

1 Timothy 6:1-10

April 1, 2020

We don't think of the apostle Paul as a health nut but in Chapter 3 he acknowledged the benefits of physical exercise (while still inferior to the exercise of godliness). His use of racing and boxing as analogies show he was familiar with Greek sports at least as a spectator, if not a participant. Then in the last chapter Paul, not the physician Luke, prescribed wine to Timothy for stomach complaints.

Paul writes a spiritual prescription in this chapter. He says to stick to a diet of the sound (or wholesome) words of our Lord Jesus Christ. The Greek word for sound, *hugiano*, has become *hygiene* in English. Paul uses it to describe sound words, sound teaching, or

soundness in the faith seven times in all the pastoral epistles.

Health may be defined as the absence of illness. Paul identifies one illness in verse 4, using the literal word sick for the love of controversy and quarrels (also translating doting, unhealthy craving, obsession, or morbid interest). This describes a departure from the whole teaching of the Lord and of Scripture to focus on narrow and prideful interpretations. It often takes the form of elevating one doctrinal point to the exclusion of others. Mr. Kelly observes, "We are sanctified by *the*, not by *a*, truth."

For study and discussion:

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?

5. What is meant by the “gain” in verse 5?
6. 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?
7. The concluding verses of this section warn of the dangers of coveting wealth. What are some of the snares of desiring to be rich?
8. Is it always bad to be rich?