

1 Timothy Overview

We have spent about 3 years studying Paul's letters to various churches

Rome
Corinth
Galatia
Ephesus
Colosse
Thessalonica

Now we will examine his 3 letters to Pastor Timothy and Pastor Titus

In his pastoral epistles, Paul calls on the pastors to

- A. Acknowledge God as their Savior
He is the Source of strength they need
- B. Be on guard against waves of false doctrine:
 1. Fables (1 Tim 1:4, 1 Tim 4:7, 2 Tim 4:4)
 2. Profane and vain babblings (1 Tim 6:20-21, 2 Tim 2:16)
 3. Apostasy and doctrines of devils (1 Tim 4:1)
 4. Arguments over dishonest questions (1 Tim 6:1-4, 2 Tim 2:23-26)
- C. Teach sound doctrine
1 Tim 1:10, 1 Tim 4:6, 1 Tim 4:16, 1 Tim 6:1-3, 2 Tim 3:10-17, Titus 1:9
- D. Maintain a godly walk
1 Tim 2:2, 1 Tim 3:16, 1 Tim 4:7-8, 2 Tim 3:5, Titus 1:1
- E. Deal with issues within the church straightforwardly
1 Tim 1:4, 1 Tim 6:4, 2 Tim 2:23-26, Titus 3:9

Paul writes his first letter to Pastor Timothy, who is in Ephesus at Paul's direction to

- stabilize the doctrinal foundation he established
- protect the flock against the false teachers
- instruct on public worship
- document the qualifications for Church leadership
- warn of apostasy
- guide the interaction between the various groups of people in the church

1 Timothy Chapter 1

And speaking of sound doctrine...the first order of business is “Who is Jesus?”

- He is Lord (v1, 2, 12)
- He is our hope (v1)
- He is our strength for the ministry He has called us to (v12)
- He came to save sinners (v15)
- He is longsuffering toward us (v16)
- He is the King eternal (v17)
- He is immortal, no beginning and no end (v17)
- He is (currently) invisible (v17)
- He is the only wise God (v1, 17)
- Worthy of all glory and honor (v17)

v1 the commandment of God:

Paul was an apostle by the command (authority) of God
A much stronger salutation than to the churches....by the “will of God”

God our Savior:

Our salvation was initiated by God...it was His desire to save us...when
we had no clue that we needed to be saved
He loved us unconditionally...even when we hated Him

He did not desire that we should remain dead in our sins and separated
from Him...

So, He sent His Son to take our sin and to pay our penalty...to bear His
Holy and just wrath...

In order to forgive our sins and to provide a means whereby we, by grace
thru faith, would not perish

The Gospel...the power of God unto salvation...

God is our Savior

and Lord Jesus Christ:

simple algebra (if $A = B$ and if $B = C$, then $A = C$)

God is our Savior (also Is 43:3, 11; Is 45:15)

Jesus Christ is our Savior (Phil 3:20, 2 Peter 1:1)

Jesus Christ is God

- v2 Timothy, my own son in the faith:
Why such a strong and formal salutation from Paul to his son in the faith?
- To help establish Timothy's authority
 - Inspired by the Holy Spirit, the letter is for you and me, too

Grace, mercy, and peace:

Grace: getting what you don't deserve (from death row to heir)

Mercy: not getting what you deserve

Peace: being in the place God wants you to be, doing what God wants you to do

another deviation from the "normal" salutation

to the churches: grace and peace

to Pastors Timothy and Titus: grace, mercy, and peace

it must be that the pastors also need mercy!

- v3-4 teach no other doctrine...fables...endless genealogies
the nagging problems at Ephesus that Paul commanded Timothy to address

1. spurious doctrines and traditions of men that ravage God's flock
i.e. ANY doctrine other than the Gospel of Grace (Romans)

the false teachers...counterfeit shepherds...were using deviant
doctrinal positions to draw people away unto themselves

There is no other doctrine, no other gospel

Gal 1:6-9

Warning: he who says doctrine is not important is a false teacher

2. sometimes the false teachers used superstitions or "miraculous" stories to get an audience...imaginative fables with enough biblical words to deceive those not grounded in the Word
3. endless genealogies that separated Jew from Gentile...but are no longer needed because the Messiah had come, breaking down the wall separating Jew and Gentile

all of which stirred up questions vs giving answers...

false teaching generates

- questions
- confusion and strife
- doubt and division

teaching the Word of God gives

- answers/clarity
- comfort
- encouragement
- strength

- v5 the end of the commandment is love:
the result of the commandment to teach sound doctrine is
1. God's love...that comes from a pure heart (self-less, obedient)
The Word affects a supernatural transformation
 2. good conscience
God's Law written on the tables of our heart
 3. sincere faith

disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ are governed by God's love...that comes
from a pure heart
no hearts are more pure than those of little children

Kindergartners were asked, "WHAT DOES LOVE MEAN?"
These answers capture God's love...out of the mouth of babes

"When someone loves you, the way they say your name is different.
You know that your name is safe in their mouth."
Billy - age 4

"Love is what makes you smile when you're tired."
Terri - age 4

"If you want to learn to love better, you should start with a friend whom
you hate."
Nikka - age 6

"Love is like a little old woman and a little old man who are still friends
even after they know each other so well."
Tommy - age 6

"My mommy loves me more than anybody. You don't see anyone else
kissing me to sleep at night."
Clare - Age 5

"Love is when mommy gives daddy the best piece of chicken."
Elaine - age 5

"Love is when your puppy licks your face even after you left him alone all
day."
Mary Ann - age 4

"You really shouldn't say 'I love you' unless you mean it. But if you mean
it, you should say it a lot. People forget."
Jessica - age 8

v6-7 turned aside unto vain jangling:
some have turned from the sound doctrine of God's love and grace to
"empty words, babble"

Satan "clears" other "ways" for men to walk...and they feed into a wide
path!

But the wide path leads to destruction

Any divergence from the narrow path is vain (Matt 7:13-14)

Why have some in Ephesus turned aside from sound doctrine?

desiring to be teachers:

several times a month I get a "taunting" e-mail from the same guy I have
never met...

and since the Radio Ministry went to Mon-Fri, I have also received several
letters/missiles from the same "listener"...

the e-mails and the snail mails are badgering me about a doctrine, trying to
lure me into an argument

their "questions" is not an honest questions

honest: wanting to know, wanting an answer

dishonest: not wanting to know, wanting an argument

I have not answered...I have "filed"...because I will not be lured into an
argument since that edifies no one

"If you are listening, I am not going to respond."

Why are those letters sent?

Why have false doctrines, superstitions, fables, and babble infected the
church?

Some have turned away from the love and the grace of God in favor of
legalism so they can be "the teacher"

why do they want to be the teacher?

- Prestige in the eyes of men
- Praise from the lips of men
- Power over men's lives...and when those are combined together
- an avenue to material Prosperity

in light of James 3:1, including ego and self-righteousness/spiritual pride
into the equation is a very costly miscalculation

Paul says, "they don't have any idea what

- They are talking about (vs 2 Tim 2:15 and 1 Peter 3:15)
- They are coveting (ministry without the calling of God is a
crushing weight...but a pure joy with the calling)

v8 the law is good if a man use it lawfully:
the Law of God is good: “beautiful, valuable, very useful”...
IF man can keep it...but no man can...
Rom 7:14-25
Rom 3:10, 23
the Law is still good because it shows man what he truly is – a helpless
and hopeless sinner in need of God’s salvation

v9-11 the law is not made for a righteous man but for the lawless:
The purpose of the Law is to declare me guilty and to lead me to Jesus so I
can be justified by faith (Gal 3:24)

the Law of God is a beautiful...mirror...showing me that I am a wretch

the Law was given to reveal truth...about man

1. wicked
 2. insubordinate and rebellious
 3. murders
 4. prostitutes
 5. homosexuals (The Word of God says “sodomites”)
 6. slave traders (*Amazing Grace* author)
 7. liars
 8. have contempt for God’s revealed Truth
- all above are contrary to sound doctrine

the Good News is that

- Jesus kept the Law for me
- Jesus paid for my transgressions
- God forgives me...
- He makes me a new creature

I am not acceptable to God because of what I do...but because of what
Jesus did

I glory only in what Jesus has done for me!

v12-14 who hath enabled me...counted me faithful:

Paul is saying, "I was on that list of dead men in v9-10."

Paul is astounded...and grateful...that God would

- choose him, a Jesus-hating, blaspheming, murderer
- save him
- give him eternal life
- send him with the message of Life into a dead world

Paul was supernaturally touched and transformed

- enabled = empowered (not even an intellect and personality of Paul can do the work of God apart from the power of God)
- counted = considered him trustworthy to carry out the mission (imagine!)

"I am proof positive...the very personification...of John 3:17!"

For God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world but that the world thru Him might be saved.

This is mind-boggling to me!

When I was dead in my

- Sin
- Ignorance
- Unbelief

Jesus touched me with His

- Grace
- Forgiveness
- Faith
- Love

And has taken my

- Weakness
- Inability
- Availability

And has

- enabled me
- counted me trustworthy
- put me here!

Jesus Christ has done it all!

God has a plan for you life too...and whatever He calls you to do, He will also empower you to do it...if you are available to be used

v15 a faithful saying:
1st of 4 “faithful sayings” in the pastoral letters

worthy of all acceptance:
“to be accepted as absolutely true without qualification”
it is true FOREVER that Christ Jesus came to save sinners!

sinners, of whom I am chief:
a healthy attitude for each of us to have about ourselves
have slice of Humble Pie!

v16 I obtained mercy:
Paul is an example of God’s love and grace and longsuffering

to all Christians to come after him, Paul exclaims, “If the Lord can
lovingly suffer my insubordination and then change and use me,
just think what He can do with you!”

Paul was voted “Least Likely of All Men to be Saved” by the early Church
But he was not beyond the reach of God’s love and grace!

no matter where you are right now, you are not outside God’s grace and
love!

Look how far He is willing to reach...

- all the way out to Saul of Tarsus!
- all the way out to me!

Jesus died for every sin...except the sin of unbelief
aka unpardonable sin, the blasphemy of the Holy Spirit
God’s love is more than sufficient to cleanse and purify every heart that
will just believe (John 6:29)

v17 Now unto...:
facing again this awesome truth of how far Jesus reached for him, all Paul
can do is rejoice and burst into praise and worship!

Jesus Christ is:

1. The King...He’s in charge!
2. eternal (Micah 5:2) i.e. not created
3. immortal (1 Cor 15) i.e. always living
4. invisible (for the moment!)
5. the only wise i.e. the Source of all wisdom
6. the only God (Hello JWs!) Jude 25
7. alone worthy of honor and glory (Rev 5:8-14)

v18 This charge I commit unto thee:
Timothy – son and soldier

“I give you this order –

- arm yourself with the Word of God
- march forward into hostile territory and take it back.
- the enemy has stolen it so we must fight valiantly to get it back

v19 Holding faith and a good conscience:
“Be faithful to your calling.”

The enemy is not those who have put away the faith...it is him who
shipwrecked their faith (Eph 6:10-12)

the armor and the weapons of an effective soldier are the theme of this
year’s Men’s Advance

v20 Hymenaeus and Alexander:
this is very tough...Paul names names

Hymenaeus taught that the resurrection had already taken place...
Long before the JW’s did

Alexander was continually giving Paul problems

Dissenters who stay in the church and become divisive become a
real burden to any pastor

“Discipline those who have been deceived by Satan’s lies and are
opponents of Christ.”

The purpose of Church discipline is to

- chasten
- correct
- restore

of course, The Blasphemer would not be the Teacher...the Holy Spirit is

1 Timothy Chapter 2

v1-3 exhort:

“to implore”

written while Nero was emperor, we are commanded by Paul to make

- supplications (“a petition, a request”)
- prayers (“to worship, to pray earnestly for”)
- intercessions (“an interview, supplications”)
- thanksgiving

for our leaders.

God appoints the kings and establishes the kingdoms...

Dan 2:19-22, 44

Rom 13:1-7 powers that be are ordained by God

1 Peter 2:13-17 “Fear God. Honor the king.”

we are told to pray for those God puts in civil leadership

from prayer...to intercession...and finally, to thanks

form of government is irrelevant...so is political party

I’m neither Republican nor Democrat...I am a monarchist!

ALL leaders need God’s help and God’s guidance

pray that they allow God to govern them

Pray for President Bush and his Cabinet for wisdom regarding

- Iraq...real lives there and here at stake
- Terrorism...war of cultures
- Israel...no land for peace!
- U.N....one world government
- Economic issues...jobs
- Bold and vocal about their faith
- Protecting godliness and honesty (vs corruption)

Pray for Congress, Governor, Legislature, Mayor, City Council

This is what God wants us to do!

v4-6 God our Savior:

shifting the discussion from kings and governors...to the King of kings.

Here we see the heart of God...desires that

- no man should perish but that all come to repentance
2 Peter 3:9
- all men see their desperate need for a Mediator...as Job did
Job 9:1-3, 32-33
Job 19:23-27
- all men chose to live in His kingdom...be governed by Him
Rom 10:11-13 whosoever shall call on the name of the
Lord shall be saved

God takes no pleasure in the death of the wicked (Ez1 18:32) but...
even though it is God's desire that all men be saved...most choose
to not be saved

God has given every man a choice

Joshua 24:15

It would be meaningless for God to give us a choice

- If He would not honor our choices
- If there was not an attractive alternative

Our choice is all about God's mediator, His Son Jesus Christ...

"Who do you say that I AM?"

- Was made flesh and dwelt among us...and was made sin for us
- Paid the penalty for our transgressions
- In so doing, purchased us from the slave market
ransom = "redemption"
- no other man...or woman...died in my place to redeem me!
No priestly class died for me
Mary did not...
No other dead person ("saint"), either
Only One man is both God and man, thereby uniquely able to
mediate the breach caused by Adam's rebellion
- it is impossible for corrupt finite man to reach the Holy Infinite
God...contrary to what every religion teaches
but it is no problem for the Infinite God to reach finite man
(only Biblical Christianity teaches that)

...so He establishes the Terms and Conditions...which are Jesus Christ and Him crucified

- ignoring His terms and conditions will not make them go away...they are unchanging
- not believing the terms and conditions does not diminish their absolute Truth
- trying to negotiate different terms and conditions is futile...for God does not negotiate with clay
- trying to negotiate different terms and conditions is irrational... they cannot possibly get any better than this!

Yet most men ignore...do not believe...try to negotiate

PETA's "Holocaust on Your plate" campaign
People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals...
an animal rights group

Only the God-less can equate human life with animal life
By rejecting the terms and conditions of God our Savior, man
thinks of himself as an evolved animal
If you believe you are an animal, you will think and act like and
animal
Q: since when are "ethics" a concern to animals"
But what you believe...how you think...how you act...does not
change God's absolute truth...which is...
Man is the fallen image of God...not a highly evolved animal...
that must have a Mediator to be reconciled to Him

Whether you accept God's terms and conditions or not...this is
categorically true, a faithful saying:

Phil 2:6-11

v7 I am ordained:
preach to the unbeliever...teach the believer

What is his authority to say some of these things?

Paul was hand-picked and sent by the Lord to be a preacher
and teacher...of faith and truth...of faith in The Truth

Paul now shifts gears and talks about how to worship the Lord in public

v8 pray:

“worship”

Public Worship Issue: lifting of hands

“These hands...heart...mind...are dedicated to doing Your service,
Lord.”

condition for lifting up my hands:

1. they must be holy...sanctified for the Lord
2. without anger toward men...in purity of heart
3. not doubting...in faith toward God

do not lift your hands to God

- if you are filled with wrath toward men or doubt toward God
- in order to draw attention to your self and off of Jesus...this is an act of worship, not to be a source of distraction for others trying to worship too

v9-12 women:

OK! Is everybody blessed!
What does this mean?

Public Worship Issue: order

context, context, context:

1. the church at Ephesus was getting unruly
2. at Ephesus was the Temple of Diana, with over 1000 temple prostitutes...
3. the issue is God's order (1 Cor 11:3, 1 Cor 14:40)...
4. God is NOT making a value statement

God is not a respecter of persons...He does not play favorites...

His daughters are NOT 2nd class citizens in His kingdom!

What is true in the family...the 2 that has become 1...a compound 1...
requires order for there to be unity...

is equally true in God's family...there must be order if there is to be unity

The all-knowing, all-powerful God by His sovereign will has given man

- Position of leadership (not dictatorship!)
- Responsibility
- Accountability

So, in context (repeat above) the role of women (including teen age girls)
in public worship...

- Appearance...is to be modest...(v9-10)
to not draw attention to themselves and thereby distract
worship

Modest in “presentation”

To not attract the attention of the men...if you know
what I mean...and...

To not create envy among the other women

Modest is NOT...worldly and seductive

short shorts

short skirts

plunging necklines

tight, form-fitting clothing

“overdone” with make-up or jewelry or
alluring hairdos

Modest in “presence”

Bashful...vs bold and flirty

Self-control

Clear, sound mind

This is not about legalism...a dress code...but about

Christ’s love to not stumble a brother or a sister

Women, if you have ANY questions or objections, see
Monica

Why see Monica?

- Participation (v11-12)
 - v11 Silence = “to be still”
Apparently wandering around and socializing
during the worship service was a problem
worship had become disorderly
 - v12 In settings apart from public worship:
women teach women
women counsel women
- women can lead worship or serve in any ministry...but in
the setting of Public Worship women do not teach
from the pulpit
Monica is not an option when we are at the Men’s Advance
- The issue, again, is keeping God’s order...in the church...
God’s family...as it is in the home
- the Body of Christ is not intended to be politically correct
the world is politically correct, the Church is not
women pastors is an unbiblical practice within the church
some denominations ignore this part of God’s Word

just as Job said that we cannot pick and choose the circumstances in our
lives (Ch 2:10), man cannot pick and choose which parts of
God’s Word to obey

God’s Word transcends time and cultures...
it is ALWAYS true...
it is true EVERYWHERE

besides...there is no greater beauty than the glow of countenance of a
woman in love with Jesus Christ!

v13 For Adam was first:

Against the cries of “That’s not fair!” from the feminists, God reminds us that His order has been so from the very beginning

- God created man
First
from the dust of the earth
- God formed woman
Second
from the man
...second in time and in method...NOT in value!

With the position given him by God, man also received responsibility and accountability

v14 Adam was not deceived:

God made Adam out of the dust of the ground (Gen 2:7)
gave man the command (Gen 2:15-17)
formed Eve out of Adam (Gen 2:18, 21-22)

God allowed a test to reveal if they would choose to obey or disobey
Results: Eve was deceived...BUT Adam willfully disobeyed
deceived, Eve took the lead...not given to her
Adam foolishly followed...in rebellion

Adam was held responsible and accountable for the fall
Rom 5:12-14

Ladies, God has asked you to follow a foolish sinner!
Pray for him!

v15 childbearing:

bearing fruit...maternity

saved:

“preserved”

by raising godly children by living lives that are characterized by

- faith
- agape...God’s love
- holiness...purity
- self-control and a sound mind

the sin of the man resulted in the Mediator coming into the world via the woman

1 Timothy Chapter 3

Timothy is in Ephesus – that church that was

- subject to winds of false doctrine
- in disarray

Last week, Paul, referring to God's order in the family, began teaching sound doctrine about order in God's family, the church.

He continues that teaching this week, focusing on church leadership.

The Lord establishes order in God's house by appointing spiritual men to oversee things
Why is this necessary? Unity and peace

Eph 4:1-6, 11-16

In the Church, God has chosen and gifted men to:

- minister the Word of God
- build up the body
- perfect the saints for the work of the ministry

Additionally, other things also needed to be cared for, both spiritual and physical things.
These things were to be entrusted to mature Christian men – elders and deacons

Without clear guidelines in the NT, church governance structure began to gravitate around two Greek words:

1. in 1 Timothy, *episkopos*, translated “bishop”....governed by bishops (Episcopalians)
2. in Titus, *presbuteros*, translated “elders”...governed by a board of elders (Presbyterians)

In Acts of the Apostles, Paul uses the words interchangeably, so it appears they are two different names for the same men

In both structures, a body of qualified men

- hire and fire pastors
- create and communicate the vision for the church
- judge disputes within the body
- tend to the financial and material matters of the church

In addition, here in the USA, land of democracy, another form of church governance has arisen...Congregational rule...where the body votes on

- The pastor
- A Board of Elders and A Board of Deacons
- Budget/financial matters

What is the governance structure of Calvary Chapel?
the Moses model...the one God gave to Israel

- God's form of government is a theocratic monarchy...not a democracy
- God called Moses to be His spokesman to the congregation of Israel
- Moses ministered the Word of God to the people
- When things became too heavy for him, 70 elders were appointed, and they were Spirit-filled
- Under Moses, the elders would handle spiritual and material issues, going to Moses only when the issue was too heavy for them
- Moses would go to God with that heavy issue
- God would communicate His decision to Moses, His spokesman, who in turn would communicate it to the people

We also see that model in the early church
Acts 15...1st Church Counsel...headed by James

Following that model,

- The Senior Pastor is...Jesus Christ, the head of the church
- The presiding pastor, called by God to minister the Word of God...is me
- assisting pastors to help minister to the people, especially spiritual needs via prayer...are Greg and Chuck
- elders are established for business and spiritual aspects of the ministry
- deacons are appointed for the practical issues of church operations

So

- the church is the Lord's
- the "shepherd" is not a hireling
- we do not have elections...the sheep do not vote for the shepherd
- the sheep are not burdened with hire/fire decisions
- God raises up servants to minister to His flock and to keep order and unity

What is not clearly taught in the NT is church governance structure...but what is clearly taught is order and unity

So let's look at the Lord's qualifications for the men He will appoint to church leadership for the purpose of keeping unity and order

v1 a true saying:
cannot be disputed

if a man desire...bishop...good work:
if a man has a desire to be a “a superintendent, an overseer” in the church,
his is desiring something honorable and commendable
of all the things a man could desire, this truly is a good thing!

Keyword: desire
“intense desire”
an intense burden put on the heart by the Lord...like the one put on
my heart at a Men’s Retreat/Advance

David Hocking’s words to me regarding the ministry:
desire...an inward excitement planted by God...not me

v2-7 the Lord’s 16 qualifications of a bishop (elder)

1. blameless
“inculpable”
no proven charges against...there are occasionally accusations...
2. husband of one wife:
Not polygamous....a one-wife man, as God designed
No mistresses.
Divorce circumstances must be individually considered
Note: need not be married
3. vigilant
watchful...both spiritually and physically
4. sober:
a clear, sound mind
5. of good behavior:
self-controlled
not a hypocrite
follows Christ everywhere, not just at church
6. hospitable:
loves to minister to the saints...to sit with and listen to God’s
children

7. able to teach:
to explain and apply the Word
2 Tim 2:15 a workman rightly dividing the Word of
truth
1 Peter 3:15 ready always to give a reason of the hope
- some man may be saying, "Teaching. Well, that leaves me out."
Notice: this is last on the "positive" qualifications, not the first
- What is first is the character of the man...the fruit of God
Then comes the gift (teaching) of God
8. not given to drunkenness:
neither the one who uses wine as an escape from problems (evil)
nor
the one uses wine as the beverage of choice (appearance of evil)
9. not a striker:
not violent
will not abuse their authority
self-controlled
peaceable
10. not greedy:
not a money-grubbing materialist but an investor in the kingdom of
God
11. patient:
longsuffering with God's children...whom we know are rascals!
12. not a brawler:
not contentious but a peacemaker
13. not covetous:
of material things, wives, etc...but covets the best spiritual gifts
14. able to manage his family:
accepts God's order in his home and the responsibility and
accountability of the leadership position God has given him
his first ministry is his wife...his second ministry is his children
he must preside over his family in a way that honors God before he
is asked to help preside over God's family
This does not mean an elder must be Ward Cleaver or Ozzie
Nelson or Fred McMurray! BUT NOT Ozzy Osbourne!!
He is to train the children up in God's Word...but the children
become responsible for their own decisions as they grow up

15. not a novice:

mature...experienced...firmly grounded in the Word
not a baby Christian (in either time or depth of relationship with
the Lord) who is under-equipped spiritually to deal with
mature problems that arise in any church
“elder” is an issue of spiritual maturity, not seniority

Why? Satan targets Church leadership, so the spiritual warfare in
their lives is more intense
this man must be spiritually mature enough to handle those attacks

16. good report:

a good reputation...a good witness...with unbelievers
fair
honest
a man of integrity
not a man whose witness shipwrecks the faith of other believers or
gives cause of the unbeliever to blaspheme God

to summarize, perhaps, the qualifications for an elder

- Spirit-filled (fruit of the Spirit in Gal 5:21-22)
- Mindful of his first ministries, his family
- Mature in the Lord
- Good reputation with those outside the church i.e. walks the talk for all to see

v8-12 the Lord’s 10 qualifications of deacons

“to run errands, an attendant, a waiter”...doers of whatever needs to be
done for the operational functioning of this ministry

Acts 6:1-7

A deacon is not one “below” an elder or a pastor but one with a different
calling from the Lord within the Body of Christ.

Remember, the Body of Christ is an organism, not an organization
A church cannot function without these men

1. grave:

“honorable, honest”
serious about serving the Lord and His flock

2. not double-tongued

“telling a different story” or double-minded
i.e. not a politician but able to speak the truth in love

3. not given to much wine
4. not greedy:
 motivated by the love of the Lord not by money
5. clean conscience:
 purity of faith
6. proven:
 not a baby Christian
 given a probationary period to prove themselves
7. wives who are
 “wives” = “wife” **and/or** “woman”

if it means “wife”, the man’s wife is part of the qualification consideration

- worthy of respect
- gracious, not malicious talker (gossip)
 Gr. Word for “slanderer” = Gr. Word for “devil”
- temperate
- trustworthy in all things
 able to keep confidences
 no hidden agendas

why this about the wives?

Because the 2 are 1...the ministry is a Team thing, both husband and wife

if not supportive and “in it with” her husband, a wife can hold her husband back from serving the Lord...

if it means “woman”, Paul is talking about deaconess.

- “must their” is in italics in the KJV...not in original language
- pastors and elders have been mentioned...why not their wives?

Note: What must a woman do to be a pastor’s wife?

Marry a pastor...it’s the ONLY way!

8. husband of one wife
9. ruler of his own family

v13 used the office...well purchase:

faithful deacons will be rewarded with:

1. a “grade of dignity”
2. great boldness in faith – leadership calls for frankness and assurance, which come from the Holy Spirit

Church governance...church leadership...at CCA

- we do not have elections...the sheep do not vote for the shepherd
- the sheep are not burdened with hire/fire decisions
- God raises up servants to minister to His flock and to keep order and unity
- This should comfort you...we are in God’s hands, not mine

The Lord has given me this intense desire...this calling...and the Lord will raise up men to support me and to minister to His flock.

Therefore, I am

- not picking elders and deacons
- watching the men...to see who the Lord has already called...
- listening to the Lord...for He will reveal them in His time

And I will follow my Shepherd

Men, if you in your flesh desire to be a leader (i.e. your motives are not pure)... you might be able to fool me but you will never be able to fool God.

Don’t play politics and seek promotion in the church like the world does
God works thru servants...He plants the intense desire in the heart

The work of the church is spiritual work, requiring the power of the Spirit of God
aspiring to and doing something you have not been called to will squash you...
if I did not have this calling on my life, it would kill me!
The best place for you is the place God has given you.

If you are faithful with a little, you will be faithful with much...

I started serving the Lord where He put an intense desire on my heart

- In the Children’s Ministry
- In the choir
- Greeting and ushering
- In a small group study
- In a Men’s Study
- In a Men’s Prayer ministry
- In a Home Fellowship
- As a pastor...

So start serving with a little...and be faithful!

v14-15 oughtest to behave:
the Church is

- the Bride of Christ
- the Body of Christ
- the Temple of the Holy Spirit
- the house of God
- the pillar and foundation of The Truth

the Church is a special place...God's household...the pillar and ground of the Truth in a community

therefore, we must behave:

- orderly
- decently
- NOT worldly

v16 mystery of godliness:
what is the Truth...the revelation of godliness? This is!

Jesus Christ!

1. appeared in a body
2. devoid of man's sinful nature
3. raised from the dead by the Holy Spirit
4. seen by angels (and they are amazed, 1 Peter 1:12)
5. preached among unbelievers
6. believed by (some of) the world
7. received back in glory ie Someone was waiting for Him

Without controversy, without doubt, Jesus is God Almighty

1 Timothy Chapter 4

Remember where we left off...Ch 3:16

In contrast to the sound doctrine of the Truth...

v1-5 the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times:
When?

last days = just before Jesus Christ returns to establish His kingdom

2 Tim 3:1-5 ferocious times will come

Gen 49:1 Jacob's prophecies "befall you in last days"

Acts 2:17 when pour out My Spirit (Joel 2:28)

2 Peter 3:3-10 scoffers walking after their own lusts

Is 2:2 the Lord's house be established in mountain

latter days = another way of saying the same thing

Jer 48:47 judgment of Moab

Ezk 38:16 Magog invasion in "My land"

Dan 2:28 Neb's dream of world empires

Dan 10:14 angel's explanation of Daniel's vision

latter times = only here in 1 Tim 4:1
since Paul

- warned the Ephesian elders about ravenous wolves that would follow him
- is writing to Timothy about faithfully teaching and contending for sound doctrine in Ephesus...

this means a "season" after the birth of the Church

then it was the "latter times"...now is still the "latter times"
but now might also be the "last days", the "latter days"

Throughout the Church Age, The Holy Spirit says very distinctly, very clearly, that there will be apostasy

- rejection of God's Truth...
falling away from the Truth...sound doctrine
to the teachings of devils...false doctrine
- 1. holy laughter...even though repentance and revival are
always accompanied by weeping and brokenness...
not uncontrollable laughter or roaring like lions
- 2. health and wealth...even though Christ-likeness
includes suffering and tribulation
- 3. speaking in tongues...does not save us...Jesus saves us

False doctrine is

- extra-biblical
- unbiblical
- adding or taking away from God's Word

Test every doctrine:

- Did Jesus teach it (Gospels)?
- Did the early Church practice it (Acts)?
- Did Paul exhort it (epistles)?

If God does not say it in His revealed Word, it is a lie
If the father of all lies says it, how can it be true?

Lucifer was the most subtle of all the creatures...his
deceiving doctrines are very subtle...and deadly
The prince of the power of the air is the source of the winds
of false doctrine continually blowing thru the
Church to seduce children of God away from the
simple Gospel and the power of the Blood
That is why Eph 4:11-14

- rejection of God's ways written on man's heart, seared
(insensitive) consciences
those whose consciences no longer speak to them...who
can sin without ANY sense of guilt
e.g. Gilbert HS kids this week
- rejection of God's ordained institution of marriage
living together..."playing married" without the
legal and spiritual commitment
vs...the supernatural union of 2 becoming 1 in every regard

- rejection of God's gift of food
 Gen 9:3 God to Noah, post-flood
 Acts 10:9-15 God to Peter, post-Pentecost

Is it sin to be a vegetarian?

Not if that is a choice made by faith

Rom 14:17-18, 22-23

But it is sin if it is

- a form of pride...there is no diet more spiritual than another...that would be an affront to the Blood of Jesus Christ
- part of worshipping the creature
 Vegans...a belief system akin to Hinduism
 Sacred cows in India where people are starving

Rom 1:18-25

Apostasy is happening today...as it always has

All of us must

- guard the Truth in our hearts...we know the counterfeit and the counterfeiter by knowing intimately the Truth and studying it daily
- be alert to apostasy and be instant in season to give every man an answer for the hope we have
- empowered by the Holy Spirit, boldly share the Truth with those who have been deceived by the devil

v6 put the brethren in remembrance:

in contrast to the teachers of the doctrines of devils, nourish the flock with the Truth of God's Word

every Sunday and Thursday and Devotional, my goal is to prepare a healthy meal for God's children

a good minister of Jesus

- reminds believers of the Truth
- nourishes the believer's faith by proclaiming sound doctrine

by sticking to the Word of God...what God says, not what man says or what I think...I will be a good and faithful servant precisely what I want the Lord to say to me!

- v7-8 refuse profane and old wives fables:
refute heathenistic and silly stories...nonsense like
- Mary sightings
 - Statues that bleed
 - Hebrew shouting carp
- things that have no biblical basis in truth...avoid them

Exercise thyself unto godliness:

Paul is not condemning physical fitness...we are to be good stewards of the body God has given and Jesus has purchased but...physical exercise is of little value compared to spiritual exercise

physical exercise profits “for only a short while”...77 years on average
But spiritual exercise (prayer, study, witnessing the Truth) leads to spiritual fitness, which is eternal

All the time, effort, and money to get a “beautiful body” is ultimately wasted...it has no eternal value whatsoever.
a spiritual fitness fanatic, with an intimate personal relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ, lives forever and will have great rewards

Choose wisely your fitness battle

- One is a winning battle, the other a losing battle.
- One is unaffected by gravity, the other always loses to gravity.

“work out” with the work of Jesus Christ of seeking and saving the lost.
Don’t live for the moment...live the moment for eternity!”

- v9 This is a faithful saying
2nd “faithful saying”...that which was true, is true, and will always be true
worthy of unqualified acceptance

- v10 we both labor and suffer reproach because we trust:
the eternal truth for which Paul labored to the point of exhaustion and
suffered (who would labor and suffer for a lie?).
he served the
- living God
 - God of salvation of those who trust Him
Jesus = Jehovah is salvation
died for the sins of the whole world
has called all unto salvation by faith
few are chosen...because few surrender by faith
 - Truth that will be utterly rejected by the apostate (Luke 18:8)

trusting in God, believing the Bible, has a price:

1. hard work in the world...the ground is hard and rocky
2. suffer the scorn and mocking of the world...
unbelieving family and friends think we are “crackers”

but the wise man chooses the eternal over the temporary

- v11 these things command and teach
the doctrine Paul has communicated to Timothy is to be declared and
taught.
Be “offensive” rather defensive to confront the kingdom of Satan and
rescue those trapped behind the gates of hell
Matt 16:15-18

- v12 let no man despise thy youth
Timothy is a young man...in his thirties by now...still a young man
- conventional wisdom says the young do not have the experience to apply
whatever knowledge they may have...so whatever they say is
discounted
Paul exhorts Timothy to ignore conventional wisdom in favor of God’s
wisdom
- “Don’t be distracted or discouraged by attacks against you based on your
age.
- Joseph was a young man
 - Jeremiah was a young man (Jer 1:4-10).
 - David was a young man.
 - Daniel was a young man.
 - I was a young man (Acts 7:58)”

Age is not the issue...the Truth is the issue.
You have been called by God and anointed by men. Don't be detracted.
Be faithful to your calling.
Don't just talk a good game, live it for all to see.
Let your light shine!

solid pastoral advise for us all: be an example in our

1. speech

- let your speech always be gracious...seasoned with salt
- speak no filthy communication...exercise self-control of the tongue
- have a solid working knowledge of God's Word

2. life

- lifestyle...the whole package
- vocabulary
- thoughts and desires
- definition of "fun"
- priorities
- investments

3. love...fruit of God's agape love...as described in 1 Cor 13

- longsuffering
- kind
- not envious
- not self-serving
- not boastful
- not weird
- not provoked
- hates sin but rejoices in the Truth
- unwavering – bears and endures all things
- filled with hope
- never fails

4. spirit

- gentle
- sweet
- meek
- quiet
- submissive
- obedient

5. faith

- faithful
- trustworthy

6. purity

- walk in purity (Timothy was a single man...in Ephesus!)
- resist temptation
- denial of self

v13 give attendance to reading:

“Until I rejoin you, be disciplined to

- read the Word of God (every day...manna)
- comfort and encourage the brethren...with
- sound doctrine

an exhortation to me until Jesus comes

v14 neglect not the gift:

Timothy had hands laid on and was sent by church elders to preach and teach the Word of God
he had the gift of evangelism (2 Tim 4:5)

“Do not be lazy, do not disregard the gifts God has given you.”

As we will read in the 2nd letter to Timothy, he was fearful and needed prompting to “get going” (2 Tim 1:6-8)

we are no different than Timothy

- have been gifted
- have a tendency to not use those gifts
fear of man...rejection...or
lazy and complacent...or
confused...or
self-confident (our ability vs God’s gift)

By the sovereign will of God, the gifts of God are given by the Holy Spirit for the benefit of the entire Body

And we must be empowered by the Holy Spirit to use those gifts
we bring nothing to the table...we can do nothing apart from Jesus

using your spiritual gifts requires allowing the Lord to cultivate your spiritual ears as He leads...and our stepping out in faith and obedience

remember the warning Jesus gave in The Parable of the 10 Talents!

- v15 meditate upon...give thyself wholly:
 Paul encourages Timothy to
- meditate (think deeply and thoroughly) on this exhortation
 - commit himself to the Lord's calling upon his life
- Ps 1:1-3
 As we meditate on God's Word, the Holy Spirit transforms and renews our minds
- Don't stop at "think"...move on to "do"
 commit your ways unto the Lord
 James 1:8...then...James 1:22
 As we do/obey God's Word, the Holy Spirit transforms our hearts and our souls
- Be sold-out, on-fire...because Jesus is coming back
 Now is the time to be bold in sharing the Truth!

- v16 take heed...continue...both save thyself and them that hear thee:
 save: "to preserve"...to keep us out of trouble
- THE doctrine...sound doctrine...Words of Truth that
- preserve life
 - protect God's children
 - produce fruit
- diligently reading the Word...meditating on the Word...obeying the Word
- benefits us
 - benefits those who hear and watch us

Want to serve the Lord? Action words for a servant:

1. Remember (v6)
2. Refuse (v7)
3. Exercise (v7)
4. Labor (v10)
5. Suffer (v10)
6. Trust (v10)
7. Teach (v11)
8. Live (be an example, v12)
9. Obeys (v13)
10. Neglect not (v14)
11. Meditate (v15)
12. Give (v15)
13. Take heed (v16)
14. Continue (v16)

1 Timothy Chapter 5

In keeping with the letter's instruction on God's order in God's family, Paul instructs Pastor Timothy on how to interact with:

5:1-2 relationships in the fellowship
5:3-10 older widows
5:11-16 younger widows
5:17-25 elders

v1 Rebuke not an elder:
elder = an older man

Timothy, a young man in a position of authority and responsibility in the church at Ephesus (4:12) is being reminded of Ex 20:12
"Honor your father and mother that your days may be long upon the land which God has given you

"Honor your father...respect your elder.
Don't ever chastise him in public.
If correction is needed, do it privately with great respect."

the younger men as brothers:

"And respect your brothers in the Lord, the young men like you."

v2 The elder women as mothers:

"Ex 20:12 also applies to the older women in the fellowship...honor them as you honor your mother."

I have always honored my mother. I still do. I always will.
Because I loved and respected her.
So should we treat the older women in the fellowship.

the younger as sisters:

"The younger women are your sisters...and the King's daughters.
Interact with them accordingly."

Look out for them...Protect...Encourage...Respect
not
Lust after...bully

Ground Rule for relationships in the Church: respect

- v3 Honor the widows that are widows indeed:
 Honor: “to prize...to highly value...to care for”
 The elderly did not “lose value” in that culture or in the early Church...that is a modern tragedy.
- Church, hold up in high regard...and care for accordingly...those women who have lost their husbands and are all alone.
- Those who have been orderly...
- “Eph 5” wives...Christ-centered and husbands-centered
 - godly mothers...
- God is the Defender of the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow... those who need protection, refuge, and must trust in the strength of another....says so over 20 times in the Word
- God calls us to visit and care for the widows (James 1:27)...not prey upon them like the scribes and the Pharisees did (Mark 12:38-40)
- v4 if any widow have children or nephews:
 a widow with children or grandchildren has someone to care for them so they are not “widows indeed.”
- The children/grandchildren are to “repay” their parents/grandparents in their time of dependent need
- God’s Care Ministry...welfare system...starts with the family, not with the Church
- v5 widow indeed:
 however, the “widows indeed” have no one to care for them, so the church must.
- a “widow indeed” is further defined as a woman who is
- Isolated...truly in need...no other help available
 - God-fearing...trusting in God to meet her needs
 - Prayerful...a warrior!
 - A spiritual woman of God
- e.g. Anna in Luke 2:36-37

v6 but she that liveth in pleasure:
“to be voluptuous, to be wanton”

this is a woman whose husband died...and now she is starting to party and
“live it up!”...using widowhood as a license to pursue lustful
pleasure
contrasted to a “widow indeed,” she is a woman of the world...

she is not God-fearing and prayerful...she is a disorderly woman.
Such a woman (or such a man for that matter) is a dead person walking

v7 give in charge:
“Make these commands known in the church so the people can make
God-honoring decisions and be orderly. And no one can say
‘I didn’t know!’”

v8 but if any provide not...worse than an infidel:
God’s welfare system starts with the family, not with the Church
turning attention from the “widow indeed” to her family...if any person
does not provide for his family, God says he is like an
unbeliever...only worse!!!

all the dead-beat dads of our society have a surprise coming!
As do dead-beat sons and daughters!

A very hard-hitting Word from the Lord: Any person who rejects their
obligation to care for their family is scum.

- wives
- children
- elderly parents

In our society, the “old folks home” is a great tragedy
many adults of aging parents dodge their responsibilities by pushing them
aside to the care of strangers

- The elderly have great value
- The burden is no greater than the burden you were to them
when you were a baby...it’s fitting repayment for the care
they gave you

Such a person says his/her time and effort is more importantly spent
selfishly rather than selflessly

Yes, medical conditions may warrant this...but it should be a last resort

What my dad did with his mother in Raleigh was the right thing

v9-10 additional qualifications of a “widow indeed” entitled to church support:

1. over 60 (was older than now)
2. wife of one man
 - at a time, just like elder and deacon in Ch 3
 - a faithful, one-man woman...
 - NOT like Samaritan woman at the well in John 4
3. evidence of her faith abounds in her good works (James 2:14-26)
4. raised her kids in God’s ways
5. hospitable
6. served the Lord...demonstrated a servant’s heart
7. helpful, caring, giving, compassionate...loved God’s family like she loved her own
8. has given her life to Christ...has been orderly

NOTE: if you know of a woman like this, not being cared for...you need to let us know

and these Godly women can still serve the Lord...

- prayer...God uses mightily what man says is not useful!
- teaching the younger women (Titus 2:3-5)
- a ministry of helps around the Church

v11-14 younger widows refuse:

“But decline church support to the younger widows.
They still have the physical desires for companionship that God has given every man and woman...and at some point those desires could dominate their thoughts.”

one of two scenarios will happen with young widows:

1. she will desire a husband.

A young widow presents herself to the Church, saying,
“Hey! I’m a widow and I want the church to support me. And I will serve the Lord!”
and she will...until some young single man catches her eye...

PTL! This passage does not mean a widow is “going to hell” if she gets married again.
The desire to be married is a God-given desire...to be done God’s way...to receive God’s blessings
If she re-marries, the husband will care for her, not the Church

But...she would have given satan a foothold because he would condemn her for “leaving Jesus in favor of this bum”

or

2. with too much time and energy, she will become a gossiping busybody, creating problems in many relationships.... being very disorderly.

The church is not to care for her.

Given those two scenarios, the younger widows should not “be taken in by the Church” but should remarry, have children, and run a household...be orderly...to not give satan a foothold in the church

v15 some are already turned to Satan:

This was a current problem in the church at Ephesus that Pastor Timothy needed to confront head-on.
He needed to go on a “search and rescue” mission for these young widows and restore them

v16 if any man or woman...let them relieve them...relieve them...widows indeed:

Summarizing the issue by re-visiting v4 and v8, God's order...

God's Care Ministry...for widows:

1. families first
2. the Church for those truly alone

In our culture, the young set aside the old

It is a disgrace if a child will not care for an aging parent but rather just
"put them away"

And Social Security does not remove the responsibility!

v17-19 elders that rule well...worthy of double honor:

elder: church leader...a mature man who handles all situations

Biblically...their guidance is The Word, not psychology or
personal opinion

A faithful leader in the church, especially one who labors in teaching the
Word of God, is entitled to honor and respect

So...honor faithful leaders with

- provision...reward (v18, 1 Cor 9)
- protection...reputation (v19)

Those with the intense desire planted in their heart by God to serve Him in
a position of leadership...

- live in a glass houses
- are held accountable to a higher standard
- are targets of false accusations by Satan

The reputation of a faithful servant of God can be destroyed by false
accusations...care and protection are essential

Dismiss the accusations unless they are brought forward by 2 or 3
witnesses

- by 2 or 3 witnesses the truth shall be known...
the rogue assailant...the lone assassin looking to
manipulate people and decisions...should just be brushed
aside
- the witnesses are there not to join in the accusation but to
observe its presentation.
- they protect the accused as much as they witness for the
accuser

God's order reveals the truth and stops "open season" on Church leaders.

v20 Them that sin rebuke:

Elders are not exempt from Church discipline

- 2 or 3 witnesses are needed to come forward if an elder has fallen
- sinners are to be rebuked publicly, to warn others (heavy!)

The purpose of church discipline for elders

- weed out those seeking leadership in their flesh
- restore the fallen...to free those in bondage
- discourage sin elsewhere in the body

v21 doing nothing by partiality:

Church leadership is never to be a “Good Ol’ Boys Club”

Pastors must guard against this...favoritism is disorderly...

If v21 is ignored...v20 will be also...and confusion gets a foothold

Favoritism

- it destroys families
 1. Jacob and Esau by Isaac and Rebekah
 2. Joseph vs the older 10 by Jacob
 3. God’s family
- it misrepresents God

God does not play favorites...He loves us all equally...
all are equally important
All men stand before Him on the same level

The 3 witnesses (v19) of this command are

1. God the Father
2. The Lord Jesus Christ
3. Holy angels

Obviously an important command!

v22 lay hands suddenly on no man:

”So don’t be hasty to anoint elders...

- let them prove themselves...
- let them mature and grow...
- and let the Lord pick them.”

“Don’t let your ministry be destroyed by the sins of your hand-picked leaders.

Be careful...be discerning...be wise...be pure.”

v23 Paul, tending to his son in the faith, now encourages him to stay healthy...for the demands of the ministry are great

Drink no longer water

There must have been a problem with the local water so Paul tells

Timothy to neutralize it by using a small amount of wine

The result is diluted, weak wine...to kill the coodies...

wine NOT as strong drink...but for medicinal purposes only

Don't look to this verse as a loophole!

Today, wine is NOT medicine!

Medical science has made gigantic advances in 2000 years!

v24-25 after the parenthetical words on staying healthy, Paul returns to the issue in v22

some men's...and some men:

“Be wise and be discerning, Timothy!”

- some men's sins are a blaze that all men can see them
Hitler, Stalin, Charles Manson
- other's are private and no one will know until afterward
(David Hocking father-in-law)
- some men's good works of faith are so visible that all can see them (Billy Graham, George Mueller)
- other's are behind-the-scenes and won't be known until later
(nursery workers, prayer warriors)

know this...there are no secrets from God

- your sin will find you out (Num 32:23, Luke 12:2-3)...
and so will your good deeds (Luke 8:17)
- no sinner gets away with anything...and no saint goes unnoticed

1 Timothy Chapter 6

- v1 servants...count their own masters worthy of all honor:
Employees are to honor their unsaved employers so that God will be honored
Honor your employer
- by being the best employee
 - with your work ethic
- Echoes of Col 3:23-24
- Biblical Christianity...a personal relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ...
is to be seen as well as heard.
How we act in all circumstances...both good and bad...will be the witness
the unbeliever will notice and remember
e.g. Saul of Tarsus watching Stephen
- Our witness is priceless...it is our reflection of Jesus Christ for others to see
We are to be a mirror of the Lord
- everywhere we are – at home or at work
 - at all times...regardless of circumstances
- Our circumstances are not to dictate our reflection before the unbelieving world.
Our natural heart is not to be projected for others to see.
Because then we are no different than the world
If we act like and talk like the world, the unbeliever will blaspheme God as a phony
- Instead, we need the Holy Spirit to put our flesh in chains so the world can see Jesus Christ in us....see His
unconditional and sacrificial love
grace and mercy
forgiveness
longsuffering
gentleness and kindness and compassion
meekness
peace
joy

v2 believing masters...do them service

If you have a Christian boss, do not take advantage of that by

- slacking off
- praying when you should be working
- witnessing instead of working

Honor a believing boss, he/she is family!

What a blessing!

Count it a joy to serve a brother/sister

v3-5 if any man teach otherwise...from such withdraw yourself:

“If someone teaches a doctrine contrary to God’s truth, avoid them.

They are not filled with God’s love and grace, but with themselves...

Their doctrine is unhealthy.

They are false teachers...and can be identified by their fruit

1. pride (which God hates)
2. ignorant...devoid of knowledge and wisdom
(which God desires us to have so we are not ignorant)
3. breed
 - division vs unity
 - envy vs rejoicing
 - quarrels, contentions, arguments vs peace
 - evil rumors vs edification and encouragement
 - meddlesomeness vs helping bear the burden
4. corrupt mind vs a renewed mind
5. devoid of truth (Jesus Christ is the Truth)
6. preach the gospel of Mammon (money, possessions, materialism)...which really is not good news but a cruel and destructive taskmaster fueled by the covetousness in an unregenerate heart

supposing that gain is godliness:

Some men had...and still have...the notion that godliness is a way to riches

- see the ministry, not as an opportunity to serve the Lord, but in terms of financial gain....fleecing the flock by
- robbing men of the Truth...and their money
Asking shamelessly for money...or their ministry will close
Manipulating the flock to keep digging deep into their pocketbook
Proclaiming health and wealth

Godliness is NOT a way to get rich...Christian ministry is not how to amass great material wealth
So avoid such men

v6 godliness with contentment is great gain:

great gain = godliness + contentment

contentment does not exist without godliness, for in the absence of godliness there is never contentment
nor is there great gain without contentment

Contentment is something every man seeks, but few find it.

Because it can only be found in Jesus.

Therefore, contentment is a choice

Choosing to abide in Jesus Christ, not the world...and in His will for you

Rank these by value

- a new Mercedes
- a brick of gold
- a 5 karat diamond ring
- Bill Gate's house
- the Rockefeller investment portfolio
- contentment

Of all the world has to offer...of all the "gifts" of the god of mammon (Matt 6:24)...contentment is not one of them

If your passion or life's pursuit is the accumulation of wealth,

- you will never be satisfied.
- before you know it, your things will own you

The god of mammon is very strong in our society...

breeding and promoting discontentment

- Madison Avenue advertising campaigns
- Mail order catalogues (they are evil!)

In this nation

- we look into a bursting closet...and say we have nothing to wear
- we gaze into a stocked refrigerator or pantry...and say there is nothing to eat

In the context of the rest of the world's standard of living, how absurd we are!

Discontentment...choosing to live by the world's scorecard...is like bitterness or like cancer...it just eats at you...
completely consuming you unless radical surgery is performed
Such surgery will happen on the mission trip this week!

Our God offers gifts the world cannot – contentment, joy, peace
God's definition of wealth is very different than man's

What worldly possessions did Jesus have?

Luke 9:58 Foxes have holes and birds have nests, but the
Son of man has no where to lay His head

Success is not measured in how many things you have.

Luke 12:13-21

Worldly wealth has temporary value...no amount of money ever saved a
man on his death bed

Ps 49:6-10

v7-8 brought nothing...carry nothing out:

Job 1:21a Naked came I out of my mother's womb and naked shall I
return. The Lord gave and the Lord has taken away.

Be content with food, clothing, and shelter

v9-10 those that will be rich...the love of money:

Ephesus was the banking/trading/commerce center in Asia minor...
It was all about “show me the money” in that town

To make the accumulation of wealth the pursuit of your life is to

- commit great error
- bring great sorrow upon yourself

Riches cannot be trusted...they are lost faster than they are gained
the passionate pursuit for material wealth...is crazy

They that desire to be rich...ignorantly desire:

- Unbearable temptations...
 To cheat in order to gain
 To step on others to “get ahead”
 To take advantage of others at every opportunity
- Hidden traps that will cause sudden falls
- A life driven by the insatiable desires of the flesh
- Agonizing destruction and ruin (physical, emotional, spiritual)

The lives of the rich and famous are frequently horror stories!

- life and death of Howard Hughes
- bitter miserliness of JD Rockefeller

James 5:1-6

Many think money

Cures all ills

Makes you happy

Solves every problem

But in reality, money as a passion

Compounds problems

Brings great sorrow

Is behind the evil that tears down society

Drugs

Prostitution

Pornography

But money is not the problem...money is not evil.

Gold and silver and material possessions can be used by God to
accomplish mighty things

- Abraham was rich
- Joseph
- Daniel
- David
- Solomon

The heart of man is the problem...man’s heart is evil, worshipping false
gods

Listen to the Presidential collection in your wallet. They are speaking:

- “You say you own me.
- Yet, if you are not thoughtful and careful, I will own you.
- I hang out with questionable characters.
- I lubricate the world’s economies like the rain waters fields.
- But I cannot bring life to that which is dead.
- I am intended to be an instrument of God’s children...not their god.
- Therefore, handle me with care.”

The love of money...the idolatry of mammon...is a root that produces much evil fruit that leads to self-destruction and eternal ruin

Lord, give us the wisdom of Solomon!

Prov 30:8-9

Ecc 5:10-15

Prov 23:4 Labor not to be rich

v11 But thou, o man of God, flee...follow:

Flee the love of money!

Flee every day...because worldliness pursues us every day!

A godly man continually flees idols...flees all the world has to offer

1. covetousness
2. temptations
3. snares
4. foolish and hurtful lusts (all lusts are foolish and hurtful)

In favor of following the true and living God

1. righteousness (Jesus’)
2. godliness
3. faith
4. love
5. patience
6. meekness

The acceptable things of God and the fruit of the Spirit have nothing to do with money

Rather being in love/lust with money, be in love with God (Gal 5:22-23)

v12 Fight the good fight

The godly man and woman is to

1. Flee
2. Follow
3. Fight

Fleeing worldliness and following godliness will not be easy...it is a daily fight

But it is a fight worth fighting...by faith

Some things must be confronted and other things must be defended

Jude 3-4

The world is watching us...pushing the envelope...to see just WHERE the Church will “stand up” and fight

Our society is a perverse as it is because the Church was unwilling to fight the good fight

- Theory of Evolution taught in the class room as fact
- Roe v Wade
- Prayer in school
- Morals of Hollywood
- “free love” and drug culture
- psychology...the wisdom of man

How do we fight?

On our knees in intercessory prayer

The soldier must wear the armor of God...
the battlefield is the minds of men...
the battle is fought on our knees...
the battle belongs to the Lord

Good profession:

a bold profession faith in Jesus Christ

in light of Matt 6:24...Matt 16:24

Phil 3:4-11 spoken by a man who witnessed...

Acts 7:60 “Lord, lay this sin not at their charge.”

v13 Jesus Christ...a good confession:

Jesus' confession before Pilate

- silence...of a God in complete control
- I AM the King of the Jews
- meekness...strength under control
- Creator facing His creature
- Truth before a seeker of truth

Another good confession: that little girl at Columbine High School in Littleton, Colorado

“Do you believe in God?”

“Yes I do.”

...murdered for her faith in the God who loved her to the point of death

v14 keep...without spot...until the appearing:

Flee the things of the world and cling to the things of God...
every day, all day

Be steadfast...resolute...disciplined...focused...on guard...until the Lord returns to take us out of the world and into His kingdom

v15-16 Who only has:

Our Lord

1. Blessed and Only Potentate (= “ruler”)
2. King of kings
3. Lord of lords
4. sole possessor of immortality
5. dwells in Light that no man can approach, has seen, or can see
6. has honor everlasting
7. has power everlasting

v17-19 Charge them that are rich:

Note: Who are the rich in the world?

Every one of us are! Just consider the standards of living elsewhere in the world

God's command to the wealthy of the world

1. do not be proud or "snooty"
2. enjoy the blessings!
3. But do not trust in temporary riches
wealth cannot be my happiness or my security
4. Rather, trust in the living God, the Source of all riches
wealth is a wonderful thing in the hands of God
(Kraft Foods)...but a destructive thing in the hands
of man
5. be rich in a "working" faith
6. generously and easily share the wealth ie. be eager to share
the blessings the Lord has given you...look for
opportunities to give
7. invest wisely...send wealth ahead!
Matt 6:19-21 lay not up for yourself treasures on earth but
in heaven. [why?]
For where your treasure is, there will be
your heart also
8. hold onto eternal riches...eternal life, spiritual riches in
heavenly places with Christ Jesus

v20-21 avoiding profane and vain babbling:

Guard what has been given to me...

- the Good News of Jesus Christ
- God's wisdom
- God's riches

Be a faithful steward, not giving Satan even a toehold.
With good stewardship comes reward.

And disdain all that opposes God...like evolution

Evolution is in the Bible!

- profane and vain babbling (not based on facts)
foolish thinking by a reprobate mind
- falsely called science ("knowledge")
- anti-faith
- unpleasing to God (Heb 11:6)
- worthy of a good fight

e.g. last Sunday

- Monica and kids were in California
- Miss Geri broke the binding on her Bible
- To save her money, I offered to glue it, as I had done mine
- Spanish class...Shelley, Lynn, Cheryl...and Van
(No Van, no class!)
- Geri was late...came 2minutes after Van etc drove away
- It was cold and raining
- Geri and I talked OUTSIDE...in full view rather than behind closed doors