



Sermon – 09/10/2017

1 Timothy 6:2 – 5

So I'm, I'm reading this morning and last night the Oklahoma/Ohio State game, Oklahoma won, when the end of the game came, teams were off the field and quarterback for Oklahoma, one of the most classless things you can possibly do, ran out on the field with the Oklahoma flag and stabbed it in the middle of the field on the logo for Ohio State. Classless. It was interesting, the comment that was made, though, because it made me think of Texas A&M. It said, it said, only the band was left. And I'm thinking at Texas A&M if only the band's left, you're not putting that in the middle of this field. We've got the toughest band in the country. So it was kind of a goofy statement. He wouldn't make it about us. But it's, you know I expect that kind of self-centered, classless, "it's all about me" from people that don't know Jesus Christ. But for us there have to be a distinctive. And that's the text we come to today. 1 Timothy. We're coming to the end of the book. 1 Timothy chapter 6 and Paul is writing an unusual thing.

Now I'm going to read the verses. There are two ideas juxtaposed. We'll look at riches next Sunday morning. But I want you to listen to what he says. Because it's interesting what it says. At first if you think about who we are and you think about the fact that we've embraced the grace of Jesus Christ, right. We've been forgiven. He's given us his Holy Spirit. He's given us a guarantee that we're going to heaven when we die. So you would think with that kind of grace and the embracing of Jesus Christ and the greatness of who he is, man this is wonderful. So I want his best against my best. Now listen to this. Six, the last part of verse 2. Now before we get into this remember he's, he's given Timothy, he makes a statement to him several times, he says, "Timothy I've given you the teaching in the Greek, that is, I've given you a box and there's all sorts of truths and principles in the box." We obviously have them in the New Testament. But Timothy got them from his mother, his grandmother, and now Paul. And Paul's taught him; all their time together he's given this box of truth and he tells Timothy a couple things about it. He says, "I want you to wrap yourself in it." Literally in the Greek he says be in it. I want you to pull those things out, implement them in your life, and if you do it will train you for godliness. A Greek word that appears four times in the book of Timothy. It's going to appear in this passage and remember this particular Greek word for godliness, this is not the word for holiness, holiness means to be set apart, but this particular word for godliness is *eusebeian*. It means that I revere God so deeply, now listen, I revere him so deeply. We just sang; what's the last song we just sang? No other name is more important in my life than Jesus. So I revere that name so deeply, now listen, that I love what he loves. I like what he likes. I honor what he honors. I value what he values. I am repulsed by what he's repulsed by. I'm sickened by what he's

sickened by. What angers him, angers me. What he loves, I love. That's the meaning of the Greek word which reappears in this text. So hear now what Paul writes. Last part of chapter 6, last part of verse 2 in chapter 6.

²Teach and urge, or encourage, these things. ³If anyone teaches a different doctrine and does not agree with the healthy words of our Lord Jesus Christ and the teaching that accords with godliness, listen, ⁴he is puffed up with conceit and understands nothing. He has an unhealthy craving for controversy and for quarrels about words, which produce envy, dissension, slander, evil, suspicions, ⁵and constant friction among people, listen, who are depraved in mind and deprived of the truth, imagining that godliness is a means of gain.

Now he says three things that look kind of don't make sense. He says, "Timothy you've got this box of teaching. I want you to take it out, first of all, and I want you to teach it. I want you to give it to everybody." As a matter of fact, he tells him in 2 Timothy, he says, "Get a group of men around you," and it would be true with women also, "who are faithful and solid. Give them the teaching so they can keep delivering." Then he says, "Urge them encourage people who are in the grace of Jesus Christ to embrace these teachings." Why would you have to encourage me to embrace these teachings? Because he says in Ephesus, where Timothy's pastoring, there is a different doctrine and it does not agree with the healthy words of Jesus Christ and the godliness that comes from teaching. Now here's the difficulty now. I want you to listen today. It's almost like last week's sermon. It's not going to be a pleasant one. But listen carefully. He puts three things on the table in front of us. He says, "Timothy you know what healthy teaching is." That's literally the Greek actually when you have the word sound. We get the word hygiene from the Greek word there; healthy. "Timothy you've got teachings healthy, you've got false teachings that has come into the church. I want you to urge your people to go here." Why would it take urging for me to embrace a doctrine that is the sound words of our Lord Jesus Christ and that accords with the reverence that shows up in my life? Why would I struggle with this false doctrine over against the beauty of the truth of Jesus? Why? There is some things in the box that we love.

I did two funerals yesterday. And what I taught in the funerals was what we'd all love. Talked about the fact that Connie Byrd, that her Lord came and got her and took her home to where he is. John 14: to be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord. There was nobody in the funeral that said, "Oh, preacher, I don't like that." Everybody loves that. The family's, they're hunkered down on that truth, that she's OK and that they'll be OK until they see her and they're OK. It's a truth we love. When the Bible says in Psalm 139 that the thoughts of God about you are more than the sand on the seashore. I saw somebody before the service last night, they heard Mark Lowery, and Mark Lowery said, "God's got your picture on his refrigerator." I mean that really is pretty much the truth of that Psalm. Who in the world has a problem with the fact that the Creator has my photo on his refrigerator? When the Bible says in Romans 8 that when you can't pray that his spirit prays on your behalf so that, what does it say, the Baptist verse. For we know that all things work together for good to those who are called according to God's purpose. So God works everything out good in my life because when I can't pray, the Holy Spirit prays for me. Who has a problem with that? I mean there are truths inside this box that we love.

And then there's some truths that you don't. Look in chapter 6, verse 1.

¹Let all who are under a yoke as slaves regard their own masters as worthy of all honor, so the name of God and the teaching may not be reviled. ²Even those who have believing masters must not be disrespectful

You're in church, you got a man that can sell your son tomorrow, he owns you, he's your brother in Christ, you take the same Lords Supper, you listen to the same sermon, you have the same promises, and you got to go home and honor him and respect him. And that's Gods best for you. I don't like that. And so false teaching arises that always does one of two things. Number one: that do not agree with the healthy words of our Lord Jesus Christ. There's always a doctrine that will arise that will honor me instead of Jesus. Whether you're Islam, whether you're Jehovah's Witness, Mormons, whatever it is, every other religion in the world, Jehovah's Witness, for example, they work hard. They have all these meetings. They don't pledge allegiance. They don't have birthdays. They don't have Christmas. They have all these rules, all these things, why? So that when they die and they stand before God, he'll look at them and say, "You know what, you've been so great. You did so much great stuff. Listen, come on in." What the Bible teaches, I don't get into heaven because of my greatness. I get into heaven because of the greatness of Jesus. But I like that doctrine because it gives me honor. And then the other thing that false doctrine does, another base, it will take away godliness. It will let me do what I want to do. There was a weird teaching, it surfaced in the New Testament, you find it in 1 John where he says anybody that calls Jesus accursed doesn't do that by the spirit of God. There was this weird teaching that was sweeping the first century church which was that Jesus just seemed to be physical. That he really didn't die in the flesh; it just looked like that. Because the flesh is dirty and it's evil, the spirit is the only thing that matters. And what they were teaching was you can, because the flesh doesn't matter, because it's bad, you can do anything you want to with your body. You can sleep with anybody you want to, any time you want to, as many times as you want to. Because the body is bad so it doesn't matter what you do with it. But your spirit, as long as you pray and love Jesus, you're OK. So man's best always honors me or releases me from the godliness that God demands of me. So I have to kind of choose, right, between God's best and my best.

Now that's where the problem is. Sometimes they fit together well. I, God's best for me has been to pastor at Texas A&M. I told more Aggie jokes than anybody in the history of Texas when God sent me here. There's not a day, I've been here 31 years, there's not a day I get up and don't love being the pastor here. There's not a day that I get up and I don't enjoy every single, well not everything I do, let me back that one up, little overstatement there. But 90%, we'll go there, I love what I do. I love being pastor here. I love the Aggies. I love the spirit. I love everything about being here. God's best for me is really kind of my best. It's been a great ride. So sometimes they match. If you look at Joseph in the Old Testament, he had a rough go early in his life, right. His brothers sell him. He winds up in jail, prison, accused of sexual assault on a woman, he was serving her master. But then he winds up being the number two guy in Egypt. All the football games he has box seats. He's the number two guy for the rest of his life. He saves his family and brings them home and gets to torture his brothers a little bit after what they did to him. I mean it's a great gig. Daniel, he gets exiled when he's like age twelve. He gets thrown into Babylon for three years. They give him a new culture, a new language, a

new food, new clothing. They change everything about him. And what happens? He winds up the number two guy in two kingdoms: Babylon and the Medes and Persians. He is the number two guy. It is a great gig. God's best for him was great.

The guy that wrote this book. God's best for him, go home and read 2 Corinthians 11: shipwrecked, beaten, stoned, left for dead, jail after jail after jail, when he says his passion is to go preach the gospel where nobody's gone and he's in jail for years. God's best for him. God's best for Jesus was a cross so that he could give us his best. Sometimes God's best and our best, it matches. If you're Billy Graham, God's best for you is that you've spent your life, great wife, great kids, preaching a gospel that literally, including me, millions have met Jesus because of your preaching. Presidents have had you in their office. They've embraced your wisdom, embraced your teaching, you are a revered man. Even by people that don't care anything about Jesus. God's best for Billy Graham was incredible. Sometimes God's best is really fun. And there are other times when it's tough. You ask the slave in 1 Timothy 6:1 and 2, "How do you like God's best?" He's going to look at you and say, "You know, I have a pretty tough life, but his name and his teaching is more important than my circumstance." Got a guy in the Old Testament, Micaiah, good prophet man. He tells Ahab, Ahab asks, "What's going to happen?" He says, "I'll tell you what's going to happen. God's done with you. He's going to take you out today." And Ahab looks at his guys and he says, "Put him in the jail. Bread and water until I come back." Well he does not come back and so this guy never leaves the jail and that's God's best. We had a girl that came through our College Ministry years ago. She and her husband married, called to be missionaries; God's best, they're together in a car in Mosul when a gunman opened up on the car. She's hit with shrapnel and bullets 27 times. She has numerous surgeries. Her fingers are shot off. Her husband is killed. I went and visited her in her home with her mother after all this. She still believed she was in God's best. See, sometimes it really fits what we like. And there are other times when God's best is tough. So you have to decide, based on 1 Timothy 6, that you want the name of Jesus. If you really sang that song, then you've got to live that out. I don't know any other name except the name of Jesus. And I want his truth. I don't want anything in my life that would damage either one of those things. So you have to choose. False teaching came into this church. We have the same thing today. We have it all over the state. We have it inside Bryan/College Station. We have it around the corner. A false teaching has become to offer for you man's best as God's best. I'm going to read you, I'm not going to tell you who wrote this, but this is what's being taught today. Opens with a story of a guy in Hawaii who's got a pretty decent house, but he looks up on this hill and there's this massive house. And he thinks, "Man I'd love to have that. But I'm never going to have that."

Startled at his own thoughts, he asked himself, "What do you mean? As long as you can't imagine it, as long as you can't see it, then it is not going to happen for you." The man correctly realized that his own thoughts and attitudes were condemning him to mediocrity. He determined then and there to start believing better of himself, now listen, and believing better of God. Same way with us. We have to conceive it on the inside before we're ever going to receive it on the outside.

Then you have further statement because he goes over here and this is when you realize the statement, he's puffed up with conceit, he understands nothing, he has that unhealthy craving for controversy, quarrels about words, he is depraved in his mind, and deprived of the truth.

Imagining that godliness is a means of gain. There's a story in the Old Testament about Elijah and Elisha. And Elijah's on the day when he's going to die. All the prophets know it. Elisha knows it. Elisha is his number one servant. And they're walking together and God's going to take Elijah home on this day. They all know it. So Elijah and Elisha are talking and Elijah looks at Elisha and he says, "What can I do for you?" Elisha makes one statement to him. He says because he's watched, Elijah's his mentor and he's watched God use Elijah as a tremendous prophet in Israel. And so he says, "I want a double portion of your spirit." And Elijah looks at his mentee and he says, "Look it's a tough thing you're asking for. If when I go home you see me, you'll know God's going to give you that." Now here's this guy's concept. Listen to this. He quotes this story and then he says:

I want a double portion of the spirit, Elijah replied boldly. I want to be twice as powerful, twice as strong, twice as blessed, I want to see twice as many miracles. He didn't say any of that. That's not what he said. He wanted a double anointing of God. Now here we go. Interestingly, Elijah didn't rebuke his underling. He simply responded, "Elisha, you've asked a very difficult thing. Nevertheless, if you can see me when I'm taken from you, it shall be done unto you. But if not, it shall not be so." Certainly, in a literal sense, Elijah was telling Elisha, "If God allows you to see it, you can count on your request being granted"; absolutely. No problem. But then here it comes. But we can't help but wonder if Elijah was also saying, "If you can see it, you can be it. If you can visualize it in your heart and mind, seeing it through the screen of God's Word with your 'spiritual eyes,' it can become a reality in your life."

That is heresy. That is idolatry. That is me looking at Elijah and saying, "You know it's not dependent on God. It's dependent on you. And if you'll just think in your mind and visualize you have the double from me, listen, it'll come to you because it's not dependent on God, it's dependent on you. That, ladies and gentlemen, is the epitome of idolatry. And that is all over this state. We like that because it affords to me to use God to get my best. I see that house; I use God to visualize it into my life. The problem, of course, is heresy never works. If you're Daniel, you're in a lion's den, lion's over there hungry, listen, if God isn't in there you can visualize all you want. You can sit there in your head and say, "I see they're not eating me." That's what's happening. So you can visualize that all you want. If you're Joseph and you're in jail for being accused by one of the most powerful men in Egypt, that you went after his wife, you can visualize all you want. You are not coming out of that jail cell. Heresy never works. And here's the other thing. Man's best ends at your grave. God's best always extends. This slave in 1 Timothy 6 who honors his God and he's got a believing master and he loves him and he serves him and he takes care of him. When he dies that example and that honor of the name of Jesus and that honor of the truth in his life goes past his life into every single person that ever saw what he did.

14th Century, church was nearly lost. It had become intensely corrupt and pretty vile. The Pope's had become horrible. But a man named Wycliffe began to preach that the Bible was more important than the Pope. Eventually another man in Bohemia, northeastern part of the Czech Republic, this man, John Huss embraced Wycliffe's teachings. About the time that he embraced them the Papacy had reached a crisis. There were two Popes and they had a council, deposed both of them, and brought a man named Alexander in and so he, John Huss, was

preaching, obviously, against the Pope, he excommunicated John Huss, but really kind of only on paper. John Huss was still able to preach and all this stuff and people were still coming to him and responding. Until the next Pope came along, John 23rd. Now he exponentially increased the sale of indulgences. Indulgences were that if you had an uncle in Hell and you liked him, you didn't like him you didn't do this, but if you liked him you could buy him out of Hell. You just pay the Pope some money and you can do whatever you want. You can get your uncle out of Hell. And so they were raising a lot of money and the Pope was making a cut with the King of Bohemia. So the King's getting a little cut on the indulgences and now he's getting boxes at the games. So he's thinking this is a pretty good deal. Huss comes along and says, "Man this is ungodly and not right. The Pope's wrong and the Bible's right." It's not a good thing to say. So this new Pope really does excommunicate him. And now the King doesn't back him because the king's making money off the indulgences. So he's exiled. So he does a little bit of writing, but finally they're tired of this so the Papacy sets up this council and they said, "Hey, John, we want you to come. Safe passage, buddy, we're going to take care of you. Come on in here. Everything will be fine." So John Huss buys this because he thinks they're going to let him share what he believes about the Bible versus Papacy. And so John Huss goes; they arrest him. They bring him in. They don't want to hear what he says. They just start demanding that he recant and give it up. The Pope's better than the Bible. So they're just off on him. He won't do it. They put him back in jail. They bring him back. And they basically said, "Here's the deal buddy. We're going to burn you, literally, if you don't recant." So he was given one last chance to repent. They brought him in, he had his priestly robes on, they stripped them off one by one, they tied him to the stake, and they got the wood out there and they got the fire going. "One last chance buddy." Now I wanted to make sure I got this right because here's what he said. "Lord Jesus it is for thee that I patiently endure this cruel death. I pray thee to have mercy on my enemies." And as the flames engulfed him they heard him reciting the book of Psalms. Now he died, burned, by the Pope and by the king. But interestingly his legacy went past the burning. And there were a group of Bohemian men who embraced the teaching that the Bible is more important than the Pope and they became known as the Moravian Brethren. They led John and Charles Wesley to Jesus Christ who were instrumental in a spiritual renewal in both Europe and in America. You choose man's best; it dies at the hole they put you in. You choose God's best, it goes way past that hole all the way to the day he comes back.

Let's pray.

Father your best sometimes is tough. And sometimes it's just a tremendous joy. Lord remind us that, Father, at the end of the day your best is always best. Thank you for that fact and that truth. I thank you and I honor you in the name of your son, Jesus Christ.