



SABBATH 20—MAY 18, 2024

Towards Heaven

1 Timothy 6:17, 18—“Command those who are rich in this present age not to be haughty, nor to trust in uncertain riches but in the living God, who gives us richly all things to enjoy. Let them do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to give, willing to share.”

Renowned preacher George W. Truett was invited to dine at the home of a very wealthy man. After the meal, the host took him to a place where they could get a good view of the area surrounding his mansion. Pointing to the oil wells dotting the landscape, he boasted, “As far as your eyes can see, it’s all mine.” Looking in the opposite direction, where his grain fields were blooming, he said, “All that is mine.” Turning east toward huge herds of cattle, he boasted, “They’re all mine.” Then, pointing to the west and a beautiful forest, he exclaimed, “This is all mine too.” He paused, expecting the pastor to praise him for his great success.

Placing one hand on the man’s shoulder and pointing to the sky with the other, Pastor Truett simply said, “How much do you have in that direction?”

The man lowered his head and confessed, “I never thought of that.”

The biblical text we read is Paul’s exhortation to each of us. It helps us to understand that the cure for the harm that resources can cause us lies in being faithful to God and generous to others. When we are faithful in our tithes and offerings and generous to those in need, we are making it clear to ourselves that our possessions do not own us. We also understand that the resources we have in our hands are evidence of God at work in our lives, rather than our ability to acquire or accumulate resources.

Ellen G. White sums up this concept very well:

Satan uses worldly treasure to ensnare, deceive, and delude souls, to accomplish their ruin. God has given directions as to how they are to appropriate His goods in relieving the wants of suffering humanity, in advancing His cause, in building up His kingdom in the world, in sending missionaries into regions beyond, in disseminating the knowledge of Christ in all parts of the world (*Counsels on Stewardship*, p. 133).

Appeal: Never forget that our true riches are in heaven!

