

“LOVE SPEAKS WITH A FOCUSED HEART!”

1 Timothy 6:6-16

Grace, mercy and peace are yours from God, “the blessed and only Ruler, the King of kings and Lord of lords, who alone is immortal and who lives in unapproachable light.” (1 Timothy 6:15-16)

Brothers and sisters in his family, workers in his church:

Evaluate these statements and decide what you think of them:

“Pastor, we’ve got to get more members so that we can pay the bills.”

“If we don’t grow, we’ll never be able to pay off this mortgage.”

“The trouble with younger new members is that they never give as well as older lifelong members.”

See any problem with those statements? Have you heard any of them said by good Christian people? Ever bounce them around in your head at some time? Is there any truth to them? From a business perspective, they might seem fiscally accurate. But from a heart connected to Christ, you know **they’re wrong** because they focus on the wrong thing.

Many use the excuse not to be in church by saying, **“The church is all about money. That’s all they’re really after.”** And in some religious circles, that’s true. But our text from 1 Timothy dispels all that. The very first word of our text tells us the church is not about money. Just before our text, Paul was warning young Pastor Timothy about false teachers that saw religion as a means for financial gain. Many (or dare I say MOST) TV preachers use religion this way. The first word in our text shatters that by saying: **“But”** That is not the case for us. There’s something different.

As we’ve been talking about these past weeks, our goal is to share the gift of life by sharing our faith, by letting our love speak. Today...

“LOVE SPEAKS WITH A FOCUSED HEART!”

1. Love overcomes the love of money

2. Love confesses the One we hold to

1

Love speaks with a focused heart because real love overcomes the love of money. That’s an easy thing to say. The Spirit speaks through Paul: **GODLINESS WITH CONTENTMENT IS GREAT GAIN.** What is he saying?

“Godliness” – **εὐσέβεια** in the Greek is a word that describes living your religion, doing what you say, giving glory to God with one’s life. It’s not a going through motions, but a daily living your faith in Jesus and being happy realizing that HE is all you want and all you need. That’s where real gain is. That is true profit. Gain comes in actually living what we believe and that takes razor sharp focus in our hearts.

Remember Job? He was the Bill Gates of his time. He lost everything - including his family and personal health. Yet **Job spoke with a focused heart: 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.** {Job 1:21} Paul **spoke with a focused heart** when he told the Philippians: **I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation.** {Phil 4:12} Paul underscores that truth: **FOR WE BROUGHT NOTHING INTO THE WORLD, AND WE CAN TAKE NOTHING OUT OF IT. BUT IF WE HAVE FOOD AND CLOTHING** (which refers to what covers our bodies and what covers our heads, ie shelter), **WE WILL BE CONTENT WITH THAT.** These sayings must have triggered these thoughts: *“You can’t take it with you,”* *“You won’t have a U-Haul behind your hearse.”* Point is what’s the use of getting caught up with stuff? It’s not ours. We didn’t come with & we won’t take it with us.

Most people have wealth as their #1 number goal in life. I know you’re probably saying: *“That’s not me. That’s not my goal. I don’t do that.”* But let’s face it – Christians are tempted as much as anyone else to lose focus on what’s really important and lasting.

But what is **the love of money?** **THE ROOT OF ALL KINDS OF EVIL.** Notice he doesn’t say money is a root of evil; the **LOVE** of it is. And Satan is so good at setting that trap, slowly leading us from **seeing money as a gift to seeing money as the goal.** It’s like the old fashioned mouse trap. Put some a piece of bacon, cheese, or p-nut butter on the shelf, pull back the spring-loaded bar, and carefully rig it so when the critter is attracted to the food and goes to eat it, then **SNAP**...the trap’s got him and he’s a goner.

A heart not focused on Jesus Christ cannot overcome the lure of money. When the lust for more, the quest for more, and the search for more drives our hearts, then our lives **SNAP** and we are...**PEOPLE FALL INTO TEMPTATION AND INTO MANY FOOLISH AND HARMFUL DESIRES THAT PLUNGE MEN INTO RUIN AND DESTRUCTION...AND EVEN SOME, EAGER FOR MONEY, HAVE WANDERED FROM THE FAITH AND PIERCED THEMSELVES WITH MANY GRIEFS.**

The political world, the sports world, the business world, sometimes even the church world are focused on how much more can we get? It has ruined many a Christian that used to be dependent on the Lord, and now is dependent on the dollar. **We try to love**

both God and Mammon, but you know what Jesus said about that: it's impossible. And the god called Mammon can't do anything for us but take away. The god Mammon **takes away our peace of mind** as we have more stuff to worry about. The god Mammon **takes away our time** as we worship at the altar of extra work for extra pay. The god Mammon **takes away our conscience** as we bend the rules and cross the lines of honesty. The god Mammon **takes our happiness** if our only goal is the paycheck so when you don't get the raise or the bonus, you're angry. The god Mammon **gives nothing** but takes away everything. And the worst that it takes away is our faith in Jesus which plunges people into spiritual ruin and destruction. It has become today's American Idol and it doesn't need a tryout on stage to succeed!

We need razor sharp focus to overcome the love of money. And the only way is to zero in on Christ Jesus and his love to be able to [speak with a focused heart](#).

2

For the times we've been trapped, for the times we've failed, the only option is to confess the One we speak about as Christians. [LOVE SPEAKS WITH A HEART THAT IS FOCUSED ON JESUS CHRIST AND SEES HIM as the one to hold to](#).

BUT YOU, MAN OF GOD, (not just Timothy, but every child of God) **FLEE FROM ALL THIS AND PURSUE RIGHTEOUSNESS. PURSUE RIGHTEOUSNESS, GODLINESS, FAITH, LOVE, ENDURANCE, AND GENTLENESS**. In reality Jesus says: **pursue Jesus. FIGHT THE GOOD FIGHT OF FAITH AND TAKE HOLD OF THE ETERNAL LIFE TO WHICH YOU WERE CALLED**. It is a battle out there. People are casualties when they can't overcome the love of money. And things are casualties when they don't last. Is that what we really want to pursue in life? What are we striving for? What do we want to take hold of?

Paul repeats what Jesus said in Matthew chapter 6: **Seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be give to you as well**. (Matt 6:33) Look at what you're going for: **the eternal life to which you were called**. That's worth more than everything in the world. As we look at things through lens of the Gospel, we see Jesus Christ who gives life to us. He is our Treasure; He is the one we hold on to. Jesus said: **STORE UP FOR YOURSELVES TREASURES IN HEAVEN WHERE MOTH AND RUST DO NOT DESTROY, AND WHERE THIEVES DO NOT BREAK IN AND STEAL**. {Matt 6:20}

Our focus has not always been on Christ. It has slipped and got trapped by the god Mammon. But that's why Jesus gave us his life. He kept a razor-sharp focus on the will of God. Jesus fulfilled God's law perfectly to give us that perfect record. His focus was like **a laser beam** which had its spot zeroed in on the cross. Then he gave his life to forgive our sins. He took the punishment our selfishness deserves and made the [payment of his blood](#) to pay our debts. He fought the good fight and WON!

In so doing, he gives us life, real life, life begun in baptism; life strengthened by worshipping Him and by receiving his body and blood; life with an eternal inheritance. **That's our confession**. That's the One we speak about in our Christian lives, in our Christian faith, and in [our focused hearts](#) right up until he comes to take us home.

One day we will see the One we hold to. In the meantime, we let our [love speak with a focused heart that overcomes the love of money and confesses the One we hold to by faith](#). And as God provides for us every day, may we give Him the glory in our worship, in our service, and in our focus! **AMEN**