

# THE ROCK COMMUNITY CHURCH

## 1 Timothy 6:17-21

### “Viewing Money God’s Way”

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Speaker: Pastor Drew Hunsley

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23:03

Good morning. It's good to see all of you guys and be able to worship with you. So you picked a good week to come to church this week, right? I know we are in the middle of our "Pure Church" series. So that meaning talking about what it means to do church the right way.

23:17

Paul gave us some incredible instructions and all of that, but we've made it to the season finale, right? Not the series finale, but the season finale. We're finishing up the book of 1st Timothy this weekend.

23:30

So I'm gonna invite you to make your way to 1st Timothy chapter six. We're gonna be just in the last few verses of the book of 1st Timothy chapter six. And while you guys are making your way there, I just wanna kinda give a little explanation, disclaimer, just a little bit of information for you.

23:47

So verses 20 and 21, we're actually not gonna spend a whole lot of time focusing on this week. So verse 20 and 21 are actually Paul giving some instruction to Timothy telling Timothy to guard the deposit that has been entrusted to him, to guard sound doctrine, to guard the right belief that he's been given.

24:05

And so that's really kind of the theme of much of the book. And we're actually gonna see the same command come up in a couple of weeks when we are starting the book of Titus. So we're not gonna take a whole lot of time with that.

24:16

So I wanna focus this weekend. We're gonna focus on verses 17 through 19, which as I was reading and studying this week, I heard this passage kind of described as a little P.S. note from the apostle Paul at the end of this letter, right?

24:31

So if you look and if you remember last week as we were studying, we finished last week in verse 16 with the word "amen," right? Amen, any time you say amen, that means you're done, right? Well, we see Paul kinda go through some things talking about how Jesus is the blessed and only sovereign, the king of kings and the Lord of lords, who alone has immortality and dwells in unapproachable light to him, be glory, excuse me, be honor and eternal dominion, amen.

24:58

It kinda sounds like an ending of one of Paul's letters, but then we see these couple extra little notes that are tacked on here at the end. Now, I say that it seems like they're just kinda tacked on at the end because as you read through the letter, we see that Paul actually addressed the topic that we're gonna be talking about this morning.

25:16

He addressed it just a few verses earlier. Earlier in chapter six, we see him talk about the importance of being content with what we have, the importance of being content with what God has given you and not being someone who is greedy for more money, someone who has a love of money, but it seems like Paul wanted to come back to the topic to maybe make a few extra points to make sure that things were clear.

25:40

Because I think that it's possible if we read just the portion that we read a couple of weeks ago where Paul says, hey, don't be a lover of money, just be content with whatever it is that you have. I think it could sound like we're kinda praising poverty and bemoaning the opportunities that wealth provides.

25:57

But what he does here is he challenges the wealthy Ephesians that are there in the city where he's writing this letter to. He wants to take a moment and challenge them to use their money the way that God would have them to.

26:09

And so when we go through this passage this week, I think we're gonna see a couple of things from Paul. The first thing that we're gonna see is a warning from Paul about the dangers of wealth. The second thing that we're gonna see is the positives, the opportunities that wealth can provide and finally we're gonna see an invitation from Paul to use our wealth in productive ways.

26:28

So we wanna read through the passage to get started. I wanna invite you to follow along or if you wanna follow along on the screens as well, we'll have the verses up there as well. We're gonna read 1 Timothy chapter six, verses 17 through verse 21 through the end of the chapter.

26:42

It says in verse 17, as 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. They are to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share, thus storing up treasure for themselves as a good foundation for the future so that they may take hold of that which is truly life.

27:09

Oh, Timothy, guard the deposit entrusted to you. Avoid the irreverent babble and contradictions of what is falsely called knowledge, for by professing it some have swerved from the faith. Grace be with you.

27:21

These are the words of the Lord. Would you pray with me? God, we thank you for your word. We thank you for the opportunity to gather here together and to bring this study of this book to a close this week.

27:34

And God, we thank you for the words that Paul has to encourage Timothy and to encourage the rich believers there in the Ephesian church. We pray that you would help us in the same way to receive what you would have for us this morning.

27:46

God, that we would hear what your Holy Spirit would say to us. God, that we would live our lives with open hands and that we would receive from you whatever it is that you have to give and God that we would give generously whatever it is that you would have us to give.

28:00

So God, we give this time to you. We pray that you would speak and that you would allow us to listen, that you would give us ears to hear what you have to say to us this morning. So we give this time to you.

28:08

We pray all this in Jesus' beautiful name, amen. All right, well as we jump in, the first thing that we see is the warning about wealth, right? In verse 17, Paul starts by addressing those who are rich in the present age.

28:22

And so he's gonna give this warning about wealth, but I know you may not know this, but I actually heard you complain or I heard that little comment in your thought just a minute ago, right? You may have leaned over a couple of you probably leaned over and said, well, good thing he's not talking about us this week, right?

28:36

Because we're not rich, right? I always hear that. We think about who is rich. What does this mean when he says charge the rich in this present age? Well, good, that's not me, right? So before we get too far into this topic, I just wanna share a few statistics with you that I found this week.

28:52

I found these on zippia .com if you wanna go check my facts, but I found this week that the average global personal income, if you just take everybody around the world, what everybody makes across the world, the average global personal income is \$9 ,733 per year.

29:12

That's what the average person around the world makes. It's kind of surprising, at least to me, right? I don't know if that number jumps out at you, but maybe you heard that and you go, wait a minute, average actually isn't a good statistic for us to use there.

29:27

Because to talk about the average, or to talk about the mean is a flawed statistic because a few really high outliers or a few really low outliers can skew the results. And in fact, it has skew that result.

29:40

Elon Musk and Bill Gates, some of his buddies, those guys, they've actually skewed the number a good bit. So a median would be a better statistic. So if you're not familiar with your high school statistics, right?

29:51

Median means that half of the people or half of the things are above the number and half are below the number. It's kind of the middle of the road that we would want to consider. So the median per capita household income globally is \$2 ,920 per year.

30:09

The average person, the normal person around the world, makes less than \$3 ,000 a year. Now that means that if you're making over \$100 ,000 a year, that puts you in the top 10% of earners around the world.

30:22

And if you make over a million dollars, that puts you in the top 1% of people around the world. I say that to say I dare speculate that anybody that's in this room, anybody in this room that would try to convince a lot of people around the world that you're not wealthy, I think you might get slapped in the face a few times, right?

30:40

I think that might be a difficult sell for you to be able to look at the majority of our global population and say, no, no, no, I'm not rich. Anyway, with that said, Paul returns to the subject of money here in this passage.

30:55

He had discussed money, he had discussed contentment being content with what you have earlier in the chapter, but he returns to this topic of money to say a few things, not to people who want to get rich, but to those who are already rich.

31:10

I want you to notice first and foremost that Paul doesn't condemn wealth or riches in any way in this passage. We look at this passage and he says, for those who are rich, give them a couple of warnings, and then he tells them how to handle their wealth as they would use it in whatever it is that they would do.

31:29

He delivers some real talk about the dangers of wealth and about the responsibilities of wealth. And so there's nothing wrong with money in and of itself, but scripture is clear and we're gonna see it here.

31:41

Scripture is warning us, money is not something that we can trust with the weight of expectation in our lives. Money is something that cannot be trusted because he says in verse 17, as for the rich in this present age, charge them not to be haughty, nor to set their hopes on the uncertainty of riches, but rather to set their hopes on God.

32:04

He gives us a couple of warnings here. So the first thing that he warns us about is the attitude that the internal posture and thoughts about yourself or thoughts about other people that wealth can bring in our lives.

32:16

Paul's closing words in this chapter to this letter kinda cuts right to the chase. He says, command those who are rich, not to be haughty or not to be arrogant, some translations will say. So I think these are common postures that are at least, at the very least, they are temptations for people who have resources, right?

32:35

Now, for those of us who don't consider ourselves wealthy, we certainly can look at people who are and we can see, oh, there's some things that kinda show up as characterizations of who those people are or how they think or whatever, right?

32:49

There's magazines and websites all over our culture that tell us about what people are wearing and how people are living their lives, who just recently bought a house in Malibu or where this person is going for vacation or who's dating who or whatever it is, right?

33:05

We have this fascination with celebrities. We have this fascination with wealthy people. And I think there's many who would look at those wealthy important people and would perceive them as someone who should be respected.

33:19

And when that person walks into the room, we should care what that person has to say because they're successful, they're wealthy. We wanna know what that person thinks about whatever the topic is. When they come into the boardroom, everybody else is gonna get quiet and care about what that person has to say on the matter.

33:35

That person is just smarter than the rest of us. That person is just better than the rest of us. They're worthy of our attention. And so this whole thing that we can look at and it's easy for us to see it when we look at other people, right?

33:48

But I think those are temptations that come just kind of along with being wealthy in general. Maybe we don't verbalize them. Maybe we don't say them out loud, but there's an entitlement or an arrogance that comes along with having more than other people do.

34:03



So what Paul's warning the wealthy here is he's warning them not to be haughty, not to be arrogant, not to think more importantly of themselves than they should. That's the same warning that Paul provides in the book of Philippians.

34:16

Don't think more highly of yourself than you ought to, but we should have the humility that Jesus did when he came and lived among humanity. Paul wants to remind the wealthy that the only reason that they're prosperous is not because they worked hard, it's not because they're somehow implicitly better than other people, it's because God has chosen to make them prosper.

34:36

God has blessed them and everything that they have comes from God. Now does that mean that we don't work hard? No, of course not, right? We work hard and we should do everything that we can in whatever it is that we do.

34:48

But anybody who's ever lived just a little bit of life is gonna realize really quickly that there's times where the same skill level goes into a task, the same effort goes into something. Both people work hard.

35:02

You take person A and person B, they may have the same education, they may have the same opportunities, they may even work just as hard, but one of them by whatever means, luck or providence, one succeeds and the other one fails.

35:16

Anybody ever gone on a business venture before that they thought this is gonna be absolutely perfect and then it went belly up in that moment? Things happen, right? The wealthy should be reminded that everything that they have comes from God.

35:29

Ultimately it's God who gives and it's God who takes away. So we should be careful about thinking more highly of ourselves than we ought. He warns us not to have an attitude of arrogance or entitlement when it comes to wealth.

35:43

Second thing that he warns the rich, he says as for the rich, charge them not to be arrogant, but he also says to charge them not to set their hopes on the uncertainty of riches. The other temptation that wealthy people have to deal with is the potential of misplaced hope.

36:02

How hard this is for us. If we have abundance, if we have everything provided for us and taken care of for us, it's really difficult to make sure that we don't start to set our hopes in our stuff.

36:16

Jesus, when the disciples came and asked him, Jesus, teach us to pray. Jesus gave that model prayer, the Lord's prayer. Many of us are familiar with it. We could, many of us probably recite it as we sit here.

36:27

Father who art in heaven, and we continue on, right? One of the lines in that prayer is something that I think many of us in this room probably haven't actually prayed in quite a while. Maybe, just maybe, I'm just speculating here, but how many people wake up in the morning and say, God, give us this day our daily bread? Anybody have to wake up and pray for bread in the morning, or maybe you just go down to the pantry and open it up and you get to choose from six different selections.

36:54

Am I in a honey -wheat mood, or am I in a white bread mood? Or maybe I'm feeling some oat brand today, right? Whatever it is, you've got all those options that are available to you. How many of us actually have to pray, God, provide what I need today?

37:11

There's a danger for us if we put our hope in the riches that we've amassed because we know that there's uncertainty that comes along with riches. We cannot expect riches and wealth, monetary currency.

37:27

We cannot expect those things to provide ultimate happiness. We cannot expect them to provide contentment, because riches are uncertain. Money comes and money goes, and anybody that's ever had some money come in, and it's amazing how fast it just kind of flies away out of the bank account, right?

37:42

Anybody have a hole in the bottom of their bank account like mine does? Because you put it in the top, and then somehow it's just gone at the end, right? Well, Proverbs 23 actually talks about that same principle.

37:53

Proverbs 23, verses four and five, it says, do not toil to acquire wealth. Don't work overly hard. Be discerning enough to stop. Be discerning enough to desist. Why does he say that? Well, he says in verse five, when your eyes light on it, it's gone.

38:09

For suddenly it sprouts wings, flying like an eagle towards heaven. Anybody else have their money just grow wings sometimes and fly away? Money comes and money goes, and if we place our hope in, no, no, tomorrow's gonna be okay because I've got this savings account.

38:27

Things are gonna be okay because I've invested well and I've planned for the future, but then what happens when something goes belly up? What happens when things don't go the way that we expect them to?

38:37

Well, if we put our hope in riches, what happens when they're gone? But instead, he warns us there is uncertainty in riches, but instead he gives us another command. He says, instead of putting your hopes in the uncertainty of riches, put your hopes in God.

38:53

The only safe place for us to put our hope, for us to put our trust is in God himself. Because everything that we have comes from him and if God wants you to have, God is going to give to you. And if God doesn't want you to have, it doesn't matter how safe your investments were, it doesn't matter how much you buried it away or hidden it under your mattress or put it in some safe account that you were gonna put it in.

39:15

Whatever it is, if God doesn't want you to have it, it's gonna be gone in a moment. Paul reminded the Ephesians to put their hopes in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment. I want you to notice as we look at this, we're talking about money this morning, but when you look at that section, to put their hope in God, who richly provides, Paul really isn't focusing on what a person does with their money at this point.

39:40

Because to simply boil this whole thing down, if our hope is in anything but God, we're on unstable footing. That's ultimately what Paul is trying to communicate here. God is the only place that we can put our hope, that we can put our focus and be content and be able to rest knowing that the thing that we've set our foot on, the thing that we're expecting to hold up underneath of us, that it'll actually hold up.

40:02

That's kind of the overarching message that we spent time studying the book of Ecclesiastes over the past, well, the end of last year, the last six months or so of last year, right? Because in the providence of God, there's some people who live in really comfortable circumstances.

40:17

I think there's many in this room that when you want something, you go online, or you go to the store and you pick it up, right? It's okay, Paul is not condemning here that you're not allowed to have money, that money is evil.

40:30

We're allowed to enjoy ourselves. Even Ecclesiastes talked about that, right? At verse 17, we see he says to the rich, acknowledge that God gives generously, that God richly provides us with everything to enjoy.

40:46

You know, God's not some grumpy old Scrooge that just wants you to be poor and sit in the corner and wear burlap and just be angry all the time, right? We have a God who's loving, who gives good gifts to his children.

41:00

He provides for the rich and for the poor alike, and whatever it is that he provides for us, he provides for our enjoyment. I wanna remind you of one verse, we actually saw this a few different times in the book of Ecclesiastes, but this came to mind as we were studying, as I was studying this week, because Ecclesiastes chapter two, it actually tells us it's okay to enjoy what God has given you.

41:22

Ecclesiastes two, verse 24 and 25, says there is nothing better for a person than that he should eat and drink and find enjoyment in his toil. This also I saw was from the hand of God, for who apart from him can eat or who can have enjoyment.

41:39

See when God gives us something, it's good for us to say thank you and it's good for us to enjoy those things. But what Paul is warning us and Paul is trying to tell us is hey, be careful, because if you try to build that thing up, if you build your life around your riches, there may come a day when those riches fail you.

41:58

There may come a day where the certainty of I've planned well for the future, that something happens and something changes and all of a sudden that's not there. And if that is the foundation that you've built your life on, well then your life is gonna crumble around that terrible moment.

42:13

But if you place your hope in God, he's telling us that whatever it is that comes, whether good times come or good times go, whether you have much or whether you have little, rich or poor, right? All of those things God is still in control, so he's warning us to put our hope in God, not to put our hope in our money.

42:32

Next thing we see in verses 18 and 19 is, Paul actually starts to celebrate the opportunities that wealth can bring. And verse 18 and 19, he says that the wealthy are to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share, thus storing up treasure for themselves as a good foundation for the future, so that they may take hold of that which is truly life.

42:56

I love the way that when we read through these verses, I love the way that Paul plays with the words here, because he says, tell the rich to be rich. If you stop there, that's what he says, right? He plays with this a little bit.

43:09

He says, tell the rich to be rich in good works, to be rich in good deeds. But this phrase where he adds on just that little statement at the end, it completely reverses the idea of what people who are rich would consider riches to be, right?

43:25

Everyone wants to be rich, but are you rich in good deeds? Are you rich in good works? Paul's challenge is for the Christians to be overwhelmingly focused on what God wants for their lives, that they should live their lives with him in mind instead of living their lives with whatever it is that they want to go purchase or accumulate for themselves.

43:47

Their appetite, their desires is not the primary focus, but instead, they should use their opportunities to be rich in good works, to do what God would have them to do. We want to be rich in what he wants in our lives, not rich in what we want in our lives.

44:03

You know, one of the most counter-cultural ways for us to do that, for us to live life with God at the center of our lives instead of us at the center of our lives. One of the most counter-cultural ways to do that is through extravagant generosity.

44:17

I think a simple summary of what Paul's trying to communicate here is that God wants Christians to be good and God wants Christians to be generous with what they have. Now, I don't say all of that because God is some slimy salesman who's trying to convince you to drop off all your money here at the church and will give you some magic beans and you can leave here with hope for whatever these beans...

44:39

God's not just trying to trick you into dropping off all your money at the door. God doesn't come begging for money. In fact, if you know anything about God, you know that God is far wealthier than any human that has ever walked the face of the earth.

44:51

Psalms 50 comments that God owns the cattle on a thousand hillsides. And in fact, yeah, that would be a lot, right? If you were a rancher, imagine a thousand hills full of cows, you're probably gonna be doing okay for yourself.

45:04

But in fact, God not only owns the cows, he owns the hills themselves, right? God is far more capable of having whatever it is that he needs. If he is able to speak and the universe flew out into existence, I think if he needed something, you're not the person he would call to help provide it for him.

45:22

If he could just speak, you know, I'm hungry. I wonder if John will give me a sandwich. No, he's gonna say sandwich. And it's gonna show up, right? God doesn't need anything from us. But also God doesn't hoard his treasure.

45:38

God is not someone who keeps for himself. God gives generously to us. The reason that we're able to be so generous is because we serve and we follow a generous God. As Paul puts it here in our passage, verse 17, he says that the rich should put their hope in God who richly provides us with everything to enjoy.

45:59

You know, it's impossible for me to think about God's overwhelming generosity without thinking of his most extravagant gift of all. Because not only has God created the universe, not only has God given us all kinds of good gifts with family and a beautiful place to live and all the things that he provides for us, but most importantly, Second Corinthians chapter eight reminds us, it says, for you know that the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he, Jesus was rich, for your sake, he became poor.

46:28



So that you, by his poverty, might become rich. The most generous thing that God could do was in sacrificing, giving his one and only son to come and to live among us. That Jesus would come, would put on flesh, and would lay aside the glories of heaven.

46:45

God had everything that he could have possibly needed in heaven. Jesus, for eternity past, had existed in absolute glory with angels waiting on him at hand and foot. Everything that he could have possibly wanted, he had it all.

46:58

But Jesus laid aside the glories of heaven, came and put on flesh. That means that he got hungry for the first time when he came and lived as a man. That means that he had want, that he wasn't able to just be and do everything because he had limitations as a human man, even to the point of going and laying his life down.

47:20

That he was unjustly accused, that he was unjustly murdered so that he would pay a penalty that I deserved and that you deserve, he didn't deserve. Jesus gave generously to us. God has given extravagantly to us.

47:35

And if we understand just how blessed we are, generosity seems like a pretty reasonable response to me. I think that if we understood how blessed we truly are by God, it would impact, it would have a difference, it would make a change in our lives.

47:50

Because the way that we look at other circumstances, the way that we look at other people, if we have received much, we should give much. That's actually a direct quote from Jesus as well. Luke chapter seven was talking about, there was this woman who was a sinful woman and the world knew that she was a sinful woman.

48:09

And as Jesus comes into this house with the religious elite of the day, he's there and he's spending time with them and they're just sitting there judging him, mad at Jesus because there's this woman sitting at his feet, cleaning his feet and taking care of Jesus.

48:24

And if Jesus was a holy person like he says he is, if Jesus really was God, well, Jesus would know who this woman really was. Jesus wouldn't want her to have anything to do with him, and Jesus turns and dresses them and knows that those thoughts are going through their heads and he says in Luke 7:47, therefore I tell you, her sins which are many are forgiven for she loved much, but he who has forgiven a little loves a little.

48:53

I think there's a principle there for us to pause and slow down and reflect on for a minute because if you have been given much, if you've been given to generously, that means that we should give generously.

49:04

And that means that if you have been loved extravagantly, that means that we should love other people with the same extravagance. And we should give in the way that we have received. We should love in the way that we have been loved.

49:17

We should forgive in the way that we have been forgiven. When I look at somebody and I say, no, they don't deserve forgiveness. That's a dangerous place for me to be. It's a dangerous thing for me to say because you know who else didn't deserve forgiveness?

49:37

You could raise your hand too, right? Yeah, you didn't deserve forgiveness. We were described as enemies of God, but God being rich in mercy because the great love with which he loved us, God demonstrates his love for us.

49:56

Even though we were still sinners, even though we didn't deserve to be forgiven, Jesus Christ came and died for us. Those who have received much should give much. So we get to the opportunity of wealth.

50:10

We're talking about this opportunity. What is the opportunity that he's talking about here? Well, I think it's generosity, right? It's being able to be generous because Paul tells us to be rich in good works here in this passage, but the reality is that some deeds of mercy, some things that we would wanna do for someone else, sometimes they require money.

50:29

And so being able to have the opportunities of wealth, to be able to use your money to be a blessing to somebody else, well, that's an opportunity that some people don't have. Wealthy Christians can glorify God through the use of their money, because God calls all of his children to be generous and be ready to share, but those that have more are able to share more, right?

50:53

Instead of considering godliness as we saw earlier in 1 Timothy chapter six, just a couple of weeks ago, there were false teachers who considered godliness, considered religion as a means of gain. They said, I can get rich if I put on a good show, if I act a certain way, if I live my life a certain way, people will give me their resources.

51:15

And the false teachers viewed religion, viewed godliness as a means of gain, but I think what Paul is saying here is, and he's saying, Christian, you should view your gain as an opportunity to be godly.

51:30

Don't view godliness as a means of gain, view your means of gain as an opportunity for godliness. Stewarding our personal well, using what God has given to us and using it well, it's an important aspect of a rich Christian's calling.

51:45

It's an important aspect of what it means to be a believer and to say, God, everything that I have is yours, you have saved me, and whatever it is that I've got, I wanna follow you, you're the king in my life, you're the boss in my life, and that means that the way that I spend my time should be based on what God would have me to spend my time on.

52:05

That means the way that I live my life should be based on the way that God would have me to live my life. The way that I make decisions, I should make decisions the way that God would have me make decisions, but it also, everybody pucker up and get nervous for just a second, the way that I spend my money should also be the way that God would have me to spend my money.

52:29

One way for us to become more like Christ is to train ourselves to be generous in all the little sacrifices in life, because you don't get to being the person who's well trained and incredibly generous and just gives it all away.

52:42

You don't get to that point without first learning to just consider others as more important than yourself, like Philippians two says, you don't get to that point of extravagant generosity without first learning to consider others as more important than yourselves.

52:57

So we can start by being generous in the little sacrifices every day. Anybody ever drive through the parking lot looking for the closest possible spot so you don't have to walk any further than you have to, right? Well, what if you just parked further away so that somebody else could have that spot? What if you left that last piece of cake instead of

going... What if you let somebody else enjoy that thing? What if you did someone else's chores?

53:23

What if you shared your tools with the neighbor and didn't even get mad about it when he didn't bring them back right away? For the Christian, generosity is a way of life. It's not something that we do every once in a while.

53:36

Generosity is an overarching theme of the Christian's life. In fact, in the days of the early church, if we were to read through the book of Acts, you're gonna see some pretty radical generosity on exhibit because generosity, I believe it was generosity more than anything else that separated and made distinct the early church from the non-church people.

54:01

It separated the Christians from the non-Christians because Christians gave radically. They were generous to what I would describe as kind of extreme ends. I think many of us, I'm gonna read this verse in just a minute, I think many of us are gonna go, well, that's just crazy talk, right?

54:18

We live in a capitalist society. We live in a world where I work hard and I have what I have because I earned it. And you work hard and you have what you have because you earned it. Well, Christians in the book of Acts, they don't seem to have that attitude, right?

54:31

They cared for the poor in a way that was extravagant. So let me read Acts chapter four, verse 34. It talks about how the early church handled their resources and were generous. And it says in Acts four that there was not a needy person among them.

54:46

For as many as were owners of land or houses, they sold them and they brought the proceeds of what was sold. There was not a single person among their entire number who had need because there were those who were wealthy who said, I don't need to own all this land, I don't need to own the house, I'm gonna sell everything that I've got, I'm gonna come, I'm gonna put it in the pot, and everybody's gonna be taking care of.

55:10

That sounds pretty radical to me. That sounds like extreme generosity. The followers of Christ were the ones who fed the hungry in that day. There weren't the social net that would catch people if someone ended up down on their luck.

55:25

The Christians were the ones who took care of the needy. They fed the hungry, they cared for lepers, they rescued children who had been left to die. The Christians were the ones that were generous in that society.

55:37

In fact, by the second century, just a couple hundred years after Jesus came and walked, Tertullian, he was one of the early church fathers during that time, Tertullian was able to boast that Christians spent more on the poor that were living in the streets than the pagans spent at the temple.

55:55

That's pretty extreme, isn't it? In that culture, people would go and would give to the temple, they would go and essentially they were trying to buy the favor of the gods, right? Whatever god it was, they were going to sacrifice.

56:08

This god is gonna make my crops grow and this god is gonna make sure we have peace and this god... They would go and they would try to offer these bribes essentially to

these gods. What Tertullian is saying is that the Christians spent more in just giving it away to the poor to be generous with what they had.

56:27

Christians gave more to the poor in the streets than the pagans spent at the temple. The New Testament talks about generosity and it talks about how the early church viewed finances and it talks about it in a pretty extreme way.

56:41

New Testament though teaches that having money is not a sinful thing, but it is an immense responsibility. It is something that we have to give serious weight to how we handle our resources because if we just float through life and this and that and we'll just see how things go and if we allow it to feed our pride, it's gonna eat us.

57:08

But wealth is also an incredible opportunity, right? As John Calvin wisely once remarked, I love this quote, John Calvin said that a man's opportunities to do good to others increase with the abundance of his riches, that's the opportunity of wealth.

57:23

I think that's the opportunity that many of us in this room has. So as Christians who are very wealthy by the world standards, right? Anybody in this room make more than \$2,920 a year, right? Yeah, I dare say most of us should probably be raising our hand.

57:37

I think there's probably even a few that just have an allowance that might make more than that in the room. Right? We're relatively wealthy by the world standards. I want us to pause and imagine for a minute.

57:52

Imagine with me, dream with me for just a minute. What could our church do if we had the same attitude towards our resources as the early church? What would change in the world? If we viewed our resources, if we just lived and God heard it, yeah, I owned land and I owned a house but now I don't want that anymore.

58:14

God, I want my life to be the way that you would. I want my resources to be used the way that you would have. What kind of an impact could we make? How would the world look different if we were able to do something like that? Just a small church like us. Imagine what the church could accomplish in the world if we gave away our wealth with the same generosity that Jesus gave away his life, gave away his rights, gave away what was rightly his.

58:48

I think we could be easily classified. We could be easily described as Paul does here, offers this command in 1 Timothy. I think it would be easy for us to be seen as generous and rich in good works, right?

59:01

I dare argue we could change the world. But we certainly would be considered generous and rich in good works. Paul offers this warning about wealth and he talks about the opportunities that wealth brings but I want to finish with an invitation to use our wealth because I think Paul closes his final word here, this little note that he puts at the end of the letter.

59:26

He closes with a final word to the rich with this dazzling incentive because he's telling us why we should be generous. Because you look at verse 19 and it lays it out pretty clearly. Verse 18, he says that we are to do good to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share and then he continues on with the why in verse 19.

59:49



He says, storing up treasure for themselves as a good foundation for the future so that they may take hold of that which is truly life. This verse is introducing a reality of the strange economy of eternity because if God's economy is different than ours, if this world is not our home, if these resources, we just talked about a couple of weeks ago, right?

01:00:14

You don't get anything when you come in and you don't take anything with you when you leave. We come into this world naked and penniless and we leave this world naked and penniless. You can't take it with you. So I think what Paul's arguing here is that storing up earthly treasure that our focus being so clearly set on money and what I want and what I need and what I deserve, storing up earthly treasure is a bad investment.

01:00:42

According to the Bible, I think Paul's kind of implying, making the argument here that there are two different kinds of wealth when we look at this because in verse 17 he says, as for the rich in this age, that seems to imply that there's a riches that lives outside of this world, lives outside of this age in time.

01:01:04

This phrase suggests that there's a coming age, that being rich now and being rich then are actually two entirely different matters. We're earthly treasures concerned. We can enjoy it for a little while, but you can't take it with you.

01:01:19

But if we're talking about spiritual riches, you can actually send it on ahead. You can actually use what you have in this life. You can use it to store up treasures in the life to come. This amassing of treasure in heaven by generously giving it, it's actually, it's not just an idea that Paul came up with.

01:01:42

It's consistent with what Jesus taught as well. Jesus explicitly said these words, right? Just interesting little factoid to point out. In first Timothy 6:19, Paul's talking about storing up treasure for themselves in heaven.

01:01:59

If we were to flip back to Matthew 6:19, I don't know if that's... just jumped out at me. Anyways, Matthew 6:19-20, Jesus is speaking in his famous sermon on the mountain. He says, do not lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven.

01:02:17

Do not lay up for yourselves, excuse me, start over, ignore what I just said. Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal. But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven where neither moth nor rust destroy and where thieves do not break in and steal.

01:02:36

Jesus is telling us, no, no, no, this world stuff falls apart, stuff breaks, your clothes that you spent so much on, they're going to have a hole in them one day. They're going to fall apart, they're going to get stained, they're going to ultimately have a problem, whatever it is.

01:02:51

That car that you loved and treasured and valued, I know some of you guys can fix them, I can't. If it breaks down, you know, leave the keys in it on the side of the road somewhere, I'm done, right? Stuff breaks down, stuff falls apart.

01:03:06

Our stuff in this life, there's a limit. There's a limit on its usefulness, there's a limit on what it can ultimately do for us. Jesus is saying, store up for yourselves treasures in heaven. I want you to know that there's no way for you to buy yourself into heaven, there's no dollar amount that God says, if you give a million, you're in, right?

01:03:31

There is no get out of jail free card that you can buy. The go back in church history, there's some people in selling indulgences and things, they thought that for a little while, there's a problem with that, we can have all kinds of conversations about that.

01:03:44

But you can't buy your way into heaven, right? Eternal life is a free gift made available that if we would receive it, that if we accept the gift that God is offering, we are made alive. It's a free gift, you don't have to pay anything.

01:04:02

But anyone who understands what God has done for them, anyone who is generous out of the gratitude that they kind of rightfully should have, that the outlook that they should have, knowing how much God has given to them, if we're generous out of that gratitude, what Paul's saying here is that we already begin to enter into the joy of eternal life, even before eternal life has really begun.

01:04:26

The life to come hasn't even started yet, but we get to live in the joy of that abundant life. We get to live in the joy of eternal life even now by using the resources that we have to save up for treasures tomorrow.

01:04:43

I don't want to suggest anything nefarious, but if you somehow, hypothetically, had some insider information, right? If you knew that there was an investment, a stock, something that you could purchase and it was going to blow up this year, next year, whenever it was, you know absolutely without a shadow of a doubt, this stock, I'm going to buy it with pennies and it's going to turn into millions, right?

01:05:06

If you could go back 30 years ago, 40 years ago and buy Apple stock. you would probably, right? Take everything that you have and put it all in. We would liquidate it all and put it into this thing that we know is going to bring an incredible yield.

01:05:22

In fact, I daresay that you would be a fool if you didn't take everything that you have and throw it into that investment. Because a wise investor is happy to part with capital if he knows that it's going to bring a good return.

01:05:35

If I let this go, it's going to bring me back more in the future. That's just basic investing, right? That's just good, wise financial sense. I think looking at this passage, the only logical path forward for a Christian, we look at the resources that we have in this life and essentially what we're doing in giving generously is we're taking the monopoly money of this life.

01:06:00

There really doesn't have any ultimate value, right? It's just paper. We can enjoy it for a little while, but you can't take it with you. What good is it in this life? If we give generously, we're essentially trading the monopoly money of this life for true, eternal, heavenly riches.

01:06:19

That's taking Paul's advice here when he says to be generous and to be ready to share, to store up for yourselves treasures, a good foundation for the future. What Paul's saying here is by being generous, by being rich in good works, that's the better option than just being rich in United States currency, than just being rich in the stuff of this world.

01:06:42

And so I say all of that and I just want to share with you guys briefly just something that God has been kind of poking me in the ribs with over the last month or two. Something that you... you ever have that that God's just going, excuse me, listen up, right?

01:06:57

Well, I want to share with you guys something that God's been poking me with a little bit lately because a few weeks ago I had a weekend off. Pastor Dave, I think, was preaching that weekend and so I had a weekend off.

01:07:09

I got to just go to church somewhere else. It was something that I got to enjoy just going and sitting in a chair. I wasn't Pastor Drew. I wasn't anything. I was just the bald guy sitting in the third row, right?

01:07:18

So I went and took my family. We got to go to another church and just sit in the crowd and they, you know, we were sitting there. We were worshiping and listening to the message and all those things.

01:07:28

And they did something that struck me and it's been just kind of bouncing around in my head, just mulling in my gut over the past month or two. Because they did something that we don't do in our worship service.

01:07:40

They took time and the pastor came up at the end of worship and he shared about how we give generously. We acknowledge that whatever it is that we have, we give back to God and that's an act of worship in the same way that's singing about the greatness of God as an act of worship.

01:07:55

In the same way that studying the Word of God and considering what God has to say to us and changing our lives, changing our actions is an act of worship. When the same way, he said, giving of our financial resources is an act of worship.

01:08:10

The Bible is very clear that we give generously and so they took time and they prayed in the middle of their service and they passed the basket, right? They passed the bucket around and people gave generously of their offerings as they just took a couple of minutes and paused in the middle of the busy service to acknowledge what God had given them, to be thankful for what God had given them and to worshipfully give back.

01:08:35

I know it's been years since this church has passed an offering basket, right? We made that decision years ago that we were going to do away with that. But that time in that worship service a few weeks ago, it struck me and it's stuck with me to the point where I came back a few weeks later and I asked our elders, hey, why did we do away with that?

01:08:54

Right? That change happened before I got here. But, you know, that time in that worship service was profoundly meaningful to me. I didn't even drop anything in their bucket, right? I give in other ways.

01:09:05

I do my thing, but it was profoundly meaningful just to take a couple of minutes and to pause and to reflect on, no, we give back to God because God deserves everything that we've got to give. This isn't me railing on automated donations, right?

01:09:22

Give online, that's great for you. You want to give in the box in the back? If you want to drop your money into a basket, whatever it is, that's fine. But giving is an act of worship. Giving is something that we should slow down.

01:09:36

It's not just a bill that gets paid that we push it out of our mind and giving is an act of worship. Generosity is an act of worship. It's a way of saying in our own hearts and saying publicly what God wants for my life is more important than the things that I want in my pantry.

01:09:53

It's more important than the things that I want in my closet. It's more important than the things that I want in my garage or my driveway. There's something meaningful about acknowledging God's work in our lives and reflecting on the choice to give back to Him.

01:10:08

So it caused me to pause and to consider my giving and how I'm trusting God when I had those couple of minutes in service. So a few weeks ago I brought it up to the elders. I said, guys, can we do that?

01:10:21

We allowed to do that? Are we good with that? What was the reason? Why'd we do away with that? So long story short, we're going to start passing the basket again in church in a few weeks. So in a couple of weeks when we change the worship schedule around, everything else is changing, right?

01:10:37

We're going to add that little couple of minutes into our worship service because I think it's going to allow us to pause and to reflect on what it is that God has done in our lives. Just a couple of reminders for you. If the person next to you doesn't stick anything in, don't judge them. They probably gave online, right? It's okay. But we do want to just build in that little, there's moments where it's good for us to pause.

01:11:04

There's moments where, you know, even reading through the Psalms, right? There's that word that shows up over and over and over again. Sela, stop, think, reflect on what's going on here. We want to build in one of those pause moments in our worship services.

01:11:21

And my prayer, my hope, our hope in making this decision is that God would use that pause in our week to allow us to worship, would allow us to reflect on all the goodness, all the things that He's blessed us with in our lives, allow us to acknowledge that everything that we have belongs to Him as we thankfully give a portion back to Him, as stewards of what He has given us.

01:11:44

We just manage. It's not ours. God can take and God can give whenever He wants, but we are stewards, managers of what God has given us. And so, an acknowledgement of that, we give back to Him in a way that says, this world is not my home and God, I trust you.

01:12:04

I think the important principle that Paul's trying to communicate to us here that he would challenge us with this week is that we should be generous, that we should be rich in good works. And sometimes being rich in good works means using some of the resources that God has given us to be generous in some other way.

01:12:23

So I've got a challenge, an application. We always get to the end of the message, right? There's always something that we go, hey, here's your challenge for you to consider this week. How would God have you respond to this?

01:12:33

So I want to close with a simple challenge this week, right? It doesn't include writing a check. It doesn't include signing over your 401k at the back. There are no lawyers. There is no transaction that we're going to sit here and lock the doors until you give it all, right?

01:12:48



What I did, though, this week is I stopped and I picked up 50 copies of a little tiny book. I stuck the picture in here. You may have seen them when you came in. Because there's a little book called Why Should I Give to My Church by a guy named Jamie Dunlop.

01:13:02

I think when we read this book, I just read it this week. Actually, some of the things that I shared this week were from that little booklet. It's only about 50 pages. It's a tiny little book. I think I read it in about half hour or 45 minutes.

01:13:14

But what it does in that book is it makes a case for biblical generosity in the same vein that Paul is making the argument here in this week's passage. So, my challenge is not to write a check. My challenge is not sign over this resource or that resource.

01:13:30

What I am asking you to do is would you grab one of those booklets on the way out this morning? And if you grab one of those booklets, you take it, would you take the time to read it? Right? Because there's a few little spots in there that it asks you to interact with it a little bit.

01:13:48

Hey, why do we give? And asks you to kind of answer those questions. And then he kind of explains biblically why we give. Right? So if you take one of those little booklets, I'd encourage you to take one.

01:14:00

And if you do, would you commit to reading through it and praying through it? Because I think it's good for us to pause and to take just a moment and reflect on, God, am I handling my resources the way that you want me to?

01:14:13

And if your answer in that is yes, good, and thank you, and God is blessed by your generosity. People around you are blessed by your generosity. But as you read through that book, I'd want to ask you to reevaluate your generosity, to reevaluate how you handle the riches that have been made available to you in this life.

01:14:35

I think there's some people who would hear a message like this and would just say, you anybody that's ever watched a preacher on TV, God will bless you if you write me a check for \$1,000. We've all seen those things.

01:14:51

We go, uh, that's not right. I think that's more of what Paul was talking about earlier in this chapter, those who would use godliness as a means of gain. but God is very clear, he talks about money a lot. And there's a reason why he talks about money a lot. Why does God care about my giving? The answer is not because he needs your money. Because God's got plenty. God's got more resources available to him than you would ever be able to provide.

01:15:22

God doesn't need your money. It is abundantly clear, if you read the scriptures, God doesn't need your money. But what is also abundantly clear is that our hearts and our money are intimately tied together.

01:15:35

Confession, I totally stole this out of that little booklet that you're gonna pick up, but that little booklet right there, he makes a connection, he pointed this out. He said, if you buy stock in Nike, all of a sudden you're gonna start watching the stock market, you're gonna care how Nike is doing as a company, right?

01:15:51

If you buy stock in something, if your money is tied to that company, you're gonna care how that company is doing. Our hearts and our money are intimately tied together. If you

give and live as such that most of your treasure is waiting for you in heaven, well, Jesus is saying is that that's where your heart is gonna be as well.

01:16:14

Where your heart is, that's where your treasure is. Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. God doesn't need your money, but he does want your hearts. And giving generously, letting go of some of the things that God has placed into our hands.

01:16:28

God wants you to give because he wants your hearts. And your heart and your money, like it or not, are intimately tied together. So our prayer team is gonna be down here at the end of the service. They would love to pray with you about anything you've got going on.

01:16:42

Our prayer wall is gonna be out in the back hallway. If you go out the doors and turn right, we've got a big prayer wall there where you can write your prayer request down and drop them in the box or stick them in the wall there as well.

01:16:53

Our prayer team would love to be praying for you, whatever it is that you've got going on this week. But with that, I wanna invite you guys, would you pray with me now? God, we thank you for your word.

01:17:03

We thank you for, God, we thank you for encouragement on those weeks when we come to church and we leave here excited and skipping out. And God, we thank you for the weeks where we come in and it feels like sometimes our toes get smushed. And you touch in a space where maybe we maybe we need to reconsider our obedience. Maybe we need to consider how you would have us to act differently based on the truth that is revealed in your word.

01:17:37

So God, as we gather together, I'm thankful for this church. I'm thankful for the encouragement and the privilege that it is to worship together and to sing together and to study together, to eat a donut together, all these things, God.

01:17:52

But God, we're also thankful that, God, that when we come together, that your word is able to speak. God, that we collectively are people of your book. God, that we wanna humble our opinions, that we wanna lay our thoughts and our expectations and what we think, that we wanna lay those things aside.

01:18:12

And God, we want to, God, we want our lives to be what you want. We want our words to be what you would have us say. We want our ways that we spend our time to be the ways that you would have us spend our time.

01:18:26

And God, we want the way that we spend our resources to be the way that you would have us spend our resources. God, help us to be generous and to be rich in good works. Help us to look for opportunities to view the world the way that you would have us view the world.

01:18:41

To give generously, to look for opportunities, to love mercy and to love people. God, we pray that you would help us to, God, pry our fingers apart a little bit as we hold with clenched fists the resources that we worked hard and we earned.

01:18:59

If we didn't, we may have worked hard, but we didn't earn anything that you didn't provide. God, help us to hold with open hands, to give generously, to love extravagantly. God, help us to trust you and to be obedient to what it is that you would have for us because by doing so, we're storing up for ourselves treasures in heaven.

01:19:21

By doing so, we are reflecting the incredible, immense worth that you have in our lives. God, we want to give generously because you have given generously to us. We want to love other people and forgive other people generously because you have loved and forgiven us generously.

01:19:39

God, help us to reflect the things that we say we believe. God, help us to live them out. God, we love you. Thank you for Jesus. It's in his name we pray, amen.