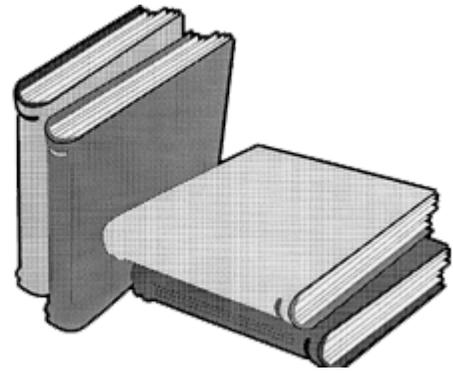


The Rock and Pit

*Look unto the rock whence ye are hewn,
and to the hole of the pit whence ye are digged.*

Isa 51:1

Selections from the Christian's heritage in print,
Collected by Dean Brown



Issue 945

On Marriage, Money, and the Necessities of Life; Advice to a Young Minister.

I doubt not but it is very lawful at your age¹ to think of marriage, and in the situation you describe, to think of money likewise. I am glad you have no person, as you say, fixedly in view; in that case advice comes a post² or two too late. But your expression seems to intimate³ that there is one transiently in view. If so be, since you have no settlement⁴, and if she has no money, I cannot but wish that she may pass on till she is out of sight and mind. ...

I take it for granted that my friend [the recipient] is free from the love of filthy lucre and that money will never be the turning point with you in the choice of a wife. Methinks I hear you think, 'If I wanted money, I would either dig or beg for it; but to preach or marry for money, that would be far from me.' I commend you.

However, ... money itself, obtained in a fair and honourable way, is desirable, upon many accounts, though not for its own sake. Meat, clothes, fire, and books, cannot easily be had without it. ...

Besides, you might have a John, a Thomas, and a William, and half a dozen more to feed (for they must all eat). And how could this be done without a competency on one side or the other ... I see not. Besides, you would be grieved not to have an occasional shilling in your pocket to bestow on one or another of the Lord's poor.

John Newton (the "Servant of Slaves", of Amazing Grace fame),
3 February 1775.

From Grant Gordon, ed., *Wise Counsel:*
John Newton's Letters to John Ryland Jr., Banner of Truth 2009.

¹ The recipient was 22.

² A delivery of the mail.

³ Indicates.

⁴ A specific calling to a church.