

Letters to Lead By

1 TIMOTHY 6:11–21

FIRST DAY: Introduction

One day every person ever born on earth will stand before the *only Potentate, the King of kings and Lord of lords*. Therefore, it is essential that on earth we prepare for the priorities of eternity.

In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus warned, *Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasure in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also* (Matthew 6:19–21).

Under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, the apostle Paul reminded Timothy of the coming day when all men will give an account to Jesus Christ. In light of this certainty, Paul instructed his young protégé on the practical ways to pursue, fight, and keep heavenly ideals in a materialistic culture.

This same warning and practical advice is valid for every believer, in every age, living on earth. We live by a different set of values, knowing that our true Sovereign is the *Lord of lords, who alone has immortality, dwelling in unapproachable light*.

Ask the Lord to help you set your affections on eternal realities.



FOOD FOR THOUGHT

This special designation [Man of God] was also given to Moses (Deuteronomy 33:1), Samuel (1 Samuel 9:6), Elijah (1 Kings 17:18), and David (Nehemiah 12:24), so Timothy was in good company.¹
—Warren Wiersbe

SECOND DAY: Read 1 Timothy 6:11

1. In his ministry, Timothy constantly dealt with *those who desire to be rich* (1 Timothy 6:9). In contrast, as a minister of the Lord Jesus Christ, his own priorities were to reflect his identity in Christ. How did Paul identify Timothy? 1 Timothy 6:11a
 - a. What does this identity denote to you about Paul's aspirations for Timothy?

(1) Link this with 1 Kings 2:1–3 and share your thoughts.

2. In 1 Timothy 6:11b, Paul urged Timothy to *flee these things*. Use 1 Timothy 6:4b–5, 9–10 to cite and remark on the *things* Timothy was to *flee*.
 - a. What does the word *flee* suggest to you concerning the way we are to deal with *these things*?

3. By contrast, Paul urged Timothy to *pursue* spiritual things (1 Timothy 6:11c). To *pursue* is to *run swiftly after in order to catch a person or thing*. With this in mind, comment on these divine objectives:
 - a. *Righteousness* (integrity or virtue)
 - b. *Godliness* (practical piety or devotion)
 - c. *Faith* (trust, confidence in God)
 - d. *Love* (sacrificial, unconditional compassion)
 - e. *Patience* (endurance or constancy even in trials and suffering)
 - f. *Gentleness* (kindness and humility)
4. Use the following Scriptures to further elaborate on the believer's unique pursuit:
 - a. Romans 14:19
 - b. 1 Thessalonians 5:15

c. Hebrews 12:14

5. From your study today, what differences do you detect between the pursuits of the believer to those of the unbeliever?

THIRD DAY: Read 1 Timothy 6:12

1. As Paul continued his exhortations to Timothy, what did he urge Timothy to engage in? 1 Timothy 6:12a
 - a. Considering the fact that Timothy was dealing with those who had *strayed from the faith* (1 Timothy 6:10), why was this exhortation pertinent?
 - b. The Greek word for *fight* is *agonizomai*, which implies *contending or struggling against difficulties*. What does this convey to you about this struggle?

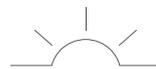
(1) Why do you think Paul described this as a *good fight*? See also 1 Corinthians 9:26–27.

- (2) Use Ephesians 6:10–13 to share the best way to engage in this *good fight*.
2. What was Timothy urged to *lay hold on*? 1 Timothy 6:12b
 - a. Bible scholar John Stott noted, *Although Timothy had already received eternal life, Paul urged him to seize it, grasp it, lay hold of it, make it completely his own, enjoy it and live it to the full.*² Link this with Philippians 3:12–14 and Hebrews 3:14 and share your insights.
 3. Paul reminded Timothy that he had been *called to eternal life* (1 Timothy 6:12c). As a believer, what does this calling mean to you? See also John 10:10.
 4. According to 1 Timothy 6:12d, how had Timothy *confessed* this calling?
 - a. Connect this with Luke 12:8. What do you see?
 5. Share a way you have experienced the Christian life as the *good fight*.



FOOD FOR THOUGHT

The Greek word for *confession* (*homologeō*) speaks of a public declaration.



FOOD FOR THOUGHT

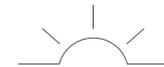
Being a pastor or church leader was a very dangerous occupation in the hostile environment of Timothy's day.
–Brian Brodersen

- a. Why do you think the surety of Christ's return inspires obedience? See also 1 John 3:2–3.
3. In reference to the timing of Christ's *appearing*, what did Paul say? 1 Timothy 6:15a
- a. How does this speak to you? See also Matthew 24:44.
4. At the mention of Christ's *appearing*, Paul offered a beautiful expression of praise to God. Use 1 Timothy 6:15b–16 to express what the following phrases mean to you:
- a. *The blessed and only Potentate*
- b. *The King of kings and Lord of lords*
- c. *Who alone has immortality*
- d. *Dwelling in unapproachable light*
- e. *Whom no man has seen or can see*
- f. *To whom be honor and everlasting power*
- g. *Amen*



FOOD FOR THOUGHT

The Greek word for *appearing* (*epiphaneia*) is where we get the word for epiphany—which means a glorious manifestation. It is mentioned only six times in the entire Bible and only by the apostle Paul—once in reference to the Lord's first coming, and five times concerning His return.



FOOD FOR THOUGHT

The word *amen* is one of the most ancient and universally used words. It is closely related to the Hebrew word for *believe* (*amam*), or *faithful*. *Amen* is first used in Numbers 5:22, and is found throughout the entire Bible. Paul concluded all of his epistles with *amen*, which means *of a truth, most assuredly, and so be it*.

(1) How do you think these profound truths would help Timothy in his calling and confession of faith?

(2) How do these truths speak to you in your calling and confession of faith?

FIFTH DAY: Read 1 Timothy 6:17–21

1. Having addressed those *who desire to be rich* (1 Timothy 6:9), Paul then addressed those who were already *rich in this present age*. From 1 Timothy 6:17–19a, note what Timothy was to *command* them:

a. *Not* to do

(1) Why?

b. *To* do

(1) Why?

2. Our motivation for positive works or actions is found in the *living God, who gives us all things richly to enjoy*. Link this with the following Scriptures to comment on the generous nature of God:

a. Psalm 84:11

b. Romans 8:32

c. Philippians 4:19

(1) How does this affirm the wisdom of trusting God instead of *uncertain riches*?

3. According to 1 Timothy 6:19b, what is the motivation behind *good works*?

a. Connect this with Colossians 3:1–4 and share your thoughts.

4. Paul's final word to Timothy (1 Timothy 6:20–21a) summed up his exhortations throughout the epistle. Cite and comment on what Paul charged Timothy to:

a. Guard

b. Avoid

(1) What is this *falsely called*?

5. Paul closed his epistle with a blessing. Write this blessing using 1 Timothy 6:21b:

_____ . *Amen.*

6. Considering all of Paul's exhortations, why do you think God's *grace* was essential for Timothy?

a. Share an area in which you need God's *grace* upon your life.

SIXTH DAY: Review

1. Paul concluded his first epistle to Timothy with a strong exhortation to lead. From your study this week, comment on the following exhortations:

a. Flee

b. Pursue

c. Fight

- d. Keep

 - e. Command

 - f. Guard
2. Use these exhortations to pray for the leaders in your church.