

Speaker's Outline

October 10, 2009



“A Clear Focus on God’s Purpose for Men”

1 Timothy 6:6-11

Introduction

Contentment is an allusive emotion. Few men seem to be content though the world is chockfull of answers about things that will make a man’s life complete. However, the pursuit of the world’s answers will likely distract men from what is important as Paul taught his devoted understudy, Timothy. Timothy would not have his mentor much longer, so Paul wanted to coach him in the wisdom of pursuing the right things in life.

Option One—The World’s Riches

Paul reminds Timothy that all men are born and die the same way—with nothing (v. 7). The natural tendency is to pursue the world’s definition of success, which typically entails possessions, money, and position. What the world doesn’t tell you is that this pursuit can be encompassing and distracting from God’s purpose for your life (vv. 9-10). With the sacrifice of contentment comes another potential loss: missing God’s purpose for your life.

Illustration: In the midst of America’s financial crisis, yet another crisis emerged. Bernie Madoff ran a ponzi scheme that cheated thousands of people out of billions of dollars. He was paying dividends to previous investors with the investments of new customers. There was no legitimate return on the investments. Eventually, Madoff squandered the money to the detriment of many charities and families. Consequently, Madoff went from the heights of the investment world to a jail cell where he will likely stay the rest of his life. As Paul warned, Madoff will die having lost most everything he had, including his dignity.

Option Two—God’s Riches

Paul calls Timothy a “man of God” (v. 11) because Timothy was a committed Christ follower. It is reasonable for us to understand that the advice Paul gave to Timothy would apply to Christian men today. Paul advises us to be intentional, fleeing one thing in pursuit of another.

Fleeing implies that one is running from something usually out of fear, danger, or despair. What you flee is typically not a good thing. However, pursuit has a different meaning altogether. Pursuit implies intent, purpose, and drive and has the element of focus as you pursue something in particular. Each man has a choice. He can pursue his desires or God’s desires.

Paul defines God’s desires of pursuit in the lives of “men of God.” The focus is “righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance, and gentleness” (v. 11). What do these mean for men today?

- Righteousness—God alone makes repentant sinners right with Him through grace; it can never result from our good works (Ephesians 2:8-9).
- Godliness—Reflects living in a way that honors God, made possible because of God’s holiness that He desires to establish in us (1 Thessalonians 3:13).
- Faith—Having trust and confidence in God and His Word that brings definition to who we are as Christ followers, a man of God exhibits faith in his attitude and actions (Romans 1:17).
- Love—The New Testament uses agape in this verse, which refers to unconditional love, good will, and benevolence (1 Corinthians 16:14).¹
- Endurance—Given the persecution of the early church and the competing world views, Paul wanted Timothy and all Christ followers to keep the faith all the days of their life (1 Corinthians 4:11-12).
- Gentleness—Though there’s a warrior in every man, men of God are to exhibit their passions for the faith and those who are lost in a manner that reflects the quiet confidence of God being in charge of every aspect of their life. That attitude contributes to contentment as reflected in gentleness (Colossians 3:12-13).

Illustration: Former NFL defensive lineman Reggie White haunted opposing quarterbacks. Whenever a quarterback dropped back to pass the football, they had to look out for White who would be relentlessly in pursuit to sack them for a loss. That was White on the field, but off the field he was another man. A devoted Christian and family man, White focused on living his faith in a way that was as dynamic as his football skills. But it was done in a sure (faith) and soft (gentle) manner that gave evidence of God (godliness) being at work in his life.

Conclusion

Men will find contentment in one place—the center of God’s will for their life. Particularly for fathers, the center of God’s will includes being the spiritual leader of their home and mentoring their children—particularly their sons—to be godly. Life teaches us that children will follow their parents, typically adopting many if not most of their parent’s values.

So if your child is following you, much like Timothy followed Paul, where are you leading your child? Paige Patterson, president of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas, is an avid outdoorsman and frequent speaker at wild game dinners and other men’s events. Patterson typically reminds lost men that if they don’t know Christ and are not modeling discipleship, by default they are leading their children to hell. Likewise, a saved father should be intentional to lead their family and children to an eternal relationship with God.

[Note: At this point, make a clear presentation of the gospel and invite men and boys to commit their life to Christ on this morning.]

Each man must determine what the center of God’s will looks like for him, and how God has made him to help accomplish Acts 1:8. Men will learn that their family and church are anxious for them to pursue that spot as God designed men to be spiritual leaders.

¹ Thayer and Smith. “Greek Lexicon entry for Agape”. “The NAS New Testament Greek Lexicon”. <<http://www.biblestudytools.net/Lexicons/Greek/grk.cgi?number=26&version=nas>>. 1999.