

Additional Words About Wealth

1 Timothy 6:17-19

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Earthly wealth is not evil when proper attitudes toward it and usage of it is maintained.

I. Timothy is to strongly warn the wealthy in his congregation:

A. Earthly riches often lead to an improper sense of superiority. (v. 17a)

For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the faith God has distributed to each of you. (Romans 12:3)

The rich are wise in their own eyes... (Proverbs 28:11a)

But remember the LORD your God, for it is he who gives you the ability to produce wealth, and so confirms his covenant, which he swore to your ancestors, as it is today. (Deuteronomy 8:18)

Wealth and honor come from you;

you are the ruler of all things.

In your hands are strength and power

to exalt and give strength to all. (1 Chronicles 29:12)

Now listen, you who say, “Today or tomorrow we will go to this or that city, spend a year there, carry on business and make money.” Why, you do not even know what will happen tomorrow. What is your life? You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes. Instead, you ought to say, “If it is the Lord’s will, we will live and do this or that.” As it is, you boast in your arrogant schemes. All such boasting is evil. (James 4:13-16)

B. Earthly riches often lead to misplaced trust. (v. 17b)

Those who trust in their riches will fall... (Proverbs 11:28a)

Then he said to them, “Watch out! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; life does not consist in an abundance of possessions.”

And he told them this parable: “The ground of a certain rich man yielded an abundant harvest. He thought to himself, ‘What shall I do? I have no place to store my crops.’”

“Then he said, ‘This is what I’ll do. I will tear down my barns and build bigger ones, and there I will store my surplus grain. And I’ll say to myself, “You have plenty of grain laid up for many years. Take life easy; eat, drink and be merry.”’”

“But God said to him, ‘You fool! This very night your life will be demanded from you. Then who will get what you have prepared for yourself?’”

“This is how it will be with whoever stores up things for themselves but is not rich toward God.” (Luke 12:15-21)

God gives some people wealth, possessions and honor, so that they lack nothing their hearts desire, but God does not grant them the ability to enjoy them, and strangers enjoy them instead. (Ecclesiastes 6:2)

Do not wear yourself out to get rich;
do not trust your own cleverness.
Cast but a glance at riches, and they are gone,
for they will surely sprout wings
and fly off to the sky like an eagle. (Proverbs 23:4-5)

C. Instead, trust in our kind and benevolent God. (v. 17c)

I have no need of a bull from your stall
or of goats from your pens,
for every animal of the forest is mine,
and the cattle on a thousand hills.
I know every bird in the mountains,
and the insects in the fields are mine.
If I were hungry I would not tell you,
for the world is mine, and all that is in it. (Psalm 50:9-12)

This is what I have observed to be good: that it is appropriate for a person to eat, to drink and to find satisfaction in their toilsome labor under the sun during the few days of life God has given them—for this is their lot. Moreover, when God gives someone wealth and possessions, and the ability to enjoy them, to accept their lot and be happy in their toil—this is a gift of God. They seldom reflect on the days of their life, because God keeps them occupied with gladness of heart. (Ecclesiastes 5:18-20)

Whoever dwells in the shelter of the Most High
will rest in the shadow of the Almighty.
I will say of the LORD, “He is my refuge and my fortress,
my God, in whom I trust.” (Psalm 91:1-2)

D. ...to generally be good as God is. (v. 18a)

“...yet he did not leave himself without a witness by doing good, by giving you rain from heaven and fruitful seasons, satisfying you with food and your hearts with joy.” (Acts 14:17 NET)

E. ...to have an abundance of good works. (v. 18b)

F. And to be liberal in assisting those in the fellowship. (v. 18c)

Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers. (Galatians 6:10)

And now, brothers and sisters, we want you to know about the grace that God has given the Macedonian churches. In the midst of a very severe trial, their overflowing joy and their extreme poverty welled up in rich generosity. For I testify that they gave as much as they were able, and even beyond their ability. Entirely on their own, they urgently pleaded with us for the privilege of sharing in this service to the Lord's people. And they exceeded our expectations: They gave themselves first of all to the Lord, and then by the will of God also to us. So we urged Titus, just as he had earlier made a beginning, to bring also to completion this act of grace on your part. But since you excel in everything—in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in complete earnestness and in the love we have kindled in you—see that you also excel in this grace of giving. (2 Corinthians 8:1-7)

II. Those who live to please God and bless people have great assurance of their rewards in the next life. (v. 19)

“Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moths and vermin destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moths and vermin do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. (Matthew 6:19-21)

Sell your possessions and give to the poor. Provide purses for yourselves that will not wear out, a treasure in heaven that will never fail, where no thief comes near and no moth destroys. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. (Luke 12:33-34)

What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if someone claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such faith save them? Suppose a brother or a sister is without clothes and daily food. If one of you says to them, “Go in peace; keep warm and well fed,” but does nothing about their physical needs, what good is it? In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead. (James 2:14-17)