

1. Why must slaves respect their masters (or, from today's perspective, employees their bosses)?

2. Why is this all the more important if the master and servant are brothers in Christ?

3. Paul contrasts sound, or healthy, doctrine in verse 3 with a unhealthy or morbid interest in controversy in verse 4. What are the results of this "sickness"?

4. Can you think of any examples today of the divisive "quarrels about words" that Paul warns against?

To put it another way:

1 Tim 6:3-5 (DBY) If any one teach differently, and do not accede to sound words, those of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the teaching which is according to piety, he is puffed up, knowing nothing, but sick about questions and disputes of words, out of which arise envy, strife, injurious words, evil suspicions, constant quarrellings of men corrupted in mind and destitute of the truth, holding gain to be [the end of piety.

If anyone advocates a different doctrine and does not agree with sound words, those of our Lord Jesus Christ, and with the doctrine conforming to godliness, he is conceited and understands nothing; but he has a morbid interest in controversial questions and disputes about words, out of which arise envy, strife, abusive language, evil suspicions, and constant friction between men of depraved mind and deprived of the truth, who suppose that godliness is a means of gain.

Cross references:

1 Pet 2:18 (ESV) Servants, be subject to your masters with all respect, not only to the good and gentle but also to the unjust.

Rom 2:24 (NKJV) For "the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you," as it is written.

5. False teachers and troublemakers, according to verse 5, suppose that godliness is a means to gain. Does this refer only to monetary gain?

6. Some would maintain that the best way to keep peace in the assembly is to tolerate all viewpoints. Does this passage support that view?

7. Verse 6 says there is great gain in godliness with contentment. As a way of understanding this, what would godliness without contentment be like? contentment without godliness?

8. The concluding verses of this section warn of the dangers of coveting wealth. What are some of the snares of desiring to be rich?

Cross references:

2 Tim 2:23 (ESV) Have nothing to do with foolish, ignorant controversies; you know that they breed quarrels.

Titus 3:9-11 (ESV) But avoid foolish controversies, genealogies, dissensions, and quarrels about the law, for they are unprofitable and worthless.

Psalms 37:16 (NKJV) A little that a righteous man has is better than the riches of many wicked.

Prov 15:16 (KJV) Better is little with the fear of the LORD than great treasure and trouble therewith.

Phil 4:11 (NKJV) Not that I speak in regard to need, for I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content.

Heb 13:5 (ESV) Keep your life free from love of money, and be content with what you have, for he has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you."

Prov 30:8-9 (ESV) Remove far from me falsehood and lying; give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me with the food that is needful for me, lest I be full and deny you and say, "Who is the LORD?" or lest I be poor and steal and profane the name of my God.

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