

I Timothy 6:3-10

We have noted in I Tim. 6:1,2 how believing slaves were to render faithful service to their unsaved masters as well as to their masters who knew the Lord. We saw in these verses some applications concerning our present-day employer-employee relationship and how that a Christian should present a good testimony by being a good worker.

Now the apostle Paul turns his attention to false teachers and the love of money. Notice these two things often go hand in hand. And some of the most prominent preachers so-called are living in the lap of luxury and it is evident that money is their purpose in preaching.

In verses 3-5 Paul identifies and characterizes certain false teachers. Then he instructs Timothy on what to do about such teachers. Then to make sure that Timothy doesn't get side-tracked over money, Paul explains what real gain is and exposes the problems with following after riches (6-10).

V. 3 - Paul identifies certain false teachers who would not teach wholesome words. The word wholesome means "healthy or health-giving." What they would teach would not agree with the words that Jesus taught and the things that are associated with godliness.

It is interesting to note that the Bible speaks of false teachings as unhealthy things that make for sick saints and diseased persons. In II Tim. 2:17 Paul mentions two persons affected by false teachings. The words they had heard had eaten like a cancer or "gangrene" and Hymenaeus and Philetus believed that the resurrection was already past.

V. 4 - These false teachers are characterized in certain ways. They are proud or profess to have superior

knowledge that others don't have but Paul said they don't know what they are talking about.

Examples of these false teachers is clearly seen in our day with men like the charismatic preacher Kenneth Copeland. He along with others supposedly have received revelation from God that others have not. ..."he did not say he was the Son of God." The statement "God told me" is the premise upon which so many began their discourses.

Other things that characterize false teachers are listed here. They raise questions that breed strife over words instead of being edifying and building others up spiritually.

V. 5 - Paul further characterizes these false teachers as men of corrupt minds. This means diseased with unhealthy doctrines. They are also destitute of the truth. This identifies them as apostates who were no doubt exposed to the truth at one time but rejected it.

The most despicable thing about these false teachers is now mentioned. They suppose that gain is godliness or that gain can be acquired through godliness. In other words they seize the opportunity to make money through the ministry. This may cover those selling indulgences like the R.C.'s to those choosing the ministry as a profession. It also involves the prominent charismatic preachers who preach a prosperity gospel. These men are making millions in the ministry and make statements that "Jesus was wealthy and would wear designer clothes if He were here today."

Notice Paul instructs Timothy to withdraw himself from such people as this. This meant no fellowship with those who make the ministry a means of money-making.

V. 6 - Paul explains what gain is - It is godliness with contentment. Being content with what God has given us to do is what real gain is because this occupation will carry over in eternity and last forever.

V. 7,8 - Paul argues the way believers should be content with godliness or doing what God has given us to do. We didn't bring anything into this world and we won't carry anything out.

Someone has said there are three times in our life when we have empty hands - at birth, when we come to Jesus, and at death.

Note the word "raiment" here means "covering" and may include not only food and raiment but a place to live.

V. 9,10 - Paul exposes the problems with following after riches.

V. 9 - They that "will" or "purpose" to be rich fall into temptation. This may involve the temptation or enticement to gamble, lie, to steal, or even commit worse crimes as murder.

It's not uncommon today to hear of people hiring someone to kill a spouse to collect the insurance money or of someone suing another for greedy purposes.

Paul says they that purpose to be rich fall into a snare also. In other words he falls into a trap from which he can't get free.

A person might say when I reach a certain figure in my bank account I will stop and be content with that, but he can't. Once one's heart is set upon anything there's usually no turning around.

People who live for pleasure will continue to live for pleasure. People who live for wealth... who live for fame...

V. 9 - Paul says they who purpose to be rich also fall into many foolish and hurtful lusts which leads to destruction.

For example some people desire to get ahead to keep up with the Joneses and in so doing they rob themselves of the more precious things in life like being a faithful servant and having a part in love offerings and opportunities to lay up for eternity.

Greed for wealth can also lead to destruction. This can be seen in the examples of the rich young ruler (Mk 10:17-22), the rich farmer (Lk 12:16-20), and the rich man mentioned in Lk 18...

V. 10 - Paul says the "love" of money not money is the root of "all kinds of " evil. Not all evil springs from the love of money but it is the source of much evil.

Think of the evils associated with this - murder, prostitution, extortion, drug trafficking and a host of others.

Paul states that for this cause some have erred from the faith and suffered many sorrows.

Now let me give you the scenario of some people's life. They hook and crook to amass a fortune then they die and their kids run through it. Worse yet they could have used some of their money to be a blessing to others and laid up but they didn't!

It's a fact some people are never content. No matter where they are and what they have. Someone has said "true

contentment comes from godliness in the heart not wealth in the hand."

Challenge: Are you laying up here or laying up for eternity?

You're only laying up here...

I. WHEN YOU'RE NOT HONORING GOD WITH A TITHE

II. WHEN YOU'RE NOT WILLING TO SHARE WITH OTHERS WHO HAVE NEEDS

III. WHEN YOU'RE NOT TAKING PART IN PROJECTS TO PROMOTE MISSIONS AND OUTREACH TO OTHERS