

The Teachings on Riches in 1 Timothy
in light of *Ephesiaca* by Xenophon of Ephesus

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Abstract

Scholars are divided on reading the teachings on riches in 1 Tim. Evidence that has been largely overlooked in NT scholarship, *Ephesiaca* by Xenophon of Ephesus, suggests that the topic be revisited. *Ephesiaca* is a story about a rich Ephesian couple. This text brings to life what is known from ancient sources about the social setting and cultural rules of the rich in Ephesus and adds details to enhance our knowledge of life and society.

Recent scholarship has dated *Ephesiaca* to the mid-first century CE. If the Acts narrative is reliable, this locates the story in broadly the same timeframe as the ministry of Paul in Ephesus. Interestingly, the story contains some of the same general themes *and* rare terms found in the teachings on riches in 1 Tim. My argument does not focus on locating specific dates for 1 Tim or *Ephesiaca*, but rather, my aim is to analyze these two texts alongside each other and extant ancient sources.

My dissertation begins by introducing *Ephesiaca* and the socio-rhetorical methodology used to explore it alongside other evidence and 1 Tim. The methodology has five parts: social and cultural texture, inner texture, intertexture, ideological texture, and sacred texture. The first texture is helpful for locating a *Sitz im Leben* of the rich in Ephesus, the social and cultural *context* that preceded the *texts* of 1 Tim and *Ephesiaca*.

The four remaining textures are employed to scrutinize five passages: 1 Tim 2:9-10; 3:1-13; 6:1-2a; 6:2b-10; and 6:17-19. The findings of this study reveal a fresh perspective on these texts. The teachings on riches in 1 Tim appear to call followers of Jesus to handle riches in a counter-cultural manner that is consistent with the trajectory of other NT teachings when read in light of ancient sources and *Ephesiaca* by Xenophon of Ephesus.