

FIRST TIMOTHY

Chapter 6

Let all who are under a yoke as bondservants regard their own masters as worthy of all honor, so that the name of God and the teaching may not be reviled. 2 Those who have believing masters must not be disrespectful on the ground that they are brothers; rather they must serve all the better since those who benefit by their good service are believers and beloved.

6:1 *bondservant*. Used for slavery in general. Emphasizes the undesirable condition of many slaves who were driven and treated no better than yoked beasts of burden. (TLSB)

masters. Refers primarily to non-Christians, whose slaves had become believers. Over time, Christian teaching of brotherhood tended to undermine Roman slavery. (TLSB)

worthy of all honor. Masters are among the “other authorities” for whom the Fourth Commandment demands honor, service, and obedience. (TLSB)

reviled. Disrespect and disobedience from believing slaves would cause their unbelieving masters to disparage the newfound faith. Honorable service rendered by believing slaves, conversely, would have an evangelistic effect on their masters. (TLSB)

6:2 *believing masters ... brothers*. All Christians, regardless of earthly vocation and status, are viewed and loved equally in God’s sight (Gal 3:28). They are, therefore, brothers and sisters. (TLSB)

they must serve ... beloved. If unbelieving masters are to be honored and served (v 1), then believing masters should be honored and served “all the better.” (TLSB)

urge these things. Refers to the instructions to slaves. (CSB)

Variations of this admonition appear throughout the Pastoral Epistles (cf 5:7; 2Tm 2:14; Ti 2:15). (TLSB)

5:1–6:2 When Christians interact with one another in ways that are honorable and pure, they beautifully reflect God and the faith they confess. But the Church is burdened and liable to be reviled by unbelievers when honor and purity are lacking. Our dear Lord Jesus has made every Christian worthy of eternal honor by His sacrificial death and resurrection. Through faith in Him, even dishonorable sinners are regarded as God’s pure and beloved children. • Lord Jesus, turn us from our self-indulgent ways, that we may selflessly give honor and care to those whom You have given us to love and cherish. Amen. (TLSB)

False Teachers and True Contentment

Teach and urge these things. 3 If anyone teaches a different doctrine and does not agree with the sound words of our Lord Jesus Christ and the teaching that accords with godliness, 4 he is puffed up with conceit and understands nothing. He has an unhealthy craving for controversy and for quarrels about words, which produce envy, dissension, slander, evil suspicions, 5 and constant friction among people who are depraved in mind and deprived of the truth, imagining that godliness is a means of gain. 6 But godliness with contentment is great gain, 7 for we brought nothing into the world, and we cannot take anything out of the world. 8 But if we have food and clothing, with these we will be content. 9 But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation, into a

snare, into many senseless and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction. 10 For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evils. It is through this craving that some have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many pangs.

6:3–5 Paul returns to the subject of 1:3.

6:3 *accords with godliness.* An elaboration on both the content and the effect of our Lord's sound words. (TLSB)

6:4 *controversy.* Worthless matters serve only to distract souls from the sound words and teaching of v 3. (TLSB)

6:5 *robbed of the truth.* They had once known the truth but had been led into error. (CSB)

Completely corrupted. (TLSB)

godliness is a means to gain. Both financial and material reward. Cf Jn 2:13–22. (TLSB)

6:6 *godliness with contentment* – True godliness is faith in the Lord Jesus together with the kind of life that faith produces. This brings contentment, the opposite of dissatisfaction and greed.

A state of being and attitude that enables the Christian to live with faith in Christ, impervious to the influence of external circumstances. (TLSB)

At the opening of this paragraph, Paul arranges to obviate a misunderstanding, as though Christianity were under no circumstances a source of gain: But a great gain indeed is godliness with contentment, with the feeling of possessing all that one needs. Piety does indeed result in a gain, and one that is far more excellent than that which the errorists had in mind. It is a characteristic of godliness that this virtue offers a real gain only in connection with such an attitude of satisfaction with one's lot as places its hope and confidence in the Lord and His providence, Ps. 37, 5; Prov. 30, 8; Matt. 6, 33. (Kretzmann)

6:7 *brought nothing into* – The first reason adduced by the apostle in support of his statement is that taken from the transitory character of this world's goods: For nothing it was that we brought into this world; that we also can bring nothing away (who will doubt?). That is the common, the general human experience. Not only without money and goods, but in absolute nakedness man is born into the world, Job 1, 21. And no matter how much he may earn and gain during this short life, no matter how greedily he may seek the things of this world, he can take nothing along with him into eternity, Ps. 49, 17; Luke 12, 15-21. All the money and goods of this present life are thus transitory in character; they can be our property at best for only a short time, take them along with us we cannot: why, then, strive after that which cannot bring lasting satisfaction? (Kretzmann)

This universal and timeless truth is recognized by those possessing godliness with contentment (v 6), but ignored by those who are ambitious only for earthly gain (v 5). St. Bernard of Clairvaux: "Cease to pursue those things which it is misery to attain.... Will it be more prudent to yield them up for love of Christ than to have them taken away by death?" (SLSB, pp 207–8). (TLSB)

Job 1:21 "Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked I will depart. The LORD gave and the LORD has taken away; may the name of the LORD be praised."

6:8 food and clothing – The word for “clothing” means “covering” and includes not only what directly covers the body but also shelter. Food and covering take care of our most basic needs.

The necessities of life come from God. See Luther’s explanation of the First Article of the Apostles’ Creed. (TLSB)

The second reason of the apostle in support of his statement warning against dissatisfaction and avarice: But having food and raiment, with these let us be content. The actual needs of a man are really much smaller than he himself usually is willing to believe. If he is in possession of that which keeps him alive from day to day; if he has the simplest foods to eat and water to drink; if he can cover his nakedness against heat and cold; if he has some form of shelter against the inclemencies of the weather, then he is in possession of those factors which he needs for the sustaining of his life. Christians that realize the truth of these facts will therefore gladly heed the admonition to be content with this measure of God’s goodness and bounty, especially since they have the promise that they will always have what they need for the support and wants of the body, Matt. 6, 33. 34.

Psalm 34:10 “The lions may grow weak and hungry, but those who seek the LORD lack no good thing.”

Matthew 6:31-33 “³¹ So do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ ³² For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. ³³ But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.”

Philippians 4:12 “I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want.”

6:9 fall into temptation – The tense of the Gk verb shows that this commonly happens among those who desire riches. (TLSB)

The apostle furthermore refers to the danger connected with the possession of many goods of this world: They, however, that desire to be rich fall into temptation and a snare and many senseless and pernicious lusts, which drown the people in ruin and destruction. Note that Paul does not condemn riches in themselves, not the fact that a person is rich, his having received an unusual amount of God’s blessings, although it remains true that such people are exposed to very great temptations. He is speaking of such as make it their object and goal to be rich at all costs, that have no other interest in the world than to heap up riches to themselves. People of this kind deliberately court temptation and therefore find little difficulty in finding it; in fact, they readily fall into temptation, they find cause and inspiration for many sins, they find many sins beckoning them on to which they, in their former less prosperous state, never gave a second thought. Following the lure of riches, they fall into the snares of sins, of intemperance, of dissipation, of voluptuousness, and many other vices. Every new day provides further food for the lust of their heart and eyes; with ever greater eagerness they strive after the flimsy hollowness of this world’s gifts. Foolish the apostle calls these desires, since they take away all decent reasoning, all moral common sense, causing people to be drowned, to be dragged down into ruin and destruction, into moral and spiritual bankruptcy. So immeasurably deep is this perdition that it includes bodily ruin as well as intellectual, spiritual, and eternal condemnation. At present all the nations of the world seem to have been caught in the vortex of a wild whirlpool, as the mania for amusements and luxuries indicates all too plainly. (Kretzmann)

snare. The temptation for riches acts as a trap. (TLSB)

ruin and destruction – Similar terms that, when used together, could include both physical and spiritual destruction. (TLSB)

6:10 *love of money* – Just as shoots sprout from a root, so all kinds of evils sprout and grow from the love of money; money itself is not inherently evil. (TLSB)

Money itself is not the evil. God made Abraham and others very rich men. Most Christians are blessed with more money than is actually needed for the basics of food and clothing. The problem is the heart.

In conclusion, the apostle characterizes this insane desire for money: For a root of all evils is the eagerness for money, which some coveting after have erred from the faith and have transfixed themselves with many sorrows. So dangerous is avarice, the love of money, the desire for riches, that St. Paul expressly says there is no evil in the world which cannot grow and receive its nourishment from this terrible vice. Every sin in the Decalog may directly or indirectly be traced back to avarice. Those are the fruits which a person harvests if he permits this root to obtain a firm hold in his heart. From his experience of many years, gained in many countries, the apostle is able to add that such people as did covet after money, as did desire it with all the eagerness of their foolish mind, lost the spiritual life given to them by faith with this gift itself. They have gone aside, they have erred from the right way. They may not have felt the danger of the situation at first, but the more their love for money grew, the more their love for their neighbor, for Christ, was stifled. They made Mammon their god, and that god made them unhappy. They are plagued with many sorrows and restless thoughts, not only thoughts of remorse, but also internal torments of various kinds: worry for the future, apprehension for the safety of all the money and goods that they have accumulated, fear on account of the uncertainty of investments. Thus Paul characterizes the foolishness, the sinfulness, the damnableness of the love of money. All the more should Christians be found willing to heed his warning and to flee the vice of covetousness. (Kretzmann)

Matthew 15:19 “For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false testimony, slander.”

wandered. Their departure from the Christian faith did not happen instantaneously. (TLSB)

pierced themselves. Much of the temporal suffering endured by lovers of money is self-inflicted. (TLSB)

6:2–10 Rather than being content with what we have, we by nature covet the things we do not have. Those who covet often see money as a wonderful solution to all of life’s problems. But those who love money are in grave danger; they risk losing their faith in Christ. Our Savior has blessed us with the riches of His priceless salvation. Nothing can separate us from His love. As He tenderly cares for us through His Word of promise, we are able to enjoy lives of godliness with contentment. All that we can take with us when we leave this world is the life and immortality that Jesus has given us through faith—and that is more than enough! • Give us grace, dear Lord, rightly to regard the wealth we call our own, that it might not be a curse in our lives but a blessing. Amen. (TLSB)

Fight the Good Fight of Faith

11 But as for you, O man of God, flee these things. Pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, steadfastness, gentleness. 12 Fight the good fight of the faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called and about which you made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses. 13 I charge you in the presence of God, who gives life to all things, and of Christ Jesus, who in his testimony before Pontius Pilate made the good confession, 14 to keep the commandment unstained and free from reproach until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ, 15 which he will display at the proper time—he who is the blessed and only Sovereign, the

King of kings and Lord of lords, 16 who alone has immortality, who dwells in unapproachable light, whom no one has ever seen or can see. To him be honor and eternal dominion. Amen. 17 As for the rich in this present age, charge them not to be haughty, nor to set their hopes on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who richly provides us with everything to enjoy. 18 They are to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share, 19 thus storing up treasure for themselves as a good foundation for the future, so that they may take hold of that which is truly life. 20 O Timothy, guard the deposit entrusted to you. Avoid the irreverent babble and contradictions of what is falsely called “knowledge,” 21 for by professing it some have swerved from the faith. Grace be with you.

6:11 *man of God* – By Paul calling him this he was not setting him apart from other Christians. Peter uses this term when he calls Christians “a people belonging to God” (1 Peter 2:9). Paul, again uses the term in 2 Timothy 3:17 to mean anyone who belongs to God. (CSB)

Paul thoroughly contrasts Timothy with lovers of money who wander from the faith. Timothy was a unique man of God, but the words that follow may apply also to every man and woman of God. (TLSB)

Having shown the transitoriness, the superfluity, and the danger of possessing and, more still, of striving after great earthly possessions, St. Paul, by way of contrast, now shows the glory of spiritual possessions, as an incentive to him to make every effort toward their attainment: But thou, O man of God, flee these things; follow rather after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness. It is a title by which high honor was conferred upon Timothy and upon all Christians, that of being designated a man of God, 2 Tim. 3, 17. The believers are children of God, they belong to God as His own, a fact which alone is a strong argument for the Christians to show themselves worthy of the grace expressed by the name. He that belongs to God as His own has the fullness of riches in Him and is not in need of temporal gifts and blessings to complete his happiness. (Kretzmann)

flee these things – Keep on running away from all these temptations both in your heart and in your actions. This reminds one of Psalm 1:1 where the psalmist warns against becoming progressively more comfortable in sinful actions. “Blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked or stand in the way of sinners or sit in the seat of mockers.” Joseph sets an excellent example when he states “How then can I this do such a wicked thing and sin against God?” (Gen 39:9) and runs away from Potiphar’s wife in Genesis 39:13.

The Christians, therefore, gladly heed the call of the apostle: Shun, avoid, flee these things. It is a bad plan to try out one’s powers of resistance in courting the dangers connected with the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life. To keep away from their alluring attractions is the one safe thing to do. By constant activity in matters pertaining to the kingdom of God and the service of his neighbor a Christian will put away from him the temptation to many sins of the flesh. Rather, on the other hand, he will follow after, seek with all his might, the virtues which are so often praised so highly in Scriptures: righteousness of life, according to which a person will at all times and in all conditions conduct himself in accordance with the Word of God and His holy will; godliness, according to which the entire religious life of a person will be one of reverence for the holy God; faith, which accepts the merits of Christ and finds comfort in the grace and help of God at all times; love, by which faith shows itself active in good works toward God and one’s neighbor; patience or steadfastness in sustaining trials; meekness and humility, according to which a person will not permit himself to become embittered. That is the one side of true Christian conduct. (Kretzmann)

6:12 *fight the good fight of faith* – The Christian is engaged in an ongoing contest in which sound doctrine is advanced against the forces of darkness and evil. (TLSB)

When we become Christians, we are enlisted in a fight with the devil, the world and our own sinful flesh that continues until we are taken to heaven. We need to take hold of the resources (Word and Sacrament) that God gives us and not try to do it on our own. Ephesians 6:10-20 points to much armor that God would be glad to give us.

But the other side is emphasized by the apostle with just as much force: Fight the good fight of faith, take a firm hold on eternal life, to which thou hast been called and hast confessed the good confession before many witnesses. The apostle uses the picture of an athletic contest, in which the participants must exert every muscle, every nerve to the utmost, if they desire to possess the victor's crown. (Kretzmann)

Take hold of the eternal life.† Timothy had possessed eternal life since he had first come to faith, but Paul urges him to claim its benefits in greater fullness. (CSB)

God's gift of eternal life is not a prize that you receive at the conclusion of the contest but a prize that you receive and retain even in this present life of faith. (TLSB)

called. God's active power alone can appropriate the gift of eternal life to human beings. In the Christian life, this call comes through the Sacrament of Holy Baptism. (TLSB)

The entire life of the Christians is a continual battle against the many enemies of their faith; they must hold their faith against every attack, against every temptation. Hereby faith itself must contribute and impart strength for proper steadfastness, especially for securing, for laying hold upon, eternal life. The life of eternity with God above is in itself the prize for which the Christians must strive with unabated rigor and eagerness. For obtaining this prize Timothy and every other Christian has been called, that is the real object of their lives, Phil. 3, 14. (Kretzmann)

you made your good confession. Probably a reference to Timothy's confession of faith at his baptism during Paul's first missionary journey. (CSB)

This is probably the public confession of faith Timothy made at his Baptism. (TLSB)

This argument possessed all the more weight, since Timothy had professed his faith in Christ and in the certainty of eternal life in a confession before many witnesses. St. Paul is most probably referring to the confession made by Timothy at the time of his Baptism and reception into the congregation. For even in those early days a special baptismal confession was in use. This was a good, a fine, an excellent confession, both its content and its significance elevating it above all confessions with a mere worldly content. Since, moreover, many witnesses, very likely the entire congregation, had been present at the time of his making his confession of faith, he should remember also the obligation toward these Christian brothers and sisters, and not lightly set aside the responsibility resting upon him. These words are so important that they should be heeded also in our days by every catechumen or confirmand, both before and after the special rite by which he joins the congregation as a communicant member. (Kretzmann)

6:13–16 Paul appeals through both Father and Son and magnifies their attributes. (TLSB)

6:13 *who in his testimony before Pontius Pilate made the good confession.* Probably a reference to Jesus' statements recorded in Jn 18:33–37; 19:10–11. (CSB)

The matter is of such importance to Paul as to make him add a very impressive exhortation: I charge thee before God, who quickens all things, and Christ Jesus, who before Pontius Pilate testified the good confession, that thou keep the commandment immaculate, irreproachable, until the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is in the form of a serious, emphatic, cordial exhortation, of an earnest charge, that Paul

addressed his pupil at this point. He adjures him before, in the sight of, God, of whom he says that He gives life to all things. God is the Source of all life, both physical and spiritual; Timothy, therefore, having received his spiritual life from God, may be assured that the same Lord will continue to keep him by His power unto life everlasting. But Paul not only reminds Timothy of God and His quickening strength, but also of his Savior Christ Jesus, whose frank confession as to His person and office during the trial before the Roman governor Pontius Pilate is an example for all Christians of all times. (Kretzmann)

I charge you – Cf 5:21. (TLSB)

God, who gives life. Human life did not accidentally evolve over time. It is, rather, a gift and act of God Himself. Paul testified to this truth before the Areopagus in Athens (Ac 17:25). (TLSB)

testimony before Pontius Pilate. Jesus' testimony concerning His divine identity served as the basis for His execution (cf Mk 15:2; Lk 23:3). Others understand "testimony" in a broader sense, including not only Jesus' words but also His suffering, crucifixion, death, and burial. (TLSB)

6:14 *the commandment.* Perhaps the whole charge given to Timothy to preach the gospel and care for the church (see v. 20)—though the preceding context may indicate that Paul used the singular "command" to sum up the various commands listed in vv. 11–12. (CSB)

These two facts should be the reasons influencing and strengthening Timothy to keep the commandment, the sum of the entire body of Christian doctrine entrusted to him, immaculate, pure, uncontaminated, without the slightest admixture of error, and also irreproachable, so that no one would be able to bring a charge against him of even the slightest irregularity in his preaching. The gift of the pure doctrine is too precious to permit any careless handling. Timothy should therefore observe the charge to keep the doctrine in all purity until the revelation, the last coming, of the Lord Jesus Christ. With the second advent of Christ the Church will be transformed from the humble and militant to the glorious and triumphant state. Then also the proclamation of the Gospel-message will have an end, for then we shall see, possess, and enjoy what we have here believed. (Kretzmann)

appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ. The return of the Lord on the Last Day. (TLSB)

6:15 *at the proper time.* Just as Jesus' first coming occurred at the precise time God wanted (Gal 4:4), so also his second coming will be at God's appointed time. (CSB)

God will choose and determine the exact moment. Cf Gal 4:4. (TLSB)

the blessed and only Sovereign - All true and lasting happiness is personified in Him and only comes from Him and can be only found in His presence in our lives.

Sovereign. Absolute, powerful ruler (TLSB)

King of kings and Lord of lords. See Rev 19:16. (CSB)

Jesus' reign extends even over those earthly rulers who wield great power and exercise control. Cf Rv 19:16. (TLSB)

As usual, the feeling of exaltation which takes hold of the apostle here lifts him to the point of joyous exclamation: Which in due time will show the blessed and only Powerful One, the King of kings and the Lord of lords, He alone having immortality, living in an inaccessible light, whom nobody of men has seen nor can see; to whom honor and everlasting power. Amen. The revelation of Christ will be shown;

according to His human nature He will be revealed before the eyes of the astonished nations. God will set this revelation forth, cause it to be made. In due time this will be done, at the period of the world's existence which is known only to God, having been hidden even from Christ according to His human nature in His state of humiliation. The Blessed and the only Powerful One God is called, since He is in possession of the fullness of heavenly bliss and happiness, and since He is, in His essence, almighty, the Sovereign, the Lord, or, as Paul continues to explain, the King of kings and the Lord of lords. ALL people that dwell on earth, no matter whether they bear the title and exercise the power of unlimited monarchs over millions of subjects, sink into insignificance beside Him. (Kretzmann)

6:16 *immortality*. Lit, "deathlessness." An attribute unique to God that He shares with human beings through the Gospel (2Tm 1:10). Ambrose: "How could He not have immortality Who has life in Himself? He has it in His nature" (NPNF 2 10:288) (TLSB)

He alone has immortality; He is the only one in whom this attribute is a quality of His essence; He is the Source of everlasting life. He lives in a light of heavenly glory, which is inaccessible to mere human beings, to mortal sinners. The very reflection of the divine glory is unbearable to human eyes, Ex. 34, 30; much less will they be able to look into the glory of the divine essence itself. No man's eyes have seen nor will see the glory of the great God of heaven, not on this side of eternity. And yet the apostle breaks forth into a deliberate doxology, saying that both glory and eternal strength should be given to Him. Our praise and adoration of His wonderful essence will continue throughout eternity, long after we have changed the mortal hull of our body into the glorified body of heavenly majesty. This is most certainly true. (Kretzmann)

Exodus 33:18-20 "¹⁸Then Moses said, "Now show me your glory."¹⁹ And the LORD said, "I will cause all my goodness to pass in front of you, and I will proclaim my name, the LORD, in your presence. I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion."²⁰ But," he said, "you cannot see my face, for no one may see me and live."

Psalm 104:2 "He wraps himself in light as with a garment; he stretches out the heavens like a tent."

John 14:9 "Jesus answered: "Don't you know me, Philip, even after I have been among you such a long time? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father'?"

1 John 1:5 "This is the message we have heard from him and declare to you: God is light; in him there is no darkness at all."

Revelation 21:23 "The city does not need the sun or the moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and the Lamb is its lamp."

whom no one has seen or can see. The divine being's glory is different from the light He created. Cf Jn 8:12; 1Jn 1:5. In the Nicene Creed, we confess that Jesus is "God of God, Light of Light." (TLSB)

no one has ever seen or can see. Sinful humanity cannot see God and live. (TLSB)

eternal dominion. Christ both possesses and exercises inexhaustible strength. (TLSB)

6:17 *rich*. Paul refers to those who are already rich, having acquired their wealth in honest and irrefragable ways, not those who desire to be rich (cf vv 9–10). (TLSB)

The admonition which Timothy is to address to the rich people of the world is by no means a mere postscript, but shows the application of the doctrinal exposition in the early part of this chapter. Of the

desire to get rich quickly and its dangerous consequences the apostle had treated; to the rich themselves he says: Those that are rich in this present world-period charge not to be proud-minded, not to have their hope rest on the uncertainty of riches, but upon the living God, who offers everything to us richly for enjoyment. St. Paul speaks of the rich in this present period of the world, of men that are wealthy in the goods pertaining to this temporal life. These goods are for the moment only, they are transitory, they are vain. For that reason the wealthy people should not be supercilious, proud-minded, a vice to which they are peculiarly addicted. In reality, they have nothing to be proud of, for their possessions are merely entrusted to them by God for a season, and they are transitory and evanescent. How foolish for them to indulge in sinful pride! Another thought brought out by the apostle is this, that the wealthy should not rest their hope on the uncertainty of their wealth. The riches of this present world are an uncertain quantity, subject to rapid change, gained today, lost to-morrow. To place one's hope and confidence in wealth is to place it on an uncertain, deceitful foundation. Instead, the rich people should let their hope rest in God, who is not a dead idol like the money which these people adore, but is the living God, the God and Fountain of life. He it is that offers and provides us with all that we need in this life, and in rich measure at that. As a rule, we receive far more than we actually and absolutely need and can use; we are able not only to satisfy our immediate wants, but also to enjoy the gifts of God in quantities above our actual needs. How foolish, then, for men to put their trust in riches! (Kretzmann)

present age. The "rich" have tangible, earthly wealth. Intangible, spiritual riches cannot be accurately assessed within the limits of time. (TLSB)

enjoy. Riches and all other gifts from God's hand are to be received for our enjoyment with thanksgiving (4:4). (TLSB)

6:18 *rich in good works.* Even the poorest Christians can be "rich" in service. Those who enjoy earthly riches should especially endeavor to be "rich" in this noble way, which flows from faith in Christ. (TLSB)

ready to share – Instead of this the apostle admonishes that the rich of this world prove themselves faithful stewards of the gifts entrusted to their care: TO do good, to be rich in good works, to be liberal, ready to share, laying down for themselves a good foundation for the future, that they may take hold on the real life. The apostle uses synonymous expressions in order to emphasize his point. The rich people, as stewards of God's gifts to them, should be ready with the proper conduct toward men in all circumstances of life. They will therefore excel, be especially rich, in good works which may be done with the aid of money and earthly goods: that is a wealth which far surpasses that of mere money. They should be liberal, generous, where the need is shown to exist; they should be cheerfully willing to be of service to their neighbor at all times. In this way they will gather for themselves true treasures, such as have a lasting value, beyond the transitoriness of this present age and world, Luke 16, 9; 6, 35; Prov. 19, 17. Every gift that comes from a heart full of true love, all assistance that flows from real interest in our neighbor's welfare, is a jewel in the eyes of God. He, therefore, that has many deeds of true kindness to his credit will have a large treasure standing in his name. a capital bearing interest in the best sense of the word. (Kretzmann)

6:19 LAY UP TREASURES...FIRM FOUNDATION – On the Great Day, when the Lord will render to every man his account, He will pay interest of mercy to him that was rich in good works, and he will be able to lay hold on eternal life. It is an inducement to us to trust in Him as our faithful and gracious God, to fear, love, and trust in Him, to show Him our gratitude by never forgetting or forsaking our neighbor in any case of real want! (Kretzmann)

Good works that always accompany faith are treasured by the Lord Jesus (Mt 25:34–40) (TLSB)

6:20 *entrusted to you.* The gospel. The same command is found in 2Ti 1:14. (CSB)

The Gospel—the Christian faith itself. In the ancient world, such a deposit involved the obligation of scrupulously guarding another’s possession, keeping it secure, then returning it in the same condition in which it was received (TLSB)

what is falsely called knowledge. A reference to an early form of the heresy of Gnosticism, which taught that one may be saved by knowledge. (The term “Gnosticism” comes from the Greek word for knowledge; see Introduction to 1 John: Gnosticism.) (CSB)

Empty talking and opposing ideas are characteristic of false teachers, about whom Timothy has been warned repeatedly (cf 1:6–7; 6:3–5). (TLSB)

knowledge. The “facts” on which all false teachers claim to stand, though they understand nothing (cf 1:7; 6:4) (TLSB)

6:21 *swerved from the faith.* This final warning concerns the grave effects of false teaching. The same verb occurs in 1:6.(TLSB)Paul characteristically uses this word of blessing at the conclusion of his Letters.

Grace be with you. The Greek for “you” here is plural, indicating that, although Paul is writing to Timothy, he expects the letter to be read to the entire Ephesian congregation. (CSB)

Paul characteristically uses this word of blessing at the conclusion of his Letters. (TLSB)

you. Plural, showing that Paul expected this Letter to be read to the believers. (TLSB)

6:11–21 As a true man of God, Timothy is to flee every corrupting influence and keep God’s command, faithfully guarding that which has been deposited with him. False “knowledge” not only contradicts God’s revealed truth, but it also places human reason above the deposit of good news God has entrusted to us, ultimately destroying our faith. In His testimony before Pontius Pilate, Jesus confessed that He was the Son of God. Although His enemies used that true testimony to convict Him before Pilate, His crucifixion and resurrection secured the treasures of life and salvation for all who believe. • Lord God, guard and keep us, we pray, so that the devil, the world, and our sinful nature may not deceive us or mislead us into false belief, despair, and other great shame and vice. Although we are attacked by these things, we pray that we may finally overcome them and win the victory. Amen. (TLSB)