

THE LAWS OF LEADERSHIP

1 Timothy 6:11-16

LAW #16 A Good Leader Sticks by His Principles and Priorities

In Time magazine of June 29, 1992, Katherine Hepburn was asked the question why she never had children. And she gave, a tremendous answer. *“You can’t do both. It’s a choice. If you want a career, which I did, why bring a child into the world who can’t get the benefit of your total attention. You can’t concentrate on more than one thing at a time.”*

Law #16 of Leadership says, “A good leader sticks by his principles and priorities.”

Paul is preparing young Timothy to take over the responsibility of his most strategic church, the Ephesian church. Paul has had all these things to say to him, and now we come down to the end of the letter. It’s almost like when Paul gets ready to finish, he just finishes with a flurry. It’s just bam, bam, bam.

And there are four exhortations that are in these final verses. We looked at two of them last week.

And we look at the last two today in these remaining five verses.

First of all: Exhortation #1 last week:

Flee, follow, fight, and take hold of the eternal life

Exhortation #2:

Keep the principles stainless.

**And now today, we are going to see Exhortation #3:
the dangers and duties that come from riches, in verses
17-19.**

And Exhortation #4:

Guard the deposit.

We are going to begin our study with verse 17.

**Now, you might be thinking, a couple of weeks ago we
talked about wealth and leadership.**

What we talked about a couple of weeks ago, was greed.

It was aspiring above everything else to have a big bottom line. Today we are talking about people who are rich and what they need to do as Christian leaders to honor the Lord with it. Because it's not wrong to be rich.

We said the love of money, was what Paul was talking about.

What we are talking about today is some of these Christians in the early church obviously were blessed of the Lord. They weren't all poor. And Paul, evidently, knew that Timothy had some of them in his congregation. And because of that, he gives him certain principles for them to operate on, so that they will be honorable to the Lord. That's the first part of it.

Then the next exhortation has to do with guarding the principle. Stay by the stuff no matter what!

Let's dig into it. Pick up with me at verse 17.

v.17 *"To those who are wealthy in the present age (current generation), charge them not to be proud, neither to have their hope set upon the uncertainty of wealth,*

but upon God the one who is continually providing us all things abundantly for [our] enjoyment.”

Now I want you to notice something about that verse. There’s no denunciation. There’s no saying, “*Hey! that’s wrong!*” He mentions a couple of dangers, but he’s not saying, there is anything wrong with wealth. He’s just addressing these people who have an extended stewardship because of the blessing in their lives. **That’s all.**

Back to verse 17, “*so to those who are wealthy in the present age (current generation).*” Let’s stop there a moment. Isn’t that interesting that he would say, to those who are wealthy in the here and now. Why would he specify that? You see, it’s possible to be wealthy in the here and now and to be poverty stricken in the hereafter, if you don’t handle the here and now properly. And so it’s very specific. **You can be rich here and not over there.**

It’s possible to have the best of both worlds if you follow the instructions of the scripture in how to handle it. That’s all he’s saying. **You can have a big bottom line here and be poverty stricken over on the other side.**

“Be charging them.” You could say that’s a present tense.
We could say, ***“keep on charging them.”***

Now I want to say something here before we go any further because some of you like me who don’t have a huge bottom line have just shifted it into neutral haven’t you?

And you’re thinking this message is just for so and so, and it isn’t for me. Listen, every single one of us, teacher alike, is wealthy if we were in the Ephesian congregation. We all have tremendous privileges and we indeed are wealthy. So this message belongs to all of us.

“Keep on charging them.”

**Now what are you supposed to do?
You *“keep on charging them”* about a couple of things here in this verse.**

First, *“not to be proud.”*

Paul is about to mention 2 negatives.

#1, *“don’t be proud”* or haughty because you are more blessed than somebody else. That’s a danger.

That word “*proud*” or haughty only occurs in one other place in the New Testament.

Listen to what Paul says in Romans 11:20.

“Granted, they were broken off for their unbelief, but you stand by your faith. Don’t be conceited, but fear;”

Paul is writing to Gentile Christians.

And he’s saying that the Jews were broken off from the blessings of the Abrahamic covenant because of their unbelief. And you and I because of faith in Christ have been grafted in to these blessings.

And he says just because we have been grafted into the blessings, don’t us let get the big head. By the fact that we have these blessings.

#1. *“Don’t be proud, but”*

#2. *“Neither to have your hope set upon the uncertainty of wealth.”*

Paul says, be sure you have your hope in something that’s going to last.

You know as well as I do, wealth can be here today and gone tomorrow. Just look at the stock market!

And sometimes it can slip away pretty fast.

What would you do if you were wiped out financially today?

Would you still have a level of contentment because of your relationship to the Lord? Do you see what I'm saying?

Can you be a person who is free from putting your hope in the uncertainty of wealth?

Paul wants that for these believers and you and me.

Now let me give you a couple of verses, just to illustrate the point.

Proverbs 23:5:

“Cast but a glance at riches, and they are gone, for they will surely sprout wings and fly off to the sky like an eagle.”

So it's the uncertainty of these things that Paul is warning Timothy.

Back to verse 17.

“To those who are wealthy in the present or now age, keep on charging them” (2 negatives): “not to be proud and not to have their hope set upon the uncertainty of wealth but,” (here comes the contrast).

Remember Paul does this a lot of times he'll throw a couple of negatives at you and then he'll turn around and give you the positive.

This is what you should do:

fix your hope, “upon God the one who is continually providing us all things abundantly for our enjoyment.”

Instead of fixing your hope on the *temporary, the material, the wealth*, fix your hope on God and Him alone.

“He is the One who is continually providing us all things abundantly for our enjoyment.”

Now let me give you a verse, Romans 15:13:

“Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.”

**Really, the choice is between the temporal and the eternal.
It's the choice of the here and now as opposed to the here
after. And that which is eternal.**

Paul is saying to Timothy focus upon God.

**Put your whole attention upon Him as the #1 priority in
your life.**

He is the one who's continually providing us all things.

Now what verse does that remind you of?

You think of Philippians 4:19 don't you?

***"My God shall supply all your needs according to His riches
in glory"***

But not all your wants.

All your needs.

And I love Ephesians 3:20:

***"Now unto Him who is able to do exceeding abundantly above
all that we can ask or think."***

He is a great God!

**And He longs and delights and desires to constantly be
providing us all things.**

Back to the end of verse 17.

“Who is continually providing us all things” (how much?) abundantly.

He does it.

He’s a wonderful God.

And He is indeed concerned about us.

And He *“provides all things abundantly”* and can you believe that last phrase is in there?

You didn’t know that a Christian could have fun, did you?

“For our enjoyment.”

It delights His heart that we are enjoying Him and what He has provided. That’s the right attitude.

And so thank Him today.

Now the word *“enjoyment”* only occurs in one other place in the New Testament.

Catch this, why was Moses such an incredible person that God would speak to him face to face? Hebrews 11:25

“Choosing rather to endure ill-treatment with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season.”

You see, Moses made the right choice.

He chose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to be enjoying the pleasures of sin for a season here and now.

And basically the whole premise is you choose one or the other.

You choose to enjoy God or you choose to enjoy the here and now.

And when you choose to enjoy God you get to enjoy the here and now and it's thrown in with it, why?

Listen John 10:10

"The thief comes only to steal, and kill, and destroy; I come that they might have life, and might have it more abundantly."

Now, verse 18: Here is the four-fold strategy of a person who's been blessed with physical success.

Just four things that you need to be doing.

It's the battle plan for a person who needs to exercise a good stewardship as a believer.

Verse 18 *"To be doing good, to be wealthy in good works, to be generous, sharers with others."*

And then #4 is in verse 19.

“Laying away for themselves a good foundation with a view to the future”

Now in the early church in Acts 2:44 we read this:

“And all those who had believed were together, and had all things in common; and they began selling their property and possession, and were sharing them with all, as anyone might have a need.”

And then Acts 4:32:

“And the congregation of those who believed were of one heart and soul; and not one of them claimed that anything belonging to him was his own; but all things were common property to them.”

They were freed up in the financial to minister to each other.

How can I be a person who is filled with good deeds and doing these four things?

Let's look at those for just a minute.

#1: “to be doing good” with what you have.

#2: “to be wealthy in good works.”

You can define that however the Lord speaks to you.

And #3: “to be generous, sharers with others.”

Now those two words “generous” and “sharers with others” only occur here in the New Testament.

So in essence, it’s a picture of someone who’s liberal and generous in giving what he has.

Listen to this statement by Winston Churchill.

**We make a living by what we get,
but we make a life
by what we give.**

(From The On-Purpose Person: Making Your Life Make Sense by Kevin W. McCarthy, p. 117)

**You know, he says it well. We make a living by what we get
but we make a life by what we give.**

**That’s all Paul’s saying. “Be doing good.”
“Be wealthy in good works and
be generous sharers with others.”**

And then the last one is in verse 19, the 4th one.

“Laying away for themselves a good foundation with a view to the future, in order that they may lay hold of that which is truly life.”

I know what you’re thinking.

Financial security.

That is opening up a savings account.

“That is laying away for themselves a good foundation with a view to the future.”

Now isn’t it amazing that we’re so earthbound that we would think that’s the interpretation of that passage?

That is not the interpretation of that passage.

Certainly we need to be fiscally responsible.

And we need to plan for the future.

But remember what Jesus said in the Sermon on the Mount:

Matthew 6:19:

“Don’t lay up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But lay up for yourselves treasure in heaven.”

**And so, what he's saying here is lay a good foundation, why?
Because the storms are going to come.**

Remember when he ends the sermon He says,

"The wise man built his house upon the rock and the foolish man built his house upon the sand."

Lay a good foundation as a good steward.

"Laying away for themselves a good foundation with a view to the future."

Now William Barclay does a fabulous job when it comes to studying words in the text and when he gets to this verse, listen to what he says:

"And they are told that such wise use of wealth will build for them a good foundation in the world to come. As someone put it:" "What I kept, I lost; what I gave, I have."

(p. 159)

And that's what he means here in the fourth part of the strategy in using what God has given me.

Jim Elliot said:

"He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep, to gain what he cannot lose."

Now what's the reason for all of that?

If you follow those four things that we have described, the purpose behind all of those statements is in that next phrase of verse 19.

“In order that they may lay hold of that which is truly life.”

Isn't that interesting?

Laying away so you can lay hold.

And you're *“laying hold of that which is truly life.”*

In Phil. 3:13-14 Paul says:

“I haven't laid hold of it yet but I keep pressing on so that I might lay hold of that.”

There are four things we do:

“we need to be doing good,”

“we need to be wealthy in good works,”

“we need to be generous sharers with others,”

and “we need to be laying away for ourselves a good foundation with a view to the future.

Laying hold of that which is truly life.”

**These last couple of verses are very personal.
And this last exhortation, the fourth of the four
is in this next verse.**

Verse 20.

***“O Timothy, guard the deposit, turning away from profane
and empty talk and contradictions of what is falsely called
knowledge”***

Now Paul says, “O Timothy.”

**I think the reason he called Timothy by his name is because
Paul is saying, *Timothy live up to your name and honor God,*
which means, “Honor God.”**

There in the city of Ephesus and I want you to do 2 things:

1. I want you to “*guard the deposit.*”

“Guard everything I’ve given you from the Scriptures.

Be a faithful expositor of the truth.

Don’t violate the principles of Scripture.

Guard the deposit.”

Isn't that interesting?

Paul's has been talking about wealth and then he turns around and says, *"O by the way, I sure have been making a lot of investments in you young man."*

You guard the deposit that I've placed within you from a spiritual point of view.

And don't let it get away from you.

And I want to tell you one more thing, Timothy, that can distract you real, real bad.

Turn away (present tense) (keep on turning away) from 3 things:

Profane talk, empty talk and contradictions."

In other words, stay by the deposit of the truth but turn away from these other things.

You might recall that we talked about wealth in law #14 and here we are at law #16 and the focus of the passage primarily is not upon money but on young Timothy is taking on the leadership role at the church in Ephesus.

Timothy what do you need to be doing?

These are the things that brought about this 16th law of leadership.

A good leader sticks by his principles and his priorities.

Let's look at how God blessed that with some other people in Scripture.

In Daniel 1:8:

“Daniel purposed in his heart that he wouldn't defile himself with the king's meat.”

He had convictions about what they were eating.

And so Daniel went with that purpose and that principle in mind and he said, “You know, I can't eat this but if you'll let me eat what I want, God's going to bless me.” And God did.

In Daniel 6 they signed a decree that he wasn't supposed to pray but when he found out the edict had been signed, he went home just like he always did and he opened his windows and prayed to heaven three times a day just like he had always done.

He stood by his principles and his priorities.

**Why was Nehemiah such a man blessed?
He stood by his principles and priorities.**

**Don't surrender your principles under the pressures that
come upon you.**

**When the pressure comes to surrender your priorities,
and to surrender your principles, realize you are in dire
straites!**

Matthew 6:33:

***“Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness;
and all these things will be added.”***

Listen to Steven Covey in Principle Centered Leadership:

**“Focusing on alternative centers—work, pleasure, friends,
enemies, spouse, family, self, church, possessions, money,
and so on — weakens and disorients us.**

**For example, if we are focused on the social picture,
we empower circumstances and the opinions of others to
guide and control us.**

**Lacking security and self-esteem, we tend to be emotionally
dependent on others.**

Lacking wisdom, we tend to repeat past mistakes.

Lacking guidance, we tend to follow trends and fail to finish what we start.

Lacking power, we tend to reflect what happens to us and react to external conditions and internal moods.

But when we center our lives on correct principles, (I wished he would have said Jesus Christ) we become more balanced, unified, organized, anchored, and rooted.

We have a foundation for all activities, relationships, and decisions.

We also have a sense of stewardship about everything in our lives, including time, talents, money, possessions, relationships, our families, and our bodies.

We recognize the need to use them for good purposes and, as a steward, to be accountable for their use.

Centering on principles provides sufficient security to not be threatened by change, comparisons, or criticisms; guidance to discover our mission, define our roles, and write our scripts and goals; wisdom to learn from our mistakes and seek continuous improvement; and power to communicate and cooperate, even under conditions of stress and fatigue.” (pp. 21-22)

How do leaders stand by the stuff and they live by their principles and their priorities.

How do you implement that in your life?

How does young Timothy fulfill the mandate of ministry there in Ephesus?

I going to share with you the three D's.

When these things are true you're going to be preparing your priorities and your principles and see them in proper perspective.

1. Delayed gratification.

Be content to delay in view of ultimate gratification.

You might have to go through a long process.

You might have to go through a lot of things.

The delays are in the Father's purpose and plan and the gratification will only be intensified by the delay.

That is a tough thing for baby boomers.

I want it and I want it now.

2. Decide ahead of time.

If you have a plan then you are not going to get blown out of the tub.

Decide what you're going to do in that given situation when it comes.

So when it comes you are putting it on automatic pilot and doing what you've already decided ahead of time to do.

3. Discipline. Just do it! Nike says. Just do it!

Conviction, character, and courage.

It's staying by the stuff.

A good leader sticks by his principles and priorities.

Let's go to Verse 21.

V.21 *"Which certain ones announcing, missed the mark concerning the faith. Grace be with you all."*

A lot of guys are missing the mark today.

In 2 Timothy 4:10 Paul says:

"Demas, has forsaken me because he loved this present world."

Isn't it neat that Paul ends like a southerner.

"Grace be with you all."

The thing that makes that special is, this letter is not just meant for Timothy.

It's "Grace be with you all."

It's a letter to be read in the Ephesian congregation.

It's a letter that describes the absolute qualifications of a person who wants to be a leader.

I hope you will often reflect on these 16 laws of leadership as you test them against our present leadership.

There are 10 lessons that come out of this study.

LESSONS FROM THE PASSAGE:

#1: There is a stewardship and responsibility for the believer who is wealthy.

#2: The person who is wealthy is not to be proud.

#3: Placing our hope in material wealth is like building on the sand.

#4: God is in the business of abundantly providing for us at all times.

#5: The Father's abundant provision is for our enjoyment.

#6: The 4 things that the believer is to be doing with his wealth are:

- 1. to be doing good,**
- 2. to be wealthy in good works,**
- 3. to be generous, sharers with others,**
- 4. laying away for themselves a good foundation.**

#7: A right attitude in the use of our funds is a key to the abundant life.

#8: A good leader sticks by his principles and priorities, even under pressure.

#9: Timothy is challenged and charged to guard the deposit of the truth.

#10: Timothy is challenged and charged to stay away from controversy.

STUDIES IN THE FIRST EPISTLE TO TIMOTHY

PART II - 1 TIMOTHY 4-6

"The Laws of Leadership"

Key verse 4:12: *"Let no one look down on you (think little of) because you are young; but keep on becoming an example of the believers in word, in behavior, in love, in faith, in purity."*

LAW NUMBER SIXTEEN-A Good Leader Sticks by His Principles and Priorities

1 Timothy 6:17-21

Key verse 6:20

Notes

v. 17 To those who are wealthy in the present age (current generation), charge them not to be proud, neither to have their hope set upon the uncertainty of wealth, but upon God the one who is continually providing us all things abundantly for [our] enjoyment.

v. 18 To be doing good, to be wealthy in good works, to be generous, sharers with others.

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v. 20 O Timothy, guard the deposit, turning away from profane and empty talk and contradictions of what is falsely called knowledge—

v. 21 which certain ones announcing, missed the mark concerning the faith. Grace be with you all.

QUESTIONS:

- 1. Read 1 Timothy 6:17-21 and summarize in your own words what Paul is saying in this section.**
- 2. In what two ways is Timothy to charge the wealthy?**
- 3. What is God doing for us, according to verse 17?**
- 4. What three things are they to be doing, according to verse 18?**
- 5. What are they to be "laying away for themselves," according to verse 19?**
- 6. What is Timothy commanded to do, according to verse 20?**
- 7. How did certain ones "miss the mark," according to verse 21?**
- 8. What is Paul's final wish in verse 21?**
- 9. What verse in the study has meant the most to you?**
- 10. What lesson have you learned from this study?**