



Sermon – 09/24/2017

1 Timothy 6:11

Hebrews 12:2

So we're walking through 1 Timothy. We're in chapter 6. Last week we looked at the thing we all love to talk about; money. But he didn't say anything about giving it to the church. He said, he said, he said if you don't have it, not to chase wealth. Doesn't define what wealth is, but he says don't chase wealth. And then he says if you have wealth, it's OK to enjoy it and to share it. So then he comes to this verse. Now we're going to look at one verse today, verse 11. He makes this statement. He says,

¹¹But you, O man of God, flee these things,

That is, don't chase money. Don't get out there and go after wealth. Don't do that. And then here's what he says. He tells you what to pursue. Now this is for all of us obviously. As a matter of fact, the word pursue is actually the Greek word for persecute. It's to chase down. So here's what you and I are supposed to chase down. We all have different things that run our lives. There are certain reasons you get up tomorrow and got to work, go to school, or do whatever you do and so here are some things that we have to chase. So we're going to walk all the way through the list. Last one's going to sting a little, but we're going to walk through it regardless. He says,

¹¹But you, O man of God, flee these things pursue, (number one) righteousness,

Now he's going to say godliness in the next word and it seems like maybe those are redundant. Those are not at all. The reason you go to heaven after you meet Jesus, when the Holy Spirit tells you that you're a sinner, Jesus is not, and you accept His blood as a payment for your sin. Then there are two things that happen in your life instantaneously that are the reasons you go to heaven. Number one, all the bad stuff in your life that's recorded is washed away. It's gone in the blood of Jesus. And the really cool think about that, you can't re-smudge it. No matter what you do, His blood is there every single day so you can't ever smudge it again. There's never going to be anything bad on there that you do because the blood of Jesus holds you free until the day you die. So you don't see any smudging. What you do see, though, is, up here, righteousness. You see the righteous deeds that Jesus did and the things that He was tempted to do and didn't do. Those things are up here and they are now given to you. So you have to things when you come to Christ. Your sin is just absolutely washed away and the second thing is,

you're given the acts of Jesus Christ which is why when you die you step into heaven because you are literally as holy as Jesus is because you're given His holiness and your mess-ups are taken away. He says, chase, here's the first thing, righteousness. So I chase those things that are now in my account. I chase after them. I want to grab them and I don't want them just in my account. I want them now in my life. I want to be able to act as Jesus did, and I want to stay away from the things Jesus stayed away from. So I want the acts that have been given, been put in my account, I want to chase them and pull them down in my life. There's the first thing.

Then he uses the second word. He says, chase godliness. OK. We've mentioned this word how many times in 1 Timothy? *Eusebeian*. It is a Greek word that means, now I want to make this really clear today. What it's not and what it is. It is a Greek word that means I revere God; as a matter of fact, it was used in pagan religions. You revere this god so much that you embrace what he values and you stay away from what he devalues. What repulses the Father, repulses us. What He believes in honoring, we honor. If I reverence Him enough, now that that's what you chase. Now I want you to listen to me carefully. You don't chase the story. You chase the Savior. If I'm an atheist or an agnostic or just nominal person, right, the story in the Bible is a good story. There's a God. He loves me. He put His Son on the cross. He made the payment for my sin. I don't have to do anything to be saved. He gives me His salvation and the grace of Jesus Christ. What a great story. But you're not being godly. The attitude of godliness is not in you if you're motivated by the story. If you're not motivated in a way that it alters your life, then you're not godly. We've got a ton of people that can go sing, cry, great tears, because, again, the story is touching. I mean I have trouble at the end of *Homeward Bound* when the dog comes over the hill. That's shameful to admit, but there you go. We get moved by certain stories and really the story of the New Testament's a great story. So it's understandable how we can weep and cry when we hear and we sing about it, and Steve leads us well and we're caught up in the story. Then when we go out and we sleep with our boyfriend or we go out and we lie, we go out and we cheat, we go out and we're bitter and we hate people and we don't forgive and we don't love and we don't value. Then I'm caught up in the story, not the Savior. Godliness, so I want His acts in my life. And then I want an attitude of godliness where, now listen, there story doesn't tug at my heart, the Savior tugs at my soul. Now there's a difference between those two things. One thing, a lost person, he can be moved by the story, but the Savior can't tug at his soul. Those of us that have embraced Jesus Christ we don't need to be caught up in the story. We need to be tugged in our souls by the Savior. That's godliness. So I'm going to chase righteousness. I'm going to chase godliness.

Now look at the next thing. Faith. "Oh I already have faith. Why am I chasing that?" It's critical to chase that. By chasing it, what it means is you run after it until you're able to use it. Remember Jesus in Gethsemane, right? Judas is gone. He's got eleven guys. He leaves eight here. Takes the three, tells them to pray for Him. And then He goes over here and He prays three times. "Father if there's another way that we can get everybody back without me drinking their sin, is there another shot?" And so God says to him basically what? "No. You're the only answer. The cross is the method for the answer. I will resurrect you." Hebrews 12:2 says,

²for the joy in front of Him, He endured the cross,

There was not joy in the cross. There's no joy in Him drinking our shame and filth. So he says, "For the joy set before Him." Now let me, now catch me here. When Jesus finishes the third prayer, right, and He stands up and He walks off. Now He knows, right, that He's the only shot we have. And He knows that He, the only way for Him to be that shot is He's got to go to the cross and drink our filth. He's never tasted sin. He's not just got to taste it; He's got to digest it for six hours. So His faith is, and God's made that faith clear now, that He's the only shot, cross is the only answer, the resurrection's coming. The way you chase faith is you do what He did. He knew that was true, now listen, and He acted on that faith even though there was no basis. When He acts on that faith and He steps back to His boys and says, "Let's go." And in comes Judas. What happens? Nine guys pack out. Two guys stay. Judas and Peter. Judas will completely deny the faith. Peter will curse Jesus Christ violently. So He goes to the cross, there's nobody. John shows up, but John doesn't buy it. So He's left alone for six hours drinking out sin. One person buys into Him on the cross and one person buys into Him at His death. Thief on the cross buys into Him when He dies, I mean right as He's dying. The Roman soldier in the end of Mark buys into Him after His death. That's it. Jesus chased faith. He grabbed it. He didn't just believe it was true. He acted on that faith. Stood on that faith with one guy buying in Him when He died and one guy buying in Him after He died. I still, honestly, can't process this, right. For over a year and a half He has told them over and over and over and over and over and over, "I'm going to be rejected. They're going to crucify me." What's the next thing He's told them over and over and over? What is it? "I'm coming out of the grave." So when He comes out of the grave any of these guys there? Nobody. You would think at least one of them would have gone, "You know, let's take a shot. It's 5:30 in the morning. Maybe He's coming." Nobody's there because they don't buy it. He chased that faith, grabbed it, stood on it, used it in spite of the fact there wasn't a single reason to do so except what His Father told Him. There are times in your life when that's it. I had a friend call me this week, a pastor friend. "You know I'd had a melanoma call with my back." And he said, "Hey, I'm really struggling with this deal. They're going to cut this thing off my back. It's just driving me crazy. What do you do with this?" He said, "I got little kids, I got a wife, I'm pastoring." He said, "It's tearing me up. What do you do?" I said, "Look, this is going to sound preacher and it's going to sound really simple. But here's what you do. You go to Psalm 139. It says God's numbered your days. You accept His decision no matter what this means. And if it means your days are numbered then you trust Him to take care of your family. And if your days aren't numbered, you trust Him to use you to take care of your family. But you've got to trust what He says even when you don't like it." And I'm telling you, we all have rough times where we have to make some hard faith calls. We have to chase that to the place where we pull it into our life even when we have no reason to buy into it except what He said. So we chase faith.

We chase love. He doesn't use *philia*. We don't chase feeling good. We don't look at things to try to feel good. He chooses *agape* here. That's what we chase. We chase, and the Greek word *agape* means I love something because I see the value in it. Ed Wren and Sherrie were on vacation last week. And it's amazing that we didn't hear Ed's name at this deal. So I'm just saying that's the hand of God right there. But Ed and Sherrie were at a Trump supporting rally. They had the bikers there that were doing a protection. And Ed said he looked at Sherrie and said, "Oh man." And he said, "Coming around the corner were some Black Lives Matter supporters." So you've got Trump supporters/Black Lives Matter supporters. A&M/Texas. Baylor/whoever. So it's not going to be good, right. So sure enough, you know, Black Lives

Matter guys start walking up and the guy running kind of the deal looks out and he says, "Hey, let's do what they wouldn't do for us." And he looks at him and he says, "We're going to be patriotic today. I want you to come up. We're going to give you two minutes and you say what you want to say. And we're going to be respectful." So they came up on stage. Guy spoke four or five minutes. Most people were respectful. There were a couple jeering moments. Somebody said all lives matter. He said, "I totally agree." The Black Lives Matter guy said, "I totally agree. I'm just saying when there are bad cops, they need to be dealt with. But I agree all lives matter." When it was over, they didn't necessarily anybody changed each other's mind, they didn't necessarily feel good about each other, but when it was over the Black Lives Matter guy went down and people were taking photos of their children with him, families taking photos of each other, nobody's mad, nobody's throwing rocks. But you didn't hear that on MSNBC did you? You didn't hear that on CNN. You didn't really hear that on Fox News. Because those organizations, listen to me, exist to make you divided from each other. As Christians I don't expect the media to get this. I don't expect Washington to get this. But what I do expect is those of us that understand Jesus Christ, we chase love. Which means this. Even if we have somebody we don't feel good about, we don't like them, we don't feel good about them, we're never going to feel good about them, it doesn't matter, every single person in this entire world is valuable because he's in the image of God and Jesus died for him. So we're going to chase that. I don't care if you feel good about somebody. Those that are married, do you feel good about each other every day? "Oh we've never had a fight." Oh, right! And you've never lied. So at any rate, we're going to chase not what we like but we're going to chase the value in everybody we know.

Then we're going to chase endurance. We're going to stay with this. We're going to endure. That Greek words literally was used for a woman who would put a water pot on her head, now listen, she didn't just stand there with water pot like this. Put the water pot on her head and went on about her daily business. We're going to chase righteousness. We're going to chase godliness. We're going to chase love. We're going to chase faith no matter what stress we have in our life. We are never not moving toward Jesus. And then the last thing.

We're going to chase; this was the only place I could find this in the New Testament. Unique little word. It's translated gentleness, kindness, it's actually a Greek word that means composure. It means that no matter how wrong I think I am, I don't attack and bark at those that I think have wronged me. So when you get on Facebook and you bark because that's the greatest coward's place in the universe, by the way, you can be a coward and bark at anybody on Facebook. But when you get on there and bark because you're not being gentle and kind and you're not chasing that, then you damage the cause of Christ. Let me give you what I think is the perfect example here. Now I love you Aggies. Careful. I'm not done. I love you Aggies, but I'm here 31 years and when I first came here you didn't boo at football games and now you do. We've become barkers. If you struggle with Coach Sumlin and you're at home and you're watching the game and you go, "Ah, I can't believe he ran the ball instead of passing it." OK. You're at home. Fine. You're with some friends. Fine. But if you're chasing composed kindness, then you don't get on Facebook and bust Coach Sumlin and hide behind your little posting. Because the problem is Coach Sumlin's wife sees that. His children see that. And what does that do to them? It wrecks their heart. If we're going to chase composed kindness in here, we're not going to do that anymore. He's the coach at Texas A&M. We're going to honor him

with love and respect because that's what we're called to do as children of Christ. You know what would be impressive today? Is if those of us that have busted him on Facebook, if we go home and chase kindness, if we go home and say, "You know what, I busted Coach Sumlin here, and I just want those that read my Facebook postings to know something. I want you to know today that I'm apologizing." Because see it's going to be tough if Coach Sumlin's wife drives by this church and their kids drive by this church, and they see you coming in church with your Bible and it's held high and you're walking in with it when they know you just ripped their daddy's heart out. You say, "Well, no, wait a minute preacher." Jesus cleaned the temple. That's exactly right. He cleaned God's house. He never went into the Roman senate. And he cleans God's house of two things: immorality and heresy. If there's immorality and heresy, you get after it. But he's not immoral because he didn't call a pass you wanted. And he's not heretical because he didn't call a run you wanted. You keep your mouth shut unless it's immorality or heresy in this room. So if we're going to chase kindness, here's what we're going to do. We're going to go home today and you're going to post on Facebook, "I busted Coach Sumlin and I want to apologize for doing that to him and his family because he's not guilty of immorality or heresy. And I'm not going to bust him and bark at him anymore. I'm going to chase righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance, and kindness because being a child of Jesus Christ is more important than being a fan of Texas A&M."

Let's pray.

Father, I don't care what anybody else does and I know you don't either. But those of us that belong to You, let us chase what You want us to chase. Father pull in our lives today Your righteousness. Let us be touched in the soul by Your Son, not moved by a story. Let us use the faith, let us endure in it, let us value every single person you value, even if we don't feel good, and Father let us chase publicly kindness so that, Father, when people see us walk in this building, they know we're in love with Your Son. Drive that into every heart in this room. In Jesus Christ's name.