

1 Timothy 6

Read 1 Timothy 6:1-2: All believers are ambassadors of the gospel. Do we see ourselves as having a special purpose; or do we get weighed down in the mire of our daily grind? There are two things going on in our lives. We have what is in front of our eyes; in the commonality of all men. We also have a hidden spirit who needs to shine and be brought out. Sometimes it's hard to get around our current circumstances with enthusiasm. We have amnesia. We keep forgetting who we are. We can seem to be in a rut, or to have little to look forward to.

Paul takes the example to the extreme. What if we were a slave? That would have a whole different level of emotional deficit. A slave usually has little hope. Hope is important. It is tied to our enthusiasm and quality of life; and our energy to live our lives. We are broken people who live in a broken world. This world also seems to be calibrated to cause us to stumble, and have continual unpleasant moments. I am convinced that there are good reasons for that. I believe that this predicament goes beyond Adam's sin. There is no such thing as a person who does not experience continual disappointment. The Kingdom of God can have victories as I fall down. We have to continually re-direct our focus on the spiritual kingdom living inside of us.

"I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world." (John 16:33)

It is hard not to make generalizations about a bad moment.

Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own. (Matthew 6:34)

We can get very depressed and down as we focus more and more on our predicament. It seems like our challenges are programmed to systematically turn us to God. They are also slowly weaning us from our other hopes. The world and everything in it is unsustainable; except that God keeps providing another rescue breath. Once we begin to focus on God; our hope is lifted. Our circumstances may have not changed; but their significance changes.

I waited patiently for the LORD; he turned to me and heard my cry. ² He lifted me out of the slimy pit, out of the mud and mire; he set my feet on a rock and gave me a firm place to stand. ³ He put a new song in my mouth, a hymn of praise to our God. Many will see and fear the LORD and put their trust in him. (Psalm 40:1-3)

It seems that the highest praise comes from deliverance. Part of the problem is that Jesus is our only source of joy; and our hope. The longer we try to skim on time alone with him, the more we get wrapped up in the cheap stuff of this world. It is better to walk quietly with him every morning; than to run out there and get clobbered; and then come running back to him, full of anxiety.

He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners,^[3] to proclaim the year of the LORD's favor and the day of vengeance of our God, to comfort all who mourn,³ and provide for those who grieve in Zion— to bestow on them a crown of beauty instead of ashes, the oil of joy instead of mourning, and a garment of praise instead of a spirit of despair. (Isaiah 61:1b-3a)

Joseph is a good example of a slave who was full of hope. He could have focused on his family's cruelty and hatred for him. He could have mourned that his life was forgotten. He could have gotten mad at God for not being rewarded for his obedience. Instead, he tried to make the most out of every opportunity in front of him. He did not give up. He became the best that he could be at whatever he did. We need a sense of purpose, and the feeling that we do matters. If we use the golden rule in all that we do; we will be more satisfied. The things that Satan draws us to always let us down.

When we complain, we are complaining about what God has allowed for our life. To complain can be an indirect criticism of God. This gauntlet of tricks and let downs and small victories is tailor-made for us. It is pointless to reject it; and hope for something different.

"Will the one who contends with the Almighty correct him? Let him who accuses God answer him!" (Job 40:2)

It is helpful to see that the hardships and unpleasant things are vehicles of change and course correction and blessing to us. Some of the biggest blessings come from the most-unpleasant moments.

..we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who^[4] have been called according to his purpose. (Romans 8:28)

Read 1 Timothy 6:3-10: There is a lot of foolish talk in the media and in social media these days. In the past, the news services reported the facts. Today many people have a microphone and an audience. We have famous personalities who provide their opinions on all things throughout the day. Unfortunately, most of

what men say is questionable or suspect. We should be certain about what we say. We should never just speak to be heard or respected.

My dear brothers and sisters, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry, ²⁰because human anger does not produce the righteousness that God desires. ²¹Therefore, get rid of all moral filth and the evil that is so prevalent and humbly accept the word planted in you, which can save you. (James 1:19-21)

There have always been people who disagree with what is happening. Today we have to hear every aberrant opinion. The more people talk; the more there will be division. It is time to turn off the microphones and go back to work.

In the multitude of words sin is not lacking, but he who restrains his lips is wise. (Proverbs 10:19)

The Bible says that every man is right in their own mind. It is important that God is heard. For that reason; we need to restrain ourselves. We should save our moment to things that count.

We need to now the Bible backwards and forwards. We need to make sure that we do not listen to people who teach anything contrary. In fact, we should not even indulge incorrect teachings. The only way that we will detect what is accurate is by spending time in the word, daily.

Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth. ¹⁶Avoid godless chatter, because those who indulge in it will become more and more ungodly. ¹⁷Their teaching will spread like gangrene. (2 Timothy 2:15-17)

Read 1 Timothy 6:11-14: Part of the Christian battle is to stay focused and purposeful. The Bible tells us to be like soldiers and farmers. A soldier is undistracted by all of life's ongoing activities. He is fulfilling his duty first. He stays at his post. Likewise, the hard-working farmer puts in many hours for something unseen, to produce life and a harvest.

Join with me in suffering, like a good soldier of Christ Jesus. ⁴No one serving as a soldier gets entangled in civilian affairs, but rather tries to please his commanding officer. ⁵Similarly, anyone who competes as an athlete does not receive the victor's crown except by competing according to the rules. ⁶The hardworking farmer should be the first to receive a share of the crops. ⁷Reflect on what I am saying, for the Lord will give you insight into all this. (2 Timothy 2:3-7)

Read 1 Timothy 6:15-17: Many of our disappointments and anguish are from setting our hopes on uncertain things of this world.

"Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moths and vermin destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. ²⁰ But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moths and vermin do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. ²¹ For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. (Matthew 6:19-21)

There is nothing about walking in the Spirit that our flesh is willing to bow to. The things of the Spirit are completely uninteresting to our flesh.

But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. (1 Corinthians 2:14)

We need to do it out of obedience, to discover it is freeing and transforming. There are many men who struggle with various sins. They repent and then fall back into it again. The problem is that they are doing nothing to walk in the Spirit. You cannot obtain any strength if you do not spend time in the word and prayer; and halt all other things in your life.

So I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. ¹⁷ For the flesh desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the flesh. They are in conflict with each other, so that you are not to do whatever^[c] you want. ¹⁸ But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law. ¹⁹ The acts of the flesh are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; ²⁰ idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions ²¹ and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God. ²² But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³ gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law. ²⁴ Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. ²⁵ Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit. ²⁶ Let us not become conceited, provoking and envying each other. (Galatians 5:16-26)

Read 1 Timothy 6:18-21: We are all commissioned to find real life. Life is not trying to make ourselves happy with accumulated wealth or experiences. We find real life when we share and when we become generous. We need to remain vigilant about staying on track, and following Jesus. We also experience real life when we hold on to what God has given us. We have all been entrusted with an

invaluable gift of eternal life in Christ. We have been given a huge opportunity to use our conversation with God to affect change in the lives of others.

We have many good gifts from God. It is up to us to protect them and use them for good. To think that we are called to just enter endless public debates over faith is misguided. **We need to make a difference ourself.**

Satan is a trader. He offers worldly things in exchange for our goods. Have you taken an inventory of your blessings; and reflected on which you are compromising? For what? Ezekiel 27 compares Satan to the king of an international market where the worlds goods are traded. He trades a good marriage for more thankless hours at work. He trades personal relationships for business.
