

1. Paul commanded Timothy to teach the things that he instructed. If anyone teaches something different from the Apostles' teaching in the Bible, they are a false teacher who is both arrogant and ignorant.
2. False teachers desire controversy in the Church and argue with the Word of God. The fruit of their teaching is many sinful actions, depraved thinking, and false beliefs. The heart of these evil thoughts is that Christianity can be a means of gain. The emphasis of these false teachers is discontentment with what God has given us.
3. Instead, true Christianity leads to a great contentment in what God has given us. True teachers of God's Word know that when we are born, we start with nothing and when we die, nothing comes with us. If we have enough to survive then we can be content be thankful to God. This is the opposite of what these false teachers of prosperity and word of faith teach.
4. Paul knew that contentment was at the heart of the Christian life. He often suffered both health issues and poverty. Other times he might receive great provision from the Lord. But in whatever circumstances God gave him, he gloried in Christ alone.
5. But the teaching of these false teachers is that the Christian life is about health and riches. They teach that we should desire, and that we are entitled to these blessings from God. Those who seek after these things instead of contentment in Christ will face ruin and destruction. These false teachers lead people away from Christ.
6. Loving anything more than Jesus Christ is the root of many evil things. When desires for health and wealth take the place of God, discontentment drives us away from Jesus and ultimately leads to destruction. This false love is taught by prosperity and word of faith teachers and is it is a false gospel that will not save.
7. Jesus taught that Christianity is not about seeking health, wealth, or other treasures here on earth. Jesus leads His followers to seek treasures in Heaven that can never be taken away. Prosperity and health in this life are temporary and will not last. False teachers of prosperity and word of faith rob people of the true treasure of contentment in Christ Himself.
8. Our hearts will be with what we treasure. True Christianity is about putting our treasure in Jesus and His eternal glory. It is about loving Him above all else. Those who teach that following Christ is a means to physical blessings are ultimately sending people to Hell.
9. If our eyes are focused on Jesus, we will desire Him and be blessed with Him as our reward. But if our eye is focused on the darkness of discontentment, then we will ultimately be left in darkness. The message of discontentment that the prosperity and word of faith teachers preach leads to eternal darkness.
10. Christians cannot serve a Master other than Christ. These false teachers point people to do just that. This is a false Christianity. Christians must choose to serve God or serve material prosperity. One cannot serve both.
11. If the Holy Spirit testifies that we are truly Christians, then we will suffer with Christ in this life. Our suffering is for a time, and then our true inheritance is in Heaven. Prosperity and word of faith teachers deny that the Christian is meant to suffer, which contradicts the Word of God.
12. Our sufferings here in the present time are of value because of the great glory in the coming Kingdom of Christ. These false teachers teach that suffering is antithetical to the Gospel. Christ suffered greatly in His life here on earth and to every Christian will share in that. Paul himself experienced great suffering and he taught that this was part of the Christian life.

Application

1. The false teachers of the prosperity and word of faith movement are teaching that Christianity is just a means to health and wealth. They teach intense discontentment with what God has given us and teach that suffering is always a sign that a person is lacking faith. All these teachings are in direct contradiction to the teachings of Jesus and the Apostles. They result in a different gospel, which cannot save. Do not believe the message of prosperity and word of faith teaching.
2. There are many teachers even today who appeal to carnal desires like health and wealth, denying that the Christian life is one of suffering and faithfulness to Christ no matter what our circumstances. Do not just simply reject their message, but also protect yourself, your family, your friends, your church, and others by not having anything to do with these false teachers. Avoid them!

Scriptures

Matthew 7:15-20

¹⁵ “Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep’s clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves. ¹⁶ You will recognize them by their fruits. Are grapes gathered from thornbushes, or figs from thistles? ¹⁷ So, every healthy tree bears good fruit, but the diseased tree bears bad fruit. ¹⁸ A healthy tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a diseased tree bear good fruit. ¹⁹ Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. ²⁰ Thus you will recognize them by their fruits.

1 Timothy 6:2-10

Teach and urge these things. ³ If anyone teaches a different doctrine and does not agree with the sound words of our Lord Jesus Christ and the teaching that accords with godliness, ⁴ he 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, ⁵ and constant friction among people who are depraved in mind and deprived of the truth, imagining that godliness is a means of gain. ⁶ 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.

Philippians 4:11-13

¹¹ Not that I am speaking of being in need, for I have learned in whatever situation I am to be content. ¹² I know how to be brought low, and I know how to abound. In any and every circumstance, I have learned the secret of facing plenty and hunger, abundance and need. ¹³ I can do all things through him who strengthens me.

Matthew 6:19-24

¹⁹ “Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal, ²⁰ but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. ²¹ For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. ²² “The eye is the lamp of the body. So, if your eye is healthy, your whole body will be full of light, ²³ but if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light in you is darkness, how great is the darkness!
²⁴ “No one can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and money.

Romans 8:16-18

¹⁶ The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, ¹⁷ and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also

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Scripture: 1 Timothy 6:2-10 and Matthew 6:19-24 and Romans 8:16-18

be glorified with him. ¹⁸ For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us.

Romans 16:17

¹⁷ I appeal to you, brothers, to watch out for those who cause divisions and create obstacles contrary to the doctrine that you have been taught; avoid them