

I TIMOTHY 6

Please turn in your Bibles this evening to I Timothy chapter 6 as we continue our study through the Word of God and this evening, we will be finishing up Paul's first letter to Timothy.

Keep in mind that Paul is writing to this young pastor who is overseeing the church in Ephesus. And there were problems there that needed to be dealt with and Paul is encouraging Timothy in what he should do in these matters. He needed to take the role that God had given him and lead the people. He needed to bring order back into the church, because there was so much disorder going on. And let's face it, when you try to correct someone, especially when they have been doing something wrong for a period of time, they don't like it. But Paul wants Timothy to deal with these problems.

Remember what Paul said back in I Timothy 3:14-15, "**These things I write to you, though I hope to come to you shortly; but if I am delayed, I write so that you may know how you ought to conduct yourself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.**"

And what an important statement that is today as the church has no longer become the pillar and the ground of the truth, but we are entertainment centers, counseling centers, sports centers.

We have moved away from the truths of God found in the Word of God and one of the reasons that is so true is that we are more interested in what we want than what God wants.

So our worship is about ourselves.

Our churches are focused in their teachings to tell us things we want to hear.

We have all kinds of things that will meet our fleshly desires in the church.

But the one thing we don't have is the Word of God being taught or if it is being taught, it is watered down so not to offend anyone!

Remember the warning that Paul gave to Timothy in I Timothy 4:1-2, "**Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons, speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their own conscience seared with a hot iron.**"

As you move away from the Word of God you are opening yourself up to all kinds of false teaching, false doctrines, or as Paul calls them, "**doctrines of demons.**"

And what is so dangerous with this is that as you continue down this path your conscience becomes insensitive to the things of God and it is amazing what you can fall prey to.

It is the Word of God opened up to us by the Spirit of God that leads us in the ways of God. Never forget that!

Again, listen to what Paul said, warned Timothy in II Timothy 4:2-5, "**Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; and they will turn their ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables. But you be watchful in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.**"

The pastor is to preach the Word and it doesn't matter what the people want, you give them the truths of God found in the Word of God.

Remember Aaron in the Old Testament, when Moses was up on Mount Sinai and the people were getting restless. And Aaron, in wanting to please the people, told them to bring their gold jewelry and he made a golden calf for them to worship God by.

And God was not pleased, and He is not pleased today when the pastor tickles people's ears with these doctrines of demons. He wants them to give the Word of God to the people of God so that they can grow and mature in the faith!

Why is this so important?

Because, listen to what Paul said in II Timothy 3:16-17, "**All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.**"

God's Word tells us what is right, it tells us what is wrong, it tells us how to get right when we have gone astray, and it tells us how to stay right! And the reason for all of this is, "**that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.**"

Now, as we have seen in this letter, Paul is instructing Timothy how the church is to function, the role of people in the church, church leadership, church discipline and-so-on.

Continuing that thought here in chapter 6, Paul is going to deal with several issues:

EXHORTATION TO SERVANTS – I TIMOTHY 6:1-2

EXHORTATION AGAINST FALSE TEACHERS IN THE CHURCH – I TIMOTHY 6:3-5

EXHORTATION TO GODLINESS WITH CONTENTMENT – I TIMOTHY 6:6-16

EXHORTATION TO THE RICH – I TIMOTHY 6:17-19

EXHORTATION TO GUARD WHAT WAS COMMITTED TO HIM – I TIMOTHY 6:20-21

So with that as our introduction, let's begin reading in I Timothy chapter 6, beginning in verse 1 and let's see what the Lord has for us as we study through His Word.

I TIMOTHY 6

VERSES 1-2

Remember the focus of these verses – ***EXHORTATION TO SERVANTS!***

And the Greek word that Paul uses here for “**servants**” is DOULOI, and it speaks of a bondservant.

And Paul is addressing two issues here. First, the slave who works for an unsaved owner and then a slave who works with an owner that is a Christian.

Why is this such a big deal?

Because in the Greco-Roman world of the first century, it has been estimated that there were some sixty million slaves. And now that Christianity has been introduced into the world, some of these slaves had become Christians and some of these slave owners had also become Christians!

So Paul deals with the unsaved slave owner first. And the point is simple. If your owner is not saved, do your best to serve your master faithfully, be respectful to them.

Now we can come up with a million reasons why they don't deserve to be treated kindly, for us to work hard for them, but Paul lays it out and he tells us that if you don't, then the name of God will be dragged through the mud, God will be dishonored.

You see, you represent the Lord in all that you do and thus, at work, if you are lazy, disrespectful to your boss, it sheds a bad light on God.

Paul, in Colossians 3:22-25 tells us, **“Bondservants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh, not with eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but in sincerity of heart, fearing God. And whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance; for you serve the Lord Christ. But he who does wrong will be repaid for what he has done, and there is no partiality.”**

In other words, you serve your master as unto the Lord. Don't just work hard when they are watching you, but all the time because the Lord is watching you and you are serving Him!

And in the early church, this was played out and it impacted the unsaved in a powerful way. One writer put it like this, “The history of the early church reveals that Christian slaves generally commanded a higher price on the slave market than unbelievers. If a master knew that a certain slave on the auction block was a Christian, he would generally be willing to pay more for that slave, since he knew that the slave would serve him faithfully and well. This is high tribute to the Christian faith.” (William MacDonald)

That is a powerful witness to the unsaved, the way we work. They are watching. And for today, we are not slaves, we get paid for what we do, but we are a witness to our boss, let us shine brightly so they may see Jesus in all that we do!

Then, in verse 2 Paul speaks of the saved slave owner and how we are to work or serve them. It should not change anything, but some felt that if their owner was a Christian and they were a Christian, they should not have to work so hard, they can ease up, relax.

But Paul says, ***“Not so, if your master/employer is a Christian, you are to serve him just as hard, be just as faithful, bless him by your work ethics.”***

I have seen this with one brother who helped several Christian men out, getting them a job at his business and most of them were let go because of their poor work ethic, they didn't show up for work on time or didn't show up at all! That should not be! We should not expect special treatment or favors because our boss is a Christian, we should work hard, do our best and bless the brother because of our work ethic!

And once again, we are serving the Lord, so if your work ethic is bad, that is not a good thing!

Now what about slavery, how come the Bible does not condemn it?

First of all, in the Old Testament, it was a way to pay back a debt you owned without going to jail.

The problem comes with man and his heart is evil and he can do the most outrageous things to his fellow man because he has power over them. That is not right, but it is what happens many times.

Why didn't Paul call for a violent uprising against slavery?

Because that would not have worked!

What worked was the influence of Christianity upon a society that put an end to slavery, greed, racism, hatred!

We see these things coming back into the world and it is because we are not an influence upon the world anymore, our faith is not making a difference, we are not a light!

One author put it like this, "Paul and others in the New Testament did not call for a violent revolution against the institution of slavery (which would have failed miserably). Yet through the gospel, they did effectively destroy the foundations of slavery - racism, greed, class hatred - and made a civilization without slavery possible."

Another writer put it like this, “The church itself was a place where slavery was destroyed. It was not uncommon for a master and a slave to go to church together, where the slave would be an elder in the church, and the master was expected to submit to the slave’s spiritual leadership! Such radical thinking was an offense to many, but glorified God and eventually destroyed slavery.” (David Guzik)

This must have been a problem in Ephesus because Paul is addressing this issue. In fact, here in I Timothy 6:2 he says to Timothy, **“Teach and exhort these things.”**

And it is a problem in America today. Let me show you what I mean. We are told, What’s wrong with work ethic in America? . . .

The decline of work ethic is not uniquely an American problem, but one that is affecting all Western nations and a growing number of those in the East. However, if we examine the American workplace today with a comparable example from the 1930s, 1960’s, or even the 1990’s, it’s easy to see that America has lost sight of the virtues that comprise work ethic - the very things that helped build our country.

The pursuit of happiness and the American Dream drove progress and innovation, but they came with unintended side effects. In many cases, for instance, healthy ambition has morphed into avarice [greed]. Urbanization and an emphasis on large-scale businesses means fewer and fewer kids are learning about work in the natural course of family life.

Technological advances that make life faster, more fun, more entertaining, and easier to navigate are also consuming our time and energy while eliminating avenues for learning vital concepts about work.

And pop psychologists have pushed parents to focus on building self-esteem in their children, creating at least two generations of me-centric workers.

No wonder so many employers are using terms like entitled, disengaged, unmotivated, and disloyal when describing their current workforce and potential labor pool.

Are leaders really struggling with work ethic-deficient employees?

Pull any employer to the side and ask them to describe, in general, the work ethic that they see represented throughout their ranks and your apt to hear some colorful language. Even the eternally optimistic warm and fuzzy managers wince a bit when the term work ethic enters the dialogue.

I interact with thousands of leaders, managers, business owners and execs each year and I've yet to find any who believe that the work ethic represented in the current labor pool stands up to that of the labor pool twenty, ten - or even five years ago.

These same employers, however, will openly lament the prevailing entitlement mentality of the emerging workforce that many decry is contagious, now rampant among X'ers and even baby boomers.

Which generation of workers is having the most trouble with their work habits and why?

America's emerging workforce - those in the sixteen-to-twenty-four age bracket - bring some amazing skill sets and personality traits into the labor pool. The challenge is that Millennials don't always want to work, and when they do, their terms don't always line up with those of their employers.

All too often, the young worker shows up ten minutes late wearing flip-flops, pajama bottoms, and a T-shirt that says "My inner child is a nasty . . ." Then she fidgets through her shift until things slow down enough that she can text her friends or update her Facebook page from her smartphone.

As Christians, employers should want to hire us because of our good work ethic. We work hard, we are honest, we go above and beyond what we are supposed to do. And it is not necessarily because they deserve it, it is what the Lord has called us to do!

If any of you have poor work ethics, think you can lay back because your boss is a Christian, or even if they are not a Christian, you are wrong. You need to repent and serve your boss faithfully for the reality is, you serve the Lord!

Jesus said in Mark 10:45, “**For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.**” And believe me, no one deserved anything that the Lord did for them, He freely gave to them!

Remember what I said, that in Paul’s day, Christian slaves would go for more money because, for the most part, they worked harder, were more reliable than non-Christian slaves.

But, in Ephesus, things were not going well, though, probably because of the poor leadership there and now Timothy was to lead them in the right direction once again.

Let me share with you this true story.

Warren Wiersbe relates the story of a young lady who had left a secular job to work for a Christian organization. She had been there about a month and was really disillusioned. “I thought it was going to be heaven on earth,” she complained. “Instead, there are nothing but problems.”

Wiersbe asked her if she was working just as hard for her new boss as she did in the secular job. The look on her face said, “No!” So, Wiersbe told her, “Try working harder, and show your boss real respect. Just because all of you in the office are saved doesn’t mean you can do less than your best.” She took his advice and the problems cleared up.

And I will close this section with this. Each Christian should ask if they are leading people *to* Jesus by how they work, or if they are leading people *away* from Jesus by their bad work and testimony at their job.

VERSES 3-5

In this portion of I Timothy chapter 6 the focus is on the ***EXHORTATION AGAINST FALSE TEACHERS IN THE CHURCH.***

And the warning is pretty simple. He wants Timothy to be on guard against those in the church who would like to replace the teaching of sound doctrine with **“useless wranglings of men of corrupt minds and destitute of the truth.”**

In other words, those who want to focus on strange spiritual experiences or taking the simple ideas of the Scripture and making them into some kind of bizarre doctrine or focus on words to make them say what they want them to say. They have no truth in their teachings!

It is as one writer put it, ***“One thing about false teachers who slip into churches is that their doctrine always raises questions, creates confusion and leads to arguing and division instead of building up believers in the faith.”*** (Source Unknown)

And the key to exposing false teachers with their false doctrine is to be students of the Word of God and ask the Spirit of God to show you truth from error. The Holy Spirit will never contradict the Word of God, that is an easy one.

The hard one is that these people who teach in error don't have signs saying they are false prophets – but if you listen to what they are saying, if you see the confusion, the division, the chaos that comes when they are trying to promote these lies, then that should be a red flag that something is wrong.

Sound doctrine, healthy doctrine are words that build up, edify, exhort, comfort and correct people.

On the other hand, on the other end of the spectrum, unsound doctrine, unhealthy words weaken the spiritual lives of people like any disease would.

We saw that a few years back when a group of people from the church tried to bring in that Hebrew Roots movement, where you have to keep the Law to be saved. It was so bad that one of the people they were getting this doctrine from said that we need to believe in Jesus to be saved and Jesus is the Torah and thus, you must believe in the Torah to be saved. Is that true? No, it is not and that is easy to refute.

But what this false teaching was bringing into the church was confusion in people's lives, division amongst the brethren, chaos and thus, it had to be removed and it was!

Were these friends of mine? Yes, they were but they refused to repent, and they continued with the false teaching when I asked them to stop, and thus, they were removed.

Make no mistake about it, it is dangerous to allow false teaching to continue on in a church and that is why Paul is warning Timothy to be on guard, to pay attention and deal with those who are teaching false doctrine, and remove them from the church if they refuse to repent and put aside these false doctrines they are trying to promote.

And here is a point we should remember, truth produces godliness, while error tends to lead a person towards immorality! False doctrine is not healthy and what is manifested in our lives will not be healthy then.

It is as Paul said in II Timothy 2:15-19, **“Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. But shun profane and idle babblings, for they will increase to more ungodliness. And their message will spread like cancer. Hymenaeus and Philetus are of this sort, who have strayed concerning the truth, saying that the resurrection is already past; and they overthrow the faith of some. Nevertheless the solid foundation of God stands, having this seal: ‘The Lord knows those who are His,’ and, ‘Let everyone who names the name of Christ depart from iniquity.’”**

Now here in Ephesus, and we even see this many times today, why were they departing from the faith and promoting this false doctrine?

Pride, greed are the most motivating factors.

What makes us think we are right, and they are wrong?

Isn't that prideful on our part?

Folks, it is not that I am right and you are right and they are wrong, but God is right and what He says in His Word is truth, we don't have to guess what are the Words of God in the Bible, they all are! From Genesis through Revelation God, by His Spirit, is speaking to us!

Also, like I have said, greed is a big motivation, making a profit off of God, but that is not how they would speak of it.

They may say something like this. “Hey, I'm the Kings kid and the Father doesn't want me to be poor, to drive around in an old car or have an old house. If you sow your seed faith offering to me, then God will bless you a hundred-fold!”

And the only one who gets rich is the one promoting this false doctrine. If a person is in the ministry for the money, they are in for the wrong reason and they truly need to get out.

It is as Calvin said, “For these men all Christianity is to be measured by the gains it brings . . . Paul forbids the servants of Christ to have any dealings with such men.”

And Paul again is commanding us regarding these false teachers with their false doctrine, “**... From such withdraw yourself.**” May we do that if they refuse to turn back to God and His Word.

VERSE 6

In this section of I Timothy chapter 6, starting in verse 6 and continuing on through verse 16, Paul is focusing on **EXHORTATION TO GODLINESS WITH CONTENTMENT**.

And this is important for us to understand. You see, it is not just living a godly life but being content with the life that God has given you.

Paul not only taught that, but he lived it!

Paul, in Philippians 4:11-13 tells us, “**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.**”

You see, there is great gain in a life lived that way because your life is not dominated by bigger, better, newer things. Whatever God has given to you, you are content and thankful because God has given it to you. You are content and thankful because the reality is, we don’t deserve anything and yet God blesses us exceedingly abundantly above all that we can ask or think!

Barclay comments on this word “**contentment**” and says, “The word used here for contentment is autarkeia . . . by it they meant a complete self-sufficiency. They meant a frame of mind which was completely independent of all outward things, and which carried the secret of happiness within itself. Contentment never comes from the possession of external things.”

Now, as you turn on the television and watch some of these televangelists you see they are not content but want more and they want you to pay for it! That is what we are not to do, we are to be content in what God has given to us.

I like what Paul said in II Corinthians 9:8, “**And God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that you, always having all sufficiency in all things, may have an abundance for every good work.**”

God will give to us all that we need to accomplish the work He has called us to do – we are sufficient in Him and we need to be content in Him!

VERSES 7-8

This should just make sense and I like Paul’s perspective here. You see, what was true 2,000 years ago, is still true today.

When you are born, as you come into this world, you don’t have a penny with you or even a pocket to put it in, you are born naked!

When you die, you can gain all the material possessions in the world, but you can’t take it with you!

So what are you living for? Where is your treasure?

May it be in the Lord and with the blessings He has given to you in this life, may you use it for His glory and send those treasures on ahead!

In our society there are many people who are not content with their life and Paul's point is that if you have food and clothing what more do you need?

And think about this for a minute. The poorest person in this congregation here in Manitowoc is wealthier than 90 percent of the world's population- and we are not content!

One commentator put it like this. He wrote,

In the mountains of Mexico lie two adjacent springs. One sends forth hot water, the other cold. "Your people must thank Mother Nature for hot and cold water right next to each other," said a travel guide to an Indian as he washed his clothes in the springs. The Indian wisely answered, "No, we grumble because she didn't supply soap."

- Jon Courson

You see, there is always something to complain about if you are not satisfied in the Lord and what He has provided!

But you might be thinking, "*If I only had more money I could . . .*"

And that is a big driving force for people today in America as evidenced by the huge increase in gambling, Lotto and-so-on.

But is it true, that money brings happiness? Listen to what some who have money have said about it:

John D. Rockefeller once said, "I have made many millions, but they have brought me no happiness."

Cornelius Vanderbilt added, "The care of millions is too great a load . . . there is no pleasure in it."

Millionaire John Jacob Aster described himself as “the most miserable man on earth.”

Despite his wealth, Henry Ford once remarked, “I was happier doing mechanic’s work.”

And John D. Rockefeller commented, “The poorest man I know is the man who has nothing but money.”

These are people who have had money and they saw it as emptiness and yet, look at the people who are trying to get rich, if they only see their treasure is in the Lord!

Folks, this is not a suggestion or a principle, it is truly a command. And we all probably need to deal with this at some level in our life, give it to God and be satisfied in what He has given to us, because, as I have said, our treasure is truly in Him and if we have the Lord, there truly is nothing that we need. He will supply us with what we need to accomplish the work He has called us to do!

We need to learn to be content in the Lord. Paul put it like this in Philippians 4:11-12, **“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.”**

May we learn to be content in what the Lord has given to us, and He has given us so much, but so often, we want just a little bit more. But as Paul said, **“And having food and clothing, with these we shall be content.”** I Timothy 6:8.

VERSES 9-10

Paul tells us the problem with money, people are greedy and they **“fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and harmful lusts which drown men in destruction and perdition.”**

The Greek word for “**fall**” is EMPIPTO, (em-pip’-to) and it is in the present tense, which speaks of a continual falling into temptations and traps so they can be rich.

Think about it, all the scams that are out there to make you rich, and as foolish as they sound, people go after them with the hope of making it rich.

Case in point. Over the past year or so I have received several e-mails with the following general story line, and I am paraphrasing, but you will get the idea, they go something like this:

“I am a Christian woman living in the Middle East (or Africa) and my husband, a Christian businessman died. He left me millions of dollars and now I am dying. Before I die, I would like to give my money to a Christian organization so they can continue the work of God.”

And the story goes on, but the idea is to get into your bank account, give her that information so the money can be forward into your account.

Do you realize that many fall into this trap so they can become rich and this goes for non-Christians as well, as scams are perpetrated upon them and they also fall into this so they can make some money, get something for nothing!

You see, greedy people are entrapped by their desire to be rich and that is why these scams work!

The tragedy for the Christian is it ruins their spiritual life as they take this plunge into greediness, the love of money. You see, the pursuit of riches drowns people and Paul wants Timothy to not only understand this, but to warn others of it!

“Howard Hughes was, at one time, the richest man in the world at one time owned oil wells, refineries, tankers, and pipelines; also hotels, a life insurance company, a finance company, and aircraft companies. But he surrounded his 700-acre estate with bodyguards, vicious dogs, steel bars, searchlights, bells, and sirens. In addition to being afraid of planes, ships, and crackpots, he feared disease, old age, helplessness, and death. He was lonely and gloomy and admitted that money could not buy happiness.”

Make no mistake about it, this is what the Bible calls “**the deceitfulness of riches.**”

Now please understand this. Money is not evil, not at all. It is paper or metal, but it is not evil, that is not what Paul is saying here.

But the love of money is!

Why is that?

Because who are you going to serve, who are you going to love, the Lord or money because you can't serve two masters!

And when you think about it, the love of money and contentment are mutually exclusive!

Maybe you heard of the old Roman Proverb that says, “*Money is like sea water, the more you drink the thirstier you get.*”

I think Solomon, the richest man in the world, summed it up correctly when he said in Ecclesiastes 5:10, “**He who loves silver will not be satisfied with silver; Nor he who loves abundance, with increase. This also is vanity.**”

The Amplified Bible puts this verse like this, “**He who loves silver will not be satisfied with silver, nor he who loves abundance with gain. This also is vanity (emptiness, falsity, and futility)!**”

And listen to how The Living Bible puts Ecclesiastes 5:10-12, **“He who loves money shall never have enough. The foolishness of thinking that wealth brings happiness! The more you have, the more you spend, right up to the limits of your income. So what is the advantage of wealth-except perhaps to watch it as it runs through your fingers! The man who works hard sleeps well whether he eats little or much, but the rich must worry and suffer insomnia.”**

Listen to how Bishop J. C. Ryle summarizes this for us. He wrote, “Money, in truth, is one of the most unsatisfying of possessions. It takes away some cares, no doubt; but it brings with it quite as many cares as it takes away. There is trouble in the getting of it. There is anxiety in the keeping of it. There are temptations in the use of it. There is guilt in the abuse of it. There is sorrow in the losing of it. There is perplexity in the disposing of it. Two-thirds of all the strife’s, quarrels, and lawsuits in the world arise from one simple cause – money.”

I think that sums it up for us very nicely. There is nothing wrong with having money unless the money is controlling your life, there is the danger!

James tells us in James 5:1-5, **“Come now, you rich, weep and howl for your miseries that are coming upon you! Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are moth-eaten. Your gold and silver are corroded, and their corrosion will be a witness against you and will eat your flesh like fire. You have heaped up treasure in the last days. Indeed the wages of the laborers who mowed your fields, which you kept back by fraud, cry out; and the cries of the reapers have reached the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth. You have lived on the earth in pleasure and luxury; you have fattened your hearts as in a day of slaughter.”**

And folks, the reality is, **“Neither their silver nor their gold Shall be able to deliver them In the day of the LORD’s wrath; But the whole land shall be devoured By the fire of His jealousy, For He will make speedy riddance Of all those who dwell in the land.”**

Zephaniah 1:18.

Why do we go after that which does not satisfy, that will be no good in the end, instead of what does satisfy, the Lord!

In fact, if you had all the gold in the world and in death you could take it with you, someone will ask you, “Why did you bring all that asphalt up here?” You see, the streets of heaven are made of gold! (Revelation 21:21).

As we read on Paul is going to show us what a man of God is to be in comparison to a man who seeks after money or is controlled by anything other than the Lord.

VERSES 11-12

The idea here is to **FLEE** these ungodly, worldly things and **FOLLOW** after godly things, after the Lord.

You see, it is hard to be greedy when you are seeking to be righteous, seeking after godliness, trusting in the Lord by faith, loving people unconditionally, patient and having a gentle spirit!

And make no mistake about it, we are in a battle! Don’t go **AWOL** but continue the good fight.

A good example of this is seen in salmon as they are swimming upstream, against the current, fighting forward, making progress with the goal of finishing the swim in mind.

On the other hand, if they don't fight, if they don't work, they will float back downstream and so will Christians if we just give up.

We will become more like the world and less like Christ.

But, since you have made a decision for Christ, now live accordingly as Jesus said in Matthew 16:24-26, “**. . . ‘If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it. For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?’**”

That is the correct perspective we need to have. That we have everything we need in Christ, He will supply us and thus, be content and live accordingly!

VERSES 13-16

Someone may ask, “*Why should we live this way?*”

Paul tells us here in verse 13.

First of all, God the Father, the One who gives us life will hold us accountable for not walking accordingly.

Secondly, Jesus Christ, our ultimate example of how we are to live will also hold us accountable.

And Paul shows us the example of Christ as He stood before Pontius Pilate.

In John 18:37 we are told, “**Pilate therefore said to Him, ‘Are You a king then?’ Jesus answered, ‘You say rightly that I am a king. For this cause I was born, and for this cause I have come into the world, that I should bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice.’**”

Jesus did not back down but stated the truth no matter what the consequences might be and so should we! Our life should match our confession of faith.

And this commandment is not just one specific thing, but it encompasses the entire Word of God.

And the evidence is seen as our life is without some big spot, some big blotch that would dishonor God, we are blameless. Again, our life should match our confession of faith and our life is to be lived this way, we are to fight the good fight of faith until the Lord comes!

It is as John admonishes us in I John 3:2-3, **“Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.”**

Make no mistake about it, having a correct perspective on God is important. We need to understand that He is coming back. We need to understand that He is sovereign, He is in control, He is holy and so much so that our sinful bodies of flesh can't see God and live.

Thus, God has taken the form of a man, Jesus and dwelt among us at one time.

We see Old Testament appearances of God, or Theophanies.

But no one has seen God the Father in full, in all of His glory and lived. But one day we will as we go to be with Him in our new bodies, not made of flesh and blood.

With Jesus, we see Peter, James and John witness His glory on the Mount of Transfiguration, but they in no way saw all of His glory!

In fact, Jesus' full glory was veiled by His humanity and won't be unveiled until He lights the sky up with His Second Coming in glory.

Thus, in knowing who God is, His holiness, that He alone deserves our worship and praise, that He is coming back, it motivates us to live lives that are pleasing to Him no matter what we are going through, no matter what comes our way.

It is as Paul said in Hebrews 13:6, **“So we may boldly say: ‘The LORD is my helper; I will not fear. What can man do to me?’”**

Perspective is everything!

VERSES 17-19

In these verses here in I Timothy chapter 6 we see Paul give this ***EXHORTATION TO THE RICH.***

Is it wrong to be rich, to have money? Not at all. And I think what Paul tells us here puts it all into perspective for us. Yes, there are some who might be rich now, but they must use their riches responsibly if they will be rich in the age to come.

If God has blessed you with money there is nothing wrong with that, again, that is what Paul is telling us.

He also warns though, to use what God has blessed you with not for earthly gain but for the building up of God’s kingdom. And folks, that truly goes for all of us here.

I like what John Wesley said, “Do all the good you can, by all the means you can, in all the ways you can, in all the places you can, at all the times you can, to all the people you can, as long as you ever can.”

It is the ***CAN-CAN*** approach to life!

Remember what Jesus said in 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.”**

And as I said, that goes for all of us, where is our treasure?

May it be in the Lord!

Let me add this little note. If the world’s economy collapsed today, and it could, 70% of the people in this world would have absolutely nothing!

Again, where is your treasure, where is your faith – in the riches of this world or in the Lord who owns everything and gives to us what we need?

VERSES 20-21

As we conclude this letter, we see this ***EXHORTATION TO GUARD WHAT WAS COMMITTED TO HIM.***

These closing verses bring before us the great dangers of so-called intellectualism, rationalism, modernism, liberalism, and every other “ism” which disregards or waters down sound doctrine.

So this call is not to Timothy or pastors alone, but to all of us, that we are to guard, protect the truths of God from a world that is trying to water them down, negate them.

You see, we are, as a church, as a body of believers, **“the pillar and ground of the truth.”** I Timothy 3:15.

Thus, we are responsible to hold onto and proclaim the truth! May we keep that truth that has been committed to us, let us not drop the ball!

It is as Jude admonishes us, **“Beloved, while I was very diligent to write to you concerning our common salvation, I found it necessary to write to you exhorting you to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints.”** Jude 3.

The truths of God found in the Word of God have been entrusted to us. And this faith we have does not change, it was the same 2,000 years ago as it is today. Don't let people tell you that God's Word has to change or be updated, that is not true. It **“was once for all delivered to the saints.”**

Make no mistake about it, there are attacks out there by the highly educated people regarding what we believe.

They call us Creationists, “Flat-Earther's” because they think we are backwards, we don't believe in science, and we are just as foolish as those who use to believe that the earth was flat!

Guess what, it was not Christians who believed in a flat earth, because the Bible clearly tells us the earth is a sphere, not flat!

Folks, they will try to sway you to their thinking because they are so educated, but I have news for them, I know the author of the Book, the Bible and I think He knows what He is talking about. It is His Spirit that speaks to our hearts as He opens up God's Word to us, helping us to understand it!

I am going to trust Him rather than trust those who are trying to negate Him!

And if you check out what they have to say, it is nothing more than hot air, empty words, idle babblings.

Let the Word of God by the Spirit of God and with the Grace of God guide you and you will be all that God wants you to be! Amen!