

God's Riches 1 Timothy 6

Introduction

- Before my wife spoke last week, she encouraged those of you who are new to not allow her message to be the only message you heard at Mullen Memorial Baptist Church.
 - I'm not sure she knew that I would be preaching on money this week!
 - So, I hope today does not scare you away, but draws you closer to the Lord.
- It's hard to talk about an Abundant Life without discussing how the Bible approaches the topic of money.
 - Why is it that we are comfortable talking about money everywhere else, but in the church?
 - Possibly because money is considered a personal possession of value
 - Possibly because the example of money through the church has not always been reflected positively.
 - Possibly because we don't have a proper Biblical understanding of money.
 - Whatever the case, let me suggest to you that our improper understanding of money is not only destroying us as the church, but as a society, and as individuals.
- If you have been attending Mullen Memorial for more than a year, chances are you have heard a sermon from me regarding money, tithing, or stewardship.
 - The truth is, I'm not afraid to talk about these topics, because God wasn't shy about sharing these topics in the Bible.
 - Did you know that there are over 2,000 verses regarding money in the Bible?¹
 - This compares to roughly 500 verses on the topics of prayer and faith.²
 - If you have noticed that even though there are more verses in the Bible regarding money, we tend to focus our attention on prayer and faith.
- Here's what I've come to appreciate about the topic of money
 - It is much deeper than how much money is in your wallet or your bank account
 - Tithing and Stewardship have more to do with discipleship.
 - Quite possibly this is the reason that the topic of money is referred to more than any other topic in the Bible
 - We give not from our wallet, but from our heart
 - Therefore, the Abundant Life is not about how much we have, but how much we give.
- Sermon Title: God's Riches
 - 1 Timothy 6
 - The Apostle Paul will instruct Timothy on how to address the issue of money with the church in Ephesus.

¹ Greg Laurie. *Money and Motives*. <http://www.oneplace.com/ministries/a-new-beginning/read/articles/money-and-motives-9220.html>. Accessed 5/17/19.

² Ibid.

- However, I want you to recognize that this topic of money is wrapped within the teachings of sound doctrine, in other words: discipleship
- Three Points
 - Equation: Godliness + Contentment = Great Gain
 - Have an Eternal Perspective
 - Talk hold of that which is truly life

Godliness + Contentment = Great Gain

- Hank Aaron story about batting
 - Grew up hitting with this hands set like a left-hander, but stance of a right-hander
 - It wasn't until he got to the major leagues that a batting coach corrected the way he held the bat.
 - Hank Aaron's nickname "Hammerin' Hank"
 - Without the proper mechanics, there's a good chance that Hank Aaron would have never broke the home run record.
- The Apostle Paul's letter to Timothy is about teaching "good mechanics" or "sound doctrine"
 - **1 Timothy 1:3-4**
 - Several topics that Paul addresses, one of which is money
 - **1 Timothy 6:3-4**
 - An improper understanding of money is destroying the church, society, and individuals
 - **1 Timothy 6:10**
 - The topic of money is a discipleship issue, because it is not tied so much with how much we have, but to the character by which we live-godliness.
- Godliness
 - Created in the image of God (Genesis 1:27)
 - Temptation in the Garden of Eden: **"For God knows that when you eat of it (Tree of the knowledge of good and evil) your eyes will be opened and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."** (Genesis 3:5, ESV)
 - Adam and Eve had already been created in the image of God, how much more did they need?
 - God provided them with the Garden of Eden where every need was met, what more did they need?
 - *Godliness* therefore, refers to the character of God.
 - God created us out of love
 - God provided for us out of love
 - Our response to God is to obey what God says out of love
 - The sin of Adam and Eve was that they were not satisfied with the abundance that God supplied out of love.
 - The desire to have more often drives a love for money
 - Description of false teachers

- **1 Timothy 6:4-5**
- ESV Study Bible, “The concern with false teachers here centers on their greed and their apparent exploiting of the faith for material gain.”³
- An improper understanding of money will destroy you.
- Money, Tithing, Stewardship are all matters of discipleship.
- If we can begin to accept this truth about money, we can begin to have a godly perspective about it.
- Equation: Godliness + Contentment = Great Gain (**1 Timothy 6:6-7**)
 - Example of Adam and Eve- live in obedience to God by being content with the abundant life that God offers.
 - Contentment, in part, comes from having a proper understanding of money.
 - Think back to Hank Aaron
 - Once he changed his hand positioning, he could hit the ball even better than before
 - The proper mechanics- Godliness + Contentment = Great Gain will go a long way in helping you hit a home run when it comes to money!

An Eternal Perspective

- Vision fulfillment this week through chaplain training
 - The City of Belpre has had a good week.
 - For the past 6 months, the chaplains of the Belpre Police Department have been working together to host a chaplain training, through the International Fellowship of Chaplains
 - This week, 22 pastors, law enforcement officers, and lay leaders came together to learn how to take their faith into their communities.
 - People from city, county, Parkersburg, and out of town
 - Listening to stories
 - Doors God opens
 - A few years ago, Pastor Mark Eaton and Police Chief Terry Williams discussed the vision of having chaplains available in our community
 - This week, was a fulfillment of that vision
 - Our city had the opportunity to impact not only the 22 people who attended the training, but will continue to impact people as these chaplains are used by God in their respective places where God has planted them.
 - Seeing this vision through has been a long road. We like when things come together, but we like it even better when they come together instantly. The fulfillment of this vision did not happen instantly. It took a lot of work, and quite frankly has exceeded our expectations. However, this vision would never have been fulfilled without an eternal perspective.
- **1 Timothy 6:11-12**

³ ESV Study Bible, Wheaton: Crossway, 2008. Kindle loc. 312220.

- Here are the true riches
- The character of God
- Have to have an eternal perspective in order to appreciate what Paul is saying.
 - The false teachers were trying to cut corners
 - Sure they may have gained power and influence
 - BUT, **1 Timothy 6:7**
 - It is short lived
 - **1 Timothy 6:8**; even with little we can be content
- The true riches of life are found in the faith and character of God
 - Calling and Confession
 - How many times have you met someone and after introducing yourself by name, the next question is: “What do you do?”
 - Our response, “I am...”
 - What we do has a tendency to define who we are.
 - That’s not necessarily a bad thing, because you should love what you do, but God does not identify you by what you do. God defines who we are as his child. God defines you by lost or found. Saved and Redeemed.
 - Our true identity, or calling is not in what we do, but what in God has done for us.
 - Once we begin to identify ourselves in this way, it impacts our confession.
 - The defining moment in Jesus’ earthly life was his confession before Pontius Pilate.
 - All Jesus had to do was say he was not a king, deny who he truly was
 - It would have made things a lot easier, practical in the face of crucifixion.
 - However, Jesus did not deny his calling, he made his confession
 - He fought the good fight of faith
- Example from *God and Money: How We Discovered True Riches At Harvard Business School*
 - Two business students, John Cortines and Gregory Baumer, who were convicted about their perspective of money
 - Shaped by conviction; informed through Bible study and personal reflection
 - “We have learned so much along this journey, most significantly, we no longer ask, ‘How much should we give?’ Rather, our question has now become, ‘How much do we need to keep?’”⁴
 - This question reflects an eternal perspective on money.
 - Godliness is revealed in the way we approach money in our life.

⁴ John Cortines and Gregory Baumer, *God and Money: How We Discovered True Riches At Harvard Business School*. Peabody: Rose Publishing, 2016, pg. 4.

- Do we consider money a matter of discipleship and obedience to God?
- Are we living the equation: Godliness + Contentment = Great Gain
- Do we have an eternal perspective?

Take hold of that which is truly life

- **1 Timothy 6:17-19**
- Summer is on it's way
 - Plans to be out
 - Plans to enjoy family and new experiences
 - Get out of the house; since of freedom and peace
- Uncertainty of riches compared to the Faithfulness of God
 - God provides richly everything for us to enjoy
 - Calls us to be generous in giving and serving for the good of others.
 - By doing so, we take hold of that which is truly life
- Do you think it is possible to find true life in death?
 - Visit with someone in which they know, the doctors know, and I know that death is a real possibility
 - Yet, in the midst of their weakness and sometimes fear, there is a peace and joy
 - Money isn't a concern
 - Understand, **"we brought nothing into the world, and we cannot take anything out of the world."** (1 Timothy 6:7, ESV)
 - Instead, **"Fight the good fight of faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called and about which you made the confession in the presence of many witnesses."** (1 Timothy 6:12, ESV)
 - It is in that calling and confession that the Abundant Life can be found.
- Termite Issue
 - Disappointed and yet Opportunistic
 - Planned this sermon series weeks before we even discovered the termite issue
 - Opportunity for us to put money, giving, stewardship into perspective
 - Running off a shoe string budget
 - Not a spending problem, but a concern toward giving
 - Requires faith, but also for us to self-evaluate our understanding when it comes to tithing, giving, stewardship
 - To date: \$2000 toward termite with about \$600 left to meet expected need. Regular giving has not gone down, which indicates that you are giving abundantly.
 - I hope that we can continue to give abundantly!
 - You help sustain a Legacy through your investment in MMBC
 - Outreach to the community
 - Baptism and recommitment of faith
 - This stuff doesn't just matter in the present, but it matters for all eternity!

- This is what true life, the Abundant Life is all about!
- Take hold of it!
- It's not about how much you have, but how much you give.

Conclusion

- Have you taken hold of that which is truly life?
 - Give your life completely to Jesus Christ as your calling and confession
 - Have an eternal perspective: Godliness + Contentment = Great Gain
 - Count your abundance not by how much you have, but by how much you give.