Paul instructs Timothy in **1 Timothy chapter 6** about godliness and false teachers, "These are the things you are to teach and insist on. If anyone teaches otherwise and does not agree to the sound instruction of our Lord Messiah Yeshua/Jesus and to godly teaching, they are conceited and understand nothing. They have an unhealthy interest in controversies and quarrels about words that result in envy, strife, malicious talk, evil suspicions and constant friction between people of corrupt mind, who have been robbed of the truth and who think that godliness is a means to financial gain. But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it. But if we have food and clothing, we will be content with that. Those who want to get rich fall into temptation and a trap and into many foolish and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs. But you, man of God, flee from all this, and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance and gentleness. Fight the good fight of the faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called when you made your good confession in the presence of many witnesses. Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment. Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share. In this way they will lay up treasure for themselves as a firm foundation for the coming age, so that they may take hold of the life that is truly life."

Throughout the years there have been many prosperity teachers who have taught that God wants us all to be rich, and that if we are not then we don't have faith. Many televangelists have gotten very rich over the years preaching to us a false gospel. They preach a watered-down, lukewarm gospel. They preach anything but to crucify the flesh and forsake this world and to be content with what we have: nothing about laying up treasure in heaven. Yeshua tells this story in **Luke 12:16-21**, "And He told them this parable: 'The ground of a certain rich man yielded an abundant harvest. He thought to himself, "What shall I do? I have no place to store my crops." Then he said, "This is what I'll do. I will tear down my barns and build bigger ones, and there I will store my surplus grain. And I'll say to myself, 'You have plenty of grain laid up for many years. Take life easy; eat, drink and be merry.'" But God said to him, "You fool! This very night your life will be demanded from you. Then who will get what you have prepared for yourself?" This is how it will be with whoever stores up things for themselves but is not rich toward God.'" We live in a society where everyone wants everything for free, and yet salvation, which is a free gift from God, does require of us our very lives. Paul tells us that many will not agree with sound doctrine or godly teaching. How true that is today! We have been taught this compromised, watered-down, lukewarm doctrine for years, so how are we to know what is sound and what is not? You could go back and see what famous preachers taught in the 1800's or at the turn of the century when we had a great revival, or you could simply go to the Word of God and see what is written, as long as you do not have a modern version of the Bible.

You may be thinking that this is all ridiculous to think that our Bibles have been changed to line up with some of our teachings today. Well, Paul warns us, John warns us, Peter warns us, and Jude warns us, and even Yeshua warns us. **2 Timothy 3:1-5** tells us, "But realize this, that in the last days difficult times will come. For men will be lovers of self, lovers of money, boastful, arrogant, revilers, disobedient to parents, ungrateful, unholy, unloving, irreconcilable, malicious gossips, without self-control, brutal, haters of good, treacherous, reckless, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, holding to a form of godliness, although they have denied its power; avoid such men as these." Yeshua tells us that we will know a false teacher by his fruit. Here is some of that fruit: **1)** Is the teaching using the Word of God as the central source? Is it being taught just as it is written in the Word of God? Scripture will always explain Scripture. **2)** Is Yeshua the central theme of the teaching? For everything we need for life and godliness is in Him, for He is the mystery of godliness. **3)** Does the teaching compel you to forsake the world and draw closer to the Messiah, to crucify the flesh and leave your sinful nature behind? **4)** Does the teaching teach you to pursue God and the things of God, like the Holy Spirit and His fruit, godliness and holiness? **5)** Or does the teaching tell you just what you want to hear? In the end times people will only want their ears tickled: no teaching about sin, or repentance, judgment, or even hell. **6)** Does the teaching result in a change of heart or a change in lifestyle? **7)** Does the teacher use his own stories or drama or props or other gimmicks to teach?

8) Does the teaching leave you feeling justified that now you can keep doing what you have been doing with no convictions? **9)** Is the teaching about increasing church membership or income? Only God gives the increase and prospers a church, and that is done by prayer and faithfulness. **10)** Is the teaching about social justice, globalism or politics? We must have the meat of the Word if we are going to become strong spiritually. If we are only going to be taught the same types of messages, we will not be able to stand strong against the attacks of the Devil. We need to be like the Bereans who would search out the Scriptures to be sure that they were being taught correctly. Knowing our Scriptures is the same as knowing God. If we are incorrect in our knowledge then we are incorrect about who God is, and it will affect our walk with God and our faith in God. There is teaching today that says that we do not need to live by God's Word, for that is considered being under the law. There is teaching that says that if we accept Messiah we are saved and now we can live under no condemnation. What about the conviction of the Holy Spirit and repentance? The twisting of God's Word is a terrible offence to God and His people. Paul tells Timothy in **2 Timothy 2:15**, "Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth." Yeshua warns us in **Matthew 7:15**, "Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves." We must learn to test the spirits, but to do that we need to be walking in the Spirit. Paul tells us to flee these people who have a form of godliness but deny its power.

We need to be godly people, and to do that we must first realize that there is great value in godliness, that it is worth pursuing. We must be content in where God has us, and so that means that we should not be pursuing worldly gain. Yeshua tells us in **Luke 12:15**, "Then He said to them, 'Beware, and be on your guard against every form of greed; for not even when one has an abundance does his life consist of his possessions.'" Here in America we have so much that so many people have to have storage sheds to keep their things or buy bigger houses. We must learn contentment, but we also need to learn humility. When we are humble we do not need to compete with our neighbor. We do not need to feel superior and in so doing, as the saying went years ago, "keep up with the Jones'." We should rejoice when our brother is blessed and not try to outdo him in his blessing; and no matter what we may think, that is exactly what we do. Yeshua is our example in godliness: a king who was born in a stable; a leader who was rejected by his brothers; a man of wisdom who was mocked and laughed at; one who did miracles and was called the devil. He never fought or opened his mouth, but with humility he forgave his persecutors. Instead of wearing a crown, he wore thorns. This is godliness. This is what we strive for, for it has great value for this life and for the life to come. This is the power of godliness, for in it we have eternal life and we have the victory.

Questions/Comments?

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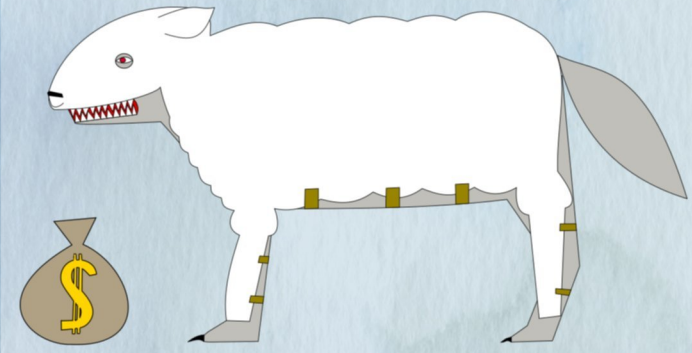
Godliness and False Teachers



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