



The Scrolls

Helping **CENTRAL BIBLE CHURCH** Families Belong, Become and Go Beyond

V22 N19

May 24, 2020

DEAR TIMOTHY

"How Rich Are You?"

1 Timothy 6:17-19

THIS WEEK'S CORE COMPETENCY

Generosity

I gladly give my
resources to fulfill
God's purposes.

"Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver."

2 Corinthians 9:6-7



What is your
investment
strategy?

Giving away my money isn't the same as throwing away my money, although more people than you might think probably see it that way. After all, what good is my money once it's no longer *my* money? You have likely heard the adage, "It is better to give than receive" and thought to yourself, "for the one receiving maybe, but for the one giving not so much." The adage is based on a saying of Jesus not found in the Gospels. In his parting words to the Ephesian elders Paul quoted the Lord: "In everything I did, I showed you that by this kind of hard work we must help the weak, remembering the words the Lord Jesus himself said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive'" (Ac 20:35).

Perhaps some need to reset how they view giving, especially giving to fulfill God's purposes. When we put our money in a bank, contribute to a retirement account, pay a child's tuition, invest in a house, etc., we don't think of it as giving money away, let alone throwing money away. When we dispense money in these ways, we believe we get something valuable in return, and it's that perceived value we get in return that makes the difference between what we consider "money wasted" and "money well spent." And so one might argue: It's not the money that matters; money has no intrinsic value. It's how we use it that determines its true value. And using it to fulfill God's purposes is a proven win-win value-added strategy. Obviously "receivers" win, but "givers" win, too.

And now we have the evidence to prove it. Consider the following research out of the University of Notre Dame:

"For most religious believers, it is an article of faith that it is more blessed to give than to receive. For at least two University

of Notre Dame sociologists, it is an article of fact as well.

In their book, *The Paradox of Generosity: Giving We Receive, Grasping We Lose*, Christian Smith, Notre Dame's William R. Kenan Jr. Professor of Sociology, and sociology doctoral candidate Hilary Davidson provide empirical evidence in support of the biblical admonition. According to their analysis of measurable data, people who are generous with their money, time and associations are happier, healthier and more resilient than their less generous counterparts.

The book, published in 2014 by Oxford University Press, makes use of information gathered in Notre Dame's five-year Science of Generosity Initiative. Smith's unprecedented multidisciplinary nationwide survey that found that only 2.7 percent of Americans give a 10th or more of their income to charity, at least 86.2 percent give away less than 2 percent of their income and nearly half give nothing.

Smith and Davidson argue that this reluctance to give not only deprives those in need, but also diminishes the happiness of those who could, but don't, help them.

'By grasping onto what we currently have,' Smith writes, 'we lose out on better goods that we might have gained. In holding onto what we possess, we diminish its long-term value to us. By always protecting ourselves against future uncertainties and misfortunes, we are affected in ways that make us more anxious about uncertainties and vulnerable to future misfortunes. In short, by failing to care for others, we do not properly take care of ourselves. It is no coincidence that the word 'miser' is etymologically related to the word 'miserable'" (<http://generosityresearch.nd.edu/news/53090-the-paradox-of-generosity/>).



EXAMINE GOD'S WORD

17 *Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment.* 18 *Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share.* 19 *In this way they will lay up treasure for themselves as a firm foundation for the coming age, so that they may take hold of the life that is truly life.*

READ in another translation

17 *Command those who are rich in this world's goods not to be haughty or to set their hope on riches, which are uncertain, but on God who richly provides us with all things for our enjoyment.* 18 *Tell them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, to be generous givers, sharing with others.* 19 *In this way they will save up a treasure for themselves as a firm foundation for the future and so lay hold of what is truly life. (NET)*

After reading the text, practice your Observation skills by noting the following:

- Underline "command" in vv. 17, 18.
- Circle "rich" and "richly" in vv. 17, 18.
- Bracket "hope in wealth" and "hope in God" in v. 17.
- Circle "so uncertain" in v. 17.
- Box "but" indicating *contrast* in v. 17.
- Bracket "for our enjoyment" in v. 17.
- Underline "tell" in v. 18.
- Highlight v. 18.
- Circle "treasure" in v. 19.
- Circle "firm foundation" in v. 19.
- Bracket "life that is truly life" in v. 19.

What one word would you use to describe the TONE of this passage? (i.e., stern, joyful, cautious, etc.)

What word or idea stands out to you in this passage?

What one thing you do not understand in this passage?

Try to summarize the THEME of this passage in one word. If you were going to describe these verses, you might say, "This text is about _____."



DIG DEEPER

Answer the questions to help you apply the passage and prepare for discussion

1. There *were* “rich” believers *then*; there *are* rich believers *now*. Who are they and do you see yourself as one of them?

 2. There *are* “rich” believers in this *present world*; there *will be* rich believers in the *coming age*. Who will they be and do you think you’ll be one of them?

 3. What has wealth got to do with arrogance?

 4. Give an example of the *uncertainty* of wealth.

 5. Explain the *contrast* in verse 17.

 6. Why does Paul point to God’s generosity?

 7. *Contrast* what the rich are and are not to do.

 8. What good is “treasure” in the coming age?

 9. A “good foundation” for what?

 10. **Discussion:** Talk about Paul’s perspective on living “the good life.”
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Commentary On The Text

Paul's words to Timothy found in 1 Timothy 6:17-19 are not difficult to understand. The difficulty is found in doing them, not understanding them. In verses 6-10 the apostle tells his protégé what to tell people who "want to get rich." In verses 17-19 he tells him what to tell people who "are rich." One commentator summarizes nicely what Paul has to say to Timothy: "The structure of the passage is simple. Paul gives six admonitions built around five imperatives: do not be haughty, do not set one's hope on riches but on God, do good, be rich in good works, be liberal and generous. He follows with the result of following these actions—the rich will lay a good foundation for the future—and concludes with the reason that they should do these things—in order to grasp true, eschatological, eternal life" (William D. Mounce, *Word Biblical Commentary*, vol. 46, *Pastoral Epistles*, 365).

Let's examine the passage verse by verse. In verse 17 Paul uses *contrast* to tell Timothy that the rich are not "to put their hope in their wealth;" instead, they are "to put their hope in God." Moreover, they are "not to be arrogant." It's easy for rich people to have confidence in their wealth rather than God who gave it. It's easy, too, for them to have an inflated view of themselves. Money and the self-confidence that regularly comes with it can easily lead to arrogance by fooling them into believing that they are better, smarter, and more important than the poor—or even worse, that their wealth is a sure sign of God's approval. Think of the rich man's attitude toward Lazarus (Lk 16:19-25). How wise it is to hope in God who richly provides everything for life's enjoyment! Warren Wiersbe writes, "If wealth makes a person proud, then he understands neither himself nor his wealth. 'But thou shalt remember the Lord thy God; for it is He that gives thee power to get wealth' (Deut. 8:18). We are not owners; we are stewards. If we have wealth, it is by the goodness of God and not because of any special merits on our part. The possessing of material wealth ought to humble a person and cause him to glorify God, not himself" ("1 Timothy," in *The Bible Exposition Commentary*, 2:238). How foolish to hope in this world's wealth that is "here today and gone tomorrow!"

In verse 18 Paul tells Timothy to tell the rich to be rich in deeds rather than dollars. All of the terms he uses in this verse—do good, be rich in good deeds, be generous and willing to share—

likely imply, first and foremost, that they should give away their dollars. One interpreter explains: These final four actions are the natural result of realizing that all a person has is a gift from God. Paul starts with the general 'do good' and moves to the more specific 'be rich in good deeds,' and then clarifies that by 'good deeds' he means sharing generously with others" (367). If the point of verse 17 is enjoy what God gives you, the point of verses 18-19 is employ what God gives you. Paul isn't telling Timothy to tell the rich to give away all of their money; a farmer doesn't sell his seed corn! He is telling him to tell them to be wildly generous.

In verse 19 Paul tells Timothy to remind the rich that it is possible to be rich in this present age and poor in the next, just as it is possible to be poor in this present age and rich in the next. Paul's words to Timothy are doubtless based on Jesus' words to his disciples recorded in Matthew 6:19-21: "Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. 20 But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. 21 For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also." Generosity returns value. On the one hand, it is treasure. On the other, it is a foundation. It involves taking hold of "life that is truly life." The significance of the metaphors is less than crystal clear. However, the gist of their significance is more or less captured in the following words. Believers live in this present age, which means they must address everyday realities, but they also look forward to the age to come, which means they must address future realities as well. By being generous and willing to share with others in this age they accomplish two things. They lay up treasure for themselves and establish a firm foundation for their life there—two marks of *continuity* between this age and the next. Believers may not be able to take it with them, but they are able to send it on ahead. One commentator writes: "By working out their salvation in practical ways such as sharing, they are transferring their riches to the coming age, establishing a firm foundation for them there. This is not the reason for sharing but the result. The reason for doing so, apart from recognizing one's true position in the present age as a recipient of God's gracious gifts, is the desire to grab on to life that is truly life: eschatological life, eternal life." (369).

Word Studies/Notes

v. 17 **command** “The Gk. term [*parangellos*] in the PE [Pastoral Epistles] means ‘to urge’ rather than ‘to command’ (cf. 1 Tim 1:3), and this confirms that Paul is speaking not to his opponents but generally to those in the church; his language is stronger when addressing the opponents” (William D. Mounce, *Word Biblical Commentary*, vol. 46, *Pastoral Epistles*, 366).

v. 17 **rich** “Throughout this passage there is a play on the various forms of the word [*plousios*], ‘rich.’ Those who are rich [*plousios*] should set their hope not on uncertain riches [*ploutos*] but on God who richly [*plousiōs*] gives all things. Rather they should be rich [*ploutein*] in good deeds. This is similar to the play on the word [*pistis*], ‘faith,’ in 1 Tim 1:12-17” (Mounce, 365).

v. 17 **hope in wealth** To hope “in” something “signals a confident anticipation.” It indicates that one trusts in that something to bring benefits of one kind or another. “The rich are not to place their confidence in wealth, the perfect tense [*ēlpikenai*], ‘to set [their] hope,’ emphasizing in a negative sense the assuredness of their conviction” (Mounce, 366).

v. 17 **so uncertain** Cf., “the uncertainty of riches” (ESV). The Gk. term [*adēlotēti*] occurs only here in the NT. “The uncertainty of wealth has been commented on from ancient times. It takes to itself wings and flies away (Prov. 23:5). Even great fortunes have disappeared almost overnight” (Ralph Earle, “1 Timothy,” in *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary*, 11:388).

v. 17 **our enjoyment** “The last word is *apolausin* (only here and Heb 11:25). This strong compound suggests that physical pleasure is in itself not sinful, but divinely ordained when sought within the structure of God’s will. White rightly observes, ‘No good purpose is served by pretending that God did not intend us to enjoy the pleasurable sensations of physical life’ (EGT, 4:149)” (Earle, 388). “‘All things’ is not everything people could possibly want, as if God were obligated to fulfill every wish. 1 Tim 6:8 limits human needs to food and clothing, and therein lies God’s obligation. [*panta*] means that everything a person has whether it be food and clothing or more, is a gift from God” (Mounce, 366).

v. 19 **treasure for . . .** Cf., Mt 6:19-21. “The phrase ‘for themselves’ emphasizes that generous givers may imagine that they are helping others, but

they also are storing up significant personal benefits . . . The godless, on the other hand, lay up treasures for themselves of a different kind (Jas 5:1-5)” (Thomas D. Lea and Hayne P. Griffin, Jr., *1, 2 Timothy, Titus*, NAC, 176).”

v. 19 **firm foundation** “The mixing of metaphors [i.e., treasure/foundation] is somewhat confusing—Bernard (102) calls it ‘inexact brevity’—but the basic thrust is clear. By being generous, the rich are not losing their wealth. Rather, they are laying it away in heaven, and by doing so, they are establishing a firm foundation for eternity, for life that is truly life. Lock translates, ‘in this way they store up true treasures for themselves which form a firm foundation on which they can build for the future’ (73)” (Mounce, 368).

Other Texts to Consider

Philippians 4:18-19

“I have received full payment and have more than enough. I am amply supplied, now that I have received from Epaphroditus the gifts you sent. They are a fragrant offering, an acceptable sacrifice, pleasing to God. And my God will meet all your needs according to the riches of his glory in Christ Jesus.”



APPLY THE TEXT

CENTRAL MESSAGE OF THE TEXT

Put your hope in God, not your wealth, so you can be wildly generous to others,
thereby laying up treasure for the future and taking hold of true life now.

CENTRAL MESSAGE FOR YOUR LIFE

(Rewrite the Central Message above to personally apply to your own life)



3 LIVING QUESTIONS

The “Living Questions” are simple questions we may ask of any text in order to apply the Bible to our life. Answer the questions below as personally as you can.

1. What does this passage teach me about God?

2. What does this passage teach me about myself?

3. What does this passage lead me to do?



FAMILY TALK

It seems like every time I go on a walk I come across spare change. I always grab the coin and take it home to my youngest son. When he was younger, it didn't matter if I brought home a penny or a quarter; it was as if I were delivering a gold mine. Money was just that, a singular word. It all had the same value. A coin was a coin and a bill was a bill, and that meant only one thing – he was rich! The funny thing is that spare change could be thrown in a jar never to be thought of again, but what he truly treasured was his stuffed Froggy. This season, so many riches I might have considered valuable have been stripped away. What I'm treasuring most is my quiet time with the Lord. A "normal" morning for me used to mean getting up early and making sure all six of us are ready for our day. Today's normal is so much different and I love it. Today I can wake up and truly have a quiet time, outside with the squawking chickens, chirping birds and God's beautiful creation. I'm learning what Timothy meant: to put my "hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment" (1 Tim 6:17). The riches of spare change are nothing compared to the riches of God's word! Parents, I'm praying you can "take hold of the life that is truly life" (1 Tim 6:19) as you and your family treasure God's word this season.

What Does The Bible Say?

What does the Bible say? Read 1 Timothy 6:17-19

1. What are the rich commanded not to do in v 17?
2. Who should they put our hope in and why?
3. What three things in v. 18 should Timothy command people to do?

What Do You Think?

Are these commands only for the rich or for all people? Explain your answer.

What Do You Do?

What do you have that could be a blessing to someone else?

CORE COMPETENCY: Generosity

I give away my faith, life, money, and time to help with God's work.

MEMORY VERSE: Matthew 6:21

For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

KidPIX COUPON

Earn 1 KidPIX Token by completing the CENTRAL Kids Bible Study on this page and another token by memorizing and reciting the memory verse for this week.

Questions: kids@wearecentral.org

- _____ I completed my Bible Study
- _____ I memorized this week's verse
- _____ I brought my Bible to church
- _____ I brought a friend



CHILD'S NAME

GRADE PARENT SIGNATURE

OUR CORE COMPETENCIES

CENTRAL BELIEFS

Authority of the Bible (2 Timothy 3:16-17)
I believe the Bible is the Word of God and has the right to command my belief and action.

Church (Ephesians 4:15-16)
I believe the church is God's primary way to accomplish His purposes on earth today.

Eternity (John 14:1-4)
I believe there is a heaven and a hell and that Jesus Christ is returning to judge the earth and to establish His eternal kingdom.

The Holy Spirit (Romans 8:9)
I believe the Holy Spirit convicts, calls, converts and changes me as a child of God.

Humanity (John 3:16)
I believe all people are loved by God and need Jesus Christ as their Savior.

Identity in Christ (John 1:12)
I believe I am significant because of my position as a child of God.

Jesus Christ (Hebrews 1:1-4)
I believe Jesus Christ is the Son of God who became man, died for sinners and rose from the dead.

Life Purpose (Acts 20:24)
I believe I am a steward of God's resources and have been redeemed to participate in His Kingdom purposes for His glory.

Personal God (Psalm 121:1-2)
I believe God is involved in and cares about my daily life.

Salvation by Grace (Ephesians 2:8-9)
I believe a person comes into a right relationship with God by His grace, through faith in Jesus Christ.



CENTRAL VIRTUES

Love (1 John 4:10-12)
I sacrificially and unconditionally love and forgive others.

Joy (John 15:11)
I have inner contentment and purpose in spite of my circumstances.

Peace (Philippians 4:6-7)
I am free from anxiety because things are right between God, myself and others.

Patience (Proverbs 14:29)
I take a long time to overheat and endure patiently under the unavoidable pressures of life.

Kindness/Goodness (1 Thessalonians 5:15)
I choose to do the right things in my relationships with others

Faithfulness (Proverbs 3:3-4)
I have established a good name with God and with others based on my long-term loyalty to those relationships.

Gentleness (Philippians 4:5)
I am thoughtful, considerate and calm in dealing with others.

Self-Control (Titus 2:11-13)
I have the power, through Christ, to control myself.

Grace (Colossians 3:13)
I demonstrate forgiveness, mercy and generosity to others, even when they have offended me.

Hope (1 Peter 1:3-5)
I have a growing anticipation of God's promises and my secure eternity with Him.

Humility (Philippians 2:3-4)
I choose to esteem others above myself.



CENTRAL PRACTICES

Bible Study (Hebrews 4:12)
I study the Bible to know God, the truth, and to find direction for my daily life.

Biblical Community (Acts 2:44-47)
I fellowship with other Christians to accomplish God's purposes in my life, others' lives, and in the world.

Compassion (Psalm 82:3-4)
I seek to serve the last, the least and the lost in my community.

Disciple-Making (2 Timothy 2:2)
I multiply godly beliefs, virtues and practices in others to encourage their spiritual growth in Christ.

Evangelism (Acts 1:8)
I share Jesus with others through personal proclamation and demonstration of the gospel.

Generosity (2 Corinthians 9:6-11)
I gladly give my resources to fulfill God's purposes.

Prayer (Psalm 66:16-20)
I pray to God to know Him, to lay my request before Him and to find direction for my daily life.

Single-Mindedness (Matthew 6:33)
I focus on God and His priorities for my life.

Spiritual Gifts (Romans 12:4-6)
I know and use my spiritual gifts to accomplish God's purposes.

Worship (Psalm 95:1-7)
I worship God for who He is and what He has done for me.

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