Small Group Discussion + Leader Guide

Sunday - November 8, 2026

Preached By: Matt Alexander

"Guarding the Church Against Greed"

Message #12
"Set In Order: God's Design for His Church" 1 Timothy Series
1 Timothy 6:1-10

Homiletical Bridge:

CIT: Paul explained to Timothy how to guard the church from the corruption of greed.

FCF: Our sinful hearts are tempted to pursue personal gain, measure life by possessions, and compromise our devotion to Christ.

Theological Principle: Christ guards His church through godly conduct, sound doctrine, contentment, and warnings against the love of money.

Thesis: We must guard our church from the corruption of greed.

Proposition: I want FC to be guarded from the corruption of greed.

PQ: How does Christ guard His church from the corruption of greed?

1. ***Conduct That Commends the Gospel — vv. 1–2***
2. ***Corruption of False Doctrines — vv. 3–5***
3. ***Contentment of True Godliness — vv. 6–8***
4. ***Consequences of Covetousness — vv. 9–10***

BEFORE YOU MEET

Encourage group members to read 1 Timothy 6:1–10 before gathering. Ask them to come prepared to share one thing from the passage that stood out to them.

OPENING QUESTION

Use this to get the conversation started. Keep it light and accessible.

Think of something you worked hard to obtain — a possession, a position, or an achievement. Looking back, did it deliver everything you expected it to? Why or why not?

SERMON OVERVIEW

In 1 Timothy 6:1–10, Paul instructs Timothy on how to guard the church from the corruption of greed. He addresses four areas: conduct that commends the gospel, the corruption of false doctrine, the contentment of true godliness, and the consequences of covetousness. The central conviction of the passage is this: true gain is not found in having more. It is found in knowing Christ.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Our daily conduct in the workplace and in relationships either commends the gospel or contradicts it.
- False teachers who treat ministry as a means of financial gain distort the gospel and damage the church.
- Godliness joined with contentment is itself great gain, because we arrived in this world with nothing and will leave everything behind.
- The love of money — not money itself — is a root of all kinds of evils, and it has caused some to wander from the faith entirely.
- The answer to greed is not simply wanting less. It is learning to treasure Jesus more.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Section 1 — Conduct That Commends the Gospel

1 Timothy 6:1–2

1. Paul's concern in these verses is that the name of God and the gospel not be brought into disrepute. In what ways can the everyday conduct of a believer either support or undermine the message they claim to believe?

2. The sermon pointed to Colossians 3:23, which calls believers to work as if working for the Lord rather than for people. What would it look like practically for your work — whether at a job, at home, or in ministry — to reflect that standard?

3. Have you ever witnessed someone whose conduct in the workplace or community made the gospel more believable to those around them? What did that look like?

Section 2 — Corruption of False Doctrines

1 Timothy 6:3–5

4. Paul describes false teachers who imagine that godliness is a means of financial gain. The sermon used the image of a doctor who tells patients only what they want to hear in order to keep collecting payment. How does that image help clarify what is at stake when the gospel is distorted for personal profit?

5. The sermon offered three diagnostic questions for evaluating teaching: Does it agree with God's Word? Does it exalt Christ? Or does it appeal to selfish desires? How can your group apply those questions regularly when consuming Christian content — sermons, books, podcasts, or social media?

6. Why do you think the prosperity gospel continues to attract large followings even when it contradicts clear biblical teaching? What

needs does it appear to meet, and how does the true gospel address those same needs more faithfully?

Section 3 — Contentment of True Godliness

1 Timothy 6:6–8

7. Paul states that godliness with contentment is great gain, and that we brought nothing into the world and will take nothing out of it. How does that reality change the way you think about what you are working toward in life?

8. The sermon drew a distinction between the world's formula — gain produces contentment — and Paul's formula — godliness with contentment is gain. Where do you see the world's formula shaping the way you think about money, possessions, or success?

9. Contentment was described not as laziness or denial, but as trusting God's provision without allowing possessions to rule our hearts. What is the difference between genuine contentment and simply giving up? How do you personally distinguish between the two?

10. The sermon asked: "Can you thank God for what you have without constantly comparing it to somebody else?" Be honest with yourself. In what areas of life do you find comparison most tempting?

Section 4 — Consequences of Covetousness

1 Timothy 6:9–10

11. Paul warns that those whose hearts are controlled by the desire to become rich fall into a snare. The sermon compared greed to an animal trap — the bait looks appealing, but what appears to be an opportunity becomes captivity. Where have you seen that pattern play out, either in your own life or in someone you know?

12. The sermon noted that Judas walked with Jesus, heard His teaching, and witnessed His miracles — yet his love of money ultimately led

him to betray the Savior. What does that sobering example reveal about the danger of being close to religious activity while the heart remains far from Christ?

13. Jesus said in Matthew 6:24 that no one can serve both God and money. What are some practical signs that money has begun functioning as a master rather than a tool in someone's life?

Gospel and Application

14. The sermon closed with the story of George Beverly Shea, a young man who chose to devote his extraordinary voice to honoring Christ rather than pursuing personal recognition and financial reward. What decision or opportunity in your own life has required you to choose between personal gain and devotion to Christ? How did you navigate it?

15. The closing challenge was this: the answer to greed is not learning to want less — it is learning to treasure Jesus more. What does it look like in your daily life to actively cultivate a greater treasure in Christ rather than simply trying to suppress the desire for more?

PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS

Choose one or more of the following to practice individually or as a group before your next meeting.

Conduct Check Identify one specific relationship or setting — a workplace, a neighborhood, a family situation — where your conduct has not consistently reflected your faith. Commit to one concrete change this week and report back to the group.

Contentment Practice For the next seven days, begin each morning by writing down three things you already have for which you are genuinely grateful. At the end of the week, reflect on whether this practice shifted your perspective on what you need.

Discernment Exercise Identify one source of Christian teaching you regularly consume — a podcast, a book, a YouTube channel, or a social media account. Apply the three questions from the sermon: Does it agree with God's Word? Does it exalt Christ? Or does it appeal to selfish desires? Share your findings with the group.

Generosity Response Greed is not simply defeated by restraint — it is often defeated by generosity. Identify one specific, tangible act of generosity you can take this week, whether toward your church, a neighbor, or someone in need. Make a plan and follow through.

Heart Inventory Set aside fifteen minutes this week for honest reflection. Ask yourself the two closing questions from the sermon: Can I honestly say that Jesus is worth more to me than everything this world has to offer? And what, if anything, has been competing with Him for first place in my heart?

CLOSING PRAYER PROMPTS

Close your group time in prayer, using these prompts to guide you.

- Thank God for the grace of salvation that money could never purchase.
- Confess any specific ways greed, comparison, or covetousness has taken root.
- Ask God for the contentment that comes from knowing Christ rather than accumulating more.
- Pray for your church to be a community where the gospel is commended by both word and conduct.
- Pray for anyone in the group who is facing a decision where personal gain and devotion to Christ are in tension.

MEMORY VERSE FOR THE WEEK

1 Timothy 6:6 — Paul's declaration that godliness joined with contentment is great gain. Write it out. Carry it with you. Let it challenge the assumptions your heart makes about what you actually need.