



1 Timothy 6: Knowing God's Contentment, 18-19 March

Personal Preparation 1

We're coming to the end of our journey through 1 Timothy. In this last chapter, Paul returns to many of the major topics he's already spoken about. One of these topics is the danger of false teachers.

Read 1 Timothy 6:3-10

According to verse 3-10, what can you tell about these false teachers ie. what do they teach, and what does their teaching lead to?

What is their personal desire in all this?

What does 1:1-7 and 4:1-4 add to our knowledge of what these teachers teach?

In 1 Timothy, 'faith' is a reference to trust and belief eg. 1 Timothy 5:1, 14. But in 1 Timothy, 'faith' is also short-hand for what Christians believe *in* ie. the gospel of Jesus Christ. Fill in the table below – how do these verses describe people falling away from this true faith?

1:19	
4:1	
5:8	
6:10	
6:21	

According to 1 Timothy 1:14-16, what does the true faith consist of?

In your experience – why do people turn away from the true faith today?

Give thanks for the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Group Discussion

In Personal Preparation time we saw that these false teachers have a desire to use their religious authority for financial gain. We're not sure how this would actually happen in practice, but it's worth noting that in 2 Corinthians 2:17, Paul says, 'Unlike so many, we do not peddle the word of God for profit. On the contrary, in Christ we speak before God with sincerity, like men sent from God'.

We're not going to focus so much on the false teachers, but on the issue of money and contentment for us.

Read 1 Timothy 6:3-21

1. What is contentment?

2. What kind of things stop you feeling content?

3. Is money evil? Explain.

4. What kind of harmful desires and evil come from a love of money?

5. What are some examples of the 'many griefs' (v10), that people can piece themselves with, when being eager for money?



6. How would you tell if you had started to become a lover of money?

7. What should we do instead of having a love of money? (v11-12)

8. How does a focus on eternal life help us not to be lovers of money?

9. For those who are rich (we need to think carefully before we exclude ourselves from this category) – what does verses 17-19 tell us to do?

10. How does this help us to be content?

11. How can we help each other to have a godly attitude to money?

Pray for our contentment. Pray that our hope would be in God and the eternal life he prepared for us. Pray that we would use our material wealth in generous ways. Pray that as a church we would be rich in good deeds.

Extra Reading:

We've now come to the end of term 1 for growth groups in 2009. How did it go for you? Was it great experience? Was it frustrating? Was it a bit in between? Our growth groups are bound to be imperfect. They are full of imperfect people! But as we now enter a break period, it's a good time to reflect on why growth groups are important part of our church.

To get us thinking about this, here's an excerpt from a Christian resource (Matthias Media) catalogue about small groups. After listing reasons why we should go to Growth Group, here's the reasons they list for why people don't. It's helpful in its bluntness!

1. I'm not getting the personal encouragement I need.

A Bible study group is not 'group counselling'. If you feel in need of more support, talk to your group leader about it and perhaps see if you could meet with someone one-to-one....By encouraging and serving others, we often find God gives us encouragement and strength ourselves.

2. I don't have much in common with the people in my group.

Focus on the things you do have in common, rather than the things you differ in. There are at least two very significant things you have in common: you are followers of the same Lord Jesus, and you are part of the same church 'family'. Sometimes, we can focus on differences that seem important to us at the time: family status (single, married, kids/no kids), job status or our passionate interests. But a mixed group can be even more interesting and helpful than a 'homogenous' group if approached with the right attitude. Again, if you have specific needs because of your situation, talk to your leader about it.

3. I often find it boring.

Could it be an attitude problem on your part? A more loving approach might be to do extra preparation and help make it more interesting for everyone by putting thought and effort in the studies and discussion. Perhaps also talk to your leader about how to add some variety to your group's diet. If it is the people you find boring, then you might need to repent of your selfish attitude that sees them as only being there for your entertainment! Start caring for them, and you might actually find them more interesting.

4. It's just so much effort to get there.

Yes, it is sometimes. Bite the bullet, don't be lazy; you know this group, along with church, is perhaps the most worthwhile thing you do each week. There's no magic way to make it easier; just persevere for the sake of others (as well as yourself). It's worth it. Just think how Jesus persevered for your sake

In 2009, we're focusing on 'the real thing' of real relationships with each other. Growth Groups are such an important way to make this happen. Growth groups are about exploring the bible together, encouraging each other to grow as followers of Jesus, and developing caring friendships. Hope to see you back at growth group in term 2!