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*This volume is dedicated to my friends and colleagues who have proofread each of the volumes in this commentary series. Each of them has a different academic discipline and theological perspective. Their comments have helped me see my oversights and overstatements.*

**Dr. Robert Ellison**  
**Dr. David King**  
**Dr. Bruce Tankersley**

## **Here's what the Lockman Foundation has to say about the New American Standard Bible 1995 Update:**

### **Easier to read:**

- ▣ Passages with Old English “thee’s” and “thou’s” etc. have been updated to modern English.
- ▣ Words and phrases that could be misunderstood due to changes in their meaning during the past 20 years have been updated to current English.
- ▣ Verses with difficult word order or vocabulary have been retranslated into smoother English.
- ▣ Sentences beginning with “And” have often been retranslated for better English, in recognition of differences in style between the ancient languages and modern English. The original Greek and Hebrew did not have punctuation as is found in English, and in many cases modern English punctuation serves as a substitute for “And” in the original. In some other cases, “and” is translated by a different word such as “then” or “but” as called for by the context, when the word in the original language allows such translation.

### **More accurate than ever:**

- ▣ Recent research on the oldest and best Greek manuscripts of the New Testament has been reviewed, and some passages have been updated for even greater fidelity to the original manuscripts.
- ▣ Parallel passages have been compared and reviewed.
- ▣ Verbs that have a wide range of meaning have been retranslated in some passages to better account for their use in the context.

### **And still the NASB:**

- ▣ The NASB update is not a change-for-the-sake-of-change translation. The original NASB stands the test of time, and change has been kept to a minimum in recognition of the standard that has been set by the New American Standard Bible.
- ▣ The NASB update continues the NASB’s tradition of literal translation of the original Greek and Hebrew without compromise. Changes in the text have been kept within the strict parameters set forth by the Lockman Foundation’s Fourfold Aim.
- ▣ The translators and consultants who have contributed to the NASB update are conservative Bible scholars who have doctorates in Biblical languages, theology, or other advanced degrees. They represent a variety of denominational backgrounds.

### **Continuing a tradition:**

The original NASB has earned the reputation of being the most accurate English Bible translation. Other translations in recent years have sometimes made a claim to both accuracy and ease of reading, but any reader with an eye for detail eventually discovers that these translations are consistently inconsistent. While sometimes literal, they frequently resort to paraphrase of the original, often gaining little in readability and sacrificing much in terms of fidelity. Paraphrasing is not by nature a bad thing; it can and should clarify the meaning of a passage as the translators understand and interpret. In the end, however, a paraphrase is as much a commentary on the Bible as it is a translation. The NASB update carries on the NASB tradition of being a true Bible translation, revealing what the original manuscripts actually say—not merely what the translator believes they mean.

—The Lockman Foundation

## A WORD FROM THE AUTHOR: HOW CAN THIS COMMENTARY HELP YOU?

Biblical interpretation is a rational and spiritual process that attempts to understand an ancient inspired writer in such a way that the message from God may be understood and applied in our day.

The spiritual process is crucial but difficult to define. It does involve a yieldedness and openness to God. There must be a hunger (1) for Him, (2) to know Him, and (3) to serve Him. This process involves prayer, confession and the willingness for lifestyle change. The Spirit is crucial in the interpretive process, but why sincere, godly Christians understand the Bible differently, is a mystery.

The rational process is easier to describe. We must be consistent and fair to the text and not be influenced by our personal or denominational biases. We are all historically conditioned. None of us are objective, neutral interpreters. This commentary offers a careful rational process containing three interpretive principles structured to help us overcome our biases.

### **First Principle**

The first principle is to note the historical setting in which a biblical book was written and the particular historical occasion for its authorship. The original author had a purpose, a message to communicate. The text cannot mean something to us that it never meant to the original, ancient, inspired author. His intent—not our historical, emotional, cultural, personal or denominational need—is the key. Application is an integral partner to interpretation, but proper interpretation must always precede application. It must be reiterated that every biblical text has one and only one meaning. This meaning is what the original biblical author intended through the Spirit's leadership to communicate to his day. This one meaning may have many possible applications to different cultures and situations. These applications must be linked to the central truth of the original author. For this reason, this study guide commentary is designed to provide an introduction to each book of the Bible.

### **Second Principle**

The second principle is to identify the literary units. Every biblical book is a unified document. Interpreters have no right to isolate one aspect of truth by excluding others. Therefore, we must strive to understand the purpose of the whole biblical book before we interpret the individual literary units. The individual parts—chapters, paragraphs, or verses—cannot mean what the whole unit does not mean. Interpretation must move from a deductive approach of the whole to an inductive approach to the parts. Therefore, this study guide commentary is designed to help the student analyze the structure of each literary unit by paragraphs. Paragraph and chapter divisions are not inspired, but they do aid us in identifying thought units.

Interpreting at a paragraph level—not sentence, clause, phrase or word level—is the key in following the biblical author's intended meaning. Paragraphs are based on a unified topic, often called the theme or topical sentence. Every word, phrase, clause, and sentence in the paragraph relates somehow to this unified theme. They limit it, expand it, explain it, and/or question it. A real key to proper interpretation is to follow the original author's thought on a paragraph-by-paragraph basis through the individual literary units that make up the biblical book. This study guide commentary is designed to help the student do that by comparing modern English translations. These translations have been selected because they employ different translation theories:

- A. The United Bible Society's Greek text is the revised fourth edition (UBS<sup>4</sup>). This text was paraphrased by modern textual scholars.

- B. The New King James Version (NKJV) is a word-for-word literal translation based on the Greek manuscript tradition known as the Textus Receptus. Its paragraph divisions are longer than the other translations. These longer units help the student to see the unified topics.
- C. The New Revised Standard Version (NRSV) is a modified word-for-word translation. It forms a midpoint between the following two modern versions. Its paragraph divisions are quite helpful in identifying subjects.
- D. The Today's English Version (TEV) is a dynamic equivalent translation published by the United Bible Society. It attempts to translate the Bible in such a way that a modern English reader or speaker can understand the meaning of the Greek text. Often, especially in the Gospels, it divides paragraphs by speaker rather than by subject, in the same way as the NIV. For the interpreter's purposes, this is not helpful. It is interesting to note that both the UBS<sup>4</sup> and TEV are published by the same entity, yet their paragraphing differs.
- E. The New Jerusalem Bible (NJB) is a dynamic equivalent translation based on a French Catholic translation. It is very helpful in comparing the paragraphing from a European perspective.
- F. The printed text is the 1995 Updated New American Standard Bible (NASB), which is a word for word translation. The verse by verse comments follow this paragraphing.

### **Third Principle**

The third principle is to read the Bible in different translations in order to grasp the widest possible range of meaning (semantic field) that biblical words or phrases may have. Often a Greek phrase or word can be understood in several ways. These different translations bring out these options and help to identify and explain the Greek manuscript variations. These do not affect doctrine, but they do help us to try to get back to the original text penned by an inspired ancient writer.

This commentary offers a quick way for the student to check his/her interpretations. It is not meant to be definitive, but rather informative and thought-provoking. Often, other possible interpretations help us not be so parochial, dogmatic, and denominational. Interpreters need to have a larger range of interpretive options to recognize how ambiguous the ancient text can be. It is shocking how little agreement there is among Christians who claim the Bible as their source of truth.

These principles have helped me to overcome much of my historical conditioning by forcing me to struggle with the ancient text. My hope is that it will be a blessing to you as well.

Bob Utley  
East Texas Baptist University  
June 27, 1996

## **A GUIDE TO GOOD BIBLE READING: A PERSONAL SEARCH FOR VERIFIABLE TRUTH**

Can we know truth? Where is it found? Can we logically verify it? Is there an ultimate authority? Are there absolutes which can guide our lives, our world? Is there meaning to life? Why are we here? Where are we going? These questions—questions that all rational people contemplate—have haunted the human intellect since the beginning of time (Eccl. 1:13-18; 3:9-11). I can remember my personal search for an integrating center for my life. I became a believer in Christ at a young age, based primarily on the witness of significant others in my family. As I grew to adulthood, questions about myself and my world also grew. Simple cultural and religious clichés did not bring meaning to the experiences I read about or encountered. It was a time of confusion, searching, longing, and often a feeling of hopelessness in the face of the insensitive, hard world in which I lived.

Many claimed to have answers to these ultimate questions, but after research and reflection I found that their answers were based upon (1) personal philosophies, (2) ancient myths, (3) personal experiences, or (4) psychological projections. I needed some degree of verification, some evidence, some rationality on which to base my world-view, my integrating center, my reason to live.

I found these in my study of the Bible. I began to search for evidence of its trustworthiness, which I found in (1) the historical reliability of the Bible as confirmed by archaeology, (2) the accuracy of the prophecies of the Old Testament, (3) the unity of the Bible message over the sixteen hundred years of its production, and (4) the personal testimonies of people whose lives had been permanently changed by contact with the Bible. Christianity, as a unified system of faith and belief, has the ability to deal with complex questions of human life. Not only did this provide a rational framework, but the experiential aspect of biblical faith brought me emotional joy and stability.

I thought that I had found the integrating center for my life—Christ, as understood through the Scriptures. It was a heady experience, an emotional release. However, I can still remember the shock and pain when it began to dawn on me how many different interpretations of this book were advocated, sometimes even within the same churches and schools of thought. Affirming the inspiration and trustworthiness of the Bible was not the end, but only the beginning. How do I verify or reject the varied and conflicting interpretations of the many difficult passages in Scripture by those who were claiming its authority and trustworthiness?

This task became my life's goal and pilgrimage of faith. I knew that my faith in Christ had (1) brought me great peace and joy. My mind longed for some absolutes in the midst of the relativity of my culture (post-modernity); (2) the dogmatism of conflicting religious systems (world religions); and (3) denominational arrogance. In my search for valid approaches to the interpretation of ancient literature, I was surprised to discover my own historical, cultural, denominational and experiential biases. I had often read the Bible simply to reinforce my own views. I used it as a source of dogma to attack others while reaffirming my own insecurities and inadequacies. How painful this realization was to me!

Although I can never be totally objective, I can become a better reader of the Bible. I can limit my biases by identifying them and acknowledging their presence. I am not yet free of them, but I have confronted my own weaknesses. The interpreter is often the worst enemy of good Bible reading!

Let me list some of the presuppositions I bring to my study of the Bible so that you, the reader, may examine them along with me:

### **I. Presuppositions**

- A. I believe the Bible is the sole inspired self-revelation of the one true God. Therefore, it must be interpreted in light of the intent of the original divine author (the Spirit) through a human writer in a specific historical setting.

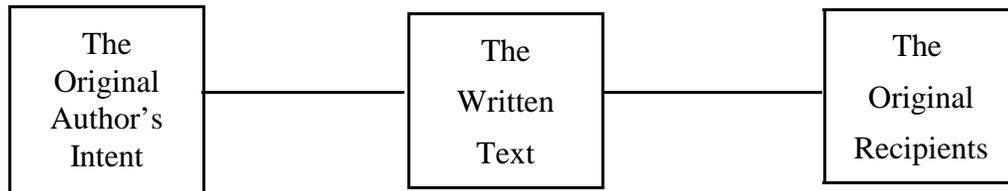
- B. I believe the Bible was written for the common person—for all people! God accommodated Himself to speak to us clearly within a historical and cultural context. God does not hide truth—He wants us to understand! Therefore, it must be interpreted in light of its day, not ours. The Bible should not mean to us what it never meant to those who first read or heard it. It is understandable by the average human mind and uses normal human communication forms and techniques.
- C. I believe the Bible has a unified message and purpose. It does not contradict itself, though it does contain difficult and paradoxical passages. Thus, the best interpreter of the Bible is the Bible itself.
- D. I believe that every passage (excluding prophecies) has one and only one meaning based on the intent of the original, inspired author. Although we can never be absolutely certain we know the original author’s intent, many indicators point in its direction:
  1. the genre (literary type) chosen to express the message
  2. the historical setting and/or specific occasion that elicited the writing
  3. the literary context of the entire book as well as each literary unit
  4. the textual design (outline) of the literary units as they relate to the whole message
  5. the specific grammatical features employed to communicate the message
  6. the words chosen to present the message
  7. parallel passages

The study of each of these areas becomes the object of our study of a passage. Before I explain my methodology for good Bible reading, let me delineate some of the inappropriate methods being used today that have caused so much diversity of interpretation, and that consequently should be avoided:

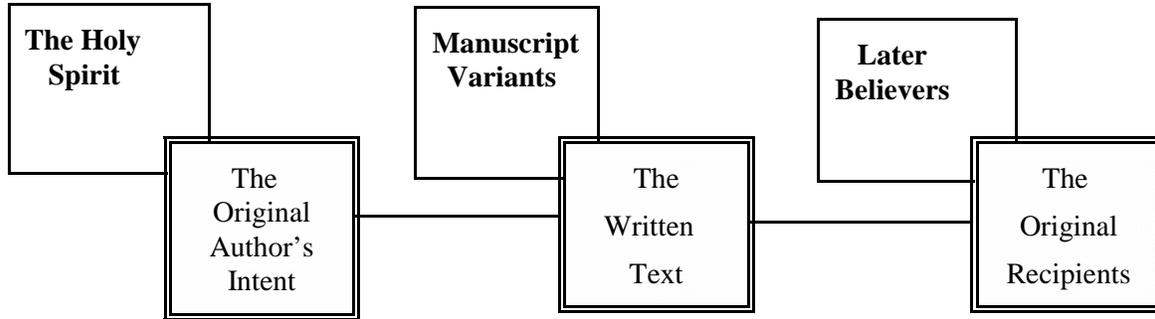
**II. Inappropriate Methods**

- A. Ignoring the literary context of the books of the Bible and using every sentence, clause, or even individual words as statements of truth unrelated to the author’s intent or the larger context. This is often called “proof-texting.”
- B. Ignoring the historical setting of the books by substituting a supposed historical setting that has little or no support from the text itself.
- C. Ignoring the historical setting of the books and reading it as the morning hometown newspaper written primarily to modern individual Christians.
- D. Ignoring the historical setting of the books by allegorizing the text into a philosophical/theological message totally unrelated to the first hearers and the original author’s intent.
- E. Ignoring the original message by substituting one’s own system of theology, pet doctrine, or contemporary issue unrelated to the original author’s purpose and stated message. This phenomenon often follows the initial reading of the Bible as a means of establishing a speaker’s authority. This is often referred to as “reader response” (“what-the-text-means-to-me” interpretation).

At least three related components may be found in all written human communication:



In the past, different reading techniques have focused on one of the three components. But to truly affirm the unique inspiration of the Bible, a modified diagram is more appropriate:



In truth all three components must be included in the interpretive process. For the purpose of verification, my interpretation focuses on the first two components: the original author and the text. I am probably reacting to the abuses I have observed (1) allegorizing or spiritualizing texts and (2) “reader response” interpretation (what-it-means-to-me). Abuse may occur at each stage. We must always check our motives, biases, techniques, and applications. But how do we check them if there are no boundaries to interpretations, no limits, no criteria? This is where authorial intent and textual structure provide me with some criteria for limiting the scope of possible valid interpretations.

In light of these inappropriate reading techniques, what are some possible approaches to good Bible reading and interpretation which offer a degree of verification and consistency?

### III. Possible Approaches to Good Bible Reading

At this point I am not discussing the unique techniques of interpreting specific genres but general hermeneutical principles valid for all types of biblical texts. A good book for genre-specific approaches is *How To Read The Bible For All Its Worth*, by Gordon Fee and Douglas Stuart, published by Zondervan.

My methodology focuses initially on the reader allowing the Holy Spirit to illumine the Bible through four personal reading cycles. This makes the Spirit, the text and the reader primary, not secondary. This also protects the reader from being unduly influenced by commentators. I have heard it said: “The Bible throws a lot of light on commentaries.” This is not meant to be a depreciating comment about study aids, but rather a plea for an appropriate timing for their use.

We must be able to support our interpretations from the text itself. Five areas provide at least limited verification:

1. the original author's
  - a. historical setting
  - b. literary context
2. the original author's choice of
  - a. grammatical structures (syntax)
  - b. contemporary work usage
  - c. genre
3. our understanding of appropriate
  - a. relevant parallel passages

We need to be able to provide the reasons and logic behind our interpretations. The Bible is our only source for faith and practice. Sadly, Christians often disagree about what it teaches or affirms. It is self-

defeating to claim inspiration for the Bible and then for believers not to be able to agree on what it teaches and requires!

The four reading cycles are designed to provide the following interpretive insights:

- A. The first reading cycle
  1. Read the book in a single sitting. Read it again in a different translation, hopefully from a different translation theory
    - a. word-for-word (NKJV, NASB, NRSV)
    - b. dynamic equivalent (TEV, JB)
    - c. paraphrase (Living Bible, Amplified Bible)
  2. Look for the central purpose of the entire writing. Identify its theme.
  3. Isolate (if possible) a literary unit, a chapter, a paragraph or a sentence which clearly expresses this central purpose or theme.
  4. Identify the predominant literary genre
    - a. Old Testament
      - (1) Hebrew narrative
      - (2) Hebrew poetry (wisdom literature, psalm)
      - (3) Hebrew prophecy (prose, poetry)
      - (4) Law codes
    - b. New Testament
      - (1) Narratives (Gospels, Acts)
      - (2) Parables (Gospels)
      - (3) Letters/epistles
      - (4) Apocalyptic literature
- B. The second reading cycle
  1. Read the entire book again, seeking to identify major topics or subjects.
  2. Outline the major topics and briefly state their contents in a simple statement.
  3. Check your purpose statement and broad outline with study aids.
- C. The third reading cycle
  1. Read the entire book again, seeking to identify the historical setting and specific occasion for the writing from the Bible book itself.
  2. List the historical items that are mentioned in the Bible book
    - a. the author
    - b. the date
    - c. the recipients
    - d. the specific reason for writing
    - e. aspects of the cultural setting that relate to the purpose of the writing
    - f. references to historical people and events
  3. Expand your outline to paragraph level for that part of the biblical book you are interpreting. Always identify and outline the literary unit. This may be several chapters or paragraphs. This enables you to follow the original author's logic and textual design.
  4. Check your historical setting by using study aids.
- D. The fourth reading cycle
  1. Read the specific literary unit again in several translations
    - a. word-for-word (NKJV, NASB, NRSV)
    - b. dynamic equivalent (TEV, JB)
    - c. paraphrase (Living Bible, Amplified Bible)

2. Look for literary or grammatical structures
  - a. repeated phrases, Eph. 1:6,12,13
  - b. repeated grammatical structures, Rom. 8:31
  - c. contrasting concepts
3. List the following items
  - a. significant terms
  - b. unusual terms
  - c. important grammatical structures
  - d. particularly difficult words, clauses, and sentences
4. Look for relevant parallel passages
  - a. look for the clearest teaching passage on your subject using
    - (1) “systematic theology” books
    - (2) reference Bibles
    - (3) concordances
  - b. Look for a possible paradoxical pair within your subject. Many biblical truths are presented in dialectical pairs; many denominational conflicts come from proof-texting half of a biblical tension. All of the Bible is inspired, and we must seek out its complete message in order to provide a Scriptural balance to our interpretation.
  - c. Look for parallels within the same book, same author or same genre; the Bible is its own best interpreter because it has one author, the Spirit.
5. Use study aids to check your observations of historical setting and occasion
  - a. study Bibles
  - b. Bible encyclopedias, handbooks and dictionaries
  - c. Bible introductions
  - d. Bible commentaries (at this point in your study, allow the believing community, past and present, to aid and correct your personal study.)

#### **IV. Application of Bible Interpretation**

At this point we turn to application. You have taken the time to understand the text in its original setting; now you must apply it to your life, your culture. I define biblical authority as “understanding what the original biblical author was saying to his day and applying that truth to our day.”

Application must follow interpretation of the original author’s intent both in time and logic. We cannot apply a Bible passage to our own day until we know what it was saying to its day! A Bible passage should not mean what it never meant!

Your detailed outline, to paragraph level (reading cycle #3), will be your guide. Application should be made at paragraph level, not word level. Words have meaning only in context; clauses have meaning only in context; sentences have meaning only in context. The only inspired person involved in the interpretive process is the original author. We only follow his lead by the illumination of the Holy Spirit. But illumination is not inspiration. To say “thus saith the Lord,” we must abide by the original author’s intent. Application must relate specifically to the general intent of the whole writing, the specific literary unit and paragraph level thought development.

Do not let the issues of our day interpret the Bible; let the Bible speak! This may require us to draw principles from the text. This is valid if the text supports a principle. Unfortunately, many times our principles are just that, “our” principles—not the text’s principles.

In applying the Bible, it is important to remember that (except in prophecy) one and only one meaning is valid for a particular Bible text. That meaning is related to the intent of the original author as he addressed a crisis or need in his day. Many possible applications may be derived from this one meaning. The application will be based on the recipients’ needs but must be related to the original author’s meaning.

## V. The Spiritual Aspect of Interpretation

So far I have discussed the logical and textual process involved in interpretation and application. Now let me discuss briefly the spiritual aspect of interpretation. The following checklist has been helpful for me:

- A. Pray for the Spirit's help (cf. I Cor. 1:26-2:16).
- B. Pray for personal forgiveness and cleansing from known sin (cf. I John 1:9).
- C. Pray for a greater desire to know God (cf. Ps. 19:7-14; 42:1ff.; 119:1ff).
- D. Apply any new insight immediately to your own life.
- E. Remain humble and teachable.

It is so hard to keep the balance between the logical process and the spiritual leadership of the Holy Spirit. The following quotes have helped me balance the two:

- A. from James W. Sire, *Scripture Twisting*, pp. 17-18:

“The illumination comes to the minds of God’s people—not just to the spiritual elite. There is no guru class in biblical Christianity, no illuminati, no people through whom all proper interpretation must come. And so, while the Holy Spirit gives special gifts of wisdom, knowledge and spiritual discernment, He does not assign these gifted Christians to be the only authoritative interpreters of His Word. It is up to each of His people to learn, to judge and to discern by reference to the Bible which stands as the authority even to those to whom God has given special abilities. To summarize, the assumption I am making throughout the entire book is that the Bible is God’s true revelation to all humanity, that it is our ultimate authority on all matters about which it speaks, that it is not a total mystery but can be adequately understood by ordinary people in every culture.”
- B. on Kierkegaard, found in Bernard Ramm, *Protestant Biblical Interpretation*, p. 75:

According to Kierkegaard the grammatical, lexical, and historical study of the Bible was necessary but preliminary to the true reading of the Bible. “To read the Bible *as God’s word* one must read it with his heart in his mouth, on tip-toe, with eager expectancy, in conversation with God. To read the Bible thoughtlessly or carelessly or academically or professionally is not to read the Bible as God’s Word. As one reads it as a love letter is read, then one reads it as the Word of God.”
- C. H. H. Rowley in *The Relevance of the Bible*, p. 19:

“No merely intellectual understanding of the Bible, however complete, can possess all its treasures. It does not despise such understanding, for it is essential to a complete understanding. But it must lead to a spiritual understanding of the spiritual treasures of this book if it is to be complete. And for that spiritual understanding something more than intellectual alertness is necessary. Spiritual things are spiritually discerned, and the Bible student needs an attitude of spiritual receptivity, an eagerness to find God that he may yield himself to Him, if he is to pass beyond his scientific study unto the richer inheritance of this greatest of all books.”

## VI. This Commentary’s Method

The *Study Guide Commentary* is designed to aid your interpretive procedures in the following ways:

- A. A brief historical outline introduces each book. After you have done “reading cycle #3” check this information.
- B. Contextual insights are found at the beginning of each chapter. This will help you see how the literary unit is structured.

- C. At the beginning of each chapter or major literary unit the paragraph divisions and their descriptive captions are provided from several modern translations:
1. The United Bible Society Greek text, fourth edition revised(UBS<sup>4</sup>)
  2. The New American Standard Bible, 1995 Update (NASB)
  3. The New King James Version (NKJV)
  4. The New Revised Standard Version (NRSV)
  5. Today's English Version (TEV)
  6. The Jerusalem Bible (JB)

Paragraph divisions are not inspired. They must be ascertained from the context. By comparing several modern translations from differing translation theories and theological perspectives, we are able to analyze the supposed structure of the original author's thought. Each paragraph has one major truth. This has been called "the topic sentence" or "the central idea of the text." This unifying thought is the key to proper historical, grammatical interpretation. One should never interpret, preach or teach on less than a paragraph! Also remember that each paragraph is related to its surrounding paragraphs. This is why a paragraph level outline of the entire book is so important. We must be able to follow the logical flow of the subject being addressed by the original inspired author.

- D. Bob's notes follow a verse-by-verse approach to interpretation. This forces us to follow the original author's thought. The notes provide information from several areas:
1. literary context
  2. historical, cultural insights
  3. grammatical information
  4. word studies
  5. relevant parallel passages

- E. At certain points in the commentary, the printed text of the New American Standard Version (1995 update) will be supplemented by the translations of several other modern versions:
1. The New King James Version (NKJV), which follows the textual manuscripts of the "Textus Receptus."
  2. The New Revised Standard Version (NRSV), which is a word-for-word revision from the National Council of Churches of the Revised Standard Version.
  3. The Today's English Version (TEV), which is a dynamic equivalent translation from the American Bible Society.
  4. The Jerusalem Bible (JB), which is an English translation based on a French Catholic dynamic equivalent translation.

- F. For those who do not read Greek, comparing English translations can help in identifying problems in the text:
1. manuscript variations
  2. alternate word meanings
  3. grammatically difficult texts and structure
  4. ambiguous texts

Although the English translations cannot solve these problems, they do target them as places for deeper and more thorough study.

- G. At the close of each chapter relevant discussion questions are provided which attempt to target the major interpretive issues of that chapter.

# INTRODUCTION TO THE PASTORAL LETTERS

## I and II TIMOTHY and TITUS

### OPENING STATEMENT

- A. The geographical locations mentioned in I Timothy, Titus, and II Timothy do not fit into the chronology of either Acts or Paul's other letters.
1. visit to Ephesus (cf. I Tim. 1:3)
  2. visit to Troas (cf. II Tim. 4:13)
  3. visit to Miletus (cf. II Tim. 4:20)
  4. mission to Crete (cf. Titus 1:5)
  5. mission to Spain (from Clement of Rome, A.D. 95 and the introduction to the Muratorian Canon, A.D. 180-200)

Therefore, I think that Paul was released from prison (early to mid 60's, which is documented in I Clement 5, written about A.D. 95) and took a fourth missionary journey, was then rearrested and killed before A.D. 68 (Nero's suicide).

- B. The purpose of these letters has generally been thought to have been administrative (church organization). However, in the *New International Biblical Commentary*, Vol. 13, on I and II Timothy and Titus, Gordon Fee convinces me that the occasion for the letters was false teaching emerging within the house churches of Ephesus (I Tim.) and on the island of Crete (Titus).
- C. In some ways the Pastoral Letters establish an administrative pattern similar to the Essenes' *Manual of Discipline*. These guidelines were all the more necessary in light of the early and pervasive deviation from Apostolic teachings and form.
- D. The similarity between the Pastoral Letters and Luke's vocabulary in Luke and Acts may be due to the fact that Paul used him as a scribe (cf. C. F. C. Moule, *The Problem of the Pastoral Epistles: A Reappraisal*). S. G. Wilson has even asserted in *Luke and the Pastoral Epistles* that these three books may have been Luke's attempt to write a third volume delineating the gospel's movement beyond Rome.
- E. Why are these three books lumped together? Is it possible they deal with separate times/places/issues? Only I Timothy and Titus have anything to do with church organization. It is really (1) their vocabulary; (2) the false teachers that seem to unify these books; and (3) the fact they do not easily fit into the chronology of Acts (if taken together).

### AUTHOR

- A. The letters themselves claim to be from Paul the Apostle (cf. I Tim. 1:1; II Tim. 1:1; and Titus 1:1) to his two apostolic representatives, Timothy and Titus.
- B. The issue of authorship of the Pastoral Letters began to be debated in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. The rejection of Paul's authorship is usually based on:

1. a developed church organization (qualifications for leaders)
  2. a developed gnosticism (documented in the second century)
  3. a developed theology (creedal statements)
  4. a variation of vocabulary and style (one-third of the words are not used in Paul's other writings)
- C. These differences can be explained
1. these are Paul's last writings, possibly using Luke as a scribe
  2. vocabulary and style are dependent on the occasion
  3. gnostic ideas were a development of first century Jewish thought (cf. Dead Sea Scrolls)
  4. Paul was a brilliant theologian and creative writer with a large vocabulary
- D. There is a growing understanding of historical precedent
1. Paul's use of a professional Christian scribe (in this case, possibly Luke, cf. II Tim. 4:11)
  2. Paul's use of co-writers (i.e. part of his mission team)
  3. Paul's use of liturgical or hymnic quotes (a good summary is found in *Dictionary of Paul and His Letters*, edited by Hawthorne and Martin, published by IVP, p. 664).

Suggestions that portions of the Pastoral Letters are quotes from other sources help explain the numbers of *hapax legomena* (words used only one time in the NT), non-Pauline idioms, and unique use of Pauline terms.

- a. doxologies (cf. I Tim. 1:17; 6:15-17)
  - b. list of vices (cf. I Tim. 1:9-10)
  - c. appropriate conduct for wives (cf. I Tim. 2:9-3:1a)
  - d. qualifications for ministers (cf. I Tim. 3:1b-13)
  - e. hymnic confessions (cf. I Tim. 2:5-6; 3:16; II Tim. 1:9-10; Titus 3:3-7)
  - f. hymns (cf. I Tim. 6:11-12,15-16; II Tim. 2:11-13; Titus 2:11-14)
  - g. OT *midrash* (cf. I Tim. 1:9-10; 2:9-3:1a; 5:17-18; II Tim. 2:19-21; Titus 3:3-7)
  - h. formula
    - (1) "faithful is the word" (cf. I Tim. 1:15; 2:9-3:1a; II Tim. 2:11-13; Titus 3:3-8)
    - (2) "knowing this that" (cf. I Tim. 1:9-10; II Tim. 3:1-5)
    - (3) "these things" (cf. I Tim. 4:6,11; II Tim. 2:14; Titus 1:15-16; 2:1)
  - i. quote from a Greek poet (cf. Titus 1:12 [Epimenides and/or Euripides])
- E. It is surprising that a supposed second century "Paulinist" would mention such specific details as people's names (i.e. Hymenaeus, I Tim. 1:20; II Tim. 2:17; Alexander, I Tim. 1:20; Zenas, Titus 3:13) and events (Trophimus' illness at Miletus, II Tim. 4:20; or the widow's role, I Tim. 5:9) that are not mentioned elsewhere in Paul's writings. These things do not fit with the assumption of pseudographity.

For a good article on pseudonymity related to NT letters, see *An Introduction to the New Testament*, by Carson, Moo, and Morris, pp. 367-371.

## DATE

- A. If it is true that Paul was released from prison (after the close of the book of Acts, possibly A.D. 59-61), then is there any early tradition of his post-prison activities (i.e. preaching in Spain, cf. Rom. 15:24,28).
1. the Pastoral Letters (cf. II Tim. 4:10)
  2. I Clement 5

- a. Paul preached in the east and west (i.e. Spain)
  - b. Paul was killed under “the prefects” (i.e. Tigellinus and Sabinus, who functioned in the last year of Nero’s reign, A.D. 68)
  - 3. the introduction to the Muratorian Fragment (a list of canonical books from Rome about A.D. 180-200)
  - 4. Eusebius’ *Ecclesiastical History* 2:22:1-8 states that Paul was released from Roman imprisonment
- B. It seems that I Timothy and Titus were written close together before Paul’s re-arrest. II Timothy is Paul’s last writing and good-bye while in prison.
- C. Possible chronology of Paul’s writings following F. F. Bruce and Murry Harris with minor adaptations.

<u>Book</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Place of Writing</u>	<u>Relation to Acts</u>
1. Galatians	48	Syrian Antioch	14:28; 15:2
2. I Thessalonians	50	Corinth	18:5
3. II Thessalonians	50	Corinth	
4. I Corinthians	55	Ephesus	19:20
5. II Corinthians	56	Macedonia	20:2
6. Romans	57	Corinth	20:3
7.-10. Prison Letters			
Colossians	early 60's	Rome	
Ephesians	early 60's	Rome	
Philemon	early 60's	Rome	
Philippians	late 62-63	Rome	28:30-31
11.-13. Fourth Missionary Journey			
I Timothy	63 (or later,	Macedonia	
Titus	63 but before	Ephesus (?)	
II Timothy	64 A.D. 68)	Rome	

## RECIPIENTS

- A. The name, Pastoral Epistles, comes from D. N. Berdot’s commentary of A.D. 1703. It speaks of their unique character and content. Timothy and Titus, however, are not pastors, but apostolic delegates.
- B. These letters were written to churches, but under the literary form of letters to Paul’s co-workers, Timothy and Titus. Paul addresses the congregations as he addresses his leadership team. Hints of Paul’s wider audience are
- 1. the formal introductions mentioning his apostleship
  - 2. the plural “you” in the final close of all three letters
  - 3. Paul’s defense of his call (cf. I Tim. 2:7)
  - 4. Paul’s writing to Timothy about things he would already have known from his time with Paul (cf. I Tim. 3:15)

## OCCASION/PURPOSE

- A. The main purpose was to combat emerging heresies (cf. I Tim. 1:3-7). The specific heresy may be a combination of Jewish and gnostic tendencies (much like the false teachers of Ephesians and Colossians). Possibly there were two distinct groups.
- B. The OT gives specific guidelines for the organization of the community of faith. The NT does not contain specific instructions concerning the organization or polity of the church. The Pastoral Letters (I Timothy, II Timothy, and Titus) are as close as it comes to NT guidelines.
- C. I Timothy was written
  - 1. to request Timothy to stay on at Ephesus (cf. I Tim. 1:3)
  - 2. to deal with the false teachers (cf. I Tim. 1:19-20; 4:1-5; 6:4-5,20-21)
  - 3. to help organize the leadership (cf. I Tim. 3)
- D. Titus had a similar assignment to deal with heresy and organization on Crete (cf. 1:5)
- E. II Timothy finds Paul in prison with little hope of release (cf. 4:6-8, 16-18)
- F. There is a strong sense of “sound teaching” (i.e. correct doctrine) that rings through these letters (cf. I Tim. 1:10; 4:6; 6:3; II Tim. 1:13; 4:3; Titus 1:9; 2:1) or “sound in the faith” (cf. Titus 1:13; 2:2). God entrusted this “sound teaching” to Paul (cf. I Tim. 1:11); Paul entrusted it to Timothy (cf. I Tim. 6:20) and Timothy was to entrust it to faithful men (cf. II Tim. 2:2).

## THE FALSE TEACHERS

- A. It is difficult to discuss the false teachers because of our lack of specific first century information. Paul is writing to those who knew these false teachers firsthand. He, therefore, does not fully discuss their theology, but usually condemns their lifestyle and motives (as does Jude).
- B. The main interpretive issue relates to whether they were
  - 1. Jewish
  - 2. Greek
  - 3. a combination

The false teachers seem to be a mixture of Jewish and Gnostic elements. But how did these totally divergent religious movements merge?

  - a. Judaism always incorporated some dualistic elements (cf. Dead Sea Scrolls)
  - b. Gnosticism of the second century developed these common near-eastern philosophical/theological themes
  - c. Judaism of the diaspora was much more eclectic than modern scholarship previously imagined
  - d. there is a first century precedent for a Jewish-gnostic heresy in the book of Colossians
- C. Some of the elements of the false teachers
  - 1. Jewish aspects
    - a. false teachers

- (1) teachers of the Law (cf. I Tim. 1:7)
- (2) the circumcision party (cf. Titus 1:10)
- b. false teachers warned about Jewish myths (cf. I Tim. 3:9; Titus 1:14)
- c. false teachers concerned with food laws (cf. I Tim. 4:1-5)
- d. false teachers concerned with genealogies (cf. I Tim. 1:4; 4:7; II Tim. 4:4; Titus 1:14-15; 3:9)
- 2. Gnostic aspects (See Special Topic at Titus 1)
  - a. asceticism forbidding and exempting
    - (1) forbid marriage (cf. I Tim. 2:15; 4:3)
    - (2) exempt certain foods (cf. I Tim. 4:4)
  - b. sexual exploitation (cf. I Tim. 4:3; II Tim. 3:6-7; Titus 1:11,15)
  - c. emphasis on knowledge (cf. I Tim. 4:1-3; 6:20)

## CANONICITY

- A. Paul's letters were gathered together into one volume called "the Apostle" and then circulated among all the churches. The only Greek manuscript of Paul's letters that lacks I and II Timothy and Titus (also II Thessalonians and Philemon) is a papyrus manuscript from the 200's, called P<sup>46</sup> (from the Chester Beatty papyri). Even this is conjecture because the manuscript is missing several concluding papyrus pages. All other Greek manuscripts contain what came to be called "the Pastoral Epistles."
- B. Ancient sources which quote, allude to, or mention the Pastoral Letters
  - 1. early church leaders
    - a. Pseudo-Barnabas (A.D. 70-130) quotes II Timothy and Titus
    - b. Clement of Rome (A.D. 95-97) alludes to I Timothy and II Timothy and quotes Titus 3:1
    - c. Polycarp (A.D. 110-150) alludes to I Timothy, II Timothy, and Titus
    - d. Hermas (A.D. 115-140) quotes I Timothy and II Timothy
    - e. Irenaeus (A.D. 130-202) quotes often from I Timothy, II Timothy, and Titus
    - f. Diognetus (A.D. 150) quotes Titus
    - g. Tertullian (A.D. 150-220) quotes I Timothy, II Timothy, and Titus
    - h. Origen (A.D. 185-254) quotes I Timothy, II Timothy, and Titus
  - 2. list of canonical books which includes the Pastoral Letters
    - a. Muratorian Fragment (from Rome about A.D. 200)
    - b. Barococcio (A.D. 206)
    - c. Apostolic List (A.D. 300)
    - d. Cheltenham List (A.D. 360)
    - e. Athanasius' Letter (A.D. 367)
  - 3. early versions which contain the Pastoral Letters
    - a. old Latin (A.D. 150-170)
    - b. old Syriac (A.D. 200)
  - 4. early church councils which affirmed the inspired status of the Pastoral Letters
    - a. Nicea (A.D. 325-340)
    - b. Hippo (A.D. 393)
    - c. Carthage (A.D. 397 and 419)

- C. A process of consensus among the early Christian congregations of the Roman Empire developed the canon. This consensus was surely affected by internal and external social pressures. The basic requirements for inclusion in the canon seem to have been:
1. relationship to an Apostle
  2. a message consistent with other Apostolic writings
  3. the changed lives of those who encountered these writings
  4. a growing agreement in the lists of accepted writings among these early churches
- D. The need for a canon developed because of
1. the delayed Second Coming
  2. the geographical distance between churches and Apostles
  3. the death of the Apostles
  4. the early rise of false teachers
    - a. Judaism
    - b. Greek philosophy
    - c. mixture of Jewish and Gnostic elements (Colossians)
    - d. other Greco-Roman mystery religions (e.g. Mithra)
 This occurred as the gospel spread to different cultures.
- E. The issue of canonicity is historically related to authorship. The early church accepted the Pastoral Letters as Paul's writings. My own presuppositions about canonicity include the involvement of the Spirit, not only in the writing of the Scriptures, but also in their gathering and preservation. The question of Paul's authorship (which I assume) does not affect inspiration and canonization.

### **READING CYCLE ONE (see p. vi)**

This is a study guide commentary, which means that you are responsible for your own interpretation of the Bible. Each of us must walk in the light we have. You, the Bible, and the Holy Spirit are priority in interpretation. You must not relinquish this to a commentator.

Read the entire biblical book at one sitting. State the central theme of the entire book in your own words.

1. Theme of entire book
2. Type of literature (genre)

### **READING CYCLE TWO (from "A Guide to Good Bible Reading" pp. vi-vii.)**

This is a study guide commentary, which means that you are responsible for your own interpretation of the Bible. Each of us must walk in the light we have. You, the Bible, and the Holy Spirit are priority in interpretation. You must not relinquish this to a commentator.

Read the entire biblical book a second time at one sitting. Outline the main subjects and express the subject in a single sentence.

1. Subject of first literary unit
2. Subject of second literary unit
3. Subject of third literary unit
4. Subject of fourth literary unit
5. Etc.

# I TIMOTHY 1

## PARAGRAPH DIVISIONS OF MODERN TRANSLATIONS\*

UBS <sup>4</sup>	NKJV	NRSV	TEV	NJB
Salutation	Greeting	Salutation	Introduction	Address
1:1-2	1:1	1:1	1:1	1:1-2
	1:2a	1:2a	1:2a	
	1:2b	1:2b	1:2b	
Warning Against False Doctrine	No Other Defense	The Defense of the Truth	Warnings Against False Teaching	Suppress the False Teachers
1:3-7	1:3-11	1:3-7	1:3-7	1:3-7
1:8-11		1:8-11	1:8-11	1:8-11
Thankfulness for Mercy	Glory to God for His Grace		Gratitude for God's Mercy	Paul On His Own Calling
1:12-17	1:12-17	1:12-17	1:12-17	1:12-17
	Fight the Good Fight			Timothy's Responsibility
1:18-20	1:18-20	1:18-20	1:18-20	1:18-20

### READING CYCLE THREE (from "A Guide to Good Bible Reading" p. vii)

*FOLLOWING THE ORIGINAL AUTHOR'S INTENT AT THE PARAGRAPH LEVEL*

This is a study guide commentary, which means that you are responsible for your own interpretation of the Bible. Each of us must walk in the light we have. You, the Bible, and the Holy Spirit are priority in interpretation. You must not relinquish this to a commentator.

Read the chapter in one sitting. Identify the subjects. Compare your subject divisions with the five modern translations. Paragraphing is not inspired, but it is the key to following the original author's intent, which is the heart of interpretation. Every paragraph has one and only one main subject.

1. First paragraph
2. Second paragraph
3. Third paragraph
4. Etc.

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\* Although they are not inspired, paragraph divisions are the key to understanding and following the original author's intent. Each modern translation has divided and summarized the paragraphs. Every paragraph has one central topic, truth, or thought. Each version encapsulates that topic in its own distinct way. As you read the text, ask yourself which translation fits your understanding of the subject and verse divisions.

In every chapter we must read the Bible first and try to identify its subjects (paragraphs), then compare our understanding with the modern versions. Only when we understand the original author's intent by following his logic and presentation can we truly understand the Bible. Only the original author is inspired—readers have no right to change or modify the message. Bible readers do have the responsibility of applying the inspired truth to their day and their lives.

**Note that all technical terms and abbreviations are explained fully in Appendices One, Two, and Three.**

## WORD AND PHRASE STUDY

### NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 1:1

<sup>1</sup>Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus according to the commandment of God our Savior, and of Christ Jesus, *who is our hope,*

**1:1 “Paul”** This is a Greek name meaning “little.” Most Jewish families of the diaspora (Paul was from Tarsus of Cilicia) named their children with a Jewish name and a Greek name. Before Acts 13:13 he is called Saul (“asked”). This is the name of the first Hebrew king from the tribe of Benjamin (as was Paul, cf. Acts 13:21; Rom. 11:1; Phil. 3:5). In Acts 13:13, Luke suddenly and unexpectedly changes “Saul” to “Paul.”

▣ **“an apostle”** This is one of two common Greek words for “send.” This term has several theological usages.

1. the rabbis used it as one called and sent as an official representative of another, something like our English “ambassador” (cf. II Cor. 5:20).
2. the Gospels often use the verb form of this term of Jesus being sent by the Father. In John the term takes on Messianic overtones (cf. John 4:34; 5:24,30,36,37,38; 6:29,38,39,40,57; 7:29; 8:42; 10:36; 11:42; 17:3,8,18,21,23,25; 20:21)
3. it is used of Jesus sending believers (cf. John 17:18; 20:21)
4. it is used of a special leadership gift in the NT
  - a. the original twelve inner circle of disciples (cf. Acts 1:21-22)
  - b. a special group of Apostolic helpers and co-workers
    - (1) Barnabas (cf. Acts 14:4,14)
    - (2) Andronicus and Junias (KJV, Junia, cf. Rom. 16:7)
    - (3) Apollos (cf. I Cor. 4:6-9)
    - (4) James the Lord’s brother (cf. Gal. 1:19)
    - (5) Silvanus and Timothy (cf. I Thess. 2:6)
    - (6) possibly Titus (cf. II Cor. 8:23)
    - (7) possibly Epaphroditus (cf. Phil. 2:25)
  - c. an ongoing gift in the church (cf. Eph. 4:11)
5. Paul uses this title for himself in most of his letters as a way of asserting his God-given authority as Christ’s representative (cf. I Cor. 1:1; II Cor. 1:1; Eph. 1:1; Col. 1:1; II Tim. 1:1). Even in a personal letter like I Timothy, this authority is important
  - a. his authority gave Timothy authority
  - b. he is combating false teachers
  - c. his letter was obviously read to the entire church.

▣ **“of Christ Jesus”** These terms are part of the fuller title “the Lord Jesus Christ.” These three titles all have individual significance.

1. “Christ” is the Greek translation of the Hebrew *Messiah* (Anointed One). It asserts Jesus’ OT status as God’s promised one sent to set up the new age of righteousness.
2. “Jesus” is the name given to the baby in Bethlehem by the angel (cf. Matt. 1:21). It is made up of two Hebrew nouns: “YHWH,” the covenant name for deity, and “salvation” (cf. Exod. 3:14). It is the same Hebrew name as Joshua. When used alone it often identifies the man, Jesus of Nazareth, son of Mary (ex. Matt. 1:16, 25; 2:1; 3:13,15,16; Acts 13:23,33; Rom. 8:11; I Cor. 11:23; 12:3; Eph. 4:21; Phil. 2:10; I Thess. 1:10; 4:14).

3. “Lord” (used in 1:1 in KJV or in 1:12) is the translation of the Hebrew term *adon*, which meant “owner, husband, master, or lord.” The Jews became afraid of pronouncing the sacred name YHWH lest they take it in vain and break one of the Ten Commandments. Whenever they read the Scriptures, they substituted *Adon* for YHWH. This is why our English translations use all capitals LORD for YHWH in the OT. By transferring this title (*kurios* in Greek) to Jesus, the NT authors assert His deity and equality with the Father (this same thing is done by the grammar of v. 2 with one PREPOSITION referring to God the Father and Jesus the Son, cf. I Thess. 1:1; II Thess. 1:1,2).

▣ **“according to the commandment of God”** This is another literary way of asserting Paul’s apostolic authority. Paul’s ministry was the “will of God” (cf. II Tim. 1:1) and “the commandment of God” (cf. Titus 1:3). This probably refers to Paul’s call on the road to Damascus and the information revealed through Ananias (cf. Acts 9:1-22; 22:3-16; 26:9-18). Paul did not volunteer!

▣ **“God our Savior”** This is an OT title for YHWH’s care and deliverance of Israel (cf. Isa. 19:20; 43:3,11; 45:15,21; 49:26; 60:16; 63:8), especially through the coming Suffering Servant (cf. Isa. 52:13-53:12). This title is used of God the Father in Titus 1:3; 2:10 and 3:4 and of God the Son, Jesus, in Titus 1:4; 2:13 and 3:6. This is another way of theologically linking the Father and the Son.

This was one of the NT titles for YHWH which was used of Caesar. The Caesars of Paul’s day claimed to be “Lord,” “Savior,” even “divine.” Christians reserved these titles uniquely for Jesus and because of this they were seen as traitors by the Roman government and society and were persecuted and died by the thousands in the first and second centuries.

▣ **“and of Christ Jesus our hope”** Paul often uses this term in several related senses. Often it is associated with the consummation of the believer’s faith (cf. I Tim. 1:1). This can be expressed as glory, eternal life, ultimate salvation, Second Coming, etc. The consummation is certain, but the time element is future and unknown.

1. the Second Coming (cf. Gal. 5:5; Eph. 1:18; 4:4; Titus 2:13)
2. Jesus is our hope (cf. I Tim. 1:1)
3. the believer to be presented to God (cf. Col. 1:22-23; I Thess. 2:19)
4. hope laid up in heaven (cf. Col. 1:5)
5. ultimate salvation (cf. I Thess. 4:13)
6. the glory of God (cf. Rom. 5:2; II Cor. 3:7-12; Col. 1:27)
7. the salvation of Gentiles by Christ (cf. Col. 1:27)
8. assurance of salvation (cf. I Thess. 5:8-9)
9. eternal life (cf. Titus 1:2; 3:7)
10. redemption of all creation (cf. Rom. 8:20-22)
11. adoption’s consummation (cf. Rom. 8:23-25) a title for God (cf. Rom. 15:13)
12. OT guide for NT believers (cf. Rom. 15:4)

**NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 1:2**

**<sup>2</sup>To Timothy, my true child in the faith: Grace, mercy and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.**

**1:2 “To Timothy”** The Pastoral Letters follow the typical Greek letter form: (1) from whom; (2) to whom; and (3) a prayer/wish.

## SPECIAL TOPIC: TIMOTHY

- A. His name means “one who honors God.”
- B. He was the child of a Jewish mother and a Greek father and lived in Lystra (cf. Acts 16:1). The Latin translation of Origen’s commentary on Rom. 16:21 says Timothy was a citizen of Derbe. This is possibly from Acts 20:4.
- C. He was instructed in the Jewish faith (or Christian faith) by his mother and grandmother (cf. II Tim. 1:5; 3:14-15).
- D. He apparently trusted Christ during Paul’s first missionary journey (cf. Acts 14:6-7).
- E. He was asked to join Paul and Silas’ missionary team on the second journey (cf. Acts 16:1-5), apparently to take John Mark’s duties. He was confirmed by prophecy (cf. I Tim. 1:18; 4:14).
- F. He was circumcised by Paul in order to work with both Jews and Greeks (cf. Acts 16:3).
- G. He was a dedicated companion of Paul and became his Apostolic delegate. He is mentioned by name more than any other of Paul’s helpers (17 times in 10 letters, cf. Rom. 16:21; I Cor. 4:17; 16:10; Phil. 1:1; 2:19,22; Col. 1:5; I Tim. 1:2; II Tim. 1:2; Titus 1:4).
- H. Paul affectionately calls him “my true child in the faith” (cf. I Tim. 1:2); “my beloved son” (cf. II Tim. 1:2); “my true child in a common faith” (cf. Titus 1:4). Also notice “my beloved and faithful child in the Lord” in I Cor. 4:17.
- I. He was apparently in Rome when Paul was released from prison and accompanied him on his fourth missionary journey (cf. Col. 1:1; Philemon 1).
- J. He is called an “apostle” in I Thess. 2:6 in the sense of an ongoing spiritual gift for the churches (cf. Eph. 4:11).
- K. Two of the three Pastoral Letters are addressed to him.
- L. He is last mentioned in Heb. 13:23 (but chronologically in II Tim. 1:2).

▣ **“my true child”** “My” is not in the Greek text. “Child” is *teknon*, which means a legitimate child. Paul saw himself as Timothy’s spiritual father (cf. II Tim. 1:2; 2:1). He also refers to Titus (cf. Titus 1:4) and Onesimus (cf. Philemon v. 10) by similar phrases.

▣ **“Grace, mercy and peace”** Notice the commonality and differences in Paul’s opening greetings:

1. “Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ” (cf. Rom. 1:7; I Cor. 1:3; II Cor. 1:2; Gal. 1:3; Eph. 1:2; Phil. 1:2; I Thess. 1:2; Philemon 1:3)
2. “Grace to you and peace from God our Father” (cf. Col. 1:2)
3. “Grace to you and peace” (cf. I Thess. 1:1)
4. “Grace, mercy and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord” (cf. I Tim. 1:2; II Tim. 1:2)
5. “Grace and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Savior” (cf. Titus 1:4)

Notice that there is variety, but some elements are standard.

1. “Grace” begins all greetings. It is a Christianized form of greeting focusing on the character of God.
2. “Peace” is the result of humans trusting in the trustworthy God.
3. “Mercy” is another way of describing God’s character and is unique in Paul’s writings, used only in I and II Timothy. This term was used in the Septuagint to translate the Hebrew term *hesed* (i.e. covenant loyalty). God is gracious and trustworthy.
4. The Father and Son are mentioned in each greeting (in I Thess. they are mentioned in the previous phrase). They are always grammatically linked. This was one way the NT writers asserted the full

deity of Jesus of Nazareth. This is also true of the use of the OT titles for YHWH applied to Jesus (i.e. Lord and Savior).

▣ **“Father”** The Bible uses human categories (anthropomorphisms) to describe deity as an aid to time-bound, sinful mankind. The most common biblical metaphors relate to the family: (1) God as Father, as parent (mother and father), as near kin (*go’el*); (2) Jesus as Son, as brother, as husband; (3) believers as children, as adopted children, as bride.

### **SPECIAL TOPIC: FATHER**

The OT introduces the intimate familial metaphor of God as Father: (1) the nation of Israel is often described as YHWH’s “son” (cf. Hos. 11:1; Mal. 3:17); (2) even earlier in Deuteronomy the analogy of God as Father is used (1:31); (3) in Deut. 32 Israel is called “his children” and God is called “your father”; (4) this analogy is stated in Ps. 103:13 and developed in Ps. 68:5 (the father of orphans); and (5) it was common in the prophets (cf. Isa. 1:2; 63:8; Israel as son, God as Father, 63:16; 64:8; Jer. 3:4,19; 31:9).

Jesus spoke Aramaic, which means that many of the places where “Father” appears as the Greek *Pater* may reflect the Aramaic *Abba* (cf. 14:36). This familial term “Daddy” or “Papa” reflects Jesus’ intimacy with the Father; His revealing this to His followers also encourages our own intimacy with the Father. The term “Father” was used sparingly in the OT for YHWH, but Jesus uses it often and pervasively. It is a major revelation of believers’ new relationship with God through Christ (cf. Matt. 6:9).

It must be remembered that Father is a metaphor of family, not of generation or previous existence. There has never been a time when God the Father, God the Son, and God the Spirit were not together and of one essence! See Special Topic: The Trinity at Gal. 4:4.

### **NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 1:3-7**

<sup>3</sup>As I urged you upon my departure for Macedonia, remain on at Ephesus so that you may instruct certain men not to teach strange doctrines, <sup>4</sup>nor to pay attention to myths and endless genealogies, which give rise to mere speculation rather than *furthering* the administration of God which is by faith. <sup>5</sup>But the goal of our instruction is love from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith. <sup>6</sup>For some men, straying from these things, have turned aside to fruitless discussion, <sup>7</sup>wanting to be teachers of the Law, even though they do not understand either what they are saying or the matters about which they make confident assertions.

### **1:3 “Ephesus”**

1. It was the largest city of the Roman province of Asia Minor. It was not the capital, though the Roman governor lived there. It was a commercial center because of its excellent natural harbor.
2. It was a free city, which allowed it to have its own local government and many political freedoms, including no garrison of Roman soldiers.
3. It was the only city which was allowed to hold biannual Asian Olympic games.
4. It was the site of the Temple to Artemis (Diana in Latin), which was one of the seven wonders of the world of its day. It was 425' by 220' with 127 columns which were 60' tall, of which 86 were overlaid with gold (see Pliny’s *Hist. Nat.* 36:95ff). The image of Artemis was thought to have been a meteor which resembled a many-breasted female figure. This meant that there were many cultic prostitutes present in the city (cf. Acts 19). It was a very immoral, multi-cultural city.
5. Paul spent more than three years in this city (cf. Acts 18:1ff; 20:13). He stayed there longer than any other place.
6. Tradition asserts that it became the Apostle John’s home after Mary’s death in Palestine.

7. Paul and Timothy must have traveled here together after Paul was released from Roman imprisonment in Rome. It is the first geographical information about Paul's fourth missionary journey. Notice he was moving on to Macedonia.
8. Eusebius (a third century church historian) relates the tradition that Timothy was later stoned in Ephesus because of arguments with the followers of Diana.

▣ **“so that”** This is a *hina* (purpose clause), which means “in order that” (1:10,18,20; 2:2; 3:15; 4:15; 5:7,16,20,21; 6:1,19).

▣ **“may instruct”** This is a military term “to give strict orders” (cf. vv. 5,18; 4:11; 5:7; 6:13). Paul is directing Timothy as his Apostolic delegate.

▣ **“certain men not to teach strange doctrines”** Normally Paul, like all first century writers, would include a prayer of thanksgiving, an expected introductory item of Greek letters. However, in both Galatians and I Timothy the situation (i.e. opposing false teachers) demanded a deviation from the normal pattern. There is much modern academic speculation about these false teachers. They seem to combine aspects of Jewish and Greek thought (like the false teachers of Colossians). In this context (1:3-4) they are characterized by

1. strange doctrines
2. attention to myths
3. attention to endless genealogies
4. mere speculation

Some commentators relate these to Gnosticism's aeons or angelic spheres (*plerōma*) between a high good god and lesser gods/angels, the least of which molded/formed evil matter. See Special Topic: Gnostics at Titus 1:1.

The Jewish element is obvious in:

1. “teachers of the Law” (I Tim. 1:7-10)
2. “Jewish myths” (Titus 1:14; II Tim. 4:4)
3. “disputes about the Law” (Titus 3:9)
4. “those of the circumcision” (Titus 1:10)
5. possibly the origins of the Messiah in Titus 3:9a



**NASB** “to teach no other doctrine”  
**NRSV** “to teach different doctrine”  
**NRSV** “teaching false doctrine”  
**TEV** “teaching false doctrine”  
**NJB** “to spread wrong teaching”

This is a PRESENT INFINITIVE of a compound term *heteros* (another of a different kind) plus *didakalin* (the thing taught). The adjective *heteros* is also used to describe inappropriate teaching in Acts 17:21; II Cor. 11:4; and Gal. 1:6-7. I Timothy 6:3 is a good parallel.

In *The New International Biblical Commentary*, p. xiv, one of my favorite commentators, Gordon Fee, asserts that this verse is crucial in interpreting the purpose of I Timothy. In his opinion it is not primarily a “manual of church discipline,” but a refutation of false teachers/teaching (and I agree).

**1:4 “nor to pay attention to myths and endless genealogies”** Because of the references to Jewish Law (vv. 7-10 and Titus 3:9b), to circumcision (Titus 1:10) and Jewish myths (Titus 1:14 and in II Tim. 4:4), it seems obvious that these teachings were Jewish in nature. It is possible that it refers to the speculative origins of the Messiah (cf. Titus 3:9a).

Irenaeus and Tertullian thought Paul was prophetically speaking to later gnosticism's aeons or angelic levels between the holy god and a lesser god (or *elohim*/angel) who formed matter. Gnosticism is a system of thought that is known from writings from the middle of the second century. See Special Topic: Gnostics at Titus 1:1. From these writings we know of their extensive lists of angelic levels between a high good god and the lesser spiritual beings. However, these gnostic lists are never characterized in contemporary Christian, Jewish, or Gnostic literature by the terms "myths" or "genealogies."

The subject of gnosticism has been greatly advanced by the archaeological discoveries of gnostic texts such as Nag Hammadi. These writings are now available in English, *The Nag Hammadi Library* by James M. Robinson and Richard Smith.



**NASB** "give rise to mere speculation"  
**NKJV** "which cause disputes"  
**NRSV** "that promote speculations"  
**TEV** "which only produce arguments"  
**NJB** "only foster doubts"

It is possible to get so involved in the study of Christianity academically that we forget why we are studying God's word (cf. Titus 3:8; Matt. 28:19-20). Just because a text could mean this or that does not mean that it does mean that. Check the historical setting and larger literary context.

This is exactly the reason that Pietism developed out of the Reformation tradition. Mind and heart must both be yielded and energized by God's Spirit.



**NASB** "rather than *furthering* the administration of God"  
**NKJV** "rather than godly edification"  
**NRSV** "rather than the divine training"  
**TEV** "they do not serve God's plan"  
**NJB** "instead of furthering God's plan"

This is the term for "household manager" used for believers' stewardship of the gospel message. It refers to God's gracious plan for all mankind's salvation through faith in Christ (cf. Gen. 3:15; 12:3; Exod. 19:5-6; John 3:16; II Cor. 5:21; Eph. 2:8-10; 2:11-3:13).

### **SPECIAL TOPIC: EDIFY**

This term *oikodomeō* and its other forms are used often by Paul. Literally it means "to build a house" (cf. Matt. 7:24), but it came to be used metaphorically for:

1. Christ's body, the church, I Cor. 3:9; Eph. 2:21; 4:16
2. building up
  - a. weak brothers, Rom. 15:1
  - b. neighbors, Rom. 15:2
  - c. one another, Eph. 4:29; I Thess. 5:11
  - d. the saints for ministry, Eph. 4:11
3. we build up or edify by
  - a. love, I Cor. 8:1; Eph. 4:16
  - b. limiting personal freedoms, I Cor. 10:23-24
  - c. avoiding speculations, I Tim. 1:4
  - d. limiting speakers in worship services (singers, teachers, prophets, tongue speakers, and interpreters), I Cor. 14:3-4,12
4. all things should edify

- a. Paul's authority, II Cor. 10:8; 12:19; 13:10
- b. summary statements in Rom. 14:19 and I Cor. 14:26

▣ **“which is by faith”** There is a real difference between “myths,” “genealogies,” “speculations,” and faith. Faith is based on the historical truth of the gospel, not theories. Faith comes from the promises of God (cf. Gal. 3:14,16,17,18,21,22,29), not the philosophical preponderance of humans (cf. I Cor. 1:18-31). One is based on revelation, the other on human speculation. One honors God and the other magnifies the human thinker.

This is not meant to depreciate godly scholarship but to differentiate divine revelation from human reason, speculation and discovery. Believers are called to love God with their “minds” (cf. Jesus’ quote of Deut. 6:5 in Matt. 22:36-37; Mark 12:28-30; Luke 10:27) and to pass these truths on to their children (cf. Deut. 6:7,20-25).

**1:5 “love from a pure heart”** The goal of Paul’s charge to believers in v. 5 had a three-fold component.

1. love from a pure heart
2. love from a good conscience
3. love from a sincere faith.

In Hebrew “heart” was used for the seat of the intellect, emotions, and will (cf. Deut. 6:5-6). It stood for the whole person.

### **SPECIAL TOPIC: THE HEART**

The Greek term *kardia* is used in the Septuagint and NT to reflect the Hebrew term *leb*. It is used in several ways (cf. Bauer, Arndt, Gingrich and Danker, *A Greek-English Lexicon*, pp. 403-404).

1. the center of physical life, a metaphor for the person (cf. Acts 14:17; II Corinthians 3:2-3; James 5:5)
2. the center of spiritual (moral) life
  - a. God knows the heart (cf. Luke 16:15; Rom. 8:27; I Cor. 14:25; I Thess. 2:4; Rev. 2:23)
  - b. used of mankind’s spiritual life (cf. Matt. 15:18-19; 18:35; Rom. 6:17; I Tim. 1:5; II Tim. 2:22; I Pet. 1:22)
3. the center of the thought life (i.e. intellect, cf. Matt. 13:15; 24:48; Acts 7:23; 16:14; 28:27; Rom. 1:21; 10:6; 16:18; II Cor. 4:6; Eph. 1:18; 4:18; James 1:26; II Pet. 1:19; Rev. 18:7; heart is synonymous with mind in II Cor. 3:14-15 and Phil. 4:7)
4. the center of the volition (i.e. will, cf. Acts 5:4; 11:23; I Cor. 4:5; 7:37; II Cor. 9:7)
5. the center of the emotions (cf. Matt. 5:28; Acts 2:26,37; 7:54; 21:13; Rom. 1:24; II Cor. 2:4; 7:3; Eph. 6:22; Phil. 1:7)
6. unique place of the Spirit’s activity (cf. Rom. 5:5; II Cor. 1:22; Gal. 4:6 [i.e. Christ in our hearts, Eph. 3:17])
7. the heart is a metaphorical way of referring to the entire person (cf. Matt. 22:37, quoting Deut. 6:5). The thoughts, motives, and actions attributed to the heart fully reveal the type of individual. The OT has some striking usages of the terms
  - a. Gen. 6:6; 8:21, “God was grieved to His heart” (also notice Hosea 11:8-9)
  - b. Deut. 4:29; 6:5, “with all your heart and all your soul”
  - c. Deut. 10:16, “uncircumcised heart” and Rom. 2:29

- d. Ezek. 18:31-32, “a new heart”
- e. Ezek. 36:26, “a new heart” vs. “a heart of stone”

▣ **“a good conscience”** There is not an OT counterpart to the Greek term “conscience” unless the Hebrew term “breast” implies a knowledge of self and its motives. Originally the Greek term referred to consciousness related to the five senses. It came to be used of the inner senses (cf. Rom. 2:15). Paul uses this term twice in his trials in Acts (cf. 23:1 and 24:16). It refers to his sense that he had not knowingly violated any expected duties toward God (cf. I Cor. 4:4).

Conscience is a developing understanding of believers’ motives and actions based on (1) a biblical world-view; (2) an indwelling Spirit; and (3) a knowledge of the word of God. It is made possible by the personal reception of the gospel.

Paul uses this term twice in chapter 1, once in relation to his own developed sense of the will of God (cf. 1:5) and once in relation to the willful rejection of the false teachers (cf. Titus 1:15), including Hymenaeus and Alexander (cf. 1:19). These false teachers have had their consciences seared (cf. 4:2).

▣ **“a sincere faith”** Paul uses this adjective three times in his writings to describe (1) faith (cf. I Tim. 1:5; II Tim. 1:5); and (2) love (cf. II Cor. 6:6 and also I Pet. 1:22). It has the connotation of genuine, real, or sincere which is opposite of “counterfeit” which describes the false teachers (cf. vv. 19-20).

**1:6-7** These verses further characterize the false teachers in very Jewish categories

1. they strayed from the goal of ethical teachings (cf. v. 5)
2. they turned aside to “fruitless discussion” (NASB)
  - a. “idle talk” (NKJV)
  - b. “meaningless talk” (NRSV)
  - c. “empty speculation” (NJB)
3. they wanted to be teachers of the Law
4. they do not understand the Law
5. they make confident assertions about things they do not understand
6. verses 9c-10 seem to reflect the Ten Commandments

The tragedy of false teachers is either (1) their spiritual blindness, which is often expressed by insincerity; (2) their willful rejection of light, not just ignorance; or (3) they lead others into error and ruin.

**NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 1:8-11**

**<sup>8</sup>But we know that the Law is good, if one uses it lawfully, <sup>9</sup>realizing the fact that law is not made for a righteous person, but for those who are lawless and rebellious, for the ungodly and sinners, for the unholy and profane, for those who kill their fathers or mothers, for murderers <sup>10</sup>and immoral men and homosexuals and kidnappers and liars and perjurers, and whatever else is contrary to sound teaching, <sup>11</sup>according to the glorious gospel of the blessed God, with which I have been entrusted.**

**1:8-11** This is one long sentence in Greek. It clearly reveals one continuing purpose of the Mosaic Law, especially as it relates to moral living.

**1:8 “But we know that the Law is good”** See Special Topic below.

## SPECIAL TOPIC: PAUL'S VIEWS OF THE MOSAIC LAW

- A. It is good and from God (cf. Rom. 7:12,16)
- B. It is not the way to righteousness and acceptance by God (it can even be a curse, cf. Gal. 3)
- C. It is still God's will for believers because it is God's self-revelation (cf. I Tim. 3:15-17. Paul often quotes the OT to convict and/or encourage believers)
- D. Believers are informed by the OT (cf. Rom. 4:23-24; 15:4; I Cor. 10:6,11), but not saved by the OT (cf. Acts 15; Rom. 4; Gal. 3; Hebrews)
- E. It functions in the new covenant to
  - 1. show sinfulness (cf. Gal. 3:15-29)
  - 2. guide redeemed mankind in society
  - 3. inform Christian ethical decisions

It is this theological spectrum from cursing (cf. Gal. 3:10-11,13) and passing away (cf. book of Hebrews) to blessing and permanency (cf. Matt. 5:17-20) that causes the problem in trying to understand Paul's view of the Mosaic Law. In *A Man in Christ*, James Stewart shows Paul's paradoxical thinking and writing:

"You would normally expect a man who was setting himself to construct a system of thought and doctrine to fix as rigidly as possible the meanings of the terms he employed. You would expect him to aim at precision in the phraseology of his leading ideas. You would demand that a word, once used by your writer in a particular sense, should bear that sense throughout. But to look for this from Paul is to be disappointed. Much of his phraseology is fluid, not rigid. . . 'The law is holy' he writes, 'I delight in the law of God after the inward man' (cf. Rom. 7:12,22) but it is clearly another aspect of *nomos* that makes him say elsewhere, 'Christ had redeemed us from the curse of the law (cf. Gal. 3:13)" (p. 26).

▣ **"if"** This is a THIRD CLASS CONDITIONAL SENTENCE which means potential, but contingent, action. The Mosaic Law must be used in an appropriate manner and not as a legalistic agenda (cf. Rom. 2:27-29; 7:6; II Cor. 3:6).

**1:9 "but for those who are lawless and rebellious"** Paul includes several lists of sins in his writings (cf. Rom. 1:29-31; 13:13; I Cor. 5:11; 6:9-10; Eph. 5:5; Col. 3:5; I Tim. 6:4-5; II Tim. 3:2-4; Titus 3:3). They are similar to the lists of vices of the Greek moralists (Stoics). This list describes those for whom the Law still has relevance (i.e. sinners). The Law as God's agent to convict of sin is fully discussed in Gal. 3.

## SPECIAL TOPIC: VICES AND VIRTUES IN THE NT

Lists of both vices and virtues are common in the NT. Often they reflect both rabbinical and cultural (Hellenistic) lists. The NT lists of contrasting characteristics can be seen in

	<u>Vices</u>	<u>Virtues</u>
1. Paul	Rom. 1:28-32	---
	Rom. 13:13	Rom. 2:9-21
	I Cor. 5:9-11	---
	6:10	I Cor. 6:6-9
	II Cor. 12:20	II Cor. 6:4-10

	Gal. 5:19-21	Gal. 5:22-23
	Eph. 4:25-32	---
	5:3-5	---
	---	Phil. 4:8-9
	Col. 3:5,8	Col. 3:12-14
	I Tim. 1:9-10	---
	6:4-5	---
	II Tim. 2:22a,23	II Tim. 2:22b,24
	Titus 1:7, 3:3	Titus 1:8-9; 3:1-2
2. James	James 3:15-16	James 3:17-18
3. Peter	I Pet. 4:3	I Pet. 4:7-11
	II Pet. 1:9	II Pet. 1:5-8
4. John	Rev. 21:8;	---
	22:15	---

▣ **“lawless”** This meant “no recognized authority.” These false teachers had rejected the moral aspects of the Mosaic Law. They had become a “law” unto themselves (no conscience, cf. 4:2).

▣ **“rebellious”** This meant “not under authority.” They wanted to be authorities unto themselves.

▣ **“ungodly”** This meant “knowledgeably irreligious.” They were not ignorant, but self-blinded.

▣ **“unholy”** This means the opposite of godly. They oppose all that God stands for and does.

▣ **“profane”** This meant “to trample the holy.” They claimed to be spiritual, but by their lifestyles they demonstrated their worldliness.

▣ **“those who kill their fathers and mothers”** If this list reflects the Decalog, then this may reflect lack of the respect/honor which is due parents (cf. Exod. 20:12; Deut. 5:16).

▣ **“murder”** In the Decalog this refers to non-legal, premeditated murder (cf. Exod. 20:13; Deut. 5:17).

**1:10 “immoral men”** This meant “sexually immoral” and may refer to Exod. 20:14 and Deut. 5:18. Sexuality without bounds has always characterized false teachers.

▣  
**NASB, NJB**      **“homosexuals”**  
**NKJV, NRSV**    **“sodomites”**  
**TEV**              **“sexual perverts”**

## **SPECIAL TOPIC: HOMOSEXUALITY**

There is much modern cultural pressure to accept homosexuality as an appropriate alternate lifestyle. The Bible condemns it as a destructive lifestyle, out of the will of God for His creation.

1. it violates the command of Gen. 1 to be fruitful and multiply
2. it characterizes pagan worship and culture (cf. Lev. 18:22; 20:13; Rom. 1:26-27; and Jude 7)
3. it reveals a self-centered independence from God (cf. I Cor. 6:9-10)

However, before I leave this topic let me assert God's love and forgiveness to all rebellious human beings. Christians have no right to act hatefully and arrogantly towards this particular sin, especially when it is obvious that all of us sin. Prayer, concern, testimony, and compassion do far more in this area than vehement condemnation. God's Word and His Spirit will do the condemning if we let them. All sexual sins, not just this one, are an abomination to God and lead to judgment. Sexuality is a gift from God for mankind's well-being, joy, and a stable society. But this powerful, God-given urge is often turned into rebellious, self-centered, pleasure-seeking, "more-for-me-at-any-cost" living (cf. Rom. 8:1-8; Gal. 6:7-8).

▣ **"kidnappers"** This may be further evidence that the entire list parallels the Ten Commandments. This is a rabbinical interpretation of "thou shalt not steal" (cf. Exod. 20:15; Deut. 5:19). The rabbis assert that it refers to kidnaping of slaves (cf. Exod. 21:16; Deut. 24:7); however, the immediate context seems related to perverse sexuality (i.e. the sexual use of a slave girl, cf. Amos 2:7, or the use of young boys for homosexual perversity).

▣ **"and liars and perjurers"** This may relate to the Commandment "you shall not bear false witness against your neighbor" (cf. Exod. 20:16; Deut. 5:20).

▣ **"and whatever else is contrary to sound teaching"** If we continue to compare this to the Decalog then this must refer to "coveting" (cf. Exod. 20:17; Deut. 5:21). However, Paul seems to end his list of sins in Rom. 13:9 and Gal. 5:21 in the same general sense (i.e. without specific reference to coveting).

▣ **"sound teaching"** We get the English word "hygiene" from this Greek word. This term is used in the NT 11 times; 9 are in the Pastoral Letters. It speaks of teachings that make believers spiritually healthy.

This concept (though different phrasing) is a repeated theme in the Pastoral Letters (cf. I Tim. 1:10; 4:6; 6:3; II Tim. 1:13; 4:3; Titus 1:9,13; 2:1,2,7). In this context it is parallel to "the gospel of glory" in v. 11.

The difficult contemporary application of this text relates to modern believers being able to define "false teachers." How does one differentiate between items of personal preference and culture versus crucial doctrinal issues? The answer must lie in the Apostolic preaching of the gospel, especially as it relates to the person and work of Christ and how humans receive the benefit of Christ's work and live in light of the gospel's mandate of Christlikeness.

"Sound teaching" is one of several words and phrases that lift up and describe God's truth.

1. "Word of God" (cf. I Tim. 4:5; II Tim. 4:2; Titus 2:5)
2. "word of our Lord" (cf. I Tim. 6:3; II Tim. 1:13) "words of truth" (cf. II Tim. 2:15) "words of faith" (cf. I Tim. 4:6) "teaching" (cf. I Tim. 1:10; II Tim. 4:3; Titus 1:9, 2:1)
3. "deposit" (cf. I Tim. 6:20) "truth" (cf. II Tim. 1:14; 2:18, 25; 3:7,8; 4:4) "the Gospel" (cf. I Tim. 1:11; II Tim. 2:8, 10, 11) "the faith" (cf. I Tim. 6:21; II Tim. 4:7) "Scriptures" (cf. II Tim. 2:15-16)

**1:11 "the glorious gospel"** This is literally "the gospel of the glory of the blessed God." This is parallel to the "sound teaching" of v. 10. God has revealed how to respond to Him and other humans in appropriate (gospel) and inappropriate (Jewish legalism) ways. The new covenant in Christ is the final arbitrator of what is necessary and appropriate for believers (cf. Acts 15).

The term glory (*doxa*) is very difficult to define. In the OT the Hebrew term *kabod*, a commercial term, means “to be heavy” and thereby valuable and honorable. It had a special derived sense when used of YHWH (cf. Exod. 16:7) in connection with the *shekinah* cloud which represented His presence. This cloud was a pillar of fire. Therefore, *kabod* took on a radiant, brilliant connotation (cf. Exod. 24:17). In the OT it becomes a way of referring to God Himself (cf. Isa. 59:19). This is why John 1:14 becomes so significant. Jesus and/or His gospel are identified fully with the blessed God of the OT, YHWH.

▣ **“blessed God”** This word for “blessed” is used for God, only here and in 6:15. It is the same term used in the Beatitudes of Matt. 5 (i.e. “happy,” “content”). The implication of the idiom is that YHWH is worthy of praise.

▣ **“which I have been entrusted”** This is an AORIST PASSIVE INDICATIVE of *pisteuō*, the general term for faith, trust, or believe in the NT. Here it is used in the sense of “to entrust something to another” (cf. Luke 16:11; Rom. 3:2; I Cor. 9:17; Gal. 2:7; I Thess. 2:4; I Tim. 1:11; Titus 1:3; I Pet. 4:10).

Paul believed that God had made him a steward of the gospel for which he would give an account (cf. I Cor. 9:17; Gal. 2:7; I Thess. 2:4; Titus 1:3).

**NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 1:12-17**

**<sup>12</sup> I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who has strengthened me, because He considered me faithful, putting me into service, <sup>13</sup>even though I was formerly a blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent aggressor. Yet I was shown mercy because I acted ignorantly in unbelief; <sup>14</sup>and the grace of our Lord was more than abundant, with the faith and love which are *found* in Christ Jesus. <sup>15</sup>It is a trustworthy statement, deserving full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, among whom I am foremost *of all*. <sup>16</sup>Yet for this reason I found mercy, so that in me as the foremost, Jesus Christ might demonstrate His perfect patience as an example for those who would believe in Him for eternal life. <sup>17</sup>Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God, *be* honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.**

**1:12 “I thank Christ Jesus our Lord”** This is one of the rare occasions when Paul directs his prayer to Christ instead of the Father. He possibly does this here because it was Jesus whom he heard on the Damascus road (cf. Acts 9:4-5; 22:7-8; 26:15). Paul believed that Jesus

1. strengthened/enabled/empowered him (cf. Phil. 4:13; II Tim. 4:17)
2. considered him faithful/trustworthy
3. put him to ministry (cf. Acts 9:15).

The rest of this paragraph is devoted to Paul’s amazement that God could love, forgive, and use a sinner like him. If God could do this for Paul, He could do it for anyone, even the false teachers and those influenced by them.

This type of doxology that seems to break into the context is characteristic of Paul’s writing. Expressing his theology often caused him to burst into praise and thanksgiving. Paul often used the Greek term *eucharisteō* or *eucharistia* to express thanks, but the term here is *charin*, which is formed from the stem of the term “grace” (*charis*). This term is rarer in Paul’s writing (cf. I Tim. 1:12; II Tim. 1:3). However, both are used apparently interchangeably in the Corinthian letters, therefore, they are probably synonymous for Paul, with little or no distinctiveness implied.

## SPECIAL TOPIC: THANKSGIVING

### I. Introduction

#### A. This is the appropriate attitude of believers toward God:

1. This is the source of our praise to God through Christ
  - a. II Corinthians 2:14
  - b. II Corinthians 9:15
  - c. Colossians 3:17
2. This is the proper motive for ministry, I Cor. 1:4
3. This is the continual theme of heaven
  - a. Revelation 4:9
  - b. Revelation 7:12
  - c. Revelation 11:17
4. This is the continual theme of believers
  - a. Colossians 2:7
  - b. Colossians 3:17
  - c. Colossians 4:2

### II. Biblical Material

#### A. Old Testament

1. Two basic words:
  - a. *yadah*, which means praise
  - b. *todah*, which means thanksgiving. It is usually used of sacrifices offered (cf. II Chr. 29:31; 33:16)
2. David appointed special Levites to praise and thank God. This was continued by Solomon, Hezekiah, and Nehemiah:
  - a. I Chronicles 16:4,7,41
  - b. I Chronicles 23:30
  - c. I Chronicles 25:3
  - d. II Chronicles 5:13
  - e. II Chronicles 7:6
  - f. II Chronicles 31:2
  - g. Nehemiah 11:12
  - h. Nehemiah 12:24,27,31,38,46
3. The Psalter is the collection of the praises and thanksgivings of Israel:
  - a. Thanksgiving to YHWH for His faithfulness to the Covenant
    - (1) Psalm 107:8 [for *hesed*]
    - (2) Psalm 103:1ff
    - (3) Psalm 138:2 [for *hesed*]
  - b. Thanksgiving was part of the processional to the Temple
    - (1) Psalm 95:2
    - (2) Psalm 100:4
  - c. Thanksgiving accompanied sacrifices

- (1) Psalm 26:7
- (2) Psalm 122:4
- d. Thanksgiving given for the actions of YHWH
  - (1) Deliverance from enemies
    - (a) Psalm 7:17
    - (b) Psalm 18:49
    - (c) Psalm 28:7
    - (d) Psalm 35:18
    - (e) Psalm 44:8
    - (f) Psalm 54:6
    - (g) Psalm 79:13
    - (h) Psalm 118:1,21,29
    - (i) Psalm 138:1
  - (2) Deliverance from prison (metaphor), Psalm 142:7
  - (3) Deliverance from death
    - (a) Psalm 30:4,12
    - (b) Psalm 86:12-13
    - (c) Isaiah 38:18-19
  - (4) He puts down the wicked and exalts the righteous
    - (a) Psalm 52:9
    - (b) Psalm 75:1
    - (c) Psalm 92:1
    - (d) Psalm 140:13
  - (5) He forgives
    - (a) Psalm 30:4
    - (b) Isaiah 12:1
  - (6) He provides for His people
    - (a) Psalm 106:1ff
    - (b) Psalm 111:1
    - (c) Psalm 136:1,26
    - (d) Psalm 145:10
    - (e) Jeremiah 33:11

## B. New Testament

1. The major word used for thanks and thanksgiving (some references)
  - a. *eucharisteō* (cf. I Cor. 1:4,14; 10:30; 11:24; 14:17,18; Col. 1:3,12; 3:17)
  - b. *eucharistos* (cf. Col. 3:15)
  - c. *eucharistia* (cf. I Cor. 14:16; II Cor. 4:15; 9:11,12; Col. 2:7; 4:2)
  - d. *charis* (cf. I Cor. 15:57; II Cor. 2:14; 8:16; 9:15; I Pet. 2:19)
2. The example of Jesus
  - a. He was thankful for food
    - (1) Luke 22:17,19 ( I Cor. 11:24)

- (2) John 6:11,23
  - b. He was thankful for answered prayer, John 11:41
- 3. Other examples of thankfulness
  - a. for God's gift of Christ, II Cor. 9:15
  - b. for food
  - c. Acts 27:35
    - (1) Romans 14:6
    - (2) I Corinthians 10:30; 11:24
    - (3) I Timothy 4:3-4
  - d. for healing, Luke 17:16
  - e. for peace, Acts 24:2-3
  - f. for deliverance from danger
    - (1) Acts 27:35
    - (2) Acts 28:15
  - g. for all circumstances, Philippians 4:6
  - h. for all humans, especially leaders, I Timothy 2:1
- 4. Other aspects of thankfulness
  - a. It is God's will for all believers, I Thessalonians 5:18
  - b. It is an evidence of the Spirit-filled live, Ephesians 5:20
  - c. To neglect it is sin
    - (1) Luke 17:16
    - (2) Romans 1:21
  - d. It is an antidote for sin, Ephesians 5:4
- 5. Paul's thankfulness
  - a. His blessings on the church
    - (1) for proclaiming the gospel
      - (a) Romans 1:8
      - (b) Colossians 1:3-4
      - (c) Ephesians 1:15-16
      - (d) I Thessalonians 1:2
    - (2) for grace bestowed
      - (a) I Corinthians 1:4
      - (b) II Corinthians 1:11; 4:15
    - (3) for accepting the gospel, I Thessalonians 2:13
    - (4) for fellowship in the spread of the gospel, Philippians 1:3-5
    - (5) for growth in grace, II Thessalonians 1:3
    - (6) for knowledge of election, II Thessalonians 2:13
    - (7) for spiritual blessings, Colossians 1:12; 3:15
    - (8) for liberality in giving, II Corinthians 9:11-12
    - (9) for joy over new believers, I Thessalonians 3:9
  - b. His personal thanksgiving

- (1) for being a believer, Colossians 1:12
- (2) for deliverance from bondage to sin, Romans 7:25; II Cor. 2:14
- (3) for the sacrificial labor of other believers, Romans 16:4; II Cor. 8:16
- (4) for some acts not occurring, I Corinthians 1:14
- (5) for personal spiritual gift, I Corinthians 14:18
- (6) for the spiritual growth of friends, Philemon 4-5
- (7) for the physical strength for ministry, I Timothy 1:12

### III. Conclusion

- A. Thanksgiving is our central response to God once we are saved. It issues not only in verbal assent, but lifestyle gratitude.
- B. Thanksgiving in all things is the goal of a mature life in the care of God ( cf. I Thess. 5:13-18)
- C. Thanksgiving is a recurrent theme of both Old and New Testaments. Is it a theme of yours?

**1:13 “blasphemer”** This must refer to Saul’s beliefs and statements about Jesus before his conversion.

▣ **“a persecutor and a violent aggressor”** (cf. Acts 8:1-3; 9:1,13,21; 22:4,19; 26:10-11; I Cor. 15:8-9; Gal. 1:13; Phil. 3:6)

▣ **“I was shown mercy”** This is an AORIST PASSIVE INDICATIVE. God/Christ had mercy on Saul the violent persecutor. If he can receive mercy, anyone can receive mercy. This reveals clearly the character of God and how far His love and mercy extends to sinners.

▣ **“because I acted ignorantly in unbelief”** In the OT, sins of ignorance could be forgiven by sacrifice (cf. Lev. 16), whereas for premeditated sin there was no sacrificial possible, not even on the Day of Atonement. In Romans Paul clearly asserts that God holds humans responsible for the light they have. An example of this truth is that before the Mosaic Law, God did not hold humans responsible for violating its precepts (cf. Acts 17:30; Rom. 3:20,25; 4:15; 5:13,20; 7:5,7-8; I Cor. 15:56). This same truth is also seen in those who have never heard the gospel (cf. Rom. 1:18-2:29). They are responsible for the light they have (from creation, Rom. 1:18-23 and an inner moral witness, Rom. 2:14-15). This is called “natural revelation” as opposed to “special revelation” (i.e. the Bible).

**1:14 “the grace of our Lord”** The key in Paul’s theology about salvation was the character of God, not the performance of mankind. Fallen humans’ only hope is in the settled, merciful, gracious character of God, expressed in Christ (cf. Eph. 1:3-14; 2:4,8-9).

▣ **“more than abundant”** This is literally “super abundantly” (*hyperpleonazō*). It is a characteristic *hapax legomenon* compound with *hyper* created by Paul. “Where sin increased, grace abounded all the more” (Rom. 5:2).

### SPECIAL TOPIC: PAUL’S USE OF “HUPER” COMPOUNDS

Paul had a special fondness for creating new words using the Greek PREPOSITION *huper*, which basically means “over” or “upper.” When used with the GENITIVE (ABLATIVE) it means “in behalf of.” It can also mean “about” or “concerning,” like *peri* (cf. II Cor. 8:23; II Thess. 2:1. When used with the

ACCUSATIVE it means “above,” “over,” or “beyond” (cf. A. T. Robertson, *A Grammar of the Greek New Testament in the Light of Historical Research*, pp. 625-633. When Paul wanted to accentuate a concept he used this PREPOSITION in a compound.

Here is a list of Paul’s special use of this PREPOSITION in compounds.

A. *Hapax legomenon* (a word used only once in the NT)

1. *Huperakmos*, one past the prime of life, I Cor. 7:36
2. *Huperauxanō*, to increase exceedingly, II Thess. 1:3
3. *Huperbainō*, to overstep or transgress, I Thess. 4:6
4. *Huperkeina*, beyond, II Cor. 10:16
5. *Huperekteina*, overextend, II cor. 10:14
6. *Huperentugchanō*, to intercede, Rom. 8:26
7. *Hupernikaō*, to be abundantly victorious, Rom. 8:37
8. *Huperpleonazō*, to be in exceeding abundance, I Tim. 1:14
9. *Huperupsoō*, to exalt supremely, Phil. 2:9
10. *Huperphroneō*, to have lofty thoughts, Rom. 12:3

B. Words used only in Paul’s writings.

1. *Huperairomai*, to exalt oneself, II Cor. 12:7; II Thess. 2:4
2. *Huperballontōs*, above measure, exceedingly, II Cor. 11:23 (ADVERB only here, but VERB in II Cor. 3:10; 9:14; Eph. 1:19; 2:7; 3:19)
3. *Huperbolē*, an overshooting, an extraordinary armoring (?), Rom. 7:13; I Cor. 12:31; II Cor. 1:8; 4:7,17; 22:7; Gal. 1:13
4. *Huperekperissou*, beyond all measure, Eph. 3:20; I Thess. 3:10; 5:13
5. *Huperlian*, in the highest degree or pre-eminently, II cor. 11:5; 12:11
6. *Huperochē*, prominence, excellence, I Cor. 2:1; I Tim. 2:2
7. *Huperperisseuō*, to super abound, Rom. 5:20 (MIDDLE VOICE, to be abundantly filled, overflowing, II Cor. 7:4)

C. Words used by Paul and rarely in other NT writers

1. *Huperanō*, far above, Eph. 1:21; 4:10; and Heb. 9:5)
2. *Huperechō*, excellence, pre-eminence, Rom. 13:1; Phil. 2:3; 3:8; 4:7; I Pet. 2:13
3. *Huperēphanos*, assuming or haughty, Rom. 1:30; II Tim. 3:2 and Luke 1:51; James 4:6; I Pet. 5:5.

Paul was a man of great passion; when things or people were good, they were very good and when they were bad, they were very bad. This PREPOSITION allowed him to express his superlative feelings about sin, self, Christ and the Gospel.

▣ “with the faith and love which are found in Christ Jesus” There are several interpretive issues involved in this verse.

1. Should “Lord” (v. 14) refer to YHWH (cf. v. 17) or Jesus? In context YHWH is best.
2. Should God’s gift of grace be linked to faith and love, which are also gifts in Christ (cf. TEV, NJB)?

Surely Paul’s conversion (cf. Acts 9) was an act of grace. Paul was chosen and acted upon. His response was not an act of unaffected free will! His needs were met in God’s grace and Jesus’ actions. Paul received heaven’s gifts and then lived them out to others.

Notice that God's provisions for salvation come only through Christ. He is God's answer to fallen mankind's needs in every area (cf. vv. 15-17).

**1:15 “It is a trustworthy statement deserving full acceptance”** This phrase is used 5 times in the Pastoral Letters (cf. 1:15; 3:1, 4:9; II Tim. 2:11; Titus 3:8). It is used much like Jesus' “amen, amen” (translated “truly, truly” or “verily, verily”) to introduce significant statements.

▣ **“Christ Jesus came into the world”** This implies Jesus' pre-existence (cf. John 1:1,15, 8:57-58, 16:28, 17:5; I Cor. 8:9; Phil. 2:6-7; Col. 1:17; Heb. 1:3; 10:5-8), which was a major doctrinal issue related to His deity (He was incarnated, not created, cf. Prov. 8:22). This may address the gnostic aspect of these false teachers. See Special Topic: Gnosticism at Titus 1:1.

### **SPECIAL TOPIC: PAUL'S USE OF *KOSMOS***

Paul uses the term *kosmos* in several ways

1. all the created order (cf. Rom. 1:20; Eph. 1:4; I Cor. 3:22; 8:4,5)
2. this planet (cf. II Cor. 1:17; Eph. 1:10; Col. 1:20; I Tim. 1:15; 3:16; 6:7)
3. humans (cf. 1:27-28; 4:9,13; Rom. 3:6,19; 11:15; II Cor. 5:19; Col. 1:6)
4. humans organized and functioning apart from God (cf. 1:20-21; 2:12; 3:19; 11:32; Gal. 4:3; Eph. 2:2,12; Phil. 2:15; Col. 2:8,20-24). It is very similar to John's usage (i.e. I John 2:15-17)
5. the current world structures (cf. 7:29-31; Gal. 6:14, similar to Phil. 3:4-9, where Paul describes Jewish structures)

In some ways these overlap and it is hard to categorize every usage. This term, like so many in Paul's thought, must be defined by the immediate context and not a pre-set definition. Paul's terminology was fluid (cf. James Stewart's *A Man in Christ*). He was not attempting to set up a systematic theology, but proclaim Christ. He changes everything!

▣ **“to save sinners”** This is the purpose of Christ's coming (cf. Mark 10:45; Luke 19:10; I John 2:2). Also it shows the basic tenet of the gospel concerning fallen humanity's need for grace (cf. Rom. 3:9-18,23; 6:23).

▣ **“I am foremost”** The greater the light, the greater the consciousness of sin (cf. v. 16; I Cor. 15:9; Eph. 3:8). Paul felt guilty over his persecution of the church (cf. Acts 7:58; 8:1; 9:1-2; 22:4,19-20; 26:10-11), but felt empowered by God's grace, love, and provision for sinners through Christ's finished work (cf. v. 16).

### **1:16**

<b>NASB</b>	<b>“perfect patience”</b>
<b>NKJV</b>	<b>“all longsuffering”</b>
<b>NRSV</b>	<b>“the utmost patience”</b>
<b>TEV</b>	<b>“full patience”</b>
<b>NJB</b>	<b>“inexhaustible patience”</b>

This is a compound Greek term (*makros* and *thumos*) for “restrained wrath.” This term is often used of God in the Greek OT, called the Septuagint (cf. Num. 14:18; Ps. 86:15; 103:8; Joel 2:13; Nah. 1:3). It also characterizes God in the NT (cf. Rom. 2:4; 9:22; I Pet. 3:20; II Pet. 3:15). It is meant to characterize His children also (cf. II Cor. 6:6; Gal. 5:22; Eph. 4:2; Col. 1:11; 3:12; II Tim. 3:10; 4:2).

▣ “as an example” Paul’s testimony of salvation from being an arch enemy of Christianity to becoming the trusted Apostle to the Gentiles reveals the depth and width and height of God’s grace. In a sense Paul was a sincere false teacher on whom God had mercy!

▣ “for those who would believe in Him” Jesus prays for those who would believe in Him in John 17:20-26. Although the Gospel of John uses the preposition *eis* often to express the object of human faith, Paul normally uses *epe* (cf. Rom. 4:5,24; 9:33; 10:11; I Tim. 1:16; also notice Acts 9:42; 11:17; 16:31) or just the DATIVE (cf. Gal. 3:6; Acts 18:8; 27:25). There seems to be no theological difference between (1) believing into (*eis*); believing in (*en*); believing on (*epe*); or the use of the DATIVE CASE without a preposition (cf. I John 5:10).

Paul, like John, sometimes uses *hoti* (i.e. believe that), which emphasizes the content of faith (cf. Rom. 6:8; I Thess. 4:14). The gospel is (1) a person to welcome; (2) truths to believe; and (3) a life to live.

### **SPECIAL TOPIC: FAITH (*PISTIS* [noun], *PISTEUō* [verb], *PISTOS* [adjective])**

- A. This is such an important term in the Bible (cf. Heb. 11:1,6). It is the subject of Jesus’ early preaching (cf. Mark 1:15). There are at least two new covenant requirements: repentance and faith (cf. 1:15; Acts 3:16,19; 20:21).
- B. Its etymology
1. The term “faith” in the OT meant loyalty, fidelity, or trustworthiness and was a description of God’s nature, not ours.
  2. It came from a Hebrew term (*emun, emunah*), which meant “to be sure or stable.” Saving faith is mental assent (set of truths), moral living (a lifestyle), and primarily a relational (welcoming of a person) and volitional commitment (a decision) to that person.
- C. Its OT usage
- It must be emphasized that Abraham’s faith was not in a future Messiah, but in God’s promise that he would have a child and descendants (cf. Gen. 12:2; 15:2-5; 17:4-8; 18:14). Abraham responded to this promise by trusting in God. He still had doubts and problems about this promise, which took thirteen years to be fulfilled. His imperfect faith, however, was accepted by God. God is willing to work with flawed human beings who respond to Him and His promises in faith, even if it is the size of a mustard seed (cf. Matt. 17:20).
- D. Its NT usage
- The term “believed” is from the Greek term (*pisteuō*) which can also be translated “believe,” “faith,” or “trust.” For example, the noun does not occur in the Gospel of John, but the verb is used often. In John 2:23-25 there is uncertainty as to the genuineness of the crowd’s commitment to Jesus of Nazareth as the Messiah. Other examples of this superficial use of the term “believe” are in John 8:31-59 and Acts 8:13, 18-24. True biblical faith is more than an initial response. It must be followed by a process of discipleship (cf. Matt. 13:20-22,31-32).
- E. Its use with PREPOSITIONS
1. *eis* means “into.” This unique construction emphasizes believers putting their trust/faith in Jesus
    - a. into His name (John 1:12; 2:23; 3:18; I John 5:13)

- b. into Him (John 2:11; 3:15,18; 4:39; 6:40; 7:5,31,39,48; 8:30; 9:36; 10:42; 11:45,48; 17:37,42; Matt. 18:6; Acts 10:43; Phil. 1:29; I Pet. 1:8)
- c. into Me (John 6:35; 7:38; 11:25,26; 12:44,46; 14:1,12; 16:9; 17:20)
- d. into the Son (John 3:36; 9:35; I John 5:10)
- e. into Jesus (John 12:11; Acts 19:4; Gal. 2:16)
- f. into Light (John 12:36)
- g. into God (John 14:1)
- 2. *en* means “in” as in John 3:15; Mark 1:15; Acts 5:14
- 3. *epi* means “in” or “upon,” as in Matt. 27:42; Acts 9:42; 11:17; 16:31; 22:19; Rom. 4:5,24; 9:33; 10:11; I Tim. 1:16; I Pet. 2:6
- 4. the DATIVE CASE with no PREPOSITION as in Gal. 3:6; Acts 18:8; 27:25; I John 3:23; 5:10
- 5. *hoti*, which means “believe that,” gives content as to what to believe
  - a. Jesus is the Holy One of God (John 6:69)
  - b. Jesus is the I Am (John 8:24)
  - c. Jesus is in the Father and the Father is in Him (John 10:38)
  - d. Jesus is the Messiah (John 11:27; 20:31)
  - e. Jesus is the Son of God (John 11:27; 20:31)
  - f. Jesus was sent by the Father (John 11:42; 17:8,21)
  - g. Jesus is one with the Father (John 14:10-11)
  - h. Jesus came from the Father (John 16:27,30)
  - i. Jesus identified Himself in the covenant name of the Father, “I Am” (John 8:24; 13:19)
  - j. We will live with Him (Rom. 6:8)
  - k. Jesus died and rose again (I Thess. 4:14)

▣ **“eternal life”** Eternal life (*zōen aiōnion*) is a major recurring theme in John’s theology. It is a current reality (e.g. John 3:16,36; 5:24; 6:47,54) as well as a future hope given to those who know the Father through trusting the Son (e.g. John 17:2-3).

Paul uses this term as a way of referring to the life of (1) the new age; (2) the kingdom of God; or (3) resurrection life (cf. Rom. 2:7; 5:21; 6:22,23; Gal. 6:8; I Tim. 1:16; Titus 1:2; 3:7). Only God is immortal; only God can give life. He gives eternal life to those who trust His Son by faith.

**1:17 “the King”** This doxology is similar to 6:15-16. It reflects the language of the later synagogue (“the King of the Universe”) and the Jews of the diaspora (the term “eternal” was used of God by Philo of Alexandria).

It is quite possible that Paul is quoting a creed or hymn of the early church as he does in 3:16; 6:15-16 and II Tim. 2:11-13.

▣ **“Eternal”** This is the first of four powerful ADJECTIVES which is the same ADJECTIVE used in the phrase “eternal life” in v. 16 but here to describe God. It is literally “of the ages” (*aiōnion*), which may be a metaphor of eternity or a reference to the Jewish concept of two ages: (1) a current evil age characterized by independence and rebellion (angel and human) and (2) a coming promised age of righteousness brought by the Spirit and implemented by the Messiah. See Special Topic at 6:17.

The “already and not yet” tension of eternal life characterizes the current period where these two Jewish ages are overlapped because of the new revelation concerning the two comings of the Messiah, one as Savior, and a later one as King, Lord and Judge.

▣ **“immortal”** This is literally “incorruptible.” It refers metaphorically to the ever-living, only-living One (YHWH from the CAUSATIVE FORM of the Hebrew verb “to be,” cf. Exod. 3:14). Only God has life in Himself (cf. Rom. 1:23; I Tim. 1:17; 6:16). All other life is a derived gift and a stewardship. It comes only through the grace of the Father, the work of Christ (cf. II Tim. 1:10), and the ministry of the Spirit.

▣ **“invisible”** This is used in the sense of the spiritual realm (cf. Col. 1:15) or possibly YHWH as the unseen God (no images, cf. Exod. 33:20; Deut. 4:15; I Tim. 6:16). God is the eternal Spirit present in all of creation!

▣ **“the only God”** This refers to Jewish monotheism (cf. Deut. 6:4-6; Jude 25). This context reflects the unique biblical world-view. The Bible presents mankind with a faith perspective beyond the five senses.

1. There is one and only one God (cf. Gen. 1:1; Exod. 8:10; 9:14; Deut. 4:35-39; I Sam. 2:2; II Sam. 7:22; 22:32; I Kin. 8:23; Ps. 86:8,10; Isa. 43:11; 44:6,8; 45:6-7,14,18,21-22; 46:5,9; Jer. 2:11; 5:7; 10:6; 16:20).
2. He is a personal, creator, redeemer God (cf. Gen. 1-2; 3:15; Ps. 103-104).
3. He gives promises of hope and restoration by means of Messiah (cf. Isa. 53).
4. Faith in Messiah repairs the breach of rebellion (the gospel).
5. Whosoever believes in Messiah may have eternal life (the gospel).

The Textus Receptus, following the Greek uncial manuscripts  $\aleph^c$ ,  $D^c$ , K, L, and P, adds “wise” (NKJV, “to God who alone is wise”). This addition is absent in the Greek manuscripts  $\aleph^*$ , A,  $D^*$ , F, G, and  $H^*$ . It may be a scribal addition from Rom. 16:27.

▣ **“be honor and glory”** This is basically the meaning of the OT term *kabod* (cf. v. 11). It is used several times in the book of Revelation along with other praises (cf. 4:9,11; 5:12,13; 7:12).

In the OT the most common Hebrew word for “glory” (*kabod*) was originally a commercial term referring to a pair of scales which meant “to be heavy.” That which was heavy was valuable or had intrinsic worth. Often the concept of brightness was added to the word to express God’s majesty (cf. Exod. 15:16; 24:17; Isa. 60:1-2). He alone is worthy and honorable. He is too brilliant for fallen mankind to behold (cf. Exod. 33:17-23; Isa. 6:5). God can only be truly known through Christ (cf. Jer. 1:14; Matt. 17:2; Heb. 1:3; James 2:1).

The term “glory” is somewhat ambiguous: (1) it may be parallel to “the righteousness of God”; (2) it may refer to the “holiness” or “perfection” of God; (3) it could refer to the image of God in which mankind was created (cf. Gen. 1:26-27; 5:1; 9:6), but which was later marred through rebellion (cf. Gen. 3:1-22). It is first used of YHWH’s presence with His people (cf. Exod. 16:7,10; Lev. 9:23; Num. 14:10).

▣ **“forever and ever”** This is literally “ages of the ages,” an idiom for eternity (cf. Gal. 1:5; Phil. 4:20; II Tim. 4:18). This same term is used in v. 16 for “eternal life” and in v. 17 for “King eternal.” See Special Topic at 6:17.

▣ **“Amen”** See Special Topic at 6:16.

**NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 1:18-20**

**<sup>18</sup>This command I entrust to you, Timothy, my son, in accordance with the prophecies previously made concerning you, that by them you fight the good fight, <sup>19</sup>keeping faith and a good conscience,**

**which some have rejected and suffered shipwreck in regard to their faith.<sup>20</sup> Among these are Hymenaeus and Alexander, whom I have handed over to Satan, so that they will be taught not to blaspheme.**

**1:18 “command”** Paul uses two military terms in this chapter: (1) “command” (vv. 3,5,18) and (2) “fight the good fight” (v. 18; cf. II Cor. 10:3-6; Eph. 6:10-17). This paragraph (i.e. vv. 18-20) returns to the false teachers’ theological issue of vv. 3-7.



NASB, TEV            “entrust”  
NKJV                 “commit”  
NRSV, NJB           “giving”

This is a PRESENT MIDDLE INDICATIVE of *paratithēmi*. Paul entrusted the work of the gospel to Timothy (cf. I Tim. 6:20; II Tim. 1:14, just as Jesus had entrusted it to him, cf. II Tim. 1:12) to pass on to other faithful men (cf. II Tim. 2:2).

This term is used of (1) Jesus entrusting Himself to God in Luke 23:46; (2) believers entrusting themselves to God in Acts 14:23; and (3) Paul entrusting believers to God in Acts 20:32.

▣ **“in accordance with the prophecies previously made concerning you”** Timothy received both spiritual giftedness and prophetic confirmation by the church in Lystra at the time of the laying on of hands (cf. 4:14). This phrase can mean (1) “made about you” (cf. NRSV) or (2) “led me to you” (cf. RSV).

▣ **“fight the good fight”** Often the Christian life is depicted as an athletic event or warfare, as here. The prophecies concerning Timothy enabled him to continually and courageously fight the good fight like Paul (cf. PRESENT MIDDLE SUBJUNCTIVE, cf. 6:12; II Tim. 2:3-4; 4:7; II Cor. 10:3-6; Eph. 6:10-17).

**1:19 “keeping faith and a good conscience”** The good fight involves having and continuing to have (PERFECT ACTIVE PARTICIPLE)

1. faith
2. good conscience

Both of these are mentioned in 1:5. They are mentioned again because the loss of them is the very reason some members of the church have shipwrecked their faith. Faith could refer to either (1) Christian doctrine or (2) Christian living. Both are crucial.

We learn from II Tim. 2:17 that Hymenaeus was involved in doctrinal deviation (asserting the resurrection had already taken place) and godlessness (cf. II Tim. 2:16). The other named person, Alexander, can not be the silversmith mentioned in II Tim. 4:14 and Acts 19 because he was an enemy of the gospel.

Their rejection of truth and godliness was not due to deception, but willful rejection (AORIST MIDDLE [deponent] PARTICIPLE of *apōtheō*, cf. Acts 7:39; 13:46; Rom. 11:1). See notes on conscience at 1:5.

▣ **“which some have rejected and suffered shipwreck in regards to their faith”** This is a difficult and controversial subject. See Special Topic: Apostasy at 4:1. There are so many examples of apostasy in I Timothy (cf. 1:19; 4:1-2; 5:14-15; 6:9-10,21; II Tim. 2:16-18; 3:1-8,13; II Pet. 2:1,20-21; Jude 4).

**1:20 “I have handed over to Satan”** This is a very difficult phrase. Biblical precedents are (1) God using Satan to tempt Job (Job 2:6); (2) the Spirit thrusting Jesus into Satanic testing (Mark 1:12); and (3) Paul turning a believer over to Satan in order to purify him so that he may ultimately be restored (I Cor. 5:5). Notice the stated purpose in v. 20 is to teach them not to blaspheme. It may refer to excommunication from

the believing fellowship. God's temporal discipline is always redemptive. God uses Satan to test human beings (cf. Gen. 3; Job 1-2; Zech. 3). In a sense, Satan is a tool of God. It is Satan's rebellion against God, his desire for independence, that makes him evil, not his tempting duties.

The use of this phrase implies there is hope for these false teachers and their followers. However, the similar metaphor used for the false teachers in 4:2 implies there is no hope for them.

## **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

This is a study guide commentary, which means that you are responsible for your own interpretation of the Bible. Each of us must walk in the light we have. You, the Bible, and the Holy Spirit are priority in interpretation. You must not relinquish this to a commentator.

These discussion questions are provided to help you think through the major issues of this section of the book. They are meant to be thought-provoking, not definitive.

1. Why does Paul assert his apostleship in a personal letter to Timothy?
2. What was the nature of the heresy at Ephesus?
3. How are Christians related to the Law of Moses?
4. How did Paul view his ministry? (v.12)
5. Why does he repeat his testimony so often? (v. 16)
6. What were Timothy's orders? (v. 18)
7. Did Hymenaeus and Alexander fall from grace? (v. 19)
8. What is a "good conscience?" (v. 19)
9. What does it mean to hand someone over to Satan? (v. 19)

# I TIMOTHY 2

## PARAGRAPH DIVISIONS OF MODERN TRANSLATIONS

UBS <sup>4</sup>	NKJV	NRSV	TEV	NJB
Instructions Concerning Prayer (2:1-3:1a)	Pray for All Men	The Regulation of Worship	Church Worship	Liturgical Prayer
2:1-7	2:1-7	2:1-7	2:1-7	2:1-7
	Men and Women in the Church			
2:8-3:1	2:8-15	2:8-15	2:8-15	2:8
				Women in the Assembly
				2:9-15

### READING CYCLE THREE (see p. vii)

*FOLLOWING THE ORIGINAL AUTHOR'S INTENT AT THE PARAGRAPH LEVEL*

This is a study guide commentary, which means that you are responsible for your own interpretation of the Bible. Each of us must walk in the light we have. You, the Bible, and the Holy Spirit are priority in interpretation. You must not relinquish this to a commentator.

Read the chapter in one sitting. Identify the subjects. Compare your subject divisions with the five modern translations. Paragraphing is not inspired, but it is the key to following the original author's intent, which is the heart of interpretation. Every paragraph has one and only one subject.

1. First paragraph
2. Second paragraph
3. Third paragraph
4. Etc.

### CONTEXTUAL INSIGHTS

- A. This entire section, 2:1-3:13, deals with public worship and organization
  1. public worship (2:1-15)
    - a. the role of men (2:1-8)
    - b. the role of women (2:9-15)
  2. church organization (3:1-13)
    - a. pastor (3:1-7)
    - b. deacon (3:8-10,12-13)
    - c. women helpers (3:11)
- B. The focus of believers' prayers is the redemption of "all" (cf. 2:1). The desire of God is the redemption of "all" (cf. John 3:16; I Tim. 2:4; Titus 2:11; II Pet. 3:9). Jesus paid the penalty of sin for "all" (cf. Rom. 5:18-19). What marvelous inclusivism!

- C. This section could be an early church manual designed to help churches organize and direct their activities (cf. 3:14-15).
- D. The most difficult part of this passage to interpret is 2:8-15. It is not difficult to understand, but it is difficult to know how to apply it to our cultural situation. It is so easy to make the parts of the NT we do not agree with “cultural” and, therefore, not relevant to us. I am very uncomfortable labeling a clear inspired text as cultural for several reasons
1. Who am I to negate Scripture?
  2. How do I know that I am not being overly influenced by my own culture (personal bias linked to historical conditioning)?
  3. Is there any textual sign, idiom, marker which designates that which might be cultural versus that which is God’s will for all churches of all ages?

First, there are no textual markers! Second, I must allow all Scripture to address the specific issue. If Scripture is unified on the topic it must be a universal truth. If Scripture seems to give several options or situations, I must allow some freedom in interpretation (cf. *How to Read the Bible For All Its Worth* by Fee and Stuart, pp. 70-76).

## WORD AND PHRASE STUDY

### NASB (UPDATED) TEXT 2:1-7

**<sup>1</sup>First of all, then, I urge that entreaties *and* prayers, petitions *and* thanksgivings, be made on behalf of all men, <sup>2</sup>for kings and all who are in authority, so that we may lead a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and dignity. <sup>3</sup>This is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, <sup>4</sup>who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. <sup>5</sup>For there is one God, *and* one mediator also between God and men, *the* man Christ Jesus, <sup>6</sup>who gave Himself as a ransom for all, the testimony given at the proper time. <sup>7</sup>For this I was appointed a preacher and an apostle (I am telling the truth, I am not lying) as a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth.**

**2:1 “First of all”** This Greek idiom means “of first importance.” The context asserts that this is meant to control and limit the affect of the false teachers.

▣ **“entreaties *and* prayers, petitions *and* thanksgivings”** This is a series of four words for prayer (Phil. 4:6 has three of them. Ephesians 6:18 has two of them). This is Paul’s way of emphasizing that all forms of prayer should be offered for all men, especially those in authority. In Eph. 6:18 this same emphasis on praying for all is limited to believers but here it is universalized.

The term “petitions” (*enteuxis*) occurs only here and in 4:5.

▣ **“on behalf of all men”** The term “all” appears five times in verses 1-7, which show the extent both of our prayers and God’s love. Some see the emphasis on all men as a reaction to the exclusiveness of the false teachers.

### SPECIAL TOPIC: INTERCESSORY PRAYER

#### I. Introduction

##### A. Prayer is significant because of Jesus’ example

1. personal prayer, Mark 1:35; Luke 3:21; 6:12; 9:29; 22:29-46

2. cleansing of the Temple, Matt. 21:13; Mark 11:17; Luke 19:46

3. Model Prayer, Matt. 6:5-13; Luke 11:2-4

B. Prayer is putting into tangible action our belief in a personal, caring God who is present, willing, and able to act on our behalf and the behalf of others.

C. God has personally limited Himself to act on the prayers of His children in many areas (cf. James 4:2).

D. The major purpose of prayer is our fellowship and time with the Triune God.

E. The scope of prayer is anything or anyone that concerns believers. We may pray once, believing, or over and over again as the thought or concern returns.

F. Prayer can involve several elements.

1. praise and adoration of the Triune God

2. thanksgiving to God for His presence, fellowship, and provisions

3. confession of our sinfulness, both past and present

4. petition of our sensed needs or desires

5. intercession where we hold the needs of others before the Father

G. Intercessory prayer is a mystery. God loves those for whom we pray much more than we do, yet our prayers often effect a change, response, or need, not only in ourselves, but in them.

## II. Biblical Material

### A. Old Testament

1. Some examples of intercessory prayer:

a. Abraham pleading for Sodom, Gen. 18:22ff

b. Moses' prayers for Israel

(1) Exodus 5:22-23

(2) Exodus 32:31ff

(3) Deuteronomy 5:5

(4) Deuteronomy 9:18,25ff

c. Samuel prays for Israel

(1) I Samuel 7:5-6,8-9

(2) I Samuel 12:16-23

(3) I Samuel 15:11

d. David prayed for his child, II Samuel 12:16-18

2. God is looking for intercessors, Isaiah 59:16

3. Known, unconfessed sin or an unrepentant attitude affects our prayers

a. Psalm 66:1

b. Proverbs 28:9

c. Isaiah 59:1-2; 64:7

### B. New Testament

1. The Son and Spirit's intercessory ministry

a. Jesus

(1) Romans 8:34

- (2) Hebrews 7:25
- (3) I John 2:1
- b. Holy Spirit, Romans 8:26-27
- 2. Paul's intercessory ministry
  - a. Prays for the Jews
    - (1) Romans 9:1ff
    - (2) Romans 10:1
  - b. Prays for the churches
    - (1) Romans 1:9
    - (2) Ephesians 1:16
    - (3) Philippians 1:3-4,9
    - (4) Colossians 1:3,9
    - (5) I Thessalonians 1:2-3
    - (6) II Thessalonians 1:11
    - (7) II Timothy 1:3
    - (8) Philemon, v. 4
  - c. Paul asked the churches to pray for him
    - (1) Romans 15:30
    - (2) II Corinthians 1:11
    - (3) Ephesians 6:19
    - (4) Colossians 4:3
    - (5) I Thessalonians 5:25
    - (6) II Thessalonians 3:1
- 3. The church's intercessory ministry
  - a. Prayer for one another
    - (1) Ephesians 6:18
    - (2) I Timothy 2:1
    - (3) James 5:16
  - b. Prayer requested for special groups
    - (1) our enemies, Matt. 5:44
    - (2) Christian workers, Hebrews 13:18
    - (3) rulers, I Timothy 2:2
    - (4) the sick, James 5:13-16
    - (5) backsliders, I John 5:16
  - c. Prayer for all men, I Timothy 2:1

### III. Hindrances to prayer

- A. Our relationship to Christ and the Spirit
  - 1. Abide in Him, John 15:7
  - 2. In His name, John 14:13,14; 15:16; 16:23-24
  - 3. In the Spirit, Ephesians 6:18; Jude 20

4. According to God's will, Matthew 6:10; I John 3:22; 5:14-15

B. Motives

1. Not wavering, Matthew 21:22; James 1:6-7
2. Humility and repentance, Luke 18:9-14
3. Asking amiss, James 4:3
4. Selfishness, James 4:2-3

C. Other aspects

1. Perseverance
  - a. Luke 18:1-8
  - b. Colossians 4:2
  - c. James 5:16
2. Keep on asking
  - a. Matthew 7:7-8
  - b. Luke 11:5-13
  - c. James 1:5
3. Discord at home, I Peter 3:7
4. Free from know sin
  - a. Psalm 66:18
  - b. Proverbs 28:9
  - c. Isaiah 59:1-2
  - d. Isaiah 64:7

IV. Theological Conclusion

- A. What a privilege. What an opportunity. What a duty and responsibility
- B. Jesus is our example. The Spirit is our guide. The Father is eagerly waiting.
- C. It could change you, your family, your friends, and the world.

**2:2 “for kings and all who are in authority”** The Bible does not teach the divine right of kings, but it does teach the divine will for organized government (cf. Rom. 13:1,2). The theological issue is not whether we agree with our government or whether our government is fair. Believers must pray for governmental officials because they are in God's will in a fallen world. Believers know from Rom. 13:1,2 that all authority is given by God; therefore, as followers of Christ we respect it. This statement is all the more powerful when you realize Paul is asking believers to pray for governmental leaders like Nero!

▣ **“in authority”** This word is *huperochē*. See Special Topic: Paul's Use of *Huper* Compounds at 1:14.

**SPECIAL TOPIC: HUMAN GOVERNMENT**

I. INTRODUCTION

- A. Definition - Government is humanity organizing themselves to provide and secure sensed physical needs.

B. Purpose - God has willed that order is preferable to anarchy.

1. The Mosaic legislation, particularly the Decalog, is God's will for mankind in society. It balances worship and life.
2. No form or structure of government is advocated in Scripture, although ancient Israel's theocracy is the anticipated form of heaven. Democracy and capitalism are not biblical truths. Christians are to act appropriately in whatever governmental system they find themselves. The purpose of the Christian is evangelism and ministry, not revolution.

C. Origin of human government

1. Roman Catholicism has asserted that human government is an innate need, even before the Fall. Aristotle seems to have agreed with this premise. He says, "man is a political animal" and by this he meant that government "exists for the promotion of the good life."
2. Protestantism, especially Martin Luther, has asserted that human government is inherent in the Fall. He calls it "the Kingdom of God's left hand." He said that "God's way to control bad men is to put bad men in control."
3. Karl Marx has asserted that government is the means by which a few elite keep the masses under control. For him, government and religion play a similar role.

## II. BIBLICAL MATERIAL

A. Old Testament

1. Israel is the pattern which will be utilized in heaven. In ancient Israel YHWH was King. Theocracy is the term used to describe God's direct rule (cf. I Sam. 8:4-9).
2. God's sovereignty in human government can be clearly seen in :
  - a. Jeremiah 27:6; Ezra 1:1
  - b. II Chronicles 36:22
  - c. Isaiah 44:28
  - d. Daniel 2:21
  - e. Daniel 2:44
  - f. Daniel 4:17,25
  - g. Daniel 5:28
3. God's people are to be submissive and respectful even to invading and occupying governments:
  - a. Daniel 1-4, Nebuchadnezzar
  - b. Daniel 5, Belshazzar
  - c. Daniel 6, Darius
  - d. Ezra and Nehemiah
4. God's people are to pray for civil authority:
  - a. Jeremiah 28:7
  - b. Mishnah, Avot. 3:2

## B. New Testament

1. Jesus showed respect to human governments
  - a. Matthew 17:24-27, paid the Temple tax
  - b. Matthew 22:15-22, advocated a place for the Roman tax and, thereby, Roman civil authority
  - c. John 19:11, God gives civil authority
2. Paul's words related to human governments
  - a. Romans 13:1-7, believers must submit to and pray for civil authorities
  - b. I Timothy 2:1-3, believers must pray for civil authorities
  - c. Titus 3:1, believers must be subject to civil authorities
3. Peter's words related to human governments
  - a. Acts 4:1-31; 5:29, Peter and John before the Sanhedrin (this shows civil disobedience)
  - b. I Peter 2:13-17, believers must submit to civil authorities
4. John's words related to human governments
  - a. Revelation 17, the whore of Babylon stands for human government opposed to God

## III. THEOLOGICAL CONCLUSIONS

- A. Human government is ordained by God. This is not "the divine right of Kings," but the divine place of government. No one form is advocated above another.
- B. It is a religious duty for believers to obey civil authority with a proper reverent attitude.
- C. It is proper for believers to support human government by taxes and prayers.
- D. Human government is for the purpose of order. They are God's servants for this task.
- E. Human government is not ultimate. It is limited in its authority. Believers must act for their conscience's sake in rejecting civil authority when it oversteps its divinely appointed bounds. As Augustine has asserted in *The City of God*, we are citizens of two realms, one temporal and one eternal. We have responsibility in both, but God's kingdom is ultimate! There is both an individual and corporate focus in our responsibility to God.
- F. We should encourage believers in a democratic system to actively participate in the process of government and to implement, when possible, the teachings of Scripture.
- G. Social change must be preceded by individual conversion. There is no real lasting eschatological hope in government. All human governments, though willed and used by God, are sinful expressions of human organization apart from God.

This concept is expressed in the Johannine usage of "the world."

▣ **"so that they may lead a tranquil and quiet life"** This seems to mean "peaceful" in the sense of "free of outward trials" and "quiet" in the sense of "free from inner turmoils." Believers must exercise their faith by calm living, which is so difficult in times of distress and confusion. These false teachers had disrupted the peace and joy of the house churches at Ephesus. Paul gave this same type of advice to the church at Thessalonica, which had been disrupted by an over-zealous, eschatological faction (cf. I Thess. 4:11; II Thess. 3:12). In the face of church turmoil, pray and live gentle, godly lives!

▣ **“in all godliness and dignity”** Christians were persecuted and misunderstood by pagan society. One way to counteract this problem was the lifestyle of the believers.

The term “godliness” is used ten times in the Pastoral Letters (cf. 2:2; 3:16; 4:7,8; 6:3,5,6,11; II Tim. 3:5; Titus 1:1). It has the connotation of reverence toward God expressed by an appropriate moral lifestyle. See note at 4:7.

The term “dignity” is also used several times in the Pastoral Letters (cf. I Tim. 2:2; 3:4,8,11; Titus 2:2,7). It is defined in Bauer, Arndt, Gingrich and Danker’s Lexicon as “reverence, dignity, seriousness, respectfulness, holiness, probity” (p. 47).

Christians should draw attention to themselves positively (i.e. “worthy of respect”), but not negatively (cf. v. 3; I Pet. 4:12-16).

**2:3 “this is good and acceptable”** Godliness is God’s will for all humanity. This is a way of referring to the restoration of the marred “image of God” in humanity from Gen. 1:26-27. God has always wanted a people who reflect His character. The question has always been “how?” The OT showed that fallen humanity could not produce obedience or righteousness by their own efforts. Therefore, the NT is based on God’s actions and faithfulness, not mankind’s (cf. Jer. 31:31-34; Ezek. 36:22-38). God restores and motivates followers through His Book, His Son, and His Spirit. We are not right with God based on our performance, but once we know Him in salvation, the goal of our lives is holiness (cf. Matt. 5:20,48; Rom. 8:29; Gal. 4:19; Eph. 1:4; 2:10). See Special Topic: Sanctification at II Tim. 2:2.

▣ **“God our Savior”** See note at 1:1.

**2:4 “who desires all men to be saved”** Believers are to pray for all people because God wants all people saved. This was a shocking statement to the exclusivistic false teachers, whether gnostic or Jewish or more probably in the Pastoral Letters, a combination. This is the great truth about God’s love for all mankind (cf. 4:10; Ezek. 18:23,32; John 3:16; Titus 2:11; II Pet. 3:9; I John 2:1; 4:14). This verse shows the imbalance of dogmatic, super-lapsarian double-edged predestination which emphasizes God’s sovereignty to the exclusion of any needed human response. The stated truths of “five point” Calvinism, especially “irresistible grace” and “limited atonement” violate the covenant aspect of biblical faith. It is improper to reduce God to a puppet of human free will, as it is also improper to reduce mankind to a puppet of divine will. God in His sovereignty has chosen to deal with fallen mankind by means of covenant. He always initiates and structures the covenant (cf. John 6:44;65), but He has mandated that humans must respond and continue to respond in repentance and faith (cf. Mark 1:15; Acts 3:16,19; 20:21).

Often the theological discussion of God’s sovereignty (predestination) and human free will deteriorates into a proof-texting contest. The Bible clearly reveals the sovereignty of YHWH. However, it also reveals that His highest creation, mankind, made in His image had been given the awesome personal quality of moral decision making. Humans must co-operate with God in every area of life.

The term “many” has been used to assert that God has chosen some (the elect) but not all; that Jesus died for some, not all. A careful reading of the following texts shows that these are used in a parallel sense!

**Isaiah 53**

1. “all” (v. 6)
2. “many” (vv. 11-12)

**Romans 5**

1. “all” (v. 18)
2. “many” (v. 19)

▣ **“to be saved”** This is an AORIST PASSIVE INFINITIVE. This implies fallen humans cannot save themselves, (PASSIVE VOICE) but God is ready, willing, and able to do so through Christ.

▣ **“and to come to the knowledge”** This is the intensified Greek form *epi + gnōsis*, which implies “full and experiential knowledge.” This inclusivism was a real jolt to the false teachers’ emphasis on elitism and special knowledge. The exact relationship between the Jewish and Greek elements in the false teachers is uncertain. They obviously have a Jewish element which magnified “myths,” “genealogies,” and “the law” (see note at 1:6-7). There has been much speculation related to the Greek element. There was surely an element of immorality which was more characteristic of Greek false teachers than Judaism. How much of the later gnostic system of angelic levels is involved in the heresies of the Pastoral Letters is simply uncertain. In *Word Pictures in the New Testament*, vol. 4, p. 567, A. T. Robertson identifies the false teachers as “Gnostics.”

With the archeological discovery at Nag Hammadi in Egypt we now know much more about the gnostic speculations and theology. There is an English translation of these texts entitled *The Nag Hammadi Library* edited by James M. Robinson and Richard Smith. There is also an interesting interpretation of these texts in Hans Jonas’ book *The Gnostic Religion*.

▣ **“of the truth”** The term “truth” is used in several ways in the New Testament: (1) for the person of Jesus (cf. John 8:31,32, 14:6); (2) to describe the Spirit (cf. John 16:13); and (3) to describe the “Word” (cf. John 17:17). God’s truth is ultimately seen in Jesus Christ, the Living Word, which is adequately recorded in the Bible, the written Word; both are brought to light to us through the agency of the Holy Spirit. The truth referred to here is parallel to “the sound teaching” of 1:9 and “the glorious gospel of the blessed God” of 1:10. It refers to the good news of Jesus Christ (cf. 4:3; II Tim. 2:25; 3:7; Titus 1:1).

#### **SPECIAL TOPIC: “TRUTH” IN PAUL’S WRITINGS**

Paul’s usage of this term and its related forms comes from its OT equivalent, *emet*, which is trustworthy or faithful. In interbiblical Jewish writings it was used of truth in contrast to falsehood. Maybe the closest parallel would be the Dead Sea Scrolls’ “Thanksgiving Hymns,” where it is used of revealed doctrines. The members of the Essene Community became “witnesses of truth.”

Paul uses the term as a way of referring to the gospel of Jesus Christ:

1. Romans 1:18,25; 2:8,20; 3:7; 15:8
2. I Corinthians 13:6
3. II Corinthians 4:2; 6:7; 11:10; 13:8
4. Galatians 2:5,14; 5:7
5. Ephesians 1:13; 6:14
6. Colossians 1:5,6
7. II Thessalonians 2:10,12,13
8. I Timothy 2:4; 3:15; 4:3; 6:5
9. II Timothy 2:15,18,25; 3:7,8; 4:4
10. Titus 1:1,14

Paul also uses the term as a way of expressing his speaking accurately

1. Acts 26:25
2. Romans 9:1
3. II Corinthians 7:14; 12:6
4. Ephesians 4:25

5. Philippians 1:18

6. I Timothy 2:7

He also uses it to describe his motives in I Cor. 5:8 and lifestyle (also for all Christians) in Eph. 4:24; 5:9; Phil. 4:8. He sometimes uses it for people:

1. God, Rom. 3:4 (cf. John 3:33; 17:17)

2. Jesus, Eph. 4:21 (similar to John 14:6)

3. Apostolic witnesses, Titus 1:13

4. Paul, II Cor. 6:8

Only Paul uses the verb form (i.e. *alētheuō*) in Gal. 4:16 and Eph. 4:15, where it refers to the gospel. For further study consult Colin Brown (ed), *The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology*, vol. 3, pp. 784-902.

**2:5 “there is one God”** This emphasis on monotheism (cf. Rom. 3:30; I Cor. 8:6; Eph. 4:6) can be found in I Tim. 1:17, which reflects Deut. 6:4-6. However, Jesus the Son and God the Father seem to be separate here. It is important to remember the NT assertion that Jesus is divine (cf. John 1:1; Col. 1:14-16; Heb. 1:2,3), but also a separate personality from the Father. The doctrine of the Trinity (see Special Topic at Titus 3:6) recognizes the unity of one divine essence and yet, the eternal distinctiveness of the three Persons. One way to show this biblical paradox is to compare passages from John’s Gospel

1. Jesus is one with the Father (John 1:1; 5:18; 10:30,34-38; 14:9-10; 20:28).

2. Jesus is separate from the Father (John 1:2,14,18; 5:19-23; 8:28; 10:25,29; 14:10,11,12,13,16; 17:1-2).

3. Jesus is even subservient to the Father (John 5:20,30; 8:28; 12:49; 14:28; 15:10,19-24; 17:8).

The concept of the deity of the Son and the personality of the Spirit is explicit in the NT, but not fully worked out in orthodox theology until the third and fourth centuries. The term “trinity” is not biblical, but the concept surely is (cf. Matt. 3:16-17; 28:19; John 14:26; Acts 2:32-33,38-39; Rom. 1:4-5; 5:1-5; 8:1-4,8-10; I Cor. 12:4-6; II Cor. 1:21-22; 13:14; 4:4-6; I Thess. 1:2-5; II Thess. 2:13; Titus 3:4-6; I Pet. 1:2; Jude 20-21).

The grammar of vv. 5-6 gives the theological reasons related to God’s inclusive salvation

1. There is only one God. From Gen. 1:26-27 we know that all humans are made in His image.

2. There is only one way to God through the Messiah (cf. John 14:6), which was predicted in Gen. 3:15.

3. There is only one means of salvation, the finished sacrificial offering of the sinless Lamb of God, Jesus (cf. John 1:29; II Cor. 5:21).

The one God has provided a way for all to be in fellowship with Him (cf. Gen. 2:15). Whosoever will may come, but they must come His way, through His provision, by faith in His Son as their only hope for acceptance.

▣ **“and one mediator also between God and men”** This is an example of the NT’s affirmation that faith in Jesus’ person and work is the only way to be right with the Father (cf. John 10:1-18; 14:6). This is often referred to as the “scandal of the exclusivism of the gospel.” This truth seems so out of place in our day of tolerance (with no absolutes), but if the Bible is the self-revelation of God, then believers must affirm this exclusivism. We are not saying one denomination is the only way, but we are saying that faith in Jesus is the only way to God.

The use of the term “mediator” has priestly connotations (cf. Heb. 8:6; 9:15; 12:24). A priest stood between a needy people and a holy God. Jesus is our High Priest (cf. Heb. 7-9).

▣ **“the man Christ Jesus”** The emphasis of this verse is that Jesus is fully human and is still the only mediator between God and mankind (cf. John 14:6). The gnostic false teachers would have denied Jesus’ humanity (cf. John 1:14; I John 1:1-3).

It is possible that the background is not the gnostics, but Paul’s Adam-Christ typology (cf. Rom. 5:12-21; I Cor. 15:21-22,45-49; Phil. 2:6). Jesus was seen as the second Adam, the origin of a new race, not Jew, not Greek, not male, not female, not slave, not free, but Christian (cf. I Cor. 12:13; Gal. 3:28; Eph. 2:11-3:13; Col. 3:11).

It is also possible that verses 5 and 6 are a theological definition of the term “the truth,” found in v. 4.

**2:6 “who gave Himself”** The Father sent but Jesus willingly came and laid down His life (cf. Matt. 20:28; Mark 10:45; John 10:17,18).

▣ **“a ransom for all”** This reflects the great truth of Isaiah 53 (esp. v. 6). The term “ransom” came from the slave market and was used for purchasing a friend or relative out of slavery or military captivity. The grammar of this phrase is extremely important: (1) there is an unusual compound form of the word “ransom,” with the PREPOSITION *anti* (instead of ); (2) the PREPOSITION “for” is the Greek PREPOSITION *huper*, which means “on behalf of” (cf. Titus 2:14). The theological emphasis is the vicarious, substitutionary atonement of Jesus Christ on our behalf (cf. II Cor. 5:21).

## **SPECIAL TOPIC: RANSOM/REDEEM**

### **I. OLD TESTAMENT**

A. There are primarily two Hebrew legal terms which convey this concept.

1. *Gaal*, which basically means “to free” by means of a price paid. A form of the term *go’el* adds to the concept a personal intermediary, usually a family member (i.e. kinsman redeemer). This cultural aspect of the right to buy back objects, animals, land (cf. Lev. 25,27), or relatives (cf. Ruth 4:15; Isa. 29:22) is transferred theologically to YHWH’s deliverance of Israel from Egypt (cf. Exod. 6:6; 15:13; Ps. 74:2; 77:15; Jer. 31:11). He becomes “the redeemer” (cf. Job 19:25; Ps. 19:14; 78:35; Prov. 23:1; Isa. 41:14; 43:14; 44:6,24; 47:4; 48:17; 49:7,26; 54:5,8; 59:20; 60:16; 63:16; Jer. 50:34).
2. *Padah*, which basically means “to deliver” or “to rescue”
  - a. the redemption of the first born, Exod. 13:13,14 and Num. 18:15-17
  - b. Physical redemption is contrasted with spiritual redemption, Ps. 49:7,8,15
  - c. YHWH will redeem Israel from their sin and rebellion, Ps. 130:7-8

B. The theological concept involves three related items

1. There is a need, a bondage, a forfeiting, an imprisonment.
  - a. physical
  - b. social
  - c. spiritual (cf. Ps. 130:8)
2. A price must be paid for freedom, release, and restoration.
  - a. of the nation, Israel (cf. Deut. 7:8)
  - b. of the individual (cf. Job 19:25-27; 33:28)
3. Someone must act as intermediary and benefactor. In *gaal* this one is usually a family member or near kin (i.e. *go’el*).

4. YHWH often describes Himself in familial terms.

- a. Father
- b. Husband
- c. Near Kin

Redemption was secured through YHWH's personal agency; a price was paid, and redemption was achieved!

## II. NEW TESTAMENT

### A. There are several terms used to convey the theological concept.

1. *Agorazō* (cf. I Cor. 6:20; 7:23; II Pet. 2:1; Rev. 5:9; 14:34). This is a commercial term which reflects a price paid for something. We are blood-bought people who do not control our own lives. We belong to Christ.
2. *Exagorazō* (cf. Gal. 3:13; 4:5; Eph. 5:16; Col. 4:5). This is also a commercial term. It reflects Jesus' substitutionary death on our behalf. Jesus bore the "curse" of a performance-based law (i.e. Mosaic Law), which sinful humans could not accomplish. He bore the curse (cf. Deut. 21:23) for us all! In Jesus, God's justice and love merge into full forgiveness, acceptance, and access!
3. *Luō*, "to set free"
  - a. *Lutron*, "a price paid" (cf. Matt. 20:28; Mark 10:45). These are powerful words from Jesus' own mouth concerning the purpose of His coming, to be the Savior of the world by paying a sin-debt He did not owe (cf. John 1:29).
  - b. *Lutroō*, "to release"
    - (1) to redeem Israel, Luke 24:21
    - (2) to give Himself to redeem and purify a people, Titus 2:14
    - (3) to be a sinless substitute, I Pet. 1:18-19
  - c. *Lutrōsis*, "redemption, deliverance, or liberation"
    - (1) Zacharias' prophecy about Jesus, Luke 1:68
    - (2) Anna's praise to God for Jesus, Luke 2:38
    - (3) Jesus' better, once offered sacrifice, Heb. 9:12
4. *Apolytrōsis*
  - a. redemption at the Second Coming (cf. Acts 3:19-21)
    - (1) Luke 21:28
    - (2) Romans 8:23
    - (3) Ephesians 1:14; 4:30
    - (4) Hebrews 9:15
  - b. redemption in Christ's death
    - (1) Romans 3:24
    - (2) I Corinthians 1:30
    - (3) Ephesians 1:7
    - (4) Colossians 1:14

(5) *Antilytron* (cf. I Tim. 2:6). This is a crucial text (as is Titus 2:14), which links release to Jesus' substitutionary death on the cross. He is the one and only acceptable sacrifice; the one who dies for "all" (cf. John 1:29; 3:16-17; 4:42; I Tim. 2:4; 4:10; Titus 2:11; II Pet. 3:9; I John 2:2; 4:14).

B. The theological concept in the NT implies

1. Mankind is enslaved to sin (cf. John 8:34; Rom. 3:10-18; 6:23).
2. Mankind's bondage to sin has been revealed by the OT Mosaic Law (cf. Gal. 3) and Jesus' Sermon on the Mount (cf. Matt. 5-7). Human performance has become a death sentence (cf. Col. 2:14).
3. Jesus, the sinless lamb of God, has come and died in our place (cf. John 1:29; II Cor. 5:21). We have been purchased from sin so that we might serve God (cf. Rom. 6).
4. By implication both YHWH and Jesus are "near kin" who act on our behalf. This continues the familial metaphors (i.e. father, husband, son, brother, near kin).
5. Redemption was not a price paid to Satan (i.e. Medieval theology), but the reconciliation of God's word and God's justice with God's love and full provision in Christ. At the cross peace was restored, human rebellion was forgiven, the image of God in mankind is now fully functional again in intimate fellowship!
6. There is still a future aspect of redemption (cf. Rom. 8:23; Eph. 1:14; 4:30) which involves our resurrection bodies and physical intimacy with the Triune God.

▣ **"for all"** Thank God for the word "all" used five times in vv. 1-7! It is extremely important that we realize that Jesus' death covered the sins of the entire world (cf. John 1:29; 3:16,17; I Tim. 4:10; Titus 2:11; Heb. 2:9; II Pet. 3:9; I John 2:2; 4:14). The only thing keeping anyone and everyone from being saved is not their sin, but their unbelief in the finished work of Jesus Christ (cf. John 1:12; Acts 17:30; I Tim. 4:10; I John 5:10-13).



**NASB** "the testimony *given* at the proper time"

**NKJV** "to be testified in due time"

**NRSV** "this was attested at the right time"

**TEV** "the proof at the right time"

**NJB** "this was the witness given at the appointed time"

This phrase is parallel to I Tim. 6:15 and Titus 1:3. God is in control of historical events. Christ came at His appointed time to redeem all humanity (cf. Rom. 5:18-19).

The other possibility is that it may be related to Rom. 5:6; Gal. 4:4; Eph. 1:10, whereby certain historical conditions of the first century Greco-Roman world provided the ideal time.

1. *Pax Romana*, or peace of Rome, allowed people to move from country to country freely
2. one common language (*koinē* Greek) allowed all persons of the Mediterranean world to understand each other
3. the obvious bankruptcy of the Greek and Roman religions caused people to search for meaning in life. They wanted a more personal aspect to their spirituality (This is also seen in the rise of the mystery religions).

**2:7 "For this I was appointed"** This is an emphasis on Paul's election and calling by God (the Damascus road encounter), much like 1:1. God wants the Gentiles to understand His inclusive gospel.

▣ **“a preacher and apostle. . .as a teacher”** Sometimes these are listed as separate gifts of the Spirit, as in I Cor. 12:28 or Eph. 4:11. In these lists the term “prophet” may refer to preacher (especially I Corinthians). In a sense each of these leadership gifts proclaim the same gospel, but with different emphases. Paul uses these exact three terms again in II Tim. 1:11 to describe his ministry.

▣ **“(I am telling the truth, I am not lying)”** Many commentators have said that this would be inappropriate in a personal letter written by Paul to his beloved co-worker, Timothy. But we must remember that these letters were meant to be read publicly in the church (cf. 6:21b; II Tim. 4:22b; Titus 3:15b). This letter was Paul’s letter of recommendation and transfer of authority to his young apostolic representative sent to the house churches of Ephesus, which were struggling with false teachers.

▣ **“as a teacher of the Gentiles”** Paul sensed that God had called him specifically to proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles (cf. Acts 9:15; 22:21; 26:17; Rom. 1:5; 11:13; 15:16; Gal. 1:16; 2:7; Eph. 3:1-2,8; II Tim. 4:17). This is another confirmation of the universality of God’s love and Christ’s redemption.

▣ **“in faith and truth”** This may refer to (1) the attitude of the proclaimer or (2) the content of the message. In 1:14 “faith” is linked to “love.” Both of these terms describe Jesus and are meant to be emulated by His followers.

**NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 2:8-15**

**<sup>8</sup>Therefore I want the men in every place to pray, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and dissension. <sup>9</sup>Likewise, I want women to adorn themselves with proper clothing, modestly and discreetly, not with braided hair and gold or pearls or costly garments, <sup>10</sup>but rather by means of good works, as is proper for women making a claim to godliness. <sup>11</sup>A woman must quietly receive instruction with entire submissiveness. <sup>12</sup>But I do not allow a woman to teach or exercise authority over a man, but to remain quiet. <sup>13</sup>For it was Adam who was first created, and then Eve. <sup>14</sup>And it was not Adam who was deceived, but the woman being deceived, fell into transgression. <sup>15</sup>But women will be preserved through the bearing of children if they continue in faith and love and sanctity with self-restraint.**

**2:8 “Therefore I want the men in every place to pray”** As Paul affirms dignity and appropriateness in public life (cf. vv. 1-7) so too, in worship (cf. I Cor. 11-14). The phrase “in every place” probably refers to house churches in or near Ephesus. Acceptable prayer is defined in three ways in verse 8.

1. lifting holy hands
2. unstained by anger
3. without dissensions

These qualifications clearly show Paul is speaking to the faithful believers and excluding the false teachers, their surrogate speakers (possibly young widows), and their followers.

Paul uses this phrase, “in every place,” often (cf. I Cor. 1:2; II Cor. 2:14; I Thess. 1:8; I Tim. 2:8). It may be an OT allusion to Mal. 1:11, which prophesies a world-wide worship of the Messiah. This would match the repeated use of “all” in vv. 1-7.

▣ **“lifting up holy hands”** This was the normal position of Jewish prayer. It mandates that believers’ words and lives ought to agree (cf. James 4:8).

▣ **“without wrath”** This is the Greek term *orgē*, which means “a settled opposition” (cf. Matt. 5:23-24; 6:15). Anger at others does affect our relationship with God (cf. Matt. 5:21-24; Mark 11:25; I John 2:9,11; 4:20-21).



**NASB** “dissension”  
**NKJV** “doubting”  
**NRSV, TEV, NJB** “argument”

Greek philosophers used this term for a teaching session or dialogue. In the NT it has a negative connotation (cf. Matt. 15:19; Mark 7:21). Here, it refers to either the context of the teachings or the inappropriate, angry, and disruptive attitude of the false teachers.

**2:9**

**NASB** “likewise”  
**NKJV** “in the manner”  
**NRSV, TEV** “also”  
**NJB** “similarly”

This shows that the context is “how should men and women be involved in public worship” (i.e. house churches, cf. I Cor. 11-14).

▣ **“I want women to adorn themselves with proper clothing”** Clothes reveal the heart and mind. Believers need to dress appropriately, not only at church but in all places and at all times because they are Christians. The emphasis of this passage is not on outward appearance only, but also on godliness (cf. v. 10; I Pet. 3:3,4). In every area of life believers are the light of the world and the salt of the earth (cf. Matt. 5:13-16). We must remember who we represent!

However, this does not imply that believers should wear drab clothing. We should dress so as not to stand out in whatever society the believer lives. Be neat, be clean, be in fashion, but most of all be Christian.

▣ **“not with braided hair and gold or pearls or costly garments”** This implies that at least a percentage of the believers were relatively wealthy. The Jewish and Roman hair styles of the day were very elaborate, extravagant, and expensive. Apparently the Christian women were being indoctrinated toward worldliness or personal freedom (possibly caught up in the women’s freedom movement, which had started in Roman culture, cf. I Cor. 11:2-16). This may reflect the exclusivism of the false teachers who sought out the rich, the influential, and the intellectual.

**2:10 “by means of good works”** Believers must remember that they are not saved by good works, but unto good works (cf. Eph. 2:8-10; Titus 3:8; James 2:14-26). Our lives give credibility to our profession of faith, which is the assertion of the entire books of James and I John.

In this context “good works” relates to normal domestic cultural expectations (cf. 5:10; Titus 2:5).

▣ **“as is proper for women making a claim to godliness”** This clearly limits the context to saved women. This is not a general guideline for society. The proper dress for God’s children is godliness. Beauty is not a certain attire, but a changed heart. Truly beautiful and attractive women are godly women (in all areas of their lives).

**2:11 “A woman”** This could refer to all Christian women or wives (cf. Charles B. Williams translation, “a married woman” in vv. 11 and 12).

▣ **“receive instruction”** This is a PRESENT ACTIVE IMPERATIVE. At first this seems very negative, but (1) women could not study the Law in Judaism or attend school in the Greco-Roman world. So, in a sense this is a positive step towards women being trained in God’s word; (2) this text must be seen in light of the false teachers who were targeting women (cf. 5:13; Acts 20:30; II Tim. 3:5-9; Titus 1:11). It is

possible that some women were surrogate speakers for the false teachers in public worship in the house churches (Gordon Fee, *New International Biblical Commentary*, vol. 13).

- ▣ **“with entire submissiveness”** This also seems negative for our day, but let us remember
1. the term “submission” was used of Jesus. He was submissive to the Father (cf. I Cor. 15:28); He was submissive to His earthly parents (cf. I Thess. 5:21). In other words He fulfilled His expected societal and religious duties with the proper attitude
  2. “being submissive” is God’s will for all believers (cf. Eph. 5:21). It is one of the five PRESENT PARTICIPLES that describes what it means to be “filled with the Spirit” (cf. Eph. 5:18)
  3. in this same passage in Ephesians Paul uses three domestic examples to show mutual submission within the home (1) wives to husbands; (2) children to parents; and (3) home slaves to masters. The radically positive part of this context (i.e. Eph. 5:18-6:9) is that Paul limits the power of those in that society who had all the power (i.e. husband, parents, and masters). In its day Paul’s writings about women, children, and slaves were radically positive
  4. Paul did not attack slavery as an issue because he knew it was an issue that would destroy the effectiveness of the church and her witness in that period of history. I think the same is true of the social status of women. Paul asserts their spiritual equality (cf. Gal. 3:28; Col. 3:11), their giftedness (cf. I Cor. 12:7-13), and their role in spreading the gospel (cf. Rom. 16). But he knew that women in leadership roles would (1) be misunderstood because of fertility worship and (2) rejected by an almost exclusively patriarchal, male dominated society.

**2:12 “exercise authority over a man”** This verb *authenteō* is used only here in the NT. It is defined as “one who acts on his own authority” (*authentēs*, master) or “one who dominates.” See discussion in Moulton and Milligan, *Vocabulary of the Greek Testament*, p. 91. Does this mean that women can be in leadership if they do not dominate? The immediate context does not support this by the added phrase “but to remain quiet” (cf. I Cor. 14:34). Paul’s statements about women in submissive roles cannot be explained by the use of this *hapax legomenon*. It must be dealt with from a cultural perspective. God chose to reveal Himself into a specific cultural setting. Everything in that culture was/is not the will of God for all believers in all cultures in all ages. The truth and power of the gospel radically changes human culture (i.e. slavery, male dominance). Arrogant, exploitive dominance is evil whether from men or women. There are two extremes to avoid: (1) women can do nothing (ancient Near Eastern culture) and (2) women can do anything (modern western individualism). Believers (male and female) minister within their culture to maximize evangelism and discipleship, not personal agendas!

## **SPECIAL TOPIC: WOMEN IN THE BIBLE**

### **I. The Old Testament**

- A. Culturally women were considered property
  1. included in list of property (Exodus 20:17)
  2. treatment of slave women (Exodus 21:7-11)
  3. women’s vows annulable by socially responsible male (Numbers 30)
  4. women as spoils of war (Deuteronomy 20:10-14; 21:10-14)
- B. Practically there was a mutuality
  1. male and female made in God’s image (Genesis 1:26-27)
  2. honor father and mother (Exodus 20:12 [Deut. 5:16])
  3. reverence mother and father (Leviticus 19:3; 20:9)

4. men and women could be Nazarites (Numbers 6:1-2)
  5. daughters have right of inheritance (Numbers 27:1-11)
  6. part of covenant people (Deuteronomy 29:10-12)
  7. observe teaching of father and mother (Proverbs 1:8; 6:20)
  8. sons and daughters of Heman (Levite family) led music in Temple (I Chronicles 25:5-6)
  9. son and daughter will prophesy in new age (Joel 2:28-29)
- C. Women were in leadership roles
1. Moses' sister, Miriam, called a prophetess (Exodus 15:20-21)
  2. women gifted by God to weave material for the Tabernacle (Exodus 35:25-26)
  3. a woman, Deborah, also a prophetess (cf. Jdgs. 4:4), led all the tribes (Judges 4:4-5; 5:7)
  4. Huldah was a prophetess whom King Josiah asked to read and interpret the newly-found "Book of the Law" (II Kings 22:14; II Chr. 34:22-27)
  5. Queen Esther, a godly woman, saved Jews throughout the Persia empire

## II. The New Testament

- A. Culturally women in both Judaism and the Greco-Roman world were second class citizens with few rights or privileges (the exception was Macedonia)
- B. Women in leadership roles
1. Elizabeth and Mary, godly women available to God (Luke 1-2)
  2. Anna, godly woman serving at the Temple (Luke 2:36)
  3. Lydia, believer and leader of a house church (Acts 16:14,40)
  4. Philip's four virgin daughters were prophetesses (Acts 21:8-9)
  5. Phoebe, deaconess of church at Cenchrea (Rom. 16:1)
  6. Prisca (Priscilla), Paul's fellow-worker and teacher of Apollos (Acts 18:26; Rom. 16:3)
  7. Mary, Tryphaena, Tryphosa, Persis, Julia, Nereus' sister, several women co-workers of Paul (Rom. 16:6-16)
  8. Junia (KJV), possibly a woman apostle (Rom. 16:7)
  9. Euodia and Syntyche, co-workers with Paul (Phil. 4:2-3)

## III. How does a modern believer balance the divergent biblical examples?

- A. How does one determine historical or cultural truths, which only apply to the original context, from eternal truths valid for all churches, all believers of all ages?
1. We must take the intent of the original inspired author very seriously. The Bible is the Word of God and the only source for faith and practice
  2. We must deal with the obviously historically conditioned inspired texts
    - a. the cultus (i.e. ritual and liturgy) of Israel (cf. Acts 15; Gal. 3)
    - b. first century Judaism
    - c. Paul's obviously historically conditioned statements in I Corinthians
      - (1) the legal system of pagan Rome (I Cor. 6)
      - (2) remaining a slave (I Cor. 7:20-24)
      - (3) celibacy (I Cor. 7:1-35)

(4) virgins (I Cor. 7:36-38)

(5) food sacrificed to an idol (I Cor. 8:1ff and 10:23-33)

(6) unworthy actions at Lord's Supper (I Cor. 11)

3. God fully and clearly revealed Himself to a particular culture, a particular day. We must take seriously the revelation, but not every aspect of its historical accommodation. The Word of God was written in human words, addressed to a particular culture at a particular time.

B. Biblical interpretation must seek the original author's intent. What was he saying to his day? This is foundational and crucial for proper interpretation. But then we must apply this to our own day. Now, here is the problem with women in leadership (the real interpretive problem may be defining the term "leadership." Were deaconesses or prophetesses seen as leaders?) It is quite clear that Paul, in I Cor. 14:34-35 and I Tim. 2:9-15, is asserting that women should not take the lead in public worship! But how do I apply that today? I do not want Paul's culture or my culture to silence God's Word and will. Possibly Paul's day was too limiting, but also my day may be too open. I feel so uncomfortable saying that Paul's words and teachings are conditional, first century, local situational truths. Who am I that I should let my mind or my culture negate an inspired author?!

However, what do I do when there are biblical examples of women leaders (even in Paul's writings, cf. Rom. 16)? A good example of this is Paul's discussion of public worship in I Cor. 11-14. In 11:5 he seems to allow women's preaching and praying in public worship with their heads covered, yet in 14:34-35 he demands they remain silent! There were deaconesses (cf. Rom. 16:1) and prophetesses (cf. Acts 21:9). It is this diversity that allows me freedom to identify Paul's comments (as relates to restrictions on women) as limited to first century Corinth and Ephesus. In both churches there were problems with women exercising their new-found freedom (cf. Bruce Winter, *Corinth After Paul Left*), which could have caused difficulty for their church in reaching their society for Christ. Their freedom had to be limited so that the gospel could be more effective.

My day is just the opposite of Paul's. In my day the gospel might be limited if trained, articulate women are not allowed to share the gospel, not allowed to lead! What is the ultimate goal of public worship? Is it not evangelism and discipleship? Can God be honored and pleased with women leaders? The Bible as a whole seems to say "yes"!

I want to yield to Paul; my theology is primarily Pauline. I do not want to be overly influenced or manipulated by modern feminism! However, I feel the church has been slow to respond to obvious biblical truths, like the inappropriateness of slavery, racism, bigotry, and sexism. It has also been slow to respond appropriately to the abuse of women in the modern world. God in Christ set free the slave and the woman. I dare not let a culture-bound text reshackle them.

One more point: as an interpreter I know that Corinth was a very disrupted church. The charismatic gifts were prized and flaunted. Women may have been caught up in this. I also believe that Ephesus was being affected by false teachers who were taking advantage of women and using them as surrogate speakers in the house churches of Ephesus (cf. I and II Timothy).

C. Suggestions for further reading

*How to Read the Bible For All Its Worth* by Gordon Fee and Doug Stuart (pp. 61-77)

*Gospel and Spirit: Issues in New Testament Hermeneutics* by Gordon Fee

*Hard Sayings of the Bible* by Walter C. Kaiser, Peter H. Davids, F. F. Bruce and Manfred T. Branch (pp. 613-616; 665-667)

**2:13-15** Paul's argument in this context is related theologically to Gen. 3. It is also related to excesses of the false teachers (cf. I Tim. 1:3-11; 4:1-5; 5:11-13). Paul uses Gen. 3 to make the analogy that as Eve was seduced by the snake into sin, rebellion, and independence, so were some of the women deceived in the same way by the false teachers (cf. 5:13; II Tim. 3:6-9).

The consequences of the Fall are directly related to woman's submission to and desire for her husband (cf. Gen. 3:16). Her independent action was and is the theological issue. Does this still remain today? Has the gospel totally removed all aspects of the Fall of Gen. 3? Does our modern culture with its trained, articulate women leaders negate Paul's clear statements? See Special Topic at the beginning of v. 12.

**2:14 "fell into transgression"** There are two consequences assigned to Eve because of her transgression: (1) pain in childbirth, and (2) submission to her husband. The verb tense is PERFECT, which implies that these are still in effect. Jesus inaugurated the new age, but believers also still live in the old age.

**2:15 "But women will be preserved through the bearing of children"** This is a very difficult and involved passage. It is possibly the most difficult in all of Paul's writings. We need to remember (1) its relation to Gen. 3:13,16; (2) the teachings of the false teachers; and (3) the contrast (i.e. "But"), which relates to the deception of the false teachers.

The term "preserved" or "saved" can be related to either physical deliverance from the birthing experience (cf. New American Standard Version), which seems to be backed up by the use of the word in I Tim. 4:16 for the abuse of the false teachers (some of whom apparently advocated celibacy as a spiritually superior state, cf. 4:3), or in the spiritual eschatological sense which forms most of its NT usage.

One novel interpretation is based on a detail of Greek grammar where the DEFINITE ARTICLE in the phrase "through the childbearing," possibly refers to the incarnation of Jesus Christ: (1) This context relates to Gen. 3:15; (2) the PREPOSITION *dia* can be translated "by means of"; (3) there is a DEFINITE ARTICLE with "the child birth"; and (4) both the SINGULAR and PLURAL are used of "woman . . . they." Thus Eve becomes the representative of all women saved by the promise of God of a special birth (i.e. Jesus, which is theologically similar to the Adam-Christ typology of Rom. 5:12-21; I Cor. 15:21-22,44-48; Phil. 2:6-7).

The immediate context seems to emphasize that women as home-makers is the societal expectation of Paul's day, and for most societies, ancient and modern. Woman's salvation does not come from leadership in public worship or an unexpected cultural freedom.

In truth it does not come from expected social roles either, but through faith and its fruits (cf. v. 15b). Salvation is in and through Christ. Godly women trust Him and do not seek to draw undue attention to themselves. However, in our culture the "undue attention" occurs when women are limited. As lost people would have been turned off by overactive Christian women in the first century, today's lost people are turned off by a seeming Christian sexism and legalism. The goal is always evangelism and discipleship, not personal freedoms or personal preferences (cf. I Cor. 9:19-23).

▣ **"if they continue in faith and love and sanctity with self-restraint"** This is a THIRD CLASS CONDITIONAL SENTENCE which means potential contingent action. The contingency is the believing women's continuance in faith, love, sanctity, and self-restraint.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

This is a study guide commentary, which means that you are responsible for your own interpretation of the Bible. Each of us must walk in the light we have. You, the Bible, and the Holy Spirit are priority in interpretation. You must not relinquish this to a commentator.

These discussion questions are provided to help you think through the major issues of this section of the book. They are meant to be thought-provoking, not definitive.

1. How do the truths of this section relate to the false teachers?
2. Are we to pray for governmental officials who are not Christians and who act in unfair and godless ways?
3. Does God really want all humans saved? Did Jesus really die for all sins?
4. Define the word “ransom.”
5. Why is Christian dress an appropriate item for discussion in our modern world?
6. How are good deeds related to saving faith?
7. What is the place of women in the modern church in light of verses 11-14?
8. What does verse 15 mean in light of the rest of NT teachings?

# I TIMOTHY 3

## PARAGRAPH DIVISIONS OF MODERN TRANSLATIONS

UBS <sup>4</sup>	NKJV	NRSV	TEV	NJB
Qualifications of Bishops 3:1b-7	Qualifications of Overseers 3:1-7	Problems of Administration 3:1-7	Leaders in the Church 3:1-7	The Elder-in-Charge 3:1-7
Qualifications of Deacons 3:8-13	Qualifications of Deacons 3:8-13	3:8-13	Helpers in the Church 3:8-13	Deacons 3:8-13
The Mystery of Our Religion 3:14-16	The Great Mystery 3:14-16	3:14-16	The Great Secret 3:14-16	The Church and the Mystery of the Spiritual Life 3:14-16

### READING CYCLE THREE (see p. vii)

*FOLLOWING THE ORIGINAL AUTHOR'S INTENT AT THE PARAGRAPH LEVEL*

This is a study guide commentary, which means that you are responsible for your own interpretation of the Bible. Each of us must walk in the light we have. You, the Bible, and the Holy Spirit are priority in interpretation. You must not relinquish this to a commentator.

Read the chapter in one sitting. Identify the subjects. Compare your subject divisions with the five modern translations. Paragraphing is not inspired, but it is the key to following the original author's intent, which is the heart of interpretation. Every paragraph has one and only one subject.

1. First paragraph
2. Second paragraph
3. Third paragraph
4. Etc.

### CONTEXTUAL INSIGHTS

- A. This list involves three different types of ministers.
  1. pastors (3:1-7)
  2. deacons (3:8-10,12-13)
  3. the widow's role (3:11; 5:9-16) or deaconesses (cf. Rom. 16:1)
- B. These qualifications may be in direct contrast to the false teachers' lifestyle and teachings.
- C. Verse 16 is an early creedal statement or hymn. Paul often incorporated this type of material (cf. Eph. 5:19; Phil. 2:6-11; Col. 1:15-16; 3:15-20; II Tim. 2:11-13). The rhythmic structure is clearly seen in the six AORIST PASSIVE INDICATIVE verbs combined with five LOCATIVE or INSTRUMENTAL grammatical phrases.

## WORD AND PHRASE STUDY

### NASB (UPDATED) TEXT 3:1-7

**<sup>1</sup>It is a trustworthy statement: if any man aspires to the office of overseer, it is a fine work he desires to do. <sup>2</sup>An overseer, then, must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, temperate, prudent, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, <sup>3</sup>not addicted to wine or pugnacious, but gentle, peaceable, free from the love of money. <sup>4</sup>He must be one who manages his own household well, keeping his children under control with all dignity <sup>5</sup>(but if a man does not know how to manage his own household, how will he take care of the church of God?), <sup>6</sup>and not a new convert, so that he will not become conceited and fall into the condemnation incurred by the devil. <sup>7</sup>And he must have a good reputation with those outside the church, so that he will not fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.**

**3:1 “It is a trustworthy statement”** This idiom can act as both a concluding statement and an opening statement (cf. I Tim. 1:15; 3:1; 4:9; II Tim. 2:11; Titus 3:8). This is the second of five “trustworthy” statements in the Pastoral Letters. They function syntactically like Jesus’ use of an introductory “amen” or “amen, amen” (translated “truly, truly” or “verily, verily”), drawing special attention to the statement.

▣ **“if any man”** This is a FIRST CLASS CONDITIONAL SENTENCE which is assumed to be true from the author’s perspective or for his literary purposes.

▣ **“aspires. . . desires”** These are two strong Greek terms: (1) “reaches for” (cf. 6:10; Heb. 11:16) and (2) “sets his heart on” (cf. Matt. 13:17; Luke 15:16). This tells me that our modern emphasis on the necessity of an OT type call from God to the ministry may be too limiting. A desire to be in church leadership is sufficient. The desires of believers’ hearts are from the Lord (cf. Ps. 37:4).



NASB	“the office of overseer”
NKJV	“the position of a bishop”
NRSV	“the office of a bishop”
TEV	“a church leader”
NJB	“presiding elder”

This is the term *episkopos*, and it is usually translated in English “bishop” or “overseer.” It seems to be synonymous with the other two NT terms for the office of leadership in a local church. The terms “pastor,” “overseer,” and “elder” all refer to the same office (cf. 5:17; Acts 20:17,28; Titus 1:5,7). The NT church had only two offices: pastor and deacon (cf. Phil. 1:1). It seems that “elder” had a Jewish background, while “overseer” had Greek city-state background.

**3:2 “above reproach”** This is the key qualification of the entire context for leadership in a local church. The phrase implies no handle for criticism, both in the believing community (vv. 2-6) and in the non-believing community (v. 7). This same theme of no reproach is repeated in verses 7,10; 5:7; and 6:14. There are no perfect leaders, but there are godly, respectable, acceptable believers. See note at Titus 1:6.



NASB, NKJV	
NJB	“the husband of one wife”
NRSV	“married only once”
TEV	“he must have only one wife”

This phrase has caused much discussion. It was obviously an issue for the house churches at Ephesus in the first century (cf. 3:1,12; 5:7; and on Crete, Titus 1:6). Here are the basic interpretive theories.

1. it refers to polygamy
2. it refers to a remarriage after divorce
3. it refers to the second marriage after the first wife's death
4. it refers to a man faithful and attentive to his wife (another way of asserting good family relationships).

This obviously refers to family relationships, and any problem in the area of family relationships disqualifies one from leadership in a local church. Number 1 was not a problem in the Roman Empire, but was a potential problem in Judaism (though rare in the first century); #2 was a great problem in the Roman Empire, and also a problem in Judaism (Hillel vs. Shammai); #3 was a major concern of the Early church, especially Tertullian, and is still an issue in Baptist circles in Europe. However, I Tim. 5:14 is a parallel passage where younger widows can remarry with no reproach (cf. Rom. 7:2-3; I Cor. 7).

There is one more option, that the requirement refers to marriage versus singleness. The false teachers had forbidden marriage (cf. 4:3). This may be a direct refutation of their tendency toward celibacy and asceticism. This is not to assert that an unmarried person cannot be a church leader, but that singleness cannot be a requirement. I think this is the best option and also that it answers the other interpretive problems relating to (1) "not addicted to much wine" and (2) the issue of women in 2:8-15. These must be interpreted in light of the false teachers.

If the issue is a strong, godly family, then divorce is not the only critical issue. Even in the OT divorce was sometimes the appropriate option: (1) YHWH divorces unfaithful Israel and (2) priests were commanded to divorce unfaithful wives (see "Old Testament Perspective on Divorce and Remarriage" in *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* Vol. 40 #4, Dec. 1997). All humans experience disruption in their family life in some areas. My major concern with taking this qualification strictly literally is the lack of consistency in taking all the others literally as well. If divorce disqualifies, then so do (a) not addicted to wine (cf. "not . . . addicted to much wine" of v. 8, which is not necessarily a commandment to total abstinence) and (b) "keep his children under control" of v. 4, which would eliminate many modern pastors and deacons.

Truthfully, I do not know many Christian leaders who could consistently fulfill all of these requirements throughout their lives. So before we become too critical of the flaws of leadership remember that these qualifications are God's will for all His children. I am advocating not lowering the standards, but not using them in a legalistic, judgmental sense. The church needs godly, socially acceptable leadership. However all we have to choose from is saved sinners! Modern churches must seek out leaders who have proven themselves faithful over time, not perfect leaders.

One more point, if this list is taken too literally, then Jesus (because He was single) and Paul (because he was possibly divorced or widowed) could not have been church leaders. Makes one think, doesn't it?

▣ **"temperate"** This is literally "be sober." Because alcohol abuse is mentioned specifically in v. 3, this probably refers to the metaphorical use of this term meaning "be sensible" (cf. v. 11; Titus 2:2).



NASB	"prudent"
NKJV	"sober-minded"
NRSV	"sensible"
TEV	"self-controlled"
NJB	"discreet"

This term *sōphrōn* meant "balanced" in the Greek philosophers. It was a very famous Greek term that denoted avoidance of the extremes (i.e. "the golden mean"). It was used of someone of sound mind (cf. I Tim. 3:2; Titus 1:8; 2:2,5). Related terms are also found in I Tim. 2:9,15; II Tim. 1:7; Titus 2:4,6,9,12,15.



**NASB, NRSV** “respectable”  
**NKJV** “of good behavior”  
**TEV** “orderly”  
**NJB** “courteous”

This is a form of the Greek term *kosmikos*. It is used in Titus in two different senses: (1) negatively of avoiding worldly lusts (2:12) and (2) positively of proper order (2:10). In I Timothy the context implies proper order or decorum. That which is proper, respected, and expected by the local society. Therefore, it is an aspect of v. 7a, “must have a good reputation with those outside *the church*.”



**“hospitable”** The inns of Paul’s days were notorious houses of prostitution. Therefore, Christians, and especially Christian leadership, had to have their homes open for itinerant missionaries and for the needy of the community (cf. I Tim. 5:10; Titus 1:8; Rom. 12:13; Heb. 13:2; I Pet. 4:9; II John 5; and III John).



**“able to teach”** Leaders are to be able teachers (cf. II Tim. 2:24). It is interesting that “teaching” is listed as a separate gift in I Cor. 12:28, but linked to the gift of pastor in Eph. 4:11. Apparently there were teachers, but also all pastors had to be able to function in this area, too. In a sense all of the gifted persons in Eph. 4 are proclaimers of the gospel, but in different senses and with different emphases.

Some biblical scholars interpret this qualification as a reference to well-trained or educated people, or possibly those who are “teachable”!

Finally, this ability to teach may be related to the false teachers who thought they were teachers of the Law (cf. 1:7), but were self-deceived.

### 3:3

**NASB** “not addicted to wine”  
**NKJV** “not given to wine”  
**NRSV** “not a drunkard”  
**TEV** “he must not be a drunkard”  
**NJB** “not a heavy drinker”

This is a compound of the PREPOSITION *para* (“beyond”) and *oinos* (“wine”). It seems to be an allusion from the Septuagint to Prov. 23:29-35. It must be reemphasized that the Bible rails against drunkenness, but does not teach total abstinence (cf. 3:8; 5:23; Titus 1:7; 2:3). Total abstinence comes from an individual commitment of believers to the Lord Jesus based on the limiting of their personal freedoms because of the culture in which they minister (cf. Rom. 14:1-15:13 and I Cor. 8-10). For a good article see *Hard Sayings of the Bible* by Kaiser, Davids, Bruce, and Branch, pp. 673-674.

## SPECIAL TOPIC: BIBLICAL ATTITUDES TOWARD ALCOHOL (FERMENTATION) AND ALCOHOLISM (ADDICTION)

### I. Biblical Terms

#### A. Old Testament

1. *Yayin* - This is the general term for wine, which is used 141 times. The etymology is uncertain because it is not from a Hebrew root. It always means fermented fruit juice, usually grape. Some typical passages are Gen. 9:21; Exod. 29:40; Num. 15:5,10.
2. *Tirosh* - This is “new wine.” Because of climatic conditions of the Near East, fermentation started as soon as six hours after extracting the juice. This term refers

to wine in the process of fermenting. For some typical passages, see Deut. 12:17; 18:4; Isa.62:8-9; Hos. 4:11.

3. *Asis* - This is obviously alcoholic beverages (Joel 1:5; Isa. 49:26).
4. *Sekar* - This is the term “strong drink.” The Hebrew root is used in the term “drunk” or “drunkard.” It had something added to it to make it more intoxicating. It is parallel to *yayin* (cf. Prov. 20:1; 31:6; Isa. 28:7).

#### B. New Testament

1. *Oinos* - the Greek equivalent of *yayi*
2. *Neos oinos* (new wine) - the Greek equivalent of *tirosh* (cf. Mark 2:22).
3. *Gleuchos vinos* (sweet wine) - wine in the early stages of fermentation (cf. Acts 2:13).

### II. Biblical Usage

#### A. Old Testament

1. Wine is a gift of God (Gen. 27:28; Ps. 104:14-15; Eccl. 9:7; Hos. 2:8-9; Joel 2:19,24; Amos 9:13; Zech. 10:7).
2. Wine is a part of a sacrificial offering (Exod. 29:40; Lev. 23:13; Num. 15:7,10; 28:14; Deut. 14:26; Judg. 9:13).
3. Wine is used as medicine (II Sam. 16:2; Prov. 31:6-7).
4. Wine can be a real problem (Noah- Gen. 9:21; Lot- Gen. 19:33,35; Samson- Judg. 16:19; Nabal- I Sam. 25:36; Uriah- II Sam. 11:13; Ammon- II Sam. 13:28; Elah- I Kgs. 16:9; Benhadad- I Kin. 20:12; Rulers- Amos 6:6; and Ladies- Amos 4).
5. Wine can be abused (Prov. 20:1; 23:29-35; 31:4-5; Isa. 5:11,22; 19:14; 28:7-8; Hosea 4:11).
6. Wine was prohibited to certain groups (Priests on duty, Lev. 10:9; Ezek. 44:21; Nazarites, Num. 6; and Rulers, Prov. 31:4-5; Isa. 56:11-12; Hosea 7:5).
7. Wine is used in an eschatological setting (Amos 9:13; Joel 3:18; Zech. 9:17).

#### B. Interbiblical

1. Wine in moderation is very helpful (Ecclesiasticus 31:27-30).
2. The rabbis say, “Wine is the greatest of all medicine, where wine is lacking, then drugs are needed.” (BB 58b)

#### C. New Testament

1. Jesus changed a large quantity of water into wine (John 2:1-11).
2. Jesus drank wine (Matt. 11:18-19; Luke 7:33-34; 22:17ff).
3. Peter was accused of drunkenness on “new wine” at Pentecost (Acts 2:13).
4. Wine can be used as medicine (Mark 15:23; Luke 10:34; I Tim. 5:23).
5. Leaders are not to be abusers. This does not mean total abstainers (I Tim. 3:3,8; Titus 1:7; 2:3; I Pet. 4:3).
6. Wine used in eschatological settings (Matt. 22:1ff; Rev. 19:9).
7. Drunkenness is deplored (Matt. 24:49; Luke 11:45; 21:34; I Cor. 5:11-13; 6:10; Gal. 5:21; I Pet. 4:3; Rom. 13:13-14).

### III. Theological Insight

#### A. Dialectical tension

1. Wine is a gift from God.
2. Drunkenness is a major problem.
3. Believers in some cultures must limit their freedoms for the sake of the gospel (Matt. 15:1-20; Mark 7:1-23; I Cor. 8-10; Rom. 14:1-15:13).

#### B. Tendency to go beyond given bounds

1. God is the source of all good things (creation is “very good,” Gen. 1:31).
2. Fallen mankind has abused all of God’s gifts by taking them beyond God-given bounds.
3. Abuse is in us, not in things. There is nothing evil in the physical creation (cf. Mark 7:18-23; Rom. 14:14,20; I Cor. 10:25-26; I Tim. 4:4; Titus 1:15).

### IV. First Century Jewish Culture and Fermentation

- A. Fermentation begins very soon, approximately 6 hours after the grape is crushed especially in hot climates with non-hygienic conditions.
- B. Jewish tradition says that when a slight foam appeared on the surface (sign of fermentation), it is liable to the wine-tithe (*Ma aseroth* 1:7). It was called “new wine” or “sweet wine.” The primary violent fermentation was complete after one week.
- C. The secondary fermentation took about 40 days. At this state it is considered “aged wine” and could be offered on the altar (*Edhuyyoth* 6:1).
- D. Wine that had rested on its lees (old wine) was considered good, but it had to be strained well before use.
- E. Wine was considered to be properly aged usually after one year of fermentation. Three years was the longest period of time that wine could be safely stored. It was called “old wine” and had to be diluted with water.
- F. Only in the last 100 years with a sterile environment and chemical additives has fermentation been postponed. The ancient world could not stop the natural process of fermentation.

### V. Closing Statements

- A. Be sure your experience, theology, and biblical interpretation do not depreciate Jesus and first century Jewish and/or Christian culture! They were obviously not total abstainers.
- B. I am not advocating the social use of alcohol. However, many have overstated the Bible’s position on this subject and now claim superior righteousness based on a cultural/denominational bias.
- C. For me, Romans 14:1-15:13 and I Corinthians 8-10 have provided insight and guidelines based on love and respect for fellow believers and the spread of the gospel in every culture, not personal freedom or judgmental criticism. If the Bible is the only source for faith and practice, then maybe we must all rethink this issue.
- D. If we push total abstinence as God’s will, what do we imply about Jesus, as well as those modern cultures that regularly use wine (e.g. Europe, Israel, Argentina)?

▣ **“pugnacious”** This is literally “not a striker” (cf. Titus 1:7). This may be related to the abuse of alcohol as it affects all interpersonal relationships (i.e. the family, the house church, the false teachers).

▣ **“gentle”** This refers to a loving reasonableness, which is prepared to yield to others. It describes a kind, gentle person (cf. Titus 3:2; James 3:17; I Pet. 2:18).

▣ **“peaceable”** This is the Greek term for a fight, a battle, a conflict, but with the ALPHA PRIVATIVE, which negates the meaning. Therefore, it means one who does not fight or stir up controversy (cf. Titus 3:2). It is easy to see how the false teachers are the literary foils to chapter 3.

▣

**NASB** “free from the love of money”

**NKJV** “not covetous”

**NRSV** “not a lover of money”

**TEV** “he must not love money”

**NJB** “not avaricious”

This is a compound word from the term for “silver” and the term for “brotherly love” with the ALPHA PRIVATIVE which equals “not a lover of money” (cf. 6:6-10; Titus 1:7; Heb. 13:5; I Pet. 5:2). This was another characteristic of false teachers.

**3:4-5 “he must be one who manages his own household well”** Leadership can be seen at home. Any kind of difficulty between husband and wife or children or grandparents or in-laws was a basis for disqualification in this early church setting. “No handle for criticism” is the main concern. How one rules his home will show one’s tendencies in leading the church (cf. v. 5, which is a parenthetical question expecting a “no” answer). Oh, my, this would disqualify many modern ministers if taken literally and to the letter. The many positive as well as negative characteristics mentioned in vv. 2-3 are revealed in the home environment. “Check the home first” is good advice for personnel committees!

**3:5 “if”** This is a FIRST CLASS CONDITIONAL SENTENCE which is assumed to be true from the author’s perspective or for his literary purposes.

**3:6 “and not a new convert”** This is left out in Titus. I Timothy was written to Ephesus, which was an established church, while Titus was written to Crete, which was a new work. They were all new converts. The literal root term used here means “young plant.” However, the exact time factor is uncertain.

▣ **“so that he will not become conceited and fall into the condemnation incurred by the devil”** Pride is a major problem for angels and humans (cf. 6:4; II Tim. 3:4). The verb (AORIST PASSIVE PARTICIPLE) means “become smoke-blinded.” The GENITIVE “of the devil” can refer to (1) the judgment caused by the devil (cf. v. 7) or (2) the same type of judgment the devil received (cf. NKJV, TEV, NJB).

Paul mentions the spiritual enemy of mankind several times in I Timothy (but not in II Timothy or Titus): (1) devil (*diabolos*, 3:6,7); (2) Satan (*Santanas*, 1:20; 5:20); and (3) the demonic (*daimonion*, 4:1). The biblical world-view that mankind has a spiritual opponent (cf. Eph. 2:2; 6:10-19) is revealed in both the OT and NT.

### **SPECIAL TOPIC: SATAN**

This is a very difficult subject for several reasons:

1. The OT reveals not an arch enemy of good, but a servant of YHWH who offers mankind an alternative and also accuses mankind of unrighteousness. There is only one God (monotheism), one power, one cause in the OT—YHWH.

2. The concept of a personal arch-enemy of God developed in the interbiblical (non-canonical) literature under the influence of Persian dualistic religion (*Zoroastrianism*). This, in turn, greatly influenced rabbinical Judaism and the Essene community (i.e. Dead Sea Scrolls).

3. The NT develops the OT themes in surprisingly stark, but selective, categories.

If one approaches the study of evil from the perspective of biblical theology (each book or author or genre studied and outlined separately) then very different views of evil are revealed.

If, however, one approaches the study of evil from a non-biblical or extra-biblical approach of world religions or eastern religions, then much of the NT development is foreshadowed in Persian dualism and Greco-Roman spiritism.

If one is presuppositionally committed to the divine authority of Scripture, then the NT development must be seen as progressive revelation. Christians must guard against allowing Jewish folk lore or western literature (Dante, Milton) to further influence the concept. There is certainly mystery and ambiguity in this area of revelation. God has chosen not to reveal all aspects of evil, its origin, its development, its purpose, but He has revealed its defeat!

In the OT the term “satan” or “accuser” can relate to three separate groups:

1. human accusers - I Sam. 29:4; II Sam. 19:22; I Kgs. 11:14,20,29; Ps. 109:6
2. angelic accusers - Num. 22:22-23; Job 1-2; Zech. 3:1
3. demonic accusers - I Chr. 21:2; I Kgs. 22:21; Zech. 13:2

Only later in the intertestamental period is the serpent of Gen. 3 identified with Satan (cf. Book of Wisdom 2:23-24; II Enoch 31:3), and even later does this become a rabbinical option (cf. *Sot* 9b and *Sanh.* 29a). The “sons of God” of Gen. 6 become angels in I Enoch 54:6. I mention this, not to assert its theological accuracy, but to show its development. In the NT these OT activities are attributed to angelic, personified evil (cf. I Cor. 11:3; Rev. 12:9).

The origin of personified evil is difficult or impossible (depending on your point of view) to determine from the OT. One reason for this is Israel’s strong monotheism (cf. I Kgs. 22:20-22; Eccl. 7:14; Isa. 45:7; Amos 3:6). All causality was attributed to YHWH to demonstrate His uniqueness and primacy (cf. Isa. 43:11; 44:6,8,24; 45:5-6,14,18,21,22).

Sources of possible information are (1) Job 1-2, where Satan is one of the “sons of God” (i.e. angels) or (2) Isa. 14; Ezek. 28, where prideful near eastern kings (Babylon and Tyre) are possibly used to illustrate the pride of Satan (cf. I Tim. 3:6). I have mixed emotions about this approach. Ezekiel uses Garden of Eden metaphors not only for the king of Tyre as Satan (cf. Ezek. 28:12-16), but also for the king of Egypt as the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil (Ezek. 31). However, Isa. 14, particularly vv. 12-14, seems to describe an angelic revolt through pride. If God wanted to reveal to us the specific nature and origin of Satan, this is a very oblique way and place to do it. We must guard against the trend of systematic theology of taking small, ambiguous parts of different testaments, authors, books, and genres and combining them as pieces of one divine puzzle.

I agree with Alfred Edersheim (*The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*, vol. 2, appendices XIII [pp. 748-763] and XVI [pp. 770-776]) that Rabbinical Judaism has been overly influenced by Persian dualism and demonic speculation. The rabbis are not a good source for truth in this area. Jesus radically diverges from the teachings of the Synagogue in this area. I think that the rabbinical concept of angelic mediation and opposition in the giving of the law to Moses on Mt. Sinai opened the door to the concept of an arch-angelic enemy of YHWH as well as mankind. The two high gods of Judaic dualism, *Ahkiman* and *Ormaza*, good and evil, were developed into a biblical dualism of YHWH and Satan.

There is surely progressive revelation in the NT as to the personification of evil, but not as elaborate as the rabbis. A good example of this difference is the “war in heaven.” The fall of Satan is a logical necessity,

but the specifics are not given. Even what is given is veiled in apocalyptic genre (cf. Rev. 12:4,7,12-13). Although Satan is defeated in Jesus and exiled to earth, he still functions as a servant of YHWH (cf. Matt. 4:1; Luke 22:31-32; I Cor. 5:5; I Tim. 1:20).

We must curb our curiosity in this area. There is a personal force of temptation and evil, but there is still only one God and we are still responsible for our choices. There is a spiritual battle, both before and after salvation. Victory can only come and remain in and through the Triune God. Evil has been defeated and will be removed!

**3:7 “he must have a good reputation with those outside”** Leadership must be viewed as honest and genuine by the unbelieving community which the church is trying to bring to faith in Christ (5:14; 6:1; Titus 2:5,6,10; I Cor. 10:32; Col. 4:5; I Thess. 4:12).

▣ **“so that he will not fall into reproach and the snare of the devil”** Paul was concerned about spiritual warfare (cf. 6:9-10; Eph. 2:1-3; 4:14; 6:10-19). Godliness is an armor, but selfishness is an open door for evil to exploit!

#### **NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 3:8-13**

**<sup>8</sup>Deacons likewise *must be* men of dignity, not double-tongued, or addicted to much wine or fond of sordid gain, <sup>9</sup>but holding to the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience. <sup>10</sup>These men must also first be tested; then let them serve as deacons if they are beyond reproach. <sup>11</sup>Women *must* likewise be dignified, not malicious gossips, but temperate, faithful in all things. <sup>12</sup>Deacons must be husbands of only one wife, and good managers of their children and their own households. <sup>13</sup>For those who have served well as deacons obtain for themselves a high standing and great confidence in the faith that is in Christ Jesus.**

**3:8 “Deacons”** Deacons are not mentioned at all in II Timothy and Titus. The office and function of a deacon is not defined in the NT. Many assume that Acts 6 is a beginning of this particular task-oriented office, but this seems unlikely. Here they are mentioned, along with pastors, as the two functions/offices in the local church (cf. Phil. 1:1). The term “deacon” means “to raise dust,” which is metaphorical for menial service. It became the general word of “ministry” in the NT (cf. 1:12; 4:6; II Tim. 1:18; 4:5,11). Deacons are servants, not managers!

▣ **“likewise”** The qualifications of church leaders are extended to a new group, as they are to “women” in v. 11.

▣ **“*must be* men of dignity”** See note at 2:2.

▣ **“not double-tongued”** This means saying different things to different groups to be accepted under false pretenses. This is a form of lying and falsehood.

▣

NASB	“not. . .addicted to much wine”
NKJV	“not given to much wine”
NRSV	“not indulging in much wine”
TEV	“moderate in the amount of wine they drink”
NJB	“they must not drink too much wine”

This is a compound of *pros* and *echō*, which means “to have in addition” or “to hold to.” In this context maybe “to give oneself up to” (Harold K. Moulton, *The Analytical Greek Lexicon Revised*, p. 349). This phrase, like verse 3, does not refer to total abstinence, but to abuse. In some cultures, even in our day, Christians have no problem with this statement. In America alcohol abuse led to the temperance movement which overstated the biblical passages. If we, for whatever reason, intentionally overstate the biblical position, we become the standard, not the Bible. It is as problematic to add to the Bible (even with the purest motives and for sincere causes) as it is to take away from the Bible. Is the Bible the only source for faith and practice? If so, it must judge all cultures! See Special Topic at 3:3.

▣ **“or fond of sordid gain”** This refers to the business honesty of these bi-vocational church leaders. If money is priority (cf. 6:9-10) then Jesus cannot be! False teachers are often characterized in the NT as greedy and sexually exploitive. Remember, this entire context reflects the abuses of the heretics.

**3:9 “but holding to the mystery of the faith”** This mystery seems to refer to both Jew and Greek being included in the family of God (cf. Eph. 2:11-3:13; Col. 1:26,27). The term “faith” has the DEFINITE ARTICLE, which means it refers to the body of Christian doctrine.

### **SPECIAL TOPIC: GOD’S PLAN FOR REDEMPTION, “MYSTERY”**

God has a unified purpose for mankind’s redemption that even preceded the Fall (Gen. 3). Hints of this plan are revealed in the OT (Gen. 3:15; 12:3; Exod. 19:5-6; and the universal passages in the prophets). However, this inclusive agenda was not clear (I Cor. 2:6-8). With the coming of Jesus and the Spirit it begins to become more obvious. Paul used the term “mystery” to describe this total redemptive plan, which was once hidden, but now fully revealed (I Cor. 4:1; Eph. 6:19; Col. 4:3; I Tim. 1:9). However, he used it in several different senses:

1. A partial hardening of Israel to allow Gentiles to be included. This influx of Gentiles will work as a mechanism (jealousy) for Jews to accept Jesus as the Messiah of prophecy (Rom. 11:25-32).
2. The gospel was made known to the nations, all of whom are potentially included in Christ and through Christ (Rom. 16:25-27; Col. 2:2).
3. Believers will have new bodies at the Second Coming (I Cor. 15:5-57; I Thess. 4:13-18).
4. The summing up of all things in Christ (Eph. 1:8-11).
5. The Gentiles and Jews are fellow-heirs (Eph. 2:11-3:13).
6. Intimacy of the relationship between Christ and the Church described in marriage terms (Eph. 5:22-33).
7. Gentiles included in the covenant people and indwelt by the Spirit of Christ so as to produce Christlike maturity, that is, the restored image of God in fallen humanity (Gen. 1:26-27; 5:1; 6:5,11-13; 9:6; Col. 1:26-28).
8. The end-time AntiChrist (II Thess. 2:1-11).
9. An early church summary of the mystery is found in I Tim. 3:16.

▣ **“with a clear conscience”** The term “conscience” seems to imply that these leaders’ walk and talk coincide with the truths of the gospel. See fuller note at 1:5.

**3:10 “These men must also first be tested”** This is a PRESENT PASSIVE IMPERATIVE. This is the Greek term *dokimazō*, which is used with the connotation of “to test with a view toward approval” (cf. Rom. 2:18; 12:2; 14:22; I Cor. 3:13; 16:3; II Cor. 8:22; I Thess. 2:4). It is contrasted with *peirazō*, which

connotes “to test with a view toward destruction” (cf. I Cor. 2:5; 10:9,13; Gal. 6:1; Phil. 1:10; I Thess. 3:5; I Tim. 6:9). See Special Topic at 6:9.

▣ **“then let them serve as deacons”** This is a PRESENT ACTIVE IMPERATIVE.

▣ **“if”** This is another FIRST CLASS CONDITIONAL SENTENCE like v. 5.

▣ **“they are beyond reproach”** See note at 3:2.

**3:11 “Women *must likewise be dignified*”** This does not refer to deacons’ wives (cf. KJV and NIV), but to women in servant roles in the house churches. The Greek syntax distinguishes another group of church servants (i.e. “likewise” of v. 8). Deaconesses are mentioned in Rom. 16:1 (cf. Charles B. Williams’ translation) and possibly Phil. 4:3. The qualifications for these female servants are similar to those for the male leaders. They were meant to be deacon-helpers in situations where a male deacon would simply be inappropriate (caring for sick women, helping prepare women before and after baptism, regular visits to older women, etc). From the writings of the Early church fathers we know that the office of deaconess developed very quickly and was used throughout the early centuries. The problem in our day is that we have made deacons an executive board which, because of other passages in Timothy, seem to rule out women. However, deacons are meant to be servants, and therefore, women have an appropriate role. Possibly the deaconesses were synonymous with the “widows’ roll” (cf. 5:9ff), which were widows over sixty with no family who the early church hired for ministry.

▣ **“not malicious gossips”** This is a perfect example of the problems caused by the false teachers (cf. 5:13-15; II Tim. 3:1-7). It is possible that this refers to conversations about the false teachers’ teachings. The term translated “gossip” was often used of the devil (cf. John 6:70). It literally meant “slander” (NKJV, NRSV, NIV, cf. I Tim. 3:11; II Tim. 3:3; Titus 2:3), not gossip (NASB, TEV, NJB).

▣ **“temperate”** See note at 3:3.

▣ **“faithful in all things”** This again may be pointing toward the false teachers’ use of women in the house churches. These leaders/servants must be faithful in the faith (no ARTICLE in v. 13 also) and in their lifestyle choices.

**3:12** Most modern translations link verses 8-13 into one paragraph. Deacons start the discussion (cf. v. 8) and end the discussion (cf. v. 13), yet in v. 11 deaconesses are discussed. This is why some translations call them “deacon’s wives.” However, I think that deacon helpers, or deaconesses, may be more culturally appropriate. Women servants (i.e. “widows”) are specifically mentioned in 5:9-10.

Verse 12 is very similar to the qualifications of the overseer or bishop (i.e. pastor) in vv. 2-5.

### **SPECIAL TOPIC: QUALIFICATIONS FOR FEMALE CHURCH WORKERS**

- A. dignified (3:11)
- B. not malicious gossips (3:11)
- C. temperate (3:11)
- D. faithful in all things (3:11)
- E. not supported by relatives (3:11)

- F. hope fixed on God (5:5)
- G. continues in prayer (5:5)
- H. above reproach (5:7)
- I. over sixty years old (5:9)
- J. wife of one man (5:9)
- K. reputation of good works (5:10)
  - 1. raised children well (5:10)
  - 2. showed hospitality to strangers (5:10)
  - 3. washed the saints' feet (5:10)
  - 4. assisted those in distress (5:10)
  - 5. devoted to every good work (5:10)

M. R. Vincent, *Word Studies*, vol. 2, pp. 752 and 1196, says that the *Apostolical Constitutions*, dating from the late second or early third century, makes a distinction between the duties and ordination of female church helpers.

- I. deaconesses
- II. widows (cf. I Tim. 3:11; 5:9-10)
- III. virgins (cf. Acts 21:9 and possibly I Cor. 7:34)

These duties involved:

- I. caring for the sick
- II. caring for those physically persecuted
- III. visiting those in prison for the faith
- IV. teaching new believers
- V. assisting in baptism of women
- VI. some overseeing of female church members

**3:13 “served”** This is the VERB form of “deacon.” It is the general term in the NT for “minister/servant.” The term “deacon” is not in this verse in Greek.

▣ **“obtain for themselves a high standing”** This does not necessarily refer to a higher leadership position (i.e. pastor), but possibly respect within their community which allows them to boldly share the gospel.

**NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 3:14-16**

**<sup>14</sup>I am writing these things to you, hoping to come to you before long; <sup>15</sup>but in case I am delayed, I write so that you will know how one ought to conduct himself in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and support of the truth. <sup>16</sup>By common confession, great is the mystery of godliness: He who was revealed in the flesh, Was vindicated in the Spirit, Seen by angels, Proclaimed among the nations, Believed on in the world, Taken up in glory.**

**3:14-15** Paul plans to visit Timothy in Ephesus. The Spirit directed that he write so that God's will expressed in I Timothy might bless and direct His church throughout time.

These verses confirm the interpretive context of chapters 1-3 as relating to public worship. I also think that these chapters are reactions to and qualifications based on the presence of the false teachers. This is not a neutral setting!

This same theological situation is seen in Leviticus. The book is not a collection of hygienic laws or customs so much as a reaction to Canaanite culture. Just as many of the specific laws were written to keep Canaanites and Israelites as far apart socially and religiously as possible, these passages separate the Pastoral Letters and the Jewish/gnostic false teachers.

**3:15 “in case I am delayed”** This is a THIRD CLASS CONDITIONAL SENTENCE, which means potential action.

▣ **“in the household of God”** Paul uses many powerful corporate metaphors to describe the church, such as “body,” but the family/household is one of the most insightful (God as Father, Jesus as Son, believers as children).

▣ **“church”** *Ekklesia* is a compound Greek word from “out of” and “to call.” This was used in Koine Greek to describe any kind of assembly, such as a town assembly (cf. Acts 19:32). The early Jewish Church chose this term because it was used in the Septuagint, the Greek translation of the OT, written as early as 250 B.C. for the library at Alexandria, Egypt. This term translated the Hebrew term *qahal*, which was used in the phrase “the assembly of Israel” (Exod.; Num 20:4). The NT writers asserted that they were the “divinely called out ones” who were the People of God of their day. The early Jewish believers saw no radical break between the OT People of God and themselves, the NT People of God. Believers, therefore, assert that the Church of Jesus Christ, not modern rabbinical Judaism, is the true heir to the OT Scriptures.

▣ **“of the living God”** The OT asserts that there is one and only one God (cf. Exod. 8:10; 9:14; Deut. 4:35,39; 6:4; 32:39; I Sam. 2:2; Isa. 40:10-13; 44:6-8; 45:5-7). The adjective “living” comes from the covenant name (cf. 4:10) for God, YHWH, which is the CAUSATIVE FORM of the Hebrew verb “to be” (cf. Exod. 3:14).

▣ **“the pillar and support of the truth”** This may be an allusion to Isa. 28:16, God’s foundation is Jesus the cornerstone, which is also alluded to in II Tim. 2:19. This is the third in a series of descriptive phrases linking God and the church.

1. “household of God” (v. 15)
2. “the church of the living God” (v. 15)
3. “the pillar and support of the truth” (v. 15)

The term truth (*alētheia*) is very common in Paul’s writings (and John’s). It usually refers to gospel content (cf. Rom. 1:18,25; 2:2,8; 3:7; 15:8; I Cor. 13:6; II Cor. 4:2; 6:7; 7:14; 13:8; Gal. 2:5,14; 5:7; Eph. 1:13; 4:21; 5:9; Phil. 1:18; Col. 1:5,6; II Thess. 2:10,12,13; I Tim. 3:15; 4:3; 6:5; II Tim. 2:15,18,25; 3:7,8; 4:4; Titus 1:1,14). See Special Topic: Truth at 2:4.

### 3:16

**NASB** “by common confession”

**NKJV** “without controversy”

**NRSV, NJB** “without any doubt”

**TEV** “no one can deny”

This is the Greek term usually used for one’s profession or confession of faith (see Special Topic: Confession at 6:12). It marks off the following lines as an early creedal affirmation.

▣ **“great is the mystery of godliness”** “Mystery” in Paul’s writings often refers to the Gentile mission (cf. Eph. 2:11-3:13), which may be a key to v. 16. See note at 3:9. This introduces an early confessional statement or a Christian hymn. Another of these is found in II Tim. 2:11-13. The structural pattern might

be (1) A B C D E F (revealed truths about Christ); (2) AB, BA, AB (contrast between earth and heaven or humiliation and exaltation); or (3) ABC, ABC (revealed truths about Christ and His church).

CHIASTIC PATTERNS within the Bible are becoming more apparent to modern scholarship. The Companion Bible published by Kregel in 1990 and Kenneth E. Bailey's *Poet and Peasant* use this approach extensively.

Paul seems to be quoting one verse of an early hymn or possibly a line of church liturgy. This verse emphasizes Jesus' humanity and His world-wide ministry. It does not contain Paul's three major theological emphases: (1) the cross; (2) the resurrection; and (3) the Second Coming. Paul quotes several sources in I, II Timothy and Titus which explain the unique vocabulary and distinct use of theological terms used differently in other Pauline writings.



<b>NASB</b>	<b>“He who was revealed in the flesh”</b>
<b>NKJV</b>	<b>“God was manifested in the flesh”</b>
<b>NRSV</b>	<b>“He was revealed in flesh”</b>
<b>TEV</b>	<b>“He appeared in human form”</b>
<b>NJB</b>	<b>“He was made visible in the flesh”</b>

This speaks of the Incarnation (birth) of Jesus Christ at Bethlehem: His life, teachings, death, and resurrection, which fully reveal the Father (cf. John 1:14-18). There is also the strong inference of His pre-existence (cf. John 1:1-5; 8:57-58; II Cor. 8:4; Phil. 2:6; Col. 1:17). This is the central truth of the Gospels about Jesus Christ, that He was fully God and fully human (cf. John 1:14; Phil. 2:6-8; Col. 1:14-16; I John 4:1-6).

There is a later Greek manuscript variant in which the relative pronoun *hos* is changed to *theos*. This later change may have occurred (1) with the confusion over OC (the abbreviations in uncial Greek for who) read as HC (the abbreviation in uncial Greek for “God”) or (2) as a purposeful theological change by later scribes (cf. MSS  $\aleph^c$ ,  $A^c$ ,  $C^c$ , and  $D^2$ ) wanting to make the text more specific against the adoptionist heresies (cf. Bart D. Ehrman, *The Orthodox Corruption of Scripture*, pp. 77-78).



<b>NASB</b>	<b>“Was vindicated in the Spirit”</b>
<b>NKJV, NJB</b>	<b>“Justified in the Spirit”</b>
<b>NRSV</b>	<b>“vindicated in spirit”</b>
<b>TEV</b>	<b>“was shown to be right by the Spirit”</b>

This phrase has been understood in several ways. Does it mean vindicated or justified? Does this mean that the Holy Spirit was active in Jesus' ministry (NASB) or that Jesus' spirit was affirmed by the Father (cf. Matt. 3:17; 17:5) while Jesus lived as a human being (NRSV)?

Some theologians see “Spirit” as referring to Jesus' divinity, which was vindicated by His resurrection (cf. Rom. 1:4).

▣ **“Seen by angels”** The angels longed to know what God was doing with fallen mankind (cf. I Cor. 4:9; Eph. 2:7; 3:10; I Pet. 1:12). However, it may refer to the angels' ministering to Jesus, either at His temptation experience (cf. Matt. 4:11; Mark 1:13), in the Garden of Gethsemane (cf. Luke 22:43, which is a questionable text), or immediately after the resurrection (cf. Luke 24:4,23; John 20:12).

This phrase is so short and ambiguous that several theories have been offered by commentators and all are merely speculation:

1. angels ministering to Jesus (above)
2. angels beholding His ascension (godly angels and/or fallen angels cf. I Pet 3:19-20,22)
3. angels beholding His exalted heavenly enthronement

▣ **“Proclaimed among the nations”** This is the worldwide preaching of the gospel which would have been extremely shocking to the Jews of the first century, but this is really the whole point (cf. Matt. 28:18-20). This is the mystery of godliness (cf. Eph. 2:11-3:13).



**NASB, NKJV “Believed on in the world”**

**NRSV, TEV, NJB “believed in throughout the world”**

Not only was it a universal message, but there was a universal response, and now the Church is made up of both Jew and Gentile (cf. Eph. 2:11-3:13). This has always been God’s plan. The one true God has fulfilled His promise of Gen. 3:15. Personal repentance and faith in the gospel now, in this life, opens heaven for “whosoever” (cf. John 1:12; 3:16; Rom. 10:9-13). See Special Topic: Paul’s Use of *Kosmos* at 1:16.

▣ **“Taken up in glory”** This seems to refer to His ascension. It is surprising that Jesus’ death, resurrection and return are left out, but if this was a Christian hymn, quoted possibly only in part, then it is understandable. Also, exactly which rhythmic (chiastic) pattern is followed determines one’s interpretation (cf. v. 16). This hymn/creed linked to the opening statement would powerfully refute gnosticism. The man Jesus was glorified (cf. chiastic pattern #2)! However, following the NRSV the last three lines may refer to the Church (cf. chiastic pattern #3). For a fuller note on “glory” see 1:17.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

This is a study guide commentary, which means that you are responsible for your own interpretation of the Bible. Each of us must walk in the light we have. You, the Bible, and the Holy Spirit are priority in interpretation. You must not relinquish this to a commentator.

These discussion questions are provided to help you think through the major issues of this section of the book. They are meant to be thought-provoking, not definitive.

1. How many types of ministers are there?
2. Why are pastors, bishops, and elders called different names in the NT?
3. Did the NT have deaconesses? If so, what was their function?
4. Why is verse 16 thought to be a Christian hymn about Christ?
5. What is a chiasm? Why is it important?

# I TIMOTHY 4

## PARAGRAPH DIVISIONS OF MODERN TRANSLATIONS

UBS <sup>4</sup>	NKJV	NRSV	TEV	NJB
Prediction of Apostasy 4:1-5	The Great Apostasy 4:1-5	False Teachers 4:1-5	False Teachers 4:1-5	False Teachers 4:1-11
A Good Minister of Jesus Christ 4:6-10	A Good Servant of Jesus Christ 4:6-10	4:6-10	A Good Servant of Jesus 4:6-10	
4:11-16	Take Heed to Your Ministry 4:11-16	4:11-16	4:11-16	4:12-16

### READING CYCLE THREE (see p. vii)

*FOLLOWING THE ORIGINAL AUTHOR'S INTENT AT THE PARAGRAPH LEVEL*

This is a study guide commentary, which means that you are responsible for your own interpretation of the Bible. Each of us must walk in the light we have. You, the Bible, and the Holy Spirit are priority in interpretation. You must not relinquish this to a commentator.

Read the chapter in one sitting. Identify the subjects. Compare your subject divisions with the five modern translations. Paragraphing is not inspired, but it is the key to following the original author's intent, which is the heart of interpretation. Every paragraph has one and only one subject.

1. First paragraph
2. Second paragraph
3. Third paragraph
4. Etc.

### CONTEXTUAL INSIGHTS TO 4:1-16

- A. Like chapters 1-3, chapters 4-6 can be interpreted in light of the false teachers.
- B. Chapter 4 reflects negative leadership (vv. 1-5) and positive leadership (vv. 6-10).
- C. Verses 11-16 are a personal message from Paul to Timothy which continues through 6:2.

## WORD AND PHRASE STUDY

### NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 4:1-5

**<sup>1</sup>But the Spirit explicitly says that in later times some will fall away from the faith, paying attention to deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons, <sup>2</sup>by means of the hypocrisy of liars seared in their own conscience as with a branding iron, <sup>3</sup>men who forbid marriage and advocate abstaining from foods which God has created to be gratefully shared in by those who believe and know the truth. <sup>4</sup>For everything created by God is good, and nothing is to be rejected if it is received with gratitude; <sup>5</sup>for it is sanctified by means of the word of God and prayer.**

**4:1 “But the Spirit explicitly says”** This may refer to (1) OT prophecy; (2) Paul as the recipient of direct inspiration from the Spirit (cf. Acts 20:33); or (3) inspired messages from other gifted, contemporary leaders (cf. Acts 21:11).



NASB, NRSV,

TEV “later times”

NKJV “latter times”

NJB “last times”

Paul, like the prophets of the OT, was speaking of his own time, but relating it to the last days before the Second Coming. Paul teaches a delayed *Parousia* in II Thess. 2. Therefore, this characterization of rebellion and false teaching describes his own day (cf. II Tim. 3:1) as well as the time between the first coming of Christ and the second (cf. II Pet. 3:3; Jude 18).

The NT often characterizes these later days or end-times much like the OT prophets who took a crisis of their day and projected it into an eschatological setting (cf. Matt. 24:10-12; Acts 20:29-30; II Thess. 2:3-12; II Tim. 3:1-9; 4:3-4; I John 2:18-19; 4:1-3).



NASB “fall away”

NKJV “depart from”

NRSV “renounce”

TEV “abandon”

NJB “desert”

One evidence of a true salvation is that one remains in the church (cf. I John 2:18). See Special Topic: The Need to Persevere at 4:16.

### SPECIAL TOPIC: APOSTASY (*APHISTĒMI*)

This Greek term *aphistēmi* has a wide semantic field. However, the English term “apostasy” is derived from this term and prejudices its usage to modern readers. Context, as always, is the key, not a preset definition.

This is a compound term from the preposition *apo*, which means “from” or “away from” and *histēmi*, “to sit,” “to stand,” or “to fix.” Notice the following (non-theological) usages:

1. Remove physically
  - a. from the Temple, Luke 2:37

- b. from a house, Mark 13:34
- c. from a person, Mark 12:12; 14:50; Acts 5:38
- d. from all things, Matt. 19:27,29
- 2. To remove politically, Acts 5:37
- 3. To remove relationally, Acts 5:38; 15:38; 19:9; 22:29
- 4. To remove legally (divorce), Deut. 24:1,3 (LXX ) and NT, Matt. 5:31; 19:7; Mark 10:4; I Cor. 7:11
- 5. To remove a debt, Matt. 18:24
- 6. To show unconcern by leaving, Matt. 4:20; 22:27; John 4:28; 16:32
- 7. To show concern by not leaving, John 8:29; 14:18
- 8. To allow or permit, Matt. 13:30; 19:14; Mark 14:6; Luke 13:8

In a theological sense the verb also has a wide usage:

- 1. To cancel, pardon, remit the guilt of sin, the Septuagint of Exod.32:32; Num. 14:19; Job 42:10 and NT, Matt. 6:12,14-15; Mark 11:25-26
- 2. To refrain from sin, II Tim. 2:19
- 3. To neglect by moving away from
  - a. the Law, Matt. 23:23; Acts 21:21
  - b. the faith, Ezek. 20:8 (LXX ); Luke 8:13; II Thess. 2:3; I Tim. 4:1; Heb. 3:12

Modern believers ask many theological questions that the NT writers would have never thought about. One of these would relate to the modern tendency to separate faith from faithfulness.

There are persons in the Bible who are involved in the people of God and something happens.

#### I. Old Testament

- A. Korah, Num. 16
- B. Eli's sons, I Sam. 2, 4
- C. Saul, I Sam. 11-31
- D. False prophets (examples)
  - 1. Deut. 13:1-5 18:19-22
  - 2. Jeremiah 28
  - 3. Ezekiel 13:1-7
- E. False prophetesses
  - 1. Ezekiel 13:17
  - 2. Nehemiah 6:14
- F. Evil leaders of Israel (examples)
  - 1. Jeremiah 5:30-31; 8:1-2; 23:1-4
  - 2. Ezekiel 22:23-31
  - 3. Micah 3:5-12

#### II. New Testament

- A. This Greek term is literally *apostasize*. The Old and New Testaments both confirm an intensification of evil and false teaching before the Second Coming (cf. Matt. 24:24; Mark 13:22; Acts 20:29,30; II Thess. 2:3,9-12; II Tim. 4:4). This Greek term may reflect Jesus' words in the

Parable of the Soils found in Luke 8:13. These false teachers are obviously not Christians, but they came from within (cf. Acts 20:29-30; I John 2:19); however, they are able to seduce and capture true, but immature, believers (cf. Heb. 3:12).

The theological question is were the false teachers ever believers? This is difficult to answer because there were false teachers in the local churches (cf. I John 2:18-19). Often our theological or denominational traditions answer this question without reference to specific Bible texts (except the proof-text method of quoting a verse out of context to supposedly prove one's bias).

#### B. Apparent faith

1. Judas, John 17:12
2. Simon Magnus, Acts 8
3. those spoken of in Matt. 7:21-23
4. those spoken of in Matt. 13:1-23; Mark 4:1-12; Luke 8:4-10
5. the Jews of John 8:31-59
6. Alexander and Hymenaeus, I Tim. 1:19-20
7. those of I Tim. 6:21
8. Hymenaeus and Philetus, II Tim. 2:16-18
9. Demas, II Tim. 4:10
10. apparent believers of Heb. 3:16-10
11. false teachers, II Peter 2:19-21; Jude 12-19
12. antichrists, I John 2:18-19

#### C. Fruitless faith

1. Matthew 7:13-23
2. I Corinthians 3:10-15
3. II Peter 1:8-11

We rarely think about these texts because our systematic theology (Calvinism, Arminianism, etc.) dictates the mandated response. Please do not pre-judge me because I bring up this subject. My concern is proper hermeneutical procedure. We must let the Bible speak to us and not try to mold it into a preset theology. This is often painful and shocking because much of our theology is denominational, cultural or relational (parent, friend, pastor), not biblical. Some who are in the People of God turn out to not be in the People of God (e.g. Rom. 9:6).

▣ **“the faith”** This term (usually with the ARTICLE) is used in the Pastoral Letters for the body of revealed Christian truth (cf. 3:9; 4:6; 5:8; 6:10,12,21; II Tim. 2:18; 3:8,10; 4:7; Titus 1:5,13; 2:2). Here it is not necessarily referring to their salvation as much as to their false teaching.

▣ **“paying attention to”** This is a PRESENT ACTIVE PARTICIPLE which emphasizes continual action. These apostates continue to believe and give credence to demonic teaching.

4:2

NASB **“by means of the hypocrisy of liars”**

NKJV **“speaking lies in hypocrisy”**

NRSV **“through the hypocrisy of liars”**

**TEV** “spread by deceitful liars”  
**NJB** “seduced by the hypocrisy of liars”

These claim to be “teachers of the Law” (cf. 1:7). They are vividly described in 1:3-7; 4:2-3,7 and 6:3-10,20-21.

1. they teach strange doctrines (1:3; 6:3)
2. they pay attention to myths and genealogies (1:4)
3. they have turned aside to fruitless discussion (1:6)
4. they make confident assertions about what they do not understand (1:7; 6:4)
5. they are hypocritical liars (4:2)
6. they have seared consciences (4:2)
7. they forbid marriage (4:3)
8. they advocate abstaining from foods (4:3)
9. they put forth fables (4:7)
10. they are conceited (6:4)
11. they have a morbid interest in controversial questions and disputes about words (6:4)
12. they cause constant friction (6:5)
13. they have false knowledge (6:20-21)
14. they have gone astray from the faith (4:1; 6:21)



**NASB** “deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons”  
**NKJV** “deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons”  
**NRSV** “deceitful spirits and teachings of demons”  
**TEV** “lying spirits. . .teachings of demons”  
**NJB** “deceitful spirits and doctrines that come from devils”

Paul’s view of these false teachers is very negative. He attributes their teaching to the work of Satan (see Special Topic at 3:6, cf. 2:14; 3:6-7) and to the demonic. In many ways Paul’s view of these heretics parallels the OT view of Canaanites’ fertility worship. God told the Israelites to totally destroy these people because they would corrupt the faith. These same warnings are found here (cf. II Thess. 2:9-10; James 3:15; I John 2:18-19).



**NASB** “seared in their conscience”  
**NKJV** “having their own conscience seared with a branding iron”  
**NRSV** “consciencs seared with a hot iron”  
**TEV** “consciencs are dead, as if burnt with a hot iron”  
**NJB** “consciencs are branded as though with a red-hot iron”

This refers to one of two things. First, the false teachers were beyond the place of repentance (cf. Eph. 4:19; Titus 1:15). We get the English word “cauterize” from this Greek term. Secondly, this phrase refers to Satan’s brand showing his ownership (ex. Rev. 13:16,17; 14:11; 16:2; 19:20; 20:4). Because these men refused to see truth, they are now incapable of seeing truth (cf. II Cor. 4:4). This is the unpardonable sin of the Gospels and the sin unto death of I John 5. See notes on “conscience at 1:5.

**4:3 “who forbid marriage and advocate abstaining from foods”** Here are two of the ascetic teachings of the false teachers. The first, forbidding marriage, is related to the Greek background (gnostic) or possibly the Jewish Essene (Dead Sea Scroll Community) influence. Marriage is a gift from God (cf. Gen. 2:24) and the will of God (cf. Gen. 1:28; 9:1,7). Marriage is the norm; celibacy is a special call and gift (cf. Matt. 19:11-12; I Cor. 7).

The second, abstinence from certain foods, seems to be related to the Jewish background (cf. Lev. 11). Both concepts are dealt with theologically in Gen. 1:28-31. There has always been a tendency among religious people to depreciate the material world, to think of celibacy as a more spiritual state and to view abstinence from both food and drink and asceticism in general as a superior spiritual condition (cf. Matt. 15:11; Mark 7:17-23; Rom. 14:1-15:13; I Cor. 8:8; 10:23-33; Col. 2:8-23). The list of qualifications of leadership in chapter 3 is probably related to these false teachings. Notice both marriage and wine are permitted (cf. 3:2,12; 5:9 and 3:3,8; 5:23).

▣ **“the truth”** See Special Topic at 2:4.

**4:4 “For everything created by God is good and nothing is to be rejected”** For this tremendous truth on the goodness of all things see Gen. 1:31; Rom. 14:14,20; I Cor. 6:12; 10:26; Titus 1:15. However, we must balance this with the fact that though all things may be good and clean to those who know their origin is in God, not all things edify the church (cf. I Cor. 6:12 and 10:23). Therefore, we as Christians limit our freedoms for the sake of others out of respect for Christ (cf. Rom. 14:1-15:13; I Cor. 8-10).

The word “rejected” is literally “to throw away.” Moffatt translates it “tabooed.” Be careful about cultural and/or denominational traditions (cf. Isa. 29:13; Col. 2:8-23).

**4:5** God’s spoken word brought about creation (cf. Gen. 1:3,6,7,14,20,24) and affirms the original goodness of all things (cf. Gen. 1:31). The believer thanks God (cf. v. 4b) for His creation and provision (cf. Rom. 14:6; I Cor. 10:30-31).

▣ **“prayer”** This term (*enteuxis*) is only used twice in the NT, both times in I Timothy (cf. 2:1 and 4:5). It denotes meeting with someone for the purpose of visiting with them. It is often translated “intercession” (cf. 2:1); in this context, “thanksgiving” seems more appropriate. Remember that context, not dictionaries, determines the meaning of words!

**NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 4:6-10**

**“In pointing out these things to the brethren, you will be a good servant of Christ Jesus, *constantly* nourished on the words of the faith and of the sound doctrine which you have been following. <sup>7</sup>But have nothing to do with worldly fables fit only for old women. On the other hand, discipline yourself for the purpose of godliness; <sup>8</sup>for bodily discipline is only of little profit, but godliness is profitable for all things, since it holds promise for the present life and *also* for the *life* to come. <sup>9</sup>It is a trustworthy statement deserving full acceptance. <sup>10</sup>For it is for this we labor and strive, because we have fixed our hope on the living God, who is the Savior of all men, especially of believers.**

**4:6 “In pointing out these things to the brethren”** *Hupotithēmi*, which in the MIDDLE VOICE means “suggest.” Notice the gentleness with which Paul urges Timothy to correct the members of the church (cf. chapter 5). Notice the contrast in verse 11 where he gives strict orders to deal with problems in that fellowship. Both are appropriate in their place.

▣ **“*constantly* nourished on the words of the faith and of the sound doctrine”** This is PRESENT PASSIVE PARTICIPLE (although in form it may be MIDDLE VOICE, which would encourage believers to study the truths of the faith for themselves). Ministers are nourished on the true tenets of Christianity (I take these two descriptive phrases as synonymous). The purposes of Scripture are spelled out clearly in II Tim. 3:15-17, as is the responsibility of each believer in II Tim. 2:15, especially in light of false teaching (cf. II Tim. 2:14-18).

▣ **“which you have been following”** This is a PERFECT ACTIVE INDICATIVE. Timothy had a track record of faithfulness. This term can either mean (1) to have followed (cf. II Tim. 3:10) or (2) to have closely investigated (cf. Luke 1:3).

**4:7 “But have nothing to do with worldly fables fit only for old women”** The Pastoral Letters discourage (PRESENT MIDDLE (deponent) IMPERATIVE) speculative discussions with obstinate false teachers (cf. I Tim. 1:4; 4:7; II Tim. 2:14-18,23; Titus 1:14; 3:9). This very VERB (*paraiteomai*) is used in I Tim. 4:7; 5:11; II Tim. 2:23 and Titus 3:10.

The phrase “old women” (*graōdēs*) is used only here in the NT. Harold K. Moulton, *The Analytical Greek Lexicon Revised*, p. 82, says by implication it means “silly” and “absurd.”

Since I believe also with Gordon Fee that women were being manipulated by the false teachers and were being used as spokespersons for their views in the house churches, then one wonders

1. Were there old women false teachers (cf. 5:6)?
2. Was this a way to accentuate the problem related to women?
3. Was this just a patriarchal cultural idiom?

▣ **“discipline yourself for the purpose of godliness”** This is a PRESENT ACTIVE IMPERATIVE. “Discipline,” or “in training,” is an athletic metaphor from which we get the English word “gymnasium.” Athletic training is a good example of strenuous, dedicated, priority effort for us to emulate as Christians in the spiritual realm which is so much more significant (cf. I Cor. 9:24-27; II Tim. 2:5; 4:7; Heb. 12:1-3).

▣ **“godliness”** This is a pivotal term in the Pastoral Letters. It refers to the doctrinal and daily lifestyle implications of the gospel (cf. 3:16). It describes not the exceptional, but the expected. It is a compound term from “good” (*eu*) and “worship” (*sebomai*). True worship is daily living by means of proper thinking (cf. 4:16a). Notice the number of times this word is used in the Pastoral Letters:

1. Noun (*eusebeia*), I Tim. 2:2; 3:16; 4:7,8; 6:3,5,6,11; II Tim. 3:5; Titus 1:1
2. Adverb (*eusebēs*), II Tim. 3:12; Titus 2:12
3. Verb (*eusebeō*), I Tim. 5:4
4. The related term *theosebeia*, I Tim. 2:10
5. The negated term (ALPHA PRIVATIVE, i.e. *asebeia*), II Tim. 2:16; Titus 2:12

**4:8** The physical body is part of our stewardship of life, but is not the priority. Godliness is priority!

**4:9 “It is a trustworthy statement”** This phrase can either go with verse 8 or 10. Paul uses this phrase often to highlight significant statements in the Pastoral Letters (cf. 1:15; 3:1; 4:9; II Tim. 2:11; Titus 3:8), much like Jesus used “Amen, amen” or Paul used “I do not want you to be ignorant, brothers” in his earlier writings (cf. Rom. 1:13; 11:25; I Cor. 10:1; 12:11; II Cor. 1:8; I Thess. 4:13).

**4:10 “we labor and strive”** These are both athletic metaphors. The latter, from which we get the English word “agony” or “agonize,” is also found also in Phil. 2:16; I Tim. 6:12; and II Tim. 4:7.

There is a Greek manuscript variant in this phrase: (1) MSS  $\aleph^c$ , D, L, P, O241, as well as the Vulgate, Peshitta, and Coptic translations have “suffer reproach” (NKJV), while (2)  $\aleph^*$ , A, C, F, G, K, and 075 have “strive” (NASB, NRSV, TEV, NJB, NIV). The UBS<sup>4</sup> gives “strive” a “C” rating, which means the committee had difficulty in deciding between the variants.

▣  
NASB “because we have fixed our hope”  
NKJV “because we trust in”

**NRSV** “because we have our hope set on”  
**TEV** “because we have placed our hope”  
**NJB** “is that we have put our trust in”

This is a PERFECT ACTIVE INDICATIVE. Believers trust in the settled, sure, unchangeable character of God as their only hope (cf. Ps. 102:26-27; Mal. 3:6; Heb. 1:11-12; 13:8; James 1:17). The certainty of our salvation is grounded in the character of YHWH (cf. 6:17; Rom. 15:12; II Cor. 1:10).

▣ **“on the living God”** I think this Greek phrase reflects the name of the OT covenant-making God. This is the root meaning of the term “YHWH,” which is the CAUSATIVE FORM of the Hebrew verb “to be” (cf. Exod. 3:14). YHWH is the ever living, only living One.

▣ **“who is the Savior of all men, especially of believers”** This title is used quite often in the Pastoral Letters (cf. 1:1; 2:3; II Tim. 1:10; Titus 1:3-4; 2:10-13; 3:4,6). In earlier chapters of I Timothy it is used of God as the Redeemer, potentially, of all mankind (cf. 2:4,6; Luke 2:11; John 1:29; 4:42; Rom. 5:18-19; I Pet. 3:9). Possibly because of the little phrase “especially of believers” (where one would theologically expect “only”) it may be used in its OT sense of Elohim, who is “protector” or “provider” of all life on earth (cf. Matt. 5:45; Acts 17:28).

**NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 4:11-16**

<sup>11</sup>Prescribe and teach these things. <sup>12</sup>Let no one look down on your youthfulness, but *rather* in speech, conduct, love, faith *and* purity, show yourself an example of those who believe. <sup>13</sup>Until I come, give attention to the *public reading of Scripture*, to exhortation and teaching. <sup>14</sup>Do not neglect the spiritual gift within you, which was bestowed on you through prophetic utterance with the laying on of hands by the presbytery. <sup>15</sup>Take pains with these things; be *absorbed* in them, so that your progress will be evident to all. <sup>16</sup>Pay close attention to yourself and to your teaching; persevere in these things, for as you do this you will ensure salvation both for yourself and for those who hear you.

**4:11 “Prescribe”** This is a PRESENT ACTIVE IMPERATIVE of a term meaning “strict military orders” (cf. 1:3,18).

▣ **“and teach these things”** This is another PRESENT ACTIVE IMPERATIVE. Paul is encouraging Timothy to take charge. This church was disrupted by false teachers and their surrogates (i.e. possibly younger widows, cf. II Tim. 3:6-7).

**4:12 “Let no one look down on your youthfulness”** This is a PRESENT ACTIVE IMPERATIVE with a NEGATIVE PARTICLE which usually means to stop an act already in process. The term “young” in Roman and Greek culture could refer to a man up to the age of 40. Possibly the false teachers were picking up on Timothy’s age as a way of attacking or depreciating his teachings (cf. I Cor. 16:11). Timothy was Paul’s apostolic surrogate. Paul encourages Titus in much the same way in Titus 2:15.

▣ **“but *rather* in speech, conduct, love, faith, *and* purity”** Timothy was to show (PRESENT MIDDLE (deponent) IMPERATIVE) his equipment for leadership by his lifestyle (cf. vv. 6c and 7b). He was to live exactly opposite of the false teachers!

There is a Greek manuscript variant in this phrase. The Textus Receptus adds after “in love,” “in spirit.” This is found in the uncial manuscripts K, L, and P and also most later minuscule manuscripts. However, it is absent in  $\aleph$ , A, C, D, F, G, and the Vulgate, Syrian, and Coptic translations, which implies it was added by a later scribe.

#### **4:13 “Until I come”** (cf. 3:14)

▣ **“give attention to”** This is another PRESENT ACTIVE IMPERATIVE. Paul emphasizes three public functions for Timothy as the official leader in corporate worship: (1) public reading of Scripture; (2) preaching; and (3) teaching. The Early church took the basic form of worship from the Synagogue (cf. Acts 13:15; 15:21).

**4:14 “Do not neglect”** This is a PRESENT IMPERATIVE with a NEGATIVE PARTICLE which usually means to stop an act already in process. Does this verse imply that Timothy had neglected his giftedness or that he should not neglect his giftedness? I think the latter.

▣ **“the spiritual gift within you”** Every believer is given a spiritual gift at conversion (cf. I Cor. 12:7,11,18). In this context, Timothy’s spiritual gift became recognized by local church leaders at Lystra (cf. Acts 16:2) and affirmed at a special commitment service (cf. 1:18). Spiritual giftedness is given by the Triune God (cf. I Cor. 12:4-6) to individual believers for the common good of the body of Christ (cf. I Cor. 12:7,11). The exact time of the giftedness is not explicitly stated, the exact number of gifts is not delineated, and the exact mechanism is not revealed. What is obvious is that all believers are gifted for ministry (cf. Eph. 4:12).

▣ **“with the laying on of hands”** This seems to be a dedication practice of the NT Church (cf. Acts 6:6; 13:3; II Tim. 1:6), which they took from the OT (cf. Num. 8:10; Deut. 34:9).

#### **SPECIAL TOPIC: LAYING ON OF HANDS**

This gesture of personal involvement is used in several different ways in the Bible.

1. passing on the family leadership (cf. Gen. 48:18)
2. identifying with the death of a sacrifice as substitute
  - a. priests (cf. Exod. 29:10,15,19; Lev. 16:21; Num. 8:12)
  - b. laypersons (cf. Lev. 1:4; 3:2,8; 4:4,15,24; II Chr. 29:23)
3. setting persons aside to serve God in a special task or ministry (cf. Num. 8:10; 27:18,23; Deut. 34:9; Acts 6:6; 13:3; I Tim. 4:14; 5:22; II Tim. 1:6)
4. participating in the judicial stoning of a sinner (cf. Lev. 24:14)
5. receiving a blessing for health, happiness, and godliness (cf. Matt. 19:13,15; Mark 10:16)
6. relating to physical healing (cf. Matt. 9:18; Mark 5:23; 6:5; 7:32; 8:23; 16:18; Luke 4:40; 13:13; Acts 9:17; 28:8)
7. receiving the Holy Spirit (cf. Acts 8:17-19; 9:17; 19:6)

There is a surprising lack of uniformity in the passages that have been historically used to support the ecclesiastical installation of leaders (i.e. ordination).

1. In Acts 6:6 it is the Apostles who lay hands on the seven for local ministry.
2. In Acts 13:3 it is the prophets and teachers who lay hands on Barnabas and Paul for missionary service.
3. In I Timothy 4:14 it is the local elders who were involved in Timothy’s initial call and installation.
4. In II Timothy 1:6 it is Paul who lays hands on Timothy.

This diversity and ambiguity illustrate the lack of organization in the first century church. The early church was much more dynamic and regularly used the spiritual gifts of believers (cf. I Cor. 14). The NT is simply not written to advocate or delineate a governmental model or ordination procedure.

▣ **“which was bestowed on you through prophetic utterance”** Does this imply that Timothy’s spiritual gift was given to him (1) at the time of his being set apart for service (cf. 1:14) or (2) by means of prophecy and laying on of hands (cf. II Tim. 1:6); or (3) that the prophets acknowledged his giftedness and the elders set him apart for service (cf. 1:18)? I think #3 is best.

▣

**NASB, NKJV** “by the presbytery”

**NRSV** “by the council of elders”

**TEV** “the elders”

**NJB, NIV** “the body of elders”

I must admit that I bring some frustration to this text. I have a theological bias against the “clergy/laity” dichotomy that has developed in Christianity. I believe that all believers are called and gifted for maturity and ministry (cf. I Cor. 12; Eph. 4:11-12). Believers are all saints and ministers!

The Reformation concept of “the priesthood of the believer,” first articulated by Martin Luther, misses the biblical point—all believers are to function as priests (cf. Exod. 19:5-6; Num. 16:3). Biblically it must be “the priesthood of believers”!

Now in saying this I also realize that God calls believers to lead believers. There is no question that some are called and equipped to direct, guide, motivate, exhort, and organize the people of God.

However, these leaders are not special believers, or privileged believers, but servant leaders (cf. Matt. 18:1-4; 20:20-28; 23:11). Modern ordination tends to depreciate several biblical truths:

1. all believers are servant ministers
2. all believers are gifted for ministry

Ordination has developed from an unofficial affirmation of giftedness and a prayerful commitment to a specific ministry task into an elaborate, high-walled elitism! This concept must be changed; this paradigm must be reevaluated; this unbiblical development must be challenged. Modern Christianity has based so much tradition and elitism on such a small biblical base. So where is the authority, in clear NT passages or in denominational traditions?

**4:15**

**NASB** “Take pains with these things”

**NKJV** “meditate on these things”

**NRSV** “put these things into practice”

**TEV** “practice these things”

**NJB** “Let this be your care”

This is another PRESENT ACTIVE IMPERATIVE. In the Septuagint this term was used of meditating (cf. Isa. 33:18; Acts 4:25). In the NT it seems to have an active sense of strenuous exercise.

▣

**NASB** “be absorbed in them”

**NKJV** “give yourself entirely to them”

**NRSV, TEV** “devote yourself to them”

**NJB** “your occupation”

This is another PRESENT IMPERATIVE. It means “put yourself into these teachings.” Let them be priority in your life and ministry. God’s truth needs to clearly and evidently mold our lives in such a way that others can clearly see Christ in us!

▣ **“so that your progress will be evident to all”** Remember that Timothy is to live before believers and nonbelievers so that they will have no handle for criticism of the gospel or his ministry (cf. 3:2,7,10; 5:7,8,14; 6:14). The exact opposite of this progress in godliness is seen in the false teachers (cf. II Tim. 2:16 and 3:9).

**4:16 “Pay close attention to yourself and to your teaching”** Here is yet another PRESENT ACTIVE IMPERATIVE. Timothy is to take time for his own spiritual maturing and nurturing. This is a good word for pastors in our day (cf. vv. 6c; 7b; 12b).

▣ **“persevere in these things”** This is yet another PRESENT ACTIVE IMPERATIVE. Timothy is to be an example of perseverance because the false teachers and their followers have obviously not persevered. Salvation is linked not only to an initial confession of repentance, faith and godliness, but also to continuance in these things. Perseverance is evidence of true salvation! In true biblical Christianity the way one starts, the way one lives, and the way one finishes are all crucial!

### **SPECIAL TOPIC: THE NEED TO PERSEVERE**

The biblical doctrines related to the Christian life are difficult to explain because they are presented in typically eastern dialectical pairs. These pairs seem contradictory, yet both are biblical. Western Christians have tended to choose one truth and ignore or depreciate the opposite truth. Let me illustrate.

1. Is salvation an initial decision to trust Christ or a lifetime commitment to discipleship?
2. Is salvation an election by means of grace from a sovereign God or mankind’s believing and repentant response to a divine offer?
3. Is salvation, once received, impossible to lose, or is there a need for continual diligence?

The issue of perseverance has been contentious throughout church history. The problem begins with apparently conflicting passages of the NT:

1. texts on assurance
  - a. statements of Jesus (John 6:37; 10:28-29)
  - b. statements of Paul (Rom. 8:35-39; Eph. 1:13; 2:5,8-9; Phil. 1:6; 2:13; II Thess. 3:3; II Tim. 1:12; 4:18)
  - c. statements of Peter ( I Pet. 1:4-5)
2. texts on the need for perseverance
  - a. statements of Jesus (Matt. 10:22; 13:1-9,24-30; 24:13; Mark 13:13; John 8:31; 15:4-10; Rev. 2:7,17,20; 3:5,12,21)
  - b. statements of Paul (Rom. 11:22; I Cor. 15:2; II Cor. 13:5; Gal. 1:6; 3:4; 5:4; 6:9; Phil. 2:12; 3:18-20; Col. 1:23)
  - c. statements of the author of Hebrews (2:1; 3:6,14; 4:14; 6:11)
  - d. statements of John (I John 2:6; II John 9)
  - e. statement of the Father (Rev. 21:7)

Biblical salvation issues from the love, mercy, and grace of a sovereign Triune God. No human can be saved without the initiation of the Spirit (cf. John 6:44,65). Deity comes first and sets the agenda, but

demands that humans respond in faith and repentance, both initially and continually. God works with mankind in a covenant relationship. There are privileges and responsibilities! Salvation is a process, a covenant, and a growing personal relationship.

Salvation is offered to all humans. Jesus' death dealt with the fallen creation's sin problem. God has provided a way and wants all those made in His image to respond and continue to respond to His love and provision in Jesus.

If you would like to read more on this subject from a non-Calvinistic perspective, see

1. Dale Moody, *The Word of Truth*, Eerdmans, 1981 (pp. 348-365)
2. Howard Marshall, *Kept by the Power of God*, Bethany Fellowship, 1969
3. Robert Shank, *Life in the Son*, Westcott, 1961

The Bible addresses two different problems in this area: (1) taking assurance as a license to live fruitless, selfish lives and (2) encouraging those who struggle with ministry and personal sin. The problem is that the wrong groups are taking the wrong message and building theological systems on limited biblical passages. Some Christians desperately need the message of assurance, while others need the stern warnings! Which group are you in?

▣ **“for as you do this you will ensure salvation both for yourself and for those who hear you”** This can relate to verse 10 or to the false teachers (cf. 2:15). Paul was always concerned that he guard himself lest he become disqualified (cf. I Cor. 9:27).

The NT uses several VERB TENSES to describe salvation: (1) AORIST (i.e. completed action), Acts 15:11; Rom. 8:24; II Tim. 1:9; Titus 3:5 (Rom. 13:11 combines the AORIST with a FUTURE orientation); (2) PERFECT (i.e. state of being), Eph. 2:5,8; (3) PRESENT (i.e. ongoing action), I Cor. 1:18; 15:2; II Cor. 2:15; I Pet. 3:21; 4:18; and (4) FUTURE (in the verb tense or by contextual inference), Rom. 5:9,10; 10:9; 11:26; 13:11; I Cor. 3:15; 5:5; Phil. 1:28; I Thess. 5:8-9; I Tim. 4:16; Heb. 1:14; 9:28; I Pet. 1:5. Therefore, salvation begins with an initial faith decision and issues in a process of lifestyle faith that will one day be consummated in sight (cf. I John 3:2).

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

This is a study guide commentary, which means that you are responsible for your own interpretation of the Bible. Each of us must walk in the light we have. You, the Bible, and the Holy Spirit are priority in interpretation. You must not relinquish this to a commentator.

These discussion questions are provided to help you think through the major issues of this section of the book. They are meant to be thought-provoking, not definitive.

1. Are the false teachers Christian? Were they ever Christian?
2. Why are abstinence and asceticism a danger to the Church?
3. What does verse 10 mean? Will everyone be saved in the end?
4. How was Timothy to overcome his youthfulness?

# I TIMOTHY 5

## PARAGRAPH DIVISIONS OF MODERN TRANSLATIONS

UBS <sup>4</sup>	NKJV	NRSV	TEV	NJB
Duties Toward Others	Treatment of Church Members	The Pastor and the Flock	Responsibilities Toward Believers	Pastoral Practice
5:1-2	5:1-2	5:1-2	5:1-2	5:1-2
	Honor True Widows			Widows
5:3-16	5:3-16	5:3-8	5:3-8	5:3-8
		5:9-16	5:9-10	5:9-16
			5:11-16	
	Honor the Elders			The Elders
5:17-23	5:17-25	5:17-22	5:17-22	5:17-22
		5:23	5:23	5:23
5:24-6:2a		5:24-6:2a	5:24-25	5:24-25

### READING CYCLE THREE (see p. vii)

*FOLLOWING THE ORIGINAL AUTHOR'S INTENT AT THE PARAGRAPH LEVEL*

This is a study guide commentary, which means that you are responsible for your own interpretation of the Bible. Each of us must walk in the light we have. You, the Bible, and the Holy Spirit are priority in interpretation. You must not relinquish this to a commentator.

Read the chapter in one sitting. Identify the subjects. Compare your subject divisions with the five modern translations. Paragraphing is not inspired, but it is the key to following the original author's intent, which is the heart of interpretation. Every paragraph has one and only one subject.

1. First paragraph
2. Second paragraph
3. Third paragraph
4. Etc.

### CONTEXTUAL INSIGHTS

- A. In light of the larger historical setting of the book, these words of pastoral advice are probably also colored by the false teachers' actions
  1. problems with widows (5:3-16)
  2. problems with elders (5:17-25)

3. problems with slaves (6:1-2a)
4. problems with false teachers (6:2b-10)
  - a. doctrine
  - b. wealth

B. There are three terms used in this section in two differing senses

1. “elder”
  - a. older man (v. 1)
  - b. house church leader (v. 17)
2. “widow”
  - a. female survivor of a marriage that the church helped (vv. 3-8)
  - b. special category of female church worker that the church hired (vv. 9-16)
3. “honor”
  - a. respect (vv. 3, 17)
  - b. salary (vv. 3, 17)
  - c. or both

C. In some ways chapter 5 relates to chapter 3. The “elders” of 5:17 refer to the “overseers” of 3:1 and the widow’s “list” (roll) of 5:9 refers to the “women” of 3:11.

I realize that this distinction between widows the church helped (vv. 3-8) and widows who served the church seems a bit of a stretch, but here is why I hold this view.

1. The qualifications of a widow are strict (cf. vv. 5,9-10). Does this imply that the church only helped some very special widows?
2. The “roll” of v. 9 seems to be a special list of widows.
3. The “list” (cf. 5:9) or the pledge (literally “the first faith”) in v. 12 implies more than just a promise not to remarry. Why would remarrying be a problem? It would remove the widow from needed church support, but what if it were a contract for church employment? In this way the church helped needy persons (i.e. salary), yet also got their services (i.e. serving other women).
4. The discussion of “elders,” which starts at v. 17, involves church paid help.

## WORD AND PHRASE STUDY

### NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 5:1-2

**<sup>1</sup>Do not sharply rebuke an older man, but *rather* appeal to *him* as a father, to the younger men as brothers, <sup>2</sup>the older women as mothers, *and* the younger women as sisters, in all purity.**

**5:1 “Do not sharply rebuke”** This is an AORIST ACTIVE SUBJUNCTIVE with the NEGATIVE PARTICLE, which means do not start an act. This is a strong Greek term, which literally means “to strike blows” (cf. 3:13). Christians must act differently, they must always act in love with a view toward reconciliation. This advice may reflect the OT admonition to honor the aged in Lev. 19:32.

▣ **“an older man”** This is literally the term “elder” (*presbuteros*). There are two senses in which this term is used in this context: (1) for an older man (v. 1) and (2) for a leadership position in the local house churches (v. 17 cf. I Pet. 5:1,5).

## **SPECIAL TOPIC: AGE**

### **I. Introduction**

- A. A quote from a Christian Life Commission on “A Future for the Family,” 1973, p. 16, by L. D. Johnson, entitled “Hebrew-Christian Geriatrics”:

“Our attitude toward the aging, reflected in our behavior as opposed to our sentimental talk, suggests that we recommend the Bible more ardently than obey it. Probably no society among civilized people demonstrates less concern for the aged than ours. We are youth worshipers. We cater to the young, pamper and overprotect them, indulge them, envy them, and make fools of ourselves trying to imitate them. Our highest value is youth, our lowest age.

Yet the absurdity of such a turned-upside-down value system ought to be obvious. One out of six of us in the western world is over sixty, and the proportion is rising.”

- B. Cultures have differed greatly in how they have treated their aged:

1. Oriental cultures have shown great respect and care for their aged.
2. American Indian culture abandoned their aged to die.

- C. There are some biblical guidelines to help us in this area.

### **II. Biblical Material**

#### **A. Old Testament**

1. Age is a divine blessing for a covenant walk
  - a. Proverbs 16:31
  - b. Genesis 15:15
  - c. Exodus 20:12; Deut. 6:2; 22:6-7; 25:15
  - d. Job 5:17-26 (especially v. 26)
  - e. Psalm 91:14-16
  - f. Psalm 92:1-15 (especially vv. 14-15)
2. Even blessed age has its unique problems
  - a. graphic description of old age is found in Eccl. 12:1-5
  - b. Isaac had poor eyesight, Gen. 27:1
  - c. Jacob had poor eyesight, Gen. 48:10
  - d. Eli had poor eyesight, I Sam. 3:2
  - e. Barzillai had poor hearing and taste, II Sam. 19:31-35
  - f. David had poor circulation, I Kings 1:1-4
  - g. Ahijah had poor eyesight, I Kings 14:1
3. God never leaves us, even in old age
  - a. Psalm 37:23-26
  - b. Psalm 71:9,18
  - c. Psalm 73:24
4. Age, since it is a sign of God’s blessing, is to be respected
  - a. Leviticus 19:32
  - b. Ruth 4:15

- c. Proverbs 23:22
- d. Lack of respect is and will be judged
  - (1) Deuteronomy 28:50
  - (2) I Samuel 2:31-32
  - (3) Isaiah 3:5
  - (4) Lamentations 4:16; 5:12
- e. Wisdom of Solomon, 2:10
- f. Wisdom of Ben Sirach (Ecclesiasticus) 8:6
- 5. Blessed age brings wisdom and discernment
  - a. I Kings 12:8
  - b. Job 12:12,20
  - c. Job 15:10
  - d. (Ecclesiasticus 25:6)
  - e. There are exceptions
    - (1) Job 32:6ff
    - (2) Ecclesiastes 4:13
- 6. What is considered old age?
  - a. Leviticus 27:1-8, 60 years
  - b. Psalm 90:10, normal - 70, good - 80
  - c. Isaiah 65:20, 100 years
  - d. (Ecclesiasticus 18:9 - 100 years)

#### B. New Testament

- 1. I Timothy
  - a. the widows role, 5:3ff
  - b. attitude toward older persons, 3:1-2
  - c. believers are responsible to their families, 3:8

#### III. Some Practical Suggestions

- A. Teach your children to respect older people (you will need this one day yourself!).
- B. Make it a family project to contact aged members of your family. If possible, in person, if not, call or write to older relatives, especially at holiday times.
- C. Take a trip to an aged neighbor or nursing home. Encourage your church to adopt a home and visit the patients regularly.
- D. Provide time for your younger children to be with grandparents, either natural or “adopted.”
- E. Encourage our churches to develop Senior Adult Ministries. Assign a staff member to coordinate.
- F. Personally begin now to plan and prepare for retirement.

▣ **“but rather appeal to him as a father”** This is a PRESENT ACTIVE IMPERATIVE. Paul’s emphasis is for Timothy to treat the members of the house churches as his closest family members (cf. Mark 3:31-35). The honor and respect due “fathers and mothers” may reflect the Ten Commandments (cf. v. 4).

**5:2 “younger women as sisters, in all purity”** Because of (1) Timothy’s age and (2) the sexual exploitation of the false teachers (cf. II Tim. 3:6), Paul was especially careful to denote purity in relation to the young women.

**NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 5:3-8**

**<sup>3</sup>Honor widows who are widows indeed; <sup>4</sup>but if any widow has children or grandchildren, they must first learn to practice piety in regard to their own family and to make some return to their parents; for this is acceptable in the sight of God. <sup>5</sup>Now she who is a widow indeed and who has been left alone, has fixed her hope on God and continues in entreaties and prayers night and day. <sup>6</sup>But she who gives herself to wanton pleasure is dead even while she lives. <sup>7</sup>Prescribe these things as well, so that they may be above reproach. <sup>8</sup>But if anyone does not provide for his own, and especially for those of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.**

**5:3 “Honor widows”** The term “honor” in vv. 3 and 17 may denote a salary or a stipend the church gave (1) to needy widows (cf. vv. 3-8); (2) to special women helpers (cf. vv. 9-16); and (3) to the elders (cf. vv. 17-22). It seems that the church, following the OT and synagogue (cf. Deut. 24:17-22; Exod. 22:22-24; Isa. 1:17; Acts 6:1ff; 9:39,41), cared for widows. It was Paul’s concern that those the church helped were really in need or had no family of their own to help them (cf. vv. 4,16). The false teachers exploited widows (cf. vv. 6,15). Paul admonishes the church to help true widows.

**5:4 “if”** This is a FIRST CLASS CONDITIONAL SENTENCE (as is v. 8). There were widows who were being neglected by their own families (cf. vv. 8,16).

▣ **“for this is acceptable in the sight of God”** This probably refers to the Ten Commandments about honoring father and mother (cf. Exod. 20:12), in this case a widowed mother. In the OT God defends the weak, socially disenfranchised, and powerless. The cry to defend “the widow, the orphan, and the alien” becomes as characteristic here as the Deuteronomic phrase (repeated in Jeremiah).

Believers show their love and respect for YHWH by honoring His word and will for maintaining strong family ties and responsibilities.

**5:5 “Now she who is a widow indeed and who has been left alone”** Paul gives specific guidelines for his day on the qualification for receiving help from the church (but not on the “list” of v. 9): (1) PERFECT TENSE—has and continues to live alone; (2) PERFECT TENSE—has been and continues to be a godly woman (3) PRESENT TENSE—continues to flee earthly pleasures by means of continual prayer. Anna (Luke 2:37) and Dorcas (Acts 9:36) (although she is not specifically said to be a widow), would fit these qualifications.

**5:6**

**NASB “But she who gives herself to wanton pleasure”**

**NKJV “but she who lives in pleasure”**

**NRSV “who lives for pleasure”**

**TEV “who gives herself to pleasure”**

**NJB “who thinks only of pleasure”**

Because of the cultural situation this may refer to (1) widows turning to prostitution as a means of making a living or (2) the sexual exploitation by the false teachers (cf. II Tim. 3:5-7). This seems to be a very stern warning (cf. v. 15).

▣ “is dead even while she lives” This refers to a state of spiritual death (PERFECT ACTIVE INDICATIVE). This verse is describing widows in the house churches of Ephesus! The false teachers had brought about not only their own “deaths,” but now they are spiritually responsible for the “deaths” of others.

5:7

NASB “Prescribe these things”  
NKJV “these things command”  
NRSV “give these commands”  
TEV “give them these instructions”  
NJB “instruct them in this”

This term refers to “strict military commands” (cf. 1:3,18; 4:11). These were not suggestions! These were not items of personal preference.

▣ “so that they may be above reproach” This was and is an appropriate calling for all believers. Whoever fails to provide for his own relatives, especially his immediate family, has disowned the faith and in the eyes of the community is worse than an unbeliever (vv. 7,8). This reflects Jesus’ teachings in Mark 7:9-13. This seems to relate to the continual emphasis on giving no handle for criticism, both to believers and unbelievers (cf. 3:2,7,10; 5:7; 6:14). Christians must always live so as to attract others to faith in Christ. The positive side of this is seen in verse 4, while this is the negative. See Special Topic: Qualifications for Female Church Workers at 3:12.

5:8 “if” This is a FIRST CLASS CONDITIONAL SENTENCE meaning some believers have neglected their families (cf. v. 4,16)

▣ “denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever” I believe this refers to the person’s witness in the community (cf. v. 7; 3:4-5), not to their salvation. Even unbelievers help their own families. However, there are other texts which use this same term “deny” and imply a total rejection of God (cf. II Tim. 2:12; Titus 1:16; II Pet. 2:1; Jude 4). In context this may somehow be related to the actions or teachings of the false teachers “who fell away from the faith” (cf. 1:19-20; 4:1-2; 6:9-10,20-21) or their followers (cf. vv. 6,15).

**NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 5:9-16**

**<sup>9</sup>A widow is to be put on the list only if she is not less than sixty years old, *having been* the wife of one man, <sup>10</sup>having a reputation for good works; *and* if she has brought up children, if she has shown hospitality to strangers, if she has washed the saints’ feet, if she has assisted those in distress, *and* if she has devoted herself to every good work. <sup>11</sup>But refuse to *put* younger widows *on the list*, for when they feel sensual desires in disregard of Christ, they want to get married, <sup>12</sup>*thus* incurring condemnation, because they have set aside their previous pledge. <sup>13</sup>At the same time they also learn *to be* idle, as they go around from house to house; and not merely idle, but also gossips and busybodies, talking about things not proper *to mention*. <sup>14</sup>Therefore, I want younger *widows* to get married, bear children, keep house, *and* give the enemy no occasion for reproach; <sup>15</sup>for some have already turned aside to follow Satan. <sup>16</sup>If any woman who is a believer has dependent widows, she must assist them and the church must not be burdened, so that it may assist those who are widows indeed.**

5:9 “A widow is to be put on the list only if she is not less than sixty years old” This is a PRESENT PASSIVE IMPERATIVE with the NEGATIVE PARTICLE, which implies stop an act in process. Here is

another qualification for the widows who were part of the ministry team. The term “the list” is the Greek term for “a legal register.” The widows’ roll may be synonymous with the concept of “deaconess” (cf. 3:11; Rom. 16:1). The “Apostolic Constitutions,” written in the early second century, listed three categories of women ministers: virgins, deaconesses, and widows.



**NASB** “*having been the wife of one man*”

**NKJV** “*and not unless she has been the wife of one man*”

**NRSV** “*and has been married only once*”

**TEV** “*In addition she must have been married only once*”

**NJB** “*who has had only one husband*”

There has been much discussion as to what this phrase means (cf. 3:1,12). But it is obvious that whatever it means, it was a very serious issue to the house churches of Ephesus and Crete (cf. 3:1,12; 5:9; Titus 1:6). Strong, godly families were (and are) a powerful witness to a lost and confused world.

For a more complete discussion see 3:2. In v. 14 young widows are admonished to remarry. This seems to imply that a second marriage was not seen as sinful (cf. Rom. 7:2-3; I Cor. 7). In Baptist circles in Europe this “husband of one wife” or “wife of one man” has been interpreted as a biblical rejection of second marriages, especially for pastors. However, this was not the case in middle eastern culture. This theory reflects the growing asceticism of the early church, but not of the NT. Greek thought negatively impacted the early Gentile churches. True biblical faith is never a withdrawal from the world, but an active witness within the world.

**5:10 “having a reputation for good works”** There are five specific good deeds listed (all **FIRST CLASS CONDITIONAL SENTENCES**) in the remainder of verse 10. See Special Topic: Qualifications for Female Church Workers at 3:12. These good works reflect a woman’s expected role in the local community.

▣ **“if”** This is a series of five **FIRST CLASS CONDITIONAL SENTENCES** in v. 10, each of which denotes a qualification of a widow to be hired by the church.

▣ **“if she has brought up children”** This is not meant to imply that a childless woman cannot be considered, but that if she has had children, they must be godly. This is the recurrent emphasis (cf. chapter 3) upon a strong, godly, faithful family life.

▣ **“if she has shown hospitality to strangers”** This does not refer to the welcoming of any and everybody into one’s home, but the boarding of itinerant Christian leaders.

▣ **“if she has washed the saints’ feet”** This was an act of a household servant receiving a guest. Jesus did this for His own disciples to teach them humility (cf. John 13). Here it seems to be metaphorical of humble service (and possibly a culturally expected hospitality).

### **SPECIAL TOPIC: SAINTS**

This is the Greek equivalent of the Hebrew *kadash*, which has the basic meaning of setting some one, some thing, or some place apart for YHWH’s exclusive use. It denotes the English concept of “the sacred.” YHWH is set apart from humanity by His nature (eternal non-created Spirit) and His character (moral perfection). He is the standard by which all else is measured and judged. He is the transcendent, Holy One, Holy Other.

God created humans for fellowship, but the fall (Gen. 3) caused a relational and moral barrier between a Holy God and sinful humanity, God chose to restore His conscious creation; therefore, He calls on His people to be “holy” (cf. Lev. 11:44; 19:2; 20:7,26; 21:8). By a faith relationship with YHWH His people become holy by their covenantal position in Him, but are also called on to live holy (cf. Matt. 5:48).

This holy living is possible because believers are fully accepted and forgiven through Jesus’ life and work and the presence of the Holy Spirit in their minds and hearts. This establishes the paradoxical situation of

1. being holy because of Christ’s imputed righteousness
2. called to live holy because of the presence of the Spirit

Believers are “saints” (*hagioi*) because of the presence in our lives of (1) the will of the Holy One (the Father);(2) the work of the Holy Son (Jesus); and (3) the presence of the Holy Spirit.

The NT always refers to saints as PLURAL (except one time in Phil. 4:12, but even then the context makes it PLURAL). To be saved is to be part of a family, a body, a building! Biblical faith starts with a personal reception, but issues into a corporate fellowship. We are each gifted (cf. I Cor. 12:11) for the health, growth, and well-being of the body of Christ—the church (cf. I Cor. 12:7). We are saved to serve! Holiness is a family characteristic!

☐ **“is she has assisted those in distress”** Here again this probably refers to a comforting ministry toward believers, but it could include needy, hurting, lost neighbors. Each of the qualifications reveals the servant heart of these elder widows.

**5:11 “But refuse to put younger widows on the list for when they feel sensual desires in disregard of Christ, they want to get married”** We must remember the positive theology of marriage which is presented in the Bible (cf. Gen. 1 & 2). This phrase seems to relate to a vow that these widows took when they became house church helpers (cf. v. 12). This is not a disparaging statement about marriage, but a disparaging comment about making a vow in Christ’s name and not keeping it (i.e. as divorce does also).

**5:12 “thus incurring condemnation”** The King James Version has “damnation.” This is much too severe a translation for the Greek word *krino*. Vows to God were/are a serious promise (cf. Lev. 27 and Num. 30), but not a salvation issue.

☐

**NASB “they have set aside their previous pledge”**

**NKJV “they have cast off their first faith”**

**NRSV “for having violated their first pledge”**

**TEV “of breaking their earlier promise to him”**

**NJB “for being unfaithful to their original promise”**

The Greek term *pistis*, which is usually translated “faith,” “trust,” or “believe,” has the OT connotation of faithfulness or trustworthiness. This is how it is used here, in the sense of a priority promise related to their serving Christ (literally, “the first faith”).

**5:13 “as they go around from house to house”** Possibly the widows helped in daily care and weekly distribution of food (as did the synagogue) to the members of all the different house churches. They may have visited house to house to check on believers.

▣ **“gossips and busybodies”** The first term is used in III John 10 of false charges being brought against a church leader. The problem is clearly defined in Titus 1:11. The problem was not idle gossip, but heresy!

The second term is used of magic or sorcery in Acts 19:19. However, in this context it applies to women who make their business tending to other people’s business (NJB “meddlers”).

▣ **“talking about things not proper to mention”** In the context of the Pastoral Letters the false teachers tricking young women (cf. II Tim. 3:5-7), it is possible that they were spreading the false teachings from house church to house church or from Christian homemaker to Christian homemaker (cf. Titus 1:11). This is why Paul will not let them speak publicly in the house churches (cf. 2:9-15) and will not allow them to be church helpers.

**5:14 “Therefore, I want younger widows to get married”** Marriage (for these a second marriage) is not evil or less spiritual (cf. I Cor. 7:8,39). Homemaking is a godly calling (cf. 2:15).

▣ **“give the enemy no occasion for reproach”** The “enemy” is SINGULAR; it could refer to (1) Satan (cf. v. 15) or (2) a false teacher (cf. II Tim. 3:5-7). These widows who had become sexually active have opened a door for both satanic attack and criticism from the whole community (believing and unbelieving).

The term “occasion” is a military term for a “beachhead” or “base of operations” (cf. Rom. 7:8,11). The physical body is not evil, but it is the battleground of temptation. Human sexuality is not the problem. It is fallen humans taking God-given good things beyond God-given bounds.

**5:15 “for some have already turned aside to follow Satan”** Possibly Timothy had related to Paul a specific occurrence such as the widow mentioned in verse 6 or 13. The false teachers had targeted these young widows as surrogate speakers (as they had some male leaders, cf 1:20). Behind the false teachers was/is the activity of the evil one.

**5:16 “if”** This is a FIRST CLASS CONDITIONAL SENTENCE. Paul wants Christian families to do their duty (PRESENT ACTIVE IMPERATIVE). He also wants to provide for those who have no family (cf. vv. 4,8).

**NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 5: 17-22**

**<sup>17</sup>The elders who rule well are to be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who work hard at preaching and teaching. <sup>18</sup>For the Scripture says, “YOU SHALL NOT MUZZLE THE OX WHILE HE IS THRESHING,” and “The laborer is worthy of his wages.” <sup>19</sup>Do not receive an accusation against an elder except on the basis of two or three witnesses. <sup>20</sup>Those who continue in sin, rebuke in the presence of all, so that the rest also will be fearful of sinning. <sup>21</sup>I solemnly charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus and of His chosen angels, to maintain these principles without bias, doing nothing in a spirit of partiality. <sup>22</sup>Do not lay hands upon anyone too hastily and thereby share responsibility for the sins of others; keep yourself free from sin.**

**5:17 “elders”** The term “elder” (*presbuteros*) was an OT designation of leadership, while the term “overseer” (*episkopos*, cf. 3:1) was a Greek city-state designation of leadership. These two terms are used synonymously in the NT (cf. Acts 20:17, 28, where elder is used of pastors and also Titus 1:5,7, where elder and overseer are used of the same leader).

The NT cannot be used to establish a divine church polity. It records all three developed forms: (1) episcopal (James as authoritative leader); (2) presbyterian (a group of elders reviewed); and (3) congregational (the congregation voted).

The PLURAL here and in Acts 20:17 and Titus 1:5 could possibly point toward house churches. The early church did not have separate buildings until the third century. No one home was large enough to accommodate all the believers; therefore, different Christian homes around the larger cities opened their doors for the regular meetings of the Christian community. This approach also protected the church from being arrested all at once.

Exactly how the leadership of a city with several house churches was organized is unclear. As the church grew, organization was needed. The form of that organization is not as crucial as the godliness of the leaders.

▣ **“worthy of double honor”** This is a PRESENT PASSIVE IMPERATIVE. It can refer to salary (cf. Gal. 6:6) or to esteem (cf. I Thess. 5:12-13). The following context of verse 18 suggests salary.

▣ **“especially those who work hard at preaching and teaching”** Elders are always mentioned in the PLURAL in the NT, which seems to imply several local house churches in the larger cities like Ephesus (cf. Acts 20:17ff). Pastors were to be able to teach as well as preach (cf. 3:2; II Tim. 2:24; Eph. 4:11).

Some leaders have one spiritual gift and others another. Leaders must focus on their giftedness and allow other gifted Christians to pick up the slack. Some believers are wonderfully gifted for leadership, often in several ways. Those who function in several areas need to be rewarded for their efforts and protected by the church in their areas of ineffectiveness. We as the body of Christ rejoice in the giftedness of our members, but we also need to remember that we desperately need one another (cf. I Cor. 12:7)!

**5:18 “For the Scripture says”** This is a quote from Deut. 25:4. It is also quoted in I Cor. 9:6-7,14. The uniqueness of verse 18 is that the OT is quoted on the same standing as a NT quote that we find in Luke 10:7 (“the laborer is worthy of his wages”). This shows Paul’s view not only of the inspiration of the OT, but of the equality of the emerging NT (cf. II Pet. 3:15-16).

Paul’s affirming the concept of a paid leadership is very interesting.

1. Following his Jewish heritage, he did not usually take money from those he taught (Philippi and Thessalonika were the exceptions).
2. This very issue had been used by false teachers to attack Paul (as in Corinth cf. II Cor. 11:7-9; 12:13).
3. There is probably some connection with this brief statement and the teaching of the false teachers, but exactly what is not stated.

**5:19 “Do not receive an accusation against an elder except on the basis of two or three witnesses”** This is a PRESENT MIDDLE IMPERATIVE with the NEGATIVE PARTICLE, which visually means “stop an act in process.” This reflects the turmoil and accusations caused by the false teachers.

The concept itself is from the writings of Moses (cf. Num. 35:30; Deut. 17:6; 19:15).

**5:20 “those who continue in sin”** Notice the PRESENT ACTIVE PARTICIPLE. In context this refers to leaders who continue to sin (cf. I Cor. 3:10-15). This is not necessarily a one-time act. Paul addresses the proper procedures for dealing with sinning believers in Rom. 16:17-18; I Cor. 5; Gal. 6:1-5; I Thess. 5:14; II Thess. 3:6-15; I Tim. 1:20; 5:19-20; and Titus 3:10-11.

▣ **“rebuke in the presence of all, so that the rest also will be fearful of sinning”** This seems to speak of public disciplinary actions (cf. Gal. 2:14; James 5:16) which some elders took against others who had

1. overstepped their authority
2. promoted false teaching
3. engaged in other inappropriate actions

“Rebuke” is a common term in the Pastoral Letters (cf. II Tim. 4:2; Titus 1:9,13; 2:15). The “rest” may refer to

1. the other house churches
2. the other local elders
3. other believers

**5:21 “I solemnly charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus and of His chosen angels”** This strong oath is found several times in the Pastoral Letters (cf. 5:21; 6:13; II Tim. 4:1; and in a related sense in II Tim. 2:14). Paul was serious about his teachings.

▣ **“His chosen angels”** It is somewhat surprising that “chosen angels” are mentioned instead of the Holy Spirit. This is used in the sense of (1) those who minister to God’s chosen people and who are present with them (cf. Ps. 138:1; I Cor. 4:9; Matt. 18:10; Luke 9:26; and Heb. 1:14) or (2) those special angels near God’s throne who are uniquely associated with His presence (in rabbinical literature, the seven angels of the presence).

▣ **“to maintain these principles without bias, doing nothing in a spirit of partiality”** Timothy is to have no favorites nor hold any grudges! The term “maintain” is the Greek word for “guard.” As God guards us (cf. II Thess. 3:2; Jude 24) and our inheritance (cf. I Pet. 1:4-5), we are to guard His truth! We must also guard ourselves against false teaching (cf. II Tim. 4:15; II Pet. 3:17; I John 5:21).

Notice the covenant reciprocity: God keeps/guards us; believers must keep/guard His truth and themselves! It is possible that this charge to Timothy is related to the favoritism and partiality shown by the false teachers claiming to be an elite group or to have special knowledge or special freedoms.

**5:22 “Do not lay hands upon anyone too hastily”** This verse has three more PRESENT ACTIVE IMPERATIVES. It has been interpreted in two ways: (1) to refer to ordination (cf. 3:10; 4:14) or (2) to refer to accepting and reinstating a repentant elder who has been publically reprovved (cf. v. 20). Number 2 seems to fit the context of verses 24 and 25 and the historical context of false teachers best.

▣ **“share responsibility for the sins of others”** This may refer to (1) ordaining too quickly (cf. 3:6) or (2) restoring elders to leadership too quickly. Remember the context is the activities of the false teachers infiltrating the churches. Our actions can be interpreted by some as affirmation or approval of the errors of others (cf. II John 11).

▣ **“keep yourself free from sin”** This is literally “keep yourself pure” (cf. 4:12; 5:2). Sin is an attitude, an act, and an association.

**NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 5:23**

**<sup>23</sup>No longer drink water exclusively, but use a little wine for the sake of your stomach and your frequent ailments.**

**5:23 “No longer drink water exclusively”** Timothy was totally abstaining from wine. Paul mentions that wine taken in small amounts for medicinal purposes should not be a problem for a church leader. We must remember that the early Mediterranean world drank wine often. This could mean (1) add a little fermented wine to purify your water or (2) drink a little wine from time to time when your stomach acts up. Wine is not the problem; fallen mankind’s misuse and abuse are the problems. The Bible rails against drunkenness (cf. Prov. 23:29-35; Isa. 5:11,22; 28:1-8), but does not teach total abstinence (cf. 3:3,8). In our day and

society total abstinence must be related to the spiritual concepts found in Rom. 14:1-15:13; I Cor. 8 and 10:23-33). See Special Topic: Attitudes Toward Alcohol and Alcoholism at 3:3.

▣ **“for the sake of your stomach and your frequent ailments”** Are these two different descriptive phrases or are they referring to one problem? Does this verse imply Timothy was a physically weak person? Timothy’s work was challenging and difficult. If he was also physically weak, it makes him all the more a wonderful role model and noble person.

**NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 5:24-25**

**<sup>24</sup>The sins of some men are quite evident, going before them to judgment; for others, their *sins* follow after. <sup>25</sup>Likewise also, deeds that are good are quite evident, and those which are otherwise cannot be concealed.**

**5:24-25** These verses may relate to the warning in v. 22. By their fruits ye shall eventually know them (cf. Matt. 7). In context Paul addresses false teachers and true teachers. They are evident by their teachings and lifestyles (sins that are evident) and other sins (i.e. hidden sins or attitudes/motives) will be revealed on Judgment Day.

## **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

This is a study guide commentary, which means that you are responsible for your own interpretation of the Bible. Each of us must walk in the light we have. You, the Bible, and the Holy Spirit are priority in interpretation. You must not relinquish this to a commentator.

These discussion questions are provided to help you think through the major issues of this section of the book. They are meant to be thought-provoking, not definitive.

1. List the paid staff positions of a local church mentioned in chapter 5.
2. List the qualifications of a true widow who was to receive funds from the church.
3. How are verses 7,8, and 14 related to I Timothy 3?
4. How does verse 20 relate to verses 24 and 25?
5. Does the Bible teach total abstinence from alcohol?

# TIMOTHY 6

## PARAGRAPH DIVISIONS OF MODERN TRANSLATIONS

UBS <sup>4</sup>	NKJV	NRSV	TEV	NJB
Duties Toward Others (5:1-6:2a)	Honor Masters 6:1-2	(5:1-6:2a)	Responsibilities Toward Believers (5:1-6:2a)	Slaves 6:1-2a
False Teaching and True Wealth 6:2b-10	Error and Greed 6:3-10	Final Instructions 6:2b-10	False Teaching and True Riches 6:2b-5	The True Teacher and the False Teacher 6:2b-10
The Good Fight of Faith 6:11-16	The Good Confession 6:11-16	6:11-16	Personal Instructions 6:11-16	Timothy's Vocation Recalled 6:11-16
6:17-19	Instructions to the Rich 6:17-19	6:17-19	6:17-19	Rich Christians 6:17-19
6:20-21a	Guard the Faith 6:20-21	6:20-21a	6:20-21a	Final Warning and Conclusion 6:20-21
6:21b		6:21b	6:20b	

### READING CYCLE THREE (see p. vii)

*FOLLOWING THE ORIGINAL AUTHOR'S INTENT AT THE PARAGRAPH LEVEL*

This is a study guide commentary, which means that you are responsible for your own interpretation of the Bible. Each of us must walk in the light we have. You, the Bible, and the Holy Spirit are priority in interpretation. You must not relinquish this to a commentator.

Read the chapter in one sitting. Identify the subjects. Compare your subject divisions with the five modern translations. Paragraphing is not inspired, but it is the key to following the original author's intent, which is the heart of interpretation. Every paragraph has one and only one subject.

1. First paragraph
2. Second paragraph
3. Third paragraph
4. Etc.

## CONTEXTUAL INSIGHTS

- A. The subject of false teachers returns (cf. 1:3-11,19-20; 4:1-5; 6:3-11,17-19). This entire letter addresses the problems caused by the doctrinal and moral issues raised by the heretics.
- B. Verses 1-2 seem out of place, but they probably also relate to the false teachers' messages about Christian slaves and their new rights and freedoms. The UBS<sup>4</sup> TEV see the structure of this section of the book as Paul encouraging Timothy on how to deal with different groups within the church.
1. older men and women (5:1-2)
  2. widows (5:3-11)
  3. elders (5:17-25)
  4. slaves (6:1-2)
- C. Surprisingly I Timothy does not end with a series of personal greetings. Paul stayed longer in Ephesus than in any other city and had tremendous evangelistic results. He knew many faithful believers in this city. Why greet only Timothy?

This letter is obviously meant to be read to the assembled church or in the house churches ("you" is plural in v. 21). However, it was also a personal letter with advice and instructions specifically for Timothy, his Apostolic surrogate.

## WORD AND PHRASE STUDY

### NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 6:1-2

<sup>1</sup>All who are under the yoke as slaves are to regard their own masters as worthy of all honor so that the name of God and *our* doctrine will not be spoken against. <sup>2</sup>Those who have believers as their masters must not be disrespectful to them because they are brethren, but must serve them all the more, because those who partake of the benefit are believers and beloved. Teach and preach these *principles*.

**6:1 "All who are under the yoke as slaves"** Christianity adapted itself to the culture of its day in regards to slavery. Two-thirds of the Roman world were slaves. It was the truth, justice, and love of God in the gospel that eventually brought slavery to an end. Paul chose to deal with human attitudes in their cultural situation instead of a violent overthrow of that cultural situation (much like he did the societal role of women).

### SPECIAL TOPIC: PAUL'S ADMONITIONS TO SLAVES

1. Be content, but if an opportunity for freedom avails itself, take it (I Cor. 7:21-24).
2. In Christ there is no slave or free (Gal. 3:28; Col. 3:11; cf. I Cor. 12:13).
3. Work as unto the Lord; He will repay (Eph. 6:5-9; Col. 3:22-25; cf. I Pet. 2:18-20).
4. In Christ slaves become brothers (I Tim. 6:2; Philemon vv. 16-17).
5. Godly slaves bring honor to God (I Tim. 6:1; Titus 2:9).

Paul's admonition to slave owners:

Christian slaves and slave owners have the same Master; therefore, they should treat each other with respect (Ephesians 6:9; Colossians 4:1).

▣ **“to regard their own masters as worthy of honor”** Apparently verse 1 refers to Christian slaves serving non-Christian masters, while verse 2 refers to Christian slaves serving Christian masters. A Christian slave is to act toward believers and unbelievers so as to bring honor to God and the gospel of Jesus Christ (cf. Eph. 6:6-7). Verse 1 has the same orientation as 3:2;7;10; 5:7,8,14; and Titus 2:5, which means “no handle for criticism.” Also see v. 14 of this same chapter.

**6:2 “Those who have believers as their masters must not be disrespectful to them”** This is literally “look down,” which is a PRESENT ACTIVE IMPERATIVE with the NEGATIVE PARTICLE, implying stop an act already in process. This phrase relates to the doctrinal concept that everything we as believers do must be of the highest quality for Christ’s sake (cf. I Cor. 10:31; Eph. 6:6-7; Col. 3:17; I Pet. 4:11).

The term “masters” is not the normal term for slave owner, *kurios* (cf. Eph. 6:5,98; Col. 3:22; 4:1), but *despotēs*. It is usually used of God the Father and the Son, but in the Pastoral Letters it is used regularly for earthly slave masters (cf. 6:1,2; II Tim. 2:21; Titus 2:9).

▣ **“Teach and preach these principles”** These are two PRESENT ACTIVE IMPERATIVES, which implies a continual obligation (cf. 4:11). This phrase can conclude the previous admonition (cf. NASB, NKJV) or introduce what follows (cf. NRSV, TEV, NJB).

**NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 6:3-10**

**<sup>3</sup>If anyone advocates a different doctrine and does not agree with sound words, those of our Lord Jesus Christ, and with the doctrine conforming to godliness, <sup>4</sup>he is conceited *and* understands nothing; but he has a morbid interest in controversial questions and disputes about words, out of which arise envy, strife, abusive language, evil suspicions, <sup>5</sup>and constant friction between men of depraved mind and deprived of the truth, who suppose that godliness is a means of gain. <sup>6</sup>But godliness *actually* is a means of great gain when accompanied by contentment. <sup>7</sup>For we have brought nothing into the world, so we cannot take anything out of it either. <sup>8</sup>If we have food and covering, with these we shall be content. <sup>9</sup>But those who want to get rich fall into temptation and a snare and many foolish and harmful desires which plunge men into ruin and destruction. <sup>10</sup>For the love of money is a root of all sorts of evil, and some by longing for it have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs.**

**6:3 “If”** This is a FIRST CLASS CONDITIONAL SENTENCE (which is assumed to be true) continuing the literary context from v. 3 through v. 5. There were false teachers who rejected Paul’s teachings (cf. 1:3-7; 4:1-3).

▣ **“advocates a different doctrine”** This is the Greek term *heteros*, which means “another of a different kind.” The false teaching was a combination of Jewish legalism and Greek philosophy similar to that found in Colossians and Ephesians.

▣ **“and does not agree with sound words”** See note at 1:10.

▣ **“those of our Lord Jesus Christ”** Paul asserts that the origin of the “sound words” is Christ’s teachings which were given to Paul. These false teachers rejected both Christ and His Apostles’ teachings.

▣ **“and with doctrine conforming to godliness”** See note at 2:2. Christ’s teachings always had godliness as their goal (cf. 3:16). These false teachers tried to separate truth from life, justification from sanctification,

the indicative (gospel truth) from the imperative (gospel godliness). See Special Topic: Sanctification at II Tim.2:21.

**6:4**

**NASB, NRSV** “**he is conceited**”

**NKJV, NJB** “**he is proud**”

**TEV** “**is swollen with pride**”

This is a PERFECT PASSIVE INDICATIVE. The term is literally “smoke-blinded” by means of pride (cf. 3:6; 6:4; II Tim. 3:4). See Special Topic: Vices and Virtues in the NT at 1:9.

▣ **“but he has a morbid interest in controversial questions and disputes about words”** There has been an ongoing emphasis on Timothy not being involved in these futile discussions of the false teachers (cf. I Tim. 1:3,4; 4:7; II Tim. 2:14; 4:4; Titus 1:14). I wonder how this would apply today?

The term “morbid” is literally “to be sick.” It came to be used metaphorically of an intense craving for something. These false teachers were not seeking godliness, but wanting esoteric knowledge about unrevealed areas or peripheral areas of truth. They wanted to argue over oblique doctrinal issues which only caused arguments and prideful divisions.

The older I get the more I know I do not know and the happier I am with less understanding! The main truths of Christianity are clear and repeated! Yet, somehow we strive to know “all” the details and implications and weave theological webs containing all the inferences of difficult, oblique, apocalyptic and prophetic passages. We glory in our detailed systems instead of our relationship with Christ. It may be harder for a dogmatic, systematic theologian to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich person!!

Preach the clear truths! Discuss the peripherals in love! Be gracious to all! Maturity will make us less judgmental and more Christlike.

**6:5 “men of depraved mind”** Either (1) the entire context refers to the false teachers or (2) the first few verses refer to them and the rest refers to the consequences caused in the local house churches by their teachings (cf. Arichea and Hatton’s *A Handbook on Paul’s Letters to Timothy and Titus*, UBS). I think the young widows, and also possibly some slaves (cf. 6:1-2), were surrogate speakers for the false teachers (cf. Gordon Fee’s *First and Second Timothy and Titus* in the New International Biblical Commentary Vol. 13).

▣ **“deprived of the truth”** Both of these last phrases are PERFECT PASSIVE PARTICIPLES, implying a settled state of mind and heart brought about by an outside agent, probably the evil one. He is the father not only of lies, but also of religious speculation and theological elitism. See Special Topic: Truth at 2:4.

▣

**NASB** “**who suppose that godliness is a means of gain**”

**NKJV** “**who suppose that godliness is a means of gain**”

**NRSV** “**imagining that godliness is a means of gain**”

**TEV** “**They think that religion is a way to become rich**”

**NJB** “**imagine that religion is a way of making a profit**”

This seems to involve one of two things: (1) the false teachers taught a theology of success and possessions or (2) they charged for their teaching (cf. Titus 1:11; II Pet. 2:3). Number 2 is probably more likely. The King James Version adds a phrase at the end of verse 5, “from such withdraw thyself,” but this only occurs in the Corrector of the fifth century manuscript D. It does not occur in the more ancient manuscripts  $\aleph$ , A, or D.

**6:6 “when accompanied by contentment”** This word basically involves not prideful self-sufficiency, but the Holy Spirit-encouraged sufficiency that comes not from circumstance or personal resources, but dependence on God in Christ (cf. Phil. 4:11-13).

**6:7 “For we have brought nothing into the world”** This may be an allusion to several OT passages (cf. Job 1:21; Ps. 49:17; Eccl. 5:15). It gives a rationale for the statement in v. 6. Verses 6 and 8 are similar to statements found in the Greek Stoic philosophers. Paul was familiar with these moralists. Many of his lists of sins and virtues are also similar to these Greek writers. See Special Topic: Paul’s Use of *Kosmos* at 1:6.

**6:8** Believers need to be content with God’s provision of daily needs (cf. Prov. 30:8; Matt. 6:11). Paul’s use of the word “gain” in v. 5 caused him to elaborate on the false teachers’ greed (cf. vv. 6-10 and 17-19).

## **SPECIAL TOPIC: WEALTH**

- I. Perspective of the Old Testament as a whole
  - A. God is the owner of all things
    - 1. Genesis 1-2
    - 2. I Chronicles 29:11
    - 3. Psalm 24:1; 50:12; 89:11
    - 4. Isaiah 66:2
  - B. Humans are stewards of wealth for God’s purposes
    - 1. Deuteronomy 8:11-20
    - 2. Leviticus 19:9-18
    - 3. Job 31:16-33
    - 4. Isaiah 58:6-10
  - C. Wealth is a part of worship
    - 1. the two tithes
      - a. Numbers 18:21-29; Deut. 12:6-7; 14:22-27
      - b. Deut. 14:28-29; 26:12-15
    - 2. Proverbs 3:9
  - D. Wealth is seen as a gift from God for Covenant fidelity
    - 1. Deuteronomy 27-28
    - 2. Proverbs 3:10; 8:20-21; 10:22; 15:6
  - E. Warning against wealth at the expense of others
    - 1. Proverbs 21:6
    - 2. Jeremiah 5:26-29
    - 3. Hosea 12:6-8
    - 4. Micah 6:9-12
  - F. Wealth is not sinful in itself unless it is priority
    - 1. Psalm 52:7; 62:10; 73:3-9
    - 2. Proverbs 11:28; 23:4-5; 27:24; 28:20-22
    - 3. Job 31:24-28

## II. Unique perspective of Proverbs

### A. Wealth placed in arena of personal effort

1. slothfulness and laziness condemned—Proverbs 6:6-11; 10:4-5,26; 12:24,27; 13:4; 15:19; 18:9; 19:15,24; 20:4,13; 21:25; 22:13; 24:30-34; 26:13-16
2. hard work advocated—Proverbs 12:11,14; 13:11

### B. Poverty versus riches used to illustrate righteousness versus wickedness—Proverbs 10:1ff; 11:27-28; 13:7; 15:16-17; 28:6,19-20

### C. Wisdom (knowing God and His Word and living this knowledge) is better than riches—Proverbs 3:13-15; 8:9-11,18-21; 13:18

### D. Warnings and admonitions

#### 1. warnings

- a. beware of guarantying a neighbor's loan (surety)—Proverbs 6:1-5; 11:15; 17:18; 20:16; 22:26-27; 27:13
- b. beware of getting rich through evil means—Proverbs 1:19; 10:2,15; 11:1; 13:11; 16:11; 20:10,23; 21:6; 22:16,22; 28:8
- c. beware of borrowing—Proverbs 22:7
- d. beware of fleetingness of wealth—Proverbs 23:4-5
- e. wealth will not help on judgment day—Proverbs 11:4
- f. wealth has many "friends"—Proverbs 14:20; 19:4

#### 2. admonitions

- a. generosity advocated—Proverbs 11:24-26; 14:31; 17:5; 19:17; 22:9,22-23; 23:10-11; 28:27
- b. righteousness better than wealth—Proverbs 16:8; 28:6,8,20-22
- c. prayer for need, not abundance—Proverbs 30:7-9
- d. giving to the poor is giving to God—Proverbs 14:31

## III. Perspective of the New Testament

### A. Jesus

1. wealth forms a unique temptation to trust in ourselves and our resources instead of God and His resources
  - a. Matthew 6:24; 13:22; 19:23
  - b. Mark 10:23-31
  - c. Luke 12:15-21,33-34
  - d. Revelation 3:17-19
2. God will provide our physical needs
  - a. Matthew 6:19-34
  - b. Luke 12:29-32
3. sowing is related to reaping (spiritual as well as physical)
  - a. Mark 4:24
  - b. Luke 6:36-38
  - c. Matthew 6:14; 18:35
4. repentance affects wealth
  - a. Luke 19:2-10

- b. Leviticus 5:16
- 5. economic exploitation condemned
  - a. Matthew 23:25
  - b. Mark 12:38-40
- 6. end-time judgment is related to our use of wealth—Matthew 25:31-46

#### B. Paul

- 1. practical view like Proverbs (work)
  - a. Ephesians 4:28
  - b. I Thessalonians 4:11-12
  - c. II Thessalonians 3:8,11-12
  - d. I Timothy 5:8
- 2. spiritual view like Jesus (things are fleeting, be content)
  - a. I Timothy 6:6-10 (contentment)
  - b. Philippians 4:11-12 (contentment)
  - c. Hebrews 13:5 (contentment)
  - d. I Timothy 6:17-19 (generosity and trust in God, not riches)
  - e. I Corinthians 7:30-31 (transformation of things)

#### IV. Conclusions

- A. There is no systematic biblical theology concerning wealth.
- B. There is no definitive passage on this subject therefore, insights must be gleaned from different passages. Take care not to read your views into these isolated texts.
- C. Proverbs, which was written by the wise men (sages), has a different perspective than other types of biblical genre. Proverbs is practical and individually focused. It balances and must be balanced by other Scripture (cf. Jer. 18:18).
- D. Our day needs to analyze its views and practices concerning wealth in light of the bible. Our priorities are misplaced if capitalism or communism are our only guide. Why and how one succeeds are more important questions than how much one has accumulated.
- E. Accumulation of wealth must be balanced with true worship and responsible stewardship (cf. II Cor. 8-9).

**6:9 “But those who want to get rich fall into temptation and a snare”** Believers bring many things on themselves because of greed for earthly things, power, and popularity (cf. Pro. 23:4; 28:20; Matt. 6:19-34). “Temptation” is the Greek term *peirasmos*.

#### **SPECIAL TOPIC: GREEK TERMS FOR “TESTING” AND THEIR CONNOTATIONS**

There are two Greek terms which have the idea of testing someone for a purpose.

- 1. *Dokimazō, dokimion, dokimasia*

This term is a metallurgist term for testing the genuineness of something (metaphorically, someone) by fire. The fire reveals the true metal by burning off (purifying) the dross. This physical process became

a powerful idiom for God and/or humans testing others. This term is used only in a positive sense of testing with a view towards acceptance. It is used in the NT of testing

- a. oxen, Luke 14:19
- b. ourselves, I Cor. 11:28
- c. our faith, James 1:3
- d. even God, Heb. 3:9

The outcomes of these tests were assumed to be positive (cf. Rom. 1:28; 14:22; 16:10; II Cor. 10:18; 13:3; Phil. 2:27; I Pet. 1:7). Therefore, the term conveys the idea of someone being examined and proved to be worthwhile.

- a. good
- b. genuine
- c. valuable
- d. honored

## 2. *Peirazō, peirasmōs*

This term has the connotation of examination of examination for the purpose of fault finding or rejection. It is often used in connection with Jesus' temptation in the wilderness.

- a. It conveys the attempt to trap Jesus (cf. Matt. 4:1; 16:1; 19:3; 22:18,35; Mark 1:13; Luke 4:2; 10:25; Heb. 2:18).
- b. This term (*peirazō*) is used as a title for Satan in Matt. 4:3; I Thess. 3:5.
- c. It (in its compound form, *ekpeirazō*) is used by Jesus to not test God (cf. Matt. 4:7; Luke 4:12; also see I Cor. 10:9).
- d. It is used in connection with the temptation and trials of believers (cf. I Cor. 7:5; 10:9,13; Gal. 6:1; I Thess. 3:5; Heb. 2:18; James 1:2,13,14; I Pet. 4:12; II Pet. 2:9).

▣ **“ruin and destruction”** This concept is used several times in the NT (cf. Matt. 7:13; Rom. 9:22; Phil. 1:28; 3:19; II Thess. 2:3; II Pet. 2:1; 3:7; Rev. 17:8-11). It is metaphorical for the violent ceasing of physical life. This term does not relate to the theological concept of annihilation (see Fudge, *The Fire That Consumes* for a cogent argument for annihilation), which asserts that the spiritually lost do not suffer separation, but the loss of existence. They interpret this literally. This is asserted to be more “humane” of God than an eternal hell. However, the same term that describes an eternal heaven in Matt. 25:46 describes an eternal hell.

**6:10 “For the love of money is a root of all sorts of evil”** This may have been a well-known proverb. Money is not the problem; it is the love of money that is the problem! The Greek does not have the definite article with “root” which means it is one of many problems (cf. II Tim. 2:25-26; 3:2-5,7-9). Money is a tool, not a goal.

▣ **“some by longing for it have wandered away from the faith”** Does “faith” here speak of salvation or godly living? In this context the false teachers have left the faith and are trying to influence others (cf. Mark 13:22). Greed and financial exploitation (along with sexual exploitation, as well as claiming special knowledge or insight) is a recurrent characteristic of false teachers. If money becomes ultimate, it becomes a god. “Mammon” in Matt. 6:24 is capitalized in NASB because it is assumed to reflect the title of a money

god from Syria. Love of money can become idolatrous. It can cause disastrous results in this life and in the next (cf. 4:1; 5:8; II Tim. 2:25-26; Titus 1:16).

It is hard to discern the difference between a lost false teacher and a duped believer. Often they look, think, and act alike. Only God knows the heart. He will make the final decision. Jesus' words in Matt. 7 ("by their fruits you shall know them") and 13 (the parable of the soils) are very troubling to our cherished systematic theologies.

**NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 6:11-16**

**<sup>11</sup>But flee from these things, you man of God, and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, perseverance and gentleness. <sup>12</sup>Fight the good fight of faith; take hold of the eternal life to which you were called, and you made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses. <sup>13</sup>I charge you in the presence of God, who gives life to all things, and of Christ Jesus, who testified the good confession before Pontius Pilate, <sup>14</sup>that you keep the commandment without stain or reproach until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ, <sup>15</sup>which He will bring about at the proper time—He who is the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords, <sup>16</sup>who alone possesses immortality and dwells in unapproachable light, whom no man has seen or can see. To Him *be* honor and eternal dominion! Amen.**

**6:11 “But flee from these things”** Timothy is commanded (PRESENT ACTIVE IMPERATIVE, cf. II Tim. 2:22) to flee from the things discussed in vv. 3-10. This is in contrast to the things he was to preach and teach (cf. v. 2b), which are listed in 5:1-6:2a. Christianity involves initial and continuing choices!



NASB, NRSV

TEV

“you man of God”

NKJV

“O man of God”

NJB

“as someone dedicated to God”

This was an honorific title from the OT which was used of Moses, Elijah, Elisha, Samuel, and David. In II Tim. 3:16, 17 it is used for all believers equipped by the word of God. The false teachers are not men of God or equipped by the Word of God.

▣ **“pursue”** This is another PRESENT ACTIVE IMPERATIVE, an ongoing command. The first IMPERATIVE (“flee”) is negative, the second IMPERATIVE (“pursue”) is positive. Both are crucial for sound teaching and personal righteousness.

▣ **“righteousness”** This must refer to holy living (cf. James 3:13-18), not to imputed (forensic) righteousness as in Romans (cf. chapter 4). See Special Topic at Titus 2:13. Romans 1-8 (a doctrinal summary) speaks of our position in Christ (i.e. justification). The Pastoral Letters (letters against false teaching) speak of our possessing our possession (i.e. sanctification). See Special Topic: Righteousness at Titus 2:12.

This list of Christlike qualities is exactly opposite of the lifestyles of the false teachers. By their fruits you shall know them (cf. Matt. 7).

▣ **“godliness”** This is a recurring theme (cf. 3:10; 4:7-8; 6:3,5-6; II Tim. 3:5). Eternal life has observable characteristics. To know God is to be (desire to be) like God (cf. Matt. 5:48).



**NASB, NJB** “perseverance”  
**NKJV** “patience”  
**NRSV, TEV** “endurance”

The Greek word *hupomonē* has several possible English translations. In *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*, Bauer, Arndt, Gingrich and Danker say that this word refers to the enduring of toil and suffering (p. 846). Timothy was to face (1) the problems; (2) those who caused the problems; and (3) those affected by the problems with a steadfast endurance. See Special Topic at 4:16.



“gentleness” Not only was Timothy to endure and persevere, but he was to do so with a faithful, loving, gentle spirit (cf. 3:3; II Tim. 2:25; Titus 3:3; Gal. 6:1; James 1:21; 3:13,17; I Pet. 2:18; 3:4).

**6:12 “fight the good fight of faith”** This is a PRESENT MIDDLE (deponent) IMPERATIVE. The cognate verb and noun are used here to intensify the athletic (cf. 1:18; Heb. 12:1-3 or military, cf. Eph. 6:10-18) metaphor (Paul also “fought the good fight,” cf. II Tim. 4:7). We get the English word “agony” from this athletic metaphor.



“take hold of the eternal life” This is an AORIST MIDDLE IMPERATIVE (cf. v. 19). This is metaphorical of the winning athlete receiving the trophy or crown. This shows mankind’s need to initially respond (cf. v. 12b) and continue to respond in faith as the next phrase shows God’s keeping power (cf. v. 12c). These are true and valid covenantal aspects of salvation; they are paradoxical, but true! Eternal life is a way of referring to the consummation of the gospel hope (i.e. glorification, cf. Rom. 8:30).



“to which you were called” This emphasis on God’s electing and keeping power (cf. I Cor. 1:9) must be combined with our daily faith cooperation. Predestination and perseverance must be held together as two sides of one coin.

### **SPECIAL TOPIC: ELECTION/PREDESTINATION AND THE NEED FOR A THEOLOGICAL BALANCE**

Election is a wonderful doctrine. However, it is not a call to favoritism, but a call to be a channel, a tool or means of others’ redemption! In the Old Testament the term was used primarily for service; in the New Testament it is used primarily for salvation which issues in service. The Bible never reconciles the seeming contradiction between God’s sovereignty and mankind’s free will, but affirms them both! A good example of the biblical tension would be Romans 9 on God’s sovereign choice and Romans 10 on mankind’s necessary response (cf. 10:11,13).

The key to this theological tension may be found in Ephesians 1:4. Jesus is God’s elect man and all are potentially elect in Him (Karl Barth). Jesus is God’s “yes” to fallen mankind’s need (Karl Barth). Ephesians 1:4 also helps clarify the issue by asserting that the goal of predestination is not heaven, but holiness (Christlikeness). We are often attracted to the benefits of the gospel and ignore the responsibilities! God’s call (election) is for time as well as eternity!

Doctrines come in relation to other truths, not as single, unrelated truths. A good analogy would be a constellation versus a single star. God presents truth in eastern, not western, genres. We must not remove the tension caused by dialectical (paradoxical) pairs of doctrinal truths (God as transcendent versus God as immanent; security vs. perseverance; Jesus as equal with the Father vs. Jesus as subservient to the Father; Christian freedom vs. Christian responsibility to a covenant partner; etc.).

The theological concept of “covenant” unites the sovereignty of God (who always takes the initiative and sets the agenda) with a mandatory initial and continuing repentant, faith response from humans (cf. Mark 1:15; Acts 3:16,19; 20:21). Be careful of proof-texting one side of the paradox and depreciating the other! Be careful of asserting only your favorite doctrine or system of theology!

▣ **“and you made the good confession”** This is the Greek word *homologeō*, which speaks of a public profession or confession (cf. I John 1:9). This seems to refer to Timothy’s baptism as his public profession of faith. Early believers repeated the formula “Jesus is Lord” (cf. Rom. 10:9-13) as their personal and public profession of faith in Jesus. This brief phrase implied His humanity, deity, atonement, and exaltation (cf. Phil. 2:6-11).

### SPECIAL TOPIC: CONFESSION

- A. There are two forms of the same Greek root used for confession or profession, *homologeō* and *exomologeō*. The first is a compound of *homo*, the same, and *legō*, to speak. The basic meaning is to say the same thing, to agree with.
- B. English translations of this word group
  - 1. praise
  - 2. agree
  - 3. declare
  - 4. profess
  - 5. confess
- C. This word group had two seemingly opposite usages (cf. Josh. 7:19)
  - 1. to praise (God)
  - 2. to admit sin

These may have developed from mankind’s sense of the holiness of God and his own sinfulness. To acknowledge one truth is to acknowledge both.
- D. NT usages of the word group
  - 1. to promise (Matt. 14:7; Acts 7:17)
  - 2. to agree or consent to something (John 1:20; Luke 22:6; Acts 24:14; Heb. 11:13)
  - 3. to praise (Matt. 11:25; Luke 10:21; Rom. 14:11; 15:9)
  - 4. to assent to
    - a. a person (Matt. 10:32; Luke 12:8; John 9:22; 12:42; Rom. 10:9; Phil. 2:11; Rev. 3:5)
    - b. a truth (Acts 23:8; II Cor. 11:13; I John 4:2)
  - 5. to make a public declaration of (the legal sense developed into a religious affirmation, Acts 24:14; I Tim. 6:13)
    - a. without admission of guilt (I Tim. 6:12; Heb. 10:23)
    - b. with an admission of guilt (Matt. 3:6; Acts 19:18; Heb. 4:14; James 5:16; I John 1:9)

▣ **“in the presence of many witnesses”** This may refer to (1) Timothy’s ordination (cf. 5:14; II Tim. 1:6); (2) his public profession before the local church (cf. Acts 16:1-2); or (3) his baptism.

**6:13 “I charge you in the presence of God”** Verses 13-16 are one sentence in Greek. As Timothy confessed Jesus publicly (cf. Matt. 10:32-33), now Paul charges him also in God’s presence (cf. 5:21; II Tim. 4:1).

Paul “charges” or commands Timothy often in the Pastoral Letters. Sometimes these refer to things that Timothy should do (cf. 1:3,18; 4:11; 5:21; 6:13; II Tim. 4:1) and sometimes to what he should tell others (cf. 5:7,21; 6:17; II Tim. 2:14).

▣ **“who gives life to all things”** God is the origin and source of all life (cf. v. 16; 1:17; II Tim. 1:10). There is no life apart from Him. The OT title YHWH, from the Hebrew verb “to be” (cf. Exod. 3:14), is a word play on this very concept. God is the only one who can give and sustain physical and eternal life.

This term has connotations of both (1) giving life (cf. I Sam. 2:6; I Tim. 6:13) and (2) preserving life (cf. Jdgs. 8:19; I Sam. 27:9,11; I Kgs. 21:31; Luke 17:33; Acts 7:19). YHWH does both through Christ.

▣ **“and of Christ Jesus, who testified the good confession before Pontius Pilate”** Jesus is called the “Faithful witness” (cf. Rev. 1:5; 3:14). The term “before” (*enōpion*) can mean (1) “front of” or (2) “in the time of.” Therefore, this could refer to Jesus’ entire life of witness or specifically His trials (cf. Matt. 27:2; John 18:37).

**6:14 “that you keep the commandment without stain or reproach”** This may refer to vv. 11 and 12. Timothy was to live in obedience and purity, unlike the false teachers. See Special Topic at 3:2.

▣ **“until the appearing of”** In II Tim. 1:10 and Titus 2:11 this term (*epiphaneia*) is used of Jesus’ first coming, but here and in II Thess. 2:8; II Tim. 4:1,8; Titus 2:13 it is used of His Second Coming. The Second Coming has always been a strong incentive to live the Christian life. See Special Topic at Titus 2:13.

**6:15 “which He will bring about at the proper time”** This same phrase is used in 2:6 and Titus 1:3 of Jesus’ first coming. The “He” describes God the Father’s knowledge and control over the first and second comings of the Messiah (cf. Matt. 24:36; Acts 1:7).

▣ **“He who is the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords”** This prayer is similar to 1:17. These descriptive phrases initially and contextually refer to God the Father:

1. “blessed” (1:1)
2. “only Sovereign” (1:17; cf. Ecclesiasticus 46:5)
3. “Lord of lords” (Deut. 10:17; Ps. 136:3)

The title “King of kings” is parallel to “Lord of lords” and is used of Jesus in Rev. 17:14; 19:16. It originally referred to the kings of Mesopotamia, but was used by the Jews during the interbiblical period to refer to YHWH.

**6:16 “who alone possesses immortality”** This is the term “death” with the ALPHA PRIVATIVE (cf. I Cor. 15:53-54). This seems to be the basic meaning of the OT title “YHWH,” the ever living, only living One (cf. Exod. 3:14-16). Notice the inference of monotheism, “who alone possesses”! YHWH is the origin and source of life and there is no other! See note at 2:5.

▣ **“and dwells in unapproachable light”** The rabbis called the “cloud of glory” the *Shekinah*, which is from the Hebrew term “to dwell” (with the implication “to dwell with permanently,” cf. Exod. 24:17; 23:20).

▣ **“whom no man has seen or can see”** In the OT God’s holiness was so awesome that no sinful human could see God and live (cf. Gen. 16:13; 32:30; Exod. 20:19; 33:18-20; Judg. 6:22-23; 13:22; Isa. 6:5; John 6:46; I John 4:12). In the NT believers have seen Him truly revealed in Jesus (cf. I John 1:18; 6:46) and will see Him personally one day (cf. Matt. 5:8; Heb. 12:14; Rev. 22:40).

▣ **“to Him be honor and eternal dominion”** Paul often breaks into praise of God the Father (cf. 1:17). The Son is the Father’s instrument of creation, revelation, redemption, and judgment. However, the eternal kingdom belongs to the Father through the Son (cf. Dan. 7:13; I Cor. 15:25-28).

▣ **“Amen”** This is a Hebrew idiom of affirmation.

## SPECIAL TOPIC: AMEN

### I. OLD TESTAMENT

- A. The term “Amen” is from a Hebrew word for truth (*emeth*) or truthfulness (*emun, emunah*) and faith or faithfulness.
- B. Its etymology is from a person’s physical stable stance. The opposite would be one who is unstable, slipping (cf. Deut. 28:64-67; 38:16; Ps. 40:2; 73:18; Jer. 23:12) or stumbling (cf. Ps. 73:2). From this literal usage developed the metaphorical extension of faithful, trustworthy, loyal, and dependable (cf. Gen. 15:16; Hab. 2:4).
- C. Special usages
  1. a pillar, II Kgs. 18:16 (I Tim. 3:15)
  2. assurance, Exod. 17:12
  3. steadiness, Exod. 17:12
  4. stability, Isa. 33:6; 34:5-7
  5. true, I Kgs. 10:6; 17:24; 22:16; Prov. 12:22
  6. firm, II Chr. 20:20; Isa. 7:9
  7. reliable (Torah), Psa. 119:43,142,151,168
- D. In the OT two other Hebrew terms are used for active faith.
  1. *bathach*, trust
  2. *yra*, fear, respect, worship (cf. Gen. 22:12)
- E. From the sense of trust or trustworthiness developed a liturgical usage which was used to affirm a true or trustworthy statement of another (cf. Deut. 27:15-26; Neh. 8:6; Ps. 41:13; 70:19; 89:52; 106:48).
- F. The theological key to this term is not mankind’s faithfulness, but YHWH’s (cf. Exod. 34:6; Duet. 32:4; Ps. 108:4; 115:1; 117:2; 138:2). Fallen humanity’s only hope is the merciful faithful covenant loyalty of YHWH and His promises.

Those who know YHWH are to be like Him (cf. Hab. 2:4). The Bible is history and a record of God restoring His image (cf. Gen. 1:26-27) in mankind. Salvation restores mankind’s ability to have intimate fellowship with God. This is why we were created.

### II. NEW TESTAMENT

- A. The use of the word “amen” as a concluding liturgical affirmation of the trustworthiness of a statement is common in the NT (cf. I Cor. 14:16; II Cor. 1:20; Rev. 1:7; 5:14; 7:12).

- B. The use of the term as a close to a prayer is common in the NT (cf. Rom. 1:25; 9:5; 11:36; 16:27; Gal. 1:5; 6:18; Eph. 3:21; Phil. 4:20; II Thess. 3:18; I Tim. 1:17; 6:16; II Tim. 4:18).
- C. Jesus is the only one who used the term (often doubled in John) to introduce significant statements (cf. Luke 4:24; 12:37; 18:17,29; 21:32; 23:43)
- D. It is used as a title for Jesus in Rev. 3:14 (possibly a title of YHWH from Isa. 65:16).
- E. The concept of faithfulness or faith, trustworthiness or trust is expressed in the Greek term *pistos* or *pistis*, which is translated into English as trust, faith, believe.

**NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 6:17-19**

**<sup>17</sup>Instruct those who are rich in this present world not to be conceited or to fix their hope on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who richly supplies us with all things to enjoy. <sup>18</sup>Instruct them to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share, <sup>19</sup>storing up for themselves the treasure of a good foundation for the future, so that they may take hold of that which is life indeed.**

**6:17-19** One wonders if vv. 17-19 were an after-thought or if Paul received more information about the house churches in Ephesus. It is also possible that Paul wrote vv. 17-21 himself as he regularly closed his letters (cf. II Thess. 3:17-18).

**6:17 “Instruct those who are rich in this present world not to be conceited”** As verse 9 warns about an evil desire for money, verse 17 warns those who have money against putting their faith in it and not in Christ (cf. Matt. 6:19-21; 13:22; 19:23-30; James 1:9-11; 5:1-6).

**SPECIAL TOPIC: THIS AGE AND THE AGE TO COME**

The OT prophets viewed the future by an extension of the present. For them the future will be a restoration of geographical Israel. However, even they saw a new day (cf. Isa. 65:17; 66:22). With the continued willful rejection of YHWH by the descendants of Abraham (even after the exile) a new paradigm developed in Jewish intertestamental apocalyptic literature (i.e. I Enoch, IV Ezra, II Baruch). These writings begin to distinguish between two ages: a current evil age dominated by Satan and a coming age of righteousness dominated by the Spirit and inaugurated by the Messiah (often a dynamic warrior).

In this area of theology (eschatology) there is an obvious development. Theologians call this “progressive revelation.” The NT affirms this new cosmic reality of two ages (i.e. a temporal dualism):

<u>Jesus</u>	<u>Paul</u>	<u>Hebrews</u>
Matthew 12:32	Romans 12:2	1:2
Matthew 13:22 & 29	I Cor. 1:20; 2:6,8; 3:18	6:5
	II Cor. 4:4	11:3
	Galatians 1:4	
Mark 10:30	Eph. 1:21; 2:1,7; 6:12	
	I Timothy 6:17	
Luke 16:8	II Timothy 4:10	

Luke 18:30  
Luke 20:34-35

Titus 2:12

In NT theology these two Jewish ages have been overlapped because of the unexpected and overlooked predictions of the two comings of the Messiah. The incarnation of Jesus fulfilled the OT prophecies of the inauguration of the new age. However, the OT also saw His coming as Judge and Conqueror, yet He came at first as the Suffering Servant (cf. Isa. 53), humble and meek (cf. Zech. 9:9). He will return in power just as the OT predicted (cf. Rev. 19). This two-stage fulfillment caused the Kingdom to be present (inaugurated), but future (not fully consummated). This is the NT tension of the already, but not yet!

▣ **“or to fix their hope on the uncertainty of riches”** This is a PERFECT ACTIVE INFINITIVE. Humans tend to trust in their resources, not God’s resources (cf. 4:10; 5:5). Some of Jesus’ strongest words were directed at the wealthy (cf. Luke 18:18-30).

**6:18 “Instruct them”** Here are Paul’s threefold guidelines for those who have worldly goods: (1) continue doing good (cf. 5:10; II Tim. 2:21; 3:17; Titus 3:1,8,14); (2) be ready to share; and (3) be generous (cf. II Cor. 8-9).

**6:19** This verse reminds one of Jesus’ Sermon on the Mount, especially chapter 6 (cf. Luke 12:15). It uses two metaphors: (1) storing up true riches and (2) building a sure and strong foundation. The wise use of wealth does both! By them believers take hold of true life (i.e. eternal life, cf. v. 12).

**NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 6:20-21**

**<sup>20</sup>O Timothy, guard what has been entrusted to you, avoiding worldly *and* empty chatter *and* the opposing arguments of what is falsely called “knowledge” <sup>21</sup>which some have professed and thus gone astray from the faith. Grace be with you.**

**6:20-21** These closing verses may have been hand written by Paul himself to authenticate the letter (cf. II Thess. 3:17-18).

**6:20 “guard what has been entrusted to you”** The verb is an AORIST ACTIVE IMPERATIVE. The term “entrusted” is related to the banking term for “deposit” which is used three times in the Pastoral Letters for “the gospel” (cf. 1:11) or the body of Christian truth (cf. Acts 6:7; 13:8; 14:22; Gal. 1:23; 3:23; 6:10; Phil. 1:27; Jude v. 3,20). Believers are stewards of the gospel (cf. I Cor. 4:1-2; II Tim. 1:12,14).

▣ **“avoiding worldly *and* empty chatter *and* the opposing arguments of what is falsely called knowledge”** “Avoiding” is a PRESENT MIDDLE PARTICIPLE used as an IMPERATIVE. I Timothy is a letter primarily about heresy, not church organization. The guidelines in the book are directly related to the problems caused by the false teachers, not necessarily universal guidelines for all churches of all times in all places.

▣ **“knowledge”** The false teachers in the Pastoral Letters are a combination of “Jewish legalists” and Greek gnostics (much like those in Colossians and Ephesians). Knowledge, usually secret or specially revealed knowledge, was the claim of these teachers. Somehow these teachers separated truth from life and turned salvation into knowledge, divorced from godliness.

**6:21****NASB** “which some have professed and thus gone astray from the faith”**NKJV** “by professing it, some have strayed concerning the faith”**NRSV** “by professing it some have missed the mark as regards the faith”**TEV** “for some have claimed to possess it, and as a result they have lost the way of faith”**NJB** “by adopting this, some have missed the goal of faith”

This same word is used in 1:6 to describe the false teachers; also notice 1:19; 4:1-2; 5:15; 6:10. There are so many strong warnings in this book.

Remember Christianity is (1) a person to be welcomed; (2) doctrine to be believed; and (3) a corresponding life to be lived! If any one of these is de-emphasized or left out, then tremendous problems occur (cf. Matt. 7:21-27).

▣ **“Grace be with you”** The “you” is PLURAL. This shows that the letter was to be read publicly. Notice Paul prays for them God’s grace and true knowledge (cf. v. 20)! This same PLURAL ending is in all the Pastoral Letters (cf. II Tim. 4:22; Titus 3:15).

**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

This is a study guide commentary, which means that you are responsible for your own interpretation of the Bible. Each of us must walk in the light we have. You, the Bible, and the Holy Spirit are priority in interpretation. You must not relinquish this to a commentator.

These discussion questions are provided to help you think through the major issues of this section of the book. They are meant to be thought-provoking, not definitive.

1. Why didn’t the Christian church attack the issue of slavery? (Other passages of Paul’s which deal with slaves are I Cor. 7:21-24; Gal. 3:28; Eph. 6:5-9; Col. 3:22-25; Philemon vv. 16,17; Titus 2:9; I Pet. 2:18).
2. What do verses 1 and 2 say about our modern day employer/employee relationships?
3. What is heresy?
4. What is the difference between a false teacher and differences in interpretation?
5. Is money evil?
6. Describe as much as you can the theology of the false teachers.

# TITUS

## INTRODUCTION TO TITUS

### I. Brief Background

- A. Titus is part of the collection of Paul's letters known as "the Pastoral Letters." This is because I Timothy, Titus, and II Timothy deal with Paul's admonitions to his co-workers on (1) how to deal with false teachers, (2) how to establish leadership in local churches, and (3) how to encourage godliness. The apparent chronological order of these books is: I Timothy and/or Titus then later, II Timothy. Titus deals with the same subjects as I Timothy. Titus may have been written first because its introduction is so lengthy and theologically involved, much like Romans.
- B. The geographical movements of Paul and these co-workers do not fit into the geographical movements of Paul in Acts. Therefore, many assume that this is evidence that Paul was released from prison and conducted a fourth missionary journey.
- C. The dates for this fourth missionary journey would have to be sometime between the early A.D. 60's to A.D. 68 because Paul was beheaded under Nero and Nero killed himself in A.D. 68 (many scholars assume Paul was beheaded in the persecution of A.D. 65).

### II. Titus, the Man

- A. Titus was one of Paul's most trusted co-workers. This is evidenced by the fact that Paul sent him to the trouble spots of Corinth and Crete.
- B. He was a full Gentile (Timothy was only half-Greek), converted under Paul's preaching. Paul refused to circumcise him (cf. Gal. 2:3).
- C. He is mentioned often in Paul's letters (cf. II Cor. 2:13; 7:6-15; 8:6-24; 12:18; Gal. 2:1-3; II Tim. 4:10) and it is very surprising that Luke does not mention him in Acts. Some commentaries theorize that (1) he may have been a relative of Luke (possibly a brother) and to include his name would have been seen as an act of cultural impropriety on Luke's part or (2) Titus is Luke's major source of information about Paul's life and ministry and, therefore, like Luke, would not be named.
- D. He accompanied Paul and Barnabas to the all important Jerusalem Council, recorded in Acts 15, where the issue of the new Gentile believers' relationship to the Mosaic Law was debated and settled.
- E. This book focuses on advice Paul gives Titus about his ministry on Crete. Titus is acting as Paul's official surrogate/legate.
- F. The last information in the NT about Titus is that he was sent to minister in Dalmatia (cf. II Tim. 4:10).

### III. The False Teachers

- A. There is obviously a group of false teachers on Crete who opposed Paul's gospel.
- B. Their theological teachings led to conflict with the godly lifestyle that is expected of all believers.
  - 1. references to godly living: 1:1,16; 2:7,14; 3:1,8,14
  - 2. summaries of character qualities: 2:11-14; 3:4-7
- C. There is an obvious Jewish flavor to this false teaching (cf. 1:10,14; 3:8-9). These heresies are a combination of Jewish legalism and Greek speculative thought (gnosticism, see Special Topic at 1:1). They are similar to the false teachers addressed in I Timothy, Colossians, and Ephesians. The focus of the Pastoral Letters is on heresy, and not exclusively church organization.

### **READING CYCLE ONE (see p. vi)**

This is a study guide commentary, which means that you are responsible for your own interpretation of the Bible. Each of us must walk in the light we have. You, the Bible, and the Holy Spirit are priority in interpretation. You must not relinquish this to a commentator.

Read the entire biblical book at one sitting. State the central theme of the entire book in your own words.

- 1. Theme of entire book
- 2. Type of literature (genre)

### **READING CYCLE TWO (see pp. vi-vii.)**

This is a study guide commentary, which means that you are responsible for your own interpretation of the Bible. Each of us must walk in the light we have. You, the Bible, and the Holy Spirit are priority in interpretation. You must not relinquish this to a commentator.

Read the entire biblical book a second time at one sitting. Outline the main subjects and express the subject in a single sentence.

- 1. Subject of first literary unit
- 2. Subject of second literary unit
- 3. Subject of third literary unit
- 4. Subject of fourth literary unit
- 5. Etc.

# TITUS 1

## PARAGRAPH DIVISIONS OF MODERN TRANSLATIONS\*

UBS <sup>4</sup>	NKJV	NRSV	TEV	NJB
Salutation 1:1-4	Greeting 1:1-3 1:4a 1:4b	Salutation 1:1-3 1:4a 1:4b	Opening Greetings 1:1-3 1:4a 1:4b	Address 1:1-4
Titus' Work in Crete 1:5-9	Qualified Elders 1:5-9 The Elders' Task	Administration 1:5-9	Titus' Work in Crete 1:5-9	The Appointment of Elders 1:5-9 Opposing the False Teachers
1:10-12a 1:12b-16	1:10-16	1:10-16	1:10-16	1:10-14 1:15-16

### READING CYCLE THREE (see p. vii)

*FOLLOWING THE ORIGINAL AUTHOR'S INTENT AT THE PARAGRAPH LEVEL*

This is a study guide commentary, which means that you are responsible for your own interpretation of the Bible. Each of us must walk in the light we have. You, the Bible, and the Holy Spirit are priority in interpretation. You must not relinquish this to a commentator.

Read the chapter in one sitting. Identify the subjects. Compare your subject divisions with the five modern translations. Paragraphing is not inspired, but it is the key to following the original author's intent, which is the heart of interpretation. Every paragraph has one and only one subject.

1. First paragraph
2. Second paragraph
3. Third paragraph
4. Etc.

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\* Although they are not inspired, paragraph divisions are the key to understanding and following the original author's intent. Each modern translation has divided and summarized the paragraphs. Every paragraph has one central topic, truth, or thought. Each version encapsulates that topic in its own distinct way. As you read the text, ask yourself which translation fits your understanding of the subject and verse divisions.

In every chapter we must read the Bible first and try to identify its subjects (paragraphs), then compare our understanding with the modern versions. Only when we understand the original author's intent by following his logic and presentation can we truly understand the Bible. Only the original author is inspired—readers have no right to change or modify the message. Bible readers do have the responsibility of applying the inspired truth to their day and their lives.

**Note that all technical terms and abbreviations are explained fully in Appendices One, Two, and Three.**

## WORD AND PHRASE STUDY

### NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 1:1-3

**<sup>1</sup>Paul, a bond-servant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ, for the faith of those chosen of God and the knowledge of the truth which is according to godliness, <sup>2</sup>in the hope of eternal life, which God, who cannot lie, promised long ages ago, <sup>3</sup>but at the proper time manifested, *even* His word, in the proclamation with which I was entrusted according to the commandment of God our Savior,**

**1:1 “Paul”** This Greek term means “small.” The question is did Paul give himself this name or did his parents. Paul considered himself the least of the saints because he once persecuted the Church (cf. Acts 7:58; 8:1; 9:1-2; 22:4,19-20; 26:10-11; I Cor. 15:9; Eph. 3:8; I Tim. 1:15). However, most Jews of the Diaspora (living outside Palestine) were given two names at birth during this period, one Jewish and one Greek.

▣ **“a bond-servant of God”** This was an honorific title used of Old Testament leaders (cf. Deut. 34:5; Josh. 1:1-2; 24:29; II Sam. 7:5; Ps. 89:3; 105:42; Dan. 6:20; 9:11). Paul usually uses the phrase “servant of Christ” (cf. Rom. 1:1; Gal. 1:10; Phil. 1:1). However, here he was “a bond-servant of God.” This may point to the fact that these false teachers were somehow connected to Judaism.

1. God is mentioned five times in the opening of this letter (cf. vv. 1-4)
2. this may also explain why the title “Savior” is used three times for God the Father as well as three times for Jesus
3. it is obvious from 1:10,14; 3:8-9 that there was a Jewish element to the controversy on Crete.

▣ **“an apostle”** This is literally “sent one,” which had the implication within rabbinical Judaism of one delegated with official authority. It is similar to our concept of ambassador (cf. II Cor. 5:20). This was also Paul’s way of asserting and reinforcing his authority in Christ, as would the previous title “Servant of God.” He was establishing his credentials so as to empower Titus. This letter would have been read to the entire church as the PLURALS of I Tim. 6:21; II Tim. 4:22; and Titus 3:15 clearly show.

▣ **“for the faith”** The NOUN has no DEFINITE ARTICLE; therefore, it could refer to (1) one’s personal trust in Christ; (2) faithful living (OT sense); or (3) the body of Christian doctrine (cf. Acts 6:7; 18:8; 14:22; Gal. 1:23; 3:23; 6:10; Phil. 1:27; Jude 3,20). Paul’s mission was either to (1) stimulate the faith of those already saved or (2) bring those elect from eternity into personal faith (“calling out the called”). Both are necessary, but which is being emphasized here is uncertain.

▣ **“of those chosen of God”** This is literally “according to faith of elect ones.” In the OT election was used of service to God, while in the NT it is used of salvation by God (cf. Rom. 8:29-30; 9:1ff; Eph. 1:4-11; II Tim. 1:9). This sense of election is expressed well in Acts 13:48. The church is the elect of God (cf. Rom. 8:32; Col. 3:12; II Tim. 2:10). The church was not a new entity, but an extension of the OT people of God. See the Special Topic on Election (Predestination) at I Tim. 6:12.

▣ **“the knowledge”** This is the Greek compound term *epiginōskō*, which implies a full experiential knowledge. This is an idiom of true conversion (cf. John 8:32; I Tim. 4:3; II Tim. 2:25; I John 2:21; III John 1). This was in contrast to the false teachers whose emphasis was on a secret knowledge which was unrelated to a holy life. This same phrase is used in I Tim. 2:4, but with an emphasis on God’s will for all humans!

## SPECIAL TOPIC: GnosticisM

- A. Most of our knowledge of this heresy comes from the gnostic writings of the second century. However, its ideas were present in the first century (Dead Sea Scrolls) and the Apostle John's writings.
- B. The problem at Ephesus (I Timothy), Crete (Titus) and Colossae (Colossians) was a hybrid of incipient gnosticism and legalistic Judaism.
- C. Some tenets of Valentinian and Cerinthian Gnosticism of the second century
  1. Matter and spirit were co-eternal (an ontological dualism). Matter is evil, spirit is good. God, who is spirit, cannot be directly involved with molding evil matter.
  2. There are emanations (*eons* or angelic levels) between God and matter. The last or lowest one was YHWH of the Old Testament, who formed the universe (*kosmos*).
  3. Jesus was an emanation, like YHWH, but higher on the scale, closer to the true God. Some put Him as the highest, but still less than God and certainly not incarnate deity (cf. John 1:14). Since matter is evil, Jesus could not have a human body and still be divine. He appeared to be human, but was really only a spirit (cf. I John 1:1-3; 4:1-6).
  4. Salvation was obtained through faith in Jesus plus special knowledge, which is only known by special persons. Knowledge (passwords) was needed to pass through heavenly spheres. Jewish legalism was also required to reach God.
- D. The gnostic false teachers advocated two opposite ethical systems
  1. For some, lifestyle was totally unrelated to salvation. For them, salvation and spirituality were encapsulated into secret knowledge (passwords) through the angelic spheres (*eons*).
  2. For others, lifestyle was crucial to salvation. In this book, the false teachers emphasized an ascetic lifestyle as evidence of true salvation (cf. 2:16-23).
- E. Good reference books are
  1. *The Nag Hammadi Library* by James M. Robinson and Richard Smith
  2. *The Gnostic Religion* by Hans Jonas

▣ **“of the truth which is according to godliness”** This is a strong contrast to the false teachers' exclusivism. They emphasized knowledge as the possession of an elite group. Truth must be related to daily life (cf. I Tim. 2:2). Godliness or piety (*eusebeia*) is a common theme in the Pastoral Letters (cf. I Tim. 2:2; 3:16; 4:7,8; 6:3,5,6,11; II Tim. 3:5; Titus 1:1; a compound form, *theosebeia*, in I Tim. 2:10; and the adjective *eusebōs* in II Tim. 3:10; Titus 2:12). See note at I Tim. 4:7.

This obviously reflects the errors of the false teachers. Believers are not only called to heaven when they die, but to Christlikeness now (cf. Rom. 8:28-29; II Cor. 3:18; Gal. 4:19; Eph. 1:4; I Thess. 3:13; 4:3). The purpose of the gospel does not end until all know the Savior and all reflect His character. See Special Topic: Truth in Paul's Writings at I Tim. 2:4.

**1:2 “in the hope of eternal life”** The preposition *epi* implies “resting on.” The RSV and TEV have “which is based on.” There is ambiguity of this term “hope” regarding the consummation of God's eternal plan of redemption.

Eternal life in Paul's writings is always the life of the new age, eschatological life (cf. Rom. 2:7; 6:22,23; Gal. 6:8; I Tim. 1:16; Titus 1:2; 3:7). In John's writings it refers to a present reality based on trusting Christ as Savior (cf. John 3:15; 10:28; 12:25; 17:2-3; I John 1:2; 2:25; 3:15; 5:11,13,20). Both are true. The new

age has been inaugurated with Jesus' first coming. Believers are already part of this new age. The new age will be consummated at the Second Coming.

### **SPECIAL TOPIC: HOPE**

Paul often uses this term in several related senses. Often it is associated with the consummation of the believer's faith (cf. I Tim. 1:1). This can be expressed as glory, eternal life, ultimate salvation, Second Coming, etc. The consummation is certain, but the time element is future and unknown.

1. the Second Coming (cf. Gal. 5:5; Eph. 1:18; 4:4; Titus 2:13)
2. Jesus is our hope (cf. I Tim. 1:1)
3. the believer to be presented to God (cf. Col. 1:22-23; I Thess. 2:19)
4. hope laid up in heaven (cf. Col. 1:5)
5. ultimate salvation (cf. I Thess. 4:13)
6. the glory of God (cf. Rom. 5:2; II Cor. 3:7-12; Col. 1:27)
7. the salvation of Gentiles by Christ (cf. Col. 1:27)
8. assurance of salvation (cf. I Thess. 5:8-9)
9. eternal life (cf. Titus 1:2; 3:7)
10. redemption of all creation (cf. Rom. 8:20-22)
11. adoption's consummation (cf. Rom. 8:23-25)
12. a title for God (cf. Rom. 15:13)
13. OT guide for NT believers (cf. Rom. 15:4)

▣ **“God, who cannot lie”** Our faith rests on God's faithfulness and trustworthiness regarding His promises (cf. Num. 23:19; I Sam. 15:29; Rom. 3:4; II Tim. 2:13; Heb. 6:18). Our hope rests on God's unchanging character (cf. Ps. 102:27; Mal. 3:6; Heb. 13:8; James 1:17).

▣ **“promised long ages ago”** This is an AORIST MIDDLE INDICATIVE. The MIDDLE VOICE emphasizes the subject, God (cf. Rom. 4:21; II Tim. 1:9). The phrase “long ages ago” is literally “before times eternal.” This may refer to God's redemptive promises and provisions before creation (cf. Matt. 25:34; John 17:24; Eph. 1:4; I Pet. 1:19-20; Rev. 13:8).

**1:3**

**NASB, NKJV** “at the proper time”

**NRSV**

**NJB** “in due time”

**TEV** “at the right time”

This phrase is PLURAL (i.e. “before times eternal”) and may reflect the whole Christ event, (cf. I Tim. 2:6; 6:14-15; Gal. 4:4). This may refer to (1) the pervasiveness of the Greek language; (2) the political peace of Rome; and (3) the religious expectation of the world after the loss of honor and belief in the Homeric gods.

▣ **“manifested”** This means “clearly brought to light” or “clearly revealed.” Jesus is clearly revealed in the Gospels and apostolic preaching (cf. II Tim. 1:10).

▣ **“His word”** This can refer to (1) the gospel message about Christ or (2) Christ Himself (cf. John 1:1; Rev. 19:13).

▣ **“with which I was entrusted”** Paul deeply sensed his stewardship of the gospel (cf. I Cor. 9:17; Gal. 2:7; I Thess. 2:4; I Tim. 1:11) and also the stewardship of all believers (cf. I Cor. 4:1-2 and I Pet. 4:10).

▣ **“God our Savior”** This is a common title for God in the Pastoral Letters (cf. 1:3; 2:10; 3:4). However, in each context it is also used of Jesus (cf. 1:4; 2:13; 3:6). It was a title (as was “Lord”) claimed by the Roman Caesars.

**NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 1:4**

**<sup>4</sup>To Titus, my true child in a common faith: Grace and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Savior.**

**1:4 “to Titus”** This letter is addressed to Titus, but it was to be read publicly to all the house churches (cf. the PLURAL of “you” of 3:15). Titus was Paul’s faithful Gentile Apostolic legate. It is unusual that he is not named in Acts (see Introduction II. C.).

▣ **“my true child”** Paul uses this same terminology for Timothy in I Tim. 1:2 and “my son” in II Tim. 1:2 of Onesimus in Philemon v. 10. It is a familial metaphor for Paul’s converts and friends.

▣ **“in a common faith”** “Common” is not used here with the connotation of unclean as in Acts 10:14 and 11:8, but in its connotation of universal or normal. A similar phrase is used in Jude v. 3. It is common in the sense that it is for all humans and available to all humans. This may be a direct antithesis to the false teachers’ elitism and exclusivism.

▣ **“Grace and peace from God the Father”** These two terms often form Paul’s opening prayers. It is possible that “grace” (*charis*) is a wordplay on “greetings” (*charein*, cf. James 1:1; Acts 15:23), the similar Greek word that opened most Greek letters. Paul takes the normal cultural opening, *charein* and changes it to the uniquely Christian *charis*.

The term “peace” may reflect the common Hebrew greeting “*Shalom*.” If so, Paul combines both cultural greetings into one Christian greeting.

The Textus Receptus (cf. KJV) and the Greek manuscripts A, C<sup>2</sup>, and K, add “mercy” to grace and peace. This is probably an assimilation from I Tim. 1:2 and II Tim. 1:2. The shorter form is found in manuscripts N, C\*, D, G, and P as well as the Latin Vulgate. The UBS<sup>4</sup> gives the shorter reading an “A” rating (certain).

▣ **“Christ Jesus our Savior”** This phrase links God the Father, YHWH of the OT, and Jesus the Messiah by the use of the term “Savior” (cf. 1:3-4; 2:10,13; 3:4,6). It is used of God in v. 3 and of Jesus in v. 4. Using OT titles of God applied to Jesus was a common way for the NT authors to assert the deity of Jesus.

**NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 1:5-9**

**<sup>5</sup>For this reason I left you in Crete, that you would set in order what remains and appoint elders in every city as I directed you, <sup>6</sup>namely, if any man is above reproach, the husband of one wife, having children who believe, not accused of dissipation or rebellion. <sup>7</sup>For the overseer must be above reproach as God’s steward, not self-willed, not quick-tempered, not addicted to wine, not pugnacious, not fond of sordid gain, <sup>8</sup>but hospitable, loving what is good, sensible, just, devout, self-controlled,**

**holding fast the faithful word which is in accordance with the teaching, so that he will be able both to exhort in sound doctrine and to refute those who contradict.**

**1:5 “For this reason”** Titus’ assignment was to (1) set in order the things that were lacking or left undone, and (2) to appoint elders (cf. Acts 14:23). The problem was not to reform an existing structure, which proved to be inadequate, but to establish a structure. Here we see a different type of polity structure than I Tim. 3, which was addressed to the established church at Ephesus. Notice Titus appoints, not a congregational vote.

Notice the phrase “in each town.” Remember both Timothy and Titus were apostolic legates, not local pastors or regional leaders.

▣ **“Crete”** This was the original home of the Philistines and the pre-Greek Minoan culture. Acts 27:7-13 states that Paul visited this island on his way to Rome, but it does not record that he preached there then. This is why many commentators (including this author) believe these Pastoral Letters reflect a fourth missionary journey after Paul was released from Roman imprisonment sometime in the early 60’s.

▣ **“that”** This is a *hina* (purpose clause) so characteristic of Paul’s letters (cf. 1:9,13; 2:4,5,8,10,12,14; 3:7,8,13,14).

▣ **“appoint”** Paul directs Titus to appoint elders in these new churches as he and Barnabas did in Acts 14:23. Paul does not direct Timothy to do the same because the house churches in Ephesus were an established work (cf. I Tim. 3).

▣ **“elders”** The term *presbuteroi* is synonymous with “overseers” (cf. v. 7) and “pastors” (cf. Acts 20:17,28; Titus 1:5,7). This term has a Jewish background, while “overseers” has a Greek city-state political-administrative background. Notice the qualification in I Tim. 3:6 that they not be new converts is left out. This implies these were new churches being formed.

▣ **“as I directed you”** This is an AORIST MIDDLE IMPERATIVE. Titus was acting as Paul’s apostolic surrogate.

**1:6 “if”** This is a FIRST CLASS CONDITIONAL SENTENCE. Paul assumed there would be qualified men in every city.

▣  
**NASB** “is above reproach”  
**NKJV, NRSV** “blameless”  
**TEV** “without fault”  
**NJB** “irreproachable character”

This is the key to all of the qualifications, both positive and negative, of both I Timothy and Titus (cf. vv. 6,7; I Tim. 3:2,7,10; 5:7; 6:14). This is not the exact Greek term found in I Tim. 3, but a synonym used in exactly the same way. The minister must be a good witness to those within the believing community and to the unbelievers in the community (cf. 2:5,8,10; Acts 2:47; 4:4,31; 5:13,42). See Special Topic at I Tim. 3:2.

These qualifications must be interpreted in light of two purposes: (1) the leaders must be acceptable to believers and unbelievers; evangelism is the ultimate goal and (2) the leaders must be observably different from the false teachers. It is difficult to know exactly how to apply these qualifications to different cultures and time periods. Believers must guard against historically conditioned rules, yet be open to God-given principles. My experience with modern western churches has been that:

1. they proof-text one or more of these qualifications, but ignore or depreciate others
2. they add to these guidelines and claim biblical authority for the additions

3. they interpret these rules in light of our day instead of a first century culture, which was disrupted by false teachers
4. they take ambiguous phrases and turn them into dogmatic rules that universally apply.

Please consult the more complete discussion on I Timothy 3.

☐ **“the husband of one wife”** This phrase has caused much discussion. It is obvious that it was also an important issue to the church at Ephesus (cf. I Tim. 3:1,12; 5:7). This can refer to (1) polygamy; (2) remarriage after divorce; (3) second marriage after the death of a spouse; or (4) a man who is faithful and attentive to his wife and family. The early church put a high value on family relationships, and any problem in this area disqualifies one from leadership positions in the church. The first was not a problem in the Roman Empire but may have been a problem in the Jewish community (Jacob, Elkanah, David, Solomon); the second was a great problem in the Empire as well as a problem within Judaism based on the rabbinical discussions between the conservative school of Shammai and the liberal school of Hillel. The third was a major concern of the Early church, especially Tertullian, and is still a problem in Europe; however in I Tim. 5:9 (cf. Rom. 7:1-2; I Cor. 7) widows can remarry with no reproach. The fourth relates to the false teachers’ depreciation of marriage (cf. I Tim. 4:3). In this sense it is another way of asserting the need for a strong family life, yet not necessarily excluding unmarried men (remember Jesus and Paul were single).

☐ **“having children who believe, not accused of dissipation or rebellion”** This is discussed in I Tim. 3:4-5). Leadership qualities can be seen in one’s home life. Any kind of difficulty between husband and wife or children or grandparents was a basis for disqualification in this early church setting. “No handle for criticism” is the main concern. How one rules his home shows how he would tend to lead the church. Those of us who are vocational ministers worry about this qualification! Often preacher’s kids rebel even in the presence of a godly home. Maybe our lack of dogmatism on this point should be reflected toward the others’ qualifications as well.

☐ Does v. 6 apply to the children of a pastor, or is it two more qualifications for the pastor? Either way it focuses on the family’s lifestyle and attitude toward authority. I think in an extended list of qualifications that it refers to the prospective leader.

**1:7 “the overseer”** This term *episkopon* is usually translated “overseer” or “bishop.” The context shows that they refer to the same person (cf. 1:5,7 and Acts 20:17,28). This term has a Greek city-state, political-administrative background. See note at I Tim. 3:2.

☐ **“as God’s steward”** This refers to a household steward (cf. I Cor. 4:1; 9:17). This family term is related to the qualifications of v. 6. The pastor as a family man reflects how he will lead the church. There are five negative characteristics in v. 7 and six positive characteristics in v. 8. See Special Topic: Vices and Virtues in the NT at I Tim. 1:9.

☐

<b>NASB, NKJV</b>	<b>“not self-willed”</b>
<b>NRSV, TEV</b>	<b>“not arrogant”</b>
<b>NJB</b>	<b>“never arrogant”</b>

This is a compound term from *autus* (one’s self) and *edomai* (pleasure). It characterizes that person who is willful, obstinate, arrogant, self-pleasing (cf. II Pet. 2:10).

▣ **“not quick-tempered”** This is the term *orgē*, which referred to an outburst of anger. It is the opposite of the terms “gentle” and “peaceful” in the list of qualifications in I Tim. 3:3. This characterizes one prone to anger or drastic mood swings.

▣  
NASB, NRSV           **“addicted to wine”**  
NKJV                   **“not given to wine”**  
TEV                     **“or a drunkard”**  
NJB                     **“nor a heavy drinker”**

This seems to be an allusion from the Septuagint of Prov. 23:29-35. It must be re-emphasized that the Bible rails against drunkenness but does not teach total abstinence (cf. Gen. 27:28; Ps. 104:14,15; Eccl. 9:7; Prov. 31:6-7). Total abstinence comes from an individual believer’s commitment to the Lord Jesus based on the limiting of one’s personal freedoms because of love for others within the culture in which he/she ministers (cf. Rom. 14:1-15:13; I Cor. 8-9; 10:23-33). See Special Topic: Biblical Attitudes Toward Alcohol (fermentation) and Alcoholism (addiction) at I Tim. 3:3.

▣  
NASB                   **“not pugnacious”**  
NKJV, NRSV,  
TEV, NJB           **“not violent”**

This is literally “not a striker.” This may be related to the overuse of alcohol or certain personality types (cf. I Tim. 3:3).

▣  
NASB                   **“not fond of sordid gain”**  
NKJV                   **“not greedy for money”**  
NRSV                   **“or greedy for gain”**  
TEV                     **“or greedy for money”**  
NJB                     **“nor avaricious”**

This same problem is reflected in the false teachers in v. 11. See fuller note at I Tim. 3:8.

**1:8 “hospitable”** This is literally “lover of strangers.” The inns of Paul’s day were notorious houses of prostitution; therefore, Christians, and especially Christian leadership, had to have their homes open for itinerant missionaries and for the needy of the community (cf. I Tim. 5:10; Rom. 12:13; Heb. 13:2; I Pet. 4:9; III John v. 5).

▣ **“loving what is good”** Both of the first two terms of v. 8 are compounds of *phileos* and *agathos*. This phrase was a common phrase of affirmation in the Greco-Roman culture. It has been found often in their inscriptions. Its opposite is found in II Tim. 3:3, which characterizes the false teachers.

▣  
NASB, NJB           **“sensible”**  
NKJV                   **“sober-minded”**  
NRSV                   **“prudent”**  
TEV                     **“disciplined”**

This term in its various forms is common in the Pastoral Letters (cf. I Tim. 2:9,15; 3:2; II Tim. 1:7; Titus 1:8; 2:2,4,5,6,9,12,15). The term reflects the avoidance of the extremes. It implies a balanced life.



NASB “just, devout”  
 NKJV “just, holy”  
 NRSV, NJB “upright, devout”  
 TEV “upright, holy”

These qualities are not listed in I Tim. 3. They were often linked together in Greek culture. They are terms that reflect the relationship between duty toward God and duty toward man.

▣ **“self-controlled”** This describes Paul’s preaching before Felix and Drusilla in Acts 24:24ff. It is used in connection with one of Paul’s athletic metaphors in I Cor. 9:25. It is also used of a quality of Christian maturity in Titus 2:2 and II Pet. 1:6. The noun appears in the list of the fruit of the Spirit in Gal. 5:23. It reflects someone who, through the Spirit, has been able to control the passions and pulls of a fallen world system, the temptations of Satan (demonic) and a fallen sin nature. This describes a believer who has become Christ-controlled.

**1:9**

NASB, NKJV “holding fast the faithful word”  
 NRSV “must have a firm grasp of the word that is trustworthy”  
 TEV “must hold firmly to the message which can be trusted”  
 NJB “a firm grasp of the unchanging message”

This is a PRESENT MIDDLE PARTICIPLE. Believers are to be a link in the chain of apostolic, historical Christianity. They must grasp and hold on tenaciously to the Old and New Testaments which are the self-revelation of the one and only true God. It is their, and our, only guide for faith and practice!



NASB, NRSV “which is in accordance with the teaching”  
 NKJV “as he has been taught”  
 TEV “which agrees with the doctrine”  
 NJB “of the tradition”

Church leaders must pass on the Apostolic truths they have been taught without change.

▣ **“so that he will be able both to exhort in sound doctrine”** The minister, by personal preparation, spiritual giftedness, and love must be able to work with believers and non-believers. His task involves teaching, preaching, and modeling (i.e. living out) the gospel and correcting false teachings (cf. II Tim. 4:2).

▣ **“and to refute those who contradict”** The next few verses (cf. vv. 10-16) describe the attitudes and actions of these false teachers. There was an obvious Jewish element (cf. vv. 10,14).

**NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 1:10-16**

<sup>10</sup>For there are many rebellious men, empty talkers and deceivers, especially those of the circumcision, <sup>11</sup>who must be silenced because they are upsetting whole families, teaching things they should not *teach* for the sake of sordid gain. <sup>12</sup>One of themselves, a prophet of their own, said, “Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, lazy gluttons.” <sup>13</sup>This testimony is true. For this reason reprove them severely so that they may be sound in the faith, <sup>14</sup>not paying attention to Jewish myths and commandments of men who turn away from the truth. <sup>15</sup>To the pure, all things are pure; but to those who are defiled and unbelieving, nothing is pure, but both their mind and their conscience are defiled.

**<sup>16</sup>They profess to know God, but by *their* deeds they deny *Him*, being detestable and disobedient and worthless for any good deed.**

**1:10**

**NASB** “rebellious men”  
**NKJV, NJB** “insubordinate”  
**NRSV** “rebellious people”  
**TEV** “who rebel”

This is the term “be subject” (*hupotassō*) with an ALPHA PRIVATIVE (cf. 1:6). This means “not under authority.” This relates contextually to “those who contradict” in v. 9. They are described in 3:9-11.



**NASB** “empty talkers and deceivers”  
**NKJV, NRSV** “idle talkers and deceivers”  
**TEV** “deceive others with their nonsense”  
**NJB** “who talk nonsense and try to make others believe it”

The primary problem of the Pastoral Letters is false teachers and their converts. What we believe and how we live are crucial aspects of Christianity.

▣ **“those of the circumcision”** This phrase reminds one of Paul’s theological opponents at the Jerusalem Council (Acts 15) and in the churches of Galatia (Gal. 2:12ff). It is uncertain how these early Jewish legalists, who asserted that people had to become Jewish and keep the Mosaic Law before they could trust Jesus and become Christians, are related to the false teachers of Colossians, Ephesians, and the Pastoral Letters. These later heresies seem to be a combination of Jewish legalism and Greek philosophical thought (gnostics). See Introduction to I Timothy, C. False Teachers.

With the death of the Apostles and the rapid spread of Christianity, many factious groups developed through the ancient Near East and Mediterranean world. The NT gives guidelines on how to identify these false teachers, especially Matt. 7 and the book of I John, which focus on appropriate lifestyle and true doctrine.

**1:11 “who must be silenced”** This is a PRESENT INFINITIVE of the compound “to put on the mouth” (i.e. to muzzle, to gag, or silence). Church leaders must control who speaks in the house churches. The same principle is true today. Religious and academic freedoms do not give anyone and everyone the right to address the gathered people of God!

▣ **“they are upsetting whole families”** This could refer to house churches (cf. Rom. 16:5; I Cor. 16:19; Col. 4:15; I Tim. 3:15) or to the exploitation of widows and those they talk to (cf. II Tim. 3:6).

▣ **“for the sake of sordid gain”** This shows the true nature of the false teachers (cf. I Tim. 1:7; 6:5,10; II Pet. 2:3,14; Jude 16). The church leaders of I Tim. 3 must be free of this temptation (cf. I Tim. 3:3,8; 6:9-10).

**1:12 “One of themselves a prophet”** Epimenides lived in the sixth century B.C. and was from Crete. The fact that Paul quotes one of their poets shows the Greek influence on this island and in the heresy. Paul quotes from Greek philosophers and poets at least three times in his writings (cf. Acts 17:28; I Cor. 15:13; Titus 1:12). His home town of Tarsus was known for its educational institutions. Paul was highly educated in both Greek and Hebrew culture.

Paul may have called Epimenides a prophet because he wrote truly about the inhabitants of Crete or possibly because the Cretans considered him a speaker inspired by the Greek gods. He was known as one of the wisest men of Crete.

▣ **“Cretans are always liars”** This is in hexameter poetic form. The Cretans believed and bragged that Zeus was buried on their island. The term “cretinous” meant “a liar.” In this context this characteristic seems to relate to the false teachers, not the churches or the general public.

▣ **“lazy gluttons”** The basic meaning of this phrase is greed (cf. Phil. 3:19).

**1:13 “reprove them severely”** This literally means “cut off with a knife.” This is a PRESENT ACTIVE IMPERATIVE. This strong term is used only here in the NT. Additional admonitions to strongly rebuke can be seen in I Tim. 5:25; II Tim. 4:2; Titus 2:15.

▣ **“so that they may be sound in the faith”** This shows that discipline is to be redemptive, not punitive (cf. I Cor. 5:5; Heb. 12:5-13). The PRONOUNS in v. 13 refer to the false teachers (cf. II Tim. 2:25-26).

The term “sound” is a recurrent theme in the Pastoral Letters, which refers to something being healthy (cf. I Tim. 1:10; II Tim. 1:13; 4:3; Titus 1:9,13; 2:1,2,8).

**1:14 “Jewish myths”** These myths may be connected to Jewish speculation about the genealogy of the Messiah (cf. 3:9; I Tim. 1:4; II Tim. 4:4).

▣ **“and commandments of men”** This, in context, seems to refer to the Oral Tradition of the Jews, later codified in the Babylonian and Palestinian Talmuds (cf. Isa. 29:13; Mark 7:7-8; Col. 2:16-23).

▣ **“who turn away from the truth”** This is a PRESENT MIDDLE PARTICIPLE. These false teachers continue to turn away from the gospel. See Special Topic: Truth at I Tim. 2:4.

**1:15 “To the pure, all things are pure”** “Everything” is put first in the Greek sentence for emphasis. This truth is hard for some believers to understand (cf. I Tim. 4:4; Mark 7:15-23; Luke 11:41; Rom. 14:14,20; I Cor. 10:23-33)! This possibly relates to asceticism so common in Greek religious philosophical traditions (cf. I Tim. 4:3; Col. 2:20-22). Legalistic Christians often lose biblical balance at this very point!

▣ **“but to those who are defiled and unbelieving, nothing is pure”** The first COGNATE VERBAL is a PERFECT PASSIVE PARTICIPLE and the second is a PERFECT PASSIVE INDICATIVE, which speaks of a settled state produced by an outside agent, here possibly the evil one. This type of person twists everything and everyone for personal interest (ex. Acts 20:29).

**1:16 “They profess to know God”** “God” is placed first in the Greek sentence for emphasis. These false teachers claim to be religious! They claim godliness based on human regulations (cf. Isa. 29:13; Col. 2:16-23), but in reality, they are defiled. Some see this as another evidence of the Jewish element of the heresy because of the term “God” rather than Christ.

▣ **“but by *their* deeds they deny *Him*”** This is a PRESENT MIDDLE INDICATIVE. Believers’ lifestyle choices give evidence of their true conversion (cf. Matt. 7:16,20; I John and James).

▣ **“detestable”** This is a term used often in the Septuagint translated “abominable” and is often associated with idolatry. It literally means “smelly” (cf. Rev. 21:8).

▣ **“and disobedient and worthless for any good deed”** What a shocking phrase (cf. I Cor. 3:10-15; II Pet. 1:8-11)! The word “worthless” literally means “failure to pass the test” (*dokimos* with the ALPHA PRIVATIVE, cf. II Tim. 3:8). See Special Topic: The Greek Term for “Testing” at I Tim. 6:9.

## DISCUSSION QUESTION

This is a study guide commentary, which means that you are responsible for your own interpretation of the Bible. Each of us must walk in the light we have. You, the Bible, and the Holy Spirit are priority in interpretation. You must not relinquish this to a commentator.

These discussion questions are provided to help you think through the major issues of this section of the book. They are meant to be thought-provoking, not definitive.

1. Why is the list of qualifications for leaders in I Tim. 3:1-13 different from the list in Titus 1?
2. How do these lists which reflect a first century Greco-Roman culture relate to my day, my church?
3. How is this list affected by the teachings and lifestyle of the false teachers?
4. Summarize the entire list in one sentence which should describe a Christian leader.
5. Does this passage reflect a different church polity than I Timothy?
6. What type of false teachers were in Crete? Were they Christians or not?
7. List the verses that reflect the Jewish aspect of the false teachers.
8. List the verses that reflect the Greek philosophical aspect of the false teachers.
9. Explain the universal principle in v. 15.

# TITUS 2

## PARAGRAPH DIVISIONS OF MODERN TRANSLATIONS

UBS <sup>4</sup>	NKJV	NRSV	TEV	NJB
The Teaching of Sound Doctrine	Qualities of a Sound Church	The Pastor and the Flock (2:1-3:11)	Sound Doctrine	Some Specific Moral Instructions
2:1-10	2:1-10	2:1-2 2:3-5 2:6-8 2:9-10	2:1-5 2:6-8 2:9-10	2:1-10
	Trained by Saving Grace			The Basis of the Christian Moral Life
2:11-15	2:11-15	2:11-14 2:15-3:8a	2:11-14 2:15	2:11-14 2:15

### READING CYCLE THREE (see p. vii)

*FOLLOWING THE ORIGINAL AUTHOR'S INTENT AT THE PARAGRAPH LEVEL*

This is a study guide commentary, which means that you are responsible for your own interpretation of the Bible. Each of us must walk in the light we have. You, the Bible, and the Holy Spirit are priority in interpretation. You must not relinquish this to a commentator.

Read the chapter in one sitting. Identify the subjects. Compare your subject divisions with the five modern translations. Paragraphing is not inspired, but it is the key to following the original author's intent, which is the heart of interpretation. Every paragraph has one and only one subject.

1. First paragraph
2. Second paragraph
3. Third paragraph
4. Etc.

### CONTEXTUAL INSIGHTS TO VERSES 1-10

- A. Paul's admonitions to different groups of people
  1. older men (vv. 1-2)
  2. older women. v. 3 (cf. I Tim. 2:9-15)
  3. younger women (vv. 4-5)
  4. younger men (v.6)
  5. Titus, vv. 7-8,15 (cf. I Tim. 4:12-13)
  6. slaves (vv. 9-10)

- B. In Titus 2 the qualifications for church leaders found in Titus 1:5-9 and I Tim. 3 are extended to believers of both sexes and of all ages.
- C. The purpose for Christians living godly lives is clearly expressed in vv. 11-14, which is one sentence in Greek.
- D. Titus 2 is a real contrast to the lifestyles of the false teachers found in 1:10-16.

## WORD AND PHRASE STUDY

### NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 2:1-3

**<sup>1</sup>But as for you, speak the things which are fitting for sound doctrine. <sup>2</sup>Older men are to be temperate, dignified, sensible, sound in faith, in love, in perseverance.**

**2:1 “But as for you”** This shows the vast difference between the false teachers and Titus, a true leader/teacher (cf. I Tim. 6:11; II Tim. 3:1,14).

▣ **“speak”** This is a PRESENT ACTIVE IMPERATIVE (cf. I Tim. 4:13; II Tim. 4:2). The gospel and its implications must be articulated.

▣ **“the things which are fitting for sound doctrine”** Sound teaching (healthy teaching) is a recurrent theme (cf. 1:9,13; 2:1,2,8; I Tim. 1:10; II Tim. 1:13; 4:3). Notice that in this context the healthy teaching is not doctrinal, but practical lifestyle, people centered Christlikeness.

**2:2 “Older men”** This is the same word translated “elders” in Titus 1:5 and I Tim. 5:1,17, but this context demands a different translation (cf. Philemon 9). In this culture it would refer to men over 60.

▣  
**NASB, NRSV** “to be temperate”  
**NKJV, TEV** “sober”  
**NJB** “reserved”

This is literally “be sober,” which could refer to intoxication (cf. 1:6,7). The term was also used metaphorically of mental alertness or vigilance (cf. I Tim. 3:2,11).

▣ **“sensible”** This term is used in vv. 2,4,5,6 and 12. See note on “prudent” at I Tim. 3:2.

▣  
**NASB, NJB** “reverent”  
**NKJV** “serious”  
**NRSV** “sensible”  
**TEV** “dignified”

This term is used several times in the Pastoral Letters (cf. 2:2,7; I Tim. 2:2; 3:4,8,11; and a form of the term in II Tim. 2:2; 3:4). According to the lexicon by Bauer, Arndt, Gingrich, and Danker, it can be translated “reverence, dignity, seriousness, respectfulness, holiness, or probity” (cf. p. 47).

This term is related to the Latin “Augustus” (cf. Acts 25:21,25; 27:11). It referred to the veneration or worship of someone, the Emperor, and came to describe how one should act or feel in his presence.

▣ **“sound”** This is the recurrent metaphorical use of the term from v. 1, “healthy.” Christians are to be healthy and stable in their faith, in their love, and in their perseverance (cf. I Tim. 6:11; II Tim. 3:10), as well as in their doctrine. For Paul, believing and living were inseparable—just the opposite of the false teachers.

▣ **“perseverance”** See Special Topic at I Tim. 4:16 and in a different form in II Tim. 2:11.

**NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 2:3-5**

**<sup>3</sup>Older women likewise are to be reverent in their behavior, not malicious gossips nor enslaved to much wine, teaching what is good, <sup>4</sup>so that they may encourage the young women to love their husbands, to love their children, <sup>5</sup>to be sensible, pure, workers at home, kind, being subject to their own husbands, so that the word of God will not be dishonored.**

**2:3 “reverent in their behavior”** This is a compound term of *hieros*, that which is holy or sacred (from *hierov*, for temple) and *prepei*, that which is fitting or proper. Older Christian women are to behave in godly, holy ways (cf. I Tim. 2:10).

▣

**NASB** “not malicious gossips”

**NKJV, NRSV,**

**TEV** “not slanderers”

**NJB** “no slander-mongering”

The term used here (*diabolos*) is the same as is used of the Devil, the “slanderer” (cf. John 6:20; I Tim. 3:6. See Special Topic: Satan at I Tim. 5:10). However, it is PLURAL and does not have the ARTICLE (cf. I Tim. 3:11; II Tim. 3:3). John Calvin said that “talkativeness is a disease of women, and it is increased by age.”

The problem referred to is not only tale-bearing but possibly the sharing of false information (cf. I Tim. 5:13). The young widows may have been the surrogate speakers for the false teachers in the homes and house churches of Ephesus (cf. II Tim. 3:5-7). Whether this phrase (cf. I Tim. 3:11; II Tim. 3:3) refers to the same problem is uncertain.

▣ **“nor enslaved to much wine”** This is a PERFECT PASSIVE PARTICIPLE. This is a stronger statement than Titus 1:7 or I Tim. 3:3,8. Alcoholism (see Special Topic at I Tim. 3:3) must have been a problem in Crete, which shows that NT guidelines may intensify or relax in certain cultures.

▣ **“teaching what is good”** Because of I Tim. 2:12 this apparently means teachers at home or mentors of younger women. Verses 4-5 give the content of the teaching. See Special Topic at I Tim. 3:3.

**2:4 “encourage the young women”** The root term *sōphrōn* is found in vv. 4,5,6 and 12. Its basic meaning is “to be of a sound mind.” It advocates a self-controlled, balanced life.

▣ **“to love their husband, to love their children”** God’s will for married women is that they be lovers of husband and children. The false teachers were disrupting homes (cf. 1:11; II Tim. 3:6).

**2:5** The characterization of young women as obedient homemakers was the expected social norm of the first century Mediterranean culture (cf. I Tim. 2:10). Does this message apply to married women in all cultures in all times? This is not an easy question! Modern Christians must allow some freedom of

interpretation here without dogmatism. Please read *How to Read the Bible For All Its Worth* by Fee and Stuart and *The Gospel and Spirit* by Gordon Fee.



NASB            “workers at home”  
NKJV            “homemakers”  
NRSV            “good managers of the household”  
TEV              “good housewives”  
NJB              “how to work in their homes”

There is a Greek manuscript problem in this phrase. Most early uncial manuscripts (א\*, A, C, D\*, F, G, I), most early church Fathers, and most later minuscule manuscripts have the common term, houseworker (*oikourgos*, “house” + “worker”), but some ancient texts (א<sup>c</sup>, D<sup>c</sup>, H, L, P) have housekeeper (*oikouros*, “house” + “guard”), which is similar to I Tim. 5:14, *oikodesmoteu* (household manager, “house” + “master”).

This term, *oikoorgos*, is a very rare term (Bruce M. Metzger, *Commentary on the Greek New Testament*, p. 654). One of the basic tenets of textual criticism is that the most unusual term or phrase is probably original because scribes would have been more likely to change it to something familiar.

▣ “subject to their own husbands” The term “subject” or “submit” comes from a military term that referred to a chain of command. This is a PRESENT MIDDLE PARTICIPLE (cf. Eph. 5:21ff; Col. 3:18; I Tim. 2:11-12; I Pet. 3:1). However, notice that Paul, in Eph. 5:21, links submission to being filled with the Spirit (cf. 5:18) and makes it a mutual responsibility of all Christians. Please read notes at I Tim. 2:11-12.

▣ “so that the word of God will not be dishonored” Believers’ lifestyles are significant. This is a recurrent theme in the Pastoral Letters, “no handle for criticism” (cf. vv. 8,10; I Tim. 3:2,7,10; 5:8,14; 6:1; Titus 1:6-7,8,10). Believers’ lives and words should bring others to Christ (cf. Matt. 28:19-20).

**NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 2:6-8**

**6**Likewise urge the young men to be sensible; **7**in all things show yourself to be an example of good deeds, *with* purity in doctrine, dignified, **8**sound *in* speech which is beyond reproach, so that the opponent will be put to shame, having nothing bad to say about us.

**2:6** The younger men are given only one guideline (“be sensible,” cf. vv. 2,4,5). It is the only IMPERATIVE in vv. 2-6. It is grammatically uncertain whether the “in all things” of v. 7 relates to this verse and is thereby another guideline for young men, or is related to the emphatic “yourself” of v. 7, which would refer to Titus.

**2:7** “show yourself to be an example” This is a PRESENT MIDDLE PARTICIPLE used as an IMPERATIVE (cf. I Tim. 4:12).

▣ “of good deeds” This is a recurrent emphasis (cf. 1:16; 2:7,14; 3:1.8.14). Lifestyle change was the evidence of and an attraction to the Christian message.



NASB            “with purity in doctrine”  
NKJV            “in doctrine *showing* integrity”  
NRSV            “in your teaching show integrity”

**TEV** “be sincere. . .in your teaching”

**NJB** “by sincerity. . .when you are teaching”

This seems to describe the way Titus is to teach (in contrast to the false teachers’ impure lives and motives), not only the content of his preaching and teaching. If it does refer to content, then possibly it is an emphasis on the resurrection (cf. Rom. 2:7; I Cor. 15:42,53,54).

There are several Greek manuscript problems related to this phrase. In *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament* Bruce M. Metzger says the term *aphthorian* (incorruption) (1) has the good manuscript support (i.e.  $\aleph^*$ , A, C, D<sup>\*</sup>); (2) fits the context; (3) explains the other variants; and (4) is the most unusual of the options. The most common option (i.e.  $\aleph^c$ , D<sup>c</sup>, L and most later minuscule manuscripts) is *adiaphthorian* (sincerity) (p. 654).

**2:8 “sound in speech”** This is the same recurrent term used in vv. 1 and 2 which meant “healthy” (metaphorically in contrast to the unhealthy message of the false teachers).



**NASB** “dignified”

**NKJV** “reverence”

**NRSV** “gravity”

**TEV** “serious”

**NJB** “earnestness”

See full note at 2:2.

▣ **“which is beyond reproach”** This is a guideline for both Christian leaders and believers in general (cf. 1:6-7,8,10; I Tim. 3:2,7,10; 5:8,14; 6:1). See Special Topic at I Tim. 3:2.

▣ **“the opponent”** In context this could refer to (1) the false teachers of 1:10-16; or (2) the unbelievers of society who criticized Christianity out of pagan ignorance. Believers’ lives should silence both groups and attract them to the gospel.

**NASB (UPDATED) TEXT 2:9-10**

<sup>9</sup>*Urge* bondslaves to be subject to their own masters in everything, to be well-pleasing, not argumentative, <sup>10</sup>*not* pilfering, but showing all good faith so that they will adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in every respect.

**2:9 “Urge bondslaves to be subject to their own masters”** “To be subject” is a PRESENT MIDDLE INFINITIVE (cf. Eph. 6:5-9; Col. 3:22-24; I Tim. 6:1-2). The verb “urge” is implied from v. 6. Like women, slaves are urged to have a godly attitude toward cultural authority structures for Christ’s sake. The issue is not personal freedom, but evangelism! See Special Topic: Paul’s Admonitions to Slaves at I Tim. 6:1.

▣ **“in everything”** This phrase is repeated in verse 10. It is significant that believers realize that their lives, in all areas, reflect on God. This concept is theologically parallel to mutual submission found in Eph. 5:21 and the submission of godly wives in 5:22-6:9 (cf. H. E. Butt’s *The Velvet Covered Brick*).

▣ **“to be well-pleasing”** The unstated, but implied, meaning is not only to the slave owners, but supremely to God (cf. Rom. 12:1-2; Eph. 6:7-8).



**NASB** “not argumentative”  
**NKJV** “not answering back”  
**NRSV, TEV** “not to talk back”  
**NJB** “without argument”

How believers handle even difficult situations and conditions is a clear, strong witness of their faith in Christ (cf. Eph. 6:5-9).

**2:10 “not pilfering”** This must have been a common problem for slaves (cf. Eph. 4:28).

**“showing”** This term meant to give outward and clear proof of something. Our lives must bring glory to God and evidence of the life-changing power of the gospel!

**“God our Savior”** This was a common title used by and for Caesar. This is a characteristic phrase of the Pastoral Letters for deity (cf. 1:3-2:10; 3:4). The same title is also repeatedly used of Jesus (cf. 1:4; 2:13; 3:6).

### CONTEXTUAL INSIGHTS TO TITUS 2:11-14

- A. This brief passage (vv. 11-14) gives the theological reasons for Christians living godly lives. This discussion is very similar to Titus 3:4-7 and II Timothy 1:8-10.
- B. Verse 11 refers to the first coming of the Messiah, the Incarnation (cf. Titus 3:4; II Tim. 1:10). Verse 13, uses the same term, “appearing,” to refer to the Second Coming of Christ (cf. I Tim. 6:14; II Tim. 4:1,8). The first coming was characterized by God’s grace; the second will be characterized by God’s justice!
- C. Verse 12 is a summary of the godly characteristics required of leaders in chapter 1:5-9 and all Christians in chapter 2:1-10.
- D. Verse 13 sets the gospel in the characteristically Pauline category of “the already” (the Kingdom of God is present) and “the not yet” (the Kingdom of God is future). This tension is true of much of Paul’s discussion about the Christian life.
- E. Is Jesus alone being referred to in v. 13 (cf. NASB, RSV, NEB, NIV) or is it a double reference to God the Father and to Jesus the Son (cf. KJV, ASV, Moffatt translation)? There are several reasons why this seems to be a reference to Jesus’ deity, clothed in titles used for the Roman Caesar:
  - 1. only one ARTICLE with both NOUNS
  - 2. verse 14 relates only to Christ
  - 3. the terms “great” and “appearing” never refer to God the Father
  - 4. there are several other passages in Paul and other NT authors where full deity is attributed to Jesus
  - 5. the majority of the early church fathers also saw it as referring to Jesus. It should be noted, however, that the early versions tended to see the phrase as referring to YHWH and Jesus.
- F. Verse 14 describes the Church in OT terms used of Israel. In some senses the Church is the fruition of God’s desire for Israel (cf. Rom. 2:28-29; Gal. 6:16; I Pet. 2:5,9; Rev. 1:6). Yet Israel remains an object of God’s unique love and care (cf. Rom. 11).

## WORD AND PHRASE STUDY

### NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 2:11-14

<sup>11</sup>For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men, <sup>12</sup>instructing us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age, <sup>13</sup>looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus, <sup>14</sup>who gave Himself for us to redeem us from every lawless deed, and to purify for Himself a people for His own possession, zealous for good deeds.

**2:11 “For”** Verses 11-14 are linked to 1-10, and give the theological basis for godly living.

▣ **“the grace of God has appeared”** This refers to the incarnation of Jesus (cf. II Tim. 1:10; Titus 3:4-7). The life, teaching, and death of Jesus fully revealed the Father’s love, mercy and grace. When we see Jesus, we see God (cf. John 1:1-14; 14:8-11; Col. 1:15-19; Heb. 1:1-3). The term *epiphany* (appearing) is used in v. 13 for Christ’s Second Coming (cf. 2:11,13; 3:4; II Thess. 2:8; I Tim. 6:14; II Tim. 1:10; 4:1,8). See Special Topic at 2:13.

▣ **“bringing salvation to all men”** God sent Christ to die for the sin of all humans, but they must personally respond by repentance, faith, obedience, and perseverance. The following passages reflect the universal scope of Christ’s work: (1) “for the world” (John 1:29; 3:16; 6:33,51; II Cor. 5:19; I John 2:2) and (2) “all men” (Rom. 5:18; I Cor. 15:22; I Tim. 2:4-6; Heb. 2:9; II Pet. 3:9). See fuller note at I Tim. 2:4.

God made humans in His image (cf. Gen. 1:26-27). In Gen. 3:15 He promised to redeem all humans. He specifically mentions His worldwide agenda even in His call of Abraham (cf. Gen. 12:3) and of Israel (cf. Exod. 19:5). The OT promises to Israel (Jew vs. Gentile) have now been universalized to believer and unbeliever (cf. Eph. 2:11-3:13). God’s invitation to salvation is worldwide, individually focused, and Spirit-energized.

### SPECIAL TOPIC: PREDESTINATION (CALVINISM) VERSUS HUMAN FREE WILL (ARMINIANISM)

Titus 2:11 is a balance to other NT passages on election. I thought it might be theologically helpful to provide my commentary notes from Rom. 8:29 and 9, as well as Eph. 1.

- I. Romans 8:29 - Paul uses “foreknew” (*proginōskō*, “to know before”) twice, here and 11:2. In 11:2 it refers to God’s covenant love for Israel before time began. Remember that the term “know” in Hebrew related to intimate, personal relationship, not to facts about someone (cf. Gen. 4:1; Jer. 1:5). Here it was included in a chain of eternal events (cf. Rom. 8:29-30). This term was linked with predestination. However, it must be stated that God’s foreknowledge is not the basis of election because if that were so, then election would be based on fallen humanity’s future response, which would be human performance. This term is also found in Acts 26:5; I Pet. 1:2,20 and II Pet. 3:17. “foreknew” (*proginōskō*, “to know before”)
  - A. The terms “foreknow” or “predestine” are both compounds with the preposition “before” and therefore, should be translated “to know before,” “to set bounds before,” or “mark off before.” The definitive passages on predestination in the NT are Rom. 8:28-30; Eph. 1:3-14; and Rom. 9. These

texts obviously stress that God is sovereign. He is in total control of all things. There is a preset divine plan being worked out in time. However, this plan is not arbitrary or selective. It is based not only on God's sovereignty and foreknowledge, but on His unchanging character of love, mercy, and undeserved grace.

We must be careful of our western (American) individualism or our evangelical zeal coloring this wonderful truth. We must also guard against being polarized into the historical, theological conflicts between Augustine versus Pelagius or Calvinism versus Arminianism.

B. "predestined" (*proorizō*, "to set the bounds before")

Predestination is not a doctrine meant to limit God's love, grace, and mercy nor to exclude some from the gospel. It is meant to strengthen believers by molding their world-view. God is for all mankind (cf. I Tim. 2:4; II Pet. 3:9). God is in control of all things. Who or what can separate us from Him (cf. Rom. 8:31-39)? God views all history as present. Humans are time bound. Our perspective and mental abilities are limited. There is no contradiction between God's sovereignty and mankind's free will. It is a covenantal structure. This is another example of truth given in dialectical tension. Biblical doctrines are presented from different perspectives. They often appear paradoxical. The truth is a balance between the seemingly opposite pairs. We must not remove the tension by picking one of the truths. We must not isolate any biblical truth into a compartment by itself.

It is also important to add that the goal of election is not only heaven when we die, but Christlikeness now (cf. Rom. 8:29; Eph. 1:4; 2:10). We were chosen to be "holy and blameless." God chooses to change us so that others may see the change and respond by faith to God in Christ. Predestination is not a personal privilege, but a covenantal responsibility. This is the major truth of the passage. This is the goal of Christianity. Holiness is God's will for every believer. God's election is to Christlikeness (cf. Eph. 1:4), not a special standing. The image of God, which was given to man in creation (cf. Gen. 1:26; 5:1,3; 9:6), is to be restored.

C. "conformed to the image of His Son"—God's ultimate goal is the restoration of the image lost in the Fall. Believers are foreordained to Christlikeness (cf. Eph. 1:4).

## II. Romans 9

A. Chapter 9 is one of the strongest NT passages on God's sovereignty (the other is Eph. 1:3-14), while Romans 10 states humans' free will clearly and repeatedly (cf. "everyone" v. 4; "whosoever" vv. 11,13; "all" v. 12 [twice]). Paul never tries to reconcile this theological tension. They are both true! Most Bible doctrines are presented in paradoxical or dialectical pairs. Most systems of theology are logical half-truths. Augustinianism and Calvinism versus semi-Pelagianism and Arminianism have elements of truth and error. Biblical tension between doctrines is preferable to a proof-texted, dogmatic, rational, theological system that forces the Bible onto a preconceived interpretive grid.

B. This same truth (found in Rom. 9:23) is stated in Rom. 8:29-30 and Eph. 1:4,11. This chapter is the strongest expression of God's sovereignty in the NT. There can be no dispute that God is in total charge of creation and redemption. This great truth should never be softened or diminished.

However, it must be balanced with God's choice of covenant as a means of relating to human creation, made in His image. It is surely true that some OT covenants, like Gen. 15, are unconditional and do not relate at all to human response, but other covenants are conditioned on human response (e.g. Eden, Noah, Moses, David). God has a plan of redemption for His creation;

no human can affect this plan. God has chosen to allow individuals to participate in His plans. This opportunity for participation is a theological tension between sovereignty (Rom. 9) and human free will (Rom. 10).

It is not appropriate to select one biblical emphasis and ignore another. There is tension between doctrines because eastern people present truth in dialectical or tension-filled pairs. Doctrines must be held in relationship to other doctrines. Truth is a mosaic.

### III. Ephesians 1

- A. Election is a wonderful doctrine. However, it is not a call to favoritism, but a call to be a channel, a tool or means of others' redemption! In the OT the term was used primarily for service; in the NT it is used primarily for salvation which issues in service. The Bible never reconciles the seeming contradiction between God's sovereignty and mankind's free will, but affirms them both! A good example of the biblical tension would be Romans 9 on God's sovereign choice and Romans 10 on mankind's necessary response (cf. 10:11,13).

The key to this theological tension may be found in 1:4. Jesus is God's elect man and all are potentially elect in Him (Karl Barth). Jesus is God's "yes" to fallen mankind's need (Karl Barth). Ephesians 1:4 also helps clarify the issue by asserting that the goal of predestination is not heaven only, but holiness (Christlikeness). We are often attracted to the benefits of the gospel and ignore the responsibilities! God's call (election) is for time as well as eternity!

Doctrines come in relation to other truths, not as single, unrelated truths. A good analogy would be a constellation versus a single star. God presents truth in eastern, not western, genres. We must not remove the tension caused by dialectical (paradoxical) pairs of doctrinal truths (God as transcendent versus God as immanent; security vs. perseverance; Jesus as equal with the Father vs. Jesus as subservient to the Father; Christian freedom vs. Christian responsibility to a covenant partner, etc).

The theological concept of "covenant" unites the sovereignty of God (who always takes the initiative and sets the agenda) with a mandatory initial and continuing repentant, faith response from man. Be careful of proof-texting one side of the paradox and depreciating the other! Be careful of asserting only your favorite doctrine or system of theology.

- B. "He chose us" in Eph. 1:4 is an AORIST MIDDLE INDICATIVE which emphasizes the subject. This focuses on the Father's choice before time. God's choice must not be understood in the Islamic sense of determinism, nor in the ultra-Calvinistic sense as some versus others, but in the covenantal sense. God promised to redeem fallen mankind (cf. Gen. 3:15). God called and chose Abraham to choose all humans (cf. Gen. 12:3; Exod. 19:5-6). God Himself elected all persons who would exercise faith in Christ. God always takes the initiative in salvation (cf. John 6:44,65). This text and Rom. 9 are the biblical basis for the doctrine of predestination emphasized by Augustine and Calvin.

God chose believers not only to salvation (justification), but also to sanctification (cf. Co1:12). This could relate to (1) our position in Christ (cf. II Cor. 5:21) or (2) God's desire to reproduce His character in His children (cf. 2:10; Rom. 8:28-29; Gal. 4:19). God's will for His children is both heaven one day and Christlikeness now!

"In Him" is a key concept of Ephesians 1:4. The Father's blessings, grace, and salvation flow through Christ (cf. John 14:6). Notice the repetition of this grammatical form (LOCATIVE of sphere) in v. 3, "in Christ"; vs. 4, "in Him"; v. 7, "in Him"; v. 9, "in Him"; v. 10, "in Christ," "in Him"; v. 12,

“in Christ” and v. 13, “in Him” (twice). Jesus is God’s “yes” to fallen mankind (Karl Barth). Jesus is the elect man and all are potentially elect in Him. All of God the Father’s blessings flow through Christ.

The phrase “before the foundation of the world” is also used in Matt. 25:34; John 17:24; I Pet. 1:19-20 and Rev. 13:8. It shows the Triune God’s redemptive activity even before Gen. 1:1. Humans are limited by their sense of time; everything to us is past, present and future, but not to God.

The goal of predestination is holiness, not privilege. God’s call is not to a selected few of Adam’s children, but to all! It is a call to be what God intended mankind to be, like Himself (cf. I Thess. 5:23; II Thess. 2:13); in His image (cf. Gen. 1:26-27). To turn predestination into a theological tenet instead of a holy life is a tragedy. Often our theologies speak louder than the biblical text.

The term “blameless” (*amōmos*) or “free from blemish” is used of (1) Jesus (cf. Heb. 9:14; I Pet. 1:19); (2) Zachariah and Elizabeth (cf. Luke 1:6); (3) Paul (cf. Phil. 3:6); and (4) all true Christians (cf. Phil. 2:15; I Thess. 3:13; 5:23). God’s unalterable will for every Christian is not only heaven in the future, but Christlikeness now (cf. Rom. 8:29-30; Gal. 4:19; I Pet. 1:2). Believers are to reflect God’s characteristics to a lost world for the purpose of evangelism.

Grammatically the phrase “in love” in this verse could go with either v. 4 or v. 5. However, when this phrase is used in other places in Ephesians it always refers to human love for God (cf. 3:17; 4:2,15,16).

- C. In Eph. 1:5 the phrase “He predestined us” is an AORIST ACTIVE PARTICIPLE. This Greek term is a compound of “before” and “mark off.” It refers to God’s predetermined redemptive plan (cf. Luke 22:22; Acts 2:23; 4:28; 17:31; Rom. 8:29-30). Predestination is one of several truths related to mankind’s salvation. It is part of a theological pattern or series of related truths. It was never meant to be emphasized in isolation! Biblical truth has been given in a series of tension-filled, paradoxical pairs. Denominationalism has tended to remove the biblical tension by emphasizing only one of the dialectical truths (predestination vs. human free will; security of the believer vs. perseverance of the saints; original sin vs. volitional sin; sinlessness vs. sinning less; instantaneously declared sanctification vs. progressive sanctification; faith vs. works; Christian freedom vs. Christian responsibility; transcendence vs. immanence).

God’s choice is not based on foreknowledge of human performance, but on His gracious character (cf. vv. 9 & 11). He wishes that all (not just some special ones like the Gnostics or modern-day ultra-Calvinists) would be saved (cf. Ezek. 18:21-23,32; John 3:16-17; I Tim. 2:4; 4:10; Titus 2:11; II Pet. 3:9). God’s grace (God’s character) is the theological key to this passage (cf. vv. 6a, 7c, 9b), as God’s mercy is the key to the other passage on predestination, Rom. 9-11.

Fallen mankind’s only hope is the grace and mercy of God (cf. Isa. 53:6 and several other OT texts quoted in Rom. 3:9-18). It is crucial in interpreting these first theological chapters to realize that Paul emphasizes those things which are totally unrelated to human performance: predestination (chap. 1), grace (chap. 2), and God’s eternal plan of redemption (mystery, 2:11-3:13). This was to counterbalance the emphasis of the false teachers on human merit and pride.

**2:12 “instructing us”** This literally meant child discipline or training (cf. I Tim. 1:20; II Tim. 2:25; 3:16). Grace is personified as a loving parent (cf. Heb. 12:5ff).

▣ “**ungodliness**” This is a word play between *asebeia* (ungodliness, ALPHA PRIVATIVE) and *eusebia* (godliness). They may reflect the “two ways” of the OT Wisdom Literature (cf. Josh. 24:14-15; Ps. 1; Prov. 4:10-19; Matt. 7:13-14). We are to turn from evil because Christ gave Himself to deliver us from evil; we are to turn to good because Christ set the example. Grace teaches us both a positive and negative lesson!

▣ “**worldly desires**” (cf. 3:3; I Tim. 6:9; II Tim. 2:22; 3:6; 4:3)

▣ “**sensibly**” See note at I Tim. 3:2.

▣ “**righteously**” (cf. vv. 2,4,5,6)

## **SPECIAL TOPIC: RIGHTEOUSNESS**

“Righteousness” is such a crucial topic that a Bible student must make a personal extensive study of the concept.

In the OT God’s character is described as “just” or “righteous.” The Mesopotamian term itself comes from a river reed which was used as a construction tool to judge the horizontal straightness of walls and fences. God chose the term to be used metaphorically of His own nature. He is the straight edge (ruler) by which all things are evaluated. This concept asserts God’s righteousness as well as His right to judge.

Man was created in the image of God (cf. Gen. 1:26-27; 5:1,3; 9:6). Mankind was created for fellowship with God. All of creation is a stage or backdrop for God and mankind’s interaction. God wanted His highest creation, mankind, to know Him, love Him, serve Him, and be like Him! Mankind’s loyalty was tested (cf. Gen. 3) and the original couple failed the test. This resulted in a disruption of the relationship between God and humanity (cf. Gen. 3; Rom. 5:12-21).

God promised to repair and restore the fellowship (cf. Gen. 3:15). He does this through His own will and His own Son. Humans were incapable of restoring the breach (cf. Rom. 1:18-3:20).

After the Fall, God’s first step toward restoration was the concept of covenant based on His invitation and mankind’s repentant, faithful, obedient response. Because of the Fall, humans were incapable of appropriate action (cf. Rom. 3:21-31; Gal. 3). God Himself had to take the initiative to restore covenant-breaking humans. He did this by

1. declaring sinful mankind righteous through the work of Christ (forensic righteousness).
2. freely giving mankind righteousness through the work of Christ (imputed righteousness).
3. providing the indwelling Spirit who produces righteousness (ethical righteousness) in mankind.
4. restoring the fellowship of the garden of Eden by Christ restoring the image of God (cf. Gen. 1:26-27) in believers (relational righteousness).

However, God requires a covenantal response. God decrees (i.e. freely gives) and provides, but humans must respond and continue to respond in

1. repentance
2. faith
3. lifestyle obedience
4. perseverance

Righteousness, therefore, is a covenantal, reciprocal action between God and His highest creation. It is based on the character of God, the work of Christ, and the enabling of the Spirit, to which each individual must personally and continually respond appropriately. The concept is called “justification by faith.” The

concept is revealed in the Gospels, but not in these terms. It is primarily defined by Paul, who uses the Greek term “righteousness” in its various forms over 100 times.

Paul, being a trained rabbi, uses the term *dikaiosunē* in its Hebrew sense of the term *SDQ* used in the Septuagint, not from Greek literature. In Greek writings the term is connected to someone who conformed to the expectations of deity and society. In the Hebrew sense it is always structured in covenantal terms. YHWH is a just, ethical, moral God. He wants His people to reflect His character. Redeemed mankind becomes a new creature. This newness results in a new lifestyle of godliness (Roman Catholic focus of justification). Since Israel was a theocracy, there was no clear delineation between the secular (society’s norms) and the sacred (God’s will). This distinction is expressed in the Hebrew and Greek terms being translated into English as “justice” (relating to society) and “righteousness” (relating to religion).

The gospel (good news) of Jesus is that fallen mankind has been restored to fellowship with God. Paul’s paradox is that God, through Christ, acquits the guilty. This has been accomplished through the Father’s love, mercy, and grace; the Son’s life, death, and resurrection; and the Spirit’s wooing and drawing to the gospel. Justification is a free act of God, but it must issue in godliness (Augustine’s position, which reflects both the Reformation emphasis on the freeness of the gospel and Roman Catholic emphasis on a changed life of love and faithfulness). For Reformers the term “the righteousness of God” is an OBJECTIVE GENITIVE (i.e. the act of making sinful mankind acceptable to God [positional sanctification]), while for the Catholic it is a SUBJECTIVE GENITIVE, which is the process of becoming more like God (experiential progressive sanctification). In reality it is surely both!!

In my view all of the Bible, from Gen. 4 - Rev. 20, is a record of God’s restoring the fellowship of Eden. The Bible starts with God and mankind in fellowship in an earthly setting (cf. Gen. 1-2) and the Bible ends with the same setting (cf. Rev. 21-22). God’s image and purpose will be restored!

To document the above discussions note the following selected NT passages illustrating the Greek word group.

1. God is righteous (often connected to God as Judge)
  - a. Romans 3:26
  - b. II Thessalonians 1:5-6
  - c. II Timothy 4:8
  - d. Revelation 16:5
2. Jesus is righteous
  - a. Acts 3:14; 7:52; 22:14 (title of Messiah)
  - b. Matthew 27:19
  - c. I John 2:1,29; 3:7
3. God’s will for His creation is righteousness
  - a. Leviticus 19:2
  - b. Matthew 5:48 (cf. 5:17-20)
4. God’s means of providing and producing righteousness
  - a. Romans 3:21-31
  - b. Romans 4
  - c. Romans 5:6-11
  - d. Galatians 3:6-14
  - e. Given by God
    - 1) Romans 3:24; 6:23
    - 2) I Corinthians 1:30

- 3) Ephesians 2:8-9
- f. Received by faith
  - 1) Romans 1:17; 3:22,26; 4:3,5,13; 9:30; 10:4,6,10
  - 2) I Corinthians 5:21
- g. Through acts of the Son
  - 1) Romans 5:21-31
  - 2) II Corinthians 5:21
  - 3) Philippians 2:6-11
- 5. God's will is that His followers be righteous
  - a. Matthew 5:3-48; 7:24-27
  - b. Romans 2:13; 5:1-5; 6:1-23
  - c. II Corinthians 6:14
  - d. I Timothy 6:11
  - e. II Timothy 2:22; 3:16
  - f. I John 3:7
  - g. I Peter 2:24
- 6. God will judge the world by righteousness
  - a. Acts 17:31
  - b. II Timothy 4:8

Righteousness is a characteristic of God, freely given to sinful mankind through Christ. It is

- 1. a decree of God
- 2. a gift of God
- 3. an act of Christ

But it is also a process of becoming righteous that must be vigorously and steadfastly pursued; it will one day be consummated at the Second Coming. Fellowship with God is restored at salvation, but progresses throughout life to become a face-to-face encounter at death or the Parousia!

Here is a quote taken from *Dictionary of Paul and His Letters* from IVP

“Calvin, more so than Luther, emphasizes the relational aspect of the righteousness of God. Luther's view of the righteousness of God seems to contain the aspect of acquittal. Calvin emphasizes the marvelous nature of the communication or imparting of God's righteousness to us” (p. 834).

For me the believer's relationship to God has three aspects:

- 1. the gospel is a person (emphasis of the Eastern Church and Calvin)
- 2. the gospel is truth (emphasis of Augustine and Luther)
- 3. the gospel is a changed life (emphasis of the Roman Catholic church)

They are all true and must be held together for a healthy, sound, biblical Christianity. If any one is over emphasized or depreciated, problems occur.

We must welcome Jesus!

We must believe the gospel!

We must pursue Christlikeness!

▣ “in the present age” See Special Topic at I Tim. 6:17.

**2:13 “looking for”** This is a PRESENT MIDDLE which refers to a continual personal expectation of Christ’s return.

▣ “the blessed hope” This is another reference to the Second Coming.

▣ “the appearing” See Special Topic below.

### SPECIAL TOPIC: NT TERMS FOR CHRIST’S RETURN

This is literally “until the *Parousia*,” which means “presence” and was used of a royal visit. The other MT terms used for the Second Coming are (1) *epiphaneia*, “face to face appearing”; (2) *apokalupis*, “unveiling”; and (3) “the Day of the Lord” and the variations of this phrase. The antecedent to “Lord” in this passage is both YHWH, as in vv. 10 and 11, and Jesus in vv. 7,8,14. This grammatical ambiguity was a common technique of NT authors to assert the deity of Jesus.

The NT as a whole is written within the world-view of the OT, which asserted

1. a current evil, rebellious age
2. a coming new age of righteousness
3. it would be brought about by the Spirit’s agency through the work of the Messiah (Anointed One)

The theological assumption of progressive revelation is required because the NT authors slightly modify Israel’s expectation. Instead of a military, nationalistic-focused (Israel) coming of the Messiah, there are two comings. The first coming was the incarnation of deity in the conception and birth of Jesus of Nazareth. He came as the non-military, non-judicial “suffering servant” of Isa. 53; also the mild rider on the colt of a donkey (not a war horse or kingly mule), of Zech. 9:9. The first coming inaugurated the New Messianic Age, the Kingdom of God on earth. In one sense the Kingdom is here, but of course, in another it is still in the future. It is this tension between the two comings of the Messiah which, in a sense, is the over-lapping of the two Jewish ages that was unseen, or at least unclear, from the OT. In reality, this dual coming emphasizes YHWH’s commitment to redeem all humanity (cf. Gen. 3:15; 12:3; Exod. 19:5 and the preaching of the prophets, especially Isaiah and Jonah).

The church is not waiting for the fulfillment of OT prophecy because most prophecies refer to the first coming (cf. *How to Read the Bible For All Its Worth*, pp. 165-166). What believers do anticipate is the glorious coming of the resurrected King of Kings and Lord of Lords, the expected historical fulfillment of the new age of righteousness on earth as it is in heaven (cf. Matt. 6:10). The OT presentations were not inaccurate, but incomplete. He will come again just as the prophets predicted in the power and authority of YHWH.

The Second Coming is not a biblical term, but the concept forms the world-view and framework of the entire NT. God will set it all straight. Fellowship between God and mankind made in His image will be restored. Evil will be judged and removed. God’s purposes will not, cannot, fail!

▣ “of the glory” The phrase “of the glory” can be understood in two ways: (1) the “glorious appearing” (cf. NKJV) or (2) “the appearing of the glory” (cf. NASB, NRSV, TEV and NJB). Glory is often associated with God’s presence in the OT (especially the Shekinah cloud of glory during the wilderness wandering period). Glory is from the Hebrew term *kabod* which refers to a radiant splendor. Two of the Greek terms associated with the Second Coming also refer to a brightness or radiance: *epiphaneia*, (cf. Matt. 25:31) and *phanerōō* (cf. Matt. 24:30). Jesus spoke of His and His Father’s glory in John 17:1-5,22,24.

## SPECIAL TOPIC: GLORY

The biblical concept of “glory” is difficult to define. Believers’ glory is that they understand the gospel and glory in God, not in themselves (cf. 1:29-31; Jer. 9:23-24).

In the OT the most common Hebrew word for “glory” (*kbd*) was originally a commercial term relating to a pair of scales (“to be heavy”). That which was heavy was valuable or had intrinsic worth. Often the concept of brightness was added to the word to express God’s majesty (cf. Exod. 19:16-18; 24:17; Isa. 60:1-2). He alone is worthy and honorable. He is too brilliant for fallen mankind to behold (cf. Exod 33:17-23; Isa. 6:5). YHWH can only be truly known through Christ (cf. Jer. 1:14; Matt. 17:2; Heb. 1:3; James 2:1).

The term “glory” is somewhat ambiguous: (1) it may be parallel to “the righteousness of God”; (2) it may refer to the “holiness” or “perfection” of God; or (3) it could refer to the image of God in which mankind was created (cf. Gen. 1:26-27; 5:1; 9:6), but which was later marred through rebellion (cf. Gen. 3:1-22). It is first used of YHWH’s presence with His people during the wilderness wandering period in Exod. 16:7,10; Lev. 9:23; and Num. 14:10.

▣ **“our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus”** Jesus is here unambiguously given the title of God! The Caesars claimed similar titles. The terms “appearing” and “great” are never used of YHWH. Also, there is no ARTICLE with “savior.” The syntax of Koine Greek supports this as a title for Jesus because there is only one ARTICLE with both nouns, thus linking them together. Jesus is divine (cf. John 1:1; 8:57-58; 20:28; Rom. 9:5; Phil. 2:6; II Thess. 1:12; Heb. 1:8; I John 5:20; II Pet. 1:1,11). In the OT the Messiah was expected to be a divinely empowered person like the Judges. His deity surprised everyone!

**2:14 “who gave Himself for us”** This follows the theology of Mark 10:45; II Cor. 5:21; and Heb. 9:14. It refers to the vicarious, substitutionary atonement (cf. Isa. 53; Gal. 1:4; I Tim. 2:5-6; Heb. 9:12-15; I Pet. 1:18-19). God the Father “sent” but the Son “gave Himself”!

▣ **“to redeem us”** The terms “ransom” and “redeem” have OT roots (the NASB prints v. 14 as an OT quote). Both words refer to someone being bought back from slavery as Israel was redeemed from Egypt. This also implies that believers are free from the power of sin through Christ (cf. Rom. 6). See Special Topic: Ransom/Redeem at I Tim. 2:6.

▣ **“to purify”** Refer to the Special Topic on “Righteousness” at 2:13. The theological question is how does He purify people? Is it a free gift through Christ, given by divine decree or is it a mandated, repentant, obedient, persevering faith? Is it all of God or is a human response mandated?

For me, since I view the Bible as presenting truth in paradoxical pairs, it is both a free act of the holy God and a required initial act and a continuing act of a fallen individual!

▣ **“a people for His own possession”** This is OT covenant terminology (cf. Exod. 19:5; Deut. 14:2; I Pet. 2:5,9,10; Rev. 1:6). The church is spiritual Israel (cf. Gal. 6:16; Rom. 2:29). The church has the mandate to evangelize all humans (cf. Matt. 28:19-20; Acts 1:8) by sharing the gospel and living the gospel!

▣ **“zealous of good deeds”** The goal of Christianity is not only heaven when believers die but Christlikeness now (cf. Eph. 1:4 2:10). God’s people are characterized by an eager desire for good works (cf. James and I John).

**2:15 “speak and exhort and reprove”** There are three PRESENT ACTIVE IMPERATIVES: continue teaching (cf. 2:1), continue exhorting, and continuing reproof (cf. II Tim. 3:16). Church leaders must encourage the saints and recognize false teachers!

▣ **“with all authority”** Jesus is said to have all authority (*exousia*) in heaven and on earth (cf. Matt. 28:18). He delegated this authority to His Apostles (Paul being the last, one born out of due time). Paul delegated his authority (*epitagē*) to both Timothy and Titus as his personal representatives.

Since the death of these eye-witnesses, the written New Testament (as well as the OT) has become the authority “for all subsequent generations of believers” (cf. II Tim. 3:15-17).

▣ **“let no one disregard you”** This is a PRESENT ACTIVE negated IMPERATIVE (cf. I Tim. 4:12). This may refer to (1) those within the church with regard to Titus’ age or delegated authority or (2) those involved with the false teachers, possibly even a chief spokesperson.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

This is a study guide commentary, which means that you are responsible for your own interpretation of the Bible. Each of us must walk in the light we have. You, the Bible, and the Holy Spirit are priority in interpretation. You must not relinquish this to a commentator.

These discussion questions are provided to help you think through the major issues of this section of the book. They are meant to be thought-provoking, not definitive.

1. Does this chapter speak of Christ’s first coming or His Second Coming?
2. What is so significant about verse 13?
3. List the three tasks of the preacher in v. 15.
  - a.
  - b.
  - c.
4. Does v. 15 close out chapter 2 or begin the discussion of chapter 3?

# TITUS 3

## PARAGRAPH DIVISIONS OF MODERN TRANSLATIONS

USB <sup>4</sup>	NKJV	NRSV	TEV	NJB
Maintain Good Deeds	Graces of the Heirs of Grace	The Pastor and the Flock (2:1-3:11)	Christian Conduct	General Instructions for Believers
3:1-7	3:1-8	2:15-3:8a	3:1-8a	3:1-3 3:4-8a
3:8-11	Avoid Dissension 3:9-11	3:8b-11	3:8b-11	Personal Advice to Titus 3:8b-11
Personal Instructions and Greetings	Final Messages	Final Instructions	Final Instructions	Practical Recommendations, Farewells and Good Wishes
3:12-14	3:12-14 Farewell	3:12-14	3:12-14	3:12-14
3:15	3:15	3:15a 3:15b	3:15a 3:15b	3:15

### READING CYCLE THREE (see p. vii)

#### *FOLLOWING THE ORIGINAL AUTHOR'S INTENT AT THE PARAGRAPH LEVEL*

This is a study guide commentary, which means that you are responsible for your own interpretation of the Bible. Each of us must walk in the light we have. You, the Bible, and the Holy Spirit are priority in interpretation. You must not relinquish this to a commentator.

Read the chapter in one sitting. Identify the subjects. Compare your subject divisions with the five modern translations. Paragraphing is not inspired, but it is the key to following the original author's intent, which is the heart of interpretation. Every paragraph has one and only one subject.

1. First paragraph
2. Second paragraph
3. Third paragraph
4. Etc.

### CONTEXTUAL INSIGHTS TO TITUS 3

- A. This brief message characterizes in two ways the entire book.
  1. Christian character is emphasized in 1:16; 2:7,14; 3:1-2, 8
  2. Christian doctrine is summarized in 2:11-14 and 3:4-7

3. Believers are to live right because they have been made right with God. We are to take on the family characteristics of our Father. The goal of Christianity is not only heaven when we die, but Christlikeness now (cf. Rom. 8:28-29; II Cor. 3:18; Gal. 4:19; Eph. 1:4; I Thess. 3:13; 4:3). The purpose of our new life is to reach the lost with the gospel. However, Paul wants to make sure that his appeal to “good living” is not confused with “works righteousness.”
- B. The entire Trinity is active in mankind’s salvation
1. Father’s love (v. 4)
  2. Spirit’s wooing, renewal and baptism (v. 5)
  3. Son’s mediatorship (v. 6)
- C. Verses 9-11 are Paul’s warnings against false teachers and exhortation to good deeds, characteristic of the Pastoral Epistles (cf. 1:10-16; I Tim. 1:3-7).
- D. Verses 12-15 form a personal conclusion of encouragement and instructions to Titus.

## WORD AND PHRASE STUDY

### NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 3:1-11

<sup>1</sup>Remind them to be subject to rulers, to authorities, to be obedient, to be ready for every good deed, <sup>2</sup>to malign no one, to be peaceable, gentle, showing every consideration for all men. <sup>3</sup>For we also once were foolish ourselves, disobedient, deceived, enslaved to various lusts and pleasures, spending our life in malice and envy, hateful, hating one another. <sup>4</sup>But when the kindness of God our Savior and *His* love for mankind appeared, <sup>5</sup>He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit, <sup>6</sup>whom He poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, <sup>7</sup>so that being justified by His grace we would be made heirs according to *the* hope of eternal life. <sup>8</sup>This is a trustworthy statement; and concerning these things I want you to speak confidently, so that those who have believed God will be careful to engage in good deeds. These things are good and profitable for men. <sup>9</sup>But avoid foolish controversies and genealogies and strife and disputes about the Law, for they are unprofitable and worthless. <sup>10</sup>Reject a factious man after a first and second warning, <sup>11</sup>knowing that such a man is perverted and is sinning, being self-condemned.

**3:1 “Remind them”** This is a PRESENT ACTIVE IMPERATIVE, meaning “keep on reminding.” This is obviously linked to 2:15. Titus is to remind them of what they already know (cf. II Tim. 2:14; II Pet. 1:12; 3:1-2; Jude 5). See Special Topic: Vices and Virtues in the NT at I Tim. 1:9.

▣ **“to be subject”** This a PRESENT MIDDLE INFINITIVE, meaning “continue to put yourself under authority.” It was a military term for the chain of command. This same term is used of Christian wives in 2:5 and Christian slaves in 2:9. It is also used of all Christians in Eph. 5:20. It is basically an attitude of life for Christians in all areas.

▣ **“to rulers, to authorities”** These two terms, *exousia* and *archē*, have a wide range of meaning in the Mediterranean world. There is, however, some semantic overlap in the sense of authority or power over another.

1. *Exousia* is used of civil authority in Rom. 13:1 and Titus 3:1. I Timothy 2:2 and I Pet. 2:13-17 are theologically parallel, though these two specific Greek terms are not used.

2. *Exousia* and *archē* are used for spiritual authorities and powers in Eph. 2:2 and Col. 2:15. In Eph. 3:10 and 6:12 these two terms are linked with “in the heavenlies,” which is unique to Ephesians and refers to the spiritual realm active in human history.
3. There are some Pauline texts that combine civil and spiritual authorities (I Cor. 15:24; Eph. 1:21; and Col. 1:16).

See Special Topic: Human Government at I Tim. 2:2.

▣ **“to be obedient”** This is a PRESENT ACTIVE INFINITIVE. It is a compound word and word play on “obey” (*peithomai*) plus “rulers” (*archē*). It is found only here and in Acts 27:21 in the NT. The concept of submission and obedience is repeated in Paul’s admonition to Christian wives, children, and slaves in Eph. 5:21-6:9 and Col. 3:18-25.

▣ **“to be ready for every good deed”** This phrase in context may refer to believers’ service to the civil authorities and/or community service to their fellow humans. However, similar phrases appear in II Tim. 2:21 and 3:17, where the context refers to godly living in general (cf. Titus 2:14; II Cor. 9:8; Eph. 2:10). The false teachers of 1:16 are unqualified for any good work, secular or sacred.

**3:2** This sentence lists four things that Christians should do in relation to their neighbors. Christians were the minority in their neighborhoods. How they acted was a crucial witness. Also, this list may reflect what false teachers do and true believers should not do.

This is good advice for modern believers involved in political action. How we act is as important as what we say! No cause supercedes evangelism!



NASB	<b>“to malign no one”</b>
NKJV, NRSV	<b>“to speak evil of no one”</b>
TEV	<b>“not to speak evil of anyone”</b>
NJB	<b>“not to go slandering other people”</b>

This is literally the term “blaspheme” (cf. I Tim. 1:13,20; II Tim. 3:2; I Pet. 4:4; II Pet. 2:2,10,11,12). It is usually used of speaking evil of God (cf. Matt. 26:65). It came to be used by Paul to assert that the gospel should not be spoken evil of because of Christian’s conduct (cf. Rom. 14:16; I Cor. 10:30 and here). How believers live is crucial for the evangelistic witness of the church.

▣ **“to be peaceable”** This, like all three of these terms, refers to believers’ dealings with non-believers. See note at I Tim. 3:3.

▣ **“gentle”** See note at I Timothy 3:3.



NASB	<b>“showing every consideration for all men”</b>
NKJV, NRSV	<b>“to show every courtesy to everyone”</b>
TEV	<b>“always to show a gentle attitude toward everyone”</b>
NJB	<b>“always polite to people of all kinds”</b>

Again the phrase refers to believers’ actions toward non-believers. In II Tim. 2:25 it relates to our actions toward believers (cf. I Tim. 6:11). The theme of “everybody” is characteristic of the Pastoral Letters. God loves all people; Jesus died for all people; Christians must respond positively toward all people (cf. I Tim. 2:1,4,6; 4:10; Titus 2:11).

**3:3 “For we also once”** The actions described in this verse characterize fallen mankind, even Christians before they were saved (cf. Rom. 1:29-31; II Cor. 6:9-11; Eph. 2:3; 4:17-21; Gal. 5:19-21).

▣ **“foolish”** This is the term for “thinking” or “reasoning” negated (cf. Luke 6:11; 24:25; Rom. 1:14,21; Gal. 3:1,3; I Tim. 6:9; II Tim. 3:9). It is a strong term for wrong, inappropriate thinking.

▣ **“disobedient”** This is the term “believing” negated. It was used of (1) King Agrippa in Acts 26:19; (2) pagans in Rom. 1:30; Eph. 2:2; 5:6; (3) Jews in Luke 1:17; Rom. 11:30,32; Heb. 4:6; and (4) the false teachers in Titus 1:16; II Tim. 3:2.

▣ **“deceived”** This is a PRESENT ACTIVE PARTICIPLE, which literally means “deceived” or “seduced.” It originally referred to the wanderers of the night sky and came into English as “planet.” It came to be used metaphorically for that which was in error. This term, like the previous two, is used in Paul’s description of human sin in Rom. 1:27 and II Thess. 2:11. Also notice its use in I Tim. 4:1-2; II Tim. 3:13; I Pet. 2:25; II Pet. 2:18; 3:17; and Jude 11.

The PASSIVE VOICE implies the action of an outside agent, here Satan or the demonic.

▣ **“enslaved”** This is a PRESENT ACTIVE PARTICIPLE, which literally means “serving as slaves” to human lusts (cf. Rom. 6:6,12).

▣ **“to various”** This is the adjective “multi-colored,” which was used of the rainbow. It was used of many-sided things (i.e. in I Pet. 1:6 and James 1:2 of the many trials that face believers and in I Pet. 4:10 of the variegated, many-sided nature of God’s grace).

▣ **“lusts”** This is a compound term from “upon” (*epi*) and “the mind or soul” (*thumos*). It referred to a strong desire for something, often in a negative sense. This term is also used in Rom. 1:24 to describe fallen mankind.

▣ **“pleasures”** We get the English term “hedonism” from this Greek word (cf. Luke 8:14; James 4:1-3). Personal gratification becomes a tyrant!

▣ **“spending our life in malice and envy”** This is another description from Rom. 1:29 of the characteristics of fallen humanity.

▣  
NASB, NKJV   **“hateful, hating one another”**  
NRSV         **“despicable, hating one another”**  
TEV           **“others hated us and we hated them”**  
NJB           **“hating each other and hateful ourselves”**

This uses two synonymous Greek terms for hatred. This list of problems reminds one of Matt. 7, “by their fruits you shall know them”! This describes these believers before conversion, but hopefully not after, and still describes the false teachers and their followers.

**3:4-7** This is one long sentence in Greek, which defines the gospel (similar to 2:11-14). It may even be from a hymn, creed, or song.

**3:4 “But when the kindness”** Oh, what a contrast grace makes! We get the English term “philanthropy” from this word which is from two Greek terms: “brotherly love” (*phileō*) and “mankind” (*anthropos*). In

the NT this word is only found here and in Acts 28:2. God loves people made in His image, even fallen ones (cf. Rom. 5:8).

▣ **“of God our Savior”** This is a description of YHWH (cf. II Kin. 13:5; Ps. 106:21; Isa. 19:20; 43:3,11; 45:15,21; 49:26; 60:16; Luke 1:47). This may reflect the contemporary titles for the Emperor (cf. I Tim. 1:1). This is a characteristic phrase of the Pastoral letters. Notice that Jesus is called by the same title in v. 6 (cf. I Tim. 1:1; 2:3; 4:10; Luke 2:11; John 4:42; Acts 5:31; 13:23; II Tim. 1:10). Compare Titus 1:3-4; 2:10-13; 3:4-6. The very heart of the creator God is on saving, redeeming, forgiving, restoring, reuniting His rebellious creatures (cf. John 3:16; Rom. 5:8).

▣ **“appeared”** This refers to Jesus’ first coming. The same term is used in 2:13 for Jesus’ Second Coming (cf. I Tim. 6:14). See Special Topic at 2:13. God’s promised salvation was born at Bethlehem (cf. 2:11).

**3:5 “He saved us”** This is an AORIST ACTIVE INDICATIVE, which implies completed action in past time. This is the main verb of the long Greek sentence from v. 4 to v. 7. See Special Topic: Greek Verb Tenses used for Salvation at II Tim. 1:9.

▣ **“not on the basis of deeds which we have done”** This phrase is placed first in the Greek sentence for emphasis. Salvation is based not on mankind’s efforts, but God’s (cf. 3:20,2-28; 4:4-5; Rom. 9:11; Gal. 2:16; Eph. 2:8-9; Phil. 3:9; II Tim. 1:9). This is the theological tension between “faith apart from works” and “faith seen in works” (cf. Eph. 2:8-10; James 2:14-26). The Jewish gnostic false teachers were emphasizing human merit!

▣ **“in righteousness”** Believers are to pursue righteousness (i.e. Christlikeness) after salvation (cf. I Tim. 6:11), but fallen humans can never approach a holy God on the merits of their own self-righteousness (cf. Isa. 64:6 and the series of OT quotes in Rom. 3:10-18). See Special Topic: Righteousness at 2:12.

▣ **“but according to His mercy”** Fallen mankind’s only hope is in the loving, merciful grace of God. It is His character and purposeful action that has brought the opportunity of forgiveness and restoration (cf. Gen. 3:15; Mal. 3:6; Eph. 2:4-7; I Pet. 1:3).

▣ **“by the washing of regeneration”** This is literally “through the bath of regeneration.” The term washing (*loutron*) is used only twice in the NT (Eph. 5:26 and here). It was rarely used in the Septuagint. It can refer to (1) the place of bathing, (2) the water of bathing, or (3) the act of bathing. In Leviticus washings were a symbol of cleansing or purifying persons or things (cf. Dead Sea Scrolls).

The term “regeneration” (*palingenesia*) is also a rare term, found only in Matt. 19:28 and here. It is a compound from “again” (*palin*) and “birth” (*genesis*). Therefore, it refers to the new birth brought about by the finished work of Christ and the wooing of the Spirit. The occasion of the new birth is water baptism, the agent is the Holy Spirit (cf. vv. 5-6), the means is the death and resurrection of Christ (cf. v. 6), and the basis of it all is the love and mercy of the Father (cf. v. 4). This is not a text that supports baptismal regeneration. Baptism was the occasion for the public confession/profession (cf. Acts 2:38) and the symbol of the believer’s death, burial, and resurrection with Christ in symbolic action (cf. Rom. 6:3-9; Col. 2:12). In the early church baptism was the opportunity for a person’s public profession of faith (“Jesus is Lord” cf. Rom. 10:13). The focus is the action of the Holy Spirit (i.e. birthing and renewing).

▣ **“renewing”** This is also a rare term used only twice in the NT, here and Rom. 12:2. It means to cause someone or something to become new. A related term is found in Col. 3:10. Grammatically it is synonymous with “rebirth.” There is only one PREPOSITION (*dia*) for both of them. Therefore, this is not

two works of grace, but two aspects of one work. This implies they are one event administered by the Holy Spirit. This would be similar to John 3:5-8 and I Pet. 1:23.

**3:6 “poured out”** This could refer to the Father (cf. v. 4) or the Holy Spirit (cf. v. 5). The same verb with the same ambiguity is used in Acts 2:17-18,33; 10:45, which is taken from Joel 2:28-30.

▣ **“through Jesus Christ our Savior”** The title “Savior” applied to God the Father in v. 4 is now applied to God the Son. This same interchange of titles is found in Titus 1:3 and 4; and 2:10 and 13.

## SPECIAL TOPIC: THE TRINITY

Notice the activity of all three Persons of the Trinity. The term “trinity,” first coined by Tertullian, is not a biblical word, but the concept is pervasive.

1. the Gospels
  - a. Matthew 3:16-17; 28:19 (and parallels)
  - b. John 14:26
2. Acts - Acts 2:32-33, 38-39
3. Paul
  - a. Romans 1:4-5; 5:1,5; 8:1-4,8-10
  - b. I Corinthians 2:8-10; 12:4-6
  - c. II Corinthians 1:21; 13:14
  - d. Galatians 4:4-6
  - e. Ephesians 1:3-14,17; 2:18; 3:14-17; 4:4-6
  - f. I Thessalonians 1:2-5
  - g. II Thessalonians 2:13
  - h. Titus 3:4-6
4. Peter - I Peter 1:2
5. Jude - vv. 20-21

It is hinted at in the OT

1. Use of plurals for God
  - a. Name *Elohim* is plural, but when used of God always has a singular verb
  - b. “Us” in Genesis 1:26-27; 3:22; 11:7
  - c. “One” in the *Shema* of Deuteronomy 6:4 is plural (as it is in Gen. 2:24; Ezek. 37:17)
2. The angel of the Lord as a visible representative of deity
  - a. Genesis 16:7-13; 22:11-15; 31:11,13; 48:15-16
  - b. Exodus 3:2,4; 13:21; 14:19
  - c. Judges 2:1; 6:22-23; 13:3-22
  - d. Zechariah 3:1-2
3. God and Spirit are separate, Genesis 1:1-2; Psalm 104:30; Isa. 63:9-11; Ezek. 37:13-14
4. God (YHWH) and Messiah (*Adon*) are separate, Psalm 45:6-7; 110:1; Zechariah 2:8-11; 10:9-12
5. Messiah and Spirit are separate, Zechariah 12:10
6. All three mentioned in Isa. 48:16; 61:1

The deity of Jesus and the personality of the Spirit caused problems for the strict, monotheistic, early believers:

1. Tertullian - subordinated the Son to the Father
2. Origen - subordinated the divine essence of the Son and the Spirit
3. Arius - denied deity to the Son and Spirit
4. Monarchianism - believed in a successive manifestation of God

The trinity is a historically developed formulation informed by the biblical material

1. The full deity of Jesus, equal to the Father, affirmed in 325 A.D. by the Council of Nicea
2. The full personality and deity of the Spirit equal to the Father and Son was affirmed by the Council of Constantinople (381 A.D.)
3. The doctrine of the trinity is fully expressed in Augustine's work *De Trinitate*

There is truly mystery here. But the NT seems to affirm one divine essence with three eternal personal manifestations. For further discussions on this subject see *To What End Exegesis?* pp. 330–350 by Gordon D. Fee and *Christian Theology*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. pp. 346-367 by Millard J. Erickson.

**3:7 “so that”** This is a purpose statement (*hina*) like 3:8, 13 and 14.



**NASB** “being justified by His grace”  
**NKJV, NRSV** “having been justified by His grace”  
**TEV** “by His grace we might be put right with God”  
**NJB** “justified by his grace”

This is an AORIST PASSIVE PARTICIPLE (cf. Rom. 1:16-17; 3:24) related to the word “righteousness.” See full note at 2:12. The PASSIVE VOICE implies the agency of the Spirit. “Justification by faith” is a forensic (legal) metaphor used so often by Paul emphasizing God’s initiating grace (cf. I Tim. 1:2,14; II Tim. 1:2; Titus 1:4). Believers are forgiven and accepted because of who He is and what He has done, not because of who they are or what they have done!

☐ **“we would be made heirs”** This is the ultimate application of the family metaphors used to describe believers (cf. Rom. 4:13; 8:14-17; Gal. 3:29; 4:7; Heb. 6:7; James 2:5).

☐ **“eternal life”** See note at 1:2.

**3:8 “This is a trustworthy statement”** This is a common marker for five of Paul’s theological affirmations in the Pastoral Letters (cf. I Tim. 1:15; 3:1; 4:9; II Tim. 2:11). Exactly to what verses this refers has been debated among commentators; most assume vv. 4-7.

☐ **“to speak confidently”** (cf. I Timothy 1:7)

☐ **“so that”** This is another *hina* (purpose clause), like 3:7, 13, and 14.

☐ **“those who have believed God”** This is a PERFECT ACTIVE PARTICIPLE, which describes a past act with continuing results which becomes a settled state of being. Usually in the NT the object of belief is Jesus, but often the PRONOUN (Him) used for deity is ambiguous and could refer to the Father or the Son.

▣ **“will be careful to engage in good deeds”** The term “careful” is a form of the verb “to reason” or “to consider carefully,” which is found only here in the NT. The INFINITIVE “to engage” is from a word normally translated “manage” (cf. I Tim. 3:4,5,12). Believers must constantly think about and take the lead in living godly lives for the sake of the gospel. Paul affirms again that people are right with God apart from personal good works, but also that the goal of God for every believer is personal good works (cf. Eph. 2:8-10 and James 2:14-23). The motivation is gratitude for the undeserved, unmerited grace of God; the effect is Christlikeness; the goal is evangelism.

▣ **“for men”** Again, the universal emphasis is that God loves all mankind and wants all to be saved. A key way to draw unbelievers to God is the changed lives of believers (cf. Matt. 5:16; I Pet. 2:12).

**3:9 “But avoid”** This is a PRESENT MIDDLE IMPERATIVE, meaning “to continue to keep aloof from or avoid” (cf. II Tim. 2:16).

▣ **“foolish controversies”** This term is first in the Greek text for emphasis (cf. I Tim. 6:4-5; II Tim. 2:14,23). Timothy is Paul’s apostolic delegate. He is not to debate or speculate but to pass on apostolic truth with authority.

▣ **“genealogies”** The same type of false teachers who were in Ephesus (cf. I Tim. 1:4) were on Crete. These genealogies were probably Jewish, relating to Messianic speculations, not gnostic angelic levels (*eons*).

▣ There is a series of nouns in v. 9 connected by “and” (*kai*), which may refer to separate aspects or one general tendency. These nouns are “controversies,” “genealogies,” “strifes,” and “disputes.” They all occur in either I or II Timothy.

▣ **“about the Law”** This shows the Jewish element in this false teaching (cf. 1:10,14; I Tim. 1:3-7).

▣ **“for they are unprofitable and worthless”** Theological hair-splitting and speculations are not always helpful to the body of Christ. Titus, like Timothy, speaks with Paul’s apostolic authority.

**3:10 “reject”** This is another PRESENT MIDDLE IMPERATIVE, like v. 9. The same term, “to refuse, reject, or decline,” is used in I Tim. 4:7; 5:11 and II Tim. 2:23. The same concept is used in Rom. 16:17; Gal. 1:8-9; II Thess. 3:6-14.

In our attempt to dialog with factious people we must not give any gesture or greeting that could be seen as an acceptance or affirmation (cf. II John 10).

- ▣
- |      |                                      |
|------|--------------------------------------|
| NASB | “a factious man”                     |
| NKJV | “divisive man”                       |
| NRSV | “anyone who causes divisions”        |
| TEV  | “to those who cause divisions”       |
| NJB  | “if someone disputes what you teach” |

This is the Greek term *hairetikos* (which occurs only here in the NT), from which we get the English term “heretic.” This term originally meant “to take sides” or “to choose for oneself.” It is used in the NT (1) of “sects” in Acts 5:17; 24:14; (2) of “factions” in I Cor. 11:19; Gal. 5:20 and (3) of “teachings” in II Pet. 2:1.

▣ **“after a first and second warning”** This is consistent with the other NT passages on church discipline (cf. Matt. 18:15-17; Gal. 6:1; II Thess. 3:15; James 5:19). It may reflect Lev. 19:17.

**3:11 “knowing that such a man”** This is a PERFECT ACTIVE PARTICIPLE. Their actions clearly show and continue to show who they really are (cf. Matt. 7).

▣ **“is perverted”** This is a PERFECT PASSIVE INDICATIVE. This form is found only here in the NT. This is a compound term from *ek* (from) and *strephō* (to turn), meaning therefore, to turn from. It is a word play on the term for turning to Christ (conversion) of Matt. 18:3 or *epistrephō*, which reflects the OT term for turning (*shub*) to God (Matt. 13:15; Mark 4:12; Luke 22:32; John 12:40; Acts 3:19; 25:27; James 5:19-20). These false teachers are now turning from God (cf. 1:14, *apostrephō*) to heresies and false teachings.

The PASSIVE VOICE implies an outside agent. In this context it has to be Satan.

▣ **“and is sinning”** This is a PRESENT ACTIVE INDICATIVE, which implies habitual, on-going, lifestyle characteristics (cf. I Tim. 5:20).

▣ **“being self-condemned”** This is a PRESENT ACTIVE PARTICIPLE. The form is found only here in the NT. Our actions and words reveal our hearts (cf. I Tim. 5:24; Matt. 7; Mark 7).

#### **NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 3:12-14**

**<sup>12</sup>When I send Artemas or Tychicus to you, make every effort to come to me at Nicopolis, for I have decided to spend the winter there. <sup>13</sup>Diligently help Zenas the lawyer and Apollos on their way so that nothing is lacking for them. <sup>14</sup>Our people must also learn to engage in good deeds to meet pressing needs, so that they will not be unfruitful.**

**3:12 “Artemas”** This man is unknown to us, but not to God.

▣ **“Tychicus”** He is mentioned in Acts 20:4; Eph. 6:21-22; Col. 4:7-8 and II Tim. 4:12. He is the bearer of the prison letters. These two men were to take Titus’ leadership place on Crete so that he could join Paul for the winter.

This shows that the letter, although written to Titus, was meant to inform, instruct, and encourage the entire church on Crete. Many of Paul’s statements to Titus do not make much sense if Titus was to leave soon after the letter was received unless it was obvious to the Christians that Paul was addressing them through his words to Titus.

▣ **“make every effort to come to me”** Paul did not want to be alone (cf. II Tim. 4:9,21), I think because he had severe eye problems probably dating back to his conversion on the Damascus road (cf. Acts 9:3-9,12,17-18). I believe his “thorn in the flesh” (cf. II Cor. 12:7) was probably this eye problem. Notice the unusual statement in Gal. 4:15. Also in Gal. 6:11 Paul comments about his own handwriting being very large. He wrote the last few lines of his letters to authenticate them (cf. II Thess. 2:2; 3:17; I Cor. 16:21; Col. 4:18; Philemon 19).

▣ **“Nicopolis”** There are several cities by this name, which means “victory-town.” This was probably the coastal town close to the site of the battle of Actium.

#### **3:13**

**NASB “diligently help. . .on their way”**

**NKJV “send. . .on their journey with haste”**

**NRSV** “make every effort to send. . .on their way”  
**TEV** “do your best to help. . .to get started on their travels”  
**NJB** “help eagerly on their way”

This is the adverb *spoudaiōs*, which means “earnestly” or “eagerly” or “diligently” (cf. Luke 7:4 and a related term in Phil. 2:28). It is combined with the AORIST ACTIVE IMPERATIVE *propempō*, which meant to furnish everything needed for a journey (cf. III John 6; and Acts 15:3). Apparently Zenas and Apollos were undertaking a mission activity. Paul asks a similar thing from the house churches at Rome in Rom. 15:24.

▣ **“Zenas the lawyer”** Whether he was a Jewish or Greek lawyer is unknown.

▣ **“Apollos”** He was a very eloquent preacher from Alexandria who was helped by Priscilla and Aquila (cf. Acts 18:24,28; 19:1; I Cor. 1:12; 3:5,6,22; 4:6; 16:12). These two men were probably the bearers of Paul’s letter to Titus.

**3:14 “Our people must also learn to engage in good deeds”** This is a PRESENT ACTIVE IMPERATIVE (cf. 1:16; 2:7,14; 3:18), encouraging missionaries is an evangelistic activity (cf. 2:7,14; 3:8).

▣ **“so that they will not be unfruitful”** The term unfruitful is ambiguous. I think it is parallel to Paul’s “in vain” (cf. *eikē* in I Cor. 15:2; Gal. 3:4; 4:11 or *kenos* in I Cor. 15:10,58; II Cor. 6:1; Gal. 2:2; Phil. 2:16; I Thess. 2:1; 3:5), which refers to effective evangelistic and mission-minded churches. Paul started churches in selected areas for the purpose of evangelizing the entire region. If for some reason these initial congregations lost sight of their “great commission” purpose, then their planting was in vain!

**NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 3:15a**

<sup>15</sup>**All who are with me greet you. Greet those who love us in *the* faith.**

**3:15 “all who are with me greet you”** Paul usually, but not always (cf. I Tim.), concludes his letters with greetings (1) from the mission team accompanying him and (2) to the believers in the church or locality he is writing.

▣ **“in *the* faith”** The term for faith can be used of doctrine as in Acts 6:7; 13:8; 14:22; Gal. 1:23; 3:23; Phil. 1:27; Jude 3,20 or as a way of expressing one’s personal relationship to God through Christ (cf. John 1:12; 3:16). It can also be used in the OT sense of faithfulness or trustworthiness. This phrase probably means that the false teachers on Crete had rejected Paul’s apostolic authority and teachings.

**NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 3:15b**

<sup>15b</sup>**Grace be with you all.**

▣ **“Grace be with you all”** The “you” is PLURAL. This letter was to be read to the house churches on Crete as were all the Pastoral Letters (cf. I Tim. 6:21; II Tim. 4:22).

▣ The King James Version concludes with “Amen,” but this is not present in the early Greek manuscripts P<sup>61</sup>,  $\aleph^*$ , A, C, or D\*. Probably later scribes noticed its use in Rom. 16:27; Gal. 6:18; Phil. 4:20; II Thess. 3:18; I Tim. 6:16; and II Tim. 4:18 and added it here as they did in Rom. 15:33; 16:20,24; I Cor. 16:24; II Cor. 13:14; Eph. 6:24; Phil. 4:23; I Thess. 5:28; I Tim. 6:21; II Tim. 4:22; and Titus 3:15.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

This is a study guide commentary, which means that you are responsible for your own interpretation of the Bible. Each of us must walk in the light we have. You, the Bible, and the Holy Spirit are priority in interpretation. You must not relinquish this to a commentator.

These discussion questions are provided to help you think through the major issues of this section of the book. They are meant to be thought-provoking, not definitive.

1. Why should Christians submit to civil government? What if the governing authorities are not Christians?
2. What is the major emphasis of vv. 4-7?
3. Is baptism necessary for salvation? Why? Why not?
4. Why are believers to be subject to civil authority?
5. What is a heretic?
6. Outline the theological statements of vv. 5-7.
7. What do the “good deeds” of vv. 8 and 14 involve?
8. Are the false teachers Jewish or Gnostic? Why?

# II TIMOTHY 1

## PARAGRAPH DIVISIONS OF MODERN TRANSLATIONS

UBS <sup>4</sup>	NKJV	NRSV	TEV	NJB
Salutation	Greeting	Salutation	Introduction	Greeting and Thanksgiving
1:1-2	1:1	1:1	1:1	1:1-2
	1:2a	1:2a	1:2a	
	1:2b	1:2b	1:2b	
Loyalty to the Gospel	Timothy's Faith and Heritage	Thanksgiving and Exhortation	Thanksgiving and Encouragement	1:3-5
1:3-14	1:3-7	1:3-7	1:3-7	
				The Gifts That Timothy Has Received
				1:6-11
	Not Ashamed of the Gospel	An Appeal to Show Courage (1:8-2:13)		
	1:8-12	1:8-14	1:8-10	
	Be Loyal to the Faith		1:11-14	
	1:13-18			1:12
1:15-18		1:15-18	1:15-18	1:13-14
				1:15-18

### READING CYCLE THREE (see p. vii)

#### *FOLLOWING THE ORIGINAL AUTHOR'S INTENT AT THE PARAGRAPH LEVEL*

This is a study guide commentary, which means that you are responsible for your own interpretation of the Bible. Each of us must walk in the light we have. You, the Bible, and the Holy Spirit are priority in interpretation. You must not relinquish this to a commentator.

Read the chapter in one sitting. Identify the subjects. Compare your subject divisions with the five modern translations. Paragraphing is not inspired, but it is the key to following the original author's intent, which is the heart of interpretation. Every paragraph has one and only one subject.

1. First paragraph
2. Second paragraph
3. Third paragraph
4. Etc.

## WORD AND PHRASE STUDY

### NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 1:1-2

<sup>1</sup>Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, according to the promise of life in Christ Jesus,  
<sup>2</sup>to Timothy, my beloved son: Grace, mercy *and* peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.

**1:1 “Paul”** Saul of Tarsus is first called Paul in Acts 13:9. It is probable that most Jews of the diaspora had a Hebrew name (Saul) and a Greek name (Paul). If so, then Saul’s parents gave him this name, but why, then, does “Paul” suddenly appear in Acts 13? Possibly (1) others began to call him by this name or (2) he began to refer to himself by the term “little” or “least.” The Greek name *Paulos* meant “little.” Several theories have been advanced about the origin of his Greek name: (1) the second century tradition that Paul was short, fat, bald, bow-legged, bushy eye-browed, and had protruding eyes, deriving from a non-canonical book from Thessalonika called *Paul and Thekla*, is a possible source of the name; (2) Paul calls himself the “least of the saints” because he persecuted the Church (cf. Acts 9:1-2; I Cor. 15:9; Eph. 3:8; I Tim. 1:15). Some have seen this “leastness” as the origin of the self-chosen title. However, in a book like Galatians, where he emphasizes his independence from and equality with the Jerusalem Twelve, this is somewhat unlikely (cf. II Cor. 11:5; 12:11; 15:10).

▣ **“an apostle”** This came from the Greek word “send” (*apostellō*). Jesus chose twelve men to be with Him in a special sense and called them “Apostles” (cf. Luke 6:13). This term was often used of Jesus being sent from the Father (cf. Matt. 10:40; 15:24; Mark 9:37; Luke 9:48; John 4:34; 5:24, 30, 36, 37, 38; 6:29,38,39,40,57; 7:29; 8:42; 10:36; 11:42; 17:3, 8,18,21,23,25; 20:21). In Jewish sources, an apostle was someone sent as an official representative of another, similar to “ambassador” (cf. II Cor. 5:20).

▣ **“Christ”** This is the Greek equivalent of the Hebrew term *messiah*, which meant “an anointed one.” It implied “one called and equipped by God for a specific task.” In the OT three groups of leaders—priests, kings, and prophets—were anointed. Jesus fulfilled all three of these anointed offices (cf. Heb. 1:2-3). He is the promised One who was to inaugurate the new age of righteousness.

▣ **“Jesus”** This Hebrew name meant “YHWH saves,” “YHWH is salvation,” or “YHWH brings salvation.” It is the same as the OT name “Joshua.” “Jesus” is derived from the Hebrew word for salvation, *hosea*, suffixed to the covenant name for God, “YHWH.” It was the name communicated by God through an angel to Mary (cf. Matt. 1:21).

▣ **“by the will of God”** This same introductory phrase is used in I Cor. 1:1; II Cor. 1:1; Eph. 1:1; and Col. 1:1. Paul was convinced that God had chosen him to be an Apostle. This special sense of calling started at his Damascus road conversion (cf. Acts 9:1-22; 23:3-16; 26:9-18). Paul often asserted his God-given authority and calling to affirm his writings as being uniquely from God (i.e. inspired, cf. II Tim. 3:16; I Cor. 2:9-13; I Thess. 2:13).

▣  
NASB, NKJV “according to the promise of life”  
NRSV “for the sake of the promise of life”  
TEV “sent to proclaim the promised life”  
NJB “in accordance with his promise of life”

Paul is asserting that his salvation, calling and equipping for ministry are all based on God's promises of real life, eternal life through Christ (cf. 1:1,2,9,13). Paul alludes to this concept of God's having and giving life several times in the Pastoral Letters (cf. 1:1; I Tim. 6:15-16,19; Titus 1:2).

**1:2 “to Timothy, my beloved son”** This is metaphorical for Paul being Timothy's spiritual father in the gospel (cf. 2:1; T Tim. 1:2; Titus 1:4). This opening paragraph shows their mutual love.

▣ **“Grace, mercy and peace”** Notice the commonality and differences in Paul's opening greetings

1. “Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ” (Rom. 1:7; I Cor. 1:3; II Cor. 1:2; Gal. 1:3; Eph. 1:2; Phil. 1:2; I Thess. 1:2; Philemon 1:3)
2. “Grace to you and peace from God our Father” (Col. 1:2)
3. “Grace to you and peace” (I Thess. 1:1)
4. “Grace, mercy and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord” (I Tim. 1:2; II Tim. 1:2)
5. “Grace and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Savior” (Titus 1:4)

Notice that there is variety, but some elements are standard

1. “Grace” begins all greetings. It is a Christianized form of the standard Greek opening. It focuses on the character of God.
2. “Peace” is the result of humans trusting in the trustworthy God, faithing His faithfulness.
3. “Mercy” is another way of describing God's character and is unique to I and II Timothy. This term was used in the Septuagint to translate the Hebrew term *hesed* (i.e. covenant love and loyalty). God is gracious and trustworthy.
4. The Father and Son are mentioned in each greeting (in I Thess. they are mentioned in the previous phrase). They are always grammatically linked. This was one way the NT writers asserted the full deity of Jesus of Nazareth. This is also true of the use of the OT titles for YHWH applied to Jesus (i.e. Lord and Savior).

▣ **“from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord”** The opening phrase which follows “grace, mercy and peace” has one PREPOSITION (*apo*) linking the Father and the Son in an equal grammatical relationship (cf. I Tim. 1:2; Titus 1:4 and II Tim. 1:2). This was a technique used by Paul to assert the deity of Jesus.

“Father” is not used in the sense of sexual generation or chronological sequence, but intimate family relationship. God chose family terms to reveal Himself to humanity (cf. Hosea 2-3, where God is shown as passionate, faithful lover, and Hosea 11 where He is shown as loving father and mother).

The deity of revelation is not the Prime Mover or the First Cause of Greek philosophy, but the Father of Christ Jesus. The Bible is not a human-reasoned philosophy but a divine self-disclosure, a revelation which cannot be discovered by human analysis. See Special Topic: Father at I Tim. 1:2.

▣ **“Lord”** God revealed His covenant name to Moses in Exod. 3:14—YHWH. It was from the CAUSATIVE FORM of the Hebrew verb “to be.” The Jews were later afraid to pronounce this holy name, when they read the Scriptures, lest they take it in vain and break one of the Ten Commandments (cf. Exod. 20:7; Deut. 5:11). Therefore, they substituted another word, *Adon*, which meant, “husband, owner, master, lord.” This is the source of the English translation of YHWH as LORD.

When the NT authors called Jesus “Lord” (*kurios*), they were asserting the deity of Jesus. This affirmation became the early church's baptismal formula, “Jesus is Lord” (cf. Rom. 10:9-13; Phil. 2:6-11).

**NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 1:3-14**

**<sup>3</sup>I thank God, whom I serve with a clear conscience the way my forefathers did, as I constantly remember you in my prayers night and day, <sup>4</sup>longing to see you, even as I recall your tears, so that I**

may be filled with joy. <sup>5</sup>For I am mindful of the sincere faith within you, which first dwelt in your grandmother Lois, and your mother Eunice, and I am sure that *it is* in you as well. <sup>6</sup>And for this reason I remind you to kindle afresh the gift of God which is in you through the laying on of my hands. <sup>7</sup>For God has not given us a spirit of timidity, but of power and love and discipline. <sup>8</sup>Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, or of me His prisoner; but join with *me* in suffering for the gospel according to the power of God, <sup>9</sup>who has saved us, and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was granted us in Christ Jesus from all eternity, <sup>10</sup>but now has been revealed by the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus, who abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel, <sup>11</sup>for which I was appointed a preacher and an apostle and a teacher. <sup>12</sup>For this reason I also suffer these things, but I am not ashamed; for I know whom I have believed and I am convinced that He is able to guard what I have entrusted to Him until that day. <sup>13</sup>Retain the standard of sound words which you have heard from me, in the faith and love which are in Christ Jesus. <sup>14</sup>Guard, through the Holy Spirit who dwells in us, the treasure which has been entrusted to you.

**1:3 “I thank God”** It was typical of ancient Mediterranean letters to include a prayer of thanksgiving at the beginning of the letter. Paul usually followed this pattern (cf. Rom. 1:8; I Cor. 1:4; Eph. 1:15-16; Phil. 1:3-4; Col. 1:3-4; I Thess. 1:2; II Thess. 1:3; Philemon 4).

▣ **“whom I serve. . .the way my forefathers did”** Paul was not conscious of Christianity being a separate or new faith from the OT (cf. Acts 24:14; 26:5-6; Rom. 4; II Cor. 11:22; and Phil. 3:5).

▣ **“clear conscience”** See note at I Tim. 1:5.

▣ **“remember”** Paul remembers Timothy’s life, family, and call to ministry. He uses the term *mneia* in four ways in vv. 3-6.

1. in v. 3 Paul remembers Timothy constantly in his prayers
2. in v. 4 he uses the PARTICIPLE FORM to remind Timothy of their tearful separation
3. in v. 5 he uses a COMPOUND form (*hupo + mneia*) to remind Timothy of his family’s sincere faith
4. in v. 6 he uses a COMPOUND VERBAL form of the term (*ana + mneia*) to remind Timothy of his calling and equipping for ministry.

It is theologically helpful and encouraging to look back over our lives and see God’s hand which was involved at every stage (family faith, personal faith, call and equipping for ministry, and godly friends and mentors).

**1:4** Paul and Timothy had a wonderful relationship in Christ’s service. Their friendship encouraged and strengthened them for ministry (cf. 4:9,21).

**1:5 “sincere faith”** Literally this is “unhypocritical.” It is used in the sense of “a pure faith” (cf. I Tim. 1:5).

▣ **“within you”** It is uncertain from the context (and 3:15 as well as Acts 16:1) whether this refers to Judaism (Timothy’s grandmother and possibly mother) or Christianity (Timothy’s conversion). It obviously refers to faith in YHWH and His redemptive plan.

▣

NASB	“I am sure that <i>it is</i> in you as well”
NKJV	“I am persuaded is in you also”
NRSV	“I am sure, lives in you”

**TEV** “I am sure that you have it also”

**NJB** “I am sure dwells also in you”

This is a PERFECT PASSIVE INDICATIVE. This phrase in Greek is a strong affirmation of continuing confidence in the Spirit’s work in Timothy’s life and ministry.

**1:6 “to kindle afresh”** This is a PRESENT ACTIVE INDICATIVE which implies an ongoing need to fan or rekindle or stir up the flame. There is the volitional aspect of giftedness! This is not meant to imply that Timothy had let the flame of God’s call and giftedness burn low, but that in difficult situations like his current assignment, he should take strength from God’s previous call and equipping.

▣ **“the gift of God”** The root of the term “gift” (charisma), which is from “grace” (*charis*). This could refer to the Holy Spirit or, better in this context, to his gifts of ministry. Every believer has a supernatural gift or gifts for ministry (I Cor. 12:7,11,18). Timothy’s gift was recognized by Paul and his home church (cf. I Tim. 4:14).

▣ **“through the laying on of my hands”** This cannot be a proof text for “apostolic succession.” See Special Topic at I Tim. 4:14. Laying on of hands was used for several reasons in the Bible.

**1:7 “For God has not given us a spirit of”** The ancient Greek texts of the NT were written in all capital letters (uncials), so capitalization in modern translations is a matter of interpretation. There is no DEFINITE ARTICLE in the Greek text. There are also NT parallels for a small “s” (cf. Rom. 8:15; I Cor. 2:12) yet in both contexts the Holy Spirit is specifically mentioned. Most modern translations have “a spirit...” (i.e. KJV, ASV, NKJV, NASB, RSV, NRSV, NEB, REB and NIV). However, others assume the Holy Spirit is being referred to here (cf. TEV, NJB and the William’s translation of the NT). In reality it could be purposeful ambiguity (cf. NEB and NJB).

God has given each believer the greatest gift, the Spirit, as well as a spiritual gift(s) for ministry but also a bold and powerful desire to serve, to share, to go, to be Christlike.

Robert Girdlestone, *Synonyms of the Old Testament*, has an interesting discussion of the uses of the term “spirit” in the NT (pp. 61-63).

1. evil spirits
2. the human spirit
3. the Holy Spirit
4. things that the Spirit produces in and through human spirits
  - a. “not a spirit of slavery” vs. “a spirit of adoption,” Rom. 8:15
  - b. “a spirit of gentleness,” I Cor. 4:21
  - c. “a spirit of faith,” II Cor. 4:13
  - d. “a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him,” Eph. 1:17
  - e. “not a spirit of timidity” vs. “power, love and discipline,” II Tim. 1:17
  - f. “spirit of error” vs. “spirit of truth,” I John 4:6

▣

**NASB, NJB** “a spirit of timidity”

**NKJV** “a spirit of fear”

**NRSV** “a spirit of cowardice”

**TEV** “the Spirit. . .does not make us timid”

There are one negative and three positive aspects to the giftedness of God.



**NASB** “discipline”  
**NKJV** “sound mind”  
**NRSV** “self-discipline”  
**TEV, NJB** “self-control”

See note at I Tim. 3:2 for *sōphrōn*.

**1:8-14** This is one sentence in Greek.

▣ **“ashamed”** This is a key phrase in this first chapter (cf. vv. 8,12,16; also note Mark 8:38; Rom. 1:16). Here its grammatical form is an AORIST PASSIVE (deponent) SUBJUNCTIVE; it does not imply that Timothy was ashamed, but is rather an admonition not to start being ashamed.

Paul may have been alluding to the OT concept of sin bringing problems and righteousness bringing blessings (cf. Deut. 27-28; Job, Ps. 73). Paul was not suffering for sin but for Christ.

▣ **“of the testimony of our Lord, or of me His prisoner”** Paul admonished Timothy to continue to preach the sufferings of Christ (cf. Gen. 3:15; Isa. 53; Acts 3:18; 26:23) and also to identify with Paul as a spiritual prisoner of the gospel and a physical prisoner because of the gospel! Preach the good news regardless of the cost or consequences!

▣ **“join with me”** Because of Paul’s theology about the believers close identification with Christ in death (cf. Rom. 6; Gal. 2:20) and suffering (cf. Rom. 8:17; II Cor. 1:5; Phil. 3:10; also in I Pet. 4:13), Paul often forms new Greek words using the PREPOSITION *syn* which means “joint participation in”: (1) suffer with (1:8 and 2:3); (2) died with (2:11); (3) live with (2:11); and (4) reign with (2:12).

▣ **“in suffering for the gospel”** This is an AORIST ACTIVE IMPERATIVE (cf. 2:3, 9; 4:5; Rom. 8:17; I Pet. 3:14; 4:12-19). The key to this phrase is “for the gospel,” not our own evil (cf. I Pet. 2:15-16). Modern Christians must recognize that suffering for the gospel is the norm, not the exception (cf. Matt. 5:10-12; John 15:18-21; 16:1-2; 17:14; Acts 14:22; Rom. 5:3-4; II Cor. 4:16-18; 6:4-10; 11:23-28; Phil. 1:29; I Thess. 3:3; II Tim. 3:12; James 1:2-4).

**1:9 “who has saved us and called us”** These are two AORIST ACTIVE PARTICIPLES joined by “and” (*kai*). In Rom. 8:29-30 the “calling” comes before the “saving,” referring to God’s sovereignty (election), but here the calling is referring to ministry (called with a calling, cf. vv. 6-8 and Special Topic at v. 9).

This is the NT equivalent to the covenant language of the OT used of Israel. Believers in Jesus are the covenant people of God.

### **SPECIAL TOPIC: GREEK VERB TENSES USED FOR SALVATION**

Salvation is not a product, but a relationship. It is not finished when one trusts Christ; it has only begun! It is not a fire insurance policy, nor a ticket to heaven but a personal relationship with Jesus that issues in daily Christlikeness.

#### **SALVATION AS A COMPLETED ACTION (AORIST)**

- Acts 15:11
- Romans 8:24
- II Timothy 1:9

- Titus 3:5
- Romans 13:11 (combines the AORIST with a FUTURE orientation)

#### SALVATION AS A STATE OF BEING (PERFECT TENSE)

- Ephesians 2:5,8

#### SALVATION AS A CONTINUING PROCESS (PRESENT TENSE)

- I Corinthians 1:18; 15:2
- II Corinthians 2:15
- I Peter 3:21; 4:18

#### SALVATION AS A FUTURE CONSUMMATION (FUTURE in VERB TENSE or context)

- (implied in Matt. 10:22, 24:13; Mark 13:13)
- Romans 5:9,10; 10:9,13
- I Corinthians 3:15; 5:5
- Philippians 1:28;
- I Thessalonians 5:8-9
- I Timothy 4:16
- Hebrews 1:14; 9:28
- I Peter 1:5

Therefore, salvation begins with an initial faith decision (cf. John 1:12; 3:16; Rom. 10:9-13), but this must issue in a process of lifestyle faith (cf. Ro. 8:29; Gal. 4:19; Eph. 1:4; 2:10) which will one day be consummated in sight (cf. I John 3:2). This final state is called glorification. This can be illustrated as

1. initial salvation—justification (saved from the penalty of sin)
2. progressive salvation—sanctification (saved from the power of sin)
3. final salvation—glorification (saved from the presence of sin).

▣ **“with a holy calling”** This could refer to God as holy, but probably in context it refers to God’s will for a holy covenant people. God’s will has always been for a people “made in His image” (cf. Gen. 1:26-27) to reflect His image! The work of the Messiah has restored the image of God lost in the rebellion of Adam and Eve in Gen. 3. The goal of Christianity is Christlikeness (cf. Rom. 8:29; Gal. 4:19; Eph. 1:4).

#### **SPECIAL TOPIC: CALLED**

God always takes the initiative in calling, electing, and wooing believers to Himself (cf. John 6:44, 65; 15:16; I Cor. 1:12; Eph. 1:4-5,11). The term “calling” is used in several theological senses:

- A. Sinners are called to salvation by the grace of God through the finished work of Christ and the conviction of the Spirit (i.e. *klētos*, cf. Rom. 1:6-7; 9:24, which is theologically similar to I Cor. 1:1-2 and II Tim. 1:9; II Pet. 1:10).

- B. Sinners call on the name of the Lord to be saved (i.e. *epikaleō*, cf. Acts 2:21; 22:16; Rom. 10:9-13). This statement is a Jewish worship idiom.
- C. Believers are called to live Christlike lives (i.e. *klāsis*, cf. I Cor. 1:26; 7:20; Eph. 4:1; Phil. 3:14; II Thess. 1:11; II Tim. 1:9)
- D. Believers are called to ministry tasks (cf. Acts 13:2; I Cor. 12:4-7; Eph. 4:1).

▣ **“not according to our works”** This was Paul’s main preaching point to the Judaizers of Acts 15 and Galatians. The false teachers of the Pastoral Letters also have a Jewish works-righteousness mentality. This rejection of a works-righteousness is a recurrent theme in Paul’s writings (cf. Rom. 3:20; 27-28; 4:4-5; 8; 9:11; Gal. 2:16; Eph. 2:8-9; Phil. 3:9; II Tim. 1:9; Titus 3:5).

▣ **“according to His own purpose and grace”** God’s will and character cannot be separated. He has acted on fallen mankind’s behalf based on who He is (cf. Eph. 1:4-5, 11). The gospel reflects the heart of the Father, the loving actions of the Son and the power of the Spirit. Salvation was God’s idea, God’s initiation and God’s provision!

▣ **“which was granted us in Christ Jesus from all eternity”** The gospel was not “plan B.” It was always God’s plan to redeem fallen mankind, mankind made in His image and made for fellowship with Him. As Genesis 3 records mankind’s rebellion, it also records God’s promise and plan (cf. Gen. 3:15; Rom. 16:25-26; Eph. 2:11-3:13).

This predetermined plan through Christ is referred to often in the sermons of the Apostles in Acts (cf. 2:23; 3:18; 4:28; 13:29 as well as in Jesus’ own words in Mark 10:45; Luke 22:20). It is possibly alluded to in Titus 1:2 and Rev. 13:8.

Israel was only the first stage in God’s plan of world redemption (cf. Gen. 12:3; Exod. 19:5). The Messiah has always been the only hope for sinful humanity!

**1:10 “the appearing of”** The term *epiphany* here refers to Christ’s first coming (cf. I Tim. 6:14; Titus 2:11), but in II Tim. 4:1 and Titus 2:13 the same word refers to His Second Coming. See Special Topic at Titus 2:13.

▣ **“our Savior Christ Jesus”** Savior is an OT title for YHWH (cf. Ps. 106:21; Isa. 43:3,11,15,21; 49:26; 60:16; 63:8; Hos. 13:4; Luke 1:47). In the NT it is attributed to Jesus as God’s Messiah (cf. Luke 2:11; John 4:42; 13:23; Eph. 5:23; Phil. 3:20; I John 4:14).

Only in the Pastoral Letters are both titles used in close proximity for both God the Father and God the Son.

A. God

1. God our Savior (I Tim. 1:1)
2. God our savior (I Tim. 2:3)
3. the savior of all men (I Tim. 4:10)
4. God our savior (Titus 1:3)
5. God our savior (Titus 2:10)
6. God our savior (Titus 3:4)

B. Christ

1. our savior (II Tim. 1:10)
2. the Lord Jesus Christ our savior (Titus 1:4)
3. our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus (Titus 2:13)

4. Jesus Christ our savior (Titus 3:6)
5. our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ (I Peter 1:11)
6. the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ (II Peter 2:20)
7. our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ (II Peter 3:18)

The Pastoral Letters, written in the mid to late sixties, were also reacting against the Roman Emperor's claims of being both God and savior (as well as these titles' use in the mystery religions). For Christians these titles were reserved for YHWH and His Messiah.

▣ **“who abolished death”** See Special Topic below.

### **SPECIAL TOPIC: NULL AND VOID (*KATARGE O*)**

*Katarge o* was one of Paul's favorite words. He used it at least twenty-five times, but it has a very wide semantic range.

- A. Its basic etymological root is from *argos*
  1. inactive
  2. idle
  3. unused
  4. useless
  5. inoperative
- B. The compound with *kata* was used to express
  1. inactivity
  2. uselessness
  3. that which was cancelled
  4. that which was done away with
  5. that which was completely inoperative
- C. It is used once in Luke to describe a fruitless, and therefore useless, tree (cf. Luke 13:7).
- D. Paul uses it in a figurative sense in two primary ways
  1. God making inoperative things which are hostile to mankind
    - a. mankind's sin nature (Rom. 6:6)
    - b. the Mosaic law in relation to God's promise of "the seed" (Rom. 4:14; Gal. 3:17; 5:4,11; Eph. 2:15)
    - c. spiritual forces (I Cor. 15:24)
    - d. the "man of lawlessness" (II Thess. 2:8)
    - e. physical death (I Cor. 15:24,26; II Tim. 1:10; Heb. 2:14)
  2. God replacing the old (covenant, age) for the new
    - a. things related to the Mosaic Law (Rom. 3:3,31; 4:14; II Cor. 3:7,11,13,14)
    - b. analogy of marriage used of Law (Rom. 7:2,6)
    - c. the things of this age (I Cor. 13:8,10,11)
    - d. this body (I Cor. 6:13)
    - e. leaders of this age (I Cor. 1:28; 2:6)

This word is translated many different ways but its main meaning is to make something useless, null and void, inoperative, powerless but not necessarily non-existent, destroyed or annihilated.

▣ **“brought life and immortality to light”** The term “life” is used several times in the Pastoral Letters and can mean (1) eternal life (I Tim. 1:16; 6:12; Titus 1:2; 3:7); (2) true life (I Tim. 6:19); (3) present life and life of the age to come (I Tim. 4:8); (4) promise of life in Christ (II Tim. 1:1); and (5) life and immortality through Christ (II Tim. 1:10).

There are two related terms used in the Pastoral Letters to express never ending, new age life: (1) “corrupt” with an ALPHA PRIVATIVE (II Tim. 1:10; Titus 2:7; Rom. 2:7; I Cor. 15:52-54); or (2) “death” with an ALPHA PRIVATIVE (I Tim. 6:16 and I Cor. 15:53-54).

This is not the Greek concept of every human having an immortal pre-existing “soul.” Believers’ immortality begins with their personal repentant faith in Christ. God is the only source of immortality (cf. I Tim. 1:17; 6:16). He gives it freely through Christ (and Christ alone).

▣ **“through the gospel”** This Greek term originally meant “a reward for bringing good news.” It came to uniquely refer within Christianity to God’s wonderful message of forgiveness and acceptance through Jesus’ life, teachings, death and resurrection. It later became the term used to describe the books about Jesus’ life (i.e. the four Gospels). Jesus is the good news of God’s love and provision for sinners.

**1:11 “for which I was appointed”** This is AORIST PASSIVE INDICATIVE. In this verse Paul is asserting his God-given gifts and tasks related to the gospel (cf. I Tim. 2:7).

▣ **“a preacher”** This is not so much a gift as it is a task (cf. TEV). Preaching is never listed as a gift but in a sense is a vital aspect of all the leadership gifts (cf. Eph. 4:11), which all involve proclamation. This NOUN is from the VERB *kērussō*, which meant to publicly announce or proclaim. It came to have a technical sense as a way of referring to Apostolic preaching (*kērygma*) especially as it appears in the recorded sermons of Peter and Paul in the book of Acts.

▣ **“an apostle”** “Apostle” comes from one of the Greek words meaning “to send” (*apostellō*). Jesus chose twelve of His disciples to be with Him in a special sense and called them “Apostles” (cf. Luke 6:13). The verb form is often used of Jesus being sent from the Father (cf. Matt. 10:40; 15:24; Mark 9:37; Luke 9:48; John 4:34; 5:24,30,36,37,38; 6:29,38,39,40,57; 7:29; 8:42; 10:36; 11:42; 17:3,3,18,21,23,25; 20:21). In Jewish sources, the term was used of someone sent as an official representative of another, similar to “ambassador.”

This term had a special authoritative meaning. It was used of those who knew Christ during His physical life and ministry (cf. Acts 1:21-26). Paul claimed that he also had seen the Lord in his Damascus vision and call (cf. Acts 9). These men were uniquely called and equipped by the Spirit to record and explain the events, teachings and miracles of Jesus’ earthly life.

The term came to be used of an ongoing gift in the church (cf. I Cor. 12:28; Eph. 4:11). Their exact function is never specified; it may be church planting in new areas or regional leadership (cf. Acts 14:4,14; 18:5; I Cor. 4:9; Gal. 1:19; Phil. 2:25; I Thess. 2:6).

▣ **“a teacher”** This is listed as a spiritual gift in Acts 13:1; Rom. 12:6-7; I Cor. 12:28; and James 3. It is combined with the gift of pastor in Eph. 4:11 and I Tim. 3:2; II Tim. 2:24. When used as a separate gift, it may refer to the training of new converts, but when linked to pastor it may refer to the training of believers in doctrine (cf. II Tim. 2:15; 3:16-17).

The KJV and the NKJV have the added term “to the Gentiles.” This does not occur in the Greek uncial manuscript  $\aleph^*$  and A, but it does occur in most other ancient texts. It does occur in I Tim. 2:7 and is probably an addition by early scribes.

**1:12 “for this reason I also suffer these things”** This must relate to v. 8. Paul knew personally the price of spiritual leadership (cf. II Cor. 4:7-12; 6:3-10; 11:24-28).

▣ **“but I am not ashamed”** This refers to Paul’s admonition to Timothy in v. 8 and v.16. Paul’s problems were in a sense evidence of his success in gospel proclamation!

▣ **“for I know whom”** Notice that the emphasis is on personal relationship, not circumstances.

▣ **“I have believed”** This is a PERFECT ACTIVE INDICATIVE which is literally “I have believed and continue to believe.” It refers to Paul’s salvation experience on the road to Damascus (cf. Acts 9).

▣ **“I am convinced”** This is a PERFECT PASSIVE INDICATIVE. It refers to Paul’s confidence in God and from God, even amidst the persecution and imprisonments that he experienced.

▣ **“He is able to guard”** The phrase “He is able” is a wonderful descriptive designation for God (cf. Rom. 16:25; Eph. 3:20 and Jude 24). God is not only able, but He is willing to protect our profession of faith in Christ (cf. I Pet. 1:4-5) and our faithful lifestyle! Not only is salvation a God initiated, God produced and God consummated event, but so, too, is the Christian life.

▣ **“what I have entrusted to Him”** God guards believers’ professions (cf. I Pet. 1:4-5). However, believers must guard their stewardship of the gospel (cf. I Tim. 6:20; II Tim . 1:14). Christianity is a covenant with benefits and privileges, but also with requirements and responsibilities!

▣ **“that day”** This is an OT way of referring to the end time (cf. v. 18). The OT clearly revealed one climactic intervention of God into human history. However, from the progressive revelation of the NT believers now know there are two comings, the incarnation (the inauguration of the kingdom of God) and the Second Coming (the consummation of the kingdom of God).

### 1:13

NASB “retain”

NKJV “hold fast”

NRSV “hold to”

TEV “hold firmly to”

NJB “keep”

This is the very common “I have” (*echō*), but it has a wide semantic range as the translations show. The form is a PRESENT ACTIVE IMPERATIVE. Timothy must continue to hold on to the apostolic truth passed on to him by Paul (cf. 3:14; Titus 1:9).

▣ **“the standard”** The term “standard” in Greek meant “to sketch” and was used of an architect’s designs (i.e. a blueprint). Paul had given Timothy the overall plan.

▣ **“of sound words”** This is a recurrent theme in the Pastoral Letters which refers to healthy teachings (cf. I Tim. 1:10; 4:6; 6:3; II Tim. 1:13; 4:3,4; Titus 1:9,13; 2:1,2). This verse obviously reflects the presence and problems caused by the false teachers.

▣ **“in the faith and love”** This refers to the manner in which leaders are to retain, pass on, and defend the truth of the gospel (cf. I Cor. 13).

**1:14 “Guard through the Holy Spirit”** This is an AORIST ACTIVE IMPERATIVE. Note that believers must guard, but the Holy Spirit is the means and power by which it is done! See note at 1:12.

▣ **“who dwells in us”** This is a PRESENT ACTIVE PARTICIPLE. There is a fluidity between the work of the Spirit and the Son. G. Campbell Morgan said that the best name for the Spirit is “the other Jesus.” The following is an outline comparison of the work and titles of the Son and Spirit:

1. Spirit called “Spirit of Jesus” or similar expression (cf. Rom. 8:9; I Cor. 15:45; II Cor. 3:17; Gal. 4:6; I Pet. 1:11).
2. Both called by the same terms
  - a. “Truth”
    - (1) Jesus (John 14:6)
    - (2) Spirit (John 14:17; 16:13)
  - b. “Advocate”
    - (1) Jesus (I John 2:1)
    - (2) Spirit (John 14:16; 16:7)
3. Both indwell believers
  - a. Jesus (Matt. 28:20; John 14:20,23; 15:4-5; Rom. 8:10; II Cor. 13:5; Gal. 2:20; Eph. 3:17; Col. 1:27)
  - b. Spirit (John 14:16-17; Rom. 8:9,11; I Cor. 3:16; 6:19; II Tim. 1:14)
  - c. Father (John 14:23; II Cor. 6:16)



**NASB** “the treasure which has been entrusted to you”  
**NKJV** “that good thing which was committed to you”  
**NRSV** “the good treasure entrusted to you”  
**TEV** “the good things that have been entrusted to you”  
**NJB** “that precious thing given in trust”

This refers to something entrusted to another for safe keeping. This is possibly a word play on the term *pistis*, which is translated into English as belief, trust, or faith. Believers have entrusted their faith to God (cf. 1:12). God in turn has entrusted to them the gospel message (cf. I Tim. 6:20). Believers are stewards of the gospel message. We will one day give an account to Him (cf. II Cor. 5:10) on how we have handled this deposit of truth!

**NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 1:15-18**

<sup>15</sup>You are aware of the fact that all who are in Asia turned away from me, among whom are Phygelus and Hermogenes. <sup>16</sup>The Lord grant mercy to the house of Onesiphorus for he often refreshed me, and was not ashamed of my chains; <sup>17</sup>but when he was in Rome, he eagerly searched for me, and found me—<sup>18</sup>the Lord grant to him to find mercy from the Lord on that day—and you know very well what services he rendered at Ephesus.

**1:15 “turned away from me”** Some of Paul’s helpers (cf. 4:10,16) deserted him in his imprisonment (cf. 1:8,16) but not necessarily deserted their faith in Christ. This was probably related to Paul’s Roman trial.

▣ **“Phygelus and Hermogenes”** Nothing is known about Phygelus or Hermogenes.

**1:16-18** Verses 16-18 are an extended prayer (AORIST ACTIVE OPTATIVE).

**1:16 “Onesiphorus”** This is one believer and his family (or house church) who did not desert Paul (cf. 4:19). In unspecified ways (emotionally, financially) this man encouraged Paul while he was in prison, as well as provided a needed ministry in Ephesus (cf. v. 18).

**1:18 “The Lord. . .the Lord”** In Hebrew there is a clear distinction between YHWH (LORD) and Adon (Lord, cf. Ps. 110:1). In Greek both are translated as *kurios*. It seems that this prayer is addressed to the Messiah and refers to the “day of YHWH,” an OT idiom for the end of time (a day of blessing or judgment).

This seems like a strange prayer to us. Some commentators have assumed that Onesiphorus had died; if so this is the only prayer in the Bible on behalf of the dead. Paul was asking that God bless his “house” (i.e. family or house church) because of his faithful ministry (cf. Deut. 7:9; 5:10 and the same concept in I Cor. 7:14).

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

This is a study guide commentary, which means that you are responsible for your own interpretation of the Bible. Each of us must walk in the light we have. You, the Bible, and the Holy Spirit are priority in interpretation. You must not relinquish this to a commentator.

These discussion questions are provided to help you think through the major issues of this section of the book. They are meant to be thought-provoking, not definitive.

1. Did Paul see Christianity as separate from OT faith or an extension of it?
2. What is the purpose of laying on of hands?
3. List the theologically significant items in v. 9.
4. How has Jesus put an end to death?
5. How is the word “guard” used differently in v. 12 and v. 14?
6. Why did Paul’s co-workers desert him? Does this imply that they were no longer believers?

## II TIMOTHY 2

### PARAGRAPH DIVISIONS OF MODERN TRANSLATIONS

UBS <sup>4</sup>	NKJV	NRSV	TEV	NJB
A Good Soldier of Christ Jesus	Be Strong in Grace	An Appeal to Show Courage (1:8-2:13)	A Loyal Soldier of Christ Jesus	How Timothy Should Face Hardships
2:1-7	2:1-13	2:1-7	2:1-7	2:1-2 2:3-7
2:8-13		2:8-13	2:8-13	2:8-13
An Approved Workman	Approved and Disapproved Workers	The Pastor and the Flock (2:14-4:5)	An Approved Worker	The Struggle Against the Immediate Danger from False Teachers
2:14-26	2:14-26	2:14-19 2:20-3:9	2:14-19 2:20-26	2:14-18 2:19 2:20-21 2:22-26

#### READING CYCLE THREE (see p. vii)

#### *FOLLOWING THE ORIGINAL AUTHOR'S INTENT AT THE PARAGRAPH LEVEL*

This is a study guide commentary, which means that you are responsible for your own interpretation of the Bible. Each of us must walk in the light we have. You, the Bible, and the Holy Spirit are priority in interpretation. You must not relinquish this to a commentator.

Read the chapter in one sitting. Identify the subjects. Compare your subject divisions with the five modern translations. Paragraphing is not inspired, but it is the key to following the original author's intent, which is the heart of interpretation. Every paragraph has one and only one subject.

1. First paragraph
2. Second paragraph
3. Third paragraph
4. Etc.

#### WORD AND PHRASE STUDY

##### **NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 2:1-7**

<sup>1</sup>You therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. <sup>2</sup>And the things which you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, these entrust to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also. <sup>3</sup>Suffer hardship with *me*, as a good soldier of Christ Jesus. <sup>4</sup>No soldier in active service entangles himself in the affairs of everyday life, so that he may please the one who enlisted him as a soldier. <sup>5</sup>And also if anyone competes as an athlete, he does not win the prize unless he competes

**according to the rules. <sup>6</sup>The hard-working farmer ought to be the first to receive his share of the crops. <sup>7</sup>Consider what I say, for the Lord will give you understanding in everything.**

**2:1 “You therefore”** This seems to relate to 1:15-18, where Paul contrasts those who abandoned him with those who remained faithful.

▣ **“my son”** This refers to Paul as Timothy’s father in the gospel (cf. 1:2; I Tim. 1:2; Titus 1:4).

▣ **“be strong”** This can be (1) a PRESENT PASSIVE IMPERATIVE, “continue to be made strong” (*Word Pictures in the Greek New Testament* by A. T. Robertson’s and *Analytical Greek New Testament* by Barbara and Timothy Friberg) or (2) a PRESENT MIDDLE IMPERATIVE, “continue to be strong” (*The Analytical Greek Lexicon Revised* by Harold K. Moulton and the Charles B. Williams translation).

Does the believer participate in the empowering, or does God do the empowering? This is the tension between the sovereignty of God and the free will of humans. In the NT both are involved in salvation and the Christian life. God deals with fallen mankind in a covenant relationship. There are both rights and responsibilities, requirements and privileges! Grace is always priority, but response is mandated!

### **SPECIAL TOPIC: COVENANT**

The OT term *berith*, covenant, is not easy to define. There is no matching VERB in Hebrew. All attempts to derive an etymological definition have proved unconvincing. However, the obvious centrality of the concept has forced scholars to examine the word usage to attempt to determine its functional meaning.

Covenant is the means by which the one true God deals with His human creation. The concept of covenant, treaty, or agreement is crucial in understanding the biblical revelation. The tension between God’s sovereignty and human free-will are clearly seen in the concept of covenant. Some covenants are based on God’s character, actions, and purposes.

1. creation itself (cf. Gen. 1-2)
2. the call of Abraham (cf. Gen. 12)
3. the covenant with Abraham (cf. Gen. 15)
4. the preservation and promise to Noah (cf. Gen. 6-9)

However, the very nature of covenant demands a response

1. by faith Adam must obey God and not eat of the tree in the midst of Eden (cf. Gen. 2)
2. by faith Abraham must leave his family, follow God, and believe in future descendants (cf. Gen. 12,15)
3. by faith Noah must build a huge boat far from water and gather the animals (cf. Gen. 6-9)
4. by faith Moses brought the Israelites out of Egypt and received specific guidelines for religious and social life with promises of blessings and cursings (cf. Deut. 27-28)

This same tension involving God’s relationship to humanity is addressed in the “new covenant.” The tension can be clearly seen in comparing Ezek. 18 with Ezek. 36:27-37. Is the covenant based on God’s gracious actions or mandated human response? This is the burning issue of the Old Covenant and the New. The goals of both are the same: (1) the restoration of fellowship lost in Gen. 3 and (2) the establishment of a righteous people who reflect God’s character.

The new covenant of Jer. 31:31-34 solves the tension by removing human performance as the means of attaining acceptance. God’s law becomes an internal desire instead of an external performance. The goal of a godly, righteous people remains the same, but the methodology changes. Fallen mankind proved

themselves inadequate to be God's reflected image (cf. Rom. 3:9-18). The problem was not the covenant, but human sinfulness and weakness (cf. Rom. 7; Gal. 3).

The same tension between OT unconditional and conditional covenants remains in the NT. Salvation is absolutely free in the finished work of Jesus Christ, but it requires repentance and faith (both initially and continually). It is both a legal pronouncement and a call to Christlikeness, an indicative statement of acceptance and an imperative to holiness! Believers are not saved by their performance, but unto obedience (cf. Eph. 2:8-10). Godly living becomes the evidence of salvation, not the means of salvation.

**2:2 “the things you have heard from me”** Timothy is to pass on Paul's Apostolic teachings, not his own personal opinions or theories (cf. 1:13).

▣ **“in the presence of many witnesses”** This seems to refer to those who heard Paul preach and teach when Timothy was present. Timothy is to emulate Paul in every area!

▣ **“entrust these”** This is an AORIST MIDDLE IMPERATIVE. This is the same word used in 1:12,14. See note at 1:12.

▣  
NASB, NKJV           **“to faithful men”**  
NRSV                   **“to faithful people”**  
TEV, NJB              **“to reliable people”**

This is the Greek noun *pistis* translated into English as “faith,” belief” or “trust.” Here it is used as an ADJECTIVE, *pistos*, in the OT sense of trustworthy, faithful, hopefully discerning potential church leaders. This is the principle of delegation and multiplication. Jesus spent His time on a select few so as to reach many through them. Two wonderful books which develop this concept are *The Master Plan of Evangelism* and *The Maser Plan of Discipleship*, both by Robert E. Coleman.

**2:3 “Suffer hardship with me”** This is an AORIST ACTIVE IMPERATIVE. It has been a recurrent theme (cf. 1:8,12; 2:3,9; 4:5). See fuller note at 1:8. Ministry often causes a reaction from a lost neighbor, civil authority or culture.

▣ **“as a good soldier”** Paul often described the Christian life in military (cf. v.4) or athletic (cf. v.3) metaphors (cf. Rom. 13:12; II Cor. 6:7; 9:7; 10:4; Eph. 6:11-17; Phil. 2:25; Philemon 2; I Tim. 1:18; 6:12; II Tim. 4:7).

**2:4 “No soldier. . .athlete. . .farmer”** Paul uses three occupational examples to express his encouragement to Timothy.

▣ **“entangles himself in the affairs of everyday life”** This is a PRESENT MIDDLE PARTICIPLE which emphasizes continuing actions on the part of the subject. It is not that secular things are bad, they just cannot be priority or ultimate (cf. II Pet. 2:20).

**2:5 “if”** This is a THIRD CLASS CONDITIONAL SENTENCE which speaks of contingent action.

▣ **“competes according to the rules”** This was used of professional, full-time athletes. If a competitor deviates from the rules, he/she is disqualified (cf. I Cor. 9:24-27).

**2:6 “the hard-working farmer”** Paul uses three strenuous professional examples:

1. soldiers fight for their commander
2. athletes strive within the rules to win a crown
3. farmers work hard to partake of the fruit of their crops

All involve commitment, effort, patience and suffering! All receive their due reward (cf. Prov. 27:18).

**2:7 “Consider what I say”** This is PRESENT ACTIVE IMPERATIVE which implies “continue to think through this carefully.” Notice the continuing play between human responsibility and God’s gracious provision.

▣ **“the Lord will give you understanding in everything”** The Lord, by means of the Holy Spirit, will give His people understanding (cf. John 14:16; 16:13). This may reflect the new covenant of Jer. 31:31-34 (esp. vv. 33-34).

This surely does not refer to specific, complete knowledge in every area of life, but a full and complete knowledge of the gospel and its implications. The Spirit provides believers with all the knowledge they need to live for God.

**NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 2:8-13**

**<sup>8</sup>Remember Jesus Christ, risen from the dead, descendant of David, according to my gospel, <sup>9</sup>for which I suffer hardship even to imprisonment as a criminal; but the word of God is not imprisoned. <sup>10</sup>For this reason I endure all things for the sake of those who are chosen, that they also may obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus *and* with *it* eternal glory. <sup>11</sup>It is a trustworthy statement: For if we died with Him, we shall also live with Him; <sup>12</sup>If we endure, we shall also reign with Him; If we deny Him, He also will deny us; <sup>13</sup>If we are faithless, He remains faithful; for He cannot deny Himself.**

**2:8 “Remember”** This is PRESENT ACTIVE IMPERATIVE. Paul calls on Timothy’s memory several times (cf. 1:3,4,5,6; 2:8,14). This particular occurrence emphasizes doctrines related to Christology.

▣ **“Jesus Christ, risen from the dead”** This is a PERFECT PASSIVE PARTICIPLE which implies that Jesus was raised by the Father and that He remains the resurrected One. Jesus’ resurrection was the sign that the Father fully accepted the Son’s earthly work, teachings and sacrifice for sin. Jesus’ resurrection is one of the central pillars of Christianity (cf. I Cor. 15).

The resurrection of Jesus is also an integral part of the early preaching (*kerygma*) of Peter and Paul in Acts, which shows the often-repeated main truths of the gospel in the early church.

1. the Messiah must suffer
2. Jesus fulfilled OT prophecy
3. the new age of the Spirit has come in Jesus
4. Jesus died for sinners, which was God’s predetermined plan
5. Jesus was raised from the dead and exalted to God’s right hand
6. Jesus is coming again
7. whoever will trust Him in repentance and faith will be saved

▣ **“descendant of David”** This speaks of His true humanity (cf. Matt. 1:1; Rom. 1:3) and the fulfillment of prophecy (cf. II Sam. 7:14ff).

▣ **“according to my gospel”** These are Paul’s very words in Rom. 2:16; 16:25. This refers to his apostolic preaching of the gospel.

**2:10 “I endure”** This means “voluntary, active, steadfast endurance.” Paul chose to remain under the load of gospel ministry for the sake of others.

▣ **“who are chosen”** God knows His own (cf. Titus 1:1; Rev. 13:8). Apparently this refers both to those who have responded and those who have not yet responded (cf. Rom. 11:25-26) to the gospel.

▣ **“that they also may obtain the salvation”** This salvation is only through Christ and unto eternal life (cf. I Thess. 5:9; II Thess. 2:13-14).

▣ **“and with it eternal glory”** NT salvation can be characterized by the things one is delivered from and the things one is given.

A. Delivered from

1. sin
2. Satan and the demonic powers
3. error
4. self-deception

B. Given

1. a peace with God now
2. a purpose in life now
3. a giftedness for ministry now
4. a Spirit-filled and directed life now
5. a future consummation
6. a future home in heaven
7. a future glory with Christ
8. a future reigning with Christ
9. a future body like Christ's

▣ **“glory”** See note at I Tim. 1:17.

**2:11 “if”** This is the last of the five “trustworthy statements” in the Pastoral Letters (cf. I Tim. 1:15; 3:1; 4:9; Titus 3:8). This one (vv. 11-13) appears to be a quote from a creed or hymn.

1. a series of four “if” clauses (FIRST CLASS CONDITIONAL SENTENCES, cf. vv. 11,12,13 twice)
2. the first two are positive; the last two are negative
3. the third and fourth clauses have an extra line

▣ **“we died with Him”** This is one of several *syn* compounds in II Timothy. It speaks of the biblical metaphor of baptism by immersion (cf. Rom. 6:1-11; Gal. 2:20). This exact form only occurs here, in Mark 14:31 and II Cor. 7:3.

▣ **“we shall live with Him”** This is another rare *syn* compound (cf. Rom. 6:8; II Cor. 7:3). This refers to the believers' confidence of sustained fellowship with Jesus, not only now by faith but one day (and every day) face to face.

The first three “if” clauses end in FUTURE TENSE VERBS which assume an eschatological (i.e. end time) setting. The entire NT has this same already-but-not-yet tension. The kingdom of God has come (inaugurated) in Jesus but it has not been consummated. Believers experience many aspects of the Kingdom now, but others are reserved for the Second Coming.

▣ “if we endure” This grammatical construction (FIRST CLASS CONDITIONAL SENTENCE) assumes believers will persevere.

## **SPECIAL TOPIC: PERSEVERANCE**

The biblical doctrines related to the Christian life are difficult to explain because they are presented in typically eastern, dialectical pairs. These pairs seem contradictory, yet both poles are biblical. Western Christians have tended to choose one truth and ignore or depreciate the opposite truth.

1. Is salvation an initial decision to trust Christ or a life-time commitment to discipleship?
2. Is salvation an election by means of grace from a sovereign God or a faith and repentant response on mankind's part to a divine offer?
3. Is salvation, once received, impossible to lose, or is there a need for continual diligence?

The issue of perseverance has been contentious throughout church history. The problem starts with seemingly conflicting passages of the NT.

1. texts on assurance
  - a. statements of Jesus in John's Gospel (John 6:37; 10:28-29)
  - b. statements of Paul (Rom. 8:35-39; Eph. 1:13; 2:5,8-9; Phil. 1:6; 2:13; II Thess. 3:3; II Tim. 1:12; 4:18)
  - c. statements of Peter ( I Pet. 1:4-5)
2. texts on the need for perseverance
  - a. statements of Jesus in the Synoptic Gospels (Matt. 10:22; 13:1-9,24-30; 24:13; Mark 13:13)
  - b. statements of Jesus in John's Gospel (John 8:31; 15:4-10)
  - c. statements of Paul (Rom. 11:22; I Cor. 15:2; II Cor. 13:5; Gal. 1:6; 3:4; 5:4; 6:9; Phil. 2:12; 3:18-20; Col. 1:23; II Tim. 3:2)
  - d. statements of the author of Hebrews (2:1; 3:6,14; 4:14; 6:11)
  - e. statements of John (I John 2:6; II John 9; Rev. 2:7,17,20; 3:5,12,21; 21:7)

Biblical salvation issues from the love, mercy, and grace of a sovereign Triune God. No human can be saved without the initiation of the Spirit. Deity comes first and sets the agenda, but demands that humans must respond in faith and repentance, both initially and continually. God works with mankind in a covenant relationship. There are privileges and responsibilities!

Salvation is offered to all humans. Jesus' death dealt with the sin problem of the fallen creation! God has provided a way and wants all those made in His image to respond to His love and provision in Jesus.

If you would like to read more on this subject see

1. Dale Moody, *The Word of Truth*, Eerdmans, 1981 (pp. 348-365)
2. Howard Marshall, *Kept by the Power of God*, Bethany Fellowship, 1969
3. Robert Shank, *Life in the Son*, Westcott, 1961

The Bible addresses two different problems in this area: (1) taking assurance as a license to live fruitless, selfish lives or (2) encouraging those who struggle with ministry and personal sin. The problem is that the wrong groups are taking the wrong message and building theological systems on limited biblical passages. Some Christians desperately need the message of assurance, while others need the stern warnings of perseverance! Which group are you in?

There is a historical theological controversy involving Augustine versus Pelagius and Calvin versus Arminius (semi-Pelagian). The issue involves the question of salvation: if one is truly saved, must he persevere in faith and fruit?

The Calvinists line up behind those biblical texts that assert God's sovereignty and keeping-power (John 10:27-30; Rom. 8:31-39; I John 5:13,18; I Pet. 1:3-5) and VERB TENSES like the PERFECT PASSIVE PARTICIPLES of Eph. 2:5,8.

The Arminians line up behind those biblical texts that warn believers to "hold on," "hold out," or "continue" (Matt. 10:22; 24:9-13; Mark 13:13; John 15:4-6; I Cor. 15:2; Gal. 6:9; Rev. 2:7,11,17,26; 3:5,12,21; 21:7). I personally do not believe that Heb. 6 and 10 are applicable, but many Arminians use them as a warning against apostasy. The parable of the Sower in Matt. 13 and Mark 4 addresses the issue of apparent belief, as does John 8:31-59. As Calvinists quote the PERFECT TENSE VERBS used to describe salvation, the Arminians quote the PRESENT TENSE passages like I Cor. 1:18; 15:2; II Cor. 2:15.

This is a perfect example of how theological systems abuse the proof-texting method of interpretation. Usually a guiding principle or chief text is used to construct a theological grid by which all other texts are viewed. Be careful of grids from any source. They come from western logic, not revelation. The Bible is an eastern book. It presents truth in tension-filled, seemingly paradoxical pairs. Christians are meant to affirm both and live within the tension. The NT presents both the security of the believer and the demand for continuing faith and godliness. Christianity is an initial response of repentance and faith followed by a continuing response of repentance and faith. Salvation is not a product (a ticket to heaven or a fire insurance policy), but a relationship. It is a decision and discipleship. It is described in the NT in all VERB TENSES:

AORIST (completed action), Acts 15:11; Rom. 8:24; II Tim. 1:9; Titus 3:5

PERFECT (completed action with continuing results), Eph. 2:5,8

PRESENT (continuing action), I Cor. 1:18; 15:2; II Cor. 2:15

FUTURE (future events or certain events), Rom. 5:8,10; 10:9; I Cor. 3:15; Phil. 1:28; I Thess. 5:8-9; Heb. 1:14; 9:28

**2:12 "we will also reign"** This is another *syn* compound found here and in I Cor. 4:8. Paul is very fond of these compounds. The time, place, and participants are uncertain.

### **SPECIAL TOPIC: REIGNING IN THE KINGDOM OF GOD**

The concept of reigning with Christ is part of the larger theological category called "the Kingdom of God." This is a carry-over from the OT concept of God as the true king of Israel (cf. I Sam. 8:7). He symbolically reigned (I Sam. 8:7; 10:17-19) through a descendant from the tribe of Judah (cf. Gen. 49:10) and the family of Jesse (cf. II Sam. 7).

Jesus is the promised fulfillment of OT prophecy concerning the Messiah. He inaugurated the Kingdom of God with His incarnation at Bethlehem. The Kingdom of God became the central pillar of Jesus' preaching. The Kingdom had fully come in Him (cf. Matt. 10:7; 11:12; 12:28; Mark 1:15; Luke 10:9,11; 11:20; 16:16; 17:20-21).

However, the Kingdom was also future (eschatological). It was present but not consummated (cf. Matt. 6:10; 8:11; 16:28; 22:1-14; 26:29; Luke 9:27; 11:2; 13:29; 14:10-24; 22:16,18). Jesus came the first time as a suffering servant (cf. Isa. 52:13-53:12); as humble (cf. Zech. 9:9), but He will return as King of Kings (cf. Matt. 2:2; 21:5; 27:11-14). The concept of "reigning" is surely a part of this "kingdom" theology. God has given the kingdom to Jesus' followers (see Luke 12:32).

The concept of reigning with Christ has several aspects and questions:

Do the passages which assert that God has given believers “the kingdom” through Christ refer to “reigning” (cf. Matt. 5:3,10; Luke 12:32)?

1. Do Jesus’ words to the original disciples in the first century Jewish context refer to all believers (cf. Matt. 19:28; Luke 22:28-30)?
2. Does Paul’s emphasis on reigning in this life now contrast or complement the above texts (cf. Rom. 5:17; I Cor. 4:8)?
3. How are suffering and reigning related (cf. Rom. 8:17; II Tim. 2:11-12; I Pet. 4:13; Rev. 1:9)?
4. The recurrent theme of Revelation is sharing the glorified Christ’s reign
  - a. earthly, 5:10
  - b. millennial, 20:5,6
  - c. eternal, 2:26; 3:21; 22:5 and Dan. 7:14,18,27

▣ **“If we deny Him He also will deny us”** Remember that this was an age of persecution, torture, and death (cf. Matt. 10:32-33; Luke 9:26; I Tim. 5:8; Titus 1:16; II Pet. 2:1; Jude 4).

**2:13 “If we are faithless, He remains faithful”** This phrase is very surprising. The condition is still FIRST CLASS (assumed to be true); one would have expected a THIRD CLASS (potential action).

In what sense is the believer faithless? Does this mean (1) faltering under persecution or trial; (2) following the false teachers; or (3) an ungodly lifestyle?

This may reflect the OT covenant’s concept of God’s faithfulness amidst Israel’s continual unfaithfulness (cf. Mal. 3:6). Ultimately the hope of believers is on the unchanging character and promises of God. YHWH’s faithfulness is both a descriptive title (Deut. 7:9; Isa. 49:7; I Cor. 1:9; 10:13; II Cor. 1:18; I Thess. 5:24; II Thess. 3:3) and a characteristic (Ps. 36:5; 40:10; 89:1,2,5,8; 92:2; 119:90; Heb. 6:17-18; I Pet. 4:19) which is fully revealed in Christ (Heb. 6:13-20). Because some abandon the faith does not imply that God abandoned them! Free will functions at every level. God’s grace and faithfulness are not in jeopardy because of the false teachers and their followers’ faithlessness!

**NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 2:14-19**

<sup>14</sup>Remind *them* of these things, and solemnly charge *them* in the presence of God not to wrangle about words, which is useless, *and leads* to the ruin of the hearers. <sup>15</sup>Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, handling accurately the word of truth. <sup>16</sup>But avoid worldly *and* empty chatter, for it will lead to further ungodliness, <sup>17</sup>and their talk will spread like gangrene. Among them are Hymenaeus and Philetus, <sup>18</sup>*men* who have gone astray from the truth saying that the resurrection has already taken place, and thus they upset the faith of some. <sup>19</sup>Nevertheless, the firm foundation of God stands, having this seal, “The Lord knows those who are His,” and, “Let everyone who names the name of the Lord abstain from wickedness.”

**2:14 “Remind *them*”** This is a PRESENT ACTIVE IMPERATIVE. See note at 1:3 on “remember.”

▣ **“these things”** This could refer to vv. 11-13 or 14-19.

▣  
NASB      “solemnly charge *them* in the presence of God”  
NKJV      “charging *them* before the Lord”

**TEV** “warn them before God”

**NJB** “tell them in the name of God”

There is a Greek manuscript variant between “God” (MSS  $\aleph$ , C, F, G, I) and “Lord” (MSS A, D). A similar phrase using “God” appears in 4:1 and I Tim. 5:4,21; therefore, *Theos* is probably original. Like so many of these variants, this makes no significant theological difference.

This is the compound term *dia + marturomai*, which means “to declare earnestly and solemnly” (cf. Luke 16:28; Acts 2:40; 8:25; 10:42; 18:5; 20:21,24; 23:11; 28:23; I Tim. 5:21; II Tim. 2:14; 4:1).

Timothy was to use his authority both as Paul’s apostolic representative and God’s spokesman to confront the false teachers in godliness, not theological speculation (cf. vv. 14-26).

▣ **“not to wrangle about words”** There was a factious element present (cf. v. 16; I Tim. 1:3-4; 4:7; 6:4,5,20; Titus 3:9).

Timothy is warned not to enter into a theological dialogue with these false teachers for several reasons.

1. it was useless because their minds had been seared and blinded (cf. v. 14; I Tim. 4:2; 6:5; Titus 3:11)
2. it causes other believers who overhear the dialogue to falter (cf. v. 14,18; I Tim. 6:20-21)
3. it leads to further ungodliness (cf. v. 16,19; I Tim. 6:3)
4. it will spread like gangrene (cf. v. 17)

▣ **“leads to the ruin of hearers”** “Ruin” is the Greek term from which we get the English word “catastrophe.” It literally meant “to overthrow.”

**2:15 “Be diligent to present yourself”** This is an AORIST ACTIVE IMPERATIVE with an AORIST ACTIVE INFINITIVE. This is a call for a decisive act of the will (cf. Rom. 6:13).

▣ **“approved”** This is a metallurgical term which became an idiom for “a test with a view toward approval,” a metaphor for confirming something as genuine (cf. I Cor. 11:19; II Cor. 10:18). See Special Topic at I Tim. 6:9.

▣ **“to God”** God is the one who must approve our teaching, preaching, and our lifestyle.

▣ **“as a workman who does not need to be ashamed”** Spiritless Bible teaching and un-Christlike daily living will cause believers shame when they stand before their Lord (cf. II Cor. 5:10). Paul was concerned about being ashamed before the Lord, but not before men (cf. 1:8,12,16).

▣ **“accurately handling”** This is a PRESENT ACTIVE PARTICIPLE meaning “to cut straight.” This was often used of constructing a road, plowing a furrow, or a stone mason building a structure (cf. Prov. 3:6; 11:5 in the Septuagint).

This term is used metaphorically to cut a straight line. The Word of God is a straight (righteous) path to truth. The word “straight” is an OT construction term taken from the word for a “river reed” which was used to confirm the horizontal straightness of walls, streets, etc. YHWH used this term to describe His own character. It is translated “just” or “right” (and all the related forms). God is the ruler or standard by which all else is evaluated. Apostolic truth reflects God’s character; Apostolic living reflects God’s character. The false teachers fail at both!

▣ **“the word of truth”** In Eph. 1:13; Col. 1:5 and James 1:18 this refers to the gospel. Here it refers to Apostolic truth preached by Paul and passed on by Timothy and accepted and lived out by mature believers. For a good book on the development of Apostolic preaching, teaching and letters in the New Testament see

*Birth of a New Testament* by William L. Bevens (Union Baptist University, Carson City, TN). See Special Topic: Truth at I Tim. 2:4.

**2:16 “But avoid worldly *and* empty chatter”** This is a PRESENT MIDDLE IMPERATIVE. This is a major theme in the Pastoral Letters (cf. I Tim. 6:20; Titus 3:9).

▣ **“it will lead”** Believers are to cut a straight path to righteousness and truth (cf. 2:15) but the false teachers and their followers are making a path to ungodliness and self-deception (cf. 3:9,15).

**2:17**

**NASB, NRSV** “their talk will spread like gangrene”

**NKJV** “their message will spread like cancer”

**TEV** “such teaching is like an open sore that eats away flesh”

**NJB** “talk of this kind spreads corruption like gangrene”

What a vivid idiom of the effects of false teaching! Heresy spreads like a fast growing cancer, even among believers, and the consequences are as horrible as the metaphor (cf. I Tim. 6:20-21).

▣ **“Hymenaeus”** See note at I Tim. 1:20.

▣ **“Philetus”** This is the only mention of this person in the NT.

**2:18 “who have gone astray from the truth”** This is literally “to miss the mark,” which is a metaphor from archery (cf. I Tim. 1:19; 4:1; 5:8; 6:10,21). The general word for sin (*hamartia*) means to fall short of the mark. This relates to the emphasis in this chapter on cutting a straight path (cf. 2:15-16). God is “straight” (i.e. from a Hebrew commercial metaphor using a river reed), which equals “right or “just.” His people should reflect His character, but these false teachers and their followers had clearly demonstrated by their deviation from Apostolic truth that they had left the straight path (i.e. “The Way” which was an early title for the church).

▣ **“saying that the resurrection has already taken place”** This is a PERFECT ACTIVE INFINITIVE (cf. I Cor. 15:12). The possible interpretations are

1. Greek dualism, which rejected a physical aspect to eternity
2. Greek philosophy’s emphasis on the divine spark in every person united with God at death
3. a Sadducean-like denial of any physical afterlife
4. resurrection was for Christ only
5. resurrection had already occurred (cf. II Thess. 2:1-2)
6. believer’s resurrection to new life occurs at salvation (cf. John 5:25; Rom. 6:1-11; Col. 2:12-13).

▣

**NASB** “thus upset the faith of some”

**NKJV** “they overthrow the faith of some”

**NRSV, TEV** “they are upsetting the faith of some”

**NJB** “they are upsetting some people’s faith”

This is a PRESENT ACTIVE INDICATIVE from “to overturn” (cf. John 2:15) or “to overthrow” which came to be used metaphorically for “to subvert” or “to corrupt” (cf. Titus 1:11 and the results in I Tim. 1:19; 6:21). Exactly what this means or implies in relation to apostasy is uncertain, but it is certainly a spiritual disaster! The words of Matthew 7, “by their fruits you shall know them” (cf. 2:19), are true!

The term “faith” can be understood in three ways:

1. one's belief (doctrines) about Christianity
2. one's relationship with Jesus Christ
3. one's lifestyle godliness or Christlikeness

**2:19 “firm foundation of God”** God's people as a building built on Christ as the foundation is one of Paul's favorite metaphors (cf. I Cor. 3:10ff; Eph. 2:20ff; I Tim. 3:15). In this context it refers to God's truth remaining sure and solid in contrast to the false teachers. The believer's hope is in the character of God and His trustworthiness to His promises.

▣ **“stands”** This is a PERFECT ACTIVE INDICATIVE. The United Bible Societies *A Handbook on Paul's Letters to Timothy and Titus*, p. 210, lists four options as to the identification of this “foundation.”

1. Christ Himself, the cornerstone (cf. Isa. 28:16; Rom. 9:33; I Cor. 3:10-12)
2. the message about Christ (cf. Eph. 2:20)
3. the Church, the body of Christ
4. the Truth (sound teaching)

▣ **“having this seal”** This is possibly an allusion to (1) the ancient custom of inscribing the purpose of the building on the cornerstone or (2) a reference to an official wax seal of ownership (cf. John 3:33; 6:27; Rom. 4:11; 15:28; I Cor. 9:2; II Cor. 1:22; Eph. 1:13; 4:30; Rev. 7:3-8).

▣ **“The Lord knows those who are His”** This may be an allusion to Num. 16:5 in the Septuagint, a historical setting of factions and division, as well as John 10:14,27.

▣ **“Let everyone who names the name of the Lord”** This may be a purposeful ambiguity. Does the term “Lord” refer to YHWH or Jesus? In the OT, calling on YHWH's name was a metaphor of worship. The NT author adopts this use of “the name” as a way of (1) asserting Jesus' deity; (2) acknowledging Him as Savior and Master and (3) implying that to call on Him is to emulate His actions and character in daily life (as well as worship events).

This is a PRESENT ACTIVE IMPERATIVE which refers to those who continue to claim a relationship with Jesus. The name in Hebrew was a way of affirming the character of a person. If believers call on Jesus' name to be saved and reflect His name as followers, then they must believe and live as He did!

### **SPECIAL TOPIC: THE NAME OF THE LORD**

This was a common NT phrase for the personal presence and active power of the Triune God in the church. It was not a magical formula, but an appeal to God's character.

Often this phrase refers to Jesus as Lord (cf. Phil. 2:11)

1. at the profession of one's faith in Jesus at baptism (cf. Rom. 10:9-13; Acts 2:38; 8:12,16; 10:48; 19:5; 22:16; I Cor. 1:13,15; James 2:7)
2. at an exorcism (cf. Matt. 7:22; Mark 9:38; Luke 9:49; 10:17; Acts 19:13)
3. at a healing (cf. Acts 3:6,16; 4:10; 9:34; James 5:14)
4. at an act of ministry (cf. Matt. 10:42; 18:5; Luke 9:48)
5. at the time of church discipline (cf. Matt. 18:15-20)
6. during preaching to Gentiles (cf. Luke 24:47; Acts 9:15; 15:17; Rom. 1:5)
7. in prayer (cf. John 14:13-14; 15:2,16; 16:23; I Cor. 1:2)
8. a way of referring to Christianity (cf. Acts 26:9; I Cor. 1:10; II Tim. 2:19; James 2:7; I Pet. 4:14)

Whatever we do as proclaimers, ministers, helpers, healers, exorcists, etc., we do in His character, His power, His provisions—in His Name!

▣ **“abstain from wickedness”** This is an AORIST ACTIVE IMPERATIVE. This may be an allusion to Num. 16:26-27 in the Septuagint. In context this obviously refers to associations with the godless false teachers and their followers.

**NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 2:20-26**

<sup>20</sup>Now in a large house there are not only gold and silver vessels, but also vessels of wood and of earthenware, and some to honor and some to dishonor. <sup>21</sup>Therefore, if anyone cleanses himself from these *things*, he will be a vessel for honor, sanctified, useful to the Master, prepared for every good work. <sup>22</sup>Now flee from youthful lusts and pursue righteousness, faith, love *and* peace, with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart. <sup>23</sup>But refuse foolish and ignorant speculations, knowing that they produce quarrels. <sup>24</sup>The Lord’s bond-servant must not be quarrelsome, but be kind to all, able to teach, patient when wronged, <sup>25</sup>with gentleness correcting those who are in opposition, if perhaps God may grant them repentance leading to the knowledge of the truth, <sup>26</sup>and they may come to their senses and escape from the snare of the devil, having been held captive by him to do his will.

**2:20 “a large house”** The immediate context strongly implies that this is a metaphor for the church (cf. John 14:2).

▣ **“some to honor and some to dishonor”** Some see this as describing the different kinds of skills, personalities and gifts (cf. Rom. 9:19-24; I Cor. 12:12-31) of believers but others see it as relating to the troublemakers of vv. 22-23.

**2:21 “if anyone cleanses himself”** This is a THIRD CLASS CONDITIONAL SENTENCE which implies potential action, but with some degree of contingency or a person’s volitional actions. The term “purify” is an AORIST ACTIVE SUBJUNCTIVE possibly related to conversion or turning back from following false teachers. The compound term *ek + kathairō* is used only here and in I Cor. 5:7. Believers have a choice in their involvement and usefulness in the Kingdom’s work.

▣ **“sanctified”** This is a PERFECT PASSIVE PARTICIPLE which implies several things: (1) they were sanctified in the past and that state or condition continues (PERFECT TENSE); (2) they were sanctified by God (PASSIVE VOICE).

Notice the condition of one choosing to cleanse himself and then the statement of God’s action. Sanctification is both a divine act and a human act. This pattern characterizes the covenant relationship in all of God’s dealings with humans. He always takes the initiative and sets the agenda, but mankind must respond appropriately and continue to respond.

**SPECIAL TOPIC: SANCTIFICATION**

The NT asserts that when sinners turn to Jesus in repentance and faith, they are instantaneously justified and sanctified. This is their new position in Christ. His righteousness has been imputed to them (c.f. Rom. 4). They are declared right and holy (a forensic act of God).

But the NT also urges believers on to holiness or sanctification. It is both a theological position in the finished work of Jesus Christ and a call to be Christlike in attitude and actions in daily life. As salvation is a free gift and a cost-everything lifestyle, so too, is sanctification.

**Initial Response**

Acts 20:23; 26:18  
 Romans 15:16  
 I Corinthians 1:2-3; 6:11  
 II Thessalonians 2:13  
 Hebrews 2:11; 10:10,14; 13:12  
 I Peter 1:1

**A Progressive Christlikeness**

Romans 6:19  
 II Corinthians 7:1  
 I Thessalonians 3:13; 4:3-4,7; 5:23  
 I Timothy 2:15  
 II Timothy 2:21  
 Hebrews 12:14  
 I Peter 1:15-16

▣ **“useful to the Master”** This is the Greek term from which we get the English “despot.” It refers to a slave owner (cf. v.24) having complete authority over another (cf. I Tim. 6:1-2; Titus 2:9; I Pet. 2:18).

Believers who cleanse themselves are useful to God. The false teachers are not useful!

▣ **“prepared for every good work”** This is another PERFECT MIDDLE or PASSIVE PARTICIPLE. This verb is only found here and in the quote from Isaiah in I Cor. 2:9 (i.e. 64:4 and 65:17). Good works do not make us acceptable or bring us to God, but once we meet Him in Christ they are the expected result (cf. Eph. 2:10; James 2:14-26)! We are a people created for Christlikeness, the restoration of the image of God which was lost in the fall of Gen. 3. Believer’s godly lives confirm their salvation and attract others to Christ. See Special Topic: Vices and Virtues in the NT at I Tim. 1:9.

2:22

NASB, NKJV	“Flee. . .pursue”
NRSV	“Shun. . .pursue”
TEV	“Avoid. . .strive for”
NJB	“Turn away. . .concentrate on”

These are both PRESENT ACTIVE IMPERATIVES. Believers are to continue to exhibit God’s sanctification (cf. I Tim. 6:11).

▣ **“from youthful lusts”** Every stage of life has its unique temptations (cf. Eccl. 3:1-8; 11:10; 12:1-8).

▣ **“righteousness, faith, love and peace”** These are all characteristics of the triune God which need to be developed and exhibited in His people (cf. I Tim. 1:5,14). For “righteousness” see Special Topic at Titus 2:13.

▣ **“who call on the Lord from a pure heart”** This is a PRESENT ACTIVE PARTICIPLE, which implies continuing action. In Joel 2:32, Acts 2:21 and Rom. 10:9-13 this phrase seems to imply an initial response, but in this context it refers to the maturing believers. Our purposeful and continuing association with mature believers is one secret of a faithful, joyful, and peaceful Christian life. See Special Topic: Heart at I Tim. 1:5.

**2:23 “refuse”** Timothy is commanded to continue not to participate in the false teacher’s silly arguments and speculations (PRESENT MIDDLE [deponent] IMPERATIVE).

▣ **“foolish”** This term may reflect the Hebrew/Aramaic term for “senseless evil” (i.e. *raca* cf. Matt. 5:22).

▣ **“ignorant”** This is the term used of instructing children with the ALPHA PRIVATIVE. Paul often used the un-negated term in its various forms in the Pastorals (cf. I Tim. 1:20; II Tim. 2:25; 3:16; Titus 2:12). These false teachers are without sense and without training; this is purposeful and willful! All they want to do is debate and speculate about non-essentials (cf. I Tim. 1:4; 4:7; 6:4; II Tim. 2:14; 4:4; Titus 1:14; 3:9). This type of arrogant debating is repeatedly denounced in the Pastoral Letters.

**2:24-25** Here are a series of things that believers should do to help “the seduced ones” return to the Lord:

1. must not be quarrelsome (cf. I Tim. 3:3; Titus 3:9)
2. be kind to all (cf. Titus 3:2)
3. be able to teach (cf. I Tim. 3:2; Titus 1:7)
4. be patient when wronged (different terms but parallel in I Tim. 3:3; 6:11; II Tim. 3:10; Titus 2:2)
5. be gentle in correcting (cf. I Tim. 3:3; Titus 3:2)

Obviously Paul is reflecting on the necessary qualities of leadership (cf. I Tim. 3) and also the godly characteristics of every believer (cf. Titus 3:1-3).

**2:25 “those who are in opposition”** This is a PRESENT MIDDLE PARTICIPLE (i.e. those who continue willfully to oppose Apostolic truth and ethics).

▣ **“if perhaps God may grant them repentance”** The “if” is not in the Greek text but the AORIST ACTIVE SUBJUNCTIVE implies a THIRD CLASS CONDITIONAL SENTENCE.

The theological issue related to the phrase is the sovereignty of God related to salvation versus the free will of humans. Is faith and repentance (cf. Mark 1:15; Acts 3:16,19; 20:21) a human response or a gift from God? There are texts which strongly imply that they are a gift from God (cf. Acts 5:31; 11:18; Rom. 2:4). Since I believe that all Scripture is inspired (cf. II Tim. 3:16) then one must compare all texts related to any given theological issue and not succumb to a proof-text method. It is obvious that the one true God is in control of all things! But He has chosen to relate to His highest creation by means of covenant. God always takes the initiative and sets the agenda, but mankind must respond and continue to respond. It is never an either/or question. It is always a both/and relationship. See Special Topic: Covenant at 2:1

### **SPECIAL TOPIC: REPENTANCE**

Repentance is a covenant requirement (along with faith) of both the Old (*Nacham*, I Kgs. 8:47; *Shuv*, I Kgs. 8:48; Ezek. 14:6; 18:30; Joel 2:12-13; Zech. 1:3-4) and the New Covenants (John the Baptist: Matt. 3:2; Mark 1:4; Luke 3:3,8; Jesus: Matt. 4:17; Mark 1:15; 2:17; Luke 5:32; 13:3,5; 15:7; 17:3; Peter: Acts 2:38; 3:19; 8:22; 11:18; II Pet. 3:9; Paul: Acts 13:24; 17:30; 20:21; 26:20; Rom. 2:4; II Cor. 2:9-10).

But what is repentance? Is it sorrow? Is it a cessation of sin? The best chapter in the NT for understanding the differing connotations of this concept is II Corinthians 7:8-11, where three related, but different, Greek terms are used.

1. “sorrow” (*lupē*, cf. vv. 8[twice], 9[thrice], 10[twice], 11). It means grief or distress and has a theologically neutral connotation
2. “repentance” (*metanoeō*, cf. vv. 9,10). It is a compound from “after” + “mind,” which implies a new mind, a new way of thinking, a new attitude toward life and God. This is true repentance.

3. “regret” (*metamelomai*, cf. vv. 8[twice], 10). It is a compound from “after” + “care.” It is used of Judas in Matt. 27:3 and Esau in Heb. 12:16-17. It implies sorrow over the consequences, not over the acts.

Repentance and faith are the required covenant acts (cf. Mark 1:15; Acts 2:38,41; 3:16,19; 20:21). There are some texts which imply that God gives repentance (cf. Acts 5:31; 11:18; II Tim. 2:25). But most of the texts see this as a necessary human response to God’s offer of a free salvation.

The definitions of both the Hebrew and Greek term are required to grasp the full meaning of repentance. The Hebrew demands “a change of action,” while the Greek demands “a change of mind.” The saved person receives a new mind and heart. He thinks differently and lives differently. Instead of “What’s in it for me?” the question is now “What is God’s will?” Repentance is not an emotion that fades or a total sinlessness, but a new relationship with the Holy One that transforms the believer into a holy one.

▣ **“leading to the knowledge of the truth”** The path to truth (*alētheia*) and full knowledge (*epignōsis*) is not found in (1) Jewish genealogies or (2) gnostic speculations but in the gospel of Jesus Christ (cf. 3:7; I Tim. 2:4; Titus 1:1). See Special Topic: Truth at I Tim. 2:4.

**2:26 “they may come to their senses”** This is the AORIST ACTIVE SUBJUNCTIVE compound form (*ana + nēphō*) of the term *nēphalios* (“be sober”) used metaphorically for “be alert” (cf. I Tim. 3:2,11; Titus 2:2).

▣ **“having been held captive by him”** This is a PERFECT PASSIVE PARTICIPLE of the compound term “to catch” + “alive” which was used of hunting animals. Here it is used of taking a prisoner of war captive. The PASSIVE VOICE and the immediate context identify Satan as the agent and the false teachers and their followers as the prisoners! As the gospel catches humans (cf. Luke 5:10) so, too, the evil one (cf. I Tim. 3:7).

There is an ambiguity related to the pronouns “him” and “that one.” Most English translations assume that both refer to the devil. It is surely possible that the last one refers to God’s will that these deceived ones turn back to him (cf. v. 25).

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

This is a study guide commentary, which means that you are responsible for your own interpretation of the Bible. Each of us must walk in the light we have. You, the Bible, and the Holy Spirit are priority in interpretation. You must not relinquish this to a commentator.

These discussion questions are provided to help you think through the major issues of this section of the book. They are meant to be thought-provoking, not definitive.

1. What is the basic purpose of the pastor?
2. Why is suffering a part of Christianity?
3. Why is the resurrection so central to the Christian faith?
4. To what does verse 12b refer? What does it mean?
5. How should Timothy deal with false teachers?
6. Why is verse 15 so important to all Christians?
7. Does God grant humans repentance? If so, for some or for all?
8. Who is said to have captured the false teachers and their followers? How can they escape?

## II TIMOTHY 3

### PARAGRAPH DIVISIONS OF MODERN TRANSLATIONS

UBS <sup>4</sup>	NKJV	NRSV	TEV	NJB
The Character of Men in the Last Days  3:1-9	Perilous Times and Perilous Men  3:1-9	The Pastor and the Flock (2:14-4:5)  2:20-3:9	The Last Days  3:1-9	The Dangers of the Last Days  3:1-5 3:6-9
Last Charge to Timothy (3:10-4:8)  3:10-17	The Man of God and Word of God  3:10-17	3:10-4:5	Last Instructions (3:10-4:8)  3:10-4:5	3:10-13  3:14-17

#### READING CYCLE THREE (see p. vii)

#### *FOLLOWING THE ORIGINAL AUTHOR'S INTENT AT THE PARAGRAPH LEVEL*

This is a study guide commentary, which means that you are responsible for your own interpretation of the Bible. Each of us must walk in the light we have. You, the Bible, and the Holy Spirit are priority in interpretation. You must not relinquish this to a commentator.

Read the chapter in one sitting. Identify the subjects. Compare your subject divisions with the five modern translations. Paragraphing is not inspired, but it is the key to following the original author's intent, which is the heart of interpretation. Every paragraph has one and only one subject.

1. First paragraph
2. Second paragraph
3. Third paragraph
4. Etc.

#### WORD AND PHRASE STUDY

##### **NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 3:1-9**

<sup>1</sup>But realize this, that in the last days difficult times will come. <sup>2</sup>For men will be lovers of self, lovers of money, boastful, arrogant, revilers, disobedient to parents, ungrateful, unholy, <sup>3</sup>unloving, irreconcilable, malicious gossips, without self-control, brutal, haters of good, <sup>4</sup>treacherous, reckless, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, <sup>5</sup>holding to a form of godliness, although they have denied its power; Avoid such men as these. <sup>6</sup>For among them are those who enter into households and captivate weak women weighed down with sins, led on by various impulses, <sup>7</sup>always learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. <sup>8</sup>Just as Jannes

and Jambres opposed Moses, so these *men* also oppose the truth, men of depraved mind, rejected in regard to the faith. <sup>9</sup>But they will not make further progress; for their folly will be obvious to all, just as Jannes' and Jambres' folly was also.

**3:1 “the last days”** This refers to the overlapping of the two Jewish ages. See Special Topic at I Tim. 6:17. The last days are now (cf. Acts 2:16-17; Heb. 1:2; I Pet. 1:20; 4:7; I John 2:18).

▣ **“difficult times will come”** This refers to the “birth pains” of the new age (cf. Matt. 24; Mark 8:13; Luke 21; Rom. 8:22; I Tim. 4:1).

There has been much discussion among commentators and theologians about the state of human society when the Lord returns. For some, the power of the gospel and the work of the Spirit are changing human society for the better (postmillennialism). For others, the OT and NT predict a catastrophic conclusion to human history (premillennialism and amillennialism).

Paul's discussion of the “man of lawlessness” in II Thess. 2 portends an escalating evil and rebellion, as do I Tim. 4 and II Tim. 3. Jesus will come to restore order and righteousness.

**3:2 “lovers of self”** For a similar list on rebellion see Rom. 1:28-32. This particular characteristic is the essence of human rebellion. It is a compound term from love (*philos*) + self (*auto*) (cf. Phil. 2:21).

▣ **“lovers of money”** See note at I Tim. 3:3 and 6:10.

▣ **“boastful”** This characterizes human boasting or confidence in one's self (cf. Rom. 1:30; James 4:16; I John 2:16)

▣ **“arrogant”** This describes someone who thinks he/she is superior and expresses it in words and deeds (cf. Luke 1:51; Rom. 1:30; James 4:6; I Pet. 5:5). The Greek term is *huperēphanos*. See Special Topic: Paul's Use of *Huper* Compounds at I Tim. 1:14.

▣

NASB	“revilers”
NKJV	“blasphemers”
NRSV	“abusive
TEV	“they will be insulting”
NJB	“rude”

This is literally “blasphemers.” It is uncertain whether they speak against (1) God/Christ (cf. I Tim. 1:13,20; 6:1; Rev. 16:11;21); (2) angels (cf. II Pet. 2:10-12) or (3) other humans (cf. I Tim. 6:4; Titus 3:2; I Pet. 4:4).

▣ **“disobedient to parents”** This may relate to the Ten Commandments (cf. Exod. 20:12). For Jews, strong families meant a stable society (“Your days will be prolonged in the land”). Self assertiveness always hurts inter-personal relationships at home, at church, at work, etc.

▣ **“ungrateful”** This is the term for “grace” negated. Several of the words in this list are negated terms with the ALPHA PRIVATIVE. These are thankless, self-centered, disruptive people.

▣ **“unholy”** This is the negated form of the term *hosios*, which referred to someone who observed all of God's laws and therefore thought he was pious or devout (cf. Titus 1:8) and pure (cf. I Tim. 2:8). *Hosios* was used to describe Jesus in Acts 2:27; 13:35 (a quote from Ps. 16). In Heb. 7:26 it is a characteristic of

Jesus, our High Priest. Paul uses it to describe his own actions toward the believers at Thessalonika (cf. I Thess. 2:10).

**3:3**

<b>NASB, NKJV</b>	<b>“unloving”</b>
<b>NRSV</b>	<b>“inhuman”</b>
<b>TEV</b>	<b>“they will be unkind”</b>
<b>NJB</b>	<b>“heartless”</b>

This is the Greek term for natural affection, negated (cf. Rom. 1:31). It refers to a lack of human or family love.



<b>NASB</b>	<b>“irreconcilable”</b>
<b>NKJV</b>	<b>“unforgiving”</b>
<b>NRSV</b>	<b>“implacable”</b>
<b>TEV</b>	<b>“merciless”</b>
<b>NJB</b>	<b>“intractable”</b>

This is the Greek term for making a treaty or agreement, negated (cf. Rom. 1:31). It refers to people who are not willing to make up or restore a relationship.

☐ **“malicious gossips”** This is the Greek term for “slanders” (*diaboloï*) which is also the term for Satan (Hebrew) or Devil (Greek). See note at I Tim. 3:11.



<b>NASB, NKJV</b>	<b>“without self-control”</b>
<b>NRSV, NJB</b>	<b>“profligates”</b>
<b>TEV</b>	<b>“violent”</b>

This is the Greek term *kratos* meaning “strength, power, might,” negated. These people lack self-control (cf. Matt. 23:25; I Cor. 7:5).

☐ **“brutal”** This is the Greek term for “tame, gentle or mild,” negated. The NJB has “savages.”

☐ **“haters of good”** This is the Greek compound *philos + agathos* (i.e. lover of good, cf. Titus 1:8), negated. These people are enemies of all that is good and virtuous.

**3:4 “treacherous”** This is the Greek compound “to give over” which was used idiomatically for “a betrayer” (cf. Luke 6:16; Acts 7:52).

☐ **“reckless”** This Greek term is a compound of *pros + piptō* used idiomatically for not thinking and thereby acting irrationally (cf. Acts 19:36).



<b>NASB</b>	<b>“conceited”</b>
<b>NKJV</b>	<b>“haughty”</b>
<b>NRSV</b>	<b>“swollen with conceit”</b>
<b>TEV</b>	<b>“swollen with pride”</b>
<b>NJB</b>	<b>“demented by pride”</b>

This is a PERFECT PASSIVE PARTICIPLE which denotes a condition brought about by an outside agent; here, the evil one. It is an idiom relating to deception by being smoke blinded (cf. I Tim. 3:6; 6:4).

▣ **“lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God”** Paul has used several compounds with *philos*:

1. self-lovers (3:2)
2. money-lovers (3:2)
3. not lovers of good (3:3)
4. pleasure-lovers (3:4)
5. God-lovers (3:4)

Instead of focusing on God and His will, these people focus on themselves and their own wills (cf. Phil. 3:19).

**3:5 “a form of godliness although they have denied its power”** This is a PERFECT MIDDLE PARTICIPLE (cf. Isa. 29:13; Rom. 2:20; Titus 1:16). This is a settled state of willful self-assertion. Institutionalized religion can be a cruel taskmaster!

▣ **“Avoid such people”** This is a PRESENT MIDDLE IMPERATIVE (cf. II Thess. 3:6). Timothy is to willfully and continually avoid this kind of person. This is an obvious reference to the false teachers and their followers.

**3:6 “those who enter into households”** Literally this is “sneak” (cf. Matt. 7:15; Jude 4). These false teachers were taking advantage of un-watchful and uninformed housewives.

▣ **“captivate”** This is a PRESENT PARTICIPLE. This is literally “to capture by means of a spear” (cf. Eph. 4:8; Rev. 13:10). The false prophets continue to use this strategy of seducing families through the wife, who stayed home during the daytime work hours.

▣ **“weak women weighed down with sins”** This is a PERFECT PASSIVE PARTICIPLE. This seems to relate to a problem with younger widows seduced by evil.

▣ **“led on by various impulses”** This is a PRESENT PASSIVE PARTICIPLE. This implies women continuously led by evil (cf. Titus 3:3).

**3:7** The immediate context and NEUTER PLURAL verbal forms twice in v. 6 and twice in v. 7 confirm the antecedent as the “weak women” of v. 6. What a tragic description of sin and manipulation!

**3:8 “Jannes and Jambres”** These are the traditional names of Pharaoh’s magicians in Exod. 7:8ff. Their names are learned from Rabbinical Judaism, specifically The Targum of Jonathan, but they are not mentioned in the OT. Paul often uses Rabbinical traditions (cf. I Cor. 10:4).

▣ **“so these *men* also oppose the truth”** This is a PRESENT MIDDLE INDICATIVE. These false teachers have a problem with authority and continue to oppose Apostolic teaching. See Special Topic: Truth at I Tim. 2:4.

▣  
NASB           **“men of depraved mind”**  
NKJV           **“men of corrupt minds”**  
NRSV           **“these people, of corrupt mind”**

**TEV** “people whose minds do not function”

**NJB** “their minds corrupt”

This is a PERFECT PASSIVE PARTICIPLE from the compound *kata + patheirō*, meaning someone who has become and continues to be depraved through an outside agency (i.e. Satan or the demonic) resulting in their own willful rejection of truth (cf. I Tim. 6:5 Titus 1:15).



**NASB** “rejected in regard to the faith”

**NKJV** “disapproved concerning the faith”

**NRSV** “counterfeit faith”

**TEV** “who are failures in the faith”

**NJB** “their faith spurious”

This is the term *dokimazō* with the connotation of testing with a view toward approval, negated. These failed the test of faith (cf. Rom. 1:28; I Cor. 9:27; II Cor. 13:5-7; Titus 1:16; Heb. 6:8). This is a frightful description of shipwrecked faith! See Special Topic: Greek Terms for “Testing” and their Connotations at I Timothy 6:9.

**3:9** “they will not make further progress” This may refer to the false teachers and their followers because the same verb is used of them in 2:16 and 3:13. Its root meaning is to advance in something (i.e. 2:16 in godliness and 3:13 in deceiving and being deceived).

▣ “for their folly will be obvious to all” “By their fruits you shall know them” (cf. Matt. 7:20; I Tim. 5:24).

**NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 3:10-17**

<sup>10</sup>Now you followed my teaching, conduct, purpose, faith, patience, love, perseverance, <sup>11</sup>persecutions, *and* sufferings, such as happened to me at Antioch, at Iconium *and* at Lystra; what persecutions I endured, and out of them all the Lord rescued me! <sup>12</sup>Indeed, all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will be persecuted. <sup>13</sup>But evil men and impostors will proceed *from bad* to worse, deceiving and being deceived. <sup>14</sup>You, however, continue in the things you have learned and become convinced of, knowing from whom you have learned *them*, <sup>15</sup>and that from childhood you have known the sacred writings which are able to give you the wisdom that leads to salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. <sup>16</sup>All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; <sup>17</sup>so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.

**3:10-11** Verse 10 is a contrast to the lives and priorities of the false teachers. Paul lists the things that Timothy shares with him in ministry:

1. Paul’s Apostolic teaching (cf. I Tim. 4:6)
2. Paul’s lifestyle
3. Paul’s purpose
4. Paul’s faith (cf. I Tim. 6:11)
5. Paul’s patience
6. Paul’s love (cf. I Tim. 6:11)
7. Paul’s perseverance (cf. I Tim. 6:11)
8. Paul’s persecutions
9. Paul’s sufferings (cf. I Cor. 4:10-13; II Cor. 4:7-11; 6:3-10; 11:23-28)

All of the verbs in vv. 10-11 are AORIST. Paul was reflecting on his missionary journeys and how the Lord had delivered him in every circumstance. He passes this encouragement on to Timothy by way of a reminder.

**3:11 “Antioch, Iconium and Lystra”** From Acts 13 and 14 we know that this was the area of Timothy’s home.

**3:12** This is a shocking verse to modern western believers. Our culture has been spared many of the persecutions related to Christianity. But with the lack of persecution has also come a lack of power and godliness! Jesus was perfected by the things He suffered (cf. Heb. 5:8). The things God uses to develop His children into Christlikeness are the very things we flee from! The health, wealth and prosperity movement characterizes our spoiled, pampered culture.

Notice the text says “all”! Persecution is normal for God’s children seeking to live for Him in a fallen world. Yes, normal (cf. Matt. 5:10-12; John 15:18-21; 16:1-2; 17:14; Acts 14:22; Rom. 5:3-4; 8:17; II Cor. 4:16-18; Phil. 1:29; II Tim. 1:8; 2:3; 3:12; I Thess. 3:3; James 1:2-4; I Pet. 4:12-19)!

We are not to seek persecution, but we must live ready! If we die daily (cf. II Cor. 5:14-15; Gal. 2:20; I John 3:16) for the cause of Christ, then physical death does not intimidate us anymore!

**3:13 “evil men and imposters”** They were charlatans like the false magicians (cf. v. 8).

▣ **“will proceed”** This is the same verb as in 2:16.

▣ **“deceiving”** This is a PRESENT ACTIVE PARTICIPLE. They led others astray as they are led themselves by evil.

▣ **“and being deceived”** This is a PRESENT PASSIVE PARTICIPLE. Those trapped by sin, self and Satan tend to trap others!

**3:14 “continue in the things you have learned”** This is a contrast to v. 13 and continues the encouragement from vv. 10-12. This is a PRESENT ACTIVE IMPERATIVE (cf. 2:13; Titus 1:9).

**3:15 “from childhood”** This shows Timothy’s religious training at home (cf. 1:5). It is uncertain whether this refers to Judaism or Christianity.

▣ **the sacred writings”** This could include more than just the OT, but verse 16 shows us that the OT is what is meant here.

▣ **“which are able to give you the wisdom that leads to salvation”** This shows the primary purpose of Scripture is mankind’s redemption. It also shows us the mechanism of redemption which is mankind’s faith response to God’s Messiah. This is the essence of Apostolic preaching (*kerygma*). However, verse 17 shows that Scripture (which in this text must refer to the OT because the NT was not yet complete or in circulation) has another subsequent purpose—equipping the saints for lifestyle Christlikeness. Paul often used the OT to encourage believers to live godly lives.

## SPECIAL TOPIC: THE *KERYGMA* OF THE EARLY CHURCH

- A. The promises by God made in the Old Testament have now been fulfilled with the coming of Jesus the Messiah (Acts 2:30; 3:19,24; 10:43; 26:6-7,22; Rom. 1:2-4; I Tim. 3:16; Heb. 1:1-2; I Peter 1:10-12; 2 Peter 1:18-19).
- B. Jesus was anointed as Messiah by God at His baptism (Acts 10:38).
- C. Jesus began His ministry in Galilee after His baptism (Acts 10:37).
- D. His ministry was characterized by doing good and performing mighty works by means of the power of God (Mark 10:45; Acts 2:22; 10:38).
- E. The Messiah was crucified according to the purpose of God (Mark 10:45; John 3:16; Acts 2:23; 3:13-15,18; 4:11; 10:39; 26:23; Rom. 8:34; I Cor. 1:17-18; 15:3; Gal. 1:4; Heb. 1:3; I Peter 1:2,19; 3:18; I John 4:10).
- F. He was raised from the dead and appeared to His disciples (Acts 2:24,31-32; 3:15,26; 10:40-41; 17:31; 26:23; Rom. 8:34; 10:9; I Cor. 15:4-7,12ff; I Thess. 1:10; I Tim. 3:16; I Peter 1:2; 3:18,21).
- G. Jesus was exalted by God and given the name “Lord” (Acts 2:25-29,33-36; 3:13; 10:36; Rom. 8:34; 10:9; I Tim. 3:16; Heb. 1:3; I Peter 3:22).
- H. He gave the Holy Spirit to form the new community of God (Acts 1:8; 2:14-18,38-39; 10:44-47; I Peter 1:12).
- I. He will come again for judgment and the restoration of all things (Acts 3:20-21; 10:42; 17:31; I Cor. 15:20-28; I Thess. 1:10).
- J. All who hear the message should repent and be baptized (Acts 2:21,38; 3:19; 10:43,47-48; 17:30; 26:20; Rom. 1:17; 10:9; I Peter 3:21).

This schema served as the essential proclamation of the early church, though different authors of the New Testament may leave out a portion or emphasize other particulars in their preaching. The entire Gospel of Mark closely follows the Petrine aspect of the *kerygma*. Mark is traditionally seen as structuring Peter’s sermons, preached in Rome, into a written Gospel. Both Matthew and Luke follow Mark’s basic structure.

**3:16 “All Scripture”** There is no ARTICLE. It could be translated “every Scripture” but this may imply to some that they are isolated truths (propositions). The plague of modern Bible study is the “proof-text” method of interpretation which destroys the literary context and the intent of the inspired author.

☐ **“is inspired by God”** This is literally “God exhaled.” The how is not stated, but the who and the why are very specific! In II Pet. 1:21 the Spirit is the focus of inspiration, but here it is the Father. Both are active in this area!

☐ **“in righteousness”** See Special Topic at Titus 2:12.

**3:17 “so that”** This is a PURPOSE CLAUSE (i.e. *hina*) which should be translated “in order that.”

☐ **“adequate”** This term is only found here in the NT. It means “complete, capable, proficient or entirely suited.”

☐ **“equipped”** “Adequate” (*artios*) and “equipped” (*exartizo*) are COGNATE VERBS used for equipping something for an assigned task (cf. Eph. 4:12). It speaks of gifted, functioning maturity which is brought by the Spirit through the Scripture.

▣ **“for every good work”** What God calls us to (cf. Eph. 2:10), He equips us for (cf. 2:21)!

## **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

This is a study guide commentary, which means that you are responsible for your own interpretation of the Bible. Each of us must walk in the light we have. You, the Bible, and the Holy Spirit are priority in interpretation. You must not relinquish this to a commentator.

These discussion questions are provided to help you think through the major issues of this section of the book. They are meant to be thought-provoking, not definitive.

1. To what does the phrase “last days” refer?
2. To what kind of false teachers is Paul referring? Describe what they believed.
3. List the 9 things Paul asks Timothy to emulate in verses 10-11.
4. What do verses 15-17 say about inspiration?
5. How is the Living Word—Jesus, related to the written Word—the Bible?

## II TIMOTHY 4

### PARAGRAPH DIVISIONS OF MODERN TRANSLATIONS

UBS <sup>4</sup>	NKJV	NRSV	TEV	NJB
Last Charge to Timothy (3:10-4:8)	Preach the Word	The Pastor and the Flock (2:14-4:5)	Last Instructions (3:10-4:8)	A Solemn Charge
		3:10-4:5	3:10-4:5	
4:1-5	4:1-5			4:1-5
	Paul's Valedictory	Concluding Exhortations		Paul in the Evening of His Life
4:6-8	4:6-8	4:6-8	4:6-8	4:6-8
Personal Instructions	The Abandoned Apostle		Personal Words	Final Advice
4:9-15	4:9-16	4:9-15	4:9-13	4:9-15
			4:14-15	
4:16-18		4:16-18	4:16-18	4:16-18
	The Lord is Faithful			
	4:17-18			
Final Greetings	Come Before Winter		Final Greetings	Farewell and Final Good Wishes
4:19-22	4:19-21	4:19-21	4:19-21a	4:19-21a
	Farewell		4:21b	4:21b
	4:22	4:22	4:22a	4:22
			4:22b	

### READING CYCLE THREE (see p. vii)

#### *FOLLOWING THE ORIGINAL AUTHOR'S INTENT AT THE PARAGRAPH LEVEL*

This is a study guide commentary, which means that you are responsible for your own interpretation of the Bible. Each of us must walk in the light we have. You, the Bible, and the Holy Spirit are priority in interpretation. You must not relinquish this to a commentator.

Read the chapter in one sitting. Identify the subjects. Compare your subject divisions with the five modern translations. Paragraphing is not inspired, but it is the key to following the original author's intent, which is the heart of interpretation. Every paragraph has one and only one subject.

1. First paragraph
2. Second paragraph
3. Third paragraph
4. Etc.

## WORD AND PHRASE STUDY

### NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 4:1-5

**<sup>1</sup>I solemnly charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by His appearing and His kingdom: <sup>2</sup>preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with great patience and instruction. <sup>3</sup>For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but *wanting* to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance to their own desires, <sup>4</sup>and will turn away their ears from the truth and will turn aside to myths. <sup>5</sup>But you, be sober in all things, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.**

**4:1 “I solemnly charge you”** Paul continues to lay out Timothy’s task and admonishes him to action (cf. I Tim. 5:21; 6:13; II Tim. 2:14; 4:1). Remember this is Paul’s last letter before being martyred!

▣ **“in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus”** The Father and Son are linked together in a grammatical form that emphasizes their equality.

▣ **“who is to judge”** This is an OT title and function for God used here for Jesus. This shows His full deity (cf. Matt. 25:31ff; Acts 10:42; 17:31; Rom. 2:16; I Pet. 4:5); as Christ was the Father’s agent in creation (cf. John 1:3; I Cor. 8:6; Col. 1:16; Heb. 1:2) so, too, will He be the Father’s agent in judgment.

▣ **“the living and the dead”** This refers to Jesus’ judgment of all conscious creation (cf. Phil. 2:10). Some will be alive at the time of the Second Coming (cf. I Thess. 4:13-18; some are with the Lord (cf. II Cor. 5:8) and some (the wicked) are in Hades (cf. Rev. 20:13; Matt. 11:23; Luke 16:23).

### SPECIAL TOPIC: WHERE ARE THE DEAD?

#### I. Old Testament

A. All humans go to *She’ol* (etymology uncertain), which is a way of referring to death or the grave, mostly in Wisdom Literature and Isaiah. In the OT it was a shadowy, conscious, but joyless existence (cf. Job 10:21-22; 38:17; Ps. 107:10,14).

#### B. *She’ol* characterized

1. associated with God’s judgment (fire), Deut. 32:22
2. associated with punishment even before Judgment Day, Ps. 18:4-5
3. associated with *Abaddon* (destruction), but also open to God, Job 26:6; Ps. 139:8; Amos 9:2
4. associated with “the Pit” (grave), Ps. 16:10; Isa 14:15; Ezek. 31:15-17
5. wicked descend alive into *She’ol*, Num. 16:30,33; Ps. 55:15
6. personified often as an animal with a large mouth, Num. 16:30; Isa. 5:14; 14:9; Hab. 2:5
7. people there are called *Shades*, Isa. 14:9-11

#### II. New Testament

A. The Hebrew *She’ol* is translated by the Greek *Hades* (the unseen world)

#### B. *Hades* characterized

1. refers to death, Matt. 16:18
2. linked to death, Rev. 1:18; 6:8; 20:13-14

3. often analogous to the place of permanent punishment (*Gehenna*), Matt. 11:23 (OT quote); Luke 10:15; 16:23-24
4. often analogous to the grave, Luke 16:23

C. Possibly divided (rabbis)

1. righteous part called paradise (really another name for heaven, cf. II Cor. 12:4; Rev. 2:7), Luke 23:43
2. wicked part called *Tartarus*, II Pet. 2:4, where it is a holding place for evil angels (cf. Gen. 6; I Enoch)

D. *Gehenna*

1. Reflects the OT phrase, “the valley of the sons of Hinnom,” (south of Jerusalem). It was the place where the Phoenician fire god, *Molech*, was worshiped by child sacrifice (cf. II Kgs. 16:3; 21:6; II Chr. 28:3; 33:6), which was forbidden in Lev. 18:21; 20:2-5
2. Jeremiah changed it from a place of pagan worship into a site of YHWH’s judgment (cf. Jer. 7:32; 19:6-7). It became the place of fiery, eternal judgment in I Enoch 90:26-27 and Sib. 1:103.
3. The Jews of Jesus’ day were so appalled by their ancestors’ participation in pagan worship by child sacrifice, that they turned this area into the garbage dump for Jerusalem. Many of Jesus’ metaphors for eternal judgment came from this landfill (fire, smoke, worms, stench, cf. Mark 9:44,46). The term *Gehenna* is used only by Jesus (except in James 3:6).
4. Jesus’ usage of *Gehenna*
  - a. fire, Matt. 5:22; 18:9; Mark 9:43
  - b. permanent, Mark 9:48 (Matt. 25:46)
  - c. place of destruction (both soul and body), Matt. 10:28
  - d. paralleled to *She’ol*, Matt. 5:29-30; 18:9
  - e. characterizes the wicked as “son of hell,” Matt. 23:15
  - f. result of judicial sentence, Matt. 23:33; Luke 12:5
  - g. the concept of *Gehenna* is parallel to the second death (cf. Rev. 2:11; 20:6,14) or the lake of fire (cf. Matt. 13:42,50; Rev. 19:20; 20:10,14-15; 21:8). It is possible the lake of fire becomes the permanent dwelling place of humans (from *She’ol*) and evil angels (from *Tartarus*, II Pet. 2:4; Jude 6 or the abyss, cf. Luke 8:31; Rev. 9:1-10; 20:1,3).
  - h. it was not designed for humans, but for Satan and his angels, Matt. 25:41

E. It is possible, because of the overlap of *She’ol*, *Hades*, and *Gehenna* that

1. originally all humans went to *She’ol/Hades*
2. the experience there (good or bad) is exacerbated after Judgment Day, but the place of the wicked remains the same (this is why the KJV translated *hades* (grave) as *gehenna* (hell)).
3. only NT text to mention torment before Judgment is the parable of Luke 16:19-31 (Lazarus and the Rich Man). *She’ol* is also described as a place of punishment now (cf. Deut. 32:22; Ps. 18:1-5). However, one cannot establish a doctrine on a parable.

III. Intermediate state between death and resurrection

A. The NT does not teach the “immortality of the soul,” which is one of several ancient views of the after life.

1. human souls exist before their physical life
2. human souls are eternal before and after physical death
3. often the physical body is seen as a prison and death as release back to pre-existent state

- B. The NT hints at a disembodied state between death and resurrection
  1. Jesus speaks of a division between body and soul, Matt. 10:28
  2. Abraham may have a body now, Mark 12:26-27; Luke 16:23
  3. Moses and Elijah have a physical body at the transfiguration, Matt. 17
  4. Paul asserts that at the Second Coming the souls with Christ will get their new bodies first, II Thess. 4:13-18
  5. Paul asserts that believers get their new spiritual bodies on Resurrection Day, I Cor. 15:23,52
  6. Paul asserts that believers do not go to *Hades*, but at death are with Jesus, II Cor. 5:6,8; Phil. 1:23. Jesus overcame death and took the righteous to heaven with Him, I Pet. 3:18-22.

#### IV. Heaven

- A. This term is used in three senses in the Bible:
  1. the atmosphere above the earth, Gen. 1:1,8; Isa. 42:5; 45:18
  2. the starry heavens, Gen. 1:14; Deut. 10:14; Ps. 148:4; Heb. 4:14; 7:26
  3. the place of God's throne, Deut. 10:14; I Kgs. 8:27; Ps. 148:4; Eph. 4:10; Heb. 9:24 (third heaven, II Cor. 12:2)
- B. The Bible does not reveal much about the afterlife. Probably because fallen humans have no way or capacity to understand (cf. I Cor. 2:9).
- C. Heaven is both a place (cf. John 14:2-3) and a person (cf. II Cor. 5:6,8). Heaven may be a restored Garden of Eden (Gen. 1-2; Rev. 21-22). The earth will be cleansed and restored (cf. Acts 3:21; Rom. 8:21; II Pet. 3:10). The image of God (Gen. 1:26-27) is restored in Christ. Now the intimate fellowship of the Garden of Eden is possible again.

However, this may be metaphorical (heaven as a huge, cubed city of Rev. 21:9-27) and not literal. I Corinthians 15 describes the difference between the physical body and the spiritual body as the seed to the mature plant. Again I Cor. 2:9 (a quote from Isa. 64:4 and 65:17) is a great promise and hope! I know that when we see Him we will be like Him (cf. I John 3:2).

#### V. Helpful resources

- A. William Hendriksen, *The Bible On the Life Hereafter*
- B. Maurice Rawlings, *Beyond Death's Door*

▣ **“by His appearing”** Literally this is *epiphany*. It conveys the idea of “brightness, radiance, splendor, or glory.” It may reflect the OT concept of God's presence in the Shekinah cloud of glory during the wilderness wandering period of Israel's history after the Exodus. This is the characteristic word in the Pastoral Letters for the Second Coming (cf. I Tim. 6:14; II Tim. 1:10; 4:1,8; Titus 2:11,13; 3:4; II Thess. 2:8). See Special Topic at Titus 2:13.

Paul admonishes Timothy to do certain things in light of the reality of Judgment Day/Resurrection Day. The Second Coming is meant to encourage believers in every age, although it will be reality to only one generation. Believers should live each day as if it were, or might be, the last!

▣ **“His kingdom”** This refers to the reign of God in believers' hearts now that will be consummated over all creation (cf. Matt. 6:10). Here again, God's kingdom is assigned to the Son. Jesus Christ is described in three eschatological functions: (1) Judge; (2) the coming One; and (3) the King.

**4:2 “preach the word”** This is the first in a series of nine AORIST IMPERATIVES. Our message (*logos*) is Jesus (cf. Col. 4:3). He is the gospel!

▣ **“be ready in season *and* out of season”** This is an AORIST ACTIVE IMPERATIVE. Literally it is “seasonably” (*eukairōs*) and “unseasonably” (*akairōs*). This describes the “great commission” of Christianity.

▣ **“reprove”** It is literally “to put on trial so as to prove” (cf. I Tim. 5:20; Titus 1:13; 2:15).

▣ **“rebuke”** This is an another AORIST ACTIVE IMPERATIVE (cf. Luke 17:3; 23:40).

▣ **“exhort”** This is another AORIST ACTIVE IMPERATIVE. This is the same root as “encourage.” To reprove or rebuke without encouragement and patience is not Christian (cf. 3:10; I Tim. 1:16).

▣ **“with great patience”** See note at I Timothy 1:16.

**4:3 “For the time will come”** This reflects Paul’s day, in some sense every day, and uniquely the last days (cf. 3:1; I Tim. 4:1-2).

▣ **“they will not endure sound doctrine”** Many of the words in the Pastoral Letters are also found in Luke’s writings. It is possible that Paul used Luke as a scribe to write these letters.

The term “sound” means “healthy” and was used often by Luke (cf. Luke 5:31; 7:10; 15:27, etc.). It is a very common description of doctrine and faith in the Pastoral Letters (cf. I Tim. 4:6; 6:3; II Tim. 1:13; 4:8; Titus 1:9,13; 2:1,2,8).

▣ **“but *wanting* to have their ears tickled”** This phrase refers to the false teachers (cf. v. 4) and their followers.

▣ **“they will accumulate for themselves teachers”** They just want to hear (1) those who agree with them (cf. Jer. 5:31); (2) those who teach new and speculative things or (3) many different teachers (always a new seminar to attend).

**4:4 “turn away. . .turn aside”** The first term is used of perversion in Titus 1:14 or desertion in II Tim. 1:15. The second term is used often in the Pastoral Letters (cf. I Tim. 1:6; 5:15; 6:20; II Tim. 4:4).

Both of these are a play on the OT concept of righteousness as a ruler (or straight edge); all the terms for sin are a deviation from the standard. These false teachers turn away from sound doctrine and turn to myth!

▣ **“from the truth”** See Special Topic: Truth at I Tim. 2:4.

▣ **“myths”** This concept is used often in the Pastoral Letters (cf. I Tim. 1:4; 4:7; Titus 1:14; 3:9; II Pet. 1:16). It possibly refers to (1) the Gnostic *aeons* (angelic levels between the high good god and lesser spiritual beings which would form matter); (2) Jewish Messianic genealogies; or (3) some non-canonical “gospels.”

**4:5** This is another contrast between the actions of Timothy and the false teachers.

▣  
NASB           **“be sober in all things”**  
NKJV           **“be watchful in all things”**  
NRSV           **“always be sober”**

**TEV** “keep control of yourself in all circumstances”

**NJB** “must keep steady all the time”

This is a PRESENT ACTIVE IMPERATIVE. This does not refer to abstinence from wine but to being even-tempered. See full note at I Tim. 3:2.



**NASB** “endure hardship”

**NKJV** “endure affliction”

**NRSV, TEV** “endure suffering”

There is a series of three AORIST ACTIVE IMPERATIVES in this paragraph. This term is used three times in II Timothy (cf. 1:8; 2:3,9; 4:5). It refers to persecution and deprivation caused by being involved in the gospel ministry.

▣ **“do the work of an evangelist”** This is the second AORIST ACTIVE IMPERATIVE in this paragraph. The NOUN “evangelist” is only used three times in the NT.

1. Philip’s seven daughters (cf. Acts 21:9)
2. a gifted local church leader (cf. Eph. 4:11)
3. and here

The term “gospel” (*euangelion*) literally means “good news”; an evangelist (*euangelistēs*) is one who shares the gospel.

An evangelist is a spiritual gift to the church (cf. Eph. 4:11) and evangelism is the responsibility of every believer (cf. I Pet. 3:15; Col. 4:6). Believers must not only affirm the mandate of Jesus (cf. Matt. 28:19-20) but live it out day by day!

▣ **“fulfill your ministry”** This is the third AORIST ACTIVE IMPERATIVE. Gospel ministry without evangelism is not a full ministry (cf. Col. 4:17). Evangelism is the heart of God, the purpose of Christ’s sacrifice, and the primary task of the Spirit.

**NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 4:6-8**

**<sup>6</sup>For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure has come. <sup>7</sup>I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith; <sup>8</sup>in the future there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day; and not only to me, but also to all who have loved His appearing.**

**4:6 “being poured out”** This is a PRESENT PASSIVE INDICATIVE. This phrase is used in Phil. 2:17 of an OT wine sacrifice (cf. Num. 28:7,10,14,15). Paul saw his life as a sacrifice to Christ.

▣ **“the time of my departure has come”** This is a PERFECT ACTIVE INDICATIVE. This term *analysis* (English “analysis”) is only found here in the NT, but the VERB form is used several times to refer to a ship being loosed from its moorings (cf. Luke 12:36). It is used metaphorically of death in Phil. 1:23. This is the last letter Paul wrote before being beheaded, between A.D. 56-58 (according to early church tradition).

**4:7 “I have fought the good fight”** This is the first of three PERFECT MIDDLE INDICATIVES. Paul used athletic (I Cor. 9:27; Phil. 3:13-14) and military (cf. Eph. 6:10-18) metaphors to describe his ministry. What he encouraged Timothy to do (cf. I Tim. 1:18; 6:12) he had done himself.

▣ **“I have finished the course”** This is the second PERFECT ACTIVE INDICATIVE. Paul knew his death was imminent.

▣ **“I have kept the faith”** This is another PERFECT ACTIVE INDICATIVE. It refers to (1) doctrine; (2) faithfulness; or (3) an athletic metaphor for keeping the rules (cf. I Cor. 9:27).

**4:8 “crown of righteousness”** This is either (1) not our own but Christ’s imputed righteousness; and/or (2) our Christlike living. The term refers to an athletic victor’s laurel wreath. We get the English name “Stephen” from this Greek word. There are several crowns assigned to believers in the NT:

1. an imperishable crown (I Cor. 9:27)
2. a crown of righteousness (II Tim. 4:8)
3. a crown of life (James 1:12; Rev. 2:4)
4. a crown of glory (I Peter 5:4)
5. a crown of gold (Rev. 4:4)
6. a crown which is righteousness

See Special Topic: Righteousness at Titus 2:12.

▣ **“which the Lord, the righteous Judge”** The term “Lord” could apply to YHWH because He is called the Judge (cf. Gen. 18:25; Ps. 5:6; 94:2; Joel 3:12; Heb. 12:23; James 4:12) or to Jesus because this judgment is linked to “appearing” (cf. 1:10; 4:1,8; I Tim. 6:14; Titus 2:13). YHWH has appointed Jesus as judge (cf. Matt. 25:31-46; Acts 17:31; II Cor. 5:10).

▣ **“will award to me on that day”** This has an end time (eschatological) orientation (cf. 1:18; 4:1). Apparently Paul believed that believers would be with the Lord at death (cf. II Cor. 5:8), but the rewards and full fellowship awaited Resurrection Day (cf. I Thess. 4:13-18).

▣ **“but also to all who have loved His appearing”** This refers to believers’ eager anticipation of the Lord’s Second Coming. It is no longer fearful. It is joyous! It is a sign of true Christianity!

**NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 4:9-15**

<sup>9</sup>Make every effort to come to me soon; <sup>10</sup>for Demas, having loved this present world, has deserted me and gone to Thessalonika; Crescens *has gone to Galatia*, Titus to Dalmatia. <sup>11</sup>Only Luke is with me. Pick up Mark and bring him with you, for he is useful to me for service. <sup>12</sup>But Tychicus I have sent to Ephesus. <sup>13</sup>When you come bring the cloak which I left at Troas with Carpus, and the books, especially the parchments. <sup>14</sup>Alexander the coppersmith did me much harm; the Lord will repay him according to his deeds. <sup>15</sup>Be on guard against him yourself, for he vigorously opposed our teaching.

**4:9 “make every effort to come to me soon”** Paul was lonely (cf. v. 21; Titus 3:12) and probably had eye problems (cf. II Cor. 12:7) which made it difficult for him to be alone.

**4:10 “Demas has forsaken me”** The historical context of Paul in prison, perhaps soon to be beheaded, may explain Demas’ actions. It is uncertain as to how his forsaking Paul relates to his faith in Christ.

**4:10 “having loved this present world”** This is literally “this present age.” See Special Topic at I Timothy 6:17. Demas chose the immediate over the eternal. The pull of this world is very strong, but it is only transitory (cf. I John 2:15-17).

▣ **“gone to Thessalonika”** Compare Philemon 24 with Acts 20:4. Aristarchus and also possibly Demas were from Thessalonika.

▣ **“Crescens has gone to Galatia”** There is a Greek manuscript variation involving the destination of Crescens:

1. the Asia Minor (western Turkey) Roman province of Galatia (cf. MSS A, D, F, G)
2. southern France, then called Gaul (Galatia) [cf. MSS **ℵ**, C]

The United Bible Societies’ fourth edition of *The Greek New Testament* gives “Galatia” an “A” rating meaning almost certain. This would support the fact that Paul did visit the eastern Mediterranean.

▣ **“Titus to Dalmatia”** He was one of Paul’s faithful Apostolic delegates (cf. Cor. 3:2; 7:6; 12-12; 8:6,16,23; 12:18; Gal. 2:1,3; Titus 1:4). Dalmatia was a Roman province in the southern area of Illyricum (the former Yugoslavia). Paul preached there in Acts 20:1. It is north of Macedonia. This assignment is the last we hear of Titus in the NT.

**4:11 “Luke”** He was a Gentile physician (cf. Col. 4:14; Philemon 24 and the “we” sections of Acts). It is possible that the term physician may simply mean “educated.” He is the only non-Jewish NT author (i.e. the Gospel of Luke, Acts and possibly the scribe for the Pastoral Letters).

▣ **“Mark”** This is John Mark, in whose house the Last Supper may have been observed (cf. Acts 12:12). He accompanied Paul and Barnabas on the first missionary journey, but for some reason quit the team (cf. Acts 15:38). Paul and Barnabas had an argument over Mark’s inclusion on the second missionary journey resulting in two separate mission teams (cf. Acts 15:36-41). Paul and John Mark did later reconcile (cf. Col. 4:10).

**4:12 “Tychicus”** Ephesus was the church and city where Paul spent the most time and effort. Timothy was in Ephesus when Paul wrote I Timothy. Tychicus was Paul’s trusted messenger (cf. Acts 20:4; Col. 4:7; Eph. 6:21; Titus 3:12) who was probably the bearer of II Timothy to Timothy and possible his replacement.

**4:13 “the cloak”** This was a large, heavy garment which was used as a coat and also as a sleeping bag during the winter.

▣ **“Troas”** This was a port city on the coast of modern western Turkey. It was the location of Paul’s “Macedonian vision” recorded in Acts 16:6-10. Apparently Paul had established a work there at some point.

▣ **“and the books, especially the parchments”** Even Paul felt the need to study and read. The “parchments” refer to tanned animal skins which were used for writings. Their name is taken from Pergamum where they were invented. This was very expensive but durable writing material. It probably referred to OT scrolls. “The books” may refer to letters or legal documents. However, this is all speculation.

**4:14 “Alexander”** This was a common name, so we are not sure whether he was (1) the same person mentioned in Acts 19:33-34; (2) the false teacher mentioned in I Timothy 1:20, along with Hymenaeus or (3) another unknown Alexander. He is another example of the opposition to the gospel, whether without or within the church.

▣ **“the Lord will repay him according to his deeds”** This is a spiritual principle. God is ethical and moral and so is His creation. Humans break themselves on God’s standards. We reap what we sow. This is true for believers (but does not affect salvation) and unbelievers (cf. Job 34:11; Ps. 28:4; 62:12; Prov. 24:12; Eccl. 12:14; Jer. 17:10; 32:19; Matt. 16:27; 25:31-46; Rom. 2:6; 14:12; I Cor. 3:8; Gal. 6:7-10; II Tim. 4:14; I Pet. 1:17; Rev. 2:23; 20:12; 22:12).

▣ **“Be on guard against him”** This is a PRESENT MIDDLE IMPERATIVE. Be on constant vigilance. Evil is present and vicious!

**NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 4:16-18**

**<sup>16</sup>At my first defense no one supported me, but all deserted me; may it not be counted against them. <sup>17</sup>But the Lord stood with me and strengthened me, so that through me the proclamation might be fully accomplished, and that all the Gentiles might hear; and I was rescued out of the lion’s mouth. <sup>18</sup>The Lord will rescue me from every evil deed, and will bring me safely to His heavenly kingdom; to Him *be* the glory forever and ever. Amen.**

**4:16 “At my first defense”** From this Greek term, *apologia*, we get the English word “apology.” It was used in the sense of a legal defense (cf. Acts 19:33; 22:1; 26:1,2,24). Paul defended, explained and proclaimed the gospel in several legal settings, both in Palestine and Rome (cf. Acts 9:15).

▣ **“no one supported me, but all deserted me”** This may explain v. 10. As fear melted the hearts of Jesus’ followers after His arrest, so too, Paul’s helpers began to become fearful and they deserted him (i.e. Demas).

In the Roman court system of Paul’s day there was a preliminary investigation of the charges before the formal trial took place. Apparently in this legal procedure no one testified on Paul’s behalf.

▣ **“may it not be counted against them”** Paul reflects Jesus’ words from the cross (cf. Luke 23:34) and Stephen’s words in Acts 7:60, but notice also the accountability phrase of v. 14.

**4:17 “the Lord stood with me”** Jesus promised to be with us in Matt. 28:20. The same VERB is used of Paul being encouraged by a supernatural presence in Acts 23:11 and 27:23 (also notice Acts 18:9).

▣ **“and strengthened me”** Paul often speaks of Christ strengthening him (cf. Eph. 3:16; Phil. 4:13; Col. 1:11; I Tim. 1:12; II Tim. 2:1).

▣ **“the proclamation might be fully accomplished”** Paul was sent as an Apostle to the Gentiles (cf. Acts 9:15; 22:21; 23:11; 26:17; Rom. 1:5; 11:13; 15:16; Gal. 1:16; 2:7; Eph. 3:1-8; I Tim. 2:7).

▣ **“I was rescued out of the lion’s mouth”** This could be an OT idiom for (1) God delivering believers from their enemies or (2) God delivering them from death. Read Psalms 7:2; 22:21 and 35:17.

**4:18 “the Lord”** In this verse (and v. 14), this could refer to YHWH, but in verse 17 (and v. 1) it refers to Jesus. Jesus is the best option for all the occurrences in chapter 4.

▣

NASB	“rescue me from every evil deed”
NKJV	“deliver me from every evil work”
NRSV	“rescue me from every evil attack”
TEV	“rescue me from all evil”
NJB	“rescue me from all evil attempts on me”

Paul knew that the Lord was with him, for him and in him. He also realized that human opposition had a Satanic or demonic origin. The proclamation of the gospel is always accompanied by evil opposition!

This phrase is all the more striking and paradoxical when it occurs so close to Paul’s execution!

☐ **“will bring me safely to His heavenly kingdom”** See Special Topic: This Age and the Age to Come at II Tim. 3:1.

☐ **“to Him *be* glory forever and ever”** Paul often breaks into doxologies of praise (i.e. two good examples, Rom. 11:36; Eph. 3:14-21).

☐ **“Amen”** See Special Topic at Titus 2:12.

**NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 4:19-21**

**<sup>19</sup>Greet Prisca and Aquila, and the household of Onesiphorus. <sup>20</sup>Erastus remained at Corinth, but Trophimus I left sick at Miletus. <sup>21</sup>Make every effort to come before winter. Eubulus greets you, also Pudens and Linus and Claudia and all the brethren.**

**4:19 “Prisca and Aquila”** The lady (also called Priscilla) is mentioned first in Acts 18:18,26; Romans 16:3 and here; her husband is mentioned first in Acts 18:2 and I Cor. 16:19. Possibly she was mentioned first, which was highly unusual, because she was of Roman nobility. She may have been the stronger personality of the couple. They were tent-makers (or leather workers) like Paul and were his good friends and co-laborers in the gospel.

☐ **“Onesiphorous”** See note at 1:16-18.

**4:20 “Erastus”** The same name is also mentioned in Acts 19:22 and Romans 16:23.

☐ **“Trophimus I left sick”** This man is mentioned in Acts 20:4; 21:29 and possibly II Cor. 8:19-22.

There are so many questions we would like to ask the NT writers. One subject all believers think about is physical healing. In Acts (cf. 19:12; 28:7-9) Paul is able to heal, but here and in II Cor. 12:7-10 and Phil. 2:25-30, he seems unable. Why are some healed and not all, and is there a time window connected to healing which has closed?

I surely believe in a supernatural, compassionate Father who has and does physically as well as spiritually heal, but why is this healing aspect seemingly present and then noticeably absent? I do not think that it is connected to human faith, for surely Paul had faith (cf. II Cor. 12). I feel that healing and believing miracles affirmed the truthfulness and validity of the gospel, which it still does in areas of the world where it is first proclaimed. However, I feel that God wants us to walk by faith and not by sight. Also, physical illness is often allowed in believer’s lives (1) as temporal punishment for sin; (2) as consequences of life in a fallen world; and (3) to help believers mature spiritually. My problem is I never know which one is involved! My prayer for God’s will to be done in each case is not a lack of faith but a sincere attempt to allow the gracious, compassionate God to work His will in each life.

☐ **“at Miletus”** This was a seaport of western Asia Minor (western Turkey), south of Ephesus.

**4:21 “Make every effort to come before winter”** Paul was lonesome and probably had eye problems. Shipping stopped in the winter, so no one would be able to come to him after the seasonal storms began (cf. Titus 3:21).

☐ We do not know of any of these believers from other parts of the NT. Oh, but God does!

**NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 4:22**

**<sup>22</sup>The Lord be with your spirit. Grace be with you.**

**4:22** This was probably written by Paul's own hand to show the letter's genuineness (cf. II Thess. 2:2; 3:17).

▣ **“The Lord be with your spirit”** This PRONOUN “you” is SINGULAR, referring to Timothy (cf. Philemon 25). Here the term “spirit” is a small “s” referring to Timothy.

▣ **“Grace be with you”** The PRONOUN “you” is PLURAL. Although all of the Pastoral Letters were addressed to individuals, they were meant to be read aloud to the house churches (cf. I Tim. 6:21; Titus 3:15).

## **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

This is a study guide commentary, which means that you are responsible for your own interpretation of the Bible. Each of us must walk in the light we have. You, the Bible, and the Holy Spirit are priority in interpretation. You must not relinquish this to a commentator.

These discussion questions are provided to help you think through the major issues of this section of the book. They are meant to be thought-provoking, not definitive.

1. What is an evangelist?
2. Should every Christian be a verbal witness?
3. Do verses 5-8 imply that Paul was expecting to die?
4. What happened to Demas?
5. Why could Paul not heal Trophimus?
6. Why is the last sentence of the book a plural?

## APPENDIX ONE

### BRIEF DEFINITIONS OF GREEK GRAMMATICAL TERMS

Koine Greek, often called Hellenistic Greek, was the common language of the Mediterranean world beginning with Alexander the Great's (336-323 B.C.) conquest and lasting about eight hundred years (300 B.C.-A.D. 500). It was not just a simplified, classical Greek, but in many ways a newer form of Greek that became the second language of the ancient near east and Mediterranean world.

The Greek of the New Testament was unique in some ways because its users, except Luke and the author of Hebrews, probably used Aramaic as their primary language. Therefore, their writing was influenced by the idioms and structural forms of Aramaic. Also, they read and quoted the Septuagint (Greek translation of the OT) which was also written in Koine Greek. But the Septuagint was also written by Jewish scholars whose mother tongue was not Greek.

This serves as a reminder that we cannot push the New Testament into a tight grammatical structure. It is unique and yet has much in common with (1) the Septuagint; (2) Jewish writings such as those of Josephus; and (3) the papyri found in Egypt. How then do we approach a grammatical analysis of the New Testament?

The grammatical features of Koine Greek and New Testament Koine Greek are fluid. In many ways it was a time of simplification of grammar. Context will be our major guide. Words only have meaning in a larger context, therefore, grammatical structure can only be understood in light of (1) a particular author's style; and (2) a particular context. No conclusive definitions of Greek forms and structures are possible.

Koine Greek was primarily a verbal language. Often the key to interpretation is the type and form of the verbals. In most main clauses the verb will occur first, showing its preeminence. In analyzing the Greek verb three pieces of information must be noted: (1) the basic emphasis of the tense, voice and mood (accidence or morphology); (2) the basic meaning of the particular verb (lexicography); and (3) the flow of the context (syntax).

#### I. TENSE

- A. Tense or aspect involves the relationship of the verbs to completed action or incomplete action. This is often called "perfective" and "imperfective."
  - 1. Perfective tenses focus on the occurrence of an action. No further information is given except that something happened! Its start, continuation or culmination is not addressed.
  - 2. Imperfective tenses focus on the continuing process of an action. It can be described in terms of linear action, durative action, progressive action, etc.
  
- B. Tenses can be categorized by how the author sees the action as progressing
  - 1. It occurred = AORIST
  - 2. It occurred and the results abide = PERFECT
  - 3. It was occurring in the past and the results were abiding, but not now = PLUPERFECT
  - 4. It is occurring = PRESENT
  - 5. It was occurring = IMPERFECT

## 6. It will occur = FUTURE

A concrete example of how these tenses help in interpretation would be the term “save.” It was used in several different tenses to show both its process and culmination:

1. AORIST - “saved” (cf. Rom. 8:24)
2. PERFECT - “have been saved and the result continues” (cf. Eph. 2:5,8)
3. PRESENT - “being saved” (cf. I Cor. 1:18; 15:2)
4. FUTURE - “shall be saved” (cf. Rom. 5:9, 10; 10:9)

C. In focusing on verb tenses, interpreters look for the reason the original author chose to express himself in a certain tense. The standard “no frills” tense was the AORIST. It was the regular “unspecific,” “unmarked,” or “unflagged” verb form. It can be used in a wide variety of ways which the context must specify. It simply was stating that something occurred. The past time aspect is only intended in the INDICATIVE MOOD. If any other tense was used, something more specific was being emphasized. But what?

1. PERFECT TENSE. This speaks of a completed action with abiding results. In some ways it was a combination of the AORIST and PRESENT TENSES. Usually the focus is on the abiding results or the completion of an act (example: Eph. 2:5 & 8, “you have been and continue to be saved”).
2. PLUPERFECT TENSE. This was like the PERFECT except the abiding results have ceased. Example: John 18:16 “Peter was standing at the door outside.”
3. PRESENT TENSE. This speaks of an incomplete or imperfect action. The focus is usually on the continuation of the event. Example: I John 3:6 & 9, “Everyone abiding in Him does not continue sinning.” “Everyone having been begotten of God does not continue to commit sin.”
4. IMPERFECT TENSE. In this tense the relationship to the PRESENT TENSE is analogous to the relationship between the PERFECT and the PLUPERFECT. The IMPERFECT speaks of incomplete action that was occurring but has now ceased or the beginning of an action in the past. Example: Matt. 3:5, “then all Jerusalem were continuing to go out to him” or “then all Jerusalem began to go out to him.”
5. FUTURE TENSE. This speaks of an action that was usually projected into a future time frame. It focused on the potential for an occurrence rather than an actual occurrence. It often speaks of the certainty of the event. Example: Matt. 5:4-9, “Blessed are...they will....”

## II. VOICE

- A. Voice describes the relationship between the action of the verb and its subject.
- B. ACTIVE VOICE was the normal, expected, unemphasized way to assert that the subject was performing the action of the verb.
- C. The PASSIVE VOICE means that the subject was receiving the action of the verb produced by an outside agent. The outside agent producing the action was indicated in the Greek NT by the following prepositions and cases:
  1. a personal direct agent by *hupo* with the ABLATIVE CASE (cf. Matt.1:22; Acts 22:30).
  2. a personal intermediate agent by *dia* with the ABLATIVE CASE (cf. Matt. 1:22).
  3. an impersonal agent usually by *en* with the INSTRUMENTAL CASE.
  4. sometimes either a personal or impersonal agent by the INSTRUMENTAL CASE alone.
- D. The MIDDLE VOICE means that the subject produces the action of the verb and is also directly involved in the action of the verb. It is often called the voice of heightened personal interest. This

construction emphasized the subject of the clause or sentence in some way. This construction is not found in English. It has a wide possibility of meanings and translations in Greek. Some examples of the form are:

1. REFLEXIVE - the direct action of the subject on itself. Example: Matt. 27:5 “hanged himself.”
2. INTENSIVE - the subject produces the action for itself. Example: II Cor. 11:14 “Satan himself masquerades as an angel of light.”
3. RECIPROCAL - the interplay of two subjects. Example: Matt. 26:4 “they counseled with one another.”

### III. MOOD (or “MODE”)

- A. There are four moods in Koine Greek. They indicate the relation of the verb to reality, at least within the author’s own mind. The moods are divided into two broad categories: that which indicated reality (INDICATIVE) and that which indicated potentiality (SUBJUNCTIVE, IMPERATIVE and OPTATIVE).
- B. The INDICATIVE MOOD was the normal mood for expressing action that had occurred or was occurring, at least in the author’s mind. It was the only Greek mood that expressed a definite time, and even here this aspect was secondary.
- C. The SUBJUNCTIVE MOOD expressed probable future action. Something had not yet happened but the chances were likely that it would. It had much in common with the FUTURE INDICATIVE. The difference was that the SUBJUNCTIVE expresses some degree of doubt. In English this is often expressed by the terms “could,” “would,” “may,” or “might.”
- D. The OPTATIVE MOOD expressed a wish which was theoretically possible. It was considered one step further from reality than the SUBJUNCTIVE. The OPTATIVE expressed possibility under certain conditions. The OPTATIVE was rare in the New Testament. Its most frequent usage is Paul’s famous phrase, “May it never be” (KJV, “God forbid”), used fifteen times (cf. Rom. 3:4, 6, 31; 6:2, 15; 7:7, 13; 9:14; 11:1, 11; I Cor. 6:15; Gal. 2:17; 3:21; 6:14). Other examples are found in Luke 1:38, 20:16, Acts 8:20, and I Thess. 3:11.
- E. The IMPERATIVE MOOD emphasized a command which was possible, but the emphasis was on the intent of the speaker. It asserted only volitional possibility and was conditioned on the choices of another. There was a special use of the IMPERATIVE in prayers and 3rd person requests. These commands were found only in the PRESENT and AORIST tenses in the NT.
- F. Some grammars categorize PARTICIPLES as another type of mood. They are very common in the Greek NT, usually defined as verbal adjectives. They are translated in conjunction with the main verb to which they relate. A wide variety was possible in translating participles. It is best to consult several English translations. *The Bible in Twenty Six Translations* published by Baker is a great help here.
- G. The AORIST ACTIVE INDICATIVE was the normal or “unmarked” way to record an occurrence. Any other tense, voice or mood had some specific interpretive significance that the original author wanted to communicate.

IV. For the person not familiar with Greek the following study aids will provide the needed information:

- A. Friberg, Barbara and Timothy. *Analytical Greek New Testament*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1988.
- B. Marshall, Alfred. *Interlinear Greek-English New Testament*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1976.
- C. Mounce, William D. *The Analytical Lexicon to the Greek New Testament*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1993.
- D. Summers, Ray. *Essentials of New Testament Greek*. Nashville: Broadman, 1950.
- E. Academically accredited Koine Greek correspondence courses are available through Moody Bible Institute in Chicago, IL.

## V. NOUNS

- A. Syntactically, nouns are classified by case. Case was that inflected form of a noun that showed its relationship to the verb and other parts of the sentence. In Koine Greek many of the case functions were indicated by prepositions. Since the case form was able to identify several different relationships, the prepositions developed to give clearer separation to these possible functions.
- B. Greek cases are categorized in the following eight ways:
  - 1. The **NOMINATIVE CASE** was used for naming and it usually was the subject of the sentence or clause. It was also used for predicate nouns and adjectives with the linking verbs “to be” or “become.”
  - 2. The **GENITIVE CASE** was used for description and usually assigned an attribute or quality to the word to which it was related. It answered the question, “What kind?” It was often expressed by the use of the English preposition “of.”
  - 3. The **ABLATIVE CASE** used the same inflected form as the **GENITIVE**, but it was used to describe separation. It usually denoted separation from a point in time, space, source, origin or degree. It was often expressed by the use of the English preposition “from.”
  - 4. The **DATIVE CASE** was used to describe personal interest. This could denote a positive or negative aspect. Often this was the indirect object. It was often expressed by the English preposition “to.”
  - 5. The **LOCATIVE CASE** was the same inflected form as the **DATIVE**, but it described position or location in space, time or logical limits. It was often expressed by the English prepositions “in, on, at, among, during, by, upon, and beside.”
  - 6. The **INSTRUMENTAL CASE** was the same inflected form as the **DATIVE** and **LOCATIVE** cases. It expressed means or association. It was often expressed by the English prepositions, “by” or “with.”
  - 7. The **ACCUSATIVE CASE** was used to describe the conclusion of an action. It expressed limitation. Its main use was the direct object. It answered the question, “How far?” or “To what extent?”
  - 8. The **VOCATIVE CASE** was used for direct address.

## VI. CONJUNCTIONS AND CONNECTORS

- A. Greek is a very precise language because it has so many connectives. They connect thoughts (clauses, sentences, and paragraphs). They are so common that their absence (asyndeton) is often

exegetically significant. As a matter of fact, these conjunctions and connectors show the direction of the author's thought. They often are crucial in determining what exactly he is trying to communicate.

B. Here is a list of some of the conjunctions and connectors and their meanings (this information has been gleaned mostly from H. E. Dana and Julius K. Mantey's *A Manual Grammar of the Greek New Testament*).

1. Time connectors

- a. *epei, epeidē, hopote, hōs, hote, hotan* (subj.) - "when"
- b. *heōs* - "while"
- c. *hotan, epan* (subj.) - "whenever"
- d. *heōs, achri, mechri* (subj.) - "until"
- e. *priv* (infin.) - "before"
- f. *hōs* - "since," "when," "as"

2. Logical connectors

a. Purpose

- (1) *hina* (subj.), *hopōs* (subj.), *hōs* - "in order that," "that"
- (2) *hōste* (articular accusative infinitive) - "that"
- (3) *pros* (articular accusative infinitive) or *eis* (articular accusative infinitive) - "that"

b. Result (there is a close association between the grammatical forms of purpose and result)

- (1) *hōste* (infinitive, this is the most common) - "in order that," "thus"
- (2) *hiva* (subj.) - "so that"
- (3) *ara* - "so"

c. Causal or reason

- (1) *gar* (cause/effect or reason/conclusion) - "for," "because"
- (2) *dioti, hotiy* - "because"
- (3) *epei, epeidē, hōs* - "since"
- (4) *dia* (with accusative) and (with articular infin.) - "because"

d. Inferential

- (1) *ara, poinun, hōste* - "therefore"
- (2) *dio* (strongest inferential conjunction) - "on which account," "wherefore," "therefore"
- (3) *oun* - "therefore," "so," "then," "consequently"
- (4) *toinoun* - "accordingly"

e. Adversative or contrast

- (1) *alla* (strong adversative) - "but," "except"
- (2) *de* - "but," "however," "yet," "on the other hand"
- (3) *kai* - "but"
- (4) *mentoi, oun* - "however"
- (5) *plēn* - "never-the-less" (mostly in Luke)
- (6) *oun* - "however"

f. Comparison

- (1) *hōs, kathōs* (introduce comparative clauses)
- (2) *kata* (in compounds, *katho, kathoti, kathōsper, kathaper*)
- (3) *hosos* (in Hebrews)
- (4) *ē* - "than"

g. Continuative or series

- (1) *de* - "and," "now"
- (2) *kai* - "and"
- (3) *tei* - "and"

(4) *hina, oun* - “that”

(5) *oun* - “then” (in John)

3. Emphatic usages
  - a. *alla* - “certainty,” “yea,” “in fact”
  - b. *ara* - “indeed,” “certainly,” “really”
  - c. *gar* - “but really,” “certainly,” “indeed”
  - d. *de* - “indeed”
  - e. *ean* - “even”
  - f. *kai* - “even,” “indeed,” “really”
  - g. *mentoi* - “indeed”
  - h. *oun* - “really,” “by all means”

## VII. CONDITIONAL SENTENCES

- A. A **CONDITIONAL SENTENCE** is one that contains one or more conditional clauses. This grammatical structure aids interpretation because it provides the conditions, reasons or causes why the action of the main verb does or does not occur. There were four types of conditional sentences. They move from that which was assumed to be true from the author’s perspective or for his purpose to that which was only a wish.
- B. The **FIRST CLASS CONDITIONAL SENTENCE** expressed action or being which was assumed to be true from the writer’s perspective or for his purposes even though it was expressed with an “if.” In several contexts it could be translated “since” (cf. Matt. 4:3; Rom. 8:31). However, this does not mean to imply that all **FIRST CLASSES** are true to reality. Often they were used to make a point in an argument or to highlight a fallacy (cf. Matt. 12:27).
- C. The **SECOND CLASS CONDITIONAL SENTENCE** is often called “contrary to fact.” It states something that was untrue to reality to make a point. Examples:
  1. “If He were really a prophet which He is not, He would know who and of what character the woman is who is clinging to Him, but He does not” (Luke 7:39)
  2. “If you really believed Moses, which you do not, you would believe me, which you do not” (John 5:46)
  3. “If I were still trying to be pleasing to men, which I am not, I would not be a slave of Christ at all, which I am” (Gal. 1:10)
- D. The **THIRD CLASS** speaks of possible future action. It often assumes the probability of that action. It usually implies a contingency. The action of the main verb is contingent on the action in the “if” clause. Examples from I John: 1:6-10; 2:4,6,9,15,20,21,24,29; 3:21; 4:20; 5:14,16.
- E. The **FOURTH CLASS** is the farthest removed from possibility. It is rare in the NT. As a matter of fact, there is no complete **FOURTH CLASS CONDITIONAL SENTENCE** in which both parts of the condition fit the definition. An example of a partial **FOURTH CLASS** is the opening clause in I Pet. 3:14. An example of a partial **FOURTH CLASS** is the concluding clause in Acts 8:31.

## VIII. PROHIBITIONS

- A. The **PRESENT IMPERATIVE** with the **NEGATIVE PARTICLE** often (but not exclusively) has the emphasis of stopping an act already in process. Examples: “stop storing up your riches on earth” (Matt. 6:19); “stop worrying about your life. . .” (Matt. 6:25); “stop offering to sin the parts of your

bodies as instruments of wrongdoing. . .” (Rom. 6:13); “you must stop offending the Holy Spirit of God. . .” (Eph. 4:30); and “stop getting drunk on wine. . .” (5:18).

- B. The AORIST SUBJUNCTIVE with MĒ PARTICLE has the emphasis of “do not even begin or start an act.” Example: “Do not even begin to suppose that. . .” (Matt. 5:17); “never start to worry. . .” (Matt. 6:31); “you must never be ashamed. . .” (II Tim. 1:8).
- C. The DOUBLE NEGATIVE with the SUBJUNCTIVE MOOD is a very emphatic negation. “Never, no never” or “not under any circumstance.” Examples: “he will never, no never experience death” (John 8:51); “I will never, no, never. . .” (I Cor. 8:13).

## IX. THE ARTICLE

- A. In Koine Greek the definite article “the” had a use similar to English. Its basic function was that of “a pointer,” a way to draw attention to a word, name or phrase. The use varies from author to author in the New Testament. The definite article could also function
  - 1. as a contrasting device like a demonstrative pronoun;
  - 2. as a sign to refer to a previously introduced subject or person;
  - 3. as a way to identify the subject in a sentence with a linking verb. Examples: “God is Spirit” (John 4:24); “God is light” (I John 1:5); “God is love” (4:8,16).
- B. Koine Greek did not have an indefinite article like the English “a” or “an.” The absence of the definite article could mean
  - 1. a focus on the characteristics or quality of something;
  - 2. a focus on the category of something.
- C. The NT authors varied widely as to how the article was employed.

## X. WAYS OF SHOWING EMPHASIS IN THE GREEK NEW TESTAMENT

- A. The techniques for showing emphasis vary from author to author in the New Testament. The most consistent and formal writers were Luke and the author of Hebrews.
- B. We have stated earlier that the AORIST ACTIVE INDICATIVE was standard and unmarked for emphasis, but any other tense, voice or mood had interpretive significance. This is not to imply that the AORIST ACTIVE INDICATIVE was not often used in a significant grammatical sense. (Example: Rom. 6:10 [twice]).
- C. Word order in Koine Greek
  - 1. Koine Greek was an inflected language which was not dependent, like English, on word order. Therefore, the author could vary the normal expected order to show
    - a. what the author wanted to emphasize to the reader;
    - b. what the author thought would be surprising to the reader;
    - c. what the author felt deeply about.
  - 2. The normal word order in Greek is still an unsettled issue. However, the supposed normal order is:
    - a. for linking verbs
      - (1) verb
      - (2) subject

- (3) complement
  - b. for transitive verbs
    - (1) verb
    - (2) subject
    - (3) object
    - (4) indirect object
    - (5) prepositional phrase
  - c. for noun phrases
    - (1) noun
    - (2) modifier
    - (3) prepositional phrase
  - 3. Word order can be an extremely important exegetical point. Examples:
    - a. “right hand they gave to me and Barnabas of fellowship.” The phrase “right hand of fellowship” is split and fronted to show its significance (Gal. 2:9).
    - b. “with Christ” was placed first. His death was central (Gal. 2:20).
    - c. “It was bit by bit and in many different ways” (Heb. 1:1) was placed first. It was how God revealed Himself that was being contrasted, not the fact of revelation.
- D. Usually some degree of emphasis was shown by
1. The repetition of the pronoun which was already present in the verb’s inflected form. Example: “I, myself, will surely be with you. . .” (Matt. 28:20).
  2. The absence of an expected conjunction, or other connecting device between words, phrases, clauses or sentences. This is called an asyndeton (“not bound”). The connecting device was expected, so its absence would draw attention. Examples:
    - a. The Beatitudes, Matt. 5:3ff (emphasized the list)
    - b. John 14:1 (new topic)
    - c. Romans 9:1 (new section)
    - d. II Cor. 12:20 (emphasize the list)
  3. The repetition of words or phrases present in a given context. Examples: “to the praise of His glory” (Eph. 1:6, 12 & 14). This phrase was used to show the work of each person of the Trinity.
  4. The use of an idiom or word (sound) play between terms
    - a. euphemisms - substitute words for taboo subjects, like “sleep” for death (John 11:11-14) or “feet” for male genitalia (Ruth 3:7-8; I Sam. 24:3).
    - b. circumlocutions - substitute words for God’s name, like “Kingdom of heaven” (Matt. 3:21) or “a voice from heaven” (Matt. 3:17).
    - c. figures of speech
      - (1) impossible exaggerations (Matt. 3:9; 5:29-30; 19:24)
      - (2) mild over statements (Matt. 3:5; Acts 2:36)
      - (3) personifications (I Cor. 15:55)
      - (4) irony (Gal. 5:12)
      - (5) poetic passages (Phil. 2:6-11)
      - (6) sound plays between words
        - (a) “church”
          - (i) “church” (Eph. 3:21)
          - (ii) “calling” (Eph. 4:1,4)
          - (iii) “called” (Eph. 4:1,4)
        - (b) “free”
          - (i) “free woman” (Gal. 4:31)
          - (ii) “freedom” (Gal. 5:1)

- (iii) “free” (Gal. 5:1)
- d. idiomatic language - language which is usually cultural and language specific:
  - (1) figurative use of “food.” (John 4:31-34)
  - (2) figurative use of “Temple.” (John 2:19; Matt. 26:61)
  - (3) Hebrew idiom of compassion, “hate.” (Gen. 29:31; Deut. 21:15; Luke 14:36; John 12:25; Rom. 9:13)
  - (4) “All” versus “many.” Compare Isa. 53:6 (“all”) with 53:11 & 12 (“many.”) The terms are synonymous as Rom. 5:18 and 19 show.
- 5. The use of a full linguistic phrase instead of a single word. Example: “The Lord Jesus Christ.”
- 6. The special use of *autos*
  - a. when with the article (attributive position) it was translated “same.”
  - b. when without the article (predicate position) it was translated as an intensive reflexive pronoun—“himself,” “herself” or “itself.”
- E. The non-Greek reading Bible student can identify emphasis in several ways:
  - 1. The use of an analytical lexicon and interlinear Greek/English text.
  - 2. The comparison of English translations, particularly from the differing theories of translations. Example: comparing a “word for word” translation (KJV, NKJV, ASV, NASB, RSV, NRSV) with a “dynamic equivalent” (Williams, NIV, NEB, REB, JB, NJB, TEV). A good help here would be *The Bible in Twenty-Six Translations* published by Baker.
  - 3. The use of *The Emphasized Bible* by Joseph Bryant Rotherham (Kregel, 1994).
  - 4. The use of a very literal translation
    - a. *The American Standard Version* of 1901
    - b. *Young’s Literal Translation of the Bible* by Robert Young (Guardian Press, 1976).

The study of grammar is tedious but necessary for proper interpretation. These brief definitions, comments and examples are meant to encourage and equip non-Greek reading persons to use the grammatical notes provided in this volume. Surely these definitions are oversimplified. They should not be used in a dogmatic, inflexible manner, but as stepping stones toward a greater understanding of New Testament syntax. Hopefully these definitions will also enable readers to understand the comments of other study aids such as technical commentaries on the New Testament.

We must be able to verify our interpretation based on items of information found in the texts of the Bible. Grammar is one of the most helpful of these items; other items would include historical setting, literary context, contemporary word usage, and parallel passages.

## APPENDIX TWO

### TEXTUAL CRITICISM

This subject will be dealt with in such a way as to explain the textual notes found in this commentary. The following outline will be utilized

- I. The textual sources of our English Bible
  - A. Old Testament
  - B. New Testament
- II. Brief explanation of the problems and theories of “lower criticism” also called “textual criticism.”
- III. Suggested sources for further reading

#### I. The textual sources of our English Bible

##### A. Old Testament

1. Masoretic text (MT) - The Hebrew consonantal text was set by Rabbi Aquiba in A.D. 100. The vowel points, accents, marginal notes, punctuation and apparatus points started being added in the sixth century A.D. and were finished in the ninth century A.D. It was done by a family of Jewish scholars known as the Masoretes. The textual form they used was the same as the one in the Mishnah, Talmud, Targums, Peshitta, and Vulgate.
2. Septuagint (LXX) - Tradition says the Septuagint was produced by 70 Jewish scholars in 70 days for the Alexandria library under the sponsorship of King Ptolemy II (285-246 B.C.) The translation was supposedly requested by a Jewish leader living in Alexandria. This tradition comes from “Letter of Aristeas.” The LXX frequently was based on a differing Hebrew textual tradition from the text of Rabbi Aquiba (MT).
3. Dead Sea Scrolls (DSS) - The Dead Sea Scrolls were written in the Roman B.C. period (200 B.C. to A.D. 70) by a sect of Jewish separatists called the “Essenes.” The Hebrew manuscripts, found in several sites around the Dead Sea, show a somewhat different Hebrew textual family behind both the MT and the LXX.
4. Some specific examples of how the comparison of these texts have helped interpreters understand the Old Testament
  - a. The LXX has helped translators and scholars understand the MT
    - (1) the LXX of Isa. 52:14, “As many shall be amazed at him.”
    - (2) the MT of Isa. 52:14, “Just as many were astonished over you.”
    - (3) in Isa. 52:15 the pronoun distinction of the LXX is confirmed
      - (a) LXX, “so will many nations marvel at him”
      - (b) MT, “so he sprinkles many nations”
  - b. The DSS have helped translators and scholars understand the MT
    - (1) the DSS of Isa. 21:8, “then the seer cried, Upon a watchtower I stand. . .”
    - (2) the MT of Isa. 21:8, “and I cried a lion! My Lord, I always stand on the watch tower by day. . .”
  - c. Both the LXX and DSS have helped clarify Isa. 53:11
    - (1) LXX & DSS, “after the travail of his soul he will see light, he will be satisfied”
    - (2) MT, “he shall see. . .of the travail of his soul, He shall be satisfied”

## B. New Testament

1. Over 5,300 manuscripts of all or parts of the Greek New Testament are extant. About 85 are written on papyri and 268 are written in all capital letters (uncials). Later, about the ninth century A.D., a running script (minuscule) was developed. The Greek manuscripts in written form number about 2,700. We also have about 2,100 copies of lists of Scripture texts used in worship that we call lectionaries.
2. About 85 Greek manuscripts containing parts of the New Testament written on papyrus are housed in museums. Some are dated from the second century A.D., but most are from the third and fourth centuries A.D. None of these MSS contain the whole New Testament. Just because these are the oldest copies of the New Testament does not automatically mean they have fewer variants. Many of these were copied rapidly for a local use. Care was not exercised in the process. Therefore, they contain many variants.
3. Codex Sinaiticus, known by the Hebrew letter א (*aleph*) or (01), was found at St. Catherine's monastery on Mt. Sinai by Tischendorf. It dates from the fourth century A.D. and contains both the LXX of the OT and the Greek NT. It is of "the Alexandrian Text" type.
4. Codex Alexandrinus, known as "A" or (02), is a fifth century Greek manuscript which was found in Alexandria, Egypt.
5. Codex Vaticanus, known as "B" or (03), was found in the Vatican's library in Rome and dates from the middle of the fourth century A.D. It contains both LXX of the Old Testament and Greek New Testament. It is of "the Alexandrian Text" type.
6. Codex Ephraemi, known as "C" or (04), is a fifth century Greek manuscript which was partially destroyed.
7. Codex Bezae, known as "D" or (05), is a fifth or sixth century Greek manuscript. It is the chief representative of what is called "The Western Text." It contains many additions and was the main Greek witness for the King James translation.
8. The NT MSS can be grouped into three, possibly four, families that share certain characteristics.
  - a. Alexandrian text from Egypt
    - (1) P<sup>75</sup>, P<sup>66</sup> (about A.D. 200), which record the Gospels
    - (2) P<sup>46</sup> (about A.D. 225), which records Paul's letters
    - (3) P<sup>72</sup> (about A.D. 225-250), which records Peter and Jude
    - (4) Codex B, called Vaticanus (about A.D. 325), which includes the whole OT and NT
    - (5) Origen quotes from this text type
    - (6) other MSS which show this text type are א, C, L, W, 33
  - b. Western text from North Africa
    - (1) quotes from North African church fathers, Tertullian, Cyprian, and the Old Latin translation
    - (2) quotes from Irenaeus
    - (3) quotes from Tatian and Old Syriac translation
    - (4) Codex D "Bezae" follow this text type
  - c. Eastern Byzantine text from Constantinople
    - (1) this text type is reflected in over 80% of the 5,300 MSS
    - (2) quoted by Antioch of Syria's church fathers, Cappadoceans, Chrysostom, and Therodoret
    - (3) Codex A, in the Gospels only
    - (4) Codex E (eighth century) for full NT
  - d. the fourth possible type is "Caesarean" from Palestine
    - (1) it is primarily seen only in Mark
    - (2) some witnesses to it are P<sup>45</sup> and W

## II. Brief explanation of the problems and theories of “lower criticism” or “textual criticism.”

### A. How the variants occurred

1. inadvertent or accidental (vast majority of occurrences)
  - a. slip of the eye in hand copying which reads the second instance of two similar words and, thereby, omits all of the words in between (homoioteleuton)
    - (1) slip of the eye in omitting a double letter word or phrase (haplography)
    - (2) slip of the mind in repeating a phrase or line of a Greek text (dittography)
  - b. slip of the ear in hand copying by oral dictation where a misspelling occurs (itacism). Often the misspelling implies or spells a similar sounding Greek word.
  - c. the earliest Greek texts had no chapter or verse divisions, little or no punctuation and no division between words. It is possible to divide the letters in different places forming different words.
2. intentional
  - a. changes were made to improve the grammatical form of the text copied
  - b. changes were made to bring the text into conformity with other biblical texts (harmonization of parallels)
  - c. changes were made by combining two or more variant readings into one long combined text (conflation)
  - d. changes were made to correct a perceived problem in the text (cf. I Cor. 11:27 and I John 5:7-8)
  - e. some additional information as to the historical setting or proper interpretation of the text was placed in the margin by one scribe but placed into the text by a second scribe (cf. John 5:4)

### B. The basic tenets of textual criticism (logical guidelines for determining the original reading of a text when variants exist)

1. the most awkward or grammatically unusual text is probably the original
2. the shortest text is probably the original
3. the older text is given more weight because of its historical proximity to the original, everything else being equal
4. MSS that are geographically diverse usually have the original reading
5. doctrinally weaker texts, especially those relating to major theological discussions of the period of manuscript changes like the Trinity in I John 5:7-8, are to be preferred.
6. the text that can best explain the origin of the other variants
7. two quotes that help show the balance in these troubling variants
  - a. J. Harold Greenlee’s book, *Introduction to New Testament Textual Criticism*, p. 68:  
“No Christian doctrine hangs upon a debatable text; and the student of the NT must beware of wanting his text to be more orthodox or doctrinally stronger than is the inspired original.”
  - b. W. A. Criswell told Greg Garrison of *The Birmingham News* that he (Criswell) doesn’t believe every word in the Bible is inspired, “at least not every word that has been given to the modern public by centuries of translators.” Criswell said: “I very much am a believer in the textual criticism. As such, I think, the last half of the 16th chapter of Mark is heresy: it’s not inspired, it’s just concocted...When you compare those manuscripts way back yonder, there was no such thing as that conclusion of the Book of Mark. Somebody added it...”

The patriarch of the SBC inerrantists also claimed that “interpolation” is also evident in John 5, the account of Jesus at the pool of Bethesda. And he discusses the two different accounts of the suicide of Judas (cf. Matt. 27 and Acts 1): “It’s just a different view of the suicide,” Criswell said. “If it is in the Bible, there is an explanation for it. And the two

accounts of the suicide of Judas are in the Bible.” Criswell added, “Textual criticism is a wonderful science in itself. It is not ephemeral, it’s not impertinent. It’s dynamic and central...”

### III. Manuscript problems (textual criticism)

#### A. Suggested sources for further reading

1. *Biblical Criticism: Historical, Literary and Textual*, by R.H. Harrison
2. *The Text of the New Testament: Its Transmission, Corruption and Restoration* by Bruce M. Metzger
3. *Introduction to New Testament Textual Criticism*, by J. H Greenlee

## APPENDIX THREE

### GLOSSARY

**Adoptionists.** This was one of the early views of Jesus' relation to deity. It basically asserted that Jesus was a normal human in every way and was adopted in a special sense by God at his baptism (cf. Matt. 3:17; Mk. 1:11) or at His resurrection (cf. Rom. 1:4). Jesus lived such an exemplary life that God, at some point, (baptism, resurrection) adopted Him as His "son" (cf. Rom. 1:4; Phi. 2:9). This was an early church and eighth century minority view. Instead of God becoming a man (the Incarnation) it reverses this and now man becomes God!

It is difficult to verbalize how Jesus, God the Son, pre-existent deity, was rewarded or extolled for an exemplary life. If He was already God, how could He be rewarded? If He had pre-existent divine glory how could He be honored more? Although it is hard for us to comprehend, the Father somehow honored Jesus in a special sense for His perfect fulfillment of the Father's will.

**Alexandrian School.** This method of biblical interpretation was developed in Alexandria, Egypt in the second century A.D. It uses the basic interpretive principles of Philo who was a follower of Plato. It is often called the allegorical method. It held sway in the church until the time of the Reformation. Its most able proponents were Origen and Augustine. (See Moises Silva, *Has The Church Misread The Bible?* Academic, 1987)

**Alexandrinus.** This Greek manuscript of the fifth century A.D. from Alexandria, Egypt, includes the Old Testament, Apocrypha, and most of the New Testament. It is one of our major witnesses to the entire Greek New Testament (except parts of Matthew, John, and II Corinthians). When this manuscript, which is designated "A," and the manuscript designated "B" (Vaticanus) agree on a reading, it is considered to be original by most scholars in most instances.

**Allegory.** It is a type of biblical interpretation which developed originally within Alexandrian Judaism. It was popularized by Philo of Alexandria. Its basic thrust is the desire to make the Scripture relevant to one's culture or philosophical system by ignoring the Bible's historical setting and/or literary context. It seeks a hidden or spiritual meaning behind every text of Scripture. It must be admitted that Jesus, in Matthew 13, and Paul, in Galatians 4, rarely used allegory to communicate truth. This, however, was in the form of typology, not strictly allegory.

**Analytical lexicon.** This is a type of research tool which allows one to identify every Greek form in the New Testament. It is a compilation, in Greek alphabetical order, of forms and basic definitions. In combination with an interlinear translation, it allows non-Greek reading believers to analyze New Testament Greek grammatical and syntactic forms.

**Analogy of Scripture.** This is the phrase used to describe the view that all of the Bible is inspired by God and is, therefore, not contradictory but complementary. This presuppositional affirmation is the basis for the use of parallel passages in interpreting a biblical text.

**Ambiguity.** This refers to the uncertainty that results in a written document when there are two or more possible meanings or when two or more things are being referred to at the same time. It is possible that John uses purposeful ambiguity (double entendres).

**Anthropomorphic.** Meaning, “having characteristics associated with human beings,” this term is used to describe our religious language about God. It comes from the Greek term for mankind. It means that we speak about God as if He were a man. God is described in physical, sociological, and psychological terms which relate to human beings (cf. Gen. 3:8; I Kgs. 22:19-23). This, of course, is only an analogy. However, there are no categories or terms other than human ones for us to use. Therefore, our knowledge of God, though true, is limited.

**Antiochian School.** This method of biblical interpretation was developed in Antioch, Syria, in the third century A.D. as a reaction to the allegorical method of Alexandria, Egypt. Its basic thrust was to focus on the historical meaning of the Bible. It interpreted the Bible as normal, human literature. This school became involved in the controversy over whether Christ had two natures (Nestorianism) or one nature (fully God and fully man). It was labeled heretical by the Roman Catholic Church and relocated to Persia but it had little significance. Its basic hermeneutical principles later became interpretive principles of the Classical Protestant Reformers (Luther and Calvin).

**Antithetical.** This is one of three descriptive terms used to denote the relationship between lines of Hebrew poetry. It relates to lines of poetry which are opposite in meaning (cf. Prov. 10:1, 15:1).

**Apocalyptic literature.** This was a predominantly, possibly even uniquely, a Jewish genre. It was a cryptic type of writing used in times of invasion and occupation of the Jews by foreign world powers. It assumes the biblical world view that a personal, redemptive God created and controls world events, and that Israel is of special interest and care to Him. This literature promises ultimate victory through God’s special effort.

It is highly symbolic, fanciful with many cryptic terms. It often expressed truth in colors, numbers, visions, dreams, angelic mediation, secret code words and often a sharp dualism between good and evil.

Some examples of this genre are: (1) in the OT, Ezekiel (chapters 36-48), Daniel (chapters 7-12), Zechariah; and (2) in the NT, Matt.24; Mark 13; II Thes. 2 and Revelation.

**Apologist (Apologetics).** This is from the Greek root for “legal defense.” This is a specific discipline within theology which seeks to give evidence and rational arguments for the Christian faith.

**A priori.** This is basically synonymous with the term “presupposition.” It involves reasoning from previously accepted definitions, principles or positions which are assumed to be true. It is that which is accepted without examination or analysis.

**Arianism.** Arius was a presbyter in the church at Alexandria Egypt in the third and early fourth century. He affirmed that Jesus was pre-existent but not divine (not of the same essence as the Father) possibly following Proverbs 8:22-31. He was challenged by the bishop of Alexandria who started (A.D. 318) a controversy which lasted many years. Arianism became the official creed of the Eastern Church. The Council of Nicaea in A.D. 325 condemned Arius and asserted the full equality and deity of the Son.

**Aristotle.** He was one of the philosophers of ancient Greece, a pupil of Plato and teacher of Alexander the Great. His influence, even today, reaches into many areas of modern studies. This is because he emphasized knowledge through observation and classification. This is one of the tenets of the scientific method.

**Autographs.** This is the name given to the original writings of the Bible. These original, handwritten manuscripts have all been lost. Only copies of copies remain. This is the source of many of the textual variants in the Hebrew and Greek manuscripts and ancient versions.

**Bezae.** This is a Greek and Latin manuscript of the sixth century A.D. It is designated by “D.” It contains the Gospels and Acts and some of the General Epistles. It is characterized by numerous scribal additions. It forms the basis for the “Textus Receptus” which is the major Greek manuscript tradition behind the King James Version.

**Bias.** This is the term used to describe a strong predisposition toward an object or point of view. It is the mindset in which impartiality is impossible regarding a particular object or point of view. It is a prejudiced position.

**Biblical Authority.** This term is used in a very specialized sense. It is defined as understanding what the original author said to his day and applying this truth to our day. Biblical authority is usually defined as viewing the Bible itself as our only authoritative guide. However, in light of current, improper interpretations, I have limited the concept to the Bible as interpreted by the tenets of the historical-grammatical method.

**Canon.** This is a term used to describe the writings which make up the Bible which are believed to be uniquely inspired. It is used regarding both the Old and New Testament Scriptures.

**Christocentric.** This is a term used to describe the centrality of Jesus. It is used by this author in connection with the concept that Jesus is Lord of all the Bible. The Old Testament points toward Him and He is its fulfillment and goal (cf. Matt. 5:17-48).

**Commentary.** This is a specialized type of research book. It gives the general background of a biblical book. It then tries to explain the meaning of each section of the book. Some major on the application aspect while others deal with the text in a more technical way. These books are helpful but should be used after one has done his own preliminary study. The commentator’s interpretations should never be accepted uncritically. Comparing several commentaries from differing theological perspectives is usually helpful.

**Concordance.** This is a type of research tool for Bible study. It lists every occurrence of every word in the Old and New Testaments. It helps in several ways: (1) determining the Hebrew or Greek word which lies behind any particular English word; (2) comparing passages where the same Hebrew or Greek word was used; (3) showing where two different Hebrew or Greek terms are translated by the same English word; (4) showing the frequency of the use of certain words in certain books or authors; (5) helping one find a passage in the Bible (cf. Walter Clark’s *How to Use New Testament Greek Study Aids*, pp. 54-55).

**Dead Sea Scrolls.** This refers to a series of ancient texts written in Hebrew and Aramaic which were found near the Dead Sea in 1947. They were the religious libraries of sectarian Judaism of the first century. The pressure of Roman occupation and the zealot wars of the 60’s caused them to conceal the scrolls in hermetically sealed pottery jars in caves or holes. They have helped us understand the historical setting of first century Palestine and have confirmed the Masoretic Text as being very accurate, at least as far back as the early B.C. era. They are designated by the abbreviation “DSS.”

**Deductive.** This method of logic or reasoning moves from general principles to specific applications by means of reason. It is opposite from inductive reasoning which moves from observed specifics to general conclusions (theories) which reflects the scientific method.

**Dialectical.** This is the method of reasoning whereby that which seems contradictory or paradoxical is held together in a tension, seeking a unified answer which includes both sides of the paradox. Many biblical doctrines have dialectical pairs, predestination—free will; security—perseverance; faith—works; decision—discipleship; Christian freedom—Christian responsibility.

**Diaspora.** This is the technical Greek term used by Palestinian Jews to describe other Jews who live outside the geographical boundaries of the Promised Land.

**Dynamic equivalent.** This is the name of a theory of Bible translation. Bible translation can be viewed as a continuum from “word to word” correspondence, where for every Hebrew or Greek word an English word must be supplied; to a “paraphrase” where only the thought is translated with less regard to the original wording or phrasing. In between these two theories is “the dynamic equivalent” which attempts to take serious the original text but translates it in modern grammatical forms and idioms. A really good discussion of these various theories of translations is found in Fee and Stuart’s *How to Read the Bible For All Its Worth*, p. 35 and in Robert Bratcher’s Introduction to the TEV.

**Eclectic.** This term is used in connection with textual criticism. It refers to the practice of choosing readings from different Greek manuscripts in order to arrive at a text which is supposed to be close to the original autographs. It rejects the view that any one family of Greek manuscripts captures the originals.

**Eisegesis.** This is the opposite of exegesis. If exegesis is a “leading out” of the original author’s intent, this term implies a “leading in” of a foreign idea or opinion.

**Etymology.** This is an aspect of word study that tries to ascertain the original meaning of a word. From this root meaning then specialized usages are more easily identified. In interpretation, etymology is not the main focus, rather the contemporary meaning and usage of a word.

**Exegesis.** This is the technical term for the practice of interpreting a specific passage. It means “to lead out” (of the text) implying that our purpose is to understand the original author’s intent in light of historical setting, literary context, syntax and contemporary word meaning.

**Genre.** This is a French term that denotes different types of literature. The thrust of the term is the division of literary forms into categories which share common characteristics, historical narrative, poetry, proverb, apocalyptic and legislation.

**Gnosticism.** Most of our knowledge of this heresy comes from the gnostic writings of the second century. However, the incipient ideas were present in the first century (and before).

Some stated tenets of Valentian and Cerinthian Gnosticism of the second century: (1) matter and spirit were co-eternal (an ontological dualism). Matter is evil, spirit is good. God, who is spirit, cannot be directly involved with molding evil matter; (2) there are emanations (*eons* or angelic levels) between God and matter. The last or lowest one was YHWH of the OT who formed the universe (*kosmos*); (3) Jesus was an emanation like YHWH but higher on the scale, closer to the true God. Some put Him as the highest but still less than God and certainly not incarnate Deity (cf. John 1:14). Since matter is evil, Jesus could not have a human body and still be Divine. He was a spiritual phantom (cf. I Jn. 1:1-3; 4:1-

6); and (4) salvation was obtained through faith in Jesus plus special knowledge, which is only known by special persons. Knowledge (passwords) was needed to pass through heavenly spheres. Jewish legalism was also required to reach God.

The gnostic false teachers advocated two opposite ethical systems: (1) for some, lifestyle was totally unrelated to salvation. For them, salvation and spirituality were encapsulated into secret knowledge (passwords) through the angelic spheres (*eons*); or (2) for others, lifestyle was crucial to salvation. They emphasized an ascetic lifestyle as an evidence of true spirituality.

**Hermeneutics.** This is the technical term for the principles which guide exegesis. It is both a set of specific guidelines and an art/gift. Biblical, or sacred, hermeneutics is usually divided into two categories: general principles and special principles. These relate to the different types of literature found in the Bible. Each different type (genre) has its own unique guidelines but also shares some common assumptions and procedures of interpretation.

**Higher Criticism.** This is the procedure of biblical interpretation which focuses on the historical setting and literary structure of a particular biblical book.

**Idiom.** This word is used for the phrases found in different cultures which have specialized meaning not connected to the usual meaning of the individual terms. Some modern examples are: “that was awfully good,” or “you just kill me.” The Bible also contains these types of phrases.

**Illumination.** This is the name given to the concept that God has spoken to mankind. The full concept is usually expressed by three terms: (1) revelation—God has acted in human history; (2) inspiration—He has given the proper interpretation of His acts and their meaning to certain chosen men to record for mankind; and (3) illumination—He has given His Spirit to help mankind understand His self-disclosure.

**Inductive.** This is a method of logic or reasoning which moves from the particulars to the whole. It is the empirical method of modern science. This is basically the approach of Aristotle.

**Interlinear.** This is a type of research tool which allows those who do not read a biblical language to be able to analyze its meaning and structure. It places the English translation on a word for word level immediately under the original biblical language. This tool, combined with an “analytical lexicon,” will give the forms and basic definitions of Hebrew and Greek.

**Inspiration.** This is the name given to the concept that God has spoken to mankind by guiding the biblical authors to accurately and clearly record His revelation. The full concept is usually expressed by three terms: (1) revelation—God has acted in human history; (2) inspiration—He has given the proper interpretation of His acts and their meaning to certain chosen men to record for mankind; and (3) illumination—He has given His Spirit to help mankind understand His self-disclosure

**Language of description.** This is used in connection with the idioms in which the Old Testament is written. It speaks of our world in terms of the way things appear to the five senses. It is not a scientific description nor was it meant to be.

**Legalism.** This attitude is characterized by an over-emphasis on rules or ritual. It tends to rely on the human performance of regulations as a means of acceptance by God. It tends to depreciate relationship and elevates performance, both of which are important aspects of the covenantal relationship between a holy God and sinful humanity.

**Literal.** This is another name for the textually-focused and historical method of hermeneutics from Antioch. It means that interpretation involves the normal and obvious meaning of human language although it still recognizes the presence of figurative language.

**Literary genre.** This refers to the distinct forms that human communication can take such as poetry or historical narrative. Each type of literature has its own special hermeneutical procedures in addition to the general principles for all written literature.

**Literary unit.** This refers to the major thought divisions of a biblical book. It can be made up of a few verses, paragraphs or chapters. It is a self-contained unit with a central subject.

**Lower criticism.** See “textual criticism.”

**Manuscript.** This term relates to the different copies of the Greek New Testament. Usually they are divided into the different types by: (1) material on which they are written (papyrus, leather), or (2) the form of the writing itself (all capitals or running script). It is abbreviated by “MS” (singular) or “MSS” (plural).

**Masoretic Text.** This refers to the ninth century A.D. Hebrew manuscripts of the Old Testament produced by generations of Jewish scholars which contain vowel points and other textual notes. It forms the basic text for our English Old Testament. Its text has been historically confirmed by the Hebrew MSS, especially Isaiah, known from the Dead Sea Scrolls. It is abbreviated by “MT.”

**Metonymy.** This is a figure of speech in which the name of one thing is used to represent something else associated with it. As an example, “the kettle is boiling” actually means “the water within the kettle is boiling.”

**Muratorian Fragments.** This is a list of the canonical books of the New Testament. It was written from Rome before A.D. 200. It gives the same twenty-seven books as the Protestant NT. This clearly shows the canon was “practically” set before the major church councils of the fourth century by local churches in different parts of the Roman Empire.

**Natural revelation.** This is one category of God’s self-disclosure to man. It involves the natural order (Rom. 1:19-20) and the moral consciousness (Rom. 2:14-15). It is spoken of in Ps. 19:1-6 and Rom. 1-2. It is distinct from special revelation which is God’s specific self-disclosure in the Bible and supremely in Jesus of Nazareth.

This theological category is being re-emphasized by the “old earth” movement among Christian scientists (e.g. the writings of Hugh Ross). They use this category to assert that all truth is God’s truth. Nature is an open door to knowledge about God, it is different from special revelation (the Bible). It allows modern science the freedom to research the natural order. In my opinion it is a wonderful new opportunity to witness to the modern scientific western world.

**Nestorianism.** Nestorius was the patriarch of Constantinople in the fifth century. He was trained in Antioch of Syria and affirmed that Jesus had two natures, one fully human and one fully divine. This view deviated from the orthodox one nature view of Alexandria. Nestorius’ main concern was the title “mother of God,” given to Mary. Nestorius was opposed by Cyril of Alexandria and, by implication, his own Antiochian training. Antioch was the headquarters of the historical-grammatical-textual

approach to biblical interpretation while Alexandria was the headquarters of the four-fold (allegorical) school of interpretation. Nestorius was ultimately removed from office and exiled.

**Original author.** This refers to the actual authors/writers of Scripture.

**Papyri.** This is a type of writing material from Egypt. It is made from river reeds. It is the material upon which our oldest copies of the Greek New Testament are written.

**Parallel passages.** They are part of the concept that all of the Bible is God-given and, therefore, is its own best interpreter and balancer of paradoxical truths. This is also helpful when one is attempting to interpret an unclear or ambiguous passage. They also help one find the clearest passage on a given subject as well as all other Scriptural aspects of a given subject.

**Paraphrase.** This is the name of a theory of Bible translation. Bible translation can be viewed as a continuum from “word to word” correspondence, where for every Hebrew or Greek word an English word must be supplied; to a “paraphrase” where only the thought is translated with less regard to the original wording or phrasing. In between these two theories is “the dynamic equivalent” which attempts to take serious the original text but translates it in modern grammatical forms and idioms. A really good discussion of these various theories of translations is found in Fee and Stuart’s *How to Read the Bible For All Its Worth*, p. 35.

**Paragraph.** This is the basic interpretive literary unit in prose. It contains one central thought and its development. If we stay with its major thrust we will not major on minors or miss the original author’s intent.

**Parochialism.** This relates to biases which are locked into a local theological/cultural setting. It does not recognize the transcultural nature of biblical truth or its application.

**Paradox.** This refers to those truths which seem to be contradictory, yet both are true, although in tension with each other. They frame truth by presenting it from opposite sides. Much biblical truth is presented in paradoxical pairs. Biblical truths are not isolated stars but are constellations made up of the pattern of stars.

**Plato.** He was one of the philosophers of ancient Greece. His philosophy greatly influenced the early church through the scholars of Alexandria, Egypt, and later, Augustine. He posited that everything on earth was illusionary and a mere copy of a spiritual archetype. Theologians later equated Plato’s “forms/ideas” with the spiritual realm.

**Presupposition.** This refers to our preconceived understanding of a matter. Often we form opinions or judgments about issues before we approach the Scriptures themselves. This predisposition is also known as a bias, an *a priori* position, an assumption, a preunderstanding, or a presupposition.

**Proof-texting.** This is the practice of interpreting Scripture by quoting a verse without regard for its immediate context or larger context in its literary unit. This removes the verses from the original author’s intent and usually involves the attempt to prove a personal opinion while asserting biblical authority.

**Rabbinical Judaism.** This stage of the life of the Jewish people began in Babylonian Exile (586-538 B.C.). As the influence of the Priests and the Temple was removed, local synagogues became the focus of Jewish life. These local centers of Jewish culture, fellowship, worship and Bible study became the focus of the national religious life. In Jesus' day this "religion of the scribes" was parallel to that of the priests. At the fall of Jerusalem in 70 A.D. the scribal form, dominated by the Pharisees, controlled the direction of Jewish religious life. It is characterized by a practical, legalistic interpretation of the Torah as explained in the oral tradition (Talmud).

**Revelation.** This is the name given to the concept that God has spoken to mankind. The full concept is usually expressed by three terms: (1) revelation—God has acted in human history; (2) inspiration—He has given the proper interpretation of His acts and their meaning to certain chosen men to record for mankind; and (3) illumination—He has given His Spirit to help mankind understand His self-disclosure.

**Semantic field.** This refers to the total range of meanings associated with a word. It is basically the different connotations a word has in different contexts.

**Septuagint.** This is the name given to the Greek translation of the Hebrew Old Testament. Tradition says that it was written in seventy days by seventy Jewish scholars for the library of Alexandria, Egypt. The traditional date is around 250 B.C. (in reality it possibly took over one hundred years to complete). This translation is significant because: (1) it gives us an ancient text to compare with the Masoretic Hebrew text; (2) it shows us the state of Jewish interpretation in the third and second century B.C.; (3) it gives us the Jewish Messianic understanding before the rejection of Jesus. Its abbreviation is "LXX."

**Sinaiticus.** This is a Greek manuscript of the fourth century A.D. It was found by the German scholar, Tischendorf, at St. Catherine's monastery on Jebel Musa, the traditional site of Mt. Sinai. This manuscript is designated by the Hebrew "A" called "*aleph*" [א]. It contains both the Old and the entire New Testaments. It is one of our most ancient uncial MSS.

**Spiritualizing.** This term is synonymous with allegorizing in the sense that it removes the historical and literary context of a passage and interprets it on the basis of other criteria.

**Synonymous.** This refers to terms with exact or very similar meanings (although in reality no two words have a complete semantic overlap). They are so closely related that they can replace each other in a sentence without loss of meaning. It is also used to designate one of the three forms of Hebrew poetic parallelism. In this sense it refers to two lines of poetry that express the same truth (cf. Ps. 103:3).

**Syntax.** This is a Greek term which refers to the structure of a sentence. It is synonymous with our "grammar."

**Synthetical.** This is one of the three terms that relates to types of Hebrew poetry. This term speaks of lines of poetry which build on one another in a cumulative sense, sometimes called "climatic" (cf. Ps. 19:7-9).

**Systematic theology.** This is a stage of interpretation which tries to relate the truths of the Bible in a unified and rational manner. It is a logical, rather than mere historical, presentation of Christian theology by categories (God, man, sin, salvation, etc.).

**Talmud.** This is the title for the codification of the Jewish Oral Tradition. The Jews believe it was given orally by God to Moses on Mt. Sinai. In reality it appears to be the collective wisdom of the Jewish

teachers through the years. There are two different written versions of the Talmud, the Babylonian and the shorter, unfinished Palestinian.

**Textual criticism.** This is the study of the manuscripts of the Bible. Textual criticism is necessary because no originals are in existence and the copies differ from each other. It attempts to explain the variations and arrive (as close as possible) to the original wording of the autographs of the Old and New Testaments. It is often called “lower criticism.”

**Textus Receptus.** This designation started with Elzevir’s edition of the Greek NT in 1633 A.D. Basically it is a form of the Greek NT that was produced from a few late Greek manuscripts and Latin versions of Erasmus (1510-1535), Stephanus (1546-1559) and Elzevir (1624-1678). A. T. Robertson in his *An Introduction to the Textual Criticism of the New Testament*, p. 27, says “the Byzantine text is practically the Textus Receptus.” The Byzantine text is the least valuable of the three families of early Greek manuscripts (Western, Alexandrian and Byzantine). It contains the accumulation errors of centuries of hand-copied texts. However, A.T. Robertson also says (p, 21), “the Textus Receptus has preserved for us a substantially accurate text.” This Greek manuscript tradition (especially Erasmus’ third edition of 1522) forms the basis of the King James Version of 1611 A.D.

**Torah.** This is the Hebrew term for “teaching.” It came to be the official title for the writings of Moses (Genesis through Deuteronomy). It is, for the Jews, the most authoritative division of the Hebrew canon.

**Typological.** This is a specialized type of revelation. Usually it involves New Testament truth found in Old Testament passages by means of an analogical symbol. Because of the abuse of this type of interpretation, one should limit its use to specific examples recorded in the New Testament. This category of hermeneutics was a major element of the Alexandrian method.

**Vaticanus.** This is the Greek manuscript of the fourth century A.D. It was found in the Vatican’s library. It originally contained all the Old Testament, Apocrypha and New Testament. However, some parts were lost (Genesis, Psalms, Hebrews, the Pastorals, Philemon and Revelation). It is a very helpful manuscript in determining the original wording of the autographs. It is designated by a capital “B.”

**Vulgate.** This is the name of the Latin translation of Jerome. It became the basic or “common” translation for the Roman Catholic Church. It was done in the 380’s A.D.

**Wisdom literature.** This was a genre of literature common in the ancient near east (and modern world). It basically was an attempt through poetry, proverb or essay to instruct a new generation on guidelines for successful living. It was addressed more to the individual than to corporate society. It did not use allusions to history but was based on life experiences and observation. In the Bible, Job - Song of Songs, assumed the presence and worship of YHWH but this religious world view is not explicit in every human experience every time.

As a genre it stated general truths. However, this genre cannot be used in every specific situation. These are general statements that do not always apply to every individual situation.

These sages dared to ask the hard questions of life. Often they challenged traditional religious views (Job and Ecclesiastes). They form a balance and tension to the easy answers about life’s tragedies.

**World picture and worldview.** These are companion terms. They are both philosophical concepts related to creation. The term “world picture” refers to “the how” of creation while “worldview” relates to “the

Who.” These terms are relevant to the interpretation that Gen. 1-2 deals primarily with the Who, not the how, of creation.

**YHWH.** This is the Covenant name for God in the Old Testament. It is defined in Exod. 3:14. It is the CAUSATIVE form of the Hebrew term “to be.” The Jews were afraid to pronounce the name, lest they take it in vain; therefore, they substituted the Hebrew term *Adonai*, “lord.” This is how this covenant name is translated in English.

## APPENDIX FOUR

### DOCTRINAL STATEMENT

I do not particularly care for statements of faith or creeds. I prefer to affirm the Bible itself. However, I realize that a statement of faith will provide those who are unfamiliar with me a way to evaluate my doctrinal perspective. In our day of so much theological error and deception, the following brief summary of my theology is offered.

1. The Bible, both the Old and New Testament, is the inspired, infallible, authoritative, eternal Word of God. It is the self-revelation of God recorded by men under supernatural leadership. It is our only source of clear truth about God and His purposes. It is also the only source of faith and practice for His church.

2. There is only one eternal, creator, redeemer God. He is the creator of all things, visible and invisible. He has revealed Himself as loving and caring although He is also fair and just. He has revealed Himself in three distinct persons: Father, Son and Spirit, truly separate and yet the same in essence.

3. God is actively in control of His world. There is both an eternal plan for His creation that is unalterable and an individually focused one that allows human free will. Nothing happens without God's knowledge and permission, yet He allows individual choices both among angels and humans. Jesus is the Father's Elect Man and all are potentially elect in Him. God's foreknowledge of events does not reduce humans to a determined pre-written script. All of us are responsible for our thoughts and deeds.

4. Mankind, though created in God's image and free from sin, chose to rebel against God. Although tempted by a supernatural agent, Adam and Eve were responsible for their willful self-centeredness. Their rebellion has affected humanity and creation. We are all in need of God's mercy and grace both for our corporate condition in Adam and our individual volitional rebellion.

5. God has provided a means of forgiveness and restoration for fallen humanity. Jesus Christ, God's unique son, became a man, lived a sinless life and by means of his substitutionary death, paid the penalty for mankind's sin. He is the only way to restoration and fellowship with God. There is no other means of salvation except through faith in His finished work.

6. Each of us must personally receive God's offer of forgiveness and restoration in Jesus. This is accomplished by means of volitional trust in God's promises through Jesus and a willful turning from known sin.

7. All of us are fully forgiven and restored based upon our trust in Christ and repentance from sin. However, the evidence for this new relationship is seen in a changed, and changing, life. The goal of God for humanity is not only heaven someday, but Christlikeness now. Those who are truly redeemed, though occasionally sinning, will continue in faith and repentance throughout their lives.

8. The Holy Spirit is "the other Jesus." He is present in the world to lead the lost to Christ and develop Christlikeness in the saved. The gifts of the Spirit are given at salvation. They are the life and ministry of Jesus divided among His body, the Church. The gifts which are basically the attitudes and motives of Jesus need to be motivated by the fruit of the Spirit. The Spirit is active in our day as He was in the biblical times.

9. The Father has made the resurrected Jesus Christ the Judge of all things. He will return to earth to judge all mankind. Those who have trusted Jesus and whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life will receive their eternal glorified bodies at His return. They will be with Him forever. However, those who have refused to respond to God's truth will be separated eternally from the joys of fellowship with the Triune God. They will be condemned along with the Devil and his angels.

This is surely not complete or thorough but I hope it will give you the theological flavor of my heart. I like the statement:

"In essentials—unity, In peripherals—freedom, In all things—love."