**Money, Contentment, and True Riches**

*1 Timothy 6*

**Introduction**

1. Paul’s letter written to Timothy who had remained in Ephesus at Paul’s request – **1 Timothy 1:3**
2. Ephesus was characterized by wealth:
   1. Called “the Market of Asia.”
   2. Citizens generally characterized by luxury.
   3. Home of the temple Diana, one of the 7 wonders of the ancient world.
   4. Worship of Diana of the Ephesians was a big part of the wealth of the city – **Acts 19:24** – Demetrius the silversmith who made shrines of Diana.
3. No doubt, those Christians in Ephesus were surrounded by money, and many were wealthy themselves.
4. For this reason in part, Paul addressed money in **1 Timothy 6**.
5. Money – The Blessing and Danger
6. Money is a Blessing from God
   1. Paul did not say money was the root of all evil – **1 Timothy 6:10** – the LOVE of money is.
   2. Money is a gift from God – **1 Timothy 6:17** – gives all things to enjoy.
   3. **James 1:17** – everything good comes from God.
   4. Stressed to Israel – **Deuteronomy 8:11, 17-18** – realize where your blessings come from.
   5. Money is a necessity, and God supplies us with necessities – **Matthew 7:9-11**
   6. Truly, money belongs to God, and we are mere stewards of it:
      1. This is true of all things.
      2. **1 Timothy 6:7** – we truly don’t own anything.
      3. David concerning offerings to build the temple – **1 Chronicles 29:10-15** – all belong to God.
      4. **Job 1:21** – the Lord gave to Job.
      5. God gives to us ultimately do use the money in ways He has authorized, and desires:
         1. Example of providing for own – **1 Timothy 5:8**
         2. Example of even taxes for the government’s God-appointed work – **Romans 13:1, 6-7**
   7. If money were inherently evil God would not have given it to us.
      1. However, money is something that reveals a person’s character, and that character may be evil.
7. The Love of Money
   1. The Love of money is where the danger lies – **1 Timothy 6:10**
   2. God wants our love:
      1. Must be willing to leave riches to follow Christ – **Matthew 19:20-22, 23-24, 29**
      2. Cannot serve both God and riches – **Matthew 6:24**
   3. False teachers as an example – 1 Timothy 6:
      1. The godliness of **verse 6** is in contrast to the supposed godliness of **verse 5.**
         1. **Verse 6** is TRUE godliness, while **verse 5** is FALSE godliness.
         2. The false teachers to which Paul alluded were guilty of projecting a form of godliness for the sake of dishonest gain.
         3. **Cf. 2 Timothy 3:5** – form of godliness but deny its power.
      2. **1 Timothy 6:3-5** – They teach that which is contrary to sound doctrine purposefully with the intention of “gain.”
         1. **(v. 3)** – They don’t consent, meaning they stand knowingly in opposition to it – the doctrine they reject is actually according to godliness. (**cf. 1 Timothy 3:16** – mystery of godliness.)
         2. (**vv. 4-5a**) – Rather speaks about things which are useless, having nothing to do with the truth, and this in willful rejection of the truth. (**1:4; 4:7; 6:20-21** – useless fables)
         3. **(v. 5b)** – They view the whole idea of godliness as a tool for gain – the godliness they possess is not real.
            1. They consider godliness as a means to gain, but do not become godly to take advantage of such.
            2. Their godliness is a false projection in pretense for gain.
      3. The cause of their choice to teach false doctrine, and lead men astray:
         1. **(v. 5)** – gain.
         2. **(v. 9)** – desire for riches.
         3. **(v. 10)** – love of money
            1. Now they are morally bankrupt.
            2. ***“strayed from the faith”*** – **4:1-2** – do what they do because their conscience is seared. (because all they care about is money)
            3. They will never be satisfied – ***“pierced themselves through with many sorrows”*** (**cf. Ecclesiastes 2:1, 8, 11** – vanity!)
      4. The love of money leads down a dark path of destruction. **(cf. Proverbs 15:16** – better to have little, and no trouble.)
8. Contentment – The Proper Perspective
9. A Spiritual Perspective in a Material World
   1. God wants the Christian to realize the temporal nature of all material things.
   2. **1 Timothy 6:7** – came here with nothing, and we are leaving with nothing.
   3. Learn from the rich fool, a parable taught to rebuke the material mindset of two brothers – **Luke 12:13-21**
   4. It will all be burned up – **2 Peter 3:10**
   5. Therefore, the Christian does not put stock into physical things.
10. Contentment
    1. God calls the Christian to godliness coupled with contentment – **1 Timothy 6:6-8**
    2. Picture of godliness with contentment – **Matthew 6:33** – concerned primarily with the will of God, and content with what He supplies in the process.
    3. Content with the bare necessities – **(v. 8)** – keeps us from ever falling into the trap of **(vv. 9-10).**
    4. Content in any circumstance, Christ being the key – **Philippians 4:10-13** – whatever state I am in.
       1. **Philippians 4:4** – always able to rejoice in the Lord.
       2. The riches in Christ are always enough.
    5. ***“is great gain”*** – **1 Timothy 4:8** – it has promise for the life that is to come – because true riches are laid up.
11. True Riches – The Christian’s Pursuit
12. What is Truly Valuable
    1. A command for the rich of God’s kingdom – **1 Timothy 6:17-19**
       1. It is not a condemnation of their riches.
       2. Rather, it is a call for them to understand what is truly valuable.
       3. Riches are nothing to trust in – **James 1:11** – rich will fade away in their pursuits.
          1. Trust in riches is no different than idolatry.
          2. ***“living God”*** – **3:15** – likely in contrast to idolatry.
          3. **Colossians 3:5** – covetousness linked to idolatry.
          4. Riches aren’t living and are not deserving of our trust. GOD IS!
    2. **(vv. 18-19)** – works of God are those which are lasting, and which should be focused on, and trusted in. (**cf. Matthew 6:19-21** – moth and rust don’t destroy these riches.)
13. The Pursuit of True Riches
    1. Paul’s exhortation to Timothy in contrast to the false teachers of **verse 5** – **(vv. 11-12**) – pursue things of God, and lay hold on eternal life.
    2. **(vv. 18-19)** – the rich are to use their physical possessions in part with the spiritual focus of obtaining spiritual riches.
       1. EXAMPLE – **Luke 16:9-13**
          1. **(v. 9)** – physical riches are to be used to do good for others in God’s name, and therefore lay up a foundation for heaven.
          2. **(vv. 10-12**) – God will only give us the inheritance if we are faithful in what He has given us now.
          3. **(v. 13)** – even in our earthly riches we must serve God, not be loyal to riches to God’s neglect.
       2. Example of collection for Saints – **2 Corinthians 9:6-11 –** physical riches used to produce spiritual fruit.

**Conclusion**

1. Especially those of us who live in the affluent country of America should be careful not to trust in riches, but in God.
2. We are called to view money in the way God intended, to be content in all things, and to pursue the true riches of a spiritual nature.