

“WAR OF WORDS”

I TIMOTHY 6:3-5

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INTRODUCTION

See what Paul says about these false teachers that Timothy must deal with:

“Who suppose that godliness is a means of gain” (v. 5)

How does that differ from the contemporary preachers and teachers?

- It may well be that Paul sees a connection between these false teachers and the exhortation to slaves in vv. 1-2; these teachers may have told the slaves now Christians that they can be wealthy and prosperous—Christianity is a way to prosperity and success!
- Moreover, they may have seen a way for themselves to financial prosperity by pushing the prosperity theme with those who would listen to them; *“send me your money and God will grow it as “seed faith” to make you healthy, wealthy, and prosperous.*
- They may have charged substantial fees for their services.
- They may have used their ministry opportunities as a means to financial advancement.

We have seen hundreds of such preachers in our modern times.

And preachers who promote a “prosperity gospel” necessarily twist and distort Sound Biblical Truth as here.

In both Character and Conduct these men fall short of God’s standards.

YOU MUST REJECT FALSE TEACHERS WHOSE CHARACTER, CONDUCT, AND DOCTRINE ARE CONTRARY TO GODLINESS.

I. THEIR DOCTRINE (3)

- A. Heresy—“doctrine of a different kind from genuine Biblical doctrine
- B. Unhealthy—does not agree with sound—healthy words—our word “hygiene” is a derivative.
 - “Agree”—lit. “come to, attach oneself to, agree with, join in with.
 - Derivative noun “proselyte” is from this verb.
 - Present tense shows a process of not agreeing with.
- C. Opposed to Christ—“the words of our Lord Jesus Christ”
 - In the Scriptures that He endorsed and taught to His disciples
 - His guidance of the apostles into truth through the Holy Spirit
 - Jesus is the ultimate source of the teachings, and He is the theme of the teachings.
 - He is the source of the sound doctrine, of which His words furnish the standard.
- D. Doctrine according to Godliness—godly attitude and lifestyle.
 - Sound Biblical doctrine always leads to godly lifestyle and complete devotion to God.

II. THEIR CHARACTER

- A. Conceit: “He is conceited.”
 - Perfect tense—a state of conceit in which he remains
 - Blinded as by smoke, “full of smoke
 - Moral and spiritual denseness due to his pride and conceit
- B. Ignorance—“Knowing or understanding nothing”
 - Ignorance is a companion of conceit.
 - He has no genuine knowledge.
 - He lives in a mental, moral, and spiritual world of his own making.
 - Being opposed to Biblical truth (v. 3) leaves him in real spiritual ignorance.

- V. 5 says that he is “deprived of the truth”—again existing in such a state; he has been robbed, defrauded, deprived of what should have been his since he has rejected **God’s objectively revealed truth found in His Word**. He has disinherited himself.
 - V. 5 also says he has “a depraved mind” [corrupted]*—again he exists in that condition* (perfect tense). The moral reasoning of the false teacher is depraved and his soul is darkened.
 - He has been “thoroughly depraved” in mind.
- C. Sickness—“a morbid interest”—not “doting about” (v. 4)
- A sharp contrast to having “healthy & sound words” in v. 3.
 - He is being sick in pursuing wrong ideas; he has **a morbid craving** for false teaching!
1. Controversial Questions
- Unique and different theological pursuits.
 - Cf. the similar word “speculations” in 1:4.
 - Preoccupation with pseudo-intellectual theorizing; they make “mountains out of mole-hills.
 - A morbid craving for controversies and arguments is not the sign of good health, either psychologically or spiritually.
2. War of Words—only here in NT. Cf. verb in II Tim. 2—“wrangling about words.”
- Using words as weapons.
 - Could also mean wrangling about the words.

Such speculations and word wars lead to negative behavior patterns

III. THEIR CONDUCT: 4b-5a

- A. Envy
- B. Strife—this word almost always occur together with a word meaning “envy.” Envy leads to strife.
- “Eris” the god of strife, related to Ares, the god of war, wins the day.
 - Rom. 1:29—the list of the sins of degenerative society.
 - Gal. 5:21—the list of the works of the flesh.
- C. Abusive language—literally “blasphemies”, but here against other people. Scornful and insolent language.
- D. Evil suspicions
- Literally “under mind”; thoughts that make their way into one’s mind and cause bad thoughts about other persons.
 - “All looks yellow to the jaundiced eye.”
 - Such are products of an ignorant and conceited mind.
- E. Constant Friction
- A double compound word—a “thorough” rubbing “alongside”
 - Protracted quarreling, persistent wrangling.
 - The disputants are persistent and obstinate.
 - These men truly “rub each other the wrong way”!
 - Our word “diatribe” comes from this root—“a rubbing away”; a bitter and abusive criticism or denunciation full of scurrilous abuse, stinging insult, and heated invective, covert insinuation, malicious innuendo, and thinly veiled disdain.
- F. Opposed to Genuine Godliness—v. 3; rather, **“Godliness is gain.”** (v. 5)

CONCLUSION

Truly, we need to “withdraw ourselves” from such persons!

YOU MUST REJECT FALSE TEACHERS WHOSE CHARACTER, CONDUCT, AND DOCTRINE ARE CONTRARY TO GODLINESS.

Away with the “war of words”! We must adhere to “sound words of our L J C—to the doctrine acc. to godliness.