

**Title:** The Rich in this Present Age

**Scripture:** 1 Timothy 6:17-19

**Series:** The Pastoral Epistles

1. Introduction –

- a. Beloved, we have already learned that how believers handle earthly treasures is a measure of their spiritual maturity and devotion to Christ. We are taught in the scriptures that all believers are stewards, given the responsibility to protect and manage what the Lord has given them.
- b. Paul had already discussed the issue of earthly treasures as it relates to false teachers. He pointed out the horrifying effects of loving money and pursuing ministry.
  - i. These false teacher destroyed lives.
- c. Here, he is not talking about the false teachers that desire to be rich and therefore pervert the Gospel. Here he is talking to wealthy Christians.
  - i. **A Point of Understanding:** Paul does not condemn those whom God has enriched with material wealth, but does call upon them to exercise a proper stewardship of their God-given resources. It is not a sin to be rich but it is a sin to love riches and fail to be good stewards of God's possessions.
    1. There are two questions before us today.
      - a. How should a wealthy Christian handle money?
      - b. Who can be considered a wealthy Christian?

- d. **Let us answer this last question first:** The rich are not just those with the most expensive homes and lifestyles. This is how we define wealth in our own opulent culture. However, biblically speaking, the rich are those that have more than the mere essentials of food, clothing, and shelter. In other words, anyone that has more than the essentials is a wealthy believer.
- i. In today's terminology, the Bible defines wealth as having discretionary dollars. Most of us fall into this category.
  - ii. Each one of you is a wealthy believer; biblically speaking.
    1. I know that we do not consider ourselves as wealthy. The world's definition of wealth and the biblical definition of wealth are so at odds. Let us, however, consider the state of some of our Brothers and Sisters around the world.
  - iii. **1 Timothy 6:7-9** for we brought nothing into the world, and we cannot take anything out of the world. (8) But if we have food and clothing, with these we will be content. (9) But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation, into a snare, into many senseless and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction.
  - iv. Our Lord Jesus taught us to pray for the necessities of life. We read in **Matthew 6:11** Give us this day our daily bread,

2. Verse 17: The Rich in this Present Age: 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.

a. **As for the rich in this present age:**

i. A true believer is a rich individual in the fullest sense of the word. The believer is rich in terms of the age to come; at the glorious return of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

1. With this in mind, a believer is warned that earthly riches are a temporal and fleeting thing.

a. **Present age:** earthly wealth is meant by this phrase and not spiritual riches

2. The believer is continuously called to remember that heavenly treasure is perfect and supersedes any treasure that can be accumulated in this world.

a. **Matthew 6:19-21** “Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal, (20) but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. (21) For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

b. Warning #1...**charge them not to be haughty:**

i. The word **Haughty** in the **Greek** means to have an exalted opinion of oneself. It is to be conceited.

1. We tend to look down at others that are in a lower socioeconomic position. They

become mere servants and not people that need Jesus Christ. This is part of the sinful nature of man.

2. Here the rich are warned not to put on air of superiority. The rich are to realize that material wealth is temporary and therefore must be used to advance the kingdom of God in order to secure eternal riches.

3. Instead of conceit, the man of God is to be humble. It is hard to be humble when we are rich. We lose our desire to depend on God. We must remember what becomes of those that are not humble.

a. **James 4:6(B)** ...“God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.”

c. Warning #2...The rich are not **to set their hopes on the uncertainty of riches:**

i. It is easy for man to depend on riches instead of the God of providence. Let us look at the foolishness of trusting riches:

1. **Luke 12:16-21** And he told them a parable, saying, “The land of a rich man produced plentifully, (17) and he thought to himself, ‘What shall I do, for I have nowhere to store my crops?’ (18) And he said, ‘I will do this: I will tear down my barns and build larger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. (19) And I will say to my soul, “Soul, you have ample goods laid up for many years; relax, eat, drink, be merry.”’ (20) But God said to him, ‘Fool!

This night your soul is required of you, and the things you have prepared, whose will they be?’ (21) So is the one who lays up treasure for himself and is not rich toward God.”

- d. We are to have an Attitude that Combats our Propensity to Love Money: Christians are to set their hopes...**on God, who richly provides us with everything to enjoy**
- i. We are to remember that everything belongs to the Lord and nothing belongs to us.
    1. **Psalms 50:10-12** For every beast of the forest is mine, the cattle on a thousand hills. (11) I know all the birds of the hills, and all that moves in the field is mine. (12) “If I were hungry, I would not tell you, for the world and its fullness are mine...
  - ii. We are to depend on **God** and know that it is **He who has richly provided us with all things to enjoy**. Because wealth is fleeting, we are to find our joy, dependence, and fulfillment in God. This is what it means to be truly at peace. The person that so depends on God is content no matter what circumstances he finds himself.
    1. **Philippians 4:12-13** I know how to be brought low, and I know how to abound. In any and every circumstance, I have learned the secret of facing plenty and hunger, abundance and need. (13) I can do all things through him who strengthens me.
    2. Could you say the same?

iii. We are to depend on Him and seek him above all things.

1. **Matthew 6:33-34** But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you. (34) “Therefore do not be anxious about tomorrow, for tomorrow will be anxious for itself. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble.

3. Verse 18: Combating our Propensity to Love Money:

They are to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share,

a. Do you see the difference between this type of person and the man mentioned in our parable earlier? That man was a hoarder without care for his fellow man. This is the attitude towards wealth that is the norm in our fallen world. This cannot be our attitude.

b. In order to cultivate a right attitude and manage our Lord’s resources well, we are to do heed the following instruction:

i. **We are to do good:** The wealthy are to use their money and lives to genuinely do good and noble things.

ii. **We are to be rich in good works:** As we do these good works, we are to understand that this is true wealth. Serving God by appropriately using his resources enriches us in the eternal state. We are not losing but gaining.

iii. **We are to be generous:** The good works are to be generous and not minimalistic. These good

works come from a heart that understands the generosity of God toward us.

1. God...who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places.”
  2. God...who makes our cup to run over in blessing
  3. God...who gave us His son while we were still sinners.
  4. Our God is a generous God and therefore His people must be a generous people.
- iv. **We are to be ready to share:** We are to have the attitude that looks out for the needs of the family of God and His church. We are to on the lookout and ready to step in and help our family in God. We are to be ready to invest in the salvation of souls.
- c. In other words, we are to meet the needs of others. Here again we see the 2<sup>nd</sup> of the greatest of all commands.
4. Verse 19: Valuing Heavenly Treasure: 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.
- a. Paul urges the rich to consider the result of properly handling treasure. By sharing their earthly treasures with others, they are **storing up treasure for themselves as a good foundation for the future**.
    - i. The **Greek** word for storing means to amass. We are to amass spiritual treasure and not earthly treasure.

- ii. The rich believers are not to be concerned with getting a return on their investment in this life. They patiently wait for the day of eternal reward.
- iii. Those who lay up treasure in heaven will be content to wait to receive their reward in the **future** when they reach heaven.

- 1. In order to do this, the Christian must believe that there is a day coming in which he will receive that reward. That day must be real to the Christian and must be at the forefront of all that he does.

- b. Those who invest in eternity show that they have taken **hold of that which is truly life.**

- i. Christians should invest their money in the souls of humanity; in the preaching of the evangel.
  - ii. **Luke 16:9-11** And I tell you, make friends for yourselves by means of unrighteous wealth, so that when it fails they may receive you into the eternal dwellings. (10) “One who is faithful in a very little is also faithful in much, and one who is dishonest in a very little is also dishonest in much. (11) If then you have not been faithful in the unrighteous wealth, who will entrust to you the true riches?

5. Beloved, most of you are rich in this present age. How are you handling God’s wealth?

6. Benediction:

- a. **Matthew 6:19-20** “Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and



where thieves break in and steal, (20) but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal.

**Public Reading of Scripture**  
**Luke 16:1-13**