

MR. D'S NOTES ON I TIMOTHY



Rev. Stanley L. Derickson Ph.D.

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INTRODUCTION

One of my favorite books of the New Testament is I Timothy. I rather assume my propensity for this book is the fact that it holds church leadership to a very high standard, even if the church at large does not. It is my personal opinion that if we, the church, were holding our church leaders to the Biblical standard we would see more vibrant and effective churches around the world.

I trust that you find something of use in these thoughts.

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CHAPTER 1

I TIMOTHY

Since we are going to be talking about pastors for a while, I thought I would introduce you to a little information about them.

A pastor in a tough situation was asked how he slept at night. "Like a baby, " He replied. "I sleep an hour, wake up and cry awhile. Then I sleep another while, wake up and cry again, and so on through the night."

There is Good News and there is Bad News for the Pastor:

Good News: You baptized four people today

Bad News: You lost two others in the swift current.

Good News: The Women's Association voted to send you a get-well card.

Bad News: It passed 31 to 30.

Good News: The board accepted your job description the way you wrote it.

Bad News: They also formed a search committee to find somebody capable of filling the position.

Good News: Your stand on nuclear disarmament has won the respect and admiration of many people.

Bad News: None of them are remotely connected to your church.

Good News: You finally found a choir director who approaches things your way.

Bad News: The choir mutinied.

Good News: Mrs. Jones is wild about your sermons.

Bad News: Mrs. Jones is also wild about the "The Maury Povich Show" and "Real T.V."

Good News: Seventy junior high students showed up last Thursday.

Bad News: The meeting was on Wednesday.

Good News: Your women's softball team won.

Bad News: They beat your men's softball team.

Good News: The trustee's finally voted to add more church parking

Bad News: They wanted to blacktop the front lawn of the parsonage.

Good News: Church attendance rose dramatically the last three weeks

Bad News: You were on vacation.

Good News: Your biggest critic just left the church

Bad News: He's been head of your denomination.

Good News: You finally got a key to the church kitchen.

Bad News: Someone rekeyed the lock.

Good News: Your deacons want to send you to the Holy Land .

Bad News: They are stalling until the next war.

I & II Timothy and Titus are considered the Pastoral Epistles. Not that Timothy and Titus were pastors. They were apostolic delegates doing the bidding of Paul. Paul had given them jobs to do and they were in the process of doing these things when Paul wrote to them to give them direction.

Some believe that they may have been evangelists at heart and were involved in evangelism more than in helping or planting churches. I personally don't feel that this is true. Why would Timothy accept a position to set a church in order if he was gifted to evangelize the lost? I would further question why Paul would place a man so gifted in a place where he would not be fully used in the area of his spiritual gift.

I think the thought of being apostolic delegates fits their position nicely. Paul had some things he desired to accomplish in the churches and delegated these two men to the accomplishment of those goals.

The books are called Pastoral Epistles because they deal with church order and lend themselves to the work of the pastor.

The Pastoral Epistles are unique in two ways.

1. The term mercy is not used in the openings of any books except the Pastoral Epistles of I Timothy, II Timothy and Titus.

The other epistles use grace and peace, but none use the term mercy.

Mercy is found in the following: I Timothy 1:2; II Timothy 1:2; Titus 1:4

The term is not found in the introductions of other books: Romans 1:7; I Cor. 1:2; II Cor. 1:2; Gal. 1:3; Eph. 1:2; Phil. 1:2; Col. 1:2; I Thess. 1:1; II Thes. 1:2; Philemon 1:3.

2. These three epistles are unique in another way as well. They are the only books of the Bible written to church leadership.

Since Paul chose his terminology so carefully in using grace and peace in ten books of general interest and included mercy in only three books, all of which are closely related to individual leaders, it would seem that the inclusion in the pastorals was a calculated choice of terms.

There must have been a specific reason for it. Question: What are some possibilities why Paul did this?

1. The books are teaching their recipients how to run and oversee churches. Grace, mercy and peace are essential to a smooth running church.

2. He may have desired that these two men use mercy as they were in the position of oversight in the churches. If indeed they were apostolic delegates they would have been over elders that were already in place and they needed to be careful how they worked.

3. There may be a special mercy given to the minister of God. The fall brought about the curse and part of the curse was that man would labor for his food. The minister of the Lord labors but it is such a joy to do what they really want to do in life that it isn't really labor.

A friend on the internet was listing all of the problems of his people in the church and was relating how he was ministering to them. I made a comment as to the amount of running and work he was doing. His reply was, "that is what I am here for" and that is the crux of the pastor - they are there to minister and it is a joy for them to do so.

4. On the negative side Paul may have extended mercy to the men that were leading churches. Paul knew human nature and had seen a church problem or two, so may have been encouraging

the men along.

Church people can be very cruel at times. They will at times say things that they would not tolerate if those things were said to them. They often do things to the pastor that they would not tolerate if those things were done to them.

You might wonder why Paul draws so much attention to the fact of his apostleship in the book? There were many false teachers around spreading all sorts of false teaching even in his day. He was showing that he had the authority to give instructions to Timothy and that his sayings were valid.

The apostles were direct links to the Lord Himself and it was definitely an indication of his authority.

There is also the possibility that the people were questioning Paul's authority.

Question: What is an apostle? An apostle is someone that was appointed by Christ and someone that knew Christ. (See ICor. 15:7 for Paul) They were appointed to do a job for the Lord during the transitional period between the old economy and the new - the passing of Law and institution of grace.

The term translated apostle is used as an apostle primarily (78 times of the 81 occurrences). This would indicate that this is the primary thought of the term. Some hold because of the other three usages that it means simply a sent one or a messenger, however the use of the term to designate the disciples, Paul and other leaders would indicate it is more than the simple "sent" idea. This would indicate that these men were leaders in the early church and that there was a responsibility of those that heard them to listen and heed their teaching. In II Cor. 11.13 the term is linked with pseudo to mean false apostle. "For such [are] false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ." Even in this text there seems to be the implication that apostle had more to it than just a sent one. False teachers wished to transform themselves into apostles. Thus, there must have been good reason for them to go to such trouble. The apostles were Christ's messengers to the church.

In classical Greek there were two terms for a messenger. A lesser term to indicate a messenger, and a second term to indicate a delegate of the one which was sending him. The later would be my concept of the term in the New Testament.

The lesser term would be pictured in the old movies where the slave comes running into the king's chamber with the bad news that the enemy is marching on the city, while the delegate would be pictured by the pomp and circumstance of a finely dressed envoy entering into the king's chambers to announce good news from the far countries.

The term is used of Christ's relationship with the Father in Jo17.3 "And this is life eternal, that

they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." Christ is just a tad more than a mere messenger or sent one, He is a delegate from God. It is also used of the Lord in Heb 3.1 "Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus;"

The term is used of other than the 12 apostles at times: "it is used of Barnabas as well as of Paul; in Romans 16:7; of Andronicus and Junias. In II Cor. 8:23 (R.V., margin); two unnamed brethren are called 'apostles of the churches;' in Phil 2:25 (R.V., margin); Epaphroditus is referred to as "your apostle." It is used in 1 The 2:6; of Paul, Silas and Timothy, to define their relation to Christ." From Vine's Word studies.

There is great discussion between some of the Christian movements today as to whether there are still apostles. Some folks believe that there are apostles today and many even call themselves apostles.

Others feel that the apostolic office is over and past - that it was an office for the transition period of the early church. These would believe that they had authority from the Lord Himself to go out and set in order the early church.

There are a few in evangelical circles that believe that there is a gift of apostleship and that the early apostles were such gifted men. These usually believe that as the church grew the term and gift changed slightly and today would exist as a preacher or proclaimer of the Word.

I am not sure we have enough evidence to support any of the three positions strongly. I think the last position has the better support of the three. It fits in best with what we see in Ephesians four eleven and following when it says "And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; 12 For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ" If this is true there would be an understanding that the gift of prophet has also changed. The gift of prophet would be more along the lines of someone that can look at what is going on in the world, look to the Word and bring forth insightful messages from the Word that are closely related to the day. I would see these as some of the writers and scholars of the past that have given the church so much to think about.

Having said all that I think it is also quite possible that Ephesians four was written in a time when the apostles and prophets were still somewhat active in the local churches and that as that first generation died off the church was left with the evangelists and pastor teachers for the training of the saints. As the Word was being recorded, the need for apostolic authority was on the decline as was the need for the prophets.

I personally don't feel there are apostles and prophets today. If there are, I would think the last position would be the most consistent with Scripture.

CHAPTER 2

I TIMOTHY INTRODUCTION:

AUTHOR: Paul - 1:1

Paul was originally Saul in the book of Acts. It is of interest that Roman families that were Jews had the practice of giving their children both a Jewish and a Gentile name at birth. It may be that Saul was his Jewish name, and then after his conversion/going to the Gentiles with the Gospel, he went by his Roman or Gentile name Paul.

RECIPIENT: Timothy

1:2 " Unto Timothy, [my] own son in the faith"

1:18 "This charge I commit unto thee, son Timothy, "

6:20 "O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust,"

The Bible tells us that Timothy's mother and grandmother were a part of his life. "When I call to remembrance the unfeigned faith that is in thee, which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois, and thy mother Eunice; and I am persuaded that in thee also." II Tim 1:5

I am quite disappointed in my own similarities to Timothy in the spiritual realm. Neither my mother nor my grandmother did any more for me spiritually than to take me to church. Neither spoke to me of my souls need, neither spoke to me of the Savior - both assumed that the church had done its work and taught me what I needed to know.

Paul mentions that he had laid hands on Timothy (II Tim 1:6). This may indicate a setting apart as we see in Acts 13:1ff when it speaks of the setting apart of the first missionaries. It was not an inspection of the man's credentials, but a recognition of the Spirit's work in their life as well as their call to the ministry.

Paul also indicates that Timothy was relatively young, for in I Tim 4:12 he mentions, "Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity." Quite a grocery list for so young a man to live up to!

PLACE OF WRITING: Paul wrote this letter from somewhere. Now, with the brilliant remarks out of the way! We don't know for sure where it was written except that it was probably from the Macedonian or Grecian area.

I have never read any authors that said they knew for positive where the book was written. Many suggest the normal Macedonia or Greece thought, but none have proof either way.

It was very interesting the other night I was waiting for Faith to get off work and couldn't get anything on the radio except one of the evangelical preachers. I was so pleased that I had tuned in

because he related just exactly when and where the book was written. He stated boldly as fact that Paul had been in prison in Rome, released and he went to Spain. After Spain he was heading back and was again arrested and imprisoned where he wrote first and second Timothy. No basis, no facts other than what he said. So I guess you can agree with him or most commentators.

TIME OF WRITING: 63 A. D. Most feel after Paul was imprisoned and released from Rome, he went to Ephesus and then left Timothy there, while he himself went to Macedonia.

OCCASION OF WRITING: To encourage and instruct Timothy in the task of setting the church at Ephesus straight.

Timothy was Paul's representative and was trying to work out problems.

Now, this should be a great encouragement for the pastor today. Paul put three years into the church at Ephesus and had worked hard at training these folks, yet he leaves Timothy to straighten out problems!

If the apostle Paul couldn't plant a church, educate the church and leave it without problems, how in the world should any pastor think he can right all that is wrong in a couple years?

Paul had dealt with some of the people it would seem from what is mentioned in 1:19, 20. "19 Holding faith, and a good conscience; which some having put away concerning faith have made shipwreck: 20 Of whom is Hymenaeus and Alexander; whom I have delivered unto Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme."

Timothy was to care for the rest of the problems. Jeremiah, when God called him told him that the people wouldn't listen. Go preach even though they won't listen. Now, we see Paul telling Timothy to take care of the problems. Paul gets to travel and Timothy works through the headaches! It would seem that management has its benefits.

Ministry isn't always just fun. There were times when I was teaching that I would think if I didn't have to go to faculty meetings and help with all that junk, teaching would be great. I suspect that pastors now and then think "Man this job would be great if it weren't for the people!"

PURPOSE OF WRITING: A personal letter primarily to help Timothy to know what to do. Paul instructs Timothy in the area of attitudes toward work, then instructs him to drive out false teachers, and encourages him to select proper and worthy leaders.

THEME: Strong church government is put forth in the book while the gospel and faithful ministry are also main thoughts within the letter.

PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED: False Doctrine. The people and their acceptance of Timothy 4:12. What a problem to have! They didn't like it because he was too young!

KEY VERSE: I Timothy 3:15 "But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar ground of the truth."

Take time to read the first chapter before we get into the text.

Let's begin with verse one.

1. Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the commandment of God our Saviour, and Lord Jesus Christ, [which is] our hope;

WHAT DO WE SEE HERE?

Paul wrote the book.

Paul is an apostle.

He is an apostle of Christ.

He is an apostle by commandment of God.

THE WHEN AND WHERE OF THE COMMANDMENT?

The plan for the ages was set before the foundation of the World. The commandment was delivered on the road to Damascus. The account of Saul's conversion is found in Acts 9:1-10 and his commission is found in Acts 26:13-16.

Acts 26.16-18 "But rise, and stand upon thy feet: for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee; 17 Delivering thee from the people, and [from] the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee, 18 To open their eyes, [and] to turn [them] from darkness to light, and [from] the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me."

The term "commandment" is used of army commands that are given and are to be obeyed - no choice!

The natural application of this thought is that men that enter into the ministry should do so for the express purpose of following their Lord's direction, and not view their labor as an occupation or career. Status, place in life, financial gain and position should be completely foreign to the minister's mind. God may give these things to the man of God but they should be of little value to him. He is a minister of the Lord and at His disposal.

1:12 mentions that Paul was placed into the ministry. That should be the thought. II Tim 1:11 tells us that Paul considered himself "placed" in the positions that he held.

Let me just mention a little theology at this point. This commandment is issued by two people - God the Father and God the Son. This is a good proof text for the trinity. It shows two persons of the Godhead in equal positions. It would also be indicative of the Deity of Christ. Paul, by his construction, shows his belief that Christ was God. One further observation is the complete agreement of the Father and the Son.

"God our Savior", the originator of our salvation! This is God the Father that set into place the plan of the ages that allowed for the fall and set salvation for man in case the fall occurred. "Jesus Christ" the accomplisher of our salvation. It was through His work on the cross that man might see eternity with God.

Christ is our "hope". The term hope is a word that is in contrast to another Greek word that is translated hope. This term is the Greek word "elpis" which means to anticipate. The other term is the Greek word "elpizo" which means to expect. Do you notice the difference?

We might illustrate this by saying the term Paul is using here is like a poor man saying I hope I become a millionaire. While the other term would apply to the rich kid whose loving father is a millionaire. I hope I become a millionaire. He has the expectation of doing so.

Christ is the hope that we anticipate. Our anticipation of life should be fully centered on Christ and not on the things of this life or world! It is a hope promised, so we anticipate it, but we don't expect it because we deserve it or have a right to it.

2 Unto Timothy, [my] own son in the faith: Grace, mercy, [and] peace, from God our Father and Jesus Christ our Lord.

What a greeting! How do we greet one another today? "Ya havin a good one?" "Hey, how's it goin?" Grace Mercy and peace is Paul's greeting!

Maybe we should think about how we greet one another. Paul wanted Timothy to know the grace of God, he wanted Timothy to know the mercy of God, he wanted Timothy to know the peace of God as he goes into this situation with the church at Ephesus.

Again we see God the Father and Jesus Christ placed on the same level and accomplishing the same things.

Timothy is named as the one receiving the letter from Paul.

Paul mentions, "my own son in the faith". The term "own" indicates something lawfully begotten, true, or genuine. Most commentators suggest based on this definition that Timothy was Paul's "own" spiritual offspring. "in the faith" is the qualifier that is used to prove their point.

Some might suggest that II Tim 1.5 indicates that Timothy came from a Christian family - that he

was saved before he met Paul. "When I call to remembrance the unfeigned faith that is in thee, which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois, and thy mother Eunice; and I am persuaded that in thee also."

II Tim 3.14-15 also mentions that Timothy had been taught from a child. I suspect that mom and grand-mom raised him on the Word, but that they were not Christians until Paul arrived in Ephesus.

It is probable that Paul led all three to the Lord. We have no indication of when the three became believers, only that they were and that they had great faith. Remember that Paul planted the church at Ephesus and had ministered there for three years - he had great knowledge of Timothy and his family. This verse does not disprove the possibility of Timothy being Paul's spiritual son.

There seems to be a special bond between Paul and Timothy that is something that I have observed many times in real life. The spiritual father/mother and son/daughter are usually very close. We had a friend in Denver that had a spiritual daughter that drove half way across the US to see them for a few days.

The chances are good that Timothy was saved on Paul's first missionary journey because on the second journey Timothy is already saved. (Acts 16:1-3 mentions that Paul circumcised Timothy).

It is also noteworthy in Acts 16 that Paul had been discipling Timothy as well. Paul took Timothy with him on some of his journeys.

Discipleship is of great importance after salvation. The concept is similar to giving natural birth to a baby and leaving the infant to fend for itself in the world. Today when a mother abandons a newborn the world is horrified - even in our callous society. Impossible! When you assist in the spiritual birth of a believer, it should be your first priority to assure their discipleship. Either do it yourself, or assure that they are founded in a good local church where they will receive the training they need.

Items from God and Christ: Grace, Mercy, Peace.

These seem to be items that Paul was hoping that God would give to Timothy. Paul would know that these see their source in God, and may have been praying for the trio for Timothy.

When is the last time that you asked God to give someone else grace, mercy and peace?

When we pray for missionaries, these are certainly some items that they could use. We should ask God to give these things not only to the missionaries but also to our pastors, teachers and fellow believers. We all need to have more grace in our dealings with others. We all need more mercy in our dealings with others. We all need more peace in our dealings with others.

I see also in those three words the Gospel. God in His Grace showed us mercy that we did not desire and that grace and mercy were translated into peace for us in the form of salvation.

The phrase "our Lord" bears some consideration as well. Just how do you view Christ? Is He Lord of your life? Is He Lord of every area of your life?

He is Lord - fact. He bought and paid for you - you belong to Him! You must, however in your walk make Him Lord of your life and allow Him to have that position in your life. Hiebert in his commentary on this verse mentions, "If you do not crown Him Lord of all, You do not really crown Him Lord at all." (P 26)

He is Lord of your life
He is Lord of your mind
He is Lord of your body
He is Lord of your soul
He is Lord of your work
He is Lord of your pocket book
He is Lord of your home
He is Lord of your family

He is Lord in EVERY AREA OF YOUR LIFE. He is Lord of every large area of life and He is Lord of every small area of life.

One final application of His Lordship might well be in the area of our local churches. We give lip service to the thought of Christ being the Head of the church, but do we really go to Him in prayer for the leading that He can give?

Do we go to Him in prayer for the wisdom to make decisions for the church?

Do we go to Him in prayer to make those financial decisions for the church? The building programs? The missionaries we support? The pastors we support? The evangelistic efforts we make?

Do we go to Him in prayer to plead for His work in the lives of our church children and youth and adults?

Might we commit ourselves to making Him Lord of our churches as well as of our lives?

Our prayer as individuals must be something that flows out of a truly committed heart. It ought to be a definition of our spirit, our attitude toward God, what is inside us. An unknown author put it this way:

I cannot say "our" if I live only for myself.

I cannot say "Father" if I do not endeavor each day to act like His child.
I cannot say "who art in heaven" if I am laying up no treasure there.
I cannot say "hallowed be Thy name" if I am not striving for holiness.
I cannot say "Thy kingdom come" if I am not doing all in my power to hasten that wonderful event.
I cannot say "Thy will be done" if I am disobedient to His Word.
I cannot say "in earth as it is in heaven" if I'll not serve Him here and now.
I cannot say "give us this day our daily bread" if I am dishonest or seeking things by subterfuge.
I cannot say "forgive us our debts" if I harbor a grudge against anyone.
I cannot say "lead us not into temptation" if I deliberately place myself in its path.
I cannot say "deliver us from evil" if I do not put on the whole armor of God.
I cannot say "Thine is the kingdom" if I do not give the King the loyalty due Him from a faithful subject.
I cannot attribute to Him "the power" if I fear what men may do.
I cannot ascribe to Him "the glory" if I'm seeking honor only for myself, and I cannot say "forever" if the horizon of my life is bounded completely by time.

If we assure the above to be true, then we should start considering our church with a similar detailed inspection. When we have done this Christ will have Headship and be able to lead us as a church and as individuals.

CHAPTER 3

We now shift gears from the glories of Christ and His Fathers salvation, to those that might teach other than the truth.

A couple years ago there was a theology board on the internet that had some real contenders for the faith. Just what faith some of them were contending for was the difficult question. There were radical charismatics, there were moderate charismatics, there were reformers, there were baptismal regenerationists (even though they denied that title), there were good logical minds, there were nonsensical minds, there was a man that thought he was the Beast of the book of Revelation and there was Dennis Clough. He was one of the sane voices on the board. I would love to give a big hello to Dennis if he happens to read this someday - Hi Dennis, and a big thank you for the following!

At one point when the false doctrine was flying way too thick, Dennis posted the following:

To Quasi Theologians:

"I don't study, it gets in my way, Nevertheless, I've still got plenty to say.

"Peter and Paul were oh, so wrong, It's a good thing for you I came along.

"I am sent by me to edit His Word, to define good news you thought you heard.

"So it's not by grace after all, It's not enough on Him to call, on your boot straps you must haul!

"It's true that Jesus came to die for sin, but in my system, the cross doesn't fit in.

"We must save ourselves by our works, People who only believe are really jerks!

"I know my message is really true, Cause I made it up, with scissors and glue.

"It came to me in the middle of the night, my toes tingled and my head felt light.

"It makes me feel good to be able to bless, To take confusion and add to the mess.

"I don't care about truth or context, as long as I take some into the vortex!

"Please don't bother me with Scripture, Of such things, MY doctrine is pure.

"So come and go with me, I know not where, But be sure, there won't be any Christians there!

"Dedicated to all who deviate from the "faith once delivered to the saints"! Dennis Clough"

3 As I besought thee to abide still at Ephesus, when I went into Macedonia, that thou mightest charge some that they teach no other doctrine,

This verse is the basis for some thinking the book was written from Macedonia.

Paul had given Timothy authority to begin setting things in order in the church at Ephesus.

To the point of teaching of false doctrine: Paul states, "charge some that they teach no other doctrine. . . ." Charge according to Vine is "strictly used of commands received from a superior and transmitted to others."

This passage, it would seem to me, gives the church leadership the right, indeed, the obligation to see to it that there is no doctrine other than correct doctrine taught in the church.

That my friend, is a tall order. How can church leaders fulfill this responsibility?

It will require knowing the teachers. Don't ever allow anyone to teach your people without knowing some of their background. This includes fill in pastors, this includes Sunday school teachers, this includes missionaries, and this includes all that would teach doctrine in the church over which you have leadership.

Know those that you invite in among the sheep. I have seen missionaries from questionable missions invited in only because they grew up in the church. That is not the criterion to determine speakers on.

It will require not allowing some to teach. If you don't have the proper information to make a decision - don't allow it! If you have to say no to aunt Tillie's favorite nephew, the missionary then so be it. Don't allow it.

It will require correcting those that are in error. If you find that someone in your church is teaching false doctrine, then action must be taken. It will be embarrassing and it will be hard but it must be done. They must be corrected or removed.

It will require some serious prayer time before getting into the situations that you will get into. Pray for wisdom concerning what is going on. Be sure that you are correct in your facts. Be sure that all is correct and that God is in the lead before you move.

It will require knowing your Sunday school curriculum and checking it from time to time. The Sunday school publishers are in constant flux. What was a good company ten years ago may be

very poor in their curriculum today. Many of the Sunday school publishers are now owned by secular companies. One of the fundamental publishers changed its name to widen its customer base, then was purchased by another publisher which in turn was purchased by another publisher - from fundamental and denominational to evangelical and nondenominational in about fifteen years.

Review your materials every year or so, ask your teachers to evaluate every year or so - be sure the materials are still sound.

It will require knowing your entire church and its programs. What is being taught to your children, what is being taught to your youth, what is being taught to your adults?

As I talk about this, I am not talking about the differences of opinion about minor doctrines, but major variances from the major doctrines of the church. We can have differences of opinion on where I Timothy was written, but not about whether I Timothy is a part of the Bible. We can have differences of opinion on how we approach the book of Revelation, but as to the identification of the Lamb we should be in accord.

Church leadership is not a fun office that gives us a good concept of ourselves. It is work. It is responsibility. It is accountability to the Lord for how we did. It is thankless at times. It is NEEDED!

I personally think when Paul speaks of men that "desire" the office of bishop in 3:1; he means they know up front what they are getting into and still want to fulfill the office. We will take a longer look at this when we get to chapter three.

It is of interest that the church where Timothy is ministering is one that Paul had planted. Indeed, Paul stayed three years in this church seeing to its teaching personally. It went downhill! What can we learn from this?

Don't condemn a man that plants a church for how it turns out in a few years. The former pastors may be at fault or they may not be at fault. God will sort out all the details when the time comes.

Realize that most Christian organizations and institutions head downhill soon after they are started. Not that they need to, but many do.

Most of the schools that I have attended were in the process of decline while I was attending. Some are way down the road and others are doing very well. One is in the extremes of Evangelicalism and on a cash only basis with suppliers due to their very poor stewardship.

It is also of interest to notice that Paul knew that this would happen. He mentions it in Acts 20:29-31, "For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw

away disciples after them. Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears."

Notice that Paul not only warns of trouble entering in, (speaks to being careful in the area of accepting church members) but also mentions men from within the church will arise "speaking perverse things." He knew the world and he knew human nature.

Notice "after my departing" It is indicated that only after he leaves will they come in and rise up. Is it possible they knew Paul could not be fooled? Is it possible they knew Paul was not one to argue doctrine with? Is it possible they knew Paul was a force to be reckoned with?

Note his last comment - "I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears." It would seem that warnings were keeping the false out and from rising up - **CONSIDER THAT CAREFULLY!**

And so what are you going to tell that person the next time they say doctrine isn't important? Paul thought it was very important and if we want a strong church we had better pay attention to it as well.

Keeping a church or organization straight is a full time job. It takes constant watching for possible down hill trends and problems. A serious problem can creep in, seemingly overnight if watch is not kept.

I'm sure this is one of the frustrations of pastors as they leave a ministry. They can assume fairly safely that trouble will come with either the new pastor or from within the assembly sooner or later.

A very sound pastor left a medium sized church in Nebraska. Within a year the new pastor and part of the board were at odds with the rest of the board and ultimately the church split with the pastor taking the majority of the people with him to begin another church in the same town of about three thousand people.

A pastor that sees this happen after a number of years of struggle, sweat, commitment, heartache and tears must really hurt!

"When I went" literally means "while departing." This was the last admonition that Paul left with Timothy. **AND NOW HE IS REPEATING** it in his letter - sounds to me that this is kind of important!

Question: **WHAT IS FALSE DOCTRINE?** Might I suggest anything that contradicts the clear teaching of Scripture?

Paul mentions the same thought in his second letter to Timothy in II Tim 2:15-16, "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. But shun profane and vain babblings: for they will increase [or grow] unto more ungodliness." The Word is the key! Notice the word "more" - the profane and vain babblings are

ungodly - if you don't shun them there will be MORE ungodliness.

4 Neither give heed to fables and endless genealogies, which minister questions, rather than godly edifying which is in faith: [so do].

Give heed has the idea of occupy yourself with. Don't sit down and occupy yourself on any long-term basis on these things. I recall many times in Bible College when as freshmen we know it alls would talk and argue and discuss at great lengths the intricacies of the Word - many times it was about useless questions, though it did keep us out of trouble.

Don't occupy yourself with:

fables = myths, something without historical foundations. You might consider UFO's in the class, or you might consider some of the creation myths that are in circulation today in this class. Indeed, anything besides a six 24-hour period creation is in this category. Arguing the fine points of other theories is not worth your time and effort.

endless genealogies = some feel that some Judaizers were laying stress on the genealogies of the Old Testament or possibly their own genealogies. They may have been quibbling over their personal roots.

I can imagine in a couple of generations the problem that might have been had by the church if Paul hadn't taken the Corinthians to task for their division over Paul and Apollos. Can't you just picture it in 450 A.D. - the elders of the church at Ephesus - some claiming that they are descended from Apollos, while another would be bragging of being in direct line to Paul himself, thus seeking power over the church? The First church of Apollos and the First church of Paul could well have resulted in many cities.

These things cause questions rather than promote edification of the saints. The thought would seem to be that anything that causes questions should be set aside unless the questions are answerable from Scripture. If the questions aren't answerable, then it would be best to set those topics aside and replace them with things that will cause edification of the saints.

There are some Christian books on the market which are totally outside the scope of Scripture, trying to prove God through science. I am not sure this is wrong, but at this point the Word is adequate for the bringing of the lost to the Lord, and I am not sure spending millions on books that try to prove things outside of Scripture is a wise use of the Lord's money. Had God wanted to prove His existence scientifically the Bible would contain I & II Science.

"so do" is not really a part of the text. The King James is one of the few translations that show it and being in italics it is indicated that it is not there. It is implied in the command.

Apply these thoughts to your Sunday school materials. Do they lead to good scriptural principles

or do they lead to long discussions about what a text may or may not mean?

We attended a Bible study one time that had about fifteen in attendance. We read a verse and discussed what it meant. About ten different interpretations were presented. The leader finally closed the session with "Well there certainly are a lot of possible interpretations of the passage and I am sure one of them is the right one."

An example would be faith healing. We could discuss it for hours, but the moment we brought Scripture in we would limit our discussion very quickly.

We should have a major problem with much of what is on the airwaves today. People are listening to everything under the sun and to everyone that can get a channel. Much of what is out there is not edifying the local assemblies.

It is taking financial support from the local assembly.
It is taking people from the local assembly. (some stop going to church)
It is taking doctrinal soundness from the local assembly.
It is teaching false doctrine in many cases.

As believers listen to the false, sooner or later they will begin to incorporate some of the information into their thinking and soon it will be in the local assembly.

By the way, what did Paul just say about that? Church leaders should stop it. Many listen and watch this trash because pastors have not been warning their sheep of the wolves! There are good programs on television, but there is also a ton of bad ones. GAIN DISCERNMENT FOLKS. If you know you are watching someone that is off doctrinally now and then, why bother listening to him at all.

While we are talking about listening, I might mention a woman that was very worried about her husband. (From Baptist Publications adult quarterly/Keeping the Faith published years ago.) "A distraught woman said to her physician, 'I am really afraid, doctor that my husband has some terrible mental affliction. Sometimes I talk to him for hours and then discover that he hasn't heard a single word I have said. 'That is no affliction,' was the reply, 'that's a divine gift.'"

Don't spend time listening to the false prophets of the airwaves and byways. **TURN A DEAF EAR! PAY ATTENTION TO THE GOOD DOCTRINE AND TEACHING THAT YOU ARE GETTING IN YOUR LOCAL ASSEMBLY AND FROM THE WORD.**

I must admit that I am not really for the radio and TV ministers - even, the good ones. At times they lay out what I would class as misleading if not false doctrine. Once that information is unleashed over the air there is nothing that they can do about it. Someone may have tuned in for only one program and picked up something that he shouldn't have. The listener assuming the preacher was good might practice false doctrine unknowingly.

I would like to read a quote from an adult Sunday school manual from Scripture Press (April-June 1969; Adult Living; p 3) I think this line of thought has weakened the church in recent years.

"There is another caution in this chapter. Some first-century Christians spent hours talking about the Old Testament genealogies, making up fictitious histories about each name. In the Dark Ages, theologians argued endlessly about how many angels could dance on the head of a pin. And today there are people who delight in endless - and pointless - speculation on predestination and free will; immersion and sprinkling; the pre, mid, and post-tribulation rapture; and many other "fine points."

I personally think that there is much that could be taught on some of these subjects that would clarify the discussions. The problem is that many people that are doing the discussing have never studied the topics that they seem to be experts on.

A man on the internet made several ridiculous unfounded, undocumented statements against dispensationalism. It was obvious that he had never read of dispensations. He stated that dispensationalists believed in two ways of salvation - one for the Old Testament and one for the New Testament. Totally unfounded!

I tend to think that to relegate these topics to the idea of endless - and pointless - speculation is other doctrine. There is much that we can know from the scripture on the topics and we should not relegate these doctrines to the back burner just because some people seem to get stuck on them and cause problems with them. It seems to me this material was relegating good doctrine to the area of false doctrine.

Doctrine is very important. Otherwise, Christ and the apostles wouldn't have given so much of it to us to live our lives by!

Study these topics, find your own ideas, and discuss with others to find if you have missed something and don't let it hinder your spiritual life. Don't, as Paul says, dwell on these things - study them - learn of them and move on to other doctrine.

The modern application of the genealogies might be seen in those that claim that they are in part of an apostolic succession. The Roman church holds that all Popes have come from Peter in direct line. Others hold to a succession back to John the Baptist and state that if you haven't been baptized by a man that was baptized by a man that was baptized and so goes the succession back to John the Baptist, then you aren't really baptized and that you need to be baptized by one of their men.

5. Now the end of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart, and [of] a good conscience, and [of] faith unfeigned:

Now I don't know all that this verse is saying, but it certainly sounds important and probably kind of hard! As some would say - that is deeeeeeeep stuff!

The NASB mentions "But the goal of our instruction is love from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith."

What commandment is in view? I would think in relation to the context that it is probably the instructions concerning false teachers.

Some suggest that the commandment is the command to love - they set forth Gal. 5.14 "For all the law is fulfilled in one word, [even] in this; Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." Rom. 13.8-10 also supports this thought.

Others suggest that this is speaking of the Law of the Old Testament. However, verse seven seems to say that the Old testament law is what some of the false teachers are teaching.

I think that the thought of it being the instructions or love fit best, and I would opt for the specific context - instructions to deal with the false teachers.

Question: Do Christians practice verse five? Do we show love to one another as we are in the business of edification?

The idea of love has some very perverted results in some quarters of Christianity. I was in a session a number of years ago and the speaker was telling of an old man in Denver, CO that called himself Isaiah and dressed in a white robe. The man wandered the streets preaching a bit of everything. The speaker mentioned that one Sunday he was driving the Sunday school bus and he was tempted to run over Isaiah. He figured that when the police found "FORD" stamped in Isaiah's chest they would know what had happened. I trust that you do not find this attitude to be that of Christian love. Isaiah needed the Lord and quite possibly some mental treatment, not the disgust of God's people.

Love should come from the three sources mentioned:

Love out of a PURE HEART

Question: What does this mean? Matt 5:8 mentions, "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." This may relate to the motivation of the heart. We should act toward others with true spiritual, Christ like motivations. This is going to require spirit controlled people not self-controlled people. A holy heart - no unconfessed sin.

Two verses will give some further understanding to the term pure heart.

Ps 24.3-5 "Who shall ascend into the hill of the LORD? or who shall stand in his holy place? 4

He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart ; who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully. 5 He shall receive the blessing from the LORD, and righteousness from the God of his salvation."

I Pet 1.22 "Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, [see that ye] love one another with a pure heart fervently:"

All of these verses show a pure heart to be one that is regenerated by the Holy Spirit.

Only as we have a pure heart, can we ever love another properly. Without the pure heart we will love through clouded eyes - eyes clouded by material concerns, by personality concerns etc.

Barnes probably sums it up when he says "The commandment was not designed to secure merely the outward expressions of love, but that which had its seat in the heart."

Scofield has a side reference to Eph. 6.24 where Paul ends his book to the Ephesians with this comment and blessing. "Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Amen."

Love out of a GOOD CONSCIENCE

This is going to take a person whose life is without sin. There is no way that a person with sin in their life can really have a good conscience.

This phrase goes to the motivations, as well as the truth of character of the individual. Things are to be done with a clear conscience - free of guilty feelings - nothing but the total truth in motivation and character.

I don't want to get high brow on you but I ran across a quote that fits quite well here. Now, mind you I ran across it in my illustration database, not in the original writer's book - I don't want you to be mistaken on that!

"As two assassins stealthily crept into the sleeping Duke of Clarence's bedchamber one is suddenly stricken with pangs of conscience. "A man cannot steal, but it accuseth him; he cannot swear but it checks him; he cannot lie with his neighbor's wife, but that it detects him. It is a blushing shamefast spirit that mutinies in a man's bosom; it fills one full of obstacles; it made me once restore a purse of gold that I found; it beggared any man that keeps it; it is turned out of all towns and cities for a dangerous thing; and every man that means to live well endeavors to trust to himself and to live without it. . . . it is even now at my elbow, persuading me not to kill the duke." William Shakespeare, King Richard III act 1, scene 4.

A good conscience will bring you to do right!

The book of Acts mentions Paul's labor in this area as follows when he was appearing before Felix. "And herein do I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of offence toward God, and [toward] men" Acts 24.16

Love out of a FAITH UNFEIGNED or as the NASB puts it a "sincere faith."

Sincere faith can come only from salvation. Any faith that we might have without salvation is going to be polluted with the sin nature!

It probably indicates also that the person is committed to Christ in their life in all areas of life as well.

A Sunday School teacher saw one of her little boys drawing furiously with a set of crayons. "What are you doing, Johnny?" she asked.

"I'm drawing a picture of God," said Johnny.

"But Johnny," said the teacher, "nobody knows what God looks like."

Replied Johnny: "Well, they will by the time I'm through with THIS!"

That is sincere faith - faith that they know what is going to be!

Now, the import of the phrase relates to how we are to love. Imagine if you will, trying to love someone, without a sinless heart, a clear conscience and true faith in God. Any of the three lacking would make it very difficult to love, and impossible to love adequately.

When we confront the false teachers, we must be on this kind of footing! When we confront the lost, we also must be on this kind of footing! Anything less and we will most likely falter.

These should be our personal goals as well as our CHURCH GOALS! These are things that come naturally from the love of Christ that should flow through us.

"A rich Dutch merchant was seeking to buy a diamond of a certain kind to add to his collection. A famous dealer in New York found such a stone and called him to come and see it.

"The merchant flew immediately to New York, where the seller had assigned his best diamond expert to close the transaction. After hearing the assistant describe in perfect technical detail the diamond's worth and beauty, the Dutchman decided not to buy it. Before he left, however, the owner of the store stepped forward and asked, "Do you mind if I show you that stone once more?" The customer agreed.

"The store owner didn't repeat one thing that the salesman had said. He simply took the stone in

his hand, stared at it, and described the beauty of the stone in a way that revealed why this stone stood out from all the others he had seen in his life. The customer bought it immediately.

"Tucking his new purchase into his breast pocket, the customer commented to the owner, "Sir, I wonder why you were able to sell me this stone when your salesman could not?"

"The owner replied, "That salesman is the best in the business. He knows more about diamonds than anyone, including myself, and I pay him a large salary for his knowledge and expertise. But I would gladly pay him twice as much if I could put into him something I have which he lacks. You see, he knows diamonds, but I love them."

"God is not interested in how much we know but in how much we love. When we truly love Jesus, we love others as well, and that is how the good news of the Gospel is spread." Hot Illustrations for Youth Talks by Wayne Rice.

We can know all about God, but not love Him - As we love Him we will love each other and be better equipped to do His work in and out of the church.

With this kind of love we can confront those that are in error. With this kind of love we have the best opportunity to bring them back into truth or release them from our midst. With this kind of love we can reach the lost.

In case you missed it in 1999 in October the six billionth baby was born. The report also mentioned that there are one billion young people of child bearing years. Thus, we will have another billion or two within years.

Point? Missionaries are on the drastic decrease while population is on the increase. I personally believe that the decrease in missionaries is directly tied to the lack of good solid teaching of doctrine in our churches over the past years. We have been losing the vision of a lost world out there. We have no vision, because we really don't have God's view of the lost!

Maybe in coming days as we start requiring of our preachers sound doctrine and love coming forth from the believers we will see the missionary effort revived.

CHAPTER 4

Years ago we met a young couple in Bible college. They were helping a small AMF Sunday school that was kind of playing with becoming a church. They asked us to assist in the little work so we dove right in. I taught the Adult Sunday school for a time and we traded off doing a short "teaching time" in the effort to move into a church service.

The young man had a real knack for preaching the word with a real life application. We then assisted with them in another work where he was preaching every Sunday. He was one of the best preachers I have had the privilege to sit under. He always applied the Word to where we were living.

He began studies at a seminary that had a real over emphasis on academics. As his education progressed his preaching became more involved in detail and academic matters. At the end before, moving away, he was one of the poorest preachers I have ever been under. He was teaching a particular method of study and everyone in the church including his wife disagreed with what he was doing.

He was in my view at that point in his life turned from the mark of being a great preacher to one that was a vain jangler.

A. W. Tozer puts our text into our own context in his subtle toe stomping way.

"We have gotten accustomed to the blurred puffs of gray fog that pass for doctrine in churches and expect nothing better. From some previously unimpeachable sources are now coming vague statements consisting of a milky admixture of Scripture, science, and human sentiment that is true to none of its ingredients because each one works to cancel the others out. Little by little Christians these days are being brainwashed. Evidence indicates that an increasing numbers of them are becoming ashamed to be found unequivocally on the side of truth. They say they believe, but their beliefs have been so diluted as to be impossible of clear definition. Moral power has always accompanied definite beliefs. Great saints have always been dogmatic. We need a return to a gentle dogmatism that smiles while it stands stubborn and firm on the Word of God that lives and abides forever."

I Timothy 1.6 From which some having swerved have turned aside unto vain jangling;

Does it seem to you that because they left the love and other items in verse five, which should have been there, that they have turned to vain jangling? It seems that is the easiest way to view it. The NASB follows this thought as well.

Vain jangling has the thought of vain talking or empty talk. One writer mentions this as one that

utters empty senseless things. I don't know for sure where that line is between senseless and sensible. I assume there is a little bit of perspective in this. What one views as sensible may be seen by others as senseless. What is empty and senseless to a husband certainly isn't empty and senseless to their wife - and the women all said - AMEN!

Job knew well what vain words or empty words were. He mentions in Job 16:1 "Then Job answered and said, 2 I have heard many such things: miserable comforters [are] ye all. 3 Shall vain words have an end? or what emboldeneth thee that thou answerest?"

Another example of vain jangling might well be the outworking of an improper spiritual life. It seems to me that a loose living Christian's testimony can be capable of becoming vain jangling? If a person looks at a Christian that is preaching one thing and living another it will appear to them as vain jangling - jibberish!

I would like to consider some examples of what I would call vain jangling.

In ages past there have been many questions to consider. One such follows this line of thinking. God is all-powerful, and God can do anything that he wants to do. So, can he create a rock so big that He can't pick it up?

The question has some valid information to deliver; however, after a point it would be vain jangling to continue the discussion on the subject.

Some suggest that the discussion method of teaching is "pooled ignorance." If discussion is not used correctly, this method of teaching often declines to vain talking. Yes, there are times when I would agree. However, the discussion method of teaching need not be this way if used properly.

There is one question that usually pops up in this discussion. How many angels can stand on the head of a pin? Well, this discussion can go on for quite awhile, however since they are spirit beings, it would seem logical that all of them could stand on the head of one physical pin.

Another application might lead us to question just what our fellowship is these days. Is it fellowship or empty talk? I spoke in a little Baptist church in Chugwater, WY (a little town you have to see if you have time!) and mentioned several times in the message that most fellowship was news, weather and sports. After the service a rancher's wife came to me and said, "I agree with you in principle, but in Chugwater it isn't news, weather and sports, it is fences, weather and bulls!"

We don't talk of God, we don't talk of what God is doing in our lives - we talk about empty things - things that do not bring edification.

As we set forth a pure heart, good conscience and a sincere faith, the result will be some powerful teaching, preaching and living of the Word of God. Take some time to consider how

Christians live their lives. How do we live our lives?

Barnes mentions about these teachers, "they failed of the things referred to, and had turned to vain talk. The word "which" in the plural, refers not to the law [or commandment in the King James], but to the things enumerated - a pure heart, a good conscience, and unfeigned faith."

I trust that you have gotten to know some of the great missionaries of the past. Men like Carey, Hudson Taylor, etc. These men knew of the pure heart, of good conscience and sincere faith! To read their life story is to know of their great love for their God and their great desire to serve Him.

Those they witnessed to and ministered to, also knew of the impact of these men on their lives. We need some Careys and Taylors in the church today in a big way.

Paul goes on to state bluntly that not only did they swerve from what was right and that they are empty talkers - now he says:

7 Desiring to be teachers of the law; understanding neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm.

This is a real slap in the face for the people that Paul is talking about!

- a. They desire to teach
- b. they don't understand what they say
- c. they don't understand what they affirm to others as truth.

That is a problem to want to teach and not be able to understand and comprehend the subject at hand.

Might I illustrate this?

A teacher I heard once found his foot in his mouth in a big way. He mentioned that his father changed the oil in his tractor every so many miles. Now, being a city slicker myself I thought he had a good illustration, however if you know anything at all about tractors, which the teacher did not, you know that you change oil and maintain tractors according to hours the unit has run not miles traveled. The teacher didn't understand the principles of tractor care, nor did he understand that which he was holding up as truth.

Another illustration:

I could stand before you and read Einstein's theory of relativity but I certainly would not understand it. I might even tell you emphatically that it was true, yet I cannot teach it, because I don't understand it.

Some of our politicians are right here aren't they. They have all the answers and they tell you all about it, but they don't understand the problems at all.

When working in TV repair in Denver I had a little sign over my bench. "If you think you comprehend this confusion you just don't understand the situation."

The term translated desiring according to Vine is "to will, to wish, implying volition and purpose, frequently a determination, is most usually rendered to will." This person has not only left what is right, and turned to empty talking, but he desires to teach as well. He has determined that he is going to teach as opposed to God calling and gifting him to teach. There is a bit of a difference.

The term translated "teachers of the law" is one Greek word - it is the term "nomodidaskalos {nom-od-id-as'-kal-os}" It is made up of two terms, nomo which has the thought of law and didaskalos which is often translated master in reference to the Lord Jesus in the Gospels. It is also translated teacher and doctor as in a doctor of law - a law teacher.

It would seem obvious these people that have been classed as empty talkers - those that have turned from the mark are teachers of the law. I trust you have a healthy grasp of Paul's view of these teachers.

The terms "affirm" is often translated "affirm strongly" - something felt strongly to be truth but is not - not unlike Saul himself before he was saved. He strongly affirmed his belief in the law and the way of the Jewish leaders of his day. I wonder if this is why he reacted so strongly to these men - he knew just how wrong they were and how misguided their sincerity was. He also knew how destructive their teaching could be.

Let's take a moment to look at Paul's earlier life. In Acts 8.1 we have a context of Stephen preaching and being stoned to death. Luke records "And Saul was consenting unto his death. And at that time there was a great persecution against the church which was at Jerusalem; and they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judaea and Samaria, except the apostles." Saul was part of that persecution!

Most agree that the persecution brought the furtherance of the Gospel - Saul was spreading the Gospel before He was saved!

Again in Acts 9.1 we see further how Saul was treating the Christians. "And Saul, yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went unto the high priest, 2 And desired of him letters to Damascus to the synagogues, that if he found any of this way, whether they were men or women, he might bring them bound unto Jerusalem."

Paul was part of that great persecution. He was out and about with the authority given him by the Jewish leadership to round up Christians - those heretics with all the false doctrine!

He, a teacher and believer in the law, was persecuting Christians - those that taught of Christ, the Messiah come.

In I Timothy we see this come full circle - Paul, the leadership, of the church now telling his delegates to root out those that would teach the law.

I would like to look briefly at a couple of Scriptural passages that speak to this subject of empty talking.

Nested in a long list of sins is Eph. 5.6 "Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience."

Vain words can lead to gross sinful lifestyles. Thus, they should be shunned. Paul says "Let no man deceive you" Vain words are aimed at deception - mark that down in your memory banks! VAIN WORDS ARE AIMED AT DECEPTION.

The term translated vain here means empty or by application "devoid of truth" according to Thayer.

Phillips mentions in his commentary on Ephesians: "'Let no man deceive you,' says the Holy Spirit. Those whose teaching undermines God's absolutes in the realm of personal morality are speaking vain words."

II Tim. 2.16 also speaks to the thought of vain words resulting in ungodliness.

Another form of the word translated vain jangling is used of vain talkers in Titus 1.10 "For there are many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers, specially they of the circumcision: 11 Whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre's sake."

Paul is telling Titus that these must be stopped. This is just further indication of how important it is to stop the vain or empty talking and empty talkers in the church. They are misleading the sheep from what is true and nourishing.

We also see in that passage that if you don't stop them they will subvert entire houses or families. It also mentions that their motivation may well be money!

So, what application might we find in this negative portion of Timothy?

1. It is positive in the aspect that we are to clear out this type of teacher so that we can get on with the work of the Lord!

I don't know if you have ever had a time in your life when you are exposed to ungodly or

negative influence for a long period of time. Many have told me of times like this and the usual result was that they became negative, and the bad influence was very bad for their spiritual life.

If there are false teachers in a church it is bound to have a negative result on the membership, not only in the doctrinal area, but just in the general life of the church.

2. If we want to be sure we aren't jangling vainly, then we must be sure that we have the following:

- a. We love correctly, having a pure heart, good conscience and a sincere faith.
- b. We desire to teach correct doctrine.
- c. We need to understand that which we teach, BEFORE WE TEACH IT!
- d. We need to affirm only that which is truth.

In one of the courses I taught at Frontier I taught a series of principles that I found in an old book. The book has been updated a couple times by modern authors, but they did a Readers Digest version of it. Any way there was a man that wrote of the Seven Laws of Teaching. I always added an additional law. I always encouraged my students to never teach a principle that they had not already incorporated into their personal lives.

I think this would take care of some of the problems we have been talking about. If we are putting something into our own lives, we will be a little more careful to be sure it is truth.

3. I really don't want to pick on the politicians, but I think if anyone with a reasonable mind would read this passage and then listen to some of the things these people say you will know why there is so much noise coming out of Washington these days.

4. If you hear anyone talking about the Old Testament Law be careful that they are not asking you to start following that Law as part of gaining or keeping your salvation. The Law has absolutely nothing to do with your salvation or keeping your salvation. Salvation is through the shed blood of Christ alone and nothing added.

5. Now, I couldn't leave such a prime opportunity to speak of the radio and television ministers! Well, I think I will not say any more. We covered that previously!

Well maybe just one illustration: A couple years ago I saw a woman on television that had written a book on getting rid of your husband. At one point in the discussion she mentioned that God helped her write this book and that she just prayed that God would help women to get rid of that man in their bad marriage. That is of interest to me. A God that HATES DIVORCE helping a woman write a book on how to divorce a husband. HUMMMMMMMMM!

This woman had the strong desire to teach other women. She had written a book on the subject. She did not really understand the truth of marriage or of God, and she set forth her error with full

affirmation - A TRUE VAIN JANGLER I would think.

6. Another positive in this passage that we have not mentioned is that there are some that have swerved from correct teaching. They are in the minority, which should encourage us. Those of us that are in the majority must however be on the lookout for those that have or are in the process of leaving correct doctrine.

7. There is another thought that we have not covered. As you read the context, you will note that those swerving seem to be turning from the items listed in verse five - a pure heart, a clear conscience and a sincere faith. ("Now the end of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart, and [of] a good conscience, and [of] faith unfeigned: 6 From which some having swerved have turned aside unto vain jangling;")

Might it be a good piece of application to encourage one another when we see someone that has in the past been strong in these three areas, but seems to be slipping in one or more of the areas? Say someone has always had a strong faith that God will take care of them, but has begun to worry about how they are going to make it in coming months.

To know when someone doesn't have a pure heart or clear conscience is not easy, but I think you will see hints from their actions and activities of life. Maybe an encouraging word to consider these areas in they're quite time with the Lord would help them to see your concern for them.

These passages are aimed at people that are really doing some false teaching. I have mentioned that these are in a minority but there is a reality that the run of the mill Christian can easily enter into these practices in small ways.

I received an email from a man that works among the military on a base in the east. He mentioned to me that he had prayed his way around the base for seven days. I am assuming that someone had told him to do as the Israelites did around Jericho.

Now praying isn't wrong. Praying as you walk around the area where you want God to work is not wrong. However, God gave a promise to Joshua and the Israelites about Jericho and it had nothing to do with a military base and a missionary in the United States.

Since he gave me the impression that he was looking for something special to happen because he had done this I am confident that someone told him that God would bless his effort. Well God always blesses prayer and walking is good for the heart, but it does not follow that when you walk around a spot praying that God is going to do a miracle there.

We need to be very careful how we teach the Word and how we apply His word to our lives.

WE DON'T WANT TO BE VAIN TALKERS!

CHAPTER 5

When we were in Wyoming, we lived about 50 miles north of Cheyenne and about 40 miles from any other town. The roads between were long and very empty. Many were the times when we would be plugging along at the speed limit and we would be passed by cars, pickups, and jeeps traveling at 80-90 miles per hour.

Naturally there were never any state patrolmen around when this happened - well almost never. One night we were headed to town and a pickup zipped past us and we had our usual conversation about there not being any police in the area. As we topped the next hill, we saw this same vehicle pulled over with a state trooper writing him a ticket. As we traveled on down the road, I noticed that the pickup pulled back onto the road and the trooper did a U-turn and headed back south.

You guessed it as soon as the officer was out of sight the guy went ripping around us as before. One of us commented that it would be neat if there was another officer near Torrington that would catch him again - the other mentioned that there was no way that could happen.

Just outside Torrington there is huge curve with a railroad track crossing in the middle. There was the pickup with another officer doing business with the driver!

You see the law is good when it is applied (in America it isn't applied anywhere enough) but our laws are good!

Paul knows this was true of God's law as well.

8 But we know that the law [is] good, if a man use it lawfully;

Paul says to Timothy - we know or we perceive the law is good, if a man use it lawfully.

The statement is open ended in that the phrase "if a man use it lawfully" is what is called a third class condition - maybe he will and maybe he won't. Clearly the pickup driver did not know how to use the law.

Clearly the law can be used properly as it was in the Old Testament to bring the Israelites to God, or it can be misused as it was at Ephesus. The false teachers were not using the law well - they were using it improperly and they were holding their teaching up as truth, when they didn't really know what they were talking about. In truth they were using the law for a purpose never intended.

The first item is that the "law is good," and naturally it must be good for it came from God! It is

only good however if it is used properly.

It seems a tad dumb for Paul to tell Timothy that the law is good since indeed, it came from God in the first place. Most feel this statement was for Paul's detractors more than for Timothy or even the Christian reader of the ages. He didn't want to get nailed to the wall by someone that was looking for a chance to point a finger at him.

Paul does not elaborate on the phrase "if a man use it lawfully" so we should probably relate this to the context - the thought of NOT teaching the law without understanding it - as has been the case of the false teachers.

The question is this, what law are we talking about?

The Mosaic Law? Probably. There is little question of this among commentators, but there are some that believe that it speaks of the ceremonial law - the sacrifices etc., while others hold that it speaks of the moral law - the "thou shalt not's." The latter seems to be the wiser choice since that is the immediate context that we are about to see.

Let's read verses 6-9

6 From which some having swerved have turned aside unto vain jangling;
7 Desiring to be teachers of the law; understanding neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm.
8 But we know that the law [is] good, if a man use it lawfully;
9 Knowing this, that the law is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and for sinners,

The men wanted to teach the law in verse seven. It is indicated to me that they wanted to teach the law to the believers at Ephesus and put the people under the law and its many rules.

Paul is telling Timothy that they don't understand the law if that is what they are trying to do. MacArthur puts it this way: "It is bad enough to be ignorant, but they were dogmatic about their ignorance." (The MacArthur New Testament Commentary I Timothy; p 21; Moody Press, Chicago; 1995)

The law is for two things. One is just as the text states. It is for the unrighteous. It is used to judge them before God. The second use of the law was to bring the lost to God. It is a schoolmaster to draw us to the gospel. As we realize that we can't fulfill the law and we realize how sinful we are, then we turn to the free gift of the gospel with a real understanding that salvation is not in keeping or doing, but in accepting.

To illustrate this thought we might just look to our own speed limit laws. I normally drive the speed limit. I seldom speed. I never am stopped for speeding - the speed limits weren't set for me.

They were set for the group of people that drive pickups too fast in Wyoming - they drive with the pedal to the metal. They are the ones that have the law applied to them.

It is not that I am exempt from the speed limit - all I have to do is speed and it will certainly be for me!

Ray Stedman quotes the following from a magazine article (no foot noting was given) "Laws, rules and regulations define social morality. They are often very little help in the growth of personal morality. The reason for this is not hard to understand. A law may prevent me from robbing my neighbor, but no law can prevent me from coveting his possessions and thinking of new and devious ways of making them mine. A law can discourage me, if not prevent me, from abandoning my wife and children, but it cannot stop me from making them miserable. A law can inhibit me from knifing an enemy, but it can do nothing if I merely hate him and make him feel my hate. The law, in short, can regulate my behavior, within certain limits. It cannot cleanse my mind, nor purify my heart, nor neutralize the poison of my worst intentions." What the law couldn't do the Gospel can!

The law is good, but it is limited in what it can do!

I would like to show you from the Old Testament just how good the law is. Turn to Exodus 34.1 "And the Lord said to Moses, "Cut two tablets of stone like the first [ones], and I will write on [these] tablets the words that were on the first tablets which you broke"

God thought they were so good He took time to rewrite them when Moses broke the first tablets! Just envision you are Moses for a moment and savor that moment when the Lord said that to him.

9 Knowing this, that the law is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and for sinners, for unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for manslayers,

10 For whoremongers, for them that defile themselves with mankind, for menstealers, for liars, for perjured persons, and if there be any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine;

The list breaks down into two categories.

AGAINST GOD

Lawless
disobedient
ungodly
sinners

unholy

profane

AGAINST GOD AND SOCIETY:

murderers of fathers and mothers,
manslayers,
whoremongers (this is term porno/fornicator according to Young's concordance)
them that defile themselves with mankind (homosexuals)
menstealers (kidnapers - in Paul's day it was for slavery)
liars
perjured persons
if there be any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine

We want to take a look at these terms. They, are for the most part, kind of self-explanatory, but we might find some deeper understanding of them. If you have time to study on your own relate these to the ten commandments.

AGAINST GOD:

LAWLESS: Lawless is the opposite of the term used of law in these verses - without law or a transgressor.

II Thess. 2.8 mentions this word: "And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming."

The term Wicked is our term. This is speaking of Antichrist and his demise. The term is a little more descriptive now isn't it?

The same term is also used of the actions of the Sodomites in II Pet. 2.7-8. They were lawless and wicked.

DISOBEDIENT: This term is used In Titus and is translated "unruly."

UNGODLY: Thayer says of this term "destitute of reverential awe towards God, condemning God, impious. . . ." Jude uses the term when he mentions Christ coming to judge the ungodly. Jude 1.15 "To execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard [speeches] which ungodly sinners have spoken against him."

Simply it relates to those that do not worship God. They have no desire to know Him, nor to serve Him.

SINNERS: This term covers all sorts of sins - it is the normal word translated "sin" in the New

Testament. Missing the mark set is the idea.

UNHOLY: Unholy or ungodly is the thought. II Tim 3.2 is the only other occurrence of the word. It is translated “unholy” there also, and is in a long list of not very nice things.

PROFANE: Heb. 12.16 mentions "Lest there [be] any fornicator, or profane person, as Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright."

This is the same term translated “profane.” The term comes from a root which relates to the foot - "something common" according to Thayer. The attempt to make God common might give the proper thought.

Barnes says "A man who treats religion with contempt, mockery, or scorn, would correspond with the meaning of the word."

AGAINST GOD AND SOCIETY:

When Paul lists murderers he distinguishes between types.

MURDERERS OF FATHERS: This Greek word actually is used of patricide or killing of ones father while murderers of mothers is a different Greek word for matricide or the killing of your mother. Then he uses another term for murder which is translated manslaughter.

It is of interest that Paul uses three words here that are never used elsewhere in the New Testament. I suspect they may have been words known specifically by the Ephesians and possibly not widely used in other areas of the world at the time.

The murder of a father or mother was forbidden in the law. Ex. 21.15 "And he that striketh his father, or his mother, shall certainly be put to death."

Barnes mentions concerning killing your father "It is said to have been a crime which the Roman law did not contemplate as possible, and hence that there was no enactment against it. It is indeed, a crime of the highest order;"

MURDERERS OF MOTHERS:

Barnes mentions of “murdering your mother”: "A still more atrocious and monstrous crime, if possible, than the former. We can conceive nothing superior to this in atrocity, and yet it has been committed. Nero caused his mother to be murdered, and the annals of crime disclose the names of not a few who have imbrued their own hands in the blood of those who bare them." Nero was mentioned - he fell in love with a young woman that talked him into killing mom and divorcing his wife so she could be queen.

Gill mentions something that might be of interest to us in relation to the murder of fathers and mothers. "According to the Pompeian (city in Italy - Pompey) law, one guilty of parricide was to be sewed up in a sack with a dog, a cock, a viper, and an ape, and cast into the sea, or into a river."

MANSLAYERS: This would be the regular murder, which is forbidden in Ex. 20.13 "Thou shalt not kill"

WHOREMONGERS: This term is basically a male prostitute. (this is the term pornos/fornicator according to Young's concordance) Thayer suggests "a man who prostitutes his body to another's lust for hire"

THEM THAT DEFILE THEMSELVES WITH MANKIND (HOMOSEXUALS): Paul seems to lay it right out there in detail so they won't misunderstand him. Thayer suggests that this means "one who lies with a male as with a female, sodomite, homosexual" "It is translated abusers of themselves with mankind" in I Cor. 6.9

This also was forbidden in the Old Testament. Lev. 20.13 "If a man also lie with mankind, as he lieth with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination: they shall surely be put to death; their blood [shall be] upon them."

While on this subject we mentioned in our past studies of those that hold out falsehood as truth - the vain jangling - the vain talkers - the empty words - there are churches today that teach that homosexuality is okay and that it is as normal as can be. This list as well as the I Corinthians list would suggest they speak with empty words.

A man that fits one of these sins (homosexual) and certainly is misleading if not deceptive about his lifestyle before writing the book - and he is invited into a fundamental church to participate in the service. I trust that you see the error of this action in light of the context we have before us in I Timothy.

MENSTEALERS: Menstealers is actually speaking of those that steal men to put them into slavery. This is in a list of not very nice sinners. To be quite honest I was not aware of this side to the Scriptures as they related to slavery. It is of note that the epistles have a lot to say of how a believing slave is to act toward an owner indicating that slavery was kind of neutral - that if you are a slave - live like a Christian. The master is also encouraged in certain manners toward his slaves, yet here we see that the ENSLAVER was a sinner of great magnitude. That might be a topic for further study when someone has time.

Again, as several times before, the law forbids this activity - no great surprise - God dislikes sin against Himself and His creation. Ex 21.16 "And he that stealeth a man, and selleth him, or if he be found in his hand, he shall surely be put to death"

LIARS: John 8.44 mentions that Satan is a liar. This is the same term used here - someone that is "a liar, one who breaks faith, or a false and faithless man" according to Thayer. ("Ye are of [your] father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it") See Lev. 6.2-4 also.

PERJURED PERSONS: We don't think too much about perjury in our society - even the president does it with little punishment. God calls it a biggie sin. Isn't that what one of the ten commandments is all about? Thou shalt not bear false witness. Ex 20.16 Paul puts it in the same list with a murderer! We in America should do no less. See Ex. 20.7 also.

This was a major no-no in the culture. The Greeks in their mythology placed perjury on the same level with killing your parent!

"IF THERE BE ANY OTHER THING THAT IS CONTRARY TO SOUND DOCTRINE:" And if you think of anything else that is against sound doctrine stick it in this list too!

The term translated "sound" is the word we gain our word "hygiene" from. Soundness is something that is wholesome and good for us.

The idea seems clear that Paul didn't want to leave anyone out in his listing. "any other thing" covers about everything that the list doesn't cover.

Verse eleven connects back up with the first part of the sentence, "But we know that the law is good, if a man use it lawfully;" ... "According to the glorious gospel of the blessed God. . . ."

All of the sins are kind of a parenthesis to the main message that Paul is putting forth.

11 According to the glorious gospel of the blessed God, which was committed to my trust.

I want to list the last part of verse ten and first of eleven in several translations.

ASV "and if there be any other thing contrary to the sound doctrine; 11 according to the gospel"

KJV "and if there be any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine; 11 According to the glorious gospel"

DARBY "and if any other thing is opposed to sound teaching, 11 according to the glad tidings"

NIV "and for whatever else is contrary to the sound doctrine 11 that conforms to the glorious gospel"

NKJV "any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine, 11 according to the glorious gospel"

YOUNG "and if there be any other thing that to sound doctrine is adverse, 11 according to the good news"

Now, just what can we glean from that section of Scripture? Have you ever heard anyone say something along the lines that we don't have to worry about doctrine - just concentrate on the Gospel? I have, and this verse says they are incorrect. You can't have the gospel without doctrine!

Just for fun - what are some doctrines involved in the Gospel.

Deity or Christ
Virgin Birth
Humanity of Christ
Eternality of God
Satan
Evil
Sinfulness of man
The fall
Creation
Resurrection
Sin

Or maybe we should take the easier route and list the doctrines that don't relate to the Gospel!

"which was committed to my trust" is literally "with which I have been entrusted." as Darby translates it.

This entrusting is not something special that was given to Paul, but it is a general entrusting to every believer. We are all entrusted with a job.

In I Cor. 5.20 it tells us we are ambassadors: "Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech [you] by us: we pray [you] in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God." Verse 19 mentions that we are entrusted with the word of reconciliation! "To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation."

Now the application to that truth is simply witnessing in any manner we can, as well as helping others do the same around the world. Teachers and preachers have a special work over and above this work and that is to train all believers to do this same work.

MISSIONS IN A NUTSHELL!

Not only are we commanded to witness, but we have been trusted by God to share in that ministry.

We want to be clear that these sinners are not forbidden from heaven in this text - only that they are sinners and they are examples of those that the law was given for. They will not enjoy heaven unless they see themselves in this list and accept Christ.

The obvious thrust is that we have the privilege to share our faith in Jesus Christ with these people and assist them to understand the sinfulness of their lives, and the free gift of the Lord that is offered to them.

"Many years ago in St. Louis, a lawyer visited a Christian to transact some business. Before the two parted, his client said to him, "I've often wanted to ask you a question, but I've been afraid to do so."

"What do you want to know?" asked the lawyer.

"The man replied, "I've wondered why you're not a Christian."

"The man hung his head. "I know enough about the Bible to realize that it says no drunkard can enter the kingdom of God; and you know my weakness!"

"You're avoiding my question," continued the believer.

"Well, truthfully, I can't recall anyone every explaining how to become a Christian."

"Picking up a Bible, the client read some passages showing that all are under condemnation, but that Christ came to save the lost by dying on the cross for their sins. "By receiving Him as your substitute and redeemer," he said, "you can be forgiven. If you're willing to receive Jesus, let's pray together."

"The lawyer agreed, and where it was his turn he exclaimed, "O Jesus, I am a slave to drink. One of Your servants has shown me how to be saved. O God, forgive my sins and help me overcome the power of this terrible habit in my life." Right there he was converted. That lawyer was C.I. Scofield, who later edited the reference Bible that bears his name."

May we be so open to share the Word with the lost we come in contact with - it is our duty and our honor to do so.

CHAPTER 6

LEGALISM

What is legalism? If I don't go to movies, am I a legalist? If my wife doesn't use makeup, is she a legalist? If I don't shop on Sunday, am I a legalist?

Let us first define legalism. It is not someone that is very conservative in his lifestyle that you disagree with. It is not someone that you call legalist because you don't like the things he believes and stands for.

A legalist is someone that wants to place himself or others under the law or any system of rules whereby you can gain righteousness. It is living a certain way to prosper yourself spiritually before God.

Legalism has been a problem for the church at times.

Acts 15:1, "And certain men which came down from Judaea taught the brethren, and said, Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved."

This is scriptural legalism.

The council met in Jerusalem in the following section of Acts and determined that circumcision and the law were not a part of salvation.

Let's look at the law.

1. The law was never given to the Gentiles.

Rom. 2:14, "For the Gentiles, which have not the law. . . ."

The Old Testament specifies that the law was for the Jewish people.

The Law required the Sabbath or the 7th day to be kept as a day of rest, while the New Testament tells us that the saints worshiped together on the 1st day. As a little sidelight - how do you relate to the terms Christian Sabbath? Sabbath is Saturday and nothing else. It isn't Sunday.

2. The Law was given to the Jews.

Rom. 9:4, "Who are Israelites; to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises;"

The Old Testament also shows that the law was for the Israelites.

3. The Law was used until the seed was come.

Gal 3:19, "Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made; and it was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator."

The law is finished until the Millennium when it will be re-instituted to some extent. The Gospels tell us that the veil of the temple between the holy place and the holy of holies was rent as Christ died.

The law has no legal aspect over the church age believer. We have free access to God through prayer!

The moral aspect of the law is still our guide and principle however.

Rom. 8:4, "That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."

The right and wrong of the law, as in murder etc. is still our guide but the ceremonial aspect of the law is not to be fulfilled. Example: Circumcision, sacrifice.

4. The law is a schoolmaster in the church age.

Gal 3:24-25, "Wherefore the law was our school master to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith."

"But after that faith [salvation] is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster."

Rom. 9:31-32 mentions that even some of the Jews failed the law in that they sought to fulfill it by works and not by accepting God by faith.

Gal 6:15 tells us that it isn't circumcision but it is the new creation that is needed. In short it isn't works, but tis rebirth!

5. The law was not to save people.

It pointed to Christ.

Gal 3:19, "Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made; and it was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator."

It allows the lost to know that they are sinners.

Rom. 3:20, "Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin."

6. The law was made for sinners.

Rom. 3:20, "Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin."

Anyone trying to follow the law for the seeking of righteousness is bound by the law that they cannot keep. They are lost to hell.

CHAPTER 7

In the 1800's a Scottish pastor resigned from his church. When asked why he had resigned he explained that he had only let one little boy to the Lord in the past year. He had however lead John Moffat to the Lord and Moffat was used of the Lord to open up South Africa to the Gospel.

In the early 1800's there was a chief in South Africa named Afrikaner. He was chief of the Hottentot tribe, a vicious hardened group of warriors. Afrikaner was known throughout the country and the governor of Cape Town had fixed a hefty price on his head - dead or alive.

Also in the early 1800's there was a young Scottish man by the name of Moffat which God lead into the ministry. One thing led to another and Moffat was led of the Lord to go preach the gospel to the Hottentot tribe in South Africa.

God used Moffat to speak of the Gospel to Afrikaner and Afrikaner became the first convert in the Hottentot tribe.

Moffat needed to go to Cape Town on business and he decided to take Afrikaner with him - so Afrikaner dressed as an attendant Afrikaner and Moffat made their trip.

As they made their way through the Dutch farmland Moffat found that he was supposed to have been killed by Afrikaner - or so went the story that had been passed around. One man even told Moffat that he had seen Moffat's bones.

Moffat told one farmer that the Afrikaner he knew was a good man. The farmer did not believe Moffat and said that he would like to see this terror of a man before he himself died. Moffat told the farmer that his attendant was indeed the man Afrikaner. The farmer exclaimed: "O God, what a miracle of Thy power! What cannot Thy grace accomplish!"

I trust this account of what God can do will set the stage for Paul's continuing comments to us from I Timothy.

I Tim. 1.12 And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry; 13 Who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious: but I obtained mercy, because I did [it] ignorantly in unbelief. 14 And the grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus.

Here is an outline for your possible use.

I. A TRULY THANKFUL MAN

A. Paul the Enabled

B. Paul the Faithful

II. A TRULY ENLIGHTENED MAN

A. Paul Realized Who He was Without Christ

B. Paul Realized What Christ did For Him

III. A TRULY BLESSED MAN

I Tim. 1.12-14

I don't know the inner thoughts of Paul's mind when he went into this portion of his letter but I have to wonder. I wonder if he wasn't sticking this in as one final emphasis to what he has been saying about the false teachers. They are teaching you of the law when they don't understand what the law is for. He then laid out what the law was for - the sinner! He now shifts to illustrate how wrong the Jewish concept of the law was and how he found mercy before the Lord and then describes that mercy unto salvation and ministry in his own life. What a perfect illustration of what he is saying - the law can't bring about salvation, only grace through faith in Christ can do that!

Paul himself was out there putting the law up to all comers while persecuting the saints. He was totally serious and committed to serving the law that he misunderstood. He then shares how fantastic the gospel is in changing a life.

12. And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry;

The thought of his being entrusted with the Gospel seems to move Paul to show how thankful he was for Christ's work in his life.

I would like to go back and just read through that time in Paul's life - a time of great turmoil I am sure.

Acts 9.1-20

" And Saul, yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went unto the high priest, 2 And desired of him letters to Damascus to the synagogues, that if he found any of this way, whether they were men or women, he might bring them bound unto Jerusalem. 3 And as he journeyed, he came near Damascus: and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven: 4 And he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? 5 And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest: [it is] hard for thee to kick against the pricks. 6 And he trembling and astonished said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? And the Lord [said] unto him, Arise, and go

into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do. 7 And the men which journeyed with him stood speechless, hearing a voice, but seeing no man. 8 And Saul arose from the earth; and when his eyes were opened, he saw no man: but they led him by the hand, and brought [him] into Damascus. 9 And he was three days without sight, and neither did eat nor drink. 10 And there was a certain disciple at Damascus, named Ananias; and to him said the Lord in a vision, Ananias. And he said, Behold, I [am here], Lord. 11 And the Lord [said] unto him, Arise, and go into the street which is called Straight, and enquire in the house of Judas for [one] called Saul, of Tarsus: for, behold, he prayeth, 12 And hath seen in a vision a man named Ananias coming in, and putting [his] hand on him, that he might receive his sight. 13 Then Ananias answered, Lord, I have heard by many of this man, how much evil he hath done to thy saints at Jerusalem: 14 And here he hath authority from the chief priests to bind all that call on thy name. 15 But the Lord said unto him, Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel: 16 For I will shew him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake. 17 And Ananias went his way, and entered into the house; and putting his hands on him said, Brother Saul, the Lord, [even] Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost. 18 And immediately there fell from his eyes as it had been scales: and he received sight forthwith, and arose, and was baptized. 19 And when he had received meat, he was strengthened. Then was Saul certain days with the disciples which were at Damascus. 20 And straightway he preached Christ in the synagogues, that he is the Son of God"

Paul takes time out to thank the Lord for His

Enablement

counting him faithful

putting him into the ministry

Any other feeling on the part of a missionary, minister or layperson that ministers within the church is out of line. Every Sunday School teacher, every minister of any kind must be thankful for the enablement God gives them, and realize that it is God that counts them faithful, not themselves. They must also realize that it is God that placed them into the ministry. Any other and they are totally misplaced.

It is God that enables us (Acts 1:8), and it is He that will judge our life, and it certainly should be God that places us into our ministries, no matter what those ministries might be.

The term ministry is closely related to the term for deacon. It is the doing for others in the church. It means "service." Barclay relates an account that illustrates the selfless service the term implies. "[The Greek Writer] Plutarch tells us that when a Spartan won a victory in the games, his reward was that he might stand beside his king in battle. A Spartan wrestler at the Olympic games was offered a very considerable bribe to abandon the struggle; but he refused. Finally, after a terrific effort, he won his victory. Someone said to him: "Well, Spartan, what have you got out of this costly victory you have won?" He answered: "I have won the privilege of standing in front of my

king in battle." From William Barclay's THE LETTERS TO TIMOTHY, TITUS, AND PHILEMON; Philadelphia; Westminster; 1975; pp 42-43.

The Olympics have changed a little haven't they!

It is reported that a pastor stated once that the only time that God blessed him was when one of his church people moved away or died.

I have a friend that is in a church of about seventy people. He tells me of the blessings and he tells me of the surprises, and he tells me of the problems. The problems are usually people. In fact he vocalized the above recently - his comment was prompted by the fact that there were a couple of families that were working behind the scenes to cause friction and ultimately have him removed from his pastorate.

He was realistic in knowing that the Lord was in control, and that it was Satan that was moving in his church rather than the Lord, but he still must cope with this background each time he steps into the pulpit or speaks to one of his folks.

If you are looking for your situation/ministry to generate feelings of thankfulness to the Lord, then you are in error and you will most likely not find a time when you are thankful.

Paul was thanking Christ for placing him in the ministry, not the people that he was ministering to. The people may get bad at times, but it is Christ we serve not people. This is a very important distinction.

Paul was not bragging that he was in the ministry, he was only sharing his joy in the fact of it.

There are times when I look in the mirror in the morning and wonder who that is. I am still a hood from Lexington, NE in my mind and I marvel at the fact that the God of the universe allows me to stand before His people to teach and preach. I, to this day do not comprehend what God has done in my life and through my life.

I'd like to just make a comment about the enablement that Paul mentions. We all need the Lord's enablement in all that we do. Our own talents and abilities won't be enough to do the job that the Lord asks us to do.

We need His empowerment to do it all.

We need the gifts that He has given to us to use in the church.

Without both of the above, we will be functioning at a level far below that which He wishes for us.

Don't be a minister unless you are called and placed by God. Do be a minister if He calls and attempts to place you.

The phrase "counted me" pictures the fact that Christ had faith in Paul's ability to carry out the ministry that He had given him. The phrase is used of a king that sent an ambassador to a far country that had confidence in the one sent that he would carry out the desires of the sender.

13 Who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious: but I obtained mercy, because I did [it] ignorantly in unbelief.

Lenski points out that these terms seem to build on one another - Paul is stacking up a real case against himself - not only was he a blasphemer, but on top of that he was a persecutor and if those two aren't enough he was also injurious!

Thayer says of injurious "one who, uplifted with pride, either heaps insulting language upon others or does them some shameful act of wrong"

When Paul is speaking of his having been a persecutor, he means just that.

Acts 26:10-11, "Which thing I also did in Jerusalem: and many of the saints did I shut up in prison, having received authority from the chief priests; and when they were put to death, I gave my voice against them.

"And I punished them oft in every synagogue, and compelled them to blaspheme; and being exceedingly mad against them, I persecuted them even unto strange cities."

In I Cor. 15.9-10 we are given more information. "For I am the least of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. 10 But by the grace of God I am what I am: and his grace which [was bestowed] upon me was not in vain; but I laboured more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me."

MacArthur suggests injurious might be translated "violent aggressor." He paints a very ugly picture of Paul before He met the Lord.

"Paul had shattered the Decalogue [ten commandments], smashing its commandments on the rock of his own pride. As a blasphemer, Paul violated the first half of the Ten Commandments, which speak of man's relationship to God. As a persecutor and a violent aggressor, he violated the second half, which speak of man's relationship to man. Paul was a relentless, driven ferocious persecutor of the church. Acts 8:3 and 9:1 relate the havoc he created, even entering houses to arrest believers. Not only did he approve of Stephen's death (Acts 8:1), but many others as well (Acts 26:10). A violent aggressor is a person with no normal concern for human kindness." From THE MACARTHUR NEW TESTAMENT COMMENTARY I TIMOTHY; John MacArthur; Moody Press; Chicago; 1995; p 29.

We should note that there is nothing that the Lord can't forgive in salvation. Even the persecution and testifying unto death of the saints.

This is not to say however that the long-term consequences of a life of sin before you are saved won't continue.

The drug addict or alcoholic that is saved and delivered from his addiction may suffer physical shortcomings the rest of their life.

The murderer on death row does not receive a pardon and release because he becomes a Christian.

Recently there was a woman on death row that had become a Christian and there was a great outcry for her. People wanted the government to suspend her death penalty. My question was on what basis? Kindness - yes, but the government does not need to be kind. Grace - yes, but the government does not need to be gracious. Indeed, IF they had been kind and gracious to this woman, they would have needed to be kind and gracious to every other person on death row.

Since we have no indication that Paul struggled inwardly with what he had done, I assume that in his salvation he found release from any guilt about his persecution of Christians. We can be free of pre-salvation guilt! We needn't dwell on those things - just thank God they are gone, yet we may have lasting consequences.

"But I obtained mercy, because I did ignorantly in unbelief."

Some have suggested from this verse that the sinner that is never saved because he never heard the Gospel will have a lesser judgment due to the fact that he did it in ignorance.

What do you think? Can we prove this either way? It would seem to me that the Law is set and that breaking the law will bring a set judgment. Paul knew the law well, and he was not speaking of ignorance of the law. I would guess he was speaking of doing it not knowing that it was against Christ. This may relate to Christ's discussion with him on the road to Damascus. This may have been when Paul realized what he was doing.

Actually the sinner is judged based on the fact that he rejected and refused God. The level of torment may be indicated in this verse, in that the person that does something with full knowledge of error may well be held more accountable than the person that had no concept of the wrong. (Matt. 11:20ff)

Rev 20:12 in the last part mentions that the lost will be judged, "out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works." According to their works would indicate levels of punishment.

They will all be separated from God and will be in torment, however there may be less and more torment according to works.

Paul's comment seems to be in the context of his being in the ministry. I believe that he is saying that mercy was extended in the area of a ministry in that he had sinned in ignorance or it may better be put - "sinned ignorantly." The implication being that had he been sinning in knowledge, that he would have been unworthy and unfit to be in the ministry.

The import of his having done it in ignorance is of great comfort to many. Many of us did many things when lost that we know we should pay the piper for, but this passage shows that the pre-salvation things are gone (not that the consequences are gone). You might look into Num. 15.22-31 for further info on this.

Christ in Jo 16.1-3 predicted the actions of the persecutors, Paul being one of them. " These things have I spoken unto you, that ye should not be offended. 2 They shall put you out of the synagogues: yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service. 3 And these things will they do unto you, because they have not known the Father, nor me."

We could also relate this prophecy of the Lord to the violence that has been seen by Christians through the ages to this prophecy of the Lord. It also relates directly to the martyrdom of many in the book of Revelation. All those that would persecute Christ or His people do it in total ignorance. Is this not what Christ said of his own crucifiers - "forgive them; for they know not what they do"?

Is this not a great tool in witnessing? If we understand this and wrap our minds around the concept, we will be less worried about how others react to us - it isn't personal - it's aimed at Christ through their ignorance of Him!

14 And the grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus.

His sinfulness in the former life, seems to intensify his knowledge of the grace that Christ extended to him. I have seen this in many people's lives. Those that are raised in Christian homes seldom realize the abundance of grace that God showed to each one of us. Those that were saved out of lives of sin often realize just how far down God had to reach to draw them up.

ASV "and the grace of our Lord abounded exceedingly with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus"

The grace extended to Paul was wrapped in faith and love when Paul opened his heart to the Lord. God's love was shed upon him as He accepted the Lord and His work. I would suggest that faith refers to Christ's trust in Paul to handle the ministry given to him.

I like the way Paul put it in Romans 5.20b "But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound:" No matter how terrible Paul was or even if he had been twice as bad - grace would have been able to cover it!

This verse seems to speak to the thought of Paul's view of his being saved by the Lord. The Lord extended grace and love to him when he was the likes of what he was.

I marvel many times that He choose me to do His work, any of His work much less preaching and teaching. He can take someone that thumbs their nose at Him and turn them into a usable vessel.

By way of application in relation to Paul's comment that Christ counted him faithful to be in the ministry might I suggest something?

I believe that pastors and teachers have a stronger accountability to the Lord. God has counted them faithful and faithful they should be. Many there are of the high profile pastors that have fallen - fallen because of moral problems.

In relation to this I'd like to cause us to think about something that is currently going around. It has been reported that the church of Satan is praying that Satan will bring down Christian pastors and that is happening across the nation. I've seen believers that are accepting this as truth.

What do you think? Are you getting worried about going into the ministry? Are these truth to these Satan worshiping folks - are they behind pastors falling today?

1. Satan is limited in many ways, thus how can prayers to him move him to do more? 2. He is in a conflict with God. He is going all out! He can do no more, even if some pray he will? 3. He knows pastors are the place to hit and he has been doing if for generations. He isn't hitting them harder because someone is praying to him.

The Satan worshiper may be praying for this, but I don't think their prayers are effective, for Satan has his hands completely filled - he can do no more.

The statistics however show more and more pastors are falling into trouble (1990's) I assume the reports are true, thus I must ask why? 1. Pastors are less spiritual than they used to be. 2. Pastors are allowing themselves into situations they should never be in. 3. Pastors are more prone to go with the world rather than with God. 4. I would assume possibly also that the schools are not preparing our men properly before they go out into the ministry. 5. The creed-o of the Baby Boomer generation is "ME" and satisfying me! Many pastors are boomers - enough said.

I think that a pastor that was an influence in our lives represents one that was found faithful by the Lord. The Lord saw fit to call them into the ministry and that they remained faithful throughout a long ministry.

When God led us off to Bible college, our first pastor in Denver was a man that had planted the church that he was in. When we arrived and started attending, he took me under his wing immediately. He would talk to me from time to time and when we were on visitation, he would take time to explain why he was visiting each person, and after the visit he would explain why he did what he did so that I could learn from his experience and wisdom.

The sad part of the story was that he resigned and moved away shortly after we arrived. We lost track of him and did not hear from or about him for many years.

While at Frontier School of the Bible, he was invited to teach our week long Bible conference. We were able to talk to him, and as he preached it was obvious that he had not changed a bit. He was the same humble man of God that had impressed me so much when we were both a lot younger.

In whatever ministry God has called you into, or might call you into in the future remember that it is God that enables, and that it is God that counts you faithful to accomplish that ministry.

I would like to present a portion of Barnes comment relating to the term ministry which we defined as servant. I would like for you to consider two items as you comprehend his comments. First I would like you to compare this definition of a minister to the modern day "minister" and also compare this definition to your own life as a servant of the Lord.

"It is indeed a work of toil, and of self-denial, and demanding many sacrifices of personal ease and comfort. It requires a man to give up his splendid prospects of worldly distinction, and of wealth and ease. It is often identified with want, and poverty, and neglect, and persecution. But it is an office so honorable, so excellent, so noble, and ennobling; it is attended with so many precious comforts here, and is so useful to the world, and it has such promises of blessedness and happiness in the world to come, that no matter what a man is required to give up in order to become a minister of the gospel, he should be thankful to Christ for putting him into the office. A minister, when he comes to die, feels that the highest favour which Heaven has conferred on him has been in turning his feet away from the paths of ambition, and the pursuits of ease or gain, and leading him to that holy work to which he has been enabled to consecrate his life." From BARNES NOTES; Albert Barnes; Baker Book House; Grand Rapids; 1949; p 120

CHAPTER 8

Among the many things happening for the new millennium is one that recently caught my interest. It is the year of Jubilee. The Roman Catholic Church is going all out for one of their traditional holy events - the year of Jubilee. The Pope has declared 2000 as the year of pilgrimage.

We know of the year of Jubilee in the Old Testament. The Roman Church also celebrates a year of Jubilee. They feel that it began prior to Boniface VIII but his celebration in 1300 is the first officially recorded. Boniface set it to be a celebration every one hundred years, but due to the fact that many would die with never a chance to see a celebration it was decided that every thirty-three years would be good. Finally it was settled at every twenty-five years.

It is my understanding that there are four doors one in each of four basilicas. The Pope opens the door of St. Peter's while other delegates open the other three doors at the same time.

The doors have been walled up with brick and mortar for the past twenty-five years. Prior to the ceremony of the opening masons loosen the mortar so that the doors are easily broken down. The Pope on Christmas Eve will strike the door three times with a silver hammer. The third stroke brings the door down.

The bricks, mortar and scraps are quickly gathered by guests as holy relics. Then the Pope walks through. The symbolism supposedly is that Adam and Eve were barred from the garden, and this breaking of the door symbolizes restoration and forgiveness of all past sin.

On the Christmas Eve following, the doors are again walled back up.

There are websites committed to this event. There are travel agencies offering special packages to Rome. There are special events planned all over the world. They have planned events in major cities and are calling it the "Biggest party in the world" and have set up a website for the party and its advertising.

A quote concerning the party is of interest. "'All the world sing praise" is a people's event with a special emphasis on children whose purpose is to assist the Christian celebration of the Millennium. It can be celebrated in a variety of ways; the idea is however that we try to do something together across the World at the same time to celebrate Jesus birthday worthily. . . ."

Note "to celebrate Jesus Birthday worthily. . . ." This BIGGEST PARTY IN THE WORLD is going to be on January 1, 2000 - thought they set it up to be the 25th of December at one time.

This December 24, the Pope will declare the beginning of the Year of Jubilee, and four special

Holy Doors will be opened in Rome with the most important being in St. Peter's Basilica. People from all over the world an expected 30 million or more will make a pilgrimage to Rome during 2000 seeking forgiveness of all past sins by walking through the doorways, which are opened only during Jubilee years. Many will travel thousands of miles, sacrificing time and money, in an effort to obtain eternal life. For these seekers, Rome is the place to be in 2000.

The Jubilee occurs every 25 years, but the dawn of a new millennium is bringing much more attention to this particular Year of Jubilee and will bring a greater number of pilgrims.

So much trouble to travel so far! These folks will spend millions to seek salvation, while Paul only had to go to Damascus, indeed, these celebrants only have to go to their knees before God to find their free salvation - their salvation which requires no travel, which requires no doors to open, which requires no Pope to set a year of jubilee.

And we Christian's of the born again type ought not be too smug looking down our noses at the Roman pilgrimage - many in our following are suggesting these days that we can't really understand God fully till we have walked where Jesus walked. Many ads make this trip sound like a pilgrimage - indeed, they use the term in ads - they talk as if there is spiritual gain to be received by a trip to the Holy Land.

I Tim 1.15-17 "This [is] a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief. 16 Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might shew forth all long-suffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting. 17 Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, [be] honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen."

15 This [is] a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief.

Paul says what I am about to say is a faithful saying and it is worthy of acceptance. HUMMMM! Do you think he is contrasting this statement with the teaching of the other guys we've been talking about - you remember - the guys that hold forth falsehood as truth - Paul says THIS IS VALID - THIS HAS VALUE ENOUGH TO ACCEPT! As opposed to some other teaching I know of.

This guy isn't nice in his bluntness to the false teachers! Does that give you any ideas in how you should be? On the internet boards when someone stands boldly for the truth of Scripture there is always someone that will reprimand them for being unloving, yet Paul was blunt and to the point as we ought to be in our confrontation of those that put forth falsehood as truth.

George Whitefield in a message entitled The Method of Grace said the following of preachers. "As god can send a nation or people no greater blessing than to give them faithful, sincere, and upright ministers, so the greatest curse that God can possibly send upon a people in this world is

to give them over to blind, unregenerate, carnal, lukewarm, and unskillful guides." He continues "As it was formerly, so it is now; there are many that corrupt the Word of God and deal deceitfully with it."

Even in Whitefield's day he could see that there was falsehood being set forth as truth and so it is today. The believer MUST be on their guard constantly.

Kent mentions "The formula, "faithful is the word," occurs five times in the New Testament, all of them in the Pastoral Epistles (I Tim. 1.15; 3.1; 4.9; II Tim. 2.11; Titus 3.8). A similar expression, "these words are faithful and true," occurs twice (Rev. 21.5 22.6). Apparently during the latter half of the first century, this formula was quite generally used to emphasize important truths. Here the reference almost certainly is to the statement of Jesus, uttered on several occasions (Matt. 9.13; Luke 19.10). Such truths as these probably were often repeated in the Christian assemblies, and were thus well known." THE PASTORAL EPISTLES; Homer A. Kent, Jr., Th.D.; Moody Press; Chicago; 1958; p 92. (Matt. 9.13 "But go ye and learn what [that] meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice: for I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." Luke 19.10 "For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.")

"Acceptation" according to the dictionary means "the generally understood meaning of a word" © 1995 Zane Publishing, Inc. The Merriam-Webster Dictionary © 1994 by Merriam-Webster, Incorporated. Paul says these things I'm relating are worth acceptance - as is - nothing added.

I have read that this phrase actually stands alone in the original construction of the passage. This would draw complete attention to the coming statements.

The term world has a wide meaning. It can mean the earth proper, or it can mean the universe. Either way it is true in this case, but it might bring a slightly different perspective to your mind. Christ came into the world - as in contrast FROM HEAVEN. We all know this to be true, but have you considered that Christ left the solid comforts of heavens glory to accomplish His work among men?

He gave up a throne in glory for the hardships of living. He went from not needing sleep to having to get up in the morning, from needing nothing to needing everything, from being totally free to being dependent on others.

The term Paul chose to call himself in this text is of interest. It does have the idea of chief, but there is another shade of meaning that is significant within the context. Not only can this word be translated chief, but normally it is translated first. Thayer mentions "first in time or place . . . in any succession of things or persons ... first in rank"

The context pictures Paul as the first - the example of all to come. Now, we know that there were others that were saved prior to Paul, but the Holy Spirit via Paul sets Paul as the prime example

of all to come.

Paul uses the sequence "Christ Jesus" - he uses this sequence twenty five times in the Pastoral Epistles compared to eight usages as Jesus Christ.

He came into the world - a simple statement which has deep ramifications. He came into - He came from somewhere - PRE-EXISTENCE IS THE ONLY POSSIBLE CONCLUSION! There is also the thought that He came for a specific purpose and that He came of His own accord.

Christ came into the world to save sinners. The question always seems to come up, just how many of the sinners did He come to save. Did He just come to save the elect sinners, or did he come to save ALL sinners?

Indulge me for a moment while I consider the concept of unlimited atonement.

John. 3:16 Loved the world - whosoever. There seems to be no restrictions in this passage. (I Jo 2:2)

Some suggest that some reject His salvation, so He couldn't have died for them. On the contrary, He died for every single one. If a person rejects Christ then they reject the salvation that has already been provided for them.

Christ paid all costs for all mankind's redemption! Man rejects or accepts what Christ did. This is termed in theology UNLIMITED ATONEMENT. Did Christ atone for only the elect, or did Christ atone for all mankind? Others hold that He atoned only for the elect.

This leads to the ARMENIAN Vs CALVINISM debate. The Armenians held that Christ atoned for all, while the Calvinists believed that Christ atoned for only the elect.

Where you land on this discussion well may depend on your understanding of Christ's work on the cross and salvation itself. Is it total provision for the sin of the world or is it not?

Remember, just because you believe in an unlimited atonement it doesn't make you an Armenian. It just means you can't be a five-point Calvinist.

Paul mentions that he was the chief sinner. He knew what he was before Christ. Many in our own day realize well who and what they were before Christ. Others don't really realize what they were. They have not really come to terms with what they were and now what they are.

This most likely comes from some of the easy believism that is being preached today. It is essential to believe in Who Christ was, and to believe in what He did, but it is also necessary for the person to understand who they are and why what Christ did is important.

An Independent Baptist pastor on an internet board I visit has come to the realization that he must get the people lost before he can lead them to the Lord. He has begun to use the law to show them that they are sinners. I tried to help him understand that you can show them from the New Testament that they are sinners, but he insists that you must use the law - HUMMMMMM! Well, anyway the point is that when the person realizes they are lost and on their way to hell then you can begin to talk to them of the gift of God.

I would like to read a comment from someone on this thought.

Hiebert mentions "The fact is that it is always the characteristic of a true saint to feel himself a real sinner. The air in a room seems to be clear, but when it is penetrated by the sunlight it is seen to be full of dust and other impurities; and so as men draw nearer to God, and are penetrated by the light of God (I JN 1:5 - "God is light. . . ."), they see more clearly their own infirmities, and begin to feel for sin something of the hatred which God feels for it." (First Timothy; D. Edmond Hiebert; Moody Press; Chicago; 1957; p 43.)

John Owen said once, "He that hath slight thoughts of sin never had great thoughts of God." (First Timothy; D. Edmond Hiebert; Moody Press; Chicago; 1957; p 7)

Reread and stop for a moment and think about that one.

16 Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might shew forth all long-suffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting.

"For this cause I obtained mercy" has some serious ramifications! For this cause only! Paul had nothing of worth that God would save him for. Paul could do nothing in his future of worth that God would save him for. Paul could teach noone in his future of worth that God would save him for. He was saved to show forth the glory of God - plain and simple - I might add this goes for each and every one of us. We had nor have anything to offer Him that would move Him to save us!

The term "first" is the same word translated "chief" in verse 15. Again drawing attention to Paul as the first or the example.

This verse seems to back my thoughts on verse thirteen. Paul seems to have been an example to those that come to the Lord - of the long-suffering and mercy of God in saving all types of sinners.

One of the quotes I read mentioned the fact that we should give serious consideration to the sinfulness of our old life.

David Brainard was a person that was very introspective and always viewed himself as the lowest of low before God. If you read much of his writing, you will find that he knew what he was!

I think that God included these thoughts in the Word for us to realize that no matter how bad our pre-salvation life was, that if He could forgive and use Paul in the ministry, that he can use anyone in the ministry.

No matter how low you were in your life before, the Lord can use you in His work.

There are hundreds of testimonies of people that were saved out of the dregs of society and the Lord picked them up, washed them up, polished them up and put them into His service.

One such man was a drunk tending bar many years ago. He had been confronted with the Gospel and one night he dropped to his knees behind the bar and asked God to forgive him of his sin and accepted the Lord. God sent him off to Bible college and he served God as a pastor for many years. He also raised three children. One became a pastor, one a pastor's wife and the other a professional.

This is the hope of all that are saved. WE CAN BE ACCEPTABLE TO HIM, EVEN UNTO SERVING HIM!

Christ choose Paul to be His prime spokesman. He selected this one that illustrates the depth of what man could be so that - may I say - no one has an excuse not to be saved.

Indeed, when someone spoke to lost Stanley Derickson I stated, He can't save me - I've done wrong and the answer was - He can save anyone. This passage illustrates that truth for us.

There is another application to this verse which Wiersbe mentions. "But there is a special application of this to today's people of Israel, Paul's countrymen, for whom he had a special burden . . . The people of Israel, like unconverted Saul of Tarsus, are religious, self-righteous, blind to their own Law and its message of the Messiah, and unwilling to believe. One day, Israel shall see Jesus Christ even as Paul saw Him; and the nation shall be saved." THE BIBLE EXPOSITION COMMENTARY; Warren Wiersbe; Victor Books; Wheaton; 1989; P 213.

The term translated "pattern" is used in classical Greek of a model that is brought before an artist to be drawn or painted. It has the idea of an outline or drawing.

Paul is a pattern of all Christ wants to do in mankind. This was His purpose in coming into the world, this was His desire in coming into the world, and this was his only reason in coming into the world.

I wonder even more if Paul wasn't something really special in God's plan. Christ Himself appeared to him. Why? What is the significance of this? Christ appeared to no one else in this way.

I personally see in these verses Paul revealing that Christ had special plans and special reasons

for His treatment of Paul. Remember the three years of personal attention to Paul.

Paul wasn't just blessed, but he was special in some way. He was first among many others to come. His specialness was in God's plan, not what or who he was as a human being!

Christ didn't tell Paul of his being a pattern in the record of Acts thus it must have been face to face at a later time - put yourself in Paul's place when Christ revealed this truth to him.

It is clear that Christ is central - he provided - He showed mercy - for HIS purpose. Christ was not responding to what he saw in Paul, but He was responding to His plan.

Paul was to be an example looking back to his sin and he should be an example in his post-salvation life. Let's think of his example for a few moments. What type of man was Paul? What did he have to go through?

imprisonment
whipping
beating
stoning
near drowning
walked all over Asia Minor and the near east
served in the harshest of circumstances
served without pay
served where ever and whenever he could
prayed
preached
etc.

How do you measure up to his example?

He was transformed from the chief persecutor of Christ to the chief spokesman for Christ. Just give me an example that shows more of a change than that!

As I have observed life and the testimonies of believers, it is often the man that was saved out of the terrible life that is most active in the Lord's work. Several of the more forceful evangelists of recent centuries have been men that knew of the sin that they preached against.

It often is the believer that is raised in a Christian environment that is weak in preaching against the sin of the world.

One might wonder about Paul's denigration of himself. Just how can we help Paul improve his self image. He is so down on himself. We really must make him feel better about himself! His self worth is so lacking. His self esteem is so poor. NOT! He has a true understanding of who he

is and who Christ is and what the results of that merger was. Paul is improved only by the blood of Christ.

While preparing this study I had to wonder, are "chief" and "first" relating to more than example - is this a picture of the gospel going to the gentiles before Cornelius? Most feel that Cornelius was the first indication in Acts that the Gospel would be going to the gentiles. Paul was a Roman citizen as well as a Jew. Actually being a Jew and a Roman, he was a picture of the bridge between the two - Judaism and Christianity/gentiles, as well as an example of the Gospel going to the nations.

The verse also mentions that Christ was using Paul to show forth the long-suffering of God toward those that have not yet come to Him. The term long-suffering is also translated patience at times.

It is used in I Pet. 3.20 "Which sometime were disobedient, when once the long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water"

God waited quite some time to destroy the ungodly - He waited 80 to 100 years! He truly is long-suffering! (Gen. 5.32; 6.10 cf. Gen. 7.11)

By the way, have you heard of the newest discovery concerning Noah. The man that discovered the Titanic has also discovered proof of the flood - in the words of the news media at least. He has discovered proof that the Black Sea at one time was a lake and that there was a breaking of a natural dam which inundated this lake area with saltwater from the Mediterranean Sea, thus proving that Noah did build an ark.

The problem with that is that it would be a local flood and not a universal flood. There also is no indication that the flood that this man has proven is the flood of the Bible. There could well be proof that this lake did exist and that it was a disaster, but there is no proof at all that this was the flood that the Bible speaks of. The media just never ceases!

17 Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, [be] honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen.

What a declaration concerning our God!

King = OVER ALL - even the Orion's nebula that the Hubbell telescope has viewed recently.

Eternal = Always has been - always will be.

Immortal = He can't die no matter what the liberals say!

Invisible = Remember this one when you are considering sin.

ONLY wise God = ALL other gods are dead and offer NO wisdom!

Deserving of our honor and glory forever. Give you a hint of what we will be doing in heaven?

The term translated glory is the term we gain the word Doxology from.

MacArthur puts it this way. "Having begun the passage with thanksgiving, Paul now closes it with a doxology. Eternal literally means "of the ages." It refers to the two ages in Jewish thought, the present age, and the age to come. God had no beginning and will have no end. He exists outside of time, though He acts in it. He is immortal, imperishable, and incorruptible. He will never know death, decay, or loss of strength. Because God is invisible, He can be known only by His self-revelation. That he is the only God is a fundamental truth of Scripture...." THE MACARTHUR NEW TESTAMENT COMMENTARY I TIMOTHY; John MacArthur; Moody Press; Chicago; 1995; P 33.

Amen is a transliteration of the Hebrew word meaning truth. Lenski mentions of the term, "It is always emphatic and should be read so; it is a confessional affirmation that completely justifies what precedes and compels the reader to see and to recognize the fact." THE INTERPRETATION F ST. PAUL'S EPISTLES TO THE COLOSSIANS, TO THE THESSALONIANS, TO TIMOTHY, TO TITUS AND TO PHILEMON; Augsburg Publishing House; Minneapolis; 1937; P 528.

There are some indications that the end of verse 17 might be a better chapter break. It ends with Amen and then the next verse is the challenge to Timothy and 2:1 begins "I exhort therefore. . . ." indicating that it is directly linked to the challenge of 18 and following.

To recap I would like to quote White as listed in Kent's book "In the experiences of personal religion each individual man is alone with God. He sees nought but the Holy One and his own sinful self.... And the more familiar a man becomes with the meeting of God face to face the less likely is he to be deceived as to the gulf which parts him, limited, finiet, defective, from the Infinite and Perfect." THE PASTORAL EPISTLES; Homer A. Kent, Jr., Th.D.; Moody Press; Chicago; 1958; p 93

Paul knew his own sinfulness when He faced Christ on the Road to Damascus! He also knew that he was to be an example for all to come after him.

There should be no doubt to the fact that there is no sinner that we ever will meet that is too sinful to find mercy before our God. As we visit with and witness to folks we meet, we can be assured that there is mercy for them, if they will but turn to the Lord that offers it.

There is also a real application for us as parents and grandparents. We as Christians ought to be

examples to those in our families. We need to realize that our lives before them are an example of the saving grace of the Lord.

"A man was walking through the deep snow when he heard the voice of his oldest son saying: "I'll step in Father's tracks." He was trying to do it, and two younger brothers were at the same thing. The father went to the house of prayer to seek God that evening, thinking, "If I lead my sons thus, I'll make tracks for heaven.""

May we remind ourselves of how sinful we once were, and then remind ourselves of that great step downward that Christ took on our behalf to become man to die for our sin.

May we also be reminded that this is the only truth that we can share with the many lost folks around us as we walk through our weekly life.

CHAPTER 9

Many years ago, in the years of yore, a young man and his bride flew to the beautiful land of Hawaii where they were to live for a time while the man worked for a small television repair shop in a little community called Waiane on the west side of Oahu.

There in that garden spot of the world they took up residence in the home of the woman's brother - wife and four children. One evening talk turned to spiritual things and the young man's interest was stirred. Shortly after the two couples started attending a small Baptist church in a neighboring town. The pastor of the church was just leaving for the summer to return to the mainland on furlough.

To take the pastors place there was a young Junior from Dallas Theological Seminary. He and his new wife had come for the summer to minister to the little church.

Through the summer the young man listened with great interest to the young pastor - he not only listened to the message but wondered of the messenger. He wondered if he might one day be a messenger as well.

The summer passed very quickly and the young seminarian and his wife left Hawaii to return to Dallas to finish his final year of training.

The young man that had wondered about being a messenger was indeed called to prepare for the ministry. Off to Bible college went he and his wife and young daughter.

In his second year of college there was a new president installed at his college. The new president had taught at Dallas Seminary. The young man decided to see if the president had known this seminarian that had so impacted his life.

The president certainly did know the young seminarian but was very quiet and saddened to report to the young man that the seminarian had completely rejected the teaching he had received at the Seminary and had enrolled in the most liberal seminary in the country.

The president did not go into great detail, but related that the seminarian had turned his back on the truth of the Word and was rejecting all sound doctrine. There had been several of the professors at Dallas that had worked with the man to see if they could help him understand, but he rejected all comers.

The young man ran across other Dallas people from time to time over the years and he would ask of the seminarian and all reports were very sad as to the outcome of that life that had started so eagerly to serve God, but that had turned to serve man's philosophy.

The passage before us is one of great encouragement, while also it is one of great

discouragement. It relates to a good minister, while it also relates to bad ministers.

I. DISCIPLINE

18. This charge I commit unto thee, son Timothy, according to the prophecies which went before on thee, that thou by them mightest war a good warfare;

I think one of the obvious items of interest here is the great encouragement this statement must have been for Timothy. Paul must have held Timothy in high regard and he must have wanted him to succeed!

Ray Stedman mentions of such a time in his life: "I will never forget an incident in my own ministry when I was a young man. I was still a student at Dallas Seminary, but was spending my summers in Pasadena. I worked one summer as a youth minister in a church there, when Dr. Lewis Sperry Chafer, the President and founder of Dallas Seminary, a great man of God, a great man of faith, came into town. He was gracious enough to spend an afternoon with my wife and me.

"I took Dr. Chafer to the church where I was working and showed him around the very impressive, beautiful building. The congregation at this time did not have a pastor, though they were seeking one, so Dr. Chafer said to me, "Do you think you might end up here in this church?" I said, "I don't know. Who knows what God will do? I don't have any particular plans for that." "I don't know either," he said, "but it would be a good place for you because I believe God is going to give you a great ministry." (From a message on I Timothy by Ray Stedman)

There were times in my college days that I would have really appreciated some encouragement from someone like that. The struggles were great and there seemed to be absolutely no encouragement for us from outside.

The prophecies that are mentioned are not the Old Testament type prophecy that we might think of. The Old Testament prophet was not only one that could reveal future things which God had revealed to them, but they also held an office similar to the priest, though their responsibilities and ministries were much different - they were both officially spokesmen between God and man.

This Old Testament prophet is not what we have in the New Testament. The New Testament prophet was not an official office but one of the gifts of the Spirit, which was used for giving of revelation to the early church.

If you will recall in the book of Acts there were some prophets mentioned. These were similar to the Old Testament prophet in that there was a portion of revelation related to them, however they weren't the Official prophet or office of the Old times.

Let us take a look at these for a few moments. Acts 21.10-11 "And as we tarried [there] many

days, there came down from Judaea a certain prophet, named Agabus. 11 And when he was come unto us, he took Paul's girdle, and bound his own hands and feet, and said, Thus saith the Holy Ghost, So shall the Jews at Jerusalem bind the man that owneth this girdle, and shall deliver [him] into the hands of the Gentiles."

Acts 21.8 mentions Philip and his four daughters that were involved in prophecy.

I Cor. 14.29ff mentions the proper actions of the prophet in the assembly. This was when there was still revelation being given by the Spirit to the early church.

These terms all imply the revelation via the Holy Spirit for the growing church.

There is also a thought of prophecy today that is the type of prophecy that is based on facts and observation and knowledge of human nature. It isn't a foretelling, but a reasoned out educated estimate of what the future might hold.

By looking at a man and knowing the man you can predict to a point what he is capable of and then by looking at his surroundings and direction you might also give some idea as to what he might be able to accomplish in life. Any prophecy in our time should, in my opinion, be understood in this light.

I would assume that the prophecies which Paul mentions here were of the New Testament kind. I would also assume that they may have been given at the time when Timothy was set apart to the ministry. This is mentioned in II Tim. 1.6 "Wherefore I put thee in remembrance that thou stir up the gift of God, which is in thee by the putting on of my hands." Also I Tim. 4.14 "Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery."

There seems to be a special gifting and foretelling in Timothy's case.

MacArthur contrasts the call of Timothy, through prophecy, to the call of ministers today via the inner working of the Spirit. I think it is of interest.

"Paul's command to Timothy was not his own, but was confirmed by God through the ministry of some prophets.

"Pastors and elders are no longer called to the ministry in such a dramatic fashion. As we will see in 3:1, the call to ministry rises from inside through desire, rather than outside from revelation. That desire is then to be confirmed by the church. The church, by observing a man's life and service, can confirm whether he gives evidence of being called by God to the ministry." THE MACARTHUR NEW TESTAMENT COMMENTARY I TIMOTHY; John MacArthur; Moody Press; Chicago; 1995; P 43

Not only did Paul realize Timothy's call, but he also understood Timothy's situation. Paul saw and knew that Timothy was in a war! He was encouraging him in this warfare.

We too are in warfare, though we seldom see it or acknowledge it in the United States today. The Devil is really not pushing believers here for we are already sidetracked, and of no immediate threat to his work.

We are in a war to control our lives.
We are in a war to control the forces of evil.
We are in a war to bring the church back to what it ought to be.

Anytime we confess sin we are gaining control of our lives for the lord.
Anytime we speak of the word and proclaim it we are taking a little control for the Lord.

This war is spiritual: II Cor. 10:4, "For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;"

This war is invisible: Eph. 6:12, "For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places."

The spiritual warfare is very real and is in every facet of our life. I used to teach a spiritual warfare class that was keyed to missionaries. It was a semester long and I had plenty of material to cover the 32, 50-minute classes.

You will find also that this is a very neglected field of Christian authors. When I was setting up the class on warfare, I found that there were no books available on the subject from conservative authors. Recently I have seen a couple on the market, but I don't know who or what the authors are like.

It also seems that within these prophecies were some comments that would show that God was going to see to it that Timothy would be victorious in his warfare for the Lord.

It would be of interest to know how he faired in the warfare that followed at Ephesus and the rest of his life - we know that it was good!

Warfare is not an uncommon idea in Paul's writings. He uses the concept in Eph. 6:10-17; I Cor. 9:7 II Cor. 10:4. He even speaks of our armor - he seriously sees the work of the minister and of believers to be warfare.

We move now from encouragement and victory to discouragement and defeat in the lives of others.

II DISCIPLINE LACKING

19 Holding faith, and a good conscience; which some having put away concerning faith have made shipwreck:

Might we say that if we do not have faith and a good conscience that we are leaving ourselves open for shipwreck?

When I was in the Navy the crew of our ship was confronted with shipwreck. We went through the eye of typhoon Nancy. We were battered by 65-foot seas and winds well more than one hundred miles an hour. There was tremendous damage to the ship. Landing craft were torn from their mounts - 3/4 inch steel cables were snapped like string. A huge winch secured by one-inch bolts was ripped from its mounting and was sliding around the deck causing its own damage. Antennas that were sealed at the factory and mounted on the top of the masts were full of salt water when we finally went in for repairs.

Most of us feared that the ship would capsize and sink. I was hanging onto a radar repeater with my legs spread as wide as I could and I still lost my footing on a couple of the worst rolls. There were several times in the night that if we had tipped one more degree, we would have capsized. The thought of shipwreck was very definite and was not very pleasant. Many of us really doubted that we were going to make it through the night.

A few months after the typhoon we sailed into a harbor in Formosa and as we entered the harbor we saw two Merchant ships that had been forced onto the coast by the storm. Neither was in any shape to ever sail again.

Usually when a ship is wrecked they are never used again.

Those of us in the Northwest in 1999 know well of shipwrecks and their usefulness. The New Karrisa was one big pain in the neck and totally worthless the moment she ran aground. This was a large cargo ship that arrived off the coast of Oregon in a storm. The crew anchored off the coast, but something happened and she ran aground. They invested millions in getting the hulk removed from the coast.

This thought of worthlessness is often true of believers that become sidetracked, though not necessarily! There is always a possibility of restoration.

Faith and a good conscience. The faith I think that we can understand, but do we really understand the importance of a "good conscience?"

What are some of the problems of an unclear conscience?

a. Guilt feelings.

- b. Inferiority complex or at least feelings of.
- c. Unworthy feeling.
- d. Depression which often leads to unclear thinking.

If the above are in place or even a few of them, just how comfortable is a person when the Word is discussed or preached? Normally people are uncomfortable plus. The usual result of these comes in lack of attendance to the things of the Lord, be they devotional life, walk, services or whatever.

Holding faith! It is to be an integrated part of our life. Faith may be "the faith" or "belief" since the context is false teaching etc. however the primary thought to me would be faith in living and more specifically faith for salvation.

HOLDING FAITH AND A GOOD CONSCIENCE is the key to this passage. Timothy was one that was accomplishing this in a proper manner but on the other hand Hymenaeus and Alexander were not.

Here we are nearly into the year 2000 and we are still talking about these two men that Paul named as having been shipwrecked in the faith. What a claim to fame!

It seems to me that these putting aside faith, may well be the false teachers Paul has been talking about all the way through the letter. They have put away faith as a means of salvation and taken the law as a means to salvation. This is the only reason that I can think of that putting away faith would be classified in verse twenty as "blaspheme."

III. LACKING DISCIPLINE DISCIPLINED

20 Of whom is Hymenaeus and Alexander; whom I have delivered unto Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme.

Hymenaeus is seen in II Tim 2:17-18 also: "And their word will eat as doth a canker: of whom is Hymenaeus and Philetus; Who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some."

Notice that faith is again mentioned. The doubt caused by this man caused a lack of faith. His false teaching affected others and so it is in life. That is why we avoid, get rid of, eliminate false doctrine from our lives.

The seminarian that I introduced you to in the opening had read a book that had shaken his faith in the Word. That shake resulted in a total breakdown of his faith, thus his dive into the liberal education.

Isn't this where the person with an unclear conscience ends up quite often? Such a person has no

faith in the Word or in the believers around them. They often seek the vain jangling of the false teachers.

Alexander is a common name so we don't know who he is or what his problem was. Many believe he is the same one mentioned in II Tim. 4.14 "Alexander the coppersmith did me much evil: the Lord reward him according to his works: 15 Of whom be thou ware also; for he hath greatly withstood our words. " I assume his error was the same as Hymenaeus.

You notice that Paul took these men into his office and dealt very delicately with them so as not to hurt their feelings. He requested that they sugar coat their teaching so that they could continue to teach, but not offend the more conservative folks in the church.

NO! He turned them over to the Devil.

Let's look at I Cor. 5:1-7 for a moment to see a similar incident in Paul's life.

1. It is reported commonly [that there is] fornication among you, and such fornication as is not so much as named among the Gentiles, that one should have his father's wife.
- 2 And ye are puffed up, and have not rather mourned, that he that hath done this deed might be taken away from among you.
- 3 For I verily, as absent in body, but present in spirit, have judged already, as though I were present, [concerning] him that hath so done this deed,
- 4 In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ,
- 5 To deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.

We know from II Cor. that this man was brought back into the fellowship of the church. He was restored through the church discipline process that the Word of God holds forth.

This seems to speak of apostolic authority, but I firmly believe that church discipline would be a direct application of what Paul did.

It is sad that in our day more churches do not practice church discipline.

While in Wyoming my manager at work was having problems in his marriage - his wife was "having trouble finding herself" as so many young women do. She wanted a divorce. He came to me wanting advice. I told him that I would go to the church board - a very conservative church - and ask them to intervene. He followed that advice and came back a week later to tell me that they would do nothing.

I was blown away that a sound church would not follow Biblical principles - blatantly say no we won't do this - I asked why and he informed me that both his family and her family were all

members of the church and the board did not want to take sides and upset the woman's family.

The woman went on and got a divorce and the church board put forth a letter to the congregation stating that there was nothing wrong with the couple breaking up, but that they would no longer be able to work with the youth - now if there is nothing wrong, why wouldn't they be allowed to work with the youth.

This is typical of churches and their dealing with problems and with choosing to not use Biblical principles in the affairs of the church (pun intended).

It is of import, that blaspheme is one of the items for which church discipline is necessary. Morals as in the context of I Corinthians is another and division as well. Basically any outward sin which is detracting from the testimony of the Lord should be considered for discipline.

"That they may learn not to blaspheme" is the clear indication that the turning over to Satan was not a forever item, nor a for life item. It was for educational purposes. You didn't know the Devil was a teacher did you? Not one I'd care to sit under!

Paul was desirous of seeing these two men come back to their proper place in the fellowship.

There is one item of business that we haven't covered as yet. What was the charge that Paul committed to Timothy? At first I thought it was the holding faith and good conscience, but then I thought more specifically it might be holding to faith as the only means of salvation - this would result in a good conscience. Lenski suggests that Paul is repeating his charge to Timothy to remove false teachers. This might be more consistent with the thought of waring a good warfare. I suspect Lenski is correct.

As we end chapter one of I Timothy I would like to draw some application.

1. Timothy was told to get the false doctrine and false teachers out of the church.

How dare we do any less in our own day?

We aren't talking about the little disagreements of interpretation on minor passages. These are not uncommon and should be something that we allow one another to have.

We knew a dear old lady that had some quirks in her thinking. One day at the dinner table she and her grandson's were having a discussion about whether the wine of the miracle where Christ made wine from water was fermented wine or just juice. She was very emphatic that she didn't think that it was fermented - that it was only grape juice. The grandsons were trying to gently tell her that it was most likely fermented wine.

She all of a sudden turned to me, the poor innocent bystander that had not been in the

conversation, and said, "Stan, do you think the Lord turned that water into fermented wine?" Before I had opportunity to answer she must have sensed my coming answer and said, "Well! Your Lord might but MINE wouldn't!" That was the end of the discussion.

I know good men on both sides and all get along well together. They realize this isn't a serious problem. If it is, we are going to really have to talk to the believers in Irian Jaya that use soda crackers and orange juice for the Lord's table. They can't get grape juice.

However, if you have someone that begins to teach against the normal sound doctrines, you had better deal with them very quickly.

2. Timothy was told to be a good soldier. We are all soldiers of one sort or another.

Some of us are AWOL or absent with out leave.

Some of us are POW's or prisoners of war. Tied up in the Devil's camp.

Some of us are on permanent furlough.

Some of us are just to chicken to show our swords to the enemy.

We sing about being soldiers of the cross and that we should be marching onward, but are we really that type of soldiers?

3. One and two above are directly related!

A correctly doctined soldier is usually a good soldier, however at times they are so doctined that they forget to soldier at times.

4. We as believers should be as Paul, in that we are believers and servants of the Lord only by His grace and mercy which He decided to shed upon us at His own good pleasure, and not our superior qualities and talents.

I saw a suggestion in some Gospel Light Sunday school material years ago that suggested the student think of a person that they had known that was very influential in their life and describe them briefly. The point - do you see the following items in their lives?

"pure heart"

"good conscience"

"sincere faith"

"knowledge of sin"

"servant heart"

These are traits we ought to be seeking to instill in our own lives.

Ray Stedman rightly said: "The question this leaves us with is: "What are we doing?" We are

called by Christ, called to live a Christian life in a godless world. This is not something to take lightly, something to do on weekends, a low-calorie dessert to add to life to make it more agreeable. We are soldiers in a battle, a fierce war against sin, called by Christ himself to "wage a good warfare, to hold fast to the faith, to hold to a good conscience." God's image in the eyes of others is at stake. We are to live redemptively in the midst of a fallen world."

Consider your life up to this point in time - is it really a war zone or are you on permanent R & R (Rest and Relaxation leave)?

CHAPTER 10

When we were in Bible college way too long ago, we met an older couple in the church we had decided to attend. He also worked in the same business where I worked so we were able to see a lot of each other.

One of the things I remember most about Lou was the way he prayed. He lived this passage in his prayer life. Each time in Wednesday evening prayer meeting he would pray for the saints, he would pray for the lost, he would pray for the state officials, he would pray for national leaders and he would pray for world leaders. This was an integrated part of his prayer life.

Lou was also one of the most kind, meek men I have run across in this life. He and his wife would assist most anyone in any way that they could. They were some of the more spiritual people that I have had the privilege to meet.

One of his joys was to attend the Christian businessmen's luncheons monthly. He often invited others to go with him - often lost folks. He used this as one of his witnessing tools in reaching the lost.

As we enter into chapter two, we notice that Paul covers prayer before he begins to cover the proper life styles of believers and church leaders. He also covers prayer just after he mentions shipwrecked saints and warring the good warfare. Prayer is the answer to a multitude of problems it would seem.

Prayer is also the required ingredient in a properly functioning church, as well as the church's leadership!

Paul now shifts gears - he moves from the exhortation concerning false teachers to what I might call false worship. It is not that the Ephesians were worshiping false gods, but that they were worshiping God incorrectly. Evidently Paul had noticed some problems when he was there that he wanted Timothy to get to work on.

Now that he has the false teachers out of the church - let's get to the work of the Lord!

I Cor. 14:40 sets the stage for proper worship. "Let all things be done decently and in order." It will become evident in coming verses that this was not being accomplished at Ephesus.

I. SAINTS PRAYING

2:1-2a "I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, [and] giving of thanks, be made for all men; 2:2a For kings, and [for] all that are in authority;"

This passage seems to connect to 1:18. Paul has encouraged Timothy to wage a good warfare,

and then in 2:1 he is telling him just how he can do that successfully. PRAY!

"Exhort" has the idea of begging or entreating and urging someone to do something. Paul realizes that prayer is a key to Timothy's success and he wants to remind Timothy of one of the building blocks toward the victory.

Supplication is something done within the general heading of prayer.

Supplication is a petition or request - something requested as a result of a need. Supplication has the idea of giving rational reason for a request. When a request is made for something or someone, explain to God why you think the request should be answered.

You want to be very careful in your thinking on this one. When in Wyoming we had run up a little debt picking up some computer equipment etc. and as I was praying I almost asked the Lord to allow us to get out of debt. As I considered it, I ask myself if I could give Him a logical explanation as to why He should.

The debt was incurred for our ministry and the time that it would save, but it was a conscious choice on our part to take on the debt. It had nothing to do with God taking on the debt. We had a peace about making the purchases before the Lord, yet I felt that to seek the relief of debt would be out of line. I laid it before the Lord that I realized that we had taken on these responsibilities and that we would enjoy not having them if He would desire to eliminate them for us. He could do it in a moment, or He may let us pay them off as we were able, to encourage us to not do it again.

The term supplication may be slightly different than prayer in that the supplication might involve you as part of the answer, while prayer, is a general term, however some feel is limited to those things which only God can answer.

I had a pastor friend tell me of a situation years ago when one of his church members came in with a terrible car problem. The man's car had need of major repairs which would have been a poor investment, and the man had no money for a different car or repairs. The pastor told the man to sit down and that they would pray about it. My friend told me that he had barely approached the Lord when the Spirit prodded him about the two cars he owned, but never used. He stopped praying and looked the man in the eye and said you have a car - you can have one of mine. This would be supplication. God through the Holy Spirit answered the prayer by involving the one praying.

Hiebert says of intercessions "occurring only here and in 4:5 in the New Testament, suggests thought of confidence in prayer. It does not have the limitation of being for others, as implied in our English term. It was used for a petition of any kind to a superior. It speaks of personal and confiding intercourse with God on the part of one qualified to approach Him. A life lived in fellowship with God gives confidence in prayer." First Timothy; D. Edmond Hiebert; Moody

Press; Chicago; 1957, p50

Wiersbe elaborates on this thought. "This same word is translated "prayer" in I Timothy 4:5, where it refers to blessing the food we eat." "The basic meaning is "to draw near to a person and converse confidently with him." It suggests that we enjoy fellowship with God so that we have confidence in Him as we pray." THE BIBLE EXPOSITION COMMENTARY; Warren Wiersbe; Victor Books; Wheaton; 1989; p 215.

The verb form of this term is translated intercession in two very interesting passages.

Rom. 8.26 "Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered." The Holy Spirit intercedes for us with confidence!

Heb. 7.25 "Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them." Intercession by Christ on our part with confidence! We have two members of the Trinity praying with confidence to the Father concerning our needs.

We see in the terms "giving thanks" the idea of thanking God for past and future answers. This compliments or completes our prayers. When you say, "Pass the potatoes," you usually say thank you when you get them. If you ask God for something and you get it then thanksgiving should be automatic.

Trench mentions concerning thanksgiving something that is of interest which I had not considered in this text before.

"As such it may and will subsist in heaven (Rev. 4:9; 7:12); will indeed be larger, deeper, fuller there than here; for only there will the redeemed know how much they owe to their Lord; and this, while all other forms of prayer in the very nature of things will have ceased in the entire fruition of the things prayed for." THE INTERPRETATION OF ST. PAUL'S EPISTLES TO THE COLOSSIANS, TO THE THESSALONIANS, TO TIMOTHY, TO TITUS AND TO PHILEMON; R. C. H. Lenski; Augsburg Publishing House; Minneapolis; 1937; p 539. THERE WILL ONLY BE THANKS GIVING IN HEAVEN - NOTHING TO ASK FOR OR NEED!

What is meant by pray for ALL men? Why should we? We should pray for all men, not just the missionaries and the pastor, but the other men in the church, other men in the community, and other men in the world, indeed, all of mankind.

Lenski puts it this way: "No matter how far away men may be, the prayers of the church are able to reach them. Who can number all men? Yet these prayers omit none. "All men" transcends even national confines. "All men" means that, although millions do not pray or pray aright, the congregations of true believers who do know how to pray speak for them and leave none

unprayed for. Paul does not seem to be afraid that a congregation may pray for too many or ask too much. If such praying were useless, the apostle would not write what he does write." THE INTERPRETATION OF ST. PAUL'S EPISTLES TO THE COLOSSIANS, TO THE THESSALONIANS, TO TIMOTHY, TO TITUS AND TO PHILEMON; R. C. H. Lenski; Augsburg Publishing House; Minneapolis; 1937; p 539.

What did we hear recently of world population? Six billion people on the earth and Paul informs us that God wants us to pray for all of them! What a job, but on the other hand what an honor! This might give the admonition to pray without ceasing new meaning.

The Pharisees prayed to please men, we should pray to please God.

It crossed my mind, why would praying for all men please God. The only answer I can think of is that when we pray for all men, we pray for all God's creations! Relate this to the thought that He wants all men to be saved and you know that He will be pleased as we pray for His will - all men's salvation.

While I was an interim pastor in Oregon one of the deacons of the church asked if we should pray for lost people. I took some time to study this for him and this passage is one of the texts I ran into.

I would like to deviate from the text for a short study in this area for indeed, praying for all men relates to praying for the lost.

1. In that God desires all to come to Him, it would be logical that we should pray toward that end for the lost in general. Specifically those that we know. II Pet 3.9 "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is long-suffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance."

2. Matt 5.44 mentions, "pray for them which despitefully use you. . . ." Another passage of similar language is Luke 6:28. This is the context of enemies, those that curse you and people that despitefully use you. You are to pray for the latter.

Pray for what? Might I suggest you pray for a change of heart, for growth, for salvation, and for personal relations?

3. Matt 19.13 hints at the fact that some thought Christ might pray for children. There is no indication that they all were believing children. "Then were there brought unto him little children, that he should put [his] hands on them, and pray: and the disciples rebuked them."

Again what might we pray for? Some suggestions - guidance through childhood, the child's salvation, for the child's spiritual education.

4. Pray for those that would hear the apostles words and come to know God is mentioned in John 17.20, "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word;" This gives clear proof that we should pray for lost men's salvation or the situation that might bring them to it.

Pray for the salvation of the lost - that the Holy Spirit might draw the lost to the Lord.

5. Christ approached the Father in John 17.9 mentioning, "I pray for them: I pray not for the world. . . ." This could indicate that there may be a limit in how we pray for the lost, or world, however the People's New Testament commentary suggests that Christ is just saying, I am not praying for the world now - I am praying for these now.

6. Christ prayed for the lost soldiers that cast lots for His clothes. Luke 23.34, "Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." This might relate to people that rebuff you when you witness.

7. I Tim 2.1-4 clearly commands us to pray for kings and all that are in authority. This will surely sometime include lost people. Pray that we can live quietly and peaceably would indicate we ought to pray for good relationships with these people.

Verse four certainly brings the lost persons salvation into the picture as well.

If you relate I Timothy 2.1-4 to Romans 13 and our command to be submissive to the government, you might see a pattern relating to the quiet and peaceable life as well.

What else might we pray about?

- a. governing ability
- b. mercy on people
- c. Godly outlook
- d. wisdom in knowing people, laws, etc.
- e. softness toward Christian beliefs. (The Romans martyred believers. There are believers in Africa in 1999 being killed for their faith.)

Not to get political but how do we pray for a leader like Bill Clinton? He said he was a believer, but he lived in sin.

David Brinkley on the Sunday morning show 4-29-96 asked his colleagues if they thought that Bill would lie to the special investigators taped testimony. One or two of the commentators mentioned, well we know that he lies so....

For leaders such as this, pray for salvation or correct living which ever is needed, honesty, a proper moral life and if need be confession.

I must admit on a personal level, I was not praying for Bill Clinton - I was too busy discussing his disgusting ways - this I say to my own shame, and as I look back on it, many other Christians were in the same boat - we were caught up in the condemnation, rather than the intercession.

MacArthur has a section in chapter six of his book on the Old Testament men that prayed for lost Israel that was very interesting if you would like further study on this. (The MacArthur New Testament Commentary 1 Timothy)

And that all-inclusive phrase "all that are in authority." That means teachers, pastors, parents, husbands, bosses, police officers etc.

II. SAINTS LIVING

2:2b "that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty."

How does this relate to us today?

Pray for kings, even Clinton, and even Yeltsen? Some would say, "Why should I pray for them?"

Paul was asking the church at Ephesus to pray for Nero. Nero was one of the prime movers in the great persecutions of Christians in the early days of the church. He even dipped them in oil and burned them to light his huge parties.

Now if the early Christians were to pray for Nero and those following him, we ought to be able to pray for leaders of our own time - none I know of are this bad - though I specify at this time.

It should be noted also that thanks is involved!

Theophilus of Antioch (second-century) said "I will rather honor the king [than your gods], not, indeed, worshiping him, but praying for him. But God, the living and true God, I worship, knowing that the king is made by Him....Honour the king, be subject to him, and pray for him with loyal mind; for if you do this, you do the will of God." Theophilus to Autolytus, I.xi; the Ante-Nicene Fathers [reprint; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1971, 2:92.

MacArthur quotes Tertullian (a third-century theologian): "Without ceasing, for all our emperors we offer prayer. We pray for life prolonged; for security to the empire; for protection to the imperial house; for brave armies, a faithful senate, a virtuous people, the world at rest, whatever, as man or Caesar, an emperor would wish. These things I cannot ask from any but the god from whom I know I shall obtain them, both because He alone bestows them and because I have claims upon Him for their gift, as being a servant of His, rendering homage to Him alone...." THE MACARTHUR NEW TESTAMENT COMMENTARY I TIMOTHY; John MacArthur; Moody Press; Chicago; 1995; p 64.

Paul wanted the German Christians to pray for Hitler. Indeed, he wanted all Christians to pray for Hitler. He wants us to pray for the most evil people on earth as well!

Food for thought:

What would have happened with Hitler had Christians been praying?

With Nixon had Christians been praying?

With Clinton had Christians been praying?

Now mark my words - be sure to get this right - We are told to pray for them not prey upon them.

"all in authority" - this even gets down to people like your employer and the state and local police department. PRAY FOR THOSE CLOWNS THAT WANT YOU TO DRIVE THE SPEED LIMIT!

Why? "...that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty."

This is the result Paul expected.

Is it possible that the trouble Christians have in so many countries around the world with their government is caused because they as a whole have failed in this part of their prayer life? It seems very possible, for God tells us to do it that we may be at peace!

This may well be the reason for growing unrest in America. We should be praying more for our leaders, more for heads of networks, heads of publishing houses for ALL men.

I recently read an article detailing the evolution of a Bible software company. It has gone from company to company and most of the companies after the first transition were unregenerate corporations. The interesting part is that the heads of these conglomerates have retained a Christian to head the Bible software entity. We might well pray that this continues so that the Word is not corrupted by power and greed. Actually I think it may be too late on the greed part - the program sells for ninety-nine dollars for the cheapest version and almost 300 for the high-end version.

We should pray for Christian publishers - only a handful are privately owned. Most are part of large secular corporations.

We might pray that more Christians get into the political arena. I don't encourage ministers to do so because they have a calling to their work, but other believers should consider the possibilities. God can use believers in government.

Praying for all men is to be an integrated part of the minister's and church's life whether it is for

kings, authorities or paupers. All men contribute to the society we so easily enjoy.

Personally I thank God for the classical composers and the music which they left for us to enjoy. I often felt guilty thinking of praying about men, probably some of which were ungodly, indeed, we are told by historians some were perverse, however God allowed them to create and we enjoy their efforts.

Yes, we need to thank God for these men for it was only by God's grace that their work was set down or even transmitted to our time. We can enjoy this music - we can enjoy great art works etc.

What are some other reasons why we should pray for all men?

a. They are all God's creation. We are all made in the image of God, and as such should appreciate one another. Now that's a tall order.

Indeed, as we pray for all men, we will become more acquainted with God's view of them and it might move us in the area of missions.

God loves the world, not just believers. Each person is important to God thus should be important to us.

b. The possibility of your witnessing to the person is also an item of consideration. Pray for all that you deal with seeking the Lord's help in reaching them for Him.

When Faith and I were custodians at our church in Oregon, we found several times that someone had used the church garbage dumpster for their garbage. I started watching for evidence of the culprit's identity. At Christmas time they dumped a bunch of Christmas wrappings, and among them was a wrapper from a mailed package that had their name and address on it.

I took the address part to the pastor and he stated that he would take care of it.

I asked him some time later how he had taken care of it. He stated that he had taped the address to the top of the dumpster, so that they would know that we knew who they were. He told me that his grandfather had told him many years before that you should always leave any relationship with any person in a manner in which you would be free to witness to them later if the opportunity came. The pastor asked me to let him know if there was any more improper dumping. There was not. The pastor had not made an enemy!

c. The person's occupation may well contribute to society. Where would we be if all farmers disappeared? I would hate to think how many years it would take me to get a crop of any worth into the barn and be able to feed Faith and myself.

Where would we be if the power plants were unmanned? We would be running on oil lamps, as long as the oil men kept pumping and the marketing men kept marketing.

Ray Stedman shared with his congregation the reality of this verse. "Some of the young Christians who work in Vacaville prison tell me that the Christians there regard themselves as the control apparatus to keep the peace of that prison. When riots threaten or when violence breaks out in the prison, the Christian prisoners gather together and ask themselves, "What has gone wrong with us?" When discord is present among the Christians, they always expect, and almost always see, immediate restlessness in the whole prison. They have learned that God will keep the prison peaceful when the Christians are at peace, and in right relationship with him. That is a very significant confirmation of what the apostle is stressing here.

"In fact, one of these men told me that some months ago the chief psychologist of the California prison system was asked by the Prison Board why was it that Vacaville prison had fewer riots and less trouble than any other prison in the state. The man said, "The only thing I can suggest is that there is a group of Christians up there who pray for Vacaville prison. That may not mean much to you," he said, "but that is what appears to me to make the difference."" (From <http://www.pbc.org/dp/stedman/timothy/3768.html>; Ray Stedman; sermon on I Timothy 2.1 ff)

You might want to read Titus 3.1-3 for further along these lines.

III. SAINTS PLEASING

2:3 "For this [is] good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour;"

If we really desire to do our best for God then we would mark this down as something to do.

IT IS GOOD & ACCEPTABLE TO GOD to pray for all men. How easily we can do something that is good in the sight of God. Why in the world wouldn't every believer take this one on to their personal goal list?

III. SAINTS WITNESSING

2:4 "Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth."

What does ALL MEN mean to the average Christian in this context? Do we really think of the world?

I've been seeing some very misguided people that are saying that the world is 75% evangelized: There are 12,000 total people groups in the world. There are 9,000 of them that have A gospel witness thus the world is 75% evangelized - this is their thinking. Is it any wonder that mission agencies are having increasing trouble finding workers and funds - the WORK IS ALMOST DONE! The Devil has been seriously busy on this one.

The truth is closer to the reality that half the world has never heard the Gospel.

How will they hear if Christians are telling other Christians that the job is almost done? God wants all of mankind to come to a saving knowledge of Him!

This is like saying America is totally evangelized if they have one church - imagine, if your church were the only church in your country would you feel your people had been evangelized?

How can this ever happen if they never hear the Gospel. Rom. 10:13-15 "For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!"

Knowledge is a word that depicts a complete knowledge of truth - this is the Lord's desire for all of mankind - knowledge unto salvation.

The key to this passage is certainly that God wills to have all men saved. Praying and living are two ways that we can assist God in accomplishing this task. **SOMETHING EVERY BELIEVER CAN BE INVOLVED IN!**

Richard Baxter a puritan gave some appropriate thoughts to end our study with.

"Oh, if you have the hearts of Christians or of men in you, let them yearn towards your poor ignorant, ungodly neighbors. Alas, there is but a step betwixt them and death and hell; many hundred diseases are waiting ready to seize on them, and if they die unregenerate, they are lost forever. Have you hearts of rock, that cannot pity men in such a case as this? If you believe not the Word of God, and the danger of sinners, why are you Christians yourselves? If you do believe it, why do you not bestir yourself to the helping of others? Do you not care who is damned, so you be saved? If so, you have sufficient cause to pity yourselves, for it is a frame of spirit utterly inconsistent with grace Dost thou live close by them, or meet them in the streets, or labour with them, or travel with them, or sit and talk with them, and say nothing to them of their souls, or the life to come? If their houses were on fire, thou wouldst run and help them; and wilt thou not help them when their souls are almost at the fire of hell?" (Cited in I. D. E. Thomas, A Puritan Golden Treasury [Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 1977], 92-93)

CHAPTER 11

A few years ago Faith and I traveled to California to be interviewed for a position in a Baptist church in a large city. My qualifications were adequate to the position, my doctrine was adequate to the beliefs of the church, my moral life was adequate to their standard. The pastor and one of the deacons were conducting the interview.

I believe it was the final question of the interview. The deacon settled into his chair with a very pensive look on his face and with slow and deliberate language asked me the following question. How do you view your efforts in this life and the reward that you expect in the next?

I was dumbfounded for an extended embarrassing moment. I could not really grasp his question, in light of the fact that I had never in my life thought about it. I looked at the floor, hummmmmmmmmeeeeeedd for an extended time and finally honestly said, "I guess I've never thought about that before." He looked extremely puzzled.

Finally I began explaining to him of my feelings of my position before the Lord. I told him that when God reached down to touch my life, I felt that He owned me - that I would do anything that He requested of me. I had never done anything in my spiritual life to gain reward. I do because He did! He died on the cross for me - He paid the price that I might live - He made heaven a destination for me - why in the world would I worry about reward - if there are any it is only because He wants to do that for me.

To finish the story, though the ending does not relate to the passage - during the interview they had made it clear to me that they had someone in the organization that could handle the position without further expenditures. I told them that I would be glad to consider the position further, but that they already had the provision of God among them in my mind.

The two met for a time without my presence and they thanked us for driving out and spending time with them. They saw clearly that I was right in God's provision from their own group.

Please read I Timothy 2.5-7.

This text introduces us to many doctrines of the faith. I would just list a few for you and I don't mean this to be an exhaustive listing.

Unity of God
Mediatorship
Humanity of Christ
Deity of Christ
The Trinity
Man
Sin

Redemption
Salvation

Indeed, it is of interest that you can almost find within this text the ten major divisions of theology.

I. RECOURSE

As man without Christ we have no recourse. We are destined for the flames of hell. We have no choice, we have no option, we have no recourse. However, God has introduced one that is capable of giving us choice, giving us option, of giving us recourse. Christ Jesus allows us to have possibilities with God.

We continue on with the thoughts of verse four "Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth."

Verse five then comments on the one responsible for making verse four possible. "For [there is] one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus;"

One God speaks to the Father while mediator speaks of Jesus Christ His Son.

"One God" specifically identifies this as God the Father in heaven. He identifies Himself in Deut. 10.17 "For the LORD your God [is] God of gods, and Lord of lords, a great God, a mighty, and a terrible, which regardeth not persons, nor taketh reward:" Also see Psalm 136.2 "O give thanks unto the God of gods: for his mercy [endureth] for ever. 3 O give thanks to the Lord of lords: for his mercy [endureth] for ever."

God knows that man has concocted many gods, but He also knows that He is God of all gods, no matter how powerful man makes his god, Almighty God is supreme in all ways.

One God declares the unity of God as well as the superiority of God. He is the one and only God that man must look to for salvation. He is the creator of all of mankind, and all of mankind is responsible to Him as their creator.

MacArthur mentions "One of the most fundamental teachings of Scripture is that there is one God (cf. Deut.4:35, 39; 6:4; Isa. 43:10; 44:6; 45:5-6, 21-22; 46:9; I Cor. 8:4,6). That runs counter to the pluralistic religiosity of our world, which rejects the concept of any exclusive religious truth. We are taught by the spirit of our age that the gods of the Christians, Jews, Moslems, Buddhists, and Hindus are to be charitably considered equally valid. If that were true, there would be many ways of salvation, and hence no need for evangelism. But since there is only one true God, then He is the One in whom all must believe to be saved." THE MACARTHUR NEW TESTAMENT COMMENTARY I TIMOTHY; John MacArthur; Moody Press; Chicago; 1995; p 71.

I was reminded when reading this, of a letter that was sent by a Chicago ministerial group to the Southern Baptist Convention in 1999. The Southern Baptists were going to have a gathering in Chicago and during this gathering there was going to be some evangelism taking place.

The letter was to inform the Convention that the association was afraid their "we are saved - you are not saved" philosophy would cause problems within Chicago. They even went so far as to ask them to change their place of meeting. They indicated that evangelism might in fact incite hate crimes in the city.

They did not desire the division of the Gospel in their city! How sad that people calling themselves Christians do not want the gospel of Christ preached in their city.

On 1-7-00 Peter Jennings news a report was given that was very negative to the Southern Baptists. The Christian religion that wants all saved by their God is arrogant, was one comment.

The final thought was that the Baptists were proselytizing among the Jews and Muslims - this was made clear in a negative way.

They didn't mention that the Jews proselytize among Christians and Muslims nor that the Muslims are spending millions to reach the world - only that the Baptists were in error in their thinking.

The passage immediately introduces the need of man - the need to find some way to reach the Father - the gap that many speak of in evangelism. God and man are separated until some common ground is found to bring them together. Thus there is need of a mediator.

A Mediator is one which referees - acts between two parties in hope of reconciliation. Today we have in our court, labor, and insurance systems what we call arbitrators. The arbitrator brings the two sides together to see what can be done to resolve the differences.

You might remember in the book of Job - this was one of Job's desires - that a mediator be found to defend him.

Thayer mentions of the term "one who intervenes between two, either in order to make or restore peace and friendship, or form a compact, or for ratifying a covenant."

One of the questions that usually arises from this passage is, if we have Jesus Christ to reconcile us to God why bother trying to go through Mary, saints, angels or whatever as others do to get to God. If God sent His Son to be our go-between why would we seek others? This seems to me to be illogical.

I might introduce you to a new doctrine that is coming down the pike. The Roman church has for years mentioned that Mary is the mother of God. They now are taking this a step further. When

the angel announced the coming child Jesus, she had the option of saying no - this is their interpretation - and because she said yes, she becomes the "co-redemtrix" of mankind. Had she said no, God's salvation plan could not have come to pass, thus she is just as much the savior of man as Christ.

The fact of the verse is that there is one God and one Mediator. No need for any other God, and no need for any other mediator. Indeed, this verse should give the theologian espousing the above doctrine a bit of a problem! ONE MEDIATOR, not two!

1:1-2 show Christ directly linked to God but not linked to man. Here we have a direct statement of His manhood.

"man Christ Jesus" This is a general term for an individual man or can be used of mankind. In fact within this verse we see both usages. "Men" is used as mankind, while man is used of Christ.

Not only is Jesus Christ God, but He is man! We won't take time to study the doctrine of the God-man, but let it suffice to say that Christ was just as much God as if He had never been man, and just as much man as if He had never been God.

II. RANSOM

2:6 "Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time."

"Who" - (v5) Jesus

In John 10:18 Christ states that He laid down His life, no one took it. He gave Himself a ransom for all of mankind. This is how He became the mediator of v5. (Christ speaking of his life said "No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father.")

"for all" Not just for the elect, but for all sinners - for all of mankind, even those that reject Him completely. This gives equal footing for praying for all mankind in the previous passage! Pray for ALL man because God wills that ALL be saved, and has provided a ransom for ALL men!

Not only His life, but Himself -- everything He was--life, thoughts, hopes and dreams.

Some suggest that He died for only the elect. This is untrue and a slight to the work of Christ, and the abilities of almighty God to accomplish that which He has purposed!

It is suggested in my mind that Christ did all that was required to bring all of mankind - every single one - to complete restoration to God. Their sin problems are totally taken care of in Christ's work - all they have to do is accept that work. This leaves them to stand before God only for rejecting the Christ that could have and would have saved them. I have not seen many authors

that present this to their reader - in fact I have only seen one. I think many fear being labeled a universalist.

MacArthur quotes a man that agrees with my thought, but I am not sure MacArthur actually understood what the man meant. He quotes William G. T. Shedd ""The atonement is sufficient in value to expiate the sin of all men indiscriminately; and this fact should be stated because it is a fact. There are no claims of justice not yet satisfied; there is no sin of man for which an infinite atonement has not been provided....Therefore the call to 'come' is universal." (DOGMATIC THEOLOGY [reprint; Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1980], 2:482) THE MACARTHUR NEW TESTAMENT COMMENTARY I TIMOTHY; John MacArthur; Moody Press; Chicago; 1995; p 72

The reason I question MacArthur fully understanding Shedd is that he states the following, "Christ's death was sufficient to cover the sins of all people...." Sufficient in my mind indicates there was enough there to cover all but that not all accepted, thus some were not covered.

The price was paid for everyone, but each soul through the centuries has had to pick up the merchandise. We must individually appropriate this salvation. Just because we're in a so-called Christian nation or in a Christian home, it does not mean we're automatically saved. We have to accept our salvation.

Ransom according to Thayer is "what is given in exchange for another as the price of his redemption, ransom." The term used indicates more than just the payment of a ransom, but indicates the substitution of someone else for the penalty - Christ gave Himself in our place on the cross. Christ was a substitute for our life on the cross.

He mentioned this concept himself as recorded by Matthew in 20:28 "Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many."

He ransomed us he redeemed us, he purchased us - how do we relate to that concept as we live our lives? Do we live as if we are His, do we act as if we are His, do we treat others as if we are His - His in the sense of being totally His - at His total disposal - not at all at our own disposal?

"Due time" according to Thayer is "pertaining to one's self, one's own, belonging to one's self." This indicates that in due time relates to Christ's own timing of his ransom. The time of the cross was not an accident, it was a part of the overall plan of salvation. Not a month early or late, not a day early or late, not an hour early or late, not a minute early or late, not a moment early or late - right on time according to His plan.

I had a professor in a Life of Christ class that took an hour to develop the thought of Christ coming at the specific point in history when it was most opportune. All things in the culture were perfect for the coming of the Lord. He went into the detail of the government, of the tremendous road building of the Romans and the easy spread of the Gospel to the world etc. He tied this with

Gal. 4.4-5 "But when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, 5 To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons."

What does "to be testified in due time" mean? Was this due time relating to Paul and his witness to the world? I would think this would be the thought, though there is certainly an application to us as we continue that ministry which Paul started. Christ picked His time to die, His time to begin the establishment of the church, and His time to begin His work with the gentiles.

The prime job of the pastor is tied into these verses. The job is winning souls for God. This is done in many ways by the pastor. Not only personally through preaching, counseling and witnessing but by teaching others to teach and witness of God's grace and salvation.

These verses also contain our own admonition as well as the pastors! We are all to be testifying of the Lord's grace in our lives and encouraging others to come to know the Lord.

We needed recourse, Christ gave Himself a ransom and now God desires a response.

III. RESPONSE

2:7 "Whereunto I am ordained a preacher, and an apostle, (I speak the truth in Christ, [and] lie not;) a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and verity."

The verse seems to relate to this whole concept of the past verses of the Gospel and importance of Christ.

"A preacher" is described as "a herald or messenger vested with public authority, who conveyed the official messages of kings, magistrates, princes, military commanders, or who gave a public summons or demand, and performed various other duties. In the NT God's ambassador, and the herald or proclaimer of the divine word." by Thayer.

"a teacher of the Gentiles" Paul always went to the Jews first in every town, and then when they rejected him he went to the Gentiles and most of the time was accepted.

This is also a clear declaration that God is interested in ALL mankind, not just the Jewish people. It is also clear that the Mediator was for ALL of mankind not just the Jewish people. It is also clear that prayers for all men was for ALL men, not just the Jewish community.

"For this I am" declares clearly that Paul's purpose in life was the declaration of the Gospel. The clear message of his life was the saving grace of Jesus Christ's death on the cross for the sin of all mankind.

"in faith and verity" Verity is the same Greek word translated truth earlier in the verse. The

double usage of the word in such short a time would indicate emphasis. One must wonder what kind of stories were circulating about Paul that would move him to defend his trustworthiness so.

Paul declares his innocence of the problem of a lie elsewhere as well. Rom. 9:1 "I say the truth in Christ, I lie not...." See also II Cor. 11:31 "The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which is blessed for evermore, knoweth that I lie not."

Wow! What a mouthful of praise for God in this verse, and Paul calls it all up to support the fact that he is not lying to the reader!

This is an added emphasis to his authority as many false teachers had probably been attacking Paul's authority. Imagine his frustration of trying to prove himself correct. It has crossed my mind that Hymenaeus and Alexander of Chapter one may have been questioning Paul's teaching and that this may be why he was so emphatic on his authority and position.

Paul uses the phrase "lie not." A very brief phrase, but what an admonition. Honesty must be the standard. One lie and the reputation is that of a liar. This is not a proper pastoral reputation nor is it a proper Christian reputation.

I recently was given a website address of a man in California that was offering a CDROM with free Bible software and some books. The price was right - only 7.95 shipping - so I sent for one. I also posted the address on a couple of boards and informed some friends. I finally after several months received the cd and put it in the computer. The Bible software was not really Bible software. The software was a library program with a Bible text in it. You can search the Bible text but there were none of the helps and information that is always included in "Bible Software." The software that he included on the cd can be downloaded for free thus he was not offering anything of real value when he offered the Bible software.

One of my friends confronted the man by email and he denied that he had misled anyone. My friend emailed back exactly how he had misled, and he again denied it.

This is a man that is in one of our major evangelical seminaries - this is how he is putting himself through seminary!

The minister of God should not lie. The Christian should not lie. John 8.44 might be of interest to you along this line of thought also. "Ye are of [your] father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it."

"If the basis for prayer is the sacrificial work of Jesus Christ on the cross, then prayer is a most important activity in a church. Not to pray is to slight the cross! To pray only for ourselves is to deny the worldwide outreach of the cross. To ignore lost souls is to ignore the cross." "We pray for "all" because Christ died for "all" and it is God's will that "all" be saved. We must give

ourselves to God to be a part of His worldwide program to reach people before it is too late."
THE BIBLE EXPOSITION COMMENTARY; Warren Wiersbe; Victor Books; Wheaton; 1989;
p 216.

Now I wouldn't want to put this passage on a level with the field of literature, but isn't this what the three Musketeers were all about? Their motto was one for all and all for one. Now I think the passage has a different slant than the Musketeers had, but the phrase fits well without text. One for all - the One God died for all that all might serve the One!

I trust that you will consider just what God's request might be of you in this area of being a ransomed soul owing its life to another. You are His. Not open for discussion, not open for rationalization, and not open for choice. He has every right to every breath you take, He has every right to every dollar you have, He has every right to every moment of time you have.

HOW ARE YOU GOING TO USE YOUR BREATH, YOUR DOLLARS, YOUR TIME?

CHAPTER 12

While living in Cheyenne, WY we attended a little Baptist church a few times over the months. They had special music from time to time which wasn't of our taste, but tolerable. One morning a young thin blonde stepped to the platform. The usual beat ridden loud music began. The gal started swinging and swaying and was almost to swallow her microphone. As the song progressed, she started slapping her thigh with her hand and was really getting with it.

At one point in the performance she attempted to stir the congregation up a little as she thought we were too stayed in our demeanor.

Finally, as she finished, she allowed her total frustration to vent and stomped off the platform and down the center aisle telling us we were the deadest bunch she had ever seen.

Obvious it was to the most casual observer that she was there for someone's glory, but I'm not convinced it was the Lord's.

Public worship is of utmost importance and Paul is in the middle of showing Timothy what ought and what ought not!

2:8 "I will therefore that men pray every where, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting."

There are a number of questions that come to my mind when I read this passage. I don't know that I have the complete answer to any of them, but will share my thoughts and you can see if you think I do.

Are we to lift holy hands in our worship services today?

Are we to lift holy hands in our daily prayer life?

Are we to lift holy hands in prayer at all?

Why did Paul link men praying with their hands in the air, with women dressing modestly? Did he see the men had one problem and the women another and just lump these together to show he is an equal opportunity rebuker?

I would suggest that the obvious is that men are to pray while the women do all the work in the church, but I doubt that I would get away with it.

The context of this passage is that God wants all men saved, that He has made provision for all men to be saved, that He wants us praying for all men to be saved, and now Paul gives added emphasis to further prayer and good works (proper dress).

Verse eight probably fits best with 2.1-7. The paragraph break at the end of eight seems quite obvious. Paul ends the section on prayer with prayer. This is the answer to one of our questions.

He does not directly tie men praying with women dressing. The "women dressing" relates to the whole text concerning women, while men praying relates to the praying for all men.

Paul has stated clearly that we are to pray, and now he adds some specifics. He tells the men to pray.

I. PROPER PRAYER

"I will therefore" - Because of what I've said please do the following.

"Men" This is a term that is normally translated man or husband, but can refer to mankind though seldom. You might note the plural, indicating more than one or two - all are to be involved in this function of the church.

The thought of pray everywhere indicates to me that this a general call to all male Christians to be involved in the labor of prayer anytime and anywhere. Adam Clarke suspects Paul is speaking to the Jewish concept of prayer. "This may refer to a Jewish superstition. They thought, at first, that no prayer could be acceptable that was not offered at the temple at Jerusalem; afterward this was extended to the Holy Land; but, when they became dispersed among the nations, they built oratories or places of prayer, principally by rivers and by the seaside; and in these they were obliged to allow that public prayer might be legally offered, but nowhere else. In opposition to this, the apostle, by the authority of Christ, commands men to pray everywhere; that all places belong to God's dominions; and, as he fills every place, in every place he may be worshiped and glorified."

Linski suggests that the construction of the verse indicates men as opposed to women. "The men only and no women whatever are to do the praying in the public worship of the congregations." THE INTERPRETATION OF ST. PAUL'S EPISTLES TO THE COLOSSIANS, TO THE THESSALONIANS, TO TIMOTHY, TO TITUS AND TO PHILEMON; R. C. H. Lenski; Augsburg Publishing House; Minneapolis; 1937; P 554.

This seemingly was related to the culture of the time - the Jewish temple was not a place for the women to attempt to be vocal. Paul is setting the standard for the local churches at Ephesus.

Kent agrees with this thought however, mentions that I Cor. 11.5 indicates under proper circumstances a woman could pray publicly. He suggests, and I think he is correct that the men are to be the leaders and within the guidelines set forth, women can pray as long as they do not usurp the authority of the men of the church.

Another side note to this passage is the fact that Paul specifically mentions all men praying - there is no limitation on which of the men can pray, there is no limitation on which offices can pray, and there is no limitation on which classes of men can pray. ALL ARE TO PRAY!

"lifting up holy hands" We might note but not belabor the point that "men" are to pray with uplifted hands not "women." I don't know that this was a specific limitation to the point, but Paul certainly indicates it to me. This flies in the face of the practice of many groups and denominations today.

Thayer speaks of holy: "undefiled by sin, free from wickedness, religiously observing every moral obligation, pure holy, pious"

Clarke mentions the possibility of Paul referring to the Jewish practice of washing their hands before prayer to signify their separation of themselves from sin.

The qualifier "holy" is attached to the hands. The term demands personal purity on the part of every man praying. Not "seemingly holy," but holy! If you aren't holy then your prayer should be silent until you are! You should be caring for your sin before approaching the Lord with requests.

The term translated "hand" is always translated hand, but does not mean the appendage at the end of your arm literally. It relates to the grasping of a hand or the seeking of the hand outstretched.

Clarke mentions his belief that this relates back to the thought of the Old Testament saint that was to lay his hand on the sacrifice as it was killed. He believed that Paul was relating the whole thought to us placing our hands on the Lamb of God and praying. After all we can only approach God via the sacrifice that Christ made for each of us.

This would be a palm down position of the hand - much as pastors do when they have a benediction.

I am not convinced that Paul is telling us that raising hands is a thing to do in prayer. It may be done, but is it something that needs to be done - I think not.

Lifting hands

Luke 24.50 And he led them out as far as to Bethany, and he lifted up his hands, and blessed them.

This seems to be a possible reason to lift hands while praying.

Holy hands

Psa 34.3-4 Who shall ascend into the hill of the LORD? or who shall stand in his holy place? 4 He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart; who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully.

James 4.8 Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse [your] hands, [ye] sinners;

and purify [your] hearts, [ye] double minded.

It seems to me Paul's emphasis is on holiness in prayer and prayer. Lifting of hands seems secondary to me.

To make this a defining part of prayer seems to be an over emphasis on the physical. We are to worship in spirit not physically. Prayer is talking with God, not a ritual of set actions.

It needs to be a movement of the heart - not moved by pride. I have seen so many in churches and on television that close their eyes and raise their hands during a song and start swaying back and forth only to open an eye to peek to see who is watching. This isn't praying, this is pride.

This passage may indicate that prayer has many faces. Christ lifted up His eyes, some in the Old Testament prostrated themselves, others knelt. There is no right or wrong position to pray, but as the heart leads, the position should follow.

Linski rightly notes that today we fold our hands to pray. We do this to keep our hands from distracting our minds from things of the Lord.

"lifting" without wrath and doubting. Lifting of the hands was common in Jewish life. Some think it was part of the early church prayers.

This is not to say that we can't lift holy hands today, but do not forget to do a good word study on the idea of lifting hands before the Lord and see what you find before you do it in a worship service. It was cultural and it is not a command to ONLY pray with lifted hands.

I might add it is hands not arms!

Holy kiss is found four times in the New Testament: Ro. 16:16; I Cor. 16:20; II Cor. 13:12; I Thess. 5:26. This is not the practice of the majority of churches today - even though we have four clear verses on it in the New Testament, so why do some practice lifting of hands which is only in one verse in the New Testament if it is such a clear command?

I think there is one verse in the Old Testament that has the idea of totally awesome - excitement plus. Lunging your hands into the air to emphasize excitement over what God has done is the thought I have of raising holy hands.

Actually we should understand that the early church met as they did in the book of Acts - in homes, fasting, praying, fellow-shiping and teaching. They did not have the 11:00 service we have! The gatherings were less formal than ours and probably less structured.

One final passage that may relate to the thought of lifting holy hands. Acts 17:25 speaks of idol worshippers. Acts 17:25 (KJS) "Neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed any

thing, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things;"

Without wrath seems self-explanatory, but I would like to share the thoughts of Barnes on this phrase. "That is, without the intermingling of any evil passion; with a calm, peaceful, benevolent mind. There should be nothing of the spirit of contention; there should be no anger towards others; the suppliant should be at peace with all men. It is impossible for a man to pray with comfort, or to suppose that his prayers will be heard, if he cherishes anger."

The term doubting to our mind smacks of lack of faith, however this is not the case. The term has the thought of reasoning or argumentation. Now, understanding this, lack of faith might be a possible outworking of this. If a man is reasoning about faith and whether God is going to answer or not, then our idea of doubting would apply, but primarily Paul is saying, don't come from the debates and try to pray.

Barnes continues in relation to "without doubting, "They were not to approach God in prayer in the midst of clamorous disputings and angry contentions. They were not to come when the mind was heated with debate, and irritated by strife for victory. Prayer was to be offered in a calm, serious, sober state of mind..."

It seems to me that Ephesus may have had a real problem of proper worship - evidently there was a lot of arguing and disputes. The following context on women and silence in the church and position in the family may have been the subjects of the disputings.

I can kind of in-vision the chaos called worship that may have been going on in Ephesian churches.

Paul tells them to do two things: Men pray, and women dress properly. Not too much different than most of the days in which I have lived my life - men lacking in prayer and women lacking in modest dress - hasn't changed much since Paul's day.

One might ask, what is modest apparel? Hopefully we can add some understanding to this in this study.

II. PROPER PRETTIES

Ray Stedman related that he understands that a famous personality spent three hours in a beauty shop - and that was just for the estimate.

When a woman dresses as a man it is fashionable, yet when a man dresses as a woman, he is a pervert. There has to be something illogical in that. What is the matter with our thinking in this generation?

Paul requests that the women dress conservatively, yet we have preachers' wives on television

that look like they should be in a different profession.

I would like to introduce this section with a quote from MacArthur. His comments relate to the entire text of verses 9-15 concerning women.

"The role of women in the church is a topic that is hotly debated today. Unfortunately, the debate has left the pages of Scripture to find its resolution. The traditional doctrines are being swept away by the flood tides of evangelical feminism. Churches, schools, and seminaries are rapidly abandoning truths they have held since their inceptions. Dozens of books are being written defending the new "truth" regarding the role of women. Ironically, some of the authors of those books formerly held to the traditional, biblical view. But under the pressure of feminism they have abandoned biblical accuracy in favor of the culture. The biblical passages on women's roles are being culturally reinterpreted, ignored because of the alleged anti-female bias of the biblical authors...." THE MACARTHUR NEW TESTAMENT COMMENTARY I TIMOTHY; John MacArthur; Moody Press; Chicago; 1995; Pages 77-78

Verse 9 "In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array;

The term "women" is a term that relates only to women in general, not mankind. It can relate to married or single women or women of any age.

The term "adorn" is of interest. It is closely related to the Greek word kosmos which relates to the world and world order. It has the thought of order or preparation for completeness. Making up or making ready would be a good line of current thought to me. No, I won't say that make up is worldly though that might be a possible indication.

The word translated "modest" is also related to kosmos - the thought being set in proper order. Thayer says "well arranged, seemly, modest." It is translated "good behavior" in I Timothy 3.2. Actually the term used is the word we gain the word cosmetics from.

Lenski tells us that there is a play on words in the original which gives the thought in the verse of "in adorning attire - adorn themselves." THE INTERPRETATION OF ST. PAUL'S EPISTLES TO THE COLOSSIANS, TO THE THESSALONIANS, TO TIMOTHY, TO TITUS AND TO PHILEMON; R. C. H. Lenski; Augsburg Publishing House; Minneapolis; 1937; P 558.

We won't take time to look at it, but for further study check out Isa. 3.18-24 for further on women's adornment.

I would like to speak of modest apparel for a moment, if I may meddle. This hasn't been a real big issue since the miniskirt days, but it is becoming more and more of a problem again due to the fashions.

There are two areas of modest apparel:

1. There is the area before other believers: In the church most certainly modesty should be the hallmark, however it isn't necessarily so. There are times I have to be very careful where I look when on a platform in a church.

Years ago in the miniskirt crazy days, the churches in Denver, CO were in a turmoil over the short skirts in the sanctuary. There were many that said that they were okay and others that thought it was not a show of modesty. I took it upon myself several times to mention a few points. Actually Titus two covers this. Older women should be teaching younger women!

a.) The woman is certainly going to draw attention to herself, rather than to her Lord. This can not be okay. We are in worship service to cast attention to God.

b.) She is going to cause men to stumble into sin. Thought life is where she may cause much unknown sin for men.

c.) Her husband should have put a stop to it before they left home.

2. The other area is before the world: What is the neighbor or anyone else going to think if they see a "Christian woman" in immodest clothing? It is going to be a testimony problem at best.

A lost woman seeing her husbands "Christian" secretary running around immodestly is not going to be easy to witness to!

Some years ago I heard a preacher illustrate the problem that we face in the church. I will give you the shortened version for the sake of time.

He mentioned a true story of an old woman that had shown him a picture of her graduating class. The woman asked the missionary if he noticed anything a little risque. He looked at the picture and it was full of men in white shirts and ties with a number of women in long full dresses. He replied that he did not see anything risque. She pointed to herself in the picture and pointed out that she had raised her skirt high enough to expose her shoe. She mentioned that this was a no no in her day.

The speaker went on to expand on this line of thinking. The old woman came to the place that she accepted showing her shoe, indeed her sock, indeed her dark stocking and even lighter stockings and her leg, though only the lower portion.

The process is so easy from generation to generation. One generation accepts something a bit shorter, and the next accepts something a bit thinner, and the next something a bit skimpier, and the next is accepting something less, until there will be nothing modest about the ladies! We see women's blouses today that would not have been shown as night-wear in Sears catalogs some

years back.

I might add that the men need to follow this admonishment as well! In days past, this was not a problem, but in our present day it certainly is becoming one. Men dress immodestly, they wear jewelry and care for their hair more than some women. Some of the clothes, to me, are becoming very inappropriate.

I would like to share a quote from the mini skirt days that might be of interest to us.

"The house of God is no place for a showy display of fashion and finery (verse 9). A woman's dress is often the mirror of her mind. You can often read vanity or immorality in the gaudiness or the skimpiness of her attire. Regardless of what anyone may tell you, Christian morality shows itself up for what it really is in personal attire (verse 10b). In dress we are guided by necessity, comfort, and national custom but preeminently by godliness. A truly Christian woman will feel embarrassed and ashamed to stir up base instincts in any man by what she wears--or doesn't wear." (Keeping the Faith; Baptist Pub.; Denver; 1971; Adult SS Quarterly, p 10)

Shame facedness - do it with Godly fear - fear of God's chastening hand. Some of the terms that relate to this are bashfulness and modesty. There is a thought within the word of having respect for others. This may well relate to men, your husband as well as other women - and we might throw in children.

Along with modesty and shame facedness Paul adds "sobriety." "The well-balanced state of mind resulting from habitual self-restraint." (First Timothy; D. Edmond Hiebert; Moody Press; Chicago; 1957, p 58) This can relate to both under control as well as the opposite of drunk.

"braided hair" - may have related to idol worship. Thayer mentions "what is woven, plaited, or twisted together." He adds that it is used in other literature, of the basket Moses was placed in.

NOT adorned with Gold - Pearls - costly array.

Gold seems to relate to the thought of articles made of gold. Some relate the term to gold that is carved or molded into an idol. This later idea may be what Paul had in mind, but it isn't clear. This is seen in Acts and the idol makers.

Costly array would relate to expensive clothing. We are really in trouble on this one in the church today! Wow, are we in trouble. Consider the millions of dollars that women AND men spend on clothing in our current world system. Where would Burlington, Levi, Calvin Klein, J. C. Penney, and Sears and all the other clothing stores of the world be without us buying their products? If Christians lived by this verse the retailers would be shattered financially.

BUT with good works which becomes a Godly woman.

I might move back to the miniskirt days for an illustration from the life of one woman. She was the picture of Godliness. She was the picture of what Paul wants in this verse. She was not an old woman either. She was a fairly young mother that was slim and attractive. She was always dressed very nicely. She never seemed out of place in the area of dress. When you saw her and talked with her you were never drawn to the fact that she was wearing skirts that were above her knees. The inner woman was the evident part.

I might say that this is only one of the few examples I can think of where a short skirted woman depicted outwardly enough godliness to draw attention to the godliness rather than the length of her skirt. (I do not know if all the men around her felt that way or not.) You might also like to study 1 Pet 3:1-6 in relation to this as well.

Let's look at some areas where dress can be an issue:

Dress can put social pressure on Christians that want to take a stand. If they don't, they are falling into the Devil's trap. If they do, they are left out quite often.

This can relate to style of dress as well as the costliness of dress.

Dress ought not to be a division in the church. All should be welcome, however this seems to be getting out of hand. I've seen pastors in tan pants and sports shirts to "make people comfortable."

Can you imagine the priest of the Old Testament showing up to the temple or tabernacle in tan pants and a sport shirt?

I think God deserves some respect when we come to publicly worship Him.

Some might say, "But I enjoy dressing a particular way." To this I reply, I listened to rock music for about a year even though I knew I shouldn't. My rationalization was, "I like the music." It crossed my mind one day that an adulterer probably likes his sin too - I stopped listening to rock music. NEVER does enjoyment of an activity make it into a sanctified activity. God's Word makes it sin.

The person dressing improperly is in the wrong - it is sin. (Here we have a command of God to dress modestly. If you don't, you are disobeying God.) You are also making brethren stumble.

Husbands and/or parents need to set the standards for their homes and the dress of those within the home.

Men should not be allowing themselves to be carried into sin. Their eyes are theirs to control!

A woman's indiscretions are a blaspheming of the Word of God according to Titus 2:5.

Along with modest dress there are to be good works.

III. PROPER PERSPERATIONS

10. "But (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works."

Good works are that which Paul encourages the women to adorn themselves with. They are to work for their Lord!

In short, if you profess it - dress it!

The overall thought concerning women seems to me to be that the woman dresses so as not to detract anyone's attention away from the Lord in worship. That she not be the focus of anyone's attention, might be another way to put it.

Her adornment should be her good works!

I would like to conclude with some thoughts from Matthew Henry.

"Under the gospel, prayer is not to be confined to any one particular house of prayer, but men must pray every where. We must pray in our closets, pray in our families, pray at our meals, pray when we are on journeys, and pray in the solemn assemblies, whether more public or private. We must pray in charity; without wrath, or malice, or anger at any person. We must pray in faith, without doubting, and without disputing. Women who profess the Christian religion, must be modest in apparel, not affecting gaudiness, gaiety, or costliness. Good works are the best ornament; these are, in the sight of God, of great price. Modesty and neatness are more to be consulted in garments than elegance and fashion. And it would be well if the professors of serious godliness were wholly free from vanity in dress. They should spend more time and money in relieving the sick and distressed, than in decorating themselves and their children. To do this in a manner unsuitable to their rank in life, and their profession of godliness, is sinful. These are not trifles, but Divine commands. The best ornaments for professors of godliness, are good works...."

I trust as we leave we have two clear items to meditate on. Men are to pray - and women are to be reflecting godliness.

CHAPTER 13

Let me begin by saying this is where I get myself into deep trouble. We are going to talk about women and talking.

Where I work, we purchased a new vacuum cleaner about the same time we hired a woman to do some vacuuming. We add longer cords to the units to make it easier to use and I did not have the new one ready.

The woman started work and became accustomed to the older, heavier vacuums. At some point in time she decided she couldn't use the older one, but that maybe the newer one was lighter and easier to use. I told her to try it and see if this was true. It was and so she started using it.

About two months later one morning I noticed that she was using one of the older units. I did not ask why as she tended not to be super coherent when she talked. Later she asked me if I had fixed her vacuum. I replied that I did not know that it had a problem - that I would look at it later that day. She told me she had heard something break and that it didn't work like it used to.

I checked the unit over and found nothing wrong with it so set it aside and told her the next day that it was functioning the way it should and that I couldn't find anything that was broken.

She came to me the next day and said "Did you know ahh - my vacuum - ahh - well ah - it doesn't - well you know - ah - well I tried another one and it - well it is the same - did you find anything wrong with my - well the old one is like the new one - do you know what I'm talking about?"

I told her I did not - she continued in a similar manner for awhile, then I decided there was something wrong with the new vacuum as well as one of the older ones. I said "what is wrong with them?" "Well they don't - ah - well go down." "You mean the handle doesn't go down - WELL NO IT DOESN'T!"

I said "let's go see." We went upstairs and I looked at the new one. Nothing wrong that I could find. She was quite insistent that it was broken. She wanted me to check it out and fix it. I told her it was working as it was designed. I said "Let's go down and look at the other one that you were using in the basement."

When we arrived in the basement I asked where the vacuum was. WELL IT'S UP THERE WERE WE JUST CAME FROM. I said no, not the new one - where is the old one. Well it is up there! I said up where - she said "we just looked at it." "I said no that is the new one, where is the old one you are using." "WELL IT'S IN THE BASEMENT!" I said, "we are in the basement what part of the basement is it in?" "WELL IT'S OUT THERE IN THE BEDDING AREA."

I went out and found the older vacuum to be working fine as well. I told her and she told me quite plainly that it wasn't working the way the new one used to.

I said they are working fine and that she had to use one of them and left.

At quitting time she started in again. "What do you think is wrong with these vacuums?" I replied "nothing" - that both were working properly. She said that the new one used to stop in the middle and it was easier to use. This is the first time I realized what she was talking about. The new one was stiff when it arrived and the stiffness had gone away as it was broken in. One of the other fellows explained that was what it probably was. "Well, I sure wish someone would fix it." "Mine broke, I heard it, it doesn't work like it used to."

Exit walking quickly forward while standing on tongue.

As I was leaving, she said, "Well are you going to fix it?" I returned and attempted to explain that it was okay - that it was stiff, but now it was functioning properly.

"Well you need to do something about it."

Exit walking quicker.

The next day we three entered the elevator at the same time (she, her vacuum and you know who). As the door closed, she released the handle and moved it up and down and quietly said, "Hum, doesn't lock like it used to."

Exit elevator forward containing laughter.

End of discussion. Woman had final word. Discussion closed.

At quitting time I had the misfortune to be in the shop when she brought her vacuum up. "I heard something the other day, I really think something is broken. I don't want to - ah - make a point of this but I think it is broken."

I again replied with the usual "working as designed," "stiff when new" options.

"Well, uh if you went to the dentist and he told you something, uh wouldn't you want to see what someone else had to say - wouldn't you want a second opinion?"

"There is nothing wrong with the vacuum." "Do you suppose you should check it again, I know there is something wrong with it." I told her I had taken it apart twice and that there was nothing wrong. I told her I was sure one of the other men had looked at it before I had, hoping that she would accept one of us as her second opinion. Not to be.

"Well maybe someone else could look at it and see if they can find out what is wrong with it."

I said that it seemed to be okay as I took the bottom off for the third time. I called her over and

showed her how the handle and release worked and that it couldn't work any other way. I said "see - it stops at the first stop, then you release it again and it goes on a little further" - "And it used to stop in the middle!" "See there is something wrong with it!" "No, there has never been a stop in the middle - it was stiff."

She said "Well, I know that is what you think but maybe - you know"

She continued, "Well I'm not trying to judge - I don't think we should judge" INTERRUPTING I said "It isn't about judging it is about looking at the facts - the two vacuums are identical - the handles came from the same factory" SHE INTERRUPTS "but that one is older!" I informed her that the new handle on the old vacuum had been purchased/installed at the same time as we purchased the new vacuum.

"Well then why don't you compare it to the other vacuums?" "I have - they all work the same, they are all designed the same."

"Well I'm not questioning your ability but maybe someone else could find why it doesn't work right."

I invited her to open it up and find the problem herself. "Well I'm not a mechanic but maybe someone else could ---"

Tongue firmly between teeth.

She went on, "Well I know that is what you believe but I know something is wrong."

Tongue clinched between teeth.

"Then you're not going to do anything?"

Exit forward speedily - tongue in great pain.

I'm not suggesting Paul was talking about this woman, but there are times when women can be somewhat difficult control when it comes to their speaking.

I. WOMAN'S POSITION

Let us view woman's position before God and man.

2:11 "Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection."

This is a new thought from Paul concerning worship.

Fact: "Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection." Paul also mentioned a similar thought in I Cor. 14:32,35. This verse indicates keep peace in the church is the thought of the word.

Some feel the word has the thought of quietness with silence being a possibility.

Yes, we can easily say this is cultural. Yes, we can say that this is Paul's Parasitical prejudice. Yes, we can say a lot of things about this text that the text doesn't say about itself.

Just what is Paul trying to get at?

I suggest that he is trying to say that women should be quiet in the church. Not quiet as in gagged, though that may have been close to the case in Ephesus, but quiet partners with the men of the church. I must admit there have been times in my own ministry where a gag or two would have been a real blessing.

To support my choice of the word quiet: The word translated silence is translated quietness in II Thess. 3.11 "For we hear that there are some which walk among you disorderly, working not at all, but are busybodies. 12 Now them that are such we command and exhort by our Lord Jesus Christ, that with quietness they work, and eat their own bread."

It might be of note that the American Standard Version translators used quiet instead of silent in all four of the places where the word occurs. The word comes from a word that relates to quietness, so this might be a better thought. It is also used in Acts 22.2. "(And when they heard that he spake in the Hebrew tongue to them, they kept the more silence: and he saith,) "

One further proof that this should be quiet rather than silent is found back up in verse one. The term translated peaceable is the adjective form of our word translated silent. Quiet or peaceable seems to be a better thought than silence in my mind. I don't know exactly the meaning in King James English, but quietness seems the thought of the original language.

We went to speak in a church in Denver in the late 80's which had a very different worship service. The men and women sat in a large square, while the children sat QUIETLY in a row of smaller chairs in front of their own parents. There was no leader for the service, but the women spoke through their husbands if they wanted a particular song or passage and that usually at home before they left for church. The husbands would request that the group sing a song, read a passage, or he might share some thoughts from the Scriptures.

It was not that the men wanted to rule over the women and shut them up, they just wanted the service to draw as little attention to mankind as possible and throw all of the attention upon the Lord and His worship. They had the Lord's table set in the center and it was always the center of attention.

Ray Stedman has a good quote: "Women are not to have an attitude of argumentative

aggressiveness, assertiveness, or stubborn insistence on having their own way or their own view recognized. Rather, their attitude is to be one of reasonableness, patience, and a willingness to listen to others."

I would assume that if there is a difference of opinion, it ought to be kept to herself and handled with her husband at home.

I don't feel that I would be out of line to say that in my own life I have seen any false teaching come forth from a man in any session that I have taught in, yet several times I have had women totally disrupt sessions with false teaching or arguing that was very unnecessary.

Let me be quick also to state that the women are usually the ones that tend to enter into discussion quicker than men. Their input is usually very good and meaningful to the subject at hand.

I wonder if Paul's comments on women aren't aimed at discouraging the false teaching and arguing thought. He mentions that they should ask of their husbands at home etc. It would be good if a woman has questions about a lesson that she go home and sit down with her husband and talk it over with the Word.

A real problem today is that the man would not be able to look at the word and find an answer to the question. This is probably why we have gotten away from this concept of Paul's.

My wife will quite often ask me if what she is thinking is right, and then share it in a class, or just ask for her own information.

I think also that part of what Paul is getting at is that women tend to accept the thinking of others too easily. Eve is a good example. She latched right onto what the Devil told her. It took a real man to thumb his nose outwardly at God!

The false doctrine that has interrupted my studies often comes from the woman listening to the radio preachers and accepting all that they say as Gospel truth and not thinking about it or checking it with Scripture or their husband.

When teaching I had a female student that disagreed with me and began arguing very loudly and forcefully. Basically she was repeating what her father had taught her. I finally shifted subjects and finished the class. This was very disruptive and disrespectful. We had a guest speaker's wife in the class and as I left, I over heard the speaker's wife and the student talking about the text again. They stopped me and the speaker's wife started in that she also thought I was wrong.

I finally requested that they both go study it for themselves before the Lord in the Word. I went to the library and found that none of the commentaries held what they believed and most held what I had taught. I then went to the office and restudied the text just to be sure. The point being - a

quiet questioning after class would not have disrupted an entire class.

Some feel that Paul is trying to make a positive in these texts. They believe that he is encouraging women to be in teaching sessions and learning.

In the Jewish life women were pretty much left out of things if not refused learning of spiritual matters.

2:12 "But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence."

Paul says he does not permit a woman to teach, or usurp authority over the man

The term translated "man" is - "andros" - mature as opposed to a boy.

A quote may help: "The Gospel elevated the woman and gave her a position of spiritual equality with the man before God, but it does not remove the original position of subordination that God ordained for the woman." (First Timothy; D. Edmond Hiebert; Moody Press; Chicago; 1957, p 60)

I'm not sure this quote is all together true. I think she had equality before. There is nothing to suggest woman is less than man spiritually. They are the same, however there is an order of creation and an element of subordination in life.

The thought of equality before God is very Biblical as well as the thought that during her earthly time she is also to her husband and while in church to the male leadership.

Don't tar me and feather me, but allow me to literally view the scriptures in the plain easy way of understanding them. If Paul tells me that a woman is not to teach men then I believe that she is not to teach men. If Paul says that women are not to usurp authority over men then I believe that women should not usurp authority over men.

"but to be in silence"

This quote came from a Sunday school lesson book some years ago.

"In public worship the ladies must assume the attitude of a learner; they must sit quietly and listen to instruction `with all subjection' (verse 11). Modern movements to achieve an imagined emancipation and independence of women are both unbiblical and unnatural. Such attempts are a revolt against a woman's divinely constituted being and role."

"It is absolutely a disgrace for any man to sit in public at the feet of his wife or any other woman while she presumes to expound Scripture. By subjecting himself to her authority, he virtually

betrays his trust as 'head of the woman..' The teaching of Christian doctrine in the public assembly is reserved exclusively for the men (verse 12). Shortages in the pulpits of the land can never justify the unscriptural practice of ordaining women or permitting them to preach." (Keeping the Faith; Baptist Pub.; Denver; 1971; Adult teacher SS Quarterly, p16)

I might add that this is quite humorous when you relate it to the fact that the same company published adult Sunday school literature written by a woman!

A woman writing material is not only teaching the man teacher, but she is also influencing the men that he might teach.

A number of years ago I ordered some adult Sunday school materials from a publisher. The material came and it was written by a woman. I returned them with a nice letter stating that I did not care to use materials written by a woman.

I received back a very curt letter from the editor telling me what for. His thinking was that there are only a few good Sunday school material writers and that he would use any that he wanted - male or female.

I sent a letter to him and explained this text to him and told him that he was free to use women writers and that I was free not to use women writers based on the Word.

I received another letter from him that was very nice. He admitted that I was right and that he would try to refrain from using women writers again.

In the Women's Liberation movement most reject the Bible. Some say the Bible teaches Women's Lib. God is She. I say anyone that says that is blaspheming God's name. You ask why. God is the Father of Jesus, Mary was Jesus mother. If God be a She then God is a homosexual and a freak of nature that can produce a child unnaturally without a father. I reject, as the height of false teaching and ignorance, this line of thinking.

WHY SHOULD A WOMAN NOT TEACH? Not because I said it. Not because Paul said it. Because it reverses the roles set by the creation and the fall -- Woman was to be a helpmeet not a boss and she was the one easily deceived.

Some theologians that desire to allow for the women's lib movement have come up with a view that allows the person to give lip service to belief in what Paul states about the woman teaching men, yet allows women to teach men.

They hold that the woman is not to teach men unless the man gives the woman permission to teach men. That is not in the verse, nor can you draw it as a principle from this verse!

Others state that the pastor can give authority to the woman to teach. She through the pastor

usurps authority of men sitting in the congregation - in my opinion.

Jimmy Carter when asked about this text stated that this is one area in which he disagreed with Paul. ON NATIONAL TELEVISION HE OUTWARDLY DISAGREED WITH GOD'S WORD.

In many churches across the country women are teaching men in things concerning the Word. This is not to be.

I must admit that some of the women teachers I have heard in adult classes are as good if not better than some of the men, however that is not the criterion. Scripture is our criterion and the Lord says that women should not teach men. I tolerate it once in awhile because we are invited into the situation.

We filled the pulpit in a little church in Wyoming and the adult teacher was a woman. The woman admitted she didn't like it but none of the men would do it so she decided to go ahead - my question is, if she hadn't taken the position would a man have assumed it even though he felt inadequate? Again I have to admit that she was an excellent teacher and understood the Word better than many men I have sat under.

The good women teachers ought to be teaching the other women of the church as we will see if we get to Titus in our study. Titus 2:3-5 if you want to look at it on your own.

The pastor and leaders must screen the materials used in their church and be able to assure themselves as well as their congregation that the materials are of sufficient quality. They are also responsible for assuring proper teachers both in gender and qualifications.

SO! Just what place does a woman have in a class or service? I believe that a good application of this verse would run along the following lines:

- a. A woman can enter into discussions as long as she does not become argumentative with the men in the class. If she indeed, feels that she is correct and the men are wrong, she should not push for vindication, but go home and seek information from her husband and if she is correct, a visit with the teacher and the couple for some good discussion IN LOVE to see if things can be cleared up would be in order. I think if the leader is spiritual at all he will correct his thinking and correct things in class. I know of no one in the ministry that is really interested in teaching false doctrine.
- b. Women should check things that they believe with their husbands if they find that their belief is counter to the usual teaching of the church.
- c. They should be very careful what they listen to on radio and television. They should also compare what they hear with Scripture and then discuss it with their husband. This would also include the myriads of books on the market.

This is not to say that women should not teach! They should be teaching. They should teach other women as well as children.

It is my personal preference to see women teach no higher than 6th graders. The older young people need the man to teach if at all possible. A lady teaching the girls could be very good as well. At the same time, I am not saying that only women can teach children either. I, again personally would rather see the children's classes manned by men as well.

Now let's move on to the why of this limitation.

II. WOMAN'S PROBLEM

2:13 "For Adam was first formed, then Eve."

Woman was formed to give man a helpmeet, someone that could minister to him in ways that he has need.

Wesley stated that this verse shows that the woman was inferior to the man - HE SAID IT NOT ME!

2:14 "And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression."

Gen. 3:16 shows she is also under man due to the fall. Gen. 3:16 states, "Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee."

Many hold that the desire that the woman is to have for her husband is the sexual desire, and/or the love desire. If you really think about that, it does not fit the text well at all. This is just after they sinned and God is bringing forth punishment and consequences. To relegate sexual desire or love to part of punishment just doesn't fit to me.

The word desire is also used in Gen. 4:7. Here we are in the account of Cain and Abel. Cain has offered and his offering has been rejected. Here we see that God is talking with him. "If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door. And unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him."

Cain is told that evil will desire to rule him, but that Cain must rule evil instead.

Now, let's reread the last part of Gen. 3:16, "thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee."

It seems to me that God is telling Eve that she will desire to rule her husband, yet this will not be so. He will in turn rule her, or at least this is the proper makeup of the marriage. This is more in

keeping with punishment.

"The seduction of Eve provides sufficient evidence that women are not endowed with the faculties of spiritual discernment in matters of doctrine and morals. By nature women tend to rely upon first appearances, feelings, intuitive capacities, and aesthetic sensibilities. These qualities, as excellent as they are, do not equip the fairer sex to exercise independent judgment in governing the church or guiding doctrinal discussions. Because women have a greater potential than men for being beguiled, it is inadvisable to give them positions of authority over men." (Keeping the Faith; Baptist Pub.; Denver; 1971; Adult SS Quarterly, p 11)

I think this quote is a little harsh, though the principle seems correct.

The Jehovah Witnesses realize this, I think. They call in the day time when men are at work. Every time I've come home and they were there they fled. They hardly say goodbye. They know they can double talk many women but that it is difficult to face a man with their false teaching.

The proper order is God, man, woman and children. If the woman usurps, it is God, woman, man and children or at times worse, Woman, God, man and children.

There is another thought that Wesley mentions in relation to the woman. He not only noted that she is more easily deceived, but also more easily deceives. I think from personal experience this is probably true. When our kids were at home, our sons were right up front - like Adam - when they went against us. Our daughter on the other hand was quite deceptive in her disobedience.

Woman has a proper position due to her problem, however God gives her a promise and I believe a compensation.

III. WOMAN'S PROMISE

2:15 "Notwithstanding she shall be saved in childbearing, if they continue in faith and charity and holiness with sobriety."

Many are the suggestions about the meaning of this difficult expression. We may not answer this one completely.

Let us just list some of the possible explanations of this text.

1. She will be spared becoming totally involved in the world system or society because she is home taking care of kids. She will be spared the troublesomeness of being out in the world.

Well, that doesn't really fit in our world. If this was a promise of God, many Christian women are not enjoying it today.

2. Some suggest that she will get safely through childbirth - not succumbing to death.

I'm not sure that I would want to state that, because I have no facts to state that a Christian woman has never died in giving birth to a child.

3. Some teach that having many children results in better chances of entering into heaven. This is not acceptable! Salvation is based on the Blood of Christ not a woman having children.

4. It has been suggested that she will be saved from not being "worthless" spiritually. She will be serving God by giving birth to and raising children. She is being saved from being fruitless - due to her limitation in teaching in the assembly - but will be very productive as a mother.

The term translated saved can be used of being saved from destruction, but it also has the thought of saved TO completeness. The woman is completed in childbirth might be the thought here. I think most women would agree to this thought that having a child completes them as a woman.

Paul adds some modifiers to the thought of raising kids as well. He encourages faith, charity, holiness, and sobriety. I would challenge all women to study that list that Paul gives to you to live up to!

Not to say that the fellows shouldn't take a look at the list for themselves!

Faith that continues is faith that is always there to meet the needs in prayer and trusting the Lord for answers to life's problems.

Charity that continues is love that is available at all times. Not just now and then when you want to - but all the time - anytime that someone needs it.

Holiness that continues is holiness that is always there. The children and husband never need to worry about this woman - they know that she is walking with God. It is a holiness that is always there. You don't find the holiness going in the glove box when they get behind the wheel, or the holiness that stays in the closet when the gossip session begins.

Sobriety relates to soundness of mind. The woman is in control of her mind at all times. She doesn't allow it to become clouded by influences from within or from without. (The term only appears here and in I Tim. 2.9 and in Acts 26.25.)

Sobriety that continues is found in the woman that really is together, and together all the time. Things might shake her for a short time, but she is back on top very quickly.

SOME CONCLUSIONS TO OUR STUDY OF CHAPTER TWO:

Paul does not tell us to go out and demonstrate - He tells us to PRAY for the leaders! It isn't that

demonstrations are wrong, but it is a question of if they are proper for the believer. How will your testimony wash if someone knows that you have been in that particular demonstration?

It is a matter of whether you are breaking the law or not.

It is a matter of whether God led you into it or someone else.

It is a matter of priorities. We are to be evangelizing the world. How will this demonstration help do that?

Paul stresses prayer and submission. I believe the two go hand in hand. Prayer is of the utmost importance in the Christian's life. If you aren't praying on a regular basis then you are missing God's best blessing. Fellowship with the Creator of the heavens and the earth. It really helps to get prayer into your life.

Some quick thoughts on prayer:

1. Before you ask for anything seek forgiveness for your sin.
2. Be sure you are saved!
3. Be honest with God. Don't try to put on a front for God. I have a hint for you - He knows better!
4. Be regular about it.
5. Try a prayer list. Item, date requested and date answered.
6. Try short prayers through the day when you have a few moments.
7. Be persistent about a request until you feel it is answered.
8. Combine praise with your requests.
9. Be open to God's bidding - He may want you to be part of the answer.
10. Be sure the rest of your life is in proper order - sin wise -service wise - and give wise.
11. Pray with someone else as often as possible.
12. Pray longer than you think you should.
13. Share answered prayer with other Christians. It will encourage you as well as others.

14. If you're just starting a regular prayer life, start with a short but specific amount of time.

I trust that the thoughts given have been uplifting to women. I trust I have not offended anyone - women are God's special gift to men - they are not second class citizens, though our society hasn't really given fact to that as yet. They do have their place in the order of God's plan - a very special place.

CHAPTER 14

TO QUOTE A FEW CHILDREN I'VE HEARD, "MINE!"

INTRODUCTION:

Several years ago we took our daughter and grand daughter to Nebraska to see some relatives. We had noticed and mentioned earlier that our grand daughter had not used the "mine!" word in her short little life.

When we arrived at our relatives, it was not long before grand daughter and the relatives little children began playing together. Their son was very cruel in mentality. He walked up to me with a monster action figure with sharp edges and laid it on my forearm and scraped it as hard as he could down my arm. He looked at me with a grin and asked if it hurt. They were very grabby, picky, noisy, and selfish. It was about five minutes before our grand daughter used that term "MINE!" for the first time.

She learned very quickly that to keep in that house, is to holler MINE!

In this text we find that church leaders are to have a prerequisite, even before they are examined to see if they are qualified.

Let us turn to I Timothy 3:1.

SCRIPTURE READING:

1 "This [is] a true saying, If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work.

2 "A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach;

3 "Not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous;

4 "One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity;

5 "(For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?)

6 "Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil.

7 "Moreover he must have a good report of them which are without; lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil."

Notice in that first verse that the church leader is to desire the office that he holds. We want to delve into this idea of desiring the office of elder in this study.

"There's a story about a proud young man who came to Socrates asking for knowledge. He walked up to the muscular philosopher and said, O great Socrates, I come to you for knowledge. Socrates recognized a pompous numskull when he saw one. He led the young man through the streets, to the sea, and chest deep into water. Then he asked, What do you want? Knowledge, O wise Socrates, said the young man with a smile. Socrates put his strong hands on the man's shoulders and pushed him under. Thirty seconds later Socrates let him up. What do you want? he asked again. Wisdom, the young man sputtered, O great and wise Socrates. Socrates crunched him under again. Thirty seconds passed, thirty-five. Forty. Socrates let him up. The man was gasping. What do you want, young man? Between heavy, heaving breaths the fellow wheezed, Knowledge, O wise and wonderful... Socrates jammed him under again. Forty seconds passed. Fifty. What do you want? Air! he screeched. I need air! When you want knowledge as you have just wanted air, then you will have knowledge." (M. Littleton in Moody Monthly, June, 1989, p. 29)

The church leader should be able to look at his position and say, "MINE!" They are to WANT AIR!

Now, understand what I am saying. I am not saying that church leaders are to act like little children nor am I saying they ought to be bad swimmers!

I am saying however, that a man should not be in church leadership unless he has considered the ramifications of this verse.

Once he is convinced in his own heart and mind that he desires the office, he should then be examined to see if he is qualified according to the rest of the text as well as the list in Titus.

You may be saying to yourself why consider the desire of an elder. I personally have not heard a message on the subject, and as I went looking for commentary information, I discovered that many do not discuss the thought when commenting on this passage. I want to comment on it in this study because to me it is a new problem facing the church. In years past I think most people that were in office were there because they enjoyed that ministry, but I'm not sure all officers today are there because of a desire to serve.

Many are the men that I have run across in positions in the church are qualified, but are not totally committed to their work and ministry. These men are doing a good work and are sincere in their effort, however they are not the men that God wants in that position - they don't desire the work. God will call men to the work and give them the desire to fulfill that position by prayer and the Word not by being voted in.

I have also come in contact with men that desire to lead the church and do some of the preaching,

but are not comfortable with the other aspects of today's concept of pastoring. These men are not serving in the position that they should because of their churches traditional concept of pastoring. They have the desire but not the opportunity.

It is of interest that God might well call a man and give him the desire, long before he is qualified. That would indicate that training and discipleship are required in some cases. There might also be a man that has been in a church for many years, highly qualified, and is called later in life that is fully qualified.

The text is not limiting to a set pattern, but rather is limiting to a set list of qualifications. A call, a desire, and a life that is fitting the office that is desired.

We need also to point out that not all men should desire the office. There are more that will not desire it than those who do. God only needs a few to oversee the flock.

We want to take a look at the terms that are used in this verse, and then we will look at the implications of the text.

WORD STUDY:

"This [is] a true" This term is closely related to the word that is normally translated faith.

This term is used of someone that shows themselves faithful in business transactions/is used of a person that follows orders/is used of a person that is worthy of trust/is used of a person that can be relied upon. It is also used of God being faithful (I Cor. 10.13; II Cor. 1.18).

The term is used of a person having faith in Christ's resurrection and His Messiahship. "And he said to the woman, Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace." (Luke 7:50) It is the term that Luke used of Stephen in Acts 6.8, "And Stephen, full of faith and power, did great wonders and miracles among the people."

Barnes mentions of the word, "...means assuredly true; it was that which might be depended on, or on which reliance might be placed. (Barnes p 122)

"saying" This is the same word that is used to describe Christ as the Word, Logos. It is also the same word that is used to describe God's Word the Bible. It has the idea of something that is spoken or said. It seems to be a general term which takes on special meaning when related to Christ and/or the Bible.

A Greek philosopher named Heraclitus first used the term logos around 600 BC to designate the divine reason or plan which coordinates a changing universe. This word was well suited to John's purpose in John 1, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." (John 1:1)

"If a man" The term seems to indicate that any and all men are open to have this desire, yet only those so burdened, gifted and called would have the desire. If any man desires, is the idea. This presupposes salvation - the man must be a believer.

"desire" The Online Bible states: "to stretch one's self out in order to touch or to grasp something, to reach after or desire something" They also list as a usage, "to give one's self up to the love of money" Picture a greedy person - you know, like Scrooge McDuck - their desire for money - the man desiring to be a church leader should be so desirous.

Vinzant vol. 3 mentions "Originally to stretch forth, to reach after. Here it implies not only desiring but seeking after. The word implies eagerness...."

The term is a verb and the construction indicates continuing action that the person has involved himself in. He is actively desiring.

I Tim 6.10 "For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows." The term coveted is the term we are looking at.

Heb 11.16 "But now they desire a better [country], that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city."

"the office of a bishop" This seems to indicate the office or name of the position that is desired. (Lu. 19.44; Acts 1.20; I Tim 3.1; I Pet. 2.12.) The term elder or shepherd pictures the ministry of the one in that office.

The idea of investigation and inspection are seen in the term. These terms are used in the thought that as a church leader, the person would inspect the church constantly and determine what needs to be done and set into motion the work to accomplish this.

The shepherd does this constantly in the field with the sheep.

"he desireth" The idea seems to be to long for, or to desire. Since the word is translated lust and covet also, we must assume that this longing or desire is quite strong, indeed, strong enough I assume, to move the person to act upon that desire by seeking the office.

Christ used this word for a man's lust for a woman in Matt 5.28.

Luke used the term to describe the desire of a hungry beggar wanting the crumbs from the rich man's table: "And desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table: moreover the dogs came and licked his sores." (Luke 16:21)

"a good" There are many terms listed in the Online Bible to describe this term. Beautiful,

handsome, excellent, eminent, choice, precious, admirable and magnificent, to list some.

It is used of good works, of good fruit, good ground etc., indicating that this work that is desired is a GOOD DEAL. Something quite acceptable and good.

"work" This is a word that simply means that which occupies our time as we do things. Work normally indicates effort and exertion.

It is used of the works that believers have done which will be tried by fire at the judgment seat of Christ. I Cor. 3.13-15

"good work" might also be translated a good office, or good ministry. Paul is telling Timothy to find men that desire to be involved in the oversight of believers. He is then to look at their overall character and find if they qualify according to the list that is set forth in the coming verses.

The Darby version seems to put it quite nicely: "The word [is] faithful: if any one aspires to exercise oversight, he desires a good work."

To put it into the thought of our word study you might try this. It is true to say, if a man really desires to oversee the church, he is seeking a good ministry.

"Faithful is the saying" in the King James indicates that this is just a saying that is true. The Darby indicates that this is the Word of God that is faithful. A saying in the Word elsewhere dealing with this subject or the Word itself. Which case is correct? If we had a passage in the Old Testament or writings of the New Testament that predated I Timothy, we could suggest that the Darby translation was correct. If not, then the King James would be correct.

The literal translation of the verse states, "Faithful is the word" which does not indicate if it is just a saying or The Word. I do not find any previous reference to a person desiring the oversight of believers. There are a few references which mention that God is in the business of overseeing His people - Jer. 31.28; 44.27 for example. Luke 2.8 mentions of shepherds, "And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night." This illustrates our text. A shepherd desires to oversee the flock as does a church leader. However, no ref. to indicate previous mention of men desiring to oversee.

I think the King James is probably the closer to what Paul had in mind. I really do not see any indication that the Bible was in his mind.

I. BASIS OF THE WORK

The true saying is that if you desire the work, you desire a good work. Now, if there is any other desire, or if there is no desire, then the saying is not true of you.

The desire is for the work and nothing else! If there is anything else involved then you no longer have a true description of yourself.

Let's consider some of the possible wrong desires. I would like to just list three possibles and read a verse for each.

IN THE NEGATIVE:

A. Not for money - I Tim 3.3, "Not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous;"

Many are the stories that I could tell you of pastors that are more interested in the "pay package" than they are in God leading them into or out of a work.

Let one account suffice. One of our chapel speakers at the school where I taught was a camp director in Montana. He told us of a pastor that had told him that he was changing churches because he needed more money. Up front - that is no reason to change churches. The camp director asked the pastor how much he was getting at his present church. The pastor replied, "Only \$40,000."

B. Not for pride - I Tim 3.7, "Moreover he must have a good report of them which are without; lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil." Most feel that the snare of the devil was his pride.

C. Not for self - I John 2.15-17,

15 "Love not the world, neither the things [that are] in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

16 "For all that [is] in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.

17 "And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever."

Do it because you feel compelled to do it for God! No other reason or desire should be involved.

IN THE POSITIVE:

I would like to submit three references and just list some of the positive aspects of this work.

A. THE CARING: Acts 20:28, "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath

purchased with his own blood." WATCHING AND FEEDING.

This work is done for the Holy Spirit because it is done at his command and call. I don't know about you, but I've been in a number of meetings where people were almost railroaded into office by a congregation that needed someone to fill a position. This is not the desire of the Lord.

It relates to the oversight of the church.

It relates to the spiritual feeding of the people of that church.

It is done for those that Christ died for.

It is of note to me that in this great passage, given to the elders of the churches there is no mention of all the things that we feel a pastor is to do. Visitation, marriages, mowing, cleaning, funerals, community projects etc. Not that these things are bad, but they are not a Biblical job description for an elder.

The pastor is to be involved in feeding and watching for the people.

B. THE PREPARING: Eph. 4.11-16

11 "And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;

12 "For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:

13 "Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ:

14 "That we [henceforth] be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, [and] cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive;

15 "But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, [even] Christ:

16 "From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love."

Note: Christ = Head

Leaders of the body

For the perfecting of the saints.

For the edification of the saints.

For the protection of the saints
For body increase.
For the work of the ministry. (Both the ministers and saints.)

C. THE SENDING: II Cor. 5.18,19; Matt 28.18-20; Acts 1.8

I would like to list the II Cor. passage. The others are probably familiar to you - if not take time to read them later.

18 "And all things [are] of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation;

19 "To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation."

We are to be spreading the message of reconciliation to the world.

THAT IS MISSIONS!

All too often our leaders teach the people, and maybe even care for the people, but few churches send their people. The number of mission minded churches is on the drastic decrease today.

When on deputation, I ran into a church in Washington that had sent out more than fifteen couples to the mission field. That is a church that takes time to teach its people about the Lord's command to go.

We want to move on now to the desire of the work.

II. DESIRE OF THE WORK

The man that is spoken of in this text is one that is somewhat consumed by what he wants to do.

I am reminded of people that I have seen that are involved in car racing. Their every moment is geared toward the next race and getting the car ready for that race.

Their money quite often is committed to the car, their time is committed to the car, their thought life is committed to the car and all else that they have is committed to the car.

So, the man that desires to oversee the church should commit himself, his time, his resources and his effort to doing the work of God.

If he is still in the seeking stage of his desire and not qualified then all should be committed to assuring that his life measures up to the standard that follows in I Timothy.

The man should want to do it.
The man should want to do it well.
The man should want to do it well for Christ.
The man should want to do it well for Christ only.

His total focus should be on the work that he is attempting to do for Christ and Christ alone. The work is not for his benefit, but for the benefit of Christ and Christ's people.

And now the nature of the work. A GOOD WORK. Not one that brings shame or division to the church or Christ. A GOOD WORK!

III. NATURE OF THE WORK

A. It should be a work that glorifies God. There is no other logical reason to labor for God.

"[Even] every one that is called by my name: for I have created him for my glory, I have formed him; yea, I have made him." (Isaiah 43:7)

B. It should be a work that increases Christ's body.

The whole concept of the Body of Christ is the growth, maturing and the working together of the members.

If we are afraid of growth in our churches, we are afraid of what God wants. This is not uncommon today. Many are afraid their apple cart will be bothered, thus don't like the thought of growth.

We were in a church that was interviewing a candidate. The man wanted to do some new things to see if he could bring about some growth in the very stagnant church. The people became nervous and asked all kinds of questions about why he wanted growth etc. They did not call the man. It was of interest to us that the man they called had similar ideas about growth but didn't tell them about his ideas. They called him and he brought about growth in the church. GOD WILL HAVE HIS WAY, ONE WAY OR ANOTHER.

The whole idea of evangelism is growth in case you haven't noticed. If we are leading people to Christ, then the body will be growing.

By the way, this is the problem today. We aren't leading people to Christ fast enough to replace those that the Lord takes home. We either need to get out and begin evangelizing or ask the Lord to let the Christians live longer.

C. It should be a work that flows from the Holy Spirit.

Any labor that is not directed by the Holy Spirit,
any labor that is not empowered by the Holy Spirit,
any labor that is not centered in the Holy Spirit cannot be a work that is from God.

As a church there should be much prayer concerning all facets of the ministry. As church leadership meets to plan the future of the church, prayer should be the prime force behind their action.

We ought not move without orders from God.

APPLICATION:

1. FOR THE CHURCH LEADERS:

Do you leaders measure up? I see few churches holding leaders to this standard in I Tim three.

I have seen a few men of this caliber in my life. I met one a number of years ago. He was a very busy man in his own life, yet he desired to do the work of the Lord. He was working long hours at work and yet he spent many hours in church work.

He was not interested in glory or recognition, indeed, oft times he would do things and the pastor would take the credit - it didn't matter to the man.

He was involved in ushering, he was a board member, he was involved in the missions committee, he was involved in visitation, and he was involved in other areas of the churches ministry.

He desired the work and he did it when given the opportunity.

2. FOR THE CHURCH MEMBERSHIP:

It is your responsibility to hold your church leaders to this standard.

NOT YOUR STANDARD,
NOT A PAST STANDARD,
NOT A FALSE STANDARD,

BUT GOD'S STANDARD!

In closing I would like to read four verses which show the balance of leadership in the church. We have Christ the Head, we have the leaders, and we have the people. There should be a balance between the three.

Acts 20.28 mentions the ministry of the overseer as well as Christ the provider of salvation.

"Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood."

I Timothy 3.1 mentions that the overseer should desire to do the work that he is entrusted with, and then the following verses tell us of his qualifications.

"This [is] a true saying, If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work."

Heb. 13.7 mentions that teaching is part of their ministry, as well as living a good example before man.

"Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of [their] conversation."

Heb. 13.17 tells the congregation that they are to obey the overseer. The congregation is also to submit to the overseer. The clear teaching of this verse is that the overseer must give account of his sheep.

"Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that [is] unprofitable for you."

I might be quick to point out that these last two verses do not teach that the pastor is in total power, and that he makes all decisions for the church. This is a false line of thinking that is being spread through the country by a Bible College in Missouri.

Illustration: We started going to a church that as we found out later had no board, the pastor controlled all aspects of the church's life and program. He had come in and eliminated the board over time and was in total control of the church. His belief was that the people were there to do his bidding and he was to tell them what to do. If they did not follow him, they were standing against the Lord's anointed.

Thus, we see that Christ is the provider of our salvation and head of the church. He directs the church via prayer through all the saints. The overseers are to set the tone of the church for the congregation, and the congregation is to obey and submit to the ministry of the overseer.

There is one item that has not been covered. Who makes sure that the overseer lives up to the qualifications? This should be the responsibility of all believers in that church. I assume that the elders will do much of the work with the person desiring the position, but the congregation should also be involved. They are the people that know the candidate the best.

So, we come to the end. The man that desires to be an elder is to desire that ministry with a Godly desire. The congregation in turn with, and through the present elders will assure that the man is qualified according to God's standard.

Before I close, I must warn you. There is a danger in what I have told you. IF YOU HOLD YOUR CHURCH LEADERS TO THIS STANDARD, THEY ONE DAY WILL, AS THEY SHOULD, HOLD YOU TO THE SAME STANDARD. All except one of the qualifications for the elder are restated elsewhere in Scripture for all believers. The "apt to teach" is the only qualification that is not for all believers.

In our churches, we should be holding the leaders to this standard, and they should be holding us to the same standard. THINK OF IT - church purity in action!

When in Bible College in Denver we knew a graduate student that was pastoring a church. He was a student and was working near full time in the electronics industry.

He was quite busy in his life and was doing quite well in school, and the church he was pastoring was growing.

They had two children but one had been in poor health. They finally found a specialist that told them that the child had a serious long term expensive problem. The couple had no health insurance and did not know what to do. The man asked the student body to pray for his family.

A few days later the man's boss called him in and asked him to transfer to a larger facility out of state, as management. It would include all moving expenses, a very large increase in salary and full benefits with the company, which included complete health insurance.

You see the dilemma. Leave the pastorate of the church and school and have all the financial security they needed and move up the corporate ladder or pass up a good promotion and face the thousands of dollars in upcoming medical expenses.

He again asked the student body to pray. In a few days he announced that he had decided that the pastorate was much more important to him, his family and His Lord than any money, job or security and that he had already turned the employer down.

That man desired the office of bishop.

CHAPTER 15

Recently Leadership Magazine commissioned a poll of a thousand pastors. The pastors indicated that 12 percent had committed adultery while in the ministry which is one in eight pastors! The poll also revealed that 23 percent had done something they considered sexually inappropriate. Christianity Today surveyed a thousand of its subscribers who were not pastors and found that 23 percent said they had been involved in extramarital relations and 45 percent indicated they had done something they themselves deemed sexually inappropriate. One in four Christian men are unfaithful, and nearly one half has behaved unbecomingly! This becomes more important when we realize that Christianity Today readers tend to be college-educated church leaders, elders, deacons, Sunday school superintendents, and teachers.

God knows where men's hearts and minds tend to wonder, and He knows that those ministering to His children ought to be of the highest caliber, thus He has set a very high standard - a standard that I personally have only seen invoked once in a single church in thirty years of ministry.

Many churches run out the standard when they need a pastor and read it and many study it to be sure they know what they are supposed to look for, but then when it comes to finding such a man they fail miserably. Many churches never hold this standard to their prospects because they are not willing to wait for God to provide His man for His church!

- I. PREREQUISITE FOR HEADSHIP (ruling the house)
- II. PREREQUISITE FOR FATHERSHIP (having children in subjection)
- III. PREREQUISITE FOR LEADERSHIP (caring for the church)

INTRODUCTION:

SUSAN WESLEY'S RULES FOR CHILD TRAINING: She had 19 children, and raised them well with the following 16 rules:

1. No eating between meals.
2. All children in bed by 8:00 p.m.
3. Take your medicine without complaining.
4. Subdue self will in each child.
5. Work with God to save the soul of each child.
6. Teach the child to pray as soon as he can speak.
7. Require all to be still during family worship.
8. Give children nothing they cry for.
9. Give them only what they ask for politely.
10. To prevent lying, punish no fault which is first confessed.
11. Do not allow a sinful act to go unpunished.
12. Command and reward good behavior.

13. Preserve property rights, even in the smallest matters.
14. Strictly observe all promises.
15. Require no daughter to work before she can read well.
16. Teach children to fear the rod."

Now, I wish that these rules had been introduced as Wesley's father's rules, but they are good rules anyway.

I don't want to talk about children specifically, though they are related to our study. We want to look at the elder qualification to be a good parent as a prerequisite to being a church leader.

Turn to I Tim. 3:4-5 with me. "One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity; (For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?)"

This father achieves obedience of his children in the following way - by having them in subjection with gravity.

He stands as head - runs it as head. There is a chain of authority with him at the top. One of the biggest hindrances to a proper upbringing of children is a family that has no authority. If the father runs things one way and the mother another there is no way that the children can know what is expected. The parents need to discuss what they think the proper family is to be, then the father is to make the final decision and the couple should go forth with a united front in the raising of their children.

The man should be able to control his children. If his children aren't saved and turn out bad it is not necessarily a disqualification in this area, unless of course, he has neglected the family's training. He should be able to control the children. Their salvation is up to God, and their life's decisions are theirs BUT their raising and discipline are the fathers overall responsibility.

The father must teach, guide and exhort. Vine mentions, "to stand before, hence to lead, attend to" This indicates care and diligence. Not something that is accomplished by remote control, nor is it something that is accomplished by delegating authority to the mother. Mom is an integrated part of the process but not the defining moment of the process.

Ruleth is the same word that is translated ruleth in Rom. 12.8. This is the context of ruling a church congregation. These two verses only strengthen one another. (the others usages are: I Thess. 5.12 "are over"; I Tim 3.12 and Titus 3.8,14 where it appears as "to maintain".)

In many church government setups the elders are simply there to facilitate the desires of the congregation. This is not the thought here in this passage. There is more to the office of elder than doing the bidding of the congregation. The congregation sets the purpose of the assembly, makes final big decisions, and assists in seeking qualified men, but the leadership is in the hands

of the church leaders.

The term subjection has the thought of a deep decision or commitment. It is used in II Cor. 9.13 as submission to the Gospel. This is not a subjection or submission that is now and then - the submission to the gospel is a serious, deep, one time, total, life altering matter.

So the children of the family of a church elder should be committed to their father's headship and leadership - not now and then - not when it is convenient - not when the child wants to - AT ALL TIMES!

Some feel that the elders' children ought to have a higher standard set upon them. This is not necessarily fair, but this passage may indicate that this is a true observation. Not that the kids are perfect, but held to a higher standard in their family relationships.

The thought of "children" is not that of a small child necessarily. The term is used of young to older. Vine states, "it gives prominence to the fact of birth". (It is used in Matt. 9.1-2 of a man; Matt 2.18; 3.9 as children under two; Rom. 8.16 = adults are children of God; Col. 3.20 as in children obey your parents.)

There may be a sense that adult children should still be in proper relation to the father as in Honor your Father and Mother.

Thayer mentions of the term gravity "the characteristic of a thing or person which entitles to reverence and respect, dignity, majesty, sanctity, honour, purity" The elder should run his house in such a way that his children automatically see him as a man that is entitled to respect and dignity.

One of the merchandise managers at the store where I work is such a man. I call him by first name, but find myself a little uneasy in doing so. This man is not a believer, but he seems to have his house in order, he seems to have his work in order, and he seems to have his life in order.

I have a great respect for this man. I feel that he is deserving of any respect, help, or assistance I can ever give to him. He did not ask me for this respect. The respect comes from my knowing his character.

Many are the children in this world that have no respect nor dignity toward their parents. In the store we see children mouthing off to their parents constantly, even to the point of swearing at them and calling them names.

One of our pastors when we were going to Bible college had one good son and one that was not so good at times. The poor one was rebellious to a point - didn't care for church - long stringy hair - very rough type. He didn't turn out a pride and joy as a teenager BUT, he was under subjection. One look from his father and foolishness or wrong doing was stopped. He was always

in church. He always did as his father asked him to do. He seemed later on to have turned out okay. He bothered some people in the church, but they were not seeing the whole story - only the outward trouble.

Before you condemn a pastor for a bad teen, see if he has him in subjection. This is the requirement - not that all kids turn out as super saints. The result of a good elder is not always 100% spiritual on fire Christians.

This man lead his small struggling congregation over a number of years to establish a large church with a very adequate building. He had some in his church that were as his sons. Some were outstanding members, and some were stinkers. The pastor as in his family brought his membership to a place of unity and lead both his natural family and his spiritual family to success.

Barnes has a real mouth full on this point. I am not sure I lived up to his standard - in that I have and probably always will be way over humored! "Having his children in subjection with all gravity. This does not mean that his children should evince gravity, whatever may be true on that point; but it refers to the father, he should be a grave or serious man in his family; a man free from levity of character, and from frivolity and fickleness, in his intercourse with his children. It does not mean that he should be severe, stern, morose--which are traits that are often mistaken for gravity, and which are as inconsistent with the proper spirit of a father as frivolity of manner --but that he should be a serious and sober-minded man. He should maintain proper dignity, he should maintain self-respect, and his deportment should be such as to inspire others with respect for him."

I believe that humor and fun can be a part of a family's life. Grave to me would be seriousness of purpose for the family, not necessarily a personality trait. Everyone knowing this is a Godly family would be the thought in my mind.

Verse five (For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?)

Verse five shows the why of verse four.

The term "house" may imply, as well as controlling the family as the context speaks of, but also of the material things. He should be able to run his house in a proper manner, keeping his bills paid, keeping his house in repair and keeping his house in pleasant appearance. Some preachers today are behind in their bills if not delinquent, and are behind in their homes upkeep. This ought not be so.

Now, just why would Paul tell Timothy that an elder must be a good head of house to be a good elder?

SOME THOUGHTS:

If he is a good head of house he will be a good leader for the church. Paul likens the one job to the other. The job, the principles of, and the work of being a good head of house are JUST the qualifications for the elder.

a. He will be the one that heads up the church.

One that assists and helps sets the course for the church.

One that trains the church.

One that nurtures the church.

One that encourages the church.

One that assists the church to its fullest potential.

One that DISCIPLINES THE CHURCH.

b. I suspect that Paul saw another characteristic that a good father will bring to a church.

The father that is head of his house and a responsible father to his children is one that has a great love and concern for the family. So, the elder that has a love and concern for his people will be the leader of the church that he ought to be and will be the responsible leader that he should be.

c. On the other side of the coin we must relate the thought of submissive children to the congregation.

There is absolutely no way a church can march forward if the people are not willing and desirous of following the men that God has placed over them.

Think of the logic of this. A child has no choice in the father that is placed over them by God. The church member may have little choice over the elders that are placed over them by God. Both should be in subjection to the respective leader.

NEVER CAN A CHURCH HOPE TO BE SUCCESSFUL FOR GOD IF THE PEOPLE ARE NOT WILLING TO ALLOW THEIR ELDERS TO LEAD THEM.

THEY CANNOT FORCE THEM TO FOLLOW,
THEY CANNOT FORCE THEM TO SUBMIT TO THEM,
AND THEY CANNOT FORCE THEM TO RESPECT THEM.

If they are God's men for the hour then that ends the discussion. The church member should work and live in the church membership as a good child of God.

d. And this brings us to the final thought. The church member is a Child of God. The elder is placed over the child of God as an earthly father or guide. THIS IS NOT HOW STANLEY

DERICKSON SET IT UP - IT IS HOW GOD SET IT UP!

The elder should have the responsibilities of a father, the elder should have the authority of a father, and the elder ought to have the respect of a father.

NOW, DON'T GO OUT TELLING EVERYONE I WANT TO BE CALLED FATHER! I don't know this to be a fact, but I suspect that this may be the basis for the Roman Catholic thought of the priest being called father.

APPLICATION:

1. Never consider a candidate that does not have his family with him. How in the world can you consider his qualification in this area if you have never met the family?
2. It is wise to see the family for more than a couple hours. This is one of the reasons that many churches are asking that their candidates spend a week with the church before being considered.
3. The pastor and his family are to be the example of a proper family to those that they minister to.

One of the reasons the mission we were with was so excited about us going to Ireland was this very fact. The Irish have a very poor concept of the family and the mission wanted the Irish believers to see what a Christian family was to be like - not that ours was perfect - only a lot more of a family than the Irish had ever seen. We did not ultimately go to the field, but since several very strong families have raised support and arrived on the field.

4. The man that does not fulfill this qualification is not to be a church leader. If a man has not raised his family well, then God does not feel that he can raise a church family well.

Again, this is not open to discussion. This is the way God set it up and this is the way that God wants it.

5. One final family concept that relates to the church family concept is unity. The family that is properly raised is a family unit - there should be a real unity of purpose.

So, in the church there should be a real unity - indeed, there must be a unity of purpose lest the church crumble.

Pleiades is a set of seven stars in the constellation Taurus. They are supposedly the seven daughters of Atlas in Greek mythology. The seven make up a loose cluster of stars. Six are visible to the average person. The interesting part of this cluster of stars is that they are in separate and distinct orbits, which one day will lead them in different directions. This will result someday in the disappearance of the star cluster Pleiades.

I think that this illustrates quite well the church that has several people going several different directions - often their own direction. The church that is not united in purpose will one day cease to exist.

I trust that as time goes along the church universal will start looking very seriously at the qualifications for elders before calling men into the leadership.

I also trust that if there is ever a time that an elder of the church ceases to rule his own house well, that he is asked to step aside before he rules God's house not so well.

God did not set these qualifications for the fun of seeing if Timothy could find someone to fulfill them. THESE ARE GOD'S REQUIREMENTS FOR THE MAN THAT IS GOING TO LEAD HIS CHILDREN!

God knows what outcome He wants for His children and He will provide the men that will get that job done!

Don't be afraid to require what God requires!

Don't be afraid to be picky!

Don't be afraid to await God's man!

A final quote from Barnes:

"One that ruleth well his own house. This implies that a minister of the gospel would be, and ought to be, a married man. It is everywhere in the New Testament supposed that he would be a man who could be an example in all the relations of life. The position which he occupies in the church has a strong resemblance to the relation which a father sustains to his household; and a qualification to govern a family well, would be an evidence of a qualification to preside properly in the church. It is probable that, in the early Christian church, ministers were not infrequently taken from those of mature life, and who were, at the time, at the head of families; and, of course, such would be men who had had an opportunity of showing that they had this qualification for the office. Though, however, this cannot be insisted on now as a previous qualification for the office, yet it is still true that, if he has a family, it is a necessary qualification, and that a man in the ministry should be one who governs his own house well. A want of this will always be a hindrance to extensive usefulness."

If this standard had been the standard used for leaders over the last fifty years, we would not be faced with the problems we have in churches today.

The sexual impropriety

The stress on cash

The stress on self-centeredness

The church problems

We must seek and wait till we find men of this caliber instead of electing warm bodies to offices that our constitutions require us to fill.

CHAPTER 16

I do not know who the person is that produced this, but I like their humor. It came to me on the internet.

"So Long, Pastor."

"You Know It's Over When:

"When the flood of dinner invitations is reduced to a trickle and the menus switch from sirloin to burgers, you know the honeymoon between you and your congregation is over.

"In the beginning you reign from your pedestal, feeling invincible. The first tremors are so subtle that you ask, "Did I imagine that?"

"Then the pedestal begins to rock as enthusiastic handshakes and vigorous pats on the back are replaced by cordial smiles and forced praise for the "fine" sermon you preached. You tip-toe, you dance, you flail your arms, but eventually you topple. And the worst part is, you never saw it coming-just like the last time.

"See if you have overlooked these warning signs of a disgruntled congregation:

- You return from vacation to find the visiting preacher's name on your mailbox.
- Your church is about to split, and neither group wants you.
- Shut-ins pull the window shades and pretend they aren't home when you come for a visit.
- Mom moves her membership letter to another church.
- You're told God is calling you to the mission field-now.
- You're cast as the donkey in the Christmas cantata.
- Your wife moves her membership letter to another church.
- The trustees have been marching around your house the last six days praying and carrying lanterns.
- Your secretary starts sending out your resume.
- The congregation forces the members of the pulpit committee to wear sackcloth and make a public apology.
- Church members start referring to you in the past tense.
- Your "love offering" is a two-for-one coupon at Ponderosa.
- You show up at the church on Monday morning to discover the locks have been changed."

Jackie Macgirvin Ministries Today

Having covered the desire and the ruling of the house previously, lets move into the first seven verses of chapter three.

Verse one: This [is] a true saying, If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work.

A true saying: Truth. If you say what is true people will know what is going on. If you say part of truth and leave out part people won't know what is going on.

I used to work with a man that would ask a question based on part of the information then wait for an answer. Then when you've said yes, he gives you more information.

He asked me if I could go to a meeting in another state. I began asking questions because I knew him. Come to find out the TWO day meeting required me to go the night before, which also required me to pay for three nights in a motel and meals - not quite what a simple "Can you go to a meeting" means.

Don't do that to people! I've seen husbands and wives do it, I've seen parents and children do it, and I've seen pastors and church people do it. USE THE TRUTH!

Some might wonder, so if we are being so Biblical in our churches, why don't we have bishops? (The office of a bishop is a good work.) The NASB uses the term overseer which is the same as the elder of the church.

It is the Greek word "episkopos". It has the idea of taking the lead and care of the sheep.

In the New Testament times the churches had elders - Plural. It is assumed that one was in overall charge, but a plurality of leadership and decision making.

As I view the Scriptures, the elder is the highest office of church leadership. The pastor is an elder if you have a hired pastor and he qualifies. The spiritual leadership of the church is in the elders. It is the elders that should set the direction of the churches spiritual activities including worship, fellowship, prayer, and evangelism.

Some churches call the pastor elder and the deacons are the board of the church. Some have the elder as pastor, the deacons as spiritual leaders under the elder, and a trustee board to care for the material items of the church.

As we discuss elders, I am in my mind speaking of the pastor and board. Then the deacon board is the part of church leadership that cares for the material end of things. Don't confuse this with paid staff preachers being elder boards. Some teach that the elders are paid staffers only - no laymen. There is absolutely no indication in the Word that all elders are to be paid officers.

I used to give my theology students a listing of the occurrences of deacon and elder in the New Testament and ask them to define the offices. They always defined the elders as the spiritual leaders and the deacons as the material leaders. They always saw the pastor as part of the elders.

If second year Bible College students can see this, why haven't the pastors and teachers of past ages been able to grasp the concept?

It is not relevant what you call the spiritual/material leaders as long as you see a distinction. I personally believe that the Bible sets forth the elders as the spiritual and the deacons as the material ministers of the church, but if you want to call them something else I don't see that it is a large problem. Just be sure you have two groups caring for these areas of the church.

Paul mentions the desire of a good work in one verse and uses six verses to show the spiritual qualifications for the work.

How would you describe the man that "desires the office of bishop?" What does the term desire communicate to you?

Desire = literal "to stretch oneself out after" Something you labor and sacrifice for. Similar to the desire you have for that new car or house.

Matthew Henry mentions, "If a man desired the pastoral office, and from love of Christ, and the souls of men, was ready to deny himself, and undergo hardships by devoting himself to that service, he sought to be employed in a good work, and his desire should be approved, provided he was qualified for the office."

I suspect that this is the basis of the thought of calling and ordaining to the pastorate. It should be something that really wells up from within to bring the person to take active steps to become the overseer of a congregation. In the New Testament context, that would have been within his own congregation rather than the thought of seeking approval of other pastors as ordination is today.

It would seem that this thought would eliminate most church government ideas where the men are nominated from the floor, or nominations in any manner. The desire would indicate to me that the man really wants to have this ministry and lets others know of that desire.

It would require that those in charge be knowledgeable of this desire as well. As they see the desire then they should evaluate the possibilities of this man taking on the position.

I was contacted by a junior in high school recently that was interested in ministry. It took several notes back and forth to assist him, but finally I was able to put him in contact with some mission boards that could use him and help him in planning toward mission work.

The point - he is a junior in high school with a desire from God to serve in the church.

Someone needs to tuck him under their wing and disciple him - train him - nurture him in things of the Lord.

I encouraged him to talk to his pastor. I suspect the mission boards will assist him greatly also.

Evaluation should be made on the basis of what we will be seeing as far as qualification and the qualities of the man should be viewed as well.

The qualifications seem to require more than just a "yes" when asked to take the position. The evaluation should include not only the man's desire, but he should be honest and open as to his qualifications in all of these areas before he takes the position.

He should also be open to the input of the leadership as to the needs of his life. They may see some failings that he needs to work on.

This whole idea is shown very nicely in relation to the workmen of the tabernacle in Ex. 36:2, "And Moses called Bezaleel and Aholiab, and every wise hearted man, in whose heart the Lord had put wisdom, even everyone whose heart stirred him up to come unto the work to do it:"

I would even suggest if you have a man that has none of these qualifications in his life, that the elders should start training him. Make him a workman for the deacons, begin to study and disciple, if he can keep confidences include him in some board meetings so that he can learn. This should be a gold mine for the elders. Train and cultivate that "desire" into an elder. As he matures, you will have a new leader.

I received a very sad commentary on the church recently. One of the major mission boards is launching a new program aimed at helping local churches understand their need to be training leaders and raising up missionaries. They then will assist in helping the church set into motion leadership training.

Pretty sad that the church has to be told of its responsibilities and have to be trained in how to accomplish them!

There are fifteen to seventeen qualifications depending on the listings.

Verse two: A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach;

Just a side note before we begin the list, we might submit that all of the terms in this listing are masculine. The term overseer and all adjectives are in the masculine, which would be one proof that women are not in view when it comes to the office of elder. The husband of one wife also tends to exclude women from the office.

A bishop must be "blameless." What type of man are we talking about when we ask for blameless elders?

1. blameless: "above reproach" NASB. Kent suggests "irreproachable."

Literally "not to be laid hold of" - not justly open to censure or criticism. Many pastors are beset by nasty rumors. A 50-year-old bald, overweight, and not very good-looking pastor resigned his church in Nebraska many years ago to start a new church elsewhere. The rumor was that he left because of a girlfriend up in the sand hills.

No matter the honest and uprightness of a man, there will be detractors that attempt to bring downfall. Those rumors however, when compared to his character should fall by the wayside. I asked a number of people if they had heard this story. All that knew the pastor laughed at the ridiculousness of the story.

Blameless should be not only in the church but with the lost as well. This may require some talking with neighbors and co-workers to find out how the man is viewed by the lost people that he associates with. This can be done by mail or in person. It should be a good indicator of the persons' true spiritual walk.

Some have suggested that this means that the person must have had a blameless life from childhood. I asked one of these people if that meant that a converted drunk could not become an elder. He replied that this would be true.

To those I submit Gen. 5:21-22 which tells that Enoch did not walk with God until he had his first son. This man was translated because of his walk with the Lord. "And Enoch lived sixty and five years, and begat Methuselah: And Enoch walked with God after he begat Methuselah three hundred years, and begat sons and daughters:"

We might suggest the apostle Paul as well - a murderer that became an apostle. I doubt that blameless means blameless for the entire life before the office.

He should have a very good testimony in the community. Someone that is respected. Someone that isn't in trouble or behind on his bills.

2. husband of one wife: The experts say that this literally is a "one woman type man." Now just what that means is left way out in left field most of the time.

Let's consider some of the interpretations that have been suggested.

a. Married to the church (Roman Catholic). The Roman church believes that the priests and nuns are actually married to Christ. In fact it is my understanding that part of their vows include a wedding of sorts.

b. Prohibition of polygamy. This was held till 325 A.D. and is very much a part of the thought of the text.

c. One wife at a time, which to some allows for divorced and remarried elders.

The problem with allowing for divorced/remarried elders is the real question of whether they ruled their house well if the marriage was dissolved legally.

d. Prohibition of unmarried overseers: This isn't a valid interpretation, though it is wise in many cases. It will eliminate rumors, trouble and possibilities of trouble. If there is a real desire on the part of a single man then steps should be taken to see if protections could be taken to avoid the problems mentioned.

e. Prohibition of divorced overseers. There is some discussion on this thought, and I think most conservative people hold to this being a prohibition of the divorcee due as well as the fact that he has not ruled his house well if he has failed in his marriage.

f. Prohibition of widowed elders remarrying: Some in the past have accepted this interpretation. A pastor in Texas had been quite successful in the pastorate, but when the Lord took his wife home, the pastor immediately resigned from the church. When he remarried, he reentered the pastorate.

Paul elsewhere indicates it is okay for the widower to remarry, but this is a general stipulation and some would reject it in relation to the holding of an office.

I Tim 4:3 mentions that some of the false teachers were suggesting celibacy as something to be desired. "Forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth."

Paul mentions that these are doctrines of devils.

A "one woman man" is the idea of this phrase. That is one for life at a time. If his first mate dies and he remarries he would be eligible - in my mind. I would also feel a widower would be free to serve, either single or remarried.

3. vigilant: Literally "unmixed with wine, wineless" according to Hiebert One that is an ABSTAINER.

Vine mentions that it has the idea of self-controlled. This would be in contrast to the thought of not controlled as one that is drunk. (The term is used in I Tim 3:11 and Titus 2:2 as sober.)

The elder should be someone that is on the serious side about what he is doing. He should be in proper control at all times.

One that is of this nature will be open to see problems arising, to see trouble as well as see good things coming and good things to do.

Vinzant in his word studies mentions, "to be sober with reference to drink, and, in a metaphorical

sense, to be sober and wary; cool and unimpassioned."

In my first year of Bible college I went to talk to the acting president of the school. His office was always a mess. His office was a long narrow room with the door in the middle of the wall. He called to me to come in. I opened the door to a floor covered with stacks of papers and magazines. He told me that there was a path to the chair at the end of his office so I carefully negotiated my way to it. He was behind his desk which also was covered with stacks of who knows what. The floor from one end of the office to the other was covered with paper - except for this little path in and through the piles.

This was not an orderly man until that day when he evidently was attempting orderliness. I might add, that he was not a leader. He made no attempt to make himself a leader - he was a teacher.

Women can be a witness just by keeping their houses orderly. The home atmosphere reflects the home attitude. There are homes I have gone into that were the opposite of this and it is totally uncomfortable to be there.

4. sober: "prudent" is the word the NASB translators chose. It has the thought of fully rational or well balanced. This word also is translated "discreet." Being careful how your mind, mouth and actions run might be the line of thought.

Vine mentions that this is a sound mind or self-controlled mind.

An elder with a messed up thought pattern will be leaving himself and his church open to problems. If he is constantly thinking of money or women, there will be an improper balance in most of what he does.

The elder is to be stable in mind. He is not easily swayed by error or false doctrine.

5. "of good behavior": Respectable is another translation of the word. An elder that can't keep his hands off the women is taboo.

We were in a church where one of the men was always hugging, patting women on the back and generally being touchy. Some of the women felt uncomfortable with the way he was. Some of the husbands also felt uncomfortable.

No matter how honest and innocent this man was, it would not have been fitting for him to be an elder.

Respectable. Do nothing to bring anything but respect. He must have a proper lifestyle before his fellow believers and the world.

6. "given to hospitality": One that is willing to share his home with people.

In the New Testament there was a great need of this in the church. Visiting Christians would not want to stay in taverns and inns with all the brawling and drinking, so they would turn to the believers for housing.

Kent mentions that this might even spread to the thought of hospitality to the widows and orphans as needed in hard times. This could as well be a prime ministry of the church to her people.

Be friendly. A pastor in Colorado was called to pastor a small town church. The man viewed himself as a preacher and a preacher only. He was not called to visit or anything else - only preaching. He wouldn't even go to coffee with the church people. The church floundered after he and a couple other oddballs had finished with it.

In another small church one couple had been in the church seven years and had never been in the pastor's home. Pastors ought to have a desire to know their people and to share their homes with them.

Many pastors will not even offer to house and feed missionaries that are coming for meetings. I had only a handful of pastors offer housing when I was on the road.

The elders home should be open as much as possible to church members, visitors and the unsaved as well.

One pastor of a church where we had visited a time or two came running out after church to catch us before we drove away and invited us to dinner on a certain night. We were excited until we arrived and found that it was a demonstration dinner for cookware. We had to sit through the sales pitch and endure the atmosphere which we would not have chosen.

7. "apt to teach": An elder should be willing and wanting to teach within his assembly, if there is time in his schedule. This is not only in Sunday School, but in Bible studies, pulpit, etc.

This is the only skill in the list. Preaching is not required, only teaching. This includes desire and ability. Note: The pastor teacher is not required to be a preacher. Only a teacher and shepherd.

It is not required that he keep his audience's attention. I've seen excellent teachers - skill and content - with sleepers and non-listeners.

Effectiveness would be seen in the thought. Most likely the gift of teaching is quite evident. If a person desires the office, then they should be known for their ability to teach before hand. If a person cannot teach, don't write them off, train them and see if the gift of teaching becomes evident.

Some in recent day try to redefine this to mean "teachable." A man that will allow others to teach

him and help him is the thought. The thought is not in the text, though the idea is not a bad one for the elder!

For the most part he should have little to be taught in the spiritual realm He should know it and practice it.

Verse 3: "Not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous;"

8. "Not given to wine": "not addicted to wine" is the translation of the NASB.

He should refrain from alcoholic beverages. Drinking is not acceptable to the Lord, the church or the world.

We have always taken a strong view toward drink of any kind. This is partly due to the reason that I was very close to alcoholism as a young man. I also see drinking as a very poor testimony to anyone that might know of it.

I have explained our position to saved and lost alike. The lost agree with me and many saved disagree.

Even within my own home, I have no desire to even have alcohol in the house, and I would trust that this would be your view as well in light of our society's overindulgence. We must be apart from the world in our appearance and life.

I spoke with a pastor in Nebraska that had confronted a church member whose house some teenagers had stolen liquor from, about his involvement with alcohol. The teens were in an accident because of the drink and the attitude of the member was, "Pastor, you get lost! What I do in my own home is my business and not yours!"

9. "No striker": This seems to denote a person that is quick-tempered and who will strike out when angered. Not given to acts of physical violence. The word is derived from a word meaning to flatten.

Not taken to the fists to settle disputes. He should be able to settle things peaceably and quietly.

I was in a service one evening when the pastor finished his service with, "Does anyone have anything to say or add?" One of the women of the church challenged him slightly on one of his points. She did not push the subject but one of the board members did push it. He pushed it until he was on his feet and he and the pastor were arguing, somewhat heatedly. They did not come to blows over it, but the appearance was not much better than blows! They were red-faced and hollering while shaking their fingers at one another.

In our society there is the thought that the elder should not be a striker with words. Words can be just as devastating as blows from a fist.

The elder should control his temper and actions as well as his tongue.

10. "but gentle": This is included in the list in the New American Standard Bible but not in the King James Version.

These two (no striker/but gentle) hint that the outward demeanor or appearance at all times should be on the meek side and not of the aggressive nature.

The elder should have his demeanor under control at all times. This requires that he be walking with the Lord at all times which will normally require a daily - early morning quiet time and some periodic adjustments throughout the day to his spiritual life.

As I view these standards I'm reminded of the fruit of the Spirit in Gal. 5:22-23

CONTROLLED BY THE SPIRIT CONTROLLED BY SELF

LOVE HATE, DISLIKE
JOY SORROW, DEPRESSION, BEING DOWN
PEACE TROUBLE, CONCERN, DOUBT
LONG SUFFERING IMPATIENT
GENTLENESS ROUGHNESS, HARSHNESS
GOODNESS BADNESS, EVIL
FAITH WORRY, DOUBT, CONCERN
MEEKNESS OUTWARD, OPINIONATED, PROUD
SELF CONTROL LOSS OF CONTROL

Which side do we tend to live on? The key is I Jo. 1:9 - confess and give the Holy Spirit control of your life. (also Eph. 5:18-21 - being filled/controlled by the Holy Spirit)

11. "not greedy of filthy lucre": There is a companion text you might want to read along with this thought I Pet. 5:1-3

Kent quotes Calvin, "He who wishes to become rich also wishes to become rich soon." THE PASTORAL EPISTLES; Homer A. Kent, Jr., Th.D.; Moody Press; Chicago; 1958; P 133.

The church should watch for their pastor. They need not make him rich, yet they should watch for his welfare if they are going to have a full time pastor. I have seen some pastors and their families struggling to make ends meet while their church members were living in luxury.

The pastor should also look to the welfare of their congregation. If they see that the church is struggling, then maybe a part time job would be the answer. If a church is unable to meet the bills he can minister to the folks by working. I have also seen congregations unable to do anything for the work the church is supposed to be involved in, because their pastor's salary was so high.

Don't let money control your life because it will ultimately control your church as well.

“Greedy” has the idea of really desiring the money. Spending time trying to figure out ways of getting money.

The term “filthy lucre” is up for some discussion. Just what does it mean? Is it dirty money, or is it the idea that the greed for money is filthy, or is all money filthy.

The thought of money being filthy has some real possibilities, because it tends to pollute so many people. Actually the term filthy is left out of some translations.

The elder ought not be in the ministry for money nor indeed be in love with money. A well-balanced budget will help keep this problem away from the pastor.

I recently heard of a pastor that took a church and for several years kept hitting on the board for raises. Several a year, until the board had to ask the man to leave.

Just an observation, the pastor that is willing to work outside the church is probably one that desires to shepherd.

Someone told me of a church in Nebraska which had two pastors receiving \$77,000 a year. The church was growing but the church did not want to build at the moment. Due to the church's attendance the leaders were considering two services. The pastors refused to do two services on Sunday morning because they wanted their way. This was not logical and it was putting the church in a bind - if they decided to go ahead and build before they felt they were able.

12. "patient": Wait for the Lord in all things. Don't get in a hurry. If you don't have peace with a decision, then don't make it. If you don't know what to do, wait. If the work isn't progressing - wait. If a problem arises deal patiently - many problems go away.

Showing patience with all people including the membership!

this means the nasties

this means the meanys

this means the gimmies

this means the sickies

this means the problemies

this means the normalies

Again this is going to take the quiet time and adjustments of the spiritual life that we mentioned earlier.

13. "not a brawler": Not quarrelsome in nature - not looking for arguments. You'll find enough without looking. This probably extends to the thought that he is willing to give up his rights in a problem. Not to say you allow wrong, but if 99% want you to wear a suit on Wed. night - why not - why make problems.

This is not easy for us in our self-centered, my rights society, but the Lord asks this of His church leaders and we should ask the same of our church leaders.

14. "not covetous": (This one is not in the NASB.) Don't desire anything including:

money
things
other churches
other pastor's attendance numbers
buildings
education
etc.

Being content with what God has given you and not your neighbor. Someone said, "It would be easier to do with less if we didn't see others with more." God is quite capable of giving you what He wants you to have.

Verse 4: "One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity;"

15. One that ruleth well his own house = (having his children in subjection with all gravity ("dignity" NASB)

He achieves obedience of his children in this way. Stands as head - runs it as head. Chain of authority with him at the top.

The man should be able to control his children. If his children aren't saved and turn out bad it is not a disqualification in this area unless he has neglected the family's training. He should be able however to control the children. Their salvation is up to God, and their life's decisions are theirs.

The father can only teach, guide and exhort. Vine mentions, "to stand before, hence to lead, attend to" This indicates care and diligence.

By the way, can you think of a better place to check your elders out? Check with his wife and kids. Watching the kids around dad and mom will tell you if the home is proper. The kids can tell you if he is patient - a brawler etc.

This is why it is good for a church to invite a prospective pastor for a week or so when candidating.

Verse 5: "(For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?)"

This verse shows the why of verse four.

The term "house" may imply, as well as controlling the family as the context speaks of, but also the material things. Many preachers today are deadbeats. This ought not to be so.

Right today I can brag on my kids - they turned out great. Tomorrow I hope to be able to say that. They make decisions and may make poor ones - we don't know.

There is a real truth included in this qualification that the marriage and marital relationship ought to be proper as well.

Verse six: "Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil."

16. "Not a novice": Not a new convert might be a good line of thought. There is also the possibility of someone that has been a believer for a long time, but has never studied or been taught. The thought of maturity in the spiritual life is the key.

"lest being lifted up with pride" The novice will quite often fall into pride when given leadership responsibilities. The office requires spiritual maturity.

Paul appointed elders on his return trip through towns usually, thus I would say this spiritual maturity was with reference to those around the elder. He might not have to be very mature in Christ if the people were new converts and very immature.

A man I worked for made his college graduate son manager of the company. Proud was the young man and over confident was he. He ran the company into the ground in a few months.

I would repeat the thought that if you have a novice that desires the office - begin training.

The elder should be mature and knowledgeable enough in the word to "teach" those that he would shepherd.

Many automatically view a young person as not mature enough to pastor a church. This may or may not be so.

I have seen some young men straight out of college that have more sense and wisdom and

maturity than many older men that I have seen in the pastorate. Judge the man on his maturity and not on his age. This is what Paul tells Timothy in 4:12 where he says, "Let no man despise thy youth..."

"condemnation of the devil": This may mean that the immature elder would be condemned (not eternally as the Devil is, but reward wise) as the devil was condemned eternally when he fell into pride

I think that I can truthfully say that I have met very few pastors that come across as being proud. Some may be underneath but on the surface I see very few.

I see some that are arrogant. What is the difference between arrogance and pride? I see pride as being super happy with who and what you are. I would see arrogance as being super happy with who and what you think you are and letting everyone else know who and what you think you are. I have met some of these.

Verse seven: "Moreover he must have a good report of them which are without; lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil."

17. good report to non Christians (my paraphrase)

There was a pastor in Nebraska that didn't spend much time around my father, but my father held high regard for the man. He would ask how the pastor was doing when I had visited with him. The pastor had visited my dad in the hospital a few times, but they had no clear deep relationship.

Other pastors (many, I fear) in business dealings are very blunt, bold and blustering. They expect super deals and super service. These do not have good report with non Christians.

A young man in one of the churches we attended was a body and fender man struggling to make a living. The pastor brought his car in for a paint job. The job was finished and the pastor came in and picked up the car. As he left without paying or offering to pay, he said thanks for the paint job.

The young man never grew spiritually to my knowledge. This was, in part, his own fault, but also, in part, to the obnoxiousness of the pastor.

Why is this trait important? Lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil. Sounds like the devil is out to trap him.

To be the man that does not really have the good report with the world is to be in the middle of the snare of the devil. There will be little which that person can do in the community or even the church.

We recently heard of a man that pastored in a small town where the townspeople had the rule of no soft drinks in the school auditorium - even during sporting events. He thought that was a dumb rule and entered the auditorium with a coke. The public was not impressed with his freedom to drink coke! The man was not able to minister to the town folks and it left a black mark against the church that hired him.

I would like to break here for a comment or two about the elder's wife.

Why are there no qualifications for the elder's wife? The elder's wives do not have qualifications nor do the deacon's wives.

There is discussion as to whether the deaconess is the deacon's wife, a woman deacon, or an office held by other women. Some prefer the wife idea. Others prefer this to be an office. I must admit I see both possibilities, but lean toward it being an office or ministry. If the deacon's wife were to have qualifications why wouldn't the elder's wife be my line of thought.

No matter your belief on the subject, have deaconesses or the equivalent of them doing the work. You may have women functioning in these areas and this is fine - wives would also work well. THE POINT! Have women functioning in the work of the deaconess so that those ministries are being cared for.

There is also the thought that the elder is to rule his house well and if this is done the wife will probably be of the caliber needed.

There are five qualifications in Titus that are not listed here and I would like to cover them briefly. Titus 1.5ff

a. "not self-willed" which indicates a man that is willing to give in a conflict. He is willing to bow to what is right. This is not only with men, but must be a part of the man's spiritual life. He must be willing to bend for the Lord.

b. "not soon angry" indicates that anger may be around but it takes an awful lot to bring it to the surface.

Patience must be long and when it is worn out there may be anger, but even if there is anger it is controlled and it does not lash out.

c. "a lover of good men" shows that the elder should be an enjoyer of those that walk with the Lord. If you have a man that doesn't enjoy the company of godly men - wonder if he will be a good leader of godly men.

We sat under a pastor for several years that failed miserably here. He had godly men that desired fellowship with him yet he shunned them and often drove them away. His fellowship was with

men outside the church that were far from his own belief system.

The church suffered greatly due to the effects of the outsiders on the pastor.

Many pastors miss this one because they can't handle someone else in the limelight.

This means to love even when there are some faults around! The elder should gather around himself some good men to train and to fellowship with.

d. "just" means just what it says. Just is the God we serve and just must be the elder or elders that we have serving in the church. Just in all of your dealings be they with saved, lost, nasty, cheaters, etc.

e. "holy" is the idea of set apart for God's use. The man of God must be set aside for the Lord's use and must have a life fitting that thought. I can't imagine trying to attend a church where the pastor was known to be in sin.

It is illogical for any pastor to feel that he can continue on in his office and be living in sin. Holy to some is relative. I need to be with the unsaved so I can reach them, is their thought. I will run with them and work with them till they are saved. Maybe - maybe not.

Women. If you had a muddy mucky pair of Levi pants to get clean would you put them in water, then dump in a lot of clean clothes and stir them up? Will the clean make the dirty clean? Never.

Yes, we must reach and have contact with the lost, but we don't have to get down into their sin and position to do it.

There is one other phrase in Titus - one that is of importance. Verse 9 states, "Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught...."

This means that the church determines if what he holds is proper. Not only what he holds, but what he has been taught. There is a difference. A man might hold what you hold but have been taught other things that might crop up in his later life and ministry.

A pastor in Nebraska had been taught in a school that held other than proper doctrine. He seemed straight as possible when he was hired as pastor.

He was influenced by some other pastors that he knew and as he pastored and studied some of his wrong doctrine surfaced and began to make sense to him and it filtered into his preaching and over a few years he had led the entire church from a position of fundamental, dispensational Christianity to a non-dispensational position and out of the fellowship of churches that the church had been in.

Don't just check what he believes, but check what he has been taught. If he comes from a questionable seminary then the questionable may well surface someday. Don't take a chance!

Realize seminaries change. Just because your old pastor was from that school doesn't mean the current graduates will be like him.

I trust as you walk through life, you have opportunity to sit under the ministry of men of this caliber. This is the desire of God's plan and heart. He desires that His people be taught of Him that they might worship Him and know Him.

Another poem from my favorite poet.

When God wants to drill a man
And thrill a man
And skill a man,
When God wants to mold a man
To play the noblest part;
When He yearns with all His heart
To create so great and bold a man
That all the world shall be amazed,
Watch His methods, watch His ways!
How He ruthlessly perfects
Whom He royally elects!
How He hammers him and hurts him,
And with mighty blows converts him
Into trial shapes of clay which
Only God understands;
While his tortured heart is crying
And he lifts beseeching hands!
How He bends but never breaks
When his good He undertakes;
How He uses whom He chooses
And with every purpose fuses him;
By every act induces him
To try His splendour out --
God knows what He's about!

Anonymous

It is God's men we must seek - not those that are prepared by man.

CHAPTER 17

We want to look now to the office of deacon and to the ministry of women which some classify as the office of deaconess.

Whether there is an office of deaconess, you can dispute indefinitely, but to dispute the need of women doing this sort of ministry in the church is futile. Any church that is to succeed will have to have women that are willing to give assistance to the elders and deacons with the work of the Lord.

In my own mind when I hear the term deacon I am often reminded of some elderly gentlemen that served in that office in the church where I grew up. I was not a believer at the time, but I was still impressed with these men that served the church well.

Each and every Sunday the deacons would take turns - two of them sitting behind the table set with the Lord's table elements - and they would give a devotional relating to the observance then they would help serve the elements.

These men were men I held in respect, just from what I observed of them in the church surroundings. Later as a believer I became aware of some of these men and their lives outside of the church and this was consistent with what I had observed as a child.

I recall that one of these men and his wife were quite old and they were driving an old rattletrap of a car. Their son came home to visit and took them to the Chrysler-Plymouth dealership and bought them a NEW 1950 Plymouth. I would rather think that his family relationship pictured the thought of a proper family life of a deacon.

On the other hand there are deacons that could evoke a quite different feeling. Peter Marshall once said of some of his leaders "Tell my trustees when I am dead that they should shed no tears, For I shall be no deader then than they have been for years."

The deacons can have an adverse effect on church goers as well.

A mother was having difficulty persuading her son to go to church one morning.

"Nobody LIKES me at church!" said the son. "The members don't. The children don't. And the deacons want to send me to another church! I don't want to go!"

"But John," said his mother, "you've simply GOT to go. You're not SICK. It isn't RAINING. People are EXPECTING you to be there. And besides, you are 50 years old now and the MINISTER of the church -- so you simply MUST go!"

Verse 8. "Likewise [must] the deacons [be] grave, not double-tongued, not given to much wine,

not greedy of filthy lucre;"

The office of deacon is quite often an office that is filled by men that don't really want to be in the office. Many are asked to do the office and accept the office only out of a duty to do something for the church. Many do not really have the desire to do the office and as a result, do very little for the church.

"Likewise" would indicate that the deacons will have qualifications just as the elders had. These are required qualifications and are not optional.

The deacons were first appointed in Acts 6:1-7. The deacons have to do with the material realm, but can be involved in spiritual area as bold witnesses.

One of the first deacons was Stephen and we know that he was soon preaching and giving his life for the Lord.

Within the material ministry there can be a spiritual ministry as well.

I'd like to list some possible ways that you could minister spiritually within the context of material ministry?

a. Working with someone on a building allows for interpersonal relationships and a time when the deacon could well get into witnessing, counseling or just encouraging. There could well be contact with contractors, repairmen and other businessmen that need the Lord.

When the pipes break in the winter and someone is struggling to get them fixed, an encouraging voice could be just what the worker needs.

b. Sharing of funds or help from the church with poor or needy will be a prime opportunity to share the thoughts of the Lord in encouragement or witness.

c. In asking for help from members of the church you are allowing others to serve their Lord. It may well be the start of their desire to go on into church leadership.

The word translated deacon has a rich meaning. Thayer mentions the following: "1.) one who executes the commands of another, esp. of a master, a servant, attendant, minister 1a) the servant of a king 1b) a deacon, one who, by virtue of the office assigned to him by the church, cares for the poor and has charge of and distributes the money collected for their use 1c) a waiter, one who serves food and drink"

The term grave is used to show that they are dead in the pulpit. They are boring people to death. NO NO NO NO!

The New American Standard translates the term as "dignity." Not a teenage type, but a mature type. Kent mentions that it means "worthy of respect."

This is a positive term followed by negative terms.

"Not double tongued" has the thought of telling different stories. This includes, I think, saying you'll do something and then not doing it.

In short, the person would have to be classified a liar and this is not consistent with good leadership. How could you ever trust what the man said?

If you think back to the way the United States dealt with the Indian nations, we can find a perfect illustration of this term. The officials promised the Indians great things, but we all know that little actually materialized and that the Indians suffered greatly due to the "WHITE MEN THAT SPEAK WITH FORKED TONGUES."

"not given to much wine" seems to be rather obvious - not a heavy drinker. This in its context was a call not to abstinence but to moderation. Wine was a common beverage at the time, but to indulge overly was definitely wrong.

In our own day the thought of alcoholism is rampant and the need to drink wine for liquids in the body is not true. We have good clean water available and there is no need to drink wine.

Raymond in his book mentions, "If an individual by drinking wine either causes others to err through his example or abets a social evil which causes others to succumb to its temptations, then in the interests of Christian love he ought to forego the temporary pleasures of drinking in the interests of heavenly treasures." THE TEACHING OF THE EARLY CHURCH ON THE USE OF WINE AND STRONG DRINK; New York; Columbia University Press; 1927; p 88.

We may be free to drink now and then in the strictest sense of things, but we are not free to do so because in our day and age we need to limit our Christian liberty in this area so that we are not a stumbling block to others.

Adam Clarke puts it this way "Neither a drunkard, tippler, nor what is called a jovial companion. All this would be inconsistent with gravity"

"not greedy of filthy lucre" The deacon should be in the office because of a call and/or a desire not because of money.

When I told my father I was going to be a preacher he said, "Well I guess there's good money in that!"

Kent quotes Erdman's "THE PASTORAL EPISTLES OF PAUL", "Judas was not the last

treasurer who betrayed his Lord for a few pieces of silver."

Years ago in the Midwest a church had noticed some items missing in the church - they found the pastor had been selling things to pick up some extra money. He confessed and they forgave him and they went on. They notice a few weeks later that the communion set was missing. Confession, forgiveness and they went on.

Not long and offerings began to disappear before they were counted. Confession, forgiveness, he left and they went on.

I don't think that this relates entirely to the office - outside of the church is not a place for greed either.

Wesley seems to be rather specific on this point. "Not desirous of filthy gain-With what abhorrence does he everywhere speak of this! All that is gained (above food and raiment) by ministering in holy things is filthy gain indeed; far more filthy than what is honestly gained by raking kennels, or emptying common sewers."

"Charles L. Allen tells a story, which he says was a favorite of Sigmund Freud, the Father of Psychiatry. It is about a sailor who was shipwrecked on a desert island and was captured by some of the natives of that isle. They carried him off on their shoulders to their village, where he was sure he would end up being the main course. Instead they put a crown on his head and made him the king. He enjoyed all the attention he was receiving but he grew a little suspicious. He started making inquiries about what this meant and discovered that their custom was to crown a stranger and make him king for a year. At the end of that year he was sent to a completely deserted isle where he was allowed to starve to death. Obviously this did not appeal to the sailor so he devised a plan. Since he was the king, the natives obeyed his every order so he ordered them to ship supplies to the isle where he would be sent when he was deposed. He had them build him a hut. He had them plant vegetables and fruits and clear the land for quite an adequate garden. When his year was up and they sent him to the deserted isle he lived in abundance. Hopefully this little story reminds you of Jesus' words about laying up things on earth as opposed to being rich toward God. Wealth can be dangerous or it can be used as a blessing. It can be used to allow us to store up good things in heaven. The choice is ours. Let us be wise in our attitude toward our material possessions that we might not end up being rich in things and poor with God." GOD'S SEVEN WONDERS FOR YOU; Charles L. Allen Old Tappan, NJ.; Fleming H. Revell Co.; 1987.

William Burkitt summarizes the qualifications well when he says "Let the deacons be grave, not guilty of levity, but serious and composed, men of a modest and becoming carriage; not double-tongued, nor over-talkative persons, nor saying one thing to one person and the contrary to another, according to the place or company they fell into; not given to much wine, not the thing, but the excess, is forbidden; not greedy of filthy lucre, seeking to get wealth by sordid ways and means."

Verse 9. "Holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience."

"holding mystery of the faith" indicates those things revealed to the church age saints. (Hidden before) I Cor. 2:7-10 "But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, [even] the hidden [wisdom], which God ordained before the world unto our glory: 8 Which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known [it], they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. 9 But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. 10 But God hath revealed [them] unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God."

"in a pure conscience" would relate not only to belief, but to life. One serving God must have a clean conscience of his way of life. How could you honestly preach or share with others spiritually if your conscience wasn't clear about what you believed?

When I was a member of the IFCA (Independent Fundamental Churches of America) one of the requirements for membership was that each member was to sign the doctrinal statement and signify they were still in complete agreement with it.

One year I realized that there was a small phrase within the statement that I could not agree with. I felt compelled out of "a pure conscience" to attach a three-page statement that I was in disagreement and the specifics of why.

The purpose of the signing of the statement was so that each one would take a moment and question his continuing agreement, and I believe in part, check their conscience, just to be sure they could honestly say they did.

This might be a good place to mention that the deacon is not required to be a teacher, nor is he required to be able to teach, but he is not forbidden to teach either. A deacon may well have the gift of teaching and this would be one of his areas of labor.

Verse 10. And let these also first be proved; then let them use the office of a deacon, being [found] blameless.

They should be proved, checked, evaluated to see if they measure up to the standard set.

"ALSO" indicates that the bishops are also to be proved. This is done in the local assembly and not by pastors called in from here and there to examine a young man to see if he's worthy.

The thought of ordination is not in this text. The elder and the deacon are to be people from the assembly and as they live and work in the local church the church leadership and people will know the type of person that they are.

Acts 13:1-3 shows this concept in action.

"Now there were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers; as Barnabas, and Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, which had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul.

"As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them.

"And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away."

No examination can guarantee how a man will build a church but holding your prospective leaders up to this sort of light may increase the odds.

Let them be deacons because they are blameless! If they aren't blameless, then don't allow them to be deacons.

Again the idea of blameless. The testimony of church leaders is critical to the church as well as to the church's witness. Anyone that cannot live up to the standard set should excuse himself from his duties immediately.

Verse 11. "Even so [must their] wives [be] grave, not slanderers, sober, faithful in all things."

"Their wives must be grave" Actually the term "wives" is not found - it is the thought of women. I assume from the context that text easily allows for women in a special ministry as the bishops and deacons - that of serving their Lord in a specific capacity.

Ray Stedman mentions, "The apostle now turns to women deacons. It is true that this word "women" here can mean the wives of the male deacons, but I do not take it that way, largely because there is no corresponding treatment of the wives of elders in the preceding passage. If Paul was concerned about how the wives of the deacons behaved, he would likely have been concerned about the way the wives of the elders behaved, but he does not say anything about them."

Stedman and others take this to show that there can be female deacons. This might be a possible interpretation, but in my mind there seems to be here a listing of offices and qualifications, thus there are elders, deacons, and deaconesses.

Verse twelve indicates to me that deacons are to be male. (Husband of, and running the house well.)

In Rom. 16:1 ("I commend unto you Phoebe, our sister, who is a servant of the church which is at Chenchreae.") The term servant is the same word as used in Timothy - it seems to show the office of deaconess, servant - deaconess literally.

There is no indication in the text that these women are linked to the deacons, other than by similarity of ministry.

To have deacons and women that do this work that are "deacon's wives," as the text mentions, is not inappropriate, however the deacon's wives here in the text are probably not wives. They are just a group of women doing a work that should have the following qualifications.

"not slanderers" is literally "not devils." The Greek term is "diabolos" and it is normally translated devil - false accuser is another translation of the term.

I suspect gossips would be another term that could be used. I think that we all know what a gossip can do to a person or a church. They can ruin many years of good work in a single mouthful.

A pastor we knew was accused by one of the women in the church of making obscene phone calls. She had no proof and there were very few that believed her, but within a few months that man's ministry was ruined in the town and he was forced to move on for the churches sake.

Another account might illustrate the power of the tongue. " Abraham Lincoln's coffin was pried open twice. The first occasion was in 1887, twenty-two long years after his assassination. Why? You may be surprised to know it was not to determine if he had died of a bullet fired from John Wilkes Booth's derringer. Then why? Because a rumor was sweeping the country that his coffin was empty. A select group of witnesses observed that the rumor was totally false, then watched as the casket was resealed with lead.

"The second time, fourteen years later, the martyred man's withered body was viewed again--this time by even more witnesses. Why again? For the same grim purpose! Rumors of the same nature had again implanted doubts in the public's mind. The pressure mounted to such proportions, that the same ghoulish, grotesque ceremony had to be carried out. In spite of the strong protests of Lincoln's son Robert, the body was exposed a second time. Officials felt the rumors should be laid to rest along with the Civil War president. Finally -- the corpse was permanently embedded in a crypt at Springfield."

"soberminded" relates to a controlled mind and manner. The mind of someone controlled by alcohol would be the contrast. The idea of temperate or moderate in things would be involved also I would think.

"faithful in all things" would cover all areas of life, her marriage, her church work, her mothering role - everything.

She should be faithfully doing the things that she is involved with, and doing a good job at all. If she can't do the good job in all areas along with home life then she probably shouldn't be involved in the church for her home will suffer.

Verse 12. "Let the deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well."

These are the same as for bishop which we have covered previously.

Verse 13. "For they that have used the office of a deacon well purchase to themselves a good degree, and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus."

Deacons, purchase good standing, might be the thought. In the secular realm there is a certain amount of this.

There is a mortuary in London that advertises dead men's backgrounds - church work is mentioned, indeed in our own country the background is sometimes given in the obituary and this lends a bit of prestige to the memory if the person was a pastor or church leader. It gives you a certain type of status. Indeed, in many of our communities the pastors of churches are held as important to the community.

We had a pastor that helped direct our lives many years ago yet later he seemed to get side tracked. He became very interested in golf. He joined the country club and seemed to become very involved in that society. He became quite involved in the country club life.

When he died the obituary read like that of one of great social status. All of his secular accomplishments were listed including his long-standing membership in the country club.

At the end there was a simple sentence "He was also pastor of the _____ church."

I think he had purchased the wrong "good standing."

The secular is the lesser of the ideas in that the spiritual is the more important. As we serve God as church leaders, we gain approval in the Lord's eyes and in a sense gain status with Him.

More importantly is the "great boldness" that comes with serving. As we serve, we gain confidence in what we are doing, in the fact that the Lord can use us and we become more confident to do more and more things for the Lord.

In closing we might take a moment and just list some of the possible ministries of a deacon and of the deaconess.

DEACON

Caring for and cleaning of the church/parsonage properties, either themselves or hiring it done.
Assist the elders in any manner that they can.

Submit material needs to the elders/congregation for approval and financing.

Calling on the neighborhood, sick, shut-ins, widows and orphans.
Taking an active part in discipling orphans, both in spiritual and physical things.

Giving assistance to widows and orphans - both financial as well as physical, when needed.

DEACONESS

Calling on and assisting female church members/others that could be assisted.
Providing flowers for funerals, church services, sick folks and shut-ins.
Taking small orphans for outings.
Providing meals/facilities/assistance for funeral parties.
Cleaning of the church facilities.

"Servant" in our English New Testament usually represents the Greek *doulos* (bondslave). Sometimes it means *diakonos* (deacon or minister); this is strictly accurate, for *doulos* and *diakonos* are synonyms. Both words denote a man who is not at his own disposal, but is his master's purchased property. Bought to serve his master's needs, to be at his beck and call every moment, the slave's sole business is to do as he is told. Christian service therefore means, first and foremost, living out a slave relationship to one's Savior (1 Corinthians. 6:19-20).

"What work does Christ set his servants to do? The way that they serve him, he tells them, is by becoming the slaves of their fellow-servants and being willing to do literally anything, however costly, irksome, or undignified, in order to help them. This is what love means, as he himself showed at the Last supper when he played the slave's part and washed the disciples' feet.

"When the New Testament speaks of ministering to the saints, it means not primarily preaching to them but devoting time, trouble, and substance to giving them all the practical help possible. The essence of Christian service is loyalty to the king expressing itself in care for his servants (Matthew 25: 31-46).

"Only the Holy Spirit can create in us the kind of love toward our Savior that will overflow in imaginative sympathy and practical helpfulness towards his people. Unless the spirit is training us in love, we are not fit persons to go to college or a training class to learn the know-how or particular branches of Christian work. Gifted leaders who are self-centered and loveless are a blight to the church rather than a blessing." *Your Father Loves You*; James Packer; Harold Shaw Publishers; 1986; Page March 3.

May God raise up men of this caliber in this country to begin leading the church in the proper path!

CHAPTER 18

When I was in high school, I worked summers in construction for a small contractor. He was a Christian and became involved in a small Bible church. Later the church wanted to build a building and asked him to be the contractor.

Their church was designed and the foundation was to be poured. Now, this is back in the days of yore afore they had delivery of wet cement but this contractor had a state of the art cement mixer. It had a big hopper that came down where you tossed in the cement and then shoveled in the sand. When the mixer was empty, you would hit a lever and up the hopper would go and the mixing would begin.

The problem with this machine was that every time that hopper emptied it returned to the ground to be filled. Since I was the low man on the totem pole, I was elected to fill it - and fill it - and fill it - and fill it - and fill it - the entire day I filled it and filled it and filled it again. Got the picture?

Anyway we poured concrete into the ground all day to lay the foundation for the church. The foundation needed to be strong because they were going to build a large timber framework to support a very heavy roof made of four by four roofing.

I might add after filling and filling, I could have used a foundation myself to hold me up!

We want to look at foundations in this study.

3.14 These things write I unto thee, hoping to come unto thee shortly: 15 But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth. 16 And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.

All right, we see that Paul looked to the future with desires to accomplish things! Now, what can we do with that little piece of information for ourselves? I personally believe that God allows us to look to the future and make possible plans and to seek to bring those plans to pass - as long as we allow for God's intervention to change our minds.

Remember that word that he used - hoping. I again personally believe that this is a hope that can get us through those terrible times of drudgeries that happen onto most of us from time to time. There were many years in which the only hope I had was that God would use me in some way - that hope carried me through those very difficult years.

We don't know if Paul ever made it to Ephesus or not. In Titus he requested that Titus meet him and most agree that Paul would have met with Timothy first while on his way to Titus.

Verse 15 But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.

We see in verse fifteen the "if" that I mentioned - being open to God changing our minds for us. He was hoping to do something, but knew that there was an "if" involved.

Verse fourteen and fifteen show Paul's desire for Timothy as he labored in the church.

Paul is writing to tell Timothy how to conduct himself and church business. Behave himself seems to say it all, but many are the church today that are run by men that have no idea how to behave themselves in or out of the church.

I think in our society that we all have the concept of the world when it comes to behaving. The world tells us "IF WE BE - WE SHOULD HAVE!" Or to put it another way "IF I HAVE I BE!" Now tell me that isn't the sum and substance of our society today! Having is equated with being today. If we don't have, we don't behave correctly.

"behave" The term translated behave is used in II Cor. 1. 12 "For our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the world, and more abundantly to you-ward."

Conversation is the term we are looking at. The base of the word is "to turn hither and thither, to turn one's self about, sojourn dwell in a place." It refers to the way you live and act.

This not only applies to Timothy, but applies to the believers at Ephesus, as well as to believers in general. THERE IS A STANDARD OF BEHAVIOR in the house of God!

Today, we are in ANYTHING GOES MODE in our churches. We allow any music, we allow any dress, we allow any activity, we allow any doctrine, we allow any moral value, we allow anything!

The term house is generally the thought of a building, but can and is used of a household in the New Testament. Household would seem the more appropriate here because there were no church buildings in the New Testament time. The believers met in homes.

The term is translated home in Mark 5.19 "Howbeit Jesus suffered him not, but saith unto him, Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee."

In Acts 16.14-15 we see the term relating to a family. "And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, which worshiped God, heard [us]: whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul. 15 And when she was

baptized, and her household, she besought [us], saying, If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and abide [there]. And she constrained us."

The exact phrase "house of God" appears in the Old Testament over eighty times, and in the New Testament only six times. In the Old Testament it relates normally to the place of worship where God lived.

We see in three passages in the gospels that it also relates to the Old Testament, and these verses relate to David and his men eating in the house of God. (Matt. 12.4; Mark 2.26; Luke 6.4)

Here in I Timothy we see that the phrase is tied directly to the church and I Pet 4.17 speaks to the fact that the house of God relates to people rather than a building. "For the time [is come] for judgment to begin at the house of God: and if [it begin] first at us, what [shall be] the end of them that obey not the gospel of God?" (Heb. 10.21 is the other occurrence)

In a very real sense the church - the people - are the house of God as the tabernacle and temple were in the Old Testament. After all, is not God the Holy Spirit living within each of us?

"church of the living god" Church of the living God, as opposed to a temple with a dead idol.

The term translated church is the term ecclesia which simply relates to a group of people that are called out for a purpose.

In Acts 19.29-41 it is used of a secular gathering - nothing to do with believers. It is also used of Israel in the wilderness in Acts 7.38. These usages of the term are what my definition is based on.

Now, if I might, suggest once again that "CHURCH" is not a building, it is a people. I trust you can gain that concept and hang onto it. We have been trained and accustomed to the term church being a building for so many years - now we need to retrain ourselves.

As you read the Word and see the term church use this meaning in your mind and see if you don't find some of those passages taking on a new meaning.

As a pastor of a church I am not pastor of a building, I am a pastor or shepherd of a group of people - a group of sheep!

Ray Stedman mentioned in one of his messages "The Apostle Paul ... calls the church, "the house of God," which suggests intimacy and warmth, a family gathered; and then he calls it, "the church of the living God," which suggests excitement and power. That was what the church was, and is; that is the nature of the church.

"We have largely lost our consciousness of what it means to be "the house of God." We have been so brainwashed by this sub-Christian concept that a building is the house of God that we

have forgotten what the real house of God is."

Let us consider the church for a moment. Just consider what is present each and every time a church of Christ meets.

1. The ultimate power of all history is present within each and every one present. The Holy Spirit - ready willing and able to act.
2. The ultimate weapons available to all believers faith, hope, love, prayer, righteousness, and all those great things are present.
3. The ultimate capabilities built into each and every one of us - the spiritual gifts that the Spirit has given for the building of the church are present.
4. The ultimate wisdom of God promised to us for the asking - just waiting to lead the church into His paths is available.

I am sorry to say that I see few churches that even have a hint of a clue of the above possibilities set before them!

It might be that this is a good place to interject a commercial for the "INDEPENDENT AUTONOMOUS CHURCH" since they seem to be a vanishing breed.

There is no indication in the Scriptures that there were any gatherings or groups of churches linked together either financially or organizationally in the New Testament. The local church was a group of people gathering for prayer, fasting, teaching and fellowship. They were not gathering for conventions, for conferences, for seminars, or any other purpose.

The church was a group of people that was organized as the Bible has taught us here in I Timothy for the purpose of worshiping God and extending His work into the world. There were no controls over them from other churches or a remote hierarchy. They were on their own to do the work of the Lord as they felt He was leading them to do it.

Now, comes the question - is it wrong to be part of a group of churches? Is it wrong to be a part of a denomination?

Let us consider some items of interest.

1. Is it productive to have to check with denominational leaders before doing things you feel God is leading you to do?
2. Are not the people of your church capable as believer priests to determine the Lord's will for their lives and their gathering?
3. Do you as a local church have excess money to send off to a denomination to be used for bookkeeping, travel etc. of the hierarchy?
4. Do you believe that anyone other than your own church leadership has any authority to lead or have a hand in your church?

I would not say necessarily that it is wrong, but rather why would you want to?

"the pillar and ground of the truth" It would seem that Paul is trying to say that the church is the foundation of truth.

The house of God is the church and it is the foundation of truth. Now, let us take that one step further based on what we have found thus far. Christian believers, as they gather, are the foundation of truth! Or at least they have it available. They may or may not reflect that fact.

DOES THAT SCARE YOU OR WHAT? To think that the churches around the country today are the TRUTH. The sad fact is, they are not the truth, yet many nonbeliever when they want answers go looking for them at the house of truth - the church ---- the sad fact is they are not finding the answers they seek.

They find that they are told to just believe and enjoy the fruits of everlasting life.

They find that they are told that divorce and remarriage are the way of life.

They find that they are told that there is no real black and white.

They find that they are told that they can be anything they want to be.

They find that they are told that there are no absolutes.

They find that they are told that anything goes.

There is another application of this thought for the lost of the world. Without the church they have no foundation to know or base truth on. If the church is confused then so will the world be confused. Hummmm sounds somewhat familiar to an old guy that has observed a lot of things in our society.

The world is looking to the isms because they view the church as irrelevant - and I might add - today it is!

They look to alcohol.

They look to "spiritual guides."

They look to "gurus."

They look to things.

They look to everything for truth and comfort.

One of the turn of the century fads was the labyrinth. A pattern on the ground that you walk along while you look for peace, direction, meaning, comfort and all that stuff. THE CHURCH USED TO SUPPLY THOSE TO ALL COMERS!

Indeed, that is the problem of all of missions. The church is the key to getting the truth to lost man, but the church is not doing it.

It has been reported that within the decade (following the turn of the century) that the United

States will no longer be the strongest missions minded country in the world. The torch of missions is shifting from America into the third world. Third world nations are sending out more and more missionaries. They will be sending more missionaries than America before 2010.

MacArthur suggests a number of areas in which we uphold the truth that is the church. I would like to just list these for your consideration in relation to your own church and how it upholds truth. (THE MACARTHUR NEW TESTAMENT COMMENTARY I TIMOTHY; John MacArthur; Moody Press; Chicago; 1995; p137-138)

1. by believing the Word
2. by memorizing the Word
3. by meditation on the Word
4. by study of the Word
5. by obeying the Word
6. by defending the Word
7. by living the Word
8. by proclaiming the Word

Now we have viewed the fact of the church as well as the fact that it is the foundation of truth. Now, Paul will refocus us on the foundation of the Church - Jesus Christ.

Verse 16. And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.

Some suggest that this may be an early hymn or psalm that was circulated. It is made up of three couplets and has a rhythm in the original suggesting more than just an off the cuff thought from Paul.

Couplet one: manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit

Flesh contrasted with Spirit. Being manifest would indicate that His whole being is in view so to speak. Flesh or manhood would be manifest to those around him. His entire being would be the thought as contrasted with His Spiritual existence following the resurrection.

Couplet two: seen of angels, preached unto the gentiles

Angelic host contrasted to mankind. The term gentiles also can be translated nations. The angelic host contrasted to the lost nations of the world.

As a side-note one might ponder just what is wrapped up in "seen of angels" - just how often were they involved in ministering to and around the Savior while He walked this earth. One might also contemplate their thoughts of seeing ALMIGHTY GOD walking the face of His

creation as man.

Couplet three: believed on in the world, received up into glory

The world contrasted to glory.

Lenski suggests that the verbs are positioned as to present these things forcefully as TRUTH. He also says that the items build upon each other.

As the church fathers attempted to iron out the truth of Scripture in the first years of the church, a statement was set that most of Christianity accepted through the ages.

The Nicene Creed from the fourth century.

"I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible;

"And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God, begotten of his Father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father; by whom all things were made; who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven, and was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary, and was made man; and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate; he suffered and was buried; and the third day he rose again according to the Scriptures, and ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of the Father; and he shall come again, with glory, to judge both the quick and the dead; whose kingdom shall have no end.

"And I believe in the Holy Ghost, the Lord, and Giver of Life, who proceedeth from the Father and the Son; who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified; who spake by the Prophets. And I believe one holy Catholic and Apostolic Church; I acknowledge one baptism for the remission of sins; and I look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come.

"AMEN."

Most any Christian can agree with this creed - however not all.

Paul makes a statement that cannot be quibbled with.

"without controversy" All in agreement might be a good translation. Wow - what a phrase to use in the context of the church. The following is truth, it is fact, it is unanimously accepted within the church of Jesus Christ - that is the true church.

"mystery of godliness" is explained in the next phrase. God was manifest or revealed in the flesh

- in more specific terms - manifested IN Christ. This proves the pre-existence of Christ.

"justified" or vindicated" in the Spirit - the thought that he was vindicated of all He said while here on earth when He was raised from the grave.

He was seen of angels. This is the normal term for angels. Their presence with Him is not something new - they ministered to him in Mk 1:13, they were in attendance after the resurrection, they were present at the ascension and most likely many times between.

He preached unto the nations. This relates to Eph. 4.8-10 "Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. 9 (Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth? 10 He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things.)"

Christ at some time between the resurrection and his ascension went into sheol to minister to the nations. Some view this to mean that He preached or confirmed all that had been taught to all Old Testament peoples. In a nutshell, He confirmed those that had faith in God by taking them to be with Him, and he confirmed those that had no faith to continue on in their place of residence until the Great White Throne judgment and eternal torment.

There is also a real truth that He reached the nations when He was at Jerusalem for passovers. Jewish folks from all over the world gathered for the celebration.

He was believed on in this world. Just a quick look into the Gospels or the book of Acts will show this to be true. A listen to a testimony time in a church will also confirm the validity of this comment.

"received" up into glory" Let's take a moment and read the passage that records this event.

Acts 1:1-11 "The former treatise have I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach, 2. Until the day in which he was taken up, after that he through the Holy Ghost had given commandments unto the apostles whom he had chosen: 3 To whom also he shewed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God: 4 And, being assembled together with [them], commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, [saith he], ye have heard of me. 5 For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence. 6 When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel? 7 And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power. 8 But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth. 9 And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight. 10 And while they looked

stedfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; 11 Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven. "

That is the validity of the one that we serve! He is all that Paul claims and so much more.

Before I close this section, I would like to give a quick recap of chapter three.

Why are so many pastors leaving their churches and missionaries leaving their fields today?

1. They know they miss the mark set here. Often, I fear, not entirely their own fault. Many times they have never been forced to look at the listing and evaluate themselves before the Lord as to their qualification. When they do, they know that they don't.

2. Some cannot live on the salary. This may be due to their expensive taste, or it may be to the small salary. Some churches feel that their pastor is a servant and he should suffer for Jesus, so they help him along in his suffering.

Most churches today are doing quite well for their pastors if not too well. Some do all they can and the pastor works on the side. This is not the best, but it works well if needed.

We have a friend that worked for seven years while pastoring. At one point in time he was the only man in the church that was working. The church did not grow to great numbers, but they grew to great spiritual heights.

3. Many are grossly dejected because of the coldness of Christians to Christ's work and the non-Christians toward the gospel.

I must admit that there were times when I was teaching that I wished college teachers were allowed a Monday morning like pastors, so that they could resign. Some Sundays I wonder why some people get together for church. At times I think it is nothing more than habit.

I was asked to have a meeting in Colo. Springs at a little independent church and the pastor, a friend, asked me to bring a real stirring message. I gave a message on Hell and really preached! There were two people that came to talk to me and one of them was a visitor from Kansas.

My friend said that the message was just what he wanted, but that the church was just not breathing.

That church was judged DEAD by the pastor and the district man of the fellowship of churches that the church was with.

Why are the pastors kids always some of the worst kids? Or are they just viewed as the worst?

1. They are always under a microscope so may be unfairly evaluated.
2. Some pastors neglect their own household. This is why it is good to have a board and pastor that will respond to one another. If the board sees a problem coming, they can advise the pastor.
3. The wife may also be overburdened with church activities to the point that she isn't able to take proper care of the children. The pastor should be watching this and correct it if need be.

With a list like Paul has set forth here in chapter three maybe you should be praying that your pastor have these requirements and equally important that he stay on the straight and narrow.

We see here in I Timothy three that the church is organized and has leaders. Many Bible study groups are springing up around the country. They are okay on a short term basis, but unless they are formed by a church as disciple groups or are forming into a church they are unscriptural.

This list of qualifications is a stiff standard to live up to.

I personally know of only one church that requires their elders and deacons to consider their qualification before accepting office. There are probably more, but I know of only one that has it as an integrated part of their constitution. They take several months to go through a qualifying process which includes:

- a. Letters to neighbors and fellow workers as to their spiritual life.
- b. Talks with the spouses by the existing board.
- c. A time of consideration of each qualification. This is a study of the word, a time of prayer and a talk with the board, then they move onto the next qualification. This usually takes a week or so per qualification.
- d. A time for the congregation to respond with negative and positive comments about the person.
- e. A time of congregational prayer.
- f. A final talk with the board.

If a person does not qualify, they are asked to work on the areas in which they are lacking and try the process the next year. The candidate and congregation are to accept this postponement as a spiritual step not a failing. To see problems and want to correct them takes maturity.

It is easy to say, yes, I qualify for this, but it is another to seriously consider it before the Lord

and your fellow man!

Is there a different standard for the pastor and the average Christian? Is this a standard for only the elders and deacons?

I would submit that this is the standard for every born again believer. Each and every one of us should have these qualifications as part of our goal for our spiritual life.

The term goal is the difference. The list is a goal for most believers, however the list is a requirement for the elders and deacons of the church. These things should be in place when they take office.

When you call a pastor consider these biblical qualifications not other qualifications such as good with youth - good preacher (not required of pastor teacher) - good illustrator - good looking - good dresser.

These qualifications should be in the pastor so that he can be an example to the other Christians so that they can be maturing toward this list.

I am going to list the qualifications followed by a reference. The reference will show that all believers are to be seeking this trait. Most of these references use the identical Greek term, others a closely related term. This is not meant to be a complete list - I am sure many other passages could be listed.

blameless = I Tim 5:7

husband of one wife = Rom. 7:22

temperate = Tit 2:2; I Tim 3:11; I Pet. 5:8

sober-minded = Tit 2:2; Tit 2:5; I Tim. 2:9

given to hospitality = I Pet. 4:9

apt to teach - not used of all Christians

not given to wine = This should be obviously one for all believers

no striker = I Pet. 3:11

not greedy of filthy lucre = Heb. 13:5; I Tim. 6:10

patient = Phil. 4:5

not a brawler = Tit. 3:2

not covetous = Heb. 13:5

one that ruleth his own house = Eph. 6:1-4; Proverbs; "rules" husband-wife relationship Eph. 5:23

not a novice = only usage of this term - however all Christians are called to maturity (I Cor. 3:3)

good report to outsiders = II Thess. 1:10; Rom. 12:18

Deacons

grave = Proverbs call us to honesty; Phil. 4:8; Titus 2:2
not double tongued = only usage of the term John 8:44 speaks of devil being father of the lie.
blameless = I Cor. 1:8

Ephesus was one of the leading cities in the Roman Empire. It was full of sin and corruption. One of the prominent buildings in the city was a temple to the goddess Diana.

Barclay mentions of the temple "One of its features was its pillars. It contained one hundred and twenty-seven pillars, every one of them the gift of a king. All were made of marble, and some were studded with jewels and overlaid with gold" (THE LETTERS TO TIMOTHY, TITUS, AND PHILEMON; Westminster; Philadelphia; 1975; p 89)

A city of such prominence and so deeply embedded in sin, yet God prompted Paul to send his representative Timothy to the little church to set some things straight.

Francis Schaeffer once said in a message "The greatest creativity ever given is the ability of men, by their choices, to change the course of history."

Now apply that to the situation Timothy found himself in. Apply that to the situation you find yourself in.

We all by our choices are bringing an effect to the civilization in which we live.

We can choose to change the world, or we can choose to feel like we can't.

We can choose to serve the Lord to the best of our abilities, or we can choose to feel like He can't use us.

We can choose to leave a mark on this years culture even though we might not have marked last year's culture!

Personal opinion, this is one of the great failings of the church. We have misused this creativity to build buildings rather than lives, to build reputations rather than affect people, to build followings rather than change history.

I trust you will give some serious thought to these words. "The greatest creativity ever given is the ability of men, by their choices, to change the course of history."

We, the church, have the truth - the world needs the truth. What choices are we going to make to change history for God?

CHAPTER 19

My wife and I were looking for a church home after moving to a new community. We looked in the yellow pages and tried a number of churches.

After a time, I found it more profitable to call and talk to the pastors of the prospective churches to see what I could find out. At times this saved us a distasteful visit.

I called a church that was a member of a fairly sound association that had the phrase "theologically conservative" in its description of itself. I called the pastor and was very excited with what I heard.

We arrived enthusiastic at the prospects and found the adult Sunday school class and settled in.

The discussion before the class began centered around everything but the Lord, but that isn't all that abnormal.

The class began and degenerated quickly into a discussion of whether Paul really was right when he called for male elders.

Before the class was over it was evident that the teacher and others felt Paul was in error at times in the word, and most were really rejecting the inspiration and inerrancy of the Word.

Shocked, we entered into the church service and settled into a service that was right on. In fact the pastor was one of the best I've heard.

Later that day I called the pastor and told him of my confusion over his messages conservativeness and the Sunday school's liberal bent.

He asked what class we had gone to. After a description of where it met he said, "well in that class you are probably right. They don't have a high regard for the inspiration of the Scripture. He explained that the class was a split off of another, more liberal, church in town that had decided to settle with his church. He mentioned that the other adult class would be more to our liking.

A fundamental church allowing false teachers to occupy their classrooms and foster the spreading of their false doctrine!

We want to look at ACCEPTING FALSEHOOD in verse one, PRACTICING FALSEHOOD in verse two and three, and REJECTING FALSEHOOD in verses four and five.

I. ACCEPTING FALSEHOOD

Verse 1. Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils;

Off hand I personally can't think of many people that I have known that have departed from the faith. Most have continued on in the Word and followed the Lord to His benefit.

Indeed, however we seem to be in the last days from all indications. Those leaving the faith are becoming more and more prominent. They are leaving the truth for the half-truth of Satan.

We have seen some of the prominent TV evangelists fall into immorality and financial ruin as well as criminal acts.

We have Christians that have been brought up in the church that are turning to the cults and joining into the false doctrine.

We have believers reading the daily astrological listings in the newspaper.

We have believers reading devotionals from liberal denominations.

We have believers calling the Psychic hot lines.

We have television evangelists that are having visions of dead people that introduce them to Jesus and to the Holy Spirit.

We are seeing men trained in our better institutions turning from their Biblical training and going into or starting fringe area groups.

I think one of the worst examples of people going off into all sorts of things is within some of the fringe radical charismatic groups. We have the prosperity gospel that tells us that God wants all to be rich - the fact that only the church leadership is getting rich should tell us something.

My brother spoke of one in Seattle. They took up offerings in five-gallon buckets. The pastor and his wife both drive Mercedes Benz automobiles.

Most of the congregation was poor to middle class and giving like crazy so they can be rich.

There are the Holy Laughter and Holy barking folks that tell us we just aren't with it unless we are barking or laughing in the Spirit.

We have leaders in all of the denominations turning to embezzlement, to sex crimes and even murder. We have men that have served in fundamental ministries that are going off into money making ministries.

I recently received an email from a graduate of one of the main fundamentalist schools that was seeking ten dollars a month for the privilege of advertising his page on mine. He was setting up a prayer site - ten bucks to allow him to pray for people - hummmmmmmmmmmmmmmmmmmmm.

Paul's use of the phrase "in the latter times" is of interest. Is Paul here admitting that the age might go on after his death? (He was a firm believer in the imminent return of Christ.)

I think that this may have been one of his realizations. He was getting older and realizing he might not live long enough to see the Lord come. The disciples looked for Christ to return almost immediately.

We do not know the time of the end! I trust that you will never predict the end, nor subscribe to someone else's predictions.

I hear almost yearly someone say from a pulpit that we see the end coming to pass in the middle east. Hog wash! Christ told us that it will come as a thief in the night. We won't see the unfolding of prophecy in this life, but probably from our heavenly view.

The prophets call for peace and unwallled cities in Israel before the end is come. The land of Israel is far from this today!

"depart from the faith" This seems to be one that has just up and changed his doctrine and walked away from a proper belief in the Word. From the faith would indicate more than just a doctrinal shift, but more to the thought that the person has left the faith or more to the point, left the church.

I would be quick to state that there are two areas in our day in which leaving the church can occur.

- a. The type of shift in thinking that Paul is mentioning - the walking away from the faith.
- b. The person that gets so fed up with the hypocrisy and sin of the church and leaves in total disgust. These people often just stagnate because they have no real spiritual growth, feeding or fellowship.

This type of person is becoming very common in our own day. Many in my own area are in this situation. I might mention that many are not stagnating, but living relatively normal Christian lives.

Some suggest that the person that does not attend church regularly cannot be spiritual. They normally mention the passage Hebrews 10.25 "Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as ye see the day approaching."

The item of interest in my mind is that the church is to give to the believer opportunity to fellowship, pray, and serve. Many churches you can attend for years and never see the fellowship or service. If the church is not fulfilling its end of responsibilities then attendance is not relevant. The church is also to feed and nurture but few are succeeding.

"giving heed to seducing spirits" The idea seems to extend to giving assent to the seducing spirits.

The term seducing indicates leading astray or misleading if you will with spirits that entice. This term appears four other times in the New Testament and is always translated with the idea of deceiver. (Matt. 27.63 - deceive; II Cor. 6.8 - deceivers; II John 7 - deceivers and deceiver

The term "spirits" is the term that is used of man's spirit as well as the Holy Spirit. Indeed, this is the same term that is translated Spirit in the first of the verse. The term is used in relation to the mind in Rom. 8:6 which states, "For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace."

It would seem that Paul is using the word to give warning to any misleading thought of the mind or in short again the thought of false doctrine.

Doctrines of Devils or deceptive thoughts and/or doctrines might be the thought of the phrase.

Again there are batches of them out there. They even sound good when presented. They even may sound scriptural - unless you look at the WHOLE OF SCRIPTURE.

This is not doctrines about demons, but doctrines fostered by them. What doctrines the demons might foster is wide open - most anything that will mislead and cause you to deviate from truth.

The interlinear translates this as "spirits misleading and teachings of demons,"

"doctrines" is the word "didaskalia" It is translated teaching once and learning once and all other occurrences are translated doctrine. It is the same term that is used of sound doctrine (II Tim 3:16).

"devils" is a term that is normally translated devils and it is indicating the demons. It is the term used when Christ was casting out demons in the Gospels.

It would seem that the teachings are the teachings of the god of this world rather than the God of creation. These are doctrines that the devil has propagated via his emissaries the demons.

Don't ask me to give you an example, for any false doctrine is of the Devil ultimately. Any teaching that is contrary to the Word of God is false doctrine and doctrine of the devil.

Matthew 7.15-16a gives a description of the type of men we might be looking at.

"Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits...."

One question that often comes up relating to this text is this. Are these people Christians that fall into false doctrine or are they professors that never really grasped the truth?

LET'S LOOK AT SOME FACTS:

1. In verse one "depart from the faith" is a term that is used usually of Christians 1.19; 3.9.
2. It is mentioned that their conscience is seared. This usually is connected with a long time of wrong doing or thought.
3. They forbid, what those that believe and know the truth, are to be enjoying.

Professors or departing Christians? First of all salvation is not an issue in this text. As to them being Christians - I would think from the text they are believers that just take a right turn out and away from their faith.

II. PRACTICING FALSEHOOD

Verse 2 "Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron;"

How would you describe "lies in hypocrisy?" Can you think of an example? Maybe speaking lies with a smile on their face? Maybe speaking lies from the lectern? Maybe speaking lies from the pulpit? Maybe speaking lies from the microphone on radio and TV?

Anyone that puts forth a, known to them, lie as truth - he is guilty of Paul's thought at this point in the text.

If I know that something is false and teach you folks that lie then I am speaking lies in hypocrisy.

"conscience seared with a hot iron" My Father years ago had very bad nose bleeds. He went to the doctor and they burned the inside of his nose on both sides to cauterize the area so that the nose bleeds would stop. He had no more nose bleeds, but he no longer could smell the great smell of a roast in the oven or the smell of a flower, or the smell of smoke, or anything else. With the benefit he had a real loss.

Indeed, the loss was the sense of danger if burning odors had ever floated his ways. He could have been in serious trouble had a fire started when he was alone.

So, the person with a seared conscience is in deep danger of the things that they might get into because they do not have the proper input from the Holy Spirit into their lives.

Nothing further can move their conscience - it has no feeling left.

I do know of people that have sidestepped God's command one time, then another time, then they find other commands that they can sidestep and another, until they are sidestepping everything that they know to be right and calling their error truth to justify their life style and actions.

Verse 3 Forbidding to marry, [and commanding] to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth.

Well we know that Dr. Adkins isn't a false prophet - he would never tell anyone to abstain from meats! (Dr. Adkins has set forth the high protein, low carbohydrate diet which involves eating lots of meat.)

Why might someone forbid people to marry?

- a. Personal power struggle with the person.
- b. Trying to run another person's life.
- c. Perpetrate wrong, or falsehood.
- d. Try to get someone to agree with your idea of not marrying.
- e. Doing it for spiritual gain.
- f. Trying to make them emotionally reliant on the leader.

"forbidding to marry" There are some of the cults that forbid marriage until the leader has chosen the mate and then the couple can be married. The followers readily submit to this activity.

This type of forbidding of meat is refuted in Col 2:16, "Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days:"

Paul chose two topics, marriage and meats, probably because they were problems at the time in Ephesus.

He did not mean to limit seducing spirits to only spreading two false teachings. There are many false teachings around today including these relating to marriage and meat.

It is of interest to me that these terrible nasty doctrines of devils are what I would call today some minor false teaching in relation to what we have going on today. Forbidding to marry or worrying about what meats to eat or not eat seems small potatoes in light of the ordination of women, homosexual churches and pastors, abortion, euthanasia etc. Not to mention the deity of Christ, inspiration, inerrancy, and the Trinity.

Do you suppose that this is in of itself a monstrous rebuke of our own times and church? We have not addressed those smaller problems that Paul term large problems and we have progressed so far down the road that we are dealing with things that Paul never even imagined were possible in the church!

A missionary to Venezuela mentioned of the numerous churches that had been planted in his tribe, and how the elders come together from all churches once a year to work on problems and have Bible teaching. If the elder or pastor does not settle the problems in his own church the pastors of the other churches will go to that church and take care of things. This is probably not best in that all churches should be independent, yet it points up the fact that the Indians are doing great work for God because they do not allow problems to strangle them.

Anything which is against Scripture would fit into this verse.

"commanding to abstain from foods"

Catholics have been guilty of both of these until recent years when they lifted the meat restrictions. They still forbid the priests and nun's to marry though this teaching is also under heavy fire within the Roman church. Married priests and nun's are serving up the mass and holding services in liberal renegade churches in our country.

Concerning marriage, I believe we have some real fallacies in our teaching on the subject. We need to concentrate on marriage in the children to youth years so that they understand it before they enter into it, find trouble and walk away from it!

Let's chase a rabbit for a moment and talk about singles in the church. By singles I mean someone that has not been married before. If you have singles, keep your nose out of their marriage business. Don't push them about marriage. Don't "fix them up - THEY AREN'T BROKEN!" Don't pester them. They are single because they desire to be or just haven't found the right person. Just because you are married, it does not require everyone to be married.

Feel free to ask if they are interested in meeting singles of the opposite sex, but don't force or push them.

Singleness is not a plague. It is at times a choice.

A professor at one of the colleges I attended was single by choice and felt this is what God wanted for him. He had much more time for study and preparation.

He mentioned in class one day that there was one thing in the church that really bothered him and that was the fact that every little old lady had a nice young lady for him to meet.

He had no desire for marriage.

Another item that is off the subject but seems to fit here. Single missionaries. One of the things you can pray for when praying for singles workers is that they will be able to cope with their singleness. In many cases the single missionary is single because of circumstance not by desire.

Missions have found that if a single person returns for a third term on the field that they will normally remain single for life.

Can you feature the commitment it would take to return for that third term single?

I have had good discussions on the internet with single believers of all ages, and they strongly agree with what I have set forth above. Many of them add the great need for fellowship and nurturing within this group of people.

7th Day Adventists often hold to the Law's stipulations on the eating of meats, while others abstain from all meat.

Both meats and marriage can be gratefully shared in if we believe in God and know the truth. The unsaved world as a whole today is not "grateful" for marriage. Some are rejecting it, many are trying to get out of it and many are just unhappy in it.

The Christians of this country are prone to this same thinking. We had a missionary in our home that we have known for many years and we were talking of the many friends that we had in common. We were appalled at how many had fallen into divorce.

I counted in one of our year books 117 students. Of those students we could only name 17 that had entered ministries, and some of them were now out of the ministry due to family problems.

Marriage and meat can be good to some people, but are not required. For example - pastors would have much more time for their ministry if they did not have family responsibilities.

I Cor. 10:31 tells us everything is to glorify God.

Romans 14:4,5 shows what God thinks of forcing this type of abstinence upon people. If you continue in Romans 14, you will see that this area is an area of judging others and Paul says this is not right. We all will be judged, so why do it? ("Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth. Yea, he shall be holden up: for God is able to make him stand. One man esteemeth one day above another: another esteemeth every day alike. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind.")

III. REJECTING FALSEHOOD

Verse 4 For every creature of God [is] good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving:

Is every creature of God really good for food? "every creature of God is good" - EVERY - !

Nothing is to be refused IF "it is received with thanksgiving." This indicates our food should be accepted after thanks has been given.

Another rabbit trail. Do we say a prayer over those snacks that we put together for guests, you know, those desserts, coffees, cheeses etc.? Do we bless those things we know we shouldn't be eating? Maybe we ought to consider this in the quiet of the refrigerator light some late night.

One more point then about "every creature" - A missionary in chapel was mentioning that they eat roast tarantulas with their Indian people in Venezuela. Does every creature mean every creature? YES. Even the horsemeat that is eaten in Europe today.

Our American tastes may not measure up to the spiders and the snakes that are eaten in the world. We might attribute this to our overabundant economy!

Verse 5 For it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer.

The term sanctified has the idea of something that has been set apart. How can food be set apart as this verse indicates? What was Paul trying to say here?

"it is sanctified" - set aside for God's use. God uses it to prepare us to be able to do the things that He wants us to do. Food is required for us to continue daily tasks and that is what we are all about.

Notice it is sanctified by the Word as well as prayer. This is not meaning that you must read the word, pray and then eat, though that might not be a bad idea.

The Word states that all creatures are good for eating, thus all things are set apart for us. We then pray and recognize that God has set the food aside for our use and His use in us.

"prayer" In prayer we are putting ourselves and our food under God's eyes and direction.

So, how do we apply this truth?

1. If it is separated to God then can you throw it away and waste it with a clear conscience? We need to consider our stewardship of what God has given us.
2. By praying before every meal then we are committing that much more of our life to Him.
3. If we know it's been made holy then it won't be so bad that it's only a casserole that we've had six times before this week.

Some have wondered due to the Old Testament restrictions of diet whether believers are free to eat meat?

After the flood Noah was given permission to eat meat. The Jewish law limited the types of meat to the clean animals, but again in the New Testament all meats are considered okay for mankind. I Timothy contains one of the best texts to show this. "For every creature of God is good...if it is received with thanksgiving." There are no qualifying statements to change this straight forward statement of fact.

Acts 10:9ff indicates that we are free to eat of all sorts as well.

Why should we pray for our bread?

"Back of the bread is the snowy flour,
and back of the flour the mill.
Back of the mill is the field of wheat,
the rain and the Father's will." Anonymous

Just why is the topic of meats such a federal case to Paul? Is this not the typical tactic of the Devil? Getting one to believe that what God says is false. Eve bought it as have millions others through the years and the term meat can be translated victual or food - seems he is still alive and well.

The main point to this passage in my mind is allowing God to be a part of the most mundane part of our life - that of eating. Taking time to recognize that He is the provider of all that we have.

We looked at Francis Schaeffer's comment last study about how man can change the course of history. "The greatest creativity ever given is the ability of men, by their choices, to change the course of history."

The truth is a two-edged sword. Good choices change history for the good, while bad choices change history for the worse.

Those we have studied in this passage have changed things for the worse over the years. We have some isms today that are misleading millions of people. These men that turned away from truth to follow their own thinking have produced some of the largest cults in history.

We on the other hand may be those that God is going to use to do great things for mankind - I would encourage you once again to consider carefully the decisions and choices you make. Make them based on God and His leading.

In closing I would like to challenge you with a thought. Many young people are coming under the influence of the isms and thinking of the world. I ran across something on the net recently that

brought me up short - is this maybe one of the reasons the young are going astray. Is this something our generation has failed in miserably - in educating the newer generations in the history of things both secular and spiritual?

Just think about it - can these young people really relate to what we are saying to them? This relates to the secular but the same is true of spiritual knowledge.

This list is related to the year 2000 but the thought of it relates to each new generation.

"Each year the staff at Beloit College in Wisconsin puts together a list to try to give the faculty a sense of the mindset of that years incoming freshmen."

Here is the list for 2000:

"The people who are starting college this fall across the nation were born in 1982.

"They have no meaningful recollection of the Reagan Era and probably did not know he had ever been shot.

"Black Monday, 1987 is as significant to them as the Great Depression.

"There has been only one Pope.

"They were 11 when the Soviet Union broke apart and do not remember the Cold War.

"They have never feared a nuclear war.

"They are too young to remember the space shuttle blowing up.

"Tianamen Square means nothing to them

"Bottle caps have always been screw off and plastic.

"Atari predates them, as do vinyl albums.

"The expression you sound like a broken record means nothing to them.

"They have never owned a record player.

"They have likely never played Pac Man and have never heard of Ping-Pong.

"They may have never heard of an 8 track. The Compact Disc was introduced when they were 1 year old.

"As far as they know, stamps have always cost about 33 cents.

"They have always had an answering machine.

"Most have never seen a TV set with only 13 channels, nor have they seen a black-and-white TV.

"They have always had cable.

"There has always been VCRs, but they have no idea what BETA is.

"They cannot fathom not having a remote control.

"They were born the year that Walkman were introduced by Sony.

"Roller-skating has always meant inline for them.

"Jay Leno has always been on the Tonight Show.

"They have no idea when or why Jordache jeans were cool.

"Popcorn has always been cooked in the microwave.

"They have never seen Larry Bird play.

"They never took a swim and thought about Jaws.

"The Vietnam War is as ancient history to them as WWI, WWII and the Civil War.

"They have no idea that Americans were ever held hostage in Iran.

"They can't imagine what hard contact lenses are.

"They don't know who Mork was or where he was from.

"They never heard: Where's the beef?, I'd walked a mile for a Camel, or 'de plane, de plane.'

"They do not care who shot J. R. and have no idea who J. R. is.

"The Titanic was found? They thought we always knew where it was.

"Michael Jackson has always been white.

"Kansas, Chicago, Boston, America, and Alabama are places, not groups.

"McDonalds never came in Styrofoam containers.

"There has always been MTV.

"They don't have a clue how to use a typewriter."

May we make our message relevant to those that we meet. May we also be assured our message is true and Biblical.

CHAPTER 20

Someone related that they were at a high school basketball game that went into overtime. The first overtime was so exciting. The crowd was literally on the edge of their seats in anticipation of the outcome. Then, the game went into double overtime. What excitement! Now the cheering was deafening as the crowd expressed their encouragement to the home team. Then, the game went into TRIPLE overtime! Now the crowd was in a frenzy. Everyone was focused on the events on the court. Everyone was cheering, and everyone anxious to know how the game would turn out.

Now, let us consider this illustration as it relates to the pastoral overtimes. If the preacher happens to go a minute or two over the sacred hour, it is HIGH NOON for him. And should he dare to go into triple overtime, watch out!

We want to look at Godliness in this section. The TEACHING OF GODLINESS in verse six, the EXERCISING UNTO GODLINESS in verse seven, PROFITING FROM GODLINESS in verses eight and nine and REASON FOR GODLINESS in verse ten.

I Timothy 4.6-10 If thou put the brethren in remembrance of these things, thou shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished up in the words of faith and of good doctrine, whereunto thou hast attained. 7 But refuse profane and old wives' fables, and exercise thyself [rather] unto godliness. 8 For bodily exercise profiteth little: but godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come. 9 This [is] a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance. 10 For therefore we both labour and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the Saviour of all men, specially of those that believe.

I. TEACHING OF GODLINESS

We want to look at GODLINESS in this study. We want to look first at the teaching of godliness.

Verse 6. If thou put the brethren in remembrance of these things, thou shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished up in the words of faith and of good doctrine, whereunto thou hast attained.

Paul tells Timothy he is a good minister if he tells the brethren the preceding

Since the preceding is good doctrine and truth, then by application a "good minister" is one that tells his people of good doctrine and truth. A "good minister" or the evaluation of a "good minister" should be at least in part based on the doctrine or the content that he teaches.

If he is not teaching good doctrine, then steps should be taken to correct it. Steps might include counsel by the board or it may mean more education or moving on.

The term "minister" is the same word rendered deacon in 3:8. Thus not minister as we know minister.

One that serves the people, one that teaches the people, one that ministers to the people. Again we don't see the thought of a fantastic preacher, but that of a man that plods along doing the work of a shepherd.

"Remembrance of these things" truth is always the antidote for error. You don't suppose Paul knew that we tend to be forgetful about spiritual things?

What are "these things?" The previous five verses.

Timothy is to be nourished by this ministry.

Indeed, I don't know how a person could teach the Word of God and not come away nourished. Yet I hear of people that are teaching and preaching declare that they just can't go on any more because they just aren't being fed.

To be quite honest, from what I see in the Word I would say that they are not doing their preparation properly for their ministry else they would be feeding themselves.

Just a little side road - Paul likens spiritual teaching to milk and meat. The milk is for the child, the meat for the adult, but isn't the other side of that illustration true also? Shouldn't there be some point in life when you start feeding yourself just as in real life? I can't imagine that not being the end result of Paul's thought - anyone that needs fed is not feeding themselves!

To be quite honest, I'm not sure I wouldn't go nuts if I had to sit in a church service week after week without ministering. My food and meat spiritually come from my own study and ministry. If I had to exist spiritually on what I am fed in most churches that we have gone too "just for church", I would literally dry up and stay home Sundays and watch TV.

All teachers and preachers are blessed as they prepare their lessons.

We know we are to have the teaching of godliness in the church, but it is not wise to teach it if we aren't willing to use it.

II. EXERCISING UNTO GODLINESS

Verse 7 But refuse profane and old wives' fables, and exercise thyself [rather] unto godliness.

"refuse profane and old wives' fables" Two separate types of fables

This may be in reference with what Paul spoke of in 1:4.

Don't even give them serious discussion. Just don't deal with them except to refute them with Scripture.

One might find many profane fables to illustrate Paul's thoughts. The Jewish fables of the Pharisees and their Talmud might well come to mind.

The many legends of St. Patrick might also illustrate his thought. One comes to mind. The reason Ireland has no snakes is that he ran them all into the sea!

"Different tales tell of his standing upon a hill, using a wooden staff to drive the serpents into the sea, banishing them forever from the shores of Ireland. One legend says that one old serpent resisted, but the saint overcame it by cunning. He is said to have made a box and invited the reptile to enter. The snake insisted the box was too small and the discussion became very heated. Finally the snake entered the box to prove he was right, whereupon St. Patrick slammed the lid and cast the box into the sea." (From <http://www.st-patricks-day.com/legpat.html> 3-12-00)

REFUSE them - don't soft-soap them, don't allow them to be taught, don't allow them to be spread in the church.

Lenski offered some good advice for those that hold to these profane fables.

"People who are fanatical in regard to some silly religious matter desire nothing more than to have you argue with them. To do so is to leave the wrong impression as though the matter is worth discussion and argument. That encourages their folly; they think they really have something. For that very reason they will cling to their infatuation more obstinately than ever when one makes the mistake of treating them seriously."

From (THE INTERPRETATION OF ST. PAUL'S EPISTLES TO THE COLOSSIANS, TO THE THESSALONIANS, TO TIMOTHY, TO TITUS AND TO PHILEMON; R. C. H. Lenski; Augsburg Publishing House; Minneapolis; 1937; p. 628)

"...exercise thyself rather unto godliness." Prepare for it as an athlete prepares for the Olympics.

Part of that exercise is leaving the profane and the wives' fables alone.

Let's think about the profane fables and old wives' fables.

What are some other PROFANE FABLES:

Greek mythology for one. Yes, it is interesting and it is okay to read it, but don't spend a lot of time in it.

The thought of any fable, myth, fiction etc. is called into question by this text. The emphasis is on the exercise unto godliness, not reading the mentioned items for the majority of your time. If you spend hours in the realm of the non-real, you will tend to begin to find that your emotions are swayed by the non-real to the point that you respond to the fiction rather than the reality.

This is true of friends as well - you will hang in their area - if Godly it is okay, but if ungodly you will be hanging away from God.

If you are centered in godly things then you will center your emotions and thought life on the Lord and His things.

What are some OLD WIVES' FABLES:

Swing a ring suspended on a thread over the stomach of a pregnant woman and determine what the sex of the child is. Or doing the same over a grave to determine the sex of the occupant. Reading the tombstone might be quicker!

Pregnant woman spitting in Ajax. If it turns one color it is a boy etc.

Many others that I'm sure we could dig up and list.

Ray Stedman illustrated this portion with the following paragraph.

"Another widespread myth in our day, one that is winning increasing status on every side, is the doctrines of Mormonism. Mormonism is based upon foolish myths about early American history that do not have a semblance, a shred of evidence from archaeology, to support them. Archaeologists have tried to find any evidence whatsoever for the strange story the Book of Mormon tells, about an early American civilization that flourished here before Columbus came. They can find nothing that confirms it in any degree. Instead, everything they find is absolutely contrary to the picture drawn in the Book of Mormon. But how many believe this nonsense, and how widely it is being accepted and even gaining a position of prominence among us! I am not talking about Mormons. Many of them are wonderful, dear people. Merely because people are lost is no sign they are worthless. Mormons are often marvelous people, but their teachings are in error. We ought to understand that and not give ourselves to godless and silly myths." (from <http://www.pbc.org/dp/stedman/timothy/3775.html>; 3-12-00; a sermon)

When we teach godliness in our churches and exercise ourselves unto godliness, then we will also see profit in godliness.

III. PROFITING FROM GODLINESS

We come now to one of my favorite Scripture verses. This is one of my life verses!

Verse 8 For bodily exercise profiteth little: but godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.

"bodily exercise profiteth little" - bodily discipline isn't totally rejected, but is completely subjected to spiritual exercise.

Let me put that through your mind one more time. Bodily discipline isn't totally rejected, but is completely subjected to spiritual exercise.

Paul may have been thinking of the discipline of no marriage and no meats of v3 when he mentions profane fables.

When he subjects physical exercise this way he is not saying that it is of no value, nor is he saying that we shouldn't worry about the physical. We need to remember that our body is the temple of the Holy Spirit and that we need to keep our building in good repair.

"godliness is profitable unto all things" this passage speaks of looking to the future as well as the present. Godliness is good for this life as well as for the future life. The thought of the New Testament is that we should prepare for the next life rather than for this life.

Our efforts, our investments, our work, our everything ought to be centered on the next life with little attempt to work, invest, or earn for this life. Paul approached this subject in Colossians as well. Col. 3.1-4 mentions, "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory. Christ who is our life...." That is the principle that we are operating on in this life if we are living for God. "I am my life...." is where many American Christians are this day and age. All they do and think is aimed at what they can do in this life."

William Burkitt mentions three areas in which we may profit from Godliness. He basically would submit that what we leave in this life to gain Godliness - we will most likely gain in this life from that pursuit of Godliness.

"1. It is profitable to make a man rich, to help him to get and increase an estate; because it makes a man wise and prudent, diligent and industrious, thrifty and frugal.

"2. It is profitable to make a man renowned as well as rich; it is the only way to attain a good name and reputation: the godly man is a worthy and excellent man, and he is an useful and servicable man, and such do seldom miss of a good reputation in the world; those that want goodness themselves, will yet commend it in others.

"3. It is profitable for pleasure, as well as for riches and honour; for a life of religion doth

increase the relish and sweetness of all our sensible enjoyments, so far is it from abridging us of any earthly delights: and besides, it adds to us a world of pleasures of its own; thus godliness is profitable unto men in all things, having the promise of happiness both in this life, and that which is to come, annexed to it." (Burkitt, William M.A.; William Burkitt's Notes on the New Testament; 40th edition, 1807, Public Domain.)

Verse 9 This [is] a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance.

"this is a faithful saying" This text seems to refer back to the preceding

"worthy of all acceptance" In short all of us should accept verses 7 & 8 and then do something about it. Not only should we accept them, so should the entire church.

How do we exercise unto godliness?

This is in contrast to physical exercise. Let's look at physical exercise first.

1. You do more than just natural everyday things. If you walk around the block every evening then when you start exercising you walk around the block several times.
2. You do your exercise until you're tired, then a little bit more.
3. You do it on a regular basis or it is worthless.
4. You discipline yourself to it. You force yourself to do it even when you don't want to.
5. You look for and get results.

Quite often after months of forcing yourself you find that you enjoy it and look forward to it and promise yourself that you won't miss it.

Now, Godly exercise is the same. We have to work at it - on a regular basis and we must discipline ourselves to it. We then see results.

We may even see the day that we enjoy it and look forward to improving our relationship to the Lord.

When is the last time you were physically exhausted from studying the Bible and prayer?

The above 5 should be true of each one of us every day.

Not only should we be profiting from godliness, we have good reason to seek it.

III. REASON FOR GODLINESS

Verse 10 For therefore we both labour and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the Saviour of all men, specially of those that believe.

Because of these 2 verses Paul and Timothy labor. Toiling to the point of exhaustion.

That is the result of seeking God in an exhaustive manner. We strive to labor for Him for we realize what He has done for us.

When I was in the Navy, we were getting ready for a very important operation. Electronically the ship was a mess. I was the only experienced technician - 18 new ones that couldn't do anything came aboard. What they did do was wrong or caused more trouble than was present before they attempted to fix it. I worked for several weeks very hard, long hours and then for 48 hours I worked with only eating breaks and a couple very, very short naps. I was exhausted. I fell asleep before my work was done. It took them literally 15 minutes to wake me up to finish. I could hear them, but couldn't move or make a sound. My mind was functioning somewhat, but it could not or would not cause my body to function. (I had labored.)

"suffer reproach" This is suffering criticism or condemnation for things you are not guilty of. It is false accusation, it is suffering wrongly - not a pleasant experience, but Paul says that he and Timothy did this because they trust in God.

In this verse we have the picture of an athlete putting the last ounce of his energy into the race in order to be victor.

In races, especially long distance ones, as the runners near the finish line you can see them give that last spurt - you can see the anguish on their faces and the sweat on their foreheads.

This is what Paul did. His every fiber worked for his Lord and Savior.

When is the last time you worked that hard for God? Paul lived this way much of his life.

"because we trust in the living God" This is the reason for Paul's labors and is the reason that we should, to put it bluntly, be working our fool heads off for God.

Christians are a lazy lot these days. Few will get involved in more than one service a week. Few will get involved in work days. Few get involved at all these days.

The thought of hard work is foreign to most of our teenagers today. I'm speaking of Christian teens. Some of our students where I taught felt that they had overworked if they got up in time for breakfast.

"who is the Savior of all men, specially of those that believe" Savior of all men seems to speak of the desire on Christ's part for and preparation to save man.

I John 2:2 says he died for all.

"specially of those that believe"

The "specially" groups are those which accept his work on Calvary.

There are a number of explanations for this verse.

Kent lists four and I would add a fifth.

Kent suggests:

1. Universalist Interpretation: All mankind will ultimately be saved.
2. Providential Interpretation: This thought takes a lesser view of the term Saviour and suggests that all mankind is saved via the rain and sun that God provides and that the believer receives even more blessing from this grace from God.
3. Potential-actual Interpretation: This is one of the more popular thoughts that says that the potential for salvation was provided by Christ, but that only those that believe receive the benefit thereof.
4. Temporal-eternal Interpretation: God gives preservation and deliverance in this life, but for those that believe this preservation carries forward into eternity.

He quotes Purdy on this position. "God is the Saviour of all men in that on a temporal basis he gives them life and strength, awakens within them high ideals, provides for their pleasure and sustenance, and graciously allows them to live for a time in the light of His countenance.

"God is specially the Savior of believers in that he has a special call for them, answers their prayers, and provides for their well-being, not only in this life, but also in the life which is to come." (Purdy, Warren E.; THE MEANING OF THE PHRASE 'SAVIOR OF ALL MEN' IN FIRST TIMOTHY 4:10; Unpublished critical monograph, Grace Theological Seminary; 1954, p. 48.)

A fifth option might run along the line that Christ paid for all sin as in ALL sin. Every man, woman and child, was purchased and placed in a position equal to that of Adam before he sinned.

Those that believe and accept that work then become believers and share in the full benefits of

salvation.

Kent and MacArthur suggest that the adverb "specially" demands that the believer must enjoy the highest degree of what all enjoy. MacArthur adds a phrase of interest "All men will enjoy to some extent the same kind of salvation as believers enjoy.... The difference is one of degree, not kind." (THE MACARTHUR NEW TESTAMENT COMMENTARY I TIMOTHY; John MacArthur; Moody Press; Chicago; 1995; p 168)

Kent's number four is his choice, but this does not really fit within the qualification of "The difference is one of degree, not kind." You can't say that physical benefitting is the same as spiritual benefitting.

I personally view degree and kind both as necessary.

The lost must enjoy a lesser "degree" of the same kind of salvation. To say that the lost enjoy something physically, and the believer something physically but added spiritual does not seem to fit their own criteria.

I might point out that my fifth choice fits their stipulation for the adverb as well as fitting both degree and kind.

Now that we have that cleared up, let's take a quick look at some application.

Phillips Brooks once said "The great purpose of life -- the shaping of character by truth."

Is this not what Paul is attempting to do in Timothy's life? In the believers at Ephesus? In the believers at your church?

The truth of the Word ought to be shaping our character - our Christian life - if not then we are not allowing it to, or we are not close enough to it.

A Very Special Lord's Prayer From Ray Heistand

If God Should Speak . . . A different look at The Lord's Prayer

"Our Father which art in heaven....."

---Yes?

Don't interrupt me. I'm praying.

---But you called me.

Called you? I didn't call you. I'm praying. "Our Father which art in heaven....."

---There you did it again.

Did What?

---Called me. You said, "Our Father which art in heaven." Here I am.....What's on your mind?

But I didn't mean anything by it. I was, you know, just saying my prayers for the day. I always say the Lord's Prayer. It makes me feel good, kind of like getting a duty done.

---All right. Go on.

"Hallowed be thy name....."

---Hold it. What do you mean by that?

By what?

---By "hallowed be thy name"?

It means.....it means.....Good grief, I don't know what it means. How should I know? It's just a part of the prayer. By the way, what does it mean?

---It means honored, holy, wonderful.

Hey, that makes sense. I never thought about what "hallowed" meant before. "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven."

--Do you really mean that?

Sure, why not?

---What are you doing about it?

Doing? Nothing, I guess. I just think it would be kind of neat if you got control of everything down here like you have up there.

---Have I got control of you?

Well, I go to church.

---That isn't what I asked you. What about your bad temper? You've really got a problem there,

you know. And then there's the way you spend your money---all on yourself. And what about the kind of books you read?

Stop picking on me! I'm just as good as some of the rest of those people at the church.

---Excuse me. I thought you were praying for my will to be done. If that is to happen, it will have to start with the ones who are praying for it. Like you, for example.

Oh, all right. I guess I do have some hang-ups. Now that you mention it, I could probably name some others.

---So could I.

I haven't thought about it very much until now, but I really would like to cut out some of those things. I would like to, you know, be really free.

---Good. Now we're getting somewhere. We'll work together, you and I. Some victories can truly be won. I'm proud of you.

Look, Lord, I need to finish up here. This is taking a lot longer than it usually does. "Give us this day, our daily bread."

---You need to cut out the bread. You're overweight as it is.

Hey, wait a minute! What is this, "Criticize me day"? Here I was doing my religious duty, and all of a sudden you break in and remind me of all my hang-ups.

---Praying is a dangerous thing. You could wind up changed, you know.

That's what I'm trying to get across to you. You called me, and here I am. It's too late to stop now. Keep praying, I'm interested in the next part of your prayer.....(pause). Well, go on.

I'm scared to.

---Scared? Of what?

I know what you'll say.

---Try me and see.

"Forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us."

---What about Ann?

See? I knew it! I knew you would bring her up! Why Lord, she's told lies about me, spread stories about my family. She never paid back the debt she owes me. I've sworn to get even with her!

---But your prayer? What about your prayer?

I didn't mean it.

---Well, at least you're honest. But it's not much fun carrying that load of bitterness around inside, is it?

No. But I'll feel better as soon as I get even. Boy, have I got some plans for that neighbor. She'll wish she had never moved into this neighborhood.

---You won't feel any better. You'll feel worse. Revenge isn't sweet. Think of how unhappy you already are. But I can change all that.

You can? How?

---Forgive Ann. Then I'll forgive you. Then the hate and sin will be Ann's problem and not yours. You will have settled your heart.

Oh, you're right. You always are. And more than I want to revenge Ann, I want to be right with you. Ann, I want to be right with you (pause) (sigh). All right. All right. I forgive her. Help her to find the right road in life, Lord. She's bound to be awfully miserable now that I think about it. Anybody who goes around doing the things she does to others has to be out of it. Someway, somehow, show her the right way.

---There now! Wonderful! How do you feel?

Hmmmmmm. Well, not bad. Not bad at all. In fact, I feel pretty great! You know, I don't think I'll have to go to bed uptight tonight for the first time since I can remember. Maybe I won't be so tired from now on because I'm not getting enough rest.

---You're not through with your prayer. Go on.

Oh, all right. "And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil."

---Good! Good! I'll do that. Just don't put yourself in a place where you can be tempted.

What do you mean by that?

---Don't turn on the TV when you know the laundry needs to be done and the house needs to be picked up. Also, about the time you spend coffeing with your friends, if you can't influence the

conversation to positive things, perhaps you should re-think the value of those friendships. Another thing, your neighbors and friends shouldn't be your standard for "keeping up". And please don't use me for an escape hatch.

I don't understand the last part.

---Sure you do. You've done it a lot of times. You get caught in a bad situation. You get into trouble and then you come running to me, "Lord, help me out of this mess, and I promise you I'll never do it again." You remember some of those bargains you tried to make with me?

Yes and I'm ashamed, Lord. I really am.

---Which bargain are you remembering?

Well, there was the night that Bill was gone and the children and I were home alone. The wind was blowing so hard I thought the roof would go any minute and tornado warnings were out. I remember praying, "Oh God, if you spare us, I'll never skip my devotions again."

---I protected you, but you didn't keep your promise, did you?

I'm sorry, Lord, I really am. Up until now I thought that if I just prayed the Lord's Prayer every day, then I could do what I liked. I didn't expect anything to happen like it did.

---Go ahead and finish your prayer.

"For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever."
Amen

---Do you know what would bring me glory? What would really make me happy?

No, but I'd like to know. I want now to please you. I can see what a mess I've made of my life. And I can see how great it would be to really be one of your followers.

---You just answered the question.

I did?

---Yes. The thing that would bring me glory is to have people like you truly love me. And I see that happening between us. Now that some of these old sins are exposed and out of the way, well, there is no telling what we can do together.

Lord, let's see what we can make of me, O.K.?

---Yes, let's see....

I would like to close with a couple paragraphs from MacArthur.

"Pastors [I would include all believers personally] are often evaluated on the basis of the wrong criteria. Their effectiveness is frequently gauged by the size of their church, their building program, their popularity, their educational background, the number of books they have written, or their radio or TV exposure.

"While such things may have some significance, none of them are biblically valid criteria for assessing a man of god. The Puritan genius John Owen wrote, 'A minister may fill his pews, his communion roll, the mouths of the public, but what that minister is on his knees in secret before God Almighty, that he is and no more' (cited in I.D.E. Thomas, A PURITAN GOLDEN TREASURY [Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 1977],192). (THE MACARTHUR NEW TESTAMENT COMMENTARY I TIMOTHY; John MacArthur; Moody Press; Chicago; 1995; pp. 157-158)

Godliness. The only way to find it is one step at a time as the somewhat lengthy illustration indicates. You free up a little of yourself, and He will fill it with a little of Himself! Sounds like a great deal to me.

CHAPTER 21

One of the great preachers of the past is Bishop of Constantinople John Chrysostom. Some called him Golden-mouthed. MacArthur quotes Stott:

'He is generally and justly regarded as the greatest pulpit orator of the Greek church. Nor has he any superior or equal among the Latin Fathers. He remains to this day a model for preachers in large cities.

"Four chief characteristics of his preaching may be mentioned. First, he was biblical. Not only did he preach systematically through several books, but his sermons are full of biblical quotations and allusions. Secondly, his interpretation of the Scriptures was simple and straightforward. He followed the Antiochene school of "literal" exegesis, in contrast to fanciful Alexandrian allegorizations. Thirdly, his moral applications were down to earth. Reading his sermons today, one can imagine without difficulty the pomp of the imperial court, the luxuries of the aristocracy, the wild races of the hippodrome, in fact the whole life of an oriental city at the end of the fourth century. Fourthly, he was fearless in his condemnations. In fact, "he was a martyr of the pulpit, for it was chiefly his faithful preaching that caused his exile.'" Stott. John R. W.; *Between Two Worlds*; Grand Rapids; Eerdmans; 1982; 21

Infopedia encyclopedia mentions: "Chrysostom, John c.347-407. Syrian prelate. Called soon after his death Chrysostom, i.e. Golden-mouthed. Became hermit monk; returned to Antioch, gained great reputation as preacher; ordained priest (386); archbishops of Constantinople (398-404); gained popular following by eloquent criticisms of wealthy and powerful; deposed at a synod near Constantinople and banished at an instance of Empress Ataxia and patriarch of Alexandria (403); recalled because of wrath of people, but banished again (404), to Armenia. Authors of homilies, commentaries, and letters that had great influence. Later recognized as Doctor of the Church."

Interesting to me that a man that interpreted the Word literally, was a Biblicist and preached against the ills of his society was banished! Maybe there is hope for me and my desire for a mountaintop cabin away from all mankind.

Riddle mentions "THE pre-eminence of Chrysostom as a preacher remains undisputed, despite the many reversals of judgment that have resulted from modern historical investigations; no voice has been raised against the popular verdict, repeated in every age, that awards to him the first place among pulpit orators in the Eastern Church.

"Nor has there been any serious difference of opinion in regard to his personal character. His intense moral earnestness has always been recognized, and the man has been honored because it was distinctly felt that the man gave power to the oration. "Golden mouth" avails little, unless it belongs to a golden man." From an INTRODUCTORY ESSAY "ST. CHRYSOSTOM AS AN EXEGETE" BY M. B. RIDDLE, D.D.; found in a book of Chrysostom's homilies.

Verse 11 These things command and teach.

Aaahhh, you didn't know that word was allowed in the Bible did you! COMMAND - one of those words that seems to be left out of most of our current world vocabulary.

"Command and teach" Note command and teach - not command and then teach at a later date. Command seems to give the thought of laying out what is to be done and then teaching would indicate a need to show how to do what is commanded.

Recently at work I told one of the new associates to do something. Normally the job would take about an hour and a half at most. I noticed about two hours into the day she was only about a third of the way through the project. I inquired as to what was going on and was informed that when I told her what to do, she didn't know how to do it. I had assumed that she had been trained in that area, but not so. I HAD COMMANDED, BUT HAD NOT TAUGHT!

Someone gave me a pin sometime back that states that the ten commandments aren't multiple choice. Paul tells Timothy to command and teach these things. They are not optional, they are not multiple choice, and they are not for only the pastors, teachers, and missionaries.

I hope I'm not bursting any bubbles in this study but every single one of us have received this command and it is our responsibility to do it from this point on until we meet the Lord.

We will be looking at PERSONAL EXAMPLE in verse twelve, PERSONAL MINISTRY in verses thirteen and fourteen, and PERSONAL PREPARATION in verse fifteen and sixteen.

I. PERSONAL EXAMPLE

Verse 12 Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity.

"Let no man despise thy youth," Now that is one I can forget about very quickly - been there can't do that no more! Timothy was probably thirty-five to forty by now according to some writers.

Many years ago we were attending a little Baptist church with a wonderful preacher. He asked me to take a senior citizen class which I did. One day the folks voiced their concern that they weren't helping in the church. I asked them what in the world they thought a bunch of old people could do (they knew my humor).

Before the class was over, they had filled a large blackboard with jobs they felt they could do. I took the list to the pastor and he went straight through the roof. He accused me of all sorts of things and indicated just how ignorant I was to believe that those old folks would ever do anything.

I left and prayed for a couple days and decided to call one of the deacons and talk to him. I had barely told him who I was when he started telling me off for being a young know-it-all etc. I finally hung up without talking to him - just listened a lot.

We left the class/church. We later found out that I was the third in a line of teachers he had run off. We also heard later I was not the last. He could not stand to have anyone in his church that was young and that ministered to the congregation.

It is not uncommon for older men to try and run a younger man's ministry. It is not uncommon for the older men to have knowledge and wisdom which far surpass that of the young man. True, they know much and are wiser, but young men have been alive for several years and have learned many things also. The proper attitude is one of co-learning and co-teaching. Many older pastors could benefit from advice from younger men if they weren't too proud and obstinate to take it.

Likewise the younger pastor can benefit greatly from having the wisdom of the older if he isn't too proud and obstinate to take it.

Be an example to the believers that you minister to in, word, or might we say in speech, teaching and preaching.

Being an example was important for Timothy in that he was one of the leaders - one of the shepherds. Adam Clarke listed a little poem of note concerning a wondering pastor.

"Himself a wanderer from the narrow way,
His silly sheep, no wonder if they stray."

Stedman expands on this thought somewhat "Charles Spurgeon, in a lecture to his students in London in the last century said, "Beware of being like some, who go about with theological revolvers in their ecclesiastical trousers." Stedman continues "Some young men have a tendency to shoot from the lip. Modern-day jet fighters, however, give us a better picture of how the battle in the public Christian ministry is fought: Today the whole plane has to be aimed in order to bear upon the target. Here the apostle tells Timothy that his whole life has to be aimed at his objective. " From a sermon at <http://www.pbc.org/dp/stedman/timothy/3776.html>

Be an example by your conduct or manner of life. Be careful of where you go and what you do. Don't give anyone the chance to attack you because of your conduct.

Be an example by your love. If a leader doesn't show love then he will not be well accepted. There must be a concern and compassion for those around them.

Be an example by your spirit. The term spirit is not in most manuscripts though Young lists it in his literal translation. It would have the idea of your spiritual life being above board and in order. Your attitude and spirit must also be in proper order.

Be an example by your faith. How can a man of little faith lead a group to great spiritual heights? He can't.

Be an example by your purity. He must have sin under control in his life. If sin enters, he must confess it on the spot. No one is going to follow a man that is living in sin.

Purity may well relate to Timothy's age and young women. This is a very serious area of concern for young single men in the ministry.

IN SHORT IF YOU ARE DOING ALL OF THESE THINGS THEN YOU WILL NOT HAVE MANY WONDERING ABOUT YOUR YOUTH!

Once you have your personal example down, you can begin to concentrate on your ministry.

II. PERSONAL MINISTRY

Verse 13 Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine.

"Give attendance to" or pay attention to your reading etc. Give the time required to this part of your life.

The New American Standard and New International Version insert public before reading indicating that this speaks to reading in the public services. This is most likely a part of Paul's thought, but since the previous verse speaks to Timothy and his example, I would assume that it also relates to his own personal reading.

"Reading" This is to be an integrated part of the believers life as well as a part of the church.

Acts 13.15 mentions the reading of the Law, and here we have reading again mentioned as important. Just what was Paul encouraging Timothy to read? We don't know for sure, but it would be my assumption that it would be the Old Testament that he might have had as well as any copies of any of the epistles that had been around.

Personal reading is a must for our increased knowledge. My father was not well educated formally, but over many years of reading the Omaha World Herald, he became quite knowledgeable about a large number of subjects. Seldom did anyone ask him a question that he did not have an answer for them.

In personal readings of the Christian world, today you might wonder why they read. Most of what is on the market is of the self help vintage or fiction. There is little interest in good Bible study or commentaries these days.

Many asked why Dallas Seminary didn't republish Lewis Chafer's seven volume Systematic

Theology and the reported answer was that there just weren't enough people interested - it would not be cost effective.

There is also the possibility that Paul wanted him to acquaint himself with the teaching of the world at that time. There were writers and philosophers in this time that would have been read by some that he might minister to.

It is difficult to relate well to lost people if you don't know what they are being taught, what they are reading, and today what they are viewing.

Reading also relates to public church gatherings.

Many of our churches are getting away from reading of the Scriptures. There are many reasons for this.

a. While interim pastor at a church in the Midwest I noticed that they stopped having Scripture reading and it occurred to me that it was probably due to my not having my sermon together early enough in the week to call them with an appropriate text. In such a case, give your interim a hint or two to get his act together.

b. The proliferation of so many different translations has been a real hindrance to the Scripture reading. When someone reads from a different translation from mine, I spend more time trying to figure out where they are, or why the translator used that particular word, than I do listening to the Word and allowing it to sink into my mind for consideration.

Possibly an answer to this would be to request that the congregation just listen to the Word being read or possibly have them read silently.

c. Boredom with the Word. Many believers have little interest in what the Word says so as a result they become very bored with listening to it.

d. Our society says that we can only give one hour to God and we have to get four songs in plus the offering, and announcements and the pastor needs 35 minutes and something just has to be left out.

e. There is also the probability that in our MTV society that we can't get interested in anything unless it comes in a forty-five-inch model.

The term translated "exhortation" is a term that is related to one of the terms used of the Holy Spirit - one called along side for comfort and encouragement. Many take this to be preaching, but that is not the thought, though sharing of the word is not inappropriate in the Biblical exhortation.

II Cor. 1.3 mentions the term as comfort. "Blessed [be] God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort;"

Verse four also uses the term and is of note to our context. "Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God."

This pictures one of the important ministries of the elders of a church. One of comforting those in hardship or loss.

Lets take a moment and consider what we have learned concerning public worship so far in our study of Timothy?

1. Chapter one, we are not to have false teachers.
2. Chapter two, if it is speaking of public worship tells us to have men praying for leaders and those in authority. Women are to dress modestly and be in subjection in the worship service.

We might think about "public worship" for a moment or two.

- a. There was no such thing as "public worship" in the early church except that which took place at the temple. The worship that the New Testament speaks of was mainly on a personal level and during those times when the believers gathered in homes.
- b. Public worship as we view it today, that is in a church or public building where many people gather together, is not what we see in the New Testament.
- c. We should understand I Timothy in that light rather than a complete guide for worship and practice for our churches.

3. Chapter three, We find the qualifications for those leading the church and services.

4. Chapter four speaks to the minister's example as well as public reading of Scripture, exhortation and doctrine.

Paul tells him to pay attention to what is read and taught in the public services.

Why was Timothy to pay attention to what was read and taught in the services?

To see that no false teachers get in and start teaching.

That my friend is one of the things that your church leaders should be doing. When you have speakers of any kind the leaders should be seeing if the teaching is correct. If it is not then they

have the responsibility to correct that teaching, SOON! I would personally recommend the very next service. Stop false teaching in its tracks. I would also attempt to be sure that all people attending the error were personally contacted if they weren't in the service when the error was refuted.

This also can include the responsibility of checking out guest speakers beforehand to see to it that they are sound teachers.

This includes music as well as speakers. Our home pastor many years ago invited the son of another pastor in the fellowship to present a music concert. The son brought a bunch of young people with him, unannounced as I remember, and the music was getting quite lively, when the youth that had arrived with him began bopping up and down the aisles while they sang. The pastor had to stand up and stop the program. Both the musician and the pastor were embarrassed.

Don't feel bad about asking for a tape of THE program that will be presented and tell them to stick to the program.

Many churches are doing this. Indeed, many churches are instituting music policies to protect against music that is inappropriate from getting into their churches.

Verse 14 Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery.

"Neglect not the gift" Paul spoke of a gift given to Timothy. This gift is seemingly different from spiritual gifts, but probably very similar in nature and operation. I would assume that he would have mentioned it as a spiritual gift if that was what it was.

Paul states this as a command and it is for us today. Do not neglect the gift you have - use it so that God can be glorified. Every believer has a gift, and if he is not using that gift then he is hindering the smooth workings of the church.

"Which was given thee by prophecy with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery" Evidently a gift was given by prophecy from God. How, we aren't told. In the context we can expect the gift to relate to the fact that Timothy was an apostolic representative - indeed, this may be what the gift was - the appointment to that position and/or authority.

Today we do not have the gift of prophecy unless you view preaching as prophecy, which some do hold. Prophecy in the early church seemed to have a dual function. That of future telling as in the case of Agabus and Paul before Paul went to Jerusalem and then the forthtelling or idea of continuing revelation in the early part of the book of Acts.

The gift was bestowed upon Timothy by the presbytery or elders. I suspect it may have been the elders at Ephesus that were involved, though we aren't told specifically. II Tim. 1.6 includes

Paul's own hands within this context as well.

It would be of note to the church leaders in Ephesus, if this be true, to hear what Paul stated in the context of let no man despise thy youth. These men had started him into the ministry, so they should have no problem with him doing that ministry in their church.

III. PERSONAL PREPARATION

Verse 15 Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy profiting may appear to all.

"Meditate upon these things;" When is the last time you took a verse much less the thoughts of an entire book and just thought about it, about what it said, what it meant and how it applied to you? The best part of my study comes when I just look through the Scripture passage and the notes and let the Holy Spirit teach me.

Meditate evoked an interesting comment from Robertson in his Word Pictures. "It is like our "up to his ears" in work and sticking to his task." Paying close attention to what you are doing. When in the Word we need to really pay close attention to what we are doing - we need to be up to our ears in the Word!

Barnes mentions another area of meditate upon these things: "Meditate upon these things. Upon the train of events by which you have been led into the ministry, and upon the responsibilities and duties of the office. Let your mind be deeply impressed with these things; make them the subject of profound and serious thought."

"Give thyself wholly to them," would relate to the entire passage - example, reading, doctrine, gift and laying on of hands.

"That thy profiting may appear to all." has the idea of blazing a trail through a wilderness. In short, leave a trail easily followed by your students and congregation.

Verse 16 Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee.

"Take heed" may mean personal appearance, but more in keeping with the context I would say it means be watchful how you live and teach.

UNTO

"Thyself" personal upkeep possibly but more than likely spiritual upkeep. Don't be a slouch physically or spiritually.

AND

"The doctrine" Any teaching is doctrine. This passage certainly flies in the face of much of the modern contempt for doctrine and theology.

"Continue in them" Don't stray into false doctrine - don't leave it.

"For in doing this thou shalt both save thyself and them that hear thee."

This is a difficult text. Just what is Paul getting at here? A number of explanations have been set forth over the years.

1. You insure salvation in that they and yourself know the way of salvation. Since Timothy and his listeners were already believers this does not fit all that well.
2. You insure by works that you will be saved. This is held by those that have a works based salvation, but not most of those in the fundamental/evangelical circles. A problem with this is that Timothy's works can't save others nor can listening to sermons save a listener.
3. You save yourself and your listeners from something else, is another possibility.

FACTS:

1. Salvation is not in the context. Church order and the actions of the man Timothy are in view. The context dwells on the personal and public life of the man, Timothy. The following context is a continuation of Chapter 4

The term save is not used exclusively of spiritual salvation. Literally it means deliver or protect. It is also translated make whole and heal. The term is usable in several contexts.

2. The fortifying Timothy is to do is against heresy. Vss. 1, 2, & 7. He is to save from these things by proper doctrine (v16) and exhortation (v13).

A Derickson paraphrase -

"For in doing this thou shalt both save thyself and them that hear thee" (paraphrase) from "seducing spirits, doctrines of demons and "old wives' fables."

We must be founded in the Word and the Lord.

I read an illustration years ago of the buoys that are still used to mark ocean traffic lanes. They are anchored to the rock below the surface of the sea. No matter how hard the storms and seas

pound the buoy, it always is in its place guiding the seafarer. The writer then described how the Devil has attacked the church from within and from without, but yet it is still there to point the seeker to the rock upon which it is founded - Jesus Christ.

If you are anchored anywhere other than the Word of God then you are in line for a sinking.

Paul is not speaking of spiritual salvation in this text, but of the saving of men from false doctrine. In the case of a lost person being within the ministry of Timothy, it would be fitting that the person would be saved, yet salvation comes from God and not men. The text speaks of keeping from false teachings.

Many commentators dance on their tippy toes trying to get around the words to show that this is speaking of eternal salvation, but it is illogical in my mind. Timothy can't save himself by his teaching, thus he can't be speaking of salvation of the eternal nature.

Weirsbe follows my line of thinking, or I his. He relates this to a warning from Paul to Timothy to watch how he lives so that he will not mess up his ministry. He mentions ministers that have not "kept up with their profession. Moral problems, divorces, and other kinds of shameful conduct have destroyed many of god's servants." THE BIBLE EXPOSITION COMMENTARY; Warren Wiersbe; Victor Books; Wheaton; 1989; P. 228.

MacArthur takes this to be a security of the believer issue. He believes that Timothy can save himself if he perseveres in the faith. In my mind this however is inconsistent in that his perseverance can't save others!

"The benefit of so doing is twofold: it will insure salvation both for the minister himself, and for those who hear him. It will bring about salvation for him in the sense that final salvation, deliverance from sin and entrance into eternal glory, demands perseverance. It is a mark of genuine salvation." THE MACARTHUR NEW TESTAMENT COMMENTARY I TIMOTHY; John MacArthur; Moody Press; Chicago; 1995; P. 181. (I think this is a quote that should set a believer's teeth on edge. This is an example of why many fundamental people are questioning MacArthur's teaching.)

It seems that the whole concept of keeping on top of truth is the key to keeping down false doctrine and trouble for the believer.

The pastor, teacher or missionary that does not keep up on all that is going on and compare it with truth is going to have an uninformed congregation that is in danger of falling into real problems.

False doctrine always comes in nice wrapping with a large bow on top. Run it through the X-ray machine before you ship it to your brain!

I am sure that many tire of my constant warning of the isms and falsehoods of our day, but to my mind it is my responsibility to proclaim truth and point out falsehood.

I would guess that my children, grown and with their own children, may even tire of my continued watchfulness over them. I have no way to stop them from entering into falsehood but I can surely warn them of what dear old dad thinks. My systematic theology originated from my desire for them to have what the old heretic believed on as wide a group of topics as possible.

I may not be able to stop them from making mistakes, but I certainly can keep my "I TOLD YOU SO" rights current and in order!

Any minister of the Lord that does not watch for wolves is not protecting his sheep. A shepherd watches over as well as leads to truth.

CHAPTER 22

In the church were Faith and I were saved there were two dear old widows that were so important to the church in its beginnings. They were not as the widows that we are going to look at in this study for they were self sufficient financially, but they certainly illustrate the assistance to the body of Christ that these ladies can be.

Barbara Rice and Nellie Walcott lived in an old two story house with a full basement. They became involved with the Bible study that later developed into our home church. The church met in their home for some time before they built a Christian education wing that also had a meeting room.

When they invited the church into their home, they at some point in time limited themselves to live in a small apartment within the house. The upper floor was often occupied by missionaries on furlough. Ultimately the ladies gave the property to the church.

They were always involved in the church in any way that they could be. They were widows, but not widows indeed as Paul puts it. They had some of the qualifications we will see in the study, but they did not meet the qualification of need. That being said, the church did do many nice things for the ladies anyway.

Then these were the three widows indeed that were in our first church. They were "surviving" on Social Security and welfare. Had they had any further need the church should have been involved. I told them in a church service that I wanted them to let us know if they ever had a need.

Later in life I decided that I was out of line. If the church leadership knows their people properly, they will know when those needs exist and the widows wouldn't have to ask.

We want to look at GOVERNING FAMILY RESPONSIBILITIES in verses one and two, then BLOOD FAMILY RESPONSIBILITIES in verses three and four and finally at CHURCH FAMILY RESPONSIBILITIES in verses five through seven.

I. CHURCH RELATIONSHIPS

Verse 1. Rebuke not an elder, but entreat [him] as a father; [and] the younger men as brethren;

The obvious thought here is whether Paul is speaking about the elders of the church or the older men. If you link the verse to the previous context you would say the elders of the church, but with the following context it would seem obvious that he was speaking of the older men.

The term itself is the term applied to the elders of the church, yet the term is a general one to relate to many aspects. I will just list the many thoughts of the word according to Thayer. "1)

elder, of age, 1a) the elder of two people 1b) advanced in life, an elder, a senior 1b1) forefathers 2) a term of rank or office 2a) among the Jews 2a1) members of the great council or Sanhedrin (because in early times the rulers of the people, judges, etc., were selected from elderly men) 2a2) of those who in separate cities managed public affairs and administered justice 2b) among the Christians, those who presided over the assemblies (or churches) The NT uses the term bishop, elders, and presbyters interchangeably 2c) the twenty-four members of the heavenly Sanhedrin or court seated on thrones around the throne of God "

It seems that Paul has shifted gears from the organization of the leadership of the church and started to discuss the membership of the church and how Timothy is to relate to them.

What does rebuke mean? What can we say in a dispute or discussion with an older man that would be permissible and not be seen as a rebuke?

Webster views rebuke as "an expression of strong disapproval" Vine suggests, "to strike at"

This is the only New Testament usage of the term. It is related to the term in Rev 8:12 that is translated "was smitten". The context is speaking of the sun being smitten in one of the cataclysms of the end times.

Literally it means "to strike, or beat with a blow". By further drawing it might indicate a pounding with words.

It would seem that this is a harsh rebuke, one that would cause hurt, I would think. In a discussion or dispute, it would relate to Timothy telling the elder that he is wrong and/or less than intelligent for believing as he does.

I would view it as speaking to an elderly man in a way that causes hurt or pain to the person.

The second part of the admonition seems to me to imply that the elder person had done wrong or had erred in some manner. If you have an older man that has stepped away from the Lord, Paul asks that you draw him back in the loving way that you would try to entreat your own father about an error.

The man is older, probably wiser, and he has seen a thing or two. You need to give him the respect that he deserves.

The terms "entreat" seems to imply this type of action as well. This is the term we saw last study which was translated comfort elsewhere in Scripture. It is the thought of calling along side and comforting, beseeching or exhortation.

This is a term that is the kissing cousin to the term used of the Holy Spirit when He is termed by the Lord the other comforter.

It is used by Paul when he prayed for the removal of the thorn in the flesh. The term is translated "besought" in II Cor. 12:8.

When confronted with a problem with an older man the thought should be of one approaching his own father to encourage him toward proper behavior or life.

This is aimed directly at Timothy and his relation to these different groups of people. It also relates to other leaders and probably by application all believers.

In light of the idea that the secondary purpose of the epistle, to set in order church conduct, it would relate to the elders and their relationships to these groups of people within their church.

If a church elder rebukes an elder man then he should be reprimanded for his action.

I might insert here that in our year 2000 society in America this is a much needed line of thought. Older men are not respected in our country, nor are they seen to have much value at all.

It will take a marked effort for men coming out of seminaries and Bible colleges in our day to relate properly to the older men of their churches and ministries.

In Leviticus there is a long listing of do's and don'ts and among them is the following admonition. Lev. 19:32 "Thou shalt rise up before the hoary head, and honour the face of the old man, and fear thy God: I [am] the LORD."

HONOR the face of the old man placed in the same sentence with FEAR THY GOD! I trust the import of that sinks into some young people in our society.

"[and] the younger men as brethren;" The term brethren can denote brothers (Jn 1:40 Peter/Andrew being brothers), as well as the general sense of other male believers. (Rom. 1:13; 7:1, 4; 8:12) There are other uses of the term and is general for any group that are related together by a number of relationships.

I surmise that since this is a long listing of subgroups within the local assembly that the younger men would be the young male believers and Paul would be indicating the thought of treating the younger men of the church as blood brothers.

The thought of rebuking either my father or my brother is a thought that is totally foreign to me. I thought them wrong but never did I state the same to my father, and very seldom to my brother.

The respect of the father would dictate your approach.

The practical application of this is the fact that in many of our churches we are ignoring the wisdom of the older men of the church so that we can go with the more trendy things of life that

the younger generation likes.

It isn't that we should let the old fogies limit the growth of the church, but neither should we grow a church on the trendy and the worldly.

It has crossed my mind that it is the older that have resisted the "contemporary music" fad. It is the younger that have pushed it - because they like it.

Is it possible that God put "elders" in control of Israel - of cities and in this age of churches to help keep out the new and trendy?

Verse 2 The elder women as mothers; the younger as sisters, with all purity.

The term "elder women" is the same term translated "an elder" in verse one.

Why do you believe that Paul inserted the little phrase "with all purity?"

I take it that the idea of "rebuke not" and "entreat as" are applicable to all of the groups listed.

The idea of rebuking my mother was interesting to me for many times I disagreed, but only a time or two did I challenge her on anything. When I was smaller, it was fear. She would have killed me. She was BIGGG!!!!

The obvious picture here is for the elders to treat the people in their church as their own family. As their dad, their mom, their brother, and their sister.

"IN ALL PURITY" is the obvious application to the normal family life - purity in all relationships. Not only moral purity by purity of communication, action, etc.

The thought of moral purity would completely eliminate many problems within the church. If every elder treated all the people of the church as sisters of his own family, then he would never be out of line with them.

Respect should be extended to all of the family, even when they are weird, strange. Senile, tactless etc.

Robertson takes this to mean women employed by the church, women that are hired for work within the church. I for one don't see this indicated anywhere, nor do I believe it to be true. I would view this as a general principle of how the church is to operate in relation to the widows within the body.

II. BLOOD FAMILY RESPONSIBILITIES

Verse 3. Honour widows that are widows indeed.

Honor widows. The question comes to mind - if I am to honor widows that are widows indeed, then are there widows that I don't have to honor? NO!

Honor, I think has more to it than just simple honor or respect. We will see this as we go along.

The term translated honor here is also used in Eph. 6:2 of honoring your father and mother so the picture Paul is painting continues with the idea of respect.

Is it possible that the respect that you show to people in some cases, should result in material giving as well? Indeed, giving of material things is a sign of honor in a way. When we give a present to someone it is in honor of some special day or it may at times be for just showing that you honor their friendship.

Before we move on, I would like to draw your attention to something that is somewhat foreign to our own society. In our society the widow is not held in high esteem unless she has money and you might get some. This is true in some churches. The attention given to widows often is to keep on their good side in case the church is in the will.

The widow is usually totally ignored by society, indeed all too often by her own family. In the Old Testament the widow was one of those subgroups of the Israelite nation that God had a special place for. He wanted the widows and the orphans cared for. It seems from the many times that it is mentioned that these two groups were very close to God.

I will just list a few references for you to study on your own along this line. A concordance will also help if you want to go further. Ps 68.5; 146.9; Prov. 15.25; Ex 22.22; Job 31.16; De 24.17; 14.29. (James 1:27 mentions that pure religion is visiting the widows and orphans.)

The common ground between the widow and orphan is that they both have lost the man in their life as well as their provider. Indeed, that is what this text in I Tim. is all about - taking care of the widows.

I would like to list the requirements listed in this text for a "widow indeed".

1. one that has lost her husband in verse five.
2. one who trusteth in God (a believer) verse 5
3. one who continues in supplication and prayers night and day verse 5 - a Godly woman that is known for her walk with the Lord.
4. one who liveth not in pleasure verse 6 - if she is out at the mall every day buying clothes etc.

then she is not qualified. She should not be married to the pleasures of this life. She should be committed to living a right and proper life.

5. one who is blameless verse 7 - yes this is the same word that is used of the elder of the church in chapter three. Their life should be such that no one can lay hold of them with accusations.

6. one who is over 60 verse 9 - I assume that the limit is set because one younger could probably take care of herself.

In our society with medical help etc. as it is there are many sixty year old women that should probably be supporting themselves for awhile. Life expectancy was not very high in Paul's day. If a woman can't support herself then the church should help.

7. one who was wife of only one man verse 9 - if she has outlived two husbands, then she will probably have plenty of family if not money to take care of herself.

This may also relate to the idea that if she has had more than one husband that she is more serious about men rather than being serious about the Lord.

8. one who is well reported of because of her good works verse 10 - she is to have a good reputation around the community. It might be that the good works could be continued as she can for the church.

This seems to shift to a list of the good works that are mentioned above. It isn't that she must have done all of these, but that she is the type of woman that has done these good works and is known for them.

a. one who has brought up children verse 10 - that person deserves some help. They have done a good size job in life already!

b. one who has lodged strangers

c. one who has washed the saints feet

d. one who has relieved the afflicted

e. one who has diligently followed every good work 10

9. one who has no one to help support them 16

This indicates that a woman that can support herself or has family that can support her should not be on the widows list.

However, anyone filling this list of qualifications should seek and find help from her local assembly.

Yes, we have Social Security and welfare and all those other programs, yet they do not always keep the older women going. IF there is a need then the church should meet it if the woman is a widow indeed.

We should note that "Poverty is not dishonorable in itself, but only when it comes from idleness, intemperance, extravagance, and folly." Plutarch

Some have suggested that this should be a group of widows that are gathered together to work in the church. The sixty-year limit in Paul's days would have made the women pretty old for much work at all.

The thought of a group for work is not widely held. It would not be wrong to involve the widows as they have ability if they desire to, but it should not be involvement because the church is helping them. The church isn't to be in the employment business. It should be to serve the Lord.

The thought of taking care of widows is not new in Timothy's time, but was around even in the early part of Acts.

Acts 6:1 mentions, "And in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplied, there arose a murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministration."

The first deacons arose from the need to care for the widows of the early church.

I have always thrilled with churches that get behind their people to care for them.

When living in Nebraska we attended a small Bible church. I had surgery with no insurance and Faith was making very little at her job. The church rallied behind us and saw us through the bad times. They were truly God's provision for our needs at that time.

This is something that we should do for more than just the widows. If we have people that fall into problems, then we should help. If they dive into the problems because they decide not to work then you have another story indeed.

Verse 4 But if any widow have children or nephews, let them learn first to shew piety at home, and to requite their parents: for that is good and acceptable before God.

"piety" is translated worship in Acts 17:23. The Englishman's concordance states that the literal translation of the word in the Timothy text would be, "to care piously for their own house."

"Requite" is translated shalt perform, shall reward, will pay, shall render, yielded, to give and others. It seems to have the idea of children giving back, as in giving back what they have been given in their lives with their family.

In short the Godly thing to do if you have a widow in your family that is in the need of help, is take her in and show her the proper hospitality and care for her as she cared for you.

This concept is not widely held in our own society. We tend to say to our old folks, "get lost." This is not to say that care homes etc. are wrong for they are not. In many cases the people need the care that only a care home can offer.

If on the other hand the widow is not in need of that care, but is not able to be in her own surroundings then your place may well be the place where she belongs.

Those dear old mothers took care of us when we needed help, and we should in turn help them when they are in need of help.

III. CHURCH FAMILY RESPONSIBILITIES

Verse 5 Now she that is a widow indeed, and desolate, trusteth in God, and continueth in supplications and prayers night and day.

What is the link to the term desolate, and the "trusteth in God" that Paul mentions?

The thought here seems that she is trusting God for her continued needs. The widow that cast in her mites might well relate to this section. She gave all that she had and placed herself on the Lord for her provision.

It isn't just a, "Well Lord I've blown all that my husband left me and now it's up to you." It is a conscious reliance on the Lord for needs and this is backed by her prayers for the same. She is entreating her God for the things that He has promised to give to her. Matt 6:33

"Night and day" prayer. What a prayer partner! We need some like this woman! Not that they pray twenty-four hours a day, but praying through out the day.

The term desolate according to Thayer "to make single or solitary - leave alone, forsake." This is a woman that is without recourse other than to God for her needs.

Verse 6 But she that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth.

The dead refers to her spiritual condition. She is living in this world for the pleasures that it can give and she is not responsive to God nor to things of the Lord, thus she is not worthy of help from the church.

The church should not ignore this group of widows for they do need the Lord and need to be reached with the Gospel. If, on the other hand, they are carnal Christian women, then they need to be rebuked for their sins, BUT AS MOTHERS and sisters.

Verse 7 And these things give in charge, that they may be blameless.

The things above are to be given to the church as a charge for their knowledge of their responsibility. The blameless refers to them being widows INDEED and not cheating God and the church.

This is true of the church as well. The church needs to know that they are responsible for the widows or they might be blamed for not taking care of them. In Acts six the problem was that some of the widows were not being ministered to and it led to hard feelings and charges.

In our later life - after both our parents were gone, we came in contact with an old woman that was a member at a church where I was interim pastor. As we talked with her and became friends with her I was taken with the importance of this passage. This woman was self sustaining financially and was quite active for her age, but as her health diminished she needed some assistance and later a care home.

The reason I bring this up is that her lost family was right there to take care of her. They knew their responsibility even though they weren't Christians.

Had she not had that type of family it would have been the church's kindness and responsibility to fill in for her in her time of need.

Common sense demands this care of an aged woman, yet God felt he had to tell us this via the apostle Paul - He tends to know how Christians degenerate toward one another.

There is a sense in which we should be open to assisting widows on a personal basis as well - help as you can when you can.

Before we move on, the term nephew currently relates to the son of a brother or sister, however in the English language in the past it related closely to grandchildren or any family member according to Barnes.

Barclay mentions along this same line of thought "It was Greek law from the time of Solon that sons and daughters were, not only morally, but also legally bound to support their parents. Anyone who refused that duty lost his civil rights. Aeschines, the Athenian orator, says in one of his speeches: "And whom did our lawgiver (Solon) condemn to silence in the Assembly of the people? And where does he make this clear? 'Let there be,' he says, 'a scrutiny of public speakers, in case there be any speaker in the Assembly of the people who is a striker of his father or mother, or who neglects to maintain them or to give them a home.'" Demosthenes says: "I regard the man who neglects his parents as unbelieving in and hateful to the gods, as well as to men." Philo, writing of the commandment to honour parents, says: "When old storks become unable to fly, they remain in their nests and are fed by their children, who go to endless exertions to provide their food because of their piety." To Philo it was clear that even the animal creation

acknowledged its obligations to aged parents, and how much more must men? Aristotle in the Nichomachean Ethics lays it down: "It would be thought in the matter of food we should help our parents before all others, since we owe our nourishment to them, and it is more honourable to help in this respect the authors of our being, even before ourselves." As Aristotle saw it, a man must himself starve before he would see his parents starve. Plato in The Laws has the same conviction of the debt that is owed parents: "Next comes the honour of loving parents, to whom, as is meet, we have to pay the first and greatest and oldest of debts, considering that all which a man has belongs to those who gave him birth and brought him up, and that he must do all that he can to minister to them; first, in his property; secondly, in his person; and thirdly, in his soul; paying the debts due to them for their care and travail which they bestowed upon him of old in the days of his infancy, and which he is now able to pay back to them, when they are old and in the extremity of their need." Barclay, William; THE LETTERS TO TIMOTHY TITUS, AND PHILEMON; Philadelphia; Westminster; 1975; PP. 106-7

My how things have changed! Let's get back to what is right and give our elders honor and respect!

CHAPTER 23

Years ago our home church pastor found that he had a spot on his lung and the doctors determined that he should have surgery. One of his sons was a nurse in a Large medial complex in the next state, so the pastor went there for the surgery.

The day came for the operation and all went well. The pastor was in recovery, then moved into a room - all seemed quite normal. Within hours he was in serious difficulty. Something had gone wrong with the lung they had operated on. Ultimately the decision was made to remove the lung to save his life. He had been very healthy so operating on one lung would not be a great difficulty for him.

The lung was removed and again he was removed from recovery and was doing well. As before, he suddenly took a serious turn for the worse. The doctors could not reverse his course and he died.

The doctors were in utter shock but nothing could be done.

In the days ahead the church knew that they needed to move on, but they wanted very seriously to assist their former pastor's widow. She was not sixty, and she had another son and a daughter both of which could have taken care of her, but the church determined they had a responsibility to the widow.

The church, after much discussion and prayer gave her some options concerning her living accommodations.

They told her that if she wanted to stay in town that she could have title to the parsonage. If she wanted to move out of town, that she could live in the parsonage or they would rent her a place until she was comfortable in making the move.

If she wanted to move immediately they were going to move her.

She opted to stay and take the parsonage.

Again, the church was not obligated to do this, but they wanted to and it was a great show of their love and concern for her.

The church needed a custodian and secretary at the time so she took on those responsibilities to assist in her own livelihood.

This church had to have been a great testimony to the lost people in the community.

The church was not required to assist, but they wanted to assist. This ought to be any church's

guide to their relationship to their widows.

I might interject here that I am not advocating the welfare program, nor the presence of widows on welfare roles. The government offers these alternatives so if someone takes advantage of them when in need I see nothing intrinsically wrong with it - emphasis on someone that has a NEED!

I might also add that if the church was doing its part there would be no need for a widow to be on welfare. I trust that we might see more churches doing more of what they ought.

Social security on the other hand is something that we as citizens are required to contribute too, so we ought to gain from our contribution.

We will be looking at the SERIOUSNESS OF SUPPORT in verse eight, CRITERIA OF SUPPORT in verses nine and ten, UNWORTHY OF SUPPORT in eleven through fifteen, and NEED OF SUPPORT in verse sixteen.

I. SERIOUSNESS OF WIDOW SUPPORT

8 But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel.

Whom is Paul speaking of in verse eight? The church, the individual, the widow or someone else?

When we moved to Denver to attend Bible college, we settled in a little Bible church for a church home. One of the first of many trials that confronted me took place in that church. One night for Sunday evening service we broke up into little groups. I was placed with two older men. We went down into the basement and one of the men turned to this verse and began to expound.

At the time we had no money, had barely gotten ourselves moved into an apartment, had no money for school, and a brand-new job. We were in a world of hurt financially but current on our bills and an income that would cover our needs.

Now back to the inquisition. I don't know that this was planned, but I felt that my being assigned to these two men and their picking this particular verse was a little fishy, especially considering his choice of words to indicate but not state that he was speaking of me.

At any rate the man made me feel that I was an infidel and that I was totally corrupt because I wasn't caring for my family properly. I read the verse over and over and could not see where he could use it in my case - I was convinced that it was speaking of widows and widows only.

For days I felt like a total failure and kept going back to the verse. Finally the Lord gave me a peace that this was indeed, speaking of widows only. This was at a time in my life when I had no

formal or church teaching in the Word. It may well be one of the reasons I am so staunch on literal interpretation.

Poverty or being poor is not being unspiritual, but not taking care of widows is!

Some suggest the Church:

- a. The context is the church caring for widows.
- b. The last time individuals were in view is in verse four.
- c. Whom is the book written to? Timothy. Paul is setting some principles to function by. The elders might well be in view in verse eight.
- d. This verse seems to relate directly to the thought of verse seven and the blameless state of the church.

Others suggest the individual:

- a. The term "anyone" is the key. If Paul were speaking of the elders there would be better terminology to draw the reader's attention to the church leadership.
- b. The individual is the one that is to care for the widow according to verse four.
- c. Verse 16 is very specific that the individual is in view in this whole concept. The individual should do it if possible, if not then the church should take over.

CONCLUSION:

The primary emphasis is on the individual caring for his own family and widows so that the church is not burdened with that financial supply.

There is a secondary emphasis to the church itself by application. We are family and if we have family in need that is not being cared for, then we are in error.

I would like to make a few observations about this text and the misuse of it by many through the years.

1. This text speaks of taking care of widows after the fact of the death of their husband. It also speaks of her remaining family caring for her.
2. It is not speaking to the husband that does not supply his wife, before the fact of his death with a house, two cars and \$200,000 in life insurance.

The husband is to provide for his wife while they are together, but there is no indication that there is a Scriptural requirement for him to provide for her after he is gone.

It is nice if he can provide for her widowhood needs before he leaves, but in many cases this is an impossibility. We know of people that have never made enough too much more than feed themselves and the man has died. That man isn't worse than an infidel. His family is worse than an infidel if they don't care for her.

3. The Lord Himself had the responsibility of his widowed mother. Tradition and logic tell us that Joseph probably died much before the crucifixion. Christ did not have an insurance policy on himself with a double indemnity clause in case of crucifixion.

He did not provide for Mary other than asking John to watch out for her.

Was He worse than an infidel? No, never, but this would be the practical application if I Tim 5:8 were speaking of providing before you leave this life for the women in your life.

I am not speaking against insurance, cars and houses based on this text, but want you to understand that God does not require us to work our lives to provide for times that MIGHT happen.

My father was told when he was twenty-one that he would not live ten years more. He went ahead and married and had children. He made all his plans on what he had been told. He put all the insurance on my mother - none on himself. She died quite a few years before he did - planning doesn't always work out the way you want.

There are many ministers and missionaries of past generations and present generations that are in serious trouble if this verse speaks of providing insurance.

I have heard several over the years really downgrade anyone that hasn't set their spouse up financially.

WRONG!!!!

The real proof of the pudding of my thought is the fact that the time of Paul was before the time of life insurance and IRA's. The best they could do was bury it in the backyard.

You might note that the text is in a present tense and not looking back at the man that pulled the dumb stunt of passing over.

The man that does not care for a widow is denying the faith in that he is not doing what Paul has stated that he should and he is not doing that which the unsaved do by nature. The natural thing to do is to care for your own.

Indeed, it is an indication of the coldness of the believers Timothy was working with for Paul to have to mention the subject.

The thought of “deny” the faith is a perfect tense which is something that was completed in the past. There may be more to this denial than most commentators suggest. Most feel that he is simply not living up to what the faith would have him do.

I would suggest that inaction is openly showing what the persons’ internal relationship to God is. NONBELIEVER may well be the case.

II. CRITERIA OF WIDOW SUPPORT

9 Let not a widow be taken into the number under threescore years old, having been the wife of one man,

"Taken into the number" would indicate that this was an actual listing of the widows that had need and that they were literally ministered to via the church funds and/or the peoples material possessions.

Wesley held that this was a taking into the number of deaconesses. He did not indicate what this thought was based on. I would view it simply as a listing of folks in need of help.

"Having been the wife of one man" would be similar to the elders’ qualification of a one woman man - this is a one man woman! She may have had more than one marriage, though any new marriage was only after she had been widowed from the previous.

The proof that Paul is not limiting this to one husband is seen in 5.4 where he tells the younger widows to remarry. If he were telling them to remarry and they then couldn't be added to the list in later years, Paul would have been very unfair to the younger.

Barnes would disagree with me, but his only proof to the contrary is the fact that widows that did not remarry after their first husband died were held with respect as seen in Luke 2.36-37 "She was a widow of great age, and had lived with an husband seven years from her virginity; and she was a widow of about fourscore and four years." I am not sure that this is proof enough to limit the passage in this manner.

10 Well reported of for good works; if she have brought up children, if she have lodged strangers, if she have washed the saints' feet, if she have relieved the afflicted, if she have diligently followed every good work.

We have covered these in the previous study, but I would make a comment or two concerning the washing of feet.

Washing of feet was a custom and courtesy of the culture of the day. The roads were not blacktopped and people did not have LTD's to drive to different locations, so when a person arrived to visit or maybe come to your home for a gathering of the church the dust would be heavy on the foot.

A foot washing would have been something offered to any guest coming into a home. This is not a proof text for foot washing, though the attitude of servant hood is certainly an application we can derive from this text.

I have read literature from the Brethren church - those that believe in foot washing as an ordinance and they do not use this passage in their presentation. Indeed, the only passage they suggest is that of the Lord when He washed the apostles feet. (They do mention this text as an example of it being done in their conclusion.)

III. UNWORTHY OF WIDOW SUPPORT

Now, we need to insert a disclaimer before we move onto the next section. This is Paul speaking, this is his doctrine, these are thoughts from HIS mind - I am not responsible for what he says.

11 But the younger widows refuse: for when they have begun to wax wanton against Christ, they will marry;

This is not a prohibition of helping a widowed woman under sixty, but it is a prohibition of putting her on the list for permanent help.

Any woman that has not worked and loses her husband might need help to get onto her feet, but the help should be viewed by her and the church as only temporary.

The thought of the text in other translations has the idea of when they have healed from their loss they will begin to have desires toward the opposite sex and that they will probably marry and not need the help of the church.

In my mind the younger woman might make a commitment to the Lord and to serve Him, but as the healing process goes along, she might find that she desires to remarry.

12 Having damnation, because they have cast off their first faith.

The reading of these verses in the King James Version is very negative and degrading to the younger widow.

The NASB may help us to understand what Paul is saying. "But refuse to put younger widows on the list, for when they feel sensual desires in disregard of Christ, they want to get married, thus incurring condemnation, because they have set aside their previous pledge." 5:11-12

The thought seems to be that the younger widows of the day were in the habit of pledging to remain unmarried for the remainder of life, but that Paul knew that many wouldn't keep that pledge and Paul would desire that they go ahead and remarry.

The condemnation would not be spiritual in any way unless they had made a vow to the Lord in the thought of the Old Testament, in which case there might be a loss of reward.

There is also the thought that she might receive condemnation from either the church people or the unsaved.

Burkitt feels this to be a matter of salvation: "waxing wanton against Christ, would marry; that is, growing weary of the church's service, and despairing of marriage in the church, would revolt from the faith, and marry some infidel out of the church.

"Having damnation; that is, committing a sin worthy of damnation, and bringing themselves into a damnable condition. Because they renounced their first faith, which they made profession of when they were baptized, turning apostates to please their infidel husbands, which the apostle calls a turning after Satan, verse 15, to the great scandal of Christianity."

I think this is a radical interpretation and not based on a good reading of the passage.

13 And withal they learn [to be] idle, wandering about from house to house; and not only idle, but tattlers also and busybodies, speaking things which they ought not.

If they don't get married and settle down they will just get into trouble. Let's list that trouble that is mentioned:

"Be idle" would be the natural thing to arise - no husband to care for - time on their hands would be the ultimate result.

"Wandering house to house" Being idle, what else is there to do in a day without television, stereos, movie theaters, malls, cars, and all those goodies.

"Tattlers" - I saw a note on a Baptist church bulletin board years ago that there is no better machine for picking up dirt than the telephone. Now Paul did not know of the telephone so I think he just knew women of his own day.

I assume that the tattling would be on one another and anyone else that had the misfortune to come into range.

One of the possible translations of this term is babbling, which kind of says it all.

"Busybodies" One commentary suggested not only is there the thought of being involved in

useless activities, but also neglecting useful activities - neglecting is kind of the result of the former.

The thought of false doctrine might come into the picture, though Paul does not list it specifically, and women tend to lead one another astray if they begin to talk about things of this sort.

In our own day we have groups for support of most any problem that you have faced. They get together and begin talking of their experiences and miseries and woes and problems and depressions to the point that everyone comes away feeling good, or so they say. In light of this text I rather question the validity of these get-togethers.

In short, they won't turn out to be the Godly saintly widows that the 60-year-olds will.

The church will be hindered if they have this type of person on the list to be helped.

I DIDN'T SAY A WORD! NOT ONE SINGLE SOLITARY WORD DID I SAY ABOUT THE TRUTH OR THE FALSEHOOD OF THE UPCOMING STATEMENTS OF PAUL!

14 I will therefore that the younger women marry, bear children, guide the house, give none occasion to the adversary to speak reproachfully.

15 For some are already turned aside after Satan.

Here we have the crux of what Paul was getting at. If you keep them out of trouble then they will not be an occasion for gossip and charges from without the church.

Paul mentions that some have already followed this route and this is enough. The indications are that they have not only just been a problem, but that they have fallen into sin in some manner.

The sin may well relate to the woman of verse six that is in pleasure and that is spiritually dead.

I had to wonder as I studied this text if the old adage - "Keep them barefoot and pregnant" came from Paul's line of thinking.

I don't say any of this to slight women, nor do I believe that slight was in the mind of Paul.

The place for the woman is in the home doing what she is naturally talented at. Raising kids and keeping her husband happy.

She was not meant to work and support the family, she was meant to raise and care for it. Again, I am not saying women can't or shouldn't work if the need arises.

III. THE CRITERIA OF WIDOW SUPPORT

16 If any man or woman that believeth have widows, let them relieve them, and let not the church be charged; that it may relieve them that are widows indeed.

Again, we see the thought that we have expressed throughout.

Paul wants those that can to support their widows and if that is not possible then the church should do so.

APPLICATION:

1. Some might suggest that this comes out of the old Judaism and that since we are in the church that we aren't bound by it.

Wrong! Paul related this truth to Timothy, his personal representative to share with the church leaders. It was in the context of the local church. It is for us today.

2. It is our responsibility to care for the widows. There is no other interpretation available.

a. If she really qualifies as a widow indeed, we should, as a church, get involved in her welfare.

b. We have social security today and it is from the government that God placed us under so we naturally should encourage the widow to use that money first. Then as she NEEDED, we should as a church assist her.

We aren't talking the Ritz and trips to Hawaii here folks; we are talking of helping her get along with her NEEDS.

3. I believe that every church should literally have a list of widows that they care for if there are any that are a part of their church!

We might consider one more item that relates to our discussion. We ought not support the widows because Paul told us to support the widows. He was evidently reminding the folks at Ephesus of their responsibility to the widows.

Our love for one another should ultimately move us to love one another materially if there is a need, especially in the case of the widows, that have no one to give them assistance - Love one another was the Lord's command, and this extends to all believers, but I would say especially to those that have a greater need.

Besides that it is the natural thing to do!

I think a church that is creative could do a lot for the widows today. Just visiting them would be a great asset. Clean Their house - do yard work, do repairs if they are unable - just be useful to them.

Set up a meals on wheels program with volunteers if you have enough widows. Help them get to appointments and doctors.

It is not only our natural and Biblical responsibility but it ought to be a privilege to help one of God's children in need.

CHAPTER 24

"A Christian leader told of a group of laymen who came to see him one day for some advice. They wanted to know of a diplomatic way to get rid of their pastor. The man, sensing that they were not being fair, gave them some suggestions:"

"1. Look your pastor straight in the eye while he is preaching and say amen once in a while. He'll preach himself to death.

"2. Pat him on the back and tell him his good points. Before you know it, he'll work himself to death.

"3. Rededicate your own life to Christ and ask your minister for a job to do. He'll die of heart failure.

"4. Get the church to unite in prayer for him. Soon he'll become so effective that a larger church will take him off your hands." (From the November 10, 1995 Daily Bread)

Concerning church elders and our relationship to them we will be looking at PAY EM in verses seventeen and eighteen, TRUST EM in verses nineteen and twenty, and EQUAL EM in verse twenty one.

I. PAY EM

17. Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine.

I Thess. 5.12-13 mention a similar line of thought. "And we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you; And to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake. [And] be at peace among yourselves. "

The term "rule" is a little misleading in our society. It has the thought of being boss and I fear many of our independent Baptist brethren have taken this word at its general usage and have created unto themselves dictatorships.

The term actually has the thought of leading. The man that leadeth the congregation well is worthy.

The term is translated "over" in I Thess. 5.12 which we just looked at.

The term is the same that is used of the elder ruling his own house well.

Titus 3.8 and 14 both use the term in the phrase "maintain good works" which would indicate

maintaining that which is desired. In light of an elder it would be one that maintains the direction of the church, that is assuming the church has some direction - many today are in maintenance mode - maintain the status quo - never mind what the Lord might want.

Stedman mentions of the thought in a sermon, "One who leads is not necessarily a boss. He does not drive people, he leads them. He goes before and sets the pace and the direction; whether people follow or not depends entirely upon how much respect he has built in their eyes by his personal character, his abilities, and his gifts. An elder is a man who is able to command the respect of others and get them to follow him in the directions the Lord has set."

What can we learn from Paul's use of the plural term elders in this verse?

We can see that the plural term shows that more than one elder can teach and preach - not just one person. We also see that there more than one elder in the church to lead the membership.

I would like to take some time and consider this thought of honor and double honor. This is one of the texts full time pastors drag out anytime anyone asks them about being paid for their ministry.

I frequent a board that is run by a man that feels he is owed a good living if not a living equal to the richer of his church. He sells his sermons on the internet, and he offers Christian software on his site, but at a higher price than the source dealers sell it for. I'm not sure that is Biblical honor.

Anyway the thought of honor most likely relates to both respect and material support, but I would like to see if we can really - Biblically justify the thought of full time paid pastors.

Though we are not going to take time to delve into the respect/honor issue, it is just as important if not more so than the material.

Some would go back to the Levites and their being supported by the giving to the Lord. The one major problem with this is that there is no priesthood today as there was in the Old Testament. We all - every believer - are priests, so if you want to use the Levites as a proof text you will have to pay each and everyone in the church equally. However, this is part of the basis for giving to elders. We will see this shortly.

We might mention that the early elders of the church recorded in the book of Acts were not graduates of Jerusalem Baptist seminary, they were common people of the church that met the criteria to be elders. There is no indication what so ever that they were paid.

Paul himself took gifts from those that wished to share with him, but he did not have a retainer from a local church. He, indeed, went back to his tent making abilities to support himself when in need.

There is indication in II John that the early church preachers were not paid, but relied on the kindness of believers. Verse ten mentions "If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house neither bid him God speed." Many believe that some preachers moved from town to town preaching and were dependent on believers for room and board.

One problem that paid pastors never address is the Spiritual gifts. Each and every believer has at least one spiritual gift. Now, the shepherd is to be a teacher - or literally to have the spiritual gift of teaching. Why should a person with one gift be paid full time and not all the others? Not overly logical.

We do have before us one main text which we need to consider.

18 For the scripture saith, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn. And, The labourer [is] worthy of his reward.

We have two illustrations. The ox that treadeth should not be muzzled, or he should be allowed his feed - now this offers nothing more in my mind than to allow the elder to be given that which will cover his physical needs. Deut. 25.4 mentions, "Thou shalt not muzzle the ox when he treadeth out the corn."

The second phrase mentions the laborer is worthy of his reward. This illustration brings us to the proof that the elder may be paid, indeed, should be paid. The worker is due his hire.

Some believe that the Gospel of Luke was already in existence and that Paul was quoting Luke in this verse (Luke 10.7). Others believe that Paul was just mentioning a phrase that the Lord had used in His ministry.

I Cor. 9.9-14 is also a text which gives some value to the thought of a paid pastor, however I feel that it is a far cry from what we see in the church today. " 9 For it is written in the law of Moses, Thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn. Doth God take care for oxen? 10 Or saith he [it] altogether for our sakes? For our sakes, no doubt, [this] is written: that he that ploweth should plow in hope; and that he that thresheth in hope should be partaker of his hope. 11 If we have sown unto you spiritual things, [is it] a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things? 12 If others be partakers of [this] power over you, [are] not we rather? Nevertheless we have not used this power; but suffer all things, lest we should hinder the gospel of Christ. 13 Do ye not know that they which minister about holy things live [of the things] of the temple? and they which wait at the altar are partakers with the altar? 14 Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel."

If you have an elder that is spending great time in the ministry then the church is obligated to assist him to keep his families needs met.

Some references that might be of help in further study of this idea are: Matt. 10:9-10 Provide neither gold, nor silver, nor brass in your purses, Nor scrip for [your] journey, neither two coats, neither shoes, nor yet staves: for the workman is worthy of his meat. This is the context of the sending out of the apostles and probably has no direct relation to church leaders, though there may be some application. Lu. 10.7-8 And in the same house remain, eating and drinking such things as they give: for the labourer is worthy of his hire. Go not from house to house. 8 And into whatsoever city ye enter, and they receive you, eat such things as are set before you: Again this is not directly applicable to us, but there is application for us. Deut. 24.15; Lev. 19.13.

The next question is this - is it wrong to have a paid pastor? Not necessarily provable, but there also may be reason not to want one. These questions are asked only to stir your thinking about what God really wants in the church.

- a. Is the man that looks to the people for his security always willing to preach the Word freely and openly as he sees it?
- b. Is the paid pastor a hindrance to the involvement of the congregation?
- c. Is the paid pastor truly free to consider openly before the Lord God's leading to another ministry?
- d. Is the paid pastor relying on the Lord for his subsistence?

This honor is the same as in the case of caring for the widow. It is not only the honor due a person in a position of leadership but it is quite possibly material assistance as in the case of the widows.

This is not a basis verse for the thought of a full time pastor. The full time pastor comes to us out of a society that is lazy and too affluent. We have the money to pay him and we are too lazy to do the work ourselves so we JUST MUST HAVE A PAID PASTOR!

I would encourage you to get that thinking out of your mind. We are functioning under that system but it is not necessarily "Thus saith the Lord!" We need to get back to the idea of elders from the assembly doing the work of the Lord and not relying on a full time man to care for our every need.

It is of interest to me that Paul placed this thought of honor to the elder in the context of the widow that is assisted in her NEEDS by the church because she has no other choice.

The honor due the elder should be something to assist him to get along because he is doing so much in the church that he can't work enough to supply the families need.

If we were to get back to the idea of several elders sharing in the work of the shepherding, we

would have several men that had jobs that would maybe/maybe not need a supplement to that job to keep the family going.

Paul's context wasn't the idea of everyone needs a house, car, two TV's, five stereos, a washer and dryer plus multiple other items.

He was speaking to a people, many of which may well have been slaves that had little need other than food shelter and clothes.

ENOUGH SAID PROBABLY IF NOT TOO MUCH.

Burkitt mentions that some in his day took this passage to mean the elders of the family not the elders of the church. I personally don't think the passage lends itself to that interpretation, though there might be some good areas of application for the family if one were to consider this line of thought as a sidelight to that of the elders of the church.

II. TRUST EM

19 Against an elder receive not an accusation, but before two or three witnesses.

This is really an application of Matt. 18.15ff and the principle that the person in sin is to be confronted individually first then by taking two or three with you.

Paul is simply stating that the elder has the same right in this aspect as any other believer.

If an elder is accused of something then there had better be two eye witnesses to it that are reliable.

OTHERWISE DON'T ACCEPT IT! (Some other refs for your future study: Deut. 17.6; 19.15; Jn. 8.17; II Cor. 13.1; Heb. 10.28.)

I mentioned in an earlier study a pastor that had been accused of making obscene phone calls to a woman in his church. I also mentioned that he ultimately had to leave that church. He was incorrectly accused, and he was incorrectly held accountable. There was only one woman making the accusation and no witnesses, thus he should never have been accused publicly by the woman nor should the supposed offense ever been brought up in any gathering of the church or the church leadership.

20 Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear.

If you have an elder that has erred then he should be rebuked publicly before the assembly so that others will fear the same if they fall into error.

I personally believe that some of the television preachers that have fallen into moral problems should have been confronted publicly on the stations where they ministered. The people they were in contact with needed to know of the improper actions and that the actions were not being taken lightly.

So, who says fear shouldn't be part of the spiritual life. It would seem that Paul wanted the people to fear incorrect activity!

III. EQUAL EM

And I don't mean give them Equal sweetener for their coffee when they come to visit with you.

21 I charge [thee] before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect angels, that thou observe these things without preferring one before another, doing nothing by partiality.

Oh fooveeey! Paul is no fun!

He wants us to treat everyone the same and not play favorites!

I assume the "observe these things refers to the widows and the elders. Both groups should be treated equally and without favorites. One widow should not be treated differently more than the other nor should one elder be rebuked and another receives no rebuke.

This may well go back even further to the thought of treating all of the subgroups of this chapter without partiality.

Paul seems to be somewhat serious when he states, "I charge [thee] before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect angels, that thou observe these things without preferring...."

He means business. Why? Partiality in a church is a natural trouble maker!

I would like to consider the reason that some of the writers of Scripture use multiple Persons of the Trinity when speaking of God - one God as we all know the Bible teaches.

Why did Paul say "before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ" when speaking in this text? Why did John, in Revelation 11.15, say "of our Lord, and of his Christ?"

Of course we know that the Holy Spirit is moving the authors in what they record, but the use of two members of the Trinity is of interest to me. Also, why not all three members of the Trinity?

Some possible reasons:

1. When name dropping is used, why use only one, especially when you know three very

IMPORTANT people. I don't think that Paul was name dropping, but when he charges, he wanted to make the point as clearly as possible - he was serious and he had good backing in what he said.

2. There is the possibility that he was charging them before their God, the author of their salvation, as well as their savior and head of the church Jesus Christ.

Then comes a further question, why does Paul charge the folks before the elect angels? What do angels have to do with saints living a proper life?

1. Heb. 12.1 may give some help. "Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset [us], and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, "

We aren't told specifically that this cloud of witnesses includes the elect angels, but that is a distinct possibility. I would suggest that the cloud of witnesses includes the entire heavenly court, but it Almighty God, the beasts of the throne, the angelic host and the departed saints.

2. I Peter 1.11-12 "11 Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow. 12 Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things, which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; which things the angels desire to look into."

It would seem from this passage that the angels are very interested in the goings on between God and man especially in the area of salvation. I suspect it is similar to our interest in what they are like and what that time of decision was like when Satan rebelled.

Heb. 1.14 "ministering spirits sent forth to minister to those who shall be the heirs of salvation," shows clearly that the angels minister to the believer in some manner thus it shouldn't surprise us that they are witnesses of church/believer activities.

And then there is a further question. Why did Paul use the term "elect" in relation to angels? Are angels elected as humans are elected? If so are they also predestined etc.? If they were elect, were the fallen angels not elect? Wow, look at all the false doctrines we could build on this one verse if we determined to do so.

No, I don't think that they are predestined, but Paul is clear that they are elect - just what that means we need to consider further.

The term elect appears as elect, but also is translated "chosen," thus indicating that the angels were chosen in some manner or some of the angels were chosen. It is the same term that is used of believers being elect.

The thought crossed my mind that this might relate to the arch angels as opposed to all angels. They are a special level of angels and would have been chosen to that level - logically speaking in my mind. Young translated the terms "choice messengers." This would allow nicely for my thinking.

There is also another possibility. Many believe that the angels that chose to serve God were somewhere before time sealed or guaranteed in their "GOOD" decision - thus prohibiting them from falling at a later time. This is a possibility, though I don't hold to this thought, nor is there any passage I know of that indicates it. If this is true, one might suggest that this was a choosing or election of some sort.

Burkitt suggests one final possible interpretation to the idea of elect. He mentions that these "elect angels" may be a group of angels selected or chosen by the Lord Himself out of all the angelic host to assist Him in his Headship over the church. These angels may be chosen to minister exclusively to the believers in this age, while other angels were to serve in other capacities in God's overall plan of the ages.

Some miscellaneous texts relating to angels that might be of use. Luke 9.26 mentions His holy angels. Jude 1.6 mentions those angels that fell, which automatically creates a class that did not fall. II Peter 2.4 also mentions the fallen angels. Paul relates again the relationship that exists between angels and man I Cor. 4.9; I Cor. 11.10

Now to the final thought of the verse.

NO FAVORITISM:

Not based on like or dislike.

Not based on rich or poor.

Not based on preacher or non-preacher.

Not based on good looking or bad looking.

Not based on doctrine or bad doctrine - well maybe there is one basis for making exceptions!

This seems to relate to how the congregation treats the elders since elders are the specific context.

We might apply this to relate to not upholding the teaching elder over and above other elders. It might apply to believing one elder over another, or for that matter believing an elder over a member of the congregation - well even vice versa.

I believe that the writer of Hebrews sums up the relationship quite well when he says in 13.7 "Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of [their] conversation." And then in verse seventeen he continues "Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your

souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that [is] unprofitable for you."

I do not know what all is involved with "must give account" but I trust that I have followed and remembered those elders that God has placed me under over the years - that they might give good report to the Lord with joy!

One further comment from the Hebrews text - the congregation is to submit to the elder. On one of the boards I visit often the men have been discussing church government as I have been presenting it in this study. One of the points they have brought forth is this thought of submission to the rule - or as we have seen - leadership of the elders. If this does not happen, then the system God set up won't function - this may be why we have so many systems. People do not want to submit so they devise other systems so they don't have to submit.

If God has set these men in office then the congregation is obligated to submit to their leadership. No choice - unless the elders are in sin or going a completely different direction than the congregation has set.

In our society each person is an island unto themselves and submits to no one! We were at a restaurant in line waiting. The line was in a hallway wide enough for people to pass and have room between. I was at one side. A young employee of the establishment who seemingly owned the center of the hallway came briskly through and hit my arm because I was in her space.

Congregations must learn they are a body, not individuals, for the church to function correctly.

CHAPTER 25

I interviewed some folks for a job at my place of employment. There were two that caught my interest. One was a middle-aged man that was quite overweight and he had a short pony tail. The other was a young college-aged girl. Both seemed to be interested in the job, both seemed to be qualified, and both seemed to desire to work.

I opted for the young woman for no particular reason other than the last young woman that we had was an excellent employee.

The first weeks were great - she was truly energetic and quick in her work, she was easy to work with, she was a hard worker. This however changed rather quickly. She became lazy, she became quite irregular in her attendance and in general became a very poor employee.

Moral of the story? In the modern work place in America you can't select your workers as we should do in the church.

Not only that, we in America shouldn't be choosing our leaders as we choose employees at work.

Paul tells Timothy to lay hands suddenly on no man. Had I been able to observe this young woman in her previous job or possibly in her home life, I most likely would have seen signs of her inappropriateness for the job at work.

As we work in the church, we will be able to tell what type of men we are working with. It may take some time, but our lives become evident to one another, and it is on this reality that we should base our leadership decisions.

In our previous context we studied how the elders were to be treated, now we will look at the basis for Timothy's choosing of elders.

We will be looking at YOU - BE PURE in verse twenty-two, YOU - BE HEALTHY in verse twenty-three, and YOU - CHOOSE CAREFULLY in verses twenty-four and twenty-five - you meaning Timothy.

Verse 22 Lay hands suddenly on no man, neither be partaker of other men's sins: keep thyself pure.

Some in the past have suggested the laying on of hands related to laying hands on the sick, however this is a specific context of church leadership and to insert healing into this passage seems very poor interpretation.

Let's consider the phrase "keep thyself pure." in relation to the believers life. What principles might you come up with to put the phrase into action?

- a. Keep - something that I consciously do for myself. It will take commitment on my own part.
- b. Thyself - you are your responsibility. You needn't worry about others, but only yourself. That should make our job much smaller.
- c. Pure - holy, set apart, without sin, etc. are all thoughts that run through our minds.
- d. This is something that we should do for ourselves as well as for our God and Saviour!

The first phrase is how you avoid the following item of trouble.

Lay hands suddenly does not mean ordination as we know it today, though that may well be an application to the thought of giving church approval to a man too quickly.

I suspect in my own mind that the two phrases concerning hands and sin were linked together in Paul's mind, but there is application for both in our own day. We ought not approve of men, be they pastors, elders, or deacons too quickly. We need to know these men well.

The second thought is that if you do approve quickly you share in any wrongdoing they are able to unleash on the church.

The application of this might run along the lines of don't be related close enough to anyone that you become entwined in the sin that is in their life. Partake is a Greek word that is closely related to the word translated fellowship. Don't be in fellowship with another man's sin.

We are to remain free of sin and we don't need to join in the sin of other men, be it directly or indirectly by giving our approval to them. We can get into enough sin on our own.

II John 11 gives a similar admonition in relation to false teaching "for he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds."

I would like to speak of ordination as we have it today. The usual is a man calling pastors from surrounding churches to grill him mercilessly on his doctrine in the afternoon to see if he is qualified and then have an ordination service that evening.

The ordination is set and plans are made for it even before the man has met to see if he is qualified. There just has to be something wrong with that.

Let's turn to Acts 13:1-3 for a moment. "Now there were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers; as Barnabas, and Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, which had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. 2 As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. 3 And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid [their] hands on

them, they sent [them] away"

We won't belabor this passage, but note that the Holy Spirit was definitely involved in this process of approving, while also prayer and fasting were involved. This wasn't the yearly meeting when they had to appoint a few warm bodies to the church board, this was a setting aside and sending of men that the Holy Spirit had set forward within the church to do a job.

Also we see in I Tim 3:10 "And let these also first be proved; then let them use the office of a deacon, being [found] blameless."

This verse mentions the thought of proving elders. It would seem that as the church elders see a person that God is working with, they will help in any way that they can to assist him in his growth and knowledge of the Word. Then when the man is ready, kick him out to the mission field or whatever the Lord should lead him into.

He is approved, ordained, whatever you want to call it because you know him to be the man that you would be proud to send out into the Lord's work.

It is the local church that ordains. It is the local eldership that ordains, not the pastors of other churches. I am not opposed to having a couple pastors in for the final steps for assistance, but the approval should come from the local church and only the local church can really know the man.

Paul mentions that if you lay hands on someone and he has sin problems then you will be a part of that sin. This is when he goes out into other churches to minister you will have been part of the problem that he causes if you give the okay before you know him to be okay.

We spent nine months in a church as interim pastor and I don't really think that those people knew enough about me to say I was okay to send out. They knew of my public ministry, but very little of our private life and life away from their town.

There are some groups that actually attempt to follow ordained men through their ministries to be sure they continue on in the correct path. If for some reason the man steps out of what is wholesome, those that ordained him will call for him to give up his ordination papers. This is a good practice.

Within the local church setup Paul seems to be setting forth, it would be the elders removing an erring elder from office.

Before moving on I would like to consider the thought of Holiness for a moment.

Outwardly we can put on the look of holiness, but underneath is the condition that is in view. What God sees, determines if we are holy or not. Tricking those around us may get us through life feeling good about ourselves, but how good are we going to feel when the Lord lays all our

secret sin bare for all to see?

I am a firm believer that the tears that won't be in heaven are those that will be shed at the judgment seat of the Lamb. I think many believers will cry out about all that they did not do, and all that they did do that was sin.

Holy is a state of mind as well as a state of life. It is keeping yourself from sin, from sinful ways, and from sinful thought. It is setting yourself aside totally for God's use and pleasure.

The term translated "holy" is almost always the same term. The word is used of God, the term is used of the Holy Spirit, and that should tell us a little bit about the word itself. I doesn't indicate that we can be kind of holy, nor does it indicate that we can be part time holy!

Holy is the Lord and holy should his people be. I Peter 1.16 mentions "Be ye holy ; for I am holy." If we are to be Holy as God is Holy, we ought to be FULL TIMERS IN THE HOLY CAMP! No other option is given.

This is why Christians ought to feel terrible about the lack of holiness. They should realize the hurt that it causes their Father when they walk with the Lord of this world rather than Him.

II. YOU - BE HEALTHY

Verse 23 Drink no longer water, but use a little wine for thy stomach's sake and thine often infirmities.

What can we learn about Paul's gift of healing in this verse? (In Acts Paul healed people and in Ephesus they carried handkerchiefs that he had touched out into other areas and people were healed. Acts 19:11-12)

Evidently the gift of healing that Paul had in Ephesus earlier was no longer operational when he was writing to Timothy. This is one of the best indicators that the gift of healing is not for today as some believe.

Not only could Paul not heal Timothy, he could not heal himself (thorn in the flesh) nor could he heal Trophimus. (II Tim. 4.20 Erastus abode at Corinth: but Trophimus have I left at Miletum sick).

This seems to be a parenthetical verse stuck in to give advice to Timothy. However it may not be - we will consider this in a moment.

Wine was used for medicinal purposes in Paul's day.

Today we spell relief R O L A I D S!

There is no need for me to take wine for my stomach's sake, indeed it would be very inappropriate to do so in our day when there are medicines that will do better.

It crossed my mind when going over this passage, that Paul may have been addressing a problem in Timothy's life. I would never be dogmatic, but since the previous verse mentions sin, and the following verses are concerned with sin, that this verse might also relate to wrongdoing on Timothy's part.

Since we all know the water was not good in those days - in fact still isn't in much of that area of the world. Thus, the common drink for liquid was wine. Now, for Paul to tell Timothy to no longer drink water but to drink wine, makes me wonder if Timothy was being abstinent about drinking wine to gain liquid for his body's need.

As I read some commentaries, I found that this was the thought others have seen in the passage.

There is another truth to be gleaned from this text other than what we have seen. Paul suggests an alternative to drinking dirty water - thus there is a valid point: Take care of your health. If there is an alternative that is healthier then it is not wrong to take it as long as Scripture doesn't forbid it and gain better health.

Matt. 10.23 backs up this thought. "But when they persecute you in this city, flee ye into another: for verily I say unto you, Ye shall not have gone over the cities of Israel, till the Son of man be come." It isn't wrong to leave a dangerous situation for a safer situation.

III. YOU - CHOOSE CAREFULLY

Verses 24-25 Some men's sins are open beforehand, going before to judgment; and some [men] they follow after. Likewise also the good works [of some] are manifest beforehand; and they that are otherwise cannot be hid.

These verses seem to be linked to the thought of laying on of hands quickly.

Sin and good works can come before or after getting to know a person.

If sin appears while you are observing the man then the church should judge him according to church discipline. That sort of man has no business in church leadership.

Barnes mentions of this judgment: "Their character is well understood. There is no need of waiting for the day of judgment to know what they are. Their deeds so precede their own appearance at the judgment-bar, that the record and the verdict can be made up before they arrive there, and there will be scarcely need even of the formality of a trial. The meaning here is, that there could be no doubt about the character of such men, and Timothy should not be accessory to their being introduced into the office of the ministry. "

In others the sin will follow at a later time after you have given your approval.

This seems to be an encouragement to be very careful in okaying men for the ministry.

The good works are usually up front and never hidden so you can usually view their works and know the type of person that they are.

The thought may be here that some sins are just outward and they will be easy to view. Other sin is inward, such as lust, and that sin can go unnoticed for some time before it becomes known and outward.

Num. 32:23 states, "...be sure your sin will find you out."

Another truth that comes forth is that good works do not go unnoticed.

It was once said of a man, "He always gave freely the milk of kindness but always managed to rattle the bottles."

You don't have to rattle the bottles to be noticed, just do the good works and people will notice.

I would like to finish this study with three illustrations of men that were less than upright and pure. These three men were leaders in their own right within fundamental Christianity in the early 1990's. All three had been ordained by various churches and were currently in ministries. These men were all involved in the ministry of training young men and women for the ministry, and all were active in local churches in a teaching/preaching ministry.

One must wonder about other areas of their lives if they so blatantly disregarded right living in this area.

The first man had written a book which was being published by the company I worked for. I picked up a copy as I was making my rounds and read the forward. Within the forward he mentioned that he had picked up much of the information over the years and that he did not know where all of it came from. He apologized for not giving credit to those he had taken from. This man was pastor of one of the largest fundamental churches in the Midwest, yet he had been teaching other men's materials as his own for years and now was publishing some of it without giving credit - that to most is theft.

The second man was one of my teachers in graduate school. He had given extensive notes to the class and I had been quoting him in my theology. While writing I always attempt to give proper credit for quotes. When I decided to publish the work, I was writing all of the authors and publishers to gain permission to quote.

I wrote to my former professor and asked if it would be okay to use a few quotes from his notes

and listed the items quoted.

His reply totally shocked me. He told me that most of his notes were from other men and asked that I not use the quotes. This from a pastor and leader in one of our more conservative fundamental movements.

The third man was president of a Bible college. He had been asked to give some seminars in the school where I taught. The man was well known for his seminars in the Midwest and had presented them many times around the country.

It was the practice of the school to tape all messages so that students could take copies for future reference or send them to family and friends.

Faith was in the office duplicating some of his messages when he walked in. He became very concerned when he found out that we were making copies of the message tapes.

He finally admitted to Faith that the information he had been sharing as his own great wisdom was in fact gleaned from the ministries of other men. He asked that the tapes not leave campus.

I trust that as you walk life's pathways, that you make a more pointed attempt to keep yourself holier, than these men did.

Outwardly these men were considered Godly men yet in their secret world they were ungodly.

They ought not have been in positions of leadership! Someone laid hands on too quickly.

CHAPTER 26

SERVICE WITH A SMILE

Our text mentions some that were under a yoke. The yoke has been a common tool for controlling work animals for many centuries.

Encyclopedia Britannica (CDROM version) mentions: "wooden bar or frame used to join draft animals at the heads or necks so that they pull together."

"Control of a team of yoked beasts was difficult. Furthermore, ancient yokes pressed against a hard-pulling animal's windpipe, choking it. The invention of the horse collar solved this problem and led to the replacement of oxen by horses. In some areas of the world, however, oxen still are yoked together much as they were in medieval Europe."

Frontier School of the Bible for many years used the yoke as a symbol for the school. Not only did it depict the setting of the school, in ranch country, but it also symbolized the thought of being in a yoke with God in living our Christian lives.

We will be looking at BEING A WORKING SERVANT in verse one and BEING A LOVING SERVANT in verse two.

Lev. 26.13 pictures what we see in our text. "I am the Lord your God, which brought you forth out of the land of Egypt, that ye should not be their bondmen; and I have broken the bands of your yoke, and made you go upright." The Israelites were in servitude for many years - now God had freed them.

I. BE A WORKING SERVANT

Verse 1. Let as many servants as are under the yoke count their own masters worthy of all honour, that the name of God and [his] doctrine be not blasphemed.

The first point to be made is that this passage is not to be used to validate slavery, nor is it to be used to validate abolition of slavery. The verse is simply teaching how to act if you are a slave. It assumes that some are slaves - since Paul knew there were slaves in the society around him, he desires to give them teaching on how they should behave as Christians.

The Roman empire sported more than sixty million slaves, so if anyone reading Paul's letter had thought he was attempting to abolish slavery they are very mistaken - if Paul wanted to preach slavery was wrong he would have died much sooner than he did. The Roman empire would not have stood for that sort of language very long. Furthermore God was not leading Paul in making a statement for or against slavery - only for servants living honorably.

Some suggest that close to half the Roman Empire were slaves of one sort or another. Many were removed from their countries to Rome and other centers of control to serve the empire. Others were just enslaved within their own country.

Stedman points out an important fact: "But the truth is that, though Scripture does not denounce slavery, neither does it approve of it. There is no defense of slavery in Scripture; there is no attempt made to perpetuate it in any degree. In fact, although there were sixty million slaves in the Roman Empire at the time this letter was written, by the end of the second century slavery had widely disappeared, largely because of the impact of Christian teaching and influence of Christians throughout the Empire."

He goes on to say "The process was never to be one of armed revolt, even of strikes or boycotts or riots. Rather, it was by obedience to words such as these in Paul's letter to Timothy, where it was laid upon both Christian slaves and Christian masters to look at each other in a different way and to treat each other with honor and respect even though the institution of slavery continued. Slaves were to look to God to change the practice." I might add, as did the Israelites

There are a couple of very prominent Old Testament accounts that show again that God wants us to live within the status that we find ourselves in. Joseph was sold into slavery, and served well all those years.

Daniel and thousands of others were taken into captivity by the Babylonians. Daniel also served his captures well and was rewarded for his good service.

The obvious application would be to the employees of our day - those that feel that they are treated as slaves - which is probably most of us! JOKE! We as employees are destined to have opportunity to treat our employers correctly or incorrectly - this is one of the passages that can give us guidance.

GIVE YOUR EMPLOYER ALL HONOR. Now, that doesn't mean only when you are one on one with them in their office, IT IS WHEN YOU ARE HAVING COFFEE AND EVERYONE IN THE BREAK ROOM IS DISHING HIM DIRT - give them honor ALL the time.

Why? The verse is very clear - so that God's teaching or doctrine is not blasphemed.

This word translated "honor" is the same term we studied in chapter five where we are told to honor the elder that ruleth well. US POOR SLAVES HAVE TO HONOR EVERYONE AND NOBODY GIVES A HOOT ABOUT US!!!!!! LARGE SMILEY FACE IMPLIED! God asks that we honor! This we should do.

In the area of how to honor, you might give due consideration to how you speak to them, how you react to them, how you talk behind their back about them, and how well you perform in the work place for them.

Just what Paul had in mind when he mentioned the doctrine of God being blasphemed would be of great interest to me. I have to think it related to the possibility of witnessing to the master. If we are slothful workers, or if we have an attitude toward them, I am sure that they will feel our incorrect feelings and relate it directly to how they feel toward our belief system. If they see that you are a goof off, they will wonder what moral/ethical teaching there can be within your belief system.

Sad to say, this is a passage that needs to be adopted by many believers. Many I see today are just like the lost when it comes to work ethic and attitude.

We might consider the reverse of blaspheme. If we are to work so that the name of God and His doctrine is not blasphemed, then we should be working so that they are being glorified!

WOW! When you go to work, you go in such a manner that you are attempting to glorify God! No, it isn't easy, but that should be our attitude!

This attitude basically goes back to love thy neighbor - put them before yourself. In the rights movements of the 70's there was total concentration on the individual and what they wanted - at all cost - at anyone else's cost.

One might want to relate this passage to the union movement in our country as well. I will allow you to work through that one on your own. Concentrate on how you can honor someone when you are demanding that they give of their material gain for your benefit. You might add a side light of allegiance - who are you following when called on to strike - the union or Christ. How do you honor the employer if you are acting against his desire and betterment?

Let's add just a little emphasis to what we have said. One of the usages Thayer puts to this Greek word translated slave is "devoted to another to the disregard of one's own interests." Now, put a little personal application to that as you go to work tomorrow!

Another little emphasis: The term translated master is the word that our English word despot comes from. A despot is a tyrant - a dictator. GIVE HONOR EVEN IF THEY ARE A TOTALLY LOUSY BOSS might well be the thought of the text!

Give the honor due them, so that God's NAME AND DOCTRINE will not be spoken of in a demeaning manner.

If you would like to read a clear view of how God feels about His good name, read Ezek. 20 and notice how many times He speaks of His name and His not wanting it to be polluted.

II. BE A LOVING SERVANT

2 And they that have believing masters, let them not despise [them], because they are brethren;

but rather do [them] service, because they are faithful and beloved, partakers of the benefit. These things teach and exhort.

Oh wow, Paul had to add a little salt to the wounds. Not only do we have to be nice to our lost masters, but we have to be nice to the ones we go to church with too!

Notice that there are BELIEVERS which had slaves in Bible times. This is made quite clear in the book of Philemon as well. Again we see that Paul is not preaching against slavery - only giving guidelines for believers as they continue on in their present situation.

Now, to understand this passage, we might try to place ourselves into this situation. Being a slave, you know your master (owner) is a Christian. It would be very easy to fall into the trap of thinking that they should free you just because he is a believer. Despise is a good word to describe the feeling that would arise if you weren't set free.

The word translated despise is used in Matt. 6.24 and depicts hate. "No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon."

A possible translation of the word would be "disesteem" or the opposite of esteem.

This is not to say that the believing slave owner should free his slaves, nor is it to say that they should keep their slaves. I am told that during our countries early days many believers kept slaves knowing that their lot would be much worse if they were owned by nonbeliever.

It is to say that the slave should keep a proper attitude. On the other hand the reason to give them a proper attitude is because they are on the same level spiritually as the owner. Both slave and master are born again, both slave and master are bound for eternity, both slave and master are indwelt by Almighty God. This common bond should make it easier to keep proper attitudes - from both sides.

Paul adds "these things teach and exhort." It must be that the church at Ephesus had some slaves with an attitude, and possibly some owners that were not handling their own business properly. Paul wants the church to encourage the proper attitude. In our world of employee/employer, we ought also to teach these things - that we keep our attitudes straight and proper and give honor to the higher up.

The term master here is the same word as is used in verse one - a tyrant.

"Do them service" is of interest. Service, is actually the term used of a slave - be in bondage to the master that is a believer. Not only are you owned, but you are to live your life as if you are owned.

There is a double benefit to this. If a slave is a good worker with a pleasant attitude, his

master/employer will be very pleased with the slave - this often relates to good being aimed toward the slave/employee.

The last part of the verse seems to uplift the believing master. Paul via the Holy Spirit says of them, "they are faithful and beloved," - faithful would be the Master's response to God while it seems to me that beloved would be God's response to the master.

There is some discussion as to what the benefit relates to. Is it the benefits of salvation, or is it the benefit of the servant doing well?

Barnes held that it was benefit of salvation. "That is, the benefit which the gospel imparts--for so the connection requires us to understand it. It cannot mean, as many have supposed, that they were "partakers of the benefit of the labours of the servant," or enjoyed the fruits of their labours,--for how could this be a reason for their treating them with the more respect? But the true reason assigned is, that the master had been, by the grace of God, permitted to participate in the same benefits of salvation as the servant; he had received, like him, the pardon of sin, and he was to be regarded as a fellow-heir of the grace of life"

Wesley and Burkitt also viewed it as relating to salvation.

Adam Clarke on the other hand held that it was not the Gospel. "Joint partakers of the benefit. This is generally understood as referring to the master's participation in the services of his slaves. Because those who are partakers of the benefit of your services are faithful and beloved; or it may apply to the servants who are partakers of many benefits from their Christian masters."

I would follow Barne's thought I think specifically, however all are true by application.

In over thirty years of working I have never asked for a raise, or change in working conditions. God has always supplied in all areas of our life. I have been with employers that have been able to bless in a material way - and have, and I have been with employers that have not been able to bless. When material needs were needed, the Lord either moved the employers to raise the level of pay or God just did it on His own. Our responsibility is to treat our masters/employers correctly and allow God to care for the rest.

I worked with two different men that found their businesses in decline. As things deteriorated, I worked with them as best I could and as long as I could to work less hours to cut overhead.

There are two applications I would like to make.

1. The joy that ought to arise from having a Christian employer. I have had both and find working for a believer is very nice. The atmosphere of the work place is much less tense. You don't have to worry about off colored conversations and quite often you don't have to worry about being asked to do things that are against your belief.

2. The joy of an employer over having believers working for them. I worked for two Jewish men in Denver for a number of years. They went out of their way to hire believers. I'd guess that most of the time, there was at least 80% of the work force that was Christians.

The owners found the work ethic of the Christian was one that was profitable and less cumbersome to them.

I trust that we as employees and employers are living this passage each and every day.

I would like to finish these points of application with a comment by Ray Stedman that reflects how we should live. "Everything is going to rest upon how you feel about them. If you think they are ding-a-lings who are unworthy of your respect, then no matter how polite you may be when they are watching, your attitude toward them will be one of bitterness and resentment; you will be constantly trying to find ways to goof off and justify it, because of their attitude toward you. But Scripture says, "regard them as worthy of respect" -- no matter what they are like, no matter how they treat you. Why? Because they are made in the image of God. Just like you, when God's grace touches them, they are capable of reflecting his glory and beauty; they are the potential bearers of God himself, so they are to be treated with respect."

I mentioned in the beginning that the yoke tends to also symbolize our relationship to God. I would like to share just one man's walk in the yoke of the Lord.

John Wesley

He preached three messages a day average for over fifty-four years (about 44,000 sermons) while traveling 200,000 miles by horseback and carriage.

He did a four-volume commentary on the Bible, a dictionary, a large work on church history plus some grammars and medical books. Then there were the books on church music, his seven volumes of sermons and other misc. papers. Well then there was the fifty volume Christian Library that he edited.

He worked from 4:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. and broke only for meals. He was quoted during this time as saying "I have more hours of private retirement than any man in England."

At 83 he was upset with himself for not being able to write more than 15 hours a day without his eyes bothering him. At 86 he was disappointed in himself because he could only preach twice a day. He was traveling up to fifty miles a day to preach all over England and Wales.

(Here are some other passages that speak to the slave/master relationship for the Christian for further study. Rom. 12.2; I Cor. 7.21-24; Eph. 6.5-9; Col. 3.22-41; Titus 2.9; Philemon 8-21; I Pet 2.18.)

If you have the attitude that all you do is to assist God in the yoke with Him, then your attitude to your employer or employee will be proper.

If on the other hand you feel trapped in a yoke - having to serve with God, then your attitude will stink in every area.

God sent His Son to die for us. He owns us. We were bought with a price. Indeed, this passage relates directly to our relationship to God. We are slaves.

May we live like it.

CHAPTER 27

This passage speaks to one of the taboos of our society, that of separation. I offer the following account as an example of "extreme separation" which I would totally reject, but it will get our minds thinking in the right direction.

I was walking across a bridge one day, and I saw a man standing on the edge, about to jump off. So I ran over and said, 'Stop! Don't do it!'

He said, 'Why shouldn't I?'

I said, 'Well, there's so much to live for.'

He said, 'Like what?'

I said, 'Well, are you religious or atheist?'

He said, 'Religious.'

I said, 'Me too! Are you Christian or Buddhist?'

He said, 'Christian.'

I said, 'Me too! Are you Catholic or Protestant?'

He said, 'Protestant.'

I said, 'Me too! Are you Episcopalian or Baptist?'

He said, 'Baptist!'

I said, 'Me too! Are you Baptist Church of God or Baptist Church of the Lord?'

He said, 'Baptist Church of God!'

I said, 'Me too! Are you original Baptist Church of God, or are you Reformed Baptist Church of God?'

He said, 'Reformed Baptist Church of God!'

I said, 'Me too! Are you Reformed Baptist Church of God, reformation of 1879, or Reformed Baptist Church of God, reformation of 1915?'

He said, 'Reformed Baptist Church of God, reformation of 1915!'

I said, 'Die, heretic!', and I pushed him off.

We will see in our study that withdrawal or retreat is a valid option to the believer when it comes to Christian living. Some call this separation - a not very popular word in our day within the church.

We want to look at THE SYMPTOM OF THE DISEASE in verse three, THE CAUSE OF THE DISEASE in verse four and 5a, and THE TREATMENT OF THE DISEASE in verse 5b.

I. THE SYMPTOM OF THE DISEASE

3 If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, [even] the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness;

Now, we have a tongue lashing for anyone that would teach other than what Paul has laid out in the first two verses. In short, if someone comes telling you that you should not honor your master/employer, if someone comes telling you that you should not do a good days work for your master/employer, if someone comes telling you that you should not honor your master/employer, THEN that person is a proud person that knows nothing - words of Paul not of me!

We might take a moment and wonder who would come telling you to do these evil things. Can you think of anyone, or any group?

Consent has the idea of rejecting what is offered. Now, If someone were to offer me a piece of chocolate cake with fudge frosting, and I say no, I consent not to the cake - NOW don't ever think that situation will ever happen - JUST an illustration.

There is an application here to other areas of life. The principle here is someone that is rejecting proper doctrine. Verse five says to withdraw from these. If you have taught or shared good doctrine and it has been rejected it is Biblical to withdraw. Some would say that you are running from a fight - not so - withdrawal is an effective life principle in this situation.

As one that frequents the Bible boards on the internet, I often get sidewise with all the wise folks that know I am totally ignorant of the Word - they know their position is correct because it is theirs - right? I attempt to share the Word and my thoughts on it, and if they reject it, then I try to let it go. Those few times that I have attempted to convince, the attempt has been met with fierce opposition. This opposition is why I believe Paul counsels to withdraw - it relates to what he says of these folks - proud.

There are three areas of truth mentioned. We have Paul's teaching, the teachings of Christ and any doctrine which is according to godliness.

Doctrine which is according to godliness would include all the writings and teachings of the church's leadership over the centuries. Anything that concurs with the Word and leads toward godliness.

I suspect this passage is the basis for some of the overemphasis on the "tradition" of the church that the Roman church and the Orthodox church teach. I would agree that writers of the past are important, but they are not equivalent with Scripture. If indeed it is consistent with Scripture it will lead to godliness, but it is not Scripture nor equal to it.

II. THE CAUSE OF THE DISEASE

4 He is proud, knowing nothing, but dotting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings,

Pride in that he knows better how to deal with masters/employers than God.

Knowing nothing seems to be rather self-explanatory. Reject truth and you know nothing - wow that has application in our society today! Those that would make us think they know truth in fact know nothing.

Dotting is listed as "to be taken with such an interest in a thing as amounts to a disease, to have a morbid fondness for" by Thayer. Actually the Greek term used here is the predecessor of our term nausea. The New International Version translates it this way - "has an unhealthy interest in." You may have heard the term in-nausium. That fits well.

This passage sums up the result of many of the Bible related boards on the internet. The result of those that reject truth cause all these things - indeed the result is often very distasteful.

The sad part is that they have rejected the truth, and continue to do so when someone presents it further. There have been times when I have asked a number of questions that show up their falsehood and no answer is forthcoming - only strife and railings. If you can't beat them - call them names seems to be their watch-word.

Robertson ties all these terms together and mentions they are "all products of an ignorant and conceited mind." I think that about sums it all up.

5 Perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness: from such withdraw thyself.

Perverse disputings is the Greek term from which our word diatribe comes from. Diatribe means "biting or abusive speech or writing" (from © 1995 Zane Publishing, Inc. The Merriam-Webster Dictionary © 1994 by Merriam-Webster, Incorporated). Notice that this can mean speech OR writing. If you run into this type of writing, be sure to give it the same action as speech. Withdraw

from it - or in current language - put it in the circular file.

These are corrupt minds - destitute of truth! Not the kind of thing you as a believer should be filling your mind with - don't give it a chance to take up your time.

This term "corrupt" is a perfect tense which would indicate that the corruptness is complete and something that occurred in the past - something that is done - which I might add, probably won't be changed - indeed the tense has the thought of once and for all. Application - don't bother taking your time and effort to change what will not change.

The term "destitute" is also a perfect tense - truth is not something that is going to come into this mind, nor will it change this mind.

The thought of gain is of interest. Just what type of gain is being mentioned in this context. Is it material gain, is it moral gain, or is it academic gain? Since material items are not involved, it clearly relates not to material or monetary gain. Moral gain has some possibility in the context, but academic gain seems to fit the context best.

The American Standard Version mentions it this way "supposing that godliness is a way of gain."

The New International Version ties gain to monetary value "who think that godliness is a means to financial gain."

Young translates it this way "supposing the piety to be gain;" This would tie it to moral change to be gained. Moral change is gain but this seems to be a false piety brought about by their disputings etc. and this certainly is not gain, nor true moral change.

III. THE TREATMENT OF DISEASE

"...from such withdraw thyself."

The truth to be found here is to withdraw from this type of person - back away, loose them!

I am sad to say this but this is the state that many Bible college students pass through. Most do pass through but it is a hard hard time spiritually and mentally. They question everything and everyone. They disagree and dispute everything - not that we aren't to question what we are taught, but they question way past this - they find little truth, they don't have the truth, they can't function properly spiritually, they become proud, they find envy, they cause strife, and they argue constantly. A phase of growth to be passed through. Only God brings them through it!

To a very real point a pastor has the responsibility to maintain his distance from these people in the community and also has a responsibility to warn his flock of the same.

It seems to me that verse one and two are directly connected to verse three and verse six through five is a side warning about anyone trying to detract from Paul's teaching.

The term is withdraw. This is not a complicated word to understand, yet so many Christians today equate it with incorrect behavior, yet Paul tells us to withdraw from people Christians that sin.

This phrase is not in all translations, but it certainly is not against the norm of Scripture. Rom. 16.17 is a very similar passage. "Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them."

I would like to just recap some criteria for separation within the Christian life.

FALSE DOCTRINE:

1. Anyone that teaches other than the doctrine of Paul, and by application other writers of Scripture.
2. Anyone that believes other than the teachings of Christ.
3. Anyone that believes doctrine that is other than teaching that brings Godliness.

Titus 3.10 also mentions the heretic "A man that is an heretic after the first and second admonition reject;"

Many believers in our area years ago were listening to the local Christian radio station. Many praised the station as their resource for their spiritual life, yet almost every time I tuned in, I would hear blatant false teaching. These folks were flooding their minds with things that were openly against Scripture.

FALSE PRACTICE:

4. Anyone that occupies themselves with doting of questions and strife of word.
5. Anyone that produces envy, strife, or railings of evil surmisings.
6. Anyone that is destructive of truth.

FALSE GODLINESS:

7. Anyone that believes that gain is Godliness.

Stedman related this in a sermon to those that are spiritual or are members of churches for the social and business gain that it provides.

My brother before he was saved joined a mainline denominational church in our hometown and I asked him why. His reply was "Well that is were most of the business people go to church and I thought it would be good for the business." Had nothing to do with belief, truth or God.

FALSE MORALS:

8. Immorality in I Corinthians five was grounds for separating a person from the assembly. Verse eleven "But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat."

FALSE LIVING:

9. Matthew 18 gives the sequence to be followed to gain reconciliation between believers. If a person refuses to resolve the conflict then separation is the end.

10. II Thess. 3.6 admonishes us to withdraw from any that walketh disorderly. "Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us."

The Christian's testimony is very important, thus withdrawal may be the better option. We need to exhort those living wrongly, but keeping a close association with them will open us to their falsehood as well as improper testimony due to public scrutiny.

I would like to read a quote from a document from church history. It was a question answer format produced by Meno Simons and followers when they attempted to live the admonition of Scripture when they were told to withdraw from wrongdoers.

The document sets forth questions as to how they would implement what they called the ban, or the exclusion of erring believers from the assembly.

" O my sincerely beloved brethren, let us sincerely pray for understanding and wisdom that all misunderstanding, error, jealousy, offense, division, and untimely reports may be utterly exterminated, root and branch; that a wholesome understanding, doctrine, friendship, love, edification, and a sound judgment may get under, way and prevail. Let everyone look with pure eyes and impartial hearts to the example to which Christ points, and to the wholesome, natural meaning of the holy apostles, and let true, Christian love take precedence; and everyone will know, by the grace of God, how he should act and proceed concerning this matter."

We are to withdraw, but we are to do it in love and with the thought of restoration to the assembly of the one banned.

If the church had been practicing this teaching the church would not have the problems it has

today. There would not be openly sinning believers in the church, there would not be unsaved people in the church and Christ would indeed have a holy church rather than what exists today.

CHAPTER 28

Just prior to the winning of the 300 million plus lottery in May of 2000 I heard a radio evangelist that was really condemning people for their involvement in the lottery.

Some of his comments went along the line of the following:

I don't know why all those people spend all that money on something that they won't win. Only one or two people can possibly win, yet millions of people purchase millions of tickets.

These people are motivated only by one thing - covetousness. That is all it is, plain and simple it is covetousness - their desire for more money. Nothing but Greed. Nothing but desiring something they don't have.

They just want more money to buy more things. They just want more and more.

They desire more and more money. They covet other people's money. They want that free money, they want all those millions so they can spend it on themselves.

Covetousness is wrong, covetousness is not from God, covetousness is of the devil. We should not covet money. We should be satisfied with what God has given us!

Those people that spend money on the lottery are seeking more and more money. Money is nice - in fact I wouldn't mind having some more of it myself! HUMMMMMMM!

I have mentioned prosperity gospel before in these studies. This teaching tells us that if we are not rich we are not really spiritual. This teaching seems to fall into the area of false teaching if I understand this passage correctly. I might add that this passage is one of the plainest and most concise of Paul's teachings. It is really quite plain and it is really quite obvious what he is saying.

We want to look at the GOAL OF LIFE in verse six, the REALITY OF LIFE in verse seven, and the CONTENTMENT OF LIFE in verse eight.

I. GOAL OF LIFE

Verse 6. But godliness with contentment is great gain.

Paul now STRONGLY contrasts the thought of "gain is godliness" in our previous study (false godliness in the case of those rejecting truth) which is error, with "contentment being gain." Interesting contrast - take some time to contemplate this one!

Content to many is having all you want when you want it. This is not the natural Biblical thought of contentment.

The term content is defined by Thayer as "1) a perfect condition of life in which no aid or support is needed 2) sufficiency of the necessities of life 3) a mind contented with its lot"

Content with no aid or support desired. Now that is a good definition of content. Happy as you are with nothing added.

The word Paul uses to convey great gain, is "megas" - MEGA gain if you are content!

Let us consider what are some of the benefits of being content.

1. Peace: Not many believers really have the peace of being content with where they are, with what they have, and with who they are. Many are always stretching for things that they are not and things that they do not have. Peace is being what God has made you and no more. When He leads you to seek further then you should act.

2. Due to peace you may find better health. If you have no peace you will be full of worry and stress. They are finding more and more health problems that are related to stress or the opposite of commitment.

3. You will be a better witness for your Lord. If people see that you are satisfied where you are, and who you are they will know that there is something special in your life - they know they don't have that peace and contentment.

4. You will be happier. Due to the lack of worry and stress you will find you enjoy life more. You most likely will find things to do that bring joy to your life.

II. REALITY OF LIFE

Verse 7 "For we brought nothing into [this] world, [and it is] certain we can carry nothing out."

Job 1.21 is a similar passage. "And said, Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither: the LORD gave, and the LORD hath taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD."

NOW, we have one of the more profound statements of the apostle Paul - no one can argue with this statement - it is near a universal principle. I doubt that anyone would be foolish enough to argue with this statement. It is kind of hard to bring anything with you when you are born for you have nothing that belongs to you!

The next statement is also a universal principle. There is nothing that can be done to change the fact that when you die you can't take anything with you. Oh yes, you can wear a nice suit and all sorts of jewelry, but that is on the old body that is going to rot as will the clothes and jewelry. You aren't there so you don't even take that with you.

Many have attempted to take it with them, but none have been able to. The Pharaohs filled their vaults with treasure and servants, yet rotted in their mummy clothes. I read once of a man that was so in love with his 1931 Chevy that he requested he be buried in it - his relatives did it.

Faith had a rich uncle that always joked that he was taking his money with him - he was going to get an asbestos coffin - not too smart now that we know asbestos can kill you.

The soul/spirit are separated from the body and they can't even take their body with them - nothing at all will accompany us to our time before the Lord. This is why our decision about Christ is so important. If we go before God without the finished work of the Lord Jesus, we will not enjoy our time before God in judgment.

On the other hand if we have accepted the work of Christ we will be clothed by Almighty God Himself and will be given all that we will need.

One must wonder about Paul's recipients. Just who did he have to explain this one to? He must have wondered about some of those he was writing to - REALLY WONDERED! There must have been some that were way over the edge into intellectualism and away from truth and reality.

When my wife and I moved from Wyoming we had a truck full of belongings and the car on a tow dolly. I told her that one of the GREAT joys of death was that you didn't have to take it with you!

Barnes put it well. "Of the truth of what is here said, there can be nothing more obvious. It is apparent to all. We bring no property with us into the world; no clothing, no jewels, no gold; and it is equally clear that we can take nothing with us when we leave the earth. Our coming into the world introduces no additional property to that which the race before possessed, and our going from the world removes none that we may have helped the race to accumulate. This is said by the apostle as an obvious reason why we should be contented if our actual wants are supplied; for this is really all that we need, and all that the world is toiling for."

Ps 49:17 also relates the same truth. "For when he [the rich man] dieth, he shall carry nothing away; his glory shall not descend after him." You can't even take your degrees and social gains with you!

One must consider just how godliness is gain to us today. If you live a godly life, you will most likely be persecuted for it - you will be made fun of, you may be the brunt of jokes, and possibly even open ridicule - so how is godliness gain?

How is Godliness gain?

I have noticed over the years that an honest upright walk before the Lord is often noticed by employers. I have mentioned that I worked for two Jewish men in Denver years ago. They had seen the work and walk of Christians and they often hired them if they were qualified. They

treated us very well, and we seldom had any complaints toward them. Basically we worked in a Christian surrounding. The bosses were working their way to heaven and the rest of us enjoyed the fellowship of believers. The bosses never accepted the Lord to my knowledge, but it was their clear choice to reject Christ - they had many walking examples of the Lord's converting power and were witnessed to by several of the believers.

In our own personal lives we can and will have a much more peaceful existence not only personally, but within our families if we walk with the Lord. As we walk with Him, we naturally come into a closer relationship with Him and that certainly is gain.

We might take a moment and consider contentment and complacency. The two are very close, yet so far apart. Complacency is self-satisfaction or smugness. Contentment is satisfaction - interesting, one is satisfaction and the other is satisfaction in self - NOW that has to tell us something!

Complacency is aside from God, while contentment is with God.

Complacency is sin, while contentment is godly.

Complacency pleases self, while contentment pleases God.

Complacency is derived from the Devil, while contentment is derived from God.

Complacency has no goal, while contentment has a goal.

Complacency is indifference, while contentment is satisfaction.

Complacency is noninvolvement, while contentment is involvement.

Complacency is carnal, while contentment is spiritual.

You can't take it with you is the opposite of you don't have to take it with you, just to give you one more contrast.

III. CONTENTMENT OF LIFE

Verse 8 And having food and raiment let us be therewith content.

Paul had many counterparts in secular life that taught this same simple philosophy of life. That we should be content with that which is necessary. Seneca mentions "No man is born rich; every one that comes into the world is commanded to be content with food and raiment."

This may be why Paul indicated that this is an obvious truth! ("it is certain" vs. 7)

Matt 6:33 was in my Bible reading when I was just starting Bible college and the verse so impacted my life that I have attempted to live by it all my life since. "Seek ye first the kingdom of heaven and all these things will be added unto you." The context was one of the first things that I read - being in debt and having many bills and few things I wanted to know what all these things meant - it was food and covering and little more.

Here Paul reminds the believers of this principle of living - and I might add quite appropriately - slaves be content where you are and be content with what you have. THIS IS WHAT GOD WANTS OF US!

I might draw your attention to the fact that housing is not among those "needs" that are promised in Matthew. Only food and covering. Paul was content to live this life, as we should be.

Clarke indicates that the term translated raiment was general enough to possibly include not only clothes, but housing. He suggests that it means covering which could well indicate a roof or home. Few of the other commentators mentioned this nor did I find indication of it in the Lexicons. If true, certainly a roof is as far as it could be stretched. A roof does not mean four bedrooms and three baths and a three-car garage.

There are some that condemn ministers for working in secular jobs. Beware - this verse does not tell the minister not to work - it says be content with food and raiment. There are pastors that need to work to provide those two items for their families - this is not wrong. Paul himself worked for a living at times. (Acts 20.33,34; 18.1-3) Paul contrasts this concept with those that love the world or material things to the point of leaving the ministry (II Tim 4.10).

One more item from Paul is found in Philippians 4.11 "Not that I speak in respect of want; for I have learned, in whatever state I am, in this to be content." There are two truths to be seen in this passage.

First be content in either state - IT ISN'T WRONG TO BE CONTENT AND RICH though I can't speak to that truth personally. Rich is probably exaggeration - Paul was not rich but at times he evidently had more than he needed.

Secondly, Paul says he "learned" to be content in all states. It is a learned process, thus if you struggle in this area of being content - LEARN IT and don't feel guilty if you struggle while learning.

I have suggested to many gatherings that there are a lot of levels of giving. There is giving a buck a week, there is giving of a tenth, there is giving lots more than a tenth, and there is the giving of the widow in the Gospels - she gave everything she had and trusted the Lord to provide her needs.

I suspect that the widow is not only an example of giving, but of trust and contentment as well.

Giving is an area where many of us are way too complacent - remember - self satisfied.

There are some items I want to make clear.

1. You can be godly and not content. To be godly and content is gain. Quite a difference and the gain proves there is a difference.

2. The reward or gain is being steadfast in what we have, it isn't suffering through hard times - it is being content through hard times.

Barnes relates the thought that food and clothing is only symbolic of other things needed for life. I think he might be correct, but the following paragraph given to most believers today would require all to have three cars, a primary house and a secondary house both of which would be filled with toys beyond number.

"Food and raiment," here, seem to be used to denote supplies for our wants in general. It is not uncommon to denote the whole by a part, and as these are the principal things which we really need, and without which life could not be sustained, the apostle uses the phrase to denote all that is really necessary for us. We cannot suppose that he would forbid a desire of a comfortable habitation, or of the means of knowledge, or of conveniences for worshiping God, etc. The idea is, that having those things which meet the actual necessities of our nature, and save us from distress, we should not strive after "uncertain riches," or make wealth the object of our anxious pursuit."

In light of what I shared in the last study concerning Wesley I was interested in his comments on this passage. They were indeed short and to the point.

His comments on verse seven "Neither can we carry anything out-To what purpose, then, do we heap together so many things? O, give me one thing,-a safe and ready passage to my own country!"

His comments on verse eight "Covering-That is, raiment and an house to cover us. This is all that a Christian needs, and all that his religion allows him to desire."

I trust that you will consider seriously before the Lord just what is that which is NEEDED to sustain your life and live accordingly from this point forward.

I would like to close with a short comment that Wiersbe included in his commentary.

I am reminded of the simple-living Quaker who was watching his new neighbor move in, with all of the furnishings and expensive "toys" that "successful people" collect. The Quaker finally went over to his new neighbor and said, "Neighbor, if ever thou dost need anything, come to see me, and I will tell thee how to get along without it." (THE BIBLE EXPOSITION COMMENTARY; Warren Wiersbe; Victor Books; Wheaton; 1989; p. 235.)

CHAPTER 29

When we were teaching in Wyoming, we were also interim pastor for a while at a little Bible church. The church was in another town about sixty miles from our home. Most Sundays we would drive home or to another town for lunch and enjoy some time alone.

One Sunday one of the couples that we had met but not gotten to know very well invited us to dinner the following Sunday. We accepted and looked forward to the meal and getting to know the folks.

We followed them home from the church. When we drove into the driveway, we were totally shocked by the size of the home. When we walked into the front door, we were even more shocked as the home was much larger than it appeared. We were seated in the informal dining room just off the kitchen. The table and chair set was most beautiful. The room was decorated in the richest of trappings.

We could see the gorgeous formal dining room from where we ate dinner. The living room was yet beyond the formal dining room. After dinner we were given the tour of the basement bedrooms and offices, but did not make it upstairs.

The point being these folks were nothing out of the ordinary in what we had observed of them at the church. Their riches seemingly had no outward effect on them as they related to other people. They were enjoying the riches God had allowed them to acquire but had not allowed the riches to enjoy them.

We will look at the SNARE OF DESIRING RICHES in verse nine, the ERROR OF DESIRING RICHES in verse ten, and the CURE OF DESIRING RICHES in verse eleven.

I. SNARE OF DESIRING RICHES

Verse 9 But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and [into] many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition.

This passage seems to need little explanation. It is negative to the end. Anyone wanting to be rich and acting on that desire, will fall into temptation, snares, lusts and these items will end in destruction and perdition. Not up for light discussion - FACT.

“Snare” is simply the snare used to capture animals or birds. The snare is something which acts totally unexpectedly. The prey is certainly startled and shocked at the snare because they did not know it was there, nor were they expecting it.

The desire for riches will turn around and bite you very hard and very unexpectedly.

The thought of destruction and perdition does not necessarily, but can mean eternal damnation. Personally I would assume that this is speaking of eternal damnation because most true believers would not fall into the downward spiral that is described here, but it certainly is an awesome warning for the believer - don't commit yourself to becoming rich.

Is it wrong to be rich? No, definitely not, but to commit yourself toward that goal is shutting the door to God - remember - you can't serve God and mammon? If you are to be rich, God is fully capable of making you so! You commit to Him and allow Him to do His work.

That really takes the pressure off - we commit our lives to God and allow Him to create what He wants and we don't have to do all the straining and laboring of making something of ourselves.

He can zap us rich if that is what He wants for us or He can lead us into activities which can result in riches - but we needn't seek riches nor strain for them.

When I read this passage I often recall a very good friend from Bible College days. He was called by God to prepare for the mission field. He arrived at the college fully planning to take the Gospel to a particular tribe in South America.

We were able to get to know one another and became good friends. At some point in time he became sidetracked with the thought of going into business to make enough money to get through school and probably help others through school as well.

He ultimately purchased a business so that he could make big bucks. As time went by he dropped out of school because he was spending more and more time at the business. Finally he was totally sidetracked from God's will for his life.

We lost track of one another, and I do not know if he ever got back on track or not. He certainly was well on the way to total destruction spiritually.

II. ERROR OF DESIRING RICHES

Verse 10 For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.

How might we pierce ourselves with riches?

1. Others constantly wanting your money and causing you turmoil. Quite a number of the lottery winners of recent days have been plagued by people wanting them to give them some of their winnings.

2. Taking care of your money. We have known older people that have had to plan their weeks activities around getting to the bank to take care of investments. Others constantly worry about

their investments and whether they are being profitable or whether they are losing money.

3. Worry about their money. Will they have enough to carry them through to their death. Will the stock market fall and leave them in financial trouble.

4. Trying to spend their money. After a point there is nothing to spend money on. You buy all you think you need, and then you have to go looking for things to buy. After a point you have bought so much that you need more room to store all of it.

I am told that Jackie Onassis had large warehouses to store the clothes and shoes that she no longer used.

5. Finding you can't take it with you. What in the world will I do with all of it if I can't take it with me. Who do I like enough to GIVE them all my money.

6. Worry about running out of money. Will all these millions be gone some day. Will I spend too much so that when I get old there won't be any left for taking care of me?

7. Taking care of what you buy. Even in our little two bedroom house and small garage we have so much stuff that requires maintenance that I find I spend more and more time just taking care of what we have assembled. Of course if you have millions you could hire it done, but then calling repairmen would probably become a problem at some point in time.

8. Protecting your money and purchases. Where do I keep it? Where will it be safe? Will the bank really be a good place to keep it?

9. And last but not least how can I make all those payments to Uncle Sam, after all, we have to get that forty-five million in so they can advertize the new dollar coin!

I am sure if I were rich I would be able to find more ways in which I was piercing myself, but this will have to do from my present limited perspective.

III. CURE OF DESIRING RICHES

Verse 11 But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness.

"O man of God:" Wow, this is the apostle Paul's estimation of Timothy! Can you imagine how Timothy felt at this point in reading this letter? He must have been tremendously encouraged by Paul's comment.

The importance of Paul's use of the term is emphasized in that the phrase "man of God" is used for only the prophets in the Old Testament and Timothy himself in the New Testament.

Flee - get away from - find safety from these things. Isolate yourselves from all this stuff!

The term righteousness seems to have the thought of finding a right or correct walk before God - not sinning would do.

The term godliness seems to be the mental side of righteousness. Righteousness is the walk and godliness is the attitude that allows us to walk righteously.

Faith on the other hand seems to be that belief or trust in God and His word that allows us to have the attitude of godliness which allows us to walk righteously.

Love, patience, and meekness are the kind of characteristics that make a believer what they should be before God and man.

We might observe that if a person is seeking after this list of items, there will be little time for seeking after material things.

Paul mentions Timothy as a man of God, while looking surely past Timothy to all those Timothy would minister too as well as you and me. II Tim 3.17 states "That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." Perfect has the thought of completeness - the mature man is a man of God - you don't have to be a preacher, missionary or in any other position to be a man of God - just complete before the Lord.

Verse nine's "will be rich" and verse tens "love of money" seem to indicate the conscious desire for riches and deciding to go after them. This might be going after riches instead of godliness. Actually the first will most likely produce the latter.

Being rich is not likely if you are following after those traits of godliness!

Paul asks Timothy to follow after:

Righteousness
Godliness
Faith
Love
Patience
Meekness

Now, you might relate these items to your own life.

Do you portray all of these at work with your employees/employer/coworkers?

Do you portray all of these at the store when you are in a hurry?

Do you portray all of these at the stop light when someone comes buzzing through on a red?

Do you portray all of these at home with your family?

In 1923, a very important meeting was held at the Edgewater Beach Hotel in Chicago. Attending that meeting were nine of the world's most successful financiers. Those who were present were:

1. The president of the largest independent steel company
2. The president of the largest utility company
3. The president of the largest gas company
4. The greatest wheat speculator of the era
5. The president of the New York Stock Exchange
6. A member of the President's cabinet
7. The greatest "bear" on Wall Street
8. Head of the world's greatest monopoly
9. President of the Bank of International Settlements

Admittedly the group gathered was impressive and represented well some of the world's most successful men or at least those who had found the secret of making money. Surely they must have been very happy in their success. (25 years later)

1. The president of the largest independent steel company, Charles Schwab, died bankrupt and lived on borrowed money for five years before his death.
2. The president of the largest utility company, Samuel Insull, died a fugitive from justice in a foreign land, and penniless.
3. The president of the largest gas company, Howard Hopson went insane.
4. The greatest wheat speculator of the era, Arthur Cutton, died abroad insolvent.
5. The president of the New York Stock Exchange, Richard Whitney, had just been recently released from Sing Sing Penitentiary.
6. The member of the President's cabinet, Albert Fall, was pardoned from prison so he could die at home.
7. The greatest "bear" on Wall Street who was Jesse Livermore, died of suicide.
8. The head of the world's greatest monopoly, Ivan Krueger, died of suicide.
9. President of the Bank of International Settlements Leon Fraser, died of suicide.

The men listed above learned the art of making money and achieving great power and status but not one of them learned how to "Live." Happiness is contentment. Even some of the poorest people on earth have learned this.

Remember godliness with contentment is gain from our last study.

As I was preparing this study I was on the internet and ran across an item that stood out in stark contrast to the listing above. It was a listing of accomplishments of a man of God that had recently gone to be with the Lord. The man had been a successful pastor for thirty plus years, he was on boards of Christian organizations and he was author/editor of many books.

He was a man of God that had focused on "willing to be godly" rather than "willing to be rich" - a decision to follow God and seek godliness rather than follow money and seek wealth. He died doing what he had focused his life on, while the men in the list died doing what they attempted to avoid all their life - lack of money.

I trust you don't miss the obvious contrast. He who wills to be rich will be caught in a snare and his riches will bring him down. On the other hand he who wills to be godly will be a man of God and his godliness will bring him riches in glory.

CHAPTER 30

DOING THE DEW JUST WON'T DO IT!

We will be looking at DO IT in verse twelve, HOW TO DO IT in verses thirteen and fourteen, and WHY DO IT in verses fifteen and sixteen.

I. DO IT

Verse 12 Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses.

This is one verse that some believers do not know is in the Bible. Many today tell the lost that they need to accept the Lord so that they can find true peace - HOGWASH! Becoming a Christian places you between the Devil and Christ and they are at war! You do not enter into a life of peace when you become a Christian. In America today we have it very good, but not all believers have it this easy. Today we have believers being killed for their faith in the world.

Fight the good fight - keep at it even when it is ruff - FIGHT - don't surrender!

Lay hold on eternal life because you are called to it and it is the only flight in town going up! Not that you have to hold on so you don't loose it, but hold on as it is your life - there is nothing else. Paul reminds them of their faithful witness before many - of their relationship with God.

Just what does it mean to fight the good fight?

1. Within the context we find that it includes Godliness and a godly walk as well as the close companion of these, having heavenly goals not earthly.

That kind of sets the parameters in my mind. If you are aimed toward heavenly goals and godliness then all Satan's forces will be aimed at you! We can expect nothing less than temptation, troubles, trials, discouragement and all those other items the Devil likes to throw in front of us.

2. Paul mentions this phrase also in II Timothy 2.7 "I have fought a good fight, I have finished [my] course, I have kept the faith:" To Paul fighting the good fight was keeping the faith. In one of the following verses Paul relates this to loving Christ's appearing. This seems to relate to number one. Keeping our goals on high with our Lord.

What is keeping the faith? Walking according to what the Bible teaches us. Following after the Lord's leading and Word. Being obedient to God's commands and seeking His promises.

3. Paul in Ephesians 6.11-13 mentions "11 Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. 12 For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against

principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high [places]. 13 Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand."

This pictures the fight or battle that we are in as believers. We are to put on the armor of God and fight the battle. Note, God supplies the armor for us but we need to put it on and use it. Note also it is a standing battle - don't advance - just hold the line.

4. The word translated "fight" is the word we gain our word "agonize" from. It is also translated "strive" and "labor fervently." This is the thought of working up a terribly big perspiration!

This relates to something that the faint hearted are not going to enjoy very much. STRIVE, LABOR FERVENTLY FOR GOD!

The second term translated "fight" is akin to the other word, but is actually used of the arena that the Olympic games were played in. The thought is of a struggle for a prize.

Lay hold has the thought of take to one self - to take in addition to or take for one's own use.

There is a lot of controversy about just what this means. Those that do not believe in eternal security naturally suggest that we have to HANG ONTO ETERNAL LIFE, GRASP IT, GET YOUR HOOKS INTO IT LEST IT BE TAKEN AWAY FROM YOU! However, I see noting about taking away in the passage.

It seems to MacArthur that Paul is telling Timothy to "get a grip" on what salvation is, learn of it so you can live your life as you should. I think that is a good approach to the phrase.

II. HOW TO DO IT

Verse 13. I give thee charge in the sight of God, who quickeneth all things, and [before] Christ Jesus, who before Pontius Pilate witnessed a good confession;

Put yourself in Timothy's place at this point. Paul says, I CHARGE YOU BEFORE GOD AND CHRIST JESUS - capital letters are mine, but the words must have jumped out at Timothy - this must be important - especially in light of the fact that Paul used the same terminology in the previous chapter verse twenty one.

Paul uses the attribute of God's being the fountain of life. Barnes suggests " Perhaps he means to say, that God is the source of life, and that as he had given life to Timothy--natural and spiritual--he had a right to require that it should be employed in his service; and that, if, in obedience to this charge and in the performance of his duties, he should be required to lay down his life, he should bear in remembrance, that God had power to raise him up again."

Paul adds in the phrase "who before Pontius Pilate witnessed a good confession" to his charge. Christ when facing DEATH was able to witness a good confession - so you Timothy, get with and keep with the program and do the same! (Christ's confession is found in John 18.33-38; 19.8-11)

Barnes suggests that Paul may have been referring to the fact that Christ stood before Pilate and refused to detract from the truth - and the implication being to Timothy - if you face death, give no quarter to truth.

Pontius Pilate is well known to most anyone that has lived through an Easter service in most any church. He was the sixth procurator of Judah - the man that found no guilt in Christ, but allowed the Jews to crucify Him anyway.

Could we say that Paul is totally putting the pressure on here? He did it for you, now the least you can do for Him is the same!

Verse 14 That thou keep [this] commandment without spot, unrebukeable, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ:

Just what commandment?

1. Some commentaries suggest the Gospel, though it is an invitation not a commandment, thus I would opt to the verse referring back to verse eleven and twelve.
2. Stedman suggests that it is the commandment to love one another in the upper room that was given to the apostles. I tend to think that the apostle Paul could have made it a little more clear if that were the commandment he had in mind.
3. Adam Clarke states that it is "That the commandment itself-the whole doctrine of Christ, should be kept entire. 2. That his life should be agreeable to that doctrine. Keep it without spot-let there be no blot on the sacred book;"

He goes on to state that this was a command for Timothy to hand down that same doctrine and lifestyle to others until the coming of the Lord. I don't see that in the passage, though it is quite in keeping with II Timothy 2.2 which mentions "And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also."

4. I would assume it probably refers back to the phrase "fight the good fight of faith" just mentioned in verse twelve. Of course my favorite commentator agrees with me - Barnes notes.

Do it without spot and so completely that no one can rebuke you about how you keep it. In short DO IT RIGHT! DON'T DEVIATE FROM IT EVER - do well till the Lord comes.

This thought of perfection is used of our Lord in I Pet. 1.19 where it speaks of Christ the perfect

Lamb and His shed blood. "But with the precious blood of Christ as of a lamb without blemish and without spot:"

The same word is used to encourage believers to have pure lives in James 1.21 and II Pet 3.14 as well.

The term translated "appearing" is the word we gain our word "epiphany" from. Epiphany relates to a glorious manifesting or appearing. The Greek word is used in Greek mythology of a god coming in visible form and usually to help or assist someone.

III. WHY DO IT

These two verses seem to be just a little introduction to the Savior we serve - just kind of a thumbnail sketch if you will.

Verse 15 Which in his times he shall shew, [who is] the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords;

"only potentate" is of interest. Only sets this one above all other potentates, indeed, declares Him to be the only true potentate. Potentate refers to one with great authority. We are not speaking here of a city councilman, or a state senator, or even a president of a country. We are speaking of the only real authority JESUS CHRIST OUR LORD.

We are talking the king over all other kings, we are talking about the Lord over all lords, we are talking the big one, we are talking the biggest - nobody above this authority - I trust you are getting the picture.

This passage overflows with the respect and awe which Paul seems to have for his Lord and Master. Christ moves in these short verses from the criminal before Pilate to the King of kings and Lord of lords. An awesome Person that we have the opportunity of serving.

Consider this as you rethink the chapter. We serve a master, and Paul has set forth some very important principles in how we should do this. (for further on this declaration see Deut. 10.17; Rev. 17.124; 19.16)

Verse 16 Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom [be] honour and power everlasting. Amen.

It almost seems to me that Paul just spouts off about his Lord and Savior - he just doesn't seem to be able to contain himself.

This verse speaks to the glory of God that is mentioned in the Old Testament. Moses was hidden in the cleft of the rock while God passed by and was affected physically by viewing just what he

could see when hidden - in fact the idea of the passage seems to be that he saw what was left after God passed by. (See also Ps. 104.2; James 1.17; I Jo. 1.5; Jo 1.18; Ex. 33.20-23; Jo. 6.46; Col. 1.15; I Jo 4.12; Gen. 32.30; Rev. 22.3,4)

The glory of God cannot be viewed by pre-resurrection man. We cannot stand the glory.

Within the eternal state we find that God is the light by which we will do whatever we will be doing. He is the light! Rev. 21.5 tells us " And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light : and they shall reign for ever and ever."

Immortality relates to not being subject to death.

Barnes states concerning immortality "Creatures have immortality only as they derive it from him, and of course are dependent on him for it. He has it by his very nature, and it is in his case underived, and he cannot be deprived of it. It is one of the essential attributes of his being, that he will always exist, and that death cannot reach him."

Since we have such a marvelous God, we ought to do marvelous things for Him.

Tozer rightly mentions "The history of mankind will probably show that no people has ever risen above its religion, and man's spiritual history will positively demonstrate that no religion has ever been greater than its idea of god....For this reason the gravest question before the Church is always God Himself, and the most portentous fact about any man is not what he at a given time may say or do but what he in his deep heart conceives God to be like....Were we able to extract from any man a complete answer to the question, "What comes into your mind when you think about God?" we might predict with certainty the spiritual future of that man." (THE MACARTHUR NEW TESTAMENT COMMENTARY I TIMOTHY; John MacArthur; Moody Press; Chicago; 1995; p 270 Quoting P 9 of Tozar's THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE HOLY.)

I trust we think very highly of our God!

I would like to think a little while about the phrase "to whom be honour and power everlasting."

Just what is meant here? As I read the text I have the feeling that the honor and power are items that man is to give forth to God. Not that God needs any power - He is all powerful, but that we give Him further power in some manner.

Just how in the world can puny man give the all powerful, completely honorable God honor and power?

Might I suggest some items for you to consider?

HONOR

1. Acknowledging Him as The King of kings and Lord of lords.
2. Living a life which reflects well upon Him and His Word.
3. Sharing our faith with those that we meet. This shows that we really believe in the salvation that we have been given.
4. Giving of our life, mind, and material realm to Him and His service.

POWER

1. Power to rule in our lives - giving Him free reign in our lives to improve us, to use us, and to mature us.
2. Working within the church to improve the work of the Lord so that the ministry of the church can spread into the community and other people's lives.

I think that the truth of the above two (giving God power and honor) items is viewable in our own country. In years past, this was a relatively godly nation. Today godliness is on the radical decline.

God used to have power in this nation. His morals were held widely, His Word was read widely, His church was strong. Today we see little in the way of morals, we see little in the area of using His Word, and the church is weak to the point of being near irrelevant in our society.

Might I chase a rabbit a moment? I was looking for a book online and found a disturbing trend.

Fundamentalism in years past was a proud and honorable belief system. It produced men like Tozer, Torrey and Chafer - men that did great things for God.

Today fundamentalism has been demonized and totally confused. Christians are condemning it in books and the media when they get the chance.

They have tied fundamentalism to the radical element of the charismatic movement and their politics and antics and are condemning fundamentalism for it when most of these men were not true fundamentalists in the first place. Most of them would reject the writings of the early fundamentalists.

Fundamentalist is not a four-letter word. If you don't know what it means get a book on it from Torrey or Tozer and learn of it.

In closing I would like to share some thoughts concerning William Carey.

Carey, the father of modern missions.

In Carey's many years of missionary service he was faced with many many trials and problems yet he was able to continue. He himself defined his secret. "I can plod. I can persevere in any definite pursuit. To this I owe everything."

As I talk to believers I find plodding is what the Christian life is about. Plodding day after day in His steps.

He had many problems with allergies so could not become the gardener that he desired to be.

He was apprenticed as a cobbler from age 16 to 28. Carey married his Master's sister-in-law in 1781 and when his master died he supported the widow and family as well as his own family.

His wife could not read and this became a problem in their marriage as he expanded his life.

There was great poverty in the family.

In 1785 he accepted a call to pastor a Particular Baptist Church and later moved onto a larger church in Leicester. He worked to support his family.

He became convinced that it was the churches responsibility to reach the lost with the Good News. Most of his day felt that the great commission was given to the apostles and not incumbent upon the Christian community.

He presented some of his ideas before some fellow ministers and one of the comments came, "Young man, sit down. When God pleases to convert the heathen, He will do it without your aid or mine." He went on to call Carey a "Young miserable enthusiast".

He later addressed a gathering of ministers and spoke from Is. 54:2-3 and used his now famous words, "Expect great things from God; attempt great things for God."

From this meeting grew the Particular Baptist Society For Propagating the Gospel Among the Heathen.

He later was part of starting a mission to the lost.

Carey's decision to go to India was a rousing success at home.

His church was upset over losing their pastor.

His father judged him "mad."

And last but not least his wife refused to go.

She is not the mother of modern missions.

Carey made plans to leave which included his 8-year old son Felix.

In March 1793, after much deputation, Carey, Felix, and another missionary, named Thomas and his family set sail. The voyage ended at Portsmouth, England when they were put off the ship. They had not obtained a proper license and Thomas had many upset creditors desiring to see him stay around awhile.

The delay worked out for the better due to the fact that Dorothy, his wife, had delivered the baby and had begrudgingly agreed to join her husband if she could take a little sister with her.

Carey raised the additional funds and set sail in June of 1793.

The East India Co. was in total control of the country and disliked missionaries for they feared they would upset their economic windfall.

Carey fearing they would be sent home moved the family interior and soon the family was down with Malaria.

His problems were increased due to the nagging of his wife and her sister. What's more the Thomas family was living in Calcutta in great style while they were living in poverty and disease.

A Mr. Short of the East India Co. opened his home to the Carey's until they were well and they moved 300 miles north to Malda where Carey became a foreman in an indigo factory.

Dorothy's sister married Mr. Short and this left Dorothy alone many miles away. She was very unstable mentally and when their son Peter died in 1794 she went insane. Co-workers described her as "wholly deranged".

In spite of all the family problems Carey used the job not only to support himself but to learn the language and to evangelize. He did much work on translation.

There was a time when the family lived in a compound with others where they learned to get along by overlooking the faults of one another. Of course it was Carey that did most of the overlooking.

Carey translated three entire Bibles. (Bengali, Sanskrit, and Marathi). Portions of Scripture and New Testaments were translated into other languages as well.

The quality of his work did not match the quantity however. He sent one of his works to England

and he was admonished to do much better. He reviewed it himself and judged it ununderstandable.

He did not give up but returned to go over his work and rework it until he felt that it could be understood.

In 1807 Dorothy Carey died. He had done much of his translation work with his wife in the next room raving and screaming.

In 1808, just six months after Dorothy's burial he married Lady Charlotte Rumohr of Danish royalty. This marriage was naturally opposed by all his coworkers.

She died in 1821.

Carey again married two years later at the age of 62 and his bride was 17 years younger. Her name was Grace.

Carey sustained what to most would have been the twig that broke the camel's back. He had several manuscripts in a warehouse and it burned along with all his work. This did not stop him, but he continued on and began the work over again.

I cannot imagine how Carey must have felt over losing a Polyglot dictionary, Two grammar books, and whole versions of the Bible that were one of a kind. He returned to work to replace them.

The final trial the poor man faced was that his original mission basically broke ties with him.

Carey died in 1834.

"His influence in India went beyond his massive linguistic accomplishments, his educational institutions, and the Christian following he shepherded. He also made a notable impact on harmful Indian practices through his long struggle against widow burning and infanticide. But otherwise, he sought to leave the culture intact." p. 121 from Jerusalem to Irian Jaya

He wrote just after his father died in 1825, "I, however, never intended to return to England when I left it, and unless something very unexpected were to take place, I certainly shall not do it....My heart is wedded to India; and though I am of little use, I feel a pleasure in doing the little I can." p 251 WILLIAM CAREY MISSIONARY PIONEER AND STATESMAN by F. Deaville Walker.

A man that laid "hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses."

"Though I am of little use, I feel a pleasure in doing the little I can." The man that started the

modern missions movement. A man that fought the good fight.

How are you going to live the rest of your life?

CHAPTER 31

THERE IS A SURE THING!

You might want to read I Timothy 6.17-19.

This is supposedly a true story, though I don't know the family personally.

Aunt "Emma" was married to a tightwad who was also a little strange. He made a good salary, but they lived frugally because he insisted on putting 20 percent of his paycheck under the mattress. (The man didn't trust banks.) The money, he said, was going to come in handy in their old age.

When "Uncle Ollie" was 60, he was stricken with cancer. Toward the end, he made Aunt Em promise, in the presence of his brothers, that she would put the money he had stashed away in his coffin so he could buy his way into heaven if he had to.

They all knew he was a little odd, but this was clearly a crazy request. Aunt Em did promise, however, and assured Uncle Ollie's brothers that she was a woman of her word and would do as he asked.

The following morning she took the money (about \$26,000) to the bank and deposited it. She then wrote a check and put it in the casket four days later.

When preparing this study I tried to think of a rich Christian person that lived this life. Actually I thought of several that trusted God, but only a few that were rich in good works and none that were ready to distribute or willing to communicate.

I assume that the last two items might be done on a personal and private basis and these works might not be known to the public.

However!

I know a number of unsaved people that don't know God, but follow His principles. They have some sense of a higher power and realize their riches are because of their being blessed by a higher power. A couple come to mind - now I realize these folks are not believers but they give and use their riches as if they knew this passage. Paul Neuman has given millions away over the years. He has companies which turn all profits over to charity. Oprah Winfrey also contributes liberally.

I used to know a rich man personally that also was constantly giving of his blessings. He was my employer in Denver years ago. He would give me car loads of stereos and televisions that did not work so that I could fix them, sell them and make a little money on the side. When he found we were having our last son he offered us a crib and baby clothing. When our car broke down he

loaned us one of the company trucks. He worked with me on my schedule so that I could continue in college. He instituted a profit-sharing program for the employees. I told him I would not be there for more than a year so didn't need to sign it - he told me to sign it anyway - just in case. As it turned out I was there several years and when we moved it resulted in a couple thousand dollars for us to resettle with.

He was most kind to his workers. One time the tube company he purchased television tubes from had a special - buy so many tubes and get a free battery operated soldering iron. He liked the soldering iron and ordered enough tubes so that everyone in the shop - about eight of us - could have a free soldering iron. We had tubes stored all over the place for weeks.

We will look at TRUST IN GOD in verse seventeen, GIVE TO GOD in verse eighteen, and BUILD FOR GOD in verse nineteen.

It is of interest to me that many in the lost world live their lives as if they knew this portion of Scripture.

I. TRUST IN GOD

Verse 17 Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not high-minded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy;

The thought of high-mindedness reminds me of a small farming community in mid Nebraska. The community was poor but close knit and friendly. In the fifties a large corporation built a factory in town. The coming of this boon to town, made many of the townfolks became quite rich.

It was easy for newcomers to town to notice the snobbery and unkindness of many of the towns folks. It was not a pleasant town to live in if you were an outsider. The riches had changed the people drastically.

The term high-minded is used in Rom. 11.20-21. "Well; because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith. Be not high-minded, but fear: 21 For if God spared not the natural branches, [take heed] lest he also spare not thee."

High-minded seems possibly to speak to pride and self assurance. Don't be rich and proud and don't be rich and confident in self.

Barnes said "The idea is, that they should not value themselves on account of their wealth, or look down with pride and arrogance on their inferiors. They should not suppose that they are any better men, or any nearer heaven, because they are wealthy. Property really makes no distinction in the great things that pertain to character and salvation. It does not necessarily make one wise, or learned, or great, or good. In all these things the man who has not wealth may be vastly the superior of him who has; and for so slight and unimportant a distinction as gold can confer, no

man should be proud."

What a contrast - trust in uncertain riches or trust in the living God! No contest in any thinking persons mind! However, since Paul made the statement there must be some that have a problem in that area.

I think the most profound illustration of this business of riches being uncertain, is to be seen in Bill Gates the head of Microsoft. In the early part of 2000 when the stock market took its little stumbles, Bill Gates literally lost Billions of dollars in one day. THAT IS UNCERTAINTY OF RICHES!

Paul returns to his previous thought. Charge them - the rich in the world that they have a duty before God to use His riches that He has given them to do good with the material blessings.

Not only do good with their riches, but don't get a big head about the riches, nor their good works, AND certainly don't trust in those riches.

Some might get the idea that the rich are really getting it here, but the poor ought to be very careful as they can be high-minded of their poorness and need to be on guard as well.

(See also James 5.1-3; Prov. 23.4,5; Matt. 6.19,20)

"Giveth us richly all things to enjoy;" Enjoy it. That which He gives - don't feel guilty about having things. Enjoy them, use them and share them!

This thought of enjoy is of interest. There have been times that I have not enjoyed things that God has given, but rather felt guilty about.

We at one time while in Bible college needed a car. We had eight hundred dollars and no more. We took a bus to a car lot and looked at the total junk that they offered for that price. As we were leaving the lot we stopped to admire a very nice looking Plymouth Sport Fury convertible. We were dreaming about what it would be like to own something like that. The salesman came up to us and asked if we would be interested in the car. I laughed and told him all we had was the eight hundred. He said he would speak to his boss. He returned and offered the car to us for the money we had. It was November and they knew they wouldn't sell the car over the winter and did not want it in their inventory so were offering it to us.

We drove it home hardly believing that God had given us this fabulous car for so little. The problem came when we would have missionaries over for lunch and have to explain how poor Bible college students could afford a Sport Fury.

Many were blessed as we always were quick to share the account of what God had done.

II. GIVE TO GOD

Verse 18 That they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate;

There is a man in Indiana that started in construction. He trusted God and served Him to the best of his ability. God started moving the man up in riches and the man remained as he had been - rich in good works. Ultimately the Lord allowed this man to be the financing behind a large Christian college.

In short if you see a need, fill it. Actually the rich are to be taught to do this, but we can do the same thing in whatever situation we are in. We were in very meager financial shape when a missionary and his wife came to the church where we attended. The wife was carrying an old tattered Bible. The replacement cardboard cover was held in place with masking tape. We had just purchased some Bibles that were only \$5. apiece. We really stretched the budget to buy them, but knew the kids needed them and we had two extra. We invited the folks to lunch and gave her a Bible - nothing the rich can do that we can't do - they can just do it in a much bigger way.

Being rich in good works in this context is aimed at the rich, but it is a good principle for all to live by. We should all be rich in good works.

There are four items of concern in this verse.

1. "do good" This is not an option, if you are rich you should do good. This is the reasonable service with what God has given.
2. "be rich in good works" To be rich in good works has a double meaning. Be rich or liberal in the amount of your good works, and also you will be rich in reward and blessing as you involve yourself in good works.
3. "ready to distribute" You don't have to wait with baited breath, but be ready - when opportunity knocks answer the door with your check book open.
4. "willing to communicate" The thought of this word has a double meaning. It relates to willing to socialize as well as distribute of your belongings according to Thayer.

Barnes and Clarke both indicate this is a giving of material items/money to make the others comfortable with the rich. I would assume this might relate to the rich mans giving to the church as well as possibly giving to a poor man's needs. Both would bring the aspect of fellowship automatically. Being willing to be a part of the church - not set apart.

Now, to the question that is hanging over us - how much must I have to be rich? If I am worth half a million am I rich or must I have a million - well I think we get the picture. Give as God has

prospered you is the principle.

The Word does not suggest a level of wealth, indeed, the level will vary from time to time.

I recently (in 2000) saw a news report of a grandfather that thought he had the world by the tail when he took a job in the 50's that would progress to the point where he might earn \$10,000 a year. The report was comparing the grandfather with his graduating grandson that was receiving \$10,000 in sign up bonuses for his \$40,000 a year job.

I think we all can go to the Lord in prayer and ask Him to help us determine if we are rich or not. I personally feel rich at times and try to give accordingly even though we are mid to low income. In the past when we were solidly rooted in the low income area, God still allowed us opportunity to share with others in need.

III. BUILD FOR GOD

"Laying up in store" -- ALL RIGHT the Christmas lay away plan at Target is Biblical! Well not quite!

Verse 19 Laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life.

Lay up a good foundation in the time to come. I am reminded of the passage in the Gospel when the Lord said, (Matt. 6.19-21) "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: 20 But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: 21 For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also."

Using the Lord's material blessings wisely is the prudent thing to do not only for the rich, but for all of us.

That they may lay hold on eternal life is misconstrued to indicate we have to do good works to keep our salvation sure. Now, if you want to work like mad because you fear God withdrawing His free gift then go for it - you will certainly do many great things for Him, but this passage does not teach this. Works are a thing to be done because of our love for Him and His creation, not out of fear of not making it to heaven.

The thought to me seems to be that the rich man is to do good works so that he will be laying reward for himself in heaven so that he can really enjoy the eternal life that is yet to come. The American Standard Version indicates this when it translates the verse as follows: "laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on the life which is [life] indeed" Robertson's Word pictures mentions: "This life is merely the shadow of the eternal reality to come."

There is absolutely no investment on earth that will give a better return on your money than to use your funds for good works - God will bless you more than you can earn on the most prime of investments!

So, why don't more Christians invest more in eternal matters? I personally believe it is the fact that most of us are totally self-centered. We are into doing for ourselves, so doing for God or others doesn't fit our mind set.

There is one aspect of maturing in the human that may be at play. When a child is offered a quarter now or a dollar tomorrow they will always take the quarter now - until at some point they mature and realize the dollar delayed is best.

Today we have a society of "we want it now" people that are totally disinterested in the future.

They aren't called the "NOW" generation for nothing.

Robertson also mentions a paradox in this verse - "'laying up in store' by giving it away" A truth to consider very carefully.

I trust that all of us are living this passage, and I especially trust that all that are or will be rich will give special attention to the admonitions of this passage.

Some other references relating to riches:

Prov. 13.1-11 cf. Rev 3.17

Eccles. 5.8-17

Luke 16.19-21

Psalm 112

II Kings 4.8-17

Luke 12.16-21

Luke 18-18-25

Prov. 11.28

Prov. 23.4

Prov. 23.5

Prov. 27.24

Prov. 13.22

Psalm 49.16,17

CHAPTER 32

THE SEQUENTIAL LIFE

When the Lord started leading us into Bible college, one of the men that He used in a mighty way was a man that was the business manager of the first College I attended.

He was a great encouragement to me on a personal level, and was very kind and encouraging to us as a couple. He was also a member of our church so we fellowshiped together many times.

The Lord used his financial expertise to expand the college campus and to bring in many buildings for remodeling and use.

He later resigned and took a position with a large Bible camp in the Midwest where the Lord used him to assist many people in setting up their finances and wills to the best benefit. He was also instrumental in expanding the ministry of the camp in a mighty way.

This man lived this passage. He took those material things that God entrusted him with and set aside all else to the betterment of the Lord and His ministries.

He kept the charge given him - minister - in the area of finance.

20 O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust, avoiding profane [and] vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so called: 21 Which some professing have erred concerning the faith. Grace [be] with thee. Amen.

We will look at KEEP in verse twenty a, AVOID WILL HELP KEEP in verse twenty b and twenty-one a, and GRACE WILL HELP AVOID in verse twenty one b.

I. KEEP

Verse 20 a: O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust

The verse speaks to teaching, but within the book's context it relates to position of ministry as well in my mind.

A final charge to Timothy from Paul to keep what has been committed to him to do in his ministry. A final encouragement to avoid babblings and disputes. The science that is mentioned is the term normally translated knowledge thus "so called" knowledgeable, or I suspect arguments against truth. The message is clear - beware of false knowledge as it leads you away from truth.

"O Timothy" - in 6.11 Paul uses the phrase "O man of God" and here O Timothy. The phrase to me speaks of great emotion in Paul's mind. He is concerned with the man Timothy and his walk

with God. How great it must have been for Timothy to know of Paul's concern for him.

Paul pleads with Timothy to keep those things that God has committed to him to do. In Timothy's case it was the church or group of believers at Ephesus and a good knowledge of doctrine to commit to them.

The thought of "keep" is interesting. It is a banking term or a term to depict setting something aside in safety - as in an attic. Might this relate to Paul's earlier thoughts of investing in things heavenly?

I assume that Paul was speaking of Timothy's spiritual knowledge and gifts. II Timothy 2.2 reinforces the thought of this text. Paul is encouraging Timothy to do the job with the preparation that he has been given.

II Timothy 2.2 "And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also." This passage is really the crux of Paul's life, and it ought to be the crux of our own lives - teaching others that they might teach others - discipleship!

That is what the Great commission is all about!

What has God committed to you? How are you doing with the trust that He has placed in you?

Each has spiritual gifts for use in the local assembly. Are you using yours? Each has spiritual knowledge to share with others. Are you using yours?

II. AVOID WILL HELP KEEP

Verse 20 b-21 a: avoiding profane [and] vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so called: 21 Which some professing have erred concerning the faith.

Man tends to think himself to be very smart.

1. Cosmology seeks to explain creation.
2. Philosophy seeks to explain life.
3. Theology seeks to explain God.
4. Psychology seeks to explain the mind.

Recently a new ology has shown up in stores. It is "frameology" - it is a picture frame company. Not sure what it seeks to explain other than how your money transfers from your pocket to theirs though.

Anyway, the Hubble telescope has been finding things that are shattering many of the old beliefs

of science. Scientists are rehashing their beliefs and theories to reflect the reality that they are finding of late. Many know they were wrong for years.

That must be disheartening to know "truth" and find out it was false!

The question is, are they going to have to continue this process with each new invention. Science or science so called, has given us the theory of evolution. By the way do you know how many evolutionists does it take to change a light bulb? A: None. They just sit and wait for the old bulb to change into a laser beam.

THREE MONKEYS

Three monkeys sat in a coconut tree, Discussing things that are said to be; Said one to the other, "Now listen you two, There's a certain rumor that can't be true: That man descended from our noble race, The very idea is a disgrace!

"No monkey ever deserted his wife, Starved her babies, and ruined her life; And you've never known a mother monk, To leave her babies with others to bunk, Or pass them on from one to the other, Till they scarcely know who is their mother.

"And another thing you'll never see, A monk build a fence round a coconut tree, And let the coconuts go to waste, Forbidding all other monks to taste; Why, if I put a fence around a tree, Starvation will force you to steal from me!

"Here's another thing a monk won't do: Go out at night and get in a stew, Or use a gun, a club or a knife, To take some other monkey's life! Yes, man descended, the wicked cuss, But, brother, he didn't descend from us!"

Christian leaders basically put evolution to rest in the sixties. Few could stand against the thinking of believers on the subject. There were many evolutionists that had made comments showing their own doubt in their own system.

Then in the 80-90's area Carl Sagan exploded onto the scene with his BIILLLLIIIOONNNSSS AND BIILLLLLLIIIOONNNSSS OOOFF YEEEAARRSS AGO. What a great communicator he was! PBS hurled his message far and wide as did the publishing world, and again evolution was in the forefront as "the" truth of science for our day.

Paul told Timothy to avoid oppositions of science falsely so called! Don't waste your time with this crazy stuff was Paul's evaluation. It is just going to come around again and again as often as lost man's imagination runs wild.

The point? The Bible has always - through all time been the source of truth on all of these subjects, and man has thumbed his nose at it!

III. GRACE WILL HELP AVOID

Verses 21 b: "Grace [be] with thee. Amen."

Just what does "grace be with thee" mean? By grace we are saved. By grace we continue to live, but what does this closing mean?

The term grace has many shades of meaning. Thayer mentions the following.

"that which affords joy, pleasure, delight, sweetness, charm, loveliness: grace of speech 2) good will, loving-kindness, favour 2a) of the merciful kindness by which God, exerting his holy influence upon souls, turns them to Christ, keeps, strengthens, increases them in Christian faith, knowledge, affection, and kindles them to the exercise of the Christian virtues 3) what is due to grace 3a) the spiritual condition of one governed by the power of divine grace 3b) the token or proof of grace, benefit 3b1) a gift of grace 3b2) benefit, bounty 4) thanks, (for benefits, services, favours), recompense, reward"

Some possible meanings:

1. Paul is just giving a greeting of the day - saying that he wills a favorable life for Timothy - have a good day - if you will. This may be.
2. Paul had some ability to offer grace as an apostle. I see no indication of this in the Word, nor would it make sense, since grace extends from God.
3. Actually the term "thee" is plural, so Paul is most likely addressing the other elders or leaders if not the entire church at Ephesus. This might assist us in determining the meaning. Grace is an item that is needed in any church.

We need to treat one another as if we realize we are all products of grace.

We need to treat our leaders as if we hold them in favor.

Leaders need to treat the congregation as if they hold them in favor.

We all need to be gracious to one another at all times.

There needs to be a mutual respect by all. Leaders must respect the members. The members must respect the leaders. Both must realize that Christ is the head of the church and not them.

I would think this is a prayer of sorts or benediction on the church leaders and the people at Ephesus.

A very nice have a good day request to the Father might be the thought of it.

There is nothing exceptionally special about the phrase. Paul uses it in Titus in his closing (Titus 3.15). Indeed, Paul mentions "all" in his closing to Titus.

SOME THINGS TO FLEE FROM THAT ARE MENTIONED IN I Timothy:

- 1.3 other doctrine or false doctrine
- 1.4 fables and endless genealogies - fiction
- 1.6 vain jangling
- 1.9,10 whole list of wrong doers
- 2.8 wrath and doubting
- 2.12 women leaders in the church
- 3.2 multiple marriages
- 3.3 wine, violence, greed, brawling, covetousness
- 3.45, unruly children
- 3.6 pride
- 3.8-12 repeat some of the above
- 3.11 slanderousness
- 4.1 seducing spirits, doctrines of demons, lies
- 4.7 profane and old wives fables
- 4.14 idleness of gift
- 5.1 rebuking of elders
- 5.8 ignoring needs of a widow in family
- 5.12 don't leave first love
- 5.13 gossiping
- 5.22 sudden approval of Christian workers
- 6.4 questions and disputes on wrong or false teaching
- 6.10 love of money
- 6.17 high-mindedness, trust in riches
- 6.20 profane and vain babblings, false knowledge

COMMANDS FROM I TIMOTHY

- 1.3 no other doctrine
- 1.4 don't heed fables and genealogies
- 1.18 war a good warfare.
- 1.19 holding faith and good conscience
- 2.1 pray for all men
- 2.2 pray for leaders
- 2.8 pray
- 2.9 women dress properly (modestly)
- 2.11 women to learn silently
- 2.12 no women usurping authority.
- 3. qualifications for leadership
 - blameless
 - husband of one wife
 - temperate soberminded

good behavior
hospitable
teacher
not given to wine
not violent
not greedy of filthy lucre
patient
not a brawler
not covetous
rulers at home
not a novice
have good report with unsaved
grave
not double tongued
not given to wine
not greedy of filthy lucre
holding mystery of faith
proven
blameless
wives - grave, not slanderers, soberminded, faithful in all things
4.4 all creation is good and to be received with thanksgiving
4.7 refuse wives fables - exercise unto godliness
4.12 let no man despise thy youth - be an example
4.13 give attendance to reading, exhortation, doctrine
4.14 don't neglect gift
4.15 meditate on these things
4.16 continue in doctrine
5.1 exhort, don't rebuke church members
5.3 honor widows
5.9 don't support younger widows
5.14 young widows remarry
5.16 support your family's widows.
5.17,18 support elders
5.19 receive accusation only before 2 or 3 witnesses
5.20 rebuke elders before all if in sin
5.21 don't be partial in discipline in church
5.22 lay hands quickly on no man
6.1 honor masters
6.11 follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness
6.12 fight the good fight
6.17 charge the rich not to be high-minded not trust uncertain riches, trust God, do good works,
ready to distribute, willing to share
6.20 avoid vain babblings

If we took only the things we are told not to do and begin work on these in our lives we would be busy for some time. Then we have all of the commandments. Only six chapters and we have at least 30 condemnations and at least 56 commands.

DARE ANY CHRISTIAN SAY I HAVE NOTHING TO DO IN MY SPIRITUAL LIFE?

"Keep that which is committed" - this list has been committed to each of us. God is trusting that we keep these truths. Read through this list and see if you can't improve your spiritual life in some manner!

Read through the list and see how your church stands up to the standard set forth.