

## A GOOD INCOME

**“Men, you know that we receive a good income from this business” (Acts 19:25)**

Demetrius was a silversmith in ancient Ephesus. He earned a “good income” by making silver shrines to the pagan goddess Artemis. One principle objection he had to following Jesus involved the loss of his income. In this regard Demetrius stands as a symbol for thousands of others who choose a “good income” over Jesus.

- Peter, Andrew, James and John left their “income” as fishermen to become fishers of men.
- This was true of the other apostles as well. They too chose to trust in Christ rather than in their present income.
- As you know, the perfect sacrifice of Christ rendered obsolete the priesthood of Aaron. Therefore, when a great company of priests became obedient to the faith (Acts 6:7), it obviously affected their employment.
- Abraham gave up the security of the city to dwell in tents with Isaac and Jacob. Elisha left the security of his farm and 12 yoke of oxen to follow Elijah. Moses gave up his security as the son of Pharaoh’s daughter to lead the people of God from captivity. God called Gideon while he was threshing wheat and Amos while he was a shepherd and dresser of sycamore trees. Barnabas was a Levite and Luke was a physician. If God calls us into His service He will sustain us and those who look back are not fit to serve in His Kingdom.
- Judas discovered too late that there is no real security in 30 pieces of silver.

### SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT

The wicked one realized that Jesus would never cash in as cheap as Judas did. That’s why the devil took Jesus to a high place and showed him in an instant “all the kingdoms of the world”. (Lk. 4:5). He offered Jesus “all of these kingdoms” if he would bow down and worship him. Jesus reminded the devil that we are to only worship and serve God. In retrospect, we see how stupid it would have been to give up eternal rewards for “all those kingdoms”. “All those kingdoms”, as you know, no longer exist. All earthly kingdoms will ultimately disappear into the dust of history.

Conventional wisdom dictates that a bird in the hand is worth two in the bush. Shakespeare said that it may be better to face the ills we have than fly to others that we know not of. Jesus said the rich man was a fool for trusting in bigger barns and earthly wealth (Lk. 12:13 - 21). The rich man He died that very night and someone else inherited all the wealth in which he trusted.

When Demetrius was alive the temple of Artemis was one of the seven wonders of the ancient world. Surely it must have been seen by him as a symbol of great security. It wasn’t! Today it is gone! It was completely destroyed in 401 A.D. and only the foundation and sculptural fragments remain. Further, Demetrius also died, and his precious “income” died with him. Those who received Christ in Ephesus, however, have a reward that lasts forever. Jesus promised them the right to “eat from the tree of life, which is in the paradise of God” (Rev. 2:7).

Not everyone is called by Christ to leave where they are and stop what they are doing. Take, for example, the man who was delivered from a legion of demons. He begged Jesus to let him go with Him. Jesus, however, would not let him do so but said: “Go home to your family and tell them how much the Lord has done for you, and how he has had mercy on you.” (Mk. 5:19). Obedience to God is the ultimate goal for everyone. Solomon said so! He concluded that the whole duty of man was to fear God and keep His commandments (Eccl 12:13). We are not to trust in uncertain riches, but in the Living God (1 Tim. 6:17).

Again, the words of the martyr Jim Elliott are apropos: “He is no fool who give us the things he cannot keep to gain the things he cannot lose”.