

1 Timothy 6:11-21 Bible Study Guide With Inductive Questions

I. Fight the Good Fight (11-16)

Cross-References

Hebrews 13:5 – Keep your life free from love of money, and be content with what you have, for he has said, “I will never leave you nor forsake you.”

Ecclesiastes 5:10 – He who loves money will not be satisfied with money, nor he who loves wealth with his income; this also is vanity.

2 Timothy 2:22 – So flee youthful passions and pursue righteousness, faith, love, and peace, along with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart.

2 Timothy 4:7-8 – I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will award to me on that Day, and not only to me but also to all who have loved his appearing.

James 4:7 – Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

Ephesians 6:13 – Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm.

Verse by Verse Commentary

1. O man of God – Paul stresses the fact that Timothy is a man of God, and not a man of the world. In the previous verses he talked about the dangers of loving money. A worldly person pursues worldly things. But a follower of God loves God first and makes serving Him the priority. Followers of Jesus are called “Christians,” not “wealthtians.” We follow Christ, not money. Next time you are tempted to compromise in order to get more money remember that as a man or woman of God your allegiance is to Him.

2. Flee these things – The things Timothy is supposed to flee are the ones mentioned in verses four to ten. It includes both the teachings of the false teacher and his wayward lifestyle which leads him to greed and materialism. “Flee” is a word often used in Scripture denoting a believer’s correct response to temptation. We are to run away from things which can tempt and snare us.

Someone may say that fleeing is a coward’s way out. After all, believer’s are strong and resilient, right? Surely, we can stand up to temptation! Such thoughts are actually tricks of the enemy. A famous Chinese tactician named Sun Tzu said that one key aspect of warfare is to “know your enemy and know yourself.” We should realize that our enemy (Satan and the world) are strong. The temptations they throw at us are very alluring. Satan’s temptations are not one size fits all. He is clever enough to develop a custom package for each person. In other words, he will tempt you where you are weak. If you are not interested in alcohol, he will not tempt you with it. If you are a very diligent person, he won’t focus on trying to get you to lazily sleep in. He will attack your weakness.

Do you know your own weaknesses? Which temptations are more effective on you? Part of the key to victory is understanding your own weaknesses. When you know the temptations that often work against you, then you need to run away when you face these things. The difference between [Joseph](#) and Samson is that Joseph ran away when faced with a temptation from his master’s wife while Samson would see a beautiful woman, keep looking, and then go closer to enjoy a bit.

An alcoholic need not try to prove himself by going to a bar and resisting. The wise choice is to stay out of a bar in the first place. A person who struggles with lust (which is probably most men) should stay away from tempting situations (meals out with co-workers of the opposite sex, business trips with extended time with an attractive colleague, or late night hours on a computer by himself.)

So how does a person flee from the love of money?

- Leave when a person tries to bribe you.
- Avoid hanging out with people that encourage you toward dishonest business practices.
- Avoid people who always talk about money or obsessed with fashion, luxury, etc.
- Make intentional decisions about our careers and vocation to choose ones where we can serve God rather than focusing on getting rich.

3. Pursue – The Bible often has negative instructions paired with positive instructions. What would it look like if a believers is only running away from many things, but not running toward something? He would be lost and purposeless. He would lack direction and meaning. He would be focused on a list of “do nots,” but not have any idea about what he should do. A person can flee temptation and pursue godliness at the same time. He can do this because they are in opposite directions. Fleeing one is pursuing another. This tells us we don’t just stay in place.

Applying this principle to the tongue would mean we don’t just remain silent because the tongue can be very destructive. Instant we actively seek to use our tongue for good.

A man of God should take initiative to seek out ways to be righteous, to love others, to increase his faith, and to show gentleness.

Activity: Spend a few minutes and write down one way that you can pursue each of the character qualities listed in verse 11. After you finish, share what you have written with your group.

4. Fight the good fight – You must realize you are in a fight. Christians are not on a cruise. You are not floating on a lazy river in the local water park. You are in a fight. Your enemy the devil is like a lion who wants to devour you. He is not satisfied until your life is in ruins and you and everyone you know are in hell. He hates God with a malice and bitterness unlike anything we have ever seen and he hates you as a follower of God. All his time is spent in seeking ways to thwart God and to attack the saints. He has many weapons in his arsenal: the world, media, internet, entertainment, psychology, peer pressure, alcohol, drugs, and your own flesh. Not all of those are inherently evil, but he uses them as evil weapons to hurt our walks with God.

If a wild animal entered your home to eat your children, would you just keep streaming Netflix while he carried your child out of the home? You would try to stop it, fighting it with your bare hands if you had to. You would fight to the death.

We are to keep up the fight against Satan, not resting, not relaxing, not ignoring it, not giving up. We are to resist the devil so that he will flee from us. In this fight, the very best weapon is prayer. You don’t have to fight it on your own. The pride of thinking “I can handle it” will sink us faster than anything else. Gotham City has the bat signal to get help from their super hero. We have prayer to get help from ours, God. Next time you face that temptation, pray these simple words, “God help me.” He will send you the help and resolve that you need. The very process of turning to God and saying those words will help you to resist evil and fight Satan’s advances.

5. Take hold of eternal life – Here is an instruction similar to the one above about pursuing righteousness. You are to grab hold of eternal life and never let go. The knowledge of and hope for eternal life motivates us to live a

certain way. When you know that there is eternal life waiting for you, it encourages you to fight against temptation and not give up. It encourages you to be faithful in the midst of persecution because this life is not all there is. It inspires you to pray more to God and develop your relationship with Him because you will be with Him face to face forever. It gives you strength to say “no” to the world because what it is has to offer is temporary and fading away.

Timothy had already confessed his belief in Christ. Many people witnessed it. But a past decision was not enough. He had to live it out everyday. The same is true for us.

Application: Your salvation is not just a thing of the past, something that happened when you walked the aisle in your childhood. It is not just a decision you made a long time ago. It is something which you need to live out today. You should reaffirm your spoken confession and internal commitment to living for Jesus everyday. When you use your hands to grab onto the things of God, you cannot at the same time hold on to the world. Our hands can only cling to one thing at a time.

6. I charge you to keep the commandment unstained – The command could refer to the one in verse 11 to flee these things and pursue righteousness. It could refer to the command in verse 12 to fight the good fight. Or it could refer to the Paul’s exhortation to maintain the good confession he made toward the Lord. I think it refers to all of the above. Each of these three things are different aspects of the same goal, to keep following after Jesus rather than the world. Timothy should not give up. He should must turn away from the world and keep following after God with his whole heart. Like Timothy, we are charged to stay on the narrow road in pursuit of an ever closer relationship with our Savior.

7. The appearing of our Lord Jesus – Paul says this is going to happen at the “proper time.” God is the sovereign, immortal, King of Kings. He will return to this world at the perfect time, not one second early and not one second late. It is certain. Knowing that He is coming back should motivate us to be prepared by faithfully living for Him now.

Application: Paul mentions many aspects of God’s nature. His conclusion is to give Him honor and praise. How can you give God honor in your daily life? Our actions and words can bring honor to Him when we obey Him and testify of Him. At the same time, we can glorify Him as we pray to Him and we can praise Him in the way we talk about Him to the people around us, either believers or unbelievers.

Discussion Questions

- Why does Paul emphasize “man of God?”
- Flee what things (11)?
- What is the relationship between fleeing and pursuing? Can you flee one thing and pursue another thing at the same time?
- How do you pursue something intangible like righteousness or faith?
- What is the good fight of faith? Why is called a fight? How can you win this fight?
- How would someone “take hold” of eternal life?
- What “good confession” did Jesus make in front of Pontius Pilate?
- What commandment is Timothy supposed to keep unstained (14)?
- What do we learn about Jesus’ return in these verses?
- How can you prepare for His return now?
- What do these verses teach us about God and His character?
- How can you give God honor in your daily life?

II. Set your hope on God, not money (17-19)

Cross-References

Proverbs 11:28 – He who trusts in his riches will fall, But the righteous will flourish like the green leaf.

Jeremiah 48:7 – For because of your trust in your own achievements and treasures, Even you yourself will be captured; And Chemosh will go off into exile Together with his priests and his princes.

Psalms 52:7 – “Behold, the man who would not make God his refuge, But trusted in the abundance of his riches And was strong in his evil desire.”

Psalms 62:10 – Do not trust in oppression And do not vainly hope in robbery; If riches increase, do not set your heart upon them.

Matthew 19:21 – Jesus answered, “If you want to be perfect, go, sell your possessions and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me.”

Luke 12:19-21 And I’ll say to myself, “You have plenty of grain laid up for many years. Take life easy; eat, drink and be merry.” “But God said to him, ‘You fool! This very night your life will be demanded from you. Then who will get what you have prepared for yourself? “This is how it will be with whoever stores up things for themselves but is not rich toward God.”

Verse by Verse Commentary

1. The rich in this present age – The words Paul uses highlights the fact that these riches are temporary. They won’t last. Jesus described a rich man who pursued worldly wealth as a “fool” (Luke 12).

Isaiah 40:8 – The grass withers and the flowers fade, but the word of our God stands forever.

A wise person should consider the lasting impact of those things he spends his time and energy on.

Application: Ask yourself if the things you are doing now will make an impact in 100 years from now? If most of your time is spent on things that have no eternal impact, then you need to make some major adjustments. What is one thing you can do now that will have an eternal impact?

2. Charge them not to be haughty or set their hope on riches – Rich people can easily grow prideful and look down on others who are lower on the ladder of success. The world lifts up and praises the wealthy as being savvy. They are often called a “self-made man.” Many wealthy people soak in such compliments and let them go to their head. A person blessed with money should not consider he is better than others. Neither should he avoid associating with or making friends of regular people.

An even more common temptation for the wealthy is to set their hope on riches. Their savings accounts, retirement accounts, 401ks, insurance, and stocks make them feel safe and give them confidence that everything will be well as they grow old. The Great Recession stock market crash of 2008 and the internet bubble of 2001 caught many surprise and showed them that these things could not protect their futures. But even if no disaster strikes and all their financial hopes are realized, they will still be disappointed. Why? Money cannot bring lasting satisfaction.

Ecclesiastes 5:10 – He who loves money will not be satisfied with money, nor he who loves wealth with his income; this also is vanity.

People seek after money thinking that it will make them happy, but it doesn't. The thrill of the most exciting purchase wears off quickly and it is on the next thing.

Just think about money for a moment. It is printed on paper! Governments just print more whenever they want. Why would a person trust in money or set his hope on world financial systems that rise and fall? Set your hope on the Lord.

3. Set your hope on God who richly provides us with everything to enjoy – What a wonderful statement. God has our best interests at heart. He wants to give us meaningful and happy lives. He happily fills our lives with good things. Christians are not like Buddhist monks who deny themselves basic pleasures for no reason. While it is good and healthy to deny ourselves for a period of time while fasting, God does not ask us to get rid of anything fun. He wants us to enjoy good food. He is happy when we have fun times of travel and vacation with our families. Games and sports are to be enjoyed with good attitudes and a smile on our face. A husband and wife should enjoy intimate times together. Following God does not mean that we must reject the fun and pleasant things in this world.

I once heard a story of a missionary family who were so discouraged at the attitudes of their fellow co-workers that they gave up and returned from the mission field. They had been ridiculed for using an air conditioner and pampering themselves. Their team even criticized them for having peanut butter sent in. “A missionary should not live a life of luxury” was the prevailing attitude.

But our God is not like this. He is generous and gracious and happy for us to have nice things. However, He wants us to keep Him at the center of our hearts and minds. When we go on vacation with our families we should do so with worshipful hearts toward God for His great and wonderful creation. When we play games and sports we are to compete with good attitudes, fair play, and as good sports whether we win or lose. We can pray first with our teammates. We can make new friends. We can testify to each other of God's goodness. And our reaction to unfair calls can be a testimony to shine the light to our lost friends.

Colossians 3:2 tells us to set our mind on things above and not on things on the earth.

We are heavenly minded not by sitting around and day dreaming, but by keeping Christ at the center of our activities, not matter what they are. As in most things in life, there is a balance. We should not become pleasure and fun oriented and live a life of luxury. Neither do we need to reject all the nice things in life.

Application: How can you bring God into your fun activities? What is one way that you will be heavenly minded while enjoying something nice God has given you?

4. Be generous and ready to share – No matter if God has given you a lot or a little, you should be generous with what you have. If you have a lot of money, perhaps this is why God gave it to you! The money and materials He has placed in your hands are resources He has given you for building His kingdom and His kingdom is His people.

As we generously share with others and support those who work for God, we store up treasure in heaven build our lives on a solid foundation that will not crash like the stock market.

Discussion Questions

- What is the present age?
- What is the future age?
- How could a person become rich in the future age?
- Why might a rich person become haughty? How might his riches change his attitude toward others?

- How do people set their hopes on their riches?
- What does it mean that “He provides is with everything to enjoy?” He gives us everything we want?
- Should Christians deny themselves nice things for the sake of serving God?
- What is the proper balance of enjoying good things without pursuing luxury?
- If God has blessed you with money, what should you do with it?
- How can a poor person also be generous?
- What does verse 19 mean? How does one store up for treasure for himself?
- Share with the group one way you can serve God with your money (that you are not already doing.)

III. Stay on the right path (20-21)

Cross-References

Proverbs 21:23 – Whoever keeps his mouth and his tongue keeps himself out of trouble.

Ephesians 4:29 – Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear.

Psalms 141:3 – Set a guard, O Lord, over my mouth; keep watch over the door of my lips!

Verse by Verse Commentary

1. Guard the deposit entrusted to you – This likely refers to the spiritual gift that Timothy received and which Paul repeatedly encourages him to keep faithfully using. It seems to be a gift related to teaching the Word. Timothy was to persevere in teaching the word and using his gift to help others.

2. Avoid the irreverent babble – Paul has mentioned this type of unedifying talk many times in this book. It is apparent that such nonsense was prevalent all around Timothy. Rather than engaging with such foolish people, Timothy was to simply stay away from it. These fruitless discussions if followed to the end only led people away from the faith.

Application: What is one thing you learned in this book that you have started doing? What is one thing you learned which you still need to work on?

Discussion Questions

- What is the deposit entrusted to Timothy?
- What is irreverent babble and contradictions?
- What does “by professing it” refer to?
- Name one thing you have learned in our study of 1 Timothy that you would like to keep practicing in your own life.