

Message #35

I Timothy 6:6-10

When Jesus Christ was here on earth, He said these words—“Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also” (Matt. 6:21). One of the greatest measuring sticks of spirituality is one’s attitude toward and one’s use of money.

Now there were heretics in Ephesus who were teaching that “godliness is a means of gain” (6:5). Religious play actors love money (Luke 16:14). They were teaching that the proof that one was really spiritual and really right with God was they had a lot of money. But, let us remind ourselves of some true Biblical facts:

- 1) According to Jesus Christ, the wealthiest church—Laodicea—would be spewed out of the mouth of God and the poorest church—Philadelphia—would be highly honored by God (Rev. 3:16-17/3:8).
- 2) According to Hannah, it is the Lord who makes poor and makes rich (I Sam. 2:7).
- 3) According to this context, some of the godliest people in the church will be poor widows, not rich entrepreneurs (6:9-10).
- 4) According to Jesus Christ, far more often the rich person goes to hell, while the poor winds up in heaven (Luke 18:24-25).
- 5) According to the apostle Paul, he himself experienced great poverty, yet he was so godly he could say follow my example (Phil. 4:12/3:17).
- 6) According to wisdom, the best way to live life is to have enough, but not too much (Prov. 30:8-9).

Clearly, it is pure heresy for one to suggest that having a lot of money proves one is blessed by God; it may prove one is not right with God.

IF A CHURCH IS TO BECOME A PILLAR AND SUPPORT OF THE TRUTH, IT MUST KEEP A PROPER ATTITUDE CONCERNING GODLINESS AND MONEY.

A person’s attitude toward money is directly connected to their godliness. One’s attitude toward money is an accurate measuring stick of real spirituality.

TOPIC #1 – What really matters in eternity. **6:6**

What will really benefit the believer when he or she gets into eternity will be his godliness, not his money. The word “godliness” is one that refers to godliness that is pious and reverent toward God (G. Abbott-Smith, p. 189).

Now we may carefully notice that our godliness is at a great level, literally in Greek a “mega” level, when it is accompanied by contentment. That word “contentment,” which is so critical to this context, is one that means when we consider what we have as enough or sufficient (Smith, p. 69).

When we have reverence for God and we are obedient to God, which is accompanied by contentment with whatever God has given to us, we are at a mega-level of godliness in the mind of the Living God.

The richest people, from God’s perspective on this earth, are people who don’t need anything else, but are perfectly content with what they have. Godliness at the mega-level is one that reverences God, obeys God and is content with what God has given.

We know from Paul’s letter to the Philippians that contentedness is something that is “learned” (Phil. 4:11).

TOPIC #2 – What doesn’t matter in eternity. 6:7

What matters in eternity is your godliness; but what doesn’t matter in eternity is what you owned or how much you made.

Mark this point and mark it well—when you die or when you are raptured, you can take your godliness with you; but everything material, tangible, or monetary you will leave here!

Job said, “Naked I came from my mother’s womb, and naked I shall return...” (Job 1:21).

Solomon said, “...He will take nothing from the fruit of his labor that he can carry in his hand” (Eccles. 5:15).

If God grants abundance, it should be freely enjoyed and used for the glory of God (I Tim. 6:17-18).

TOPIC #3 – What should give us contentment on earth. 6:8

We are at a mega-level of spirituality when we arrive at the realization that food and covering are all we really need to be content.

What is it that we really need to survive? The answer is found in this verse—we need food and covering. This is a concept not invented by the Apostle Paul. This was clearly how Jacob viewed it (Gen. 23:20). This is how Moses viewed it (Deut. 10:18). This is how Jesus viewed it (Matt. 6:25-33).

All we really need to survive are food and covering. God has absolutely promised us that He will never leave us nor desert us and will always take care of us (Matt. 6:32-33; Heb. 13:5-6).

God has given us His Word that we will always be personally cared for by Him. That thought should give us contentedness. If we really want to see where we are in our godliness, we can run this simple little formula check: “Could I be content with just food and covering?”

TOPIC #4 – What will happen to those not content. **6:9-10**

The text is written in such a way that this is not what might happen; this is what will happen. In fact, God will see to it that these things do happen to one who takes off on this pursuit.

Negative #1 - One who wants to get rich will fall. **6:9a-10a**

(Area #1) - One who wants to get rich will fall into temptation. **6:9a**

The word “temptation” is one that means he will fall into temptation that leads to sin, not a development of character (Smith, p. 351).

One who is out to get rich will discover he does not have the ability to withstand temptation. When tempted to do something sinful, he will yield. The obvious reason is because the Holy Spirit is not controlling the life, but the greedy man is controlling his own life and he is powerless when it comes to temptation.

(Area #2) - One who wants to get rich will fall into a snare. **6:9b**

The word “snare” speaks of a trap. This particular Greek word comes from a verb that speaks of a grasp that holds something fast and tight (Smith, p. 359).

What Paul is saying is that when a person goes after wealth, it will trap him so that he can't get free. It will take hold of the person's life and wealth will consume them. Solomon said, “He who loves money will not be satisfied with money” (Eccles. 5:10).

(Area #3) - One who wants to get rich will fall into lusts. **6:9c-10a**

The word “desires” which is plural speaks of passionate longings, desires, and lusts for things forbidden by God (Smith, p. 170). God's Word is stating that if one makes riches his goal, his godly character will not be strengthened; but his evil lusts will be increased.

Notice carefully the kinds of lusts are qualified as being “foolish” and “harmful.” These words mean that the man who pursues money will discover he will have no power to stop yielding to things that he knows are wrong. He won't understand why he does the things he does. He will wind up doing many things that will hurt him and others.

Make money your god and you will wind up a spiritual loser. Your lusts will “plunge” you into ruin and destruction. Isn't it interesting that if the man is after a lot of money, the world will applaud and esteem him; but spiritual speaking this pursuit will ruin and destroy him.

The word “plunge” is one that refers to sinking to the bottom, totally submerged. Make wealth your “god” and you will drown your godliness.

The conjunction which begins **verse 10** “for” explains how this desire to get rich ruins a person—the love of money is the root of all sorts of evil. The ultimate evil motivated by money was the murder of Jesus Christ (Luke 16:14; 22:3-5).

Negative #2 - One who wants to get rich will wander. **6:10b**

One who goes after money will be led astray from the faith. This may accurately mean several things:

- 1) The person who loves money will not be one committed to the Word and doctrine of God, but will desert these objectives for money (II Tim. 4:10).
- 2) The person who loves money will move away from the faith system, without which it is impossible to please God. Such a one will trust in himself and his own wealth (Rev. 3:17).
- 3) The person who loves money will not have a spirituality that will produce maturity or fruit (Luke 8:14).

Negative #3 - One who wants to get rich will pierce himself. **6:10b**

One that is after money is committing spiritual suicide. The word “pang” is one that means great pain, torment and distress (Smith, p. 310).

The individual or the church that is becoming a pillar and support of the truth is one who thinks this way concerning godliness and money.