

Sermon Title: Robbed!
Sermon by Pastor Fred Oaks
Week of September 26, 2010

Sermon Based Small Group Discussion Guide

Icebreaker: Has anything ever been stolen from you? Or have you ever lost something that was of significance to you? What emotions surrounded these times of loss?

Big Idea: When Christians don't stay connected to Christ and the church, it is easy to disregard, or be robbed of, God's truth. The result: wrong priorities and needless grief.

Sermon Text: 1 Timothy 6:3-19

3If anyone teaches false doctrines and does not agree to the sound instruction of our Lord Jesus Christ and to godly teaching, 4he is conceited and understands nothing. He has an unhealthy interest in controversies and quarrels about words that result in envy, strife, malicious talk, evil suspicions 5and constant friction between men of corrupt mind, who have been robbed of the truth and who think that godliness is a means to financial gain.

6But godliness with contentment is great gain. 7For we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it. 8But if we have food and clothing, we will be content with that. 9People who want to get rich fall into temptation and a trap and into many foolish and harmful desires that plunge men into ruin and destruction. 10For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs.

11But you, man of God, flee from all this, and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance and gentleness. 12Fight the good fight of the faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called when you made your good confession in the presence of many witnesses. 17Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment. 18Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share. 19In this way they will lay up

treasure for themselves as a firm foundation for the coming age, so that they may take hold of the life that is truly life.

1. What are some of the characteristics, as seen in this passage, of a person who has "been robbed of the truth"? Put these in modern terms.
2. False teachers, or those who teach a version of the truth that diverges from God's revealed truth, have always existed within and outside the church. By what means might a Christian discern someone's message as true or false?

These verses refer to the truth of Jesus Christ, consistent with his teaching and example as recorded in the Bible. Many other sources of "truth" in our culture compete for our attention and allegiance.

3. Name some "truth" claims prevalent in our culture.
4. Can you think of an incident when a preacher's love of money may have corrupted his teaching?

In his sermon, Pastor Oaks focused on one of the results of being robbed of the truth. Instead of trusting God to provide for our needs, people often place their trust in wealth.

Contentment

5. Read verse 6, again. What does the word contentment mean to you? What is it not? What characteristics does a content person possess?

6. What do the following verses, also written by Paul, teach us today about living a contented life?

a) Philippians 4:11 “I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances.”

b) 2 Corinthians 12:9 “But he said to me ‘My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.’”

Contentment: “A perfect condition of life in which no aid or support is needed.” (Joseph Thayer, Greek scholar).

It is derived from the Greek word, *autarkeia*. The word translated “sufficient” in 2 Cor. 12:9 shares the same root word, *arkeo*.

7. In the following verses, Paul writes about the outcome of choosing to be content, of agreeing with God that he is sufficient to meet all our needs.

a) Philippians 4:13 I can do everything through him who gives me strength.

b) 2 Corinthians 9:8 And God is able make all grace abound to you, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work.

8. What is a recent situation that has helped you learn to be content?

9. What would be the implications of living a life of “godliness with contentment” to you personally? What changes would it require?

10. If more believers lived in this way, how would it affect your church?

11. If the church worldwide were to live in this countercultural way, what impact would Christianity have around the globe?

On Your Own

Going back to the truth claims mentioned in question 2, which of these are the most opposed to Christ’s message? Which are the most difficult for you to resist? What is one step you could take to put distance between that “truth” and your heart, mind, soul?

Prayer Requests and Praises:

Taking it Home