

I Timothy 6:1-10

Commentary: Godliness in the master-slave relationship 6:1-2

In the last major section of this letter, Paul called Timothy to instruct various groups within the church concerning godliness.

He starts by urging Christian slaves to display godliness toward their masters. Slaves made up a large portion of the population of Ephesus and thus the Ephesian church, however, in the church both slave and master met on equal terms. The New Testament writers do not question the institution of slavery, rather, encourage improved attitudes of both masters and slaves. Slaves were to regard their masters as “worthy of all honour” (v1) if for no other reason, than that God had placed their masters in a position of authority over them. Such a respectful attitude would result in honour to the God they served and the “doctrine” (v1) they followed. Christian slaves who had believing masters had a second reason to give their masters honour and faithful service; they were their “brethren” (v2). As such they deserved even greater consideration than unbelieving masters.

Comprehension Questions:

Carefully read through I Timothy 6:1-10 and then attempt to answer the questions which follow.

- 1) For what purpose does Paul instruct bondservants/slaves to honour their masters (v1)?

Commentary: Ungodliness 6:3-5

In the opening statement of this letter, Timothy was commanded to “teach no other doctrine” than the one he had received from the apostle Paul (1:3) who again returns to this instruction concerning the false teachers: first describing their actions (v 3), then their attitudes (v 4a), next the fruits of their ministry (v 4b-5a), and finally their motivation (v 5b) in order that Timothy may promptly identify and deal with them effectively.

- 3) What are the characteristics of a false teacher (v4)?

- 4) What are the fruits of false teaching (v4-5)?

- 5) For what purpose does the false teacher spread their falsehood (v5)?

- 6) What should the church’s response towards false teachers be (v5)?

Commentary: Godliness through contentment 6:6-10

In contrast with the material gain of the false teachers (v5), Paul reminds Timothy that the Christian finds "great gain" from godliness when accompanied by an attitude of contentment towards one's material possessions. A simple lifestyle demonstrates contentment with the basics of life (v7-8). By contrast, greed opens the door to temptation and destruction (v9).

Paul asserts that the true sign of "godliness" is "contentment" (v6).

7) What does Paul consider necessary to achieve this state of contentment (v6-8)?

Paul states "*For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil*"(v10).

8) Is money therefore evil? Justify your answer.

9) What does the love of money cause some people to do (v10)?