

1 AND 2 TIMOTHY AND TITUS

INTRODUCTION

The authenticity, canonicity and integrity of the three epistles, along with their Pauline authorship, were never questioned in the first seventeen centuries of Christianity, except by the apostate Marcion, “who taught rigid rules of fasting and asceticism,” and therefore quite naturally denied the portion of the New Testament which was fatal to his false doctrine.

Evil men cannot be comfortable with the Holy Scriptures which expose their teachings, and they therefore launch furious attacks against the word of God.

H. D. Spence, Ellicott’s Bible Commentary, Vol. VII, Introduction to the Pastorals, p. 173, wrote. “There never seems to have been the slightest doubt in the early Christian Church that the Pastoral Epistles were canonical, and written by the apostle Paul. For seventeen centuries, the Pastorals were believed to have been written by Paul, and in all the churches were received as inspired Scripture.”

THEIR AUTHORITY QUESTIONED

“Their authority was first questioned in the 19th century by a school of German criticism; but despite the popular success enjoyed by the Tubingen School which followed their example, it is now known that all of their arguments were worthless. Their arguments are briefly summarized as follows:

I. Words not found in other writings.

Of all the conceits of modern Biblical scholarships, no one of them is more worthless than word counting. The silly little games that scholars play with word counting, have no bearing whatever on such questions as that of authorship. William Hendriksen, *op. cit.* p. 13, bluntly summed up this whole proposition by writing; “The modern critic has failed to prove with respect to even a single word of the total Pastoral vocabulary that Paul could not have written it.”

II. The church organization visible in the Pastorals is a later development than had taken place in Paul's time.

William Hendriksen, *op. cit.*, p. 22, wrote, "Among the many poor arguments presented in the defense of their thesis . . . this is one of the poorest." The "officialdom" visible in the Pastorals is exactly the same as that in Acts. This is today a widely known and appreciated fact; and it certainly must be true as William Hendriksen, *Ibid.*, said that the adverse critics; "Avoid reference to this argument anymore, and apparently would like to forget that anyone ever brought it up."

III. That the heresies combated were those of a century later than Paul's time.

The argument has no weight or substance whatever. It is now known by scholars everywhere that the later heresies of the second century were known in the first also, and that Paul's words in these letters are even better understood as dealing with the first-century forms of those heresies rather than with their second-century forms.

IV. The chronology of Paul's life, as in Acts, allows no room for these epistles.

Paul was released from prison shortly after Acts was written, and according to the oldest traditions received, made the long-anticipated journey to Spain before he was finally arrested and executed by Nero some three or four years after the events in Acts

FIRST TIMOTHY

Newport J. D. White, *Expositor's Greek Testament*, Vol. IV, p. 83, considered this chapter, aside from the salutation (verses 1-2), as regarding a crisis in the Christian faith (verses 3-20).

Paul was writing at some time subsequent to his release from the imprisonment of Acts 28, following his journey to Spain and at some place when he was on his way to Rome, following the great fire of July 19, 64 A. D., and

possibly with some purpose of aiding the Christians there who were threatened by the ominous change in the attitude of Nero, whose great persecution against the Christians was not yet in full progress.

The tradition that both apostles Peter and Paul were martyred by Nero rose at too early a time to be passed off as a fiction of the Roman Catholic Church, and thus being in all probability true. History has left us no clues as to the mechanics of how Paul in this letter was on the way to Rome, and how in 2 Timothy, only a little later, he was anticipating execution.

Paul in this chapter began laying the groundwork for protecting and extending the beloved faith no longer by his own prodigious efforts, but in this new situation, by his beloved converts such as Timothy and Titus.

Verses 1-2

“Paul an apostle of Christ Jesus . . .” Newport J. D. White, *op. cit.*, p. 89, wrote; “Paul claims to have been as truly sent by Christ as were those who were apostles before him.”

Why did Paul at the outset of this letter, stress his apostolic office? William Hendriksen, *Commentary on 1 & 2 Timothy and Titus* wrote; “Timothy needed to know that this letter was not just a friendly substitute for a confidential chat, even though its tone is naturally cordial, for a friend is indeed writing a friend. The letter rises above the purely human level.”

“God our Savior . . .” While unusual in Paul’s letters, the idea is certainly found elsewhere, as in 2 Corinthians 5:19; and, besides that Paul’s close personal friend Luke used the same expression in Luke 1:47.

“Christ Jesus, who is our hope . . .” The absolute unity between the Father and the Son, shines in this. As dark and evil crises gathered ominously over His head and as Paul contemplated the threatening evils that would assail the beloved church, he loved to contemplate Jesus Christ as the one glorious hope that made all of the suffering and hardship, all of the trials and sorrows, both worthwhile and bearable.

“To Timothy, my true child in the faith . . .”

TIMOTHY

The name of Paul’s friend Timothy was accorded the high honor of having one of the New Testament books addressed to him personally. John Wesley, *One Volume New Testament Commentary*, in loco wrote: “Of all whom Paul ever converted, Timothy seems to have been to Paul the disciple who was most beloved and trusted.”

Timothy’s father was a Greek and his mother a devout Jewess, who despite the marriage had maintained her faith in the Scriptures. Due to the circumcision controversy, Paul circumcised Timothy, not as in any manner connected with salvation, but as an expedient foil of Jewish criticism. (Acts 10:3) Titus who had no racial connection with Judaism, Paul absolutely refused to circumcise. (Galatians 2:3)

Timothy was ordained by the eldership of Lystra and Derbe (I Timothy 4:14), and by the laying on of the hands of the apostle himself.

Timothy followed and aided Paul extensively in all of the labors recorded in Acts; and once, when Paul was necessarily separated from him in Berea, he went on to Corinth alone, but did not rest till Timothy had rejoined him. There seems to have been a very beautiful and wholesome friendship between the two. Timothy seems to have acted as Paul’s deputy whenever the occasion required it. Both during Paul’s first imprisonment in Rome and afterward, Timothy continued his faithful attendance upon Paul.

Timothy was, in all probability, at Paul’s side when the end came. As the threatening clouds became more and more ominous, and when Paul knew that his execution was at hand, he desired more than ever the companionship of his beloved Timothy; so he sent the somber appeal, “Make every effort to come to me soon.” (2 Timothy 4:9)

“My true child in the faith. . .” Ronald A. Ward, *Commentary on 1 & 2 Timothy and Titus*, p. 23, wrote; “The word true means “born in lawful

wedlock.” Thus being the most emphatic affirmation of the genuineness of Timothy’s conversion.

“In the faith” in the New Testament nearly always means “the faith” and the importation into the word the notion of “subjective trust.”

“Grace, mercy and peace . . .” Paul usually concluded his letters with “Grace and peace;” but here the inclusion of “mercy” would seem to be best explained thus, H. D. M. Spence, *Ellicott’s Commentary*, Vol. VIII, 1 Timothy, p. 178, wrote; “The nearness of death, the weakness of old age, the ever-increasing dangers which crowded around Paul, seem to have called forth from him the deeper expressions of love and tender pity.”

Verse 3

On Paul’s last trip to Rome, he covered as much ground as he could, warning and encouraging the many churches that he had planted concerning the looming persecutions in Rome. The thing that most concerned Paul was that the doctrine should be maintained absolutely in its purity and fidelity.

The situation at Ephesus, where Paul had lately been, was compounded by the appearances of certain departures from the true faith, and this letter was Paul’s charge to Timothy relative to making the necessary corrections. It appears that Paul was compelled, from whatever consideration we do not know, to proceed with all dispatch to Rome; hence the reason for his leaving Timothy behind at Ephesus.

“Remain on at Ephesus . . .” In the Greek, William Hendriksen, *op. cit.*, p. 54, wrote; this is “stay on,” and this probably indicates that Paul and Timothy had gone to Ephesus together, Timothy being left behind when Paul could no longer stay.”

“Instruct certain men . . . ; The indication from this is that not a great number were involved, but that some false teachings were being advocated. All false teaching should be cut off at the beginning whenever possible.

“Not to teach strange doctrines . . .” The false doctrine in evidence here “seems to have arisen mainly, if not entirely, from Jewish sources.” (H. D. M. Spence, *op. cit.*, p. 178)

Newport J. D. White, *op. cit.*, p. 91, wrote, “Paul’s forebodings for the church in Ephesus (Acts 20:29-30) were at that time being fulfilled.” John Wesley, *op. cit.*, *in loco*, interpreted this as, “Let them put nothing in the place of it (the gospel), and add nothing to it.”

Verse 4

Of all historical peoples, the Jews, more than any other, were concerned with genealogies; and, coupled with this, the sequential mention of the Ten Commandments, one at a time in order, a moment later, emphatically demand that the false teaching here be understood as Jewish improvisations upon the body of Christian truth.

Verse 5

“The goal of our instruction . . .” The meaning here is the goal of the whole Christian institution. In the New Testament, “faith” means Christianity,” not “subjective trust/faith.” Wilbur B. Wallis, *Wycliffe Bible Commentary, New Testament*, p. 843, wrote, “Faith (In this passage) is used in the sense of the faith, sound doctrine.”

“Love . . . good conscious . . . faith . . .” A. C. Hervey, *op. cit.*, p. 3, wrote, “These three phrases seem to rebuke by contrast the merely ceremonial cleanness and the defiled conscience and the merely nominal Christianity of those heretical Judaizers.”

Verse 6

William Hendriksen, *op. cit.*, p. 63, described their teaching as evidenced by his verse as follows, “It is like useless reasoning, argumentation that gets nowhere, dry as dust disputation, wrangling about fanciful tales and pedigrees that has finally landed them in the no-man’s-land of ceremonial subtleties, in the dreary marsh of ridiculous hair-splitting. And the owner of that quagmire is Satan, who heads the welcoming committee.”

It is much easier to talk, using religious phrases and words, than to teach the word of God to the end of converting souls and encouraging the life of Christ.

Verse 7

“Teachers of the law . . .” This is nothing but the law of Moses affording further indubitable proof that Judaizing heresies are the false doctrine in view here. Their “teaching” had no substance whatever; it was all rant, cant and nonsense.

Verse 8

It is an error to make this verse some kind of license for binding the Mosaic law upon Christians. Nothing could be clearer in Paul’s writings than the fact of the law of Moses having been “taken out of the way, fulfilled, abrogated, nailed to the cross,” etc. Paul had flatly declared that Christians are “dead to the law by the body of Christ” (Romans 7:4), this having reference, of course, to all requirements of the law in their totality.

Paul here said that the law is good,” indicting that there is a legitimate use of it. What are the legitimate uses, for Christians, of the law of Moses?

VALUE OF MOSES’ LAW

1. Its great prophecies point to the coming of Christ, some 333 of these being the most convincing evidence on earth to the effect that Jesus our Lord is indeed the divine Messiah. (Micah 5:2)
2. The old Israel is a type of the new; and the study of the history of the old Israel affords many glimpses of what is to be expected in the unfolding history of the New Israel which is the church of the living God. As there was an apostasy in the old Israel, so there is in the new; and there are doubtless many other similarities that shall in time be unfolded.
3. The love, mercy, forgiveness and patience of God in dealing with the saints of the Old Testament are valid and certain pledges of His same

dealings with the children of God in the new dispensation. (Romans 15:4)

4. The only logical and intelligent account of the creation of all things is found in the books of Moses (the Pentateuch). Without the revelation of the Old Testament in this sector, men could not with confidence know the story of creation.
5. The course of hardening and rebellion among the pre-Christian Gentile nations is fully evident in the Old Testament, giving us an example of that which happens when a nation turns away from God.
6. The psychology of both righteous and wicked minds is abundantly presented throughout the Old Testament, as seen in the compromises proposed by Pharaoh, the proposals to Nehemiah, etc.
7. The richest deposit of devotional material in existence is to be found in the Old Testament, and the things enumerated here are but samplings of the benefits to be derived from knowledge and study of the Old Testament.

Verse 9

“Lawlessness and rebellion . . . ungodly and sinners . . . unholy and profane . . .” Hendriksen, *Ibid.* p. 68, was correct in seeing persons in view in these phrases as, “Those who flout the first four commandments of the Ten Commandments.”

“Kill their fathers and mothers . . .” This relates to the fifth commandment, “You shall honor your father and your mother;” In the New Testament the more reprehensible nature of any dishonor of parents is plain in Paul’s designation here.

“For murderers . . .” This is a clear reference to the sixth commandment. The law of Moses forbids “murder,” it is the lesser charge of manslaughter that surfaces here.

Verse 10

“Immoral men . . . and homosexuals. . .” The seventh commandment condemns “adultery.” All forms of sexual vices are equally condemned in the law of Christ.

“And kidnappers . . .” “You shall no steal,” the eighth commandment is in view here; but it is the most reprehensible kind of stealing involved in the crime of kidnapping. Paul evidently meant to stress that even Moses’ law was opposed to all forms of wickedness.

God’s law, whether of the Old Testament or the New Testament, is primarily concerned with human behavior.

“Liars and perjurers (false swearing). . .” It is the ninth and possibly also the tenth commandment which prompted this. More than any other point that may be considered mandatory from the teaching in these verses is the fact that it was the Jewish law which was being abused by the false teachers.

“Sound teaching. . .” H. D. Spence, *op. cit.*, p. 181, wrote, “This is an expression peculiar to this group of Epistles; a sharp contrast is suggested to the “sickly and unhealthy” teaching of the false teachers, with their foolish legends and allegories, teaching which suggested controversy and endless disputes, and had no practical influence upon life.”

Verse 11

“The glorious gospel of the blessed God . . .” A. C. Hervey, *op. cit.*, p. 4, suggested the possible meaning might be, “The gospel which tells of the glory of God.” The words as rendered, however, are the truth; and the general idea comes through beautifully any way.

“Blessed God . . .” Hervey, *Ibid.*, wrote, “This with chapter 6:15 are the only passages in the New Testament where blessed is an epithet of God.”

Verse 12

The thought here was paraphrased by William Hendriksen, *op. cit.*, p. 74, “Such mercy! for note well: this very sinner was not only saved, but was even deemed worthy to be entrusted with the ministry of the apostleship!”

“I thank Christ Jesus . . .” Alan G. Nute, *op. cit.*, p. 508, observed, this earnest word here: “reaches its climax in the noble doxology of verse 17.”

Verse 13

“Blasphemer . . .” means “speaking against” either God or man; but Paul here means the more serious offense; because, while he did not speak against the Father, he did speak against the Son who is one with the Father.

“A persecutor. . .” In context this is somewhat of an elaboration upon the preceding word, since it was as “a persecutor” that his speaking against God occurred.

“Violent aggressor . . .” John Wesley, *op. cit.*, *in loco* wrote, “This third word, although the English version obscures the fact, continues the ascending scale of self-condemnation.” It indicates a person who takes a savage personal delight and a malicious enjoyment in the afflictions inflicted upon another.

“Because I acted ignorantly in unbelief. . .” Wilbur B. Wallis, *op. cit.*, p. 845 said the fact of Paul’s being able to commit so grievous sins against God demonstrates the “Pitiable, guilty blindness of sin.” (Ephesians 4:18; 1 Peter 1:14)

J. R. Dummelow, *Commentary on the Holy Bible*, p. 996, observed, “This is an instance of that form of ignorance which excuses acts done through it, that is, ignorance of fact, not of moral principle.”

Verse 14

“Which are found in Christ Jesus . . .” indicates the theater where the grace, love and faith (all three) are available for sinners. Paul did not receive grace outside of Christ, but inside and the faith that saves is not a faith exercised independently of the body of Christ, but “in Him.”

The tragedy of our day is that many speak glibly of their “faith in Christ,” whereas, due to the fact of their never having been baptized “into Christ,” their so-called faith is “out of Christ,” not “in Christ.”

A. C. Hervey, *op. cit.*, p.5 said the word “abundant” occurs 106 times in Paul’s letters.”

W. H. Hendriksen, op. cit., p. 75, classified this as, “Another instance of Paul’s “super” words. It is clear that this super vocabulary is characteristic of Paul.”

Verse 15

There are five of these expressions in this group of letters, the other four being: 1 Timothy 3:1, 4:9, 2 Timothy 2:11, and Titus 3:8.

“That Christ came into the world to save sinners . . .” is indeed worthy of being considered a proverb. The expression stands as an epitome of the whole Christian religion.

- (1) The deity of Christ is in it, for no man could it be said that “he came into the world.”
- (2) The redeeming, saving purpose of the visitation of the Day-spring from on high is in it.
- (3) The universal sinfulness of mankind is in it, for his condition was such that only God could save him, and that at awful cost of Himself in the sending of the Beloved.

“Whom I am foremost. . .” The question is, how was Paul the chief of sinners?

- (1) His sin was chief in the sense of the zeal and avid delight in which he pursued it.
- (2) Paul was the greatest in the diabolical results that would have been achieved if he had continued in it, possibly that of total destruction of Christianity; surely that was his purpose.
- (3) Paul was the chief of sinners because his sin was against Christ Himself in the person of his spiritual body on earth.
- (4) He was the chief of sinners in the matter of his marvelous abilities, super intellectual powers, unswerving zeal and persistent determination which augmented the threat of his operations against God’s purpose on earth in Christ.

(5) He was the foremost among sinners because of the particular historical position which his persecutions held in the very beginning of Christianity.

Verse 16

“As an example . . .” That the blessed apostle does not here overestimate the significance of his conversion is discernible throughout history.

“Believe on Him for eternal life. . .” (See Romans 10:10-11 also) “Believe on” Christ in both passages is unto eternal life, and salvation, as is ever the case in the New Testament. The sacred writers were diligent never to leave an impression that merely “believing on” the Lord Jesus Christ “surely led” to eternal life, but merely in the direction of it, “unto life.”

“Eternal life. . .” Christianity is involved with the supernatural, a fact abundantly clear in such an expression as this. The grand scope and purpose of Christianity is to accomplish the forgiveness of men’s sins (salvation), and in the upper and better world usher them into eternal and better life where they may have in utmost joy and tranquility, fellowship with the Creator forever.

Verse 17

This grand doxology is not addressed to “the Father,” but to God in His compound unity of Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

“Forever and ever . . .” This is “the ages of the ages” in the Greek. This marvelous doxology was Paul’s response to the glorious fact of his joyous salvation in Christ to which he had just referred.

Verse 18

“Timothy, my son . . .” It was to Timothy, the beloved young man, whom Paul had converted and whose faithfulness never wavered, that Paul turned as he contemplated the dreadful historical situation then closing upon the Christians.

“The charge” to him was the total precious treasure of Christian truth which together they had done so much to advance. Those awful dangers which Paul saw in the future would soon be closing around the beloved Christians in

Asia; there would be many who could not stand the test; the blessed apostle sensed that he would not survive to be of any help; and therefore his whole hope was rested in the fidelity of that glorious companion, Timothy, who had so long suffered and toiled with the apostle.

“Fight the good fight . . .” These were appropriate words for Christians living in the age of the great persecutions under Nero, soon to break upon the defenseless church.

Verse 19

“Faith and a good conscience . . .” The obedience of faith is meant by this as in this quotation from Wilbur B. Wallis, *op. cit.*, p. 846, “The whole gospel message embraces both doctrine and obedience. The faith is what we believe about Christ; good conscience is not allowing the conscience to be defiled by sinful practices contrary to the doctrine.”

“Suffer shipwreck . . .” Newport J. D. White, *op. cit.*, p. 101, wrote, “We are not justified in interpreting suffered shipwreck as though it meant they were lost beyond hope of recovery. Paul himself had suffered shipwreck at least four times when he wrote this, and had on each occasion lost everything except himself.”

While true enough that Paul did survive four shipwrecks, the fact is that shipwrecks are usually fatal to some and frequently to all who may be aboard; and there is certainly nothing in the passage that denies shipwrecks as equivalent to “spiritual death” in a passage like this.

Verse 20

“Hymenaeus . . .” Many scholars, along with H. D. M. Spence, *op. cit.*, p. 183, agree that, “Hymenaeus is probably identical with the heretic of this name, charged in the second epistle as teaching that the resurrection was passed already!”

“Alexander . . .” Although some have done so, it would appear to be precarious to identify this character with “Alexander the coppersmith” (2 Timothy 4:14), or with another Alexander mentioned in Acts 19:33.

“I have delivered over to Satan . . .” Another glimpse of this same apostolic power is found in the case of the incestuous person (1 Corinthians 5:5), and this is a power no longer on earth. From this and other passages it is clear that the apostles had such power; but it came to an end with the cessation of miracles.

Adam Clarke, Commentary on the Whole Bible, Vol. VI, p. 213, supplied the following observation upon this apostolic gift, “No such power as this remains in the church of God, and none should be assumed; and the pretensions of it are as wicked as they are vain. It was the same power by which Ananias and Sapphira were struck dead, and Elymas the sorcerer struck blind. Apostles alone were entrusted with it.”

“Not to blaspheme . . .” Such evil teaching as that of denying the resurrection was equivalent in every way to “speaking against God.”

We are not told here of the exact nature of their “blasphemy” but something far more serious than opposition to Paul is indicated. The two sinners singled out in this verse were gross offenders whom Paul punished for the sake of checking the damage which their example might otherwise have wrought in the church.

If the denial of any future resurrection was involved in their behavior, along with the teaching that “the resurrection was passed already,” this would have led to the exercise of all kinds of sins in the church. F. F. Bruce, Answers to Questions, p. 113, wrote, “That suggests that they were antinomians, teaching that believers should continue in sin that grace may abound, (Romans 6:1).”

CHAPTER 2

INTRODUCTION

Paul’s purpose is clearly that of laying down instructions for conducting the public services of the congregations. David Lipscomb, Commentary on First Timothy, p. 142, wrote, “He laid down rules for the men in public worship, and then gave rules for the women.”

More is covered in this chapter than prayer regulations, for the entire aspect of Christian assemblies is the subject of Paul's instruction, even including guidelines for the proper dress and adornment of the worshipers.

The Christological passage (verses 5-7) is in a sense a parenthesis, being related to the great mission of the church in its outreach to all men, and the stress laid upon this in the public prayers.

Verses 1-2

“First of all . . .” This indicates the primary importance of the public prayers of the church, and not necessarily that public prayers should be first in the order of worship.

Paul's use of “first” throughout all of his writings generally has the meaning of “the first thing I wish to write.” J. Glenn Gould, *Beacon Bible Commentary*, p. 569, wrote, “Prayer in all its forms should occupy a central place in the church's service of worship.”

“I urge . . .” has the meaning of “I command.” Paul is not revealing here that which would please him, but that which is the will of God.

“Entreaties, prayers, petitions, and thanksgivings . . .” The general meaning of this is “all kinds of prayers;” and R. C. H. Lenski, *The interpretation of Saint Paul's Epistles . . . to Timothy*, p. 538, wrote, “Here are four words for prayers.”

H. D. M. Spence, *op. cit.*, p. 184, said, “Many attempts, some of them not very happy ones, have been made by grammarians and commentators to distinguish between these terms each of which denotes prayer.”

The entreaties are petitions addressed to God; prayers include petitions but also thanksgivings, adorations, etc.; petitions are usually thought of as pleas upon behalf of others; and the thanksgivings are expressions of gratitude and appreciation for blessings God has already bestowed, no prayer, in any sense, being complete without thanksgiving.

“For kings and all who are in authority . . .” the true Christian stands for law and order, any government being far better than none at all. Nero was at

the time of Paul's writings the emperor; and as J. R. Dummelow, Commentary on the Holy Bible, p. 997, wrote, "The apostle's instructions shows that the prayers of the church are to be offered for bad rulers as well as for good."

"All who are in authority . . ." This indicates all who are in authority regardless of rank, taking in the administrative assistants in government as well as heads of state.

"That we may live a tranquil and quiet life . . ." Christians are not to be revolutionaries in the sense of that word today, although the influence of the gospel, properly advocated, can and does have a therapeutic effect upon the entire society. Tranquility and quietness are inherent traits of the true followers of Jesus Christ.

"In all godliness and dignity . . ." The first noun here has reference to the discharge of religious duties; and R. C. H. Lenski, *op. cit.*, p. 541, wrote that "dignity" refers to dignified and worthy conduct toward our fellow men."

There is also evident in these verses the reason for offering prayers upon behalf of governmental authorities. Such rulers as kings can, by their mistakes, bring untold sorrow upon all their subjects, as well as rich blessings through religious rule. Therefore, the church should never forget to pray for such leaders.

Nebuchadnezzar was compelled to eat grass with the beasts of the field for seven years in order to learn the lesson, "The most high is ruler over the realm of mankind." (Daniel 4:25) It is feared that many today are in need of learning the same lesson. Christian prayers are therefore a means of putting into God's hands an instrument for overruling the affairs of human kingdoms for the benefit of God's children.

Verse 3

God Himself is the Savior of all men. Wilbur B. Wallis, *op. cit.*, p. 847, wrote, "This" in this verse emphasizes the universality of the sufficiency, applicability and offer of the gospel to all men." "This" in this verse applies first of all to the prayers commanded to be offered, and also includes the

contemplated results in the quiet and peaceable life granted to Christians as a consequence.

Verse 4

“Who desires all men to be saved . . .” It is the will of God that all men should inherit eternal life; but it is also the will of God that men should do so through acceptance of Jesus Christ, and persons refusing to do that must forfeit the inheritance.

God desires the salvation of all, but the responsibility for accepting that salvation rests squarely upon every man.

Verse 5

The reference to Jesus Christ as a man is in the present tense, despite the fact of this having been written after the ascension of Christ, indicating that our Lord did not cease being a man when He rose from the dead and ascended to the right hand of God.

“One God . . .” The Hebrew people failed to appreciate the truth that God is the God of all men, not of Israel alone; and there is always a tendency for people to think of God as theirs and not the God of all.

“One mediator . . .” There are exactly as many mediators as there are Gods, namely only one; and here is the end of any alleged legitimacy for invoking saints, or even the Virgin Mary, in one’s petitions to God.

Verse 6

It was in the mind of God, “before the world was” to redeem humanity; and as Paul said in another place, “When the fullness of time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law.” (Galatians 4:4) Thus the “testimony” of Christ to the fact of God’s willingness to save all men was borne by the coming of Christ “in the fullness of time.”

“Who gave Himself as a ransom . . .” Our Lord literally gave Himself, in that no one took His life away from Him, but He laid it down of His own accord. (John 10:17-18)

There are no less than seven centers of initiative which are discernible in the crucifixion of Christ; and thus it is proper to say that

- (1) God crucified Christ;
- (2) Christ crucified Himself (gave Himself willingly);
- (3) the Jews crucified Him;
- (4) the Romans crucified Him;
- (5) all mankind crucified Him;
- (6) Satan crucified Him; and
- (7) every man crucified Him.

The inestimable worth of our Lord Jesus Christ is apparent in that a ransom must have equivalent value to that which is ransomed or redeemed; and that Christ's death as a sacrifice equivalent to the value of the entire race of mankind is inherent in the comparison.

Verse 7

Since there is but one God, the God of all men; and since there is but one mediator between God and all mankind, the church should diligently pray for all men, especially in view of God's willingness and desire that none should perish but all should "come to the knowledge of the truth." (Verse 4)

"Come to the knowledge of the truth . . ." Men do not already have "the knowledge of the truth," absolutely demanding that those who are to be saved must first be taught the truth.

Verse 8

Paul here restricted the offering of public payers in Christian assemblies to men as distinguished from women; and this is fully in keeping with the teachings of the New Testament elsewhere.

The fact that present social attitudes may be opposed to what is taught here cannot possibly be of any permanent importance. In the current era society has degenerated into a very permissive attitude toward every kind of

immorality, violence, and crime; and, in such a social climate, there may very well be more and more individuals and even churches that will reject the teachings of the apostles and proceed to do as they please.

R. C. H. Lenski, *Ibid.*, p. 554, wrote, “In verse 8, “the men” are in contrast with all who are women (verse 9). This difference is not felt in English; but in the Greek this is plain. The men only, and no women whatever, are to do the praying in the public worship of the congregation.”

“I want the men in every place to pray . . .” A better rendition would be, “I demand that the men do the praying everywhere.” It is futile to suggest that Paul’s words in this place are merely expressing a preference.

“The men . . .” Not only does this contrast with “women” (verse 9), but it also contrasts with “church officials, elders, ministers, deacons, etc.” The right of offering public prayers did not pertain exclusively to ministers or others of any special class. Alan G. Nute, *op. cit.*, p. 509, wrote, “All male members of the church had an equal right to offer prayer and were expected to use that right.”

“Lifting up holy hands . . .” This is not a prescription demanding any posture in prayer. E. M. Zerr, *Bible Commentary*, Vol. VI, p. 168 wrote: “It is merely an allusion to the ancient practice of presenting the uplifted hands in respectful petition to God, as in Nehemiah 8:6, Psalm 141:2 and Lamentations 3:41.”

“Without wrath and dissension . . .” A. C. Hervey, *Pulpit Commentary*, Vol. 21, *The Pastorals*, p. 34, speaks of a number of instances cited by Chrysostom in which angry and vindictive prayers were offered to God against personal enemies with such expressions as “so do to him . . . smite him . . . recompense him, etc.” As Chrysostom said of such prayers, “Do not pray against your brother. Your prayer is not against him, but against yourself.” (Hervey, *Ibid.*)

All who approach God in prayer should do so with humble and contrite hearts, conscious of such sins and shortcomings as mar every soul in the sight of God.

“In every place . . .” Wherever any church pretends to follow Christ and the teachings of the apostles, these instructions are to be received and honored. Hervey, *Ibid.* pointed out that there is also here a denial that worship is to be confined to any certain place, as in the temple, for example, under Judaism.

Verses 9-10

“Adorn . . . with proper clothing . . .” They are misguided indeed who think that the most expensive, or the latest, or the most fashionable attire is in any sense “best,” and there have been many instances in which it was the “worst.”

Paul F. Barakman, *The Epistles to Timothy and Titus*, p. 36, wrote, “Note that Paul did not say “careless” or “shabby.” There is no virtue in offensive untidiness. What he meant was the kind of apparel that becomes a woman whose first concern is to be a credit to Christ.”

R. C. H. Lenski, *op. cit.*, p. 560, wrote, “Neither is Paul insisting on drab dress. Even this may be worn with vanity; the very drabness may be made a display.”

Perhaps the best comment on this passage is the writing of the apostle Peter who gave instructions along the same lines wrote, “Your beauty should not be dependent upon an elaborate coiffure, or on the wearing of jewelry or fine clothes, but on the inner personality—the unfading loveliness of a calm and gentle spirit, a thing very precious in the eyes of God. (1 Peter 3:3-4)

There can, in fact, be no authority whatever in these passages for the imposition of a church-administered dress code. The true ornament is not such things, but the spiritual loveliness and beauty of genuine Christianity.

Balmer H. Kelly, *the Layman’s Bible Commentary*, Vol. 23, p. 74, wrote, “We are true to the spirit of these passages when we say that the true dress of Christians at public worship should be marked by simplicity and taste, but it does not follow that the church should tempt by specific rules to regulate the dress of the members.”

Verse 11

“Let a woman quietly receive instruction . . .” This is far superior to the translation “learn in silence” in the American Version; because no requirement whatever of silence is imposed in the worship of God. The quietness in view here is that of due acceptance of authority, respect for God’s rule of prohibiting women from taking over the public worship, and the quiet acceptance of their womanly role as child-bearers and mothers of the human race. Certainly in the asking of questions in dialogue teaching situations, and in such things as the singing or responsive readings, women do not violate this passage by their participation in such things.

Verse 12

“To teach . . .” refers to public teaching in the worship. Alan G. Nute, *op. cit.*, p. 510, said, “This prohibition in no way contradicts Titus 2:2-3; it relates to teaching in the church in the presence of men and to the fact that authority in matters concerning the church is not committed to women.”

It is upon this verse that the office, either of elder, deacon, or evangelist, must, in the light of New Testament teaching, be denied to women.

Satan, in many instances, has succeeded in creating the impression that Christianity is something merely for the women and children, and not for men, at all; and, where such a prohibition as this is denied, the tendency would be to make Satan’s lie the truth.

“Or exercise authority over a man . . .” Every entity must have a head, and the headship of man over the family and in the church is by Divine appointment. Evil men who do not believe in God, thus rejecting any thought that there even is such a thing as “Divine appointment,” find it difficult to accept this; but those who believe in God and His word receive it joyfully. In the next two verses, Paul spelled out the reason for God’s investiture of family headship and church authority upon men, and not upon women.

Verse 13

Adam and Eve were not merely mythical figures of the remote past, but the progenitors of the human race. Moreover, they did not “evolve” from lower creation together, but Adam was made first; then Eve was formed of a rib taken out of his side.

Adam’s being the first formed, and having an existence before Eve was created gave him priority in creation. Eve was created as his assistant and helper, one suitable for him and, if both Adam and Eve had respected this God-given arrangement, the human family might still have resided in the Garden of Eden. The disaster came when Eve became the leader instead of the helper and led her husband into the tragic fall of the entire race. But this is not all. Eve proved to be incapable of leadership, as mentioned in the next verse.

Verse 14

The argument here is that Adam was not deceived, whereas Eve was deceived, thus exhibiting a serious flaw that disqualified her from being the head, or leader. That quality of women being easily deceived is alone sufficient to justify the appointment of men as elders and evangelists, and as heads of the family.

We are living in an age that exhibits a widespread rejection of God’s teaching on this question, but the teaching remains clear enough. As Loy said (quoted by) R. C. H. Lenski, *op cit.*, p. 566, “There are effeminate, long-haired men who claim the right of women, and masculine, short-haired women who claim the rights of men; and, in virtue of the good sense which the Creator has endowed humanity, they become the laughing stock of the sober-minded in both sexes.”

Verse 15

“Child-bearing” is a synecdoche for “the entire status of women in their relationship to God and men.”

J. R. Dummelow, *op. cit.*, p. 567, was correct in seeing the meaning thus, “The woman shall be saved by keeping simply and faithfully to her allotted sphere as wife and mother.”

ON THE DECEIVABLENESS OF WOMEN

It is a gross mistake to view the natural capacity of women for being deceived as in any manner whatever a reflection upon womankind. It is positively her most adorable characteristic. Fully half the marriages on earth would never have been contracted, except for this utterly feminine and absolutely delightful quality for being easily deceived.

There is no use for anyone to deny this, because women see it clearly enough in their sisters, if not in themselves; and every woman who has ever tried to dissuade a love-struck daughter from marrying “the son of Ahab” is painfully and tragically aware of it. But the human race would be bankrupt without such a trait in women, an absence that would take all the romance out of life!

But are there not historical examples of strong-willed, powerful women, impossible to deceive, who have held the rod of empire or the affairs of state with great ability? Yes, indeed! But exceptions do not make the rule.

The glory of women is to achieve their ends without being charged with leadership and authority; and those precious angels called women who are willing to trade their natural, God-given status for one of authority; and leadership are inevitably short-changed in the transaction. Apostolic wisdom is behind the admonition of this chapter, and it should be earnestly heeded by all.

CHAPTER 3

This great chapter conveys the apostolic instructions relative to their appointment of elders and deacons, (verses 1-13), concluding with a marvelous Christological passage regarding the mystery of redemption, (verses 14-16).

Verse 1

“It is a trustworthy statement . . .” This is Paul’s emphasis upon the importance of the eldership in church organization. Full agreement is felt with A. M. Stubbs, *The New Bible Commentary Revised*, p. 1171, who construed this expression as the mark of, “Paul’s concern to encourage a proper regard for the task of oversight” of the churches.

“If any man aspires to the office of overseer. . .” “Overseers” were elders, deacons, preachers, shepherds and stewards, but all of these titles are descriptive of one office only, that of an elder of a local congregation.

R. C. H. Lenski, *Saint Paul’s Epistles . . . 1 Timothy*, p. 76, wrote, “Paul is not telling Timothy to arrange for these offices and to define their functions and their scope; such offices were already established and in use. Timothy is merely to see to it that only properly qualified persons fill them.”

“A fine work he desires to do . . .” Some of the super-moralists are critical of Paul’s encouraging the ambition of men to be elders; but such a self-righteous attitude is due to a failure to understand that: “In the early history of the church, willingness to serve as an overseer meant sacrifice.” (William Hendriksen, *New Testament Commentary, 1 & 2 Timothy*, p. 118)

E. M. Zeer, *Bible Commentary, Vol. VI*, p. 171, wrote, “Paul calls the office a good work, which shows that an elder has something on his shoulders besides holding down an office.”

Don DeWelt, *Paul’s Letters to Timothy and Titus*, p. 60, wrote, “We read of elders visiting the sick (James 1:27; 5:12, 14), feeding the flock on the word of God and protecting it from enemies. (Acts 20:29-31)

As regards the definition of “bishop,” Kenneth S. Wuest, *Word Studies from the Greek New Testament, 1 Timothy*, p. 52, writes, “Thayer defined the word: an overseer, a man charged with the duty of seeing that things to be done by others are done rightly, and any curator, guardian, or superintendent.”

Verse 2

Fifteen qualifications for an overseer (elder) are mentioned in this chapter, seven are mentioned in this verse.

“Above reproach . . .” Kenneth S. Wuest, *op. cit.*, p. 52, pointed out that the Greek word which this comes from means: “One who cannot be laid hold upon,” that is, a man without a handle, one who has given evil men no occasion whatever to blame or censure him.

E. M. Zeer, *op. cit.*, p. 997, said, “This word has been distorted out of its true meaning, saying it requires a bishop to be without sin.” Sinless perfection is not required of Christians, nor is it of elders; and those are profoundly in error who make the high standard in evidence here the excuse for appointing none at all. The very fact of Paul’s appointing elders in every congregation; and the fact that one or more of a group of elders might be declared deficient in given qualifications is not a valid reason for countermanding God’s order to ordain elders “in every church.”

“The husband of one wife . . .” J. R. Dummelow, *Commentary on the Holy Bible*, p. 997, gives the four major interpretations of this that have come down historically, wrote:

- (1) The presbyter is not to be a Christianized Jew who, under Moses’ law had taken more than one wife.
- (2) He is not to take a second wife after the death of the first.
- (3) He is not to marry again while his divorced wife lives.
- (4) He is to be a man faithful to his wife.”

Newport J. D. White, *op. cit.*, p. 111, wrote, “This does not mean that the bishop must be or have been married.” However, this is exactly what it does mean; and even if such a requirement is not in the Greek from which this is translated, it is perfectly obvious that Timothy was here under strict orders to look only in the married community for church officers.

Under (2), mentioned by Dummelow, it may be observed that the oldest interpretations are deeply colored by this very view; but we reject it on the

grounds that Paul himself said, “Let marriage be held in honor among all.” (Hebrews 13:4)

A. C. Hervey, the Pulpit Commentary Vol 21, 1 Timothy, p. 541, wrote, “There is nothing in Paul’s writings, to suggest that notion of there being anything dishonorable in a second marriage,” provided of course, such second marriages were due to the death of a previous partner or divorce for Scriptural reasons.

What is prohibited, absolutely, is polygamy; and there are some who read into this requirement the possibility that some of the Christians from the pagan culture either were, or had been, involved in polygamous marriages; and it is regrettable that, if such was the case, no Scriptural precedents have come down to us throwing light upon the proper handling of such a problem. Anything reprehensible in the marital relations of a prospective elder would certainly disqualify him.

In this first great requirement is seen the absolute sanctity of the home and that sacred respect and honor of it which dominate the whole Christian doctrine.

R. C. H. Lenski, *op. cit.*, p. 579, wrote, “All of the qualifications listed except aptness to teach and that pertaining to a novice are requirements that apply to all Christians.” There are not two standards for so-called clergy, but one standard for all.

“Temperate, prudent, respectable . . .” It has often been remarked that the preconditions of leadership in the church are not such things as unusual talent, wealth, power or ability, but sound moral and ethical conduct.

“Temperate . . .” Kenneth S. Wuest, *op. cit.*, p. 56 wrote: “The literal Greek here is one who sits long at his wine,” leading to the rendition, “not given to much wine.” That wine was freely used even by Christians in apostolic times is evident in a statement like this; but it should always be remembered that the so-called wines of our times have ten times the alcoholic percentage of wines in that day; and that, even in those times, the people who wanted to set the proper example abstained from wine altogether.

Such qualifications as temperate, sober-minded and orderly in church elders are absolutely mandatory. The church today is beset with every conceivable fad, fancy, fiction and nostrum that the devil himself can invent; and for dealing with such things, the church of all ages needs sober, stable, orderly, right-minded men who have the courage and ability to protect and nourish the flock of God.

Elders were to be chosen from that class of Christians who opened their doors to fellow-saints in need or distress.

Newport J. D. White, *op. cit.*, p. 113, is probably correct in supposing that: "The duty of the elders was closely connected with the maintenance of external relations, which was their principal function."

"Able to teach . . ." The Christian life is a life of study and learning. Every elder should be able to shut the mouths of the gainsayers, shield the church from false teaching and see to it that truth and truth alone is fed to their charges.

R. C. H. Lenski, *op. cit.*, p. 584, said, "Aptness to teach means not merely a natural aptitude, but the qualification of having been taught as well." It is regrettable that this qualification is sometimes overlooked.

Verse 3

The following definitions are from Kenneth S. Wuest, *op. cit.*, p 56-57, (Note: The following definitions will be based upon which version of the Bible you are using.)

Brawler: a fighter, a contentious person, one who goes about with a chip on his shoulder.

Pugnacious or striker: these nouns speak of a bruiser, one who is ready with a blow, contentious, quarrelsome person.

Gentile: means one who is kind, considerate and sensible to the feelings of others, not harsh, rude or blunt in his behavior.

Not covetous, no lover of money: the word avaricious may be used to translate the thought here.

Striker: one who went around thumping people on the head with a quarter staff. “Skull-breakers” is a synonym.

Verse 4

The emphasis in this verse is the ability to rule, a well-disciplined family being the surest evidence of such a trait in one considered for the eldership.

Regarding the question of whether a man with only one child could be appointed, E. M. Zerr, *op. cit.*, p. 173, has this illuminating comment: “The captain of a sinking ship orders that women with children should enter lifeboats first. This does not mean that women with only one child would be denied entrance.” Sarah remarked in (Genesis 21:7), “Who would have said to Abraham that Sarah would nurse children? Yet I have born him a son in his old age.”

The Scriptural use of the plural “children” to include also the meaning of a single child is fully established from the Old Testament.

Not the number of the children, but their behavior is in view here. Paul would state in the very next verse that a man unable to control his own household should not be entrusted with the government of a church.

“With all dignity . . .” This is not a grace of childhood, but should be applied to the dignity and decorum of the father.

Verse 5

Don De Welt, *op. cit.*, p. 59, wrote, “If one be incapable of governing so small a society as his own family, but suffers his children to be disobedient and vicious, how shall he govern in a proper manner that greater and far more important society, the church of God?”

Verse 6

The elevation of a recent convert to the eldership might easily issue in an inordinate pride upon his part; and, therefore, whenever possible, men of settled experience in living the Christian life should be chosen.

“Lest he become conceited . . .” These words are from *tuphoo*, meaning literally according to Kenneth S. Wuest, op. cit., 58, “To raise a smoke, omit smoke, or smolder.” Metaphorically it means, “To blind with pride or conceit.”

“Fall into the condemnation incurred by the devil . . .” It means the condemnation into which Satan and the fallen angels fell when God condemned them. Pride was the occasion of the fall of Satan, exactly the same temptation of a novice prematurely elevated to the eldership.

Kenneth S. Wuest, op. cit., p. 58, connected these things as follows, “The condemnation of the devil refers to the fact that Satan is under the condemnatory sentence of God, since sin was motivated by pride.”

Verse 8

These same qualities are required of elders, and sufficient comment on them was made above. A synonym for dignity is honorable.

A. C. Hervey, op. cit., p. 52, wrote, “Double-tongued, found only here in the New Testament,” means deceitful, lacking in integrity. “(Not) fond of sorted gain” . . . indicates a man who is not inordinately fond of making money.

Verse 9

“The mystery of the faith . . .” here is the same as “the great mystery” mentioned a few moments later in (chapter 3:16). The doctrine of the mystery unfolded in the New Testament is rather extensive, as fully elaborated in The Mystery of Redemption in chapter 3:16.

“With a clear conscience . . .” Paul made a great deal of the conscience; and, while a clear conscience does not prove one is right, an impure conscience most certainly proves one to be wrong.

Verse 10

“And let these (deacons) also first be tested . . .” This requirement of having first to be tested was also mandatory in the case of elders. R. C. H. Lenski, op. cit., p. 597, wrote, “The fact that such a testing was to be applied also to overseers is so self-evident from the conditions laid down in 2-8, that

“also” now refers to it. Paul states that the testing is likewise necessary in the case of deacons.”

This is a very important point to be noted, because in it lies the certainty that the women to be mentioned in the same breath are the wives of both elders and deacons, the same requirements in their wives being mandatory for both.

Verse 11

A. C. Hervey, *op. cit.*, p. 53, summarized the three possible meanings of this verse, making it applicable to

- (1) the wives of the deacons,
- (2) the wives of the elders and deacons, or
- (3) the women deacons. Note: “Hervey, like so many present-day commentators opted for the third meaning, but this writer is certain that the third meaning is wrong.”

If the women in view here had been deacons, Paul would have called them deacons, which he certainly did not do; and furthermore, in the very next verse Paul said that deacons “must be husbands of one wife,” leaving women out of sight altogether as possible holders of this office.

This verse on the qualities of office’s wives is absolutely mandatory to be observed. The wrong kind of wife can ruin any elder or any deacon; and to make the qualification in sight here applicable to a whole new class of church officials would be to make Paul guilty of a very glaring omission.

But isn’t Phoebe in some versions of the Bible called a deaconess in Romans 16:1? Yes, indeed; but policemen are also called deacons of God in Romans 13:4. It should always be remembered that “deaconess” translates the Greek word for “servant,” and that for centuries, the translators have rendered the word “deacon” only when the official church office was meant.

If churches were commanded to appoint women deacons, where is the record of it, either in the New Testament or in the custom of the historical church? When women deacons are appointed, they are appointed without

Divine authority and with no adequate qualifications to serve as guidelines for their appointment.

Verse 12

“Let deacons be husbands of one wife . . .” This disqualifies any woman from serving as an official deacon. The people who are determined to appoint female deacons will have to find their authority and their guidelines somewhere else than in the New Testament.

Verse 13

David Lipscomb, Commentary 1 Timothy, p. 161, remarked, “Through service of the deaconship a man grows into the qualifications and fitness for the work of an elder.”

ELDERS AND DEACONS

The elders and deacons of the churches of our Lord throughout the world are probably the greatest group of men on earth today. Their work is that of a constant service and study, not in some ivory tower, but in the boiling crucible of daily life, where the word of God and its application to pressing human problems are their constant daily concern. Note: This verse concludes Paul’s instructions for the appointment of elders and deacons.

Verse 14

Did Paul return to Timothy in Ephesus? R. C. H. Lenski, *op. cit.*, p. 605, wrote, “We have no means of knowing. He wrote to Titus about the same time and told Titus to come to Nicopolis for the coming winter, which was probably a few months hence, so that before going to Nicopolis Paul hoped to visit Timothy in Ephesus.”

Verse 15

“How one ought to conduct himself in the household of God . . .” This may well be translated, “How one ought to behave.”

“The house of God . . .” William Hendriksen, *op. cit.*, p. 136, wrote, “House is correct here, not “household;” believers are God’s house because God dwells in them.”

“The church of the living God . . .” Inherent in this is a comparison with; paganism, or rather a contrast, thus: “Church of the living God, not the temple of the dead idols.”

“Pillar and support of the truth . . .” A pillar supports and upholds, exactly what the church does for the truth of God. The word “support” in this connection has the same meaning.

Verse 16

The widely held opinion that this is from some earlier hymn in current use among the earliest Christians is totally without foundation.

“He who” refers to “God” mentioned twice in the preceding verse, and “which” or “who” would also have the same reference to “God.”

“Great is the mystery of godliness . . .” The New Testament refers to these mysteries:

The mystery of Christ and His church (Ephesians 5:32)

The mystery of lawlessness (2 Thessalonians 2:7)

The mystery of the seven stars and the seven candlesticks (Revelation 1:20)

The mystery of the resurrection (1 Corinthians 15:51)

The mystery of the hardening of Israel (Romans 11:25)

The mystery of the harlot church (Revelation 17:7)

The mysteries of the kingdom of heaven (Matthew 13:11)

The mystery in view in this clause, however, is the “great” mystery much more comprehensive than those mentioned above, and in a sense containing all of them. Frequent references to it in the New Testament designate it as:

The mystery (Romans 16:25)

The mystery of the will of Christ (Ephesians 1:9)

The mystery of Christ (Ephesians 3:4)

The mystery of the gospel (Ephesians 6:19)

The mystery of God (Colossians 2:2)

The mystery of the faith (1Timothy 3:9)

The mystery of godliness (1Timothy 3:16)

Christ Himself is the mystery as revealed by his verse, but the close relation of Christ to all phases of the mystery is at once evident.

“He was revealed in the flesh . . .” This is a statement of the Incarnation, however translated, referring to the visitation of the Dayspring from on high. Only of Almighty God, or of the Second Person in the godhead, might it be properly said that, “He was revealed in the flesh.”

“Was vindicated by the Spirit . . .” Christ was vindicated in the Spirit, because God’s Spirit, “without measure,” dwelt in Him, testified to His deity upon the occasion of His baptism, and was sent by Christ upon the day of Pentecost. In the most superlative degree, all the fruits of the Holy Spirit were exhibited in the life of Christ. He was vindicated in the Spirit.

“Beheld by angels . . .” The implication here is that angels were extremely solicitous for our Lord’s welfare, ever ready to do His will, and importantly identified with His earthly ministry. Angels announced His birth, warned Joseph to flee into Egypt, ministered to Him in the wilderness, strengthened Him in Gethsemane, rolled away the stone from His grave, announced His resurrection, escorted Him to glory and prophesied His return in the Second Coming. The Passion, and ten thousand of His holy angels will accompany Him in the Second Coming. Yes, He was beheld of angels.

“Proclaimed among the nations . . .” Paul mentioned again and again the fact that the inclusion of Gentiles was an essential part of the mystery, and thus it would be better to understand this as “preached among the Gentiles.

“God was well pleased through the foolishness of the message to save those who believed.” (1 Corinthians 1:21)

The great need of this age is preaching the word of God. Evil forces have battered down the outer doors and are assaulting the inner citadel of faith itself. No such crisis in a millennium has confronted the church; the hour of her mortal decision is upon her. She must forsake all the evil philosophies of men and return to the faithful proclamation of what the word of God declares, if she is either to be saved herself or have the power to save others. Let the church ring out the message,

“Proclaimed or preached among the nations.”

“Believed on in the world . . .” This is a continuing mystery. Contrary to every evil, in spite of what appears to be every good reason against it, the word of God still falls in honest and good hearts; and God continues to reap His precious harvest of souls from the earth.

In spite of a roaring tornado of wickedness on every side, God’s faithful continues to love Him rather than darkness. Countless thousands, or millions—no one knows how many, continue to live by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God; and every passing decade sees more and more buildings erected in the name of Christ and dedicated to His service than were ever built and dedicated to any earthly ruler in all history. Yes, our Lord is believed on in the world!

“Taken up in glory . . .” As the text stands it appears rather as a reference to the glorious nature of His ascension. Three great passages of the New Testament deal with this: Philippians 2:5-9, Ephesians 4:8-9 and 2 Corinthians 8:9.

The Scriptural accounts of the ascension, or of the “going up” of Christ, seem to have been preliminary to the actual ascension into the spiritual realm above, leading to the unfortunate view that such accounts are contradictory, which, of course, they are not. Christ apparently “went up” from His disciples more than once; and it may be doubted if the actual ascension itself was witnessed by mortal eyes.

Like the resurrection, it was accounted by angels; and their testimony verified the fact; but the actual assent was probably too glorious for mortal eyes to have endured the sight of it. The ascension is very properly included among the elements of the great mystery, for there are certain corollaries of it that shall never be known by men until the saints are caught up to meet the Lord in the air.

CHAPTER 4

INTRODUCTION

R. H. H. Lenski, *Saint Paul's Epistles . . . 1 Timothy*, p. 626, wrote, "This whole chapter (verses 1-16) constitutes a main division of 1 Timothy; it deals with coming heresies and tells how Timothy is to be fortified and is to fortify the churches against them. "The first five verses (verse 1-5) deal with particular features of the great apostasy which all of the sacred writers revealed would develop during the historical progression of Christianity. Before beginning the study of this chapter, a glance at some of their prophecies is in order.

THE GREAT APOSTASY

Christ foretold that "wolves in sheep's clothing" would ravage the flock of God (Matthew 7:15ff) indicating that the church itself would be the theater of the apostasy.

Paul had warned that "grievous wolves" would come from the eldership itself. (Acts 20:28-30)

The Corinthians were alerted to the fact that Satan would seduce them, and that their minds would be corrupted from the simplicity and purity that is toward Christ;" and the contrast of the bride of Christ with that of Adam points to the church. (2 Corinthians 11:3)

The apostasy shall occur, or be centered, in the very temple of God, in context a reference to the church, the spiritual body of Christ. (2 Thessalonians 2:1-12)

The "falling (apostasy) away from the faith" in this passage (1 Timothy 4:1-5) carries the presumption that the apostates were once in the true faith.

Another phase of the apostasy, namely its amorality and lawlessness is stressed in 2 Timothy 3:1-8; and the indifference of Christians to sound teaching and their desire for "teachers after their own lusts" are pinpointed in 2 Timothy 4:1-7.

Methods and character of the apostate teachers appear in 2 Peter 2:1-3, where is found remarkably supplementary material for what Paul mentioned in this chapter of Timothy, that is, that the false teachers, greedy for money, teach what they know to be a falsehood.

Revelation chapters 17-18 set forth still other characteristics of the apostasy prophesied by the Lord and His apostles; and, in perfect consonance with everything else that was written about it, the heretical and persecuting power is a harlot church.

The fulfillment of Paul's words in 1 Timothy 4 must be looked for within the church itself, and not in some obscure ancient sect.

Verse 1

"But the Spirit explicitly says . . ." William Hendriksen, *New Testament Commentary, 1 and 2 Timothy and Titus*, p. 145, wrote, "This means that there was neither doubt nor vagueness about it."

Newport, J. D. White, *Expositor's Greek Testament, Vol. IV*, p. 120, wrote, "Over against the future triumph of the church, assured by the finished work of Christ, we must set the opposition."

"That in later times. . ." This is not limited to any immediate period after Paul's letter. David Lipscomb *Commentary, 1 Timothy*, p. 154, wrote, "From the time at which he was writing and forward in all periods of the church, men have apostatized from the faith."

"Some will fall away from the faith . . ." Paul did not use the same word here for "fall away" which he used in 2 Thessalonians 2:3. Carl Spain, *The Letters of Paul to Timothy and Titus*, p. 73, said, "The apostasy of 2 Thessalonians 2:3 is

the same as the departure here in verse 1. Both words are from *aphistemi*, meaning to abandon, or rebel, to desert. It is translated forsake (Acts 21:21), and “fall away from” in Hebrews 3:12).

The Second Coming is also connected with the final and complete manifestation of this apostasy in 2 Thessalonians 2:1-12.

“From the faith . . .” simply means “The Christian faith,” giving further emphasis to the Christian roots of the apostasy in view.

“Paying attention to deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons . . .” It is not taught here that evil spirits actually teach, but that they through men” mentioned a moment later) deceived multitudes and are, in fact, themselves instigators of the false teaching.

In the Old testament, the evil spirit who stood before the Lord said, “I will be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets” (1 Kings 22:22; and the same evil power would be able to corrupt Christian elders, change them into hardened hypocrites, speaking the most glaring falsehood, with no reproach, whatever from their dead consciences. Of course not elders alone, but ministers, and the whole echelon of religious hierarchies are included in this.

The Roman emperor upon his death became a demon to be prayed to. The historical church herself finally began offering prayers “to” the dead saints, which most certainly fulfills the definition of “doctrines of demons” understood objectively.

Verse 2

The very worst mistake that any sincere student of the word of God can make is to assume that teachers of false doctrine are either telling the truth, or they are unaware of the false doctrines they are teaching.

“Seared in their conscience as with a branding iron . . .” This is a description of the “hardened, blinded, deadened soul” in whom the truth principle has utterly perished. The scriptures contain a great deal of material on the judicial hardening of willful sinners.

Verse 3

“Who forbid marriage . . .” This heads the list of characteristics of the great apostasy that shall seduce and mislead the church of God; and one may only be astounded at the fanciful interpretations of this that one finds in commentaries. Note some of these:

Ronald A. Ward, *op. cit.*, p. 78, wrote, “False teachers were to arise in Timothy’s day, and shortly thereafter who would teach that God did not create matter because matter is evil. The command to abstain from meats and marriage is based upon the supposed evil of matter.”

H. D. M. Spence, *Ellicott’s Bible Commentary*, Vol. V, p. 196, wrote, “This is an indication of the impious doctrine of some of the great Gnostic schools . . . probably in those early days creeping into the churches. The Jewish sect of the Essenes had already taught abstinence from marriage was meritorious.”

R. C. H. Lenski *op. cit.*, p. 622, wrote, “The whole monastic system that developed together with all the lying teachings from which it arose, appeared soon enough. It still flourishes in Rome and in all the rest of the false asceticism.”

John Wesley, *One Volume New Testament Commentary*, *in loco*, explained the meaning here thus, “Forbidding priests, monks and nuns to marry, and commanding all men to abstain from such and such meats on such and such days.”

There is also the universal prohibition against marriage during Lent, a ban that denies marriage during a specified period to hundreds of millions throughout the earth. Yes, Paul’s prophecy was fulfilled in the most comprehensive and extensive dimensions imaginable.

“Abstaining from foods . . .” Paul’s condemnation of such doctrine has in view the fact that Jesus Christ made “all meats clean.” (Mark 7:19; Acts 10:13-16)

“Those who believe and know the truth . . .” Once again the order of trust, then knowledge appears in the New Testament, as in, “We have believed and come to know that you are the Holy One of God.” (John 6:69)

Verse 4

“Everything created by God is good . . .” This is attested by the fact that even those creatures held to be unsuitable for food in some countries are yet considered delicacies in others, as any international market demonstrates.

“If it is received with gratitude . . .” Thanksgiving at meals is a basic Christian duty, and the same is in view here.

Verse 5

“Sanctified . . . or consecrated . . .” Ronald A. Ward, *op. cit.*, p. 70, pointed out the value of this verse in another connection, “Paul says the unbelieving husband is consecrated through his wife. (1 Corinthians 7:14) It cannot mean that the husband is saved because he has a Christian wife. But what does it mean? He is not to be regarded as unclean, and therefore divorced; he can continue to be the husband of a Christian.”

H. D. M. Spence, *op. cit.*, p. 197 noted that quotations, or allusions, founded upon the Bible often made up a portion of thanksgiving at meals in the Christian community, citing a very old form of the practice from the Apostolic Constitutions, thus, “Blessed be thou, O Lord, who nourishes men from their youth up, and who gavest meat to all flesh; fill our hearts with joy and gladness, so that we, always enjoying a sufficiency, may abound unto every good work in Christ Jesus our Lord, to whom be ascribed the glory, honor and power unto the ages. Amen.”

J. Glenn Gould, *Beacon Bible Commentary*, Vol. IX, p. 594, also pointed out the “table thanks” common among Wesley and his preachers thus, “Be present at this table Lord; be here and everywhere adored; these creatures bless and grant that we may feast in Paradise with Thee.”

Verse 6

This is one of the passages which the source critics have bitterly complained about: “Faith in the Pauline epistles is a subjective experience, but in the Pastorals it is more objective in character.” Of course, this is their excuse for denying Paul wrote the Pastorals.

“Faith” in this place is undeniably objective, being related not so much to “trusting” as it is to piety and good works; and Paul’s letters do not contradict each other.

The most widespread theological error of this age is that of misunderstanding the use of “faith” by Paul in his letters, and the unlawful, ridiculous interpretation of it as meaning, invariably, “trust/faith.” George Howard’s article: “The Faith of Christ,” in *Expository Times*, Vol. 7 p. 212-214, wrote, “That it does occasionally have that meaning is certain; but as Dr. Howard of the University of Georgia declared, “The usual meaning of the word in the New Testament is fidelity.”

“A good minister,” in the Pauline definition, is one who is both nourished by and a teacher of the sound Scriptural doctrine upon which the New Testament church is founded.

Verse 7

Ronald A. Ward, *op. cit.*, p. 71, wrote, “Invented stories and untrue fables have no place in Christian proclamation. The faith is rooted in history.”

“Discipline yourself for the purpose of godliness . . .” Later Paul would cite the reason for his admonition. Exercising godliness leads to eternal rewards; the other type of exercise provides only temporal benefits.

Verse 8

This is called a “faithful saying” in the next verse. The contrast between the mere care of the body and the far more important care of the soul is the thing in view. It is incredible how much time, effort, expense and concern men lavish upon exercise and care of their bodies; and, while Paul allows this to be profitable “for a little,” that is, “for a little time, only,” the far more important

requirement of the religious life of the soul should be stressed more than the other.

Verse 9

R. C. H. Lenski, *op. cit.*, p. 636, wrote, “This saying is identical with the *dictum* in chapter 1:15 and does not seal what follows, but what precedes. (It carries the idea), trust it or not; it is and remains worthy of all acceptance.”

Verse 10

“Fixed our hope on the living God . . .” The Christian hope contrasted starkly with the hope of the pagan world which was set upon dead idols.

“Who is the Savior of all men . . .” Ronald A. Ward, *op. cit.*, p. 73, wrote, “This is not universalism. The key is in the words, ‘especially of them that believe.’” It is a fact, of course, that God is able and willing to save all men, and that all who are ever saved will be saved by Him; and it is in this sense that, “He is the Savior of all men.” R. C. H. Lenski, *op. cit.*, p. 639, said, “We know why so many are not saved.” (Matthew 23:37)

Verse 11

Every word Paul addressed to Timothy is Christian doctrine. The order to command and teach these things extends to all times and to all congregations seeking to do the will of the Lord. Paul’s instructions in this letter were not merely personal advice to Timothy, but solid doctrinal guidelines for the church of all ages.

Verse 12

Newport J. D. White, *op. cit.*, p. 126 paraphrased the meaning of this verse as follows: “Assert the dignity of your office even though men may think you young to hold it. Let no one push you aside as a boy.”

J. Glenn Gould, *op. cit.*, p. 598, pointed out that, “It is age, rather than youth, that is in danger of being despised today. When a church seeking a minister automatically disqualifies every man on its list who is fifty years old, or older, it has come dangerously near to despising maturity.”

Despite the validity of what Gould says, there is also a widespread tendency to ignore and bypass men in their twenties when settled churches start looking for a minister. This also is extremely reprehensible.

“In speech, conduct, love, faith and purity . . .” The conduct of any minister is regulated by this. He must be one whose life measures up to the holy ideals which he preaches.

Verse 13

“Until I come . . .” As previously pointed out, we do not know if Paul ever was permitted to go to Ephesus again, as he planned here to do.

“Give attention to the public reading . . .” Despite the obvious application of this admonition to the simple necessity of study on the part of every minister, R. C. H Lenski, *op. cit.*, p. 643, was sure that something else was meant. He wrote, “Timothy is directed to pay close attention to the reading of the churches, that is, to what is being read, not that something else should be read, still less that Timothy do the reading, but to what is being read.” It was a similar concern which Paul enjoined upon Timothy here. Note: Some of the modern translations being read publicly are near blasphemy in their contradiction of sacred truth.

Verse 14

What was the gift and where did Timothy get it? Lenski, *Ibid.*, p. 645, answers thus, “God gave (it) not by a miraculous gift from heaven, but “by means of prophecy,” by a communication of the word to him, and did that under the tutelage of one of the best capable prophets this world ever had, namely, Paul himself.”

The gift may also be identified with Timothy’s ability, as Paul’s assistant, to found and establish churches in the truth. (2 Timothy 1:6)

As to what prophet may have spoken it, Silas, who was also a prophet, was Paul’s companion at the time; and either he or Paul could have made the prophecy which was so gloriously fulfilled in Timothy.

Verse 15

The utmost diligence and application to the task in hand are indicated by this; and such diligence and perseverance will surely issue in favorable results. It is regrettable that some ministers seem to believe that they can benefit mankind more by who they are and what they imagine themselves to be, than by any diligent application to the work of saving souls. It was a task, arduous, demanding, and constant to which Paul here assigned Timothy.

Verse 16

Paul never thought of salvation as a “once procured, final feat, settled and done forever! No, salvation was a matter of fidelity and perseverance to the end of life. From this, it is also clear that there is a sense in which men must save themselves, not in the sense of either meriting or earning salvation, but in the sense of diligent continuity in the Christian way.

There is no occasion in the Christian life when the follower of the Lord may feel free to rest upon his laurels, assume that he “has it made,” or cease the fidelity which must mark the entirety of his whole life.

Wilbur B. Wallis, Wycliffe Bible Commentary, New Testament, p. 856, pointed out that “continuing” is one of the basic words, used to describe the steadfast walk of a Christian. (Galatians 3:10; Hebrews 8:9; James 1:25; Acts 14:22 and Colossians 1:23) It is basically the same as abide in John 15 and I John.”

CHAPTER 5

Instructions in this chapter deal with respect for the aged, concern for sound budgeting practices in a congregation, and especially the problem of overloading the financial burden of the church by the inclusion of persons who should be supported by their own offspring.

Verse 1

“Do not sharply rebuke an older man . . .” A. C. Hervey, Pulpit Commentary, Vol, 21, 1 Timothy p. 59, wrote, “The context shows that the meaning is not a presbyter, but an older man.” Honor and respect of the aged is

a Christian principle. The meaning here is not that an elder must never be accused, because Paul, a little later, made provision for that. The proper sensitivity, respect and regard for the elderly are in view here.

“The younger men as brothers . . .” A glimpse of the apostolic conception of the Christian community, shines in these verses. Various Christians are as fathers, mothers, sisters, and brothers, as determined by their age and sex. In fact the church itself has been described as a Divine extension of the family, the family being, in every way, just as sacred and Divine as the church.

It often happens that the church family preserves more of the genuine family love and mutual concern than may be found in some families.

Verse 2

R. C. H Lenski, *Saint Paul's Epistles . . . 1 Timothy* p. 654, observed that, “In all purity” is commonly understood to mean that Timothy is to watch his sexual nature when he is admonishing younger women.”

A. C. Hervey, *op. cit.*, p. 95, had this conclusion, “See how jealously the apostle guards against any possibility of abuse of the familiar intercourse of a clergyman with the women of his flock.”

Verse 3

“Honor . . .” John Wesley, *One Volume New Testament Commentary*, in loco wrote: “That is, maintain out of the common stock.” H. D. M. Spence, *Ellicott's Bible Commentary*, Vol. VIII, p. 201, affirmed the same thing. “The widow is not merely to be honored, but she is also to be assisted out of the alms of the faithful.”

This construction of the word “honor” goes back to our Lord's command that “honor your father and your mother” forbid use of the Divine Corban to avoid their financial assistance.” (Matthew 15:4-6)

The same word occurs again in verse 17, below, where likewise the meaning includes financial remuneration.

Despite the duty of helping needy widows, however, Paul moved quickly to countermand any intention of the church's assuming financial obligation that properly belonged to children or other next of kin to those in need.

Verse 4

"Their own family. . ." This is not to be restricted to parents only, or even to grandparents. R. C. H. Lenski, *op. cit.*, p. 656 commenting on the Greek words wrote the following, "They are used with reference to dutifulness toward God, and toward one's country, or one's family, including parents, grandparents, and other relatives."

"This is acceptable in the sight of God . . ." Despite the fact of this being stated positively, as an example of what pleases God, the negative is also true, that failure to heed this injunction is not acceptable in the sight of God.

Verse 5

Two classes of widows are pointed out by this, only the first class being entitled to the support of the church. Paul indeed allowed and commanded that the truly faithful and God-fearing should be maintained by the congregations.

"Continues in entreaties and prayers night and day . . ." cannot mean continuous engagement in the actual offering of prayers, but it speaks of a rule of life and conduct.

It is a high tribute which Paul paid to the widows supported from the public purse. He does not command them to set their hope upon God, but describes them as already doing so.

Verse 6

"She who gives herself to wanton pleasure is dead even while she lives . ." This is one of seven passages in the New Testament which speak of spiritual hardness which "it is impossible to renew." How sad is the thought that some are already spiritual dead. They may yet live many years; but as regards the precious hope in Christ, they are dead already.

Verse 7

This verse has the effect of binding the laws enunciated in this chapter upon all generations of Christians. It is Paul's way of emphasizing that his words in this letter are not merely good advice for a young preacher, but they are the law of God to the church of all ages.

Verse 8

H. D. M. Spence, *op. cit.*, p. 202, wrote the following comment on this verse, "The circle of those whose support and sustenance were the responsibility of the Christian is here enlarged. Not merely parents and grandparents, but "he must assist those of his own house." Even dependents connected with the family who have fallen into poverty and neglect are included."

Charity begins at home, and so do all other obligations of the Christian life. Newport J. D. White, *Expositor's Greek Testament*, Vol. IV, p. 128, wrote, "One of the most subtle temptations of the devil is his suggestion that we can best comply with the demands of duty in some place far away from home. Jesus always said, "Do the next thing; begin at Jerusalem, etc." The path of duty begins from within our own house, and we must walk it on our own street."

Verses 9-10

"A widow be put on the list . . ." This means, let none be enrolled upon the list to receive church support except those with the qualifications outlined in these verses.

David Lipscomb, *Commentary*, on 1 Timothy, p. 166, wrote, "This did not necessarily preclude aid to widows who were younger and in need; but these were the ones who were to be enrolled in the class whom the church maintained in comfort and honor."

Wilbur B. Wallis, *op. cit.*, p. 857, wrote, "Here are details about the qualifications of widows to be supported by the church.

- (1) It was proper that they should have already reached old age.

(2) There was a mutual obligation between the church and those widows, who were to consecrate themselves to the service of the church, which would have been altogether intolerable, if there was still a likelihood of their being married.”

The women in this list were mothers with children, past the age of sixty, already known and honored in the church for their good works. Whatever service they may have given to the church in such things as teaching, visitation of the sick, etc., was evidently undertaken by them upon a voluntary basis, which was quite natural in view of their being supported by the church. This was a far different thing from the exploitation of young women in monasticism.

“Having been the wife of one man . . .” The past perfect is used here because the husband (by definition of widow) would already have been dead.

Verse 10 begins and ends with “good works,” which like a pair of book-ends, encloses the list of services mentioned; and this was very fortunate. Otherwise, it might have been alleged that “foot washing” was a church ordinance.

Verse 11

Our interpretation of this is: “Do not take any young widows into this list of those to be supported by the church; because, as time goes on, they will wish to marry; and, due to their youth and lack of experience, they will become idle, gad around from house to house, tattle and carry tales. This cannot mean that any young widows in need would be refused all assistance.

Verse 12

“Pledge” simply refers to their pledge of loyalty to Christ at the time of conversion. In the pagan culture of that time, a Christian widow’s marrying again was altogether likely to mean marrying a pagan, marrying out of the church, a thing Paul denounced in the Corinthian letter.

Verse 13

This verse is referring back to verse 12 and is giving us what is thought to be the meaning of that verse.

Verse 14

The proper life-style for young widows is that of remarriage, to a Christian husband, of course, and the rearing of a family, not that of a paid retainer of the church.

“I want younger widows . . .” R. C. H. Lenski, *op. cit.*, p. 672, wrote, “We do not attribute to Paul the statement that all widows up to the age of sixty should marry. ‘Younger’ here refers to the youthful widows.”

“Keep house . . .” E. M. Zeer, *Bible Commentary*, Vol. VI, p. 181, wrote, “The Bible does not contradict itself; and it teaches that the husband is to have the ruler-ship over his wife and household.” The meaning, therefore, is that she shall rule her household subject to the authority of her husband.

“Give the enemy no occasion for reproach.” H. D. M. Spence, *op. cit.*, p. 205, wrote, “The adversary here is not the devil, but the sneering worldly man, jealous of a faith he will not receive, envious of a life he will not share, and always on the lookout for flaws of followers of a religion which he hates.”

The particular slander Paul was guarding against was discerned by R. C. H. Lenski, *op. cit.*, p. 674, who wrote thus, “The charge, or danger, was not that those young widows would become strumpets (prostitute, or harlot). But many of them were ready to enter into a pagan marriage without Christ, without their first faith; they become pagans again in order to suit a pagan husband. Plenty of such cases occur to this day.”

Verse 15

Only God can know what shame and loss had already come to the church in Ephesus from the very situation Paul was dealing with in this passage.

Verse 16

“Let not the church be burdened . . .” The thought is not that the church would not step in, where those responsible were not doing their duty, but that they should not be called upon to do so.

“May assist those . . .” No definite method is suggested, but there are many instances in which one widow can provide a home for another.

Verse 17

All of the elders were “apt to teach and preach” by definition, and all were associated together in the ruler-ship of the church; and therefore there is no distinction here between so-called classes of “elders,” a conceit that finally issued in the development of the monarchical bishop of later ages.

Timothy had just been instructed to show the proper regard and respect to all elderly persons; and here is the admonition to let that honor be even more conspicuous in his dealings with the elders of the church.

J. Glenn Gould, *Beacon Bible Commentary*, Vol. IX, p. 608, wrote, “It is difficult to believe that this means simply “a double stipend” as the NEB renders it . . . ”The day had not yet arrived when the church’s ministers would receive full support. It was still customary for the church’s leaders to support themselves, just as the apostle himself did.”

Verse 18

“You shall not muzzle the ox while he is threshing. . .” This is a quotation from Deuteronomy 25:4, that Paul used to advocate support for gospel preachers in 1 Corinthians 9:9. From both this and the second quotation he was about to give, it is certain that verse 17 has reference to financial remuneration.

“The laborer is worthy of his wages . . .” There is absolutely no doubt that Paul here classified this second quotation as “Scripture” to which he attributed both this remark and the one from Deuteronomy.

In the New Testament Matthew 10:10 says: “The worker is worthy of his support.”

Luke 10:7 says: “The laborer is worthy of his wages.” Thus Paul here quoted from the Christian gospels, extending to them the full authority and status of Scripture.

Verse 19

The instruction here is that no charge against an elder is to be received against an elder unless it is substantiated by two or three (actual) witnesses.

The case in view here is that of a ruler of the church who is indeed guilty of sinful conduct; and, in order to keep trivial, untruthful and irresponsible charges from being made, the apostle instructed that two or three witnesses were to be ready to testify against an elder before any charge would even be considered. A. C. Hervey, op. cit., p. 100, said this means, "Suffer no man to accuse a presbyter (elder) unless he is accompanied by two or three witnesses able to back up the accusation."

Verse 20

In the case of an elder, or other church leader, who is fairly convicted of gross wrongdoing, he should be rebuked and denounced publicly.

David Lipscomb, op. cit., p. 173, wrote, "When we cover up sins in the church, we corrupt the morality and virtue of the church and destroy its efficacy to honor God or to save men. Evil teachers and evil men must be exposed and purged out of the church, or the church becomes corrupt and becomes a synagogue of Satan instead of a church of Jesus Christ."

Verse 21

"His chosen angels . . ." are here represented as witnessing the work of Christians on earth, as in Hebrews 1:14. The word "elect" in this place has the meaning of faithful angels, the ones not carried away by the rebellion of Satan.

"Without bias . . ." Absolute fairness on the part of any person charged with the solemn duties of hearing complaints and solving difficulties in a church is a basic requirement if there is to be either peace or justice in a church.

"Doing nothing in a spirit of partiality . . ." An elder, or a minister, must not be partial as regards his activity among the members. There is a kind of partiality that develops a little "clique" of the preacher's special friends or gives undue attention and publicity to the work of a few, instead of to the many, which is critical of conduct in some which is allowed in others. All such partiality is self-destructive of the minister's effectiveness and unproductive as far as the church is concerned.

Verse 22

“Lay hands upon one too hastily . . .” means, “Do not get in a hurry to name any man as an elder.”

“Share responsibility for the sins of others . . .” This warns that the person responsible for appointing elders who prove unfaithful is, in a sense, partaker of their sins, unless due deliberation, investigation and testing preceded such an unfortunate appointment.

“Keep yourself free from sin . . .” This has primary reference to the matter of irresponsible appointment of church elders just mentioned. Before leaving this verse, it may be inquired, “Why has the laying on of hands largely disappeared from the ceremonial in churches?” R. C. H. Lenski, *op. cit.*, p. 688, answered it saying, “It is only symbolical, confers no Divine power or gift of the church of God that would bless a person; but it accompanied the prayers of the church that God would bless the person with all that he needs for his Christian life, or in the case of the minister, for his holy office and work.”

Although the laying on of hands has ceased, in large degree, it is fervently to be hoped that the prayers for those charged with solemn responsibility have not!

Verse 23

This little verse is a jewel. It reveals Timothy as a total abstainer from alcohol; but it is amazing what the commentators make of this. One asserts that since the drinking water was bad in those times, Paul is here admonishing Timothy to use wine instead of water. The restriction “little wine,” of course refutes that notion.

Others have thought that Paul here advised Timothy to “liquor himself up a bit” in order to improve his courage and ability to carry out Paul’s orders!

It was the illness of Timothy that led to this instruction; and one cannot help wondering if perhaps the good physician Luke had a hand in this prescription.

If, despite the hardship and the universal custom of wine-drinking, Timothy refrained from the use of it in order to be a good example, consenting to use it only upon a doctor's prescription; is there not in this, sufficient motivation for "teetotalers" today? Indeed there is!

Verse 24

This is merely a comment to the effect that, in spite of all proper investigations, it is impossible always, to know whether or not a given candidate is fitted for high office in the church.

Verse 25

This means that "the truth will out" eventually, as it regards any man, however discreet, secretive or hidden may be his actions from the public scrutiny. The effect of both of these last two verses is to stress the importance of not being hasty in the ordination of elders. Verse 25 is to warn Timothy against hasty condemnation, and the former verse 24 had been to warn against hasty approval.

CHAPTER 6

This final chapter has a pungent paragraph on the reciprocal duties of slaves and masters (verses 1-2), stern warnings against senseless disputations and covetousness (verses 3-10), a beautiful admonition for the man of God to live a life worthy of the good confession (verses 11-12), a great Christological doxology (verses 13-16), instructions for the rich Christians in Ephesus (verses 17-19), and the final word to Timothy, concluded with a brief benediction (verses 20-21).

Verse 1

"Let all who are under the yoke as slaves . . ." How many were these? Paul F. Barakman, *The Epistles to Timothy and Titus*, p. 68, wrote, "It is estimated that there were sixty million slaves in the Roman Empire at the time of the writing of this letter; and it is hardly necessary to detail the facts concerning their miserable lot."

The ancient empire was built upon slavery, at that time a world-wide institution, recognized and practiced in every nation under heaven. That slaves formed a considerable portion of all the congregations of Paul's day may be inferred from the extensive teachings on the subject in 1 Corinthians 7:21-24, 12:13, Ephesians 6:5-8, Colossians 3:11, 22, 1 Peter 2:18 and also in 1 Corinthians 1:27-29.

The holy gospel must have been especially welcome and appreciated by slaves, who, despite being at the bottom of the social and economic ladder, nevertheless qualified to receive the glorious promises of Christian truth.

A. C. Hervey, Pulpit Commentary, Vol. 21, 1 Timothy, p. 118, wrote, "It must have been an unspeakable comfort to the poor slave." In addition to large numbers of slaves being Christians, there is also the likelihood that some of them were even elders.

"Under the yoke . . ." There are two words in this little paragraph that carry inherent criticism of the institution of slavery. "Yoke" is one of them, and the other is "master," coming from a particular Greek word "*despotes* (from which our word despot is derived) meaning one who has dominion.

CHRISTIANITY AND SLAVERY

For the apostles to have attempted to eradicate slavery, David Lipscomb, Commentary on 1 Timothy p. 176, wrote, "By preaching it as hateful to God and degrading to men would have produced rebellion and revolution in its darkest and most violent form; and Christ did not propose to break up such relations by violence."

There was also another side to the problem. If becoming a Christian had been equated with emancipation, the churches would have been overwhelmed with a flood tide of sinful men, seeking not Christ or holiness, but freedom from their chains, creating circumstances which would immediately have destroyed Christianity from the earth.

J. Glenn Gould, op. cit., p. 613, wrote, "It would have been impossible for the Christian church to strike overtly in an effective way at the institution of

slavery; but indirectly the church sounded the death knell of the institution.” This was done by teaching the dignity of man, the supreme value of the individual, and those very Christian graces admonished in his chapter.

In any kind of revolution attempted by Christians, the entire movement would not only have been crushed; but horrible and extensive bloodshed, famine, death, and pestilence would have prevailed.

The great principle of Christianity looking to the reform of existing social evils is that of working as “leaven,” and not as “dynamite.”

“Regard their own masters as worthy of all honor . . .” This was the basic requirement for all slaves upon penalty of death for violation; so the sanity of such instruction is apparent; but the new-found liberty in Christ would have tempted some, due to human nature, to despise their masters. Thus the thought here is to the effect that Christianity makes anyone a better person, therefore a better employee, a better master, or even a better slave.

Newport J. D. White, *Expositor’s Greek Testament*, Vol. IV, p. 140, wrote, “The Christian slave is to remember that the fact of his master being a Christian, believing and beloved, entitles him to better service, if possible, than that due to a heathen master . . . If the spiritual status of the master be raised, the quality of the service rendered is not to be lowered, but rather idealized.”

Men may despise this ethic if they choose to do so, but it was this very thing that broke the back of the institution and lifted the yoke of slavery from the back of humanity.

“That the name of God and our doctrine may not be spoken against . . .” “The name of God . . .” is here placed upon a coordinate basis with “the doctrine,” showing the highest esteem in which the apostles held the sacred doctrine of the faith. The current downgrading of doctrine is hurtful, sinful and contrary to divine law.

“Not be spoken against . . .” Any action on the part of professed servants of God which gives the enemies of the Lord an excuse to blaspheme, is ever reckoned in the Scripture as a sin of the deepest dye. Compare Nathan’s

words to King David (2 Samuel 12:14) and Paul's reproach to the Jews (Romans 2:24)

Verse 2

"Believers as their master . . ." By spelling out slave duties to both kinds of masters, Paul left no room to be misunderstood.

"Not be disrespectful to them . . ." David Lipscomb, *op. cit.*, p. 177 concluded from this and the following verse that: "We may justly conclude that evil-disposed persons had been acting differently and arousing discontent and a rebellious spirit."

It is a strange paradox of human nature that the more mild and tolerant any authority may be the less respect it is likely to command. This is not to be the attitude of Christian slaves.

"Let them serve . . ." means let them serve them, if possible, with even better service.

"Who partake of the benefit . . ." as rendered here indicates the masters, who, because they are believing and beloved, should receive of this better service. Note: Some commentators render the words differently applying them to the slaves, who by better service may receive more considerate treatment. As a matter of fact both interpretations are true. Christianity pours in the oil that lubricates and improves even the most unsavory situations.

Verse 3

The character in view here would be denounced in the most vehement language in the next verse; but this description of the one to be denounced should be carefully noted.

"A different doctrine . . ." The very fact of a doctrine's being new to the New Testament is enough to condemn it. Paul's opinion of "new ideas" in the realm of theology was simply to the effect that their advocates were both evil and "sick." A. M. Stibbs, *The New Bible Commentary, Revised*, p. 1175, wrote, "There is a contrast here between teaching which is "healthful" and teachers who are "sick."

Teaching is confirmed as “sound” or “wholesome”

(1) by having Christ as its Author and (2) by the God-fearing conduct of the teacher.”

Verse 4

This is a rather salty speech! A glance at the way various translations have rendered this is interesting: He is blinded with conceit and really knows nothing, but is crazy with discussions and controversies about words—Richard Francis Weymouth.

He is a conceited idiot! His mind is a morbid jungle of disputation and argument—Edgar J. Goodspeed.

He is a conceited, ignorant person, with a morbid craving for speculations and arguments—Edgar J. Goodspeed.

He is a conceited, ignorant creature, with a morbid passion for controversy and argument--James Moffatt.

We have already seen, any overt assault upon the established institution of slavery in ancient society would have been an unqualified disaster for the world; and the sheer insanity of any who might have advocated it shines in this passage.

Verses 5-6

“Deprived of the truth . . .” A. C. Hervey, *op. cit.*, p. 120, wrote, “Deprived implies that they once had had possession of the truth, but had lost it by their own fault.”

Thus, these were not outside agitators who were disturbing the churches, but were “good apples turned bad.”

“Suppose that godliness is a means of gain . . .” This applies to all who misuse sacred work for secular profit or personal benefit; but the implication is also inescapable that this relates to the slave problem.

Verse 7

“There are no pockets in shrouds” is one of the oldest proverbs; and Paul, by these stern words, warns against the temptation to make any kind of worldly gain the sum of all of one’s life. “For not even when one has an abundance does his life consist of his possession.” (Luke 12:15)

Verse 8

Food, clothing and shelter are the three basic needs of mankind; and all three are included here. Whoever, therefore, has food to eat, clothes to wear and shelter from the elements, with something left over for the aid of others is rich!

As J. Glenn Gould, *op. cit.*, p. 616, said, “This is a rigorous standard,” and by it, there are a great many rich people.

Verse 9

Paul used two metaphors in this verse to describe the people whose minds are set upon becoming rich. They are caught in a “snare,” in the sense of a trapped animal, which once captured is unable to recover itself. The other is that of an exhausted swimmer who is drowned in the flood.

“Those that want to get rich . . .” could also be translated “they that desire to be.” The people here condemned are not merely rich, specifically, but those, whose desire and intention are focused upon one thing. This does not decry lawful ambition and application in one’s work. Newport J. D. White, *op. cit.*, p. 143, said, “What is here condemned is not an ambition to excel in some lawful department of human activity, which indeed may bring an increase in riches . . . but the having of a single eye to the accumulation of money by any means.”

“Ruin and destruction . . .” A. C. Hervey, *op. cit.*, p. 121, wrote, “These two words taken together imply the utter ruin and destruction of body and soul,” being the double disaster brought on by the foolish and hurtful lusts by which the seekers of riches destroy themselves.”

Verse 10

The thought of this verse is parallel with verse 9; and again, it is not the possession of money, but the love of it and the pursuit of it, which are condemned.

True, making money the root of “all evil” seems a little extravagant to some; but, again from Newport J. D. White, p. 144, *Ibid.*, he wrote, “When one is dealing with the degrading vice of any kind, the interests of virtue are not served by qualified assertions.”

“Pierced themselves through with many a pang . . .” This is the same thought of being plunged into ruin and destruction, mentioned in verse 9.

Verse 11

Paul F. Barakman, *op. cit.*, p. 79, has an interesting homily based upon the following outline of the next two verses, thus,

The fact that a man has been called of God and is equipped for service by the gift of the Holy Spirit does not eliminate the necessity for strenuous effort. He must:

- “Flee” (verse 11). One of the best influences is a pair of heels.
- “Follow” To flee is not enough, being only negative; the positive counterpart of flight is following the Lord.
- “Fight ” (verse 12). Whatever metaphor Paul had in mind, whether athletic or military, one phase of Christian living is certainly that of active resistance to evil.
- “Lay hold” (verse 12). Salvation is freely offered, but it must be grasped. This is a term which means “take hold once for all.”
- “Keep” Excavations at Pompeii found the body of a soldier buried alive because no one came to relieve him at his post of duty. A similar faithful endurance to death is indicted by this.”

Newport J. D. White, *op. cit.*, p. 145, observed that the six virtues enumerated in this verse contrast with the six vices in verses 4, and 5, but that, "We cannot arrange them in pairs of opposites."

"O man of God . . ." The force of this is very great. The word "man" is not that distinguishing the male from the female, but the word which encompasses all. It means the person worshipping and serving God, as contrasted with the money-lovers just denounced.

"Flee . . ." That is "flee" from the pursuit of money; turn away from it; put it out of sight. J. D. White, *Ibid.*, well said, "The love of money in ministers of religion does more to discredit it in the eyes of ordinary people than would indulgence in many grosser sins."

Verse 12

"Fight the good fight of the faith . . ." The military metaphor was a favorite of Paul's putting on the whole armor of God, enduring hardness as a good soldier.

"Lay hold on the life eternal . . ." But was not Timothy already saved? Indeed he was, but the New Testament makes it starkly clear that fidelity on the part of Christians is also required of them if they really hope to enter heaven at last.

"To which you were called . . ." All men are called in the sense of being objects of God's invitation to receive eternal life; but, as so frequently in the New Testament, "a call" means one answered and responded to; and so it was with Timothy. The time of his conversion is clearly in mind here, as the immediate reference to "the good confession" proves.

"You made the good confession . . ." White, *Ibid.*, p. 146, properly discerned this obvious reference to Timothy's baptism, writing, "In the primitive church, the baptism of an individual was a matter in which the church generally took an interest and part. This explains the "many witnesses" of Timothy's good confession."

THE GOOD CONFESSION

Why, is this called the good confession twice in a single short paragraph?

- I. It is the good confession because Christ made it, under oath (Mark 14:62, the same being the legal charge upon which our Lord was condemned to be crucified. (John 19:7) Christ made it and died for making it, in order that men might make it and live.
- II. It is the good confession because God Himself made it three times, speaking out of heaven in broad open daylight, namely
 - (1) at the baptism of Christ, (Matthew 3:17,
 - (2) at the transfiguration (Matthew 17:5), and
 - (3) when the Greeks came to see Jesus (John 12:28).
- III. It is the good confession because all men, evil and righteous alike, shall at last make the good confession (Philippians 2:11). Since all must make it eventually, why not make it in this life and be saved?
- IV. It is unto salvation,” as also clearly appears in this verse (Romans 10:10). It is a vital part of the plan of salvation.
- V. Christ Himself will confess those who make it, that occasion being, in all probability, the time when the redeemed have their names written in the Book of Life.
- VI. It has been made by the saints of all ages. Nathaniel made it (John 1:49); Peter made it (Matthew 16:16); Timothy made it (1 Timothy 6:12); Nicodemus made it (John 3:2); Thomas made it (John 20:28); Judas who betrayed Christ made it (Matthew 27:4); the judge who tried him made it (Matthew 27:24); Pilate’s wife made it (Matthew 27:19); the centurion in charge of His execution made it (Matthew 27:54); and the greater thief on the cross confessed him (Luke 23:42).
- VII. The same is true of the angels and of demons. The night He was born, the angels of heaven said, “Behold there is born to you this day in

the city of David a Savior which is Christ the Lord” (Luke 2:22); and the demons said, “What have I to do with You, Jesus, the Son of the Most High God?” (Mark 5:7) Heaven, earth and hell all have one word of Jesus Christ, “He is the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth, the Son of God Most High.”

VIII. The good confession is “good” because it is a summary of all Christian doctrine. Everything depends upon this, the rock of our salvation.

Verse 13

“I charge you in the presence of God . . .” The word “charge” carries with it the meaning of an official order, one to be carried out at any cost.

“Who testified the good confession before Pontius Pilate . . .” It should be remembered that that was “a night” trial. The questioning went on for hours, during most of which Jesus remained silent. Now and again He gave answer, but only when the question was so stated that His answer would be in full harmony with His divine will.

Verse 14

“The commandment . . .” R. C. H. Lenski, op. cit., p. 721, wrote, “Some think the word is called “commandment” because the gospel commands men to repent; but the New Testament shows clearly that the gospel itself is called the commandment because its preaching, teaching, and inculcation were enjoined upon the apostles. (Matthew 28:20ff)

“Without stain or reproach. . .” Hervey noted that some commentators are uncertain whether these terms should be applied to Timothy’s conduct or to the gospel; but they are true either way. The view here is that they are a reference to the kind of life Timothy was enjoined to live in his preaching of the gospel.

“The appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ . . .” This is a reference to the Second Advent of our Lord, all Christians endeavor being carried forward with the constant respect to this eventual Coming.

Verse 15

The expression “King of kings and Lord of lords” occurs nowhere else in the Bible, but one so nearly like it as to be held identical is found in Revelation 19:16; and the belief here is that the word of God is always the best comment on the word of God. The passage in Revelation leaves no doubt whatever that Jesus Christ, wearing “the garment dipped in blood,” is the KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS in that passage; and thus there is no impediment to holding the same as true here. After all, in the Greek New Testament, Christ is called “God” no less than ten times, not including this passage.

THE KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS

- I. From the moment of our Lord’s birth when He was acclaimed by the wise men until He was nailed up to die under an inscription that cited Him as King, Jesus Christ during His earthly ministry was everywhere and always a KING.

There are four definite groups of Scriptures which set forth the kingship of Christ.

- A. There are those that speak of Him as the kings of the Jews: (Matthew 2:1-2, Mathew 27:37, Luke 23:37 and John 1:49.)
- B. Another class of Scriptures proclaims the universal, world-wide dominion of Christ, claiming for His kingdom all the nations of the earth and the uttermost parts of it: (Psalm 2:6-8), Zechariah 9:9-10)
- C. A third class of Scriptures mentions Jesus as the possessor of a kingdom: (Matthew 25:31-34, Luke 23:29-30, 42.)
- D. The fourth class stands apart, because they extol the kingship of Christ in language overwhelmingly superlative. (Isaiah 9:6-7, I Timothy 6:15, Revelation 19:16)).

The vision of Christ in Revelation portrays Him as a mighty King, indeed the mightiest of all ages, followed by the armies of heaven, crowned with many diadems, arrayed in a garment sprinkled with blood, and with the sharp sword proceeding out of His mouth. Previously, John had seen a vision of the

bitter forces of evil hurling their full strength against the Lord; but He said, “The Lamb shall overcome them, for He is Lord of lords and King of kings.”
(Revelation 17:14)

Christ declared that “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.” (Matthew 28:18)

II. What are the credentials of such a King as this? Hebrews 1:2-3 lists no less than seven basic credentials of King Jesus:

He is King by right of inheritance (Verse 2).

He is King by right of creation (Verse 2).

He is King by right of personal excellence (Verse 3).

He is King by virtue of identity with deity (Verse 3).

He is King by right of maintenance (Verse 3).

He is King by right of purchase (redeemed us from sin (Verse 3).

He is King by right of office (Verse 3).

Christ has set down on the right hand of the majesty on high. He is now ruling and shall continue to do so till all enemies are put under foot. Christ is King by right of conquest. (Hebrews 2:14)

III. Christ is therefore King in every department of life, every department of the material creation and in every department of the spiritual universe, or until Christ shall render back the kingdom to God. (1 Corinthians 15:28)

A. Christ is King of the universe.

“All things” were made by Him. (1 John 1:1f) “He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together.” (Colossians 1:17) This great King lifted up the continents from the ocean floor, hurled the suns in space, spread out the heavens above; and yet His care extends even to the smallest creatures, not even a sparrow falling to the ground without His concern. (Matthew 10:29)

B. He rules in the kingdoms of men. (Daniel 4:25) The dominion of this King is therefore without any limitations whatever.

IV. We shall now view briefly some of the symbols by which the kingship of Jesus is emphasized in the Scriptures. These are thrones, crowns, swords and scepter, (a rod or staff highly ornamented, a symbol of authority and sovereignty.)

A. Thrones.

The throne of Christ is established as a spiritual reality in statements like these: “He has established His throne for judgment, (Psalm 9:7) and “He upholds His throne by righteousness, (Proverbs 18:28). The New Testament has this: “Let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy, and may find grace to help in time of need.” (Hebrews 4:16)

B. Crowns.

The crown of Christ is that of eternal life, the crown of righteousness, the crown of glory, the crown of omnipotence, the crown of victory over every enemy, even death, and the crown of eternal and universal authority. These are the “many diadems.” (Revelation 19:12) No earthly crown may be compared to the diadems of Christ.

C. Swords.

In the book of Revelation, the great King is portrayed with a sharp sword proceeding out of His mouth (19:15), the sword being the Word of God. The true sword of Christ is spiritual, namely His word. His is the “sword of the Spirit.” (Ephesians 6:17) Christ needs only to speak, and it is done. By His word, He created the worlds; He came from heaven to bring the word of salvation to men; His word shall raise the dead and assemble all men of all ages to the court of the Great Day; His word shall enter the righteous into glory and vanish the wicked forever.

D. Scepters.

The scepter is another royal symbol ascribed to the Christ. “And the righteous scepter is the scepter (symbol of authority) of His kingdom.”

(Hebrews 1:8) God, through Christ, extends the scepter of Christ, which is His righteousness; and as many as touch, shall be made whole.

Verse 16

These words, as applied to the Lord Jesus Christ, are obviously spoken of His eternal and glorified state, because, as regards His earthly ministry, of course, men could and did see Him. That it is impossible for men to see Him at the present time is a fact of wide theological implications. What of all the Saints of the historical church, to whom prayers are even offered, especially of the blessed Mary? Can she deliver any petition to the King? Indeed, no!

Verse 17

Newport J. D. White op. cit., p. 148, wrote, “This paragraph indicates that the church had affected society more widely in Ephesus than it had at Corinth, of which Paul wrote, “Not many mighty, not many noble are called.” (1 Corinthians 1:26)

There were evidently a number of rich Christians in Ephesus. Such indeed would have been the source of strong temptation to a young man, like Timothy. Paul, however, knew his man, being very sure that Timothy would live up to the trust committed to him.

“The uncertainty of riches . . .” It is not that the rich must be presupposed to have acquired wealth by dishonorable means, because this is by no means true; rather the thought is that money itself is wicked, and one of the wicked things about it is that it tempts people to trust in it, the only vice which Timothy was here cautioned against.

“God, who richly supplies us with all things to enjoy . . .” All wealth and all possessions are of the Lord. Those who are blessed with such things should thank and honor the Lord for their blessings. Paul next laid down some rules for the wealthy, showing how they may use their wealth for their own eternal welfare, as well as for the blessing of others.

Verse 18

The wealthy have many opportunities to do good, but how often such opportunities are allowed to go unnoticed or neglected. (Hebrews 13:16)

The contrast between the two instructions seems to be this: “distribution” refers to the distribution of funds that the rich might make personally to men in his presence, or community; whereas “communicate” refers to monies supplied to philanthropies of distant recipients, such as missionaries, with whom communication would be involved.

Verse 19

“Storing up for themselves the treasure . . .” This is exactly what we should have expected the author of 1 Corinthians 16:2 to have written; and here is the obvious meaning of “both” references. The one doing the “laying,” is the Christian from “lay by him in store.” The words “for themselves” identify both Scriptures as being related to the words of Christ, “But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven.” (Matthew 6:20)

“A good foundation for the future . . .” The eternal benefit accruing to the giver was likewise stressed by Christ Himself in Luke 16:9, which furnishes elaboration to what Paul said here. The foundation is vital, fundamental and necessary for whatever is contemplated.

Verses 20-21

“Guard what has been entrusted to you . . .” Hardly any passage in the New Testament has any more relevance for our own generation than does this one. This is the time of the utmost arrogance, pride and conceit of haughty boasters who are shouting in deafening tones from every culture center on earth that they “KNOW.” This is the Neo-Gnosticism of the 20th century. What they profess to know is a lie. Man did not evolve from lower life forms. It does not lie within man to direct his steps; and before the phenomenon has disappeared, the proof of the Scriptures will again be profoundly demonstrated.

“What is falsely called knowledge . . .” R. C. H. Lenski, op. cit., p. 735, wrote, “This warning is not directed to Timothy as though he might lose the

faith but is a warning that Timothy is to address to the membership of the churches. (This applies also to other warnings found in this letter.)

“Grace be with you . . .” This very brief benediction is quite similar to the one which concludes the book of Hebrews.

“You . . .” here is plural in the Greek, indicating that the meaning of it here is identical with that in Hebrews where it is rendered “you all.” As J. Glenn Gould, *op. cit.*, p.623, said, “It is evident that he has the entire church at Ephesus in mind when he pens this parting benediction.”

2 TIMOTHY

INTRODUCTION

This is the last of the Pauline letters written while he was in prison in Rome, momentarily expecting execution, vitally concerned for the sacred faith, the preaching of which had so long absorbed his total energies, and fervently pouring out in this “his last will and testament” a deeply emotional and compelling appeal for the Christians (led by Timothy) to manifest steadfast fidelity in the face of the impending storm of hatred and persecution.

Satan at this time had organized the world against Christianity. This letter was apparently written only a few weeks or possibly months, prior to his death. The last four savage years of Nero’s rule extended from 64-68 A. D.; and that is about as close as verified historical facts enable men to date this letter.

Nero was only looking for a scapegoat; but a set of the most tragic and deplorable circumstances in all history, was the thing that provided the trigger of Nero’s choice of Christianity to be a scapegoat for his own political unpopularity.

The enmity of the state had been enlisted against the Christians. Divine intervention prevented Herod Agrippa (Acts 12) from exterminating Christianity. However, it was a Neronian persecution which brought pagan Rome down upon the church of Christ with all savagery and sadistic lust of the whole pagan world.

Edward Gibbon, *History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, Vol. 1, p. 600, who described the tortures as follows, “Some were nailed o crosses; others sewn up in the skins of wild beasts, and exposed to the fury of dogs; others were smeared over with combustible materials and used as torches to illuminate the darkness of night. The gardens of Nero were destined for the melancholy spectacle, which was accompanied with a horse-race and honored with the presence of the emperor.”

Such was the historical background against which 2 Timothy was penned by the beloved apostle, awaiting execution. The fact of Paul’s being

spared the torture which came to so many was, in all probability, due to his being a Roman citizen.

All speculations against the authorship (by Paul) and authenticity of 2 Timothy are drowned in the simple truth that it would be more difficult to forge a letter like this than it would be to forge the entire library of William Shakespeare.

CHAPTER 1

Verse 1

“To the promise of life . . .” This preposition denotes the object or intention of his appointment as apostle, which was to make known the promise of eternal life. With the shadow of death hanging over him, almost the first words regard the promise of everlasting life to Christians.

Verses 2-3

In Paul’s mind is the fact of Christianity being not a new, upstart faith, but the culmination of the legal faith (Judaism) so long recognized as vital, historical, legitimate, and absolutely unopposed to any legitimate government. In worshiping God through Christ, Paul was only doing the same thing which (in a sense) had been done by generations of his devout ancestors.

“I serve with a clear conscience . . .” Paul had always been a conscientious worshiper of God and later of God through Jesus Christ. He had even been, at first, a conscientious persecutor; but it is hard to believe that the reference in this context is anything else than a declaration of his innocence with reference to any action against the Empire.

“I constantly remember you . . .” Paul did not dwell upon his impending fate but took refuge in happy remembrances of past joys.

“In my prayers night and day . . .” Some of Paul’s prayers were uttered at night, some in the daytime, and this cannot mean that he spent all of his time praying.

Before leaving this verse, it should be noted, that according to Carl Spain, *Letters of Paul to Timothy and Titus*, p. 111, wrote, “Paul always maintained that the gospel was the Divinely ordained sequel to Judaism; not a new religion, but the fulfillment of the promise made of God unto our fathers. (Acts 26:6) Carl Spain also agreed with this, *Ibid*, p. 111, “Paul was not guilty of propagating some illegal religion in the name of a strange deity, as he was so often accused.”

Verse 4

Such was the love of Christians for each other, that strong men in the face of danger and death to loved ones openly wept; and there are a number of examples of this in the New Testament. Ronald A. Ward, *Commentary on 1 and 2 Timothy and Titus*, p. 143, said, “We are not called to a hard Stoicism which condemns all emotional experience.”

Verse 5

The great implication of this verse according to Newport, J. D. White, *op. cit.*, p. 154, is that the, “Faith of God’s people before Christ came is not different in kind from the faith after Christ has come.”

Eunice was a Christian of Jewish background (Acts 16:1); and, from this passage, it is inferred that Timothy’s grandmother Lois was also among the “believing Jews.”

How natural it is, and how touching, that Paul under threat of impending death would have been thinking of those glorious days on the second missionary tour when he first became acquainted with this illustrious family. Timothy was a third generation Christian; and, contrary to the way it sometimes happens, his faith was not diminished.

“For I am mindful . . .” There is no record of what constituted this “reminder.” It could have been a personal letter or visit from one who knew Timothy.

Verse 6

“Kindle afresh the gift of God . . .” This does not mean that Timothy had let the gift die. Fred D. Gealy Interpreter’s Bible, Vol. XI, p. 463, wrote, “Although the Greek verb may mean ‘rekindle or relight,’ it also may mean ‘agitate or stir up.’ ”The gift of God” was the office Timothy held as an apostolic representative.

“Through the laying on of my hands . . .” David Lipscomb, Commentary, II Timothy, p. 187, was of the opinion that, “This gift seems to have been bestowed upon Timothy by the laying on of the hands of the presbytery, Paul joining them in it.”

In any event, the admonition to Timothy was that he should be diligent and unwavering in the service of the Lord. Disaster should be faced, not by giving into it, but by stirring up God’s gracious gifts within men and by redoubling all vigorous effort.

Verse 7

“Spirit . . .” Fred D. Gealy, op. cit., p. 464, wrote, “Although “spirit” is here properly printed with a lower case letter as referring to the inner and abiding quality and character of Christian men, yet this spirit is not native to man, nor is it his achievement. It is God’s gift. The spirit of the Christian man is really God’s Spirit.”

“God has not given us a spirit of timidity . . .” Timidity and cowardice are also implied by this word. E. M. Zerr, Bible Commentary, II Timothy, p. 187, wrote, “Christians do not need to have such feelings, for God wishes them to be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might.” (Ephesians 6:10)

“Power and love and discipline . . .” At least two of these are named as “fruit of the Spirit.” (Galatians 5:22) They are standard earmarks of Christian character.

Verse 8

Interestingly enough, Paul did not consider himself Nero’s prisoner at all, but “the prisoner of the Lord.” The meaning of this is that Paul considered it

the will of God that he should thus suffer and that he left everything safely in the hands of the dear Savior.

“Do not be ashamed . . .” does not mean that Timothy was ashamed. Kenneth S. Wuest, *Word Studies for the Greek New Testament Vol II, 2 Timothy* p. 119, wrote, “Paul used the aorist subjunctive with the negative which forbids the doing of an act not yet begun.”

“The testimony of our Lord . . .” This means the true apostolic gospel was delivered to us through the apostles, not the impressions and subjective thoughts of Christians.

“Suffering for the gospel . . .” Every Christian should be aware of the doctrine of suffering as it concerns the Christian life. Many people have erred with reference to Christianity through their eternally seeking the easy, convenient, popular or man-pleasing course of action, rather than adhering strictly to what is known to be the will of the Lord.

The problem that precipitated these words was that of the storm of imperial opposition to Christianity following the counterfeit charges initiated by Nero. There were powerful friends of Paul in Asia, such as the Asiarchs of Ephesus, who would have found it very difficult and politically suicidal to have supported Paul in his appearance in Nero’s court. Timothy is not to be influenced by such shameful and unchristian conduct.

Verse 9

The word “God” near the end of the preceding verse precipitated here a typical Pauline digression, the next few clauses being devoted to extolling the grace and purpose of God from before times eternal.

“Who has saved us . . .” The past tense here indicates that Paul had reference to the primary or initial salvation of Christians, an act referred to, by the apostle Peter, as being “his purification from his former sins.” (2 Peter 1:9)

“Called us with a holy calling . . .” In the New Testament, call is always understood as a call obeyed.

“From all eternity . . .” Both the heavenly plan for man’s salvation and the means of its accomplishment has existed eternally. It is a gross error, of course, to apply this to individuals as regards their personal salvation, except as they are united with and in Christ and fully identified with our Lord.

Eternally, it has been the will of God to save those who shall be found in Christ Jesus, it being implicit in this, of course, that those who desire to remain “in Christ” shall certainly be able to do so.

Verse 10

Fred D. Gealy, *op. cit.*, p. 469, stated, “The assumption is that before He was born Christ existed with God. Birth in His case did not mean the beginning; rather it signified their appearance in history of the Divine Savior previously existing but until now concealed.”

“The appearing . . .” is not merely a reference to the birth of Christ, but to the whole thesis of the incarnation, together with the life, death, resurrection and ascension of our Lord.

“Abolished death . . .” Kenneth S. Wuest, *op. cit.*, p. 123, stated the true meaning to be, “He made death . . . of none effect.” The Christian gospel indeed robbed death of its terrors and enabled the Christian to face it with sanity, composure and hope.

“Life and immortality . . .” This inherently demands the conception that the body itself shall be raised to eternal life. As Lenski commented, “This assures also our blessed bodily resurrection.” The word Paul used thus means more than a mere immortality, after the Greek notion, but eternal life for both soul and body of the redeemed.

Verse 11

Paul reviewed the years of ceaseless activity on the mission field and all over the world of that era. Now, with the looming prospect of death, the apostle lets his thought dwell upon the blessed hope of everlasting life following the resurrection, a doctrine that Paul had extensively taught throughout his mission on earth.

Verse 12

The problem of this verse regards just what Paul committed, or entrusted to God. William Hendriksen, *op. cit.*, p. 235, wrote, “Is it the gospel or is it myself and my complete salvation?”

Approaching the end of life, Paul found no nagging uncertainty, no shadow of doubt, no waning confidence in the Lord, but an overwhelming certainty; and the basis of the certainty shines in this verse. It was grounded not primarily upon what he believed, but upon whom he had believed, namely the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. Saints of all ages have found in this marvelous text sufficient confidence and trust to fortify them against all the misfortunes of life and to enable them to face death itself in the beautiful serenity of full confidence in the Lord.

A. C. Hervey, *Pulpit Commentary*, Vol. 21, 2 Timothy, p. 4, said, “The thought of this verse is expressed in a metaphor drawn from the common action of one person entrusting another with some precious deposit, to be kept for a time and restored whole and uninjured. All the words in this sentence are part of this metaphor.”

Ronald A. Ward, *op. cit.*, p. 155, wrote, “The Greek reads literally, “my deposit,” which some scholars regard as the gospel or as souls in Paul’s pastoral care; others see it a reference to Paul himself, his soul.”

The passage is true any way it may be interpreted, the thought of the Last Day, as well as the impending execution of the apostle, seems to suggest that it was particularly Paul’s own soul that he probably had in mind in this metaphor.

Verse 13

The “standard of sound words is the faith and love which is in Christ Jesus” and this is neither uncertain nor elastic.

The meaning of the root form of this word (*tupos*), according to W. E. Vine, *Greek Dictionary*, Vol. II, p. 33, “Is the impress of a seal, the stamp made by a die, a figure, image, form or mould.” The great disaster which has befallen

modern Christianity is precisely that of departing from the pattern, despite the frequent warnings in the New Testament against it, some even going so far as to affirm that there is no pattern given.

Verse 14

“The treasure,” here is the gospel which long ago had been committed to Timothy when he became a preacher of the word of God; but at the time of this letter, with the death of the apostle looming ahead, there was a special sense in which the propagation of the truth would be left in the hands of Timothy, committed to his trust. We may surely believe that Timothy lived up to this trust.

“Through the Holy Spirit who dwells in us . . . “ Supernatural guidance through the blessed Spirit gave the apostles possession of “all truth;” and this is a promise that the same Holy Spirit would aid men like Timothy in the guarding of it.

Verse 15

“All who are in Asia . . .” This does not refer to any general desertion of the faith by Christians throughout Asia, but to the turning away from Paul of any who might have been of help to him in his trial before the imperial government of Nero. The two men named here are examples of those who refused to help Paul. No one knows anything at all about these men. Whoever they were, it seems that Paul had hoped for their support, hence the disappointment evident here.

“Turned away from me . . .” This does not refer to deserting the truth, but to the refusal to stand by the apostle in his trial. Christians who might have been guilty of such a thing would, of course, have suffered the bitter pangs of sorrow and remorse.

Paul here expressed no criticism of those who turned away from him, no bitterness, no resentment, only the tragic fact itself being narrated, taking comfort in the blessed remembrance of one who had not forsaken him. (Verse 17)

Verses 16-17

It is possible that Onesiphorus, like the apostle, had been imprisoned and was awaiting execution, and that the mercy Paul hoped would be extended to his house would be that of their not being arrested and charged similarly, that is, mercy from Nero's persecution.

Verse 18

It is not in the form of a prayer, qualifying rather as a prayerful hope, and not as a petition in the form of a specific request.

Carl Spain, *op. cit.*, p. 123, wisely observed that, "If Onesiphorus was awaiting trial Paul avoids language that might be used against him." Before any proposition that justifies prayers for the dead could be supported by this passage, it would have to be proved that Onesiphorus was dead.

R. C. H. Lenski, *op. cit.*, p. 776, affirmed that, "The analogy of Scriptures is solidly against anything in the nature of prayers for the dead," a fact no student of the word may deny.

A further word on this from William Hendriksen, *op. cit.*, p. 240, will suffice; "Paul at times expressed the wish that eschatological blessings be granted to those who, while the apostle is writing, were still living on earth (1 Thessalonians 5:23b); (and therefore) the conclusion that Onesiphorus had actually died is not necessary."

It is best, therefore, to view this rather difficult passage, not as any kind of prayer on behalf of the dead but, as Fred D. Gealy, *op. cit.*, p. 477, suggested, "It may be that we should see in the prayer—it is not in the form of direct address--merely a gracious fervent wish or expression of hope."

CHAPTER 2

R. C. H. Lenski, *Interpretation of Paul's Epistles . . . to Timothy*, p. 777, gave, "Join in suffering what is bad" as the heading of this chapter.

This is especially appropriate for the first 13 verses, and the last half of the chapter (verses 14-26) lays out appropriate guidelines to be followed by Timothy in dealing with disorders then descending upon the church.

The impending persecution, perhaps already underway, the proliferation of noxious heresies, the emergence of evil teachers and the creeping error emanating from the central government continue to loom in the background of this letter.

The mention of Onesiphorus who remained faithful; and dominating this whole epistle is Paul's urgent appeal for the faithfulness of Timothy no matter what might need to be suffered in connection with it.

As a great encouragement to Timothy, the last half of the chapter points out that there is no need to fear for the church, which is securely anchored against all errors and misfortunes. It is founded upon solid rock, and neither time nor savage persecutions will be able to destroy it.

Verses 1-2

“Be strong in the grace . . .” Such passages as this admonish men to be strengthened; as Newport J. D. White, Expositor's Greek New Testament, Vol. IV, p. 160, said, “Those who are exhorted to be strengthened are not merely passive recipients of an influence from without. The act of reception involves man's cooperation with God.”

The very grace that is designed to strengthen Christians is “in Christ.” When believers are baptized into the Lord, their constant duty ever afterward is to maintain their identity as Christ and in Christ, a duty that enlists the full employment and constant cultivation of the total religious life of the individual. If men would be strengthened by the grace “in Christ,” their constant prayers and devotions, their unceasing study and perseverance, must be orchestrated in such a manner as to build up in Christ the true spiritual life of the Christian.

“The things which you have heard . . .” This is a reference to the total gospel messages Timothy had been so long accustomed to hearing proclaimed by Paul.

William Hendriksen, *New Testament Commentary*, 2 Timothy, p. 246, wrote, “This expression undoubtedly refers to the entire series of sermons and lessons which the disciple had heard from the mouth of his teacher during all their association from the day when they first met.”

“In the presence of many witnesses . . .” This is not a reference to the people who heard Timothy confess Christ, nor to the witnesses of his being ordained to the ministry (in any exclusive sense), but it is a reference to all the many thousands encountered upon the mission fields when Paul and Timothy had proclaimed the gospel.

Verses 3-4

“Good soldier of Christ Jesus . . .” As often with Paul, he used metaphor in a very selective manner, only one side of soldiering coming to view here, namely, that quality of being willing to suffer that which is bad.

“The affairs of everyday life . . .” All Christians inevitably find themselves, in a sense, entangled with the affairs of the present life. David Lipscomb, *New Testament Commentaries*, 2 Timothy, p. 209, wrote, “It is not secular employment that is forbidden, but entanglement in it.”

E. M. Zerr, *Bible Commentary*, 2 Timothy, p. 190 gave the practical thought here, that, “Any kind of occupation whether right or wrong in itself that prevents a disciple from doing his duty would constitute the entangling affairs mentioned in this verse.”

Verse 5

“Unless he competes according to the rules . . .” “Competes according” means that the child of God must recognize the Divine rules, endure the disciplines, fulfill all requirements regarding the proper enrollment, always abiding by the rules of the contest, if he hopes to receive eternal life. The great thesis of current times to the effect that “I’ll do it my way,” “I’ll work out my own religion,” etc.—all such notions are refuted by Paul’s word here.

Verse 6

In striving so diligently to establish faith and endurance in others, Timothy himself will be the first to profit from such exhortations and strivings. Newport J. D. White, *op. cit.*, p. 162, proposed that Paul might have meant that Timothy would benefit no matter how successful or unsuccessful his efforts prove to be thus, “The laborer receives his hire no matter how poor the crop may be; his wages are the first charge on the field.” (1 Corinthians 9:10)

“First to receive his share of the crops . . .” As a matter of truth, any minister of the gospel who labors to encourage and strengthen others is the first to partake of the new and greater strength himself. William. Hendriksen, *op. cit.*, p. 249, put it, “His own faith is strengthened, his hope quickened, his love deepened and the flame of his gift enlivened.”

Verse 7

There is nothing more needed upon the part of rushing, harried, heedless multitudes that that of reflection upon life and death, their meaning and purpose, and the need of facing both in a frame of reference that takes the will of God into account, and yet, how difficult, how nearly impossible is it properly to reflect upon such things!

Henry Ward Beecher, *Biblical Illustrator*, p. 153, one Sunday, commentating upon the appearance of his great audience sitting under the panels of sunlight streaming through the great colored windows of the church, noted that, “Sometimes the audience has a scarf of yellow running over them, or one of blue, or one of red, according as the window is painted. Man’s reason is like a painted window; the light that goes through it and falls upon his conscience is bizarre, wrinkled, grotesque or distorted. Man’s understanding is like a window. The sunlight is all of one color, but all the light that goes through the window is not.”

Therefore, let men take heed how they consider and reflect. Consideration is the bottom layer of all true faith and worship.

Verse 8

“Risen from the dead . . .” The constant theme of Paul’s preaching invariably stressed the resurrection of Christ from the dead; and, in the threatening situation under which Paul wrote, it was most appropriate that this should be stressed again.

“According to my gospel . . .” It appears best to consider the passage as a reference to the total gospel as delivered both to Paul and to the Twelve, rather than as having any limited application. Paul’s gospel was the same as that of the apostles, and he used the possessive pronoun in exactly the same sense as when he said, “My God and my Savior.”

Verse 9

“The word of God is not imprisoned . . .” Paul comforted himself with the great truth that the Christian message had already been effectively planted on earth.

A. C. Hervey, *op. cit.*, p. 20, wrote, “Though they bind me with an iron chain, they cannot bind the gospel. While I am here shut up in prison, the word of God preached by a thousand tongues, is giving life and liberty to myriads of my brethren of the human race.”

Verse 10

“For the sake of those who are chosen . . .” All of the elect of all times and places truly benefit from the faithful suffering of the apostle Paul.

This verse reveals the amazing truth that Paul knew the importance his sufferings would have throughout time to eternity for all of the elect. Therefore, he was more than willing to suffer on behalf of all who afterward might hear the gospel message and become Christians that they also may obtain the salvation!

At the same time, his sufferings were for those already saved; because, if any moral failure had marred Paul’s life at this juncture, the faith of many Christians then living would have been destroyed by such a disaster.

“Those who are chosen . . .” Ronald A. Ward, *Commentary on 1 and 2 Timothy and Titus*, p. 166, noted, “This text implies that it is not the bare fact of

“chosen” (or “election”) that saves men. The gospel of Christ has been preached even to the “chosen” or “elect.”

The faithfulness of the chosen even after they were saved from their old sins” is likewise implied here; because the message of this verse is that such necessary fidelity would be greatly encouraged and aided by Paul’s faithful suffering of martyrdom.

Verses 11-13

This letter was not written in the second century, as once alleged, but in the period of Nero, as the Greek text shows; and there simply had not been sufficient time elapsed for hymns and liturgies to have been developed and to have gained popularity that would have justified Paul’s use of such things in his letters.

“It is a trustworthy statement . . .” R. C. H. Lenski, *op. cit.*, p. 792, wrote, “We see that Paul is not quoting some ancient hymn as some think. Although we have symmetry in the sentences, this is not poetry, but Paul’s own prose.”

“If we died with Him . . .” Lenski, *Ibid.*, p. 793, wrote, “This is the death which occurs in baptism.” (Romans 6:3-5) Dying with Christ is a metaphorical reference to denying one’s self, contrition and repentance experienced at the time of being baptized “into His death.” There are also legal implications of the most profound character connected with this:

- (1) when the sinner is baptized into Christ and identified with Him “as Christ,” he is therefore by God’s fiat automatically entitled to all the privileges of the death of Christ;
- (2) he is dead to the Law of Moses;
- (3) he has already paid (through the death of Christ) all the penalty of sin.

“We shall also live with Him . . .” Those who are baptized into Christ are immediately “raised to walk in newness of life” (Romans 6:4); but in that

immediate newness of life there is also a pledge of eternal life; and it is that latter thing which dominates the thought here.

“If we endure . . .” That is, if we endure persecution, hatred, opposition and even death itself—if we do all this, we shall partake of the glory of Christ in heaven.

“If we deny him, he also will deny us . . .” Jesus Himself said the same thing. (Matthew 10:33) It is true that Peter denied the Lord, lived to repent of it, and was forgiven; but the denial in this passage speaks of a final decision, a deliberate choice of repudiation against the Lord.

“If we are faithless . . .” The notion that faith exists (in any saving degree) where there is no longer fidelity is but a vagary of theological speculation. The true analysis of this place, as written by H. D. M. Spence, *op. cit.*, p. 228, is appreciated, “Those who understand this passage as containing soothing, comforting voices for the sinner, for the faithless Christian who has left his first love, are gravely mistaken. This is one of the sternest passages in the Book of Life; for it tells how it is impossible for the pitiful Redeemer to forgive in the future life. He cannot treat the faithless as though he were faithful—cannot act as though faithfulness and faithlessness were one and the same thing.”

H. D. M. Hendriksen, *op. cit.*, p. 260 also agreed that: “The meaning of the last line cannot be, “If we are faithless and deny Him, nevertheless He, remaining faithful to His promise, will give us everlasting life.”

Don De Welt, *Paul’s Letters to Timothy and Titus*, p. 218, wrote, “Without a cross, there is no crown; without a thorn, there is no throne.” All that Paul wrote to Timothy and his charges in Ephesus had in view the utter necessity of true fidelity and unwavering loyalty to Christ, on the part of every Christian who hoped to share in the eternal reward.

“He cannot deny Himself . . .” This truth is exactly parallel to Romans 6:18 and Titus 1:2.

Verse 14

Paul moved to instruct Timothy with regard to the false teaches who had emerged in Ephesus.

“Remind them of these things . . .” That is, remind the Christians under his care in Ephesus of the soul-inspiring truths just enunciated in the faithful saying.

“Not to wrangle about words which is useless . . .” Many a time, Christians have plunged into useless and silly arguments while the citadel of their faith was destroyed. Not only are such arguments of no profit, as Paul said; but they are actively mischievous, destructive and subversive of true faith. Christians? They are commanded not to do it!

Verse 15

“Handling accurately the word of truth . . .” Kenneth S. Wuest, *Word Studies from the Greek New Testament, Vol. II, 2 Timothy*, p. 135, wrote, “Handling accurately), means to “cut straight.” Vincent defines the word, “to hold a straight course” (as plowing a straight furrow); and the Greeks used the word for “expound soundly.”

The old expositors understood this as a reference to making the proper division between the law and the gospel, between the Old Testament and the New Testament; and, in view of the basic meaning of the words here rendered “handling accurately,” there is absolutely nothing wrong with such an exegesis.

No preacher can “cut it straight,” “tell it like it is,” or employ “sound exegesis,” without making those very distinctions clear in his preaching.

Alan G. Nute, *A New Testament Commentary*, p. 521 summed up the meaning of this verse as: “An appeal for a straightforward, balanced exegesis of Holy Scripture.”

Verse 16

“Avoid . . .” H. D. M. Spence, *op. cit.*, p. 228, wrote, “This is a strong word and means literally to make a circuit so as to avoid.”

“Worldly and empty chatter . . .” This refers especially to the striving about words to no profit, mentioned above. Those arguments which make for frequent use of God’s name and yet without honor and submission to God’s will, are actually profane in spite of any cloak of piety; and there are many religious discussions which fall squarely into this category.

“It will lead to further ungodliness . . .” The end result of such disputations is not righteousness, but ungodliness.

Verses 17-18

“Will spread like gangrene . . .” The word here, according to Newport J. D. White, op. cit., p. 166, said, “The word here is the medical term for the consuming progress of a mortifying disease.”

“Hymenaeus and Philetus . . .” Having identified their teaching as “gangrene,” Paul then proceeded to give one of the salient features of their false doctrine. They had spiritualized the resurrection, claiming that it had already happened. It may appear surprising that such a false notion would have been able to overthrow the faith of some, but history has demonstrated that the more ridiculous and preposterous some heretical teaching is, the more readily some unstable souls are attracted and destroyed by it.

Verse 19

This and the following verses have a special relevance to Paul’s appeal to Timothy for fidelity no matter what might happen. White, Ibid., p. 164, said, “There is no need to despair of the church. It is founded upon a rock, in spite of appearances. Take a broad view of the case. The church is not the special apartment of the Master from which unseemly things are banished; it is a great house with places and utensils for every need of life.”

“The firm foundation of God stands . . .” Perhaps the best interpretation of this is to see it as a metaphor of the church, of which Jesus said, “The gates of hell shall not prevail against it.” The figure is that of a great foundation for some mighty building; and, as it was common in ancient times,

to engrave some seal or name upon the foundation, Paul gave the illustration of God's seal upon the foundation which is the church.

In the last analysis, every man shall be judged on the basis of his deeds, whether they be good or bad. (2 Corinthians 5:10)

Verse 20

“Not only gold and silver vessels . . . vessels of wood and earthenware . . .” The eternal mystery of why there should be vessels of dishonor in God's church is perpetual. There was a Ham in the ark, an Esau in the womb of Rebekah, and a Judas among the Twelve. The thing in view here is that even the vessels of dishonor will serve the Father's will in God's own way; but that is a far different thing from the proposition that they will be saved anyway. Pharaoh was used for the glory of God, as were also Esau and Judas.

A. C. Hervey, *op. cit.*, p. 23, was right in his view that, “Though everyone that names the Lord ought to depart from wickedness, yet we must not be surprised if it is not so, and if there are found in the church some professing Christians whose practice is quite inconsistent with their profession.”

Verse 21

“If a man cleanses himself from these . . .” A. C. Hervey, *Ibid.*, p. 23, said, “The image is better maintained if we understand “from these” to mean babblings, and ungodliness, and eating words of the heretics denounced.”

Verses 22-23

Chrysostom, as quoted by White, *op. cit.*, p. 168, commented on this verse saying, “Every inordinate desire is a youthful lust. Let the aged learn that they ought not to do the deeds of the youthful.”

Notice the great verbs directed toward the behavior of Timothy: “flee from youthful lusts . . . pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace . . . indicating that avoidance is a vital tactic to be employed in a successful ministry.

R. C. H. Lenski, *op. cit.*, p. 814, thought that Paul had in view here, “Those people who busy themselves with all sorts of useless matters and then come to Timothy with their opinions, with the hope of some support from him.”

Verse 24

Here is given the antidote for the vain and conceited babblings with which some busied themselves, the same being a very noble and beautiful picture of the kind of personality that should be exhibited by God's preachers: gentleness, forbearance and understanding.

Verses 25-26

“Those who are in opposition . . .” The essential foolishness of all sin and wrong-doing is implied in these words. Doing sinful things is actually opposing one's self. In the parables, Jesus described the unprepared virgins, the man who built on the sand, and the one who proposed to pull down and build bigger barns as “foolish” ones; and the same principle shines here.

Satan indeed takes captive (alive) the unfortunate souls who are entrapped in evil and thus become servants of the devil's will. The true reality of Satan, his purpose, his existence and his means of operation are strongly evident here. The current theology which refuses to recognize Satan is blind and ignorant of the truth.

Everywhere, there is a widespread resurgence of interest in witchcraft, spiritualism, Satanism, the occult and horoscopes, etc. All of these trends are the logical result of dispensing with God and His holy word.

Ronald A. Ward, *op. cit.*, p. 184, wrote, “Bereft of God in a materialistic environment, unsatisfied souls fumble for meaning beyond it in the supernatural; “For they sow the wind, and they reap the whirlwind.” (Hosea 8:7)

Satan is still taking captive souls to do his will; and therefore let the church seize the opportunity to proclaim the gospel of salvation in the name of Jesus Christ.

CHAPTER 3

This chapter has a vivid description of the great apostasy (verses 1-9), signs of which were already present, an appeal to Paul's own inspiring and inspired example (verses 10-15), and one of the most impressive paragraphs in

all the Bible with reference to the inspiration of the holy scriptures, (verses 16-17).

Verse 1

“But realize this . . . “ Kenneth S. Wuest, *Word Studies from the Greek New Testament*, p. 143, paraphrased this as, “Be keeping this in mind.”

“In the last days . . .” It is a mistake to identify this period as restricted to the times immediately prior to the Second Coming; because, as the passage itself shows examples of the grievous times that were plentiful at the time Paul wrote. John Wesley, *Commentary on the New Testament*, in loco wrote, “This means the times of the gospel dispensation.”

“Difficult times . . .” The word “difficult” actually means, “hard times” or times of stress.

Verse 2

There are many such lists of sins in Paul’ writings and none of them is exhaustive or complete.

“Lovers of self . . .” Self-love is pride, selfishness and a total unawareness of God; and the other sins enumerated actually derive from this basic root of all wickedness.

“Lovers of money . . .” The Pharisees who crucified Jesus were described by the gospel of Luke as “lovers of money;” and, in all ages, the money-lovers have never stopped crucifying the Son of God.

“Boastful, arrogant, revilers . . .” What a graphic picture of the unregenerated opponent of truth!

“Disobedient to parents, ungrateful, unholy . . .” The breakdown of family discipline, the graceless and ungrateful behavior of spoiled and undisciplined children which inevitably follows, and the gross wickedness that inevitably derives from such conditions are characteristic of the current history of our times. Paul’s teaching is that the intensification and proliferation of these shall indeed mark the final apostasy.

Verse 3

“Unloving . . .” This refers to the unnatural child that does not love the parents, or to mothers who do not love their children, or to any person without the basic affections which are the glue which holds the social order together.

David Lipscomb, *New Testament Commentaries*, 2 Timothy, p. 228, wrote, “The affection here is common to every class of brutes; consequently, men and women without it are worse than brutes.”

“Irreconcilable . . .” is the attitude of a person unwilling to make a truce or to agree to peace under any circumstance, a vicious fighter who fights for the sheer enjoyment of it.

“Malicious gossips . . .” The Greek word here is *diabolos*, one of the names of Satan, and has the literal meaning of “false-accusers.”

“Without self-control . . .” The persons noted here have no restraint or self-control in anything, none of the ambitions, passions, appetites or desires being under any discipline whatever.

“Brutal . . .” can be rendered fierce or savage.”

“Haters of good . . .” The natural animosity of darkness against the light, of wickedness against righteousness, of error against truth, is the mark of these persons. “The wolves always hate the sheep.”

Verse 4

“Traacherous . . .” Every selfish, undisciplined person exhibiting the qualities Paul was describing is at heart a traitor to all that is good and holy, every one of them a potential Judas instantly ready to betray the holiest for self-gratification.

“Reckless, conceited . . .” Paul piled word upon word in this graphic composite of the wicked person.

“Lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God . . .” Lovers of pleasure, unless such love is renounced, will inevitably find themselves drifting away from

the Lord. Whether or not sinful pleasures, is meant here is not stated, because the words apply to all pleasures.

The love of pleasures has the potential of robbing the soul of its love of the Lord. In the parable of the sower, it will be remembered that the cares and riches and pleasures were the thorns that choked out the word.

Verse 5

The fact of gross sinners described here “holding a form of godliness” identifies this particular discussion of the apostasy as descriptive of the inner character of many in the apostate religion that shall characterize the last days. Outsiders are not primarily in view here, but those who hold a form of godliness.

David Lipscomb op. cit., p. 229, wrote, “Paul here described a class of people who went under the name of Christ.” A. C. Hervey, Pulpit Commentary, Vol. 21, 2 Timothy, p. 41, quoting Alford, said, “This command shows that the apostle treats the symptoms of the last times as in some respects present.”

Note also the powerful implication of this passage regarding the “power” of the form of godliness, a power denied by the evil behavior of some, but nevertheless a power resident in the form of holy religion itself.

The very ordinances of holy religion are power-laden; they are not mere symbols. The admonition here is not to leave off the forms of the gospel, but not to deny the power of them through godless living.

J. Glenn Gould, Beacon Bible Commentary has a very perceptive passage on this, as follows, “This is not intended to suggest that true religion is formless. Indeed form and power are not natural enemies or mutually exclusive. In fact, there must be a marriage between form and power if the worship of God is to be the thing of grace and beauty that God desires.”

“Avoid such men as these . . .” Don D. Welt, Paul’s Letters to Timothy and Titus, p. 237, said, “Here is the reason for withdrawal of fellowship.” When one becomes convinced that a whole communion of professing Christians has so

far departed from the word of God that he must turn away from them, the social consequences can be very unpleasant.

Verse 6

Kenneth S. Wuest, *op. cit.*, p. 146, wrote, "One of the great virtues of womanhood, namely, that of trusting another, is here turned into a weakness by Satan. Eve was deceived. Adam sinned with his eyes wide open." Paul did not say that all women are capable of being so deceived, but a certain class, present in every society; and as Ronald A. Ward, *op. cit.*, p. 190, said, "They are fruit waiting to be plucked by a 'nice man' with a novelty."

Verse 7

"Always learning . . ." John Wesley, *op. cit.*, *in loco* wrote, "That is, 'Ever learning new things, but never learning the word of God.'" There is a type of person, by no means restricted to women, who is always seeking novelty, something new and different, such persons having never learned to "Ask for ancient paths, where the good way is." (Jeremiah 6:16)

Verse 8

"Jannes and Jambres . . ." These were the evil magicians who withstood Moses during his appearances before Pharaoh; and Paul's identification of them here is the very earliest mention of these names which has descended to us through history. These imposters could indeed counterfeit some of the miracles of Moses; but in others their weak pretensions were exposed, and their folly became evident to all. For example when Moses cast down his rod and it became a serpent, the magicians also produced serpents; but all of their serpents were swallowed up by the serpent that came from the rod of Moses..

"Rejected as regards the faith . . ." This indicates that the evil men Paul spoke of had once been in the faith but had fallen away from it. "The faith" is understood subjectively in this place by some. R. C. H. Lenski, *Interpretation of Saint Paul's Epistles . . . 2 Timothy*, p. 828, observed, "The Lord has not supplied us with a touchstone that may be supplied to men's hearts; but he has supplied us with His word, thereby to test all that men offer as "the faith" or doctrine."

Verse 9

“They will not further progress . . .” has the meaning that all the devices of evil opponents shall be unable to checkmate or foil the truth.

“Their folly shall be obvious to all . . .” This is certain to be true eventually, even if, for some great length of time, the heretical teaching seems to prevail. (Revelation 6:12-17)

Verse 10

In this and the following verse Paul listed ten aspects of his own life which he was leaving to Timothy as an example of faithful conduct. Carl Spain, *op. cit.*, p. 145, wrote, “They serve as a sort of check list for Timothy to use as he reflects on his close companionship with Paul through the years.”

Much could be said about every one of these words; but perhaps the big lesson may be found in their order. As always Paul put doctrine first. Other things are important, but the true doctrine is the most important of all. None of his major epistles departs from this order: doctrine first, then the practical admonitions.

“But you followed . . .” A marvelous compliment to Timothy is inherent in this. Ronald A. Ward, *op. cit.*, p. 194, noted that the meaning is, “You, in contrast to the false teachers.” Timothy had been given every opportunity to listen and to observe Paul’s life and teachings, finding absolutely nothing in either that was inconsistent with the whole; and therefore he had wholeheartedly followed the blessed apostle’s example.

Verse 11

“At Antioch . . .” It was of course Antioch of Pisidia, not of Syria. Of Paul’s almost innumerable hardships and persecutions, he chose here exactly those with which Timothy was familiar. Acts 13th and 14th chapters record the events mentioned here, as well as Timothy’s connection with them.

Rather than recounting again all of the persecutions endured by the apostle, we should dwell upon the lesson which he advanced on the basis of

them namely, that the Lord had stood by him and delivered him out of every one of them.

Verse 12

The absence of persecution, in any active sense, from the lives of most Christians of this era is generally due to the watered-down version of their Christianity and not to any subsidence of the savage hatred of the darkness for the light. Besides that, persecutions today are manifested must more indirectly. Promotions are withheld, invitations are denied, and a snickering unpopularity is the daily portion of many precious souls working in a hostile, atheistic environment.

Why does the world hate Christians? "Because you are not of the world . . . therefore the world hates you." (John 15:19) No Christian should be surprised at persecution.

Luke recorded the very words spoken on the mission field, long ago, "Through many tribulations, we must enter the kingdom of God" (Acts 14:22); and, in the words of Newport J. D. White, *op. cit.*, p. 173, "Consistency in the life of Christ must necessarily be always opposed by the world."

Verse 13

Sin, like cancer and certain other diseases, is progressive, becoming worse and worse in each succeeding stage. As Christ is received and honored, here and there, upon the earth, rampant wickedness appears to subside and diminish; but with every relaxation of the Christian ethic, a new wave of terror follows.

Verse 14

It is true of all men who have the good fortune to come from godly homes, that the teaching and example of Christian parents is a priceless advantage; but such parents always teach their children that the authority is not in themselves, but in the word of the Lord.

Verse 15

“From childhood . . .” Newport J. D. White wrote, “Timothy could not recall a period when he had not known the sacred writings. This is the force of the hyperbole.”

“The sacred writings . . .” In the next verse, Paul used the word “Scripture.” Why the distinction? William Hendriksen, *op. cit.*, p. 300, wrote, “Paul did this for the simple reason that he wishes to draw a distinction between the Old Testament (verse 15) and whatever has a right to be called Divinely inspired Scripture (verse 16). The latter comprises more than the former.”

“Able to give you the wisdom that leads to salvation . . .” The Old Testament was able to do this, because therein were contained the prophecies which pointed out and identified the Messiah when He came into the world. Only in this sense could the Old Testament make one wise unto salvation, as Paul immediately added in the qualifying clause, “Through faith which is in Christ Jesus.”

“Through faith which is in Christ Jesus . . .” This clause is interesting in that it defines the arena where the faith that saves is operative, giving a concise definition of what “faith in Christ” actually means. It has no reference to the subjective trust/faith of believers, but means faithful adherence to the teachings of Christ, true fidelity exercised by one who is in Christ. Thus people who have not accepted the gospel by being baptized “into Christ” may indeed have faith “out of Christ” (that being where they are), but not “faith in Christ” no matter what professions of faith may be enunciated.

Verse 16

“All Scripture . . .” William Hendriksen, *op. cit.*, p. 301, wrote, “In distinction from the “sacred writings” (verse 15), “all Scripture” means everything which, through the testimony of the Holy Spirit in the church, is recognized by the church as canonical. When Paul wrote these words, the direct reference was to a body of sacred literature which even then contained more than the Old Testament.”

“Is inspired by God . . .” The Greek words here are “God-breathed,” meaning that the canonical writings are absolutely trustworthy.

“Profitable for teaching . . .” If the church would prosper, let it teach the word of Scripture, for there is no profit in the postulations of men

“For reproof . . .” Only the Christian morality is the true ethic governing human behavior. The pre-Christian Gentiles forsook God, and the result was the near-universal debauchery of the human race. There can be no doubt that forsaking the New Testament ethics on such things as adultery, homosexuality, drunkenness, etc., if persisted in, will have the same final result.

“For correction, for training in righteousness . . .” Such uses as these could not be attributed to human works; therefore, it is in view of the holy inspiration of the Bible that Paul was able to add this and verse 17.

Verse 17

The “man of God” here is not merely Timothy. “Man,” is generic and means “human being.” All persons who walk in the way of God are made complete and completely furnished unto every good work by the Holy Scriptures. R. C. H. Lenski, op. cit., p. 848, said, “The value of these two verses (16, 17) is beyond question. It is a proof passage for verbal inspiration and for much more besides. As a proof passage it is outstanding and yet forms only a part of the entire volume of proof and evidence for verbal inspiration. It is one of the peaks in the Rocky Mountain range that establishes, “The Impregnable Rock of Holy Scripture as inspired.”

Before leaving this incredibly important passage, we shall explore a little further the Scriptural evidence bearing upon the subject of Inspiration.

INSPIRATION OF THE BIBLE

First of all, and most importantly, our Lord Himself believed in the inspiration of the Old Testament. Matthew 4:4ff relates that at the time of Jesus’ great temptation, He turned aside every thrust of Satan with the words, “It is written.”

In Matthew 19:5ff, Jesus said these words, thus attributing the authorship of Genesis to the Creator of the world.

In John 10:34-36, Jesus referred to the Old Testament as “your law . . . the Scriptures . . . the word of God,” adding that “the Scriptures cannot be broken.”

In Matthew 22:29, Jesus attributed the ignorance of the Sadducees to the fact of their not “knowing the Scriptures.”

In Luke 24:25, Jesus denounced as “foolish” those who did not “believe all” that stands in the Scripture.

Secondly, the holy apostles implicitly believed in the total accuracy, infallibility, and inspiration of the sacred Scriptures, further proof that Jesus was also the source of that belief; for it is inconceivable that they would have believed such a thing unless it had been taught to them by the Master.

In 2 Peter 1:21, this passage says all that Paul said in 2 Timothy 3:16-17. The source of Scripture is God; Scriptures were spoken by man indeed; but the men who spoke it spoke “from God.”

The total preaching of the apostles was geared to the conviction that the gospel they delivered was prophetically unfolded in the Old Testament. The death, burial and resurrection of Christ were “according to the Scriptures.” (1 Corinthians 15:3-4)

When Judas betrayed the Lord, it was “because it is written. (Acts 1:20) The Bereans were “more noble” because they tested even the preaching of the apostles “searching the Scriptures to see whether these things were so.” (Acts 17:11)

Those who believe in the Lord and His holy apostles have no trouble whatever with the doctrine of inspiration.

Regarding the inspiration of the New Testament, Jesus promised the apostles in Matthew 10:20, “For it is not you who speaks, but it is the Spirit of your Father who speaks in you.”

In John 14:26, “He (the Spirit) . . . will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you.”

CHAPTER 4

This immortal chapter is indelibly stamped upon the conscience of all mankind. It may be called the last will and testament of the great apostle to the Gentiles.

In view of his own forthcoming death, Paul penned his solemn charge to Timothy to “preach the word” (verses 1-8); then he called for Timothy to hasten to be at his side for the end, requesting that he bring Mark and a few personal belongings, including in this some very interesting material regarding his personal affairs and the circumstances that pertained to his final imprisonment, (verses 10-18). The final four (verses 19-22) contain a few salutations and the final apostolic benediction.

Verse 1

Facing the immediate prospect of death, as were so many others of the faithful Christians, Paul declared his solemn charge to be “before; that is, “in the sight of “God and of Christ Jesus; but it was also very appropriate that his charge with attendant warnings should contain this powerful reminder of the eternal judgment to be faced by all men.

“Who is to judge the living and the dead . . .” The living, are those who shall remain and still be upon the earth at the time of the Second Coming (2 Thessalonians 4:17; 1 Corinthians 15:51): the dead of course, are the myriads who sleep in death till the coming of the Lord.

“And by His appearing and His kingdom. . .” These are not added here as witnesses along with God and of Christ of Paul’s solemn charge, but merely for the “purpose of reminding Timothy of both.”

The coming of Christ will be the occasion of the final judgment; and, as R. C. H. Lenski, Exposition of the Epistles of Paul . . . 1 Timothy, p. 851, wrote, “There is no room for nor thought of a millennium,” in this passage.

“His kingdom . . .” On Paul’s very first missionary journey, he had stressed that, “Through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God.” (Acts 14:22)

Despite the fact that the false charges of his enemies who accused him of setting up a regime opposed to that of Caesar (Acts 17:7-8) had caused him to use other synonyms for the church of God, he never changed this basic concept of it as “the Kingdom of God.” Evil men shall not inherit the kingdom. (1 Corinthians 6:9; Galatians 5:21)

Jesus is now reigning in His kingdom and will continue to do so till all enemies are put under foot. (1 Corinthians 15:25)

Verse 2

“Preach the word . . .” Something of what this means has been lost in the modern definition of preaching. The true meaning is, “Herald the word of God in its completeness, not altering it in any way, nor adding anything of his own that is borrowed from another source.” (Lenski, Ibid, p. 852) It also includes the mandate to announce to men the total message as God gave it. Paul said, “I did not shrink from declaring to you the whole purpose of God.” (Act 20:27)

Again from Lenski, Ibid, “Many a preacher who should be a herald and is not . . . must stammer and blush when he faces Christ’s appearance and His kingdom.”

“Be ready in season and out of season . . .” This means that preaching should not be limited to convenient times or to those suitable occasions. Newport J. D. White said, “Do not ask yourself if this is a suitable occasion for preaching? But ask rather why this should not be a suitable occasion. Have no limited season; let it always be the season.”

What God wants of His ministers was stated positively by H. D. M. Spence, Ellicott’s Commentary on the Whole Bible, Vol. VIII, p. 239, when he wrote these words, “(He want) a restless, sleepless earnestness, which struggles

on with the Master's work in spite of bodily weakness and discouragement, in face of dangers and the bitterest opposition."

"Reprove . . ." This means to censure, as for a fault, and to express disapproval of the actions of others, certainly a lost art in modern preaching.

"Rebuke . . ." This is even a stronger word that means "to reprove sharply, to reprimand with authority." The preacher should never forget whose word it is that he preaches.

"Exhort . . ." The meaning here is "to urge by earnest appeal or argument," but it also carries the idea of persuasion.

"Exhort with great patience and instruction . . ." The love and tenderness of the preacher is required by this. The true preacher should not be like Jonah who indeed heralded the message of God, inwardly hoping to see the awful sentence executed, who did not even invite his hearers to repent, who indeed hoped they would not heed the message, and who was disappointed and angry when they did!

Verse 3

"For the time will come . . ." The use of "for" here and in verse 6 cites two reasons for Paul's urgent charge, these being

- (1) apostasy so often foretold is present (potentially) even in Timothy's time, and indeed at all times, and
- (2) the grand old warrior Paul will very soon have departed from this life. Thus there are the most urgent considerations requiring Timothy to exert himself to the utmost.

"When they will not endure sound doctrine . . ." The thought here is that, as the future unfolds, Christians will more and more despise and hate the doctrine taught by the apostles of Christ, preferring their own philosophies, systems and devices to those of the sacred Scriptures. Spence, *Ibid.*, p. 239, wrote, "Timothy must keep in mind that things in the church of Christ on earth will not change for the better."

“To having their ears tickled . . .” “Tickled comes from a verb which means to itch or have an irritating desire.” The thought is that men in the church will strongly prefer to hear novelties, tantalizing theories, stimulating rhetoric and flowery phrases rather than the word which is able to make them wise unto salvation.

“Accumulate for themselves teachers . . .” Spence, *Ibid.*, p. 239, wrote, “The desire for pleasure is insatiable, and is increased by indulgence; hence the heaping up of those who may minister to it.”

“In accordance to their own desires. . .” Here is the seat of the trouble. The lusts of men, which at all risks they are determined to satisfy, lead them to despise the truth which condemns them; and yet, desiring to keep some semblance of religion, they are beguiled by evil ministers who deceive them with soothing words, fantasies, speculations and philosophies of men.

Verse 4

What happens to people who despise and turn away from God’s truth is revealed here; they are duped by fables. When a child of God falls away from the truth, there are no longer any hoops on the barrel; there is absolutely nothing too ridiculous or preposterous for him to receive. It is always the most bizarre and extreme cults that are able to seduce and proselyte Christians.

Verse 5

“You, be sober in all things . . .” Sober in this context means “that clarity of mind and sound judgment that is not blinded and carried away by foolish fables, and morbid opinions.”

“Endure hardship . . .” a hardship which Paul himself was at that moment suffering, thus providing the great example for Timothy.

“Do the work of an evangelist . . .” The New Testament does not make a distinction between this word and “preacher.”

“Fulfill your ministry . . .” Carl Spain, *Commentary on 1 and 2 Timothy and Titus*, p. 153, observed, that the word “fulfill” here means “the same as the

word Paul used in verse 17, below, where Paul speaks of proclaiming the word fully.”

To fulfill one’s ministry is to be faithful and loyal to all its obligations, not to stint (limit) the service, nor bridge the message, nor to shrink from giving the full measure of fidelity and devotion.

Verse 6

“For I am already being poured out . . .” William Hendriksen, *op. cit.*, p. 313, wrote, “This is comparable to the libation of wine that was poured out beside the altar in the Jewish sacrifices. (Numbers 15:1-10)

The meaning is that Paul considered his coming death as the final event that would embellish and complete the marvelous life of suffering for the gospel which he had already lived. The libation poured out in the Jewish sacrifices was the final, crowning ceremony involved in the offering of the sacrifice.

Paul never considered himself in any sense as a sacrifice to God, there being only one sacrifice involved in the redemption of men, namely, that of Jesus Christ our Lord.

The evident meaning of this verse is that Paul recognized that his earthly race was run and that the issue of his present imprisonment was certain to be his execution, an event he regarded as already in progress, with the date of it, of course, unknown to himself.

How inspiring, how noble, how unbelievably beautiful is the attitude of this grand apostle in the contemplation of death! R. C. H. Lenski, *op. cit.*, p. 858, wrote, “Socrates” attitude toward the cup of hemlock has been admired; it is the best the paganism can offer; but how pitifully empty it is when placed beside these few words of Christian triumph and Christian assurance which are looking up to the Lord . . . with all who love his epiphany and await their crowning. Lord give me a death like this!”

Verse 7

William Hendriksen, *op. cit.*, p. 313, rendered this verse, “The grand fight I have fought, the race I have finished, the faith I have kept.” The mere

reference to facts so overwhelmingly obvious, in such a context as this, could not possibly indicate any undue self-esteem on the part of the apostle.

“I have fought the good fight . . .” The imagery here is not that of a mere boxing match, or of any other particular contest such as marked the Olympian games, but rather of the entire course of life, which Paul surely regarded as “the grand fight,” the same being not a contest looking merely to the defeat of others but of triumphing over every obstacle that stood between him and the crown of life.

“I have finished the course . . .” It is the race of life which is meant. The Christian race allows that all who run lawfully and diligently may receive the prize (verse 8), provided that, as in the example of the apostle, they finish the course.

“I have kept the faith . . .” Paul’s keeping the faith is exactly parallel to his having fought the grand fight and finished the course, meaning a body of duties discharged. The total life of Paul indicates that his keeping the faith included the full discharge of his duties as a Christian. Without such fidelity, or the earnest effort to attain it, no person has any promise of eternal life. This is a basic fact of the Christian religion, nor does this truth, in any sense, make man his own Savior, or require sinless perfection.

Verse 8

The next thing in order is for Paul to receive the crown, the “crown of righteousness . . .” A. C. Hervey, *Pulpit Commentary*, Vol 21, 2 Timothy, p. 59, thought the crown of righteousness here means, “That crown the possession of which marks the wearer as righteous before God.”

Newport J. D. White, *op. cit.*, p. 178, believed that, “It was the crown which belongs to, or is the due reward of, righteousness;” however, the view here is that, it is most certainly both.

Without the righteousness of keeping the word and commandments of the Lord, none shall receive that crown; but all of the righteousness of a Christian cannot make him ultimately and truly righteous in the eyes of the

Lord, that righteousness being the achievement of Jesus Christ alone. However, the crown of righteousness at the last day will endow all who are truly “in Christ” with the sum total of our Lord’s own righteousness.

All of these crowns being the earthly symbol of the glory, power, and majesty of kings, they are also, by metaphor, fitting symbols of the rewards, honors and glory of Christians in the world to come.

“The Lord, the righteous Judge . . .” There is an unstated but obvious contrast here between the righteous Lord and the unjust judge before whom Paul had stood to be condemned.

“Will award to me on that day . . .” Note: Paul said nothing of any who would be crowned in some “first resurrection.” He spoke of only one day, only one occasion, that of the Second Coming of our Lord, as being the occasion when all of the redeemed would receive the crown of life.

“To all who have loved His appearing . . .” One cannot escape the overwhelming emphasis upon the doctrine of the Second Coming in a statement like this. Those who are finally to be saved are precisely those who love, and longingly await, the coming of Christ in judgment.

The great design of the Lord’s Supper was that it should be observed by the faithful “until He come;” and it is a loss of interest in Jesus’ Second Coming that contributes to the omission and forsaking of the Lord’s table by vast multitudes of the secular church of this age.

Why should Christians love the appearing of Christ in judgment? It will mean that the glory of Jesus Christ will then be apparent to all men; the time of probation shall have ended; the reward of the righteous shall be received; and God shall rise in holy wrath and cast evil out of His universe.

Verse 9

This cannot indicate any uncertainty on Paul’s part of the eventual outcome of his imprisonment, but rather an uncertainty of the date when the inevitable sentence would be carried out. Against the possibility that his imprisonment might drag on through the cold winter months, Paul wrote

Timothy to come as soon as possible. To be sure, he might need the cloak mentioned later; but, principally, he needed the loving and sympathetic companionship of one whom he loved and with whom he had already endured so many sufferings and hardships.

Verse 10

“Demas . . .” is mentioned only three times in the New Testament, Colossians 4:14 and Philemon 2. His having loved the present age stands in contrast with those who love the appearing of the Son of God; and any hope that some seem willing to express on his behalf seems very precarious at best. It is idle to speculate on what Demas did in Thessalonica, or on why he chose that destination instead of any other. With the persecution raging in Rome, his purpose may have been merely that of getting as far away as he could.

“Crescens has gone to Galatia . . .” Crescens’ going there may have indicated that Paul on the trip to Spain, which he very probably made between the first and second imprisonments, might also have established congregations in Gaul (in France). Nothing is known of this man except what is written here.

“Titus to Dalmatia. . .” The absence of these friends and co-workers from Paul’s side in Rome is mentioned as one of the reasons why he so much needed the presence of Timothy.

Verse 11

“Luke . . .” The beloved physician, who for so long was Paul’s companion, even here, is still by his side.

“Pick up Mark and bring him with you . . .” The introduction to the Gospel of Mark (in this series of commentaries) has a rather full account of this young man, now older of course, who had once deserted Paul at Pamphylia (Acts 13:13), but who in this scene is fully restored to the apostle’s confidence.

Verse 12

This verse doubtless has the meaning that “I am sending Tychicus to Ephesus;” and as most scholars believe, he was the bearer of this letter to Timothy.

Verse 13

“The cloak . . .” White, *Ibid.*, p. 180, declared that the word thus rendered is from the Latin *paenula*, “meaning a circular cape which fell down below the knees, with an opening for the head in the center.” It would appear from this that it somewhat resembled the poncho, even today observed in south Texas and Mexico.

The cold of Roman nights, even in summer, is well known; and Paul’s prospect of possibly spending the winter in a dungeon without heating or proper clothing was indeed a chilling one.

“Which I left at Troas with Carpus . . .” Nothing more is known of Carpus; and, as to why Paul left the cloak at Troas, we simply do not know.

“And the books, especially the parchments . . .” It is impossible to identify these. It is not even known if “the parchments” means materials that Paul would need in writing letters, or if valuable written documents already in existence are meant.

Verses 14-15

Herbert Lockyer, *All the Men of the Bible*, p. 43, lists five characters bearing this name in the New Testament. They are:

- (1) the one mentioned here,
- (2) a prominent member of the high priestly family in Jerusalem (Acts 4-6),
- (3) the son of Simon who bore the cross of Jesus (Mark 15:21),
- (4) the man identified with the tumult at Ephesus (Acts 19:35),
- (5) a Christian who became an apostate (1 Timothy 1:20), possibly, though not certain, the man in view here.

“The Lord will repay him according to his deeds . . .” Here was a man who was trying to hide the gospel of Christ, doing a great deal of damage to the blessed apostle; and it was only natural that Paul should have been comforted in the assurance that God will judge and punish such evil-doers. He uttered no

imprecations, expressed no bitterness and manifested no vindictiveness of any kind.

“Be on guard . . .” If Alexander lived at Ephesus, where Timothy was located, or if he lived in Rome to which Paul summoned Timothy, Timothy would encounter him either way; hence the necessity of this warning.

Verse 16

Those who forsook Paul, as mentioned here, were guilty of a grievous sin against him; but there was a difference in their sin and that of Alexander. These loved the apostle, and through fear, failed to stand by him; but Alexander was an enemy of the truth; therefore Paul breathed a prayer for these, whereas he consigned Alexander to the judgment of God. His was a sin against the truth.

“At my first defense . . .” It has been variously understood as meaning Paul’s appearance before the Sanhedrin (Acts 23:1-10), his appearance before Felix (Acts 24:1-23), his first appeal to Caesar (Acts 24:11-12), also as the defense which he made at his arraignment (preliminary trial) on the occasion of his last imprisonment, and which had taken place only shortly before the time of his letter to Timothy.

Verse 17

“The Lord stood with me . . .” The great apostle was not alone, after all; the blessed Savior who had protected and blessed him through so many fiery trials in the past was present then to encourage, bless, comfort and strengthen.

Paul’s concern was that he might be empowered to preach the truth to the Gentile multitude which (according to Conybeare) would most certainly have been present at a trial like Paul’s. This verse reveals Paul’s satisfaction and thanksgiving at having been enabled to proclaim an effective message to those who, in all probability, were screaming for his death.

“I was delivered out of the lion’s mouth . . .” The meaning of this would appear to be that Paul’s life was spared; and, even though it was but briefly spared, Paul’s thanksgiving appears in a word like this. After all, even though Paul was sure that death was coming to him, as Carl Spain, op. cit., p.

159, wrote, “Paul always allowed for the possibility that God might intervene and change the future which Paul envisioned.”

Verse 18

“The Lord will deliver me . . .” Paul did not mean that the Lord would deliver his body, but deliver him. As A. M. Stibbs, *New Bible Commentary, Revised*, p. 1183, wrote, “The deliverance Paul expected was from all evil, not from death, but through it.” Paul was here claiming the blessed promise of the Lord to the apostles that, “They shall cause you to be put to death, and you shall be hated of all men for my name’s sake. Not a hair of your head shall perish.” (Luke 21:16-18) Paul knew that his body would be beheaded, and yet he triumphantly declared, “The Lord will deliver me.”

Verse 19

“Prisca and Aquila . . .” This wonderful couple had saved Paul’s life, putting the whole world of Gentile churches in their debt; and both in this list and in Romans 16:3, Paul mentioned them above all others.

“The household of Onesiphorus . . .” They were Christian friends of Paul’s. It is not known whether or not Onesiphorus had perished, or if he had been sent on some mission. It may have been that Onesiphorus, like Paul, was awaiting trial, and it might have damaged his case if Paul had mentioned him.

Verse 20

“Erastus . . .” This too was a common name; but despite this, White identified him as probably the Erastus mentioned in Acts 19:22.

“Trophimus I left at Miletus sick . . .” No forger would have spared a miracle in this situation. They were never wrought for the private benefit of any persons, but were always for confirming the word, either of Christ or His blessed apostles.

TROPHIMUS

This Asiatic Christian was a friend and traveling companion of the apostle Paul, being mentioned three times in the New Testament, here, and in Acts 21:29, and in Acts 24:6.

He was one of the eight friends who accompanied Paul at the close of his third missionary journey. He was the innocent case of the riot in the Jewish temple that almost cost Paul his life.

The reference before us shows that even at this late date Trophimus was still a traveling companion of the apostle, having been with him only recently, and who no doubt would have been with him in Rome had not sickness overtaken him which led to his being left behind in Miletus.

Verse 21

“Before winter . . .” Paul quite naturally dreaded the onset of cold weather, not having the cloak which he so much needed. In this, he urged Timothy “to hurry,” (to make every effort.)

“Eubulus . . .” Nothing is known of this man except what is written here.

“Pudens . . .” This is all that Scripture reveals of him.

“Linus . . .” His name appears nowhere else in Scripture.

“And Claudia . . .” Newport J. D. White, *op. cit.*, p. 184, wrote, “In the Constitution of the apostles, this woman is identified as the mother of Linus,” but little dependence can be accredited to it.

“And all the brethren . . .” after all, in spite of the persecution, there was some considerable company of the redeemed in the ancient imperial capital who were still “brethren” and who would carry forward the living faith after its most prominent leaders were slaughtered in the Neronian persecution.

Verse 22

R. C. H. Lenski, *op. cit.*, p. 884, wrote, “This is Paul’s own prayer-wish for Timothy; they are the great apostle’s last words that came down go us through history.”

What sadness fills our hearts as we contemplate the termination of so fine and great a life!

Paul sealed his marvelous witness of Christ and His resurrection with the blood of His martyrdom; the letters he launched from the end of his chain and from the final dungeon at last exploded the pagan empire with all of its diabolical institutions; and the historical church erected its cathedrals upon the ruins of it. If ever one died triumphantly, it was Paul; and his Holy words still challenge men to believe and obey the gospel of Christ Jesus our Lord.

TITUS

INTRODUCTION

AUTHORSHIP: From the earliest Christian times, Titus has been received as a genuine epistle of Paul the apostle of Jesus Christ, and the utmost suspicion and distrust should be manifested against allegations to the contrary, allegations which in point of time are more than a thousand years too late to be acceptable to perceptive students.

As John Rutherford, International Standard Bible Encyclopedia, p. 2262 wrote: “Objections dating only a century back are all too feeble to overturn the consistent marks of Pauline authorship found in all three epistles corroborated as this is by their reception in the church, dating from the very earliest period.”

DATE: The Neronian period between 64 and 68 A. D. must be identified as that time during which Titus was written.

TO WHOM WRITTEN: The following is a brief resume of what is known concerning the person to whom Paul addressed this epistle:

TITUS

Nothing is known of Titus except that which may be gleaned from this letter and from 2 Corinthians, Galatians and 2 Timothy.

Titus is thought to have been converted by Paul (Titus 1:4), and the passage in Galatians reveals that he was a Gentile.

Although Timothy, who was part Jewish, was circumcised as a matter of expediency, Paul resisted absolutely any demands for the circumcision of Titus.

Titus also assisted Paul in taking up the collection for the poor Jewish Christians in the city of Jerusalem.

In addition to Paul's entrusting the volatile situation in Crete to Titus, it is also clear that Titus aided similarly in setting things in order in Corinth. (2 Corinthians 2:13; 7:6, 13-14)

There seem to be subtle differences in the feelings Paul had for Titus and Timothy, the greater respect being to Titus in regard to his administrative ability, and the greater affection being reserved for Timothy. Of course, this is nowhere stated.

The epistle to Titus proves that after Paul's first imprisonment he was released to resume his work on the mission field; because it is during that interval between the two imprisonments that Paul and Titus were together in Crete. (Titus 1:5) Paul's last assignment to Titus was probably that of sending him to Dalmatia. (2 Timothy 4:9)

PLACE OF WRITING: Spence, *Ibid.*, p. 251, his guess as to this would appear to be as good as any, "He wrote this letter, we are told (Titus 3:12), when on his way to Nicopolis to winter; we believe that soon after his arrival there he was arrested and sent to Rome to die. That date would be 65 or 66 AD., and it was probably written from some place in Asia Minor, perhaps Ephesus."

CHAPTER 1

After the 65-word salutation (in the Greek), longer than that of any of Paul's letters except Galatians and Romans (verses 1-4), Paul outlined the qualifications of elders whom Titus was commissioned to appoint in Crete (verses 5-9), referred to the character of the false teachers operating there, and warned Titus concerning the unsavory reputation of the Cretan population, (verses 10-16).

Verse 1

"Paul a bond-servant of God . . ." Again and again Paul referred to himself as the "servant of Christ." Paul did not consider himself as having two masters, but only one, Paul's conviction being that of the perfect unity of the Father and the Son.

The word here rendered "servant" actually means slave, and it has a significant bearing on Christian doctrine.

The Greeks had two words for slave, one (*andrapodon*), persons captured in war and sold into slavery, another (*doulos*) for persons who were born into slavery. In the new birth, Paul had been born again as a *doulos* of God and of Christ.

"And an apostle of Jesus Christ . . ." A. C. Hervey, Pulpit Commentary, Vol. 21, Titus, page 1, wrote, "This shows that this is not a private letter, but a public and official document," binding upon the church of all ages as the word of the Lord.

"For the faith of those chosen of God . . ." conveys the meaning of being in harmony with the Christian religion and the holy teachings upon which the church is founded.

"The truth which is according to godliness . . ." The truth with which the body of the New Testament is concerned relates to that high standard of ethics, morality and godliness which are the objective of that truth. As Ronald A. Ward, Commentary on 1 and 2 Timothy and Titus, p. 234, wrote, "God's elect knew the truth which was the inspiration of their walk with God."

Verse 2

"In the hope of eternal life . . ." This is the oldest promise ever recorded, having been given "before the foundation of the world," "before times eternal," "before the world was," and "before times everlasting," as Paul variously described it. This promise was not made to men, though it pertains to them, but to Jesus Christ our Lord.

R. C. H. Lenski, Interpretation of Saint Paul's Epistles . . . p. 892, noted, "The Greek has no word for eternal;" and as many have pointed out, the meaning is "before the ages began to roll along in their never-ending course."

Verse 3

Here the great truth shines that the promise of eternal life is "manifested," that is, made known, or made available to men "in the message," that is, the gospel of Jesus Christ as brought by the Lord Himself and delivered unto mankind by His apostles. Thus eternal life is conditional, only those who

are willing to hear and obey the message being eligible to receive it. Thus William Hendriksen's deduction is correct, that, "Strictly speaking, it was not life everlasting that was revealed, but the word of God with respect to it."

For the myriads of men who have lived since the apostles, it is still "the word of God with respect to eternal life" that has been manifested to them.

"At the proper time manifested . . ." There is a heavenly chronology according to which all of the plans of God are being effectively achieved. (Acts 17:31)

"God our Savior. . ." It is appropriate to refer to God as the Savior of men because the initial plan was His.

Verse 4

"My true child . . ." This is usually understood as meaning that Paul had converted Titus, although, of course, no detail of this is given in the New Testament.

"In a common faith . . ." Don De Welt, Paul's Letters to Timothy and Titus, p. 141, is correct in understanding it, "As the objective quality of faith," that is, the Christian religion shared by the Christians of all ages.

Verse 5

"I left you in Crete . . ." Here is all that is known of Paul's and Titus's efforts together in Crete; but it must be inferred that, after the first imprisonment, Paul was released and he and his aides carried on extensive missionary work, perhaps even making that long projected journey to Spain that Paul mentioned in Romans, certainly, he carried on work in Crete.

Crete is the large island lying about equidistance from three continents and in the midst of the Mediterranean Sea. Paul had touched there briefly on the shipwreck journey but at that time he was a prisoner in route to Rome.

Crete was the cradle of the ancient Minoan civilization and there were said to have been a hundred cities on the island. The population was of mixed races, noted for their trickery, drunkenness and licentiousness. A temple of Bacchus was there, and the island was famed for its wines. Paul himself, in

following verses, would discuss the evil character of many of the people. It was not an enviable assignment which Titus here received from the apostle. Still there were many congregations of believers there, some perhaps, dating from those citizens of Crete who on Pentecost had heard the good news in Jerusalem. (Acts 2:11)

“Elders in every city . . .” This actually means a plurality of elders in every church in each city of Crete indicating the extensive spread of the gospel there, at the time of Paul’s letter.

Verse 6

This list of the qualifications of elders is substantially the same as that given to Timothy (1 Timothy 3:1ff); and that list with the comments should be noted in connection with what is written here.

“Above reproach . . .” is a term that appears to blanket the whole list of check-points enumerated.

“Husband of one wife . . .” There can be no doubt that heads of families were alone considered suitable material from among whom the appointment of elders was to be made. The historical church sinned in the development of a government by celibate priests. This qualification does not allow an elder to be polygamous, nor to be divorced and remarried except upon Scriptural grounds.

“Having children who believe . . .” The opinion of E. M. Zerr, Bible Commentary, p. 201, is worthy of consideration, “My conclusion is that “faithful children” in Titus 1:6 is equivalent to controlled children in 1 Timothy 3:4, 12, where the same point is under consideration, and hence that they are to believe in and be faithful to their father, regardless of whether they are members of the church or not, nor even that they are old enough to be members.”

“Who believe, not accused of dissipation or rebellion.” This states the qualifications negatively, riotous, unruly and disobedient children in any man’s family being enough to disqualify him.

Verse 7

“The overseer . . .” Paul does not mean that only one “overseer” was needed for the oversight of a church, or churches. As William Hendriksen, *op. cit.*, p. 346, said, “The hierarchical idea of several ‘priests’ and their ‘parishes’ being outranked and governed by the bishop and his ‘diocese’ is foreign to the Pastorals.”

The seven words in the New Testament which are applied to this office are: bishop, overseer, presbyter, elder, pastor, shepherd, and steward, the latter being found only in this verse.

“As God’s steward . . .” The term “steward” in English derives from an old Anglo-Saxon word, *stig-ward* or ‘keeper of pigs, or sty.’ This was a key position of great authority and importance in the feudal culture. Survival of the lord and his serfs depended upon honest and faithful management of the principal meat supply. Just so, a faithful administration of the Lord’s congregations is required.

“Not self-willed . . .” This has to be one of the most important qualifications enumerated, despite the fact of so little attention being paid to it; once a self-willed, opinionated elder is appointed, then his prejudices, his opinions, his judgments and his vision become the automatic boundaries of the church’s progress.

“Not quick tempered . . . not pugnacious . . .” These are negative qualifications related to the essential self-control and sober judgment of men capable of serving as elders. The word “pugnacious” referred to a person who went around thumping other people on the head with a quarterstaff.

“Not fond of sordid gain . . .” This means “dirty money,” that is, money acquired through questionable or dishonest means; but more than that is meant. Any man whose chief end in life is the acquisition of wealth, or whose affections are primarily set upon the things of this life, or who has an inordinate love of material possessions—any such person should not be named as an elder of the Lord’s church.

Verse 8

Upright, honest, clean family men are those to be sought out and appointed. However, the words just and devout indicate that they must also be God-fearing, righteous, and deeply devoted to holy religion. Any “nice fellow” is not necessarily elder material.

“But hospitable . . .” Hospitable in the New Testament sense does not mean merely entertaining one’s friends, but far more.

Verse 9

Don De Welt, *op. cit.*, p. 147 wrote: “This has been taken by many to be a commentary, on 1 Timothy 3:2, in which Paul states that an elder must be able to teach;” and that view would appear to be correct. The primary duty of elders, namely, that of watching over and protecting the flock of God requires that they be students of the Holy Scriptures, having a broad knowledge of what is and what is not sound doctrine.

“That he may be able both to exhort in sound doctrine and to refute those who contradict . . .” This shows why an elder must be apt to teach and must possess an accurate and extensive knowledge of the holy truth revealed in the Scriptures.

Gainsayers are evil and seductive teachers in all generations who exercise their subversive talents for private gain, doing much damage to the faith of many.

Verse 10

The persons in view here are the company of Jews who had indeed accepted Christ as the Messiah, having been baptized into the faith, and who, through inadequate understanding of Christianity, were attempting to bind the forms and ceremonies of Judaism upon Christians. It seems to have been especially of that large group of Pharisees who had accepted Christ. (Acts 15:5) Their teaching was totally wrong, and their motives were far from holy; because they evidently hoped to enlist Christians as keepers of Jewish rites out of regard to the fees that would be collected. They were unruly, insubordinate, vain,

empty-headed deceivers, there being no grounds whatever upon which the true church could accommodate their behavior.

Verse 11

“Who must be silenced . . .” Here is ample authority for the elders of the church to exercise decisive control over the teaching from their pulpits, or even privately.

Purity of a church demands that the fountain from which it drinks must be pure. Elders have both the right and the duty to silence unsound, subversive and inaccurate teaching. It is as if Paul had told the elders to “shut off the hot air.”

The urgent necessity of stopping such teachers appears in the extent of the damage they were doing.’

Verse 12

“Cretans are always liars . . .” History reveals that this was not an untrue judgment. William Hendriksen, *op. cit.*, p. 353, said, “In antiquity, the noun Cretism was a synonym for ‘lie;’ and the verb to Cretize meant to tell lies.”

“Evil beasts, lazy gluttons . . .” By these terms Paul described men who were given over completely to sensuality, idleness and gluttony being depraved and having no thought of spirituality, morality, or righteousness.

Verse 13

The very existence of congregations of Christians on the island demonstrated that a remnant of Christians on the island demonstrated that a remnant of the population was striving for better things; and yet they were in danger of being seduced and won back to the old ways, hence the need to reprove and rebuke behavior unbecoming to the name of Christ.

“Sound in the faith . . .” means, objectively sound in the Christian religion, this being an important witness that the faith which saves is not merely a subjective trust/faith; for it is founded in a behavior and life-style compatible with the teachings of the Master. No person is “sound in the faith” who is not doing, or who is making no effort to do, the will of Christ.

Verse 14

Again, the Jewish connection of the false teaches should be noted. The problem did not derive from a late first century gnosticism, but from militant Judaism, a militancy that totally disappeared following the destruction of the temple in A. D. 70.

Extensive reference to the teaching and devices of these evil men may be found in the Galatian letter, their purpose being to subvert Christianity by amalgamating it with Judaism.

Paul here used some of the very words of Christ who said to the Pharisees, "But in vain do they worship Me teaching as their doctrines the precepts of men." (Matthew 15:9)

For all who would worship God correctly, there must be a sharp distinction between what God has commanded and authorized in the sacred Scriptures, and the ceremonies, innovations and traditions that are purely human in their origin.

Verse 15

"To the pure all things are pure . . ." As A. M. Stibbs, the New Bible Commentary Revised, p. 184, well said, "Things here does no refer to things which are morally wrong," but to objects. Unwashed pots (not ceremonially washed), non-kosher food, graves, and other things considered ceremonially unclean are the type of things in view here.

J. Glenn Gould, Beacon Bible Commentary, Vol IX, p. 673, stressed the misuse of such a passage as this writing, "Someone utters a vile, indecent, vulgar, or profane story or remark; and another more sensitive soul expresses disapproval; whereupon still another justifies it by saying, "To the pure all things are pure."

Note: Paul was not speaking of speech, behavior or conduct, but of things.

"Their mind and their conscience are defiled . . ." Chrysostom as quoted by White, *op. cit.*, p. 190, said with reference to this that, "When the soul is

unclean, it thinks all things are unclean.” Such defiled persons are quick to see the innocent actions of others cause for censure or blame.

Verse 16

“They profess to know God . . .” Newport J. D. White, *op. cit.*, p. 190, said, “This is an allusion to the Jewish pride of religious privilege . . . alone sufficient to prove that the heretics here are not the gnostics of the second century.”

David Lipscomb, *op. cit.*, p. 270, wrote, “This is all spoken of men claiming to be servants of God.” They were therefore apostate Christians, the word “reprobate” here means “being put to the test for the purpose of being approved, but failing to meet the requirements being disapproved.”

Those who allege that Paul taught any kind of justification by “faith only” should ponder this passage. This passage is the true Pauline teaching. It is in full consonance with the teachings of the Master who said, “And why do you call me Lord, Lord, and do not do what I say?” (Luke 6:46)

CHAPTER 2

Don De Welt, *Paul’s Letters to Timothy and Titus*, p. 154, wrote, “The care of individual members of the church is the subject of chapter 2.” Throughout there is a strong emphasis upon the family which is the basic unit of every worthwhile society ever to appear on earth.

The five particular classes of individuals mentioned are aged men, aged women, young married women, young men and slaves. Despite the fact of Paul’s emphasis in this chapter being upon correct moral and ethical behavior, there are nevertheless doctrinal declarations of immeasurable significance.

All of the practical admonitions of this chapter are related “to the doctrine of God our Savior” (verse 10), “the grace of God” (verses 11-12), the Second Coming of Christ” (verse 13), “the atoning ransom of the blood of Jesus Christ” (verse 14), and the “purification unto Himself” (conversion of the

redeemed), (verse 14), and also the bond of unity in Jesus Christ of all the faithful who are the Lord's "own possession," (verse 14)!

Verse 1

"The word rendered 'you' is emphatic." The Cretans may be liars and some of the believers empty talkers, but Timothy is to teach the sound doctrine. It is "the proper ethical consequences which must ever flow from the Christian truth which Paul was about to stress, but Titus must never leave off teaching the sound doctrine. Everything depends upon that. Alan G. Nute, *A New testament Commentary*, p. 527, wrote, "Titus should instruct them in the behavior which accords with belief." Although Titus was addressed directly, Wilbur B. Wallis, *Wycliffe New Testament Commentary* p. 886, wrote, "Through him Paul was instructing the whole church of Crete;" and even beyond that he was instructing the church of all ages to come.

"Sound doctrine . . ." is described as "wholesome" or "healthful" but perhaps the best definition is "scriptural, accurate, and dependable."

Verse 2

"Older men. . ." J. R. Dummelow, *Commentary on the Holy Bible*, p. 1008, wrote, "This is not the elders in an official sense, but simply the old men."

"Temperate . . ." has the meaning, not given to excess in anything. This virtue is often absent in believers. A life undistorted by any excessive indulgences of any kind is the thing required.

"Dignified" or "grave. . ." This must never be confused with gloominess. A calm, sensible and decorous attitude, or demeanor, in all places and all times is enjoined. "Monkey business" and "clowning around" are forbidden by this.

"Sensible . . ." While mentioned here in the instructions to older men, this virtue Alan G. Nute, *op. cit.*, p. 527, wrote, "is demanded of three of the groups which follow, and of all in verse 12."

“Sound in faith . . .” R. C. H. Lenski, Interpretation of Saint Paul’s Epistles . . . Titus p. 910, wrote, Faith here is objective,” meaning that older men should cling to the fundamental doctrines of Christianity. Here “love and perseverance (patience)” are bracketed with faith.

H. D. M. Spence, Ellicott’s Commentary on the Whole Bible, Vol. VIII, p. 155, wrote, “In these three lies the sum of Christian perfections. It is with “faith” that we worship God; no prayer, no work of piety can be severed from faith. “Love” spreads its wings over all our duties to our neighbor; and “patience or perseverance” must ever go hand in hand with “faith” and “love.”

The Christian life is not merely commendable behavior, but such conduct as it relates to the great principles of the truth of God.

E. M. Zerr, Bible Commentary, p. 203, said, “Sound in the faith means to be true to the word of God which is the basis of faith.” (Romans 10:17)

In this lies the great principle that all ethical behavior, if it is to have any meaning at all, must be anchored in authority that is external to man. Without the guiding restraint of that external authority, morality is progressively downgraded until it disappears all together.

Verse 3

The instruction here is to all older women in the congregation.

“Reverent in their behavior . . .” This is one of the most beautiful phrases in the New Testament, fittingly applied here to that class of godly older women in the Lord’s church.

“Not malicious gossips . . .” This means “not false accusers,” and is translated from a word which is one of the names for the devil, who is called “the accuser” of the brethren.

“Not enslaved to much wine . . .” David Lipscomb, New Testament Commentaries, Titus, p. 272, wrote, “The women of Crete were given to wine

drinking. Observe the fitness of the term “enslaved.” The drunkard is thoroughly the slave of his appetite.”

Here is an indication of what is mean by the term “wine” as used in the New Testament; it was a drink that had the power to enslave, and this is impossible of application to mere grape juice.

“Teaching what is good . . .” R. V. G. Tasker, *op. cit.*, p. 193, said, “This cannot refer to public teaching, which was in any case mainly the responsibility of the elders, but must refer to ministry in the home.”

Verse 4

The elders were not entrusted with the training of young married women, a function that pertained to the godly older women in the congregation.

There are seven qualities to be instilled in the younger women, two mentioned in this verse, five in the next. They are:

- (1) husband-lovers,
- (2) children-lovers,
- (3) sensible,
- (4) pure,
- (5) workers at home,
- (6) kind, and
- (7) being subject to their own husbands.

It seems hardly necessary to speak of training one to love her husband or children; but as Ronald A. Ward, *Commentary on 1 and 2 Timothy and Titus*, p. 253, wrote, “Love does not always flow out of a person, even a wife or mother, as from a mountain spring. Love in the family requires thoughtfulness, and the

mother has to work at it. Paul recognized this, and the older could inspire the younger.”

Verse 5

“Sensible. . . “ As noted above, this quality is actually to be manifested by all Christians. It means having all faculties under control, well-balanced, even tempered, and realizing the importance and seriousness of life.

“Pure . . .” The word “chaste” as appears in some versions referred to sex and may help us to understand what “pure” means.

“Workers at home . . .” The word from which this is derived may mean either “workers” or “keepers” at home.

“Kind . . .” This is one of the homely virtues that blesses mankind as much as any other.

“Being subject to their own husbands . . .” This is fully in keeping with the New Testament teaching that the husband is the head of the family; and, through the centuries, those societies in which women have honored this Divine injunction have invariably elevated women to higher and higher places of honor, respect, and protection. In many cultures where this ethic is dishonored, women have ultimately been reduced to the status of chattels, as they were in the pagans of Paul’s day. The behavior here enjoined proved to be the way up for womankind; and the opposite of it will doubtless prove to be the way down.

R. C.H. Lenski, *op. cit.*, p. 913, wrote, “So much depends on the women, in great part on the young women.” The world still judges Christianity by the character of the young women produced by the church.

Verse 6

Paul did not here skimp the advice to young men. Carl Spain, *Commentary on 1 and 2 Timothy and Titus*, p. 179, noted, the word, “Likewise” may be construed as pertaining to “all the injunctions given in verses 1-10.” “To

be sensible” is therefore a synecdoche for the entire list of applicable injunctions.

Verse 7

This entire verse reiterates instructions already given to others, above; but here is the additional thought that Titus is to show himself as an example of good deeds, with purity in doctrine, dignified. J. Glenn Gould, *op. cit.*, p. 680, wrote, “It is evident that Paul is as fully concerned with Titus’ teaching as with his conduct.”

Verse 8

“That the opponent may be put to shame . . .” Wherever truth is preached, “he that is an opponent” always appears. It cannot be that Satan will allow the word of God to be preached without opposition. The gospel minister and all Christians must ever keep this in mind and speak, and so live, that the enemy may be ashamed to speak against them.

Verses 9-10

“To be well pleasing . . .” J. Glenn Gould, *Ibid.*, p. 680, wrote, “It is probable here that Paul was thinking of Christian slaves with Christian masters.” David Lipscomb, *op. cit.*, p. 275 wrote: “It is obvious that ‘all things’ is here limited to things not contrary to God’s law.”

“Not argumentative . . .” means “taking back,” with a view to thwarting, or criticizing, the master’s will.

“Not pilfering . . .” Newport J. D. White, *op. cit.*, p. 198, wrote, “The particular form of theft implied is the abstraction or retention for one’s self of a part of something entrusted to one’s care.”

“That they may adorn the doctrine of God . . .” The lot of a Christian slave was as nearly intolerable as possible. Without anything except the bare necessities for existence, slaves toiled continually without pay, without vacation,

often even without any appreciation on the part of their masters. They had no legal, civil or natural rights of any kind. When they became ill, they were allowed to die, unless the master thought it profitable to have them cured. Cruel and unjust punishments were often endured by them. Yet, even in such a condition, Paul speaks of their “adorning” the doctrine of God. The service of a slave was elevated to a higher plane.

Note: Don De Welt, *op. cit.*, p. 162, wrote, “Let it be noted that verses 9-10 are not given as suggestions, but as imperatives of Christian conduct.”

Verse 11

This is a reference to the Incarnation, the First Coming of the Son of God, whose visitation upon our planet came directly and solely from the grace of God. (Luke 2:29-30)

When Simeon said this, all men had not been saved; and at the time of Paul’s writing here, nor at any time ever, was it ever true that all men are saved. The mystery of why so many are still unsaved is not ours to unravel.

“Bringing salvation to all men . . .” H. D. M. Spence, *op. cit.*, p. 258, wrote, “This is another of those hard sayings which have been pressed into the service of that kindly but erring school of expositors which shuts its eyes to the contemplation of the many unmistakable sayings which warn of the impenitent and hardened sinner of the sad doom of eternal death.”

Verse 12

It is the grace of God (through the gospel) which instructs men regarding those conditions which must be fulfilled by men in order to partake of the grace; and rejection of the instructions is equivalent to the rejection of the grace. Both positively and negatively the conditions are plainly laid out.

“Deny ungodliness . . .” This refers to the denial in one’s life of irreligion. Salvation is promised to the religious persons who seek and find the true way of the Lord. The person who boasts that “I am not religious” has

already forfeited the grace of God as it pertains to him. Such persons have "fallen short of it." (Hebrews 12:15)

"And worldly desires . . ." The sins of the flesh must be renounced. Even an apostle "buffeted his body" to bring it under subjection to the will of Christ. All of the evils that perplex humanity in very large part are due to the unbridled seeking on the part of un-regenerated men to fulfill the lustful appetites of their bodies. The true doctrine of Christ confronts the problem squarely, enabling the Christian, with Divine help, to overcome.

"Sensibly . . . righteously . . . godly . . ." Paul F. Barakman, *The Epistles to Timothy and Titus* wrote, "Guthrie suggested that 'sensibly, righteously, and godly' might be taken to mean the right kind of action toward ourselves, toward our neighbors and toward God."

Verse 13

"Appearing . . ." The two Advents are in verses 11, 13. In verse 11, it was the appearing of the grace of God and in the First Coming of our Lord, and here it is the final appearing in the Second Coming when Christ will judge the quick and the dead. The first of this twofold epiphany is past, being the earthly life of our Lord; whereas the one in verse 13 is future.

"Looking for the blessed hope . . ." All of the excellent rules for living laid down earlier in this chapter are meaningless without that relationship between Christ and His followers on earth who are walking as He commanded and expectantly waiting that time when the skies shall be bright with His appearing.

"The glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ . . ." R. C. H. Lenski *op. cit.* p. 922, said, flatly, "Jesus Christ is here called our God and Savior. One person is referred to and not two."

H. D. M. Spence, *op. cit.*, p. 258, wrote, "The only begotten Son, alone, is the subject of this sublime passage." Written as it should be written, it is one

of the most precious statements in all the New Testament bearing upon the deity of our blessed Lord.

Paul was encouraging the beleaguered saints on Crete to hold fast the true faith until that moment in the fullness of time when Christ has promised to return, the second time apart from sin, robed in glory of the eternal world, for the purpose of redeeming the righteous and casting evil out of His universe.

Verse 14

“Who gave Himself for us . . .” Here the great ransom for many is in view. (Mark 10:45) We do not inquire concerning the one to whom the ransom was paid, nor as to why it was necessary, nor if it could not have been done in some other way. All such questions lie beyond our ability either to ask or to solve. Sufficient is the knowledge that our Lord “paid it all” that we might live. Men did not take His life away from Him, but he freely laid it down upon our behalf. (John 10:17-18) No bitterness assailed Him as He bore our sins on the tree; but “for the joy that was set before Him, He endured the cross, despising the shame.” (Hebrews 12:2)

“From every lawless deed. . .” The basic connection of salvation with the separation of the saved from the pursuit of iniquity is again apparent in this. Christ did not come to save men in their sins, but from their sins.

“Purify for Himself a people . . .” Newport J. D. White, *op. cit.*, p. 196, accurately pointed out that Paul very likely has in mind Ezekiel 37:23, “I will deliver them from all their dwelling places in which they have sinned, and will cleanse them: and they shall be My people, and I will be their God.”

On the basis of this, White, *Ibid.*, went on to affirm, “That there is an illusion to holy baptism here, which is explicit in this chapter verse 5.” It may not be denied that sinners are purified unto the Lord in their conversion and that they become the Lord’s own possession.

Verse 15

“Speak . . . exhort . . . reprove . . .” Ronald A. Ward, *op. cit.*, p. 264, wrote, “These verbs are in the present imperative, meaning ‘keep on doing it.’” They also have the meaning that Paul considered Titus to be already doing the things commanded.

“All authority . . .” R. V. G. Tasker, *op. cit.*, p. 202, wrote, “This word, found only in Paul’s epistles, has always the sense of a divine commandment.” It is because of the heavenly origin of his message that Titus was admonished to “let no man despise thee.” The gospel preacher does not need to feel inferior to any man, because his message is from God.

CHAPTER 3

This concluding chapter contains sundry instructions for Christians with a warning against factious persons (verses 1-11), a few personal remarks, salutations and the benediction (verses 12-15).

Verse 1

“Be subject to rulers . . .” The authority of human government is of God, and the Christian is instructed to be obedient because such is God’s will.

Don De Welt, *Paul’s Letters to Timothy and Titus*, p. 170, wrote, “The Cretans were very dissatisfied with Roman rule, and showed signs of revolt, according to Polybius and Plutarch.” The large Jewish population would also gladly have taken in such a movement. However, the most remarkable thing about Paul’s orders here is the consideration that must be given to the way the apostle felt personally toward the Roman state. There is no outcropping of any resentment in any of his letters, but it must surely have been present. Roman governors, through avarice and through incompetence, had kept him in prison for years; Roman authorities had illegally bound him, beaten him with rods, delayed hearing charges against him, and when the charges were not presented,

still left him bound for years longer. Beyond that, the glaring immorality and wickedness of Nero were beginning to be known throughout the world, and the eventual consequence, of the enthronement of evil would certainly have aroused apprehension in a man like Paul. Yet, in view of all that, he wrote, “Be in subjection to rulers.”

“To authorities . . .” Rulers are not mere exercisers of earthly power, they are also authorities, possessed of a right that reaches as far as God Himself; and such authority must not be disobeyed by Christians, except in those instances where obedience would be disobeying God. (Acts 5:29)

“To be obedient . . .” This quality of Christian character tends to become rare in a society where violence, extremism and every form of private and public disobedience of the laws of God and man are practiced with impunity, and even glamorized by a secular, rebellious society. Nevertheless, it is the cornerstone of all law and order, even of civilization itself. The opposite of it is lawlessness, a spirit working even in the culture of Paul’s day (2 Thessalonians 2:7), but now even more, and threatening ultimately to usher in the final terror.

“To be ready for every good deed . . .” The church is restricted in its worship and doctrine by the teaching of Christ and the apostles, but here is ample encouragement for Christians to engage in every good work. Here is their authority for taking part in any worthy work. May a Christian run for public office, take part in political campaigns, or serve in positions of community trust? The answer must be affirmative.

Verse 2

In this verse and in verse 1, there are listed seven basic requirements of Christian character; and, on first thought, some might classify all of them as “old fashioned.”

“These things here charged by Paul were new virtues to men. They are held up to admiration by no heathen moralist.” Moreover, such virtues were

even scorned and made light of by many pagan writers. In a sense, they are still new, because the newest, freshest, cleanest thing on earth is a Christian soul which truly exhibits them; and when such an exhibition appears, no desert flower after a shower ever bloomed with sweeter charm and fragrance than that of such a Christian personality.

“To malign no one . . .” We believe David Lipscomb, *New Testament Commentaries*, Titus, p. 281, was correct in his interpretation that this means, “Do not speak evil or contemptuously of rulers.” This surely seems to be the very thing Paul especially meant, but the injunction goes far beyond that. It is wrong to read this as if it said, “Speak evil of no good man.” Speaking evil of any man, especially public, prominent or powerful men, invested with honor or office, is not to be indulged by Christians. Why? For us it is enough to know that it is the Lord’s will, and yet many reasons are visible.

To speak evil in those cases were, in a sense, it would be deserved is merely to multiply the influence of a bad example. Furthermore, dwelling in one’s thoughts upon the evil of others intensifies the temptation for the Christian himself to do wrong, thus hindering the positive thrust of his life. (Philippians 4:8)

“To be uncontentious, gentle . . .” Both of these virtues are listed among the qualifications of elders. (1Timothy 3:3) A neighbor lacking such virtues is a thorn in the flesh, and Christians should not be thorns.

“Showing every consideration for all men . . .” R. C. H. Lenski, *Interpretation of Saint Paul’s Epistles . . . Titus*, p. 928, wrote, “This is the temper which does not make us assert ourselves; it is an unassuming, passive spirit, the opposite of harshness and haughtiness.”

Meekness must never be thought of as mere weakness, for it is the most awesome strength. Charles Rann Kennedy, *The Terrible Meek*, quoted in John Bartlett, *Familiar Quotations*, p. 817, caught a glimpse of this in the lines, “The meek, the terrible meek, the fierce agonizing meek, are about to enter into their inheritance.”

Moses was meek, but no more powerful figure ever appeared in history than the Jewish lawgiver.

Verse 3

Just as seven Christian virtues are given in verses 1, 2, there are seven negative qualities listed here, being in the principal part, merely the negative of the aforementioned virtues. Paul's reason for bringing in this description of unregenerate men, is apparent in the first three words, "for we also." This is an accurate picture of themselves before they became Christians.

Newport J. D. White, Expositor's Greek New Testament, Vol. IV, p.197, wrote, "The connection is: you need not suppose that it is hopeless to imagine that these wild Cretan folk can be reclaimed. We ourselves are a living proof of God's grace. "

"Foolish . . ." All sin against God is foolish. The unregenerate virgins, the rich man who planned to build bigger barns, the man who built upon the sand, and the disciples who did not "believe all" that the prophets had spoken were all given a single designation by the Son of God, "foolish, fool, foolish . . . fools!"

"Disobedient . . ." This means disobedient to divine law, the commandments of God, as in Luke 1:17, Titus 1:16.

"Deceived . . ." This is, deceived, either by false systems of religion, our own lusts and appetites, or by the foolish arrogance of our own conceit.

"Enslaved to various lusts and pleasures. . ." Although they had become "slaves of God," Paul reminded them that once they were "slaves" to all kinds of lusts and pleasures. "Pleasures," as generally used in the New Testament, is in the sense of evil pleasures. (Luke 8:14; 1 Timothy 5:6)

"Spending our life in malice and envy . . ." Malice is a general term for wickedness, but Carl Spain, Commentary on 1 and 2 Timothy and Titus said,

“Here it has the special connotation of ill-will and malignity.” Such malice is the desire to harm others as in Ephesians 4:31.

“Hateful, hating one another . . .” What a sad picture of the sinful life is this. The sinner himself becomes hateful, despising himself, and even being hated by other sinners.

As Newport J. D. White, *op. cit.*, p. 198, wrote, “This marks the stage of degradation before it becomes hopeless: when vice becomes odious to the vicious, and stands a self-confessed failure to produce happiness.”

Verse 4

The wretched night of human sin, suffering and shame was pitied by the Father Himself; and Paul here related that pitying and loving kindness of God to the rescue of the Christians from the intolerable lives of sin which they formerly lived. John 3:16 is an excellent comment on this verse, for Paul was thinking of how God’s kindness and love toward men had “appeared” upon earth in the epic events of the Incarnation and the preaching of the gospel of Christ which followed as a consequence of it. That it was the gospel message that Paul particularly had in mind is proved by the next verse.

Verse 5

It is profitable to glance at other Scriptures which are admitted by scholars to be parallel to the teaching here. Scripture is always the best comment on Scripture.

“For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. (Galatians 3:27) Of this verse H. D. M. Spence, *op. cit.*, p.261, said, “The apostle has grandly paraphrased his words here in Titus 3:5.”

“And such were some of you, but you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and in the Spirit of our God.” (1 Corinthians 6:11) Of this verse G. R. Beasley-Murray, *Baptism in the New Testament*. 216, said, “The relation of baptism to

justification in 1 Corinthians 6:11 and in Titus 3:5 is fundamentally the same: the grace that baptizes is the grace that justifies.”

“Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her; that He might sanctify her having cleansed her by the washing of water by the word.” (Ephesians 5:25-26) R. C. H. Lenski, *op. cit.*, p. 933, wrote, “Paul’s other great passage regarding baptism is Ephesians 5:26, where we discuss at length the ‘washing of water’ in connection with the spoken word.”

There are a number of other very important passages bearing upon the subject Paul introduced here, namely John 3:5, Acts 2:38, 1 Peter 3:21, Matthew 3:16, and Romans 6:3-5. With these verses you cannot miss Paul’s meaning in this verse.

“Not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness . . .” God’s unmerited grace is the source of all salvation, and all the good works of a hundred lifetimes could never earn or merit the saving grace of God. These words have been made the excuse for denying that such ordinances as baptism and the Lord’s Supper are in any wise essential to salvation; but that class of deeds commanded by Christ as prerequisite to redemption, simply do not lie within the periphery of his statement here.

What Paul spoke of here was the “the righteousness of men,” the works “which we did ourselves.” It is imperative to notice that “the washing of regeneration” mentioned at once is by that very citation excluded from the “works done in righteousness” which are contrasted with it.

“But according to His mercy . . .” Some commentators take pages explaining how this means that God’s mercy saves us without being baptized, despite that the very next line that says, “God’s mercy saved us through regeneration, ‘baptism.’”

“By the washing of regeneration . . .” The ASV margin gives “laver” in his clause instead of “washing;” but as H. D. M. Spence, *op. cit.*, p. 261, said, “Laver” here can only signify the baptismal font.” The allusion, of course, to the great bronze laver that stood at the entrance the Jewish temple, in which priests

washed themselves before engaging in their duties within the sanctuary. The analogy in the Christian religion is the baptistry, the same being the only laver connected with the holy faith, and being the place where sinners are cleansed and justified prior to their entry into the true sanctuary, which is the Lord's church.

The use of the term laver is very fortunate, because the primary meaning of it, in context, is the baptistry, standing in a figure (Metonym) for baptism, for which alone a baptistry is used, and adequately translated as "washing."

Newport J. D. White, *op. cit.*, p. 198, wrote, "God saved us by baptism, which involves two complementary processes: (a) the ceremony itself which marks the actual moment in time of the new birth, and (b) the daily, hourly, momentarily renewing of the Holy Spirit."

It is inexcusable to say that baptism "is only setting the seal on the essential act of faith" . . . or that baptism is little more than a purifying act; as G. R. Beasley-Murray, *op. cit.*, p. 213, stated it, "Neither of these contentions is worthy of discussion."

"But, isn't baptism, only a symbol?" This has been shouted so loudly and so frequently and for so long that many believe it; but it is untrue. R. C. H. Lenski, *op. cit.*, p. 934, sets the matter straight. Commenting on the affirmation that "Man submits to baptism after the new birth to picture it forth to men," he said this: "Paul excludes this idea in a double way. "God saves us by means of the bath, etc.—this is the bath of regeneration. How can anyone think Paul would say, "God saved us by means of a picture of regeneration? Compare Jesus' own words in John 3:5."

"Regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit . . ." The twin elements of the new birth, as set forth in John 3:35, are present here. One birth with two elements in it, the bath in water (baptism) and the Holy Spirit of promise—this is the teaching of the New Testament. The same twin elements in the new birth

are evident in Peter's Pentecostal command to "Repent and be baptized . . . receive the Holy Spirit." (Acts 2:28, 39)

Jesus Himself said, "He who has believed and has been baptized shall be saved." Note too that baptism is God's means, not man's. Baptism is not a work of men; no man ever baptized himself; only God can do that, and even then, only for those who will believe and repent; and every true baptism in all history was a work of Almighty God Himself; to this solemn ordinance alone is conjoined the sacred triple name of Father, Son and the Holy Spirit. All who despise it or downgrade it do so at their eternal peril.

Verse 6

R. C. H. Lenski, *op. cit.*, p. 936, said, "This is not a reference to Pentecost . . . but to baptism and the Spirit's outpouring of it." Thus the Pentecostal emphasis of "repent and be baptized . . . and you shall receive the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2:38-39) is identical with what is revealed here. The gift in view here is the gift ordinary, the earnest of the Holy Spirit, the Holy Spirit of promise, the indwelling Spirit which is received by every true convert to Christ.

Baptism (the birth of water) is the element for which man is responsible for the doing of it (despite the fact of baptism not being the work of any man); nevertheless God required even of Saul of Tarsus that he "have himself baptized." This is every man's responsibility.

Although baptism is exclusively a work of Almighty God, the Lord will not perform it upon any person who does not seek it through faith and repentance. "The renewal of the Holy Spirit," here and in the preceding verse, is the element of the new birth which is performed by God through Christ, it being appropriate to say that the Spirit is sent both by the Father and by the Son.

Verse 7

"Justified . . ." The text is saying that God not only saves us by baptism and the resulting reception of the Holy Spirit, but that "His grace" justifies us by

exactly the same means. As E. M. Zerr, Bible Commentary, p. 205, pointed out, “Justification has many shades of meaning,” but two of these meanings are predominant. “Justification” in the ultimate sense of being the grounds upon which the Father declares men to be righteous is grounded in the perfect faith and obedience of Jesus Christ our Lord, in whom sinners are justified by being united with, and actually incorporated into Christ’s spiritual body, thus being, in fact “Christ” and justified “as Christ.” There is a secondary sense of justification, the one in view here, in which God cleanses from all past sins and receives the sinner into the body of the redeemed.

Baptism here appears as the means used by God’s grace in order to achieve man’s justification and to make him an heir of eternal life. R. C. H. Lenski, *op. cit.*, p. 937, wrote, “Then and there, in and by baptism, and in and by the Spirit bestowed in baptism (we) actually become heirs of eternal life.”

The bestowal of such high privilege and rich benefit is actual, genuine, real; but it is neither final nor irrevocable. That state will be given to Christians only “on that day.”

Another word with reference to the two uses of “justification” is thus:
(1) one is used in the temporary sense, the same being probationary, and
(2) the other is used in the eternal sense, being final.

Of course, it is the first of these which is referred to in this verse.

The Lutheran heresy of salvation by “faith alone” which has blinded many of the modern protestant scholars has all but ruined Protestant Christianity. We shall not note all of the objections that have been raised against the interpretation followed here, but we shall make an exception for that voiced by Ronald A. Ward, Commentary 1 and 2 Timothy and Titus, p. 271, who wrote, “Some of the bloodiest dictators and some of the most-wicked men have been baptized people.” This is no valid objection because it applies equally to those “who believed on” the Lord Jesus Christ, and then went on to crucify Him. (John 12:42) The answer lies in the probationary nature of the justification that

comes as a result of the new birth of “water and of the Spirit.” Angels fell, and Judas was, at first, a faithful apostle.

Verse 8

“This is a trustworthy statement . . .” This is merely Paul’s equivalent of the “Amen, Amen” sometimes used by Jesus.

“Careful to engage in good deed. . .” The allegation, that this means “pursue honest occupations,” while true enough in principle, is not what Paul said here. Newport J. D. White, *op. cit.*, p. 200, wrote, “Throughout the New Testament, the terms used here “mean good works in the religious or moral sense.”

Verse 9

“Genealogies . . .” These were the specialty of the Jews, so much so that Christian writers included the genealogy of Jesus in both Matthew and Luke.

“The law . . .” can have reference only to the Mosaic law.

Verse 10

By definition, a factious person’s sin is of a “public“ nature; but even in cases of public sins, the first and second admonitions commanded by the Lord Jesus Christ were not to be omitted or ignored.

Verse 11

“Self-condemned . . .” does not indicate his acknowledgement of his sin, but that his withdrawal from the spiritual body and separation of himself from it condemned him. The man had apparently already separated himself from the believers.

Verses 12-13

“Artemas . . . Zenas . . . Apollos . . . It is a remarkable fact that these three names of faithful helpers of the blessed apostle, still with him in the closing period of his life, are names derived from three of the most famous heathen deities. As H. D. M. Spence, *op. cit.*, p. 266, pointed out, “Artemas is from Artemis the famous tutelary goddess of Ephesus; Apollos is from the well-known sun god; and Zenas is from Zeus.”

Nothing is known of Zenas and Artemas except what appears here, but Apollos is mentioned a number of times in the New Testament. He came to Ephesus (Acts 18:24) teaching mightily in the Scriptures, but knowing only the baptism of John. Priscilla and Aquila taught him the way of the Lord more perfectly. (Acts 18:26)

He powerfully confuted the Jews (Acts 18:28), made many disciples who were required by Paul to be baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus (Acts 19:1-7); and in 1 Corinthians 1:12 to 4:6 Paul referred to Apollos again and again, ranking him with himself and the apostle Peter.

“Nicopolis . . .” Paul’s purpose of spending the winter in this town may or may not have been realized. Some believe that his arrest and final imprisonment came soon after what was written here, although there cannot be much certainty about that. Newport J. D. White, *op. cit.*, p. 201, wrote, “It is possible that the winter is that mentioned in 2 Timothy 4:21.”

NICOPOLIS

R. C. H. Lenski, *op. cit.*, 945, wrote that there are, “Nine cities of this name found in the Mediterranean area. However, the one to which Paul here referred “is probably the city of that name situated on the southwest promontory of Epirus.” This is only a few miles from the modern city of Prevesa, the city which the Greeks bombarded in 1912. Considerable ruins of the ancient city still remain, including two theaters, a stadium, and an aqueduct. The name means “Victory City.” so-called from Augustus’ victory over Anthony.

“That nothing is lacking for them . . .” This constitutes instructions to Titus to provide whatever material things would be needed by Apollos and Zenas on their journey. From these brief references, R. C. H. Lenski, *op. cit.*, p. 946 concluded that: “They were with Paul, had received their directions from him, and carried this letter to Titus who was sending them on.”

Verse 14

The meaning here would appear to be according to A. C. Hervey, *op. cit.*, p. 47, “Let our Christians learn to do what Jews do, and even heathens too, that is, really provide for the real wants of their own.”

The emphasis throughout these letters which Paul placed upon good works was commented upon thus by David Lipscomb, *op. cit.*, p. 188 writing: “In these “pastorals” we have eight reminders to be earnest and zealous in good works. The passages are: 1 Timothy 2:10, 5:10, 6:18, 2 Timothy 2:21, Titus 1:16, 2:7, 14, and 3:14. It is noteworthy that these epistles containing so many exhortations to work for Christ are among His last inspired utterances.”

Verse 15

“All who are with Me . . .” It is impossible to know who any of these might have been.

“Who love us in faith . . .” Newport J. D. White, *op. cit.*, p. 202, 91, commented, “This means 'the faith,' that is, the household of faith. Absence of the article before familiar Christians terms is a characteristic of the pastorals.”

J. R. Dummelow, *Commentary on the Holy Bible*, p. 1009, noted that, “The mingling of old names with new (Artemas and Zenas being new; Apollos and Tychicus being old) is a strong critical argument for the Pauline authorship. A pupil wishing to imitate Paul would hardly be apt to mention any but well-known names.”

“Grace be with you all . . .” How grateful all men should be to the Lord who preserved and handed down through history this priceless letter so rich and encouraging in its teachings, and so full of the Lord Jesus Christ.