

Introduction
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1. It is often said that Jesus spoke more about money than any other topic:
2. An article in Preaching Today cited these stats:
  - a. 16 out of Jesus' 38 parables were concerned with how to handle money
  - b. In the Gospels, one out of every 10 verses deals directly with the subject of money
  - c. The Bible has 500 verses about prayer, less than 500 verses on faith, but over 2000 on money and possessions
3. The problem with these stats is that while money is often mentioned in the Bible, it's more often used to illustrate a different point or spiritual truth (as in the case of Jesus' parables)--In other words, just because a parable or verse mentions money, that doesn't mean the parable or verse is about money
4. In reality, Jesus spoke more about the Kingdom of God, faith and salvation, and hell than He did money
5. Nonetheless, the Bible does have a lot to say about money and that is again the topic of our passage today
  - a. In our passage last week, Paul warned Timothy of the destruction that comes from false teachers who seek to get rich (READ 1 Timothy 6:9-10)
  - b. He warned Timothy to be content with what God provides and to flee from the pursuit of riches (READ 1 Timothy 6:11-12)
  - c. Today, Paul provides instructions on how the rich are to use the wealth God gives them (READ 6:17-19):
    - 1) Paul begins by warning of the DANGERS of wealth (6:17)
    - 2) He then addresses the DUTIES of wealth (6:18)
    - 3) Finally, he reminds us of the DIVIDENDS of using wealth appropriately (6:19)
6. Before we begin I want to address what it means to be "**rich in this present world**"?
  - a. Paul is obviously speaking about financial wealth, i.e. money and possessions
  - b. However, what defines what it means to be rich?
  - c. I decided to Google what it means to be rich here in the United States:
    - 1) Some "experts" said anyone making over \$120,000 a year is rich, while others said you have to make at least \$500,000 a year
    - 2) Others said it all depends on where you live: \$100,000 a year in some small podunk town in the middle of nowhere might make you rich, but that would barely be enough to survive in places like New York and San Francisco; in some third-world countries that's more than you'd make in a lifetime
    - 3) Others said it's less about income and more about possessions (e.g. how much you have in savings, what you own for a home, a car, etc.)
    - 4) The bottom line is, rich can be a relative term
  - d. The real question we should be asking ourselves is whether or not we are rich from a Biblical perspective:
    - 1) While the Bible doesn't specifically define what it means to be rich, an argument can be made that any time we have more than we need to meet our basic needs, we are certainly rich compared to those who don't

2) With that in mind, the principles we'll see today will certainly apply to us

A. The first thing we see in our passage this morning are the DANGERS of wealth (6:17)

\*\*There are two that Paul mentions

1. The first danger Paul warns about in regard to wealth is conceit, or as other translations render it, haughtiness (6:17a): **"Instruct those who are rich in this present world not to be conceited"**
  - a. This word comes from two Greek words that are joined together—"high" and "mind", meaning high-mindedness
  - b. Conceit or haughtiness is a form of pride and arrogance when someone believes he or she is better than others

American Dynasty: The Vanderbuilts; Clash between the haughty old, inherited money and the new money of the industrialists like the Vanderbuilts in the late 1800s/early 1900s; Lavish box seats of the Academy of Music in Manhattan were a status symbol for the elite and were controlled by the old money, and they refused to sell box seats to people with new money like the Vanderbuilts; so, the Vanderbuilts built a new theatre three times the size, the Metropolitan Opera House, which destroyed the Academy of Music within two years. The haughty old money folks turned to vaudeville shows to try to save the theatre (talk about irony)

- c. Conceit is the direct opposite of humbleness and humility and it's warned against in the Bible:
    - 1) Of the seven things Proverbs 6 says the Lord hates, haughtiness is listed first (READ Proverbs 6:16-19)
    - 2) Proverbs 21:4 says, **"Haughty eyes and a proud heart, the fallow [unplowed] ground of the wicked is sin"** (LSB)
  - d. When it comes to the Church, it is especially true that there is no place for conceit or haughtiness (READ Romans 12:3-16)
2. The second danger Paul warns about is fixing our hope on wealth (6:17b): **"...or to fix their hope on the uncertainty of riches..."**
  - a. The inherent problem with fixing one's hope on riches is that they are uncertain
  - b. There is no guarantee they will last beyond today:
    - 1) Proverbs 23:4-5: **"4 Do not weary yourself to gain wealth, Cease from your consideration of it. 5 When you set your eyes on it, it is gone. For wealth certainly makes itself wings Like an eagle that flies toward the heavens."**
    - 2) In Matthew 6:19-20, Jesus said, **"Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. 20 But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves do not break in or steal;"**

Watching my FIS/BKI stock go up and down

3. Instead of fixing our hope on riches, we should fix our hope on God (6:17c): **“on God, who richly supplies us with all things to enjoy”**:
  - a. There are two parts to this statement and the first reminds us that the only thing worthy of our hope and trust is God Himself:
    - 1) This isn’t true just of eternal or spiritual things
    - 2) It’s also true when it comes to earthly things and this is the one that is most difficult for us at times
    - 3) Listen to what Jesus said in Matthew 6:20-34
  - b. The rest of v. 17 reminds us that even though we shouldn’t place our hope in riches, it’s okay to enjoy what God provides for us:
    - 1) The Bible doesn’t condemn wealth or demand that we sell all our possessions and take a vow of poverty
    - 2) In fact, the Lord **“richly supplies us with all things to enjoy”** (did you notice the word play with **“those who are rich”, “uncertainty of riches”, “God richly supplies”**)
4. Takeaway: we should place our hope in God, not in our possession or wealth, and honor Him by enjoying what He’s given us; the author of Ecclesiastes summed it up like this (READ Ecclesiastes 5:10-20)

B. The second thing we see in this passage are the DUTIES of wealth (6:18)

**\*\*While we just learned that we can enjoy the things God has given to us, what we learn next is that there are responsibilities or duties that comes with wealth (READ 6:18)**

1. The first duty is that we are to do good with what God has given us; we are to be **“rich in good works”** (18a; more word play):
2. The second duty is that we are to **“be generous and ready to share”** (18b)
3. These two go hand-in-hand and reflect a principle that is found throughout the Bible which is that we should use what God has given us to help others when they are in need:
  - a. Hebrews 13:16 says: **“And do not neglect doing good and sharing, for with such sacrifices God is pleased.”**
  - b. We saw this in the 1<sup>st</sup> century Church (READ Acts 2:42-45; 4:33-37; 11:29)
  - c. We saw the epitome of this in the Macedonians (READ 2 Corinthians 8:1-5)
  - d. Did you know that one of the reasons we are called to work is so that we can help meet the needs of others?
    - 1) Ephesians 4:28: **“He who steals must steal no longer; but rather he must labor, performing with his own hands what is good, so that he will have something to share with one who has need.”**
    - 2) Titus 3:14: **“Our people must also learn to engage in good deeds to meet pressing needs, so that they will not be unfruitful.”**
  - e. In fact, the Bible says when someone has the world’s goods, sees a brother in need, and refuses to help, the love of God does not abide in him (READ 1 John 3:17)
4. Takeaway: using what God has given us to do good and help others not only honors the Lord, but is a responsibility that comes with what He gives us

C. The final thing we see in this passage are the DIVIDENDS of handling wealth Biblically (READ 6:19)

1. A dividend is a payment made by a company to its shareholders based on the company's profitability; as such, the more you invest in a company, the more you receive in dividends
2. When used metaphorically, it refers to receiving a benefit or reward in the future due to some investment made in the present
  - a. For instance, the dividends of healthy eating and daily exercise is generally better health as you get older
  - b. Another example: the dividends of a good college education or vocational training after high-school are often better pay or a fulfilling career in the future
3. Here Paul is reminding us of the dividends—the rewards—of having a Biblical perspective of wealth and using it accordingly:
  - a. The first dividend is that we are establishing a foundation for eternal life: **“storing up the treasure of a good foundation for the future”**:
    - 1) This is a challenging statement because Paul mixes two metaphors which makes it hard to interpret:
      - a) The first metaphor is that of storing up or treasuring up something
      - b) The second metaphor is that of a good foundation
    - 2) If we render this statement literally it reads, **“treasuring up a good foundation for the future”** which suggests that what's being stored up—the treasure—is a good foundation for the future (e.g. eternal life)
  - b. The second dividend is a result of this good foundation which is that we **“may take hold of that which is life indeed.”**
    - 1) To take hold of something means to fully embrace it
    - 2) The word **“indeed”** indicates something that is genuine and real; another way to render this would be **“that which is truly life”**—and in this context, it's an obvious reference to eternal life
  - c. So, in essence what the Bible is saying here is that when we use the wealth that God gives us to do good and be generous, we are constructing a foundation which will enable us to fully embrace and enjoy eternal life for all it's worth; How so?
    - 1) Listen to what Paul wrote in Corinthians 3:11-15 (READ):
      - a) The foundation is Christ but we build upon that foundation with our earthly works
      - b) When that work is tested, if it remains we will receive a reward
      - c) If it burns up, we will still be saved (because that's by grace through faith), but we will suffer loss and not receive eternal rewards
      - d) So some in eternity will be given rewards and some will not, suggesting that we will not all experience eternal life in the same way
    - 2) If this sounds familiar, it's because Jesus said something similar when speaking of storing up treasure(s) and receiving rewards:
      - a) READ Matthew 6:1-21
      - b) Revelation 22:12: **“Behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to render to every man according to what he has done.”**

4. Takeaway: what we do today with what God has given to us plays some part in how we will experience eternal life:
  - a. When we use what He's given us to do good, be generous, help others we are treasuring up a good foundation—building upon the foundation of Christ—which will result in heavenly rewards that will enable us to fully embrace and enjoy all that eternal life can be
  - b. If we choose, instead, to use what God has given us purely for ourselves, storing up earthly treasures, that will all be burned away and we'll suffer loss