

Further up, Further in

Resources for Continued Study



LOOKOUT
MOUNTAIN
PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH

DATE: November 15, 2020

SPEAKER: Joe/Brian

SERIES: Stewardship

PASSAGE: 1 Timothy 6:6-16

“CULTIVATING GODLINESS”

For individual study or discussion

Much of Paul’s first letter to Timothy dwells on the dangers of false teaching. Again and again, Paul warns Timothy about false teachers and urges him to fight the good fight, holding on to the faith (see 1 Timothy 1:19, 4:7-8, 16; 6:12). His talk about money at the end of the letter is not the introduction of a new and separate subject, but part and parcel of his admonitions to Timothy to cling to the faith and avoid falling prey to those who teach false doctrines, for the love of money can be a powerful determiner of one’s beliefs.

- 1) Time and again, Christians have been tempted and persuaded to approve things that are contrary to God’s Word because those very things can increase wealth. It’s not difficult to think of examples of this—to name only two: the enslavement of Africans in the 17th-19th centuries in America and the prosperity gospel of health and wealth that flourishes globally today.
 - How do we guard against the love of money trapping us into believing what will ultimately lead to ruin and destruction—that is, anything that is contrary to the Gospel?
 - Are there ways in which our own love of money is influencing what we believe about God, his plan of salvation, and his commands for how we should live?
- 2) Paul instructs Timothy that “if we have food and clothing, we will be content with that.” (v. 8)
 - Commentators generally agree that “food and clothing” also involves the idea of shelter, since it is, like clothing, a covering. Is that what we consider “enough”? Why or why not?
 - If “godliness with contentment” is indeed great gain (v. 6), is there such a thing as godliness *without* contentment?
 - Does Paul’s teaching to Timothy about contentment with food and clothing mean that there is no need to try and alleviate poverty? Should those who are utterly destitute merely be instructed to learn contentment? (What Scripture would you reference to support your answers?)
- 3) When Paul tells Timothy to flee from the trap of the love of money and to fight the good fight of the faith, he couples that admonition with the encouragement to “take hold of the eternal life to which you were called.” (v. 12)
 - What does it mean to take hold of (or seize) eternal life? Timothy had been a Christian for many years when Paul wrote this letter. Did he not possess eternal life from the moment he became a Christian? (Hint: Can we possess something and not treasure it? Believe something and not value it?)
 - How can we make eternal life something we live to the fullest while still in this world?

Family Dinner Table

It seems safe to say that everyone *likes* money—likes having it and likes being able to use it to get what they want.

So when Paul tells Timothy that the *love* of money is *a* root of all kinds of evil, we have to think about what exactly that means. Do we need to hate money? Is it wrong to want money at all? At what point does *liking* money become a love of money?

Perhaps one way to think about this is to consider what kinds of evil loving money can actually lead to (see v. 10a). If getting more and more money (as much as possible) is our goal, what kinds of things might we be tempted to do in our pursuit of money? How will we view other people and their needs if getting lots of money is our top priority? How will we view the way we spend our time if having lots of money is our top priority? And why can an eagerness for money lead people away from their faith (see v. 10b)?

Once you’ve thought about those questions, you can think about this: how do we pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance, and gentleness, as Paul told Timothy to do in verse 11?

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