

Not Just a Matter of Time (1 Timothy 6.11-21)

As I urged you when I went into Macedonia, stay there in Ephesus so that you may command certain men not to teach false doctrines any longer ⁴ nor to devote themselves to myths and endless genealogies.

1 Timothy 3.14-15 “Although I hope to come to you soon, I am writing you these instructions so that, if I am delayed, you will know how people ought to conduct themselves in God’s household, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and foundation of the truth.”

The doctrine of eternity is an enormous help when it comes to our struggle of values, because it teaches us what is truly valuable and worth living for. Eternity blesses us with ultimate values clarification. Go to Revelation, and listen to the voices that are on the other side. What is the subject of their celebration? It's not wealth, power, grand palaces, people's acclaim, success, or achievement. No, the constant focus of the celebration is the Savior and his faithful and victorious grace. We need the values clarification of eternity because we so easily lose our sense of what's important.

But if you live with eternity in view, remembering that this is not your final destination but rather a time of preparation for your final destination, you will not be surprised when things don't work as they should, when people are less than perfect, when your dreams don't unfold as you expected, or when hardship comes your way. You'll know that when difficulty comes, you are being molded by the hands of the divine artist into something progressively more beautiful and more fit for what is to come.

I. The Way that Matters (verses 11-12)

Four imperatives:

Flee

Pursue

Fight

Take hold

What are we to flee?

“Must be fleeing always...” (Williams)

“These things be constantly fleeing.”
(Wuest)

“ever flee these things” like a pestilence, like poisonous serpents, like the devil’s snares. One would cease to be a man of God if he did not so flee these things, if he let them catch him. Alas, some only pretend to flee. They often stay near and think they are at a safe distance until they are overtaken and caught. Continue to flee, do nothing but flee, the margin of safety cannot be too great. (Lenski)

“Pursue” is used of an animal stalking its prey. The sense is to have a single-minded focus.
(Belleville)

What are we told to pursue?

Flee! Pursue!

The two are one, two sides of one course of conduct:

when we are fleeing we pursue;

when pursuing we flee,

a halt in flight is a halt in pursuit, and vice versa. (Lenski)

Fight

Take Hold

Just so! We are to grab onto the eternal life that is already ours and ride it for all it's worth through the ups and downs of following Christ. Eternal life—the knowledge of God the Father and Christ his Son, the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, the knowledge of sins forgiven, the peace of Christ, the fruits of the Spirit, the joy of service, the love of God—these are things we must grab onto and joyously hold until we arrive in Heaven.[Hughes]

II. The Witnesses that Matter (Verses 13-16)

“a blanket imperative for Timothy to follow through on all this epistle presents him with...the entire commission that Timothy has received from Paul.”

So we make it our goal to please him, whether we are at home in the body or away from it. For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive what is due him for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad.

2 Corinthians 5:9-10

Since everything will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people ought you to be? You ought to live holy and godly lives as you look forward to the day of God and speed its coming. That day will bring about the destruction of the heavens by fire, and the elements will melt in the heat. But in keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, the home of righteousness.

2 Peter 3:11-13

John 17.14 “I have given them
your word and the world has
hated them, for they are not of
the world any more than I am of
the world.”

Philippians 3.20-21 “But our commonwealth (citizenship) is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will change our lowly body to be like his glorious body, by the power which enables him even to subject all things to himself.”

Hebrews 13.14 “For here we do not have an enduring city, but we are looking for the city that is to come.”

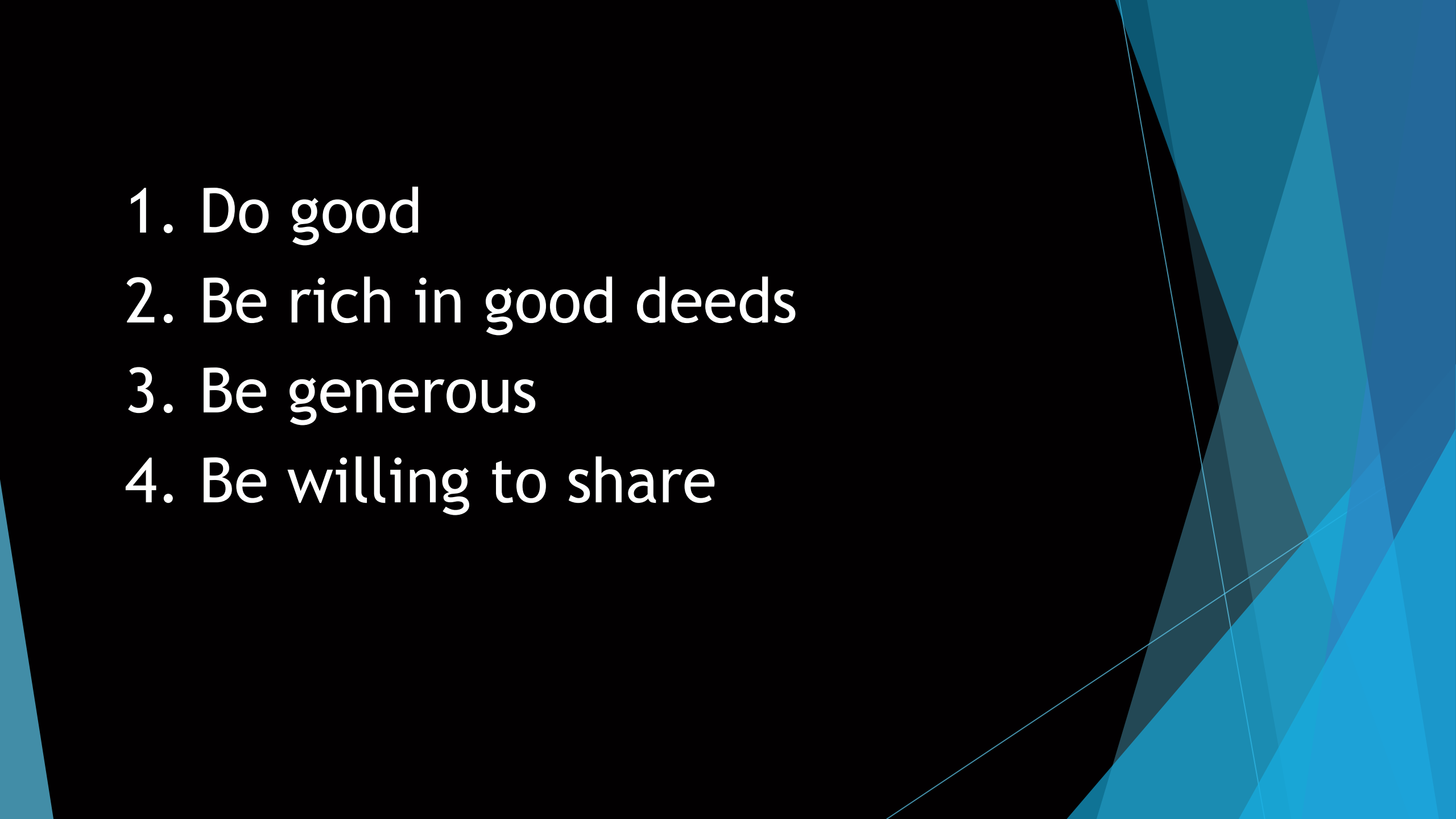
1 Peter 2.11 “Dear friends, I urge you, as aliens and strangers in the world, to abstain from sinful desires, which war against your soul.”

1 John 2.15-16 “Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For everything in the world—the cravings of sinful man, the lust of his eyes and the boasting of what he has and does—comes not from the Father but from the world.”

III. The Wealth that Matters (Verses 17-19)

Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment. Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share. In this way they will lay up treasure for themselves as a firm foundation for the coming age, so that they may take hold of the life that is truly life.

1 Timothy 6:17-19

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1. Do good
 2. Be rich in good deeds
 3. Be generous
 4. Be willing to share

“Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

Matthew 6:19-21

Cast but a glance at riches,
and they are gone, for they
will surely sprout wings and fly
off to the sky like an eagle.

Proverbs 23:5

For we brought nothing into
the world, and we can take
nothing out of it.

1 Timothy 6:7

R.K. Hughes says: “Believers already have life, but a generous, giving Christian is one who has taken hold of eternal life now and is riding life for all it is worth.”

- ▶ In the sight of God, who gives life to everything, and of Christ Jesus, who while testifying before Pontius Pilate made the good confession, I charge you to keep this command without spot or blame until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ, which God will bring about in his own time—God, the blessed and only Ruler, the King of kings and Lord of lords, who alone is immortal and who lives in unapproachable light, whom no one has seen or can see. To him be honor and might forever. Amen.