

Letters to Lead By

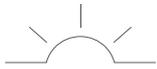
1 TIMOTHY 6:1–10

FIRST DAY: Introduction

Those who serve Jesus have a different perspective, motivation, and manner of life than those without Christ. Jesus highlighted these differences in the Sermon on the Mount when He said, *For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you* (Matthew 6:32–33). Therefore, as the servants of the Lord, we seek to bless Jesus in every occupation, pursue the things that bless Him, and live in ways that please Him. Paul ended his first epistle to Timothy by reminding him of the unique posture, perspective, and pursuits that believers are to hold and exemplify before the world. Once again, Paul warned Timothy that there will be conflict and confrontation with certain people who do *not consent with wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ*.

It is crucial, as servants of Jesus, to remember that we live and think differently than others. This will bring us into conflict at times. First Timothy 6:1–10 emphasizes the contrast between the servants of Christ and those who serve themselves.

Ask the Lord to help you to seek the kingdom of God first and foremost.



FOOD FOR THOUGHT

There are those people who say the Bible advocates or encourages slavery. That is not so. Nowhere in the Bible do you find slavery encouraged. But these are the conditions that existed. Paul is talking about learning to be content whatever your position in life.

—Pastor Chuck Smith

SECOND DAY: Read 1 Timothy 6:1–2

1. It has been estimated that in Paul's time, over half of the Roman Empire held the occupation of slave. So when Paul addressed slavery, he was speaking about a large portion of Timothy's congregation. Their masters could legally treat them as property, not persons; therefore, as disposable possessions, they were often dealt with harshly. In spite of this, Paul exhorted Christian *bondservants* to *count their own masters worthy of all honor* (1 Timothy 6:1a). In Greek, the word *honor* indicates total reverence or deference. Why do you think treating *masters* this way would stand out in Roman culture?
 - a. In today's culture, how do you think showing such *honor* to employers would affect the workplace atmosphere?

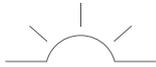
2. According to 1 Timothy 6:1b, why was it essential for Christian *bondservants* to regard their *masters* in this way?
 - a. What does this convey to you concerning:
 - (1) The Christian's perspective toward the workplace

- (2) The Christian's witness and conduct in the workplace (see also 1 Peter 2:12)
3. First Timothy 6:2a (NLT) says, *If the masters are believers, that is no excuse for being disrespectful. Those slaves should work all the harder because their efforts are helping other believers who are well loved.* In that setting, why do you think it might be tempting to disrespect a believing master?
 - a. How does this verse speak to you concerning treatment of fellow believers?

 4. Paul urged Timothy to *teach and exhort these things* (1 Timothy 6:2b). Why do you think issues like this need to be taught and exhorted from a biblical perspective?

 5. In light of your study today, read Colossians 3:22–24. Considering the Christian's role and perspective in the workplace, how are you:
 - a. Encouraged

 - b. Challenged



FOOD FOR THOUGHT

The believer who understands the Word will have a burning heart, not a big head.¹
—Warren Wiersbe



FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Paul used the word *godliness* a total of eight times in this epistle to Timothy, three of which are in this chapter (verses 3, 5, and 6).

THIRD DAY: Read 1 Timothy 6:3–5

1. Concerning Paul's instructions, he told Timothy, *Some people may contradict our teaching, but these are the wholesome teachings of the Lord Jesus Christ. These teachings promote a godly life* (1 Timothy 6:3 NLT). Use this verse to respond to the following:
 - a. The word *wholesome* means *sound, true, not corrupted*. What does this convey about the believer's reliance on the *teachings* of Jesus?
 - (1) What does this suggest to you about those who *contradict* such *teaching*? See also 1 Timothy 1:7.
 - b. This is the sixth time Paul mentioned the subject of *godliness* in this epistle. How does this minister to you about the Christian's main objective? 1 Timothy 6:3
 - c. Share a way the *teachings* of Jesus promote *godliness*.

2. In 1 Timothy 6:4a, Paul described the false teacher who taught something different than the sound *doctrine* of Jesus. He said such a person was *proud* and *knowing nothing*. Bible scholar John Stott pointed out that Paul was essentially calling the false teacher a *conceited idiot* or *pompous ignoramus*.² Why do you think Paul addressed false teachers so strongly?

- a. Why is pride especially dangerous? See Proverbs 16:18 and 1 Timothy 3:6.
3. According to 1 Timothy 6:4b, these false teachers were *obsessed with disputes and arguments over words*. In Greek, this implies an unhealthy, morbid interest or fondness for finding fault with words. What strikes you most about this?
- a. From 1 Timothy 6:4c–5a, note and remark on the fruit of this obsession.
- (1) What does this type of fruit indicate? See Matthew 7:18–20.
- (2) *Destitute of the truth* literally means *having been robbed of truth*. Contrast this with John 8:31–32 and share your thoughts.
4. According to 1 Timothy 6:5b, what was the underlying motivation of these men?



FOOD FOR THOUGHT

*Gospel instruction aims at unity and love. Unsound doctrine yields ugly results with verbal strife at the center.*³
—NIV Zondervan Study Bible



FOOD FOR THOUGHT

The phrase *useless wranglings* refers to constant friction between people.

5. How are true believers to respond or react to such men?
1 Timothy 6:5c

a. Use Proverbs 9:7 and Matthew 7:6 to underscore the soundness of Paul's advice.

6. From the following Scriptures, compare the conduct of these false teachers with that of Paul and share your thoughts:

a. Acts 20:33–35

b. 2 Corinthians 2:17

c. 1 Thessalonians 2:4–5

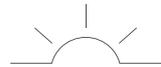
(1) How is Paul an example for you?

FOURTH DAY: Read 1 Timothy 6:6–8

1. After Paul exposed the false teachers who treated *godliness* as *a means of gain* (1 Timothy 6:5), he declared a profound spiritual truth. Use 1 Timothy 6:6 to record this truth:

Now _____ with _____
is _____.

- a. Link this with Philippians 4:11–12 and share your thoughts.
 - b. Pastor Warren Wiersbe said that the word *contentment* means *an inner sufficiency that keeps us at peace in spite of outward circumstances*.⁴ How does the principle of spiritual *contentment* speak to you personally?
 - c. How would you define *contentment*?
 - (1) What *great gain* have you received through godly *contentment*?
2. In your own words, record the plain truth that Paul declared in 1 Timothy 6:7.

**FOOD FOR THOUGHT**

*What ultimately matters in this world is what matters in the world to come.*⁵
—NIV Zondervan Study Bible

a. Connect this with Job 1:21, Matthew 6:19–20, and 2 Corinthians 4:18. How might embracing this reality influence a person's perspective concerning:

(1) Earthly things

(2) Eternal things

3. What did Paul say that we should *be content* with?
1 Timothy 6:8

a. Link this with Matthew 6:31–32. Share your insights.

4. Use Hebrews 13:5–6 to explore the reason why believers can *be content*.

a. How has today's lesson ministered to you?

FIFTH DAY: Read 1 Timothy 6:9–10

1. In contrast to those who have learned contentment, Paul pointed out the dangers for those who *desire to be rich*. Use 1 Timothy 6:9 to document the digression that these people *fall into*:

a. *Into* _____
(verse 9a)

b. *And into* _____
(verse 9b)

c. *Which* _____
(verse 9c)

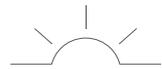
(1) What stands out to you from this digression?

(2) The meaning of *perdition* is *ruin and loss*. Link this with Matthew 13:22. What do you see?

2. From 1 Timothy 6:10a record Paul's sobering declaration:

For the _____ of _____ is a _____ of all kinds of _____.

- a. Notice that it is not *money* itself, but the *love of money* that is a source of *all kinds of evil*. Why is this distinction important?

**FOOD FOR THOUGHT**

Money is one of the most unsatisfying of possessions. There is the trouble in the getting of it. There is anxiety in the keeping of it. There are temptations in the use of it. There is guilt in the abuse of it. There is sorrow in the losing of it. There is perplexity in the disposing of it. Two-thirds of all the strife, quarrels, and lawsuits in the world arise from one simple cause—money.⁶

—J. C. Ryle

3. First Timothy 6:10b indicates the devastating consequences of loving *money*. Use this verse to cite and remark on:
 - a. The spiritual consequences (see also Matthew 6:24)

 - b. The emotional consequences

4. There are several vivid examples in the Bible of the devastating consequences of loving *money*. Use the chart to comment on these examples:

EXAMPLE	CONSEQUENCES	YOUR TAKEAWAY
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Achan</i> (Joshua 7:20–25)</p>		
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Judas</i> (John 12:4–6; Matthew 26:14–16; 27:3–5)</p>		
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Ananias</i> (Acts 5:1–5)</p>		

- a. What *kinds of evil* effects have you seen manifested because of the *love of money* on:
 - (1) People

(2) Society

5. In light of your study today, consider the perspective of these Scriptures concerning money and share your thoughts:

a. Psalm 62:10b

b. Proverbs 11:28

c. Ecclesiastes 5:10

d. Jeremiah 9:23b–24

e. Luke 12:15

(1) How can a godly perspective on money be a witness to the world?

