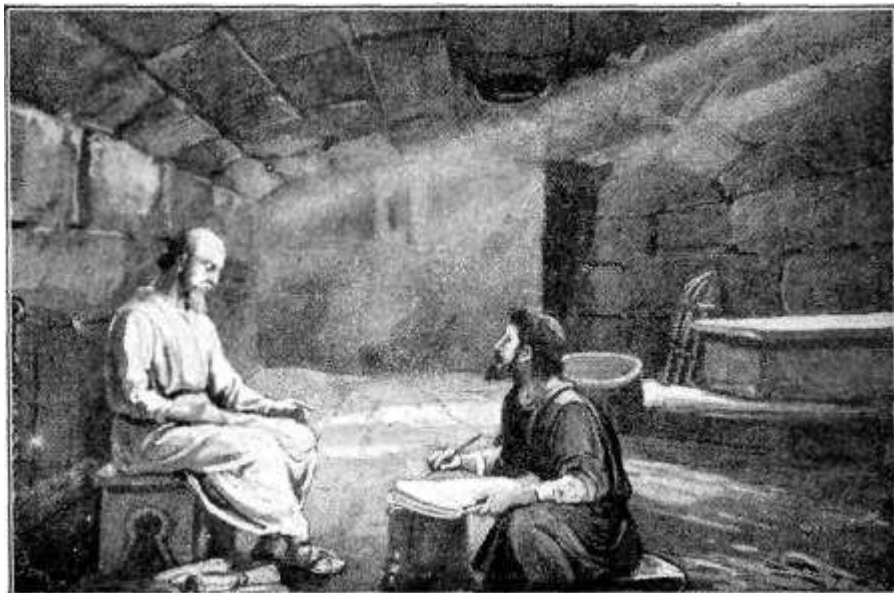


**CONCISE BIBLE NOTES**  
**THE FIRST EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE TO**  
**1 TIMOTHY**

**Dr. Stanford E. Murrell**



**Paul Writing to Timothy**

## THE FIRST EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE TO TIMOTHY

*Written AD 65 or 66*

### 1 TIMOTHY 1

<b>Divine Author:</b>	God the Holy Spirit (2 Timothy 3:16)
<b>Human Author:</b>	Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ
<b>Purpose:</b>	To encourage Timothy to combat heresy in Ephesus (1 Timothy 1:3, 18; 4:12-16), and to instruct him how to behave in the House of the Lord (3:15)
<b>Background:</b>	Acts 20:28-31

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

1:1. Only since 1726, has the church called some of Paul's writing's, The Pastoral Epistles (1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, and Titus). Paul Anton is the first person to use this term as Paul instructs Timothy on how to conduct his behavior in the care, and oversight of the local church. Titus is also a pastoral epistle. 2 Timothy is more of a personal epistle. All of the epistles were expected to be read in all the churches, for the truth of God is for all believers, and not just for a select few.

1:1. Paul, an apostle. Timothy knew that Paul was an apostle, and so did the church at Ephesus. What Paul is doing, is establishing his authority. He wants Timothy to pay close attention to what he has to say.

1:1 by the commandment of God. The idea of the freedom of the will was not an issue with Paul. This is an issue with many Arminians, and with secularist, but it is not an issue to those who embrace the doctrines of God. God is sovereign. He controls our hearts, our minds, and our wills. With Augustine we say, ""Grant what thou commandest, and then command what thou wilt" (Bishop of Hippo, 354-430). It was the will of God that Paul be an apostle, and so God commanded what He willed.

1:1. God our Savior. It is God the Father who is the Author of our salvation. It is the Lord Jesus Christ who is the believer's hope, based on His redemptive work at Calvary. It is the Holy Spirit who regenerates the unbeliever's heart, thereby applying what the Father planned, and the Son has executed.

1:1. God our Savior. In none of his other epistles did Paul refer to God as "Savior". Perhaps he did so here because the Romans were calling other men, savior.

### Roman "Saviors"

- Scipo                   A Roman general was called, "Our hope and our salvation".
- Aescapulus           The god of healing was referred to as "god of salvation, savior".
- Nero                   On copper coins Nero had printed an image of himself, with the inscription  
"God and Savior".

1:1. God our Savior. "F.W. Borum in one of his books speaks of a man who was an unbeliever, whose name was Rushworth. He had been a skeptic all his life. Finally, he resolved to read for an hour a day the book that he had so long derided. As he was reading along, he looked up, and spoke to his wife and said, 'Wife, if this book is right, we are all wrong.' He continued to read. A few days later he looked at his wife and he said, 'Wife, if this book is right we are lost.' And then a few days later he looked up to his wife and he said, 'Wife, if this book is right, we may be saved.' And he was saved by God our Savior. So the apostle stresses that" (S. Lewis Johnson).

1:1. Lord Jesus Christ, *which* is our hope. This is a great title for Christ. He is our hope. *Psalms 5 Why art thou cast down, O my soul? And why art thou disquieted within me? Hope in God: for I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God.*

"My hope is built on nothing less  
Than Jesus' blood and righteousness.  
I dare not trust the sweetest frame,  
But wholly trust in Jesus' Name.

On Christ the solid Rock I stand,  
All other ground is sinking sand;  
All other ground is sinking sand.

When darkness seems to hide His face,  
I rest on His unchanging grace.  
In every high and stormy gale,  
My anchor holds within the veil.

His oath, His covenant, His blood,  
Support me in the whelming flood.  
When all around my soul gives way,  
He then is all my Hope and Stay.

When He shall come with trumpet sound,  
Oh may I then in Him be found.  
Dressed in His righteousness alone,  
Faultless to stand before the throne."

Edward Mote, c. 1834

### Hope in Difficult Days

Despite wars and the rumors of war, despite economic chaos in the economies of the world, despite the threat of a nuclear holocaust by North Korea in April, 2013, there is hope, in Jesus Christ our Lord. There have been other dark days in history. Tacitus wrote of the terrible conditions of the world during his time in history, "I am entering upon the history of a period rich in disaster, doomy with wars, rent with seditions, nay savage in it's very hours of peace. Four emperors perished by the sword. There were three civil wars. There were more with foreigners and some had the character of both at once. Rome wasted by fires, its oldest temples burned, the very capital set in flames by Roman hands, the defilement of sacred rights, adultery in high places, the see crowded with exiles, island rocks drenched with murder. Yet wilder was the frenzy in Rome, nobility, wealth, the refusal of office, it's acceptance, everything was a crime and virtue was the surest way to ruin." The Christian looks at history, past and present, and says, "The Lord Jesus Christ is my Hope." The Christian has hope in life and hope in death.

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

1:2. Timothy. Paul addresses this epistle to a young man named Timothy, who had been converted through the preaching of the apostle. Timothy was from the city of Lystra (Acts 16:1), a providence of Asia, which is now Turkey.

1:2. Grace, mercy, *and* peace. Here are three great words of redemption. The Christian has been given a new vocabulary.



1:2. son. genuine child. Greek, *tekton*, means, “to beget”; *teknon* is someone who has begotten a child. By using the word son, Paul emphasizes Timothy’s position in his heart as his “own son”, meaning that Timothy became his spiritual child. Paul met Timothy during his First Missionary Journey. One goal of every Christian should be to have spiritual children, and grandchildren, in the faith. The heart of young Timothy was open to receiving the gospel because, though his father was a Greek, his mother, Eunice, was a Jewish believer. His grandmother, Lois, was also a believer (2 Timothy 1:5). Despite his youth, Paul realized Timothy’s gift as a pastor, and minister of the gospel (2 Timothy 1:16). In the providence of God, Timothy became a valuable assistant to Paul. Wanting to give no offense to the Jews he was seeking to minister to, Paul circumcised Timothy (Acts 16:3).

Timothy was with Paul during his Second Missionary Journey. Leaving Lystra and Derbe, Timothy traveled with his spiritual father throughout Asia Minor, and on into Macedonia. In Berea, Timothy stayed with Silas to minister the Word (Acts 17:10-15). Later, both Timothy and Silas reunited with Paul in the city of Corinth.

Timothy also went with Paul on the Third Missionary Journey. He was with Paul in Ephesus. Timothy is called Paul’s helper (Acts 19:22). As a helper, Timothy was sent out on a missionary ministry of his own with another disciple, Erastus. The two went to Macedonia. Later, Paul established Timothy as the pastor at Ephesus.

Later, when Paul was in his first Roman imprisonment, Timothy was with him (Philippians 2:19-23).

### **No Other Doctrine**

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

1:3. Having left Timothy in Ephesus and moved on to Macedonia in northern Greece, Paul writes to him.

1:3. As I besought thee. Paul might have commanded, or demanded, but ever the gracious person, Paul simply pleaded with Timothy.

#### **Timothy: A Partner with Paul in Ministry**

- My Fellow Worker                      Romans 16:21; 1 Thessalonians 3:2
- Our Brother                              2 Corinthians 1:1; Colossians 1:1; 1 Thessalonians 3:2;  
Philemon 1:1; Hebrews 12:23
- Servant of Jesus Christ              Philippian 1:1

1:3. Macedonia is in northern Greece.

1:3. charge. instruct. Timothy was an apostolic legate, or Paul's representative. Neither Timothy nor Titus were local pastors, as that term is understood today.

1:3. no other doctrine. Paul did not want Timothy to teach novelties. It is dangerous to teach something contrary to the historic Christian faith. There is a tendency in human nature to become bored with the historic faith and have an "eureka" moment, resulting in new teachings which are contrary to the faith, and which other Christians have never heard of. *Jude 3 Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.*

The prohibition against novelties is different from those times in the Christian church when a great biblical doctrine comes with freshness, and a new significance. In the fourth century, when Augustine rediscovered the doctrine of grace, it was a special moment for the church. When the Reformation came in October, 1517, the church was blessed. But the doctrines renewed were not novelties.

### **Forbidden Novelties**

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

1:4. It is possible to hold Christianity in the wrong kind of spirit.

### **Characteristics of Heresy**

- |                               |                                |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| • Speculative intellectualism | 1 Timothy 1:4; 6:4; Titus 3:9  |
| • Intellectual pride          | 1 Timothy 6:4                  |
| • Asceticism                  | 1 Timothy 4:4-5; Titus 1:15    |
| • Immorality                  | 2 Timothy 3:6; 4:3; Titus 1:16 |
| • Greed                       | Titus 1:11                     |
| • Argumentativeness           | 1 Timothy 6:20; Titus 3:9      |
| • Legalism (based on the Law) | 1 Timothy 1:6-7                |
| • False teaching              | 2 Timothy 2:17-18              |

Gnosticism, a philosophy of knowledge, was characterized by these traits of heresy. The Gnostics believed that matter was eternal. Not only was God eternal, but matter was eternal. This set up the concept of dualism.

According to Gnosticism, matter was evil. It was eternal, and it was evil. Therefore, the Gnostics reasoned, there must be aeons, or emanations, which proceeded out of the holy God in heaven, much like concentric circles are formed by throwing a pebble in the water.

This presuppositional reasoning led the Gnostics to think that Jesus Christ was one of the *aeons*, for each *aeon* had a name, and each *aeon* had a biography, and thus a genealogy. For the Gnostics, the real key to salvation was to know the *aeons*, these divine emanations, these demi-urges, and their biography, and their genealogies, and through this knowledge come to know truth. So there were much speculation, and endless arguments, over genealogies and their significance. All of this produced a spiritual elite for those who proclaimed to understand.

In their arrogance, the Gnostics divided individuals into categories. There was the natural man, a reference to the person who did not understand what the Gnostics were trying to say, and there was the spiritual man. The spiritual man was the one who embraced the teachings of the Gnostics.

This twofold division finds a counterpart in Paul's teaching about the Natural Man, and the Spiritual Man of Romans 7.

The Gnostics also had no place for genuine holiness of life, or the cross of Jesus Christ. In this, they were quite different from those in the Christian community.

### **Characteristics of a Christian**

- A lover of the Lord Jesus Christ
- A concern for holiness of life
- An appreciation for the Cross of Calvary

Oswald Chambers said, "All heaven is interested in the cross of Christ. All hell is terribly afraid of it, while men are the only beings who more or less ignore it." The Christian does not ignore the Cross.

1:4. fables. Greek (μῦθος, muthos, "myth"), referring to a tale, a fiction (study Judges 9:8-15; 2 Kings 14:9). In the New Testament, the term fable is used to speak of a falsehood, or a cleverly devised tale. *1 Timothy 4:7 But refuse profane and old wives' fables, and exercise thyself rather unto godliness. 2 Timothy 4:4 And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables. Titus 1:14 Not giving heed to Jewish fables, and commandments of men, that turn from the truth.*

#### Modern Day Novelties

- Christian Science
- Dispensationalism
- Scientology
- The New Age Movement
- Hare Krishna etc.

1:4. minister. render.

1:4. questions endless speculations.

1:4. edifying. The Greek word here is "dispensation" (οἰκονομία oikonomia (oy-kon-om-ee'-ah), referring to the administration (of a household or estate); specifically, a (religious) "economy". What Paul is saying is that religious fables, and striving over genealogies promote controversy, rather than God's purpose in redemption, and God's saving plan in faith.

#### The Purpose of Paul's Charge

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

1:5. Now the end. The goal of the charge to Timothy not to teach anyone fables, or myths, is love. Sometimes love must express itself in a gospel rebuke. Timothy is to rebuke false teachers because of godly love for the truth and for the church. All biblical doctrine will lead to Christian love, the sacrificial kind of love which is illustrated in the heart of God, by the giving of His Son. *2 Corinthians 9:15 Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift.*

1:5. out of a pure heart. Jesus said, *Matthew 5:8 Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.*

1:5. a good conscience. When a person is able to examine their life without feeling guilty, that is a good conscience.

1:5. faith unfeigned. This refers to a faith which is unhypocritical. There is an authentic faith. There is a Christian faith that works through love. Dr. S. Lewis Johnson provides his expanded translation of this verse saying,



"Timothy, I'm give you this charge, not simply that you shall slay the false teachers, but that out of your exhortation and charges there should come true Christian love, which incidentally, can only come through, of course, good teaching of the word of God."

### The Final Fate of the False Teachers

6 From which some having swerved have turned aside unto vain jangling;

1:6. swerved. Greek, (*ἀστοχεῖω astocheo*), to miss the mark, i.e. (figuratively) deviate from truth. This word means to fail. The false teachers have failed to lead people to the truth of God.

1:6. vain jangling. A reference to empty babble, meaningless random talk. This is true of most false teaching and liberal theology. It is very difficult to comprehend what is trying to be said. There is a lot of words, but no real sense.

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

1:7. desiring.

### Characteristics of the Mind of the Heretics and the Mind of the Christian Thinker

The Heretic	The Christian Thinker
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A desire for novelty</li> <li>• Exaltation of the intellect</li> <li>• Enjoys argument more than action</li> <li>• Arrogance</li> <li>• Dogmatic and unteachable</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A desire to present a divinely historic faith</li> <li>• Appeals to the mind and emotions</li> <li>• Is a doer of the Word of God and a hearer</li> <li>• Has a good conscience and a pure heart</li> <li>• Always learning, always reforming</li> </ul>

### The Place of the Law in the Life of the Believer 1 Timothy 1:8-11

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

1:8. the law *is* good. Martin Luther believed the Law of God as expressed in the Old Testament, was useful politically. The Law could help establish secular righteousness. The principles of government found in the Law are useful for national, state, and local governments to help organize and regulate society. A second use of the Law was to bring individuals to Christ by the convicting ministry the Law contained. This theological usage of the Law brought individuals to a knowledge of sin. *Romans 3:20 Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin.* Luther believed the Law was to be preached, first and then the gospel.

A third use of the Law was introduced by John Calvin, and other Reformers called the normative use of the Law. The thought is that the Law not only guides civil and political government, not only does it bring conviction of sin, but the Law is to be a normative guide for Christians who have faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. In particular, the Ten Commandments must guide Christian conduct. The Reformers conceded that the Christian is not to be under the Law, especially those social and ceremonial provisions of the Law, the Moral code laid down eternal principles of conduct for Christian living.

**The Ten Commandments**  
**Exodus 20:2-17**  
**NKJV**

*1<sup>st</sup> Commandment. I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. You shall have no other gods before Me.*

*2<sup>nd</sup> Commandment. You shall not make for yourself a carved image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth; you shall not bow down to them nor serve them. For I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and fourth generations of those who hate Me, but showing mercy to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My Commandments.*

*3<sup>rd</sup> Commandment. You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain, for the Lord will not hold him guiltless who takes His name in vain.*

*4<sup>th</sup> Commandment. Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord your God. In it you shall do no work: you, nor your son, nor your daughter, nor your male servant, nor your female servant, nor your cattle, nor your stranger who is within your gates. For in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day. Therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it.*

*5<sup>th</sup> Commandment. Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long upon the land which the Lord your God is giving you.*

*6<sup>th</sup> Commandment. You shall not murder.*

*7<sup>th</sup> Commandment. You shall not commit adultery.*

*8<sup>th</sup> Commandment. You shall not steal.*

*9<sup>th</sup> Commandment. You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.*

*10<sup>th</sup> Commandment. You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, nor his male servant, nor his female servant, nor his ox, nor his donkey, nor anything that is your neighbor's.*

1:8. if a man use it lawfully. It is possible to use the law in an unlawful manner. For example, if I were to teach that a person is saved by keeping the Law, that would be using the Law unlawfully.

1:8. if a man use it lawfully. The apostle teaches there is a lawful use of the law. The challenge is to reconcile this concept with what Paul wrote to the church of Rome where he teaches that Christians are not under the law, but under grace. *Romans 6:14 For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace.* In Romans 7 Paul teaches the same truth, we who have died with respect to the Law, live in a new sphere of life being guided by the Holy Spirit. *Romans 7:6 But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter.*

The question remains: What is the lawful use of the Law? One proper use of the Law is to remind everyone of the holiness and righteousness of God. Both the Tabernacle, and then the Temple, stressed the holiness and righteousness of the Lord. Second, the Law is used to remind the believer to be holy, for God is holy. A spiritual life thus fulfills the righteousness of the Law as holiness is produced in the believer. *Romans 8:4 That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.* If we are constantly breaking the Ten Commandments, then that is a testimony that we are not being led by the Holy Spirit.

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

1:9. is not made. is not valid. Notice, the text says that the Law was made. The Mosaic Law was made several hundred years after God made His covenant with Abraham. Why was the Law made?

The Law was preparatory. The answer is that the Abrahamic Covenant was a Covenant of grace and blessing. It did not emphasize sin. Therefore, at Mt. Sinai, God made the Law in order to convict individuals of sin in order to lead people to repentance, and prepare them for the coming of the Redeemer, the Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Law was provisional. After the death of Christ, God tore the curtain in the Temple in two and did away with the whole ceremonial system, allowing man to have direct access into the Holy of Holies, into direct fellowship with Himself. Halleluiah! What a Savior!

So the Law did not disannul the Abrahamic Covenant (Galatians 3:11-19), nor was the Law meant to be permanent. With the coming of Christ the Law was done away with, because the Holy Spirit was given to take the place of the Law to guide the life of the believer. This guidance by the Holy Spirit allows the believer to operate under a "higher law", the law of the life of the Spirit in Christ Jesus (Romans 8:2).

The Law was a unity. If a person broke one part of the law, he broke it all. *James 2:10 For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all.*

The Law was never intended to be used as a basis of salvation. *Galatians 2:21 I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain.*

### Five Reasons why God Gave the Law

- God gave the Law in order to give the knowledge of sin. Galatians 3:19; Romans 3:20
- God gave the Law to stimulate sin. Romans 7:9-13
- God gave the Law to restrain sin. Exodus 20:1-10
- God gave the Law to reveal the evil nature of sin. Romans 7:13
- God gave the Law so that grace might more abound. Romans 5:20
- God gave the Law to make men guilty. Romans 3:19  
(i.e., liable to judgment; liable to punishment)
- God gave the Law to bring individuals to Christ. Galatians 3:24  
(*schoolmaster*, a temporary trusted Greek slave)
- God gave the Law as a preview of good things to come. Hebrews 10:1  
(the sacrifice of Christ, His priesthood, heaven, etc.)

1:9. the law is not made for a righteous man. In Pauline theology a “righteous man” was a “just man”, and that in turn referred to a justified man. A justified man was one that has acknowledged sin, and has turned by faith to rely upon the Lord Jesus Christ and the saving work of Calvary. The righteous man is the one who has a right standing before God.

By way of application, you can be a righteous man or woman in the sight of God. This does not mean there is no sin, but it does mean that the penalty for sin has been paid for by the Lord Jesus, so that legally, in the sight of the Law, you are justified, you are declared righteous before God. The righteousness of Christ has been imputed to your account.

1:9. ungodly. godless.

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

1:9-10. Paul describes the unjustified man. Jesus said, “*Ye shall know them by their fruits*” (Matthew 7:16), and so says Paul.

## **The Law is Made for the Following**

### **Sins Against God**

#### **Sins Against Commandments One through Four**

- The lawless
- The disobedient
- The ungodly [godless]
- Sinners
- The unholy
- The profane

#### **Sins Against the Fifth Commandment**

- Murderers of fathers
- Murderers of mothers

#### **Sin Against the Sixth Commandment**

- Manslayers

#### **Sins Against the Seventh Commandment**

- Whoremongers [fornicators]
- Those that defile themselves with mankind [homosexuals]

#### **Sin Against the Eighth Commandment**

- Men stealers [slave traders of kidnapped victims]

#### **Sins Against the Ninth Commandment**

- Liars
- Perjured persons
- Any other thing that is contrary [opposed] to sound doctrine

1:10. sound doctrine. This word in the Greek text means, “healthy, wholesome.” (Study 2 Timothy 4:3; Titus 1:9; Titus 2:1). Paul had a strong concept of the perseverance of the saints. He believed that the saints would not act like an unjustified person.

### **A Practical and Pastoral Word of Warning**

“Many of you probably have people in your family who have made professions of faith, and you've wondered about them. Do not take the view that they are Christians who have backslidden if their departure from the faith has persisted over a long period of time, and their lives are characterized by disobedience to Scripture. It is much safer to take the view that their decision was not a genuine decision, and therefore, you may exhort them to be saved, to get saved, before it's too late” (S. Lewis Johnson).

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

1:11. According to the glorious gospel. The gospel is very glorious for it tells us of the Lord Jesus Christ. And it is glorious because it tells us about the blessed God.

“Tell me the story of Jesus,  
Write on my heart every word.  
Tell me the story most precious,  
Sweetest that ever was heard.

Tell how the angels in chorus,  
Sang as they welcomed His birth.  
“Glory to God in the highest!  
Peace and good tidings to earth.”

Tell me the story of Jesus,  
Write on my heart every word.  
Tell me the story most precious,  
Sweetest that ever was heard.

Fasting alone in the desert,  
Tell of the days that are past.  
How for our sins He was tempted,  
Yet was triumphant at last.

Tell of the years of His labor,  
Tell of the sorrow He bore.  
He was despised and afflicted,  
Homeless, rejected and poor.

Tell of the cross where they nailed Him,  
Writhing in anguish and pain.  
Tell of the grave where they laid Him,  
Tell how He liveth again.

Love in that story so tender,  
Clearer than ever I see.  
Stay, let me weep while you whisper,  
Love paid the ransom for me.”

Fanny Crosby, 1880

**Abounding Grace to the Chief of Sinners**  
**1 Timothy 1:12-20**

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

1:12. enabled. made me able.

1:12. putting me into the ministry. By putting Paul into the ministry, the apostle became an example of the gifts God gives to the church.

**Four Gifts of God for the People of God**  
**Ephesians 4:11-12**

- And he gave some, apostles;
- and some, prophets;
- and some, evangelists;
- and some, pastors and teachers;

**Three Reasons for the Gifts of God**

- For the perfecting of the saints,
- for the work of the ministry,
- for the edifying of the body of Christ:

“Praise God, from Whom all blessings flow;  
Praise Him, all creatures here below;  
Praise Him above, ye heavenly host;  
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.”

Thomas Ken, 1674

1:12. putting me into the ministry. The meaning here is that the Lord appointed Paul to spiritual service. In fact, every person who names the name of Christ has been appointed to spiritual service as a believer priest. Moreover, every Christian has been assigned, by God the Holy Spirit, a spiritual gift to use in spiritual serve (1 Corinthians 12;11). The nine gifts of the Spirit and the nine fruits of the Spirit enhance Christian ministry.

**Nine Gifts of the Spirit**  
**1 Corinthians 12:7-11**

- The Word of Wisdom
- The Word of Knowledge
- The Gift of Faith
- The Gifts of Healing
- The Working of Miracles

**The Nine Fruit of the Spirit**  
**Galatians 5:22-23**

Love  
Joy  
Peace  
Longsuffering  
Gentleness

- |   |            |
|---|------------|
| • The Gift of Prophecy                      | Goodness   |
| • The Gift of Discerning of the Spirits     | Faith      |
| • The Gift of Divers Kinds of Tongues       | Meekness   |
| • The Gift of the Interpretation of Tongues | Temperance |

**Five Exhortations to Use  
All Spiritual Gifts**

- *1 Corinthians 14:39 Wherefore, brethren, covet to prophesy, and forbid not to speak with tongues.*
- *1 Corinthians 14:1 Follow after charity, and desire spiritual gifts, but rather that ye may prophesy.*
- *1 Thessalonians 5:19 Quench not the Spirit.*
- *1 Timothy 4:14 Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery.*
- *2 Timothy 1:6 Wherefore I put thee in remembrance that thou stir up the gift of God, which is in thee by the putting on of my hands.*

**The First Reason for Obtaining Mercy  
1 Timothy 1:13**

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

1.13. injurious. insulting with violence.

**The Sins of Paul**

- |                      |                   |
|----------------------|-------------------|
| • Blasphemy          | 1 Timothy 1:13    |
| • A Persecutor       | 1 Timothy 1:13    |
| • Assessor to Murder | Acts 7:58         |
| • Injurious          | Acts 8:3-4; 9:1-2 |
| • Inordinate Anger   | Acts 15:37-40     |
| • Covetous           | Romans 7:7-9      |



1:13. I obtained mercy. The heart must see that salvation is of the Lord. A mother once approached Napoleon seeking a pardon for her son. The emperor replied that the young man had committed a certain offense twice and justice demanded death. "But I don't ask for justice," the mother explained. "I plead for mercy."

"But your son does not deserve mercy," Napoleon replied. "Sir," the woman cried, "it would not be mercy if he deserved it, and mercy is all I ask for." "Well, then," the emperor said, "I will have mercy." And he spared the woman's son (Luis Palau, *Experiencing God's Forgiveness*, Multnomah Press, 1984).

1:13. in unbelief. From a human perspective, Paul believed God's grace was shown to him in part, because what he did against the church was done ignorantly and in unbelief. From a divine perspective, Paul obtained mercy because he was a chosen vessel. *Acts 9:15 But the Lord said unto him, Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel:*

1:13. I did *it* ignorantly. Paul says that he did not willfully sin against gospel light, though he was sinning. Paul sincerely thought he was doing God's work in fighting against the church. The words of the Lord at Calvary come to mind when Jesus prayed for those who were killing Him. *Luke 23:34 Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them [let them go]; for they know not what they do. And they parted his raiment, and cast lots.*

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

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

1:15 Christ did not come to save all people of all sin, or all would be saved. Many people, such as Judas Iscariot, do not go to heaven, but to their own place (Acts 1:25). Therefore the scope of the atonement is of necessity restricted to those souls that will ultimately, and finally, be saved.

#### **Five Faithful Sayings**

- |                  |   |
|------------------|---|
| • 1 Timothy 1:15 | Concerning the saving of sinners            |
| • 1 Timothy 3:1  | Concerning pastoral service                 |
| • 1 Timothy 4:9  | Concerning personal suffering               |
| • 2 Timothy 2:11 | Concerning the Christian's secret to living |
| • Titus 3:8      | Concerning authentic sanctification         |

1:15. I am chief. the worst. This expression of the apostle's humility and what he understood about himself, is not to be minimized. He was a great sinner, but found in Christ a great Savior.

“Jesus, what didst Thou find in me  
That thou hast dealt so lovingly?  
How great the joy that Thou hast brought,  
So far exceeding hope or thought!  
Jesus, my Lord, I Thee adore;  
O make me love Thee more and more.”

The Presbyterian Hymnal, 1895

### **The Second Reason for Obtaining Mercy 1 Timothy 1:16**

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

1:16. I obtained mercy. Salvation is what God has done for us, not what we do for God.

1:16. pattern. The word speaks of an active display whereby something is going on. Paul’s life shows the long-suffering of God.

### **Paul’s Doxology**

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

1:17. God is invisible. He cannot be seen except through the person of Jesus Christ, who is the image of the invisible God (Colossians 1:15). No idol can sufficiently convey the true nature and image of God. The incarnation is a necessity, for there to be a true image of God.

1:17. wise God. Not all of the ancient Greek manuscripts have the word, “wise”. The text reads, “*the only God.*” There is not a god of the Muslim, and a god of the Hindus. The only God is the God of Scriptures. When people say, “I believe in God,” the proper response is, “Which God? The only God? The God of the Scripture?”

### **Four Divine Attributes**

- God is Eternal
- God is Immortal
- God is Invisible
- God is Wise

### Waging a Good Warfare

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

1:18. charge. command.

1:18. which went before. which were made long ago. The reference refers to those predictions given by the prophets when Timothy was, in the beginning, given guidance with reference to his future service, in connection with the apostle (S. Lewis Johnson).

1:18. according to the prophecies. In the early church there were prophets. Are there prophets today? This is the question the church must answer today, for many individuals arise to give new revelation.

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

1:19. Hold faith. The way Timothy could hold to faith was by having confidence in God and by believing the revealed truth

20 Of whom is Hymenaeus and Alexander; whom I have delivered unto Satan [by excommunication or by apostolic authority, [Matt. 18:18], that they may learn not to blaspheme.

## 1 TIMOTHY 2

### A Manuel of Church Order Concerning Supplications, Prayers, and Intercessions

#### 1 Timothy 2:1-3:16

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

2:1. I exhort. The apostle Paul was a great believer of structure. His exhortations form the basis for a Manuel of Church Order. *1 Corinthians 14:40 Let all things be done decently and in order.*

2:1. first. most importantly.

#### Basic Bible Doctrines in 1 Timothy 2

- |   |                    |
|---|--------------------|
| • Doctrine of the Local Church                                | 1 Timothy 2:1-3:16 |
| • Doctrine of the Christian and the State                     | 1 Timothy 2:1-2    |
| • Doctrine of Monotheism                                      | 1 Timothy 2:5      |
| • Doctrine of Salvation and Sanctification                    | 1 Timothy 2:4      |
| • Doctrine of Faith and Reason                                | 1 Timothy 2:4      |
| • Doctrine of the Mediation of Jesus Christ                   | 1 Timothy 2:5      |
| • Doctrine of the Atonement: Voluntary, Substitutional, Penal | 1 Timothy 2:6      |
| • Doctrine of the Atonement: Its Design                       | 1 Timothy 2:4, 6   |
| • Doctrine of the Atonement: What Should be Preached          | 1 Timothy 2:6,7    |

#### Four Obligations of Christians for All Men

- |                    |  |
|--------------------|--|
| • Supplications    | Prayer directed toward some specific need            |
| • Prayers          | Prayer in worship for it is directed toward God      |
| • Intercessions    | Prayer of intercession with a petition before a king |
| • Giving of thanks | Prayer of appreciation                               |

#### Does “All” Mean “All”?

2:1. all men. The word “all” refers to “all without distinction”, not “all men without exception”. A universal expression must be understood in context. Paul is talking about classes, or groups of men, whether bond or free, Jew or Gentile, kings or peasants.

- Not all men without exception have heard the gospel, and yet, we read that salvation has appeared to all men. *Titus 2:11 For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men.*

- Justification unto life has not come upon all men, and yet we read the words of Paul’s epistle to the Romans. *Romans 5:18 Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life.*
- Not all men sought for the Lord Jesus Christ, and certainly not in the same positive way. *Mark 1:37 And when they had found him, they said unto him, All men seek for thee.*
- Not every single person marveled at the great works of Jesus Christ, and yet we read that “all men did marvel.” *Mark 5:20 And he departed, and began to publish in Decapolis how great things Jesus had done for him: and all men did marvel.*
- Not everyone counted John a prophet. Certainly the Romans did not, nor did many Jewish leaders. *Mark 11:32 But if we shall say, Of men; they feared the people: for all men counted John, that he was a prophet indeed.*

### **The First Reason for Prayer**

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

2:2. that. This word indicates the reason why Paul instructs prayer to be made for all types of men. Prayer will enable the believer to lead a quiet and peaceable life. Christians are not to be agitators. Believers are not to be community organizers, pitting one group of people against another. Christians are to be characterized by peace and quiet, in godliness and gravity.

2:2. honesty. gravity, respectability. When the church meets for worship, there ought to be gravity. Worship should be responsible and respectable. God is present. This principle should pertain even to the way we dress.

### **The Second Reason for Prayer**

3 For this *is* good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior;

2:3. good and acceptable. Paul’s second reason for prayer for all kinds of men is that it is admirable in the sight of God. Tranquility enhances the promotion of the gospel.

4 Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.

2:4 Who will have all men to be saved. God would have all to be saved whenever He appoints the gospel to be preached, and the Holy Spirit to convict, and convert. However, God is under no obligation to draw all to Himself (John 6:44 cf. Acts 16:7).

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

2:5 Christ is a Great High Priest for His people. He mediates on their behalf so that sin is not charged to their account.

6 Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time.

2:6 If God truly intended for all men without exception, to come to faith, then that would happen, for if anyone could ultimately resist God, He would cease to be the Sovereign. In context, Paul is speaking of all sorts or classes of men (note, v. 1, 2), which are identified. God would have all types of individuals come to faith, and they do.

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

2:7. verity. truth.

8 I will therefore that men pray every where, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting.

2:8. men pray. There are two familiar words in Greek that refer to men. There is the word *anar*, and there is the word *anthropos*. The term *anthropos* is often used as a generic term, referring to mankind, or it may refer to women. On the other hand, *anar* is used in contrast with a woman, or a man in contrast with a child. *Anar* is the term the apostle uses here in order to teach that in public worship, men should lead in prayer.

2:8. pray every where. Paul means, “ever where the church meets” because in 1 Timothy 3:14 he will say, “These things write I unto thee, hoping to come unto thee shortly. 15 But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.”

2:8. holy hands. The character of the one praying is stressed. Psalms 66:18 If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me:

2:8. doubting. disputing, questionings.

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

2:9. In like manner. Women do have a role to play in the church in accordance with the Divine design. Women should attend the meetings quietly, to learn in submission, to show Christian modesty and virtue, and to do good works.

2:9. modest apparel. The emphasis is upon modesty and not ostentatiousness. This does not mean that women must look like something the cat dragged in. It is just as wrong to be ostentatious in a negative way by plain looks, and an unusual way of dressing, in order to call attention to one's spiritual distinctiveness.

2:9. broided. bradied hair.

10 But (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works.

2:10. good works. Charity works, works that meet needs.

2:10. good works. Good works would include using the spirit gift God the Holy Spirit has provided.

***Special Note.***

There are two classes of spiritual gifts. There are gifts that are gifts of utterance, such as the gift of evangelism, and pastor-teacher. There are gifts that are non-utterance, such as the gifts of administration, helps, and government. Women can have both types of gifts, those that are gifts of utterance, and those that are gifts of non-utterance.

**How Women Might Work  
in the Local Assembly**

- Teach a Sunday school class for children.
- Conduct a home Bible study for ladies.
- Engage in acts of evangelism and outreach ministries.
- Promote musical programs.
- Encourage the homeschool movement.
- Organize ways to meet needs with food and finances.
- Be a good mother.
- Showing hospitality.
- Greeting ministry to sick and shut-ins.
- Home visitation and hospital visitation.
- Secretarial work in getting the gospel out.
- Tape ministry and book printing ministry.

11 Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection.

2:11. learn in silence. In recent years, several denominations have begun to ordain women as priestesses. For example, in July, 1974, the Episcopal Church ordained eleven priestesses, even though it was illegal according to their Book of Church Order. Though there was an initial protest, by July 1976, the 72nd General Convention in Philadelphia passed a resolution declaring that "no one shall be denied access" to ordination into the three orders of ministry: as deacons, priests or bishops, on the basis of their sex.

A second resolution declared that no one could be barred from participating in the life and governance of the church, either because of their gender, or because of their theological beliefs concerning the ordination of women.

2:11. learn in silence. learn without rebellion.

### **What Paul is Not Teaching**

- Paul is not teaching the superiority of men. He is saying that women have certain functions as men have certain functions. A successful society depends upon the exercising of these functions.
- Paul is not teaching men to be harsh in their attitude and treatment of women. Her father was stage and screen legend John Barrymore. Her mother was a successful actress. But her childhood was wretched, and her adult lifestyle filled with pain and sorrow. Without knowing true love and happiness, Diana Barrymore once said, "I don't mind being punched." Playwright Noel Coward said that women should be strapped regularly, like a gong. Such is the sick thinking of secular society. Even some religions teach something terrible like that, such as the Muslim religion which is very demanding and demeaning on women. But Paul is not teaching harshness towards women.
- Paul is teaching a spiritual relationship based on a voluntary, godly submission, from a humble heart, and a grateful heart. In football, a running back is not more important than a good offensive line. In the body, the hand is no less important than the eye. In the matter of salvation, the Lord Jesus was assigned the function by the trinity, in the work of mediation, to rely wholly upon the Father. Nevertheless, the Son was equal with the Father, very God of very God. In matchless grace Jesus humbled Himself, and became obedient, even unto death. Submission is not a matter of inferiority.

In the church, the public assembly is in view, and in the church, the women are to learn in silence, just like they did in the Synagogue. They were to worship without rebellion. The issue is function, not worth.

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

2:12. I suffer not a women to teach. The divine prohibition is not absolute. Women are to instruct other women and children as per Titus 2:4. Specifically, the younger women are to be taught how to be serious, how to love their husbands, and how to love their children.

2:12. teach. In the Greek, this word is stressed. Why? Because of the principle concerning the relationship of authority.

2:12. nor to usurp authority. Two principles guide the believer's understanding of the role of women in the church.



First, submission to the authority of Scripture. Second, the tradition of the church on this matter. Therefore, when the apostle teaches that women are not to attempt to control men, he is saying something very important. The apostle is teaching that, “Equal worth does not demand similar function” (S. Lewis Johnson).

### **Inappropriate Guidelines of Interpretation**

- Time Conditional Culture
- Rabbinical Views of the Apostle Paul
- A Cultural Phenomenon
- Temporary Regulations

2:12. nor to usurp authority. In the Old Testament, no woman was allowed to be a priest. When Jesus chose His disciples, He chose twelve men. When the early church chose deacons, men were selected. The qualifications for church leaders speak of the elders being the husband of one wife. Historically, there is no movement to ordain women as elders or ministers in the Christian church.

### **The First Argument for the Subordination of the Woman and Restriction on Teaching**

#### **The Origin of the Woman**

13 For Adam was first formed, then Eve.

2:13. For. The word “for” (Greek, *gar*), provides the reason for the doctrinal teaching and practice. The first reason provided is based on the order of creation.

2:13. The historical basis for this first doctrinal argument for the subordination of the woman, and the restriction on her teaching, is found in Genesis 2:18-25, which records the origin of the woman.

### **The Second Argument for the Subordination of the Woman and Restriction on Teaching**

14 And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression.

2:14. The historical basis for the second argument for the subordination of the woman, and the restriction on her teaching, is found in Genesis 3:14-19, which records God’s judgment upon the woman, and what took place as result of her sin. See also 1 Corinthians 11:8-10. Paul’s argument is that the woman is taken out of the man, which suggests dependence, and further, she is created for the man.

2:14. And Adam was not deceived. When Adam sinned, he was under no illusion about what he was doing. Why did Adam sin? One possibility is that he loved Eve so much, he chose her over God. He could not image life without Eve, and so he chose to share her fate knowing full well what that fate would be. Adam's sin was willful and therefore he was more culpable, which may be why he was judged last. Adam was the covenant head. He should have refused the proffered fruit of the tree. With that being said, in context, Paul's point is that since Eve was led astray by deception, the teaching office should be reserved for and protected by the man, whom God continues to hold most accountable.

### **Deceived Women who in Turn Deceive**

- Mary Baker Patterson Glover Eddy                      Christian Science
- Ellen G. White    Seventh Day Adventist

#### ***Special Note.***

Men too are guilty of being deceived and deceiving others.

- Joseph Smith    Mormons
- Charles Taze Russell    Jehovah Witnesses

Nevertheless, the Lord has a right to organize the church the way He sees best, and on the principles He decides, and so, the man is to teach, and have authority in the local assembly.

2:14. deceived. The Greek word for deceive means to be "utterly deceived." See also 2 Corinthians 11:3.

2:14. was in the transgression. Greek, came to be in the transgression.

### **The Third Argument for the Subordination of the Woman and Restriction on Teaching**

15 Notwithstanding she shall be saved in childbearing, if they continue in faith and charity and holiness with sobriety.

2:14-15. This passage of Scripture is based on Genesis 3:13-19. One of the unintended consequences of the Fall was the subordination of the woman in the church. Women's Liberation should have no influence over the church, for God has spoken. The church must not be intimidated by the world, the flesh, or the devil.

2:15. saved in childbearing. Paul may be speaking soteriologically. He may be referring to the salvation that comes to the world through means of the virgin birth. God is not angry with the woman forever, because of Eve's deception. In grace, God has appointed an important function for the women. Her role is rooted in childbearing through whom the Messiah came.

2:15. saved in childbearing. Literally, saved in the childbearing. There is a definite article. Compare this with Genesis 3:15.

2:15. charity. love.

***Special Note.***

Despite Paul's restrictions here, Liberals appeal to Galatians 3:28 in an effort to justify the ordination of women, and giving them authority over men. The response is that Paul does not teach in Galatians 3:28 that Christians are all one "in the church". Rather, he teaches that Christians are one in Christ. In Christ there is neither male nor female. Of course, Paul is not abolishing all sexual distinctions that exist by way of creation. Nor does Galatians 3:28 have anything to say about a person's function within the local church. In context, Paul is speaking of the believer's relationship to Christ Jesus. In Christ there is no difference. Any person that has been regenerated by the Holy Spirit, and has received justification and the forgiveness of sins, that person is a new creation. Whether the individual is a male or female, the person is in Christ, with all the spiritual privileges that entails. One of the gospel privileges is to function within the local church, but within the parameters or boundaries of the known Divine will. The Divine will, the will of God can only be known by considering the whole counsel of God. And that takes us, in regard to the function of women in the church, back to 1 Timothy 2.

***Special Note.***

There is a fourth reason why Paul teaches that women are not to teach in the church. Paul argues for the silence of women because it is written in the Law. *1 Corinthians 14:34 Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law.* The place where this prohibition is taught "in the Law" is Genesis 2 and 3. So Paul's teaching about not ordaining women to public ministry is not based upon culture, it is based upon the Law, and beyond that to the order of Creation and what happened at the Fall.

## 1 TIMOTHY 3

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

3:1. true. reliable.

3:1. bishop. Greek, *episkopes*, overseer.

### A Variety of Church Orders

Government	Offices	Style
Episcopalian	Bishops, Priests, and Deacons	Hierarchical
Presbyterian	Elders, Deacons	Representative
Congregational	Pastor, Deacons	Autonomous
Charismatic	Pastor, Deacons	Gifted men

### The New Testament Form of Church Government

Theocracy	Elders, Deacons	The Holy Spirit
-----------	-----------------	-----------------

3:1. Church order matters for three reasons.

- Theologically. By means of the instrumentality of the Church, the wisdom of God is being manifested to the angels. *Ephesians 3:10 To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God.* Therefore, church order is essential.
- Practically. The church is the house of God. *1 Timothy 3:15 But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.* There must be order in a household.
- Socially and Scripturally. Dignity is an essential ingredient of church order. *1 Corinthians 14:37 If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord. 38 But if any man be ignorant, let him be ignorant. 39 Wherefore, brethren, covet to prophesy, and forbid not to speak with tongues. 40 Let all things be done decently and in order.*

3:1. he desireth a good work. In those days, men needed encouragement to assume this holy office.

2 A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behavior, given to hospitality, apt to teach;

3:2. A bishop. The terms bishop and elder all refer to the same office in the local assembly. In the single church at Ephesus, as in all the churches, we find a plurality of elders, also called bishops, stressing the function of these leaders. They are to be overseers in the church.

### **Synonymous Terms**

#### **Dignity of Office**

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

#### **Duty of the Office**

Bishop. *Acts 20:28* *Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers [bishops], to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.*

### **Elders are to be Appointed**

Elder. *Titus 1:5* *For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed thee: 6 If any be blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children not accused of riot or unruly.*

Bishop. *Titus 1:7* *For a bishop must be blameless, as the steward of God; not self-willed, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre;*

Bishop. *Philippians 1:1* *Paul and Timotheus, the servants of Jesus Christ, to all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons:*

3:2. After the death of the apostles, the local elder became the highest governing authority in the local church, by Divine design. The administration of the local assembly has not been left to a deacon board, or governing counsel, or staff member, but the elder.

#### ***Special Note.***

“Never in the New Testament anywhere, is anyone, called "the pastor of a church", in the sense of a man who is the administrative head of a church. That is an office that has arisen in the course of the church's history, outside of Scripture. There is no such thing as, "the pastor", of a local church” (S. Lewis Johnson).

3:2. blameless. irreprouchable by those in the church in the following areas.

3:2. the husband of one wife. i.e., faithful to his wife. Some believe this is a prohibition against being a polygamist. However, polygamy was never a live option in the Christian church, so this is probably not what the apostle had in mind.

Some believe the statement means that an elder must be married. But then, that would rule out the apostle who wrote this instruction. The word “one” would be meaningless, by this interpretation.

Another understanding is that a man must be a one wife kind of man, the kind of man who is faithful to one woman. He must be loyal to his spouse. He must not be engaged in adultery.

A final understanding is that if a man marries, his wife dies, and he marries again, he forfeits his right to be an elder. He must be a one woman man. Dr. S. Lewis Johnson finds support for this last understanding in the writings of Hermas, Clement of Alexandria, Tertullian, Chrysostom, Epiphanes, and Cyril, who wrote in disparagement of second marriages, not as sin, but as weakness.

Confirmation for this position is appealed to from 1 Timothy 5:9. *“Let not a widow be taken into the number under threescore years old, having been the wife of one man.”* The expression of being married to one person is the same as in 1 Timothy 3:2.

### **The Personal Habits of an Elder**

3:2. vigilant. temperate.

3:2. sober. of sound mind and judgment.

3:2. of good behavior. orderly in life, habits, and work. An elder is to display an outward beauty of countenance. There must be propriety in dress and conduct.

#### ***Special Note.***

God is interested in the things we wear as per 1 Timothy 2:9, and here, in 1 Timothy 3:2.

3:2. given to hospitality. ready to receive strangers.

3:2. apt to teach. able to teach. The reference here is to the ability to provide a good and comprehensive summary of the biblical faith. An elder should have a thorough knowledge of Bible doctrine. “The person who disparages a comprehensive knowledge of the Christian doctrine is only disparaging that things that the apostles affirm are essential, and they are particularly essential for the elder who has responsibility of oversight” (S. Lewis Johnson).

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

3:3. Not given to wine. Not addicted to wine. Drunkenness is forbidden. *Ephesians 5:18 And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit.*

***Special Note.***

In John 2:1-11, the Bible records the first miracle Jesus performed, which was the making of the best wine. The primary dictionary definition of wine refers to the fermented juice of grapes, made in many varieties, such as red, white, sweet, dry, still, and sparkling, for use as a beverage, in cooking, and in religious rites, and usually having an alcoholic content of 14 percent or less.

The Greek word the Holy Author used appears in John 2 is used 32 times in the New Testament, and is translated wine every time. On the two occasions when the Bible refers to wine that has not had time to ferment, the prefix “new” is added.

3:3. no striker. not physically violent.

Proverbs 23:34

34 You will be like one sleeping on the high seas,  
lying on top of the rigging.

NIV

3:3. not greedy of filthy lucre. not fond of questionable gain.

3:3. but patient. peaceable.

3:3. not a brawler. one who argues needlessly.

3:3. not covetous. not a lover of money.

4 One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity;

3:4. children in subjection. children that are trustworthy. Children are to be in subjection to their parents, especially the children of the elders.

5 (For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the Church of God?)

3:15. rule. A good father will rule in love over his household, not in fear or domination.

6 Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil.

3:6. novice. lit. newly united. a new convert.

3:6. lifted up. Lit. “enveloped in smoke.” conceited.

**Special Note.**

It has been said that, "Someone who is wrapped up in himself, makes a mighty small parcel."

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

3:7. reproach. disgrace.

3:7. snare. sprung by.

**Special Note.**

Satan is used by God to exercise certain disciplinary acts against sins such as blaspheme, and immorality. Usually, the disciplinary action involves either the process of dying, or death itself.

- Blaspheme. *1 Timothy 1:20 Of whom is Hymenaeus and Alexander; whom I have delivered unto Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme.*
- Immorality. *1 Corinthians 5: It is reported commonly that there is fornication among you, and such fornication as is not so much as named among the Gentiles, that one should have his father's wife. 2 And ye are puffed up, and have not rather mourned, that he that hath done this deed might be taken away from among you. 3 For I verily, as absent in body, but present in spirit, have judged already, as though I were present, concerning him that hath so done this deed, 4 In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, 5 To deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.*

3:1-7. Upon examination, the duties of an elder falls into three categories.

- Leadership of the Flock
 

Pastoring	Counseling	
Shepherd	Protecting	
Finances	Overseeing	Acts 11:30; 1 Timothy 3:3
Teaching	Doctrine	

**Special Note.**

The story has been told of a man who was running as fast as he could after a crowd of people. Somebody asked him the reason for his hurry and he gasped out, "I've got to catch up with them. I'm their leader." Godly leaders do not lead from behind, but from in front, like the Good Shepherd (Psalm 23).

- Guarding the Flock Against False Teachers Titus 1:9-13
  - Modernism
  - Liberalism
  - Arminianism
  - Dispensationalism
  - Legalism
  - Semi-Pelagianism



Decisional Regeneration  
 Baptismal Regeneration  
 Theology of Hope  
 Theology of Revolution  
 Barthianism

- Disciplining the Flock    Moral and Doctrinal Purity    1 Thessalonians 5:14-23

### **The Plurality of Elders**

3:1-7. The plurality of elders in the local church is taught throughout the New Testament. In Acts 20:17, the elders are referred to. In James 5:14, those who are sick are to call for the elders (plural) of the church (singular). There is no biblical evidence that one minister elder pastored a house church. It might have happened, but the biblical testimony is that of a plurality of elders. In Hebrews 13:7, 17, and 24 Christians are told to remember “them”, plural, “over you.” In 1 Thessalonians 5:12 the reference to the leadership is plural. The apostle was in Thessalonica just several weeks prior to writing this letter, so there was no time for the establishments of little churches. Then in 1 Timothy 5:17 we read, “*Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine.*”

#### ***Special Note.***

The Baptist theologian, A. H. Strong, does not agree with the one elder or pastor for the local church. Nor does the Baptist document, the New Hampshire Articles of Faith.

### **Two Types of Elders**

Notice that two types of elders are recognized. There are “Teaching Elders” who “*labour in the word and doctrine*”, and there are “Ruling Elders.”

### **Tenure of Elders**

Having been appointed by the Holy Spirit, biblically, elders are appointed for life as long as they stay in the local church, and there is no moral failure. Rotation may have arisen because elders failed to discipline other elders. Another contributing factor was to give others a chance to serve. Also, the church adopted a business model where “Board Members” are often rotated. However, the Divine plan is the best model to follow.

### **Selection of Elders**

The selection of an elder is addressed in Acts 14:23. “And when they had ordained them elders in every church, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord, on whom they believed.” Biblically, an elder is ordained after being appointed by other elders. *Titus 1:5 For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed thee:*

The tradition today is to elect an elder by a congregational vote. However, normally, sheep do not elect the shepherd. Ideally, God appoints elders, and the sheep recognize the voice of their shepherd. That is a more biblical model. *Acts 20:28 Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.*

### **Emerging Elders**

Elders will emerge in a congregation. They emerge because God has sovereignly appointed them. They manifest the characteristics of the elder in that they shepherd the flock, guard the flock, and are interested in maintaining the purity of the flock. An emerging elder will manifest a natural love for the people, a love for the historic faith, a love for God's Word, and an interest in theology with a view to instructing others and teaching.

### **Disciplining of an Elder**

God has moved to protect His servants by demanding that any accusation be made in accordance with an honorable witness. *1 Timothy 5:19 Against an elder receive not an accusation, but before two or three witnesses. 20 Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear. 21 I charge thee before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect angels, that thou observe these things without preferring one before another, doing nothing by partiality.*

It is instructive that Jesus Christ, who is the Chief Elder, was falsely accused by many. And yet, the Bible says, the witnesses could not agree. *Mark 14:56 For many bare false witness against him, but their witness agreed not together.*

But if an elder is found guilty of a true accusation, then the other elders are to discipline him. *1 Timothy 5:20 Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear.*

## **The Office of Deacon**

### **Qualifications**

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

3:8. The origin of the office may be found in Acts 6:1-6. *“And in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplied, there arose a murmuring of the Grecians [Greek Jews] against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministration. 2 Then the twelve called the multitude of the disciples unto them, and said, It is not reason that we should leave the word of God, and serve tables. 3 Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business. 4 But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word.*

*5 And the saying pleased the whole multitude: and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolas a proselyte of Antioch: 6 Whom they set before the apostles: and when they had prayed, they laid their hands on them.*

While the word “deacon” (Gk. *diakonous*; from *konias*, dust), does not occur in this passage, the word “serve” does occur in verse 1, verse 2, and verse 4.

3:8. deacons. Lit. one who serves. The biblical emphasis is on the menial service of a deacon, not the office. Deacons are to serve, at the discretion of the elders, as they meet the needs of the congregation.

At all times, deacons are servants, not leaders in the church. Those congregations that allow a Deacon Board to become the driving force of the local church, and overrule elders, violate the known will of God, conceptionally, are contrary to sound doctrine, and are disregarding the apostolic example.

Deacons are not to think God has set them as overseers of the flock to rule. They have no governing responsibilities, biblically.

Nor should elders ever surrender their governing responsibilities to deacons, or to a congregational member.

There are strong willed deacons, who will try to overreach once they have been recognized as a deacon, but they need to be gently rebuked, and reminded of God’s divine order. The same should be done to a strong willed personality in the congregation. Those who have money will sometimes try to use their generous giving as a way to act as an equal, or surrogate, church ruler, “a power behind the throne”. This must not be allowed.

Because of the lowly stature of the position of deacon, it requires a very humble, godly person to serve. While men love to take titles unto themselves, God hands out towels.

#### **Illustrations of those who Served Others**

- Jesus                      Mark 10:45
- Martha                    Luke 10:40
- Stephen                  Acts 6:1
- Phoebe                    Romans 16:1

3:8. grave. worthy of honor.

3:8. not doubled tongued. saying different things to different people.

**Special Note.**

In his book, *Pilgrim's Progress*, John Bunyan created the town of Fair Speech. In this town dwelt Lord Turn-about, Lord Time-server, and Lord Fair-speech, after whose ancestors the town was named. Mr. Smooth-man was also in the town, and Mr. Facing-Both-Ways. There are a lot of descendants of Mr. Facing-Both-Ways in the local church today. Finally, there was Mr. Anything, and the parson of the parish, Mr. Two-tongues. Time has not changed. These characters live today.

3:8. filthy lucre. dishonest gain.

## 9 Holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience.

3:9. A deacon must be able to defend “the faith”, the doctrines of grace, and live out the ethics of the same. They are not commanded to be able to teach, as the elders are, though good teachers some may be. If a deacon has the gift of teaching, it certainly should be exercised. The deacons of Acts 6, were evangelists as well. Confusion must not be made between functioning as a deacon, and exercising a spiritual gift.

**Special Note.**

The Mystery of the Faith is summarized in v. 16, where it is called the Mystery of Godliness.

### The Mystery of Godliness

- In the Person of Jesus Christ, God was manifest in the flesh.
- In the Person of Jesus Christ, God was justified in the Spirit.
- In the Person of Jesus Christ, God was seen of angels.
- In the Person of Jesus Christ, God was preached unto the Gentiles.
- In the Person of Jesus Christ, God was believed on in the world.
- In the Person of Jesus Christ, God was received up into glory.

3:9. a pure conscience. Belief, without mental reservation, will shape behavior.

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

3:10. first be proved. The church should look to appoint men as deacons who have a good report and are full of the Holy Spirit. *Acts 6:3 Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business.*

3:10. first be proved. “The safety of the church lies in waiting upon the activity of the Holy Spirit” (S. Lewis Johnson).

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

3:11. *so must their*. Words that are italicized are not in the original. The Greek text says, “Wives must be grave, etc.

3:11. wives women. Possibly a reference to deaconesses. Is there an office of deaconess? By the time of the 4th century, it was common for deaconess to be attached to the local church.

#### **Four Arguments for the Office of Deaconess**

- The Parallel Argument. Even so...is used in verse 8 to speak of a different office. Even so...verse 11 may be speaking of another office.
- The Parenthetical Argument. In verse 12 the apostle comes back and says, “Let the deacons,” now he talks about the deacons again. He comes back to the deacons here, so he might be speaking about something else in the preceding verse.
- The Biblical Argument. Phoebe is called a servant in Romans. *Romans 16:1 I commend unto you Phebe our sister, which is a servant of the church which is at Cenchrea:*
- The Cultural Argument. In a culture where the sexes were strictly separated, the need for women to assist women in sickness, in baptism, in acts of charity, would necessitate the office of deaconess.

#### **Four Arguments Against the Office of Deaconess**

- It would be strange for the apostle to speak about deacons being grave in v. 8, and the husband of one wife, in v. 12, and then suddenly introduce the office of a deaconess, and insert something about that into the flowing narrative.
- Then, there is the absence of the definite article. One might expect the article to be used, the deaconesses.
- As far as the term, “*like manner*”, this expression is used in v. 8, and then in v. 11 “*must their wives be grave*”. The “*like manner*” is that the deacon is to be a sober, solemn, grave, kind of person, and so must his wife be.
- Finally, since the role of a deacon was to go and serve the needs of the congregation, it was commonly expected their wives go with them to help them. Their wives must act appropriately.

3:11. be grave. dignified.

3:11. not slanderers. defamers of others. The word “slander” refers to someone who acts like the devil.

3:11. sober. self-controlled.

3:11. faithful in all things. dependable.

12 Let the deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well.

### **The Reward of the Deacon**

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

3:13. a good degree. a place of dignity.

### **The Secret of Godliness 1 Timothy 3:14-16**

14 These things write I unto thee, hoping to come unto thee shortly:

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

3:15. the Church. The Church is called “the pillar and ground of the truth.” The church is the bulwark of that upon which it, the church is grounded. The local church is in existence because of the truth. Now, it must engage in a disciplined protection of it. The church must defend that, indeed, He, Jesus Christ, which has called it into existence.

### **How to Defend the Faith**

- Withdraw from heretics. *1 Timothy 6:5 Perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness: from such withdraw thyself.*
- Embrace the resurrection. *2 Timothy 2:18 Who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some. The word for “err” could be rendered, “have shot wide of the truth.”*
- Identify those who defy the truth. *2 Timothy 3:8 Now as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith.*
- Acknowledge that some will “stop their ears” to the truth. *2 Timothy 4:4 And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.*
- Do not embrace erroneous teaching. *Titus 1:14 Not giving heed to Jewish fables, and commandments of men, that turn from the truth.*

3:15. The Church is considered to be a family, for it is called the “house of God.” The church is also the preserver, and defender of the truth of God. The truth cannot be defended merely by putting it in a creed, or writing about the faith in a book. There must be personal evangelism.

### **Six Divine Secrets**

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

3:16. controversy. dispute. (Lit. Gk. confessedly). There should be no dispute about these truths.

3:16. mystery. A mystery is a divine secret. All truth comes to men by revelation. The Holy Spirit must illuminate the heart and mind of a person or the gospel will remain mysterious. The secret of the faith is revealed by God.

3:16. mystery of godliness. A reference to the work of Jesus Christ.

***Special Note.***

There are six mysteries referenced in Scripture which C. H. Spurgeon notes.

- The first is the mystery of the Incarnation, which is now before us—“Great is the mystery of godliness, God was manifest in the flesh.”
- The next is the mystery of the union of Christ with His Church, of which we read, in Ephesians 5:31, 32, “For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the Church.”
- The third mystery is the mystery of the calling of the Gentiles, to which Paul refers in Ephesians 3:4-6, where he says, “Whereby, when you read, you may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ; which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto His holy Apostles and Prophets by the Spirit; that the Gentiles should be fellow heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of His promise in Christ by the Gospel.” Herein we have a joyful portion for which we can never be too grateful.
- The fourth mystery concerns the Jews and deals with the restoration of Israel, whom we ought to remember with abounding sympathy and brotherly love. Of this you will read in Romans 11:25, 26: “For I would not, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this mystery, lest you should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles is come in. And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob.”

- For a fifth mystery I would bid you remember the doctrine of the removal of corruption from the body and of its resurrection as spoken of in the famous passage, “Behold, I show you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.”
- And then, alas, to close the list, there is that mystery of iniquity which began to work so soon and works yet more and more of evil.

3:16. God. Some manuscripts have “He who”. The *Textus Receptus* (Received Text), does have “*theos*”, God. So does Codex Alexandrinus.

### An Early Hymn of Divine Majesty

“Great is the secret of godliness”,

*Chorus*

“God was manifest in the flesh,  
justified in the spirit,  
seen of angels,  
preached unto the nations,  
believed on in the world,  
received up into glory.”

#### ***Special Note.***

In the second century AD, Pliny the Younger, a lawyer, author, and magistrate of Ancient Rome, wrote a letter to the Roman emperor Trajan (reign, AD 98 – 117), about the customs of the Christians. He told the emperor that, “The Christians were accustomed to meet together on the morning of a fixed day, evidently Sunday, when they took vows not to rob, or steel or lie, or commit adultery, and that they sang a hymn of praise to Christ as God.” The importance of this report, and this hymn, is that they both set forth the divinity of Christ. The doctrine of the deity of Christ was not an invention of zealots with the passing of time, but the immediate faith of the church.

3:16. God was manifest in the flesh. This thought sets forth the Doctrine of the Incarnation. It was not a man, an angel, or the devil that was manifested in the flesh. “He who” was manifested in the flesh was God. This expression is used of the Lord Jesus when He said, “*for this cause came I unto this hour*” (John 12:27). Here is the Doctrine of the Great Condescension.

#### ***Special Note.***

“Bronson Alcott, the New England dreamer and seer, made a visit to England many years ago. He had a conversation with Carlyle. And in his conversation with Carlyle, he said he could, “Sincerely say just as much as Jesus Christ, ‘I am one with the Father.’” “Yes,” replied Carlisle, “But Jesus got men to believe him” (S. Lewis Johnson).



3:16. in the flesh. Christians are not Docetics. We do not believe in a phantom. Jesus really was incarnated. *1 John 1:1 That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life; 2 (For the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us;) 3 That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ. 4 And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full.*

3:16. justified in the spirit. vindicated in his spirit. By His resurrection, the claims of Christ were vindicated. He who had claimed to be rich, though He was poor, really was rich. He who claimed to be the Son, of God, though He was weak and had humbled Himself, really was who He claimed to be for God highly exalted Him, and He sat down on the right hand of the Father. He who claimed to have a Name above every name, though He suffered the shame of the Cross, really was the King of kings, and Lord of lords. And the angels bowed before Him and welcomed Him home as He led captivity captive (Ephesians 4:8). On resurrection morning, Jesus was vindicated in His body when He rose from the dead, and in His spirit, when life returned to His body.

- *Romans 4:25 Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification.*
- *Romans 1:3 Concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh; 4 And declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead:*

3:16. seen of angels.

#### **The Ministry of Angels to Jesus**

- |  |                   |
|--|-------------------|
| • Angels foretold His birth.                       | Luke 1:19         |
| • Angels announced His birth.                      | Luke 2:11         |
| • Angels strengthened Him in His temptation.       | Matthew 4:11      |
| • Angels comforted Him at Gethsemane.              | Luke 22:39-43     |
| • Angels sat by His empty tomb.                    | Luke 28:1-4       |
| • Angels proclaimed His resurrection.              | Luke 28:5-6       |
| • Angels comforted the disciples at His ascension. | Acts 1:9-10       |
| • Angels preached His Second Advent.               | Acts 1:11         |
| • Angels continue to look at His Word.             | 1 Peter 1:2       |
| • Angels are interested in His Church.             | Ephesians 3:10    |
| • Angels learn from His Church.                    | 1 Corinthians 4:9 |

“Angels in fixed amazement around our altars hover,  
with eager gaze adore the grace of our eternal lover.”

3:16. preached unto the nations. God was, and is, preached unto the nations.

“We have heard the joyful sound: Jesus saves! Jesus saves!  
 Spread the tidings all around: Jesus saves! Jesus saves!  
 Bear the news to every land, climb the mountains, cross the waves;  
 Onward! ’tis our Lord’s command; Jesus saves! Jesus saves!

Waft it on the rolling tide: Jesus saves! Jesus saves!  
 Tell to sinners far and wide: Jesus saves! Jesus saves!  
 Sing, you islands of the sea; echo back, you ocean caves;  
 Earth shall keep her jubilee: Jesus saves! Jesus saves!

Sing above the battle strife: Jesus saves! Jesus saves!  
 By His death and endless life Jesus saves! Jesus saves!  
 Shout it brightly through the gloom, when the heart for mercy craves;  
 Sing in triumph o’er the tomb: Jesus saves! Jesus saves!

Give the winds a mighty voice: Jesus saves! Jesus saves!  
 Let the nations now rejoice: Jesus saves! Jesus saves!  
 Shout salvation full and free; highest hills and deepest caves;  
 This our song of victory: Jesus saves! Jesus saves!”

Priscilla J. Owens, 1882

3:16. preached. It is by preaching that Christ was proclaimed. Christ was not preached by portraying the gospel in liturgy, nor by drawing the gospel in art, nor by playing the gospel in drama, but by preaching. Men of God, preach Christ. *2 Timothy 4:2 Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. 3 For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; 4 And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables. 5 But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry.* The Reformers set the pulpit in the center of the church meetings in order to emphasize the centrality of Christ in the preaching of the Word for “*faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God—and how shall they hear without a preacher?*” “God’s way of creating faith in men’s hearts is not by pictures, music, or symbols, but by the hearing of the Word of God!” (C. H. Spurgeon).

3:16. believed on in the world. How people believe is a great mystery. The mystery is only solved by understanding effectual grace and the sovereign ministry of God the Holy Spirit. *John 3:8 The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit.*

3:16. believed on in the world. The world of the Gentiles would especially be amazed that the gospel was preached to them, for the Jews had no dealings with the Gentiles. Yet, in matchless mercy, God was to make salvation possible to the heathen.

3:16. received up into glory. Here is the Doctrine of the Ascension and Session of our Lord Jesus Christ. Our Covenant Head was received into glory. But not only was Christ received into glory, He ascended in glory, for Holy Angels beheld His ascension with the souls of all the saints.

“When Mr. Lincoln died, the Secretary of War, Edwin Stanton was in the room with him, and when on the morning of April the 15th, eighteen sixty-five, he died, the Secretary turned to the window, pulled down the blind to shut out the bright sunlight, and then turned again and looking down at the silent form said, ‘Now he belongs to the ages.’ There is no one who really belongs to the ages. But there is One to whom the ages belong. He is the One whom Paul speaks of here. He is the One who was *“manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory”* (S. Lewis Johnson).

### **Psalms 96**

“O sing unto the Lord a new song:  
sing unto the Lord, all the earth.

Sing unto the Lord, bless his name;  
shew forth his salvation from day to day.

Declare his glory among the heathen,  
his wonders among all people.

For the Lord is great, and greatly to be praised:  
he is to be feared above all gods.

For all the gods of the nations are idols:  
but the Lord made the heavens.

Honour and majesty are before him:  
strength and beauty are in his sanctuary.

Give unto the Lord, O ye kindreds of the people,  
give unto the Lord glory and strength.

Give unto the Lord the glory due unto his name:  
bring an offering, and come into his courts.

O worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness:  
fear before him, all the earth.

Say among the heathen that the Lord reigneth:  
the world also shall be established that it shall not be moved:  
he shall judge the people righteously.

Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad;  
let the sea roar, and the fulness thereof.

Let the field be joyful, and all that is therein:  
then shall all the trees of the wood rejoice  
Before the Lord:

for he cometh, for he cometh to judge the earth:  
he shall judge the world with righteousness,  
and the people with his truth.”

## THE HEXAPLA OF MYSTERY

A SERMON DELIVERED ON LORD'S-DAY MORNING, DECEMBER 22, 1872,

BY

C. H. SPURGEON

AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON

### 1 Timothy 3:16

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

THE Apostle tells us in the preceding verse that the Lord has a double design in maintaining His Church in the world. The first is that it may be the place of His abode, for the Church of the living God is “the house of God,” the home wherein He reveals Himself unto His own children, the resting place of His love which He has of old appointed. Jehovah still inhabits the praises of Israel and still He fulfills His promise to His chosen, “I will dwell in them and walk in them.” (2 Cor. 6:16). Blessed is the Church which has realized this first design of God and so has continued to enjoy the Lord’s Presence and power. May we in this place be a building fitly framed together and grow unto a holy temple in the Lord, for a habitation of God through the Spirit.

God’s next purpose in sustaining a Church in the world is that it may preserve and uphold His Truth among men, for the Church of the living God is “the pillar and ground of the Truth.” The Gospel must be believed, practiced and proclaimed by men of God or it will not have power. God does not trust the conservation of His Truth to books, or to the most accurately written creeds, or to some one person supposed to be infallible—He puts the incorruptible Seed into the hearts of His chosen and in such good soil its vitality and its growth secure its preservation. Even the inspired Word, as a letter, has small power till it gains a lodging place for the Truth in a warm heart—and then it grows and yields fruit till its boughs spread far and wide and its seeds are wafted on the wings of every wind to spring up on the hills and among the valleys where none had looked for them.

As long as one copy of the Holy Scriptures remains in the world we shall have the pure Truth of God among us, but it will be like an unplanted seed. For the propagation of the Gospel, human voices are required—for the establishment and confirmation of it among men, human lives are needed. And God intends that His Gospel shall be set forth and held up, published, defended, maintained and supported in the world by His Church—not alone by His ministers, nor by a hierarchical establishment—but by the entire company of faithful men and women! To the sacramental host of His elect has He committed the banner of the Truth which they are always to unfold and carry on by the power of His Spirit, from victory to victory. In this sense, the Church of the living God is and ever must be, “the pillar and ground of the Truth.” Let us take care, in our measure, to make her so.

While dealing with this question, it was most fitting for the Apostle to tell us what the Truth is and now is the most proper time for each one of us to learn what are the vital and essential Truths which the Church of God is forever to maintain. Our text is, for this reason, deeply interesting. It deals not with questionable and debatable topics, but with things verily and, indeed, received among us. Its testimony is short but weighty. We cannot spare a single word from it and it would be a crime to add anything to it.

The Apostle calls it a “mystery,” and so, indeed, it is for exceeding greatness of meaning, but not for obscurity of language, for it is as plain as it is full. Neither is it a mystery because it speaks of recondite opinions or philosophical theories, for it deals only with facts and is an historical summary of actual occurrences. Observe that the comprehensive summary of the Gospel here given is contained in six little sentences which run with such regularity of measure in the original Greek that some have supposed them to be an ancient hymn. And it is possible that they may have been used as such in the early Church.

There is a poetic form about the six sentences. You are aware, of course, that the Orientals do not consider it essential to sacred Psalms and hymns that they should resound with jingling rhymes—we are the slaves of mere sound in that respect, but they are free. Their fashion of verse-making has more respect to the sense than ours and lies, as a rule, very much in introducing pleasant parallels and contrasts. These you have here, whether the six paragraphs are verses of a hymn or not.

Note that “manifest in the flesh” is contrasted with “justified in the spirit.” “Seen of angels,” who are nearest to the Throne of God, is fitly set by the side of “preached unto the Gentiles,” who stand at the opposite pole and are far off. And then the third duplicate is made up of the evident opposites, “believed on in the world,” “received up into glory.” Thus, all through, the lights and shades are set over against each other by evident design.

Moreover, you will perceive an equally plain parallelism if you will read attentively. The first two stanzas deal with the revealing of the Lord Jesus—He is manifest in the flesh and He is yet more fully made manifest by being justified in the Spirit. Then follows a making known of the Lord by sight to angels and by hearing to the Gentiles. And in the third pair of lines there is a twofold reception—the one by Grace among men who believe and the other into His actual glory in Heaven. Add to all this that pairs are also discernable in the first and last, the second and fourth and the two middle lines.

Just for an instant notice that the first clause of the series deals with Christ’s descent and the last with His ascent. The second and the fifth are both intensely spiritual and the third and fourth have to do with the senses only. Thus you find another set of parallels whose existence can hardly be a mere accident. Note this, for it teaches us that our memories need to be helped and strengthened in every way and so it is well to have condensed Truth to carry about with us and exceedingly advantageous to us to have it arranged in such a shape that we are likely to recollect it. The Apostle has been led by the Spirit to give us goodly words helping our infirmities—of this help we should gratefully avail ourselves to the utmost.

If we are somewhat instructed in the Word we have here an example of practical usefulness. We may for ourselves and for others, especially for the young, try to put the Truth of God into forms which will help it to retain its hold upon the memory. I shall call my text a hexapla of essential Truth, a six-fold mystery of godliness. You have six great points clearly set forth before you and these constitute the main, the essential elements of our holy faith which the Church of God is forever to set forth and uphold to the end of time. The Apostle has said, “without controversy great is the mystery of godliness.” When he says “without controversy,” I suppose he means that there ought to be no controversy about these facts though controversies have arisen concerning them and always will, since the most self-evident Truth of God will always find self-evident fools to contradict it!

He means that in the Church of God, at any rate, there is no question about these fundamentals. Outside of the Church these statements are denied, but inside the house of God no one ever questions them for a moment—and he who does so is by that very act proven to have no part nor lot in the matter. Without controversy all Christians agree that these are Truths of God and also that they are no trifles, but involve a mystery—a great mystery—that is to say they were things hidden in themselves and so concealed that reason could not have found them out. And even now, though they are revealed, they concern matters so vast and so profound that none of us comprehend them fully—and the best instructed scribe in the kingdom recognizes in them infinite depths which he cannot hope fully to explore.

The facts are unquestioned by the Church of God and are without dispute among the faithful, regarded as containing in their inner depths a world of weighty meaning, even the great mystery of godliness. Have you ever noticed that there are six New Testament mysteries? There may be more, but these six are the chief. The first is the mystery of the Incarnation, which is now before us—“Great is the mystery of godliness, God was manifest in the flesh.” The next is the mystery of the union of Christ with His Church, of which we read, in Ephesians 5:31, 32, “For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the Church.” Thrice blessed union with Jesus, may our souls find their Heaven in Your holy mystery—

“Oh teach us, Lord, to know and own  
This wondrous mystery,  
That You with us are truly ONE,  
And we are ONE with You!”

The third mystery is the mystery of the calling of the Gentiles, to which Paul refers in Ephesians 3:4-6, where he says, “Whereby, when you read, you may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ; which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto His holy Apostles and Prophets by the Spirit; that the

Gentiles should be fellow heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of His promise in Christ by the Gospel.” Herein we have a joyful portion for which we can never be too grateful.

The fourth mystery concerns the Jews and deals with the restoration of Israel, whom we ought to remember with abounding sympathy and brotherly love. Of this you will read in Romans 11:25, 26: “For I would not, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this mystery, lest you should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles is come in. And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob.”

For a fifth mystery I would bid you remember the doctrine of the removal of corruption from the body and of its resurrection as spoken of in the famous passage, “Behold, I show you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.” And then, alas, to close the list, there is that mystery of iniquity which began to work so soon and works yet more and more of evil.

Our text, then, is one of six mysteries, but it has this preeminence that it is a great mystery. It is called, “the mystery of godliness,” because it most intimately concerns a godly life. Those who receive it in their hearts become thereby godly men and, moreover, it builds up Believers in godliness and is to them a grand motive for the reverent love and holy fear of the Lord their God. Let so much as we have already spoken stand for our preface, and let us now, by the Holy Spirit’s aid, consider one by one the six branches of the mystery which is now before us.

I. The first sentence is, “GOD WAS MANIFEST IN THE FLESH.” I believe that our version is the correct one, but the most fierce battles have been held over this sentence. It is asserted that the word *Theos* is a corruption for “Os” so that, instead of reading, “God was manifest in the flesh,” we should read, “who was manifest in the flesh.” There is very little occasion for fighting about this matter, for if the text does not say, “God was manifest in the flesh,” who does it say was manifest in the flesh?

Either a man, or an angel, or a devil. Does it tell us that a man was manifest in the flesh? Assuredly that cannot be its teachings, for every man is manifest in the flesh and there is no sense whatever in making such a statement concerning any mere man and then calling it a mystery! Was it an angel, then? But what angel was ever manifest in the flesh? And if he were, would it be at all a mystery that he should be “seen of angels?” Is it a wonder for an angel to see an angel? Can it be that the devil was manifest in the flesh? If so, he has been “received up into glory,” which, let us hope, is not the case.

Well, if it was neither a man, nor an angel, nor a devil—who was manifest in the flesh? Surely He must have been God! And so, if the word is not there, the sense must be there or else nonsense. We believe that if criticism should grind the text in a mill, it would get out of it no more and no less than the sense expressed by our grand old version. God Himself was manifest in the flesh! What a mystery is this! A mystery of mysteries! God the Invisible was manifest! God the Spiritual dwelt in flesh! God the Infinite, uncontained, boundless, was manifest in the flesh!



What infinite leagues our thought must traverse between Godhead self-existent and, therefore, full of power and self-sufficiency, before we have descended to the far-down level of poor flesh which is as grass at its best and dust in its essence! Where can we find a greater contrast than between God and flesh? And yet the two are blended in the Incarnation of the Savior! God was manifest in the flesh. Truly God, not God humanized, but God as God! He was manifest in real flesh. Not in manhood deified and made superhuman, but in actual flesh—

“Oh joy! There sits in our death,  
 Upon a throne of light,  
 One of a human mother born,  
 In perfect Godhead bright!

Forever God, forever Man,  
 My Jesus shall endure;  
 And fixed on Him,  
 My hope remains  
 Eternally secure.”

Matchless Truth of God! Let the Church never fail to set it forth, for it is essential to the world’s salvation that this doctrine of the Incarnation be fully known. O my Brothers and Sisters, since it is, “without controversy,” let us not controvert but sit down and feed upon it! What a miracle of condescension is here, that God should manifest Himself in flesh! It needs not so much to be preached upon as to be pondered in the heart. It needs that you sit down in quiet and consider how He who made you became like you—He who is your God became your brother Man. He who is adored of angels once lay in a manger! He who feeds all living things hungered and was thirsty. He who oversees all worlds as God, was, as a Man, made to sleep, to suffer and to die like yourselves!

This is a statement not easily to be believed. If He had not been beheld by many witnesses, so that men handled Him, looked upon Him and heard Him speak, it were a thing not readily to be accepted that so Divine a Person should be manifest in flesh. It is a wonder of condescension! And it is a marvel, too, of benediction, for God’s manifestation in human flesh conveys a thousand blessings to us. Bethlehem’s star is the morning star of hope to Believers. Now man is nearest to God. Never was God manifest in angel nature, but He is manifest in flesh. Now, between poor puny man that is born of a woman and the infinite God, there is a bond of union of the most wonderful kind. God and Man in one Person is the Lord Jesus Christ!

This brings our manhood near to God and by so doing it ennobles our nature—it lifts us up from the dunghill and sets us among princes—while at the same time it enriches us by endowing our manhood with all the glory of Christ Jesus in whom dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily! Lift up your eyes, you down-trodden sons of man! If you are men you have a brotherhood with Christ, and Christ is God! O you who have begun to despise yourselves and think that you are merely sent to be drudges upon and slaves of sin, lift up your heads and look for redemption in the Son of Man who has broken the captives’ bonds!

If you are Believers in the Christ of God, then you are also the children of God and if children then heirs—heirs of God, joint heirs with Jesus Christ! What a fullness of consolation there is in this Truth, as well as of benediction, for if the Son of God is Man, then He understands me and will have a fellow feeling for me. He knows my unfitness to worship sometimes—He knows my tendencies to grow weary and dull—He knows my pains, my trials and my griefs—

“He knows what fierce temptations mean,  
For He has felt the same.”

Man, truly Man, yet sitting at the right hand of the Father, You, O Savior, are the delight of my soul! Is there not the richest comfort in this for you, the people of God? And, besides, there is instruction, too, for God was manifest in the flesh. And if you desire to see God, you must see Him in Christ Jesus.

It does not say God was veiled in the flesh, though under certain aspects that might be true, but God was “manifest in the flesh.” The brightness of the sun might put out our eyes if we gazed upon it and we must look through dark glasses and then the sun is manifested to us. So the excessive glory of the infinite Godhead cannot be borne by our mind’s eyes till it comes into communication and union with the nature of man and then God is manifest to us. My Soul, never try to gaze upon an absolute God—the brightness will blind your eyes—even our God is a consuming fire! Ask not to see God in fire in the bush, nor God in lightning upon Mount Sinai—be satisfied to see God in the Man Christ Jesus, for there God is manifested!

Not all the glory of the sky and of the sea, nor the wonders of Creation or Providence can set forth the Deity as does the Son of Mary, who from the manger went to the Cross and from the Cross to the tomb—and from the tomb to His Eternal Throne. Behold, now, the Lamb of God, for God is manifest in Him! People of God, look nowhere else for God! I shall leave the point when I have asked a personal question. Have we, each one of us, seen God in Christ Jesus? Remember, this is essential to salvation! We speak not now that which is harsh or severe—we only speak that which is honest and true. If you rebel against it we can still say no less. You cannot be right anywhere unless you are right about the Person of the Lord Jesus!

If you do not accept Him as the Son of God He cannot be a Savior to you. And without Him for a Savior you are as surely lost as you are born, whatever profession you may make. I trust we can say, many of us, “Yes, Jesus Christ is to us Lord, to the glory of God the Father and we worship Him and obey Him, putting all our trust in Him and rendering our adoration to Him.” If you are not now His worshippers, may the blessed Spirit bring you to Jesus and not suffer you to attempt to go to the Father first, for the Lord Jesus has told us, “no man comes unto the Father but by Me.” May you go to the Throne of God by the way of the Cross, for that is the only way—and may you go by that road at once.

II. The second clause concerns our Lord’s vindication by the Spirit. He who was “manifest in the flesh” was also “JUSTIFIED IN THE SPIRIT.” When our Lord came in human flesh and declared to be the Son of God there were many reasons why His statement would be doubted, for He came in such poverty, weakness and disrepute. In any case, the appearance of God in flesh would need great proof, but the circumstances which surrounded our Savior were such as to cast, especially in carnal minds, great doubt upon His pretensions.

Our Lord, however the flesh might seem to cloud His claims, was “justified in the Spirit,” which may mean, and perhaps does, that His spiritual Nature as Man was so elevated by His Godhead that it abundantly justified His claim to be the Son of God. What a spirit was His for purity and dignity! What nobility ever came near to His? What a mind was His! What wisdom dwelt in Him! Even as a Child He baffled Rabbis and as a Man He confounded all who would entrap Him in His speech. Was there ever such teaching as His? Listen to Him and you feel that the spirit which flashes from those eyes and distils from those lips justifies His claim to be the Son of the Highest.

Hearken, also, to His words of command when His Godhead glows through His Humanity and proves Him Divine. He speaks and it is done. He commands and it stands fast. At His bidding waves sleep and winds rest—pain flees, strength returns, health smiles—and death lives! Has not His spiritual Nature, by deeds so astounding, fully justified Him? And see, dear Friends, how He was justified—not only by His own spirit, which worked beyond the reach and compass of all other spirits—but He was justified by the Holy Spirit which rested upon Him without measure and made His human spirit strong.

It was this anointing which made Him the chief of all Prophets, teachers and revealers of the mind of God. All who heard Him confessed His unrivalled power, even when they resisted it. The Spirit of God bore witness in Him—His words were full of unction. The Spirit of God bore witness with Him—His words went to men’s hearts. The Spirit of God bore witness to Christ and justified all His claims at the time of His Baptism, when out of the excellent Glory there appeared the form of a dove and a voice cried out of Heaven, “This is My beloved Son.” That same Spirit justified Him audibly again in His Transfiguration. But silently and yet more evidently the seal of God was always on Him—the Spirit witnessed to Him everywhere. Only blind eyes, blinded by hate, refused to see the Divine light which hung about His every word and act, as radiance enrobes a star!

Above all, our Lord’s claims were justified by the Spirit in His Resurrection, when He was “declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness by His resurrection from the dead.” Nor less so when, after 40 days, He was received up into Glory and the Spirit of God justified all that Christ had said by coming down like a rushing mighty wind and cloven tongues of fire and resting upon His disciples. If Christ had not risen from the dead He would have been a convicted impostor. And after His rising from the dead, if the Spirit of God had not been given, His claim would still have remained under a cloud!

But now it is clear that, “He has ascended on high and received gifts for men, yes, for the rebellious also, that the Lord God might dwell among them,” for the scattering of the Spirit of God among men was that promised largess which our mighty Conqueror distributed among His people when He entered upon the possession of His crown. The Holy Spirit has justified Christ! This is a part of the testimony of the Church—that Christ’s claims are to be justified by the spirit of His teaching and also by the Holy Spirit whose supernatural power will accompany the proclamation of the Gospel.

Now, let the Church always stand to this. I am afraid we are on wrong ground when we begin to defend the Gospel by mere reason. The true defense of the Gospel is the Spirit of Christ—Jesus is justified in the Spirit—and needs no other justification. O, Brethren, if we exhibit the Spirit of Christ we shall answer ridiculers and if the Spirit of God rests on the ministry of the Church, ridiculers will cease to ridicule! They will see her glory and they will be ashamed.

The Holy Spirit is our strength, our glory, the abiding witness that our great Leader is Lord and God. Brethren, has the Holy Spirit ever justified Christ in your soul? He has come to save—has the Holy Spirit revealed Him as your Savior? He has come to blot out sin—has the Holy Spirit ever revealed Him in all His power to pardon you? This is the sure vindication of Christ—your own personal experience of His preciousness and His power! If the Holy Spirit has given you that, none can confuse you! But if you have it not you lack the one thing necessary. God grant you may not lack it long!

III. The third clause of our hexapla is, “SEEN OF ANGELS.” This is an important point, for angels had waited to see the Lord, patiently gazing on the Mercy Seat. There had been rumors in Heaven of this mystery of the manifold wisdom of God but they had not understood it. And it is now in Christ that the mystery of Incarnate God has been revealed to them. If I may say so, the brightness of the Godhead had confused even the angels. They were not able to see God, but when God came and manifested Himself in the flesh, then God was seen of angels.

The Godhead was seen in Christ by angels as they had never seen it before. They had beheld the attribute of justice. They had seen the attribute of power. They had marked the attribute of wisdom and seen the prerogative of sovereignty. But never had angels seen love, condescension, tenderness and pity in God as they saw these things resplendent in the Person and the life of Christ! They were astounded to think that God was such a One. They knew Him to be thrice holy, for they had chanted, “Holy, holy, holy,” in their perpetual song. But they did not know Him to be Love—essential Love—as they knew it when they saw that, “He spared not His own Son, but freely delivered Him up for us all.”

The angels, seeing God thus manifest in flesh, ministered to Him. They watched around the manger. They were messengers to His foster parent to warn him of intended evil to the Child. And they waited on the Redeemer in the desert of His temptation. One of their number strengthened Him in the garden. Another rolled away the stone from His grave, while others sat at the head and foot of the sepulcher where Jesus had lain. I doubt not it is true as we sang just now—

“They brought His chariot from above,  
To bear Him to His Throne;  
Clapped their triumphant wings, and cried,  
‘The glorious work is done.’”

Jesus was alone seen of angels and this is one reason why they sing so sweetly of Him—why they tune their notes so heartily to the song, “Worthy is the Lamb that was slain,” for they saw Him live and die—they saw Him labor and suffer and therefore is their song so vivid and so full of adoration. “You were slain,” they sing, though they cannot add, “and have redeemed us unto God by Your blood.”

Now the joy of this truth lies here—it brings the angel host near to us, for they saw Jesus and waited on Him and we see Him and therefore our eyes and the angels' eyes meet upon the Person of Christ. We have one common love, one common Lord—and now the ministering spirits that waited upon Him are ready to wait upon us. They love the members for the sake of the Head. Beloved, we rejoice this day to know that Christ is Head of angels and principalities and powers, as well as Head of His Church! And so, in Him broken unity is restored and the household of God is one in Him. Angelic eyes beheld and loved—they still love and wonder. Fair spirits, charmed with the beauty of our Bridegroom, you rejoice with us and make it your delight to swell His train!

One question and we leave this point. Have you ever seen Jesus? He was seen of angels. Have your eyes ever seen Him—your inner, spiritual eyes? If not, the Lord help you this morning to look unto Him and be saved! It is nothing that He was seen of angels unless He is seen of me also, even as of one born out of due time. O, to see Him as my Savior, my All and rest in Him! This is the main business. May God grant us that gladness!

IV. Briefly, the fourth part of the great mystery does not look, at first sight, to be at all mysterious. There is much of mystery in the facts that God was “manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, and seen of angels.” But the next appears very commonplace—“PREACHED UNTO THE GENTILES.” Yet it is not without a marvel. Those who reflect will see a great mystery of Grace in it. Until Christ came, nothing was “preached to the Gentiles.” They were accounted dogs, and few were the crumbs that fell to them from the Master's table! But after our Lord had ascended on high He was proclaimed to the Gentiles.

To a Jew, especially, this would seem a very strange thing. The Jew thought that if the Gentile perished it was but a matter of course—but for the Gentiles to be visited with the Gospel was strange, indeed! That God should work effectually in Peter to the Apostleship of the circumcision was to them readily a matter of faith. But that the same should be equally mighty in Paul towards the Gentiles was incredible! Well, blessed be God, you and I are partakers in this mystery, for we have heard and believed the love which God has toward us! We are Gentiles, also, but unto us has the Gospel been preached as well as unto the ancient people! Yes, and we have been more highly favored than they, for at this day more are the children of the desolate than the children of the married wife.

God has multiplied the seed of Abraham after the Spirit among the Gentiles, whereas the seed of Abraham after the flesh have, in these times, rejected the Savior. Rejoice then, in the mystery that Christ is preached among the Gentiles! Mark you, preached! For He is to be set forth in that manner. The Church is ever to maintain this great, incontrovertible mystery that the setting forth of Christ to the Gentiles is to be by preaching and not by any other means of man's devising. Suppose I could take my pencil, now, and draw the Savior with such matchless skill that a Raffaele or a Titian could not rival me? God has never ordained that Christ should so be set forth to the Gentiles.

Or, suppose I should perform the ceremony of the “mass” with all the exactness and with all the gorgeousness which the Church of Rome would require? Such a setting forth of Christ among the Gentiles would not be according to the Divine mystery. Christ is to be preached among the Gentiles! The appointed way of manifesting the Incarnate God to the sons of men is by preaching—the Church must always maintain this! The strongest castle of the walls of Zion for offense and defense must always be the pulpit. God is pleased by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe!

I hate to see, as I do sometimes in certain modern buildings, the pulpit stuck in the corner and the altar in the most conspicuous place. The altar of sacrifice, indeed! The place of defilement and remembrance of sin—how come is that in the holy place at all? God has never ordained it to be there! Where in Holy Scripture have we mention of a material altar in the assemblies of Believers? Our only altar is the spiritual Altar of our Lord’s Person, whereof they have no right to eat that serve the tabernacle of outward forms of rites and ceremonies. Altars belong to Jews and heathens and even they never bow before them! None but your Popish idolaters have fallen so low as that!

The most prominent agency in the Church of God is the preaching of Christ—this is the trumpet of Heaven and the battering ram of Hell! By this door salvation comes, for faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God—and how shall they hear without a preacher? God’s way of creating faith in men’s hearts is not by pictures, music, or symbols, but by the hearing of the Word of God! This may seem a strange thing—but strange let it seem, for it is a mystery—and a great mystery, but a fact beyond all controversy! Let the Church forever maintain that Christ is to be preached unto the Gentiles!

A part of the greatness of the mystery lies in the persons who preached the Gospel. It was a strange thing that Jesus should be preached unto the Gentiles by unlearned and ignorant men. One of the Apostles, it is true, was of another class, but he declares that he never preached with excellency of speech. He declared that in all simplicity he laid bare the mystery of God in plain language. It was wonderful that Christ should be preached unto the Gentiles so rapidly. It was but the other day the 120 were in the upper room and within a few years there was no part of the civilized globe which had not heard the name of Jesus! They had penetrated Scythia. They had subdued the barbarians—their only weapon being the Cross!

They had triumphed at Athens, in the stronghold of classic learning. They had passed into Rome and set up the Cross amidst the luxurious vices of the capital. No place was un-trodden by the Christian missionary and no place was unaffected by the power of the Gospel which he preached. This is a great mystery—may the Lord repeat the mystery again and again! O that preaching might once again be recognized to be God’s power unto salvation and used everywhere—in the Church, in the lecture hall, in the street—in foreign lands and at home! The voice of the Truth of God in the preaching of Jesus is the great power of God!

One question here, and we leave it—Have you reverently heard the Gospel? For there goes with the declaration that God saves through preaching, the warning, “Take heed how you hear.” If God waits to bless by hearing, woe unto the men who hear inattentively and disrespectfully! Woe unto the hearers who are not doers of the Word! A responsibility goes with hearing and God grant that you may be obedient hearers so that we who preach may give a good account of you at the last—that our ministry may not have been in vain—but may have been to you the voice of God to your salvation.

V. And now the fifth part of the mystery is a very remarkable one. Like that which preceded, it does not appear to be mysterious on the surface, but it is so—“BELIEVED ON IN THE WORLD.” This is the most glorious of all the six points, this wonderful fact that Jesus is “believed on in the world.” Why, when the humble preachers first went out to tell of Jesus, their story was so strange you could not imagine that any would believe it! And then the doctrines that they taught were so contrary to all the prejudices of flesh and blood, so humbling to human pride, so insulting to all our self-esteem that it was not probable that men would accept them! And the world, too, what a world it was!

It was steeped up to its throat in cruelty, in vice, in luxury, in sins infamous and unmentionable—and was it likely that a pure Savior with a perfect doctrine like His would find followers? But He did—He was “believed on in the world.” Why, I think the first preachers must have been ready to leap for joy when they found that men believed them! If I had been Peter, I should scarcely have slept for joy for many a night if I had found 3,000 willing to believe my testimony and willing to be baptized into Christ! And Paul—oh, I think with all his sorrows, he must have been a very happy man—must have been struck with wonder to see that though he went into idolatrous lands to tell this new, strange and incredible story, yet in every place there were found men or women who received it joyfully!

Hark well that the Church is bound to maintain this mystery—that it is by believing in Christ that the efficacy of His Sacrifice comes to men. The mystery is not that Christ is served in the world, that is not put here—nor that Christ is worshipped in the world, that is not the first point—those things will be sure to follow. But the vital mystery is that Christ is “believed on in the world,” that is to say, trusted as the Savior! Men leave all other trusts and trust in Him! They give up their self-righteousness. They leave their vaunted sacraments. They forsake all ways and modes of self-salvation and come and trust in Christ—this is the great mystery!

“Well,” says one, “I do not see that there is a mystery in it.” Have you ever believed in Jesus yourself, beloved Friend? If you have, you will say, “this is the finger of God.” Belief in Jesus is as great a work of Divine power as the making of this globe. One of the visitors to this place lately said, “I am willing to be a Believer if the preacher can persuade me.” Very likely, but no preacher can create true faith—it needs a mightier power than the preacher’s, even the power of the Holy Spirit! God gives to His elect the blessing of faith and others willfully remain in unbelief. Faith, simple as it is, is supernatural, Divine and not to be attained by human aid, nor human eloquence. They who have it know that it is a blessed mystery, this believing on Jesus Christ in the world. Have you this faith? Do you believe in Jesus? Everything else in my text leads up to this.

If He is manifest in the flesh, what is that unless I believe in Him? What if He is justified in the Spirit? What is that unless faith in Him justifies me? What if He is seen of angels, how does that help me unless I see Him, too? And even if He is preached among the Gentiles, that does but involve greater guilt upon my soul if, after hearing, I have not believed in Him. O dear Hearers, I may not speak to you much longer and every time that I am kept away from addressing you I feel a deep anxiety that by some means my preaching may be made effectual to your salvation. Many of you have believed in my Lord—this is my comfort—but, on the other hand, how many there are who still hear, and hear, and hear, and that is all? How long will you wait? How long will you cause me to labor for nothing? No one is so worth trusting as the Savior is and nothing is so true as that He came to save sinners!

VI. The last point of the Church's witness is that Jesus was "RECEIVED UP INTO GLORY." Only this word about it—He was so received because His work is finished. He would never have gone into His Glory if He had not finished all His toil. He would have accepted no reward had He not fully earned it. My Soul, do you believe that Christ is received up into Glory? That will let you know that you are resting in a finished work, an Atonement which has put away all sin, a satisfaction which has made all Believers accepted in the Beloved. He has gone into Glory, thus He is personally rewarded.

And moreover, He has thus representatively taken possession of all that He has purchased. Is Christ in Glory? Then the Believer is in Glory—not literally but in his Covenant Head. What Christ takes possession of He claims in our name—"I go to prepare a place for you." O you who sorrow over the present, rejoice also, for even now at this moment Heaven is yours—your Jesus has taken possession in your name! And oh, it is joyous to know that our great Lord is eternally exalted! If He were not exalted what comfort could we have? He is received up into Glory!

Men say He is not God—they cannot hurt Him, for He is received up into Glory! They revile His Gospel—they cannot dim the luster of His crown, He is received up into Glory! They would gladly slay His people if they could, but He is received up into Glory! They struggle and they strive against His cause and would gladly overthrow it—but O, what does it matter? He is everlastingly exalted and He will shortly come—that same Jesus who was received into Glory shall so come, in like manner as He was seen to go up into Heaven!

Here are great wells of comfort! He has gone to His Glory and has taken to Himself His great power! But every hour is bringing nearer the time when He shall lay bare His sword in the midst of His foes and shall unveil His face in the midst of His friends! Let us rejoice in Him this day and go our way to bear with all the Church of the living God the six-fold testimony of our text concerning our precious Savior. Amen.

Sermon No. 1087  
Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit  
Adapted from  
The C.H. Spurgeon Collection, Ages Software

***Special Note.***

Hexapla, (Christian Religious Writings / Bible) an edition of the Old Testament compiled by Origen, containing six versions of the text; from Greek hexaploos, six-fold.



## 1 TIMOTHY 4

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

4:1. expressly. without doubt.

4:1. shall depart from the faith.

- *Acts 20:29 For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock.*
- *Matthew 24:23 Then if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is Christ, or there; believe it not. 24 For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect. 25 Behold, I have told you before. 26 Wherefore if they shall say unto you, Behold, he is in the desert; go not forth: behold, he is in the secret chambers; believe it not.*

4:1. doctrines of devils. demons.

### Doctrines of the Devils

- **Doctrine of Celibacy.** The evil of this religious dogma of the Church of Rome has been made manifest in an alarming way in recent years through the Catholic sex abuse cases. There have been a series of convictions, trials and investigations of child sexual abuse, crimes committed by Catholic priests, nuns and members of Roman Catholic orders against children as young as 3 years old with the majority between the ages of 11 and 14. These cases included invasion sex of the vilest nature. There have been criminal prosecutions of the abusers and civil lawsuits against the church's dioceses and parishes. Many of the cases span several decades and are brought forward years after the abuse occurred. Cases have also been brought against members of the Catholic hierarchy who did not report sex abuse allegations to the legal authorities. It has been shown they deliberately moved sexually abusive priests to other parishes where the abuse sometimes continued. This has led to a number of fraud cases where the Church has been accused of misleading victims by deliberately relocating priests accused of abuse instead of removing them from their positions (Wikipedia, Article, *Catholic Sex Abuse Cases*).
- **Doctrine of Special Meals.** Despite the divine freedom given to eat, after prayer, what God has created, and declared to be good, millions of religious people have scruples against eating meat. While being a vegetarian might be a preference of personal choice, making it a religious dogma is wrong.
- **The God is "Dead" Theology.** It is argued that the concepts by which we speak of God are no longer relevant. God is now revealed in Secular Theology. Someone has said, "He who is wedded to the spirit of this age, will find himself a widower in the next."

- The New Age Movement. The objective of the New Age movement is to create a spirituality without borders or confining dogmas. It is inclusive and pluralistic, which means that truth is either relative, or non-existent.

With each passing century, new doctrinal errors are produced, and proclaimed by demons, and presented to challenge the Church, and the historic saving faith, which we believe.

2 Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron;

4:2. seared. cauterized.

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

4:3. which. God has ordained both marriage, and good food.

4:3. meats. foods.

4:3. of them which believe. Only the Christian can truly give thanks for food, for it flows from faith in Him.

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

4:4. For. Paul explains why it is possible to eat all foods. "*Every creation of God is good.*" *Genesis 1:31 And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was very good. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day.* With this understanding, the nature of God is seen to be gracious and generous.

5 For it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer.

4:5. sanctified. set apart.

4:5. by the Word of God. This may be a reference to the teaching of the Word of God. God Himself stands behind the goodness of His creation.

4:5. and prayer. Christians should say grace prior to eating. Whenever the Lord Jesus took food, He blessed it.

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

4:6. If thou put. Christians must be built up in the faith. Doctrine is important.

4:6. nourished up. trained.

7 But refuse profane and old wives fables, and exercise thyself rather unto godliness.

4:7. old wives fables. Historically, old wives' tales have their origin in the oral tradition of storytelling. These stories were generally created by women, telling stories to each other, or to children. The stories attempted to teach practical lessons, and make difficult concepts like death or coming of age, easy for others to understand. Sometimes these stories are used to scare children so they do not do certain things. Every culture has "old wives fables."

4:7. exercise. train.

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

4:8. exercise. A disciplined life is expected. The believer is to refuse everything that hinders and distracts from godliness.

9 This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance.

4:9. a faithful saying. A reference to the teaching of verse 8.

#### **Four Faithful Sayings in Scripture**

- *1 Timothy 1:15 This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief.*
- *1 Timothy 4:8 For bodily exercise profiteth little: but godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come. 9 This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance.*
- *2 Timothy 2:11 It is a faithful saying: For if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him:*
- *Titus 3:8 This is a faithful saying, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable unto men.*

10 For therefore we both labor and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the Savior of all men, specially of those that believe.

4:10. the living God. This expression is a term which in the New Testament relates God as the Creator to all men. *Acts 14:15 And saying, Sirs, why do ye these things? We also are men of like passions with you, and preach unto you that ye should turn from these vanities unto the living God, which made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all things that are therein:*

4:10 the Savior of all men. In context, Paul argues that God is not merely the Saviour of a few ascetics (note verses 3, 4). God's offer of salvation applies to all men without distinction. To reassure any Christian who was concerned by the exclusive claims of the heretics, Paul declares that God is especially the Saviour of believers. This passage should not be taken out of its context to teach universalism, or that Christ died for all sins of all men without exception. Christ died to save His people from their sins. *Matthew 1:21 And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins.*

#### **Various Interpretations of "All Men"**

4:10. all men. He is the Savior of all men so that Universalism is in view. But, if that is being taught, why add "specially" of those that believe. It would be unnecessary.

4:10. all men. He is the Savior of all kinds of men. If Distributive Salvation, and young and old, male and female, kings and peasants are in view, the problem still exists, for everyone is again saved.

4:10. all men. He is the Savior of all men IF, out of their free will, they believe. But this is not what the text says for the will is not free, it is in bondage to sin, and must be made free.

4:10. all men. He is the Savior of all men potentially, effectually of the believers.

4:10. all men. He is the Savior of all men. That is what the text says. So the text must have a non-soteriological (non-salvation) sense. What is meant here is that He is the preserver of all men, specially of those that believe. Or, He is the deliverer of all men, specially of those that believe. *Psalms 36:6 Thy righteousness is like the great mountains; thy judgments are a great deep: O Lord, thou preservest man and beast.* The sense of the text is that God preserves the lives of all men, but He is the Savior, especially, of those that believe.

#### ***Special Note.***

Notice the language of 1 Timothy 4:16. *"Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee."* Can a man save himself? No. Impossible (Ephesians 2:8-9). How then can Timothy "save" himself? In context, the idea is that Timothy can preserve himself, he can deliver himself from apostasy, if he will give heed to Bible doctrine, and continue in the faith. So there is a sense in which the word "save", is used in a non-soteriological way.

## Training for Ministry

11 These things command and teach.

4:11. These things. A reference to all that has gone before.

### Personal and Private Ministry

12 Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, [in spirit], in faith, in purity.

4:12. despise. think little of. There are two extremes to avoid. One extreme is to think that only older men can effectively be an elder or deacon. The other extreme is to reject a person because they are young. The main issue is the maturity of the person.

4:12. thy youth. Young people tend to talk too much, to talk beyond their knowledge. Another area of concern is that the youth do not live up to high expectations. “Timothy, learn to control your tongue, and be an example in word, in manner of life, in love, in faith, and in moral purity.”

4:12. thy youth. (Gk. *neotes*). A reference to someone 40 years old or younger.

4:12. conversation. manner of life.

4:12. charity. love. *Agapao* love is a love that gives. It is directed towards others in sacrifice. *John 3:16 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.*

4:12. in spirit. The words “in spirit”, are not in the original.

4:12. in faith. The sense here is that of faithfulness. There is the absence of the definite article. The idea is that of loyalty. “Timothy, be steady. Be loyal to Christ, and to the church, despite what happens.”

4:12. in purity. moral purity.

### The Public Ministry

13 Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine.

4:13. attendance. attention. This word means “to take heed to.”

4:13. to reading. The reading was in the Scriptures, particularly the Law and the Prophets, and then any apostolic leaders. The reading of the Word was important to the early church, as it had been important in the worship of the synagogues.

- *Acts 13:15 And after the reading of the law and the prophets the rulers of the synagogue sent unto them, saying, Ye men and brethren, if ye have any word of exhortation for the people, say on.*
- *Acts 15:21 For Moses of old time hath in every city them that preach him, being read in the synagogues every Sabbath day.*
- *1 Thessalonians 5:27 I charge you by the Lord that this epistle be read unto all the holy brethren.*
- *Revelation 1:3 Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand.*

**Special Note.**

Justin Martyr, who wrote the *First Apology* in the 2nd century, tells us a great deal about the church in the 2nd century. In one part of his *First Apology* he describes the meetings of the church on Sunday. They observed the Lord's Supper every Sunday. Then there was the reading of the Scripture, followed by exhortations.

4:13. exhortation. This word refers to words of comfort, words of rebuke, and words of exhortation. The book of Hebrews is a doctrinal book, and it is a book of exhortation. *Hebrews 13:22 And I beseech you, brethren, suffer the word of exhortation: for I have written a letter unto you in few words.*

4:13. teaching. Over the course of time, every believer should know something about the great doctrines of the Bible.

- Theology Proper    The Study of God
- Bibliology        The Study of the Bible
- Anthropology     The Study of Mankind
- Soteriology       The Study of Salvation
- Pneumatology    The Study of the Holy Spirit
- Ecclesiology     The Study of the Church
- Eschatology      The Study of the Future

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

4:14. the gift. Timothy was given the gift of being a pastor-teacher.

**The Gift**

- The Gift Recognized. *Acts 16:2 Which was well reported of by the brethren that were at Lystra and Iconium.*

- The Gift Confirmed. *1 Timothy 1:18 This charge I commit unto thee, son Timothy, according to the prophecies which went before on thee, that thou by them mightest war a good warfare;*
- The Gift Perfected. *2 Timothy 1:6 Wherefore I put thee in remembrance that thou stir up the gift of God, which is in thee by the putting on of my hands.*

15 Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy profiting may appear to all.

4:15. meditate. ponder. “Timothy, do whatever you can to develop your spiritual gifts”. A closed mind, and intellectual sloth, are sins, in the study of the Word of God.

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

4:16. Take heed unto thy self, and unto the doctrine. The two go hand in hand. No one can lead another person to a higher spiritual status than that which he has obtained.

4:16. Take heed unto thy self. “Gladstone was one of Britain’s greatest Prime Ministers. Men sometimes ask him what the secret of his success was. He said, ‘Concentration.’ Disraeli was his mortal enemy. They asked Disraeli what was his secret of success. He said, ‘Persistency of purpose.’ There was one more famous Prime Minister than either of these two, Daniel. And the thing that was characteristic of him was that he purposed in his heart. ‘Take heed to thyself and to the doctrine’” (S. Lewis Johnson).

4:16. save thyself. Timothy was to save himself, he was to deliver himself, from apostasy by giving himself to sound Bible doctrine. *Philippians 2:12 Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.* Those who deliver themselves from false teaching are able to help deliver others as well.

### **Doctrine of Timothy**

1. Timothy (venerating God) was a convert, and a friend of Paul the apostle.
2. Timothy was the son of a mixed marriage that, while unlawful, was frequent in the later periods of Jewish history. His mother was a Jewess, and his father, whose name is not known, was a Greek.
  - *Acts 16:1 Then came he to Derbe and Lystra: and, behold, a certain disciple was there, named Timotheus, the son of a certain woman, which was a Jewess, and believed; but his father was a Greek: 2 Which was well reported of by the brethren that were at Lystra and Iconium. 3 Him would Paul have to go forth with him; and took and circumcised him because of the Jews which were in those quarters: for they knew all that his father was a Greek.*

3. The biblical portrait of Timothy's early life indicates a godly mother and grandmother, full of compassion and faith, who carefully instructed him in the Scriptures, to place in his heart the hope for the Messiah of Israel.
  - *2 Timothy 1:5 When I call to remembrance the unfeigned faith that is in thee, which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois, and thy mother Eunice; and I am persuaded that in thee also.*
  - *2 Timothy 3:15 And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.*
4. Because he lived in Lystra, Timothy was far removed from the larger colonies of Israelite families.
5. Nevertheless, he was brought up in a thoroughly Jewish environment, with the limitation being he had not been circumcised. According to Jewish belief, this meant he was not within the sphere of God's ancient covenant.
6. In the providence of the Lord, Timothy came under the ministry of Paul when he made his first visit to that city.
  - *Acts 16:1 Then came he to Derbe and Lystra: and, behold, a certain disciple was there, named Timotheus, the son of a certain woman, which was a Jewess, and believed; but his father was a Greek:*
7. At that time Timothy was probably converted (Acts 14:6; cf. 2 Timothy 1:5).
8. While no mention is made of Timothy until the time of Paul's second visit, it is probable that his spiritual life and growth in grace, and knowledge of Christ, took place under the care of the elders of the church.
  - *Acts 14:23 And when they had ordained them elders in every church, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord, on whom they believed.*
9. The spiritual maturity of Timothy was openly recognized. He was considered to be especially suited for the work of the ministry, and was ordained to that end. .
  - *1 Timothy 1:18 This charge I commit unto thee, son Timothy, according to the prophecies which went before on thee, that thou by them mightest war a good warfare;*
  - *1 Timothy 4:14 Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery.*
10. So impressed was Paul with Timothy, he desired to have him as a traveling companion.
11. In an unusual act of social expediency, Paul circumcised Timothy, in order to take away a point of controversy, and in order to have a more effective ministry.



- *Acts 16:1 Then came he to Derbe and Lystra: and, behold, a certain disciple was there, named Timotheus, the son of a certain woman, which was a Jewess, and believed; but his father was a Greek:*
  - *Acts 16:3 Him would Paul have to go forth with him; and took and circumcised him because of the Jews which were in those quarters: for they knew all that his father was a Greek.*
12. The action of Paul, in circumcising Timothy, has been considered inconsistent with his principle and conduct in refusing to circumcise Titus.
- *Galatians 2:3 But neither Titus, who was with me, being a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised: 4 And that because of false brethren unawares brought in, who came in privily to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage:*
13. Some Bible scholars see a difference. One author notes, "The two cases are, however, entirely different. In the latter there was an attempt to enforce circumcision as necessary to salvation; in the former it was performed as a voluntary act, and simply on prudential grounds" (Haley, *Alleged Discrepancies*, p. 260).
14. Even if the act of circumcision was voluntary, and for the sake of gospel expediency, the question still arises whether or not the ritual should have been performed. The church has always struggled with cultural influences, and how to respond, in an appropriate manner.
15. Once Timothy united with Paul officially he became one of the apostle's most faithful companions.
16. Together they, along with Silvanus and probably Luke also, journeyed to Philippi.
- *Acts 16:12 And from thence to Philippi, which is the chief city of that part of Macedonia, and a colony: and we were in that city abiding certain days.*
17. In the city of Philippi, the young evangelist was already conspicuous for his spirituality and religious fervor.
- *Philippians 2:19 But I trust in the Lord Jesus to send Timotheus shortly unto you, that I also may be of good comfort, when I know your state. 20 For I have no man likeminded, who will naturally care for your state. 21 For all seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's. 22 But ye know the proof of him, that, as a son with the father, he hath served with me in the gospel.*
18. Apparently Timothy remained at Philippi to guide the infant church.
19. Later, Timothy will appear at Berea, where he remained with Silas, after Paul's departure, joining Paul at Athens.

- *Acts 17:14 And then immediately the brethren sent away Paul to go as it were to the sea: but Silas and Timotheus abode there still.*
20. From Athens, Timothy returned to Thessalonica, because he had unusual gifts of compassion, and teaching.
- *1 Thessalonians 3:2 And sent Timotheus, our brother, and minister of God, and our fellow-labourer in the gospel of Christ, to establish you, and to comfort you concerning your faith:*
21. After serving in Thessalonica, Timothy left for Corinth, for his name is united with Paul's in the opening words of both letters written from that city to the Thessalonians.
- *1 Thessalonians 1:1 Paul, and Silvanus, and Timotheus, unto the church of the Thessalonians which is in God the Father and in the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.*
  - *2 Thessalonians 1:1 Paul, and Silvanus, and Timotheus, unto the church of the Thessalonians in God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ:*
22. Of the five following years of his life, there is no record.
23. Timothy is next mentioned, as being sent forward to do advance work when the apostle was considering a long journey that was to include Macedonia, Achaia, Jerusalem, and Rome.
- *Acts 19:22 So he sent into Macedonia two of them that ministered unto him, Timotheus and Erastus; but he himself stayed in Asia for a season.*
24. It is probable that Timothy returned by the same route, and met Paul according to a previous arrangement.
- *1 Corinthians 16:10 Now if Timotheus come, see that he may be with you without fear: for he worketh the work of the Lord, as I also do.*
25. If Timothy united with Paul at Rome, then he was with the apostle when the second epistle was written to the church of Corinth (2 Corinthians 1:1).
26. Timothy then returned with the apostle to Corinth, from which place he sent greeting to the disciples whom he had known personally at Corinth, but who had since gone to Rome. So the letters crossed back and forth.
- *Romans 16:21 Timotheus my workfellow, and Lucius, and Jason, and Sosipater, my kinsmen, salute you.*
27. When Paul decided to visit Philippi, Timothy went ahead with some friends, to await for the apostle's arrival on a different ship.

- *Acts 20:3 And there abode three months. And when the Jews laid wait for him, as he was about to sail into Syria, he purposed to return through Macedonia. 4 And there accompanied him into Asia Sopater of Berea; and of the Thessalonians, Aristarchus and Secundus; and Gaius of Derbe, and Timotheus; and of Asia, Tychicus and Trophimus. 5 These going before tarried for us at Troas. 6 And we sailed away from Philippi after the days of unleavened bread, and came unto them to Troas in five days; where we abode seven days.*
28. No further mention is made of Timothy until he reunited with the apostle, probably soon after his arrival in Rome.
29. Timothy was with Paul when the epistles to the Philippians, the Colossians, and Philemon were written (Philippians 1:1; 2:19; Colossians 1:1; Philemon 1).
30. It appears from 1 Timothy 1:3, that Timothy and Paul, after the release of the apostle from his imprisonment, revisited the pro-consular of Asia.
31. Then, the apostle continued his journey to Macedonia while Timothy remained, half-reluctantly, even weeping at the separation (2 Timothy 1:4) at Ephesus to stop if possible the outgrowth of heresy, and licentiousness that had sprung up there.
32. In the church of Ephesus, Timothy had to perform the following pastoral duties.
- Timothy had to exercise rule over presbyters, some older than himself. *1 Timothy 4:12 Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity.*
  - Timothy also had to give righteous judgments. *1 Timothy 5:1 Rebuke not an elder, but intreat him as a father; and the younger men as brethren; 1 Timothy 5:19 Against an elder receive not an accusation, but before two or three witnesses. 20 Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear.*
  - Timothy had to regulate the giving of alms, and the treatment of certain women. *1 Timothy 5:3 Honour widows that are widows indeed. 4 But if any widow have children or nephews, let them learn first to shew piety at home, and to requite their parents: for that is good and acceptable before God. 5 Now she that is a widow indeed, and desolate, trusteth in God, and continueth in supplications and prayers night and day. 6 But she that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth. 7 And these things give in charge, that they may be blameless. 8 But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel. 9 Let not a widow be taken into the number under threescore years old, having been the wife of one man, 10 Well reported of for good works; if she have brought up children, if she have lodged strangers, if she have washed the saints' feet, if she have relieved the afflicted, if she have diligently followed every good work.*

- Timothy had to ordain overseers and deacons. *1 Timothy 3:1 This is a true saying, If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work. 2 A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach; 3 Not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous; 4 One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity; 5 (For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?) 6 Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil. 7 Moreover he must have a good report of them which are without; lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil. 8 Likewise must the deacons be grave, not double tongued, not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre; 9 Holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience. 10 And let these also first be proved; then let them use the office of a deacon, being found blameless. 11 Even so must their wives be grave, not slanderers, sober, faithful in all things. 12 Let the deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well. 13 For they that have used the office of a deacon well purchase to themselves a good degree, and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus.*

33. Because these pastoral responsibilities were of grave consequences, Paul was anxious that Timothy remain loyal to the cause of Christ. Paul expressed his desire to see him again.

- *2 Timothy 4:9 Do thy diligence to come shortly unto me:*
- *2 Timothy 4:21 Do thy diligence to come before winter. Eubulus greeteth thee, and Pudens, and Linus, and Claudia, and all the brethren.*

34. It is not clear whether Timothy was able to fulfill the apostle's last request.

35. According to an old tradition, Timothy continued to act as bishop of Ephesus and suffered martyrdom under Domitian, the Roman emperor, from AD 81 – 96, or Nerva, the Roman emperor, from AD 96–98.

***Special Note.***

- Domitian was born Titus Flavius Domitianus (AD 51 – 96).
- Nerva was born Marcus Cocceius Nerva (AD 35 - 98).

## 1 TIMOTHY 5

### The Administration of the Local Church

#### A Limited Social Function

#### Concerning the Widows

#### 1 Timothy 5:1-16

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

5:1. elder. In context, the reference is to someone older than Timothy, but someone who is in need of censure. Affection, respect, and brotherliness must be present. Rebuking is a proper procedure, but it must done with love.

2 The elder women as mothers; the younger as sisters, with all purity.

5:2. with all purity. Because much temptation is associated with youth, this exhortation is added. It is needed at any age, if the truth be told. It is not an easy injunction to obey. *2 Timothy 2:22 Flee also youthful lusts: but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart.*

3 Honor widows that are widows indeed.

5:3. widow. A distinction needs to be made between those who are widows in need, and those who had family members. First, a “widow indeed” is one who is not rich, but is destitute. Second, a “widow indeed” is one who has a Christian reputation of service.

5:3. honor. provide for them financially.

***Special Note.***

Ignatius of Antioch, who was martyred about AD 117, wrote in one of his epistles, “Let not widows be neglected, after the Lord be Thou their guardian.” Philo of Alexandria (d. AD 50), argued that widows should be taken of because it is natural to do so. He argues that in nature, the older storks, in the animal kingdom, are taken care of by the younger storks, for storks are naturally faithful to an established nesting site.

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

5:4. nephews. lit. grandchildren. Christians should take care of the widows. Christian children should honor their parents, and make sure their needs are taken care of.

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

5:5. a widow indeed. One whose husband was dead.

5:5. desolate. without support.

5:5. prayers. Since this word is in the plural, the reference is probably to public prayers. *Luke 2:36 And there was one Anna, a prophetess, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Aser: she was of a great age, and had lived with an husband seven years from her virginity; 37 And she was a widow of about fourscore and four years, which departed not from the temple, but served God with fastings and prayers night and day.*

6 But she that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth.

5:6. is dead while she liveth. People can be dead in trespasses and sin, though physically alive. It is possible to live a useless life for personal pleasure.

**Characteristics of the Person  
who is “Dead” while Alive**

- |  |                               |
|--|-------------------------------|
| • Such a person has an accusing conscience.  | Romans 2:15                   |
| • Such a person has a defiled conscience.    | 1 Corinthians 8:7; Titus 1:15 |
| • Such a person has a weak conscience.       | 1 Corinthians 8:12            |
| • Such a person has a seared conscience.     | 1 Timothy 4:2                 |
| • Such a person has an evil conscience.      | Hebrews 10:22                 |
| • Such a person longs for a good conscience. | 1 Peter 3:21                  |

**Characteristics of the Person  
who is “Alive” to God**

- |  |                                    |
|--|------------------------------------|
| • Such a person has a conscience sensitive to sin.       | John 8:9                           |
| • Such a person has a holy boldness.                     | Acts 23:1; Romans 9:1              |
| • Such a person has no unconfessed, or unforgiven sin.   | Acts 24:16                         |
| • Such a person respects divinely established authority. | Romans 13:5                        |
| • Such a person has a good testimony.                    | 2 Corinthians 1:12                 |
| • Such a person has renounced dishonesty.                | 2 Corinthians 4:2                  |
| • Such a person has a pure conscience.                   | 1 Timothy 1:5; 3:9 ; 2 Timothy 1:3 |
| • Such a person has a purged conscience.                 | Hebrews 9:14; 10:2                 |
| • Such a person prays for a good conscience.             | Hebrews 13:18                      |

“Jesus, keep me near the Cross;  
 There a precious fountain,  
 Free to all – a healing stream –  
 Flows from Calvary's mountain.

*In the cross, in the cross,  
 Be my glory ever,  
 Till my raptured soul shall find  
 Rest beyond the river.*

Near the cross, a trembling soul,  
 Love and mercy found me;  
 There the bright and morning Star  
 Shed its beams around me.

*In the cross, in the cross,  
 Be my glory ever,  
 Till my raptured soul shall find  
 Rest beyond the river.*

Near the cross! O Lamb of God,  
 Bring its scenes before me;  
 Help me walk from day to day  
 With its shadow o'er me.

*In the cross, in the cross,  
 Be my glory ever,  
 Till my raptured soul shall find  
 Rest beyond the river.*

Near the cross! I'll watch and wait,  
 Hoping, trusting ever,  
 Till I reach the golden strand  
 Just beyond the river.

*In the cross, in the cross,  
 Be my glory ever,  
 Till my raptured soul shall find  
 Rest beyond the river.”*

7 And these things give in charge, that they may be blameless.

5:7. give in charge. lit. transmit in a message.

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

**Widows in the Lord's Service  
1 Timothy 5:9-1**

9 Let not a widow be taken into the number under threescore [60] years old, having been the wife of one man.

5:9. taken into the number. be enrolled. There was an official church list of those who were to be taken care of.

5:9. threescore. 60. At the age of 60, many other distractions cease and it is easier to concentrate on spiritual matters. Especially in the ancient world, 60 was an old age.

5:9. wife of one man. a one man woman. One who was faithful in marriage.

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

**Twelve Qualifications before a Widow  
was to be Taken Care of by the Church**

- She must be a widow indeed, or destitute, and without support.
- She must not have any relatives that could take care of her.
- She must be at least 60 years of age.
- She must have been faithful in marriage, and the wife of only one man.
- She must be one that trusts in God.
- She must be one that continues in supplications and prayers night and day.
- She must have a good report, and be known for her good works.
- She must have been a good mother, reflected in godly children.
- She must be known for hospitality, having lodged strangers.
- She must be known for humility, by having washed the saint's feet.
- She must be generous to others, and known to have relieved the afflicted.
- She must be known to have diligently followed every good work.

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

5:11. wax wanton. Lit. turn away.



5:11. they will marry. This is the will of wish; they wish to marry.

12 Having damnation, because they have cast off their first faith.

5:12. damnation. judgment.

#### **Two Reasons for Young Widows to Marry**

- There is danger in turning away from a hasty pledge made to Christ. 1 Timothy 5:11-12
- There is danger in becoming idle and causing mischief. 1 Timothy 5:13

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

5:13. tattlers. garrulous, gossips.

5:13. busybodies. Gk. *periergos*. This word is used for those who are mettlesome, but it is also used for those who engage in the magical arts (Acts 19). The temptation arises for women, who are idle, to become enamored with horoscopes, magic, spells, and matters related to the occult.

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

5:14. I will that the younger women marry.

5:14. guide. manage.

5:14. adversary. enemy.

#### **Four Noble Responsibilities for Christian Women**

- Marry.
- Bear children.
- Manage the house.
- Be circumspect in behavior and speech.

15 For some are already turned aside after Satan.

16 If any man or woman that believeth have widows, let them relieve them, and let not the Church be charged; that it may relieve them that are widows indeed.

5:16. man or woman. Lit. If any woman who is a believer. In this 16th verse, the Greek text says that, if any believing woman have widows, let them aid them, and let not the church be charged. The word for “man” is not in the original. The responsibility, according to the text, falls on the believing woman. It refers to the female who has a widow as a member of a household, evidently not a real close relative, perhaps even a friend, or a servant, who is yet a widow, and the responsibility rests upon her to provide, in order that the church may relieve the widows that are widows indeed (S. Lewis Johnson).

5:16. be charged. be burdened with.

### **A Return to the Elders, the Officials of the Church**

17 Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially they who labor in the word and doctrine.

5:17. elders. The elders are the same as the bishops of 1 Timothy 3:1-7; pastors. There is to be a plurality of elders in the local church. There are also two types of elders. While all elders rule, some have gifts of ministry, such as the gift of pastor-teacher, exhortation, or evangelism.

5:17. double honor. respect and financial remuneration. The reason for remuneration is found in v. 18.

5:17. especially they who labor. The principle of reward, according to work, is a biblical principle.

18 For the scripture saith, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn. And, The laborer is worthy of his reward.

5:18. the scripture saith. *Deuteronomy 25:4 Thou shalt not muzzle the ox when he treadeth out the corn.* This was a merciful provision. There is a God given right to participate in the reward of the labor in which he is engaged.

5:18. And. The laborer is worthy of his reward. This expression comes from Luke 10:7. “*And in the same house remain, eating and drinking such things as they give: for the labourer is worthy of his hire. Go not from house to house.*” Notice that the term “Scripture”, also applies to the gospel of Luke 10:7, which is part of the New Testament. So when we read in 2 Timothy 3:16, “*All Scripture is given by inspiration of God,*” it includes the Old Testament, and the New Testament.

5:18. the scripture saith. Once more Paul appeals to the Law to establish a New Testament practice. The Law is not “dead”, as many insist today in some theological circles.

***Special Note.***

Paul quotes Deuteronomy 25:4 again in 1 Corinthians 9:9.

19 Against an elder receive not an accusation, but before two or three witnesses.

5:19. witnesses. In the Old Testament no one was to be accused, elder or not, except before two or three witnesses. *Deuteronomy 19:15 One witness shall not rise up against a man for any iniquity, or for any sin, in any sin that he sinneth: at the mouth of two witnesses, or at the mouth of three witnesses, shall the matter be established.* Once more Paul appeals to the Old Testament, and thus to the Law, to establish a principle and practice of the New Covenant. Therefore, no system of theology should ever pit Moses against Christ, or Law against Grace. The attempt to make Christians suspect the place of the Law, especially the Moral Law, in the life of the believer, is wrong.

5:19. receive not an accusation. God has moved to protect His ministers. If practiced, this ordinance would do away with a lot of malicious talk.

20 Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear.

5:20. Them that sin. This applies to all church members, but elders in particular. If an elder has sinned, they should be rebuked before all the elders. By administering discipline to elders that sin, the principle of impartiality is applied. Rank has no special privileges when it comes to accountability.

5:20. before all. A reference to all the elders.

5:20 that others also may fear. A holy fear is part of the Christian's experience.

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

5:21. elect. chosen.

5:21. preferring. esteeming.

22 Lay hands suddenly on no man, neither be partaker of other mens sins: keep thyself pure

5:22. keep thyself pure. In context, this is a reference by not putting men into a holy office too quickly. Elders are not to be ordained too quickly. The elder that violates this principle, will live to regret not spiritually vetting a candidate for this office.

23 Drink no longer water, but use a little wine for thy stomachs sake and thine often infirmities.

5:23. use a little wine. Care must be taken not to insist on Total Abstinence as a guiding principle of the Christian's life. The servant is not above his Master, and Jesus, not only drank wine, He made the best wine. Jesus openly confessed He drank wine, and so opened Himself up to false accusations.

- *Matthew 11:19 The Son of man came eating and drinking, and they say, Behold a man gluttonous, and a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners. But wisdom is justified of her children.*
- *John 2:1 And the third day there was a marriage in Cana of Galilee; and the mother of Jesus was there: 2 And both Jesus was called, and his disciples, to the marriage. 3 And when they wanted wine, the mother of Jesus saith unto him, They have no wine. 4 Jesus saith unto her, Woman, what have I to do with thee? Mine hour is not yet come. 5 His mother saith unto the servants, Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it. 6 And there were set there six waterpots of stone, after the manner of the purifying of the Jews, containing two or three firkins apiece. 7 Jesus saith unto them, Fill the waterpots with water. And they filled them up to the brim. 8 And he saith unto them, Draw out now, and bear unto the governor of the feast. And they bare it. 9 When the ruler of the feast had tasted the water that was made wine, and knew not whence it was: (but the servants which drew the water knew;) the governor of the feast called the bridegroom, 10 And saith unto him, Every man at the beginning doth set forth good wine; and when men have well drunk, then that which is worse: but thou hast kept the good wine until now. 11 This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth his glory; and his disciples believed on him.*

***Special Note.***

If a person is under personal conviction about consuming alcoholic beverages, then, in good conscience, he must refrain. In Jewish society there was the Nazarite Vow (Numbers 6:2-3-4). In the New Testament times, it was the practice of the Gnostics to practice “tee-totaling” as a form of asceticism. Paul may be speaking against those cultural influences. What Paul says here, is that to make Total Abstinence a church policy is wrong. Now, drunkenness is always wrong, and is soundly condemned (Romans 13:13; Galatians 5:21). There are times when strong drink is not to be taken, as there are occasions when it is

Proverbs 31:4-6 observes this dual concept. In Proverbs 31, we read that Bathsheba did not want her son, Solomon, to drink to excess, but she was wise enough to not put a total prohibition on strong drink.

*Proverbs 31:1 The words of king Lemuel, the prophecy that his mother [Bathsheba] taught him.*

*Proverbs 31:4 It is not for kings, O Lemuel, it is not for kings to drink wine; nor for princes strong drink: 5 Lest they drink, and forget the law, and pervert the judgment of any of the afflicted. 6 Give strong drink unto him that is ready to perish, and wine unto those that be of heavy hearts. 7 Let him drink, and forget his poverty, and remember his misery no more.*

Wine is also good for medicinal reasons. “Hippocrates, recommends moderate drafts of wine for a patient for whose stomach, water alone, is dangerous. And Plutarch, another ancient author not too far from Old Testament times, states that wine is the most useful of drinks, and the pleasantest of medicines. So the apostle is telling Timothy then, knowing his spirit, knowing his physical condition, do not allow ascetic rules to so grip you that you fail to take a little wine because of the weakness of your body” (S. Lewis Johnson).

24 Some mens sins are open beforehand, going before to judgment; and some *men* they follow after.

5:24. Sins of individuals are often hidden for a long time. Therefore, it is good to be patient before ordaining an elder.

25 Likewise also the good works *of some* are manifest beforehand; and they that are otherwise cannot be hid.

5:25. The good works of many, though done in humility and secret, will eventually be made known. What verses 24-25 teach together, is that it is good to patiently wait for God the Holy Spirit to make manifest those who are not qualified to be an elder, and those who are.

## 1 TIMOTHY 6

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

6:1. Timothy was an apostolic legate, which means he was a representative of the apostle. Paul sent Timothy, and Titus, to various congregations, to set them in order, and to establish policies. His instruction to Timothy concludes with the comments of chapter 6.

6:1. servants. slaves. In the Roman Empire, there were many slaves, some of whom became Christians. Though Paul condemned the slave trade and “men stealers” (1 Timothy 1:10), as a principle, his counsel was for Christian slaves to remain in whatever state they were called until the Lord changed their status.

- *1 Corinthians 7:20 Let every man abide in the same calling wherein he was called. 21 Art thou called being a servant? Care not for it: but if thou mayest be made free, use it rather. 22 For he that is called in the Lord, being a servant, is the Lord's freeman: likewise also he that is called, being free, is Christ's servant. 23 Ye are bought with a price; be not ye the servants of men. 24 Brethren, let every man, wherein he is called, therein abide with God.*

6:1. masters. Paul has in mind unbelieving masters, or slave owners.

6:1. be not blasphemed. Paul provides a reason for slaves to learn to be content. They must not do anything that would be disrepute to the name of God. Rebellion, or running away, might involve stealing, acts of physical violence, or worse. The story of Onesimus reveals some of the concerns of runaway slaves (Philemon 1).

2 And they that have believing masters, let them not despise *them*, because they are brethren; but rather do them service, because they are faithful and beloved, partakers of the benefit. These things teach and exhort.

6:2. despise. The temptation would arise for a slave who had a Christian master to despise, or look down upon with contempt their master, because the slave knew that, in Christ, they are on the same level with them. Christianity does reveal injustices for it is the most moral of all religions. But Paul does not advocate social revolution. Therefore, the slaves are to “do them service”.

6:2. because. A reason is given as to why slaves should honor their Christian masters. Paul appeals to the mind of the slaves, and does not exploit their emotions. Paul notes the divine perspective of the Christian masters.

### Concerning Christian Slave Owners

- Christian slave masters are said to be faithful.
- Christian slave masters are said to be beloved of God.
- Christian slave masters are said to be partakers of the benefits of the redemptive work of Christ.

***Special Note.***

Paul's high regard for Christian slave owners seems surprising, and impossible, until it is realized that slave owners have obligations to those whom God has entrusted to their care. Of course, every godly slave owner should want to change the status of their slaves, and change society, but it takes time. Heart work takes time. Social change takes time, and it takes matters being done decently, and in order. If there is to be revolution, let it be because of the rise of Christian principles affecting and changing lives.

6:2. These things teach and exhort. Timothy was to teach these guiding principles, and then he was to exhort them to be honored by the slaves.

### Instruction Regarding False Teachers

3 If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, *even* the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness;

6:3. If any man. In context, Paul is referring to the false teachers. In 1 Timothy 1, Paul spoke against the thoughts of the false teachers, but here he stresses their character, conduct, and why they say what they do.

6:3. wholesome. healthy. Truth is needed for spiritual health, even the words from the Lord Jesus, through His apostles. Bible doctrine must be apostolic doctrine. Bible doctrine must never contradict the words that are of our Lord Jesus Christ.

6:3 according to godliness. Truth, that is of God, will result in a standard of godliness. Christian teaching is teaching that will result in godly living. A Christian may do wrong, but a true Christian will never justify that which is contrary to the known will of the Lord. The heart must never call right what God calls wrong.

“Take time to be holy, speak oft with thy Lord;  
Abide in Him always, and feed on His Word.  
Make friends of God's children, help those who are weak,  
Forgetting in nothing His blessing to seek.

Take time to be holy, the world rushes on;  
Spend much time in secret, with Jesus alone.  
By looking to Jesus, like Him thou shalt be;  
Thy friends in thy conduct His likeness shall see.

Take time to be holy, let Him be thy Guide;  
And run not before Him, whatever betide.  
In joy or in sorrow, still follow the Lord,  
And, looking to Jesus, still trust in His Word.

Take time to be holy, be calm in thy soul,  
Each thought and each motive beneath His control.  
Thus led by His Spirit to fountains of love,  
Thou soon shalt be fitted for service above.”

William D. Longstaff, 1882

4 He is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings,

6:4. He is proud. Often, the companion of conceit is ignorance. Doctrine is dismissed.

6:4. dotting. speaking foolishly. There are some who have a morbid desire to engage in controversial subjects, and to debate specific words.

6:4. evil surmissings. evil thoughts. Every thought is to be brought captive to Christ. 2 *Corinthians 10:3 Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ;*

5 Perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness: from such withdraw thyself.

6:5. disputings. arguments.

#### **Four Results of Foolish Arguments**

- Envy
- Strife
- Railings
- Evil Surmising (Thoughts)



### Three Reasons for Foolish Arguments

- The minds of some are corrupt.
- The minds of some are destitute of the truth.
- The minds of some are falsely convinced that “gain is godliness”.

6:5. gain is godliness. It is not right to ask for pay for one’s ministry. It is not right to ask money for one’s-self. Beware of those who ask for pay for preaching the Word of God. Pope Leo X said, “Since God has given us the papacy, let us enjoy it.” Then, he squandered the wealth of Rome, believing he was entitled to the treasury of God’s people. His avaricious behavior led to the selling of indulgence, against which Luther railed, and out of which came the Protestant Reformation.

6:5. from such withdraw thyself. These words are not found in the Greek text, though they do provide a reasonable suggestion for consideration. In addition, these words are found in the text of 2 Timothy 3:5, where Paul writes, “*from such turn away*”, and so the scriptural principle is sound.

6 But godliness with contentment is great gain.

6:6. with contentment. with satisfaction.

### The Basis for Christian Contentment

- Peace with God through the sacrifice of Christ.
- The joy of salvation.
- Submission to the sovereignty of God.
- The assurance of everlasting life.
- The joy of having become one of the saints.
- The knowledge that God is working all things together for good.

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

6:7. For. Paul provides a practical reason why every Christian should learn godly contentment. The apostle notes that we brought nothing into this world, and we will carry nothing out of it.

8 And having food and raiment let us be therewith content.

6:8. let us be therewith content.

“He that is down needs fear no fall;  
 He that is low, no pride;  
 He that is humble, ever shall  
 Have God to be his guide.

I am content with what I have,  
 Little be it, or much;  
 And, Lord, contentment still I crave,  
 Because Thou savest such.”

John Bunyan

9 But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and *into* many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition.

6:9. But they that will be rich. The desire for money will lead individuals into unnecessary temptation, and beyond that, a snare. Those who will not cease from sin, discover they cannot cease from sinning. The end of this madness is destruction and perdition. The curse of many ministries is the lust, intense desire for money, leading to an over extension of buildings and budgets.

6:9. perdition. (Gk. *apoleia*) ruin or loss (physical, spiritual, or eternal).

10 For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have *erred* from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.

6:10. the root. a root.

### Three Downward Steps to Destruction

- Step One.           Temptation
- Step Two.           Lust
- Step Three.        Ruin

6:10. they have *erred*. To whom is Paul referring?

- He may have been referring to the false teachers who loved money.
- He may have been referring to the rich man of our Lord’s parable, and Lazarus.
- He may have been referring to Ananias and Sapphira.
- He may have been referring to Judas.

11 But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness.

6:10. flee these things. avoid the love of money.

#### **Six Godly Pursuits**

- Righteousness
- Godliness
- Faith
- Love
- Patience
- Meekness

6:10. meekness. gentleness.

6:11. O man of God. This title, in the Old Testament, was a title of the prophet Elijah (2 Kings 1:11, 13).

#### **First Charge**

12 Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses.

6:12. lay hold on eternal life. According to tradition, Timothy was clubbed to death. He was patient. He was meek. He was faithful to the end. He fought the good fight of faith. He laid hold on eternal life, which is the gift of God, through Jesus Christ the Lord (Ephesians 2:8).

#### **Three F's**

- Flee
- Follow
- Fight

6:12 thou art also called. The state of being numbered among the elect necessitates a holy standing in the outworking of personal sanctification.

#### **Four Parting Exhortations**

- Flee these things.
- Follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, and meekness.
- Fight the good fight of faith.
- Lay hold on eternal life.

## Second Charge

13 I give thee charge in the sight of God, who quickeneth all things, and *before* Christ Jesus, who *before* Pontius Pilate witnessed a good confession;

6:13. quickeneth. gives life.

14 That thou keep this commandment without spot, unrebukable, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ:

6:14. keep this commandment. What commandment? In context, the reference is to all the instructions Paul has been given. The can be summed up on one command, actually, the command given by Christ Himself.

- *John 13:34 A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another.*

6:14. unrebukable. without fault.

15 Which in his times he shall shew, *who is* the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords;

6:15. he shall shew. He is God the Father.

- God the Father is called the King of kings, and Lord of lords.
- God the Son is called the King of kings, and Lord of Lords. Revelation 17:14; 19:16

16 Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom *be* honor and power everlasting. Amen.

6:16. immortality. Gk. athanasia. deathlessness.

6:16. which no man can approach. God is inscrutable. He is incomprehensible. When Moses asked God to show him God's glory, the Lord answered, "*And he said, Thou canst not see my face: for there shall no man see me, and live*" (Exodus 33:18).

We can know God, but we cannot know God fully. God is known by us. We know Him. We know Jesus. We know the Spirit. But throughout all eternity we shall learn more about Him who dwells in a house of light.

When the first disciples of Jesus asked Him, “Where dwellest thou”, Jesus could have said, “I dwell in the light which no man can approach unto”, but instead, in the days of His humiliation, the Lord said, “Come and see. And they came and saw where He dwelt and abode with him” (John 1:38-39). If we were to ask the ascended Christ, “Where dwest Thou”, He will again say, “Come and see”, but this time, He will take us to heaven nearer to the glory of God.

### **The Third Charge**

17 Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not high-minded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy;

6:17. high-minded. haughty.

18 That they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate

6:18. willing to communicate. willing to give to the poor.

6:18. rich in good works. The real use of wealth is to do good works, distribute to others, willing to share.

19 Laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life.

6:19. lay hold on eternal life. In verse 12, and now in verse 19, Paul uses this expression. Paul is not suggesting that salvation can be earned, or deserved, obtained, and then lost. What Paul wants is for every Christian to have a perfect appropriation of that which we already have in principle, in Christ. To lay hold of eternal life, is to enter into the full possession of this new quality of life, which comes to every believer through a relationship with the Lord Jesus. Eternal life is a present possession.

- *John 10:27 My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: 28 And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.*

In time, we have the gift of God, which is eternal life, and at death, or the translation of the Second Advent, we enter the full possession of it.

### **The Fourth Charge**

20 O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust, avoiding profane *and* vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so called:

6:20. committed to thy trust. i.e., a knowledge of the truth.

6:20. vain. empty.

6:20. Babblings. idle talking.

6:20. oppositions of science. erroneous arguments.

21 Which some professing have erred concerning the faith. Grace be with thee.  
Amen.

6:21. erred. deviated from the truth.