

*** The Heights Baptist Church * Series: 1 Timothy: Instructions for the Church ***
*** Topic: Paul's Charge to Timothy * Scripture: 1 Timothy 6 * 6/9/2024 ***

MAIN POINT

As Christians, we need to find our fulfillment and contentment in Christ alone, not in worldly wealth.

INTRODUCTION

Share about a time in your life where you saw something and thought, "I want that."?

How does our culture tend to make us feel like our contentment is found in money or possessions?

UNDERSTANDING

ASK A VOLUNTEER TO READ 1 TIMOTHY 6:1-2

***Note to study leader:** Many slaves in the Roman empire were indentured servants, who were forced to sell themselves into slavery to work off their debt. While this type of slavery is not nearly as heinous as slavery was in American history, it certainly wasn't an ideal living situation. Yet Paul challenges these Christians to regard their masters "with all honor" for the purpose of honoring God and advancing the gospel.*

What are some applications from these verses for Christians today in America?

Why might we be tempted to take advantage of believers who are in authority over us?

In Christ there is neither Jew nor Gentile, slave nor free, male nor female, we are all one in Christ (Galatians 3:28-29). Since we know we are equal with each other, we may be tempted to take advantage of that fact and choose not to submit to one another.

ASK A VOLUNTEER TO READ 1 TIMOTHY 6:3-5

What danger is presented against godly teaching in the church if there is a focus on financial gain?

Why can godliness never be a means to financial gain?

Paul is presenting a strong message that shows us contentment and materialism are not compatible. This lesson may be difficult for us, since it is in our sinful nature to look out for ourselves rather than look to God, and to gain what we can for ourselves, at the expense of others. Whatever our social status is, God's principles apply. They should never be watered down to suit our fleshly desires.

ASK A VOLUNTEER TO READ 1 TIMOTHY 6:6-10

How does godliness relate to contentment?

The word "godliness" suggests an attitude focused on God and doing what pleases Him. It depicts a reverence that recognizes that we live each moment before God. The more focused on Christ we are, the more content we will be. Contentment isn't based on what we have, it's based on whose we are. Without a desire to be more and more like the One who created us, we won't experience contentment.

Why do you think there is "great gain when we combine godliness with contentment" (v. 6)?

Notice the progression in verse 9 (from temptation to snare to senseless and harmful desires to ruin and destruction). Individuals trapped by their longings for riches become full of senseless and harmful desires for that which we cannot take into eternity. When life is built on the illusion that wealth can bring contentment, it only plunges us into ruin and destruction.

How is verse 10 often misquoted? What's the difference in meaning between the way it's misquoted ("Money is the root of all evil") and the way it actually reads? Why is this difference important?

Money is not evil in and of itself. We are to follow biblical principles of stewardship with money. However, when we love money, we take our eyes off the One who is of infinitely greater worth. Jesus made it clear that we can either love God or we can love money, but we cannot love both (see Matt. 6:24).

ASK A VOLUNTEER TO READ PHILIPPIANS 4:11-13 AND 4:19

How does Paul's view of contentment compare with the modern world's view of contentment?

Paul stated that he was content no matter what his circumstances. Because of his faith and trust in Christ, Paul was able to live triumphantly above changing circumstances. In order to find contentment in Christ, we must learn to find our purpose in God and trust him to meet our needs in the way He knows is best for us.

Read verse 13 again. What made Paul's contentment possible? What does that contentment look like?

Paul knew that godliness goes hand in hand with contentment, and he wanted Timothy to understand this. When we're focused on living God-honoring lives, our contentment is measured by what we are doing in his service, and by what God is doing in us.

ASK VOLUNTEERS TO READ MATTHEW 6:33 AND HEBREWS 13:5

Have you ever tried to define "enough" in your life? Why is it hard to be satisfied with what we have?

It's easy to believe if we had only a little bit more, we would be content. However, if we look at people who have a little or even a lot more than we have, we realize contentment is not found in what we have.

ASK A VOLUNTEER TO READ 1 TIMOTHY 6:11-16

Paul had just warned Timothy against false teachers who were "puffed up" and whose teaching encouraged "envy, dissension, slander, evil suspicions, and constant friction." Apparently, their teaching was motivated by pride and greed, as Paul also warned Timothy against the love of money in light of their teaching.

How do verses 11-12 help us avoid the trap of loving money?

Why is it important that we not only flee worldly pursuits, but also replace them with godly ones?

Godliness extends into every aspect of life, every response to the opportunities and challenges of the world, and every relationship. These are the priorities of Christians.

Why did Paul describe the Christian life as a fight (v. 12)? How might viewing the Christian life as "the good fight of the faith" change the way you approach spiritual growth?

By challenging Timothy to "fight the good fight of the faith," Paul made clear that spiritual growth is not easy. Growing in Christlikeness requires persistence, discipline (1 Tim. 4:7), and practice (1 Tim. 4:15).

ASK A VOLUNTEER TO READ 1 TIMOTHY 6:17-19

Paul closed with some advice to those who were rich in this world.

What are God's expectations for people who are "rich in this world," according to the passage?

How might having wealth tempt us to become arrogant? How is generosity an effective way to combat the pride and false security that the love of money brings?

How might considering that God “richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment,” change the way we think about our money? How might it help us learn to be generous?

God is our loving Father. It is okay to have fun, as long as our priority is our walk with him, serving the church, and sharing the good news with others.

ASK A VOLUNTEER TO READ 1 TIMOTHY 6:20-21

Timothy had been entrusted with the gospel as the foundation for his relationship with God and given the responsibility of leading the church. These verses give us Paul’s concluding thoughts for Timothy.

To what was Paul referring when he instructed Timothy to “guard what has been entrusted to you”?

The phrase “guard what has been entrusted to you” likely included the gospel message.

“We deal with the world by sharing the gospel and leave the rest to God.” Pastor Randy Hahn, The Heights Baptist Church, sermon notes from March 12th, 2023

It is likely that Paul was also referring to the church that Timothy had been assigned to lead. Paul’s direction literally translates, “guard the deposit.” This (parathēkē) is a banking term denoting a sum deposited to the care of a bank (also used in 2 Tim 1:12 and 14). This included fighting for sound doctrine in the church, keeping his life pure, and sharing the gospel.

Timothy also had the responsibility to safeguard the teaching of the gospel within his congregation. This included both actively teaching the truth of the gospel and actively protecting his congregation against false teachers who sought to distort the gospel message. Paul warned those who professed the false teaching of the heretics that they would miss the mark of the Christian faith. The false teachers pretended to teach what ought to be believed, and they “shot far wide of the faith” (NEB) with their false knowledge.

What effect has “godless chatter and the opposing ideas of what is falsely called knowledge” had on some people in the church?

What is our responsibility as Christians to actively confront false teaching in the church?

“We are not fighting against people, but for people. We are fighting with the gospel out in the world; and we are fighting for right and biblical thinking in here (in the church).” Pastor Randy Hahn, The Heights Baptist Church, sermon notes from March 19th, 2023

APPLICATION

What steps have you taken to guard the truth of the gospel in your own life and with your primary relationships at home and in the church?

What steps can you take to ensure you are putting your hope in Christ and not in money?

PRAYER

Our heavenly Father, help us learn the lessons you have given us in this chapter from 1 Timothy. Change our hearts so that we would be willing to set our “rights” aside to help advance the gospel. Help us stick to and apply the sound instruction given to us in your word, and to avoid false teachings and avoid stirring up controversies that can distract us from sharing the gospel. Help us to have your perspective about money. Thank you for the material possessions you have provided us with for our enjoyment, and that you’ve entrusted to us to be good stewards of. Help us not to put our hope in wealth, but in you God. Help us to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share, so that we can take hold of the life that is truly life.

COMMENTARY

1 TIMOTHY 6

6:1. Paul is not addressing the practice of slavery in the secular world (although he did condemn the slave traders along with murderers in 1 Tim. 1:9–10). Rather, he is addressing the attitudes Christians in any situation need to have to best reflect Christ to a world who desperately needs him. Lasting cultural changes don't occur through legislating morality, but rather through the transformation of individual hearts as people are brought to the Lord.

Paul knew that salvation is not wrapped up in the alteration of society. No lasting change is brought about by political agitation or revolution. Such approaches do not solve the dilemma of man's relationship to God, or the eternal destiny of the soul. Cultural liberation can occur and stabilize only when the people within the culture have been deeply changed. Only spiritual revolution can secure this.

It is also a fundamental doctrine of the Christian faith that all people are equal before God. The cross of Christ is the great leveler, with the powerful and the powerless coming to salvation in the same, simple way. And so, though it may seem scandalous to us, God longs for the salvation of the oppressor as much as the oppressed. And this is great news for us, because we can easily be identified as both.

Submission is a virtue in God's eyes. When a hierarchy of authority exists, whether in government, social relationships, jobs, or within the church, God requires the giving of honor and respect to those in power. In our own time and culture, this could certainly be applied to employee and employer relations.

6:2. A new dimension is introduced when slave and slave owner are both Christians. Though Christian faith makes many proclamations about freedom (Luke 4:18–19; John 8:32; 2 Cor. 3:17; Gal. 3:28), it does so in recognition of a spiritual reality that is not yet realized in the social context. Christianity brings us into new relationships with one another, but the fullness of these relationships is not always achieved immediately, or even in this life. That is why slaves who have believing masters are not to show less respect for them because they are brothers.

Some of the wealthy Christians of New Testament times had slaves and stewards in their households. Embracing Christianity did not free the slave from his situation, nor did it lessen his obligations of service to his master—quite the opposite. Coming to Christ creates a new relationship, not only between the individual and God, but also between the individual and other people. Slave and master were now brothers, bonded together in God's family. This increased the obligation of service to one another.

In fact, entry into God's family holds the believer to a higher standard. The slave is to serve them even better. Why? Because those who benefit from their service are believers, and dear to them. Here is that exceptional love for which Christians and the church should be known—love that overrides roles, titles, jobs, and economic status and works for the benefit of others. Of course, Paul's instructions were based on mutual respect and submission to one another. The balancing instructions to masters are found in his letter to Philemon and also in Ephesians 6:9.

6:3-6. In contrast to false teachers who were motivated by selfish greed (vv. 3-5), Paul urged believers to seek godliness with contentment. The Greek word translated "contentment" refers to self-sufficiency. In Greek philosophy, the word denoted a wise man's independence of circumstances. It meant to become independent of outside support and to find all you need in yourself. To Paul, however, contentment was not found in himself but in Jesus Christ. Christian contentment is Christ-sufficiency, not self-sufficiency. Paul said to the Philippians, "In any and all circumstances I have learned the secret of being content" (Phil. 4:12, HCSB). How so? Paul said he was "able to do all things through Him" (v. 13) because Christ had strengthened him.

Why is godliness with contentment great gain? Paul did not refer to destitute Christians, those who did not have even the basic necessities for human survival. No person can be content with destitution. He referred to godly people who had food and clothing and who felt content with that.

Paul commended the benefits of godliness with contentment in v. 6 (see Ps 37:3-5). Paul used the word “contentment” to refer to an attitude of mind independent of externals and dependent only on God. He was not advocating godless self-sufficiency as a source of contentment. Paul believed that true sufficiency is Christ-sufficiency (Phil 4:13). Paul was affirming that those who felt that godliness leads to gain were indeed correct, for there is great profit (spiritual profit) in a brand of godliness that possesses a contentment in the realm of its material possessions. True godliness is a means of much gain, for it promises benefits for this life and the next (4:8). Adding contentment to this godliness would promote gratitude for God’s gracious gifts in this life (see 1 Tim 4:4-5).

6:7. Paul then referred to a true fact related to human birth and death—for we brought nothing into the world, and we cannot take anything out of the world. The Greek sentence begins with nothing for emphasis. Job said, “Naked I came from my mother’s womb, and naked shall I return” (Job. 1:21; see also Eccl. 5:15). We were born into this world penniless, and when we die, we are penniless once again. Our entrance into life is identical to our exit from life. Our brief life on planet Earth is a journey between two states of having nothing. As someone said, “There are no pockets in a shroud.” Every human being starts life in the same financial condition—with nothing. You did not even have a diaper until your parents gave you one. Family can bury their dead in a display of wealth, but they leave behind everything they accumulated. Whether we have little or much, we have it only for a little while. Material gain is only the traveling baggage of time, not the luggage of eternity. Jesus said, “Do not lay up for yourself treasures on earth, ... but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven” (Matt. 6:19-20).

6: 8. Why do godliness and contentment represent great gain? Paul’s “for” clause introduced an eschatological reason for this contentment. Since after a brief stay we shall depart this life as we came in, it is sheer folly to concern ourselves with earthly matters. Material gain is irrelevant, and greed is irrational (see Job 1:21). The second reason (v. 8) is that we must be content when we possess life’s necessities. The term “clothing” is general enough to include both clothing and shelter, but the immediate context favors limiting it to personal possessions such as dress. Paul’s words reflect the teaching of Jesus (Matt 6:25-34; Luke 12:22-31). Paul referred to food and clothing as symbols of life’s necessities. What is actually a necessity will vary somewhat in different societies. However, all of us face the temptation of greedily coveting more than we need.

In these verses Paul warned that godliness is not a trait from which to make material profit (v. 5). True godliness has contentment for its companion (v. 6). Since we cannot take life’s luxuries into God’s presence, we should be content with life’s necessities (vv. 7-8). Greed can find no place in an attitude like this.

Since we enter life with no possessions in hand and leave the same way, what should be our attitude toward material things? Paul said, if we have food and clothing, with these we will be content. Necessities are essential to our existence; luxuries aren’t. Food and clothing meet our basic needs. The Greek word translated “clothing” also means “house,” so shelter likely is included in the necessities.

Many Christians are in financial bondage. It’s because they did not learn to be content with the basic needs of life—food and clothing. They mistakenly added to the list of necessities a newer car, a bigger house, luxury items, and the newest gadget to come on the market. This passage calls us back to simpler living with God at the center of life. Real spiritual contentment occurs when you are Christ-sufficient.

6:9. “Those who desire to be rich” describes people motivated by money and possessions. The Bible has many warnings against covetousness (see Ex. 20:17; Ps. 49:10-20; Prov. 28:20; 30:7-9; Eccl. 5:10; Luke 12:13-21). The Bible also tells of many who came to grief because of it (Adam and Eve, Achan, Judas, and Ananias and Sapphira.)

People who walk the path of greed, who want to be rich, walk into peril. First, they fall into temptation, such as temptation to steal or lie or cheat. The snare that entraps them often is moral compromise. Second, when desire for riches goes unchecked, people fall into many senseless and harmful desires, such as lust for power and prestige. Money becomes an addiction—more money only inflames desire for more money. Greed is senseless (not rationally defensible) and harmful (brings bondage). Finally, greedy people, whether poor or rich, plunge themselves into ruin and destruction. The imagery is of people who are sinking and then

drowning. Greed destroys marriages and causes men and women to jeopardize health and emotional well-being. Jesus warned about the eternal destruction that comes to those controlled by greed (see Luke 16:14-31). It was the rich man's preoccupation with the world's wealth that caused him to neglect his soul.

6:10. Ruin and destruction come because the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. This may be the most misquoted verse in the Bible. Paul did not say that money is the problem; the problem is the love of money. The Bible has much to say about money, primarily with regards to our stewardship of it. Jesus spoke much about money, because it is how we view and use money that tells where our devotion is. It is our attitude toward money that gets us into trouble.

Paul spoke the words of vv. 9-10 to those who "want to get rich" ("men who keep planning to get rich," Williams). There is no condemnation of wealth as such, and the words do not apply to someone who wistfully longs, "It would be nice to have more money." In v. 9 Paul painted three progressive pitfalls in which the willful wealth-seeker becomes entangled. The "desires" are "foolish" because instead of bringing gain, they only produce harm. Paul supported this warning about wealth with a contemporary proverb. We can make three comments about the proverb. First, it does not condemn money but the love of money. Second, it does not state that all evil comes from the love of money, but such misplaced love can cause a great variety of ("all kinds of") evil. It is incorrect to say that the love of money causes all sins. Ambition and sexual lust are also fertile breeding grounds of sin. Third, the wandering elders from Ephesus who had sold out to greed were living proof of this maxim. The concern about materialism Paul had expressed in v. 5 had become a reality in the false teachers. Judas and Ananias and Sapphira were New Testament figures who "drowned" because of this inordinate love.

There is a link between the "faith" of the gospel and the blessedness God promises to his people (6:10b; Ps 1). The denial of one negates the other. Some translations (e.g., "spiked themselves on many thorny griefs," NEB) capture the intensely painful idea behind the word "pierced." With these graphic words Paul concluded his description of the heretics, their false teaching, and their false practice. He now turned his attention to specific words of guidance for his beloved Timothy.

6:11. The beginning words, "But you," show that Timothy's behavior was to provide an utter contrast to that of the false teachers mentioned in vv. 3-10. The twin commands of v. 11 contain a warning and a challenge. Timothy was warned to flee the heresy, divisiveness, and greed that Paul had denounced in vv. 3-10. He was challenged to "pursue" six virtues mentioned in three pairs. Each trait represents a must to insure Timothy's effectiveness in his ministry. The term "righteousness" refers primarily to upright conduct before human beings, and "godliness" describes an open and obedient relationship before God. The words "faith" and "love" reflect trust in God and benevolence and goodwill toward others (see 2 Thess 1:3; Titus 2:2). Timothy would need "endurance" in order to guarantee staying power for his difficult task. He needed "gentleness" in order to deal effectively with cantankerous heretics and wavering believers.

Instead of pursuing greed, Paul admonished Timothy (and us) to pursue godly virtues and spiritual goals. Paul contrasted the man of God with the false teachers (vv. 3-5) and the lovers of money (v. 10). The verbs flee and pursue are vivid. Flee from false teachings and the love of money as if something is chasing and endangering us. And evil is. The desires of the flesh and the pride of possessions constantly hound us to give in to the worldly system based on greed. Instead, we must pursue intentionally the specific virtues of righteousness, godliness, faith, love, steadfastness, gentleness. Righteousness is upright conduct before God and others. Godliness is conforming our lives to the character and person of God displayed by Jesus Christ. Faith here refers to faithfulness or dependability. It describes the person who, despite all the changes and circumstances of life down to the very end, is loyal to God. Love is that virtue that works for the good of others over self, striving to give rather than to receive. Steadfastness is the sticking power to stay in the race when the going is tough, knowing that one will be victorious in the end. Gentleness is power under control. Each of these virtues manage false prophets from without and greed from within.

6:12. Paul added two more verbs of importance in verse 12. The first is "fight", an athletic or a military metaphor with an emphasis on a disciplined and determined struggle, requiring one's best to prevail and take the victory. The English word agonize comes from it. It's in the present tense, indicating an ongoing fight.

The other verb in this verse is “take hold”; its tense reflects a single, completed event. That indicates we can take hold of eternal life as a completed, final action with assurance. To confess is to speak out one’s faith, to announce one’s belief. A Christian confession announces one’s dependence on Jesus Christ.

6:12. Having urged Timothy to avoid the false vagaries of the heretics and to develop needed Christian graces, Paul gave directives for perseverance. First, he borrowed an image from the athletic sphere to urge Timothy to “keep up the good fight for the faith.” The metaphor can imply either running or boxing or wrestling. The use of the present tense for “fight” suggests a continuous struggle. Second, Paul used a command focusing on eschatology urging Timothy to continue in the contest. Depending on the context, Paul could present eternal life as a blessing to be realized at the end (here and in Rom 6:22) or as a present experience (2 Cor 4:10-12, though the expression differs in this passage). The fact that God had “called” Timothy to eternal life suggests that it was already in his grasp but not completely held. Paul’s command was intended to stir up Timothy to renewed vigor, but it does not imply that Timothy earned eternal life by self-effort. It suggests that “eternal life” is more of a goal toward which Timothy was to orient his efforts rather than a prize that God would give him as a reward for that effort. The fact that God had called him was an incentive for his response.

6:13-16. Paul turned from a series of admonitions to Timothy to give advice to those already rich. The preceding words on wealth in vv. 6-10 were spoken to those who aspired to wealth. As a final thought Paul spoke a word to those who already had it. The constructive advice here balances the more extreme prohibitions of the earlier passage. He did not condemn wealth, but he showed the added temptations the wealthy face. He was vitally concerned that Christians have the right attitude toward their wealth and make the proper use of it (see also Luke 12:13-21; Ps 52:7).

6:17. Paul’s beginning reference to the present world suggests that the wealthy can have their wealth only in this age. It is good for this present world, but it does not convert automatically into blessedness in the world beyond. In this verse Paul contrasted right and wrong responses to the possession of wealth. A wrong response involves an arrogant attitude and the making of wealth as the hope of one’s life. As a deterrent to trusting in riches, Paul mentioned the transitory, uncertain nature of wealth. The word uncertain contains a reminder that it is by no means clear that riches will continue with the one who has them. The right response is to hope in a God who lavishes on His people all their needs. The statement implies that God does not give wealth to promote pride but that we might use and enjoy it in His will (see also Jas 2:5; 4:13-14; 5:2-3). Paul’s sound advice walks the straight line between a world-denying asceticism and a self-centered indulgence. The advice promotes gratitude toward God for the benefits He bestows.

6:18. Paul mentioned four ways to use wealth wisely. To do good involves using wealth in a positive way instead of letting it feed a life of personal luxury. To be rich in good deeds pointed the wealthy in the direction in which they were to be truly rich, in the doing of good deeds. These two verbs probably include more than benevolence. The need for benevolence is emphasized in the next pair of terms. To be generous demands a liberal sharing of wealth with others. One who is willing to share shows that the generous act of giving is to spring from internal generosity. Paul was suggesting that genuine wealth is found in what we give, not what we have.

6:19. Paul outlined the outcome of such generosity by stressing two truths. First, he stressed that giving generously to the needy stores for the giver a future treasure. Paul was not advocating that the giver could earn salvation or favors from God. Good works are solid evidence of salvation and assure us that we have eternal life. Paul may have based these thoughts on such words as contained in Matt 6:19-21. The godless, on the other hand, lay up treasures for themselves of a different kind (Jas 5:1-5). Second, Paul stressed that generous actions allow the giver to lay hold of eternal life in the here and now. Paul had urged Timothy to lay hold of this in v. 12. Here Paul expressed that taking hold of eternal life is a goal of the unselfish giving he had commanded. Christians who enter the life of love by unselfish behavior will enter gloriously into God’s presence in the life to come.

In summary, Paul provided positive action for Timothy to undertake after he warned him to flee the evil desire for wealth. Paul’s practice was wise and sensible. Often those who prohibit one action fail to provide a substitute. Paul prohibited Timothy’s pursuit of wealth, but he urged him to follow hard after the traits of righteousness and godliness and to continue the struggle for the truth of the gospel in the Christian life.

In 6:17–19 Paul made a final statement on a positive use of wealth. It is vain to denounce wealth to those already wealthy. It would be better to instruct them in its positive use. Paul did that here, urging that the wealthy enrich their lives with all types of good deeds. He particularly urged them to use their wealth to share with the needy.

6:20-21. At around 200 AD, a false teaching known as Gnosticism began to become a major problem for the church. This false doctrine infiltrated and led astray some Christian churches. Gnostics felt that a hierarchy of spiritual beings related humanity to God, and they emphasized that salvation came from mastering the “knowledge” of the escape of the soul from the world of matter. Some interpreters have seized upon the word “knowledge” (v. 20) as evidence that Paul was opposing a form of Gnosticism. But we can see from the new Testament letters such as Colossians and Jude that the beginnings of Gnosticism were already surfacing in the first century.

Paul gave two final commands to Timothy.

First, he directed Timothy to “guard what has been entrusted” to him, literally “guard the deposit.” The “deposit” (*parathēkē*) is a banking term denoting a sum deposited to the responsibility of a bank (cf. the same word in 2 Tim 1:12, 14). Fee suggests that the deposit Paul had entrusted to Timothy was the task of resisting the false teachers. ¹⁷³ This also included keeping his life pure and faithfully proclaiming the truth.

Second, Timothy was to “turn away from godless chatter” and avoid the pseudointellectual jargon of the heretics. “Godless chatter” (see 2 Tim 2:16 for the same word) characterizes the prating of the heretics as futile nonsense. Paul did not want Timothy to waste time in refuting these erroneous ideas. He was to ignore them. The “knowledge” of the heretics included empty discussions about fables, genealogies, and asceticism. Paul avowed that what the heretics espoused was knowledge, but he named it “false knowledge.” There was such a commodity as genuine knowledge (2 Cor 4:6; Phil 3:8), but these heretics did not possess it.

6:21 Paul warned those who professed the false teaching of the heretics that they would miss the mark of the Christian faith. The false teachers pretended to teach what ought to be believed, and they “shot far wide of the faith” (NEB) with their false knowledge.

Two features of the closing greeting are unusual. First, it is brief (see 2 Cor 13:14 for a lengthy greeting). Second, the pronoun for “you” is plural, suggesting that Paul intended that the letter be read to the assembled congregation.

Paul thus concluded 1 Timothy, absent from the scene of battle but concerned enough about the presence of heresy to write an entire letter of directives to his young colleague Timothy. Timothy was to guard the trust committed to him, avoid the pseudointellectual pretensions of the heretics, and stop the advance of this cancerous heresy in the church at Ephesus.