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1 TIMOTHY 6:1-21

April 4, 2004

Today, we end our study of **1 Timothy**. This book has truly been a handbook for church ministry. There's much to see in today's lesson, so let's get right to it.

1 Timothy 6:1-2...

Slavery was an integral part of the culture of New Testament times. In the Old Testament, we read of many ordinances given specifically for slaves. These ordinances were given to protect the slaves and were carried over to the New Testament. This system of slavery was not perfect, but it was workable.

We don't relate too much to this sort of system, do we? We don't have this system today, and actually the slavery system of Bible days bears little resemblance to the slavery that existed in the South in the pre Civil War days.

But, the principles that we see in these two verses can be applied to the modern day workplace.

With the exception of our own home, the most common place for the believer to show forth his faith in the Lord Jesus Christ is the workplace, isn't it? ...at the **office** or the **school** or the **shop** or the **hospital**...

The believer's behavior at work will bring either praise or criticism to the name of God! People watch us! They **look at our performance** and they **sense our attitudes** and they **listen to our conversations**.

Remember God has called us to be His witnesses...

Not just on Sunday at church, but also during the week at work.

From these two verses we see that employees are to

- 1) show respect to their employers**
- 2) serve them well...**

whether their employers are **believers** or **unbelievers**!

Why? **That the name of God will be honored!** We're to do all we do as unto the Lord...for Him and for His glory!

And this isn't always easy. We cannot do this in our own strength.

Many of you work in an atmosphere that is definitely not Christian! But, God never called us to do something He has not already equipped us to do.

"I can't, You never said I could. You can, You always said You would."

- Major Ian Thomas

Verses 3-5...

Throughout history, many deadly diseases have appeared on the scene and threatened to wipe out mankind...

Bubonic Plague, cholera, diphtheria, malaria and other horrible diseases have become epidemic and have killed many people.

Today, certain segments of our population are threatened with AIDS.

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But, you know...these diseases are able only to **kill the body**. There is a disease that is able to **damn the soul**. And that disease is this false teaching that we've seen so much of in the book of **1 Timothy**.

Paul has such a way with words...and in these few verses he gives us 7 symptoms of the spiritual disease of false teaching...

Let's just take a few minutes and look at each one of these symptoms..

1) The Mark of a False Teacher

The first mark of a false teacher is **what they affirm or what they advocate**...which is a **different doctrine**. This is any doctrine that differs from the divine revelation of Scripture. This different doctrine can take many forms...but it's all error.

Error about the **Person** of Jesus Christ...His **virgin birth**, His **sinless perfection**, His **substitutionary death**, His **bodily resurrection**...and so on...

Another mark of a false teacher is **what they deny**...

Paul says he does not agree with sound words, those of our Lord Jesus Christ. The false teacher denies the words of Jesus specifically and they deny the Word of God generally.

(Did you know there is a council of so called theologians who have made it their prime priority to go through the New Testament and find the words that Jesus spoke and say He didn't speak them? I believe they call themselves the "Jesus Seminar.")

See, these folks deny the inerrancy and the infallibility and the inspiration of the Word of God! These false teachers and false theologians are not committed to Scripture!

They use phrases like "The Bible **contains** the word of God,
it **contains** the truth of God...**but it's not all His truth**
it's certainly not without error."

And they will add to and take away from to make it prove their different doctrine.

A third mark of a false teacher is **what they reject**. They reject "the doctrine conforming to godliness." False teaching never results in a **godly** life. It always results in an **ungodly** life, and we'll see that in the next few verses.

3) The Attitude of a False Teacher

It's very easy to see the attitude of the false teacher. Paul says he is **conceited and he is full of pride and arrogance**.

This word "conceit" comes from the root word meaning "smoke." In English slang we might say "blowing smoke" or "full of hot air."

The very idea that anyone would presume to place himself above the Word of God...that anyone would "add to" or "take from" the Word of God tells us that he is full of arrogance...and ignorance...which we will see next.

4) The Mentality of a False Teacher

Paul said "he understands nothing..."

This person may have been educated in the very best university and he may have a string of degrees after his name, but the most humble, uneducated believer who is grounded in the Word of God

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and who is hungry for it and believes it and lives it
is far more able to understand the deep things of God than the most educated heretic!

Some of us might say, "But I don't have an understanding of all the
Scripture. There are sections that I don't fully
understand."

That's okay. We don't have to understand **all** of Scripture. But, I believe that when we practice
the truths that we **do** understand and when we ask God to enable us by His Holy Spirit to
understand more and when we have a real hunger and thirst for it...

then, He will give us more and more and more enlightenment. So, don't worry so much
about the parts of God's Word that you **don't** understand...be concerned about abiding by the
parts that you **do** understand!

5) The Effects of a False Teacher

As we said before, false teaching fails the test of truth because it fails to produce godliness. It
also fails to produce unity and harmony.

Look at the effects of false teaching...**envy, strife, abusive language, evil suspicions,
constant friction...** Not a very pretty picture, is it?

Only the truth of God's Word produces that precious peace that passes all our understanding!

5) The Cause (Source) of a False Teacher

"depraved mind"...what is a depraved mind...a corrupt mind...an unregenerate mind...an
unredeemed mind...a reprobate mind? This sort of mind operates only according to the
flesh...never according to the Spirit. These folks have no room for God in their mind!

Scripture has much to say about our mind.

In **Romans 1**: God gives men over to a reprobate or depraved mind
because of a consistently sinful lifestyle.

In **Romans 12**: **We are not to be conformed to the world, but instead**
we are to be transformed by the renewing of our mind.

In **1 Corinthians**: Paul tells us that we can have the mind of Christ.

In **Philippians**: We're told that the peace of God will guard our hearts
and minds in Christ Jesus!

Is your mind redeemed? Is it guarded by God? Do you have the mind of Christ?

If you know the Lord Jesus Christ as your own personal Savior and Lord, you can have a mind
that is **renewed and guarded and spiritual**.

6) The Condition of a False Teacher

These folks are in a state of apostasy. The word "deprived"...**v. 5**...is the Greek word
aposteros...apostate. We covered this a couple of weeks ago.

These are folks who have heard truth.

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They even know truth.

But, they have rejected truth.

But, because they know truth they are able to mix just enough truth with their false teaching to make it sound wonderful.

There will be degrees of rewards in heaven...but there will also be degrees of punishment in hell...and I believe the hottest part of hell has been reserved for those who know truth, reject truth and have taught others to do the same!

Jesus said it would be better if someone had a millstone tied around his neck and be dropped into the sea than for that person to lead one of His little ones astray.

7) The Motive of a False Teacher

“they suppose that godliness is great gain...v. 5...

They serve money, not God. They serve greed, not Jesus. They are guided by wealth, not the Holy Spirit.

Remember the false prophet Balaam of the Old Testament? The man whose donkey was smarter than he was? Peter said that some have followed the way of Balaam because they, like Balaam, have loved the **wages** of unrighteousness.

The book of **Acts** tells us of a man who came to the disciples and wanted what they had (he wanted some of what they had)...he wanted their “religion”...but he didn’t want their salvation...He wanted the ability to make a profit from religion.

And Peter said, “You can’t obtain the gift of God with money.
may your silver perish with you, because your heart
is not right before God.”

You know, we have our share of these false teachers with us today, don’t we? - teachers who mix a little truth with error

- teachers who mix a little truth with experience!

For what? For fame and money!

Now that we’ve seen these false teachers and **their** love of money, Paul turns the teaching to warning **believers** about the dangers of loving money.

Verses 6-10...

Jesus said, “Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.”

Remember, the Bible doesn’t teach that *money* is a sin...it teaches that *loving money* is a sin!

And I believe when a person recognizes and acknowledges that all he has comes from God’s hand of mercy, then he will put not only his money, but also his talent, his ability, his time...all that he has into proper perspective.

Let me tell you a few things the love of money will do to folks...

- 1) **They become more concerned and more obsessed with making it than living a righteousness life.**

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God gave Solomon his wealth, but Solomon couldn't handle it! He became obsessed with what it could do for him.

2) They never have enough.

They never learn like Paul, "I have learned to be content in whatever circumstances I find myself." Solomon kept accumulating wealth. And in the end he had to admit all of it was in vain.

3) They tend to flaunt their wealth.

Solomon multiplied horses and wives and gold...the three things kings were not supposed to do.

4) They resent giving it.

They want to keep it. Like Ananais and Sapphira, they may give some of it but they will want folks to believe they gave more than they did.

And finally,

5) Those who love money will often sin to get it.

Verse 9 tells us that.

And we have many examples in Scripture...like Achan in the Old Testament who said, "I coveted the silver and the gold and I took and I buried it." And like Judas in the New Testament who sold the Lord Jesus Christ for 30 pieces of silver.

Let's skip down to **verses 17-19**...

In **verses 9-10**, Paul addressed those who **desired** to be rich.

In **verses 17-19**, Paul addressed those who **were** rich.

God does not forbid His children from having wealth. God says we must use our wealth for His glory!

We must remember while having money is not a sin, neither is it a sign God loves the person with money more, or that the person with money is more godly.

Look at what the rich man is to guard against...pride and false hope.

Look at what the rich is to do...trust in God...not in his riches...do good, share with others, invest in eternity.

All believers are to live their lives in the light of eternity. All believers are to invest their money in the souls of men and women.

Can you imagine the joy that will be ours when we get to heaven and someone comes up to us and says, "I'm here because you loved enough to give...I'm here because you shared what you had."

I've heard it said, "I've never seen a hearse pulling a 'U-Haul' trailer." May God help us to love souls more than money. May God help us to use the money He gives us for His glory!

Verse 11...

Paul calls Timothy a "man of God." What a title! Wouldn't you love to be known as "a man of God?"

Well, let's see how a man or a woman of God conducts themselves.

Paul lists four characteristics that mark a loyal child of God!

...what he flees from

...what he follows after

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...what he fights for
...what he is faithful to...

Verse 11a... what he flees from

This refers back to **verse 10**. Flee from the love of money. Paul is drawing a contrast between the false teachers who used their religion for great gain and the true man of God...

And I believe Paul is saying,

“The false teachers are controlled by **money**. But Timothy, you be controlled by **God**. They are controlled by **sin**, you be controlled by **righteousness**. They are controlled by the **world**; Timothy, you, man of God, **set your sights on heaven!**”

Verse 11b...what he follows after...

It doesn't do much good to flee **from** something if we're not following **after** something, because if we flee from something without following after something that from which we are fleeing will soon catch up with us!

We're to pursue **righteousness, godliness, faith, love, perseverance and gentleness.**

Verse 12... what he fights for...

We've said it before...when we become a Christian, we enter into a warfare! It's sad that some Christians don't even realize there's a battle going on. Others know it, but they seek a “desk job”...a position of ease and comfort. They don't want to fight. This word “fight” comes from the word from which we get our word “agony.”

But, there are just some things worth fighting for. Paul says to Timothy in **2 Timothy...** “*I have fought the good fight. I have finished the course. I have kept the faith.*”

How I pray that each of us can say that one day!

Verses 13-14...what he is faithful to...

The man of God must be faithful to the commandments of God. He must be faithful to the entire revealed word of God.

Timothy is charged by Paul here to do this and we know from other Scriptures that Paul encourages and exhorts Timothy to preach it, to proclaim it and to protect it and to do it without stain and without reproach!

What a contrast between the false teacher and the true man of God! Paul is always so profound in his teaching and he is also so profound in his praise! He began this book with a doxology and he ends it with a doxology.

Verses 13-16...

Please notice several of the divine attributes of God's character contained in these verses. He is Creator, Sovereign, Immortal, Invisible...and much, much more! He is Holy!

Verses 20-21...

The most important yardstick by which a church can be measured is
not how **large it is**
or how **great its fellowship is**
or how **interesting its preacher is**
or how **good the music is**

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or how **impressive the building is...**

The most important measure of a church is how it handles the Word of God!

Paul ends this letter to Timothy with an exhortation “to guard what has been entrusted to you.” And he pleads with Timothy not to become like those who are teaching heresy.

As we close our lesson today, I want us to think about some ways that we can guard what has been entrusted to us!

1) Study the Word of God...

“Study to show yourselves approved unto God...a workman who needs not be ashamed accurately handling the word of truth.”

2) Know the Word of God...

“Thy word have I hid in my heart that I might not sin against Thee.”

3) Believe the Word of God...

“All Scripture is inspired by God, and is profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness.”

All means **all**...from **Genesis** to **Revelation**...the parts you **do** understand and the parts you don't!”

4) Honor the Word of God...

Job: “I have treasured the Word of God more than my necessary food.”

5) Love the Word of God...

The psalmist said, “O how I love Thy Law.”

Do you? Do you spend time in God's Word each day? If you don't, you should!

6) Obey the Word of God...

God told Joshua, “This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth and you shall meditate on it day and night...so that you may be careful to do all that is written in it for then you shall make your prosperous and then you will have success.”

7) Proclaim the Word of God...

Paul told Timothy to “preach the Word in season and out of season.”

Do you know enough of the Word to share it with others? You know, folks don't need to know or hear what **we think**, they need to know and hear what **God's Word says**.

May God find us faithful to do all of these things. I pray that we'll be so grounded in the Word that we'll be able to spot a false teacher after just a few words have been spoken.