

Paul's Letters to Timothy



Events Leading to the Writing of Paul's Letters to Timothy, Written From Asia and Rome After Paul's First Imprisonment, c. A.D. 64–66

The First Epistles of Paul the Apostle to TIMOTHY **INTRODUCTION**

1

1. Title. In the earliest Greek manuscripts the title of this book is simply *Pros Timotheon A* ("To Timothy I"). Later elaboration has expanded the title to the form found in the KJV.

2. Authorship. This epistle identifies Paul as its author (ch. 1:1). For a discussion of authorship see Vol. V, pp. 183–185. Concerning the date of writing see Vol. VI, p. 107.

3. Historical Setting. The circumstances of the writing of 1 Timothy can be ascertained only by inference from incidental remarks in the epistle. For a discussion of these as they bear on the date and circumstances of the writing of this epistle see Vol. V, p. 184.

4. Theme. This epistle was written to Timothy while he was pastor of the Ephesian church, and is composed primarily of instructions addressed to him as a leader of the

¹Nichol, F. D. (1978). *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary : The Holy Bible with exegetical and expository comment*. Commentary Reference Series (1 Ti 1:1). Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association.

church. Accordingly it is classified as a pastoral epistle. In it Paul admonishes Timothy to conduct himself in a manner pleasing to God and helpful to the flock over which God has placed him, and delivers to him a solemn charge to preach the Word and to defend its teachings. This epistle reflects a rather fully developed plan for church organization and administration. The emphasis upon doctrine in 1 Timothy and the other pastoral epistles (see 1 Tim. 4:6, 13, 16; 2 Tim. 3:14–17; 4:1–4; Titus 1:9; 2:1, 7) is illustrated by the fact that of the 21 times the Greek word for doctrine (*didaskalia*) is found in the NT, 15 appear in 1 and 2 Timothy and Titus.

Though Paul seems to have felt himself closer to Timothy than to his other associates (see Phil. 2:19, 20), the inference may be drawn from this epistle that Timothy was a man of mild temperament and not so aggressive as Paul might have wished. Accordingly the apostle encourages his younger companion in the ministry to more vigorous leadership. The close relationship between Paul and Timothy accounts for the free, frank manner in which the apostle expresses his desires, admonitions, and purposes to the pastor of Ephesus, and doubtless explains the consequent lack of systematic order. The epistle was apparently written, point by point, as successive aspects of ministerial activity came to the apostle's mind.

5. Outline.

- I. Salutation, 1:1, 2.
- II. The Charge to Rebuke Teachers of Perverted Doctrine, 1:3–20.
 - A. Perverted use of law produces strife, 1:3, 4.
 - B. Proper use of law develops character, 1:5–11.
 - C. Paul's life confirms power of proper use of law, 1:12–17.
 - D. Timothy challenged to competent leadership, 1:18–20.
- III. The Universality of Christian Worship, 2:1–15.
 - A. Prayers for all men, 2:1–3.
 - B. Salvation for all men, 2:4–7.
 - C. Worship procedure for all men, 2:8–15.
- IV. Prerequisites for Christian Leaders, 3:1–13.
 - A. The character of bishops, 3:1–17.
 - B. The character of deacons, 3:8–13.
- V. The Christian Message, 3:14 to 4:5.
 - A. The essential message of Christianity, 3:14–16.
 - B. The counterfeit message within Christianity, 4:1–5.
- VI. Practical Suggestions for a More Earnest Ministry, 4:6–16.
 - A. Study on sound doctrine, 4:6.
 - B. Avoid speculations, 4:7.
 - C. Be an example in godliness, 4:8–16.
- VII. The Minister as Church Administrator, 5:1 to 6:19.
 - A. His relation to old and young members, 5:1, 2.
 - B. His relation to the widows, 5:3–16.
 - C. His relation to the elected elders, 5:17–25.
 - D. His instruction concerning Christian slaves, 6:1, 2.
 - E. His relation to teachers of false doctrine, 6:3–5.
 - F. His relation to worldly riches, 6:6–10.
 - G. His responsibility as a character pattern for all, 6:11–16.

H. His relation to the Christian rich, 6:17–19.

VIII. Paul's Final Charge to Timothy, 6:20, 21.

CHAPTER 1

1 *Timothy is put in mind of the charge which was given unto him by Paul at his going to Macedonia.* 5 *Of the right use and end of the law.* 11 *Of Saint Paul's calling to be an apostle,* 20 *and of Hymenaeus and Alexander.*

1. Paul. The insertion of the author's name in his salutation was a common procedure in ancient times (see on Rom. 1:1).

Apostle. See on Acts 1:2; Rom. 1:1. Though Paul was not of the Twelve, he was directly called by Christ at a later time (see Acts 13:2; 20:24; Gal. 1:11, 12, 15; see on Acts 9:15).

Commandment. Gr. *epitagē*, "injunction," "command." No man could carry more impressive credentials than the direct authorization Paul had as an apostle. In the difficulties the church faced at Ephesus the authoritative support of Paul would reinforce Timothy's leadership.

Saviour. A title ascribed by Paul to both the Father (ch. 3, 5) and Jesus (Phil. 3:20; 2 Tim. 1:10; Titus 1:4; 2:13; 3:6). Attributes of each member of the Godhead are common to all (see on Col. 2:9). All members of the Trinity have participated in the work of man's salvation, each doing His specific task.

Lord Jesus Christ. Textual evidence attests (cf. p. 10) the reading "Christ Jesus."

Hope. Compare Rom. 15:13; see on Rom. 5:4; 8:24; 12:12. Christ is not only the object of man's hope but also its source. Men find their basis for "hope" for temporal support as well as for future immortality in Christ (see on Col. 1:27).

2. Timothy. For a brief biographical sketch see on Acts 16:1.

Own. Gr. *gnēsios*, "legitimate," "sincere," "true." Paul may be emphasizing that it was through his ministry that Timothy had been converted and trained for the ministry, or that Timothy was particularly noteworthy in genuineness of devotion to the cause of Christ and to Paul personally.

Faith. Here probably meaning the system of Christian belief.

Grace. See on Rom. 3:24; 1 Cor. 1:3.

Mercy, and peace. Compare Paul's introduction in 1 Cor. 1:1–3. This sequence of spiritual blessings corresponds to man's experience when he stands justified before God. When man fully understands and accepts God's plan for his restoration from sin, as revealed in His many overtures of mercy, a new state of tranquillity pervades his soul (see on Rom. 5:1).

Father and Jesus. See on Rom. 1:7.

3. Besought. Timothy had accompanied Paul on his first journey through Macedonia (see Acts 16:1–12; 20:1–4). The apostle here refers to a later journey, one that followed his first imprisonment at Rome (see Vol. VI, p. 101). Although Timothy very greatly desired to remain by Paul's side, the young church needed his faithful pastoral care.

Charge. Gr. *paragellō*, "to command," "to declare." Paul frequently asserts his apostolic authority lest the young churches suffer because of some who disparaged his apostleship (see chs. 4:11; 5:7, 21; 6:13, 17).

Some. Or, "certain ones." Paul tactfully avoids magnifying the problem (see on Gal. 1:7).

No other doctrine. That is, no teaching contrary to the truth as proclaimed by the apostles (see on Gal. 1:8).

4. Fables. Gr. *muthoi*, “myths,” “inventions,” “falsehoods.” Paul may here refer to the rabbinical fictions such as were later incorporated into the Mishnah and other Jewish writings (see Vol. V, pp. 96–100). However, he may also be warning against an early form of Gnosticism (see Vol. V, p. 181; Vol. VI, pp. 54–58).

Genealogies. Probably a reference to a Jewish practice in which an attempt was made to trace family ancestries back to a Davidic or priestly heritage. Much of Jewish teaching and preaching was based on finely spun allegories that pleased the fancies of the people without feeding their souls. See Titus 1:14.

Minister. Or, “cause,” or “bring about.”

Questions. Gr. *ekzētēseis*, “investigations,” “speculations.”

Edifying. Textual evidence favors (cf. p. 10) the reading “stewardship.” Accordingly, the last clause of this verse may read: “which engender mere speculation rather than the stewardship of God, which is [accomplished] in faith.” Mere disputation, which satisfies profitless curiosity only, will never promote the growth of the church.

5. End. Gr. *telos*, “aim,” “purpose,” “result.” Compare on Rom. 10:4.

Commandment. Gr. *paraggelia*, that is, the charge, or commission, Paul gave to Timothy (v. 3).

Charity. Gr. *agapē*, “love” (see on 1 Cor. 13:1). Paul’s charge (1 Tim. 1:3) to Timothy originated in love and was given to engender a spirit of love in the hearts of the church members at Ephesus. The result of unprofitable debates on myths and endless genealogies was not love, but contention and faction.

Pure heart. See on Ps. 24:4; Matt. 5:8.

Unfeigned. That is, without pretense, not play acting. Love proceeds only from pure, undivided hearts, good consciences, and loyal faith, not from worthless speculations, which produce only more “questions” (v. 4). Love alone will unify church members and reveal Christ to the world.

6. Having swerved. Literally, “having missed the mark,” that is, the three sources of true love in v. 5.

Vain jangling. Gr. *mataiologia*, “useless talk” (cf. 1 Cor. 15:17). If love is not the result or goal of man’s activity, that which is done leads to nothing permanent or satisfying.

7. Teachers of the law. Compare on Luke 5:17. Apparently these teachers were Jews.

Understanding. This inability of the scribes and teachers to comprehend the meaning of the law was rebuked by Christ (see on Matt. 22:29). Personal opinion and undigested truth are the wares peddled by biased and immature would-be teachers. A teacher’s words carry significant influence, and when these words are indiscriminately given without adequate comprehension, only confusion can result.

8. Law. Because these would-be teachers (v. 7) spun their unprofitable myths out of the Jewish law and perverted the solemn verities of the gospel, Paul now presents the “law” in its proper perspective. He does not want his criticism of the “teachers of the law” (v. 7) to be misconstrued as a depreciation of the “law” itself. That Paul here

includes moral precepts is evident from vs. 9, 10, which summarize various principles of the Decalogue (cf. Ex. 20:1–17).

Good. Gr. *kalos*, “excellent.” The “law” is “good” in the sense that it meets well the purpose for which it was designed.

Lawfully. That is, as it was intended to be used. To treat it as a mere set of rules to be argued about, or as a subject for profitless philosophical discussion (see vs. 3–7), or as a means of salvation (see on Rom. 3:20; cf. Rom. 4:14; Gal. 3:17, 19–25; 5:4) perverts and abuses the law. For a discussion of the eternal nature and purpose of the moral law see on Rom. 3:31.

9. For a righteous man. The apostle does not teach that the Christian is no longer obligated to obey the Ten Commandments (see on Rom. 3:31). Jesus did not come to release men from commandment keeping, but to show man the possibility of obedience and to provide the necessary power for complete victory over sin (see on Rom. 8:4). However, the law no longer condemns the justified man, although it remains as his standard of conduct (see on Rom. 6:14).

Lawless. That is, those opposed to, or unregulated by, law.

Disobedient. Or, “rebellious.” Sin is rebellion against God’s authority. When a created being refuses to live in harmony with the laws of the universe, he presumes his opinion to be more wise than God’s. Rebellion against authority results in the pathetic list that follows.

Ungodly. That is, irreligious persons.

Profane. That is, those who make no distinction between holy and secular things, those who lose a sense of the living God and live wholly on a secular plane as did Esau (see Heb. 12:16). This term and the preceding five refer specifically to man’s violations of the first four of the Ten Commandments. 1 Tim. 1:10 describes man’s transgressions with respect to one another.

Whoremongers. Or, “fornicators” (see on Ex. 20:14).

Them that defile. Homosexuals.

Menstealers. Or, “kidnapers,” “slave traders.” Slavery has been a curse upon mankind from earliest times. God endeavored, through Israel, to re-establish the dignity of the individual (see on Ex. 21:16; Deut. 24:7). Here Paul likewise amplifies the true worth of the individual.

Liars. For comment see on Ex. 20:16.

Perjured. Those who do not tell the truth when taking an oath that they will do so.

Sound. Gr. *hugiainō*, “to be healthy.” Here and in v. 9 Paul paints a sharp picture of those who defy God’s law. Opposition to God’s will results in deterioration of body, mind, and soul (see on Rom. 1:21–32). Only the truth, as lived out in the life, will bring peace to the mind and vitality to the body. The English word “hygiene” is from *hugiainō*.

11. Gospel. Paul continues his denunciation of unconsecrated men who aspired to be teachers in the church. These would-be teachers were applying the law in a way contrary to its intended purpose. Instead of revealing their sins (v. 9), the law became a field for intellectual speculation and hair-splitting arguments (see on v. 4). To use the law “lawfully” (v. 8) it must be seen within the framework of the “glorious gospel of the blessed God” and used accordingly. The law and the “gospel” cannot be separated, for, in the plan of God, each requires the other. The law “lawfully” used (see on Rom. 3:20, 31;

Gal. 3:24) amplifies the “glory of the blessed God” and reveals how timely and adequate the “gospel” actually is. Paul gives to both the law and the gospel their rightful place.

The “gospel” reveals the “glory” of God. Man now may behold in Jesus Christ the solicitous concern of his heavenly Father, who has left nothing undone in the program of revealing His love and mercy to fallen men (2 Cor. 4:6; Eph. 1:6).

Committed to my trust. Or, “with which I was entrusted.” This solemn sense of responsibility was the impelling force of Paul’s ministry, and provided authority for such letters as 1 Timothy (see on ch. 1:1). Every minister should sense this basic conviction that to him has been entrusted the grand work of revealing God’s glory.

12. Thank. That is, for the honor of being entrusted with the gospel (v. 11). Verses 12–16 reveal Paul’s humble evaluation of his own insufficiencies. However, when he used the law “lawfully” (v. 8) he became a new man and a living witness to the saving power of God. Consequently, what God could do with him, the “chief” of sinners (v. 15), He could also do for any other man.

Enabled. Gr. *endunamoō*, “to empower.” Paul depended on no merit of his own in carrying out the divine charge. Every pastor can claim the resources of divine power when the problems of the ministry confront him.

Faithful. That is, worthy of being trusted. Paul’s warm heart fills with gratitude when he considers the honor of being trusted by God. The response of a sincere man is to leave nothing undone in vindicating this confidence of God in him.

Minty. Or, “service.”

13. Blasphemer. Such Paul had once been (see on Acts 9:4, 5; 26:9–11). Paul reviews his life in order to set forth more emphatically the power of the grace of God (see on 1 Tim. 1:14) and the result of using the law “lawfully” (see on v. 8).

Persecutor. See on Acts 9:1, 4, 5; 22:4; 26:9–14; Gal. 1:13, 23; Phil. 3:6.

Injurious. Or, “insolent” (see on Rom. 1:30).

Ignorantly. Paul sincerely believed that he was doing God’s service (see on John 16:2; Acts 23:1; 24:16; 26:9). His wrongdoing had not reached the stage where he willfully sinned against conscience and the Holy Spirit (see on Matt. 12:31–32, Heb. 10:26–27; see 5T 436). When Paul clearly saw the majesty of Jesus, his unbelief was conquered, he was obedient to the “heavenly vision” (see on Acts 26:19).

14. Grace. See on Rom. 3:24; 1 Cor. 1:3. Paul claims no credit for his own conversion. Without the concern and strength of God he would still be the persecuting Saul.

Exceeding abundant. Compare Rom. 5:20. Grace is given in proportion to man’s need. Those who are weakened the most in sin need the most grace. Paul does not imply that God arbitrarily gives men varying measures of grace, with the result that some men are never converted because God refused to give them sufficient grace.

Faith. A loyal friendship with Jesus Christ superseded Paul’s former “unbelief” (v. 13). See on Rom. 3:22; 4:3.

Love. The outrageous behavior of the bigot was replaced by a new spirit of compassion and gratitude. Faith and love are eloquent proof that “grace” controls the life. For a definition of “love” see on Matt. 5:43; 1 Cor. 13:1.

15. Faithful. Or, “trustworthy.” The expression “this is a faithful saying” is found only in the pastoral epistles (see 1 Tim. 3:1; 4:9; 2 Tim. 2:11; Titus 3:8).

Worthy. The fundamental teaching that Jesus came to redeem men can be accepted without hesitation or doubt. Nothing is worthy of more attention.

Came. Paul affirms the pre-existence of Christ (see on John 1:1–3; 16:28; 17:5).

Save. From the beginning of sin God has been working His plan to save men from eternal destruction. To acquaint men with Jesus Christ is the work of angels and godly men. This verse does not limit God's grace to a select few but emphasizes its availability for all "sinners" (see on Matt. 1:21).

Chief. Paul continues to sense his unworthiness, even after conversion. He does not say "was chief," but "am chief" (see on 1 Cor. 15:9, 10). His humility arises from his memory of past insults and persecution done to God and His church (see on 1 Tim. 1:13) as well as his awareness of his present insufficiency apart from the daily power of God. The truly converted Christian never loses the sense of unworthiness that he experienced when he first surrendered his will to Christ. He knows that without the daily indwelling of the power of God his life would not reveal the graces of Christian character. "The nearer we come to Jesus and the more clearly we discern the purity of His character, the more clearly we shall discern the exceeding sinfulness of sin and the less we shall feel like exalting ourselves" (COL 160). The Christian's only safeguard is to remember the pit from which he was "digged" (Isa. 51:1; cf. Ps. 40:2), to place no confidence in self, and gladly to submit his will to the desires of God from day to day.

16. Cause. Paul becomes a model of what God can do with any man even though he may at one time have been insolent, a blasphemer, and a persecutor (see on v. 13). Thus, any man may reason that if God had enough patience and love to forgive a man as sinful as Paul, then He must have enough patience and love to forgive him also. Jesus bore long with Paul, knowing that his conversion would become a source of encouragement for men in all ages.

Jesus Christ. The glory of Paul's conversion was the revelation of Christ's long-suffering and love, which are extended to all men.

Pattern. Or, "example," that is, of what God can do with any man who submits to His love. In saying that he was "chief" (v. 15), or first, Paul does not mean that he was Christ's only example of divine patience. Every convert is a living monument, or "pattern," of the unfathomable love and long-suffering of God.

Believe. Or, "trust" (see on Rom. 3:3).

17. King eternal. Literally, "the King of the ages," an expression that occurs only here in the NT. It sets forth the eternal character of God's universal kingdom (see Rom. 16:26).

Perhaps in his reference to God as "King" Paul may be thinking of the utter contrast between Him and the infamous emperor Nero, who would soon put the apostle to death. But in the everlasting kingdom Paul, with all the redeemed, would possess a life that could not be taken away from him (see 1 Tim. 6:11–16).

Paul's review of his new life in Christ contrasted with his old life of bigotry and hate lifts his spirit into a glorious doxology of gratitude. For similar songs of praise see Rom. 11:36; 16:27; Gal. 1:5; Eph. 3:21; Phil. 4:20; 1 Tim. 6:15, 16.

Immortal. Gr. *aphthartos*, "imperishable," "incorruptible," "immortal." Compare the use of *aphthartos* in 1 Cor. 9:25; 15:52; 1 Peter 1:4, 23.

Invisible. Or, "unseen" (see Heb. 11:27; see on Col. 1:15).

Only wise God. Textual evidence favors (cf. p. 10) the omission of “wise.” God has no competitor for men’s affections, for no other possesses the qualities here assigned to God. Only a loving relationship with the “immortal” God will ensure each man’s eternal existence.

Honour and glory. That is, man’s unreserved reverence and service and his spontaneous outbursts of loving gratitude.

18. This charge. That is, Paul’s assignment of the pastoral duties at Ephesus to Timothy (see on vs. 3, 5).

Son. Gr. *teknon*, “that which is begotten,” here, Paul’s spiritual offspring (see on v. 2).

Prophecies. Paul here probably refers to predictions made at Timothy’s ordination which described his future devotion and success in the ministry (see Acts 16:2). These words may also indicate that Timothy’s “charge” to correct those teaching a different doctrine (see on 1 Tim. 1:3, 4) was also validated by God through prophets in the church (see on Acts 13:1; 1 Tim. 4:14). For a discussion of the duties of a prophet see on Matt. 11:9.

By them. The confidence of older and experienced church workers that he would prove faithful and valuable encouraged and strengthened Timothy as he faced the difficult problems that confronted the church at Ephesus.

Warfare. Timothy’s endeavor, both to provide strong leadership as Paul’s representative, and to campaign against sin, may be likened to a warfare of righteousness against evil (see on 2 Cor. 10:3, 4; Eph. 6:10–17; 2 Tim. 2:3, 4).

19. Holding faith. Timothy was to be girded with the conviction that God had spoken through Paul and the prophets of the church when they appointed him to leadership in the gospel ministry and had predicted his future usefulness. Timothy could succeed only if he maintained conviction that men of God had spoken God’s will for him and that in doing his task faithfully he could be assured of God’s blessing. The cumulative counsel of God’s Word, at that time the OT, would be an additional weapon in the “warfare” (v. 18) against the divisive teachers (vs. 3–7).

Good conscience. This was to be Timothy’s second weapon in the warfare against error and sin. Whatever problem Timothy faced, his strength would consist in a sincere effort to act in accordance with the principles laid down by Paul and by the Word of God. Christian workers today will likewise find their deepest convictions growing dull and nerveless if their personal lives do not validate the message they preach.

Having put away. Gr. *apōtheō*, “to thrust away,” “to reject” (see Acts 13:46). Paul here describes those who willfully rejected the voice of conscience. The tragic steps of apostasy are: (1) the violations of a pure conscience, (2) loss of conviction as to the relevancy of Christian principles, and (3) deliberate rejection of the faith.

Faith. Literally, “the faith.” That is, the faith of those who heed not the voice of conscience.

Shipwreck. Like the ship’s captain who turns from his compass to rely upon his own judgment, only to court disaster, so the Christian will make “shipwreck” of his faith when he turns from the dependable Word of God to rely upon his own judgment or that of someone else.

20. Hymenæus. Probably the same teacher of perverted doctrines mentioned in 2 Tim. 2:17.

Alexander. Nothing further is actually known about this man.

Delivered unto Satan. Some commentators think that this expression was equivalent to a judicial sentence in the Jewish synagogue. If so, the phrase may have originated when Job's faith was questioned and the Lord "delivered" Job to Satan to be tested (Job 2:6). However, Paul used this phrase evidently not with the thought that the purity of those "delivered" was to be revealed but rather with the thought that their actions should thus be condemned as spiritually incompatible with the standards of the Christian church. As in 1 Cor. 5:3–5, this phrase refers specifically to church expulsion, and was the last measure of discipline that a church community could visit upon an offending member. Because the offender had rejected one or more of the fundamentals of the Christian faith (1 Tim. 1:19) he had, by his own acts, really disfellowshipped himself from the spirit and body of the church proper.

Because there are only two spiritual kingdoms in this world, that of God and that of Satan, the person who renounces the service of the kingdom of God automatically enters the service of Satan's kingdom. The church does not actually make the transfer, but ratifies the choice already made by the offending member (see on 1 Cor. 5:5).

May learn. Gr. *paideuō*, "to train children," "to teach," "to instruct." Even though church expulsion is a drastic measure, it is intended to be remedial. The shock of finally being severed from the church body may arouse the careless sinner to the perilous situation of his soul. No longer a member of the family of Christ, the offender may now realize his need of repentance and contrition. Thus, the extreme measure of church expulsion may be the only means of recalling the sinner to the path of "faith, and a good conscience" (v. 19) and of instructing him as to his true state before God.

Blaspheme. Perhaps Paul refers to the perverted acts of those who wrongly use the law (see on vs. 3–7). Because the law is an expression of God's will and character, any perverted use of it would dishonor God and misrepresent His purposes. Any form of dishonoring God is blasphemy.

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- 1 1T 506
- 2 AA 204
- 4 1T 302
- 15 MB 115; MH 65; SC 36, 41; 5T 629, 641
- 17 MH 434; 8T 282
- 18 7T 281

CHAPTER 2

- 1 *That it is meet to pray and give thanks for all men, and the reason why.* 9 *How women should be attired.* 12 *They are not permitted to teach.* 15 *They shall be saved, notwithstanding the testimonies of God's wrath, in childbirth, if they continue in faith.*

1. Therefore. Or, "then." Paul now turns to counsel on various practical matters relating to public worship that Timothy will find helpful while administering his duties as pastor of the church at Ephesus.

First of all. Paul proceeds to state a fundamental principle of church administration, one basic to freedom of worship.

Supplications. Gr. *deēseis*, “entreaties,” “petitions.” Prayer is here viewed from the standpoint of personal need, implying a recognition that God alone can satisfy these needs.

Prayers. Gr. *proseuchai*, the usual term for all sacred communion with God.

Intercessions. Gr. *enteuxeis*, “intercessory prayers” (cf. on Rom. 8:26, 27). Childlike confidence, in the assurance of ready access to God, characterizes the genuine Christian.

Giving of thanks. Gr. *eucharistiai*, “giving of thanks,” “thanksgivings.” Christians are to be thankful for the favors received both from men and from God, who “giveth to all men liberally” (see on James 1:5).

All men. The Christian’s concern for his fellow men transcends the artificial boundaries of race, nation, and social status. Christian love yearns to include “all men” within the plan of salvation.

2. Kings. Paul is not necessarily endorsing monarchy as the ideal government. It was the usual form in his day. Whatever the form of government, the Christian is to recognize its authority and his obligation to cooperate with it (see on Rom. 13:1; cf. on Acts 5:29; see 1 Peter 2:13–17).

Quiet and peaceable. Christians endeavor to walk at “peace with all men” (Heb. 12:14). Their loyalty to the established government and their exemplary citizenship will cause the onlooker to view their patriotism as above question.

Godliness. The Christian’s reverence for God should mold and temper his every word and deed. To profess loyalty to the high standards of the Christian religion and yet live no better than the unconverted is the most contemptible form of insincerity and hypocrisy.

Honesty. Gr. *semnotēs*, “honor,” “respect,” “dignity.” Genuine Christians will earn the respect of their neighbors by honest business dealings, by participation in worthy community activities, and by their own disciplined homes.

3. This. That is, prayers and labors for “all men” (see on v. 1).

Acceptable. Living a life that validates the Christian message, coupled with an earnest, tactful concern for the spiritual and material welfare of “all men,” fulfills God’s ideal for His children.

God our Saviour. See on ch. 1:1.

4. Who will have. Literally, “who wills” (cf. Titus 2:11; see John 3:17; Rom. 9:18, 19; 2 Peter 3:9). No man could be saved if God had not purposed to forgive and to restore repentant sinners. Because God’s love excludes no man from the opportunity of salvation, all those who are eventually lost will suffer the consequences of their own failure to accept God’s overtures of love (see on John 3:16).

Knowledge of the truth. That knowledge born of personal experience concerning God and His will that leads to salvation (see Rom. 1:28; Eph. 1:17, 18; 4:13–15; Col. 1:9, 10; 3:10; 2 Tim. 2:25; Titus 1:1; Heb. 10:26), and which is revealed through the Bible (see on John 17:17). More than mere intellectual knowledge is here comprehended.

5. One God. The universality of Christianity (see on vs. 1, 4) is amplified with the recognition of the divine lordship of God over the whole universe (see on Acts 17:23–28; Rom. 10:12; 1 Cor. 8:4; Eph. 4:6; 1 Tim. 1:17).

One mediator. Only through Jesus can the sinner be reconciled to God (see on John 14:5–6; Rom. 5:1–2). God does not need to be reconciled to man, for it was His “will” (1

Tim. 2:4) that initiated the plan of salvation. In addition, He provided the means of salvation through Christ's life and death. See on Rom. 5:10. Paul here clearly rules out the need of human mediators and the supposed value that some have attached to such attempted mediation.

The man Christ Jesus. Christ's nature as a "man" is emphasized. Jesus did not represent any particular level of society or nationality, but rather all mankind, both male and female. Paul here condemns the Docetic theory (see Vol. V, p. 912), which emerged in apostolic times and taught that Christ never had a human body, but only appeared to have one. John refers to this heresy as "antichrist" (1 John 4:3).

For a discussion of the humanity of Christ see Vol. V, p. 917.

6. Gave himself. Christ's mission to this earth was voluntary (see on John 10:17, 18).

Ransom. Gr. *antilutron*, an emphatic form of *lutron*, the usual word for "ransom" (see on Matt. 20:28; cf. on Rom. 3:24–25). Paul here stresses man's total inability to contribute anything toward his personal salvation.

All. Christ's atonement is adequate for the worst of sinners and is available to all men everywhere (see 1 Tim. 2:4, 5; see on John 1:12).

Testified. The mission of Christ to earth confirmed God's plan to save "all men" (v. 4).

In due time. See on Rom. 5:6; Gal. 4:4; cf. Titus 1:3.

7. Whereunto. Or, "which" Paul here refers to the provision for man's salvation as set forth in vs. 4–6. This was the theme of Paul's message.

I. That is Paul.

Ordained. Or, "appointed." The apostle's remarkable record of courage and undiminished energy was the result of his deep conviction that God personally had called him to the ministry (see on 1 Cor 1:1; 1 Tim. 1:12).

Preacher. Gr. *kērux*, "herald." A *kērux* was an official messenger who proclaimed publicly the decrees of a king or other government official. Paul compares the divinely appointed minister with such a messenger.

Lie not. Compare Rom. 9:1. Because of his conflicts with the Judaizers and the misusers of the law (1 Tim. 1:4–7), Paul wishes to obviate any charges of treason to his own nation. This he does by stressing God's part in sending him to the "Gentiles" (see on Gal. 2:8–9).

Gentiles. Gr. *ethnē*, "nations" (see on Acts 14:16). Because God desires "all men" to be saved (1 Tim. 2:4), He has made provision that all men should have the fullest opportunity to know the "truth" (v. 4).

Through Paul and his successors the proclamation of God's love would be heralded to all nations. For this reason we should pray for and be concerned with the well-being of "all men" (see on v. 1). See on Acts 17:30.

In faith and verity. That is, in matters relating to faith in Christ and the truths of salvation.

8. Will. Gr. *boulomai*, "to desire," "to intend." Paul now turns to the proper attitude and manner that should characterize all public prayer. Even in prayer order must be maintained, and Paul, as a skilled administrator, instructs his subordinate, Timothy, in details designed to prevent confusion and fanaticism. Compare 1 Cor. 14:33, 40.

Men. Gr. *andres*, “men” as distinguished from women. For a discussion of the role of women in the public services of the church see on 1 Cor. 14:34, 35.

Every where. That is, in each service of public worship.

Holy hands. Figurative of a character void of moral defilement. By this the apostle implies that only such men should pray in public. The hands symbolize deeds, and an upright man is said to have “clean hands” (see on Ps. 24:4; cf. James 4:8). For a morally and spiritually polluted man to pray in public worship is hypocrisy, and his act in so doing, an insult to the God of heaven.

Without wrath. Genuine prayer, whether public or private, can be made only in an atmosphere of love and forgiveness. The spirit of anger and revenge is incompatible with the Spirit of God and must be removed before there can be effective worship (see on Matt. 5:22; 6:14, 15; Eph. 4:31).

Doubting. Gr. *dialogismos*, “disputing,” “quarreling.” Genuine prayer brings the worshiper into harmony with the spirit and the purposes of God. Wrong attitudes toward either man or God destroy the effectiveness of prayer.

9. Like manner. Paul now expresses his will concerning the proper attitude and conduct of women church members.

Adorn. Gr. *kosmeō*, “to put in order,” “arrange.”

Modest. Gr. *kosmios*, “well-arranged,” “in good taste,” hence, “proper” in the sense of being conservative.

Shamefacedness. Gr. *aidōs*, “self-respect,” “modesty.” Such an attitude shudders at the thought of shameful deeds, and holds a reverence for purity that prevents such deeds.

Sobriety. That is, soundness of mind, self-control. Paul here pictures the converted Christian woman as one whose every desire is to reflect the selflessness of Christ. She determines to fulfill her womanly tasks with grace and resourcefulness, without being a burden either to the church or to her husband.

Broided hair. Gr. *plegma*, something “woven,” “twisted together,” “braided.” In the context the word “hair” must be understood. Paul’s theme in vs. 9, 10 is feminine modesty and a high regard for moral purity. Any hair style that is designed to attract special, and flattering attention to its owner would be in contravention of the principle here set forth. However, hair that is carelessly done up may be equally conspicuous and in violation of Christian principles. Good taste is a part of good religion.

Gold, or pearls, or costly array. See on 1 Peter 3:3–6. The purpose of costly adornment, whatever form it may take, is to attract attention to oneself. It is always an expression of selfishness and sometimes, also, of a desire for improper attentions from the opposite sex. For the Christian, modesty, quality, appropriateness, and serviceability should determine what is worn and how it is worn. Expenditures that go beyond this ideal are incompatible with the principles of Christian stewardship. Such display reflects personal vanity and self-centeredness, which are not consonant with Paul’s plea for Christian self-respect and modesty.

10. Godliness. Or, “reverence toward God.” By participating in public worship these women have openly professed their loyalty to the God they worship. To profess Christian faithfulness and yet dress extravagantly and immodestly is a form of hypocrisy.

Good works. Paul points to the external as well as the internal nature of genuine religion. The most attractive and worthy adornment is a record of “good works.” This alone will bring to women the complete satisfaction of being sincerely loved and respected. No amount of attractive clothing will hide the blemish of an unpleasant disposition, the lack of “good works” Compare Titus 3:8.

11. In silence. Because of the general lack of private and public rights then accorded women, Paul felt it to be expedient to give this counsel to the church. Any severe breach of accepted social custom brings reproach upon the church. Christians should avoid even the appearance of evil (1 Thess. 5:22). See on 1 Cor. 14:34.

With all subjection. That is, without self-assertion. Compare Eph. 5:22; Titus 2:5; 1 Peter 3:1, 2.

12. Usurp authority. The Scriptures exhort Christians to do everything decently and in order (1 Cor. 14:40). In the days of Paul, custom required that women be very much in the background. Therefore, if women believers had spoken out in public or otherwise made themselves prominent, these scriptural injunctions would have been violated and the cause of God would thus have suffered reproach. See on 1 Cor. 11:5–16.

13. For. Paul here states his reasons for the counsel regarding the relationship between men and women.

Adam. The subordination of Eve to Adam following the entrance of sin in no way reflected dishonor on her, but was intended to bring harmony and to contribute to her fullest happiness (see on Gen. 3:16). As the husband is the head of the home, so he is the natural leader of a group of homes in a church congregation.

14. Adam was not deceived. It was Eve who was beguiled by the evil one (Gen. 3:13; 2 Cor. 11:3). Adam sinned with a full knowledge of the step he was taking. Because of his love for Eve he voluntarily chose to share the results of transgression with her (cf. Gen. 3:17).

Woman being deceived. The apostle’s second argument for the submissiveness of women is that when Eve tried to assert leadership she was beguiled. There is no explanation for sin. Why Eve could be deceived by Satan, in the full light of God’s explicit command, is beyond rational explanation. Because of this tragic event, Paul sees added reason for counseling converted women not to attempt “to usurp authority over the man.”

15. Saved. That is, woman’s leading role in the introduction of sin and her present subordinate position in no way affect her opportunity for salvation. Men and women stand in equal need of the mercy and saving power of God.

In childbearing. In making provision for the birth and nurture of children God has entrusted a great honor and privilege to womankind. When woman fulfills her trust faithfully, by channeling her energies into the creation of a happy, orderly home, she will not only be called blessed by her husband and children but will also receive the approbation of the Lord. Salvation cannot be separated from a person’s day-by-day relation to the responsibilities of life. To forsake or neglect her God-appointed sphere of activity for other pursuits may result in unhappiness and loss. Paul urges all women to do their duty as faithful mothers and to recognize man’s God-given responsibility of leadership in the home and in the church. God has given to both men and women special qualifications for accomplishing their individual tasks, and both will find their greatest

happiness in filling their assigned places with a spirit of love, devotion, and faithful service.

If. Salvation, whether of men or of women, depends upon continuance of the initial faith that led them to Christ. Salvation is instantaneous, but it must be maintained by daily, uninterrupted surrender to the plan and purpose of God for each individual.

Charity. Or, “love,” as the fruit of genuine faith (see on 1 Cor 13:1). Love does not seek to “usurp authority” (1 Tim. 2:12), nor does it neglect the honorable duties performed by a faithful wife and mother.

Holiness. A completely dedicated life is the result of genuine faith, which subordinates everything else to the accomplishment of God’s will (see on Phil. 3:7–8). A sanctified woman will find in her allotted role as mother a more rewarding pathway of service than she will in competition for leadership that will cause her “to usurp authority over the man.”

Sobriety. See on v. 9. Paul calls for sensible women who exalt their womanly duties.

ELLEN G. WHITE COMMENTS

- 1 7T 15
- 1, 2 CS 148
- 3, 4 7T 15
- 3–6GC 262
- 8 CG 518; CT 241; TM 515; 5T 410, 536; 7T 42
- 8–10CS 301; MYP 313; 1T 506; 4T 630
- 9 CG 427; MH 287; SL 16; TM 130; 1T 131, 421, 457; 4T 645; 6T 96
- 9, 10 CG 416; Ev 270; 1T 20, 189, 278, 460; 2T 455
- 10 4T 646

CHAPTER 3

2 *How bishops, and deacons, and their wives should be qualified, 14 and to what end Saint Paul wrote to Timothy of these things. 15 Of the church, and the blessed truth therein taught and professed.*

1. True. Gr. *pistos*, “faithful,” “worthy of trust.” Some commentators believe the first phrase of ch. 3 should be considered the concluding statement concerning the subordination of women as set forth in ch. 2. However, it may be applied to either what precedes or what follows, because both comments are worth careful consideration.

Bishop. Or, “overseer” (see on Acts 11:30; 20:28). In apostolic times the office of “bishop” was the same as that of elder. For the historical development of the episcopate see Vol. VI, pp. 26, 38.

Good. Gr. *kalos*, “excellent,” “commendable.”

2. Must. Gr. *dei*, “it is necessary,” that is, by very nature of the case. A Christian leader must exemplify the principles of his profession if he would convince others of the worthiness of his message. A stream flows no higher than its source, and a congregation will not usually rise higher than its leadership.

Blameless. Or, “irreproachable,” “not open to censure.” With respect to the following list of moral prerequisites the leader of a church should not be open to censure. He must prove his moral fitness.

One wife. This phrase has been variously explained as meaning that (1) all ministers should be married; (2) polygamy and concubinage are strictly forbidden to ministers; (3)

a divorced person should not serve as a bishop, and (4) ministers are not to remarry if widowed.

Against the first explanation it is urged it is urged that there may be difficulty in harmonizing this with Paul's statement encouraging men to live as he lived, that is, without a wife (see on 1 Cor. 7:7, 8). However, those who defend the first explanation point out that when Paul's statements regarding marriage are viewed in their context, it was the "present distress" that led him to urge caution (see on 1 Cor. 7:26, 28). Paul does not belittle the divine order of the home, which God instituted in Eden. The companionship of husband and wife is one of His ordained means for the proper spiritual development of both, as Paul himself declares (see on Eph. 5:22–33; 1 Tim. 4:3; Heb. 13:4). Doubtless Paul includes this in his counsel regarding bishops because a married man would be more adequately prepared to understand many of the problems arising among the families of the church. Certainly Paul here condemns the mandatory celibacy of the clergy. That much is undebatably clear.

The second explanation may reflect part of Paul's thinking, because he always condemned sexual promiscuity. In a day when polygamy was socially acceptable in the East and concubinage among the Greeks and Romans, Christians were to stand undefiled as an example of a better way of life. If church members should fail in this regard, there may be censure and forgiveness; but if a church leader fails to exemplify the highest moral standard, he thereby forfeits his position of leadership. Paul may be stressing the danger of appointing as bishop, or elder, any man who has an irregular moral record.

Those who favor the third explanation point out that, even as the Jews recognized the most trivial grounds for divorce (see on Matt. 5:32), some of the early Christians were excusing divorce for causes other than adultery (see on Matt. 19:8, 9). A bishop divorced for any reason would be handicapped as a spiritual leader.

Through the centuries considerable support has been given to the fourth explanation. Those inclining to it favor the translation "married only once." Against this view it is urged that the Greek does not necessarily imply that a bishop cannot be married more than once, but merely says that he is to be "husband of one wife," that is, that he may not have two or more wives at one time. It is also pointed out that nowhere in Scripture is remarriage after the death of a first spouse condemned, nor is it considered detrimental to spiritual leadership. Finally, those who oppose this view note that advocates of celibacy and other ascetic practices of an extreme nature are the strongest supporters of the view.

One fact is clear, the bishop is to have an untarnished record of marital fidelity, which would serve as a worthy pattern for his flock.

Vigilant. Gr. *nēphalios*, "abstainer from wine," "sober." In classical usage *nēphaleos* is used to describe a wineless meal or libation presented to a heathen god.

Sober. Gr. *sōphrōn*, "prudent," "sound-minded," "self-controlled." Such leaders are always needed in the church, to ward off fanaticism and to lead out in times of grave emergency.

Good behaviour. Gr. *kosmios*, "orderly" (see on ch. 2:9).

Given to hospitality. See on Rom. 12:13. The bishop should be noted for his unselfish consideration for Christian travelers.

Apt to teach. Gr. *didaktikos*, “skilled in teaching.” The minister of God must be both willing to be taught and also qualified to instruct others in the truths of God’s Word, following the example of the great Teacher.

3. Not given to wine. Or, “not a drunkard,” “not addicted to wine.” The elders were not to give any ground for the charge that they were drunkards or pleasure seekers (cf. on v. 8; ch. 5:23). They, above all others in the church, were to be models of sobriety.

No striker. That is, one who is not pugnacious and quarrelsome. A conciliatory, peacemaking disposition is a prime qualification of every church leader.

Not greedy of filthy lucre. Textual evidence favors (cf. p. 10) the omission of these words.

Patient. Gr. *epieikēs*, “gentle,” “reasonable” (see on James 3:17).

Not a brawler. Or, “not a fighter,” a conciliator.

Not covetous. Literally, “not a lover of silver.” The experience of Judas Iscariot and Simon the sorcerer reveals the danger and injury that come to the ministry of the church through the love of money (see John 12:1–6; Acts 8:14–23).

4. Ruleth. Gr. *preištēmi* “to superintend,” “to preside over.” If a man fails in a smaller task, he is incapable of succeeding in the larger task of superintending the many families that compose a congregation or group of churches (see v. 5).

House. Gr. *oikos*, “house,” and by extension, “family,” “household.”

Children in subjection. The minister’s children must show by their obedient behavior and serious attitude that they respect their father. The sons of Eli, the high priest, present a tragic example of a father’s misguided love and his failure to control his family (see on 1 Sam. 2:12, 27).

Gravity. Gr. *semnotēs* (see on ch. 2:2).

Novice. Literally, “newly planted.” The Scriptures say nothing regarding a specific minimum age for ministerial candidates, but require only that they be spiritually mature.

Being lifted up. Or, “being puffed up,” “being conceited.” Conceit blurs the judgment.

Condemnation of the devil. This phrase may be understood to mean (1) that the “novice” will receive the same condemnation, or judgment, accorded the devil when pride precipitated his rebellion in heaven (see on Eze. 28:12–17); or (2) the condemnation that the devil himself, as “the accuser of our brethren” (see Rev. 12:10; Job 1:6; 2:4, 5), will bring against the “novice” who becomes wrapped in conceit. Against this latter view it is urged that nowhere is judgment a function of the devil. Judgment is God’s task, and the judgment accorded the devil in heaven (Rev. 12:7–9) will also be awarded those who allow pride to control their thinking.

7. Must. See on v. 2.

Good report. The reputation of the bishop in the community must be of the highest character, one that merits the full respect and confidence of those not connected with the church (see on 2 Cor. 6:3). Christianity would have little appeal if its leaders were as lacking in integrity as men outside the church too often are.

Reproach. That is, the harsh criticisms and revilings of both church members and unbelievers. When the minister’s influence is blighted by the critical judgment of the

community, discouragement and despair almost certainly ensue, which will further depreciate his usefulness.

Devil. See on Matt. 4:1. A minister who has lost the respect of church members and those without has fallen into at least one “snare of the devil,” and will continue to do so unless a decided change of heart occurs.

8. Likewise. Even as the office of bishop, or minister, has certain requisites, so also has the office of deacon.

Deacons. See on Mark 9:35. For a discussion of the function and historical development of the diaconate see Vol. VI, pp. 25, 26.

Grave. Gr. *semnos*, “worthy of honor,” “dignified.” For the related noun see on ch. 2:2.

Not doubletongued. That is, does not say one thing to one person and the contrary to someone else. Every church officer should be a peacemaker, not a scandal-bearer or troublemaker. It may have been this word that prompted John Bunyan to name one of the characters in *Pilgrim’s Progress* “Mr. Two-tongues.”

Wine. Gr. *oinos*, “wine,” whether new or fermented. Some hold that Paul here speaks of unfermented wine—grape juice—because for him to speak otherwise would place him in conflict with his declaration against defiling the body (see on 1 Cor. 6:19; 10:31), and contrary to the general teaching of the Bible regarding intoxicating drink (see on Prov. 20:1; 23:29–32; John 2:9). Others hold that Paul here permits a temperate use of ordinary wine. They declare that if he were speaking of grape juice he would not need to warn the deacons against drinking “much” of it, and would have no valid basis for forbidding the elders to drink it at all. The passage is admittedly difficult. See on Deut. 14:26; cf. on 1 Tim. 5:23.

Not greedy of filthy lucre. Or, “not eager for dishonorable gain.” The Christian should always be above taking advantage of anyone, even though he may not be guilty of breaking any specific law in so doing. Furthermore, he does not use the privilege of his office to do favors for indirect personal gain. Money is not his chief goal in life.

9. Mystery. For the significance of Paul’s usage of “mystery” see on Rom. 11:25.

Faith. Literally, “the faith,” that is, the whole body of Christian teaching. The deacon is to be not only a well-informed Bible student but also one who reflects the principles of the Bible.

Pure conscience. See ch. 1:5. Instead of the failings noted in ch. 3:8, the deacon will exemplify the principles of the Christian faith in his daily life. Before God and man the faithful deacon will stand unashamed, with a conscience void of intentional wrongdoing.

10. Proved. Or, “tested.” The fitness of any prospective deacon must not be taken for granted. Paul urges the safe procedure of first investigating all phases of a man’s life before installing him in the responsible office of a deacon, even though this office is lesser in rank than that of the bishop (see vs. 2–7). Paul here specifically condemns the proposal sometimes made—that assignment to church office be made as an encouragement to those who have been careless, or weak in the faith, in the hope that such recognition may stimulate zeal and piety.

11. Wives. Gr. *gunaikes*, “women,” or “wives.” It is impossible to determine conclusively whether Paul is speaking of deaconesses or of deacons’ wives.

Grave. See on v. 8.

Slanderers. Gr. *diaboloī*, see on Matt. 4:1.

Sober. Gr. *nēphalioī*, “abstainers from wine” (see on v. 2).

Faithful. That is, always trustworthy in matters committed to them. Perhaps this is a reference to trustworthiness in dispensing charity to the needy.

12. One wife. See on v. 2.

Children. See on v. 4. The same high standard of a well-ordered home life that applies to a bishop applies also to a deacon. A religion that does not work in the home is not worth much.

13. Used the office of a deacon. Gr. *diakoneō*, “to serve” (see on Acts 6:1). The entire phrase reads literally, “they who served,” or “they who ministered.” Paul now summarizes vs. 1–12 and presents an incentive for all to serve faithfully in their appointed offices—bishops, elders, deacons, and deaconesses. Even though by this time the term *diakonos*, “deacon,” was beginning to assume its more specific, technical meaning, it was still employed to describe all who served the church in any capacity. Paul, though an apostle, frequently described himself (see 1 Cor. 3:5; 2 Cor. 3:6; 6:4; 11:23; Eph. 3:7; Col. 1:23) and Timothy, pastor of the Ephesus church (see 1 Tim. 4:6), as *diakonoī* (plural of *diakonos*).

Purchase. Gr. *peripoieō* “to gain,” “to preserve” (see on Eph. 1:14). Faithful service results in an increased capacity to serve even more faithfully in the future.

Degree. Gr. *bathmos*, “step,” “threshold,” that is, rank, status, or standing among people. Growing efficiency in church work is evidence of deepening fellowship with God, and results in increased respect in the community. Paul does not represent the performance of church duties as a means of securing personal salvation, or work faithfully done on earth as earning one a more exalted status in eternity.

Boldness. Gr. *parrēsia*, “fearless confidence,” “cheerful courage” (see on Acts 4:13). Paul frequently uses *parrēsia* to describe the confidence all church members should have in the success of the gospel plan and in their own personal achievements through a vital connection with Christ by faith (see Eph. 3:12; Phil. 1:20; Heb. 3:6; 4:16; 10:19, 35). When a church officer is united with Christ, no problem, whether personal or professional, should cause him to become discouraged. Doing well each assigned task will result in serenity and confidence, and prepare a man to meet more difficult problems in the future.

The faith. That is, the Christian faith, which finds its center in Christ.

14. Hoping to come. So far as we know, this desire was never realized.

15. Behave. Gr. *anastrephō*, “to conduct oneself.” Paul instructs Timothy with respect to the administration of the local church, and particularly concerning the high moral conduct required of all leaders. When Timothy faced the frequent and varied problems common to all congregations, he would find in Paul’s letter a ready source book policy and procedure.

House. Or, “family” (see on Eph. 2:19; 1 Tim. 3:4). In a day when Christians did not own church buildings (see p. 18) the thought that God was nevertheless in their midst, both personally and collectively, was profoundly reassuring. A building cannot reflect a

“living God,” but a converted Christian can. Thus, God’s church is primarily the spiritual union of all its converted membership, whether worshiping in the same room or separated by great distances.

Living God. Worshiping a “living God” requires a living faith, one that recognizes God’s purposes at work from day to day. Only as Christians live enthusiastically for the extension of the gospel program can they be dwelling places for the living God.

Pillar. See Gal. 2:9. Genuine Christians are God’s witnesses to the power of His grace and to the wisdom of His purposes. When they fail to cooperate fully with the divine plan to restore in man the image of God, the day of the restoration of this earth is inevitably delayed (see COL 69). Unless God’s power and purposes are worked out in the lives of His professed people Satan’s charges will be vindicated (see on Job 1:9 PP 42). Hence, Paul urges church members to reflect in their lives the principle of truth they profess.

Ground. Gr. *edraiōma*, “a prop which makes stable,” “a support,” “a buttress.” The church of redeemed men and women, actively engaged in the program of restoring in man “the image of his Maker” (see Ed 15), is a prime exhibit of the supreme sufficiency of the “truth.” It is not enough merely to assent to the principles of truth; they must be fully reflected in the life (see on John 8:32).

16. Without controversy. Literally, “by common consent.” Many commentators believe this verse refers to a well-known hymn of the earth church.

Mystery. See 1 Tim. 3:9; see on Rom. 11:25. “The mystery of godliness” (1 Tim. 3:15) is the basis for every hope and the source of all comfort.

Godliness. See on ch. 2:2. The triumph of God’s grace over the forces of evil in a man’s life will always be cause for wonder and gratitude.

God. Textual evidence favors (cf. p. 10) the reading “he who.” The reference is clearly to Jesus, in and through whom the divine secret has been revealed.

Manifest. See on John 1:14.

In the flesh. Jesus Christ, though possessing “all the fulness of the Godhead bodily” (see on Col. 2:9), divested Himself of His heavenly prerogatives (see on Phil. 2:5–8) and lived in the sphere of men, even to the possession of a human body (see on 1 Tim. 2:5). For a discussion of Christ’s human nature see Vol. V, p. 917.

Justified. Gr. *dikaioō*, “to be declared righteous.” For a discussion of Christ as the “Just One” see on Acts 7:52. Christ was declared righteous because He was sinless (see on John 8:46). Men are declared righteous when they seek His imputed righteousness (see on Rom. 4:25).

In the Spirit. Or, “in spirit,” that is, with respect to spiritual things. The Saviour faced life with a spirit of complete dedication to the will of God, and it was this attitude that kept Him from sin. Christ came to be man’s substitute, and it was His record as a human being that proved God altogether just in His requirements and in His judgements.

See on angels. That is, every phase of Christ’s earthly life, from birth to resurrection and ascension, was viewed by the angels. They were witnesses to His perfection of character and utter selflessness (see Matt. 4:11; Luke 2:9–15; 22:43; Heb. 1:6).

Gentiles. That is, the nations, to whom the Lord Himself had commanded the apostles to go (see Matt. 28:18–20; Acts 1:8).

Believed. Paul here chronologically traces the success of Christ's mission from the incarnation to His favorable reception in the hearts of sincere men. Paul thus attests the rapid progress of the gospel into all the known world (see on Col. 1:23).

Received up. Gr. *analambanō*. The same word is used in the ascension narrative (Mark 16:19; Acts 1:2, 11, 22).

Into glory. Literally, "in glory," that is, the reception that welcomed Jesus when He ascended to heaven was glorious.

ELLEN G. WHITE COMMENTS

2 CSW 103

4 EW 97, 100; 1T 119, 139, 216, 235; 5T 618

7 4T 38

15 COL 54; SR 366

16 COL 134; CT 262; DA 24; FE 179, 444; GW 251; MYP 190; PK 597; SC 12; 2T 215; 5T 746; 6T 59; 7T 29; 8T 326

CHAPTER 4

2

1 *He fortelleth that in the latter times there shall be a departure from the faith. 6 And to the end that Timothy might not fail in doing his duty, he furnisheth him with divers precepts belonging thereto.*

The Spirit. That is, the Holy Spirit, speaking either through Paul himself or through some other prophet in the church. For a discussion of the relationship between "the Spirit" and prophets within the church see on 1 Cor. 12:10; Eph. 4:11; 2 Peter 1:21; Rev. 1:1; 19:10.

Latter times. Or, "later times," that is, in the days that would follow the time when the prediction was made. The Christian church was to expect increasing apostasy, which would culminate prior to the second advent (see on Matt. 24:24; Rev. 16:14).

Depart. Gr. *aphistēmi*, "to remove oneself from," "to apostatize." For *apostasia*, the noun derived from this verb, see on 2 Thess. 2:3. Paul at Miletus had already warned the elders of the Ephesian church of the coming apostasy in the Christian church (see Acts 20:28–31). For a more extended discussion of the great apostasy that was to manifest itself in the church before the return of Christ see on 2 Thess. 2:3–10.

The faith. The use of the definite article "the" in Greek emphasizes a "faith" that has just been referred to—here the profound truths stated in ch. 3:16.

Seducing. Literally, "wandering," hence, misleading and deceptive. The most effective and deceptive opponents of the church are former members who set forth a cunning mixture of error and truth.

Spirits. That is, men actuated by "seducing spirits" (see on 1 John 4:1).

Devils. Gr. *daimonia*, "demons" (see on 1 Cor. 10:20). The teachers of deception disseminate teachings that are inspired by Satan and his co-workers. Compare the devil's control of Judas (see Luke 22:3). Satan works to control the minds of men, hence, the importance of a sound intellectual grasp of truth.

²Nichol, F. D. (1978). *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary : The Holy Bible with exegetical and expository comment*. Commentary Reference Series (1 Ti 1:1). Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association.

Modern spiritualism, a prominent example of the “doctrines of devils,” is merely a revival of the demon worship and witchcraft of the past. Its seductive influence will eventually sweep the world, Christian and non-Christian alike, and prepare the way for Satan’s last great delusion (GC 562, 588, 589, 624; PP 686).

2. Hypocrisy. Or, “pretense,” “outward show.” Teachers of deception (v. 1) may pretend loyalty to truth while they spread their “doctrines of devils” (v. 1). Apostates often do not sail openly under the flag of error and treason to the cause of Christ. The teachers of deception trumpet loudly their loyalty to the cause of truth, thus better to delude men.

Their conscience. Literally, “their own conscience.” The deceptions that are misleading others in the church are, at the same time, making the deceivers insensitive to truth.

Seared with a hot iron. Or, “branded with a branding iron.” Some hold that this refers to the insensibility of a conscience that is no longer aware of guilt at wrongdoing in somewhat the same way that searing by a hot iron renders human flesh incapable of feeling, so that it becomes progressively difficult for the Holy Spirit to make any impression on the conscience. Compare the course of Judas, who finally ignored every appeal to his soul (see Luke 22:3; John 6:70; 13:27). Others believe that as a branding iron leaves its mark, so the “doctrines of devils” (1 Tim. 4:1) and hypocritical “lies” (v. 2) make the satanic brand an indelible mark. Hence, as Paul possessed the “marks” of his service to Christ (Gal. 6:17), so these deceivers will bear corresponding marks of loyalty to Satan.

3. Forbidding to marry. Paul here warns against fanatical concepts that were first introduced into Christianity by the Gnostics (see Vol. VI, pp. 54–58) and perpetuated by the monastic system. The Gnostics believed that all matter was evil, and that the human body, being material, must have its passions repressed and denied. According to this theory, marriage became a concession to the lusts of the flesh, and was therefore sinful. Paul makes clear that marriage is a God-given institution and that to attack this institution would be to assail the infinite wisdom and beneficent purposes of God (see on 1 Cor. 7:1; Heb. 13:4).

Meats. Gr. *brōmata*, “food” (see on Mark 7:19). For a discussion of Paul’s position concerning the relationship between food and Christian living see on Rom. 14:1. Paul here refers to ascetic influences and tendencies that permeated the church. For ceremonial, ritualistic reasons these ascetics considered the total prohibition of certain foods to be spiritually desirable. The prohibition of certain foods on particular religious days may also be included in the apostle’s warning.

Which. Some believe that this refers back to “meats” only, whereas others urge that marriage is also to be included.

Created. Both food and marriage were part of God’s original plan for man in Eden.

To be received. Literally, “for participation.” The institution of marriage and the foods specified for man to eat (see on Gen. 1:29; see Additional Note on Lev. 11) are part of God’s plan for the proper development of man. He who created man knows best what activities he should participate in so as to attain a balanced, happy life. For man to deny himself the privileges of marriage and food necessary for proper health would be to question and defy the wisdom and will of God.

Thanksgiving. Men are not only to accept God's directions for living, but to rejoice in His concern for them and to register their gratitude in a life of praise and thanksgiving (see on 1 Cor. 10:30, 31).

Which believe and know. Literally, "by the faithful, even those knowing fully [that is, who have an experimental understanding of]." God's plans for man are understood best by those who have committed their will to Him and put those plans into practice (see John 7:17). Those who know by experience the unfailing love and concern of God will be the first to vindicate His wisdom as it extends to every facet of their lives. Only those who have fully realized this wisdom will be able to give genuine "thanksgiving."

Truth. That is, the revealed will of God as contained in the Scriptures (see ch. 3:15; see on ch. 2:4).

4. Every creature. Gr. *pan ktisma*, "everything founded," "everything created," here evidently to be understood as restricted to the created things of v. 3 (see comment there).

Good. Gr. *kalos*, "excellent," that is, perfectly adapted and suitable to its intended purpose. Even as the inventor of an earthly machine knows best what the ideal conditions are for its successful operation, so God knows the best possible conditions for man's perfect happiness (see on Gen. 1:31).

Some commentators believe that Paul here abolishes the distinction made in the OT between "clean" and "unclean" foods (see on Lev. 11). It should be noted, however, that he specifically limits his remarks to those things created by God for use as food (see on v. 3). God specified at creation what articles He intended man to use as food. This prescribed diet did not include the flesh of any animal, or even all types of vegetation (see on Gen. 1:29, 31). They were created for a different purpose, and for that purpose they were "good," that is, perfectly adapted to meet the purpose for which God made them. After the Flood God permitted the use of "clean" meats, but specifically forbade the eating of "unclean" meats. The Bible nowhere removes that ban.

Nothing to be refused. Everything God has created should be made to fill the need for which it was created.

5. Sanctified. Gr. *hagiazō*, "to treat as holy" (see on John 17:17). God has ordained, or set apart, marriage (see on 1 Tim. 4:3). He has also set apart certain items appointed for use as food, and they are therefore "sanctified," or set apart, each for its intended use.

Word of God. That is, by His express command. Christians set their pattern of living consistently with the Bible.

Prayer. Genuine prayer reveals man's attempt to cooperate fully with God's plan for his restoration from sin. Prayer before each meal and frequently throughout the day is not too often to voice gratefulness for the love and wisdom of the Lord (see on Col. 3:17).

6. If thou put the brethren in remembrance. Or, "by suggesting to the brethren." Paul calls for a constant ministry of teaching. In the NT the members of the church are frequently called "brethren" (see Phil. 3:1; James 1:2; 1 Peter 5:9).

These things. That is, the instruction regarding the growing danger posed by apostate teachers (see on vs. 1–5).

Good. See on v. 4.

Minister. Gr. *diakonos*, "deacon" (see on ch. 3:13).

Nourished up. No Christian minister can continue long in God's favor without a systematic program of Bible study and general self-improvement. The Scriptures alone

can make his ministry effective for good. To be “nourished up” in the Scriptures does not mean merely that certain texts and Biblical facts have been successfully mastered, for the devil himself has mastered the Scriptures in this way (see on James 2:19). To know Christ personally and to have an experimental knowledge of salvation, as revealed in the Bible, is the objective of all genuine Bible study.

No Christian, whether minister or church member, can be properly nourished if he does not partake of a balanced diet, whether of literal or of spiritual food. Food eaten by someone else will never contribute to one’s own spiritual health or growth (cf. DA 390). Paul challenges young Timothy to be a true representative of Jesus as he ministers to his congregation.

Faith. Literally, “the faith” (see on chs. 3:9; 4:1; 5:8).

Good doctrine. That is, sound teaching.

Attained. Literally, “closely followed.” Paul’s commendation of Timothy will further strengthen the young pastor’s influence.

7. Refuse. The less attention the Christian minister gives to speculative ideas, the more service he will do for all concerned. The Master Shepherd does not intend that His sheep shall become experimental animals on which religious fanatics may try out their ill-conceived theories.

Profane. See on ch. 1:9. Christian ministers are not to concern themselves with secular speculations.

Old wives. Or, “old-womanish,” that is, silly superstitions, which are unworthy of a discerning Christian’s attention.

Exercise. Paul urges Timothy to direct his energies into the positive presentation of the great truths of salvation.

Godliness. The best defense of Christian doctrine is not found in a continued attack upon the current “fables,” but rather in a consistent Christian life (see on ch. 2:2). In addition, the clear, positive presentation of truth which undergirds this genuine Christian experience will be more effective than quibbling over fanciful notions.

8. Bodily exercise. Paul is not here minimizing the benefits of physical exercise. The human body is “the temple of the Holy Ghost” (1 Cor. 6:19, 20), and it is mandatory for every Christian to keep himself in the best of health. To do so requires a reasonable amount of physical exercise. However, Paul is concerned lest physical austerity or exercise of any kind should be made an end in itself, to the detriment of godliness of character. The morality of any phase of healthful living consists not in what a person is doing with his body but in what spiritual advancement his increased physical stamina makes possible (see on 1 Cor. 9:24–27).

Little. That is, in comparison with the supreme importance of training the character, which “is profitable unto all things.” Some believe that Paul is also comparing the temporary value of physical development with the present and future value of spiritual training. This may be true, but the fact that good health contributes to spiritual alertness and personality must not be ignored. “Health is an inestimable blessing, and one which is more closely related to conscience and religion than many realize” (GW 242).

All things. Any attention to either physical or mental training is merely a means to the one end of spiritual vitality. The Christlike character is the principal concern of the genuine Christian.

The life that now is. Paul concurs with Christ that not only does godliness hold out to the believer the promise of eternal life, “which is to come,” but it gives peace, happiness, and blessings in this present life (see Ps. 34:12–14; Luke 18:28–30).

9. Faithful. Gr. *pistos*, “worthy of trust” (see on ch. 3:1).

10. For therefore. Rather, “for to this end,” that is, the end of “godliness” of character (see on v. 8), which is to be sought for by every Christian.

Both. Textual evidence favors (cf. p. 10) the omission of this word.

Labour. Gr. *kopiaō*, “to toil exhaustedly.” The wearisome schedule of Paul’s daily ministry was the result of his earnest desire to spread the challenge of “godliness” throughout the churches and among the masses of heathen. His love for souls may be measured by the record of his exhausting toil (see on 2 Cor. 11:23–29).

Suffer reproach. Or, “are reviled.” However, textual evidence favors (cf. p. 10) the reading “to contend with adversaries” (see on 1 Cor. 9:25).

Trust. That is, hopefully trust. See on Rom. 5:1–5; 8:24, 25; 15:13. Compare 1 Thess. 5:8; 2 Thess. 2:16; Titus 3:7; Heb. 3:6; Peter 1:3, 4; 1 John 3:2, 3.

Living God. The unchanging nature of God provides the basis for the complete reliability of the promises (see v. 8), which are extended to all believers.

Saviour. Paul considers the three members of the Godhead as directly involved in the plan of salvation (see on ch. 1:1). Every expressed thought and act of each reveals that God’s prime concern is the redemption of men.

All men. That is, God desires all men to be saved, and has made sufficient grace available for this great purpose (see on ch. 2:2).

Those that believe. Although salvation is available to all men, only those who choose to “believe” and accept it will benefit from its provision (John 3:17, 18, 36; see on John 1:12).

11. Command. Verse 11 may also be translated: “Make a practice of keeping this message before the people, and continue teaching it.” A Christlike character is of primary importance, and its cultivation must never be subordinated to other activities, however worthy. Paul saw the danger of men becoming church members but failing to become genuine Christians.

12. Despise. Or, “think down on.”

Thy youth. Timothy was probably not 40 years old, and yet would have numerous elders under his charge (see ch. 5:1, 17, 19). From ch. 4:12–16 some have concluded that Timothy was timid and reticent by nature, more given to obey than to command, and that Paul’s counsel here was intended to correct this supposed defect. Youth is no barrier to a rich spiritual fellowship with God, and old age is not a guarantee of sound thinking or complete dedication. Men, according to Paul, are to be judged by their sanctified abilities and not by arbitrary standards such as age.

Example of the believers. That is, a model of what every genuine Christian should be like. Compare Titus 2:7. The phrase may be rendered “an example to the believers,” that is, a model of conduct to be imitated by those who believe (cf. Phil. 3:17; 1 Thess. 1:6, 7; 2 Thess. 3:9; 1 Peter 5:3). Thus the apostle challenges Timothy to continue to exemplify the Christian virtues and graces, so that his authority may be held in honor.

In word. Or, “in conversation,” “in speech,” whether public or private.

Conversation. Gr. *anastrophē*, “manner of life” (see on Eph. 4:22).

Charity. Or “love” (see on 1 Cor. 13:1).

In spirit. Textual evidence favors (cf. p. 10) the omission of this phrase.

In faith. By observing Timothy’s unswerving conviction that God is trustworthy and merits our fullest loyalty, other church members would be encouraged to do likewise. Both love and faith grow in proportion to an expanding knowledge of the character of God. Love and faith have an interacting force upon each other; the increase of one nurtures the growth of the other.

In purity. As an example of the Christlike life, both to believers and nonbelievers alike, the Christian minister’s moral record must be completely unsullied (see ch. 5:2, 22).

13. Till I come. Paul evidently expected to be released from prison.

Give attendance to. Or, “give heed to.”

Reading. That is, the Scripture lessons read in public worship, following the synagogue custom (see on Luke 4:16). Because in those days the Scriptures had to be laboriously copied by hand, very few homes could afford a copy; hence the need for, and importance of, the reading of Scripture in public worship. Because of the contentious and delusive teachers in the churches under Timothy’s care (see on 1 Tim. 1:3–6; 4:1, 7) Paul charges the young apostle to select carefully the Scriptures to be read in public and to give them careful interpretation. Timothy was not to be a censor of free thought, but a wise leader, sensitive to his duty to keep the essentials of the gospel untainted from “doctrines of devils” (see on v. 1).

Exhortation. That is, the admonition to duty based on the Scripture lesson as read in public worship. Perhaps Paul here refers to the preaching phase of church worship.

Doctrine. Literally, “the teaching.” It will be detrimental to the life of the church if the self-appointed teachers disseminate teachings that are contrary to the fundamentals of the Christian faith. Hence Timothy is to give careful heed to all phases of public worship.

14. Neglect not. Or, “Be not careless.”

Gift. Gr. *charisma*, “a gift of grace” (see on Rom. 1:11; 12:6). Here Paul refers to Timothy’s special abilities of administration (see 1 Tim. 1:18; 4:11), of keen mental analysis of conflicting teachings (see chs. 1:3, 4; 6:5), and of his rare quality of clarity in teaching (see ch. 4:6, 11). All Christians have some “gift,” the exercise of which will strengthen the church (see on Rom. 12:6). However, no “gift” should give cause for boasting, because every gift is from God alone. The consequences of neglecting one’s personal “gift” are fearful to contemplate. First, the efficiency of soulsaving is diminished and the general program of the church is adversely affected. In the second place, the result in the character of the careless church member will be fully revealed in the judgment. Compare Matt. 25:14–30.

Paul especially commands all ministers to give themselves unreservedly to their sacred calling and to avoid competing interests that absorb time and energy that should be devoted to ministry to the flock entrusted to their care.

By prophecy. Or, “through prophecy.” God had communicated His will for Timothy through Paul and other prophets of the Christian church (see on ch. 1:18).

Laying on of the hands. Timothy’s “gift” of church leadership was not bestowed on him at the time of his ordination. No special power flowed through the hands of the “presbytery.” Rather, the ordination service recognized Timothy’s abilities and consecration, and thus expressed the church’s approval of his appointment as a church

leader. All thus ordained are authorized to perform the rites of the church. For a discussion of the Biblical concept of the “laying on the hands” in ordination see on Acts 6:6.

Presbytery. Gr. *presbuterion*, “council of elders.” For the interchangeable usage of the titles *presbuteros*, “elder,” and *episcopos*, “bishop,” see Vol. VI, pp. 26, 38; see on Acts 11:30; 1 Tim. 3:1.

15. Meditate. Gr. *meletaō*, “to attend to carefully.” The faithful minister does not divide his day between his spiritual duties and secular pursuits. Christ’s ministers will labor as Christ labored, bringing to the task their freshest thoughts and best energies.

Give thyself wholly to them. Literally, “be in these things.” The Christian minister must be totally immersed in the task of soulsaving; he must know no other master than Jesus Christ.

Profiting. Or, “advancement,” “progress.” Here Paul challenges Timothy to vindicate the judgment of the church that his “advancement” to this new office of leadership was not ill advised. In secular business every worker demonstrates his value by production. Past deeds written in glorious references will not compensate for present unproductiveness. So in the Christian ministry a man’s value is determined by his recognized ability to help men and women to find God.

16. Take heed unto thyself. The apostle asserts the primary importance of dependable Christian character as a qualification for service to the church. Acquaintance with the teachings of the church is important, but this knowledge can never compensate for a questionable reputation. The most winsome argument for Christianity is not unanswerable logic but the fragrance of a Christlike life. Sincere seekers for truth are not interested in theory, but in a working philosophy of life that can solve their problems and help them to overcome their weaknesses. When non-Christians who are honest in heart see that the gospel changes selfish, vain, timeserving men into pure, unselfish Christians they will be drawn to the Christ of the gospel.

It is a tragic inconsistency for a minister to attempt to reform the lives of others if his own has not been re-created by the power of God. He who would preach kindness and love must first exemplify these qualities in his own life. The preaching of the gospel is hindered or hastened by the lives lived by professing Christians (see Rom. 8:19; Cor. 2:14–16; Eph. 4:12, 13; COL 69; Ev 695, 696; GC 457, 458; 6T 450; 9T 29).

Doctrine. See on v. 13; ch. 6:1. The successful church leader will not only live an exemplary life but will also possess a keen understanding of the Scriptures. The Holy Spirit cannot bless the labors of those who work for souls while willfully neglecting the thorough study of the Word.

Continue. Like Timothy, every minister is to make it his life’s habit to adhere to these basic principles of genuine Christian experience. Each passing year should show decided improvement, both in spiritual development and in an understanding of the truths of God’s Word.

Save. Salvation is here presented as dependent upon continuance in the initial experience of grace (cf. on Heb. 3:14). When the matchless consequences of a divinely ordered life are apparent to the world many are led to respond to the gospel call. Paul’s order of words must not be overlooked: the saving of lost men is a result of the living of saved lives by faithful church members. God’s most effective witness, seen best in the

man Christ Jesus, is the truth as it is revealed through the personality and character of redeemed men and women.

ELLEN G. WHITE COMMENTS

- 1 CM 129; CT 257; DA 257; Ev 361, 363, 595, 624; FE 288; GC 444, 552; MM 90, 96, 101; PP 103, 686; SR 393; TM 58; 5T 525; 6T 401; 8T 75, 249; 9T 68
2 CH 409; 1T 338; 2T 406; 3T 485
8 CH 29, 627; Ed 145; GW 91; 4T 405
12 CT 536; FE 136; GW 124; ML 121; 4T 449
12, 13 2T 504
12–162T 642
13 ML 89
13–165T 524
15 AA 356; FE 445; GW 125; 1T 470, 473; 2T 317; 5T 593
15, 16 2T 505; 4T 449
16 CM 58; GW 104, 124; ML 234; TM 292; 5T 160, 591; 6T 330

CHAPTER 5

- 1 *Rules to be observed in reproofing.* 3 *Of widows.* 17 *Of elders.* 23 *A precept for Timothy's health.* 24 *Some men's sins go before unto judgment, and some men's do follow after.*

Rebuke not. Or, “never severely chide.” There must be no evidence of discourtesy on the part of Christians toward any group, especially by those who are younger toward those who are older. As an example for all church members to follow, Timothy is here reminded of the many practical occasions that test the genuineness of a man's religious experience. The various groups here listed represent the many classes of people making up the congregations Timothy was to supervise and before whom he was to “take heed” so that he would “both save” himself and “them that hear” him (see on ch. 4:16).

Elder. Gr. *prebuteros*, “older [man]” (see on Acts 11:30). Even secular propriety recognizes the moral appropriateness of youthful deference toward age and experience. Regardless of the correctness that may characterize a young person's ideas, it is highly disrespectful for him to treat inconsiderately those who are older. Such action does not commend him as a genuine Christian (see on Ex. 20:12; Lev. 19:32).

Intreat. Or, “exhort.” Old age does not automatically cancel the need for correction, but if it is the younger man's duty to reprove, the spirit of sincere respect and humility must prevail.

Younger men. Admonition and discipline are effective only when they are administered in a manner that is above criticism. Those receiving the needed counsel must not find cause for refusing the young leader because of a haughty, superior attitude. The younger members of the church must sense his fellowship, not his superiority.

2. Elder women. Every church leader should look at his fellow church members as God does, that is, as a family unit. This perspective should protect the minister against any tendency to supercilious arrogance and overbearing discipline.

The younger. The minister's relationship with female members should not only be pure but also free from all misunderstanding and suspicion. Especially do young ministers need this counsel as they face constantly the devil's siren call to impurity.

3. Honour. That is, with material assistance as well as respect. In Matt. 15:4–6 Jesus contrasts those children who faithfully provide for the material needs of their parents with those who “honour” their parents only in word. Mere pity for the plight of widows will

not provide the needed help, nor will it provide an exhibit of the genuine Christian spirit (see on James 1:27).

Widows indeed. Different categories of widows have always existed in the church: (1) those who still have the active support of children or other relatives, v. 4; (2) those who are completely destitute of family support, v. 5; (3) those who live “in pleasure” and receive material care in some other manner than by either relatives or the church, v. 6. Obviously, only the second class of widows was eligible for the consistent support of the church. The Jewish custom of caring for widows was followed by the Christian church (see on Ex. 22:22; Acts 6:1; James 1:27).

4. Nephews. Literally, “descendants.” In Old English the word “nephew” did not have the specific meaning it has today. The care of a widow is primarily the obligation of her close relatives. If her sons or daughters are also in need of support, or are dead, the obligation then rests upon other descendants.

First. That is, care for his parents is a man’s first obligation.

Piety. Gr. *eusebeō*, “to act piously,” “to act godly.” The noun *eusebeia* is translated “godliness” in 1 Tim. 2:2; 3:16; 4:7–8; 6:3, 5, 6, 11; 2 Tim. 3:5. The Christian religion brings into sharp focus those duties that every mature man or woman will faithfully attend to. To profess loyalty to God and yet to be oblivious to the needs of the family is not true religion. God does not accept even church activity as a substitute for the primary duty of caring for parents or grandparents.

To requite. Or, “to give back recompenses,” that is, in the light of the care expended by parents in rearing children. Whatever a child does for his parents in their old age can never fully compensate for this care. Not the motive of duty alone, but grateful love, should inspire care for aged parents.

Parents. Or, “ancestors.”

Good and. Textual evidence attests (cf. p. 10) the omission of these words.

Acceptable. The sense of duty, whether toward man or God, demonstrates the degree of godliness possessed by church members. God is an example of One who did not ignore the helplessness and poverty of others. His love knows no limits as He strives to care for the needs of His creation. Hence, the Christian who denies selfish considerations, caring faithfully for his parents or grandparents, reveals a Christlike attribute that is well pleasing to God (see on ch. 2:3).

5. Widow indeed. That is, widows without close relatives and without any visible means of support (see on v. 3).

Desolate. Literally, “left alone,” that is, without children.

Trusteth in God. The widow now described does not assume an earnest deportment to win the sympathy and commendation of the church. From the beginning of her widowhood she has placed her future in the hands of God, knowing that His love will provide a solution to her problem.

Night and day. That is, in the night and in the day, Paul does not imply that continual prayer should constitute the chief occupation of widows; he merely states that God is their constant companion and their ready source of comfort.

6. In pleasure. Or, “luxuriously.” Paul gives no admonition to the church regarding this widow, who seems to be well provided for, presumably by her new admirers. Apparently she has exchanged the dignity befitting her age and religious profession for the gaiety of her new freedom.

Dead. That is, spiritually dead “in trespasses and sins” (see on Eph. 2:1–5; Jude 12; Rev. 3:1).

7. These things. That is, the instruction concerning the care of widows (vs. 3–16).

Charge. See on chs. 1:3; 4:11. Some of Paul’s admonition was for Timothy’s personal use and some for the edification of the whole church. The information with which Timothy was charged in this epistle was especially to be enjoined publicly upon the whole church.

They. That is, all those concerned with the proper care of the widows. Both the children of widows and the church in general are to manifest to the world an irreproachable program of solicitous responsibility toward their widows. Also, the widow who lives in undignified pleasures ought to reconsider her ways so as not to deserve the reproach of both the church and the world.

8. Provide not. Some commentators believe that this includes material assistance for those deprived of security while the wage earner lives. Others think Paul means that financial security of some kind should be provided for a family by the husband, so that his death would not cause financial hardship to those who survive him.

Own. That is, those connected with his family in any way perhaps in this context, especially widows. In Paul’s day this would include family servants as well as all relatives.

His own house. Paul includes more than widows in this wide circle of responsibility; all dependent relatives should be cared for by those most closely related to them. This practice deserves the full commendation of the church, for all people must look forward to the day when they will be dependent upon others, if death does not suddenly intervene.

Denied the faith. That is, the fundamental teachings of the Christian church concerning a man’s responsibility toward his parents and others who are close of kin. The Christian church affirms the Sinai declaration that children are to “honour” their parents (see on Ex. 20:12), that true religion exalts and ennobles ordinary family duties. To profess a religion based on unselfish love and yet to ignore the responsibilities due one’s parents is tragic inconsistency. A lack of sincerity in one’s profession is thus manifested. Jesus set an example for every Christian when He solicitously provided for His mother’s care at the time of His crucifixion (see on John 19:25–27).

Infidel. Literally, “unbeliever.” Because many a heathen regards it his duty to care for his aged parents, the failure of a Christian to provide for his family would make him “worse than an infidel.”

9. The number. A literal translation of this verse reads: “Let a widow be enrolled who has become not less than 60 years old, wife of one husband.” The function of this special enrollment of widows, though understood in Paul’s day, is now not clear. This was not the only circle of “widows indeed” (vs. 4, 5), because obviously there were cases of “desolate” widows (v. 5), without children, who had not yet reached 60 years of age. Indeed, v. 10 describes the special widows of v. 9 as having reared children, and this raises the question as to why these children were not caring for their mothers. Possibly the children were not now living, or were unable or unwilling to perform their filial duties. Under any circumstances the “widow indeed” needed special help.

Threescore years old. Paul counseled the young widows to remarry (see on vs. 11–14). Hence, this arbitrary age limit implies that remarriage was most unlikely for the widows who constituted the special group. In other words, their now single state was

considered permanent. Thus, the expectation that they would continue in a single state was based, apparently, on the age to which they had attained, not on any vows some claim they were supposed to have taken.

One man. Compare ch. 3:2, 12. The widow honored by the church in this special enrollment must have a worthy record, that is, a widow who had been a faithful wife and mother.

10. Reported. A well-attested life, both within and without the home, was a prerequisite for each widow of the special group (see v. 9). What follows appears to be a sort of achievement test, by passing which a widow might qualify for membership in the special group.

Good works. See on ch. 2:10. With Jesus, Paul places great emphasis upon the fruits of a genuine Christian faith (see on Matt. 5:13–16; 7:16–20; 2 Cor. 9:8; Eph. 2:10; 1 Tim. 3:7; James 2:17–26).

Brought up children. Paul now specifies some of the “good works” to which he refers. The Greek implies that to have “brought up children” was a requirement of one enrolled in this special group of widows. Some suggest that this includes the widow’s commendatory concern toward the destitute children of others and her personal support of orphans.

Lodged strangers. To have been able to entertain strangers suggests that the widows under consideration had not been financially destitute themselves.

Washed the saints’ feet. Eastern courtesy required that the feet of guests be washed. Special honor was presumably shown if the hostess herself performed this act, proper to a servant. Some understand this to refer to faithful participation in the ordinance of foot washing instituted by our Lord in John 13:3–15, particularly since “saints” are specified as the recipients.

Afflicted. See on Rom. 12:13.

Every good work. That is, such as devout women might properly be expected to engage in.

11. Younger widows. That is, those under 60 years of age.

Refuse. See on ch. 4:7. Note that Paul does not suggest that needy widows who are under 60, and without children, should not receive material assistance from the church. He says simply that younger widows should not be enrolled in this special group, which seems to have been granted a permanent subsidy.

Wax wanton. That is, act without the self-restraint that is becoming to Christian womanhood. Presumably, women who had passed the age of 60 would not be susceptible to many of the temptations that might beset their younger sisters in the church. Those admitted to this special group had proved themselves worthy of special honor and recognition as mothers in Israel.

They will marry. In and of itself this course of action would not be wrong, for elsewhere Paul encourages remarriage (see on v. 14). Apparently, however, widows became eligible for the privileges accorded this special group only when they were considered of such an age that it was unlikely they would be able to find other companions. Thus, if these widows who had been admitted to the group were to marry, it would be obvious that they should not have been accepted in the first place and that they did not deserve the support provided. They should have followed the instruction set forth in v. 14, to begin with.

12. Damnation. Gr. *krima*, “judgment,” “condemnation.” It is clear that Paul does not condemn remarriage as such, but advises it (see on 1 Cor. 7:28). What he says here applies only to this select group.

First faith. That is, their former faith in Christ, which kept them loyal to Him.

13. And withal. Or, “at the same time also.” The young widows here referred to no longer have the restraining influence of home duties, and the time lies heavily on their hands. If the church were to accept these young widows into the permanent society of widows (v. 9), it would thus be encouraging idleness and frivolous living. The young widows might not feel the wholesome necessity of supporting themselves to the best of their ability if they expected regular church assistance. Furthermore, the general behavior of the young widows here described would be a discredit to the church.

Tattlers. Or, “gossipers.”

Busybodies. Or, “meddlers.” They are not dependable, resourceful Christians.

14. Younger women. That is, the younger widows.

Marry. Compare 1 Cor. 7:28, 39. Such counsel as Paul here gives would avoid the dangers he has just mentioned, as well as the pitfall of asceticism (see on 1 Tim. 4:3). God implanted the desire for marriage in man and woman, and it would be wrong to advise against this normal desire. When a young woman desires to marry and has a suitable husband in prospect, there should be no arbitrary church regulation to shackle her.

Guide the house. Literally, “manage household affairs.” Compare Prov. 31:10–31. To be an asset to her husband in his lifework and so to order the affairs of the home that health and joy are the lot of all its members—these constitute the lofty privilege of a Christian wife and mother.

Occasion. Literally, “a base of operations” from which an attack may be made. The young widow is very closely watched. By remarrying wisely and by living an honorable and praiseworthy life she will demonstrate Christian faithfulness.

15. Turned aside. A reference to actual examples of young widows who had cast off the restraints of Christian dignity, fitting the descriptions of vs. 6, 11–13.

Satan. Here, personifying a way of life contrary to that represented by “Christ” (see v. 11). Some young widows, enjoying their new freedom, neglected or ignored their primary pledge to Christ, or “first faith” (v. 12), and their ensuing conduct was not representative of the faith they professed. However, Paul was not in favor of any regulation of young widows that would force them to live under restrictions never intended by God.

16. Man or. Textual evidence favors (cf. p. 10) the omission of these words.

Woman that believeth. Literally, “woman believer.” Paul here completes his instruction regarding the care of widows. He cites a very probable situation wherein a woman church member, married to an unbelieving husband, has a widowed mother or grandmother. The responsibility for her mother’s care resides with her, not with the church. Her unbelieving husband will sense the fairness of this emphasis, because responsibility is placed where it properly belongs.

Let not the church. That is, the church should not assume the burden rightly belonging to the relatives (see on v. 4).

Widows indeed. Paul includes all widows in his instruction. Those with children are to be assisted by their children. Regardless of their age, those widows who have no

children and those whose children refuse to fulfill their obligations are to be faithfully relieved and supported by the church (see on vs. 3, 5).

17. Elders. Or, “bishops,” the leaders of the local congregation (see on ch. 3:1).

Rule. See on ch. 3:4.

Double. Successful church leaders are worthy of “honour” for two reasons: (1) They are older; (2) they fulfill their offices in a commendable manner. Some consider that the “honour” here referred to includes respect for age and experience and also financial support.

Honour. Some commentators believe that this refers to substantial remuneration worthy of faithful elders. A salary double that of the widow’s stipend has been suggested. Others assert that the context explains the kind of “double honour” under consideration as a greater measure of respect, which would be worthy of their office.

In the word. See on ch. 4:12.

Doctrine. See on ch. 4:16. Apparently the elders worthy of double honor not only administered church business but also taught publicly and privately.

18. Scripture saith. Compare Paul’s argument in 1 Cor. 9:7–14 for a just remuneration for the ministry. Paul appeals to God’s Word as the final authority: those who devote full time to the ministry should be paid an honorable wage. Some commentators think Paul does not here refer to financial support, but to honor befitting position and creditable service. As an ox receives grain for its service, so an elder should receive respect and honor worthy of his ministry.

Reward. Gr. *misthos*, “wages,” “hire.” Paul’s insertion of the idea of payment for work performed suggests strongly that “honour” (v. 17) contains the thought of actual financial support (see Luke 10:7). The apostle here refers to the principle embodied in the Lord’s plan for the support of the Levitical priesthood (Num. 18:21), that those who dedicate themselves to holy service deserve material support from those whose spiritual interests they serve (see AA 336). This quotation places the words of Jesus on the same plane as OT Scripture. This seems to be the first instance where His words are quoted as “scripture.”

19. Elder. See on v. 17.

Receive not. In view of the ensuing damage to a Christian leader’s reputation by any accusation, whether valid or not, Timothy was not even to give audience to any accuser unless he could bring “two or three witnesses” with him to vouch for his accusation. Paul does not urge favoritism of any kind for those in office who do wrong. He simply desires to protect faithful leaders from some who may wish to depreciate their influence by calumny.

But. Or, “except.”

Witnesses. That is, when the accused member is brought to trial before a recognized tribunal his opponents must have “two or three witnesses” to substantiate the charge. Jewish practice protected the individual from reckless, malicious accusations (see on Deut. 17:6; 19:15). The NT church adopted this Jewish custom of protection for the individual (see on Matt. 18:16). However, in regard to a church “elder,” Paul recommends avoiding even a public hearing if the accuser, at the time of the original accusation, could not produce “two or three witnesses” of reputable integrity.

20. Them that sin. That is, the “elders” (see on v. 19). Paul will excuse and protect sin in no man.

Rebuke. Gr. *elegchō*, “to convict,” with the implication that the charge is true and that the evidence is clear (see on John 8:46; 16:8). It is a serious moment when one church member accuses another of sin. Consequently, any charge should be thoroughly validated by reliable witnesses before it is made public. When the Bible urges Christians to “rebuke,” it is always in the sense of “convict.” This can be done only when undeniable evidence is at hand. Such counsel forbids reckless accusations whereby the reputations of innocent people are damaged and their confidence in the brethren weakened.

All. This may mean simply “all” the other elders or it may refer to “all” the congregation. Both views might be correct, in that varying faults, ranging from simple inefficiency to flagrant immorality, might be treated differently.

21. Charge. Or, “testify earnestly.”

God, and the Lord Jesus Christ. Some believe that the Greek implies the oneness of the Beings here referred to. The divinity of Christ would thus be emphasized (see on John 1:1–3; Titus 2:14). All thoughts and deeds stand in full view before the God of heaven.

Without preferring. Church decisions growing out of the investigation of sin, especially among elders (vs. 19, 20), must not be to please men but to satisfy the justice of God. Difficult as it always is, no church leader should allow either friendship or enmity to affect a just investigation into charges of sin. If the ministry fail in respect to personal virtue and integrity, what can be expected of the laity?

Partiality. Young ministers such as Timothy sometimes face the difficult problem of correcting those who are older than themselves. This duty, plus the young minister’s natural desire to be accepted and well liked, increases the soundness and pertinency of Paul’s admonition against prejudgment and partiality. The decisions of church leaders must not be made with the intent of seeking favors from the strong or wealthy. Regardless of personal friendships, justice must ever prevail.

22. Lay hands. Paul may be referring either to the hasty ordination of an inexperienced and untried man (see on ch. 3:6, 10) or to the hasty reinstatement of an elder after he has been under discipline. The latter view is more in harmony with the immediate context (see on ch. 5:20, 21). The office of elder was too sacred and important for a hasty admission or readmission of anyone who had not proved himself worthy. The candidate for eldership must first be carefully examined as to his qualifications (see on ch. 3:1–7).

Neither be partaker. If Timothy refused to acknowledge the sins of his elders, he would be shielding sin, and thus sharing in its spirit and consequences.

Pure. The minister, above all others, must remain clean from moral indiscretions. In v. 21 Paul reminds Timothy that no factor, such as wealth, prestige, or personal friendship, should affect his judgment with respect to church matters. The installation or readmission of elders must never be based on any considerations other than the unequivocal standards of ch. 3:1–7.

23. Drink no longer water. In Paul’s day, as now, the water in many localities was often unsafe for use. Physical ailments such as dysentery, often due to contaminated water, were common occurrences. Consequently, other ways to quench thirst were often recommended.

Wine. Gr. *oinos* (see on ch. 3:8). Some commentators believe that Paul here advocates the temperate use of fermented wine for medicinal purposes. They call attention to the fact that wine has, through the centuries, thus been used.

Others hold that Paul refers to unfermented grape juice, their reasoning being that he would not give advice inconsistent with the rest of Scripture, which warns against the use of intoxicating beverages (see Prov. 20:1; 23:29–32; cf. EGW ST Sept. 6, 1899).

Stomach's sake. The purpose of Paul's counsel is that Timothy should be physically fit for the heavy duties that rest upon him as administrator of the churches in Asia Minor. Mental and moral alertness are closely related to physical fitness.

Often infirmities. Apparently Timothy was frequently ill. A body frequently beset with infirmities is not an attractive advertisement for any kind of health reform.

24. *Open beforehand.* Gr. *prodēlos*, “clear,” “evident.” Aside from vs. 24, 25 *prodēlos* appears only in Heb. 7:14, where it is translated “evident.” In the papyri the word is used consistently in this sense. Some consider that in 1 Tim. 5:24, 25 Paul concludes his counsel regarding accusations against, and the sins of, church elders (vs. 19, 20), and the examination of the life record of prospective elders (v. 22). Others consider that the apostle refers to the sins of men generally. According to the first view, the words “going before” mean that the sins of elders or of prospective elders “lead (them) into judgment,” that is, make it possible to reach a decision concerning their fitness for office. According to the second view, “going before” means that confessed sins are disposed of judicially in heaven prior to the great final day of judgment, when God will reward every man according to his works as they appear at that time on the records of heaven (cf. 1T 263).

Judgment. Gr. *krisis*, “the act of judging.” Those who hold the first view apply this to the judgment of an elder's qualifications to remain in office, or of a prospective elder to be inducted into office. Those who hold the second view apply this to the great final judgment.

Follow after. Or, “come after.” According to the first view, Paul means that the sins of some elders may not be “openly evident” at the time accusation is made against them, or that the sins of some prospective elders may not be known at the time they were appointed to office. According to the second view, unconfessed sins accompany unrepentant men when they appear before God at the great final judgment.

25. *The good works.* Whatever a man does, whether good or evil, is remembered by those who are personally affected by it, and also in the man's own memory, where it prepares the will for a repeated performance of the same act. Good or evil becomes a habit, and men reveal today what their thinking and actions have been in the past.

They that are otherwise. Or, “those being otherwise,” meaning, “works that are otherwise than good,” that is, evil works.

Cannot be hid. That is, permanently. In time the truth will come to light.

ELLEN G. WHITE COMMENTS

- 6 MB 61
- 8 5T 179
- 10 DA 564; EW 117
- 13 AH 250
- 17 1T 130, 194, 446, 472, 473; 4T 393
- 18 AA 336
- 19 PP 386
- 20 2T 15

22 CT 103, 257; GW 438; 4T 406; 5T 617
24 1T 263; 5T 331

CHAPTER 6

1 *Of the duty of servants.* 3 *Not to have fellowship with newfangled teachers.* 6 *Godliness is great gain,* 10 *and love of money the root of all evil.* 11 *What Timothy is to fly, and what to follow,* 17 *and whereof to admonish the rich.* 20 *To keep the purity of true doctrine, and to avoid profane janglings.*

1. Servants. Gr. *douloi*, “slaves” (see on John 8:34; Eph. 6:5). Slavery was an integral part of the Roman economy, and it was on this level of society that many of Christianity’s first converts were made. However, the Christian church contained both slaves and slaveowners. Concerning Paul’s counsel to Christian masters and slaves see on Eph. 6:5–9; Col. 3:22 to 4:1.

Under the yoke. That is, legally bound to their masters. Our Lord Himself refused to be a judge of civil matters, that is, to interfere forcibly with the established social order (Luke 12:14).

Worthy of all honour. Compare on Eph. 6:5.

Name of God. That is, the person and authority of the Godhead. In both the Greek and the Hebrew the “name” of any person commonly refers to the person himself and his character. All that the person represented, all that he intrinsically was in character, was wrapped up in the name by which he was called.

His doctrine. Or, “the teaching” (see on chs. 4:6, 16; 5:17). Christianity would have been no more than a philosophical theory if its teachings did not change the moral fiber of man and could not instill within him a hope that transcends all earthly disappointment. Thus, the worthiness of the gospel “teaching” rested on the quality of character developed in the lives of its adherents.

Blasphemed. If the early Christian ministers had actively attacked the institution of slavery, which was permitted by Roman law, they would have made Christianity appear as opposed to law and order and as fomenting insurrection and bloodshed. Thus God and the gospel would have been blasphemed.

2. Despise. Or, “disdain,” “be disrespectful.” Paul contends that if pagan “masters” are “worthy of all honour,” how much more respect should be given the “believing masters.”

Do them service. Because these slaves were Christians, a greater responsibility rested upon them. The pagan slaves and masters would now be able to judge the difference in honesty and respect that Christianity would make in a converted slave. But if the Christian slaves showed less respect than the non-Christian, the gospel would accordingly be judged worse than paganism, and effective evangelism would be made more difficult, if not impossible.

Partakers of the benefit. That is, the believing master will benefit by the Christian slave’s services.

These things. Paul refers to his counsel regarding the position of slaves in the Roman Empire.

3. Teach otherwise. Apparently, there were teachers in Ephesus who held that because a converted slave was freed from sin through Christ he was also released from his obligations to an earthly master. This teaching would have borne fearsome

consequences to the infant church, and brought forth the strong condemnation of the apostle.

Wholesome. Or, “sound,” “healthy” (see on ch. 1:10).

Words of our Lord. The words of Jesus constitute the gospel message. The teachings of the NT are but an amplification of the statements of Jesus during His earthy ministry. In ch. 1 Paul condemns teachings contrary to Christ’s own instructions. Here, the apostle exposes the motives and character consequences of those who “teach otherwise.”

Doctrine. Or, “the teaching,” that is, of the Christian religion (see on v. 1).

Godliness. See on ch. 2:2. If religious teaching does not produce godly lives, it stands self-condemned. The worth of all spiritual instruction is measured by the degree of spiritual health enjoyed by its adherents.

4. Proud. Gr. *tuphoō*, “to be blinded by conceit.”

Doting about questions. Or, “morbidly fond of speculations.”

Strifes of words. Gr. *logomachiai* “word battles.” The multiplication of words in finespun allegorical interpretations is the principal tool of the pseudo scholar. Instead of dealing directly with an issue he will spend his time spinning a web of flowery phrases and pious platitudes about the matter. He fights battles over words and avoids the thrust of logic and sound exegesis.

Cometh. Nothing else can be expected from a mind blinded by conceit and self-deceived as to its knowledge. The evils of society are often the product of unsound, perverted teaching. Dogmatic, opinionated teachers never reflect the spirit of honest inquiry. They consider all opposition a personal attack, and view with suspicion every endeavor to maintain sound doctrine.

Railings. Or, “blasphemies.”

Surmisings. Or, “suspicions.” This kind of atmosphere is no advertisement for the peace and brotherhood of Christianity.

5. Perverse disputings. Or, “constant irritations.” Paul notes further results of unsound religious teaching. Fellowship is exchanged for constant bickering and irritation.

Corrupt minds. The basic problem of intransigent teachers of irrelevant and unsound doctrine lies in their personal attitude to truth. They have bent their minds to defend their personal positions because their own conceit convinces them that they could not possibly err. The Jewish leaders who refused the words of Christ set their minds to support tradition, not to encourage truth wherever found (see John 8:45).

Destitute. Or, “bereft,” “dispossessed.” Because these teachers have dedicated themselves to preserve traditional errors, the spirit of truth does not prevail as it once did when they joined the Christian church. They have ceased to advance. Yet they remain in the church, opposing all who would help them.

Gain is godliness. In all ages there have been men who equated material possessions with spiritual health. However, the example of our Lord and the disciples should remove all thought that those most righteous are necessarily also the most prosperous in worldly possessions. The experience of Job illustrates the insecurity of worldly possessions. The best men do not necessarily own the most property. Most often, those who have dedicated life and means to the cause of God retain only the minimum for material needs, all else being diverted into the channels of Christian service.

Others explain v. 5 as referring to religious workers whose chief thought is compensation for their services, and who look upon religion as a means for securing a

comfortable income. They serve by the hour and not by the necessities that demand a church worker's time day or night. In part, this earthy perspective of Christian service accounts for the traits of false religious teachers listed in vs. 4, 5.

From such withdraw thyself. Textual evidence favors (cf. p. 10) the omission of this clause.

6. *Godliness.* Literally, "the godliness," that is, the true "godliness," which rightly represents Christian principles and satisfies the deepest yearnings of the heart (see on chs. 2:2; 3:16; 4:7, 8; 6:3).

Contentment. Paul here defines the most priceless possession man can own. Men and women have searched the world for peace of mind and an untroubled heart. Billions of dollars are being spent annually as man endeavors to find contentment in amusement, travel, liquor, and the satisfaction of physical passion. Yet, the object of their quest eludes them because man must still live with his conscience and face the question of his eternal destiny. However, the gift of God is not only eternal life; it also brings an untroubled mind, one that has learned to trust a loving God amid all the uncertainties of life. When friends or strangers misunderstand him, when infirmities begin to sap the strength of youth, when loved ones slip away in death, then the Christian finds in his holy religion a peace of mind that gives him contentment, courage, and hope. The fleeting glory of earth is not his master; he knows of a better land and a more dependable Master. With God as his only helper, the Christian needs nothing more. Calm and assured, he presents a welcome contrast to the harried, nervous, unsatisfied throngs in the world around him (see on Matt. 11:28–30; Phil. 4:11, 12).

Gain. Such untroubled confidence in the leadership of God is worth far more than the temporary grasp a man may have on material possessions. The world's list of suicides includes many men and women who were rich in worldly possessions but poor in heavenly "contentment."

7. *Certain.* Textual evidence favors (cf. p. 10) the omission of this word.

Nothing out. Here Paul illustrates the temporary nature of material possessions. Only that which is spiritual and is deposited with God will endure forever (see Job 1:21; see on Matt. 6:20).

8. *Raiment.* Or, "coverings," including clothing and shelter. Because a man cannot take any of his material possessions with him beyond the grave, his chief pursuit while on earth should be for character development. After obtaining the essentials that sustain life, man has acquired all that he will ever need. To crave more than the essentials breeds a discontented spirit, a competitive zeal that is never satisfied.

9. *Rich.* Paul continues his evaluation of religious teachers who make merchandise out of their religious duties. However, the principles clearly apply to all Christians. Those who strive for riches are nurturing within themselves a fire of passion that will eventually destroy the finer qualities of the soul. Man cannot serve God and mammon simultaneously (see on Matt. 6:24; James 1:8–11).

Fall. The passion for riches presents a limitless assortment of enticements to compromise principle (see on James 1:12–15).

Foolish. Or, "unwise," "unreasonable." Regardless of the reasons men give for their headlong rush for riches, few prove reasonable when health fails or when the grave beckons. To acquire extensive material possessions presupposes that other important

matters are neglected. Daily Christian duties that call for time and personal attention are almost sure to be reduced to a minimum.

Lusts. See on Rom. 7:7.

Drown. By its very nature the lust for riches is a threat to the life and health of the spirit. The seductiveness of riches is here compared to the false sense of security a mediocre swimmer possesses when he attempts an untried channel.

Destruction. Gr. *olethros*, “ruin,” from a word meaning “to destroy.” In classical Greek *olethros* is used to describe the destruction of property. Here Paul notes the ruin, in this life, of the soul’s finest qualities, which results from the pursuit of riches. The tender ties of parent and child are often sacrificed on the altar of material possessions. The happy atmosphere of a contented home is often blighted by the insatiable quest for wealth. The finer features of a man’s character always suffer when he measures his service by the fees he receives.

Perdition. Gr. *apōleia*, “utter ruin,” “complete destruction,” from a word meaning “to destroy utterly,” “to perish.” The man who allows himself to be trapped by the lure of riches destroys his peace of mind, often severing the bonds of affection of this life, and at the end is doomed to eternal destruction. However, there is no Biblical basis for the belief that the unsaved will live forever amid tormenting flames. After the judgment sin and sinners are utterly destroyed (see on Matt. 25:41; John 3:16; Rev. 20:15).

10. Love. Paul here gives the reason for his warnings against religious workers serving primarily for money. As the consequences of money seeking (v. 9) apply to all men, so does the observation of v. 10. Paul clearly makes a distinction between “the love” for riches and the mere possession of riches, which may be the gift of God to trustworthy Christians.

Root of all evil. Literally, “root of all the evils.” In the Greek this phrase is emphatic. Generally speaking, roots are not seen, but only the branches. Here Paul draws aside the curtain that often shields men’s motives. For riches men will sacrifice honor, friendship, and health. The taproot of money love is responsible for a great share of this world’s miseries.

Erred. Or, “strayed.”

The faith. That is, the Christian revelation of truth, which defines how men are to live before God (see on chs. 3:9; 4:1, 6; 5:8).

Pierced themselves. The perils of prosperity are self-created. Balaam (2 Peter 2:15) and Judas Iscariot (Matt. 27:3; John 12:4–6) illustrate the lure of riches and its inevitable disillusionment and sorrow. Neither man was forced to submit to the seductive appeal of quick wealth. The agony of sinking in one’s own pit defies imagination. Many parents have awakened too late, after years of acquiring wealth, to find that their children are strangers within their own home, their affections rooted elsewhere. No amount of money in the bank will buy back neglected years, and the comfort of being loved and appreciated in old age will often be denied such parents, regardless of their tears of anguish. Extensive land ownings and a more pretentious home are not balm enough for spent health that has lost its vigor to enjoy the acquired possessions. Countless are the “sorrows” that are self-induced in man’s quest for material security.

11. O man of God. Paul implies that the lovers of money mentioned in vs. 9, 10 are not God’s men; they have another master. In the OT the expression “man of God” is

applied to a God-ordained prophet (see Judges 13:6; 1 Sam. 2:27; 1 Kings 12:22; 2 Kings 1:9, 10; Jer. 35:4), and Paul here challenges his younger co-worker to similar devotion to duty. Timothy's security rests in the trustworthiness of God, not in the fleeting security of riches.

Flee these things. That is, do not linger even to question the advantages of material security. The Christian worker's only safety rests in an undivided program, leaving no time for mere acquisition of wealth (see on James 1:6–11).

Follow after. Literally, “make a habit of earnestly seeking.” Instead of directing his energy and time to the pursuit of riches, the Christian should use them in the pursuit of Christlike virtues. God has promised that our material needs will be provided when we seek His service first (see on Matt. 6:33).

Righteousness. Gr. *dikaïosunē* (see on Matt. 5:6).

Godliness. Gr. *eusebeia* (see on ch. 2:2).

Faith. Gr. *pistis* (see on Rom. 3:3).

Love. Gr. *agapē* (see on 1 Cor. 13:1).

Patience. Gr. *hupomonē*, “endurance” (see on James 1:3; Rev. 14:12).

Meekness. Gr. *praïpathia*, “gentleness.”

12. Fight. Gr. *agōnizomai* (see on Luke 13:24). Paul frequently compares the Christian life with the athletic contests which were familiar to people in Asia Minor. Victory was the result of determined perseverance and rigid self-control. Once the race began there was no time for side issues or divided thinking, nor does a runner stop halfway in the race to compliment himself on how well he has run (see on 1 Cor. 9:25).

Faith. Literally, “the faith,” that is, the Christian revelation of the gospel (see on v. 10). Before all the competing religions of the world the Christian defends the gospel in two ways—by a consistent Christian life and by an able, logical presentation of Christian truth (see on ch. 4:16).

Lay hold. That is, keep on fighting, to grasp the reward of “eternal life” (see on 1 Cor. 9:24; 2 Tim. 4:8).

Eternal life. Literally, “the eternal life.” Paul here contrasts the reward due those who have unreservedly pursued a sanctified life, with the wages of “destruction and perdition” (v. 9) due those who made material security the goal of their energy and time.

Called. See on Rom. 8:28.

Good profession. Paul perhaps refers first to Timothy's baptism, which witnessed to his faith in Christ, and also to his continuing loyalty to his baptismal vows. Every man is thus called to inherit “eternal life” (see on Matt. 22:14; John 1:12; 3:16). However, the provisions of salvation are granted only to those who profess allegiance to God's way of life.

13. Charge. See on ch. 1:3. With a solemnity that increases as he approaches the close of his letter, Paul reminds Timothy of the awesome presence of God, who sees man's every act and who is always available to strengthen those who, like Timothy, face difficulties because of their Christian profession.

In the sight of God. That is, in the presence of God. Perhaps Paul still refers to one of the athletic contests of v. 12, in which the gladiator, upon entering a Roman arena crowded with many witnesses, fixes his eye on the emperor. In like manner he urges

Timothy to “fight the good fight of faith” (see v. 12) before his witnessing Lord and before the many “witnesses” (v. 12) who will judge the merits of Christianity by his deportment.

Who quickeneth all things. That is, the one giving all things life. Paul here emphasizes that God is not only the source of all life but also the One who grants the reward of “eternal life” (v. 12). In addition, the Christian’s spiritual life is the result of God’s life-giving power.

Pontius Pilate. See on Luke 3:1.

Good confession. Christ’s witness in His own hour of crisis provides all Christians with a worthy example of courage, truthfulness, and tact (John 18:36, 37; Rev. 1:5; 3:14). To be a loyal follower of Christ the Christian must not flinch under trial, but duplicate Christ’s “good confession” in word and in deed.

14. Keep. Gr. *tēreō* “to guard,” “to attend to.”

Commandment. Some believe Paul refers to Timothy’s baptismal vow (v. 12); others, to the injunctions in vs. 11, 12. In the final analysis, the Christian witness to the supreme merits of God’s way of life constitutes Paul’s challenge.

Without spot. Or, “free from censure,” “without moral blemish.”

Unrebukenable. Gr. *anepilēptos* “cannot be laid hold of,” “irreproachable,” translated “blameless” in chs. 3:2; 5:7.

Appearing. Gr. *epiphaneia*, “appearance,” “visible manifestation” (see on 2 Tim. 1:10; 4:1, 8; Titus 2:13; see on 2 Thess. 2:8). In classical Greek *epiphaneia* describes the sudden appearance of an enemy in war, the visible surface of the body, or the supposed appearances of heathen deities to their worshipers. In the papyri the inauguration of the emperor Caligula is described as an “epiphany.” In the NT *epiphaneia* is used solely to describe either the first or the second advent of Jesus. The visible return of Christ is as certain as were His physical birth and His visible ministry. Here Paul reminds Timothy and all Christians of their task until Jesus comes. The Christian witness is God’s vindication of the wisdom of His commands; this witness must be kept irreproachable until the end of time (see James 1:27). The minister’s presentation of the gospel, both in his personal life and in his teaching, must never give anyone cause to think wrongly or slightly of God’s appointed way of life for man.

15. Times. Gr. *kairoi*, “favorable time,” that is, the time when, in the plans of God, the second advent should take place.

He. That is, the Father. The glory of Jesus Christ is the Father’s glory, and the attributes the Father possesses also belong to Christ. The words “who is” not being in the Greek, the first clause of v. 15 may read: “Which, in its own favorable time, he, the Blessed One and only Potentate, will show.”

Potentate. Or, “ruler,” “sovereign.” Paul was satisfied to know that even though he often suffered at the hand of earthly authorities, his life was ultimately in the hand of God, the Supreme Ruler of the universe.

King of kings, and Lord of lords. Literally, “the King of those who reign as kings and Lord of those who are lording.” This appellation applies to both the Father and Jesus (see Rev. 17:14; see on ch. 19:16).

16. Immortality. That is, God alone inherently possesses endless life. All created beings are mortal and must comply with certain conditions if this life is to be maintained (see on 1 Cor. 15:54). Some commentators believe that the apostle may have used the word “only” as an implied rebuke of the Eastern tendency toward deifying the emperor, even before his death (see p. 721).

Light. As the essence of God (see on James 1:17; 1 John 1:5) and as His figurative garment (see Ps. 104:2).

Approach unto. Sin separated man from God (Isa. 59:2), and in his mortal state man cannot live in the divine presence.

Whom no man hath seen. See 1 Tim. 1:17; see on Col. 1:15. Paul here particularly refers to the first person of the Godhead.

To whom be honour. That is, these qualities are forever the attributes of God, and it is the highest joy of the Christian to ascribe these honors to God.

17. Charge. A word frequently used in this epistle (see chs. 1:3, 18; 5:7; 6:13) to indicate the deep concern Paul felt for the spiritual welfare of the church, particularly since he realized that his ministry might soon close.

Rich. In vs. 5–10 Paul warns of deadly spiritual dangers that confront those who “will be rich,” that is, aspire for material security. Here he counsels those in the church who are already rich in material possessions. They may have been abundantly blessed in business or they may be beneficiaries of an inheritance. Paul makes clear that, of themselves, riches are not evil and may even be a definite asset to the church.

This world. Gr. *nun aiōn*, “now age.”

Highminded. Because wealth brings to its possessors influence and power and a degree of self-sufficiency, they need to be ever alert lest, in pride, they misuse it, to secure favors or other advantages.

Uncertain riches. See on James 1:10, 11.

The living. Textual evidence favors (cf. p. 10) the omission of these words.

God. The assurance that God loves man far more than even the worthiest of earthly fathers can love his children (see on Matt. 7:9–11; Luke 11:9–13) constitutes the true wealth of the Christian. Concern for material possessions becomes secondary to the Christian’s peaceful confidence that the Lord will supply all of his needs (see on Matt. 6:19, 33).

Enjoy. God intended that all creation should bring Him and all His creatures “joy” and “pleasures for evermore” (see on Ps. 16:11).

18. Rich in good works. The rich Christian has a special opportunity to serve his fellow men and to show to the world the results of grace. When non-Christians see the gracious unselfishness of rich Christians they will naturally tend to have respect for the Christian way of life, and may, indeed, turn to Christ.

Ready to distribute. Or, “ready to impart,” that is, they are willing to give to others a part of their riches. The rich Christian is entrusted with a solemn responsibility. The way he handles wealth will affect his spiritual development as well as the comfort of those less fortunate.

Willing to communicate. Gr. *koinōnikoi*, “sociable,” “ready to fellowship.” The rich Christian will not hold himself aloof from those less fortunate in material possessions. He will give himself as well as his gift to his fellow church members.

19. Laying up in store. Or, “laying up as a treasure,” that is, in heaven.

Foundation. In contrast with the unstable foundation of material possessions (see v. 17), the rich Christian finds his security in the unfailing love and guidance of God. His daily habit of trust builds a restful, mature character, which God will honor when the eternal rewards are bestowed. Note the parallel between this verse and passages in the Sermon on the Mount (see Matt. 6:19, 20).

The time to come. That is, the future, when the redeemed shall receive their reward (see on 2 Tim. 4:8).

Eternal life. Textual evidence favors (cf. p. 10) the reading “that which is indeed life” rather than “eternal life.” Since the inception of sin our lives fall far short of the full life that God intended man should enjoy. The blight of sin has darkened even the brightest of earthly joys. No man is now immune from the wasting of physical strength and the limitations of mental faculties. The purpose of the plan of salvation is to restore that which man lost through sin (see on Luke 19:10; 1 Cor. 13:12).

20. Keep that which is committed to thy trust. Literally, “guard the deposit.” In the papyri the Greek phrase is used of a bank’s responsibility for the protection of monetary deposits. Paul knew that the purity of the gospel message would depend upon the faithfulness of the next generation of workers, represented by young Timothy.

Avoiding profane and vain babblings. That is, turning away from secular, empty talk. One way to preserve the purity and power of the gospel is to shun trivial subjects and to use one’s time for teaching truth, not for discussing irrelevancies. Paul thus ends his letter by summarizing the theme begun in ch. 1:3–7.

Oppositions. Gr. *antitheseis*, from which our English word “antithesis” is derived.

Science. Gr. *gnōsis*, “knowledge.” It is generally believed that Paul here alludes to teachings of the kind later set forth in a more fully developed form by the Gnostics (see Vol. VI, pp. 54–58).

Falsely so called. Gr. *pseudōnumos*, “falsely named,” from which we derive our English word “pseudonym.” Paul refers to those self-authorized teachers in the church who contended that higher “knowledge” consists of hidden meanings in “fables and endless genealogies” (ch. 1:4). The involved, allegorical teachings of such teachers can rightly be called counterfeit “knowledge.”

21. Some. That is, the teachers of “other doctrine” (see on ch. 1:3–7).

Erred. Literally, “missed the mark” (see on ch. 1:6).

The faith. See on ch. 3:9.

Grace. With this one word Paul sums up all that is comforting in the knowledge of the unmerited favor that God extends without limit to sinful man (see on John 1:14; Rom. 1:7; 3:24).

Thee. Textual evidence favors (cf. p. 10) the reading “you” (plural).

Amen. Textual evidence favors (cf. p. 10) the omission of this word.

The postscripts following v. 21 appears in none of the ancient manuscripts, though the brief statement, “Written from Laodicea,” occurs in one important uncial of the 5th century.

ELLEN G. WHITE COMMENTS

3–121T 540

6 ML 169; 1T 481; 2T 140

6–124T 618

8 1T 481
 9 CS 157; PP 168; 1T 477; 2T 336; 6T 374
 9, 10 COL 56; 5T 277; 9T 132
 9–124T 352
 10 CS 139, 209, 214, 220; MH 212; PK 650; Te 99; 1T 478, 551, 696; 2T 652, 657; 3T 121, 244, 398, 547; 4T 41, 489; 6T 453
 10, 11 AA 366
 11 ML 98
 12 CS 22; Ev 618; FE 137, 292, 300; GW 161, 264; ML 313, 318, 358; MM 32; PP 208; 1T 78; 3T 472; 4T 536, 624; 5T 395, 521, 579, 629; 7T 17; 8T 53; 9T 287
 15 AA 175; GC 614
 15, 16 LS 48; 1T 39
 16 AA 333; EW 122; FE 375; MH 434; 1T 344; 2T 267; 5T 699; 8T 282
 17 CS 65; 1T 542
 17, 184T 143
 17–19AA 367; COL 375; Ev 560; MH 213; 1T 541, 693; 2T 241, 682; 4T 352; 5T 271
 18 COL 370; 1T 536; 2T 242, 465, 664; 3T 546; 7T 225; 8T 33
 18, 19 CS 161; TM 32; 1T 706; 2T 31, 59, 159, 333, 676, 681; 3T 209, 250; 4T 473; WM 84
 19 CS 117, 126, 151; CT 99; 3T 389; 4T 597
 20 CSW 35; Ev 362; FE 181, 182, 186; GC 522, 573; GW 16; MYP 190; TM 32; 5T 80
 3

³Nichol, F. D. (1978). *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary : The Holy Bible with exegetical and expository comment*. Commentary Reference Series (1 Ti 4:1). Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association.