

## Study Notes for [1 Timothy 6:11-16, 20-21](#)

### THE KING'S ROYAL APPEARING

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#### **Introduction:**

In this passage, Paul ends his letter by giving his spiritual son his personal instructions; instructions that would be public for all the church to see – giving Timothy the authority from Paul to carry them out. These instructions are for Timothy's own spiritual development and discipline (rather than for how he should administer leadership with regard to the church members). It is easy to see Paul's great affection for Timothy in these instructions. The instructions are not harsh or demanding but encouraging and they also reveal Paul's love and concern for the Ephesus church.

#### **Outline of Passage**

1. Paul's personal and direct instructions to Timothy include (vv. 11-12):
  - i. to *flee* from the love of money and the temptations to get rich
  - ii. to *fight* the food fight of faith
  - iii. to *keep* the commandment (vv. 13-15a)
2. Doxology (vv. 15b-16)
3. Final words of encouragement and warnings (vv. 20-21)

#### **Notes**

6:11 Paul begins by instructing Timothy to flee from "these things" – where "these things" refer to the love of money and the temptations to get rich; including sins such as greed, envy and jealousy. Timothy is also to flee from bad doctrine and controversies.

Paul refers to Timothy as a "man of God." This designation is often used in the OT (See Deuteronomy 33:1; Joshua 14:6; 1 Samuel 9:6; 1 Kings 12:22; Nehemiah 12:24; Jeremiah 35:4). The designation shows the level of esteem Paul held for Timothy. For Timothy, as well as all the members of the Ephesus church who read it, this must have been a great encouragement.

Instead of the love of material things, Timothy is to desire "righteousness (correct conduct cf. Philippians 1:11), godliness (relationship to God cf. 3:16), faith and love (the supreme Christian virtues which are on all of Paul's lists), perseverance and gentleness (everyday attitudes in living out the Christian life)."

6:12 Paul uses the metaphor of a fight to describe the life of a devote and serious Christian whose desire is to glorify God. The metaphor is an athletic one rather than involving war (see 2 Timothy 4:7) and includes the idea of contending with integrity. Paul understands that the life of a Christian can be difficult and so requires all of the attributes he listed in the previous verse. This is particularly true when the Christian life runs opposite from the prevailing culture. Paul's own life reflects this and he expects it from Timothy as well. Note that this is the second time that Paul uses this metaphor (1:18) in his first letter to Timothy. And note also the present tense of the instruction; Paul understands these issues to be current in Timothy's life.

“take hold” extends the athletic metaphor of “fight” in the sense of taking hold of the prize. By stating this in the present tense, Paul is saying that “eternal life” is ‘already’ available even though it is clearly ‘not-yet’ and he must await the final consummation (Fee, 150).

“good confession” likely refers to Timothy’s baptism when he publicly confessed Christ before “many witnesses.” Notice that Paul uses this phrase twice: once for Timothy and immediately in the next verse for Jesus. Paul is identifying Timothy as an imitator of Christ.

6:13-14 Christ’s “good confession” does not only refer to the words he spoke but to his entire witness as the Son of God taking on the sins of the world at his death and culminating in his resurrection from the dead which vindicated him as God’s own Son (3:16).

“the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ” refers to the Second Advent (2 Timothy 4:1,8; Titus 2:13).

6:15-16 “he will bring about” means that everything is being done by God to bring the world to its final consummation.

“unapproachable light” is taken from Psalm 104:2. God’s glory is so blinding that it can not be seen by the human eye (Exodus 24:15-17; 34:29-35; 1 Kings 8:11). The apostle John also uses the designation of light (John 1:7-9; 1 John 1:5-7). The following phrase “no one has seen or can see” follows directly from this.

6:20-21 “Grace be with you” here the “you” is plural (you all) implying the entire Ephesian church. It is clear that Paul intended then that the letter be public and not only for Timothy. The “grace” Paul is referring to is the “grace of our Lord Jesus Christ” that is the grace of God which He extends to all His people and that comes through Christ Jesus.

## References

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