

## 1 TIMOTHY February 5, 2023

### 1 Timothy 6:2b-10

Teach and urge these things. <sup>3</sup> 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**, <sup>4</sup> 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, <sup>5</sup> and constant friction among people who are depraved in mind and deprived of the truth, imagining that godliness is a means of **gain**. <sup>6</sup> But godliness with contentment is great gain, <sup>7</sup> for we brought nothing into the world, and we cannot take anything out of the world. <sup>8</sup> But if we have food and clothing, with these we will be content. <sup>9</sup> 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. <sup>10</sup> 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. <sup>1</sup>

*“This is the Word of God” – “Thanks be to God.”*

“Teach and urge, or encourage, these things.” That is the instruction from Paul through the Holy Spirit’s urging to the young pastor of Ephesus named Timothy.

But what are “these things?”

The phrase is part of verse 2 but included in the section that we read today. It is right to note that chapters and verses were not in the original, so the breakdown of themes, verses, paragraphs, and such were added since, about five-hundred years or so after the original autographs. Yet,

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<sup>1</sup> [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#). (2016). (1 Ti 6:2–10). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

it is God's Word and our inerrant focus of teaching and understanding and needful for us to read and study and understand.

So, what are "these things?"

This may be a reference to the prior verses beginning in 5:22. Yet, Paul's style is to often say things like this as an introduction that leads to the following verses or instructions. At least that is how his other letters are written.

It could be a general statement referencing the full teaching and instruction given through the letter. That is a good possibility.

Nevertheless, it is clear whether verses prior, verses after, or the fullness of the letter, "these things" reference the clear, inerrant, hard at times, unchanging, words of truth that affirm the gospel of Jesus Christ and are good and right for the training, understanding, and building up of the church.

These things are vital.

These things are not secondary.

These things are easily ignored.

These things differentiate a healthy church from an unhealthy gathering.

So, Timothy, and every pastor of every church throughout history, teach and urge and encourage these things for the glory of God and the good, health, and strength of the church.

### **GODLINESS VS. GAIN**

There is a theme in Paul's letter here that comes through again. There is value in standing on the narrow truth so that a broader influence for the gospel's may be made.

There are godly men and women in the body. There are ungodly men and women in the room as well.

The contrast is clear, and Paul once again states the importance of being a pastor of high character, deep calling, and righteous submission to the sovereign God. Timothy – Paul says – “You are such a man. Don’t forget it.”

**<sup>3</sup> 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**, <sup>4</sup> 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, <sup>5</sup> and constant friction among people who are depraved in mind and deprived of the truth, imagining that godliness is a means of **gain**.**

Paul speaks once more of the deadly reality of false teachers infiltrating the church. The heresy of false doctrine that slips in unnoticed and then is believed by friends and relatives, brothers, and sisters, is like a dark, evil spiritual cancer that spreads unnoticed at first, then kills.

“**If anyone**” is a broad statement of the apostle that states the reality of the issue. Yet, when you get to verse five and Paul says “**constant friction among people**” it is clear that while using judicious language not to name names, those reading know that the “people” are certain people and immediately they come to mind.

Mind you, Paul is not averse to naming names. He does so in numerous letters such as:

- Demas (2 Timothy 4:10)
- Phygelus and Hermogenes (2 Timothy 1:15)
- Hymenaeus and Alexander (1 Timothy 1:19-20)

- Philetus (2 Timothy 2:17)

Kindness is a virtue certainly and we should be loving and kind, but there is also this reality – when the name of God, when the identity of Christ, when the power of the Holy Spirit is marred, misused, hijacked, and a cause for heretical teaching, the men and women of God must not turn a blind eye. And in those cases, naming names is right and holy.

Christ said...

**Matthew 7:15**

**<sup>15</sup> “Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep’s clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves.”<sup>2</sup>**

So believers are to be aware...to be able to recognize...to see false teachers rebuked and called out. That is the way of righteousness. That is the role of the shepherd in relation to the flock.

There are so many false teachers who are likely really nice people in our world today and while it is easy to pick out the celebrity ones who espouse modalism, word faith Pentecostalism, Pauline Christianity, prosperity teachings, or even the mysticism taught by those who are little more than music publishers and concert promoters masquerading as churches, it is more surprising and more difficult to discern when it is a point of order in your Bible study group, or the local gospel radio preacher, or the friend who espouses a different gospel, but lives just down the street.

You see, the Ephesians weren’t facing an onslaught by celebrities, but were facing an internal disease hiding in their midst. And Paul instructs the pastor to teach the Word, live the Word, be above reproach, protect the flock and if it means removing someone from the fellowship...so be it. The church is the bride of Christ, and she is our treasure.

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<sup>2</sup> [\*The Holy Bible: English Standard Version\*](#). (2016). (Mt 7:15). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

However, where people find their treasure is varied and Paul addresses this to the pastor. To be longing for personal gain leads one to be puffed up, as Paul states, with conceit and **understanding nothing**. Nothing. Strong word here.

These are those who long for conflict and controversy. They may state they are polemicists fighting for the integrity of doctrine, but their doctrine is flawed and therefore empty. And, they have no love. Just anger.

### **Good Doctrine Matters**

There are words that just aren't considered marketable in the new era of Christianity. Words like **doctrine** and **orthodoxy**. In fact, in the world of pragmatic Christianity where sermon series like "5 steps to a better marriage" or "How to invest wisely" or "Adulting is hard" seem to be promoted to a church subculture that is a mile wide and an inch deep when it comes to biblical fidelity, to offer a teaching on sound doctrine or proper orthodoxy will likely result in yawns and collective ignoring of upcoming groups. This perhaps is the result of decades of church growth pragmatism sold as the new way to do church. Not that all the old ways were right either, because pragmatic realities have always driven markets. Yet, as is clear in God's Word...**doctrine matters**.

Doctrine – teaching – must be right.

False teachers have self-created graduate degrees in false doctrine and easily cause well-meaning, baby Christians (that's based on depth of biblical growth, not years of being believers) to follow the latest trend or ticklish teaching. And it is not new. So be careful little ears to what you are listening. And remember the adage "I can do all things through a verse out of context that I want to do" which has been the mantra for many purveyors of lies.

### **BUT GODLINESS IS GAIN**

Those who thought a form of godliness would gain them earthly riches end up being purveyors of false doctrine.

As with most heresies, there is a grain of truth. Godliness does bring gain.

**<sup>6</sup> But godliness with contentment is great gain,**

Good doctrine with godly character brings great gain. Contentedness with the gifts of God is beautiful and fulfilling, leaving us not wanting.

This is not just something Paul came up with.

**Ecclesiastes 5:10**

**<sup>10</sup> He who loves money will not be satisfied with money, nor he who loves wealth with his income; this also is vanity. <sup>3</sup>**

**Luke 12:27-30**

**<sup>27</sup> 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. <sup>28</sup> 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! <sup>29</sup> And do not seek what you are to eat and what you are to drink, nor be worried. <sup>30</sup> For all the nations of the world seek after these things, and your Father knows that you need them. <sup>4</sup>**

The gospel is a good news story and this is good news. The Lord Jesus Christ is ALL we need. Really. And he has made himself available. The Son of God, Savior, Redeemer, dead on a cross. Risen from the grave and alive forevermore invites you to great gain! To know him. To know the Way, the Truth, and to have the Life. Today.

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<sup>3</sup> [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#). (2016). (Ec 5:10). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

<sup>4</sup> [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#). (2016). (Lk 12:27–30). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.