**The Pastoral Epistles: 1 & 2 Timothy, Titus**

***Lesson 8: Godliness and Money***

**Series principal Bible verses: *1 Timothy 1:15-17****: Here is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners—of whom I am the worst.  But for that very reason I was shown mercy so that in me, the worst of sinners, Christ Jesus might display his immense patience as an example for those who would believe in him and receive eternal life.  Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory for ever and ever. Amen.*

**Bible passages for Lesson 8**:

**1 Timothy 6:2b-11; 17-19.** These are the things you are to teach and insist on. 3If anyone teaches otherwise and does not agree to the sound instruction of our Lord Jesus Christ and to godly teaching, 4they are conceited and understand nothing. They have an unhealthy interest in controversies and quarrels about words that result in envy, strife, malicious talk, evil suspicions 5and constant friction between people of corrupt mind, who have been robbed of the truth and who think that godliness is a means to financial gain.

6But godliness with contentment is great gain. 7For we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it. 8But if we have food and clothing, we will be content with that. 9Those who want to get rich fall into temptation and a trap and into many foolish and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction. 10For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs. 11But you, man of God, flee from all this, and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance and gentleness.

…

17Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment. 18Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share. 19In this way they will lay up treasure for themselves as a firm foundation for the coming age, so that they may take hold of the life that is truly life.

**Lesson Objective**: Money has the power to control us rather than us controlling money for the glory of God.

**Introduction:** Like many things, money is a blessing from God, and it allows us to bless others. But it also has the potential to become an idol – both the desire simply to accumulate wealth and the striving to gain financial security, which can mean independence from God.

**Major Point 1**: Godliness is not a means to financial gain. **1 Timothy 6:6**

1. How do we reconcile this with Proverbs 14:24: “The wealth of the wise is their crown…,” as well as other proverbs that seem to indicate that good living will produce prosperity, i.e., Proverbs 21:5: “The plans of the diligent lead to profit as surely as haste leads to poverty.”
2. Godliness, or at least holy living, often does lead to greater financial stability and security, right? Is Paul denying this?
3. Do we have a tendency to unconsciously – or consciously – equate financial security as a sign of godliness, as Job’s friends did. Are we more likely to support as an elder a successful businessman with wealth rather than a man who chooses to be poor?
4. In 2 Timothy 3, he equates love of money with being “lovers of themselves, … boastful, proud, abusive, … treacherous, rash, conceited,” etc. How are these things related?
5. The “prosperity gospel” catches a lot of grief from within and outside the church – and rightfully so. How would you define it and what’s wrong with “God wants you to live your best life now”?
6. Paul’s letter to Timothy and Titus say elders should not be “in it for the money.” But does 1 Tim. 5:18 suggest they should be compensated?

**Major Point 2**: “Godliness with contentment is great gain.”

1. People often mis-paraphrase 6:10 to say “money is the root of all evil.” How would you distinguish that from what Paul actually says? Related: What kinds of evil does the love of money actually lead to? Why?
2. We often see financial security and accumulation as a powerful motivator. Proverbs warns us over and over again to work hard and avoid laziness. How do we avoid laziness while seeking contentment?

**Major Point 3**: Those who are rich should “do good,” “be rich in good deeds” and “be generous.”

1. Is it accurate to say that we should use our wealth as a means to godliness rather than the other way around? How is this different from “buying our salvation”?
2. Compare this to Matt. 6:19: “Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth…” Is Paul saying the same thing or something different?
3. How can we avoid giving the wealthy earthly praise for their generosity within the church?

**Call to Action**: How do you use your money? Or is it using you?