

will bless him in the material of this world. Our faith in God is not established upon gaining material possessions or experiencing ease in this life. Our faith in God resides upon knowing Him personally. Our faith is bound by our confidence and trust that God knows what is eternally best, that God keeps His promises and that God will strengthen us in times of trial. One of the greatest victories over Satan is when those who belong to God see this world through the eyes of eternity - when we continue to love, serve and glorify God

even during times of persecution, infirmities of health and financial difficulties and the ridicule from those who live the life of ease. We are told in **Hebrews 13:5** to keep our lives free from the love of money and to be content with what we have. As Christians, our wealth will be to dwell in heaven with God and His Son and the ones who have gone on before us. It's all about going to heaven! God knows what we need better than we know ourselves.

-Bill Davis

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Faithful Sayings

Olsen Park Church of Christ

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Services

Sunday: 9:30 a.m.
10:20 a.m.
6:00 p.m.
Wednesday: 7:00 p.m.

Elders:

Ken Ford
Charles Kelley
Pat Ledbetter

Deacons:

Dean Bowers
Eddie Cook
Bill Davis
Pat Goguen
Neil Ledbetter
Jeff Nunn
Fred Perez
Rusty Scott

Evangelist:

Kyle Pope

Religiously Cynical

How often do we as law abiding citizens see those around us who do nothing but challenge the legal system in this country and scam and scheme to make all the money they can get, while looking innocent by doing it? These types of people are nothing new and have around for thousands of years doing these stunts. In **Malachi 3:14**, Malachi talked about how the God fearing Jews were quoted as saying it was futile to serve God, calling the arrogant blessed when the evil doers prospered in all that they put their hands to do.

Malachi 3:13-15: *"You have said harsh things against me," says the LORD, "Yet you ask, 'what have we said against you?' You have said, 'It is futile to serve God. What did we gain by carrying out His requirements and going about like mourners before the LORD Almighty? But now we call the arrogant*

blessed. Certainly the evildoers prosper, and even those who challenge God escape.'" In **Malachi 2:17**, Malachi told the Jews how they had wearied the Lord with their words by saying all who do evil are good and He is pleased with them. **Malachi 2:17:** *"You have wearied the LORD with your words. "How have we wearied Him?" you ask. By saying, "All who do evil are good in the eyes of the LORD, and He is pleased with them" or "Where is the God of justice?"*" How often today do we as Christians get into a religiously cynical attitude with God when we see all the evil and injustice around us? That is to say we call those who beat the system blessed by God and that we are not blessed by God because we don't fare as well. I dare say that most of us reading this article can honestly say that we have at one time or

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another. Today in our society and in our work place and yes even in church we have seen those who will do more talking than action and get all the praise of men while the one who does the work goes unnoticed. We see those on TV, in the work place and in our neighborhood who scam the federal or local governments to get all the assistance they want. We see those who will cheat on their taxes or even buy property with the U.S. taxpayers' money, letting the taxpayers pay for all of their wants and needs. We see those in our work place who will cheat their employers out of thousands of dollars to take off when they don't have the vacation hours or abuse their sick leave to take off because they don't want to work. these types of people we tend to call blessed because they are good at what they do. How many times as Christians do we get discouraged when we go by all the rules, work for what we have and pay our taxes then claim the correct exemptions on our taxes just to find that others "beat the system" and got away with it? How many times do we give our best in this life just to have those around us tell us we have never had to work for anything? Even though what we have, we worked long hours to earn with God's help. This is nothing new. In Psalm 73:1-11 David saw these same people doing the same actions back in his days.

Psalm 73:1-11: *"Truly God is good to Israel, to such as are pure in heart. But as for me, my*

feet had almost stumbled; my steps had nearly slipped. For I was envious of the boastful, when I saw the prosperity of the wicked. For there are no pangs in their death; but their strength is firm. They are not in trouble as other men, nor are they plagued like other men. Therefore pride serves as their necklace; violence covers them like a garment. Their eyes bulge with abundance; they have more than heart could wish. They scoff and speak wickedly concerning oppression; they speak loftily. They set their mouth against the heavens, and their tongue walks through the earth. Therefore his people return here, and waters of a full cup are drained by them. And they say, "How does God know? And is there knowledge in the Most High?"

As we read this passage we see the wicked prosper leaving the faithful people wondering why they even bother to do good. Also the wealth of the wicked looks so inviting that the faithful ones may wish they could trade places. In Job 21, Job refuted Zophar's crazy idea that evil people will never experience wealth and happiness. Job pointed out that in the real world the wicked and God haters will and do prosper as seen in **Job 21:7-15:** *"Why do the wicked live and become old, yes, become mighty in power? Their descendants are established with them in their sight, and their offspring before their eyes. Their houses are safe from fear,*

neither is the rod of God upon them. Their bull breeds without failure; their cow calves without miscarriage. They send forth their little ones like a flock and their children dance. They sing to the tambourine and harp, and rejoice to the sound of the flute. They spend their days in wealth, and in a moment go down to the grave. Yet they say to God, 'Depart from us, for we do not desire the knowledge of Your ways. Who is the Almighty that we should serve Him? And what profit do we have if we pray to Him?'"

At first sin seems enjoyable and very attractive. Lying and stealing or the oppression of others often will bring temporary wealth to those who live in sin. But if we take a closer look, some of these people will live a long and prosperous life living on their ill gotten gains. These people fail to realize that the judgment day for their sins may no come in their lifetime. God's punishment may be deferred until the last judgment when sinner swill be eternally cut off from the presence of God. As Christians, we should not be impressed with the success and the power of evil people. God's judgment of them is a done deal. For God's judgment is certain, sure and just. The wealth of the wicked will suddenly lose its power at death. The rewards of one's deeds will suddenly take on an eternal value. What seemed like wealth is now wasted and what seemed worthless now will

last forever. The rewards of the righteous will not be found as pilgrims upon this earth, but in their home in heaven. As Christians, don't wish you could trade places with those who live in sin acquiring wealth by dishonest gain. One day they will wish they could trade places with you and have your eternal wealth. As Christians, we should not let the riches or the pleasures of sin in the world make us take our eyes off of Jesus and the cross as seen in **Hebrews 12:1-2:** *"Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that we set before Him endured the cross despising the shame and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God."*

We are to finish the race before us and keep the faith so we can receive the crown of righteousness which is our reward for being faithful to the very end. **II Timothy 4:7-8:** *"I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing."* When a person becomes a Christian he should not assume that he will live in wealth and that God