

INSTRUCTIONS TO BELIEVERS PART ONE:

1 TIMOTHY 6:1-10: "Let as many servants as are under the yoke count their own masters worthy of all honour, that the name of God and his doctrine be not blasphemed.

2 And they that have believing masters, let them not despise them, because they are brethren; but rather do them service, because they are faithful and beloved, partakers of the benefit. These things teach and exhort.

3 If any man teaches otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness.

4 He is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmising's,

5 Perverse disputing's of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness: from such withdraw thyself.

6 But godliness with contentment is great gain.

7 For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out.

8 And having food and raiment let us be therewith content.

9 But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition.

10 For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.

1. MASTER/SLAVE, EMPLOYERS / EMPLOYEES; verses 1-2; (The NIV uses slaves instead of servants) During the first century slavery was common among the people. Those who were captured in war and were not killed, served the country as slaves. We see that practice of slavery throughout the Bible. In addition, landowners had slaves to do work on their land.

The Israelites were instructed on how to treat a fellow Israelite with regards to slavery. Let us read Levi. 25:39-46. We no longer have slavery in this country, it does not mean that verses one and two do not apply to us today. Masters and Servants or Employers and Employees may be used interchangeably in this context. With this understanding, these verses are telling us how we are to conduct ourselves whether we are employers or employees; and if a believer has an employer who is also a believer, the employee should not expect to receive preferential treatments, neither should he do less than is required of him.

2. Employees who claim to be Christians are to conduct themselves so that God is honored, and the Christian doctrine is upheld at their workplaces. They should be productive, respectful, arrive at work on time, do a full day's work, and be good examples in moral and character. They should not be involved in idle conversations and gossip. They should go beyond the call of duty in their service. They do so, because they know that through their work, they are not serving man but God, and unbelievers are watching them. They should do nothing at the workplaces that would compromise their faith and misrepresent true doctrine. They are to conduct themselves in such a way that unbelievers will be interested in knowing the God they serve; and do nothing that would become a stumbling block to unbelievers.

To the Christian employer, they are to treat their employees as brothers and not as the world treat their employees. The world's system exhibits a master servant attitude at the workplaces where some business owners consider the employees less than themselves. Paul instructed Christian business owners to treat their employees fairly as brothers, which includes fair compensation for their services. Business owners are to remember that they are answerable to God, and He owns everything including the business they call theirs. They are not the true owners but caretakers of the business.

3. THE LOVE OF MONEY; verses 3-5; Paul warned Timothy and us to stay away from those who just want to make money from preaching, and from those who strayed from the sound teaching of the gospel, which leads into quarrels that cause strife in the church. A person's understanding of theology should not become the basis for lording it over others or used mainly for the purpose of making money. He warned Timothy and us, to stay away from people who just want to argue, and those who corrupt the doctrine of Christ. Those who do not agree with the Word of Christ are proud and know less than they think they know. Those who fall from plain practical doctrines of Christianity fall into controversies.

Men who are not content with the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, will form opinions of their own and impose them on others, will sow seeds of all kinds of mischief in the church. Men of corrupt minds are destitute of the truth. The words of Jesus Christ are wholesome words, they are the best to prevent or heal the church's wounds, as well as to heal the wounded conscience. When men have the wholesome word of Christ, they will not argue about their own opinions or that of another person.

We are warned not to add to or take away from the word of God. (Revelation 22:18-19 and Deuteronomy 4:2) Here we see God's warning at the beginning when He gave instructions to Moses and also at the end of His book to us, the Bible. It is important that we heed sound doctrine and stay away from those who are not content with the word of Jesus Christ. False teachers generally pervert the word of Christ for personal gains, we should stay away from them and their teachings. When we know the word of God, with the aid of the Holy Spirit we are able to identify false teachers and their false doctrines.

4. HONORING GOD; verse 6; True Christianity is the worse trade according to the world standard for those who make it a trade to serve themselves, but those who make it their

calling, and make a business of it, will find it a gainful calling. The truth that Paul communicated is “Godliness with contentment is great gain”. Godliness in itself is great gain, and, wherever there is true godliness, there will be contentment. All true godly people have learned as Paul learned that in whatever state they are, to be contented. (Philippians 4:11-12)

5. WRONG BELIEF ABOUT MONEY; verses 7-10; Often people say “money is the root of all evil”; but that is not what the Bible teaches. The Bible says the love of money is the root of all evil. (1 Timothy 6:10) We are commanded to love God with all our heart, soul and mind. (Mark 12:30) We are to love one another. (1John 4:7) We are to love ourselves and our neighbors equally. (Mark 12:31) When anyone starts loving money, it becomes their god.

They trade what God should get, which is their love with all their heart soul and mind and give that love to money, the pursuits of it, and the desire for it instead of their love and desire for God. We are told in Matthew 6:33 to first seek The kingdom of God and His righteousness, and everything else will be added to us. In this passage, Paul is instructing us that our love should be directed to God and not money. He stated a truth, that we entered into this world empty handed and when we die, we will take nothing with us. He is not saying that it is a sin to be rich. The warning is how we become rich. Notice the verse did not say those who are rich, but those that will become rich, those who place their happiness in riches.

We should not be consumed in the acquiring of riches because, most who chase after riches do so at the cost of their love for God, many times comprises of character, integrity and or moral are involved. Money, then becomes their master and we cannot serve two masters we must chose one, (Matthew 6:24). We are to store our treasures in heaven not on earth because what we have on earth we will leave on earth when we die, they are all temporary; but the treasures that are stored in heaven will last for eternity. (Matthew 6:19-20) People May have money, and not

love it, but, if they love it until it becomes an obsession it can lead to all kinds of evil, including covetousness.