

MAIN POINT

Jesus calls us not to put our hope in money but to be rich in good works and live with eternity in mind.

INTRODUCTION

What is a Christmas gift you are hoping for this year?

Describe a time you had high expectations for the joy that a gift would bring. How did the gift meet or fail to meet your hopes?

All of us have experienced a time when we had high expectations for the amount of joy a possession could bring, but in reality the item we hoped for failed to meet our expectations. All through the Bible, Jesus and others taught that true fulfillment can never be found in the things of this world, but in the things of God. This week we will look at the instruction Paul gave to those with wealth through his first letter to Timothy.

DISCUSSION

> READ 1 TIMOTHY 6:17-19.

While we may not consider ourselves rich, the reality is that if we live in America and own a car, we are some of the wealthiest people in the world. Why do you think we are so often hesitant to admit that we are rich? How might a failure to admit or recognize that we are rich result in poor financial decisions?

What are God's expectations for people who are "rich in this world," according to the passage?

How might having wealth tempt us to become arrogant? How is generosity an effective way to combat the pride and false security that the love of money brings?

Why is it dangerous for us to put our trust in wealth?

How might considering that God "richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment," change the way we think about our money? How might it help us learn to be generous?

How might being generous toward others provide us opportunities to share the gospel?

What is the link between the generosity described in verses 18-19 and "godliness with contentment"?

Read Matthew 6:19-24. What does it mean to "lay up treasure in heaven"? What are some practical ways we might do this?

How should we use our money if we hope to "lay up treasure . . . for the coming age" (1 Tim. 6:18-19)?

How might we seek joy in Jesus during this season, that we might not be focused on earthly possessions but on treasure that lasts in heaven?

APPLICATION

How is God calling you to refocus your money and resources toward storing up heavenly treasure? How will you respond?