
Thursday, June 8, 2023 • Read 1 Timothy 6:17–19

Questions from the Scripture text: What does the apostle tell Timothy to do to the rich (v17)? When/in what are they rich? What is he to command them not to be? In what is he to command them not to trust? In Whom are they to trust instead? How does God give? What things does He give richly? Unto what purpose does He do this giving? So, what are the rich to do (v18)? In what are they to be rich? For what are they to be ready? To do what are they to be willing? What do they store up for themselves (v19)? For what are they storing up this foundation? In order to lay hold on what?

What special dangers threaten believers who are rich in this present age? 1Timothy 6:17–19 helps us prepare for the sermon in morning public worship on the coming Lord’s Day. In these three verses of Holy Scripture, the Holy Spirit teaches us that **pride, false security, ingratitude, and complacency threaten believers who are rich in this present age.**

This passage is something of an intrusion between v16 and v20. The apostle was giving final instructions to Timothy for himself, but he has just gushed about the glory of Christ in vv14b–16, which leads to one more instruction concerning those who think they have riches enough already before that appearing.

The apostle warns against uncertain riches. Being rich in this present age threatens to infect our thinking. It endangers us of falling into a mindset that our wealth has lifted us up (“haughty,” v17a) to a place where we are not needy, as if our daily bread isn’t something to be prayed for. And if we do not see our need in material things, which touch us so perceptibly, then this haughtiness is sure to infect us in spiritual things as well. The one who does not feel the truth of “give us this day our daily bread” will become callused against feeling the neediness of “forgive us our debts” and the neediness of “lead us not into temptation.”

And so the apostle urges Timothy to always be reminding the wealthy that riches are “uncertain” (v17b). They sprout wings and fly away (cf. Pr 23:5). Having worldly wealth (cf. Deut 8:12–13) threatens the haughty heart of Deut 8:14a, which deludedly feels as if “my power and the might of my hand have gained me this wealth” (cf. Deut 8:17). It is necessary for us continually to remember that riches in this present age are “uncertain riches”!

The apostle praises the richness of riches. We might think that a good way of guarding our hearts against self-exalted thinking about riches or false security in riches would be to resist riches and their richness. But this is not what the apostle does. Rather, he praises the richness of riches in light of Who gives them and His design for them.

It is “the living God Who gives richly to us” (v17c). If we treat those riches as undesirable, then we will mistreat His goodness and generosity in having given them to us. Praising poverty ignores God as if He is not alive and involved in our lives. Praising poverty is ingratitude to God for the goodness of His involvement in our lives.

“all thing to enjoy” encourages us not just to count earthly riches as good to possess but also pleasurable to be enjoyed. Remember the false spirituality that the Spirit warned us against in 4:1–5. A believer should see the good things that he has in the way that the Word and prayer (4:5) teach us to see them. Now, the wholesome words of the Lord Jesus (6:3) remind us that God gives richly all things *to enjoy them* (v17d). And prayer reminds us to look to God for every good thing *as good things*.

The *richness* of riches is not bad. When consecrated/sanctified to us by the Word of God and prayer, that very richness points us to our heavenly Father’s kindness, goodness, and wisdom. This dynamic enables us to enjoy richly the portion His love and wisdom assign to us if that portion is small, because it is from Him. And if our portion is large, its richness out to remind us to have our enjoyment in Him and His love and His wisdom, rather than in the size of the portion. He is the One Who designed that richness in the first place! This is the key to proper contentedness, no matter what our circumstances happen to be (cf. Phil 4:11–13).

The apostle directs us to richer riches. “Rich in good works” (v18a) is a better sort of riches than to be “rich in this present age.” Firstly, these are riches that are readily available, regardless of your earthly affluence. One may always do good. But the wealthy Christian has more options of good things that he can do for more people. The “riches” are riches of the heart: *readiness* to give and *willingness* to share (v18b). Having earthly things enables him to cultivate that readiness and that willingness by having more opportunity for concrete expression.

The richest riches, however, are those of eternity. Good works are not only evidence of a renewed heart; they are prerequisites to the enjoyment of God Himself in glory (cf. Heb 12:10–14; 1Jn 3:1–3). Knowing that we must be made glorious in heart before we can come into glory itself, every step forward in holiness constructs another portion of the foundation that grace is building for us, unto that perfect blessedness that we will have in the time to come (v19a).

Good works literally lay hold on eternal life (v19b); they continue laying hold of that for which Christ has laid hold of us (cf. Phil 3:12–15). Our earthly riches are likely to vanish, even in this life, and certain to vanish when this life is over. Whenever I have them, let me not rest on that which is behind, but pressing forward to what is ahead, let me employ earthly riches in good works as I press on to lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me!

Thus, good works are that richer counterpart to bodily exercise: a chance to exercise ourselves toward that godliness that profits for both this life (readiness/willingness riches of the heart) and the life to come (foundation-laying riches that lay hold of eternal life).

What place do looking to God and thanking God have in your enjoyment of daily food, daily clothing, daily shelter? As you have enjoyed the richness of earthly goods, what evidence is there to you that you have been largely mindful of Him Who made them rich for you rather than merely indulging your heart in the richness of what He made? How central has “laying hold of eternal life” been in the way that you live, and what you decide to do with what you have?

Sample prayer: Lord, we thank You for the great generosity that You have shown us in the riches of this present age. Forgive us for how we have had our hearts lifted up by those riches and trusted them instead of trusting You. Often, we have even indulged our hearts in the richness of Your gifts, rather than using the richness of the gift to enjoy You Yourself from our hearts. At other times, we have failed to see how richly You have blessed us, and we have been guilty of gross ingratitude, failing to live a life of thankfulness. You have laid hold of us to give us eternal life, but we rarely think about laying hold of that eternal life by the holiness of readiness and willingness to give and to share. Forgive us, we pray, and grow us in that holiness that we must have in order to see the Lord—in Whose Name we ask it, AMEN!

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(The following is a machine-generated transcription. PLEASE BE AWARE of—and patient with—transcribing errors. If there is something confusing or obviously erroneous, you are invited to listen to the audio recording via hopewellarp.org)

First, Timothy 6 verses 17 through 19. These are God's words. Command those who are rich in this present age, not to be haughty. Georgia trust and uncertain riches. But in the living, god, Who gives richly all things to enjoy? Let them do good that they may be rich in, good works.

Ready to give willing to share. Storing up for themselves, a good foundation for the time to come. That they may not hold. Only eternal life. So, for the reading of gods inspired and Centered. The apostle here warns us. That that which we praise. Uh, we will trust And that which we trust in.

We will get its fruit. And so he says, Command those who are rich in this present age, not to be haughty, do not Be full of or proud of your riches or yourself. Hi, as the As if you give yourself the riches, you remember. The lorden Deuteronomy 6. Telling his people that to you, is going to give them wells that they didn't dig vineyards and trees they didn't plant and houses.

Um, they didn't build. And so forth. Uh but then he warns them that when you have all these things don't say, Um, My might and the power of my hand has given me this. Such as the foolishness of the haughtiness of man, when he has things. The problem is, if we are proud in ourselves rather than giving credit to God, Being humbled by gratitude.

Then we will trust in ourselves, and the richest. Instead of the living god and so The binary option in verse 17. You either trust in the riches or your trust in the living. God, if you trust in the living god, Then you trust. In the right one because first of all, he's the one who gave richly whatever you enjoy.

But you also trust in the right one looking forward, because Is the one from him. All true and good riches come. Those who trust in him, those who are Grateful. Love him and love others. Verse 18. And so, instead of being full of themselves or follow their money, Glad that god has given them the opportunity.

To do good works. Given them the opportunity to give given them the opportunity. To share. And that if we praise God, and if we thank god, And if we trust God, Then we praise and thank and trust, the one who gives us the true true riches. His very own self forever and ever.

And so, This resting in god. Uh, through christ. Receiving jesus and seeing that, everything else. As a gift that comes together with jesus. As a storing up. For ourselves a good foundation. For the time to come because laying hold of god in christ. Is till i hold of eternal life.

And if we lay hold of ourselves and our riches, In this world instead. Then we will not have. Grasp on. Are resting in our braising of god. When the eternal life that is in him, From him. Let's pray. Her father, we ask for the help of your spirit. We ask Not only that.

This portion of your word, Would be written upon our hearts. But that you'd give us insight to our own minds. Our own thoughts, our own affections That your spirit would reveal to us. If we are proud of ourselves, Or haughty. In our earthly. Riches. So, that we may then be humbled before you buy your word.

And let your spirit would stir up in us. Praise for Um, christ. Praise to you for him. Thanks to you. Thanks to him. That would Fuel more, trust. Well, trust in which we lay hold of eternal life. By laying hold. Of you and him, we ask in his name.

Amen.