



First Timothy

Advice For The Rich

Be Rich in Good Works

I Timothy 6:17-19

Lesson Thirty-Five

Mission Arlington/Mission Metroplex Curriculum



First Timothy

A Study of the First Letter of the Apostle Paul to His Son in the Faith

Advice For The Rich—I Timothy 6:17-19

When you read the title of this lesson, you may say, “Well that’s not for me. I am not even close to being rich.” But wait, that really depends on who you compare yourself with in the world. When you think about it, most people in America are rich compared to people in some parts of the world. If you have a home, you are richer than some. If you have a car, you are wealthier than many. If you have enough food to eat today, you are much richer than millions in our world. If you have a high school education, you are rich compared to many. Well, we could go on and on. The point is, if you have anything, you have a responsibility to honor God with what you have.* Read I Timothy 6:17-19.

We should, first of all, note that Paul didn’t tell the rich folks that they were bad for being rich. He didn’t tell them that they should give all their wealth away. He didn’t tell them that God doesn’t like rich people. Jesus did once comment that it was very difficult for a rich person to enter Heaven. (Matthew 19:23ff) He said that because a man had just refused to give up his wealth and follow Jesus. He said that it was not impossible for a rich person to get into Heaven, but only God could accomplish what humans see as impossible.

We know that anyone, rich or poor, can come to Jesus in faith and be accepted by God. That faith must include total belief in Jesus as Savior, and willingness to accept Him as Lord of your life, which means that all your possessions are now His, not yours.

We may think of the church in Paul’s day as being made up of slaves and poorer people. However, there must have been some wealthy folks, too. Remember that the first convert in Philippi was Lydia. She was a wealthy person who made her money selling purple dye and purple material. Both the dye and the material were very expensive at that time.

Paul did advise Timothy to tell those who had some wealth that they should be very careful that their wealth did not become a reason for them to be proud. It is easy to think that because you have more money, or live in a better apartment, or drive a better car, you are better than the other person.

When a person understands who they really are, when they see themselves through God’s eyes, that person will realize that they have no right to look down on anyone. The fact is that all of us are created by God. None of us is superior to anyone else, because God created us and treats each of us alike.

Another sad lesson learned by people who have some wealth, Paul said, is that it can be here today and gone tomorrow. In the year 2008, many people who considered themselves pretty well off found that the money they had invested in the stock market was worth a lot less, some of them lost their jobs and even lost their homes.

So Paul told Timothy that people who have riches, no matter how great those riches are, should share. The wealth they had was to bless not only themselves, but anyone who had a need. They were to see their riches as not only a good thing for themselves, but for anyone else who

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would benefit from the wealth.

He also points out something that we may not have thought of; wealth is not only money and things. Paul said that a person can be rich in what they do. He calls this “good deeds.” You don’t have to be rich in worldly goods to be rich.

Paul then told Timothy that those who had time and ability to do good deeds had the same responsibility as the rich to use them to help others. Paul is giving very good advice to Christians here. Jesus gave Himself fully and completely for us. He didn’t have to do any of it. He gave freely to everyone who will accept His gift.

Talk about rich! Jesus is the heir to everything that is in existence today and much more that we don’t know about in God’s Kingdom. Yet, He left all that to come to the tiny planet Earth and die. And, He died, not for Himself or the Father, but He died for you.

Talk about needy! Every human is in great need of a Savior who can forgive our sins, a friend to guide us, a hope for the future beyond the grave. Jesus left His home in Heaven...gave up all His riches...to give all that to us. And it doesn’t cost us a thing.

So what we have is a new understanding. Wealth is not a sin. Wealth is a responsibility. A person who sees their wealth as something to benefit only them, a thing to be proud of, a security that will keep them safe when life brings trouble, that person is not looking at wealth as God sees it. That person may have riches of this world, but will be very poor in their soul.

Jesus warned against “storing up treasures” on earth. He said that Heaven is the bank you want to put your valuables in. Jesus said, “Where your treasure is, your heart will be there also.” (Matthew 6:19-21)

How do we put our valuables in the bank of Heaven? We put our wealth...that may not be a lot of money...to good use helping others. We do good deeds to help others who have need. That becomes a deposit in Heaven that is not affected by stock market values and cannot be repossessed just because we can’t make a payment.

And finally, Paul told Timothy that if people are laying up treasures in the life to come, they would also be enjoying a full life here. What is full life, or true life, on earth? It is being generous and kind. It is looking to Godly things for wealth, not to earthly things. It is finding joy in giving. Paul quoted Jesus in Acts 20: 35, “It is more blessed to give than to receive.”

*Underlined words and phrases are to be used in completing the Student Worksheet.

Lesson Goal: To point out to students the true meaning of wealth and what God expects of those who have monetary wealth and the wealth of good deeds.

Scripture Memory: “Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share. I Timothy 6:18

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Student Worksheet—Following Through

King of Kings—I Timothy 6:15, 16

>If you have anything, you have a responsibility to _____ God with what you _____.

>We know that anyone, _____ or poor, can come to Jesus in _____ and be accepted by God. That faith must include total _____ in Jesus as Savior, and willingness to accept Him as _____ of your life, which means that all your possessions are now _____, not yours.

>It is easy to think that because you have more _____, or live in a better apartment, or drive a better _____, you are _____ than the other person.

>All of us are _____ by God. None of us is superior to anyone else, because _____ created us and treats each of us _____.

>They were to see their _____ as not only a good thing for themselves, but for _____ else who would benefit from the _____.

>Paul said that a person can be _____ in what they do. He calls this “good _____.”

You don't have to be rich in worldly _____ to be rich.

>Talk about rich, Jesus is the heir to _____ that is in existence today and much more that we don't know about in God's _____. Yet, He left all that to come to the tiny planet Earth and die. And, He died, not for Himself or the Father, but He died for _____.

>Paul quoted Jesus in Acts 20: 35, “It is more blessed to _____ than to _____.”

For Memory: “Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share. I Timothy 6:18

How to begin a Personal Relationship with God:

First, believe that the God of the Bible is the true God.

Second, believe that Jesus, God's Son, was sent to earth to die so that you can have a relationship with God.

Third, ask God to forgive your sins in Jesus' name. Jesus' death on the cross paid the price of every sin you commit.

Fourth, ask Jesus to be your Savior and the Lord of your life.