

NOTES ON THE FIRST EPISTLE TO TIMOTHY

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PAUL'S LETTERS TO TIMOTHY - WHEN AND WHERE WRITTEN (W. BUNTING)

A brief consideration of the background of the sender and the recipient of these letters should help us. Saul, later called Paul, born in Tarsus of Cilicia, was a citizen of no mean city; a Pharisee, and the son of a Pharisee; of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of the Hebrews; circumcised the eighth day; trained as a tent-maker; educated at the feet of the great Gamaliel; as touching the righteousness which is in the Law, blameless; honoured with Roman citizenship.

Timothy lived in Lystra, on the north side of the Taurus mountains. His father was a Greek. His mother, Eunice, a Jewess, and his grandmother, Lois, were women of unfeigned faith, and they sought to instruct Timothy from childhood in the sacred writings. He was uncircumcised.

What was it brought these two men with such dissimilar backgrounds together to work, with others, as a remarkable team in the spread of the message of the gospel? We know that the experience of Saul of Tarsus on the Damascus Road was the turning point in his life (Acts 26:12-19¹). In the case of Timothy, one wonders if this young man witnessed the scenes in Lystra during the apostle's first visit to that city. "They stoned Paul, and dragged him out of the city, supposing that he was dead" (Acts 14:19²). Was Timothy one of the disciples that stood around

1. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Acts%2026.12-19>

2. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Acts%2014.19>

the seeming lifeless Paul, and witnessed his miraculous recovery? Years later the apostle reminded Timothy of the sufferings which befell him at Antioch, at Iconium, and at Lystra (2 Tim.3:11³).

It was during Paul's second visit to Lystra with Silas that he found Timothy, who was well reported of by the brethren at Lystra and Iconium, and him would Paul have to go forth with him (Acts 16:2⁴,3⁵). Thus was forged a link between Paul and Timothy which became stronger as the years passed.

"My beloved and faithful child in the Lord" (1 Cor.4:17⁶); "I have no man likeminded" (Phil.2:20⁷); "My true child in faith" (1 Tim.1:2⁸); "My beloved child" (2 Tim.1:2⁹). These are but some of the apostle's references to Timothy which show the close bond that existed between them.

There is little to help us to determine when and where the first letter to Timothy was written. We learn from 1 Tim. 1:3¹⁰ that Paul exhorted Timothy to remain at Ephesus while he journeyed into Macedonia. The letter was written in the hope that he would soon return to Ephesus (1 Tim.3:14¹¹). We therefore suggest that it was written before his final visit to Miletus when he

3. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/2%20Tim.3.11>

4. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Acts%2016.2>

5. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Acts%2016.3>

6. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Cor.4.17>

7. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Phil.2.20>

8. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Tim.1.2>

9. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/2%20Tim.1.2>

10. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Tim.%201.3>

11. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Tim.3.14>

sent for the elders from Ephesus and conveyed the sad news that they would see his face no more (Acts 20:38¹²).

The letter contains guidance to the young man Timothy on a wide range of matters associated with the house of God; exhortation to prayer, qualifications to be looked for in overseers and deacons, the attitude of servants to masters and masters to servants, and much else besides.

“I appeal unto Caesar” — these words were uttered before Festus when Paul exercised his right of appeal as a Roman citizen to the supreme tribunal of the Emperor at Rome (Acts 25:11¹³). The second letter to Timothy was written under the shadow of his appearance before the Emperor, and the possible outcome of his appeal.* That Paul was still chained to a Roman soldier is borne out by his reference to the frequent visits of Onesiphorus, “For he oft refreshed me, and was not ashamed of my chain; but, when he was in Rome, he sought me diligently, and found me” (2 Tim. 1:16¹⁴, 17¹⁵).

This letter bears the stamp of a man already under the shadow or sentence of death. He writes, “I am already being offered, and the time of my departure is come. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith” (2 Tim. 4:6¹⁶, 7¹⁷). We have little difficulty in deciding when and where this letter

12. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Acts%2020.38>

13. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Acts%2025.11>

14. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/2%20Tim.1.16>

15. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/2%20Tim%201.17>

16. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/2%20Tim.4.6>

17. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/2%20Tim%204.7>

was written; its value is enhanced by the fact that it is probably the last extant letter from the apostle Paul.

It would seem that Timothy was still at Ephesus, and he must have been deeply touched upon receipt of this letter. There is a measure of urgency in the apostle's request to him, "Do thy diligence to come shortly unto me" (2 Tim.4:9¹⁸). His request is made more urgent by the words, "Do thy diligence to come before winter" (2 Tim.4:21¹⁹).

Some think that his appeal had been determined in his favour, and that his last imprisonment was under Nero consequent upon Rome's own later policy of persecuting Christians. 2 Tim.4:13²⁰ suggests a recent visit to Troas and arrest there, and verse 20 a recent visit to Miletus.

18. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/2%20Tim.4.9>

19. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/2%20Tim.4.21>

20. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/2%20Tim.4.13>

COMMENTARY ON 1 TIMOTHY

1

1 Tim.1:1¹,2²

Paul speaks of himself as being a called apostle of Jesus Christ in 1 Cor.1:1³: (See also 2 Cor.1:1⁴; Eph.1:1⁵; Col.1:1⁶; 2 Tim.1:1⁷), but here he speaks of himself as being an apostle of Christ Jesus by the command of God and Christ Jesus. God is called here our Saviour and Christ Jesus is our Hope. Christ is our Hope before God, our Priest, the “better Hope,” through which we draw nigh unto God (Heb.7:19⁸; see also 6:18; 3:6). He is also the blessed Hope, the One who is coming again (Tit.2:13⁹), “who shall appear a second time, apart from sin, to them that wait for Him unto salvation” (Heb.9:28¹⁰); not salvation from the penalty of sin, but from the presence of sin, that salvation which is “ready to be revealed in the last time (1 Pet.1:5¹¹), which is nearer to us than when we first believed” (Rom.13:11¹²). The AV/KJV

1. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Tim.1.1>

2. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Tim%201.2>

3. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Cor.1.1>

4. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/2%20Cor.1.1>

5. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Eph.1.1>

6. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Col.1.1>

7. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/2%20Tim.1.1>

8. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Heb.7.19>

9. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Titus.2.13>

10. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Heb.9.28>

11. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Pet.1.5>

gives “my own son in the Faith.” It is not “my own son,” but “my true child,” and it is “in faith” not “in the Faith,” though there are differences of opinion on the point among scholars as to whether “the” is implied before “faith,” though the definite article is not in the Greek. We may safely follow the RV reading – “my true child in faith.”

1 Tim.1:3¹³,4¹⁴

The question arises, “When did Paul exhort Timothy to tarry at Ephesus when he was going into Macedonia?” Was it some time before his imprisonment in Rome, of which we read in Acts 28:16¹⁵,30¹⁶, when he abode in his own hired dwelling “with the soldier that guarded him”? Was there but one imprisonment, or were there first and second imprisonments? In Philippians 1:26¹⁷ Paul writes anticipating being with the Philippians again, and in Philn.22 he writes to Philemon in Colossae, “But withall prepare me also a lodging: for I hope that through your prayers I shall be granted unto you.” To Timothy he also wrote, “The cloke that I left at Troas with Carpus, bring when thou comest, and the books, especially the parchments” (2 Tim.4:13¹⁸). In this same chapter he said, “Trophimus I left at Miletus sick” (verse 20). It seems to me that these references indicate that there were two imprisonments, and that the events he alludes to in 1 and 2 Tim-

12. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Rom.13.11>

13. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Tim.1.3>

14. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Tim%201.4>

15. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Acts%2028.16>

16. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Acts%2028.30>

17. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Phil%201.26>

18. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/2%20Tim.4.13>

othy took place after the book of the Acts closes, between Paul's two imprisonments in Rome.

Timothy was besought or exhorted by Paul to stay in Ephesus while he himself proceeded to Macedonia. The object, as Paul stated, was that Timothy should charge certain men not to teach heterodox doctrines, doctrines contrary to what Paul had taught, nor to give heed to fables (Tit.1:14¹⁹ speaks of Jewish fables) and endless genealogies. In these interminable genealogies the Jews, in their pride of race and natural birth, took a special delight. The genealogy of Jesus Christ is the only genealogy in the New Testament. He being proved to be the Messiah, having come of the seed of David and Abraham, the vital matter from then on is not natural birth, but the new birth, the birth from above, by the Spirit and word of God, by which all so born are children of God.

These fables and genealogies led to questionings out of which arose strifes, the produce of the carnal mind. This is the opposite of a dispensation which is in faith. Here is the great cleavage between that which is natural and that which is spiritual, of works and faith, of law and grace. If people are believers it matters not whether they are Jews or Gentiles, royal or noble or of the common folk; pedigrees have no value now with God.

1 Tim.1:5²⁰

The end, object or purpose, of the charge was love out of a pure heart. Of what value is love, if it does not proceed out of a pure

19. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Titus.1.14>

20. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Tim.1.5>

heart, if the motive behind a profession of love is not pure? Love is easily felt where it exists; it is evident in love's labour (1 Thess.1:3²¹). Then follows the next component of the charge, "a good conscience." No believer can please God with a bad or defiled conscience. What is conscience? It is the inward knowledge of a person which bears witness to his words and works whether they are good or bad, right or wrong. Conscience either accuses or excuses (Rom.2:15²²). It may be seared as with a hot iron (1 Tim.4:2²³), and so rendered ineffective in its witness. Conscience is not in itself the standard of right and wrong; it can be perverted by wrong teaching. Paul claimed to have lived with a good conscience even when he was a proud Pharisee persecuting the saints (Acts 23:1²⁴).

When he became subject to the doctrine of the apostles then his conscience, enlightened by the new teaching, reacted in quite another way. The third part of the charge is "faith unfeigned." Faith is the result of hearing the word of God (Rom.10:17²⁵). If there is no revelation there can be no faith. Some say, "I believe," when they should say, "I think." Faith unfeigned is not a mere pretence at believing, nor is it a false faith which does not rest upon the word of God.

1 Tim.1:6²⁶,7²⁷,8²⁸

21. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Thess.1.3>

22. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Rom.2.15>

23. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Tim.4.2>

24. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Acts%2023.1>

25. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Rom.10.17>

26. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Tim.1.6>

27. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Tim%201.7>

To swerve is to miss the mark. Sin also means to miss the mark. Men like to talk who have no ear to listen to God talking to them. “The talk of the lips tendeth only to penury” (Prov.14:23²⁹). How useless is empty talk! trivial, vain disputings! Such vain talkers desired to be teachers of the law, but they were without understanding of its use in this dispensation. Indeed it is well for all carefully to follow Paul’s teaching regarding the law, its functions as a rule of life, not a means of life, its uselessness in dealing with sin as rooted in the flesh, its inability to give life to the sinner dead in sins, or to provide him with righteousness. Its use to saints is the same in this dispensation as in the past, as a lamp to their feet and a light to their path, to teach them how to behave before God and men, love being the fulfilment of law (Rom.13:8-10³⁰). Paul says of the law in Rom.7:12³¹ that it is holy, and the commandment thereof holy, righteous, and good. Its use is to guide the just who are liable to go wrong, and man being by nature a wrong-doer must learn that wrongdoing is sin against God, and so by the law cometh the knowledge of sin (Rom.3:20³²).

1 Tim.1:9³³,10³⁴,11³⁵

28. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Tim%201.8>

29. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Prov.14.23>

30. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Rom.13.8-10>

31. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Rom.7.12>

32. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Rom.3.20>

33. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Tim.1.9>

34. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Tim%201.10>

35. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Tim%201.11>

Here we have a lengthy list of various forms of evil-doing and vice which illustrates what Paul wrote in Gal.3:19³⁶: “What then is the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the Seed (Christ) should come to whom the promise hath been made.” “Through the law cometh the knowledge of sin” (Rom.3:20³⁷). “I had not known sin, except through the law” (Rom.7:7³⁸). The true motive power of all well-doing is, “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God,” and “Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.” The Lord said, “On these two commandments hangeth the whole law, and the prophets” (Matt.22:34-40³⁹). He gave the meaning of what He called the second commandment in His teaching in Matt.7:12⁴⁰: “All things therefore whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, even so do ye also unto them: for this is the law and the prophets.” This is the simplest, greatest and most corrective statement of the conduct of men toward each other that was ever made, and, if it were obeyed on earth, would turn earth into a veritable heaven.

But self-love, with its covetousness and all other forms of evil, makes this world a heap of reeking moral and physical corruption. It is against such a state that the voice of the law speaks loudly, in the light of which men are called to repent. Even the world’s legislatures are continually churning out laws to control men in their sinful propensities. Kind and loving people need few laws. The cause of all the trouble is that state of moral cor-

36. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Gal.3.19>

37. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Rom.3.20>

38. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Rom.7.7>

39. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Matt.22.34-40>

40. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Matt.7.12>

ruption which Paul so frequently calls “the flesh.” A list of its works he gives in Gal.5:19-21⁴¹: The moral depravity of human nature was the cause of Israel’s and also of the world’s corruptions and distresses. Against the fruit of the Spirit who indwells all believers there is no law (Gal.5:22⁴²,23⁴³). The gospel of the glory of the blessed (or happy) God proclaims the need of new birth to men; this message of divine glory is totally against human sin and corruption. It opens the door to a new way of life, a divine and heavenly mode of living in a world which is waxing worse and worse.

1 Tim.1:12⁴⁴

“I thank Him,” or “I am thankful to Him” (Gk. charin Echo can correctly be rendered “I am thankful.” See 2 Tim.1:3⁴⁵; Lk.17:9⁴⁶; Heb.12:28⁴⁷) who strengthened or empowered me; such was the appreciation of Paul in regard to the grace which he had known and which was not found vain in him (1 Cor.15:10⁴⁸). It produced in him a spirit of thankfulness. He speaks of the Lord counting him faithful, appointing him to his service (Gk. diakonian). The Lord makes no mistakes, for His gifts and calling are without repentance on His part (Rom.11:29⁴⁹). He knew Paul perfectly when He saved him on

41. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Gal.5.19-21>

42. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Gal.5.22>

43. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Gal%205.23>

44. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Tim.1.12>

45. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/2%20Tim.1.3>

46. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Luke.17.9>

47. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Heb.12.28>

48. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Cor.15.10>

the Damascus road; He had separated him even from his mother's womb (Gal.1:15⁵⁰), and long ages before that, in times eternal, there was a purpose and grace given to him in Christ Jesus, which became manifest through his being saved and called with a holy calling (2 Tim.1:9⁵¹); this calling became evident to men in Acts 13:1-3⁵².

1 Tim.1:13⁵³,14⁵⁴

The record from the pen of Luke of Paul's actions prior to his conversion, and what he says of himself in the Acts and elsewhere, fully confirm what he says here, that he was indeed to the full extent a blasphemer, not only one himself, but he sought to make the saints who suffered at his hands blasphemers also. He persecuted the saints even to foreign cities (Acts 26:11⁵⁵), and he laid waste the church of God in Jerusalem, haling men and women to prison (Acts 8:3⁵⁶; 1 Cor.15:9⁵⁷; Gal.1:13⁵⁸). How deeply Paul felt in his conscience the memory of those past days! But God had mercy on him, because, he says, "I did it ignorantly in unbelief." The Lord prayed for those that killed Him in the

49. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Rom.11.29>

50. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Gal.1.15>

51. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/2%20Tim.1.9>

52. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Acts%2013.1-3>

53. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Tim.1.13>

54. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Tim%201.14>

55. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Acts%2026.11>

56. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Acts%208.3>

57. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Cor.15.9>

58. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Gal.1.13>

words, “Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do” (Lk.23:34⁵⁹).

Peter said to the Jews in Jerusalem, “Brethren, I wot that in ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers ... Repent ye therefore, and turn again, that your sins may be blotted out” (Acts 3:17⁶⁰,19⁶¹). Ignorance and unbelief were far from being good qualities in Paul. They did not provide merit so that God had mercy on him, but show the justice of God in discriminating between what may be done in ignorance and the terrible evil of rebellion, of sinning against light. Paul evidently was one of those to whom the Lord referred in Jn 16:2⁶², when He said, “The hour cometh, that whosoever killeth you shall think that he offereth service unto God.” The grace and love of the Lord abounded exceedingly in Paul’s case, for which he was truly thankful to Christ Jesus his Lord. “Which is” is the English rendering of the Greek singular definite article *tes* and refers to the love which is in Christ Jesus. The passage indicates Paul’s faith and Christ’s love.

1 Tim.1:15⁶³

Here it is clearly stated that the purpose of the Lord’s coming into the world was not to set up His millennial kingdom and to reign over Israel and the world. No such kingdom was offered to the Jewish people, as some interpreters have erroneously explained the words of Jn the Baptist and of the Lord, “Repent

59. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Luke.23.34>

60. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Acts%203.17>

61. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Acts%203.19>

62. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/John%2016.2>

63. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Tim.1.15>

ye; for the kingdom of heaven is at hand” (Matt.3:2⁶⁴,4⁶⁵,17⁶⁶). It is also said “For God sent not the Son into the world to judge the world; but that the world should be saved through Him” (Jn 3:17⁶⁷). We know from many scriptures that the judgement of the world precedes the millennial reign of Christ, and had He come with the intention of reigning, and not suffering, then must He have come to judge the world. But the Lord is most emphatic that He was not sent to judge, but to save the world. The words of Jn 3 were spoken at the commencement of His public ministry and those of Matt.20:28⁶⁸ near the close of His life. He said, “The Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many.” He is the Saviour of the world, and He had not come to save Israel from the power of Rome, but from their sins (Jn 18:36⁶⁹; Matt.1:21⁷⁰). He came, as Paul says, to save sinners from the penalty and also from the power of sin. Of the vast concourse of sinners Paul puts himself first and chiefest of all.

1 Tim.1:16⁷¹

The purpose, emphasized by Paul, why the Lord had shown mercy to him was that He might show forth in Paul an ensample of His longsuffering mercy with sinners. Need we say that Paul

64. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Matt.3.2>

65. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Matt%203.4>

66. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Matt%203.17>

67. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/John%203.17>

68. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Matt.20.28>

69. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/John%2018.36>

70. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Matt.1.21>

71. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Tim.1.16>

is not here speaking of his suffering for Christ and the gospel's sake as an example for others to follow, but that he was an example of the Lord's longsuffering with men who in the hardness of their hearts kick against the goads of divine reproofs, so that they might know the way of God's salvation? Surely divine mercy waited on Saul of Tarsus, who was fitting himself to be a vessel of destruction. Here in the chief of sinners we see the longsuffering of the Lord magnified. Peter says that the Lord is longsuffering to usward, not wishing that any should perish. He also refers to the long-suffering of God in the days of Noah (2 Pet.3:9⁷²; 1 Pet.3:19⁷³,20⁷⁴).

1 Tim.1:17⁷⁵

The redeemed soul of Paul, as he thinks of God's abundant love, grace and mercy to him, a one-time persecutor and now an apostle of Jesus Christ, bursts out in praise to God, the eternal King and only God, who is incorruptible and invisible, of whose infinite kindness he had known. Instead of languishing in torment which his sin deserved, he, in the joy of salvation, praises God whose hand in mercy had been stretched out toward him. Shall we not ever do likewise when we too take the cup of salvation and call upon the name of the Lord?

1 Tim.1:18⁷⁶,19⁷⁷,20⁷⁸

72. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/2%20Pet.3.9>

73. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Pet.3.19>

74. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Pet%203.20>

75. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Tim.1.17>

76. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Tim.1.18>

77. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Tim%201.19>

After the digression Paul has made, first to speak of the purpose of the law and of God's mercy to himself, a law-breaker, he returns to the charge referred to in verse 3: He writes to Timothy in the endearing term of "my child," not "my son." He refers to the prophecies connected with Timothy's call to the ministry, first as a fellow servant with Paul. This is referred to in 1 Tim.4:14⁷⁹, where Paul says, "Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery." God had spoken by the mouths of persons, perhaps the brethren at Lystra and Iconium, as we read in Acts 16:2⁸⁰: "The same was well reported of by the brethren that were at Lystra and Iconium." Whilst the minister of Christ is one who feeds the lambs and sheep, and the flock of God, he is, in another sense, to be a warrior who will face and fight those who are enemies of God's flock.

David the shepherd-king of Israel was such. He fed his father's sheep, but when a lion or a bear took a lamb out of the flock he went after him, and slew him and delivered the lamb. Later, when he cared for the flock of God, he slew Goliath and other enemies besides. Timothy was to take sword and shield and to be a good soldier of Christ Jesus and to war against false teaching and false teachers. There are times for soft words and times also for words that are strong and powerful. The Christian soldier must hold faith and a good conscience; otherwise he will be weak before the enemy. Some had violently thrust these essentials from them, little realising their immense value, and were as

78. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Tim%201.20>

79. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Tim.4.14>

80. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Acts%2016.2>

a vessel without chart or rudder, a plaything of wind and wave. Shipwreck was the result. Few things present such a hopeless and melancholy sight as a shipwreck. What once had been a noble vessel, perchance the pride of the seas, at last becomes a wreck, mere scrap for the furnace, or worse, to go gradually to pieces as it sinks daily to oblivion beneath the waves.

Of such as made shipwreck concerning the Faith (not concerning salvation) were Hymenaeus (perhaps the same as in 2 Tim.2:17⁸¹) and Alexander (perhaps Alexander of 2 Tim.4:14⁸²). These two men had been guilty of blasphemy. (Blasphemy literally means hurtful speaking, to speak injuriously, evil speaking. In things pertaining to God, it means, “to speak of God and divine things in terms of impious irreverence.”) These men had been excommunicated, that is, they had been delivered to Satan for their evil speaking. (See 1 Cor.5⁸³, where the man there was delivered unto Satan for immoral conduct). In both cases the judgement of the apostle, which was God’s judgement, had been given effect to in the respective churches.

81. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/2%20Tim.2.17>

82. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/2%20Tim.4.14>

83. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Cor.5>

COMMENTARY ON 1 TIMOTHY

2

1 Tim.2:1¹,2²

Here begins that section of the epistle which deals with the behaviour of men and women, of overseers and deacons, in the house of God (1 Tim.2:1-3:16³). Of this part Paul writes, “These things write I unto thee ... that thou mayest know how men ought to behave themselves in the house of God” (1 Tim.3:14⁴,15⁵). Any movement that is of God, whether in an individual or among a people, begins with and is maintained by prayer. If men have no living, continuous contact with God, then there can be neither light nor power. This dispensation began with prayer: “These all with one accord continued stedfastly in prayer, with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with His brethren” (Acts 1:14⁶). The powerful witness of the apostles continued on similar lines: “Now, Lord, look upon their threatenings: and grant unto Thy servants to speak Thy word with all boldness ... And with great power gave the apostles their witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them all” (Acts 4:24⁷,29-33⁸).

1. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Tim.2.1>

2. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Tim%202.2>

3. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Tim.2.1-3.16>

4. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Tim.3.14>

5. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Tim%203.15>

6. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Acts%201.14>

7. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Acts%204.24>

Great power and great grace were the result of much prayer. Here in 1 Timothy right behaviour begins with prayer. Supplication, prayer, intercession, are words which convey ideas much akin to each other. In the Old Testament the Hebrew word translated supplication conveys the idea of graciousness, a seeking of grace. Gesenius says that properly it means the cry for mercy. This seems to be borne out in the first use of the word in Solomon's prayer at the dedication of the house of the LORD. He uses the word frequently (1 Kgs.8:28⁹,30¹⁰,33¹¹,38¹²,45¹³,47¹⁴,49¹⁵,52¹⁶,54¹⁷,59¹⁸). Note particularly the words of verse 52: "That Thine eyes may be open unto the supplication of Thy servant, and unto the supplication of Thy people Israel, to hearken unto them whensoever they cry unto Thee." The Greek word for supplication in 1 Tim.2:1¹⁹ means a petition, a begging as the result of need, an asking. Prayer means a wish, entreaty made to God as the result of need, an asking.

8. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Acts%204.29-33>

9. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Kings.8.28>

10. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Kgs%208.30>

11. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Kgs%208.33>

12. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Kgs%208.38>

13. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Kgs%208.45>

14. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Kgs%208.47>

15. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Kgs%208.49>

16. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Kgs%208.52>

17. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Kgs%208.54>

18. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Kgs%208.59>

19. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Tim.2.1>

Prayer means a wish, entreaty made to God only, or a vow. Intercession means a meeting with, an interview, intercourse with the object of interceding for someone. Thanksgiving is the expression of gratitude, the use of grateful language to God. These words are all in the plural, showing that there is to be a continuance in their exercise. Such are to be made for all men. In the matter of prayer there is gross darkness in many hearts in many lands, and there are many lying vanities. The Buddhist turns his prayer wheel and cries, "O Jewel of the Lotus, Amen." The Moslem prays to Allah, Mahomet's god. The Romanist ceaselessly repeats "Hail Mary." Protestants pray betimes to Almighty God without reference to Jesus Christ, the one Way of reaching the ear of God His Father. They, at least, should know better. There are prayers in plenty, but most who pray know neither the Lord Jesus nor His Father. Such prayers are vain.

The Lord said to His disciples in the matter of prayer, "In praying use not vain repetitions, as the Gentiles do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking" (Matt.6: 7²⁰). Surely there is much need for prayer by those in whom is the Spirit of God and who know Jesus Christ the Son of the Father, for men steeped in ignorance and unbelief who are drifting on to hell and eternal misery. Particular prayer is to be made for kings and all in eminence or dignity in human affairs, so that things may be overruled by God that we may be able to lead a quiet and tranquil life in all godliness and gravity. The Christian should be a godly and grave person, not gloomy and dejected: he has everything to make him happy and cheerful in the present joy of the Holy Spirit and the future inheritance in glory.

1 Tim.2:3²¹,4²²

God is not ignorant of the need of the souls of men nor does He need to be stirred to concern and activity concerning that need. So great was His love for the world that He gave His only begotten Son to die on Calvary (Jn 3:16²³; 1 Jn 4:9²⁴,10²⁵). He has also sent forth His Spirit to convict men of sin and to bear witness concerning Christ (Jn 15:26²⁶; Jn 16:7-11²⁷). What more could He have done? His will is that saved illuminated men and women should be His witnesses in the world, each in his own sphere, shedding their light in the darkness. God is the Saviour, saints are His messengers, the instruments He uses, but they must be in touch with Him, hence the need for prayer. God willeth, that is, he desires, all men to be saved. God's desire is equal to the provision He has made, for there is one Mediator between God and men, and that Mediator is the redemption price as well.

Saved men should not stop at being saved. Alas, many do. They should go on to the knowledge of the truth. Coming to the knowledge of the truth does not mean coming to know the way of salvation from hell. It means coming to know the way of the truth for believers, for God has a way in which they should walk as well as a way for them to be saved. See the following passages where the phrase "the knowledge of the truth" is men-

21. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Tim.2.3>

22. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Tim%202.4>

23. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/John%203.16>

24. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20John%204.9>

25. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Jn%204.10>

26. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/John%2015.26>

27. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/John%2016.7-11>

tioned: 2 Tim.2:24-26²⁸; 2 Tim.3:7²⁹; Tit.1:1³⁰; Heb.10:26³¹: If the knowledge of the truth was synonymous with being saved, then we should certainly have the falling away doctrine taught in Heb.10:26-31³²: That believers can fall away from the living God and from a place in divine service is plainly taught in the word, but they cannot fall away from grace and be lost eternally. Believers should not remain ignorant of what the will of God is. The Lord revealed in Jn 7:17³³ the principle on which God works, “If any man willeth to do His will, he shall know of the teaching.” If the believer is willing to do God’s will then God will teach him.

1 Tim.2:5³⁴,6³⁵

Men conceive and make gods many (1 Cor.8:5³⁶). Idolatry and mythology stocked the world and men’s minds with gods in abundance, and still do. Greece, to take one example, the land of philosophy and worldly wisdom, had gods for all purposes, gods for war and gods for peace, for land and sea, for debauch and sensuality, gods that married and gods that fought with each other, and in addition there was AN UNKNOWN GOD, who was the God that Paul declared to the philosophers in Athens (Acts 17:22³⁷,31³⁸). Worldly wisdom did not rid the minds of men of

28. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/2%20Tim.2.24-26>

29. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/2%20Tim.3.7>

30. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Titus.1.1>

31. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Heb.10.26>

32. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Heb.10.26-31>

33. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/John%207.17>

34. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Tim.2.5>

35. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Tim%202.6>

36. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Cor.8.5>

such vain imaginations, nor can worldly wisdom rid men's minds of the idolatry of our times. The Scriptures proclaim from first to last that there is one God.

How did the world get on and how were men saved before the arrival of the pope of Rome and all the idolatrous images of the papal system or the ikons of the Greek church? And what of the world before the arrival of Buddha and Mahomet? Where was God then? The God of Israel and of the patriarchs of the book of Genesis is the same one God that Paul proclaimed. Any other person or thing that claims the veneration of men, a veneration which is due to God alone, is idolatry. In the days of the apostle men had angelic mediators whom they worshipped (Col.2:18³⁹). Papal Rome carries on this practice, but instead of it being angels it is Mary, whom the Roman Catholics worship as the queen of heaven, which is an ancient form of idolatry which is condemned by God in Jer.7:16-20⁴⁰; Jer.44:15-30⁴¹: To mariolatry (the worship of the Virgin Mary, whom they have erroneously held for long years as "ever virgin") they have recently added the dogma that she went to heaven in bodily form, and it is mortal sin for a Roman Catholic not to accept this.

Where in the Scriptures do we find the death of Mary? Or where do we find that she went to heaven when she was alive or that she died and was raised from the dead and went to heaven? Such are nowhere to be found in the whole New Testament. Men be-

37. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Acts%2017.22>

38. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Acts%2017.31>

39. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Col.2.18>

40. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Jer.7.16-20>

41. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Jer.44.15-30>

lieve what they want to believe and what they think will be to their advantage. Lies spring out of the earth today like weeds in a garden, but, thank God, the day of the Lord is coming when truth shall spring out of the earth (Ps.85:11⁴²); then the hideous monstrosities of idolatry, of Rome and all other systems of idolatry, will be swept away. Before that day men will cast their idols to the moles and the bats, and shall seek to cover themselves in the caverns and clefts of the ragged rocks from the terror of the LORD. (See Isa.2:5-22⁴³; Rev.6:12-17⁴⁴).

Let it be shouted from the housetops that there is one God and but one Mediator and one High Priest. There is no other priest or mediator that comes between the souls of men and God, it matters not what systems of education or ordination men may establish; men's systems are human, Scripture revelation is divine. The blessed Man Christ Jesus, the one Mediator, is Himself the ransom price of the souls of men. He is between God and all men; He also gave Himself a ransom for all men, so that there is abundant provision for all men to be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth. If men are not redeemed the fault does not lie at God's door, but at the door of those who refuse the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. God has done all that is possible, providing salvation and eternal life as a gift (Rom.6:23⁴⁵; Eph.2:8⁴⁶).

1 Tim.2:7⁴⁷

42. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Ps.85.11>

43. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Isa.2.5-22>

44. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Rev.6.12-17>

45. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Rom.6.23>

46. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Eph.2.8>

Here Paul shows his part in the work of God relative to the salvation of men, and the coming to the knowledge of the truth on the part of those that are saved. Paul's work lay principally among the Gentiles; he was an apostle of Gentiles, as sent to them. Some men may be more of the herald than the teacher, and some more of the teacher than the herald, but Paul was one who could sling equally well with both hands. He could make disciples and also teach them to observe all that the Lord had commanded (Matt.28:19⁴⁸,20⁴⁹).

1 Tim.2:8⁵⁰

Here the original Greek word for "desire" is *boulomai*, the word "willeth," in verse 4, Gk. *thelo*. Wordsworth says "that *thelo* expresses a stronger desire than *boulomai*." The former "has been explained of active volition and purpose," and the latter (*boulomai*) "of mere inclination, passive desire, or propensity." Paul desires that men should pray. Here he makes a difference between the sexes, as he does in verses 9-15 in regard to women. Prayer in public, which Paul has in view, is the function of the men. There is little fear in regard to men's conduct in the house of God if they are praying men who pray lifting up holy hands without wrath or disputing. Wrath and disputation will dispel holiness of life and fervency in prayer, these things cannot dwell in the same heart as prayer.

1 Tim.2:9⁵¹,10⁵²

47. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Tim.2.7>

48. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Matt.28.19>

49. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Matt%2028.20>

50. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Tim.2.8>

In assemblings where the men are to pray (for all men and kings and so forth) the women are not to mar these gatherings by their clothing or behaviour, but they are to appear in seemly guise, their arrangement of dress is to be with modesty and discreetness. “Shamefacedness” of the AV/KJV is a corruption of the word “shamefastness” of the RV, which is correct. The word means modesty. Women are to exhibit proper womanly reserve so becoming of their sex. Many modern women have cast aside much of this reserved dignity and grace, and this is not to their honour. Women are not to adorn themselves with plaits of hair, gold or pearls, but (what is becoming in women professing godliness) through good works. How fitting it is for men to be lifting up holy hands in prayer to have such women in their company whose attire and decorum is of that godly sort which is an encouragement and not a hinderance to prayer!

1 Tim.2:11⁵³,12⁵⁴

As in public gatherings the men are to pray, so also in public gatherings women are not to teach, but to be in quietness. This is the voice of the Spirit of God, for here Paul is writing inspired Scripture, and not as some say, who wish to get round the commandment of the Lord, that it is Paul’s opinion. To make this to be Paul’s opinion would make His writings on other matters Paul’s opinion also. Where would this lead us to? Women who fear God will hear and heed God’s word as here given. They will be glad to take the place assigned to them by God from the very

51. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Tim.2.9>

52. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Tim%202.10>

53. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Tim.2.11>

54. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Tim%202.12>

beginning. Women are to be in subjection. This does not mean inferiority. If subjection meant inferiority then it would mean that the Son of God is inferior to God (1 Cor.15:28⁵⁵). He is the equal of God the Father (Jn 5:18⁵⁶), and on equality with God (Phil.2:6⁵⁷), and of the essence and nature of God, and consequently in the image of God (Col.1:15-19⁵⁸; Heb.1:3⁵⁹).

Woman is man's equal in essence and nature, not an inferior creature, but in God's all-wise purpose, in our present earthly estate, she is in subjection to the man, in the ordination of God, and must not in public assemblings teach, and she must not exercise dominion over the man. The Greek word for "to have dominion" is Gk. *authenteo*, which means one acting by his or her own authority, to domineer.

1 Tim.2:13⁶⁰,14⁶¹

Here Paul gives reasons why the woman is to be in subjection and in quietness; the first is in the order in which man and woman were made. Paul uses the Greek word *plasso* for formed, a word similar in meaning to the Hebrew word used by Moses in Gen.2:7⁶²: "The LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground"; both words mean to mould, as the potter moulds a ves-

55. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Cor.15.28>

56. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/John%205.18>

57. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Phil.2.6>

58. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Col.1.15-19>

59. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Heb.1.3>

60. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Tim.2.13>

61. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Tim%202.14>

62. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Gen.2.7>

sel of clay. Eve in contrast was made of a rib taken from Adam's side. The word "made" in "made He a woman" (Gen.2:22⁶³) means "to build" (RVM). It means to build anything, a house, a city, and so forth. It is also used of a man and a woman building a house by having children (Gen.16:2⁶⁴; Deut.25:9⁶⁵; Ruth 4:11⁶⁶). The Lord when speaking of the Church, which is His Body, His Bride, speaks of building the Church (Matt.16:18⁶⁷).

The purpose of God in the woman was that she should be a help meet, a female helper to the male, to aid, succour, and answer to man's needs in all respects, spiritually, mentally and physically, and to assist him in wedlock in building his house by bearing him children. No other creature that God had made could do this. The animals had no spiritual life, no consciousness of the Divine Being, no mental ability such as man was given as the lord of all earthly creatures, and to mix with beasts physically would have been bestiality of the most abominable kind. Thus woman is man's true helper, answering to him in all his needs. Alas, the second reason for the woman's subjection to the man lies in how the fall took place. Eve was beguiled, deceived or seduced, and fell into transgression. Hence the sentence of God in Gen.3:16⁶⁸, "I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee." Adam,

63. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Gen.2.22>

64. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Gen.16.2>

65. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Deut.25.9>

66. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Ruth%204.11>

67. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Matt.16.18>

68. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Gen.3.16>

in contrast to Eve, was not deceived. His transgression, being sin against light, was the more serious of the two.

1 Tim.2:15⁶⁹

In what sense is the woman to be saved through the childbearing? What is her danger? This verse is integrated with what goes before by the conjunction “but” (Gk. *de*). She is not to have dominion over the man or to teach publicly. Childless Eve acted on her own authority without consulting her husband. She took of the forbidden tree, and did eat of its fruit and also gave to her husband, and he did eat. Thus the devil wrought from beneath, through the animal, the serpent of the field, to the woman, and through the woman to the man. He ever works from beneath. God works from the man to the woman and by them to the animals. He works from above. Thus it was that the fall of mankind came about.

To meet the ravages of death, conception and the birthrate had to be increased, and what was God’s judgement on the woman and womankind was to be to their salvation. Their desire was to be to their husbands who would rule over them. The childless wife is in need of special grace so that she will not usurp the rights and place of her husband, and act on her own authority and teach him what to do. Some have this grace, and those who have not got it should seek it. This comely state of the proper relationship of husband and wife will be realized, if they continue in faith and love and sanctification with sobriety. Sobriety means discreetness or restraint of the desires or passions. The childbearing is the natural childbearing of a husband and wife, and has

69. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Tim.2.15>

nothing to do with the Lord's miraculous birth or with salvation which comes to us by His death and resurrection.

COMMENTARY ON 1 TIMOTHY

3

1 Tim.3:1¹

“If a man seeketh,” that is, stretches forward to overseership, does not mean that one through ambition or otherwise expresses a wish to be appointed or recognized as an overseer, but by his actions shows that he is stretching forward to do such a work which the Lord has laid upon his heart. The work of constituting a man an overseer is of the Holy Spirit. “Take heed unto yourselves, and to all the flock, in the which the Holy Spirit hath made you bishops (overseers), to feed the church of God” (Acts 20:28²). Men may ambitiously seek overseership, and others may appoint to that position those who have shown no evidence in their life that they are seeking the work, but are seeking only the position of overseers. This is the sure road to trouble. Note that overseership means work, place is of very secondary importance. Indeed the overseer should be the servant of all and the least of all. There is no word in the Greek for “office.” The words “the office of a bishop” are one word in the Greek, episkopes, which means “overseership.” Paul says that this is a good or beautiful work.

1 Tim.3:2³,3⁴

1. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Tim.3.1>

2. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Acts%2020.28>

3. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Tim.3.2>

4. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Tim%203.3>

The overseer's conduct is carefully dealt with by Paul, for he is a public man and one who is to be a pattern to the saints. They should be able to look to him as an ensample, and the overseer might at times correct his behaviour by asking himself the question, "Would I like all the saints to be like me?" If he would not, then it is time to apply the proper correction to his life. He is to be irreproachable, blameless, one whose conduct cannot be attacked or censured. "The husband of one wife" has been the subject of considerable discussion. There are at least five views as to what these words mean:

- (1) A man who prior to conversion had had more than one wife, and who were still alive.
- (2) A man who has but one wife alive (though there is no evidence whatever that Christians at any time were guilty of polygamy, of having more than one wife).
- (3) A man who has been married once only, a second marriage upon the death of his wife being disallowed in the case of an overseer (see 1 Tim.5:9⁵).
- (4) Chaste fidelity to the marriage vow ("that neither polygamy, nor concubinage, nor any offensive deuterogamy, should be able to be alleged against such a person")
- (5) A man who is an overseer should be a married man, the husband of a wife.

We may dismiss (5) in the light of the fact that Paul himself was not a married man, or, as some think, a widower (1 Cor.7:7⁶,8⁷;

5. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Tim.5.9>

1 Cor.9:5^{8,6}). An apostle was an elder or overseer (1 Pet.5:1¹⁰). It might be argued that the words, “One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity,” imply that he must be married and also he must have children. Even if he had but one child he would thus not be eligible, for the scripture speaks of children. This, we judge, would be straining Scripture beyond its proper limit. As to (4), this is too vague. It is not simply that a man believes in the chastity of marriage and faithfulness to the marriage bond, but that he is himself the husband of one wife. Then in regard to (3), Paul elsewhere shows that death severs the marriage bond, making the person thus freed free to marry again (1 Cor.7:39¹¹; Rom.7:2¹²). In 1 Tim.5:14¹³ he desires the younger widows to marry.

As to (2), does the apostle mean that overseers must have only one wife but saints may have more than one? We believe that this would be a very improper view to take. Saints were not allowed to have more than one wife. When Paul says that the overseer must not be a brawler, a striker, or a lover of money, he is not allowing that the saints may be brawlers, strikers or lovers of money. Paul is making positive statements as to conduct. Should an overseer’s wife die, are we to lay it down as the Lord’s will that he

6. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Cor.7.7>

7. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Cor%207.8>

8. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Cor.9.5>

9. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Cor%209.6>

10. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Pet.5.1>

11. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Cor.7.39>

12. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Rom.7.2>

13. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Tim.5.14>

must live a celibate life afterwards? Would not this be going beyond what the Lord says about a man's gift in Matt.19:11¹⁴,12¹⁵? And such a course of teaching might reap its terrible reward in some cases.

We must avoid the teaching of certain in the days of the apostle, and in our own times, whose doctrine he sums up in the terse words – “forbidding to marry.” Death discharges the bond of marriage, leaving the freed person free to marry in the Lord, if he so desires, though the words of Paul in 1 Cor.7:40¹⁶ may have a bearing in some cases. Then as to (1), it seems to us that the correct view of “husband of one wife” is, that prior to conversion a man may have married and divorced his wife and remarried another woman, and there might have been, besides the wife he was living with, one or more women alive who had been his wives.

The following is an extract from “The life and epistles of Paul,” by Conybeare and Howson, page 751: “In the corrupt facility of divorce allowed both by the Greek and Roman law, it was very common for man and wife to separate, and marry other parties, during the life of one another. Thus a man might have three or four living wives; or, rather, women who had all successively been his wives ... We believe it is this kind of successive polygamy, rather than simultaneous polygamy, which is here spoken of as disqualifying for the Presbyterate.” The overseer must be temperate, that is sober, not given to wine, therefore vigilant; sober-minded, that is discreet, sensible, prudent, wise; orderly, decorous, well behaved; given to hospitality, one who loves or is kind

14. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Matt.19.11>

15. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Matt%2019.12>

16. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Cor.7.40>

to strangers; apt to teach, one who is skilful or qualified to teach. The overseer is not to be a brawler, a reviler, as the result of wine-drinking; he is not to be a striker, one apt to strike, a characteristic allied to being a brawler. He is to be gentle, mild, yielding easily; not contentious, not disposed to fight, not quarrelsome; no lover of money, and as a consequence, liberal, generous.

1 Tim.3:4¹⁷,5¹⁸

The household of an overseer should be a pattern of order and his children should be in subjection with gravity or solemnity. If a man fails in the rule of his own house, Paul quite correctly asks how will such a man care for the church of God; if he fails in the lesser sphere of rule, how can he succeed in the greater? The principle of added responsibility being, as the Lord said, "He that is faithful in a very little is faithful also in much" (Lk.16:10¹⁹). It must not be deduced, as we have said before, from what Paul says here, that a single man is not eligible for oversight work because he has no household and no children. It must at the same time be conceded, I think, that, generally speaking, the family man is taught many practical lessons that can be profitably turned to good account in the rule of a church of God.

1 Tim.3:6²⁰,7²¹

17. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Tim.3.4>

18. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Tim%203.5>

19. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Luke.16.10>

20. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Tim.3.6>

21. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Tim%203.7>

A novice is one that is newly planted in a church of God; a church of God is a planted thing (1 Cor.3:6²²). The word translated “puffed up” (Gk. *tupotheis*) comes from the word smoke. It not only signifies being puffed up or inflated, but that pride, which is like smoke that blinds the eyes, blinds one to a proper sense of one’s importance. Such a proud puffed coxcomb would be useless in the position of ruling others. A novice cannot become an overseer lest he fall into the fault or crime of the devil, which was pride (Ezek.28:17²³). The overseer must also have a good testimony from without, that is, without the church of God. “Them that are without” is a phrase which was first used by the Lord (Mk.4:11²⁴) to describe those who were outside the circle of His disciples. It is also used in 1 Cor.5:12²⁵,13²⁶; Col.4:5²⁷; 1 Thess.4:12²⁸, as well as here in 1 Tim.3:7²⁹.

If overseers are to have a good testimony from them that are without, then they must walk in wisdom and honesty toward them. This is what Paul enjoins in Philipians 2:15³⁰, and Peter also says, “Having your behaviour seemly among the Gentiles; that, wherein they speak against you as evil-doers, they may by your good works, which they behold, glorify God in the day of

22. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Cor.3.6>

23. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Ezek.28.17>

24. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Mark.4.11>

25. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Cor.5.12>

26. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Cor%205.13>

27. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Col.4.5>

28. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Thess.4.12>

29. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Tim.3.7>

30. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Phil%202.15>

visitation" (1 Pet.2:12³¹). He who is the accuser of the brethren before God (Rev.12:10³²) will soon fill the mouths of his servants with reproaches against saints whose behaviour is not what it ought to be. Those who fall into the devil's snare, whatever form it may take, may have great trouble getting out, and especially so if such persons should be recognized in the public work of oversight. Falling into the devil's snare may be like the bird with the broken pinion that ne'er soared as high again.

1 Tim.3:8³³,9³⁴

Deacons are mentioned in Philippians 1:1³⁵ with saints and bishops (overseers). What is a deacon and what is an overseer? A deacon is a servant, a waiting man, a messenger. Liddell and Scott say, "Commonly derived from Gk. dia (through) and konis (dust), one who is dusty from running ..., or one who sleeps in dust and ashes." Another opinion is that the word is derived from Gk. diako, to run or hasten. Its application in Scripture is that it signifies a servant or minister. An overseer (Gk. episkopos) literally means one who watches over, a guardian, a superintendent; it is equal to Gk. presbuteros (elder). See Acts 20:17³⁶,28³⁷; 1 Pet.5:1³⁸,2³⁹: Ministry of various kinds, but par-

31. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Pet.2.12>

32. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Rev.12.10>

33. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Tim.3.8>

34. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Tim%203.9>

35. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Phil%201.1>

36. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Acts%2020.17>

37. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Acts%2020.28>

38. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Pet.5.1>

39. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Pet%205.2>

ticularly ministry of the word, is the function of the deacon. Rule, feeding, and caring generally for the flock, is the responsibility of overseers.

Such as are overseers are to be obeyed by the flock (Heb.13:17⁴⁰). Deacons are to be grave, serious, venerable; not double-tongued (Gk. diligos), not speaking one thing and meaning another, not deceitful in words; not given to much wine. See the wise words of king Lemuel's mother to her son (Prov.31:4⁴¹,5⁴²). Deacons are not to be greedy of filthy lucre, that is sordidly greedy of gain; they are to be holding the mystery (hid from many and revealed to some) of the Faith (the revealed will of God for His people in this dispensation) in a pure (clear, unsoiled) conscience.

1 Tim.3:10⁴³

Note the force of the word "also" in connection with the proving of deacons, which shows that the overseers had been proved. Overseers are to be proved by overseers. When proved they are to minister or act as deacons, if they be blameless. By their general ability for the work of ministry deacons show their fitness for the work. The proving requires a time of probation. A man may do carpenter work who would not be described as a carpenter, so also one may do deacon work who is not a deacon. A deacon is one who (might we say?) has served his apprenticeship.

1 Tim.3:11⁴⁴

40. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Heb.13.17>

41. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Prov.31.4>

42. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Prov%2031.5>

43. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Tim.3.10>

There being no word for “wife” in the Greek, as there is no word for “husband,” has led to divided judgement as to whether women here should be wives, that is wives of deacons, or whether they are deaconesses. Why should wives of deacons be mentioned, and a standard of conduct be demanded from them, and the wives of overseers be not referred to? The work of overseers being somewhat more prominent and responsible than that of deacons, the conduct of their wives would be of first importance. I am of the opinion that the women here are female deacons, that is, deaconesses. We have one reference to a deaconess which is of help in the interpretation of this verse. Paul says, in writing to the saints in Rome, “I commend unto you Phoebe our sister, who is a servant (deaconess) of the church that is at Cenchreae.” Her work as a deaconess was not public nor in the public ministry of the word, but within a woman’s sphere of service.

This is explained by Paul in the words, “She herself also hath been a succourer of many, and of mine own self” (Rom.16:1⁴⁵,2⁴⁶). The deaconess is to be grave, serious, and not to be a slanderer (Gk. diabolous – devils). See also Tit.2:3⁴⁷, where the same word “slanderers” is used. They are to be temperate (see verse 2). How much is comprehended in the words “faithful in all things”! The deaconess is one who can be trusted implicitly that the work with which she is entrusted will be carried out in a manner worthy of the work of the Lord. (Would that this could be said about all, both men and women, for, alas,

44. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Tim.3.11>

45. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Rom.16.1>

46. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Rom%2016.2>

47. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Titus.2.3>

it seems to be with some that anything will do for God. What many human masters would not tolerate God seems to have to put up with.)

1 Tim.3:12⁴⁸

Deacons, like overseers, are to be husbands of one wife (see remarks on verse 2, and are, like overseers, to rule well their children and their houses. Having children on the part of a married man is contemplated in a deacon, but having no children cannot be a cause of exclusion from being a deacon.

1 Tim.3:13⁴⁹

Serving well as deacons has its present recompense, for by their service they gain for themselves a good standing or degree. The word means a step. There is an ascent to higher heights in the things of God. Many are content to remain at the bottom of the ladder; they do not give themselves to God's things, as Timothy was exhorted to do (1 Tim.4:15⁵⁰), consequently there is no progress manifest. An eminent servant of Christ used to say, "Many are at the bottom; few are at the top." Those who have served well gain also great boldness or confidence; it literally means freedom of speech in the Faith in Christ Jesus, not faith in Christ Jesus.

1 Tim.3:14⁵¹,15⁵²

48. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Tim.3.12>

49. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Tim.3.13>

50. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Tim.4.15>

51. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Tim.3.14>

52. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Tim%203.15>

“These things” refer to the things of chapters 2 and 3 in regard to prayer, and the proper behaviour of men and women, of overseers and deacons. Paul hoped to come to Timothy sooner than perchance he thought as he wrote the epistle, but if he tarried, what he had written would show Timothy and others what Paul’s (and the Spirit’s) mind was as to proper conduct in that which is the house of God. What was proper behaviour for the church of God in Ephesus was correct behaviour in every other church of God; Paul taught the same things in every church of God (1 Cor.4:17⁵³). The house of God which is the church of the living God is the pillar and ground (or base, not foundation) of the truth.

It is a pillar of witness to the truth of God. Testimony and conduct are ever wedded together. If good conduct goes then testimony will perish. Hence it was that with such public servants as overseers and deacons, Paul went into their behaviour fully and carefully. The thought of the pillar of testimony carries the mind back to Jacob, in Gen.28⁵⁴, when he set up his stone pillow as a pillar and poured oil on the top of it, and said, “This stone, which I have set up for a pillar, shall be God’s house: and of all that Thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto Thee” (Gen.28:11⁵⁵,17⁵⁶,18⁵⁷,22⁵⁸). The tabernacle in the wilderness is called the “tabernacle of the testimony” (Acts 7:44⁵⁹). The house

53. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Cor.4.17>

54. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Gen.28>

55. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Gen.28.11>

56. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Gen%2028.17>

57. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Gen%2028.18>

58. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Gen%2028.22>

of God and the Body of Christ should never be confused and confounded; such distinctions as men and women (i.e. males and females), overseers and deacons, are not in the latter as there are in the former. There are many other distinctions in these widely different things.

1 Tim.3:16⁶⁰

Proper conduct in the house of God is godliness; that piety, or reverential awe, which befits those who are in God's earthly dwelling. How and where shall we learn this? We shall learn it from One who was manifested in the flesh, who is the mystery of godliness. Those who are Christ-like set forth this behaviour that Paul calls for. There has been much discussion as to what is the correct rendering in this verse, whether it should be "God was manifested in the flesh," or, "He who (or who) was manifested in the flesh," whether Paul wrote in Greek: *os* (or *ths*) (an abbreviation for Gk. *theos* – God) or *os* (Gk. *hos* – who). Textual critics differ in their judgement as to which word was written by Paul. One has asked what our spiritual reaction would be if it were read thus: God was manifested in the flesh; God was justified in the Spirit; God was seen of angels; God was preached among the nations; God was believed on in the world; God was received up in glory.

Reading the verse thus, our reaction would be in favour of "who" rather than "God." In this complex sentence "God" or "who" is in the nominative. It must not be concluded that those who favour "who" here are against the Deity of the Lord in doing so. The De-

59. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Acts%207.44>

60. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Tim.3.16>

ity and Eternal Sonship of the Lord are well established in many other passages of the Scriptures. The mystery of godliness is the incarnate Christ, on this there is little or no difference between all true believers.

COMMENTARY ON 1 TIMOTHY

4

1 Tim.4:1¹,2²

The Greek word rendered “expressly” is derived from Gk. rhetor, an orator, and signifies “plainly” or “expressed in words.” How the Spirit spoke is not revealed, and how men, such as Paul, were definitely assured that the Spirit had spoken are among the secret things about which conjecture is vain. “In later times” signifies times later than those when this epistle was written. They do not mean the same as “the last days” of which 2 Tim.3:1³ speaks. Some were to fall away or apostatize from the faith. This means that they would give up the stand that they had taken earlier for the truth as being in that which is the house of God, the pillar and ground of the truth (1 Tim.3:15⁴). We are told how this falling away was to take place. It was to come about by lying and hypocritical men who would be used by seducing spirits to propagate the doctrines of demons. Such evil spirits are the spiritual hosts of wickedness in heavenly places (Eph.6:12⁵) against which the Christian soldier must wage a ceaseless battle. He is provided with armour by his Captain for this warfare.

How do demons operate? They first win men to their side, often for filthy lucre or mercenary gain. The conscience of such per-

1. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Tim.4.1>

2. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Tim%204.2>

3. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/2%20Tim.3.1>

4. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Tim.3.15>

5. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Eph.6.12>

verted men is branded, as one has said, “with the foul marks of their moral crime,” and being thus cauterized is rendered ineffective. In hypocrisy they speak the devil’s lies to the destruction of those that hear them. Alas, the way of Jud.as, whose covetousness led him to the fatal choice of getting easy money, is followed by many still. Christ is being betrayed on all sides, and those only escape who give heed to and hold fast to the word of God as written.

1 Tim.4:3⁶

We have, no doubt, here reference made to the heresies of the Esenes and others who regarded marriage to be contrary to their ideas of the purification of the body; the same ideas prevailed among them on the matter of meats. They failed completely to appreciate the meaning of the Lord’s teaching on meats, in Mk.7:14-23⁷, that it is not what goes into the stomach that defiles, but what comes out of the heart. This matter of eating meats is dealt with in Acts 10 and Rom.14⁸: Marriage, we are told, is honourable (Heb.13:4⁹), but some for the kingdom of heaven’s sake (Matt.19:12¹⁰), or for other reasons, live celibate lives. Satan either leads men into spiritual and moral depravity, or teaches a supposedly higher state of body purification than is taught in the Faith, but he neither can nor will come down foursquare on the doctrine taught by the Lord and His apostles, which is truth, for there is no truth in him. Rome follows the Essene ideas in com-

6. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Tim.4.3>

7. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Mark.7.14-23>

8. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Rom.14>

9. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Heb.13.4>

10. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Matt.19.12>

manding her priests and nuns to live celibate lives, and alas, what moral perversions and fatal retributions have followed this mere human commandment, which is contrary to the constitutions of human beings in general! Rome also commands the abstention from meats at certain seasons. Those that know the truth enjoy the greatest liberty in the matter of eating, for there is nothing unclean of itself (Rom.14:14¹¹).

1 Tim.4:4¹²,5¹³

Of every creature it is said, “God saw that it was good” (Gen.1:25¹⁴). Nothing is to be rejected, if it is received with thanksgiving. It is sanctified to the Christian’s use by the word of God in Mk.7¹⁵, and this is repeated in other passages already referred to. It is sanctified by the prayer of the recipient. This is more than the relationship of man to his Creator, it is that of the believer to his God. In the Levitical code, when God was dealing with Israel after the flesh, certain meats were common and unclean and unfit for the consumption of a holy people, and certain were sanctified by God in the law and were to be thankfully received by Israel.

1 Tim.4:6¹⁶

11. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Rom.14.14>

12. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Tim.4.4>

13. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Tim%204.5>

14. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Gen.1.25>

15. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Mark.7>

16. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Tim.4.6>

“These things” of 1 Tim.3:14¹⁷ are the things of 1 Tim.2:1-3:13¹⁸: “These things” of this verse (1 Tim.4:6¹⁹) are the things of which the Spirit had expressly spoken concerning the apostasy of certain from the truth, from the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints (Jude 1:3²⁰). Timothy in his laying these things before the brethren, the divine institution of marriage, and all that goes with it, and also the matter of meats, things covering so great an area of human existence in this scene, would be a good minister or deacon of Christ Jesus. He would be combating the fast-flowing tide of the heresies of the Essenes and others concerning these things, which submerged and drowned so many in later times. His faithful ministry would reveal that he had been nourished (which means to make firm or solid, and in consequence one who by reason of education and training would not be moved) in the words of the faith and of the good (the word also means beautiful) doctrine which he had closely followed till then. He was no mere camp-follower, one who followed a long way behind.

1 Tim.4:7²¹, 8²², 9²³

How much precious time, a most precious thing for the Christian in this life, is wasted upon profane (from Gk. *belos* – a threshold, what is open to all and is consequently unholy) and

17. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Tim.3.14>

18. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Tim.2.1-3.13>

19. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Tim.4.6>

20. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Jude%201.3>

21. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Tim.4.7>

22. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Tim%204.8>

23. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Tim%204.9>

old wives' fables, things which are silly and absurd, and are often harmful! Such were to be declined, avoided, refused, by Timothy and all like him, but in contrast to the listless and enervating effect that these old wives' fables produced, he was to be a man of firm moral and spiritual fibre by exercising himself unto godliness. Godliness is the reverential awe of the Divine Being which is not natural to man in his fallen state. Such is produced in the believer by the prayerful reading of the Scriptures and the practising of what is read.

Fables feed the natural superstition in the human mind, which is the opposite of godliness. Human beings are often superstitiously afraid of things and persons that they need not fear at all. Some fear priests, statues, images, stocks, stones and wells and relics of paganized Christianity in which there is nothing to fear. Think, too, how much evil is done by novels, those fabulous fabrications, all of them untrue in fact, which often pander to the lower and lustful side of human nature. If novel reading is persisted in, then be sure that godliness like a scared bird will fly out of the window. Godliness is not attained in a day or two. Exercise in the Greek is the word *gumnazo* – gymnastic exercise. Godliness has the promise of the life that now is and of the life to come. Thus the godly man gets the best out of life here and hereafter. We must keep up this exercise of godliness all through life, for the athlete who gives up exercise soon deteriorates and the profit derived from exercise passes like a morning cloud. Bodily exercise is really of small profit compared with the exercise of godliness.

1 Tim.4:10²⁴

24. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Tim.4.10>

The living God is the Saviour or Preserver of all men. Here it is not salvation from sin's penalty but from the effects of sin's awful power. The human race has in it all the potentialities of self-destruction, and it had long perished from off the earth but for the fact that the living God is the Preserver of all men, not simply of believers. Paul and others laboured and strove after that present salvation which is connected with godliness, for God saves the godly from many temptations which drown other men. Indeed the godly have ever been as the salt of the earth (Matt.5:13²⁵), men and women whose presence on earth retarded the world's corruptions. Peter in this connexion asks, "If the righteous is scarcely saved, where shall the ungodly and sinner appear? (1 Pet.4:18²⁶). There is no such thing as the believing sinner being scarcely (Gk. *molis* – with difficulty, hardly) saved from sin's penalty.

In contrast, the believer who works out his own salvation by the power of God working in him (Phil.2:12²⁷,13²⁸) has often a hard task against the flesh, the world and the devil, and often bemoans his ungodly thoughts, though he may appear outwardly a moderately godly person. We all know this labouring and striving, and the nearer to the Lord we seem to get the greater the inward strife seems to become.

1 Tim.4:11²⁹,12³⁰

25. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Matt.5.13>

26. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Pet.4.18>

27. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Phil.2.12>

28. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Phil%202.13>

29. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Tim.4.11>

30. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Tim%204.12>

Here Paul measures preaching with practice. The rule is ever the same as that exhibited in the life of the Lord, in “all that Jesus began both to do and to teach” (Acts 1:1³¹). Doing and teaching should never be divorced. Timothy the teacher was to be a pattern of godly living. Here we see the spectrum of the beautiful life of godliness broken up into its parts through the mind of Paul, revealing its several excellences – in word, manner of life, love, faith, purity. Timothy was to be a model for all to follow. How often Paul refers to his own life as a pattern for saints to imitate! (1 Cor.11:1³², etc.). Youth is no disqualification to gift and godliness.

1 Tim.4:13³³,14³⁴

Until the apostle should come, who would confirm his work, Timothy was to give heed, attend to or give himself to, the public reading of the Scriptures, to public exhortation and teaching of the Old Testament and such other books of the New Testament as were by that time written. He was not to neglect, not to allow to decay through carelessness, the gift that was in him. This was a gift of service answering to the spiritual ability of Timothy for such service. Paul says in 2 Tim.1:6³⁵, “Stir up (into a flame) the gift of God, which is in thee through (Gk. dia – by means of) the laying on of my hands.” Timothy was a young man with God-given natural ability, which was sanctified by the added gifts in grace of the Spirit. Such were seen by others, and through (dia)

31. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Acts%201.1>

32. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Cor.11.1>

33. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Tim.4.13>

34. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Tim%204.14>

35. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/2%20Tim.1.6>

prophecy, and through (dia) the laying on of the apostle's hands, the gift of a fuller sphere of divine service was imparted to him; this was done with (Gk. meta) the laying on of the hands (the fellowship) of the elderhood or presbytery.

It is comely when there is the recognition of God's gift in a man, that he be given the gift of service for which he is divinely fitted. It is as uncomely when a man is seeking to do a work for which he is not fitted. No number of men can supply a gift that God has left out of any man's constitution. The historical account of what Paul alludes to in these verses is given in Acts 16:1-3³⁶: "And he came also to Derbe and to Lystra: and behold, a certain disciple was there, named Timothy, the son of a Jewess which believed; but his father was a Greek. The same was well reported of by the brethren that were at Lystra and Iconium. Him would Paul have to go forth with him."

1 Tim.4:15³⁷,16³⁸

"Be diligent" (the Greek word here means to meditate on, think upon, revolve in the mind): "give thyself wholly to them", that is, literally, "in these things be"; they were to be the business of Timothy's life. The Lord said to His parents, "Wist ye not that I must be in the things of My Father?" (Lk.2:49³⁹, RVM.). If one would make progress in the things of God, one must make them one's lifework. Other things are incidental and accessory to redeemed men's chief business in this world. When other things,

36. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Acts%2016.1-3>

37. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Tim.4.15>

38. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Tim%204.16>

39. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Luke.2.49>

things worldly and material, dominate the believer's life, though no moral misdemeanour is seen, he begins to lose ground, and if that state of things continues, the deterioration in both service and living for God becomes more rapid, till at last the service of God may be given up entirely and the believer loses all the marks of a saint on the way to glory. "Take heed to thyself" comes before, "and to thy teaching." Practice comes before preaching. If the practice is wrong, the preaching should stop till the practice is put right. Paul asks, "Thou therefore that teachest another, teachest thou not thyself?" By continuing in these things, by preaching what he practised, Timothy would save both himself and those that heard him. How profitable is a godly life and a godly minister!

COMMENTARY ON 1 TIMOTHY

5

1 Tim.5:1¹,2²

“Elder” here, as the context shows, means simply an old person, not an elder or overseer. An old man was not to be sharply rebuked, but exhorted as a father, and the younger men were not to be lorded over, but treated as brethren. Likewise, elder women were to be dealt with as mothers and the younger as sisters. Such relationships were to be in all purity, that is, in chastity, modesty, blamelessness.

1 Tim.5:3³,4⁴

Honour those who are really widows, which means that their needs were to be supplied. See the Lord’s teaching in Matt.15:3-6⁵: Here is wholesome instruction for those who are children or grandchildren in regard to their widowed mother or grandmother. It is a shame for children to cast their widowed mother on the care of others. It is a shame for any to do this, but for professing Christians to do this is abominable. Words cannot be too strong to describe such hard-heartedness. Let children think long and soberly of a mother’s love and unwearied care on their behalf before they turn them out for strangers to

1. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Tim.5.1>

2. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Tim%205.2>

3. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Tim.5.3>

4. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Tim%205.4>

5. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Matt.15.3-6>

look after. We repeat Paul's weighty words, "Let them learn first to shew piety to their own family, and to requite their parents." Let us each think of the Lord's care for His mother when He was dying on the cross, and how He left her in the care of the apostle John. It is said that he "took her to his own." There is no "home" in the Lord's words. All that was John's was hers, home, food, clothing, and so forth. Alas, we live in a cruel and heartless age! Sin is proud, selfish and cruel. Care of parents is acceptable in God's sight. Let children remember the first commandment with promise, which is, "Honour thy father and thy mother."

1 Tim.5:5⁶,6⁷,7⁸

Here we have two kinds of widows, the real, sincere, pious widows, and the merry widows, the frivolous and light hearted who live for self-gratification. The one sort live in continuous touch with the throne of God, the other are dead while they live. Such things were to be commanded; it was not a matter of entreaty, for reproach could be brought upon the testimony of the Lord by careless behaviour.

1 Tim.5:8⁹

To provide means, literally, to perceive beforehand, to foresee. It has the same meaning as when Abraham said, "God will see for Himself" (Gen.22:8¹⁰, RVM.). Heb. Jehovah-Jireh means,

6. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Tim.5.5>

7. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Tim%205.6>

8. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Tim%205.7>

9. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Tim.5.8>

10. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Gen.22.8>

“The LORD will see” or provide (Gen.22:14¹¹, RVM.). Pre-vision comes before pro-vision. The head of a Christian household is responsible to foresee the needs of those for whom he is responsible, and to make provision for them up to his capacity so to do. If he wantonly fails in the discharge of his duty he comes under the stricture of the apostle: “He hath denied the Faith, and is worse than an unbeliever.” Let it be noted that this verse comes into the paragraph that deals with the care of widows.

1 Tim.5:9¹²,10¹³

We must, I think, make a difference between ministering to the poor and needy and the enrolment or listing of widows. The poor may require to be cared for at a much earlier age than sixty years, but widows were not to be enrolled for the purpose of being relieved until they were sixty. Then there are other conditions which show that the enrolled widows had been persons of a high standard of Christian conduct. Regarding the condition, “the wife of one man,” see note on 1 Tim.3:2¹⁴: The conditions show that widows were not enrolled, shall we say automatically, when they became sixty. In being cared for by the church they were reaping a little of the fruit of their sowing in past years, when they ministered to the need of others. Verses 4-16 show that if they could be cared for by others, relatives in particular, this should be done so that the church should not be burdened.

1 Tim.5:11¹⁵,12¹⁶

11. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Gen.22.14>

12. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Tim.5.9>

13. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Tim%205.10>

14. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Tim.3.2>

Timothy and the elders with him were to decline enrolling widows younger than sixty. The word rendered “refuse” here is rendered “reject” in connexion with the heretic, in Tit.3:10¹⁷ AV/KJV In the one case it is to refuse enrolment for relief; in the other it is to refuse fellowship to the heretic. The gifts of the church to younger widows, as Paul viewed it, would tend to increase a state of wantonness against Christ. The word rendered “wanton” here is derived from a word which means “to take away the rein,” and means “to revel, to become luxurious or lascivious against”. Paul later recommends the younger widows to marry; there is a Christian propriety in such a matter. Here desiring to marry is the excessive desire born of lasciviousness, which is unbecoming in those who are disciples of Christ. In such a course of conduct by widows, they are guilty or condemned, for they have cast off their first faith, which was so real and sound that it led to chastity of conduct which the Faith requires of the Lord’s disciples. “Their first faith” does not mean, in my opinion, the marriage bond of the first marriage, which was discharged by death.

1 Tim.5:13¹⁸

Here we have a description of women out of control with idle hands and loose tongues. They learn to be idle; what a school of learning to attend! They also go about from house to house, an aimless but harmful life. The original word for “tattler” is derived from a word which means “to boil over or bubble.” Such tattlers or gossipers and busybodies, prying, intermeddling persons, are a

15. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Tim.5.11>

16. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Tim%205.12>

17. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Titus.3.10>

18. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Tim.5.13>

menace to the peace of any community. How seriously the characters of saints suffer at their hands! To some, retailing scandal seems a pleasant occupation. Garbage collecting is poor employment for one on the way to heaven.

1 Tim.5:14¹⁹,15²⁰

There is no conflict between 1 Cor.7:39²¹,40²² and Paul's expressed desire here, that the younger widows marry and bear children. The widow in 1 Cor.7²³, Paul says, "is free to marry whom she will: only in the Lord." But in the matter of happiness, he gave his judgement, that is, that higher happiness which springs from being devoted to the Lord and free from the cares of married people, of which he wrote in 1 Cor.7:34²⁴: "She that is unmarried is careful for the things of the Lord, that she may be holy both in body and in spirit: but she that is married is careful for the things of the world, how she may please her husband." It is in the light of this that Paul says that "she is happier if she abide as she is, after my judgement." This matter of remaining unmarried is one of gift (Matt.19:10²⁵,11²⁶). In view of the fact that some younger widows had given way to carnal desires, and had gone after Satan, and others seemed to be tending in the same direction, Paul could not counsel them in regard to the higher

19. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Tim.5.14>

20. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Tim%205.15>

21. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Cor.7.39>

22. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Cor%207.40>

23. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Cor.7>

24. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Cor.7.34>

25. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Matt.19.10>

26. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Matt%2019.11>

happiness, and he advises that the younger widows should marry, when, of course, opportunity offered, and live the respectable life of a married Christian woman, in bearing children (not seeking to avoid the consequences of the marriage of normally healthy people), ruling the household, and giving no occasion to the adversary for railing.

1 Tim.5:16²⁷

Certain textual critics (the RV takes the same line) delete “man” here. Such as had widows, beyond the relationships indicated in verse 4, that of children or grandchildren, were to relieve them so that the church might relieve such as were widows indeed.

1 Tim.5:17²⁸,18²⁹

Here we have an interesting fact, we have two quotations made by Paul, both of which are called Scripture, the one about the ox from Deut.25:4³⁰, and the other from Lk.10:7³¹: The Gospel according to Luke is divinely inspired Scripture as is the book of Deuteronomy. Peter also classes the writings of Paul among the Scriptures (2 Pet.3:15³²,16³³). Elders are not equal in ability, piety and devotedness. Such as take the lead and do so well are to be counted worthy of double honour. There are those still,

27. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Tim.5.16>

28. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Tim.5.17>

29. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Tim%205.18>

30. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Deut.25.4>

31. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Luke.10.7>

32. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/2%20Pet.3.15>

33. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/2%20Pet%203.16>

who, like Korah and his company of old, would rise up against God-given leaders, and say by their actions what Korah said, “Ye take too much upon you, seeing all the congregation are holy” (Num.16:3³⁴). Good leaders have to be honoured and all leaders obeyed (Heb.13: 17³⁵). It would seem that as there were whole-time ministers of the gospel, who, as they sowed spiritual things, were to be ministered to in carnal things (1 Cor.9:11³⁶), so there were elders who ruled well and laboured in the word and teaching in whole-time service, who were to be cared for by the saints. The same words are used of both, “Thou shalt not muzzle the ox when he treadeth out the corn.” An ox might be muzzled at other times, if, or when, he was not treading out the corn; but when he was at the work of providing food for others he had a God-given right to eat himself.

1 Tim.5:19³⁷

Some think that their individual testimony against another, and perhaps especially against an elder, should be accepted without question, and seem peevish and think that they are regarded as being untruthful if their word is not received and acted upon. The apostle’s command here is no doubt based upon Deut.19:15³⁸: See also Num.35:30³⁹; Matt.18:16⁴⁰; 2 Cor.13:1⁴¹:

34. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Num.16.3>

35. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Heb.13.%2017>

36. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Cor.9.11>

37. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Tim.5.19>

38. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Deut.19.15>

39. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Num.35.30>

40. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Matt.18.16>

41. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/2%20Cor.13.1>

God's ways in judgement are perfect. We each do well to consider the Lord's words in Matt.7:1-5⁴², especially His words about the mote and the beam.

1 Tim.5:20⁴³

Where sin is duly proven it must be dealt with. To cover up the sin of an elder because he is an elder is a sure road to trouble, which may become widespread and the many be defiled (Heb.12:15⁴⁴). Such as sinned had to be convicted on the evidence of witnesses, and had to be reproved or rebuked that the rest of the elders might be in fear, for dealing with wrong has, or should have, a salutary effect on all. "The rest" here are not the rest of the saints in an assembly. Elders are to be dealt with by their peers and before their peers and not before the saints.

1 Tim.5:21⁴⁵,22⁴⁶

Here is a most important charge on the serious matter of divine judgement, which God in the present phase of His kingdom has committed to men on earth, wherein some have to deal with the actions of their fellows. The charge is given before the highest court of judicature – God, Christ Jesus, and the elect angels. Who are the elect angels? Two views may be put forward for consideration: (1) that they are the "good angels as distinguished from the bad," the latter being the angels of the devil

42. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Matt.7.1-5>

43. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Tim.5.20>

44. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Heb.12.15>

45. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Tim.5.21>

46. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Tim%205.22>

(Rev.12:7⁴⁷); (2) that they are certain of the heavenly host who are chosen out for special service in connexion with heavenly worship and government. It seems to me that (2) is the correct view. I would draw the attention of the reader to two scriptures and suggest, without being dogmatic, that they show a class of heavenly beings which are distinct from the innumerable hosts of angels. In Heb.12:23⁴⁸ we have “the church of the firstborn (ones) who are enrolled in heaven.”

This is a distinct company as the Greek of the passage plainly shows, from the innumerable hosts of angels which form the general assembly. It is an unfortunate translation in both the AV/KJV and RV. The error is corrected in *Mr. Darby's translation 1*. Compare with this the inner place around the tabernacle which was occupied by the Levites, who were taken instead of the firstborn sons of Israel who sinned in the matter of the golden calf. See Ex.13:2⁴⁹,15⁵⁰; 32:26-29⁵¹; Num.3:44-51⁵²: It seems clear that the church of firstborn ones are angels called out by God according to His purpose. Church signifies such as are called, and it also implies election. Then in Rev.4⁵³ and Rev.5⁵⁴, we have twenty-four elders; heavenly beings who are distinct from the ten thousand times ten thousand and thousands

47. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Rev.12.7>

48. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Heb.12.23>

49. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Exod.13.2>

50. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Ex%2013.15>

51. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Ex%2032.26-29>

52. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Num.3.44-51>

53. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Rev.4>

54. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Rev.5>

of angels. Twelve is a governmental number, as witness the twelve tribes of Israel and the twelve apostles. Twice twelve is also a governmental number.

These twenty-four elders sit on twenty-four thrones, which show that they have spheres of authority and rule. We learn from Col.1:16⁵⁵; Col.2:10⁵⁶ etc., that all angels are not equal; there are those over others, as is clearly indicated in thrones, principalities, and so forth. Timothy, in the matter of judgement, was to act without prejudice, that is, apart from judging a matter beforehand, before evidence was given by faithful witnesses. The day of Christ will reveal how often brethren have decided a case, for one reason or another, before the time had arrived for judging according to the evidence. Timothy was also to be impartial, that is, without leaning towards anyone and showing favour, without being biased, in his judgements. He was not to lay hands hastily on any one. The whole of a man's conduct over past years needed to be taken into account when he was being considered for some particular responsibility in the service of God. How comely it is when a man is given work for which he is suited! Timothy was also to be careful that he did not involve himself in the wrongdoing of others. His honour would be tarnished by being a partaker in other men's sins. He was to keep himself pure. The original word for "pure" means "to watch over, to be on one's guard against, to take care"; his ways and actions were to be irreproachable.

I Mr. Darby renders the passage: "and to myriads of angels, the universal gathering; and to [the] assembly of the firstborn [who

55. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Col.1.16>

56. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Col.2.10>

are] registered in heaven;” *The Englishman’s Greek New Testament translates somewhat similarly: “and to myriads of angels, [the] universal gathering; and to [the] assembly of [the] firstborn [ones] in [the] heavens registered; ...” – J.M.*

1 Tim.5:23⁵⁷

It may be right to think of Timothy as being a man of weak physique and timid disposition. At the same time we can well understand that the strain of great assembly responsibilities would drain the vital force of his nervous system, and in consequence his stomach and digestion would suffer. He was an abstemious man, a drinker of water, and Paul advised him for medicinal purposes to use a little wine for his stomach’s sake and his frequent weaknesses. Trouble with false teachers, experienced by one who had a highly spiritual mind and a weak body, resulted in the physical weaknesses of Timothy. Any one who has had a measure of such troubles knows how much one’s health may suffer at times. The connexion in which Paul alludes to Timothy’s health is significant.

1 Tim.5:24⁵⁸,25⁵⁹

Some men’s sins are flagrant and open and pass on to judgement before the day of judgement comes; that is, the judgement with which Timothy had to do. On the other hand the sins of others are secret, and only after due inquisition are they discovered. In the one case the notoriety of their wrong-doing precedes them;

57. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Tim.5.23>

58. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Tim.5.24>

59. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Tim%205.25>

in the other their sins follow them, and sin ever follows the wrong-doer; he can never free himself from it. So also is it with good works. Some good works are clearly seen, and some are secret, but the latter cannot remain hidden; they too will be discovered. We may think that our actions will not be revealed. That is impossible. "Every child maketh himself known by his doings, Whether his work be pure, and whether it be right" (Prov.20:11⁶⁰).

60. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Prov.20.11>

COMMENTARY ON 1 TIMOTHY

6

1 Tim.6:1¹,2²

Servants here were bondservants or slaves, slaves under the yoke, and were to honour their unbelieving masters. Christian slaves who had unbelieving masters would no doubt be greater in number than those who had believing masters (Gk. despotes, a master of slaves). Christian slaves by their conduct were not to cause the name of God and the doctrine to be blasphemed. Even household servants were to suffer their wrongs patiently (1 Pet.2:18-23³). Christ was to be their example of patient suffering. Such slaves as had believing masters were not to despise them because they were brethren, but to serve them the rather. Though there is no slavery today, as in that past day, it is still a difficulty where there are Christian masters and servants.

Sometimes such masters may not be the best of masters, and equally the servants do not make the best of servants. Each may make too great claims on the other. It at times presents difficulties where assembly and business relationships are involved. The same difficulties seemed to exist in the apostle's days also. Paul's words here, if heeded, will be found to be helpful. Who are those that partake of the benefit? It seems to be the masters that partake of the benefit of the service of the slaves. A good slave was,

1. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Tim.6.1>

2. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Tim%206.2>

3. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Pet.2.18-23>

no doubt, a sharer in many benefits and good work-people today often reap bountiful rewards.

1 Tim.6:3⁴,4⁵,5⁶

We return in this verse to the purpose for which Paul left Timothy in Ephesus, namely to “charge certain men not to teach a different doctrine” (1 Tim.1:3⁷). The words of the Lord Jesus are the test of sound, healthful doctrine, which issues in a godly life. Any doctrine which does not result in godliness is unhealthy. In contrast, the doctrine of Christ received and acted upon makes men like Christ. Another (Gk. heteros, of a different kind) doctrine results in pride, the person who teaches it is puffed up (Gk. tuphoo, which is derived from tuphos, smoke), knowing nothing, his mind is darkened by his smoky pride and it has a like effect on his hearers. He is one who is doting (Gk. noseo, sick, and has a depraved appetite) about questionings and disputes of words, an argumentative, proud fellow. Think of the list that follows from this state of spiritual sickness: envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings, wrangling of men corrupted in mind and bereft of the truth. Could we have a brood of vipers worse than these? They would drive peace out of any community and poison any communion to its vitals. What is the object of such teachers? What do they hope to gain by it? Paul’s answer is plain – “supposing that godliness is a way of gain.” Their religion was but a gainful occupation. It was the things of earth and not those of

4. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Tim.6.3>

5. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Tim%206.4>

6. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Tim%206.5>

7. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Tim.1.3>

heaven they sought. It was self and not Christ! Theirs was the religion of Jud.as, who carried the bag and stole the Lord's money.

1 Tim.6:6⁸,7⁹,8¹⁰

Godliness, that comely reverential fear of God, coupled with a mind contented with its lot is, says the apostle, great gain or profit. Such a person is one of heaven's noblemen. We brought nothing into the world at birth, neither can we carry anything out at death, though we can, according to the exchange of heaven in the matter of giving on earth, have a treasure laid up for ourselves where there are no thieves to steal what will be ours permanently. Having sustenance and covering we are to be content. Pilgrims should not attempt to carry too heavy loads!

1 Tim.6:9¹¹,10¹²

Paul here is not condemning rich people, but such as desire to be rich, persons who have a craving after riches. Such fall into temptation, tempted to do shady or dishonest things for gain. Often they are caught in a snare and are trapped by the devil and lose their Christian liberty, and are no longer free to serve the Lord, as, perhaps, they once did. They may also fall into many foolish lusts which are hurtful to themselves and perchance to others also. These things sink men into destruction and perdition. The lives of such believers might have been lives of usefulness and

8. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Tim.6.6>

9. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Tim%206.7>

10. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Tim%206.8>

11. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Tim.6.9>

12. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Tim%206.10>

of eternal profit, but they became saved believers with lost lives. The love of money (not money itself) is a root of all kinds of evil. All kinds of sin against God and crimes against humanity are traceable to this vile root, which has spread throughout the whole race of mankind. It seduces men from the Faith, and they pierce themselves through with many sorrows.

1 Tim.6:11¹³

A man's greatness is not in what he has, but in what he is. Nabal of old (1 Sam.25¹⁴) was a great man, because his greatness consisted in having three thousand sheep and a thousand goats (verse 2). But "Nabal (fool) is his name, and folly is with him" (verse 25). The Lord said, "A man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth" (Lk.12:15¹⁵). There are qualities in a Christian man's life that no money can buy, such as those which Paul indicates here, and which are proper to a man who can be called a man of God. Here is a pursuit in life worthy of us all.

1 Tim.6:12¹⁶

The fact that the definite article is before eternal life here does not make it something different in kind from eternal life in Jn 3: 16¹⁷, etc. Life here is something that is set before us to lay hold upon. Eternal life, which is the gift of God to all believers, may

13. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Tim.6.11>

14. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Sam.25>

15. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Luke.12.15>

16. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Tim.6.12>

17. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/John%203.%2016>

be increased in the measure in which we grow spiritually. The Lord said, "I came that they may have life, and may have it abundantly" (Jn 10:10¹⁸). The measure of the life of a babe in Christ is not to be the measure of the life of a young man or a father (1 Jn 2:12-14¹⁹). Paul in Gal.6:8²⁰, writes about reaping eternal life, that is, by sowing to the Spirit we may reap an increase of the eternal life that we already have. A spirit of lifelessness will yield no increase of life, and such as follow this course continue as mere children to be tossed to and fro by the winds of doctrine, the playthings of the devil's stratagems.

The present conflict calls for living, vigorous saints, such as not only have life, but are laying hold of it. Plants that have been planted in the soil are alive, but they never grow and develop the life that they have until they lay hold of the earth in which they are and begin to draw from it the nourishment that they need. We are called to live the eternal life that has been given to us, but, alas, we may have a name to live and yet be dead (Rev.3:1²¹), there being no movement in the soul. Timothy had a vigorous life, for he had confessed a good confession in the sight of many witnesses. Witness-bearing demands that we live the life to which we bear witness. To what purpose is it to speak to others of eternal life, if that life has no manifestation in ourselves?

1 Tim.6:13²²,14²³

18. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/John%2010.10>

19. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20John%202.12-14>

20. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Gal.6.8>

21. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Rev.3.1>

22. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Tim.6.13>

23. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Tim%206.14>

Timothy was charged before God who makes all things to live, who would quicken him to keep, preserve as a sacred trust, God's commandment without spot and irreproachable until the Lord appeared. He was charged also before Christ Jesus, of whom it is said that He witnessed a good confession before Pontius Pilate. Thus we have in God the Source of Life for all obedience and testimony, and the blessed example of the Faithful Witness (Rev.1:5²⁴), who right to Pilate's bar confessed a good confession. The Lord's appearing is His returning to this scene of testimony, not His appearing to His own. This fact is seen in the next verse. 1 Tim.6:15²⁵,16²⁶ "He shall shew"; who is the "He"? It is the Lord Jesus Christ of the previous verse. "Its own times" refers to the day of the Lord's appearing. In that day of the Lord, He will show, make visible, that He is Himself the blessed and only Ruler, the King of all kings and the Lord of all lords. He only, at the time that Paul wrote to Timothy, had immortality, raised in a resurrection body in which He neither will nor can die again.

We also at His coming again, if alive, shall put on immortality, and if we are then amongst the dead in Christ then shall put on incorruption (1 Cor.15:34-54²⁷). The Lord saw no corruption when He lay in the tomb (Acts 13:35-37²⁸). Rome has now proclaimed that Mary, the Lord's mother, went to heaven in bodily form. This is impossible, for notice what Paul says in 1 Cor.15:23²⁹, "Christ the firstfruits; then they that are Christ's,

24. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Rev.1.5>

25. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Tim.6.15>

26. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Tim%206.16>

27. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Cor.15.34-54>

28. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Acts%2013.35-37>

at His coming.” Note the force of “then”, not “then Mary,” but “then they that are Christ’s.” Note, too, what Paul says in 1 Thess.4:16³⁰,17³¹: “The dead in Christ shall rise first: then we that are alive, that are left, shall together with them be caught up in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air. ” The first to rise from the dead after the Lord’s resurrection are the saints of this dispensation, those that are in Christ, at which time the living in Christ shall put on immortality. Let none confuse immortality with eternal life; immortality has to do with the body, not with the soul.

Every believer has already received the gift of eternal life (Jn 3:16³²,36³³, etc.), but believers are mortal, that is, subject to death, as to their bodies. Let none be trapped by those who ask the question about having an immortal soul. This is a confusing of terms, and it is the confusing of terms that has led to so many heresies. Mortal and immortal have to do with the body, not with the soul. Sinners are dead through their trespasses while they are alive in a mortal body, and if they believe in Christ they are made alive with Him (Eph.2:1³⁴,5³⁵) and are saved by grace. At the present time the Man Christ Jesus dwells in light unapproachable, which no mortal man has seen or can see. We shall shortly see Him at His coming, even as He is now, and be like

29. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Cor.15.23>

30. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Thess.4.16>

31. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Thess%204.17>

32. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/John%203.16>

33. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Jn%203.36>

34. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Eph.2.1>

35. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Eph%202.5>

Him (1 Jn 3:2³⁶), and we shall then have bodies like unto His glorious body (Phil.3:21³⁷). To God's Christ, who is both God and Man, be honour and might eternal.

1 Tim.6:17³⁸,18³⁹,19⁴⁰

Here we have Paul's charge to the rich in this present age. First, they are not to be high-minded, an ever-present danger in the case of rich folk. Earthly riches are uncertain and fortune is fickle, hence believers are not to make riches the basis of their hope of security for future contingencies in earth's changing scenes. The living and unchanging God is our security, and He provides richly for our enjoyment and we have His promises which can never fail. The rich are to be rich in good works, liberal in distributing and ready in their fellowship. In so doing they are laying up treasure for themselves, which is a good foundation for the future. In this way they lay hold on what is truly life, which was what Timothy was exhorted to do in verse 12: It was a vain life, the life of such a man as the Lord described in Lk.16:19⁴¹, but alas, many still live this kind of life.

1 Tim.6:20⁴²,21⁴³

36. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20John%203.2>

37. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Phil.3.21>

38. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Tim.6.17>

39. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Tim%206.18>

40. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Tim%206.19>

41. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Luke.16.19>

42. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Tim.6.20>

43. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Tim%206.21>

That which was committed to Timothy was “the deposit.” What was this deposit? Was it (1) the doctrine that he taught? or was it (2) the work which the Lord entrusted to him and to which he was called? It seems to me that it is (2), the work to which he was called. But it should at once be definitely stated, that the work of Timothy and also of Paul could only be accomplished within the compass of the Faith, which Paul in the end of his life claimed to have kept (2 Tim.4:7⁴⁴). If we compare verse 20 here with 2 Tim.1:9⁴⁵,12⁴⁶,14⁴⁷ we shall be helped, for there again he writes to Timothy of the deposit. Paul and Timothy were saved and called, not according to their works, but according to God’s purpose and grace which was given them in Christ Jesus before times eternal. This purpose was manifested by the appearing of Christ Jesus. Paul was appointed a preacher, an apostle and a teacher. He writes in verse 12 of “my deposit,” what the Lord had committed to him, and which, being unable to guard himself, he committed to the Lord to guard for him.

Likewise Timothy was to guard his deposit, not in his own strength, but “through the Holy Spirit, which,” says Paul, “dwelleth in us.” Only by turning away from babblings and oppositions of false knowledge, which was no real knowledge, could Timothy hope to guard his deposit, otherwise he would be overthrown. Some had professed this pseudo-knowledge and had erred from the Faith, and many still err through a false knowl-

44. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/2%20Tim.4.7>

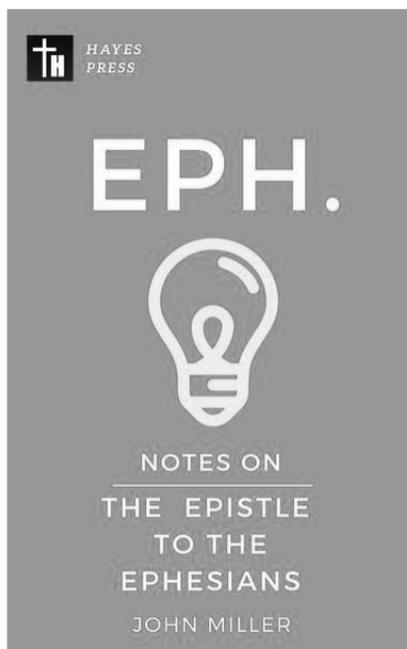
45. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/2%20Tim.1.9>

46. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/2%20Tim%201.12>

47. <https://biblia.com/bible/esv/2%20Tim%201.14>

edge. Paul ends his epistle to Timothy, his true child in faith, with his usual salutation in all his epistles, "Grace be with you."

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