

THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

AUGUST 3RD-4TH, 2019 // 1 TIMOTHY

SLAVES & MASTERS (1 TIMOTHY 6:1-2)

THE BIBLE DOES NOT CONDONE SLAVERY

Paul was not telling Tim that slavery was ok. He wanted to teach Christians that spiritual liberation is more important than social liberation.

- **If society is to change, the hearts of mankind must change first.** Paul knew that Christianity must be known for soul change above all other things.

THIS APPLIED TO SLAVES AND SLAVE OWNERS

Slavery was a normal part of culture in Tim's day. Paul tells slaves to respect their masters in order to honor God and not tarnish the faith.

- This goes back to Rom. 13. **We're called to honor authority, even if it is mismanaged. We can stand up to social injustices, but it must be done with honor and integrity.**

WHAT IF THE SLAVE OWNER BECOMES A CHRISTIAN?

A new dimension to the issue of slavery comes into play when a slave owner gets saved. What we learn is that sometimes culture lags behind spiritual change.

- This means **salvation doesn't always make an instant change in all walks of one's life. Discipleship and sanctification follow justification.**

THE CROSS IS THE GREAT LEVELER

Just because one is saved, doesn't mean that their circumstances instantly change. In the case of slaves, Paul told Tim that saved slaves should serve in a way that honors God, even if they are never freed.

- **Salvation makes us all equal regardless of title. Jesus' love overrides roles and economics.**

GREED (1 TIMOTHY 6:3-10)

WE WILL FACE ADVERSITY

Paul knew that it wasn't a question of if Tim would be challenged, but when. False teaching is anything contradictory to the teachings of Christ and the apostles in the Bible.

- **Christians have to determine to live pleasing God first. When we live to please man, we will inevitably fall into dangerous teachings.**

THE HEART AND MIND OF A FALSE TEACHER

Paul goes beyond the "what" and addresses the "why" of false teachers. False teachers are **elitist, arrogant, have "unhealthy interests in disputes,"** and from this comes **"quarreling, slander, evil suspicions and disagreements."** Their minds are **"depraved and deprived of truth."**

IN OTHER WORDS, IT IS SELF-CENTEREDNESS

People who practice and teach things antithetical to Jesus are in it for personal gain on some level. Even those that appear to be benevolent and passive find glory and affirmation for self.

- **Look at any cult or most major world religions/philosophies apart from the Gospel. They are self-serving!**

GODLINESS LEADS TO TRUE CONTENTMENT

The world is constantly trying to find happiness in material possessions, popularity, entertainment, intoxication, etc., but oddly enough **suicide, depression and anxiety continue to skyrocket!**

- **The missing component is God! In an effort to try everything else, we miss the real Savior!**

WHAT WE HAVE CHASED HAS DECEIVED US

Paul says those that "want to be rich fall into temptation, a trap, and many foolish...desires which plunge people into...destruction."

- The pursuit of selfish desire always leaves us wanting and empty. **The world, through evil influence, does a bait and switch when it comes to pleasure and happiness.**

IT'S NOT THE PAPER, IT'S THE CRAVING IT

We often say "money is the root of all evil," but that is incorrect. There is nothing evil about money, or even having a lot of it. The problem is when we crave and worship money.

- There's a false narrative (derived from envy) that wealthy people are evil. **It is not wealth that is evil, but the love of it.** That love has caused "many griefs."

CHARACTER (1 TIMOTHY 6:11-16)

YOU NEED TO RUN!

Paul straightforwardly tells Tim that he needs to "flee" from evil things and "pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance, and gentleness."

- **The reason many of us fall to sin is we like to hang around it.** The wise Christian moves away from evil and draws closer to the things of God.

PURSUIT TAKES INTENTIONALITY

If we are to live godly lives, we must pursue godly things on purpose. That means we read the Word, pray, come to church, hang around with good people at good places.

- Paul refers to it as **"fighting the good fight."** Godliness is a struggle and we have an enemy combatting us. **If it were easy, everyone would be a Christian.**

HOLD ON TO WHAT YOU CONFESSED

Tim is told to "Take hold of eternal life... about which you have made a good confession in the presence of many witnesses."

- When we get baptized, publicly identify as Christians, put the sticker on the car or wear the shirt, **we must be prepared to represent Christ and do it well!**

WE ARE TO STAND FIRM AS CHRIST STOOD FIRM

Just like Christ professed the truth to Pontius Pilate right before His crucifixion, we are to stand strong in the faith and share the gospel regardless of the repercussions.

- **This is why character is so important. If we don't lay a solid foundation down in times of peace, we will buckle in times of pressure!**

LIVING IN "UNAPPROACHABLE LIGHT"

Paul reminds Tim that God is sovereign, far beyond us, and deserves all honor and has eternal power. He also tells Tim to live without fault or failure, but how is one to do that under such a perfect God?

- **We must live a repentant and humble life constantly dependent on God's provision and guidance.**

TO THE WEALTHY (1 TIMOTHY 6:17-19)

RICH DOESN'T EQUAL EVIL

The Bible is clear that wealth makes it more difficult to follow God, but that it is not evil to be wealthy. Tim is told to instruct wealthy Christians not to be arrogant or "set their hope on the uncertainty of wealth."

- **We also need to be careful not to covet and envy those that have things we do not!**

MONEY MANAGEMENT IS A METRIC OF THE HEART

Everything we have ultimately belongs to God, but we are entrusted with it by Him for a time. What we do with whatever level of wealth we have shows the state of our heart.

- As Christians we're to live open-handed, not because we're mandated or guilty, but because **we should care about the human condition.**

"RICH IN GOOD WORKS"

Tim is instructed to teach the wealthy, and all of us, that we are to be "rich in good works, generous, and willing to share."

- When we do this, we gain something better than wealth, we start to build the "foundation for the coming age" and we **"take hold of what is truly life."**

PROTECTION (1 TIMOTHY 6:20-21)

THIS IS NO JOKE!

Paul ends this letter with an emphatic "guard what has been entrusted to you."

- **Regardless of our lot in life at this moment, all Christians have been given the Holy Spirit and the call to bring light into this dark world! This is a large responsibility that many of us have taken for granted!**

HOW DO WE GUARD WHAT WE'VE BEEN GIVEN?

We're to position ourselves to hear truth by being in church, reading the Word, and prayer. We're to avoid teaching that contradicts the Bible and "empty speech" that people have been deceived to believe is knowledge.

- **Pray for wisdom and discernment and be cautious as to who has influence in our lives!**

SEVERITY IN OUR TIME

- We are all susceptible of departing from the faith if we don't take it seriously.
- **Character matters.** We must intentionally work towards godly things and avoid evil things. **What and who is feeding your mind?** Do you believe there are malicious forces at work?
- We must remember that the world needs light and we are the ambassadors! **All of us who claim Christ are called to communicate Christ in word and deed!**
- People are drowning around us all the time! Most are searching for an answer, and we're not loving others if we don't share it.
- This life can be brutal. Because we are imperfect and have an adversary against us, **we will make mistakes and come up short.**
- We need to consistently fall back on God's grace and mercy! **We cannot do this life without God's Spirit and guidance.**