

Handout: 1 Timothy Lesson 3

The final two chapters of St. Paul's first letter to St. Timothy divide into two parts:

1. Duties toward members of the Church in Ephesus (5:1-6:2a)
2. Warnings concerning false teaching, defining true wealth, and final exhortations (6:2b-21)

In Part 1 (5:1-6:2), St. Paul instructs Timothy on how to interact with seven groups of people within the faith community according to age, gender, and position. A different approach to each group is necessary to achieve the best result for the individual and the unity of the community:

1. Older men: treat as fathers
2. Men who are the same age or younger: treat as brothers
3. Older women: treat as mothers
4. Younger women: treat as sisters
5. Widows: assist according to their circumstances
6. Community elders/presbyters: treat with honor the honorable but rebuke the sinners
7. Slaves: encourage to treat their masters with respect

Paul suggests different support systems for different classifications of widows:

1. Elderly widows with families should receive assistance from their relatives, older children, and grandchildren (5:4).
2. Young widows should remarry (5:14).
3. Older widows without families or wealth should receive material support from their local faith communities (5:16).

Paul gives a series of seven recommendations in 5:21-25 focused on ordaining men to the ministry except for verse 23:

1. Treat everyone the same: do not favor some or have prejudice against others (verse 21).
2. Carefully decide to ordain presbyters so you do not share in continuing sin by ordaining an unfit candidate (verse 22a).
3. Do not ordain men complicit in another's sins (verse 22b).
4. Maintain internal purity through righteousness behavior (verse 22c).
5. Drinking a little wine is healthier than water (Verse 23).
6. Acknowledge that the sins of some people impact the community (verse 24).
7. Acknowledge good works that impact the public good whether obvious or not (verse 25).

In 6:4-5, Paul characterizes false teachers in seven different ways:

1. They are conceited.
2. They understand nothing (about the Gospel of salvation).
3. They have a morbid disposition disposed to arguments and disputes.
4. They inspire envy, rivalry, insults, and evil suspicions.
5. They promote friction among people with corrupted minds.
6. They are people deprived of the truth.
7. They suppose religion to be a means of material gain.

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Paul uses the Greek word *eusebeia* (translated as *ōreligionö* in verses 5 and 6) and the Greek word *autarkeia* in verse 6: *5 and mutual friction among people with corrupted minds, who are deprived of the truth, supposing religion [eusebeia] to be a means of gain. 6 Indeed, religion [eusebeia] with contentment [autarkeia] is a great gain.* The word *autarkeia* is a technical term in Greek philosophy for the virtue of independence from material goods. *Eusebeia* (translated *ōdevotionö* in 4:7) means devotion, piety, godliness, and holiness towards God that is the foundation of the practice of our Christian religion. The word *ōreligionö* is from the Latin word *religare* and means *ōto tie, fasten, bind, or to gather up, treat with care.ö* Religion is the moral virtue by which a person is disposed to render God the worship, service, and the obedience He deserves. *ōReligionö* then corresponds to the practice of piety toward God as Creator and Savior.

In 6:11-12, Paul urges Timothy to pursue seven goals in his ministry:

1. Righteousness
2. Devotion
3. Faith
4. Love
5. Patience
6. Gentleness
7. Eternal life

6:16 *who dwells in unapproachable light, and whom no human being has seen or can see.* Light is one of the images most associated with divinity in the Bible:

1. God created light and in that light created everything else (Gen 1:3).
2. Light dwells with Him (Dan 2:22).
3. God clothes Himself with light (Ps 104:2).
4. He makes the light shine in the darkness (Jn 1:5).
5. God the Son is the light of the world that drives out the darkness (Jn 8:12).
6. God is light (1 Jn 1:5).
7. God will be the light of the new creation at the end of time (Rev 22:5).

It is the blazing light of His divinity that makes him unapproachable to human sight which is why God told Moses, *“But my face you cannot see, for no man sees me and still lives”* (Ex 33:20).

ōAmenö is a Hebrew/Aramaic word used in the sense of *ōit is soö* or *ōI believe,ö* but it is a Hebrew acrostic formed from the first letter of three Hebrew words: *El Melech Ne’eman* (*ōGod is a trustworthy Kingö*). In Revelation 3:14b, it is a title for Jesus Christ: *The Amen, the faithful and true witness, the source of God’s creation, says this... ”*

In 6:17-19, Paul addresses both the negative and positive use of wealth.

The negative use of wealth:

1. Do not let your material wealth make you proud.
2. Do not let your material wealthy make you rely on it instead of relying on God who provides what is truly valuable in a person’s life.

The positive use of wealth:

1. Do good works and be generous in sharing your wealth.
2. Good deeds store up a heavenly reward for eternal life.

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