

Leadership Tip!

Lead with your heart. Your members will feel comfortable with your openness and willingness to share, give and help. That's what we call doing life together!

SPENT – LEGACY**STARTER QUESTION:**

Throughout our lives we often experience our level of provision go up and down. When things are not going so well, many of us turn to God in prayer for help. But what do we do when things are going well? Describe a time when things were going well for you. What was your reaction to those around you, and more importantly, how did you react to God?

MAIN IDEA:

This week, Pastor Hank used a ladder as a metaphor for trust, and many of us may have envisioned, “the corporate ladder.” Trust in the corporate ladder often looks like this; if I work hard I will be rewarded with promotions, pay raises, and more responsibility. If we put too much faith in the corporate ladder we sometimes find ourselves becoming preoccupied with success or wealth or power. This preoccupation frequently comes with stress, anxiety (especially about finances), and ultimately may draw our faith away from God.

This series is about returning our faith, in the form of trust, back toward God. By realizing God wants the best for us, and that everything we have comes from Him, we can begin to experience the kind of trust God longs for us to have.

KEY SCRIPTURE:**1Timothy 6:18 (NLT)**

“Teach those who are rich in this world not to be proud and not to trust in their money, which is so unreliable. Their trust should be in God, who richly gives us all we need for our enjoyment.”

The Proud and the Humble

Let's take a closer look at Paul's words. When he writes, "Teach those who are rich in this world not to be proud..." What does that pride look like?

- "The money I make is mine"
- "I deserve it."
- "I earned it."
- "I am in charge of it."

But Paul goes on to tell us money is unreliable. It is easy to forget the fleeting nature of money since we are constantly reminded of its (supposed) importance in movies, songs, and commercials. But when the money is gone, many of us find that we have tumbled back to the ground. Money was nothing more than a rickety ladder.

In the same verse, Paul hints at humility. What might that humility look like?

- "I worked with MY hands... that were given to me by God."
- "I used MY brain... the one that was given to me by God."
- "All I have has come my way by the loving hand of God."

When we humbly realize God provides, when we stop relying on money as our source of happiness, when we return our faith toward God, we are able to enjoy His provision for our lives. As Paul says, God "richly gives us all we need for our enjoyment."

Faith and Giving

1 Timothy 6:18 (NLT)

"Tell them to use their money to do good. They should be rich in good works and generous to those in need, always being ready to share with others."

Part of faith is giving. This can be a stumbling block for some people. This stumbling block could be as subtle as saying, "Once I have made a certain amount of money, THEN I will start giving." But doesn't this show a lack of trust in God? Isn't that person really saying, "I will trust in God later"? Giving our first portion (or "first fruits") to God can seem counter-intuitive, but giving back to God is one way we represent trusting in Him rather than money.

But giving is not only about **our** faith; it is also about blessing others. First we bless others when we provide for those who may be in need. Who has not seen the effects of good will projects and food banks? Next we bless others by showing love. Just as God provides for us out of love, we can provide for others out of Christian love. And finally, we bless others when they realize the love we have shown is the same love awaiting them in the capital “C” church [that is, not just our local church, but the church of all Christ-followers]. Isn’t bringing others into a relationship with the living God a worthwhile investment?

The Generosity Ladder

1 Timothy 6:18, 19 (NLT)

“Tell them to use their money to do good. They should be rich in good works and generous to those in need, always being ready to share with others. By doing this they will be storing up their treasure as a good foundation for the future so that they may experience true life.”

Recall Pastor Hank’s metaphor of the generosity ladder, each rung represents a level of giving and ultimately trust.

- The Initial Giver – The very first step toward trusting God rather than our money.
- The Consistent Giver – The person who decides to give regularly.
- The Intentional Giver – The person who thinks about what they spend their money on.
- The Sacrificial Giver – The person who begins to make changes in their lifestyle that costs them something.
- The Legacy Giver – This is the person who asks, “God, how much do you want me to keep?” instead of asking, “God, how much do you want me to give?”

Each rung of the ladder requires faith, and each rung requires us to embrace the truth that God is more reliable money, trusting that He will provide.

ENGAGE AUTHENTICALLY: Giving, at any level, can be viewed as a pretty big commitment. If God doesn't get your commitment, somebody or something else will. The question is WHO will get your commitment?

FINAL THOUGHTS:

As you think of Pastor Hank's ladder, remember that

- All we have comes from God (and ultimately belongs to Him)
- We can learn to live within God's current provision for our lives, and...
- When we do this we are free to give generously and experience the joy of building a legacy

How can our group pray for you?

CLOSE IN PRAYER

SPENT
"Legacy"
November 27, 2016

Beliefs --- Decisions ---- Outcomes

Week 1: All I have has come from God (and ultimately belongs to Him)

Week 2: I've got to learn to live within God's current provision for my life.

"Teach those who are rich in this world not to be proud and not to trust in their money, which is so unreliable. Their trust should be in God, who richly gives us all we need for our enjoyment."
1 Timothy 6:17 (NLT)

Being Rich:

- If you have enough food, clothes, live in a house / apt, and have a reliable means of transportation, you are among the top 15% of the world's wealthy.
- If you earn \$25,000 or more annually, you are in the top 10%
- And if you earn more than \$50,000 annually, you are in the top 1%

"Tell them to use their money to do good. They should be rich in good works and generous to those in need, always being ready to share with others."
1 Timothy 6:18 (NLT)

"What I'm trying to do here is to get you to relax, to not be so preoccupied with getting, so you can respond to God's giving. People who don't know God and the way he works fuss over these things, but you know both God and how he works. Steep your life in God-reality, God-initiative, God-provisions. Don't worry about missing out. You'll find all your everyday human concerns will be met."
Matthew 6:31-33 (Message)

The Generosity Ladder:

- Initial Giver
- Consistent Giver
- Intentional Giver
- Sacrificial Giver
- Legacy Giver

When I put my trust in God and give generously,
I can experience the joy of building a lasting legacy.

"Tell them to use their money to do good. They should be rich in good works and generous to those in need, always being ready to share with others. By doing this they will be storing up their treasure as a good foundation for the future so that they may experience true life."
1 Timothy 6:18,19 (NLT)