

1 Timothy
E.) The Church and its ministry to the world
3. 6:11-16 Serving sober mindedly

6:11-12
“How to get rich and stay that way”

I. Introduction

II. Vs. 11-12 Four “F” verbs

I. Introduction

Paul warned Timothy about the pursuit of wealth as a means of contentment and now tells him how to maintain “*godliness with contentment*”. One of the studies done on the lack of contentment of wealthy people looked at where the most content people in the world lived and rated them by 65 countries. The results were unexpected according to a 2003 “*World Value Survey*” published by the British magazine “*New Scientist*”. The top three most contented countries where people live are Puerto Rico, Mexico and Nigeria with a staggering less GDP, (Gross Domestic Product) that measures the average personal buying potential per person. When looking at those countries they offer far less “*peace and security*” or “*education or health*” then does the US, as all three of those countries are near the bottom according to the 2003 U.N. Human Development Indicators. The study found that they had two things that other countries had less of:

1. **A strong sense of community**
2. **Frequent, enthusiastic community celebrations**

US research supports this as people in the US describe **the quality of life being the highest when their personal relationships with their family, friends and community are the strongest**. Dr. Fordyce describes this as the “**Happiness Law of Diminishing Returns**” which states: *Any area of achievement that adds to happiness will only do so*

to a certain mid-point then it will begin to have the opposite results. Saints, we Christians ought to have the strongest sense of community and the greatest reason to have enthusiastic community celebrations. The question is how do we appropriate God's resources to this end?

II. Vs. 11-12 Four "F" verbs

Paul gives Timothy four verbs all of which are in the imperative and as we know are action words that Timothy can do to appropriate the riches that are ours in Christ. I have interpreted these to all start with the letter "F" to help our memories:

1. **Vs. 11a FLEE**: This verb has to do what we are to shun but Paul in this verse doesn't tell Timothy what to shun instead it is a reference to the characteristics of the false teachers he wrote about in the proceeding verses. Timothy was to **shun three attributes** that summed up the false teachers both then and now:
 - a. **Conceit**: These fellows were full of themselves while proclaiming they were full of wisdom. Any knowledge that puffs us up, makes our intelligent the object of admiration is not something that we need to learn or emulate. I for one already possess way too much of this kind of knowledge.
 - b. **Combativeness**: Second these false teachers seemed to have a love for controversy, they were always trying to form a faction, some redefining of truth that made them a little better then there brothers and sisters.
 - c. **Covetousness**: Finally they had an appetite for material wealth, theirs was the pursuit for making a buck and showing it by their life style.
2. **Vs. 11b FOLLOW**: Or as Paul puts it "pursue" and then goes on to list **six things** that Timothy should follow and divides them into **two groups**, the first is towards

God, “*righteousness, godliness and faith*”. The 2nd three is towards your fellow man, “*love, patience and gentleness*”.

God:

- a. ***Righteousness***: Paul is not referring to “rightness” as a behavior but rather as a belief, as in we are trusting in Jesus’ rightness and that is the way we now see ourselves as living in His rightness that has covered our wrongness as we are now made right in Jesus’ rightness. This belief is what gives us believers as sense of security and stability as our focus and self-worth is based upon what God has done for us not upon what we have done or in my case not done.
- b. ***Godliness***: The 2nd thing Timothy was to follow after was wholeness or balance in life. Very easy for us to get out of balance living in this world as we correct something lacking only to make give it to high a priority in life which will cause to again become out of balance. Timothy was to pursue the balance that aided him in being a whole person not overly focused on one thing. You see folks that can be dominated by one passion, one topic or one mood and their life becomes a flat spot. Hard to move forward when you have flat spots in life.
- c. ***Faith***: Next Paul wants Timothy to continue to pursue faithfulness or loyalty to God, an awareness that you have committed your life to God. Paul understood that many times a person’s interest and hunger for God is at its peak when we first come into a relationship with the

Lord then like our earthly relationships begins to wane. Hey saint's as it relates to Jesus we shouldn't be looking behind us at the "good ole days" but looking forward as the best is yet to come. Jesus ought to still be the most exciting person you have ever met and spending time with Him daily your greatest excitement.

Man: Paul now moves on to **three words that describe how Timothy should treat our fellow humans.**

- a. ***Love:*** The first word is a familiar one "Love"! Throughout the word we are exhorted to "*Owe no man anything, accept the debt of love*" and "*love one another*". I believe that this is always an appropriate question to ask yourself, "*Are my actions, and words displaying Christ's love?*" We would all be better off if that was a regular concern for our lives. That is how you can gage your progress spiritually, as you becoming a more loving person.
- b. ***Patience:*** The 2nd word Paul gives Timothy to follow with regards to our fellow sojourners has to do with our endurance towards others. Refusing to give up on someone, even though they have failed numerous times. I've always been amazed at the effort folks will put into new relationships that aren't willing to put into old ones. We are called on to support the weak, to come along side and bare each other's burdens.
- c. ***Gentleness:*** Finally Paul says that they are to treat folks with gentleness, a compassionate heart towards others. Six things to check

each day; three towards God three towards are fellow man. Six things to ask: “*How am I doing in these six things?*”

3. **Vs. 12a FIGHT**: The third action word Paul gives Timothy is at the start of verse 12 where he says, “*Fight the good fight of faith*”. The Christian life is not a playground it is a battleground and as such it will be a constant fight. Our enemies will not surrender, they will not give in and go home. Our enemies are twofold satan and our fallen natures. Satan is so crafty he will get you to think that people are your problem and he will get you fighting against each other instead of focusing on the victory won in Jesus through His death and our appropriation through our death to self. We could make a shorter work and get to celebration at lot quicker if we got to dying instead of trying to kill the other person.

4. **Vs. 12b FASTEN**: The final verb for Timothy is “*lay hold*” or **fasten** and it is associated with “*eternal life, to which you were also called and have confessed the good confession in the presence of many witnesses*”. I like simplicity and here Timothy is told keep the right perspective and in case he wasn’t sure what that perspective was Paul tells him it is the same perspective in life that he was “*called*” to “*confessed*” in and that he had done so in the “*presence of many witnesses*”. Saint’s this “*eternal perspective*” in life reminds us that this isn’t our home, we are just passing through. It reminds us that Jesus is at the center of all we love and live for. Dear ones nothing in this world ought to be able to “dislodge” us from Jesus.

Next week we will hear from Paul about keeping your eyes on the Prize as he reveals truths regarding Jesus and His Unique Majesty. This will enable us to appropriate the

riches in Christ which will guarantee that we will be content people. You see saints a lot of our problems stem from us failing to recognize just who it is we have trusted in. This problem, that issue, these unsurmountable odds would be overwhelming if our Jesus was just an ordinary man, some mere prophet or religious teacher who got swept away in political intrigue of the day. But dear ones that is not who our Jesus is, so take a deep breath put on a smile because he is Mighty to save!