

The Pastoral Epistles

I Timothy 6:17-21 – “¹⁷As for the rich in this present age, charge them not to be haughty, nor to set their hopes on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who richly provides us with everything to enjoy. ¹⁸They are to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share, ¹⁹thus storing up treasure for themselves as a good foundation for the future, so that they may take hold of that which is truly life.

²⁰O Timothy, guard the deposit entrusted to you. Avoid the irreverent babble and contradictions of what is falsely called “knowledge,” ²¹for by professing it some have swerved from the faith.

Grace be with you.

In preceding verses Paul speaks to the issue of pursuing wealth. While the “love of money is the root of all kinds of evil,” wealth, in and of itself, is not sinful. So, if you are a believer who loves the Lord, and you happen to have substantial financial means, how should you live? God says:

1. Do not be “haughty.” - Their self-image is _____

* If you see yourself as impoverished to lower middle-class, you may not struggle with this, until you are in a third world country. You are seen as wealthy, and you begin to find faults with their culture (EG they lack ambition, they are poor money managers, they are unintelligent, etc.). [See “When Helping Hurts” – pgs. 54-55]

Table 2.1

| If we believe the primary cause of poverty is... | Then we will primarily try to... |
|--|----------------------------------|
| A lack of knowledge | Educate |
| Oppression by powerful people | Work for social justice |
| Personal sin | Evangelize and disciple |
| A lack of material resources | Give material goods |

2. Do not “set your hopes on the uncertainty of riches, but on God.” Wealth provides no _____. Riches are the sand on which we must not build our lives. Enjoyment is a result of confidence and faith in God alone.

If you are a believer who loves the Lord, and you happen to have substantial financial means, how should you use it? God says:

1. “To do good.” - To give to _____ others.
2. “To be rich in good works.” - To be generous in benevolence.
3. “To be generous and ready to share.” - To have a heart of _____.

If you are a believer who loves the Lord, and you happen to have substantial financial means, and you are giving generously, what is your reward?

1. Currently – you are building a “good foundation for the future.”
2. Eventually – you “may take hold of that which is truly life.” - you will be able to seize that which is of more importance than the superficiality of the flesh.

In closing, Paul gives final instruction to Timothy. He implores:

1. Vigilance in keeping the _____ he was given.
2. Deterrence of discussion that bears no fruit, and the so called “knowledge” that goes contrary to _____.

* In love for Timothy, Paul gives this instruction so that he can avoid the error that others have committed in veering from the sound doctrine of _____.

Finally, Paul finishes with a final wish for wellness. “Grace be with you.” I believe Paul truly expects and desires a blessed life for Timothy. A life marked by the generosity of God.