

Faithful Stewards: What God Requires of Those He Entrusts

**“Who Giveth Us Richly All Things
to Enjoy”**

The Stewardship of God’s Wealth

1 Timothy 6:6-19

In our Stewardship study so far, we have looked at being good stewards of God’s work and God’s Word.

Today, we come to a subject that touches every one of us, and not just occasionally but every day: our finances. The point of this message is not to increase giving. It’s not because there is a problem. It’s because stewardship does not stop at ministry or doctrine — it reached into how we handle what God has entrusted us with physically and financially.

We live in a culture that measures success financially. A person is considered successful if they earn well, prosper, and accumulate. But for the believer, the question is not simply, “How much do I have?” The question is, “Whose is it?” — and “What is it for?”

The pressure today is subtle. It is not usually a temptation to deny Christ, but to quietly trust something else.

That is why 1 Timothy 6 is so relevant. Paul warns about the danger of desiring wealth, reminds the man of God what he is to pursue instead, and instructs the wealthy how to handle what they possess.

In other words, he teaches stewardship.

I. THE PERIL OF WEALTH (VS. 6-10)

A. Contentment is the true gain (vs. 6-8)

1. *"Godliness with contentment is great gain"* (vs. 6)

a) *"Gain"* (πορισμός) — Only used in verses 5 and 6 and is a word that means to get, gain, acquire, to have more.

(1) In verse 5, the false teachers referenced were teaching that godliness equaled financial gain (*"supposing that gain is godliness"*).

(2) In much preaching today, the teaching that wealth was indicative of godliness is still being taught. The Bible considers that teaching *"corrupt,"* and it is still considered that today.

b) *"Godliness"* (εὐσέβεια)

(1) In the Pastoral Epistles, this is not simply piety; it is a reverence for God expressed in conduct.

(2) This is a common theme in the 1 Timothy (2:2; 3:16; 4:7-8; 6:3, 5, 6, 11).

(3) It isn't just external religion, but a life oriented toward God.

c) *"Contentment"* (αὐτάρκεια)

(1) In Greek philosophy of the day (especially Stoicism), this word meant self-sufficiency and inner dependence from circumstances.

(2) In its use in Paul's writings (only appears twice), it doesn't mean self-sufficiency; it means sufficiency in God.

2 Corinthians 9:8

⁸ And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all *things*, may abound to every good work:

(3) The believer's contentment rests in God's provision, not in our own ability.

2. The argument from man's mortality (vs. 7)

If wealth or possessions cannot enter with us into life nor leave with us when it's over, it should not define us.

Psalm 49:16–17

¹⁶ Be not thou afraid when one is made rich, when the glory of his house is increased; ¹⁷ For when he dieth he shall carry nothing away: his glory shall not descend after him.

Luke 12:20–21

²⁰ But God said unto him, *Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided?* ²¹ *So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God.*

3. Sufficiency defined (vs. 8) — "*having food and raiment...*"

The word for "*raiment*" (σκεπάσματα – only used here) is a word that is broader than just "clothing." The word can mean covering or shelter as well.

a) At its root, the word means "a covering." In classical Greek and the Septuagint, it can refer to anything that provides protection or concealment.

- b) In the philosophical dialogues of Paul's day, this "*food and raiment* (covering)" was a common statement used to describe the absolute bare necessities in life. By choosing this word instead of a specific word for "tunic" or "cloak," the Holy Spirit may be leading Paul to emphasize the *function* (protection/covering) over the *form* (fashion/status).
- c) Paul is not just discussing the contents of a wardrobe, but the sufficiency of God's provision for our sustenance and our shelter. In a culture of "*gain is godliness*" (vs. 5), this word defines the boundary of "enough."

Hebrews 13:5

⁵ *Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.*

Matthew 6:31–33

³¹ *Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? ³² (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. ³³ But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.*

B. Covetousness is the hidden snare (vs. 9)

1. "*They that will be rich*"

- a) "*Will be*" (βουλόμενοι) — to resolve; to determine; to will deliberately.
- b) The Holy Spirit is not condemning the wealthy here. He is warning against the ambition to be

wealthy.

- c) *"Rich"* — this is relative to what our society considers what "rich" means.

2. The consequences of the first phrase:

- a) *"Fall into temptation and a snare..."* — the image suggests gradual capture.

- b) *"Many foolish and hurtful lusts"*

- (1) *"Foolish"* (ἀνόητος) — lacking spiritual understanding

- (2) *"Hurtful"* (βλαβερός) — harmful, injurious

- (3) *"Lusts"* (ἐπιθυμία) — an inordinate desire and appetite for wealth, in this case, is going to inflict injury on even the best interests and intents of the believer.

C. The love of money is the root (vs. 10)

1. *"The love of money"* (φιλαργυρία) — this is literally translated. The word is used in 1 Tim. 3:3 in the qualifications of the pastor with a negative: *"not covetous."* The Pastoral Epistles repeatedly warns pastoral leaders about this.
2. *"Is the root of all evil"* — the love of money is the root that produces every kind of evil. Greed is the root from which every kind of evil can grow. Once money becomes the object of affection, it can corrupt any area of life.
3. There is a progression given as a result:
 - a) *"Which while some coveted after..."* — the word for "coveted" (ὀρεγόμενοι) is one that means to

reach out for, or stretch toward. They were grasping for it.

- b) Then, they *"erred from the faith"* (ἀπεπλανήθησαν) — passive voice; they were led astray by it.
- c) *"And pierced themselves through"* (περιέπειραν) — they impaled themselves on it. They did this to themselves; it was self-inflicted damage.

2 Timothy 4:10

¹⁰ For Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world, and is departed unto Thessalonica; Crescens to Galatia, Titus unto Dalmatia.

II. THE PROPER VIEW OF WEALTH (VS. 6:11-16)

A. Our pursuit is different (vs. 11-12)

1. *"But thou, O man of God..."* — the phrase *"man of God"* is only found in the Pastoral Epistles in the New Testament (here, and 2 Tim. 3:17).
 - a) Paul is saying, in essence, *"Not them — but you."*
 - b) *"Man of God"* is significant here. In the Old Testament it was used for the prophets Moses, Samuel, Elijah, and Elisha, showing the importance, seriousness, and value of the term.
 - c) In relation to the context of stewardship, Timothy must remember who he belongs to before he handles money correctly.
2. There is a series of commands in verses 11 and 12:
 - a) *"Flee"* (φεύγε) — present imperative, which points

to continuous action. Greed is not to be debated; it is to be avoided.

2 Timothy 2:22

²² Flee also youthful lusts: but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart.

- b) *"Follow after"* (δίωκε) — intense pursuit. Instead of pursuing wealth, Timothy is to pursue *"righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness."*
- c) *"Fight"* (ἀγωνίζου) — from which we get *"agonize."* It's athletic contest language. The Christian life requires resistance, especially against cultural definitions of success.

2 Timothy 4:7

⁷ I have fought a good fight, I have finished *my* course, I have kept the faith:

Philippians 3:14

¹⁴ I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

- d) *"Lay hold on"* (ἐπιλαβοῦ) — aorist imperative, which points to decisive grasping. This isn't earning salvation (*"eternal life"*), but living in light of it. Timothy was to act in view of eternity, not in view of income. That's stewardship.

B. Our confession is different (vs. 13-16)

1. Christ before Pilate (vs. 13) — because Jesus refused the earthly kingdom, rejected political and material power, Timothy must reject the *"gain is godliness"* compromise.
2. The majesty of God (vs. 15-16)

- a) Paul describes God as: *"the blessed and only Potentate," "the King of kings," "the Lord of lords,"* and *"dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto."*
- b) A right vision of who God is and where God is diminishes the appeal of wealth. "High theology protects against low materialism."

III. THE PURPOSE OF WEALTH (VS. 17-19)

A. Wealth is not to be trusted in (vs. 17)

- 1. *"Charge"* (παραγγέλλω) — military word for a commander giving an order. This is not optional; this is mandatory material.
- 2. *"That are rich in this world"* — because it is for this age, it must be invested beyond this age.
- 3. He gives two prohibitions:
 - a) *"Not highminded"* (ὕψηλοφρονεῖν) — don't look down on others that are not as blessed as you.
 - b) *"Nor trusting in uncertain riches"* — money can be lost very quickly.
- 4. The positive:
 - a) *"But in the living God..."* — the first purpose of wealth is it must not replace God as the object of trust.
 - b) *"Who giveth us richly all things to enjoy"* — self-explanatory.

B. Wealth is to be shared (vs. 18)

- 1. *"That they do good..."* (ἀγαθοεργέω – only used

here) — that is, do good with their riches. Literal definition is to act for someone's advantage or benefit.

2. *"That they be rich in good works..."* — there's a play on words here: they are rich materially (vs. 17), and as such, they are to be rich morally as well.
3. *"Ready to distribute"* (εὐμεταδότους – only used here) — means to impart; be generous; to impart to the poor.

Luke 3:11

¹¹ He answereth and saith unto them, He that hath two coats, let him impart to him that hath none; and he that hath meat, let him do likewise.

Ephesians 4:28

²⁸ Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with *his* hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth.

4. *"Willing to communicate"* (κοινωνικούς) — fellowship, partnership. Wealth is meant to create participation in God's work.

C. Wealth is to be invested (vs. 19)

1. *"Laying up in store for themselves..."* — this is financial investment terminology (Matt. 6:19-21).
2. *"A good foundation against the time to come..."* — Wealth is to be used in light of the future age.

Conclusion:

Paul says in verse 19 that believers are to be *"laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come."*

In other words, wealth in this present age is to be invested for the next.

John Wesley understood that principle.

As his income increased, he refused to increase his lifestyle. He chose instead to increase his giving. Though he eventually earned what would have been considered a very comfortable income, he continued living simply so he could give generously. When he died, very little money remained to his name — most of what he had earned had been given away.

Wesley believed that a Christian's increase in income should not raise his standard of living, but his standard of giving.

He understood something vital: money is temporary, but what we do with it is eternal.

And the question for us is not, "How much do we have?"

It is, "What are we laying up?"

The issue is not how much passes through our hands, but how much is sent ahead for the glory of God.