

# 1 Timothy

## Section 3 – 12 weeks

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This was originally an expository series of sermons given in the church where I was serving as Pastor. A few years later, they were edited to be used as a Bible Study. There are a few things I feel I should share with you before using this material:

First: I had no intent of sharing or publishing this material until encouraged to do so by some friends. While I did consult several commentaries as I was preparing the original sermon series, I did not make notes of the references used in the messages. There was not in the beginning, nor is there now, any intent to plagiarize. Should you see anything you feel is the original thought of another, I ask for your grace and mercy.

Second: In my notes for teaching (or preaching), I tend to spell certain words phonetically for the purpose of emphasis. When transforming these notes from sermon notes to teaching notes, I felt inclined to leave a number of these phonetic spellings. They help me to make emphasis in the lesson at particular points.

Third: In my notes for teaching (or preaching), I make little effort to conform to rules of grammar. One example is that I often use a hyphen ( - ) to indicate a point where I may want to pause slightly and to keep certain thoughts connected as I speak. Another example is that I will use local colloquialisms to make points in the message.

Please accept that these notes are not an academic work. But I do hope they will help the preacher or teacher to be able to more quickly prepare their own sermon or teaching.

We begin this section - with some guidelines about the proper attitude toward age groups. The issue of Timothy's age being younger than some in the church has already been raised. And it was addressed in a manner that basically said, "Timothy, don't let your being young - hold you back from doing what God has called you to do - AND – don't let the fact that some are older - hold you back from being the minister you are called and gifted to be."

This set of instructions about age groups - IS NOT just something directed at Timothy. It is a basic attitude for ALL Believers to take on as part of their foundational belief system and life directing system.

Please don't be aggravated by me mentioning again – this whole letter is about stopping the affect of False Teachers in the Church. This instruction is to help - in stopping False Teachers in leading the Church astray. It would probably be an error to say "all" False Teachers – but I think it is correct to say that "many" false teaches - tend to have an attitude of seeing themselves as "superior" to all other people. They are quick to rebuke or put down an older person - as quickly as they would a younger person.

False Teachers have a little more problem in this area, because many of the false teachings - lead these people to see themselves - as the one who deserves all respect and honor, and few, if any other people, - who should be respected or given honor.

Often times the False Teacher views themselves - as being something of a more "elect" person than other believers. False Teachers will frequently believe themselves - to be more spiritually enlightened than other believers and might I say - More spiritually privileged than others.

Let's take a look at a couple of verses rather slowly for a few minutes.

Read 1 Timothy 5:1-2 and make notes:

Some translations of the N.T. have the word “elder.” The original language – and the overall context - of this text refers to “older men” and “older women” – not to those who hold the office of “elder” in the church. We are given a proper way to treat “older men” – the precise age range isn’t given – and I think that this is pretty important that it isn’t.

There isn’t any legal age given - as to when we are “old enough” to be respected or honored. There isn’t any legal age given as to us being - “not yet worthy” of respect - because we are younger than that age.

Let me make a suggestion about this age range thing. Let’s think in terms of 20 years.

What if Christians should treat every man - that is within 20 years of our age - as if they are our BROTHER? If they are less than 20 years older than us – or if they are less than 20 years younger than us – then we treat them as our brother.

What if Christians treated every woman - within 20 years of our age as if they are our SISTER?

What if we treated every man - that is more than 20 years older than us as if they are our FATHER?

What if we treated every women - that is more than 20 years older than us as if they are our MOTHER?

What if we treated every boy or girl - that is more than 20 years younger than us as if they were our CHILDREN?

If we could adopt such an attitude – do you think we would be likely to abuse our senior citizens?

Would we be likely to abuse the children?

Would be we likely to hurt and take advantage of our brothers and sisters?

The leadership in Ephesus had come under the influence of false teachings. Those in leadership positions had a tendency to be very harsh in their rebukes.

What the Holy Spirit is pointing out to Timothy through this letter of Paul – is that even when rebuke and correction is to be done - it is to be carried out in an attitude of respect - and with the dignity appropriate for the person involved.

In both the Greek and Roman cultures, the “father” was owed the complete and absolute respect of all those within the family. So when this says to Timothy to treat the older men as your father – he was being told to correct or rebuke the older men in the same way he would go about - telling his father - that he was wrong about something.

Let’s not focus on a few people who might be the exception – let’s consider the normal healthy person. Don’t you think - that if we found ourselves in a place where we had to tell our dad that he was wrong about something – that we would do it in something of a positive way? Don’t you think there might be something of a conciliatory manner in the way we would approach telling them they are wrong?

Now, - transfer that over to how it would be – if we as Christians would correct those who are much older than we are – if they needed correcting. And there is a parallel pattern toward correcting an older woman. How would we go about correcting our Mom?

The level of respect and honor that we would take to the process of correcting Mom – that’s the level of respect and honor we should take to the process of correcting the older women.

Again, let’s not focus on the exceptions – but let’s consider most of us as the average person. Would we just up and beat the life out our brother because they are wrong?

Okay, some of us may need to repent, - if we tend to gloat and boast when our brother is wrong. But when we are in an attitude of love for our brother – we don’t want to destroy them when we discover they are wrong about something. We want to help them see what is right – and we want to help them learn to be right.

Whether it's the right way to catch a ball, or the right way to throw a ball. Whether it's the right way to handle the bully or it's the right way to do a job. Whether it's the right way to do a math problem or whether it's the right way to deal with the science project. We want to help them know what is right.

Every person who accepts Jesus as their Savior – is part of the Family of God - older men, - older women, - younger men, - and younger women. If Christians could get our attitudes toward others - going in this direction – it would be no problem for us to maintain absolute – PURITY in regards to one another.

I wished it were not so. I wished it were - only a hypothetical thing. But we have had a number of episodes where leaders in some local church treated others in the church in a manner where no purity was left. That would never happen, if we would deal with the older men as fathers – deal with the older women as mothers – deal with men with a range of our age as brothers – deal with women within a range of our age as sisters – and deal with young boys and girls as our children.

Think of a healthy family – not a sick or perverted family. Do siblings – brothers and sisters - look at each other in romantic ways? Do parents find their children sexually attractive? NO! They do not. And neither do Church Leaders when they have a proper attitude toward God's people.

If the church today – could simply get hold of this teaching from 1<sup>st</sup> Timothy - we would not have to hear about perversions and abuse having taken place in some local church.

We are told in this passage – rather than “rebuke” and older person – we are to “EXHORT” the older persons. This doesn't mean that an older person can never be corrected or disciplined. It is saying that even if we have to correct or discipline an older person – we should do the correction in an attitude and manner of exhortation rather than an attitude and manner of rebuke.

If we are in a right relationship with Jesus – if we are truly a Christian as we confess – would we knowingly and purposefully harm our brother or our sister? What tenderness would we show our brother or sister if we had to correct them?

That would stop and prevent all impure actions and relationships among God's people.

If we are in reality - the Christian we claim to be – would we purposefully and willingly hurt and harm our own children? Children do in fact have to be corrected – Children do have to be disciplined – that is an important part of “raising up a child in the way they should go” – but would real Christians chastise, discipline, or correct their own children harshly or would we do so with tenderness?

With the tenderness and watchful caring - that we would give to our own children – that is the way we would deal with all those who are younger than we are. That would pretty much stop and prevent child abuse of any kind among God's people.

If we have been treating others in a dishonorable way – then we have offended our Heavenly Father and we owe Him an apology.

Write your thoughts and questions regarding this study to share with the group:

Acts tells us something rather interesting. The very first internal problem - the church ever experienced – was not about doctrine or theology – it wasn't about the right type of music – or the right type of church service - it was murmuring about how the widows were being taken care of.

Some felt the Jewish widows - were getting better care and provisions - than the non-Jewish widows. In ancient times widows were certainly in a difficult situation. There just wasn't much in the way of honorable employment for women. There weren't any secular institutions to provide for widows. Government welfare programs didn't come into existence until recent times.

The teaching concerning widows in the church is noticeably more extensive - than the teachings on the other subjects in this letter to stop false teachers in the church.

Read 1 Timothy 5:3 and make notes:

A couple of things are worth our slowing down - in order to soak up this verse. First - is the phrase “proper recognition.” This lets us know that there is a “PROPER” recognition - and there is “IMPROPER” recognition where widows are concerned. The second is the phrase “who are really in need.” This lets us know that there are some widows who are NOT “really” in need of support from the church. When a woman in those days lost her husband, she was often left without any financial means of support.

Read 1 Timothy 5:4 and make notes:

## 1 Timothy – 26 Helping The Needy

We can't help but be reminded at this point of the instruction in God's Word - for Believers to "honor your father and your mother." The Bible makes it clear there is an "assumed" responsibility of the children to provide for – and to care for – their elderly parents. And this can't be over-looked in this passage in Timothy where there is mention of widows who are "really in need"

This verse starts giving us parameters we can use to determine which widows make up those who are "really in need." Before the church takes on the responsibility of caring for and providing for a widow, - if she has family – then THE FAMILY is to be taking care of her. Encouraging family members to take care of the widows in their family – IS helping them to "learn" how to put their RELIGION into practice – "by caring for their own family." And this is seen as "repaying" their parents AND their grandparents.

The use of the word "repaying" is a clear statement that there is some level of recognized debt on the behalf of children - and grandchildren. And please don't miss this little statement in V4 –

when we take care of our parents and our grandparents - this IS "pleasing to God." It is not a wrong application of this text to say if we don't care for our parents and our grandparents – we are not PLEASING God !

Read 1 Timothy 5:5 and make notes:

The "widow who is really in need" – is one who has no family left – she alone is the last member of that family. This "widow who is really in need" continues day and night in her prayers to God for help.

Read 1 Timothy 5:6 and make notes:

Here is a contrast to the “widow who is really in need.” Verse 6 speaks of a widow who is living for pleasure – and she is declared already dead – and not alive. Some have applied this to specifically sexual misconduct - but I am convinced this is much too NARROW of an application to fit with the overall message of this letter.

This would also apply to the widow who is NOT improper in her conduct sexually - but she is living her life to do only what is pleasing to her - without regard to the needs of those around her.

We can understand how she might feel this way – especially if she had been in a marriage where the husband was domineering, selfish, and over-bearing. He is gone now - and her fleshly logic says, “finally, after all these years, I’m going to please me - instead of someone else” - “if I don’t find personal pleasure in this activity – then I’m not going to do it.” There are other examples of “why” she might live “to herself.”

Please Keep These Three Things In Mind:

- .1. We should approach this topic with Grace and Mercy rather than legalism.
- .2. The application is broader than just widows – it applies to people in need.
- .3. This is part of the instructions to protect the church from false teachers.

Beyond just widows - those In Need Are To Seek Help From Family – First! The first responsibility for the care of Widows belongs to the family circle, - not to the Church. Not “just Widows” - but those “in need.”

This text lays a responsibility - not just that younger family members are to take care of older family members – but also upon the older family members - to live the kind of life - and be the kind of person who can get along with the younger family members.

Some older people have lived their life in such a manner as to chase away the younger family members. They have been – and sometimes still are – so grouchy, - so complaining, - and so meddling - that no one can stand to be around them very long.

If we live our lives in a manner that exhibits a lifetime of helping others – then we are not going to be the Grouchy – Meddling – Complainer.

I can't imagine any action that more fully reveals the glory of Christ in someone – than to see children lovingly supplying the needs for older family members - Visiting them, - seeing to their comfort as well as needs - Making them feel loved and wanted.

That IS - what Jesus demonstrated to us when he walked this earth in a physical body. Jesus made those in need - feel loved AND wanted.

Profound psychological insights are frequently found in Scriptures. One of these - is that Scriptures show us the way we treat people - is determined by the way we see them.

The world view is to basically see every other person as a rival of some sort. Maybe this other person is someone we see ourselves as competing with.

As Christians, we are called to have a very different view of other people. This has a lot to do with why Timothy was NOT instructed to see older women as a “mother-in-law” - but was told to see older women as a “mother”.

Those who fail in their responsibilities at home – are living out a DENIAL of the faith – and this makes them worse than an unbeliever. We don't expect a dog - to perform like a race horse. And we don't expect an unbeliever - to live out their life in a Godly manner.

An Un-Believer - has NOT pledged to God that they will live - to bring Him Glory and Honor. The Un-Believer has NOT said that they give the control of their life over to God. But the Believer Has! And not keeping our Word – is a very bad thing!

**1 Timothy – 26 Helping The Needy**

Write your thoughts and questions regarding this study to share with the group:

In the last lesson – we looked at the beginning of the discussion about Widows. We were told in 1 Timothy 5:3 – to give proper recognition to those widows who are really in need. First – notice the phrase: “widows – who are really in need.” In this lesson we will continue with the discussion on “widows” - and the Church.

Read 1 Timothy 5:7 and make notes:

Timothy has already been given several things he is to “teach” the people in the church at Ephesus – Now, he is told to “give the people these instructions, too.” And the reason for giving the people these instructions – is “so that” no one will be open to blame. Let's look at these instructions:

Read 1 Timothy 5:8 and make notes:

This verse is often included when someone is teaching on the importance of a father or mother providing for their children. And it is usually included when teaching some husband the importance of providing for his wife. While I won't say that either of these - is a wrong application – The fact is – that it says “relatives” - so it is bigger than just the “husband or father.” And - this text it is talking about providing for the widow in the family.

If we have a widow in our family – and we are NOT trying to help take care of her - We are NOT living like the Christian we profess to be. If we don't care for this widow in our immediate family – We are living out our life - as one who has DENIED the faith - And we are indeed - worse than those who don't believe in Jesus as their savior.

## 1 Timothy – 27 Widows

This is another one of the many areas where I appreciate it not spelling out exactly what “immediate” family is. For some of us that might be restricted to mother, and grandmothers – For others it might also include sisters – And for others it might include aunts.

I suggest we let the condition of our heart – help determine what “immediate” means to each person. Now, let's look at some of the specifics laid out for us:

Read 1 Timothy 5:9-10 and make notes:

We get a list of identifiable qualifiers for those widows who are to be placed on the list - the church will help take care of. While we are allowed some flexibility on what “immediate” family might be - It is clear – as to who qualifies to be placed on the list of widows:

1. she must be over 60 years old
2. she must have been FAITHFUL to her husband
3. she has to be well-known for her good DEEDS

And the “good deeds” are not left vague or fuzzy – “such as” – or things like:

- A. bringing up children
- B. showing hospitality
- C. washing the feet of saints
- D. helping those in trouble

In order to qualify for the church to help take care of them: A widow must have no family left, She must have a reputation of marital fidelity, And there must be evidence of good works.

Did you notice - nothing is said about prayer – or other “behind the scenes” ministry. The qualifications call for VISIBLE acts - of an outward living out of the Faith. Let's look at some more specifics for considering Widows:

Read 1 Timothy 5:11– 12 and make notes:

Not fuzzy – not vague – just plain and straight forward; Do not put “younger widows” on the list! Some have attempted to approach this text with a legalistic attitude - And say that it is widows “younger than sixty.” Technically – that can be seen as a correct interpretation. But when we consider the verses that follow – it might be more appropriate to consider this as referring to those “widows” who are young enough to bear children.

There has been a number of debates regarding the “pledge” - these young widows would be breaking. It doesn't appear that any one interpretation pleases everybody – but again, taking a look at the following verses – it seems best to interpret this in the view that these widows who begin to follow after fleshly pleasures – wind up marrying unbelievers.

Read 1 Timothy 5:13 and make notes:

The worse case scenario being already mentioned – that of marrying an unbeliever. Now another unhealthy thing that happens to some widows - the concept of “being idle” – having nothing better to do - than to just go from house to house.

Consider for a moment – if the church provides for the needs of a widow who is able to work and provide for herself – then she can be tempted into this “idleness” attitude - instead of a “taking responsibility” attitude. Remember, this instruction is concerning the “younger” widows – so it is reasonable to think they are likely to be able to work – as well as being able to re-marry.

## 1 Timothy – 27 Widows

Young people - who have no RESPONSIBILITIES – and have all their needs provided by someone else - are subject to the temptation of becoming a gossip – to become a busybody – and wind up saying things “they ought not say.”

If you remember from an earlier lesson from this letter to Timothy – the attitude of the “liberated” Roman woman was having a negative impact upon the believers in Ephesus.

Read 1 Timothy 5:14 and make notes:

All of this being considered – all of this having been said - I counsel younger widows – First, to marry again; Second, to have children; Third, to manage their homes - So as not to give the enemy any opportunity for slander.

The short version – I counsel younger widows to take on RESPONSIBILITIES - So that the devil won't have any opportunity to bring about slanderous things.

My grandmother was fond of saying, “idle hands are the devil's workshop.” My observations in life – have noticed that this appears to be true. Idleness is fertile ground for all kinds of sin. And idleness exposes the person to condemnation.

When the care of a husband is withdrawn, and the young widow is not involved with the care to please God – they frequently begin to meddle in the affairs of others - and they begin to gossip. The person who is NOT busy minding their own business has a tendency to try to MIND the BUSINESS of others. The person who is busy minding their own business doesn't have time to mind that of others.

Younger widows should take on a respectable role . within the domestic community. This responsibility and accountability removes them from the arena where so much of the temptations to promiscuity takes place.

Read 1 Timothy 5:15 and make notes:

You may remember – we said in the last lesson that there is more specifics given regarding widows - than any other topic in the letter to Timothy. Maybe this verse clues us in on why so much more instruction has been given about widows than on the other subjects. Maybe too many have already fallen – maybe these instructions are so full and thorough in an effort to do some manner of damage control.

God is not dishonored by the re-marriage of a widow. For a young widow to remarry actually serves as a type of safeguard against becoming a gossip or busybody.

Read 1 Timothy 5:16 and make notes:

This is a restatement of what has been said earlier. But here it is rather explicit. It is the responsibility of the “woman who is a believer” - to make sure the widows in her family are taken care of.

Can anyone see the wisdom in it being the responsibility of the “woman” - to take care of the widow – instead of the “man”? And again the instructions refer to the “widows who are really in need.”

Before we are too quick to write this subject off as something of little interest to us:

The Psalmist stated - God is a defender of widows. God's compassion goes out to those people who find themselves in a difficult situation. There are several examples in the Gospels that show Jesus had a soft spot in his heart for widows.

The Early Christians certainly did reach out to widows. In Acts 9, we find the account of a woman who had died, her name was Tabitha. The account tells us that when Peter came to the room where her body was laying – all the widows stood by him – each one showing the coats and garments that Tabitha had made for them while she was alive. Tabitha apparently used her own personal resources to make clothing for a number of needy widows.

Those In Need – Are To Be RESPONSIBLE – Not Idle.

The widows that are supported by the church are to give themselves to a spiritual ministry. Widows are to keep busy even in what some will see as their declining years. Widows are no where in God's Word encouraged to utilize their time - all to their own personal pleasure. A Christian woman who becomes a widow will continue to serve God.

The church needs to use discernment in deciding who is in genuine need of assistance. This portion of Scripture provides some guidelines as to who qualifies. The church should use these guidelines and be careful that our "help" is in accordance with God's heart.

Home Responsibilities Are To Be Accepted As An APPOINTMENT Of God. True Christianity seems to reveal itself in the context of family relationships.

The Bible tells us that an Elder must be one who manages his own household well – and it tells us a deacon must exercise good oversight of his family.

## 1 Timothy – 27 Widows

The burden isn't only upon older family members – the younger members of a family are to work toward good relationships with the family as well. Children are to give back to the older members of the family – and this includes financially – but it is Not Limited to financial. It includes the very basics of life – food, clothing, housing, and Even The Intangibles such as love, encouragement and companionship. Children are to view such obligations as a great PRIVILEGE – not only to repay older family members – but to show Godly characteristics in their own life.

Hopefully – most of us understand that this principle reaches way beyond the “widow.” It is really a principle for God's people to follow concerning “people in need.” And if we can “come to terms” with this principle concerning “widows” - then we won't have a problem applying it to others.

How are we doing in this area of helping to look after those in need? Older? - Younger?

Write your thoughts and questions regarding this study to share with the group:

Continuing in this 1st letter to Timothy – we find more instructions - on how the church can keep false teachers out – and have the right kind of leaders instead. After giving rather detailed instructions - concerning widows and the church – we now receive more instructions concerning Elders.

Read 1 Timothy 5:17 and make notes:

This verse begins on something of a positive note. It speaks of honor – double honor in fact – is to be given to those elders who do a good job of directing the affairs of the church. And it says, “especially those whose work is preaching and teaching.” Elders whose work – is preaching and teaching - deserve the honor of a BROTHER – and then - they deserve the honor of being a LEADER in the church.

Earlier in this letter we had instructions on how to treat older men and older women. In this section, the word “elders” is referring to those who hold an actual place of leadership within the church – not just those who are older – or senior citizens.

For this verse to even say those “who direct the affairs of the church WELL” – means that there were some who did NOT do a good job of directing the affairs of the church. The elders who direct the affairs of the church are worthy of honor – those who do it well - are worthy of double honor.

Not all the elders of a church – preach. Not all the elders of a church – teach. But some do preach – and some do teach – And some do both.

I don't want to be legalistic – and I certainly don't want to make any hard lines of distinction. I do want to leave plenty of room for these to overlap – as the Holy Spirit leads. In general terms – “preaching” is usually to the LOST people - and “teaching” is usually to the SAVED people – as a general rule.

The local church is to provide for the pastor. This is God’s plan for the local church and for the pastor.

Some local churches have a wonderful attitude and heart in this area. They do a good job - of showing and expressing honor toward its elders. That was the case of the last church I served as Pastor before retiring. I often told other ministers - how good they were as a body of believers to do that.

Those who are part of a local church who does well in this area might wonder - why even slow down on this verse – “we’ve got this.” This verse is one of several - that are important in the guard against false teachers.

I believe it has happened in every town I have ever lived in. It hasn’t happened in the church where I was every time – but it has happened in some church in the area. A group of people decide to believe the lie – that God never intended for the local church to have a pastor. Some will teach the local church should not “pay a pastor”. Those you make this argument – almost always use Paul as an example – and point to his having made tents. To those people – let it be pointed out - it is that same Paul who was used of the Holy Spirit to write these instructions.

Please notice the last part of this verse – “especially those whose work is preaching and teaching.” If preaching and teaching is their work – then how is it - that they feed their family? How do they - pay the house payment? How do they - have the finances for everyday living?

Read 1 Timothy 5:18 and make notes:

This makes reference to a passage found in Deuteronomy 25:4. They used an animal to walk around in a circle pushing a large stone around and around - grinding grain into meal and flour. The children of God were told – allow the ox to feed of the very grain that he is working to grind for you.

The short version – God saw it as WRONG - to make the ox work to thresh grain - and go HUNGRY while he was doing it.

There was a type of argument used among Jewish teachers and lawyers of that time. Today – we usually refer to it as the “less then more” type of argument. If this which is less – is true - then surely this which is more – must be also true.

Jesus used this a few times. If God will provide for the tiny – almost insignificant sparrow - then surely God will provide for the hallmark of his creation – mankind. If it is right for the ox to be allowed to eat of the grain it is threshing - then surely it is right for the Elder to be fed from the people they are serving.

And just to make sure no one misunderstood – “The worker deserves his wages” - “wages” is what one DESERVES for their work. If the work of an elder is preaching and teaching – then there are wages associated with that work. This passage does NOT say “it would be nice” - It says “deserves”.

If you want to argue about the “IT” - being \$5 or \$50 - that he deserves – I will just leave that to your heart and God. It was already happening in Paul’s day – and the Holy Spirit knew - it would happen in our day. So he had it written down – yes, - the local church should pay the elder - whose work is preaching and teaching. And in most churches – that person is called “pastor”

Read 1 Timothy 5:19 and make notes:

This falls into the heading of deserving of honor. Don’t even entertain and accusation against and elder – if there is only one witness. Elders are NOT above being questioned. But they do deserve the honor and respect - that if wild accusations are just thrown about - they should not be entertained. But if there are 2 or more witnesses – then CONSIDER the charges – and EVALUATE the evidence.

## 1 Timothy – 28 Elders

One of the false teachings that has made its way into a number of churches - says that Church leaders get to a place where they can make no mistakes. As long as we are in these fleshly bodies – we are prone to sinning. It's just that elders - who lead and direct the church - deserve the honor. That says, it has to be 2 or more witnesses, - before we will follow up on it.

Read 1 Timothy 5:20 and make notes:

This little verse stands in direct opposition to that false teaching – of leaders being unable to sin. For those elders who “do sin” – they are to be rebuked publicly. And this will serve as a warning to others.

Read 1 Timothy 5:21 and make notes:

“Keep these instructions without partiality” - There can not be “SPECIAL ” elders - who are allowed to get away with doing bad things - while the “other” elders - have to make amends. All elders - are to receive honor - All elders, - when accused by 2 or more witnesses – Are to be investigated. Rebuked publicly if guilty – and declared innocent publicly - if found to be not guilty.

Elders who oversee the church or to be honored. Showing honor to the elders includes not being willing to accept every negative thing that is said about an elder. But this honor comes with responsibility. The elders are to live their life in an upright manner - Elders are to be people of integrity. And this honor comes with the price that all are equal – There is to be no partiality. And when 2 or more witnesses come forward - this is to be investigated thoroughly.

Write your thoughts and questions regarding this study to share with the group:

In the previous lesson - we began looking at the instructions concerning Elders. We read where – while Elders are never above being questioned - they ARE to be given honor. We read that those whose “work” is preaching and teaching should receive their wages from the church.

Now let's look and some more instructions concerning Elders in the church. And I am convinced – these instructions are appropriate for other areas of leadership within the church – not only Elders.

Read 1 Timothy 5:22 and make notes:

There are a number of ideas as to why this verse is included. It seems best to understand it in light of the fact that – in those cases where an elder is dismissed from their position of authority due to sin - there was a tendency among the churches - to be too quick to name a replacement.

I personally believe that is what happened - among the original disciples when Judas killed himself. It seemed right to the remaining 11 – since Jesus had appointed 12 – and they were now 1 short – they needed to name a replacement. If they had just waited a little while – they would have received that replacement. I am aware that – not everyone holds this view but for me - Jesus already had Paul picked out. The original 11 acted in their own fleshly wisdom. God’s choice was not the one they selected – God’s choice was Paul.

So this instruction is to encourage the church - to be in no rush to REPLACE an elder who has retired – who has died – or who has been dismissed. Wait on God – look for the one He is pointing out. For we do share in the actions – good or bad – of those we ordain – those we Lay Hands On.

Read 1 Timothy 5:23 and make notes:

Please notice the phrase - “because of your stomach and your frequent illnesses.” We don’t know for sure – but many Bible scholars agree the highest probability is that Timothy suffered digestive problems on a frequent basis.

In those days, wine was a very common prescription for digestive tract problems. Two other phrases are important to notice – One is “drinking only water” – and the other is “a little wine.”

It is noteworthy - that Timothy is NOT told - to stop drinking water. And it is also noteworthy - that Timothy is NOT told - to drink “wine only.” He is told to “use a little wine.” There was a shortage of “good water” in that part of the world in those days. It was a fairly common practice to put “a little wine” into the water that was to be used for drinking.

Some years ago, the house we lived in had a well. We began to have some health problems. When the water was tested – it was discovered that our well was contaminated. We were instructed to pour a couple of gallons of bleach into the well. We were NOT instructed to start drinking bleach - we were instructed to mix bleach with the water - in order to cleanse the water of the contaminate. This is likely the same idea presented to Timothy.

But there are two possibilities: one is that Timothy was being instructed to add a little wine to each container of water before drinking it; and the other is - it may have been intended for Timothy to drink some wine from time to time – to help clean up any contaminate that may be in his digestive system. And – it could be – both of these were the intended instructions!

## 1 Timothy – 29 Elders (cont'd)

Timothy – whatever your personal reasons for doing so – it is a noble thing to refrain from all use of alcohol - but since you are sick so often – go ahead and use a little wine - For your health's sake.

It is a false teaching that says – you will go to hell for drinking ALCHOLIC drinks. It was false in Timothy's day - and it is false today. Is it a wise thing to do? – drink alcoholic drinks that is? No, - not for most of us. But just drinking some is not sinful. Do I drink any? NO – None. That is my personal commitment – not a directive from God.

Read 1 Timothy 5:24-25

The sinful actions of some people – bring about consequences right here on this earth. When someone engages in a sinful lifestyle - and they contract an incurable disease - part of their judgment arrives here on this earth - for all to see.

But some people's sins are not so obvious – and may only be revealed at the final judgment. In the same way – sometimes a person's good deeds are obvious -even those that are NOT obvious – in time will be revealed.

Go ahead - try to live out your life doing a lot of good deeds - with the intent of doing them all anonymously. Sooner or later – your good works will be revealed. We do good deeds in secret for a while – but eventually we will be revealed - for the “good deed” person that we are. And be sure to remember – we can do sinful deeds in secret for a while – but eventually we will be revealed - for the “sinful deed” person that we are.

There are 3 main points every church, and every church leader, should take note of from this text:

**Don't be in a HURRY to name new elders.**

Whether it is due to retirement, death, or being dismissed - wait to see who is walking the walk - wait to see who is doing the work of an elder - and only then - "lay hands on."

**It is acceptable to take MEDICINE .**

I know that the text talked specifically about wine - but it was discussed in the context of what is good for Timothy's physical health. It does not displease God - when someone takes medicine for a physical illness.

**Don't be too caught up in those who appear to be getting away with SIN.**

This is especially true when they are in a place of Leadership. I have seen a person just make themselves sick – they believe a person in leadership is doing wrong – they are convinced of it - But they can't get the 2 or more witnesses. And this person in leadership is allowed to continue. I've seen a person ruin their health getting so worked up over this person who appears to be getting away with sinning.

Rest assured – each of us will receive what is due us for our actions. Unless we repent and ask for forgiveness. This is a pretty solemn warning and I believe it is especially serious for those who are elders – and other area of leadership. We can't afford to think – just because there is only 1 witness - that we are going to get away with sin. God's Word says, It will be revealed. But on the positive side - so will our good works.

**1 Timothy – 29 Elders (cont'd)**

Write your thoughts and questions regarding this study to share with the group:

We have been told in this 1<sup>st</sup> Letter to Timothy that those who are older than us – should receive honor. We have also been told that those serving in leadership within the church – should receive honor.

In this section of the letter - we are told that there is another group of people who are to “receive honor.” And it is important for me to say at this point – that the message in this portion of the text - should not be disconnected from the previous section.

This is a very interesting text – the slaves being referenced here are Christians – and it is the slaves that are addressed – not the masters – nor the owners – of the slaves. And yes, a passage written to slaves - does have relevance in our current day society.

Read 1 Timothy 6:1 and make notes:

This verse indicates that some slaves were NOT giving their master “full respect.” And it doesn’t say that all of their masters “are worthy” of full respect – it simply tells the slaves to “CONSIDER their masters to be worthy of full respect. The reason for this respect is given – “so that” God’s name and the Christian teaching would not be slandered. This wasn’t a new - or unique - concept. Isaiah prophesied to the people of God - and they heard a message which said, “On account of you, - my name is continually blasphemed among the Gentiles.”

The phrase “under the yoke” of slavery – helps us keep in mind that this passage is not referring to those who are servants. The “yoke of slavery” helps us keep in mind that the social situation of a slave - was a hard thing to endure.

Read 1 Timothy 6:2 and make notes:

I know that it is easy for us to dismiss this portion of Scripture – thinking that since we don't have “slaves” in our society that it doesn't have any relevance to our life. But I beg you – please do not dismiss this text – because there is a message for us - one that has relevance to our current society – right here in this country.

The literature that has been recovered from the early Christian era – has a number of writings that deal with slavery. There are a number of writings of Christian leaders instructing those who are slaves - in how they should conduct themselves as Christians.

Slavery apparently was a common part of society - during the early days of the Church. I think I can understand why there were some conflicts in attitudes.

Slaves were not free to do - or to go - as they would please. I can imagine that every slave dreamed of the day they would find their freedom and no longer be a slave. It might be especially true among the writings of Paul, but the New Testament teachings indicate an attitude of freedom and equality - among believers in Jesus Christ as Savior.

I can see where a slave that has been saved, and began to read or hear the Christian teachings, would begin to see themselves as a child of the king – instead of seeing themselves as nothing more than a slave. This would just naturally bring about some conflicts within the person.

Can you imagine for a moment – how it would be seen by the community at large – if every time a slave became a Christian – they became disrespectful toward their master? If slaves began to show contempt for their master when they became Christians – it wouldn't be long before the community as a whole - would say that Christianity is not a good thing - and would work toward keeping their slaves away from the Christian message.

“Honor” translates into “ RESPECT .” A slave that provides obedient service – maybe even faithful devotion – toward their master - would certainly be seen as giving honor – or respect – to their master.

If the slave master was not a Christian – and the slaves he owned became Christians - and they showed a lack of respect and honor toward their master - after becoming a Christian – what is the likely-hood that this person - would be interested in even hearing the Gospel message?

This disobedience – this lack of honor – this lack of respect – on the part of the slave - could have great consequences for the reputation of the church – and for future slaves and slave owners regarding the receiving of the GOSPEL message.

It is hard for some to comprehend - how Paul – or any Christian teacher for that matter – could ever tell slaves to honor and respect their masters. It seems quite natural for many that slavery goes against the grain of the Christian message. It is indeed contrary to the gospel message - that one person could own another person. It just makes sense - that any real Christian leader would lead the drive to correct such a social injustice.

In spite of this line of logic – the Christian slaves are called to adhere to the cultural and social customs and the traditions of that day – in order that the gospel message might not be hindered.

For a slave to give honor and respect to their master – means they have to submit to their master – it means they have to be obedient - in carrying out instructions and commands. It means they have to faithfully do - what the master says without questioning.

Christian slaves are instructed to serve with excellence – and with complete obedience. For the slaves who have become Christians – and their master is also a Christian – this would be a situation where it would seem natural for some conflict to arise.

In the N.T., there are 3 different Scripture Texts where we are told that in the Kingdom of God there is neither SLAVE or FREE; 1 Corin 12:13; Gala 3:28; Coloss 3:11.

Christian teachings declare equality in Christ Jesus there is neither master or slave – bond or free – we are all the same in Christianity. And yet – in the first century of the church - here is a person who owns slaves – and here are people who are slaves. It might be a natural tendency - for the slaves who have become a Christian – and especially for those who's master is also a Christian – to declare that Christianity has leveled the playing field and maybe even declare that the old rules - just no longer apply.

They could start demanding that new rules be put into place. “I don’t have to respect you any longer – I don’t have to honor you any longer – for now we are the same – you are a child of the king – and I am a child of the king.” But the message given by the Holy Spirit through Paul is a little different from what would come naturally.

The slaves who are Christians – who has a master who is a Christian are told that they should NOT show less respect or give less obedience to their master – but instead “they are to serve them even better”. If your master is a Christian – and you are a Christian – then your master is a fellow believer. As a fellow believer – your master should be dear to you – because they are dear to the Heavenly Father. If they are dear to you – as a fellow believer – then you should serve them even better - than you would if they were not a fellow believer.

The propagation of the gospel message is of greater importance than each slave being set free. Because – if the Gospel message takes root in the heart of the slave owner this will probably lead to them setting their slaves free.

What resistance to the gospel message would come about if every household with Christian slaves – became a household with little respect, little honor, or little obedience!

I have watched children who have grown up in a household - where the parents called themselves Christian - and yet they had little respect and showed little respect for other people. These children became adults who rejected Christianity because they witnessed so little respect, honor, and obedience on the part of those who claimed to be a Christian.

That is what would likely to have been the result - in the community where the slaves who became Christian - then showed little respect and obedience toward their masters. On the other hand, what doors might open to the gospel, if every household with Christian slaves, - became households with the greatest of respect, the most honor, and the highest level and most faithful obedience!

Jesus pointed out to his disciples - that the “Kings of the Gentiles lord it over them.” Jesus also pointed out that most people - see the person being served at the table as being greater than the one who is serving the table. Jesus told his disciples - “you are not to be like that.” Jesus spoke of a new paradigm – one in which the one who rules - is the one who serves – and one where the greatest among us - is the one who serves the most.

And down deep – there is the understanding - that when the master and the slaves come into the full knowledge of God – and come into a full relationship with Jesus Christ – That the slave master will find a way – and make it possible for the slaves to earn their freedom. And until that time arrives – the master will want to provide the best for his slaves.

Both the master who is a Christian – and the slave who is a Christian benefits.

**1 Timothy – 30 Slaves**

Write your thoughts and questions regarding this study to share with the group:

In the previous lesson – we looked at 1 Timothy 6:1-2. In this lesson we are continuing with these verses – as we discuss the 2 Major Applications of these two verses:

Read again 1 Timothy 6:1-2 and make notes:

Have you noticed how much difficulty we have giving indications of respect to someone whom we see as an equal? How hard would it be - for us to call our biological brother or sister – Mr or Mrs? If they received some office or title of honor – would we naturally refer to them as Mr Mayor or Your Honor – or would we just have to refer to them as Bob or Susan?

This teaching on slaves and masters - shows us something of a household CODE for the Christians. The real Christian is the one who is more interested in serving – than they are in being served.

I mentioned in the previous lesson - that the message of these verses - should not be disconnected from the previous parts of the letter. Consider for a moment – those who desire - or seek - to be given places or positions of leadership within the church. Is it their desire to be served – to be honored – to be respected? Is it their desire to receive some perception of power and authority? If so, - then they have missed the true gospel message!

Look at the example of Jesus Christ. Who was greater – Jesus or the people he came to serve and to save? Who washed feet – Jesus or the disciples? Within the kingdom of Heaven – here on earth – it is the greater who **SERVES** – not the lesser.

I am aware that among some church groups - there is a message - and an attitude - that is passed along - that the leaders of the church are to be served by the members of the church. There are those church groups where a pastor - or even an associate pastor - will never do any serving of others - Only preaching or teaching. Those who are members are expected to do the serving.

But the message that Jesus brought says – the greater one is the one who serves. When the slave grasps the concept - that they are to do whatever their “own master” instructs them to do – then they have learned - that there is to be an order and there is to be obedience within a household.

When we finally find our place in the household of God - AND – we have this concept down pat – how much easier it will be for us to serve God faithfully and with complete obedience. This was true for the slaves of the first century and it is true of us today!

Christians are to treat other Christians with respect and honor. Now - the 2 major applications of this message - in our current society:

### **1. In the CHURCH .**

When people approach the church with the attitude that is common in the world today - the church becomes about who has authority – or who has the power. But when people approach the church with the attitude that was demonstrated by Jesus - the church becomes about loving others and honoring others enough to serve them. In whatever way they need to be served. The greatest in the church is the one who serves the most.

### **2. In the MARKET Place**

When people approach the market place with the attitude of the world - it becomes about you giving me the best discount – maybe even give it to me for free – because we know each other – because we are family – or maybe just because we are friends. But when we approach the market place with the attitude of Jesus - it becomes about me desiring to give you the full price for your product or service because I know that I am helping to provide for a fellow believer. Knowing that I am helping this fellow believer - better help others.

## 1 Timothy – 31 Respect

When we take the attitude of the world into the place where we work - we tend to show little respect and obedience to our manager or supervisor - because we are “at least as good as they are” – You know, “I’m pretty sure I’m better than they are.” But when we take the attitude of Jesus into our work place - we want to do the very best job possible - we want to honor our manager or supervisor - we want to show respect to them - even more so - if they are a fellow believer in Jesus Christ.

his message does not say that we should never try to correct social injustice - when we discover it in our society. Especially in this nation where we have the right to do so. But this message does tell us that it is more important for us to be people of obedience - to be people who show honor and respect to those in authority – For the sake of the gospel message.

Our homes should be places of respect for authority – and places where obedience is the norm. In our places of employment – no one should be more obedient or more respectful than the Christian.

When we can get this message to begin working in our lives - not only will our local churches be places of respect – places of honor – and places of obedience - But the GOSPEL MESSAGE will be received by more people. And the truth is - when we get to this place in our heart and attitude we will have a much greater chance to correct social injustice.

If investigators were to sent out to interview those who know us - Would they come back and testify that we are a person who shows others respect and honor - Would they testify that we are a person who is obedient? Or would they say something quite different?

**1 Timothy – 31 Respect**

Write your thoughts and questions regarding this study to share with the group:

The closing section of this First Letter to Timothy is something of an echo from the beginning of the letter. Timothy is commanded to teach – and - false teachers are the basic theme. The things that are being misunderstood - are pointed out – a contrasting correct model is given - some instructions are given – and Timothy’s commission is repeated.

Now let's begin our examination of the first part of this closing section:

Read 1 Timothy 6:2b and make notes:

This verse is something of a connector. It is NOT just a conclusion of the preceding section - and it is NOT just an introduction to the following section. It applies to what WAS said in the preceding section – AND it applies to what IS about to be shared.

Read 1 Timothy 6:3 and make notes:

This is basically how this letter began – by addressing the presence of false teachers in the church – that those teaching false doctrines - do not agree with sound instructions – they do not agree with Jesus - nor the godly teachings of Jesus.

Read 1 Timothy 6:4-5

The “he” - in verse 4 is the “one teaching false doctrines.” These appear as “strong words” to some people – but please keep in mind - Paul is writing this at the direction of the Holy Spirit. False Teachers are called “CONCEITED ” – it is said that “False Teachers” Understand Nothing. False Teachers claim to have a lot of knowledge and understanding – many of them probably think they understand a great deal – but this verse declares that they “understand nothing.”

False Teachers have an “unhealthy interest” in QUARRELS about words. And this IS relevant for today! It is a common thing for people to bring up arguments - over what is right and wrong. And claim there is disagreement - over what some word really means – or over what that word really meant - when the text was written.

It is fairly frequent that people will try to argue - that we can’t know what is right or wrong because we don’t really understand some specific word. This type of argument is used concerning marriage – and what is and what is not - acceptable for married people to do. This type of argument is used - concerning what is and what is not acceptable - in the way of sexual conduct. And sometimes what is and what is not - actually sexual conduct.

These types of arguments are always the RESULT of false teachings – and let me say this now – God’s Word does give us very clear and understandable guidelines for a proper life and proper lifestyle. God's Word is not confusing – it is not cloudy – it is not vague.

False Teachers have an “unhealthy interest” in CONTROVERSIES. And these unhealthy interest bring about “envy – strife – malicious talk – evil suspicions – and constant friction between men of corrupt mind.

Today in the church we often use the phrase “corrupt mind” to refer to people who are thinking more carnally than spiritually. But in the original language – this is written in MEDICAL terms. “Corrupt mind” is interpreted from Greek words - that were used to refer to those who have a “sick mind” – those who have become mentally unstable due to physical injury – due to some chemical poisoning - or to any unexplained reasons.

## 1 Timothy – 32 Greatest Gain

The False Teachers are observed to have been effective in causing friction between people who are experiencing mental problems already. Surely, most of us would agree - that to purposefully cause a person to be upset who already is experiencing mental difficulties – is just a mean or evil person. The False Teachers not only have been robbed of the TRUTH – they are robbing others of the TRUTH.

And one thing that is fairly common among False Teachers – they are doing what they do – and they are teaching what they teach – for the express purpose of increasing their own personal GAIN. Perhaps this is most often financial gain – but sometimes “the gain” is - political authority, - or power - or position.

Certainly not all, but a great majority of the false teachings have some element that says, “if you do what we teach, you will benefit financially.” Many of the false teachings have a sub-message - that says “this is the way to get more money” - or “this is the way to get people to do what you want them to do.”

Read 1 Timothy 6:6 and make notes:

Here is one of the many contrast - between The True Teachings of God - and the false teachings – Godliness with contentment - IS GREAT GAIN.

The greatest gain - is not the acquiring of great financial wealth. The greatest gain - is not the acquiring of great worldly power. The greatest gain - is not getting a large following of people. Either of these – and quite frankly all worldly gain – is only TEMPORARY. All worldly gains - only last as long as our earthly life exists.

Read 1 Timothy 6:7 and make notes:

Material goods cannot pass through the veil that separates this physical world and its life - from the spiritual world and its life. Regardless of what we acquire – legally - or illegally - in our life on this earth - we will leave this world - with exactly the same amount of earthly possessions - as we had when we entered it. We brought only our life itself - when we entered physical life – and when we leave physical life – we will take only our life itself. No finances – no authority – no strength – no toys – no sporting equipment – no clothing – no jewelry – no collections.

Write your thoughts and questions regarding this study to share with the group:

In the previous lesson we looked at a couple of things about False Teachers: The False Teachers not only have been robbed of the Truth - they are robbing others of the Truth. One of the things that is fairly common among False Teachers – they are doing what they do – and they are teaching what they teach – for the express purpose of increasing their own personal Gain.

We were also told in the previous lesson one of the many contrast - between The True Teachings of God and the false teachings – Godliness with contentment - IS GREAT GAIN. In this lesson we will take a few minutes to look at this.

Read 1 Timothy 6:8 and make notes:

“We will be content with that” - Most Bible Scholars agree - Paul was speaking of himself primarily in this verse. Paul had come to the place where if he had food and clothing – he considered this to be sufficient - Because he knew - that whatever else he had would simply be LEFT BEHIND when he did leave.

It is recognized that many of the other believers - had not yet come to this attitude. But it is also agreed - that this is what Paul is suggesting every Christian needs to adopt this attitude as their philosophy of life.

When asked by his disciples to teach them how to pray Jesus said we should pray “give us today, our daily bread.” Jesus never said pray “Oh Lord, give me great possessions.” He said we should pray give me today, what I need for today.” And does that mean we should not invest – that we should not work toward future gain? NO! -There are other Scriptures that tell us we should. But the purpose of such investment should be -so that we can better honor God - in that future day. It should not be the primary purpose - just to “have more of the treasure.”

Read 1 Timothy 6:9 and make notes:

It couldn't be said more clearly - those who do not adopt the attitude - that having our basic needs for life is sufficient – are in danger. As with an earlier passage – this is not an indictment against being rich. It is a warning for those who have as their basic goal to “become rich”. If our basic goal is to become rich – then we will fall into temptation - and the temptation will lead us to a trap – and the trap will cause us to experience - many foolish and harmful desires. And these foolish and harmful desires - will “plunge” us into ruin and destruction.

The word “PLUNGE” in the original language was the same word that refers to someone - being thrown overboard at sea during a storm - or to someone who fell from great height into water. It speaks of a person who doesn't just get into water – but of a person who is thrown - deep into the water - and goes under the water.

“Ruin and destruction” are also something of medical terms. They are the words that are used to refer to a person who has a fatal medical condition - for which there is no known treatment or cure.

Read 1 Timothy 6:10 and make notes:

## 1 Timothy – 33 Purpose

Verse 10 offers something of a fresh breath for many people – it tells us that it is not the having “money” - that is the problem. It is the “love” of money - that is the problem. In fact the “Love of money” - is said to be “a root of all kinds of evil.”

What are we going to get from a “root of evil”? We will get evil FRUIT - from an evil root!

There have been many people who Love God – Believe in Jesus Christ – and live their lives - in a manner that brings Glory and Honor to God – who have acquired great wealth. They were not eager to acquire money – the money came as a result - of the way they applied their gifts, talents, and opportunities. The acquiring of money - was not their goal. The acquiring of money - came as a result of them faithfully working toward their goal.

There appears to have been even more people – who set out loving God – Believing in Jesus – but were so eager to get lots of money - that they “wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs.” It is sad when a Believer “wanders from the faith” – but it is extremely sad for a Believer to have wandered from the faith AND also pierce themselves - and thus - become the cause of their own pain.

This letter to Timothy has something to say to Christians Today:

Let us examine our GOALS.

Let us examine our MOTIVE for what we are doing.

Let us examine exactly - what is it that we are striving for.

What is the purpose - for which we are living? What is it - that we hope to accomplish?

This teaching is not so new or unique. What Paul is telling Timothy - under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit – is pretty much what Jesus had already said – just look at Matthew 6:28-34.

## 1 Timothy – 33 Purpose

When we examine our purpose and our goals – will we discover - that our goals and purposes are all wrapped around efforts to acquire worldly wealth – to acquire worldly possessions - And that we just try to “be a Christian” - while we work toward our goals?

If this is the case, then we will also discover - that almost anything - will take precedent - over serving God. For when we are asked to choose - whether we will serve God today or do this thing to acquire worldly possessions – we will go after the worldly possessions - every time. When we are asked to choose - whether we will do the right thing today or will we acquire worldly possessions – we will do whatever it takes – and morality - want be considered.

If that is what we discover about our purpose and our goal - we need to see the flashing warning lights - we need to hear the warning sirens - we are surely headed for great pain. But if we discover that our purpose – our goal – is to honor God - And if the acquiring of worldly possessions should come about while we are working toward bringing Glory to God - Then - we can live out our life in contentment. For we will NOT be enticed by the temptations - we will NOT fall into the traps - And we will NOT be the ones who are “plunged” into destruction and ruin.

Write your thoughts and questions regarding this study to share with the group:

This section brings the commissioning and the instruction to Timothy - to a close. There are two dominant themes in this closing section. One is separation – and the other is the use of past and future references to focus on the present.

As has been stated before – while these instructions are addressed to Timothy – most Bible Scholars agree – these instructions are intended for all Believers. And please be assured – this message is very relevant to our current society and culture. In this lesson – we will focus on the theme of “Separation”:

Read 1 Timothy 6:11 and make notes:

Concerning the call for separation – the devastation experienced by those following after false teachings has already been described earlier in this letter. Now Timothy is instructed to separate from ALL that is evil. But Timothy is not simply instructed to flee away FROM evil Timothy is also told to specifically flee TOWARD a godly character and lifestyle.

Timothy is called to live a life that is clearly different from those following after false teachings. The Christian life is not to be merely a “fleeing from evil” – the truly Christian life is - a “fleeing toward godliness!” Much has been said about what those following false teachings are doing – and how they live their daily lives - “But You, man of God!” The “But You” phrase helps clearly make a distinction between the one who is a Christian and the rest of the worldly community.

So what, - if everyone else in our community is doing it - So what, - if everyone else in our community says it is okay - “you are a Christian – you must be Christ-like and not world-like” - “you are a Christian – you are “to flee from all of this.”

The Holy Spirit is not as thoughtless or careless in the words He uses - as most of us are. When the Holy Spirit told Paul to write the instructions - and to say “flee” - the Holy Spirit wanted Timothy then – and wants us today – to understand that the evil that is taught and approved of by the false teachers - is not something to hang around. It is not safe to just recognize that it is evil - but it is okay to live next to - it is something to “flee” from – “Flee” means to “run away from with haste” – it means we are to put forth some SERIOUS effort to get away from it.

If you looked into the nursery where your baby was sleeping – and you noticed a big rattle snake on the other side of the room of your baby’s nursery – would you simply say, “well the snake is on the other side of the room – its’ not bothering my baby” – and then just close the door and go on about your business?

Most everyone of us would get in there and do battle with that snake – or at the very least grab our baby and get them away from the snake. We understand - this snake is dangerous – we understand - that rattle snakes don’t always bite – we understand - that not everyone who gets bit by one actually dies. But we also recognize - the very real danger that exists when a rattle snake is near our baby – and we would not allow the two of them to remain close together.

And yet today, people who claim to be a Christian, refuse to flee from the presence of evil! Many people today, who claim to be Christian, can live with sin, - and be completely at peace! People get mad at the preacher when he tells them they need to separate themselves from the sin!

These instructions to Timothy told him that he was expected to live differently from the accepted culture and practices of his day! When the preacher tells people that same thing today – some of the nicer ones, just look at the preacher like he is crazy - But some of them actually get mad and verbally attack the preacher. And some have will even contact the elders and insist that the preacher be punished in some way!

“But you, man of God, not only are you to flee from all this sinful stuff – you are to pursue righteousness and you are to pursue godliness.” Just like “flee” indicates a “hasty” retreat from the evil - “pursue” - indicates MORE than simply moving in a direction. “Pursue” - means “hunting down” – “chasing after with the intent to catch.”

In years past I have gone hunting - I hunted with the intention of bringing home some meat. But that was nothing compared to the “pursuing” I did when I was intent on getting Susan to fall in love with me - and then get her to agree to marry me. If I had hunted with the intensity and determination I used in my pursuing of Susan – there wouldn’t have been any game left in the woods – it might have taken years for the game population to recover.

That’s the kind of intensity that is spoken of when Timothy is told to “pursue righteousness.” And to “pursue godliness.” And then he is told to “pursue - faith, love, endurance and gentleness.”

I visited a home group a few years ago – I listened as they discussed faith for a few minutes. It seems most of them agreed that God gives us some measure of faith – but that we are expected to use the faith – or to exercise the faith – or in some way - to help get our faith to grow. The way it was being talked about was like - “it would be nice – even preferred – but only if it were convenient”.

These instructions tell us to “pursue faith.” That means it isn’t enough to simply sit around on our “blessed assurance” and wait until we have “more faith.” We are to be - actively pursuing this “more active faith.” And also is included the instruction to “pursue - love, endurance and gentleness.”

For some of us – one or more of these characteristics don’t necessarily come naturally. For some of us – one or more of these characteristics does seem to come easier. So, while some may have to work a little harder in one area – while others have to work harder in another area - we are to “pursue” having “love” and “endurance” and “gentleness” - to be evident and regular characteristics of our everyday lives.

## 1 Timothy – 34 Flee and Pursue

Christians are to be taking steps toward a “two-pronged” activity plan:

- .1. FLEE Sinful activities
- .2. PURSUE Godly activities

Today’s Real Christians – must put forth a serious effort to “flee from the lifestyles” that are declared sinful - in God’s Word.” Today’s Real Christians – must put forth a serious effort to “pursue a godly lifestyle.” That is a lifestyle that lines up with the standards set forth in God’s Word.

Write your thoughts and questions regarding this study to share with the group:

There are two dominant themes in the closing section of this letter. One is separation – and the other is the use of “past” and “future” references to focus on the present.

In the last lesson we focused on “separation.” Today’s Real Christians – must put forth a serious effort to “flee from the lifestyles” that are declared sinful - in God’s Word.” AND - Today’s Real Christians – must put forth a serious effort to “pursue a godly lifestyle” that is - a lifestyle that lines up with the standards set forth in God’s Word.

In this lesson we are going to focus on the “use of past and future references” - “to focus on the present.”

Read 1 Timothy 6:12 and make notes:

Concerning the past – Timothy is instructed to look back – to recall – or to bring back to his mind – the “good confession” he had made in the presence of “many witnesses.” This “good confession” - may have been - the testimony Timothy gave when he accepted Jesus as his personal Savior. This “good confession” - may have been - the testimony Timothy gave as he was ordained and commissioned to preach. This “good confession” - Timothy made earlier – is like a “past boundary marker.”

These instructions really have little to do with the time before this “PAST boundary marker.” So whatever we did before that marker in time – it really isn’t important for this cause - the instruction is “take hold of the eternal life - to which we were called”

We are not going to spend much time on this subject – but let me just remind us - that our physical bodies are temporary – they are going to expire – and we will get new bodies. Our spiritual bodies are everlasting. So when we get saved – the spiritual part of us has eternal life.

We need to live our lives as though we have taken hold of this eternal life. We simply must stop living our lives as though we are handling a disposable towel. We are to handle our eternal life - as though - what we do with our life now – does in fact have eternal consequences.

Read 1 Timothy 6:13-15a and make notes:

Concerning the Future – Timothy is instructed to keep these instructions - “until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ.” This is a Future boundary marker. These instructions have nothing to do with what you will do after this “FUTURE boundary maker.” So whatever it is that we will be doing after that marker in time – it really isn’t important for this cause. It is right now - that these instructions are important Timothy.

It is like the marker on a grave – there is a date indicating when this person was born. And then there is a date indicating when this person died. Neither of those dates is really all that important – the really important thing is that little “dash” that is between those two dates.

People born in one time - were not – and are not – any better than those born in any other time. People who die in one era of time - were not - and are not - any better than those who die in any other era. For all of us – the really important part is what we do with our lives between those two dates.

Timothy was being told that it is counter-productive to spend too much time worrying about the PAST. And it is certainly counter-productive to spend too much time worrying about the FUTURE.

It is the current time that we can do something about – it is the right now - that we must show what Godliness looks like – demonstrate what Godliness sounds like. We need to Show our community what it is to say no to evil - and to say yes to God. “I charge you to keep this command without spot or blame until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

It is not enough to have our “salvation experience” - and then do whatever we want until we die and “go to heaven.” That concept - is a false teaching! Real Christians are called to – and are expected to – keep these instructions WITHOUT SPOT OR BLAME – until Jesus comes back.

Read 1 Timothy 6:15b-16

The closing doxology - God is the “blessed and ONLY Ruler.” Many people think they are a ruler – but real Christians understand that there is only “One Ruler” - and that is God. He is the King of all the kings! However great any king - may think they are – they are subject to God – for He is the Lord of all lords! Regardless of the power and authority any lord may think they have – they will all bow their knee to God.

God ALONE is immortal – anyone and anything else can be DESTROYED – but not God. He lives in such a righteous and holy light – that no one can actually see him. We are blessed when he chooses to reveal a part of himself to us – which he has done on many occasions. Yes – to God be “honor” forever.

In the first century A.D. – when Jesus established the Church – the Christian message and the Christian lifestyle was very different from the accepted lifestyles and practices of that culture and society. The first Christians were NOT told to “fit in” with the world – they were instructed to live “very DIFFERENTLY ” from the world.

And the message to Christians today is exactly the same – we are not to accept the standards set by our society or our culture. We are to live our lives by the standard set down in God’s Word.

Yes, I do agree it would be much more comfortable if our society would align its morals and its standards to God’s Word. There are very few of us who like to feel “un-comfortable” in the midst of our friends, co-workers, or family. As long as our society and culture chooses to set standards that are contrary to God’s Word – we can’t afford to be comfortable with those standards.

The choice is rather simple – we can choose to be comfortable TODAY – or we can choose to be comfortable in the FUTURE! But rest assured - that it will be much more “comfortable” in the future for those who live by God’s Standards today.

Today’s Real Christians – must demonstrate Biblical Standards of Living God's Word. Even if it goes against the grain of our society’s accepted behaviors.

Write your thoughts and questions regarding this study to share with the group:

After the closing doxology of the First Letter to Timothy – there are instructions for those who are rich in worldly possessions. Some think in terms - of our day and practice and seem to think that everything should be done and said before the doxology.

But when we stop and think – we sometimes do that same thing today. Can't you remember some church service – where we have done all the things we generally do – we have made the announcements – we have offered up the closing prayer – and we have told everyone church is dismissed – and then someone has something else they feel they must share – a praise report – or a prayer request – or an announcement?

So it really isn't that strange in the letter to Timothy. Ephesus was at one of the crossroads of trade. Many merchants and traders passed through Ephesus. There was something of an international banking system set up in Ephesus. And then there was all the supporting businesses for those who travel. There was in fact a number of people in Ephesus who lived in the upper economic level of society.

Before we dig into this last set of instructions – let me call to your memory an earlier section of this letter - where materialistic gain was compared to godly gain. And of course “godly gain” was said to be the best gain.

Even if you are pretty sure that you don't fall into this category of being wealthy, - there is something for all of us in this passage. So, please pay attention as we feast on this last portion of the First Letter to Timothy.

Read 1 Timothy 6:17 and make notes:

All of us who are Believers will be “rich in the world to come” - But not all of us are rich in this present world. For those of us who are rich in this present world – the instructions are really quite simple. These are not complicated or confusing instructions at all. First – “DON'T BE ARROGANT .” Secondly – “don't put your HOPE in the wealth.”

The reason for this instruction isn't that having wealth is a bad thing. The reason we should not put our hope in wealth is that wealth is “so uncertain.” From the personal testimonies I have heard – there have been several in the congregation where I served as Pastor - who have experienced the “uncertain-ness” of worldly wealth. I can share with you - that we have several people in our church family - who have experienced living with plenty and some left over. And then suddenly – without them doing anything wrong. Just a quick series of events that they did not see coming - suddenly, they didn't have enough to pay the bills – to put gas in the car – or to buy the smallest thing to eat.

There are several who can give personal testimony to the true uncertainty of worldly wealth. And while we all need to have hope – whatever we do - we are not to put your hope in worldly wealth. Instead – put your hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment.

For those who find themselves with any measure of worldly possessions – Don't apologize for having them. God has given them to you for you to enjoy!

It would do everyone of a lot of good to focus on two words in this passage. The first word is “everything” and the second word is “enjoyment.”

Whatever it is that God has given us – let's make sure we enjoy it. A Scripture comes to mind: “For those who are faithful with the little – will be given much.” It certainly is not the only reason – but one of the reasons more of God's people - do not get more of the world's goods – is that they do not enjoy the portion of world's goods that they already have.

## 1 Timothy – 36 Those Who Are Rich

There are far too many people who claim to be Christians -who are walking around acting like – and talking like – ungrateful brats! Whatever it is that God has given me today – I’m going to enjoy it - and I am going to thank God for giving to me what He has given me.

Read 1 Timothy 6:18 and make notes:

The Third instruction to those who are rich in worldly possessions – do good WORKS. In fact, “be rich in good deeds.” The Fourth instruction is to “be generous and willing to SHARE.”

This is a really important point here – and many people miss it. This fourth instruction is not saying the same thing twice – it is actually a two part instruction. It is important that we grasps “what it says” - and it will be helpful to understand “why” it says it.

The first part of the instruction says “be generous” – that’s simple and straightforward enough. But the second part of the instruction is actually provided to release those who are rich from condemnation. I can tell you from years of experience – there are people who are in need – someone else has the goods to share that this person needs - but the person in need “will not allow” them to be generous and share. They refuse to accept the help – they refuse to accept the giving on the other person’s part.

I can also tell you from experience – that if the person with the goods tried to give and the one in need would not accept - if the only thing they know is that the Bible says they are supposed to be generous - the Devil would show up and condemn them for not being generous. And most of them would accept the condemnation – because they would be aware that they did not share.

Isn’t the Holy Spirit wonderful!

## 1 Timothy – 36 Those Who Are Rich

The instruction to those who are rich in worldly possessions is not only to “be generous.” It also says “and willing to share.” So that when we are willing to share and the other person will not allow us to share - then in God’s eyes – on our behalf – it is just as if we did share. It is enough to “be willing” when the other person won’t let us share.

Before Satan twist this and turns it into something confusing - remember – God looks on the intent of the heart – more than He looks on the outward actions.

Read 1 Timothy 6:19 and make notes:

“In this way” – in the being generous where they can – and in the “being willing to share” where they are not allowed to share - “in this way – they will lay up treasure for themselves.” I mentioned earlier that this passage has something to say to those of us who are not so wealthy in worldly goods. Here is one place it has something to say to all of us. The principle being laid out – is the “willingness” to share - more so than the actually sharing itself.

This same “WILLINGNESS” applies to those who don’t really have all that much to share - but are in fact “willing” to share what they do have - with those who are in need! When the widow put the equivalent of two pennies into the offering – do you remember what Jesus told His disciples? He said, that this woman gave more than all the others – because she gave out of her lack - while all the others gave out of there excess.

Living out our lives with a “GENEROUS heart” and with an attitude of being willing to share - doesn’t JUST lay up treasure in heaven - it lays 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.”

Some of us have come to understand that if we spend everything we make on our living today - and we put away nothing for the last years of our life – life might just turn out to be somewhat sour – or at least less than enjoyable. Sure - we need to spend some of what we make on living today –but we need to put something away for future years – the years when we might not have the physical strength or stamina to work like we do today - years when we might not have the mental quickness to work like we do today. We might even comment on “just how smart” it is to lay up something for our future.

Now make a similar comparison to the person who lays up treasure for this life - but fails to lay up any treasure for the future life. The person who lays up treasure for the life that is to come is said to be “taking hold of the life - THAT IS TRULY LIFE!” You think living here on earth in this physical body is living? With all that it is prone to suffer? Now if you want to know what REAL LIVING is – the life we will have in Heaven – Now That Is Real Life ! And the really smart person will lay up a “firm foundation” for life there - more than they will lay up any kind of “foundation” for life here.

Read 1 Timothy 6:20-21

It is clear – that this passage is not ONLY for those who are rich in worldly possessions. The instructions turn back to Timothy – the pastor of the Church at Ephesus - and he certainly was not one of those who was rich in earthly goods.

Earlier in this letter, Timothy was instructed to keep False Teachers out of the Church. He was told to confront heresy – He was told to do a number of things that a Good Pastor would do for the congregation He Loves! Now following the instructions on “being generous” and “being willing to share.”

Timothy is told to “guard what has been entrusted to your care.” That certainly would apply to the congregation – but it also applies to “EVERYTHING” that has been entrusted to Timothy’s care.

“Guarding” has some noteworthy implications. When we “guard” something – or someone – it isn’t enough to simply place it or them somewhere and put a lock on the entrance. If we are to “guard” this thing or this person – then we are “on the look out” for those that would come to harm them. We are vigilant in our “looking out” to make sure someone – or something – doesn’t come up and try to take them away – or to do harm to them.

When we “guard” – we are keeping that which we guard where we can see it. Where we can tell if it is okay. Where we can tell if we need to do something. If we allow ourselves to get caught up in “godless chatter” - if we allow ourselves to get caught up in “opposing views” to God’s Word - then we are likely to be caught “off guard” - and that which has been entrusted to our care – can be harmed.

This is certainly a good word for any pastor - not to allow themselves to get so caught up in things – programs – godless conversations – opposing views - to the point that they are not guarding the congregation. But this is also a good word to everyone of us.

What is it that God has entrusted to our care? Whatever it is – let us not allow anything or anyone to get our attention away from “guarding” what has been entrusted to us.

For Moms and Dads – this includes the children. For all adults – this includes our homes – our cars – our household furnishings. For the Elders of the Church – this includes the congregation. For the Leaders of our various ministries – this includes whatever they have been entrusted with. This includes our jobs - This includes our investments - But Please Do Not Forget – there is another life after this one - and we surely need to be laying up something for that life.

**1 Timothy – 36 Those Who Are Rich**

How do we lay up things for that life? By doing good works here - by being generous where we can here - by being willing to share here! And my prayer for each of you is the very closing statement of this letter: “Grace be with you.”

Write your thoughts and questions regarding this study to share with the group: