



**FIRST TIMOTHY**

**SECOND TIMOTHY**

**PAUL'S LETTERS TO A YOUNG PREACHER**

**WITH CLASS QUESTIONS FOR EACH LESSON**

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# **INTRODUCTION TO**

# **FIRST TIMOTHY**

## **THE HISTORY:**

The histories of two faithful and productive servants of the Lord merge in the meeting of Paul and Timothy at Lystra in Acts 16:1-3. Paul was on his second preaching journey when he came again to the hometown of the promising young Christian who would become so much a part of his life from that time forward. Evidently, Paul perceived some need for another helper in the work that he and Silas anticipated doing among the Gentiles. That need was filled when Timothy was taken along as they went through the cities, delivering the “decrees to keep, which were determined by the apostles and elders at Jerusalem.” But first, Timothy, whose father was a Gentile, was circumcised “because of the Jews who were in that region” (Acts 16:3,4).

Timothy was subsequently engaged with Paul in gospel work at Philippi, Berea, Thessalonica, Corinth, and perhaps in other cities visited by Paul on his second trip. Later, the young preacher continued to be associated with the apostle as they served together and strengthened churches in various places. He was with Paul in Ephesus when the letters to Corinth were written (2Cor. 1:1) and at Corinth when another epistle was sent to the church in Rome (Rom. 16:21). Timothy is also included in the opening remarks of letters sent to Philippi, Colosse, and Philemon while Paul was a prisoner of the Roman government, indicating their continuing close relationship during the apostle’s most trying times.

At some point in his service to Christ, Timothy seems also to have been imprisoned (Heb. 13:23), but we have no details whatever of that occurrence. Toward the end of Paul’s second confinement at Rome, he sought Timothy’s company and assistance once again before his impending execution took place (2Tim. 4:9,21).

## **THE MAN:**

Timothy is one of the more memorable companions of Paul. His exemplary character was admired by older brethren at Lystra and Iconium even before he first met the great apostle (Acts 16:2). He had been well taught in the Holy Scriptures by a godly mother and

a faithful grandmother (2Tim. 1:5; 3:15) and likely obeyed the gospel during Paul's first preaching work at Lystra (Acts 14:6,7). While we cannot know his exact age during the course of his association with Paul, Timothy is spoken of as a "youth" (1Tim. 4:12; 2Tim. 2:22). However, the first-century culture within which Paul functioned stretched the definition of "youth" far beyond our modern concept. Regardless of his years, the young preacher appears always to have proved himself to be faithful, dependable, and untiring in every task assigned to him in the Lord's service. David Lipscomb remarks:

The character of Timothy as set forth in the Scriptures is one of rare beauty. There is not an intimation in the divine record that there ever was a failure of his faith. From his call at Lystra to the end of his earthly sojourn there is not an intimation of his swerving from the faith revealed in the gospel, never a shrinking from the post of duty and danger of suffering, and never of failing in fidelity to the trust committed to him or in love and loyalty to Paul.

### THE PROBLEMS:

Sometime following Paul's release from his imprisonment at Rome, he and Timothy were together at Ephesus, although Luke's historical record of Paul's work had closed by that time. Paul went from there "into Macedonia" and left Timothy in Ephesus to "charge some that they teach no other doctrine" [than the teaching Paul had already done there] (1Tim. 1:3). It appears that "some" were already engaged in contradicting and misusing the lessons that the apostle had delivered to the disciples. Perhaps Timothy was left with a "list" of matters needing attention. At any rate, we can gain some insight into the nature of the problems at Ephesus by noting the varied topics addressed by Paul as he reminds the young preacher of his duty to defend truth against error. Some of the important issues included in Paul's discussion were:

1. Fables and genealogies were receiving attention that should be given to the gospel;
2. Ill-prepared disciples were endeavoring to teach God's law to others without comprehending the importance and sanctity of the gospel;
3. The relationship of saints to sinners was not fully appreciated;
4. The role of women needed to be better understood;
5. Qualifications and work of elders and deacons must be respected and maintained;
6. Positive personal qualities must be nourished within Timothy's own character;
7. The local church must be benevolent but cautious toward the care of its widows;
8. Appropriate behavior must be enforced among various groups in the congregation, including servants and masters, the unruly, and those who were worldly-minded and worldly-wise.

**THE LETTER:**

***Time:*** It seems certain that Paul was released from prison as he had anticipated in his “prison epistles” (Phil. 1:19, 25,26; 2:24; Col. 4:3). Since we have no historical record of his activities after that time, the instance of this writing must be left to conjecture. Some critics maintain that the letter was written to Timothy shortly after Paul had been forced to leave Ephesus hurriedly following the uprising instigated by Demetrius and other silver-smiths (Acts 19). However, that theory, it is said, fails to allow for certain circumstances in Luke’s account, and other scholars hold that a more likely time for the origin of this epistle is between Paul’s first and second imprisonments, whose dates are generally thought to be between 63-66 A. D.

***Place:*** Both Paul and Timothy had returned to Ephesus following Paul’s release from his captivity at Rome. From there the apostle had gone “into Macedonia” and had left Timothy in Ephesus to accomplish a special task (1Tim. 1:3,4). There is no way to know Paul’s exact location when he wrote to Timothy, except that it would have been somewhere “in Macedonia” or beyond. Philippi, Corinth, Nicopolis, or some other place in the general area of Macedonia could have been the city of origin.

***Theme:*** It seems clear that the apostle had left Timothy in Ephesus to fill two roles:

1. He would serve as a minister of the gospel. As such, he would teach the same doctrine that Paul had taught in converting and edifying the church members there (1:3,4).

2. He would function as a monitor of the spiritual conditions among the disciples. A “monitor” is [Webster]:

[Noun]-- a. “one who admonishes, especially in reproof or caution”;

b. “a pupil or student selected for special duties, often disciplinary”;

c. “a warning; a reminder”;

[Verb]-- d. “to check...to ascertain the quality of ( \_\_ )”;

e. “to test...to determine whether the ( \_\_ ) comes within specified limits.”

3. Within all of these these definitions, Timothy’s work at Ephesus was to investigate spiritual conditions in the church and to measure what he found against the standards established by Paul in his original apostolic indoctrination of the saints. The young preacher was doubtless charged also to try to correct any deviations found among the disciples and probably was expected to report to Paul for further instructions about what more needed to be done to improve and maintain the spiritual health of the congregation. The focus of our study will be: “Timothy-- Minister and Monitor of the Gospel.”

**THE OUTLINE:**

**TIMOTHY: MINISTER AND MONITOR OF THE GOSPEL**

Chapter One

**THE MINISTRY OF THE GOSPEL**

- I. Greeting-- 1:1,2**
- II. The glory of the Gospel-- 1:3-11**
- III. Paul's ministry of the Gospel-- 1:12-17**
- IV. Timothy's ministry of the Gospel-- 1:18-20**

Chapter Two

**MONITORING PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS**

- I. Praying for rulers and all men-- 2:1,2**
- II. Evangelizing the lost-- 2:3-7**
- III. Behavior of Christian men-- 2:8**
- IV. Behavior of Christian women-- 2:9-15**
  - A. Modesty-- 2:9**
  - B. Good works-- 2:10**
  - C. Submissiveness-- 2:11-14**
  - D. Domestic responsibilities-- 2:15**

Chapter Three

**MONITORING ORGANIZATIONAL RELATIONSHIPS**

- I. Elders-- 3:1-7**
- II. Deacons-- 3:8-13**
- III. Conduct in the House of God-- 3:14-16**

Chapter Four

**MONITORING PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY**

- I. Caution about religious error-- 4:1-5**
- II. Loyalty to the truth-- 4:6-11**
- III. Obligation for good personal behavior-- 4:12-5:2**

Chapter Five

**MONITORING CHURCH BUSINESS**

- I. Enrollment of widows by the church-- 5:3-16**
- II. Treatment of elders by church members-- 5:17-20**

Chapter Six

**MONITORING CHRISTIAN BEHAVIOR**

- I. Monitoring the behavior of servants and masters-- 6:1,2**
- II. Monitoring the behavior of the unruly-- 6:3-5**
- III. Monitoring the behavior of the material minded-- 6:6-10**
- IV. Monitoring personal behavior of self-- 6:11-16**
- V. Monitoring the behavior of the rich-- 6:17-19**
- VI. Monitoring the behavior of the worldly wise-- 6:20,21**

**All scripture quotations and references in this study, including class questions, are taken from the New King James Version unless otherwise noted.**

Chapter One

Verses 1,2-- GREETING

1. Timothy had been left at Ephesus to perform a difficult task. “Some” were teaching a doctrine different from what Paul had taught while in that city. It would not be easy or pleasant to expose their false teachings and to reaffirm the truths of the gospel. Timothy’s efforts might be met with questions about his authority for undertaking such work, and Paul is anxious to furnish him with a response to use if challenged.
2. The young preacher would be working within the authority of an “apostle.” Paul, like the other apostles, had been sent by Jesus Himself to preach the gospel that the Ephesians had been taught. When Timothy defended the precepts that Paul had preached, he functioned as an administrator of the authority which Christ had given exclusively to the apostles, and that authority was not to be ignored (Gal. 1:8,9).
3. The authority by which Timothy would undertake his task also involved the autonomy of God, since, as one interpretation suggests, Paul had his *apostleship* by virtue of God’s commandment. Another view is that Paul’s *message* to Timothy had been commanded by both the Father and the Son. Either way, it was clear that Timothy was not acting by his own authority in opposing the false teachers at Ephesus. Heaven stood behind every word and deed that might be directed against “another doctrine.”
4. God as his Savior and Jesus Christ as his Lord were man’s only hope of eternal salvation. Further, why would anyone entertain any doctrine that was not approved by those on whom his salvation depends?
5. Timothy was Paul’s “true son” within the “faith” of the gospel. Paul probably had baptized Timothy and had been his first and principal instructor in the truth to which the young man had committed his life. The two men, one older and fatherly, the other younger and dependent on the older man as a child depends on his father, enjoyed a special relationship seldom seen, even among religious people.
6. Timothy was a “true” son in the faith. Other young men at Ephesus and elsewhere had been converted by Paul, but Timothy was special. He could be depended on to do his duty; his loyalty to Paul and to Paul’s message was of the kind expected only from a son toward his father.
7. The divine doctrine which some had perverted offered three unique and precious blessings to its followers: grace, mercy and peace. None of these was available from any other source. Its detractors were giving up a great deal when they gave up the gospel!

## Verses 3-11-- THE GLORY OF THE GOSPEL

1. Paul's gentle reminder to Timothy about his responsibilities in Ephesus would call attention again to the importance of defending the gospel from the perversions of those who were mishandling it. As a preacher, Timothy had the ongoing duty to "preach the word" to all (2Tim. 4:2). Its truths were essential to the salvation of every soul (John 8:32). But there were "some" who needed a *special* lesson from the young teacher. Those who were promoting things "other" than what the apostle had declared must be warned that what they were doing was totally unacceptable to Paul and to the Lord (Gal. 1:6-9).
2. Paul's warning was in the form of a "charge," which denotes a "command" not to be ignored. The truth offers no options to those who would be its teachers. It must be a matter of proclaiming "the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth."
3. It appears that those guilty of teaching "another gospel" were exhibiting an attraction to Jewish religion, which was replete with human traditions and their "corroborating" fables to "prove" their validity. These fables were "traditional supplements to the law, allegorical interpretations, Jewish stories of miracles, Rabbinical fabrications, whether in history or doctrine, false doctrines generally, etc." (Wuest).
4. Genealogies were also of crucial importance to these teachers. Such lists, of course, had been vital to the conduct of Jewish affairs in the Old Testament. Genealogical tables served: (1) as a means of preserving the integrity of the rights of land possession of each tribe in the land of Palestine [Caanan]; (2) to reserve the privileges of priestly service to the men of Levi's tribe exclusively; (3) and, most importantly, to provide an accurate line of descent from Judah and David to the Jewish Messiah.
5. The arrival of the Christ [Messiah] and the dissolution of the Levitical temple ministry had removed any need of genealogies from the divine scheme. Their emphasis was on the *flesh*; the focus of the gospel is on the *spirit* of man. The pride of fleshly credentials is completely foreign to the mindset of New Testament disciples (Phil. 3:3-8). Physical heredity has no place among their qualifications for reaching heaven.
6. Devotion to genealogies within the gospel system was an "endless" [pointless] pursuit. It had become impossible in many cases to trace the descent of individual Jews to the person of Abraham, which was uppermost among the reasons for common people to cherish their lists of ancestors. It is reported that Herod the Great, an Idumaeen jealous of the physical lineage of the Jews, destroyed the carefully preserved genealogical tables in order to remove any disadvantage he might suffer for not having a personal heritage that could be traced back to Abraham.
7. Not only were the traditions, fables, and genealogies *useless* to Christians, they were productive of great harm to the spirituality of the disciples. They fostered *disputes*, *strife*, and *division* rather than *godly edification*. They *tore down* instead of *building up* the relationships of brotherhood and unity that should characterize God's people.



8. Things important to the Judaizers were without any worthwhile purpose. However, the “commandment” [things commanded by God to be taught-- vs. 1] was intended to develop the most noble qualities in every disciple:
- a. Love. “And now abideth faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love” (1Cor. 13:13). Love is fundamental to every quality and to every activity of the Christian life. Without love, we are *nothing* in God’s sight (1Cor. 13:2). No higher goal can occupy us than increasing our love for God and man;
  - b. A pure heart. Sincerity is as essential to love as love is necessary to Christian character. It is easy to *profess* love, but the proof of *true* love is in our behavior toward those we claim to love. A *pure* heart is one whose devotion to God is unmixed with less important loyalties. Pleasing God is its supreme goal, and total submission to the Lord’s will its only purpose. “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart...” (Luke 10:27);
  - c. A good conscience. The conscience is a God-given sensitivity by which we can monitor our own conduct in the light of what we know about right and wrong. A “good” conscience is one that is unabused by deliberate violations of the knowledge of what is “good.” A good conscience becomes “evil” (Heb. 10:22) when it is desensitized to feelings of guilt about behavior inconsistent with what is “good.” When this occurs, the conscience not only ceases to guide an individual into morally acceptable conduct but also becomes a dangerous weapon in the hands of the devil as it lends *approval* to the practice of things that are not morally acceptable. Paul’s persecution of the church was done in “good conscience” (Acts 23:1) only because his grasp of what was “right” about oppressing Christians was really wrong;
  - d. Sincere faith. Sincerity in *whatever* we believe is essential to God’s approval, but the emphasis here is not only on the sincerity of the heart but also on the integrity of the doctrine embraced by the heart. Faith comes from the gospel (Rom. 10:17). Anything originating elsewhere is no part of “the faith” by which man is saved (Rom. 1:5; 16:25). The only “unfeigned” faith is that which comes from the plain teaching of Scripture rather than from the doctrines and commandments of men (Matt. 15:9). This explains the stress placed by Paul on Timothy’s *attitude* toward “all Scripture” (2Tim. 2:16,17) and toward his *acquisition* of knowledge about the word of God (2Tim. 2:15; 1Tim. 4:13).
9. “Some” had compromised their dedication to teaching the “pure” gospel and had instead become involved in “idle talk.” These were the same persons identified in vs. three, and their idle talk was a gospel other than what Paul had preached. Their activity was not only *useless* but also *harmful* to the spiritual health of others. They had *strayed* into behavior “aside” from the truth, perhaps suggesting that they had moved slowly, and possibly unintentionally, away from a previously sound position. False doctrine often overtakes us in such subtle ways and in small enough increments that we can become entangled before we fully realize what is happening to us.

10. Teachers have been afforded a good measure of prestige and respect in most societies. But one cannot effectively teach what he does not understand. Preparation always underlies good teaching, but some are unwilling to pay the price of *preparing to teach* in exchange for the *privilege of teaching*. James offers a solemn warning about this serious mistake, "...let not many of you become teachers, knowing that we shall receive a stricter judgment" (James 3:1).
11. "Some" at Ephesus had an ambition to be *nomodidaskalos*, "law teachers." Perhaps they saw their opportunity for prominence in the teaching of Mosaic law. Although relatively unqualified to deal with the intricate traditional law of the rabbis, they presumed nevertheless to "say" and "affirm" things about which they had only a shallow understanding. The conclusions they drew from the Law and the applications they imposed on others were totally foreign to the "glorious gospel" that Paul had left with the church when he departed the city.
12. Paul was often accused not only of abandoning the Law under which he had been brought up but also of holding the entire Law in the greatest contempt. These charges, of course, prejudiced many Jews against giving his gospel any hearing. The truth was, while Paul stood firm in his contention that none could be saved by Moses' law, nor by any other law that demanded perfection in its followers, he always was considerate of the Jews' loyalty to the cultural lifestyle they had practiced under the Law. Even with Christians, he took no issue with their observing customs that were unattached to their quest for eternal life. [See Acts 21:18-26.] In fact, he acknowledged certain religious advantages enjoyed by the Jews because they *had* the Law (Rom. 3:1,2,31).
13. Those who were promoting Moses' law, or any other law apart from Christ, as God's will for man in the present time were in error because they failed to grasp the real purpose of such law. Law was beneficial ["good"] only when allowed to serve its intended design. Moses' law had numerous objectives that should have prepared the Jews for the Messiah and His kingdom:
  - a. It identified sinful behavior and condemned its practice (e.g., Exo. 20:3-17, etc.);
  - b. It affirmed the abhorrence with which God regards man's sin (Rom. 7:13);
  - c. It exposed the eternal consequences of disobedience (e.g., Rom. 6:23; Ezek. 18:20);
  - d. It encouraged conformity to Jehovah's appointments (e.g., Rom. 10:5);
  - e. It guarded Israel from the moral excesses of other nations (Gal. 3:22,23);
  - f. It condemned men who were unable to keep it perfectly (Rom. 7:10,11,24);
  - g. It led helpless sinners to the help of Christ (Gal. 3:24).
14. Those purposes for the Jews' law *expired* with the coming of the Messiah and the installation of His law of liberty as the way to salvation (Jas. 1:25).
15. The moral law of the Gentiles [See Rom. 2:14,15.] provided similar benefits to them [to a lesser degree] that the Law of Moses offered to the Jews. The "lawful" use of any law is to apply it within the bounds of its objectives.

16. One of the Law's primary designs was to restrain the Jews from such errant behavior as to render them infertile soil for the gospel of faith. Its severe condemnation of immorality made it unnecessary for Jehovah to "give them up" as He had done to Gentile nations because of their gross misconduct (Rom. 1:28).
17. There were two basic positions about law [any law] that Paul wanted Timothy to advocate among the members of the church at Ephesus:
  - a. It was of no value at all to those who were seeking to save their souls. Law could *not* provide the righteousness necessary to eternal life (Rom. 3:20). Law only condemned those who failed to satisfy its demands for perfection. Paul concluded that men must be justified by faith and not by any deeds of law (Rom. 3:25);
  - b. It might have substantial value to those who chose to apply its high standard of morality [if it had such] to their personal lives among others. The identification of sinful practices and the condemnation of negative moral behavior was unequivocal in Moses' law. Moreover, the morality of the Law had been duplicated in the gospel on a higher level [e.g., Matt. 5:17ff.]. Those who chose to use the constraints of the Law as a moral guidepost certainly did themselves and others no *harm*, but they should be made to understand that anything lifted from a law other than the gospel could have no bearing whatever on salvation from sin. Paul had no quarrel with the *morality* of the Law of Moses; only with its inability to *forgive* its followers when they violated its *moral precepts*. The Law was not made to make people righteous, only moral.
18. The behavior controlled by the Law involved both the wrong attitudes men hold toward God's authority [e.g., lawless, insubordinate, profane] and the wrong behavior they exhibit against the lifestyle He wants for people [e.g., murderers, fornicators, liars, etc.]. These and other similar things are *contrary* to the "sound doctrine" of acceptable moral conduct, and any law that helps to eliminate them must be viewed as "good" for that purpose, but not for making saints out of sinners.
19. Paul's gospel, left in the charge of Timothy to preach and defend, was "glorious" far beyond anything offered by any other law. It could:
  - a. Cleanse human *behavior* through an unequalled code of moral conduct (Matt. 5: 27, 28, etc.);
  - b. Cleanse human *souls* through acts of obedience to God's commands (Acts 2:28; 1John 1:7,9, etc.);
  - c. Correct both *attitudes* and *actions* harmful to man's relationship to God;
  - d. Offer its benefits to *all* men without excluding any (Mark 16:15; 2Pet. 3:9);
  - e. Open heaven's doors to *everyone* willing to accept its beneficence (Rev. 22:17).
20. The glories of the gospel system can be compared to a treasure and to a pearl of great price (Matt. 13:44-46). It must be *guarded* against all intrusions into its integrity. The Lord had entrusted His gospel to Paul (1Cor. 2:12-14), and now Paul had passed the torch of responsibility to a young preacher who enjoyed his respect.

## Verses 12-17-- PAUL'S MINISTRY OF THE GOSPEL

1. Paul was grateful for many things and often expressed thanks to God for the blessings he received. There was nothing that seemed more thankworthy to him than the opportunity he had been given to be rescued from spiritual ruin and allowed to become earth's foremost advocate of his Rescuer. He had been chosen by Jesus to become an earthen vessel to bear God's truth to "the Gentiles, kings, and the children of Israel" (Acts 9:15). The Lord expected him to be faithful to his charge, and he had not disappointed.
2. The Lord had put Paul into the ministry of the gospel to accomplish significant things in behalf of lost men and women (Acts 26:18). Paul had special qualifications to be successful in his work, being highly educated and favored with an overwhelming religious sincerity and a zeal for action (Acts 26:9; Gal. 1:14). To these personal credentials God had added apostolic powers which Paul employed with great effect as he labored in many places [e.g., Acts 13:9-12; 20:9,10].
3. When we are first introduced to Paul in the Scriptures, he seems a poor prospect for becoming a servant of Christ. By his own admission, he was at that time a blasphemer [*blasphemos*-- "abusive, speaking evil"], a persecutor [*dioko*-- "to put to flight, drive away, pursue"] and an insolent [*hubristes*- "a violent man"] man. We can identify each of these characteristics in his persecutions of Christians and churches (Acts 8:3; 9:1).
4. Paul was inherently an honest and sincere individual. Even as he sought to destroy the cause of Christ, he always did what he thought was right (Acts 26:9; 23:1). The key to his doing well as an apostle was in *changing* what he thought was right, and this was accomplished in his conversion (Acts 9:6; Gal. 1:23). God recognized that his zeal and devotion to error would carry over into his dedication to truth.
5. Intentional opposition to the truth would *not* have recommended Paul to become a minister of Christ, but his ignorance of the nature of his behavior did. Ignorance did not save him, nor was he saved while ignorant of the truth, but his ignorance made a statement about what kind of disciple he would be if shown God's will. And, in keeping with the Lord's expectations, he "was not disobedient to the heavenly vision" (Acts 26:19) and took up his commission immediately.
6. The conversion of Paul the sinner into Paul the saint required both God's abundant mercy toward him and his own grateful love and faith toward so generous a Lord. God's part and Paul's part in the great transformation were both essential [See Acts 22:16.].
7. Paul always considered himself to be the greatest example possible of the complete success of Jesus' mission in the world. The Lord came to "destroy the works of the devil" (1John 3:8), and the apostle felt that no more destructive work could have been done than what he had done as Satan's agent. The "faithful" saying which Paul associates with the salvation of the "chief of sinners" seems not to be a direct statement of Scripture but instead was likely a familiar maxim among the early disciples.

8. There were three basic reasons why God demonstrated exceeding mercy in the conversion of Saul of Tarsus:
  - a. Saul was a soul in sin. The Lord is ready to reach out in forgiveness to any sinner who will be saved (Acts 10:34,35; 2Pet. 3:9);
  - b. Saul was an earthen vessel peculiarly equipped to carry the gospel to the Gentiles and to other lost men (2Cor.4:7);
  - c. Saul's initial opposition to the gospel stood in stark contrast to his eventual advocacy of the same gospel. His conversion served as a significant example ["pattern"] of (1) the power of the gospel (Rom. 1:16) and, (2) the unlimited bounds of God's merciful willingness to forgive even the greatest of transgressors against His will. If Saul could be moved to change, and if God could be moved to forgive him despite the magnitude of his sin, then none could be excluded from salvation by the gospel!
9. The apostle's emotions erupt into a proclamation of praise and honor when he reflects upon the implications of the facts of his own conversion to Jesus' cause. Before he met the Christ, he was a man in sin and in spiritual *misery*. How utterly wretched he had been (Rom. 7:23,24)! But now, he is a man with a mission who could *rejoice* in his hope of heaven (Phil. 4:4)! Who could cause such a drastic change in him? Who could deliver him from his despair (Rom. 7:24)?
10. Only the eternal and immortal King Jesus and His all-wise Father could have brought such joy out of sorrow and such victory out of defeat! Only God can hold out such a great and precious promise to all who will hear His voice and follow Him.....Amen-- "Thus, 'Amen' said by God 'it is and shall be so,' and by men, 'so let it be'"[W. E. Vine]. Perhaps it carries both meanings here.

#### Verses 18-20-- TIMOTHY'S MINISTRY OF THE GOSPEL

1. The noun *parangelia* ["charge"] is "a proclamation, a command or commandment," and is "strictly used of commands received from a superior and transmitted to others" [Vine], while the verb *paratithemi* ["commit"] signifies "to entrust, commit to one's charge." Considering these differences, it appears that Paul wants Timothy to realize that his mission to "charge some that they teach no other doctrine"(1:3) was not merely Paul's own idea of something that ought to be done. Instead, it was underwritten by the superior authority of heaven, by which Paul was first *charged* to preach the pure gospel and to stoutly expose error and defend truth (Gal. 1:6-9). Now, since the situation at Ephesus cried out for a defense of the gospel, the task was being handed off [*committed*] by Paul to young Timothy.
2. "Son Timothy" once again expresses the apostle's confidence that the youth was capable of handling the responsibility being given him. It pleases a father to be able to provide his son opportunities to prove his abilities to succeed in difficult situations. Paul must have taken great pride in this "son's" service in the kingdom.

3. Paul first preached the gospel in Lystra in Acts 14:6,7. It is probable that Timothy heard the truth and was baptized at that time. Later, Paul returned to Lystra and learned that the young man had progressed as a disciple. He was “well spoken of” by brethren who knew him (Acts 16:2). These compliments, however, were not the “prophecies” made about his potential for service. Prophecies [*propheteia*] were “speaking forth the mind and counsel of God” [Vine]. We have no more information about who had prophesied or what had been said, but obviously both human and divine testimony had foretold Timothy’s usefulness to Paul and to the Lord’s church.
4. Divine prophecy and human judgment enabled Paul to be comfortable in entrusting an important task to a man young in years and lacking in practical experience. Timothy would be dealing with men of devious character who were dedicated to subverting the true gospel and who would resort to any means to accomplish their purpose. His confrontation with them would be spiritual “warfare.” Nevertheless, Paul was sure that the young preacher would not fail but rather would prove himself as a “good soldier” of Christ (2Tim. 2:3).
5. Two basic things would determine whether Timothy would fulfill the predictions that had been made about him:
  - a. He must have faith. Such faith would involve both what he believed about the true gospel and what he would do to proclaim it and defend it against its enemies. Faith without works is always “dead” [useless] (James 2:26);
  - b. He must maintain a good conscience. Insincere claims of devotion are soon exposed for what they really are. Only half-hearted service can be expected from half-converted workers. Jesus’ prescription for success in His cause is, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind...” (Luke 10:27).
6. A strong faith is directly dependent on a pure conscience. Insincere motives in what we do will sooner or later erode the strength of what we believe. Paul had in mind certain individuals who once had committed themselves to the gospel but whose motives has been compromised with worldly things. When motives become mixed, faith [confidence] in the Lord’s truth becomes weak, and convictions then are questioned and rejected one by one. Soon, once-faithful voyagers “suffer shipwreck” concerning “the faith” [the body of truth by which men are saved-- See Gal. 1:23].
7. Two of these defectors from the faith were Hymenaeus and Alexander. They likely were known to church members at Ephesus. Timothy may or may not have been familiar with these men and what they had done in falling away. Either way, they could serve as good examples to Timothy and other Christians about the importance of seeking continually to become *stronger* in all things upon which eternal life depends.
8. Hymenaeus is mentioned again in 2Timothy 2:17 in company with Philetus. They were of the “sort” who had strayed from the truth and had resorted to profane and

vain “babblings.” Among their errors, they contended that the resurrection was already past, and their false teaching was overthrowing the faith of some disciples. This misrepresentation of the resurrection may have been included in their initial “shipwreck of the faith,” or it may have been a later addition to their catalog of sins.

9. Alexander is possibly the “coppersmith” who had done Paul much harm at the writing of the second letter to Timothy (2Tim. 4:14). It is uncertain whether this Alexander had any connection with the one mentioned in Acts 19:33 who sought to make a “defense” [of the true God?] to the unruly mob who attempted to harm Paul at Ephesus.
10. Both apostates had been “delivered” to Satan to teach them not to “blaspheme.” While some believe that a physical affliction was involved in this action, openly declaring their apostasy, this action likely consisted of a public denunciation of the wrongdoers and a strong demonstration of discipline against them by faithful disciples. A similar order concerning an unsaintly saint was given to the church at Corinth. The process which culminated in the disciples not “keeping company” with the offender may be studied in 1Corinthians 5:1-9.
11. To “blaspheme” [*blasphemia*-- “rail at or revile”] is to “speak contemptuously of God or of sacred things” [Vine]. Blasphemy is not necessarily confined to denouncing the Godhead. It may consist also in offering deliberate opposition to the “things of God,” all the things revealed by the apostles from the mind of the Lord (1Cor. 2:11). Hymenaeus and Alexander were as guilty of blasphemy when they promoted their false doctrines as the immoral man who had rejected the holiness of God in his acts of adultery. What we do that is wrong is no worse in God’s eyes than what we teach that is wrong!

1. When Paul went into \_\_\_\_\_, he left \_\_\_\_\_ in \_\_\_\_\_ to oppose some who were teaching a \_\_\_\_\_ doctrine.
2. He condemned the teaching of \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_, which caused \_\_\_\_\_ rather than \_\_\_\_\_.
3. The gospel stresses \_\_\_\_\_ from a \_\_\_\_\_, a \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.
4. Some wanted to be \_\_\_\_\_ of a \_\_\_\_\_ they didn't \_\_\_\_\_.
5. The \_\_\_\_\_ is good if it is used \_\_\_\_\_.
6. The \_\_\_\_\_ is not made for a \_\_\_\_\_, but for those who practice things \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_.
7. The \_\_\_\_\_ gospel had been \_\_\_\_\_ to Paul's trust.
8. Paul was put into the \_\_\_\_\_ even though he had been a \_\_\_\_\_, a \_\_\_\_\_ and an \_\_\_\_\_ man.
9. God's \_\_\_\_\_ was given to Paul because his persecution was carried out in \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.
10. A \_\_\_\_\_ saying was that \_\_\_\_\_ came into the \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_.
11. As the \_\_\_\_\_ of sinners, Paul would be a \_\_\_\_\_ of God's \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ for believers.
12. \_\_\_\_\_ had been made about Timothy's potential in the gospel.
13. Timothy could wage the \_\_\_\_\_ if he had \_\_\_\_\_ and a \_\_\_\_\_.
14. \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ had made \_\_\_\_\_ of their \_\_\_\_\_.
15. These two were \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_ to learn not to \_\_\_\_\_.



Chapter Two

One matter that Timothy would be responsible for as he sought to carry out Paul's instructions was the monitoring of personal relationships of church members among themselves and toward people outside the church. The doctrine taught by Paul in Ephesus had spelled out those responsibilities, and Timothy must assure that the saints were behaving in accord with what had been commanded.

**Verse 1,2-- PRAYING FOR RULERS AND ALL MEN**

1. Four different English words are used to cover the obligation Christians have in praying for "all men." Supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings should be included in petitions to God. The precise distinctions intended by the apostle are not easily determined. The Greek words, according to George R. Berry's The Greek New Testament, and their meanings, as defined by Henry Thayer, are:
  - a. Supplications-- *deesis*-- "imploring God's aid in some particular matter";
  - b. Prayers-- *proseuche*-- "prayers addressed to God";
  - c. Intercessions-- *enteuxis*-- "a falling in with, meeting with, a petition, supplications";
  - d. Thanksgivings-- *eucharistia*-- "the giving of thanks."
2. Albert Barnes defines "prayers" as "petitions which arise from a sense of need" and "supplications" as requests for "protection, and is applicable to one who, under a sense of guilt, flees to an altar with the symbols of supplication in his hand."
3. Kenneth Wuest says that "supplications" gives "prominence to personal needs. Here the word refers to petitions having to do with one's personal needs as they are related to the government under which he lives..." "Intercessions" signifies "approach to God in free and familiar prayer...In our present passage, the idea of interposition is prominent. We are as Christians to make prayers a factor in our relations to our secular rulers."
4. The New Collegiate Dictionary perhaps gives definitions that will help to distinguish these terms. They agree substantially with the definitions of the lexicographers:
  - a. Supplications: "Humble petitions";
  - b. Prayers: "The offering of adoration, confession, supplication, thanksgiving";  
[This obviously is a general term, including the others.]
  - c. Intercessions: "Acts of interceding, mediation...or entreaty in behalf of another";
  - d. Thanksgivings: "A prayer expressing gratitude."
5. Christians should be interested in the welfare of all men. Although we show a special

concern for our brethren in Christ (Gal. 6:10), our good will must extend beyond the borders of the kingdom. All men are creatures made by the same God; all enjoy the deep concern of that God (2Pet. 3:9); and all are objects of the spiritual blessings promised in the gospel of His Son (Mark 16:15). It is altogether fitting that God's people should pray for "all men."

6. Among "all men" are those who exercise authority over Christians and whose decisions have a great impact on their opportunities to serve the Lord under favorable conditions. It isn't surprising that Paul makes a point of stressing the need for prayers in behalf of kings and others in places of authority.
7. Rulers cannot be expected to give particular attention to the Lord's disciples. In some instances, they may even be unaware of the saints' existence or of their singular activities in serving God within the New Testament pattern. Nevertheless, governance favorable to the practice of religion in general will benefit the church in particular. Moreover, civil tranquility offers an environment in which religious people can make their choices and exercise their rights to spiritual activity without stress and conflict being raised against them by an unfriendly government.

**Verses 3-7-- EVANGELIZING THE LOST**

1. Praying for "all men" and for "kings and authorities" is a practice both good and acceptable to God because it reinforces in Christians their awareness of and responsibilities toward the brotherhood of man. It also allows each disciple to become an active participant in the evangelization of "all the world."
2. God's interest in "all men" is unquestioned. Jesus was sent to seek and to save [all] "the lost" (Lk. 19:10). He died on the cross for [all] "the world" (John 3:16). The gospel was sent to [all] "creatures" for their salvation (Mark 16:15,16).
3. Salvation is always accompanied by a knowledge of the truth. Although God respects prayers for opportunities to learn the truth about salvation (Acts 10:1,9), He also insists that sinners obey His commandments to be saved (Acts 10:34,35) once those opportunities are confronted. God's commandments are revealed only in His gospel (Rom. 1:16,17). Those who never learn the truth never can be saved by the truth (John 8:32).
4. All men share a relationship with the One God. He is the maker of all men (Gen.1:26), and it is not unexpected that He should be interested in the welfare of all men or that He would have made provision for the salvation of one man as well as another (Acts 10:34,35). Our interests and efforts toward the redemption of all men from sin should correspond to His.
5. All men share the privilege of having Jesus Christ as their Mediator [*mesites*-- "a go-between"]. Humanity in its seriously flawed nature is incompatible with divinity in its perfect holiness. Communication between them is impossible without a mediator to represent each to the other. Christ is the ideal Mediator between God and men, for

He alone shares in the nature of both. Moses served as the mediator between Jehovah and Israel in the giving of the law (Gal. 3:19,20), but Jesus is a better Mediator of the better covenant (Heb. 8:6). As “a Minister of the sanctuary and of the true tabernacle” (Heb. 8:2), He offers us the indispensable service of interceding for us when we attempt to come to the perfect God (Heb. 7:25).

6. All men were ransomed by Jesus Christ when He gave Himself on the cross for the sins of all. Paying the ransom [*antilutron*-- “a means of loosing”] delivered men from the penalty of eternal death. This payment was made “for” [*hyper*-- “on behalf of” (Vine); “for one’s (another’s) advantage or benefit” (Thayer)] all men, not just a select few.
7. The incontrovertible truth that whatever divinity has done in behalf of humanity has been done for *all* humanity is good cause to evangelize all men with the story of Jesus. God’s eternal plan was for testimony about the Savior to go to “every creature” (Mark 16:15,16) in all the nations of the earth (Matt. 28:19).
8. God was careful to delay His testimony about Jesus until “due time.” Galatians 4:4 speaks of the Savior being sent “in the fullness of time,” and Romans 5:6 says that “in due time” Christ died for ungodly people. All three references assert that the time chosen by Jehovah for setting into motion His grand plan of redemption was more opportune for success than other times might have been. The social and political conditions of the first century offered distinct advantages to the preaching of the gospel that were absent at any earlier time [e.g., precise language, good road systems, peace among nations, etc.].
9. Paul’s work in the world was to preach salvation to all men. He had been endowed with spiritual gifts as an apostle to enhance the success of his efforts. His whole life was now focused on how he could accomplish the most good for the most people as he moved about from place to place (1Cor. 9:22,23).
10. He was a preacher, an apostle, and a teacher for *all* men, but especially for the Gentiles. The Lord had carefully selected and separated him to bear the testimony of Jesus to people who had enjoyed little or no earlier introduction to the Messiah of the world. Salvation was intended for Gentiles as well as for the [supposedly] “prepared” Jews, and Paul was conscious of his great responsibility to “level the playing field” for everybody.

#### Verse 8-- BEHAVIOR OF CHRISTIAN MEN

1. Having established the truth that God had made the gospel of Christ available to both Jew and Gentile, and having asserted his personal responsibility as a chosen apostle to preach that gospel to all men, Paul is now ready to prescribe by his apostolic authority certain principles of conduct that should govern the behavior of the men and women who had been favored with his revelation.

2. This chapter opened with the apostle's directions about those for whom Christians ought to pray, the kinds of things that should be included in the prayers, and certain reasons why these prayers should be offered. Now, he adds a few other instructions by which prayers ought to be regulated.
3. Since women were directed to keep silent in the churches (1Cor. 14:14), it fell to the men to lead the congregations in their public prayers. "Men" is not used comprehensively in verse eight to include both genders, as made clear by Paul's instructions for women in verse nine. Nor is he addressing rules about private prayers, for those regulations would be the same for both men and women.
4. Whenever and wherever Christian men accepted the responsibility of leading their brethren in the most serious activity of addressing God in prayer, their "hands" [lives] must be "holy." [See James 4:8.] Two reasons make this imperative: (1) God will not hear the prayers of deliberately disobedient people (John 9:31), and, (2) the congregation must not be perceived by the world as supportive of any unholy conduct by its leaders (Rom. 2:24).
5. Prayers must come from hearts devoid of wrath and ill-will toward others. Using prayer to enlist God's reprisal against others would be totally inconsistent with our being forgiven as we forgive (Matt. 6:12,14,15). Love and forgiveness are controlling motivations for prayers offered in behalf of our fellow men.
6. Doubts about the effectiveness of our prayers is as inappropriate as ill feelings toward those about whom we pray. James warns sternly about the destructive nature of the doubt harbored by a "double-minded" man when he prays. Prayers of that kind are altogether without merit to God (James 1:6-8).

**Verses 9-15-- BEHAVIOR OF CHRISTIAN WOMEN**

1. The good conduct of female saints under the scrutiny of public observation is also crucial to a positive reputation for the church as it worships and serves among worldly people. While theirs is not a role of leadership in the congregation, the behavior manifested by Christian women is every bit as vital to a healthy congregational influence as the public conduct of Christian men.
2. The image that women project to others is first addressed by Paul. Both dress and demeanor must testify to the spiritual priorities by which their lives are governed. It is believed that it was not uncommon for women of that time and place to exhibit a great emphasis on worldly values through the highly-sensual nature of the clothes they wore and the ornaments they displayed when they paraded themselves before the public eye. The Christian woman was to adorn herself in keeping with "modesty" [*kosmios*-- "orderly, well-arranged"] rather than according to the fashions and styles dictated by worldly people. Vine cites the kinship of *kosmios* to *kosmos* ["world"] and further defines it as "harmonious arrangement," which encourages women to present themselves so as to project an image compatible with the spiritual principles by

which their lives should be controlled.

- a. Other qualities that define the dress of a Christian woman are “propriety” or “shamefastness” [*aidos*-- “a sense of shame, modesty”] and “moderation” or “sobriety” [*sophrosune*-- “sound judgment”], a self-government that controls impulses to behave in ways contrary to the overriding “shamefastness” of the inner woman [R.C. Trench].
  - b. Modest dress in modern society is likely to concern the *covering* of body parts, but within the context of first-century Gentile society, it had more to do with the inordinate display of physical adornments that called attention to themselves and to their worldly values. Braiding and intertwining the hair with expensive materials, wearing costly jewelry and clothing, and other similar practices were commonly seen among the socially-conscious and worldly-centered women of Paul’s time. However, the motives driving their conduct must not be the same as those that determined how Christian women dressed themselves and how they deported themselves before other people.
  - c. These principles of dress and conduct were, no doubt, intended to regulate the dress and behavior of Christian women in all circumstances, public and private. It is also very likely that these instructions were intended to give special emphasis to the dress and conduct of women in the assemblies of the churches.
3. **Good works.** The prime characteristic by which a saintly woman was to be distinguished from other females was not physical but spiritual in nature. *Good works* should be the most significant feature of the image she projected to those around her. Like Dorcas (Acts 10:36-41), she ought to be known for her “good works and charitable deeds.” She must be careful to be clothed with humility (1Pet. 5:5) and righteousness (2Cor. 6:7; Eph. 6:14), even with the possibility of not being seen as style conscious or as socially acceptable among other women.
  4. **Submissiveness.** Another important trait to be displayed by the godly woman when she participated in public worship was a submissive attitude toward the men of the local church. It was the men into whose hands the Lord had placed the roles of leadership, and her behavior must conform to that divine decision. The woman’s place in the assembly was that of a *learner* who *listened to the teaching* done by the male members of the congregation. The only exception to this rule of silence was in the case of women who possessed spiritual gifts of “praying and prophesying,” which required their speaking out to others. Those who exercised those gifts did so with covered heads to declare their submissiveness to men, in spite of violating the silence by which their subordination in the worship services was usually displayed. [See 1Cor. 14:34,35 and 11:5-15.]
    - a. Paul offers two reasons for this arrangement that might not be viewed with favor by some female members upon being informed of his instructions about the

behavior of women in the church services. It was important to their compliance with his counsel that they understand that these restrictions had been placed upon them by God and not by the apostle as the expression of some prejudice he might hold against women.

- b. God's "rule of the firstborn" was the first factor that had determined which of the sexes would be given responsibility for public action in the church. The chronology of birth was invariably respected among the Jews when preferences were to be shown in their families. Many Gentile cultures also dispensed favors in a similar way. It should not be considered unreasonable that God had made His choices in keeping with common practice. Man [Adam] was first formed, and man accordingly was cast into the public view by the Lord who made him first.
  - c. The Corinthian church had problems relating to the submissiveness of women in their worship services (1Cor. 11). Paul used the creation of man and woman in his reasoning about their respective roles in the assemblies.
    - (1) Man was first created, then woman. Woman is from man (1Cor. 11:8).
    - (2) Woman was made for man [as his helper--Gen. 2:18] and not the reverse (1Cor. 11:9).
    - (3) Women should respect their God-appointed submission to men (1Cor. 11:10).
  - d. Although his prior creation gave man no personal credit to prove him more deserving of leadership than the second-made woman, the actions of Adam and Eve [representing all men and women who followed them] indicated the one to whom leadership responsibilities should be given. Eve was *deceived* by the temptations of Satan in the Garden of Eden; Adam was *not deceived*. Both fell into transgression, one knowingly and the other unknowingly, but Adam's exercise of deliberate choice rather than emotion apparently reflected something in his nature that better qualified him to function as the leader in important matters involving reasoning and decision-making. [See Gen. 3:1-7.]
5. Domestic responsibilities. Paul did not intend his reiteration of God's order of leadership to be regarded as a "put down" of women in the church. Instead, his wish is that the role of godly women should be highly extolled. Their contribution to the well-being of the church, and to society in general, is inestimable. Although denied dominion in the public activities of the church, women can do what men cannot in the realm to which they have been assigned.
- a. "She" [woman] is not a particular female, but women in general. "They" includes all women who are to be "saved" within their specified place in the plan of heaven.
  - b. "Childbearing," the exclusive function of women, is likely used here to represent

the whole of their responsibilities to God and to His church. Men fulfill their role in the activities of *leadership*; women are faithful as they perform the *domestic duties* upon which human existence and stability depend. Their task is, “marry, bear children, manage the house, give no opportunity to the adversary to speak reproachfully” (1Tim. 5:14).

- c. Men and women can be “saved” to accomplish the purposes for which they have been created by serving God in the “places” which He has determined best fit their natures.
- d. Both sexes can be “saved” as individuals not only by complying with God’s prescribed order but also by displaying the necessary qualities of faith, love, holiness, and self-control, upon which a healthy relationship with the Lord must always be based.
- e. Some scholars, including James Macknight, conclude that the “childbearing” noted here is literally realized in the role of woman in bringing the Son of God into the world by the process of human birth:

The salvation of the human race was intimated in the sentence passed on the serpent, Gen. iii. 15, ‘I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head.’ Accordingly, the Saviour being conceived in the womb of his mother by the power of the Holy Ghost, he is truly the ‘seed of the woman’ who was to bruise the head of the serpent; and a woman, by bringing him forth, hath been the occasion of our salvation.

- f. Kenneth Wuest offers some interesting thoughts about women’s “salvation through childbearing”:

If St. Paul’s argument had led him to emphasize the man’s part in the first transgression, he might have said, ‘He shall be saved in his toil,’ his overcoming the obstacles of nature.

So St. Paul, taking the common-sense view that childbearing, rather than public teaching or the direction of affairs, is woman’s primary function, duty, privilege, and dignity, reminds Timothy and his readers that there was another aspect of the story in Genesis besides that of the woman’s taking the initiative in the transgression: the pains of childbirth were her sentence, yet in undergoing these, she finds her salvation...That is her normal and natural duty; and in the discharge of our normal and natural duties we all, men and women alike, as far as our individual efforts can contribute to it, ‘work out our own salvation.’

To briefly state the matter, the interpretation is as follows: Just as hard labor is man’s salvation in a set of circumstances and surroundings that without it, would cause him to deteriorate instead of make progress in character, so the pains of childbirth become the salvation of the woman, and in the same sense and for the same purpose, that of enabling the woman to adjust herself in her circumstances and surroundings so that she too will do the same.

- g. A final comment by David Lipscomb might help to bring these verses about the submission of women to men into a clearer perspective:

Sometimes women and men, too, think this is assigning women to an inferior

position. Inferior in the sense that she is not by nature, physically or morally suited to public positions or to counteract the rougher elements of the world. But she is of finer texture physically and morally than man, and is better fitted (superior to man) for work of nursing, training children, and keeping home attractive and cheerful. She is the trainer of children and the companion of man in the home, becomes the conservator of virtue, morality, and religion and of all the purifying and elevating influences shed by them. No more sacred and no higher office did God ever lay on mortals than that he has laid on woman-- to bear and train children and subjects for his everlasting kingdom. The woman who neglects the duties she owes her children and her home for the public life that God has created for man leaves her work, her character, and her mission.



1. Four elements of a Christian's petitions to God are: (1) \_\_\_\_\_, (2) \_\_\_\_\_, (3) \_\_\_\_\_, (4) \_\_\_\_\_.
2. We should pray for all \_\_\_\_\_ but especially for \_\_\_\_\_ and those in \_\_\_\_\_.
3. Praying for rulers will promote \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ lives in all \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ for us.
4. Prayers for others are appropriate because God wants the \_\_\_\_\_ of all men when they come to a \_\_\_\_\_ of the \_\_\_\_\_.
5. "For there is one \_\_\_\_\_ and one \_\_\_\_\_ between \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_, the \_\_\_\_\_ Jesus Christ."
6. \_\_\_\_\_ became a \_\_\_\_\_ for all men in \_\_\_\_\_ time.
7. Paul was a \_\_\_\_\_, an \_\_\_\_\_, and a \_\_\_\_\_ for Gentiles.
8. Men with \_\_\_\_\_ should pray \_\_\_\_\_ without \_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_.
9. Women should dress in \_\_\_\_\_ with \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.
10. \_\_\_\_\_ hair and costly \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_ are not appropriate for women professing \_\_\_\_\_.
11. Christian women should be conspicuous for their \_\_\_\_\_.
12. Women should learn in \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ and not \_\_\_\_\_ or have \_\_\_\_\_ over a man.
13. What are two reasons given for this prohibition [above]?
  - a. \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. \_\_\_\_\_
14. Women will be saved through \_\_\_\_\_, if they exhibit \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_.

Chapter Three

After laying down some regulations in chapter two concerning duties of the disciples as they served the Lord at Ephesus, Paul turns in this chapter to a discussion of qualifications of elders, deacons and certain women in the church. This change of direction may be accounted for by the supposition that the apostle had in mind a “list” of important matters that called for Timothy’s immediate attention. He “first” had given instructions about the prayers of the church; from there he had moved to the conduct of female disciples. Now, he recites the essential qualities of those men who served local churches in public ways.

**Verses 1-7-- QUALIFICATIONS OF ELDERS**

1. Paul’s directions about the traits of elders and deacons are prefaced by a remark that this teaching is “a faithful saying.” Two other times in this letter he uses the same words about other things:
  - a. 1:15-- It was “a faithful saying” that God had work for *Paul* to do as an apostle, despite his early record of percuting the church;
  - b. 4:9-- It was also a “faithful saying” that God had work for *Timothy* to do in teaching about “faith” and “good doctrine,” especially warning the brethren of apostasy that always follows a departure from the principles of gospel truth.
2. It is not clear why this endorsement is attached to these three principles and not to others in the epistle. It may be that these were matters that might especially benefit from an extra “punch” of authority to emphasize their importance to certain people.
3. It seems to have been a matter of urgency for these qualifications to be [re]taught at Ephesus. Paul wrote Timothy about them because of some possible delay in his return to the city from Macedonia. In that event, men [ASV] would know how to behave in the church as they should (vs. 14,15).
4. The circumstances that gave rise to this discussion about elders and deacons are also undisclosed. However, there are some things we do know about elders at Ephesus:
  - a. The church there had elders during the time of Paul’s third journey, c. 57 A.D.;
  - b. First Timothy was written several years later, c. 63-65 A.D.;
  - c. The qualifications were not needed so elders could be appointed for the *first* time;
  - d. Perhaps the “other doctrine” being taught at Ephesus (1:3) had made or had tried to make changes in God’s standards since elders had first been appointed there;
  - e. Maybe there was a need for additional elders to be appointed;
  - f. Or, perhaps some of the original elders at Ephesus had not maintained the standards by which they had first been selected to rule the church.

5. Regardless of what Paul’s motivation might have been for reviewing the qualifications of church leaders, the requirements were rigid and important to the welfare of the congregation. Those who desired to serve as elders wanted to do work that would be “*good*” both for themselves and for the church over which they would rule. Their impact on other disciples made it essential that they *MUST* possess these qualities!
6. Several terms are used in the New Testament to describe the men who lead a local congregation. Each term reveals something of their work or personal characteristics:
  - a. Elders [*presbuteros*-- “an old man, an elder”]; Acts 14:23; 20:17;
  - b. Presbyters [*presbuterion*-- “an assembly of aged men”]; 1Tim. 4:14;
  - c. Bishops [*episkopos*-- “an overseer”]; Acts 20:28; Phil. 1:1;
  - d. Overseers [*episkopeo*-- “to look upon”] 1Pet. 5:2;
  - e. Shepherds [*poimen*-- “to feed; to tend”] 1Pet. 5:2;
  - f. Pastors [*poimen*-- “one who tends herds or flocks”] Eph. 4:11.
7. A second listing of elders’ qualifications may be found in Titus 1:5-9. There are some variations between the two lists. The student will do well to compare them. It is not likely that elders in Ephesus and in Crete were required to meet different standards. Apparent diversities in instructions to Timothy and to Titus may be reconciled by understanding that some characteristics may be identical although expressed in different words; some qualities in one list may be intended within the wording used to describe certain qualities in the other list; also, terminology will vary within the various versions of the New Testament. One comparison of the lists could be:

LIST TO TIMOTHY

1. A man (not a woman)
2. Blameless (without reproach)
3. Husband of one wife
4. Vigilant (temperate- ASV)
5. Sober
6. Given to hospitality
7. Apt to teach
8. Not given to wine
9. No striker
10. Not greedy of filthy lucre
11. Not a brawler
12. Rule house well- children in subjection
13. Of good report, good reputation
14. Not a novice and puffed up
15. Not covetous (contentious, quarrelsome)
16. Patient (gentle, lenient)
17. Of good behavior
18. Desire for office

LIST TO TITUS

1. A man (not a woman)
2. Blameless (without reproach)
3. Husband of one wife
4. Temperate (self-governed)
5. Sober
6. Lover of hospitality
7. Hold faithful word to teach
8. Not given to wine
9. No striker
10. Not greedy of filthy lucre
11. Not a brawler
12. Have believing children
13. Holy, saintly, religious man
14. Not self-willed, arrogant
15. Not soon angry
16. Just (upright, justice to all)
17. Lover of good (men)
18. (Desire implied in other qualities)

[H.E. Phillips, adapted.]

8. Phillips divides the qualifications of both lists into these physical, moral, and spiritual classifications:

<u>Physical</u>	<u>Moral</u>	<u>Spiritual</u>
1. A man	1. Blameless	1. Desire for the office
2. A husband	2. Of good behavior	2. Vigilant
3. A father	3. Hospitality	3. Sober
	4. Not given to wine	4. Apt to teach
	5. No striker	5. Not covetous
	6. Patient	6. Not a novice
	7. Not greedy of filthy lucre	7. Of good report
	8. Not a brawler	8. Holy
	9. Not self-willed	
	10. Lover of good men	
	11. Just	
	12. Not soon angry	
	13. Temperate	

9. The list given to Timothy addresses these qualifications that elders MUST meet [as found in the NKJV].

- a. Blameless [*anepileptos*-- “that cannot be laid hold of, hence, not open to censure, irreproachable”]. The man who aspires to become an elder must have lived a life that is clean, honorable, and without cause for reproach. Absolute blamelessness, of course, is impossible for any man to achieve, but the relative irreproachable character of an elder-to-be must be well above the average.
- b. The husband of one wife. There are divergent interpretations of this trait offered by respected scholars. One position is that the elder *must be married and that he must have only one lawful wife at a time*. The other maintains that he may be *unmarried*; the qualification, it is said, is *prohibitive of plural wives rather than affirmative of one wife*. But considering that a wife is of great value to a man in his contacts with the female members of a congregation, and understanding the advantage to a decision-maker in having some trustworthy person who can respond to his thinking as he makes important decisions, the preference for married elders is strong.
- c. Temperate [*nephalios*-- “sober-minded; self-controlled”]; translated “vigilant” in KJV. An elder must be serious-minded about the grave responsibilities he has assumed in becoming a leader of God’s people. He must watch for the spiritual welfare of other Christians, and he will “give account” for the quality of his leadership (Heb. 13:17). He cannot discharge his duties to himself and to others unless he possesses a demonstrated ability to control his own emotions and passions to a degree that prevents them from interfering with the clarity of his reasoning or from compromising the fairness of his judgments as he makes decisions [in company with

fellow elders] that will have an extensive impact on the lives of disciples both individually and collectively. **Vigilance** is required if an elder is to “take heed to himself and to the flock” (Acts 20:28), “watch for souls” (Heb. 13:17), set the proper example for the church (1Pet. 5:3), and guard against the infiltration of doctrinal error into the congregation (Acts 20:30,31). A watchman who fails to warn his people of danger will pay a severe penalty for his negligence (Ezek. 3:18).

- d. **Sober-minded** [*sophron*-- lit., “to save the mind; of sound mind, self-controlled”]. Sober-mindedness and temperance obviously are much alike as they are displayed in the leadership of elders. But their listing as separate qualifications originating in two different Greek words suggests that these character traits should receive individual attention. Perhaps the KJV translation of “discreet” reveals enough of a dissimilarity to warrant both words. Webster defines the term, “Possessed of or showing discernment or good judgment in conduct and *especially in speech*; prudent; circumspect.” “Prudence” is “the ability to regulate and discipline oneself through the exercise of the reason.” Elders must protect the privacy of sensitive matters they deal with. They must absolutely refrain from making verbal comments about church members or about situations that would disclose partiality, prejudice, or insensitivity in their personal attitudes about other people.
- e. **Of good behavior** [*kosmios*-- “orderly, modest, well-behaved, dignified”]. “Orderly” suggests dependability, good self-direction, and self-motivation in dealing with others. Modesty and dignity both tend to shield one’s behavior from causing embarrassment and from giving negative impressions. It is important that elders as the leaders and representatives of a local church should generate favorable opinions of their Christian character in the minds of their contacts. Carefulness about their language, appearance, habits, and disposition in dealing with others are vital to their success in the crucial role they fill in the kingdom of God.
- f. **Hospitable** [*philoxenos*-- “love of strangers”]. This is a quality prescribed for every disciple (Heb. 13:2). However, elders should take the *lead* in showing genuine hospitality both to church members [especially the weak, socially deprived, and visitors to services] and to those outside the church who might be favorably impressed by acts of kindness shown them by those who profess to be motivated by a love for *all* men (Jas. 2:8).
- e. **Able to teach** [*didaktikon*-- “Apt to teaching; apt and skillful in teaching”]. If elders are to **feed** the church (Acts 20:28) and to guard it from error (Acts 20:29-31), they must possess both the knowledge of God’s word and the ability to teach it to others with reasonable skill. Otherwise, they will fail in their duty as the Lord’s shepherds to **encourage disciples** to grow in spiritual strength and to **discourage false teachers** who would threaten the unity and soundness of the flock. The ability “both to exhort and convict those who contradict” is indispensable in good elders. While this

qualification does not restrain elders from utilizing the talents of others [preachers and other Christians] in discharging their responsibility to teach, neither does it allow them to avoid altogether their personal involvement in such activity.

- f. **Not given to wine** [*paroinos*-- “lit., tarrying at wine; probably has the secondary sense, of the effects of wine-bibbing, viz., abusive brawling”]. The effects of alcohol on the mind and on the behavior are well known. Strong drink has no place in the habits of a man who bears the serious obligations of an elder. His mind and personality must remain clear and unaltered from the high standards which qualify him for the eldership so that he may always be at his best to make the best decisions and to set the best example for those who observe his conduct. It may be urged that this qualification forbids only excessive drinking of alcoholic beverages. However, three truths argue against this conclusion: (1) the influence of a drinker becomes suspect to others as to the *extent* of his drinking; (2) the influence of a light or moderate drinker is destroyed in persons who are offended by drinking to *any* extent; (3) none are shielded against the possibility of “social drinking” eroding into excessive drinking and life-wrecking addictions. No elder possessing an honest heart and a deep respect for the sanctity of the position he occupies in the local church will dare to jeopardize with strong drink the opportunities and responsibilities entrusted to him by men and women who depend upon his *word* and *example* for spiritual guidance!
- g. **Not violent** [*plektes*-- “a striker, a brawler, ready with a blow, contentious”]. Much violent behavior springs out of the use of alcohol and drugs [so--“not given to wine”]. However, there are individuals whose personalities seem regularly to instigate disruptive actions. They seem to relish any opportunity to make others uncomfortable. Such conduct is unacceptable even in society outside the church, and certainly no man who cannot control his temper and his ugly disposition can be considered to serve a congregation as one of its leaders. A “striker” might participate in a labor dispute without personally displaying any violent behavior, but the chances of his becoming unintentionally involved in inappropriate activity are necessarily greatly increased by the environment into which he places himself in such circumstances.
- h. **Not greedy for money** [*aischrokerdes*-- “greedy of base gains”]. “For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil...” (1Tim. 6:10). Elders face at least two obvious tests in their relationships with material wealth: (1) Every Christian must relegate financial prosperity to a distant second place in his list of life priorities (1Tim. 6:6-8), so elders cannot afford to be less than a clear demonstration to their flock of what it means to “seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and [trust that] all these things shall be added unto you” (Matt. 6:33); (2) Elders in many instances have occasion to control monies given into the church treasury. Just so, the contributions sent to relieve poor saints in Judea were placed in the hands of the elders (Acts 11:29,30). Some elders were supported financially by the church in New Testament days (1Tim. 5:17), and the “dishonest gain” of serving primarily for the money was everywhere

condemned (1Pet. 5:2). Easy opportunity can bring easy temptation if elders are not extremely cautious to maintain pure motives on their part and to assure that circumstances are not allowed to raise any suspicions about their behavior where money is involved. These same cautions related to elders and money must, of course, also be exercised in the elder's business and social life apart from his responsibilities of church leadership.

- i. Gentle [*epiekes*-- "lit., unto likely; hence, fair, moderate, reasonable, forbearing"]. The word is "patient" in the KJV. It describes a man who seeks to avoid contention and strife; who is not quickly provoked; who does not act hastily or impetuously; who seeks no recourse against others in his judgments; and who, imitating the behavior of the Lord and the apostle Paul, is longsuffering toward those whose actions warrant correction and maybe even church discipline (2Pet. 3:9; 2Cor. 2:6-8). Gentleness is not to be mistaken for weakness in an elder or in any man. Jesus said of Himself, "...for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls" (Matt.11:29--RSV).
- j. Not quarrelsome [*amachon*-- "rare- abstaining from fighting; metaphorically in N.T., not contentious"]. Like Timothy, every disciple must "fight the good fight of faith" (1Tim. 6:12), and he must "contend earnestly for the faith" of the gospel (Jude 3). But there is no reason for a Christian, and certainly not an elder of the church, to be entangled in contention and strife about things not related to gospel soundness. And even when it becomes necessary for elders to teach and defend the truth against error, their actions must always be detached from displays of anger, ill will, and arrogance toward their adversaries. There is never any excuse for them to be disagreeable in their disagreements with others. Irreparable harm can be done to the work of the Lord by harsh and thoughtless words, even in the best of causes.
- k. Not covetous [*aphilarguros*-- "without covetousness"]. The ASV has, "no lover of money," This characteristic has already been condemned in the listing in the NKJV, which fact strongly suggests different meanings or applications for the two qualifications. Accordingly, if "not greedy for filthy lucre" is connected to an inordinate desire for material wealth, then "not covetous" must look to other ways in which a man can show too much devotion to things other than money and thus disqualify himself to serve his congregation as an elder. *Reputation* and *power* immediately come to mind when we consider this stipulation apart from financial gain. The quest for *fame* and an obsession *to control* the activities of other people have driven many men to "desire the office of a bishop" (vs. 1) and have driven many a church to grief caused by self-centered and self-serving rulers.
- l. Rules his own house well [*proistemi*-- "to stand before, to lead, attend to"]. The *status quo* of an elder's family serves as a practical demonstration of his effectiveness as a Christian father and leader of the family group. This assessment has both physical

and spiritual aspects. A physical family torn apart by infighting and discontent does not bode well for the father's success in guiding a family of God into harmonious and unified relationships. This "house" is the elder's family unit, consisting of those who are dependent on his care and support, just as God's "house" is composed of Father and children (1Tim. 3:15). This regulation comprehends children as part of the family unit, which fact makes a strong comment on the necessity that an elder be married (b., above). Also, qualifications given to Titus specify that these children are "faithful" or "believers" (Tit. 1:6), which may indicate that the "reverence" [*semnotes*-- venerableness, dignity"] they display may include submission both to God and parents. This same reverence [*semnotes*] is a characteristic required of *all* Christians (1Tim. 2:2). "Submission" [*hupotage*-- "to rank under"] was originally a military term related to forming troops into order. The elder's family, wife (Eph. 5:22) and children, must "rank under" his authority in his home and exhibit appropriate respect for his role as family head.

Paul offers reasons for three of the qualifications for bishops (vs. 5,6,7). Concerning his rule over his family, both common sense and inspiration declare that a man's suitability for ruling over a spiritual house [church] must be judged by his success or failure in guiding his own physical house. In their obligation to lead a local church in scriptural activity, elders face a task in many ways even more difficult than that of leading their own families into appropriate conduct. If they have failed in a duty less demanding, how can they be expected to succeed in something more formidable?

- m. Not a novice [*neophutos*-- "newly-planted"]. Seldom is it thought prudent to place a newly-inducted member of any organization into a position of leadership. Experience is considered a valuable quality in any person in authority. How foolish it would be to entrust a man but recently converted with the precious souls of a local church! Previous experience in the religious environment provides sound guidance to elders in arriving at good decisions about the knotty problems that are inevitable in the life of any congregation.

This common-sense reason is not the one given by Paul. Instead, he focuses on the peril faced by a new convert placed into a leadership role. The novice faces a great danger of feeling an inordinate pride of accomplishment and personal honor upon his appointment to the eldership of a local church. Pride can lead rapidly to his condemnation through the sin of personal exaltation and/or through unacceptable actions caused by his "taking too much on himself" when he falls victim to an inflated opinion of his own capabilities to make decisions that must be made only in full consultation and in consensus with the other elders of the local group. The NKJV offers, "...lest being puffed up with pride he fall into the same condemnation as the devil. This suggests, as many believe, that pride was the downfall of Satan and his angels when they "did not keep their proper domain" (Jude 6).

- n. Good testimony [*martureo*-- "in an ethical sense, of testimony concerning one's charac-



ter”] from those without. A man in his day-to-day activities often presents an image quite different than that seen by his fellow church members as he participates in the activities of the congregation. Non-members may hold him in much less regard than his brethren do. It can prove lethal to the reputation of a congregation if a morally and behaviorly unworthy man is “elevated” to a position of leadership and authority. The worth of any organization is probably first judged by the worth of its leaders.

A reason for this restriction governing the appointment and service of an elder in spite of low regard in the eyes of his contacts outside the church is that he might well be subjected to “reproach,” i.e., the bad reports about his character to the disciples. This criticism might easily cause him to become discouraged [if he is trying to reform his conduct] and fall away as a victim to the devil’s “snare.”

10. In recognition of the importance of these qualifications to the health and well-being of local churches served by elders, a brief summation of their work seems fitting:
  - a. Elders feed [teach] the truth to the local church (Acts 20:28;
  - b. Elders guard the local church from false teachers (Acts 20:29-31);
  - c. Elders rule over the local church in matters of judgment (1Tim. 5:17);
  - d. Elders oversee the affairs of the local church (1Pet. 5:2);
  - e. Elders watch in behalf of the souls who comprise the local church (Heb. 13:17);
  - f. Elders are examples in all things to the local church (1Pet 5:3).

#### Verses 8-13-- QUALIFICATIONS OF DEACONS

1. Besides the elders, deacons are the only “officers” in the Lord’s church. Their office is different from the office of elders, and their work is not the same as the work of elders. The name given them, “deacon,” [*diakonos*-- “a servant”] likely “is connected with the verb *dioko*, ‘to hasten after, pursue’ (perhaps originally said of a runner)” [Vine], which no doubt is indicative of both the importance and the urgency of the service they provide to their congregations.
2. Specific mention of deacons is found in Philippians 1:1, where they are addressed by Paul along with the elders and saints of the Philippian church. Additionally, this passage cites qualifications for the office. Also, 1Tim. 3:10 directs Timothy to “let them [those selected] serve as deacons.” Verse 13 asserts that some had “served well” in the role of deacons.
3. Seven men were selected in Acts chapter six to “serve tables” in distributing relief to certain widows in the church at Jerusalem. These seven are generally regarded as the first “deacons,” although they are not called by that name. They were appointed to serve in a particular work [“business”] of the congregation, and they accepted the responsibilities of that special service [*diakoneo*-- “to render any kind of service”] in the same way as those do today who perform tasks assigned to them by the elders and who are called “deacons” [*diakonos*-- “servants”] because of the work they do.
4. No specific reference appears in the New Testament about the work that deacons did in the local churches. However, their inclusion in Paul’s greeting in Phil. 1:1 proves

such an office existed in the churches. 1Tim. 3:10-13 establishes the fact that service was being performed in the churches by deacons. It may be safely assumed that their tasks were similar in nature to that of the seven men in Acts six, work that was done in subordination to the elders and under their direction and oversight.

5. Three rather general requirements were set for the first “deacons” (Acts 6:3), and these are often added today to the qualifications in 1Timothy 3:8-13 when deacons are selected to serve the needs of a local congregation:
  - a. A good reputation; b. Full of the Holy Spirit; c. Full of wisdom.
6. We are as uninformed about why these qualifications for deacons are discussed here as we are about why those for elders were needed by the Ephesian church. Obviously, the need was there; the apostle would not have wasted his time and theirs with instructions that had no purpose.
7. “Likewise” [like elders] deacons have specific and important qualifications to meet:
  - a. Reverent [*semnous*-- “serious, grave”]. This is the same word applied to the children of elders (3:4). It is translated “grave” in the KJV and ASV; the RSV has “serious.” Deacons are often selected from among the younger men of the church [as opposed to “elder” candidates], and they might be more naturally disposed to levity and a preoccupation with mundane things than would be fitting to the vital work they would be called on to do for the good of the local church. They should enter upon their appointment in full awareness of the seriousness of their obligations as deacons.
  - b. Not double-tongued [*dilogos*-- “saying the same thing twice”]. Some disciples have not learned the importance of truth and honesty in their dealings with other people. Telling different people different things about the *same* thing is unacceptable conduct by a Christian. Since deacons frequently make contacts with people outside the church while attending to the business to which they have been assigned by the elders, it is especially needful that they are perceived by non-Christians as truthful individuals, which will enhance both their own good image and the successful trans-action of business by the church.
  - c. Not given to much wine [See 9 f., p. 29, above, qualifications for elders.] Although some argue for the right of deacons to imbibe *a little*, while they admit that elders should *totally abstain* from strong drink, the same facts driving the second conclusion also apply to the first. Even in a society where the use of wine, both intoxicating and non-intoxicating, was commonplace, coming under its influence was judged to be incompatible with the religious life. [See Acts 2:4,12,13.] Furthermore, if Paul considered that the use of strong drink should be restricted in deacons to “not much,” how much more approving would he have been of those who used “not any”? The apostle found it necessary later to direct Timothy, obviously an *abstainer*, to drink “a little” wine strictly for medicinal purposes (1Tim. 5:23). As with elders, deacons who care for the sanctity of their office will refrain from all strong drink!

- d. Not greedy for money. [See 9 h., p. 29, above.] What is true about the relationship of elders to money is also true of deacons. “Serving tables” will often put deacons in close contact with church funds. In many congregations, caring for the contributions is a primary function of the deacons. Consequently, they must be extremely careful to assure that complete honesty and constant dependability are the measure of their service. Also, younger men [if such they are] may become too much involved in sporting events, recreational activities, overattention to business, and other similar pursuits to give necessary attention to assigned tasks. The Lord’s work suffers from such distractions, and so will the character of the offenders.
- e. Holding the faith with a pure conscience. Faith should come easier to an older saint who enjoys the proofs of personal experience that faith is valid. Younger people are necessarily dependent more on sheer belief of testimony about things that life has not yet demonstrated to them by experience to be true. But strong faith in sound doctrine (Titus 2:1) is essential in even the youngest deacons. Such faith requires:
- (1) Learning what sound doctrine *is* by much study and meditation (2Tim. 2:15);
  - (2) *Holding on to* the faith of the gospel regardless of obstacles and interferences (Matt. 6:33);
  - (3) Avoiding any conflict between the *knowledge* and the *practice* of truth. Violating one’s conscience is a serious matter. Real conviction must control our every action, even when that proves to be very difficult. The truth will work “effectively” to regulate behavior in those who truly believe it (1Thes.2:13).
- f. Be proved [*dokimazo*-- “to test, prove,” with the expectation of approving]. This stipulation does not call for deacons to be proved while serving in that capacity, but the “proving” comes prior to the serving. Men should be “let” to serve as deacons only *after* they have been approved by the church as being eligible according to the qualifications specified for the office.
- g. Blameless [*anenketos*-- “unimpeachable, that which cannot be called into account”]. In every facet of his life, the man who serves as a deacon must meet the high standard of moral and religious conduct established by Jesus for all his disciples (Matt. 5:48). Like elders, though perhaps to a lesser degree, deacons are perceived as representing the totality of Christianity and of the church. They must not fail in this awesome responsibility!
- h. Wives [*gunaikas*-- “women”] who possess particular qualities. There is wide disagreement about who these “women” are:
- (1) The term is usually applied to the wives of the deacons under discussion by Paul. If these are women other than wives of deacons, it seems unnatural that Paul suddenly should insert these qualifications that have nothing to do with those under scrutiny. It is clear that verses ten and twelve both deal with the same group of men [“deacons”]. Why would the apostle turn his attention to another group [“women”] before finishing his discussion of the first group?

- (2) The “women” may be wives of both elders and deacons. Why should only one group of church officers have wives with specified qualifications and not the other? Perhaps an age differential would suggest that the wives of younger men might not as usually possess the qualities desired as wives of older men aspiring to be elders. Of course, both groups of wives must exhibit exemplary conduct.
- (3) These “women” are *not* wives of elders or deacons but rather *all* women who professed to be Christians and faithful members of the church at Ephesus. This idea, however, seems entirely unsatisfactory. It appears obvious that Paul intends that these qualifications of “women” should have something to do with the qualifying of either elders or deacons, or both, to serve the Ephesian church.
- (4) They constitute an entirely separate group of church officers with their own peculiar requirements. Kenneth Wuest contends:

The word “wives” is *gune*, “a woman.” The word when used in reference to the marriage relation, means “a wife.” Here, it should be translated “women.” It does not necessarily refer to the wives of deacons, and for the following reasons: *first*, the words, “even so,” are the translation of *hosautos*, which is used in introducing a second or third in a series. The series here is of Church officials; *second*, there is no possessive pronoun in the Greek, which would be needed if the women were the wives of the deacons; *third*, the four qualifications which follow correspond, with appropriate variations, to the first four required of deacons as regards demeanor, government of the tongue, use of wine, and trustworthiness; and *fourth*, this is a section dealing wholly with Church officials. The reference here is to women who hold the office of deaconess, as Phoebe (Rom. 16:1).

- (5) The most natural and logical position connects these traits to deacons’ wives. Four requirements are stated for these “women”:
- (a) Reverent [*semnos*-- “august, venerable, serious, grave”]. These wives, although possibly younger in age, should exhibit a maturity of conduct and attitude that was more characteristic of older and more settled women. They ought to evidence a serious-mindedness beyond their years;
- (b) Not slanderers [*diabolos*-- “accusing falsely”]. Rash judgments are often related to the immaturity of youth. It is expected that women, as they age, will learn to be more deliberate and discerning in their assessments of other persons and their activities. Legally, slander is an oral statement motivated by a desire to do harm to someone. Of course, *deliberate attempts* to destroy reputations is more serious than the sincere, though ill-advised, reports about people that often originate in misinformation. But even the latter will be strictly avoided by women [and men] who have the loving hearts of true disciples (1Cor. 13:6);
- (c) Temperate [*nephalios*-- “vigilant, sober”]. This term is akin to *nepho*, “to be free from the influence of intoxicants.” The root idea is to be self-controlled in one’s behavior, avoiding conduct often associated with intoxication. Only dignity and reservation ought to characterize the demeanor of wives who

will, by virtue of the relationship, add to or diminish their husbands' positive image;

- (d) **Faithful** [*pistos*-- "to be trusted, reliable"] **in all things**. Woman was created as a helper to her husband (Gen. 2:18). Although in subjection to his authority as head of the family unit, she is vital to his success and happiness in more ways than can be counted. The wives of deacons [and elders] fill a very important role in the work of the local church as they assist their partners in executing the work undertaken by church officials. They keep confidential matters not to be made public; they are dependable to perform whatever tasks are helpful to the activities of the congregation; they are faithful to God as individuals; they are faithful to their duties to husbands, children, and all other persons. They strive diligently always to be assets, never detriments, to their husbands and to the local church.
  - i. **Husband of one wife**. The married state for deacons has already been established (verse 11). Now, Paul forbids their involvement in multiple marriages. These married men also have children who are well-behaved. They oversee their families to assure orderly conduct appropriate to their positions as church officers. [See 9b, p. 27, above, qualifications of elders.] Language usage and common sense both indicate that the plural "children" may be satisfied by one child as well as by a plurality of offspring.
8. The restrictions of the qualifications for the office and the serious responsibilities of the work to be done by deacons might dissuade some from aspiring to become deacons. However, Paul is anxious to convince those having second thoughts that "paying the cost" of becoming deacons is far outweighed by the rewards of faithful service in that position. Those who "serve well," as judged by both God and man, will acquire: (1) a "good standing," a reputation for dependability and honorable dealing in the eyes of their brethren and, (2) "great boldness" [*parrhesia*-- "confidence, cheerful courage"], an inward assurance that faithfulness to their tasks has caused them to be appreciated both by the church and by the Lord. That is a great reward, indeed!

#### Verses 14-16-- CONDUCT IN THE HOUSE OF GOD

1. We know nothing about the circumstances that had led to Paul's departure from Ephesus into Macedonia (1:3), nor are we told anything about why he left or what he was doing while in Macedonia. However, we do know that he planned to return to Ephesus shortly after writing this letter to Timothy. As suggested earlier, he must have judged that the information in the epistle was needed by the young preacher prior to Paul's return so that Timothy might complete his assigned task of "charging some that they teach no other doctrine" than what Paul had taught in his original message to the disciples.

2. Timothy's "conduct" in the house of God, the church at Ephesus, must be directed toward correcting the false teachers and their teaching that evidently was causing harm to some of the saints. Error, if left unchallenged, always poses a real threat to the acceptance of truth by people in the church and out. Action was needed at that very moment, and any delay in Timothy's "contending earnestly for the faith" (Jude 3) with the tools necessary for that undertaking could cause irreparable damage to the future success of the Lord's work in that city.
3. Truth and the Lord's church are inseparable. The church's very existence in any place and among any people is totally dependent on those people hearing and obeying the truth (John 8:32). In turn, the most urgent business of every local church is to provide a strong foundation for the continued proclamation of the truth at home and in all the world. Each congregation of Christians must serve as a ready instrument by which sound doctrine will be preserved and promulgated.
4. The greatness of God's "mystery" [a message beyond man's comprehension until revealed and explained to him from heaven] was without controversy among those who had received it by faith. It was a message that gave *hope* to the hopeless and *comfort* to the comfortless. It was the pearl of great price and the treasure hidden in the field about which Jesus had spoken several years earlier. Who could not love it? Who would decline making any sacrifice necessary to share in its immeasurable glories and benefits?
5. Everything about God's mystery was great. Every doctrine was profound; every promise was awe-inspiring. The very thought of the grandness of the gospel message filled Paul's heart with such deep emotion that he was moved to break forth in proclaiming a series of basic doctrines of the gospel that make it so "great":
  - a. God was manifested in the flesh and lived on earth to become our Savior (Jn. 1:14);
  - b. Jesus was justified [validated] as God's Son by His words, deeds, miracles, and by a bodily resurrection made possible by the power of the Holy Spirit (Rom. 1:4);
  - c. The eyewitness of angels testified to the fulfillment of His promise to rise from the grave and to return to heaven (Matt, 28:5,6; Acts 1:10,11);
  - d. His Lordship and His salvation were proclaimed to all men, Jews and Gentiles alike, as His ambassadors invited every creature to share in the blessings of His gospel (Matt. 28:19,20; Mark 16:15,16);
  - e. Multitudes believed on His name in response to the preaching of His gospel, and all the saved were added to His church (Acts 2:41; 9:31; 2:47);
  - f. Jesus Christ now sits in glory at the Father's right hand of power and serves His children as their Advocate and Intercessor with the Almighty Father (1Jn. 2:1; Heb. 7:25).

1. It was a \_\_\_\_\_ saying that the \_\_\_\_\_ of a \_\_\_\_\_ was a \_\_\_\_\_ work.
2. List the *three* qualifications of elders classified as “physical.” [See lesson]
  - a. \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. \_\_\_\_\_
3. List the *thirteen* qualifications of elders classified as “moral.” [See lesson]
  - a. \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. \_\_\_\_\_
  - d. \_\_\_\_\_
  - e. \_\_\_\_\_
  - f. \_\_\_\_\_
  - g. \_\_\_\_\_
  - h. \_\_\_\_\_
  - i. \_\_\_\_\_
  - j. \_\_\_\_\_
  - k. \_\_\_\_\_
  - l. \_\_\_\_\_
  - m. \_\_\_\_\_
4. List the *eight* qualifications of elders classified as “spiritual.” [See lesson]
  - a. \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. \_\_\_\_\_
  - d. \_\_\_\_\_
  - e. \_\_\_\_\_
  - f. \_\_\_\_\_
  - g. \_\_\_\_\_
  - h. \_\_\_\_\_
5. How does “ruling his house well” relate to good service as an elder?
6. What might happen to a “novice” in the office of elder?
7. How is the good testimony of those outside the church important to an elder?
8. \_\_\_\_\_ should hold the \_\_\_\_\_ of the \_\_\_\_\_ in a \_\_\_\_\_.
9. Which qualifications are the same [same words or equivalent] for elders and deacons?
10. Who do you think are the “wives” mentioned by Paul in verse 11? Why?
11. \_\_\_\_\_ obtain a \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ in the faith if they serve \_\_\_\_\_.

12. If \_\_\_\_\_ should be delayed, he wanted \_\_\_\_\_ to know how to \_\_\_\_\_ in the \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_.
13. In the context of Timothy’s task at Ephesus, what was “good behavior” on his part?
14. The \_\_\_\_\_ is the \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ of the \_\_\_\_\_.
15. What *six basic facts* of the gospel emphasized the “greatness” of its message to the lost?
- a. \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. \_\_\_\_\_
  - d. \_\_\_\_\_
  - e. \_\_\_\_\_
  - f. \_\_\_\_\_



Chapter Four

Verses 1-5-- CAUTION ABOUT RELIGIOUS ERROR

1. Paul taught the Thessalonians about a widespread “falling away” from the truth and the rise of a “man of sin” who would bring great harm to the church of the Lord. [See 1Thessalonians 2:3-12.] He revealed several details about the causes and consequences of that apostasy in an effort to discourage rumors in Thessalonica that the Lord’s second coming had already taken place.
2. The apostle thought it important that Timothy and the brethren at Ephesus should also be made aware of the dangerous days ahead. While we cannot be certain that *both* passages are related to the same departure from the faith, there is every reason to think so. The defection described to the Thessalonians was to be characterized by displays of evil power, signs, lying wonders, and deception (2Thes. 2:9,10). This one would display deception, lies, hypocrisy, and the working of spirits and demons. Both passages confirm that the departure would become full-blown at some time in the future, but the church at Thessalonica was warned that “the mystery of lawlessness is already at work.” A lack of love for the truth and an attraction to unrighteousness were identified as the prime reasons why so many would abandon their loyalty to Christ (2Thes.10-12).
3. It appears that awareness of a future apostasy was an important topic of discussion both at Thessalonica and at Ephesus because only prior warnings could keep the saints at both places from being caught up in its developing errors. Disciples who loved the truth less than they should were being deceived by worldly attractions and were headed for sure condemnation. Perhaps it was not too late to confirm some of them in the faith and save them from destruction.
4. The departure about which Paul warned Timothy was centered in religious doctrine. It was heeding the “doctrines of demons” that would result in the downfall of some (vs. 1). The quality of Timothy’s ministry was dependent on “good doctrine” (vs.6), and the young preacher was to occupy his time with “doctrine” (vs. 13). Moreover, only by continuing in the “doctrine” could Timothy save himself and others (vs. 16). Paul, unlike many today, seemed to think that doctrine was important to the spiritual health of the church.
5. The apostle introduces his warning of the departure [*aphistemi*-- “to apostatize”] with heavenly authorization: “The Spirit expressly says ...” “Expressly” is from *rhetos*, “in stated terms.” This warning had not originated in some vague, hard-to-understand vision or in a non-specific prophetic utterance. Instead, it was both specific and clear,

intended to be easily understood by all. It is not disclosed just *when* the Spirit had made this revelation to Paul. Some suppose that the message had come to him even while he was writing the letter to Timothy. Of course, if the warnings to Thessalonica and Ephesus both focus on the *same* event, Paul would have had at least part of the information for some time, with specified details perhaps being added in a later communication from the Holy Spirit.

6. The apostasy would occur “in latter [later] times.” This term is equivalent to the “last days” of the gospel dispensation when God speaks through His Son (Heb. 1:2). We are not told what *part* of this age would see the fulfillment of this inspired prediction, but the roots of rebellion were already taking hold among disciples whose commitment was not strong enough to resist the deceptions of Satan and his angels.
7. Apostasy would be spearheaded by deceiving spirits, the same spirits identified as “false prophets” by the apostle John (1John 4:1). Disobedient persons would be deceived when they gave heed to (1) false teachers and, (2) doctrines of demons. Much is said in Scripture about demons and their hurtful operations in the realm of humans. There is disagreement about whether “doctrines of demons” was a reference to teachings *about* demons [*diamonion*- “a demon,” among pagans, an inferior deity, good or bad; in NT, “an evil spirit”] or to teaching done *by* demons.
  - a. The Greeks supposed that demons had a “middle nature” between God and men. Also, the spirits of some who were thought to be virtuous men were exalted to be demons. The former functioned much like Bible angels. Both classes were worshiped as *mediators* for mankind. Paul’s warning possibly foresaw a time when the disciples would be encouraged to worship angels and dead saints and a time when the practice of seeking mediation with heaven through other intercessors than Christ and the Holy Spirit (Heb. 7:25; Rom. 8:26) would become widespread.
  - b. A demon was responsible for a young woman’s testimony about Paul and Silas as “the servants of the Most High God, who proclaim to us the way of salvation” (Acts 16:17). Demons evidently were capable also of instigating *false* teaching delivered by men who went about with a purpose to do harm to the cause of the Lord.
8. Both false men and false spirits would speak religious lies out of hypocritical hearts that knew better than what they taught. Their consciences were no longer in control of their actions. Prolonged abuse had destroyed their effectiveness in suppressing the wicked purposes of the deceivers. James Macknight makes some interesting assertions about how these warnings were fulfilled:

These hypocritical teachers are called *liars*, because of the gross fictions and frauds which they were to contrive for the purpose of establishing the worship of demons. How well the appellation agrees to the Romish clergy in the dark ages, any one may understand who is acquainted with the lies then propagated, concerning the apparitions of angels, and of the ghosts of departed saints, and concerning the miracles done by them, and by their relics, and by the sign of the cross, &c. all preached by monks, and priests, and even bishops;

and committed to writing in the fabulous legends of their saints, to render them objects of adoration.

9. As examples of the false doctrines emerging from the apostasy away from the faith, Paul cites two: forbidding to marry and commanding to abstain from foods ["meats"--ASV] approved by God for human consumption.

a. The prohibition to marry was perhaps associated with the idea that all fleshly pleasures should be avoided by spiritual people. The main purpose of religion, it was thought, is to free the soul from everything that would hinder its progress toward heaven, and every physical pleasure was just such an obstacle to salvation. This doctrine appeared very early among the churches and caused disturbances to the unity and harmony of the disciples. Macknight adds this information about the prohibition to marry:

This false morality was very early introduced into the church, being taught first by the Encratites and Marcionites, and afterwards by the Manicheans, who said marriage was the invention of the evil god, and who considered it as sinful to bring creatures into the world to be unhappy, and to be food for death. In process of time the monks embraced celibacy, and represented it as the highest pitch of sanctity. At length celibacy was recommended by the priests, and by the orthodox themselves, and more especially by the bishops of Rome, the great patrons of the worship of angels and saints. For they strictly enjoined their clergy, both regular and secular, to abstain from marriage. Thus, the worship of demons, and the prohibition of marriage, though naturally unconnected, have gone hand in hand in the church, as the Spirit here foretold.

The gospel treats marriage in an entirely different manner. Paul advised against marriage for some people under particular and unusual circumstances (1Cor.7: 26,27). But even among those individuals marriage was not sinful (1Cor. 7:28). The Hebrew writer declared that "Marriage is honorable among *all*, and the bed undefiled" (Heb. 13:4). Any teaching to the contrary is false teaching.

b. Jewish Christians had been taught through Moses' Law that certain foods were not to be eaten (Lev. 11). Some Judaizers who professed to teach the gospel were guilty of inserting similar prohibitions for Christians. There were also serious questions raised among the churches about what was appropriate for disciples to do about meats that were first offered to idols and then sold in the common markets (1Cor. 8). Total abstinence from these meats was adopted by some as the solution to all such problems.

Fasting at certain times and for particular purposes had been a familiar practice among the Jews (Matt. 6:16-18) and was not unknown to members of the early church (Acts 13:2,3). However, it was not the prohibition of *all* foods but only of *certain* foods that would become a mark of the apostasy that Paul warned about. It is quite possible that later regulations regarding foods had their origin in religious observations existing prior to the founding of Christianity. M. R. Vincent

**gives us his insight into their historical roots:**

The ascetic tendencies indicated by these prohibitions, developed earlier than these Epistles among the Essenes, an ascetic Jewish brotherhood on the shores of the Dead Sea, who repudiated marriage except as a necessity for preserving the race, and allowed it only under protest and under stringent regulations. They also abstained from wine and animal food. This sect was in existence in the lifetime of our Lord. Strong traces of its influence appear in the heresy assailed in Paul's Epistle to the Colossians. The Christian body received large accessions from it after the destruction of Jerusalem (A.D. 70). The prohibitions above named were imposed by the later Gnosticism of the second century.

Church history plainly records the insertion of days and seasons for fasting into the private lives of church members as part of a later, general departure from the precepts taught by the apostles about the lifestyle of Christians. While we cannot be adamant about what religious digression the apostle had in mind in these remarks, it is apparent that *any* systematic introduction of the errors cited in this passage would fall under the condemnation expressed by the apostle. Adam Clarke makes this observation about interpreting Paul's prophecy about apostasy:

Which mode of interpretation [Catholicism or some other movement--RG] is best, I shall not attempt to say: to determine the meaning of prophecies is a difficult task; and, in a case of this kind, I rather choose to trust in the judgment of others [e.g., Bishop Newton's Dissertations on the Prophecies--RG] than to my own. It is to be deplored that all the preceding particulars apply but too well to the corruptions in the Romish Church, therefore to it they appear peculiarly applicable. But whether God had this Church alone in view, I dare not affirm.

10. Church officials who would prevent their church members from "receiving" the foods under discussion are acting in direct contradiction to the purposes God had in their creation. He created the vegetation of earth for man's food (Gen. 1:28,29) and later added "every moving thing that lives," beasts, birds, and fish, to his diet (Gen. 9:3). Paul affirms that all such creatures are "good" [for food] and may be eaten with God's blessing, if the consumer eats with an awareness of who provides his food and if he is thankful for those provisions.
11. Food is "sanctified" [set apart, dedicated; thus, approved] for man's nourishment and enjoyment if:
  - a. The word of God authorizes its consumption; this authorization has been extended since early in the earth's history [see above];
  - b. The consumer is thankful and expresses his gratitude to the Giver in prayer.

**Verses 6-11-- LOYALTY TO THE TRUTH**

1. Timothy had been the recipient of some kind of gift that was intended to help him in his work (4:14), but we don't know the exact nature of the gift or the extent to which it offered him assistance. It is certain that he bore a heavy personal responsibility for accomplishing the tasks that Paul had assigned him at Ephesus. Guidance in making

good choices of his activities would not come to the young preacher through direct inspiration from heaven but by the sage advice of an old preacher who knew both by revelation and by his own extensive experience what was required for any preacher to be a “good minister of Jesus Christ.”

2. Timothy’s challenge was to teach the disciples the same “good doctrine” which Paul had taught previously at Ephesus. Paul’s doctrine was “good” because it had delivered “words of [the] faith.” Timothy was totally committed to that doctrine, but other teachers were seeking to promote “another doctrine” which would lead the brethren astray. Timothy’s prime focus as a preacher must be to offer strong opposition to the errors they were teaching. Even in our time, younger [and older] preachers should devote the greater part of their attention to proclaiming “the words of the faith and of the good doctrine.” Regardless of the many other things that can claim their energy and devotion, nothing is as important to them as their duty to learn and to preach the pure gospel and to defend its precepts against “other doctrines” that would make inroads into its sanctity.
3. Both Jews and Greeks had been exposed to many “profane and old wives’ tales” as an integral part of their respective religions. The Jewish Talmud was replete with writings that Clarke calls, “the most ridiculous and profane fables that ever disgraced the human intellect.” Greek mythology was just as offensive to human reason. It is likely that the “other doctrine” of the false teachers in Ephesus (1:3) sought to incorporate some of these legends. Such tales were profane [*bebelos*--“accessible, lawful to be trodden”]. Cremer notes that, “Accordingly *bebelos* is that which lacks all relationship or affinity to God. They offered no true spiritual value and were to be rejected [*paraiteomai*-- ‘to refuse, beg off, avoid’] by Timothy and other disciples as unworthy of their time and attention.” Fables is *muthos* [“a fiction, an invention, falsehood”], a term applied especially to the Jewish traditions and Gnostic myths about their system of demi-gods and the supposed emanations from the spiritual world to mankind.
4. Timothy’s energies would be far better spent in pursuing godliness [*eusebeia*-- from *eu*, “well,” and *sebomai*, “to be devout”] This is a word that occurs only in Paul’s letters to Timothy and Titus and in Peter’s second epistle. It is “that piety which, characterized by a Godward attitude, does that which is well-pleasing to Him” (Vine). Godliness could be pursued by “exercise.” Athletes seeking a “perishable crown” (1Cor. 9:25) devoted themselves to strenuous exercise and thought it to be very worthwhile. Many exercised [trained] naked, unwilling that any clothing should hinder their exertions. Timothy’s exercise toward godliness, of course, was mental and spiritual rather than physical and was expressed in the faithful execution of his duties as a preacher of the gospel. The more he became involved in doing the “work of an evangelist” (2Tim. 4:5), the more effective his efforts would become in saving souls.
5. Excelling in physical contests, although deemed important by the worldly-minded, was of no *real* value to people who were striving after the prize of heaven (Phil. 3:14). The

glories attached to athletic prowess were limited and fleeting at best, but the value of godliness is twofold: it offers the reward of God's peace which "surpasses all understanding" now (Phil. 4:7) and *eternal peace* in the life to come. Man can seek nothing else in this world that will allow him to "have his cake and eat it, too." Adam Clarke gives us this perception of the "promise of the life that now is":

The man that loves, fears, and serves God has God's blessings all through life. His religion saves him from all those *excesses*, both in *action* and *passion*, which sap the foundations of life, and render existence itself often a burden. The peace and love of God in the heart produces a *serenity* and *calm* which cause the lamp of life to burn clear, strong, and permanent. Evil and disorderly passions obscure and stifle the vital spark. Every truly religious man extracts the uttermost good out of life itself, and through the Divine blessing gets the uttermost good that is in life; and what is better than all, acquires a full preparation here below for an eternal life of glory above. Thus godliness has the promise of, and secures the blessings of, both worlds.

6. Albert Barnes also has some worthwhile observations about this concept. Due to the length of his remarks, they will appear in an addendum at the end of this chapter.
7. As wonderful as God's rewards are for those who pursue godliness, there are but few who recognize their real worth and regulate their lives accordingly. Perhaps that is why Paul labeled his concept of the real value of piety as a "faithful saying and worthy of *all* acceptance." How different the world would be if more people had Paul's conviction about this truth and displayed that conviction in their manner of life!
8. Paul's own life was a practical demonstration of his unwavering devotion to "pressing toward the goal for the prize of the upward call" (Phil. 3:4). He was eager to work hard and to suffer reproach for his efforts if need be. A complete *trust* that God would honor His promise to bestow the crown of righteousness at judgment day motivated the apostle to "keep on keeping on" in spite of any unfavorable circumstances that might stand in his way.
9. Not only was Paul convinced that the Lord would bless him personally in return for faithful service as a preacher and apostle (2Tim. 4:7,8) but also that He would prove Himself to be the Savior of all those who put their trust in Him when rewards were finally "handed out." Meanwhile, God demonstrates His love for all the world (John 3:16) and His willingness to save every sinner (2Pet. 3:9) by the providential care He extends even to those who choose to reject Him (Matt. 5:45).
10. Lessons about the urgency of seeking godliness and about the dangers of falling away from the truth might be unpopular with listeners who preferred preachers who would "scratch their itching ears" (2Tim. 4:3,4). However, *loyal* preachers don't tailor their preaching to the preferences of their listeners. Instead, they "command and teach" the things that will determine the eternal destiny of souls on the Day of the Lord.

#### Verses 4:12-5:2-- OBLIGATION FOR GOOD PERSONAL BEHAVIOR

1. Scholars state that Roman society classified chronological ages differently than the distinctions we are accustomed to making. Some say that childhood lasted until

eighteen years; youth up to forty-four; and old age until death. Others divide these periods in other ways, but most would characterize Timothy in our modern world as a “younger man” rather than as a tender “youth.”

2. Still, there is little doubt that Timothy was young enough in years and in experience to recommend caution for him as he approached the problems that would arise at Ephesus as he carried out Paul’s wishes in dealing with both faithful and unfaithful disciples. There were “youthful lusts” from which he must flee that were especially treacherous to those of fewer years and with less exposure to the realities of the religious world (2Tim. 2:22). He needed to be careful to guard against the pride so characteristic of youth when occasion arose to “correct those who are in opposition” (2Tim. 2:25). Also, he must not allow matters naturally attractive to the young to distract him from the awesome task that Paul had left in his hands (1Tim. 1:3).
3. The Greek text, we are told, suggests that some at Ephesus were already despising [*kataphroneo*-- lit., “to think down upon or against anyone”] Timothy’s youth. They were reluctant to take correction or guidance from a preacher who probably was younger than many of them. Wuest believes that this word [“despise”] “does not denote a mere feeling of contempt--it is active. We may infer that Timothy is being told not to let men *push him aside* as a stripling.” Age seldom is pleased to defer to youth, but wisdom isn’t always synonymous with years. Timothy’s wisdom was of heavenly origin, and its validity and trustworthiness had nothing to do with the age of its messenger.
4. Timothy’s confidence was in his message and not in himself. Whatever personal deficiencies others might perceive in him, it was crucial to the spiritual health of the church that every professed disciple of Christ should give him the respect due any “earthen vessel” of the gospel from whom saving truth could shine forth (2Cor. 4:7).
5. Paul’s solution to the “problem” of youth was simple. In spite of his words, Timothy likely would continue to be at a disadvantage with some brethren. But by his example he could demonstrate a personal dedication to the principles he was proclaiming. His practical testimony might prove more effective with his detractors than his verbal testimony alone.
6. There were *six* areas in which Timothy’s example might prove impressive.
  - a. In word. Sound speech was necessary both in Timothy’s public teaching of the gospel and in his private associations with people in and out of the church.
    - (1) It appears that certain members were timid or disapproving of the sound doctrine left behind by Paul when he departed for Macedonia (6:3,4). Their continued lack of enthusiasm for the truth could only bring harm to the cause of Christ in their city. The young preacher’s example of proclaiming “the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth” boldly and forcefully would go far in encouraging others to follow his lead.

- (2) Preachers sometimes can send “mixed signals” about the gospel. They talk “hard” in the pulpit but walk “soft” in the street. *What they say* publicly comes through strong and clear, but *what they stand for* privately is much less impressive. Our examples of how we teach by what we say and our examples of how we teach by what we do must be perfectly consistent if we are to “let our lights shine” for the Lord (Matt. 23:3b).
- b. In conduct. Paul wrote to Titus about some who “profess that they know God, but in works they deny Him...” (Titus 1:16). Sadly, those individuals were not peculiar to the first century. It has always been too common for some who claim discipleship to live like disciples of the devil and not like followers of Jesus. A bad example of living can destroy a good sermon anytime. Christian behavior must make a practical display of “salt” and “light” if the prejudices of the world are to be dislodged from the hearts of sinners by the word of the gospel (Matt. 5:13,14).
- c. In love. “Perfect love casts out fear” (1John 4:18). Our deep love for our Father relieves us from any fear [terror] in our relationship with Him. Similarly, genuine love directed toward other people will allay any fear [discomfort] they may feel toward the children of God. Relationships can become strained when others perceive that we feel “holier than thou” in our attitude toward them or when they believe that our only interest in them is to proselyte them into “our church.” Loving hearts and loving deeds can oftentimes convince them that our only interest in them is for their *best* interests in themselves. We must show them that our concern is not about what they can do for us, but about what the gospel can do for them.
- d. In spirit [this quality is omitted from most versions]. Enthusiasm is contagious. Excitement in a young preacher [or in anyone else] can cause those who are older in the truth, and who have become a little less enthusiastic than they once were, to rekindle the fires of dedication in their spirits and to lift themselves again to a high level of spirituality that had diminished over time through inattention. “And a little child shall lead them” (Isa. 11:6) can find fulfillment in the example of young and zestful enthusiasm in the work of the Lord.
- e. In faith [*pistis*-- “firm persuasion”]. It is vital that a young preacher give diligent study and meditation to the Scriptures. Firm conviction comes from drawing one’s own conclusions about Bible things and not only from hearing what someone else has decided. Paul instructed Timothy to “Study to shew thyself approved unto God...” (2Tim. 2:15--KJV). A young mind not shaped by the rigors of its own investigations can all too easily be influenced by the pronouncements of other students who can not always be depended on to reach the most sound determinations. Paul would have Timothy’s brethren study the principles of the gospel for themselves in the same way that he insisted that the young preacher be responsible for his own knowledge of the truth.
- f. In purity. Many a youthful preacher has become entangled in the impurities of the



society around him and has destroyed his potential for fruitful labors in the kingdom of God. Disciples sometime become discouraged in the faith because of indiscretions on the part of young [and older] preachers who should instead be examples of propriety to others. “Flee also youthful lusts...” (2Tim. 2:22). Preachers must be role models to young and old alike. Their influence over other Christians is wide-ranging [often too much so]. Let them be aware that they will receive a “stricter judgment” (Jas. 3:1) in the example they set for the saints!

7. There were *four* ways in which Timothy could improve himself as a preacher and as a worthy example to the brethren at Ephesus. These improvements should begin even while he awaited Paul’s return to the city.
  - a. Give attention to reading, exhortation, and to doctrine. These exercises probably related to Timothy’s public work of teaching [reading] the [O.T.] Scriptures, exhorting the brethren to comply with their Christian duties, and reviewing carefully his notes and recollections of the pure doctrine that Paul had taught before he went into Macedonia.
  - b. Do not neglect the gift that is in you. This likely was a spiritual gift that would strengthen the young man’s ministry of the word. Its nature is unidentified. High expectations for Timothy’s success as a teacher had been manifested when Paul laid his hands on him to confer his “gift of God” (2Tim. 1:6) and when the presbytery [elders] had done the same thing when they endorsed his labors as a preacher of the gospel. Inattention to his duty or distraction into matters other than teaching would not be tolerated either by Paul or by the elders who had placed their confidence in his progress in the truth. Even a spiritual gift would not assure that he would exhibit the personal dedication necessary to satisfy the lofty predictions for his future that others had made.
  - c. Meditate on these things. The precepts of truth are not always easily assimilated into the reservoir of human thought. It is especially difficult for young minds to reconcile the profound concepts of the gospel with the worldly principles that are so compelling to immature thinking. Concerted meditation [*meletao*-- “to care for, to attend to, practice”] is prescribed for required comprehension of the heavenly plan. The manifold layers of truth are unwrapped and enjoyed only through slow, deliberate, and strenuous mental exertion. “Buying the truth” (Prov. 23:23) comes at a significant cost to those who would become “good ministers of Jesus Christ.”
  - d. Take heed to yourself and to the doctrine. These two tasks are equally important to a young preacher’s progress. His character must first be improved to the level of impeccability. His mind must next be filled with the doctrine that has been left to us by apostolic inspiration. Only then can he expect to satisfy his role of helping to shape the characters and indoctrinating the minds of others.
8. Dedication to these assignments will certainly improve the preacher’s prospect of saving himself and enhancing his ability to save others by following Paul’s advice.

9. These verses [5:1,2] seem properly to fall within the discussion of chapter four rather than chapter five. They continue Paul's instructions to Timothy about his personal conduct as he worked among the disciples at Ephesus as a gospel preacher.
10. Relationships with other individuals in the congregation must be monitored carefully because the destiny of souls was at stake in every contact.
  - a. **Older men** should be given respect appropriate to their age and experience in the church and in the world. There were many helpful things both spiritual and temporal that a young man could learn from an older Christian. Should problems arise with an older man, gentleness as with one's own parent should govern his actions in any such situation.
  - b. **Younger men** ought to be treated with brotherly love. Harshness and inconsideration should not mar the warm relationships that young men of the same age and with the same interests and concerns can develop among themselves. Timothy would sacrifice precious opportunities for personal fulfillment should he err in his conduct toward other young men and alienate their confidence in him.
  - c. **Older women** were his "spiritual mothers" (Rom. 16:13). They could offer him an affection and an appreciation that only a mother can give. We know little of the circumstances of Timothy's relationship with his own biological mother, but most likely his life, both spiritual and physical, could be enriched greatly by maintaining warm associations with the older women in the congregation at Ephesus.
  - d. **Younger women** ought to be regarded with the same aura of purity that would govern contacts with his own sister. A young preacher must remain aware of the temptations involved in his associations with young women in the church. He must always exercise extreme caution that not only is his conduct pure but also that it cannot be misconstrued and twisted into something less honorable than he intended it to be. More than one budding "good minister" of the word has been shipwrecked upon the ragged rocks of inappropriate relationships with the opposite sex.

*Addendum-- Albert Barnes on “Having promise of the life that now is...”*

There is not an interest of man, in reference to this life, or to the life to come, which it [religion--RG] would not promote. It is favorable to health of body, by promoting temperance, industry and frugality; to clearness and vigor of intellect, by giving just views of the truth, and of the relative value of objects; to peace and conscience, by leading to the faithful performance of duty; to prosperity in business, by making a man sober, honest, prudent, and industrious; to a good name, by leading a man to pursue such a course of life as shall deserve it, and to comfort in trial, calmness in death, and immortal peace beyond the grave. Religion injures no one. It does not destroy health; it does not enfeeble the intellect; it does not disturb the conscience; it does not pander to raging and consuming passions; it does not diminish the honour of a good name; it furnishes no subject of bitter reflection on a bed of death. It makes no one the poorer; it prompts to no crime; it engenders no disease. If a man would do that which would most certainly make him happy, he would be decidedly and conscientiously religious; and though piety promises no earthly possessions directly as its reward, and secures no immunity from sickness, bereavement, and death, yet there is nothing which so certainly secures a steady growth of prosperity in a community as the virtues which it engenders and sustains, and there is nothing else that will certainly meet the ills to which a man is subject. I have no doubt that it is the real conviction of every man, that if he ever becomes certainly *happy*, he will be a Christian; and I presume that it is the honest belief of every one that the true and consistent Christian is the most happy of men. And yet, with this conviction, men seek everything else than religion, and in the pursuit of baubles, which they know cannot confer happiness, they defer religion-- the only certain source of happiness at any time-- to the last period of life, or reject it altogether.

1. The \_\_\_\_\_ foretold that some would \_\_\_\_\_ from the \_\_\_\_\_.
2. They would heed \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_.
3. Teachers would speak \_\_\_\_\_ in \_\_\_\_\_ and would have their \_\_\_\_\_ with a \_\_\_\_\_.
4. What two errors were cited that would be promoted in the “falling away”?
  - a. \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. \_\_\_\_\_
5. Foods are “sanctified” for man’s consumption upon what two conditions?
  - a. \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. \_\_\_\_\_
6. How could Timothy be confident that he was a “good minister” of Christ?
7. \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_ instead of \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ should receive Timothy’s attention as a preacher.
8. Why does bodily exercise profit only “a little”? \_\_\_\_\_  
Why is godliness profitable for “all things”? \_\_\_\_\_
9. List the *six* things in which Timothy was told to be an example to believers?
  - a. \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. \_\_\_\_\_
  - d. \_\_\_\_\_
  - e. \_\_\_\_\_
  - f. \_\_\_\_\_
10. What *three* things should occupy Timothy’s time until Paul returned from Macedonia?
  - a. \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. \_\_\_\_\_
11. What was Timothy warned against neglecting? \_\_\_\_\_  
What *two* things had been associated with his receiving it?
  - a. \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. \_\_\_\_\_
12. Timothy’s \_\_\_\_\_ would be seen if he would \_\_\_\_\_ entirely to the things on which he was told to \_\_\_\_\_.
13. “Take heed to \_\_\_\_\_ and to the \_\_\_\_\_.”
14. \_\_\_\_\_ in the things prescribed for him would allow Timothy to \_\_\_\_\_ himself and those who \_\_\_\_\_ him.

Chapter Five

Verses 1,2-- These verses are included in the discussion of Chapter Four.

**Verses 3-16-- ENROLLMENT OF WIDOWS BY THE CHURCH**

1. Paul seems to make a transition in this passage from monitoring several areas of Timothy's personal conduct to examining and regulating certain activities of the church. The first of these is establishing guidelines for widows to be added to the "number" who were being supported financially by the congregation.
2. A controversy regarding the support of widows had been settled quickly and amicably under the guidance of the apostles when the church was young (Acts 6:1-7). We cannot know whether these instructions to Timothy were intended to correct abuses already in motion in the church in Ephesus or to prevent the development of situations that would lead to trouble in the future among the brethren there.
3. "Honor" [*timao*-- "to value"] in this passage involves the high respect that Christians should give to their widows. Paul indicates that "honor" also includes financial assistance for those who were qualified as "really widows" ["widows indeed"]. This help would serve as a concrete demonstration of the regard in which they were held. Later in this chapter, "honor" is used in much the same way regarding the relationship of the congregation to its elders (verse 17).
4. Obviously, two classes of "widows" existed in the church at Ephesus: those who were "really" widows and those who weren't. Of course, all were legally widowed in the loss of their husbands, but some had certain qualities not possessed by the others, which made them eligible for financial help from the congregation.
5. The first criterion that must be met before a widow could be assisted by the church was, "Does she have any physical family to supply her needs?" Those women who had children or grandchildren [*ekgonos*-- "born of"] should look to them for help and not to the church.
6. Christians have an obligation to demonstrate "piety" ["profound respect mingled with love and awe"-- Webster] first at home [in their own family unit], i.e., before they assume responsibility for the needs of those outside the family. Those with widows in need also show their piety toward God when they do what He says about providing what is needed. There is an *order* in our benevolent deeds: family first; then others in need. That is the Lord's "good and acceptable" way.
7. Having met the first requirement for financial help, being destitute ["left alone"] without children or grandchildren to relieve her needs, the widow must then satisfy other criteria. Generally, it is not only the conditions of her present distress that are relevant to her support by the church but also her record of faithfulness as a disciple prior

to her destitution.

8. This restriction is suggested by the contrast raised in verse six. On the one hand, none can doubt the genuineness of a widow's convictions if she has maintained a long-standing record of trusting in the Lord and continually expressing that trust in supplications and prayers in her own behalf and in behalf of others. On the other hand, if her life prior to widowhood was marked by pleasure and by self-serving activity, and if her "conversion" has come about concurrently with her widowhood, she might be suspected of using religious devotion only as a tool in seeking the financial help of the church.
9. Both the active requirements of helping worthy widows and the prohibitions about help for the unqualified must be observed by the church at Ephesus if "they" are to be blameless regarding their decisions about enrolling widows.
10. So important does Paul consider proper behavior toward widows that he returns to the duty of the disciples in this regard and seems now to make their obligation even broader. Where before it was "children and grandchildren" who sustained the responsibility of relieving their widows, now it is those of one's "household" who must be supported. This term [*oikeios*] means, "belonging to a house, kindred."
11. The Jews were charged under the Law of Moses to care for their widows (Exo.22:22-24; Deut. 24:17-19). Most Gentiles had a similar sense of responsibility within their moral makeup. They said, "Nature dictates that to everyone, his own children and relatives should be most dear." Cicero is quoted as declaring, "Every man should take care of his own family." So, any Christian who ignored the needs of such destitute women was guilty of conduct contrary to what was commonly done even by people outside the body of Christ. Failure to act appropriately would not only violate the requirements of *the faith* but also would hold up the church to the shame and ridicule of a widow-sensitive world of unbelievers.
12. In verse twelve the apostle adds several specific characteristics that identify the widows eligible to be "taken into the number" [enrolled] for regular assistance by the church.
  - a. She must be at least sixty years of age. A woman of these years is likely to be different than the "younger widows" who might turn to interests not compatible with the level of religious commitment needed for tasks assigned to widows by the church. It is assumed that "sixty" for some unexplained reason is a rigid number not subject to variation in individual cases.
  - b. She must have been married to only *one* husband. This is the same stipulation given by Paul for elders (3:2). Opinions are divided among scholars about whether this language restricts widows and elders to just one marriage or simply prohibits the qualification of persons guilty of adulterous or bigamous unions.
    - (1) It is clear that Paul usually had no objections to second marriages for widows (1Cor. 7:39,40), and in this passage he urges younger widows to remarry (verse 14). If he now limits the "real" widows to one marriage, the reason must be

found in something other than in the second marriage itself.

- (2) It is claimed by some that a widow who never remarries is afforded a higher respect, especially in religious circles, than one who takes a second husband. And, they affirm, among the pagans it was thought that such a woman wore a “crown of chastity” worthy of great honor.
  - (3) Despite arguments to the contrary, it seems that the better interpretation is in favor of the one-husband/wife-at-a-time position with regard to both elders and enrolled widows.
- c. She must be recognized as a doer of good works. She has let her “light shine before men” continually, not sporadically, and she has been a source of glory to God by her benevolent deeds (Matt. 5:16). Like Dorcas, she has been “full of” good works and charity for others. Kindness has been a way of life for her.
  - d. She must have brought up children. “If” does not permit her enrollment without meeting this requirement, but the word simply replaces “and not unless” in the first part of verse nine. Obviously, she must have done an exemplary job of rearing her children. As with elders, “children” is satisfied by *one* offspring, although a plurality of children might prove to be an advantage in the tasks undertaken by both elders and enrolled widows.
  - e. She has shown hospitality in lodging strangers. Again, this is also one of the qualifications specified for elders. It is a commendable virtue in any disciple (Heb.13:2) and is all too scarce in our modern society.
  - f. She has washed the saints’ feet. This practice was an act that displayed both *hospitality* and *humility*. Dusty sandal-shod feet were usually washed as a welcoming gesture by a gracious host or hostess (Luke 8:44). Washing His disciples’ feet was Jesus’ way of impressing them with the necessity of humility in their mission of saving the souls of lost men and women (John 13). The eligible widow had been both hospitable and humble in her social contact with others. It is noted that washing feet was never performed as an act of worship in the services of the early church.
  - g. She has relieved the afflicted from whatever unfavorable circumstances they suffered. She has not discriminated among the many who needed her help, and she has turned none away from her care and concern.
  - h. She has followed every good work. She has no “pet” project to which she gives all her attention. She is dedicated to any task that will benefit another person. She does her part in every work of the local church that is appropriate to her sex and age. She keeps busy with “behind the scenes” activities that may bring her no special recognition but that give her the satisfaction of knowing that she has tried to bless both “just and unjust” after the example set by the Lord (Matt. 5:45).
13. Younger widows are not to be enrolled for church assistance not only because they don’t satisfy the qualifications set out by the Lord’s apostle but also because the natural tendencies of their biological age make it likely that they would prove themselves unsuited for the work planned for them in the local church. If enlisted, there

was a high probability that they would soon lose their ardor for spiritual work and instead turn their thoughts toward another marriage and toward other things that accompany a “normal” life for younger women. The tasks for which they had been made responsible would then suffer as a result.

14. Younger widows would be distracted from their duties because they “grew wanton” against Christ. While this term now carries a connotation of lustfulness and dissoluteness, it was not always so. Webster offers numerous definitions with a wide range of meanings. The two best fitting this context are “undisciplined” and “extravagant.” These younger women probably were not immoral; they simply tended to become impatient with the restraints imposed by spiritual service for the church, and they were unable to control their desire to participate in the same pleasures of life which “everyone else” enjoyed.
15. Commitments made to the Lord cannot be abandoned with impunity. There is a measure of “condemnation” [*krima*-- “the sentence pronounced, a verdict”] attached to such behavior. Enrolled widows were obligated to Christ to perform the duty they had promised to do. While this “condemnation” might not have been so severe as to destroy their souls, at least it was an expression of the Lord’s displeasure about their betraying the trust that their enrollment had placed in them.
16. Not only would these undependable young widows bring a degree of shame upon themselves if they should ignore the obligation they had assumed, but their action also could lead to other conduct that would hurt the image of the local church. The lack of useful activity might lead them into idleness, which could provide strong temptations to engage in gossip and meddling into others’ business. Such behavior would reflect badly on the character of the local congregation of which they were members. “No persons are commonly more dangerous to the peace of a neighborhood than those who have nothing to do.”
17. To put aside all possibility of harm that might come from the enrollment of young widows by the church, Paul altogether disallowed their being enrolled to do service for the church. Although no specific details are given about the “enrollment” of these “real widows” or about the responsibilities they assumed in their enrollment, Timothy and his brethren apparently were well acquainted with the arrangement.
  - a. Basically, the enrollment of widows was designed to provide financial support when there was no other available source of assistance for them.
  - b. The “enrollment” of *some* widows suggests that other widows in the congregation were eligible for *regular* [non-enrolled] help from the church treasury on a case-by-case basis when it was confirmed that they had no kin who could care for them in their distress.
  - c. The strict qualifications for enrollment strongly imply that eligible widows performed important work for the church “in exchange” for their support. This work



- would have cast these women into a role where their reputations were vital to the image of the congregation they served. The nature of their work is uncertain, but it likely included providing services for female members of the church that were best done by other women. Paul charged Titus that older women should admonish younger women to be good wives, mothers, and homemakers (Tit. 2:3-5). Some such activity might be included in the responsibilities of the enrolled widows.
- d. The enrollment of older widows and the case-by-case assistance given to younger widows in no way relieved the church at Ephesus of its duty for benevolence toward other needy members of the congregation who were not widows.
18. Even though younger widows were not good candidates to receive help in “exchange” for offering important services to the church, their needs were still pressing and demanded the attention of the congregation. There were two obvious avenues available for their relief: (1) regular benevolence on an as-needed basis and, (2) remarriage to eligible men who would assume their support.
19. Paul recommended the latter option as the better choice where possible. Every widow who could remarry and re-establish her disrupted home would afford herself a useful life personally and would once again participate in God’s own plan to give stability and tranquility to the world through the establishment and proper functioning of families.
20. It may be that a problem with younger widows had already grown to be serious enough that attention should be given to it at once. “Some” [how many?], even as he wrote, were following after things that pleased Satan [“adversary”--vs. 14] instead of God. We are not told how far into inappropriate conduct they had turned.
21. Paul delivers a final admonition that Christian men and women [ASV and RSV omit “man”] *must* satisfy their obligations to other family members [vs. 8] and especially to widows in their families. Not only was their compliance imperative because it was the right thing for them to do but also it would prevent the obligations of the church toward widows from becoming so great as to be unmanageable both financially and logistically. If responsible relatives would care for the needs of their own widows, the church would rightly be burdened [“charged”--KJV] only with the expense and labor of caring for those who were desolate in their distress.

**Verses 17-25-- TREATMENT OF ELDERS BY CHURCH MEMBERS**

1. A second area in which the apostle recognized that the congregation might be deficient was in the treatment of elders by some of its members. Paul expected Timothy to make corrections in this area where they were needed.
2. Ephesus had been fortunate to enjoy the leadership of elders for some years (Acts 19: 8, 10; 20:17ff.). It is assumed, with good evidence (Acts 20:28-36), that these were well-intentioned men who were dedicated to caring for their flock as best they could. It was important that the congregation realize the tremendous value of their elders to

the welfare of the church. It was equally necessary that they should express their **appreciation** for those who gave so generously of themselves in behalf of others.

3. Christians should have a high regard for **all faithful elders**, but there were some who were worthy of something more. This passage establishes the fact that some elders spent a great part of their time in teaching the word of God and others didn't. Those who did should receive financial support from the church to compensate them for time that otherwise would have been spent in secular work. The word for "honor" is *time*, and one of its definitions is "a price paid or received."
4. Paul documents his rationale for this practice of supporting elders. He quotes first from the Old Testament (Deut. 25:4) and then from The New Testament (Luke 10:7) to demonstrate that God has always intended for every worker, man or animal, to be recompensed for his labor. Workers who labor in spiritual things are rightfully paid out of funds devoted to spiritual purposes.
5. Another issue of importance concerning elders involved the response to be made by Timothy and others should an elder be accused of sinful conduct. This was likely to happen, for anyone in such a position of leadership and authority would be subject to criticism for the decisions he had made and the actions he had taken in his role. An elder might be especially vulnerable to unjust or malicious accusations.
  - a. Disgruntled church members might become vindictive toward him in reaction to decisions made about congregational activity or disciplinary measures against unruly members.
  - b. The high level of activity by elders in a local church might subject them to greater scrutiny than other members. The reasons behind some of their official conduct might sometimes not be disclosed or understood by the congregation, and innocent behavior might be misconstrued as inappropriate or even sinful.
  - c. Persons outside the church might center their evil purposes upon the elders in an attempt to discredit the Lord's cause in some way. The most obvious targets of their wicked schemes would be the church leaders.
6. Regardless of the origins of accusations, there were certain procedures to be followed in making fair and righteous decisions about the charges. The first requirement was that no complaint should be considered unless it could be supported by at least two or three witnesses to the bad conduct in question. This restriction had been used in determining guilt in Old Testament inquiries (Deut. 19:15). This procedure would reduce the possibility of false charges coming out of misunderstanding or ill-will.
7. If accusations were found to be accurate, and if sin had actually been committed by an elder, his position must not deter the church from calling him into account for his conduct. Indeed, appropriate action against an erring leader would make it all the more apparent to people both inside and outside the church that the disciples were dedicated to righteousness and that sin would not go unnoticed or unpunished. All would learn a valuable lesson about the dangers of temptation when sin in "high places" was rebuked and the sinner was handled appropriately. David Lipscomb defends

such action against a straying elder, even when some think it will “hurt the cause”:

And what or who is injured by exposing evil teaching or evil men? No truth can be injured by the exposure of falsehood. God cannot be honored by covering up evil and cherishing false teachers or evil men in the church. To do this is to honor the devil and his servants equally with God and his servants. It cannot help good men to keep evil men in association with them. It corrupts their goodness, destroys their influence for good, injures bad men themselves, and countenances them as though they were good. The weakness of churches is: they cherish falsehood and evil among them. They cannot be strong either with God or man while so doing. To expose error and bad men is to proclaim to the world that they seek truth, purity, holiness and godlikeness.

8. Timothy’s responsibility in the matter of dealing with elders was clear: do the right thing about honoring worthy elders and exposing the sins of the unworthy. Prejudice that comes out of unfortunate personal relationships or partiality associated with personal friendships must play no part in fair dealings with all. A Father who deals justly with every saint and sinner and a righteous Son who died that all men might be judged solely by *what*, not *who*, they are must both expect no less objectivity in the conduct of humans. “Elect” [blessed] angels [who “kept their proper domain” when other angels “left their habitation” (Jude 6)] also testify that just conduct in the face of peer pressure will be amply rewarded.
9. The problems connected with the discipline of unruly elders could often be avoided by paying more careful attention to the qualifications for bishops before they were selected. “Laying hands” on someone often had reference to an appointment to certain responsibilities (Acts 6:6; 13:3; 1Tim. 4:14). Paul’s warning about being hasty in laying on hands quite possibly refers to the mistake of appointing men to be elders before a thorough investigation is made of their character within the qualifications specified for those who will serve in the office. Timothy must not allow this to happen, or he would have to share in the blame of bad leadership. He must keep himself pure from condoning the character flaws and sins of men wrongfully installed for public service in the Lord’s church.
10. At this point in his discussion about the treatment of wayward elders, Paul injects a personal statement that at first seems to bear entirely on another subject. However, his charge to Timothy at the end of verse 22 to “keep himself pure” perhaps called his attention to a struggle within the young preacher about his health and his reputation. On one hand, he was reluctant to drink wine lest he harm his reputation. On the other, he was convinced that wine could be healing to his stomach problem and other “frequent infirmities.” Paul’s permission for him to use a little wine as a medical remedy for his physical weaknesses must have been a welcome prescription from the apostle.
11. Returning to his admonitions about the difficulty of keeping the eldership clear of abuses, Paul closes his assessment with the observation that, despite putting forth its best effort, a church may fail in its attempt to select only well qualified men to lead it.

Some are easily disqualified by defects that are quickly identified. However, the flaws within some candidates are so well concealed from any investigation that they may go undetected until it is too late for an accurate “judgment” to be made. Those deficiencies will surface eventually and will have to be dealt with when they become known.

12. In the same way, an investigation may not reveal just how *good* some men really are. While the goodness of some candidates for the eldership may be widely known and admired by the church, there may be others with equally fine characters who, for one reason or another, are not so much appreciated as potential leaders of the congregation. Perhaps the apostle is cautioning Timothy that these men against whom there is no *obvious* objection but who are not as striking as others in their public image ought not to be *denied* the opportunity to serve. The Lord’s work has a way of bringing out the best in a modest man who truly wants to excel in the cause of the Lord.

1. What *two* main topics does Paul deal with in this chapter?
  - a. \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_ should provide help for \_\_\_\_\_ as an effort to \_\_\_\_\_ their \_\_\_\_\_.
3. What *two* general qualities distinguish a “real widow” who can be enrolled for help?
  - a. \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. \_\_\_\_\_
4. A widow who lives in \_\_\_\_\_ is \_\_\_\_\_ while she \_\_\_\_\_.
5. Those who won’t support their \_\_\_\_\_, especially of their own \_\_\_\_\_, deny the \_\_\_\_\_ and are \_\_\_\_\_ than an \_\_\_\_\_.
6. What are the *eight* specific qualifications for widows to be “enrolled” by the church?
  - a. \_\_\_\_\_ e. \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. \_\_\_\_\_ f. \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. \_\_\_\_\_ g. \_\_\_\_\_
  - d. \_\_\_\_\_ h. \_\_\_\_\_
7. Younger widows may grow \_\_\_\_\_ against \_\_\_\_\_ and desire to \_\_\_\_\_; in this they leave their \_\_\_\_\_.
8. These young women “learn” what *three* things?
  - a. \_\_\_\_\_,
  - b. \_\_\_\_\_ c. \_\_\_\_\_
9. What *four* things should younger widows do?
  - a. \_\_\_\_\_ c. \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. \_\_\_\_\_ d. \_\_\_\_\_
10. \_\_\_\_\_ who \_\_\_\_\_ well should receive \_\_\_\_\_.
11. Some elders labored in \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.
12. Charges against elders must have \_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_.
13. Elders who \_\_\_\_\_ must be \_\_\_\_\_ before \_\_\_\_\_ so that the \_\_\_\_\_ may be in \_\_\_\_\_.

Chapter Six

Verses 1,2-- MONITORING THE BEHAVIOR OF SERVANTS AND MASTERS

1. Having called Timothy's attention to two important responsibilities to be borne by the congregation at Ephesus [the proper enrollment of widows and the conduct of the church toward its elders], Paul returns in this chapter to matters relating to the behavior of several classes of church members. Their personal conduct was as vital to the soundness of the local body as the correct functioning of the body as a church.
2. Paul first addresses masters and servants. Although there were servants at this time who were not slaves, it is clear that those in this passage were "under the yoke" and had no choice about serving their masters.
3. Paul and other gospel writers made no overt judgments about the *existence* of the master/slave relationship. Slavery was a political institution that the gospel made no immediate attempt to eradicate. It seems certain that it could not long endure within the gospel principles of spiritual freedom and the equality of persons before God. But until the leaven of God's word had adequate time to bring about drastic societal changes in the places where it went, heaven was concerned with assuring that established institutions like slavery were practiced in keeping with the basic gospel precepts of love and fair treatment.
4. This was not Paul's only attempt to regulate relationships between masters and slaves. [See 1Cor. 7:21; Eph. 6:5; Col. 3:22; 4:1; Titus 2:9; Phile. 16.] Their behavior toward one another could have a great impact, either positively or negatively, on the spiritual health and reputation of the local church.
5. The name of God ["everything that the 'name' covers"] is blasphemed [*blasphemia*-- "to speak contemptuously of God or of sacred things"] when His people misbehave before unbelievers. [See Rom. 2:24.] God's doctrine [teaching] is seen as weak and ineffective when its injunctions fail to change the conduct of disciples to conform to the image of Christ (Rom. 8:29).
6. It is likely that some were saying that the gospel encouraged converted slaves to disrespect their masters and to offer them a diminished level of service. Timothy's efforts to promote *God's* honor among men would be rejected by people who believed that God was seeking to destroy a desirable institution in their society by eroding the honor which masters should be shown by their slaves. That misapprehension needed to be corrected at once.
7. Three situations arose when parties in a master/slave relationship were converted: (1) believing slaves might have unbelieving masters; (2) believing masters might own unbelieving slaves; (3) both masters and slaves might be Christians. Regardless of what changes conversion had brought to their relationship, both masters and slaves who

had become believers must exhibit even greater respect for the obligations of their relationship than they had shown before their conversion.

8. Slaves especially might tend to ignore their continuing duty to serve well. Their new spiritual equality with believing masters and their avored spiritual status over those who disbelieved probably had caused some to “despise” their duty toward any master at all. Actually, Christians who were slaves now were obliged to serve their masters *much better* than ever, and this was especially true if the masters were fellow saints in the kingdom of God.

### Verses 3-5-- MONITORING THE BEHAVIOR OF THE UNRULY

1. Paul urged the Thessalonians to “warn the unruly” (1Thes. 5:14). An “unruly” person is one who is “not subject to rule.” He is disobedient in his conduct because he does not have a proper respect for law. Apparently, there were unruly people in the church at Ephesus whose behavior as Christians needed improvement.
2. The first unruly members whose behavior warranted Paul’s censure were those who opposed the wholesome [sound] words of the godly doctrine initially taught at Ephesus by the apostle. Timothy had been made responsible for charging these pretenders to “teach no other doctrine” (1:3). The true gospel was “sound” [*hugiaino*--“whole, healthy”] because it encouraged a “godliness” [*eusebeia*-- “to reverence well,” “to be devout”] of mind that motivated men to do what pleases the Lord. Their “gospel” was self-serving and productive only of harmful attitudes and actions on the part of its advocates.
3. The “other doctrine” probably included a number of false opinions, but in particular it was in disagreement with Paul’s view of the master/slave relationship. Slavery was fertile soil for causing friction among Christ’s disciples. Numerous hurtful issues could be raised about the institution by those who were “teaching otherwise” than what Paul had taught about masters and slaves and who would like nothing more than to disrupt the peace and harmony promoted by Paul’s doctrine.
4. Why would anyone deliberately seek to divide the loyalties of God’s people about the institution of slavery? Why would they arrogantly cast aside the demonstrated wholesomeness of the doctrine of Jesus and promote a doctrine whose end result would be turmoil and ill will among brethren?
5. Paul doesn’t hesitate to state his view of the character of those who had chosen to undermine his apostolic authority and who wanted to divert the disciples from the inspired doctrine which he taught by that authority. He described them as:
  - a. Proud. The ASV has “puffed up.” They were confident in themselves and in their own understanding of spiritual values rather than in God and in His ability to determine what was right and what was wrong in the lives of humans. They seemed completely unaware that, “There is a way which *seems* right to a man, but its end is the way of death” (Prov. 14:12) or that, “It is not in man who walks to direct his

- own steps” (Jer. 10:23);
- b. **Knowing nothing.** Of course, like many others, they possibly were well educated in various fields of learning. They probably considered themselves to be very capable to learn and to teach others what they had learned. Unfortunately, what they had pursued studiously was what the world called “knowledge” [“science”-- KJV]. God called it “profane and vain babblings and contradictions” (6:20). In all their learning, the indispensable lesson they had failed to learn was the lesson of *humility in learning*: “Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths” (Prov. 3:5,6);
- c. **Obsessed with disputes.** There are people who delight in controversy about things both important and unimportant. The *topic* of dispute is virtually irrelevant; the dispute *itself* is what is important to them. How different that attitude is from the advice that Paul gave to Timothy a short time later: “But avoid foolish and ignorant disputes, knowing that they generate strife. And a servant of the Lord must not quarrel but be gentle to all, able to teach, patient, in humility correcting those who are in opposition...” (2Tim. 2:23,24);
- d. **Obsessed with arguments over words.** Jewish religious leaders were known to give inordinate and unproductive attention to words and all their shades of meaning. Moreover, they often crafted foolish and hurtful practices from their deliberations while neglecting the “weightier matters” of their law: justice and mercy and faith (Matt. 23:23). Even Gallio, a pagan Greek ruler, detected the shallowness of their pursuit of truth when he discovered that they were interested not in wrongdoing or wicked crimes against their law but only in words and names. In disgust, he drove them from his presence (Acts 18:14-16). At least some of these teachers of the “other doctrine” at Ephesus obviously were Jewish in nationality and/or mindset.
- (1) These disputes and arguments were altogether void of any benefit to the debaters or to their listeners.
  - (2) Instead of deriving knowledge and reaching conclusions about religious issues that would draw them closer to God and to one another, their useless deliberations led only to harmful conduct among the disputants.
    - (a) **Envy.** Some would flaunt their learning and debating skills. Others would be less able to promote themselves as scholars or as “movers and shakers” of the religious world. Envy would inevitably rear its ugly head and lead to ill feelings among men who were *all* supposed to be seeking only truth.
    - (b) **Strife.** It is often difficult to control one’s temper in the heat of discussing matters of difference. Such disputes and arguments as were conducted at Ephesus could quickly become “fights” rather than “discussions.” Relationships among brethren could be wrecked and never repaired.
    - (c) **Revilings** [“to subject to abuse in speech; scold”-- Webster]. “Out of the



abundance of the heart the mouth speaks” (Matt. 12:34). Unkind words to our brethren betray unkind feelings, and “by your words [hearts] you will be justified, and by your words [hearts] you will be condemned.”

- (d) **Suspicious.** Brotherly relations are in a sad condition when the Lord’s disciples are driven to question one another’s motives when engaged in religious discussion. However, it frequently becomes evident that some disputants are more interested in *triumph* rather than in *truth*. And it is often the case that intense discussions of *less important* matters tend to give rise to *more occasion* for the doubts and suspicions that drive brethren apart.
  - (e) **Useless wranglings.** In fact, the disputations in which these false teachers delighted to engage were worse than useless. They resulted in no new useful knowledge that would help men get to heaven. They failed to increase the appreciation and respect that church members had for one another. Their most apparent product was “wranglings” [*diaparatribe*-- “mutual irritations; hostility, enmity”] which left no one more righteous than before the discussion began.
  - e. **Corrupted in mind.** The NKJV has, “of corrupt [adjective] minds.” The verb form, “corrupted,” is preferred. *Diaphtheiro* means, “utterly bringing to a worse state, through and through.” The thought is akin to Paul’s warning in 2Tim. 3:13, “But evil men and imposters will grow worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived.” The deterioration of morality is *progressive*; skills to deceive others increase with their use, and hesitancy to use those skills simultaneously decreases;
  - f. **Destitute of the truth.** *Apostereo* in the passive voice [as here] means, “bereft” [deprived] of truth, “with the suggestion of being retributively ‘robbed’ of the truth, through the corrupt conditions of the mind” [Vine]. Perhaps these teachers had no real love of truth and had been sent “strong delusion” by the Lord that persuaded them that their false doctrine was really the truth (2Thes.2:10,11). Such men are particularly dangerous to unsuspecting students;
  - g. **Supposing that godliness is a means of gain.** Paul declared in verse ten that “the *love* of money is a root of all kinds of evil.” Religion can’t expect to escape the threat posed by men and women who prefer *prosperity* to *integrity* and who view religion as an opportunity to fill their own pockets instead of as the way to help others fill their dreams of a better life here and hereafter. Teachers of this persuasion are capable of twisting the truth into any doctrine that will bring them fame and fortune. Timothy was warned sternly about teaching for money, “Flee these things” (6:11).
6. After we read Paul’s scathing description of the false teachers who were trying to destroy the faith of the Ephesian Christians, his command to Timothy about how to treat them is not surprising: “From such withdraw yourself.” This same action was demanded of the Thessalonians (2Thes. 3:6). It was important for a young and im-

pressionable preacher to separate himself from the subtle and corrupting influences of other teachers who did not have the same commitment to the truth that he did. It was also necessary for the church to withdraw itself from these evil persons because Paul knew that “a little leaven leavens the whole lump” (1Cor. 5:6).

Verses 6-10-- MONITORING THE BEHAVIOR OF THE MATERIAL-MINDED

1. Another lesson on values seemed appropriate following the apostle’s condemnation of the greed that dominated the conduct of some teachers at Ephesus. Both Timothy and the entire church would benefit from a reminder of what *really* constitutes *prosperity* for disciples of Christ.
2. Contentment to spend one’s life pursuing godliness instead of money is the *real prosperity* offered by the gospel. It was not enough that the saints should be willing to sacrifice the rewards of worldly ambitions if just from a sense of duty. They must be content that their sacrifice was the right choice because it was the only way to *real wealth*. Earthly wealth spawns earthly concerns which interfere with one’s total dedication to going to heaven! Jesus’ own advice about what the Christian should choose for his goal in life was, “But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things [material wealth] shall be added to you” (Matt. 6:33). David Lipscomb has a useful comment:

Every earthly possession is only meant for this life-- for the period between the hour of birth and death-- then we should only be concerned about what we can wisely use in our journey through life. To burden ourselves with more is to hinder our usefulness and our true enjoyment of life and our opportunities for doing good for others and for improving ourselves.

3. It is not only sinful to *be selfishly rich*; it is destructive to the soul to *selfishly want* to be rich. It is the normal desire of those aspiring to riches to spend them, if acquired, on their own pleasures. Rarely is enhancing one’s usefulness in the kingdom of God the goal for growing rich.
4. Some justify their choices to pursue worldly fame and fortune by supposing that such things will enable them *someday* to do good in the Lord’s work. Neglecting spiritual activities can become desirable *now* when seen as the way to increase those same activities in the *future*. But an objective examination of human experience will expose those aspirations as extremely risky for the Christian.
5. Paul’s wisdom in this matter is not only inspired but also historical. There are many pitfalls along the way to riches, even when travelers have noble intentions about using their money when they finally acquire it. Temptations, snares, and many foolish and harmful lusts lurk along the way to distract and divert well-intentioned persons from their commendable purposes.
6. Seeking riches is dangerous to disciples because the desire to have money for what it can do for *others* is often supplanted by the desire for what it can do for *ourselves*,

and that insidious exchange can be fatal to our usefulness to the Lord. Worse, the *selfish* love of money not only robs the Christian of his potential value to Christ, but it can lead him into practices that will rob him of his *soul*. All kinds of evil spring out of the desire to be rich. Paul warns that greed for money will, (1) cause the faithful to stray from the faith [and we are *saved* by our faith!] and, (2) plunge its victims into “many sorrows” instead of giving them the happiness they thought wealth would bring. A list of these “sorrows” attached to being rich is probably beyond the comprehension of those who have had little exposure to wealth, but media reports about problems encountered by the “rich and famous” regularly confirm the accuracy of Paul’s warning.

#### Verses 11-16-- MONITORING THE BEHAVIOR OF SELF

1. Flee and pursue. Timothy’s choice for his life’s goal had been made some years earlier. As a “man of God” he wanted to be rich in heavenly treasures instead of in earthly possessions (Matt. 6:19, 20). To accomplish what he had set out to do, he must continue to flee from the *pseudo* riches that so often attract the young and pursue instead the choices that lead to the *real* riches of righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, and gentleness.
2. Fight the good fight of faith. Paul considered Timothy to be a “good soldier of Jesus Christ” (2Tim. 2:3), and he expected him to “fight” in behalf of the One who had enlisted him. Paul had himself “fought the good fight” and looked for the crown of life that accompanied faithful service (2Tim. 4:7,8). Unlike soldiers who sought to conquer cities and their treasures, Paul, like a sage spiritual “general,” challenged the young and inexperienced “private” with wisdom born of actual combat. “Lay hold on eternal life.” Compared to the rewards of this heavenly prize, all other efforts would be a complete waste of Timothy’s time and energy.
3. *Every* Christian has been “called” by the gospel to fight for Christ (Eph. 6:10-17), but Timothy had been called personally by the Lord’s own apostle to fight a special fight of converting the lost and strengthening the saved (Acts 16:1-5). Paul and others depended on Timothy to be loyal to the cause he had from the first espoused. The young preacher had been given an unusual opportunity to serve in a unique cause (1Tim. 4:14). He also had a coveted gift to help him to be successful in his service (2Tim. 1:6).
4. Timothy also had obligated himself to stay the course and to distinguish himself in the spiritual war against the devil when he had made a “good confession” of Jesus before witnesses. This loyalty oath perhaps was the same confession that each convert makes during the process of his conversion (Acts 8:37). Or, it might have been another confession(s) made under different circumstances to show his unwavering commitment to fight hard for his Lord. Some even suppose that it was a “good” confession because it was made under the threat of punishment as when Christ confessed His Kingship and His Sonship to Pilate (John 18:37) and to the Jewish council (Mark 14:62,63).

Regardless of the circumstances, there were many witnesses who would testify about Timothy's determination to remain faithful to his stand for right and truth.

5. The "good confession" of Jesus' Sonship had ultimately brought physical death to the Savior. However, the power of His Father had restored His life. Similarly, fighting the good fight of faith and strictly keeping the commandment [doctrine] of the gospel might also eventually cost Timothy his own life at the hands of his adversaries. But he could rest assured that God would raise him again just as He had raised His own Son. Meanwhile, nothing demanded Timothy's perseverance like Jesus' sacrifice for him. Barnes comments on the impressions it must have made on Timothy, as it does on us:

Let us place him before us as he stood at the bar of Pilate-- threatened with death in its most appalling form, and ridiculed for the principles which he maintained; let us look on him, friendless and alone, and see with what seriousness, and sincerity, and boldness he stated the *simple truth* about himself, and we shall have one of the best securities that we can have that we shall not dishonor our profession. A clear view of the example of Christ our Savior, in those circumstances, and a deep conviction that his eye is upon us to discern whether we are steadfast as he was, will do more than all abstract precepts to make us faithful to our Christian calling.

6. By blamelessly keeping the teaching of Christ until death [which, for him, would be as final as Christ's actual "appearing"], Timothy would manifest to the world two basic convictions: (1) he believed there was a judgment planned by God where faithfulness would be rewarded with eternal life, and, (2) he also trusted that the power of Christ was adequate to fully execute that plan.
7. The power of Christ to appear at God's appointed time and to judge all men according to their works is guaranteed both by His nature and by His heavenly position.
  - a. His position is unchallenged. Earthly rulers are able to accomplish many impressive tasks by virtue of their exalted stations in the kingdoms of men. However, the Lord can do *whatever* He desires to do because His kingdom ranks far above any other government, and His position and power in that kingdom are absolute and unsurpassed.
    - (1) He has been "blessed" by the Father who "raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places..." (Eph. 1:20). He now occupies "David's throne" as He reigns absolutely over "all things" (Acts 2:30; 1Cor. 15:25,27).
    - (2) He is the *only* Potentate [*dunastes*-- akin to *dunamis*-- "power, a high officer"] because His authority surpasses any other authority and His power to control the activities of earth overrides all powers of kings and their kingdoms. He is indeed the "King of [all] kings and Lord of [all] lords."
  - b. His nature is unique.
    - (1) He alone [among rulers over men] has immortality. He lived before the earth existed (John 1:1), and He will continue to live after the earth exists no longer. He is the Prince [*archegos*-- "author"] of life (Acts 3:15), both physical and

spiritual. The Giver of temporal life to all people certainly has the ability to bestow eternal life on the people of God.

- (2) He “dwells” in unapproachable light. “Light” is truth (1John 1:7). Father and Son *can* be approached: in prayer (1Thes. 5:17); in faith and obedience (Heb. 11:6); and in godly living (Jas. 4:8). However, the truth [light] about Christ’s divinity is beyond question, and no man can “approach” the appointed judge of the world to challenge His absolute authority to decree eternal life for the righteous and eternal death to the wicked at the Day of reckoning.
  - (3) He cannot be seen. Jesus Christ is God [Divinity] (John 1:1), and God is Spirit (John 4:24). The physical body in which the Word dwelled *was* seen by many; the Spirit was seen by *none*. Nor should Jesus’ powers be estimated according to the powers of other men with other human bodies. He is God in the flesh, and the flesh in no way diminishes His Godly powers to come in judgment on the earth and to fulfill every promise He has made about the hereafter.
  - (4) The Christ will retain *forever* the honor of His *position* as “King of kings and Lord of lords.” He also will possess the power inherent in His *nature* to execute His plan to reward faithfulness with eternal life.
8. Amen [*amen* (transliterated from Hebrew)-- “faithful, sure”] If Paul uses his own “Amen” to conclude his endorsement of Jesus’ faithfulness and of His ability to keep the promises about His “appearing,” the word means: “So let it be.” If it is God who gives the “Amen” to the passage, then it means: “It is and shall be so.” Either way, Timothy had every reason to trust that his reward for keeping the commandment without spot was worth far more than any price he might have to pay to secure it. [See Rom. 8:18.]

#### Verses 17-19-- MONITORING THE BEHAVIOR OF THE RICH

1. There were some at Ephesus who *wanted to be* rich (vs. 9). Others were *already* rich. It was important to their own salvation and to the salvation of others who might come under their influence that the [relatively?] rich members should show caution in using their wealth.
2. There were some things that the rich must not do.
  - a. They must not be haughty [*hupselophroneo*-- “to be high-minded”]. Wealth often-times warps a rich man’s sense of self-importance. He may be tempted to hold the poor in contempt for their failure to acquire material possessions. He may forget that God is the Father of both rich and poor, and He loves all men equally. There is *no* respect of persons with the Lord, and there should be none among His disciples.
  - b. They must not trust in their uncertain riches. Treasures in heaven are never compromised, but “moth and rust” may take away those we accumulate on earth (Matt. 6:19,20). Like Nebuchadnezzar’s, our wealth can disappear in an instant, and we may be compelled to “eat grass like oxen” to get our priorities straight (Dan.4:32).

3. There were other things that the rich must do.
  - a. They must trust in the living God. He has ordained, “But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these [material needs] will be added to you” (Matt. 6:33). The Lord can be depended on under all circumstances to provide what He has promised. “Heaven and earth [including worldly riches] will pass away, but my word will not pass away” (Matt. 24:35). We can trust in the Lord even when everything else is uncertain.
  - b. They must do good. Doing good for others and not for themselves may prove to be difficult for people who have more wealth than they need. Yet, their riches afford them many more opportunities for “doing good” than less affluent people. Money should be viewed as something to be shared rather than something to be saved.
  - c. They must be rich in good works. These are the treasures that are laid up in heaven and not on the earth (Matt. 6:19,20). These are the riches that we can enjoy “spending” throughout eternity. The pleasures they will bring us will last forever, and we will never tire of the things that we have “bought” with our true riches.
  - d. They must be ready to give, willing to share. David said, “A good man deals graciously and lends...” (Psa. 112:5). How much *more* gracious it is for a man to give with no prospect of retrieving his money. Sharing would be more spontaneous to us if we would only remember that “The earth is the Lord’s and all its fulness...” (Psa. 24:1). Everything really belongs to Him, and what we have is only on loan from Him to be used by us for His purposes. When we share with the less fortunate, we really are only “middlemen” for God as He goes about distributing His gracious bounty among those who have need.
  - e. They must store up a good foundation [*themelios*-- “belonging to a foundation”; i.e, a foundation stone] for the “time to come.” James Macknight translates the verse, “*Providing for themselves, not money, which can be of no use to them in the other world, but what is infinitely better, a good foundation to stand on in the day of judgment, that they may lay hold on the prize of eternal life.*”
  - f. They must lay hold on eternal life. The goal for many is to “live the good life,” which means different things to different people. However, it seldom means that we live “the good life” when we spend our lives seeking eternal life. Yet, that is truly the only good life, because it is the only life providing us with never-ending pleasure and fulfillment. [See Rev. 21:4; 22:1-4.]

#### Verses 20,21-- MONITORING THE BEHAVIOR OF THE WORLDLY-WISE

1. The “glorious gospel of the blessed God” had first been committed to Paul as the Lord’s apostle. His life since his conversion had been consumed with defending and promoting its precepts and commands. In it alone could be found the “mystery” of

how man can show himself righteous before the Lord (Rom. 1:16,17). Paul was convinced that man's eternal destiny depended on how he responded to the gospel that Paul was working so hard to spread among the lost. He had been faithful to the Lord's commitment.

2. Paul had committed to Timothy the same body of truth that God had committed to him. Timothy had the same obligation that Paul had to handle the truth in complete awe of its divine origin (Gal. 1:11,12).
3. The gospel must be guarded against both subtle and overt attacks that would be made against the faith by those who were teaching "another doctrine" (1:3). Unable to confront sound doctrine head-on, they would resort to twist it by "going in the back door" with false and deceptive teaching that was:
  - a. Profane [*bebelos*-- "permitted to be trodden"; opposite of *hieros*-- "sacred"]. What they taught originated in worldly minds, appealed to worldly minds, and would be accepted by worldly minds. It had *nothing* to do with heavenly doctrine that would lead men to Christ and salvation;
  - b. Vain babbling [*kenophonia*-- "empty sounds"]. The "other doctrine" likely was delivered with the use of great communication skills. Its teachers probably sought to impress the church by employing excellence of speech and persuasive words of human wisdom as other teachers had done at Corinth. [See 1Cor. 2.] Nevertheless, in spite of its fancy packaging, the "other doctrine" was completely empty of anything of real value to people trying to get to heaven;
  - c. False knowledge. In fact, what the pretenders were teaching at Ephesus was not knowledge at all. It was only the human opinions of shallow minds that were seek an easier way than the way offered by the gospel of truth. "And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall set you free" (John 8:32). Wise men "walk by faith, not sight" (2Cor. 5:7), and "faith comes by hearing...the *word of God*" (Rom. 10:17), not from the *opinions* of self-promoting teachers;
  - d. Contradicting to the true knowledge. There is ample objective evidence to identify *true* doctrine taught by inspired messengers from Christ. Students who accept doctrines that not only are not taught in the Scriptures but that actually contradict the word of God are gullible and self-destructing. These excursions into human wisdom will always cause naive disciples to "stray from the faith." Like Timothy, we should at all times avoid them!

1. Paul first addressed \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_. Their conduct could cause others to \_\_\_\_\_ the \_\_\_\_\_ and the \_\_\_\_\_ of God.
2. Slaves must serve \_\_\_\_\_ masters because they are \_\_\_\_\_ and are \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.
3. \_\_\_\_\_ doctrine consisted of \_\_\_\_\_ and was according to \_\_\_\_\_.
4. What are *five* things that result from disputes and arguments over words?  
a. \_\_\_\_\_ b. \_\_\_\_\_ c. \_\_\_\_\_  
d. \_\_\_\_\_ e. \_\_\_\_\_
5. "But \_\_\_\_\_ with \_\_\_\_\_ is \_\_\_\_\_."
6. If Christians have \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_, they should be \_\_\_\_\_.
7. The would-be rich face at least *three* dangers. What are they?  
a. \_\_\_\_\_ b. \_\_\_\_\_ c. \_\_\_\_\_
8. A man of God should pursue *six* things:  
a. \_\_\_\_\_ b. \_\_\_\_\_ c. \_\_\_\_\_  
d. \_\_\_\_\_ e. \_\_\_\_\_ f. \_\_\_\_\_
9. Timothy had \_\_\_\_\_ the good \_\_\_\_\_ before many \_\_\_\_\_ as \_\_\_\_\_ had done before \_\_\_\_\_.
10. *Three* things describe the rank of Jesus in heaven [verse 15]:  
a. Only \_\_\_\_\_ b. \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_ c. \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_
11. *Four* things describe the nature of Jesus in heaven [verse 16]:  
a. \_\_\_\_\_ b. \_\_\_\_\_ in \_\_\_\_\_  
c. cannot \_\_\_\_\_ d. \_\_\_\_\_
12. The rich should do *four* things to obtain eternal life:  
a. \_\_\_\_\_ in \_\_\_\_\_ b. do \_\_\_\_\_ c. be \_\_\_\_\_  
to \_\_\_\_\_ d. be \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_
13. Some had \_\_\_\_\_ from the \_\_\_\_\_ when they failed to \_\_\_\_\_ and vain \_\_\_\_\_ and false \_\_\_\_\_.



# INTRODUCTION TO

# SECOND TIMOTHY

## THE HISTORY:

For information about Timothy and his relationship to the apostle Paul, refer to the introductory material for First Timothy. The circumstances surrounding Timothy's earlier work at Ephesus are also discussed there.

## THE CIRCUMSTANCES:

One fundamental matter must be confronted before any determination can be made about the time and place when Paul wrote this letter to the young preacher. Was the aged apostle imprisoned *twice* in Rome: once as recorded by Luke in the last chapter of Acts and a second unrecorded detention which followed his release from the first confinement? The opinions of scholars are widely divided on this issue.

Some writers believe that there was only *one* imprisonment in Rome and that both First and Second Timothy were written during the same period of time as the other "prison epistles," Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon. Several pieces of evidence are usually offered for this timeframe:

1. Luke was with Paul in Rome when this letter was sent (2Tim. 4:11). It is argued that since he made no mention in Acts of a second imprisonment for Paul, there must have been none. However, it should be understood that Luke does not propose that Acts should be a history of Paul's apostolic life and activities. Instead, his concern was for the early preaching and spread of the gospel, and he obviously considered that his task was sufficiently completed when Paul was sent to Rome as a prisoner in Acts 28. Luke's silence about any later work done by Paul has no bearing on his record of the early history of the Lord's church in the world.
2. Timothy was still considered to be a "young" man when this letter was composed, as shown in 2Tim. 2:22, "Flee also youthful lusts." It is said that if this epistle came out of a second confinement, Timothy would have been past the age of "youth." But it

should be noted that, according to some calculations, Timothy would have been only about 34 years old at the time of a supposed second imprisonment. That would have fallen well within the limits that defined “youth” in the cultures of the Greeks and the Romans.

3. Paul made a “first defense” before Caesar upon arriving at Rome in Acts 28:16. It is thought that his companions were so apprehensive about this hearing that they all fled to safety. However, Paul was unexpectedly “delivered out of the mouth of the lion” (2Tim. 4:16,17) and was allowed to live rather comfortably in his own hired house as reported by Luke in the last chapter of Acts. He was allowed to continue to preach the gospel and many souls were saved. During that time, at least some of his friends returned to him and were present when Second Timothy was composed and sent to Ephesus not long after First Timothy was written to the young preacher. Such a scenario seems in disagreement with some of the statements made by Paul in the letter and with his general attitude about his confinement reflected throughout the epistle.
  - a. For instance, following his “first hearing” he was closely held “in chains” as a criminal and was forced to “endure” many things for the elect (2Tim. 2:9,10). His situation seems to have become worse rather than better by the time he wrote his second letter to Timothy.
  - b. His “first hearing” occasioned in Paul a new disposition of resignation to his destiny and an expectation of impending death at the hands of his captors. His time to “depart” was drawing near and he was already being “poured out” as a sacrifice in the cause of the Lord (2Tim. 4:6-8). This mindset appears to be different from what he had expressed in Phil. 2:24, Col. 4:7,8, and Philem. 22 as he wrote the “prison epistles” during his first detention.

Some scholars are so firmly convinced that both letters to Timothy were penned during the *same* imprisonment of the apostle in Rome that they have also concluded, in an effort to reconcile the contrasts presented by the two letters, that what we now call the *Second* letter was actually sent to Ephesus before the *First* was written.

Other scholars are equally sure that there were *two* confinements in Rome and that Second Timothy was the product of the second. They say:

1. Paul’s totally different outlooks in the letters about his prospect for release or continued detainment make *two* different environments necessary. In the first letter, he entertained a definite hope for release; in the second he just as definitely looked for execution at the hands of the Romans. [See above, 3b.]
2. When the first letter was sent, several persons, according to the other “prison epistles,” were *with* Paul, offering him comfort and assistance. In the second, those individuals were missing.
  - a. Timothy joined in Paul’s salutation to the Colossians (Col. 1:1); now he is else-

- where, as evidenced by Paul's sending this letter to him.
- b. Mark, "the cousin of Barnabas," is also mentioned in the same letter (Col. 4:10). But in 2Timothy 4:11, Timothy was instructed to "get Mark and bring him unto me."
  - c. Demas was with Paul in Col. 4:14, but in 2Tim. 4:10 he is absent, having "forsaken" Paul and gone to Thessalonica.
  - d. At his "first defense" [first hearing at his second imprisonment] none stood by him; all "forsook" the apostle except Luke (2Tim. 4:16).
3. Erastus had "stayed" in Corinth (2Tim. 4:20). But if he had been with Paul on the first trip to a Roman prison, they would not have gone by way of Corinth at all. [See Acts 28.] This reference is to another, more recent trip that Erastus had made with the apostle to Corinth. The Greek *emeinen*, we are told, signifies that two were in company when one remained behind and the other went ahead, which exactly conforms to the facts attached to the statement that Erastus "stayed" in Corinth.
  4. Trophimus had been left sick when Paul left Miletus. Again, no stop was made at Miletus when Paul's ship transported him to Rome in Acts 28. This must refer to a later occasion when the two had gone together to Miletus, evidently between the two confinements of Paul as a Roman prisoner.
  5. Paul had left certain books and a cloak at Troas at some past time. Now, he wants them brought to him (2Tim. 4:13). He wanted to have the cloak for warmth "before winter" (2Tim. 4:21). More than two years had passed between his visit to Troas (Acts 20) and his departure for Rome (Acts 24:27). Still more time elapsed before Timothy left Rome and went to Ephesus to receive these two letters. Other winters had come and gone; why would Paul just now request his cloak and books? Obviously, they had been left at Troas not very long before the second letter came to Timothy, which indicates a fairly recent trip to Troas between *two* imprisonments.
  6. Early writers such as Eusebius, Chrysostom, and Theodoret affirm that Paul was released by Rome [about 62 A.D.] and taken again [67 or 68 A.D.] when he was finally executed.

### THE PLACE:

From several items of internal evidence in the letter, it appears that Second Timothy was written to the young preacher while he was still at Ephesus. Paul had left him there when he had gone into Macedonia (1Tim. 1:3), and Timothy had remained in Ephesus until now, teaching and defending the pure gospel.

### THE TIME:

The date of Paul's execution is generally thought to have been in 67 or 68 A.D. This

letter would have been written shortly before, at a time when Paul said that his departure was “at hand.” James Macknight furnishes this information concerning the calculation of the date of Paul’s death and the writing of Second Timothy:

These particulars [about Paul’s imprisonment--RG], which are all either expressed or insinuated in the apostle’s second epistle to Timothy, shew clearly that it was written not long before the apostle’s death; the time of which may be determined with a good degree of probability by the following circumstances. The Emperor Nero having set fire to the city on the 10th of July, A.D. 64, to remove the odium of that nefarious action, which was generally imputed to him, he endeavored to make the public believe it was perpetrated by the Christians, who at that time were become the objects of the popular hatred on account of their religion. For, as if they had been the incendiaries, he caused them to be sought out, and be put to death in the most barbarous manner. So Tacitus informs us, Annal. lib. xv, c. 44. and Setonius, Ner. c.16. This is what is commonly called the first general persecution of the Christians. Wherefore, as the ancients, with once voice, have reported that the apostle Paul was put to death at Rome by Nero in this persecution, we cannot be much mistaken in supporting that his death happened in the end of the year 66, or in the spring of 67, in the 13th year of Nero’s reign.

**THE IMPRISONMENT:**

We cannot be certain, of course, about the events that led to Paul’s second imprisonment at Rome. Luke’s account of Paul’s activities ends prior to that time. There are many speculations about the interval between the two captivities and also about the apostle’s labors following his release from the first confinement. Macknight concluded that these were the things that brought him to a Roman jail the second time:

...it is only needful in this place to relate, that after the apostle left Timothy at Ephesus, he went into Macedonia to visit the churches there, according to his promise, Philip. ii. 24, then went to Nicopolis in Epirus, with an intention to spend the winter, Tit. iii. 12, and to return to Ephesus in the spring, 1Tim. iii. 14. But having ordered Titus to come to him from Crete to Nicopolis, Tit. iii. 12, on his arrival he gave him such an account on the state of the churches in Crete, as determined him to go with Titus, a second time, into that island. While in Crete, hearing of the cruel persecution which the Emperor Nero was carrying on against the Christians...the apostle speedily finished his business and sailed with Titus to Italy, in the end of the autumn 65, rightly judging, that his presence at Rome would be of great use in strengthening and comforting the persecuted brethren in that city.

Paul, on his arrival at Rome, taking an active part in the affairs of the Christians, soon became obnoxious to the heathen priests, and the idolatrous rabble, who hated the Christians as atheists, because they denied the gods of the empire, and condemned the established worship. Wherefore, being discovered to the magistrates, probably by the unbelieving Jews, as the ringleader of the hated sect, he was apprehended, and closely imprisoned as a malefactor, 2Tim. ii. 9. This happened in the year 65, or in the beginning of 66.

**PURPOSE:**

The principal reason for this letter appears to be Paul’s urgent request for Timothy to

come to him as soon as possible, hopefully “before winter” (2Tim. 4:21). All others, except Luke, had deserted him. Not only would Timothy, his dear son in the faith, be a great comfort to Paul in his distress but also he could be helpful in the “ministry” that the apostle continued to press as opportunity allowed. Mark could also share in that good work at Rome, and Paul requested that Timothy bring him along on his journey (2Tim. 4:11). Knowing that some interval of time would occur before Timothy could arrange to leave his responsibilities at Ephesus, there were a number of things to which the apostle wished to urge Timothy’s attention in the meanwhile. Many of these issues were the same or similar to those for which the young man had been made responsible in the first letter.

**THE SIGNIFICANCE:**

Albert Barnes has some insightful observations about the significance of this second letter and its place of importance in the literature of the Bible:

If the view of the time when this epistle was written...is correct, and if this the last epistle which was written by the Apostle Paul before his martyrdom, then it occupies a very important place in the sacred canon, and is invested with great interest. It may be regarded as the dying counsels of the most eminent of the apostles to one who had just entered on the ministerial life. We should read it with the interest with which we do the last words of the great and the good. Then we feel that every word which they utter has a weight which demands attention. We feel that, whatever a man might do at other times, he will not trifle then. We feel that, having little time to express his wishes, he will select topics that lie nearest his heart, and that he deems most important. There is no more interesting position in which we can be placed, than when we sit down at such a man’s feet, and listen to his parting counsels. To a young minister of the gospel, therefore, this epistle is invaluable; to any and every Christian, it cannot fail to be a matter of interest to listen to the last words of the great apostle of the Gentiles, and to ponder his last written testimony in favour of that religion to the promulgation of which he had devoted his talents and his life.

**THE THEME:**

It is apparent even from a casual reading of this letter that it is highly personal in its tone, revealing the deep love and respect that the older apostle had for the younger preacher. The theme is as personal as the tone. Paul’s brief period of freedom and opportunity that followed his first imprisonment had come to an abrupt end with another confinement in a Roman jail. Many things seemingly are much worse for him now than before. His activities are severely restricted, and nearly all of his companions have left him for one reason or another. His most pressing desire is for the return of Timothy, who could be both a comfort and an encouragement to him in his distress and an assistant who could do things for him that he was not allowed to do for himself. This letter serves as the apostle’s urgent request to the young man to come quickly to Rome. Furthermore, there are still things needing to be done at Ephesus for the spiritual health of the church there, and

there is little time for doing them before Timothy can leave the city to join Paul in Rome. Paul can offer comfort and encouragement that will go far in helping the youth meet his responsibilities in the gospel. This letter will serve as the apostle's last opportunity to guide him in being a "good minister of Jesus Christ" (1Tim. 4:6). In fact, should the empire execute him before Timothy arrives, these will be Paul's very *last words* to Timothy. That possibility lends added significance to what he says in this epistle.

Our study of Second Timothy will give attention to some of the "Famous Last Words" with which Paul tried to help a young preacher to be "ready in season and out of season."

THE OUTLINE:

**"FAMOUS LAST WORDS"**

Chapter One

- I. Greeting-- 1:1,2
- II. Remembering Timothy-- 1:3-5
- III. "Stir up..."-- 1:6,7
- IV. "Share..."-- 1:8-12
  - A. Suffering for gospel-- 1:8,12
  - B. God's purpose-- 1:9-11
- V. "Hold fast..."-- 13-18
  - A. Sound words-- 1:13,14
  - B. With others' help-- 1:15-18

Chapter Two

- I. "Be strong..."-- 2:1,2
  - A "Endure..."-- 2:3-8
  - B. Paul's example of enduring-- 2:9,10
  - C. Basic truths about enduring-- 2:11-13
- II. "Present.."-- 2:15
  - A. "Remind..."-- 2:14
  - B. "Shun and Avoid..."-- 2:16-18; 23,24
  - C. "Depart..."-- 2:19-21
  - D. "Flee.." -- 2:22
  - E. "Correct..."-- 2:25,26

Chapter Three

- I. **“Know...”-- 3:1-9**
  - A. Perilous times-- 3:1-8
  - B. Folly will be manifest-- 3:9
- II. **“Follow...”-- 3:10-17**
  - A. Paul’s example-- 3:10-13
  - B. Paul’s teaching-- 3:14
  - C. Timothy’s early training-- 3:15-17

Chapter Four

- I. **“Preach...”-- 4:1-8**
  - A. The word-- 4:1.2
  - B. Filling a need-- 4:3.4
- II. **“Fulfill...” 4:5**
- III. **“Come...” 4:6-16**
  - A. When-- 4:9, (21)
  - B. Why-- 4:6-8, 10-16
    - 1. Paul’s demise-- 6-8
    - 2. Paul’s isolation-- 10-16
- IV. **“[The Lord] Stood...”-- 4:17,18**
  - A. For “full” preaching-- 4:17a
  - B. For Gentile hearing-- 4:17b
  - C. For future deliverance-- 4:18
- V. **Closing-- 4:19-22**
  - A. Personal remarks-- 4:19-21
  - B. Farewell-- 4:22

All scripture quotations and references in this study, including class questions, are taken from the New King James Version unless otherwise noted.

Chapter One

Verses 1,2-- GREETING

1. In his characteristic greeting, Paul describes himself to Timothy as an apostle of Jesus Christ. Of course, Timothy knew that Paul was an apostle, but perhaps this gentle reminder of his apostolic authority (2Cor. 5:20) would impress Timothy with the *importance* and *urgency* of what he was about to say to him.
2. It was by the will of God that Paul had been commissioned to take the gospel to the Gentiles (Acts 26:17,18), and the prospect of eternal life both for himself (2Tim. 4:8) and for others (John 3:16) depended on his faithfulness to that commission.
3. Paul's relationship with Timothy was *like* that of a father to his son, but perhaps the spiritual bond between the apostle and his "son *in the faith*" (1Tim. 1:2) was even stronger than a physical kinship might have been.
4. No greater blessing could come to the young preacher than to receive the *grace* of God's providence to supply his needs, the *mercy* of God's forgiveness should he fall into waywardness, and the *peace* of God to comfort his heart in whatever circumstances he might find himself as he worked in the kingdom of Christ.

Verses 3-5-- REMEMBERING TIMOTHY

1. In addition to his apostolic inspiration, Paul's unchanging personal truthfulness and sincerity were good reasons for Timothy to trust whatever instructions this letter might contain. He knew that Paul without exception had always followed the dictates of a "pure conscience" and had tried to serve the Lord both under the Law and under the gospel (Acts 23:1).
2. True religious dedication had always enjoyed a strong presence in Paul's physical family. Even though we know nothing specific about these "forefathers" who had served God with a pure conscience, we have to be impressed with the men and women who were responsible for Paul's Jewish credentials: "circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of the Hebrews; concerning the law a Pharisee..." (Phil. 3:5).
3. Paul's prayers for Timothy were flavored by various remembrances he retained of his young friend. He remembered that Timothy had shed tears, perhaps at their last parting or maybe when news had come to the youth about the conditions of the old man's imprisonment. He also remembered how much he wanted to see his "son in the faith" again and how desperately he wished to try to comfort him about his concerns. That would bring joy to both of them.
4. Most of all, Paul remembered the genuine ["unfeigned"--ASV] faith that Timothy had



exhibited when the two had worked together for the Lord. This faith evidently had been formed and nurtured in the young man's heart by his mother and grandmother, but the details of the process are unrevealed.

5. We know that Paul first preached the gospel in Lystra about 46-47 A.D. on his initial missionary journey (Acts 14:6ff.). It is likely that both Lois and Eunice obeyed at that time or soon thereafter. Three to four years passed before Paul returned to Lystra about 50 A.D. Timothy was by then a well-regarded and promising young Christian (Acts 16:1ff.), having been led to obedience by his believing relatives and other interested persons.

#### Verses 6,7-- "STIR UP..."

1. The first of the "famous last words" from Paul were "stir up your gift!" This gift is thought to be either (a) a spiritual gift to assist in his teaching; (b) a natural gift [ability] for teaching and preaching; or (c) an opportunity extended by the elders and/or Paul for teaching in the church at Ephesus and in other places.
2. This could not have been only a natural gift, for it came to Timothy by the imposition of hands, upon which a natural aptitude for teaching would not have depended. It is possible that the "gift" conferred on him by the hands of the "presbytery" was nothing more than an opportunity to teach (1Tim. 4:14). However, most translations state that this gift was "in" him, as was the gift given by Paul's hands (2Tim. 1:6), suggesting that both passages refer to the same gift and that it was an inspired gift. While it is true that hands commonly were laid on persons to install them into offices or to confer special responsibilities or privileges to them [e.g., Acts 13:3], it is also true that the hands of the apostles were used to convey special miraculous powers to others [e.g., Acts 8:17; 19:6]. Paul's hands probably gave Timothy a Spirit-controlled power [gift] to "preach the word" (2Tim. 4:2). That was the "gift" that was "in" him when the presbytery laid their hands on him to assign him the duties of teaching and preaching the gospel at Ephesus.
2. Some believe that Paul was one of the presbytery [eldership] who had laid hands on Timothy. They contend that 1Tim. 4:14 and 2Tim. 1:6 refer to the same gift whose giving was shared by Paul with the "other" elders. However, the apostle's own list of qualifications for the eldership [a wife and believing children (1Tim. 3:2,3; Tit. 1:6)] would make him ineligible for that office.
3. It is most likely that there was only *one* miraculous "gift" given to the young man by Paul, and in concert with that gift, another "gift" [offer] from the presbytery allowed him to teach and defend the gospel of Christ in the Ephesian congregation. Receiving these gifts would place a heavy burden on Timothy to perform his duties well.
4. Even a spiritual gift from an apostle could require a "stirring up" under certain circumstances. "Stir up" is from *anazopureo*, "to kindle afresh, to keep in full flame," as one would do with a fire. Spirit-given gifts were exercised under the control of their possessors (1Cor. 14:32). Such power might not be used to its fullest potential should

its recipient for some reason become negligent of his duty. Then, the gift would need “stirring up” to accomplish its greatest good.

5. We cannot know whether Timothy’s gift had actually fallen into some disuse. The great confidence that Paul everywhere expresses about his dedication to the truth would seem to discount that possibility. However, the religious climate in Ephesus would likely make it very difficult for Timothy’s faith and zeal to survive in the days ahead should the false teachers accelerate their pernicious attacks on the young and inexperienced preacher and on the truth for which he stood. His “gift” and his enthusiasm to use it must be “kept in full flame” if he were to be successful.
6. Timothy’s weapons of truth were far more powerful than the weapons of error employed by his adversaries in Ephesus. Paul asserted their strength, “For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ...” (2Cor. 10:4,5).
7. Timothy’s arsenal included not only the invincible truth that he taught (Heb. 4:12) but also the compelling persuasiveness of the special “gift” he had been given to deliver and to defend that truth (Heb. 2:4). Why should he be afraid of error and its advocates? Why should he fear coming to Paul’s assistance in Rome? God intends that His soldiers march with boldness and confidence against the forces of Satan (1Tim. 6:12). Warriors whose hearts are filled with the power of God made available to them in the gospel (Rom. 1:16), whose love for God and His truth far outweighs any other emotion in their hearts, and whose dedication to God enables them to handle every confrontation with error with the reasonableness and courtesy of a sound mind have “nothing to fear but fear itself” [Franklin Delano Roosevelt].

Verses 8-12-- “SHARE...”

1. Another of Paul’s last words to Timothy was “Share.” The concept of *sharing* things both good and bad has been prominent in the mindset of God’s people since the establishment of the church:
  - a. “Bear one another’s burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ” (Gal. 6:2);
  - b. “...or if one member is honored, all the members rejoice with it...” (1Cor. 12:26);
  - c. “Now all who believed were together, and had all things in common...” (Acts 2:44).
2. Persecution in some form and at some level is inevitable for every faithful Christian (2Tim. 3:12). Yet, few look at trouble with anticipation, and few rush into it when it can be avoided altogether. Considering our own attitudes toward suffering, a positive response by Timothy to Paul’s invitation would speak volumes about the young man’s character and commitment. Paul was presently suffering grievously in his captivity. He was in a Roman cell only because he had preached the gospel openly and unashamedly. And now, he has urged Timothy to come to Rome where he will likely face his

own imprisonment if he ministers to the apostle's needs and if he continues to take every opportunity in Rome to bring souls to the Savior by teaching and doing the very same things that had cost Paul his freedom.

3. Paul's request led to a choice for Timothy that would have been very difficult for some to make. If he should decline to answer Paul's plea and remain at Ephesus, it would expose to the apostle and to the world that his faith had been overcome by his "shame" [*epaischunomai*-- "to have a feeling of fear or shame which prevents a person from doing a thing"] of Paul and his gospel. But "perfect love casts out fear" (1John 4:18), and Paul was confident that Timothy would ignore any nagging fear [shame] of suffering because he loved the apostle and his gospel so much.
4. Paul's needs and the needs of the gospel in Rome must have been great and urgent to move him to call Timothy to share in the certain dangers that attended preaching the gospel in the pagan capital. But if the apostle had any misgivings about sending for the young evangelist, one fact was enough to convince him that it was the right thing to do: both he and Timothy would suffer for the gospel "according to the power of God." To Paul, that meant that prison was not a destination; it was only a station on the way to heaven. He knew that God would "*deliver*" them from "every evil work" and "*preserve*" them "for His heavenly kingdom" (2Tim. 4:18). Any sacrifice made by Timothy, including his physical life, was insignificant when compared with the "glory" that follows total dedication to Jesus (Rom. 8:18). The power of God would rescue both "father" and "son" from danger in one way or another!
5. The power of God had successfully orchestrated the "big picture" of redemption until now, and whatever might happen to them would only be a small part of His grand plan. God first had saved them and then had called them with a "heavenly calling" to perform special work for Him, not because they were personally superior to others, but because both were willing to be used as tools in executing His plan to save the lost. Together, the two preachers could share in God's *great purpose* of the ages.
6. The working out of God's eternal plan was well under way. He had already sent Jesus into the world, and Jesus had died on the cross to destroy the power of death over mankind. Moreover, God had revealed through the gospel how a lost world could attain to eternal life and immortality through obedience to His will. Finally, the last "piece of the puzzle" was also now in place. Apostles like Paul and disciples like Timothy had been sent into all the world to preach the details of God's plan to save all nations, and both Gentiles and Jews could now share in its precious promises.
7. Good things come at a price. The cost of preaching salvation was suffering at the hands of those who felt threatened by the "good news" of a spiritual King who wanted them to become citizens in His kingdom. Paul recognized that he was among the number chosen to pay that cost. Nevertheless, all the fear and shame usually attached to suffering was lost in his persuasion that the *same* power that had brought God's plan to this point would also "keep" him and his work totally secure within the heavenly purpose.

## Verses 13-18-- “HOLD FAST...”

1. A third instruction was to “hold fast.” Paul challenged the Thessalonians to “test all things; *hold fast* what is good” (1Thes. 5:21). He was convinced that investigation would prove a number of things to be “good” and worthy to be “held fast” by the brethren:
  - a. The “traditions” [*paradosis*-- “a handing down or on”] taught by Paul and other inspired teachers of the gospel (2Thes. 2:15);
  - b. The confidence and rejoicing of our hope (Heb. 3:6);
  - c. Our confession [profession] (Heb. 4:14; 10:23).
2. The pattern of sound words was also important enough to the salvation of the disciples that a preacher should “hold it fast.” The words delivered to the Ephesians when Paul first proclaimed the gospel in their city were intended as a “pattern” for whatever teaching might be done thereafter. “Pattern” is translated as “form” in some versions. Berry’s Greek New Testament has “delineation” [lit., “to draw a line”], i.e., “a sketch or description in words” [Webster]. The original word is *hupotuposis*, “an outline, sketch” [Vine]. All such terms strongly suggest that the integrity of the gospel exists not only in the thoughts conveyed by the apostles but also in the words employed to transmit them. Evidently, that was what Paul intended when he said to the Corinthians, “These things we also speak, not in *words* which man’s wisdom teaches but which the Holy Spirit teaches, comparing [combining-- ASV] spiritual things with spiritual [*words*-- ASV]” (1Cor. 2:13).
3. Kenneth Wuest [Word Studies in the Greek New Testament] makes these comments on the significance of the “pattern” of teaching to be retained by Timothy:
 

“Form” is *hupotuposis*. The verb is *hupotupoo*, “to sketch, outline.” The noun *tupos* means “a blow”; it was used of the beat of horses’ hoofs; it meant the impression left by a seal, the effect of a blow or pressure, an engraved mark, a pattern, a model. The word thus speaks of a pattern by which one can maintain the sameness of a thing. Paul exhorts Timothy to hold fast the pattern of sound words committed to him. That is, he is to hold to the doctrinal phraseology he received from the great apostle. Particular words are to be retained and used so that the doctrinal statements of the truth may remain accurate and a norm for future teachers and preachers. This is vitally connected with the doctrine of verbal inspiration which holds that the Bible writers wrote down in God-chosen words, the truth given by revelation.
4. Paul, in his first letter, encouraged Timothy to oppose certain men who were teaching “another doctrine” in Ephesus (1Tim. 1:3). This charge to “hold fast” to a “pattern” of sound words furnishes Timothy with a means by which to express his opposition to any “other doctrine.” His preaching must in every way conform to what Paul had taught prior to his leaving Ephesus to go into Macedonia.
5. Paul’s words were “sound” because they were true. “Sound” [*hugiano*-- “to be healthy, sound in health”] words are true because God cannot lie (Tit. 1:2). Of our bodies it can be said, “you are what you eat.” Spiritually, the same principle applies. When weak disciples feed on the *sound* words of Scripture, they will grow in strength

and spiritual health. Conversely, feeding on the *unsound* words of human opinion will leave one spiritually malnourished and underdeveloped.

6. A diet of sound words was prescribed for the growing Christian not only by inspired apostles but also by Jesus Himself:
  - a. “And you shall know the *truth*, and the *truth* shall make you free” (John 8:32);
  - b. “Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God” (Matt. 4:4);
  - c. “... blessed are those who hear the word of God and keep it” (Luke 11:28);
  - d. “He who is of God hears God’s words...” (John 8:47).
7. It is in faith that the disciple searches out and obeys the *sound words* of the gospel. The love he has for Christ and for the truth will allow him to do no less.
8. In verse 12, Paul had declared that he had “committed” his whole self to Christ. In return, the Lord would “keep” [*phulassi*-- “to guard, watch, keep watch”] him secure until the judgment. Here, in verse 14, he reverses his thought: the teacher of the gospel must “keep” [*phulasson*] what had been “committed” to him, i.e., the sound words of revelation.
9. A “gift” dwelled in the young preacher Timothy (1:6) and in Paul [“us”]. It was no doubt in the form of a spiritual power by which their ability to teach others was greatly enhanced. It had been distributed to Timothy and others by the Holy Spirit (1Cor. 12:11). Stirring up [exercising] this gift would relieve Timothy of trying to find the right words with which to teach his lessons, and it would assure that the words given to him by the Holy Spirit were the sound words that heaven would approve.
10. There is strength in numbers (Eccl. 4:9-12). It is sometimes easier to persevere in a commitment if it is shared with others than it is to stand alone in that commitment. Hopefully, Timothy would have other disciples in Ephesus who would encourage him when he taught and defended sound doctrine. But Paul had not always enjoyed that luxury. In fact, even now he must report sadly that “all those of Asia” [where Ephesus was located] had turned from him and from the gospel. This surely refers to disciples from Asia who had been with Paul in Rome, not the entire Christian population of that region. It may be that many of them were known personally to Timothy.
11. Two defectors, for some unexplained reason, are singled out. We know nothing more about Phygellus and Hermogenes than what is said here. Albert Barnes observes:
 

It is a sad thing when the *only* record made of a man-- the only evidence we have that he lived at all-- is, that he turned away from a friend, or forsook the paths of true religion. And yet, there are many men of whom the only thing to be remembered of them is, that they lived to do wrong.
12. On the other hand, “holding fast” to sound doctrine in spite of persecution had been made easier for Paul by demonstrations of faith by other disciples. Among them was Onesiphorus, a Christian formerly of Ephesus who had come to Rome [See vs. 18].

**This courageous saint is forever blessed as a disciple who “visited” Jesus in prison in the person of Paul (Matt. 25:36-40). Paul’s tribute to this man’s faith is impressive.**

- a. Upon his arrival in Rome, he had expended much time and effort to locate Paul. Evidently, information about Roman prisoners and their prisons was not readily available, but Onesiphorus was *very* diligent in seeking the apostle until he *found* him.**
  - b. He was not ashamed [afraid] that his own safety might be endangered by his association with a Roman prisoner who was being kept in chains. His behavior in this regard was held up to Timothy and others as an example worthy of imitation (1:8).**
  - c. He had *often* refreshed Paul. His interest in the apostle was not superficial, and his determination to help him was not short-lived. Repeatedly, as often as the opportunity presented itself, he had done what he could to ease the problems faced by Paul.**
  - d. Years before, he had served Paul in “many ways” when Paul was in Ephesus. Now, his renewed efforts to help were strong evidence of his appreciation of Paul and of the importance of the work he was doing among the Gentiles.**
- 13. The house of Onesiphorus is mentioned in Paul’s closing remarks in this letter (4:19).**
- 14. If the apostle’s prayer was answered, Onesiphorus would be well compensated for trying to help Paul “hold fast” to the gospel. What blessing could be as precious for this good man as knowing that the mercy of the Lord would cover his sins in the Day of judgment? Yet, we too can share in that prayer and in God’s mercy if we, like Onesiphorus, demonstrate our faith in loyal service to our Lord!**

1. How does Paul describe his relationship to Timothy, (a) in verse two; (b) in 1Tim.1:2?  
a. \_\_\_\_\_ b. \_\_\_\_\_
2. Paul and his \_\_\_\_\_ served God with a \_\_\_\_\_.
3. Timothy's \_\_\_\_\_ had first dwelt in \_\_\_\_\_, his \_\_\_\_\_, and in \_\_\_\_\_, his \_\_\_\_\_.
4. Timothy had a \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_ which he received when \_\_\_\_\_ laid his \_\_\_\_\_ on him.
5. Preaching should not be done in \_\_\_\_\_ but with a spirit of \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ and using a \_\_\_\_\_.
6. Timothy must not be ashamed of what two things?  
a. \_\_\_\_\_ b. \_\_\_\_\_
7. Christ's \_\_\_\_\_ has abolished \_\_\_\_\_ and brought \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ to light through the \_\_\_\_\_.
8. Paul was appointed a \_\_\_\_\_, an \_\_\_\_\_, and a \_\_\_\_\_ of the \_\_\_\_\_.
9. Paul was not ashamed of his \_\_\_\_\_ and knew that God would \_\_\_\_\_ what he had \_\_\_\_\_ to Him until the Day of \_\_\_\_\_.
10. Teachers must “\_\_\_\_\_” the \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_ that the apostles preached.
11. Inspired teachers had the \_\_\_\_\_ to help them “keep” the \_\_\_\_\_ that was \_\_\_\_\_ to them.
12. Two disloyal disciples, \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_, had deserted Paul, but \_\_\_\_\_ had assisted Paul \_\_\_\_\_.
13. This disciple previously had helped Paul in \_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_.
14. Paul asked \_\_\_\_\_ for him in \_\_\_\_\_.

Chapter Two

This chapter contains more of Paul's "Famous Last Words" to his young friend.

Verses 1,2-- "BE STRONG..."

1. Timothy would face numerous challenges from the false teachers at Ephesus that would test both his personal faith and the doctrine he was teaching. When he came to Rome, even greater confrontations with the forces of Satan awaited him. There was only *one* defense available to him by which he could continue to be a valuable tool in the hands of God... "BE STRONG!" God's strength always prevails against the strongest of the devil's devices (2Cor. 2:11).
2. The Lord's grace motivates the Christian to be strong. We can always be sure that:
  - a. He will never leave us to fight our battles alone (Heb. 13:5);
  - b. He will help us fight, regardless of who or what our foe may be (Heb. 13:6);
  - c. He will provide whatever measure of strength is necessary for victory (Phil. 4:13);
  - d. He has power to "keep" us secure as long as the struggle continues (2Tim. 1:12);
  - e. He assures a favorable outcome to *every* trial of our faith (2Tim. 4:17).
3. Spiritual strength is developed as we "exercise" ourselves toward a lifestyle characterized by godliness (1Tim. 4:7,8). "Godliness" [*eusebeia*-- "to be (well) devout"] is piety, which is a Godward attitude; respect; devotion. Godliness impels one to *do* whatever pleases God. Spiritual strength is measured by the degree of godliness to which we have attained. Only the "godly" are strongly enough *planted* to withstand the forces that assail our faith (Psa. 1:3,4).
4. Both godliness and strength result from a close contact with the word of God (Acts 20:32):
  - a. We must accept the Bible as the word of God before it can "work in us" to make us strong (1Thes. 2:13);
  - b. We must love its truths enough to seek them out through serious study and meditation (Eph. 5:17);
  - c. We must reverence its authority and embrace as essential whatever it says (John 12:48,49);
  - d. We must take action in doing whatever it commands (Matt. 7:21).
5. It was the "things that you have heard from me [Paul]" that would make Timothy strong enough to meet his foes. Those same truths would also enable other good and faithful men to stand shoulder to shoulder as they defended sound doctrine against evil men who wanted to teach something else (1Tim. 1:3). This would be extremely important when the time came for Timothy to leave Ephesus and join Paul in Rome. Then, the prime responsibility for maintaining purity in teaching and practice in



Ephesus would pass to someone else.

6. No convert was ever promised that the Christian life would be easy. Rather, as the apostle exhorted new believers, “We must through many tribulations enter the kingdom of God” (Acts 14:22). Unless weak Christians become strong, they will definitely meet with defeat in their warfare against Satan.

**Verses 3-8-- “ENDURE HARDSHIP...”**

1. Several things would demonstrate that Timothy had the strength he would need to overcome the obstacles his adversaries would lay before him. These matters must receive his immediate attention.
2. The *first* thing necessary to spiritual strength was the determination to “endure hardship.” Paul had no doubt that difficult circumstances lay ahead for the young preacher. He knew that since “all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution,” certainly a gospel preacher who took an active role in opposing false brethren who taught “another doctrine” would not escape their wrath and retribution.
3. Hardships *would* come; *how* Timothy faced them would either strengthen or destroy his usefulness as a minister of the gospel in Ephesus, depending on whether he raised staunch resistance to the forces of evil or gave way to the enemy’s attacks and deserted his post of duty. Endurance [“continuing under pain or hardship without being overcome”--Webster] was the key to victory in his righteous battle.
4. Paul was very familiar with the hardships that faithful evangelists in the first century were likely to encounter. He had endured almost every imaginable obstacle without wavering from the singleness of his purpose to serve Christ as well as he could. [See his list of the sufferings he experienced as an apostle-- 2Cor. 11:23-28.]
5. Vine observes that in the best manuscripts “endure” is *sunkakopathee*-- “to suffer hardship with.” Thayer adds that this word was often employed to describe hardships borne by military personnel, which is exactly the connotation Paul gives it in this passage. The Roman army had a pervasive presence throughout the breadth of the empire. Everyone had some knowledge of the experiences, good and bad, that accompanied the lives of soldiers. They understood that a “good” soldier would never abandon his responsibility, no matter the consequences to himself of standing firm.
6. Neither would a “good” soldier allow outside commitments to distract him from the dedication he had pledged to his military service. In Rules of War Among the Romans, Grotius, the Dutch theologian, observes that:

Roman soldiers were not allowed to marry, or to engage in any husbandry or trade; and they were forbidden to act as tutors to any person, or curators to any man’s estate, or proctors in the cause of other men. The general principle was, that they were excluded from those relations, agencies, and engagements, which it was thought would divert their minds from that which was to be the sole object of pursuit.

Army life must be endured, regardless of how attractive other pursuits might be.

The soldier's top priority was to please his superiors, not himself. His military career depended on his always doing that.

7. Another familiar example of the importance of "enduring" hardship was seen in the training exercises of athletes who competed in the early Olympic games. The preparations were extremely rigorous. Much sacrifice and great exertion were required before a man was accepted as a competitor. The "rules" of the training period were as demanding as those governing the actual competition. Sometimes, the athlete would be strongly tempted to give up his vision of winning the laurel crown because of the harshness of the training. But he must endure.
8. Farming was still another common activity that illustrated the necessity of enduring hardship to be successful. None would question the fact that the farmer could expect to enjoy the fruits of his labor only after he had endured his struggles with the forces of nature. Drought, flood, or infestation by insects could quickly bring him to financial ruin unless he endured such things and worked hard to succeed in spite of adverse conditions.
9. These lessons should not be lost on a young preacher who would need to "ENDURE" obstacles far more daunting than those experienced by any of those included in Paul's illustrations.
10. There was *one more* example of enduring that Timothy should remember. The last and *greatest* example of faithful endurance of suffering and hardship was, of course, Jesus Christ. He had endured trials far greater than any that Timothy would encounter. The writer of Hebrews documented the Lord's endurance:
  - a. He endured the cross, despising the shame that attended such a death (Heb. 12:2);
  - b. He endured violent hostility against Himself from men He sought to bless (vs.3);
  - c. Paul's gospel proclaimed that Jesus' crown followed His cross. The *glory* of resurrection could occur only after the *humiliation* of crucifixion (Heb. 12:2).

#### Verses 9, 10-- PAUL'S EXAMPLE OF ENDURING

1. Personal examples are always effective in teaching a lesson because they move the discussion from theory to practice. Paul could testify from his own experiences that endurance during unfavorable times was possible for *others* because he had demonstrated in his Roman imprisonment that it was possible for *him*.
2. Paul had undergone innumerable tribulations for the cause of Christ. In many ways, his present bondage in a Roman jail was the worst, mainly because he had little if any hope of relief. Execution and death loomed on the near horizon (2Tim. 4:6). Additionally, conditions in his captive quarters were extremely unkind. Barnes gives a brief description of the Mamertine prisons where it is thought Paul was kept:

The Mamertine prisons are of great antiquity. According to Livy, they were constructed by Ancus Martius, and enlarged by Servius Tullius. The lower prison is supposed to have been once a quarry, and to have been at one time occupied as a granary. These prisons are on the descent of the Capitoline Mount, towards the Forum. They consist of two apartments,

one over the other, built with large uncemented stones. There is no entrance to either, except by a small aperture in the roof, and by a small hole in the upper floor, leading to the cell below, without any staircase to either. The upper prison is twenty-seven feet long, by twenty wide; the lower one is elliptical, and measures twenty feet by ten. In the lower one is a small spring... Dr. Burton says that a more horrible place for the confinement of a human being can scarcely be conceived.

3. It is apparent from Paul's references to this captivity that it was much more unpleasant than the first.
  - a. In the first, Paul's innocence of any crime against the government was widely admitted (Acts 26:31,32). It became evident during that confinement that his chains were "in Christ," i.e., because of his religious activities and not because of some wrongdoing on his part (Phil. 1:13). The second imprisonment involved charges against him as an "evildoer," charges serious enough to warrant "chains."
  - b. Paul was allowed to live in his own hired dwelling in the first jailing. At first, he had only one guard to restrict his activities (Acts 28:16) and later on may have only been under "house arrest" (Acts 28:30). But now it appears that he is more closely "chained," and he is allowed far fewer personal choices. He speaks of enduring "all things," indicating the severity of his existence as a prisoner.
  - c. The first captivity resulted in a significant spreading of the gospel message in Rome. The apostle was permitted to "receive all who came to him," and he personally preached the gospel "with all confidence" and no one interfered with his efforts (Acts 28:30,31). But at the present, although the word of God was not "chained," the impression is given that perhaps other men such as Onesiphorus (1:16) and Luke (4:11) did whatever preaching was done.
  - d. Paul's days seemingly were filled with visits from numerous people who sought him out during his first confinement (Acts 28:17, 30). His bonds did not discourage his brethren from freely associating with him (Phil. 1:14). How different it was now; at his first defense [hearing] everyone but Luke forsook him, and he stood alone, except for the Lord (4:16).
4. Paul was willing to suffer for the sake of his "elect" brethren if his experience could be an inspiration for them to endure their own tribulations. Endurance was as essential for *their* salvation (Matt. 10:22) as it was for *his* (4:7,8).

#### Verses 11-13-- BASIC TRUTHS ABOUT ENDURING

1. A "faithful saying" seems to be Paul's own collection of spiritual maxims derived from several faithful [true] principles found in the Scriptures. All of them stress the fact that enduring temporal hardships will result in enjoying eternal pleasures:
  - a. "For if we died with Him, we shall also live with Him." This truth Paul included in his discussion of dying to sin and living to God in Romans 6:8;
  - b. "If we endure, we shall also reign with Him" repeats positively what Jesus had stated negatively, "No one, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is

- fit for the kingdom of God” (Luke 9:62);
- c. “If we deny Him, He will also deny us,” was also first declared by the Lord: “But whoever denies Me before men, him will I also deny before my Father who is in heaven” (Matt. 10:33);
  - d. “If we are faithless, He remains faithful; He cannot deny Himself” are two truths that appear in Heb. 3:5,6 and Tit. 1:2. The first reference asserts that Israel was denied entrance into Caanan after rebelling against God’s warnings about disobedience. The second affirms that God cannot lie [deny Himself] by ignoring anything He has said previously.
2. All of these passages are intended to stress that the Lord demands faithfulness to our commitments. *IF* we are obedient and comply with the terms of our covenant with Him, He will do for us everything He has promised. However, *IF* we default in our responsibilities, He will have no obligation to keep any pledge that He has made.
  3. Timothy and other disciples at Ephesus must remember these two basic characteristics of God, as Paul explained them to the Roman Christians: “Therefore consider the goodness and severity of God: on those who fell, severity; but toward you, goodness, if you continue in His goodness. Otherwise you also will be cut off” (Rom. 11:22). It was essential that they endure their troubles regardless of the cost of loyalty to Christ.

Verse 15-- “PRESENT YOURSELF APPROVED UNTO GOD...”

1. Timothy must remember as he tries to comply with Paul’s instruction to work hard as a good minister of the gospel in Ephesus that it is not only the apostle who is anxiously watching what he does. God is also “inspecting” his activities, and He above all others must be pleased with what He sees.
2. As a workman, Timothy’s accomplishments must be approved by God when he “presents himself” for inspection. “Present” is from *paristemi*, “to place beside.” The figure is one of a craftsman placing his own work beside the standard used by the inspector to judge its acceptability. When thus compared, the worker’s efforts must be approved by the inspector so that the worker will not be embarrassed by falling below the expectations of the one examining his work.
3. The entirety of Timothy’s labors at Ephesus will please the Lord only if the young preacher is careful to “rightly divide” [“handle aright”--ASV] the word of truth. “Dividing” probably means applying [dispensing] the gospel in a manner appropriate to the needs and circumstances of each case he would deal with in solving the varying problems that would arise in his ministry at Ephesus. The quality of Timothy’s ministry would be measured by how effectively he used the truth in keeping the spiritual atmosphere at Ephesus pure from the errors that could pollute it.

**Verse 14-- “REMIND THEM OF THESE THINGS...”**

1. There were some at Ephesus who needed to be reminded about “these things,” evidently meaning the basic truths about faithfulness just discussed by Paul. These brethren were embroiled in controversies and strife about “*words*.” We are not informed about what kinds of words these were, but we know that the Scripture speaks often about words and their significance.
  - a. Some words are conducive to spiritual health. For example:
    - (1) “Words by which you...will be saved” (Acts 11:14);
    - (2) Words which “exhort” and “strengthen” the brethren (Acts 15:32);
    - (3) “Words of truth and reason” (Acts 26:25);
    - (4) Words which the Holy Spirit teaches (1Cor. 2:13);
    - (5) “Words of faith and of the good doctrine” (1Tim. 4:6);
    - (6) “Wholesome words...of our Lord Jesus Christ” (1Tim. 6:3);
    - (7) Sound words (2Tim. 1:13).
  - b. Some words are destructive to the spiritual welfare of God’s people, such as:
    - (1) Persuasive [enticing] words (1Cor. 2:4);
    - (2) Empty [vain] words (Eph. 5:6);
    - (3) Flattering words (1Thes. 2:5);
    - (4) Deceptive [feigned] words (2Pet. 2:3);
    - (5) Great swelling words of emptiness [vanity] (2Pet. 2:18);
    - (6) Malicious words (3John 10).
2. Whatever the nature of the offending words, they were of “no profit” to anyone. They were entirely different from the words just used by Paul to affirm the promises of the Lord about dying and living, enduring and reigning. Moreover, these useless words were not just wasting the time and energy of brethren; they were “ruining” hearers.
  - a. They were words that likely conveyed some form of false doctrine.
  - b. They were words that probably tended to obscure the truths of the gospel by twisting and misapplying the words by which those truths were delivered.
  - c. They were words that possibly diminished the importance of inspired words by contesting the wisdom of God they contained with human wisdom and reason.
  - d. They were words that might have dealt with matters having no relation to the religion of Jesus Christ, such as genealogies and extraneous histories.
3. Although many people suppose that only broad principles and concepts are germane to discovering the will of God, and that words only get in the way of finding real truth, Paul was of a different persuasion. He did not “*suggest*” that the guilty parties not strive about these ruinous words; he “*charged*” [*diamarturomai*-- “testify through and through”] Timothy to assure that their hurtful misuse of words would be stopped.
4. Timothy would “present himself approved to God” only when he had “rightly divided” [delivered] the Scriptural prohibitions about harmful words to those who were involved in religious issues outside the gospel.

Verses 16-18,23,24-- “SHUN AND AVOID...”

1. Useless involvement in “words” that had no bearing on serving God faithfully and trying to get to heaven apparently occupied a considerable amount of time and energy for some of the members at Ephesus. Not once but *three* times in this one chapter, the apostle dealt with that issue.
2. His initial discussion was directed at the mistakes of Christians other than Timothy. He told the young preacher to put an end to what others were doing. “Charge them...” was his command.
3. Now, however, the apostle turns his attention to warning Timothy about the pitfalls that accompany the “word games” that some of the members were playing. “Shun profane and vain babblings...” “But avoid foolish and ignorant disputes...” A good minister could not afford to get caught up in these exercises that had no useful purpose. Yet, there would be a strong temptation for Timothy to do so, naively supposing that they were harmless pastimes.
4. The “profane” [*bebelos*-- “that which lacks all relationship or affinity to God”] and vain “babblings” [*kenophonia*-- “empty sound”] might begin with relatively harmless discussions and debates. Their threat to the spirituality of the disciples was that they would likely degenerate into discussions that impinged on the truthful convictions and commitments of faithful saints. They often led into harsh controversy and wounded feelings among the disputants. In many ways, they could “increase to more ungodliness” in the hearts of vulnerable church members and could spread without alarm within individuals and among the church collectively in much the same way that a cancer invades large portions of a human body.
5. An inexperienced minister like Timothy could easily lose his focus on important issues and begin to divert his attention to things that could be of no assistance to anyone in their efforts to be saved.
6. Two disciples, Hymenaeus and Philetus, among others, had already gone far astray in their participation in “profane and vain babblings.” Hymenaeus is also named in 1Tim. 1:20 in company with one Alexander. We know nothing more about Philetus. Apparently, these two had once been sound and faithful brethren, but they had “strayed from the truth” gradually into doctrinal positions that clearly were wrong.
7. In particular, these defectors were holding that the resurrection was “already past.” They were actively promoting this idea and were “overthrowing the faith” of others. It seems unlikely that they were contending that the final resurrection of physical bodies had already occurred, for common observation would disallow that. It is more likely that they were teaching that the only resurrection promised was the spiritual raising of the “new man” when converts are baptized for the remission of their sins. [See Romans 6:3-8.] New life infused into old physical bodies was just a fantasy.

8. “Foolish and ignorant disputes” can occupy the minds of men who fail to grasp the “big picture” of God’s plan of redemption. There are numerous questions that can be asked about matters that are intriguing to inquiring minds, but which have no bearing on salvation or the Christian life. Study and thought can be completely wasted in the hopeless pursuit of answers to these questions. But even if some reasonable resolution is reached in these deliberations, what does it really matter? It is said that “scholars” in the Middle Ages debated hotly on the question of how many angels could dance on the head of a pin! It would be easy for a young preacher to become entangled in issues almost as foolish, so Timothy should avoid all such things and engage himself instead in the “pattern of sound words” which he had received from Paul (2Tim. 1:13).
9. Not only were these disputes dangerous because they were wasteful of a Christian’s attention but also they often embroiled participants in strife and quarreling among themselves. That outcome would lead the Lord’s servants [preachers included] into another and more condemning level of sin.

Verses 19-21-- “DEPART FROM INIQUITY...”

1. “Nevertheless” in verse nineteen looks back at the basic truths about obedience/reward and disobedience/punishment (verses 11-13) and at the sins of those who, in spite of God’s blessings, had strayed from sound doctrine into the errors of “profane and vain babblings” (verses 14-18).
2. Paul particularly has verse thirteen in view. Our *faithlessness* in no way affects God’s *faithfulness*! Salvation is a covenant between two parties, God and man. Each party makes a commitment to the other on the basis of specified terms. God promises, “I will bless the man who obeys My commandments.” In turn, the man declares, “I will expect God to bless me if I keep His commandments.” If either breaks the agreement, the other is relieved of any obligation to perform. Of course, God will *always* remain *faithful* because He *cannot do otherwise*. But with man it is different.
3. God’s foundational truths and promises are solid and will stand. His promises are sealed [guaranteed] by His essential nature of trustworthiness. He will never forget that the obedient are His children, and they *will* be saved.
4. The Lord’s integrity also demands that salvation is given only to the obedient who “depart from iniquity.” Not one exception can be made, because obedience by sinners is an unchangeable term in the covenant of salvation. The foundation of God stands!
5. Defections from the faith can be discouraging to faithful disciples. A young and less experienced preacher could be especially vulnerable to this discouragement. Paul’s advice to Timothy is simple: all you can do to prevent some from leaving the faith is to teach them that God insists that all who seek salvation must “depart from iniquity” and warn them that His wrath will destroy those who refuse to comply.
6. Paul observes that in any “great house” [the church-- 1Tim. 3:15] there will be some

who are “vessels of gold and silver” [who glorify God by their steadfastness] and there will be others who are “vessels of wood and clay” [who dishonor God by apostasy]. Jesus once declared that the kingdom is like a dragnet which gathers in fish of every kind (Matt. 13:47).

7. Paul also used the figure of two kinds of vessels in Romans 9:21ff. However, there the lesson was that each vessel is used arbitrarily by the potter to suit his purposes, and the choice is made apart from any strength or weakness existing in the clay from which each is formed. Here, the lesson is that the vessels were different because there *was* either virtue or vice in them that determined their usefulness to the Lord.
8. Timothy’s task was to try to *change* vessels of dishonor into those of honor by persuading them to “depart from iniquity.” Those who would cleanse themselves from sin could become vessels set apart and useful in good works for the Master. This concept, incidentally, definitely proves that no man has been unchangeably predestined to hell without any opportunity to choose otherwise.

**Verse 22-- “FLEE ALSO YOUTHFUL LUSTS...”**

1. Timothy was a vessel appointed for useful service in the kingdom of Christ. Nevertheless, such a vessel could easily destroy his usefulness to serve God just as a bad vessel could cleanse himself and become a good servant. The young man must be very careful that he did not allow this to happen to him.
2. There are some “lusts” that are more attractive, and therefore more dangerous, to a youth than to an older disciple. Timothy must identify those temptations that were likely to become stumblingbocks to his faithfulness and take special care that these were handled with extra caution. He might have to work particularly hard to resist the pull of these “youthful lusts.”
3. One effective means of fleeing from hurtful practices was to pursue activities that promote spiritual health and strength. Faith, love, and peace should determine the things that made up Timothy’s daily life. He would have to make his personal list of what to flee and what to pursue as he sought to “call on the Lord out of a pure heart.”

**Verses 25,26-- “CORRECT THE OPPOSITION...”**

1. Finally, Paul directs his beloved son to remain humble when he dealt with the offenses of those who “oppose” the truth, but their errors must be corrected! False doctrine and unacceptable behavior will not go away on their own initiative. Moreover, they will spread like a cancer if left unopposed (verse 17). They must be attacked and vanquished with the truth. “Convince, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and teaching” (2Tim. 4:2).
2. Perhaps the power of the gospel will reach the hearts of wayward church members



and will move them to repent of their wrongdoing. Paul was not suggesting that God might be reluctant to “grant” repentance, because He is anxious for all men to repent and be saved (2Pet. 3:9). Nor was he placing repentance in a man’s heart prior to his knowing the truth about his sin and his need to turn away from it. It is knowing the truth that motivates lost men to repent. On Pentecost, sinners were first taught about the Sonship of Christ and were convicted of their sin of crucifying Him. Only then did they ask about forgiveness, after which they were commanded to repent of what they now understood to be sinful.

3. Correction of one’s waywardness must be preceded by “coming to one’s senses,” as the prodigal “came to himself” before returning home to his father (Luke 15:17). The Greek words carry the idea of one being roused out of a deep sleep or of being startled out of a drunken stupor and suddenly becoming aware of a serious danger into which he has fallen while asleep.
4. Sinners coming to their senses about their sins may perceive upon awakening that while they slept [spiritually], they were “ensnared” and taken captive by the devil to do his will. “Snare” is *pagis*, “a trap” that had been hidden from them by the deceptiveness of their sins.
5. Timothy now faces an awesome challenge as he prepares to make the long journey to Rome. These “last words” of the imprisoned apostle should be of great help in meeting Paul’s expectations of him.

1. "Be \_\_\_\_\_ in the \_\_\_\_\_ that is in \_\_\_\_\_."
2. What \_\_\_\_\_ had learned from \_\_\_\_\_ should be \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_ men who could teach \_\_\_\_\_ also.
3. *Three* examples of those who must serve/suffer before they can be rewarded are:
  - a. \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. \_\_\_\_\_
4. The greatest example of suffering prior to reward is \_\_\_\_\_.
5. Paul was suffering as an \_\_\_\_\_ in \_\_\_\_\_, but the \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_ was not \_\_\_\_\_.
6. Even when we are \_\_\_\_\_, God is \_\_\_\_\_ and cannot \_\_\_\_\_ Himself by ignoring His promises.
7. Some were striving about \_\_\_\_\_ that were of no \_\_\_\_\_ and that were causing the \_\_\_\_\_ of the hearers.
8. \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ babblings will \_\_\_\_\_ to more \_\_\_\_\_.
9. *Two* disciples had \_\_\_\_\_ from the \_\_\_\_\_ and were teaching that the \_\_\_\_\_ was already \_\_\_\_\_.
10. *Two* of God's truths are: The \_\_\_\_\_ knows who are \_\_\_\_\_, and, All who \_\_\_\_\_ the name of \_\_\_\_\_ must \_\_\_\_\_ from \_\_\_\_\_.
11. Vessels of honor are like \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_; vessels of dishonor are compared to \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.
12. One who \_\_\_\_\_ himself of sin can become a \_\_\_\_\_ for \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ for the \_\_\_\_\_.
13. The Lord's \_\_\_\_\_ must be \_\_\_\_\_ to all, able to \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ as he \_\_\_\_\_ those in \_\_\_\_\_.
14. Sinners are caught in the devil's \_\_\_\_\_ until they come to their \_\_\_\_\_.

Chapter Three

Paul had warned the Thessalonian church about a widespread “falling away” that would take place before the second coming of Christ occurred (2Thes. 2:1-12). He also spoke to Timothy in his first letter to the young preacher about “latter times” when some would “depart from the faith” into hurtful doctrines and practices (1Tim. 4:1-3). Apparently, both passages refer to the same apostasy, and it posed such a serious threat to the people of God that Paul saw the need to call attention to it for the third time.

Verses 1-9-- “KNOW THAT PERILOUS TIMES WILL COME...”

1. The next of Paul’s “famous last words” to Timothy was “know.” He wanted him to know certain details of the [same?] future apostasy about which he had written in the first letter (1Tim.4:1-3).
2. The “last days” in which the apostasy would occur were called “latter times” in the first letter. They are also called here “perilous times” because of the grave danger into which they would place local churches everywhere. The Hebrew writer identified the “last days” as the broad timeframe within which God communicates with man through the words of Jesus Christ (Heb. 1:2).
3. Paul’s reference in the first letter to this departure from the faith was focused on the *false doctrines* that would accompany the apostasy. In this passage, his emphasis is on the *false characters* of those who would lead their brethren into unauthorized behavior. It was important that Timothy should warn his fellow Christians at Ephesus about these character traits that would contribute heavily to strife and unrest among the disciples.
4. Men such as Paul describes were already present and were busy spreading their poison among the churches. Some of them, Hymenaeus, Alexander, Phygellus, Hermogenes, and Philetus had been named as men who exhibited qualities that could become very dangerous to the faithfulness and steadfastness of members who were trying to live right as Christians. These and others like them should be marked and dealt with firmly before their teaching and example should spread further like a cancer (2Tim.2:17). Strong discipline might delay the onset of apostasy and might help to equip the disciples to deal with unhealthy influences in the churches in the future.
5. The personal qualities that would become the leading causes of a future departure from the truth were the same undesirable characteristics that had led the Gentiles into such evil conduct that God “gave them up” to follow their own wisdom instead of His wisdom (Rom. 1:18-32). Some of the same terms are used in both lists to describe the

wicked qualities (Rom. 1:29-32 and 2Tim. 3:2-5). Great caution should be taken against men who had these traits.

- a. **Lovers of themselves** [*philautos*-- “loving oneself”]. These false brethren are also accused of the sin of “loving money” (verse 2), and later in this list, they are charged with the attitude of “loving pleasure rather than loving God” (verse 4). Every act of departing from the truth is always strong evidence of *selfishness*, i.e., wanting one’s own way rather than someone else’s. Of course, in religion there is only one determinant of what Christians should want: “I [Jesus Christ] am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me” (John 14:6). Our prayer in all matters should be the same prayer Jesus prayed to His Father, “...not as I will, but as You will” (Matt. 26:39).
- b. **Lovers of money** [*philarguros*-- “loving money”]. In the first letter, Paul declared, “For the love of money is a root of all *kinds* of evil...” (1Tim. 6:10). The love of money is closely related to the love of self because money is seen as something that can furnish the things that feed man’s ego. Money also generates a sense of power and control that can easily make its possessor feel less dependent on God for the successful conduct of his life. This was the great mistake that was made by the “fool” who left the Lord out of his plans for providing for his future (Luke 12:16-21). Jesus reminded His disciples that “one’s life does not consist in the abundance of the things he possesses” (Luke 12:14). Sadly, there is nothing that someone will not do for money. Even leaders in religion are sometimes willing to mislead their followers into error if they can make a financial profit from their actions. Such vile motives would account for some of the departures from truth that lay ahead.
- c. **Boasters** [*alazon*-- “vaunting” (Berry’s *Interlinear*)]. Webster defines the verb form of “vaunt” as, “to talk vaingloriously.” The noun form means, “a vainglorious display of what one is, or has, or has done.” This is another typical trait of those who “think more highly” of themselves than they should (Rom. 12:3) and who trust in their own personal abilities to manage their lives without the help of God (Jer. 10:23). Self-centered people of this sort are especially dangerous when they venture into the realm of religion and seek to lead others after them into doctrines and practices of their own devising which they consider to be superior to those of the gospel (Isa. 5:21).
- d. **Proud** [*huperephanos*-- “to appear above”]. This word is “always used in Scripture as ‘arrogant, boastful, proud’” [Vine]. It is closely associated with “boasting” [above]. The “pride of life” continues to drive the behavior of many, even though the Lord has warned sternly, “Pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall (Prov. 16:18). This sin is especially harmful when it is the motivation behind the decisions and actions of religious people. Apostasy is imminent when spiritual leaders rush headlong into false positions without giving due consideration

- to scriptural teaching or when personal pride prevents them from making any change in positions already taken, even though the fallacy of such positions becomes apparent to the leaders who were first responsible for promoting them.
- e. **Blasphemers** [*blasphemia*-- from *blapto*, “to injure” and *pHEME*, “speech”]. Vine says the term is “practically confined to speech defamatory of the Divine Majesty.” It seems unthinkable that any man would dare to defame the God of the Universe, the God who made him and the God by whose choice he is allowed to continue in the world. Such a person thrusts himself into direct *competition* with Jehovah for control of whatever issues may be at hand. Both divine history and human experience testify to such foolishness. However, some do not hesitate to blaspheme against the existence and/or the autonomy of the Almighty by their overt statements and actions, while others are guilty of *speaking injuriously* against both the Father and the Son when they teach their doctrines of human origin (2Jn. 9).
  - f. **Disobedient to parents** [*apeithes*-- “unwilling to be persuaded, spurning belief”]. It seems strange to find such disobedience connected with conduct that would ultimately lead the church into apostasy from the truth. However, disrespect of one’s parents is clearly preliminary to disrespect for all other authority, civil or religious. It discloses a rebellious spirit that likely will also incite defiance against the will of God. Disobedience to parents was considered serious enough under Moses’ Law to warrant the stoning to death of the guilty (Deut. 21:18-21).
  - g. **Unthankful** [*acharistos*-- “ungrateful”]. This is the first of *four* negative qualities that cause men to do violence to the truth of the gospel and to lead others to fall away from their faith. Thanklessness is a major flaw in any man’s character. Failing to be grateful to our fellows for their kindnesses to us is inexcusable. Ingratitude toward God for His abundant favors is fatal (Rom.1:21ff.).
  - h. **Unholy** [*anosios*-- “profane”]. The Latin word, *profanus*, is *pro*-- “before or outside” and *fanum*-- “temple,” hence, “unholy.” Unholy [irreligious] people treat holy things as if they were not holy or special to the Lord. There are no boundaries to restrain their personal ambitions or their expanded egos when they deal with God’s holy things (1Cor. 2:10-16). It is no wonder that men who seem unable to make a difference between holy things and profane things (Lev. 10:10) are usually at the forefront of departures away from God’s appointments.
  - i. **Unloving** [without natural affection--KJV; ASV; *astorgos*--“not loving kindred, esp. in the child/parent relationship”]. The absence of love between parents and their children is very unnatural. It is equally strange when professed believers exhibit conduct that belies their devotion to the God who declared, “He who says, ‘I know Him,’ and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him” (1John 2:4). Further, “For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And His commandments are not burdensome” (1John 5:3). When religious leaders have no real love for God *or* His directives, serious breaches of gospel truth

may be expected. The ultimate test of anyone's love for the Lord is the degree of respect he shows toward the law that God gave to govern our behavior in all things religious.

- j. **Unforgiving** [KJV--trucebreakers; ASV, RSV-- implacable-- *aspondos*--lit., "without a libation" (libations accompanied the making of treaties and compacts); hence, "cannot be persuaded to *enter into* a covenant" (Thayer). The term also signifies an unwillingness to *keep* an agreement.]. Such men have no regard for promises made either to other men or to God. Abandoning positions of scriptural strength for the weakness of unscriptural doctrines and practices is no problem for innovative spirits who are ready to change with the changing winds of popular opinion (2Tim. 4:2, 3).
- k. **Slanderers** [*diabolos*-- "accusing falsely"]. Paul knew what it meant to suffer the attacks of slander from his doctrinal enemies (Rom. 3:8). Many false prophets (1John 4:1) brazenly subscribe to the *modus operandi*, "If you can't successfully attack the message, attack the messenger!" Those who lead others into apostasy from the gospel often seek to destroy the personal reputation and influence of anyone who may stand in the way of their quest for power and fame.
- l. **Without self-control** [*akrates*-- "powerless, without strength"]. False teachers often are very much in control of their actions as they spread their hurtful ideas among vulnerable people. They know *exactly* what they are doing and why they are doing it. Still, they deliberately exchange their moral integrity for whatever rewards their devious behavior will bring them (Rom. 1:25). Paul's criticism was that they were unwilling to suppress their own personal ambitions and desires to dominate others in religious matters. Pre-eminence, even at the cost of their own faithfulness to the Lord, became their top priority. Their values were totally out of control, and their decisions based on those values were destructive to the cause of Christ.
- m. **Brutal** [KJV; ASV--fierce; *anemos*, opposite of *hemeros*-- "gentle."] The Stoic philosopher Epictetus described those who forget God as their Creator as resembling lions, "wild, savage, and fierce" (Vine). The idea was that nothing is off-limits when these false teachers begin their ugly work of apostasy. Whenever doctrines or directives from God's spokesmen threatened to interfere with doctrines and directives of their own, those precepts became "fair game" for the hungry mouths of these brutal lion-like spiritual predators.
- n. **Despisers of good** [*aphilagathos*, opposite of *philgathos*-- "loving what is good"]. The KJV has, "despisers of those that are good." Paul directed that an elder must be a "lover of what is good" or "a lover of good men" [KJV]. In either case, *despising* good [righteous] things and good [righteous] people is the mark of a depraved spirit. The wicked promoters of the great departure from righteousness would not simply *ignore* good things and good people. They would *despise* them and actively seek to

do them as much harm as possible as their mortal enemies.

- o. **Traitors** [*prodoteo*-- “a betrayer”]. This word described Judas Iscariot in Luke 6:16. “Traitor” brings up the worst of associations in the human mind. It depicts everything that is despicable and unworthy in human conduct. One who betrays his own country or his own family is rightly held in the highest contempt. A traitor to his own Savior must be totally rejected by all principled individuals. About traitors to Christ it is said [in repulsive analogies to describe repulsive behavior]:

For it would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than having known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered to them. But it has happened to them according to the true proverb: “A dog returns to his own vomit,” and, “a sow, having washed, to her wallowing in the mire” (2Pet. 2:21,22).

- p. **Headstrong** [*propetes*-- “falling forward; precipitate, rash, reckless”]. The apostates would be so completely wrapped up in their own self-importance and personal worth that they would make decisions and take actions without any sensible reason. Their behavior would be determined by the confidence in themselves that they were always right in what they thought and did. Confidence in scriptural teaching to *assure* that they were right would be largely ignored or diminished in importance. They would forget that “the way of man is not in himself; it is not in man who walks to direct his own steps” (Jer. 10:23).
- q. **Haughty** [*tuphoo*-- “to raise a smoke, to wrap in a mist”]. It signifies, “to make proud, puff up with pride, render insolent.” It “speaks of a person who in the past has come to a state of such pride, and is so puffed up, that his mind as a permanent result is beclouded and besotted with pride” [Wuest]. Human pride is doubtless the one quality in man that gives him his greatest problem and that poses the greatest obstacle to his faithfulness to scriptural teaching. Pride would lay the foundation for the departures about which Paul was so concerned.
- r. **Lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God**. Men derive pleasure from many sources. It may come from fleshly indulgencies; it may originate in an inward sense of self-importance or the outward accolades received from others. Pleasure of itself can be innocent of any wrong. But when it brings man into conflict with those things that please God, it becomes a forbidden sensation. Paul is aware that men who are more concerned with pleasing themselves instead of pleasing the Lord are especially dangerous to the cause of Jesus, who challenged his disciples to deny themselves [their own pleasures] and to take up their crosses and follow Him (Mark 8:34-36).
- s. **Having a form of godliness but denying its power**. “Form” is *morphosis*, “a form or outline, an image or impress, an outward semblance.” It imparts an impression on others of what is inside a man. That impression may be a *true* or a *false* representation of what is actually within. The leaders of rebellion against God could be expected to retain in their ministries many of the apostolic “forms” [practices and doctrines] to which the disciples had become accustomed. This tactic would convey

an image of scriptural righteousness and make them less subject to the suspicion and opposition of people who still possessed a measure of respect for the true gospel that had been preached by heaven's inspired messengers. In the hearts of the deceivers, however, there would be no real devotion to God's appointments. They would promote divine truths only as empty and powerless platitudes. Authorized practices for the church would be continued for a time, but only as meaningless rituals. The apostates would in reality deny the power of the gospel in its original form. They would give impetus only to their own innovations and to alterations of the apostles' gospel as they worked to mislead vulnerable saints into a spiritual wasteland. Their deceptions would wreak havoc among people who would perish because they "did not receive the love of the truth that they might be saved" (2Thes. 2:10).

6. There were several things that Paul insisted Timothy should "know":
  - a. There would be a great falling away from the faith at some future time;
  - b. The times of change would be "perilous times" for the Lord's church;
  - c. Apostasy would be led by men of sinful and identifiable character;
  - d. Disciples must be aware of the specific qualities that would contribute to rebellion against God.
7. Having identified the dangerous characteristics that would be found in the leaders of a falling away from God's pattern for His church, there was another important thing that Timothy must know: "And from such people turn away!"
8. There could be no toleration of any conduct among the disciples that brought unrest and doubting into the congregation at Ephesus. The consequences of such behavior were far too serious to allow it to continue.
9. The dangers that these corrupt teachers presented to the faithfulness of the church members at Ephesus existed not only in theory but also in practice. Paul points to the activities of some teachers who had already demonstrated how devious they could be in making proselytes to their insidious purposes.
  - a. They "crept" into houses. Their approach to prospective converts was not open and forthright as were the contacts for the gospel made by honorable men. They veiled their real objectives. They ingratiated themselves with their prospects by heaping upon them flattering words and effusive compliments. They *pretended* a devotion to purposes directly opposite to what they really *intended*.
  - b. They targeted "gullible ['silly'] women" for their deceptions. Perhaps these were more likely to be deceived by what they saw and heard from the fraudulent teachers than their husbands might be.
  - c. They appealed to the vulnerability of their prospects. Like Eve, who was deceived by the devices of Satan in the garden of Eden, these women, "loaded down" with the sins of *pride* and *vanity*, were particularly susceptible to the flattery and enticing words of unprincipled men who sought to "capture" them in the bonds of their false doctrine. Paul knew that such unscrupulous practices would become the rule, rather than the exception, in the "perilous times" that lay ahead, and he wanted



Timothy to share in his concern.

- d. They showed a special interest in those [women] who had previously exhibited a distinct religious instability. These had “always learned,” i.e., had investigated and had given themselves over to a variety of popular religious movements or exotic spiritual theories. Yet, in all their studies they had never come to learn and obey the simple truth of the gospel of Christ. They usually proved to be fertile soil for the deceptions of the leaders about whom Paul was so bothered. Kenneth Wuest observes:

...DeWette (quoted by Alford), notes that a sin-laden conscience is easily tempted to seek the easiest method of relief. And that method of getting relief from a sin-laden conscience, is the embracing of a false religion, one that satisfies the religious instinct of the individual, and at the same time fails to deal with the sin question and the true way of salvation.

10. It is hard to imagine that men who professed to be religious leaders and teachers would stoop to the level of their demonstrated activities. But these were men of “corrupt” [*kataphtheiro*-- “brought down into a worse state”] minds and who were “disapproved” [*adokimos*-- “not standing the test, rejected”] by God and all righteous people. Timothy must remain aware that in no way could he afford to indicate his approval [or toleration] of anything proposed by these wicked individuals that was amiss from gospel truth.
11. Jannes and Jambres had been among the magicians of Egypt who deceived Pharaoh into believing that they could match the miracles performed by Moses in his court. They too had been men of corrupt minds and disapproved conduct when they practiced their deceptions. Like the imposters denounced by Paul, they had been exposed as frauds and suffered severely for their deceptions. [See Exodus 7:11,22; 8:7,18,19; 9:11.] Paul had access to the names of Jannes and Jambres from a source apart from Old Testament revelation, for their names are not disclosed in the divine record. We can only speculate why Paul singled out these two from among the other magicians.
12. Another thing for the young preacher to *know* was that God, as always, would remain in control of a dangerous and threatening situation. The weapons of error were very strong, but the weapons employed by teachers of the truth are much stronger (2Cor. 10:4-6). Truth will *always* defeat error; light *will* banish darkness. Even so formidable an apostasy as Paul foretold would not be given free course to accomplish its wicked purposes. It would go so far, and no further, before the *folly* [*anoia*-- lit., “no mind”; “senseless”] of its leaders and their tactics would be exposed.

Verses 10-17-- “FOLLOW MY DOCTRINE...”

1. Another of Paul’s “last words” to Timothy was “*follow.*” In this instance, his language

takes the form of a *commendation* rather than a *command*. While they had been together in Ephesus and in other places, the apostle obviously had schooled his young friend and fellow evangelist in the things necessary to make him a “good minister of Jesus Christ” (1Tim. 4:6). To the young man’s credit, he had been careful to follow Paul’s instructions and had tried to be the best preacher he could be.

2. It is apparent that Paul’s expressed desire is for Timothy to “keep on doing what he had been doing” as long as he worked as a minister at Ephesus. In verse fourteen, Paul used another “famous last word” when he urged him to “*continue*” in the things he had learned from the older preacher. His present conduct should continue throughout his future work in the kingdom of God.
3. Paul had lived in Ephesus for more than two years (Acts 19:10). Later, he rehearsed to the elders of the church “in what manner I always lived among you” (Acts 20:18). He had lived in humility and had declared the “whole counsel of God” publicly and from house to house. He had worked with his hands, and he had made no demands on the finances of the saints. In every way, he had set an example for the brethren of how to live right and how to faithfully execute the commands of the gospel (Acts 20:17ff.).
4. Once again, this time to a young preacher in need of a role model, he reviewed the guidelines by which he had conducted his own life in the past and by which Timothy would do well to govern himself in the future. His success as a minister and apostle of Christ had resulted from giving careful attention to several aspects of a minister’s life.
  - a. Doctrine. Although an evangelist of the gospel must be many things to many people (1Cor. 9:19-23), his most important duty is to proclaim the whole counsel of God to all (Acts 20:27). Every other appeal he may offer to others means nothing if he fails to “preach the word” in its completeness (2Tim. 4:2) to everyone who will listen. A pleasing personality, strong leadership skills, a personal example of righteous living-- all important to the effectiveness of any ministry-- are of no worth at all unless the pure doctrine of the Son of God stands as the focal point of what the preacher is and what he does. *Some* souls might be saved in the absence of other attributes, but *none* can be saved without sound doctrine (Rom. 6:17,18)!
  - b. Manner of life. Jesus condemned the Pharisees of His time because they “said and did not” (Matt. 23:3). No teacher can expect to succeed for very long unless he lives what he preaches. Hypocrisy perhaps defeats a message more quickly than anything else. Paul was always cautious not to give others any reason to be “turned off” from his preaching because of errors [real or imagined] in his conduct (2Cor. 8:18-21).
  - c. Purpose. Paul’s life was devoted to achieving *one* main goal. He said, “One thing I do...I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus” (Phil. 3:13,14). Every thought and every action must contribute to that purpose or be considered unworthy of the mind and spirit of someone to whom getting

- to heaven means more than everything else in this world.
- d. **Faith.** Converts are made by converted teachers. Sincerity in the messenger must work in tandem with the sincerity of the message if prospects are to be duly impressed with the urgency of faith and obedience to the gospel. A genuine personal faith in the doctrine of Jesus is just as essential in the teacher as it is in the taught. Paul could declare in all honesty, “I *know* whom I have believed and am *persuaded* that He is able to keep what I have committed to Him until that Day” (2Tim. 1:12).
  - e. **Longsuffering.** Patience is vital to a teacher’s effectiveness. Not many people today are converted at the first hearing of the gospel as many were before minds became confused and hearts became hardened by competing human doctrines. [See the conversions in Acts 2, 8, 16, etc.] Gentleness and sympathetic treatment of doctrinal differences may over time wear away prejudice and misunderstanding and allow learners finally to embrace truths that otherwise might forever be rejected. The wise teacher “keeps on keeping on” in his efforts to reach sinners.
  - f. **Love.** Love of the *truth* and love for both *lost and saved men* will determine the limits of a teacher’s teaching. Faithful teachers will be constrained to teach to the extent they are truly convinced that:
    - (1) Men are lost without the remedy for sin that is found only in the gospel (John 8: 32; Rom. 1:16,17);
    - (2) Men must learn and obey the gospel before they can be saved by the gospel (Mark 16:15,16);
    - (3) Someone must respond to the Lord’s charge to take the gospel to the lost (Isa. 6:8; Rom. 10:14-17).
  - g. **Perseverance.** Many obstacles arise in a faithful teacher’s life that can discourage him from discharging his duty to the Lord. Sometimes, quitting the race seems to be the easy and attractive way out of problems and distractions. The Hebrew writer addressed this danger, “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). It has been said that “winners never quit, and quitters never win.” At the end of a productive life, Paul could look back and declare, “I have fought the good fight, I have *finished* the race, I have kept the faith...” (2Tim. 4:7). Never give up!
  - h. **Persecutions and afflictions.** We do not know what persecutions and afflictions Timothy might have suffered while preaching the gospel in Ephesus. However, it appears that he had suffered such adversities in some way, for they conclude Paul’s list of things for which the young man was to be commended. The apostle mentions three locations where some of his own persecutions had occurred, Antioch, Iconium, and Lystra. Perhaps these persecutions were selected from many others because Timothy had once lived in or near those cities and possibly could

have had some personal knowledge of what had happened in them. Details of the opposition that arose in the named places may be found in Acts 13:50,51; 14:1-6, 19,20. It is significant that the intensity of opposition to his preaching increased as he continued on his mission: he first was “expelled” from Antioch; he became the target for stoning at Iconium; finally, he was stoned and left for dead at Lystra.

But the Lord “delivered” him from it all, sometimes through non-miraculous providence [Antioch and Iconium] and sometimes by supernatural power [Lystra].

5. In an attempt to encourage the inexperienced Timothy not to become disheartened because of his suffering for the cause of Jesus, Paul observes that persecution is the common lot of all disciples who strive to live up to the expectations of their discipleship. There will always and everywhere be plenty of “evil men and imposters” to make things uncomfortable for the people of God. Satan and his angels are constantly at work to discourage and destroy those who have chosen to leave sin and serve Christ (1Pet. 5:8; 2Cor. 11:13-15). “Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution.” Albert Barnes raises an interesting and worthwhile caution about the persecution of the saints:

Yet...if we are persecuted, we should carefully inquire, before we avail ourselves of this consolation, whether we are persecuted *because* we “live godly in Christ Jesus,” or for some other reason. A man may embrace some absurd opinion, and call it religion; he may adopt some mode of dress irresistibly ludicrous, from the mere love of singularity, and may call it *conscience*; or he may be boorish in his manners, and uncivil in his deportment, outraging all the laws of social life, and may call this “deadness to the world;” and for these, and similar things, he may be contemned, ridiculed, and despised. But let him not infer, therefore, that he is to be enrolled among the martyrs, and that he is certainly a real Christian. That persecution which will properly furnish any evidence that we are friends of Christ, must be only that which is “for righteousness’ sake” (Matt. 5:10), and must be brought upon us in an honest effort to obey the commands of God.

6. There are two kinds of false teachers: those who knowingly teach error and those who are sincerely mistaken in their convictions. All are “evil men” in the sense that they attempt to lead others into religious positions that are unauthorized by Scripture. Some are “impostors” who profess to be “angels of light” while they know they are not (2Cor. 11:13-15). Others sincerely believe they are teaching the truth, but they are self-deceived in that conviction. These may be even more dangerous to the church of Christ than the deliberate offenders. Sincere workers never give up in their hurtful work; the insincere may diminish their efforts should financial and other incentives become less attractive to them.
7. Nevertheless, Timothy’s only *real* concern about who was doing good or bad work at Ephesus was that his *own* work must be faithful to the truth. He must “*continue*” in things he knew were right because an *apostle* of Jesus had taught them to him.
8. Another reason for Timothy to “*continue*” to “*follow*” the things he had learned from Paul was that they were precepts and principles consistent with all that he had learned as a child from the Old Testament writings. Confidence in the Law’s pronouncements

and prophecies had led him and family members to accept Jesus Christ as their Messiah and Savior (Gal. 3:24,25). Faith in the truthfulness of Jehovah's revelation, both Old and New, could only grow as Jews such as these broadened their comprehension of how the Testaments fit together to reveal the totality of Jehovah's master plan for man's salvation.

9. Two incidental facts are evident from Paul's reference to Timothy's knowledge of the Law: (1) The New Testament apostle endorsed the divine inspiration of Old Testament Scriptures, calling them "Holy Scriptures," and (2) a tribute is afforded to Timothy's mother and grandmother who had been faithful to their duty to teach the Holy Scriptures to their children, even in the absence of a Jewish father in the home (Deut. 4:8,9; 2Tim. 1:5).
10. Paul concludes this chapter by confirming his confidence in the accuracy and dependability of the Scriptures which had led the young preacher to learn of the Christ and of his duty to serve Christ as a "good minister" (1Tim. 4:6). His first awareness of the Messiah had been derived from Old Testament Scriptures; the second from things written by Paul and perhaps others as part of the New Testament revelation.
11. Many commentators confine Paul's remarks here to the Old Testament Scriptures. Kenneth Wuest takes such a position:

The context in which Paul is writing is limited to the O.T. scriptures. One could translate, "Every scripture is God-breathed." The context limits these writings to the O.T. writings. Thus, does Paul declare the inspiration of the O.T. The N.T. had not been completed, and Paul does not refer here to its divine inspiration. His classic passage on this subject is 1Cor. 2:9-16 which includes the inspiration of the N.T.

While it is true that a few of the N.T. books probably had not been written [Gospel of John; 1,2, 3John; Jude; Revelation] and several were possibly being completed and/or collected [Synoptic Gospels; Acts], the best scholarship affirms that all the others were written and in the hands of the churches prior to A.D. 67, when Paul wrote these "famous last words" to Timothy from his second Roman imprisonment.

12. In light of the chronology of many of the N.T. letters, it is apparent that Paul likely *did* include them in his reference to "every Scripture" [ASV] or "all Scripture" [KJV, NKJV, RSV] as being inspired of God ["God-breathed"]. Surely, he would have included his own letters in his statement, as evidenced by the "assurance" [of Paul's apostleship and inspiration] he said Timothy would have as he continued to believe and do what he had learned from Paul. Certainly, Timothy had Paul's first epistle and would soon have this one. And it isn't unlikely that he had some exposure to other letters penned by his father in the faith (2Tim. 4:13).
13. "All" Scripture [*graphe*-- "written"] given by "inspiration" of God ["God-breathed"] embraced everything in the O.T. and that part of our N.T. that was then available to the disciples. The whole body of literature with a divine origin was profitable.
  - a. For doctrine [*didaskalia*-- "that which is taught"]. In the first letter, Timothy had

been admonished to see that “no other doctrine” was being taught at Ephesus while Paul was away from the city (1Tim. 1:3). “Sound” doctrine which is *according to the glorious gospel* is crucial to a sound church [collectively] and to sound disciples [individually]. Those who dared to behave contrary to the sound doctrine were to be “noted” and “avoided” (Rom. 16:17). There is but *one* source for learning what sound doctrine is. God has revealed it through His Spirit and has conveyed it to men through the apostles of Christ, who spoke the Lord’s doctrine in *words* chosen by the Holy Spirit (1Cor. 2:10-13). As these words were *written* [Scripture] and circulated among the disciples, they were still “profitable” to teach the doctrine by which Christian lives were to be governed.

- b. For reproof [*elegmos*-- “a reproof”]. Some texts have “for conviction” [*elenxis*-- “rebuke”]. God’s word is “living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword...and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart” (Heb. 4:12). It exposes man’s sins of both heart and body (Rom. 11:33). It proclaims man’s doom unless his sins are forgiven by a merciful God (Rom. 6:23).
  - c. For correction [*epanorthosis*-- lit., “a restoration to an upright or right state”]. Learning of one’s guilt and condemnation because of sin is a crucial first step toward reformation. However, ignorance of sin’s remedy makes awareness of guilt unproductive of any good result. Looking into the mirror of man’s lost condition is useless unless obedience to God follows (James 1:23-25). Christ has provided more than enough information in the Scriptures to instruct us fully about what we must do to be saved and what we must do to remain saved (Rom. 1:16,17). There is no sin in a man’s life and no flaw in his character that cannot be remedied by humble submission to the Lord’s commandments as announced in the Scriptures (Acts 10:35).
  - d. For instruction in righteousness [*dikaiosune*-- “the quality of being right or just”]. Only faithful Christians have been made “right” and “just” through their knowledge of and obedience to the gospel of Christ (Rom. 1: 16,17; 6:13; 3:26). The spiritual life of God’s child is protected from the weapons of Satan by his “breastplate of righteousness.” It is manifested in the “fruits of righteousness” which characterize his life (Eph. 6:14; Phil. 1:11). Man cannot find his own way to a righteous life. “It is not in man who walks to direct his own steps” (Jer. 10:23). Man’s ways are the ways of death, though they seem right to him (Prov. 14:12). To “fear God and keep His commandments” is the only security available to men in this uncertain world (Eccl. 12:13).
14. “The man of God” can claim completeness in both his character and his activities when he conforms in every way to things taught in the Holy Scriptures. Of course, men under the Law of Moses could claim this same completeness by *perfect* obedience to the Law’s stipulations [but that was impossible for any but Jesus] while under the Law. Now, however, only Christians are complete as they fashion themselves into the

image of Christ as revealed to us in the truth (Rom. 8:29). It should be noted in these times of innovation and digression from the New Testament pattern that only those things which may be gleaned from the Holy Scripture [New Testament] can offer such completeness to seekers after God. If something cannot be anchored to a “thus saith the Lord,” it cannot be any part of the “completeness” intended for Christians in this present time!

15. It should be further noted that the Scriptures that generate completeness today are *not* the Old Testament writings. What once was binding no longer does so. This fact refutes any argument seeking to limit the “Holy Scriptures” that made Timothy “wise for salvation” to the Old Testament, those things “written before” (Rom. 15:4).

Addendum on the Completeness Offered to Man by the Bible:

The idea is, that whatever good work the man of God desires to perform, or however perfect he aims to be, he will find no deficiency in the Scriptures, but will find there the most ample instructions that he needs. He can never advance so far, as to become forsaken by his guide. He can never make such progress, as to have gone in advance of the volume of revealed truth, and to be thrown upon his own resources in a region which was not thought of by the Author of the Bible. No new phase of human affairs can appear in which it will not direct him; no new plan of benevolence can be started, for which he will not find principles there to guide him; and he can make no progress in knowledge or holiness, where he will not feel that his holy counselor is in advance of him still, and that it is capable of conducting him even yet into higher and purer regions. Let us, then, study and prize the Bible. It is a holy and safe guide. It has conducted millions along the dark and dangerous way of life, and has never led one astray. The human mind, in its investigations of truth, has never gone beyond its teachings; nor has man ever advanced into a region so bright that its light has become dim, or where it has not thrown its beams of glory on still far distant objects. We are often in circumstances in which we feel that we have reached the outer limit of what man can teach us; but we never get into such circumstances in regard to the word of God.

--Albert Barnes, Commentary

1. Paul warned that \_\_\_\_\_ would come in the \_\_\_\_\_.
2. How many characteristics are listed to describe leaders of the “falling away” \_\_\_\_\_
3. What are the *four* “un”qualities [NKJV] that these men would display?
  - a. \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. \_\_\_\_\_
  - d. \_\_\_\_\_
4. Some would love \_\_\_\_\_ rather than \_\_\_\_\_.
5. \_\_\_\_\_ women, loaded down with \_\_\_\_\_ would be easily “captured” by the false teaching of men who \_\_\_\_\_ into their \_\_\_\_\_.
6. These women were always \_\_\_\_\_ but never came to know the \_\_\_\_\_.
7. What was the background story for Paul’s reference to Jannes and Jambres? [Exo. 8,9]
8. Timothy had carefully followed *nine* things that he had seen in Paul. What were they?
  - a. \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. \_\_\_\_\_
  - d. \_\_\_\_\_
  - e. \_\_\_\_\_
  - f. \_\_\_\_\_
  - g. \_\_\_\_\_
  - h. \_\_\_\_\_
  - i. \_\_\_\_\_
9. “Yes, and all who desire to \_\_\_\_\_ in \_\_\_\_\_ will suffer \_\_\_\_\_.”
10. How will evil men and imposters progress, and what will they continue to do?
11. From \_\_\_\_\_ Timothy had learned the \_\_\_\_\_ which had led him to \_\_\_\_\_, which could give him \_\_\_\_\_.
12. Scripture is “profitable” for *four* important things. What are they?
  - a. \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. \_\_\_\_\_
  - d. \_\_\_\_\_
13. God’s man can be \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ for every \_\_\_\_\_.
14. What is the connection between Scripture and good works?



Chapter Four

**Verses 4:1-5-- “PREACH THE WORD...”**

1. As Paul prepares to finish his letter to the young preacher Timothy, he seems to feel a renewed urgency to impress upon him the seriousness of the responsibility that he will bear. The future spiritual quality of the Ephesian church will be determined to a large extent by how well his son in the faith meets that responsibility. Thus, he issues a “charge”[ *diamarturomai*-- “to testify through and through; to charge earnestly”] to him:
  - a. Both Father and Son are witnesses to Timothy’s assignment of duties as a minister of the gospel;
  - b. Christ’s judgment of men will reflect their response to such things as Timothy has been delegated by Paul to teach;
  - c. The eternal destiny of many souls [including Timothy’s] is dependent on how faithful the young preacher is to this charge;
  - d. Timothy should be motivated to fulfill his duty by the knowledge that preparing to be received into God’s eternal kingdom is limited to the time remaining before the Lord returns for judgment.
2. The prime responsibility given to Timothy was to “preach the word!” Other things were also important, but no other duty compared with telling others about what they needed to do to prepare for Christ’s judgment of the world (Acts 17:30,31).
  - a. He must be “ready” [*epistemi*-- “to stand by”]. The ASV has, “urgent”-- *emistami*-- “to turn one’s self or mind to, put one’s thought on a thing” (Thayer). “In season” is from *eukairos*-- “opportune,” and “out of season” is from *akairos*-- “inopportune.” The idea, of course, is that the good minister of Jesus Christ must be prepared and anxious to preach in all circumstances, favorable or unfavorable.
  - b. His preaching must consist of teaching in *three* categories.
    - (1) Teaching that convinces sinners of their sins. The KJV and ASV have, “reprove” [*elegxo*-- “convict, refute, confute”]. The term usually carries the intent to cause shame in the guilty (Thayer). Sin, despite its appeal in its various forms, is in reality ugly and condemning to every sinner (Ezek. 18:20; Rom.7:13). It is the teacher’s task to expose sin’s ugliness and to remove its appeal by vigorously proclaiming God’s intense hatred of sin in all its variations (Psa. 45:7). Only those who comprehend the fact that their sins are a reflection of their own spiritual weakness are in a position to seek forgiveness

of those sins. The gospel is the only thing that can convince sinners of their sinfulness. “Convince” implies that the preacher is successful in bringing the offender to a state of remorse and repentance, or at least to a conviction that he needs to change his behavior (Wuest).

- (2) Teaching that rebukes sinners for their sins. This word is *epitimao*-- “to tax with fault, rate, chide, rebuke, reprove, censure severely” (Thayer). It suggests a sharp, severe denunciation and, in some cases, a penalty for sins committed. “Even where the preacher has experienced failure after failure in bringing sinners or saints to forsake their sin, or where there seems little hope of so doing, yet he is to sharply rebuke sin. He has discharged his duty, and the responsibility is upon his hearers to deal with the sin in their lives”(Wuest).
- (3) Teaching that exhorts the penitent in their struggles to improve their lives both by becoming Christians and by living faithfully as Christians. In the heat of the battle against forces of evil, it is easy to forget the importance of offering strong encouragement to weak souls desiring to be stronger. Preachers should remember that much of the “word” they preach consists of instruction intended to give hope and assurance to those who truly aspire to “lay hold on eternal life”(1Tim. 6:12). There often is a need for causing hearers to “feel bad,” but there are many occasions on which weary and hard-pressed travelers need to “feel good” as they plod along the obstacle-strewn road that leads to heaven. Sometimes it is difficult to determine which approach is appropriate to the time and circumstances.

c. His preaching is also to be accompanied by:

- (1) All longsuffering. There is no substitute for patience and compassion in a preacher’s efforts to recover sinners from the captivity of Satan (3:6). No trait in his character will as readily appeal to the hearts of those he teaches as a deep humility that admits to sinners, “*There, but for the grace of God, go I.*” Holier-than-thou teachers almost always are unsuccessful in their work to “Rescue the Perishing.” Impatience with a student’s lack of familiarity with the word of God or with his slowness to “catch on” to Biblical concepts that seem so simple to the teacher is a sure route to failure for any preacher. The ability to “walk a mile in another man’s shoes” is a great asset to every teacher of the gospel of Christ;
- (2) Teaching. It appears redundant for Paul to command Timothy to be sure that his “preaching” includes “teaching,” for preaching *is* teaching. However, no redundancy is evident when we remind ourselves that much “preaching” today is devoted to “words” about many things other than the “word” of God. The pulpits are filled with men who are expert in everything except the Scriptures. Their lessons are replete with much information about all sorts of things but devoid of much information about how to be saved and how to stay that way.

**Paul's charge to Timothy was, "Don't waste your precious time or the time of your hearers with trivial and worldly matters, as popular with audiences as they might be. They contribute absolutely nothing to a sinner's need of salvation." Only the word of God can move the pilgrim toward his eternal goal (Jn. 8:32). As he comments on verse two, Kenneth Wuest has some interesting observations about what makes preaching worthwhile:**

The charge is to preach the Word. The English word "preach" brings to our mind at once the picture of the ordained clergyman standing in his pulpit on the Lord's Day ministering the Word. But the Greek word here (*kerusso*) left quite a different impression with Timothy. At once it called to his mind the Imperial Herald, spokesman of the Emperor, proclaiming in a formal, grave, and authoritative manner which must be listened to, the message which the Emperor gave him to announce. It brought before him the picture of the town official who would make a proclamation in a public gathering. The word is in a construction which makes it a summary command to be obeyed at once. It is a sharp command as in military language. This should be the pattern for the preacher today. His preaching should be characterized by that dignity which comes from the consciousness of the fact that he is an official herald of the King of kings. It should be accompanied by that note of authority which will command the respect, careful attention, and proper reaction of the listeners. There is no place for clowning in the pulpit of Jesus Christ.

Timothy is to preach the Word. The word "Word" here refers to the whole body of revealed truth, as will be seen by comparing this passage with 1Thessalonians 1:6 and Galatians 6:6. The preacher must present, not book reviews, not politics, not economics, not current topics of the day, not a philosophy of life denying the Bible and based upon unproven theories of science, but the Word. The preacher as a herald cannot choose his message. He is given a message to proclaim by his Sovereign. If he will not proclaim that, let him step down from his exalted position;

- (3) Whenever and wherever there are people lost and dying in sin, gospel preaching is needed. And the faithful preacher must stand ready to preach "in season" and "out of season." But sometimes, the prevailing environment or some unusual events seem to highlight the urgency of preaching more than at other times. Paul spoke to Timothy of such a situation;
- (4) "The time will come" when receptivity to the truth will be greatly diminished. And even as Paul wrote, there were those who were "creeping into houses" and leading the unsuspecting into sinful doctrines and practices (3:6,7). Sound preaching was much needed to undo the evil that such wicked teachers were doing. However, preaching the word would also have a secondary but extremely important effect. Perhaps strong preaching would also hinder or delay the devastating attitudes that otherwise would undermine people's acceptance of God's truth at a future time;
- (5) A less favorable atmosphere for preaching the word would result when:
  - a. More people would not tolerate the proclamation of the "whole counsel of God" (Acts 20:27). But they should know that a partial gospel is little better than no gospel at all. James Macknight, who like many others believed that these verses

foretold the great apostasy resulting in the Roman Catholic Church, had this to say about those who would not endure sound doctrine:

This prophetic description of the temper of Christians during the apostasy, hath been verified to an astonishing degree. For then the generality of the people nauseated the wholesome doctrines of true piety and sound morality inculcated in the gospel: Then the monks and friars, in all their sermons, spake of nothing but of miracles performed at the tombs of martyrs and confessors, or by their relics: And then the people delighted to hear nothing from their teachers but *fables* of that sort, as the apostle foretold, ver. 4; because by these they were confirmed in the belief that the superstitious practices which their teachers recommended procure them the pardon of their sins, however atrocious, and admission into heaven, notwithstanding they continued in sin to the end of their lives;

- b. More people would become more inclined to resort to using their own human wisdom instead of God's wisdom in His word to try to solve their personal problems. They should be warned that "it is not in man that walks to direct his own steps" (Jer. 10:23);
- c. More people would have "itching ears" to hear teaching that agreed with their own thinking and feelings about religious matters rather than to listen to what the Lord has said about man's duty and salvation. They should be made to understand that "there is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death" (Prov. 16:25);
- d. More people would follow and support teachers who were concerned only with their own advancement and not for the spiritual well-being of their hearers. They would be eager to "scratch" any ears that would respond to their shameful teaching with adulation and worldly rewards. They should be confronted with Jesus' declaration that, "...if the blind leads the blind, both will fall into a ditch" (Matt. 15:14);
- e. More people would refuse to listen to gospel truths that ran counter to their ideas of the way things ought to be. They would set themselves up as being best to judge what things were in their own interests. They should be shown that only the God who made man is capable of deciding matters that will work for man's greatest good (John 2:24,25);
- f. More people would resort to religious "fables" and exotic doctrines that stir the imagination and challenge man's adventurous spirit. Human testimony rather than the proclamations of age-old Scripture would become the basis upon which religious activity would be pursued. They should have pointed out to them that the "good way" is the "Old Paths" that the Lord had laid out to take men safely past the traps and hindrances that confront the traveler as he blazes his own trail and finally enters the "wide gate" that opens to spiritual destruction (Matt. 7:13).

The "fables" about which Paul warned were probably the fables of the Jewish rabbis. David Lipscomb provides some information about them:

It was said in the Jewish schools that an oral law had been given on Mount Sinai, and that this law a succession of teachers, from the time of Moses, had handed down.

This “law upon the lip,” as it was termed, was further illustrated and enlarged by the sayings and comments of the more famous Jewish rabbis, and in the time of the Lord Jesus Christ constituted a supplement to the written law of Moses. For centuries this supplementary code was preserved by memory or in sacred rolls and doubtless was constantly receiving additions. It contained, along with many wild and improbable legendary histories, some wise teachings. This strange collection of tradition and comment was committed to writing in the second century by Rabbi Jehuda under the general name of the Mishna or “repetition of the law.” Round this compilation a complement of discussions--the Gemara--was gradually formed...These works--Mishna and the Gemara together with a second Gemara formed somewhat earlier in Palestine--are generally known to us as the Talmud.

- (6) The only antidote that might stem the poisonous tide of popular apostasy was the diligent effort of sincere and dedicated teachers like Timothy. The challenge that he must meet was:
- a. **Be watchful in all things.** Timothy’s task was much the same as that assigned to Ezekiel long before: “So you, son of man: I have made you a watchman for the house of Israel; therefore you shall hear a word from My mouth and warn them for Me” (Ezek. 33:7). The watchman’s duty was no less important and his warnings were no less crucial because many would refuse to heed his alarms. Moreover, the well-being of his own soul was involved in how faithfully he fulfilled his responsibility. Timothy must remain aware of what was happening around him. He must be able to detect any wayward behavior that could lead the disciples into danger. He must cry out vigorously against any departure from approved teachings and practices. He must make every effort to assure that all disobediences were monitored and that appropriate discipline was applied to those who were reluctant to amend their ways;
  - b. **Endure afflictions.** Opposition to his efforts to keep the brethren in compliance with God’s truth would certainly be encountered by the inexperienced youth. Some offenders would persecute him with every possible tactic and with every available weapon. He might be tempted to *give in* or even to *give up* in his struggle to keep the church pure. But that would cause numerous souls to be lost, including his own (1Tim. 4:16). Enduring afflictions would not be *easy*, but it would be *very worthwhile*;
  - c. **Do the work of an evangelist** [*euangelistes*-- lit., “a messenger of good”]. The work of an evangelist, of course, is *evangelizing*-- taking the gospel to other men. Different pursuits may occupy his attention at times, and some of them will be necessary. But many of them may be only distractions from his central task of teaching the gospel publicly and from house to house (Acts 20:20), and they must be very limited. Some brethren might be pleased for the preacher to spend his time in matters other than study and teaching, especially when he joins with them in those matters. But it is not as a hunter, fisherman, golfer, sports spectator or hobbyist that his duty is fulfilled. His work as an evangelist must be his principal

interest and occupation.

Verse 5b-- “FULFILL YOUR MINISTRY...”

1. Another word by which Timothy should shape his activities as a good minister of the Lord was “**fulfill**”-- “fulfill your ministry!”
2. “Fulfill” is *plerophoreo*-- “to bring in full measure.” The teacher of God’s word must not allow anything, however important and urgent it might appear, to “shortchange” God and his brethren. He has received his talents from God, and he has usually been afforded his opportunities and support for preaching by his brethren. All expect him to give a good return on their investment in his ministry [service]. He must make every effort not to disappoint.

Verses 6-16-- “COME...”

1. It appears that one of the principal reasons for Paul to write this letter was to alert Timothy to the urgent need for him to leave his work in Ephesus and join Paul in Rome. Paul first dealt in the epistle with various matters that would need Timothy’s attention before making his departure, but having done that, he introduces his request for the young man’s company.
2. “Come.” The apostle does not divulge the particular reasons why it was so important for him to make this request. There may have been some special service that only Timothy could provide for Paul or for someone else. It may be that His companionship was vital enough to Paul, as he faced the ultimate punishment from Rome for his spreading of the gospel across the empire, for Timothy to leave his evangelistic responsibilities in Ephesus.
3. Whatever may have been the reasons behind Paul’s appeal, Timothy should respond “quickly.” It is likely that the aged preacher was convinced that his death at the hands of his captors was imminent. Any lengthy delay by Timothy in coming to be at his side might render his arrival *too late* to make any difference. Paul offered further guidance to Timothy about deciding *when* to leave Ephesus by telling him to “come before winter” (verse 21). There were several possible reasons for this stipulation:
  - a. Paul’s death obviously would occur “shortly.” Macknight asserts that evidence exists that Paul was executed late in 66 A.D. or early in 67. If so, the anticipation of that event would explain the urgency of Timothy’s arrival if the apostle was to see his son in the faith one more time;
  - b. Paul expressed his need for several items that Timothy should bring to him when he came. One was a cloak, an item that would have been invaluable to his comfort in a cold, damp prison cell during winter months. The relative unimportance of these items to Paul, however, would make this only a secondary reason for Timothy to vacate his labors in Ephesus;

- c. Winter was an inopportune time for travel over water, as Paul knew from his own experience recorded in Acts 27. Timothy might not arrive at all if bad weather conditions should interrupt his journey.
4. It seems clear that Paul was convinced that his death sentence would be imposed very soon. He had been tried and given at least two hearings at which to defend himself (verse 16). He had obviously been convicted of a crime against the empire for preaching a religion that dared to challenge the absolute supremacy of the emperor. Perhaps a definite date had been set for his beheading; perhaps he had only assessed his circumstances and had made his own decision about the “time of his departure.” Or, maybe heaven had given him some information about the event. However he may have arrived at his conclusion, the apostle was convinced that his death was “at hand.”
  5. Paul had always considered it appropriate for *all* Christians to be “living sacrifices” for the Lord (Rom. 12:2). Personally, he had sacrificed everything considered important to the world in order to serve Jesus Christ as an apostle (1Cor. 4:9-13). And now, he was to become a “dying sacrifice” to honor and glorify his Lord.
  6. Paul, of course, was familiar with the rituals and ceremonies of the Law under which he had been reared from a child. Specific procedures were dictated in that Law for making sacrifices to Jehovah. Among them, drink offerings of wine were specified to accompany the flesh of slain animals as part of those sacrifices (Num. 15:8-10). Paul adopts the imagery of Jewish sacrifices in an effort to portray his feelings about bringing glory to his Lord by being offered up as a sacrifice to Him. Paul was not the *principal* player in the sacrifice; he was not the Lamb. Only Jesus could fill that role (John 1:29). But he was glad to give his life as a “small” sacrifice to complement the “immense” sacrifice of Christ’s life. He had certainly worked *with* Christ to accomplish the salvation of lost souls (2Cor. 6:1), just as the wine of Jewish offerings “worked” *with* [accompanied] animal flesh to honor Jehovah.
  7. Some scholars contend that some Gentiles also were accustomed to pouring out wine on the heads of animals about to be sacrificed to their pagan gods. But we cannot know whether Paul had this in mind as he wrote about his own life being taken from him by the Roman authorities.
  8. *Three* facts gave the apostle the courage to look beyond his execution to the reward he had been promised in return for his loyal service to Jesus.
    - a. He had fought the good fight. If there ever was a fighter, Paul was. His weapons were not those used by worldly men in their fighting, but his combat against the forces of evil relied on tools far more powerful than worldly implements (2Cor. 10:3-6). He often compared the activities and equipment of military men to those of men of God (1Tim. 1:18; 6:12; 2Tim. 2:3,4; 1Thes.. 5:8; Eph. 6:13-17). As the Lord’s soldier, Paul always exhibited qualities that assured success:
      - (1) He was cautious of his enemy’s strengths and remained aware of the dangers presented by a formidable foe (2Cor. 2:11);

- (2) He never avoided contact with the enemy but welcomed every opportunity to engage in battle with Satan's troops and to press the battle to victory (Acts 20: 27; 1Thes. 2:2);
  - (3) He was not disheartened because of the great numbers against whom he must fight. He believed that any number of soldiers that were on the Lord's side constituted a majority (2Tim.1:12);
  - (4) He never gave way to the enemy nor did he make any treaties of peace with him (Eph. 4:27);
  - (5) He never became overconfident of himself or of his abilities. He recognized that real strength to fight the devil must come from the Lord (1Cor. 10:12; Eph. 6: 10).
- b. He had finished the race. We have no record of Paul's involvement in athletics prior to his conversion, but it seems evident that he had some interest in wrestling, running, and such exercises. He used athletics to illustrate several of his lessons about the Christian life (1Cor. 9:24-27; Phil. 16; Eph. 6:12; Heb. 12:1,2; 2Tim. 2: 5, etc.). Here, he compares his own long and arduous life in the Lord's service to the task of a runner who must call upon every resource within himself in order to push himself to finish the daunting marathon race in which he is competing. Regardless of how fast the start or how impressive the performance over most of the course, everything else counts for nothing unless the runner finishes the race.
- c. He had kept the faith. "The faith" was the gospel which he had spent the better part of his adult life teaching everyone who would listen (Gal. 1:23). Since the day of his conversion, he had never lost his faith in the faith in spite of the sufferings and persecutions that had beset him because of his dedication to the gospel. [See 2Cor. 11:23-33.] His zeal for the truth in old age was as vigorous as it had been in young manhood. He never considered that he had done enough to serve his Savior:

Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected; but I press on, that I may lay hold on that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me. Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus (Philippians 3:12-14).

9. Finally [after his present troubles were past], there was a splendid reward reserved for Paul in heaven. A "crown" such as olympic champions were given would be his precious prize. It would signify his ultimate victory over the sinful world, it would validate his personal righteousness before God, and it would serve to motivate other disciples to strive for the same recognition. Unlike a crown that could be bestowed on a single winner, the crown of righteousness would gladly be given by the Lord to anyone who loved God and his salvation enough to pay the cost of attaining the prize of eternal life (Mark 8:34,35).



10. Paul's isolation and feelings of loneliness must also have played a role in moving him to ask his young friend to *come* to him. We are not told all the *details* about persons he names in this passage, but he does inform us that:
- a. **Demas** had "forsaken" him because he "loved this present world." Demas is mentioned earlier in Col. 4:14 in company with Luke. It seems that he was in Paul's favor at that time. Now, he is charged with "loving" the world as the cause of his defection. The usual view of his case is that he had allowed worldly cares to interfere with the loyalty to Christ that Paul expected of him. Some scholars maintain, however, that his care for "this present world" was only a normal desire to live and that he had left Rome [with Paul's blessing] to avoid being punished for alleged treasonous activity. But the usual meaning of "forsaken" would seem to discount that interpretation;
  - b. **Cresens** and **Titus** also had left the city. They are not accused of "forsaking" Paul but only "departing," and most likely they had been sent on missions to Galatia and Dalmatia. We know nothing more about Cresens, but we know enough about Titus, another young preacher entrusted by Paul with great responsibility, not to entertain any thought that he had abandoned the apostle in such a time of need;
  - c. **Luke** had been brought with Paul to Rome (Acts 28:14) and apparently had remained in his company until now. Some think that the medical help made available to the apostle by Luke was so important that it accounts for the doctor's staying behind while others were being sent by Paul into various places;
  - d. **Mark**, who once had been a loyal fellow worker with Paul (Acts 12:25), had at one time "departed" from Paul in Pamphylia and subsequently had worked with Barnabas instead of Paul (Acts 15:38,39). Whatever differences had existed between them, Paul now judges Mark to be "useful for ministry" and asks Timothy to bring him either from Ephesus or from some location along Timothy's route to Rome;
  - e. **Tychicus** had been dispatched to Ephesus for some good reason. It is supposed by some that he had been sent to Ephesus to replace Timothy in the tasks Paul had identified in this letter as needing attention by a faithful worker in the church.
11. Several items important to Paul should be retrieved for him at Troas and brought to Rome. We are not told why these things were left at Troas or whether all were in Carpus' keeping, but Timothy was told that Paul needed them.
- a. A cloak which would be very useful during the cold of winter. W.E. Vine says about this "cloak" (cloke) [*phelones*]:
 

...a "mantle," denoting a traveling "cloak" for protection against stormy weather, 2Tim. 4:13. Some, however, regard it as a Cretan word for *chiton*, "a tunic." It certainly was not an ecclesiastical vestment. The Syriac renders it a case for writings (some regard it as a book-cover), an explanation noted by Chrysostom, but improbable. It may have been a "light mantle like a cashmere dust-cloak, in which the books and parchments were wrapped (Mackie in *Hastings' Dic. of the Bible*).

Scholarship can also be cited that this "cloak" was in reality a bag or a heavy

- water-repellent coat that would keep Paul warm in a cold prison cell.
- b. Books of an undisclosed description. These were most likely papyrus scrolls either used by or written by Paul. No reason is given why they had become so important to him or whether he desired them for his own use or someone else's.
  - c. Parchments that he "especially" wanted in his possession. These were thin pieces of animal skins that had been carefully dried and pressed. They were reserved for writing only the most important documents. Perhaps these parchments contained originals or copies of some of Paul's own letters. Maybe they were letters regarding important church business that he had received from various places.
12. It would appear that Paul, holding to the thought that his execution would occur shortly, was anxious to gather his belongings and put them into some order. A later orderly disposition of items such as those listed could be of significant help to certain individuals and churches for several possible reasons.
13. As Paul mentally surveyed the list of persons who had worked either *for* or *against* his efforts to spread the gospel, another name surfaced from his memory. Alexander, a coppersmith who had in the past done him "much harm," was still a force of evil to be dealt with. This man possibly was the same Jew who had participated in the commotion against Paul at Ephesus (Acts 19:33,34). Or, more likely, he was the Alexander who had "blasphemed" and had shipwrecked his faith for some reason (1Tim. 1:20). Whatever his identity, he was a potential threat to Timothy and to the progress of the gospel at Ephesus, just as he had been to Paul and to the word of God sometime in the past. Reminiscent of David in many of his psalms, Paul says of this enemy of Christ, "May the Lord repay him according to his works," which Scripture assures us He will do (Rev. 20:13). Wuest says that "may" in the Greek is a simple future tense that states a future fact. It should be understood in the sense of "will require."
14. Alexander and others had deliberately and maliciously sought to hurt Paul and his work. However, there were people like those who had deserted him during his first hearing before Caesar, who had intended him no harm. Their actions had come from weakness, not malice. The apostle still had feelings for them, and he desired that they not be judged too severely for their mistakes. His wish, like Jesus' prayer on the cross, was, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do" (Luke 23:34).

Verses 17,18-- "THE LORD STOOD WITH ME..."

1. Remembering all of the enemies of Jesus who had done shameful things to him over his years of preaching, recalling the numerous times he had suffered from unfortunate contacts with natural occurrences, and, most painful of all, thinking of the long list of "false brethren" (2Cor. 11:26) who had betrayed him and the Lord in many ways, Paul surely marveled that he had survived. Only one thing could explain it: The Lord

stood with me and strengthened me” in every adversity, including his troubles and trials [literally] as a Roman prisoner.

2. Paul had been “delivered out of the mouth of the lion” at the conclusion of his first hearing before Nero. Either he had avoided the possible sentence of being cast before wild animals, as was often the punishment given Christians by the Roman courts, or his reference was figurative, with the fierce Nero being portrayed as a lion who had the power to destroy defendants if he chose to do so.
3. There were *two* reasons why the Lord had delivered him from an immediate death and had allowed him an interval of time before the ultimate blow was delivered.
  - a. The message of the gospel could be more “fully” preached through Paul’s display of patience in suffering for the truth and in hope of deliverance into a better state after the suffering is finished. These great advantages enjoyed by Christians over unbelievers could be best understood and appreciated through observing them in action in the behavior of such a faithful saint as Paul.
  - b. The Gentiles especially needed such lessons as Paul’s example could provide. They struggled in pagan religions that could not offer the patience and hope so precious to loyal disciples of Jesus Christ. Both Jews and Gentiles would “hear” about Paul’s example and make a fresh commitment to follow that example all the way to heaven (1Cor. 11:1).
4. Benefits to other saints were not the only fruits of his captivity and ultimate death. An immeasurable blessing awaited Paul at the end of his earthly difficulties. He was confident that freedom from his problems lay just ahead. He probably had no false illusions about being loosed from his prison chains and turned out into the world again to proclaim his message of joy and salvation. But he anticipated a much freer freedom and a joy that even surpassed what he felt in preaching the gospel. He would be bothered no more by the “evil work” of evil men. Instead, he would wear his crown of righteousness and reign in eternal perfection in the heavenly kingdom to which his very being had been dedicated since he had been called many years before on the road to Damascus to become God’s apostle to the Gentiles.

**Verses 19-22-- CLOSING**

1. Prisca [Priscilla] and Aquila had been longtime friends and fellow workers with Paul. They were Jews with whom Paul had lived and worked when he first came to Corinth (Acts 18:2,3). He perhaps had taught and baptized them both (?), and they remained close to the apostle from that time until now, even “risking their own necks” in some way to save Paul (Rom. 16:3,4). This faithful couple now resided at Ephesus and would, no doubt, be close acquaintances of Timothy.
2. Onesiphorus likely also lived in Ephesus. He had shown kindness to Paul in Rome in spite of his chains. He had known the apostle previously in Ephesus and had served

him in that city as well. Paul in turn had prayed for God's mercy in behalf of the faithful saint (2Tim. 1:16-18).

3. Erastus apparently was a native of Ephesus who had worked with Paul there and had been used in special work at times (Acts 19:22). Many suppose that he was the same man mentioned in Romans 16:23 as being the treasurer of the city of Corinth. It seems that Paul had planned for him to be with him in Rome, but for some undisclosed reason he had instead remained at Corinth.
4. Trophimus was the Gentile Christian from Ephesus who was falsely accused by the Jews in Jerusalem of having been brought into the temple by Paul (Acts 21:29). Illness had caused him to be left by Paul at Miletus, something about which we know nothing more. We can, however, note that his being "left sick" indicates that the miraculous powers of healing possessed by the apostles were not intended to be utilized in situations that had nothing to do with confirming the gospel they preached (Mark 16:20).
5. Although none had stood by Paul during his first hearing before his Roman judges, there were some brethren who, at this point in his imprisonment, were associating with him again. Eubulus, Prudens, Linus, Claudia, and "all the brethren" sent their greetings to the young evangelist.
6. Finally, Paul's last "famous last words" to his dear son in the faith were the best and most encouraging of all: "The Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Grace be with you. Amen."

***"Amen..."***

**Knowing from whom that prayer came, and having confidence that Paul's prayer had received a favorable hearing with the Lord, Timothy's heart would be comforted in the grace of God for a very long time.**

1. \_\_\_\_\_ will judge the \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ at His \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_,
2. Timothy should \_\_\_\_\_ the \_\_\_\_\_ and be ready in \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_.
3. What were *five* things that should characterize Timothy's preaching?
  - a. \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. \_\_\_\_\_
  - d. \_\_\_\_\_
  - e. \_\_\_\_\_
4. When men refuse to hear \_\_\_\_\_, they will do what?
  - a. \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. \_\_\_\_\_
5. Timothy should do *four* things in his work as a preacher. What?
  - a. \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. \_\_\_\_\_
  - d. \_\_\_\_\_
6. Paul could claim *three* great achievements in his life as a teacher. What were they?
  - a. \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. \_\_\_\_\_
7. Paul's "crown" was:
  - a. A crown of \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. Given by a \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. To be received on \_\_\_\_\_
  - d. Available to \_\_\_\_\_
8. Paul mentions \_\_\_\_\_ [how many?] different people in verses 9-22.
9. \_\_\_\_\_ the \_\_\_\_\_ had done much harm to Paul, who said that he would be \_\_\_\_\_ according to his \_\_\_\_\_.
10. God spared Paul for a time in order to preach the gospel \_\_\_\_\_ and to allow the \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_.
11. Paul believed that God would \_\_\_\_\_ him from every \_\_\_\_\_ and keep him for His \_\_\_\_\_.
12. Paul's last words to Timothy were: "\_\_\_\_\_ be \_\_\_\_\_ you. \_\_\_\_\_."