

1 Timothy 6:6—18

August 26, 2018

In the first part of the 20th century miners would plunge deep into the earth with all their tools and a canary.

“The practice was first suggested by Scottish scientist John Haldane, known as the Father of Oxygen Therapy, who studied oxygen rejuvenation and gas poisoning by experimenting on himself. In the mid-1800s, he suggested carrying canaries or mice into mines to detect toxic gas.

Canaries were first used because their anatomy requires more oxygen and makes them more sensitive to toxic gases such as methane and carbon monoxide, both which have no color, odor or taste. Carbon monoxide is produced through combustion and typically dissipates in the air but can be toxic in a confined space such as mines. When breathed in, the gas binds to red blood cells, halting hemoglobin’s ability to carry oxygen, and causes fatigue, chest pain and difficulty concentrating.

Canaries reacted quickly to the gas, warning miners visually by fainting and audibly by no longer chirping. Miners evacuated the pits and mineshafts for safety and revived their canaries to use again, if they didn’t die.”

Canaries warned miners of dangers they would not be able to detect on their own. Hidden dangers—dangers that cannot be detected—are the most treacherous kinds of dangers.

The little birds were a warning system to toxic, noxious, deadly gas. As long as the canaries breathed freely the miners were safe. But the moment the birds stopped singing the miners got to the surface grateful that their little friends warned them.

Hidden dangers are the most treacherous kinds of dangers.

Today we are going to let the Bible address about a hidden danger that many Americans—even Christians—face. We are apt to breathe the toxic, noxious and deadly gas of the love of money.

As deadly as Carbon Monoxide is, the love of money is a greater and more treacherous enemy.

The scripture will be our warning system. Because the Bible can guide us to unseen dangers better than a canary ever could.

As we said last week, each year around this time we revisit the topic of money—Why? Because all of us

need the reminder and the warning of the toxic, noxious deadly gas of the love of money.

Last week we were reminded to, Trust God not money. This week is similar.

PROP: Love God NOT money.

“But godliness with contentment is great gain, ⁷ for we brought nothing into the world, and we cannot take anything out of the world. ⁸ But if we have food and clothing, with these we will be content. ⁹ But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation, into a snare, into many senseless and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction. ¹⁰ For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evils. It is through this craving that some have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many pangs.

¹¹ But as for you, O man of God, flee these things. Pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, steadfastness, gentleness. ¹² Fight the good fight of the faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called and about which you made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses. ¹³ I charge you in the presence of God, who gives life to all things, and of Christ Jesus, who in his testimony before Pontius Pilate made the good confession, ¹⁴ to keep the commandment unstained and free from reproach until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ,

¹⁵ which he will display at the proper time—he who is the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords, ¹⁶ who alone has immortality, who dwells in unapproachable light, whom no one has ever seen or can see. To him be honor and eternal dominion. Amen.

¹⁷ As for the rich in this present age, charge them not to be haughty, nor to set their hopes on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who richly provides us with everything to enjoy. ¹⁸ They are to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share, ¹⁹ thus storing up treasure for themselves as a good foundation for the future, so that they may take hold of that which is truly life.” 1 Timothy 6:6-18

PRAY

If you are a guest, thank you for being here. You have joined us in our annual jaunt in examining our thinking about money.

Love God, not money.

A warning.

An escape.

A hope.

1. Warning: The peril of loving money (1 Tim. 6:6-10)

Those who strive after and live for money put their lives in peril. The warning here is not against having money per se but against loving money too much. When you love money you are asking money to be your security, identity, safety and that puts you in danger.

What kind of danger?

Paul tells us in verse 9,

⁹ But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation, into a snare, into many senseless and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction. ¹⁰ For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evils. It is through this craving that some have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many pangs.

When you love money you put yourself in danger—what kind of danger?

Three kind of traps—

The danger of falling into temptation. When you love money it is like you are walking around the crumbling edges of a deep, dark pit. Fall in and you aren't easily going to get out. When you love money you are teetering on the edge about to fall.

When you love money you are about to stumble into a snare. The Love of money is like a bear trap. When you love money you and build your life around accumulating money you are one step from being trapped unable to escape.

When you love money you clap a blindfold over your eyes and give into senseless desires. The love of money makes you a fool and deadens your senses into thinking happiness and meaning comes through accumulation. When you are blindfolded you can't see where you are going. Senseless.

The love of money is a temptation, a trap and foolish that leads to what?

It is through this craving that some have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many pangs.

The love of money leads to ruin and destruction. Many have impaled themselves with the sword of the love of money and been destroyed.

Let's make sure we understand what he is not saying—

- He is not saying money is evil.
- He is not saying having money is evil.
- He is not saying needing money to pay bills is evil.

It is something else all-together.

It is the LOVE of money that leads to ruin and destruction. It is human nature to live for what we love—and if we love money most we will plunge ourselves into ruin and destruction.

Many of us are breathing in the toxic, noxious, deadly fumes of the love of money and we don't even know it.

The Love of money is the root of all kinds of evil and this desire unchecked will ruin you.

Do you hear the warning?

Money says, "I know the plans I have for you, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope."

Not true.

Are you breathing in the toxic fumes?

How you think about money impacts your eternal soul. Many of us are inhaling these toxic, noxious, deadly fumes of the Love of money.

What are some signs that you are breathing these fumes in and in danger?

- You are never happy with what you have and what you earn.
- You always want more money even when you have all your needs met.
- You obsess over what you would do if you somehow got rich.
- You aren't grateful for what you have you always want more.
- You would sacrifice and step over others if they stood in the way of you getting rich.
- You would lie, cheat and steal if it meant becoming rich.
- You devote yourself to success at work so that you can earn more.
- You always want, "Just a little more."

If any of those are true about you—you are in danger.
Heed the warning.

When the canary died in the mineshaft the miners didn't say, "Well there might be gold just a little bit further on, let's keep going."

No.

They ran the other way out into the fresh air out of the mines.

Now we all know it is not enough to be warned that we are breathing the toxic, noxious, deadly fumes of the Love of money—we need to run.

But to where?

2. Run: Escape to God from the Love of money (1 Tim. 6:11-16)

Verse 11,

¹¹ But as for you, O man of God, flee these things. Pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, steadfastness, gentleness.

Runaway!—get out with your life. Don't stop and ask for directions run for your life. Run away from the Love of money and toward God.

How?

We read three pairs of things to run to—we read,

Instead of running after money, run after righteousness and godliness. That means as hard as it is run for all you are worth toward obedience and honoring God. You will always be far from perfect but run toward obedience and as you do you will become more like Jesus.

Run after righteousness and godliness.

Also, instead of running after money, run after faith and love. That means run after defining yourself and your identity on your faith in and love for God. Unlike money God is worth trusting and loving because he is good and he always loves you back. As you run toward him with faith and love you will continually root your identity in Jesus and not money.

Run after righteousness and godliness.

Run after faith and love.

Also instead of running after money, run after steadfastness and gentleness. That means run after committing yourself to be faithful and gentle in all your dealings with other people. Instead of stepping on others to get what you want. And that way we run toward enduring to the end.

Run away from the Love of money

Run toward righteousness and godliness

Run toward faith and love.

Run toward steadfastness and gentleness.

And if that sounds hard, there is a reason. It is.

Look at verse 12,

¹² Fight the good fight of the faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called and about which you made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses. ¹³ I charge you in the presence of God, who gives life to all things, and of Christ Jesus,

It is a fight. We must keep fighting as long as we live not to love money. We must keep fighting to run away from the toxic, noxious, deadly fumes of the love of money toward God.

It will be a fight.

He doesn't say—

Keep on relaxing.

Keep on sleeping.

Keep on resting.

Keep on waiting.

But keep on fighting.

That is instructive. So much about the Christian life is a fight. It is a fight against sin. It is a fight to trust God. It is a fight to be kind. It is a fight sometimes just to get out of bed. So much of life is a fight.

Fight. And then Paul issues a charge he says—I charge you in the name of God—fight.

You know the name of God—

You know him and Paul reminds us who he is.

¹³ I charge you in the presence of God, who gives life to all things, and of Christ Jesus, who in his testimony before Pontius Pilate made the good confession, ¹⁴ to keep the commandment unstained and free from reproach until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ,

Fight to be faithful unmarred by the love of money and the stain and reproach it brings until Jesus comes back. And then you will be able to rest. Make no mistake he is coming back you know him right?

I charge you in the name of God—you know who he is—who?

“he who is the blessed and only Sovereign,”

Run away from the love of money and toward the God who is sovereign. He is all-powerful in the universe.

the King of kings

Run away from the Love of money and toward the God who is king of kings. He is reigning over all things—no one can usurp his power.

and Lord of lords,

Run away from the love of money and toward the God who is the Lord of lords. He has all authority over all things.

¹⁶who alone has immortality,

Run away from the love of money and toward the God who cannot die or fade away.

who dwells in unapproachable light, whom no one has ever seen or can see.

Run away from the love of money and toward the God who is transcendent and far above us.

To him be honor and eternal dominion. Amen.

Run away from the love of money and toward the one that every knee will bow to and every tongue confess one day.

Love God, not money.

We have good, no, great reasons to love God and not money.

- God did not leave us alone to our own devices—he loved us enough to send Jesus.
- Jesus loved us enough to leave glory come to earth to rescue us.
- Jesus loved us enough to live a perfect life though he was confronted with sorrow and temptation and trials aplenty.
- Jesus loved us enough to die in our place for our sins.
- Jesus loved us enough to rise and defeat death so that we need not fear.
- Jesus loves us enough to strengthen, stand by and empower us to keep on going.
- Jesus loves us enough to prepare a place for us the perfect place because it will be with him.
- Jesus loves us enough to never leave us or forsake us though we sin.

It only makes sense to love Jesus. Look at what he has done. We might be tempted to love money but it can't do anything like that.

Escape from the snare of the Love of money and run to Jesus.

I hope you see the reason the Bible addresses us so clearly about the love of money, I hope you see that

how you think about money is a wonderful barometer to your spiritual health.

Our invest fund is secondary. I care most of all that none here are breathing the toxic, noxious, deadly fumes of the love of money.

We've heard the warning
We've seen the escape

Now we have something money cannot buy. Hope.

3. Hope: From the peril of the love of money (1 Tim. 6:17-19)

¹⁷ As for the rich in this present age, charge them not to be haughty, nor to set their hopes on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who richly provides us with everything to enjoy.

You might think—it is good for the rich to not be proud—bravo.

But wait a moment—

I looked at the data that the World Bank puts out about income levels throughout the world and compared to the world in US dollars and they say:

So if you make over 12k a year—on a worldwide scale you are rich. Interesting that the poverty level in the US for a Family of Four is \$22,050.

Randy Alcorn is helpful in his OUTSTANDING book—
'Money, Possessions and Eternity':

“If you have enough food, decent clothes, live in a home that shields you from the weather and own some kind of reliable transportation, you are in the top 15 percent of the world’s wealthy. Add some savings, a hobby like hunting or fishing that requires equipment, two cars (in any condition), a variety of clothing and your own house, and you have reached the top five percent. You may not feel wealthy. But that’s because you’re comparing yourself to someone who owns even more. To get a better handle on reality, consider that more than 1.1 billion people in the world live on less than the equivalent of one U.S. dollar per day. Five hundred million people are hungry and another 500 million are so poor they don’t get enough food to be fully productive.” Randy Alcorn

The Bible is addressing most of us in this room.

But he doesn’t say—give all your money away and live a life of poverty—he says ENJOY!

Isn't that astounding? Hope in God and enjoy the things money can buy. But don't you dare hope in those things. We can have many things to enjoy that money can buy but hope in God and what he offers.

Do you see that the scriptures are not calling us to a monkish life with bread and water only? Enjoy what God has given!

Eat good food.

Decorate your home.

Enjoy your favorite pastime.

Enjoy those things, but do not live for those things.

Enjoy them and be generous.

For Christians, generosity is always in season. If you have trouble being generous and sharing you may be breathing the toxic, noxious, deadly gas of the love of money.

How are we to respond and fight against the love of money? Here is a way forward that informs our invest opportunity.

¹⁸They are to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share, ¹⁹thus storing up treasure

for themselves as a good foundation for the future, so that they may take hold of that which is truly life.”

Be lavish in your generosity.

Share!

And that is what the invest fund is all about. That is why we are talking about being a faithful presence here in Gilbert and the East Valley.

When we understand that the love of money is deadly—we will be more ready to be generous and share. We will heed the warning, escape the danger and hope in Christ.

When we are faithful to be generous individually and as a church we are going to be more apt to impact the community for the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Last year we raised money to transform a little used kitchen into a safe zone (coffee shop) for people not used to coming to church.

As we look forward to this next year we want to continue to be faithful and serve in those areas that the Lord had called us to. When we love God and not money we are going to be able to make a difference in the world that we live.

Our hope is with this Invest fund—that we will take up throughout September—is to fund activities that bring the light of the gospel to others.

We want to help fund—

Hope For Addiction: Each Thursday, people who have searched for asylum in drugs and alcohol learn to find a refuge in Jesus.

Rancho 3M Orphanage: 40+ orphans live on the outskirts of Juarez, MX.

Jacmel, Haiti: Marc Clouvous leads a church committed to reaching people that we could not.

And there are other things as well. Once we fund our mission and outreach goals we'd love to do some things around here such as add some lighting outside.

Please pray about how you might participate. Throughout September you can give. We will pass out more information next week.

Pray about how you can be generous. Maybe it is as simple as:

- Beginning to give regularly.
- Start small and stick to it.

- Giving generously to the Invest fund.

Each year we ask ourselves—am I breathing the toxic, noxious, deadly gas of the love of money?

Ask your friends.

Ask your spouse.

How much better it is to LOVE God and not money!

- Money does not love you back.
- Money can give no lasting security.

But God—he lavishes his love upon us. So may we be a church that makes a lasting difference for Jesus in our community as we take seriously the warning NOT to love money.

Love God NOT money.

PRAY

Benediction