

# The Letter of 1 Timothy

or

"That thou mayest know how"

*by Rick Shoemaker*

## OUTLINE OF 1 TIMOTHY

- I. THE COMMISSION 1:1-4
- II. THE COMMANDMENT 1:5-11
- III. THE CONVERSION 1:12-17
- IV. THE CHARGE 1:18-20
- V. THE CHURCH 2:1-15
- VI. THE CONDUCT 3:1-16
- VII. THE CAUTION 4:1-16
- VIII. THE CARE 5:1-2
- IX. THE COMMITMENT 6:1-5
- X. THE CONTENTMENT 6:6-10
- XI. THE COMBAT 6:11-12
- XII. THE CONCLUSION 6:13-21

This letter is written by Paul to a relatively young preacher named Timothy who had been given the responsibility of helping a congregation and leading them in right doctrine and conduct. It is the first of the two letters Paul wrote to Timothy. These were letters from an older preacher to a younger preacher. This was the first of four letters Paul wrote to individuals (1 and 2 Timothy, Titus, and Philemon). The letters to Timothy and Titus are called the Pastoral Epistles because they were written to men who were pastors of local churches.

The word "Timothy" means "dear to God". Timothy was the grandson of Lois and son of Eunice, two godly ladies mentioned by Paul (2 Tim. 1:5). They had taught him the scripture from his childhood (2 Tim. 3:15). Timothy's father was a Greek (Acts 16:1). There is no mention in Scripture of his father being converted.

We are first introduced to Timothy in the book of Acts (Acts 16:1-3). He would become one of Paul's most faithful companions in the ministry (Acts 16:1-3; 1 Cor. 4:17; 16:10; Phil. 2:19-20; 1 Th. 3:2). Paul said there was no man that he could depend on like Timothy (Phil. 2:19-20). Though we do not know when or where it seems that Timothy was imprisoned on one occasion (Heb. 13:23).

It may be that Timothy was somewhat reserved for Paul encouraged him to overcome his timidity and fear (1 Cor. 16:10, 11). Paul said "For God hath not given us the spirit of fear" (2 Tim. 1:7). Paul asked the church of Corinth to treat Timothy in a way that would set him at ease (1 Cor. 16:10-11).

It also seems that Timothy may have gotten discouraged because of the difficulty of the task he had been given. Perhaps, he was even thinking of giving up and leaving Ephesus. Paul encouraged him to continue and be faithful to the task God had given him (1:3). Only a preacher can understand the stress of serving God in such a place. Most preachers feel like giving up some time in their ministry. But, as Paul said, we must fight the good fight and be faithful to the end (1 Tim. 6:12; 2 Tim. 4:7).

If Timothy was of a timid nature, he certainly trusted God and was able to gain victory over this handicap. While in his late teens, or early twenties, he traveled with Paul on a difficult missionary journey. He is mentioned as being with Paul on several occasions (2 Cor. 1:1; Phil. 1:1; Col. 1:1; 1 Th. 1:1; 2 Th. 1:1 Philemon 1:1). Paul trusted him enough to send him to assist the churches in Corinth (1 Cor. 4:17), Thessalonica (1 Th. 3:2, 6), and Philippi (Phil. 2:19). Timothy allowed himself to be circumcised that he might not offend the Jews (Acts 16:3). The fact Paul, perhaps the most dedicated man of God at the time, would choose Timothy as his assistant says a lot about Timothy's character. It is quite obvious that Paul, instead of pampering Timothy, thrust him into some very difficult situations (2:3; 4:5). No doubt, Timothy was humble and teachable, two qualities greatly needed in believers today.

The theme verse of this letter is 1 Timothy 3:15. There Paul wrote, "...that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God...". Paul was writing to tell Timothy, and the people, how they should behave in the church. What he said still applies today.

Paul established the church at Ephesus during his third missionary journey and spent three years there (Acts 19:1-20:31). He warned them then about the false teachers that would come among them (Acts 20:29-30). His prediction came true (1 Tim. 1:6, 19-20; 4:1-3; 6:3-5, 19, 21).

Evidently, after Paul was released from his first Roman imprisonment, he and Timothy, revisited Ephesus. Paul left Timothy in Ephesus to deal with several problems in the church while he went on to Macedonia (1:3). Timothy was to deal with the false doctrine by teaching the truth (1:3-7; 4:1-3; 6:3-5), to correct the order of the church (2:1-15) and to set leaders in the church (3:1-14). This was a personal letter from Paul to "Timothy".

But, it was also to be read to the other churches throughout Asia Minor.

## I. THE COMMISSION 1:1-4

Paul got straight to business in this letter by reminding Timothy of his commission from the Lord.

*1 Ti 1:1 Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the commandment of God our Saviour, and Lord Jesus Christ, which is our hope;*

As was the common practice at that time, Paul introduced himself at the first of his letter.

Paul began his letter by affirming the fact that his authority came directly from God. If God had not sent him, he would have no right to say what he did to Timothy. But, if God did indeed send him, he had the absolute right to say what he did.

The word "apostle" means "an ambassador". It has the idea of being sent out on behalf of another. They speak and act on behalf of the one they represent. America has ambassadors who represent this country in foreign lands.

The word "apostle" is transliterated and not translated.

Paul was an apostle of "Jesus Christ" and not an apostle of the church. His calling came from God and was more than simply a position in the church. He was not a "mama called and daddy sent" preacher.

Paul was an apostle by the "commandment" of God".

He was under the commandment of God as far as his call to preach. He did not simply start preaching one day and claim he had a message from God. He had a direct call from God and not just a career he had chosen. A God-called preacher preaches because he has to, not just because he wants to. Hopefully, he will want to.

He was also under the commandment of God as far as his ministry to the church at Ephesus, which included the letter he was writing to Timothy. This letter was more than just a friend writing to a friend.

Paul often referred to the fact that his ministry was "by the will of God" (Rom. 1:10; 2 Cor. 1:1, Eph. 1:1; Col. 1:1; 2 Tim. 1:1). But, here he goes further by saying he was under the command of God. The idea of commanding suggests authority. God does not offer suggestions or make requests, He gives commands. He has the authority to do so. We should recognize His authority and obey His instructions. With a command there are only two options, we obey or we disobey.

Paul probably used the word "commandment" here because there were some problems in the church. He wanted to establish the fact from the very beginning that what he was writing came with all the authority of the God of heaven. These were words directly from their God and not just from some man. We should see the words of this letter as a message coming directly from God.

Jesus Christ is our "hope". Without Jesus, there is no hope in this world. Without Jesus, there is no hope of salvation (Jn. 10:28; Rom. 8:24-25; Eph. 2:12), no hope of joy (Jn. 15:11; 17:13; 1 Pet. 1:8), and no hope of peace (Jn. 14:27; 16:33; 20:19).

The word "hope" means "expectation". When we use the word "hope" we are usually talking about something uncertain. We may say, "I hope it does not rain today". But, the hope found in the Bible is sure. It is something we can count on because it comes from the God who never lies.

*1 Ti 1:2 Unto Timothy, my own son in the faith: Grace, mercy, and peace, from God our Father and Jesus Christ our Lord.*

As mentioned earlier, this was a personal letter to "Timothy", but it was also to be read to the other churches throughout Asia Minor.

Paul called Timothy his "own son in the faith". Some believe this means Paul led Timothy to the Lord. However, according to the book of Acts, it seems that Timothy was already a believer when he met Paul (Acts 16:1-3). Paul did visit Lystra, where Timothy lived, earlier (Acts 14:6-23). It is possible he actually met Timothy then and led him to the Lord. Since the bible does not tell us, we simply do not know.

Paul may have called Timothy his "son in the faith" because of their age difference or their close spiritual bond (Phil. 2:19-22). Timothy served Paul as a son would a father (Phil. 2:22). Whether he led Timothy to the Lord or not, Paul saw himself as a father to Timothy. Like any father, he wanted to see his son in the faith doing well. There is no thrill like the one that comes when a parent sees their child doing right.

The word, "mercy" means "compassion". When writing to churches, Paul generally used the greeting that included the words "grace" and "peace" (Rom. 1:7; 1 Cor. 1:3; 2 Cor. 1:2; Gal. 1:3; Eph. 1:2; Phil. 1:2; Col. 1:2; 1 Th. 1:1; 2 Th. 1:2; Phi. 1:3). However, when writing to pastors, he added the word "mercy" to his greeting (2 Tim. 1:2; Tit. 1:4). The reason seems obvious. A pastor needs mercy. There will be times when he needs to give mercy and there will be times when he needs to get mercy.

As with "hope" in verse one, "Grace, mercy, and peace" come from God.

*1 Ti 1:3 As I besought thee to abide still at Ephesus, when I went into Macedonia, that thou mightest charge some that they teach no other doctrine,*

The word "besought" means "to invite". Paul's closeness to Timothy is seen here. He had the spiritual authority to command Timothy to stay in Ephesus, yet he tenderly asked him to do so.

Ephesus was a large city on the western coast of Asia Minor. As mentioned earlier, Paul left Timothy in Ephesus to deal with several problems in the church while he went on to Macedonia. Timothy's ministry at Ephesus was intended to be temporary. He was to deal with the false doctrine by teaching the truth (1:3-7; 4:1-3; 6:3-5). He was not to pamper those who were teaching the error. The word, "charge" is a military term. It is a word of command. A Sergeant has the authority to tell a Private what to do and the Private is bound to obey. Timothy was to address the issues in the church with the authority given him by God.

The word "doctrine" simply means "instruction". Some believe doctrine is deep and boring. Shockingly, there are some in the family of God who believe we should avoid doctrine. By doing so, they are displaying their ignorance.

We are not told what the "other doctrine" was but it would refer to anything contrary to the New Testament gospel message (Rom. 1:16). Paul told Timothy to make sure no one taught anything different than the gospel. The church was to continue in the apostles' doctrine (Acts 2:42).

The most serious of sins that can be committed by a preacher is not their love for money or their lustful desires, it is mishandling God's Word. False teachers and teaching are not to be ignored or pampered. The devil loves to sow false doctrine in a church because he knows how destructive it can be. Once an error gets rooted it is almost impossible to remove.

Some believe Christians should be a people of love and acceptance and should not address those who teach other doctrines. We are living in a day when doctrine is compromised for the sake of fellowship. But, how can we be a people of love unless we resist those who teach error? The father who loves his children will warn them about a rattlesnake. He will tell them of its vile nature and its poison. He will tell them to avoid the snake at all costs. To do less would be unconscionable.

God takes false doctrine seriously. False teachers are described in the bible as "ravaging wolves" (Mt. 7:15), "dogs" and "evil workers" (Phil. 3:25), and "wicked" (2 Pet. 3:17). We are told to "beware" of them (Mt. 7:15). God tells us to not listen to them (Jer. 23:16). He says His hand will be against them (Ezk. 13:9).

The fight against false doctrine is a difficult one. It is difficult because you must know the truth well enough to refute the error. It is difficult because those who believe the error are convinced they are right. It is difficult because those who believe the error often take it personally when someone questions their beliefs.

Timothy may have been somewhat hesitant to remain in Ephesus. As I have mentioned earlier, there are indications that he was a timid man (1 Cor. 16:10, 11; 2 Tim. 1:7). The task of standing against those who were teaching false doctrine would be especially difficult for someone with such a nature. He had been used to traveling with Paul. No doubt, he depended quite a bit on Paul's spiritual energy. Now, he was alone in his stand for the Lord. Yet, despite his apprehension, he did what the Lord desired of him. May the Lord give us that same attitude.

This verse reveals Paul's confidence in the relatively young preacher. He entrusted Timothy to do what it took to get rid of the error that was spreading through the church of Ephesus. Paul had confidence in Timothy but his confidence was really in his Lord. He believed God would enable Timothy to do whatever it took to get the job done. We can, and must, trust the Lord.

The word "some" seems to imply those who were teaching the error were actually inside the church. It also indicates those teaching the false doctrine were comparatively few. The fact that there may have been few does not undo its seriousness. If left alone, the influence of this error would become widespread. A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump (1 Cor. 5:6; Gal. 5:9). It is strange how error seems to travel faster than truth. That is one of the reasons it must be dealt with quickly and severely.

*1 Ti 1:4 Neither give heed to fables and endless genealogies, which minister questions, rather than godly edifying which is in faith: so do.*

The "fables" probably refer to unfounded stories told by the Jews. If the devil cannot do away with truth, he will try to substitute it. The Bible warns us about fables (2 Tim. 4:4; Titus 1:14; 2 Pet. 1:16). Every preacher must guard against the temptation to preach more on current events than the truth of the Word.

A genealogy was very important to the Jews. They were very proud of their ancestry (Mt. 3:9). Also, they had to prove their lineage to hold certain positions of service in the Lord's work. But, the "endless genealogies" Paul referred to were ones that could not be trusted to be accurate. A genealogy that is inaccurate is worse than no genealogy at all.

The word "heed" means "to hold the mind" or "to pay attention". It carries with it the idea of being cautious. Doctrinal error is dangerous and should be avoided at all costs. Those teaching and preaching the Word of God must be certain they are delivering the truth. The souls of man hang in the balance.

Timothy was to deal with the false doctrine in the church in two ways.

One, by speaking those who were teaching the false doctrine. You deal with false doctrine at its source. You stop it by stopping those who teach it. You kill the snake by cutting off its head.

Two, by speaking to those who were listening to the false doctrine. If those teaching error refused to stop, the next best thing was for people to stop listening. Where there is no wood the fire goes out.

Every Christian needs to know the truth well enough to where they will recognize error. Like the bank teller who is trained to detect counterfeit bills by studying the details of the

genuine, we need to know the truth of Scripture. Every Christian should pray that their preacher would be able to discern and proclaim, the absolute truth.

The word "questions" has the idea of "dispute". The questions merely produced more questions that could not be answered. Their endless discussions caused more problems than profit. This reminds us of the Athenians who were constantly searching for some new thing that no one else had ever discovered (Acts 17:21). When we get to the place where we think we need more than the Word of God, we are in a dangerous place.

The Word of God produces "godly edifying". The unanswerable questions offer no spiritual benefit. We must guard against questions that have no answers. There is nothing wrong with speculating on certain spiritual matters but we can become obsessed if we are not careful.

We should take heed to this warning. Some people love to argue about controversial subjects. In doing so, they open themselves up to all types of danger. None of us are above being deceived. Many false cults began by someone tampering with such matters. We must remember, that the devil has transformed himself into an angel of light (2 Cor. 11:14). He is not only a master of deception, but he is also a master of distraction. If he cannot deceive us with false doctrine, he will distract us from the truth with useless discussions. We need to learn to avoid bickering over details that do not matter. Arguing over non-essentials is more than unwise, it is unchristian.

## II. THE COMMANDMENT 1:5-11

Paul explained further about the commandment from God that he had mentioned in verse one.

*1 Ti 1:5 Now the end of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned:*

In verse five, Paul summarized what God was trying to accomplish through him in his ministry to Timothy and the church at Ephesus. God was not trying to build a mega-church. He was simply trying to do a spiritual work in the hearts of those who were in Ephesus.

By the way, He is still attempting to do the same thing in you and me and the church we attend. I am afraid we are most concerned about things that are less important to God. The number in attendance or the amount in the bank account of the local church is not God's primary concern. Though these things are important, God is much more interested in the spiritual well-being of those in the church.

Those in Ephesus who would pay attention to Paul and Timothy would receive great spiritual benefits. These benefits are contrasted by the undesirable effects of the false teaching mentioned later in this chapter (1:10-16).

Some believe the "commandment" Paul spoke of was referring to the commandments in the Old Testament. I believe he was speaking of the commandment from God that he mentioned in verse one. The word "commandment" here is the same word translated as "charge" in this chapter (1:3 and 1:18). He was following the command of God and had a message to deliver.

The word "end" means "conclusion" or "goal" (cf. Rom. 10:4). God had a goal in mind when He sent Paul to the church of Ephesus and when he had him write this letter to Timothy. There is a reason for everything God says and does. Unlike some people, God does not speak just to hear Himself talk.

God had a goal in mind. Is that not true of any worker? The carpenter works because he wants the house completed. The doctor operates because he wants to help the patient



get well. And God works because He has a desired goal.

Verse five tells us God's goal was to produce a real love in the hearts of His children. The word "charity" is the Greek word "agape" which means "love". It refers to the kind of love God has for mankind (Jn. 3:16). The highest human emotion is love. But, God's love is the highest of all loves. This kind of love is so important that the bible says it is evidence that we belong to God (1 Jn. 4:7). Jesus said people will know we are his disciples because of our love for one another (Jn. 13:35). Paul emphasized the importance of love to the believers in Corinth (1 Cor. 13:1-3).

Paul mentioned three things that will be true of the person who loves as God loves. They will have a pure heart, a good conscience, and real faith.

First, the person who loves as God loves will have a "pure" heart. That speaks of the condition of our hearts. The condition of our heart tells us our true spiritual condition for it tells us what we are on the inside. David asked the Lord to create in him a clean heart (Ps. 51:10). The person with a "pure heart" is the person who hates sin, loves righteousness, and longs to please God. Anyone can pretend to love God and people. Only those with a pure heart can love as God loves.

Secondly, the person who loves as God loves will have a "good conscience". Paul spoke often about a good conscience (1 Tim. 1:5, 19; 4:2; 2 Tim. 1:3; Titus 1:15).

The conscience is that part of man that tells him what is right or wrong and urges him to do right. It is God's policeman that warns those who are violating His law. The Holy Spirit does the same but the conscience is different from the Holy Spirit. God gave us a conscience to protect us from the results of doing wrong.

Our conscience is developed by that which we are exposed to. The person who has been regularly exposed to the truth of Scripture will have a strong conscience. At the same time, a cannibal in Africa can eat their victim and have no remorse whatsoever.

Notice Paul said "good" conscience and not pure conscience. A good conscience speaks of the person who has a conscience that is functioning properly. This person is well-informed concerning the Word of God. They are sensitive to the voice of their conscience and careful to heed its warnings. They are quick to change their behavior when their conscience speaks to them. The person with a good conscience is the person who has no unconfessed sin between them and their Savior (Pro. 28:13) and no unsettled differences between themselves and others.

What could be better than to have a clear conscience before God and people? It is wonderful to know there is nothing between me and my Savior. Many are trying to clear their conscience by doing good deeds. However, our good deeds do not erase our bad ones. A clear conscience comes only by confessing and forsaking our sin (Heb. 10:22).

Our conscience can be weak. The person who lacks the truth found in the Word of God will have a weak conscience. Paul dealt with those who were struggling with eating meat offered to idols and said their conscience was weak (1 Cor. 8:7).

Our conscience can be grieved. The conscience is grieved when a person does something they know is wrong. It produces guilt, shame, and fear.

Our conscience can be seared. When we continually ignore the voice of our conscience, it eventually becomes calloused. The sensitivity towards sin is gone and we can do wrong without it bothering us.

Thirdly, the person who loves as God loves will have genuine faith. The word, "unfeigned" means "genuine". This is a faith that is not shaken even when trials come. The person who loves God will certainly trust Him (Heb. 11:6). God wants His children to trust Him. We have no legitimate reason to not trust Him because He has shown Himself trustworthy many times.



*1 Ti 1:6 From which some having swerved have turned aside unto vain jangling;*

The word "swerved" means "to miss the mark". The error of the false prophets had missed the mark of truth.

The phrase "turned aside" means "to turn away" or "avoid". In turning towards the error, they had turned away from the truth. That was not something to be taken lightly. We are admonished to walk the straight path (Heb. 12:13).

The words "vain jangling" mean "babble" or "idle talk". It has the idea of an empty noise. This refers to empty words that benefit no one. Man has a knack for speaking a lot and saying nothing. However, the message Paul had from God would change lives. God's Word is sufficient for every need we have.

They were exposed to the true Word of God that had the power to save their souls, direct their lives, and give them courage, joy, peace, and contentment, but they turned from it to a bunch of babble that made absolutely no sense whatsoever. To say the least, that was an unwise decision. Yet, many are doing the same thing today.

What made matters worse was the fact that some of those who were turning from the truth and to this useless babble were those who, as we see in the next verse, were claiming to be teachers of the truth.

*1 Ti 1:7 Desiring to be teachers of the law; understanding neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm.*

The "law" in this verse refers to the Old Testament law that had been given by God. We know that because of Paul's comments in the next few verses.

The teachers were highly respected during Paul's day. The men Paul was writing about wanted to be teachers because they longed for the position. It wasn't that they wanted to know and keep the law. They simply wanted the prestige of being the teacher. They were like the ones Jesus spoke of who wanted the uppermost seats (Lk.20:43) and loved the meetings in the marketplace (Lk.20:46).

They wanted to be teachers of the law but they were ignorant of what the law taught. How can anyone teach something they do not even know? Instead of recognizing their inability and staying quiet, they spoke of things that offered no spiritual benefit.

The word "affirm" has the idea of speaking with confidence. They not only spoke error, but they did it boldly because they believed they were right. Their boldness made what they were saying more convincing. Someone has said it does not matter what the preacher says as long as he says it loud.

*1 Ti 1:8 But we know that the law is good, if a man use it lawfully;*

The problem was not with the "law", for it is "good" (cf. Rom. 7:7, 12, 14). The law is good because it came from God and reflects who God is (Ps. 19:7; Rom. 7:12; Jam. 1:17).

The law is good, but it is not good news. It judges, punishes, and condemns, those who are guilty. It offers no assistance to the guilty person. However, the gospel message comes with help for the believing and repenting sinner (Acts 2:38; 4:12; 13:38; 16:31; 1 Cor. 1:21; Eph. 2:8).

To use it "lawfully" means to use it according to how it is designed and for the purpose God intended.

Paul wanted to make sure his words were not misunderstood. He certainly was not scorning the law. The problem was not with the law, it was with those who thought they could teach the law. Some try to use the law as they desire. They accept the part they like and try to discard the part they don't. Their effort is futile for the Word of God is forever settled and can not be changed (Mt. 5:18).

*1 Ti 1:9-10 Knowing this, that the law is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless*

*and disobedient, for the ungodly and for sinners, for unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for manslayers, For whoremongers, for them that defile themselves with mankind, for menstealers, for liars, for perjured persons, and if there be any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine;*

Paul continued by explaining the reason God gave the law.

The law is not for the "righteous man". This does not mean the law has no value for the righteous person. The law can assist us to know how we should live. It sets the standard for what is right and wrong. This is true of the law of the land and God's law. Just as the law-abiding citizen does not fear the law of the land, those who keep God's law have no reason to fear God's law. The police car does not bother us as long as we are not breaking the speed limit. The "No Trespassing" sign does not disturb the person on the right side of the fence. A "Shoplifters Will Be Prosecuted" sign means nothing to the honest person.

The law was given for the "lawless and disobedient". God knew man could not keep the law. He did not give the law to bind man to a bunch of rules. He gave it to show the sinner he could not keep the rules and to bring him to Christ for forgiveness. The law was our schoolmaster that taught us how much we needed Jesus (Gal. 3:19, 24). So, the primary purpose of the law was to show the unrighteous person how sinful they are, how unable they are to keep the demands of the law and to bring them to Jesus for the forgiveness He provided at Calvary.

The false teachers at Ephesus were undoubtedly teaching that they had to keep the law even after they had put their faith in Christ. Most false religions tell us we must be good enough to please God. The Bible says those who are trying to keep the law after they have trusted Christ as their Savior have "fallen from grace" (Gal. 5:4).

Paul gave a list of fourteen different violations of God's law in verses 9-10. It is interesting to notice how this list compares to the Ten Commandments (Ex. 20:3-17). Most of the commandments are covered by Paul's list.

The word "lawless" means "without law". This refers to the person who recognizes no law. They see themselves as above God's and man's law. No one has the right to tell them what to do or how to live.

The word "disobedient" means "insubordinate". This refers to the person who recognizes the law but refuses to submit to it. They knowingly, and willingly, disobey the law. They think they are above any law.

The word "ungodly" means "irreverent" or "wicked". This has the idea of being totally polluted from within.

The word "sinners" means "sinful". It is a word that is commonly used for those who commit all types of sin.

The word "unholy" means simply "unholy". This refers to the person who cares nothing about their responsibility to God. They have no respect for God or His law. An example would be Esau selling his birthright because he did not consider it to be sacred (Heb. 12:16).

The word "profane" means "irreligious". This word has the idea of staying away from the temple. When the Jews conducted the sacred rites required by the law, they would require those who were irreligious to stay away. This refers to the person who makes fun of or scoffs, at religion.

The "murders of fathers and murders of mothers" is a sin that is almost beyond our understanding. Yet, it is not unheard of. The Old Testament strictly forbade a child to strike their father or mother (Ex. 21:15). This would be a violation of the fifth commandment which says to honor thy father and thy mother (Ex. 20:12).

The word "manslayers" means "murderer". Murder was forbidden by the sixth commandment (Ex. 20:13).

The word "whoremonger" means "fornicator". This would include adultery, fornication, or prostitution. This violates the seventh commandment which says thou shalt not commit adultery (Ex. 20:14).

Those who "defile themselves with mankind" is referring to a sodomite or homosexual. Contrary to the opinion of some, God did not make them that way. To design a person with that type of tendency and then determine it to be a sin would not be consistent with God's design. God spoke clearly against this type of activity, called it wickedness, and said those who were found guilty were to be put to death (Lev. 20:13-14).

The word "menstealers" is found only here in the New Testament. It refers to what we would call a kidnapper. It probably refers to someone stealing a person to make them a slave. Unfortunately, many were taken into slavery in this fashion. This was expressly forbidden in the Old Testament (Lev. 6:2-4; 19:11; Dt. 24:7). It would be a violation of the eighth commandment that forbids stealing (Ex. 20:15).

The word "liar" means someone who falsifies. The Old Testament condemns this sin (Lev. 6:2-5; 19:11). This would be a violation of the ninth commandment (Ex. 20:16). It refers to out and out lying, stretching the truth, or misleading someone. This is one of the sins that have been ignored in our day. Just because man does not consider it serious, does not mean God has changed His mind about it.

The words "perjured persons" refer to those who swear falsely. In our day, we would call this breaking a promise. God was very serious about such a matter (Ex. 20:7; Lev. 19:12; 6:3). We should do what we say we will do. Our character is revealed by how we keep our word.

Paul summarized his list by saying, "any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine". This means anything contrary to God's law. Paul connected wrong doctrine with wrong behavior.

The word, "sound" means "to be well". Good, bible doctrine, will keep us spiritually fit. Paul referred to it as "wholesome" words (1 Tim. 6:3). The implication is that false doctrine produces spiritual disease.

*1 Ti 1:11 According to the glorious gospel of the blessed God, which was committed to my trust.*

The "glorious gospel" is the truth about God sending His Son to die for sinners, providing forgiveness for sin, freedom from judgment, and a promise of blessings, both now and forever. This work is done freely in the hearts of those who have done nothing to deserve it.

It is the glorious gospel that sets men free from the law. The gospel begins with the law. That being, we are all sinners, guilty, and unable to keep the law. The gospel first tells us how wretched and hopeless we are. Paul said he did not realize he was a sinner until the law told him he was a sinner (Rom.7:7). He also said the law was good because it showed him what he really was (Rom.7:12). The person speeding down the road does not know he is breaking the law until he sees the speed limit sign. He realized he was guilty when he was exposed to the law. Being exposed to the truth helped him because it caused him to slow down and keep from getting a speeding ticket.

The word "committed" means "to have faith" or "to entrust". We talk a lot about how we have faith in God but we seldom think of how God has faith in us. God had entrusted the gospel to Paul.

The gospel message that brings forgiveness to the sinner, peace to the troubled, and power to the weak. It is the message that can undo the damage of sin and bring glory to

God. And, our Father has trusted us to handle that message rightly. I wonder if He is disappointed in how we are handling this wonderful gift.

### III. THE CONVERSION 1:12-17

After speaking of the gospel that God had entrusted to him, Paul was reminded of how that same gospel had made such a difference in his own life. He wrote of how he was converted and called.

*1 Ti 1:12 And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry;*

Paul was thankful because he knew he was nothing without God and His grace. He understood that Jesus was right when he said, "without me ye can do nothing" (Jn. 15:5).

Paul was thankful also because God had given him what he needed to do God's will. The word "enabled" means "to empower" or "to make able". Paul said, "But by the grace of God I am what I am" (1 Cor. 15:10). The grace that brought Paul to Jesus was the same grace that "enabled" him to walk with God (2 Cor. 3:5; Phil. 4:13; 2 Tim. 4:17). Those God sends, He equips. God's grace doesn't save us and then leave us.

If anyone could have boasted about their education and training, Paul could have. He was taught by Gamaliel, one of the greatest teachers of that day (Acts 22:3). But, Paul did not depend on his human wisdom (1 Cor. 2:4, 13).

Every believer needs to learn the lesson Paul had learned. God's power works in us to do above and beyond what we could ever do on our own (2 Cor. 3:5; Phil. 2:13; Eph 3:20; Col 1:29). This is why Paul said, "And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power" (Eph 1:19). With His power, we can do anything that is His will (Phil. 4:13).

The word, "putting" means "appointing". The true preacher has not chosen a vocation, he has answered a call.

Paul said at least part of the reason God chose him was that God knew he would be "faithful". He would be dependable and a man who could be trusted. He lived godly (Acts 20:19; 23:1), preached faithfully (Acts 9:20-22, 27-29; 20:20-21), suffered horribly (Acts 16:23-26; 2 Cor. 11:24-28), and even worked with his own hands to provide for his needs when necessary (Acts 18:3; 20:33-34; 1 Cor. 4:12). Through all this difficulty Paul had learned perhaps what is the greatest lesson anyone can learn, that being, to be content with whatever circumstances came his way (Phil. 4:11-12). God could trust Paul, can He trust you?

Paul realized the reason he was faithful was because of God's work in him. It was a work of God's grace and not his own nature. So, he thanked God for calling him and for helping him to be faithful.

Our faithfulness is vitally important to God (1 Cor. 4:2). Faithfulness means we do right when it isn't easy to do right. Faithfulness means we do what pleases God when others do not. We need to be faithful wherever we are. Whether our ministry is large or small, we should be faithful where God has placed us.

The word "ministry" means "service". There is nothing glamorous about it. It simply means to work hard and to serve. Yet, there is no higher calling on earth than to be in the ministry of our Lord.

No doubt these words encouraged Timothy to stay in Ephesus and do that which God had called him to do. As previously stated, Timothy probably felt ill-equipped to do the task before him. Hearing once again about Paul's empowerment encouraged him to

continue.

*1 Ti 1:13 Who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious: but I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief.*

I believe the key to this verse is the word "before". The man who had been known as Saul no longer existed. Paul was not the man he used to be. Anyone who is saved can attest to the same thing. Old things are passed away and all things have become new for those who are truly saved (2 Cor. 5:17).

Paul described his condition before he met Jesus. What made God's work through Paul so amazing was the fact of what Paul was before he was saved. It is not uncommon that those who served the flesh most fervently before salvation will serve the Father most fervently after salvation. Those who were of much are most thankful. The extent of our wickedness magnifies the riches of God's mercy in saving us and God's grace in calling us.

Paul described himself before he met the Lord. The word "blasphemer" refers to someone who speaks disrespectfully about Jesus. This does not mean Paul reviled sacred things before his conversion. He obviously was a very religious man who had great respect for God (Acts 22:3; 23:6; 2 Cor. 11:22; Phil. 3:4-8). However, the old Saul had no respect for Jesus whatsoever. He saw Jesus and his followers as hypocrites and liars and did everything he could to expose them as such.

The word "persecutor" refers to someone who injures or afflicts. The word "injurious" means "maltreater". It is translated as "spitefully entreated" when speaking of how Jesus was treated (Lk. 18:32). It carries with it the idea of the violence and abuse of a bully. This type of person enjoys hurting others.

All this reminded Paul how good the grace of God was for all these were true of him before his conversion. He had traveled through the land searching out those who called themselves Christians. No village was too small and no city was too large (Acts 8:1-3; 26:9-11). He did his best to exterminate all those who claimed to be a Christian (Acts 7:58; 9:1-2, 13; 22:4-5, 19-20; Gal. 1:13; 1 Cor. 15:9).

And yet, even while Paul was causing such heartache for His children, God spoke to him and called him to salvation (Acts 9:1-6). Oh, what glorious mercy God had bestowed upon this unworthy man.

The words "obtained mercy" mean "to give out compassion". God's mercy is us not receiving what we deserve. We do not get the judgment we deserve.

After Paul explained what he did, he explained why he did what he did. He did it "ignorantly". The word "ignorantly" means "to not know". Before Paul's conversion, he thought he was doing God's will by standing against Jesus and the gospel (Acts 26:9). He had been taught from his infancy that the way to please God was to keep the law (Phil. 3:5).

Paul also did what he did in "unbelief". Before his conversion, Paul could not accept the fact that Jesus was the Son of God. He believed the Messiah to come in power and usher in a kingdom. By the way, so did all the other Jews, including those who eventually became the disciples of Christ.

Paul explaining his ignorance and unbelief was not him trying to excuse his actions. He saw himself as guilty and deserving whatever punishment was due him. Ignorance and unbelief do not excuse sin, but they can bring God's mercy. God does not tolerate willful disobedience (Lk. 12:47; Rom. 1:20-21; Jam. 4:17) but He will temporarily extend mercy to those who are ignorant (Heb. 5:2).

It is vitally important that we recognize the fact that Paul's ignorance did not relieve him from judgment. God would have been right to judge him for he was guilty. Ignorance of



the truth does not excuse us.

*1 Ti 1:14 And the grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus.*

God's grace was greater than Paul's sin. Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound (Rom. 5:20).

The grace of God produced "faith and love" in Paul's life. Paul's "unbelief" (v. 13) was replaced with "faith". The One he had denied, he was now trusting for his eternal salvation. Paul's hatred and anger against Christ were replaced with "love". The man who had been a "blasphemer" and "injurious" now loved Jesus. The One he had hated, he now loved. The One he accused of being a liar, he now proclaimed to be the Lord of lords. The characteristics of his life after his conversion were the exact opposite as before his conversion. The gospel he tried to destroy he now proclaimed unashamedly.

Paul added the words "which is in Christ Jesus" to show that faith and love can come only through a relationship with Christ. All the good things in Paul's life could be traced back to the grace of God.

*1 Ti 1:15 This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief.*

The conclusion to Paul giving his personal testimony is found in this verse.

Paul used the phrase, "This is a faithful saying" often (1 Tim. 1:15; 3:1; 4:9; 2 Tim. 2:11; Ti. 3:8).

The statement in this verse is one of the most glorious of all the truths in the bible. The word "faithful" means "trustworthy". In other words, we can believe it without the slightest doubt or hesitation. The word "worthy" means "deserving". It is a statement that deserves our acceptance as fact.

There may be times when we wonder if we are foolish to believe what God says. When troubles come and life gets difficult, the devil might tell us to trust ourselves, forget the bible, and quit going to church. But, we can trust the Word of God no matter what we have to face.

It is a statement that is worthy of "all acceptation". That means it is for all and can be accepted by all. Since all are sinners and all need forgiveness all should accept this statement.

What is this most glorious statement? It is, "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners". God became flesh that He might give His life for undeserving sinners (Jn. 1:29; 9:37; 11:27; 16:28; Rom. 5:12; 1 Jn. 2:2). This statement tells us who Jesus was, why He came, and what He did while He was here.

Jesus came and died so that He might "save sinners".

To begin with, this statement implies there is someone who needs to be saved. Jesus said those who are sick are the ones who need a doctor (Mk. 2:17). That means the first requirement in being saved is to realize we need saving.

This statement also implies that all sinners could be saved if they would simply believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, repent of their sin, and call on Him. Jesus did not die for some sinners, He died for all sinners. The Lord is not willing that "any should perish, but that all should come to repentance" (2 Pet. 3:9). His death on the cross is the payment for all the sins "of the whole world" (1 Jn. 2:2). The bible teaches that "whosoever" will believe can be saved (Acts 10:43; Ro. 9:33; 10:13; 1 Jn. 5:1).

If God was gracious enough to extend salvation to a man like Paul, He would do the same to anyone else in the world. God will save the prince as well and the pauper. If God can save the worst, He can save the rest. As one person has said, "If God can save the



chief, He can certainly save the rest of the Indians".

Paul saw himself as the worst of all. He did not say he had been the chief of all sinners. He said, of whom I "am" chief. He saw himself as the chief of sinners at the time he was writing this letter. Even after he was saved and serving God with all of his heart, he saw himself as being the worst of the worst. This was not false humility, it was his genuine opinion of himself (Rom. 7:24; 1 Cor. 15:9; Eph. 3:8).

Paul's statement revealed his attitude about himself. He was grieved about his sinful actions before his conversion but still not satisfied with his commitment since his conversion. Even though he was perhaps the most dedicated Christian on earth at that time, he realized he still fell short of what his Lord deserved. The closer we get to our Lord, the more we will see our own faults and failures. When Isaiah saw the Lord, he also saw his own sinfulness (Isa. 6:1, 5).

Paul was willing to admit his condition. So many in our day are not. Like a doctor who prescribes medicine to others but refuses to admit that he needs it himself (Mt. 23:3-4; Rom. 2:21-22; 1 Cor. 9:27).

Paul's statement about being the chief of sinners tells us something about the depth of sin. All men are equally sinners but all men are not on the same as the depth of their sin. Certainly, the sin in Paul's life that brought the death of many believers was worse than the sin of a man like Matthew.

*1 Ti 1:16 Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might shew forth all longsuffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting.*

The phrase "for this cause I obtained mercy" explains why Paul received God's mercy. This was not the only reason but it was an important one.

The mercy of God was "first" displayed in Paul to prove that it was available for anyone willing to believe and repent.

The word "pattern" means "example". Paul was an example of what God was willing to do for all sinners (2 Pet. 3:9). God is not a respecter of persons (Acts 10:34). What He does for one, He will do for anyone. No person is too bad for God to save, for Paul had been a horrible sinner before his conversion. And, no person is too good to not need saving, for Paul had been a very religious man before his conversion.

Paul's conversion was certainly an example of God's "longsuffering". God's work in the life of the man who would become the apostle Paul was amazing. We must remember, that Paul was treating the believers horribly. While God was patient with Paul He was giving the believers the grace they needed to endure the mistreatment from Paul.

Some have asked why God does not just do away with the sin in the world. The answer is simple. To do away with sin He would have to do away with sinners and He is merciful to sinners.

*1 Ti 1:17 Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen.*

Paul's thoughts of the grace of God at work in his life caused him to overflow into a doxology. He could not think of how bad he had been and how good God had been without breaking into an expression of praise. Thank the Lord for the times when that which is in us just has to come out.

Paul saw God as the "King". He knew God was the one who sits on the throne of the universe and is in control of all things. God is ruling and reigning in absolute authority. The Bible teaches that we should be subject to those who have authority over us. This is true even if those in authority are not godly (1 Sam. 26:9-11; Rom. 13:1; 1 Pet. 2:13-15, 17-19). If we are to submit to human authority, how much more should we submit to

divine authority?

God is not just the King, but He is the King "eternal". All other kings had a beginning, and an end, to their reign. Something happened that caused them to lose their throne. Either, they died, or someone stronger came along and overthrew them. But, our God has always been and always will be, the King over all. He cannot die and none is strong enough to overthrow Him.

The word "immortal" means "incorruptible" or "undecaying". The elements of this world affect everything and cause rust or decay. That is everything but God. God is beyond the influence of corruption.

God fills the universe and yet is "invisible". No one has ever seen the true essence of God. God said, "Thou canst not see my face: for there shall no man see me, and live" (Ex 33:20). Jesus said, "No man hath seen God at any time" (Jn. 1:18). John said, "No man hath seen God at any time" (1 Jn 4:12). There have been times when God has manifested Himself in a human form. This type of manifestation is commonly called a theophany. There have been times when God revealed Himself in a veiled form (Gen. 12:7; 18:16-22; 32:16-22; Ex. 3:2; 24:9-11; Dt. 31:14-15; Isa. 6:1-4; Dan. 7:9-10). Yet, with none of these occasions did anyone see God in His full essence.

The word "only" means "single" or "by oneself". There is none like Him.

He is the only "wise" God. Wisdom is the ability to use the knowledge one possesses. Only God can do this perfectly all the time, in every situation.

The word "honour" is a word that speaks of value or worth. Our God is worthy of all the respect and reverence we can give. David said much the same thing when he said, "Thine, O LORD, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty: for all that is in the heaven and in the earth is thine; thine is the kingdom, O LORD, and thou art exalted as head above all" (1 Chr. 29:11).

Paul realized his praise for God should continue "for ever and ever". God will always deserve all the glory. There will never come a time when He becomes less than He is right now. A million years from today, our God will still be the master of the universe and will still deserve all the praise from all His creation. No man can make this claim. Every person on earth is diminishing slowly. As time passes, our capacity to retain knowledge, our ability to reason, and our strength to accomplish grows less and less. But, our God will always remain the same (Mal. 3:6).

The word "Amen" means "so be it". It is a word that implies agreement.

#### **IV. THE CHARGE 1:18-20**

After the overflow of his doxology, Paul returned to the matters at hand with Timothy and the church. The God he just described had a mission for himself and Timothy. It was time to do it.

*1 Ti 1:18 This charge I commit unto thee, son Timothy, according to the prophecies which went before on thee, that thou by them mightest war a good warfare;*

This "charge" takes us back to what Paul said in verse 3 and Timothy's task of dealing with the false teaching in the church. As previously stated, the word "charge" was a military term. It speaks of a command given by a superior-ranking officer.

Once again Paul referred to Timothy as his "son". This reveals the closeness between Paul and Timothy. This is the perfect combination of a charge being given by a superior

officer and a request being made by a loving dad.

The "prophecies" probably refer to Timothy's ordination into the ministry. We are not told the exact details of these prophecies. We are not told if they were inspired by the Lord or if they were simply expressions of expectation from those who knew Timothy. Either way, those who knew Timothy best expected him to be used mightily by the Lord. As previously mentioned, Timothy had been raised by a godly mother and grandmother (2 Tim. 1:5;3:15). No doubt this training had an obvious effect on Timothy even during his early years. He undoubtedly lived a life that demonstrated a godly lifestyle.

Paul reminded Timothy of this event and how people had confidence that he would serve the Lord faithfully. They had confidence in Timothy because he had proven himself dependable. He was to remember their confidence in him when the difficult times came.

Paul tried to encourage Timothy by reminding him of the positive comments made by people in his past. However, Paul's focus was not on the past, his focus was on how Timothy was to fight a good warfare in the present. We can draw strength and encouragement from past events, but we cannot live in the past. We must stand by faith in the present moment.

Paul reminded Timothy he was in a "war" and that he should fight a "good warfare". He was to look at his ministry in Ephesus like a soldier going into battle. A soldier's focus is on victory. Defeat should not be an option. He gives his all to the cause at hand. He is willing to endure the harshness of war because victory is worth it.

The Christian life is a battleground, not a playground. We are soldiers, not girl scouts (Eph. 6:10-17; 2 Cor. 10:4; 2 Tim. 2:3-4). We must recognize the fact that we are at war with a real enemy with real weapons and real casualties. A soldier cannot allow himself to be caught up in the world around him. He must keep his mind on the battle. So it is with Christian soldiers.

Paul was trying to reassure Timothy of the fact that God had called him and equipped him to do the job that needed to be done at Ephesus.

*1 Ti 1:19 Holding faith, and a good conscience; which some having put away concerning faith have made shipwreck:*

Paul mentioned two aspects of Timothy's ministry. He spoke of "faith" and "good conscience". These two things would be necessary if the work of God was to be accomplished. Faith and a good conscience guard against doubt and self-condemnation. These are two of the devil's biggest weapons.

Timothy would certainly need "faith". He would need to believe that God was in control and truly able to deal with the problems in the church at Ephesus.

Timothy would certainly need a "good conscience". Please refer to the earlier comments about conscience (1:5). He would need the peace of knowing that he was living in a way that was pleasing to God.

The words, "put away" mean, "to push off" or "to reject". They carry with them the thought of violently pushing away. It means to violently reject or to discard aggressively.

Some in the church of Ephesus had rejected "faith". The word faith is used here to describe the entire Christian belief system since faith is its principal part.

Paul described this by the word "shipwrecked". It has the idea of a ship breaking to pieces as it strikes against the rocks. That is what happens when the captain of the ship is not in control of the helm. Those who reject the truth will be "tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine" (Eph 4:14).

Some have suggested the word "shipwreck" indicates going beyond recovery. No doubt some have sinned in such a way as to not be recoverable. John tells us to not even pray for those who have committed the "sin unto death" (1 Jn. 5:16). Yet, in this case, in the

next verse, Paul talked about them learning to not blaspheme. This certainly sounds like it was possible for them to recover. There seems to be hope for these men. This is another indication of the mercy of God and how He is willing to forgive even the worst of sins.

*1 Ti 1:20 Of whom is Hymenaeus and Alexander; whom I have delivered unto Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme.*

Hymenaeus caused problems by claiming the resurrection had already taken place (2 Tim. 2:17-18). Though we cannot be certain, this Alexander may have been to one who did Paul much harm (2 Tim. 4:14-15). We are not told exactly what these men did that opposed the work of God.

Paul tells us he "delivered" these men over to Satan. This refers to the process described in the New Testament whereby a person is put out of the local church and into the world, which is the devil's domain (Mt. 18:15-17; 1 Cor. 5:1-13). This process removes the person from the protection God gives those inside the local church and places them into the control of the devil. This process is commonly called "church discipline".

Church discipline is done to accomplish two things. First, to bring the guilty person to repentance. Second, to keep the church spiritually clean.

The process of church discipline is to be strictly followed.

- Church discipline is for church members only

God requires us to keep those inside the church spiritually clean. The church has no authority over those outside of the church.

- There must be proof of guilt and not just suspicion

This process is too serious to be carried out because of anything less than absolute proof of guilt.

- The person must be unrepentant

Jesus talked about going to the guilty person to give them a chance to confess and repent (Mt. 18:15). If they repent no discipline would be necessary.

- The person must be forgiven and restored if they repent

Paul told the church at Corinth to forgive the man who had been guilty (2 Cor. 2:5-8).

The word "learn" means "to educate". It carries with it the idea of discipline. This is like a father saying to his son, "You are going to learn how to behave". It means the discipline for disobeying will teach the son to obey in the future.

We do not know if Hymenaeus and Alexander learned to not blaspheme, but at least Paul's comment shows us it is possible.

As a relatively young man, it would not be easy for Timothy to oppose those who taught contrary to biblical doctrine. But, it had to be done. The purity and power of the entire church were in jeopardy. The truth must be defended at all costs. There would be much less error today had the truth been defended in the past.

Paul mentioned Hymenaeus and Alexander as a warning to others. What happened to them could happen to anyone else. When we think we are beyond falling, we are in trouble.

We should notice that Paul was willing to call names. He also said, "Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them" (Ro 16:17). We cannot judge the motives of others, but we can judge their conduct and their speech (1 Cor. 5:12; 10:15; Phil. 1:10; 1 Jn. 4:1).

## V. THE CHURCH 2:1-15

At this point, Paul focused his attention on the church itself and what needed to be done to make it what God desired. Chapters two and three discuss the public ministry of the church and the roles the members ought to play. These instructions are timeless. What worked then will work now.

The church was in its infant stages when Paul wrote this letter. There was little, or no, structure in its operation or the worship services. God was using Paul to teach them how they should behave in the church (cf. 1 Tim. 3:15).

Paul began his admonition to the church with the most important ingredient necessary for a good and godly church, that being prayer. No church, no Christian, will be much for God without a consistent prayer life.

*1 Ti 2:1 I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men;*

The word "exhort" means "to beseech". It carries with it the idea of calling near. It was as though Paul was trying to call Timothy to him for a close and personal conversation.

Paul named four ingredients that should be a part of the lives of every child of God.

The words "first of all" refer to importance and not to time. Paul was not saying they had to begin each service in prayer. He was saying that the most important thing for the church at Ephesus, and every church, was that they pray rightly.

Notice, Paul's first emphasis was prayer and not their need to preach, witness, or give. The reason is, that without prayer, the effects of preaching, witnessing, and giving would be limited. It does not matter how trained, talented, or tenacious we are, without the power and presence of God nothing will be accomplished in the Lord's work. We will never have much power unless we have much prayer. Prayer is the key that opens God's great storehouse of grace and power.

The early church was a church of power because it was a church of prayer (Acts 1:14). The preachers gave themselves continually to prayer and the ministry of the word (Acts 6:4). I believe the greatest need in the church of today is for people to learn how to pray rightly, and to do it. Jesus said his Father's house would be called a house of "prayer" (Mt. 21:13). Certainly preaching the Word is vitally important but all our preaching, plans, programs and promotions are useless without prayer. Daniel saw the importance of prayer. He kept praying knowing it was going to cost him greatly (Dan. 6:10-11).

Paul continued to describe the aspects of prayer. Too often we think of prayer as simply asking for the things we want. Though asking is an important part of our prayers, there is much more to prayer than just asking. If we pray only to get our needs met, we have a wrong view of prayer, of ourselves, and of God.

The word "prayers" carries with it the idea of earnestness. Our "fervent prayer" accomplishes much (Jam. 5:6). We cannot expect God to be moved by that which does not move us.

The word "Supplications" means asking for something. I am so glad we can ask and receive from our heavenly Father. As we will see, prayer is much more than just asking, but asking is an important part of prayer. God says the reason we do not receive is because we do not ask (Jam. 4:3).

The word "prayers" is a broad word that refers to all communication with God. This includes worship and adoration. Jesus taught us to begin our prayer by focusing on "Our father" (Mt. 6:9).

The word "intercessions" refers to praying for others. We should never become selfish in



our prayers. When we focus only on me and mine, we are in trouble.

The "giving of thanks" is an essential part of prayer if we are to pray rightly. How often does God answer our requests and then we forget to thank Him?

We are admonished to pray for "all men". We should pray for those in the White House, the poor house, and everyone in between. We should pray for all men because all men need prayer. We need to pray for all men because we need to care for the needs of all men. We find it easy to pray for our own family or friends. But, this tells us we should even pray for those we don't like so much. Jesus tells us we should pray for our enemies (Mt. 5:44).

Paul admonishing the church to pray for "all" men reveals the fact that the church has a responsibility to people inside and outside of the church. A church is not an entity within itself. A church is very much connected to the world around it. That being said, is it very important that a church keep a good testimony in the area of its influence. The only way that can happen is for the people in the church to live godly lives.

*1 Ti 2:2 For kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty.*

This verse talks about quiet, peaceable, godliness, and honesty, and tells us these things are the result of God's people praying. We should never underestimate the power of prayer.

This verse tells us prayer will help us enjoy a peaceful life. I believe it also tells us that prayer is the only way we can have a peaceful life. The devil intends to make our lives miserable. Our only hope of peace is that God might overcome his tactics and defeat his schemes.

Paul got more specific about who we are to pray for. We are to pray for "kings" and for those "in authority". We are to pray for all men but we are to especially pray for those who have the greatest power to affect the most lives. Paul made no difference between good and bad leaders. We should pray for them whether they be godly or godless. We should pray even more earnestly for those who are ungodly. We should not forget the leaders of our country. Their position calls for great wisdom and their decisions have a tremendous effect on many lives. Therefore, we should pray earnestly for them.

Praying for leaders of a nation begins with praying about who gets into office. That being said, I do not think it is wrong for us to pray that God would remove those in government who refuse to obey Him. God puts in and takes out those in leadership (Rom. 13:1-6). He holds the heart of the king in His hand (Pro. 21:1). Our prayers do make a difference because our God hears our cry.

Paul acknowledged the fact that kings have "authority" over the people. Jesus taught his disciples to respect the government (Lk. 20:25). The only time the disciples of Christ resisted the government was when the government commanded they do something contrary to God's will or Word (Acts 5:29). God's children should be the best citizens in the country.

The word "quiet" means "tranquil". It carries with it the idea of stillness.

The word "peaceable" means "undisturbed".

The best way for God's children to have a quiet and peaceable life is for the government to stay out of their lives and let them serve their God. The church should not want the government to control its business, nor should it look for favoritism from the government. Christians do not have to depend on the government to provide for their needs. The child of God is not an orphan. We have a Father who has promised to provide what we need.

Paul told them to pray so they would have a quiet and peaceful life. But, he also told them to pray that they might be a people of "godliness" and "honesty". Living godly and



being honest is especially difficult when there are ungodly men in authority. The good testimony of a godly church is especially important when there are ungodly people in authority. Our country is a good example of that.

No doubt, Paul's desire for a quiet and peaceable life involved more than just having an easier life. He saw it as an opportunity for the believers to spread the gospel easily. The government can be a great hindrance to the work of God.

Before we move on, we should pay attention to what this verse is telling us. It makes clear the Christian's responsibility as a citizen. If every Christian would pray rightly and vote this country would be remarkably different. The population of America in 2019 was over 329 million. Of that number, 65% professed to be Christians and 45% said they were affiliated with a church. If this 45% prayed as they should and then voted as they should, they would be unbeatable. No group, whether political or social, would be able to defeat them. Our country would be much better if the best of the best were put in office. I am saying this not because I believe the success of our country is dependent upon Washington D.C. or the politicians. I still believe the success of any nation is dependent on the spiritual condition of God's people. However, God does encourage us to do what we can to make our country a better place to live. Sadly, in many ways, we are failing miserably.

*1 Ti 2:3 For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour;*

In the previous verse, Paul said they should pray that they might have a quiet and peaceable life. In this verse, he gives another reason. They should pray because doing so was "good and acceptable" to God. How often do we think that God enjoys it when we talk to Him? He wants to answer our prayer.

Notice, Paul said God "our Saviour". The Father is our Savior in that He sent His Son to die for us (Rom. 5:10; 8:32). Once again, we see a co-equal Trinity.

*1 Ti 2:4 Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.*

We find in this verse the primary reason for praying for all men (vv. 1-2). It is not that we might have a quiet and peaceable life, it is because God wants them to be saved. The word translated "all" in this verse is the same Greek word as in verses one and two. This makes it clear that this verse is not speaking of all "kinds" of people as some teach. God wants us to pray for all men because it is His will that all men be saved. That tells us that our prayers make a difference.

It is God's will that "all men" be saved. This statement shows us the very heart and nature of God. God desires all to be saved and that none to go to hell. He gave His Son to prove it. To say that God willed that some people go to hell is a terrible misunderstanding of the God of the bible.

The word "will" means "desire or wish". It carries with it the idea of being pleased. This word is translated as "desiring" in the book of Luke where Jesus' mother "desired" to see him (Lk. 8:20). There are other times when it refers to someone desiring something (Lk. 23:8; Jn. 16:19; Gal. 4:20; 1 Cor. 7:7; 11:3; 14:5). In all these examples this word indicates simply a sincere desire, and nothing more.

It is God's will that all be saved but that does not mean all will be saved. God will not alter the way to salvation. He will not overlook the sin of the sinner, lessen the price of sin, or change the requirements of obtaining forgiveness.

God could override the will of every person on earth and force them to accept His plan of salvation. But, He will not do that. Even from the Garden of Eden, we see how God allowed man an option. He can accept, or reject God's grace. God does not want a bunch of robots running around this world doing His will because they have no choice. He wants man to come to Him, and to serve Him because they want to. I can understand that. What father would want his children to do something for them because they have

to?

Paul connects being "saved" with coming to the "knowledge of the truth". No one can be saved until they have heard the truth about them being a hopeless sinner and how Jesus died on the cross to provide their forgiveness. This is the way, the only way, to get to God.

The word, "come" is the same word Jesus used when He said, "Suffer the little children to come unto me". So, coming to the truth is more than simply coming to the understanding of the facts about the truth. It means, a person hears it, believes it, and accepts it. Without coming to the truth, a person cannot be saved. Paul wrote, "how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard" (Ro 10:14). We need to tell everyone. Limiting our witness to a certain social class, race, or gender is not only wrong, it is sinful.

*1 Ti 2:5 For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus;*

There is only "one God". God is not one among many. He is the only true God (Isa. 43:10; 44:6-8; 45:5, 21-22; 46:9).

There is one God and there is one way to get to Him. The word "mediator" means "go-between". A mediator is a person who comes between two opposing parties to bring them together. There is only one who can bring as in less God and a sinful man together, that is the Son of God, Christ Jesus. Whether an executive on Wall Street or a native in Africa, Jesus is only one way to God.

The Bible clearly teaches there is only one way to heaven (Acts 4:12; Rom. 5:2; Eph. 2:18; Heb. 7:25; 10:19-20; 1 Pet. 1:21). Jesus openly proclaimed himself to be the only way. He said "I am the way", not "I am one of the ways". He continued to say, "no man cometh unto the Father, but by me" (Jn. 14:6). If that statement is not true, we cannot trust anything else Jesus said.

Despite what the bible says, the world has difficulty accepting the fact that there is only one way to heaven. They say many roads lead to God and anyone with a sincere heart will make it. God said, "There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death (Pro. 16:25). A Pharisee and a tax collector came, but only one was accepted (Lk. 18:9-14). The rich young ruler was rejected because he refused to accept God's plan (Lk. 18:18-23).

To say there is another way of forgiveness is to say that what Jesus did on the cross is not enough. If the agonizing death of the perfect Lamb of God was not enough to pay for the sin of mankind, we will all go to hell. God gave His best, if that is not enough, we are doomed forever.

The statement, the "man" Christ Jesus tells us Jesus is still in a body. After his resurrection, Jesus was obviously in a glorified body (Mt. 28:9; Lk. 24:3; Jn. 20:27; 24:42; Acts 1:11; 7:56). Believers will receive this type of body (Phil. 3:21; 1 Jn. 3:2).

*1 Ti 2:6 Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time.*

The previous verse told us there is only one God and there is only one way to approach Him. This verse tells us God provided that way.

Jesus "gave" himself. He willingly died for us (Mt. 26:53; Jn. 10:11; 19:11; Phil. 2:6-8; Tit. 2:14). The cross was not an accident.

Jesus gave "himself". A person can give their riches, their time, their belongings, and not give themselves. Jesus gave himself. He gave his all and held back nothing.

The word "ransom" speaks of the price given to provide freedom for someone taken hostage. This is not suggesting that a ransom had to be paid to the devil. This refers to the price paid to satisfy the holiness of God (Isa. 53:11). This certainly was the highest price for the least valuable item in the history of mankind. Yet, Jesus was willing to pay

that price for us. His death and resurrection provided the means whereby the sinner could be set free from the bondage of sin (Jn. 8:36; Rom. 6:22; 8:1).

Jesus gave himself for "all". Salvation has been paid for all. It is up to each individual to receive or reject what God has provided. There is nothing on earth more sad than those who reject this gift that has been provided for them.

The word "testified" means "testimony". A witness testifies about what they know. It is the responsibility of every believer to tell what they know about Jesus (Mk. 16:15).

In "due time" means God sent His Son at the time He had planned.

*1 Ti 2:7 Whereunto I am ordained a preacher, and an apostle, (I speak the truth in Christ, and lie not;) a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and verity.*

The word "preacher" means "herald". A herald walked the streets shouting a message that had come from a king or nobleman. Paul declared the message from the King of Kings.

To further prove that God wants all men to be saved, He sent His choice man to preach the gospel to the "Gentiles". Paul, a person who hated Gentiles as much as anyone before his conversion had become the messenger to the Gentiles (2 Tim. 1:11). Paul certainly preached the gospel to all people but his primary calling was to take the gospel to the Gentiles. We, like Paul, are to tell everyone. Jesus did the work of salvation, we should do the word of salvation.

Reaching out to the Gentiles was difficult for the Jews to accept because they saw themselves as chosen people (Acts 10:9-48; Gal. 2:11-13).

Preaching in "faith and verity" means Paul was to preach the Word without concealing or adding anything.

*1 Ti 2:8 I will therefore that men pray every where, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting.*

Once again God's people are admonished to "pray". If the one who answers our prayer tells us we should pray, we should realize how important it is that we pray.

The word "therefore" takes us back to the previous verses. At first glance, it may seem that Paul was repeating what he said in verse one. A closer look reveals he was talking about what they should pray in the previous verses. Here, he was dealing with how he should pray. Having told them who to pray for (v. 1), what to pray for (v. 2), and why to pray (vv. 2b-4), Paul now dealt with how they were to pray.

The prayers of God's people are to be sincere and heartfelt. Jesus had warned his disciples about praying mechanical prayers like the Pharisees (Mt. 6:5; 23:14).

The words "every where" are referring to all the churches. Paul was centering his attention on the church and what happened in their worship services. So, he was referring here to public prayer in the church service. Prayer was to be a major part of all the churches, not just the church in Ephesus.

The word "men" in this verse is the word for man in contrast to women. God wants all Christians to pray (v.1). However, in the public assembly in the church, the men were to pray. When in church, the men were responsible for leading the church to the throne of grace. As we will see, the men were to be the leaders in the church, not just in prayer, but in a godly lifestyle. It seems the women in the church of Ephesus had allowed themselves to be influenced by the world.

Lifting hands while praying was a common Old Testament practice (1 Kg. 8:22; 2 Chr. 6:13; Ezra 9:5; Ps. 28:2; 141:2; Lam. 2:19). However, it is not the lifting of the hands that touches the heart of God, it is the cry of our hearts.

The lifting of hands can remind us about receiving. We extend and open our hands

upward to receive. Through prayer, we receive from God that which we desire from Him. The lifting of hands could also remind us about releasing. We extend and open our hands downward to release something. Through prayer, we release to God that which He desires from us.

This verse refers primarily to public prayer, however, it certainly can apply to private prayer. There are three aspects of prayer found in this verse.

- Holiness

Holy "hands" refer to a holy life. Holy hands are evidence of a holy heart.

A godly life is required for our prayer to be answered. Sin hinders prayer (Isa. 59:2; Pro. 15:29; Jer. 5:25; Mk. 11:25; 1 Pet. 3:7). The prayer of the unholy person is an abomination to God (Pro. 28:9).

- Love

The words, "without wrath" speak of our love for each other. Our relationship with others affects our fellowship with God (Mt. 5:23-24; Mk. 11:25; 1 Pet. 3:7). We should have no animosity nor unforgiveness towards anyone.

- Faith

The word "doubting" reminds us of the importance of praying in faith. Without faith, we cannot please God. We must believe that He is and that he is the rewarder of them that diligently seek him (Heb. 11:6). Doubt is the Christian's greatest enemy (Heb. 3:12, 19; Num. 14:11; 20:12; Ps. 78:32; 106:21; Jn. 3:18; 8:24; Rev. 21:8).

In the next few verses, Paul will speak of women and their role in the church. Before we address these verses, we must accept the fact that these words come from God. He was the one who made the rules and He was right in doing so. We may not understand, or even agree with, the guidelines He set. But, He is God, He is right, and we must bow to His Lordship about these matters.

Some claim these comments reveal the fact that Paul was a woman-hater. To begin with, these words are the words of God and not a man expressing his opinion. These words, like all the words in the bible, are God-breathed (2 Pet. 1:21). Paul was simply writing what God told him to write. Paul was not a woman-hater. He mentioned Lois and Eunice in 1 Timothy. He also mentioned Mary, Priscilla, Persis, Julia, Nereus, Phebe, Tryphena, and Tryphosa in the book of Romans. He spoke of all these women in a positive manner and talked about how they had been a blessing to him and the work of God.

The Bible actually elevates women. God used a female eagle as a picture of how He is watching over His children (Dt. 32:11). God spoke directly to women (Gen. 3:13; 16:8; 18:15). Woman assisted with the Tabernacle (Ex. 38:8), was included in Promised Land experience (Dt. 12:10-12), sang in the choir (Neh. 7:67), taught children (Pro. 6:20), labored in the gospel (Rom. 16:6; Phil. 4:3), were examples of prayer (Lk. 18:3), were examples of giving (Mk. 12:42), was the first to witness the resurrection (Mt. 28:1, 5), were persecuted along with the men (Acts 8:3), and were present at Pentecost (Acts 1:14). In no way are women viewed as inferior to men in the bible. In Christ, women are equal to men (Gal. 3:28). Women have always been a vital part of the work of God. In our day, most churches have more women than men.

However, none of this removes the fact that certain areas of service are reserved for men. The following verses simply indicate a God-established chain of command. This chain of command has nothing to do with the intelligence, value, or ability of women. It is simply, the way God did it.

Just as he does in the home, the devil wants to distort the role of men and women in the church. We must guard against this attack and willingly accept God's will.

That being said, the men of the church have no right to be proud or domineering about this subject. Men should be humbled that the God of heaven would allow them to serve Him and recognize the grave responsibility that comes with being a leader. A leader is an example, not a dictator. A leader does right before anyone else does. He leads the way so others can follow.

The following verses speak of the proper attire of women. As we will see, Paul emphasized the dress of the women for a specific reason. Certainly, these guidelines can apply to the men of the church also.

*1 Ti 2:9 In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array;*

The emphasis of this verse was not just the style of clothes, but the attitude of the heart. The wearing of modest apparel revealed a desire to honor and please God. The woman who refused was revealing the fact that her heart was ungodly and rebellious. This rebellion was not against Paul, or the men in the church, it was against God Himself, for God was the one who established the guidelines.

It is logical to assume that the women in the church of Ephesus were guilty of that which Paul addressed. It is unlikely he would have mentioned these very specific matters had they not been guilty.

The words, "In like manner" connect Paul's thoughts in this verse with those of the previous verses. Just as important as it is for the men to pray, the women must dress properly. This is not a matter that can be ignored or discarded.

The word, "adorn" means "to decorate" or "to put in proper order". It has the idea of preparing. The women were to prepare themselves for worship. God told Moses to take his shoes off before he came into His presence (Ex. 3:5; Acts 7:31). The house of God is holy ground and should be respected as such. The women, and the men, were to respect the house of God by dressing appropriately. We should remember, we are going to the house of God, not to a ball game. We are going to worship our God so we should go with the proper attitude and attire.

The word "modest" means "orderly". A woman should not be sloppy or unkempt. Her attire should draw attention to her inside and not her outside. The woman's appearance was to bring attention to her character, not her clothing, her love, not her looks. Her thoughts should be on grace, and not garments.

Understandably, a single woman would want to get the attention of a single man. But, she should want to attract a man who wants a woman with a godly character. A truly godly man does not want a woman who dresses in an ungodly manner. She might find a man, but there is a good chance he may be a bum who will end up breaking her heart and ruining her life.

Men are affected physically by sight. This is just one of the reasons why God tells women to dress modestly. A woman should be careful about doing anything that might produce ungodly thoughts or actions.

The word, "apparel" means "costume". It refers to the attire but it includes the entire appearance of the person. Our outward appearance reveals our inward condition.

There is nothing more attractive than a godly lady dressed modestly. Wanting to look our best is commendable. But dressing to attract attention is fleshly and displeasing to our God. Every woman should ask themselves why they dress as they do. Someone has said the woman's dress is the mirror of her mind. People see what a woman is wearing. But, God sees why a woman is wearing what she is wearing.

Some may ask what exactly is modest apparel. Paul answered that question with the words, "shamefacedness" and "sobriety". The word, "shamefacedness" has the idea of



being bashful. It carries with it the thought of reverence. Modest apparel is something that shows our reverence for God. The word, "sobriety" means "soundness of mind or self-control". It speaks of not allowing our emotions to control our actions. So, modest apparel is that which does not excite the ungodly nature of man.

The "gold, or pearls" refer to their practice of putting jewelry in their hair. They did so to display their wealth.

The words "costly array" refer to extremely expensive clothing. Ephesus was a city of great riches and women were in the habit of showing off how much they had by what they wore. When the average wage of a laborer was only one denari a day, some dresses cost 7,000 denari. That means it would take 19 years for a laborer to earn enough to buy that one dress. Imagine a lady walking into the church wearing this type of dress. Of course, all the attention would be directed toward her and worship would be hindered as a result. Also, a woman wearing such a garment would get the attention of the men in the church. It would cause a problem with the other women. They might feel inferior to such a display of wealth. They may become jealous of their husbands and their attention to the woman dressed in such a manner. The church is about us all being on level ground. Nothing should be done that might lift one above another. Our Lord should be the one, and only one, that is exalted.

The "broided hair" referred to a common practice of plaiting or braiding the hair. In Paul's day, braided hair arrayed with pearls was associated with prostitutes. The temple of Aphrodite, the goddess of love, was in the city of Ephesus. During the evening hours, the temple prostitutes would come from this temple and wander the streets. Their manner of dress made them easily recognized. Undoubtedly, some in the church of Ephesus had begun to dress similarly. This may shock us, but some of the women of our modern churches are dressing in ways that are just as worldly.

Though styles change, our attitude toward godliness should not. Godly apparel is not always convenient, nor always comfortable, but it is always right. We should not dress to please ourselves, or others, we should dress to please God. The attire of the church has degraded horribly over the last few years. Even in conservative churches, men and women are dressing in a way that is an embarrassment to the house of God. No doubt, it grieves our Lord.

*1 Ti 2:10 But (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works.*

If we profess to be God's child, we should prove it by how we look and how we live. If a woman brings attention to herself, it should be because of her godly life, not because of the way she dresses (1 Pet. 3:3-4). The most important attire is the attire of a godly life. Our "good works" display our godly hearts. Women, and men, should be noticed because of their conduct, not their clothing. Good and godly works make a woman more beautiful than costly clothes and jewelry.

*1 Ti 2:11 Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection.*

This verse has caused a great deal of confusion among God's people. We must keep in mind this is referring to the woman's role in the public setting of a church and has nothing to do with her private worship.

This verse tells us a great deal about the church in Paul's day.

- The church gathered together to learn

The Word was preached and taught (Acts 2:42). Their emphasis was on the delivery of the Word of God.

- Women were encouraged to learn

This means more than we can comprehend. Some of the Jewish rabbis believed it was a waste of time to teach women. Some of them said teaching women was like throwing



pearls to pigs. Women were not forbidden to learn but they were not encouraged to either. No doubt, this repression had caused some women to rebel as verse twelve of this chapter suggests. Their displeasure is understandable, but they were still violating God's guidelines by rebelling.

- Women were expected to obey the Word of God the same as men

The preaching and teaching in the church were meant to change lives. Both men and women were expected to give heed to the commands of Scripture and to do the will of God.

- Women were to remain silent while the message was being delivered

The word, "silence" means more than just being quiet, This is the same word translated "peaceable" in verse two of this chapter. It refers to the peaceful spirit of the woman. Some women may not be the quiet type, but their personality type does not excuse them from following God's instructions. Many of God's commands are contrary to our nature.

Some believe Paul's comment about the woman being silent refers to a problem in the church of Ephesus at that time. It seems that, in the early church days, the men and women sat separately during the church services. Some of the women were guilty of shouting out questions or comments to their husbands while the preacher was preaching. This was not only disruptive, but it violated the principle of authority.

- Women were to be subjected to the man and the message

The word "subjection" means "to submit". It means the women were to respect the man speaking as God's spokesman, recognize his message was from God, and submit to its message.

This is not suggesting that every woman in the church was under the authority of every man in the church. This subjection applied only to the men who were holding offices in the church. Of course, this means the men in the church were also under the authority of those holding office.

*1 Ti 2:12 But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence.*

The word "suffer" means "to allow or permit". This goes much further than what Paul allowed. It was referring to what God allowed.

We must remember, that Paul was talking about the church. He was saying, women were restricted from teaching publicly in the church (cf. 1 Cor. 14:34-35). This does not mean a woman could not teach at all. There were times when women were not only permitted to teach but commanded to do so (Pro. 6:20; Tit. 2:3-4). As we are about to discover, Paul was talking about a woman teaching in an authoritative manner.

The word, "usurp" means, "to take authority". It implies seizing the power or rights of another without legal authority. Women were not to speak authoritatively or attempt to take control of any public assembly of the church.

This verse says a lot, but we can get a great deal of insight by looking at what it does not say.

- It does not say women have to be totally quiet while in church

Everyone, including women, is encouraged to express praise and to testify (Ps. 145:10; 148:7-11; 150:6; Col. 3:16; Rev. 5:13).

- It does not say women are inferior to men

Authority does not mean superiority. Both man and woman were made in the image of God (Gen. 1:26). In Christ, men and women are equal (Gal. 3:28).

Submission is simply a part of God's plan. It should not be viewed as an excessive

burden. God the Father and God the Son are completely equal, yet Jesus submitted to the Father and His will (Mt. 26:39; Jn. 6:31; 1 Cor. 15:28; Phil. 2:6-8).

- It does not say women are spiritually ignorant

The fact is, many women are superior in their bible knowledge and their godly life than the average man.

- It does not say women have no ministry in the work of Christ

Women have always been a vital part of the work of God. Paul reminded Timothy of the influence his mother and grandmother had on his life (1 Tim. 1:5). In our day, most churches have more women than men. Please read the comments before verse nine for more information. Women certainly have a vital ministry in the Lord's work. They can witness (Mt. 28:7; Mk. 16:10; Jn. 4:29). They can teach children (Pro. 1:8; 1 Tim. 5:14), and other women (Tit. 2:3-5). However, in a public setting where men are present, they are restricted from teaching (1 Cor. 14:34. 1 Tim. 2:11).

- It does not say women are being punished

The submission of the woman is not a result of the curse of sin. The curse did bring about a struggle between man and woman about who would be the leader (Gen. 3:16). However, the roles of man and woman were established by God from the beginning of His creation, and before man ever sinned. Subjection is not a punishment, it is a privilege. It is an honor to have someone who cares for you and is willing to assume the role of protection and provision.

*1 Ti 2:13 For Adam was first formed, then Eve.*

This statement makes it clear that Paul's comments were not coming from a heart that hated women. The woman's submission started a long time before Paul came on the scene.

In verses thirteen and fourteen, Paul gave two reasons why God designated the man as the leader.

The first reason why God designated man as the leader was the fact that He made Adam first. This gave Adam the original authority over the earth. God's first instruction for mankind was to Adam and was before He made Eve (Gen. 2:16-17). Certainly, Adam passed these instructions on to Eve, but they came to her through Adam and not directly from God.

Both Adam and Eve sinned but Adam was the one declared guilty of plunging humanity into sin (Rom. 5:12). He was blamed because his God-given authority made him responsible for Eve. With that authority came great responsibility and accountability. Just as a woman is to submit to the leadership of the men, the men are responsible to be the proper leader. A man refusing to lead is just as sinful as a woman refusing to submit.

This teaches us that men and women are different by creation. That is not a bad thing. When we ignore this difference all kinds of issues arise. A little boy should be taught to be a boy and a girl should be taught to be a girl. The idea of being gender-neutral that is so prevalent today is a disgrace and ungodly. A changing culture does not change God's Word. This truth is just as applicable today as when it was written.

The fall came from Adam and Eve eating the fruit, but it was initiated by them moving out of their God-given roles. Eve assumed the role of leader and Adam assumed the role of submission. The fact is, man needs woman and woman needs man. They are both defective, they are just defective in different ways.

*1 Ti 2:14 And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression.*

The second reason why God designated man as the leader was the fact that Eve was

deceived in the Garden of Eden.

Eve was deceived (Gen. 3:13; 2 Cor. 11:3). She believed the lie of Lucifer. Her deception does not suggest women are less intelligent, or more gullible than men. It simply reveals the fact that, generally, women are more driven by emotion than men. In general, women are more sensitive than men. That can be something positive, or something negative.

Eve was deceived then but many women are being deceived now by believing what the world tells them. The role of a godly woman is not a disgraceful place. It is a wonderful place that glorifies God and brings joy to the woman.

Mankind still violates God's order of authority. It is evident with citizens towards the government, students towards teachers, children towards parents, employees towards employers, and even Christians towards the church.

*1 Ti 2:15 Notwithstanding she shall be saved in childbearing, if they continue in faith and charity and holiness with sobriety.*

This verse has caused much discussion among God's people.

Paul had all women in mind and not just Eve when he wrote "she". His changing from "she" to "they" indicates he was not referring only to Eve.

The word "saved" does not refer to salvation in the sense of a sinner putting their trust in the Lord and being forgiven of their sin. This word was used often in reference to being saved in a physical sense. It was translated as "whole" where Jesus healed the woman of disease (Mk. 5:34). It was used when referring to being saved from a storm (Acts 27:20). Paul used this word when talking about being freed from false teaching (1 Tim. 4:16). So, it was a word that could be used in various ways.

What did Paul mean by the word "childbearing"? Certainly, he was not saying a woman can receive forgiveness by giving birth.

Some believe Paul was referring to the birth of Christ. They believe Paul was saying, a woman may have played a big part in the fall of man, but she would also play a big part in the remedy to the fall. A woman (Mary) would give birth to the Son of God who would provide the way to salvation and deliver the world from the curse.

Though this is a wonderful thought, in my opinion, it is not the best explanation of this verse. It seems to me that Paul's words "if they continue in faith and charity and holiness with sobriety" make it clear that Paul was not speaking about Mary or Jesus.

I believe, along with many others, Paul was referring to the natural ability of a woman to give birth. He meant that woman could be saved from the stigma of being the one who led the human race into sin. A woman's failure plunged the world into sin, but a woman has the potential to help save the world by having children and raising them in a godly manner. A woman took the world into sin and a woman can help bring it out. For this to happen, the mother must "continue in faith and charity and holiness with sobriety". Mothers have a unique bond with their children and usually spend more time with them than the father. This enables them to have a dramatic influence on their children.

Women may not be able to hold certain offices in the church but they can change the world for good by raising godly children. A woman will not find satisfaction in trying to assume a role God never intended her to have. She can be satisfied and fulfilled only by surrendering herself to the role God has designed for her life.

We should remember, it is not always God's will for a woman to be married, or to have children (1 Cor. 7:25-40). A woman does not have to be a mother to be happy or to be used of the Lord.

## VI. THE CONDUCT 3:1-16

In this chapter, Paul dealt with those God had called to serve Him in the church. There are two scriptural offices in the local church; Pastors and deacons. Paul listed certain qualifications for these officers. If a church is to be what God wants it to be, it must have qualified leaders. In the previous chapter, Paul told us how women could not hold certain positions. Now, he made it clear that not all men could either. Being a man does not automatically qualify a man for a position in a church.

God gave instructions to Timothy to assist him, and the church, in choosing the men who would fill the positions of service in the church. While Paul was instructing Timothy, he was at the same time warning the false teachers that had infiltrated the church. Good doctrine informs the godly and warns the ungodly. The requirements were to help put the qualified in and keep the unqualified out of the positions in the church.

Interestingly, Paul gave no instructions about how the office of pastor or deacon was to function. He did, however, tell us a great deal about what kind of men they were to be.

When choosing a man for an office, his conduct was vitally important. When choosing a man, God doesn't consider the looks, talent, or personality of a man, He looks at the heart (1 Sam. 16:7; Neh. 9:8; 1 Chr. 28:9). The people of Israel chose Saul because of his appearance, and it was a disaster (1 Sam 9:2; 16:14; 19:1, 9; 31:4-6).

The selection of workers should not be because of friendship. Nominating officers from the floor is foreign to scripture. So often, a friend will nominate a friend who is not fit to hold a position. The selection of workers should not be because of seniority. How long a person has been at a church is immaterial when it comes to filling positions. Selecting church workers should not be done because of their talent. A natural talent offers no real help to the spiritual work of God. A person may be a great banker but a sorry spiritual leader. The selection of workers should not be because of their financial standing. Having a lot of money, or even giving a lot of money, does not qualify a man for a position in a local church.

*1 Ti 3:1 This is a true saying, If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work.*

The word "true" means "trustworthy". Paul's statement is one we can believe.

The phrase, "This is a true saying", or its equivalent, is found four other times in the bible (1 Tim. 1:15; 4:9; 2 Tim. 2:11; Tit. 3:8). Paul used this phrase only in the pastoral epistles. It puts an extra emphasis on what he was saying.

The word "bishop" refers to a pastor. The New Testament uses three different words to describe a pastor. All three refer to the same office.

Elder; This word was used to describe older men, but it was also used to describe a pastor (Acts 20:17; 1 Tim. 5:17).

Bishop; This word means "overseer". It refers to the fact that the pastor is the overseer of the church (Acts 20:28). God has established the pastor as the person of authority in the local church.

Pastor; This word means "shepherd". It refers to the fact that a pastor is to be the shepherd of the church. Like a shepherd, he is to feed, protect, and lead the sheep (Acts 20:28; 1 Pet. 5:1-2).

God gave the apostles to lay the foundation of the church (Eph. 2:20). Then, He gave evangelists and pastors to continue the church (Eph. 4:11). He did this so everything about the church would be based on the Word of God.

The call to be a pastor is a definite and clear call from God. God has placed His hand on

a particular man for a particular job.

The word "desire" means "earnest, eager, or passionate". God often gives a man a desire to do that which He is calling him to do (Phil. 2:13). I have heard missionaries talk about how excited they were to get to the place God had called them to serve. God may be sending them to the remote jungles of Africa or the slums of New York City, but they can't wait to get there.

This type of desire goes a long way when the difficulties of serving God come. It can be hard for the preacher to keep serving God when he wants to, but when he doesn't have a desire, it can be almost impossible.

Paul was not saying a desire was required for the call to be a pastor. The man God is calling may resist the call. I know several men who say preaching or pastoring a church, was the last thing they wanted to do, yet God called them to do so. The wonderful thing about it, once they surrendered to do what God wanted them to do, the desire came.

A desire alone does not guarantee a call. Some claim to have the desire but are unqualified to fill the office. Some want the prestige of the office but have no desire to live the godly life needed. Remember, the false teachers desired to be teachers but they certainly were not qualified (1 Tim. 3:7).

Paul first listed the qualifications a man must meet if he is to be a pastor. He repeats these when writing Titus (Tit. 1:5-9). The man being considered as pastor should exhibit these godly characteristics because they please and honor God. But, he is to exhibit these characteristics as an example to the people of the church. The pastor is to live so the people can do just like he does. How can a man tell the church how to live if he is not doing so himself? Paul told the people of Corinth to follow him as he followed Christ (1 Cor. 11:1). What a pastor practices is just as important as what he preaches.

When a church overlooks these requirements they are asking for trouble. There are Baptist churches that are rewriting their bylaws to be able to put unqualified men in their pulpit. God will not bless such a church.

Being a pastor is a "good" work. This does not mean it was good for the preacher. Paul wasn't telling Timothy this was going to be a great move for his career. Being a pastor at that time involved danger, difficulty, and destitution. Unfortunately, many preachers today are looking for a position that will provide advancement for themselves. Timothy would not be a celebrity like so many preachers are in our day. However, being a pastor is a good thing. A pastor can help people and honor God at the same time. That indeed is a good work.

The job of being a pastor is "work". A lazy man is a disgrace to the position. The mental load can be exhausting. The pastor must spend a great deal of time studying the Word and praying for the church (Acts 6:4). The physical load can be exhausting. The pastor will spend a good deal of time visiting those who are sick, lost, or backslidden. The emotional load can be exhausting. The pastor carries the weight of knowing he is responsible for lives and souls.

*1 Ti 3:2 A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach;*

Paul said these things "must" be true of the man who is a pastor. These are not suggestions, they are required if the man is to be the pastor God desires and demands.

The word "blameless" means "unrebukeable" (cf. 1 Tim. 6:14). It carries with it the idea of "not arrested". It means if they were accused of misconduct, there would not be enough evidence to convict them. It does not mean without any flaw, or perfect. It does mean his lifestyle is that which cannot be rightly accused. He should be the type of man that, if something negative is said about him, it would shock those who hear it. No one should say, "Well, I'm not surprised, I've always wondered about him".



The reputation of the church is dependent on the reputation of the pastor because people associate the church with the pastor. The pastor should stay spiritually clean for the sake of the church.

He must be a "husband". Only a man can be a husband. Obviously, this proves that a woman cannot meet the qualifications of being a pastor. There were no women pastors or evangelists in the bible. When this principle is violated there will be severe problems.

This does not mean a pastor must be married. Neither Jesus nor Paul were married (1 Cor. 7:8). Paul meant, that if the man is married, he must have been married once.

This statement does away with the idea of a pastor being celibate. Many of God's choice men were married. Paul will tell us later that, during the last days, there will be some who will forbid to marry (1 Tim. 4:3).

He must be the husband "of one wife". Some believe this means one wife at a time. This is highly unlikely since the people at the church of Ephesus were primarily Gentiles. The Jews practiced polygamy, but the Gentiles did not. It is unlikely Paul would say something that wasn't relevant to those he was speaking to.

The phrase "husband of one wife" actually means, "one-woman man". This means, if the man is married, he must have been married only once. However, it goes much further than that. It means his love and affection are to be devoted to his wife, and only his wife. He should not be the type who is guilty of flirting or having an interest in a woman other than his wife. Some men have been married only once but do not meet this requirement.

The word "one" actually means "first". You can not have but one, first wife. This is not to say a pastor cannot marry again if his first wife passes away. The death of a spouse frees the living to remarry (1 Cor. 7:39). This applies to preachers also.

The word "vigilant" means "temperate". A pastor should not be a man given to extremes. He should not be the type who has wide swings of mood, emotions, or action. He should be reliable and consistent. All types of problems arise in churches. There are times when these can be quite stressful for the pastor. He must not be the type who reacts quickly and without thought. He should take time to pray and act appropriately.

The word "sober" means "sound in mind". It carries with it the idea of being self-controlled or in control of self. This word comes from two words that mean "protect" and "mind". The pastor is to recognize the spiritual danger around him and be in control of his fleshly passions. He should resist sin in any form. He should see the seriousness of his calling. This certainly is not suggesting he be a solemn man with no sense of humor.

The words "good behavior" mean "orderly". This word is translated as "modest" in the previous chapter (2:9). As the women were not to allow themselves to become sloppy or unkempt in their appearance, a pastor was not to allow his lifestyle to become sloppy or unkempt.

The word, "hospitality" means "a lover of hospitality". It carries with it the idea of loving strangers. Hospitality was an important part of the lives of those living in the early church days. There were very few inns or places to spend the night. Travelers depended on people who would open their homes to provide a place of rest and sleep. The pastor should be the type of man who cares enough to help people even when it is inconvenient. Jesus said we love others as we love ourselves (Mt. 19:19). The bible has much to say about assisting others (Pro. 14:31; 19:17; 21:13; 28:27; Ps. 82:3-4; Mt. 5:42; Jn. 13:14; Acts 20:35; Gal. 2:10; 6:2, 10; Phil. 2:4; Jam. 1:27; 1 Jn. 3:17-18).

The words "apt to teach" point to the importance of delivering the Word of God in a clear and understandable way. A pastor should be a good communicator of the Word of God. The Bible is the only source of information we have about God and His will for our lives. It should be the first priority in every local church. The pastor will need to inform the ignorant, encourage the discouraged, rebuke the carnal, challenge the satisfied, and

enlighten the lost. For a man to be apt to teach, he must first be a student of the bible himself. How can he teach that which he does not know? God doesn't honor ignorance. A pastor should love the Word and love to study it. He should have a commitment to its truths and a willingness to proclaim it as it is.

*1 Ti 3:3 Not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous;*

The words "given to wine" mean "staying near wine". It refers to someone who has a habit of drinking and depends on wine to help him cope with the issues of life. Certainly, the drinking of wine would cause problems for a pastor. A pastor must have all his mental capacities. The effects of the wine would hinder his thinking and make it difficult to make wise decisions. Drinking wine would mar his testimony and make it impossible to do the work of the ministry. Certainly, the last thing a church would need is a pastor who is controlled by wine and not the Holy Spirit (Eph. 5:18).

Some try to use this statement as an excuse to drink wine. The issue of wine is totally different in our day. The contamination of their water made it very difficult to avoid wine completely. There is no such problem today. By far, the best conclusion is to drink no intoxicating beverages whatsoever. The Bible clearly warns about the horrible effects of alcohol (Pro. 20:1; 23:30-32; Isa. 5:11; 28:7; Hos. 7:5; Eph. 5:18). To ignore these warnings is dangerous, unwise, and unspiritual.

The word "striker" means "quarrelsome" but it can include physical force. It carries with it the idea of being physically or verbally abusive. A pastor should not be one who is quick to argue (cf. 2 Tim. 2:24-25). The time will come when someone will disagree or confront every pastor. He must not allow himself to take this personally or to fight back. The wrath of man never accomplishes any good (Jam. 1:20). The pastor should be the type who lets God fight his battles.

The pastor must not be "greedy". Though the church should support the pastor's needs (1 Tim. 3:4; 2 Tim. 2:6; 1 Cor. 9:7-14), he must not be guilty of loving money or things.

The words "filthy lucre" refer to money obtained in a dishonest manner. A pastor should be totally honest with his finances. The preacher who will not pay his bills or is willing to cheat to prosper does not deserve to be a pastor.

The word, "patient" means "patient" and carries with it the idea of "appropriate". In other words, the pastor needs to do what is proper in any given circumstance. He should be patient with the situations that life presents. A pastor needs to be patient with people. He must realize it takes time for people to mature in the Lord. A pastor needs to be patient with God. The Bible speaks often about how we are to wait on God (Ps. 27:14; 37:14; 130:5-6; Lam. 3:21; Isa. 40:31; Jam. 5:7).

The word "brawler" means "not disposed to fight". You would think this is a subject that should not even have to be mentioned. Unfortunately, even a preacher has an old nature that can take control if he isn't filled with the Spirit. He, like all believers, should do all he can to live peaceably with everyone (Ro 12:18).

The word "covetous" means "a lover of money". It carries with it the idea of always wanting more. The man who isn't satisfied with what he has will be willing to do what it takes to get more. A man does not have to have money to love money. Many of those who love it most do not have much of it. A pastor needs to be content with what God has given him (Phil. 4:11; 1 Tim. 6:6; Heb. 13:5).

*1 Ti 3:4 One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity;*

The situations and problems that arise in the church are often similar to those that arise in the home. The job of a pastor, like a father, is to do what is necessary to encourage others to live for God. This is true of the children in the home or the members in the

church.

The word "ruleth" means "to stand before". It also means "to practice". This does not mean the pastor should rule his family with an iron fist. It means he should lead by example. He should live a godly life before his family. He should live in a way where his family has respect for him and would want to follow his example.

The word "well" means "rightly". A pastor is to be one who handles his family in a godly manner.

Paul emphasizes the importance of the "children". Dealing with members of a church is much like dealing with children in a home. A child may rebel even in a good and godly home. The question must be asked, did they rebel because of, or despite, the father's behavior.

The word "gravity" means "respect".

This verse does not mean a pastor must have a family that is perfect and never has any issues. It does mean if these issues arise, he handles them in a godly manner. His children should understand and respect his authority in the home. They should know if they violate that authority there will be consequences. He should be a man who does not overlook his children's disobedience or inappropriate behavior. Yet, he should not be abusive in an attempt to get his children to obey. Generally, his children should demonstrate a love for their parents, a willingness to obey, and a respectful attitude. When corrected, they should show respect and a willingness to change their behavior.

*1 Ti 3:5 (For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?)*

The situations in a family are very similar to those in a church. If a man does not, or cannot, handle the issues that arise in the home, more than likely, he will fail when they arise in the church.

The word, "rule" means "to practice". It has the idea of standing before or going before, which indicates a life that can be followed. The word also has the idea of managing. A pastor certainly needs to be able to manage the affairs of the church.

The word "care" means "to care for". It is the same word used in the account of the man we call the "Good Samaritan" (Lk. 10:35). He had gone out of his way to assist the injured man. A pastor should be willing to go beyond the norm to care for the people in the church.

*1 Ti 3:6 Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil.*

The word "novice" means "newly planted". It refers to a young convert. A man needs time to grow and mature before he is placed in a leadership role. Until then, they lack the spiritual strength needed to lead others, the spiritual maturity to be able to handle problems correctly, and the spiritual knowledge to deliver God's Word in a timely manner.

We can see this principle demonstrated in life. The average young preacher thinks he knows everything and is ready to face the world. When, if the truth is told, he hasn't got enough sense to get in out of the rain. Of course, every man matures at a different rate. Age does not guarantee wisdom but it does help to prepare the preacher for the responsibility that comes with being a pastor.

The young preacher can be "lifted up with pride". The devil is quick to point out to the young preacher how he has arrived at such a young age. Many young preachers have been ruined because they did not handle the blessing of God rightly. Most people, including preachers, can handle failure better than they can success.

Such a young preacher has fallen "into the condemnation of the devil". He is going down the same path Lucifer did. Lucifer was lifted up in pride and did something foolish as a

result (Isa. 14:12-15).

*1 Ti 3:7 Moreover he must have a good report of them which are without; lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.*

Paul dealt here with those "without" the church. The preacher's influence is not confined only to the inside of the church. A preacher must have a good reputation outside the walls of the church.

The lifestyle of the pastor reflects on the reputation of the church. This is true of every member of every church but it is especially true of the pastor. He can not reach the community if they know he has done something wrong. It takes years to build a reputation and seconds to destroy it. Once damaged, it may never be repaired.

The lost world around us may not agree with what we believe, but we should not give them any reason to oppose our conduct. They should be able to say, "I do not agree with what he preaches, but he is a man of character".

The word, "reproach" means "insult". The world knows how we act. They watch us when we lose our temper at the checkout line.

The devil sets a "snare" for every preacher. He must be cautious, or he will fall.

In the next six verses, Paul gave the qualifications for the deacons in the church. The only two offices of the local church are pastors and deacons. The pastor and deacon are two men in the same army, with the same weapons, and the same enemy. They simply have different functions. The deacons are to do what they can to relieve the pastor from that which might hinder him from his time in the Word of God.

*1 Ti 3:8 Likewise must the deacons be grave, not double-tongued, not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre;*

The word "Likewise" means "in the same way". It connects what Paul was about to say to what he said in verses one through seven. For the most part, that which was true of the pastor is to be true of the deacons. The qualifications for a deacon are just as important as those for a pastor. This tells us how valuable the deacons are and how important it is that they be godly men who are Spirit-filled. The deacons were to be "men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom" (Ac 6:3).

As with the pastor (v. 2), the word "must" indicates these are requirements and not merely suggestions. God has the right to tell us what He expects from His church.

The word "deacons" is transliterated and not translated. Translation is the process of transferring the meaning of a word from one language to another. Transliteration is the process of transferring each letter of a word to the corresponding letter of another language. For example, the Greek letter "Σ" would be the equivalent of the English letter "S".

The word "deacons" means "an attendant" or "servant". It carries with it the idea of a waiter at a table. This word is found several times in the New Testament and is used to describe all types of service. It is translated as "minister" (20:26; Rom. 13:40, 1 Cor. 3:5; 6:4; Eph. 3:7; Col. 1:23; 1 Tim. 4:6), as "servant" ( 23:11; Jn. 2:5; Rom. 16:1), as "serving" (Lk. 10:40), and as "ministry" (Acts 6:4; 12:25; 20:24; 21:19; Rom. 12:7; 2 Cor. 4:1; 4:8; Eph. 4:12; 1 Tim. 1:12).

All believers are to be servants. There should be no spectators in the house of God. Yet, we are living in a day when very few are willing to serve. The day before Jesus was hung on the cross, he was washing his disciples' feet (Jn. 13:3-4). He did this while they were arguing about which of them was going to be the greatest. He did it even though he knew they would all deny him soon and one of them had already sold him out. If the Master of the universe was willing to serve, surely we should do no less.

Even though all of God's children should be servants, in this verse, and in Philippians

(Phil. 1:1), the word "deacons" refers to the office of a deacon. A deacon is a man designated as a servant of the Lord and the church. A servant does one thing, he follows the instructions of the one he serves. As Mary said, "Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it" (Jn. 2:5).

God instructed His children to take care of the poor and needy (Ex. 22:22, 6, 11; 23:11; Lev. 19:10, 15; Dt. 10:18; 14:28-29; 15:7, 9; 24:19-21; Job 29:12; Ps. 9:18; 68:5; 72:4; 146:9; Pro. 14:21; 21:13; 22:9; 28:27; Isa. 1:17; 58:10; Jer. 22:16; Mt. 19:21; Mk. 12:40; Lk. 12:33; Rom. 12:20; Gal. 2:10; 1 Tim. 5:3; Jam. 1:27; 1 Jn. 3:17).

During the early church days, there was no Social Security, pensions, insurance, welfare, or Medicaid. So, many widows had to depend on others for their needs. Therefore, the Jews had a system to provide for their widows and needy. Every Friday Jewish men went to the marketplace and to the homes collecting money to be used for the needs of the widows and needy. These men would then go to the homes of the needy and give them enough for fourteen meals (two meals a day for a week). They always went in groups of no less than two to ensure none of the funds would be stolen or misused. Those who already had enough food for a week would receive nothing. There was also a daily collection of food for those in an emergency situation. It took great wisdom and conviction to operate this system properly. They had to be completely honest because they handled a good bit of money.

The early church adopted the Jew's care for their widows. We see that being demonstrated in the book of Acts (Acts 6:1-7). A complaint arose because the apostles were so busy they did not have time to make sure all the widows were being properly cared for (Acts 6:1). The apostles responded by saying, "It is not reason that we should leave the word of God, and serve tables" (Acts 6:2).

Though some disagree, I believe these men were the first deacons of the New Testament church. This tells us a good deal about the role of a deacon. Simply put, the deacons were to do what the pastor and the church needed them to do. They were to look after the "business" that had been given them (Acts 6:3). They were to see to the taking care of the widows.

We may ask the question, why did the apostles not appoint deacons when the church was first organized. The reason is simple, they were not needed. Deacons were selected because there was a need, not just to fill an office. The same should be true today. There were at least 8,000 saved before any deacons were selected (cf. Acts 2:41; 4:4). The fact is, some churches are not large enough to need deacons. Nowhere in Scripture is it stated that deacons are required or how many deacons a church should have. Every church is different and the needs are different. A church needs deacons when they need deacons, and not before.

As with the pastors, Paul did not write about how a deacon was to function in the church. He simply talked about the type of man he should be. It isn't so much what they do but what they are that matters. If you think about it, if they are Spirit-filled, they will naturally do what is needed on behalf of the church and the Lord. On the other hand, if they are not spiritual, they will not do the right thing no matter what. The qualifications mentioned here can be summarized by a person with a heart for God.

A deacon has only the authority given to him for a particular need in a particular church. That authority is limited and temporary depending upon the particular need. If he goes to a different church, his authority as a deacon is forfeited.

Deacons are servants, not overseers. They are never seen as ruling or overseeing a local church. For this reason, I believe it is best to not refer to the deacons as a "board". The word "board" suggests a governing body. Also, our church has never had a "chairman" of the deacons. A chairman suggests there is one deacon who has more



authority than others. All the deacons of our church have always been on level ground.

Some believe the deacons should be in control of all business affairs of the church while the preachers do nothing but preach. Those who hold to this belief try to separate the spiritual matters from the secular matters in the church. However, there are no secular matters in a bible church. All matters in the church are spiritual matters.

Paul listed some requirements for those chosen to be a deacon. All these requirements can be summarized by the statement found in the book of Acts. They were to be "men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom" (Ac 6:3).

The word "grave" means "honorable". It speaks of a man who lives in a manner that causes people to respect him.

The word "double-tongued" means "telling a different story". It refers to someone who says one thing to one person and another thing to another. It carries with it the idea of saying one thing but meaning another.

Like the pastor, a deacon should not be "given to wine". A deacon should not be one who has a habit of drinking. Certainly, drinking of wine would cause problems for a deacon. The effects of the wine would hinder his thinking and make it difficult to make wise decisions. Drinking wine would mar his testimony and make it impossible for people to respect him as a deacon.

A deacon must not be guilty of loving "filthy lucre". There will be times when the ministry of a deacon will cause him to have access to a good sum of money. He must not be the type who would misuse or steal these funds. The love of money may be more than he could resist (Ecl. 5:10; 1 Tim. 6:10; Tit. 1:11).

*1 Ti 3:9 Holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience.*

The word "Holding" means "to hold" or "to keep". It has the idea of holding tightly to something we have. God has entrusted us with the wonderful gospel of Christ. We should hold it dearly and never compromise its principles.

When Paul said, "the faith" he was referring to the gospel of Christ and all it involves (cf. Jude 3). The early church continued steadfastly in the "apostle's doctrine" (Acts 2:42). The "apostle's doctrine" and "the faith" are the same. The gospel of Christ is the fact that the great and holy God of heaven revealed Himself through His Son Christ Jesus (cf. 1 Tim. 1:15; 3:16). It is called "the faith" because it can be understood and received only by faith. The natural man "receiveth not" the things of God they are revealed only by the Spirit of God (1 Cor. 2:14).

A "mystery" is something that has once been hidden but is now revealed. Though there are many examples and illustrations of the gospel found in the Old Testament, it was not openly spoken of. The gospel was concealed in the Old Testament but revealed in the New Testament (Rom. 16:25; 1 Cor. 2:7-10).

Other mysteries in scripture are, the kingdom (Mk. 4:11), the grafting in of the Gentiles (Eph. 3:3-9), the setting aside and restoration of the Jews (Rom. 11:25), the resurrection of Christ (1 Cor. 15:51), the gospel (Rom. 16:25-26; Eph. 6:19; Col. 4:3), the church (Eph. 5:25-32), the Rapture (1 Cor. 15:51-57), the iniquity of the spirit of Anti-Christ (2 Th. 2:7-11), and the restoration of all things (Eph. 1:9-10).

A deacon must be settled about what he believes about the gospel and New Testament doctrine. His ministry, testimony, and walk with God depend on it. He may not be a preacher, but his life has great influence. He should be a godly example and hold to the Bible as his guide in how to perform his duties as a deacon.

A "pure conscience" is the result of a person doing what the bible says. It speaks of living in such a fashion where our conscience is clear. Our conscience is that little policeman God has placed inside every person on earth (Please refer to the comments on 1 Tim.

1:5). The conscience is different than the Holy Spirit even though they both do some of the same things. Our conscience is developed by that which we are exposed to. The person who has been exposed to the bible will, more than likely, have a strong conscience. When we do something that violates our conscience, we will hear our little voice inside telling us it is wrong. However, the more we ignore this voice, the more calloused we become (cf. 1 Tim. 1:19; 4:2).

*1 Ti 3:10 And let these also first be proved; then let them use the office of a deacon, being found blameless.*

The word "proven" means "to test". A man being considered for becoming a deacon should be examined to make sure he meets the requirements given in these verses. The word "proven" is the same word translated as "approve" (Phil. 1:10), and "trieth" (1 Th. 2:4).

We are not told specifically how this testing should be done. There are three views about this process.

One, that he be questioned like a man being considered for pastor before he is confirmed as a deacon.

Two, that he be placed on a time of probation to see if he conducts himself properly in the role of a deacon before he is confirmed as a deacon.

Three, that he be a man who has been in the church long enough to where his life has been proven to be fit to be a deacon before he is confirmed as a deacon.

Certainly, none of these could be labeled as wrong, but I believe the last one is the best option. The word "first" implies the testing be done before the man serves as a deacon. The word "then" implies he does not serve until after the testing, not that he serves while he is being tested. Again, since we cannot be certain, none of these could be considered as wrong.

The word, "use" is a word that means "serve". The ministry of a deacon can be a wonderful opportunity to serve the Lord and the people. The man who understands this can be a great asset to the work of Christ.

The word "blameless" means irreproachable. A different word was used in verse two but it has the same meaning. It means a deacon should be a man who cannot be rightly accused of wrong conduct. It does not mean perfect or without any flaw.

*1 Ti 3:11 Even so must their wives be grave, not slanderers, sober, faithful in all things.*

Paul gave some qualifications for the deacon's wives. The ministry of a deacon is greatly dependent upon his wife. She can make or break him. A godly wife can be a tremendous help but an ungodly wife will be a burden and bring reproach on her husband. The ministry of a deacon brings him in contact with a lot of people. His wife must not be jealous of the attention her husband gets. The ministry of a deacon exposes him to all sorts of information about the church members. There will be times when her husband cannot tell her about certain matters. Not all women would be willing to accept this fact.

Some believe Paul was referring to women deacons or deaconesses here. They believe the word "Likewise" is referring to a third type of servant. But, the word Paul used in this verse for "wives" is the same word translated "wife" in the next verse. It is translated as wife in other places in the bible (Mt. 1:24; 5:31-33; 14:3; 18:25; 19:3; 22:24; 27:19; Acts 5:1; 18:2; 21:5; 1 Cor. 5:1; 7:2; Eph. 5:22; Col. 3:18; Tit. 1:6; 1 Pet. 3:1;). He was speaking of the wives of deacons.

The fact is, the word "wives" means wives. We do not have to look for any other explanation. It is obvious that Paul is speaking of the wives of a deacon because he continues to list the qualifications of a deacon in the next verse.

Though the pastor's wives are not mentioned in these verses we can certainly assume

the same qualifications would apply to her.

Certainly, a woman cannot meet the qualification given in verse twelve which requires a deacon to be the "husband of one wife".

The word "grave" is the same as in verse eight. The deacon's wife must take the things of God seriously. Her dedication to God and His will are as important as her husband's.

The word "slanderers" refers to someone who attacks the reputation of another. This word is the Greek word "diabolos", which is the word meaning "devil". The devil is the chief slanderer (cf. Rev. 12:10). A deacon's wife must not be a gossip nor speak in a way that causes strife in the church. She will be exposed to information that is not known by the general congregation. She must not be the type who would spread this information to others.

The word "sober" is the same as in verse two. It speaks of having control over the emotions.

The word "faithful" means "trustworthy or reliable". She must be faithful "in all things". This implies that she be faithful with that which she has been entrusted with. There is no substitute for being faithful. What good is the person who cannot be depended on?

*1 Ti 3:12 Let the deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well.*

Like a pastor, a deacon must be the husband "of one wife". This phrase means "one-woman man". It means his love and affection are to be devoted to his wife, and only his wife. He should not be the type who is guilty of flirting or having an interest in any woman other than his wife. Some men have been married only once but do not fulfill this requirement.

The word "ruling" means "to stand before". It carries with it the idea of being an example. He is to be the leader in godly things in his home. This does not mean there should never be any trouble with his family. It does mean when there is trouble, does he handle it rightly. He must fulfill his responsibility, guidance, instruction, discipline, and provision in his home.

There is a great deal of pressure on deacons and their families because the church expects so much of them. This puts undue stress on him and his family. The children in the home of a deacon will have to experience things that the average child does not. Deacon's children are just like everyone else's, they are children, and they will act like children.

*1 Ti 3:13 For they that have used the office of a deacon well purchase to themselves a good degree, and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus.*

The word "used" means "to wait upon" or "to serve". Once again we see the deacon is a servant for the Lord and to the church.

The word "purchased" means "to acquire" or "to gain". Serving well as a deacon provides eternal benefits.

Serving as a deacon can be beneficial for various reasons. His service can bring glory to God, assist the church members, and be a blessing to himself. There is no greater joy than to serve others.

The words "good degree" mean "a good standing". This means the man who is a faithful deacon will gain a great deal of respect from those in the church. The believers will appreciate the deacon who serves faithfully.

The word "boldness" refers to a godly confidence. This confidence comes because, as he serves faithfully, he will see the Lord using him and he will see things accomplished for the glory of God. He will come to the point where he expects God to work through him

because he has seen Him do it before. A deacon will encounter some very difficult situations. Yet, by serving faithfully, he will gain confidence that the Lord, as He has done before, will handle it again.

The opposite can be said for the man who does not execute his office as a deacon well. He will bring reproach on himself. Instead of being respected, he will be scorned. He will bring contempt on himself, the church, and the cause of Christ.

Paul's comments about pastors and deacons show us the importance of leaders in the church. The leaders must be especially careful in their behavior. Leaders are held to a higher standard than the person sitting on the pew. Every believer matters and every failure is great, but the fall of a leader is worse.

In verses fourteen through sixteen, Paul told why he wrote the letter.

*1 Ti 3:14 These things write I unto thee, hoping to come unto thee shortly:*

Paul was "hoping to come" to Ephesus soon and assist Timothy. If he did, he would come with the authority of an apostle and deal with the problems in the church.

*1 Ti 3:15 But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.*

Paul knew circumstances were unpredictable and he may not be able to return to Ephesus. Therefore, he did the next best thing, he wrote Timothy instructing him to do what he would do if he had been there himself. As far as we know, Paul was not able to return to Ephesus.

This verse confirms the authority of the pastor of the local church. Paul gave Timothy the instructions and he was to carry them out. He would say later, "These things command and teach" (1 Tim. 4:11).

The church is the "house of God". The word "house" is not referring to a building. As seen elsewhere (Josh. 24:15; 1 Tim. 3:4-5; 2 Tim. 1:16), it is referring to a family. A local church is much more than a building. It is a family of believers bound together by God's grace.

The title the "living God" is found several times in the Old Testament (Dt. 5:26; Josh. 3:10; 1 Sam. 17:26; Ps. 42:2; 84:2; Isa. 37:4; Dan. 6:20; Hos. 1:10). It refers to the greatness of the God of heaven and earth.

The "truth" refers to the information found in the Word of God. The Bible tells us the truth about God's creation, man's fall, God's provision for forgiveness, and His instructions to His people.

A "pillar" was a column that supported the weight of a building. The "ground" refers to the foundation of a building. The entire structure depended on the pillar and foundation. When Paul said the church was the pillar and ground of the truth meant the truth was dependent on the church. But, how can this be true? The Bible says the truth is forever settled in heaven (Ps. 119:89; Isa. 40:8; Mt. 5:18; 24:35; 1 Pet. 1:25). How can the truth be settled and, at the same time, be dependent on the church? The fact is, both are true. The truth is forever settled but the church is needed if mankind is going to hear it. God has committed the truth into the hands of His church (Mt. 28:19; Jn. 17:8,14,18). The truth will fall to the wayside and be forgotten if the church does not believe it, preserve it, proclaim it, and defend it. The truth is forever alive but it cannot help the person who has not heard it. Every generation of believers is responsible for keeping the truth alive, for itself, and the generation following.

God will not bless any church that does not stand for the truth. The church that refuses to stand on the truth of Scripture is not a church. They may have a building and meet together, but if the truth is lacking, it is not a church.

The devil wants to destroy the truth. If he is unsuccessful in destroying the truth, he will

try to water it down. We must keep the truth pure. A watered-down version of the truth is useless. It is no wonder that Paul admonished Timothy to take heed to himself and his doctrine (1 Tim. 4:16).

*1 Ti 3:16 And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.*

The words, "without controversy" mean there was no legitimate disagreement or discussion about the subject found in the rest of this verse. Every true believer will agree with these facts.

Once again, Paul used the word "mystery". As mentioned earlier (v. 9), a "mystery" is something that has once been hidden but is now revealed. The mystery Paul referred to here was "God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory".

Some believe these words were part of a song of praise that was sung by the early church believers.

Paul may have made this statement because some were denying the deity of Christ. Imagine, this was written only about thirty years after the death of Christ and they were already denying his deity.

God was "manifest in the flesh" by the man Christ Jesus. He said, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father" (Jn. 14:9). Perhaps the grandest truth has ever been uttered is the fact that God became a man (Gen. 3:15; Isa. 7:14; Rom. 1:3; 8:3; Phil. 2:6-8; Gal. 4:4; 1 Jn. 4:2). Those who saw Jesus could point to him and rightly say, "There goes God" (1 Jn. 1:1-2).

Jesus was "justified in the spirit". The word "justified" is not used as it pertains to Christians (Rom. 3:20, 24; 5:1, 9; 8:30). Here it means "to show" or "to prove". The work of the Spirit through Jesus proved he was who he claimed to be. Anyone can claim to be God, but Jesus not only said it, he proved it by the Spirit of God doing through him what could not be done by mortal men (Jn. 2:11). Nicodemus said, "no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him" (Jn 3:2).

The words "seen of angels" mean more than we might first recognize. The angels are curious about the work of God in human beings (1 Cor. 4:9; 1 Pet. 1:12). Certainly, the angels watched as Jesus left heaven to come to earth. They played a great part in his life while on Earth. Angels announced his birth (Lk. 1:11-17), told Mary of his birth (Lk. 1:26-37), foretold his name (Mt. 1:21), announced his birth to the shepherds (Lk. 2:8-15), praised when he was born (Lk. 2:13-14), directed his flight to Egypt (Mt. 2:13), ministered to him after his temptations (Mt. 4:11), assisted him in Gethsemane (Lk. 22:43), rolled the stone away after his resurrection (Mt. 28:2), announced his resurrection to the women (Mt. 28:5-7), sat at the sepulcher (Jn. 20:12) and were present at his ascension (Acts 1:10-11).

Yes, Jesus' life held the attention of the angels. Surely they wondered, why would he do such a thing for such undeserving people.

The words "preached unto the Gentiles" meant a great deal to the Jews living in Paul's day. The gospel message had been preached to the Jew first (Rom. 1:16). They were God's chosen people and He desired to reach the world through them. But, God turned to the Gentiles when the Jews rejected His Son (Jn. 1:11; Mt. 24:14; Mk. 16:15; Acts 10:34-48; Gal. 2:2).

These words also meant a lot to the Gentiles living in Paul's day. They meant the gospel was opened to those who had been without hope (Eph. 2:12-13). Those who had been strangers and foreigners could become a part of God's family (Eph. 2:19). Of course, God knew all along that the Jews would reject His Son (Ps. 22:27; Isa. 11:10; 24:16; Jer.



16:19; Acts 15:14; 22:31).

These words should mean a lot to us. They mean we are to proclaim the gospel to anyone and everyone (Mk. 16:15).

The word "believed" means "to trust". It means more than simply accepting a fact. It means to depend upon (Acts 8:37; 10:43; 13:39; 15:11; 16:30-31). It means a hopeless, hell-bound, sinner can be made clean. It means the man who has mistreated his family because of his love for liquor can have hope of a new life. It means the Wall Street executive can be freed of his love for money and power.

Thank the Lord, Paul could write, "believed on in the world". Some have believed the message (Acts 2:41; 4:4; 8:12; 9:42; 11:21; 17:4; 18:8; 28:24). If you have not yet accepted God's call to salvation, please do it right now. Right where you are, call on the Lord, and ask Him to forgive you and make you His child. You will never be sorry if you do.

Jesus was, "received up into glory". The Father "received" His Son home. When Jesus ascended, his Father welcomed him home by saying, "Sit thou on my right hand, Until I make thy foes thy footstool" (Acts 2:34-35; Heb. 1:3b). Jesus was received because he had completed the work he was sent to do (Jn. 17:4-5). He had done all the Father had desired and had satisfied his demands (Jn. 8:29). But, he is not just sitting on the throne waiting for the next great event, he is making intercession for the people of God (Rom. 8:34; Heb. 4:14).

Some call his entering Jerusalem a triumphal entry (Jn. 12:12-15), but his true triumphal entry was when he entered heaven after his victory at the cross and tomb. Jesus did not return to heaven by himself. He was leading the entire population of Abraham's bosom. When the Old Testament saints died they went to a place in the heart of the earth called Paradise (Lk. 23:43), or "Abraham's bosom" (Lk. 16:22). They were there waiting until Jesus paid the price for their redemption. Once that price was paid at Calvary, they could be set free and could go to heaven. After his death on the cross, Jesus descended to the heart of the earth and led these saints from Paradise to the abode of God in heaven. Jesus told the thief on the cross "To day" shalt thou be with me in paradise (Lk. 23:43). Paul as referring to this when he said "he led captivity captive" (Eph.4:9-10).

I would have loved to have been there as Jesus entered the gates of heaven. Jesus did not quietly slip back into heaven. Imagine, all the angels, all the believers, and the Father Himself, standing to greet the Son and the believers. He sat down in his rightful place on the throne (Mt. 22:44; 26:64; Mk.16:19; Lk. 22:69; Acts 2:34; 1 Pet. 3:22). His victory provides victory for those who believe on him.

Jesus returned to heaven in his resurrection body but it retained the marks of his love for us. The wounds in his hands, feet, and side are still there (Zech. 13:6; Jn. 20:24-29). These marks will be a constant reminder of the high price it took to provide us with a place in heaven.

## **VII. THE CAUTION 4:1-16**

In chapter four, Paul cautioned Timothy about the danger of false teaching. He described these false teachers in verses 1-5 and told Timothy how to deal with them in verses 6-16. He had warned the people at Ephesus earlier about the false teachers who would come (Acts 20:29-30). Paul's warning should alert us to the importance of staying with the truth.

*1 Ti 4:1 Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils;*

The word "expressly" means "distinctly". It is as though the Holy Spirit speaks each word slowly and pronounces every syllable clearly to make sure we understand. It's like someone grabbing you by your shoulders, looking you straight in the eye, and asking, "Are you listening to me, I have something important to say and you need to listen". By the way, everything the Holy Spirit says should be taken just this seriously.

The "latter times" is a term that refers to the period between Jesus' first and second coming. John said "it is the last time" (1 Jn. 2:18). Paul referred to this time as the "last days" in his second letter to Timothy (2 Tim. 3:1). Peter called them the "last times" (2 Pet. 1:20), and the "last days" (2 Pet. 3:3). Jude called it the "last time" (Jude 18). Paul would warn Timothy again about these "perilous" (dangerous) times (2 Tim. 3:1).

Paul mentioned several characteristics that would be true during the last few days. As we get closer to the end of the last days these characteristics will become more and more obvious. We are seeing these things happen in our day. Notice what God warned us to watch for.

During the last days "some shall depart from the faith"(Mt. 24:11; Mk. 13:22; 2 Pet. 3:3).

The word "depart" means "to desert". This speaks of people who claim to be saved but have never had a genuine relationship with Jesus Christ. Many followed Jesus until he said some things they didn't like (Jn. 6:66). They claimed to know him but they were not real. John said of this type of person "They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us" (1 Jn 2:19).

Those who depart from the faith will do so because they will give heed to "seducing spirits and doctrines of devils". This false teaching does not come from man, it comes from Satan himself. Paul called it the "doctrines of devils". The word "devils" refers to demons that are under the authority and control of Satan.

Satan is the prince, or ruler, of the evil angels that rebelled against God. He will use demons to speak through men to seduce anyone who will listen. The devil has his doctrine, his preachers, and his church members(2 Cor. 2:11; Gal. 1:8). He has transformed himself into an angel of light (2 Cor. 11:14).

John said the devil "deceiveth the whole world" (Rev. 12:9). He warns us about "many deceivers" (2 Jn. 7). It may be a professor in a college classroom or a preacher in a pulpit, but they are still deceivers. Sadly, many "so-called" Christian colleges have drifted from the truth once delivered by the saints. The believer is fighting against more than "flesh and blood" (Gal. 6:12). John tells us to not encourage or assist these heretics (2 Jn. 10-11).

It seems obvious that sin will worsen the closer we get to the Lord's return. No doubt, this will have a traumatic effect on the condition of this world. But, I am convinced the greatest damage will be done by the departing from the truth Paul was warning about here. When a world departs from the only source of real truth, they will act like animals. Sadly, we are seeing this happen all around us.

Giving "heed" means more than just hearing. It means to pay attention to. It carries with it the idea of devoting oneself to. It refers to a continual clinging to. They are carried away. They will give heed to the doctrines of devils but the believer is supposed to give heed to the Spirit of God (Amos 3:7; Mt. 16:17; 1 Cor. 2:10; Gal. 1:12; Eph. 3:5; 1 Jn. 2:27).

These things "shall" come to pass. Nothing can be done to keep this from happening.

Notice, that Paul said "some" shall depart. That means, there will be some who will not be deceived. Some will stay true and stand for truth. Individual scan avoid being personally swept into this departing by staying true to God's Word, preaching and teaching the truth, and praying for our generation. Believers are admonished to try the spirits to see if they are of God (1 Jn. 4:1). I want to be one of the ones who stand true no

matter what.

*1 Ti 4:2 Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron;*

These people will leave the truth that shows them how to know and please God. They will leave that which is alive and offers help, and turn to something dead and useless. However, being drawn away themselves is not enough. They want to draw others with them. These liars will be very persuasive and many will be swept up in their error.

The false teachers are speaking "lies". They claim to know God and have a message from God, but they are wrong. They claim to be from God but they are disciples of the devil. Satan's first evangelist was the serpent. His message was a lie and Eve believed him (Gen. 3:4). Deception always starts with doubt. There is one small step between doubt and denial. Those who deny the Word of God first doubted it. Eve's mistake was listening to the devil when he tried to get her to doubt what God had said. Our enemy has not changed his way of attack. He whispers words of doubt in our minds. If he can get a person to doubt, he will eventually get them to deny.

God has given us a "conscience" to guide us. This "policeman" lets us know what is right or wrong. However, as Paul will tell us, our conscience will become seared if we continually disregard it (Please read the comments in 1:5 and 3:9).

The word, "seared" means "to brand or cauterize". Being seared with a "hot iron" meant their conscience had become insensitive. Their conscience, which at one time would have warned them about the error, did not trouble them at all. They really believed what they were teaching. They were convinced they were right and tried to convince others. They had come to the place where they could not tell the difference between truth and error.

*1 Ti 4:3 Forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth.*

The false teachers believed the way to get close to God was through self-sacrifice and self-denial. They believed abstinence from certain things would make them more spiritual. They believed their man-made rules were the way to please God. They had their list of regulations and they expected everyone to abide by them. But, they went further than God does. To make demands more stringent than those God gives is anything but spiritual, it is the ultimate display of pride.

Why would a person go to such an extreme? Some believe their self-sacrifice compels God to bless them. During the early church days, some monks lived in desolate places to show how spiritual they were. They believed their pain and suffering was a way of showing God how sincere they were. One ate no cooked food, one leaned against a sharp rock all night, and one allowed his body to get so dirty that bugs that crawled on him actually dropped dead. They did these things to please the God who already loved them. Sadly, none of their sacrifices brought them closer to God, nor did it produce any of God's blessings. It probably did the opposite. Attempting to become more holy through self-denial is a work of the flesh and provides no benefit to the child of God.

This type of belief is at the heart of legalism. Legalism is the belief that salvation, or blessings from God, is obtained by good works. The legalist emphasizes rules and restrictions above the grace of God. They fail to see the purpose of the Old Testament law was to show us our sin and point us to Jesus who died in our place (Gal. 3:24). We do not earn God's grace, it is a gift from God (Eph. 2:8-9).

In this verse, Paul mentioned two of the many restrictions these false teachers demanded.

Their first restriction Paul mentioned was "Forbidding to marry".

They claimed the single life was more favorable to God. Certainly, there are positive

reasons to stay single. A single person will have more freedom because they would have no family responsibilities. Paul encouraged the people in the church of Corinth to stay single if they were able to without falling into temptation (1 Cor. 7:7-9). But, he did so only because of the "present distress" (1 Cor. 7:26). The persecution of that time made it unsafe for believers, so being single was the best option at that time. Certain ministries are unsafe, especially for women and children. Having a family would be very difficult and may even hinder a man from doing the ministry God has called him to do.

However, God gave marriage as a gift to mankind. Under normal circumstances, marriage is a positive thing (Heb. 13:4). Raising a family is a work for the Lord in itself. A godly family can be used greatly in the Lord's work. Paul wrote about a pastor being married (1 Tim. 3:2). Certainly, a godly wife and children could be a great help to a pastor.

The attack on marriage has reached an all-time high. There have been times in the past when marriage was considered unnecessary, but never has the actual concept of marriage been as perverted as it is now. Though not legally binding, there are recorded marriages to dogs, cats, horses, goats, frogs, dolphins, snakes, the Eiffel Tower, the Berlin Wall, a roller coaster, a pillow, and a chandelier. Same-sex marriage has become accepted and promoted. Man may try to reinvent marriage but God's Word of one man and one woman will never change (Gen. 2:24; Eph. 5:31).

All these things being said, the false teachers were wrong to require singleness and claim it was the way to please God. Every Christian should pray earnestly and surrender to the Lord's will about whether to marry or not. Some are gifted to be single and some to be married (1 Cor. 7:7).

Their second restriction Paul mentioned was requiring people to "abstain from meats".

The word "meats" means "food" and not just meat. God gave man plants and vegetables and meat for food (Gen. 1:29; 9:3). The Old Testament gave restrictions to eating certain types of food (Lev. 11:1-46; 20:25; Dt. 14:3-21; Judges 13:4; Ezk. 4:14). However, the New Testament removes any restrictions to our diet (Mk. 7:18-19; Acts 10:11-16; Rom. 14:1-3; Col. 2:16-17). There is no distinction between clean and unclean in the New Testament. If the Word of God does not forbid it, no man has the right to do so.

All the things God made are to be "received with thanksgiving". The fact they are to be "received" means we are to partake of that which God has created. The fact we are to receive it with "thanksgiving" means we can partake of what God created without fear.

*1 Ti 4:4 For every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving:*

Paul told them why they could partake of those things the false teachers had forbidden.

They could partake of that which God made because He made all things (Jn. 1:3) and everything He made was "good". Six different times the bible says God saw His creation as "good" (Gen. 1:4, 10, 12, 18, 21, 25). When He was finished, He said it was "very good" (Gen. 1:31).

God could have created this world with everything in black and white, but He made a universe of indescribable beauty. He could have given us only bread and water to eat, but He gave us all kinds of good-tasting food. He did so for His glory, and our enjoyment (Gen. 1:29; 9:3). Paul would later tell Timothy God has given us "all things to enjoy" (2 Tim. 6:17).

Since God made everything good, it should not be "refused". If God has approved it, who are we to reject it?

God did put one stipulation on us partaking of what He created, that being, we receive it "with thanksgiving". This must be important since Paul mentioned it two times in two

verses. That is not asking too much. We should be thankful for anything that comes from God. It is a gift God, in His goodness, has given us to enjoy. What a good God we have!

Before we move on, we must consider one thought that Paul does not specifically address here. The fact that God made all things good does not mean it cannot be corrupted. Mankind can take the good things God has created and make them into something evil. Alcoholic drinks, illegal drugs, and adultery are just a few we could name. Paul hints at this thought in the next verse.

*1 Ti 4:5 For it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer.*

The word "For" means "because". Paul tells us why we are not forbidden to partake of the things God has provided.

The word "sanctified" means "to make holy or pure". Its use here means God made all things specifically for our use and enjoyment.

It is made acceptable by the "word of God".

What the false teachers were teaching contradicted the Word of God. The Word of God tells us God made marriage and food for man's enjoyment. If the bible tells us God has given us everything to enjoy (1 Tim. 6:17), we can believe it. The Word of God should be our guide, not the opinion of man.

It is made acceptable by "prayer".

Our prayer before eating is more than us uttering a few meaningless words. We are thanking God for providing it and asking Him to bless it. Jesus did this (Mt. 14:19; 15:36). Notice, that Paul's emphasis is on giving thanks for the food and not blessing the food. We might say, those who do not thank God for their food should not expect Him to bless it.

*1 Ti 4:6 If thou put the brethren in remembrance of these things, thou shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished up in the words of faith and of good doctrine, whereunto thou hast attained.*

As mentioned before, verses 6-16 deal with how to combat false teaching. We overcome false doctrine by holding on to good doctrine. Holding fast to true doctrine should be the first priority of every believer.

Timothy was to "put the brethren in remembrance of these things". He was to warn them about the false teachers and the falling away, and then, he was to warn them again. Paul did this when he spoke to the people of Ephesus (Acts 20:20-21). The modern preacher should do the same.

Paul's admonition about "these things" was specifically dealing with the false teachers but what he said can be applied to all of the truths in the bible. We may have heard it many times, but we are prone to forget that which is not constantly before us. The communion service is a perfect example. Jesus said, "This do in remembrance of me" (1 Cor. 11:24-25). Peter wrote about stirring up the mind by way of remembrance (2 Pet. 3:1).

A "good minister" is one who is willing to warn the believers of error. The preacher's primary responsibility is to instruct the people. A shepherd does more than pet the sheep, he warns them when the wolf is close. The preacher who does not tell the truth is not a good minister. He may have a good personality, a good delivery, and a good social standing, but he is not a good minister.

Protecting the sheep against false teaching is a difficult job. It will put his commitment to the scripture to the test. Being willing to take such a stand reveals whether the preacher does what he does for the praise of man or for the glory of God. This is why Paul admonished Timothy to be "nourished up in the words of faith and a good doctrine". The "words of faith and a good doctrine" refer to the Word of God. Only by consistent



exposure to the Word of God can such a commitment be possible.

The word "nourished" makes us think of being healthy. Our world spends billions of dollars and hundreds of hours every year in an effort to be healthy. Certainly, we should be even more enthusiastic about our spiritual health. Our spiritual nourishment comes from a steady diet of the Word of God (Jer. 15:16; 1 Pet. 2:2). Without a steady intake of the Word, we will be spiritually anemic.

The word "nourished" is in the Greek present tense, which indicates this is speaking of continual action. Like food for our body, we need a regular diet of the Word of God.

The word "attained" means "to follow near". Timothy was to warn the people about the importance of being nourished. But, he was to recognize that he had the same need. Like those he wrote to, he was to stay anchored in the Word and follow its commands. Timothy had already been following the path Paul recommended and done what was indicated here (2 Tim. 3:15). A good minister is the one who practices what he preaches and does what he asks the people to do.

*1 Ti 4:7 But refuse profane and old wives' fables, and exercise thyself rather unto godliness.*

Not only was Timothy to receive the Word of God, but he was also to "refuse" the false teaching. The word "refuse" is very strong. It carries with it the idea of rejecting and avoiding completely. Paul was telling Timothy to not even consider it important enough to take any of his time. Unfortunately, even Christian colleges feel the need to have classes that teach the beliefs of false teachers. Often, this causes the students to become confused and uncertain about the truths they have believed about the bible. Paul said to avoid it. If we know the truth, we will easily recognize the error.

The word "profane" means "irreligious". It is a reference to stories that have no spiritual value whatsoever. Unfortunately, in our day, some preachers do little more than tell stories when they preach.

The words "old wives' fables" were a term used during Paul's day to refer to something that was not credible and should not be believed. It was like saying, "That is something an old woman would tell her grandchildren". We would call them fairy tales. The Talmudical writings of the Jews included many ridiculous fables. Yet, the Jews considered them as a guide for their lives and based their beliefs on them.

The word "exercise" means "to train by exercise". The Romans and the Greeks were very conscious of the physical body. The Grecian games were very popular and the athletes dedicated their entire lives to them.

Exercise certainly involves work, but it also requires knowledge to be able to do it properly. Wrong types of exercise can be harmful. So it is with spiritual exercise. We can waste a lot of time and accomplish little if we do not do it correctly.

Instead of wasting time on silly stories that provided no spiritual value, Timothy was to dedicate himself to a life of godliness. We are not only to curse the darkness, but we are to live in the light. We should resist the error and live the truth.

*1 Ti 4:8 For bodily exercise profiteth little: but godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.*

Paul compared physical exercise with spiritual exercise.

Physical exercise "profiteth little". Paul was not saying bodily exercise was wrong or unnecessary. Physical exercise does profit, but its profit is limited. It helps only the physical, and only for a little while. If you doubt that, stop exercising and see how long it takes for your muscles to get weak and flabby.

Paul also wrote about spiritual exercise, or "godliness". Spiritual exercise is profitable in "all things". Being physically fit offers little help when our world falls apart, but being

spiritually fit helps us face our problems victoriously. I believe the spiritual exercise Paul had in mind can be explained by what Jesus said. He said, "Let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me" (Lk 9:23).

A spiritually healthy believer is prepared for here, and hereafter.

Spiritual exercise promises benefits in this "life". A close walk with Christ provides the best in this present world. A close walk with Christ does not promise riches and a problem-free life. But, it does promise help when we are hurting, peace in the storms, and joy over sorrow. It provides forgiveness, assurance, contentment, joy, peace, power, rest, and fellowship with God.

Spiritual exercise also promises benefits in the life "to come". A close walk with Christ provides the best in the world to come. Dedicating ourselves wholly to God while on earth provides eternal rewards in heaven (Mt. 5:12; 6:20; 16:27; 25:21; 1 Cor. 3:13-15; 9:25; 15:58; 2 Cor. 5:10; Jam. 1:12, 22). When we get to heaven, we will not worry about how little we have while on earth. Jesus said, "For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul" (Mt. 16:26). Hearing Jesus say, "Well done" will make our sacrifice worthwhile.

Like bodily exercise, godly exercise takes effort, pain, and sacrifice. With both, we get out of it what we put into it. With both, we pay now for future rewards. There will be times when it seems like it is not worth the price, but the benefits that come afterward will be well worth it.

To receive the full benefit of exercise, it must be done consistently. Occasional exercise offers little results. Instead of spending time and effort on things for our body, we should spend most of our time on things for our spirit. If half the effort that is put into bodily exercise was put into spiritual exercise, we would be spiritual giants.

*1 Ti 4:9 This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance.*

Paul used the same statement earlier (1 Tim. 1:15). The word "faithful" means "trustworthy". There was no reason to doubt the things Paul had just written. This is true of the entire bible. We can accept every word without fear or hesitation.

*1 Ti 4:10 For therefore we both labour and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the Saviour of all men, specially of those that believe.*

Paul tells us why he did what he did. He labored as he did because he believed God. His faith pushed him on despite the cost.

The word "labour" means to work to the point of exhaustion. Preachers get accused of having an easy job but the opposite is true. Serving the Lord is strenuous work. Paul labored harder than the average person (1 Cor. 15:10).

Serving the Lord may involve suffering "reproach". It did for Paul. The word means "to defame or to chide". It is the same word used to describe the mocking thieves beside Jesus on the cross (Mt. 24:51). The world does not understand or appreciate a godly Christian. Those who live a godly life can expect to be ridiculed (Gal. 6:12; 2 Tim. 3:12).

However, if we are persecuted, we can "trust in the living God". He will be with us. His grace is sufficient for whatever we have to face. He will not forsake us when we need Him the most (Gen. 39:2, 3, 21; Ex. 3:12; Josh. 1:5; Ps. 46:7; 41:10; Mt. 28:20; Jn. 14:18; Acts 18:10; 2 Tim. 4:17; Heb. 13:5). We can trust our God. Moses did when he crossed the Red Sea (Ex. 14:13-14), Abraham did when he was willing to put Isaac to death (Gen. 22:8-10), David did when he faced Goliath (1 Sam. 17:37), the three Hebrew boys did in the fiery furnace (Dan. 3:25), Peter did when in prison (Acts 12:8-10), Paul did in the midst of the storm (Acts 27:25), and so can you when you face your battles.

The fact that Jesus is the Savior of "all men" does not mean all will be saved. It does mean Jesus' death provided salvation for the entire human race and makes it available to

anyone who hears His call, believes, and repents. It means Jesus is the one who could be the Savior of all men. He is the only one who could save everyone and he is willing to save anyone.

The word "specially" means "particularly". It is simply saying, that the work of Calvary provides forgiveness that is available to all, but only those who "believe" in that work will be forgiven (Heb. 2:9; 1 Jn. 2:2). What God has provided for all, He gives to those who are willing to accept it. Those who go to hell, go there of their own will. Some teach the work of the cross provided forgiveness only for those who will believe. They refuse to accept the fact that there will be some who go to hell that could have been saved. This makes God no less than God. He is still just as loving, just as glorious, and just as holy. God gets glory by His grace on those who receive and by His judgment on those who reject.

*1 Ti 4:11 These things command and teach.*

Paul was reassuring Timothy that what he said came directly from God and not from any man. Since that was true, Timothy had the authority to "command and teach" what God would give him. He was speaking for God and not for himself. Therefore, he could preach without fear or hesitation. He was to fearlessly proclaim the message as a "command" that came directly from God.

*1 Ti 4:12 Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity.*

The Greek culture placed a great deal of respect on age and experience. The word, "youth" was used for anyone old enough for the military, which was up to 40 years old. Timothy was probably about thirty and Paul around seventy. So, compared to Paul, and many in the church of Ephesus, Timothy was a relatively young man. He would have to earn the respect of the people he ministered to.

Paul warned Timothy to be careful of the pitfalls of youth. This involves more than just the physical temptations usually associated with youth. It includes foolish thoughts, reacting inappropriately, and making immature decisions. With youth comes the possibility of pride, arrogance, ignorance, and inexperience.

The meaning of the word, "despise" is not what we usually think of. We use the word to express hatred or contempt. Here, the word means "to think little of" or "to think down on". Timothy was not to live in a manner where people could look down on him because of his youth or immaturity. He was not to act childish. He was in the place of an elder, so he was to act like an elder. The lifestyle of the preacher is a reflection of the church. Most people will assume the church is like the preacher and the preacher is like the church.

The word "example" means "pattern". As any dressmaker can attest, you use a pattern to duplicate the original. For the finished product to be right, the pattern must be right. A flawed pattern will produce a flawed duplicate. A pattern is followed exactly. Can others use your life as a pattern?

Timothy was to live a life that would be an example to all believers. He was to live in a way that would gain the respect of the older believers and the esteem of the younger believers. Respect is something that must be earned. It takes time and commitment.

Timothy was to be an example in his conversation. The word, "word" simply means "something said". Some believe this is referring to Timothy's preaching of the Word of God. I believe it means that, and more. Timothy was to be a godly example in all his speech, in and out of the pulpit. What comes out of our mouths reveals what is in our heart (Mt. 12:34).

Timothy was to be an example in his conduct. The word, "conversation" means "behavior". The preacher should do what he tells others to do. A sheep naturally follows the shepherd. It is vitally important that he be going the right way.

Timothy was to be an example in his compassion. The word, "charity" means "love". It is the same Greek word used in John 3:16. He was to be an example by his love for God and people. The primary attribute of a shepherd is his love for his sheep. In like fashion, love is the most important part of the Christian's life (1 Cor. 13:13).

Timothy was to be an example in his charisma. The word, "spirit" means "state of mind" and refers to having a good attitude. It carries with it the idea of enthusiasm. It is a shame that so many are more excited about their career than their conversion and their recreation than their redemption. Many church-goers get more excited about their children's ball game than seeing God move and are more enthused about a sale at Walmart than having a revival at their church. We should be zealous about the work of God (Josh. 24:14; 1 Cor. 14:12; 2 Cor. 8:11; Tit. 2:14; 1 Pet. 5:2).

Timothy was to be an example in his confidence. The word, "faith" means "persuasion or confidence". It has to do with that which we really believe. The preacher, and the Christian, need confidence in the Word of God, and the God of the Word. Doubt hinders the Spirit of God in our lives (Mt. 13:58; 17:20; 21:21-22; Lk. 17:6; Jn. 11:40; Heb. 3:19). Without faith, we cannot please God (Heb. 11:6).

Timothy was to be an example in his character. The word, "purity" means "without moral defect". None of the attributes Paul mentioned would be of any good if Timothy did not live a godly life. God could not, and would not, bless his labor if his life wasn't pure. Those he preached to would not listen if he walked an ungodly path.

*1 Ti 4:13 Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine.*

Paul planned to return to Ephesus. When he returned, he would be able to assist the church in that which was needed. Timothy was to do what Paul would do until he was able to return to Ephesus.

The words "give attendance" mean "to pay attention to". It was not time to ignore the most important matters of the Christian life.

Timothy was to pay attention to "reading". No doubt, Paul's emphasis was on reading the Word of God.

God gave His Word that it might be read and obeyed. He gave Moses the Ten Commandments on tablets that could be read (Ex. 20:2-17; 31:18; Dt. 9:9-10). Moses was instructed to give the law to the Priests who were to read it to the people (Dt. 31:9-13). Ezra read the Old Testament publicly (Neh. 8:1-4).

God did the same with the New Testament Scripture. The Jews read the law in the synagogues when they met to worship (Lk. 4:16-18; Acts 13:15; 15:21). Certainly, the early church continued this practice. The letters Paul wrote were read to the churches (2 Cor. 7:8; Col. 4:16; 1 Th. 5:27; 2 Th. 3:14).

So, Paul was telling Timothy to read the Word of God publicly to the church, and privately to himself.

Simply reading the bible can help us more than we may realize. God speaks to us through His Word. The church is full of weak, and sickly, Christians who have not recognized the importance of a daily intake of the bible.

Along with our reading of the Bible, we should read good Christian books. Certainly, God can use a godly Christian writer to assist us in our walk with the Lord. We must be careful to select biblical books.

Timothy was to be sure to pay attention to "exhortation". The word "exhortation" speaks of encouraging others to do what the bible says. This may be in the form of encouragement, warning, comfort, or rebuke. We are to do the Word, not just hear the Word (Jam. 1:22).

Timothy was to be sure to pay attention to "doctrine". The word "doctrine" means

"teaching". The clear teaching and preaching of God's Word is vital for every Church and every Christian. The modern church is full of people who know little about what the bible says. They know all the names of the players on their favorite team, but they can't name the twelve apostles. God said His people are destroyed for lack of knowledge (Hos. 4:6).

Entertainment does not change people, doctrine does. Positive thinking does not help the mother struggling to raise her children alone, but doctrine will. Sadly, the average church member of our day wants to be entertained. They will not listen long to the preacher who does not excite them. As a result, we have raised a generation of spiritual infants.

*1 Ti 4:14 Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery.*

The "laying on of the hands of the presbytery" probably refers to Timothy's ordination. The "presbytery" was a group of men chosen as representatives of the church. Paul and the elders of the church must have met together, laid hands on Timothy, and sent him out into full-time service (2 Tim. 1:6). Their laying on of hands did not call Timothy, it simply confirmed his call that had come from God.

The laying on of hands is seen throughout the bible where a man was dedicated to an area of service for the Lord's work (Num. 8:10; 27:18; Dt. 34:9; Acts 6:6; 8:18; 13:3; Heb. 6:2). The act of laying on of hands did not transfer any special gift or ability, it was simply an outward sign of God's touch on an individual.

The "prophecy" mentioned here simply means Paul and other men of God saw in Timothy something special and predicted he would have a productive ministry. Undoubtedly, as mentioned earlier (cf. 1:18), God gave these men assurance that Timothy had been called and enabled for the ministry.

There is debate about whether the "gift" refers to a spiritual gift or simply a special blessing given to Timothy for his ministry. A spiritual gift is a special ability God gives to every believer at the moment of their salvation (1 Cor. 12:1-11; Rom. 12:6-8, 29; Eph. 4:7-12). God gives His children these abilities so that He might use them to do His will in this world.

Since these spiritual gifts are received at the moment of salvation, I believe this verse speaks of a special blessing God gave Timothy for the task ahead. Timothy would need a touch from God if he was to be successful at the church of Ephesus.

Timothy was to gain confidence by looking back at the time of his ordination. God had given him that which he would need to stand when the need arose. God had chosen and enabled him, the men of God of the presbytery had confidence in him, so he was to recognize this himself and trust the Lord to help him do what God had called him to do.

The word "neglect" carries with it the idea of being careless with or to make light of. Simply having the ability does not guarantee a successful ministry. An artist may have the talent to paint a masterpiece but spend his time painting stick men.

God had gifted Timothy to be a leader. Therefore, as long as he stayed surrendered to the Holy Spirit, God would enable him to do the job He had called him to do. However, if he neglected this blessing he would be like Sampson who became like any other man (Jud. 16:4-30). The same is true for all of God's children, including you and me. God has enabled every believer for the ministry He has placed them in (1 Cor. 15:10; 2 Cor. 3:5; Phil. 4:13; 1 Tim. 1:12).

Paul's warning tells us we can waste the abilities God gives us. He would tell Timothy to "stir up" the gift of God (2 Tim. 1:6). The gift God had given Timothy was like a spark of fire. If left alone, it would only smolder, if fanned it would ignite into flames. We can be like the man who buried his talent (Mt. 25:25-26). Jesus called that man a "wicked and slothful servant".



*1 Ti 4:15 Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy profiting may appear to all.*

The word "Meditate" means "to revolve in the mind". It has the idea of thinking over and over. This word is the direct opposite of the word "Neglect".

The "things" Paul referred to here were the truths he just wrote about. What we think about is so important. The battleground for every Christian is their mind. How we think and what we think matters greatly. Our mind can be a tool of the Lord or the devil. David asked God to show him his thoughts (Ps. 139:23). Paul said renewing our minds will transform our lives (Rom.12:2).

Timothy was to "give" himself totally to that which God called him to do. He was to focus completely on God's will for his life. He was not to live for money, fame, or pleasure.

The word "profiting" means "advancement or progress". It carries with it the idea of changing one's state for the better. If Timothy did as Paul suggested, it would be evident to those around him. Few things are more exciting than a young preacher who is growing spiritually and a church that is growing with him.

We must not be passive in our service to the Lord. Paul said he labored "more abundantly than they all" (1 Cor. 15:10). We should never serve God in an effort to gain His blessings, we should serve Him out of gratitude for His goodness.

*1 Ti 4:16 Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee.*

The word "heed" means "to pay attention to". Timothy was to keep a close watch on his private life and his public ministry. The early disciples gave themselves "continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word" (Ac 6:4).

First, Paul told Timothy to pay attention "unto thyself". He was to keep a constant check on his own life to make sure he doing the will of God. Any preacher worth his salt wants his listeners to heed his message and live right. However, that preacher must not overlook his own life. He also should heed the message he preaches.

Second, Paul told Timothy to pay attention to his "doctrine". The word doctrine means "instruction". Timothy was to make sure he believed and preached the truth. We must make sure that we get our beliefs from the bible and not from man's opinion.

The word "continue" means "to remain or to keep on". The natural tendency of man is to drift from that which is right. The constant pull of the world, the flesh, and the devil can draw us away from that which is holy. Quitting should never be considered as an option for the child of God.

The word "save" in this verse is not a reference to salvation from sin. The context of this verse tells us its meaning. Paul was talking about being saved from the effects of the false teachers (vv. 1-3), and a neglected spiritual life (vv. 12-15). To fail to do these things would result in hardship to Timothy and those in the church in Ephesus. This should be a reminder to every preacher of the importance of examining his life regularly, living a godly life, and preaching the truth.

## **VIII. THE CARE 5:1-2**

Chapter five deals with how we should care for those in the family of God. In answer to Cain's question, we are our brother's keeper (Gen. 4:9). We are a part of a family. How we live and how we talk affects others. Therefore, we need to learn how to get along.

Paul gave instructions to Timothy about how to relate to different groups of people in the church. The way he would communicate with these people would be very important.

As mentioned, he tells us to treat each other as family. We are to treat the elderly as we would treat our father and mother and the younger as our brother and sister (v. 1-2).

*1 Ti 5:1 Rebuke not an elder, but intreat him as a father; and the younger men as brethren;*

The word, "Rebuke" means "to upbraid". It means to strike with words and not with fists.

Here the word, "elder" refers to an older man and not the office of an elder (cf. 1 Tim. 1:17). We know this because Paul immediately mentioned the "younger" men.

The word, "intreat" means "to call near". It carries with it the idea of tenderly persuading. This speaks of Timothy's private communication with an older man. Paul will deal later with the public rebuke of an elder (v. 20). The word "intreat" is connected to the word "Comforter" which is used for the Holy Spirit (Jn. 14:16; 15:26). Timothy was to deal with the older men just as the Holy Spirit would.

Timothy needed to be tactful in how he dealt with the older men in the church. He was not to harshly rebuke an older man but to treat him as he would his own "father". Not only does an older man deserve to be treated with respect, but, he would be more likely to be receptive to what Timothy was saying if treated respectfully. A sharp rebuke is seldom gladly received by an older person.

The Jews held their aged in very high esteem. The Bible teaches us to respect the elderly (Ex. 20:12; Lev. 19:32; Dt. 5:16; Job 12:12; Pro. 20:20; 30:17; Eph. 6:1; 1 Pet. 5:5). The simple fact that an elder has lived longer demands this type of respect.

Unfortunately, the modern American church tends to disregard the value of the elderly. Their wisdom is invaluable to the church yet, so many times, they are pushed aside or shunned. This attitude is an indication of how far we have drifted from the love God desires.

Since Timothy was a younger man many in the church were older than he. He was to recognize the fact that their age produced in them a wisdom that he did not have. He was to keep in mind what Paul had said about not doing anything that might cause others to despise his youth (1 Tim. 4:12).

Paul was not suggesting that the sins of an older man be ignored. He was, however, saying that, even when in sin, the age of the older men should be respected. Very seldom would it be right for a young man to rebuke an older man. If the older man did something wrong, he should be dealt with the type of respect a son would have for his father. This should be a warning to all Christians. When a brother or sister goes astray, our goal should be to restore them and not just to condemn them (Gal. 6:1).

Timothy was to treat the younger men "as brethren". Earthly brothers may have their differences but there is still a special bond between them. And, so it should be with spiritual brothers in the family of God. We are a family.

Being brethren speaks to the fact that we are all equal. We should treat the entire Christian family with respect, patience, and love (Mt. 18:21-22; Jn. 13:34-35; Gal. 6:1).

*1 Ti 5:2 The elder women as mothers; the younger as sisters, with all purity.*

The same said about the men was to be applied to the ladies of the church. Timothy was not to lord over the congregation (1 Pet. 5:1-3).

He was to treat the ladies of the church as he would his own mother or sister.

Timothy's dealing with the women of the church should be with "purity". Paul knew temptation could destroy Timothy's ministry. The entire ministry of a preacher can be ruined by one moment of impurity. Timothy was to deal with the ladies in such a manner to where no one could even accuse him of any misbehavior.

Paul dealt with the treatment of widows in verses 3-16.

*1 Ti 5:3 Honour widows that are widows indeed.*

The word, "widow" means "lacking a husband".

The word "Honour" means "to revere". It carries with it the idea of being valuable. The widows could easily be forgotten and ignored. As with the older men, the widows in the church were to be respected. God holds in high esteem those that man considers unnecessary.

The honor mentioned here would include being assisted financially by the church. The first ministry of the New Testament church was to assist the widows with their daily necessities (Acts 6:1-4). God tells His people to take care of widows (Dt. 10:18; 14:29; 24:17-21; Acts 6:1-7; Jam. 1:27).

When a husband died it left a wife with no means of supporting herself and her family, so the church was to help provide her needs for survival. God has always remembered the poor or needy (Lev. 19:34; Dt. 10:19; 15:7-11; 26:12; Pro. 14:31; 21:13; 28:27; 29:7; 31:9; Isa. 58:10; Mt. 5:42; 19:21; Lk. 3:11).

One of the vital ministries of the New Testament church is to assist those who are in need. However, as we will see in the next few verses, that does not mean we are to just give to anyone and everyone who wants a handout. God does not promote laziness (Gen. 2:15; Ecc. 9:10; Pro. 6:6-8; 10:4; 12:11; 12:24; 13:4; 14:23; 24:30-34; Eph. 4:28; Col. 3:23; 1 Th. 4:11; 2 Th. 5:8; 1 Tim. 5:8).

The church was to be very careful in deciding which widows would be assisted. The words, "widows indeed" mean those who meet God's requirements. Some requirements had to be met before a widow could be included in the number that the church assisted. Paul gave these requirements in verses to follow.

A widow indeed was a woman who had to be a legitimate need. She lacked that which she needed for survival. As Americans, we must guard against losing sight of the difference between comfort and need or want and necessity.

*1 Ti 5:4 But if any widow have children or nephews, let them learn first to shew piety at home, and to requite their parents: for that is good and acceptable before God.*

A widow indeed was a woman who had no family to take care of her needs. If she had a family, it was their responsibility to make sure her needs were met. One of the saddest things in our country is the many older parents who have been left in a nursing home by children who do not care. Certainly, there are times when a nursing home is the best option and they are placed there by broken-hearted children. But, some have forgotten how their parents sacrificed their own needs to raise them. They just do not want the responsibility of taking care of their aging parents.

The word "piety" means "respect". The family should show respect to the widow.

The word "requite" means "to recompense or to pay back". She supported her family when they were young and unable to take care of themselves, now it is time to pay her back. Jesus was suffering horribly on the cross, his Father had turned His back, the devil was attacking terribly, and the crowd was mocking, yet he took care of his mother (Jn. 19:27). We may see the heart of God at that point more than anywhere else.

To do so is "good and acceptable" to God. It pleases God when we do these things. That means it displeases Him when we do not. It pleases God because it shows a proper attitude towards others and towards the possessions God has given us.

No doubt, there are times when the family is truly unable, or refuses to, assist the widow. The church becomes responsible in such cases.

*1 Ti 5:5 Now she that is a widow indeed, and desolate, trusteth in God, and continueth in supplications and prayers night and day.*

A widow indeed was a woman who was left alone. The word "desolate" means "left alone". She had been left alone with no family to take care of her.

When Paul wrote this, there was no Social Security, pensions, insurance, welfare, or Medicaid. If God did not provide for her, she would go without. But, God would provide her needs by working through God's people at the church.

A widow indeed was a woman who had been faithful to serve God. She was one who "trusteth in God". The word "trusteth" means "to expect". It means she had set her hope in God. and truly expected Him to provide.

Recognizing her need and realizing her hope was in the Lord's supply, she prayed "night and day". She continued to go before the Lord that He might provide what she needed.

The word "supplications" refers to her asking that her needs be met.

The word "prayers" is the word that means general prayer. This type of prayer includes worship, rejoicing, and thanksgiving. It means she wasn't spending all her time in prayer just asking for things.

*1 Ti 5:6 But she that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth.*

A widow indeed was a woman who did not live in selfish pleasure. The word "pleasure" does not refer to grossly sinful deeds. It means "to live in luxury". It means she had been indulging in eating, drinking, and pampering herself. This word is used in reference to a spoiled child.

The woman who lived in selfish pleasure was not to be added to the number who the church assisted. If they lived to please themselves, the church was not obligated to assist them. Why should God's people use God's money to help someone living in such a manner? God does not endorse selfish living.

This verse reminds us of how temptation knows no age. Paul was obviously talking about a woman who was not young, yet he made it clear that she could be controlled by selfish desires.

To all that matters in life, she is "dead while she liveth". This type of woman may have been alive in body but she was dead to spiritual matters. Jesus said, "Let the dead bury the dead" (Mt. 8:22).

*1 Ti 5:7 And these things give in charge, that they may be blameless.*

Timothy was to tell the entire church of these things. The church was to know of their responsibility to take care of the widows, to provide for their own families, and to live in a godly manner. They were to be made aware of the danger of doing otherwise.

The word "blameless" means "not arrested". It means they could not be found guilty of not obeying the instructions given in the preceding verses. This statement could be directed to everyone involved. It referred to the widows who might be tempted to do wrong. It referred to the families of the widows who were not taking care of their elderly. It referred to those in the church who did not see the need to take care of widows. The reputation of the church is at stake.

*1 Ti 5:8 But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel.*

Paul emphasized his point about taking care of widows by stating it was the responsibility of the head of the house to provide for all his family.

The word "provide" means "to consider in advance". This reminds me of the ingenuity of the ant described in the book of Proverbs. They plan and provide for what will be needed later (Pro. 6:6-8). Living as though there is no tomorrow is unwise and unscriptural. God does not promise to provide for us if we misuse what He has already given us. He promises those who are able to work and do not should go without (Pro. 6:6; 6:9-11;

12:11; 12:24; 13:4; 14:23; 19:15; 20:4).

His "own house" would include anyone living in his house. That would include granny.

The "faith" was a term used for Christianity in general.

Has "denied the faith" means he has violated the truths of Christianity which teaches us to love and care for others. It is certainly not suggesting that he has lost his salvation. Peter denied the faith by his words, these deny it by not providing for their relatives.

An "infidel" is an unbeliever. This word is one of the strongest used in the bible to describe a person who refuses to believe. The person who does not provide for his family is worse than an unbeliever because even those who do not believe have enough decency to take care of their own. Even a dumb animal in the wild will take care of their little ones.

One of the most disgraceful aspects of our great country is the vast number of men who have abandoned their responsibility and left a woman to raise children on her own.

*1 Ti 5:9 Let not a widow be taken into the number under threescore years old, having been the wife of one man,*

The words "taken into the number" refer to the widows who would be assisted by the church.

A widow indeed was a woman who was at least sixty years old. A younger woman would be able to work in some way to provide for herself. Also, a younger woman is likely to remarry (v. 11). By the age of sixty, a woman would have been past her childbearing years and less likely to think of remarrying.

A widow indeed was a woman who had been married once. The word "one" used here is the same used when dealing with the requirements of a pastor (1 Tim. 3:2).

*1 Ti 5:10 Well reported of for good works; if she have brought up children, if she have lodged strangers, if she have washed the saints' feet, if she have relieved the afflicted, if she have diligently followed every good work.*

This verse lets us know how important an elderly woman can be to any church. The list of her activities is truly impressive.

Paul told Timothy to investigate the past of the widow being considered for assistance from the church. The words "well reported" mean it was common knowledge. She had a godly testimony.

A widow indeed was a woman who had a good reputation and was known for her "good works".

A widow indeed was a woman who taught her "children" to love God and to do His will. Her love may have caused her to teach children that were not even her own. Many orphaned or neglected children needed a godly woman to take them under her wing.

A widow indeed was a woman who opened her home to assist "strangers". This shows her desire to help those in need even though providing a place for travelers to lodge was a common practice in Paul's day. Inviting strangers into one's house would be inconvenient, and could be dangerous. The woman who would receive help must be the type who had been willing to give help.

A widow indeed was a woman who had shown a humble spirit. She was the type who was willing to wash the feet of God's people. A basin of water placed at the door of their houses provided a way to clean their feet before entering. The washing of feet was a lowly job that was usually done by servants. Her willingness to wash feet revealed a humble attitude and a servant's heart.

A widow indeed was a woman who had put forth an effort to relieve those in distress. The word "afflicted" refers to any type of trouble or hardship. It may be someone who was



sick or someone simply going through some kind of trouble (Lev. 25:35; Isa. 1:17).

A widow indeed was a woman who lived a life devoted to the Lord's will and work. The word "diligently" means to give oneself totally to something. She pursued that which was good and godly. Dorcas was such a woman (Acts 9:36-39).

*1 Ti 5:11 But the younger widows refuse: for when they have begun to wax wanton against Christ, they will marry;*

The "younger" widows under the age of sixty were to not be included in the number to receive assistance from the church.

The word "wanton" speaks of living to satisfy one's desires. This word was used in describing a pampered horse that has had his rein removed. There is nothing to restrict him. This widow should be denied assistance because it would make it possible for her to seek luxury and pleasure.

The younger widow might become wanton "against Christ". In other words, her desire to serve the Lord would lessen, being replaced by her desire for earthly things. Her desire for companionship could replace her desire to please the Lord.

Paul was not saying it was wrong for this widow to "marry" again (cf. 1 Cor. 7:8-9). His point was, that if she did marry again, she would not need assistance from the church.

This verse tells us there are times when it is right for a church to "refuse" assistance. This is true, not just for widows, but others asking for help. Some people misuse what God has given them so the church should not make it easy for them to do so. They may need to come to the point of desperation before they see the need to change their behavior. They may criticize the church for not helping but we must still follow God's instructions.

*1 Ti 5:12 Having damnation, because they have cast off their first faith.*

The word "damnation" is not used here in the way we think of. It literally means "go to law or judgment". This use is seen clearly in Paul's writing to the Romans (Rom. 13:2). God will deal with the widow who is unwilling to follow His instructions.

Her "first faith" refers to how she, at first, determined to put her faith in the Lord and serve Him with all her heart (cf. v. 5). When her husband died, she decided to give her all to the Lord and live her life for Him.

Casting off her "first faith" means she allowed her emotions to take over and she reversed her decision to put her faith in the Lord to take care of her. After some time, her desire for companionship overtook her desire to serve God. She, in essence, transferred her "faith" from her Lord to her new husband. Paul said a wife "careth for the things of the world, how she may please her husband" (1 Cor. 7:33b).

Unfortunately, there are times when the desire for companionship causes a widow to marry unwisely. Sadly, some go so far as to marry an unbeliever. Certainly, a marriage out of the will of God is worse than being alone (1 Cor. 7:9). We will never find happiness by walking our own way.

*1 Ti 5:13 And withal they learn to be idle, wandering about from house to house; and not only idle, but tattlers also and busybodies, speaking things which they ought not.*

Instead of learning how to trust the Lord and please Him, she would become idle. The word "idle" means "inactive". It carries with it the idea of being useless or barren. In other words, what she was doing produced nothing good. Having no husband to care for would give her free time. And, since her finances were being taken care of by the church, she would have no incentive to gain an income. Though not in the bible, the old saying "Idle hands are the devil's workshop" is certainly true. Too much spare time can be dangerous. She was not only idle, but she might start going from "house to house" spreading gossip.

She magnified trivial matters making them seem way more important than they were.

The word "tattlers" is connected to a word that speaks of blowing soap bubbles. These women are those who tell secrets spoken to them in private. Their favorite phrase is "I shouldn't be telling this, but I know you won't tell anyone else".

The word, "busybodies" is interesting. It means "working all around" and carries with it the thought of magic. This type of woman goes around working magic by meddling in the personal affairs of others. She is busy but for the wrong reason.

They speak of things they "ought not". They need to learn how to mind their own business and stay out of everyone else's (Tit. 1:11). Gossip and backbiting can be one of the most destructive problems in any church.

*1 Ti 5:14 I will therefore that the younger women marry, bear children, guide the house, give none occasion to the adversary to speak reproachfully.*

The words, "I will" carry with them apostolic authority. This was more than just the wish of an old preacher. What he was saying was directly from the Lord and was to be heeded as such.

It would be better for the "younger" widows to "marry" and have "children" than to be overcome by her natural desires mentioned in verses 11-13. There was nothing wrong with her remarrying since her first husband had died (cf. 1 Cor. 7:39).

To "guide the house" means "to manage a home". The proper operation of the home is not something that should be taken lightly. Unfortunately, the modern attitude sees homemaking as something degrading and unfulfilling. God certainly disagrees. Raising a godly family is one of the greatest privileges on earth.

The word "adversary" means "opposite or contrary". It is a good description of the devil. He is our enemy and the complete opposite of our Savior.

The word "reproachfully" means "to slander". Our enemy will seize any and every opportunity to accuse God's children and bring reproach to the church. The slander Paul was referring to was associated with a widow who did what he mentioned in verses 11-13. A widow living in such a manner would certainly bring reproach to the church (cf. 1 Tim. 3:7; 6:1; Tit. 2:5, 10). A church is always judged by its worst member. Every Christian should do all they can to enhance the reputation of the church.

*1 Ti 5:15 For some are already turned aside after Satan.*

Some of the younger widows had already done what Paul was talking about. Their actions were not to be taken lightly. It was more than just a decision they had made on their own. Like Eve, they had been seduced by "Satan". We must be careful about who we are listening to (2 Cor. 2:11).

*1 Ti 5:16 If any man or woman that believeth have widows, let them relieve them, and let not the church be charged; that it may relieve them that are widows indeed.*

Paul concluded his comments about widows by restating what he had said in verses 4-8. Christians who had poor widows in their families were to assist them so the church could help those who met the requirements outlined in verses 4-8. The church is not to spend all, or even most, of its time or resources to provide for widows. Unfortunately, many see a church as nothing more than a charity ward. They believe the church should give to any and get upset when they do not. The primary mission of the church is to serve God faithfully and to reach the world with the gospel.

Paul dealt with the treatment of the elders in verses 17-25. A pastor must preach the entire bible. He must not avoid uncomfortable subjects. One of the most difficult subjects for a pastor is the subject being discussed here. But, this subject is just as biblical as any other in the bible and must be preached.

*1 Ti 5:17 Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine.*

The "elders" mentioned here refer to officers of the church. In the context of this verse, I believe it refers primarily to a pastor.

The word "rule" means "to maintain, to be over". The pastor is to be over the church. He is the shepherd of the flock (1 Pet. 5:2-3).

Ruling "well" means going beyond what is required. Every pastor should give his all to the church where God has placed him. To do less is a disgrace to the Lord and the church.

The word "honour" means "value or price". In the context of this verse, this word is referring to finances. Our word "honorarium" comes from this word. It dealt specifically with the idea of money being paid. Paul used it in reference to taking care of widows (1 Tim. 5:3). It is translated as "price" several times in the bible (Mt. 27:9; Acts 4:34; 19:19; 1 Cor. 6:20; 7:23). It is translated as "sum" in Acts 7:16.

The faithful preacher is worthy of "double" honor. This probably does not mean he should get double his salary. It simply means he is worthy of receiving more than normal.

Some believe the church should not pay a preacher but should use the money to support missionaries or the needy. They seem to miss the fact that if missionaries and the needy are worthy of support, surely the pastor would be.

Some may ask if Paul was talking about money, why didn't He just say money instead of using the word "honour". The answer is simple, His emphasis was the motive, not just the act. He wanted them to recognize the worth of a man of God and how it was an honor to provide for his needs. He wanted them to gladly take care of the preacher (cf. Acts 20:35). He wanted us to understand how our concern for money reveals our spiritual condition. Assistance to pay the pastor revealed a spiritual flaw.

The word "labour" means to work to the point of exhaustion (cf. 1 Tim. 4:10). Contrary to the opinion of some, a preacher's work is exhausting. Spending hours in the bible is a blessing, but it wears down the mind and body.

Obviously, some preachers labor more fervently than others. The pastor who labors in "word and doctrine" should "especially" be rewarded. A pastor wears many hats and has many important responsibilities, but there is none more important than his study and delivery of God's Word. Taking care of a preacher allows him to not have to worry about his finances and gives him time to devote to the study of the bible. The proper study of God's Word takes much more time than most people think.

Some churches give their pastor just enough for him to barely get by. By doing so, they are missing out on God's blessings. When writing the Philippians, Paul talked about the church receiving a reward for their giving to him (Phil. 4:17). We do not have to worry about giving a pastor too much. The godly pastor can be trusted to use whatever he gets in the right manner.

*1 Ti 5:18 For the scripture saith, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn. And, The labourer is worthy of his reward.*

Paul's teaching about paying a pastor was not something new. He quoted Moses and Luke to make his point (Dt. 25:4; Lk. 10:7). Notice, he called these writings "scripture". By doing so, he was affirming the inspiration of the bible.

The Bible teaches a laborer is worthy to get paid for his labor. The one who sows spiritual things is worthy to receive material things (1 Cor. 9:11; Gal. 6:6).

When an "ox" was used to grind grain he was allowed to bend down and eat some of the grain. It would be merciless to not allow him to eat as he worked.

The ox and the laborer were rewarded because their work deserved a reward. Paul was saying, that if you pay an ox and laborer, you certainly should the preacher.

Undoubtedly, at least some of the people in the church at Ephesus were taking the preachers for granted. The church that does not appreciate their pastor will exhaust him, which will lessen his ability to do his job well. The entire church will suffer as a result.

Certainly, some preachers have taken advantage of the church. Some live in multi-million dollar homes, drive extravagant cars, and live excessive lifestyles. I read the other day of a preacher who received a Rolls Royce from his church. He didn't like the color of the interior so he had it sent out to replace it. That, my friend, is a disgrace to the church and the name of Christ.

Most of the preachers who I know personally would preach whether they ever received any money or not. I certainly would. The call to preach is more than an occupation for a God-called preacher. However, this does not undo what Paul said in these verses.

*1 Ti 5:19 Against an elder receive not an accusation, but before two or three witnesses.*

In verses 19-20, Paul dealt with an elder who had been accused of some wrongdoing. As I have mentioned, I believe the context of these verses suggests Paul was referring to a pastor.

The word "receive" means "to accept". In this case, it means to accept as a fact, or to believe, an accusation leveled against a pastor. As sad as it is, there will be times when a pastor will be accused of wrongdoing. These accusations should not be taken lightly and should be investigated thoroughly.

The accused person was to be considered innocent until it was proven that he was guilty. The church is to provide for the pastor (v. 17), but it is also to protect him. When it comes to accusations, the best friend of a preacher is a trusting congregation. Their first response should be doubt about him being guilty. Every preacher deserves that. The devil would love to ruin the reputation of the pastor and the church.

If the devil cannot make a man fall he will try to convince others he has. He doesn't mind telling a lie if that is what it takes. They lied about Jesus saying he was gluttonous and a winebibber (Mt. 11:19).

The accusation must come from at least two "witnesses". The requirement of at least two witnesses is a biblical principle (Num. 35:30; Dt. 17:6; 19:15; Mt. 18:16; 2 Cor. 13:1). This would keep one person who was holding a grudge from wrongly accusing a pastor. Unfortunately, the duties and preaching of a pastor can rub people the wrong way. The devil loves to put a wedge between the pulpit and the pew.

An accusation must be based on facts and not mere suspicion. A witness is someone who tells what they know, not someone who has heard some gossip. The church should not waste time with accusations that have no evidence or credibility.

I dare not neglect to deliver a word of warning to those who might attack those who serve the Lord. God is very serious about protecting His servants. David recognized that when he refused to kill Saul. Even though Saul was ungodly and was doing his best to kill him, David would not do him harm (1 Sam. 24:1-15). Even though his men encouraged him to kill Saul while he had the chance, David refused to do so. He was convicted because he simply cut off a piece of Saul's garment. God was serious when He said "Touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm" (Ps. 16:22). God said those who touch His anointed "toucheth the apple of his eye" (Zech. 2:8).

*1 Ti 5:20 Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear.*

This command does not contradict Paul's comments about not rebuking an older man in verse one. There, he was referring to the private communications between Timothy and an older man. There, it speaks simply of an older man, here of one who holds the office

of a pastor.

Leadership in the church does not shield a person from being accountable. If anything, it makes him more accountable. Those who were found guilty were to be rebuked "before all" in the church. The implication is, that his sin had become public knowledge. If the two or three witnesses knew about his sin (v. 19), no doubt others did also.

This does not mean every failure of a pastor should be dealt with publicly. A personal sin should be confessed to God alone. A sin against a person should be confessed to God and the violated person. But, a public sin should be confessed to God and publicly.

The church is not like a corporation that hires and fires people for little reason. Those serving in the church have been placed there by God and we should not take that lightly. But, that does not mean anyone in the church, even a pastor, should be allowed to live sinfully with no consequences.

Of course, a pastor is a man like any other and he is capable of failing. Notice, that the church was not to just kick him out. The goal of rebuking any sinning church member should always be their restoration (Gal. 6:1). A pastor, like all other Christians, should be given the chance to repent and keep serving God. Of course, some sins would warrant his removal even if he repents.

The rebuke of those who are guilty of sin would cause others to "fear". The public rebuke served to bring restoration to the guilty and fear to others. Few things promote purity in a church more than seeing the horrible consequences of those who have sinned (cf. Dt. 13:10-11; Acts 5:11).

*1 Ti 5:21 I charge thee before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect angels, that thou observe these things without preferring one before another, doing nothing by partiality.*

Paul continued his thought by warning Timothy to carry out his instructions without favor. His statement reveals the importance of dealing correctly with God's servants.

Dealing with sin must be impartial. No doubt, there could be the temptation to look the other way. It would be difficult to deal with the sin of a close friend. The guilty person may have lived a truly godly life until the time he gave into sin and fell. It would seem a shame to ruin his reputation. Realizing how the family of the guilty person would be affected, would make it difficult. Realizing how a scandal could harm the reputation of the church would make it difficult to deal with the sinning believer.

The "elect angels" are those who have remained faithful to God (Heb. 12:22). They refused to follow satan when he rebelled against God (2 Pet. 2:4; Jude 6; Rev. 12:3-4). God will use these angels extensively in future events (Mt. 13:39; Rev. 7:1; 8:2; 12:7; 14:6, 8, 10, 17-19; 19:17; 20:1-3). These angels watch with interest at the human race, especially those who are saved. Also, they will, more than likely, be present when God's people stand before Him to be rewarded for their faithfulness.

The fact that "God" the Father, His Son, the "Lord Jesus Christ", and all the holy "angels", are watching us all should cause us to live right.

*1 Ti 5:22 Lay hands suddenly on no man, neither be partaker of other men's sins: keep thyself pure.*

To "Lay hands" on a man was referring to what we would call his ordination. It recognized his call and authority from God as a leader in the church. It did not give him authority, it simply acknowledged his calling of God.

The word "suddenly" means "speedily". Paul told Timothy to be extremely careful when choosing new leaders in the church. The man must meet the requirements Paul listed earlier in his letter (1 Tim. 3:1-7). Placing a man into a leadership position is too important to be done without much prayer and examination. The wrong man would cause havoc in



the church.

The word "suddenly" carries with it the idea of "too soon". A young man may be anxious to get busy serving God. But, his immaturity could do more damage than good. Given time, he may develop into a man worthy of serving in a leadership role. We must never get ahead of the Spirit of God.

Paul's admonition to Timothy about not being a "partaker of other men's sins" and to keep himself "pure" was connected to his warning about laying hands on a man suddenly. Those who would hastily lay hands on a man who was unfit for service would be partially responsible for the results of his failure (cf. 2 Jn. 1:11). As a scandal can devastate an entire church but, the damage will not be confined to the church. The news will spread into the world and can ruin the reputation of the church.

The word "keep" means "to guard". It carries with it the idea of keeping an eye on. We must constantly keep watch so that we do not fall into any type of sin.

*1 Ti 5:23 Drink no longer water, but use a little wine for thy stomach's sake and thine often infirmities.*

Timothy must have been the victim of frequent "infirmities". No doubt, Paul prayed for Timothy's physical affliction. But, he did more than pray. He recommended Timothy do what he could to help himself improve. Certainly, we should pray, but we are responsible for doing what we can to help fix our problems.

Undoubtedly, Timothy had decided to abstain from wine for his testimony's sake and to avoid any possibility of overindulgence (cf. 1 Tim. 3:3). Since Paul had just told Timothy to keep himself pure, it was only natural for him to make this comment about the use of wine. After such a comment, it would have been easy for Timothy to think he should continue to avoid wine in any form. But, the water in that day often carried disease which would contribute to his physical ailments. Mixing a small bit of wine in his water would help to kill the bacteria which would allow his stomach to heal. These stomach issues didn't improve it would hinder his ability to continue his ministry.

Paul certainly was not suggesting that Timothy lower his standards about strong drink (Lev. 10:9; Num. 6:1-4; Jdg. 13:4; Isa. 5:22; Pro. 20:1; 31:4-5; Ezk. 44:21; Eph. 5:18; 1 Tim. 3:3; Tit. 1:7; 2:3). His intentions were crystal clear. He said Timothy was to "use" wine. It was to be used as a medicine, not for enjoyment. He made it clear that he was to use a "little" wine (cf. 1 Tim. 3:3, 8). Paul was not permitting Timothy to drink nor suggesting Timothy have a little toddy to help him through a difficult day.

There is no way to rightly use this verse to excuse the consumption of the many alcoholic drinks of our day. Timothy was advised to drink something that would help him physically. None of today's alcoholic drinks make a person healthier. They will destroy the body, mind, and spirit. They will tear apart a family, ruin a reputation, and rob a person of their dignity.

It would be wise to have the attitude of avoiding temptation that Timothy did. So often, those who claim to know the Lord try to live as close to the world as they possibly can. Where are those who are willing to live as far from the world as they possibly can?

Some of our modern preachers would tell us Timothy's sickness was an indication that he was out of God's will. They would tell him he could be healed if he had enough faith. However, Paul did not tell Timothy to have faith, nor did he scold him for his lack of faith. Neither did he use his apostolic authority to heal Timothy. He did tell Timothy to use some common sense and do what he could to stay as healthy as possible.

*1 Ti 5:24 Some men's sins are open beforehand, going before to judgment; and some men they follow after.*

In this verse, Paul was still warning Timothy about laying hands on a man. He was saying

there are some men whose sins are so obvious that it would be easy to know they are not fit for service. The word "open" means "easily known or very clear". Some people struggle with "sins" that are very obvious (Gal. 5:19-20).

The "judgment" found here deals with the church's judgment to determine a man's fitness to hold an office in the church.

The sins that are "open beforehand" refer to sins that are open and obvious. It would be easy for the church to refuse such a person to hold an office.

However, some men are not what they seem. Their actions seem to be that which would make a good servant for the church. But, in time, their true colors are revealed. Paul said this the sins of this type of person "follow after". The hidden sins of this person will eventually be discovered.

*1 Ti 5:25 Likewise also the good works of some are manifest beforehand; and they that are otherwise cannot be hid.*

The word, "Likewise" means "in the same way". Just as some sins are hidden from others (v. 24), there are good deeds that go unnoticed. Some of the most godly people in the church are those who serve the Lord in an indiscreet way. They may not get a lot of recognition from mankind, but God notices every deed.

This is why he told Timothy to be careful about laying hands on a man. First impressions can be wrong so Timothy had to take enough time to really know the person.

Paul's emphasis to Timothy was that it is wise to be patient and wise before he ordained a man into the ministry. It would be better to be safe than sorry. It would be better to delay the ordination than to be hasty.

Paul's instructions to Timothy in this chapter were a lot for him to take in. He had to be willing to confront sinning elders, say no to widows, and refuse to ordain those who were unfit. His stomach was probably churning as he read these instructions. But, God would give him grace to obey.

## **X. THE COMMITMENT 6:1-5**

Paul spoke of how a servant should be committed to doing the master's will.

*1 Ti 6:1 Let as many servants as are under the yoke count their own masters worthy of all honour, that the name of God and his doctrine be not blasphemed.*

The word "servants" is a word used for slaves.

Slavery was very much a part of society in both the Old and New Testaments. Some have estimated that as much as one-third of the population were slaves in Paul's day. However, the slavery found in the bible was much different than the race-based slavery in America's past. For many, it was the only way they could provide for themselves and their families. Some were treated poorly but some held positions of authority, actually becoming doctors, teachers, and artists, among many other positions.

Though the bible neither condemns nor condones slavery, it does give instructions about slavery (Dt. 15:12-15; Eph. 6:5-9; Col. 3:22; 4:1; 1 Pet. 2:18; 1 Tim. 6:1-2). Jesus, nor the apostles, ever called for a revolt against slavery. To do so would have hindered the message of the gospel. The gospel makes all men equal (Gal. 3:28; Eph. 6:9). Like every other social issue, the gospel was the solution to slavery. Becoming a believer would make a landowner a good master and a slave a good servant. The church was a perfect example of this. A slave might hold a position of leadership in the church while a master a place of submission. In the body of Christ, the rich and the poor, master and slave, worshipped together in unity.

Paul admonished all slaves to be good workers and to respect their masters. He did so not because he was endorsing slavery but that God might be glorified. A servant was to be obedient to his master (Eph. 6:5; Tit. 2:9).

The words "under the yoke" speak of submission and can refer to any task. Therefore, this verse can be applied to a Christian and their employer. The impact of a Christian in the workplace is immeasurable. A Christian should be the most dependable employee in the company. They should never be guilty of mediocre work, disrespecting their supervisor, or of a bad attitude. Paul said we should do whatever we do the best we can (Eph. 6:6; Col. 3:22-23).

The employee is the servant to the employer. However, we should look beyond that and see that we are a servant of our Lord. It is Him we are employed by and Him we are working for. He deserves our best.

The word, "blaspheme" means "to defame or speak evil". The slave who did a mediocre job gave the unbelieving master a reason to speak evil of the "name of God". If that was true of slaves, it certainly is true of believers at their workplace. It would be a shame for an unbeliever to do a better job than a Christian.

The world will judge God, His church, and His people, by how Christians live their lives. This includes the type of employee they are. The workplace usually tells the truth about a person. Every Christian is on their best behavior while at church. What people see at church is what we want them to see, what they see at work is what we really are.

A slave's obedience to his master revealed his obedience to God. How could they expect their master to turn to God if they failed to be good servants? The Christian should always be the best citizen, employer, employee, or family member.

God does not separate the social from the spiritual. He considers everything in our lives as spiritual. We are to do all things to the glory of God (1 Cor. 10:31). We do not have to go to the mission field, we are already on the mission field.

*1 Ti 6:2 And they that have believing masters, let them not despise them, because they are brethren; but rather do them service, because they are faithful and beloved, partakers of the benefit. These things teach and exhort.*

The word, "despise" means "to think little of" or "to think down on". It is the same word that Paul used when he said "Let no man despise thy youth" (1 Tim. 4:12). It has the idea of taking it lightly. The believing slave should not take lightly the fact that they have a believing master.

The word "rather" means "to a greater degree". The believing slave should dedicate himself even more to the believing master "because" they are a part of the same family. A believing slave was not to try to take advantage of a believing master.

As in verse 1, this verse can be applied to a Christian who has a Christian employer. A believer who has a Christian boss should never feel like their boss should be more lenient because they are a fellow believer. They should not arrive late, take longer breaks, do shabby work, or expect less accountability. Being a believer did not remove the master's authority over the servant. If anything, it enhanced it.

The word, "benefit" refers to an act of kindness. This word is in Acts 4:9, where it is translated "good deed". In the context of this verse, Paul meant the master would benefit from the good deeds of the slave. Certainly, both slave and master would benefit from the good deeds of each other.

If we are to do our best for a saved boss, certainly we should for an unsaved boss. A good testimony is needed even more before the unsaved. To those outside of the church, we represent the entire body of Christ.

We live in a day of unions, strikes, and protests. Everyone is demanding their rights. How

our job affects us should not be the issue. Our focus should be on how we affect the atmosphere of our workplace. If you have a boss who is a jerk, realize that gives you an even better opportunity to display your Christian life and prove your spirituality (Tit. 2:12; 1 Pet. 2:12).

Timothy was to be sure to "teach" these things to the people at the church of Ephesus. He was to make sure they at least knew the truth. Whether they did it or not was up to them. At least, they could never say no one had told them what the Lord expected.

Timothy was to teach, but he was also to "exhort". The word means to earnestly beseech. A godly preacher does more than bark out commands. He has a genuine compassion for those he preaches to.

*1 Ti 6:3 If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness;*

Paul restated his admonition from Chapter One about being careful about false teachers. Undoubtedly, some in the church in Ephesus were teaching contrary to that which Paul was teaching.

Teaching "otherwise" means anything other than what Paul had said. God's instructions can not be altered.

Those teaching otherwise may be in the pulpit or the pew. It may have been public or private. Much of the false teaching in a church is done across the kitchen table or on the telephone.

The word, "consent" means "to approach". It has the idea of coming close. Those who resist the Word of God want nothing to do with it. But, those who appreciate it for what it is will want to hold it close to their heart.

The word, "wholesome" means "to have sound health" or "to be well". God's Word provides spiritual healing and health. It will make you well and keep you well. Right doctrine will fix what ails you.

The wholesome words are the words of our "Lord Jesus Christ". Only his words can help the sinful soul. To trust anyone or anything else is foolish and futile.

Wholesome words from God not only make us spiritually healthy, but they produce "godliness" in us.

*1 Ti 6:4 He is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings,*

Paul dealt not only with the actions of the false teachers (cf. 4:1-3) but their attitude. They were proud. The word "proud" actually means "to be inflated". We would say they had the big head. The word also carries the idea of being "wrapped in smoke". It literally means they are in a stupid state of mind as a result of their pride.

They refused to accept the clear truth of God's Word. They set their teaching above the Word of God. That is exactly what Lucifer did (Isa. 14:13). He became proud and tried to elevate himself above God and His Word. He failed and so will those who follow his ways.

The word, "nothing" means "not even one". They think they know everything but God said they don't even know one thing. They know nothing and don't know that they know nothing. The person who thinks they are always right is dangerous.

The word, "doting" means "sick". They are like a sick person who has lost their appetite for food. The food may be good but they have no desire for it. This type of person has no desire for sound doctrine. They already know everything, so why would they want to hear anything Paul had to say?

The religious Jews loved disputing about unimportant and unanswerable "questions" (1

Tim. 1:6-7). This is not talking about honest questions asked by honest people. It refers to those who asked questions to start endless discussions that would lead to disagreements. Our world has gone fanatical over useless information. They like to play with word puzzles. They have a strange craving to discuss things that do not matter. The simple truth of the Word of God is too simple to suit them. They have to complicate it. The fact that God created everything in six days is just too simple for them. So, they devise Theistic Evolution. The fact is, we need to take the Word of God at face value and let it speak for itself.

Their disagreements caused "envy". Those who knew less were envious of those who seemed to know more.

Their disagreements caused "strife". The words, "strife of words" mean "a war of words". When everyone thinks they are right there is going to be strife. In our day many are saying we should avoid doctrine and have unity. Paul refutes that argument by showing us that ignoring right doctrine causes division. Error divides, but truth unites.

Their disagreements caused "railings". This means harsh and abusive language. Their stubborn refusal to yield their opinions caused heated arguments.

Their disagreements caused "evil surmisings". The word "surmisings" means "suspicion". They go so far as to judge the motives of those who disagree with them.

*1 Ti 6:5 Perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness: from such withdraw thyself.*

The words, "Perverse disputings" mean "a rubbing against". It has the idea of constant friction.

The word, "corrupt" means "decay" or "ruined". Their refusal to accept true doctrine had corrupted their minds. How could any good come from such a person?

The word, "destitute" means "deprive". It implies the lack of something that is needed. The mind of a person suffering from dementia is not functioning properly. Those Paul was speaking about were suffering from spiritual dementia.

The theory of evolution is a good example of the "genius" that comes from these types of people. They tell us a one-celled something swimming in a puddle split into two and eventually became man. Of course, none of them can tell us where the one-celled something came from.

They believed "godliness" was the way to get "gain". Many modern preachers would have us believe the same. They have turned the Christian life into a business. Their religion is more fashion show than spirituality and more glamour than grace. We should never claim the gospel to be a means of gaining a problem-free life. To do so is to take the focus off Jesus and put it on what we can get from him. While there are many blessings in following Christ, the blessings should never become what is most important.

These prosperity preachers say the New Testament Christian is supposed to live a life of blessings. However, the New Testament has much to say about godly Christians who suffered tremendously (2 Cor.6:4-10; 11:26-27; Ga 5:11; 6:12; 6:17; Php 4:11-12; 1 Tim 5:5; Jam 5:10; 1 Pet 1:6; 4:12; 4:19).

To assume the path to promotion is always the Lord's will is unwise and can lead to great heartache. More of God's children have been ruined by blessings than by burdens.

Paul tells us we should "withdraw" ourselves from this type of person. They should be avoided because their influence will contaminate the entire church (cf. Tit. 3:10). Paul did not tell us to dispute with them or to try to straighten them out, he told us to get away from them. We are to withdraw ourselves from those who teach error because we will not be able to resist their influence. Sooner or later, we will give in.



## XI. THE CONTENTMENT 6:6-10

Paul dealt with finances and godly living in verses 6-19. Our attitude towards finances reveals a lot about the type of person we are. Riches are not evil in themselves, but they can lead a person to all kinds of ungodly behavior.

*1 Ti 6:6 But godliness with contentment is great gain.*

The false teachers believed gain would bring contentment (v. 5). This is one of the devil's most destructive, and most successful, lies. Many people are killing themselves in an attempt to get more. Someone has said, "We buy things we don't need with money we don't have to impress people we don't like". Unfortunately, this is all too true.

The fact is, most people in our country have more than they need. Very few, if any, have just enough to get by. Not many have just enough food for another meal or just enough clothes to keep from being nude. No one I know has to beg God for their next meal.

I am afraid most of us focus on the word "gain" in this verse. We are most interested in that which will benefit us. I believe our emphasis should be on the word "godliness". Our goal should be to live in a way that pleases and honors our God.

The combination of "godliness" and "contentment" brings true happiness. Some are trying to find contentment by buying new stuff because they lack the contentment that comes from walking with Christ.

When our hearts are on the things of heaven, the things of the world will not matter. The way to true riches is to live godly and be content with whatever God sends our way (Heb. 13:5a). Whether wealth or poverty, health or sickness, popularity or rejection, God's plan is always the best thing for us.

Only a godly life can bring true contentment. The joy of being satisfied is something only God can give.

*1 Ti 6:7 For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out.*

This is one of the most amazing statements in the bible. None of what we possess is really ours. We came into this world with nothing and we will go with the same. Job said, "Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither: the LORD gave, and the LORD hath taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD." (Job 1:21). The old saying, "You've never seen a hearse pulling a U-Haul" is true. Solomon said, "For riches are not for ever" (Pro. 27:24).

We may not be able to carry anything out of this world, but we can send things ahead by willingly doing the Lord's will (Mt. 6:20). Realizing this fact helps us see our possessions from an eternal viewpoint. Gold may be valuable here, but God uses it for pavement in heaven (Rev. 21:21).

*1 Ti 6:8 And having food and raiment let us be therewith content.*

The necessities for life are "food and raiment". If we have these we are blessed and should thank the Lord. If we have anything more than what we need, we are rich. Writing to the Philippians, Paul said, "Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content" (Phil. 4:11).

The word, "content" means "enough". It means we do not have to have anything else. The person who is content with having only what is necessary for life is the truly happy person. So often, those who have the most are the least content. They are never satisfied. They want more and more and it is never enough.

It isn't easy to stay content in a world that is constantly telling us we can't be happy unless we have the product they are selling.

*1 Ti 6:9 But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish*

*and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition.*

Those who "will be rich" are those who are determined to strike it big. It refers to the person who is driven by their desire for things and is willing to do whatever it takes to get what they want.

Money is a tool that can be used for good or for bad. How we use it determines whether it is right or wrong. The same dollar that will buy a banana will buy a beer. We can take our money to the church, or the liquor store. In the hands of a godly Christian, money can do great things. In the hands of a greedy person, it can do great harm.

The hunger for riches transcends all income levels. The rich or the poor can be controlled by this desire.

The word, "temptation" tells us there is more involved than just the desire of man. The devil is attempting to enslave us. He wants to control us and he does not care if it takes a bar stool or a bankroll to do it. He is working on the person at the desk not just the person at the bar.

The devil wants us to live for ourselves. He wants us to live with no thought of the consequences. He wants us to spend in a way that will put us in financial bondage.

A "snare" traps its unsuspecting victim by luring it in. By the time the victim realizes what has happened, it is too late. Lot is a perfect example of this truth. He pitched his tent toward Sodom because he was drawn to its allurements (Gen. 13:12).

A snare imprisons its victim. The person who desires things is a person who is imprisoned by their desire. Their desire pushes them to get things that will not satisfy. It leaves them discontent which causes them to want more. The vicious cycle is unending.

The word, "lusts" refers to desires that are forbidden by God and contrary to His will.

The word, "foolish" means "unintelligent or unwise". Certainly, it is unwise to spend our lives gathering that which does not make us happy and will not last. It is unwise to be so busy seeking riches that we do not have time to enjoy what we already have. I knew a man years ago who made a lot of money. He had a nice home, really nice furniture, and a very nice car, but he was working so much that he did not have time to enjoy any of it.

The hunger for more can cause a person to do things that are "hurtful".

Riches can do great damage to an individual. Money makes it possible for them to have things they could not have otherwise. Some of these things are sinful, harmful, and destructive. The parable of the rich man is a perfect example (Lk. 12:16-21). Sadly, he died unprepared to meet God.

Riches can do great damage to a family. Many families have been destroyed because the husband spent so much time trying to make more money. Many families have been wrecked because a wife demanded the best of the best. One of the curses on the American family is the idea that our children should have more than we did.

The word, "drown" means "to sink". It is used by Luke to describe the ships that were sinking (Lk. 5:7). A drowning man sinks as the water consumes him. And, so it is with those who are controlled by their love for things. It takes them down until it totally overwhelms them.

The devil always tries to make his temptation look good. The beer commercials are a good example. They never show the family destroyed by alcohol. They always show the young people having what seems to be a great time. But, like all of the devil's temptations, it ends up destroying those who are foolish enough to believe his lie.

The world's riches have a way of corrupting people. The drive for riches causes harm in this life, and the life to come. It brings "destruction" (in this life), and "perdition" (in the life to come). The love for riches may cause a person to reject their need for salvation.

We should keep in mind, that true contentment never comes from anything external. It can only come from an inward work of the Holy Spirit.

*1 Ti 6:10 For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.*

A tree grows because it has roots. The word "root" Paul wrote about refers to that which causes us to do what we do.

The first phrase of this verse is often misquoted to say "Money" is the root of all evil. However, the verse says the "love" of money is the root of all evil.

The love of money has caused many to stray from the will of God. We are in trouble when our desire for money becomes greater than our desire to please God.

Paul was not saying all sin is the result of loving money. Certainly, the man who visits a prostitute or the person who kills the homeless man did not do it because they love money.

Some say Paul meant the love of money is the root of all "types" of evil. I do not believe that is what he meant.

The context of this verse is especially important if we are to understand what Paul meant. He was still talking about a person who was determined to be rich by any means necessary (cf. v. 9). The "root" of his "evil" deeds is his love for money. This type of person is willing to do whatever it takes to get money. He is willing to lie, cheat, steal, or murder to get that which he loves so much. So, every evil deed he does is because of his desire for more money.

The word, "coveted" means "desire". It also means "to stretch oneself". It has the idea of a person stretching out as far as they can to reach something they desire.

Some love money so much that they let it draw them away from God. They erred "from the faith". They would rather have gold than God. Their master was money and not the Master.

Having money is not wrong in itself. Many of God's children had great riches without being overcome by its influence. God said He would fill the treasures of those who love Him (Pro. 8:21). It is God who gives us the ability to get wealth (Dt. 8:18).

Determining what we love will show us what we are living for. Jesus said, "No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon" (Mt 6:24).

How much we care about riches is one of the greatest gauges of our devotion to Christ. What we do with our money probably tells us more about ourselves than any other single thing. Let me encourage you to go through your checkbook and see how you spend your money. You may be surprised to find out what you really love. Jesus said, "For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also" (Mt. 6:21).

The Bible speaks quite a bit about us being content. (Isa. 55:1-2; Pro. 30:7-9; 19:23; Mt. 6:20; Lk. 3:14; 2 Cor. 12:10; Phil. 4:11-12). There is no way for us to be content if we love money. Contentment means we are totally satisfied with what we have (Pro. 30:8). After all, we cannot wear but one set of clothes or eat one meal at a time. If we have enough, why do we need more? Being rich is not about how much we have but whether we are satisfied with how much we have. Being truly rich is not getting more, but being satisfied with less. The only way to be truly rich is to be truly content. Those who pursue happiness by getting money will never find it.

The word, "pierced" means "penetrate entirely". It means to go all the way through. The more we have the more worries we have. There is the stress of paying for it, of keeping it maintained, and the concern about it being stolen. The Psalmist said, "if riches increase, set not your heart upon them" (Ps 62:10b).

The word, "sorrows" means "a state of severe emotional distress". No doubt the sorrows Paul spoke about include regret. How many people found money but regretted it in the end? Do some research on those who have won the lottery and you will find some sad and ruined lives.

Loving money will cause many "sorrows". No matter our income amount, we can overspend and put ourselves in financial bondage. The love of money makes slaves of those who fall under its control. It causes them to buy things they do not need and cannot afford. It causes them to take unwise risks. The desire for money draws a person into sinful habits. God warned His people about desiring the gold and silver of the graven images (Dt. 7:25).

Every person in America will make decisions about how they will use the money they have. That is true whether the person is a multi-millionaire running their own business or a person on minimum wage working at a car wash. We decide whether we will simply clothe ourselves or have enough clothes for our own department store. We decide if we will have a home or a mansion. We decide to eat a \$10 meal or a \$100 meal. If we decide to have things we cannot afford, we cannot blame God when we struggle to pay the bills. He did not make us buy any of our junk.

Those who love riches have "pierced themselves through with many sorrows". For some, this means they ended up spending eternity in hell for they allowed riches to keep them from accepting God's plan of salvation. For others, it means they lived a life of dissatisfaction and failure.

Before we move on, let's ask ourselves some questions about our attitude towards riches. How can we tell if we love money? Take a good and honest look at the next statements.

- We love money when we love the gift more than the giver

How much time do you spend thinking about getting more money? Riches do not bring happiness. After becoming rich, Henry Ford said he was happier when he was a mechanic.

- We love money when we use it to please ourselves with little concern about God's will

We must recognize the fact that nothing we have really belongs to us. Everything on earth belongs to God (Dt. 10:14; 1 Chr. 29:11b; Ps. 24:1). Paul said, "For the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof" (1 Cor. 10:26). This should cause us to be willing to spend, save, and share as He directs us (2 Cor. 9:7). Then, we must recognize the fact that the same God who gives it can take it away. If you doubt that, just ask Job (Job 1:21). Therefore, we should not cling to money. This certainly does not mean we are to be wasteful either. The bottom line is, we should appreciate every cent God gives us and use it as He directs.

- We love money when we get to the point where we depend on it instead of the Lord

It is easy to trust our career and our paycheck more than God. God may use your job as a means to provide your needs, but your job is not your source of provision.

- We love money when we misuse what God gives us

Can God trust you with riches? Do you control your money or does your money control you?

- We love money when we hoard it

We should live to be rich in the next world, not in this one (Lk.12:19-20). Jesus said, "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal" (Mt 6:19-20).

- We love money when we refuse to give freely

We should give gladly and liberally (Ex. 25:2; Dt. 15:7-8, 14; 2 Cor. 9:7; 1 Pet. 4:9).

- We love money when we aren't satisfied with what we have

The person who loves money never has enough. No matter how much they have, they always want more.

- We love money when we are willing to do wrong to get it

Will you cheat to make more money? Will you shortcut the quality of your work to make more money? Does your financial condition help or hinder your Christian walk?

- We love money when we want to show it off

Do you want the nicest car, or the biggest house, or the fanciest clothes that you might impress others?

## **XII. THE COMBAT 6:11-12**

Paul talked about the combat Timothy, and all Christians would face. We are at war. I say often, we are soldiers, not Girl Scouts, and we are on a battlefield, not a playground.

Paul told Timothy to "flee" (v. 11), to "follow" (v. 11), and to "fight" (v. 12).

*1 Ti 6:11 But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness.*

Paul started this verse with the words, "But thou". This is in contrast to the "some" mentioned in verse 10. He was telling Timothy that he was to be different than those he had just spoken of. He was not to be money-hungry or to love the material things of the world. Some have said a preacher who loves money does more to discredit the church than any other.

Unfortunately, the idea of being separate from the world is being cast aside in our modern-day. The fact of Christians being different is not only neglected, it is despised. However, God has not changed His mind. He still tells us to come out from the world and be different (Num. 16:26; Ez. 10:11; Ps. 1:1; Isa. 52:11; 2 Cor. 6:17; 7:1).

Paul reminded Timothy he was a "man of God". This title is used over seventy times in the Old Testament but only two times in the New Testament. Both of these times are found in Paul's letters to Timothy (1 Tim. 6:11; 2 Tim. 3:17). Timothy's responsibility was to God and not man. A true man of God longs for the things of God and not the things of the world.

The one man in the New Testament that is personally called a man of God, is Timothy. Paul probably used the title to emphasize to Timothy that he was truly God's man. It means Timothy had a great responsibility, but it also means he had power from God to do what He had called him to do. Timothy would have to keep this in mind as he carried out his responsibility in the Lord's work. And, so it is with every preacher today.

Paul told Timothy to "flee".

The word means "to run away". It carries with it the idea of fleeing to avoid danger or harm. There are times we should not even take time to think, we should run. I'm sure Eve wished many times that she had run instead of staying to listen to the serpent (Gen. 3:4-7). Joseph was wise enough to run from Potiphar's wife (Gen. 39:7-13). He did not stay and try to reason with her, he ran. We should not discuss or debate with an enemy who means us harm. The smart thing is to simply stay away. In like fashion, we should flee from the devil and his temptation. The best way to overcome temptation is to not enter into it, to begin with (Lk. 11:4; 22:40). We need to flee from anything we know will tempt



us. The average Christian seems to enjoy playing with temptation. They try to get as close as they can without falling. The problem is, sooner or later, we all will fall.

We should flee that which would harm us because we are no match for its power. None of us are stronger or smarter than the devil. We will lose the battle every time.

Specifically, Paul was telling Timothy to flee the "things" he had just been writing about. Namely, the allurements of money and possessions. But, Paul's warning can be applied to anything that would be contrary to God's Word and will. There are times when it is right to run. If we see a rattlesnake, it would be wise to get away as quickly as we can.

The Greek tense of the word flee indicates a continual action. Timothy was to run every time temptation came. Our enemies never stop attacking, so we can't stop running.

Paul told Timothy to "follow".

The word, "follow" means "to pursue". It carries with it the idea of seeking earnestly. It is the opposite of fleeing in that fleeing means to run away from and follow means to run towards. We should run from that which will hurt us and towards that which will help us (cf. 2 Tim. 2:2). Paul tells us to follow that which is good (1 Thes. 5:15).

Paul mentioned righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, and meekness in this verse. These attributes can be compared to the fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22-23). Only by being controlled by the Holy Spirit can these attributes be true of us.

The word "righteousness" is simply speaking of doing right. It refers to our outward behavior and, therefore, deals with our relationship with people. Bob Jones Sr. said, "Do right, Do right, Do right till the stars fall, Do right".

The word, "godliness" means "piety". It refers to a reverence and devotion to God. Wherein, the word "righteousness" deals more with our relationship with people, "godliness" deals more with our relationship with God.

The word, "faith" means "persuasion" or "assurance". It means we believe. Timothy would certainly need faith to do what was needed at the church in Ephesus. We will need faith to do whatever God wants us to do.

The word, "love" is the Greek word "agape". It is the same word found in John 3:16. It refers to the love God has for mankind. He loves freely and without restriction. We love Him because He first loved us (1 Jn. 4:19).

The word, "patience" means "endurance". It carries with it the idea of continuing despite trials and suffering.

The word, "meekness" means "gentleness". Meekness is the opposite of uncontrolled anger. Meekness is not weakness. Meekness is power under control. It is having the power to harm but choosing not to. This meekness is to be directed toward God and man. Towards God, in that, we surrender to His work in our lives even when we are facing great trials. Towards man, in that, we do not strike back when mistreated.

*1 Ti 6:12 Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses.*

Paul told Timothy to "fight".

The word, "fight" means "to struggle". It suggests someone is opposing us. We get our English word "agonize" from this word. It refers to the agony of a soldier who gives his all to win the battle.

It was as though Paul was sending Timothy into the heart of a horrific battle and giving him a mission of supreme importance. How Timothy carried out his mission would have a tremendous effect on the outcome of the battle. A successful mission could turn the tide of the battle and bring about victory. And, so it is with every believer. Failure to carry out his mission could bring about a sound and sad defeat. This was not a schoolyard

skirmish between schoolmates.

We should expect a battle. We have a real enemy who hates us and our God. He is at war against us and all we believe. We fight against "principalities", "powers", "rulers of the darkness" and "spiritual wickedness in high places". Paul tells us to take on the "whole armour of God" so that we might be able to stand (Eph. 6:12-18).

Our fight is against our enemy, the devil, but it is also against ourselves. Our flesh craves the things of the world and cares nothing for the things of God. Our flesh is with us wherever we go and its desires are never satisfied.

Our fight is a fight that has high stakes. It is a fight that can have a good outcome. The fight against sin produces a godly life.

The fight of the Christian is a "good" fight. Much of what mankind fights about is not worth the time or effort. There have been many unjust and unnecessary wars in this world and many have died for unfounded causes. Certainly, most church conflicts start from something not worth fighting over. However, there are some things worth fighting about. We should be willing to fight for the book and the blood. Our enemy will never lessen his attack so we dare not lower our guard nor lessen our stand. If we aren't fighting we are losing ground.

Our fight is a fight for eternal matters. The world wars were horrible and many lost their lives. But, in all those battles, the casualties were human lives. In the battle, Paul talked about, and the battle we are in at this moment, eternal souls are at stake. We are dealing with eternity.

To "lay hold" means "to seize". When Paul told Timothy to lay hold of "eternal life" he was telling him to get a hold of all that salvation provides. Most of God's people fall far short of experiencing all of the wonders of being a part of the family of God. They see themselves as forgiven and on the way to heaven, but that is all. It is wonderful to be forgiven but that is only a small part of our relationship with our God.

To lay hold of eternal life means we are to live now with eternity in mind (Phil. 3:20). Paul said we should set our affection on "things above" (Col. 3:2). In essence, he was saying "You possess eternal life, now live it". To lay hold on eternal life is to recognize we have one life to live and we need to make it count. It is realizing nothing matters more than our relationship and fellowship with Christ. It means we have dedicated what time we have in this world to the Savior who gave His life for us. It means we are living each day to please Him and fulfill His will. It means when we stand before Him we will not have to be ashamed.

Those who are saved have tapped into an inexhaustible resource. There is so much we are not experiencing. So many of us are content to live on God's breadcrumbs. If the devil cannot defeat us, he will settle for keeping us from God's best.

The fight of the Christian is the fight of "faith". Our greatest battle will be about us believing God. The devil will do whatever he can to keep us from trusting God.

Paul tells us to lay hold of all the Lord has given us so that we might not be defeated. The wise soldiers defeat their enemy by using every weapon in their arsenal. Missiles, tanks, and bombs are useless if they are not used. As Christians, we have many weapons that we never use when our enemy attacks. And, that is why we are so often defeated.

Paul demonstrated this in his own life. He realized he had not reached the goal God had set for him, so he pressed on. He said, "I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 3:14).

The word, "profession" means "confession". It has the idea of making a public statement. It refers to what we say and what we do before others. Paul was telling Timothy to live in

a way that proved that his "profession" was real. He was to live before others what he professed. If we are a Christian there ought to be some evidence.

Timothy had made a good profession, but Paul encouraged him to continue. Anyone is subject to falling. Our past successes, though they are wonderful, are not enough. We should live godly today.

There were many "witnesses" who were watching Timothy's life. Paul talked about the many witnesses who watched his life (2 Tim. 2:2).

### **XIII. THE CONCLUSION 6:13-21**

Paul concluded his letter with some final instructions to Timothy.

*1 Ti 6:13 I give thee charge in the sight of God, who quickeneth all things, and before Christ Jesus, who before Pontius Pilate witnessed a good confession;*

A "charge" is a formal appeal from a higher power. Paul's charge to Timothy came from God.

Paul reminded Timothy how they were both "in the sight of God". God was watching. He still sees all things (Pro. 5:21; 15:3; 2 Chr. 16:9; Jer. 16:17; Heb. 4:13).

The word, "quickeneth" means "to make alive". All life comes from God (Gen. 2:7; 1 Sam. 2:6; Job 33:4; Ps. 36:9; Jn. 1:4; Acts 17:25).

Paul probably used "Pontius Pilate" as an example because Jesus did what Timothy needed to do. He stood before a man who examined his life and questioned his authority. Jesus had lived a life that demanded Pilate say "I find no fault in him" (Jn. 18:38). Timothy was to trust God to give him the grace to do as Jesus had done.

The "good confession" referred to how Jesus handled Pilate's investigation (Jn.18:35-38). Jesus stood firm and did not cower under Pilate's examination. He let his life prove who he was. Timothy was to follow Jesus' example and stand firm. Like Jesus, Timothy was to stand for truth and right. It was not time to back down or compromise. We should do the same in this day of criticism of God's work. Jesus was examined "before Pontius Pilate", Timothy would be examined "before Christ Jesus", and we will be examined by both, God and man.

*1 Ti 6:14 That thou keep this commandment without spot, unrebukeable, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ:*

The "commandment" Paul was referring to was probably referring to what he had just written about fighting a good fight, but it certainly can be applied to everything he had written in this letter.

We "keep" this commandment by believing it, guarding it, living it, and sharing it.

The words, "without spot" mean "unblemished".

Some believe Paul was referring to the "commandment" itself. If this was Paul's meaning, he was telling Timothy to keep the commandments pure. He was not to add or take away, from them.

Others believe Paul was referring to Timothy himself. If this was Paul's meaning, he was telling Timothy to live his life without spot or failure. I believe this explanation fits the context of the verse better. We are admonished to stay unspotted from the world (Jam. 1:27; 1 Pet. 1:19; 2 Pet. 3:14).

The word, "unrebukeable" means "not arrested" and carries with it the idea of not being guilty. It means if we are accused of some wrongdoing, there would not be enough evidence to arrest us. In other words, we are to live in a way where no one can rightfully

accuse us of wrongdoing. The devil loves to use worldly believers as an excuse for unbelievers.

Paul's instruction was to be followed until the "appearing" of the Lord Jesus. I am so glad we have a message that does not have to be updated every so often. The world's message keeps changing but God's message stays the same. God says it right the first time, so there is no reason for His message to be updated. His message was true in Moses' day and it is true in ours.

Keeping these commandments until the Lord's return would mean that Timothy would need to pass them on to the next generation. We must pass it on as pure as we received it. We do that by living it ourselves and telling it to others just as it is. We dare not add our opinion, or our spin, to that which has come from God.

Paul, like us, did not know when the appearing of the Lord would take place. Since we did not know when we should live as though He could come at any moment.

I believe Paul fully expected the Lord's return during his lifetime. We should do the same. Just because He has not yet come, does not mean He isn't coming. One day, maybe today, our Groom will come to get His bride.

Timothy was to keep these commandments "until the appearing" of the Lord. In other words, he was to continue until the end of his life on earth. Then, and only then, would his battles be over. I am glad there is a day of rest for those who know the Lord as their personal Savior.

*1 Ti 6:15 Which in his times he shall shew, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords;*

The words, "in his times" mean at the time He determines. God not only does the right thing, He does the right thing at the right time (Acts 1:7; Tit. 1:3; Heb. 1:1). This will certainly be true of His return that Paul mentioned in the preceding verse. He will come at the exact moment He has determined. Some believe the Rapture will take place when the last person to complete His bride gets saved. If that is true, that means the timing of the Rapture depends on the Christians on earth and how faithful they are to witness to the lost. But, I believe the Lord has set an exact moment to come and get His bride. When speaking of His second coming, the bible talks about a "day" and an "hour" (Mt. 24:36, 42, 44; 25:13; 1 Th. 5:2; 2 Pet. 3:10; Rev. 3:3). I don't think man can do anything to change that time. In other words, ready or not, He is coming when He is coming.

The word, "shew" means "to make known". The day will come when Jesus will reveal His true majesty. All of His creation will see Him as He is and recognize Him to be the only true and living God. He will not be a baby in a manger then.

The word, "Potentate" means "ruler". That means Jesus is the ruler of all rulers. It means he rules over everyone, everything, everywhere.

Paul said Jesus was the "only" true ruler. Jesus said he was "the" way because there is no other way. Saying there is more than one way to heaven is saying the holy Son of God becoming a human, living a sinless life, dying a sacrificial death, and rising from the dead was not sufficient to satisfy God. God gave His best when He gave His Son. To say His plan is not enough is the height of arrogance.

While we are on this subject, Jesus is not only the only way to salvation, he is the only way to everything else we need in life. He is the only way to peace, joy, compassion, boldness, humility, godliness, and to power.

Jesus is the "king of kings and Lord of lords" (Dt. 10:17; Ps. 136:2; Dan. 2:47; Rev. 17:14; 19:16). He is the one who has all power and rules over the entire universe from His throne in heaven. The world doesn't recognize Him as such at this time. He is allowing the world to have its way for now, but the day will come when He will reveal

Himself to be the God of heaven and earth.

Many people believe they control their lives. They think they are lord of their own destiny. The truth is, the God of heaven and earth is the One in control. Nebuchadnezzar found that out the hard way. He thought he had built Babylon by his own ability (Dan. 4:30). He lost his mind and lived among the beasts of the field for seven years (Dan. 4:31-34). He did not recover until he acknowledged the fact that God was God (Dan. 4:34-37). Like Nebuchadnezzar, we should realize, we are not the master of our lives.

Man's failure to recognize God as the "Lord of lords" has done more damage to this world than any other thing. When we think we have no one to answer to, we believe we can live as we please without consequences.

*1 Ti 6:16 Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honour and power everlasting. Amen.*

The word, "immortality" means "deathlessness". It means to be exempt from death. God cannot die. Notice, Paul said "only" God is immortal. Man is immortal because God has made him thus. God is immortal because it is simply the way He is. He has always been immortal and always will be. Only Jesus has risen from the dead. All other so-called religious leaders are dead and gone. A dead person cannot help those in need.

There was more involved with Jesus' resurrection than just the fact that he was alive again. He did rise from the dead, but he was also exalted to his rightful place of honor and power. He sat down on the right hand of the Father (Heb. 12:2). The day will come when every knee shall bow before him (Phil. 2:9-11).

God is "dwelling in the light". Some believe the light Paul referred to is simply a symbol of God's presence. But, it may mean that where God is there is bright light. John said, "God is light, and in him is no darkness at all" (1 Jn. 1:5).

The "light" is evidence of the glory, majesty, and power of God. Moses said, "Who is like unto thee, O LORD, among the gods? who is like thee, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders" (Ex.15:11).

No man can "approach" the actual presence of God. Like the light from the noonday sun. It is so bright that no one can come near it or gaze into it. In like fashion, in our natural bodies, we could not live in God's presence. His absolute holiness would consume us. We may not be able to get close to the sun but we can enjoy its warmth and benefit from its power. So it is with our God. We can enjoy His love, forgiveness, mercy, and provision every day.

No man "hath seen, nor can see" God in His fulness. John said, "No man hath seen God at any time" (1 Jn 4:12). God told Moses, "Thou canst not see my face: for there shall no man see me, and live" (Ex. 33:20). Moses came the closest to seeing God when He allowed him to see His back parts (Ex. 33:18-23). God had to protect him so that he might survive the experience.

Of course, the world saw God the Son in human form (Jn. 1:18). We see God by faith now (Mt. 5:8; Rom. 1:20; Col. 1:15; Heb. 11:27) but one day we will see Him face to face (1 Jn. 3:2).

The word, "honour" refers to something of value. It carries with it the idea of holding in the highest esteem. Sadly, this is something that is missing in our day. Reverence for God has diminished terribly in the last few years. Even those who claim to be saved see no problem with calling the holy God of heaven and earth "The big guy upstairs".

The word, "power" refers to the power to rule or control. All of God's creation should hold Him in high esteem and give His absolute control over their lives. We will in eternity, we should now.



The word, "Amen" means "so be it".

*1 Ti 6:17 Charge 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;*

Paul's final instructions to Timothy dealt with those who were "rich". It may seem strange that he would deal with riches again since he had just done so. The difference is, earlier in this chapter, he dealt with those who were not rich but wanted to be (vv. 3-10). Here, he dealt with those who were rich and gave some instructions about their attitude towards their riches.

The word, "charge" is a strong word that means "to command". God is serious about how we view our possessions.

The word, "highminded" means "to be lofty in mind". It means the person with riches should not think higher of themselves than they ought (cf. Rom.12:3). Riches tend to make a person feel like they are better than they are.

Often, those who are rich think they are better than those who have little. The tendency of the rich is to pay someone to do everything for them. They pay someone to wash their cars, mow their yard, clean their house, cook their meals, and watch their children. By doing so, they separate themselves from normal relationships and their communication with others becomes little more than a business arrangement. Of course, I am not suggesting that everyone who pays for the services I have mentioned has become a social robot. Again, it is our attitude towards our possessions that makes the difference.

Those who were rich were not to "trust in" their riches. The rich may feel as though they do not need God that much. Why would they need God when they have their financial advisor? Why should they turn to God when they have their therapist? Sadly, many trust their boss and their paycheck more than the goodness of God. Many of us, whether we admit it or not, trust our work and our effort more than we do God.

Before we move on, I want to make a further comment about riches. There is little doubt of the danger of riches, as we have just discussed. However, in our country, there is animosity towards those who are rich. Unfortunately, our politicians have led the attack. I know some have cheated their way to the top. I will be the first to say they do not deserve what they have. But, most of those who are rich have done it by hard work and sacrifice. We are wrong to be critical. We ought to be thankful because most of them have provided jobs to many families.

Riches are "uncertain". If you doubt that, just ask those who lived during the Great Depression. Many lost everything overnight. As I am writing this our world has been devastated by the Coronavirus. One germ has frozen the economy of every civilized nation in the world. Seven months ago, no one had heard of the Coronavirus. And all it took was one germ.

Why would we trust in uncertain riches when we have a "living God" who owns the earth and everything in it? It is unwise to trust something unreliable when we have a God who never changes.

The word, "richly" means "a large amount". God is not a pauper. We could rightly say, God, is abundantly wealthy. God is rich in goodness (Rom. 2:4), patience (Rom. 2:4), glory (Rom. 9:23), wisdom (Rom. 11:33), knowledge (Rom. 11:33), grace (Eph. 1:7), and mercy (Eph. 2:4).

God has given us "all things". We may have worked a job and earned a salary, but it still came from God. Many fail to realize, the Lord is the One who provided our job and our paychecks.

The word, "enjoy" means "full enjoyment". God wants us to fully enjoy that which He has given us. What a wonderful God He is. He truly wants us to enjoy life and His blessings.

I believe the enjoyment Paul talked about is an all-inclusive enjoyment. God wants us to enjoy the spiritual, emotional, financial, and social blessings He gives us. God produces a joy that the world could never give. Very few experience people this enjoyment because they are too busy using God's blessings to satisfy themselves. We can use what God has given us for ourselves, for others, or for God.

*1 Ti 6:18 That they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate;*

Those who are rich aren't just to "do good", they are to be "rich" in good works. Jesus said, "For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required" (Lk 12:48). Those whom God has blessed with riches should have compassion for those who have less than they do. They should appreciate God's blessings enough to be willing to share them.

Being "rich in good works" helps us to keep the right perspective about our finances. The primary reason for us giving is not that there is a need. It is that we need to learn to be willing to give.

Being "ready to distribute" means "good at imparting". Those who are rich should be ready to give to others and not hoard to themselves that which God has graciously given them.

Willing to "communicate" means they are glad to give. It carries with it the idea of sharing what we have with those who don't. The word "communicate" is connected to a word that means "companion". It refers to how we all are from the same family and, therefore, should treat each other as we would our family.

*1 Ti 6:19 Laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life.*

In this verse, Paul continued his admonition to those who were rich.

The words, "Laying up in store" mean "to treasure away". It has the idea of laying up our valuables so that we might benefit from them at a later time.

We are to use what we have now in a way that will provide the biggest benefit at a later time. I have heard of adult children who inherited a good bit of money only to waste it away. In a short time, all they received was gone and they had absolutely nothing to show for it. How much better it would have been had they wisely used their inheritance. They could have enjoyed its benefits in the present and the future.

So it is with that which God has given us. We can selfishly devour it all or we can use it in a way where we will get the greatest benefit later. Every believer should live now to where they will be able to enjoy the greatest benefits when they get to heaven.

Jesus talked about a man who built his house on the sand. When the storm came, he lost all he had built (Mt. 7:26-27).

To "lay hold" on eternal life, as in verse 12, is to recognize we have one life to live and we need to make it count. It is realizing nothing matters more than our relationship and fellowship with Christ. It means we have dedicated what time we have in this world to the Savior who gave His life for us. It means we are living each day to please Him and fulfill His will. It means when we stand before Him we will not have to be ashamed.

*1 Ti 6:20 O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust, avoiding profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so-called:*

Paul did not end this letter with a personal greeting as he did with others. He was all business to the end. He was serious about Timothy avoiding the effects of the world around him and doing the Lord's will. I believe this shows Paul's love for Timothy and the church. It wasn't time to chat, it was time to fight the battle.

Paul mentioned two things as he ended his letter. Timothy was to guard that which the Lord had entrusted him with and he was to avoid all false doctrine.

The word, "keep" means "to guard". It carries with it the idea of guarding or protecting. It was often used as guarding in a military sense. If we do not earnestly guard ourselves against the devil's attack, he will rob us of that which God has accomplished in our lives.

The devil is a master strategist. He does all he can to keep the unbeliever from accepting Christ and the believer from walking with God. He will give and he will take that he might accomplish his goal. He will give things that will bring harm. Things like plenty of money, an ungodly friend, or a time-consuming hobby, can accomplish his goal.

The devil not only wants to give that which will hurt us, he wants to take away that which will help us. Jesus said, "The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy" (Jn 10:10). Though he was referring specifically to false religious leaders, his words can apply to the devil himself. The devil wants to take away everything God is doing in our lives.

The devil wants to take away the Word of God from the hearts of those who hear (Mk. 4:15). Therefore, the believer must guard the truth of the Word of God. If our enemy can contaminate the teaching of the church he can have his will in the church and ruin the lives of its members. The Word of God is that which informs, guides and protects the believer. It must be protected against the devil's attack.

The word, "trust" means "deposit". It refers to something that has been committed to the trust of another. We make a deposit in our bank and trust them to keep it safe. They may hold the money, but it still belongs to us and is to be used as we desire. God has deposited to every believer a certain amount of time, knowledge, faith, ability, and spiritual gifts (Gal. 4:4; Jn. 14:16-17; Rom. 8:9). Since it belongs to Him, we should use it in a way that will please and honor Him.

The word, "babblings" means "fruitless discussion". It has the idea of meaningless talk. So many love to discuss matters that don't matter.

Paul was not discouraging honest discussion about biblical truth. The Bible encourages us to compare scripture with scripture so that we might rightly divide the truth. (1 Cor. 2:13; 2 Tim. 2:15). Paul was, however, condemning those who came into the church teaching error that would cause confusion and division. Much of the discussions of our day are nothing but empty chatter. Such talk wastes time and does not benefit the cause of Christ.

The word "oppositions" reveals the danger of such error. It isn't just wrong, it opposes the truth.

Paul called the babblings of these men science "falsely so-called". What man calls science may be nothing more than a display of his ignorance.

We must first recognize the fact that the bible does not deny or discredit true science. In fact, it proves true science to be correct. However, much of what is called science today is nothing more than man's opinion and his attempt to disprove the existence of a real God.

Our English word "science" simply means "the state of knowing". At first glance, we would ask what could ever be wrong about knowing more. But, we must recognize how modern science has caused great harm in our world. Science has brought about weapons that have cost millions of lives. Science has led to the worship of creation. Man calls God's creation "Mother Nature" as though God has nothing to do with it.

Man knows a lot about what they claim to be science. The problem is, that their theories are so often incorrect. Science once said the earth was flat. What good is knowledge if what you know is wrong?

True science does not contradict the bible. It is beneficial and has aided man in more ways than we can count. It has assisted man in business, medicine, exploration, recreation, and in countless other ways.

No doubt one of the false beliefs Paul was warning about was Gnosticism. Gnosticism was one of the greatest heresies during the first three centuries. The word "Gnosticism" comes from a Greek word that means "to know". Their beliefs were strange and difficult to clearly understand.

The Gnostics had two primary beliefs. One, they believed they possessed a knowledge that came from some mystical higher plane. They believed this "superior" knowledge put them above others, gave them special knowledge about God, and gained them access to God. Two, they believed all matter is inherently evil. This belief led them to believe that anything done in the body, even the grossest of sins, was unimportant and did not matter.

Since they believed all matter was evil, they taught that Jesus' physical body was not real, but only appeared to be real. They believed Jesus' spirit descended upon him when he was baptized and left him some time before he died on the cross.

This was just one of the many heretical teachings that the early church had to deal with.

*1 Ti 6:21 Which some professing have erred concerning the faith. Grace be with thee. Amen.*

The word, "professing" means "to announce". Paul was not speaking about those who professed faith in Jesus Christ as some have suggested. He was talking about those who professed the error of the false science he had been warning Timothy about.

Being drawn away by the error, they had "erred concerning the faith". They were drawn away from the truth of the gospel by the error of the false teaching. If the devil can't get a person with sinful pleasures, he will do it with false teaching. Our world is a perfect example of that. In our world today there are an estimated 4,300 different religions. The devil is certainly at work and his plan seems to be working quite well.

The words, "Grace be with you" refer to God's favor on Timothy. Paul started this letter with the words, "Grace, mercy, and peace". He ended it with the word "Amen".

In this letter we have seen;

The commission (1:1-4), where Paul told Timothy he had a job to do for the Lord.

The commandment (1:5-11), where Paul reminded Timothy that he was under direct instructions from God.

The conversion (1:12-17), where Paul told about his own salvation experience.

The charge (1:18-20), where Paul told Timothy he was in a war and should fight like a soldier.

The church (2:1-15), where Paul focused on the church and what should be done to make it what God desired.

The conduct (3:1-16), where Paul dealt with those God had called to serve Him in the church.

The caution (4:1-16), where Paul cautioned Timothy about the danger of false teaching.

The care (5:1-2), where Paul dealt with how we should care for those in the family of God.

The commitment (6:1-5), where Paul spoke of how a servant should be committed to his master's will.

The contentment (6:6-10), where Paul dealt with finances and godly living.

The combat (6:11-12), where Paul talked about the combat Timothy, and all Christians would face.

The conclusion (6:13-21), where Paul concludes his letter with some final instructions to Timothy.

And so, we end our look at Paul's letter to Timothy. May our walk through this book make a difference in our daily walk with our Lord.