

## 1 TIMOTHY 6:17-21

False teaching had distracted the local church in Ephesus from its mission of preaching the gospel and making disciples.

So Paul writes to Timothy and the big message of his letter is: "Sort out the church for the sake of the gospel!"

Chapters 1-2: Fight for the Gospel.

Chapters 3-4: Sort out the Leadership.

Chapters 5-6: Deal with issues of Church Life.

Now in 1 Timothy 6:17-21 we come to Paul's final words.

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

O Timothy, guard the deposit entrusted to you. Avoid the irreverent babble and contradictions of what is falsely called "knowledge," for by professing it some have swerved from the faith. Grace be with you." (v17-21)

Two final instructions that Timothy needs to follow for the church to preach the gospel and make disciples.

### A. Give

1. Paul begins by telling Timothy to address the rich in the church.

Three instructions he gives for the rich.

It seems that by becoming Christians, the rich in the church had become richer as they avoided many of the excesses they had done beforehand.

It seems also that the rich were backing the false teachers.

So Paul by telling Timothy to address the rich is attempting to cut off the supply line that is keeping the false teachers going.

2. Address their attitude.

"charge them not to be haughty"

One of the dangers of riches is thinking that you are more superior or better than others.

Thinking that because you provide a great percentage of the church's income, you have a greater say in the decisions that are made.

Timothy is to warn the rich about this.

APP: Not just a danger for those who are rich, it is also a danger for elders because of the position we are in – making decisions for our own benefit.

3. Address their hopes.

"...nor to set their hopes on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who richly provides us with everything to enjoy."

It is so easy to put your hopes and security in money.

But this is dangerous, because wealth can be gone in an instant.

God alone is the only one who can provide what we need for this life and the next.

APP: As elders we are to demonstrate by the way we lead that our hope is in God – but at the same time this shouldn't be used as an excuse for foolish decision-making.

#### 4. Address their actions.

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

Encourage the rich to be generous.

To give money to help others hear the good news.

This is their responsibility and privilege.

John Stevens: "You can't take it with you when you die unless you've spent it on the gospel while you live now!"

Throughout the generations the church has survived through the generosity of wealthy believers.

APP: Be generous.

### **B. Guard**

#### 1. Paul's final words to Timothy sum up the message of the book.

"O Timothy, guard the deposit entrusted to you. Avoid the irreverent babble and contradictions of what is falsely called "knowledge," for by professing it some have swerved from the faith."

Timothy is to protect the gospel by sticking to it and passing it on and by avoiding the false teaching that leads people astray.

#### 2. The essential work of the church and its leadership today is to guard the gospel.

We are to look after it and pass it on to the next generation.

APP: This local church needs us to be a faithful group of elders.