

1 Timothy 6:3-21

Verses 3-5:

--(3) *If anyone teaches otherwise.* . . The Greek word for **teach otherwise** brings us back to 1:3, the only other place it is used in the NT. Paul is again referring to the false teachings and teachers he has charged Timothy to stop.

--*If anyone.* . . leaves them unnamed, and instead Paul moves into their identifying marks.

--*and does not consent to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which accords with godliness.* . . All health-giving words are from Jesus Christ and in harmony with biblical godliness. False teachers reject, contradict, and ignore such.

Titus 1:1: Paul, a bondservant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ, according to the faith of God's elect and the acknowledgment of the truth which accords with godliness,

--Paul describes the rejectors of Jesus Christ:

--(4) *he is proud, knowing nothing, but is obsessed with disputes and arguments over words,*

--False teachers are spiritually dense with pride. *Swelling is dangerous, in body and soul!*

--False teachers know nothing. There is no wisdom or understanding of spiritual things where the Person and truth of Jesus Christ have been rejected.

--False teachers focus on things that cause disputes and arguments.

--(4-5) *from which come envy, strife, reviling, evil suspicions, useless wranglings of men of corrupt minds and destitute of the truth,*

--Bad doctrine will produce bad fruit. Does this look like godliness? Like Jesus Christ? The Pharisees, yes, but Jesus, no. Corrupted thoughts will poison character and relationships.

--These false teachers end up **destitute of the truth**. They don't have "something" to tell us. They oppose, reject, pervert, and object to truth. Ultimately, that is because truth is not their object. What is?

--*who suppose that godliness is a means of gain.* Anyone—*If anyone (3)*—teaches that godliness will make you wealthy. They are a false teacher. We call this the prosperity gospel in our times, and there are many who teach those things: Paula White + Stephen Furtick + Creflo Dollar + Joel Osteen + Joyce Meyer + T.D. Jakes + Kenneth Copeland + Benny Hinn + Craig Groeschel, etc. The list is too long! *It is not enough to only teach it "sometimes" as if teaching a false gospel is okay if it is only "sometimes".*

--They all teach, under some guise of truth, that faith, true godly faith, will make you wealthy, bring prosperity, fulfill your dreams, and begin your best life now. **Who suppose that godliness is a means of gain.**

--What is Paul's advice? **From such withdraw yourself.**

Verses 6-8:

--(6) **Now godliness with contentment is great gain.** Paul admits that godliness does bring a type of gain into our lives, but it is not more material gain. Godliness brings contentment.

Contentment is independence, satisfaction, the very opposite of covetousness. *Abraham possessed God and not any of his other vast possessions—even his sons!*

--What does the content man or woman look like?

Philippians 4:11-13: *Not that I speak in regard to need, for I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content: I know how to be abased, and I know how to abound. Everywhere and in all things I have learned both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.*

--How can a Christian learn this? By having all things in God. The secret source of living water.

John 7:38: *He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.*

--The false teachers are greedy, holding all of life with a closed fist. The followers of Jesus Christ are content, holding all of life in an open hand.

Luke 12:15: *And He said to them, "Take heed and beware of covetousness, for one's life does not consist in the abundance of the things he possesses."*

--(7-8) *For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and clothing, with these we shall be content.*

--What does the follower of Christ understand about material wealth? We are only passing through, and all our "stuff" is a temporary stewardship. We give it all back!

--What is the point of all our "stuff" if we cannot take it into eternity? Putting it in barns?

Luke 12:16-21: *But God said to him, "Fool! This night your soul will be required of you; then whose will those things be which you have provided?" So is he who lays up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God.*

--What should a follower of Christ be content with? ***Food and clothing.*** The Greek word here for ***clothing*** has the idea of *covering* and can include things like shelter. Paul is describing the basics. Everything we need to walk with God and serve God.

Fenelon (The Complete Fenelon): *"Dear God, I am coming to you, and I never tire of coming. I have nothing in myself, and I find everything in you alone. How poor I am! How rich you are! How what need do I have to be rich, since you are rich for me? I adore your eternal riches. I love my poorness. I take pleasure in being nothing before you."*

--The problem is not necessarily the "thing" or dollar amount, but the covetousness and discontent driving us. What drives us?! Can we pray like Agur the son of Jakeh?

Proverbs 30:8-9: *Remove falsehood and lies far from me; give me neither poverty nor riches—Feed me with the food allotted to me; lest I be full and deny You, and say, "Who is the LORD?" Or lest I be poor and steal, and profane the name of my God.*

--Why is this contentment so important? Because the opposite is dangerous!

Verses 9-10:

--(9) *But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and harmful lusts which drown men in destruction and perdition.*

--The desire to be rich is not a godly motive. We cannot serve two masters.

Matthew 6:24: No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.

--The desire to be rich will cause us to fall into temptation. Riches open unsanctified doors.

Social pressures; Worldly environments; Sexual opportunities; Drinking; etc.

*Muggeridge (Jesus Rediscovered): *"I notice that where our way of life is most successful materially it is most disastrous morally and spiritually; that the psychiatric wards are the largest and most crowded, and the suicides most numerous, precisely where material prosperity is greatest, where most money is spent on education."**

--The evil desire to be rich is a snare. Once a snare snags you, you cannot escape.

Covetousness and greed enslave us to our sin. We cannot get free or give it up.

--Then, having played the fool, harmed ourselves and others, we are eventually drowned in destruction and perdition. Riches have led many to hell! So many of us would be ruined by them, and that is why God has not made us rich in His mercy!

--**(10) For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil.** . . The Bible recognizes numerous evil roots, but the root of the love of money produces all kinds of bad fruit! What haven't men done for the love of money? *Apostasy; Sexual sin; Theft; Violence; Murder; Worldliness; Divorce; Abortion; Prestige; Governmental tyranny; etc.*

--It doesn't even have to be a lot of money. Jesus Christ was betrayed for thirty pieces of silver.

--***for which some have strayed from the faith in their greediness, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.***

--The Greek word for **strayed** (*apoplanao*) is only used one other time in the NT in **Mk. 13:22: For false christs and false prophets will rise and show signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect.**

--They don't confess it aloud, but there are always some being seduced from the faith by greed. To their own eternal detriment and harm.

Verse 11:

--***But you, O man of God.*** . . In clear contrast with the lives of false teachers and covetous money-lovers, Timothy was to be a man of God. A term always referring to God's direct servant in any circumstance or age. God's man Vs. Money's man.

--Paul will give Timothy, and all men and women of God, a threefold command here: **flee, follow (pursue), fight.** . . and all three are a continual process, not something to be accomplished and forgotten. *Keep fleeing, keep following, keep fighting.*

--What was Timothy to flee? **These things.** . . false doctrine, bad behavior, and the love of money (**3:14; 4:6, 11, 15; 5:7, 21; 6:2, 11**).

*King (1 Timothy: A Leader Led): *"We may, I think, legitimately enlarge the counsel and urge that we shall turn our backs and run away from anything that is calculated to spoil the Christian experience, to hinder the Christian progress, or to lower the Christian standard—anything that will cause the unwary believer to be content with anything less than the best. Surely the man of God will desire to be the best for God: that will answer many of his questions about doubtful things."**

--What was Timothy to follow, or ***pursue? Righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, gentleness.*** This list seems to be in harmonious pairs.

--The Christian life should be more known for what *it is* rather than what *it is not*. What would our lives look like if we were truly pursuing these spiritual virtues?

Verse 12:

--***Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life.*** . . What was Timothy to fight?

--The good or *noble* fight for *the* faith. The image is that of a boxer in the ring. We don't have to fight a perfect fight, only Jesus did that, but we should put up a good contest in our individual battles and posts. *Abraham, Moses, David, Peter, all put up good, not perfect, fights.*

--In doing so, we will ***lay hold on eternal life.*** In quality, not necessarily duration. Fleeing fleshly lusts, turning from materialism, pursuing godliness, and fighting to do so, will force us to lay hold on the eternal. You cannot hold the temporal and eternal in the same hand.

--Why else should Timothy do so? ***to which you were called and have confessed the good confession in the presence of many witnesses.***

--All sons and daughters are called to be partakers in a heavenly calling. Also, he reminds Timothy of his confession before many witnesses. Both seem to be general Christian callings and confession (which would seem to refer to his baptism), not Timothy's personal ministerial calling or witness.

Verses 13-14:

--***I urge you in the sight of God who gives life to all things, and before Christ Jesus who witnessed the good confession before Pontius Pilate, that you keep this commandment without spot, blameless until our Lord Jesus Christ's appearing,***

--First, Paul exhorts Timothy further by reminding him about where his life comes from. God the Father, the Giver of all life, should command all life, and will fulfill our lives.

--Second, he reminds Timothy of Jesus Christ as the Ultimate Confessor.

****Revelation 1:5 + 3:14: and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler over the kings of the earth. . . These things says the Amen, the Faithful and True Witness, the Beginning of the creation of God:****

--In Jesus Christ, we see perfect and spotless commandment keeping. The commandment keeping Paul has in mind seems to be general here as well.

--How long should Timothy flee, follow, and fight according to his calling and confession? Until the King comes!

Verses 15-16:

--**(15) *which He will manifest in His own time, He who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings and Lord of lords,***

--When will the return of Christ be? When God wants it to be! The **manifest** glory of Jesus Christ, the Father's Faithful Witness, is a part of God's inevitable program.

--We might not see it now, but we will! Jesus' place as the King of all those kinging and Lord of all those lording will be seen and known. *This was being said of a Man from Nazareth!*

--He alone, **only**, is singular in blessedness and majesty.

--**(16) *who alone has immortality, dwelling in unapproachable light, whom no man has seen or can see, to whom be honor and everlasting power. Amen.***

--Our immortality is a gift. His is His. He alone *has* immortality. All others have *received* immortality. He is the Father of our spirits (**Heb. 12:9**).

--No created eyes, finite in nature, can truly see the full glory and majesty of His infinite nature. We can see some God, but not all of God. God's glory is always there, but not always manifest.

Verses 17-19:

--**(17) *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.***

--Paul gives the rich two warnings. Those who are wealthy **in this present age**. . . which is in contrast with the eternal ages.

1) He warns them not to be prideful. Riches can make people think highly of themselves or see themselves as special to God.

2) He warns them not to lose trust in God. Riches give a semblance of power and ability.

Proverbs 23:5: *Will you set your eyes on that which is not? For riches certainly make themselves wings; they fly away like an eagle toward heaven.*

--Why rely on God when your credit card can solve most of your problems?

--In contrast, Paul gives four positive exhortations to the wealthy in this present age.

--**(18) *Let them do good.*** . . Not just *have goods*, but *be good*. Do good with your wealth.

*Boreham (The Last Milestone): "*Once we possess a thing we incorporate it into our personal organism. Three men may each possess a sheet of paper. The first, a lover, will transmute it into a vehicle for the expression of his passion. The second, a poet, will inscribe upon it a song that will be sung for centuries. The third, a statesman, will turn it into an ultimatum that will plunge the world into war. Our money becomes good money or bad money in exact proportion to our own goodness or badness. If the personality of its owner be good, the money will be good money and will be so spent, invested, and administered as to uplift mankind. If the personality of its owner be corrupt, the money will be bad money and will blight humanity in its flow.*"*

--**that they be rich in good works.** . . . Not just an occasional tax write-off or holiday charity gift. The world says: *More money, More problems.* God says: *More money, More mercies.* Put your wealth to work for God!

--**ready to give.** . . . The Greek word Paul uses is only used here in the NT. It means to be *liberal* (not stingy or manipulative) or *good at imparting*. It describes someone who is intentionally generous. These people are looking to God to open opportunities for them to serve with their riches and wealth. ***Acts 20:35: ...And to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive.***

--Giving is a true spiritual gift. **Rom. 12:8: he who gives, with liberality.** . . .

--**willing to share.** . . . Ready without compulsion. Do not allow your riches to make you exclusive or aloof. Giving beyond those who give in return or whose favor we would like.

Luke 16:9: And I say to you, make friends for yourselves by unrighteous mammon, that when you fail, they may receive you into an everlasting home.

--The unjust steward used money to be accepted into earthly homes. We use the uncertain wealth of this age to make eternal connections with the family of God!

--**(19) storing up for themselves a good foundation for the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life.**

--Why should the rich be careful to do these things? Because they desire eternal riches and true life! If they enjoy what they have now, just wait! *Momentary pleasure Vs. Eternal pleasure. Passing treasures Vs. Eternal treasures. Carnal life Vs. Eternal life.*

2 Peter 1:11: For so an entrance shall be supplied to you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

--We cannot take anything with us. But we can send it ahead! The transmutation of earthly wealth into eternal reward is heaven's alchemy!

--C.T. Studd, after transferring his sizable inheritance from his father's estate to missionary work and workers, said, *The Bank of England may fail, but the Bank of Heaven never can.*

--Earthly wealth is a means to **lay hold on eternal life**. Riches will either bind us to this passing world, or if used correctly, seal our hearts for His courts above. What did Jesus say?

Matthew 6:19-21: Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

--You can direct your affections by how you direct your deposits.

*Flavel (Keeping The Heart): *"Oh how many have been wheeled to hell in the chariots of earthly pleasures, while others have been whipped to heaven by the rod of affliction! How few, like the daughter of Tyre, come to Christ with a gift! How few among the rich entreat his favor!"*

*"It may keep one more humble and watchful in prosperity, to consider that among Christians many have been much the worse for it. How good had it been for some of them, if they had never known prosperity! When they were in a low condition, how humble, spiritual and heavenly they were! But when advanced, what an apparent alteration has been upon their spirits! It was so with Israel; when they were in a low condition in the wilderness, then Israel was 'holiness to the Lord'; but when they came into Canaan and were richly fed, their language was, 'We are lords, we will come no more unto thee.' Outward gains are ordinarily attended with inward losses; as in a low condition their civil employments were wont to have a savor of their religious duties, so in an exalted condition their duties commonly have a savor of the world. He, indeed, is rich in grace whose graces are not hindered by his riches. There are but few Jehoshaphats in the world, of whom it is said, 'He had silver and gold in abundance, and his heart was lifted up in the way of God's commands.' Will not this keep thy heart humble in prosperity, to think how dearly many godly men have paid for their riches; that through them they have lost that which all the world cannot purchase?"**

Verse 20-21:

--**(20) O Timothy! Guard what was committed to your trust.** . . Could be translated *Guard the deposit!* Guard what has been placed in our safekeeping—the message of Christ! The Word of God! The Gospel!

--**avoiding the profane and idle babblings and contradictions of what is falsely so called knowledge.** . . Part of the way we guard the true is by rejecting worthless words, and the pseudo-knowledge of godless philosophy, scholarship, and science. Why?

--**(21) by professing it some have strayed concerning the faith.** Godless, worldly knowledge in conflict with the truth of God's Word has led many astray. Instead of guarding God's truth, they have listened to the unholy objections of unredeemed minds and unclean hearts.

*Grimke (Meditations on Preaching): *"Unsanctified knowledge, knowledge divorced from the thought of God and our responsibility to him is a curse and not a blessing."**

--**Grace be with you. Amen.**

--The **you** here is plural. *You all.* Clearly indicating this was meant to be read by a wider audience than just Timothy.