

1 Timothy 6:17

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy;

Analysis

Charge them that are rich in this world (Τοῖς πλουσίοις ἐν τῷ νῦν αἰῶνι παράγγελλε, Tois plousiois en tō nyn aiōni parangelle)—'command those who are rich in this present age.' Plousios means wealthy, rich. Parangellō is military language: command, order. **That they be not highminded** (μὴ ὑψηλοφρονεῖν, mē hypsēlophronein)—'not to be haughty.' Hypsēlophroneō means to be proud, think highly of oneself. Wealth tempts toward pride.

Nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God (μηδὲ ἠλπικέναι ἐπὶ πλούτου ἀδηλότητι ἀλλ' ἐπὶ θεῷ ζῶντι, mēde ēlpikenai epi ploutou adēlotēti all' epi theō zōnti)—'nor to set their hopes on the uncertainty of riches, but on God.' Adēlotēs means uncertainty, instability. Wealth is unreliable—economic crashes, theft, inflation, death make it futile as security. **Who giveth us richly all things to enjoy** (τῷ παρέχοντι ἡμῖν πάντα πλουσίως εἰς ἀπόλαυσιν, tō parechonti hēmin panta plousiōs eis apolausin)—'who richly provides us with everything to enjoy.' Apolausis means enjoyment.

Wealth brings spiritual dangers: pride and false security. The remedy: recognize God as the source of all blessings and the only reliable security. Wealth itself isn't evil—God gives richly for enjoyment—but trusting it rather than God is idolatry.

Historical Context

The early church included some wealthy members (Philemon, Lydia, possibly Barnabas). Paul doesn't condemn wealth but addresses its dangers. In a world without banks or insurance, wealth seemed secure—but war, disease, or political upheaval could destroy it instantly. Paul insists: trust the living God who provides, not unstable riches. Enjoy God's gifts without idolizing them.

Related Passages

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Study Questions

1. Why does wealth tempt toward pride—what's the connection between money and arrogance?
2. How can wealthy Christians hold possessions with open hands, trusting God not riches?
3. What does it mean that God gives us all things 'richly to enjoy'—how do we receive gifts without idolatry?

Interlinear Text

τῷ	πλουσίοις	ἐν	τῷ	νῦν	αἰῶνι	παράγγελλε	μὴ
who	them that are rich	in	who	this	world	Charge	not
G3588	G4145	G1722	G3588	G3568	G165	G3853	G3361
ὕψηλοφρονεῖν	μηδὲ	ἠλπικέναι	ἐπὶ	πλούτου	ἀδηλότητι		
highminded	nor	trust	in	riches	uncertain		
G5309	G3366	G1679	G1909	G4149	G83		
ἀλλ'	ἐν	τῷ	θεῷ	τῷ	ζῶντι,	τῷ	παρέχοντι ἡμῖν
but	in	who	God	who	the living	who	giveth us
G235	G1722	G3588	G2316	G3588	G2198	G3588	G3930 G2254
πλουσίως	πάντα	εἰς	ἀπόλαυσιν				
richly	all things	to	enjoy				
G4146	G3956	G1519	G619				

Additional Cross-References

Acts 14:17 (Parallel theme): Nevertheless he left not himself without witness, in that he did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness.

Proverbs 11:28 (Faith): He that trusteth in his riches shall fall: but the righteous shall flourish as a branch.

1 Timothy 4:10 (Faith): For therefore we both labour and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the Saviour of all men, specially of those that believe.

Proverbs 27:24 (Parallel theme): For riches are not for ever: and doth the crown endure to every generation?

Matthew 19:23 (Parallel theme): Then said Jesus unto his disciples, Verily I say unto you, That a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven.

Titus 2:12 (References God): Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world;

Colossians 3:16 (Parallel theme): Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.

Proverbs 30:9 (References God): Lest I be full, and deny thee, and say, Who is the LORD? or lest I be poor, and steal, and take the name of my God in vain.

Romans 11:20 (Faith): Well; because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith. Be not highminded, but fear:

Luke 19:2 (Parallel theme): And, behold, there was a man named Zacchaeus, which was the chief among the publicans, and he was rich.

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