

1 Timothy 6:17-21

A good foundation is a foundation that lasts. Whether that is a good routine in your life that keeps you healthy, a steel foundation that keeps a building up, or a budget that is the foundation of your wealth. A good foundation is crucial or what rests on it will not stand. The foundations in our lives need to stand against any element that would oppose them. They also give people hope that the building is not going to fall on them, they can achieve healthy lives, or remain financially secure. A strong foundation is a lasting foundation. It is absolutely critical to have a lasting spiritual foundation. Without one, you will be left hopeless. The world says a whole lot about what will be good for you. Today, let us cut the world's useless chatter. Let us see what God says makes your perfect foundation that gives everlasting hope

Paul, the apostle Jesus himself called, knew the world has all kinds of stuff that wants to be the foundation you live on. You probably can think of many but in our lesson Paul zeros in on one dangerous one. Paul starts the last section of 1 Timothy by telling his young associate to command those who are rich in this present world. I am not what I would consider rich... How about you? Does this lesson really apply to us here in the small town of Port Washington? Before we go on you need to know that these words by Paul absolutely apply to you and yes, my friends, you are rich. Surveys about world wealth say that if you have just over \$4000 to your name, you have more than 50% of the world. That is not Paul or me calling you rich, that is this world and simple math. Now, it is good to remember that money, cars, and being well off is not inherently bad or good. The various possessions we have are all good and wonderful blessings from our God. It is when we try to put our hope of security in those riches that we have a problem.

A woman on lake Michigan decided to build her house on a bluff. It was a beautiful location that gave her a breath-taking view of the lake every day. The waves would crash right outside and probably did wonders for her sleep. That was until those waves eroded the bluff under her house. One October a storm removed 30ft of the ground under the house. A drone caught video of the entire house collapsing and falling into the lake. That house did not have a very good foundation, did it? The owner had little hope that this house would stand for long. She had tried to slow the process down with a cement wall, but the erosion outpaced her efforts. Ultimately, she knew there was little chance the house would stand. It left her feeling very numb. You may be thinking, well what do you expect when you put a house on such a weak foundation! That is exactly what happens when we make worldly wealth our foundation. When we make our 401K, retirement, or savings the source of our security and hope, than we have built our spiritual house on an eroding foundation!

Paul makes it clear when he tells Timothy to command the rich v 17, "not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain." We all know how unstable money is. The stock market can crash, you can have an emergency that drains the accounts, or you could lose your 401k in a tragic situation. That means that every time you put your hope in wealth you will be left numbly disappointed like that woman who built her home on an eroding foundation. Paul tells us that not only is wealth a bad foundation because it is uncertain but because it makes us arrogant. There is the arrogance of thinking you have more worth than others because you have more stuff or money. Maybe that thought has entered your heart, it is so easily done in this life. Even more, we need to watch out for the spiritual arrogance worldly riches can cause. God commands us in the very first commandment, "You shall have no other gods." Luther explains that we should fear, love, and trust in God above all else. That means that God should be our hope and foundation above all else 100% of the time. When we put our hope in wealth for even a moment than we make it our idol. We tell God that what we have a firmer foundation than the one who gave it. **WHAT ARROGANCE!** The world just loves to tell you that wealth should be your foundation. Cut the useless chatter! A flimsy foundation like worldly wealth is a foundation destined for the eternal fireplace on the last day. It is no good and will not last! What is a good foundation then?

Paul tells you at the end of verse 17, "put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment." In Cheyenne Mountain, there is military bunker and complex. They built it there because they found an area that indented, and they could build the complex literally into the mountain. A

complex like that is secure and not going anywhere anytime soon. To make it fall you would need to first take down the mountain that encases it. You have a spiritual foundation that is even better. Your hope is in the Creator of the Cheyenne Mountain. Your foundation is the very words of God, who provides every good gift from above. That means your eternal foundation cannot erode no matter how bad the storms or waves of life beat against it. It is the foundation that cannot and will not change or move because it is the eternally solid rock of God's unchanging Word.

Our Gospel shows us just how precious that foundation and hope are. Jesus himself compares the foundation of God's Word to a treasure and precious pearl that when found the person sold everything. Think about that. They sold every piece of furniture, their house, their clothes, emptied the bank and gave it all up for that one treasure. They did it with joy too! That is incredible! God's Word is the foundation we can give up every piece of worldly wealth because it has an eternally greater value! Through that powerful Word, we are given an unshakeable faith in the eternal hope that is ours! Hope that is not a wishful thought but absolute certainty in the fact that you have forgiveness of sins. In God's Word, we learn about a treasure God found valuable. He was willing to give up everything! He came down and died for it. That treasure was you! God died for you so that you could live a life without guilt. Your sins are gone. Jesus already paid for them. You have the everlasting wealth of Salvation. It is yours! You will live with God now and in heaven forever. That is your firm foundation and it will never break or fall. That is your certain hope now as God gives you everything you need in this life and it is your hope to come as God has every spiritual blessing waiting for you! Not only does God give it all to you but he even gives you the ability to enjoy it! So yeah, we cut the world's useless chatter and listen to the Words of the World's Creator. We know that we hope that never ends because it is on a foundation that eternally lasts!

130 billion dollars' worth of gold. That is a valuable stash of riches. That is roughly how much gold is currently sitting in Fort Knox. That is why the Fort was built, to keep that gold safe. So, they guard the treasure with heavy walls, tanks, military personnel, and 24hr security surveillance. The gold is too valuable to let anything happen to it. Our foundation and hope in God's Word are worth building a spiritual Fort Knox around. See, the world wants to chatter its way in to steal the eternal treasures God has given you. That Paul's warning in verses 20 and 21, "Turn away from godless chatter and the opposing ideas of what is falsely called knowledge, 21 which some have professed and in so doing have departed from the faith." This world hates God and wants to distract us from the truth of the Gospel with its appealing lies. It would have you think that money and possessions are all you need and want. If God really loves you, you should have more wealth in this life. Watch out! Cut the godless chatter! It is dangerous... If only we could. We do not have the ability or the defense to guard that treasure on our own. That is why we need to stay on the foundation.

In Christ, we are given the heavy spiritual walls to fend off the world's feeble attempts to take our hope. You have the Word of God, which is a weapon so powerful that Satan crumbled before it. We can reject this world lies because Jesus has given us the truth in the solid rock of Scripture! That truth opens your ears to what God says and shuts them to the chatter of this perishing world and its perishing riches. In the Word, your God holds you and keeps you safe as your spiritual Fort Knox. Not only do you have the hope that never fades but you have the eternally strong refuge keeping it safe. Let us continue to build up that spiritual Fort by regularly and joyfully listen to the truth of God's Word.

Yeah, the world has a lot to say about wealth. God cuts that useless chatter for you. He shows you that you live with true, undiminishing wealth. You live with a certain hope forever. You live knowing that Jesus died for you and the one who created all things will daily and eternally provide for you spiritually and physically. You live on an unshakeable foundation, Jesus Christ. Your hope is not like that house falling into lake Michigan. Your hope is built on God's Word. You are eternally secure. You can now chatter with joy to the world about the absolute truth that heaven is yours now and forevermore! Amen.