

The First Epistle of Paul to Timothy

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The three books of I and II Timothy, and Titus are commonly referred to as the “Pastoral Epistles.” So, we’ll introduce all 3 of them together in this lesson.

Most believe that 1 Timothy and Titus were written between Paul’s first and second imprisonment in Rome, and 2 Timothy during his second imprisonment in Rome.

These three epistles are instructions to his “sons” in the ministry in dealing with matters they were to face in ministry. Timothy and Titus weren’t young men at this time: Timothy, for example may have been saved about 20 years by now and had worked directly with Paul for about 12 years.

These 3 epistles deal with how affairs were to be handled in their churches. And so, the instruction given in these three epistles is very practical for preachers of the gospel and for churches of the New Testament era. For this reason, they are called the Pastoral Epistles. So, what do we know about Timothy?

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Timothy’s Background (From I.K. Cross, “Paul’s Lectures to Timothy and Titus”)

Timothy seems to have been a native of Lystra, a city in the Roman province of Galatia, region of Lycaonia, and along the same road leading to Derbe. He was apparently converted on Paul’s visit to the city on this first journey, and asked by Paul to join him on his second journey to the area:

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Acts 16:1 ¹Then came he to Derbe and Lystra: and, behold, a certain disciple was there, named Timotheus, the son of a certain woman, which was a Jewess, and believed; but his father *was* a Greek:

Because his father was a Greek, he had not been circumcised, a matter which Paul had attended to, not because it was essential to his conversion, but because there were many Jews in the area where he lived. This would remove a stumbling block in his testimony to the Jews.

Acts 16:3 ³Him would Paul have to go forth with him; and took and circumcised him because of the Jews which were in those quarters: for they knew all that his father was a Greek.

Timothy's mother Eunice was a Jewess, as was his grandmother Lois, and both became devoted Christians:

2 Timothy 1:5 ⁵When 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.

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Timothy obviously became very close and dear to Paul, who refers to him as his "own son in the faith", and "my dearly beloved son" (I Timothy 1:2; II Timothy 1:2). He traveled extensively with Paul during his missionary journeys to such places as Troas, Philippi, Thessalonica, Berea, Athens and other such areas. He was on occasion sent by Paul on special missions, such as from Ephesus to Corinth:

1 Corinthians 4:17 ¹⁷For this cause have I sent unto you Timotheus, who is my beloved son, and faithful in the Lord, who shall bring you into remembrance of my ways which be in Christ, as I teach every where in every church.

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And when others had forsaken Paul as he neared his martyrdom in the prison in Rome, Paul sent urgently for Timothy to join him in Rome:

2 Timothy 4:9-11 ⁹Do thy diligence to come shortly unto me: ¹⁰For Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world, and is departed unto Thessalonica; Crescens to Galatia, Titus unto Dalmatia. ¹¹Only Luke is with me.

Whether Timothy reached the apostle before his death we do not know, but I imagine he tried his best to get there.

I'd like to read an introduction to Timothy from John Phillips (*Exploring the Pastoral Epistles*):

"The circumstances under which Paul and Timothy met had leave quite an impression on Timothy. We know that Timothy's Father was a Gentile. His Jewish mother and grandmother, however, raised him on the Old Testament scriptures and instructed him in the hope of the coming Jewish Messiah. His father's influence was strong enough to prevent Timothy's circumcision as a baby, but his mother, yielding on that issue, insisted on teaching him the great truths of the Old Testament and the Jewish faith. She filled his heart with accounts of her heroes: Moses, Elijah, David, Daniel, and Joseph. She taught him Hebrew Psalms and told him about the prophecies that spoke of a coming Messiah.

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Then Paul came (on his 1st missionary journey around 46 AD), invading Galatia with the gospel of Christ. He took city after city by storm – Pisidia, Antioch, Iconium, Lystra, and Derbe. Paul's arrival in Lystra, which seems to have been Timothy's hometown, was both exciting and tempestuous.

The whole city was turned upside down by Paul's dramatic healing of a local cripple, a man whom everyone knew to have been lame from birth (Acts 14:8-11). The amazed townsfolk at once proclaimed Paul and Barnabas to be incarnations of the pagan gods Mercury and Jupiter. The local priest prepared to sacrifice oxen in their honor. It had taken Paul's persuasive powers to prevent the people from offering the sacrifice.

One can imagine how the events of that day were discussed at Timothy's home. Paul's thrilling news that the Christ had come as promised in the Old Testament caught fire in Timothy's soul, and he surrendered to the claims of Christ.

Then there was another upheaval. Angry Jews from Antioch and Iconium descended on Lystra. They branded Paul as a heretic and troublemaker and succeeded in stirring up a riot. Paul was seized, stoned, dragged out of the city, and left for dead. Only when the Jews were convinced that he was dead did the riot cease.

Once the hubbub died down and the fickle mob dispersed, the disciples discovered that Paul was alive. Although battered, bruised, and likely bleeding, the apostle stood up! Perhaps he spent the night at Timothy's house before leaving the next day to continue his evangelistic work in Derbe. When Paul left Lystra, he carried Timothy's heart with him. The apostle ruled in Timothy's affections to the end.

Paul may have written numerous letters to Timothy. Two of them have been immortalized as books of the Bible. Little did Timothy suspect when he became a Christian that his name would become a household word wherever the gospel was preached – to the ends of the earth and to the end of time. Yet, here we are on a continent of which no Caesar ever dreamed, nearly two thousand years after Timothy's death, preparing to weigh each word Paul wrote to Timothy in the first of the two letters that survived."

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Authorship of the Pastoral Epistles

For more than 200 years, the three Pastoral Epistles have been attacked more than the Pauline church epistles on the issue of authorship. So called "higher critics", view these 3 epistles as "forgeries" that appeared during the second century. They give 4 reasons for believing that these 3 letters were not written by Paul, which we will briefly examine.

But first, when we read the book of Acts, we find at the end of the book Paul dwelt 2 full years in his own hired house, preaching. The end. Was Paul killed at the end of that 2 years? Was that the end of the Apostle Paul's ministry? No.

We know he was released from that 1st Roman imprisonment and had another 4 or 5 years of ministry in which he journeyed to Crete, Nicopolis, Spain, and perhaps as far as France and England. There is considerable historical evidence that Paul had preached in England! He came back to Corinth, Miletus, and Troas. He was probably arrested a second time in Troas and brought back to Rome for a second imprisonment.

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1) Historical. Their first argument is that events in the Pastoral Epistles do not fit into the account in Acts. They state that nowhere in Acts do we read about Paul preaching in Crete and leaving Titus there (Titus 1:5). Nor does his leaving Timothy at Ephesus fit into the Acts account. There's a good reason for that:

Paul was released from his first Roman imprisonment and made further journeys, during which he wrote First Timothy and Titus. It was during a later imprisonment that he wrote Second Timothy. There is considerable historical evidence for this position, but we don't have time to go into it in this class. A second reason given by these scholars to refute Paul as the author of the Pastoral Epistles is:

2) Ecclesiastical. In the Pastoral Epistles we read about bishops, elders (presbyters), and deacons. It is claimed by scholars that this shows a more advanced church organization than existed during the lifetime of Paul. But a careful reading of Titus 1:5-9 and Acts 20:28 shows that "elders" and "bishops" are terms used interchangeably. And in Philippians 1:1 Paul addresses the "bishops and deacons" in the church at Philippi, so he did use these terms.

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Halley's Bible Handbook, concerning the type of church organization that existed at the time of Paul states:

"At the time of Paul's writing his epistles to Timothy and Titus, church buildings were extremely rare, if not almost nonexistent. In Paul's day churches met mostly in the homes of the Christian people. Thus, the scores of thousands of Christians in and around Ephesus, where Timothy was at the time of the writing of 1st and 2nd Timothy, met, not in one, or a few, great congregations, but in hundreds of small groups in various homes, each small congregation probably under its own pastoral leadership. There must have been hundreds of pastors called elders. In this epistle they are called "bishops": different names for the same office. Timothy's work was primarily with these pastors, or congregational leaders. There were no seminaries or Bible colleges to supply Paul with trained pastors. He had to develop and train his pastors out of his own converts. And Timothy seems to be involved in overseeing these pastors in Ephesus."

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A third reason given by these modern scholars to refute Paul as the author of 1 and 2nd Timothy is:

3) Doctrinal. This is the claim that the doctrines emphasized in the Pastorals are different from those in Paul's previous Epistles, especially the recurring use of the expression "sound doctrine" (2Tim 4:3; Titus 1:9; 2:1). However, Paul's emphasis would have to be different considering that who he is writing to in these three epistles is a much different audience than the church epistles. These three letters are to two pastors that he disciplined. He was deeply concerned that they would be able to continue his struggle against false teachings after he left and that the churches they oversaw would continue to keep the faith once he was gone. The 4th argument is...

4) Linguistic. The Pastoral Epistles have a different style and vocabulary than Paul's earlier writings. This is the main point stressed today by negative critics. One critic, named Harrison, found 175 words used nowhere else in the NT. However, if one is writing to now an entirely different audience, 2 pastors instead of churches, about different subjects, that of course your vocabulary will change and your style will change.

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There is no biblical record covering the final years of Paul. So the following is a tentative reconstruction of events in Paul's life.

As Paul anticipated (Philippians 1:19,25,26; 2:24), he was released from his 1st imprisonment around 63 AD. Just as he had promised the Philippians (Phil. 2:19-23), he sent Timothy to Philippi to tell them the good news of his release. Paul himself went to Ephesus (in spite of his earlier expectation that he would see them no more as mentioned in Acts 20:38) and then he went to other Asian churches like Colossae (see Philemon 22).

When Timothy rejoined him in Ephesus, Paul instructed his assistant to "remain in Ephesus" (1 Timothy 1:3) while he journeyed to Macedonia. When he saw that he might be delayed in Macedonia, Paul wrote 1 Timothy, probably from Philippi (1 Timothy 3:14,15). After he saw Timothy in Ephesus, the apostle journeyed to the island of Crete where, after a period of ministry, he left Titus to continue the work (Titus 1:5).

From Corinth, Paul wrote his epistle to Titus, because Zenas and Apollos were making a journey that would take them by way of Crete (Titus 3:13). He instructed Titus to join him in Nicopolis after the arrival of his replacement in Crete (Titus 3:12).

If he went to Spain as he had planned (Romans 15:24,28), Paul probably departed after his winter in Nicopolis. There is significant historical evidence that Paul did indeed go to Spain and even Britain and France, and he may have been there from 64 to 66 AD.

He returned to Greece and Asia – to Corinth, Miletus, and Troas (2 Timothy 4:13,20) and may have been arrested in Troas where he left his valuable books and parchments (2 Timothy 4:13,15). After his arrest, Paul was imprisoned in Rome where he wrote 2 Timothy from his prison cell (some say in the Mamertine prison). He was put to death in 67 or 68 AD.

So, Paul probably wrote 1 Timothy and Titus in 65 or 67 AD (depending on when you place the trip to Spain and Britain), and 2 Timothy in 67 or 68 AD.

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The exterior of the Mamertine Prison, the traditional site of Paul's final imprisonment in Rome. I suspect it's been refurbished quite a bit since the time of Paul.

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Place of Origin and Destination

1 Timothy 1:3 seems to indicate that Paul was in Macedonia when he wrote that Epistle to Timothy in Ephesus. Second Timothy was written from prison in Rome, shortly before the apostle's death, to Timothy who was still at Ephesus. We have no clear indication as to where the Epistle to Titus was written from (most assume Corinth). But Titus was on the Island of Crete when Paul wrote to him.

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Purpose

These Epistles are called "pastoral" because they are addressed to pastors of churches to outline their pastoral duties (or actually Timothy and Titus oversaw the many pastors of the churches at Ephesus and on Crete). Breaking them down into simplest form, these responsibilities were basically twofold: to defend sound doctrine and maintain sound discipline or living.

To be more specific, Paul says he had urged Timothy "to abide still at Ephesus, when I went into Macedonia, that thou mightest charge some that they teach no other doctrine," in 1 Timothy 1:3. Paul also deals with many problems that would arise in a church and gives advice as to how they should be handled.

The purpose of 2 Timothy includes a more personal nature. Paul is in prison at Rome, awaiting his expected execution. He longs to see his "son" Timothy (1:4). He is getting cold in the dungeon and urges Timothy to come before winter (4:21) and bring the warm coat Paul left at Troas, and his books and parchments (4:13). He wants to study.

Because the two letters of 1st and 2nd Timothy were written to an individual whom Paul loved dearly, they provide us with some valuable insights into his life and character. But, we know that Paul is also speaking to the church at Ephesus, and indeed to all the churches of Jesus Christ even today.

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Theological Emphasis

Once again, the fact that salvation is through God's grace rather than our own good works is clearly asserted (2Tim 1:9; Titus 3:5). Closely related to this is the teaching that eternal life comes by faith in Jesus Christ (1Tim 1:16).

More precisely than anywhere else it is stated: "For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus" (1Tim 2:5). It is also declared that this Mediator gave himself "as a ransom for all men" (v. 6).

Here the doctrine of the atonement comes through clearly as it does in many of his other epistles. By his coming, Christ has "abolished death and has brought life and immortality to light through the gospel" (2Tim 1:10).

The divine inspiration of the Scriptures is stated in the Pastorals more forcefully than anywhere else in the NT. We read in 2 Tim. 3:16, "All scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:"

The pastoral Epistles are primarily practical rather than theological. The emphasis lies on the defense of doctrine rather than on its clarification or elaboration. The distinctively doctrinal passages comprise only a small part of the whole; probably because Timothy and Titus had already been thoroughly disciplined and taught.

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Summary of 1st Timothy

In his first letter to Timothy, Paul seeks to guide his younger assistant Timothy in his weighty responsibility as the overseer of the work at Ephesus and other Asian cities. He writes, in effect, a challenge to Timothy to fulfill the task before him: combating false teaching with sound doctrine, developing qualified leadership, rightly dividing and teaching God's word, and exhorting the saints to proper Christian conduct.

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Outline

- I. Paul's Charge to Timothy (Ch. 1)
- II. Paul's Charge Concerning Public Worship (Ch. 2, 3)
- III. Paul's Charge Concerning False Teachers (Ch. 4)
- IV. Paul's Charge Concerning Church Discipline (Ch. 5)
- V. Paul's Charge Concerning Pastoral Motives (Ch. 6)

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Commentary on 1 Timothy

I. Paul's Charge to Timothy (1:1-20)

Timothy is in Ephesus at the time Paul wrote this letter. He was pastoring one of the largest of Paul's churches. The "grievous wolves" that Paul had warned the Ephesian elders about in Acts 20, about 4 years earlier had probably begun to invade this church.

Acts 20:29,30 For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. 30 Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them.

And Paul had left Timothy at Ephesus to deal with the situation. His letter was intended to strengthen Timothy's hand and guide him in the steps he should take.

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A. Paul's Past Charge to Timothy (1:1-11)

1) Salutation (1:1, 2)

Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the commandment of God our Saviour, and Lord Jesus Christ, which is our hope; ²Unto Timothy, my own son in the faith: Grace, mercy, and peace, from God our Father and Jesus Christ our Lord.

Paul's greeting identifies God and Christ as One and the same. And points out that outside of Christ we have no hope. Paul also states clearly that he is an apostle of Jesus Christ. Timothy obviously already was aware of that. But, maybe Paul intended this letter to be read by those that Timothy was overseeing and they needed a reminder of Paul's authority? He was also giving Timothy his authority there in Ephesus to deal with the problems there.

What is an “apostle”? I don’t want to just assume you know what it means. The Greek word was *apostolos* and meant “a delegate or ambassador”. They were called by and sent by Christ Himself.

Luke 6:13 And when it was day, he called *unto him* his disciples: and of them he chose twelve, whom also he named apostles;

John 20:21 ²¹Then said Jesus to them again, Peace *be* unto you: as *my* Father hath sent me, even so send I you.

There are 4 generally accepted characteristics of an apostle (From Easton’s Bible Dictionary):

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(1) That they should have seen the Lord, and been able to testify of him and of his resurrection from personal knowledge (John 15:27; Acts 1:21,22; 1 Cor. 9:1; Acts 22:14, 15).

(2) **They must have been directly called to that office by Christ** (Luke 6:13; Gal. 1:1). This is the ultimate distinction that makes an apostle of Christ.

(3) It was essential that they should be infallibly inspired, and thus secured against all error and mistake in their public teaching, whether by word or by writing (John 14:26; 16:13; 1 Thess. 2:13).

(4) Another qualification was the power of working miracles (Mark 16:20; Acts 2:43; 1 Cor. 12:8-11).

So, do we still have apostles today? NO! The apostles therefore could have had no successors. They had to be called directly by Christ. The office of an apostle ceased with its first holders.

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Paul also addresses Timothy as his own son in the faith. Paul had led him to Christ, probably on his 1st missionary journey now about 20 years earlier. As far as we know, Paul had no natural born son, but in Timothy he had someone who took that place. You can tell that Timothy had a special place in Paul’s heart.

Philippians 2:22 ²²...as a son with the father, he hath served with me in the gospel.

1 Corinthians 4:17 ¹⁷For this cause have I sent unto you **Timotheus, who is my beloved son, and faithful in the Lord, ...**

Paul reserved the salutation “Grace, mercy, and peace” for his personal pastoral epistles to Timothy and Titus. He didn’t include “mercy” in his church epistles. Why? Maybe it’s because a Pastor needs mercy considering all he needs to deal with!

2) Suppression of False Teachers (1:3-7)

As I besought thee to abide still at Ephesus, when I went into Macedonia, that thou mightest charge (which means to command) **some that they teach no other doctrine,** ⁴**Neither give heed to fables and endless genealogies, which minister questions, rather than godly edifying which is in faith: so do.**

The indication here is that, because of false teachings that were invading the church at Ephesus, Paul left Timothy there to combat it, as he went into Macedonia (the three churches there are Philippi, Thessalonica, and Berea).

Paul reminds Timothy why he left him there: “that thou mightest charge some that they teach no other doctrine.” Is doctrine important? It is vital! Doctrine is vital! If we lose the truth, we’ve lost everything.

2 John 1:9 ⁹**Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son.**

Acts 2:42 ⁴²**And they continued stedfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.**

Again, what we believe is vital. As a New Testament church we are the pillar and ground of the truth. If we lose the truth, who’s going to pass it on to the next generation?

A story is told of a woman and her child who were traveling by train across the prairies in subzero weather. The woman kept on anxiously looking about her, worried about missing her stop. The conductor assured her that he would see her off the train at the right stop. A fellow traveler, a salesman, also tried to reassure her by saying, “I travel this line frequently, lady. I know every station and whistle-stop. If the conductor forgets, I’ll make sure you get off at the right place.”

Soon the salesman said, “Yours will be the next stop.” After a while the train came to a halt. There was no sign of the conductor. “This is where you get off, lady. I’ll help you out with your bags.” It was dark and snowing hard, and there was no one in sight. But the fellow passenger assured the frightened woman, “They’ll have heard the train. They’ll be along in a minute. This has to be your stop.” He climbed back on board as the train pulled away.

A while later, the conductor came through the car. “Where’s the lady with the child?” he asked. “I helped her off at the last stop”, said the salesman. “That was her stop and you weren’t here.” “That was no station!” cried the conductor. “We were held up by a signal. There are no houses for miles around.” The engineer stopped the train and backed it up. They found the woman and her child frozen to death. They were victims of false information from a sincere source.

People who teach false doctrine, whether in sincerity or in deliberate deceitfulness are as dangerous as that salesman. And people who listen to such teachers are in danger of ending up in hell for eternity as they believe what they're taught and they place their trust in false doctrine. So it was important for Timothy to put a stop to the propagation of false doctrine at Ephesus." (and just as important for us to do so today.)

It appears that there were some there at Ephesus who had drifted or turned away from the truth that Paul had taught them and had turned aside to what Paul calls in v. 4, "fables" and "endless genealogies".

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The word translated as "fables" is *muthos*, which can be rendered "hoary old myths". A fable is a fictitious story, probably Jewish legends (such as some of those in the Apocrypha).

The word "genealogies" probably doesn't refer to the legitimate, God-inspired genealogies and family trees that are scattered throughout the Bible. These scriptural genealogies serve useful purposes, and are a part of God's inspired book.

Zodhiates (Greek scholar) thinks the endless genealogies mean "busy-ing oneself with traditions of the past based upon the slightest historical hints which diverted the heart from God's truth. Not treating the genealogies as historical documents, but subjecting the names, dates, and places to a highly symbolic interpretive scheme with hidden meanings which became the basis for esoteric doctrines." As far as Paul was concerned these were mere fables that raised more questions than they answered.

Just what exactly these fables and endless genealogies were I don't think we can be exactly sure, but Paul rejected them because whatever they were, they invited questions and interfered with godly edifying. Listen, legitimate questions will come up.

What Paul is denouncing are those questions raised by those who trifle with the word of God, who ask questions for the sake of causing arguments. Many a pastor or teacher has had to deal with the person who comes up after the message to quarrel over a nonessential issue. Those are issues that, whether they're settled one way or another really don't make any eternal difference. But to bring them up and argue over them just promotes a divisive spirit and does nothing to edify us.

And as teachers, we need to be careful we aren't spending our time "splitting hairs" or teaching material that simply raises questions for the sake of making us look "scholarly". Paul frequently emphasized **edification** in his epistles, and that word **edify** means to build up spiritually. Our focus always needs to be on the Great Commission; getting the gospel out to the lost, getting those baptized that get saved, and then discipling (edifying) those that get saved.

1:5-7 ⁵Now the end of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned: ⁶From which some having swerved have turned aside unto vain jangling (random talking); ⁷Desiring to be teachers of the law; understanding neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm.

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In verse 5, Paul points out that the whole object of God's commands is love out of a clean or pure heart, an uncorrupted conscience, and an unpolluted faith. This is exactly what Christ was telling a lawyer from the Pharisees when he asked Christ what is the great commandment:

Matthew 22:36-39 ³⁶Master, which is the great commandment in the law? ³⁷Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. ³⁸This is the first and great commandment. ³⁹And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

If a person's heart, soul, and mind are right with God, loving Him with all of his heart, soul, and mind; and loving those around him as himself; he's fulfilled the intent of the law and he's not going to be very far off from fulfilling the letter of the law.

Romans 13:8 ⁸Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law.

But, these "wolves" at Ephesus had swerved away from the true intent and "end" of the law. They instead wanted to promote questions and quarrels and these legalizers began to teach the law in a manner that it was never intended to be used.

Legalists miss the whole point of salvation in Christ, which is that it is a lost sinner coming to his or her senses and realizing they can't do a thing to earn their own salvation; that they are completely lost and headed to hell; that Christ is their only hope; and that they can receive His salvation only by repenting of their old ways and putting all of their faith only in Christ to save them.

Notice their desire to be teachers. They had a desire for the lime-light and the respect that teachers can sometimes be given. By their very motive, they were revealed for what they were: hirelings who were only in the ministry for what their flesh could get out of it.

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3) The Purpose of the Law (1:8-11)

1:8-11 ⁸But we know that the law *is* good, if a man use it lawfully; ⁹Knowing 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, ¹⁰For whoremongers, for them that defile themselves with mankind (arsenokoites: homosexuals), for menstealers, for liars, for perjured persons, and if there be any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine; ¹¹According to the glorious gospel of the blessed God, which was committed to my trust.

The Law serves a great purpose: mainly to show us our sin and how wicked we really are. It was intended to show us what holiness is, it wasn't intended to make us holy. It shows the us, the lawless and disobedient, the ungodly and sinners our lost condition.

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

Galatians 3:19,24 ¹⁹Wherefore 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. ²⁴Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster *to bring us* unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.

And Paul gets very specific and names some very specific sins. Some things like homosexuality that the world would say is OK today. But no matter what the world says, God is against these sins. Legalists major on minors and insist on their petty little rules and laws. Here, some of the Jews wanted to appear an authority on the Law of Moses, but in their fleshly carnal minds, they were emphasizing the Law in a way it was never intended to be used.

In verse 11, Paul declares that this gospel was "committed to my trust." Again and again he repeats this assertion (1Cor 9:17; Gal 2:7; 1Thess 2:4). He never forgets what great responsibility that was and how much grace God had in calling him.

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B. Christ's Past Charge to Paul (1:12-17)

1) God's Abundant Grace (1:12-14)

1:12-14 ¹²And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry; ¹³Who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious: but I obtained mercy, because I did *it* ignorantly in unbelief. ¹⁴And the grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus.

After blowing the whistle on the legalistic false teachers at Ephesus, Paul in humility says that it's only by God's grace that he is no longer a part of that which he has just condemned. And instead he is entrusted by Christ to be a defender of the truth of the gospel.

Notice several things:

- 1) That it was Christ who enabled Paul to be faithful and to accomplish all that he had.
- 2) Paul was counted faithful by Christ even before he was called into the ministry. Can Christ see faithfulness in us?
- 3) It was Christ who had put him into the ministry. Not like the false teachers who wanted to be in it for their own selfish reasons. Anyone who in the ministry has to be called of God; otherwise their motives are all wrong, they'll lack the power of Christ, and they'll either end up quitting or causing a whole lot of ship-wrecked lives in those who follow them.

In verse 13 Paul says he was a "blasphemer", meaning that he cursed the name of Jesus. He was also "a persecutor." In his zeal to protect his religion, Judaism, he believed he had to destroy Christianity. But, even worse, he was "injurious", which refers to acts of violence (Acts 8:3). For several years, Saul had acted like a madman. During his rampage, homes had been wrecked, wives had been widowed, parents had been sent to prison, and children had been made orphans.

And yet, God saved him! Have we ever witnessed to someone like Saul was before he got saved? I think I can safely say we haven't. Think of the worst response you ever got while witnessing: It was nothing compared to what you'd have gotten witnessing to Saul. And yet look at what God had in store for him. The initial response we get from someone is not the end of the story.

Paul tells us he persecuted the church "ignorantly in unbelief". As a lost person, he was blinded and really had no understanding of what he was actually doing. Christ was merciful to him and we need to be merciful to those whose response to our witnessing to them isn't what we'd like, remembering they too are lashing out at us in ignorance and unbelief, blinded by the god of this world.

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2) The Worst of Sinners (1:15-17)

1:15-17 ¹⁵This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief. ¹⁶Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might show forth all longsuffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting. ¹⁷Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen.

He points out in verse 15 that the purpose for which Christ came into this world the first time was "to save sinners". Other people are born into the world without any choosing of their own to be born. But He, the Creator of the universe is the only person in history to choose the time, place, and circumstances of his own birth. All for just one primary purpose: "to save sinners".

Paul considered himself the chiefest of sinners. Even though he won perhaps more people to Christ and started more churches than any of the other apostles, he never forgot the grace of God in saving him and in using him.

It's not that he couldn't accept the forgiveness of God for what he'd done, or that he couldn't forgive himself; he chose to not forget what God had saved him from to keep himself humble as he witnessed and ministered to people in the darkest of sins.

In verse 16, Paul calls attention to something that we should consider very carefully. That is that there is a purpose to our life, and that God saves us to serve Him with a purpose. We aren't saved to just sit around until we die and go to heaven.

He states that God had saved him to become a pattern for all other believers who would come along later. If God could save and use him, God could save and use anyone.

And he stresses that the example was more of what God was doing for him than what he was doing for God.

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In verse 17, Paul, overwhelmed with the thoughts of God's grace, makes a declaration of praise that also declares the Deity of Christ.

He first describes Christ as the "King eternal", which was a dangerous statement to write at that time in the Roman Empire. But, Christ has always been King, and He will never cease to be the King of this universe until He delivers up the kingdom to the Father (1 Cor 15:28, Rev 21:3). He then will reign again in eternity with the Father (Rev 21:22,23)

He secondly describes Christ as "immortal". This word means more than not dying. It is the Greek word *aphthartos*, which means, "incorruptible or not liable to corruption or decay." Physically or morally.

Thirdly, Christ is "invisible". This is where we usually have our problems. We can understand what we can see, but it's a lot more difficult to grasp that which we can't see, except by faith.

"The only wise God". In Him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge (Col 2:3). Isaiah 9:6 declares of him, "Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, the Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." His way is perfect and He makes no mistakes as He works the minutest details of our lives out according to His will and His plan.

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One commentator put it this way:

“He is wise enough and knowledgeable enough to plan the creation of the universe. He has wisdom enough to decide the size, speed, and orbits of a hundred billion galaxies. He has wisdom and knowledge enough to hold positively charged protons together in an atom’s nucleus; enough wisdom and knowledge to create DNA, the very code of life itself that determines every physical characteristic of every living, reproducing being; and wisdom and knowledge enough to control all the factors of time, matter, and space and to hold them in proper balance so that all things work out according to the counsels of His will. To control the circumstances and interactions of 6 billion people all on earth at one time so that each one experiences exactly what He determines is best for each of them.”

No wonder Paul says, that unto Him should be “honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen.”

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C. First Charge: “War a Good Warfare” (1:18-20)

1:18-20 ¹⁸This charge (mandate or command) I commit (set before) unto thee, son Timothy, according to the prophecies which went before on thee, that thou by them mightest war a good warfare; ¹⁹Holding faith, and a good conscience; which some having put away concerning faith have made shipwreck: ²⁰Of whom is Hymenaeus and Alexander; whom I have delivered unto Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme.

Here again Paul speaks to Timothy as a son. Paul charges Timothy to “war a good warfare” against the wolves who had entered the church at Ephesus. Paul’s charge was committed unto Timothy “according to the prophecies which went on before thee.” Paul was reminding him of the prophecies made at the time he was ordained that he’ll mention again in (1 Timothy 4:14).

In verse 19, using the phrase “Holding faith” (pistis), Paul probably had in mind not only the great body of truth that we call “the faith”, but also faith in the respect of trusting in Christ for deliverance. A “good conscience” probably means being right with God.

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I.K. Cross states, “Conscience is that faculty given us to determine good from bad, but it may be cultivated, or seared so that it no longer has feeling. It is only a safe guide when we are willing to know the word of God. We can train it to condone us in any action we please if we are not interested in the truth. It was important to Paul that Timothy fight with a *good* conscience.”

In verse 19, Paul goes on to say that “some having put away concerning faith have made shipwreck.” It implies that some had willingly violated their consciences. They had deliberately rejected the truth they had once professed to believe.

Paul then names two men who had made themselves wrecked ships spiritually. Hymenaeus and Alexander. Were these men saved? If Paul is concerned that they learn not to blaspheme, maybe they were. Many commentators say they were apostates. These two are mentioned again in 2 Timothy: (2 Timothy 2:17,18: 2 Timothy 4:14). Evidently they didn’t learn their lesson when delivered over to satan to be exposed to his destruction. So, perhaps they were apostates.

Just what does it mean when Paul says “I have delivered unto satan,”? The language here is similar to that found in 1 Corinthians 5:5, where it seems to indicate removing them from the church. The purpose was to jolt the offender into repentance, as they are exposed to satan’s attacks unprotected. It is a disciplinary action in both cases (here and in 1 Corinthians), to help them get right with God.

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II. Paul’s Charge Concerning Public Worship (2:1-3:16)

Paul now gets down to the nuts and bolts of warring this good warfare. How do we do it? The first thing he mentions is prayer. Praying for all men and especially our rulers. Think about who was ruler of the Roman Empire at that time: none other than Nero! Whether the ruler is evil or deemed by us to be good, we need to pray for them either way.

A. Prayer in Public Worship (2:1-8)

1-4 - I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; ²For kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. ³For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; ⁴Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.

Paul emphasizes the importance of our prayer life with his use of the words “I **exhort** therefore, that, **first of all**”. Prayer is primary: it is our line of communication with God. He also points out that our prayers should not be just asking for something, but should be made with thanksgiving. Thanking God for what He’s already done as we ask Him to do more. In the Psalms, David frequently intersperses prayers of thanksgiving with his prayers of desperate need. Thanksgiving keeps our love for God strong as we see all He’s done for us, it keeps our perspective right, our attitude right, and gives God the glory.

Understanding the difference between supplications and prayers is difficult. “Supplications” has to do with asking God for something specific. They are petitions that have our personal needs in view, and this word can be used of asking anyone for something.

“Prayers” refers to prayers offered to God that involve an awareness of God’s power and an emphasis on personal devotion, because this word is never used of asking anyone other than God.

“Intercessions” means to intreat. To intercede is to come into the presence of God on behalf of others.

A commentator (Phillips) wrote: “We do not know how prayer works, but we know that it does. We pray; God hears. He gives our prayers their due weight as He balances all of the forces and factors involved in the situation about which we are praying. Sometimes He says yes; sometimes He says no; sometimes His answer is to wait. We can rest assured that He is too wise to make mistakes, too loving to be unkind, and too powerful to be thwarted.”

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The object of our prayers should be “all men”, everyone. Someone once said: “No person exists on this crowded planet in whom God does not have a personal interest. He would have us be ready to pray for anyone anywhere at any time.”

In verse 2, Paul narrows it down to say that we should pray for people in government so that we can continue to have freedom of religion and are allowed to live for God in a quiet and peaceable manner for the ultimate purpose that souls can be saved (which is where Paul is heading to in verse 4).

When Paul states, “for kings”, he certainly had in mind Nero, one of the most notoriously wicked rulers in all of history. God Himself sets up kings and governments according to His eternal purposes. If we live under a certain government, it’s because it’s God’s will. But here Paul implies that our prayers can either influence or even change how that government behaves and treats Christians.

In verse 4, the word translated as “will” means to wish or desire. It’s God’s desire that all men get saved. But, He’s given us all a free will and the choice is ours. How can both Calvinism and this statement be true?

One commentator (Barne’s Notes) puts it this way: “God wills that all people should be saved. It is in accordance with his benevolent nature. He has made ample provision for it. He uses all proper means to secure their salvation and if they are not saved it will be their own fault.”

Ezekiel 33:11 ¹¹Say unto them, As I live, saith the Lord GOD, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live: turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel?

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2:5-8 ⁵For *there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus;* ⁶Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time. ⁷Whereunto 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. ⁸I will therefore that men pray every where, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting.

Verse 5 is one of the most significant verses of the NT. It declares first of all that "there is one God.", which is one of the primary teachings of the Old Testament. Monotheism is the basic premise of both Judaism and Christianity, and even Islam (although their God is not Jehovah). But then comes the big difference between them. Christianity goes on to assert that "there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus."

The word for "mediator" occurs only once in the Old Testament, in Job 9:33. The basic meaning of mediator refers to a go-between, one whose office is to reconcile two parties who are at enmity with each other. Job referred to wanting such a mediator in Job 9:32,33

Job 9:32,33 ³²For *he is not a man, as I am, that I should answer him, and we should come together in judgment.* ³³Neither is there any daysman (mediator) betwixt us, *that might lay his hand upon us both.*

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Verse 6 tells us Christ gave Himself a ransom for all. The word translated as "ransom" is *antilytron* and it occurs only this once in the New Testament. It means "what is given in exchange for another as the price of his redemption" (Thayer). In the first century the simple word *lytron* was used for the ransom price paid to free a slave. Paul added the prefix anti- which signifies substitution and means "instead of". So Christ gave Himself as the ransom to free us from the slavery of sin. Because of this we are rightfully his possession.

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Paul emphasizes the truth that Christ gave himself a ransom for all mankind—for Jews and Gentiles. We take that for granted today, that Gentiles were to be included in salvation merely by faith in Christ. But even the saved Jews at that time were resistant to it. Its hinted at in the Old Testament in several places, but it's called by Paul a "mystery" in his epistles that isn't totally revealed until the New Testament times, "to be testified in due time". So, now the time had come when it should be fully made known to all.

Then, Paul writes in verse 7, “whereunto”, he emphasizes that he tells the truth when he says that, although he is a Jew, he has been ordained of God as a preacher and an apostle to take this vital message to the Gentiles. Those despicable Gentiles!

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I.K. Cross writes, “There is an important lesson for us here. We must never forget that we are held accountable to God to see that all races receive the same gospel message that we have received. This is why we send missionaries around the world and have an obligation to support them in their efforts.”

In verse 8, because of this responsibility, Paul adds that he wishes that men pray every where (not just in the temple), without resentment or argument about this very important duty to get the gospel to all peoples, without prejudice. The word translated as “doubting” means, debating or disputing. No more arguing about whether the Gentiles should receive the gospel, no more disputing about whether this people group or that people group is worthy of having missionaries sent to them.

There was a time when **William Carey**, considered by many to be the “father” of modern missions was rebuked by an older pastor for wanting to take the gospel to the heathen. In 1792 He relayed his vision to plant the Gospel among the Hindus in India. He was considered a fanatic and an embarrassment. This was at a time when Calvinism was taking a foothold in England. One older pastor rebuked him and said, "Young man, sit down! When God pleases to convert the heathen He will do it without your help or mine!" Wow!

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B. Women in Public Worship (2:9-15)

After telling men how they should conduct themselves in church services in verse 8, Paul directs his instruction to women.

2:9-15 ⁹In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness (it means modesty towards men and reverence towards God) and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array; ¹⁰But (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works. ¹¹Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection. ¹²But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence. ¹³For Adam was first formed, then Eve. ¹⁴And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression. ¹⁵Notwithstanding she shall be saved in childbearing, if they continue in faith and charity and holiness with sobriety.

In verses 9 and 10, Paul wants women to not emphasize their outward appearance or draw attention to themselves. But to adorn themselves with good works instead of focusing so much on their appearance. To let their behavior, their godliness, be what people notice, not their outward physical appearance.

His primary point in verse 9 is that a woman's apparel or clothing should be modest: it should not be revealing or draw attention to her body. It shouldn't be anything that would cause a man's attention to be drawn to her body and incite lust. It leaves a lot of leeway. It doesn't say women have to wear a black dress only or be covered from head to toe.

Regarding her countenance and behavior, Paul uses the words shamfacedness and sobriety. Paul isn't urging women to go around looking ashamed of themselves.

Shamefacedness is from the Greek word *aidoôs*, which means modesty towards men and awe or reverence towards God. This would be the opposite of flirting.

Sobriety is from a Greek word that simply means "self-control", behavior representing a meek and quiet spirit. This would be the opposite of aggressive.

The reference to "not with broided hair, or gold, or costly array" isn't saying she can't do anything with her hair or wear makeup. But these practices were excessive adornments that were obviously expensive and were obviously designed to draw undue attention to herself.

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Verses 11 and 12 have been ignored by countless woman preachers throughout the past century (especially within Charismatic circles). And many other women who haven't ignored them have gotten deeply offended by them. Why is it that submissiveness is considered weakness? Why is it looked down upon?

Remember, submissiveness is also Christ-likeness. Christ submitted to the will of the Father while on earth. In the garden He prayed, "Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless, not my will, but thine, be done." People often accuse Paul of being antagonistic towards women, citing his silencing of women in the church in 1 Corinthians 14:34,35

1 Corinthians 14:33-36 ³³For God is not *the author* of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints. ³⁴Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but *they are commanded* to be under obedience, as also saith the law. ³⁵And if they will learn any thing, let them ask their husbands at home: for it is a shame for women to speak in the church. ³⁶What? came the word of God out from you? or came it unto you only?

The feminist's fight isn't with Paul, but with God. These verses wouldn't be in the Bible if God didn't want them there. In fact, we know that Paul had a warm regard for women in the churches he worked amongst. Remember how he wrote of Phoebe, Priscilla, and other women in Romans 16.

Paul is simply restating the role of a husband and wife, here within the confines of the church. God has given men and women different roles, with the husband being placed in a position of authority within marriage (that doesn't mean a single man has any authority over a single woman). And within the church, God has placed the man in a position of authority as well. Paul is telling us that a woman should not teach or in any way usurp authority over a man within a local church setting.

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In other words, a woman should never stand before men to teach them or preach to them. She can certainly teach or even preach to women (4 daughters of Philip the evangelist in Acts 21:

Acts 21:8,9 ⁸And the next *day* we that were of Paul's company departed, and came unto Caesarea: and we entered into the house of Philip the evangelist, which was *one* of the seven; and abode with him. ⁹And the same man had four daughters, virgins, which did prophesy.

These ladies were proclaiming the truth of the word of God: to other women. And remember also that Paul instructed older women to "teach" younger women (Titus 2:4,5).

So, women teaching and even preaching to other women in a women's class is scriptural, but women teaching or preaching with men around is not. For a woman to give a testimony at church is probably alright, but if they're not careful it can slip into the women using it to exhort others (in other words to preach to others, including the men) to do something they feel strongly about.

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In verses 13-15, Paul takes us back to Genesis and reminds us that God made Adam first and put him into the position of leadership. But then in verse 14 he reminds us that Eve, the woman was the one who was deceived.

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Author Virginia Fugate, in her book, "The Other Side of the Garden", wrote (now this a woman giving a woman's perspective, and I think she does an outstanding job, so I included it): "By eating the fruit the woman was, in a sense, doing what was natural to her, following leadership. But she didn't follow the leadership of the Lord, nor did she follow the leadership of her husband. Instead, she followed the leadership of a seducer. When she ate the forbidden fruit, she showed that she considered her own opinion to be more valid than God's word. The woman's fall into Satan's trap reveals her weakest and most vulnerable areas of temptation: an intense desire for knowledge and self-rule. (I didn't write that, remember, she did)

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Additionally, a woman lacks discernment of Satan's deceptive tactics, and therefore is easily deceived. The easiest way to deceive a woman is to appeal to her lust for superior knowledge, or to tempt her with an offer of autonomy (self-rule). Although the woman was deceived, the man was not. Whereas Satan had aimed temptation at Eve's head, he directed temptation toward Adam's heart. The devil didn't tempt Adam directly, he let Eve do it.

The woman had such a powerful influence on the man that she was able to tempt him to choose, knowingly and willingly, to disobey God. And when the man followed the woman's lead, he revealed his weakest and most vulnerable area of temptation: the woman. The easiest way to tempt a man to fall away from God's will is by appealing to his desire for the woman. This desire is so strong that a man will even abandon his own principles to follow the wishes of a woman."

How many men have been called to preach or be a missionary, but didn't respond to that call because the woman they wanted to marry or were already married to wouldn't go along? Of course, the fact that a woman is ruled by her heart does not mean that a woman cannot think; we've all met some women who can outthink most men and are less easily deceived than most men.

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Verse 15 is more difficult ("Notwithstanding she shall be saved in childbearing, if they continue in faith and charity and holiness with sobriety."). Thousands of godly women have *not* been "kept physically safe through childbirth."

The word "saved" in the New Testament does not always mean salvation from sin. It's used in connection with deliverance from danger in Matthew 8:25, from death in Luke 23:35, and from sickness in Matthew 9:22.

There are as many interpretations of this verse as there are commentaries.

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The two major ones are:

- 1) That the reference is to the birth of Christ, through whom salvation has come to the world.
- 2) Another suggests that if she surrenders to the design God appointed for her by submitting to and accepting motherhood, she would be saved from becoming a prey to the deceits of Satan again to usurp the authority God has placed over her and she would take her part in the maintenance of the testimony of the church.

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C. Qualifications of Bishops (3:1-7)

Paul now turns to a different topic, the organization of the church. He mentions two kinds of offices, the pastor (and here he uses the word bishop) and deacons, and outlines the qualifications of both.

3:1-7 ¹This is a true saying, If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work. ²A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach; ³Not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous; ⁴One 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?) ⁶Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil. ⁷Moreover he must have a good report of them which are without; lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.

In verse 1, Paul is not saying it's OK for someone to have the desire for position or power that comes with being a pastor. No true shepherd of a church takes the position because he came up with the idea himself, because he wanted power and the position: that's a hireling. All true pastors are called of God and answer that call. God puts within their heart that desire to pastor, to shepherd a flock. (Acts 13:2 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. Acts 20:28 which we'll read below.)

Paul is telling Timothy that if a man comes forward and says he's called of God to pastor, that he desires the office of the pastor, that's a good desire if God put it into his heart, but that Timothy and we should all examine him and make sure he has meets the following qualifications. Just wanting to be a pastor and saying we are called of God doesn't make us qualified.

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There are 3 New Testament words for the office of the Pastor:

1) Elder (presbuteros); which simply means older or senior. Some today take it to mean only those in the church who are older in Christ, and not necessarily pastors, but the N.T. is clear that it was also an ordained office of overseeing the church, in other words, it was another name for the office of the pastor:

Acts 20:17,28 ¹⁷And from Miletus he sent to Ephesus, and called the elders of the church. ²⁸Take 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.

They were ordained into this office of an elder: **Titus 1:5** ⁵For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed thee:

They were to feed the flock of God, which is a great description of the office of the pastor: **1 Peter 5:1-5** ¹The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder,... ²Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; ³Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock.

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2) Bishop (episkopeô); which means superintendent or overseer. Occurs 3 times in the NT:

1 Timothy 3:1,2 ¹This is a true saying, If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work. ²A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach;

Titus 1:7 ⁷For a bishop must be blameless, as the steward of God; not selfwilled, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre;

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3) Pastor (poimeôn); which means a shepherd. Is found only once in the New Testament (but, its verb form, poimaino: to feed or to shepherd, is used 4 times):

Ephesians 4:11 ¹¹And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;

So, why are there 3 different names in the New Testament for the same office? Because each name for pastor gives us a different description of the office. The name elder describes the pastor as an older example to the flock; someone who's been around the block a few times, able to lead because of their vast experience. The name bishop describes the leadership role he is to have; ruling the body of Christ. The name pastor describes his role as shepherd, watching out for, and taking care of the flock. If you're still having trouble accepting the 3 different names for the same office, remember all 3 names are used in the passage in Acts 20 when Paul addresses the pastors there:

Acts 20:17,28 ¹⁷And from Miletus he sent to Ephesus, and called the elders (*presbuteros*) of the church. ²⁸Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers (*episkopos*: bishop), to feed (*poimaino*: pastor) the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.

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The qualifications of the pastor are given in verses 2-7:

Blameless: meaning irreproachable, his character and reputation must be spotless. His character is as important if not more than his abilities. This doesn't mean a pastor has to be perfect, which is impossible, but that he should live in a manner that gives no justifiable grounds for accusations. He needs to be above reproach.

The husband of one wife: meaning he must be married! Celibacy for pastors is ridiculous. A divorced man is not qualified, even if he remarries. A man whose wife has died who remarries is qualified. John Phillips writes: "God wants a man to hold a church office only if he is attached solely and wholly to his wife. Nothing will ruin a man's ministry more quickly than infidelity."

Vigilant: meaning exercising caution and self-control. Careful.

Sober: meaning sober-minded and serious, well-behaved and dignified; one who has a sound mind and draws wise conclusions. He likes to have all the facts before making a decision. So a pastor should be known for his discretion, he shouldn't jump to conclusions.

Of good behavior: They need to also be wise in their conduct. This Greek word means "orderly", suggesting a man who has a disciplined life. Who could respect a pastor who is undisciplined, who is always late for meetings, forgets appointments, and breaks promises?

Given to hospitality: this basic meaning of this word is "love of strangers". To be hospitable is to help strangers without thought of reward.

Apt to teach: The Greek word translated here means "skilled in teaching". And the ability to rightly divide the word of truth and teach it is not acquired overnight. But there is a difference also between acquired teaching skills and a Holy Spirit-endowed gift to teach. Just because someone has acquired the necessary knowledge and techniques doesn't mean that he will be a good teacher.

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Not given to wine: a person given to alcohol is obviously not fit to be a pastor. But there can be other addictions that probably disqualify him as well.

Not greedy of filthy lucre: The love of money is the root of all evil and covetous is simply a form of idolatry. It is a lack of contentment with what God has provided us, it's telling God that His grace isn't sufficient for us.

Patient: the word translated as patient here suggests being mild, gentle and fair. Often a soft touch is needed from a pastor, and when firmness is required, a gentle hand.

Not a brawler: he must not be contentious. Not someone who enjoys getting into arguments.

Not covetous: this Greek word means "not money-loving". Covetousness focuses a person's attention on things rather than on people, on this world rather than on the world to come.

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One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity: A pastor's family can all but destroy his ministry if he doesn't heed this admonition. The word gravity suggests respect and dignity. It is the quality that inspires respect and awe in children as they contemplate their fathers. The reason for this rule is stated in verse 5: **For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?** The answer is obvious, he can't.

This is why a pastor needs to be married: He can learn lessons of how to deal with people by learning how to lead his family. If he can't keep the heart of his children, he apparently isn't fit to lead a church body.

Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil. The word novice literally means "newly planted", so we believe it means that a pastor is not to be a new convert. An inexperienced person is obviously not qualified to be a church leader.

Moreover he must have a good report of them which are without; lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil. Nothing could be worse for the testimony of a local church than to choose a pastor with a bad reputation. Notice that getting a pastor's reputation ruined is the snare of the devil. The devil is always trying to ruin the reputation of a pastor.

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D. Qualifications of Deacons (3:8-13)

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The Greek word translated here as deacons, is diakonos (1249), and simply means a servant, a waiter on tables or a runner of errands. It's used 28 times in the New Testament and a survey of these uses helps us to quickly see that it doesn't mean always the New Testament office of deacon within a local Baptist church as we think of it today. Just a few samples of it's uses are:

Matthew 20:26 ²⁶But it shall not be so^{G3779} among^{G1722} you: but whosoever^{G3739-G1437} will^{G2309} be great^{G3173} among^{G1722} you, let him be your^{G5216} minister (diakonos);

John 2:5 ⁵His mother^{G3384} saith^{G3004} unto the servants (diakonos), **Whatsoever**^{G3748-G302} he saith^{G3004} unto you, do^{G4160} it.

Romans 16:1 ¹I commend^{G4921} unto you Phebe^{G5402} our sister^{G79}, which is a servant (diakonos) of the church^{G1577} which^{G3588} is at^{G1722} Cenchrea^{G2747}:

The Greeks used the word diakonos to speak of any servant and obviously the word is translated many times in the New Testament without meaning the specific office in a New Testament church. But the fact that Paul refers to “the office of a deacon” here in verse 13 and that he’s giving specific qualifications, we know that here he’s speaking of an office within a New Testament church such as the 7 that were elected to it in Acts 6.

But notice that the word diakonos isn’t used at all in that passage! Those 7 are never referred to as deacons, but the words , diakonia, 1248 (“ministration”, a noun which means aid or service) and diakoneo, 1247 (“serve”, a verb which means to wait upon) are used:

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Acts 6:1 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 (*diakonia*).

2 Then the twelve called the multitude of the disciples *unto them*, and said, It is not reason that we should leave the word of God, and serve (*diakoneo*) tables.

3 Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business.

The point is, a deacon in the New Testament had no power or authority over a pastor as some wrongly do today in some Baptist churches where a “board of deacons” runs the church. They were simply helpers to the pastor to do the more mundane duties and to free the pastor up to focus on studying the word of God, preparing sermons, counseling, and prayer; and they answered to his authority just as any other member.

Why do the Deacons have to meet special qualifications? Because they might have been more visible to outsiders and other members alike, they had to meet specific qualifications as well to be both a good example to others in the church and a good testimony to the lost in their city. So, even though their duties might be mundane and even somewhat secular, their qualifications are quite spiritual and similar to those for pastors.

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Verse 8: he is to be “grave”, which means honorable or honest, not that he should go around with a sad face all the time. “Not doubletongued” means literally not saying different things to different people, but being sincere and consistent in his speech.

“Not given to much wine” is the same as for pastors: addictions to alcohol disqualify them. “Not greedy of filthy lucre” is also the same as for pastors. It would be a bad example for the congregation and a bad testimony for the lost community for a deacon to be greedy or a drinker. And that is the point: although the deacons have no authority in the church, they are in a position of visibility and therefore need to be good examples to the saved, and a good testimony to the lost.

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Verse 9: "Holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience." That's a mouthful. What it comes down to is that a deacon must be a man of the word. One who studies, respects, and tries to live it.

The word translated as mystery refers to the great plans and purposes of God that were not revealed in the Old Testament, but are the subject of New Testament revelation.

Verse 10: "And let these also first be proved; then let them use the office of a deacon, being *found* blameless." They also (like the pastor) are to be proved before they are promoted, in other words they're to be tested before being put in trust. They also cannot be novices.

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Even the wife of a deacon has requirements. Why? Although the wife of a pastor and deacon aren't responsible for the ministry of their husbands, they don't share the same calling, they are somewhat in ministry together, so the wife needs to be a good example and have a good testimony as well. Like it or not, if you're a pastor's wife, the ladies of the church will look up to you (or down on you depending on your character). They will be watching you: how you dress, how you raise your children, how you treat your husband, everything!

Verse 11: "Even so *must their wives be* grave, not slanderers, sober, faithful in all things." She must be "grave", which is honorable or honest. The first requirement of a deacon is also the first requirement listed for his wife.

Not a "slanderer" (*diabolos*) false accuser, which is one of the names for Satan. In fact, it's translated as devil or Satan 34 times in the New Testament. Anyone practicing slander within a local church is doing the work of satan.

"Sober" (meaning circumspect, temperate, or vigilant). She must be a steady, self-controlled person.

"Faithful in all things" (that means she is dependable and trustworthy). She's a Proverbs 31:11,12 kind of woman, "**The heart of her husband doth safely trust in her, so that he shall have no need of spoil. She will do him good and not evil all the days of her life.**" She can be trusted, she won't let him down.

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Verse 12: Just like the pastor, the deacon is to be the husband of one wife and properly raise his children ("ruling" them well) and running his family "well".

Verse 13 states that those who have served well as a deacon (“have used the office of a deacon well”) earn advancement (“purchase to themselves a good degree”) in the work of God. So, the office of deacon can be a stepping stone to greater things in the work of God.

In other words, those who have shown they have a servant’s heart earn the respect and confidence of those in the church and are then entrusted with more spiritual responsibility. Leaders must be servants! But notice also they purchase to themselves “great boldness in the faith”: they come to have great liberty of speech. They are living what they preach, they have the mind of Christ.

Two examples of deacons who advanced forward in the kingdom of God are Stephen and Philip. Stephen went on to become a bold evangelist and martyr. Philip went on to become the first missionary and was the first to take seriously the Samaritan part of the Commission (Acts 8:5).

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E. Second Charge: “Behave Thyself in the House of God” (3:14-16)

3:14-16 ¹⁴These things write I unto thee, hoping to come unto thee shortly: ¹⁵But 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. ¹⁶And 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.

Paul’s desire according to verse 14 was to get to Ephesus shortly to set things straight there, but in case he didn’t get there, he was writing this epistle so that Timothy and the church at Ephesus would know how to “behave” themselves as a church and as a pastor of a church.

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Verse 15 gives us three names for the church:

1) “The house of God”, leaving no doubt as to who’s church it is. It’s God’s. Each local church is a body of Christ (**Colossians 1:18** ¹⁸And he is the head of the body, the church:), with each member set into it as it pleases God: Remember...

1 Corinthians 12:18 ¹⁸But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him.

2) “The church of the living God”: It is the ekklesia, or called out assembly of the living God. And remember, that Greek word ekklesia requires it to be a local church, capable of assembling together. Not a universal, invisible one.

3) "The pillar and ground of the truth": This title ought to send some tingles down our spine. As members of a New Testament church, we are entrusted to keep the faith, to pass it on to the coming generations.

Truth is constantly under attack in this world and satan's mode of operation is to deceive: he never stops spreading deceptions and falsehoods. He's always trying to get churches to let their doctrine slip, especially and most importantly in the area of the plan of salvation. Each local church is to be a guardian of the truth contained within the 39 books of the Old Testament and the 27 books of the New Testament.

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In verse 16, Paul summarizes some of the essential elements of the truth that the church is the guardian of. These are the truths that satan hates and attacks.

And this is an amazing verse! It begins with Christ's incarnation and ends with His ascension. "Without controversy" means "by common consent". And remember that a mystery is a truth that was hinted at in the Old Testament, but wasn't fully revealed until the New Testament.

The first part of the verse, "**God was manifest in the flesh**", refers to the mystery of Christ's Deity. He is "the image of the invisible God" (Col 1:15).

Now, the Deity of Christ was certainly mentioned in the Old Testament, for example in **Isaiah 9:6** (For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.) But, it wasn't as clearly made known as it is in the New Testament.

He was "**justified in the Spirit**". The word translated as "justified" means "to be vindicated, or to be proved or pronounced righteous". He lived a sinless life, yes, but this refers to Him being "justified in the Spirit" by His resurrection from the dead. Paul wrote in Romans 1:4 that Christ was "declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead."

He was "**seen of angels**". The use of the word *aggelos* could refer to human messengers such as the apostles, or more likely heavenly angels.

The angels, have watched the whole unfolding drama of redemption from the very beginning. Remember that, the "mystery of iniquity" didn't start on earth with Adam and Eve, but in heaven with Lucifer, previously the highest archangel (Isaiah 14:9-14, Ezek. 28:12-15). And 1 Peter 1:12 states the angels desire to look into these things relating to human salvation.

And angels have played an important part all along. They are mentioned in connection with Christ's resurrection (Matt 28:1-10, John 20:11-14) and His ascension to heaven (Acts 1:9-11).

And angels will accompany Him at His return (1 Thess 4:16) and will administer God's judgment on the earth during the tribulation period after the rapture of the saints from off the earth (Rev. 7:1-3; 8:1-13; 12:7-9; 14:1-18:21; 19:11-20:3). All that said, I'm not sure which Christ was "seen of angels" this is referring to. In heaven as He put the blood on the mercy seat in heaven?

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He was "**preached unto the Gentiles**", which is a mystery that is mentioned in other parts of the New Testament as well. This was hinted at in several places in the Old Testament, that the Gentiles would be made fellow heirs in the kingdom of God. Lost Jews in Jerusalem and throughout the world couldn't forgive Paul for breaking all of their religious taboos and living amongst the Gentiles, let alone preaching to them about God.

For Paul to obey Christ and to preach to the Gentiles was a bold move, and it was one of the distinguishing marks of a new dispensation in God's dealing with men.

He was "**believed on in the world.**" Or was received by mankind as the Messiah and Savior. Though the majority of people have rejected and will reject Christ, there always has been and always will be a "remnant" that believe on Him and receive Him on His terms.

Finally, He was "**received up into glory**". After His resurrection, He appeared here and there for forty days and nights, showing Himself alive "by many infallible proofs" (Acts 1:3). Finally, he gathered maybe about 120 people and led them to the brow of the Mount of Olives and as they gazed up at Him, he ascended up to heaven where He sits at the right hand of God to intercede for us.

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III. Paul's Charge Concerning False Teachers (4:1-16)

A. Description of False Teachers (4:1-5)

Apostasy is a turning away from revealed truth. It isn't something new. It started as soon as Satan met Eve in the Garden. And it was already taking root even as the apostles were still alive on earth. They spent much of their time combating it. They wrote about it in passages that we often interpret as meaning our times, but the apostles also believed they were living in the last times as well.

1 John 2:18 ¹⁸Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time.

It is clear that the start of the apostasy they were witnessing would wax worse and worse until the time of the rapture and the revealing of the antichrist.

What Paul writes in this passage, would become even more pertinent as the rapture draws closer. What he describes was already happening in his day; the Gnostic heresy was already moving forward with a full head of steam with its seducing spirits and doctrines of devils, forbidding some to marry and to abstain from meats. The Roman Catholic Church fulfills this probably as well as any system in the past, because it was based on the Babylonian mystery religion that preceded it.

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4:1-5 ¹Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; ²Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron; ³Forbidding 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. ⁴For every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving: ⁵For it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer.

So, although “latter times” refers to apostolic times, it also refers to our end-time conditions. The word translated as “depart” is *aphistemi*, and means to withdraw oneself from. We all know what “the faith” is: it is that whole body of doctrine taught in the Bible.

We are to “earnestly contend for the faith” (Jude 1:3), Paul said he “now preacheth the faith which once he destroyed” (Gal. 1:23), and he wrote to the Colossians to be “stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught”.

So, verse 1 refers to the turning away from the truth that has occurred throughout the centuries, but will reach a crescendo as the return of Christ draws near and it will create a global climate conducive to the coming of the antichrist (2 Thess 2:3). Those who will lead the way into the end times apostasy will be people who have known the truth, but who have deliberately abandoned it.

And those who abandon the faith in the end times will be “giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils.” The progression of apostasy in the past 2 centuries have been continuous. Darwin’s theory of evolution has given rise to Communism and finally secular humanism, which is now the reigning religion of western Europe, Canada, the United States, and Australia.

The New Age movement is leading more and more people into the occult and spiritism, setting the stage for the masses of the world to accept the antichrist and his false prophet.

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Paul points out, in verse 2 that the end-times apostasy will be propagated by people devoid of character “speaking lies in hypocrisy”. Lies needs no definition. The word translated as hypocrisy conveys the idea of playacting.

It will also be propagated by people devoid of conscience, “having their conscience seared with a hot iron.” Although they know the end result of their teaching will be blasphemy against God, uncontrolled sin, and unrestrained violence; they’ll continue to persuade people that only their teachings promote true holiness. And that’s what is happening by the main-line denominations and neo-evangelicals who tell us, “don’t be so judgmental” when we try to point out sin.

How did their consciences get “seared”? By ignoring the conviction of the Spirit of God over and over again.

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Romans chapter 1 describes that progression of refusing to give God the glory due Him, refusing to get right with Him:

Romans 1:21,22,25,28,32 ²¹Because that, when they knew God, they glorified *him* not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. ²²Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, ²⁵Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen.

²⁸And even as they did not like to retain God in *their* knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient;

³²Who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them.

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Verse 3 gives us two more marks of demon-inspired apostasy: it’s attack on marriage and its attack on the eating of meat: both of which were God ordained. These prohibitions originated back the Babylonian Mystery Religion started at the tower of Babel, continued into Jewish Gnosticism, and have become a part of Roman Catholicism. After the flood, God allowed the eating of meat. Red meat may not be the most healthy for us, but it is OK to eat it.

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B. Instruction for the True Teacher (4:6-10)

4:6-10 ⁶If 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. ⁷But refuse profane and old wives’ fables, and exercise thyself *rather* unto godliness. ⁸For 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. ⁹This *is* a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance. ¹⁰For 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.

Notice in verse 6 what a pastor or minister of Jesus Christ needs to be doing: putting the brethren in constant remembrance of the teachings of the word of God. To be constantly reminding us of the coming apostasy so that we aren't taken in by it. And putting us in remembrance requires repetition. It's not boring: we need the truth repeated over and over again.

The best way to prevent apostasy from happening to God's people is for the preacher to saturate himself with the word of God (nourished up in the words of faith and of good doctrine) and then pass what he has learned from the Bible, pass on those words of faith and good doctrine on to the saints in the church. To teach them the truth again and again until it becomes the controlling factor in their life.

Remember how Paul had warned the elders at Ephesus that apostasy would rise up from within their ranks in Acts 20:30? Apostasy from within is much more dangerous to a church than persecution from without.

Persecution has usually done nothing but strengthen churches and propagate the gospel even more, but apostasy from within has been very destructive to churches and to Christianity in general. For example: what happened in Great Britain? It once had great revivals with many thriving churches. Did those churches cave from outward pressures or persecution? They died from internal apostasy, and now the nation is spiritually dead also.

In verse 7, Paul gives us some things to refuse: "profane and old wives' fables". The word translated as "fables" has various shades of meaning, but here it carries the idea of fiction and probably refers to the Jewish Gnostic errors. I believe this can probably be applied to any man-made doctrine, any extra-scriptural teaching that embellishes or adds onto the Bible. Timothy was to "refuse" to argue with or discuss with people who were interested in propagating their extra-scriptural doctrines.

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Instead of wasting time on those discussions, on splitting hairs, we are to "exercise thyself rather unto godliness", to become more like Christ. The word for exercise (*gumnazo* from which we get our English word gymnasium) gives the idea of going into intense training as the athletes even in those times did in preparation for their games. God would have us to be just as driven and energetic in training our inner man as dedicated athletes are in training their bodies.

In verse 8, Paul notes that bodily exercise profits little. Developing physical fitness has some value, but it is relatively unimportant compared with spiritual development. Godliness or Christ-likeness is profitable both for life on earth and for life eternally. It's not that Paul is belittling bodily exercise, he simply wants our emphasis to be on our spiritual growth.

In verse 9, after just stating that godliness is preferable, he emphasizes that with “This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance.” At this point, in verse 10, he makes a brief comment that probably refers to the persecution he’s suffered already, and the growing persecution that was gaining momentum throughout the Roman Empire. He and other believers suffered reproach because they trusted in the living God. They refused to deny Him no matter how brutally they were persecuted.

And in verse 10 Christ is mentioned as the Savior of all men. But, although salvation is offered to all, not all men choose to receive it: only those who see their lost condition, repent and believe on Christ have that salvation applied to themselves.

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C. Third Charge: “Neglect Not the Gift that is in Thee” (4:11-16)

4:11-16 ¹¹These things command and teach. (Paul now gives Timothy 6 short commands) ¹²Let 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. ¹³Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine. ¹⁴Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery. ¹⁵Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy profiting may appear to all. ¹⁶Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee.

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In verse 11, Paul admonishes Timothy with “These things command and teach.” This is a sort of summary verse of what Paul is expecting Timothy to do: to exercise authority and preserve accuracy in his teaching.

In verse 12, although Timothy is described by Paul as a youth, he was probably in his late thirties (it has been about 20 years since Paul’s 1st missionary journey when Timothy probably got saved and at least 12 years since Timothy began travelling with Paul). However, he would be dealing with others in the Ephesian church who were much older than he was, so Paul told him not to let the difference in age get in his way.

The word translated as “despise” means “to think slightingly of someone”. Evidently, Paul expected some of the older men in Ephesus to try to intimidate Timothy, and was encouraging Timothy to not be affected by their efforts. You might be younger in the Lord or younger in age, but if God has called you, obey God’s call and serve Christ in that ministry; don’t be discouraged by men who might disrespect you for your age.

Instead, he was to be “an example of the believers” in 6 ways that Paul mentions:

- 1) In word (*logos*); meaning with his speech.
- 2) In conversation; meaning with his lifestyle and day to day behavior.
- 3) In charity (*agape*); meaning his compassion, he was to be like Christ in showing love to all.
- 4) In spirit; which some say meant his character was to be exemplary. He was to be filled with the Holy Spirit and totally influenced in his behavior by Him.
- 5) In faith; this could mean his trust in God or his doctrine. John Phillips wrote: "Through the centuries, generation after generation, God has raised up people who have set examples of faith before an unbelieving world and an only half-believing world.
- 6) In purity (*hagneia*); meaning he was to be an example of holiness. Remember, the city of Ephesus had the temple to Diana (Atemis) which was worshipped with prostitution.

Verse 13, Paul states he intends to get to Ephesus. Then he commands Timothy to give attendance (pay attention to, apply oneself to) to three things.

- 1) To our Bible study. The Bible is a large, deep, and vast book that must be read over and over again; studied, memorized, and meditated upon. It is something we need to read every day.
- 2) To exhortation (*parakleôsis*: which means "comfort, consolation, exhortation, intreaty"). For a pastor, part of exhorting is to comfort his flock. To preach encouragement and consolation.
- 3) To doctrine. What we believe is vital! If we don't earnestly contend for the faith, who will?

In verse 14, Paul mentions to "neglect not the gift". Apparently when Timothy had been ordained, by the laying on of the hands of the brethren, he was endowed with a gift of God. I'm not exactly sure what it was, but any gift we have from God we're to use for His glory: to reach the lost or for the edification of the saints: we'll all give an answer at the judgment seat of Christ for how we neglected or used the gifts that God has given us. It can be a big temptation to use gifts and abilities that God has given us for our own benefit.

In verses 15 and 16, Paul concludes this section with the challenge to Timothy to meditate upon what he has just written and to give himself wholly to them; to put his heart and soul and mind into them so that his progress (profiting) could be seen by anyone observing him. And people are always observing us.

He finishes by telling Timothy to take heed unto himself: to watch himself, to keep his devotions up, to keep his heart tender. And to take heed unto the doctrine. And once again, why is doctrine so important? If we lose the truth, if we don't keep doctrine pure, people will go to hell believing the wrong thing. If we don't have the truth, we don't have anything.

When Paul states that if Timothy keeps himself right with God and continues in true doctrine he'll save himself and them that hear him. Paul isn't saying Timothy needs to be saved: he already is. But he'll save himself from regret and rebuke at the judgment seat of Christ. Even Paul mentioned he needed to keep himself from becoming a cast-away. If we allow what we believe and teach to slip from the truth of the scriptures, we'll most definitely lose reward and face a rebuke at the judgment seat of Christ.

But notice the other consequence of allowing our doctrine to slip from the truth of scripture: others will not be saved and this time it most definitely is referring to their eternal salvation. If we allow a plan of salvation to be taught or we ourselves teach a plan of salvation that at all differs from the truth: people will die lost believing it. Their eternal souls depend on us keeping the doctrine pure.

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IV. Paul's Charge Concerning Church Discipline (5:1-25)

In this chapter, Paul continues to deal with Timothy's ministry, but he focuses on how a pastor is to treat the different categories of people within his congregation. He makes it clear that a pastor doesn't deal with these different category of people in all the same way. Different people need to be treated differently.

A. How to Treat All People (5:1,2)

5:1,2 ¹Rebuke not an elder, but entreat *him* as a father; *and* the younger men as brethren; ²The elder women as mothers; the younger as sisters, with all purity.

The word translated as elder usually refers to the office, but it appears that in this case it is simply referring to those who are older in age than Timothy. But, remember, Ephesus may have had many small house churches with many elders or pastors over each of those churches. But in the way Paul tells him to deal with the younger men, it probably is referring to simply older men in age. And maybe this passage is where the confusion about elders comes from.

He first deals with the men and makes it clear that an older man in the congregation should not be openly rebuked by a younger pastor, but rather should be "entreated" (meaning invited) like one would his own father in the flesh. Age is due respect, even though an older person can be just as depraved as anyone else.

The younger men were to be treated as equals in the family of God. The older women were to be treated as he would his own mother: with respect and honor. But more than that, he was to care for them and make some effort to be sure their needs were being met. We're to relate to younger or women of similar age to us "as sisters, with all purity".

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John Phillips wrote: "The closeness of a brother-sister relationship has well-defined limits. A sister is not a wife. A healthy brother-sister relationship allows not even a thought of trespassing beyond the boundaries set by God. Pastoral counseling is especially fraught with peril. The strictest safeguards must be in place. Because people with emotional needs often fasten on to a counselor, pastors must curtail counseling sessions with members of the opposite sex. Interviews should be granted only in an open area where passersby can be an added security. Far too many pastors have made shipwreck of their lives by not heeding Paul's advice to Timothy regarding his relationship to young women in the church."

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B. How to Treat Widows (5:3-16)

Early Christians in the Roman Empire had no access to aid of any kind from the government as far as we know. And by declaring themselves Christians, they became virtual outcasts, often ostracized by their community, and sometimes even rejected by their own families, so the churches needed to take care of their own.

God has always made special provisions for widows and the fatherless, and what's dear to His heart should be to ours as well.

5:3-10 ³Honour widows that are widows indeed. ⁴But if any widow have children or nephews (grandchildren), let them learn first to show piety at home, and to requite their parents: for that is good and acceptable before God. ⁵Now she that is a widow indeed, and desolate, trusteth in God, and continueth in supplications and prayers night and day. ⁶But she that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth. ⁷And these things give in charge, that they may be blameless. ⁸But 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. ⁹Let not a widow be taken into the number under threescore years old, having been the wife of one man, ¹⁰Well 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.

In some pagan cultures, widows are treated harshly because they're considered a burden on society (some commentators mention the Native Americans of the old west, and the Hindu women of India: once they cease being useful as mothers and being strong workers, they're cast off and left to die or fend for themselves).

This word translated as "honour" in verse 3 means "to estimate or fix the value, revere, venerate" and as used here conveys the idea of appreciating the widow's worth as a sister in Christ and paying proper respect to her. "Indeed" means "truly". Paul was referring to widows who were totally left without any relatives who could financially support them. And later Paul adds some duties that the church should expect widows to perform if they were supported by church funds.

In verse 4, he turns his attention to widows who were not entirely destitute: they had either children or “nephews”, which most commentators tell us means grandchildren. The Greek word *ekgonos* means grandchild according to the Strongs definition, and the Old English meaning of the word (*nefa*) when the KJV was translated meant either grandchildren or nephew as we know it today. A saved person is expected to take care of his or her parents and/or grandparents. The word translated “shew piety” means “to treat with respect”. Our society has gone so far away from this principle; putting grandparents into assisted living or nursing homes instead of taking care of them and giving them a place of respect and honor in the home and allowing them to be an influence on the grandchildren.

In verse 5, Paul both describes and recommends how a truly desolate widow should behave: trusting in God and continuing in supplications and prayers night and day. If she is going to be supported by church funds, she has these responsibilities. But in verse 6, the widow who turns to sinful pleasure is “dead while she liveth”. In verse 7, if the elders of the church financially support the lifestyle of a worldly widow, the church might be blamed for condoning that kind of lifestyle.

In verse 8, it’s made crystal clear that those who fail to take care of their own relatives is behaving worse than a lost person and has “denied the faith”. One commentator said, “Refusing to extend care to a widowed mother, aunt, or sister demonstrates a hard heart and makes a mockery of our profession of faith in Christ.”

In vs 9 and 10, several criteria are given for widows that are to be take care of by the church, besides their having no one to take care of them: they should be at least 60 years old and monogamous. She should have a good testimony of doing good works, of having raised children (it says nothing about how they have turned out), was hospitable in lodging strangers, in relieving the afflicted, and washing the saints feet (a practice common in that day of walking many miles on dusty dirt roads in sandals, but obviously not necessary today) which demonstrated her humility and servant’s heart.

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5:11-16 ¹¹But the younger widows refuse: for when they have begun to wax wanton against Christ, they will marry; ¹²Having damnation, because they have cast off their first faith. ¹³And 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. ¹⁴I will therefore that the younger women marry, bear children, guide the house, give none occasion to the adversary to speak reproachfully. ¹⁵For some are already turned aside after Satan. ¹⁶If 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.

In verses 11 through 15, Paul suggests that those widows under the age of 60 remarry, and he is explaining why.

In verse 11, the word translated “begun to wax wanton” occurs only here and conveys the idea of living sensually instead of living for Christ. Verse 12 is a difficult verse to understand. Most commentators agree the condemnation Paul writes about is not being condemned to hell, but instead the guilt of having violated the promise to live as a widow “taken into the number” of being provided for by the church should live.

Remember even in Acts chapter 6 in the early days of the 1st church, a controversy arose when the Grecian widows were being neglected in the “daily ministrations”. They weren’t being properly provided for.

And in verse 5 of this chapter Paul described what a widow would do, “continueth in supplications and prayers night and day”. Some commentators speculate that supported widows were almost “on staff”, or filling an office in the church of being supported prayer warriors. A younger widow might regret that obligation or commitment and so, when they decide to instead remarry they are casting off their first faith.

He’s also concerned in verse 13 that those widows under 60 will learn to be “idle, wandering about from house to house”. The word translated as “idle” is simply the negative form of the word for work (they’ll learn to be non-workers). And once the need for work is removed, all kinds of trouble can follow. Wandering from house to house means gossiping (today we would say texting).

“Tattlers” means “silly talkers” or excessively busy tongues. They simply spend their time talking (or texting) and Proverbs 10:19 says, “In the multitude of words there wanteth (which means lacketh) not sin”, in other words, the more we talk, the more likely we’re going to sin, to say something we shouldn’t, such as gossiping about someone else.

In verse 14, the younger widows were to remarry. But this verse can, I believe, apply to all younger women in general (not just widows). But we know from 1 Corinthians 7 that some women can, and should remain single: that’s between them and God.

The word for “guide the house” (*oikodespoteo*: notice the root for despot within the word) occurs only here and means “to manage and direct household affairs, exercising authority” and at the heart of the word is the idea of ruling or running the house as the woman of Proverbs 31 is described as doing, *in submission to her husband*. It describes the wife as a manager of the household affairs. The despot of her home, while under submission to her husband. A despot is a dictator or tyrant.

By being a godly mother and homemaker, she gives no occasion to “the adversary” to speak reproachfully of her or the church: she’s a good testimony to her community.

He finishes in verse 16 with a final admonition that “If any man or woman that believeth have widows, let them relieve them,...”. A Christian is bound by duty and the commandments of the Bible to take care of our parents. But it can be part of the role of the New Testament church to take care of the physical needs of it’s members when they have nowhere else to turn.

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C. How to Treat Elders (5:17-20)

5:17-20 ¹⁷Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine. ¹⁸For the scripture saith, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn. And, The labourer *is* worthy of his reward. ¹⁹Against an elder receive not an accusation, but before two or three witnesses. ²⁰Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear.

Obviously this passage is referring to the office of the pastor (“elders that rule well”). We should never forget that the role of the pastor is to rule (*proisteômi*: to preside over or superintend) over the church.

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John Phillips puts it this way: “The local church is not a democracy where action is decided by a majority vote. A democracy might be man’s view of the ideal form of government, but God’s ideal is an absolute monarchy in which all power rests in the hands of His Son, Jesus Christ. In the church, He is the Head, and the Holy Spirit is the Executor. The Holy Spirit raises up pastors who are to make decisions as He leads them and who are to be given honor if they do their task well. Thus the church is to be ruled by a man or men who have been gifted, proven, and appointed by the Holy Spirit.”

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Hebrews 13:7 ⁷Remember them which have the rule (*heôgeomai* which means to *lead*, that is, *command* (with official authority) over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of *their* conversation.

Hebrews 13:17 ¹⁷Obey them that have the rule (*heôgeomai*) 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.

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Those pastors who rule well ought to be “counted worthy of double honour”. The word translated as “honour” is *time'*, which means “value, that is money paid, or by analogy esteem (especially of the highest degree). Implicit within the meaning of the word is monetary pay, as evidenced by what Paul goes on to say in verse 18: the laborer is worthy of his reward.

It goes on to say, “especially they who labor in the word and doctrine”. The transmitting of the truths of God’s word is a great responsibility that needs to be recognized. It’s been said, “The world might not think so, but no nobler task exists on earth than to make known the word of God.”

A pastor needs to receive our honor, to be treated with all respect, but also to be paid well (not to the degree of the television evangelists who are in it for the money). But couldn’t you argue from this passage that they should be paid a salary that is about double of what the average church family is making, double of what a family in that community makes? The lost might assume a “man of God” should be the poorest in a church, but that isn’t scriptural.

Obviously, his focus shouldn’t be on the money (and a true pastor’s focus will not be). But he should be paid well enough that he isn’t constantly struggling to make ends meet if he is pastoring a church of people who are “well off”.

Verse 18 is a reference to **Deuteronomy 25:4**. Paul also defended the principle that the Pastor or Missionary should be paid by those he’s laboring amongst in 1 Corinthians 9:3-10. And Christ mentioned the same principle in Matthew 10:10

Matthew 10:10 ¹⁰Nor scrip for *your* journey, neither two coats, neither shoes, nor yet staves: for the workman is worthy of his meat.

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In verse 19, Paul by the Holy Spirit realizes how ready people are to gossip about church leaders and falsely accuse them, and pass on stories about them to others. To stop such talk, Paul laid down one simple rule: “Against an elder receive not an accusation, but before two or three witnesses.” Any charge against a pastor had to be made formally and substantiated by at least two, but preferably three witnesses. This was included in the law of Moses for any man:

Deuteronomy 19:15 ¹⁵One witness shall not rise up against a man for any iniquity, or for any sin, in any sin that he sinneth: at the mouth of two witnesses, or at the mouth of three witnesses, shall the matter be established.

To accept accusations against a pastor without proper proof is to undermine the authority of God-ordained leaders and to act contrary to God’s word. The word translated “accusation” has to do with legal procedure. Paul didn’t use the word for slander, so he put the emphasis on speaking against them in public, before a hearing. Paul had been victim of these unfair attacks on his character.

Moses is another example of a leader who was subjected to criticism throughout his career as leader of God’s people. And we all know how God dealt with the people who rose up against him!

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In Numbers 12, Miriam and Aaron spoke against Moses, saying “Hath the LORD indeed spoken only by Moses? hath he not spoken also by us?” As if to say, “You’re not the only one who is spiritual, what makes you think you can be the only leader?” Miriam had to live in shame outside the camp with leprosy for a week.

In Numbers 14, the whole congregation (except Joshua and Caleb) spoke against Moses for bringing them out of Egypt at all because the giants in Canaan intimidated them. This is complaining against the Pastor for how tough things are instead of trusting in God. They were forced to stay in the wilderness 40 years until they had all died off.

In Numbers 16, Korah, Dathan, and Abiram spoke against Moses and Aaron, saying “*Ye take too much upon you, seeing all the congregation are holy, every one of them, and the LORD is among them: wherefore then lift ye up yourselves above the congregation of the LORD?* ” Again, “Who do you think you are, who made you dictator?” God opened up the earth and swallowed them directly into hell.

So, does God take it lightly when someone speaks unjustly against the man of God? When they take out their frustration with God on the man that He has called? Never forget the severity with which God will judge this if you ever get an inkling to begin murmuring against the pastor. Because as Paul mentioned in Acts 20: there’s a good chance that amongst this group here, down the road maybe someone will get the idea they need to criticize the pastor to try to get people following them.

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In verse 20, because of their public position, church leaders who do sin openly and publicly should be rebuked publicly.

We have taken this to mean anyone within the church and ask that open, public sin be confessed publicly to the church as well. Some commentators feel that Paul was only mentioning this in reference to church leaders as the above verses indicate. But, the principle of church discipline in removing people from the membership when they refuse to get right is also done in part, “so that others also may fear.”

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D. Fourth Charge: “Observe These Things without Preferring One Before Another” (5:21-25)

5:21-25 ²¹I 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. ²²Lay hands suddenly on no man, neither be partaker of other men’s sins: keep thyself pure. ²³Drink no longer water, but use a little wine for thy stomach’s sake and thine often infirmities. ²⁴Some men’s sins are open beforehand, going before to judgment; and some *men* they follow after. ²⁵Likewise also the good works of *some* are manifest beforehand; and they that are otherwise cannot be hid.

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We can understand why Paul would charge Timothy before God and Christ, but why does he also mention “the elect angels”. He’s probably referring to the heavenly angels who stood with God when the others fell from their first estate (most commentators hold this view).

But Paul’s charge is that Timothy observe what Paul had just said, most specifically in verse 19, that he only receive accusations against church leaders, specifically pastors when there were two or three witnesses, and that he judge without partiality and without preferences. He needed to remain objective.

In verse 22, Paul in mentioning that Timothy “lay hands suddenly on no man” is likely referring to ordaining someone to be either a pastor or missionary, because that is how Paul uses it in 1 Tim. 4:14 and 2 Tim. 1:6, and Luke in Acts 13:3. Paul was warning Timothy against being too quick to ordain someone in the Lord’s work. One commentator wrote:

“A Christian must prove himself before he is identified with the public ministry of the local church. Many a man has come to great popularity because he has a spectacular sounding testimony or because he displays extraordinary gifts or zeal, only to fall into disgrace.”

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Verse 23 points out that Timothy didn’t have good health, but instead “oft infirmities” or illnesses. Here is another example of a saint who is right with God, but often sick. God has different plans for each of His children, and the “health and wealth” gospel that God will always bless us with good health and plenty of wealth if we’ll put Him first and stay right with Him is false. God often has a purpose in allowing affliction into our life.

We are aware how water supplies can easily become contaminated with parasites and bacteria. Wine would have remained relatively pure of those contaminations and the word translated “wine” here is *oinos* which is any form of the fruit of the vine and here most likely is just plain old grape juice which is full of flavinoids and antioxidants, not to mention vitamins such as Vitamin A.

Verse 24, Paul mentions that some sins are flagrant and open to all, and these declare themselves to all those around us. But many of our sins are hidden to most all but God and the angels in this life, but they will all be revealed in the life to come at judgment. Either way, we'll never get away with it forever. Even for the saved, unrepented sin may bring a rebuke at the judgment seat of Christ.

And verse 25 speaks of those things we do for Christ, that some are open and recognized, and rewarded in this life. But those that go unnoticed in this life "cannot be hid". God is keeping track of every little thing we do for Christ, and for each other in Christ's name.

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V. Paul's Charge Concerning Pastoral Motives (6:1-21)

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I.K. Cross writes: "Paul doesn't evade the question of slavery, neither does he crusade against it. Slaves were common in the Roman Empire under which Paul lived. Christianity didn't demand that slaves be freed. Rather, Christianity taught that whether you found yourself a slave or master, you should conduct yourself in such a manner as to bring honor and respectability to the name of Christ. A Christian slave should be a better servant to his master than an unbeliever. On the other hand, if a Christian slave had a Christian master this did not mean he should show him any less respect. In fact he should serve him even better because he is a brother in Christ. Station in life doesn't alter the basic teachings of Christian living. Whether we're at the top or at the bottom materially, we should show the same Christian virtues."

Eventually, it was Christians first in England, then in the United States that abolished slavery because of the abuse that was so rampant in it in the western hemisphere.

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A. Exhortation to Servants (6:1,2)

6:1,2 ¹Let 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. ²And 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.

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In the first century Roman Empire, especially amongst the Gentile believers, there were a lot of slaves, bond-slaves, most of whom had unsaved masters. Historically, it appears many people became slaves as the Romans conquered their nations, but some sold themselves into slavery for financial reasons. So, slaves were from all different nationalities, and had many different skill levels (some were doctors, skilled craftsman, some were laborers in the mines).

Some of those masters were kind, but others were cruel. In either case, slaves had very few rights: they were treated as pieces of property, bought and sold.

In most regions of the world, slavery has been abolished, but the principles taught here can in some way be applied to the employee – employer relationship. So, first of all, employees are to treat their employers with respect. Paul taught throughout his epistles that saints of God were to respect (in fact to honor) and obey all forms of authority.

Citizens were to obey the law and honor those in government and law enforcement in Romans 13. Wives to obey their husbands, children to obey their parents, and church members to obey and honor their pastors (Hebrews 13:7,17; 1 Tim. 5:17).

As we mentioned when studying 1 Corinthians, although God made provision for the humane treatment of slaves, He in no way condones slavery. He also made provision for the care of a divorced wife, but in no way condones divorce and made provision for the kind treatment of more than one wife, but in no way condones polygamy. Men are depraved sinners and are going to sin; slavery is just another manifestation of that fact.

By honoring even a dishonorable master or employee, a Christian brings glory to God instead of reproach and brings honor to the teachings or doctrine of God. Listen, God will judge the harsh and cruel master and boss one day, but it's our duty to be faithful and respectful to employees in this life, if that's our lot in life that God has seen fit to place us.

In verse 2, those with Christian masters or bosses still needed to honor their position and serve them just as faithfully. Not thinking slightly of them or despising them for being their boss, because they were saved. Paul recognized a danger here.

Both employer and employee are equal in the kingdom of God. The danger is that the employee might ignore the authority over him on Monday after fellowshipping equally on Sunday and thus ruin his testimony to the lost by not respecting the authority God had allowed over him.

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B. Exhortation to Godliness with Contentment (6:3-16)

1) The Danger of the Love of Money (6:3-10)

Paul is now summing up and closing his letter. So verse 3 applies I believe to the whole book just written, not just the previous two verses.

6:3-5 ³If 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; ⁴He is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings, ⁵Perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness: from such withdraw thyself.

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Godliness was Paul's theme in 3:16 through 4:16, and now he comes back to it. When it's all said and done, godliness, Christlikeness is what the Christian life is all about. The phrase "wholesome words" means the same as "sound doctrine" in 1:10. Paul knew ungodly men would deny and scoff at his teaching. The gold standard of all teaching is "the words of our Lord Jesus Christ", or the whole Bible, which is the word of God.

In verse 4, he describes these types of men: a false teacher is usually proud, he lacks spiritual discernment. False teachers think they know it all, but actually don't have a grasp of the scriptures at all. They dote about questions and strifes of words.

"Doting" means to "hanker after". They only want to argue and prove their petty little points, they like to split hairs and win arguments because it puffs them up. The result of their teachings is "envy, strife, railings, and evil surmisings." Evil surmisings means conclusions that are malicious and dangerous.

In verse 5, Paul continues to describe the false teachers. "Perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds and destitute of the truth". Perverse disputings are squabbles without truth at their center and it tells us the minds of those that come up with them are unregenerate, lost, lacking truth.

"Supposing that gain is godliness": Professing Christianity and making a pretense of serving Christ only for the sake of profit; defending their own cause for the material gains it produced; and having no spiritual conscience.

"From such withdraw thyself": Have no fellowship with such people. Here again is spiritual separation, but in this case it's from a spiritual danger, for our own safety.

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6:6-8 ⁶But godliness with contentment is great gain. ⁷For we brought nothing into *this* world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. ⁸And having food and raiment let us be therewith content.

Verses 6-10 tell us that true godliness will result in contentment. And Paul learned that contentment:

Philippians 4:11-13 ¹¹Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, *therewith* to be content. ¹²I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: every where and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. ¹³I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.

That sort of godliness, which brings contentment is great gain, and it is something to be sought after and strived for: but we can't get it without Christ's strength. In verse 7, it's pretty obvious that any material thing we've gained in this life is only temporary, we can't take it with us. "The world passeth away and the lusts thereof".

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Proverbs 23:4,5 ⁴Labour not to be rich: cease from thine own wisdom. ⁵Wilt thou set thine eyes upon that which is not? for *riches* certainly make themselves wings; they fly away as an eagle toward heaven.

Psalms 62:10 ¹⁰... if riches increase, set not your heart upon them.

The Christian is to be a hard worker and a good steward of his or her possessions and income, and with that wise stewardship and hard work may come increase and some degree of prosperity, but we are not to set our heart upon it. God blesses us so that we can turn around and give to His work or give to others in need.

In verse 8, he gives a basic formula, to be content with food and clothing. Christ gave us a similar command in Matthew 6:31-33:

Matthew 6:31-33 ³¹Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? ³²(For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. ³³But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.

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6:9,10 ⁹But 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. ¹⁰For 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.

Those who fall into the trap of wanting the things of this world are in danger of being drowned in that sin. Again, what is at the core of covetousness, and why is it called idolatry in the New Testament (Colossians 3:5)?

Because it is in a sense telling God that His grace and provision is not sufficient for us, that we need whatever it is we are coveting to be happy. We are allowing those things that we are coveting, to take God's place in our hearts at that moment.

This sort of love of the world, or things is what caused Demas to forsake Paul and the ministry God had placed him into. This sort of covetousness is what resulted in a pastor eventually robbing a bank of all things. He stated it all started when he realized he was in his fifties and didn't have any real retirement built up.

So, he tried to make some quick money playing the stock market and instead lost big, and kept on losing until he was so desperate that he robbed a bank. He drowned in the destruction and perdition of covetousness. He took his eyes off of God and stopped trusting in Him to provide.

Over and over again in our culture, covetousness destroys families.

Proverbs 15:27 ²⁷He that is greedy of gain troubleth his own house;...

As the father or both parents neglect their families (their children especially) to pour themselves into making money and spending more time on their careers so they can buy the things they want or "provide" for their families the things they want them to have.

The love of money, not money itself is the root of all evil, not sin, but evil. "Evil" is from the Greek word *kakos*, and means wrongdoing with the intent of causing harm, it is injurious to others. Some people will do anything for money. And hurt others as they do. The love of money motivates those who manufacture, smuggle, and sell drugs.

Remember the sin of Achan, how his fondness for money caused him to steal from God when Jericho was taken and how his sin lead to the destruction of not only him, but his whole family? Not to mention the 36 men who died in the next battle.

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2) Paul's Charge to Timothy: "Flee these Things" (6:11-16)

6:11-12 ¹¹But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness. ¹²Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses.

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As a man of God, Paul wanted Timothy to flee from the desire to be rich as if it were the plague. And to replace the desire for things with a desire for godly traits. To follow after righteousness, in other words our integrity towards man and godliness which is our integrity towards God, faith, love, patience, meekness, all of which are fruits of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22,23).

In verse 12, Paul exhorts Timothy to “fight the good fight of faith”. The verb fight means to strive as in a contest, for the prize. “Faith” is the Greek word *pistis*, which can mean either the core of doctrines that the Bible teaches or it can mean trusting in Christ.

Jude 3 ...earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.

“Lay hold on eternal life”. Lay hold on means to “keep your grip on”. He’s not telling Timothy to keep his salvation or to strive to earn it. Paul was telling him to saturate his mind with the fact that he was saved and to live his life with eternity in view.

“Whereunto thou are also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses.” All saved people are called to live for Christ, to lay hold on eternal life, to live our lives with eternity, with our salvation in view. We’re not saved to live for the things of this world, to get rich or to be focused on gaining material possessions. And Timothy had lived for Christ before many “witnesses”. He’d been a good example up to now. Paul wanted him to continue that to the end.

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6:13-16 ¹³I give thee charge in the sight of God, who quickeneth all things, and before Christ Jesus, who before Pontius Pilate witnessed a good confession; ¹⁴That thou keep *this* commandment without spot, unrebukeable, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ: ¹⁵Which in his times he shall show, *who is* the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; ¹⁶Who 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.

In verses 13 and 14, Paul gives Timothy another charge, to keep the commandment that he had just given him to flee, follow and fight. (“Flee these things (covetousness); and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness. Fight the good fight of faith”).

To keep that commandment “without spot”, until the appearing of Christ. It’s as though Paul knows this letter will not be read by Timothy only, but will be preserved to be read by saints until the coming of Christ. We are all to “flee covetousness, follow after righteousness, and fight the good fight of faith” until Christ comes.

In verse 15, Paul states that “in his times he shall show”. In other words, in God’s time, Christ will return for the saints at the Rapture. He’ll come in His own time.

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Paul then makes a marvelous declaration of the Deity of Christ: “who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords;”. That He is referred to as the “only” Potentate declares Christ to be the ultimate authority over creation, the King above all kings and the Lord over all lords. He rules over all. King of kings and Lord of lords is used again in Revelation 17:14 and Revelation 19:16 in reference to Christ.

Philippians 2:9-11 ⁹Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: ¹⁰That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of *things* in heaven, and *things* in earth, and *things* under the earth; ¹¹And *that* every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ *is* Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

In verse 16, it tells us that Christ only has “immortality”, meaning “deathlessness”. He conquered death not only for Himself, but also for us:

Revelation 1:18 ¹⁸I *am* he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death.

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C. Exhortation to the Rich (6:17-19)

6:17-19 ¹⁷Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; ¹⁸That they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate; ¹⁹Laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life.

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God’s blessing in the form of riches can oftentimes make men proud.

Proverbs 18:11 ¹¹The rich man’s wealth *is* his strong city, and as an high wall in his own conceit.

Proverbs 28:11 ¹¹The rich man *is* wise in his own conceit; ...

Anytime God blesses us we need to beware that we aren’t lifted up with pride. A good example of this was king Uzziah:

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2 Chronicles 26:5,7,10,16 And he (Uzziah) sought God in the days of Zechariah, who had understanding in the visions of God: and as long as he sought the LORD, God made him to prosper. ⁷And God helped him against the Philistines, and against the Arabians that dwelt in Gurbaal, and the Mehunims. ¹⁰Also he built towers in the desert, and digged many wells: for he had much cattle, both in the low country, and in the plains: husbandmen *also*, and vine dressers in the mountains, and in Carmel: for he loved husbandry. And his name spread far abroad; for he was marvellously helped, till he was strong. (Rich, powerful, and famous)

¹⁶**But when he was strong** (after God blessed him), **his heart was lifted up to his destruction:** for he transgressed against the LORD his God, and went into the temple of the LORD to burn incense upon the altar of incense.

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The blessings of God can also get us to thinking maybe we don't need God as much as we trust in the riches themselves instead of trusting in the God who gave them. In other words, not to trust in our bank accounts or 401ks, even as they grow, but to continue to trust in God, knowing that an economic collapse could render those accounts worthless. And He does give us "richly all things to enjoy".

Proverbs 30:8,9 ⁸Remove far from me vanity and lies: give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me with food convenient for me: ⁹Lest I be full, and deny *thee*, and say, Who is the LORD...

Anything we have, we have from God, and no matter how much prosperity He blesses us with, we still need to put our trust in Him for our provision. Every morsel of food we put in our mouths is from Him and given by His grace.

In verses 18 and 19, Paul instructs those that God has blessed with prosperity to focus on serving Christ and also to be willing to use that wealth for the cause of Christ ("rich in good works") and to meet other's needs ("ready to distribute"), but also to be just plain friendly to all people, not being "stuck-up" ("willing to communicate"). What they do for Christ is laying up in store for themselves a good foundation in heaven.

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D. Fifth Charge: "Keep That Which is Committed to Thy Trust" (6:20,21)

6:20,21 ²⁰O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust, avoiding profane *and* vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so called: ²¹Which some professing have erred concerning the faith. Grace *be* with thee. Amen.

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John Phillips wrote: "What a wealth of warmth is in that little word "O". Paul knew Timothy's strengths and weaknesses and how his heart yearned that Timothy would continue faithful to Christ and His faith to the end and transmit that faith to the next generation in all purity."

As members of a scriptural New Testament church, we all have committed to our trust these things as well. Will we keep the faith? Will we transmit it to others today and pass it along pure to the next generation?

Profane is wicked and vain babblings refers to empty discussions. Oppositions of science falsely so called pretty much speaks for itself. Science ceases to be science when it loses objectivity as it has in the theory of evolution; when the biases of the scientists skew the way they view evidence. Therefore, we should never allow anything that man claims is a new "finding" that contradicts scripture. In the end, it will inevitably be revealed for what it is: a false finding.