

# 1 Timothy



**The Forum Terrace Church of Christ**  
**Adult Bible Class Sunday Morning**  
**Spring 2021**

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# Introduction to 1 Timothy

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## 1 Timothy 1:1-3

### The Pastoral Epistles

Paul wrote several letters to congregations, but 1 Timothy, 2 Timothy and Titus were written to young preachers. These New Testament books have been called the “Pastoral epistles” due to the fact that denominational scholars viewed Timothy and Titus as pastors of their congregations. The term “Pastoral” was first used by D.N. Berdotused in 1703 and then popularized in the commentaries of Paul Anton in 1726.

This designation is an unfortunate misnomer based on denominational false teachings about church organization. Neither Timothy or Titus were “pastors” in Scriptural sense of the term. The Bible uses the terms “elder” or “presbyter”; “bishop” or overseer”; and “pastor” or “shepherd” interchangeably. In Acts 20:17 the apostle Paul calls for the *“elders”* of the church at Ephesus to meet him in Miletus. In verse 28 he refers to them as *“overseers”* and instructs them to *“feed”* the church. The word “feed” comes from the Greek word *“poimainein”* which is simply the verb form of *“poimen”* (shepherd or pastor). Therefore, in this context the same group of men are referred to as elders, overseers, and shepherds. This clearly establishes the fact that they are one and the same. Again Paul uses the terms interchangeably when he tells Titus to *“appoint elders in every city”* (Tit. 1:5). Then in verse 7 he instructs: *“For a bishop must be blameless.”* Further evidence comes from the apostle Peter. Peter exhorts *“the elders among you”* (1 Pet. 5:1) to *“feed the flock of God which is among you”* (v. 2). The word “feed” once again is the verb form of *“poimen”* which is a shepherd or pastor.

These three letters present a pronounced unity of content and style. All three of these epistles were written to young preachers who had worked closely with the apostle Paul. He calls them by name and gives his name without extensive introduction. Therefore, it is logical to study these three epistles together. However, since Timothy and Titus were “evangelist” not pastors, it would be best to refer to them as the Evangelist epistles.

### Authorship: Paul

Internal evidence from the epistles themselves should be enough to prove that Paul was indeed the author of these letters. First, he identifies himself as the author in the salutation of all three. Paul shows a complete knowledge of Timothy as seen by his intimate knowledge of various details. He knew of Timothy’s mother and grandmother by name. He shows concern for Timothy’s health and advises him on what to do for his oft infirmities related to his stomach. Paul calls Timothy “mine own son in the faith” (1 Tim. 1:2); “my dearly beloved son” (2 Tim. 1:2); and “my son” (2 Tim. 2:1). This is compatible with Paul’s mention of him in 1 Corinthians 4:17: “my beloved son.” Throughout these epistles he makes personal references to his own life, such as, “chief of sinners” (1:5). Several individuals are mentioned in the letter whom Paul spoke of in detail to Timothy and Titus.

A great deal of external evidence points to the authorship of Paul. Early Christian writers, Clement of Alexandria (200 A.D.), Tertullian (200 A.D.), Irenaeus (200 A.D.), Origen (250 A.D.), and Eusebius (300 A.D.), quote passages from these epistles and attribute them to Paul. The Muratorian Fragment (c. 180 A.D.) states, “But he wrote one letter to Philemon and one to Titus, and two to Timothy from affection and love.” Despite this, the absence of these three letters from the Chester Beatty Papyrus (P 46) has been a bit of a puzzle for some scholars. Furthermore, there are a few second-century Gnostic writers who rejected these letters: Basilides, Tatian, and Marcion. Passages, like 1 Tim. 1:5; 6:20; 2 Tim. 3:16, would

not have supported their gnostic teachings.

Kummel wrote "The Pauline origin of the Pastorals was not challenged from the time of their recognition as canonical writings toward the end of the second century till the beginning of the nineteenth century" (Feine-Behm-Kummel, Introduction to the New Testament (Abingdon, 1966), p. 267.) Then in 1804 a scholar by the name of Schmidt rejected Paul as the author of these letters. In 1807 Schleiermacher found the traditional authorship of 1 Timothy problematical. He became the father of that school of modern criticism which determines issues of canonical authenticity. Until this time Paul was for the most part universally accepted as the writer of these epistles. Today, several modern scholars maintain that 1 and 2 Timothy and Titus were not written by Paul. Instead they are pseudopigraphical writings. This was a common literary device used by an author to remain anonymous by falsely assigning a past famous man or woman as the writer of his work. Several reasons are given to why these scholars hold this view.

First, the events contained in these epistles do not correspond to the historical accounts found in the book of Acts. Luke's history of Paul's travels never has him preaching in Crete (Tit. 1:5). Nothing is mentioned in Acts about leaving sick Trophimus at Miletus or Paul's cloak and parchments at Troas in a way that agrees with the timeline of Paul's journey's.

This view assumes that Luke intended to give a complete history of the life of Paul. Acts ends with Paul in prison in Rome in his own rented house. Paul conveyed hope in his definite release to the church at Philippi (Phil. 1:19; 25,26; 2:24). He wrote to Philemon, "*But, meanwhile, also prepare a guest room for me, for I trust that through your prayers I shall be granted to you*" (Philem. 22). This is in stark contrast with his impending death in 2 Timothy 4:6-9 with no expectation of release. Whereas the former passages deal with Paul's first imprisonment in Rome the later passage refers to his second and final Roman imprisonment. It is realistic to believe that Paul was indeed released after his trial before Caesar. No valid charge had been brought against Paul. Roman Proconsul Festus (Acts 25:14-21) and Herod Agrippa (Acts 26:32) could not find any reason to condemn him. So, Paul was released after two years (Acts 28:30,31) which would have allowed him to continue his mission work where the events in discussed in 1 and 2 Timothy and Titus took place.

Second, some argue that the Greek vocabulary used in these epistles do not agree with the words used to write Paul's other letters. Keep in mind that the early Christian writers spoke Greek and believed Paul to be the author despite these differences. Several things could explain the differences in Paul's vocabulary. In the previous letters Paul wrote to churches and in these he writes to individual preachers whom he had a close relationship with for years. These epistles are addressing subject matter and circumstances that are unique to Timothy as an evangelist working at Ephesus and Titus at Crete. Paul is older when he wrote to these young preachers and as one ages their vocabulary increases.

Moreover the method of comparing vocabularies of Paul's letters and the words used in the first and second centuries are inherently flawed. "Cambridge statistician Yule declared that samples of about ten thousand words are necessary as a basis for valid statistical study. The pastoral Epistles were known and used by Polycarp, Justin Martyr, and Irenaeus - all of the second century" (Expositor's Commentary, vol. 11). It must also be considered that "most of the words shared by the Pastorals and the second-century writers are also found in other writings prior to AD 50. It cannot be argued that Paul would not have known them" (Carson, Moo, and Morris, Introduction, 361).

It is known that Paul at times used a scribe or secretary to dictate his letters (Rom. 16:22). Luke, who had formerly been a physician, could have served Paul in this capacity. Several medical terms are found in these letters. For example, "sound" means "health-giving"; "seared" means "cauterized as with a hot instrument"(1 Tim. 4:2); "obsessed with disputes" means "sick about them" (1 Tim. 6:4); and "cancer" is found in 2 Tim. 2:17. Also, Paul could have picked up these terms because of his close association with Luke.

The third argument raised against Paul's authorship comes from his teachings about church organization. It is believed by some that the form of organization discussed in these letters did not develop until the second century. A further assumption is that the church would have been too young in the first century for concern over the development of organizational structure. However, in the earlier letters of Paul and in the book of Acts it is clear that Paul was well aware of the need for proper church government.

During the later part of his first missionary journey Paul revisited congregations he had established sometime earlier. “So when they had appointed elders in every church, and prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord in whom they had believed” (Acts 14:26). On his way to Jerusalem Paul met with the elders of Ephesus to encourage them (Acts 20:17f). Paul addressed his letter to the church at Philippi and included “overseers and deacons” (Phil. 1:1). To the church at Ephesus he wrote, that Christ “gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers” (Eph 4:11-12). Not only was the early church well organized in the first century, the church government of the second century was a departure from the Biblical pattern. During the time of Ignatius churches began to be ruled over by one overseer with several presbyters under him and several deacons under them. Yet, Paul clearly uses the terms for “elders”, “overseers”, and “pastors” interchangeably.

The final argument against Pauline authorship is the Gnostic doctrine which is taught against in these epistles, such as, abstinence from marriage and a vegetarian diet (1 Tim. 4:1-5). Since Gnosticism had not fully developed until the second century Paul could not be the author according to modern scholarship. It is true that the phrase “godless chatter” (2 Tim. 6:20) occurs frequently in second century Gnosticism. Notwithstanding this could be due to Paul’s use of it in his epistle to Timothy. Also consider the fact that Judaism had already begun to embrace Gnostic concepts before Christianity was established as seen in a study called *Pre-Christian Gnosticism* by Edwin M. Yamauchi in 1973. The Gnostics denied the resurrection of the body (2 Tim. 2:18) which Paul combats in 1 Corinthians 15. He also had refuted early Gnosticism in Col. 2:16; 20-22.

Despite all these modern attempts debunk the traditional view that Paul is the author of 1 and 2 Timothy and Titus, the evidence remains solid that he wrote them. Viewing them as pseudopigraphal letters makes little sense. Paul forewarned brethren against receiving letters purported to have come from him (2 Th. 2:2; 3:17). When a church leader was caught attributing his writings to the apostle Paul during the time of Tertullian, he was promptly discovered and removed from a position of leadership. In fact according to John MacArthur this belief that pseudo-Paul wrote these epistles brings up more questions than it answers. He asked, “Why would he have forged three letters that cover much of the same ground? Why did he not invent an itinerary for Paul that would fit in with the record of Paul’s life given in Acts? And how did he deceive the early church into accepting the historical details of the Pastoral Epistles if they never happened?...Would it not have been the height of hypocrisy to include warnings about deceivers (cf. 2 Tim.. 3:13; Tit. 1:10) when he himself was one?” (MacArthur xiv).

For the purpose of our study, Paul will be accepted as the author of 1 and 2 Timothy and Titus.

#### **Date: 64-66 A.D.**

The modern scholars who reject the authorship of Paul would naturally have these letters to Timothy and Titus written well into the second century. “As a time of writing, the most likely assumption is the very beginning of the second century” (Kummel 387). Others accept a very early date for their writing. This date would have Paul leave Timothy (Acts 19:1-41; 20:1-3) in Ephesus on his third journey and writing back to him around 58-59 A.D. This seems highly unlikely based on the personal references in the letters and the information in Acts.

It is possible to conjecture from his epistles when Paul wrote to Timothy and Titus by tracing his journeys. Paul was most likely released after two years from his first imprisonment in Rome. Information from early Christians writers indicate that Paul may have gone to Spain when he left Rome. He had written earlier to the Roman congregation that it was his desire to visit Spain (Rom. 15:24,28). Chrysostom wrote: “Saint Paul after his residence in Rome departed to Spain.” Jerome said Paul “was dismissed by Nero that he might preach Christ’s gospel in the West.” The Muratorian canon (A.D. 200) says Luke “omits both the passion of Peter and the journey of Paul from Rome to Spain.” Perhaps the strongest evidence comes from one of Paul’s disciples, Clement of Rome. In A.D. 95 he says that Paul went “to the extreme limit of the west.” “The extremity of the West” is an phrase frequently used by Roman writers to signify Spain (Conybeare and Howson, 2:437, 438). If Paul was released in 62 A.D., he could have spent a couple of years in Spain before traveling to Crete in 64-65 A.D. (Tit. 1:6). On his way to Asia Minor Paul may have stopped off at Corinth where he left Erastus. At some point he went to Troas (2 Tim. 4:13). At Miletus he

left Trophimus because he was ill (2 Tim. 4:20). When Paul had written to Philemon he closed the letter with what might be a strange request from a man writing from prison, *“prepare a guest room for me, for I trust that through your prayers I shall be granted to you”* (Phile. 22). The apostle may have visited his friend at Colossae in about 66 A.D. From there he could have traveled on to Ephesus where he left Timothy (1 Tim. 1:3). He had hoped to see the Philippians (Phil. 1:26; 2:24). He most likely wrote back to Timothy from Philippi. *“As I urged you when I went into Macedonia - remain in Ephesus”* (1 Tim. 1:3). Next, he would have written to Titus from Nicopolis in about A.D. 66. *“...be diligent to come to me at Nicopolis, for I have decided to spend the winter there”* (Tit. 3:12). Sometime after this Paul either traveled to Rome where he was arrested or was arrested and sent to Rome. *“The Lord grant mercy to the household of Onesiphorus, for he often refreshed me, and was not ashamed of my chain; but when he arrived in Rome he sought me out very zealously and found me”* (2 Tim. 1:16,17). Titus was with Paul in Rome and from there when to Dalmatia (2 Tim. 4:10). Paul asked Timothy *“Do your utmost to come before winter”* (2 Tim. 4:21a). Along the way he was to bring his cloak left with Carpus at Troas along with books and parchments (2 Tim. 2:13). According to Eusebius (A.D. 325) *“Paul is said, after having defended himself, to have set forth again upon the ministry of preaching, and to have entered the city [Rome] a second time, and to have ended his life by martyrdom. Whilst then a prisoner, he wrote the Second Letter to Timothy, in which he both mentions his first defense, and his impending death.”* Paul was put to death by Emperor Nero sometime before June of A.D. 68 when the Roman Caesar committed suicide. Whether Timothy was able to come to Rome to visit Paul before the winter of 68 may never be known.

### **Addressee: Timothy**

Timothy had been raised on the Scriptures by his mother and grandmother. His father was a Greek. During Paul first missionary journey he visited Lystra, Timothy’s home town (Acts 14:6-23). It was at this time that Paul converted the young man and began to nurture him spiritually. Therefore, the apostle refers to him as *“a true son in the faith”* (1 Tim. 1:2). During Paul’s second journey he had Timothy circumcised and brought him with him on his travels (Acts 16:1-3). During their close relationship Timothy sent letters with Paul to several congregations (2 Cor. 1:1; Phil. 1:1; Cor. 1:1; 1 Th. 1:1; 2 Th. 1:1). He was Paul’s emissary on several occasions (1 Cor. 16:10-11; Phil. 2:19-24). Timothy perhaps received the last letter written from the apostle before he was martyred by Nero. *See the Appendix for more details.*

### **Letter Sent From: Philippi**

*“As I urged you when I went into Macedonia--remain in Ephesus that you may charge some that they teach no other doctrine”* (1 Tim 1:3). Since Paul wanted to see the brethren at Philippi, he most likely would have stopped there while going into Macedonia. This would have been a good place from which Paul could have written back to Timothy who was still at Ephesus.

### **Letter Sent to: Ephesus**

Paul had a long standing relationship with the church at Ephesus. Paul visited the city for the first time on his third missionary journey (Acts 19:4). A riot was instigated by Demetrius and other silversmiths. They attacked Paul for his preaching which they felt threatened the Roman cult worship of Diana (Greek, Artemis) whose temple at Ephesus. This Temple was one of the seven wonders of the world. On his way to Jerusalem Paul met with the elders of Ephesus at Miletus to encourage them (Acts 20:17ff). While in prison in Rome he wrote an epistle to the congregation. After his release from his first imprisonment, Paul visited Ephesus and left Timothy there to work with the church (1:3). Timothy was also at Ephesus when Paul wrote a second letter to him.

### **Purpose: Conduct of Evangelist**

The first letter to Timothy is filled with instructions on how a young preacher should conduct his work with a congregation. Paul wrote Timothy, *“let no man despise thy youth”* (1 Tim. 4:12, KJV). The word *“youth”* was applied to both Jews and Greeks to young men up to the age of 40. The letter has good



advice from an old preacher to the young evangelist. Perhaps the purpose of 1 Timothy is summed up well by two verses: “*but if I am delayed, I write so that you may know how you ought to conduct yourself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth*” (1 Tim 3:15) and “*take heed to yourself and to the doctrine. Continue in them, for in doing this you will save both yourself and those who hear you*” (1 Tim 4:16).

### **Major Themes**

Throughout the epistle Paul warns Timothy of the dangers of departures from the faith at the instigation of false teachers. This was same thing Paul had warned the overseers of at Ephesus when he met them at Miletus toward the end of his third missionary journey (Acts 20:28-31). Even among their own number wolves would arise not sparing the flock at Ephesus. Evidently Hymenaeus and Alexander were two of those "wolves" (1:20). It was very important for Timothy to maintain the purity of the Gospel against all forms of heresy (1:3; 4:1f; 6:3-5).

Instructions related to the local church persist all through the letter. Qualifications for leaders (overseers and deacons) of the church are given in great detail (3:1f). The church's unique role as the “*pillar and ground of the truth*” (3:15) is emphasized. Paul discusses the limited role of women (2:9-14; 3:11) and the unlimited role of prayer by men (2:1-8). In chapter five advice is given to Timothy on how he can deal with various individuals in the congregation: older men and women, young men and women (5:1,2); widows and widows indeed (5:3-10;16); younger widows (5:11-15); elder who labor hard and those overseers who need to be rebuked (5:17-21).

There are twelve distinct charges that Paul gives Timothy. These represent the commands given by the apostle to the evangelist that he must to in order to “*do the work of an evangelist*” and fulfill his ministry (2 Tim. 4:5).

Other themes throughout the letter include faith (1:19; 4:1; 5:8; 5:12; 6:10; 6:21); good things (1:5,8; 18; 2:3; 2:10; 3:2; 2:7; 3:13; 4:4; 4:6; 4:6; 5:4; 6:12; 6:13; 6:19); and godliness (2:2,9,10; 3:16; 4:7,8; 5:4; 6:3,5,6,11).

### **Salutation**

The fact that Paul identified himself as an apostle seems superfluous. Timothy of all people would know who Paul was and that he was indeed commissioned by Christ to be His ambassador to the Gentiles. Since Paul was a common name he identifies himself in such a way that there could be no mistake as to which Paul wrote this letter. Furthermore, this letter was mostly likely intended to be read to the church at Ephesus. By establishing the fact that he is an apostle by a command from God and Christ, his authority for what he writes is confirmed.

Although most of us address Jesus as the *Savior*, Paul applies the name to the Father while he refers to Jesus as *Lord* and *our hope*. God indeed is the architect of the scheme of redemption, while the Son of God came in the flesh, died on the cross, and rose from the dead to redeem man and free him from the shackles of death.

Paul does not use *mercy* in his normal greetings. It is added to *grace* and *peace* in this letters to the two evangelist. Vine says, “Grace describes God’s attitude toward the law-breaker and the rebel; mercy is His attitude toward those who are in distress.” Peace is the result of grace and mercy. All three come from the Father and the Son.

### **Questions:**

1. Why are 1 and 2 Timothy called the "Pastoral Epistles"? Why is this an unscriptural name for these letters?

2. Demonstrate from the scriptures that the terms "elder", "overseer", and "pastor" are often used interchangeably.
3. What are the similarities between these three letters?
4. Where do we first read about Timothy?
5. What internal evidence exists which would lead one to believe that 1 Timothy was written by Paul?
6. List the external evidence pointing to Paul as the author?
7. When did the Pauline authorship of these three letters to the evangelists first begin to be rejected by scholars?
8. What are pseudopigraphical writings?
9. What explanation can be given for why the events described in Paul's letters to Timothy and Titus do not reckon with Luke's historical accounts of Paul in Acts?
10. What might account for the difference in Paul's vocabulary in Timothy and Titus and his earlier letters?
11. Show from the scriptures that the early church was already organized with elders and deacons by the time Paul wrote these letters to Timothy and Titus.
12. List other passages in other Pauline letters where Paul's writings would teach against Gnostic doctrines.
13. What are the three possible dates suggested by scholars for 1 Timothy?

14. What evidence is there that Paul was released from his first imprisonment at Rome?
15. What evidence is there that Paul went to Spain after his first imprisonment?
16. How did Paul affectionately regard Timothy? (1:2)
17. From where did Paul write 1 Timothy?
18. Where was Timothy when Paul wrote this epistle?
19. What are the key verses which identify Paul's purpose in writing 1 Timothy?
20. List the major themes found in 1 Timothy.
21. Why might Paul identify himself as an apostle to Timothy?
22. What is different about Paul's greetings to Timothy and Titus compared to his other letters?

## Charge to Stop Abuse of the Law

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### *1 Timothy 1:3-11*

*3 As I urged you when I went into Macedonia--remain in Ephesus that you may charge some that they teach no other doctrine,*

Paul had two reasons for Timothy to stay in Ephesus: 1) to command the proper doctrine be taught and 2) stop fables and endless genealogies from hindering edification. The term “charge” comes from the military vocabulary. A superior officer would give strict orders to a subordinate. Paul is not giving Timothy mere suggestions or opinions on what he needs to do at Ephesus. Not only is doctrine important in a congregation, no other teachings other than the “apostles’ doctrine” is permitted by God (Acts 2:42; Gal. 1:6-9). False teaching is extremely dangerous to any congregation (Matt. 7:15; 2 Cor. 11:13-15; 1 Jn. 4:1) and he must stay at Ephesus for the mouths of false teachers “*must be silenced*” (Tit. 1:11). It is possible that Paul had to urge Timothy in this matter because of his timid nature and the fact that some of these false teachers were among the elders as Paul had previously warned, “*Also from among yourselves men will rise up, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after themselves*” (Acts 20:30). After all, they wanted to be teachers, Paul lists qualifications for Timothy, tells him to publicly rebuke sinning elders, and encourages him not to do this work too hastily (1 Tim. 5:19f).

*4 nor give heed to fables and endless genealogies, which cause disputes rather than godly edification which is in faith.*

The *fables* may refer to any human doctrine or tradition of men that the false teachers were elevating to the authority as sound doctrine. The term in the Greek is *muthos* from which is derived the English term “myth.” Judaizing teachers were fond of “allegorical or legendary interpretations of the O.T. centering on the pedigrees of the patriarchs” (J.N.D. Kelly, 44,45). One of the great fables of our time that is invading our congregations is theistic evolution. It is a myth proclaimed to be “science” and is filled with endless genealogies which tear down the faith of many.

The *endless genealogies* were a means of some to promote themselves among the brethren due to their important family tree. Herod the Great had previously had all genealogies destroyed when he came to power in Judea. Some may have survived at least in the memories of Jews. Under the Law of Moses they were important: to determine ownership of land; those who served in the Temple as Levites; those who could be High Priests or priests; and the coming of the Messiah. But the Law was fulfilled by the Messiah who is our High Priests who is preparing us a place in heaven. They are endless because they are without a purpose to serve. In Christ such genealogies have no value. They are useless and therefore an unnecessary distraction to the spiritual growth of the church.

The result of these fables and endless genealogies is troublesome questions that promote speculations instead of edification. Often, in a Bible class setting questions are brought up with a motive to confuse or misdirect the class instead of building up the members in faith. All things need to be done for edification.

*5 Now the purpose of the commandment is love from a pure heart, from a good conscience, and from sincere faith,*

Why did Paul command Timothy to promote sound doctrine at Ephesus? The motive was out of love. It is *agape* which does the best for others not matter what the recipient feels or thinks or how the giver feels or thinks. Faithful teachers of the Gospel do so out of love. This love is from a pure heart. As Peter commanded "*sincere love of the brethren, love one another fervently with a pure heart*" (1 Pet. 1:22b). This love must come from a good conscience. The term literally means "to know with." Christians can have a clean conscience because they have been baptized. "*Which now saves us--baptism (not the removal of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God), through the resurrection of Jesus Christ*" (1 Peter 3:21). Our conscience is not a perfect guide but if trained by the Word of God it can commend us for our good or condemn us for our evil. "*Their conscience also bearing witness, and between themselves their thoughts accusing or else excusing them*" (Rom. 2:15). Finally, love has to be in sincere faith. This is the opposite of the faith of a hypocrite who acts one way but in reality his faith is fake. All three of these are requirements of the love Timothy is to have.

*6 from which some, having strayed, have turned aside to idle talk, 7 desiring to be teachers of the law, understanding neither what they say nor the things which they affirm.*

Paul contrasts the pure motives of Timothy which is love with the true motives of the false teachers. Their goal is two-fold: 1) turn aside to idle talk bringing others along with them and 2) be teachers of the law. He uses a term "aside" which has a medical meaning of *being dislocated*. These teachers have moved so far away from the truth they have been dislocated to meaningless discussions. How many times have you found yourself in a class where someone brings up a point that has nothing to do with the subject being studied. If the teacher is not careful the whole lesson is derailed or dislocated to the point that no learning takes place. Although they may think they are smart, God considers them ignorant. They have become teachers for the wrong reasons. Like the Pharisees of old they love "*being called by men, Rabbi [i.e., teacher]*" (Matt. 23:7). James warns "*My brethren, let not many of you become teachers, knowing that we shall receive a stricter judgment*" (Js. 3:1). To be a teacher you need to know what you are talking about and be able to prove or affirm it from the scriptures.

*8 But we know that the law is good if one uses it lawfully,*

Although false teachers do not know how to teach the Law to others, it is good when used lawfully. This indicates that the law can be used unlawfully. Often false teachers will run off to the Old Testament to distort some obscure passage in a vain effort to prove their doctrine. For what is the Law good or useful: "*Now all these things happened to them as examples, and they were written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the ages have come*" (1 Cor. 10:11). "*For whatever things were written before were written for our learning, that we through the patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope*" (Rom. 15:3-4).

*9 knowing this: that the law is not made for a righteous person, but for the lawless and insubordinate, for the ungodly and for sinners, for the unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for manslayers, 10 for fornicators, for sodomites, for kidnappers, for liars, for perjurers, and if there is any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine,*

What is the law good for or why was it given to man? It was not given to the righteous man but to identify sin and the sinner. The Gospel is the Good News for those who know that they are sinners in need of salvation. Therefore, the Gospel is the perfect answer to the purpose of the Law of Moses. The Law could not tell men how to be saved, but it could show them what they need to be saved from and point them toward the One who could save them - the Christ. When the Law is used properly it can work together with the New Covenant to the saving of souls and the building up in faith.

Next, Paul lists thirteen different sinners for whom the Law was written. 1) The *lawless* who reject the law of God or live in opposition to it. 2) The *insubordinate* or unruly who refuse to obey the law they are

under. 3) The *ungodly* who lack any reverence toward God. 4) The *sinner*s are living without regard to God's rule. 5) The *unholy* are indifferent to God's character. 6) The *profane* are those who trample underfoot the things of God. 7) *Murders* of fathers and mothers could refer to those who are strikers or those cursing of their fathers or mothers. Under the Law such were to be put to death (Ex. 21:15). 8) The *manslayers* would be murder of anyone else. 9) *Fornicators* is used in reference to any kind of sexual activity outside the lawful realm of marriage between one man and one woman. 10) The term *sodomites* according to Thayer is "one who lies with a male as with a female." It literally means "males in the marriage bed." This would clearly refute the idea of men marrying men. 11) *Kidnappers* is in fact a term which refers to those who are slave-dealers. Although the New Testament does not directly attack the institution of slavery in the Roman Empire it attacks the main source from which masters obtained their slaves. In the Old Testament kidnaping was a capital offense (Ex. 21:16; Dt. 24:7). 12) *Lairs* would cover any form of dishonesty. Whereas, 13) *perjurers* is referring to those who lie under oath, such as those who bear false witness against another. 14) A general category is given to be a catch all for any sin or sinner not mentioned. The Bible does not contain a complete, specific list of every single sin.

*11 according to the glorious gospel of the blessed God which was committed to my trust.*

Now Paul seamlessly moves from the purpose of the Law to the Gospel of God. Note that the order and content of Paul's list of sins and sinners parallels the Ten Commandments. Warren W. Wiersbe wrote, "Law and Gospel go together, for the Law without the Gospel is diagnosis without remedy" (Wiersbe 212). Without the Law the Gospel would not appear to be as Glorious as it is. The term "blessed" is the same one used in the Beatitudes (Matt. 5:3f). Whereas happiness depends upon "hap" which is "chance", God's blessedness or happiness is not subject to chance or happenstance. He is blessed and joyful apart from anything or anyone. This is why the Gospel is the Glorious Good News. It comes from such a blessed God. The Gospel also has been placed into the able hands of the apostle Paul for him to proclaim to all. This remark serves as a smooth transition to the next paragraph.

#### **Questions:**

1. Why did Timothy need to stay at Ephesus?
2. What does the term "charge" mean?
3. What had Paul previously warned the elders of Ephesus would happen (Acts 20:28f)?
4. What are "fables and endless genealogies"? Why are they a threat to the church?
5. What are the three prerequisites of love?

6. What are the two goals of false teachers?
7. How do some false teachers use the Law of Moses unlawfully today?
8. For whom is the Law not made?
9. What is the Law good for today?
10. Match as many of the sins Paul has listed with the ten commandments in Exodus 20:1f.
11. Does the Bible contain a complete list of every specific sin man may commit? Explain.
12. What does it mean that God is blessed?
13. Why is the Gospel glorious?

**Application & Discussion:**

1. Is it important to teach our children the Old Testament? Why?
2. How does it effect your life knowing the God's joyfulness if not effected by any external circumstances?

# Gratitude for God's Grace

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## 1 Timothy 1:12-17

*12 And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord who has enabled me, because He counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry,*

Paul concluded his last paragraph by mentioning the glorious Gospel “*which was committed to my trust*” (1:11). Now he expresses great gratitude to the Lord who made it possible for him to become a minister of the Gospel: “*And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord*” (1:12a). The object of his gratitude is the Christ who sought him out on the road to Damascus and gave Paul a chance to serve the Lord instead of fighting against Him.

The apostle lists several things which the Lord had done from him. These are the things for which he is grateful. First, the Lord has *enabled* him or as the New English Bible translates “*Made me equal to the task.*” Christ provided Paul all he needed to give him the ability or strength to perform the work of taking the Gospel to the Gentiles. Second, the Lord counted him *faithful*, that is, trustworthy. Paul zeal to fight against Christ and Christians was sincere though wrong. His faithfulness to a false cause is now turned to help him in the righteous cause of sharing the Gospel. God knew that Paul could be counted on to continue his zealous mission for Jesus once he turned from his unbelief. Finally, Paul was grateful for the Christ “*putting me into the ministry.*” As he had served the Pharisees’ and the High Priest’s objective he now has a new commission. Paul was to serve the Lord.

*13a although I was formerly a blasphemer, a persecutor, and an insolent man;*

The gratitude of Paul is increased by the fact that God’s grace came upon him while he was at his worse. He was perhaps the greatest enemy of God and Christ at the time of his conversion, yet God still had mercy on him. Three descriptions are given by Paul to describe his former life as an antichrist. He was a blasphemer. This was a sin punishable by death (Lev. 24:16). Christians were blasphemers because they were attributing deity to a mere man, Jesus. He even tried to force Christians to blaspheme or speak reproachfully against the Lord by rejecting God’s Son as the Christ and recanting His Lordship over their lives. Ironically, it was Paul who was the real blasphemer. Furthermore, Paul was a persecutor. According to Luke’s account he was “*breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest and asked letters from him to the synagogues of Damascus, so that if he found any who were of the Way, whether men or women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem*” (Acts 9:1-2). Jesus accused him on the Road to Damascus in His question, “*Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?*” (Acts 9:4b). To top it off Paul was an *insolent man*. He played the role of a bully whose disdain for Christians caused him to engage in monstrous unrestrained acts against them. Paul is saying the he was one big, bad arrogant monster to the Christians. No wonder Ananias was concerned about going to teach him the Gospel (Acts 9:13) and the apostles hesitant to accept him as a member at the church in Jerusalem (Acts 9:26).

*13b but I obtained mercy because I did it ignorantly in unbelief.*

Paul was thankful for the mercy of God. God recognized that Paul’s heart was not defiantly rejecting His Son. Paul was acting out *ignorantly in unbelief*. The Law of Moses recognized the difference between the two motives for sin (Lev. 5:15-19; Num. 15:2-31). This does not mean ignorance is an excuse for sin.



Paul was not forgiven because he was ignorant, but mercy was shown him by putting him in the ministry of the Gospel after he became a Christian. Despite Paul's motives for his crimes against Christ, Ananias still commanded Paul to *"arise and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on the name of the Lord"* (Acts 22:16). This mercy is similar to the statement Christ made upon the cross concerning those who were murdering Him. *"Then Jesus said, 'Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do'"* (Luke 23:34).

*14 And the grace of our Lord was exceedingly abundant, with faith and love which are in Christ Jesus.*

Paul had a habit of expressing best or superb blessings of Christianity with superlatives like, *"exceedingly abundant"* grace. He would accomplish this in the Greek by adding the prefix *huper* which is akin to our English word "super." The apostle was grateful for the super-abundant grace God had shown him in forgiving him of his past sins. Paul of all people did not deserve or merit God's favor. Yet, the amount of God's unmerited favor or grace was poured out on Him in such a way that he will always be thankful.

Paul also mentions the result of this great grace upon his life: *faith* and *love*. Before Paul received God's saving grace he was an unbeliever who blasphemed God's Son. Now he has great faith in Christ Jesus. Before Paul was a persecutor and violent man against Christians and the Lord. Now, because of God's super-abundant grace he loves his brethren and his Savior.

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

The world is filled with proverbs and sayings, but not all of them are faithful. The Bible however only contains sayings that are faithful. In his epistles to both Timothy and Titus, Paul lists five things which he says are faithful sayings, statements we can trust in and count on because they are of Divine inspiration. These sayings are so trustworthy and believable that everyone can give them complete acceptance.

Here in his first "faithful saying" Paul reassures Timothy that if Paul himself is qualified to serve Christ then certainly Timothy is as well. The great apostle considered his salvation a pattern (example of what God would do for all lost sinners). Not by seeing a light and hearing a voice; but being saved by grace, through faith, in spite of our sins. It is a faithful saying, if you repent of your sins and have them washed away as Paul did, then you will experience God's saving grace. No stain of sin has ever blotted a soul so deeply the blood of Christ could not wash it away. If God's can save Paul and use him to further the Gospel, He can save anyone and use them to serve others. Timothy's timidity should melt away at such a notion.

Paul had called himself the *"least of the apostles"* (1 Cor. 15:9) and the *"least of all saints"* (Eph. 3:8) and now *chief of sinners*. Keep in mind that he used to be chief of sinners before his initial salvation. He was not at this time the greatest of sinners because of Christ's grace he has moved from sinner to saint; from abuser to apostle; from murderer to minister; from persecutor to preacher; and from blasphemer to believer. However, this present tense used in this verse shows that Paul's self-image is still recognizing a fact that God's grace is great because he has been such a great sinner. Furthermore, he still must rely on the continued grace of God because he still sins.

The purpose of Christ coming in the flesh is clearly given in this passage. Jesus did not just come to start an earthly kingdom and to reign on an earthly throne of David in Jerusalem. His purpose from eternity has been to come to save even the worst sinners like Paul.

*16 However, for this reason I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might show all longsuffering, as a pattern to those who are going to believe on Him for everlasting life.*

Perhaps in all of Scripture there cannot be found a greater example of God's saving grace than the conversion of Saul of Tarsus. God's motive for showing patience was not only to give Paul a chance to

come to repentance (2 Pet. 3:9), but to give all those to whom to would preach a chance to see in him the mercy God was willing to bestow on all those who have obedient faith. He told the Romans *“because of the grace given to me by God, that I might be a minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering the gospel of God, that the offering of the Gentiles might be acceptable, sanctified by the Holy Spirit”* (Romans 15:15b,16).

*17 Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, to God who alone is wise, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.*

In response to the super-abundant grace give by God to Paul, he breaks forth into a doxology to glorify God. He is the King eternal. Whereas, the reign of all kings are limited to time and space God is King of kings over all creation for all time. His reign is not determined on the length of His life, for he is immortal. God is a King who cannot die. Although He was in various ways manifested Himself to man. No mortal eye has beheld Him in is full glory. Kings of earth can be seen but our King is invisible. Though King Solomon was the wisest of mortal kings, the Heavenly King alone is wise. May it be throughout all eternity that God is given His due honor and glory because of His grace to mankind.

### **Questions:**

1. Who put Paul in the ministry? When did this take place?
2. For what three things was Paul thankful?
3. What was Paul prior to being put into the ministry?
4. Why did Paul obtain mercy?
5. Why did Paul consider God's grace as super-abundant?
6. What was the results of God's grace upon Paul?
7. What does "faithful saying" mean?
8. Why does Paul refer to himself as chief of sinners in the present tense?

9. Why did Christ come in the flesh?
  
10. Give two reasons why Paul obtained mercy according to verse 16.
  
11. How is Paul a pattern?
  
12. Contrast the Kingship of God with that of kings of the earth.

**Application & Discussion:**

1. Does ignorance excuse sinful conduct? What role does ignorance play in sin and being saved?
  
2. How can you use this passage to assist a brother or sister in Christ who feels like God has not or cannot forgive them?

# Faithful Commission of the Mission

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## 1 Timothy 1:18-20

*18 This charge I commit to you, son Timothy, according to the prophecies previously made concerning you, that by them you may wage the good warfare, 19a having faith and a good conscience,*

The phrase “this charge” refers back to the one made in verse five. Now the reasons are given why Paul has chosen Timothy in particular instead of someone else. Paul has committed to Timothy something of great value. This can be entrusted to him because he is viewed as a faithful son of the apostle. The second reason for committing this charge to him are the prophecies made about him. Apparently the Holy Spirit spoke up to Paul or through one of the New Testament prophets (Acts 13:1-3) that God wanted Timothy to be put in the ministry. For Timothy to reject his charge of seeing sound doctrine taught at Ephesus would be a direct violation of the Divine orders coming from the Holy Spirit.

In fulfilling his charge, Timothy must wage the good warfare. Christians are at war. Paul of all people knew this to be a fact. Everywhere he went preaching the Gospel he was dogged by false teachers sent from Satan and hellbent on hindering the apostles from fulfilling his mission. Paul told the Thessalonians *“but we, brethren, having been taken away from you for a short time in presence, not in heart, endeavored more eagerly to see your face with great desire. Therefore we wanted to come to you--even I, Paul, time and again--but Satan hindered us”*(1 Th. 2:17-18). He commanded the Christians at Ephesus to put on the whole armor of God in order to fight (Eph. 6:10-17). In his second letter Paul reminded Timothy *“you therefore must endure hardship as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. No one engaged in warfare entangles himself with the affairs of this life, that he may please him who enlisted him as a soldier”* (2 Tim. 2:2-4). Paul at the end of his life could say with confidence *“I have fought the good fight”* (2 Tim. 4:7). What makes this fight good? Who can call carnal warfare a good or wholesome thing to wage? Yet, our spiritual war is good. God is at war with Satan. The angels of God are in a spiritual conflict with the Devil and his angels. Humans are at war with the kingdom of darkness. Whereas, the forces of darkness fight dirty, Christians fight with the Truth of the Word and let the pure Light of Truth shine forth in the darkness. Timothy is not urged to fight dirty using any means possible to defeat the Devil. He is commanded to wage a strong and noble battle.

In order for Timothy to wage a good warfare, he must do so in faith. We sing a song “Faith is the Victory.”

Against the foe in vales below  
Let all our strength be hurled  
Faith is the victory we know  
That overcomes the world...

By faith, they like a whirlwind's breath  
Swept on o'er ev'ry field  
The faith by which they conquered Death  
Is still our shining shield.

Christians are command to take up the shield of faith by which they can quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. A faithful soldier will trust the orders of His commander. He will never be found slothful but

vigilantly guard what has been committed to him. Where the standard goes he will follow. He will not lose faith and retreat.

Not only must Timothy hold fast the faith, but also a good conscience. Keep in mind Paul fought against Christ and the church *"in all good conscience"* (Acts 23:1). A conscience is not the source of our faith. "So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. (Rom. 10:17). One's conscience does not determine what is right or true. If trained properly it will tell the Christians when their conduct does not match up with what they have been taught. Paul's conscience had been trained to know that blasphemers must be punished. His mistake was to reject Christ as the Son of God. Once he knew the truth his conscience pricked him so bad that after he saw the Lord on the road to Damascus *"he was three days without sight, and neither ate nor drank"* (Acts 9:9). When Ananias found him he was praying. Timothy on the other hand had been trained by the apostle Paul. His conscience could help him in his good fight. You see a conscience is like a clock. No matter how well the time piece is made and how accurately it works, if it is set wrong it will always tell the wearer the wrong time. If one lives in the Mountain Time Zone and his quality watch is set to Eastern Standard Time, it will always be an unreliable guide, although it is a good watch.

*19b which some having rejected, concerning the faith have suffered shipwreck,*

Paul warns Timothy of what will happen if someone does not hold on to the faith and a good conscience. By their rejection they will make shipwreck of their faith. These have actually shoved faith and a good conscience away from themselves. Paul moves from army metaphors to the navy. He had known what it was like to be shipwrecked and stranded on an island. The cause of their shipwreck was rejecting faith. They did not trust or have faith in the charts God had provided them to chart their course through dangerous waters. They shoved these aside and did not even listen to their conscience about the dangers that lay ahead.

*20 of whom are Hymenaeus and Alexander, whom I delivered to Satan that they may learn not to blaspheme.*

Paul gives Timothy two illustrations of those who make shipwreck of their faith. Hymenaeus may be the same false teacher mentioned by Paul in 2 Timothy 2:17,18. *"And their message will spread like cancer. Hymenaeus and Philetus are of this sort, who have strayed concerning the truth, saying that the resurrection is already past; and they overthrow the faith of some."* Also, in 2 Timothy 4:14 Paul wrote, *"Alexander the coppersmith did me much harm. May the Lord repay him according to his works. You also must beware of him, for he has greatly resisted our words."* There was an Alexander who tried to speak out against Paul during the silversmith riot at Ephesus (Acts 19:33). Keep in mind that Alexander (as it is today) was a very common name in the first century.

At some point Paul was able to be at Ephesus and discipline these two false teachers. This of course does not guarantee that they were not still around to give Timothy trouble while he labored at Ephesus. When a man was guilty of taking his father's wife at Corinth, Paul wrote, *"for indeed, as absent in body but present in spirit, have already judged (as though I were present) him who has so done this deed. In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when you are gathered together, along with my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, deliver such a one to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus"* (1 Cor. 5:3-5). This is a form of disassociation from the members. This same action by the church is commanded in Matthew 18:15-17 and 2 Thessalonians 3:6-14. Notice, that the use of congregational discipline was not just a punitive measure but a reformatory effort to teach these two men not to blasphemy. Of course, Paul does not give the particulars here. Timothy was probably already familiar with the case. Why remind Timothy about what had happened to these men? So Timothy could deal with others like them.

**Questions:**

1. What is the charge Paul committed to Timothy?
2. What are the two reasons Paul gave Timothy this charge?
3. What makes the Christian warfare the "good" fight?
4. Who makes up the opposing sides in our warfare?
5. What two things should characterize Timothy waging the good warfare?
6. What is a conscience an imperfect guide to all our conduct?
7. How does the conscience work in helping Christians be faithful?
8. Why did some suffer spiritual shipwreck?
9. Who had suffered shipwreck?
10. What did Paul do to them? Why?

11. Where else do we learn about men of the same name? What had they done?

**Application & Discussion:**

1. What are the various reasons why church discipline is exercised? (1 Cor. 5:3-5; Matthew 18:15-17; 2 Thessalonians 3:6-1)

# Men Are to Pray Everywhere for Everyone

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## 1 Timothy 2:1-8

*1a Therefore I exhort first of all*

The words “first of all” relate not to primacy of time but primacy of importance. Prayer is to be a top priority in the life of a Christian. It is not saying that prayer should be the first order of worship. The idea of a worship service is by no means inherent in the context. Then again, prayer should not be just a filler between other acts of worship. Prayer is to take priority over our daily schedule. It is not something to do if you have time or happen to need something. Jesus took special time out to pray to God. When the Hellenist widows were being neglected, the apostles did not want to neglect God’s Word or God in prayer. So seven good men were picked out to take care of these needy widows. It was not that they were too good or important to serve widows. But prayer to God and preaching His Word was of primary importance to God. *“But we will give ourselves continually to prayer and to the ministry of the word”* (Acts 6:4). Notice that prayer is placed before preaching. If prayer is so important than why is it that people will attend singings and the preaching of a Gospel Meeting but neglect prayer meetings?

*1b that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks*

### Types of Prayers

Paul list several terms that our synonymous for prayer. *Supplications* are requests coming from a sense of need. Christians need their daily bread and are to petition to God for His supplies as the Father is the Giver of all good things (Js. 1:17). The saints have need for supplies, but not just those of a physical nature like, food, shelter, funds, clothing, health, work, etc. Christians need strength for resisting temptation, wisdom, forgiveness of sins, etc. *Prayers* is translated from the Greek work *proseuche*. It is a general word for prayer and includes all types of prayer. However, its use in this context would indicate specific prayers. Some believe it is used in reference to petitions that only God can satisfy like, forgiveness of sins. However, other words for prayer can rightly include such requests. These types of prayers may be those demonstrating a man’s total dependence on God alone. The next type of prayer, *intercessions* refer to petitions offered up to God on behalf of others. As Abraham prayed for the people of Sodom (Gen. 18:24-32). Christ’s intercessory prayers for Peter (Lk. 22:31-34) and the lengthy intercession in the garden of Gethsemane are good examples. Finally, there is the giving of thanks. As Christians have so much to be thankful for, expressions of gratitude to God should come easy.

*1c be made for all men, 2 for kings and all who are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence.*

### Subjects of Prayer

The subjects of our prayers is to be in behalf of all men not just our fellow Christians. God is not a respecter of persons and his children must not pray with bias toward any but with favor to all. The Pharisees sought to pray only for Israel. Although Nero was the ruler of the world-wide Roman Empire, he was to be the subject of the prayers of first century saints. After all, civil government is ordained of God. *“Let every soul be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and the authorities that exist are appointed by God”* (Rom. 13:1; cf. 13:2-5; 1 Pet. 2:13-17). In the Old Testament



the Jews were commanded to pray for their heathen rulers (Ezra 6:10; Jer. 29:7). Early Christian writers give us insight into their prayers for rulers. Tertullian prayed for the Emperor and his citizens to have a "long life, secure dominion, a safe home, a faithful senate, a righteous people, and a world at peace; and that God may grant, both to caesar and to every man, the accomplishment of their just desires" (Apology 30). Theophilus of Antioch writes: "The honor that I will give the Emperor is all the greater, because I will not worship him, but I will pray for him. I will worship no one but the true and real God, for I know that the Emperor was appointed by him...." (Apology 1: 11). Believers were taught to support the government, not rebel against it.

What about bad rulers? Rulers who are godless and ungodly? Nero was in Rome at the time of Paul's letter to Timothy. He set fire to Rome in 64 A.D. and used the Christians as a scapegoat for his actions. The persecution that ensued later cost Paul his very head. Prayer for Nero was not to sanction or approve of his persecution of Christians.

So why pray for them? "*The king's heart is in the hand of the Lord, Like a the rivers of water; He turns it wherever He wishes*" (Prov. 21:1). Even if they are enemies of Christ and Christians, enemies are to be prayed for as Christ commanded "*but I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you*" (Matt. 5:44).

Two blessing will result from our prayers for all men and even wicked rulers. First, *we may lead a quiet and peaceable life*. "That" introduces the intended result of the prayers. Who does not want a life that is not troubled by those from without so they than find tranquility from within? When holding a Gospel Meeting in east Texas my married daughter was in the back seat giving me directions to the country home where we were having our Sunday dinner. Telling me which road to keep a lookout for she directed, "Dad, we are looking for Tranquility." I responded, "Tia, aren't we all...aren't we all." If you want to live in a country where your fellow man and the government permits you to live the Christian life without fear of harassment, you need to keep on praying for them. Remember, it does not make sense to live one way and pray another and it is benign to pray one way and vote another. Secondly, praying for all will result in us leading lives *in all godliness and reverence*. A life of religious devotion or godliness cannot be maintained without God's help with our fellow man. They are not wanting to live that lifestyle. The world seems to be insulted and threatened by those who live godly in this world. They do not have respect or a serious attitude toward God. If you want them to be at least tolerant toward you, continue in prayer for them.

*3 For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, 4 who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. 5a For there is one God*

### **Motive of Prayer**

The Divine motive for having Christians pray for everyone is that God finds *it good and acceptable*. It is intrinsically good. That is a good work in and of itself regardless of the effects of the prayers. In other words, prayers do not have to have a positive answer from God in order to be good. As long as the motives of prayer are pure, the prayers are good before God. In contrast, the Pharisees prayed in order to be praised by men (Mt. 6:5) or to impress other worshipers (Lk. 18:9-14).

Another motive of God in requesting men to pray to Him for all men is that God desires *all to be saved*. Again the Jews of the first century stand in contrast to this motive. They believed that God is not interested in the salvation of all men, just those who are of the seed of Abraham. Gnostics felt that salvation was only for those who were the spiritually elite. Calvinist reason that salvation is only for those individual souls who have been elected to it before the world began. God does not want any one to be lost. "*The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance*" (2 Pet. 3:9). However, all men will not be saved because all men have a free will to chose to obey the Gospel or not. Our prayers and God's Will cannot force people to do anything against their will. Prayer or desire for all to be saved will not guarantee anyone being saved. Remember, the purpose of prayer is not to get man's will done in heaven, but to get God's will done on earth (Matt. 6:10). If the saints want what the Father in Heaven wants, they will all pray and work at saving the souls of all men, even that of the President.

The third motivation behind God's command for His children to pray for all is His desire that all *come to the knowledge of the truth*. Yes, there is such a thing as truth. The saints are not to prayer for tolerance of everyone's beliefs as if they are all equal. Prayers are not given so all men can embrace whatever truths they desire. There is only one Truth, not truths. Salvation demands that the lost come to know what is the Truth. Jesus said, *"I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me"* (John 14:6). In order for this to happen Christians should pray to the Lord of harvest to send out workers into the harvest fields (Matt. 9:38); to give them opportunities to teach the truth to others (Eph. 6:19,20); and for open doors of opportunities (Col. 4:3). Since the Great Commission is not the great suggestion and the Gospel is for all, prayers are essential.

The final motive of God in having Christians pray for all men is the fact that God is one. There is no other God beside Him. Who else can Christians pray to? The gods of the Hindus cannot save. Allah cannot even hear the multitude of prayers by Muslims. Only God has the Truth that leads to salvation. Only God cares for the salvation of their souls. Only His children have access to His throne of grace (Heb. 4:16).

*5b and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus, 6 who gave Himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time,*

### **Mediator of Prayer**

Perhaps a fourth motive of God for His children to pray is that Jesus Christ is the only Mediator. A mediator is "a middle man" of a "go-between." One who can stand between two parties and act on the behalf of both of them. Although there is a difference or rift in the relationship between God and man our Mediator can represent both God (because He is the Son of God) and man (because He is the son of Man). No one else in all the world or history is qualified to fulfill this role. Before Christ came in the flesh, died, arose, and ascended to Heaven there was no such Mediator. *"Nor is there any mediator between us, who may lay his hand on us both"* (Job 9:33).

Jesus is not one of many, He is the one and only. This term is applied only here to our Savior and in Heb. 8:6; 9:15; 12:24; Gal. 3:19,20. This doctrine is not very tolerant of religious pluralism which calls for many paths to God or universalism which asserts that everyone will be saved regardless of their belief in Christ. In this age of political correctness prayer in the public venue have been censored to excluded mention of Jesus Christ in prayer. Through no other name can man pray than that of Jesus Christ. Prayers which are offered via the "saints" or the Virgin Mother Mary, Allah, Muhammad, Moses, etc. are empty and void of all power and meaning. Such a prayer will go no where but into the thin air.

As the Mediator Jesus stands between God and Man. Jesus bridges the gap between sinful humanity and the Most Holy God. In prayer, He stands between God's holy saints and the Heavenly Father. Although He is also our intercessor (Heb. 7:25) the terms are not the same. There are many intercessors between God and man, but there can only be one Mediator. Whereas, a mediator can represent both sides and intercessor represents only one.

The Mediator between God and man must be a man. Only one man can take the job - Christ Jesus. He was God and also became man when He came to earth from Heaven (Matt. 16:27; 22:42-45; 25:31-40; Mk. 14:61,62; Lk. 9:42-44; Jn. 3:35; Rom. 5:15; 21; 1 Cor. 15:49). This was essential to the Scheme of Redemption.

Furthermore, as to be the Mediator Jesus had to give *Himself a ransom for all*. The word *ransom* means a loosing or freeing, such as, the freedom given to a slave by the paying of the price, therefore, the price paid to free a slave. Man was enslaved by sin. All men have sinned and therefore all are slaves to sin. Jesus paid the ransom for all men. This opposes the Calvinistic doctrine of limited atonement for those souls chosen to be saved before the world began. *"For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many"* (Mk. 10:45). Since He died for all, Christians pray for all, as God wants all to be saved. Only Christ could pay the price by willingly giving Himself because He was never a slave to sin, not even for a moment.

Why did God wait so long to send His Son to die and be a ransom for all and only Mediator? God

had promises to fulfill and a perfect timing. The great Giver of grace chooses the timing of His Gift (Gal. 4:4).

*7 for which I was appointed a preacher and an apostle--I am speaking the truth in Christ and not lying--a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth.*

### **Messenger of Salvation**

Prayer for all men to the One God through the One Mediator for the salvation of all requires someone to share the Truth not just with the Jews but with the Gentiles. Paul was just such a preacher appointed by Christ Himself. A preacher or herald was one who brought forth important news. Although Judaizers rejected Paul's apostleship, he affirms that it is not a lie but the truth. Christ sent him as His ambassador to the lost Gentiles. He was to teach them to have faith in Christ and lead them to the knowledge of the Truth.

*8 I desire therefore that the men pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting;*

### **Manner of Prayer**

Paul's desire was for males, not females to pray everywhere. Robertson wrote, "This is men in contrast to women" (Robertson, 527). Although in our English translations the impact of Paul's choice of wording is not felt as strongly as in the original Greek, the meaning is plain, males are to pray publically or everywhere, not women. This of course, does not mean the women cannot pray in private or bow in prayer with others when a man words a prayer.

It is implied in the context the men under consideration our Christians who can lift up holy hands because they are saints and have access to one God through their only Mediator.

A teacher went into her classroom about fifteen minutes before the class was supposed to begin and caught a bunch of boys in a huddle on their knees in the corner of the room. She asked what they were doing, and one of them shouted back, "We are shooting craps." She replied, "That's all right. I was afraid you were praying."

Today, prayer has been removed from public schools and other like venues. Prayer is not just for the church building. Christians can pray in solitude at home (Mt. 6:6); with others at mealtime (Ac. 21:35); in public settings (Acts 20:36); etc. Jonah could pray out of the belly of the fish. A God who is everywhere can be reached in prayer everywhere. No place can be found where there is a blackout or no coverage by our Omnipresent provider of prayer.

Over the years I have been fascinated by the odd names of people I have come across. Once in a phone book I found a man named Weldon Rumpoast. Later, in east Texas I met a woman named, Ima Hogg. Visiting our congregation a few years ago was a young lady named Anita Hand. Well, God needs a few good hands when it comes to prayer. *"I desire therefore that the men pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting;"* (1 Tim. 2:8). Just what are your hands busy doing? Do you have your hands in the cookie jar or involved in the Lord's Work? Are your hands holding a news paper, the remote, a fishing pole or are they lifted up to God in prayer?

Surely this passage is not focusing on the posture of prayer. In Old Testament times, prayers were made with the face pointed toward heaven and palms turned upward with hands outstretched. This conveyed supplication and longing for God's blessing. However, prayers were given while in a variety of postures: kneeling (Dan. 6:10; Lk. 22:41; Ac. 20:36; 21:5); standing (Lk. 18:11,13); sitting (2 Sam. 7:18); bowing the head (Gen. 24:26); lifting the eyes (Jn. 17:1); falling on the ground (Gen. 17:3, Dt. 9:18; Mk. 14:35); etc.

The important thing is not the posture of the body but the posture of the heart. The hands are holy because the heart is clean. Jews and Muslim alike wash their hands before prayer. Yet, clean hands do not prove a clean heart. In order for our prayers to be heard by God it is essential to sanctify our hearts.

*"If I regard iniquity in my heart, The Lord will not hear"* (Ps. 66:18). Worshipers with hands stained by unworthy deeds must first be cleansed before approaching God in prayer (Ps. 26:6).

Two other prerequisites to acceptable prayer: *without wrath* and *doubting*. Those who lift up hands to pray need to be on good terms with God and one another. The term “doubting” does not refer to offering up prayers without doubts in our hearts. It refers to disputing, strife or contention. God does not care to listen to a troublemaker, but His ears will be inclined to a peacemaker.

Charles Spurgeon said, "I would rather teach one man to pray than ten men to preach."

**Questions:**

1. T F Paul is discussing public worship in this chapter.
2. What are supplications?
3. What are intercessions?
4. Who was Caesar when Paul wrote this letter? What did he do to Christians?
5. What two blessings may result if we pray for leaders and all men?
6. What are the four motives given for God's command for prayer?
7. What is a Mediator and why is there only One?
8. T F A Mediator is the same as an intercessor.
9. What is a ransom and what does it have to do with Paul's discussion on prayer?

10. What role did Paul play in the ransom of man?
  
11. Prove from this passage that God does not want women to pray everywhere?
  
12. What does "lift up holy hands" mean?
  
13. What are two other prerequisites of acceptable prayer?

#### **Application & Discussion**

1. Under what circumstances would it be acceptable for a woman to lead in public prayer?
  
2. Write out a prayer which would encompass all the aspects of prayer discussed in this text.

# Women are to Be Modest and in Subjection

## 1 Timothy 2:9-15

*9 in like manner also, that the women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with propriety and moderation, not with braided hair or gold or pearls or costly clothing, 10 but, which is proper for women professing godliness, with good works.*

You are setting down to with your family to watch some news while supper is cooking. Your fifteen year-old son and your six year old daughter are sitting in the family room when up on the screen is a twenty-eight year old topless lady. On Thursday and Friday, October 29,30 2010 WJLA-TV in Washington DC ABC Affiliate aired a two-part series at 5 p.m. and 11 p.m. called "Touch of Life: The Guide to Breast Self Examination." Not only was it sweeps week which is important for ratings, but it was also Breast Cancer Awareness Month. When parent groups, individual viewers, and others began to protest, some jumped to the defense of nudity on public television. Some argued the it was educational and needed to promote good healthy habits. However, such arguments would open the floodgates to all sorts of educational and health related nudity to bombard public television. Such information could be and has been disseminated to women in a variety of ways without subjecting men of integrity and young boys and girls to such immodesty.

How would you feel if you looked up and saw that the half-naked young lady was one of the sisters from your local congregation? Far too often ladies, who are children of God, will succumb to the immodest standards of this world. When they get married these Christian brides will expose too much skin in their wedding dresses. When going out, even to church or to a funeral, some will dress immodestly. What does the Bible say about the way women are dressed or undressed?

First, the Bible student should examine each of these terms used in the context. The word "*adorn*" means "to put in order, to arrange properly". A woman is not to adorn themselves with immodest clothing which is not proper, but with modest apparel. "*Apparel*" is the Greek word "katastole." A stole was a loose outer garment. The prefix "kata" means "down." Women professing godliness were to wear garments that hang down, but their apparel had to be modest. Among the ancient women some were known to slit the sides of their dress to expose a part of the thigh (phaino-marides, showers of the thigh as they were called). This ancient apparel would not be modest. The Greek word "kosmos" is translated "*modest.*" It means: "Respectable, honorable" (Arndt and Gingrich, 446); "Well-arranged, seemly, modest..." (Thayer, 356) and "Orderly, well-arranged, decent, modest (akin to 'kosmos, in its primary sense as harmonious arrangement, adornment...), is used in 1 Tim. 2:9 of the apparel with which Christian women are to adorn themselves; in 3:2 ..., one of the qualifications essential for a bishop or overseer" (Vine, 79). Thus, men who desire to be elders are to be modest as well (1 Tim. 3:2). The next term describing their attire is "shamefastness" or "*propriety*" from the Greek word "aidos" meaning: "1. Modesty of women" (Arndt and Gingrich, 21); "A sense of shame, modesty...reverence...would always restrain a good man from an unworthy act," (Thayer); "a sense of shame, modesty which is...rooted in the character" (Vine). Davies Bible Dictionary tells us that "Shamefastness is that modesty which is 'fast' or rooted in the character." The "bedfast" person is firmly fixed in his bed. The "shamefast" person is firmly fixed in a sense of shame or modesty. A woman who possess this character trait would be fast to blush. Some women are embarrassed over nothing. The ability to blush is a vanishing virtue with many (Jer. 6:15; Ezra 9:6). When just one curse word was used in the movie, "Gone With the Wind" people gasped. The nation's face turned red. Today, the nation doesn't even blush over the nudity that abounds in movies. A person with a sense of shame or modesty will not have to stand

there doubting whether a one piece bathing suit or swimming trunks are modest on the crowded public beach. Finally, to help us understand the type of clothing a godly woman would wear the Bible uses the word “*sobriety*” or “*moderation*” from the Greek “*sophrosune*.” This word means: “Soundness of mind, self-control, sobriety” (Thayer, 613); it “denotes soundness of mind (Vine, 44); “It is that habitual inner self-government, with its constant rein on all the passions and desires; which would hinder the temptation to these from arising..” (Trench, Synonyms of the N.T., 72); and “good judgment, moderation, self-control...esp. As a feminine virtue, decency chastity” (Arndt and Gingrich, 810). In other words, a Christian will dress in a way as not to stimulate the passions of the body in one’s self or in those that behold him or her. A Christian with sound judgment will not dress immodestly. A godly woman will use sound discretion in picking out their clothes. “*As a jewel of gold in a swine’s snout, so is a fair women with is without discretion*” (Prov. 11:22).

The following questions represent the three views on modesty:

- 1) Where do I draw the line?
- 2) Which dress code should I follow?
- 3) Would this be clothing a Christian professing to be godly should wear?

The last question is the one which fits the standard found in 1 Timothy 2. If you dress according to these guidelines you will not have to worry whether your clothing matches what you profess to be: a Christian. However, if you dress in such a way that causes the world to wonder or even be shocked that you are a Christian, then perhaps it is time for a new wardrobe. The next time you get dressed before you go out ask yourself while looking in the mirror: “Do I look like a woman professing godliness?” There is a famous commercial of the ‘70’s that was revived in the 90’s which asked: “Who wears short shorts?” Not the woman of 1 Timothy 2 who professes godliness.

In Titus 2:5 women are to be instructed by older women to be “chaste.” This does not mean they are to dress in such an immodest manner that they will be “chased” by men, but chaste and modest before men. Vine tells us this word means “pure from carnality, modest.”

The reason modesty is so important is that God designed the human body to be attractive to the opposite sex. Dress or the lack thereof which causes a man other than a woman’s spouse to lust is immodest. When united in marriage your bodies are not your own to do as you please without regard to your spouse and others (1 Cor. 7:4).

Men know men. They know how they think. Men can tell women what is modest or not. So brides, if your husband does not think you ought to wear something because it is inappropriate do not call him controlling or jealous. Instead, you should appreciate his insight and protection.

Another aspect of a woman’s clothing is the wearing of *braided hair or gold or pearls or costly clothing*. Paul makes it very clear this is not the look he is promoting in this passage. The first-century Roman writer tells us that this type of apparel was very common. “There is nothing that a woman will not permit herself to do, nothing that she deems shameful, and when she encircles her neck with green emeralds and fastens huge pearls to her elongated ears, so important is the business of beautification; so numerous are the tiers and stories piled one another on her head! In the meantime she pays not attention to her husband!”

*11 Let a woman learn in silence with all submission. 12 And I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man, but to be in silence. 13 For Adam was formed first, then Eve. 14 And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived, fell into transgression. 15 Nevertheless she will be saved in childbearing if they continue in faith, love, and holiness, with self-control.*

The passage under consideration is perhaps one of the most controversial in the Bible. It is not because it is too difficult to understand, but because it goes against the political correctness of our culture. Jacquelyn Grant of Atlanta, “*Black Christian women will never be free or treated as equals until they win the battle of the pulpit and preach regularly.*” (The Tennessean [13 Oct. 1989], p. 1-A). Denominations

struggle with the role of women within their churches. The first woman to be ordained in the U.S. was Anntoinette Brown of South Butler, N.Y., who was ordained in 1853 by the Congregational Church. Women were ordained by the American Baptist in 1894. Today, there are tens of thousands of women in various denominations filling roles that had been exclusively male within almost every denomination from the time they were established. Surely, religious leadership is going through a sex-change.

Even within the conservative churches of Christ there are some who wish to expand the role of women in church leadership. In his book *Confusion Or Consensus*, Vance Trefethen arguing for women to have an equal say in the decisions of the local church calls for an *"increased role for women in the decision making process of local churches"* (Trefethan 3). In his debate with Tom Roberts, Trefethen affirmed the following proposition: *"The Scriptures teach that the pattern of decision-making in matters of congregational judgment must always include the whole church (including women) under male leadership in all local churches (both with and without elders)."*

It cannot and should not be denied that women can serve the local congregation where they are members. A woman can be a Christian just like a man. She must obey the same prerequisites to be saved as a man. She must worship God according to the same pattern God has given to men. However, a woman cannot exercise authority over a man. To usurp authority means nothing more than to take over or try to take over some role of authority which has been given to another. Since she cannot usurp authority or teach over a man this is one thing which makes a female ministry unscriptural.

The limitation is based upon an attitude of submission. Other reasons for a woman's limited role in church leadership are given by Paul. *"For Adam was formed first, then Eve."* (v. 13). This refers to the principle of creation. God's Will from the beginning was for man to be the head of the woman. Next, the deception principle is used to show God's reasoning. *"And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived, fell into transgression"* (v. 14). Adam and Eve both sinned, but Adam was not beguiled. He followed Eve into sin with his eyes open. She was thoroughly deceived. *Beguiled* means completely or thoroughly deceived. She had shown that she was not qualified to take the lead. She showed that she was not adapted to the situation of headship. Eve's judgment was flawed. She ran ahead of her husband and yielded to emotion and not reason. Finally, Paul appeals to the principle of differing roles in verse 15. *"Nevertheless she will be saved in childbearing if they continue in faith, love, and holiness, with self-control."* One of Satan's tactics is the destruction of the distinctive roles God has given to man and woman. And remember, God has always had the man in the dominant role, both in the home and the church. Christ did not select a woman to be among the apostles, elders or evangelists in the New Testament church. Although there is no such thing as a woman serving as a co-preacher or co-elder or co-deacon this in no way lessens her importance or responsibility. The woman who can't be content with the limited role which God ordained for her does not have an argument with the men. Her argument is with God!

It is true that God said nothing about women preachers. He didn't say, "Thou shalt not..." Authority comes from a "Thus saith the Lord." The words for public speakers in the church are masculine. There are no words for a female preacher, female evangelist, or female pastor in the New Testament. There is no example of women performing in these functions. No woman had been commissioned by Christ to be an apostle or public proclaimer of the Word.

### Questions:

1. In what sort of venue or situation do Christian women often dress immodestly before the opposite sex in today's world?



2. Define the following words:
  - a. Adorn
  - b. Modest
  - c. Apparel
  - d. Propriety
  - e. Moderation
3. Is the inability to blush a sign of spiritual maturity? Explain
4. Why is it important for a Christian woman's apparel to match her profession of godliness?
5. What does "chaste" mean?
6. How can men, especially husbands, help Christian women in dressing modestly?
7. What sort of extremes did the women of the first century go to in order to dress up in stylish apparel?
8. What are the various arguments used for women preachers and teachers?
9. T F It is okay for a woman to teach men in public assembly so long as they are given the authority to do so by their husbands.
10. How is a woman to learn?
11. What three reasons are given for women not to teach or have authority over men?
12. Does this passage teach that women are cannot run a business where men are under her direction?

**Application & Discussion:** What are some situations where women are to teach others?

# Qualifications of Overseers

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## 1 Timothy 3:1-7

The Greek word for *bishop* is "*episcopos*" and it occurs five times in the New Testament. Vine defines the noun as follows: "*lit. an overseer (epi, over; skopeo, to look or watch), whence Eng. 'bishop', which has precisely the same meaning, is found in Ac. 20:28; Phil. 1:1; 1 Tim. 3:2; Tit. 1:7; 1 Pt. 2:24.*" (Vine, p. 120). He defines the verb form as "*Lit. to look upon (epi, upon, skopeo, to look at, contemplate), is found in 1 Pet. 5:2...the word does not imply the entrance upon such responsibility, but the fulfillment of it. It is not a matter of assuming a position, but of the discharge of the duties*" (p. 824). Thayer defines the noun as "*an overseer, a man charged with the duty of seeing that things to be done by others are done rightly, any curator, guardian, or superintendent;...guardian of souls, one who watches over their welfare:...Spec. the superintendent, head or overseer or any Christian church;...*" (Thayer, p. 243).

The Greek word *episkopos* is translated into two English words: overseer and bishop. The word "*overseer*" is of Anglo-Saxon origin meaning "*over*" to be above in rank and authority and "*seer*" which means to look upon or inspect. The word "*bishop*" is of Latin origin and is a corruption of a Greek word. It means the same as overseer.

Before engaging in this study of their qualifications one should develop the proper attitude toward the qualifications. 1) The qualifications do not demand a perfect, sinless man. Most of the qualifications are relative, which may be understood in terms of degrees, but not all of them are relative. Every elder must have all the qualifications to a high degree or above the average degree. 2) The qualifications are MUSTS.

In 1 Timothy 3:2 there are seven "*musts*" implied in the mention of the "*must*" at the beginning of the passage: "*A bishop then must be...*" The Greek word for "*must*" is "*dei*." According to Thayer it means, "*necessity in reference to what is required to attain some end*" (p. 126.) 3) A man must develop these qualifications before being appointed. The office of the bishop is not for the purpose of developing the qualities of an elder. It is not, "*Appoint them and give them time to qualify themselves*". 4) All qualifications must be maintained after appointment. Some have the mistaken notion that "*once an elder always and elder.*" A man who finds himself disqualified needs to resign.

### A Man, 3:1

The word "*man*" is translated from the Greek word "*anar*". Thayer defines it as follows: "*a man...the meanings of this word in the N. T. differ in no respect from classic usage; for it is employed with a reference to sex and so to distinguish a man from a woman; either a. as a male in or b. as a husband...2. with a reference to age, and to distinguish an adult man from a boy,...3. univ. any male person, a man.*"

Many denominations and even brethren fail to see this as a qualification. They feel free to appoint women to this position in the church. One denomination even appointed teenage girls as elders. The Newport Daily Independent reported that the Newport Presbyterian Church had appointed two women to the position of "*ruling elders*". In a church of Christ an elder became ill and appointed his wife to serve during his sickness. He died from his illness and his wife carried on as an elder until she died. Women can't possibly qualify to serve as elders for several logical reasons: (1) It is specifically commanded that an elder be a man, this excludes women. (2) All elders in the New Testament were men. (3) A woman cannot be the husband of one wife. (4) A woman cannot be a father. (5) Women are not given the role of ruling the home. (6) Women are not to exercise authority over men (1 Tim. 2:11,12). An elder is to rule or exercise authority over the church. Therefore, a woman cannot be an elder. This qualification also excludes boys or young men from serving as elders. To be an elder a man must be old enough to meet all of the qualifications. This

requires a man somewhat advanced in years.

### **Desire the Office, 3:1**

One may be qualified, but due to health, work, family saturations, or other reasons not have the desire to serve. In such cases some men have been pressured into taking on the responsibility against their wishes. Some elders lament, *"There was no one else to do it, they just forced it upon me."* An elders that was asked by the congregation to resigned due to his gross neglect of duty said, *"I didn't asked to be an elder. Years ago the brethren pressured me into serving"*. If this is the case, then both the congregation and the elder are wrong. The fact is no one will do a good job if they are forced to do it.

First, such a desire needs to be cultivated early in life or at least when they are new born babes in Christ (1 Peter 2:2). Fathers and mothers can play a major role in encouraging their sons to desire this office one day. This desire in a youth is to be encouraged by all and never criticized. Men cannot be qualified over night. Qualifying and maintaining the qualifications takes a life time. One does not become *"just"* or *"not self-willed"* by accident. One must serve willingly, not due to conscription or coercion. Peter commanded his fellow-elders to *"Shepherd the flock of God which is among you, serving as overseers, not by constraint but willingly, not for dishonest gain but eagerly; nor as being lords over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock"* (1 Pet. 5:2,3). This excludes those who are power or position hungry. In a sense, the office seeks the man as the man longs to serve in this office. He desires to do the work. An elder must be one who desires to lead God's people (1 Tim. 5:13; 1 Th. 5:12). It calls for a man who is willing to speak to others about their souls (1 Th. 5:12-14). It requires a man who has a desire to work with other elders in this work.

### **Blameless, 3:2**

Greek *anephamtos* means *"not open to attack'...The metaphor is said to be from wrestling or boxing, when a man leaves no part of his body exposed to the attack of his adversary."* (Pulpit Comm., V. 21, p. 51.)

No doubt Christ is a prime example of he many a man found blameless even among his enemies. Deacons and preachers as well as elders are to have this quality in order to preform their duties (1 Timothy 3:10 and 1 Timothy 6:14) respectively. According to 1 Timothy 5:7, widows indeed must possess this. All Christians are required to develop blamelessness (1 Cor. 1:8; Col. 1:22).

This calls for men of unquestionable integrity. It does not require perfection. For example, Peter was an elder (1 Pet. 5:1), yet Paul blamed Peter in Galatians 2:11-14. As a matter of fact, no Christian is perfect (1 Jn. 1:6-10). Nor do these terms imply that accusations cannot be leveled against them. Christ and His apostles were accused of an assortment of sins. However, he must not be one against whom evil reports constantly are being circulated. He is blameless because all past mistakes have been corrected. He has so lived his life that when anybody brings an accusation against him, a fair test will prove it to be empty. Old skeletons cannot be pulled out of the closet and used against him. God wants his eldership to be unimpeachable and unproveable.

### **Husband of One Wife, 3:2**

This qualification is translated from the Greek words: *"mias gunaikos andra"*, Literally, the phrase means *"a one woman man"* or *"a man who has only one woman."* If an individual is a *"one farm man"* he couldn't have more than one farm, yet he must have a farm. If one is a *"worshiper of one God"*, he is neither an atheist (a no God man) nor a polytheist (a believer in many gods), but he believes in and worships one God.

Some feel that it only prohibits polygamy. Again, some feel that it prohibits polygamy, but it also enforces celibacy. A view promoted by some early Christian writers is that it prohibits decamy i.e. remarriage after the death or divorce of one's spouse. Finally, there is the view that this not only prohibits polygamy and requires that a man be scripturally married to a woman.

This qualification would eliminate many men from consideration based on their marital status. (1) No polygamist could be appointed to the eldership. (2) Those who practiced any form of concubinage

would not qualify. (3) A man who has divorced his wife for any other reason than fornication cannot be an elder (Mt. 5:32; 19:4-9). Any previous marriage that ended in divorce requires that the wife had been put away for adultery and only then could the man remarry. (4) Neither could he marry an unscripturally divorced woman. By being married to a woman who has not been scripturally divorced would make him the husband of another man's wife. (5) To be qualified the man must have a wife at the time of his appointment. (5) He cannot be a bachelor. A bachelor is not a one woman man, but a no woman man. As a bachelor he would automatically be unqualified in other areas. He could have his household in subjection nor could have a wife in subjection to him. He could not demonstrate his ability to rule his household well. The bishop cannot be a husband of any kind unless he is married. If he could be a husband without marriage, he would be an unmarried husband, which is ridiculous. It would be as ridiculous as "single wives" or "married bachelors".

First, there is the concern as to whether or not an elder can continue to serve as an elder after his wife dies. Marriage ends in death (Rom. 7:2,3). He is no longer a one woman man. He is a no woman man, a bachelor. Another question closely related to this one is whether or not a man can be qualified if he remarries after his first wife as died. The answer is definitely yes. Again, marriage ends in death (Rom. 7:2,3). The man isn't also married to the dead woman, but has one wife. Finally, we consider whether or not a man is still qualified to serve if his wife has become unfaithful. An elder's wife must also meet certain qualification (1 Tim. 3:11).

### **Vigilant, 3:2**

"Naphaleon" according to Thayer means "sober, temperate, abstaining from wine, either entirely or at least from its immoderate use..." (p. 425.) Originally the word meant complete abstinence from wine.

This means that he is a good watchman. He must have the right kind of vision in watching over the church. Vision is a quality lacking in many elderships today. Many are aptly described in the statement made by Alexandre Ledru-Rollin, "There go my people. I must find out where they are going so I can lead them." Some elderships are nothing but "blind leaders of the blind". Too many congregations are "sheep without a shepherd". Vision is not merely the act of seeing, but it is an imaginative perception of things combining insight with foresight. A deep dissatisfaction with what is and a clear grasp of what could be. Without vision there are no goals, without goals the church goes no where but astray. Overseers need to see long and short term goals. Politicians publish election manifestos. Military personnel lay down campaign strategy. It is the ability to see the opportunities to strengthen the young and the weak. Seeing the opportunities to teach the lost. Recognition of leadership potential in others and knowing how to develop such. Not just seeing the problems, but visualizing the solutions. Vigilant elders have developed the quality of being able to watch himself and others against sin and false teachers (Ac. 20:28-31). Christians are commanded to "Obey those who rule over you, and be submissive, for they watch out for your souls, as those who must give account, Let them do so with joy and not with grief, for that would be unprofitable for you" (Heb. 13:17.) To be an overseer requires the ability to oversee souls, this calls for vision and watchfulness.

### **Sober-Minded, 3:2**

This is translated from "sophrona". It "denotes of sound mind (sozo, to save; phren, the mind), hence, self-controlled, soberminded,..." (Vine, p. 1057.) "a. of sound mind, sane, in one's senses...b. curbing one's desires and impulses, self-controlled, temperate..." (Thayer, p. 613.) Emphasizes calm, thoughtful, serious, good common sense. This quality is closely related to vigilant and temperate.

Being a watchman over the house of God is serious business. An elder must be a serious person. He is not a joker. A sober person can joke, but a joker will not be serious. He has complete control of his thinking faculties. He does not allow his thinking to be effected by alcohol or drugs, so he can think clearly at all times. An overseer is one who is well adjusted in the face of trial. A wise man in the ability to make good decisions.

### **Of Good Behavior, 3:2**

Thayer defines the Greek word "*kosmios*" as meaning, "*well-arranged, seemly, modest..a man living with decorum, a well-ordered life.*" (p. 202.) Vine tells us that this word is translated "*modest*" in 1 Timothy 2:9 and is definitive of a woman's apparel.

Must be one who wears orderly, respectable and modest clothing. His language is in good order as well as his habits. His priorities are in good order. He keeps his activities in proper perspective. He will not be found fishing on Sunday morning. With him there is a time to laugh, a time to cry, a time to praise, and a time to rebuke, expressing and controlling all emotions in proper order. In viewing his family, business, job, house, habits you will see that they are not conducted in a haphazard or careless fashion. He is not behind on payments. He is not hazardous with church affairs, etc. It also implies that one who can respond with true dignity to every situation. His life is full of good order. An orderly desk is not an empty desk, but one upon which everything can be properly arranged and utilized most effectively.

### **Given to Hospitality, 3:2**

The Bible is resplendent with examples of hospitable, friendly children of God. It is said that Abraham entertained angels from God unaware through his hospitality (Gen. 18:2,3). One of the reasons why Peter was summoned to the lifeless corpse of Tabitha was her great reputation for hospitality (Ac. 9:36). Right after her conversion, Lydia, demonstrated this quality in her hospitality to Paul and Silas (Ac. 16:15,40). Again, all Christians are to be hospitable to all men (1 Pet. 4:9). Since Pentecost this has been a reoccurring quality of God's people (Ac. 2:46). Probably the need for hospitality was greater in Timothy's day than in ours. We are told that the inns were dirty, dangerous and immoral. In a Greek play an actor responded to another concerning where they would stay that night, and he said, "*Where the fleas are fewer.*"

This is a quality to be demonstrated to all men even strangers (Gal. 6:10; Heb. 13:2). It is easy to show hospitality to brethren we love and know it is a whole different ball game to go all out for a complete stranger. An elder must have a reputation among brethren and strangers of being hospitable and friendly. His home is always open. Many men cannot use their homes as such because there isn't a good home life in their house. Sometimes a motel room would provide about as much warmth as can be found in some homes. Too many homes are like holy places, instead of workshops. Some are like an idol or like a shrine for all their material possessions. Their hospitality is seen in their willingness to provide for the needs of others (1 Jn. 3:17,18). He has a reputation as a generous gentlemen not a materialistic miser. Not just laying up for himself, but willing to part with what is his for the benefit of others. This qualification involves the whole family, especially the wife. She holds the key that can help make or break this quality in her husband. If the wife is too inhospitable than her husband cannot qualify. Most wives work outside the home know and have no time to "entertain". Regardless, of the reasons wife we are becoming an inhospitable nation, an elder still must have this quality. Overseers need this quality in order to do their work. Being an elders involves more than just making a few decisions. Much work is to be done. To qualify, his home must be known as a haven of hospitality.

### **Apt to Teach, 3:2**

Vine defines "*didaktikos*" as "*skilled in teaching*". (p. 112.) Thayer: "*apt and skillful in teaching*" (p. 144).

The Old Testament has many examples of able teachers. Moses though he did not consider himself much of a speaker or a willing leader turned out to be the greatest teacher of his day. Many of the great prophets were apt teachers. During the great revival following the restoration of the remnant to the promised land the Law as read and apt teachers were utilized to give the meaning of the text.

Jesus Christ is a great example of this (Mt. 7:28,29). Evangelist are to have this quality (2 Tim. 2:24). Timothy is instructed by Paul to encourage teaching ability in others. "*And the things you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also*" (2 Tim. 2:2.) Certainly all Christians are to strive in this area (2 Th. 2:15). Of course this is a relative qualification for no two men have exactly the same ability. A certain amount of native ability is requisite to being "*apt to*

*teach.*" He must be able to teach well, better than average. This ability is not proven by teaching a class one time and preaching a lesson or two. Many congregations have made a farce out of this qualification by having the prospective elder, who has never taught before, get up and teach one adult class for a quarter. This qualification is not requesting that we simply find the most knowledgeable man in the congregation. Even knowledgeable men don't always have the ability to teach. A man could be a walking Bible Encyclopedia yet unable to relay any of his knowledge through teaching. It does require a man who knows the Bible very well. Some older men have been Christians for years, but young men know more than they do (Heb. 5:12-14). He must be given to study and meditation (2 Tim. 2:15; Ps. 1:2). A man can't teach what he doesn't know. Furthermore, he must have a willingness to teach others.

Reasons for this qualification: *"be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and convince the gainsayers."* (Tit. 1:9) To be able to *"feed the flock of God"* (Ac. 20:28; 1 Pet. 5:2). Both the flock and the shepherds have the same diet. He needs to be ready at all times to give an answer and willing and prepared to contend for the faith (1 Pet. 3:15; Jd. 3). In some churches elders don't teach at all. All the teaching is left up to the preacher. This is misfortunate for the sheep. This qualification must be obtained prior to being appointed and maintained after appointment for the benefit of teaching the flock.

### **Not Given to Wine, 3:3**

From the Greek word: *"ma"* (not) *"paroinon"*. Paroinon means *"Lit. tarrying at wine...probably has the secondary sense, of the effects of wine-bibbing."* (Vine, p. 146.) Concerning this qualification commentator, Adam Clark wrote, *"This word not only signifies one who is inordinately attached to wine, a winebibber or tippler, but also one who is imperious, abusive, insolent, whether through wine or otherwise."*

It is interesting to note that Old Testament priests were forbidden the use of wine because of their work in the Tabernacle (Lev. 10:8-11). Today, the office of a bishop and the drinking of alcoholic beverages do not mix any better than water does with oil. John the Baptist who was sent with a special mission by God was not to drink any wine or liquor. As the angel instructed Zacharias, *"For he will be great in the sight of the Lord, and he will drink no wine or liquor; and he will be filled with the Holy Spirit, while yet in his mother's womb."*

Could this restriction simply mean that elders could not be drunkards or alcoholics? Of course, no Christian can be a drunkard so Paul cannot be simply saying that they cannot be drunkards. If he wished to say that he would have used the Greek word *"methē"*. The key to translating here is the Greek word, *"paroinos"*, which is only used twice in the whole Bible. Paroinos is a compound word *"para"* meaning *"at the side of"* or *"along side"*. *"Oinos"* simply means wine either fermented or unfermented. Literally, this qualification means that elders are not to be found along side of wine. An elder who is seen along side of wine can destroy his influence with those both inside and outside of the church. A deacon defended his right to drink "moderately" in the privacy of his own home. Perhaps he never drank to excess; certainly he never became a drunkard, but his teenage son did.

### **Not a Striker, 3:3**

Translated from the Greek words *"ma"* (not) *"plaktan"*. David Libscomb describes it as *"Ungoverned in temper, ready to resent insult or wrong..."* (p. 147.) This qualification is closely related to brawler, not soon angry, temperate, and patient, but is a distinct quality.

The best opposite example of this would be Christ. *"And while being reviled, He did not revile in return; While suffering, He uttered no threats, but kept entrusting Himself to Him who judges righteously;"* (1 Pet. 2:23.) Although he could have destroyed any physical opponent he chose to exercise self-control. In contrast to many today who are willing to take up arms against any one who threatens their way of life, even those who claim to be Christians have been involved in striking out at others in armed attacks. Christ's Kingdom is not a militant organization like the I.R.A. we do not strike out at our enemies with carnal warfare.

An elder must be one who is not apt to strike out at the opposition in any form. He is not too "quick on the trigger". He won't strike out to hurt with physical force, verbal abuse, emotional abuse or negative actions. Elders need this quality for they will have to deal with false teachers and must get doors slammed in their faces. Overseers will have to give an account for how they have reacted when Judgment Day

arrives. Remember, God loves a peacemaker.

### **Not Greedy of Money, 3:3**

Many examples of this type of man can be found throughout the scriptures. Balaam desired money to the extent that he was willing to prophecy against the chosen children of God. Ahab wanted Naboth's vineyard so badly that his pagan wife lied and killed to obtain it for him. The rich fool in Jesus' parable (Lk. 12:16-20). A man who will neglect his own soul for material gain will neglect the souls of others. The Rich Young Ruler is a prime example of one in a place of leadership who refuse to sell all and give to the poor in order to be a disciple of Jesus (Mt. 19:16). The early church had to deal with this attitude when Ananias and Sapphira lied to the Holy Spirit about the money they were giving (Ac. 5:1-11). Peter also had to deal with Simon who sought to purchase the right to bestow the gifts of the Holy Spirit on others (Ac. 8:22f). The early Christian writers understood this to be a necessary quality when they wrote, "*Appoint, therefore, for yourselves, bishops and deacons worthy of the Lord, men meek, and not lovers of money...*" (Teaching of the Twelve Apostles, Ante-Nicene Fathers, vol. 7, p. 381.)

To be an elder one must have his priorities in proper order relative to material things. He must seek the Kingdom of God above the dominion of Mammon, (Mt. 6:33). He realizes the futility of trying to serve both God and mammon (material world) (Mt. 6:24). It requires a man that serves God, not gold; the Savior, not silver, and the Master, not money. Paul recalled the words of the Savior in Acts 20:35 to illustrate this point to the Ephesian elders. "*It is more blessed to give than to receive.*" He must never be materialistic in his outlook or neglect his duties to make money. We are to look for men who are greater lovers of souls and the church than material things. Where others may see dollars signs the elders will see opportunities and souls to assist.

Some elderships are too materialistic. They treat the treasury as if it were their own to do with as the please without regard to the Will of God or the needs and concerns of the congregation. Some elderships become misers, not wishing to spend, but hoard up what is God's. Remember, the great commission contains no command to "go into all the world and make and save up money". We have been commissioned to make disciples, not "*nice little nest eggs*" for that obscure rainy day. True elders will never allow the wealthy members to blackmail them into making biased decisions or curtailing the preaching of the gospel on a certain subject. Of course, truly qualified men are those who would never stoop to improper means to get gain.

### **Patient, 3:3**

This same qualification is required of gospel preachers (2 Tim. 2:24). Paul's gentleness toward the Thessalonians is as a nursing mother (1 Th. 2:7). This is part of God's character (2 Pet. 3:9). Perhaps the best illustration of this is that of Christ. He is the Lion of Judah, but we also see Him as the Lamb of God. The Chief Shepherd is very gentle. "*Those who serve therefore under this Shepherd must be of like disposition. The very term shepherd is a synonym for gentleness and mildness. Gentile men are to serve under a God of gentleness and a Savior of gentleness.*" (Robert R. Taylor Jr., THE ELDER AND HIS WORK, p. 70.)

This qualification allows him to be easily approached by others with their problems and/or questions. He does not easily offend and is not easily offended. While opposing sin and err he is considerate of the other person. Not one who is vengeful, too eager or impetuous or harsh. The ability to deal with any problem that comes up no matter how long it takes or how often. He can deal with weak Christians out of love. He cannot use any physical means to make the sheep stay in line, but by patient teaching and example they will follow. Though the sheep may be complaining or murmuring he does not, even in the face of provocation.

### **Not a Brawler, 3:3**

This qualification is from the Greek word "*amachos*". "*Commonly not to be withstood, invincible; more rarely abstaining from fighting.*" (Thayer, p. 31.) It is the idea of abstaining from battle, whether physical or verbal.

He isn't one of these men who have a reputation for always being in the thick of it when there is a problem. This qualification negates any man who is a noisy person or delights in an issue. Rather he avoids foolish questions (Tit. 3:9) and he avoids envying and strife (Js. 3:16). He can surrender his rights to others to avoid wrangling and fighting over opinions. He doesn't have a chip on his shoulder nor is he trigger happy toward everything that is done or said. He is a lover of peace, not a lover of a good fight.

### **Rules Well His Own House, 3:4**

*"That ruleth"* comes from the Greek words *"proista nenos"*. Vine defines rule as *"to stand before, hence, to lead, attend to (indicating care and diligence)."* (p. 979). *"The participle means placed in front"*. (Vincent, v. 3, p. 231). According to Thayer it means *"1. to set or place before, to set over...a. to be over, to superintend, preside over...b. to be a protector or guardian; to give aid...c. to care for give attention to"*. (p. 539). He defines the Greek word for well as meaning *"beautifully, finely, excellently, well, rightly, so that there shall be no room for blame."* (Thayer, p. 323).

An early example of this fine leadership in the home is seen in Noah. Though the entire world around him was perverse and rejected God and Noah's preaching, he saved his family. Joshua illustrated this when he told all Israel, *"And if it seems evil to you to serve the Lord, choose you yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the river, of the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you dwell, but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord"* (Josh. 24:15.) Cornelius and the Philippian Jailor would be prime New Testament examples of those who ruled their household well (Ac. 10 and 16:31-34).

The home is God's proving ground for leadership ability. Why? Paul gives us the reason, *"But if a man knoweth not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?"* Note, *"rule his own house"* is in the present tense while *"take care of the church"* is in the future tense. A man must first prove his ability in the home then he is qualified to rule over the church. If a man cannot manage a small store how can he manage a large store. If a man cannot manage a little lemonade stand how can he manage a Fortune 500 company. Indeed, an elder is to be a ruler (Heb. 13:17). If he cannot rule his own house and family there is no way he is qualified to rule over God's house and family.

### **Has Children, 3:4**

He must be a father. Little argument can be given as to whether a man who has no children and never has could be appointed. Divine wisdom is seen in requiring a father to be an elder. He has a better understanding of children and young people. He can be more sympathetic to the needs of the congregation.

How many children must a man have to qualify? Some argue that no children are required. Since this view is somewhat rare and weak at this time we will not deal with it in our study. Others say that this requires a man to have a plurality of children. On the opposing side of this are those who say that a man must have at least one child. The basis of the second view is that the word *"children"* is plural and therefore forbids the singular (child). The Greek word for children is *"tekna"*. An investigation of its Biblical usage will prove helpful in resolving the differences. In his classical work, *Hermeneutics*, Dungan informs us the it is possible for the plural to include the singular in a very common figure of speech called "synecdoche" is used throughout the scriptures.

"It is usually spoken as a figure of speech by which we speak of the whole by a part, or a part by using a term denoting the whole. But while this is the main feature of this trope, it by no means exhausts it... 'Who would have said unto Abraham, that Sarah should give children suck?' (Gen. 21:7). She never had but one child, and no other was ever promised. In Gen. 46:7, when Jacob was going into Egypt, it is indicated that he took 'his sons, and his sons' sons with him; his daughters, and his sons' daughters.' But Jacob never had more than one daughter - Dinah - that was defiled by Shechem." (Dungan, 300,307).

The Greek used of *"children"* is the same as the English. Suppose the school system announced *"We want all parents to bring your children to the school nurse tomorrow for a measles shot"*. If you had only one child would you bring them? Of course you would. But why? Because you understand through



common sense that by "children" they also meant "child". Suppose you were in an audience of people which was asked, "All parents with children please stand up". If you had but one child would you stand up? Of course you would.

### **Having His Children in Subjection, 3:4**

Subjection is to be subject to another's rule and authority. Gravity means serious or worthy of respect. His children are not to be accused of riot or unruly.

Would subjection apply to a child who has left home and has a home of his own. A parent does have an obligation to his grown children. Remember, Eli was condemned by God for not trying to control his sons. Eli was not automatically condemned because his grown sons had done wrong. He was condemned because he stood by and did nothing. However, when a child becomes a part of another home the father's authority over his children and their subjection to him is greatly limited. A father should be respected and honored. If a child becomes unfaithful to the Lord this does not automatically mean that child is not in subjection to their father. A son or daughter has a free will. He has the freedom of choice to serve God or not to. It doesn't matter how well the Father ruled over or how much the child had been in subjection to his father while at home. If a father pleads with his grown daughter to return to the Lord and she does not, such does not mean she is not under subjection to him. A father cannot force a his grown children to be faithful to the Lord. A child doesn't obey God on the basis of being in subjection to the father's request and desire that they do so. It needs to be noted that these qualifications are in the present tense. The elder's ruling of his children is in the present tense while the ruling of the church is mentioned in future tense (1 Tim. 3:5). Thus, if strictly adhered to this would require that an elder must have children at home in order to be appointed. Usually by the time a man has fulfilled all the qualifications, some, if not all, of his children have set up households of their own.

### **Not a Novice, 3:6**

From the Greek words "*ma neophuton*". "*lit. newly-planted, denotes a new convert, neophyte, novice, 1 Tim. 3:6; of one who by inexperience is unfitted to act as a bishop or overseer in a church.*" (Vine, p. 119.) What Thayer has to say is identical except he adds "*one who has recently become a Christian*". (p. 424.) Vincent says "*newly baptized...*"

He must be a meat eater in order to be qualified to feed others. The writer of Hebrews condemns some who ought to be able to teach others, but are yet novices in the word. (Heb. 5:12-14.)

Just because one has been a Christian 20, 30, or even 40 years does not mean he has this ability. A Christian with a Ph.D. in a secular field may know only a few fundamentals of the Gospel, and next to nothing when it comes to meatier portions of the Word. Note, it is not wrong to be a novice. All must grow from their spiritual birth on the milk of the Word (1 Pet. 2:2). What is the reason behind having this ability. Paul tells us in 1 Timothy 3:6, "*lest being puffed up with pride he fall into the same condemnation as the devil.*" Now there are two viewpoints as to the meaning of this reason: 1) the same condemnation into which the devil fell through pride. 2) the condemnation or accusation of the devil against the novice. Vincent defines the phrase "*being lifted up*" as meaning "*the verb means primarily to make smoke; hence, metaphorically, to blind with pride or conceit...a beclouded and stupid state of mind as the result of pride.*" (v. 3, p. 232.) "*beclouded...a confused state of mind, here due to conceit because of sudden elevation to office.*" (NEW BIBLE COMMENTARY: REVISED, p. 1171.) The new convert being so quickly elevated to this position would find himself in a cloud land of conceit and pride. It is the condemnation into which the devil fell. The cause of Satan's downfall: pride. As the novice grows and develops spiritual attitudes the danger of being puffed up with conceit will grow less and less. For a congregation to appoint a novice is to put his soul in jeopardy and rob themselves of having a fine elder in the future. It is wonderful that young Christians have a desire to lead. The church should strive to channel those desires in a positive way to develop elders for the future.

### **Of Good Report, 3:7**

The seven men of good reputation were chosen in Acts 6:3 to serve in the early church. Again,

widows indeed are to have this quality (I Tim. 5:10). Furthermore, all Christians are to be have good reputations with all men (Phil. 2:15). From the very beginning of the New Testament church we see this as a quality among God's people. *"praising God, and having favor with all the people..."* (Ac. 2:47.)

They are to have good dealing with all men. It is essential *"lest he fall into the reproach and snare of the devil"*. Elders without this quality will succumb easily to the snares of the Devil. *"Those that are without"* clearly represents people who are not Christians. These people see him at work or at play. They see who his friends are and the places he frequents. Although it may seem strange that God is essentially allowing the views of the world to help us select elders, these people can often have a clearer or at least a different perception of the man. J.W. McGarvey said, *"The good which a church is capable of accomplishing in a community depends very much upon its reputation, and the reputation of the church depends much upon that of its representative men."* God wants His elders to lead His church before a world that will recognize their good reputations.

### Questions:

1. T F It is wrong to appoint a man to be an elder who eagerly seeks the position.
2. How would patience assist one serving as an elder?
3. T F To be blameless one must be perfect.
4. Why would a good report from those outside of Christ help qualify a man?
5. What does the Greek word "philoxenos" literally mean?
6. Who is a brawler?
7. How would a greedy, covetous man function as an elder?
8. What is the literal meaning of "paroinos"?
9. How would an elder's sober-mindedness assist him in his work?
10. In your own words define "vigilant."

11. Give two reasons why a novice should not be appointed as an elder:
11. T F "Apt to teach" is an relative qualification, because no two men have the exact same teaching ability.
12. Give some reasons why churches should appoint men who are apt to teach in the area of personal evangelism.
13. List four reasons why a woman couldn't be appointed an elder.
14. T F Nothing in Paul's writings on second marriages suggests the notion of there being anything disreputable in a second marriage.
15. Answer the argument: "Christ was not married therefore elders do not have to be married."
16. If a man's wife dies while he is serving as an elder he should a) resign b) continue to serve because he had a wife when appointed c) continue to serve as long as he plans to remarry in the near future.
17. Why must a man rule his own household well before he can be qualified as an elder?
18. List some verses where the word "children" is used in a way that includes the singular "child".
19. What should an elder do if one of his children who has not for some time lived in their own home but has become unfaithful?

**Application & Discussion:**

1. What are some things a congregation can do to prepare young men to one day serve as elders?

# Qualifications of Deacons and Wives

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## 1 Timothy 3:8-13

*8 Likewise deacons must be reverent, not double-tongued, not given to much wine, not greedy for money, 9 holding the mystery of the faith with a pure conscience. 10 But let these also first be tested; then let them serve as deacons, being found blameless. 12 Let deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well.*

The translators took the Greek word *diaconos* and transliterated it to produce the English term “deacon.” Elsewhere, in the New Testament this term is translated “servant” or “minister.” It can be used in a general sense referring to all Christians as servants of God (Jn. 12:26) or in a specific sense such as in this passage where qualified men serve the church in a leadership role. They are selected because they have met specific qualifications and are appointed to render a service in their office as a deacon. Deacons who hold an office in the organization of a local congregation are mentioned along side overseers in the church at Philippi (Phil. 1:1).

Perhaps the first mention of men who were selected based on qualifications to serve a congregation as deacons would be found in Acts 6:1-6. Although these men are never called deacons they represent the type of men and sort of work deacons are to fulfill. The Hellenist widows in the early church at Jerusalem were being neglected. The apostle asks that seven men who were qualified be appointed to serve the needs of these widows.

Notice that wherever deacons are mentioned as specific qualified servants in a congregation they are always male.

### Qualifications for Deacons

The seven selected at Jerusalem had to have special qualifications in order to serve. *“Therefore, brethren, seek out from among you seven men of good reputation, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business”* (Acts 6:3). Some of these are parallel to the qualifications described below.

#### **Reverent, 8**

Phillips translates this as “men of serious outlook.” They take their work seriously. People admire them for the dignity of character they express. This does not mean they are joyless and never crack a joke. This qualification requires a man who understands that life and the church is serious business and his work is not to be taken lightly.

#### **Not Double-tongued, 8**

This term is only found here in the New Testament. A double-tongued man will say one thing to one person and another thing to another. However a deacon cannot be hypocritical in his speech. His words must be reliable. He will not use his tongue to say things just for the sake of manipulating people to do the things he wants them to do.

#### **Not Given to Much Wine, 8**

The Revised Standard Version translates this phrase: “Not addicted to much wine.” Some argue that elders cannot drink wine at all according to verse three. Deacons can drink so long as they are

moderate drinkers. James Bales comments: "To argue that by forbidding 'much wine' St. Paul approves some use of wine of any and every sort, is to adopt a mode of interpretation exceedingly dangerous, and wholly inconsistent with usage." Jim McGuiggan in his book, *The Bible, The Saint, and The Liquor Industry*, wrote "besides, the condemnation of excess doesn't always mean moderation is approved. Look: 'You must stop this incessant lying!' Does this mean occasional lying is all right? 'You must stop this constant bickering.' Does this mean bickering is approved if held in moderation?" (McGuiggan 142).

Can deacons engage in social drinking as long as it is not much? The Greek word for "not" is *me*. It means "not, never at any time."

### ***Not Greedy for Money, 8***

Bullinger says this means not "eager even for dishonourable gain." Deacons are those who will have to take care of money matters. They may handle the collections or distribute funds to needy saints or ministers or purchase necessary materials or pay bills. The same qualification is required of elders in verse three.

### ***Holding the Mystery of the Faith with a Pure Conscience, 9***

This is akin to the requirement of elders who must "*hold fast the faithful word*" (Tit. 1:9). The mystery refers to that which was unknown, but now revealed (Eph. 3:3-5). The Gospel has been revealed. It is the Faith or the Word of God. Deacons "must base their decisions on the Word of God, and they must back up their decisions with godly lives" (Wiersbe 221). Obviously, they must be knowledgeable of the Word of God.

Since they may be tempted to compromise the truth, a clear conscience acts as a safeguard. Whenever they violate a commandment of God they are pricked and convicted in their hearts that they are wrong. On the positive side of this, deacons who do their work according to the Truth will be commended by their own clear conscience.

### ***First Be Tested, 10***

The word "*also*" shows that elders too must be proved. This testing or proving of a man is to be done before they are appointed to the office of an overseer or deacon. "The present tense of the verb indicates an ongoing test, not a one-time test, or probationary period...this evaluation goes on" after their appointment (MacArthur 129).

### ***Being Found Blameless, 10***

This is the same qualification required of those desiring to be overseers in verse two. It originally was used in the secular Greek world to refer to a man whose life was so unimpeachable that there was nothing by which he could justifiably be brought up on charges or arraigned in a court.

### ***Husbands of One Wife, 12***

This too is a qualification of an elder in verse two. A deacon must be a "one-woman man." Thus, a bachelor can never be appointed as deacon. If a deacon is married he must have but one wife. If he is divorced it must have been for the reason of sexual immorality on the part of his wife. If he is remarried, he must marry a woman who has a right to remarriage. While serving as a deacon, if his wife dies he must resign or if he becomes divorced, he must resign.

### ***Ruling Their Children and Their Own Houses Well, 12***

Like elders, deacons must have children. Although by the use of figures of speech a man with but a single child would still qualify. However, deacons are not required to have children who are believers as is the requirement for elders (Tit. 1:6). To rule in a congregation, deacons must have already proven that they are heads of their household and can manage the family funds, and possessions as well as family members.

*13 For those who have served well as deacons obtain for themselves a good standing and great*

*boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus.*

### **Rewards for Deacons**

If deacons serve well they have the promise of two great spiritual rewards. First, they will be elevated to a high standing before God and among their brethren. They will be blessed with a good reputation. In other words, placed on a pedestal and have their lives copied by the saints who admire their hard work. Secondly, serving the church faithfully will gain for them greater influence over the people they are serving. Their good deeds will bring assurance to others and inspire them to greater confidence. Indeed, these two rewards represent a spiritual promotion any deacon should covet.

*11 Likewise their wives must be reverent, not slanderers, temperate, faithful in all things.*

### **Qualifications of the Wives of Elders and Deacons**

Can a woman serve as an elder? Only if she can attain the qualifications listed in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9 for one to be an overseer. How can a woman be the *"husband of one wife"*? Not to mention the first qualification: *"If a man..."* Obviously, God never intended for women to be shepherds of the flock.

Some will argue that the very existence of a set of qualifications for women is proof for a position for women in the leadership of the congregation. In other words, 1 Timothy 3:11 is speaking of women officers rather than the wives of the deacons or elders. 1 Timothy 3:11 is speaking of the qualifications for the wives of both elders and deacons. Still others hold a view that this is proof of an official position for women leaders in the church, such as, a deaconess.

A bad woman can have an evil influence upon any man. The bad conduct of a woman can disqualify her husband from the office of either elder or deacon. No man should be allowed to serve in the office unless he has such a wife who meets the following qualifications. *"Likewise their wives must be reverent, not slanderers, temperate, faithful in all things"*.

### **Grave**

The Greek word *semnos* means not given to flippancy and childish behavior, but is respectable, honorable or honest. She is not indifferent to the work of the church. Her seriousness about Christianity she professes can be seen in the way she studies, treats worship services and even in the way she dresses (1 Tim. 2:9,10). This in no way means she cannot have a sense of humor and has to be cold and serious at all times. As Robert M. Hutchins wrote *"It is not so important to be serious as it is to be serious about important things"*.

### **Not a slanderer**

Translated from the word *"diabolos"*. It is the same as is applied to the devil and means a false accuser. This is a serious sin of the tongue. Often women have been singled out and warned about the need to guard their speech. Older women and younger women alike have been encouraged not to be busybodies in idle talk. As the old saying goes, *"There are four effective ways to transmit information abroad: telegraph, telephone, television, and tell a woman"*. Just as some doctors look at a patient's tongue to determine the general condition of their health, so the spiritual health of an elder or deacon's wife can be determined by how she uses her tongue. It will be important for her to hold her temper when people unjustly criticize her husband, herself or even her children. The need for confidentiality is paramount. As his wife, she will take phone messages, receive visitors, sit in on conversations with sisters with problems. Members will expect her to fill in all the juicy details. Yet she may know little and be able to tell less. As Henry Delaune wrote, *"Think all you speak, but speak not all you think"*. Her words will be chosen wisely and used kindly remembering that they cannot be *"unsaid."* Once the words leave the mouth they are no longer hers to control. She cannot be the starting point for rumors nor the carrying agent for such. After all, if we do not bridle our tongue, our religion is vain (James 1:26).

## **Sober**

The Greek word *nephaleos* is most often translated “sober”. Vine’s says it “*signifies to be free from the influence of intoxicants; in the N.T., metaphorically, it does not itself imply watchfulness, but is used in association with it...*” Indeed, Paul instructed Titus that older women were to be “*not given to much wine,*” (Titus 2:3). The fact is that mere moderation in drinking of alcohol robs one of their clear thinking and a temperate condition of mind and attitude. Although this is the general meaning, she should consider the need to always be in such a state of mind. After all soberness is required of all women (1 Tim. 2:9) and all Christians. It will involve the ability setting her heart and mind on higher things.

## **Faithful In All Things**

“*Faithful*” is translated from the Greek word “*pistos*” meaning trustworthy or trustful, sure, and true. This means in all areas of her life not just in regard to being a wife of an elder or deacon. As a helpmeet to her husband she will demonstrate faithfulness. Being a dedicated mother will show her to be faithful to her children. Her faithfulness to God will be seen in how she submissively obeys the Will of God in all things.

When the congregation selected and appointed her husband as one of their elders or deacons, they also revealed their trust in her to fulfill her place as his wife. To be a wife means to be a helpmeet. She can help her husband by her willingness to serve; by not being materialistic; by being in subjection; by showing hospitality; by being a good mother; by maintaining a good reputation; and by working with the local congregation.

Also, ladies Bible classes can help prepare the younger women to develop the qualifications and abilities to be the wives of elders and deacons. They need to start preparing now. These worthy women are made, not born. Just as each man should be preparing himself to serve in the capacity of elder or deacon, the young woman at his side is working to fit herself as the proper wife. A man does not occupy the position of an elder or deacon on the assumption that he will develop the necessary qualifications. The Bible said that they “*Must be*” certain things not maybe or perhaps.

Behind every strong elder and deacon there stands a strong, godly woman. Far too often she is the unsung hero. “*An elder’s wife must be as staunch as a rock, as busy as a beaver, as quiet as a mouse, as biblically informed as a preacher, as flexible as a rubber band, and as patient as a mother of triplets*”.

## **Questions:**

1. What does the term deacon mean? To whom can it be applied?
2. What does reverent mean?
3. Why would having a double-tongued deacon in the church present a problem?
4. T F Deacons can drink alcohol so long as they are moderate drinkers.
5. What does a deacon need to have a good attitude toward money?
6. How can a clear conscience assist a deacon in his work?

7. T F To be blameless a deacon must be morally perfect or sinless.
8. Is a deacon still qualified if his wife dies? Explain.
9. Can one be a deacon if none of his children are yet old enough to be baptized?
10. What two rewards are promised to faithful deacons?
11. List the qualifications of elders and deacons which women obviously can never attain.
12. Define the term “grave” and apply the meaning to the role of an elder or deacon’s wife.
13. Why is it so important for the wives of church leaders to guard their tongue?
14. Originally and generally what does the Greek term for “sober” signify?
15. List some specific areas where these wives need to be faithful.

**Application & Discussion:**

1. How can prospective elders and deacons be tested?
2. What are some things the wives of overseers and deacons can help their husbands do in their work?



# The Mission and Message of the Church

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## 1 Timothy 3:14-16

*14 These things I write to you, though I hope to come to you shortly; 15a but if I am delayed, I write so that you may know how you ought to conduct yourself*

### **Purpose of the Letter**

In the middle of the letter Paul takes a moment to introduce its purpose. Why did Paul write to Timothy? Two reasons stand out in this passage: First, Paul was not going to be able to come to him as soon as he had hoped. Paul's plans were often changed due to circumstances beyond his control. Sometimes the Holy Spirit would give him instructions which would change his schedule. At other times, false teachers used by Satan would hinder him and force a change of venue and itinerary. Therefore, there were things he wanted to write about. These things include the instructions found throughout the entire letter. Timothy needs to know how necessary it was to deal with false teachers who abuse the Law; discipline men like Alexander and Hymenaeus as did Paul; the need for godly men to pray for all so all could be saved; the role of women with relationship to men and their future salvation; the need to appoint qualified men as elders and deacons; and along with rest of the charges that will be given in the second half of the letter. Second, Timothy needed to know how to behave himself with regard to the church. This is not referring to his conduct in the building where the church gathered. Often times this passage is used in reference to children running around and misbehaving in the church building. The church is God's house and He has serious house rules which must be followed. If Timothy or any other child of God is going to be a part of His house, they are going to have to abide by the rules.

*15b in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.*

### **Mission of the Church**

The church is here described to Timothy by the use of three metaphors: a family or household; an assembly; and a temple. The term *house* is not the best translation, instead the term *household* would identify the church as God's family. When one is born again of water and the spirit (Jn. 3:3-5) he is added to the family of God (Acts 2:47). As brothers and sisters in Christ, God is now their father. They need to respect His house; His rules; His family.

Paul moves from a family description to that of an assembly of people. The Greek word *ekklesia* is used some one hundred times in the New Testament in reference to the spiritual church or assembly of God's people. Originally, the word was used to describe the assemblies in the Greek cities where the citizens congregated to participate in secular activities. In contrast, the assembly Paul is referring to is not a political or secular gathering of people. He is using the term to refer to those who have been "called out" of the world of darkness and sin and into a kingdom of Light. It is clearly a God-ordained institution not a man-made human institution. This spiritual assembly or congregation belongs to the living God. Many pagans would assemble at the great Temple of Diana in Ephesus, but God has His own congregation at Ephesus. He is the living God unlike the lifeless goddess they often assembled to serve.

The third metaphor employed by Paul to identify the Lord's people is a Temple. Paul no doubt has in mind a comparison to the great Temple of Diana which was one of the seven wonders of the world. It was 180 feet wide, 377 feet long and rested on a platform that was 229 feet wide and 418 feet long. The roof was supported by 177 sixty-foot columns that were six-feet in diameter. The constructing of this great

temple took over 220 years to complete. Each of the marble pillars was a gift from a king and was studded with jewels and overlaid with gold. Indeed it was a beautiful sight to behold in Ephesus. The local pagan population and perhaps the Roman world was very proud of this important and loved architectural wonder. However, it is nothing in comparison to the grandeur and importance of the Temple which is an assembly of God's family.

Paul does not just stop here in telling Timothy what the church is, he moves on to describe the important purpose of the church as the pillar and ground of the Truth. A *pillar* is a support for a roof of the building and must rest on a firm foundation. The word *ground* is a bulwark or stay. Jesus is the foundation of the church. Perhaps the members are the pillar which up hold the Truth before the world. Notice the church is not the source of truth as the Catholic church claims. Only the Church has been Divinely designed to be able to uphold the truth. Why? Because the church was part of the eternal mind and wisdom of God. Because God's Temple alone is built upon the Foundation. Because no other Household has been purchased with the blood of the Son of God. It was built upon the Truth (Jn. 14:6) to be able to uphold the truth. The New Testament church is the only thing strong and stable enough to support the truth. It is the local church at Ephesus which was to be the guardian of the Truth. "As the foundation and pillars of the Temple of Diana were a testimony to the error of pagan false religion, so the church is to be a testimony to God's truth" (MacArthur 136). As Christianity increased, the Temple of Diana decreased in popularity and the number of cult pilgrims dwindled. And when the Temple was destroyed in 262 AD by the Goths it was never rebuilt.

*16 And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifested in the flesh, Justified in the Spirit, Seen by angels, Preached among the Gentiles, Believed on in the world, Received up in glory.*

### **The Message of the Church**

The mission of the church is to uphold the truth and in so doing it proclaims and protects the great message of truth of the church. This message is undeniably and without question the truth. It is also described as a mystery. This is not a riddle which cannot be solved or a secret which cannot be known. The truth is to be made known to all men as it has been revealed to us through the inspired apostles and prophets by the Holy Spirit (Eph. 3:3-5). This message is *great*, from the Greek word *mega*. The message of the church is a mega-mystery or mega-truth. There is nothing greater and nothing more important. Third, this message is one which tells man how to be godly. *Godliness* is from the English *god-likeness*. The Gospel reveals how mere men can be more like God in all His goodness.

The rest of the verse is one of the most famous sayings in the New Testament. It appears to have come straight out of the first-century from a hymn sung by the early Christians. Many scholars believe it to have been part of a hymn due to the phrases of actions verbs which are formed into three couplets which speak of the visible and the invisible. Taken as a whole this hymn sums up the revelation of the great mystery of godliness.

### **God was manifested in the flesh**

It was not a man who came in the flesh. There is no mystery or good news about that in particular. It is not a mega event for the world. However, for God to come to the earth in the flesh is a great event in the history of mankind. The term "manifested" is oft used of Christ (Jn. 1:31; 1 Jn. 1:2; 3:5,8). Before Jesus became flesh He was invisible to the created eye (Col. 1:15). Jesus Christ did not just show Himself as a man or come in human form. Instead, he was born, he drank and ate and grew and worked and slept and was tempted and died and His flesh was buried in a tomb just like all men. The incarnation of the Son of God was a major part of the mystery, which is now made known through the preaching of the Gospel. "*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ...And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth*" (Jn. 1:1,14). God became a man so man could be godly and have a relationship with God.

### ***Justified in the Spirit***

The word *justified* means to be “made righteous.” “Spirit” could mean the Holy Spirit or the inner spirit of Christ. It most like is referring to the later. Jesus was shown to be righteous in His own spirit. He never did anything wrong. His soul never needed to be redeemed from sin. His disciples, His enemies, Pilate, the thief on the cross, and the centurion at the cross could all testify that He was an innocent man. God Himself said of His Son, “*this is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased*” (Matt. 3:17; 17:5). Jesus never sinned. “*Who committed no sin, nor was deceit found in His mouth*” (1 Peter 2:22). “*For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin*” (Heb. 4:15). If He sinned and needed justification, He could have never become our Savior.

### ***Seen by angels***

Angels have played an indirect role in the salvation of mankind. They had been a part of the great mystery from Genesis to Revelation. They were at the birth of Jesus (Luke 2:8-10), His temptation (Matt. 4:11), His suffering in the Garden (Luke 22:43), His resurrection (Matt. 28:2-7; Jn. 20:11,12), and finally His ascension (Acts 1:9,10). From the Greek word translated here as seen is derived out English word “eyeball.” In fact, they are still “eyeballing” Him today in Heaven. All the angels knew that Jesus was God who came in the flesh and was perfect. They have seen it all.

### ***Preached among the Gentiles***

God has only sent men to preach this Gospel to the nations - not angels. Paul was by Christ selected at an ambassador to the Gentiles. He has demonstrated in his mission that the Gospel is for all, not just the Jews. Both Jew and Gentile can now be one in Christ. Jesus has been preached to all the world. The great commission is being fulfilled around the globe.

### ***Believed on in the world***

From the day of Pentecost where three thousand believed the Gospel and obeyed it to the conversion of Cornelius and beyond the Gospel is accepted by those in the world. Indeed, God’s Word has not returned unto Him void. It is the power of God unto salvation for all who believe (Rom. 1:16).

### ***Received up in glory***

Although the resurrection is not mentioned the ascension is clearly identified as part of the great mystery. Christ could never have ascended if He had not faithfully performed His mission. Jesus was the first space traveler long before the advent of modern rockets. He is now at the right hand of God upon the Throne of David. He ever lives as our High Priest making intercession for us. As promised, Jesus has gone to prepare a place for the faithful saints to dwell with God (Jn. 14:2).

This hymn is All-inclusive of the great mysteries which have now been revealed in what Jesus Christ has done.

- ▶ Apparent in the Flesh
- ▶ Absolved in the Spirit
- ▶ Attended to by angels
- ▶ Advocated to the Gentiles
- ▶ Accepted by some in the world
- ▶ Ascended into Heaven

### **Questions:**

1. What are the two reasons Paul wrote 1 Timothy?

2. What are the three metaphors Paul uses to describe the local congregation?

3. Define the Greek word *ekklesia*?

4. Describe the Temple of Diana at Ephesus?

5. What is the pillar and ground of the Truth? What else?

6. What happened to the Temple of Diana?

7. What is the "mystery of godliness"? Why is it great?

8. What do some believe verse 16 represents a first century hymn?

9. Matching:

- |                                     |   |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| ___ God was manifested in the flesh | a. At Christ's birth, resurrection, ascension |
| ___ Preached among the Gentiles     | b. incarnation                                |
| ___ Justified in the Spirit         | c. Gospel is for all                          |
| ___ Believed on in the world        | d. ascension                                  |
| ___ Seen by angels                  | e. Great Commission                           |
| ___ Received up in glory            | f. Sinlessness                                |

**Discussion:**

1. What are some practical ways the local congregation can be the pillar and ground of the church?

# Warning of Coming Apostasy

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## 1 Timothy 4:1-5

*1a Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith,*

### Prophecy of Apostasy

With the word “now” Paul is introducing a contrasting topic to the mission and message of the church. As an apostle of Christ he has received plain and precise revelation from the Holy Spirit that there will be departures from the Faith - the Truth, Word or Gospel. In fact, this is already taking place. Alexander and Hymenaeus have made shipwreck of their faith (1:18-20). Some have returned to the Law seeking justification and have fallen from grace (Gal. 5:4). Paul is not saying that the he heard from the Spirit and prophecy to be fulfilled in the distant future. As John wrote, “*it is the last hour*” (1 Jn. 2:18). He had told the Ephesus elders that some of them would become false teachers thus departing from the faith (Acts 20:29,30). He is telling Timothy that Ephesus should expect

Although Calvinism teaches “once saved, always saved,” Paul and the Holy Spirit did not teach this false doctrine. The Greek word for “depart” is *aphistemi* from which is derived the English word *apostatize*. Some Christians will continue to apostatize - “to remove oneself from the position originally occupied to another place’...and refers to a purposeful, deliberate departure form a former position” (MacArthur 147).

*1b giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons, 2 speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their own conscience seared with a hot iron,*

### Source of Apostasy

The reasons why some will depart is that some will stop listening to the truth and start listening to false teachers. The word for *deceiving* is from the Greek *planos*. It may sound and look familiar because from it the English word “plant” is derived. The term refers to wandering since the Greeks saw these heavenly bodies moving in the night sky. The terms “spirits” and “demons” do not refer to disembodied superhuman beings. It is true that in the age of miracles they afflicted many people physically. However, these victims were not deceived by false teaching. In fact, when Jesus met with demons they quickly spoke up and identified Him. Demons or spirits of the first century did not go about teaching false doctrine. The deceiving and departing was done by the free will of those who had previously made shipwreck of their faith and then deceived those who (of their own freewill) departed from the faith. John spoke of “spirits” but identified them as false prophets. “*Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world*” (1 John 4:1). “*But I fear, lest somehow, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, so your minds may be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ...For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into apostles of Christ. And no wonder! For Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also transform themselves into ministers of righteousness, whose end will be according to their works*” (2 Cor. 11:12-15).

This in no way is meant to disregard the fact that ultimately the Tempter and Deceiver is behind all false doctrine. He is the father of all lies (Jn. 8:44). He used Peter to tempt Jesus. When Jesus said to Peter “*Get behind Me, Satan!*” (Matt 16:23) the Lord was not saying that Peter was literally the Devil in disguise. Referring to Judas Jesus told His disciples, “*Did I not choose you, the twelve, and one of you is*

a devil?" (John 6:70). This is not identifying who Judas is but what he is like.

The second way saints would be seduced into departure is the lies spoken by hypocrites. Yes there were hypocrites in the early church. Consider Ananias and his wife, Saphirra, in Acts 5:1-11. False teachers are able to propagate their lies so effectively because they are play-acting godliness. Their true nature and motive is hidden under the cloak of friendship and heartless zeal for the truth. They were denying in their lives what they spoke with their lips.

The reason these false teachers were able to false teach and deceive was not just an act. Some of them had seared their conscience. To sear is from the medical term in the Greek from which the English word *cauterize*. Such tissue becomes thick and scarred and devoid of feeling. The conscience works to make men feel miserable and filled with pain when they do that which they know is wrong. However, if the warnings of the conscience are ignored long enough and often enough; they lose their influence. It is like a driver going down the highway on a long trip and a warning light comes on that the oil pressure has dropped to dangerous levels. So instead of stopping and doing something about it, he takes out a hammer and smashes it. Yet after a few more miles down the road the engine is ruined and the driver is sorry now. Likewise, a conscience insensitive to false doctrines being taught is indeed a very dangerous and costly thing.

*3 forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from foods which God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and know the truth. 4 For every creature of God is good, and nothing is to be refused if it is received with thanksgiving; 5 for it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer.*

### **Types of Apostasy**

Two different apostasies are listed: celibacy and dietary restrictions. Both of these are doctrines which promote asceticism. They were taught by the sect of the Jews in the first century called the Essenes. They two would become tenets of second century Gnosticism. The belief of some is that pleasures of the flesh are bad. So holiness, purity or great spirituality can be realized by giving up these fleshing desires that are opposed to the spirit. Some exaggerated the importance of virginity to such an extreme as to promote celibacy for church leaders. Today, Catholicism venerates the Virgin Mother and does not allow its clergy or religious orders to marry. As we have seen in chapter three, bishops and deacons must be "husbands of one wife." *"Marriage is honorable among all"* (Heb. 13:2). Some of the apostles themselves had wives (1 Cor. 9:5). Although there is nothing wrong with singleness.

The New King James mentions abstaining for foods however it could be translated "meats" and in this context should most likely be so rendered. These dietary restrictions have already been dealt with in Col. 2:14-16; Acts 10:10-15; etc. Food may be rejected for health reasons or when fasting, but no food is to be rejected for doctrinal reasons.

Marriage and eating of meat is good and should not be judged or restricted by others. Paul goes on and gives a few reasons why they should be accepted by the saints. First, when God created marriage and food He had mankind in mind. Since Christians have read and understood the truth from the accounts of the creation of animals and marriage, both these blessings from God should be accepted with gratitude toward the Giver. When God created food for man He pronounced that it was "good" (Gen. 1:10,12,18:31). Second, all God's gift are acceptable if accepted with an attitude of gratitude. This does not mean that everything created is fit for human consumption. There are some foods that will kill you if you eat them. One of my sermons is called, "Startling Confessions of a Gospel Preacher" one of the points in the lesson is that "marijuana is good." God created this plant and He said all the plants He created are good. However, that does not mean it is good to smoke it or eat it. After all, saints cannot maintain sober-mindedness as they are commanded while under the influence of plant chemicals. Finally, Paul reasons that foods can be sanctified by the Word and prayer. Sanctified means *to set apart* as holy unto God. The Word of God shows that food is acceptable to God who created it for man. His Word from the beginning has set these things aside for proper use by his creation. Our prayers count food as holy in recognizing that all is a gift from God. This passage alone should be reason enough for every Christian to take the time to pray a prayer of thanksgiving before every meal.

The result of following these two departures from the truth is to: 1) deny the teachings of the Word; 2) discredit the Creator; 3) rob Him of the thanksgiving and glory due Him; 4) and make a vain attempt to be more righteous than God.

### **Questions**

1. T F Paul is speaking of apostasy in the far distant future.
2. Is Paul talking about real demons and actual evil-spirits? Explain.
3. Why are false teachers able to deceive others?
4. What is a seared conscience?
5. What to specific false doctrines would they teaching?
6. Who told Paul about these coming apostasies?
7. What religious groups taught both of these false doctrines?
8. Show for the scriptures that God approves of marriage?
9. What are the consequences of following these two false doctrines?
10. What three reasons are given for not abstain for certain meats?

### **Application & Discussion:**

1. How does this passage refute the Calvinistic doctrine of impossibility of apostasy?

# Characteristics of a Good Minister

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## Part 1: 1 Timothy 4:6-11

*6a If you instruct the brethren in these things, you will be a good minister of Jesus Christ,*

The rest of chapter four is directed to Timothy as a minister of the Gospel. Several characteristics must be a constant part of his work ethic if he is to be an excellent evangelist or a prosperous preacher. The term for *minister* is *diakonos* which is the general term for servant. It was used in chapter three to refer to the specific office of a deacon. In this passage it is a description of Timothy's role as a minister for the church.

First, Timothy is to *instruct the brethren in these things*. This requires humble and gentle reminders to his spiritual family about all that which Paul had instructed him and will instruct him in this letter. It is an essential part of a minister's job to constantly remind the God's sons and daughters of the Father's will. Peter wrote, "*For this reason I will not be negligent to remind you always of these things, though you know and are established in the present truth*" (2 Pet. 1:12). God's children are forgetful. They need a simple reminder not a belligerent demand.

*6b nourished in the words of faith and of the good doctrine which you have carefully followed.*

Next, the good minister will *carefully follow* and be *nourished* by God's Word. A preacher does not just study enough to get his sermons and class material together. He needs to be nourished. In order to feed others spiritually Timothy first must be nourished. His mother and grandmother started to feed him the Word of God and Paul continued to instruct him. To *carefully follow* indicates the need to industriously study and practice the teachings he has learned so he can share it with others.

*7a But reject profane and old wives' fables,*

A good preacher must learn to reject unhealthy doctrines of men. Worldly fables or unholy, profane inventions or myths of men are to be rejected. They are in opposition to the Word of God which is not a myth and is not of this world. Paul's statement "*old wives' fables*" seems a bit chauvinistic. However, in the first century "women were not usually allowed the educational opportunity men had, so this phrase comes from such a situation. That epithet was commonly used in philosophical circles as a term of disdain for a viewpoint lacking credibility and thus appealing only to uneducated, unsophisticated, and perhaps senile matrons. No intelligent man would hear it at all. The Ephesians would have understood Paul's use of the phrase" (MacArthur 163).

*7b and exercise yourself toward godliness. 8 For bodily exercise profits a little, but godliness is profitable for all things, having promise of the life that now is and of that which is to come. 9 This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance.*

Ephesus like any other important city immersed in Greek culture would sport a gymnasium where young men in particular would gather to enhance their physique by means of gymnastics. Paul uses the Greek word *gumnazo* to make a contrast between the benefits of physical discipline and spiritual discipline. Whereas many Greek young men trained the body Timothy was to constantly train himself in godliness.



Paul knew that spiritual self-discipline was essential to living a godly life. *“Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may obtain it. And everyone who competes for the prize is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a perishable crown, but we for an imperishable crown. Therefore I run thus: not with uncertainty. Thus I fight: not as one who beats the air. But I discipline my body and bring it into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified”* (1 Cor 9:24-27). In order to discipline his spirit Timothy needed give up anything which would hinder his spiritual training. *“Let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us”* (Heb 12:1). He would have to give himself to reading the Bible, memorizing God’s Word, meditating on the message of Christ, pray without ceasing, put on the whole armor of God, etc.

Two reasons are given why Timothy needs to train himself in godliness. First, bodily exercise is of little profit in comparison. This does not encourage the neglect of the body. Paul knew of the value of the body and the proper attitude Christians should have toward their bodies. *“Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God’s”* (1 Cor 6:19-20). *“That you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service”* (Rom. 12:1). Second, by comparison spiritual exercise is more profitable. Bodily exercise can add years to your earthly life but cannot obtain eternal life. Physical training can help one be healthy now but it cannot directly assist a Christian in being sound in doctrine and faith.

If some Christians would put as much energy and enthusiasm into spiritual things as they do athletics and body-building how much stronger they and their churches would be! Sometimes one would conclude from the emphasis given to recreation, that godliness is profitable for a little, and that bodily exercise is profitable for all things. Do not be deceived, this body will grow old, die, and return to the dust. The soul will go on to Judgment (Eccl. 12:7; Heb. 9:27).

Physical life is not as important as the life to come. Science has discovered that there are countless benefits to physical exercise, such as, lots of energy, better ability to think, great endurance, better memory, etc. One of the greatest benefits is improved health, through reduction in weight, counteracting diabetes, reducing high blood pressure, etc. Paul is not saying physical exercise has no benefit. He is saying that compared to the benefits of Godly living, bodily exercise cannot compete. Once a gospel preacher who was well known for keep his body in top shape was reminded by another minister, “don’t you know, brother, that bodily exercise is of little profit.” The fit preacher responded, “Yes, so I am going to get all the profit I can out of it.”

A life of playing on a sports team requires exercise and preparation. The life to come for the Christian requires spiritual food and spiritual exercise. A good spiritual workout includes, prayer, singing, meditation, studying, etc. This can be done alone or with other saints. The assembling of the saints is a workout secession which we do together. People exercise better if they have someone to train, walk or practice with. Rarely do you see good strong athletes who train alone. The life to come is eternal life. No matter how hard you work out eventually your body will succumb to age, sickness, injury and death. If you workout spiritual everyday you will grow stronger and stronger and one day have eternal life.

The fact that bodily exercise has little benefit compared to training in godliness is a well-known axiom so self-evident that it has become a statement logically accepted by all. This is the third “faithful saying” found out of five in the Evangelist Epistles (1:15; 3:1; 2 Tim. 2:11; Tit. 3:8).

*10 For to this end we both labor and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the Savior of all men, especially of those who believe.*

The term *labor* indicates working to the point of near exhaustion. The English word *agonize* comes from the Greek *agonizomai* which is also translated *strive*. It is another athletic term for someone who is training the body. Perhaps it is making reference to the struggle and physical suffering and extreme fatigue endured by an athlete in competition. To be a good minister mandates a commitment to hard work.

Preaching, ministering and evangelizing is not easy work. It is an occupation reserved only for those who are spiritually fit and competitive with the opponent.

The reason for choosing to be a minister who must work so hard is our fixed hope in a living God. Hope is first received when one is saved. That hope is not realized until we receive the great eternal reward at the end of life's race. Our hope is not based on a dead, lifeless man-made idol as were the gods of paganism, but the God who is eternal He is alive now, will always be alive, and always has been alive. The second basis of this continuing hope is the universal Savior. This is not to teach universalism, that is, salvation to all men without condition. In fact, salvation is for those who believe. Potentially Christ can be the Savior of all men. Actually Christ can only be the Savior of those who believe with an obedient active faith.

*11 These things command and teach.*

The things Timothy is to command and teach are all those mention up to this point in the letter and beyond. Paul will continue to give Timothy the responsibility to command widows (5:7) and the rich (6:17). The term *command* is a military word where a subordinate would receive the passing along of an order given by someone in authority. Teaching and preaching must be done with authority. Since mere men have no religious authority that inheres in their office or person all authority must be delegated authority from God through His inspired Word. Preaching and teaching must be accompanied by a "thus saith the Lord" or book, chapter and verse.

**Questions:**

1. Is Paul saying that Timothy is a deacon like those mentioned in 3:8? Explain.
2. What was Timothy to instruct?
3. How is Timothy to be nourished? Who helped nourish him?
4. What is the meaning of the phrase: "old wives' fables"?
5. What two reasons are given for Timothy to train Himself in godliness?

6. Contrast the value of godly exercise over physical exercise.
7. Explain how or why a good minister is to agonize over his work.
8. Why should our hope be fixed on God?
9. Where did Timothy get his authority to teaching these things?

**Application & Discussion:**

1. What sort of things can a Christian do to help exercise himself unto godliness?

# Characteristics of a Good Minister

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## Part 2: 1 Timothy 4:12-16

*12a Let no one despise your youth,*

In the eyes of the ancient Greek or Jew anyone under the age of forty was still considered a youth. They had to earn the respect of their elders. This might seem odd in our modern culture which looks down in disregard and often disrespect for the elderly, while worshiping youthfulness. Timothy needed to work at being so faithful to his work, so different from the youth of his day that others could not find a legitimate reason for looking down on his age. If a preacher conducts himself respectably, his age should not be a factor in the performance of his duties as a good minister. A well studied preacher will not be easily dismissed as young and ignorant.

*12b but be an example to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity.*

To be a good minister young Timothy must be a good example. *Example* is translated from the Greek term *tupos* from which is derived the English term *type*. When a key was punched on an old typewriter the key striking the carbon ribbon would leave an impression upon the paper of the desired letter. Preachers need to make sure their lives are leaving the right impression upon those who see and hear them. He cannot preach one thing and practice another. His lifestyle will either exemplify what he is preaching or it will negate is every word.

Paul lists six areas where Timothy is to set an example. The following list serves as a list of qualifications like that of an overseer or deacon in chapter three. 1) He is to be a good example in word or in his speech. He is to *“speak the truth in love”* (Eph. 4:29). Whatever he says in his daily life must also be comparable and compatible to what he speaks from the pulpit on Sunday. 2) A minister must be a positive model of proper *conduct*. People want to see sermons from a preacher not just hear them. The Pharisees did just the opposite. Jesus said of them, *“The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat. Therefore whatever they tell you to observe, that observe and do, but do not do according to their works; for they say, and do not do”* (Matt. 23:2b-3). 3) An evangelist needs to be a pattern for *love* to the brethren he serves. This is *agape* love which is willing to do the best for another regardless the cost to the lover or the attitude of the one being shown love. If the audience does not think the preacher's message is motivated by love they will not be as apt to accept it. If you love someone and they know it, they'll listen. 4) The oldest manuscripts do not mention *in spirit*. Perhaps, it refers to the moral character of the inward person. 5) A preacher must demonstrate faithfulness. He must be found a faithful servant to the Faith. 6) Finally, Timothy needed to set an example before those he was ministering to in *purity*. Although this moral cleanness would encompass all of aspects of life sexual immorality was very prevalent in ancient Ephesus. The Ephesians' Greek goddess Artemis known to the Romans as Diana. She was a nature goddess, who was the “nourishing spirit of nature and the patroness of the hunt, associated with carnal fertility rituals, orgiastic rites, and religious prostitution” (Zondervan Encyclopedia, vol. 2, p. 325.) Since a young preacher could find himself working with various women with a wide variety of moral practices and beliefs, he needs to be ever aware of the potential temptation. Some preachers make it a point not to teach or counsel women without another present, such as their wife. Far too often careless preacher set themselves up for temptations and sin which caused untold damage to the reputation of the church, his family, and his service to God. Some men have been known to use the position of a minister to prey upon women turning them

into the victims of his sexual immorality instead of being helped by him. The first time such a “minister” takes advantage of a woman who comes to him for spiritual help should be the last time he should serve any congregation. Some of these men have been allowed by elders to go from one congregation to another victimizing the weak. Albert Barnes says, “A youthful minister who fails here, can never recover the perfect purity of an unsullied reputation, and never in subsequent life be wholly free from suspicion.”

*13 Till I come, give attention to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine.*

The phrase “*till I come*” indicates that Paul was still in a position to return to Ephesus. Some scholars regard the reading here to be of a public nature while others believe that it is a command for Timothy to spend his time reading in private for his personal growth. Much attention or concentration needs to be given to the needs of the congregation and being aware of false teachers who are writing uninspired letters in opposition to Paul’s inspired epistles. Timothy needs to exhort or encourage the brethren to make applications of the truths he is teaching. There are many wholesome things a preacher can do to fill his time. However, visiting the sick, attending birthday parties, dropping in on the aged and widows for a visit, getting involved in community activities, etc. may be good as it is for any Christian. Yet, to be a good minister he must take time out to be well read, ready to exhort, and seizing every opportunity to teach the Gospel.

*14 Do not neglect the gift that is in you, which was given to you by prophecy with the laying on of the hands of the eldership.*

The term *gift* here could have various meanings. *Charisma* is “a gift of grace, a favor which one receives without any merit of his own” (Thayer). It can imply that Timothy was given one of the nine gifts of the Holy Spirit through the laying on of the apostles’ hands (Acts 8:18). The gift could be a natural ability given by God. It might be used in reference to salvation. In the context it most likely refers to a commission Timothy received to be a minister. First, it was by prophecy that he was given this gift and by the laying on of the elderships’ hands that this gift was confirmed publically. After all, Paul considered his ministry a gift from God (1:8). A similar thing happened to Paul and Barnabas before they set out on their first missionary journey. “*Now in the church that was at Antioch there were certain prophets and teachers: Barnabas, Simeon who was called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. As they ministered to the Lord and fasted, the Holy Spirit said, ‘Now separate to Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.’ Then, having fasted and prayed, and laid hands on them, they sent them away*” (Acts 13:1-3). Perhaps, young Timothy was picked out by the Holy Spirit and a prophecy was made about his role in the second missionary journey of Paul. The elders at Lystra (Acts 14:23) could have endorsed this with the laying on of their hands. It could be that Paul left him in Ephesus because of this prophecy and the elders at Ephesus confirmed this special serve he was to render to the congregation.

Perhaps Timothy was feeling the pressure of his work and was thinking about leaving Ephesus to pursue a different type of work. Paul would encourage him not to give in and give up but remember that his current position as a minister is the Will of God and accepted by men.

Today, preachers do not receive a special calling to be preacher by prophecy. Many are confirmed as the preacher for a congregation when the eldership appointed them to the service.

*15a Meditate on these things; give yourself entirely to them,*

Instead of neglecting his ministry Timothy is instructed to completely immerse himself in the practice of all of his duties. He is to be predetermined to wade into serving others spiritually all the way up to his neck. His work is to consume his time and energy. Paul uses another athletic term telling Timothy to make up his mind about his work and with singleness of mind give it all he’s got. Like a father encouraging his son. “If you are going to play football you must make up your mind. Do not go back and forth on your decision.

One moment you want to play the next moment your telling the coach that you want off the team. Once you have made up your mind completely, put your all in being a football player.”

*15b that your progress may be evident to all.*

The result of setting his mind on the practice and total commitment to being a minister is for all to see that he is making spiritual progress. Now Paul turns to a military term *progress*. A squad of soldiers are sent forward in advance of the army to clear the way. It could be used of a pioneer who moves forward clearing a path. The congregation needs to see that the preacher is making progress as he leads the way. They need to see his example advancing before them. The brethren need to see his that his knowledge of the Word and his ability to preach and teach are increasing. The elders need to see that he is able to spread the good news to the lost. It is not only Christians who need to see his progress. ALL need to see it. This includes those who are of this world or those who are not members of the congregation where he labors.

*16 Take heed to yourself and to the doctrine. Continue in them, for in doing this you will save both yourself and those who hear you.*

Finally, a good minister must pay close attention to and persevere in two things: himself and his teaching. He examine himself as a minister to make sure that he is meeting all the characteristics Paul has already outlined for a good minister. Doctrine is teaching and what he teaches is very important. The benefits are two-fold: the future salvation of himself and those whom he teaches. Being a good minister is serious business. Failure will not only cost the preacher his soul but the souls of the very ones he is suppose to help get to heaven.

**Questions:**

1. How could Timothy keep others from despising his youth?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. Matching  

<input type="checkbox"/> in word	a. moral character of the inward person
<input type="checkbox"/> in conduct	b. moral cleanness
<input type="checkbox"/> in love	c. trustworthiness
<input type="checkbox"/> in spirit	d. speech
<input type="checkbox"/> in faith	e. seek the best for another no matter how the feel
<input type="checkbox"/> in purity	f. to see a sermon
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
3. Why would sexual immorality be a particular concern for Timothy?

4. Why should a preacher need to pay close attention to reading both in public and in private?
5. What was the gift Timothy received? How and when?
6. What was Timothy to meditate on?
7. How much effort is Timothy to put into his work?
8. In what areas does a congregation need to see a minister making progress?
9. What is Timothy to give heed to and why?

**Application & Discussion:**

1. What sort of things should a young preacher read to help him in his work?
2. What sort of things would you put on your progress report as a Christian?

# Proper Treatment of Various Members

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## 1 Timothy 5:1-16

*1 Do not rebuke an older man, but exhort him as a father, younger men as brothers, 2 older women as mothers, younger as sisters, with all purity.*

### Entreating Brethren Like Family

Although the fellow Christians are sometimes compared to soldiers, when it comes to dealing with their shortcomings Timothy is to treat them like he would family. Timothy is younger. He will have to rebuke older men, even those who are serving as elders (5:19,20) or older men who are abuse the Law (1:5). Keep in mind the term “elder” in this context is not official but in general for all men who are aged. These Timothy is not to approach with sharp or harsh words or demeanor. Instead he must correct them with a tempered confrontation of their fault showing respect for their age. *“You shall rise before the gray headed and honor the presence of an old man, and fear your God: I am the Lord”* (Lev 19:32). As when Daniel approach King Nebuchadnezzar with respect even though he told him to *“break off your sins by being righteous, and your iniquities by showing mercy to the poor”* (Dan. 4:27).

When Timothy needs to confront men younger than himself, he must treat them like brothers. This calls for a balanced approach to dealing with people. Surely when obeying the Lord by admonishing, reproving or rebuking a sinning saint he will need to be careful not to be too timid and weak. After all, Paul confronted Peter to his face because he was at fault (Gal. 2:11-14). Jesus commanded, *“If your brother sins against you, rebuke him”* (Luke 17:3a). Titus as an evangelist was told to *“Speak these things, exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no one despise you”* (Tit. 2:15). When it comes to church discipline Christians are not *“to count him as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother”* (2 Th. 3:15).

Older women are to be confronted by the young evangelist as if they were his mother. *“And do not despise your mother when she is old”* (Prov. 23:22).

When dealing with young women Timothy is to treat them like they were one of his sisters. This is easy for a young preacher who has had several sisters, but for some who has had all brothers or was an only child this command will be a bit more challenging. This relationship must be maintained with all purity. Every point of contact with younger sisters in Christ should be tempered with guarded eyes and thoughts, limited physical contact, no flattery, and the avoiding of being alone together for along periods of time.

*3 Honor widows who are really widows. 4 But if any widow has children or grandchildren, let them first learn to show piety at home and to repay their parents; for this is good and acceptable before God.*

### Christians Who Have Widows

The Bible has a great deal to say about widows and the need to care for them. The Law of Moses listed ordinances for their protection and care (Deut. 27:19; 25:5-10; Gen. 38:11). God is shown as One who cares for the fatherless and widows (Ps. 94:6). Paul begins by pointing out the differences in widows. There are those who are widows who have immediate family to care for them. In contrast, there are widows who are truly, really destitute of anyone to help them. A widow who has grown children or grandchildren is commanded to look to them for aid. A lesson all generations need to learn about the home is that charity is to begin at home. Mothers and grandmothers need to be repaid. This passage is not just talking about showing them respect but taking care of their financially. Elders who work hard are worthy of double honor (5:17). Jesus and the Pharisees both understood the commandment to honor ones parents to include



monetary assistance. Jesus condemned these Pharisees for not helping their parents. *“But you say, ‘Whoever says to his father or mother, ‘Whatever profit you might have received from me is a gift to God’-- 6 then he need not honor his father or mother.’”* (Matt. 15:5-6). Those who have widows must take care of them because this is a sign of godly obedience and is met with God’s approval.

*5 Now she who is really a widow, and left alone, trusts in God and continues in supplications and prayers night and day. 6 But she who lives in pleasure is dead while she lives. 7 And these things command, that they may be blameless. 8 But if anyone does not provide for his own, and especially for those of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever. 9 Do not let a widow under sixty years old be taken into the number, and not unless she has been the wife of one man, 10 well reported for good works: if she has brought up children, if she has lodged strangers, if she has washed the saints’ feet, if she has relieved the afflicted, if she has diligently followed every good work.*

### **Widows who are Truly Alone**

“Now” shows a contrast with those widows who are not completely without someone to help them. The word “alone” or “indeed” comes from the Greek *monoo*. Our English word *mono* comes from it. The literal meaning is “single.” A widow indeed is not just single with regard to losing her husband she is really alone in that she is left by herself without living children or grandchildren. Jesus was motivated to raise the widow of Nain son because he was her only child and means of support (Luke 7:11-17). However, there is more to being a widow indeed who is eligible for support for the congregation than just having no one to help them. She must be a faithful Christian who has put her hope and trust in God and continues to be depend upon Him. This is seen in her supplications. She prays to God for her daily needs and concerns and she continues to worship Him in prayer 24/7. The prophetess Anna, who has been a widow for eighty-four years *“did not depart from the temple, but served God with fastings and prayers night and day”* (Luke 2:37).

Paul suddenly switches thoughts to a widow who is not trusting, depending on, and praying to God. She is likely to be the type of woman who longs to live the good life with luxury. Christians whose lives are focused on the worldly pleasures are spiritually dead even though they are physically alive.

Timothy was not only to look for these positive traits in a widow, he was to command that all widows develop these qualities. The reason given is that all of them may be above reproach. So, when it came time to consider helping these widows are not, their reputation would enhance their chances of being added to the roll.

Next, the topic turns back to those who have widows they should be taking care of. Those of his own household would refer to anyone in need under his roof in particular. However, the need to provide would include all those who are widows in his immediate family. If he neglects providing for them he is guilty of denying his belief in Christ in practice although he may still be proclaiming it with his lips. In addition he is not just an unbeliever because he does not practice his faith, he is worse than an unbeliever. In fact, he is worse than some animals. When storks are too hold to fly they are permitted to stay in the nest and are fed by others. Nature itself teaches the need to care for those of our own.

God did not design the church to have the ability or the mission to care for all the needy. Although all Christians should assist all needy widows (Js. 1:27), the church is only authorised to help those who are truly destitute widows because they are totally alone. Otherwise, all widows of all ages would soon turn to the local congregations treasury to be indefinitely assisted. Many of their relatives would be content to yet someone else care for their widows. Therefore, each congregation only assisted Christian widows in the long term who had no one and met certain qualifications.

Some take these qualifications to indicate an office for women clergy like that of nuns or deaconesses because of the qualifications listed in chapter three for overseers and deacons. However, there is nothing in this context indicating these older widows desire a position (3:1) or have first served well (3:13). Neither is there a list of duties given them to perform after they are placed on the roll. The list or register Vincent says means “to be enrolled in the body of widows who are to receive church support.”

The first qualifications required a widow indeed to be at least sixty years old. Any widow fifty-nine years old or let would be a younger widow. She had to have been the wife of one man or literally a one-man woman. These does not limit the number of times she was married. It means she must have been married and was faithful to her husband or husbands while married. Why would Paul require younger widows to remarry if remarriage would later exclude them from assistance if the second husband also died. She needs to be well reported for good works like the widow Dorcus. *“This woman was full of good works and charitable deeds which she did”* (Acts 9:36). There were so many witnesses to her good works that Peter came and raised her from the dead. Another requirement is that she has brought up or raised children. This would exclude women who either chose not to have children as God ordained (2:15) or rescue the many abandoned children that could be found through the Empire. Of course, these would have to also be dead in order for her to be truly alone and in need. All Christian are to be given to hospitality. She like the widow of Zarephath who showed kindness to Elijah must be hospitable (1 Kings 17:8-16). Since many of those who traveled in those times walked, water and washing of the feet was a necessity (Lk. 7:44). Is this widow known to show service and humility to others by seeing to it that this need was taken care of when quest entered her home (Jn. 13:4-15)? Another qualification in order for her to receive long-term assistance from the church is whether or not she assisted others when they were in need. If she was in the past a giver to those who were in distress, she can now be a receiver in her distress. The final qualification is a general reference to all the good deeds she has done for others in the past. Perhaps, the worthy woman of Proverbs 31 would be a good illustration of what this widow should have been in the past.

*11 But refuse the younger widows; for when they have begun to grow wanton against Christ, they desire to marry, 12 having condemnation because they have cast off their first faith. 13 And besides they learn to be idle, wandering about from house to house, and not only idle but also gossips and busybodies, saying things which they ought not. 14 Therefore I desire that the younger widows marry, bear children, manage the house, give no opportunity to the adversary to speak reproachfully. 15 For some have already turned aside after Satan.*

### **Younger Widows are To Marry**

Some might want to argue with Timothy as to why these young widows are to be excluded. Paul arms him with several reasons why churches must refuse to put these widows on the roll for continued assistance. First they, because of their youth, will naturally have a desire to marry. To place such young women on the register of those who are to be relieved puts them in a situation of singleness that goes against the natural desires to have husbands and raise children. These desires are only to be fulfilled in a marriage. For them not to marry or fulfill their desires outside of marriage is contrary to the desires of Christ. Either situation could result in *“having condemnation, because they have rejected their first pledge”* (5:12, ASV). This is not a pledge of celibacy in violation of 2:15. Furthermore, some widows may turn from faith in Christ by marrying a unbeliever. Paul wrote *“if her husband dies, she is at liberty to be married to whom she wishes, only in the Lord”* (1 Cor. 7:39). The second reason for refusing these younger widows is their tendency to be idle. With support from the church they have too much time on their hands. Trivial pursuits often lead to sinful activities such as busybodies who *“indulge in empty and foolish talk”* (Thayer). Some gossip is caused by idleness: people having nothing better to do than to talk about others. This is why Paul wanted to see the younger widows married. With the invention of the modern telephone, it is become a lot easier for idle women to wander from house to house and speak things which they ought not to speak. Paul gives the secret of preventing gossip: overcome it with a busy life and mind proper things. Be busy, but do not be busybodies. To put it another way, keep your body busy, and you won't become a busybody.

Instead of being placed on the roll for monetary assistance Paul would rather see these young widows get married. This shows he was not for celibacy and is against asceticism. These women are assumed to be young enough to have babies. Instead of looking at children as a hindrance to their happiness they are *“a gift of the Lord”* (Ps. 127:3). As their husband work to support them, they take the funds and manage the house. The result of this to protect the home from evil. God made marriage and the

home and there are many enemies of God who would love to have a chance to destroy both. The key is not painting the house in bright colors to ward off evil spirits, or have a clergyman bless or exercise the house or have a good security system and plenty of insurance. These last two may protect a building where the family lives but can never protect the home. A wife and a mother who know how to be a good manager is the first line of defense against the adversary. The term *occasion* refers to a place where an army can establish a base of operations. The wicked would like nothing more than to set up a headquarters in your home to destroy it from within.

Was Paul just making some chauvinistic and misogynistic attacks on women? In fact, he is able to back up his concerns with proof that some of these younger widows have already abandoned their faith to follow Satan.

*16 If any believing man or woman has widows, let them relieve them, and do not let the church be burdened, that it may relieve those who are really widows.*

### **Church Relieves Only Real Widows**

Paul reaffirms two points he has already made: those who have widows in their immediate family are to care for them and the church is to financially assist widows who are really alone in this world without someone to assist them. This does not mean that a younger widow or a widow with family cannot receive temporary assistance. After all, the church is to assist temporarily any needy saint. The church is not a universal benevolent society. It is not to help just anyone in need.

This passage goes a long way to demonstrate that there is a clear distinction between what an individual Christian can do and the church can do. A Christian can vote, get married, own and operate a business, etc. A local congregation can support needy saints, widows indeed, and be the pillar and ground of the truth. Paul wants all Christians to do their individual duties so the church is not so overburden that it cannot fulfill its mission.

### **Questions:**

1. Who does the term "elder" refer to in 5:1?
2. How is Timothy to treat older men?
3. Treating young men as brothers means Timothy could never rebuke or admonish them?
4. Why is "all purity" added?
5. List the various types of widows referred to in this passage?

6. Who should take care of their widows? Why?
7. What is a "widow indeed"?
8. What is the condition of a widow who lives for pleasure?
9. What does it mean for a widow to "be taken into the number"?
10. Is there an office for these widows to be appointed to in the church like that of an elder or deacon?
11. What are the qualification for a widow indeed to be added to the roll for church assistance?
12. List some widows mentioned in the Bible and their good works.
13. List the reasons Paul gave as to why churches must refuse to put these younger widows on the roll for continued assistance.
14. What did Paul want younger widows to do? Why?

15. Show from this passage that there is a difference between what an individual Christian can do and what the church is responsible for?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
16. Why are others to take care of their own widows?

**Application & Discussion:**

1. What are some things widows can do for the church?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. In what other ways is a congregation limited in the kind of benevolent work it is to do?

# Proper Treatment of Elders

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## 1 Timothy 5:17-25

*17 Let the elders who rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in the word and doctrine. 18 For the Scripture says, 'You shall not muzzle an ox while it treads out the grain,' and, 'The laborer is worthy of his wages'"*

### Paying Elders Wages

Just what does Paul mean by "double honor"? "Honor" means "primarily a valuing..." (Vine, p. 560) and "a valuing by which the price is fixed; hence the price itself..." (Thayer, p. 624). The word not only involves the idea of respect and esteem, but also the support of or providing for the elders (1 Tim. 5:3; Mk. 7-8-13). Two basic views dominate concerning this verse. 1) Those who rule well are to be given a double portion of the honor given to other elders. 2) Those who rule well are to be given another kind of honor in addition to the normal honor given to all elders. The latter view seems the most logical and scriptural. It is not reasonable or right for the scriptures to give preference in honor to one elder over another. Exalting one elder more than another will inevitably lead to the apostasy in the organization of the church. An elder either rules well or he rules poorly. If he rules well he deserves to be esteemed if he rules poorly he deserves no honor. Furthermore, Peter implied that his fellow-elders could be paid, but should not allow such to be their motive for serving (1 Pet. 5:2).

The most conclusive proof that this command allows for elders to be paid is found in the context. Paul makes two arguments in defense of giving double honor to elders. First, he reminds them of a commandment in the Law of Moses: "*you shall not muzzle the ox while he is threshing*". In Deuteronomy 25:4 the Law forbade the muzzling of an ox as he treaded out the corn or grain. As he went around or grain. As he went around and round he was left to eat as much as he would for he was doing the work. Even among the traditions of the pagans they condemned the prohibiting of an ox the right to eat the grain.

*"A laboring ox was led to the altar of Zeus on the Acropolis, which was strewn with wheat and barley. As soon as the ox touched the grain, he was killed by a blow from the axe. The priest who struck the blow threw away the axe and fled. The flesh of the ox was then eaten, and the hide was stuffed and set before the plough. Then began the steer-trial before a judicial assembly in the Prytaneum, by which the axe was formally condemned to be thrown into the sea." (Vincent, vol. 4, p. 267).*

Furthermore, Paul affirms in 1 Corinthians 9:9-11 that God didn't put that verse in the Bible just for oxen, but also for preachers. Now as a preacher I am not thrilled with the idea of being compared to an ox, but at least preachers are not alone in the comparison. Second, Paul quotes from Lk. 10:7 and Lev. 19:13: "*For the laborer is worthy of his hire.*" An honest day's pay for an honest day's work.

This verse does not teach that an elder has a right to wages simply because he is an elder. Support is only for the work that is done by the elder. The type of work he is to be supported for is specified. The work is not physical labor such as the janitor for the building. The work is not just to assist the evangelist or to make an evangelist out of an elder. He is to do the same kind of work he has always done as an elder and as all the other elders are currently doing. The only difference is he is being supported so he can devote more of his time to the work than other elders. After all an elder is already apt to teach and there is plenty of teaching to be done.

Many objections raised are over the support of an elder. 1) Some believe that there is no New Testament example of this. The three ways to establish authority are: direct command, approved example, and necessary inference. Any one of these will provide us with God given authority. We don't need a direct command and an approved example. God has given us a direct command to support elders therefore we have our authority and an approved example is unnecessary. 2) *"This would have a tendency to create a head or presiding elder."* Though this may be true the abuse of God's Law by some doesn't authorize the neglect of it by others. 3) *"Some unqualified men would seek the office as an easy position"*. The qualifications are strict enough to take care of this problem. All unqualified elders don't have the right to continue to serve much less receive support. 4) *"All elders might think they should be paid."* The only elders who have the right to think this are those who *"work hard at preaching and teaching."* 5) Still others complain that all the work will be left for the paid elder to do. Although this may be true in some cases the argument is invalid. Many churches leave all the work to the paid evangelist, so should we cease to support gospel preachers on that basis.

Churches should consider the present habit of supporting only preachers. Many advantages could be in store for those congregations who support an elder who works hard and long for them. Such would go a long way in creating greater zeal. It would result in the elimination of indifference and worldliness among the members due to the unruly brethren being dealt with. The preacher would be freed up to do more of his work. This would take away the tendency toward "pastorization" of the preacher. Each individual member could receive more attention and instruction. It would help the spread of the gospel. Finally, what better qualified man could be found for doing this work than an elder.

19 *"Do not receive an accusation against an elder except from two or three witnesses"*

### **Receive No Unconfirmed Accusations Against Elders**

Again, Paul points out a commandment from the Law of Moses. In Deuteronomy 19:15 the Law required two or more witnesses in order for any accusation to be sustained against a man. Jesus referred to this when He said, *"It is also written in your law, that the testimony of two men is true"* (Jn. 8:17). A hasty charge against any Christian is wrong. We need to be slow to speak against any brother especially an elder. This is not just a command to preachers though they receive more idle accusations against the elders than most members. Most accusations come in the form of idle gossip, the first Christian who hears such best stop it before it spreads. Any accusation must be confirmed by more than one witness. This does not mean there will never be a valid accusation when only one person brings it forth.

Why is this necessary? 1) Because of the position elders hold. Men of responsibility have always been prime targets for false accusations. The tabloids, newspapers, magazines, TV, etc. are resplendent with examples of false accusations being leveled at people with position in life. 2) Because much of it is merely idle gossip. Say to the one gossiping about an elder or any brother, *"If you do not feel your brother acted wisely in that matter go to him and talk about it. You have no right to criticize him to me, and I have no right to listen to your criticism. We might discuss this matter for hours, but will not be able to accomplish anything constructive."* 3) Because false accusations are dangerous. The twisted accusations by the Pharisees finally resulted in the crucifixion of Christ. Such led to the stoning of Stephen. Paul labored in peril among false brethren and false accusations by the Jews. 4) Because evil men are always willing to attack those in authority and those who are righteous.

Adam Clarke in his commentary on I Tim. 5:19 wrote this warning,

*"Be very cautious of receiving evil reports against those whose business it is to preach to others, and correct their vices. Do not consider an elder as guilty of any alleged crime unless it be proved by two or three witnesses. This the Law of Moses required in respect to all. Among the Romans, a plebeian might be condemned on the deposition of one credible witness; but it required two to convict a senator. The reasons for this difference is evident; those whose business it is to correct others will usually have many enemies; great caution, therefore, should be used in admitting*

*accusations against such persons."*

Before accepting any accusation we should demand good evidence from all the reliable witnesses. Their evidence must match. If an accusation can be sustained then the next responsibility must be pursued by the congregation.

*20 Those who are sinning rebuke in the presence of all, that the rest also may fear. 21I charge you before god and the Lord Jesus Christ and the elect angels that you observe these things without prejudice, doing nothing with partiality*

### **Rebuke Guilty Elders**

In verse one of this chapter Timothy is instructed not to rebuke an elder, but entreat him as a father. Does this contradict verse 20? Verse one has reference to older men and not to those serving in the eldership. The context will verify this. Older men may need to be rebuked when this is necessary the older man should be approached as one would a father. They should not be rebuked as we would a child. Some elders will need to be rebuked. Elders of the church are not foolproof. Since elders are older men verse one would apply.

This must be done publicly when the accusation has been confirmed to the congregation with more than one reliable witness. Why publicly? Because of their position and example of leadership. This doesn't demand that they automatically resign. They are to be rebuked, then they must repent and get back to work. Some brethren fail to know the difference between rebuking and ousting. Sin does not automatically disqualify a man as an elder.

The phrase "*...that others may also fear...*" is given as the purpose of this public rebuking. This is not just for the elder's good, but for the good of all the members. Others will fear the same fate if they fall or are guilty. If elders are condemned they will certainly expect the same. This fear would have a great restraining effect on their lives. It is little wonder that there is no respect for the authority of the elders when many have never witnessed a public rebuking of an erring elder.

Paul very emphatically states in verse 21 that this must be done and without prejudice. This is a very hard duty to perform. Many brethren would be tempted to overlook or ignore proper action in some cases. Some preachers would be afraid of being labeled as trouble makers. Paul wants Timothy to do his work as an evangelist without bias. Everyone one has to be treated alike. Though the temptation to show partiality to elders would be great. Partiality "*according to its etymology, inclining toward. In later Greek, of joining one party in preference to another. In Clement in the sense of factious preferences.*" (Vincent, Vol. 4, p. 269). Preachers who rebuke others would be hypocritical if he rebukes not a guilty elder.

Perhaps the most difficult responsibility yet to fall upon my shoulders as a gospel preacher has been the carrying out of this commandment. Having worked with two elders for a several years it became evident that they were practicing error and neglecting their duties as elders, overseers, and shepherds of God's family. On several occasions we met to discuss these things. Before I ever spoke to anyone about this problem I rebuked them privately not once, but twice. After a couple of years the problems became so pronounced again that others began to notice. After the elders began to use the pulpit to defend their views and neglect of duty several men in the congregation came together to discuss these things and point out their error. After this failed, I was forced to consider 1 Timothy 5:20,21. Though I had never seen elders rebuked publicly nor had I even heard of it being done I knew I couldn't reject a direct command from God. One Saturday night with the elders present and the entire congregation I rebuked and admonished them to repent. Afterward one of the other men in the congregation backed this up with his added admonition. Such was done in a spirit of love and motivated out of love for the elders and God. The result was differed between the two elders. One repented of one of his sins and recognized his need to resign. The other said he would never resign. The latter attitude prevailed in the end. Although this did not end in the most desirable way it must be remembered that failure to rebuke elders who sin is failure of the congregation to obey God and fulfill its obligations to their brothers lost in sin. If they fail to heed our warnings their blood



will be upon them and not on us.

*22 Do not lay hands on anyone hastily, nor share in other people's sins; keep yourself pure.*

### **Appointment of Elders**

Laying hands on someone means various things in different passages. The best indicator of what the author has in mind is the immediate context. In this passage it seems obvious that the appointment of men to serve as elders is under consideration. Timothy was already given the task to make sure men who desire the office of an overseer are qualified. Titus was command of Paul to appoint elders in every city (where there as a congregation) in Crete. The danger in performing this task is doing it too hasily. Perhaps, it speaks of the problem of appointing men to be shepherds before they have been properly interview for the job. Timothy was warned that if he appoint unqualified men, when they sinned as elders he would be also responsible. After all, he was the one who in haste carelessly put these men in a position where they did not belong.

*23 No longer drink only water, but use a little wine for your stomach's sake and your frequent infirmities.*

### **Timothy's Health**

This verse is an abrupt interruption of the appointment of elders. It is a parenthetical excursion to Timothy. For some reason Paul had a concern for Timothy's health and decided to just interject it in the middle of an ongoing thought.

Could Paul be restricting the use of wine among the elders and encouraging its use by Timothy in the same epistle? First, we would have to assume that this was intoxicating wine as opposed to water. The Greek word used here is "*oinos*" which can be grape juice or wine as we know it today. Ferrar Fenton in his book *THE BIBLE AND WINE* said, "*'stomach wine' or wine for the stomach; the old writers upon Greek medicine tell us, was grape juice, prepared as a thick, unfermented syrup, for use as a medicine for dyspeptic and weak persons, and there cannot be a doubt but that was the wine for the stomach; the apostle told his friend to use.*" Furthermore, Timothy had known the sacred writings from childhood (2 Tim. 3:15), and his knowledge and attitude as a Christian was such that he wouldn't even touch the stuff as medicine until Paul commanded him to do so. Timothy had been a total abstainer. If it was intoxicating wine it would have been according to custom highly diluted with water and of low alcoholic content. The purpose of Timothy using a little wine was for its therapeutic and antiseptic value in the promotion of health. Modern medications often include alcohol in small amounts, but fewer and fewer doctors prescribe alcohol as medication. One must be careful not to prescribe medicine without a license.

*24 Some men's sins are clearly evident, preceding them to judgment, but those of some men follow later. 25 Likewise, the good works of some are clearly evident, and those that are otherwise cannot be hidden.*

### **Investigate Candidates for Appointment**

The best way to avoid putting unqualified men into the office of an overseers is to exam them carefully before appoint them. During the selection process the congregation will discover that there are four possible categories each candidate will fall into. First, some men are obviously unfit because their sins are so clearly seen that the church's and the preacher's judgment is easy. Other men can cover up their faults better that the first group. After careful investigation during the selection process these sins will also come to light. "Their sins march right into the meeting behind them and refuse to be left outside" (Lenski 692). The third group are those men whose character and qualifications are so apparent to all that the selection process is goes smoothly. Finally, there are men whose goodness and qualities will come to light in the carefully investigation of the congregation helping them to make a wise judgment in accepting them as overseers of the congregation.

**Questions:**

1. What arguments does Paul use to demonstrate that elders are to be supported financially?
2. Be ready to discuss some of the objections people have concerning the support of elders.
3. What are some of the benefits a church could realize by supporting an elder in his work?
4. Why is it necessary not to receive unconfirmed accusations against them?
5. Explain the apparent contradiction between 1 Timothy 5:1 and 5:20?
6. What steps should a congregation take if an elders is found guilty of sin?
7. What does it mean to “lay hands on” in verse 22?
8. How could Timothy be guilty of others men’s sins?
9. What did the Greek term *oinos* mean?
10. According to Ferrar Fenton what could the phrase “*wine for your stomach's sake*” refer?
11. T F Timothy taking wine for his stomach trouble is the same as a Christian going to a bar for a drink of an alcoholic beverage.

12. What is the best way to avoid putting unqualified men into the office of an overseer?
  
13. List four types of candidates for the office of an overseer are discussed in verses 24,25.

**Application & Discussion:**

1. Suppose you are a member of a congregation with an elder who has sinned and you know about it. What are the steps you should take to deal with it?
  
2. Where else in the Bible is someone instructed to drink wine?

# Slaves, Masters & False Teachers

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## 1 Timothy 6:1-5

*1 Let as many bondservants as are under the yoke count their own masters worthy of all honor, so that the name of God and His doctrine may not be blasphemed.*

### How Slaves Treat Masters

It is believed that about one third of the Roman Empire was made up of slaves. Romans did not believe in the virtues of work. Work was something for the lowly. Leisure pursuits were a far nobler use of their time than working with their own hands. Slaves came through war, slave-traders, inheritance, those born to slaves, those who became a slave voluntarily for the purpose of continued employment, etc. The slavery of the Roman Empire was not all bad. It should not be compared to the slavery of the antebellum South which was based solely on race. Even the Old Testament spoke of slavery. Although the Law of Moses did not promote slavery, it did regulate it. Unless a slave volunteered to continue to be a part of his master household, he was to work not more than six years. His civil, religious, and marital rights were protected. He was protected from an abusive master from harm or death. There is an old Jewish saying, "Whoever buys a Jewish slave buys himself a master."

Slavery was not all bad in the Roman world. Their economy was based on it. Most were better off than mere day laborers who did not have hope of steady work. Slaves were often more educated and skilled than their masters. Many were craftsmen, teachers, lawyers, doctors, etc. Slaves were known to share the Gospel with their masters.

The term *doulos* is used some 150 times in the Bible to refer to physical slaves and those who are slaves to Christ. It is given a noble designation in the New Testament. Who you served and how you served were more important in the teachings of Christ and His apostles than your position in life as a slave.

Many Christians came from the ranks of slaves. How should they treat their ungodly Master. Note that the Greek word for master is *despotes* from which is derived the English word *despot*. The name alone would cause some to discount the master instead of honoring him or her. However, as widows indeed (5:3) are to be honored and hard working elders (5:17) are to be honored so are the masters or employers of Christians. Becoming a Christian gave them a new master, Christ and new found freedom spiritually. These benefits were not to be construed as an reason to rebel against their master.

Paul warns these Christian slaves of the results of dishonoring their masters: God's name and doctrine would be blasphemed. The master would verbally rail against the Christians God and discredit the teachings of the Lord's church. Christianity did not demand the abolition of slavery. This would have hindered the progress of the Gospel and making it the Good News for social reform instead of being able to offer spiritual freedom to all. The New Testament slowly destroyed the slavery system by turning slave and master alike into slaves of Christ.

*2 And those who have believing masters, let them not despise them because they are brethren, but rather serve them because those who are benefited are believers and beloved. Teach and exhort these things.*

### How Slaves Treat Believing Masters

If a Christian slave had a brother or sister in Christ as their master their situation may not be all that different. Some might despise them instead of serving them faithfully. The Christian may regard their

master as an equal and would not take orders or work as hard. They may have expected favoritism. Paul gives three reasons why they need to continue to honor their believing masters. First, they are brethren or family members. Just as most masters made their slaves part of the family so now they are both part of God's family. God is the master of both and demands that the employees continue to work hard for the employer. Second, their masters are beloved, that is, God loves them too just as much as He loves those who are slaves. Finally, both the master and the slave who are Christians have received the same benefits or spiritual blessings in Christ.

Paul issues a command or charge to Timothy that this is what must be taught to those at Ephesus. Perhaps, there were some false teachers who were advocating otherwise. This would explain why Paul moves on to a general warning against false teachers at this point.

### **Character of False Teachers**

*3 If anyone teaches otherwise and does not consent to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which accords with godliness,*

#### **False Teachers Reject the Truth**

One of the clear marks of a false teacher is his rejection of God's Word. Not only does he teach or advocate false doctrine he will not listen to the Truth. God's Word is described in three ways. The inspired word of God is wholesome, sound, or healthy. False teaching is unhealthy. One promotes spiritual well-being the other makes one spiritually ill. False teachers and their teaching is characterized as sick and sickening in this passage. The source of healthy words is identified as the words of Christ. This does not mean all the words in red found throughout the four gospels. Every word of the New Testament is from Christ through the Holy Spirit to the apostles and prophets (Heb. 1:2; Eph. 3:3-5). Finally, these false teachers are rejecting godly teaching which would produce god-likeness in those who both taught it and those who received it.

*4 he is proud, knowing nothing, but is obsessed with disputes and arguments over words, from which come envy, strife, reviling, evil suspicions, 5 useless wranglings of men of corrupt minds and destitute of the truth, who suppose that godliness is a means of gain. From such withdraw yourself.*

#### **False Teachers are Conceited**

It is one thing to deny the Word of God, it takes a real ego maniac to replace it with one's own teachings. False teachers feel free to add to it, subtract from it or totally ignore it. The Jesus Seminar represents those who stand in judgment over the very words of Jesus. Martin Luther called the epistle of James a worthless letter because it exposed his false teachings of salvation by faith only (Js. 2:17ff). The term used here refers to puffed up like a cloud of smoke. His ego is just a puffing up of nothing but smoke. Of such false teachers Peter said, "*they speak great swelling words of emptiness*" (2 Peter 2:18).

#### **False Teachers are Ignorant**

It is one thing to call a man proud but then to attack intelligence also is to call him a "*pompous ignoramus*" (NEB). The reason for their ignorance is given. They have an obsession with disputes and argument over words. These disputes are nothing more than idle speculations. They come across as if they are smart and learned students but in reality they are sick, filled with unhealthy interests. Added to this is his unwholesome love for arguments over words. Literally, these are battles over words. Today, some will argue against creation because they think they know more about the word "day" used in Genesis chapter one than Moses. These men may appear to be superior in education and intellect to some and may even sincerely feel that way about themselves, but God knows better. Those who are humble students of His Word can tell the difference (Acts 17:11; 2 Tim. 2:15).

### **False Teachers Spread Sick Behavior**

Unhealthy obsessions by false teachers result in unhealthy behavior of those they teach. Envy is not only is jealous over the advantages others have but wishes to strip those benefits away from the other person. Perhaps, it refers to wanting to take from godly teachers the influence and respect they have as teachers of the truth and destroying it. Another result is strife over words. Reviling of abusive language manifests itself when brethren start using insults and slander against the character of one another. Evil suspicions refer to those who believe they can see the inward thoughts of their opponent and ascribe to him malicious motives. The phrase *useless wranglings* refers to the constant friction that is caused. Others say it implies “employments that merely consume time without any advantage...of no practical value” (Patton 138). The teachings of these men constantly rub people the wrong way and keep brethren in a state of agitation; destroying any hope of unity.

### **False Teachers are Mentally Ill**

These false teachers do not have within them the sound or healthy mind of Christ. They have a corrupt or diseased heart. The reason for this is the lack of truth in their heart because they have pulled away from it to follow after lies. Unsound teaching and unhealthy obsessions result in an sick mind or heart.

### **False Teachers are Greedy of Gain**

Why are these men teaching these false doctrines? It is the love of money that is ultimately behind these lies. Paul will later in the chapter warn Timothy that *“the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil, for which some have strayed from the faith in their greediness, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows”* (1 Tim 6:10). *“They have forsaken the right way and gone astray, following the way of Balaam the son of Beor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness”* (2 Pet. 2:15). Simon the Sorcerer was condemned by Peter for his greedy view of the Gospel. *“Your money perish with you, because you thought that the gift of God could be purchased with money! You have neither part nor portion in this matter, for your heart is not right in the sight of God”* (Acts 8:20-21). Paul was not the type that was after the money that could be made preaching the Gospel. He often labored with his own hands making tents in order to teach the Truth.

Today, many find religion to be a lucrative means to making merchandise out of those they are suppose to help spiritually. Television evangelists are perhaps notorious for peddling their health/wealth Gospel to the masses.

### **False Teachers are to Be Quarantined**

Just as Paul had delivered the blasphemers Alexander and Hymenaeus to Satan, Timothy is to discipline false teachers (Rom. 16:17,18). Sin like leaven will spread throughout the church at Ephesus if it is not held in check and exposed as the very deadly contagious disease that it is. The only positive remedy is the preaching of sound doctrine.

### **Questions:**

1. What were some positive aspects of slavery in the first century?
2. In general how are slaves to treat their masters?
3. Why didn't Christianity attack outright the institution of slavery in the first century?

4. Give three reasons why the slaves should not despise their master who are Christians?
5. What is the most telling characteristic of a false teacher?
6. How is it that the Word of Christ is healthy?
7. What demonstrates that these are proud and ignorant?
8. List the various sick behavior spread by false teachers.
9. Why did they have sick minds?
10. What is their main motive?
11. What is Timothy to do about these false teachers?

**Discussion:**

1. Read the other scriptures which discuss the employee/employer relationship and list what the Bible teaches is required of both.
2. List a few false doctrines which demonstrates that false teachers are often very ignorant of the Word of God?

# Great Gain Through Godliness

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## 1 Timothy 6:6-10

6 Now godliness with contentment is great gain.

Paul is making a direct contrast with the motive of the false teachers in verse five. In fact, he agrees with them in part. Godliness is the means of great gain. However, Paul gives a formula for getting rich that defies not only their view of gain but our modern concept of how to become wealthy. Here is Paul's simple formula: Godliness + Contentment = Great Gain.

### Great Wealth is Found in Godliness

Godliness refers to being like God. Faithful teaching accords without godliness (6:3). The exercise of godliness is profitable for all things now and eternal (4:8). God knows how to deliver the godly from temptations (2 Pet. 2:9). Godliness will make us fruitful (2 Pet. 1:5). Godliness results from loving God never from loving money.

### Great Wealth is Found in Contentment

Contentment "is an inward self-sufficiency, as opposed to the lack or the desire of outward things" (Vincent 4.275). This contentment comes from being godly and has as its ultimate source God Himself. "Not that I speak in regard to need, for I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content: I know how to be abased, and I know how to abound. Everywhere and in all things I have learned both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me" (Phil. 4:11-13). A wealthy man thinks he has all he needs and has want of nothing. A content person has all they need and has want of nothing.

Many of millionaire never knew the contentment of a godly man. The first billionaire in the world, John D. Rockefeller said, "The poorest man I know is the man who has nothing but money." It is the rich who visit psychiatrists and/or commit suicide more often than the poor. Money can buy a lot of things in this world. Two things necessary to have a great wealth, godliness and contentment cannot be bought a any price. True happiness and riches are found within the rich relationship a believer has with God in his heart, not the amount of money he has in his bank account.

7 For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out.

### Great Wealth is Not Found in Temporal Goods

This is one of the most well attested axioms in the Bible. Job said, "Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked shall I return there. The Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord" (Job 1:21). Solomon wrote, "As he came from his mother's womb, naked shall he return, to go as he came; and he shall take nothing from his labor which he may carry away in his hand" (Eccl. 5:15). "Do not be afraid when one becomes rich, when the glory of his house is increased; for when he dies he shall carry nothing away; his glory shall not descend after him" (Ps. 49:16-17). An old Spanish proverb reminds us that there are no pockets found on a burial shroud. You can amass material goods on this earth, but you cannot take them with you. Have you ever seen a hearse pulling a u-haul?

In fact, spending one's life to make more and more money to buy mounds and mounds of material goods does not make a lot of sense. After all, all of it one day will either rust, decay be stolen or inherited



by another (Matt. 6:19,20) or burned up (2 Pet. 3:10,12). No matter how much you have you can never buy back your lost soul (Mk. 8:36). Truly, *“one's life does not consist in the abundance of the things he possesses”* (Luke 12:15).

*8 And having food and clothing, with these we shall be content.*

### **Great Wealth Can Be Found in Food and Covering**

Jesus had food and covering. He never showed signs of discontent. The bare necessities of life are all that is needed for one to be rich in this life. A rich miser cannot even enjoy his own food. In fact, some have been known to starve to death while sleeping on a mattress loaded with money. A wealthy man like John D. Rockefeller could not even eat a steak because his pursuit for riches had destroyed his stomach with ulcers. Those who cannot be content most likely will never learn to be content. They will desire more and more.

*9 But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and harmful lusts which drown men in destruction and perdition.*

### **Worldly Wealth is Destructive**

Those who make it their life's goal to be rich set themselves up for a fall. Like a baited trap Satan waits for those who lust for more and more go for the temptation. Those who want to be rich continue to fall and fall for one scheme after another. Enough is never enough. *“He who loves silver will not be satisfied with silver; nor he who loves abundance, with increase. This also is vanity”* (Eccl. 5:10). They will borrow many things they do not have to purchase things they do not need. In the end they drown. It is interesting that Paul uses a metaphor here of a man drowning in his attempt to be wealthy. It is said that when a great ocean liner sank to the depths of the sea a richman went back for his money belt weighed down with gold. His efforts to swim to a lifeboat were in vain as he slipped beneath the waves and drowned. Many never have any riches or gold, but they drown in the red ink of credit card debit.

The Bible is replete with examples of those trapped by their own greed. Achan brought destruction upon himself because he took contraband at the destruction of Jericho. Judas hung himself having betrayed the Lord for thirty pieces of silver. Ananias and Sapphira both dropped dead at Peter's feet because of their dishonesty over money. The list goes on and on.

*10 For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil, for which some have strayed from the faith in their greediness, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.*

### **Worldly Wealth Costs Too Much**

Notice it is not money that is the root of all kinds of evil, but the love of money. It literally means “affection for silver.” No matter how much you have no amount of money is worth losing your soul. Gold cannot replace God. Fortune cannot replace faith. The riches of the world cannot compare with the riches of Heaven. Though money itself is not evil, but a gift from God; money tempts us into thinking it is the giver of all good things instead of God. Some Christians think they can love both God and material goods. Jesus warned, *“No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon”* (Matt 6:24).

Riches do not equal happiness. Jay Gould is rumored to have been worth \$100 million at the time of his death. He died saying, “I'm the most miserable man in the world.” Money die disillusioned by what money seems to promise and what it actually gives in return. All that is spent or lost to get wealth, time, marriage, children, health, the soul is too great compared to what little is received in return.

**Questions:**

1. What is Paul's simple formula for becoming rich?
2. Define contentment.
3. Where else in the Bible is the axiom of verse seven found?
4. What is the amassing of material goods such an illogical use of time and energy?
5. T F Those who are rich fall into temptation and a snare.
6. What will drown those who desire to be rich?
7. List some people in the Bible who were destroyed by their desire for riches.
8. T F Money is the root of all kinds of evil.
9. Explain why money costs too much.
10. Give some examples of evil which has been produced by the love of money.

**Discussion:**

1. How can one tell when he is falling in love with money?
2. Should a Christian set as his goal in life to become a rich man?

# Tasks and Motives of the Man of God

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## 1 Timothy 6:11-16

### The Man of God

*11 But you, O man of God, flee these things and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, gentleness.*

#### The Man of God Must FLEE Love of Money

The title “*man of God*” is given to Timothy by Paul to reflect his special mission to proclaim the Word of God because he has been so commissioned by God. This is a description given to several men in the Old Testament: Moses, Elijah, David, Samuel, and others who were given a special duty by God. This puts Timothy in direct contrast with the false teachers who are men of money. A preacher is not a man of the congregation. God is the one whom He represents when he speaks the Truth. God is the one who gave him his duties. God is the one who pays his wages. God is the one who rewards him in the end. Often congregations act as if the preacher is their man. They are attempting to rob God.

The word “*flee*” does not mean to run, but to separate oneself from others and things. However, the best when to make a separation can be to show temptation or trouble a fine pair of heel and defeat sin by retreat. Joseph fled from sexual advances of Potiphar’s wife (Gen. 39:12). As false teachers are running after or pursuing lies for the sake of monetary gain, Timothy is to separate himself from such lovers of money. Paul was careful in his ministry of the Word not to appear to be like others who sought gain. He told those at Thessalonica, “*For you remember, brethren, our labor and toil; for laboring night and day, that we might not be a burden to any of you, we preached to you the gospel of God*” (1 Th. 2:9). In addition to fleeing the love of money, Paul may be reminding him to separate himself from the false teachers. “*From such withdraw yourself*” (6:5).

#### The Man of God Must FOLLOW After Virtues

Another area of personal concern for this man of God is to pursue or follow after specific positive character traits beneficial for a preacher of the Gospel continue to seek. Timothy is not just to oppose that which is wrong, he is to pursue what is right. A similar command is given him in 2 Timothy 2:22: “*Flee also youthful lusts; but pursue righteousness, faith, love, peace with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart.*”

The man of God is to chase after six virtues. He is to run after *righteousness*. A preacher must have personal integrity in always doing what is right before God. The man of God must grasp for *godliness*. His reverence for God is seen in the practical ways he strives to be like God in all his conduct as a preacher. Following after *faith* really means being a dependable or faithful minister of the Gospel. Faith and love are often coupled together in Paul’s letters. An evangelist needs to long for the type of *love* defined by the Greek word *agape*. He needs to do the best for others not matter what they want or he wants. He must serve God not matter what the congregations wants or he desires. As a preacher Timothy would need to pursue *patience*. This is not a passive attitude but a enduring activity through all the troubling and painful duties. Literally, is mean “to remain under.” Timothy was to remain at Ephesus even under the pressure from false teachers and troubles of a sinful environment. Finally, the man of God must garner *gentleness*. The term here could also be interpreted meekness. Whereas someone may be referred to a “meek” in an demeaning way, in ancient times is was given to a man as great compliment to his character. Though powerful and strong he was gentle enough a man to hold care for a baby and help a lady. Weakness is

not the meaning of meekness. Instead, it is strength under control. Like a power stallion is controlled by the bit in its mouth, so Timothy needs to reign in and control his passion and power as he dealt with others.

*12 Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, to which you were also called and have confessed the good confession in the presence of many witnesses.*

### **The Man of God Must FIGHT the Good Fight**

Paul returns to the military metaphor. However, the word *fight* is the same as the English word *agonize* and could also refer to an athletic event. This is not a one time competition or battle. A preacher is to keep on keeping on with the fight. Whereas, most wars are not noble or good this one is a spiritual conflict on the side of good and God. Paul believed that battle would be won and he would be rewarded for being a faithful soldier of the cross. *"I have fought the good fight,...Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness"* (2 Tim. 4:6f).

### **The Man of God Must FASTEN to Eternal Life**

Timothy is charged with laying hold or fastening onto eternal life. This is not the reward of others but his own reward for personally fighting the good fight. This means that "once saved, always saved" was an unknown doctrine to Paul. Eternal life is hoped for and promised to those who were faithful. It is not something the false teachers or fallen brethren can have. A preacher agonizes and fights so he can grasp within his hands the eternal reward.

Eternal life is a reward for the man of God because he has been called and has confessed. This refers to the fact that Timothy was called by the Gospel preached to be saved. He had to obey the message in order to answer the call and be saved. This also includes making the good confession before being baptized (Rom. 10:9,10; Acts 8:36f). This obviously refers back to the time when Paul first preached the Gospel at Lystra. Young Timothy heard the Word, believed, repented of his sin, confessed with his mouth and had his sins washed away in baptism. The many witnesses are those who heard and saw Timothy confess.

*13 I urge you in the sight of God who gives life to all things, and before Christ Jesus who witnessed the good confession before Pontius Pilate, 14 that you keep this commandment without spot, blameless until our Lord Jesus Christ's appearing, 15a which He will manifest in His own time,*

### **The Man of God Must Be FAITHFUL to His Duties**

Paul calls upon two witnesses as he commands Timothy to do his duty as a man of God. First is God Himself. God's sight is never impaired. He will see all that a preacher does for Him. God is the source and sustainer of all living things. The Creator is called upon to be a witness. God the Creator of all life both physical and spiritual. What a motivation to fulfill one's mission as a man of the Creator. The second witness is Jesus Christ. Just as Timothy made a good confession in public so the second witness made His confession before the governor Pontius Pilate. The end result was that Pilate turned Jesus over to the Jewish mob's demand that He be crucified. However, the Giver of all life raised Him from the dead. All preachers should do their duties faithfully to One who gave His life for His confession and the One who can raise us up after death unto eternal life. No other work has such job security and retirement benefits.

The man of God had to be faithful without impurities even till Christ returns. The job of a preacher is never done. The Gospel message must always remain pure. The only way this could be done is if men like Timothy guarded it constantly and continuously from contamination. The work done by men of God must go on and on until God determines to send His Son a second time. The Greek word *appearing* refers to the Second Coming of Christ and our English term *epiphany* is derived from it. Christ's appearing will come whenever it is the right time determined by the Father. *"But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven,[e] but My Father only"* (Matt. 24:36). All the more reason for Timothy to work faithfully.

## **Doxology**

*15b He who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings and Lord of lords, 16 who alone has immortality, dwelling in unapproachable light, whom no man has seen or can see, to whom be honor and everlasting power. Amen.*

Again Paul suddenly throws in at doxology praising God for His greatness as he had done earlier (1:17f). Each of these attributes of God are further motives for Timothy as a man of God to remember his Divinely given duties as a preacher.

### **God is Blessed**

The word for blessed is the same found in the be attitudes. It means that God's contentment cannot never to disturbed or disrupted by change or circumstances. God may hate sin and be angry at the wicked, but even then His happiness is not overcome. How blessed to work for such a joyful Boss.

### **God is Sovereign**

God has His authority and His power from Himself. No one gave him rulership or dominion. No one can take it away. No one is above Him in any way. He is over every king and every lord. Although the titles are given also to the Son (Rev. 17:14; 19:16) here is refers to the Father. This fact would go a long way to defeat the idea that a first century Christian could worship the Roman emperor saying, "Caesar is Lord" and still try to be a faithful worshiper of God.

### **God is Immortal**

It is true that man has an immortal soul and that angels are immortal. However, the immortality man possess comes from God. God is inherently immortal, that is, He is deathless or incapable of dying. The man of God serves a King who will not up and die on him.

### **God is Glorious and Holy**

Did you hear about the want-a-be astronaut that said he was going to go to the sun? A relative said that NASA would never go for it because he would burn up before he got half way there. The would be astronaut replied, "That's not a problem. We are going at night."

God's Holiness and Glory is do great it is like approaching the light of the sun. No man can approach God and live just as no one can approach the sun and live. Although God allowed Moses to see part of His glory of essence (Ex. 33:18-23) and Jesus in the flesh manifest God to man, no one can truly come into the presence of God's glorious essences.

### **God is Worthy**

God must always to given complete respect. He is worthy of all praise and honor. After all, Timothy's name means "one who honors God." May His realm of reign continue forever...Long live the King of kings.

### **Questions:**

1. Why is Timothy refer to as "man of God"?
2. What is Timothy to flee?

3. List the six virtues Timothy is to pursue and tell why these would be helpful to him as a preacher.
  
4. What does the word "agonize" have to do with this lesson about Timothy's work as a preacher?
  
5. When and where did Timothy confess the good confession?
  
6. What two witnesses does Paul call upon while urging Timothy?
  
7. What is the good confession Jesus made before Pilate?
  
8. How long is Timothy to keep his charge as a preacher?
  
9. What does *"He will manifest in His own time"* mean?
  
10. Matching:  

___ Doxology	a. deathless
___ Blessed	b. glorious holy
___ Potentate	c. joyful
___ Immortality	d. sovereign
___ Unapproachable Light	e. praising God

**Application & Discussion:**

1. What does it mean to a congregation, the community and the creator that a preacher is a “man of God”?
  
2. Look in your song book to see if you can find any doxologies. Why are these important in the Bible and in hymns?

# Trust Not in Riches, Guard Your Trust

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## 1 Timothy 6:17-21

*17 Command those who are rich in this present age not to be haughty, nor to trust in uncertain riches but in the living God, who gives us richly all things to enjoy. 18 Let them do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to give, willing to share, 19 storing up for themselves a good foundation for the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life.*

Earlier Paul addressed those Christians who had a desire to be rich. They were told that great wealth was found in godliness and contentment. As an old German proverb goes, “he is rich enough who is contented.” They were warned about the love of money. Now, Paul commands Christians who are already rich how to deal with the money they have. Ephesus was one of the richest cities in the Roman world. Some of the rich would have obeyed the Gospel. They were not told to go and sell all they had and give to the poor or the church. Their riches did not prove they were more blessed or beloved of God. Nor were they necessarily lovers of money just because they had money to spare.

Dealing with those who are rich and those who are poor is a relative distinction. After all, those who may be poor in this country would be considered rich by third world standards. Those who are wealthy in the first century would not be so well off by today’s standards. Note, the Paul does qualify those who are rich as those in the present world or age. However, those who are rich would be those men or women not only have enough money to take care of their necessities for living but have enough left over to use at their personal discretion.

### **The Rich Must Be Humble**

Having more money than others gives one a sense of power over others. This leads to an exalted opinion of oneself. Those who have wealth tend to think themselves wise and too good to associate as equals. *“Be of the same mind toward one another. Do not set your mind on high things, but associate with the humble. Do not be wise in your own opinion”* (Rom. 12:16). Some rich brethren may have looked down on poor members (Js. 2:1-4).

### **The Rich Must Trust in God**

Jesus told a parable about a rich farmer who trusted in his bumper crop. *“And I will say to my soul, ‘Soul, you have many goods laid up for many years; take your ease; eat, drink, and be merry. But God said to him, ‘Fool! This night your soul will be required of you; then whose will those things be which you have provided?’ So is he who lays up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God”* (Luke 12:19-21). Riches cannot save your soul. Furthermore, with regard to riches it is here today and gone tomorrow. One moment the farmer was alive to enjoy his riches the next he was dead and far removed from enjoying them. However, if he would have trusted in God who is living and eternal he would have had both God and riches. On our money we put “In God We Trust”. The way we live our lives it should read, “In Gold We Trust.” Money is uncertain. It does not provide us with the security we seek. God is certain. He will be alive tomorrow. He cannot be robbed or bankrupt. Three reasons are given not to trust in money: riches are uncertain; God is living and can never die; and God gives all for our enjoyment. *“Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning”* (Js. 1:17). *“Nothing is better for a man than that he should eat and drink, and that his soul should enjoy good in his labor. This also, I saw, was from the hand of God”* (Eccl. 2:24). Not only does God



supply us with all He does so richly. He is not stingy. Just giving enough to say He has helped. God keeps pouring out the gifts till they overflow.

### **The Rich Must Do Good**

Whatever is noble or excellent in character. Good cannot be defined by the rich. They need the wisdom of God to know how to spend their money for good. The Bible can supply us with every good work (2 Tim. 3:16,17). He can help the widows and orphans (Js. 1:27). The wealthy can help the spreading of the Gospel. Funds for needy saints as well as their needy lost neighbor can be provided by the rich Christians. A Christians cannot be just a giver so good can be done. He must do something with his riches. Too often wealthy members literally pass the buck so they can skip out on the work.

### **The Rich Must Be Rich in Good Works**

The rich work to make riches to put to work for good works. Earthly gain is only good for heavenly riches. The term *rich* means that they are abounding with good works. The give enough and more to do the job. The work enough to accomplish the good.

### **The Rich Must Be Ready to Give**

In order to be ready to give requires preparation. Some wealthy people can never help because they have their money always tied up in other ventures. Not only does money need to be available they need to make their own lives available. Implied in the term to give is a level of generous of bountiful given. It would require an unselfish, liberal, cheerful and sacrificial giving.

### **The Rich Must Be Willing to Share**

David noted the kind of giving by the Israelites for the building of Solomon's Temple. David prayer, *"with joy I have seen Your people, who are present here to offer willingly to You"* (1 Chr. 29:17). Share is the term *koinonia* translated in other places "fellowship". These rich Christian are assessable to the needy. They have made themselves and their money available. They have not been forced or coerced into giving. They are like Barnabas instead of Ananais and Saphirra (Acts 4:32-5:11).

### **The Rich Must Store Up Riches**

No better commentary on this passage can be found that what the Lord said in His Sermon on the Mount. *"Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also"* (Matt. 6:19-21). Storing up is what a rich man does with his funds or in this passage foundation. These funds are not found as a future foundation on earth but in Heaven. Rich people long to learn about a good investment. There is no better investment than in the futures of mankind. To be rich in this life and poor in the next result from very poor financial planning.

*20 O Timothy! Guard what was committed to your trust, avoiding the profane and idle babblings and contradictions of what is falsely called knowledge— 21 by professing it some have strayed concerning the faith. Grace be with you. Amen.*

Now that Paul as spoken about commands for the rich Christians at Ephesus, he returns once move to dealing with false teachers who wish to contaminate the Truth. Two final charges are given Timothy: guard the Truth and avoid the lies.

As a good soldier Timothy must be on guard duty at all times. The Gospel is to be spread to all men with regard to salvation. It must be protected from all men with regard to purity. The term *"committed"* means a deposit of something valuable has been given. There is nothing more valuable that the Absolute Truth, the Words of God Himself, and the Good News of Salvation to all men.

The final command from the older preacher to the younger is a repeated warn to avoid the tactics of the false teachers. They love to use both empty arguments and ignorant debates. The term profane can be translated worldly meaning anything outside the Greek temple grounds. Here Paul means anything outside the realm of truth. It is idle or empty babblings. Like the Tower of Babel, the church cannot be built up by meaningless dialogue between the workers. Contradictions comes from a Greek technical term "used in rhetoric for a counter proposition in a debate" (MacArthur 292). These antithesis of false teachers are based on false knowledge. Early gnostics believed they were blessed with special spiritual knowledge others were not privileged to have. "The gnostics actually had a doctrine that was a strange mixture of Christianity, Oriental mysticism, Greek philosophy, and Jewish legalism. Like many of the Eastern cults we see today, it over 'something for everybody'." (Wiersbe 6.237).

A reason is given why Timothy must avoid these: some have already fallen for these lies and reject the faith.

The closing remarks mention "with you" which is the plural. This does not mean the letter was written to others besides Timothy. According to Marshall Patton "Timothy was to use it when he was dealing with the churches under his care." (Patton 152).

### **Questions:**

1. Who are the rich in our modern society?
2. How to rich demonstrate haughtiness?
3. Contrast the trustworthiness of money with the faithfulness of God?
4. To what extent does God supply us and why?
5. Why should the rich do good instead of just pay people to do it for them?
6. What does "ready to give" imply?
7. Give an example of those in the Bible who were willing to share?

8. How can the rich store up riches?
9. What to final charges does Paul give Timothy?
10. What is Gnosticism?

**Discussion:**

1. If you had a million in disposable money what are some specific things you would do to spend it in light of verses 17-19?
2. What can a preacher or teacher do in a Bible Class or other settings to help him in *“avoiding the profane and idle babblings and contradictions of what is falsely called knowledge”*?