

Dr. Robert Yarbrough, Pastoral Epistles, Session 7, 1 Timothy 6

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This is Dr. Robert W. Yarbrough in his teaching on the Pastoral Epistles, Apostolic Instruction for Pastoral Leaders and Their Followers, session 7, 1 Timothy 6.

We continue with our study of the Pastoral Epistles and our study is entitled the Pastoral Epistles, Apostolic Instruction for Pastoral Leaders and Their Followers. And in this segment of our lectures, we're dealing with 1 Timothy and we've dealt with 1 Timothy's introduction and the first five chapters.

And in this segment, we want to finish up our look at 1 Timothy. I'm very aware as we look at chapter six and look back over the book how much we're leaving out, how shallow our pass through 1 Timothy is. There's just so much more in any part of the Word of God than you can exhaust as you give sermons or lectures on it.

And I guess that's a good thing. It points to the fullness and the richness of God himself. But we'll do what we can in the time that we have to finish up chapter six and then also time permitting we'll look back over and review the book of 1 Timothy just a little bit.

1 Timothy 6 begins with these words, all who are under the yoke of slavery should consider their masters worthy of full respect so that God's name and our teaching may not be slandered. Now I want you to remember that going back to the beginning of 1 Timothy chapter five we're dealing with people subgroups. We're dealing with older men and older women and younger men and younger women.

We're dealing with widows. We're dealing with elders. It's just sort of a mix of practical instruction for Timothy as to how he should deal with the different demographics that are in the church.

Remember that chapter divisions weren't put into the Bible until over a thousand years after the Bible was written. So sometimes the chapter divisions work against understanding the discourse flow. And the discourse flow here goes back into chapter five.

Chapter six is not like a new subject that Paul starts. It's of a piece with what he's been talking about in terms of how the gospel revolutionizes the social relations in the assembly and the different relations of people and the responsibility that the church has to various people in the congregations. But here we're dealing with those in the church who are what he calls under the yoke of slavery.

Verse two, those who have believing masters, because if there are slaves in the church they're probably also masters in the church. He's addressing them both, and should not show them disrespect just because they are fellow believers. Instead, they should serve them even better because their masters are dear to them as fellow believers and are devoted to the welfare of their slaves.

These are the things you are to teach and insist on. Remember here that the yellowed portion is a reference to deity, reference to God, and the red are the references to the imperatives, the commands that remind us of how Timothy or how we the readers, as we read this, should be reminded, these words are meant to direct practical life. They're meant to be appropriated and put into practice.

The last line is separated out, and that's how the NIV separates it out in the text because it's kind of a transitional verse. I think it looks back on all the things that he's been saying back into chapter five, but I'm going to list it again just below because I think it also is the heading for what follows. The main observation to make here has to do with the obvious elephant in the room in this part of 1 Timothy, and that's the issue of slavery.

And I want to say that in addressing this issue, Paul is not endorsing slavery any more than Jesus, say, in Matthew 9. Paul says in Matthew 9 when he addresses divorce, that he's not endorsing divorce. He's dealing with the reality of a world into which he came, and the suffering of which was reduced by God making this concession to his people. He said, okay, because of the hardness of your heart, I'm going to give you these directions about divorce.

As I mentioned in the text, slavery was a ubiquitous social reality in the ancient world. Across the world, there were the conquered and the conquerors, and everybody who could have slaves did have slaves. That doesn't make it right.

But slavery is not something that was part of God's created world. He didn't create the world and create slavery and then say, well, it's very good. Slavery is something that came into the world after the fall of man.

And while the church has been implicated in slavery through the centuries, particularly in North America, and that was tragic, it's only in Christianity that the church has been that we have the rise of a social and political will to end slavery. It's generally agreed by Roman world scholars that it was the rise of the Christian community that gradually brought an end to slavery in the Roman Empire. And certainly, in the modern world, beginning with William Wilberforce and the British Parliament back when Britain ruled the seas, and it was the main colonial power in the world, it was the British Empire that began to dismantle slavery.

It was also a large Christian presence that helped give rise to what was the Civil War. The largest loss of life in American military history was a war fought, and people will say for various reasons, but certainly one of the major issues and one of the major effects had to do with the abolition of slavery. And, regard for races continues to be a problem around the world.

It's not unique to any particular country, and anywhere you go in the world you will find that there are populations at war with each other. We say in American English, they hate each other's guts. And I have, this is just a feature of international travel, you get to, you travel and you get to know people, you find out who the age-old enemies are.

So, I'm not trying to exonerate the U.S. because it has a history of slavery, but it abolished slavery, and if you look around, go online, check it out, you'll find that there are between 40 and 60 million slaves right now. And none of it is the effect of the church. It's other religions, it's other parts of the world outside of the so-called Christian West, where slavery is by far most prevalent.

I want to call your attention then to just a segment of an appendix in a commentary on Colossians and Philemon by G.K. Beale, and I'm going to quote him here. It's important to contrast 1st-century Greco-Roman slavery with Old South 19th-century slavery in the U.S. And he's quoting work by, or citing work by Scott Barchi here in the Anchor Bible Dictionary, Scott Barchi has done a lot of work on the institution of slavery in the Roman world. So, some points.

Number one, slavery was much, much more common among a vaster span of the population in the Roman world. Number two, the culture and the economy came to depend on slavery. If slavery had been abolished, all of a sudden in the Roman world there would have been mass starvation.

Because what the internal combustion engine is to the modern world, or what the supply chain is to the modern world, slavery was in the ancient world. That's how a lot of things got done that people depended on, everybody depended on, for their daily livelihood. Thirdly, slavery was not limited to one ethnic race in the Greco-Roman world.

Fourthly, most slaves, except those who were enslaved because of criminality, were typically emancipated at a relatively young age, usually by around the age of 30. If you had been a slave, you had an opportunity to be emancipated. This became a motivation for faithful slave work since such work was eventually rewarded with emancipation.

Number five, the conditions of a person in slavery were often better than conditions of those emancipated from slavery. Number six, large numbers of people would

often willingly enter into slavery to better their economic and social welfare, which sometimes included payment for their debts. Seven, education was encouraged, and slaves carried out important social and political functions.

Eight, slaves could own property, and they could own other slaves. And nine, the public assembly of slaves was not prohibited by law, as it was in the American South. So again, that's not to say that slavery was ordained by God, or that the Bible endorses slavery, but as an older scholar who's now with the Lord, F. F. Bruce, said at the end of his book on Paul, called *Paul the Apostle of the Heart Set Free*, he said that New Testament practice and teaching brought the institution of slavery into an atmosphere in which it could only wither and die.

And it did. And I'll mention one other source here. It's on the screen, but here you see the journal itself.

It's by a former professor here. We called him Jimmy Egan. He's in the pastorate now, but he wrote a very fine article that was just published last year, *The Gospel Versus Slavery, Six New Testament Arguments*.

He argues that in the New Testament itself, we see not an endorsement of slavery, but such a description and regard for slavery that even at the time, people could have and should have, and in some cases did see the wickedness of the institution, and that slavery implicitly the New Testament condemns slavery, and that we should give the New Testament more credit than we do for its teaching on slavery that was way ahead of its time, and then also see that in this case, as in many cases, the church has not always read the Bible with the fullness of a clear vision that it should. So that's all I wanted to say about these opening verses of 1 Timothy 6, although there's a lot more that could be said. Then we come in the NIV Bible to the heading, *False Teachers and the Love of Money*.

And I'll repeat the words that occur at the end of verse 2. These are the things that you ought to teach and insist on because he goes on now into this issue of teaching which has recurred from the very beginning in chapter 1, the problem that Timothy faces and the challenge that he has to be strengthened in continuing to withstand is these false teachers who evidently are pretty sophisticated and pretty effective and pretty formidable, because Paul has to keep returning and he takes another swipe at what their MO is, how they operate, and what resources are at Timothy's disposal to counteract that with things that are good and pure and true. Paul says in verse 3, if anyone teaches otherwise than what Paul is teaching to Timothy, and does not agree to the sound instruction of our Lord Jesus Christ and to godly teaching, I'll just pause there. Why would he say the teaching of our Lord Jesus Christ? Isn't this Paul's teaching? No, this is not Paul's teaching.

He is an apostle of Jesus Christ. So, as I said in the first lecture, apostle means you're under somebody else's jurisdiction and you're only authorized to pass along to them what has been opened up to you. And so that's what Paul is doing.

He is conveying the sentiments and the convictions that Jesus Christ has passed along to him. If anyone doesn't agree with these things, verse 4, they're conceited and understand nothing. They have an unhealthy interest in controversies and quarrels about words that result in envy, strife, malicious talk, evil suspicions, and constant friction between people of corrupt minds.

It reminds me of going on to some blog sites and just the tone of what is there. Paul seems to be describing something like that. These are people who have been robbed of the truth and who think that godliness is the means to financial gain.

There are parts of the world that I've been in where there are people who are zealous to become ministers because it's a money source. Whether it's an independent church or whether it's a Western denomination that through maybe colonialism has a presence in that country. I think it's the Anglican church and its presence throughout Africa.

There's a real challenge in assessing people who want to work for the church because sometimes people will say they believe anything and anything in order to get a position so that they have an income and they have status. That's a problem and it's a problem all over the world. It's a problem in the West too because we get people that get into the ministry for very unholy reasons.

Sometimes as a teacher who counsels students who are talking about their call and their vision, it's not so common at the seminary level. But when I was teaching in college I met a lot of young men who had very unscrupulous motives. They wanted basically power.

Or in one case I remember a young man struggling with where to go to seminary. His father years before had gone to a seminary which now no longer really taught the Bible at all. On the one hand, the son's conviction was I really would like to go to a seminary where I would be taught the Bible and the Christian gospel.

But my dad has offered me and then he described this vast portfolio. His father was Asian and his father had become wealthy, he said to his son if you'll go to my seminary, the one I went to, I'll give you this portfolio. And this young man said to me I drive around the area of this college which was also in an affluent area.

He said I see these houses and I see these cars. And he thought for a minute and he said that's what I want. I warned him.

I said that's crazy. We're going to see later in the chapter. Free yourself from the love of money.

But he went to his father's seminary. He couldn't turn down the blandishment of the money. They think godliness is a means to financial gain.

But Paul kind of turns the table here. He says godliness with contentment is great gain. The discontent of the quest for money, that's a treadmill.

That's a black hole. That's not the contentment that godliness offers. But godliness offers a better contentment with great gain.

And here's why. We brought nothing into the world and we can take nothing out of it. But if we have food and clothing we will be content with that.

That is we as Christians, those who have our hearts full of the contentment of knowing god. And the contentment of knowing that our lives are directed and overseen by god and he has moved us into a place of his choosing. And we can say with the psalmist our lines have fallen in pleasant places and we can find satisfaction in our circumstances because we understand god has brought us there.

He will sustain us there and he will move things forward with us and for us. Those who want to get rich fall into temptation and into a trap and into many foolish and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction. We have now in many parts of the world something we call the lottery.

And it's very common to read stories about what happens to people when they win the lottery. And in the majority of cases basically it ruins their lives. When they get their wish to become rich it's so destructive that their lives are worse off after they get all this money than they were before they got the money.

The love of money verse 10 is and it says a root but you could translate it the root of all kinds of evil. And you could also translate the root of all evil. I mean that's maybe a little hyperbolic, maybe a little bit of an exaggeration.

But older translations say the love of money is the root of all evil. It's such a pervasive evil that that's really not an understatement. Much of the evil going on in the world is the result of somebody's love, somebody's greed, their love for money.

I would even say that Russia's invasion of Ukraine is economically driven to some extent. Some people are eager for money, and I think especially Paul's thinking of people in the church, some people eager for money have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs. So, for observations, I will say number one

it's human nature to disagree with apostolic teaching and to oppose it often for monetary gain.

This is just I think a tendency of humans and it's sweet when in a church you're ministering and there's not a lot of disagreement, things are kind of moving forward. But what often happens in ministry is that one or more people or parties will arise, the bigger the church the more this is likely. You're going to have at least we can call them squeaky wheels.

People who are always kind of on the fringe complaining about something or making some demand or putting pressure on the pastor or the church to go in a direction that maybe is not all that healthy. Or there are people that every time you teach a class, they're going to be raising their hand and they're going to be disagreeing with you. Or I think of a very well-known pastor whose sermons were so well-researched and written that they were published.

But every Monday or Tuesday after his sermon he preached in a town where there was a Christian college and so there were a lot of professors who attended his sermons. And every Monday or Tuesday he would get a detailed critique from a certain professor who didn't like him and didn't like his preaching. So on the one hand a Christian publisher is publishing the sermons but there's somebody in the congregation who's just a thorn in his flesh and always pointing out things that he thinks were wrong.

And he was a church member so he kind of had to deal with this person. This is just a feature of the landscape in ministry. Of course, in extreme cases, if this causes such division as we're going to see in Titus, sometimes there has to be action taken.

And I suppose in extreme cases if a person is teaching things that are heretical then there comes a time when that person has to be disfellowshipped and different churches have different means of withholding communion from someone or putting them under discipline after they're prayed for and talked to and admonished. Back to Matthew 18, there are provisions for dealing with somebody with whom there's a disagreement in the church. In terms of the gain of godliness, the real gain of godliness, with contentment as Paul puts it, he mentions three things that deserve underscoring.

Number one, is realism in verse seven about what we own. And I put that in quotation marks because we don't own anything. We came naked into the world, we will leave it naked.

All we have is on loan. And even what we quote is temporary. And I've got here on the screen POD when all we are returns to God who made us.

And POD is payable on death. When we die, everything we own is what we have, we're going to surrender it. And somebody else will have it.

So that's just a healthy thing to remember that we're stewards of what we've been given and we don't want to set our love on those things because it's not permanent. God is. Things aren't.

In verse eight we're reminded of the blessing of contentment with what we have. If we have food and clothing, we'll be content with that. And we can know that we wish we had more.

We can know that realistically we don't have enough, especially if we have children. Often you just wonder how you're going to make ends meet. But a great thing about the gospel and the shalom that God administers, he can be with us in such a way that we can rest at night even when we have apprehensions.

We can be assured that he has us covered for our future. And that's what Paul's talking about, contentment. If we have enough for the moment, we can be content with what we have.

And many saints through the ages and we see also in scripture, they don't have enough for the moment. And yet they still find contentment with God. Paul knows this and so he commends it.

Then finally we see deliverance from temptation and traps and desires and destruction caused by the love of money rather than the love of God. And people who love something that the Bible says don't love that, often they'll see that in negative terms, and they'll kind of scowl and growl and they don't like being told this is not good. But God knows what's best for his people and sometimes the things that we want the worst that God with his commands sort of slaps our hands and says, no, don't go there.

We find out looking back that that was benevolent, that was wise, that was in our best interest. And we thank God for looking back on how he delivered us from what would have destroyed our souls as it was threatening souls at Ephesus as Paul writes to Timothy. Now we have a final charge to Timothy and in terms of the heading in the NIV Bible, this is the last section of 1 Timothy.

But you man of God. Now there were a lot of men of God in the New Testament, but nobody else is called a man of God in the New Testament. In the Old Testament, there are a number of prophets that are called man of God, but this is sort of a transfer of something that's an Old Testament expression to Timothy.

And he would appreciate it because he was a student of the Old Testament. He'd been raised on Old Testament readings. You, man of God, flee from all this, so there's your first imperative, and pursue righteousness, godliness, there's that word again, faith, love, endurance.

And I think in Greek there's no and there. This is another example where Paul just sort of dumps out a number of things and it's not a neat sequence, one, two, three, four, and five. It's just a quick collage of the sorts of characteristics that the gospel instills in those who seek God through the good news and become character traits that enable us to live that life of contentment before God and with God and in service to God.

Fight the good fight of the faith. It's not going to be easy. Take hold, lay hold of the eternal life to which you've been called when you've made your good confession in the presence of many witnesses.

This is the second time that Paul's referred to some incident that Timothy sort of committed himself and was commended to God and was prayed for and his calling was recognized. He refers to that again. Take hold of that that was clear when you made your confession in the presence of many witnesses.

In the sight of God, this is very serious language, in the sight of God who gives life to everything and of Christ Jesus who while testifying before Pontius Pilate made the good confession. So, he's really calling Timothy to remember his union with Christ and what Christlikeness ought to look like in his situation and how what he's facing is not something that Christ Jesus himself never faced. He did face it.

While testifying before Pontius Pilate, he made a good confession. I charge you, there's that word that we saw all the way back in verse 1, so this is in chapter 1. So, chapter 6 is bookending what was set down in chapter 1 in terms of putting Timothy sort of under this mandate of faithfulness. I charge you to keep this command, the command to stay at Ephesus, the command to be faithful in his service, the command not to give in to the false teachers, the command to, we'll see in 2 Timothy how he is to deal with people who are opposing the gospel and opposing him and opposing Paul's teaching.

Keep this command without spot or blame and do it faithfully until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ, which God will bring about in his own time. It could be soon, could be later, but it will happen. God, the blessed and only ruler, the King of Kings and Lord of Lords, who alone is immortal and who lives in unapproachable light, whom no one has seen or can see, to him be honor and might forever. Amen.

There's another doxology and I think what Paul here is doing, consciously and unconsciously, he's, by expressing this exalted appreciation for God, he's evoking, I

think he's invoking Timothy, inviting Timothy to affirm this same vision, which puts all of our problems in perspective. I don't know about you, but sometimes I have trouble sleeping at night and I have various devices and one of them is to, cite scripture and then maybe cite the Apostles' Creed, say the Lord's Prayer, say the 23rd Psalm, pray for people, and at some point, often I'll just have a sense of the presence of God.

And that puts everything in perspective. It allows me to leave things in God's hands. He's the only one who can handle all these things that are out there that I have some tie to, but I can't do anything about.

But God can do a great deal because of his grandeur and his greatness. So, the vision of God that is this exalted, that's this true, that's this sweeping, it's the kind of thing that somebody like Paul or Timothy or like Christians today, we return to again and again to remind ourselves of who we are and to remind ourselves of in whose hands we can place ourselves. And this leads to the observations.

Number one, God is the greatest motivator for faithfulness in his service, in a very direct and really indescribable sense. We can't describe God. We can't really wrap our minds around him.

We can't reduce him to totally knowable and certainly not manageable proportions. He's God. We're not.

And in his greatness and majesty, he's the greatest motivator for faithfulness in his service. Secondly, God enables the effective pursuit of his will. And I'm thinking back here to the beginning verse of this little section, flee and pursue.

He enables the effective pursuit of his will, not simply the avoidance of mistakes. And in fact, this is the way that Timothy will prevail. He will prevail by pursuing what God sets before him.

Not to do that, he may need to flee. But I call this Paul's positive ethic. And I'll mention this again I'm sure with respect to 2 Timothy, but we avoid evil not by just avoiding evil and saying, see God, I'm doing pretty well.

I'm not doing X, Y, and Z. The way we avoid evil, the way we avoid what Paul calls in Galatians falling prey to the flesh is by walking, carrying on our lives in the spirit. So if we fill our lives with the good things of pursuing God, then we won't have time and energy to waste our time being tempted by things that we know from scripture or from experience that are not good. And sometimes people spend a lot of energy trying not to do bad things and what they need to do is figure out ways to devote their lives to service and to the pursuit of God.

And if we walk in the light, then we will not be dallying in the darkness. A third observation, a regard for God through faith in Christ that elicits doxology, perfects good theology and ethics. I mean, I think Timothy has good theology.

He's learned it from the best of them, plus he had a good foundation from his mother and grandmother. And I think he's gone far in his practical actions in God's direction, his ethical life. But what perfects good theology and good practice and what renews it and what authenticates it is the kind of love for God that results in this sort of praise for God that we see in verses 15 and 16.

I mean, what we see is praise language or exaltation language, but the source of that in Paul's heart and soul is a deep love for God. And that kind of doxology is what puts the cherry on the cake for God of good belief and good practice. You could almost think the letter was going to end there, but Paul continues, perhaps because he just has this nagging feeling that Timothy is up against the kind of a challenge that he needs to reiterate what a major problem is and how Timothy should respond to it.

And you have to surmise that at Ephesus, which was a prosperous city, there were people that were in the congregation or congregations who had money. And people who have money are very important to the church because through God's guidance, they resource the work of the church. There would not be a classroom that I'm standing in, in a building on a seminary campus in the United States, if it had not been for wealthy donors.

Because seminary students don't have the money to buy campuses and build buildings and buy projectors and computers and stuff like that. So God raises up people with means so that through them his work can go on in the world. But sometimes people who are wealthy, have a lot of power through their wealth and if they move in unholy directions they can cause a lot of problems because they can put pressure on a pastor or on a church to do things that are unethical.

Or they can, because of their power, they can think that what they think is maybe truer than God's word. And all my life I've seen wealthy people who either themselves through their influence or in some cases, one notable case I won't mention, but he hired ghost writers and he wrote books. He didn't really write them, the ghostwriters wrote books.

And they were really kind of crazy books and they caused trouble in churches. But he could do it because he had money. And it's entirely likely that Timothy had people in the church who could do good through their money but also caused problems because they're rich and rich people are worth throwing their weight around and sometimes, they're not as smart as they think and sometimes, they're not as good as they think.

They're not humble and they may not really know theology as well as they think they do. So, command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant, nor to put their hope in wealth. That's hard for a rich person.

Jesus said it's hard for a rich person to enter the kingdom of heaven. Very difficult. Don't put their hope in wealth which is so uncertain, but put their hope in God who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment.

Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share. That's what the gospel means for those who are wealthy. Not that God is there to continue to help you pile up riches, although he may continue to make you prosperous, but that God has provided you with things for the sake of glorifying God by supporting God's work in the world and by practical ministry giving, generosity giving, willingness to share with other people who are in need, like the widows, for example.

In this way, they will lay up treasure for themselves as a firm foundation. Again, that's the teaching of Jesus. Lay up treasure for yourselves in heaven where moth and rust will not corrupt.

So that they may take hold of the life that is truly life. There's the good life that money can buy, but then there's the real good life that money cannot buy, and that's fellowship with God, and that's the joy and the contentment of a life that's devoted to doing the will of God. Then there's a little break in the discourse here, psychological and Paul really does swing into his final words.

Timothy, I think it's the second time he's said his name, guard what has been entrusted to your care. And that's one way of summarizing everything he said. Paul has left Ephesus, he's entrusted the people of God, and he's entrusted the gospel ministry in one of the great cities of the Roman Empire.

Guard it. Turn away from godless chatter and the opposing ideas of what is falsely called knowledge, which some have professed and in so doing have departed from the faith. I think that there's a period on what the subject Paul first opens up in chapter one when he talks about the false teachers.

And he returns to them off and on throughout, but as he finishes, I think the conclusion is reasonable. This is just a major motivator for Paul to write what he writes because he knows that, he knows Timothy can withstand this, but he knows, humanly speaking, it's going to be a close thing. Because these are powerful ideas, these are influential people, they have resources.

The church can't function without resources, which means, you have some wealthy people, but it could be these wealthy people are part of the problem. And God can

help Timothy to sort it out, but it is not going to be an easy process. I want to just point out here, because of this word knowledge, that in older literature this was taken to be evidence that this was written late, this was not Paul, this was the late first century, this was the early second century because this is a reference to Gnosticism.

But a lot of commentators think that Gnosticism is considerably later than what even most projections of a pseudepigraphic first Timothy allow, and in any case, if Paul wrote it, which is my assumption, there's really no evidence of anything like Gnosticism this early in the first century. So, this is not a reference to the capital G Gnosticism of the second century. Evidently, knowledge was just a word that was used to summarize the view that was anti-gospel, or anti-Paul, or anti-Christ.

That was a summation of it. I don't know if it was Paul and Timothy's summary word for it, or if it was a word they used for it. We just don't know these things.

But if you want to know what the knowledge is, well, read first Timothy, and every time you reference the false teachers, kind of write down, well, what did they say? What were they getting wrong? Genealogies, and idol speculation, and all these strategies and convictions that rivaled teachings about Christ. That's the knowledge. So, it's right there for us to see the outlines of, and Paul just repeats here what he's been saying all along.

There are false teachers. They're misleading people. They're departing from the faith.

Remember Hyman Ames and Alexander from the first chapter. Keep, guard what you've been entrusted with, and don't get wrapped up in these idol speculations. Stay positive.

Stay on your gospel ministry script. And you can't win if you get on their turf. So don't get on their turf.

Don't grant them the courtesy and the favor of taking them so seriously that it sounds like, you know, you don't know if you believe in Christ anymore. What you believe in is the right interpretation of all their ideas. They're not even in the ballpark of the saving truth of God and the gospel.

So, as we conclude, we can see that part of Timothy's charge is to charge others. He has the care of souls. He is under charge himself, but a big part of that charge has to do with how others need to appropriate the gospel, live it out, and stand faithful to it.

That's just the pastoral task. Secondly, the affluent are as subject to God as the rest of us. While we should respect everybody in the household of God, and that includes

wealthy people, sometimes, as ministers, we have to be aware that there are people who are trying to use their wealth and status to beat us down so that they can really run the church.

And this is something each of us has to find our way in. Maybe you grew up in a wealthy family, so you're used to dealing with wealthy people. But, I grew up in a not-wealthy family, so wealthy people have always kind of intimidated me.

Because if you're from the working class, then you just kind of grow up like there are these people with power and money. And if you're in the ministry, you have to be careful that they won't run your ministry or cause you to defect from the faith because you put your trust in them rather than in Christ. And especially when they threaten you with their withdrawal of contributions.

Very difficult situation. True wealth is an investment in what God values. True wealth is an investment in what God values.

It's not wealth itself as it exists in the world. Wealth is what God values. Part of Christian growth is learning what God really prioritizes and where the sweet spot of shalom, peace with God is.

The pursuit of what? Well, it's not just, your bank account amount. The making of disciples is a trust to be guarded and not squandered. That's what's been entrusted to Timothy.

You know, not money, not a building, not an institution, not power, but the precious care of souls, the making of disciples, those who will fulfill Jesus' great commission and enjoy the life of fellowship in that labor. That's to be guarded. Erroneous belief or practice can lead away from saving faith.

I sometimes find impatience with people about, well, why do we have to believe just what the Bible teaches? Well, there are a lot of things that are gray areas. Romans 14, for example, a whole chapter is about areas where it's kind of up to the individual. It's all important, but there's freedom that individuals have to go different ways with certain things.

Read Romans 14 and you'll see what kind of things I'm talking about. But if we're talking about real central gospel teaching, then there's not a lot of tolerance there. For example, earlier in this book we saw people who were denying the resurrection.

If people deny the resurrection, the bodily resurrection of Jesus, that will lead you away from the faith. And sometimes denying the resurrection of Jesus begins with lesser deviations from what the Bible, well, why do I have to believe that? Why do I have to believe that? And the first thing, well, you don't have to believe anything.

And I was just at a social function a couple of weeks ago, and I was talking to a woman, and she said, it doesn't really matter what we believe, it just matters that we have faith.

That's the way a lot of people think, but it's not true. And that's one of the things that 1 Timothy addresses. Finally, number six, as in 1 Timothy 2, where Paul says, grace, mercy, and peace to you, God's grace, and all that God's grace brings is Timothy's ultimate resource and the basis for Paul's confidence in writing.

And, of course, that's a grace that mediates Christ who is his hope. And so, in that grace and in his hope, despite all of these threats, all these traps and snares and distractions, Paul says at the end, and I love this conclusion, grace be with you all, it's the only second person plural reference in 1 Timothy. And I think it is saying to Timothy, the body of Christ there, it's in your hands and this is a blessing for all, for you and all of the sheep of the flock.

And so, I think it's an affirmation of trust in God, trust in the gospel, trust in Timothy, and trust in the congregation to do the right thing under Timothy's direction and the Lordship of Christ. Now, to sum up, 1 Timothy and what it teaches, and I say Christian doctrine, and then I have a footnote. Doctrine is understood here as theology with its practical ramifications.

And today in some writings we hear about wisdom or sapiential theology. I think it's Kevin Vanhooser who talks about sapiential theology. And I know Jonathan Pennington and J. VanderWaal Dryden are writers who've written a great deal of late about the need to understand Christian teaching in ways that really do impact how we live so that we glorify God with the whole of our lives and not just our thinking, but also that we don't fall into the trap of thinking we're going to heaven because we think certain things.

There are a lot of people whose lives don't show much evidence that they're really following Christ. But they're not worried because they believe, well, what's important is I believe something. Like, I believe Jesus rose from the dead.

And I go to church and I say he's Lord. And so they pull those verses in Romans 10 out and they say, well, I'm saved because I believe in my heart God raised from the dead. And I say he's Lord.

But Jesus says, why do you call me Lord and not do what I say? The Lordship of Christ revolutionizes our behavior. And that's not salvation by works. That's salvation by Christ, who so grips us that he moves us into a life of active pursuit of righteousness and godliness and faith and good works and all the things that life in Christ enriches our life with.

So, I will not read everything that's on the screen up here because if you've been listening to these lectures, a lot of this would be very repetitious. But I just want to summarize that the priorities that we find in 1 Timothy are, first of all, sound or healthy teaching in chapter 1 and in chapter 6. And we're also going to see it in 2 Timothy and in Titus. And this relates to what I've called the two poles of pastoral leadership.

Teaching, instruction, pastoral oversight, spiritual oversight. If teaching is weak, then the flock is going to be malnourished. I have a neighbor who has cattle, and she has a lot of cattle and not a lot of land.

And so, the cattle usually look like the cows in that one dream that Joseph had. They're very lean cows. They don't have a good diet.

And congregations will have their ribs showing if they are not fattened by the good teaching of Scripture. And this is why Paul says to Timothy, keep a close watch on yourself and on the teaching. Persist in this, for by so doing you will save both yourself and your hearers.

Lots of other references to teach and teaching in 1 Timothy. The other thing I'll say here is that there often is pressure for pastors to be involved socially. And that's a good thing to be involved in visitation, and that's a good thing.

And to be involved just in being with people and organizing and being at meetings. But congregations need to preserve the time that a pastor needs to read and to think and to prepare what he's going to teach. And sometimes congregations or people in congregations don't like that because the more he teaches, the more heat he brings, and the more he puts pressure on people to really pay attention to the Bible.

And people would rather just have a pastor that helps them feel good and have nice meetings and nice social functions. And that's not the kind of pastor that Paul envisions Timothy should be. Another concern is propriety in public worship.

That was chapter 2 especially. Prayer. Men and women's conduct and approach to ministry.

And then pastors make sure that women are encouraged to discipleship. Women have hope of salvation just like men because they can be faithful through being disciples and through the faithful life that good discipleship results in and the power of the Holy Spirit. It's really a wonderful chapter conducive to the worship of God by all the people of God and not just by the men.

Thirdly, integrity and competence in pastor leadership. Chapter 3 reminds us of the high expectations God has and the ability that's required for people who oversee.

Sometimes we find people aspiring to ministry who couldn't make it doing anything else.

And maybe that was God's directing and they tried this and that and the other and finally they realized that God's calling me to this. But sometimes there are people who aspire to ministry and it's because it's a more white-collar job and they don't really want to work. And they've been in situations where they say, well that's kind of a cushy position.

You don't have to sweat. You don't have to dig. You don't have to show up to work at a certain time.

And the stereotype out in the world is well it's great to be a minister. You only have to work one morning a week. But unfortunately, there's some truth to the stereotype.

In my commentary in my section on work ethic, I talk about this problem that pastors sometimes reinforce: laziness. And some pastors also aren't that good of students. They weren't that good of students when they were getting their training and they don't really grow as students in the ministry and this is a recipe for disaster.

Because if we are not pursuing God and growing in the faith, then we will stagnate. And if we begin to stagnate, then we open ourselves up to turning away from God, underachieving, and not enjoying the fullness of God's blessing that we need to stay faithful to him. Fourthly, the preeminence of Christ in the apostolic ecclesial vision.

When we get to the end of chapter 3, Paul talks about the church being the pillar and the buttress of the truth. And this is a high view of the church, but it's a high view of the church that is upheld by another foundation. The church is not its own foundation.

And as I say on the screen, the church must not become its own head. The head of the church is Christ. And those verses about Christ at the end of chapter 3 should be seen in close proximity to the affirmation of the church as an important place.

It's important because it's occupied by Christ. He is the head. And the members are agents of his body and his movement in the world.

We see priorities for pastors throughout chapter 4. And this is kind of an oscillation between steering away from the false teaching and being zealous in the affirmation of the true teaching. There's a lot that we went over in the lecture in chapter 5 on the dignity of every church member the pros and cons of all the demographics and how Timothy should deal with the problems and especially the challenge of widows. And then doxology, not just in chapter 6, but throughout the book, Paul rallies

Timothy with a vision of God which will relativize his problems and which will renew him in faith and in faithfulness.

So, I will close with these words from 1 Timothy 6, I charge you to keep this command without spot or blame until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ, which God will bring about in his own time. God, the blessed and only ruler, the King of kings and Lord of lords, who alone is immortal and who lives in unapproachable light, whom no one has seen or can see, to him be honor and might forever. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

This is Dr. Robert W. Yarbrough in his teaching on the Pastoral Epistles, Apostolic Instruction for Pastoral Leaders and Their Followers, session 7, 1 Timothy 6.