

Proverbs 23:4

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Labour not to be rich: cease from thine own wisdom.

Analysis

The prohibition against laboring to be rich warns against making wealth life's primary goal. Cease from one's own wisdom means recognizing the futility of self-dependent striving for security. This doesn't condemn honest work but idolatrous pursuit of riches that displaces trust in God's provision.

Historical Context

Solomon's wealth (and later loss of focus) illustrated this principle. The Teacher in Ecclesiastes similarly concluded that laboring for wealth was vanity and vexation of spirit.

Related Passages

Psalm 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Study Questions

1. How do you distinguish between faithful stewardship and striving to be rich?
2. What would change if you ceased from your own wisdom and trusted God's provision?

Interlinear Text

חִצְלָה: מִבִּינְתָּבָר לֹהֲעֵשׂ יְרֵא תִּגְעַל אֶל
H408 Labour not to be rich from thine own wisdom cease
H3021 H6238 H998 H2308

Additional Cross-References

Hebrews 13:5 (Parallel theme): Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.

Proverbs 28:20 (Parallel theme): A faithful man shall abound with blessings: but he that maketh haste to be rich shall not be innocent.

Matthew 6:19 (Parallel theme): Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal:

Proverbs 3:5 (Parallel theme): Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding.

John 6:27 (Parallel theme): Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you: for him hath God the Father sealed.

Proverbs 15:27 (Parallel theme): He that is greedy of gain troubleth his own house; but he that hateth gifts shall live.

Romans 12:16 (Parallel theme): Be of the same mind one toward another. Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate. Be not wise in your own conceits.

Proverbs 26:12 (Parallel theme): Seest thou a man wise in his own conceit? there is more hope of a fool than of him.

Isaiah 5:21 (Parallel theme): Woe unto them that are wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight!

Proverbs 3:7 (Parallel theme): Be not wise in thine own eyes: fear the LORD, and depart from evil.

