

Responsibility

The Spider Man rule, “With great power comes great responsibility”. When a person has wealth or is living in a place of somewhat financial security there is a heavenly requirement of them to be givers.

Every person whether they are rich or poor are to be givers but wealthy people are especially to be generous givers.

It has been my experience that some of the most generous people on the face of the earth are poor people. Single moms are some of the biggest givers and often people working 2 or 3 jobs are some of the most loyal supporters of the work of God. Their sacrifices are noted in eternity and they will not lose their reward. Proportionate to what they have and at times don't have the people who should in the natural hold onto their finances are the ones being liberal givers. And it is on this basis that Paul addresses wealthy people. Many pastors are scared to address wealthy people because they don't want to offend them. But in this portion of scripture Paul is quite bold.

1 Tim. 6:17-19 Command those who are rich in this present age not to be haughty, nor to trust in uncertain riches but in the living God, who gives us richly all things to enjoy. *Let them* do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to give, willing to share, storing up for themselves a good foundation for the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life.

A few observations:

1. Notice that Paul never commanded the wealthy to give; but he did give clear instruction that wealthy people should not be haughty:
 - Wealth can lead to **haughtiness** - to *be lofty in mind*, i.e. *arrogant* or to be be highminded.
2. Paul also instructed that wealthy people should not trust their riches as the security provided is neither eternal nor certain.
3. Paul also instructed that God gives wealth to people that they should enjoy their prosperity. I believe what the apostle was saying that when we are givers and when we make a difference in someone else's life that this is the best enjoyment a person can have. The greatest enjoyment is in fulfilled vision and making a difference in someone else's life. We must therefore be doing good by expending our wealth in good works

“...storing up for themselves a good foundation for the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life”

When you read this portion of Scripture it would on the surface appear that Paul is saying that wealthy people can earn their way into heaven through their giving. This would be inconsistent with the whole concept of grace and salvation not based on what

we do or have done but rather by the Blood of Jesus. Therefore it is worth a few moments to expound on the real meaning of this sentence.

Please note that giving does not secure our salvation but it is possible that through greed and arrogance that we can walk away from our reward - **Laying up in store** (the Greek "apo" mean **laying apart against a future time**), laying up for themselves as a treasure" (Matthew 6:19-20).

A wealthy person or someone who is able to give is actually being the wisest investor in that they are laying in store for eternity. We get so caught up in the busyness of life and the business of life that we don't think about the eternal ramifications. But in this text Paul reminds wealthy people and all of us that what we do and how we do on earth affects eternity.

A good foundation—(See on 1 Tim. 3:13; Luke 6:48; 1 Cor. 3:11). The sure reversion of the future heavenly inheritance: earthly riches *scattered* in faith lay up in store **a sure increase of heavenly riches**. We gather by scattering (Proverbs 11:24; Proverbs 13:7; Luke 16:9).

that . . . eternal life—The oldest manuscripts and versions read, "**that which is really life,**" its joys being solid and enduring (Psalm 16:11). The life that now is cannot be called so, its goods being unsubstantial, and itself a vapor (James 4:14). "In order that ('with their feet so to speak on this foundation' [DE WETTE]) **they may lay hold on that which is life indeed.**"

Matthew 6:19-21 "Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

"We make a living by what we get, we make a life by what we give." – Sir *Winston Churchill*

"He could have added fortune to fame, but caring for neither, he found happiness and honor in being helpful to the world." - *Epitaph on the grave of George Washington Carver.*

True wealth is not what we have but what we can give