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SERMON NOTES

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Speaker: Bishop Gill

Topic: The Prosperity Gospel Exposed

The Prosperity Gospel

Error & Greed

1Timothy 6:3-12 *“³If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness; ⁴He is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings, ⁵Perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness: from such withdraw thyself. ⁶But godliness with contentment is great gain. ⁷For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. ⁸And having food and raiment let us be therewith content. ⁹But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. ¹⁰For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.”*

The Good Confession

“¹¹But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness. ¹²Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses.”

This letter written by Paul was to empower Timothy and how to deal with the prosperity teaching that was going on at the time.

In Acts 20:29-30 *“²⁹For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. ³⁰Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them.”*

1Timothy 1:19-20 *“¹⁹Holding faith, and a good conscience; which some having put away concerning faith have made shipwreck: ²⁰Of whom is Hymenaeus and Alexander; whom I have delivered unto Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme.”*

Here Paul was dealing with the false teachers that have been raised in the church, and the rise of false teachings.

The Problem of false doctrine

1Timothy 1:5-7 *“⁵Now the end of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned: ⁶From which some having swerved have turned aside unto vain jangling; ⁷Desiring to be teachers of the law; understanding neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm.”*

1 Timothy 1:4 *“⁴Neither give heed to fables and endless genealogies, which minister questions, rather than godly edifying which is in faith: so do.”*

1 Timothy 6:4 *“⁴He is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings,”*

1 Timothy 4:8 *“⁸For bodily exercise profiteth little: but godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.”*

These false teachers have a gross misunderstanding of what worldly gain is.

1 Timothy 6:6 *“⁶But godliness with contentment is great gain.”*

They see religion or having a church as a means of getting rich.

Godliness Vs Gain

The word Godliness appears 15 times in the New Testament, 8 times in Timothy alone and 4 times it is present in our passage. Godliness means to shun evil, a great sense of reverence and Godly fear.

In one part of the New Testament in Acts 3:12-So when Peter saw it, he responded to the people: “Men of Israel, why do you marvel at this? Or why look so intently at us, as though by our own power or godliness we had made this man walk? Here Godliness means holiness

In addressing the false teachers the emphasis is made a lot on Godliness.

Other scripture references for Godliness

1 Timothy 2:2 *“²For kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty.”*

1 Timothy 4:8 *“⁸For bodily exercise profiteth little: but godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.”*

1 Timothy 4:7 *“⁷But refuse profane and old wives' fables, and exercise thyself rather unto godliness.”*

1 Timothy 6:3 *“³If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness;*

1 Timothy 6:5-6 *“⁵Perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness: from such withdraw thyself. ⁶But godliness with contentment is great gain.”*

2 Timothy 3:5 *“Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away.”*

The truth which Paul preaches is according to Godliness as seen in; **1 Timothy 6:3** *“If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness;”*

Paul shows false doctrine brings about false teachers and false gains. These false teachers were measuring their teaching by material gain but the true measurement of true teaching is Godliness.

The main error then and now

If Godliness is seen as a means of gain then it becomes ungodliness which in turn becomes covetousness / idolatry as seen in **Ephesians 5:5** *“For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God.”*

The error is a misunderstanding of what is true Godliness.

The true gain of godliness.

What is the true gain to be expected from Godliness?

1 Timothy 6:6. There is also folly when striving for material gain, **1 Timothy 6:7**

To say that God wants us to be rich and wealthy in this world is wrong because we will become worldly seekers and depend upon ourselves and not on him to provide our daily bread.

1 Timothy 6:10-11 *“For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows. ¹¹But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness.”*

We should flee from what is said in verse 10 and adhere to what is said in verse 11.

A sure compass in uncertain time of storm

In the midst of the false doctrines and false teachers Paul speaks firmly about what will happen to them

1Timothy 6:3-4 “*If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness; ⁴He is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings,*”

What are the wholesome words of Christ about godliness?

Ephesians 2:20 “*And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone;*”

Lay Up treasures in Heaven

Matthew 6:19-31 “*Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: ²⁰But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: ²¹For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.*”

The Lamp of the body

²²“*The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light. ²³But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!*”

You Can't Serve God and Riches

²⁴“*No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.*”

Do Not Worry

²⁵“*Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for*

your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?

²⁶*Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they?*
²⁷*Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature? ²⁸And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: ²⁹And yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. ³⁰Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?*
³¹*Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed?”*

The above passage is one of the most soul searching scriptures in the bible; it is “The Sermon on the mount”.

Extra Facts

Jude 1:11 “*Woe unto them! for they have gone in the way of Cain, and ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward, and perished in the gainsaying of Core.*”

The first thing Paul highlighted was Godliness and he argued that the essence of Gospel preaching should be Godliness.

Genuine Christianity should produce Godliness and it should be a by-product and effect of Christianity.

The goal and standard what we preach should be Godliness. The false teachers in Paul time said something contrary to which Godliness is and that it was a means of gain. They believed if you are preaching and praying Godliness that you should be prospering and gaining worldly treasures.

If God gives you this raiment and food take it thank him for it but do not go about thinking that once you have these things you are prospering.

Be contented with your Godliness, keep on the course do not worry about the cares of the world keep your eyes on God and he will see you through.

In the parables of the prodigal son, the seeds and other parables he spoke about how these people laid up their treasures in gaining money and prospering worldly

blessings but they lost the main blessing, which is getting
 to heaven and seeing the true purpose of living holy in
 the sight of God.