

“What do you want out of life?”

1 Timothy 6:6-16

Well, this morning we are going to take a break from our fall preaching series, and we are going to be in 1 Timothy chapter 6. And in this section, Paul is going to encourage Timothy and us to focus on what is really important in life. So, let me ask a question, anybody here born with money, gold, or silver in their hands? Anyone here born with pockets full of cash? Anyone born with pockets-I don't think so. Job said, “Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked I will leave this life.” We come into this world with nothing, and we leave with nothing. All the stuff, all the money, all our possessions that we have stays here when we die.

Many of the Egyptian kings were buried with their stuff, thinking they were taking it with them into the afterlife. So, they were buried with their finest clothes, jewelry, gold, and precious stones; which none of it went with them. Jeff Bezos, who's the founder of Amazon is worth about 203 billion dollars; he is currently the richest man in the world. And if he died today, he would not even be able to take one penny with him.

Well, Paul would later write a second letter to Timothy and in chapter 3 Paul warns Timothy of the difficult times that would come in the end. And as he does, Paul gives a list of about 20 things that will happen, but he starts off by saying this, (2 Timothy 3:1-2) “But know this: difficult times will come in the last days. For people will be lovers of self, lovers of money...” Oh how true that is today. So, let's go ahead and look at our main passage this morning, 1 Timothy 6:6-16, and hopefully we will see today that true contentment only comes from running after the things of God!”

1 Timothy 6:6-8, “But godliness with contentment is a great gain. ⁷ For we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out. ⁸ But if we have food and clothing, we will be content with these.”

So, Paul just got done before this section teaching Timothy many ways of living a godly life. And many thought if you lived a godly life, riches would follow. So, now Paul connects contentment with godliness and says there is great gain from these. How blessed, how content, what peace

we could have in our lives, and what joy we could have if only we lived out this verse in our lives. Godly living, living according to God's ways is always the best. His ways always point us in the right direction. His ways lead to what is right, to truth, to peace, to joy, and to rest. We are living in a time when God's ways are laughed at and rejected, and as we look around our world, and even in our own families, we can see the negative outcomes that have come from turning away from godly living.

Also, we live in a time where there is so much stuff. Seems like every time you drive down the street a new store opens up with more stuff in it. New houses, new cars, new phones, new clothes are all around us. And everybody is running after these things; so we do too at times. But Paul says, be content. Which means to have an inward sufficiency. In other words, we don't need external things to make us happy. God is our focus; God is all that we need for real joy. Great gain comes from God, not from anything external like a car, a new pair of shoes, or from a 100 dollar bill; which we all know is here today and gone tomorrow. And being content brings freedom, it frees us. Not being content causes stress, worry, wasted time, and wasted money. True contentment is taking our eyes off of our self and putting them on God and being satisfied in Him; and what a blessing that is.

And running after the things of this world seems so foolish when we read verse 7, "For we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out." Just the thought of bringing nothing into the world and taking nothing with us when we die should cause all of us to ask several questions: If this is true, why focus so much on money, stuff, and possessions? Why am I here; what's the point? And, how did I get here? Well, Paul doesn't answer these questions, but we know the answer is God. God created us and put us here on earth and has plans and purposes for our lives. Paul writes in Colossians 1:16, "because by Him (Jesus) everything was created, ...all things have been created through Him and for Him." So, we are here because of Jesus and everything we do should be for Him. That should really cause all of us to think about not only what we do with our money, but our time and everything else. Where's my focus? Am I pursuing people, building relationships, trying to make disciples, getting the gospel out, and helping people? Or, is it all about me; my wants, my desires, and building my kingdom here on

earth. These thoughts should really challenge us today. And for us living in America, we should be so thankful for all that we have in this land, but we can't buy into the belief that money and possessions will bring any long, lasting joy.

And as we live in this land of plenty, verse 8 should really challenge our thinking of what really satisfies us. Verse 8, "But if we have food and clothing, we will be content with these." The word clothing here means "covering." So, this word can be translated clothes or shelter. These are the basics, we need food, a shirt on our back, and a roof over our heads. And I think we would all agree, we have so much more than that. We should thank God every day for all the extras in life that He gives us. And these are not just words Paul wrote down, but he lived them out. Philippians 4:11-13, "...for I have learned to be content in whatever circumstances I am. ¹² I know both how to have a little, and I know how to have a lot. In any and all circumstances I have learned the secret of being content—whether well fed or hungry, whether in abundance or in need. ¹³ I am able to do all things through Him who strengthens me." Again, true contentment only comes through God in what He offers, not through what the world offers.

And before going forward, let me just say that money is not bad. Money is not good or bad, it's just a thing. And we can either use it for good or bad, but money is neutral. The issue here is our hearts. And I would even say that we need rich Christians in this world. We need them to be generous with what God has given them. We need money to build homes for the homeless, to find the hungry, and to help the poor. Paul actually closes his letter with instructions to the rich, 1 Timothy 6:17-19, "Instruct those who are rich in the present age not to be arrogant or to set their hope on the uncertainty of wealth, but on God, who richly provides us with all things to enjoy. ¹⁸ Instruct them to do what is good, to be rich in good works, to be generous, willing to share, ¹⁹ storing up for themselves a good reserve for the age to come, so that they may take hold of life that is real." Paul is saying that it's ok to have money; it's ok to be rich; and that's it's ok to enjoy it. But in doing so, make sure your hope is always in God, not in the stuff. And to be generous with it. So, it's ok to have money, just hold it loosely, be good stewards of it, and use it to help the needs around you. Again, it's all about the heart; is my desire to build my kingdom? Or, is my desire to build God's kingdom here on earth? It's all about our hearts!

But, in saying all of that, we all know the pull that is in us to have the riches of this world. 203 billion dollars, that sounds kind of nice to have in my bank account. But now, Paul gives a strong warning against this desire. (1 Timothy 6:9-10) “But those who want to be rich fall into temptation, a trap, and many foolish and harmful desires, which plunge people into ruin and destruction. ¹⁰ For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil, and by craving it, some have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many pains.”

That should get our attention. In this passage we see the opposite of contentment and where it can lead. Again, it’s all about the heart. What’s our desires, what’s our wants? John also warns us about this in 1 John 2:15-17, “Do not love the world or the things that belong to the world. If anyone loves the world, love for the Father is not in him. ¹⁶ For everything that belongs to the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride in one’s lifestyle—is not from the Father, but is from the world. ¹⁷ And the world with its lust is passing away, but the one who does God’s will remains forever.”

And Jesus warns us about this too, (Matthew 6:19-21) “Don’t collect for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal. ²⁰ But collect for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves don’t break in and steal. ²¹ For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”

So, in Paul’s warning in verse 9, you get the sense that these people greatly desired wealth; they wanted it, they stayed up all night thinking of how to get it. Getting rich probably consumed them. And this type of heart often leads to temptation, ruin, and destruction; great is the fall. And we hear about it all of the time of actors, athletes, and people who have won the lottery that found riches but ended up broke, lonely, depressed, and in ruin.

One of the greatest stock market crashes in history was in 1929, which was followed by the Great Depression. But, before the crash there was tremendous growth in the stock market, people were making a lot of money. So, everybody was getting in on the buying, even people with no money. They would borrow money to buy stocks and then use them as collateral. Before the crash the Dow was at 381, and after losing 89% of its value, hit its ultimate low at 41.

Many corporations and individuals lost everything. It took the Dow 25 years to regain its value that it had before the crash. Great was the fall for so many that had put their hope in money.

And probably one of the most misquoted saying in the Bible comes from verse 10, “For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil, and by craving it, some have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many pains.” Scripture does not say that money is a root of all kinds of evil, but the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil; did you hear that-all kinds of evil, all from the love of money, that’s scary stuff. And if we take a step back, this love for money all comes from false beliefs. The belief that money will make me happy, and give me peace, joy, and satisfaction. The belief that if I have money I will have security, and the belief that money will give me true freedom. All lies.

This want for money, this type of desire for money, this love for money, this craving for it, all ends in temptation, traps, foolishness, ruin, destruction, all kinds of evils, separation from God, and all kinds of pains! This is a strong warning for us today. And, if that’s not enough often this desire for money starts a cycle of wanting more and more and never ends. Money just becomes the main focus in life.

Also, it causes selfishness. All this person thinks about is self. Where can I go, what can I do, what can I buy; it’s all about me and what I want. And with all of this, stress and anxiety fills this person’s life. And all of this comes from loving something that we can’t take with us when we die! Bottom line here, if we’ve made an idol out of something in our lives and are loving it more than we love God, it’s most likely not going to end well. We need to love and worship God above everything else.

And Satan, he is a master at deceiving. Satan tried this trick on Jesus, (Matthew 4:8-11) “...the Devil took Him to a very high mountain and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor. ⁹ And he said to Him, “I will give You all these things if You will fall down and worship me.” ¹⁰ Then Jesus told him, “Go away, Satan! For it is written: Worship the Lord your God, and serve only Him.” Jesus resisted, He said no, and that’s what we need to do too.

Paul has warned us in these two verses of what could happen if we go down this path of loving money. It's like driving down the street and seeing a sign that says "stop, bridge out." You stop, you turn around, you wouldn't keep going. And that's exactly what Paul says next in verse 11, "Now you, man of God, run from these things." A strong warning. The Greek word for run here means to run away, to vanish, to flee, or to escape. So, Timothy was to get away from this as fast as possible. He was not to be like those around him that put money first. And for us today, we have to flee from the temptation to desire money and riches, like so many around us because it's a trap that the devil is setting for us, and we need to escape, and literally, we need to run for our lives because it can destroy us.

So now, Paul is going to switch gears, he's been warning us of pursuing things that will ruin us, and now he is going to tell us the best things in life that we should be pursuing. Again, verse 11, "Now you, man of God, run from these things; **but** pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance, and gentleness." These are the things that really matter in life. Guys, if we are going to change this world for Jesus, then we must be different, we must be a light in this dark world; and pursuing these things will show the world that we are different.

Also, running after these things are the best things for us. Living a righteous life, a godly life, a life of trusting God, a life of loving people, a life of pressing forward and enduring, and living a life of gentleness and kindness is going to keep us away from sin, distractions, and destruction. And these are things that give us real contentment in life. These are things that will truly last. True contentment only comes from running after the things of God, not the things of this world.

And obviously, Jesus is our perfect example. He is perfectly righteous, He is God, He trusted perfectly, He is love, He perfectly endured until the end, and He is perfectly gentle and lowly in heart. He is who we should be striving to be like, He is who we should be running to everyday. So, in other words, we should be fleeing from the love of money and running as fast as we can to Jesus: the author and perfecter of our faith.

And we have this faith, because of the cross. Only through Jesus can we be forgiven of our sins and have eternal life. What hope we have knowing that we came into this world with nothing, but because of Jesus, we leave this world with everything. Because Jesus defeated sin and death on the cross, and because He rose from the grave, we get to live forever, we have eternal life, not eternal death. That's the good news, His death, burial, and resurrection. And that's the most important thing that this world needs to hear. So, Paul encourages Timothy to never stop living out his faith. Verse 12, "Fight the good fight for the faith; take hold of eternal life, to which you were called and have made a good confession before many witnesses." Paul is probably referring to the time when Timothy was baptized before many witnesses and confessed His belief in Jesus. Again, we are here because of Jesus and saved because of Jesus. So, our response should be to live out our faith for Him. So, Timothy and us, are to fight the good fight for the faith.

The Greek meaning behind, "fight the good fight," is working hard to win. To compete in a contest and struggle for victory. Timothy was to give his best effort to this most worthwhile of struggles, the struggle to further the faith. He was to take hold of eternal life; that was to be his focus, not on the things of the world that fade away. And knowing that this life is so short and before we know it, we will be taken out of this world-How should we live? We should be focused on fighting the good fight. Striving daily to love our neighbors, to get the gospel out, to make disciples, and to live in a way that points people to Jesus. These are the things that truly matter in life, not having a few extra dollars in our pockets.

And this fight will be hard and difficult, we can't grow weary in doing good. We have to stay in the fight, we have to go the whole ten rounds; there's no throwing in the towel and quitting. We may get knocked down, but we have to get back up; we may get sent to prison, we may have to die for our faith, but we must press on for the faith. People need to hear about Jesus. We are called to do this!

And I love the story of Oswald J. Smith. He grew up in Canada, and when he was 16 he heard about a gospel crusade that was taking place in Toronto. Every night about 3500 people were

filling the hall to hear R.A. Torrey speak. Smith decided that he wanted to go. So, Oswald and his younger brother Ernie asked their mom if they could go the 94 miles to Toronto to attend the meetings-she said yes. So, off they go. They arrived in time to attend the last 8 meetings, staying at their aunt's house nearby. After going to 6 meetings, the 7th meeting came. Oswald tells his story, he says, "We had made up our minds to accept Christ that afternoon. It was a special service for boys. There were 3,400 present. We did not know then that our mother had written to Dr. Torrey asking him to pray that her sons might be converted. We arrived early, and the Hall was crowded. What Dr. Torrey had to say I do not remember. But I will never forget the way he repeated his text, Isaiah 53:5, "But He was pierced because of my transgressions, crushed because of my iniquities, punishment for my peace was on Him, and I am healed by His wounds."

At the close of his message, he asked those 25 and over who wanted to accept Christ to come forward. Some responded. Little by little he lowered the ages until I was included. But to my amazement I was turned into a chunk of lead. I did not know then about the power of Satan, but I have found out since. Presently my brother quietly nudged me, and that broke the spell. I sprang out of my seat and with a sober face I took the momentous step. For a moment I found myself alone in the front, then I grasped Dr. Torrey's hand and went down into the inquiry room in the basement where I sat on a chair. A man came and spoke to me and then left. But I saw no light and got nowhere, though he thought I was through.

Then suddenly, it happened. I cannot explain it even to today, I just bowed my head, put my face between my hands and in a moment tears gushed through my fingers, and fell upon the chair, and there stole into my boyish heart a realization of the fact that the great change had taken place. Christ had entered and I was a new creature. I had been born again. There was no excitement, no unusual feeling, but I knew that something had happened, and that ever after all life would be different. That was January 28th, 1906, when I was 16 years of age, and it has lasted to this day. Yes, and it is going to last, praise God, throughout the countless ages of eternity."

Over the next 80 years God used him in a mighty way and Oswald was faithful in living out his faith. Oswald went on to found and pastor Canada's largest church in Toronto, preaching more than 12,000 sermons in 80 countries. He wrote 1200 hymns, published 35 books in 128 languages, raised 23 million dollars for missions, and helped send out hundreds of missionaries into the world. He fought the good fight!

And when Smith died on January 25th, 1986, Billy Graham said this, "I've lost a dear friend, the man who had more impact on my life than any other-a great preacher, a great songwriter, a man who stands equal to Moody and Torrey. As a Missionary Statesman he stands alone. There was no equal." There is no telling how many lives were impacted through Smith, because he was faithful in fighting the good fight for the faith. May that be our desire today!

And living this kind of life is so important, so now Paul gives a final charge to Timothy to live this out in his life, verses 13-14, "In the presence of God, who gives life to all, and before Christ Jesus, who gave a good confession before Pontius Pilate, I charge you to keep the commandment without spot or blame until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ."

Paul charges Timothy and us to live out everything that he just said. And we are not to live this out just because, but we are to live this out for God, who gives life to all and for Jesus who while on trial before Pilate, stood for truth. And in doing so, Pilate said, "I find no grounds for charging Him." And as truth is being ripped out of our culture, we have to be like Jesus and stand for truth. Timothy was not to waiver from this. He was to stand for truth, for God's Word until Jesus returns. And today, more than ever we need to stand for truth, and live out truth in our lives if we are going to win this culture back to Christ. And just as standing for truth caused Christ to suffer and to die, at times standing for truth in this world may result in suffering for us. But if so, we follow in Christ's footsteps. And we cannot stop doing this, until Jesus comes back for us.

Jesus will return; when? We don't know, only God knows, verse 15, "which God will bring about in His own time." We look forward to the day that He comes back to get us and to take us home. A perfect place for all of eternity with a perfect God. What a home that will be. No

death, no pain, no sickness, no virus, no hurricanes, no destruction, no sin; and we will get to dwell in this place forever. But, today is not that day. We are still here. And we need to fight the good fight for the faith until He comes. And who is this person who created us, who saved us, who has given us eternal life, who will return to get us, and who we get to spend eternity with? (Verses 15-16) "...He is (Jesus) the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings, and the Lord of lords, the only One who has immortality, dwelling in unapproachable light, whom none of mankind has seen or can see, to whom be honor and eternal might. Amen." That's our King, that's our Savior, that's our Jesus. That's the One we should be striving to live for; He should be to One that is first in our lives. For all that Christ has done for us and for all that He is, He deserves our worship, our obedience, and our lives. He's the one that we should be loving and running after, not a few pieces of green papers to put in our pockets.

So, we have to ask ourselves, "what do I want out of life?" On your tombstone, what do you want to be said about you, "Here lies so and so, he came into this world with nothing, but he loved, desired, and craved money all the days of his life, and took nothing with him" Or, "Here lies so and so, he loved and served Jesus, the King of kings and the Lord of lords all the days of his life, he came into the world with nothing, but because of Jesus he has everything." May we be a people that choose the second. And may we be a people that pursue the things of God in our lives. And when we do, we will then find true contentment, which is great gain! Lets pray.

Title: "What do you want out of life?"

Text: 1 Timothy 6:6-16

Worship: Jesus is the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings, and Lord of lords

Preaching date: September 26th, 2021

Key Sentence: "True contentment only comes from running after the things of God!"

Outline:

- I. What am I running after? (1 Timothy 6:6-8)
- II. Running after ruin. (1 Timothy 6:9-10)
- III. Running after the things of God. (1 Timothy 6:11-12)
- IV. Don't stop running! (1 Timothy 6:13-14)
- IV. Running after Jesus. (1 Timothy 6:15-16)

Notes:

1. Worship: (worship time should be just songs that exalt Jesus). Jesus should be our focus. He should be what we desire. Only Jesus satisfies.
2. Scripture for bulletin: Call to worship-(Holman Christian Standard Bible) Romans 12:2, Isaiah 58:11, Matthew 5:6, and Job 1:21.
Scripture of Meditation- 1 Timothy 6:17-19, 1 John 2:15-17, Ecclesiastes 5:10, and Hebrews 13:5.
3. Children's Corner: "Choose a path"
4. Visuals: Sprint, sprinting, running fast.
5. Prayer week: David plays guitar in the background.
6. Sign: "What do you want out of life?" 1 Timothy 6:6-16
7. Bulletin: Stack 2, 20C10, "But godliness with contentment is great gain"

Prayer week

Running

1 Timothy 6:6-8

Prayer-“Honestly, where do I find my contentment?”

1 Timothy 6:9-10

Prayer-“Honestly, is there a love of money that I need to turn from?”

1 Timothy 6:11-12

Prayer-“What things of God do I need to pursue more in my life?” (righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance, or gentleness)

1 Timothy 6:13-16

Prayer-“Do I need to change my view of who God is?”

