



**Studies in Psalms** by [John T Polk II](#)  
For [The Fellowship Room](#)

Psalms 49

11/22/12

Vs. 1-4 send a clarion call for all to pay attention;  
Vs. 5 asks a question about the purpose of life;  
Vs. 6-14 describe the poverty of riches;  
Vs. 15 shows the blessedness of a good man;  
Vs. 16-20 show the fruitlessness of materialism.

**Verses 1-4:** The world is invited to listen to "wisdom" as a result of "meditation." A "proverb" (parable) or "dark saying" (riddle) teach clearly when revealed. Again, this "harp" is left behind because Jesus Christ "has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross" (Colossians 2:14), so Christians are "singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord" (Ephesians 5:19). The "harp" of Moses' Law has been replaced by the "heart" of Christ's Law.

**Verse 5:** Asks "Why live lives in fear while surrounded by those who commit iniquity?" Specifically, based on this next section, "why fear" those who use wealth to abuse?

**Verses 6-14:** Those who trust in their riches learn that they: cannot purchase the salvation for one soul (Verses 6-8); cannot avoid death (Verse 9); must leave their riches behind (verse 10); try to live on in fame by putting their names on their possessions (verses 11-12). In verses 13-14 we see that those who trust in their wealth, and those who follow their ways, will be herded like sheep into the grave, where "Death" deteriorates and their "beauty" fades into the dirt from which we all have come. The "upright" who continue in life "shall have dominion over them in the morning," and as God said, "whose will those things be which you have provided?" (Luke 12:20)

**Verse 15** plainly states the rich reward of the faithful, whether rich or poor: to be accepted by God!

**Verses 16-20:** Fear not the rich who trust their riches, for they: carry no riches with them in death (verse 17; 1 Timothy 6:7); have none of their "glory" from life (verse 17); lose all their *friends* (verse 18; "The poor *man* is hated even by his own neighbor, But the rich *has* many friends" Proverbs 14:20); die just like their predecessors, never to see the light of day again (verse 19). Death comes to all, as Solomon said: "All things *come* alike to all: One event *happens* to the righteous and the wicked; To the good, the clean, and the unclean; To him who sacrifices and him who does not sacrifice. As is the good, so *is* the sinner; He who takes an oath as *he* who fears an oath. This *is* an evil in all that is done under the sun: that one thing *happens* to all. Truly the hearts of the sons of men are full of evil; madness *is* in their hearts while they live, and after that *they* go to the dead" (Ecclesiastes 9:2-3). Those who live but never "understand" the proper emphasis upon wealth have learned no more than animals, and both will die! The human should make his/her life more spiritually rewarding than living like an animal.

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**All Scriptures and comments are based on the New King James Version, unless otherwise noted.**