

# VISIONS OF HEAVEN AND HELL BY JOHN BUNYAN

## John Bunyan's Vision and Visit to Hell – Part 3 A Wicked Woman

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Please read pages 9-10 of the PDF above of John Bunyan's, "Vision of Heaven and Visit to Hell", with the title; **The Third Encounter – A Wicked Woman.**

This wicked woman that Bunyan saw and spoke with in hell, fell into temptation and loved money more than God. To be clear, money in and of itself is not evil but what Jesus says and as we'll study today, it's the love of it that God calls evil. It's tied to covetousness and greed and wickedness.

The script reads, "*This is no more but a just retribution,*" replied the fiend. "*This woman in her life time was such a sordid wretch that though she had gold enough, could never be satisfied, and therefore now I pour it down her throat. She cared not who she ruined and undid, so she could get their gold.*"

**1 Timothy 6:9-10** says; "9 *But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and harmful lusts which drown men in destruction and perdition. 10 For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil, for which some have strayed from the faith in their greediness, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.*"

Now it doesn't say in the vision that this woman was a Christian who had backslidden and that's why she was in hell, we don't know, but she was not satisfied with money, and couldn't get enough of it. She loved money more than God.

King Solomon wrote in **Ecclesiastes 5:10**; "10 *He who loves silver will not be satisfied with silver; nor he who loves abundance, with increase. This also is vanity.*" Looking in the natural that would seem to be contradictory, yet it shows it's a heart matter of an insatiable appetite for it that never is satisfied.

As Bunyan describes, she appeared to be poor yet had great riches. It says; "*And when she had amassed together a greater treasure than ever she could spend, her love of money would not let her spend so much of it as to supply herself with what the common necessities of life required; for she then went often with an empty stomach, though her money bags were full, or else she filled her stomach at another's charge.*"

Again, it's incomprehensible yet apparently true, that she was so rich yet she wouldn't spend it on her basic needs! Yet King Solomon says this in **Proverbs 13:7**; "7 *There is one who makes himself rich, yet has nothing; and one who makes himself poor, yet has great riches.*"

It's not a new phenomenon as Solomon saw it thousands of years ago. All it takes is a little 'bling', a little bit of fashion, the right car, the right hair cut and colour, the right jewelry the right house etc.; it's all what's seen on the exterior but behind the scenes, they're poor. It's a deception. But with this wicked lady it was the opposite. She had everything she could ever desire.

The story continues saying; "*And as for her apparel, it either never grew old or it was always so supplied with patches that at last it was hard to say which piece was on the original. She kept no house because she would not be taxed; nor keep her treasure in her hands for fear she should be robbed; nor let it out on bonds and mortgages for fear of being cheated; although she ever cheated all she could, and was herself so great a cheat she cheated her own body of its food and her own soul of mercy.*"

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It says in **Hebrews 13:5**; “5 *Let your conduct be without covetousness; be content with such things as you have. For He Himself has said, “I will never leave you nor forsake you.”*”

So, to the Christian, be content with what you have. Jesus doesn't want you as His child, to be like the parable of the rich fool in **Luke 12:13-21**; “13 *Then one from the crowd said to Him, “Teacher, tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me.”* 14 *But He said to him, “Man, who made Me a judge or an arbitrator over you?”* 15 *And He said to them, “Take heed and beware of [a]covetousness, for one's life does not consist in the abundance of the things he possesses.”* 16 *Then He spoke a parable to them, saying: “The ground of a certain rich man yielded plentifully. 17 And he thought within himself, saying, ‘What shall I do, since I have no room to store my crops?’* 18 *So he said, ‘I will do this: I will pull down my barns and build greater, and there I will store all my crops and my goods. 19 And I will say to my soul, “Soul, you have many goods laid up for many years; take your ease; eat, drink, and be merry.”’* 20 *But God said to him, ‘Fool! This night your soul will be required of you; then whose will those things be which you have provided?’* 21 *“So is he who lays up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God.”*”

Do any of these people sound familiar; be it the rich lady in hell or the parable that we just read, that when you read about them, you know people like them or maybe deep down inside you can see yourself like the wicked lady, or other examples found in the Bible that convict you personally of your love for money?

You can lay up treasures for yourself and not be rich towards God. It's interesting to see Christians live their whole life penny pinching, tithing off every penny, yet have an appearance of being poor not enjoying what they have stored up in the bank, because they deem it to be materialistic. But yet what they deem as materialistic, is really a love of money masquerading as good stewardship.

Another clear sign of loving money, is the hoarding of material possessions, not able to throw anything out or give away to those who have need around you. As a result, the house that is to be enjoyed, is now a storage facility, which at the end of your life, the executor of your will has to give away and throw out what you couldn't give away or throw out yourself while alive. The demon of hoarding, greed and mammon wouldn't allow you to.

Jesus says in **Luke 12:15**; “15 *And He said to them, “Take heed and beware of [a]covetousness, for one's life does not consist in the abundance of the things he possesses.”*”

So, let me ask you Christian an important question; when you give to charity do you give to charity's that only provide a tax receipt? Is the reason you do this because it's good stewardship that enables you to receive a tax benefit from the government? When you receive your money back after doing taxes, do you give it all back to the charity that you benefitted from giving to or do you put it in the bank or spend it on yourself? We've all been down this road and faced this serious question haven't we.

Could it be that what you call good stewardship, is nothing more than love of money that you've used a charity to profit off for personal gain? In other words, it's giving to receive isn't it.

Jesus says in **Matthew 6:1-4**: “6 *“Take heed that you do not do your charitable deeds before men, to be seen by them. Otherwise you have no reward from your Father in heaven. 2 Therefore, when you do a charitable deed, do not sound a trumpet before you as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory from men. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward. 3 But when you do a charitable deed, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, 4 that your charitable deed may be in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will Himself reward you [a]openly.”*”

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The story of this wicked woman continues saying; *“Since gold then was her god on earth, is it not just that she should have her belly full of it in hell?” When her tormentor had done speaking, I asked her whether what he said was true or not. To this she answered me, “No, to my grief it is not.” “How! to your grief?” I said. “Yes, to my grief,” said she. “Because were that which my tormentor tell you true, I should be better satisfied. He tells you that it is gold that he pours down my throat; but he is a lying devil and speaks falsely. Were it but gold I never should complain. But he abuses me, and instead of gold he only gives the horrid, stinking sulphur.”*

What she idolized on earth she was not able to idolize in hell. That is where the torment is. Knowing that the love of money that kept her out of heaven, she can't enjoy in hell!

In **Acts 5:1-11** we read about a couple who idolized their money and what the consequences were; *“5 But a certain man named Ananias, with Sapphira his wife, sold a possession. 2 And he kept back part of the proceeds, his wife also being aware of it, and brought a certain part and laid it at the apostles' feet. 3 But Peter said, “Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and keep back part of the price of the land for yourself? 4 While it remained, was it not your own? And after it was sold, was it not in your own control? Why have you conceived this thing in your heart? You have not lied to men but to God.” 5 Then Ananias, hearing these words, fell down and breathed his last. So great fear came upon all those who heard these things. 6 And the young men arose and wrapped him up, carried him out, and buried him. 7 Now it was about three hours later when his wife came in, not knowing what had happened. 8 And Peter answered her, “Tell me whether you sold the land for so much?” She said, “Yes, for so much.” 9 Then Peter said to her, “How is it that you have agreed together to test the Spirit of the Lord? Look, the feet of those who have buried your husband are at the door, and they will carry you out.” 10 Then immediately she fell down at his feet and breathed her last. And the young men came in and found her dead, and carrying her out, buried her by her husband. 11 So great fear came upon all the church and upon all who heard these things.”*

If Ananias and Sapphira are in hell today, they're not able to enjoy the riches that they lied to the Holy Spirit about, and it's pretty clear that the love of money caused them to lie to the Holy Spirit.

What it comes down to is this, whether you are going to heaven or hell, you can't take a penny with you, and that's why Jesus says in **Matthew 6:19-21** to lay up treasures in heaven; *“19 “Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; 20 but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. 21 For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”*

So where is your heart today? Are your treasures in heaven or are your treasures leading you to hell? As a Christian, right now, you are seated with Christ in heavenly places and that's an awesome treasure in and of itself. But your treasures and riches are also whoever you can share the gospel with to bring to heaven, those are your true riches. Remember you can't take a penny to either place, not even one penny.

Please watch this short video entitled; [‘Ananias and Sapphira’](#).