

Fight the Good Fight
1 Timothy 6:3-10 (Week 18) 03/01/2026
False Teachers and True Godliness

This is my message written prior to being preached. Please excuse the bullet point format and any grammatical mistakes. This is meant to be spoken.

² ...Teach and urge these things. ³ If anyone teaches a different doctrine and does not agree with the sound words of our Lord Jesus Christ and the teaching that accords with godliness, ⁴ he is puffed up with conceit and understands nothing. He has an unhealthy craving for controversy and for quarrels about words, which produce envy, dissension, slander, evil suspicions, ⁵ and constant friction among people who are depraved in mind and deprived of the truth, imagining that godliness is a means of gain. ⁶ But godliness with contentment is great gain, ⁷ for we brought nothing into the world, and we cannot take anything out of the world. ⁸ But if we have food and clothing, with these we will be content. ⁹ But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation, into a snare, into many senseless and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction. ¹⁰ For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evils. It is through this craving that some have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many pangs. (1 Timothy 6:2b-10)

Introduction and Review

- Today we continue our study through **Paul's first letter to Timothy**.
- We're in the final chapter, **heading for the conclusion**.
- And if you remember, Paul's overall purpose for writing this letter is so Timothy will...

¹⁵ ...know how one ought to behave in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, a pillar and buttress of the truth. (1 Timothy 3:15)

- And in preceding section from **Chapter 5:1-6:2**, this has been his focus.
- Paul gave specific instruction on how Christians are to behave in the household of God.
- There were rules governing our relationships with one another as **family**.
- **Rules** for how we are to honor, discipline and select our leaders (**our elders**)
- And finally, in chapter 6:1-2, there were **rules for doulos** which is Greek for **slaves, bondservants and servants**.
- Now you may have noticed that we didn't look at the second half of **verse 2**.
- Because in **the ESV Bible** at least, it's included in the section we come to today.
- However, Paul didn't divide his letters into sections, (no chapters or verses even).
- **So following his list of instruction...**
- He tells Timothy to...

...Teach and urge these things. (1 Timothy 6:2b)

- Timothy, teach these rules for Christian behavior in the church, **Urge Christians to obey**.
- And this isn't the first time **Paul has instructed Timothy** to teach certain things to the church.

- In **Chapter 4 verse 6** he wrote...

6 If you put these things before the brothers (if you teach these things to the church), you will be a good servant of Christ Jesus... (1 Timothy 4:6)

- And in **verse 11 of Chapter 4** he says...

11 Command and teach these things. (1 Timothy 4:11)

- And then in **Chapter 5:7** he writes...

7 Command these things as well... (1 Timothy 5:7)

- And finally in our passage for today, he says...

2 ...Teach and urge these things. (1 Timothy 6:2b)

- Clearly Paul wanted Timothy to teach the **Ephesians** the contents of this letter.
- A letter that was inspired by the Spirit of God and became part of the New Testament Scripture.
- Paul wanted Timothy to teach the church, ***the sound doctrine of God's word.***
- In fact, in **chapter 4:13** he told him...

13 Until I come, devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to exhortation, to teaching. (1 Timothy 4:13)

- It was Timothy's responsibility to proclaim the word to the Ephesian Church.
- And there are certainly a number of reasons for that.
- But one of them was to **combat the false teaching** that had arisen in **Ephesus**.
- As is the case today, so it was the case in Timothy's day,
- There is always a battle for **the hearts and minds** of believers.
- And in **Ephesus** that battle was being fought **within the church**.
- On the one side there was **Timothy (and surely others) ...**
- **who** were seeking to teaching the truth of word's God.
- But on the other side there were false teachers...
- seeking to draw people away from the truth in various ways.
- **In chapter 1**, Paul writes, they...

4 ...devote themselves to myths and endless genealogies, which promote speculations rather than the stewardship from God that is by faith. (1 Timothy 1:4)

- To make their points, they **emphasized legendary stories about OT people**,
- Stories that were not part of Scripture, and did not lead people to faith in Christ,
- But only worthless speculation.

- Also, they were...

7 desiring to be teachers of the law, without understanding either what they are saying or the things about which they make confident assertions. (1 Timothy 1:7)

- They sought to draw people away from faith in Christ and to an incorrect understanding of the **law**.
- And along with that, or as part of that, in **Chapter 4** we saw, there were those...

3 who forbid marriage and require abstinence from foods that God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and know the truth. (1 Timothy 4:3)

- They promoted **asceticism**, which puts **self-denial in the place of faith in Christ**.
- And so, with all this **false teaching going on in Ephesus**,
- Paul takes pen in hand to **write this letter**... and from the beginning he reminded Timothy...

3 As I urged you when I was going to Macedonia, remain at Ephesus so that you may charge certain persons not to teach any different doctrine, (1 Timothy 1:3)

- The reason Paul left Timothy in Ephesus was to deal with these **certain persons**,
- **these teachers of different doctrine**.
- And to help him do that, Paul writes this letter, which gives Timothy **sound doctrine that he is to teach in the Church**.
- Timothy is to employ **two strategies against these false teachers**.
- He's to confront them directly, **charging them not to teach a different doctrine**.
- And at the same time, he is to teach the correct doctrine.

2 ...Teach and urge these things. (1 Timothy 6:2b)

- **He is to make sure that the believers know the truth so they can recognize falsehood.**
- **And this should be our strategy today as well.**
- Because **false teachers continue to infiltrate the church**.
- And we must (I must, the elders must) make sure the people of God know the word of God that that may **not be deceived by different doctrine**.
- I too must **teach and urge these things**.
- Now this command serves as a transition to our passage for today.
- Because, **part of the things** Timothy needs to teach the believers in his day,
- And what we need **to know as well is how to identify false teachers**.
- So, beginning in **verse 3 of Chapter 6**, Paul exposes them... 1st Point....

1. False Teachers Exposed

- Paul is going to describe for us not only how to identify false teaching.
- But also, the faulty **character and motives of the false teacher**.
- And his indictment of these men will serve us well as we seek to expose and avoid the false teachers of our day.

- In **verses 3-5**, which is one long sentence in the Greek,
- Paul exposes these false teachers in three areas...
- **First...**

A. Their Christless Teaching

- Paul begins with **the conditional statement of verse 3...**

³ If anyone teaches a different doctrine and does not agree with the sound words of our Lord Jesus Christ and the teaching that accords with godliness, (1 Timothy 6:3)

- This conditional statement will be answered in **verses 4 and 5**.
- But the **statement itself** provides a summary of what these false teachers were teaching.
- Remember in **Chapter 1** Paul had urged **Timothy to...**

³ ...charge certain persons not to teach any different doctrine, (1 Timothy 1:3)

- And it's this same **different doctrine** that he now describes in **Chapter 6**, it...

does not agree with the sound words of our Lord Jesus Christ and the teaching that accords with godliness

- This **different doctrine** didn't agree with, **align with...**
- What Jesus or his apostles taught.
- And more specifically it did not agree with **the teaching that is in accordance with godliness?**
- That word **godliness** includes both the ideas of reverence, respect, towards a holy God.
- And the Christian's need to pursue godliness, holiness like God.
- So, teaching that is in accordance with godliness...
- Would call for both the reverence, worshiped, honor and glory of God.
- And the godliness/holiness of his people.
- And this is certainly what Jesus taught. **In the sermon on the mount, he said...**

⁴⁸ You therefore must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect. (Matthew 5:48)

- And when he was being tempted by the devil in the wilderness...

¹⁰ Then Jesus said to him, "Be gone, Satan! For it is written, "You shall worship the Lord your God and him only shall you serve." (Matthew 4:10)

- **God** was at the center of **the sound words of our Lord Jesus Christ**.
- And he certainly is at the center of **all teaching that accords with godliness**.
- In Paul's day those teachings referred to the **OT** and words of Jesus and His apostles,
- **which became the NT...** So, in a broad sense, **for us Paul is saying that...**

³ If anyone teaches a different doctrine and does not agree with Scripture (1 Timothy 6:3)

- A false teaching can be identified by the fact that it does not agree with Scripture.
- The Bible is our final authority!
- But there's an even more specific way to **identify this false teaching**.
- **That is, it diverted people from the LORD JESUS CHRIST**.
- It was not in line "***with the sound words that originated with The LORD Jesus Christ***".
- And the teaching that accords with godliness, teaching that puts God (specifically God the Son, the LORD JESUS Christ) at the center of all things.
- What I am saying is that **sound biblical doctrine** will always center on the Lord Jesus Christ.
- And therefore, different doctrine (false teaching) will not.
- **And in that sense, it is Christless.**
- Because **Jesus Christ** is at the heart of **the entire Bible**, He's the main subject of God's word.
- This is certainly clear in the New Testament...
- But **Jesus identified himself as the focus of the OT Scripture as well,**
- **in John's gospel he said...**

³⁹ You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that bear witness about me, (John 5:39)

- And in Luke's gospel on the road to Emmaus, we read...

²⁵ And he said to them, "O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! ²⁶ Was it not necessary that the Christ should suffer these things and enter into his glory?" ²⁷ And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself. (Luke 24:25-27)

- So, Christ is at the center of all Old and New Testament teaching.
- Which means he is also the center of...

the teaching that accords with godliness

- We saw this in **Chapter 3 verse 16 of 1 Timothy** where Christ is identified as...

¹⁶ ...the mystery of godliness: He (NOT IT) was manifested in the flesh, vindicated by the Spirit, seen by angels, proclaimed among the nations, believed on in the world, taken up in glory. (1 Timothy 3:16)

- The mystery of Godliness is Jesus,
- Because it is through his incarnation, life, death, resurrection, ascension and proclamation that our godliness (our reverence for God and our becoming like God) is made possible.
- The mystery is revealed; godliness comes to man through Christ alone.

- **So, I hope the point has not been lost in the details.**
- What I am trying to say and what I think Paul was trying to say is that these false teachers were deviating from Christ, **who is the manifestation of godliness...**
- **And the only one who can bring about our godliness.**
- They were not proclaiming ***the sound words of our Lord Jesus Christ,***
- And they were ***not teaching that Christ alone provides godliness to all who trust in Him.***
- Christ and his redemptive word were not at the center of their teaching.
- **They were teaching a different Christless doctrine.**
- Replacing Christ and his saving work with myths and endless genealogies.
- Replacing Christ and his saving work with **a wrong understanding of the Law.**
- Replacing Christ and his work with **Asceticism**, man-centered self-denial.
- The false teachers were setting Christ aside and focusing on other things which Paul calls **different doctrines.**
- And so how can you identify a false teacher?
- Well first & foremost his focus will be on **something different than the gospel of Jesus Christ.**
- Something else will be the **center instead of the Person and Work of Christ.**
- Something else will be **included as a necessity for godliness.**
- It may be a certain **set of rules** you have to follow to earn god's favor.
- It may be some sacrifice you have to make to be considered worthy.
- It may be a deeper truth that you have to understand to enter God's presence.
- And in the church, it will most certainly will include **the name of Jesus.**
- They will not abandon **the name**, and they may even teach some things that are true about Jesus.
- But at **the heart of their teaching**, will be something else, a different Jesus.
- **Their** different doctrine will always be man-centered (what you must do) to earn God's acceptance.
- Whereas sound doctrine **is always Christ-centered.**
- Among other things...
- It teaches that Jesus is **the creator of all things**, all things are for him and belong to him.
- That he is **the fulfilment of God's promises** given in the Old Testament.
- That he is the **perfect second Adam**, who overcame the sin of the first.
- That he is the **son of Abraham** who will bless all the families of the earth.
- That he is the **ultimate son of David**, the eternal King of Kings and Lord of Lords.
- That he is the **Lamb of God** who takes away the sin of the world.
- That Jesus is **the Redeemer and Savior**, of all who put their trust in His atoning death and resurrection.
- That he is **the Alpha and Omega**, the beginning and the end.
- The focus of **sound doctrine is always** on who Christ is,
- and what he has accomplished that we might be **receive his godliness.**
- That we might be **acceptable to God, through Christ.**

- And that's just a **brief summary of true Christianity teaches about Jesus**.
- He is the focus of all sound doctrine.
- **And so again**, Paul is saying that false teachers will have a different doctrine.
- Their teaching will focus on something besides **the Jesus of Scripture**.
- And having exposed **their Christless teaching**, Paul then turns to...

B. Their Character Flaws

- He identifies two major flaws of a representative false teacher. **First...**

⁴ he (the typical false teacher) is puffed up with conceit and understands nothing. (1 Timothy 6:4)

- That phrase **“puffed up with conceit”** is one word in the Greek, **typhoo**.
- It means to **inflate with self-conceit**, to be **high-minded**, to **lifted up with pride**.
- These false teachers **thought a lot of themselves**.
- Which **meant** they were in direct violation of **the sound doctrine in God's word**.
- For in **Romans 12:3** we read...

³ For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, (Romans 12:3)

- And in Philippians Paul commands believers to...

³ Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. (Philippians 2:3)

- One of, if not the most important character qualities for a **Christian is humility**.
- **In Philippians**, Paul makes this very clear by pointing to the **greatest example of humility**.

⁵ Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, ⁶ who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, ⁷ but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. ⁸ And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. (Philippians 2:5-8)

- With **Jesus as our example**, the Christian must **live a life of humility before God**.
- And this is especially true for those who teach, **we must approach the word of God in humility**.
- Seeking **sound doctrine**, seeking the meaning that God intended, **not the meaning we prefer**.
- But this false teacher did not follow Paul's commands or Jesus' example because he...

understands nothing

- As Paul had written earlier about these **same false teachers**...

⁷ desiring to be teachers of the law, without understanding either what they are saying or the things about which they make confident assertions. (1 Timothy 1:7)

- In their **conceit**, they think they know something, but they "**understand nothing.**"
- The **have zero spiritual** understanding because **in rejecting sound, Christ centered doctrine,**
- They necessarily embrace a different man-centered doctrine...
- They have no understanding of their own sinfulness
- OR Christ's utter sufficiency to bring about salvation.
- **So, first, this representative false teacher is conceited but understands nothing.**
- **He is both arrogant and ignorant, a deadly combination.**
- Then second,

He has an unhealthy craving for controversy and for quarrels about words, (1 Timothy 6:4)

- **Having an over inflated ego leads to a craving for controversy.**
- As Paul has said **they understand nothing** and yet **they make confident assertions.**
- Again, a **dangerous combination.**
- Hey, I know my stuff, you may not have reached a place in your life where you get it...
- But let me teach you what God has revealed to me.
- **I've found** that false teachers often assert that what they are saying comes directly from God.
- **God gave me a vision; he spoke to me in a dream.**
- Which in their mind is supposed to end all argument,
- how can you argue with what God has said to me!
- And this is just another sign **of their conceit and unhealthy spiritual lives.**
- They may think God has spoken to them,
- but when what they say does not line up with the words of Christ or Godliness then it was someone else doing the talking.
- But their pride will not let them admit this,
- and so, they relish the controversy and delight in the quarrels about words.
- So, you can often recognize a false teacher, **not only by his Christless teaching,**
- But also, by the fact that he **has a clear admiration for himself.**
- Oh, **there can be humility, but it will be false.**
- The focus **of their teaching** will not only include a **different doctrine,**
- a different way of earning godliness, acceptance by God.
- But it will include how **they were able to overcome and personally accomplish this.**
- The false teacher will often be **the center of his own teaching.**
- So, in their arrogance they **bypass the word of God and appeal to their own Spirituality.**
- And heaven help you if you call them out, **because they love a good fight.**
- No matter what you say, **they will keep coming back because they understand nothing,**
- **And they enjoy it!**
- Now as sad as that is, you might say, **well, they deserve what they get.**
- Just leave them in their **arrogance and ignorance.** Don't engage them in controversy.

- But the problem is...

C. Their Corrupting Influence

- You can't leave them be, because **they will not let the church be...**
- At the end of **verse 4 and the beginning of verse 5**,
- Paul gives **5 results of their corrupting influence** on the church.
- Their conceit, ignorance and unhealthy craving for controversy and quarrels...

⁴ ...produce envy, dissension, slander, evil suspicions, ⁵ and constant friction among people (1 Timothy 6:4-5)

- **Envy** or jealousy in **spiritual matters** is exceedingly ugly.
- As **St. John of the Cross, so long ago**, put it:

As far as envy is concerned, many experience displeasure when they see others in possession of spiritual goods. They feel sensibly hurt because others surpass them on this road, and they resent it when others are praised. (St. John of the Cross)

- And what follows **envy** is **dissension** (quarrelling and strife) in the body of Christ.
- The **assumption here** is that these false teachers were **envious of Paul, Timothy** or both.
- And because of that they were creating dissensions in the church.
- And these quarrels were fueled by **Slander**, which is the Greek word **Blasphemia** (Blasphemy).
- Evil speaking, malicious talk.
- Again, it seems they were **out to get those who did not agree with them**.
- And they were creating a culture **of slander in the church**.
- Christians were **slandering other Christians**.
- And as the slander flies it creates "**evil suspicions**"
- If enough people are saying bad things about **Timothy or Paul and anyone else...**
- Then, even though they are not true, **evil (hurtful, wicked) suspicions** are created.
- **As Economics Thomas Sowell said...**

Some things are believed because they are demonstrably true, but many other things are believed simply because they have been asserted repeatedly — and repetition has been accepted as a substitute for evidence. (Thomas Sowell)

- So, enough **baseless slander produces evil suspicions**.
- People rushing to think and then **say the worst of others**.
- And the final result of all this envy, dissension, slander and evil suspicious was...
- **Constant Friction (perverse disputing) among the people**.
- It seems that everyone was rubbing everyone the wrong way.
- They **were not fighting the good fight** they were fighting one another.
- And all of this was produced by the **arrogant, ignorant, quarrelling of the false teachers**.

- Paul then in the **rest of verse 5** describes the people involved in these **constant frictions**.

people who are depraved in mind and deprived of the truth, imagining that godliness is a means of gain

- This certainly describes the false teachers themselves,
- but it seems to also describe **the corrupting influence** they had on **others in the church**.
- They were people who are **depraved in mind**.
- Their thinking had been **corrupted**, and because of that **they were deprived of the truth**.
- Not that they couldn't hear the truth with their ears,
- but they couldn't **accept the truth because of their depraved mind**.
- They could not accept **the sound doctrine** taught by Paul and then Timothy.
- **Paul speaks of these same people in 2 Timothy as well...**

⁷ always learning and never able to arrive at a knowledge of the truth. ⁸ Just as Jannes and Jambres opposed Moses, so these men also oppose the truth, men corrupted in mind and disqualified regarding the faith. (2 Timothy 3:7-8)

- Because of their depraved mind, they could not accept the truth.
- And like **Pharaoh's Magicians Jannes and Jambres**, who opposed Moses.
- These men **ultimately oppose the truth**. Claiming to be wise, they became fools (Rom. 1:22)
- Their mind was corrupted (depraved) and worst of all, **they are disqualified regarding the faith**.
- After hearing the description of these men and their corrupting influence on the church...
- It should come as no surprise that even though they claimed to be followers of Christ,
- their rejection of **the truth, sound doctrine, the gospel of Jesus Christ**,
- **disqualified them as true believers**.
- And the final nail in their coffin, the proof that they are everything Paul has just said is that...
- They are...

imagining that godliness is a means of gain.

- That word gain in the Greek is **por-is-mos** which means to acquire and can refer to financial gain.
- And based on **the verses that follow where** Paul will talk about **contentment with what you have and condemn the love of money**.
- The gain these men are seeking is **certainly financial**.
- **They've hit rock bottom**.
- Their motives are not for the good of the body of Christ. **Their motive is money**.
- **They're seeking to gain followers in order to gain wealth**.
- For them the ministry has become all about making it big.
- **Instead of feeding the sheep they want to fleece the sheep**.
- I Can't think of anything worse to say about a Church leader than this.

- **So, Paul has exposed these false Teachers,**
- Their Christless teaching, their flawed Character and their Corrupting influence on the church.
- And it seems **his final words about them imagining that godliness is a means of financial gain**, prompted him to **address those topics from a more positive standpoint.**
- Second point...

2. True Godliness Explained

- Those who thought that **godliness is a means to financial gain** were partly right.
- There is great gain in godliness, with the **proviso** that it includes **contentment.**

⁶ But godliness with contentment is great gain, (1 Timothy 6:6)

- Here the **gain** is not **financial** but spiritual.
- This is seen in the word **contentment.**
- It means to **be satisfied with what you have**, you believe what you have is sufficient.
- And here Paul links **contentment with godliness.**
- Now for the **Greeks of Paul's day** (and most Americans of our day)
- contentment is found **through self-sufficiency.**
- Through your own **determination and hard work**, you can be content.
- However, for Paul, contentment is not self-sufficiency, but Christ-sufficiency,
- We see this clearly in his letter to the Philippians:

¹¹ ...for I have learned in whatever situation I am to be content. ¹² I know how to be brought low, and I know how to abound. In any and every circumstance, I have learned the secret of facing plenty and hunger, abundance and need. ¹³ I can do all things through [Christ] who strengthens me. (Philippians 4:11-13)

- Christ provided Paul **with godliness and strengthened him with contentment.**
- For those who are in Christ, **contentment and therefore great gain** are not related to our **financial situation.**
- We may become shirtless and shoeless and even homeless,
- but if we have **Christ's godliness**, and **his sufficiency**, **we will be rich.**
- Your contentment, your satisfaction comes when you...

***Turn your eyes upon Jesus
Look full, in his wonderful face
And the things of earth will grow strangely dim
In the light of his glory and grace***

- When we have Christ, the things of this earth (wealth, power, fame even comfort and security) are **strangely dim**, they do not **control our contentment.**
- **Christ does.**

- And Paul makes this point even clearer when in **verse 7**, he writes...

7 for we brought nothing into the world, and we cannot take anything out of the world. (1 Timothy 6:7)

- Why would you spend your life **seeking the acquisition of wealth**.
- What **godliness or contentment** is there in that **temporal pursuit**.
- When one of the wealthiest Americans of all time, **John D. Rockefeller** died,
- his aide was asked how **much he left behind**.
- The man wisely answered, **He left it all behind**.
- That truth is as old as **Biblical Revelation**.
- It dates back to what is probably oldest book in the Bible, **Job said it first...**

21 ... "Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked shall I return. The LORD gave, and the LORD has taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD." (Job 1:21)

- And later, Solomon in his great wisdom wrote...

15 As he came from his mother's womb he shall go again, naked as he came, and shall take nothing for his toil that he may carry away in his hand. (Ecclesiastes 5:15)

- Every human being experiences a possessionless entrance and a possessionless exit.
- Therefore, **greed for the Christian is irrational**.
- It makes no sense for those who are living for eternity.
- Paul then offers **this perspective**:

8 But if we have food and clothing, with these we will be content. (1 Timothy 6:8)

- As Christians who have Christ, we can be content with **the very basic necessities**,
- Whatever we have above this is to be enjoyed.
- **We are to be content with what we have and enjoy the things God gives**.
- Remember what Paul wrote to the Philippians...

12 I know how to be brought low, and I know how to abound. In any and every circumstance, I have learned the secret of facing plenty and hunger, abundance and need. (Philippians 4:12)

- Through a life of both **abundance and great need**,
- Paul had learned **the secret of contentment** in every circumstance.
- Enjoying the abundance and turning to God in times of need,
- always trusting in God's love and **Sovereignty** over his **"good and bad"** circumstances.

- Listen to Jesus speak of contentment as well:

27 Consider the lilies, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin, yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. 28 But if God so clothes the grass, which is alive in the field today, and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, how much more will he clothe you, O you of little faith! 29 And do not seek what you are to eat and what you are to drink, nor be worried. 30 For all the nations of the world seek after these things, and your Father knows that you need them. (Luke 12:27-30)

- **Real contentment** and **material prosperity** have nothing to do with one another.
- **Acquisitiveness** has zip to do **with godliness**.
- It is so simple: **Godliness (trusting in God and becoming more like God through Christ) brings Contentment in all circumstances.**
- And this my friends is great spiritual gain!
- Godliness removes anxiety and fear and replaces them with a deep contentment and joy, not in your circumstances which change, but in the LORD who never does!
- **So, Paul has explained True Godliness and the gain it provides with contentment.**
- **He then concludes with a warning... Final Point**

3. A Warning Expressed

- Paul isn't done with **those who think godliness is financial gain.**
- In **verse 9** He writes...

9 But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation, into a snare, into many senseless and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction. (1 Timothy 6:9)

- **Greed is the killer of contentment.**
- It causes **temptation and harmful desires,**
- It causes people to **do things they would never have thought they could.**
- For the **sake of financial gain** greedy people will adjust their moral compass.
- It may not be totally honest, but everyone's doing it, I would be stupid not to.
- All I need to do is **fudge the numbers** a bit and my tax return will grow.
- My **boss won't notice** if a few things go missing, **besides he doesn't pay me enough.**
- I know that this will **hurt many people** but it's a financially sound decision.
- And with each decision, based primarily on profit,
- We move further and further down **the path to ruin and destruction.**
- Maybe not of our financial portfolio but of our **contentment, godliness and our very soul.**
- For as **Paul writes in verse 10**

10 For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evils... (1 Timothy 6:10)

- As is often stated, it does not say, ***Money is the root of all evil.***
- And it does not mean that **all evil has money at its root.**
- Paul simply means that greed is a trap, for the rich and the poor and everyone in between.
- **To review verse 9,**

those who desire to be rich fall into temptation

- As **George MacDonald** wrote...

***If it be riches that slay you, what matter if it be riches you have or riches you have not?
(George MacDonald)***

- You don't have to be rich to fall to greed.
- It is **the desire to be rich, the love of money...**
- that **causes temptation, harmful desires, ruin, destruction and evil.**
- And this is apparently what happened to the onetime spiritual leaders whom Paul references in his final line of this passage:

It is through this craving (for wealth) that some have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many pangs. (1 Timothy 6:10)

- That phrase ***pierced themselves with many pangs is gruesome,***
- It literally says **impaled with many griefs.**
- The love of money results in personal miseries that feel as though they have been driven like stakes through your body.
- This is what happens to Pastors who believe ministry is for financial gain.
- This is what happens to Christians who are not content with what God provides
- and love money more than LORD.
- As Jesus makes very clear...

²⁴ "No one can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and money. (Matthew 6:24)

- **Those who love money will serve money or serve for money.**
- Their life and ministry will be **dedicated to the pursuit of financial gain.**
- And this is all **to common in the Church today.**
- Pastors who've removed Christ from the center of their teaching...
- and replaced him **with a gospel of prosperity.**
- God wants you to healthy and wealthy.
- Or God will bless you (financially) if you give to me.
- The more money you give, the more money you will receive.

- This is bad theology, false teaching, a different doctrine that comes from **a lack of godliness, contentment and a love of money.**
- And when **you embrace this money driven doctrine.**
- Or really **any doctrine that is different from the sound words of Jesus** and the teaching that accords with Godliness...
- Then your character, your love for people, your satisfaction with life will slip away.
- You will become an **arrogant ignoramus.**
- Understanding **nothing about the true gospel of Jesus Christ.**
- **Instead, you will cause corruption in the church...**
- envy, dissensions, slander, evil suspicions and constant friction, **will be your legacy.**
- **Your mind will be depraved and deprived of truth.**
- And finally, your corruption, which is not satisfied with true goodness, **will instead seek financial gain.**
- But it doesn't have to be that way, because again...

6 ...godliness with contentment is great gain, (1 Timothy 6:6)

- Here are riches of **an eternal kind** –
- "godliness" made possible by the Lord Jesus Christ who is **the "mystery of godliness"**
- and a **"contentment" from entering relationship with him.**
- Experiencing his **presence and his provision in your life.**
- Here's the bottom line to this message.
- **The Lord Jesus Christ is all we need!**
- Therefore, we must humbly **keep him at the center of our teaching,**
- We must **understand that the Bible and History are about him.**
- That **our godliness and thus our salvation comes through Him alone.**
- Because when we understand that Jesus is all we need,
- And we live based on that understanding,
- Then we **will have gained everything!**
- **Would you pray with me as Brian comes to lead us in Communion.**