

Second Baptist Church of Doylestown

1 Timothy Chapter 6

6/3/15

Bible Study Notes

The Yoke of Slavery - Verses 1-2

¹All who are under the yoke of slavery should consider their masters worthy of full respect, so that God's name and our teaching may not be slandered. ² Those who have believing masters should not show them disrespect just because they are fellow believers. Instead, they should serve them even better because their masters are dear to them as fellow believers and are devoted to the welfare of their slaves.

6:1-2 In Paul's culture there was a great social and legal gulf separating masters and slaves. But as Christians, masters and slaves became spiritual equals, brothers and sisters in Christ Jesus (Galatians 3:28). Paul did not speak against the institution of slavery, but he gave guidelines for Christian slaves and Christian masters. His counsel for the master/slave relationship can be applied to the employer/employee relationship today. Employees should work hard, showing respect for their employers. In turn, employers should be fair (Ephesians 6:5-9; Colossians 3:22-25). Our work should reflect our faithfulness to and love for Christ.

False Teachers and the Love of Money - Verses 3-10

These are the things you are to teach and insist on. ³ If anyone teaches otherwise and does not agree to the sound instruction of our Lord Jesus Christ and to godly teaching, ⁴ they are conceited and understand nothing. They have an unhealthy interest in controversies and quarrels about words that result in envy, strife, malicious talk, evil suspicions ⁵ and constant friction between people of corrupt mind, who have been robbed of the truth and who think that godliness is a means to financial gain. ⁶ But godliness with contentment is great gain. ⁷ For we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it. ⁸ But if we have food and clothing, we will be content with that. ⁹ Those who want to get rich fall into temptation and a trap and into many foolish and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction. ¹⁰ For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs.

6:3-5 Paul told Timothy to stay away from those who just wanted to make money from preaching and from those who strayed from the sound teachings of the gospel into quarrels that caused strife in the church. A person's understanding of the finer points of theology should not become the basis for lording it over others or for making money. Stay away from people who just want to argue.

6:6 This statement is the key to spiritual growth and personal fulfillment. We should honor God and center our desires on him (Matthew 6:33), and we should be content with what God is doing in our lives (Philippians 4:11-13).

6:6-10 Despite overwhelming evidence to the contrary, most people still believe that money brings happiness. Rich people craving greater riches can be caught in an endless cycle that only ends in ruin and destruction. How can you keep away from the love of money? Paul gives us some guidelines: (1) Realize that one day riches will all be gone (6:7, 17); (2) be content with what you have (6:8); (3) monitor what you are willing to do to get more money (6:9-10); (4) love people more than money (6:11); (5) love God's work more than money (6:11); (6) freely share what you have with others (6:18). (See Proverbs 30:7-9 for more on avoiding the love of money.)

6:8-9 "If we have food and clothing, we will be content." But when is enough enough? How can we truly be content? There is a difference between what we need and what we want. We may have all we need to live (that is, we have enough), but we let ourselves become anxious and discontented over what we merely want. Like Paul, we can choose to be content without having all that we want. The only alternative is to be a slave to our desires that ultimately lead only to "ruin and destruction."

Final Charge to Timothy - Verses 11-16

¹¹ But you, man of God, flee from all this, and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance and gentleness. ¹² Fight the good fight of the faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called when you made your good confession in the presence of many witnesses. ¹³ In the sight of God, who gives life to everything, and of Christ Jesus, who while testifying before Pontius Pilate made the good confession, I charge you ¹⁴ to keep this command without spot or blame until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ, ¹⁵ which God will bring about in his own time—God, the blessed and only Ruler, the King of kings and Lord of lords, ¹⁶ who alone is immortal and who lives in unapproachable light, whom no one has seen or can see. To him be honor and might forever. Amen.

6:11-12 Paul uses active and forceful verbs to describe the Christian life: flee, pursue, fight, take hold. Some think Christianity is a passive religion that advocates waiting for God to act. On the contrary, we must have an active faith, training, working hard, sacrificing, and doing what we know is right. Is it time for action on your part? Christian service, like athletics, requires training and sacrifice. Our

discipline and obedience largely define whether or not we will be contributors or merely spectators. How would other believers rank your contributing role on Christ's team?

6:13 Jesus' trial before Pilate is recorded in the Gospels: Matthew 27:11-26; Mark 15:1-15; Luke 23:1-25; John 18:28-19:16.

Verses 17-21

¹⁷ Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment. ¹⁸ Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share. ¹⁹ In this way they will lay up treasure for themselves as a firm foundation for the coming age, so that they may take hold of the life that is truly life. ²⁰ Timothy, guard what has been entrusted to your care. Turn away from godless chatter and the opposing ideas of what is falsely called knowledge, ²¹ which some have professed and in so doing have departed from the faith. Grace be with you all.

6:17-19 Ephesus was a wealthy city, and the Ephesian church probably had many wealthy members. Paul advised Timothy to deal with any potential problems by teaching that having riches carries great responsibility. If you have been blessed with wealth, then thank the Lord. Don't be proud and don't trust in your money. Use your money to do good. Be rich in good works, generous, and ready to share. No matter how much money you have, your life should demonstrate that God controls the wealth that he has placed under your care.

6:21 The book of 1 Timothy provides guiding principles for local churches, including rules for public worship and qualifications for overseers (elders, pastors), deacons, and special church workers (widows). Paul tells the church leaders to correct incorrect doctrine and to deal lovingly and fairly with all people in the church. The church is not organized simply for the sake of organization but so that Christ can be honored and glorified. While studying these guidelines, don't lose sight of what is most important in the life of the church—knowing God, working together in loving harmony, and taking God's gospel to the world.