

STUDIES IN 1 TIMOTHY

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

1 Timothy 6:17-21

Key Verse 6:20: "O Timothy, guard the deposit, turning away from profane and empty talk and contradictions of what is falsely called knowledge--"

TEXT:

v.17 To those who are wealthy in the present age (now 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.

v.19 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.

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.

INTRODUCTION:

A SLOWER GROUP

A first-grader became curious because her father brought home a briefcase full of papers every evening. Her mother explained, "Daddy has so much to do that he can't finish it all at the office. That's why he has to bring work home at night." "Well, then," asked the child innocently, "why don't they put him in a slower group?"

(From InfoSearch 3.0)

QUICK-QUOTE: CHOICES

"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 won't get the benefit of your total attention? You can't concentrate on more than one thing at a time."

--Katherine Hepburn
(in Time, Jun 29, 1992)

(From InfoSearch 3.0)

CLOCK WORK

"We can't slow the clock, but we can make it work for us instead of against us."

We live in a time-conscious culture. Almost every activity is governed by the clock. As Christians we want to use time wisely, as Paul says, "making the most of every opportunity" (Eph. 5:15-16), but we must first debunk the myths that are partly responsible for our hectic schedules.

Myth #1: Your schedule always has room for one more thing.

It is unrealistic to think we have time in unlimited quantities. Physical and emotional energy have limitations, too. Machines may work equally well at midnight or at midmorning, but people don't. A person who is overtired becomes emotionally numb. It is foolish to ignore our God-given needs and rhythms.

Myth #2: Busyness is next to godliness. Everywhere Jesus turned, He was confronted with needs, but He was not harried into trying to meet every one of them. He made time to spend with His disciples, to pray, to rest. Engaging in frantic activity does not make us more acceptable to God.

Here are some suggestions concerning how to say yes to what God wants you to do while saying no to everything else: (1) Evaluate time usage. Wise time choices begin with setting life goals and determining priorities. Keep a record for several days to see how you are actually spending your time,

and then analyze the time log in the light of your list of goals. (2) Eliminate the less important. Cutting down on the number of possessions you have can free up some time. Also, try to focus on a smaller number of activities so you can do them well rather than attempting everything. (3) Plan for family time. Schedule times to be together as a family and one-on-one with each of your children. Be with each other emotionally as well as physically.

"Clock work" by Susan Zitzman. Christian Parenting Today, Jan/Feb, 1992. Pages 57-59.

(From InfoSearch 3.0)

SPIRITUAL BURNOUT

We cannot serve without sensing some stress, but God calls us not to take on so much that we feel overwhelmed.

Burnout occurs in an electrical device when the current flowing through it overloads the circuit and creates too much heat. The same thing can happen to people, too. Burnout is just another word for exhaustion. Spiritual burnout can hit us even when we're doing all the right things for all the right reasons. Our circuits get overloaded when something gets out of balance, and we suddenly feel that we have nothing left to give. It's no wonder we grow weary. The hectic pace of our busy lives makes us more vulnerable to the spiritual battles we must continually wage. If Satan can't get to us through lust or materialism, he tries to turn our virtues into vices.

There is probably no fool-proof formula for overcoming burnout, but here are some practical suggestions for getting a handle on it: (1) Keep your eyes on the end of the race. Focusing on the goal makes today's sacrifices more bearable. (2) Expect God to be faithful. He is able and willing to help. (3) Determine in advance that you will not give in to despair. We can either choose to quit or we can refuse to be held back by limitations. (4) Choose to praise God even when you don't feel like it. (5) Continue to obey God. Be faithful in the disciplines of Bible study and prayer. Get some prayer partners. Read the biography of a great Christian. (6) Reevaluate your priorities and learn to say "no" to some things.

Stress is inevitable in ministry, but God expects us to find the balance by depending on Him for our strength.

"Spiritual burnout: when there's nothing left to give" by Charles Bradley. Decision, Feb 1991. Pages 14-15+.

(From InfoSearch 3.0)

Our 16th Law of Leadership is:

"A GOOD LEADER STICKS BY HIS PRINCIPLES AND PRIORITIES."

When the heat is turned up and the pressure is at its greatest, a good leader stays by his principles and priorities.

(The De-Valuing of America: The Fight for Our Culture and Our Children by William J. Bennett)

George Washington warned in his Farewell Address, "Of all the dispositions and habits which lead to political prosperity, religion and morality are indispensable supports. . . . And let us with caution indulge the supposition that morality can be maintained without religion." Our other Founders agreed. John Adams, a Massachusetts Unitarian, agreed in no uncertain terms: "Our Constitution was made only for a moral and religious people. It is wholly inadequate to the government of any other." James Madison, an Episcopalian, insisted that "before any man can be considered as a member of Civil Society, he must be considered as a subject of the Governor of the Universe." And even Thomas Jefferson, the great deist who was deeply skeptical of sectarianism in any form, agreed. He asked, "Can the liberties of a nation be thought secure when we have removed their only firm basis, a conviction in the minds of the people that these liberties are the gift of God?" Religion, he concluded, should be regarded as "a supplement to law in the government of men," and as "the alpha and omega of the moral law."

From Sam Adams to Patrick Henry to Benjamin Franklin to Alexander Hamilton, all of the Founders intended religion to provide a moral anchor for our liberty in democracy. And all would be puzzled were they to return to modern-day America.

p. 206-7

This side of Washington was captured best not by any of the "Washington books" but by C.S. Lewis's description of Hell in the Screwtape Letters:

We must picture Hell as a state where everyone is perpetually concerned about his own dignity and advancement, where everyone has a grievance, and where everyone lives the deadly serious passions of envy, self-importance, and resentment. . . . On the surface, manners are normally suave. Rudeness to one's superiors would obviously be suicidal; rudeness to one's equals might put them on their guard before you were ready to spring your mine. For of course "Dog eat dog" is the principle of the whole organisation. Everyone wishes everyone else's discrediting, demotion and ruin; everyone is an expert in the confidential report, the pretended alliance, the stab in the back. Over all this their good manners, their expressions of grave respect, their "tributes" to one another's invaluable services form a thin crust. Every now and then it gets punctured, and the scalding lava of their hatred spurts out.
pp. 231-32

As we approach these last 5 verses in the Epistle of 1 Timothy, we need to remind ourselves that we are in a section where Paul is giving his final exhortations to his young understudy and pastor of the Ephesian church.

There are 4 EXHORTATIONS that are given from verses 11-21:

EXHORTATION #1 is in chapter 6:11, 12:

FLEE, FOLLOW, FIGHT, AND LAY HOLD OF.

EXHORTATION #2 is in chapter 6:13-16:

KEEP THE COMMANDMENT STAINLESS.

EXHORTATION #3 is in chapter 6:17-19. It has to do with:

THE DANGERS AND DUTIES THAT COME FROM RICHES.

EXHORTATION #4 is in chapter 6:20, 21. Here Paul is telling Timothy to:

GUARD THE DEPOSIT.

We will be considering these last 2 exhortations in verses 17-21.

William Barclay says:

Sometimes we think of the early Church as being composed entirely of poor people and of slaves. Here we see that even as early as this the Church had its wealthy members. They are not condemned for being wealthy; they are not told to give all their wealth away. What they are told is what not to do, and what to do with their riches.
p. 158

Hiebert says:

In verse 9 above Paul dealt with those who "are minded to be rich"; to complete the subject, he now deals with those who are rich. The intervening paragraph shows that his warning to the former class does not imply any censure of the latter class. They are a distinct group in his mind. He names the group he has in view (v. 17), sets forth the contents of the charge to be given them (vv. 17, 18), and adds an encouragement in the carrying out of the charge (v. 19).
p. 120

Demarest says:

Have you ever added a postscript to a letter? And even a post-postscript? Yes? Then you can readily identify with these added sentences to the letter.
p. 227

Guthrie says:

The preceding section was parenthetical for the theme of riches is now resumed, although with a different purpose. The earlier section concerned those aspiring to be rich, whereas this deals with those already rich. It should be noted that such digression is characteristic of Paul's style.
p. 117

Lenski says:

When Paul says in v. 9, "they who intend to be rich," we automatically think also of some who actually are rich. We think also of such that never "intend" to accumulate wealth with an intent such as Paul describes--perhaps they are rich through an inheritance, because of natural prosperity in business, or in some perfectly proper way. What about these? No, they have not slipped Paul's mind, he takes care of them before he closes, has intended to do so all along, does so now.
pp. 726-27

Lange says:

The Apostle might have fitly closed the Epistle with this doxology. But he once more turns back to the topic, which had been interrupted by his digression (verses 11-16). He had named the dangers of those who would be rich; he now addresses those who are rich in worldly goods. But he at once shows the merely relative worth of their wealth in calling it of "this world."
p. 74

Paul, back in verses 3-10 of chapter 6, is dealing with riches in relationship to the false teachers.

Here, he is dealing with riches in relationship to the church.

v.17 To those who are wealthy in the present age (now 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.

Guthrie says:

The approach to wealth is strikingly moderate. There is no suggestion of denunciation. Rich men must carefully avoid two perils: (a) loftiness of mind, and (b) too much dependence on wealth.
p. 117

Demarest says:

The first postscript suggests that Paul realizes that while he had written about the dangers of loving money, he had not addressed those who were already rich as directly as he wished. While the early churches consisted mostly of people who were poor, there were some believers of wealth. They are given four specific commands: they are not to be haughty; they are to trust in God, not in their wealth; they are to do good; and they are to be rich in good works, giving and sharing.
p. 227

"TO THOSE WHO ARE WEALTHY IN THE PRESENT AGE (NOW GENERATION), CHARGE THEM."

This is a present imperative and can be translated:

KEEP ON CHARGING THEM.

Hiebert says:

"Charge them that are rich" clearly implies that there were wealthy members in the church at this time. No blame is attached to that fact, for they may be rich through an inheritance, natural prosperity in business, or some other perfectly proper way. Christianity is not opposed to believers being rich, but it is vitally concerned that they have the right attitude toward their riches and make proper use of it.
p. 120

Wiersbe points out:

Paul had already written about the danger of the love of money, but he added a special "charge" for Timothy to give to the rich. We may not think that this charge applies to us, but it does. After all, our standard of living today would certainly make us "rich" in the eyes of Timothy's congregation!
p. 86

Hendriksen says:

Not those who are eager to become rich, as in verse 9, are here addressed, but those who are actually rich. By immediately adding, "in terms of this present age" (an expression used only here and in II Tim. 4:10; Titus 2:12), the apostle is already beginning to fix the mind of the reader and hearer upon the transitory character of earthly wealth. He means, "this present era which will soon be past."
p. 209

The Bible Knowledge Commentary says:

Paul had dealt with those who did not possess wealth but who deeply desired it (vv. 3-10). Now he addressed these who had it and instructed them as to what their attitude should be toward it. They are not to be arrogant--as if their wealth is deserved.

1 Corinthians 4:7, 8

For who regards you as superior? And what do you have that you did not receive? But if you did receive it, why do you boast as if you had not received it? You are already filled, you have already become rich, you have become kings without us; and I would indeed that you had become kings so that we also might reign with you.

1 Samuel 2:7

The Lord sends poverty and wealth;
he humbles and he exalts.

"TO THOSE WHO ARE WEALTHY IN THE PRESENT AGE (NOW GENERATION), KEEP ON CHARGING THEM":

1. "NOT TO BE PROUD"

Hiebert says:

They must avoid the temptation to think themselves superior to the poor. "The pride of purse is not only vulgar, it is sinful" (Bernard). They also stand in danger of having a wrong attitude toward their wealth, "nor have their hope set on the uncertainty of riches." A notorious characteristic of wealth is that it so often takes wings and flies away, as many a formerly rich man has regretfully discovered. Hence to have placed and to continue to place their hope (perfect tense) on their wealth is to repose their hope on the very quality of wealth which least justifies it. Wealth is not a basis for a sure hope. "But," in passing to the positive, they are to set their hope "on God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy." The unchanging God is the only sure basis for hope.
p. 121

Barnes says:

The idea is, that they should not value themselves on account of their wealth, or look down with pride and arrogance on their inferiors. They should not suppose that they are any better men, or any nearer heaven, because they are wealthy. Property really makes no distinction in the great things that pertain to character and salvation. It does not necessarily make one wise, or learned, or great, or good.
p. 202

The word translated PROUD or HAUGHTY is used only here and in:

Romans 11:20

Quite right, they were broken off for their unbelief, but you stand by your faith. Do not be conceited, but fear;

Wiersbe says:

If wealth makes a person proud, then he understands neither himself nor his wealth. "But thou shalt remember the Lord thy God; for it is He that gives thee power to get wealth" (Deut. 8:18). We are not owners; we are stewards. If we have wealth, it is by the goodness of God and not because of any special merits on our part. The possessing of material wealth ought to humble a person and cause him to glorify God, not himself.
p. 86

"TO THOSE WHO ARE WEALTHY IN THE PRESENT AGE (NOW GENERATION), KEEP ON CHARGING THEM":

1. "NOT TO BE PROUD,"
2. "NEITHER TO HAVE THEIR HOPE SET UPON THE UNCERTAINTY OF WEALTH."

Paul has given 2 NEGATIVE COMMANDS here in the charge being given to them:

1. THEY ARE "NOT TO BE PROUD,"
2. THEY ARE NOT "TO HAVE THEIR HOPE SET UPON THE UNCERTAINTY OF WEALTH."

Lenski says:

Earthly riches may disappear overnight or may dwindle and melt away like snow in the sun. To predicate the uncertainty of the wealth rather than of its owner is exact language. Sure hope must have a sure and certain basis, and wealth is not such a basis.
p. 729

Barnes says:

A man whose house is in flames, or who is shipwrecked, or whose child lies dying, or who is himself in the agonies of death, can derive no advantage from the fact that he is richer than other men; . . .
pp. 202-3

Barnes says further:

A man who is rich, is very liable to "trust" in his riches, and to suppose that he needs nothing more; comp. Luke xii. 19. He feels that he is not dependent on his fellow-men, and he is very likely to feel that he is not dependent on God. It is for this cause that God has recorded so many solemn declarations in his word respecting the instability of riches (comp. Prov. xxiii 5), and that he is furnishing so many instructive lessons in his providence, showing how easily riches may suddenly vanish away.
p. 203

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.

Luke 12:19-21

And I will say to my soul, "Soul, you have many goods laid up for many years to come; take your ease, eat, drink and be merry." But God said to him, "You fool! This very night your soul is required of you; and now who will own what you have prepared?" So is the man who lays up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God.

RICHERS AND FAITH

Command those who are rich in this present age not to . . .
trust in uncertain riches but in the living God.

1 Tim. 6:17

Black Monday, the day in October 1987 when the American stock market fell more than 500 points, hit investors hard.

The crash made a lot of people reassess their relationship to money. The wise were again reminded that money is a transient and disappointing god.

James said that the rich person will wither as grass in the burning heat (1:11). He was no doubt referring to the strong, hot, dry wind from the south that would pass through Palestine. It would wither a field of bright flowers in a few hours. So too, the life of a rich man is but a brief moment in time. His life and his riches are soon gone--and with them an unfounded faith.

No matter how long a person may live or how rich he may be, money cannot bring him happiness. In his book For Better or For Worse, Walter Maier included this story: "A rich man had committed suicide. In his pockets were found two items: \$30,000 in cash and a letter. The letter read in part: 'I have discovered during my life that piles of money do not bring happiness. I am taking my life because I can no longer stand the solitude and boredom. When I was an ordinary workman in New York, I was happy. Now that I possess millions, I am infinitely sad and prefer death.'"

Let us learn the lesson of the Scriptures. May we resist the temptation to put our trust in our wealth. Let us trust in the eternal, everlasting God. --D.C.E.

The riches of this world are vain,
They vanish in a day;
But sweet the treasures of God's love--
They never pass away.

--H.G.B.

**Hold lightly to the things of earth
but tightly to the things of heaven.**

(From Our Daily Bread, September 8)

Lock says:

Alas, alas, I have placed my hopes on that which has failed me!
p. 74

"TO THOSE WHO ARE WEALTHY IN THE PRESENT AGE (NOW GENERATION), KEEP ON CHARGING THEM":

1. NOT TO BE PROUD,
2. NOT 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.

The word "BUT" forms the contrast and gives us the positive statement here with regard to the Christian's relationship to his wealth.

They were to be those who had their hope set upon God.

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.

1 John 2:17

And the world is passing away, and also its lusts; but the one who does the will of God abides forever.

It is the choice between the temporary and the eternal here that is described in this passage.

The Bible Knowledge Commentary says:

This is perhaps the greatest temptation to wealthy Christians into which category most modern western believers fit. Christians should put their hope in God who is the source of material things. Again, material possessions are among those things God has given for our enjoyment.

Hendriksen says:

This God is ever true to his promise. He is the God of love. He richly provides. Note play on words: "As for those (who are) rich, charge them . . . not to have their hope set on . . . riches, but on God, who richly provides." p. 209

Wiersbe says:

Yes, the word enjoy is in the Bible! In fact, one of the recurring themes in Ecclesiastes is, "Enjoy the blessings of life now, because life will end one day" (2:24; 3:12-15, 22; 5:18-20; 9:7-10; 11:9-10). This is not sinful "hedonism," living for the pleasures of life. It is simply enjoying all that God gives us for His glory. p. 87

Waiting for Perfection

Hope in God, who richly provides us with everything
for our enjoyment. --1 Timothy 6:17 (NIV)

As I was walking into our office, a friend complimented me on my bright fuchsia suit. It was one I had longed for and looked at many times before finally buying it. I told her that I had been waiting to find the perfect shoes and blouse to wear with the suit but had finally decided I would not wait any longer, even if everything did not match perfectly.

My friend said, "That decision could apply to a lot of things, not just what you wear." I saw how right she was. The attitude that all the items in the outfit had to match perfectly before I could wear it had kept me from enjoying it. I realized there had been many times in my life when my search for perfection left me hanging just like that suit in my closet. Often, waiting for perfection can rob us of the joys that can be found in daily living. The search for perfection in ourselves and in others can keep us from relating in meaningful ways to each other and to God. Ironically, it is the perfecting love of God that we deny ourselves when we think we must be perfect before we can be in God's loving presence!

Now when I select that brightly-colored suit to wear, I always smile and remember that God loves me perfectly in all my imperfections. To me, the unconditional love that God offers to each of us is the greatest wonder of all.

PRAYER: Loving God, help us to accept ourselves and others and not to demand perfection. Amen.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

If we wait for perfection before enjoying life, we will never enjoy life.

Debra Keller Robinson (Tennessee)

PRAYER FOCUS: Perfectionists

Notice in the passage the focus is upon God. He is:

"THE ONE WHO IS CONTINUALLY PROVIDING US ALL THINGS."

Philippians 4:19

And my God shall supply all your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus.

Matthew 6:32, 33

For all these things the Gentiles eagerly seek; for your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added to you.

Ephesians 3:20

Now to Him who is able to do exceeding abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us,

Our text tells us He is the God "WHO IS CONTINUALLY PROVIDING US ALL THINGS ABUNDANTLY."

Colossians 3:16

Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you, with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God.

This wonderful God of ours is:

"THE ONE WHO IS CONTINUALLY PROVIDING US ALL THINGS ABUNDANTLY."

His reason for doing that is:

"FOR [OUR] ENJOYMENT."

This word is used only here and in:

Hebrews 11:25

choosing rather to endure ill-treatment with the people of God, than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin;

The choice here is choosing whether to be satisfied with those things which we personally try to provide for ourselves in the flesh through financial security, or to choose to live life God's way. With His priorities and principles governing our actions and attitudes, we can watch Him continually providing for us all things abundantly and doing this for our enjoyment.

John 10:10

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

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

Paul lays out a 4-FOLD STRATEGY for those who find themselves wealthy with regard to material things in this present life--how they can be faithful in this stewardship and what their responsibility should be in view of their blessings:

- 1.THEY ARE TO BE "DOING GOOD,"
- 2."WEALTHY IN GOOD WORKS,"
- 3."TO BE GENEROUS, SHARERS WITH OTHERS,"
- 4."LAYING AWAY FOR THEMSELVES A GOOD FOUNDATION WITH A VIEW TO THE FUTURE."

Wiersbe points out:

It is possible to be "rich in the world [age]" (1 Tim. 6:17) and be poor in the next. It is also possible to be poor in this world and rich in the next. Jesus talked about both (Luke 16:19-31). But a believer can be rich in this world and also rich in the next if he uses what he has to honor God (Matt. 6:19-34). In fact, a person who is poor in this world can use even his limited means to glorify God, and discover great reward in the next world.
p. 86

Hendriksen says:

What should be the attitude of the rich is continued, with this difference: in verse 17b their proper attitude toward God has been pointed out; now in verse 18 their correct relation toward other people, particularly toward other believers is set forth.
p. 210

Hiebert says:

The duties they are to fulfill, v. 18. That Paul is not thinking of any selfish gratification in the use of wealth is shown by the positive duties he sets before the rich. Four duties, named in pairs, are indicated. "That they do good, that they be rich in good works." The present tense names them as continuing duties. They are to live lives of holy beneficence and are to use their wealth as a means for the performance of noble deeds in abundance. This is the way in which the rich may truly enjoy their wealth. The second pair gives specific points, "that they be ready to distribute, willing to communicate." The former is literally "to be sharing well or generously with." It points to the personal attribute of being a generous, liberal giver, sharing with others that which they have received from God.
pp. 121-22

Guthrie says:

Positive and practical demands are made upon rich men. Their actions are to be characterized by goodness and generosity, both of which are described actively and passively. They are to do good and to be rich in good works. They are, further, to be generous and to share with others.
p. 118

Hendriksen says:

A rich church-member should strive to be rich in noble deeds, in "beautiful works," as was Mary of Bethany. He should be quick to give, being ever ready to share what he has with others who belong to the fellowship or community of believers in Christ. He should do this in the spirit of Acts 2:42-44; 4:34-37.
p. 210

Acts 2:44, 45

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

Acts 4:32-37

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. And with great power the apostles were giving witness to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and abundant grace was upon them all. For there was not a needy person among them, for all who were owners of land or houses would sell them and bring the proceeds of the sales, and lay them at the apostles' feet; and they would be distributed to each, as any had need. And Joseph, a Levite of Cyprian birth, who was also called Barnabas by the apostles (which translated means, Son of Encouragement), and who owned a tract of land, sold it and brought the money and laid it at the apostles' feet.

John 12:1-7

Jesus, therefore, six days before the Passover, came to Bethany where Lazarus was, whom Jesus had raised from the dead. So they made Him a supper there, and Martha was serving; but Lazarus was one of those reclining at the table with Him. Mary therefore took a pound of very costly perfume of pure nard, and anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped His feet with her hair; and the house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume. But Judas Iscariot, one of His disciples, who was intending to betray Him, said, "Why was this perfume not sold for three hundred denarii, and given to poor people?" Now he said this, not because he was concerned about the poor, but because he was a thief, and as he had the money box, he used to pilfer what was put into it. Jesus therefore said, "Let her alone, in order that she may keep it for the day of My burial.

Our text tells us:

- 1.THEY ARE "TO BE DOING GOOD" WITH THEIR WEALTH,
- 2.THEY ARE "TO BE WEALTHY IN GOOD WORKS."

2 Corinthians 8:9

For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sake He became poor, that you through His poverty might become rich.

2 Corinthians 6:10

as sorrowful yet always rejoicing, as poor yet making many rich, as having nothing yet possessing all things.

HOW TO BE RICH AND SUCCESSFUL

But godliness with contentment is great gain.

1 Timothy 6:6

Some rich and successful people don't have much money and aren't famous. Leslie Flynn told how the leaders of an alumni association discovered this through a questionnaire sent to a missionary in Colombia, South America. Here are some of the questions they asked and the answers they received: (1) Do you own your own home? Yes. (He had paid the tribes people \$125 for his palm-thatched dwelling in the Amazon basin.) (2) Do you rent quarters elsewhere? Yes. (He and his family occasionally stayed in a house where missionaries were crowded together for conferences.) (3) Do you own a boat? Yes. (He had a dugout canoe tied up at the riverbank below his house.) (4) Do you plan to travel abroad during the next 2 years? Yes. (He and his family were going home on furlough.) (5) What is your income? Under \$10,000 per year. (6) How many automobiles do you own? None.

Flynn suggests that the computer probably spit out an analysis with the notation, "Data incompatible." But this man is both rich and successful! He possesses great spiritual wealth as a child of God and as a citizen of heaven. He is successful because he is doing the work to which God called him--a work of eternal value.

You can be like that missionary no matter what you do or how much you earn. Dedicate yourself and all you have to God. Then make it your sole purpose to do His will. You too can be rich and successful. --H.V.L.

You will surely find at the journey's end,
Whatever the world may afford,
That things fade away, and success is seen
In the life that has served the Lord.

--Anon.

To be rich in God is better than to be rich in goods.

(From Our Daily Bread, March 24)

The Bible Knowledge Commentary says:

Yet Christians must not merely consume material possessions selfishly. Possessions are to be shared with those who have less. Thus Timothy was to charge the well-off:

- (1) to do good,
- (2) to be rich not in money but in good deeds.

The wealthy should make every effort to be generous and willing to share what they have. Wherein the transient is exchanged for the eternal.

In this 18th verse we have learned that WEALTHY BELIEVERS are:

- 1."TO BE DOING GOOD,"
- 2."TO BE WEALTHY IN GOOD WORKS,"
- 3."TO BE GENEROUS, SHARERS WITH OTHERS."

There are 2 WORDS here that occur only here in the New Testament:

- 1."GENEROUS,"
- 2.The word we have translated:
"SHARERS WITH OTHERS."

It is a picture of someone who is liberal and generous in giving of what they have.

I found this little statement on the top of a letter that was wrapped around a generous gift to the Ministries:

What the heart gives away is never gone;
It is kept in the hearts of others.

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

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

Winston Churchill

p. 117

"On-Purpose Persons seek their true successes in people, relationships, faith, love, and service--never in things. Ultimately, we are each responsible for defining our own standard for success. Some persons place it in dollars earned or possessions owned. Quite different people strive for a higher call. Their success is measured in terms of lives saved, minds taught, people served, and love given."
p. 116

v.19 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.

We come now to the 4TH AND FINAL STATEMENT OF STEWARDSHIP FOR WEALTHY CHRISTIANS.

The 1st 3 were seen in verse 18:

- 1."TO BE DOING GOOD,"
- 2."TO BE WEALTHY IN GOOD WORKS,"
- 3."TO BE GENEROUS, SHARERS WITH OTHERS."

And now:

- 4."LAYING AWAY FOR THEMSELVES A GOOD FOUNDATION WITH A VIEW TO THE FUTURE."

Like the words "GENEROUS" and "SHARERS WITH OTHERS" back in verse 18, the word for "LAYING AWAY" is only here in the New Testament.

One is reminded of the Sermon on the Mount here in several of the phrases that occur in this 19th verse:

Matthew 6:19-21

Do not lay up for yourselves treasures upon 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 or steal; for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

Luke 12:33, 34

Sell your possessions and give to charity; make yourselves purses which do not wear out, an unfailing treasure in heaven, where no thief comes near, nor moth destroys. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

Luke 18:22

And when Jesus heard this, He said to him, "One thing you still lack; sell all that you possess, and distribute it to the poor, and you shall have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me."

(Men Who Win: Pursuing the Ultimate Prize
by Steven J. Lawson)

Jesus saw through the outer facade into his heart. To the greed. To the materialism. To the worldliness. To the self-centeredness. What Jesus saw was a bankrupt heart. Empty and void.

With the skill of a deft surgeon, Jesus cuts to the real issue of this man's heart: "One thing you still lack; sell all that you possess, and distribute it to the poor, and you shall have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me."

No, Jesus was not saying he must buy his way to Heaven.

This man's problem was that money and power had become his master. His god. His life pursuit. Jesus was saying, "You must change ships in midstream and follow a new Master. I must become your new Number One. Reassign your life and all your possessions under My authority."

Or it's no deal.

This rich yuppie first looked at his money. Then at Christ. Back to his money. Then back to Christ. Which would it be? It was a moment of decision. Who would be his God? Money or the Master?

The decision was cast. And money and power won.

This young exec turned on his heels and vanished, leaving sad and grieved. His face fell, dejected. Why? Because he could not have it both ways. His money was too much to give up.

Jesus watched him as he faded into the horizon and turned to His disciples saying, "How hard it is for those who are wealthy to enter the kingdom of God!" (Luke 18:24).

Yes, it is hard for the rich to be saved. Hard because they have more "things" to forsake. Hard because they have to stand in line like everyone else and receive a free gift.

Hard because they are more tied to this world. Hard because it is hard to forfeit power and control.

How hard?

"For it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God," Jesus said.

Now, that is hard. Hard, as in impossible. Camels don't fit through sewing needles. Unless it is in the movie Honey, I Shrunk the Camel.

It is impossible for anyone to be saved who wants to keep control of his life and money. Impossible. I-M-P-O-S-S-I-B-L-E!

p. 53

"LAYING AWAY FOR THEMSELVES A GOOD FOUNDATION WITH A VIEW TO THE FUTURE."

Lock suggests:

The thoughts of the true treasure and the true foundation lie close together in the Sermon on the Mount.
p. 75

The Bible Knowledge Commentary suggests this by saying:

Such eternal treasure becomes a firm foundation for the future--recalling in a mixed metaphor, perhaps another of the Lord's teachings (Matt. 7:24-27, Luke 6:47-49): wealthy Christians should invest their riches for eternity.

Luke 6:47-49

Everyone who comes to Me, and hears My words, and acts upon them, I will show you whom he is like: he is like a man building a house, who dug deep and laid a foundation upon the rock; and when a flood rose, the torrent burst against that house and could not shake it, because it had been well built. But the one who has heard, and has not acted accordingly, is like a man who built a house upon the ground without any foundation; and the torrent burst against it and immediately it collapsed, and the ruin of that house was great.

Matthew 7:24-27

Therefore everyone who hears these words of Mine, and acts upon them, may be compared to a wise man, who built his house upon the rock. And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and burst against that house; and yet it did not fall, for it had been founded upon the rock. And everyone who hears these words of Mine, and does not act upon them, will be like a foolish man, who built his house upon the sand. And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and burst against that house; and it fell, and great was its fall.

Hiebert says:

[The 19th verse is] The encouragement in carrying out the charge. They are to find encouragement to persevere in such a life of active beneficence from the fact of the reward thus secured for the future. "Laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come." By their use of their wealth for good deeds they are "laying up" or accumulating spiritual treasures for themselves in Heaven. "Earthly wealth, thus transmuted into heavenly riches, is gathered as an indestructible treasure awaiting the soul in the future world" (Harvey). The treasures thus stored up form a "good foundation," a solid and stable investment for future rewards.

p. 122

Barnes explains:

The meaning of this verse is, that they were to make such a use of their property that it would contribute to their eternal welfare. It might be the means of exalted happiness and honour in heaven, if they would so use it as not to interfere with religion in the soul, and so as to do the most good possible.

p. 203

Lange says:

St. Paul makes clear, that through such works of love we promote our own eternal interests. Our action toward others is a treasure for ourselves. It is obvious that spiritual treasures are meant. . . .

p. 74

Barclay puts it this way:

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

"IN GOD WE TRUST"

Command those who are rich . . . not to . . . trust in uncertain riches but in the living God. 1 Timothy 6:17

The first U.S. coin to bear the inscription "In God We Trust" was a 2-cent piece minted in 1864. The idea for having a motto originated with a Pennsylvania minister who suggested it to Salmon Portland Chase, Secretary of the Treasury under Abraham Lincoln. Chase, a deeply God-fearing man, asked James Polloch, director of the Mint, to come up with appropriate words. In a letter to him, Chase wrote, "No nation can be strong except in the strength of God, or safe except in His defense. The trust of our people in God should be declared on our national coins." And so the motto "In God We Trust" was born.

For millions of people, a more accurate motto might be, "In goods we trust." The material things money can buy have become such an important part of our lives that God is pushed into the background.

In today's Scripture, the rich are commanded to be humble and to trust the living God rather than the wealth they have accumulated. The enjoyment of material things is not wrong, but it must not become life's primary goal. Instead, we must become rich in good works by sharing.

Maybe that motto, "In God We Trust," is meant to be a daily reminder, especially to us in prosperous America. We should make sacrifices in order to help starving people in drought-stricken areas of the world and share with the poor and needy in our own neighborhood. That would be one way of showing that our trust is not in the almighty dollar but in the Almighty God.

--D.J.D.

Not in having or receiving
But in giving there is bliss;
He who has no other pleasure
Ever may rejoice in this.

--Anon.

**Riches are a blessing only to those
who make them a blessing to others.**

(From Our Daily Bread, June 14)

Lord," I said, "I want to be your man, not my own.
 So to you I give my money, my car--even my home."
 Then, smug and content, I relaxed with a smile
 And whispered to God, "I bet it's been a while,
 Since anyone has given so much--so freely?"
 His answer surprised me. He replied, "Not really."

"Not a day has gone by since the beginning of time,
 That someone hasn't offered meager nickels and dimes,
 Golden altars and crosses, contributions and penance,
 Stone monuments and steeples; but why not repentance?"

"Your lips know no prayers. Your eyes, no compassion.
 But you will go to church (when church-going's in
 fashion).

"Just give me a tear--a heart ready to mold.
 And I'll give you a mission, a message so bold--
 That a fire will be stirred where there was only death,
 And your heart will be flamed by my life and my breath."

I stuck my hands in my pockets and kicked at the dirt.
 It's tough to be corrected (I guess my feelings were hurt)
 But it was worth the struggle to realize the thought.
 That the cross isn't for sale and Christ's blood can't be bought.

It is Jim Elliot who said:

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

"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."

The PURPOSE behind these 4 previous statements is now here
 recorded:

All of it is "IN ORDER THAT THEY MAY LAY HOLD OF THAT WHICH
 IS TRULY LIFE."

They are to be "LAYING AWAY" in the 1st part of verse 19,

"IN ORDER THAT THEY MAY LAY HOLD" in the latter part of the
 verse.

Whereas Paul gives to the believer:

1. the RIGHT FEELINGS ABOUT WEALTH in verse 17,
2. and the RIGHT USE OF WEALTH in verse 18,

he is now giving:

3. the RIGHT AIM FOR WEALTH in verse 19.

Colossians 3:1, 2

If then you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth.

"IN ORDER THAT THEY MAY LAY HOLD."

1 Timothy 6:12

Fight the good fight of faith; take hold of the eternal life to which you were called and confessed the good confession before many witnesses.

Philippians 3:12-14

Not that I have already obtained it, or have already become perfect, but I press on in order that I may lay hold of that for which also I was laid hold of by Christ Jesus. Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet; but one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

The Bible Knowledge Commentary says:

The alluring but vain and plastic substitutes for life, supplied by an unhealthy attachment to material things, pale into worthlessness when compared with that life which is found in Jesus Christ.

Matthew 16:24-26

Then Jesus said to His disciples, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. For whoever wishes to save his life shall lose it; but whoever loses his life for My sake shall find it. For what will a man be profited, if he gains the whole world, and forfeits his soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?"

Jeremiah 9:23-24

This is what the Lord says:

"Let not the wise man boast of his wisdom
or the strong man boast of his strength
or the rich man boast of his riches,
but let him who boasts boast about this:
that he understands and knows me,
that I am the Lord, who exercises kindness,
justice and righteousness on earth,
for in these I delight,"
declares the Lord.

Hiebert points out:

They also give us the assurance of a glorious future consummation, "that they may lay hold on the life which is life indeed." As in 6:12, the verb "lay hold" is aorist and takes us to the final realization of "the life which is life indeed." The manuscript authority is strongly in favor of the adverb "really" or "indeed" instead of the adjective "eternal" used in the King James Version. "The contrast is thus between selfish, worldly living as not real life, and unselfish, beneficent living as that which is true life, in its proper idea and end" (Harvey). "The life which is life indeed" has its beginning on this side of the grave and finds its consummation on the other side of the grave.
p. 122

Guthrie says:

The concluding clause (that they may lay hold on eternal life) is closely linked with the similar phrase in verse 12, but with an interesting variation. The Greek must be rendered 'life which is life indeed,' bringing out vividly its contrast with life propped up by so uncertain a support as riches.
p. 118

Lange says:

The attainment of a true life is thus the highest end, which the rich must seek by the wise and worthy use of his wealth.
p. 74

Wiersbe says:

Riches can lure a person into a make-believe world of shallow pleasure. But riches plus God's will can introduce a person to life that is real and ministry that is lasting.
p. 87

Real and true life is NOT in material wealth.

(The Not-So-Compulsive Woman by Sandra Simpson LeSourd)

The wording on the T-shirts that Edith Marshall and I like to wear when we minister to women has proven magnificently true: It's Never Too Late to Have A Happy Childhood.

True--and vitally important. There is great healing power in childlike joy and abandon. Thinking back to my own childhood, I am only too aware of how unacceptable it was in many of our families of origin to be either childlike or joyful.
p. 145

(Laugh Again by Charles R. Swindoll)

As I attempt to probe the mind of Paul, trying to find some common denominator, some secret clue to his joy, I have to conclude that it was his confidence in God. To Paul, God was in full control of everything. Everything! If hardship came, God permitted it. If pain dogged his steps, it was only because God allowed it. If he was under arrest, God still remained the sovereign director of his life. If there seemed to be no way out, God knew he was pressed. If things broke open and all pressure was relieved, God was responsible.

My point? God is no distant deity but a constant reality, a very present help whenever needs occur. So? So live like it. And laugh like it! Paul did. While he lived, he drained every drop of joy out of every day that passed.
pp. 26-27

(Over the Edge and Back by Joe White)

I'm just so happy I can't explain it. I have tears in my eyes, yet I'm smiling my mouth off! Our God is truly an awesome God!
p. 116

(The Signature of Jesus: On the Pages of Our Lives
by Brennan Manning)

Here is the root and source of Christian joy, mirth, and laughter. It is why theologian Robert Hotchkins can insist: "Christians ought to be celebrating constantly. We ought to be preoccupied with parties, banquets, feasts, and merriment. We ought to give ourselves over to veritable orgies of joy because of our belief in resurrection. We ought to attract people to our faith quite literally by the fun there is in being a Christian. Unfortunately, however, we too readily become somber, serious, and pompous. We fly in the face of our own tradition because we are afraid of wasting time or getting attached. In the words of Teresa of Avila, 'from silly devotions and sour-faced saints, spare us, O Lord.'" p. 103

Jim and Ann Austin have been good friends for several years. They serve on our board of directors. Jim and Ann have 2 boys, James and Luke.

Ann was telling me that she would never forget when Jim would go to the nursery to pick up baby James. He would always come through the door and say, "Where is James my man?" James, with his hands full of toys, would throw them into the air, race toward Jim, and leap into his arms.

This is just a small picture of what it is going to be like when we are caught home to be with our Lord. All of the things that seem so important to us and which tie us here to earth will immediately be thrown into the air as we race toward our blessed Lord and the summons He has made to call us home.

If we can just remember that when it comes to our PRINCIPLES and PRIORITIES, we will keep them straight by recognizing what a proper Christian attitude ought to be toward material things.

We have learned 4 THINGS in these verses:

1. "TO BE DOING GOOD,"
2. "TO BE WEALTHY IN GOOD WORKS,"
3. "TO BE GENEROUS, SHARERS WITH OTHERS."
4. "LAYING AWAY FOR OURSELVES A GOOD FOUNDATION WITH A VIEW TO THE FUTURE."

When we fulfill this 4-fold mandate, we then are those who are:

"LAYING HOLD OF THAT WHICH IS TRULY LIFE."

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

Paul has a FINAL, 2-FOLD CHARGE for his young understudy Timothy:

"O TIMOTHY":

1. "GUARD THE DEPOSIT,"
2. "TURNING AWAY FROM" 3 THINGS:
 - (1) "PROFANE" TALK,
 - (2) "EMPTY TALK,"
 - (3) "CONTRADICTIONS."

1 Timothy 5:21

I solemnly charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus and the elect angels, that these things you are to guard without showing prejudice, doing nothing in a spirit of partiality.

2 Timothy 1:12, 14

For this reason I also suffer these things, but I am not ashamed; for I know whom I have believed and I am convinced that He is able to guard what I have entrusted to Him until that day.

Guard, through the Holy Spirit who dwells in us, the treasure which has been entrusted to you.

"O TIMOTHY, GUARD THE DEPOSIT."

1 Thessalonians 2:4

but just as we have been approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel, so we speak, not as pleasing men but God, who examines our hearts.

It is the DEPOSIT OF THE TRUTH.

Titus 1:9

holding fast the faithful word which is in accordance with the teaching, that he may be able both to exhort in sound doctrine and to refute those who contradict.

2 Timothy 2:18

men who have gone astray from the truth saying that the resurrection has already taken place, and thus they upset the faith of some.

Hiebert points out:

What the deposit is he does not say, but the tenor of the letter makes it plain that it is "the whole system of evangelic truth on the preservation of which Paul has been instructing Timothy through the epistle." The verb "guard" raises the picture of a soldier standing guard over a treasure which has been committed to him for safekeeping. The aorist tense urges its effective accomplishment. The word of the truth of the Gospel is the minister's chief treasure which he must not part with or suffer to be mixed with elements foreign to its nature and purpose.
p. 123

Barclay says:

It may well be that this concluding passage begins by reminding Timothy of his name, and by urging him to be true to it.
p. 160

The Greek word for trust is paratheke, which literally means a deposit. It was the word for money deposited with a banker or with a friend. When such money was in time demanded back it was a sacred duty to hand it back entire and whole and unharmed. Sometimes in Greek, children are called a sacred paratheke, a sacred trust. If the gods gave a man a child, it was that man's duty to present that child, trained, disciplined and equipped to the gods. The Christian faith is like that. The Christian faith is something which we received from our forefathers, and something which we must pass on to our children.
p. 160

Lock paraphrases verses 20 and 21 in the following way:

O Timothy, it is to you that I must look. Remember the truth is a sacred trust which Christ has left with us, and He will come to ask it back. Keep it then jealously; avoid all empty argumentations, all balancing of casuistical problems: they have nothing to do with religion, they add nothing to it, they spoil its simplicity, though some who falsely claim to special knowledge lay stress on them. These teachers, though they assert their proficiency in knowledge, have wholly missed the central truths.

May God's grace be with you all.

p. 75

Hendriksen says:

Timothy, then, is admonished to guard the trust or deposit; that is, he must faithfully watch over that which has been committed to his care. It is as if God had made a "deposit" in Timothy's bank. The word employed in the original is related to a verb meaning "to place by the side," hence, "to deposit," "to commit to (someone)."
p. 211

Guy King says:

"O Timothy"--all the deep affection of his heart is in the syllables as he breathes them out, almost as a cry, to his amanuensis. His loving care for his pupil and protege, his realization of the dangers to which he will be exposed, his comprehension of the immense spiritual possibilities of his position, all these combine to fill this cry with utmost urgency. How he longs that his young Timothy shall have the best, do the best, be the best for God. So now, as he dictates his last words, for the moment it is to lay upon him afresh the Great Commission, "Keep that which is committed to thy trust"--guard the deposit.
p. 126

The figure is that of a banker guarding safely the moneys, the jewels, the securities committed by his customers to his care. With what vigilance, and diligence, he will see to their security, and outwit the evil intentions of any who will try to "break through and steal", Matthew vi. 19. As the custodian of the faith for that Ephesian church, let their Overseer be at least as watchful as that banker, and see to it that none shall rob the church of any part of the truth, or the believer of any portion of its blessing. Many temptations may come to water down the message; but these, from whatever quarter they arise, are to be strenuously resisted.
p. 127

Lenski says:

The noun means "the deposit." It is a term used in banking to denote a sum deposited, for which the bank is responsible, which it thus guards most carefully since it must pay it back. Here we have only the general connotation.
p. 732

One is reminded of Matthew 25 when Jesus tells the parable of the talents:

Matthew 25:14, 15

For it is just like a man about to go on a journey, who called his own slaves, and entrusted his possessions to them. And to one he gave five talents, to another, two, and to another, one, each according to his own ability; and he went on his journey.

Matthew 25:19-27

Now after a long time the master of those slaves came and settled accounts with them. And the one who had received the five talents came up and brought five more talents, saying, 'Master, you entrusted five talents to me; see, I have gained five more talents.' His master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful slave; you were faithful with a few things, I will put you in charge of many things, enter into the joy of your master.' The one also who had received the two talents came up and said, 'Master, you entrusted to me two talents; see, I have gained two more talents.' His master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful slave; you were faithful with a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.' And the one also who had received the one talent came up and said, 'Master, I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where you did not sow, and gathering where you scattered no seed. 'And I was afraid, and went away and hid your talent in the ground; see, you have what is yours.' But his master answered and said to him, 'You wicked, lazy slave, you knew that I reap where I did not sow, and gather where I scattered no seed. Then you ought to have put my money in the bank, and on my arrival I would have received my money back with interest.'

Oh, Timothy, live up to your name which means "to honor God," and in so doing:

1. "GUARD THE DEPOSIT,"
2. BE "TURNING AWAY FROM":
 - (1) "PROFANE" TALK,
 - (2) "EMPTY TALK,"
 - (3) "CONTRADICTIONS OF WHAT IS FALSELY CALLED KNOWLEDGE."

Demarest says:

With this second postscript, Paul concludes this remarkable epistle. How he loved Timothy! And how concerned he was that Timothy remain faithful and alive in his ministry.

This admonition stands before us all as a constant warning of the danger of putting our energy into doctrinal and theological discussions at the expense of putting our faith to work and our love into practice.
p. 229

Guy King says:

Besides, argument is largely a matter of clever and quick wits-- you may be beaten in argument and yet be right. So often this form of discussion can only be characterised as "profane" since it is flippant about serious things, and "vain" since it is profitless for progress. No, don't argue; stick to your message. Don't waste time arguing about the seed--sow it!
p. 127

Barclay says:

"Don't waste your time seeking out contradictions in Scripture. Use the Scriptures to live by and not to argue about." But there are two meanings more probable than that.

(i) The word antithesis could mean a controversy; and this might mean: "Avoid controversies; don't get yourself mixed up in useless and bitter arguments and differences."
p. 161

Wiersbe says:

God had committed the truth to Paul (1:11), and Paul had committed it to Timothy. It was Timothy's responsibility to guard the deposit and then pass it along to others who would, in turn, continue to pass it on (2 Tim. 2:2). This is God's way of protecting the truth and spreading it around the world. We are stewards of the doctrines of the faith, and God expects us to be faithful in sharing His Good News. pp. 83-85

Paul referred here to the teachings of a heretical group called "Gnostics" who claimed to have a "special spiritual knowledge." (The Greek word for "knowledge" is *gnosis*, pronounced NO-sis. An "agnostic" is one who does not know. A Gnostic is one who claimed to know a great deal.)

There is no need to go into detail here about the heretical claims of the Gnostics. Paul's letter to the Colossians was written to counteract them. They claimed to have "special spiritual knowledge" from visions and other experiences. They also claimed to find "hidden truths" in the Old Testament Scriptures, especially the genealogies. They considered matter to be evil, and they taught that a series of "emanations" connected God with man. Jesus Christ, they said, was only the greatest of these emanations.

The Gnostics actually had a doctrine that was a strange mixture of Christian, Oriental mysticism, Greek philosophy, and Jewish legalism. p. 85

These Greek words here communicate:

empty talk,
godless chatter,
contemporary jargon.

The word "CONTRADICTIONS" is only used here. It can mean:

"opposition,"
or "objection."

The words translated "FALSELY CALLED" are only used here.

It is "falsely bearing a name which is knowledge."

The Bible Knowledge Commentary says:

Paul has come full circle here. Some of the believers have turned to false doctrine from the content of their faith.

1 Timothy 1:3-6

Even as I urged you to remain longer in Ephesus when I was going to Macedonia, in order that you might instruct certain ones not to teach a different (heretical) doctrine, nor to pay attention to legends and endless genealogies, which give rise to endless speculations rather than (acceptance in faith of God's administration) the divine training that is in faith. Now the goal of our instruction is (divine) love out of a pure heart and a good conscience and a genuine faith (without hypocrisy). From which things certain ones, having missed the mark, have turned away to fruitless discussions,

This verse is the KEY VERSE for Law #16:

"A GOOD LEADER STICKS BY HIS PRINCIPLES AND PRIORITIES."

Phillips paraphrases this 20th verse:

O Timothy, guard most carefully your divine commission; avoid the godless mixture of contradictory notions which is falsely known as knowledge.

Daniel 1:8

But Daniel resolved not to defile himself with the royal food and wine, and he asked the chief official for permission not to defile himself this way.

Nehemiah 5:15

But the earlier governors--those preceding me--placed a heavy burden on the people and took forty shekels of silver from them in addition to food and wine. Their assistants also lorded it over the people. But out of reverence for God I did not act like that.

Matthew 6:33

But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added to you.

John 4:34

Jesus said to them, "My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to accomplish His work.

John 9:4

We must work the works of Him who sent Me, as long as it is day; night is coming, when no man can work.

Paul is saying to Timothy: "Dance with the one that brung ya."

Under pressure, stick by your PRINCIPLES and your PRIORITIES.

PRINCIPLES and PRIORITIES have been joked about:

MOST IMPORTANT MESSAGE

At an annual hotel owner's convention a roving commentator, mike in hand, approached a world-famous hotel man. Holding up the mike, he said, "Sir, your name has become synonymous with the hotel business. You have expanded your chain to all corners of the globe, offering the peoples of the world a comfortable home away from home. Do you have a word, Sir? All America is listening and watching!"

"Yes, thank you," said the hotel magnate, "I do have a word for all America. Please keep the shower curtains on the inside!"

(From InfoSearch 3.0)

SACRIFICE

"My wife says if I don't quit golfing she will leave me."

"Man, that's too bad."

"Yeah, I sure will miss her."

(From InfoSearch 3.0)

FIRST THINGS FIRST

After a hard game of racquetball one man said to his friend, "Well, shall we play again next Saturday?"

The friend replied, "I was going to get married on that day, but I can put it off."

(From InfoSearch 3.0)

EARLY TO BED, EARLY TO RISE

To get his wealth, he spent his health,
and then, with strength and main,
He turned around and spent his wealth
to get his health again.

(From InfoSearch 3.0)

It is awfully easy under pressure to yield up one's PRINCIPLES and PRIORITIES.

On the dashboard of every life there are 4 RED LIGHTS:

1. SPIRITUAL
2. EMOTIONAL
3. PHYSICAL
4. MENTAL

It is when any 1 of these 4 lights comes on, or all 4 of them, that you are in danger of surrendering principles and priorities to satisfy the need of the moment.

How careful we must be to keep a balance in our lives that we might glorify God in our leadership.

(Men Who Win: Pursuing the Ultimate Prize
by Steven J. Lawson)

It was that great theologian (and international diplomat) Bobby Knight who once said, "The will to win is not nearly as important as the will to prepare to win." Amen. We must prepare to win through training, discipline, and hard work.
p. 68

(The Heart of Godly Leadership by Hudson T. Armerding)

Our football coach at Wheaton College used to tell his players, "You give up first in your mind; then your body quits." Similarly we give up first in our minds, and then we actually engage in self-indulgence, whether for material possessions or fame or gluttony or sex or whatever we think we must have. Discipline of the mind produces disciplined behavior. The Christian leader who has integrity controls his mind so he is not overcome by temptation or is adversely affected by externals.
p. 58

(The Body by Charles Colson with Ellen Santilli Vaughn)

Everyone has presuppositions, a general set of beliefs, a grid through which we perceive everything that happens--a general belief about what is true. Our presuppositions form the basis for our values, and these values determine how we behave.
p. 172

(Principle-Centered Leadership by Stephen R. Covey)

The place to begin building any relationship is inside ourselves, inside our circle of influence, our own character. As we become independent--proactive, centered in correct principles, value-driven, and able to organize and execute around the priorities in our life with integrity--we can choose to become interdependent: capable of building rich, enduring, productive relationships with other people.
p. 60

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 mirror, 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, 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

(Lincoln on Leadership: Executive Strategies for Tough Times
by Donald T. Phillips)

Early in his first term, Lincoln was constantly pressured by key advisers to capitulate to the South's demands to avoid a bloody conflict. On one occasion, he was advised by a Virginian to surrender all forts and property in the Southern states. Lincoln immediately rejected the option by telling Aesop's parable of the lion and the woodman's daughter:

A lion was very much in love with a woodman's daughter. The fair maid referred him to her father and the lion applied for the girl. The father replied: "Your teeth are too long." So the lion went to a dentist and had them extracted. Returning, he asked for his bride. "No," said the woodman, "your claws are too long." Going back to the dentist, he had them drawn. Then he returned to claim his bride, and the woodman, seeing that he was unarmed, beat out his brains.

"May it not be so with me," concluded the president, "if I give up all that is asked?"
p. 89

(The Making of a Christian Leader by Ted W. Engstrom)

Nicholas Murray Butler a former president of Columbia University, said, "There are three kinds of people in the world--those who don't know what's happening, those who watch what's happening, and those who make things happen."
p. 20

(Leadership Jazz by Max De Pree)

A leader ensures that priorities are set, that they are steadfastly communicated and adhered to in practice. This can be accomplished only if the leader halts the endless negotiation of the politicians in the group, the negotiator's waltz, as I sometimes call it. The participative process stimulates contrary opinion, as it should, but no organization can survive endless negotiation. At some point, public acceptance of a direction must appear.
p. 29

Perhaps one need remember no more than what a friend of mine once said to me. "Leaders stand alone, take the heat, bear the pain, tell the truth."
p. 226

(Who You are When No One's Looking by Bill Hybels)

I practice advance decision making. Because I have already decided to go to the club, I ignore arguments against going, no matter how persuasive they may sound.

"Sorry," I say to my body, "I'd like to hear you out, but I can't do anything about it. It's already been decided. It's on my calendar. You're not going to reverse the decision. It's done." My body may groan, but it gets itself to the weight room. Advance decision making has become a powerful way to implement the practice of discipline in my daily life.

p. 29

The essence of discipline, then, is delayed gratification, and the key to practicing discipline is advance decision making.

p. 32

(The Heart of Godly Leadership by Hudson T. Armerding)

One might ask whether a great leader who had guided the people through the wilderness to the edge of the Promised Land might not be excused for his momentary lapse of self-control. Or one might emphasize that Moses had done many good things and had been so consistent throughout almost all of his life that this one incident could be overlooked. As I have thought along these lines I have been reminded of this Scripture: "From everyone who has been given much, much will be demanded . . ." (Luke 12:48). Moses knew that in spite of the provocation of the people, he had been told to go out and speak to the rock. He knew also that in losing his temper he had stepped out of his position as a meek person. Instead of an uncompromising acceptance of the will and purpose of God, he chose to elevate himself and vent his displeasure on the people.

Moses' failure in this instance should be a warning to all of us in positions of Christian leadership. The more we grow in the Lord, enjoy the privileges He gives us, and rejoice in our opportunities to know His will and purpose, the more accountable we are to do what we know is right. Let us not offer the excuse that we were unfairly provoked; instead, let us pursue the cultivation of Biblical meekness and so maintain our self-control.

p. 134

ONE THING I DO

In the book The Vance Havner Devotional Treasury, the author wrote, "I shall never forget Dr. R. A. Torrey saying to me as a young preacher, 'Young man, make up your mind on one thing and stick to it.'" Havner comments, "The Christian life should be like a sword with one point, not like a broom ending in many straws. Such a single purpose forgets the past, reaches toward the future, and presses on. There is no time or place for side issues, diversions to the right or to the left. There is no place for hands on the plow with eyes looking back. Paul was a one-track man, but you can go a long way on one track!"

(From InfoSearch 3.0)

ACCENTUATE THE POSITIVE!

An unknown author has given us in verse form and in a rather humorous vein the following advice:

As you travel down life's pathway,
 Whatever be your goal,
 Keep your eye upon the doughnut,
 And not upon the hole.

A number of applications can be made from this little poem. First: Center your thoughts and desires upon that which has worth. Don't be sidetracked by nonessentials. Concentrate upon that which has true value. Second: In your relationships with others, avoid the pitfall of becoming so annoyed by their significant peculiarities and idiosyncrasies that you completely overlook their virtues, abilities, and the traits which deserve your commendation and praise. Third: As followers of Christ, may we never become so occupied with the things of this world that we lose sight of our real purpose and mission here on earth. True, we must provide for our families. It's our obligation to feed, clothe, and educate them properly. There are also many pleasures in this life which God wants us to enjoy. But as "pilgrims" traveling to Glory, our first duty is to set our desires, hopes, and aspirations upon that which has eternal significance.

(From InfoSearch 3.0)

TAKE TIME FOR THE BIBLE

The famous opera singer Jenny Lind always created a profound impression on her audiences, and her success was widely acclaimed. But at the height of her career she left the stage and began using her talents for charity. When asked the reason, she touched the Bible that lay open on her knees and replied, "My busy life left me so little time for this." Then, looking at the sunset, she added, "And none for that." The stage had robbed her of two important things: the Word of God and the works of God. Indeed, without these she had been spiritually impoverished.

(From InfoSearch 3.0)

PREVAILING PRAYER

William Carey was once reproached for spending so much time in prayer that he neglected his business. He replied that supplication, thanksgiving, and intercession were much more important in his life than laying up treasures on earth. "Prayer is my real business!" he said. "Cobbling shoes is a sideline; it just helps me pay expenses." The Lord honored Carey's vigorous faith, for he became a renowned missionary and was mightily used by God in India, Burma, and the East Indies.

(From InfoSearch 3.0)

RESOLUTIONS TO LIVE BY

"I have learned to trust God, instead of myself, to rescue the world. I'm willing to do what I can, but when I go to bed at night, I leave the weight of the world on His shoulders."

Most New Year's resolutions are unrealistic and end up creating lots of guilt. Goals are important, but Dr. Meier says he never makes year-long resolutions. Instead he begins each day with four biblical goals, which he claims can revolutionize a person's life.

(1) Become more like Christ: In order to be like Him, we need to spend time with Him in Bible study and prayer. Be spontaneous and flexible rather than setting up an unworkable schedule like getting up two hours earlier than usual every day. Don't follow any rigid formulas, just try to get to know the Person.

(2) Choose to serve Christ: Serving others is the way to serve Christ, but that doesn't mean we have to meet every need we come across. The burden God asks us to bear is light and easy. If you've been carrying your own burden, you may need to reprioritize your life. When Dr. Meier did this, his number one priority changed from meeting the need of every person or group that put demands on his time to knowing God personally.

(3) Resolve today's problems: Scripture tells us that tomorrow is not something we should worry about. God has promised just enough help for our current problems. Some situations, however, last for weeks or months or even longer, but we have to handle only one day at a time.

(4) Stay out of trouble: Ask God to point out to you any wrong motives or areas of selfishness. Don't allow false pride, blaming others, or self-deception. Look for healthier ways to cope with the troubles life throws at you.

"Resolutions to live by: four goals that can transform your life" by Paul Meier. Today's Better Life, Spr 1992. Pages 58-60.

(From InfoSearch 3.0)

WHETHER SMALL OR LARGE: FAITHFUL TO THE TASK

The example of John the Baptist can show three aspects of service in obscurity. 1) John realized that his gifts were given by God that Jesus could be made known through their use, 2) the joy of service comes from pleasing Jesus, 3) the purpose of ministry is to promote Jesus. Our ministries need to be evaluated in terms of priorities. All our efforts should be focused on Christ and not on self.

"Whether small or large: faithful to the task" by William A. Bembenek. Decision, May 1989. Pages 33-35.

(From InfoSearch 3.0)

GOD FIRST, FAMILY SECOND . . . RIGHT?

How can we live in obedience to God as our free time diminishes and the demands on it increase?

The traditional way of stating a Christian's priorities puts God first, family second, church third, work fourth, and so on. This ladder approach, although claiming to grow out of the Biblical requirement to give God our highest loyalty, is not truly Scriptural. (1) Christ is to be first in every area of our lives. Saying that He is first and other aspects are secondary implies that He is not an essential part of the other areas. (2) In most life-choices the question is not which area to concentrate on but how to give adequate attention to several vital areas. The ladder approach doesn't take into account the necessary trade-offs involved in trying to be both a good parent and a productive employee, for example. (3) Putting work at the end of the list of priorities implies that your secular work does not matter as much to God as a pastor's does.

A more Scriptural analogy for organizing one's priorities would be the pentathlon, an athletic event in which participants compete in five areas (pistol shooting, fencing, horseback riding, swimming, and running). The athlete must carefully allocate his training time among the five events in order to do well enough in all areas to win the prize. Aspects of the Christian life that parallel the pentathlon include work, family, personal life, church, and community. The believer's goal should be to become more Christlike in every one of the five. The beauty of this analogy is that it encourages us to take stock of all the important areas of life so that we don't spend too much time training in one area to the detriment of another. It also underscores the fact that God values progress, not perfection.

As a Christian, realize that God is sovereign over your life. There IS enough time in each day for you to accomplish what He wants you to do, and "remember that you are only a junior partner with God in fulfilling your responsibilities."

"God first, family second . . . right?" by Doug Sherman. Discipleship Journal, Nov/Dec 1990 [#60]. Pages 40-42.

(From InfoSearch 3.0)

SLICING THE PRIORITY PIE

Too often people drop important priorities altogether because they feel they haven't fully accomplished the higher priorities.

A busy pastor was working away when his 10-year-old son came and asked for the umpteenth time, "Hey, Dad, when are you gonna help me with that project?" He started to say, "Not now, son, I'm working," but caught himself. Mentally, he answered, "When will I ever have time? Maybe when he's 18 and no longer interested."

Considering the importance the Scriptures place on family, the pastor realized four things: (1) Spiritual success will be determined by our priorities. Ignoring family concerns can destroy our Christian testimony. (2) Our investments clearly reflect our priorities. Family responsibilities require time and energy. (3) If something is really a priority we will plan for it, schedule around it, and not let other things displace it. Putting your spouse's or children's names on the calendar for special "together times" is a good way to do this. Otherwise we might never get around to it. (4) Priorities are not a matter of either-or but of both-and. If we think that the top priority item on the list must be completed before we can devote any time to lower level priorities we will neglect some very vital aspects of our lives. It is helpful to think of priorities as a pie rather than a list. The whole pie represents our total amount of time, energy, and resources. The higher priorities (relationship with God, family, etc.) are given a larger slice of the pie, but lesser important aspects are not eliminated. They just get a smaller piece of the pie.

The pastor realized he had been giving his son only tiny slices of his pie, so he stopped what he was doing and helped him complete that project.

"Slicing the priority pie" by David Grant. Christian Parenting, Nov/Dec 1990. Page 10.

(From InfoSearch 3.0)

COUNTRY CLUB CHRISTIANITY

Charge them that are rich in this age, that they be not high-minded, nor trust in uncertain riches. 1 Timothy 6:17

Poverty in itself is not a blessing, nor are riches necessarily a curse. But I do believe it is easier for poor people to be fervent in the Lord's service than for those who are wealthy. An old story illustrates the point well.

In an area where ocean ships often crashed on the rocks in violent weather was a harbor town widely known for its dedicated rescue team. Whenever the siren sounded, a group of men rushed to the scene of the accident, risking life and limb to save the sailors from drowning. After several years the citizens had enough money to build a rescue station close to the shore, which greatly facilitated the operation.

A little later, some of the people took special training and became even more efficient. As time went by, they added some comforts and conveniences to the building. They furnished it with a lounge and a kitchen, then a bar and sleeping quarters. Finally it became a club where the townspeople gathered to have fun and relax. The alarm still sounded but nobody responded anymore. They were reluctant to leave their comforts and pleasures. A number of people would drown offshore, but no one seemed to notice.

Can we view this story as a picture of the change that takes place among Christians as we begin to amass this world's goods? Do we grow less concerned about the lost? Have we taken on a country club mentality? I'm afraid we have. Let's ask God to help us realign our priorities and place Him and the needs of others above the pleasure purchased with "uncertain riches."

H.V.L.

A heart that's warm with deep concern
When set on worldly goals
Will quickly cool and cease to yearn
For lost and dying souls.

--D.J.D.

THOT:Beware--luxury and ease may create hardening of the attitudes!

(From Our Daily Bread, October 1)

Law #16:

"A GOOD LEADER STICKS BY HIS PRINCIPLES AND PRIORITIES."

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

William Barclay says:

So Timothy is told: "Don't waste your time in subtle arguments; don't waste your time in 'dialectical fencing.' Don't be too clever to be wise. Listen rather to the unequivocal voice of the commandments of God than to the subtle disputations of over-clever minds."

So the letter draws to a close with a warning which our own generation needs. Clever argument can never be made a substitute for Christian action. The duty of the Christian is not to sit in a study in isolation and to weigh arguments; it is to live the Christian life in the dust and heat of the world. In the end it is not intellectual cleverness, but conduct and character which count.
pp. 162-63

Hiebert says:

Their profession of such teaching has had the tragic effect that they "have erred concerning the faith." Literally, they "have missed the mark" (same word translated "having swerved" in 1:6) as regards "the faith." "The faith" is objective and denotes the doctrinal content of the Christian faith. By their professed adherence to this spurious teaching they have tragically strayed from the path of Christian truth. Their example constitutes a solemn warning which Timothy must hold up before the congregations.
p. 124

1 Timothy 1:6

From which things certain ones, having missed the mark, have turned away to fruitless discussions,

Guthrie says:

This parting shot at the false teachers significantly uses the same word astocleo (having erred) to describe their defection as was used at the beginning of the Epistle.
p. 119

A lot of guys are missing the mark today:

2 Timothy 4:10

for Demas, having loved this present world, has deserted me and gone to Thessalonica; Crescens has gone to Galatia, Titus to Dalmatia.

(If I Really Believe, Why Do I Have These Doubts?
by Lynn Anderson)

Years back, my friend Juan Monroy, a Christian journalist in Madrid, Spain, was among those reporters selected by the Spanish government to interview the American astronaut James Irwin, who was on a European tour after his Apollo 15 mission to the moon. Monroy asked the astronaut, "What did you feel when you stepped out of that capsule and your feet touched the surface of the moon?"

To Monroy's utter surprise, Irwin replied, "It was one of the most profoundly disillusioning moments of my life."

Monroy pressed the astronaut: "How could standing on the moon be so disappointing?"

Irwin explained, "All of my life I have been enchanted by the romance and the mystery of the moon. I sang love songs under the moon. I read poems by moonstruck poets. I embraced my lover in the moonlight. I looked up in wonder at the lunar sphere. But that day when I stepped from the capsule onto the lunar surface and reached down at my feet, I came up with nothing but two handfuls of gray dirt. I cannot describe the loss I felt as the romance and mystery were stripped away. There will be no more moon in my sky!"

Monroy observed further, "When we come to the place that we think we comprehend and can explain the Almighty, there will be no more God in our heavens."
pp. 175-76

(Rediscovering Holiness by J. I. Packer)

. . . the God-shrinking trend has long prevailed. Its result is that belief in God's sovereignty and omniscience, the majesty of his moral law and the terror of his judgments, the retributive consequences of the life we live here and the endlessness of the eternity in which we will experience them, along with belief in the intrinsic triunity of God and the divinity and personal return of Jesus Christ, is nowadays so eroded as to be hardly discernible. For many in our day, God is no more than a smudge.
p. 69

(Sky Edge by W. Phillip Keller)

Our modern preachers and hyper-evangelists urge us to demand our "miracles" from God. They rant at us to claim our rights and receive some sort of dramatic demonstration from the divine. They insist that only by special signs and wonders will the world ever come to acknowledge Christ as God very God.

He Himself told us no such spectacular displays were necessary to demonstrate His deity!

Instead He urged us to look around and quietly notice the lily of the field, the fledgling sparrow fallen from its nest, the Olalla bush blowing in the breeze. There in the ordinary events of the natural world around us lay a thousand miracles of His making, the lovely touch of our Father's care.
pp. 74-75

(Never Give Up by Don Hawkins)

What's worse, your thinking is as bad as your feeling. Your thought patterns have become locked in a negative mode.

It's as though the remote control for your television set has left you stuck on a channel that only transmits a poor, fuzzy, black-and-white picture. No matter how much you fiddle with the fine tuning, things don't improve--and you just can't seem to change the channel. You keep going over things from the past, replaying them in your mind--things over which you feel either angry toward others, or yourself. These thoughts of self-anger or self-hatred are liberally laced with feelings of guilt, self-blame, and self-denigration. Yet even the thinking process itself is slow.

Your mind, like life, seems to be moving in "super slo-mo."

Furthermore, it literally seems to hurt to think. Not only is life painful, so is the thinking process. You're plagued by indecisiveness, and perhaps even by irrational ideas.

p. 63

(The Gospel According to Bubba by Chuck Meyer)

It's God talkin' to the alcoholic or the drug user or the plain ol' person on the street just tryin' to make a livin' or the troubled businessperson or you or even me and sayin' to us--'LIGHTEN UP! I love you. This isn't all there is. There's more! Let me help. I forgive you. I love you. I even like you. You're not perfect. You can't be. But you are forgiven. Get on with your life. Go out there and make some more mistakes. I'll laugh at you and I'll laugh with you. Of course life ain't fair. Of course it stinks sometimes. People get lousy deals, draw a bad card, cut the deck in an unfortunate place, cash in their chips too early, some of 'em ain't playin' with a full deck in the first place--that's just the way it is on Earth. So what? Stick with me,' God says. 'We'll ride this sucker out together and see where it goes to.'"

pp. 70-71

Guy King says:

Well, the time has come to say "Good-bye", and Paul says it with the beautiful word "grace". That was the first word the apostle said to him here, I Timothy i. 2, and now it is his last--"the sound of a great Amen". It is as if the Epistle were a valuable book, with two exquisitely tooled covers--the front cover is "Grace", and the back cover is "Grace", the two binding the whole book together. And the intervening pages so largely take their colour from their cover. They speak of God's Attitude towards us--an attitude of grace; they tell of God's Assistance of us--an assistance of grace; they present to us pictures of God's Attractiveness in us--an attractiveness of grace. All these things the word means, as Ephesians ii. 5, 8; I Corinthians xv. 10; and Acts iv. 33 respectively declare. The grand old apostle, knowing all it implies, all it has meant in his own life, can think of no greater word to finish with, and the Holy Spirit, who has inspired him all through, leads him to it.

p. 128

With this final phrase, Paul uses the PLURAL:

"GRACE BE WITH YOU ALL."

This tells us that he wrote for the benefit of others, as well as for Timothy.

CONCLUSION:

What are some of the lessons that we can learn from this particular study?

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

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

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

LESSON #4: God is in the business of abundantly providing for us at

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

LESSON #6: The 4 things that the believer is to be doing with his w

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

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

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

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

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

The big question that comes to us at the conclusion of this study is:

Are we willing to allow our hearts to be examined with regard to our principles and priorities?

Psalm 139:23, 24

Search me, O God, and know my heart;
test me and know my anxious thoughts.
See if there is any offensive way in me,
and lead me in the way everlasting.

Psalm 26:2, 3

Test me, O Lord, and try me,
examine my heart and my mind;
for your love is ever before me,
and I walk continually in your truth.

Haggai 1:5

Now this is what the Lord Almighty says: "Give careful thought to your ways.

Lamentations 3:40

Let us examine our ways and test them,
and let us return to the Lord.

1 Corinthians 11:2

Now I praise you because you remember me in everything,
and hold firmly to the traditions, just as I delivered them to you.

(Transforming Leadership by Leighton Ford)

The most spectacular cross-cultural leadership in the history of humanity took place when the Son of God became a first-century Galilean Jew. In that identification he renounced the status and the rights that he enjoyed as God's Son. Among them, Jesus gave up any right to independence; he was born in a borrowed manger, preached from a borrowed boat, entered Jerusalem on a borrowed donkey, ate the Last supper in a borrowed upper room, died on a borrowed cross and was buried in a borrowed tomb. In renouncing entitlement he exposed himself to temptation, sorrow, limitation and pain, and yet, "although Jesus identified himself completely with us, he did not lose his own identity. He remained himself." And so his incarnation taught "identification without loss of identity." pp. 32-33

The smallest thing is not too small if it is done for the glory of God and the global purpose of Jesus Christ. Our friend Colleen Evans, whose husband leads a Presbyterian congregation in Washington, D.C., went to hear Mother Teresa when she spoke at a luncheon in that city. Afterwards, deeply moved, Colleen went up to her and said, "Mother, what can I do to help the world?" Mother Teresa said, "My dear, are you married? Do you have children?" When Colleen replied that she was and she did, Mother Teresa told her, "Go home and love your husband and love your children." p. 96

(The Heart of Godly Leadership by Hudson T. Armerding)

With the poet the Christian can say:

Life is real! Life is earnest!
And the grave is not its goal.
"Dust thou art, to dust returnest,"
Was not spoken of the soul."

(Henry Wadsworth Longfellow)

p. 95

(Success, Motivation, and the Scriptures by William H. Cook)

Honey, God don't sponsor no flops.

--Ethel Waters

For then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success.

--God to Joshua
Joshua 1:8

p. 14

(The Not-So-Compulsive Woman by Sandra Simpson LeSourd)

The greatest support group was formed 2,000 years ago. Jesus gathered together twelve hurting, flawed men who would hardly have been called leadership types. They fellowshiped together, had disagreements, shared their hurts and grew stronger together. Their Leader taught them, brought out their gifts. As they were helped, they were able to help others.

And what they learned in a group situation gave strength to eleven of them to go boldly into the world and make an impact that is still being felt today.

p. 83

(Welcome to the Family by Stephen W. Brown)

Sir Ernest Shackleton has expressed what can be the experience and testimony of every Christian. When he returned to England to report on his Antarctic explorations, he told the king, "Bending above the oars, struggling through the snow, battling across the ranges, always there was Another. He made the difference between triumph and disaster. He brought us through!"

pp. 95-96

(You Can Make a Difference by Gary R. Collins)

According to Charles Garfield, however, we could all become "peak performers." When he worked as a young computer programmer on the Apollo 11 space mission, Garfield was swept into the enthusiasm of his coworkers. Most of them were unknown individuals, committed to the common task of putting the first man on the moon. As a group, they were finding a way to make a major difference in scientific history.

Neil Armstrong's first step on the moon inspired the world and launched Charles Garfield into a new career. He began to look for people who were peak performers, individuals who might never rise to stardom but whose efforts make a difference in their work, their homes, and their communities.

Garfield found these people scattered throughout society. They are in different occupations and have different interests, but all of them have goals they want to reach. They have learned to discipline themselves and to accept responsibility for their own behavior. They respect others and work well as team members. They face as many obstacles as the rest of us and they go through rough times, but when they fail, they rarely stop for long. "No matter how rough it gets, no matter how great the assault on mind and body, peak performers always feel they can do something," Garfield observed. "Invariably, they move on."

pp. 24-25

EXAMINE NOW!

As has been said, "Life is like a coin. You are free to spend it any way you wish . . . but you can only spend it once!"

God challenged His people through the prophet Haggai (Hag. 1:5) not to live unexamined lives, but self-evaluation does not come easily. The hectic pace of our lives makes it difficult. Some of us are just too comfortable with the way things are. Others shy away from it, knowing that it will be painful to see how little they have accomplished. Five questions can help you examine yourself and see what changes are needed:

(1) Is your life consistent with your beliefs? Your lifestyle should match your theology. If you say that the local church is important, your attendance record ought to reflect that conviction. If you believe giving to God's work is a high priority, your checkbook should show it.

(2) What do you find most enjoyable in life? A favorite television show, a particular sport, your job, or your children can certainly bring you pleasure, but we should find pleasure in spiritual things as well. Prayer, Bible study, and ministering to others ought to give us a sense of joy. If my greatest enjoyment in life derives from the same things as my non-Christian neighbor's does, something is wrong.

(3) Do you offer God your best or just the leftovers? In the Old Testament it was called giving God your firstfruits. In our day many Christians are committed to excellence in their business or profession but content with mediocrity in their spiritual life.

(4) What do you want people to remember you for? Tragically, when family and friends gather to mourn the death of a loved one, sometimes they can remember nothing of any real importance from the individual's life. It is, perhaps, excusable for teenagers or even young adults to live materialistic, self-centered lives, but more mature men and women ought to have examined themselves and know what is worth living for.

(5) If you knew you had only one year left to live, how would your life be different? When it comes to serving God, procrastination is so easy. We should be investing ourselves in things that will last for eternity.

Ultimately our lives will be examined by Jesus Christ. Right now, however, we have the opportunity not only to engage in self-evaluation but also to make changes.

"Examine now!" by Nelson Annan. Interest, Oct 1991. Pages 12-13.

(From InfoSearch 3.0)

STUDY # 16 - 1 Timothy 6:17-21

What are some of the lessons that we can learn from this particular study?

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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