

# Wednesday Night BIBLE STUDY

Wednesday May 3, 2023 – First Baptist Church Buda  
Midweek Prayer Meeting & Bible Study

## Honoring 1 TIMOTHY GOD

HONORING GOD  
“How To Be Good and Rich”  
*1 Timothy 6:17-21*



### Key Reminders for 1 Timothy:

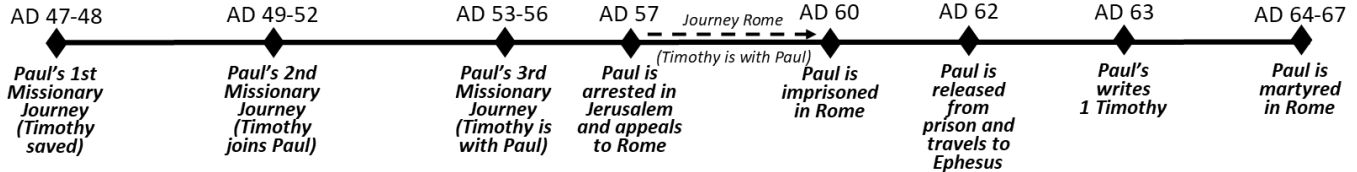
(1) **1 Timothy is a personal letter** – It is unlike most of Paul’s other letters that appear in the New Testament. Remember that most of Paul’s letters were written to churches and/or groups of churches, like Ephesians, Colossians, Galatians (a circular letter), etc. 1 Timothy was not a letter written to a group of Christians (churches). It is written to an individual and should be read and studied with that in mind. It’s personal in nature, rather than corporate. That doesn’t mean it’s not for the church today or applicable for

the church and Christians. It is! It just means that in studying and understanding the letter for context purposes this must be kept in mind. It does have a bearing on interpretation of Paul's letter.

- (2) **1 Timothy is written by Paul to Timothy, his apprentice in ministry** – As already - else's mail, or better said we are privileged by design to get to read someone else's mail. God want us to for a reason. He wants us to apply the truths Paul spoke to Timothy to our own lives. Remember that the name Timothy means "one who honors God," likewise our lives ought to honor God by how we conduct our lives, how we relate to believers in the church, how we serve and lead in the church, our behaviour, our spirit and attitudes, our words, our victory over the very things that defeat us and may keep us from being all that God has called us to be in Christ. Remember that Timothy was a young teenager from the town of Lystra when Paul first met him on his first missionary journey through Asia Minor. Paul lead Timothy to the Lord, as well as the rest of his family... his mother and grandmother. When Paul returned to the area on his second missionary journey, apparently Timothy has grown in his faith to the point that Paul asked him to join him on his missionary journey. Timothy would remain a ministry companion to Paul for the rest of Paul's life, as a faithful servant and fellow ministry.
- (3) **1 Timothy is known as a "Pastoral Epistle" (or letter)** – That makes this personal letter instructional especially for a pastor. There are three "Pastoral Epistles" in all in the New Testament; 1 Timothy, 2 Timothy and Titus, all written by Paul. They are "pastoral" in nature. In its simplest form, "pastoral" means pertaining to the pastor and or his responsibilities. The most common definitions of "pastoral" would be 1. Pastoral - of or pertaining to shepherds; hence, relating to rural life and scenes; as in a pastoral life (remember that pastors are often referred to the shepherd of the flock caring for their needs especially spiritual), 2. Pastoral – relating to the care of souls, or to the pastor of a church, as in, pastoral duties or a pastoral letter, 3. Pastoral – used to refer to the part of the work of teachers, preachers (pastors) and priests that involves giving help and advice about personal matters, or giving pastoral care through teaching, sermons, homilies, etc. The Pastoral Epistles are 1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, and Titus. All three are letters from an old man at the close of his ministry who is concerned for his successors in the pastorate. As such, the letters concern the things that would be crucial for the young pastors to understand—church organization and discipline, including such matters as the appointment of elders and deacons, the opposition of rebellious members or false teachers, and the maintenance of doctrinal purity.
- (4) **1 Timothy was written to address problems in the church at Ephesus and encourage their pastor, Timothy** – Timothy would eventually become the pastor of the church at Ephesus, likely around AD 62, following Paul's release from prison. Paul's release allowed him the opportunity to travel to Ephesus and eventually place Timothy in ministry at that church. Paul often sent Timothy to churches as his representative (1 Corinthians 4:17; 1 Corinthians 16:10; Philippians 2:19; 1 Thessalonians 3:2), and 1 Timothy finds him on another assignment, serving as pastor of the church at Ephesus (1 Thessalonians 1:3)... a troubled church with problems (Revelation 2:4, "... you have left

*your first love.*”). Timothy find’s himself... perhaps at a young age, pastoring a very strategic, yet troubled church with a lot of problems.

**(5) 1 Timothy was likely written about AD 63** - The Bible’s silence on the ultimate fate of Paul has generated a great deal of debate in modern times. The book of Acts ends with Paul sitting in a Roman prison awaiting his hearing before the Roman emperor, a privilege of appeal that all Roman citizens like Paul possessed. However, the writing of the Pastoral Epistles clearly dates to a time after the events of Acts. So where was Paul when he wrote 1 Timothy? Paul had expected the Romans to release him from prison, something that likely happened near the end of AD 62 (Philippians 2:24). As previously stated, his release allowed him the opportunity to travel to Ephesus and eventually place Timothy in ministry at that church. Paul then went on to preach in Macedonia, where he heard reports of Timothy’s work at Ephesus that prompted him to write 1 Timothy, probably in AD 63.



*<sup>17</sup> Command those who are rich in this present age not to be haughty, nor to trust in uncertain riches but in the living God, who gives us richly all things to enjoy. <sup>18</sup> Let them do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to give, willing to share, <sup>19</sup> storing up for themselves a good foundation for the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life. <sup>20</sup> O Timothy! Guard what was committed to your trust, avoiding the profane and <sup>[a]</sup>idle babblings and contradictions of what is falsely called knowledge— <sup>21</sup> by professing it some have strayed concerning the faith. Grace be with you. Amen.” – 1 Timothy 6:17-21 (NKJV)*

### ***Is it possible to be good and rich?***

*<sup>16</sup> Now behold, one came and said to Him, “Good Teacher, what good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life?” <sup>17</sup> So He said to him, “Why do you call Me good? No one is good but One, that is, God. But if you want to enter into life, keep the commandments.” <sup>18</sup> He said to Him, “Which ones?” Jesus said, “‘You shall not murder,’ ‘You shall not commit adultery,’ ‘You shall not steal,’ ‘You shall not bear false witness,’ <sup>19</sup> ‘Honor your father and your mother,’ and, ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ ” <sup>20</sup> The young man said to Him, “All these things I have kept<sup>1</sup>from my youth. What do I still lack?” <sup>21</sup> Jesus said to him, “If you want to be perfect, go, sell what you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me.” <sup>22</sup> But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions. <sup>23</sup> Then Jesus said to His*

disciples, “Assuredly, I say to you that it is hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven.”<sup>24</sup> And again I say to you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God.”<sup>25</sup> When His disciples heard it, they were greatly astonished, saying, “Who then can be saved?”<sup>26</sup> But Jesus looked at them and said to them, “With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible.” -Matthew 19:16-26 (NKJV)

### ***Is it possible to be good and rich?***

Is it possible to be good *and* rich? After watching the rich young ruler walk away from eternal life, Jesus said in verses 23-24, “<sup>23</sup> Then Jesus said to His disciples, “Assuredly, I say to you that it is hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven.”<sup>24</sup> And again I say to you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God.” (Matthew 19:23-24). Whether meant a literal needle, or a low camel’s gate in the wall of Jerusalem, as is sometimes taught. He was saying that it’s impossible, not merely difficult, for the rich to enter God’s kingdom. He instructed His followers in Luke 12:33’s parallel account, “Sell your possessions and give to charity...” (Luke 12:33). And in Luke 14:33, “So therefore, no one of you can be My disciple who does not give up all his own possessions” (Luke 14:33). Matthew 6:24 says, “You cannot serve God and Mammon” (Matt. 6:24).

<sup>1</sup> Come now, you rich, weep and howl for your miseries that are coming upon you! <sup>2</sup> Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are moth-eaten. <sup>3</sup> Your gold and silver are corroded, and their corrosion will be a witness against you and will eat your flesh like fire. You have heaped up treasure in the last days. <sup>4</sup> Indeed the wages of the laborers who mowed your fields, which you kept back by fraud, cry out; and the cries of the reapers have reached the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth. <sup>5</sup> You have lived on the earth in pleasure and luxury; you have fattened your hearts as in a day of slaughter.” – James 5:1-5 (NKJV)

### ***Is it possible to be good and rich?***

In the Revelation 18:19, John depicts the judgment that will befall the rich. Listen to it (Rev. 18:19) “<sup>19</sup> “They threw dust on their heads and cried out, weeping and wailing, and saying, ‘Alas, alas, that great city, in which all who had ships on the sea became rich by her wealth! For in one hour she is made desolate.’”

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We have recently studied the words of Paul in 1 Timothy 6:9-10... do you remember these words... notice it (1 Tim. 6:9-10), “<sup>9</sup> But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and harmful lusts which drown men in destruction and perdition. <sup>10</sup> For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil, for which some have strayed from the faith in their greediness, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.”

After reading such portions of Scripture, we must ask ourselves...

### ***Is it possible to be both good and rich?***

- You may be thinking, “That question doesn’t concern me, because I’m not rich and I never will be.”
- Not so! Perhaps none of us are super rich.
- But by world standards, we’re rich.
- Our homes have indoor plumbing, electricity, heat, and furniture. We own many convenient appliances. Most of us own at least one automobile. We all have several changes of clothes. We enjoy clean drinking water and have access to the world’s best medical care. We’re all rich by the majority of the world’s standards... we really are.
- **Because we’re rich, and because the Bible contains so many warnings to those who are rich, we need to consider carefully Paul’s words in 1 Timothy 6:17-21.**
- Even though money is dangerous, as we saw in 6:9-10, it is possible to be both good and rich if we become generous people, with our hope fixed on God, with the right perspective toward material things.

### ***To be good and rich, we must aim to be rich toward God.***

*“<sup>13</sup> Then one from the crowd said to Him, “Teacher, tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me.” <sup>14</sup> But He said to him, “Man, who made Me a judge or an arbitrator over you?” <sup>15</sup> And He said to them, “Take heed and beware of covetousness, for one’s life does not consist in the abundance of the things he possesses.” <sup>16</sup> Then He spoke a parable to them, saying: “The ground of a certain rich man yielded plentifully. <sup>17</sup> And he thought within himself, saying, ‘What shall I do, since I have no room to store my crops?’ <sup>18</sup> So he said, ‘I will do this: I will pull down my barns and build greater, and there I will store all my crops and my goods. <sup>19</sup> And I will say to my soul, “Soul, you have many goods laid up for many years; take your ease; eat, drink, and be merry.”’ <sup>20</sup> But God said to him, ‘Fool! This night your soul will be required of you; then whose will those things be which you have provided?’ <sup>21</sup> “So is he who lays up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God.” – Luke 12:13-21 (NKJV)*

Did you notice it? Being **“rich toward God”** is Jesus’ phrase. After telling the parable of the foolish rich man who planned to store up much for himself, only to find himself standing before God that very night, Jesus warned, **“So is the man who lays up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God”** (Luke 12:21). The only way to be both good and rich is to strive to be rich toward God. As Paul closes out his letter to Timothy he shows him and us some ways we can be good and rich... that is “rich toward God” no matter what this world at it, or how poor the wealth of this world may evade him (or her).

Here are Paul's words again to us as we close our this powerful letter to Timothy in our passage (1 Timothy 6:17-21), *"<sup>17</sup> Command those who are rich in this present age not to be haughty, nor to trust in uncertain riches but in the living God, who gives us richly all things to enjoy. <sup>18</sup> Let them do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to give, willing to share, <sup>19</sup> storing up for themselves a good foundation for the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life. <sup>20</sup> O Timothy! Guard what was committed to your trust, avoiding the profane and <sup>l</sup>idle babblings and contradictions of what is falsely called knowledge— <sup>21</sup> by professing it some have strayed concerning the faith. Grace be with you. Amen."* – 1 Timothy 6:17-21 (NKJV)

He shows us our passage (1 Timothy 6:17-21) four ways to aim for that goal... the aim of being "rich toward God" or "good and rich."

#### **4 Ways to Aim for the Goal of Being Rich Toward God:**

- (1) **To be rich toward God, guard against the dangers of riches** – We are going to talk about how to do that
- (2) **To be rich toward God, be rich in good deeds** – We are going to talk about what that looks like
- (3) **To be rich toward God, be generous and ready to share** -
- (4) **To be rich toward God, focus on the reality of eternity** -

Let's look at each of these...

#### **TO BE RICH TOWARD GOD, GUARD AGAINST THE DANGERS OF RICHES**

Paul mentions two specific dangers for all who are rich...

#### **2 Specific Dangers of Riches to Guard Against:**

- (1) **Guard yourself against pride** – Verse 17 of our passage says, *"<sup>17</sup> Command those who are rich in this present age not to be haughty, nor to trust in uncertain riches but in the living God, who gives us richly all things to enjoy."* The word "command" is the same word translated "urge" up in verse 13 (your translation might have the word "charge" in verse 13). Anyway, it's a military word. Paul isn't dispensing helpful hints here, but God's authoritative command for His people.

*"Haughty"* (or conceited) there in verse 17 is used only here in the New Testament, and means to be high-minded, to think you're better than others. Pride, or a haughty spirit, is spoken of often in Scripture...

- Proverbs 8:13 – *"The fear of the Lord is to hate evil; pride and arrogance and the evil way, and the perverse mouth I hate."*
- Proverbs 11:2 – *"When pride comes, then comes shame; but with the humble is wisdom."*

- Proverbs 13:10 – “By pride comes nothing but strife, but with the well-advised is wisdom.”
- Proverbs 14:3 – “The mouth of a fool is a rod of pride, but the lips of the wise will preserve them.”
- Proverbs 16:18 – “Pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall.”
- Proverbs 21:24 – “A proud and haughty man – ‘Scoffer’ is his name; he acts with arrogant pride.”

***7 Subtle Symptoms of Pride:*** (this comes from Dr. John Piper’s “Desiring God”)

**[1] Fault-finding** – While pride causes us to filter out the evil we see in ourselves, it also causes us to filter out God’s goodness in others. We sift them, letting *only* their faults fall into our perception of them. When I’m sitting in a sermon or studying a passage, it’s pride that prompts the terrible temptation to skip the Spirit’s surgery on *my own heart* and instead draft a mental blog post or plan a potential conversation for the people who “*really* need to hear this.” Edwards writes, The spiritually proud person shows it in his finding fault with other saints. . . . The eminently humble Christian has so much to do at home and sees so much evil in his own that he is not apt to be very busy with other hearts.

**[2] A harsh spirit** – Those who have the sickness of pride in their hearts speak of others’ sins with contempt, irritation, frustration, or judgment. Pride is crouching inside our belittling of the struggles of others. It’s cowering in our jokes about the ‘craziness’ of our spouse. It may even be lurking in the prayers we throw upward for our friends that are — subtly or not — tainted with exasperated irritation. Again Edwards writes, “Christians who are but fellow-worms ought at least to treat one another with as much humility and gentleness as Christ treats them.”

**[3] Superficiality** – When pride lives in our hearts, we’re far more concerned with others’ perceptions of us than the reality of our hearts. We fight the sins that have an impact on how others view us, and make peace with the ones that no one sees. We have great success in the areas of holiness that have highly visible accountability, but little concern for the disciplines that happen in secret.

**[4] Defensiveness** – Those who stand in the strength of Christ’s righteousness alone find a confident hiding place from the attacks of men and Satan alike. True humility is *not* knocked off balance and thrown into a defensive posture by challenge or rebuke, but instead continues in doing good, entrusting the soul to our faithful Creator. Edwards says, “For the humble Christian, the more the world is against him, the more silent and still he will be, unless it is in his prayer closet, and there he will not be still.”

**[5] Presumption before God** – Humility approaches God with humble assurance in Christ Jesus. If either the “humble” or the “assurance” are missing in that equation, our

hearts very well might be infected with pride. Some of us have no shortage of boldness before God, but if we're not careful, we can forget that he is God. Edwards writes, "Some, in their great rejoicing before God, have not paid sufficient regard to that rule in Psalm 2:11 — 'Worship the Lord with reverence, and rejoice with trembling.'" Others of us feel no confidence before God. Which *sounds* like humility, but in reality it's another symptom of pride. In those moments, we're testifying that we believe our sins are greater than his grace. We doubt the power of Christ's blood and we're stuck staring at ourselves instead of Christ.

**[6] *Desperation for attention*** – Pride is hungry for attention, respect, and worship in all its forms. Maybe it sounds like shameless boasting about ourselves. Maybe it's being unable to say "no" to anyone because we need to be needed. Maybe it looks like obsessively thirsting for marriage — or fantasizing about a better marriage — because you're hungry to be adored. Maybe it looks like being haunted by your desire for the right car or the right house or the right title at work: all because you seek the glory that comes from men, not God.

**[7] *Neglecting others*** – Pride prefers some people over others. It honors those who the world deems worthy of honor, giving more weight to their words, their wants, and their needs. There's a thrill that goes through me when people with "power" acknowledge me. We consciously or unconsciously pass over the weak, the inconvenient, and the unattractive, because they don't seem to offer us much. Maybe more of us struggle with pride than we thought.

Pride is a problem for everyone, but especially for those who are rich.

- It's easy to look down on the poor and think, "If they would work as hard as I do, or, if they just used their heads like I do, they wouldn't be poor."
- In other words, "I am the reason I'm rich. I worked hard; I used my smarts. I deserve it."
- A person with that kind of high-minded attitude is not going to be generous.
- He's going to hang on to what he thinks he has earned.
- Even those who have money they acquired through no effort of their own are often proud of the power and prestige that comes from their wealth.

**READ: 1 Corinthians 4:6-8** This is a very beautiful and interesting passage that says it very well... *"6 Now these things, brethren, I have figuratively transferred to myself and Apollos for your sakes, that you may learn in us not to think beyond what is written, that none of you may be puffed up on behalf of one against the other. 7 For who makes you differ from another? And what do you have that you did not receive? Now if you did indeed receive it, why do you boast as if you had not received it? 8 You are already full! You are already rich! You have reigned as kings without us—and indeed I could wish you did reign, that we also might reign with you!"*



- Paul gives the right attitude (1 Cor. 4:7): “... *what do you have that you did not receive? But if you did receive it, why do you boast as if you had not received it?*”
- **God has given us all we have.** Like Job in days of old, it all could be taken away in a day. If we want to be rich toward God, we need repeatedly to judge our pride.

There’s good news for the prideful. *Confession* of pride signals the beginning of the *end* for pride. It indicates the war is already being waged. For only when the Spirit of God is moving, already humbling us, can we remove the lenses of pride from our eyes and see ourselves clearly, identifying the sickness and seeking the cure.

**(2) Guard yourself against trusting in riches rather than in God** – Here are Paul’s words again, Verse 17 of our passage says, “*17 Command those who are rich in this present age not to be haughty, nor to trust in uncertain riches but in the living God, who gives us richly all things to enjoy.*” Here it is... riches are “uncertain” because they pertain to “this present world” (6:17), which is passing away. **If the Lord carries, we, too, all will pass away, along with our possessions, and stand empty-handed before God.** All the money in the world will be worthless then.

Proverbs 11:4 states, “*Riches do not profit in the day of wrath, but righteousness delivers from death.*” Although we all know that intellectually, we’re still prone shift our security for the future to our finances rather than to God.

Let me say it plainly...

***If you aren’t right with God, then you’re not set for the future*** (no matter how much you have set aside for financial security, or how set you are for retirement, or how well you have planned ahead materially)

★ **You may be the richest person in the world, but you’re going to die and in that moment, you will face God. If Mammon (material things) has been your god rather than the living and true God, you will come under His awful wrath, not His mercy.**

The only way to be right with God is to turn from your sin and put your trust in the only substitute whom God provided for our sins, the Lord Jesus Christ. If you’re rightly related to Him as His child through faith in Christ, then the final part of verse 17 applies to you... “*17 Command those who are rich in this present age not to be haughty, nor to trust in uncertain riches but in the living God, who gives us richly all things to enjoy.*” God richly supplies you will all things to enjoy. As a loving Father, He provides His children not only with what we need, but often He delights to give us many other good things as well. But we need to be careful never to forget the Giver and get caught up with the gift. Paul shared with the Philippians (4:11-13) how he had learned to be content in whatever

state he was in, whether he had plenty or whether he was in poverty, because Christ was the source of his contentment.

If we fix our hope on God Himself, then we can enjoy everything good as coming from His loving hand.

- We can overflow with thanksgiving for life itself, for food, housing, clothing, family and friends, material possessions, and the beauty of His creation.
- Even if all this is taken away, we can still have the joy of knowing that our sins are forgiven and that we will live eternally with Him.
- Most of us need to loosen our grip on things and tighten our grip on the Lord.
- We need to be good stewards of the things the Lord allows us to have and we can rightly enjoy them, but we also need to hold them loosely.
- Is your hope really in God Himself? Or, could it be in your things?
- With things, you've got moths, rust, and thieves to contend with, as Jesus pointed out.
- If your happiness or hope is tied up with things, you'll be a nervous wreck trying to protect them.
- If you trust and hope in God, then you can rightly enjoy what He allows you to have, but let things go if He takes them.

➔ Albert Schweitzer rightly said, "If you have something you can't live without, you don't own it; it owns you."

So to be rich toward God, guard against the dangers of riches: pride; and trusting in things rather than in God Himself.

### **TO BE RICH TOWARD GOD, BE RICH IN GOOD DEEDS**

Notice Paul's words in verse 18 of our passage... look at it there, "<sup>18</sup> *Let them do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to give, willing to share.*"

Apostle Paul was abundantly clear that no one is saved by good works or deeds, but only by grace through faith in Jesus Christ. But he was equally clear that everyone who is truly saved by faith is saved for good deeds, to walk in them Here are Paul's words in Ephesians 2:8-10... just be reminded of what he said, "<sup>8</sup> *For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God,* <sup>9</sup> *not of works, lest anyone should boast.* <sup>10</sup> *For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.*" Did you notice what he said in verse 10 there. If a person claims to be saved by faith, but his life is not growing in holiness and good deeds, his claim is suspect.

### ***A STORY THAT MATTERS...***

*A story is told of a man years ago in a village who sold wood to his neighbors. He always took advantage of them by cutting his logs a few inches short of the specified four feet.*

*One day the word spread that this woodcutter had been converted. No one believed it, saying that he was beyond being reached. One man, however, slipped quietly out of the store where the discussion was going on. He soon came running back in excitement and shouted, "It's true! It's true! He has been converted!" Everyone asked, "How do you know?" "Well, I went home and measured the wood he sold me yesterday, and it's a good four feet long!" That convinced the crowd!*

Rich Christians should be rich in good deeds as an evidence of their overflowing gratitude to God for His gift of eternal life. It should include being generous with finances, as we'll see in the next point. But, also, rich Christians aren't exempt from giving their time and labor to help others or to work for Christ. Not only by our words, but also by our lives, we should show that we are children of God, rich in good works.

### **TO BE RICH TOWARD GOD, BE GENEROUS AND READY TO SHARE**

Here are Paul's words again in **verse 18** of our passage... notice it, **"<sup>18</sup> Let them do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to give, willing to share."** Christians should not be stingy, but generous, because our God is generous and kind, especially to the undeserving. We were alienated from God, in rebellion against Him. He had every right to condemn us. But instead He sent His Son to pay the penalty for our sins. As Paul expresses it in **Romans 8:32**, **"He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how will He not also with Him freely give us all things?"**

As God blesses us with more income, we ought to look for how He wants us to give more, not just use it to improve our lifestyles.

Gallup polls have shown that as income goes up, people give less proportionately...

- *A 1989 poll showed that households earning under \$10,000 gave away 5.5 percent*
- *Those making \$50,000 to \$60,000 gave away 1.7 percent*
- *And those with incomes of \$75,000 to \$100,000 donated 3.2 percent*

As I've said before, we need to get out of the tithe mentality. If you earn a decent income and only give 10 percent, I believe you're robbing God (Mal. 3:8-10). Start at 10 percent and work up from there, but don't get stuck there. Remember, God owns it all; we're just His managers.

### ***A STORY THAT MATTERS...***

*Read the book **George Muller of Bristol**, by A. T. Pierson. George Muller founded an orphanage that grew to over 2,000 children. He never ever solicited funds... never, didn't ever ask a single individual for a dime, except to ask in prayer to God. But one secret of Muller's success with God was that he lived very simply and generously gave away vast sums to missions. In 1874 George Muller received for personal income (from donations) 3,100 pounds. That was a tidy sum in those days, and he could have lived lavishly. But he*

*and his family lived on 250 pounds and gave away the rest (he lived on 8% and gave away 92%). To put that in today's money, if the 250 pounds were equivalent to \$25,000, then Muller received \$310,000, but gave away \$285,000 and lived on \$25,000! From 1870 on, Muller personally fully supported 20 missionaries with the China Inland Mission. Over the years 1831-1885, I calculated that he gave away 86 percent of his income to the Lord's work! God funneled it in the top, but Muller kept the bottom open, never hoarding it or squandering it on personal luxury.*

### **Two Reasons We Don't Give Generously:**

**(1) We don't give generously because we don't really trust God** - Do you want to know a main reason we aren't generous givers? We don't trust God! **We mistakenly think that we've got to cover all possible contingencies, and so we're afraid to give because we aren't trusting in the living God to meet our needs in the future.** But it's a great adventure to trust God by giving and then trust Him to supply our needs.

I heard about a man who wasn't giving as he should. His pastor pushed tithing, giving 10 percent, but this man didn't see how he could give that much and still meet his bills. The pastor said to him, "John, if I promise to make up the difference in your monthly bills if you fall short, do you think you could try tithing for just one month?" As a moment's pause, John responded, "Sure, if you promise to make up any shortage, I guess I could try tithing for one month." The pastor shot back with, "Now what do you think of that! You'd be willing to trust a mere man like myself, who possesses so little materially, but you couldn't trust your Heavenly Father who owns the whole universe!"

**(2) We don't give generously because we're often sloppy, impulsive managers of the Lord's resources** - We get caught up with American consumerism, mistakenly thinking that we need more and more things, more junk and we need it right now. So, we spend money we don't have on junk we don't need. We go deep in debt to get what we "want" and then don't have the resources... the things we need to do ministry and help others.

Maybe you're wondering, "How much are we supposed to give?" The New Testament answer is, "Give as God has prospered you" (1 Cor. 16:2; 2 Cor. 9:8-11).

➡ **C. S. Lewis** said, **"I do not believe I can settle how much you ought to give. I am afraid the only safe rule is to give more than we can spare. In other words, if our expenditures on comfort, luxuries, amusements, etc. are up to the standards common among others with the same income as our own, we are probably giving away too little."**

So, to be rich toward God, we must guard against the dangers of riches, namely, pride and trusting in money; we must be rich in good deeds; and, we must be generous and ready to share.

## TO BE RICH TOWARD GOD, FOCUS ON THE REALITY OF ETERNITY

Look at **verse 19** in our passage... I'm going to back up and pick it up in **verse 18**, but focus in on what Paul is saying in **verse 19**, "<sup>18</sup> *Let them do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to give, willing to share,* <sup>19</sup> *storing up for themselves a good foundation for the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life.*"

Do you want to store up treasures that are absolutely secure for the future? Then put your money where neither moths nor rust corrupt, where thieves can't break in to steal (Matt. 6:19-21).

- Anything you invest in this life can be taken from you.
- Anything you invest in eternity is secure in the bank of heaven.
- If you had thousands of dollars in paper money that you needed to store in a safe place, you wouldn't put it in a shack in a forest known for its frequent fires.
- And yet people who take a measure of caution in making sure their earthly goods are safe never stop to consider that the earth is going to burn (2 Pet. 3:10).
- Only what you invest in God's kingdom will remain.

## ***A STORY THAT MATTERS...***

*The story is told about a sailor that shipwrecked on a South Sea island. The natives captured him, put him on their shoulders, carried him to their village, and set him on a crude throne. Little by little the man learned that it was their custom each year to make some man a king for a year. He liked that idea until he began wondering what had happened to all the previous kings. He discovered that after the year was up, the kings were banished to a deserted island where they starved to death. The sailor didn't like that idea, but he still had some time left. So he put his subjects to work, building a house, transplanting fruit trees, and planting crops on the island. So when his year was up, as he knew it would be, he was banished, not to a barren island, but to a place of abundance.*

We all know that we will die and face eternity. We only have so many years to be storing up treasures in heaven, by giving generously to God's work. It would be short-sighted and foolish of us to live well here but to have no regard to that which certainly lies ahead.

To be good and rich, we must work to be rich with God by guarding against the dangers of riches, by being rich in good deeds, by being generous and ready to share, and by focusing on the reality of eternity.

## CONCLUSION

Paul concludes with a final warning to Timothy in **1 Timothy 6:20-21**, which I'm just briefly going to touch on. Notice these last 2 verse of this letter, "<sup>20</sup> *O Timothy! Guard what was committed to your trust, avoiding the profane and idle babblings and contradictions of what is falsely called knowledge—* <sup>21</sup> *by professing it some have strayed concerning the faith. Grace be with you. Amen.*"

He appeals to Timothy to guard the deposit (lit.) which God had entrusted to him. The same is God's call to us as believers... to guard what has been entrusted us as believers.

**3 Concluding Encouragements from 1 Timothy that Honor God:** *(These things will help us to live a life that is rich toward God)*

- (1) **Think on what has been entrusted to you as a believer** – What has been entrusted to you as a Christians... a believer? Your faith... guard it. The name of Christ... guard it. You are a part of the body of Christ, the church of the Lord Jesus Christ. Not Christian is an island unto themselves. You are apart of Christ's church... guard it. You have been entrusted with the Word of God... guard it. What have you been entrusted with?
- (2) **Avoid the worldly philosophies, ideologies and false narratives that contradict the Word of God (the Bible)** – Paul calls them, "...*profane and idle babblings and contradictions of what is falsely called knowledge*..." And boy there is a lot of that today, and we tolerate it, toy with it, put up with it, sometimes even go along with it, and it is doing great damage to the church and the lives of many Christians. We need to avoid it, run from it, shun it, and call it what it is... false. And, we ourselves, must be ground in the Word of God, know what it says, to be able to do that.
- (3) **Walk daily in the grace that has been extended to us, by extending it to others** – We've been shown grace, we should show grace.