

*We exist to make disciples who delight in God and make Him known
by proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ.*

For The Love of Money

1 Timothy 6:2b-10

Keywords: Money, Wealth, love of money, false teaching, PTL Club

PowerPoint Presentation included: NONE

SermonAudio Blurb: Paul's final barrage against the evils of false teaching uncovers the deadly root behind their doctrines. It is a love of money and a desire for wealth and possessions. Paul shows how destructive this is for both the false teacher and the church.

Dismiss

I. Introduction.

- A. Read 1 Timothy 6:2b-10.
- B. A final command to be first and foremost about the business of teaching and preaching (2b).
 - 1. This is the task that every pastor must keep in the forefront of their minds. Many shall tempt you from this central task, but it must be jealously protected by any pastor, shepherd.
 - 2. It is a reference backward to all that has been taught and yet prepares us for the final push here in the closing words of Paul.
 - 3. But Paul cannot give such a positive command without once again bringing the focus upon those false teacher in the church. And with much energy he does so, bringing to bear some very strong language.
- C. Paul lifts the rock of Christian ministry in too many areas and exposes the ugly underbelly of both motives and consequences.
 - 1. There are many men now, and certainly over the centuries who have labored faithfully over the Word of God and with God's people.
 - 2. They do it for a love of God.
 - 3. But there are many others who have labored for the love of money. It is this group that Paul speaks about today.
- D.

II. For The Love of Money.

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- A. False teaching is like a sickness (3-5a).
1. What is being advocated by these people is something completely different from what it true.
 - a. “Different” here means just that, different, an another kind.
 - b. Not red delicious is different from granny smith. But hotdog versus a quasar different.
 - c. It stands outside of orthodoxy.
 - d. And this is why it has to be fought against so hard, it doesn’t belong, it is a cancer in the body that has to be cut out.
 2. "Sound" is the word from where we get 'hygiene' and speaks of healthy and strong.
 - a. So what is healthy doctrine?
 - (1) Those of our Lord Jesus Christ. But what does this mean?
 - (a) Subjective or objective.
 - (b) If subjective, then it speaks of the very words of Jesus. Those He spoke, His teaching.
 - (c) If objective, then it speaks of teaching that is about Jesus. This is probably the better understanding.
 - (d) It is a gospel-centered message that the Church brings.
 - (2) The teachings that conform to true godliness.
 - (a) A favored term by Paul in 1, 2 Timothy and Titus (never outside them though). Probably because he is instructing the teachers as to what is their goal with the people of God.
 - (b) True godliness is a Godward orientation. Just as the words about our Lord is gospel-centered, so also, healthy doctrine brings about a greater knowledge, love and reverence of our Creator and Father.
 - (3) So healthy doctrine is not vague philosophical propositions but it is a gospel-centered, God-exalting teaching that produces holiness and spiritual health.

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- b. To reject sound doctrine is to reject what God calls the pure milk of the Word that brings about growth in regard to our salvation (1 Peter 2:1-2). There is no way to reject this and not have consequences.

Transition: That is exactly what vss 4-5 describe . . .

- 3. Vss 4-5 describe the **results** of the false teachers' choice to turn away from the sound doctrine.
 - a. Jesus said it clearly in Matthew 7, you will know them by their fruits.
 - b. Note that he is not speaking of those who are listening to the false teachers, but actually the teachers themselves.
 - (1) But the fruit of this will infect the people who hear it if they are not careful and turn back to sound doctrine.
 - (2) Do not be carried [swept away in a river] away by varied and strange teachings (Hebrews 13:9).
 - c. First, they are conceited.
 - (1) Perfect tense indicating an abiding state.
 - (2) Puffed up with pride until it has enveloped them.
 - (3) False teaching is not about the gospel nor really about exalting God, for those will ultimately bring humility. But this brings only a focus upon self.
 - d. Second, they have no real understanding.
 - (1) This is pretty harsh language if you think about it.
 - (2) These men are messed up. They are filled with themselves and they think that they have the deeper knowledge, the inside track, the real meat of the Word.
 - (3) But really they know nothing, as C. K. Barrett writes, they are pompous ignoramuses. (*The Pastoral Epistles*, 184)
 - (4) Ryken said it even cleaner, they are as ignorant as they are arrogant. (252)
 - e. Third, a twisted, sick interest in controversies.

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- (1) "Morbid" speaks of sickness and unhealthiness. It is a word play on sound doctrine that they have abandoned so all they can eat for their souls is food that cannot promote health and strength.
- (2) This is so important to see and understand. Nothing good comes from bad or false doctrine.

I heard a pastor of one large church who spoke of loving to hear preaching. One of those he mentioned was Joel Osteen and one of the other panel members (Driscoll) challenge the value of it. He quipped that he eats the fish and spits out the bones. But what of those he leads who cannot discern the bones. And what true value and soundness does a man who is not even a Christian offer in his supposed sermons? This is a man who puts himself directly into the stream of false teaching and then believes he is able to stand against the stream.

4. Five results of unhealthy doctrine. This stuff is not static and neutral. It is poison, it is cancer and it is deadly.
 - a. QAll of these points of trouble are between the false teachers.
 - b. Envy.
 - (1) A proud heart is an envious heart for it cannot accept not having what it desires.
 - (2) This is marked by an incessant craving for things that belong to another. It is a bitterness that they have it and you don't.
 - (3) It gnaws away the very soul of the person until hatred is born.
 - c. Strife.
 - (1) So surprise here. An envious heart is a bitter, angry heart.
 - (2) Stick false teachers in close proximity to each other and they will be fighting in no time.
 - d. Abusive language.
 - e. Evil suspicions.

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- f. Constant friction.
- 5. This is the life and reality of those who have filled their hearts with the poison of false teaching.
- 6. It is all about them and their unique doctrine and not the glory of God and the good of God's people.
- 7. There is not unity of the Spirit of Ephesians 4.
 - a. There is no way to come to a growing unity of the faith, notice how Paul describes them at the end of verse 5.
 - (1) Depraved mind.
 - (a) This is a mind that is utterly corrupt. The mind is the ground from which we live. It is how we make decisions and we develop values.
 - (b) But for these people, their mind and thinking is spoiled and rotten.
 - (2) Deprived of the truth.
 - (a) This is even more frightening a description.
 - (b) This is in the passive voice and speaks of one who has been robbed.
 - (c) Here is the end product of those who listen to false teaching, they embrace it, then they teach it, and eventually the lies of the teaching rob them of all truth.
 - (d) And they stand bitter, angry and filled with envy while truth moves ever farther from their eyes.
- 8. Understand that this picture of the false teacher is one that is viewed through the eyes of God. What you and I see often is a well manicured, cultured, slick person and message. We are seldom given the ability to lift up the gilded covers to see what truly goes on.

While attending the North Central Bible College in Minnesota, Jim Bakker met the woman who would become his wife.

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Following their marriage, they became itinerant preachers, living out of their suitcases, going from church to church. It wasn't long before larger churches began inviting them to speak. By the mid-1960s, they were hosting the 700 Club show, which aired on Pat Robertson's Christian TV network. They remained there until 1973, when the pair left to co-found the Trinity Broadcasting Network. He then founded and served as President of the PTL (Praise the Lord) club from 1974 till 1987. The popular show was beamed via satellite to millions of PTL viewers. As the ministry prospered, increasing amounts of money poured in. With the funds, Jim began building a Christian retreat in South Carolina.

The Heritage USA resort quickly grew into an impressive Christian-oriented complex sitting on hundreds of acres and encompassing a wide range of shopping, ministry, lodging, and even a theme park. The centerpiece of the resort was a magnificent luxury hotel. Each new building added to the resort became increasingly lavish. During the mid-1980s, they offered "lifetime memberships" starting at \$1,000. This membership would supposedly entitle PTL supporters to a lifetime of vacations at the Heritage USA resort. In its heyday, the resort attracted millions of visitors each year and employed two thousand people. Jim and Tammy Faye Bakker both came from poor families, yet by now, were spending money like there was no tomorrow. They were squandering church money on luxury cars, several mansions and the now-famous doghouse equipped with air-conditioning. At the height of their overspending, the Bakker's and their PTL ministry were burning through as much as \$500,000 per day. When their spending reached these epic proportions and far exceeded donations coming in, Bakker's on-air fundraising became frantic. They stooped so low as to parade before cameras, frail, handicapped children they reportedly wanted to help, in hopes of increasing donations. As was later discovered, much of the fundraising done in the final months of the ministry, was not for upcoming projects or to cover future costs associated with the lifetime partnerships they were endlessly hawking, but rather, to simply pay current day-to-day expenses. Investigations showed that even as the lavish spending continued by the Bakker's, the operation moved deeper and deeper in debt. Jim later admitted, "I had to raise about \$1 million every two days just to stay alive." In the end, the ministry was 70 million dollars in debt. This despite the fact more than 150 million dollars had been donated by his followers.

. . . The Charlotte Observer broke the story of financial wrongdoings, beginning with the payment of over a quarter of a million dollars in church funds, as hush money, paid to church secretary Jessica Hahn. The \$265,000 payoff was intended to keep a 1980 adulterous tryst between Jim Bakker and Hahn a secret. Jim resigned as head of PTL in 1987 after admitting to the affair. It was later revealed that Bakker had not only sold far more "lifetime memberships" than he could accommodate, but was also skimming millions in church money for his own use. In May of 1987, the Assemblies of God defrocked Bakker for his adultery.

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In 1989, Jim Bakker was convicted of numerous counts of fraud and conspiracy for stealing millions from his PTL followers. He was sentenced to 45 years in federal prison for bilking those PTL supporters. Even after his conviction, Tammy Faye seemed blind to his crimes, commenting "No, I honestly don't think he (Jim) was greedy." Likewise, Jim seemed content to blame others, saying, "I think the Devil was mad. I think something so wonderful and beautiful was being built, that the Devil was mad. And then when we broke ground for the largest church ever built in the history of the world, I think the Devil said this is it. I think I've got to smash Jim and Tammy Bakker." Jim had lost his empire, then, while behind bars, his wife. In 1992, Tammy Faye divorced him. She . . . died in 2007 following a lengthy battle with cancer.

Jim went to jail in 1989, but served just a fraction of his 45-year prison sentence and was paroled in 1994, after a federal appeals court reduced his sentence.

<http://www.accuracyproject.org/cbe-Bakker,Jim.html>

- B. The root of their sickness—greed (5b-10).
 - 1. In the sickness of their world view, godliness (as they define it) is a means to make money.
 - 2. Principle: Not every doctrinal debate is driven by love and truth.
 - 3. In vs 6 Paul shows how they are right about godliness being a means of great gain, if they understood it rightly.
 - a. Godliness is not the means to getting rich.
 - b. Godliness is the treasure itself.
 - c. Paul said it powerfully in Philippians 3:7ff.
 - 4. Godliness produces much when it is carried along with a heart of contentment. Two reasons are given:
 - a. First, nothing we possess now in way of possessions will come with us.
 - (1) You can't take it with you.
 - (2) "Naked I came from my mother's womb, And naked I shall return there. The LORD gave and the LORD has taken away. Blessed be the name of the LORD." (Job 1:21)

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- (3) As he had come naked from his mother's womb, so will he return as he came. He will take nothing from the fruit of his labor that he can carry in his hand. 16 This also is a grievous evil-- exactly as a man is born, thus will he die. So what is the advantage to him who toils for the wind? (Ecc 5:15-16)
- b. Food and covering is sufficient.
 - (1) To be blunt, Paul's words here are a lot more closer to having nothing than most of us are really willing to admit.
 - (2) Consistent with Jesus' words in Matthew 6:24.
 - (a) Gordon Fee says it well, "Material gain is irrelevant . . . and greed is irrational.
 - (3) The loss of contentment in God as our supreme desire and goal brings eternal destruction that starts in the present.
- 5. The downward spiral of greed.
 - a. First, there is temptation.
 - b. Second, there is the ensnaring.
 - c. Finally, there is the destruction.
 - d. Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am being tempted by God"; for God cannot be tempted by evil, and He Himself does not tempt anyone. But each one is tempted when he is carried away and enticed by his own lust. Then when lust has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and when sin is accomplished, it brings forth death. (Jam 1:13-15)
 - e. Sin moves us from delighting in the Creator to delighting in the Creation, which only leads to the wrath of God.
- 6. Love of money is often the core force of much evil (10).
 - a. The term 'root' is a good description, for the root is often unseen and hidden.
 - (1) Like any counselor knows, the presenting problem is seldom the root problem.

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- (2) How often are decisions made in homes, churches, businesses and courtrooms that are driven at the root by a love of money?
 - (3) Covetousness is described in the bible as nothing more than idolatry.
 - (4) The pursuit of money easily becomes the goal and purpose of people.
- b. Note the two results of this love of money:
- (1) First, some have wandered away from the faith.
 - (a) This is not a mindless, aimless wandering.
 - (b) Rather it is an intentional misdirecting the person away from the real object. It is passive so it is done to the person.
 - (c) In other words, the love of money begins to move the person to hope in something other than God. They are finding their ultimate good elsewhere.
 - (d) But over time they no longer walk in the gospel of Jesus Christ, but the gospel of wealth and comfort.
 - (e) One bring eternal life and the other destruction.
 - (2) Second, some have pierced themselves with many griefs.
 - (a) This is in contrast to the passive nature of the first result.
 - (b) Here it is something that is self-inflicted.
 - (c) They impale themselves on the hook of money until they have nothing but grief.
 - (d) Think Judas and you get the idea.

III. Conclusion.

- A. Hebrews 13:5-6 We are to trust that God shall supply our needs.
 1. that is the indication that your character is NOT free from a love of money.
 - a. Not being content with what you have.

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- b. This is a powerful and convicting statement for us to consider!
2. How does the idea of God never forsaking you apply to the first part of the verse?
 - a. Is God enough?
 - b. Is God sufficient for your desires and your joy?
3. This focuses upon where our faith rests. "I will never desert you. . . ." And money causes us to often forget this.
4. This focuses up how we praise God (vs 6) "so that" we shall declare that God is our helper.

Small Group Questions

- These false teachers are described as ignorant and arrogant. What relationship do these two terms have?
- Is contentment possible without godliness? Why?
- Aside from food and covering as “the essentials” what else would you add?
- Why is it the “wanting” to get rich that is more the problem rather than those who are rich?