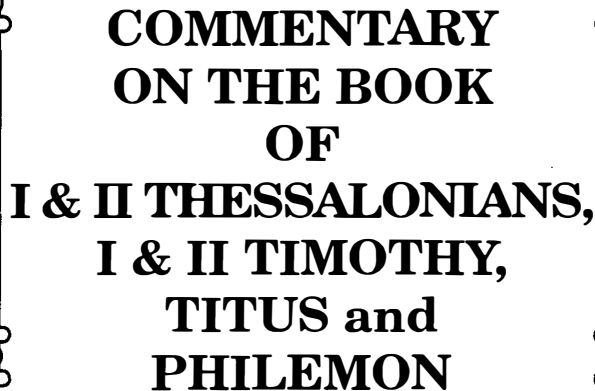


# **GOD'S MESSAGES BIBLE COMMENTARY SERIES**

## **VOLUME 7**

So they read in the book in the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense,  
and caused them to understand the reading.

(Nehemiah 8:8).



### **COMMENTARY ON THE BOOK OF I & II THESSALONIANS, I & II TIMOTHY, TITUS and PHILEMON**

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# *Dedication*

This volume of the  
**Bible Messages Commentaries**  
is dedicated  
to

## *Elders Under Whom I Have Served.*

God has set up some very demanding  
qualifications for becoming an elder.  
He has also placed very heavy responsibilities  
upon their shoulders.

By far, most of the elders I have worked with  
have discharged their duties in fine fashion.  
They have been kind and concerned.  
They have kept their impulses under control.  
They have been well read in the Book of God.  
They have made preaching and teaching a joy.

A word of recognition must be added  
about the wives of elders.  
God said an elder should be  
the husband of one wife.  
The Lord knew elders would need  
the help of a godly wife.  
I am proud to pay honor to them  
and the contributions they make to the Kingdom.

~ Leon Stancliff



# *Introduction*

## **I THESSALONIANS**

### **The Author and Date:**

When the apostle Paul came into personal contact with Jesus Christ on the Road to Damascus, and realized the need to commit his life to the will of both the Father and the Son, he was informed that he was to play a very special role in taking the gospel to the Gentile world. He took the charge very seriously and dedicated his life to that end.

During his first missionary journey Paul's travels took him into Asia Minor, but did not include any preaching in Greece. However; while he was a Troas during the second journey, he saw a vision of a man of Macedonia asking him to come over into Macedonia and help there. The apostle responded to the request and visited Athens and Corinth in Achaia, as well as Philippi and Thessalonica in Macedonia.

The first letter to the Thessalonians was one of Paul's earlier epistles. He had come to the area of Corinth early in 50 A.D. and had left the city in the late summer of 51 A.D. Thus, the letter from Corinth to the Thessalonians is to be dated at either 50 or 51 A.D.

### **Nature of the Epistle:**

As a result of Paul's preaching concerning the coming resurrection and final judgment, many had decided to simply cease work and wait for the second coming of the Master. Paul found it necessary to

persuade these persons that idle waiting was not the proper response. They must be constantly busy in the work of the Lord, trying to convert others to the Way, the Truth and the Life.

Some had been abusing spiritual gifts. Others had been living very impure sexual lives. This letter was intended to alleviate some of these problems.

### **A Short Outline of the Book:**

- I. Fond Remembrances
  - A. Thanksgiving for the Thessalonians.
  - B. Evidence of their election by God.
  - C. The Nature of Paul's work with them.
  - D. The response of the Thessalonians.
  - E. Later Relations with the Thessalonians.
  - F. More Thanksgiving and Prayer.
- II. Further Exhortations
  - A. The need for moral purity.
  - B. The order of events at Christ's Return
  - C. Duties of Christians in their Private Lives
  - D. A Prayer for Holiness and Dedication







**The Book Of  
I THESSALONIANS**



# *Outline*

## **FIRST THESSALONIANS**

1. Salutation and Greeting ..... 1:1
2. Paul's love for the members..... 1:2-10
3. Paul's life and work among them ..... 2:1-12
4. Sufferings of the Thessalonians ..... 2:13-16
5. Paul's desire to see them ..... 2:17-20
6. Timothy sent to learn their condition .. 3:1-10
7. Prayer on the Thessalonians behalf..... 3:11-13
8. Teaching about impurity of life ..... 4:1-8
9. Encouragement to brotherly love ..... 4:9-12
10. Remarks concerning those dead ..... 4:13-18
11. How to watch for the Lord ..... 5:1-11
12. How to live in the meantime ..... 5:12-22
13. Prayer for the members ..... 5:23-24
14. Benediction ..... 5:25-28



# Chapter 1

**1TH 1:1 Paul, and Silvanus, and Timotheus, unto the church of the Thessalonians which is in God the Father and in the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.**

Silas and Timothy were with Paul at the time he wrote this letter (about A.D. 52). The fact that they are both mentioned at the outset does not mean the two of them held equal rank with Paul as inspired apostles. He simply adds their names because they were fellow workers in the spread of the gospel.

To be in God and in Christ is to have left the domain of the Prince of the powers of darkness and to have entered the Kingdom of God. Remember that *“As many as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.”* One can either be in the world, or in Christ. He cannot dwell in both simultaneously. These Thessalonian Christians had chosen to live and walk in the light of Christ rather than in the night where no man can see. *“If the blind lead the blind they shall both fall into the ditch.”*

Grace and peace are often intertwined in the epistles of Paul. In Christ we have access to all of the blessings God provides for his own, even though we do not deserve them. The peace comes from having ceased to fight against God and in finding comfort through the knowledge that our sins have been forgiven. Such peace can only be had through the mercy of God and the love of his Son.

**1TH 1:2 We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers;**

We have no way of knowing how many persons Paul converted during his various journeys. It is likely that he would not have been capable of recalling all of their names so that he could thank God for each of them individually. Still, he could call upon God to grant His grace and peace to each of them, and to let God know just how much each meant to him.

Do you remember other Christians in your prayers? God gives the opportunity, and he promises that the effectual, fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much. We can make intercession for both the physical and the spiritual welfare of those we love.

**1TH 1:3 Remembering without ceasing your work of faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God and our Father;**

What sorts of things did Paul remember when he thanked God for the saints at Thessalonica? He remembered how their faith had come to life in the works they did in the service of the Saviour. He remembered the acts of kindness they performed because of their love for God, for Christ and for their brethren. I am confident that he included their kindnesses toward himself. He remembered how they had steadfastly moved forward in the Christian walk,



ever looking forward to the time when they might hear those words, “*Enter into the joys of thy Lord.*”

Their works of faith, labor of love and patience of hope did not go unnoticed. There is an all seeing eye watching every one of God’s children. In the book of Revelation John spoke of the books being opened. God’s bookkeeping is perfect. There are no omissions.

**1TH 1:4 Knowing, brethren beloved, your election of God.**

Has God elected certain individuals to enjoy the glory of heaven, and others to suffer the torments of hell, without any concern for their freedom of choice. No! No! God elects those who elect him. This verse does not speak of God having chosen certain individuals from the foundation of the earth to be with Him in heaven, with nothing they can do to alter that choice. What the verse is saying is that the entire group who have elected to serve him are ever within his sight and will reap the rewards promised to the faithful. We are to labor to make our “calling and election sure.”

**1TH 1:5 For our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance; as ye know what manner of men we were among you for your sake.**

There was good reason for the saints to remain true. Paul had not come to them without evidence

that his words were backed by divine authority. He had demonstrated his authority by performing miracles among them. Mighty signs and wonders had accompanied him as a means of assuring that he was not presenting his own human philosophy and wisdom.

They had heard his words. They had seen the miracles. They had observed that he worked with his own hands to support himself in order that no man could say he was enriching himself at the expense of his converts.

**1TH 1:6 And ye became followers of us, and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Ghost.**

It was not easy to live the Christian life in Thessalonica. The Jews attempted to persuade new Christians that they should follow the law of Moses. The idolators placed pressure on them to bow before the gods which have no eyes, no ears and no power to bless. The Greeks felt their faith in Christ was foolishness when compared with the wisdom of their great philosophers.

In spite of all these pressures they had maintained their discipleship. They were following the life style of Paul. They were not following Paul because of what he could personally offer them. They were following him because he followed Jesus and they were walking along with him. The joy of knowing their souls were safe in the arms of Jesus and that they had the support of the Holy Spirit of

God was more than enough to see them through every trial and tribulation.

**1TH 1:7 So that ye were ensamples to all that believe in Macedonia and Achaia.**

Having followed Paul in the footsteps of the Lord Jesus Christ, they had made their lives examples of righteous living. Each of them was an inspiration and a guiding light for the rest. The entirety of the Greek peninsula had opportunity to see Christ living in these saints.

**1TH 1:8 For from you sounded out the word of the Lord not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place your faith to God-ward is spread abroad; so that we need not to speak any thing.**

The gospel is just the opposite of a lethal disease. The contagious disease moves from person to person leaving death in its path. The gospel of Christ moves from person to person, leaving life and hope in its wake.

The Christian example which had been set had spread its influence in every direction. It had even reached beyond Greece and had made it far easier for Paul to teach men in other areas. Surely he did not mean that it was useless for him to do any further teaching than that which the Thessalonian saints had done through their faithful lives. There is always a need for those with strong faith such as Paul possessed to teach those less fortunate. I think,

however, that no person laboring in the mission area would disagree with Paul that any glimmer of light from saints who have preceded them in those mission areas is invaluable.

**1TH 1:9 For they themselves shew of us what manner of entering in we had unto you, and how ye turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God;**

It was a matter of great joy to Paul that those whom he had taught concerning the only true and living God had left their dumb idols who could profit them nothing and had bowed themselves before the Father in heaven who is alive and powerful, and who can see that all things work together in behalf of those who love him and obey his word.

Each faithful Christian was a demonstration that his own life had born fruit and was continuing to do so.

**1TH 1:10 And to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come.**

Right here is a statement which helps us in understanding the second letter Paul wrote to these Thessalonians. They took Paul so seriously that they began to cease their daily activities and live in a dream world where Christ was expected to come immediately and where there was no need to do anything but wait and watch.

While they were waiting they were expected to also be working in the vineyard of the Lord. Jesus promised when he left that he would return in like manner to that in which he left. But when men only spend their time gazing at the stars to see the Lord appear, they will be found wanting when he arrives.

It is still true today that some religious persons have followed the thought patterns of the Thessalonians. Like the five wise virgins, we must be ready. But, idleness is just as serious as unbelief.



## *Chapter 2*

**1TH 2:1 For yourselves, brethren, know our entrance in unto you, that it was not in vain:**

The Thessalonians knew very well that the coming of Paul to their city had made a great impact. Large numbers of persons had been converted to Christ. It was a source of much satisfaction to the apostle to recall the things which had been accomplished in their midst. Both he and the Thessalonian Christians had reason to rejoice over the results of Paul's preaching.

**1TH 2:2 But even after that we had suffered before, and were shamefully entreated, as ye know, at Philippi, we were bold in our God to speak unto you the gospel of God with much contention.**

All careful students of the scriptures will recall the difficulties that Paul had faced in Philippi. He had been beaten and placed in prison. Such treatment would have silenced many men. All it did in his case was to cause him to shake the dust off his feet and move on to Thessalonica.

Once at Thessalonica he had not failed to declare the gospel with force and power. It was not his own gospel. It was the gospel of God. Since that was the case, he would not stop his tongue in the face of the greatest of persecution. And there was both contention and persecution in Thessalonica as well as in Philippi.

**1TH 2:3 For our exhortation was not of deceit, nor of uncleanness, nor in guile:**

Most scholars of the Holy Word believe this verse reveals a number of charges which were made against Paul by those who opposed his presentation of the Word of God.

First, it appears that there were those accusing him of deceiving his listeners and persuading them to believe that which he knew not to be true. He denied that charge.

Second, there were those who accused him of an unclean manner of life. There is a possibility that the holy kiss which was exchanged between the brethren was misinterpreted as undue affection between members of the same sex. Again Paul denied the truth of the charge.

A third charge was apparently that he had placed his listeners in spiritual danger by calling evil good, and good evil. Paul claimed that none of these three accusations were proper.

**1TH 2:4 But as we were allowed of God to be put in trust with the gospel, even so we speak; not as pleasing men, but God, which trieth our hearts.**

Since God had placed such confidence in him that he was allowed to preach the good tidings of Jesus Christ, Paul would not alter it under the pressure of human pleasure and pride. It may be temporarily effective to have itching ears and bend the truth to satisfy men's egos. In the long run this



is deadly poison. It will destroy both the preacher and the one who hears him.

God could trust him. His heart was pure. He had not been ashamed to preach the entire Word of God, neither adding to it or taking from it. God had the ability to read his heart, and God would find no hypocrisy there.

**1TH 2:5 For neither at any time used we flattering words, as ye know, nor a cloke of covetousness; God is witness:**

There are experts with words who make much gain from others by pouring flattery upon them. This flattery is only a cover for the real intent of the preaching. It is not meant to save the souls of men. It is only a tool that will pry open their pocketbook. Just as God knew the heart of Paul was not deceitful, he would also know when wickedness had invaded the hearts of the false teachers.

**1TH 2:6 Nor of men sought we glory, neither of you, nor yet of others, when we might have been burdensome, as the apostles of Christ.**

The apostle was not after his listener's money. Nor was he after the glory and praise they might offer him. The only reward Paul pursued was that which came from the God of heaven.

At other places he stated that he had worked with his own hands so men would not accuse him of making gain at the expense of gullible men. He

did not wish to place burdens on others in order that he might be eased. He would be glad to due his part.

**1TH 2:7 But we were gentle among you, even as a nurse cherisheth her children:**

How much did he care about those to whom he preached? He pictured that care as being like that of a mother looking down at her nursing child. He would no more hurt those who heard him than that mother would harm the child to whom she had given life.

**1TH 2:8 So being affectionately desirous of you, we were willing to have imparted unto you, not the gospel of God only, but also our own souls, because ye were dear unto us.**

Paul said at one time that he could wish himself to be accursed if it would result in the salvation of his brethren. Here his words are much the same. He was ready and eager to offer them the truths of the blessed gospel. They were so precious to him that he would have been willing to offer himself in order that they might be saved.

**1TH 2:9 For ye remember, brethren, our labour and travail: for labouring night and day, because we would not be chargeable unto any of you, we preached unto you the gospel of God.**

The apostle was a tentmaker by trade. I think it is likely that rather than asking the Thessalonians to support him, he had worked diligently to provide for his own needs. We use the same phraseology when we today talk about working night and day. He spent long hours of hard work just so no one would have the right to condemn him for sponging off those who gladly heard what he had to say. He did not wish to owe any man anything.

**1TH 2:10 Ye are witnesses, and God also, how holily and justly and unblameably we behaved ourselves among you that believe:**

Anyone who honestly evaluated his behavior would quickly admit that Paul's life had been exemplary in every way. He had not acted in an impure manner. He had not treated men unjustly. He had not taken advantage of those who had accepted the truth.

**1TH 2:11 As ye know how we exhorted and comforted and charged every one of you, as a father doth his children,**

There are some fathers who do not have the proper affection for their own children. However, this is the exception and not the general rule. A father will instruct and encourage his children in that which is right. He will comfort them when difficult times arise. That is exactly what Paul had done. He had pointed out the paths of righteousness.

He had encouraged them to follow those paths, and he had comforted them when they were persecuted.

**1TH 2:12 That ye would walk worthy of God, who hath called you unto his kingdom and glory.**

Nothing pleased him more than to see his converts walking in harmony with the will of the Heavenly Father. In reality it was not Paul who had called them from the chains of darkness to the liberty of the glorious Kingdom of God. It was God.

The reader will notice that this statement is in the past tense. God had already called them unto his kingdom. Any man who denies that the kingdom of God has been established is wrong. John cried out for men to repent for the kingdom of Heaven was at hand. On the day of Pentecost the first citizens of the kingdom were enrolled. Any man who has believed in Christ as the Son of God, repented of his sins, confessed his belief in Christ and been baptized for the remission of sins, has been translated from the kingdom of darkness into the Kingdom of God's dear Son. The Kingdom is here now! It has not reached it's ultimate state of glory. That will take place when Christ returns to claim his own. But, it is in existence, and will claim the victory over every enemy of the cross.

**1TH 2:13 For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of**

**us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe.**

There are some who call themselves Christian teachers who do not believe the Bible as a whole is divinely inspired. In their way of thinking the Bible contains the highest and finest principles of living as they have been distilled from the great minds of the ages. Paul did not look at it that way. To him the words he was preaching were not the wisdom of men. They were the words of his Father in heaven.

Those words had brought new spiritual men into being. It had fed and nourished them as bread and water nourished the physical man. There was reason for the new Christians to rejoice in the blessings bestowed as a result of their conversion. There was also reason for Paul to continually thank God for making the good news of the gospel available.

**1TH 2:14 For ye, brethren, became followers of the churches of God which in Judaea are in Christ Jesus: for ye also have suffered like things of your own countrymen, even as they have of the Jews:**

Paul had previously said they had become followers of him, even as he was a follower of Christ. Now he added that they had become followers of the churches in Judaea. He gave the reason for his statement. The new Christians in Judaea had suffered at the hands of the Jews. The new Christians

in Thessalonica had suffered at the hands of the Gentiles.

We might add that the Jews in Thessalonica certainly had a part in bringing on the suffering. They were quite willing to push the Gentiles on in their evil ways.

**1TH 2:15 Who both killed the Lord Jesus, and their own prophets, and have persecuted us; and they please not God, and are contrary to all men:**

These are very strong words. This great man of God did not ordinarily level such strong condemnation toward others. The Jews of Judaea had fought against the Son of God as bitterly as they knew how. This rage had reached its climax in his murder at Calvary. They had rejected their own prophets in that those prophets had predicted the coming of the Messiah. Tradition tells us the Prophet Isaiah was actually sawn in two with a wooden saw. Others saw similar fates.

They had also done their best to foil the efforts of Paul in his preaching of the Word. There were many of them who would have shouted in glee if he had lost his life. They were the enemies of God and they stood in the way of other's conversion, both Jew and Gentile.

**1TH 2:16 Forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles that they might be saved, to fill up their sins alway: for the wrath is come upon them to the uttermost.**

It was one thing for these unbelieving Jews to reject the truth themselves. That was serious enough. It would lead to their damnation if they did not turn and hear. It was even more serious to oppose the Spirit of grace by denying his truth to the Gentile world. Paul described it as filling up their sins. It is as if they had a bucket which had been partially filled with the sins which they had previously committed. Now they had filled the bucket all the way to the top.

Jehovah is a God of mercy and forgiveness toward those who seek the truth. Heaven waits for those who obey his will gladly. It is not so with those who reject his words, who oppose his will and who do all they can to interfere with the salvation of their fellow men and women. Unimaginable punishment is stored up and waiting for them.

**1TH 2:17 But we, brethren, being taken from you for a short time in presence, not in heart, endeavoured the more abundantly to see your face with great desire.**

There are many things we might like to do that we cannot do. The apostle wanted very much to see the saints in Thessalonica. Though he had not been able to visit with them, his heart was with them. It was not because he did not desire to come. It was because he had been prevented from it.

**1TH 2:18 Wherefore we would have come unto you, even I Paul, once and again; but Satan hindered us.**

Satan did not directly stand in Paul's way. He did so by leading the opposition. Jesus saw Satan directly during his temptation in Jerusalem. Most of us feel the effects of his fight against God in many invisible ways. Sometimes missionaries are put into prison. Sometimes lust and pride interfere with our work. On occasion infidels and atheists ridicule the simple Christian way of life. Like Paul, we must persevere to the end. There will be a victory in Jesus!

**1TH 2:19 For what is our hope, or joy or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming?**

The thing that kept Paul going was the growth of the Kingdom of God. The Thessalonians themselves were a part of his crown of victory. The knowledge that some of them would be faithful and would be caught up to heavenly glory made all he had suffered worth while. There are two kinds of crowns. One is the crown of royalty. The other is the crown of the victorious athlete. The Christian has the right to both crowns. He reigns over Satan, over sin and over death. He also claims the crown which comes by finishing the race and fighting the good fight.

**1TH 2:20 For ye are our glory and joy.**

Any faithful Christian who has been instrumental in the conversion of others will understand what Paul meant by saying the



Thessalonians were his glory and joy. To see one whom we have brought to Christ grow in wisdom and stature and in the favor of God and men brings both glory and joy.



## *Chapter 3*

**1TH 3:1 Wherefore when we could no longer forbear, we thought it good to be left at Athens alone;**

Paul had already spoken of caring for the saints at Thessalonica as a nursing mother would care for the children in her lap. His concern had reached such a level that he could no longer remain uninformed as to their welfare. Timothy and Silas had been with him much of the time in his journeys. Now he decided to send Timothy to encourage and strengthen them in their trials. He would be left alone, but he could bear up if he knew Timothy was aiding them.

**1TH 3:2 And sent Timotheus, our brother, and minister of God, and our fellowlabourer in the gospel of Christ, to establish you, and to comfort you concerning your faith:**

Timothy was a very dear companion. Three endearing titles are used to speak of him. He was a brother in Christ. He was a minister of God's Word. He was a fellow laborer in that he gave himself in both the preaching of the gospel and in edifying and comforting other Christians.

Two purposes would be served by Timothy's visit with them. He would build them up and he would later inform Paul as to their progress in the Kingdom.

**1TH 3:3 That no man should be moved by these afflictions: for yourselves know that we are appointed thereunto.**

The Thessalonians must realize how important it was to stand up under the trials which were coming upon them. They must not be moved away from the faith by persecution.

What does Paul mean by saying Christians are appointed to suffer affliction? Only that in every age the world hates the fervid child of God. The righteousness of the saints shames them into seeing just how crude and corrupt their life style is. The shame causes them to want to eliminate the source of their shame.

**1TH 3:4 For verily, when we were with you, we told you before that we should suffer tribulation; even as it came to pass, and ye know.**

While Paul was still in their midst he had explained the certainty of opposition to the way of Christ. It had happened just as predicted. Paul knew it had been difficult. It had been difficult for him and he had no reason to think they would escape without aggravation. They now knew he was right in his predictions.

**1TH 3:5 For this cause, when I could no longer forbear, I sent to know your faith, lest by some means the tempter have tempted you, and our labour be in vain.**

When it became intolerable for him to wait longer, he sent Timothy to find out how things were going. The tempter is Satan. If Satan had been able to delude them into departing from the faith, it would have grieved Paul deeply. They would be lost, and he would have wasted his precious time.

**1TH 3:6 But now when Timotheus came from you unto us, and brought us good tidings of your faith and charity, and that ye have good remembrance of us always, desiring greatly to see us, as we also to see you:**

Timothy had returned with joyful news. They had remained faithful to Christ. Their love, or charity, continued to burn brightly. In addition, they had not forgotten Paul and they desired to see him, just as he wanted to see them.

**1TH 3:7 Therefore, brethren, we were comforted over you in all our affliction and distress by your faith:**

It had been a wonderful consolation to the apostle to find that the Christians in Thessalonica had stood tall in the Kingdom. Any affliction or distress which Paul had endured lost its sting when he heard the good news of their steadfastness.

**1TH 3:8 For now we live, if ye stand fast in the Lord.**

Had Paul not been alive before? Yes, most certainly. But with this delightful report it was almost as if he had become a new man. How wonderful it would be if they would continue to resist the tribulation in the future, even as they had in the past.

**1TH 3:9 For what thanks can we render to God again for you, for all the joy wherewith we joy for your sakes before our God;**

In our mind's eye, we can almost see Paul jumping for joy when he received the good report. When he used the word joy twice in the same sentence, we realize his deep concern over their growth and their comfort.

**1TH 3:10 Night and day praying exceedingly that we might see your face, and might perfect that which is lacking in your faith?**

His prayers that he might see the Christians at Thessalonica were not answered immediately. It was a matter of years before that which he requested was granted. The postponement came in spite of the fact that his prayers were continuing daily on their behalf. Timothy could help, but Paul wanted to personally visit with them and bolster their confidence and fruitfulness.

**1TH 3:11 Now God himself and our Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, direct our way unto you.**

Even while he was writing the letter to them he opened the floodgates of his heart to God for them. There was nothing wrong with his prayer. God would handle the matter in his own time, and in his own way. The reader should note that Paul's prayer was focused on them rather than on himself. He wished to be with them so he could increase their faith.

**1TH 3:12 And the Lord make you to increase and abound in love one toward another, and toward all men, even as we do toward you:**

Love is the foundation stone of the entire Christian life. When men are immature, love for others is stunted. When that which is perfect is come, that which is in part is done away. Paul desired that they manifest the same love toward each other as he so deeply felt for them. Jesus commanded that we love even those who despitefully use us. Paul urged his readers that their love reach out to men of every creed, color and condition. If there was any possibility of melting hearts of stone, this was the recipe.

**1TH 3:13 To the end he may stablish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints.**

The heart that is filled with hate is not the kind God wishes for man to cultivate. Only when the hate is emptied out and love has taken its place is a man ready to meet the Saviour when he returns from heaven to gather his own.

When Christ does return, he will have thousands of saints and angels with him. In the second letter to this same church he will speak of the dead in Christ rising first and then the living being caught up to meet him in the sky. The difficulties present in attempting to make a precise prediction as to the date of his coming make it wise for us to be cautious about it. Every Christian in every age must be ready at all times. Whether we live or whether we die, we wish to be forever with the Lord when he invites the faithful to enter into the bliss of heaven.



## Chapter 4

**1TH 4:1 Furthermore then we beseech you, brethren, and exhort you by the Lord Jesus, that as ye have received of us how ye ought to walk and to please God, so ye would abound more and more.**

In his epistles, Paul usually concerned himself with doctrinal issues first and then proceeded to the behavior patterns which should follow such doctrine. That is the case in this letter. He is now ready to communicate with them about the latter.

He used two terms to describe his admonitions. The first is "beseech." The second is "exhort." The first is related to the word "beg." He is tenderly calling for them to follow the instructions given by the Lord. The second is a stronger word. He is urgently and firmly calling for them to incorporate the instructions into their lives.

As converts to Christianity they had already been taught. Now it was necessary to turn words into actions. If they were truly all they ought to be they would certainly make sure their manner of life was such as would please Jehovah. But, not only were they to begin the Christian life in pure fashion, they were to continue faithfully and increase in both knowledge and deeds. The Christian must never stop growing spiritually. If he stops, he will go backward. He cannot remain as he is.

**1TH 4:2 For ye know what commandments we gave you by the Lord Jesus.**

It would not be necessary for the apostle to go back over all they had been taught. They knew what was needed. They were also aware that the instructions were not those of Paul. They had been received by him from Jesus the Christ, and they were relayed to the saints in Thessalonica through the authority of Christ.

**1TH 4:3 For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication:**

The word sanctification carries the meaning of having separated one's self from that which is impure and sinful. When the Christian set out to follow the example of Jesus he declared his intent to become a sanctified person. He and God cooperate in the sanctification process. God gives the example and also the instructions as to how one may be sanctified. Then man does his part by deliberately turning away from sin and living separate from the world.

Paul first addressed a sin that has been most common throughout all of history. That is the sin of fornication. Webster defines fornication as "voluntary sexual intercourse between unmarried persons." The Bible gives it a wider application. There are a number of occasions in which the Bible classes adultery as one form of fornication. This verse should not be limited to sexual union between unmarried persons. It is directed toward both the married and the unmarried.

**1TH 4:4 That every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honour;**

A full understanding of this verse requires a definition of the word “vessel.” There are three possibilities. The vessel could refer to a man’s wife. The word translated as “possess” in the verse can also be translated as acquire. Therefore, some students of the Bible believe the vessel to be a man’s wife. Most men do acquire a wife. I do not believe the wife is the vessel mentioned here. This seems to demean her to a level far below that which the New Testament places on the wife. She is far more than a vessel for his pleasure.

The second possibility is that the vessel mentioned is the seminal vesicles of the male sexual organs. In that case the verse would require that a faithful male Christian not release the sexual fluid at the drop of a hat.

Perhaps the most probable meaning of the word vessel is that it refers to the entire body. There are numerous verses in which the body as a whole is said to be a vessel. As an example, let us notice 2 Corinthians 4:7.

*2CO 4:6-7 For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.*

The vessels here are clearly the mind and body of men. The Thessalonians were being told their bodies were not to be abused through indiscriminate sexual contact. In this case the woman could be included, since her body would also be a vessel and should be possessed in honor.

**1TH 4:5 Not in the lust of concupiscence, even as the Gentiles which know not God:**

The Thessalonians lived in a society where the sins just mentioned were looked upon as insignificant. A man could have a prostitute for momentary pleasure. He could have a concubine who was at his constant beck and call. He could have a wife who was expected to bear his children and keep his house. It was thought permissible to enter into casual sex with almost any woman. When he wished to rear a family, the man was expected to marry the woman.

Sadly, the entry of birth control methods has caused our present society to regress toward this loose morality. Men and women are able to enter into immoral sexual relationships without the responsibility of rearing any children that once would have resulted from the unions. The Christians in Corinth had to fight off the temptations of their day. The Christians of the world today must fight off the temptations of our own age.

**1TH 4:6 That no man go beyond and defraud his brother in any matter: because that the Lord is the avenger of all such, as we also have forewarned you and testified.**

Although this verse seems to move into more general terms and would apply to any type of defrauding, it does grow out of the instructions dealing with fornication. Thus, if a man has sexual relations with a woman who is not his wife, he has defrauded another man from the purity which he should be able to expect from that particular woman. Countless divorces have been precipitated when a woman found that her husband had been visiting his affections upon another woman.

I would also add that a woman who engages in promiscuous sex cheats either her husband, or the man she might someday marry, and has defrauded him of the loyalty he has a right to expect from his wife.

It may seem that one has gotten away with such defrauding. It is not true. There will be a day of reckoning when God, who knows all things, will deal with the issue. The Thessalonians were properly warned. If they failed to heed the warning, they must await the consequences of their unholy actions.

**1TH 4:7 For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness.**

God called us out of the world through the preaching of the gospel. It will not be pleasing if the Christian returns to wallowing in the mire of sin. Sows and dogs may return to the mire and vomit. Christians may not.

**1TH 4:8 He therefore that despiseth, despiseth not man, but God, who hath also given unto us his holy Spirit.**

But what is the situation if a person does ignore the teachings of God on these things? That person has not simply rejected Paul or some gospel preacher. He has despised the assistance of the Holy Spirit. When we become Christians we are given the Holy Spirit to dwell within us. What a terrible thing it is to defile the temple of God and make a mockery of the guidance of the Holy Spirit!

This despising of the Holy Spirit not only takes place in the sin of fornication. It happens whenever a person knows the will of God and then deliberately ignores it, whether it be lying, stealing, pride, idolatry or any other thing prohibited by God.

**1TH 4:9 But as touching brotherly love ye need not that I write unto you: for ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another.**

The Thessalonian Christians had ample time and information to understand the great importance of love for one another. This topic naturally flowed out of the previous discussion. Rather than to defraud their brothers and sisters in the Lord, they should have such concern for their well being that they would do everything in their power to treat them as they themselves would wish to be treated.

**1TH 4:10 And indeed ye do it toward all the brethren which are in all Macedonia: but we beseech you, brethren, that ye increase more and more;**

This verse leaves us with the impression that the Thessalonians had responded to the teaching to love one another. Still, they had room for growth in their brotherly love. They may have demonstrated much love toward those in the entirety of the province of Macedonia. They were not to stop with that. They were to let that love grow stronger and reach out farther.

**1TH 4:11 And that ye study to be quiet, and to do your own business, and to work with your own hands, as we commanded you;**

Here are three negative qualities that certainly ought not to be a part of a sincere Christian's life style.

First, the Christian should not be loud and obnoxious. A meek and gentle spirit is a precious ornament for the faithful child of God. Now it is true that on occasion even our Lord may well have raised his voice. When he spoke to the Jews in Jerusalem and said, "*Woe be unto you scribes, Pharisees, hypocrites*" I doubt seriously if he said it in a whisper. That would have been the exception with Jesus and not the rule. Even when they took him to the cross, he went as a lamb, dumb before the shearer. When insulted, he did not return the insults.

Second, the Christian ought to refrain from tending to other person's business. We are our brother's keeper, but we are not to be a meddler in his affairs. Those who take glee in uncovering savory bits of gossip which can then be spread out as far as the tongue can reach are not pleasing to God.

Third, the Christian is not to be lazy. We are not to be hesitant to receive help from our brethren if we have done all that is possible to care for ourselves and still find it impossible. But, neither are we to sit down on our haunches and allow others to do for us what we ought to be doing for ourselves.

**1TH 4:12 That ye may walk honestly toward them that are without, and that ye may have lack of nothing.**

Those that are without are the non-Christians who watch God's people with eagle eyes. They do not hear the sermons from the pulpit. They do see the sermons in the lives of those who profess to be followers of Christ. Someone has said, "I would rather see a sermon than hear one any day."

Hard work is healthy for both the mind and the body. The children of God are called upon to exert themselves in order that they need not depend on others for their livelihood. This would be particularly distasteful if it turned out that a lazy Christian had to receive help from an industrious non-believer.

**1TH 4:13 But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope.**

This is not the only time Paul used these words, "*I would not have you ignorant.*" The word "ignorant" carries a bit different meaning to us than it did as Paul used it. He was not talking about persons with



low mental ability. He was not talking about those who were either deliberately uninformed, or who had not yet been taught. He was addressing these words to Christians who had not yet been properly instructed concerning events which were to take place when Jesus returned to reward his servants. It was his plan to give them the information they lacked.

Christians have hope after death that non-Christians do not have. One atheist is said to have prayed, “Oh God, if there be a God, save my soul, if I have a soul, from hell, if there be a hell.” I would not like to be an infidel. At present I am seventy-one years of age. My hair has mostly fallen out. The flesh on my arms and legs is showing very marked signs of degeneration. My digestive system does not work as it once did. My hands tremble and shake so much that I can hardly sign my name. And it is steadily getting worse. I have had a long series of radiation treatments for prostate cancer. Is this what life is all about? No! No! A thousand times no! This life is but a preparation for that which is to come.

Yes, physical death will come if we do not survive until the Lord returns. But, physical life is not all there is. Paul urges the Christians at Thessalonica not to grieve over those who have already entered the grave. He speaks of faithful Christians who have passed on as being “asleep.” You see, we do not cease to exist at the time of death. We may well be unconscious of that which is taking place among the living, even as one who sleeps physically is not conscious of the events taking place in the house where he sleeps. The souls of the dead in Christ will

be awakened when the Lord returns in glory. What is more, they will awake to a greater and brighter day. They have hope. There is reason to grieve over the infidel. There is no reason for extended grief over the death of a faithful Christian.

**1TH 4:14 For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.**

Dear reader, do you believe Jesus rose from the grave. The apostles did. The two on the road to Emmaus did. Over five hundred who saw him alive after he was buried in the tomb did. It is an established fact that there was a man named Jesus Christ who was crucified on a cross, who was buried in the tomb, and who rose from the dead to live again.

If Jesus was raised from the dead, it is possible for you and I to be raised. In the long ago Daniel the prophet spoke of the resurrection of the dead. He informed us there will be some who will be raised to exaltation, and there will be others who will be raised to eternal damnation. The passage here does not mention the latter group. It deals only with the dead in Christ. These will be raised first and Christ will have them with him when he comes back. Nor does the passage tell just how much time passes between the raising of the dead Christians and Christ's return with them.

**1TH 4:15 For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive**

**and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep.**

The Thessalonians realized there would be a return of Christ. They appear to have been worried over whether those Christians who had died before his return would be able to share in the wonders of the new heaven and the new earth. Paul assured them that there was no need to worry. They would be raised from the grave even before the living Christians were caught up to meet the Saviour

The word “prevent” in this verse is misleading. As it is used here it does not mean to “keep from happening.” It means to go before. The living Christians would not be lifted up to be with Christ before the dead Christians were raised from the graves.

**1TH 4:16 For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first:**

It will be difficult not to awaken from the dead when these strange events take place. The sounds are pretty impressive. The Lord will appear in the heavens with a shout. An archangel will proclaim his coming with a loud voice. A trumpet of God will sound letting all know Jesus Christ is here! Every eye shall see him. With these sounds, the dead Christians will be raised even before the living

Christians are taken up from the earth to Christ's presence.

**1TH 4:17 Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.**

After the dead Christians are taken up to be with Jesus, the living Christians will be caught up into the air to join the faithful dead in the very presence of Jesus Christ the Lord. Neither those raised from the dead, or those living when Christ comes will be forgotten. All of the faithful of all time will meet him in the air and live in his presence forever.

**1TH 4:18 Wherefore comfort one another with these words.**

Yes indeed; there is great comfort in these promises. We are not to grieve over the temporary departure of our faithful brothers and sisters in Christ when they leave us at death. They shall live again! And if we are faithful unto the coming of our Lord, we shall live with them forever and ever!

## *Chapter 5*

**1TH 5:1 But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you.**

The last chapter closed with Paul discussing the return of Christ. The point here is that although the return is certain, It is not a matter for precise calculation. The Lord said that not even the Son of man knew when it would occur. The reason the Thessalonians had no need that Paul write to them was that it was impossible for he or anyone else to make that kind of prediction. They already had all of the information they would get.

**1TH 5:2 For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night.**

Paul's words agree perfectly with those of Jesus. Thieves do not announce when they will break into a house. They come when least expected. And so it will be in the case of the return of the Lord.

May I add here that there are those who believe there will be two appearances of Christ. They see this as the first, when he comes as a thief in the night. To them this means that he will come quietly and rapture the saints from the earth. Then one thousand years later, he is to return again with the sound of the trumpet and every eye shall see him at the time of the final judgment.

The fact that Christ will return as a thief in the night has to do with the unknown time of his return.

Paul is pointing out the necessity of being prepared at all times, in order that we might not be surprised and unready. Absolutely nothing is said about another appearance one thousand years later. Christ will raise the dead Christians first, then the living Christians will be caught up and join them in the air. All the righteous will then be with their Lord eternally.

We should also take note that premillennialists spend much time talking about a rapture. This is based upon Christ coming as a thief in the night. They see him coming silently to take up the faithful from earth to be with him in the air while a great tribulation falls upon the wicked who remain on earth. This verse does not speak of a resurrection of live saints first. It speaks of resurrection of the *dead in Christ*. No mention is made of a great tribulation which is visited upon those who remain on earth.

**1TH 5:3 For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape.**

It is likely that humanity as a whole will have reached a spiritual condition in which they have little concern over a day of judgment. They may well have decided they have built a society that has no need of the way of life Jesus promoted. At just such a point the surprise could well take place.

A woman in the last weeks of pregnancy knows very well that labor pains are approaching. Yet she

has no way of knowing the precise moment they will begin. She can only prepare herself to go through each day wondering if that will be the day. The Thessalonians were in much the same condition.

**1TH 5:4 But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief.**

There are two classes of persons. One class walks in spiritual darkness. They have no interest in Christ or his teachings. The day of judgment will come upon such persons as a complete surprise.

The other class of persons are those who have heeded the words of him who said, "I am the light of the world." The day of judgment will not leave the latter group in a state of shock when it happens. They will have been preparing for that day from the time they became followers of Jesus.

**1TH 5:5 Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness.**

The children of the Father in heaven walk in the light as Christ is in the light. They have nothing shameful about their life style that they must slip around while no one sees them. They are proud of the things they say and do.

It is not so with the sinner. He knows his manner of life is shameful. He often picks the hours of darkness to hide what he is doing from the eyes of good men. Not only does he seek out the blackness

of the night for his sins. He also walks in the spiritual night.

**1TH 5:6 Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober.**

Paul is not talking about physical sleep in this verse. He is talking about those foolish persons who do not have their eyes open to the possibility of Christ's appearing. They do not watch because they could care less about the warnings in the Word of God. They live in wantonness and move in a drunken spiritual stupor.

**1TH 5:7 For they that sleep sleep in the night; and they that be drunken are drunken in the night.**

The spiritually sleepy and drunken are acting as if the daylight of Christ does not even exist. They sleep in their willful ignorance, and they lie unconscious of the realities of existence while the day of the Lord is steadily drawing closer.

**1TH 5:8 But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation.**

Here are those three words Paul was so fond of connecting. Faith, hope and love walk in togetherness in his epistles. The picture he paints here is dramatic. A soldier who sleeps at a time when he should be



awake at his post is a dangerous man. He is not only dangerous to his own safety. He endangers the lives of those who might depend upon his watchfulness.

The true Christian will be constantly alert for the day of the Lord. He will not have put on a helmet of steel. He will have protected himself with obedience to the plan of salvation. He will be wide awake and ready for Christ's appearance. He will have examined the facts, promises and commands of the Word of God and will have a faith solidly grounded upon these. He will be among those who love God and keep his commandments, knowing this is the whole duty of man.

**1TH 5:9 For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ,**

Does this verse teach that God has chosen certain individuals for the fires of hell, and others to the bliss of heaven, without even considering their freedom of choice? No, it does not. What it is saying is that there is a group that has been appointed to hell fire. If a man chooses to ignore the teachings of the Saviour and sleep his life away in the darkness, he will find himself in that group.

The human was not predetermined for heaven from before the foundation of the world, with nothing he or she could do to change that destiny, nor was he destined for the fires of hell. Paul is saying that God has appointed the entire group who walk in the light to live with him in eternity. They chose to live

and walk with Christ in this life. They will be allowed to live with him forever in the next life.

**1TH 5:10 Who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him.**

Now the apostle changes his figure of speech. The sleep in this verse is the sleep of physical death. It does not matter whether the Christian has concluded this present life and lies unconscious in the grave, or whether he is still alive when Christ comes. If dead he will be awakened and will return with the Lord. If alive he will be caught up to be with him forever in joy and happiness.

**1TH 5:11 Wherefore comfort yourselves together, and edify one another, even as also ye do.**

Christian fellowship is a precious privilege. It would be far more difficult to endure the trials and tribulations of the present life were it not for the assistance given to us by our fellow Christian soldiers. When we are downtrodden, they lift us up. When we sorrow, they heal the sorrow with words of comfort.

Paul is proud to state that the Thessalonian Christians were taking advantage of that blessing. They were providing comfort for one another. They were also seeking the growth and development of their brothers and sisters in Christ.

I cannot but remember at this juncture that the Bereans were said to be more noble than those of Thessalonica in that they search the scriptures daily to see whether the things they were being taught were so. Surely that was not the case with all of the citizens of Thessalonica. There were clearly some who heard the word gladly and rendered full obedience.

**1TH 5:12 And we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you;**

It is interesting that some have decided this verse talks about preachers and elders. The preachers are thought to be those who labor among you. The elders are thought to be those who are over you. Can the reader not see that one group of persons is discussed here. These are the elders. They perform all three of the duties mentioned. They spend countless hours tending to the sheep of the flock over which they have the oversight. They are given the authority to admonish the weak and see that they do not allow themselves to be consumed by the wolves who would feed upon the choice lambs. Yes, my friends. They labor. They supervise. They admonish. If the Christian is wise he will take careful heed to the leadership of those whom God has appointed to feed and protect him. Such Christians will be awake and ready whenever the end arrives.

**1TH 5:13 And to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake. And be at peace among yourselves.**

As a preacher of the gospel I have had occasion to work under the oversight of a number of different elders. It grieves me to hear one after another say almost the same words. After having to deal with a difficult conflict among the members of the congregation I have heard them say, "If I had known when I accepted the office of an elder, what I know now, I would never have agreed to serve." How sad! It should be a source of pride and joy. Let us live in peace with our brethren and honor the elders highly for the energy and time they expend in the caring for our welfare.

**1TH 5:14 Now we exhort you, brethren, warn them that are unruly, comfort the feebleminded, support the weak, be patient toward all men.**

It is not only the elders who are to labor, admonish and watch for the straying lambs. Every Christian is exhorted to do all he or she can do to see that others are safe and strong in the service of God.

It is not enough to live our own lives walking in the footsteps of Christ. When we see our brethren resisting the truths taught in the Word of God, each of us must do all we are able to do that such dangerous actions might be corrected. It is not easy to warn the unruly. Yet it needs to be done. Their souls hang in the balance.

The feebleminded here are not those who are mentally deficient. They are those whose souls are not strong. They are weak in the faith. They must be comforted and strengthened. The elders take the

lead in seeing that these things are done. But no Christian is excused from doing these good deeds.

**1TH 5:15 See that none render evil for evil unto any man; but ever follow that which is good, both among yourselves, and to all men.**

Christ instructed his followers to do good to those who despitefully used them. He taught that it is easy to love those who treat us lovingly. He added that it is a true mark of spiritual maturity when we can love those who abuse us. What is more, he gave us a perfect example while dying on the cross to save us from our sins.

We are not only to treat our brethren with dignity and loving concern. We are to do the same for those who are outside the family of God. They may be converted as a result of our example.

**1TH 5:16 Rejoice evermore.**

It has been said that these short sentences are like diamonds. They may be small in size, but they sparkle brilliantly with truth. *“Rejoice, and again I say rejoice”*, said Paul. The Christian has every reason to be happy. If he has blessings beyond his expectations, he should rejoice and thank God for them. If sorrow and trials come his way, he lives with the knowledge that this life is but the blink of an eye when compared with the rewards which are to be his if he endures unto the end.

**1TH 5:17 Pray without ceasing.**

It is not that we are to pray twenty-four hours each day. We are never to cease turning to God in times of joy and in times of sorrow. He will hear both our thanksgiving for our blessings and also the cries for help in time of trouble. He is our Father. He will not turn a deaf ear to the voice of his dear children. When we find ourselves unable to express our groanings, he has provided the Holy Spirit to make intercession for us and see that all things work together for our good.

**1TH 5:18 In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.**

We teach our own children to say thank you. God expects the same from us. Christ is watching to see if we are grateful for the grace and mercy which has been poured out upon us.

**1TH 5:19 Quench not the Spirit.**

When the Christian was baptized for the remission of sins, God promised to give him the Holy Spirit to dwell within him. Our own spirit gave us life when we were born of our mothers. The Holy Spirit brings us to spiritual life when we are born the second time of water and the Spirit. If we carelessly neglect that spiritual life, it will be quenched and the hope of heaven will be lost. A person who fails to feed himself with the Word of

God will quench the Spirit. A person who fails to exercise himself spiritually will do the same.

The Christian who deliberately ignores the Spirit of life is doing the same thing to his spiritual existence as the man who refuses to eat physical food does to physical body. The main difference is that we can all see the emaciated physical body. It is not as easy to see the soul which is dying of starvation.

### **1TH 5:20 Despise not prophesyings.**

In New Testament times it was the prophets who brought the Word of God to the people. They were specially inspired to teach God's truths. This was true in Old Testament times. It was also true in New Testament times until the Bible was completed.

Since we are taught that prophecy has ceased, does this mean this verse is obsolete? Not by any means! Anyone who preaches or teaches the truths found in the Word of God must be heard and loved.

As a preacher, I have wondered at the vast difference in the attitudes of those whom I have tried to teach. Some go to the extreme of treating the preacher as if he was God in the flesh. This is wrong. The apostles told some who wanted to worship them that the apostles were also men. They were not to be made objects of worship. Then there are those at the other extreme. As soon as they find they are in the presence of a preacher, they make it clear that they can swear or be obnoxious in various ways just to prove they can mock him.

Although the preacher is not to be worshipped, nor to be mocked, he is to be heard. Those who refuse to hear the ones whom the scriptures call “vessels of righteousness” will have to answer to God in the end. It will not be the preacher who will tell them, “Depart from me, I never knew you.” It will be the Lord.

**1TH 5:21 Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.**

We are to test the spirits. There are false teachers. They must be identified. There are wolves who would devour the helpless. They must be thwarted. We are to examine carefully everything which we are taught. If we measure these things carefully and find the teachings to be in accord with the Holy scriptures, we must reach out for them and cling to them. If we find they are false, we are to refuse them.

**1TH 5:22 Abstain from all appearance of evil.**

Resist the Devil and he will flee from you. The saints of God can not afford to hold hands with evil. When evil temptations rear their ugly head we must turn our eyes the other way. Even the angels of heaven are concerned over whether or not we will remain pure and holy. When those in the world see us flirting with Satan, they will certainly not be constrained to become a part of the body of Christ. In contrast, when they see the Christian living in purity and holiness, they will have no excuse for



lack of respect toward the plan of salvation which has been made available.

**1TH 5:23 And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.**

Does God sanctify us, or do we sanctify ourselves? Both! God made the plan of salvation available to us. We then follow the plan he set before us. He told us to believe. We test the evidence and believe. He commanded that we repent of our sins. We recognize the danger of living in sin and turn away. He tells us we must confess Christ as his Beloved Son. We witness before our fellow man that we believe Jesus is His Son and that we are ready to follow him. God commands that we be baptized in order that our sins may be washed away. We allow ourselves to be immersed in water to show that we have died to our old life and are ready to begin the new one.

And so God does sanctify us, or set us apart to a holy life, when we become a Christian. But, it is also true that we cooperate with God in a continuous sanctification after we are born into His family. If we continuously walk in the light as Christ is in the light, his blood continually cleanses us of our sins. He has a part in providing the cleansing power of the blood of Jesus. We have a part when we pick ourselves up from our stumbling and walk more closely behind him who had no sin.

We must note another truth in this verse. Man is a tri-partite being. He consists of body, soul and spirit. There are three in the Godhead. They are the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Some would disagree with the comparison I am about to make. The reader is certainly free to do so. However, I like to compare the Father with the soul of man from whence the will arises. I see the Son as the only Body of God that men have ever seen. The scripture at one point calls the Holy Spirit the “Finger of God.” The Spirit is the person in the Godhead that is most heavily involved in Divine action. When God created the heaven and the earth, the Spirit is said to have moved upon the face of the deep. Jesus said, “If I by the Spirit of God cast out devils—.”

It is my very strong belief that when God grants the new Christian the Holy Spirit to dwell within him he has enabled that new Christian to produce fruit which he could never have produced if left to his own powers.

**1TH 5:24 Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it.**

God has made sincere promises that he will protect those who have heard his call to come forth from the world. He will not forget his promises. He will not fail to keep them. He will cleanse the penitent sinner. He will pick up the straying Christian. It is not God's desire that any should perish but that all should be saved. If we will reach up and take his hand, he will reach down and take ours.

**1TH 5:25 Brethren, pray for us.**

Did such a spiritual giant as the apostle Paul need the prayers of others? This verse answers the question. Every faithful Christian will feel the same. The longer we live and follow the Lord, the more we realize the importance of help from our brothers and sisters in Christ. I need your prayers. You need mine. The effectual, fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.

**1TH 5:26 Greet all the brethren with an holy kiss.**

In our present society it would be misunderstood if one saw a mature man kissing another man. The immediate reaction would be to suspect the two of homosexuality. This was not the case in the time of Paul. Today a warm handshake replaces the holy kiss.

It might also be wise to mention that there are a few men who have used this verse to justify kissing their sisters in Christ. When chided for doing so they reply that the Bible commands that the brethren be greeted with a holy kiss. One had better be extremely careful that the kiss is holy. Even then the action can be viewed as unwise in a society that does not kiss that freely.

**1TH 5:27 I charge you by the Lord that this epistle be read unto all the holy brethren.**

This letter of Paul was not to be held in the hands of those who received it. It was to be read to all of the righteous saints in Thessalonica. Soon after the church began, there were those who felt they had a right to keep the scriptures in their own possession and had the right to replace the Word of God with their own modifications. This resulted in a hierarchy who considered themselves to be elite. The common people were not holy enough to be trusted with the written Word. That error has persisted down to the present. These “holier than thou” individuals will have to answer to God for refusing to let all of the holy brethren make personal examination and application of the scriptures to themselves.

**1TH 5:28 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen.**

These same words are found in several of Paul's letters. They are not just written as a force of habit. The apostle understood the wonder of God's grace. He wished for it to be a part of the life of every Christian. We should share in his concern for the brethren.

**The Book Of  
II THESSALONIANS**



# *Introduction*

## II THESSALONIANS

### **The Author and Date:**

Paul the apostle is the author of this second epistle to the saints in Thessalonika. Both the internal and the external evidence point to Paul as the author. The book itself states this fact. The earliest writers of the Christian church agree that this was the case.

It seems to have been written very close to the time of the first epistle to the same church. We estimate that both were written in the period of 50 A.D. to 51 A.D.

### **The Nature of the Epistle:**

This epistle is a very natural follow up to the first letter. The Thessalonians were under considerable persecution. The letter deals with the need to persevere under difficulty.

Once more the point is made that Christ is to return to take his own to be with him. However, the day of the Lord would not arrive until a "falling away" took place. A man of lawlessness would arise before the Lord appeared. Idleness was inexcusable. When Christ returned He must find his brethren hard at work in the service of Jehovah.

### **A Brief Outline of the Epistle:**

#### I. Doctrine and Comfort

##### A. Thanksgiving for Thessalonian Christians.

- B. Encouragement to faithfulness.
  - C. Prayer for Thessalonian Christians.
  - D. Events to precede the “Day of the Lord.”
- II. Exhortation to Continued Steadfastness
- A. Confidence in the Thessalonians Progress.
  - B. The Disorderly Must be Corrected.
  - C. Conclusive Remarks



# Chapter 1

**2TH 1:1 Paul, and Silvanus, and Timotheus, unto the church of the Thessalonians in God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ:**

This first verse is an indication that very little time had elapsed from the writing of the first letter to this one. Silas and Timothy were still with Paul, as they were before.

Some concern themselves with the names of Silas and Timothy being placed side by side with Paul in the greeting. They make a point of saying neither of the two were responsible for the contents of the letter since only Paul was an inspired man. I see no problem. Paul was responsible for the truth which was revealed. The names of Silas and Timothy were joined with his because they were his fellow workers.

The recipients of the letter were a part of the church which is in God and also in Christ. All true Christians are a part of the Church of which Jesus is the head and God is the originator. It is properly called the Church of Christ or the Church of God. Man made titles are detracting. Why give glory to Luther by calling it the Lutheran church, or why name it after a process such as is done by the Baptists. Let us give God and Christ the glory.

**2TH 1:2 Grace unto you, and peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.**

Men have no idea of the magnificence and the greatness of God's offerings to them. Our lives, our

food, clothing and shelter, our companions and our opportunities to grow in His image all come from his bountiful hand.

The peace which Paul prays might be a part of their lives is not just the absence of violence and warfare. It is the complete provision for every need. There would be no grace, and there could be no peace, without the love of God for those who are created in his image.

**2TH 1:3 We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is meet, because that your faith groweth exceedingly, and the charity of every one of you all toward each other aboundeth;**

Paul was so impressed with the Christians to whom he was writing that he could not help but thank God for their existence. He felt that their continuing increase in faith was so wonderful he must pray that it might go forward, and that he must commend them for their zeal and loyalty.

In his commendation he referred to their charity, or love, which was manifested abundantly toward others in the church. It is a satisfying thing to observe a congregation of God's people who care deeply for one another.

**2TH 1:4 So that we ourselves glory in you in the churches of God for your patience and faith in all your persecutions and tribulations that ye endure:**

The first letter had dealt with the need to continue onward under trials. This one does the same. The Christians lived in an idolatrous and pleasure seeking society. They had much opposition. When Paul knew of their glowing faith and their willingness to endure persecution, he found reason to praise them. Any time a preacher of the gospel finds those he has taught growing and working out the will of the Father, it is a source of great joy and pride. Paul felt that exultation.

**2TH 1:5 Which is a manifest token of the righteous judgment of God, that ye may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which ye also suffer:**

The situation described above where the righteous suffer and the wicked prosper should signify a change in the future. Since God does exist, and he is a just God, he will not let such a condition prevail forever. The time will come when he will take action to see that things are reversed. That fact will cause the suffering Christians to stand up and be counted on God's side. When they have done that, they will be considered as suitable candidates for entry into the glorified Kingdom of God which will arrive in it's fulness when Christ comes back to claim his own.

**2TH 1:6 Seeing it is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you;**

Jehovah is a righteous God. It is only fitting that he visit punishment upon those who persecute his people.

**2TH 1:7 And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels,**

This will take place when Christ comes back, accompanied by a host of powerful angels who are quite capable of seeing justice done. The reader will remember that one angel of God destroyed 185,000 Assyrian soldiers in a single night. What then can a great host of them do? The troubled faithful in Thessalonica must rest assured that the persecution will cease and the wicked will receive their just punishment.

**2TH 1:8 In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ:**

What kind of flaming fire will this be, and how will it be applied? Fire is used in the scriptures as a purifying agent. It is expected to burn out the dross and leave the pure metal shining and lustrous. The picture here is that of the fire and brimstone which burns for ever and ever in hell.

This is not unjust punishment. Those who are cast into the fire are the ones who refused to recognize God as God, and who rejected the gospel. Deliberate haughtiness toward the love of God, the

sacrifice of His Son and the guidance of the Holy Spirit is sin unto death; and the death is not temporal and physical. It consists of timeless and spiritual separation from all that is holy. That is not a pleasant thought!

**2TH 1:9 Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power;**

Under conditions familiar to all of us in this world, destruction ultimately comes to an end. This destruction which will come to the wicked at the return of Christ does not come to an end. The wicked will then receive that which they chose while in this life. They did not wish to be close to God or to associate with the citizens of His kingdom. At the judgment they will be separated forever from both the power and glory of God and from his righteous children.

How terrible it is to think of existing in association with the liars, the thieves, the blasphemers and the covetous of this world, and never seeing or associating with the pure, holy and loving children of God!

**2TH 1:10 When he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day.**

This verse presents a great contrast between the conditions of the righteous and those of the wicked.

While the wicked are trembling in fear and gnawing their tongues in anguish when the Lord appears, the righteous will be glorifying and admiring the Saviour for whom they have endured suffering and labored so diligently and patiently. These who admire the Lord at that time will be the ones who believed the testimony of Paul and the other apostles.

Have you noted that there is no mention of one thousand years between the reward of the faithful and the punishment of the wicked?

**2TH 1:11 Wherefore also we pray always for you, that our God would count you worthy of this calling, and fulfil all the good pleasure of his goodness, and the work of faith with power:**

It has been the will of God that all men come to a knowledge of the truth and obey it with the whole heart. Paul prayed that when the time of rewards and punishments came, the Thessalonians would have conducted themselves in such manner that God would be pleased with their works of faith and labor of love.

**2TH 1:12 That the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you, and ye in him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.**

Every Christian has taken the name of the Lord Jesus Christ upon himself. It is our responsibility to see that his name is held up before men. That is

done when Christian men and women live in harmony with his life and teachings. If we glorify him by our words and our deeds, he will return the favor and glorify us, both in this world and in the one to come.

The blessings God will give to men when they meet his conditions are fantastically greater than we deserve, or than we can possibly imagine. We must not treat these offered blessings lightly.





## *Chapter 2*

**2TH 2:1 Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him,**

The word “beseech” is a unique word. It carries a gentle, and yet urgent plea for action. Jesus is coming back! The Thessalonians, and all others, must be prepared for that event. Those who have been faithful will be gathered to him to receive the greatest reward of all. For that reason it is vital that the advice given to the Thessalonians, and made available to us through the scriptures, be heard with the utmost care.

**2TH 2:2 That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand.**

Paul was fearful that someone might do damage to their faith. There were those who were trying to persuade the rest that there was no reason to continue with life’s normal activities. Just sit and wait!

This deception could come to them from those who claimed the authority to speak from inspiration. Perhaps someone had even forged a letter in the name of Paul telling the saints at Thessalonica that Christ was due any moment.

**2Th 2:3 Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition;**

They were not to take heed to such persons. There were a number of events which were to take place before the appearance of the Christ..

First, there would be a “falling away.” This clearly refers to some spiritual decay, which takes place over a wide area. One can not fall away from a condition in which he has never been found. Therefore, this falling away must have reference to many who have walked with God in the past.

This falling away will be accompanied by the appearance of a “man of sin.” This man of sin is to be evil that he may properly be referred to as the “son of perdition.” Since perdition means the loss of the soul, this man of sin may also be referred to as “son of damnation”, or “son of hell.”

There is a very serious question here. Is this “man of sin” speaking of an individual, or is it referring to the man of sin in the same sense the God's faithful are gathered into one class referred to a the “man of God.” The man of sin may very well be a general classification of all persons who fight against all that God and His faithful stand for. Each and all of them would make up the “son of perdition.”

There are well qualified students of the scriptures who take both sides of this issue. Some believe the man of sin, or son of perdition refers to one very powerful religious individual who rises up and cause

masses of persons to follow his own leadership rather than following Jehovah. There are others who are just as well qualified who contend that this “son of perdition” is the entire collection of apostates from the truth who reject the leadership of the Father in heaven and walk and worship according to their own wisdom rather than that of God.

One other possibility exists. That possibility is that one man might well become an outstanding and powerful leader in a complete organization that opposes the truth of God and sets up its own guidelines for life and worship.

**2Th 2:4 Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.**

The “man of sin” who is revealed as a result of the great falling away will have absolutely no respect for the True and Living God. He will persuade himself that Jehovah is unnecessary. The “man of sin” will find a place for himself in the temple of God and will attempt to deceive others into bowing down before him.

The temple of God is obviously the church. Paul said, “Know ye not that ye are the temple of God?” This means the man of sin will have come from those who have fallen away from faithfulness to the will of Jehovah. Whether an individual or an entire class of individuals, the man of sin will use the church as a means of glorifying himself.

Protestant groups will see this as the Pope in Rome. Catholics will view it as those who took part in the reformation under the leadership of such men as Martin Luther, etc.

The fact of the matter is that the Christian community as a whole has undergone much spiritual decay over the centuries. Rather than being a single united body, faithful to Jesus Christ as its head, it has splintered into many fragments, each one of them making claims to speak for God.

Materialism, humanism and sectarianism are all fermenting and producing a religious climate in which the apostolic authority and Biblical facts, commands and promises are reduced to a secondary level.

It is your present writer's conviction that the "man of perdition" or "man of sin" is a general term referring to all of those who claim to speak for God, while simultaneously rebelling against His laws and competing for the glory which belongs to the Creator Himself.

**2TH 2:5 Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things?**

Paul is writing about things which he told them in person while he could commune with them face to face. He is not revealing anything new which they have not heard from him before. They had mistaken his teachings and thought his message was that the end of time was so close they had no reason to make plans for the future of life on earth.

**2TH 2:6 And now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time.**

Paul indicated that there was some delaying power that prevented the full appearance of the man of sin. He would not be able to rise to power until that preventive entity was removed. When it was taken away he would be manifested.

**2TH 2:7 For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way.**

The word “let” is one which has almost reversed it’s meaning from the time of the King James translation to our present day. To “let” was to get in the way of, or to prevent something from happening. Whatever it was that was holding back the appearance of the man of sin would have to be taken out of the way before he could appear.

Many among the Protestant world believe that which was preventing the manifestation of the man of sin was the Roman Empire. As long as the Roman Empire flourished, it was impossible for the Catholic church to rise to the level of power to which it later attained.

But to be consistent in my own understanding of the nature of the man of sin, I must say that the “falling away” permeated the entire sectarian world. That which prevented the rising of the man of sin would then be the degree of faith that has prevailed through the centuries that has kept true Christians

from exhibiting spiritual lawlessness and has caused them to worship Jehovah only refusing to bow before any man.

**2TH 2:8 And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming:**

When the spirit of wickedness has become so strong that it appears the proud and evil persons have gained control of society, Jesus will return. He will speak the word and His glory will overcome every enemy. Every knee shall bow to Him. Every tongue will confess Him as the Only Begotten Son of God.

Is this a matter of Christ teaching and wicked men being converted to a new way of life? That is possible, but it hardly seems this can be the case here. It is more likely that the same power that spoke the world into existence in the beginning will command the destruction of his opposers and they will be cast into hell.

**2TH 2:9 Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders,**

Jesus verified his divine authority through the use of miracles, wonders and signs, as recorded in Acts 2:22. In the 43rd verse of Acts 2, the apostles demonstrated their approval as messengers of the Lord through the use of miracles, signs and wonders.

Paul and Barnabas used the same type of evidence for their authority. The scriptures call these mighty signs and wonders the “signs of an apostle.”

This man of sin uses the power of Satan to attempt duplication of the works of Christ and the apostles. Paul declared that prophecies and tongues would cease when that which is perfect came. Let us not be taken in by claims that contradict the statements of the Word of God.

But, once more I must warn the reader that tremendous accomplishments in science are causing men to feel they can control their lives without the assistance of a divine hand. When one combines the attitude of liberal denominationalists with the present awe of science and technology, we could very well witness the emergence of the man of sin through this channel.

**2TH 2:10 And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved.**

Satan is the great deceiver. He succeeded in persuading Eve that she would not surely die if she ate of the fruit in the garden. He tried to break down the faith of Job in the long ago. He did his very best to deceive the Lord himself after Jesus had fasted for forty days and nights in the wilderness. Through all time he has wandered to and fro throughout the earth, seeking those he might devour.

There have been many who took the Devil’s bait. In the time discussed by Paul in our present chapter

Satan's deceit will have been enormously effective. Those who perish at the coming of the Lord will be the ones who have fallen for Satan's lies and wonders. They believed Satan and refused to accept and love the truth God has provided. They will be lost!

**2TH 2:11 And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie:**

This verse has always disturbed me. In what sense does God send strong delusions? The most satisfying answer I can come to is that God will give to man that which man seeks. If the man seeks truth God will assist him in finding that truth. "*Seek and ye shall find.*" Those who perish at the coming of the Lord will be those who sought lust and pleasure. They will have convinced themselves there is no God, or if there is a God he will not pour out wrath upon those who deny him. They will have loved and sought out a style of life that God allows but abominates. After all, God is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. The delusion he sends could well be a lack of interference in their selfish ways.

**2TH 2:12 That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.**

The damnation is not pleasing to God. That does not prevent it from taking place. Those who love lies and worldly pleasure must not be permitted to enter



into the eternal city of everlasting day. That city must be uncontaminated from sin. Even if such persons were allowed to enter, they would be miserable in the presence of the Father, the Son, the Holy Spirit, the angels and the spirits of just men made perfect.

**2TH 2:13 But we are bound to give thanks always to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth:**

The apostle Paul was always thankful to God and grateful to men for the disciples who loved the truth and followed it wherever it led. He assured these faithful saints in Thessalonica that there was no need for them to worry about their ultimate destiny. God had willed from before the foundation of the earth that those who love and obey him will be set apart by believing the truth rather than the lie. They will be sanctified by the Holy Spirit and will live forever in the presence of everything righteous and good. He will keep his promises and will see his will carried out.

**2TH 2:14 Whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.**

The instrument God uses to see that his divine will is accomplished is the gospel. That gospel is

founded on the death, burial and resurrection of his Son, Jesus Christ. Any man who makes the claim he was called by any other method is suspect.

The gospel's power lies in its promise that the faithful will be allowed to share in the glory which Jesus received when he ascended to the right hand of God after his resurrection from the dead. Both the Thessalonians and ourselves may claim that wondrous promise if we hear and obey.

**2TH 2:15 Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle.**

The good tidings of the gospel had been taught to them either through letter or by being transmitted through word of mouth. Whichever was true, they must endure until the end. The word "traditions" has been misapplied by some religious teachers. They would have us believe that any time the word tradition is used it refers to the teachings of men. That is not true. When the writers of the Holy Scripture wished to distinguish the Word of God from men's teachings, the latter are called "traditions of men." An established belief, handed down from person to person is a tradition. It may have originated with God, or it may have originated with men. The traditions taught by the apostles were given by the Almighty God. They were traditions of God, and not traditions of men. God's traditions were to be learned and lived. The Thessalonians must not be seduced by Satan to turn from them.

**2TH 2:16 Now our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God, even our Father, which hath loved us, and hath given us everlasting consolation and good hope through grace,**

Both the Father and the Son have given the faithful everything needed to strengthen, protect and guide them. Christ loved us enough to die for us. The Father loved us enough to send his Son into a sin filled world to redeem it. The least men can do is to receive such grace with open hearts and live in faith and hope.

**2TH 2:17 Comfort your hearts, and stablish you in every good word and work.**

The Thessalonians were not to be anxious about the future and the coming of Christ. They could take comfort in knowing God would be with them every step of the way. All they needed to do was spread the good news to others and work the works of him who sent Christ, and who created each of us.



## *Chapter 3*

**2TH 3:1 Finally, brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may have free course, and be glorified, even as it is with you:**

What was the secret of Paul's success as a missionary? Was it his mastery of the will of God? Was it his willingness to work day and night to promote the truth? Was it the hope of heaven after the judgment? No doubt each of these played a part. But it is possible that one very important factor in his effectiveness was the prayers of his fellow Christians. He asked for these prayers over and over. He needed such prayers, you and I must also need them.

He even indicated the content of the prayers for which he asked. Those who prayed on his behalf were to pray that Word of God flow freely among men. He desired that the truth be held up and honored in all the world. He then added a word of praise to the Christians in Thessalonica. He said the Word of God was being glorified among them.

**2TH 3:2 And that we may be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men: for all men have not faith.**

The prayers of the Thessalonians were to request that Paul and other missionaries not be hindered from their work for the Lord. There were enemies of the cross who would do what they could to prevent the spread of the gospel. Those who would fight

against the preaching of the Word of God gave proof through rebellion that they were unreasonable and wicked.

Sadly, it is true that many men are not faithful or trustworthy. Rather than assisting in promotion of the teachings of Christ, these men stand in the way of those who work as Paul, Silas and Timothy did.

**2TH 3:3 But the Lord is faithful, who shall stablish you, and keep you from evil.**

Although there are men who oppose the preaching of the gospel and the spread of the truth, God can establish those who labor in his vineyard. No matter what the opposition, God will see that his will is ultimately carried out. Jehovah is both capable and trustworthy. Even if one loses his life in service, as Stephen did, the rewards are worth it all.

**2TH 3:4 And we have confidence in the Lord touching you, that ye both do and will do the things which we command you.**

Again and again I think back to what was said about the Bereans being more noble than those of Thessalonica in that they searched the scriptures daily. Commendations such as are found in this verse tell us that at least some in Thessalonica did search honestly.

Paul had great confidence that these Christians were presently doing what God expected, and that they would keep on doing those things. We will find

a few verses later that there were some of them who needed some prodding, but Paul did find much that was good among them.

**2TH 3:5 And the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ.**

The Lord can direct our hearts into the love of God and patient waiting for Christ if we will allow that direction to take place. He is willing if we will respond. This love of God is something that goes on in the heart of the child of God. Just as patience is an attribute of dedicated Christians, so is the manifestation of the love of God. Paul advised them to imitate the love of God in their lives, and urged them to wait with patience for the coming of the Son of God. It would not happen immediately.

**2TH 3:6 Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us.**

This command did not originate in the mind of Paul. It came from the Godhead. By the authority of Jesus Christ, Paul relayed the command that the faithful Christians withdraw from those who failed to live according to the teachings that came from God and Christ, through Paul to them.

This withdrawal was a means of conveying to the disorderly that their actions were not in harmony

with the will of God. It is not always true that withdrawal will cause a change of heart in those who are living in error. It is true that there will be some who will examine themselves and turn from their wayward ways.

As was mentioned before, these traditions were the traditions of God, not the traditions of men. The religious traditions of men may be extremely dangerous. The traditions of God are dependable and full of all wisdom.

**2TH 3:7 For yourselves know how ye ought to follow us: for we behaved not ourselves disorderly among you;**

In a previous place Paul had told the Thessalonian disciples that they were to follow him *as he followed Christ*. That is still the message. The recipients of his letter knew very well that he was not in the number who walked disorderly.

**2TH 3:8 Neither did we eat any man's bread for nought; but wrought with labour and travail night and day, that we might not be chargeable to any of you:**

It is disorderly to eat the bread of others without working for it. Paul did not do that. He labored day and night in order that he might not be in debt to any man for having supported him. If any man ever earned his meat and drink, Paul did. He was a tentmaker, and this craft could be found in every community where the apostle preached. Laziness was not a part of Paul's life.



**2TH 3:9 Not because we have not power, but to make ourselves an ensample unto you to follow us.**

It was not that he could not claim the right to be supported by others. He did have that power. No one would have had a reason to complain that he was not worth his salt.

However; knowing the way men think, Paul decided it would be wise not to give any man an excuse for accusing him of living a soft life while others fed and clothed him.

**2TH 3:10 For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat.**

Paul was a long distance from them as he wrote this letter, probably in Athens. But when he had been with them he had made it evident that the ones who would not work were not to feast at the expense of others who did work.

There are some who do not work because they cannot work. These were not the ones Paul had in mind. His reference was to those who could work, but did not.

Giving people something for nothing does serious damage to all concerned.

1. It hurts the one who receives because he is encouraged in his laziness.
2. It hurts the giver because he could have seen better results from the use of his gifts.

3. It hurts the entire society because others are tempted to cease work.

**2TH 3:11 For we hear that there are some which walk among you disorderly, working not at all, but are busybodies.**

The word had gotten back to Paul after he left Thessalonica that some of the Christians there had become disorderly through having stopped working entirely. What had caused this type of behavior? It is reasonable, in view of what is said about patience in waiting for Christ, to think that this idleness came about because they were expecting Christ momentarily. But, even if Christ had come at any moment, he should have found them working, not idle.

Work is healthy. Idleness has often been said to be the Devil's workshop. When people are not employed in productive labor, they all too often begin meddling in other's business. Busybodies are a cancer on society. They always tear down. They never build up. No Christian should ever allow himself to waste away his time. Every moment is precious. It must be used in constructive manner.

**2TH 3:12 Now them that are such we command and exhort by our Lord Jesus Christ, that with quietness they work, and eat their own bread.**

Any of the Christians to whom Paul addressed this epistle were to understand the importance of

having business of their own to do, and tending to that business rather than gossiping about the affairs of their brethren. God's people ought to be too busy to enter into idle gossip. By working as they should, the idlers would not find it necessary to be supported by the hard work of fellow Christians.

**2TH 3:13 But ye, brethren, be not weary in well doing.**

Almost as if he was fearful that he would again be misunderstood, he added that the brethren who were supporting the truly needy should not quit those good works. There was a difference between supporting those who should be supporting themselves, and providing for those who could not help themselves.

**2TH 3:14 And if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed.**

If there were those who refused to heed the admonitions Paul was offering to the ones who were idle, they must be identified and be punished by refusing to associate with them. In this way the idle would come to realize the wrong direction of the life they were living and might turn from it.

Withdrawing fellowship has a constructive purpose. It is not merely a way of punishing, or getting even with one who does wrong. It is done in hope that there will be a change of action in the direction of godliness.

**2TH 3:15 Yet count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother.**

If the one who is withdrawing fellowship from an erring brother or sister does so with the attitude of haughtiness and leaves the impression that he is glad to be rid of such a troublemaker, the one who is wrong will not be likely to make a correction. If the withdrawal is clearly for the purpose of steering the misdirected life toward the footsteps of Jesus, the desired change is much more likely to happen.

**2TH 3:16 Now the Lord of peace himself give you peace always by all means. The Lord be with you all.**

This peace which is given by the Lord of peace is an inner peace. The follower of God may not have peace with the sinners of this world. But he will have peace with God, who can provide for every need.

**2TH 3:17 The salutation of Paul with mine own hand, which is the token in every epistle: so I write.**

If anyone wishes to argue that Silas and Timothy were co-authors of this letter, this verse should dispel that viewpoint. It was not signed by all three. It was signed by Paul. He is the author. When he talks about every epistle, he is not talking about a number of epistles that were addressed to the Thessalonians. He is talking about those he wrote to every person

and every church. They could know the epistle was the genuine work of an apostle because his name was attached, written in his own handwriting.

**2TH 3:18 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.**

Was anything more important in the mind of Paul than the grace of God? Since he uses this phrase at the end of letter after letter, we must conclude that it held a very high place in his mind. And we can understand why. He had fought Christ at every opportunity before his conversion. He even held the clothing of those who stoned faithful Stephen to death. Yet, God had forgiven him and had given him the chance to serve in his Kingdom. Paul was immensely grateful for such grace. He wanted all Christians to share that blessing.





**The Book Of  
I TIMOTHY**





# *Introduction*

## I TIMOTHY

### **The Author and Date:**

According to the first verse of the epistle, the author was the apostle Paul. There is almost no opposition to this view among those who trust the inspiration of the Scriptures.

There are always liberals who are unsatisfied unless they have some dispute by which they draw attention to themselves.

Both First and Second Timothy were written very close to the end of Paul's life. He had left Timothy in Ephesus and wished to protect him from the attacks of the false teachers who had opposed Paul himself. The two epistles were written at about the same time and the best estimate is A.D. 67, about a year before Paul's death.

### **The Persons Addressed:**

I and II Timothy, along with Titus, are commonly known as the "Pastoral Epistles." This is inaccurate since neither Timothy nor Titus were bishops or pastors in local congregations of the Lord's church. They were evangelists, who worked closely with Paul in establishing congregations.

Timothy was apparently a convert of Paul in Lystra on his first missionary journey (See Acts 14:6 and 16:3). Timothy's mother was a Jew and his father was a Gentile. The younger man began traveling

with the apostle on the second missionary journey.

Timothy was one of Paul's closest co-workers (See 2 Cor. 1:1; Col. 1:1; Phil. 1:1; Philemon 1:1). Paul spoke of Timothy as his "child in the faith" (I Tim. 1:1-2).

### **The Setting and Purpose of the Letter:**

If our date is correct, this letter was written during the reign of Nero. It was not a pleasant time for Christians. Nero had blamed Christians for the great fire in Rome which he probably ignited himself.

Paul had spent over two years in the city of Ephesus and expected Timothy to further stabilize the work there. Timothy faced opposition from within and without the church. These letters provided apostolic support to him.

# *Chapter 1*

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

Paul did not write from his own human wisdom. He had been instructed personally by the Lord and he preached by divine authority. This was made clear at the very beginning of nearly every one of his letters. It was particularly important in this epistle, due to the opposition which the young Timothy faced.

God is here called our Saviour. This is a title usually associated with the Son rather than the Father. Nevertheless, it is perfectly appropriate. Any of the three persons of the Godhead could be referred to as our Saviour. Without the work of any one of them, man would be lost and without hope.

The Lord Jesus Christ is specifically said to be our hope. The hope of mankind does not lie in either human wisdom or human power. Only the divine insight is capable of seeing all the consequences of human action. Only divine power has the force required to conquer the principalities and powers controlled by Satan. Paul did not come in his own name. He came as a messenger representing the Father and the Son.

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

Paul was writing to Timothy whom he considered his son. Timothy was not his son in the flesh. Paul was not married. Timothy was Paul's son in the faith because Paul had begotten him through the planting of the gospel in his heart. Many a gospel preacher will understand Paul's feelings toward Timothy. The children whom we have begotten through the gospel are often closer to us than some of our children of the flesh.

How was Paul permitted to call Timothy his spiritual son, if Christ said to "Call no man father?" It must always be understood that the source of spiritual life is the Father in heaven. A human preacher or teacher may sow the seed which springs up as a new man. But, only God can bring the spiritually dead to life. There is a vast difference between the role of God and that of man in the second birth.

A threefold blessing was pronounced upon Timothy. Paul desired that Timothy receive grace, mercy and peace. Recently I heard a very accurate differentiation between mercy and grace. Grace was said to be "getting that which one did not deserve." Mercy was said to be "not getting that which one did deserve."

Peace, as used in the New Testament, is often a much wider concept than when used in our own writing and conversation. We tend to think of peace as the absence of conflict. Peace, as used here by the apostle, is a condition in which all needs of the individual are supplied. Certainly, it would include the absence of conflict. In addition, it would encompass food for the stomach, shelter and clothing

for the body and companionship from other persons. There would be lack of nothing essential to the welfare of the one who enjoyed that peace.

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

We see here the manner in which Paul utilized the services of Timothy and Titus. They were not pastors of the congregations to which Paul assigned them. There are six words in the New Testament that are applied to a single office in the church. These are elder, bishop, pastor, overseer, shepherd and presbyter. These officers are permanent members of congregations which have been already established. They teach, they watch for weak and straying members. They take a major role in organizing the work of the local congregation. They watch for false teachers who would enter in and take advantage of the flock.

Timothy and Titus have some of these duties. Yet they were more mobile, going from place to place as Paul had need of their talents. It is a mistake to call the present day preacher a pastor. It is also a mistake to call either Timothy or Titus a pastor.

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

Telling interesting stories is not preaching the gospel. Tracing one's family tree back to Abraham was not preaching the gospel. The false teachers were doing both of these things. The result was strife and bickering. It is just as true today. The debate in the religious world is more often over things the Bible does not say, rather than the things it does say. Timothy was not to allow himself to be entangled in such methods. Instead, he was to present the faith which had come from the mind of God. It would edify and build up rather than tear down and destroy.

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

The result of the preaching of the pure Word of God is loving concern among the brethren. The word "charity" carries a somewhat different meaning today. We think of charity as care for the needy. The Bible uses the word "charity" to mean love and concern for all, whether needy or not. Paul was urging Timothy to use such methods as would leave men with good will toward others, with a mind which was unstained with greed and selfishness, and with absolute loyalty to the teachings of Jesus Christ.

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

The thirteenth chapter of First Corinthians talks about those who speak with tongues, but who have no love, as being like tinkling bells or clanging cymbals. These have the same problem.

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

These false teachers were pretending to be experts in the explanation and application of the law of God. Paul declared that they did not know what they were talking about.

This happens constantly. Recently I heard a man say he had entered into religious discussion with Catholics who knew the pronouncements of the ecclesiastics, but did not know the New Testament. He had done the same with Jews who could quote the Rabbis but did not know the Old Testament. He had talked with modernists who could discuss the writings of the theologians of note, but who knew very little about the Word of God.

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

Paul is not just talking about the law of Moses here. He is talking about the law of God in general. God's law is given to us to guide us in the ways of righteousness. It is not to be used for playing games, or for building a personal following.

**1TI 1:9 Knowing this, that the law is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and for sinners, for unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for manslayers,**

The law of God serves a most useful purpose. It points out the errors of one's life. If a man were perfectly in harmony with God's will, there would be no need for law. However, since all of us have sinned and regularly come short of the glory of God, law will always be necessary. Every trespass against the will of Jehovah must be defined and its destructive end shown.

**1TI 1:10 For whoremongers, for them that defile themselves with mankind, for men-stealers, for liars, for perjured persons, and if there be any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine;**

Here is the heart of the matter. Any thought, word or action which is contrary to the Word of God is subject to correction through the law. Paul was delivering the sound doctrine of the gospel to men. When they turned away from it and polluted it, they must be turned back to the truth.

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

Paul stated in Romans 1:16 that he was not ashamed of the gospel of Christ for it was the power of God unto salvation. Not only was he not ashamed of it; he was jealously protective of it. It was he who had introduced the precious word of God to the Ephesians. He did not wish to see it distorted or diluted. He had a serious responsibility to do all



within his power to see that it was guarded and kept pure.

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

Without Christ, Paul felt he was of little worth. He could do nothing. But with Christ he could do all things. It was nearly beyond his comprehension that Christ would have chosen him to minister the gospel to the Gentile world. Paul had certainly not been faithful before his conversion. Yet, Jesus had allowed him the opportunity of turning from his sin and had treated him as one who was faithful. This left Paul astonished.

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

No man on earth had fought the Lord as Paul had fought him. He had defiled the name of the Lord at every turn. He had made life absolutely miserable for every Christian whose path crossed his own. He said he was injurious. That is a bit mild. He was a killer.

In spite of such actions, Christ had been merciful toward him because he did not fully realize how serious his offenses were. The reader will remember that Jesus also looked down from the cross and cried

out, *“Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.”* Paul told the Athenians there had been a day in which God overlooked their sins, due to their lack of knowledge. But later he commanded all men to repent.

God definitely has a different attitude toward those who sin knowingly, and those who sin unknowingly. This is one of the reasons why men should be cautious about judging the eternal destiny of their fellowmen. We do not see with the mind of God. There may be some shocking surprises at the judgment!

Still, this does not excuse us from preaching the gospel to every creature in every nation. We must preach the truth and let God spell out the eternal rewards and punishments.

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

The grace of which Paul speaks is the grace which was shown toward him. The faith and love which Paul developed worked hand in hand with the love of Christ to change Paul from enemy to servant.

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

Is there any man too vile for Christ's blood to cleanse his soul? Only that man who will not turn

from his sin and hear the cry of the Master. If we are willing to confess our sin and turn from it, he is ready to forgive us of those sins. Paul well knew the salvation of the lost was the prime reason for the entrance of Jesus Christ into this world. Paul knew because Christ had found him and he had been as vicious and rebellious as any man could be.

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

Why had Christ been so forgiving toward Paul? Paul supplied the answer. It was because he could use Paul as a model of his mercy. God's longsuffering could be made clear through forgiving a rank sinner such as the apostle. But, he not only forgave Paul. He chose him for a very special and important work. Paul was to lead many to believe in Christ and reap everlasting life.

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

When we speak of the Kingdom of God, we sometimes mean quite different things. In this verse God is called the King eternal. This means his kingdom has existed before time began and will extend forward until time has come to an end. When Saul was chosen king over Israel, we have a different

view of the Kingdom of God. The earthly king was but a prince, subject to the eternal King in Heaven. Then, at Pentecost, another phase of the Kingdom of God was established. This time it was a spiritual kingdom with Christ reigning from heaven. The time will come when Christ will have subdued every enemy. He will then return the kingdom to the Father in order that God may be all in all (I Cor. 15).

The honor due to God is not to be seized by men. It did not belong to Paul. It did not belong to Timothy. Certainly it did not belong to the teachers of false doctrine about whom Paul warned Timothy. The invisible, immortal, wise and glorious God stands apart from all the creation which he brought about.

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

There were prophecies concerning Timothy's preaching of the gospel. The question is whether these prophecies had reference only to Timothy, or whether they applied to any man who preached the Word of God to either Jew or Gentile? Personally, I think the prophecies were general and that they applied to any who bring about the revelation of the mystery of salvation. Such prophecies not only spurred Timothy on to serve effectively. They also cause us to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints.

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

Timothy was fighting a war. Soldiers who are not loyal to their charge can be held guilty of treason. The faith which Timothy was to hold was twofold. He was to protect the body of faith which he and every other Christian are to hold dear. He was also to maintain his own confident trust in the promises of God, never shirking nor falling short of the divine expectations.

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

Two men who had not kept the faith were Hymenaeus and Alexander. These two had made a shipwreck of the truth which Paul had preached to them. Paul said he had “delivered them to Satan.” What had he done to them? To better understand his meaning, we must turn to I Corinthians 5. In that chapter, Paul commanded that a man who had been committing fornication with his father’s wife be delivered to Satan. At that time he explained what that meant. They were to withdraw fellowship from the man. They were not to keep company with him. He was to lose the advantages of being counted as a part of the family of God. He was to be turned over to Satan whom he had decided to serve.

Paul had already classified the two men who had made shipwreck of the faith as Satan’s messengers.

True Christians were to avoid them and deprive them of all the warmth of life in the body of Christ. This may seem cruel to some. It is not. The withdrawal of fellowship is not intended to destroy the individual who is withdrawn from. It is intended to shock the person into realizing the seriousness of his chosen pathway.

## Chapter 2

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

The sound doctrine Paul urged Timothy to preach included the offering of prayer. Communication with God is a prerequisite to communication with men. One must first find oneness with God before he can persuade others to share in that oneness.

There are slightly different shades of meaning in the various words Paul used here to talk about prayer. First he mentioned supplications. The Greek word which is translated as supplication is **dehvsei**. Supplications are requests for help. They may be requests from God, or requests from men. They may be personal requests, or they may be requests for other persons. The second word is **proseucav**. This word differs from the first word in that the requests are limited to God. One does not make this type of request from the hands of men. The third word is **ejnteuvxei**. The word is translated as "intercession." It tells us a little more about the matter of prayer. As Christians we have the right to approach the throne of God through Jesus Christ. Christ makes intercession for us. Then we have the privilege of making intercession on behalf of others. This word implies special access to God himself in order that we may ask aid for others. The last of the four words is **eujcaristiva**. It is translated as "giving of thanks." The blessings of God come in two major forms. There are those blessings for which we

ask. There are those blessings which come upon us separate and apart from our requests. We should thank God for both classes. Ingratitude should never be a part of the personality of the man of God. Such a man will be grateful to both man and God for any favor bestowed upon him.

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

Among those for whom Christians should pray are those who have the authority to influence human society. Governmental officials such as kings and governors have the ability to plunge millions of people into war, or help them in establishing peaceful relationships. No king is able to reign without God allowing him to do so. However, he is allowed the power to greatly affect the lives of his subjects or citizens.

God permits civil government for the purpose of punishing evildoers and encouraging welldoers. Those who hold official positions are responsible for seeing that these two obligations are met. If they fail to meet these obligations the government will become corrupt and ineffective. If they meet their responsibilities, men may live in peace and prosperity.

I might add that a government which ignores God, Christ and the principles of the Bible can never properly serve its purpose of existence. Christians should pray that governmental officials will make decisions harmonious with the will of Jehovah. Such



decisions make it much easier for the children of God to reflect the image of their Father in heaven.

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

It is good and acceptable to God for Christians to pray for such officials. It is also good and acceptable to God for the officials to act in a responsible manner.

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

If Christians pray for governmental authorities, and if those authorities act as God expects them to act, men who would otherwise be lost will be caused to know the will of God and live by its truths.

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

Prayer is essential because man is dependent upon God. It is impossible for man to set up ultimate values or to extricate himself from the sin corrupted condition in which he finds himself. There is no other completely sufficient source of assistance.

In order to access that one God, man must go through his Only Begotten Son who traveled this way of sin and sorrow and now sits at the right hand of the Father. The Son will be heard. His brethren will be the recipients of the blessings he

can bring to us. Christ is an effective mediator because his Father was divine and his mother was human. He knows both man's suffering and God's power.

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

Jesus Christ offered himself as a ransom for any man who will take advantage of the offer. Nevertheless, salvation is conditional. Those who believe one can live for the Devil here and live with God after this life have deluded themselves. Those who have sold their soul to the service of Satan are owned by him. The only way of release is through the blood of the Son of God. That blood pays the ransom price and the individual who avails himself of it may leave Satan's employment and bask in the sunlight of God's love.

There are two possibilities with respect to the due time at which Christ will be testified. One of these is that it was in the fulness of time that God sent forth his Son. After much preparation, Jesus came and presented the Way of Life. His testimony included giving himself as a ransom for sinners. The second possibility is that the testimony in due time was that of the apostles. This testimony was to begin when they were endued with power from on high on the day of Pentecost.

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

Paul was ordained to be a preacher and an apostle. To be ordained is to be appointed to a task or an office. Paul's ordination was not an action taken by men, but by God. For sectarian groups to demand that those who preach for their group be ordained by men is foreign to this passage. Any man who is a faithful Christian, and who has the information and the talent to present it can be a preacher.

There are no apostles today in the sense that Paul was an apostle. The word "apostle" means "one who is sent" and was used to refer to men other than the original apostles of Christ.

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

Since Paul was both an apostle and a preacher, he had the right to deliver the divine message. In this case, that message was that men should pray everywhere. Prayer is powerful. Paul wished to see men taking full advantage of the privilege of speaking to God.

The major thrust of the verse is that those who pray must approach God with holy or clean hands. If they are to be heard, they must not present themselves as hypocrites. God's ears are open to the righteous; but He turns his face away from the transgressor.

There is a major difference of conviction regarding the use of the word "men." Is Paul saying that men, and men only, are to do the praying in the assembly

of the saints? Or is the word generic and speaking of mankind in general? The word **andra** is related to our English word “androgen” which has to do with male hormones. This would seem to indicate Paul was talking about men as opposed to women. Also, we note that in the very next verse the “women” seems to be contrasted to the men in this verse.

But there is a fly in the ointment. The word “everywhere” is used. Surely Paul did not intend to say women must never pray at any time in any place. If we place this verse beside many other New Testament teachings, I believe we must infer that the word “men” includes women and that neither men or women are to lift unholy hands to God in prayer. At the same time, Paul taught clearly that women are to remain silent in the assembly and not to usurp authority over the man. Women are not to preach in the assembly. They are not to lead in public prayer when men are present. They are to be followers during the worship assemblies, not leaders.

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

The proper way for women to make an impact in the assembly is by being inconspicuous in dress, and humble in manner. Nothing about either their dress or their behavior is to demand attention.

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

The women are to dress themselves in good works. No truly godly woman will ever be ignored. Both God and man will recognize the virtuous woman. She will be recognized by her Father in heaven, by her husband, by her children and by all right thinking brothers and sisters in the family of God.

From long years of experience, your present writer can verify the fact that in nearly every congregation of the Lord's church there are spiritual women who would not think of usurping the authority God has placed in the hands of men, but who have as much influence as those men do in the service of Christ. They do it in a modest unassuming manner.

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

These words must refer to the worship assembly. Priscilla is mentioned along with Aquila as the two of them took Apollos and taught him the way of the Lord more perfectly. In the worship assembly, however, all women are to allow men to take the lead.

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

Women are not to teach men during a worship service. They are to be silent. They may sing. They may make a confession that Jesus Christ is the Son

of God. But they are not to take a place of prominence.

Some question has arisen recently about the use of women as translators in countries where there are no men capable of translating from English to the native language. Must the people give up the privilege of hearing the gospel preached until some man in the area becomes skilled enough in both languages to do the translating? Does this verse prohibit any woman from standing before a worshipping congregation, even under these conditions? To me the answer is unclear. Nevertheless, there is a course of action which must be pursued as rapidly as possible. One or more men must be trained as rapidly as possible in order that they may do the translating. And any woman who might be asked to translate must make it very clear that she is merely transmitting the sermon which a man is preaching.

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

God has a reason for placing women in a submissive role. In the first place, man was created before woman. She was created to be his helper rather than his supervisor. It is not God's plan that women be dominant.

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

God's wisdom in this matter was demonstrated in the disaster which occurred in the Garden of Eden. The woman was deceived. Satan apparently knew she would be more susceptible to his lies. She could be managed more easily than could Adam. The damage that was done was immense. Sin, tears, aging and death entered into the world. God did not intend for woman to be the decision maker. When she stepped into that role, death was the result.

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

In what manner may a woman be saved by childbearing? I believe part of the answer to that question is found in Genesis 3:15. *And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.*

This is a prophecy of the salvation which comes through Jesus Christ. A woman was to bear a child whose heel would be bruised by Satan. That child would be hurt but not destroyed. The child, or seed of the woman, would bruise the head of Satan. To bruise his head was to devastate him. Jesus Christ was the Seed of the woman. He was bruised when he was crucified. He rose again to fight against Satan and he will ultimately destroy him.

But how does this relate to women today? How are they saved by childbearing? Both men and women play a part in bringing a child into this world. The woman, however, is the one who carries

that child until it is born. She is the one who nurses it in the days of its infancy. She is the keeper of the home and she will normally have tremendous influence on the moral development of the child. By bringing children into the world, the woman is reversing the death penalty. As she gives birth to these children and then teaches them to live faithfully and soberly before God, she may save both herself and her offspring.

It is a sad commentary on our present society that a woman is made to feel she is unfulfilled unless she proves herself in the business world. The greatest contribution a woman can make is in childbearing and childrearing. Our world is feeling the effects of our misplaced values along this line. Things will not get better until we give women the honor they deserve as mothers and wives.



## Chapter 3

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

One of the responsibilities Paul designated for Timothy was to appoint elders or bishops in various congregations. No congregation reaches peak effectiveness until it is organized as God has specified. Such organization includes both elders and deacons. Paul would sometimes establish a congregation and then leave Timothy behind to stabilize it.

The six words that are applied to the same office spell out the primary qualities of proper elders. They fall in three groups of two.

The words **Pastor** and **Shepherd** refer to the feeding and care of God's flock.

The words **Elder** and **Presbyter** refer to the maturity level of the men.

The words **Overseer** and **Bishop** refer to the supervisory duties of the men.

No man ever ought to be appointed to the office of a bishop unless he desires that office. It is a rewarding work. But it can also be an exhausting work. I have heard men who have been elders for over twenty years say that if they had known the demands of the office, they would never have allowed their names to be placed in consideration.

It is also true that serious damage can be done to a congregation if men are appointed to the office

without meeting the qualifications God has set up. Men who are immature, greedy or impulsive can scatter God's sheep and destroy their souls.

I have heard some say any man who makes a deliberate effort to become a bishop is automatically disqualified; that there is no place for "politicking" to get this office. I know exactly the point the critics are making here. They do not want to see power hungry and dishonest men placed as elders. They are correct. The office of a bishop is no place for the selfish and the power hungry. But, there is more to this matter. This verse we are discussing talks about desiring the office. Why should we encourage our young men to desire to become preachers of the gospel and then tell them it is wrong to desire to become an elder in the church? Something is terribly wrong here. The church may well have been hurt by persuading potential elders to leave the congregations where they were raised and fill the pulpits of the land. We need fine preachers. We also need fine elders.

If elders are to supervise the teaching and preaching and to be able to identify false teachers, they must be at least as well versed in the Bible as those who preach from the pulpit. The effective preacher may be a better orator. But if he is a better student of the Bible, he can dominate the congregation, and all too often does just that!

How is it that Timothy and Titus were able to move into newly established congregations and appoint elders when the congregations were still in their infancy? How could mature leaders be present in such congregations? I believe the answer lies in

the pattern of preaching which Paul did. If a Jewish synagogue was present he always preached there first. When the men who had been versed in the Old Testament scriptures were converted to Christ, they already had a great deal of experience as leaders. As soon as they had assimilated the basics of Christianity, they were in a position to serve in the office.

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

The God given qualifications for the office of a bishop are listed for Timothy. They are still applicable. Let us look at each of them.

**Blameless** — This does not mean sinlessness. Every man has sinned and come short of the glory of God. If any man says he has not sinned he makes God a liar. Also, I would add that Jesus Christ himself was accused of breaking the sabbath and of blasphemy. The apostles were blamed for creating turmoil in the cities where they preached. It is highly doubtful that any man ever passed through life without being blamed for something. The point here is that any blame placed upon the man who presumes to become a bishop ought not to be justified. He ought to be recognized by the clear majority of the people as one who strives to live a pure and holy life.

**Husband of one wife** — The bishop is to be a male. Liberals both outside and inside the church periodically come up with the suggestion that we are limiting our possibilities when women are not allowed leadership positions. The answer has been, and always will be that God says a bishop is to have a wife. Women do not have wives.

The word wife is in the singular. It is to be one wife, not a plurality. The main thrust of this qualification is no doubt a condemnation of polygamy. In Old Testament times, many men, even such men as David and Solomon, had more than one wife. There are some places in the world today where polygamy is practiced. That is not to be the case with bishops in the Christian church.

Now what about a man who has been married, and whose wife has died? Is this man the husband of one wife? Must a man resign from the eldership if his wife dies? The Bible does not specifically answer the question, unless the answer is found in the verse we are studying. If I were an elder and my wife died, I would resign. I would no longer be the husband of one wife. It may be that God would consider the dead wife the one wife. However, I would not want to take that chance.

Next case! What if a man had been married and his wife died. Then he remarried. Is he now the husband of one wife? It may be that God would consider only the second wife. After all, he does not have two wives at the same time. However, if I were an elder, my wife died, and I remarried, I could not accept the office. I simply would not take the risk. I think God would approve, but I do not know it. I

would not, however, place pressure on another man who had lost his wife to death, or who had remarried after the death of his first wife, to resign the office, or refuse to serve. I could serve under the guidance of such a man.

**Vigilant** — There are men who are not alert and aware of things which are going on around them. If such men are placed in the office of a bishop, all sorts of catastrophes can result. Teaching can be corrupted. Personality conflicts can explode. Finances can get into disarray. Christians can leave the work and return to the world. And all of these things can happen while the bishop sleeps.

**Sober** — Clearly this qualification would eliminate drunkards. It does not stop there. Life is not one gigantic party. A little clean humor is not out of order. But this word guards against those who find it necessary to make light of even the most serious things. The preacher who spends time telling amusing stories in the pulpit is not a sober man. The bishop who takes a flippant approach to life will overlook deadly spiritual diseases within the fold.

**Of good behavior** — The man who has good behavior is one whose life is in order. He is neither a loud clown, nor is he cold and aloof. He will have a warm friendliness, and a quiet dignity.

**Given to hospitality** — There is a neighborliness about the man who makes a good elder. He sees and responds to the needs of others,

even strangers (Heb. 13:2). He will open his home to others. He will also open his heart.

**Apt to teach** — Many who are serving as elders today do not meet this qualification. The elder is responsible for both feeding the flock of God, and convicting the gainsayer. These are responsibilities which must not be passed on to the minister or preacher. If a man cannot do these things, he does not meet God's requirements for the eldership. Nor is it enough to say the man teaches by example. He must be capable of standing before a class, or even the entire congregation and teaching publicly.

Must the elders do all of the teaching, or can this teaching be delegated to others? The elders are not expected to do all of the teaching. The elders may be quite capable of teaching adults, yet very inept at teaching a class of preschool children.

The main point is not to be evaded. God expects the elders to be capable teachers.

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

There are certain negative qualifications. If a man possesses these personality characteristics, he is disqualified.

**Not given to wine** — A drunkard is not to be made an elder. His judgment would be affected. Both his morals and his associates would be suspect. His

influence upon the members of a congregation would be detrimental.

What kind of wine is this which the man must not be given to? Jesus changed water into wine at the wedding feast. Were the guests not to drink the wine after he produced it? The man who is given to wine is one who is controlled by it. He needs to take heed of the words spoken by Paul. *“Be not drunken with wine, but be filled with the Spirit.”* One can be led into action by the Word of God, or one can be led into action by alcoholic beverages. The Christian will be led by the Spirit of **God**. The word “wine” can refer to more than fermented grapes. It sometimes refers to the juice of the grape before it has ever been squeezed out. It is quite possible that the wine Jesus produced at the wedding feast was unfermented grape juice.

Another point which should be made is that in a time and place where the water was dangerous to drink, wine was sometimes mixed with water in a ratio of one part of wine to two parts of water. The alcoholic content of this drink was such that it would have required one to drink massive quantities to reach a condition of irresponsibility.

The best solution for the man who serves as an elder in advanced countries today is to abstain from alcoholic beverages completely. This will leave no question whatever.

**Not a striker** — In a day when labor union members go out on “strike”, we are apt to see the man who is a striker as being one who refuses to work. That is not the meaning here. The striker is

one who retaliates viciously toward anyone who disagrees with him. He “strikes back.” If such a man is installed as an elder, one soon has an entire congregation of “strikers.”

**Not greedy of filthy lucre** — There are possibilities for personal gain in the office of the bishop. The man who is a lover of money might well divert the funds of the church to his own profit. The Bible asks, “*Will a man rob God?*” The man who is greedy of filthy lucre would do just that. He should not be tempted by placing him in the office of elder.

**Not impatient** — Some of the goals of a congregation are long range in nature. One does not decide to build a new church building one day and worship in it the next. One does not teach a five year old one day and see him serve as an elder the next. A man who cannot wait for results may well see haphazard output. It has been said we must **plan the work**, and only then **work the plan**. Unless both are given proper attention, the results will be less than desired.

**Not a brawler** — A brawler is one who loves a good fight. His forte is the knock down and drag out. To him, solutions come about by confrontations. The conflict may not be physical, but it can still be described as a brawl. Sadly enough, such persons actually get into physical conflict. An elder should be a peacemaker, not a brawler.

**Not covetous** — One can be covetous of almost anything which he does not already have in his



possession or under his control. He can covet his neighbor's livestock, his neighbor's wife, his neighbor's fame, or his neighbor's bank account. The potential elder will see the reward of the work of an elder as the opportunity for service in the Kingdom of God.

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

Here is another area in which a large number of elders are deficient. To rule is to cause others to measure up to standards. God is the one who has dominion over all things. The ultimate standards are set by him. There are lesser dominions over which he allows others to rule and to set subordinate standards. A married man is to be ruler of his household. As long as the standards he sets for his family are in harmony with the ultimate standards set by God, the man may expect his wife and children to abide by the decisions he makes.

A good ruler knows what rules to set. He knows the nature of those who are to be subject to those rules. He does not set rules for the sake of reducing others to slavery. Every requirement he makes is intended to be for the welfare of those who are subject to him. This is the kind of man who rules his own house well. His wife and children know he loves them and seeks their good. They will honor his requirements and also his decision. His household will be recognized for their seriousness of purpose and action.

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

Let us suppose now that a man's children are unruly and rebellious. He scolds, warns, argues and beats his youngsters, with little results. The outsider may not be able to spot the cause of this chaos. But, we may be certain there are certain flaws in the nature of the man's leadership qualities. If those flaws are brought into the operation of a congregation, it is not unlikely that the same weaknesses will appear in the work of that church. Such an elder will mishandle personal relationships to the point that friction and defiance will also emerge while he is attempting to care for God's children.

The relationship between a man and his wife should be carefully considered before installing him as an elder. It is not at all uncommon to find an elder taking a certain position during a men's meeting or an elder's meeting, and then find him reversing his stand after he has gone home and made contact with his wife. That can bring serious confusion. A man must be capable of making proper decisions without the immediate input of his wife. He must then be man enough to defend those decisions in the face of wifely opposition.

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

**Not a novice** — The term “elder” implies experience. There are two classes of men who might be considered novices. One is the young man who has not yet been exposed to the trials and tribulations of life. Given more experience, the young man might make quite different decisions. That is one of the great differences between God and man. God has been everywhere and he knows the end from the beginning. A young man just does not have sufficient experience to handle the problems facing the eldership.

The other class of novices is the newcomer to the church. This man may be of mature age, yet not experienced in the operation of the church. He should be given the opportunity to familiarize himself with both the doctrine and the operation of the church before handing him such responsibilities.

The verse tells us the novice may fall into the condemnation of the Devil. I believe the condemnation of the Devil is the sentence which is placed upon him as a result of his defiance of the wisdom and power of God. There are numerous scriptures which lead me to think the Devil was a created being who had been assigned an important role in the angelic realm. If I am correct, he led a rebellion against God and influenced a host of angels to follow his lead.

The young man who is placed in a very influential position at an early age is tempted to think of himself more highly than he ought to think. Rather than leading God’s sheep in the way of the Lord, he may become puffed up and attempt to take them away

from God. He may then find himself placed under the same condemnation the Devil has incurred.

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

**He must have a good report from those without** — Those who are without are those who are not Christians. Is this a good report for his present behavior, or is it a good report for his life before he became a Christian. Either, or both might be the case. If the man lived a wicked life before his conversion, those who are familiar with that way of life which he once lived may constantly remind others of what the man once was. This could cause him to give up and return to the broad way that leads to destruction.

If the good report from them that are without refers to his reputation among nonbelievers at the time he is being considered for the eldership, we can see that his influence upon the community would be crippled and Satan would have a tool for discouraging him.

**1TI 3:8 Likewise must the deacons be grave, not doubletongued, not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre;**

Now that the qualifications of elders have been listed, Paul turned to those for the **deacons**. The word for deacons here is **diakovnou**, which simply carries the idea of serving. It is, however an office.

Any Christian can serve. These officers in the church are expected to serve in a more concentrated manner. There is reason to believe the office was first instituted when the Grecian widows were being neglected in the Jerusalem congregation. The seven men selected at that time were expected to relieve the apostles in order that the apostles could give themselves to preaching and teaching the gospel.

Some of the qualifications parallel those of the elders. Others vary from those given for the elders.

**Grave** — As in the case of the elders, the deacons are not to be light headed and flippant about life. They have serious obligations and their lives must reflect that fact.

**Not double tongued** — We sometimes use the term “two faced.” A deacon is not to stand for one thing at one time and another at a later time. He is to have solid convictions and stand for those convictions in any company.

**Not given to much wine** — A man who is controlled by liquor is not a fit subject for the office of a deacon. If a man is to make judgments as to who needs the help of the church and who does not, he must have his brain in high gear. Men’s souls lie in the balance.

Does the fact that the word “much” is used in this verse mean he can drink in moderation? I personally wish the Bible had simply said, “Do not drink alcoholic beverages at all, under any conditions.” It does not do that. Timothy was told

to take a little wine for his stomach's sake. Jesus turned water into wine at a wedding feast. Solomon said, *Go thy way, eat thy bread with joy, and drink thy wine with a merry heart; for God now accepteth thy works (Eccl. 9:7)*. When we place those facts beside the verse we are examining, it leaves our answer unclear. Perhaps the reason is that the words translated as wine could also mean "grape juice." There are passages in which the word wine is applied to juice which is still in the grape and on the vine. Certainly the Christian ought to take into consideration the admonition which says to abstain from the very appearance of evil. In countries where the water is as safe to drink as it is in most advanced countries today, there is really no need for a man to drink wine at all. This is particularly true of a deacon in the church who is looked at as an example for others.

**Not greedy of filthy lucre** — The deacon will often be handling money. If he has a special affinity for money, he will be tempted to divert funds from the work of the Lord to his own coffers. This will cause harm to the Kingdom of God and will place his own soul in danger.

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

**A pure conscience** — The deacon must believe in the truth of the gospel of Christ. He must not only believe it, he must live it in such manner that his conscience will be clean at all times. He cannot

carry a load of guilt around and still serve satisfactorily.

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

**Proven** — The elder was not to be a novice. The deacon is to first be proven. Neither of these offices have room for the inexperienced who may fall to pride. These offices are not to be used as springboards for self-magnification. They are channels for service, as such men strive to follow in the footsteps of the Saviour.

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

Just as the elders were to be the husband of one wife, therefore male, even so the deacons are to be married. The wives of deacons must also share in their sobriety of life. Silly women could do much damage to their husbands work. The deacon's wives must not be slanderers or accusers of others. The word for slanderers is **diabovlou**. The Devil is an accuser or slanderer. Devilish women will make false accusations, or even take joy in transmitting true accusations. The deacon does not need to work under that kind of load.

The deacon's wife should be a mature person, faithful to God and careful to live in accord with the commandments of the Lord.

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

Just as in the case of elders, the deacons are to be married men. Females are not to be placed in the deacon's office. The safest way is for them to have been married only once, and for that one wife to be living at the time they are serving. I repeat that if I were a deacon and my wife died, I would resign from the office. However, I would not make an issue of the matter if another man desired to continue in the office after his wife died.

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

Service as a deacon is an opportunity for growth in faith. The deacon will have occasion to put his faith to work. When that is done, the faith strengthens. It is an injustice to designate a man as a deacon and then not give him anything to do. By committed service the man may prepare himself for even greater service in the future. In some cases, he will qualify to serve as an elder, one of the most fulfilling positions any man can ever hold in this life.

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



It was not pleasant for Paul to be separated from Timothy, whom he loved as he would his own son. When it became necessary for the two to separate and remain separated for a lengthy time, Paul always looked forward to the reunion and the joy he knew would accompany it.

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

It might be longer than Paul desired. In that case the words which Paul had written in this letter would help Timothy in living a dedicated life for the Lord.

The house of God, as used here, is not a church building made out of bricks and mortar. It is the family of God, made up of Christian brothers and sisters. Paul had written this letter to help Timothy know how to think, speak and act in his association with fellow Christians. The church is the pillar which supports the truth as it is placed before the world. It is also the foundation upon which the truth stands. Unless the members of the church, such as Timothy, reflect the glory of God in their lives, the truth will be hindered.

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

Paul repeatedly talked about the mystery of godliness. It was the mystery which had been hidden in ages past, but which had been revealed through Christ and his apostles. In the fulness of time, God had sent his own Son to be born of a woman, and to live a perfect example before both Jew and Gentile in order that both might have the hope of eternal life. His perfect life was witnessed by both men and angels. After his years of ministry, he was caught up to reign at the right hand of the glorious throne of God in heaven. One day he will come back to take the faithful with him and share that glory with them.

## *Chapter 4*

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

To speak expressly is to be extremely clear. The Holy Spirit minces no words about a time during the Christian age during which there will be a very serious falling away from the faith which has been delivered through Christ and the apostles. If the reader chooses to investigate other passages dealing with this same apostasy, here are a few that teach the same thing. (Matt. 7:15ff; Acts 20:28-30; 2 Cor. 11:3; 2 Thess. 2:1-12; 2 Tim. 3:1-8; 2 Tim. 4:1-7; 2 Pet. 2:1-3 and Rev. 17 and 18).

One cannot depart from the faith unless one has been faithful. The majority of the references cited deal with those who have been true Christians and then have turned away for various reasons. We are not talking about a world which never knew the Lord. These defectors remind us of Judas.

The latter times could be any time after the full disclosure of the mystery of Godliness. It does seem, however, that this condtion was to come upon the church somewhat like a thunderstorm. There would first be rumblings in the distance. Then the winds of false doctrine would begin to blow more increasingly furious. The lightning and thunder would begin to flash and crash. Then the storm would hit in all its fury, carrying away a very large portion of the faithful.

As I write these words, we live in perilous days. The possibility of knowing of the existence of Jehovah, of the coming of Jesus Christ, of the Word which he preached and the church which he established, all of these truths are being beamed around the entire world. Yet the majority of men hold them in disdain. Even worse, the present congregations of the church are losing their identity as they turn to entertainment as the source of attraction rather than the healing and saving power of the gospel.

Powerful gospel sermons are being preached today which would have resulted in a dozen or more persons coming forward for baptism or for restoration to faithfulness. Yet not a single person is moved. This immunity to the presentation of the Word of God is an invitation to disaster.

I believe the human population will reach a time in which it will have convinced itself it lives in a post-Christian age, and that humanism and materialism, rather than the Way of Christ are the realities of life. This will result in a period of lawlessness such as has never been seen in the entire history of mankind. This attitude will prevail worldwide. Only after man has experienced the consequences of his departure will the gospel be heard by great numbers. When that takes place, Satan will be chained for an extended period and the church will move into the mainstream of human society. At that point, we will see the reign of Christ for an extended period. He will be reigning from heaven rather than from earthly Jerusalem. He will not reign for a literal thousand years. But, for

whatever length of time this is, it can be described as a time when the lion and the lamb lie down together and the knowledge of the Lord covers the earth as the waters cover the sea (Isa. 11:9).

Before this glorious day arrives, the departure of which Paul warned Timothy will devastate the earth.

How was the departure to come about? Paul gave a description of the procedure. Seducing spirits and devils will spread their teachings within the very church itself. Satan will gain control of the minds of influential members of the household of God. He managed to deceive the first couple in the Garden of Eden into thinking they could legislate good and evil for themselves. He will continue to use this method of seduction. The devils and spirits mentioned in this verse do not have to be mysterious spiritual beings outside our own experience. They may be men and women whose minds have been invaded by the “Father of lies.” When John advised Christians to “*Try the spirits to see whether they are of God*”, he was not talking about another spiritual world. He was talking about men who teach the way of the Devil.

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

These servants of Satan will follow his lead. They will put on an act, pretending to be angels of light, they will spread their poisonous doctrines. This will not cause them any discomfort because they have disobeyed their conscience so long it no longer has any ability to register a warning.

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

Paul suggested two examples of the type of false teaching which these seducers would spread. The first is forbidding to marry. In the beginning God told Adam and Eve to multiply and replenish the earth. He repeated this same command after Noah and his family exited from the ark. In New Testament times, he has told us marriage is honorable and the bed is undefiled. Those such as the Essenes and the Roman church who teach otherwise are opposing God's will.

But what are we to make of Paul's statement that those who are married are concerned more with pleasing their spouse than they are in pleasing God? This must have reference to the "present distress" which created unusual conditions in the church at Corinth, to whom he wrote those words.

The other example Paul used was the command to abstain from meats. Again, we need to go back to the beginning. At the time of creation, God said man was to eat from every herb and every tree. This would have excluded animal flesh at that time. However, after the exit from the ark, God altered these instructions. He said, they were to feel free to eat every moving thing, even as they had been permitted to eat herbs before that time. During the time of Moses, God specified certain clean and unclean animals. This seems to have been related

to the separation of the Hebrews from other nations. When Peter saw the vision of the clean and unclean animals let down from heaven, he was told God had declared that all were clean. Peter was to preach to the Gentiles. Thus, there are no meats from which God has commanded us to abstain today.

Both the Roman church and the Seventh Day Adventists preach abstinence from meats, either all of the time, or some of the time. Neither of them follow the teaching of the holy scriptures.

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

A Christian may eat meat from any creature he chooses. I admit there are some creatures whose meat I would not relish eating. My father once persuaded mother to cook some muskrats. I had considerable trouble with that! The meat was nearly black and my imagination kept reminding me I was trying to eat a rat! Nevertheless, God does not prohibit eating muskrat. I suppose, if I were hungry enough, I might be grateful to have it.

A major condition for enjoying any of God's blessings is that we demonstrate our gratitude to him for his providential care. The man who is not grateful for the food God has provided does not deserve to have it.

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

What is it that makes various types of meat acceptable for human food? First, it is the fact that God approved the eating of them in his Word. Second, the prayers of thanksgiving render such eating proper in the sight of our Father.

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

Timothy had a solemn responsibility to pass on the truths and warnings which Paul had taught him. Those to whom Timothy preached would be in need of solid and inspired doctrine to protect them from the falsehoods which would be forthcoming in his time. We will also need such truth to fortify ourselves in the present time.

Paul spoke of Timothy being nourished up in the word of faith and good doctrine. The Word of God is nourishment for the spirit and soul of man. False teaching is poisonous and deadly. Timothy had been fed a proper spiritual diet. He was to pass that same nourishment on to others who also needed it.

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

There is always a temptation to mix the wisdom of men with the doctrine of God. Profane and old wive's fables are such things as arise from the



experiences of humans rather than the infinite mind of God. When the almanac or the witty sayings of the barber or beauty shop begin to replace the inspired scriptures, we are walking on trembling ground.

The Christian is to eat the bread of life and drink the living water which Christ provides for spiritual health. Then he is to put this spiritual energy to use in practical godly living.

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

Just as physical food and exercise increase the health of the body, spiritual nourishment and spiritual exercise increase the health of the soul. Godly living is far more profitable exercise than lifting weights or doing situps. Physical exercise fits us for this present life. Godly living prepares us for existence in eternity.

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

Paul emphasized that he was not merely rattling on. The things he was writing to Timothy were critical. They needed to be learned, and then put into practice. Neglect would bring spiritual decline.

**1TI 4:10 For therefore we both labour and suffer reproach, because we trust in the**

**living God, who is the Saviour of all men, specially of those that believe.**

It was because of the importance of these teachings that Paul had been willing to work so diligently and suffer such discomfort and reproach. God can be trusted. His instructions are accurate. His warnings proceed from a loving heart. He is willing to save every man who will listen to his voice.

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

Timothy was to command and teach the doctrine Paul had delivered to him. He was to avoid the false doctrines, tales and old wive's fables which all too many others feed on.

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

Timothy was clearly a younger man than Paul. Youth is sometimes brash and careless. This causes many to discount the preaching of younger men. There was a danger that Timothy would not be heard simply because he was young. Timothy would have to take special care that his life was proper. He was to be an example to others. His thoughts, his words and his deeds must all be harmonious and such as would glorify God and his kingdom.

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

It is interesting that Timothy was told to pay attention to his reading. What was it that Timothy was to read? The twenty-seven books of the New Testament had not yet been assembled as a unit.

Surely, a part of the reading material was to be the law, the prophets and the writings of the Old Testament. In addition, Timothy had this letter from Paul, and another would come later. If the young man was to properly exhort men to obey the Word of God, he needed to know that Word. The same is true with every man who would preach or teach the gospel. He must spend hours and hours in meditation. When he has filled himself so completely that he is running over with the living water, then he has the right to be heard.

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

Timothy had a gift which had come to him as a result of prophecy and of the laying on of the hands of the presbyters or elders. In 2 Timothy 1:6, it seems that he had a gift which came about from the laying on of Paul's hands. Rather than proving Paul was an elder, I believe this indicates that at some time, according to the prophecies of the Old Testament, Paul laid his hands on Timothy and conferred certain spiritual gifts upon him. Probably, at the same time, the elders laid their hands upon

Timothy, showing their approval of his work as an evangelist.

Timothy was charged to make full use of the powers which had been given to him. We may make application to ourselves. Though we do not perform miracles, we are to make the spiritually blind to see, the spiritually lame to walk and the spiritually dead to live. Every man has been provided with certain skills and opportunities. These must not be neglected. The rewards for using them are many. The punishment for neglecting them is sure and awful.

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

Paul told Timothy to think about the matters concerning which he had written, and to go about them with all his heart. If that was done, Timothy's life would glow with spiritual radiance and God would be glorified.

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

It has been said that, "I cannot hear what you say because what you do is crying so loudly in my ears." Also, "I would rather see a sermon than hear one any day." According to Luke, he was about to tell of the things which Jesus began, "*both to do and to teach.*" After learning of the doctrine, Timothy

must take care that he lived by it and remained true to it. If so, he could rest assured in his own salvation and rejoice in the obedience of those whom he taught.



## *Chapter 5*

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

This verse is not talking about rebuking a man who holds the office of elder in the church. It refers to older male Christians. These men are to be treated as if they were one's own father. Normally one would love and respect a father. The older men are usually fathers to someone. They should be honored and respected.

The younger men are to be treated as brother's in one's family would be. I am aware of the fact that not all fleshly brothers get along perfectly. This verse assumes a loving and cooperative relationship.

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

That elderly woman may not be your mother, but she probably is someone else's. She will have given much to both her family and the church. She deserves honor and respect. Her wisdom, gained from experience can be a tremendous help to the younger women.

The younger women are to be treated as sisters. My mother made it a point, when I was nearing the age to begin dating, that the girl I dated should be treated as I would like some other young man to treat my own sister. Paul said to treat these young women with all purity. They were not to be sexual targets. They were made in the image of God.

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

A widow in Paul's day could well starve to death. Social Security did not pay a monthly check to such persons. Without a husband to support them life could be mighty grim. These widows were to be given the same type of respect as the older women.

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

The widows were to be supported with food and other needs. If they had relatives who were able to care for them, those relatives were expected to see that their needs were met. Their children, and even the brothers or sisters children, were to feel a responsibility. James informed us the pure religion and undefiled before God involves caring for the widows and orphans.

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

There would be some of these widows who would have no relatives who were able to help. In that case, other members of the church were to help out.

It is consistent with other passages, that the one who receives help is to be one who is faithful to God;



one who prays and serves the Lord continually. Some have used this verse to deny the Christian's responsibility toward those who are needy outside the church. One must be careful. God has also said we are to do good unto all men, especially those of the household of faith. A certain amount of judgment must be used here in deciding whether contributions are helping or hindering the spiritual health of the recipient.

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

Here is the real contrast. The woman who lives a degraded life is not to receive help, whether she is in the household of faith, or outside it. God expects our pearls to be cast to those who appreciate them, not to swine.

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

When persons are given help, they are to be charged with living a life of purity. They are to have been decent persons in the past, and they are to grow in spiritual stature while they are being assisted.

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

God expects a man who brings children into this world to do all he can to support those children. If he fails in that duty, he has denied the plan of God as revealed in the scriptures. Having denied God's wisdom, he makes himself an enemy of God. He is an unbeliever and will face the wrath of God if no change takes place.

Throughout the Bible it is assumed that the man is the head of the household and also the one who is the main provider. Present society is largely denying that order. Women are placing their children in daycare centers and are drawing more money than their husbands. This is bringing havoc. Children are losing the benefits of being trained and disciplined by their own mothers. These women are becoming convinced that since they are the main provider for the family, they have the right to make final decisions. Men are being denied the role which God intended. Unless this is reversed, we will find out just how wise God is and how foolish those are who attempt to ignore him and direct their own steps.

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

Any good woman who needs help and cannot provide it for herself should be cared for. However, this verse tells us there should be a great deal of hesitancy before doling out help when it is not needed and deserved. A woman who was over the age of

sixty was to have special attention. She would be less apt to be capable of caring for herself.

The widow who was to receive help should not have been one who went from husband to husband. The elders and deacons were to have been the husband of one wife. The widow who received help was to have been the wife of one husband. If she had been married to only one husband, and that husband was now dead, she might very well be destitute.

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

These are the characteristics of the widow whom God urges fellow Christians to support. She will be known for her good life. She will have a reputation for doing many different types of good works. Her children will have been well cared for. She will have cared for those who came through her area preaching the gospel. She will have shown herself to be a gracious hostess by washing her guests feet. The washing of feet was important in that the guests had often traveled in sandals over dusty roads. Paul was not discussing a religious ceremony. She will have cared for those who were sick or injured. Since she cared for others, she also should be cared for.

Paul summarized by saying she should have willingly performed every good work of which she was capable. It would be difficult to take issue with

the fact that this kind of woman deserved the aid of the church.

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

The widows who were under the age of sixty were in a different class. If the church began supporting them, there was a strong possibility they would lose their ardor for Christ. They would probably find another husband and would no longer need the help of the congregation.

There is reason to believe these widows indeed were a special group in the churches. What would be wrong with a widow receiving assistance, and then after having received it for some time, finding a husband who would support her? Perhaps these “widows indeed” made a special commitment to give their time to church activities in which women could engage. Verse nine talks of taking them into the number as if they were a special class. This present verse sounds as if some special commitment was made.

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

If I am correct in seeing this group of widows indeed as widows who had committed themselves to special work within the church, we can see why they might bring damnation upon themselves in accepting support and then not keeping their commitment to God and his Kingdom.

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

Since they had support coming from the members of the congregation, they would not have to support themselves. They could then utilize the time they would have been using to serve God in ways which suited their own fancy. While they were unoccupied, they could wander around among the houses of the members, spreading gossip and becoming increasingly lazy.

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

The women who were young enough to bear children were encouraged to marry, raise children and keep their own house. This would keep them so busy in righteous action they would not have time to do things which would give Satan a right to claim them as his servants.

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

Sadly enough, there were some who had already followed the pattern Paul was concerned about. Gossip and talebearing are tempting activities for

women who do not have enough to do. Or even among those who have enough to do, but ignore those duties. Satan finds them easy prey.

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

The “widows indeed” do not have relatives who are capable of assisting them. Since the church has a responsibility toward these women, it should not find it necessary to help those who do have such relatives.

All of this brings to a focus the vast difference in modern society when compared with the one existing then. Our present intervention of government into these matters means many of these widows would be cared for by social security benefits. Since church members pay taxes, they are certainly justified in asking for relief for these widows. There is, however, the question as to whether the government should be involved at all. Perhaps the nation would be healthier if individuals and churches solved these problems at the lower level than to spend large sums of money on administrative expenses.

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

Here, and in the following verses is a section which authorizes financial or material support for elders who spend full time in that work. Once again, the reader is reminded that this language is not pointed toward the paid pulpit preacher. A preacher might be one of the elders of a congregation, but usually he is not. He operates under the oversight of a group of elders. If one or more of that group of elders spends a large amount of time in the activities of that office, it is right to pay him for his work. The double honor is not just verbal recognition. The next verse proves that.

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

The quote is from Deuteronomy 25:4. Paul also quoted this same passage in I Corinthians 9:9. Both times he was encouraging support for those who devote much time to the work of the the Lord.

The second part of the verse is a quote from Matthew 10:10. This is unusual. Paul is quoting from a New Testament book. Not a bad idea!! The laborer is worthy of his hire. No laborer is more valuable than the one who serves faithfully in the vineyard of the Lord. If any laborer is worthy of pay, such a man is.

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

The elder here is one who holds the office of a bishop, not simply any older person. These elders were to meet very special qualifications before being installed in their office. It is not likely that they will flagrantly disobey the will of God. If one has reason to believe this has occurred, there should be substantial evidence before an accusation is made. Severe damage can be done to the entire congregation if a false accusation is made against an overseer.

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

The caution of verse nineteen is not meant to prevent chastisement of an elder who has sinned. He is not immune to correction just because he is an elder. In fact, his correction is to be apparent to everyone. This will cause other members of the congregation to have respect for divine instructions.

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

Paul left no doubt about the necessity of dealing with elders who sinned. There was to be no partiality. Sin is deadly. It must be treated regardless of the importance of the one who commits it. There are congregations that hesitate to take action against elders who sin. Sin is sin, no matter who perpetrates it.



But who are the elect angels? I believe this refers to the two groups of angels. One group was caught up in Satan’s rebellion. The other group has remained faithful to God. Just as the scriptures refer to faithful humans as the “elect” of God, these angels have elected to follow God, and God therefore elects them.

**1TI 5:22 Lay hands suddenly on no man, neither be partaker of other men’s sins: keep thyself pure.**

Often the laying on of hands was done by an apostle who conferred miraculous spiritual gifts upon a person. Since Timothy was not an apostle, this laying on of hands is simply Timothy’s approval of an individual as qualified for a certain work. It might be the office of an elder. It might also be other responsibilities.

There is another possibility here. It could be that the laying on of hands has to do with accusation of sin. In that case, the verse is a reinforcement of the previous caution about rebuking an elder. Do not punish a man before you are fully certain he is guilty.

At all times Timothy was to be careful to avoid contaminating himself while he associated with others. There would be temptation to join in with the devious activities of both Christians and unbelievers. Like Timothy, all Christians are to shun even the appearance of evil.

**1TI 5:23 Drink no longer water; but use a little wine for thy stomach’s sake and thine often infirmities.**

Timothy had some type of stomach problem. This was not an instruction applicable to all Christians in that day and our own. Wine is sometimes prescribed in our own day for stomach trouble. I know of one high level official in a Christian college who was told by his doctor to use a small amount of wine each day. He objected because he had never used alcoholic beverages.

Rather than encouraging the use of wine in moderation, this verse indicates Timothy was a “teetotaler.” He had to be instructed to use the wine as a medical treatment before he would imbibe. Wine does not usually remedy infirmities. In contrast, there are a number of infirmities brought on by the use of alcohol.

**1TI 5:24 Some men’s sins are open beforehand, going before to judgment; and some men they follow after.**

The word judgment in this verse is probably not the final judgment. It more likely refers to a judgment as to the character of a person who might be selected for a position of responsibility. Sometimes the deficiencies are openly evident and all can see them before the person is appointed. Other times they are not evident and only surface after appointment. Careful examination should be made in every case to avoid as much later grief as possible.

**1TI 5:25 Likewise also the good works of some are manifest beforehand; and they that are otherwise cannot be hid.**

Just as some sins lie hidden, there are men whose good works are not evident. When these men are appointed to responsible positions, these good works begin to surface. Happy is the congregation that places such a man in a place where he can freely practice the great faith which he possesses. He will not seek his own personal glory. But Christ will be held up and the entire church will shine with the glory of God.



## *Chapter 6*

**1TI 6:1 Let as many servants as are under the yoke count their own masters worthy of all honour, that the name of God and his doctrine be not blasphemed.**

Slaves were owned by their masters in the days of Paul and Timothy. We can only imagine what the conditions of some of these slave Christians might have been. Some master were no doubt compassionate and loving. Others must have been despotic and cruel. The Christian was to do his very best to obey his master and to give him whatever honor could be given. By constantly criticizing his master, and rebelling against him, the servant could bring the name of the Lord into disrepute.

The same admonition is useful today. A Christian employee who spends excessive time in false criticism of his employer creates a bad impression for all Christians. We do have the right to point out offenses which have been committed against us. We do not have the right to harp incessantly about every decision made by our employer. Sometimes it is not easy to draw this line, but the Christian must try.

**1TI 6:2 And they that have believing masters, let them not despise them, because they are brethren; but rather do them service, because they are faithful and beloved, partakers of the benefit. These things teach and exhort.**

The servant who had a believing master was fortunate, if the master actually put Christian principles into practice. The relationship between a Christian master and his Christian servant was to be a warm and considerate one. Such a relationship would bring benefits to both the master and the servant.

Not only were such servants to develop a good relationship with their master. They were to encourage others to do the same. An attitude of this kind would solve many employer and employee problems in the present day. Too often just the opposite is true. The employee sees the employer as an enemy and persuades other employees to see him in like manner.

**1TI 6:3 If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness;**

Some servants would no doubt refuse to either act cooperatively, or even listen to this kind of godly wisdom. The servant was to use Christ as a model. Christ came as a servant. He did not spend the majority of his time complaining. The servant who does do so is out of order.

**1TI 6:4 He is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings,**

The servant who opposed his master with arguments, refusals to obey and malicious thoughts was a very unwise person. All kinds of difficult personal confrontations were to be expected from these attitudes and actions.

**1TI 6:5 Perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness: from such withdraw thyself.**

It is a common thing for men to be self-serving. When this is the case, their minds have been polluted and their hearts are far from the truth. They equate material riches with godliness. Here again we see the “gospel of prosperity” in action. If you are faithful, you will be prosperous. If you are prosperous, you must be faithful. It is not necessarily true. Many spiritually strong Christians are very poor in this world’s riches. And many who abound in this world’s riches are poor in faith. It is well to part company with those who spend most of their time attempting to amass the riches of this world.

**1TI 6:6 But godliness with contentment is great gain.**

What is the measure of Christian growth. One of the measures is real contentment. The man or woman who can be contented with what they have, and simultaneously live a godly life, has moved several steps toward heaven.

**1TI 6:7 For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out.**

Every newborn child enters this world without a single possession. Every corpse has left everything behind. The only things we can take to heaven with us are the things we have sent on beforehand. The invisible things such as our good works will follow us.

**1TI 6:8 And having food and raiment let us be therewith content.**

Some of the happiest people I have ever known had little more than enough to pay the bills for the month. What they did have was have utter confidence that God would watch over them and cause all things to work together for good.

**1TI 6:9 But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition.**

Some of the most miserable men on earth have been the richest. They constantly worry that their houses will be broken into, that their children will be kidnapped and held for ransom or that their business ventures will go sour and they will end up penniless. As an example of this point, some of the athletes who have received multimillion dollar contracts have been entrapped in the use of drugs,



resulting in loss of both their health and their bank accounts.

**1TI 6:10 For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.**

The accumulation of money becomes a game with many persons. It is not enough to have sufficient money to take care of foreseeable needs. The person must see if he can double or triple his fortune, just for the sake of counting his coins. Peter and John once told a man who had been lame from his mother's womb, that they had no silver and gold, but they did have something else. The man was told in the name of Jesus Christ to rise and walk. That man would forever know where to place his priorities.

**1TI 6:11 But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness.**

Rather than joining in the furious search for riches, the man of God should set other goals. The development of the fruit of the Spirit of God is the primary aim of the good man. *“Fear God and keep His commandments, for this is the whole duty of man.”*

**1TI 6:12 Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art**

**also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses.**

Timothy was not to fight for riches. He was to reach out for everlasting life. That was the reason for his existence. When he confessed Jesus Christ as the Son of God and Lord of all, he had entered into a good profession. A professor is one who professes truth. Timothy was to be a professor of the life which had been placed before him by the Christ. Many were watching him day by day. It was important that his words and his actions both add to the good confession.

**1TI 6:13 I give thee charge in the sight of God, who quickeneth all things, and before Christ Jesus, who before Pontius Pilate witnessed a good confession;**

There is no more solemn charge that can be given. Paul was telling Timothy that both God and Christ were constantly aware of his manner of life. When Jesus stood before Pilate, he had made the great confession that he was the Son of God. It cost him his life. Now Timothy must provide a similar confession before all who observed him.

**1TI 6:14 That thou keep this commandment without spot, unrebukeable, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ:**

The commandment Timothy was expected to keep was that of living a holy life. The time would

come when his Lord would return. If Timothy was to be like the five wise virgins, he must take up his cross daily and follow in the footsteps of Jesus.

**1TI 6:15 Which in his times he shall shew, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords;**

The world might dismiss Jesus as a myth, or an annoyance which prevented them from living according to their own lust and pleasures. That attitude would prove to be a terrible mistake. When he comes, he will arrive as King of kings and Lord of lords. Those who have despised his love and his wise commandments will bow the knee and confess his majesty, but it will be too late.

**1TI 6:16 Who only hath immortality dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honour and power everlasting. Amen.**

Men who seek fulfilment will be of two different classes. First, there will be those who rejected Christ. They will find that while they were searching for life in this world they have forfeited life everlasting. Second, there will be those who have sacrificed all to follow the Lord. They will find that while having sacrificed their lives in this world, they have found eternal life.

What is immortality? When Adam and Eve were created, were they immortal, or were they only

potentially immortal as they had access to the tree of life? This is an interesting verse which is used by some to say that only God is immortal, and that man will die if he is denied access to the tree of life. This is used to make a further point that man will not suffer eternal torment in the lake of fire, because his soul will be extinguished after a period of punishment appropriate to his evil works while alive.

Such a position does not harmonize with Jesus statements concerning eternal reward and punishment. The reader should compare the 41st and the 46th verses of the twenty-fifth chapter of Matthew.

*MAT 25:41 Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels:*

*MAT 25:46 And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.*

The Greek word used to describe the torment of verse 41 is exactly the same word used in verse 46 to describe life. The duration of the joy of heaven is to be precisely the same as the duration of the torment of hell.

Immortality, as used in this verse we are discussing, is life in the presence of God. The one who inherits that condition will be immune to the second death, or separation from God.

**1TI 6:17 Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy;**

There are some faithful Christians who are rich in material possessions. But there are none who are highminded and place their trust in those riches. The place for the Christian's trust is in the God who created the silver and the gold. If one seeks first the kingdom of heaven, the Giver of good and perfect gifts will see that the "things" will take care of themselves.

**1TI 6:18 That they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate;**

It will not be a critical matter for the righteous that they lack in monetary goods. They may still be rich in the things that really matter. God will value them not by their possessions, but by the willingness they have to serve their Father and their fellow man.

**1TI 6:19 Laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life.**

By performing good works they have fulfilled the purpose for which God created them. They will have seen beyond the cemetery and prepared for the

time when they shall meet their Lord and be invited to enter into the joys of the Lord.

**1TI 6:20 O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust, avoiding profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so called:**

Timothy had been trusted with his own life, with the Christ, and with the opportunities to teach lost souls. He was not to treat any of these trusts lightly.

There would be many who dealt in the wisdom and the frivolity of men. Their speech was capable of shipwrecking the faith of both themselves and of others. Profane and vain babblings are words centered on the temporal. Science falsely so called is knowledge which is not true. Some have used this verse to pit modern science against the Bible. That is uncalled for. The word “science” has to do with possession of knowledge. Some of what is thought to be true knowledge is actually false. It is “science falsely so called.”

True science and true theology are not opposed. Very often false science is opposed to true theology, or false theology is opposed to true science. It invites disaster to pit truth in religion against truth in science. They are not incompatible. They work as a team for the glory of God.

**1TI 6:21 Which some professing have erred concerning the faith. Grace be with thee. Amen.**

Yes indeed! Some have contaminated the faith once delivered to the saints by compromising it with false science. Geology is a valuable science, but when it declares the earth to be four and one half billion years old, it contradicts the Bible. Biology is a valuable science, but when it mistakenly contends that man is the end result of evolution from the slime of the ocean, it contradicts the Bible. Astronomy is a valuable science, but when the wonders of the heavens become objects of worship, it contradicts the Bible. Physics is a valuable science, but when it attempts to tell us the universe created itself out of nothing, or that it has existed eternally, it contradicts the Bible.

The first chapter of Romans accurately pictures the dangers pointed out by Paul to Timothy.

*For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse: Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things (Rom. 1:20-23).*

Grace is never far from the mind of Paul. He had received it. He had rejoiced in it. He wanted Timothy, and all others to share it with him!







**The Book Of  
Second Timothy**



# *Introduction*

## **The Author**

The author was the apostle Paul. No careful student of the Bible would question this. Only modern extremely liberal scholars doubt it.

## **The Person Addressed**

I and II Timothy and Titus are sometimes called “pastoral” epistles. Timothy and Titus were not pastors, they were evangelists. Timothy is the recipient of the letter. He was one of Paul’s closest companions. See 2 Cor. 1:1; Col. 1:1; Phil. 1:1; Philemon 1

Timothy often acted for Paul when Paul could not be present. Paul had apparently converted Timothy in Lystra on his first missionary journey (Acts 14:6 and 16:3). Timothy’s father was a Greek and his mother was a faithful Jew. Paul spoke of Timothy as his child in the faith (I Tim. 1:1-2).

## **Date of Writing**

Probably written about A.D. 67 or 68, shortly before Paul’s death.

## **Setting**

Nero reigned from A.D. 64 to A.D. 68. Rome had suffered from a terrible fire and Nero used the Christians as a scapegoat. The book of Acts concludes

with Paul showing optimism. I Timothy has several passages indicating hope and future plans. II Timothy was probably written after Paul had been released from prison and then imprisoned a second time.

### **Purpose of the letter**

To encourage young Timothy to continue faithfully in the preaching of the Word of God after Paul's departure.

# Chapter 1

**2TI 1:1 Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, according to the promise of life which is in Christ Jesus,**

Paul had not pursued the task of apostleship. He had opposed the cause of Christ as vigorously as he knew how. Then, after being confronted by the Lord Jesus Christ on the road to Damascus, Paul reversed his whole pattern of life and followed the directions of the Son of God who commanded that he become an apostles to the Gentiles. Paul's will was completely subjected to that of God. *"It is no longer I that live"* (Gal. 2:20).

The apostle had acted as he had because of the hope of life which is found in Christ. If Christ could be raised from the dead, so could he. If Christ could be raised from the dead, so can vast numbers of Christians who have died to a life of folly and who have been raised from the waters of baptism to walk a new life.

The hope of resurrection is the backbone of the majority of the apostolic sermons in the book of Acts. The apostles were **convinced!**

**2TI 1:2 To Timothy, my dearly beloved son: Grace, mercy, and peace, from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.**

Timothy was the son of Paul through the gospel. How can we reconcile this statement with Jesus warning to call no man "Father?" I believe we are

to call no man father in the sense of receiving truth from him as its absolute source. God, and God only, is the ultimate source of truth.

It was possible for Paul to speak of Timothy as his son in the gospel in that he had planted the seed of the Word in young Timothy's heart. As every man should love his son, Paul loved Timothy because he had worked with God in bringing him to spiritual life.

Because of his love for the young man, Paul prayed that God's blessings might rest upon him. He prayed for three things; grace, mercy and peace.

Grace is that which God offers to us over and above that which we deserve. Mercy is God's willingness to forgive when we fall short. Peace is that which takes place when we demonstrate ourselves to be the friends of God, and not his enemies. When this happens, all three members of the Godhead cooperate in offering their assistance.

**2TI 1:3 I thank God, whom I serve from my forefathers with pure conscience, that without ceasing I have remembrance of thee in my prayers night and day;**

Paul is thankful to God for the precious memories he has of Timothy. He continually includes him in his prayers. We are reminded that all of us are told to "*pray without ceasing*" (*I Thess. 5:17*). Obviously, this means a general attitude of prayer rather than one long sixty minute, twenty-four hour, three hundred and sixty-five day a year prayer.

The apostle reminded Timothy that he had served God in good conscience with the faith which had been passed down from his forefathers. Timothy knew that, even when persecution was nearly unbearable, Paul had kept the faith. Paul well knew of that same transfer of faith from Timothy's mother and grandmother.

**2TI 1:4 Greatly desiring to see thee, being mindful of thy tears, that I may be filled with joy;**

The apostle was confined in chains in a Roman prison. Timothy may have been in Ephesus. Paul had a deep desire to see him, though it seemed he probably would not because of the chains. Notice that Paul is far more concerned about the tears of Timothy than he is about his own plight.

Often Christians find themselves separated from other children of God who have been an inspiration to them. A brief letter might mean much in such cases. We must, however, not be dismayed if this is not possible.

It would be a source of great joy to Paul if he could see Timothy again. Parting often brings deep sorrow. Reunion may wipe those tears away.

**2TI 1:5 When I call to remembrance the unfeigned faith that is in thee, which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois, and thy mother Eunice; and I am persuaded that in thee also.**

One of Paul's most precious memories was the undiluted faith which he had seen in Timothy. This faith had traveled down through three generations. One does not receive faith through genes and chromosomes. However, the man is a most fortunate one who is exposed to parents and grandparents who possess an unfeigned faith. How very badly today's world needs godly mothers and grandmothers such as Timothy had. The man who would destroy the faith and purity of a mother, or even a prospective one, is a man to be despised.

**2TI 1:6 Wherefore I put thee in remembrance that thou stir up the gift of God, which is in thee by the putting on of my hands.**

Timothy is reminded to stir up the gift which had been imparted to him by the laying on of Paul's hands. Miraculous gifts were bestowed in this manner. It is likely that Paul is referring to such a gift.

This verse must be compared with I Timothy 4:14 Timothy is told not to neglect the gift which was given him by the laying on of the hands of the presbytery. It is probable that two different gifts are mentioned here. From Acts 8:14 there seems to be no room for those who were not apostles to confer miraculous spiritual gifts.

It is unwise to neglect any gift God has bestowed upon us. Timothy is urged to make full use of his gift, in order that it will realize its purpose. To neglect



any work God has placed before us is to invite God to remove the opportunity.

**2TI 1:7 For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.**

Timothy is not to be afraid to preach Christ. No man should ever fear, or hesitate in the preaching of the gospel. With the aid of God's power and guidance, none can defeat us. The love which every Christian should have will not allow him to keep the truth to himself. Also, the preaching of Christ is the product of a sound mind. Skeptics would have us believe Christians are intellectually inferior. Just the opposite is true.

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**2TI 1:8 Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God;**

Paul had said in Romans 1:16 that he was not ashamed of the gospel. It is the power of God unto salvation. Timothy was to have that same attitude. There are far too many Christians today who are either ashamed or unable to stand up, defend the gospel and let it be known that they are Christians.

It would have been a tragedy if Timothy had allowed Paul's imprisonment to dull his enthusiasm for preaching. In more than one way, Paul was a prisoner of the Lord. He had placed his will completely at the disposal of the will of God. He was in that sense a prisoner of Christ. He had allowed Christ to capture his mind. This had resulted in his physical imprisonment in Rome. The man who is ashamed of another Christian's misfortune which results from his service to Jesus, is a most pitiable excuse for a man.

There is a hint here that one should actually consider affliction as a part of the fellowship of Christ.

**2TI 1:9 Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began,**

We have been called out of the world by a plea from God himself. It is a holy calling because it came from a holy God. It is also a holy calling because it demands a holy life.

This did not come about because we had earned it by our works. It did not come about because, by our own effort, we were able to tear ourselves from the grip of the world. It came about because God made the arrangements and provided his own Son as an example of perfect and sanctified living.

The death of Jesus Christ for the sins of the world was foreseen before the world began. He is

the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world (Rev. 13:8). These plans have been unfolded through the revealing of the “mystery of God” (Eph. 3:3-9).

**2TI 1:10 But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel:**

For long ages, the scheme of redemption had been in preparation. It was only with the appearance of the Lord that we saw the fruition of the plan. Through Jesus Christ, death has been defeated, and true life is offered. This is why Timothy is urged to stir up the gifts within him. That gospel must be preached! If Jesus could be raised from the dead, all men may have that same hope. **Men must be told about it!**

**2TI 1:11 Whereunto I am appointed a preacher, and an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles.**

It was because of the glorious appearing of Christ's gospel that Paul felt the compulsion to preach. He had not come on his own. He had been appointed by the Lord and sent an apostle to the Gentiles (See Acts 22:21). The apostle had never forgotten that charge. For the most part the Jews had rejected Christ. When they did so, Paul was to initiate the taking of the gospel to the farthest regions of the earth. Timothy must now see that this task was continued.

**2TI 1:12 For the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.**

The things Paul spoke about suffering were, in particular, those connected with his imprisonment. He felt no shame over his confinement because it was the result of his diligence in preaching the Word of God. At various other times he even spoke of rejoicing in such affliction. He was perfectly confident Christ would care for, and guide his servants. One must never fear his time and talent has been wasted when he commits them to Son of God. Timothy need not worry that he might also find himself in a prison cell, provided that imprisonment came about because of his commitment to the Master. That day would be far less important than the day of judgment. No other day stands equal to that one.

**2TI 1:13 Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus.**

Paul's advice is to cling tightly to the entire system of teaching which had been delivered. The apostle had received this information. The words had been passed on to Timothy because of Paul's love for the man, and because of his faith in the power of the Word. That same love which had caused Paul to preach to Timothy must be transferred by

Timothy to other men. Sound words are nourishment to the soul.

**2TI 1:14 That good thing which was committed unto thee keep by the Holy Ghost which dwelleth in us.**

That good thing which had been committed to Timothy's keeping may be the sound words of the faith discussed previously. One remains true to it with the aid of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is given to those who obey the Lord (Acts 5:32). The Sons of God are led by the Spirit (Rom. 8:14). No man who is led by the Holy Ghost will discard the faith which has been delivered to the saints (Jude 3).

**2TI 1:15 This thou knowest, that all they which are in Asia be turned away from me; of whom are Phygellus and Hermogenes.**

It is a sad day when faithful proclaimers of the gospel are rejected by the masses. Paul had given much to the men of Asia. They had turned away from the truth. Timothy might well expect the same fate and face the same problems.

For all time, the two men who were leaders in that rejection were marked by Paul as the enemies of God. May God never have to write our names in the book of the damned.

**2TI 1:16 The Lord give mercy unto the house of Onesiphorus; for he oft refreshed me, and was not ashamed of my chain:**

Timothy had been warned of the evil men named in verse fifteen. Now Paul called his attention to a man who was just the opposite. This man had supported him and refreshed him without hesitating.

There is a great need for those who can refresh others. Many bear severe problems and are in much need of strength of spirit. Others need physical food and clothing. The Christian does all he can to meet those needs.

There would have been shame if the reason for Paul's bonds was valid. It was not. In this case the chains were the symbol of faithful service in the Kingdom of God.

**2TI 1:17 But, when he was in Rome, he sought me out very diligently, and found me.**

Onesiphorus had been drawn to the apostle. If danger was involved, it appears not to have daunted his energy. He sought **diligently**. It must have been very satisfying to know, while bound in chains, that a fellow Christian cared this much.

**2TI 1:18 The Lord grant unto him that he may find mercy of the Lord in that day: and in how many things he ministered unto me at Ephesus, thou knowest very well.**

The greatest good one can offer his fellowmen is a prayer for the mercy and grace of God to rest upon him. Paul's supply of silver and gold may be been

running low, but one thing he could do was to pray for God's storehouse in heaven to be opened to Onesiphorus. It sounds as if Paul, Timothy and Onesiphorus had been in Ephesus together at one time. At that time, Timothy had seen Onesiphorus in action. The implication is that Timothy would be wise to follow the example of Onesiphorus, rather than that of Phygellus and Hermogenes.



## Chapter 2

**2TI 2:1 Thou therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.**

Timothy was the son of Paul in that it was the seed of the gospel which Paul had placed in his heart that brought about Timothy's birth into the Kingdom of God. The Bible commands that we *call no man father*. Thus, a father-son relationship with respect to the wisdom of men as a guide to the knowledge of good and evil is rebellion against God. The apostle was not pleading for Timothy to accept his own human wisdom. He was proud of the part he had played in Timothy's conversion. As any man desired the growth of his son, Paul urged Timothy to strengthen his faith and service in the Lord. It is a matter of grace because it comes through the wondrous willingness of God to provide us far more than we deserve.

**2TI 2:2 And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.**

The gospel must be communicated from generation to generation. Timothy had received this gospel as a precious treasure. He must not allow it to cease with his death. He is urged to commit the teachings to **faithful men**. All men fall into two basic classes. It is a waste of time to present the gospel to wicked men. They will only listen for the sake of disputation.

The other class of **righteous men** will be hungry for the truth. These men are a delight to teach. Not only are they a delight; they will multiply the effectiveness of the Word of God. The gospel must be committed to the faithful, not to the irresponsible who will trample it like pearls before swine.

**2TI 2:3 Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.**

Every Christian will face difficult battles. The poor soldier will meet defeat. The good soldier will be prepared with the armor of God, as described in Ephesians 6:11-17. Jesus promised that endurance to the end will result in a fantastic reward (Mt. 24:13 and Rev. 2:10).

**2TI 2:4 No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier.**

The soldier who becomes involved with other matters than the battle in which he is engaged will endanger both himself and that which he seeks to defend. Timothy was attempting to do the work of an evangelist. As a soldier in the front lines of Christianity, his attention must not wander toward extraneous interests. Such would be displeasing to God.

This same principle applies to every Christian. God needs men and women whose center of life is

the Kingdom. We will please him only if we so center our lives.

**2TI 2:5 And if a man also strive for masteries, yet is he not crowned, except he strive lawfully.**

A different illustration is now presented. The scene changes from the battlefield to the athletic stadium. Throughout recorded history, men have enjoyed watching athletic competition. It has provided many an illustration for the pulpit. Paul did not hesitate to make use of it.

Just as the soldier must struggle, so must the athlete. But, this time the emphasis is upon playing by the rules. We are all enrolled in the Christian race. This means we must follow the regulations set up by Christ. There will be no crown of life if we abandon the conditions presented by the Saviour and his apostles. One simply does not run outside the basepaths without being called out.

**2TI 2:6 The husbandman that laboureth must be first partaker of the fruits.**

In this verse, we have yet a third example. This time the lesson is drawn from the keeper of the fields. It is to be expected that the person who labors diligently in dressing the grapes will feel free to take of the harvest before any other. Timothy has much to look forward to. God will not forget his loyalty. See I Corinthians 15:58. His labor will not be in vain.

**2TI 2:7 Consider what I say; and the Lord give thee understanding in all things.**

The Lord's truths must not be taken lightly. If a man meditates on them day and night and applies them to life's struggles, God will see that the individual grows in wisdom and understanding. James said, "*If any man lacketh wisdom, let him ask of God who giveth liberally to all men and upbraideth not, and it shall be given him*" (Jam. 1:5).

**2TI 2:8 Remember that Jesus Christ of the seed of David was raised from the dead according to my gospel:**

A proper remembrance of the death and resurrection of Jesus will lead us to consecrated action. Paul calls it "*my gospel*." It was, of course, the gospel of God, or the gospel of Christ. However, Paul believed the preaching of this gospel to be a blessed privilege. Yes, he could rightly say it was "his gospel." He loved and cherished it dearly. He understood he could preach it to others and offer them its blessings without giving it up in any way. There are some things one may give to others and still keep for one's self.

**2TI 2:9 Wherein I suffer trouble, as an evil doer, even unto bonds; but the word of God is not bound.**

The apostle was imprisoned as if he were a common criminal. He would, however, not allow that

to become a blockade to his preaching efforts. It was not Paul who was truly bound. He was free. If anything was hindered by Paul's imprisonment, it was the Devil. From inside those chains Paul's message has rung down to us through twenty centuries. His bonds and afflictions have inspired men from his day to ours. Even his guards and captors were sometimes converted by the story of redemption. Many of them were persuaded to enlist in the Christian race.

**2TI 2:10 Therefore I endure all things for the elect's sakes, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory.**

It was certainly not pleasant for Paul to suffer indignity and punishment. Nevertheless, if other men could have the opportunity to respond to the gift of salvation, it was worth any temporary suffering Paul might endure. The glory which lay ahead far outweighed the present pain. The elect are those who comply with the commandments of Jehovah.

**2TI 2:11 It is a faithful saying: For if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him:**

There are two senses in which the words of this verse are true. The danger of physical death merely reminds us Christ has conquered death and has promised the faithful they shall live with him. It is

also true, as stated in Romans 6 that those who are dead to sin are alive in Christ.

**2TI 2:12 If we suffer, we shall also reign with him: if we deny him, he also will deny us:**

The example of Christ is that of hardship followed by glory. Our lives will also include both, and in that order. To reign with Christ it will be necessary that we share in his suffering. To deny him will bring a denial from him at a most critical of all times, the judgment.

**2TI 2:13 If we believe not, yet he abideth faithful: he cannot deny himself.**

Unlike the two previous similarities, a failure in faithfulness on our part will not bring a similar reaction from Christ. He will remain faithful, even if we are unfaithful. Jesus is always true. We may falter, but he will not. He will neither deny his tasks, nor will he deny those like Timothy and Paul who serve him. Compare Titus 1:2. *“In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began;”* (Titus 1:2)

**2TI 2:14 Of these things put them in remembrance, charging them before the Lord that they strive not about words to no profit, but to the subverting of the hearers.**

Timothy is urged to remind the faithful men mentioned in verse two, of the things Paul has been saying. Such should stimulate them into greater faith and service.

It is altogether too easy to become entangled in disputes about the meaning of words, while forgetting the vital matters of Christian teaching and life. When men strive over words, they cause confusion in the mind of the listener. This can result in lost souls. In the estimation of Paul, no greater calamity was possible. I am afraid such wrangling over words is a common weakness in congregations of the Lords' people.

**2TI 2:15 Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.**

Timothy must study to show himself approved. If such was true of Timothy, so must it be for me. God gave us an intellect and his plan requires that it be used. There will be differences in ability. Such differences will not disqualify the weaker intellect, if it be used to the fullest. Only through a proper understanding of the truth may a man determine the correct disposition of the disputes which arise among men. There should be a great sense of shame when individuals have called themselves Christians for decades and are still helpless before the confusion and division brought about by sectarian doctrinal errors.

Not only is it important that we, as Christians, not be ashamed. It is important that God not be ashamed of us for our lack of diligence.

**2TI 2:16 But shun profane and vain babblings: for they will increase unto more ungodliness.**

Profane babblings are empty and useless foolishness which center upon the temporal and carnal rather than on the eternal and spiritual matters which are the heart of life. Paul is probably warning Timothy about conversation of this kind which arises among members of the church. Great preaching will always be based upon the revelation of God—not upon jesting, entertainment or the wisdom of men.

A comparison of the conflicting ideas which various men defend as truth will quickly show how fragile the human mind is. It is well and proper for men to investigate principles in the scientific world, and to defend their positions. However, when men begin to legislate in spiritual matters, they bring on much damage in the form of conflict, controversy and division. Such babbling leads to epidemics of ungodliness and evil works. Good and evil ideas are like life itself. They reproduce and grow. Speech is the precursor of action. Foolish babbling produces correspondingly foolish actions.

**2TI 2:17 And their word will eat as doth a canker: of whom is Hymenaeus and Philetus;**

Note the similarity between the word canker here and the word cancer. We are all too well aware of



the destruction of health produced by a cancer. As it grows, the body is racked with pain. Ultimately, the cancer diverts all of the nourishment which would normally feed the body to itself. The body starves while the cancer enlarges. Foolish words, like those spoken by Hymenaeus and Philetus, will eat away at the body of Christ. Unless quick preventive measures are used, members of the body may be lost forever.

It is often even more difficult to identify the causes of spiritual illness than those which are physical. The Bible is very clear about the danger of false teaching. We cannot consume and feast upon the vain babbling of false teachers without suffering spiritual cancer of both the individual and the congregation.

**2TI 2:18 Who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some.**

Hymenaeus and Philetus had been teaching serious error. Hymenaeus was mentioned in the first letter to Timothy (1 Tim. 1:20). There, he is said to have departed from the faith. Now we find the nature of his departure. He had not become a lover of carnal pleasures. He simply taught that the resurrection had already occurred. This was in direct opposition to what Paul had taught. It may not seem to be of great significance. Yet, it caused Paul to say Hymenaeus had departed from the faith.

It is likely that these false teachers were contending the only resurrection to be that of the

soul, and not of the body. Such is not the teaching of the Bible. There will be no question as to whether or not the resurrection has occurred when it does finally take place. When the heavens are rolled back as a scroll and the elements are melted in flaming fire, men will know it. It will be both a great and a terrible day.

**2TI 2:19 Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.**

Some will depart from the faith. They will then overthrow the faith of others. But, God knows his own and he will protect those who love him. He provides the strength of the Holy Spirit to aid the loyal in their battle against Satan. There is no power above, on or under the earth which can tear God's own away from his protecting hand. Those who proudly and boldly carry the name "Christian" in all its glory will prevail. Sadly, those who turn to false teachers voluntarily leave his shelter and then are overcome.

**2TI 2:20 But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some to honour, and some to dishonour.**

The house of God contains materials of many kinds. Some, like gold and silver, will endure without

corruption. They bring honor to both themselves and to God. Others are like wood and dirt. They soon combine with the lower elements and become corrupted. They carry great danger for all with whom they associate.

We must take care here that we do not come to the conclusion that we may not contact false teachers at all. They must be met, and they must be taught out of their error if it is possible. Jesus did not hesitate to make contact with sinners. On occasion they may be rescued from the fire.

**2TI 2:21 If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work.**

Hymenaeus and Philetus had proven themselves to be dangerous. They were not about to be corrected. They posed a serious threat to the spiritual health of others. Timothy would be wise to avoid them and thus keep himself as a valuable instrument in the hands of God. Jehovah has much for each of us to do. We must prepare ourselves by fortifying our souls with the truth. This will allow us to overcome the lies and carry the truth into the whole world.

God is the potter and we are the clay. He will shape us into whatever type of vessel he desires, provided we make ourselves pliable. Then, we may become vessels of honor, regardless of the degree of talent which may have been granted to us.

**2TI 2:22 Flee also youthful lusts: but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart.**

Doctrinal error is not the only danger Timothy must avoid. Life can go awry in ideas, in speech and in actions. Paul now cautioned Timothy to flee from the lusts of youth. Human fleshly appetites are powerful forces. A young person in the prime of life may be swallowed up by various hungers. They must be overcome. Paul urged Christians to buffet their bodies and bring them under subjection.

If our days are wasted in lustful pursuits we will fail to add the Christian virtues to our lives. By avoiding destructive behavior and thoughts, we may be able to call upon the Lord with a pure heart. When this is not the case, God will turn away from our petitions with disgust.

**2TI 2:23 But foolish and unlearned questions avoid, knowing that they do gender strifes.**

The avoidance of foolish arguments and human wisdom is a constant theme throughout 1 Timothy, II Timothy and Titus. The teaching of the gospel must be made relevant to our own time through illustration and example. However, it must not suffer mutilation and alteration to suit the judgment of men.

There are thousands of foolish and unlearned questions which can be brought up. They are trivial in nature, but certainly not trivial in the devastation

which they are able to being about. They are able to keep the people of God in a constant dither. Meanwhile the questioner enjoys the bantering.

What is a foolish and unlearned question? I have heard accusations made that very serious and meaningful questions were foolish, simply because the person the question was addressed to was made uncomfortable by it. Questions should be taken seriously, even when there is doubt as to their motivation. There is no faster way to anger a person than to dismiss his or her well intentioned questions as being foolish and unlearned. Let us strive to make our questions meaningful, and also to be fair in responding to those of others.

We would do well to remember that what may be a foolish and unlearned question to one person may be a serious and meaningful question to another.

**2TI 2:24 And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient,**

The Christian is to be like his Master. Jesus was the Prince of peace. It is true that Jesus was often found in the midst of controversy. It is certainly not true that he enjoyed this condition. It is sometimes necessary to contend for the truth. But, it is never correct to promote contention and strife. The true Christian is ever seeking peace. When he finds men teaching error, he will first approach the matter with patient teaching. If it finally becomes evident that the false teacher will not renounce his error,

the Christian will, reluctantly, enter into contention with him. Jehovah is the God of peace. Peace and harmony are the hallmarks of his children. *“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God” (Matt. 5:9).*

**2TI 2:25 In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth;**

There are various ways of approaching those who teach contradictory information. One way is to gloat over their errors and assume an attitude of superiority. The Christian is never delighted that others have made mistakes. The loving Christian will point out the error. He will instruct when instruction is needed. But the teaching will be done in humility. The truth which he presents will not be presented as his own personal accomplishment, over which he can boast. The humble approach may bring about a change in the false teaching. A haughty attitude will very often destroy others and drive them into further and deeper error. Jesus always taught the “truth in love.”

**2TI 2:26 And that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will.**

The self-opposers have been made captive by Satan. He will not release his own without a fight. Most servants of Satan have been deluded into

thinking they are simply exercising their right of free will and demonstrating their freedom. The exact opposite is true. They have been ensnared by the Prince of darkness. Their actions follow his will.

Is it not interesting that when they escape, they are said to “recover themselves?” If a man does not strive to escape from Satan’s lies, he will be forever lost to finally walk in outer and utter darkness. To separate oneself from the light in this world is to qualify for absolute separation from the God of light in eternity.





## *Chapter 3*

**2TI 3:1 This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come.**

The term **last days** is used in more than one sense in the Scriptures. Joel spoke of the pouring out of the Spirit in the last days. Peter said this took place at Pentecost. Thus, the entire Christian dispensation is labeled as last days when contrasted with the days of Abraham, Moses, etc.

However as Paul speaks, these **last days** were still in the future. They are apparently the days just prior to the coming of the Lord as described by Peter, and by Paul in I and II Thessalonians. These are very likely the days of the reign of antichrist. In the last days of which Paul spoke perilous times would threaten all that the Word of God promotes.

**2TI 3:2 For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy,**

In these last days selfishness would come into full bloom. When men are lovers of themselves, the entire list of evils mentioned in this verse will run roughshod over society.

No person can carefully observe our own generation in the 1990s without seeing the close comparison between the list Paul gives and the list which occurs in our daily newspaper headlines. Disobedience to parents, ingratitude, blasphemy and

pride in filthy reveling are attempting to smother the efforts of the righteous. In addition, it is very difficult to be optimistic concerning any improvement in the situation in the near future.

**2TI 3:3 Without natural affection, truce-breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good,**

These lovers of self become so wrapped up in themselves they lose even their concern for mothers, fathers, and friends. The entirety of verse three indicates a generally hostile attitude toward all others. The antagonism reaches its zenith when these pride filled people rage against God, Christ, the Holy Spirit, the church and the Bible.

**2TI 3:4 Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God;**

A self-centered person can not be trusted to keep promises. Personal pleasure and personal gain take first place. Anything else which gets in the way will be treated as an enemy. When there is a choice to be made between God and personal pleasure, their path will be predictable. It will lead in the direction of carnal gratification.

**2TI 3:5 Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away.**

Sadly, the danger from them is increased because some of them make a pretence of being religious.

Their tongues offer lip service to God. Their lives deny what their tongues confess. Their hearts are far from Jehovah.

Godliness is supposed to result in a new and holy form of life. But, these are completely devoid of any of the fruit of the Holy Spirit. The form is there. The power is not.

Association with such persons can lead to corruption. It is best to avoid partnerships with them. It is even dangerous to consider ourselves as administering the medicine of the Great Physician, because these individuals refuse to recognize their own disease. They have the potential to infect the physician.

**2TI 3:6 For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts,**

Paul seems to be describing men in particular. These men of perverse hearts can always find women who are willing to accept their corrupt attentions. It is sad that men are attracted to women whose souls are filthy with sin and whose bodies are rotting with disease.

Both the men who take them and the women who are taken by them are slaves to their own lust, and therefore servants of Satan.

Jesus spoke of Pharisees who devoured widows houses (Matt. 23:14) . Amos pictured lazy wives as “*cows of Bashan*” (Amos 4:1).

**2TI 3:7 Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.**

How truly verse seven describes the pride-filled intellectual who travels his own self directed path! Fact after fact is accumulated through the use of stained glasses. With these distorted “facts” false conclusions are drawn which are forced into the mold of a godless philosophy. Year after year they continue building up their delusions and moving ever farther from the real truth.

Also, I might add that I have observed men forty and fifty years old in the universities taking full time loads as professional students. They never apply the information in any practical manner. Life should be like the Sea of Galilee where the water both enters and exits. It should not be like the Dead Sea where the water enters but has no exit.

**2TI 3:8 Now as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith.**

Jannes and Jambres were the Egyptian magicians who attempted to match the power of God, as shown through Moses and Aaron, with the wisdom and power of men. Just as these two failed, those who follow their example and try to oppose the will of the Creator will be overcome. They are reprobate to God's laws. Corrupt minds will lead to corrupt actions.

**2TI 3:9 But they shall proceed no further: for their folly shall be manifest unto all men, as theirs also was.**

The folly of Jannes and Jambres was made evident to both the Egyptians and the Israelites. Their foolishness was brought to an abrupt halt. The souls of the men of every age, who fight against God, will be laid out naked for all the universe to observe. This includes the principalities and powers of the angelic world (See Ephesians 3:10).

**2TI 3:10 But thou hast fully known my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, charity, patience,**

Unlike these wicked men, Timothy had come to a knowledge of the truth. Even though evil men opposed the teachings of God, Timothy was expected to continue to build his life upon Christian principles. He had begun well in incorporating the Christian graces into his pattern of behavior and thought. He must not depart from that path. Both mind and deed are mentioned.

Paul only urges Timothy to follow his doctrine and manner of life because it is also that of Jesus Christ.

**2TI 3:11 Persecutions, afflictions, which came unto me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra; what persecutions I endured: but out of them all the Lord delivered me.**

Timothy was well aware of Paul's difficulties in preaching the gospel. He had traveled with him and undoubtedly he had shared in some of the afflictions. He also knew very well that God had allowed Paul to overcome them and to continue in spite of them.

**2TI 3:12 Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.**

Is there a Christian in this world who has not seen some type of persecution because of his loyalty to Christ? There are many forms. Sometimes it occurs as mental torture and mockery. Again, it may be a lack of respect for the Christian mentality, as the high and mighty believe it to be immature and weak. In other cases it may well be physical abuse or deprivation, such as it was in Paul's case more than once.

**2TI 3:13 But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived.**

Do the evil men and seducers wax worse and worse only during the lifetime of Timothy, or is this to be a continuing thing and deepening rebellion until the return of the Lord? I think that question cannot be answered from the present verse alone.

The nineteenth and twentieth chapters of the book of Revelation may be indication that a period of triumph for the gospel is ahead, followed by a short but very wicked period just previous to the second coming of the Christ.

It is no doubt true that abandonment of the commandments of God will bring on deception of many kinds.

**2TI 3:14 But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them;**

There must be no compromise with error on the part of a Christian. When one has been privileged to learn the truth, he must “*sell it not.*” It was more than just learning the truth; it was being **assured** of the truth, that would insure Timothy’s guarding it jealously. He had received these things from the beloved Paul. Paul had received them from heaven. They did not come from men. They were too precious to let them slide.

**2TI 3:15 And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.**

The training of Timothy had begun at the right time. It began when he was a child. Some have even said the training of a child must begin while it is still in the womb.

The Scriptures are not limited to bringing temporal wisdom. They also impart eternal truths which save the soul from death. This wisdom grows out of faith in Christ and dependence upon his Word.

**2TI 3:16 All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:**

Notice that the “all scripture” spoken of here refers back to the Holy Scriptures mentioned in verse fifteen. The Holy Scriptures were inspired of God. They are not the product of the minds of men. While the wisdom of men will fail repeatedly, the revelation of God is sure and dependable. It will never fail.

Used properly, God's inspired Word will perform four functions.

1. It will provide a complete pattern of life.
2. It will inform the stubborn.
3. It will correct the wayward.
4. It will make righteousness clear.

This corresponds with what Jesus had to say about the purpose of the Holy Spirit (John 16:8).

1. It would reprove men of sin.
2. It would reprove men of righteousness.
3. It would reprove men of judgment.

This is precisely what Paul did in his confrontation with Felix.

*And as he reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, Felix trembled, and answered, Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee (Acts 24:25).*



**2TI 3:17 That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.**

In order to become what God expects him to be and to do all God expects him to do, man must be properly furnished. God has done all that is necessary to see that this is the case. He has provided him with material needs. He adds to this his providential oversight. And he has made the Holy Scriptures available that man may have no excuse for falling short.

The word “perfect” does not imply that any man is sinless without the cleansing blood of Christ. Abraham and Job were both declared by the Scriptures to be “perfect” men. They stood as giants of faith in their generation. Working hand in hand with God, and with our fellow Christians, we may also be perfect. Nothing which a man needs in order to be approved of God will be denied him.,

A good question for discussion here is whether or not the verse teaches that the Holy Scriptures **alone**, and without any other blessings from God, will thoroughly furnish man to every good work.



## *Chapter 4*

**2TI 4:1 I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom;**

The charge Paul laid on Timothy here is no more than that laid upon every Christian. Not only is the charge laid upon us; it is witnessed by both the Father and the Son. This becomes a matter of the greatest importance when one realizes Christ's appearance will bring his kingdom to its culmination on earth. At that time he will judge both those who have passed on before, and those who are still living. Each and every one will answer for the way they have responded to the Holy Scriptures.

**2TI 4:2 Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine.**

If the Word of God is preached, no opposition can permanently prevail against it. The preaching of the gospel is never out of season. It must be done without cessation. Ultimately it will be victorious!

There will be times for bone jarring language. There will be times requiring the preacher to rebuke and exhort. Men must be turned from evil ways and encouraged in right ways. But, always, the preaching must be done in patient longsuffering. And always it must be done accurately and precisely, being true to that which has been revealed from heaven.

**2TI 4:3 For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears;**

What is the time spoken of here? Does it lie within the lifetime of Timothy, or is it the period just previous to the return of the Lord and judgment, when he will take vengeance upon them that know not the Lord. Such teachers with itching ears have abounded in every century. Still, it seems Paul is talking about a time when such teachers will dominate the earth.

Teachers having itching ears are those who listen carefully for what the listeners wish to hear and then give them that which they desire. In such cases the true Word of God is ignored in favor of the wants of the multitude. There will usually be enough teachers willing to teach “smooth things” that those who wish to evade the harsh reality of the truth will feel justified in doing that.

**2TI 4:4 And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.**

We are saddened when we contemplate this picture. Men would rather manufacture their own delusions than to receive the revelation of God. They will not be pressured into obedience. They will love the lie and despise the truth. They will be much more impressed by pretty speeches than by the facts,

commands and promises of the Holy Scriptures. Every true preacher is all too much aware of these tendencies upon the part of both preachers and listeners.

They will be allowed to spread their fables and their delusions—but God will not be pleased.

**2TI 4:5 But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry.**

Timothy then received a last admonition from his beloved teacher. The young man must retain his faith and transmit the truths which he has learned. The hearts of evil men must be brought into contact with the gospel. This would require a willingness to suffer afflictions, just as Paul had done. In spite of that, he must do the work of an evangelist. In other words, he must teach men the good news.

To make full proof of his ministry was to bring forth evidence of his conviction that Jesus Christ is the Saviour of the world. Timothy must prove his faith. He had to be able to give a reason for the hope which dwelt within him. We must also be prepared to support our hope with solid evidence.

**2TI 4:6 For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand.**

The apostle then looked at his own fate. This caused him to speak with mixed emotions. He knew he would soon face the authorities and the verdict would likely be parallel to that of Jesus, his Lord.

His life would then be poured out in a final sacrifice.

Would it not be wonderful if each of us could be as positive as Paul that we are ready to be offered; ready to make our departure from this present life?

**2TI 4:7 I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith:**

The fight Paul fought is the Christian warfare. It makes use of the full armor of God against the Devil and his angels. Paul had finished his Christian race and he had caught a glimpse of the glory just beyond the finish line. The faith Paul had kept was the righteousness of God. He, along with all other men, had sinned and fallen short of the mark. But Paul was perfectly confident of God's mercy for the faithful.

**2TI 4:8 Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.**

The confidence the apostle expresses here is astounding. He had once described himself as the chiefest of sinners. Yet, here he is certain his change of life and dedication to the faith of Jesus Christ has placed him in position to receive a crown of life. Perhaps we who strive so hard should have more confidence in our eternal destiny.

It is not like Paul to think only of himself. He now sees the crown of life awarded at the judgment

to each of his faithful fellow laborers. They are the only ones who can truly be said to love Christ's appearance and look forward to it.

**2TI 4:9 Do thy diligence to come shortly unto me:**

How he longed for Timothy to be present with him! It seems his "son in the faith" has become even dearer to him as the end approached. It is easier to bear up under the trials of life when we may lean on others of like precious faith.

**2TI 4:10 For Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world, and is departed unto Thessalonica; Crescens to Galatia, Titus unto Dalmatia.**

Demas is spoken of three times. The picture is not a pleasant one. He is first called a fellow-laborer. Then he is just mentioned without a description. Now, he is said to have forsaken Paul, and probably Christ, because of his greater affection for the world. When men who have formerly been recognized for the outstanding faith tumble and fall, it hurts even worse than in the case of those who had but little faith.

Paul normally traveled with a small band of companions. They had all scattered to various works, or else like Demas, they had returned to the world. We are pained, along with the great evangelist, at his lonely condition.

**2TI 4:11 Only Luke is with me. Take Mark, and bring him with thee: for he is profitable to me for the ministry.**

Luke still remained with Paul. There are a number of “we” passages in the book of Acts which supposedly include Paul and Luke. John stood at the foot of the cross even while Jesus was crucified. Luke stayed with Paul, apparently to the end.

It is strange that Paul called for Mark. He had parted ways with Barnabas over a dispute about John Mark. Apparently the differences were entirely buried at this time and Mark is considered a valuable fellow worker again.

**2TI 4:12 And Tychicus have I sent to Ephesus.**

Tychicus acted more than once as a messenger for Paul. He delivered letters to the various churches.

**2TI 4:13 The cloke that I left at Troas with Carpus, when thou comest, bring with thee, and the books, but especially the parchments.**

It was not even time then for Paul to take his ease. The cloke which he desired was likely for the cold and damp conditions of a prison cell. The books and parchments were so much a part of his life that they must be there for him in those last hours.

An attitude similar to that of Paul is often seen today in the last years of those who have labored



in the teaching of the Bible. At times, even those who are blind will be found with a Bible lying in their lap.

**2TI 4:14 Alexander the coppersmith did me much evil: the Lord reward him according to his works:**

Metal craftsmen sometimes opposed the teaching of the apostles because they stood to lose the market for their brazen images and false gods. This one must have been a man of great influence to have been spoken of in this way. Only the Lord will know how to sufficiently punish a man like this one.

**2TI 4:15 Of whom be thou ware also; for he hath greatly withstood our words.**

Timothy was also warned to be careful about Alexander. He was still influential and would be sure to oppose Timothy's teaching just as he did that of Paul. It is just this sort of foolish man who had been condemned throughout Paul's epistles to Timothy and Titus.

**2TI 4:16 At my first answer no man stood with me, but all men forsook me: I pray God that it may not be laid to their charge.**

One must be impressed with the power of this man who had caused Paul's friends to leave him. We cannot help but wonder if we would left him also, if we had been present. Let us hope not!

The prayer here reminds us of two other very similar ones. Jesus said, while upon the cross, *“Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.”* Stephen said, while being stoned to death, *“Lay not this sin to their charge.”* Now Paul expressed himself in like manner. Paul had heard Stephen's words. Perhaps Stephen had heard those of Christ. The courage of conviction is contagious.

**2TI 4:17 Notwithstanding the Lord stood with me, and strengthened me; that by me the preaching might be fully known, and that all the Gentiles might hear: and I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion.**

Being forsaken by men means very little, provided God is still with us. The strength and power which created and sustains the universe will be sufficient for our every need.

Through Christ all righteous purposes can be attained. Paul had been appointed a special messenger to the Gentiles. Because God had special plans for him, no obstacle was too great to overcome. No force could intervene successfully. I believe the “mouth of the lion” is not a literal statement. It very likely stands for all of the terrible dangers which he had faced. The Devil himself is described as a “roaring lion.”

**2TI 4:18 And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom: to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.**

Paul feared no man. God had promised to provide. Though the Kingdom of God is in existence now, Paul is speaking of the perfected state of the Kingdom after Christ offers it to the Father after his return. He desired to be a part of that glorified eternal state.

Because God is willing to provide, He is due all glory and honor from both men and angels.

**2TI 4:19 Salute Prisca and Aquila, and the household of Onesiphorus.**

Priscilla and Aquila were the pair whose house became a place for instructing the great orator, Apollos.

**2TI 4:20 Erastus abode at Corinth: but Trophimus have I left at Miletum sick.**

The list of faithful Christians continues, as Paul rejoiced in their dedication. Christianity was very personal to Paul. He could present the grandest of ideas. But he never forgot that Christianity is about people and their needs.

**2TI 4:21 Do thy diligence to come before winter. Eubulus greeteth thee, and Pudens, and Linus, and Claudia, and all the brethren.**

We sometimes think of names such as these as minor names. I do not think Paul thought in that way. To him, there were no minor Christians.

**2TI 4:22 The Lord Jesus Christ be with thy spirit. Grace be with you. Amen.**

No man can offer another more than to offer a prayer for the grace and presence of God to be with him.



**The Book Of  
Titus**



# *Introduction*

## TITUS

### **The Author and Date:**

This is an epistle from the apostle Paul to a younger man whom he had converted in the course of his missionary travels. Paul was very concerned about the welfare and the productivity of both Timothy and Titus. He wrote these epistles to each of them as a means of strengthening their faith and increasing their usefulness in the Kingdom of God. It would not be a great deal longer before Paul would pass off the scene and such men as these must be ready to carry on the work.

This letter was probably written at about the same time as I Timothy and 2 Timothy, perhaps in between those two epistles. It is difficult to establish a certain date. The best estimate which we can make is A.D. 67

### **Purpose and Nature of the Book:**

Instructions were given for Titus to follow in the selection of elders. Also included were instructions as to the responsibilities of various persons in accomplishing the work of the church. There was strong emphasis upon holding fast to the sound doctrine which Paul had delivered to his listeners.

## **A Note of Recognition for the Apostle Paul:**

Those of us who are older and established could well ponder the attitude of the apostle toward younger Christian leaders. Jealousy and pride are a detriment to the work of God. We must be careful not to smother the development of promising young men. Paul looked upon the potential of such young men as being more precious than all the gold on earth.



# Chapter 1

**TIT 1:1 Paul, a servant of God, and an apostle of Jesus Christ, according to the faith of God's elect, and the acknowledging of the truth which is after godliness;**

As he often did, Paul began with a reference to his apostolic authority. He calls himself both a servant and an apostle. Great men are not hesitant to let it be known that they wish to be of service to their fellow men. Blessed is the man who can find the proper balance between authority and service. Each of us must at times do as we are told. There are other times when each of us has the responsibility of directing the lives of others. Let us be careful to see that we serve with respect and command with love. Paul was able to do both with dignity.

Whether Paul acted as a servant or an apostle, he did it because he cherished the faith of God's elect and shared it with them. He acknowledged the revelation from God as being truth and obeyed it as such. It was this truth that allowed men to conduct Godly lives.

**TIT 1:2 In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began;**

Not only did Paul serve God because of his faith in God and his respect for the truth. He did so because of the hope of eternal life which God had revealed through Christ and had embedded in his

heart. When Paul was converted on the road to Damascus, he had seen the glory of Jesus Christ. He could never be the same again. If Jesus Christ could rise from the grave, so could any other man who followed in his footsteps.

Paul made a point of comparing the prophecies of old with what was happening during his own lifetime. As early as the third chapter of Genesis, God had begun to make the promise that sin would be overcome. The promise became clearer with the call of Abraham and the statement that in his Seed, all nations of the earth would be blessed. Jehovah never forgot that promise. He kept reminding men during both the Patriarchal and the Mosaic ages that salvation from sin lies ahead.

God is truth. By definition he cannot lie. If he made a promise that eternal life would be made available, we may count on that promise. Paul knew Jesus Christ was the fulfilment of that promise.

**TIT 1:3 But hath in due times manifested his word through preaching, which is committed unto me according to the commandment of God our Saviour;**

It was a great source of wonder to Paul that God had chosen to reveal the long hidden message of salvation to all men through such a frail instrument as he was. The prophets of old had longed to see what was to appear in the days of Jesus Christ and his apostles. Now Paul realized he had a very special part to play in unrolling that secret of the ages to both the Jew and the Gentile.

It was not just a whim on the part of Paul. It came about because God, as the Saviour of the world, had commanded that he preach the gospel of salvation.

**TIT 1:4 To Titus, mine own son after the common faith: Grace, mercy, and peace, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ our Saviour.**

Both Timothy and Titus are spoken of as Paul's sons through faith in Christ. Sometimes those whom we convert to the Lord are more truly our descendants than are those who are born to us of the flesh. Spiritual life is vastly more important than physical life. If one brings a child into the world through fleshly birth, that child may well face physical death some day, unless Christ appears first. But when one causes another person to be born a second time through the planting of the seed of the gospel, that person need never die the second death, provided he or she remains faithful to the end.

Grace provides us with the wonderful blessings which we can never deserve. Mercy allows us to escape the wrath which might have descended upon us. Peace is the condition of mind which arises when all is well between ourselves and the Father in heaven. Paul desired that Titus enjoy all three of these.

**TIT 1:5 For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things**

**that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed thee:**

Titus was then reminded of the reason he had been left in the island of Crete. He was expected to aid in the establishment of order in the churches. Specifically, he was to see that elders were appointed in every city.

This verse indicates that congregations of God's people are not all God would have them to be until they are working under an eldership. If qualified men are present in a congregation, immediate steps should be taken to see that they are appointed to the office.

It is interesting that these churches could have qualified men this early. If Paul had established the churches through his preaching, it would have been just a few years until Titus was told to appoint elders. We have many churches today which have been in existence for fifty or one hundred years and still do not have men meeting the qualifications for appointment. We must ask ourselves what is wrong. Leadership is sorely needed presently in the Lord's church. We cannot afford to neglect the training and appointment of godly men to the office of elder.

Perhaps one of the reasons such men were found was that there were converted Jews in the congregations. These men would have been spiritually mature, needing only to move from the law of Moses to the perfect law of liberty in Christ Jesus. This could have taken place in a short time.

**TIT 1:6 If any be blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children not accused of riot or unruly.**

Titus was then given the qualifications for the appointment of men as elders. The elder or bishop must be **blameless**. Clearly this does not mean he is without sin. Romans 3:23 tells us all men have sinned and come short of the glory of God.

Nor does it mean that no one has ever blamed the man for doing that which is wrong. There are those who would point a finger of blame at the best of men. This is shown by the treatment our Lord received. He was accused of blasphemy, of breaking the Sabbath, of keeping company with sinners and of being a winebibber and a glutton.

To be blameless in the sense of this verse, is to live such a life that other Christians may recognize an example of holy living. The elder is to lead the sheep. He cannot do that without causing them to desire to walk where he walks.

The elder must be the **husband of one wife**. I believe this qualification is meant to prevent a polygamist from serving in the eldership. This is more of a problem in some nations than it is in the United States. Yet, we do hear of men being married to more than one woman at the same time in this country, even though it is illegal.

Certainly the man who has been married and has divorced his wife for any other reason than fornication, and then has married again, is not a qualified candidate for the eldership. He is not even a faithful Christian unless he has repented.

We also have the possibility of a man having been married and outliving his wife. He has had only one wife. Yet he does not have a wife after her death. Does her death disqualify him for the eldership? As I said previously in the discussion given by Paul to Timothy, I believe the qualification exists to prevent polygamy. However, if I personally were an elder and my wife died, I would resign to be absolutely certain I was not out of order.

Can a man who has been married and whose wife was unfaithful to him by committing fornication, then marry another woman and serve as an elder?

I believe he would not be disqualified by the statement in this verse. However, the matter of expediency enters the picture here. It would probably be wise for him to reject an offer to serve as an elder because of the general attitude of others who might not have justifiable reasons for divorce and remarriage, yet desired to serve.

There are dozens of hypothetical situations which can be brought up here. As an example of just how complex some of them can be, consider the following. What if a man, while still living in the world, came home drunken and murdered his wife? Later, he was converted and remarried. After living an exemplary Christian life for some twenty-five years, the congregation in which he worships requests that he submit his name for consideration as an elder. Is he qualified as being the husband of one wife?

Because of such instances as the above, it seems expedient that congregations simply make it a practice to appoint only men who are presently

married, and who have never been married to another woman.

The elder must have **faithful children, not accused of riot or unruly**. It is my understanding that this is talking about children who are faithful in the sense that they know the meaning of obedience. They accept guidance from both their fleshly father and their heavenly Father. They obey the laws of the land and submit to those who have rightful authority over them. If an elder has children who are disobedient and unruly, he may well find the same factors working in the congregation he oversees. There may be some weakness in him which either promotes or permits anarchy.

Must the candidate for the eldership have a plurality of children? I believe the verse simply means he is to have at least one child. As an example of the way in which the word “children” is used here, I would suggest the following. If I were to request that all of the persons in a gathering who had children raise their hand, I would expect that those who had one child would raise their hand just as those who had more.

There is the possibility that one might raise one child who was nicely behaved, only to have a second one that was riotous and unruly. The verse **could mean** the elder is to have more than one child. If one is so disturbed over whether the verse means more than one child that it would bear on his conscience, it would be advisable for him not to serve. If he is convinced the verse is only stating that he must not be childless, I would certainly understand

his feeling that he was qualified. I would never urge one who was already an elder, and who had but one faithful child, to step down.

One last though here deals with the situation in which a man's children have been faithful and obedient while they were at home, and then when they left home they became unfaithful. Is this man disqualified as a result of their behavior after they have left his direct supervision?

The answer to this question involves the free moral choice of men and women. Two children may be raised up in the same family. One of them remains faithful after leaving home. The other does not. The fact that one of them became unruly after leaving home does not necessarily mean the parents have failed. Every grown man or woman has been given a mind and will of their own. If they were never to do anything through their own will they would be no more than robots. When they choose to rebel against the will of either God or their parents, the guilt of that rebellion is not placed on the account of either God or parents. In spite of what some say, juvenile delinquency is not spelled P-A-R-E-N-T-S. If so, the same logic would make God responsible for the sin of his children and sin could be spelled G-O-D. This is pure blasphemy. I am well aware of the verse which tells us *Train up a child in the way that he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it.* However, this is a principle rather than an iron clad rule. It is similar to the statement. *Honor thy father and thy mother that thy days may be long upon the earth.* In general, it is true that honoring



father and mother will bring about a longer life. Still, some of the finest of our young people have died from accident or disease at an early age.

**TIT 1:7 For a bishop must be blameless, as the steward of God; not selfwilled, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre;**

The elder must not be **self-willed**. The man who must always have his own way is a self-willed person. Of course, the elder must stand up for matters of faith. When the Bible has clearly spoken on any subject, there may be no compromise. But, that is not the discussion here. Matters of faith are not matters of human will. They are an expression of the will of God. It is often when we get into matters of opinion that the self-willed man becomes obnoxious. You may give a little today, expecting that he will give a little tomorrow, only to find that he never gives at all. That kind of person will have difficulty serving as an elder. He will never be able to lead. He will always desire to push. People sooner or later become tired of being pushed and they will begin to push back.

The elder must **not be soon angry**. Another way of saying this would be that he must not be hot tempered. A man who has a trigger-happy temper will speak before he thinks. At the slightest sign of insult from another, this man will over react. Before one can blink an eye a division has been caused where it should never have arisen. Not only should

the elder be cautious about flaring up when there is no real provocation; he should be so even tempered that even the real injuries are taken in stride. Such an attitude will calm the waters when nothing else can do so.

The elder **should not be given to wine**. This is not a difficult statement to understand. A man whose mind is confused by alcohol is not in a condition to make decisions affecting his own life, to say nothing of the lives of dozens of others. As a leader, he must see the consequences of his decisions. A man whose mind is controlled by liquor is not able to do that. He will not even be able to order his own steps, to say nothing of assisting others in the Way.

The command is extended to every Christian in Ephesians 5:18 *And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit*; Every Christian is to maintain control of his senses. If one is given to wine, the result is that the wine takes over the mind and the individual acts in a manner which would not be chosen otherwise. Paul's advice in Ephesians 5:18 is to let the Holy Spirit of God do the leading, rather than being led by alcohol.

A closely related question is this. Can a man drink a **little wine** without being given to wine? Timothy was told to take a little wine for his stomach's sake. Is it a sin for a Christian to drink alcoholic beverages, provided he does not get drunk? Full length books have been written presenting both sides of this issue. It is my own conclusion that in the United States of America today, the Christian

who drinks alcoholic beverages **is not abstaining from the very appearance of evil.**

**TIT 1:8 But a lover of hospitality, a lover of good men, sober, just, holy, temperate;**

The meaning of the word “hospitality” has changed over the centuries. As we use the word today, we usually mean welcoming someone into our home and enjoying their company. When the King James translation was made the word had a wider meaning. This can be clarified by considering our word “hospital.” This is the base word from which hospitality is formed. The hospital takes people in and cares for their needs. I believe this is the heart of the word in this verse. A person who is **a lover of hospitality** is one who recognizes the needs of others and does what he can to care for those needs.

The elder is also to be a **lover of good men**. We are known by the company we keep. It is sometimes said that “Birds of a feather flock together.” There is a good deal of truth in that old saying. We feel comfortable in the presence of others who have like interests. A good man will find himself comfortable in the presence of other good men. The kind of man who will be a good elder will be drawn to the company of good people.

The next three words may well express three relationships. The first is **sober**. The candidate for the eldership must not react to life as if it were but one grand party in which he has the responsibility to keep everyone in laughter. There is, of course, a

time to laugh. However, there is a limit. The sober man has a correct attitude toward his own body, mind and soul.

The second word is **just**. An elder must have the ability to determine how other men and women should be treated. He will not show partiality. The poor and the rich, the cultured and the uncultured, the powerful and the weak will all be treated with the greatest of dignity. The elder will recognize the image of the Creator in every man.

The third word is **holy**. God has commanded, *Be ye holy for I am holy*. An elder is to take the lead in keeping that commandment. If he is of holy character, those whom he leads will find it much easier to be godlike themselves. An elder whose life is not holy will have great difficulty in attempting to lead others to the purity of God.

The verse ends with the word **“temperate.”** Temperance deals with the ability and willingness to avoid that which is destructive. Some things are like salt. Salt is very necessary to a healthy body. Yet salt can be a deadly poison when overdone. The human appetite for food is a good thing. But one must be temperate in dealing with it. There are some things which ought not to be done at all. The elder will be temperate in abstaining completely from those things.

**TIT 1:9 Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers.**

The qualifications of an elder are brought to a close by citing the need for being faithful to the revealed Word of God. A good elder must have learned the Word of God. He must have working knowledge of it. Furthermore, he must be able to use it to exhort those who are living correctly to continue in right paths. He must also be able to stand up and persuade those who are incorrect that they must alter their lives and teaching.

Paul gives an indication that there are those in the congregations over which Titus was to appoint elders that would resort to teaching merely for the sake of self gain. He calls them “gainsayers.” God abominates men who abuse his children. He urges, and He expects, his children to be meek and loving. When another man or woman uses these holy characteristics to oppress them, that man may expect the fiery wrath of God to fall upon him. The gainsayers must be stopped.

**TIT 1:10 For there are many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers, specially they of the circumcision:**

These gainsayers have no respect for order in the congregation, nor for the commandments of God. They use their persuasive abilities to pour out empty words and deceive others into leaving God and following themselves.

It appears that there was a special problem with the Jewish teachers who had been partially converted to Christianity. There were certain advantages for

them which came about because of the position of the priests and lawyers under the Law of Moses. These vain talkers and deceivers were false teachers who desired to retain those advantages under the law of Christ. They were willing to resort to deception and rebellion against the truth in order to do that.

**TIT 1:11 Whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre's sake.**

It was necessary that the false teachers be caused to cease their destruction. Either that, or those who were listening to them must be taught not to follow their lies. As it was, they were causing whole families to turn from the teachings of Jesus Christ.

The saddest thing of all was that they were doing this deliberately. They simply loved self gain more than they did the family of God.

Such actions may still be observed in our day. More than one television speaker has taught things he well knows are not the whole truth of the Scriptures. If men were told it was necessary to be baptized in order for their sins to be remitted, rather than to simply hold up their hand or walk to the front of a room, thousands of those who respond would remain in their seats. Therefore, these false teachers will not take the risk of losing their popularity by preaching the whole plan of salvation. But there is an all-seeing eye watching. And the qualified elder of the church must be able and willing to stand up for the teaching of the Bible.

**TIT 1:12 One of themselves, even a prophet of their own, said, The Cretians are alway liars, evil beasts, slow bellies.**

Do not forget, Titus was on the island of Crete as he received this letter. It is clear that the people of that land were not of the highest character. The church would have to combat many obstacles to grow and multiply.

The prophet of whom Paul spoke has been identified as Epimenides. He was a well known writer of about 300 B.C. His description of the Cretians is not a pretty one. They were habitual liars. They lived by a philosophy of brute power. They were lazy and gluttonous. The church would need strong leadership if it was to fulfil its responsibilities in such an environment.

**TIT 1:13 This witness is true. Wherefore rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith;**

Paul agreed with the prophet he quoted. These people badly needed instruction and correction. It was going to be necessary to rebuke them sharply that they might repent and abandon their ways.

Some men need gentle correction. Others need to be told point blank and blunt. The people Paul was describing were not the type who would respond as they should to gentleness. They were going to require major surgery if they were to give proper heed to the Word of God.

**TIT 1:14 Not giving heed to Jewish fables, and commandments of men, that turn from the truth.**

The Jewish Rabbis and doctors of the law had compiled massive collections of stories and commandments of their own. They expected these to be treated with the same respect as the law of God. Jesus once clashed with the Pharisees over this problem when he told them they were teaching for doctrine the traditions of men and were thus opposing the commands of Jehovah. These human traditions will turn men from truth and eternal life.

Nor are we safe from this today. Sectarianism is rampant with additions, subtractions and modifications of the will of God as revealed through Christ and his apostles. It takes a gigantic effort to cut through these systems of false doctrine and drink from the pure fountain of the water of life which God has provided.

**TIT 1:15 Unto the pure all things are pure: but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure; but even their mind and conscience is defiled.**

The gainsaying false teachers had impure and defiled minds. Nothing was sacred to them. Even their conscience was defiled. A defiled conscience is a dangerous thing. As long as the conscience warns us of our errors, we have a means of finding the right way. As soon as we have disregarded the truth



so completely that we have scarred the conscience, we will have lost that aid.

The conscience is not always a safe guide. The conscience may have been trained in a wrong direction and one may obey the conscience and still be wrong. Paul did that in his early days. However, when one has abused his conscience until it no longer serves to tell him when a thought or deed is wrong, he is coming much too close to the edge of the lake of fire.

The pure man will see the pure in what is around him. The impure and defiled man will ever be attracted to the filthy and nasty. He sees through glasses which color everything with smut.

**TIT 1:16 They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate.**

Those persons who profess to know and love God, yet whose hearts and lives are far from him, are a most hateful brood. They could care less what the Father in heaven desires of them. Self is all that matters. The souls of men are but pawns in their hands. Good works are the farthest thing from their minds.

How are we to counteract these evil ones? We cannot kill them. We cannot ignore them. The answer is to be what we should be, and do what we should do. If faithful Christians will let it be known that they know the truth and are determined to live that

truth, false teachers and gainsayers will find hard going. That is just what the apostle is going to advise Titus in the following portion of this great letter. The best way to meet sin is to use the same method as Christ. Attack it with holiness and righteousness in word and in deed.

## *Chapter 2*

**TIT 2:1 But speak thou the things which become sound doctrine:**

Doctrine is teaching. Titus was expected to avoid the teaching errors of the Cretian false teachers and speak only those things which would enhance and promote the truth as revealed from God.

The advice given to Titus is very much needed today. Men have departed from the God given Bible centered oracles and have substituted teaching intended for itching ears. This may temporarily increase their own popularity. It may also result in enlarging the numbers in a congregation. While it is doing that, it is also destroying the influence of the true church of the Living God.

**TIT 2:2 That the aged men be sober, grave, temperate, sound in faith, in charity, in patience.**

Titus is told now what advice should be given to several different groups in the church. This includes the older men, the younger men, the older women, the younger women, servants and masters.

By the time a man reaches the latter years of life he should have developed a mature style of living. Not all men do that. Some revert to careless and riotous thoughts and actions.

Elderly men should provide examples for those who follow them. They should exhibit a great deal of self control. Their teaching should harmonize with

the will of God. They should be loving and patient in nature.

**TIT 2:3 The aged women likewise, that they be in behaviour as becometh holiness, not false accusers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things;**

The older women have a very important role. Their lives are to be pure and holy. They are not to waste time in idle gossip. They are to spend their time teaching good things rather than that which destroys reputations.

It appears that being addicted to wine was a common fault in the time of Paul and Titus. In the third chapter of I Timothy , the deacons were told not to be given to much wine. Now the older women are given the same instructions. It would be difficult for a drunken woman to be a teacher of good things. Drunkenness has been a plague from the earliest historical records. The best advice for the Christian is to avoid alcoholic beverages completely. If the first drink is never taken, the person will not become addicted to much wine. There is no need for consumption of alcohol. Why do it?

**TIT 2:4 That they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children,**

The United States of America is suffering today because many have ignored the advice given in this

verse. The most important and challenging task of womanhood is to care for their children and their husbands. We have emphasized the need for self-development to the extent that commitment to the family has taken second place. Many women love their careers far more than they do their children and their spouse.

From first hand experience, I have seen a home wrecked because a young woman began working in a bank and decided to go out to lunch with other employees and have a little drink day by day. Smoking and drinking and foul language gradually took over. The end result was that she informed her husband that she didn't need either him, or his kid. The "kid" was a four and one half year old daughter who needed a mother very much. When asked why she acted as she had, the mother replied that she had to "find herself." What she really did was to "lose herself."

**TIT 2:5 To be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed.**

Immodest clothing and winking eyes are not God's way for the young woman. It is flattering to be the object of male attention. All too often it ends up with the loss of the soul.

The first priority of the young woman should be as a keeper of the home. She has a responsibility to her husband, her children and the house itself. She is a helper to her husband. She is a mother to

her children. She keeps her house in order. It is true that it takes less time to do these things today than it did in the first century. It may be possible for a woman to work outside the home and still attend to these duties. But they come first. They are not to be shunted off on her husband by saying marriage is a fifty-fifty proposition. God hath spoken. Let his commands be heard and heeded. Latch key children may yet bring our nation to its knees. Virtuous women should be valued infinitely higher than rubies, silver and gold.

**TIT 2:6 Young men likewise exhort to be sober minded.**

A common theme throughout this advice given to varying groups is that of sobriety. Man simply has a tendency to be giddy. It matters not whether it is the elderly men, young men, elderly women or young women. All of these are tempted to treat life much less seriously than it should be.

Perhaps young men are more prone to gamble with their lives than any other of these groups. Examples of such irresponsible conduct are found in “playing chicken” with automobiles, deliberately setting out to destroy the virtue of a young woman, or deciding to forsake the assembly of the saints because that is “only for children.”

**TIT 2:7 In all things shewing thyself a pattern of good works: in doctrine shewing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity,**

Titus was to provide an example himself. He could hardly influence other young men to serve faithful, if he did not do so.

It is refreshing to find young men who demonstrate a pattern of good works in their lives. Peer pressure is powerful. When enough good young men are gathered together in a congregation of God's church, there will be a lasting influence for good.

These young men should be pure in both what they teach and what they do. Their lives should be purposeful and serious, without hypocrisy. Timothy was expected to first do, then teach.

**TIT 2:8 Sound speech, that cannot be condemned; that he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of you.**

Titus was to make certain no man was justified in finding fault with his words. The finest defense against the enemies of God is a pure life. Many a lost soul has been influenced to come to the Saviour because of the purity of life they beheld in one of God's children. Not only can they not find evil to say of the faithful, they are sometimes persuaded to emulate that godly life.

**TIT 2:9 Exhort servants to be obedient unto their own masters, and to please them well in all things; not answering again;**

There were many slaves in days gone by. Sometimes these slaves were owned for a given

period of time to pay off a debt owed to the master. At other times they were the permanent property of the master. We find it difficult to place ourselves in the position of either the slave or the master in present day America because we do not experience such relationships first hand.

There were unique problems in those days. If a slave was converted to Christ, he had questions about what his new relationship to God meant with respect to his treatment of his master. Titus is given advice to relay to the servant.

He is not to be insolent. He is to be obedient. He is to do all he is able to do to please the master. He is not to talk back.

**TIT 2:10 Not purloining, but shewing all good fidelity; that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things.**

Purloining is stealing. The servant was not to steal from his master. He is to be faithful in all things. By doing this, the church and its teachings will be glorified. Such purloining today might mean taking that from our employer which we could then use for our own purposes.

Some have accused the New Testament of approving slavery. It is not so. The very best way of eradicating slavery is to demonstrate the golden rule. When a master observes true Christian behavior on the part of a servant, that master may be influenced to Christ. When he becomes a Christian, oppression of his servants would be the



last thing on his mind. He will begin preparation for the release of slaves as soon as possible. We might add that the too sudden release of a slave could have been disastrous to the slave. He could very well starve because of inability to manage his own life.

**TIT 2:11 For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men,**

Salvation is not just for one group of persons. Men and women of every nation and every age group have a vital role to play in the scheme of redemption. God's grace and God's instructions are not limited to a special few. God is not willing that any should perish.

**TIT 2:12 Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world;**

There are two ways of life. One is a broad way that leads to everlasting destruction. There are many who walk in it. The other is a narrow way that leads to everlasting life. There are but a few who travel it.

One of these paths is a selfish way. It fastens its affections on lust and pride. It cares nothing for either God, man or nature. The other way lifts its eyes unto the heavens. It devotes itself to service and loving kindness. It loses itself that it may

someday gain all things in heaven. This second way is the one which comes to us through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ.

**TIT 2:13 Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ;**

There is very good reason for each of us to live the type of life Paul urged Titus to promote. By living such a life, one prepares himself to meet the Saviour when he returns to gather his own. When he comes back he will not be carrying the sins of the ages upon himself. He will be coming surrounded by the glory of an everlasting day. Those who have heeded the words provided by the inspired apostle will be rewarded according to their works.

**TIT 2:14 Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.**

Christ did not come to earth and take upon himself the form of a servant that men might live in carnality. He came to lift men from such degradation to a higher plane. Those who listen to the Saviour are to cast off the works of the flesh and produce the fruit of the Holy Spirit of God. Even more, they are to do such good works with zealousness and rejoicing.

**TIT 2:15 These things speak, and exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no man despise thee.**

Titus was to include both positive and negative teaching. He was to first produce the Word of God. Then he was to exhort those who were traveling in an acceptable manner. But, he was also to rebuke those who walk in either unknowing error, or stubborn rebellion.

All the while we must remind ourselves Paul is instructing Titus as to what should be taught **in the church**. These words are intended first of all for Christians. Titus is to stand up proudly and speak with the authority which should be associated with the Word of God.

Titus stands as tall in the sight of God as any person to whom he may speak. He must not allow any man to humiliate either himself or the gospel he preaches.



## *Chapter 3*

**TIT 3:1 Put them in mind to be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates, to be ready to every good work,**

Christians are to be an orderly group of people. They will not spend their time in fighting against the powers that be. Of course it is true that the man of God must obey God rather than men. As long as the governmental authorities do not come into conflict with the will of God, the Christian is commanded to pay his taxes and obey the laws. Only when there is a conflict is the Christian to challenge the laws of the properly installed civil government.

**TIT 3:2 To speak evil of no man, to be no brawlers, but gentle, shewing all meekness unto all men.**

God's true children will follow in the footsteps of His Only Begotten Son. He was the perfect example of meekness and humility. He did not waste his time in searching out that in his fellow man which could be used to bring him down. Everything Christ did was intended to lift every man who would allow it, to greater and higher levels. One does not enlarge his own position by degrading and opposing others. He does so by helping them to grow in wisdom, stature, and favor with God and men.

**TIT 3:3 For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another.**

**TIT 3:4 But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared,**

The reason Christ appeared in this world was that he might demonstrate the love of God and lead others home to heaven. By doing so, he proved his greatness.

**TIT 3:5 Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost;**

No man ever earned a ticket through the gates of the eternal heavenly city. God will not ask us in the judgment to show that we have done all that was asked of us, nor avoided all that we were commanded to leave alone. He will be far more concerned over whether we gave a valiant effort to reach out for His mercy and grace. He will emphasize our desire to rise up when we occasionally fall, and take the hand of His Son whom He sent to lead us.

**TIT 3:6 Which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour;**

It was through the life and teachings of Jesus that God provided access to that grace and mercy.

The divine favors were not bestowed in ratio to our works. They were poured out far beyond what any of us could expect. Jesus was the vessel from which they flowed.

**TIT 3:7 That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.**

God's children are to inherit their Father's wealth. Dear reader, how would you like to someday inherit the wealth of the five richest men who have ever lived upon this earth? It stretches our imagination to even think of it. Yet God is the Creator and the Owner of all things, in heaven and on earth. All the desirable thing on this earth are as nothing in comparison to the wonders which will be ours if we love Him and keep his commandments.

Give God the opportunity to bless you as He desires. An existence awaits the faithful which only God can offer.

**TIT 3:8 This is a faithful saying, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable unto men.**

God's children are expected to be busy people. They are to be busy in proclaiming the truths which have been revealed to us by Jesus Christ, His Son. When such truths are passed on from generation to generation, the lives of men will be enriched in both this world and the world to come.

**TIT 3:9 But avoid foolish questions, and genealogies, and contentions, and strivings about the law; for they are unprofitable and vain.**

In view of the importance of teaching God's truths, how can any man waste his time in arguing just for the sake of disputation? The admonition in this verse was first of all directed toward the Jewish leaders who were more interested in demonstrating their power and intellect than they were in promoting the cause of Jesus Christ.

The instruction is just as apt today. The man who spends his time in self exaltation is not serving God. He is selfish and seeks his own glory. That is a deadly course of action.

**TIT 3:10 A man that is an heretick after the first and second admonition reject;**

What was Titus to do when he came into contact with one who was definitely teaching falsehood? He was first of all to point out the error and pray that the man would accept the truth and change his teaching. Then, if the false teacher did not leave his destructive path, there was to be a second attempt to help him.

If, after that second attempt, the man did not repent and begin teaching the true Word of God, he was to be rejected as a true servant of Jehovah. He must be identified to others as an enemy of the truth and one who was not to be heard.



**TIT 3:11 Knowing that he that is such is subverted, and sinneth, being condemned of himself.**

A person, whether man or woman, who will not heed the need for correction in doctrine is a rank sinner. That person has already condemned himself. Any condemnation which men place upon him only makes certain that his poisonous teachings are prevented from destroying the souls of others who are trying to be faithful. The good man must be heard. The evil and selfish man must be avoided.

**TIT 3:12 When I shall send Artemas unto thee, or Tychicus, be diligent to come unto me to Nicopolis: for I have determined there to winter.**

It was more difficult to travel in the winter months. Paul wished for the companionship of the younger man Titus. He was sending either Artemas or Tychicus to Titus with instructions for Titus to come and spend some time with him.

All of us like to have the support of other faithful individuals. This was particularly true of someone like Paul, who really had no home where he could lay his head year after year. Let us thank God for the comfort and strength we receive from His other children. Let us take full advantage of their friendship.

**TIT 3:13 Bring Zenas the lawyer and Apollos on their journey diligently, that nothing be wanting unto them.**

Not all the lawyers, or students of the law of Moses, were opposers of Christ. Zenas proves the point. We have heard of the oratorical power of Apollos before, at the time when he was taken aside by Priscilla and Aquila and taught the way of the Lord more perfectly.

**TIT 3:14 And let ours also learn to maintain good works for necessary uses, that they be not unfruitful.**

The fruits of the Spirit of God are the good works which God's own put forth. God expects expects fine fruit from His vineyard. He will appreciate such.

**TIT 3:15 All that are with me salute thee. Greet them that love us in the faith. Grace be with you all. Amen.**

The apostle did not forget others. He wanted Titus to know he was in the thoughts of Paul's own traveling companions. He also wanted those who were with Titus to be informed of their interest.



**The Book Of  
Philemon**



# *Introduction*

## PHILEMON

### **Author and Date:**

It is of interest to note that this short epistle of Paul to a single individual contains very personal information. Yet it has been accepted as an important part of the holy scriptures since the earliest days of the church. What is it about this one twenty-five verse chapter that has commanded such respect?

Perhaps the secret is in the example of humility and loving concern that Paul expected from the one to whom he wrote this letter. Onesimus had been Philemon's slave. He had run away from his master. Paul had converted the runaway slave and requested that he return to his owner. With the greatest confidence that Philemon would respond positively to the request of the apostle, Paul advised Onesimus' owner to receive him back as a brother rather than a possession. That is the kind of thing the gospel is able to bring about.

There is reason to think Onesimus had stolen some property of Philemon at the time he ran away. Paul promised to see that any debt Onesimus owed was fully paid. He would see to that himself.

The epistle was written about the same time as Philippians and Colossians, about 62 A.D.

### **Lessons Included:**

There is much in this brief epistle which can be

taken and utilized by men and women of any and every age. I would suggest at least the following lessons.

1. There is a different, and closer relationship between two Christians in an employee-employer framework that is the case when one or both are not Christians.

2. A tremendous change can take place in the life of one who has truly decided to walk in the footsteps of Christ when compared to the life he lived before his conversion.

3. To sin is to follow the lead of Satan. To forgive those who sin against us is to follow the example of the One who died upon the cross that sinners might live.

# Chapter 1

**PHM 1:1 Paul, a prisoner of Jesus Christ, and Timothy our brother, unto Philemon our dearly beloved, and fellowlabourer,**

Paul calls himself a prisoner of Jesus Christ. This is a contrast to his normal address. Usually he refers to himself as Paul the apostle of Jesus Christ. However, this letter is a personal letter. He is going to lean upon the motivating power of love rather than authority. Philemon already knew very well that Paul was an apostle. He needed to be reminded at the outset in this letter of the power of love.

There are two senses in which Paul could refer to himself as a prisoner. He wrote this letter, along with Philippians, Colossians and Ephesians, from a Roman prison. Thus, in the most literal sense, he was a prisoner because of his preaching of the gospel of Christ. But Paul was also a prisoner of Christ because his soul had been conquered by the Lord. He had been made a slave or servant of Christ. He was not his own, but belonged to Jesus.

Timothy is with him. Timothy is so often a companion of Paul in his missionary travels. Paul is not one to exclude his companions when writing to fellow Christians. He is the inspired apostle, but that does not prevent him from giving due credit to those who sacrificed much to aid him in the spread of the teachings of Christ.

The letter is primarily addressed to Philemon. Philemon was the owner of a runaway slave called Onesimus. Paul is writing this letter to him to

persuade Philemon to take Onesimus back without punishing him.

**PHM 1:2 And to our beloved Apphia, and Archippus our fellowsoldier, and to the church in thy house:**

It is possible that Apphia and Archippus are the wife and son of Philemon.

There is a church meeting in the house of Philemon. This was not uncommon in the early days of the church. It is still not uncommon in various mission points. When the group is small, it is less expensive to meet in the house of one of the members than to rent a special meeting place which may not be utilized to a very large degree.

**PHM 1:3 Grace to you, and peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.**

Grace and peace are two of the favorite words of Paul. Grace is the undeserved flow of blessings which are poured out by God on those with whom he is pleased. Peace is the condition of having all that one needs to make life full and productive. Peace is much more than simply the absence of conflict and violence.

**PHM 1:4 I thank my God, making mention of thee always in my prayers,**

Note how generously Paul speaks of his friend Philemon. He is not flattering the man. He is genuine



in his commendation. We may rest assured that he did have Onesimus, along with a host of others, on his lips when he spoke to Jehovah. The example in the Bible is that of praying not just for ourselves but for those we love. This should include not only those we know personally, but all those of the family of our Father in heaven.

**PHM 1:5 Hearing of thy love and faith, which thou hast toward the Lord Jesus, and toward all saints;**

Paul is going to ask that Philemon extend his love toward the saints to the slave Onesimus. A good way to accomplish that end is to commend his exercise of that love in the past. Paul never hesitated to request that one member of the body of Christ show concern for others in that body. He considered such conduct to be natural behavior on the part of Christians.

**PHM 1:6 That the communication of thy faith may become effectual by the acknowledging of every good thing which is in you in Christ Jesus.**

The communication of Philemon's faith was the concern he had shown for his brethren. Others could see his good works and would be willing to acknowledge the good thing which dwelt in him, that is, the Spirit of Christ. His faith in Christ had become alive in his loving care of his brethren and the passing of his own faith to that of others.

**PHM 1:7 For we have great joy and consolation in thy love, because the bowels of the saints are refreshed by thee, brother.**

It did Paul a world of good to know of the good works of those whom he had taught.

However, he is still leading up to the request which he is about to make of Philemon. These kind words will not hurt his cause. They can only further it.

**PHM 1:8 Wherefore, though I might be much bold in Christ to enjoin thee that which is convenient,**

He is now ready to present his petition. He makes it quite clear that he had the right to command Philemon to do what he was about to ask. He will not do so, but he would not have been out of order if he had. Rather than command, Paul was ready to request.

**PHM 1:9 Yet for love's sake I rather beseech thee, being such an one as Paul the aged, and now also a prisoner of Jesus Christ.**

In fact, he went even farther than to request. He beseeched. The very nature of the love of Christ impelled Paul to plead rather than to command. He plays on the sympathy of Philemon. Surely Philemon will respond to the fact that one who had given as

much to the Kingdom of God as had Paul was making this request.

The fact that Paul was held captive in prison meant that he could not make a face to face entreaty. Yet he felt confident Philemon would take the action he desired.

**PHM 1:10 I beseech thee for my son Onesimus, whom I have begotten in my bonds:**

This is not Paul's only son in the gospel. Timothy was also included in that group. When the seed of the Word is planted in the heart, the new creature which is born is a source of pride to the one planting the seed. I ask the reader, "Have you experienced such joy?"

It is not the same to call one father in the sense given here as it is to call a man father as Jesus condemned it. God is our true spiritual Father. He is the one who gives life to the seed. The gospel preacher only sees that it is planted and perhaps watered. See I Cor. 3:6 *I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase.* We can see from this verse that Paul had converted Onesimus while he was held a prisoner.

**PHM 1:11 Which in time past was to thee unprofitable, but now profitable to thee and to me:**

The implication is that Onesimus had stolen property from his master when he departed. That

would have left a very bad taste in the mouth of Philemon. Paul is quick to refer to the matter and to make an attempt to soothe the feelings of Philemon.

Christians are the best of all citizens when they act according to the dictates of the Lord. They are profitable to everyone who associates with them. Philemon might have been unprofitable before he became a Christian. Paul is certain he will not be any longer. He will now be profitable!

**PHM 1:12 Whom I have sent again: thou therefore receive him, that is, mine own bowels:**

Paul loved Onesimus as his own self. He wished to make certain Philemon would receive the man in Christian love.

Some have criticized the Bible at this point. They believe Paul should have told Philemon slavery was wrong, and that Philemon should be released from his bondservant status. However, Christianity is careful to work within the laws of the land where possible.

Many years after the Civil War in the United States, it is easier to see that a grave injustice would have been done to some of the slaves if they had been just turned loose to fend for themselves. Many of them chose to remain with their masters rather than to strike out on their own in a hostile world. But Christianity will ultimately remove the foundations of slavery. **The ground is level at the foot of the cross.**

**PHM 1:13 Whom I would have retained with me, that in thy stead he might have ministered unto me in the bonds of the gospel:**

It is apparent that Onesimus had been of great assistance to Paul after his conversion. Paul would have been delighted to have Onesimus stay on with him. Onesimus could move around freely while Paul was hindered in his movement.

Since Onesimus was Philemon's servant, keeping him to help Paul would have been similar to Philemon himself lending assistance. Paul felt that Philemon would probably have been happy to have allowed this.

**PHM 1:14 But without thy mind would I do nothing; that thy benefit should not be as it were of necessity, but willingly.**

It would have been improper for Paul to have allowed the servant of another man to work for him without the consent of his master. If by any chance Philemon did not desire that Onesimus remain with Paul, he would have been forced to do that which he did not wish. Paul could have, but did not, make such an arrangement. He desired a complete willingness on the part of Philemon.

**PHM 1:15 For perhaps he therefore departed for a season, that thou shouldest receive him for ever;**

Providence is a mysterious aid in the Christian life. We never know just how things are working out for our good. It was, no doubt, a matter of great unpleasantness when Philemon found Onesimus had run away. Especially if he had stolen some property. Now Paul says it may have worked out best for everyone concerned. Philemon may have been deprived of the service of his slave Onesimus for a short time in the temporal world in order that he be able to live eternally with him as a brother in Christ.

**PHM 1:16 Not now as a servant, but above a servant, a brother beloved, specially to me, but how much more unto thee, both in the flesh, and in the Lord?**

Onesimus would come back to Philemon as a much more valuable person. He would now be a brother in Jesus Christ. This far surpassed the former relationship as a servant. There would now be both a fleshly relationship of master and servant, but there would also be a spiritual relationship.

It is interesting that both of these relationships exist in our associations with Christ. We are his servants, and he is our Master. But he is also not ashamed to call us his brethren.

**PHM 1:17 If thou count me therefore a partner, receive him as myself.**

There was strong reason to think Philemon counted himself as a working partner with Paul.

Since Onesimus was now a partner of Paul, he should also be counted as a partner of Onesimus. We are all one in Christ Jesus. There is neither bond nor free.

**PHM 1:18 If he hath wronged thee, or oweth thee ought, put that on mine account;**

I am not certain as to what should be made of this statement. If Paul knew Onesimus had stolen property from Philemon when he left, it seems he would have said, "I will pay for that which he took from you when he left." Does Paul not know for sure? At any rate, he makes a generous offer to reimburse Philemon if Onesimus' owner feels anything was missing.

This says something about Paul. Although a prisoner at the time, he still had the financial resources to make this offer. We are also told that he dwelt in his own hired house in Rome, even though he was watched by Roman guards.

**PHM 1:19 I Paul have written it with mine own hand, I will repay it: albeit I do not say to thee how thou owest unto me even thine own self besides.**

If Philemon was willing to trust the word of Paul an apostle, he had that word that he would not lose anything. Paul himself would pay the debt.

But notice that Paul is almost blunt here after all of his previous tenderness. He clearly and plainly

reminded Philemon that the man's soul had been saved through the preaching of Paul. This was a far greater debt which Philemon owed to Paul than any debt which Onesimus might owe to Philemon.

**PHM 1:20 Yea, brother, let me have joy of thee in the Lord: refresh my bowels in the Lord.**

It would fill Paul with joy if Philemon would receive Onesimus back as a Christian brother. He had indicated earlier that he loved Onesimus deeply. Such a response on the part of Philemon would bring much rejoicing to the aging Paul.

**PHM 1:21 Having confidence in thy obedience I wrote unto thee, knowing that thou wilt also do more than I say.**

The letter has been written as friend to friend. Now Paul talks about obedience. There is a friend to friend relationship between the apostles and Christians. There is also a stronger relationship of prophet of God to mankind. As an apostle reveals to us the will of the Godhead, it is proper that we obey that word. Paul was not as worried about Philemon obeying him personally as he was that Philemon obey the will of Christ.

Paul is most confident that Philemon will go beyond what he has ask in the treatment of his returning servant.



**PHM 1:22 But withal prepare me also a lodging: for I trust that through your prayers I shall be given unto you.**

Here is an interesting thought. Paul expects to be freed from his captivity and allowed to make a visit to Philemon. This is far different than the tone of II Timothy, when he appears to have given up all hope that he will be released. In II Timothy he speaks of having fought the good fight and finishing the course.

He does place a high value on prayer. He trusts that the prayers of Philemon will make a difference in his being able to come and visit with him. It would be wise for all Christians to have such confidence.

**PHM 1:23 There salute thee Epaphras, my fellowprisoner in Christ Jesus;**

As usual, Paul sends greetings from his companions to the area to which the letter has been written.

Epaphras was also mentioned in the Colossian letter (Col. 1:7). He could have been a physical prisoner, or he could have been a fellow prisoner of Paul because Christ had captured his soul.

**PHM 1:24 Marcus, Aristarchus, Demas, Lucas, my fellowlabourers.**

All of the names mentioned in this verse were prominent assistants to Paul in the preaching of the

gospel of the Lord. Paul was proud to give them the credit which they so richly deserved.

**PHM 1:25 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen.**

For the second time in this short letter Paul prayed that the grace of God be with Philemon. There is no greater favor one can provide for another than to aid him in the reception of God's tremendous blessings, which extend so far above and beyond that which we can imagine.

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