



## 1 TIMOTHY 6:17-19

*17 Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment. 18 Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share. 19 In this way they will lay up treasure for themselves as a firm foundation for the coming age, so that they may take hold of the life that is truly life.*

## MATTHEW 6:19-21

*19 "Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moths and vermin destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. 20 But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moths and vermin do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. 21 For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.*

## NOTE TO LEADERS

This Sunday, we started a new, 3-part series called "Be Rich". Through this series, we aim to flood our community with random acts of kindness and generosity. We would love to hear your stories of this outworking - share them with us at [hello@cityhill.co.za](mailto:hello@cityhill.co.za)

## START TALKING

1. What were you challenged by in Steve's message?
2. If you were given one million dollars that you could not keep but had to give away, what would you do with it?

## START THINKING

1. Steve shared many statistics about world poverty (see list in notes). Which one of these shocked you the most? Why?
2. Read 1 Timothy 6:17-19. On Sunday, Steve spoke about misplaced hope. What does it mean to set your hope on something? Why is wealth an inadequate source of hope? Why is God worthy of our hope?

## START SHARING

1. Read Matthew 6:19-21. What stands out most to you about Jesus' words here? How do you think we go about storing up treasures in heaven?
2. On Sunday, Steve spoke about the guard rails of well-placed hope. How can generosity be a guardrail that can be used to protect yourself from misplaced hope? What guardrails do you need to set in place to trust God fully for provision and your future?

## START PRAYING

Heavenly Father, please help us not to be arrogant or put our hope in worldly wealth, but to set our hearts on you, the living God, who richly blesses us with everything to enjoy. Help us to do good - to be rich in good works and generous. Amen

## START DOING

This week, practice generosity through a random act of kindness. It doesn't necessarily need to involve money - it could be as simple as giving your time to help a busy mom or using your DIY skills to assist an elderly neighbour.

This week, Steve preached a challenging message in the first part of our "Be Rich" series.

Over the last few years, there has been much economic uncertainty, not only in South Africa but around the world too. And it has created a lot of pressure all around. In July 2022, the International Monetary Fund reported: "The global economy, still reeling from the pandemic and Russia's invasion of Ukraine, is facing an increasingly gloomy and uncertain outlook... Higher-than-expected inflation, especially in the United States and major European economies, is triggering a tightening of global financial conditions. China's slowdown has been worse than anticipated amid COVID-19 outbreaks and lockdowns, and there have been further negative spillovers from the war in Ukraine..." IMF Blog – 26 July 2022  
Thankfully, our sense of joy is not based on this gloomy outlook!

Into the middle of this, Paul writes *17 Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment. 18 Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share. 19 In this way they will lay up treasure for themselves as a firm foundation for the coming age, so that they may take hold of the life that is truly life.* 1 Timothy 6:17-19. The scripture is as applicable today as it was to the church two thousand years ago...

### 1. Ask ourselves this question: Am I 'the rich'?

World poverty stats state that:

- 9% of the world population live on less than \$1.90 per day. The good news is that the number of people living below the poverty line (in the 9%) has decreased steadily over the last few years. The bad news is that 700 million people live on less than R1000 per month.
- 11% of the world population (1 in 8) suffer from tremendous food shortages. They go to bed hungry every night.
- 14% of the world population (1 billion people) are unable to read a book or sign their name (2016).
- 26% of the world population (more than a quarter) don't have access to safe water. A huge number of people around the world die every year because they don't have clean drinking water.
- 40% of the world population (3 billion people) live on less than \$2.50 (R43 per day = R1 300 per month).
- 80% of the world population (5.6 billion) live on less than \$10 per day (R5 190 per month).
- Only 18% of the world population (1 in 6 people) own a car.
- 25 000 children die each day because of poverty (that is 2 children every 7 seconds)
- An estimated 60 million children of primary school-going age do not go to school (to solve that problem, we would need 60 000 schools with 1 000 kids each)

Most of us can classify ourselves as rich based on the stats above. By nature, we tend to compare ourselves to people who have a better car than us rather than the 82% of people who don't have a car or the 1 billion people who live on less than R1,000 per month. Therefore, the answer to the question for most of us is, yes, I am 'the rich'!

So when Paul writes, command those who are rich in this present world..., he is referring to us!

### 2. Danger to the rich = arrogance & misplaced hope

*Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment.* 1 Timothy 6:17

**a.) Arrogance** – which comes from thinking that we are a better person because we have what others don't have. And the more wealth people have, the more they tend to have very strong opinions on the world, i.e. what people should do and not do. Another form of arrogance is living in a bubble and not caring about the rest of the world. The Bible says, *God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.* James 4:6.

**b.) Misplaced hope** – Paul warns us against placing our hope in wealth which is SO uncertain. Bloomberg reported: The 500 wealthiest people in the world have lost a combined \$1.4 trillion this year, including \$206 billion on Monday alone, according to the Bloomberg Billionaires Index, as global financial markets buckle under the weight of higher interest rates and inflation anxiety. Bloomberg – 14 June 2022

Economic uncertainty increases the suicide rate as reported in 2011 by the Boston

Globe: A new report issued ... finds that the overall suicide rate rises and falls with the state of the economy – dating all the way back to the Great Depression.

The report, ... found that suicide rates increased in times of economic crisis: the Great Depression (1929-1933), the end of the New Deal (1937-1938), the Oil Crisis (1973-1975), and the Double-Dip Recession (1980-1982). Those rates tended to fall during strong economic times – with fast growth and low unemployment

Into this, Jesus Himself speaks *19 "Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moths and vermin destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. 20 But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moths and vermin do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. 21 For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.* Matthew 6:19-21

Manage your wealth to the best of your ability. But never forget that ALL of it is uncertain. The Bible has good advice on how to manage God's money that is in our hands through tithing, being generous, saving, and spending wisely.

### 3. The guard rails in 'richness' = well-placed hope

*Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment.* 1 Timothy 6:17

God provides us with everything – He is the Source. He is Rich. But not just because He owns everything; He is rich in mercy, compassion, kindness, forgiveness, generosity, grace...

Our God is rich in justice. But also rich in kindness. He doesn't treat us how we deserve! And there is an invitation for us to place our hope in the Rich God and enjoy a rich relationship with Him.

This Rich God gave His only Son so that we could be saved. The debt of our sins is fully paid by God's grace. Our spiritual poverty is exchanged for every by spiritual wealth. When we place our hope in Him, He provides for us and asks us to be His hands and feet, generous in love and kindness to those around us.