When it comes to spiritual life in the church, there are those who are nothing more than a puffed up bag of wind. They pretend they are spiritual, when in fact they aren’t. These “air bags” are conceited and ignorant and they are dangerous.

The “if” clause of verse 3 is first class conditional, meaning there were those in the church of Ephesus who, in all reality, were a dangerous threat to the true spiritual life and welfare of the church. Paul wanted Timothy to spot anyone and to silence anyone who drifts away from sound doctrine.

**IF THE CHURCH OF GOD IS TO BECOME A PILLAR AND SUPPORT OF THE TRUTH, IT MUST SPOT AND SILENCE ANYONE WHO IS CONCEITED AND MOVES AWAY FROM SOUND DOCTRINE, BECAUSE SUCH A ONE CAN DO GREAT HARM TO GOD’S CHURCH.**

The main verb of this section is found in verse 4—“he is conceited.” That word “conceit” is one that literally in Greek means he is puffed-up or beclouded with pride, all wrapped up in his smoke of conceit (G. Abbott-Smith, p. 453). In our modern English vernacular, we would say this person, when it comes to real spirituality and real Biblical knowledge, is a puffed-up bag of wind.

Let me point out that the indefinite pronoun “anyone” indicates that the leadership must keep watch over everyone in the church because “anyone” may potentially depart from a true, sound, Biblical focus and in his or her pride become totally distorted and disturbing to the church.

**IDEA #1 – The marks of a conceited man. 6:3-4a**

**Mark #1** - One who is a threat to the church **advocates** a different doctrine. 6:3a

1) The verb “advocate another doctrine” is present tense, referring to one who continually teaches another doctrine.
2) The word “different” means another of a different kind of doctrine, which is different from apostolic teaching and true Grace Age theology.

Here is Paul’s point; any person who continually sets forth teaching or doctrine contrary to the Word of God is one who is nothing more than a bag of wind in the sight of God. God’s church is to be a place where people may come to hear the pure true Word of God. If any person is teaching something different than this, he is to be silenced!

**Mark #2** - One who is a threat to the church does not **agree** with sound words. 6:3b

The idea here is that one who is a threat to the church will be one who does not continually approach or draw near to sound words (Smith, p. 384).
The word “sound” is an interesting Greek word. It is the word “hugiaino,” from which we get our English word “hygiene.” The word refers to words that are sound in the sense that they are spiritually healthy and will produce good health in God’s church.

Notice ladies and gentlemen what it is that produces a healthy church—sound teaching. In the long haul, sound teaching and instruction from God’s Word will be the medicine that will bring faith to healthy maturity. Faith comes by hearing the Word of God. Sound faith is produced by sound doctrine!

**Mark #3** - One who is a threat to the church does not conform to godliness that is doctrinally sound. 6:3c

The term “godliness” is very important. This is a word that speaks of deep reverence and piety toward God (Smith, p. 189). Look carefully at the implications of this text. No real reverence and piety toward God will be seen until one is committed to true doctrine. False doctrine does not and will not ever produce true reverence for God. It is true teaching of God’s Word that brings God’s church to the point where it truly reverences Him.

One of the main ways one can gauge true doctrine is that true doctrine will always portray truth about God that causes people to reverence Him. True teaching and sound doctrine always paints a high and holy portrait of the God of the Bible.

**Mark #4** - One who is a threat to the church does not understand anything. 6:4a

The tense of the participle “understand” means a conceited person continually does not understand anything when it comes to the truth of God. What is interesting about this participle is that it is in the passive voice, meaning God will not let the person understand anything.

In other words, the person’s ignorance is due to a sovereign edict of God.

The irony is that the conceited bag of wind walks through life thinking he really knows things about God when the truth is God doesn’t let him know anything. Pride will always stifle one’s ability to grasp truth about God.

**Mark #5** - One who is a threat to the church is a verbal disputer. 6:4b-5

One who is an arrogant bag of wind is always interested in controversial questions and disputes about various things. He will always want to argue about something. William Hendriksen said this person loves to make a mountain out of a molehill (p. 196).

Now the relative prepositional phrase “out of which” introduces us to five results that occur when a bag of wind is allowed to ramble off into areas of controversy and dispute:
IDEA #2 – The results of a conceited man. 6:4b-5

Result #1 - A conceited man produces envy. 6:4b

This type of person is envious and holds a grudge against others, because he desires to have what the one right with God has. When God is using a man, Satan will have a proud, arrogant agent that will rise up to attack him.

Result #2 - A conceited man produces strife. 6:4c

The Greek word for strife is one that refers to contentious wrangling (Smith, p. 180). One who is a conceited bag of wind is never coming to terms with truth, but is always creating verbal strife.

H. A. Ironside said if these malcontents get a couple of people to adhere to what they are saying, they are convinced the Lord is with them; but we shouldn’t be, we should withdraw from them (p. 140).

Result #3 - A conceited man uses abusive language. 6:4d

Actually the word used here is the word “blasphemy,” which literally means to speak lightly of and against sacred things (Smith, p. 82). A conceited bag of wind is one who dares to set forth doctrine that is contrary to the Word of God. He dares to piously and arrogantly even say things contrary to the precious Word of God. Such a person is conceited and knows nothing.

Result #4 - A conceited man produces evil suspicions. 6:4e

The word “suspicion” is one that refers causing one to think in a conjecturally way that is suspect (Ibid., p. 462). The word “evil” is one that refers to that which is wicked and bad and even sinful (Ibid., p. 372).

Look carefully at what is being said here—a conceited bag of wind will be one who causes people to think suspiciously about one who is good.

Result #5 - A conceited man produces constant friction. 6:5

Notice that the conceited individual can only affect people who either have depraved minds or are deprived of the truth. That is their target. They go after weaklings.

When this type of person is spotted in the church, he needs to be spotted and silenced. These people are really not interested in God’s Word or in true godliness. They are only out for themselves. If the church is to become a pillar and support of the truth, it needs to cut them off and shut them down.