Dear Open Door Family,

We live in a country and time period of history where the pursuit of wealth, and all the "stuff" that accompanies it can become our only focus. The constant commercials for wealth management, and retirement planning have made me nervous when I think about the future. Yet there is nothing I can know for certain about things like the stocks and bonds or the price of oil. At those times I have to consciously remind myself that I must be a good steward of all that God has provided for us. I cannot make financial security or wealth my only pursuit in life.

Timothy was ministering in the church at Ephesus when Paul wrote him this first letter. Ephesus was a wealthy city and many in the church had yet to learn a godly approach to finances. Let's look at these verses together

1 Timothy 6:6-10 *(NLT) Yet true godliness with contentment is itself great wealth. [7] After all, we brought nothing with us when we came into the world, and we can't take anything with us when we leave it. [8] So if we have enough food and clothing, let us be CONTENT. [9] But people who long to be rich fall into temptation and are TRAPPED by many foolish and harmful desires that plunge them into ruin and destruction. [10] For the love of money is the root of all kinds of evil. And some people, craving money, have wandered from the true faith and pierced themselves with many sorrows.*

Paul told Timothy that pursuing wealth was a sure way to fall into all kinds of temptations. Later he warns Timothy to *"...keep clear of such things. Set your heart not on riches, but on goodness, Christ-likeness, faith, love, patience and humility."* 1 Tim. 6:11 (Phillips) The reminder in vs. 7 is a an amazing statement to us and our culture. You did not bring anything into this world, and guess what? You cannot take it with you once you have accumulated it here. The challenge Paul gives is that we should be Content if we have food and clothing. That seems almost ridiculous when viewed through the eyes of our culture which says get it all and get it now. I can honestly say that I regret the time I have wasted down through the years either envying others who had more stuff, or merely dreaming about what I would do if I had more income. May we take Paul's warning seriously so that we do not get TRAPPED in anyway by the pursuit of wealth.

PRAYER: Lord, God, help me to continue to learn that the things I accumulate here will be meaningless in eternity. Please help me to pursue YOU above and beyond anything else in life. May I continue to learn to be content and satisfied with the simple things in life. Help me NOT to buy into the pursuit of the bigger, better, shinier things in life.

1 Timothy 6:17-19 *(Phillips) Tell those who are rich in this present world not to be contemptuous of others, and not to rest the weight of their confidence on the transitory power of wealth but on the living God, who generously gives us everything for our enjoyment. Tell them to do good, to be rich in kindly actions, to be ready to give to others and to sympathize with those in distress. Their security should be invested in the life to come so that they may be sure of holding a share in the life which is permanent.*

Pastor Mark Kieft
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