

Good morning! It is interesting (to me) to look at the houses being built today in the US compared to the suburban houses we grew up in during the 1950's and 1960's. We marvel that what our parents paid for a house back then was less than half of what we might pay for a car today. We want bigger houses with master bedroom suites. We want walk-in closets. We want big kitchens and spacious family rooms. The homes in which I grew up didn't have any of that stuff and we had a family of six! I have often said that the greatest challenge that most American Christians face is their stuff. We love our stuff, don't we? We want to have more stuff, too. Our stuff can get in the way, though---it can be a distraction. When we spend all of our time trying to accommodate our appetites we can miss what God wants to do with our lives! This morning, let's look together at an interesting passage of scripture and see if it will guide us toward a more fruitful life with God:

Two things I asked of You, do not refuse me before I die: keep deception and lies far from me, give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me with the food that is my portion, that I not be full and deny You and say, "Who is the Lord?" Or that I not be in want and steal, and profane the name of my God.

Prov. 30: 7-9

This passage reminds me of the prayer that Jesus taught, what we call The Lord's Prayer, in which He prays, *"Give us this day our daily bread."* We don't need to have all of our wants and needs accounted for at once; we need what God provides for "this day". Another thing that stands out is that the writer is so very self-aware---more self-aware than most people. Over the years I have found that after a person comes to Christ, two things test Christians' ability to walk with God and serve Him productively; having too much and having too little. Jesus referred to this in His explanation of the Parable of the Sower (Matt 13) when He said, *"And the one on whom seed was sown among the thorns, this is the man who hears the word, and the worry of the world and the deceitfulness of wealth choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful."* When we wander off the path on which God is leading us and wander into the thorny wilderness of trying to provide for our own needs, we can miss out on the fruitful life that God has prepared for us. What about you---what is your relationship with your stuff? I would encourage you this morning to penitently consider it. Remember, life is not about stuff...it's all about Jesus!