**BCM Bible Study - 3/30-31, 2022**

**1 Timothy 4:1-6:2a**

In this section of his letter, Paul begins by addressing specific threats to the Church and then provides instruction and encouragement to Timothy in dealing with these threats. This is followed by specific instructions regarding discipline and responsibility in the treatment of specific groups within the church. After giving a charge to Timothy concerning his behavior, Paul touches on relationships between masters and servants.

**Read 1 Timothy 4:1-5**

When Paul speaks of “teachings of demons”, he is not referring to directly teaching about demons, but teaching in a way that furthers the agenda of Satan and demons. How might demanding abstinence from certain foods and/or marriage help advance demonic principles?

* **Read Jeremiah 17:5-9 and Mark 9:42-43**
	+ How can we balance the idea that God wants us to fully enjoy His creation with the idea that discipline is necessary due to the sinful nature of our flesh?
	+ How is teaching to fully abstain from something God has made and declared good different from Jesus’ call in Mark 9:42-43?

**Read 1 Timothy 4:6-10**

Paul offers encouragement and instruction to Timothy for how to overcome the teaching of false doctrine.

* In v. 7, Paul instructs Timothy to discipline himself **for the purpose of godliness**, and in v. 8 tells Timothy that “bodily discipline is only of little profit”.
	+ What does this tell us about how we should approach worldly discipline and why it is something we should incorporate into our lives as Christians?
* Where else have you seen the language used in v. 9? (1 Timothy 1:15)
	+ “It is a trustworthy statement” is used by Paul five times in the Pastoral Epistles (1, 2 Timothy and Titus) and “announces a statement summarizing key doctrines” (MacArthur). What key doctrine might be outlined in v. 10?

**Read 1 Timothy 4:11-16**

* How can we present ourselves as an example in speech, conduct, love, faith, and purity?
	+ Are some of these areas easier to show a good example in?
	+ Discuss why this might be and share some of these areas where you most struggle.

**Read 1 Timothy 5:1-2**

* What is the charge Paul lays out in these verses?
	+ How have your experiences with family shaped what feelings this imagery evokes?

In this next section, Paul tells Timothy how to approach helping widows in the church. While specifically helping widows might not have the same emphasis now as it did when Paul was writing this, the concept of helping those most in need remains highly relevant.

**Read 1 Timothy 5:7-8**

* What does Paul say about those who fail to provide for those in need?
	+ What groups of people are most in need today? What can we as a church, and as individual believers, do to help?

**Read 1 Timothy 5:17-22**

Paul identifies exceptional elders as those who are working hard at “teaching and preaching”, signaling that an elder in today’s church might be what we call a pastor. This also refers to anyone who is teaching with spiritual authority within the church.

* Why should the criteria for bringing charges against a spiritual leader be stricter than for a normal member of the church?
	+ Does this mean we should forgive leaders in the church of more serious offenses than others?
	+ What personal experiences have you had with what happens when a spiritual leader is accused of serious sin problems?

**Read 1 Timothy 5:23-25**

Verses 24-25 summarize much of what we have talked about in this section so far.

* How do these verses relate to some, or all of the topics discussed in this study so far?
	+ Making good use of God’s good creation
	+ Proper application of discipline
	+ Setting good examples as Christians
	+ Treatment of widows (or those in need)
	+ Honoring elders

**Read 1 Timothy 6:1-2a**

Paul transitions to talking about relationships between masters and slaves.

* Why should slaves regard their masters as “worthy of all honor”?
	+ Does this call only apply to those serving believers as their masters?
* What are the effects of a believer in a servant relationship living out Paul’s instruction in vv. 1-2a?

**Challenge:** There are five instances in Paul’s Pastoral Epistles where he begins a phrase with “It is a trustworthy statement” (1 Timothy 1:15, 3:1, 4:9-10, 2 Timothy 2:11, Titus 3:8). In these cases, the following phrase represents a scriptural truth or piece of sound doctrine. Read these verses and write them down somewhere. Meditate on them over the next week and think about how following the truths they outline can help you avoid falling into some of the traps of false doctrine we have been reading about in 1 Timothy.

**Extra Notes**

* The wording Paul uses in 1 Timothy 4:10 has been interpreted before to support universalism (everyone is saved regardless of faith). This is not supported elsewhere in scripture, however, and when Paul refers to Jesus as “Savior of all men, especially of believers”, he is implying that everyone receives some sort of benefit from God’s goodness, but only believers receive the gift of eternal salvation (MacArthur).
* The system of requiring multiple witnesses to bring forth charges is not meant to protect elders who are willfully sinning but is meant to afford elders the same protections as all within the church due to their vulnerability as a public figure.
* Paul’s encouragement to drink more wine was intended to help Timothy’s health improve. This is a good example of putting the concepts discussed at the beginning of chapter 4 into practice. Note that Paul is not asking Timothy to lower his standards, but to put his physical health over maintaining strict discipline. It is not being disciplined that is important, but the pursuit of godliness.
* The word for “slaves” in 1 Timothy 6:1 refers to people who are in submission to another. It carries no negative connotation and is used elsewhere to describe Jesus serving the Father, believers serving God, and believers serving both non-Christians and other believers (MacArthur).