COMMENTARY
on
THE PASTORAL EPISTLES
OF PAUL THE APOSTLE

by
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by

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Not long ago I wrote to a friend:

"I have sailed the sea of Christian service for a long time now, and as my strength begins to wane I sometimes think I see land. But every time again the Lord seems to put His hand on my shoulder and say, 'Sail on for a little while longer, son. Soon enough you'll reach the harbor.'"

This has been particularly true where the writing of this commentary is concerned, for most of it was accomplished while I was beset with physical infirmity. But who knows how much the Lord will yet help us to accomplish?

What was a wearying task, physically, however, was pure delight, spiritually. Having now completed commentaries on the Acts and four of Paul's epistles, I can truly say that the writing of this last, on Paul's three Pastoral Epistles, has proved the most blessed experience of all.

Frankly, I had not realized the extent to which these epistles abound with exciting dispensational lessons, while at the same time providing so much encouragement to godly living.

And now, as this book goes to press, it is our prayer that these studies, which have brought so much light and blessing to the writer's heart, may do the same for the reader. And may God in His grace help us all to use this light and blessing in our witness to others - for His glory.

-CORNELIUS R. STAM

Chicago, Illinois
January 10, 1983
INTRODUCTION

TO THE PASTORAL EPISTLES

"LABORERS TOGETHER WITH GOD"

In order to gain the best possible understanding of the Pastoral Epistles, we will do well to consider first the personalities and characters of the pastors involved: Timothy and Titus. And since they were so different from each other we begin with the following question:

What type of Christian personality, do you suppose, can God best use in His service? Your type? My type? The bold, outspoken type? The reserved, cautious type?

The answer is: the type that most sincerely desires to be used of God, for the area of Christian service is so wide that there is need for many and varied personalities. Only we must sincerely desire to be used in whatever way He wishes to use us.

When our Lord was on earth "He called unto Him His disciples; and of them He chose twelve, whom also He named apostles" (Luke 6:13). This is most instructive, for a disciple is a follower; an apostle is "one sent." A disciple listens; an apostle speaks. A disciple learns; an apostle teaches. Thus our Lord called His disciples to Him and of them He chose twelve whom He appointed apostles.

The declarations of the Old Testament prophets usually began with the words: "Thus saith the Lord," but at the beginning of the whole long line of the prophets there was a young lad, saying to the Lord: "Speak; for thy servant heareth" (I Sam. 3:10).

The lesson is clear. In Christian service there is no getting to the top in ten easy lessons. Those who aspire to reach the top in the shortest possible period of time may, like Diotrephes, merely "love to have the pre-eminence."

To be truly used of the Lord, then, it is necessary to bear in mind that we must patiently listen before we can speak authoritatively; we must learn before we can teach; we must follow before we can be sent; we must humbly say, "Speak, for Thy servant heareth" before we can confidently say, "Thus saith the Lord."

Yet, even those who sincerely seek to learn and to have the Holy Spirit mold their lives do not all develop in the same way. Sometimes the Holy Spirit associates almost opposite personalities in the service of Christ. There could
hardly be a better illustration of this than that found in the cases of Timothy and Titus, two of Paul's "companions in labor," who were closer to the Apostle than most, and to both of whom he addressed personal letters.

From the two letters to Timothy it is evident that he was cultured and refined; a student of the Scriptures from his youth (II Tim. 3:15). Evidently he was delicate in health (I Tim. 5:23), and possessing, as was natural from his upbringing (II Tim. 1:5), much compassion and tenderness. We get an insight into his personality and character as the Apostle writes to him about his childhood, his mother, his grandmother, his tears, and prescribes medicine for his "often infirmities."

At times the Apostle seems concerned lest Timothy withdraw from the battle, for he urges him not to be ashamed or afraid, but to be a "partaker of the afflictions of the gospel," enduring "hardness" as "a good soldier of Jesus Christ" (II Tim. 1:8; 2:3).

But Timothy did not withdraw. He served with Paul for many years "as a son with the father" (Phil. 2:22). There was between them that warmth and openness that goes so far to produce growth in the "son" and the "father's" confidence in him. Particularly well did Timothy serve Paul, and Christ, in such places as Ephesus, where his natural abilities could be so well used. Indeed it is significant in the light of Paul's warnings to the Ephesian elders about the incipient apostasy there (Acts 20:28-31), that it was Timothy whom he urged to "abide still at Ephesus" as their pastor.

Titus was a very different character. This is evident from Paul's letter to him, in which he addresses him as a general in the army might address his lieutenant; directing him to "set in order the things that are wanting," to "exhort and convince the gainsayers," to "rebuke sharply" those who live in sin and to "reject" wilful heretics (See Tit. 1:5, 9, 11, 13; 3:10).

It was Titus whom Paul and Barnabas took with them as a test case, when Paul went to Jerusalem to defend Gentile freedom from circumcision and the Law. They knew he would not waver. Indeed, later Paul was able to rejoice that "they didn't compel Titus to be circumcised either!" (See Gal. 2:3).

Furthermore, it was Titus whom Paul sent to Corinth to exhort the saints there to be more generous in their Christian giving - a task he had assumed also on a previous occasion (II Cor. 8:6, 7). Timothy would hardly have been the appropriate choice for this undertaking.

An interesting comparison between Timothy and Titus is to be found in what Paul has to say with regard to visits they both made to Corinth.
Timothy was head and shoulders above the Corinthian believers, both morally and spiritually, yet when Paul sent him there he had to write a letter in advance, exhorting the Corinthians, "Now if Timotheus come, see that he may be with you without fear; for he worketh the work of the Lord as I also do. Let no man therefore despise him." (I Cor. 16:10,11).

But later, when Titus had been to Corinth and had returned, Paul wrote to the Corinthians: "And his inward affection is more abundant toward you, whilst he remembereth the obedience of you all, how with fear and trembling ye received him" (II Cor. 7:15).

As Timothy, then, was the man for Ephesus, Titus was the man for Crete, whose inhabitants were described as "always liars, evil beasts, slow bellies [lazy gluttons]" (Tit. 1:12).

Titus was clearly the more robust character, yet it must not be supposed that he was coarse or crude by nature, for on the contrary he exhibited a remarkable combination of enthusiasm, discretion and integrity.

While Timothy was sent to Corinth to help the believers doctrinally, Titus was sent to deal with them in more practical matters, including the delicate matter of their delinquency in giving (II Cor. 8:6).

Thus both these men of God, widely as their personalities differed, found great usefulness in the service of Christ. In both of them, too, Paul found support that he greatly needed in his labors and sufferings for the Lord Jesus.

We have already seen how Timothy served with Paul "as a son with the father," but Paul also needed a friend like Titus and, in a way, looked up to him. The apostle's anxiety and mental depression at Troas and in Macedonia was partly due to his apprehensions regarding the church at Corinth, but it was also partly due to his disappointment at failing to find Titus, whose buoyant faith had so often refreshed and encouraged him.

Indeed, even though at Troas "a door was opened" to the Apostle\(^1\) "to preach Christ's gospel" he failed to take advantage of the opportunity, not first of all because he had not heard from Corinth, but "because I found not Titus my brother" (II Cor. 2:13), and regarding his "troubled" condition in Macedonia, he says that "God, who comforteth those who are cast down," comforted him, first "by the coming of Titus," and then by the news he brought from Corinth (II Cor. 7:5-7).

Finally, both Timothy and Titus were the kind to whom Paul could entrust responsibility in the work of the Lord. They were reliable, and the Apostle's

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\(^1\) By the Lord. See II Cor. 2:12.
confidence in both of them shines forth not only in his letters to them, but also in his writings to others about them.

Timothy, he says, is "my workfellow" (Rom. 16:21). "He worketh the work of the Lord as I also do" (I Cor. 16:10). He is "my beloved son, and faithful in the Lord, who shall bring you into remembrance of my ways, which be in Christ" (I Cor. 4:17). He will "establish you and ... comfort you concerning your faith" (I Thes. 3:2).

As to Titus, Paul writes to the Corinthians, "You are as much on his heart as on mine" for "God," he says, has "put the same earnest care into the heart of Titus for you" (II Cor. 8:16). "He is my partner and fellowhelper" (II Cor. 8:23). "Did Titus make a gain of you? Walked we not in the same spirit? Walked we not in the same steps?" (II Cor. 12:18).

Nor is all this in any way neutralized by the Apostle's earnest charges to both Timothy and Titus to continue faithful in doctrine and conduct.

Before bringing this Introduction to a close two important facts should be carefully observed:

1. According to Eph. 4:11 the pastor is one of God's special gifts to the Church, and Timothy (in I Tim. 6:11) is called "thou ... man of God," a title which the Apostle surely did not use promiscuously. Some suppose that all believers are equally called to this ministry, but this is not so. God gave "some" pastors, not all pastors. The pastor's office, therefore, is a sacred trust and should be discharged with scrupulous care in the light of the Word, rightly divided, as we shall see in dealing with the text of the Pastoral Epistles.

2. It does not follow from this, however, that these epistles should be reserved for the study of pastors alone. All cannot be pastors, but all should learn from the pastor, and all should strive to achieve the qualities that are so strictly required of him in Scripture and which, hopefully, he possesses. This, indeed is how many "laymen" become pastors.

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2 I.e., as he dealt with you about financial matters.
INTRODUCTION

to

THE EPISTLES OF PAUL TO TIMOTHY

TIMOTHY'S BACKGROUND

H. L. Hastings tells of a group of British archeologists who, years ago, came upon a huge marble slab, evidently very ancient, high atop a mountain where no one would be able to move it - or be apt to find it!

Experts were called upon to decipher the hieroglyphics which covered the monument. They found them to be a declaration by an ancient ruler as to his great exploits, and an explanation that he had used these means of recording his deeds so as to secure to himself everlasting fame.

The trouble was that no one could find any historical account of a king who bore this name or who had accomplished the glorious exploits recorded on the monument! Thus the archeologists had found, engraved in marble, a glowing self-tribute to - whom? It might as well have been to nobody!

By striking contrast, young Timothy has been well known by Christian people all over the world for nearly two thousand years! During all this time, without interruption, he has been read about, written about, preached about and used as an example of consistent Christian service and conduct.

Yet, have you ever read of one great deed done by Timothy? Have you ever read of one great sermon from his lips, one brilliant book or letter from his pen, one great exploit of any kind? No, you hardly know more than that he was a young preacher, a friend of Paul, who had been taught the Scriptures from his early youth by his grandmother, Lois, and his mother, Eunice (II Tim. 1:5), so that Paul could now write to him:

". . . from a child thou hast known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus" (II Tim. 3:15).

So much for Timothy's background. Now let us consider

TIMOTHY AND THE PASTORATE

Pleading with Israel, His unfaithful wife, to return to Him again, Jehovah promised her:
"And I will give you pastors according to mine heart, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding" (Jer. 3:15).

This passage, as clearly as any in the whole Word of God, gives us an insight into the quality of the true pastor. He is a Shepherd whose chief aim it is to feed his flock and build them up in the faith.

Our blessed Lord was such a Pastor. At His first sermon, at Nazareth's synagogue, He began immediately to teach the people, showing them how to "rightly divide" and understand the Word of God. Finding Isa. 61:1,2 in the scroll that had been handed to Him, He read: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He hath anointed me ... to preach the acceptable year of the Lord," and right there, in the middle of the verse, He closed the book, and said, "This day is this Scripture fulfilled in your ears" (Luke 4:16-21).

Had He continued reading He could not, of course, have said this, for Isaiah's prophecy goes on to speak of 'the day of vengeance of our God," which had not - thank God, has not yet - come to pass.³

At another time, as He prayed in a lonely spot, a great multitude of men, women and children gathered to await His reappearance.

And Jesus, when He came out, saw much people, and was moved with compassion toward them, because they were as sheep not having a shepherd: and He began to TEACH them many things" (Mark 6:34).

The religious leaders of His day, rather than helping the people to understand the Word of God, had "taken away the key of knowledge" (Luke 11:52), and had left them spiritually starved. They desperately needed to be fed with knowledge and understanding of the truth.

This is the chief responsibility of the pastor. And thus it is that Paul urged the elders at the very church where Timothy was now the leading pastor,

"Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock over which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to FEED the Church of God, which He hath purchased with His own blood" (Acts 20:28).

Having said this, and having added a warning to the effect that this would not be easy, he reassured them with a blessing that should encourage every true man of God:

"And now, brethren, I commend you to God ³

³ For a fuller discussion of this subject see the author's booklet, Now Is The Time.
"And to the Word

"The Word of His grace,

"Which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified" (Ver. 32).

An important secret this. The pastor cannot adequately feed the flock if he is not himself "built up" spiritually through the study of the Word. He cannot dispense the treasures of the inexhaustible mine of Scripture if he has not himself diligently dug for those treasures.

This is the trouble with many pastors of our day. They do not meditate on that blessed Book as they should, much less study with a view to "rightly dividing" it. Hence they are unable to "feed ... the flock" with a healthful, nourishing diet from the Word.

TIMOTHY'S AGE

Before proceeding to the text of Paul's First Epistle to Timothy a word should be said about Timothy's age at this time.

Both the epistles to Timothy (written perhaps a year or less apart), have much to say about youth - especially Timothy's youth.

If Paul first took Timothy with him when he was about 17 or 18 years of age, he was now in his 30s. This explains why, on the one hand the Apostle presses great responsibilities upon him, yet at the same time cautions him with regard to all the pitfalls, temptations and blunders that have wrecked the ministries of so many young and promising pastors.

Even though now in his thirties, he is warned to "flee [as a quarry being hunted down by the hounds] youthful lusts" (II Tim. 2:22). And, perhaps, the Apostle's most basic warning in this area is that of I Tim. 4:12:

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

The impatient young pastor who, some years ago, said to the author: "I've decided not to let them despise my youth," wholly misunderstood this important exhortation.

The Apostle did not mean that Timothy should "throw his weight around" and "show them who's boss," as many a pastor has done to his own defeat. Rather
the meaning is, that Timothy should be careful not to say or do anything that might cause others to despise his youth: "Let no man despise thy youth, but be thou an example...." That God should inspire Paul to write this to even so godly and faithful a pastor as Timothy, and already in his thirties, shows how important the admonition is and how seriously young pastors should take it to heart.

It is interesting to note the gist of the many exhortations found in Paul's letters to young Timothy which relate to Christian character and conduct. We list a few in addition to those cited above. They breathe both caution and encouragement:

"War a good warfare" (I Tim. 1:18).

"Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine" (4:16).

"Fight the good fight of [the] faith" (6:12).

"Keep (guard) that which is committed to thy trust" (6:20).

"God hath not given us the spirit of fear . . . . Be not thou therefore ashamed . . . but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel" (II Tim. 1:7,8).

"That good thing which was committed unto thee keep [guard] by the Holy Ghost which dwelleth in us" (1:14).

"Be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus" (2:1).

"Endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ (2:3).

"All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution" (3:12).

"Evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse . . . but continue thou" (3:13,14).

"Preach the Word; be instant in season, out of season: reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine" (4:2).

"For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine . . . and they shall turn away their ears from the truth. . . . But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry" (4:3-5).

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4 I.e., on your toes.
After all this, how touching it must have been to Timothy, who knew Paul so well, to read his closing words about himself, written as the executioner’s ax was about to fall:

"For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand.

"I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith:

"Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown ..." (II Tim. 4:6-8).

As these words must have touched and inspired Timothy, let them touch and inspire all of us who have been entrusted with "the work of the ministry," whether in pastorates or elsewhere.

When we reach the end of our earthly ministry it will mean little to be able to say: "I was applauded on every hand. Thousands came to hear me preach and I built our congregation up from a handful of people to a great organization." But it will mean much indeed to be able to utter those precious words that flowed from the Apostle's heart and pen on the eve of his execution.

As we study the pastoral epistles one thing becomes unmistakably clear. The humblest pastor - one who has had little opportunity for formal education and may have few natural endowments, may take heart in the knowledge that the key to true effectiveness in the service of Christ is true spirituality. And the greatest pastor, well educated and liberally endowed with natural talents, had better remember it, "for God resisteth the proud," but "giveth grace to the humble" (I Pet. 5:5), nor does the size of a ministry necessarily reflect God's blessing upon it.

The truly spiritual pastor will give much time to the study of the Word and will be earnest and instant in prayer. He will not be self-satisfied or high-minded, but will walk humbly, begging God every day to make him the pastor he ought to be.

The truly spiritual pastor will be "crucified to the world" and will "flee youthful lusts." He will truly love lost souls and the members of the congregation God has entrusted to him, and will toil unremittingly for their good. He will conduct himself as a servant of God and will trust God to use him for His glory. How can such a pastor be a total failure?

**TIME OF WRITING**

II Timothy was evidently written while Paul was in prison at Rome, and shortly before his martyrdom (See II Tim. 4:6-13).
As to I Timothy, however, it would be unprofitable to take up several pages discussing a problem concerning which the record appears to give no conclusive evidence.

The speculations as to when Paul wrote this letter are so many and so widely divergent that the author will merely state his personal conclusion, based on the meager light available on the subject.

Assuming that Paul suffered two imprisonments,\(^5\) his First Epistle to Timothy was probably written during the interval between or shortly after he was imprisoned for the second time. There seems to be no clear indication where Paul was at the time: Troas? Macedonia? In prison at Rome? It is believed by many, however, that the two epistles to Timothy were written perhaps a year or so apart.

\(^5\) See the Appendix to the author’s Acts, Dispensationally Considered, Vol. IV.
Chapter I - I Timothy 1:1-4

THE SALUTATION

TIMOTHY'S GOD-GIVEN MINISTRY

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

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

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

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

- I Tim. 1:1-4

These first few verses of I Timothy throw open the door to the epistle as a whole and shed abundant light upon its nature, purpose and significance.

In Ver. 1 the Apostle introduces himself as "an apostle of Jesus Christ by the commandment of God......" In four of his letters to the churches he writes as "an apostle by the will of God," but here it is "by the commandment of God."

Perhaps he does this to emphasize upon Timothy's mind the fact that he is no longer an "assistant pastor," as it were. He, like Paul, has been invested with authority - though doubtless not to the same degree - which he is commissioned to assume. As Paul charges him (Ver. 18), he is to charge his hearers (Ver. 3) to be sound in the faith, and is to rebuke those who are not, that together they might "stand" their ground against "the wiles of the devil."

In this same opening verse the Apostle refers to God as "our Savior," and to the Lord Jesus Christ as "our hope." Thus at the very outset he affirms the character of the present dispensation, in which God is manifested as our Savior - through the Lord Jesus Christ.

"Being justified freely by His grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus" (Rom. 3:24).

Not that God did not save men in other dispensations, but both the significance and the emphasis were different. In Old Testament times it was His holiness, His righteousness, His power, His majesty, along with His love, that were most
strongly emphasized. Moreover, salvation in those days was more often spoken of as deliverance from temporal adversity or calamity (due to sin) than from sin itself and God's just and eternal punishment upon it.

But the message we are commissioned to proclaim today is salvation from sin and its dire results - and that by grace through faith in Christ alone. This message Satan ever opposes bitterly.

The term "God our Savior" is used again in 2:1-4, and with the same connotation. Here we are instructed to pray for "all men," especially for those in authority, that peace may prevail (Vers. 1,2),

"For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior,

"Who will have all men to be saved and to come unto the knowledge of the truth" (Vers. 3,4).

Indeed, once again it is found in 4:10,11, where the Apostle says:

". . . we trust in the living God, who is the Savior of all men, specially of those that believe.

"These things command and teach."

There is no promise, however, as to how long God's present attitude toward man will continue. "Now is the accepted time.... Now is the day of salvation" (II Cor. 6:2), says the Apostle. For the present every day is a day of grace, for the predicted judgment will surely come. And while in this dispensation God assumes the position of a Savior, in the next He will be a Judge - also through Christ (John 5:22,27).

For the present, then, God's attitude toward sinful and rebellious man is revealed to be that of grace. Indeed, Paul calls this present dispensation "the dispensation of the grace of God" (Eph. 3:2), explaining in II Cor. 5:18-21 that God has "reconciled us to Himself by Jesus Christ" (Ver. 18), since

"God was in Christ [i.e., at Calvary], reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them.... For He both made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him."

Thus God has already atoned for man's hateful murder of His Son - has atoned for it Himself - "by the death of His Son" (Rom. 5:10). Wondrous grace!
Thus while that death my sin displays
In all its blackest hue;
Such is the mystery of grace:
It seals my pardon too!"

- John Newton

And thus it is that, in a world at enmity with Himself,

". . . God ... hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation . . . . and hath committed\(^6\) unto us the word of reconciliation" (II Cor. 5:18,19).

What an honor to be commissioned to proclaim to a world at enmity with God, the blessed amnesty, the offer of reconciliation through Christ's death at Calvary! Thus the Apostle continues:

"Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God.

"For He hath made Him to be sin for us ... that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him" (Vers. 20,21).

Thus God has already reconciled the world to Himself as far as His attitude toward them is concerned. He has “slain the enmity” by the cross (Eph. 2:16), and sees nothing left to be angry about – if man will but now accept the offer of reconciliation.

And what has been the response to “the kindness and love of God our Savior toward man”? One would suppose that he would dance with glee and weep with gratitude over mercy so great and grace so free. One would think that the newspapers would carry headlines every day such as: “ANOTHER DAY OF GRACE” and “JUDGMENT STILL DELAYED,” but not so. Instead he goes on in his troubles and his revelry, not caring that God the Son died in agony and disgrace for his sins.

In complete reconciliation mutual good feelings must be achieved but, behold, man – man who committed the heinous crime, who caused the enmity, now holds a grudge against God! (Rom. 8:7; Col. 1:21). What unfathomable grace, then, that God, so basely wronged, so deeply aggrieved, should still “beseech” men through us to be reconciled, and that Christ, so foully betrayed and so brutally crucified, should send us “in His stead” to “pray” them, to beg them: “Be ye reconciled to God” (II Cor. 5:20)! This is grace indeed, lavishly proffered by “God our Savior,” through the Lord Jesus Christ, “our hope.” The proclamation of

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\(^6\) There is a vast difference between this, our God-given commission, and that which our Lord gave to the eleven before His ascension to heaven, erroneously called “The Great Commission.” See the author's book, *Our Great Commission, What Is It?*
this boundless and forgiving love is the great commission entrusted, first to Paul, and now to us – ambassadors on enemy territory.

“MY OWN SON”

It is evident from Acts 16:1-3 that Timothy had already been saved when Paul expressed an interest in taking him along with him in his ministry, for there we learn that by this time he was already “well reported of” by brethren in two cities. However, from the introductions to both of Paul’s letters to Timothy, it appears that it was Paul who had led him to the Lord, evidently during his previous visit to the same area, when the Apostle had been so brutally dragged out of the city of Lystra and stoned (Acts 14:1-19).

We gather this from the fact that in calling Timothy his "son in the faith" he uses the word teknon, "born one," and prefaces this term with the word gneesios, "true," here rendered "own." This appears to make it evident that Timothy was indeed Paul's true son, his own son, in the faith.

In his salutation the Apostle wishes Timothy "Grace, mercy, and peace, from God our Father and Jesus Christ our Lord" (Ver. 2). The burden of Paul's great message to the church - and to the world, was "grace be to you and peace," as we learn from his epistles to the churches. Here, however, the word "mercy" is added. Can this be because in his love for his spiritual son he was concerned about the many times he would need mercy, mercy in times of dire trouble, yes, and mercy when he should fail his ever-faithful Lord. Thanks be to "God our Savior" that He has compassion upon us not only in our adversities but even in our failures.

God, in grace, had given Paul many spiritual children, and the Apostle held them in special affection. To the Corinthian believers he writes:

"For though ye have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet have ye not many fathers; for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel.

"Wherefore I beseech you, be ye followers of me" (I Cor. 4:15,16).

But of all the precious children Paul had begotten in the faith, Timothy was undoubtedly closest to his heart, for he mentions him in the majority of his epistles, sometimes as a co-writer.

Before leaving Paul's salutation and going into the actual text of the First Epistle to Timothy, some observations should be made with regard to the local church, especially since this subject so directly affects all three of the pastoral epistles.
THE ANATOMY OF THE LOCAL CHURCH

The epistles of Paul do not reveal the existence of any synod, presbytery, council or other form of human organization exercising control over local congregations.

Under God, Paul established individual and independent churches, each local church viewed as a self-governing body, under Christ, the true Head of the Church.

An aggregation of local churches, in Paul's epistles, is never looked upon as "a Church," much less as "the Church," but simply as "churches." Each local church chose its own officers (I Tim. 3), exercised its own discipline (I Cor. 5:12-6:2), and none were accountable to any higher ecclesiastical body.

THE ORGANIZATION OF THE LOCAL CHURCH

Some, however, have held that since the Church of Christ is a living organism rather than an organization, local churches should not be established as organizations.

Some of these object to what they call "one man ministry," i.e., the pastorate. In their worship gatherings no one is scheduled to speak. Rather all wait silently for the Holy Spirit to "lead" some brother to rise and address the company.

The problem with this is that the one thus "led" is too often one who is not exactly "slow to speak," and may even be one who merely desires to be heard. Certainly there is no guarantee that the one who brought the message at any given service was indeed the Spirit's choice.

Is not this fact in itself an indication that some kind of organization is needed in the local church? And, indeed, does not the very fact that the true Church is a living organism indicate to us that the local church should be organized? What is more highly organized than a living body? The eye does all the seeing, the ear all the hearing, the nose all the smelling, etc.

But why, it may be asked, cannot the local church simply meet together as a living organism with Christ its only Head? Our reply: Because the local church is not the true Church. The true Church is indeed a living organism with a position in the heavenlies. But the local church may well include even some unbelievers, for the local church is merely a segment of the professing Church, and it should learn from what the Scriptures say about the true Church that organization is indispensable to proper functioning.
The analogy of the body and its members in I Cor. 12 is no argument against organization in the local church, but rather concerns the attitudes of believers toward each other because we all belong to the true Church, "which is His Body."

"For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one Body …" (Ver. 13).

The Plymouth Brethren and kindred groups, with all their desires and aspirations to be Spirit-led, have no firm assurance that their form of worship secures His leading. Moreover, with all their objections to organization, it is a simple fact that they themselves are organized.

The members of the assembly do not wait for the Spirit to lead someone to open the doors of their place of meeting. Someone must be assigned to do this. They do not wait for the Holy Spirit to lead someone to take care of the finances. A treasurer must be chosen to bear this responsibility. They do not wait for the Spirit to lead someone to record their decisions. A secretary is needed for this. Yes, and with most "brethren" assemblies this writer has known, each has had its leading elder who more or less took charge! "Doth not even nature itself teach you?"

Thus, in spite of themselves, the "brethren" are organized, albeit sometimes poorly organized.

Very clearly God has ordained elective and/or appointive offices for the local church - thus organization and rank. We know that over the bishops, or overseers, in the local churches, Paul was wont to ordain one of their number as their head (See Acts 20:17 and cf I Tim. 1:3). And he instructed Timothy and Titus, two of these, as to the election or appointment of other bishops and deacons.

Appropriately God has not been specific as to all the details of church polity, for in various cultures ideas of acceptable governmental organization vary greatly. For example, the word cheirotonesantes, rendered "ordained" in Acts 14:23, means "to extend the hand"; if upward, evidently to vote; if outward, to appoint.

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7 The author will always thank God for the fellowship he has enjoyed with these dear people, many of whom wish to be called simply "brethren."

8 Sometimes also called "elders" (See Tit. 1:5,7).
The apostle indicates that both the bishops and the deacons occupy official positions, but he does not say whether by election or by appointment by a superior. Indeed, the fact that Titus was instructed to "ordain elders in every city" (Tit. 1:5) clearly indicates that more than mere age was required for the office of elder. All bishops were elders, but not all elders were bishops.

But how did Timothy and Titus "ordain" bishops and elders, by election or by appointment? We do not know, but actually it matters little, for even if it was by personal appointment, does anyone suppose that either of these pastors would have arbitrarily appointed men to these offices, without first ascertaining who had gained the affection and respect of the members of the congregation? How could one be an effective overseer who did not have the people's confidence?

Granted, there have been unworthy elders and deacons, for the local churches on earth are at best made up of far-from-perfect believers. But with Scriptural organization the ministries of the church are at least not "left up for grabs," as we say, so that one person might take charge of a service and preach, merely on his own assumption that he is being led by the Holy Spirit.

It should be noted with regard to deacons that while they have been well called "the servants of the church," they were also the servants, or assistants, to the bishops, the overseers, who were obviously "over" them. Indeed, an Englishman's Greek Concordance will reveal that the word diakonos, whether rendered minister, servant or deacon in the English, consistently refers to one who carries out the directions of another.

PAUL'S OWN EXAMPLE

Finally, a good example of the proper recognition of organization - and of rank - in the local church is found in the record of Paul's visit to the great council at Jerusalem, as found in Acts 15 and Galatians 2.

The great Apostle, though sent to Jerusalem both by God (Gal. 2:2) and by the church at Antioch (Acts 15:2), did not simply appear at the Jerusalem council and forthwith argue his case against the bondage of Gentile believers to circumcision and the Law. Rather it took at least three separate meetings to accomplish the purpose of his visit.

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9 KJV uses the word "office" in both cases (3:1,10).
10 An "elder" in this case, was not merely an older person, but an older person who, because of his Christian character and conduct, had been "ordained" to this position. The elders here spoken of were the bishops (See Tit. 1:5,7).
11 The question whether the believers in the church at Jerusalem at that time belonged to the Body of Christ is beside the point here. The Body of Christ is the Church of the present dispensation (Eph. 1:22,23; 3:1-11), but God has always had His Church (Gr., ekklesia), His "called out" people (See Acts 7:38; Matt. 18:17).
First the Apostle had a private preliminary conference with those who were "of reputation," lest by any means his effort should prove to be in vain (Gal. 2:2).

Then, when certain of the believing Pharisees "rose up" to object (whether at a meeting of the council or not we do not know) that Gentile believers must subject themselves to circumcision and the Law, "the apostles and elders [not the whole church] came together for to consider this matter" (Acts 15:5,6).

It was at this meeting that there was "much disputing" (Acts 15:7) and that Paul "gave place by subjection, no not for an hour" that "the truth of the gospel [his gospel, Gal. 2:2] might continue with" the Gentile believers (Ver. 5).12

The results we all know. When the leaders "saw" and perceived" the validity of Paul's message and ministry, a "decision" was reached and announced by - James, legalistic James! (Acts 15:19), to the effect that the Gentiles should not henceforth be "troubled" by efforts to bring them under the Law. Hereupon, says Paul:

James, Cephas [Peter], and John ... gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship, that we should go to the heathen [the Gentiles], and they unto the Circumcision [the Jews]" (Gal. 2:9).

It was a great victory for Paul and for the truth as the three top leaders of the Jerusalem church shook hands with Paul and Barnabas in a solemn, public agreement that Paul should now be recognized as the apostle to the nations, themselves agreeing henceforth to confine their ministry to the nation Israel. Under the powerful persuasion of the Holy Spirit, these men had loosed themselves from the so-called "Great Commission," under which they had at first been sent to all nations, and what they "loosed on earth" was unquestionably "loosed in heaven" (Matt. 18:18). It was another evidence that with Israel's rejection of the ascended Christ the earthly establishment of the kingdom was now to be held in abeyance.

This decision by the council led in turn to still another meeting, this time of "the apostles and elders with the whole church" (Acts 15:22), since without their ratification the action of the leaders would bear little weight.

At this meeting the action of the apostles and elders was evidently explained to them and ratified by them, and it was agreed to send letters of confirmation to the believers at Antioch, Syria and Cilicia by the hands of trusted brethren who would further corroborate Paul's oral report to the Gentile believers.

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12 Paul had taken Titus, a Gentile, with him as a test case (Gal. 2:1-3).
All this gives evidence that there was great respect for organization and rank, not only among the Judaean believers, but also on Paul's part.

But what of Paul's reference to the very highest leaders at the council as "those who seemed to be somewhat"? Does this not negate what we have been saying? By no means. Evidently he spoke thus only because James had usurped Peter's Christ-appointed position as the leader among the twelve apostles and had presided over the discussions, even announcing the council's decision as his own! (Acts 15:19). But this actually enhances the wonder of God's overruling grace at the council. It was astonishing that James, who had usurped Peter's position, and Peter and John who had allowed it, all should take part in the public recognition of Paul as the apostle to the Gentiles, and the ambassador of grace!

THE CONDITION OF THE Ephesian CHURCH AT THAT TIME

Almost immediately in the salutation we have a statement that helps to solve the question as to whether the Apostle Paul suffered one imprisonment at Rome, or two. That statement is found in Ver. 3:

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

For several reasons the above could not have taken place on Paul's last journey to Jerusalem - and ultimately to Rome - when he had stopped at Miletus to address the Ephesian elders.

1. Timothy had not been ministering at Ephesus at that time, but had been travelling with Paul (Acts 20:4). Nor is there any indication that Timothy was one of the elders, much less the leading elder, at the Miletus gathering. How then could Paul have asked him to "abide still" at Ephesus at that time?

2. Paul had not "departed into Macedonia" at that time, but had gone right on to Jerusalem, from whence he was taken to Caesarea and thence to Rome.

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13 Who was not even one of the Twelve.
14 Here Gal. 2:11-14 should be carefully studied.
16 The words "abide still" in KJV are evidently a correct translation, for Lord A. C. Hervey (in The Pulpit Commentary) and others, are careful to object to the RV rendering "tarry," arguing that "the exact sense of prosmeinai is 'to stay on,' or, as in AV, 'to abide still.' The word [prosmeinai] tells us that Timothy was already at Ephesus when he received the request from St. Paul. . . ." (Pulpit Commentary at I Tim. 1:3).
3. As to the false doctrine referred to in Ver. 3, Paul had predicted its appearance in his address to the Ephesian elders (Acts 20:28-32), but this very prediction indicates that evidently it was still undeveloped at that time. But by the time I Timothy was written it was substantially developed. Indeed it appears from both epistles to Timothy that he had by now been subjected to much pressure from the heretics at Ephesus and needed considerable exhortation to remain steadfast in the battle for the truth.

From all this it seems clear that in I Tim. 1:3 Paul does not refer to the time of his meeting with the Ephesian elders, after which he had gone straight to Jerusalem and to prison, but that he must have been released from prison, visiting Ephesus - and Macedonia, again.

Evidently, then, Paul had been in Ephesus with Timothy (Ver. 3) after his arrival from Rome, and had urged Timothy to continue on in his ministry there, himself going on into Macedonia (Ver. 3), possibly to Philippi as he had hoped (Phil. 2:24).

There are, in the Pastoral Epistles a considerable number of further evidences which have convinced this writer that Paul was imprisoned at Rome twice, with a period of liberty between. We will discuss these as we come to them.¹⁷

**TIMOTHY'S MINISTRY AT EPHESUS**

Paul had predicted that "after my departing" serious heresy would assail the Ephesian church, both from without and from within (Acts 20:29,30). Indeed, for a period of three years he had not ceased to "warn" them, "night and day, with tears" (Ver. 31) as to the dangers of departure from the truth.

Despite all Paul's earnest warnings, however, his prediction had come to pass. Heresy and false doctrine were now widespread at Ephesus and the churches of Asia. Thus the continuing plea: "As I besought" (Ver. 3)...... "so do" (Ver. 4). He would have Timothy to "stay on" still longer to "fight the good fight of the faith."

Apostasy always begins with "a little leaven" which, if not quickly purged out, will soon spread and take control. The author has witnessed this both in the modernism of the earlier part of this century and in the neo-evangelicalism of the latter part.

Hence Ver. 4 and the rest of the Pastoral Epistles warn repeatedly - and in direct connection with combating false doctrine - against arguing about what is not vital. Even a casual reading reveals the frequency of the Apostle's warnings to "refuse," and "avoid" speculative reasonings and discussions about trivialities

¹⁷ The entire subject is given in-depth consideration in our Appendix to Acts, Dispensationally Considered (Vol. IV, Pp. 230-237).
not compatible with solid truth and doctrine. The following is a partial list of these unproductive trivialities:

"Fables and endless genealogies" (I Tim. 1:4), "vain jangling" (1:6), "Profane and old wives' fables" (4:7), "questions and strifes of words" (6:4), "Profane and vain babblings" (6:20), "strife about words" (II Tim. 2:14), "profane and vain babblings" (2:16), "foolish and unlearned questions" (2:23), "Jewish fables and commandments of men" (Tit. 1:14), "foolish questions, and genealogies, and contentions, and strivings about the law" (Tit. 3:9).

And what does the discussion of these trivial considerations produce: collectively they produce "questions" (I Tim. 1:4), "envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings, perverse disputings" (6:45), "no profit, but ... the subverting of the hearers" (II Tim. 2:14), "more ungodliness" (2:16), "strifes" (2:23), "they are unprofitable and vain" (Tit. 3:9).

It was a study of this aspect of Paul's exhortations to Timothy and Titus that led this author, as a young pastor, to make it his unceasing prayer: "Lord, help me to avoid speculations and to keep my messages vital."

**NO OTHER DOCTRINE**

Not dreaming that the dispensation of grace would be extended for 1900 years, but expecting that the Lord would come for His own during his lifetime,\(^\text{18}\) the Apostle instructs Timothy as to how he should conduct himself in "the last days." But God did know that the dispensation of grace would be thus extended. He had planned it so. Indeed, He had inspired Paul to write to Timothy and has since incorporated these letters into the Holy Bible, so that Paul's words to Timothy have now become God's Word to us, meant especially to help us to stand true to Him amid the apostasy of the closing days of the dispensation of grace.

By the words "no other doctrine," the Apostle, of course, means no other than that which he had taught them. This is emphasized in I Tim. 6:3-5, where he closes this first epistle to Timothy by saying:

"*If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ*\(^\text{19}\) . . . from such withdraw thyself."*

With all the confused thinking about the Ten Commandments and the Sermon on the Mount after the turn of the century, it was little wonder that modernism swept so many off their feet with its teachings about Jesus of Nazareth, the Man of Galilee, following in His footsteps, social betterment, political reform, etc. At

\(^{18}\) See I Cor. 15:51; Phil. 3:20; I Thes. 1:9,10; Tit. 2:13, and note how he includes himself in each case.

\(^{19}\) Cf. II Cor. 13:3
that time multitudes were so taken up with the social gospel, so eager to help make the world a better place to live in, that they did not even notice or believe that the modernists denied the very fundamentals of the Christian faith.

But the new evangelicalism of our day is still more dangerous. It is big. It is well financed. It is popular. It is subtle. Perhaps its gravest danger lies in the fact that while claiming to be "conservative," it minimizes the importance of the fundamentals of the faith and the danger of apostatizing from them, scoffing at separation from the world, joining with apostate unbelievers to "win souls for Christ," urging dialogue rather than a faithful testimony, preferring the idea of the adequacy of the Bible, rather than its inerrancy, etc.

Thus the words of Paul to Timothy, and God's inspired Word to us: "Charge some that they teach no other doctrine."

In Ver. 4 the word fables, Gr., muthois, is simply our word stories, and few realize how great a place these have assumed in the Church today. In our book, No Other Doctrine, we wrote as follows with regard to this matter:

"In considering the passage above [I Tim. 1:4], this writer examined the contents of the popular Christian periodicals coming to his desk and was astonished to find how many of them were largely filled with fiction and with stories written to promote projects and viewpoints. The Apostle says about such stories that they raise questions but do not answer them, for stories really prove nothing. This is also true of many Christian films.

"Many Christian novels have indeed exerted a savory influence upon their readers - when they have been founded upon Scriptural truths and principles. Obviously, however, an author can make his novel "prove" exactly what he wishes it to prove, for the novel involves us in a world of make-believe. Thus a novel can be dangerous to Christian faith and practice....

"The promotional story holds, perhaps an even more prominent place in our popular Christian magazines. No one can object to factual reports of what God has wrought, but too many of these stories are nothing more than promotional efforts. One has the feeling that they are not strictly true to fact; that whatever favors the writer's objective is related in glowing and exaggerated terms, while other pertinent information is omitted. In a word, many of these 'success stories' are so successful that thoughtful readers question their validity and are apt to lay

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20 50 years ago one would walk into a Christian bookstore to be surrounded with Bible commentaries and reference books, but today one is rather surrounded with almost everything but Bible commentaries. These occupy at best a secondary place, while the emphasis is given to novels, written mostly by women, plus success stories and some books that should have no place at all in Christian bookstores.

21 Especially women and young people.
them aside without even finishing them. Less discerning readers, however, are often deeply moved by them." *(No Other Doctrine, Pp. 70,71).*

Such "stories" have led many into false doctrines - doctrines into which they would never have been led if, rather, they had been taught the Word, rightly divided.

As to the "endless genealogies" of Ver. 4, it must be remembered that the church at Ephesus was begun at a synagogue and that the Jews had always attached much importance to their genealogies. But neither the relating of stories, nor laborious inquiries into genealogies served to produce "godly edifying" or building up in godliness, thus the Apostle urged Timothy to *charge* his hearers not to "give heed" to them. It should be noted here, however, that the word rendered "edifying" in KJV is the Greek *oikonomia,* or "dispensation," in the *Received Text* (Stephens, 1550), from which KJV was basically translated. Certainly it is a fact that "fables and endless genealogies" would detract from the proclamation of "God's dispensation," i.e., the dispensation of grace, which He had ushered in through Paul.
Chapter II - I Timothy 1:5-11

THE OBJECT OF PAUL’S CHARGE

AND THE PURPOSE OF THE LAW

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

"From which some having swerved have turned aside unto vain jangling:

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

- I Timothy 1:5-7

THE NEED FOR PAUL’S CHARGE TO TIMOTHY

The Apostle does not refer, in Ver. 5, to any or all of the Ten Commandments, but rather to his "charge" or commandment, to "teach no other doctrine." The word is not the same as that used in Ver. 7 and elsewhere for the Law. It is rather that used in Ver. 3, rendered "charge," a different word altogether.

The "end," or object, of this charge, he says, "is charity [love] out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned." What was Paul's message of grace, but a proclamation of "[God's] great love wherewith He loved us"? And how this "great love" should beget love in our hearts! But some had "swerved" from this love, flowing "from a pure heart, and a good conscience, and sincere faith," and had "turned aside" to "vain jangling," an old term for fruitless discussion. Feeling themselves to be quite intellectual, they "desired" to be teachers of the Law, but God's estimate of them was, "They don't know what they are talking about and don't understand the things they so dogmatically affirm."

The Apostle's prediction in Acts 20:29,30 had already come true. These legalizers, it seems, dogged Paul's steps wherever he went. As soon as he departed from a given city they would move in and try to bring his followers back under the Law, and some would be taken up with their legalistic teachings.

Evidently Titus was encountering the same problem at Crete, for in Tit. 1:9-11 the Apostle writes to him with regard to the responsibilities of the elders that, among other things, the elder should continue:

It is true that "love is the fulfilling of the [Mosaic] Law" (Rom. 13:10), but the Law does not produce love.
"Holding fast the faithful Word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers,

"For there are many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers, specially they of the circumcision:

"Whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre's sake."

But the idle talk of those who desired a reputation for profound learning had nothing in common with the sound, constructive teaching of grace by which the Apostle had helped so many. Certainly the Law never produced the virtues referred to in Ver. 5. Only God's grace can do this (Tit. 2:11,12).

THE PURPOSE OF THE LAW

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

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

"For whoremongers, for them that defile themselves with mankind, for menstealers, for liars, for perjured persons, and if there be any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine.

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

- I Timothy 1:8-11

The above should surely confirm Paul's protests elsewhere against those who declared that he had repudiated the Law, or that he was in some way opposed to it. This, however, is what many people conclude when a teacher of the Word proclaims the unadulterated gospel of the grace of God. In such cases some are quick to say, "He doesn't believe in the Law."

"Not so," says the Apostle, for "the Law is good if a man use it lawfully," i.e., legitimately.

"Knowing [or recognizing] this, that the law is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient . . ." (Ver. 9).
And with this he presents a list of those to whom the Law does apply - and they are all lawbreakers.

This argument should be clear enough to any thoughtful person. A loving mother needs no law to compel her to care for her child. An honest businessman needs no law to compel him to pay his bills. The very function of the law is to convict and condemn the criminal, the violator of the law. If everyone spontaneously did what was right, there would be no need for law.

"Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them that are under the law, that every mouth may be stopped and all the world may become guilty before God."

"... for by the law is the knowledge of sin" (Rom. 3:19,20).

The Law was given to convict and condemn the sinner and to show him his need of a Savior, but those who are saved are not under the Law, for God has declared them righteous in Christ who died for their sins. Indeed, in this same passage in Romans the Apostle goes on to say by divine inspiration:

"BUT NOW the righteousness of God without the law is manifested ...."

Further, in Vers. 24,26 he declares that believers stand righteous before God,

"Being justified freely by His grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus."

"[We] declare I say, AT THIS TIME, His righteousness for the remission of sins, that He [God] might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus."

This was "the glorious gospel of the blessed God"23 which had been committed to Paul's trust (Ver. 11). And glorious indeed was the good news that Calvary, so far from being our Lord's undoing, was His greatest victory; that there the "righteousness of God" was revealed as our Lord paid the just penalty for our sins (Rom. 1:17; 3:26), that there the Law was crucified and taken out of the way for us (Col. 2:14), that there Satan and all his hosts were utterly and "openly" defeated (Col. 2:15), that our Lord was no longer to be thought of as an unfortunate victim, but as the mighty Victor over all His foes - and ours.

This glorious good news, this news of the glory of God, if you please, was that from which some of the "would be" teachers at Ephesus had "swerved," stirring

23 Or "the gospel [good news] of the glory of the blessed God," as seems the more natural reading of the Received Text (Cf. II Cor. 4:6).
up "idle discussions" about "speculative questions" related to the Law of Moses. How refreshing, then, to read on and listen to Paul's personal testimony as to what the infinite grace of God had done for and through him!
Chapter III - I Timothy 1:12 -17

THE SIGNIFICANCE
OF THE CONVERSION OF SAUL

GRACE ABOUNDING TO THE CHIEF OF SINNERS

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

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

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

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

"Howbeit, for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might show forth all longsuffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on Him to life everlasting.

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

- I Timothy 1:12-17

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE CONVERSION
OF SAUL OF TARSUS

In the Word of God the conversion of Saul of Tarsus is given a most prominent place. It is more fully described and more often referred to in the Scriptures than any other conversion, or indeed, than any one personal experience outside of the crucifixion and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The major part of three separate chapters in Acts are taken up with this account, and it forms the main subject of two out of Paul's five recorded discourses (Acts 22,26). So conscious was the Apostle himself of the importance of his conversion in connection with the gospel of the grace of God, that he refers to it over and over again in his epistles.
There is no testimony to the riches of God's grace, nor the power of the cross, nor the reality of personal salvation which equals that of the conversion of Saul of Tarsus.

Little wonder, for even a casual examination of the record of his bitter rebellion against Christ explains why. Consider the following examples from this record:

Acts 8:3: "As for Saul, he made havock of the church, entering into every house, and holing [dragging] men and women, committed them to prison."

Acts 9:1,2: "And Saul, yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went unto the high priest and desired of him letters to Damascus, to the synagogues, that if he found any of this way, whether they were men or women, he might bring them bound unto Jerusalem."

Acts 9:13,14: "Lord, I have heard by many of this man, how much evil he hath done to Thy saints at Jerusalem: and here he hath authority from the chief priests to bind all that call on Thy name."

Acts 9:21: "Is not this he that destroyed them which called on this name in Jerusalem?"

Acts 22:4: "And I persecuted this way unto the death, binding and delivering into prisons both men and women."

Acts 22:19: "I imprisoned and beat in every synagogue them that believed on Thee."

Acts 26:10, 11: "And many of the saints did I shut up in prison ... and when they were put to death, I gave my voice [vote] against them. "And I punished them oft in every synagogue, and compelled them to blaspheme; and being exceedingly mad against them I persecuted them even unto strange cities."

To Luke's record, above, should be added Paul's own testimony to the Galatians and the Corinthians:

Gal. 1:13: ". . . beyond measure I persecuted the church of God and wasted it [laid it waste]."

I Cor. 15:9, 10: "For I am the least of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God,
"But by the grace of God I am what I am........."

All this alone would sufficiently explain why Paul calls himself the chief of sinners, and why he says here in I Timothy 1:

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

"Who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious... (Vers. 12,13).

The word "counted," here, is the same famous word of imputation which the Apostle uses so often in his letter to the Romans. Saul had been anything but faithful to his God, His Messiah, or his nation, but God had saved him by grace and now counted him worthy, appointing him to fulfil a very sacred trust. And with this went the divine enabling. Paul, now fully realizing his own weakness and wickedness, found the grace and help he needed in the Christ he had once hated and persecuted. He never forgave himself for the bloody stain on his past and never ceased to wonder at God's grace in saving and using him. Indeed, he refers to this again and again in his epistles, and most particularly in the passage we are now considering.

THE LOST SIGNIFICANCE
OF SAUL'S CONVERSION

How often have we been reminded of the purpose of our Lord's coming into this world by a quotation of that famous and precious 15th verse of I Timothy 1:

"This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners...."

A "saying," of course, is a statement or expression significant enough to bear frequent repetition. We may say, "They had a saying in Luther's day," or "They have a saying in England," i.e., something frequently repeated because it bears frequent repetition.

A "faithful saying," we take it, is one upon which we may safely rely or act; one that has consistently proved dependable.

Thus the Apostle here calls Timothy's attention to a statement of sufficient significance to repeat over and over again in his preaching and his personal witness for Christ. This "saying" is as "faithful" today as it was in Paul's day and as "worthy of all acceptation," thus it should still be repeatedly called to the attention of the lost.
But the exquisite significance of this passage has been lost to most people because it has not been quoted in its entirety, for the Apostle declares here that "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, OF WHOM I AM CHIEF."

THE CHIEF OF SINNERS

But was Paul actually the chief of sinners? John Bunyan implied that this term better described himself when he wrote his biography and titled it, *Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners*, and many since Paul have felt the same way.

The question must be asked, however, whether Paul wrote thus to Timothy out of mere modesty, or whether this passage, like the rest of Scripture, is God-inspired. We who believe in the divine inspiration of the Scriptures, of course, take the latter position.

But this is not the only reason why we believe that Paul *was* the chief of sinners. Altogether our reasons might be listed thus:

1. He wrote by inspiration of the Holy Spirit. Paul's word to Timothy is also God's Word to us.

2. All that is written about his bitter hostility toward Christ indicates that in a nation and a world at enmity against Christ, he was their chief.

3. He goes on, in I Tim. 1:16, to explain why God saved him, the chief of sinners.

4. This whole passage, from Vers. 12-16, and especially Ver. 15, is built upon the premise that he was the chief of sinners.

Some have excused Paul for his past life, on the ground that he persecuted our Lord's followers "ignorantly in unbelief." But this ignorance was no excuse. He was well versed in the Scriptures. He, of all men, could and should have known that Jesus was the Christ, but he did not wish to know. He had convinced himself otherwise.

God pitied him, to be sure - as we might pity one who destroys himself by his obstinacy. Indeed, the very word "mercy," in this context (Ver. 13), implies guilt. It is said that when a mother pleaded with Napoleon for mercy for her condemned son, Napoleon replied: "He does not deserve mercy," whereupon the woman responded, "But sire, would it be mercy if he deserved it?"

But *why* did God save His bitterest enemy on earth, the chief of sinners? Why did He show "grace ... exceeding abundant" to him?
The answer to this question becomes clear as the noon-day as we go on to read further:

"Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might show forth all longsuffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on Him to life everlasting" (Ver. 16).

Paul, it should be noted, was not a repentant sinner at the time of his conversion. Rather he was "yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord." His salvation, then, was an exhibition of the "exceeding abundant" grace of God.

The word "first," Gr., protos, in Ver. 16, has an evident relation to the word "hereafter" in the same verse and, in-deed, he calls his conversion "a pattern to them which hereafter should believe on [Christ] to life everlasting."

In using the word "pattern" he does not refer, of course, to the circumstances which attended his conversion, but to the conversion itself by "grace ... exceeding abundant," to the "mercy" and "longsuffering" shown to him.

In this he was indeed a "pattern," for the words "exceeding abundant," in Ver. 14, appear also in a historical passage which he himself later penned to the Romans. Historically, 11 where sin abounded, grace did much more abound" (Rom. 5:20).

I Tim. 1:15 and its immediate context, then, confirm the fact that our Lord Jesus Christ indeed "came into the world to save sinners," even the chief of sinners," - and that Paul was the living demonstration of this fact! They prove that this is indeed "a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation," and that since the chief of sinners is now in heaven with Christ, no sinner need despair.

Sing it o'er and o'er again;
Christ receiveth sinful men.
Make the message clear and plain:
Christ receiveth sinful men.

-James McGranahan

But there is more, for while the Greek word protos, rendered "first" in Ver. 16, is the same as that rendered "chief" in Ver. 15, and thus bears the idea of foremost, or leading, it is also the common word for first in order, and indeed, 24 The terms are identical in the Greek.
Paul was the first person to whom the Lord had showed such amazing grace -- and in such a dramatic way.

Thus this passage provides strong evidence that the present dispensation of grace, and the Body of Christ, began with Paul - at his conversion. Our Lord had had a full complement of twelve apostles. Matthias had taken the place of Judas, and they had all been "filled with the Holy Spirit." But the message of the twelve had been rejected and Stephen had been stoned. Israel had sent a message to heaven, saying, "We will not have this man to reign over us" (See Luke 19:14). It was then that God raised up another apostle, an act which in itself indicated that He was ushering in a new dispensation.25

We repeat, however, that this was the beginning of the present dispensation and of the Body of Christ, for the program for the Body, like that of Israel of old, was only gradually made known through the Apostle by divine revelation (Acts 26:16; II Cor. 12:1).

And what a fitting representative was Paul of Jews and Gentiles "reconciled ... unto God in one body by the cross" (Eph. 2:16)! He was both a Hebrew and a Roman-by birth! And he of all men was a former enemy of God, now reconciled by grace!

How appropriate, in the light of all the above, is the Apostle's doxology evidently uttered with the love and grace of the rejected King in mind:

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

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25 See the author's When Did the Present Dispensation Begin? for further light on this subject.
Chapter IV - I Timothy 1:18-2:7

SOUND DOCTRINE
AND THE SALVATION OF THE LOST

A GOOD WARFARE vs. SHIPWRECK

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

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

"Of whom are Hymenaeus and Alexander; whom I have delivered unto Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme."

- I Timothy 1:18-20

It is essentially with regard to soundness in faith and conscience that Paul charges Timothy. A troubled conscience will at the least deprive one of the power of the Spirit in his ministry. And disregard of the conscience is apt to lead to shipwreck concerning the faith. The importance of keeping the conscience clear before God is evidenced by the fact that Paul, in his epistles, refers to the conscience no less than 26 times and sometimes discusses it at length.

The ministry is no profession that a man may choose because he savors living in the public eye, or enjoys a bit of authority or prestige. It is rather a solemn responsibility to be discharged with the utmost fidelity. If a man is not truly called of God to this ministry, or if he lacks an understanding of God's message and program for the present dispensation, he should stay out of the pulpit, for God will surely hold him accountable for what he has taught his hearers (II Tim. 2:15, cf. I Cor. 3:12-15).

The phrase, "according to the prophecies which went before on thee," deserves our careful attention. Most commentaries have substituted the word "concerning" for the word "on" here, but we feel it should be left as it is. Timothy was expected to be true to his charge since many brethren, in their prophecies, had sent him forth with sincere hopes, prayers and predictions. They had placed much reliance on him. As it might be expressed in the secular world, "they had much 'riding' on him." Thus the word "on," Gr., epi (a superimposition) is appropriate.

26 Textus Receptus contains the definite article here.

27 The temporary gift of prophecy was still in force during Paul's early ministry.
The gift of prophecy has since been "done away" (I Cor. 13:8), but even so it often happens that elder brethren will take note of a promising young Christian and say, "This is a true man of God. He will be greatly used in the ministry," etc. But how disappointing when, in a few years, the young pastor fails and lets such men down or betrays their trust. Indeed, it is evident from the words, "that thou by them mightest war a good warfare," that the Apostle felt that in times of discouragement and temptation the remembrance of the expectations of these older brethren should encourage Timothy in the fight.

Perhaps the reader has noticed how often in Paul's epistles, and especially in these pastoral epistles, we come upon words like "war," "fight," "conflict," "armor," "weapons," etc. This indicates that the Christian life and ministry are more than a sort of social adventure; rather they are a battle. We pity those who suppose that Christianity is nothing more than a pleasure to be enjoyed. Certainly the Scriptural beliefs of those who consider it thus are worth little, for they never stand up and fight for them. Rather than "contend for the faith," they lightly allow false teachers to lead men into error. Nor do they seem to realize that when the truth is proclaimed in power Satan will oppose it and that they are called upon to stand up and defend it as "good soldiers of Jesus Christ." It cannot be said of them that they "war a good warfare," and at the close of life they will not be able to say with Paul, "I have fought a good light."

Obviously Christians should not wage warfare over personal matters, however, but only over the truth of God, for the Apostle, as we have seen, continues with the words, "holding faith and a good conscience," warning Timothy that some "concerning [the] faith have made shipwreck" (Ver. 19).

Concerning Hymenaeus and Alexander, who had thus made shipwreck," the Apostle says, "I have delivered [them] unto Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme" (cf., I Cor. 5:5). He does not, we believe, refer here to some supernatural judgment, but merely to the fact that he had given them up to Satan. They would now have to "learn the hard way" not to take the truth of God lightly.

A RANSOM FOR ALL

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

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

"For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior;
"Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.

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

"Who gave Himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time,

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

- 1 Timothy 2:1-7

The subject we are about to discuss here is of paramount importance, not only theologically, but also dispensationally, for it concerns the particular message which our Lord in glory committed to the Apostle Paul – and to us – for the present dispensation of grace.

**PRAYER FOR THE UNSAVED**

Probably one of our most significant shortcomings as Christians is our failure to pray – at least to pray as we ought – for the unsaved.

It has been objected that since God does not intend to save all, and since we do not know whom He has elected to be saved, it would be inappropriate of us to pray for the unsaved. Yet in the above passage we are urged to offer prayer, in its various forms, for "all men."

Interpretations of this exhortation aside, is it not a fact that most Christians fail to pray for the salvation of the lost, *not* because of some theological conviction, but through sheer indifference? The simple truth is that with most of us the verities of heaven and hell, salvation and perdition - and the condition of our fellowman relative to these, are not felt keenly enough.

**PRAYER FOR OUR RULERS**

There is one class of men which the Apostle particularly singles out as subjects for our prayers. These are "kings and all that are in authority" (Ver. 2). Why is this? He gives us the answer himself. Read it carefully:

". . . that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty."
"FOR THIS IS GOOD AND ACCEPTABLE IN THE SIGHT OF GOD OUR SAVIOR,\(^{28}\)

"WHO WILL HAVE ALL MEN TO BE SAVED, AND TO COME UNTO THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE TRUTH" (Vers. 2-4).

In times of revolution and war the cause of Christ generally suffers, for men's minds are preoccupied and they have little time or inclination to listen to the gospel. Thus we should pray for those in authority, however wicked or godless they may be. In Paul's day almost all of those in authority were pagans and enemies of the gospel, thus the exhortation to pray for those in authority applies at least equally to us.

It is true that Ver. 1 does not specifically state that we should pray for the salvation of lost rulers, but this is certainly implied, for the basic purpose of our prayers for them is that we might have peace and quiet, "for this is good and acceptable to God our Savior, who will have all men to be saved."

The civil authorities wield great power for good or for evil. They are liable to great temptations, but can also do much to promote general godliness. Thus if even one of them is genuinely saved, or even becomes God-fearing, think how much good will have been accomplished. But even if they remain wicked and godless, God can cause them, providentially, to favor such legislation or to take such executive action as will advance the cause of Christ. Let us never forget that "the king's heart is in the hand of the Lord, as the rivers of water: He turneth it whithersoever He will" (Prov. 21:1).

Certainly the passage we are considering clearly implies that the true Church of Christ is not an agitator. She may stand her ground on moral and spiritual issues, and raise her voice against sin, but she does not scream for her rights. She understands that while indeed "in the world," she is not "of the world." Such passages as the one we have here considered should assure the rulers of this world that true Christians are for them in the truest sense of the word.

Many of us have failed to pray for our rulers as we should. Some otherwise faithful Christians complain and even rebel against those in authority, but utterly fail to pray for them. Can this be pleasing to God? Indeed, if we fail in this are not we largely to blame when ill-advised or unjust laws are adopted and enforced?

**DOES GOD LOVE ALL MEN? DID CHRIST DIE FOR ALL?**

\(^{28}\) Cf 1:1 and our notes in previous chapter.
Those who read I Tim. 2:1-7 just as it is, and accept just what it says, can scarcely come to any other conclusion than that God desires the salvation of all and that Christ gave Himself a ransom for all, for that is just how it reads, that is just what it says. This proposition proves the more explicitly correct as we consider that the word rendered "will" in Ver. 4 (Gr. thelei), does not refer to God's determinate purpose, but to His desire. The same thought is expressed negatively in 11 Pet. 3:9, where we are told that God is "not willing that any should perish." Indeed, in Ezek. 33:11 God swears to this:

"Say unto them, As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live. Turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel?"

But here all sorts of questions are raised - and attempts are sometimes made to interpret the plainest passages of Scripture to mean what they do not say.

The Universalist argues, "If it is God's desire that all should be saved, can He not accomplish this? Can He not do what He wishes?" The simple answer is that God certainly does not always do what He wishes, and especially not where to do so would violate His own holy standards. He has no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but as a Judge He must do what is right. God does not always do what He wishes; He always does what is right.

Those who believe in "limited atonement," on the other hand, interpret the passage in a way that surely seems like an attempt to explain it away. Most of them contend that the term "all men," of Ver. 4, refers only to the elect. But how can this be in the light of Vers. 1, 2? Are we to pray for the elect alone? How do we know whom God has elected and whom He has not? And certainly we do not have the foreknowledge upon which this election is based.

But others who hold to "limited atonement" argue that the "all men" of Ver. 4 and the "all" of Ver. 6 really mean "all without distinction." This interpretation must have originated with some theologian! It is obviously incorrect. Neither the author's Webster's Unabridged Dictionary nor his Oxford University Dictionary carry this definition. There is an obsolete word, alkin, used many years ago, which is an obvious contraction of "all kinds," but the word all in itself cannot and does not mean all kinds. Indeed, it can refer to all kinds only when qualified by words such as kind or manner.

If the reader should hear someone say from the pulpit, "I believe that all men will be saved," would he not rightly conclude that the speaker was a Universalist? And suppose that after the service the reader should approach the man who said this, with the comment, "You believe in Universal Reconciliation do you not?" And suppose the man should reply, "No, I meant that I believe that
all kinds of men will be saved." Would not our reader have good reason to say, "You didn’t say that. Everybody believes that all kinds of men will be saved."

If God merely meant to say in Vers. 4 and 6 that He desires the salvation of all kinds of men, and that Christ died for all kinds of men, could He not have said this? Would it be like God to foster misunderstanding? And if the 47 translators of the Authorized Version, all great Greek scholars, had thought that God meant to say that He desires the salvation of all kinds of men and that Christ died for all kinds of men, they surely would have translated these two passages so, would they not?

Does some reader argue that the translators of the King James Version were biased? Then consider this: Of the 34 different translations which the author has in his library, not one upholds the "all kinds" ("all without distinction") theory. Every single one says that God would have "all men" to be saved and that Christ gave Himself a ransom "for all."

If the words "all" and "all men" in I Tim. 2:1-7 mean all kinds of men, would not God be saying that we should "give thanks ... for all kinds of men"? And if Ver. 1 tells us to pray for all kinds of men, would not this have been followed with words like, "for kings and slaves, for sinners and saints, for the educated and the illiterate," etc.? But He does not say this. Rather He says, "Pray for kings and for all that are in authority." Obviously this passage, then, cannot refer to all men without distinction, or all kinds of men. We have already explained above why He singles out this one category: because God our Savior would have the gospel go out in peace since He desires the salvation of all.

Such attempts as the above, to make clear passages of Scripture say what they do not actually say so as to maintain a theological position must come under the censure of God. And those who teach these things and call themselves Calvinists should read Calvin’s note on this very passage. He says:

"Paul demonstrates here that God hath at heart the salvation of all because he invites all to the acknowledgment of the truth."

Calvin’s word "because," here, is most significant, for here Calvin shows a keenness of insight that some of his followers lack at this point. He saw clearly that it would have been dishonest on the part of God to invite all to salvation if He did not desire the salvation of all. Indeed, Calvin emphasizes God’s desire for the salvation of all in many of his comments on passages like the above.

29 This passage says "all" and "all men," not "the elect," or "all kinds of men."
31 E.g., Matt. 23:37; 26:28; Mark 14:24; Luke 22:19; John 3:15-17; 12:47; 16:11; Rom. 5:18; 11:32; Col. 1:14; I Tim. 2:4-6; II Pet. 3:9. See Calvin's comments on these passages in Calvin's Commentaries"
To those who hold that God does not love all men and that Christ did not die for all, we suggest: Read this passage again, prayerfully, and accept what it says. As for us, this passage is one of those on the basis of which we offer salvation to each and all, and warn Christ-rejectors: "God has offered you salvation by grace, through faith in His Son, and has assured you that your salvation is His desire. Therefore if you reject Christ and remain unsaved it is your fault, and God must justly condemn you for it" (See II Thes. 2:8-12).

ONE MEDIATOR

To all the above we must add the strong argument of Ver. 5, connected as it is with Ver. 6:

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

“Who gave Himself a ransom for all....”

Surely these words are clear enough. Christ Jesus is the one Mediator "between God and men," not some men, or all kinds of men, but "men": mankind, the human race, for and "men" are here put in juxtaposition.

This declaration at the same time refutes the claims of Rome as to the mediatiorship of her priests, and of Mary as co-mediatrix with Christ.

TESTIFIED IN DUE TIME

It should be carefully observed that the glorious fact that our Lord gave Himself "a ransom for all," had not been "testified" in ages past. Nor did Peter and the other apostles proclaim this at Pentecost. Peter clearly spoke only to his kinsmen as he said:

"Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord" (Acts 3:19).

"Ye are the children of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham, And in thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed.

(Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids, MI, 1949). His Commentary on the New Testament was one of his latest works, published in 1561, only three years before his death.
"Unto you first God, having raised up His Son Jesus, sent Him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities" (Vers. 25,26).

Up until this time the only way Gentiles could find salvation was through Israel, by taking hold of her covenants, circumcision and the sabbath (Isa. 56:6,7, cf. Mark 11:17).

But when Israel rejected even the resurrected and glorified Christ, and God cast her out along with the Gentiles, He raised up another apostle to proclaim the amazing truth that:

"... God hath concluded them all (Israel and the Gentiles) in unbelief that He might have mercy upon all" (Rom. 11:32).

This is why the Apostle says that this great truth was "testified in due time":

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

This, too, is why it is Paul who shows us, in this very epistle, that God has now assumed toward this world the role of a Savior (See 1:1; 2:3,4; 4:10; cf II Cor. 5:14-21).

It is to be feared that many who so persistently refer to the sovereign grace of God have failed to see this aspect of His grace. They fail to see that with Paul the door was opened wide to outcast Gentiles and outcast Jews alike, to come to Christ and trust Him as their Savior. The Old Testament saints knew about sovereign grace, but were never told of God's secret purpose finally revealed to and through the chief of sinners, now gloriously saved, concerning the overabounding grace, the free grace, the grace offered indiscriminately to all, which so filled the heart and ministry of Paul.

Thus to deny that God loves all men and that Christ died for all is not only to commit a grave theological blunder, but to deny the special message and ministry committed to Paul for our day.

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32 Paul had not been appointed an apostle by Christ on earth, nor had he been sent to proclaim the fulfillment of prophecy. Both his apostleship and his message were heavenly in their origin (Gal. 1:11,12), and there were no Scripture passages he could point to in confirmation of his proclamation of "the mystery." Thus he often speaks under oath, as it were, calling God, or Christ, to witness, both as to his ministry and his message.
"I will therefore that men pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting.

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

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

"Let the women learn in silence, with all subjection.

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

"For Adam was first formed, then Eve.

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

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

- I Tim. 2:8-15

Many Christians rejoice in God's grace where salvation and their position and blessings are concerned, but soon become weary when the preacher deals with grace in practice, grace in the church, in the home, in daily conduct. Yet the great doctrines of Paul's epistles are invariably followed by exhortations as to Christian conduct. This is particularly so where the Pastoral Epistles are concerned, for the Apostle would have these younger men of God teach their hearers the profound importance of Scriptural Christian conduct.

It is obvious even from a superficial reading of the above passage that the Apostle here deals with the divine order of the sexes in their ministry for Christ. Also, the definite article appears in the Greek at Vers. 8,9. In Ver. 8 it is "the men"; in Ver. 9, "the women. Then the words "in like manner also," in Ver. 9, show that he is comparing the responsibilities of the men with those of the women.
In dealing with the relative position of Christian men and women, it must not be forgotten that the Apostle is writing to a pastor, so that their appearance and behavior in the assembly is particularly involved though this, in turn, involves the Christian life in general.

When he says, in Ver. 8, "I will that men [or "the men"] pray everywhere," he evidently refers to public prayer, for Christian women as well as men are exhorted and encouraged to pray elsewhere in his epistles.

Is it not strange that many modern sects which claim to go back to apostolic doctrine and practice ignore this important apostolic command? Indeed many of them have women as their leaders. This is consistent with the present outcry for women's rights, but it is not consistent with the Scriptures and certainly not with the Pauline epistles, for Paul, more than any other New Testament writer, insists upon the subordination of the woman to the man. Any who doubt this have but to search his epistles and see.

Thus it is God's will-for the Church today - that the men lead in prayer in our Christian assemblies.

But this also is a significant responsibility, for the Apostle goes on to say that the men, in praying, should lift up "holy hands, without wrath and doubting" (Ver. 8).

Lifting up of the hands was a common attitude in prayer in Paul's day, and indeed, in Old Testament times and in some areas today. But these hands, says Paul, should be "holy" and should not hide "wrath and doubting," i.e., anger and suspicion. The reader will recall how God said to His guilty people of old:

“When ye spread forth your hands, I will hide Mine eyes from you; yea, when ye make many prayers I will not hear: your hands are full of blood" (Isa. 1:15).

Unkindness, anger and suspicion should have no place in our prayers to God, for we ourselves have failed Him again and again. We are not to pray "at" others, but are to pray to God for and with them.

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33 We do not overlook the fact that there are exceptional cases, where a woman may be called upon to do what men should be doing, because the men have failed. Deborah, for example, was used to deliver Israel because of the weakness and irresponsibility of the men at that time, and especially of Barak (Judg. 4:4,8; 5:7). There are other exceptions also. But the divine rule is that the man, as God's appointed head over the woman, should take the lead, and the woman should serve in her God-given capacity, gladly accepting her subordinate position.

34 Here the Greek is not the usual hagios, but hosios, meaning kind, gracious.
It is said that a young divinity graduate, applying for a pastorate, was invited to appear before the church board. Among the many questions put to him was one from an elderly brother who asked whether it was his habit to pray vertically or horizontally. At first the young candidate did not grasp the brother's meaning, but soon enough it dawned on him and he saw the real danger of prayers directed at the people rather than to God.

And now the Apostle proceeds to deal with the subject of the woman's responsibility and her testimony to God's grace in her life. In his very first sentence it becomes beautifully evident that he does not, as some have supposed, consider the woman as some as sort of chattel meant only for the ownership and use of the man. Far from it! He holds that she should be someone very special in the family, one for whom the husband will not only open a door and push in a chair, but for whom he would give his very life. Indeed, he says this in Eph. 5:25.

In I Tim. 2:9 his very first words on the subject are "that the women adorn themselves..." For the moment, let us stop right here, for the Apostle distinctly teaches here that the women should adorn themselves, and this harmonizes perfectly with the Scriptures as a whole and especially with Rev. 21:2 where we have the Bride "adorned for her Husband."

Inattention to personal appearance, especially in women, is a poor testimony to the grace of God, and many a Christian woman has failed to exert an effective Christian influence on those about her because of untidy or immodest dress. Thus the Apostle, by divine inspiration, instructs Christian women on how to adorn themselves.

First, they should wear "modest apparel." It is a sad testimony to the godlessness of our day and the declension in the Church that women in public places - yes, often Christian women, are attired in a slovenly, and sometimes an immodest, manner. Alas, we have come from the Victorian era, now held up to ridicule, back again to the era of the Greeks, who loved to exhibit their nakedness.  

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35 This is not, thank God, a particular characteristic of the Greeks of our day.
America is reaping a fearful harvest of immorality and violence from the daring, provocative clothing - or lack of it - worn by many women. But some Christian women come far too close to having a part in this. Do they not know that immodesty in women helps to promote immorality? The FBI knows it. The police know it. The courts know it. The news media knows it - and we believe most Christian women know it too, but some who want to be "in" with the spirit of the times rationalize it and justify it in their own minds. But God does not justify it, and some Christian women ought to begin feeling convicted about it, for it has become more than evident by now that immodest dress can have a dreadfully adverse effect upon a nation. Consider its effect upon the populace as described in Gibbons' *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*.

But not only is God pleased with modesty in women; most people are too. Brazen women may get wide attention, but they are not generally respected and admired as modest women are.

But what does the Apostle mean by "shamefacedness," in Ver. 9? Are Christian women to go about looking ashamed? By no means. We are told that early editions of the *King James Version read, "shame-fastness,"* or a sense of shame for whatever is indecent, and this is evidently the sense here for the Greek *aidous* is simply a sense of shame. If only such modesty were more deeply rooted in all Christian women! Then the men would not need to be ashamed of some of them, or embarrassed by them, much less enticed to wrong by them.

The word "sobriety," here, does not mean solemnity. Rather it is used consistently in Scripture as opposed to drunkenness, and signifies control over the senses.

In the rest of the passage we have one of those "not ... but" situations so common in the Word of God. Women are to be clothed in modest apparel and good works, rather than in "costly apparel," nor will the latter ever take the place of the former. I Pet. 3:3,4 puts it beautifully. Referring here to women's adorning, Peter says:

"Whose adorning, let it not be that outward adorning of plafting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel;

"But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price."

The references to "broidered hair," "gold, pearls and costly array" in I Tim. 2:9, then, are not a ban against the use of any of these things. Rather, in both I Pet.

36 According to an FBI report, it was when American women went for the "mini-skirt" that sex crimes, and particularly forcible rape, suddenly sky-rocketed.
3 and here in I Tim. 2, the idea is that the woman's adornment should not be "this" but "that"; not costly array, but, as Peter puts it, "the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit which is in the sight of God of great price."

Ver. 11 seems, even in the light of other Scriptures, to be rather strong. Perhaps this is because the word "silence" is used. Elsewhere the King James Version renders this word (Gr. hesuchia), "quietness," and even in Acts 22:2, where we read that "they kept the more silence," the idea is that they quieted down. This does not, however, neutralize Paul's statement that the woman should learn "with all subjection," for he adds here:

"But I suffer not a woman to teach [the man], nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence [quietness]" (Ver. 12; cf. I Cor. 14:35).

A woman could, of course, teach the younger women and, indeed, they are urged to do so (Tit. 2:4), but the Apostle did not permit a woman to usurp the man's God-appointed position by teaching men.

The idea of the subjection of women to men, and in particular of the wife to the husband, is a very sensitive matter to many women. Indeed, in this day when millions of women are contending for "equal rights" with men, many women, even Christian women, balk at this injunction. But let us consider it in the light of the Word itself.

Here in I Timothy Paul bases his argument on both the creation and the fall of Adam:

"For Adam was first formed, then Eve.

"And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression" (Vers. 13,14).

In addition to the order in their creation: first Adam, then Eve, the Apostle points out that it was not Adam but the woman who was deceived in Eden. He disobeyed with his eyes wide open, evidently through love for his wife. Satan knew the difference in their natures, thus he approached Adam, not directly, but through his wife.

These facts, of course, place the greater blame on Adam, thus we read in Rom. 5:12 that "by one man [not by one couple] sin entered into the world."

It is on the facts that God first created Adam, then Eve as an "help meet for him," and that Eve was the more susceptible to deception, that Paul bases his argument for the relationship of the woman to the man.
The former of these two arguments is expanded in I Cor. 11:8,9:

"For the man is not of the woman, but the woman of the man,

"Neither was the man created for the woman, but the woman for the man" (Cf. Gen. 2:18). 37

The Pauline epistles have much more to say on this subject, but it is not the purpose of this volume to deal with it exhaustively.

**SALVATION IN CHILDBEARING**

It seems strange at first that after Paul's exhortation to the woman to take her God-given place in subjection to her husband, he should now add:

"Notwithstanding she shall be saved in childbearing if they continue in faith and charity and holiness with sobriety" (Ver. 15).

What can this possibly mean? How can the woman be saved in child-bearing - and from what?

Some believe that the woman will be saved from death in childbearing if she and her husband continue in "faith, love and holiness, with sobriety." This cannot be, however, for in many a case where these qualifications have been fulfilled the wife has died in childbearing, while in many others the most godless women have survived childbirth.

The Church of Rome teaches that her soul will be saved; that her childbearing will earn for her merits which God will accept. If this be so, then salvation is after all by works or by human merit, and Rom. 4:5; Eph. 2:8,9 and a score of other plain Scriptures forbid this. Salvation is neither by human works, nor by human merit, "lest any man should boast."

Others point out that since Christ was born into the human race to be our Savior; the woman is saved by childbearing in that sense. But this breaks down at the outset since men as well as women are saved through Christ because He was born into this world to bear our sins. Why should only women, or mothers, be included in such a statement?

It is, of course, easier to point out what this passage does not mean than to say with certainty what it does mean, but to us it seems that the Apostle, in the light of the context, teaches here that in motherhood, i.e., in taking her place in the

37 It should be noted that the above is not merely the author's viewpoint, but the Word of God on this subject.
home, living with her husband in faith, love and holiness, with sobriety, the
Christian woman will be saved from the pitfalls that have wrecked the lives of so
many women. We believe that the word "saved," here, is used in its broader
sense, as in 1 Tim. 4:16:

"Take heed to thyself and to the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing
this thou shalt both save thyself and them that hear thee."
Chapter VI - I Timothy 3:1-16

LEADERSHIP IN THE LOCAL CHURCH

THE OFFICE OF BISHOP

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

- I Timothy 3:1-7

The Apostle now proceeds to deal with the subject of leadership in the local church. On Pp. 25-34 we have already discussed the subject of rank and authority in the churches, but here in Chapter 3 the two main offices are dealt with: those of the "bishop," or overseer, and the "deacon," or helper.

We sympathize with the feelings of revulsion which some dear saints entertain against the idea of having bishops in local churches. However, we should consider this office, not in the light of ritualistic misuse of it, but in the light of the true meaning of the word, which is simply overseer - and God has provided for overseers in the local church.

The bishops, in Scripture, were given general, and especially moral and spiritual, oversight of the church, with one of their number as their chief (See Pp. 26-27). The leading overseer, however, is not given any special title in
Scripture, such as archbishop, cardinal, or pope. This clearly teaches us that the leading overseer is not to wield arbitrary authority, but is to work closely with the other overseers.

The Apostle now gives Timothy instructions as to the qualifications for this office. He is nearing the end of his earthly course. The supernatural gift of prophecy has passed away. Soon there will be no further instructions direct from heaven, not even through Paul himself, and those who say, "Thus saith the Lord," will have to base their words on the written Word of God. Also, the Church is launching out into the deep, as it were, and more permanent instructions are needed for its guidance (See Ver. 15).

It must not be concluded from Ver. 1 that the desire to be a bishop is necessarily "good." Indeed Paul says almost the opposite here, cautioning the men of the assembly not to desire this office unless they are ready, indeed have already begun, to meet its qualifications.

The Greek kalos, in "a good thing," has, like our own English word "good," a very broad usage, so that the sense in which a thing is good must be determined by the nature of the thing so called.

Thus the "good Shepherd" is the kind Shepherd; a "good soldier" is a brave soldier and one who willingly endures hardship; a "good foundation" is a solid foundation; "good measure" is abundant measure; "good works" are works which are morally right, "good fruit" is sound, healthy fruit; a "good steward" is a faithful steward; "goodly stones" and "goodly pearls" are stones and pearls of high quality, hence valuable. In each case the subject referred to as kalos, or good, excels in its own particular way.

This should help us to understand the word "then" of Ver. 2. What the Apostle is saying is this: The office of a bishop is a very sacred trust, involving high moral and spiritual responsibilities. "A bishop, then, must be. . . ." etc. Thus he actually cautions his readers against casually "desiring" this office, apprising them of the qualifications involved. So high and holy a calling should not be considered lightly, for many men of God with great abilities have failed because they lacked one or more of the moral and spiritual graces which Paul here outlines. And with this he lists the basic qualifications: "A bishop, then, must be......

"Blameless" (Ver. 2). The very first qualification is that of unimpeachable character and conduct.

"The husband of one wife" (Ver. 2) - at a time, clearly. Nor does this qualification exclude those who are unmarried. Rather it stands opposed to polygamy, so prevalent in Paul's day, and to divorce.
But there is more. The word rendered "husband" here is the Greek aner, often used for "husband," but meaning simply the individual male, the man. Thus the bishop should not merely be the husband of one wife, but literally "a one wife man," one who is faithful to his wife; who loves her as he loves no other.

Certainly this passage, as many others in Scripture, utterly annihilates the Roman Catholic doctrine of the celibacy of her priests.

"Vigilant, sober, of good behavior" (Ver. 2). The word "vigilant," here, is rendered "sober" by KJV in Ver. 11 and in Tit. 2:2. The idea is that of having the senses under control - the opposite of intoxication, which dulls the senses. The word rendered "sober" in this verse, however, has the kindred meaning of temperate. The phrase "good behavior," has to do with one's manner of life. It is rendered "modest" in 2:9.

"Given to hospitality" (Ver. 2). The author well understands the difference between the simpler days of the early 1900s and the complexities of more modern life, which often make it impossible for the pastor or Christian leader to be as hospitable as he would like to be. Yet he should be one who is naturally "given to hospitality," (Lit., a lover of strangers).

"Apt to teach" (Ver. 2). Here the English of more than three centuries ago is somewhat misleading. The meaning is not that he should be one who is apt or likely, to teach: we already have too many of these! Rather it is that he should be an apt, or likely teacher, one able or well prepared to teach.

"Not given to wine" (Ver. 3). The battle has long raged between those who believe it is wrong to partake of intoxicating liquors except as a medicine and those who hold that drinking them in moderation as a beverage is sanctioned in Scripture. The former base their arguments on passages like Prov. 20:1 (indeed a strong statement on the subject), while the latter argue from passages which appear, at least, to imply that drinking of wine was an accepted custom (which it probably was in lands where uncontaminated drinking water was hard to come by).

The following important Scripture on this subject is often overlooked, however:

"It is not for kings, O Lemuel, it is not for kings to drink wine; nor for princes strong drink:

"Lest they drink, and forget the low, and pervert the judgment of any of the afflicted" (Prov. 31:4,5).
The meaning is clear. If drinking of strong drink is to be indulged in, at least let kings and princes refrain from it lest they fail to act responsibly.

Does not this apply with greater force to those who occupy places of leadership in the Church of Christ? Doubtless this is why we find Paul prescribing "a little wine" for Timothy's "often infirmities" (5:23). The implication is that Timothy would have refrained from using any wine in spite of his illness.

The succeeding verses in the above passage from Proverbs also allow the use of "strong drink" where one is "ready to perish" or "of heavy heart," but this is far removed from casual indulgence. Certainly, however, the Apostle's injunction here in I Tim. 3:3 is clear as light. The bishop should not be "given to wine." Nor does this neutralize the truth of such passages as Prov. 20:1.

"No striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous" (Ver. 3). A "striker" is, of course, one who physically strikes another, and a "brawler" one who is quarrelsome and abusive, though the Greek contains the thought of a drunken brawl.

It seems disappointing that Paul should need to include such prohibitions in a list of qualifications for overseers of the church. However, he knew from wide experience that many a great man of God has come from a background that is anything but conducive to godly conduct, and in times of anger even a bishop may revert to his old ways.

As to "filthy lucre," many people have the notion that "lucre," in Scripture means money, and "filthy lucre," dirty money. This is not so. Lucre is simply gain. Any "lucrative" enterprise is a gainful one. Thus he warns prospective bishops against taking any course of action for base personal gain. Some, as in Paul's day, have departed so far from this injunction that they have actually convinced themselves that "gain is godliness" (6:5), that personal gain is an evidence of God's blessing. But Paul could say for himself and for Titus, in writing to the Corinthians, "Did I make a gain of you? ... Did Titus make a gain of you?" (II Cor. 12:17,18).

The word "money," however, is found in this verse, for "covetous," here, is literally, "loving money." In I Tim. 6:5-11, where the Apostle deals at length with this subject, he counsels Timothy, "But thou, O man of God, FLEE these things..." (Ver. 11). Sad indeed is the case of the pastor or church leader who has become wealthy through the sacrifices of those whom he has taught to give their all for the cause of Christ. Truly the "love of money" is a "root" that is "all evil." It produces no good whatever (See 6:5-10).

38 In extreme depression (See I Sam. 1:10, where the word is rendered "bitter" in a context of extreme sorrow).
The exhortation to be "patient" is in a way the most important of all the qualifications in this verse, for patience speaks of self-abnegation, and this is what this verse is really about. The overseer in the work of the Lord, whose care is not for himself but for others, will be blessed of God and respected and loved by men.

There are three qualifications for the office of bishop which the Apostle discusses at length. First, the bishop must be:

"One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity" (Ver. 4).

It is not implied here that a bishop must necessarily be married and must have a family. Indeed Paul nowhere says this. Rather he rightly assumes that most bishops are married men with families, and this being the case, they should rule their households well, having their children in subjection with all seriousness. They are not to be forever indulging them but are to discipline them wisely, firmly and lovingly.

This is a basic requirement, the Apostle implies,

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

As it is in business, one must prove himself responsible in smaller matters before he can be entrusted with greater responsibilities. Slipshod discipline, or lack of discipline in the home does not augur well for the success of a prospective bishop. On the other hand, the children's obedience and orderly conduct bear witness to the father's moral influence over others; his sense of responsibility, his firmness, his understanding and love - and these are important elements in the spiritual equipment of the bishop.

Second, a "novice" should not be appointed to this position.

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

Until now the Apostle has discussed what the bishop should and should not be, and what he should and should not do, but here he states clearly that a novice should not be considered for this position. The office is not open to the very young and untested. This explains why the bishop is also called an "elder," as in Acts 20:17,28 and Tit. 1:5,7. 39

39 It may be objected that Timothy was still a young man at this time. This objection is not valid for, (1) Timothy was old enough to have a wife and perhaps half a dozen children, and (2) certainly he was not a novice, but already an experienced believer, having toiled and suffered faithfully with Paul himself for
Ours is an age when striplings are after exalted to positions of great responsibility. The result, all too often, is that the young man becomes over-confident and, "lifted up with pride," he "falls into the condemnation of the devil" (Ver. 6).\(^{40}\) Pride is a devastating obstacle to spiritual blessing and because of it many a gifted young pastor has been placed on the shelf, as it were (See Psa. 138:6; I Pet. 5:5).

Was Paul, as he grew older, perhaps prejudiced against the younger brethren? This question may be answered by asking another: *Is the Bible the inspired Word of God?*

It is the Word of God that directs that a novice should not be considered for the office of bishop or overseer. He may be gifted, sound in doctrine, as far as he understands it, modest in manner, etc., but he has not yet been tested.\(^{41}\) Why destroy him, or risk destroying him, by concluding in advance what he will turn out to be? This is advice which this writer, as a young man, found hard to accept, but sad experience later taught him the wisdom of it.

Third, a bishop, or prospective bishop,

"... *Must have a good report of them which are without; lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil*" (Ver. 7).

True, in these "last days" many are "despisers of those that are good" (II Tim. 3:3), but honesty and integrity, kindness and consideration in Christian conduct do bear fruit. They give a man a good name, and "a *good name is rather to be chosen than great riches*" (Prov. 22:1).

Even a mature believer with a bad name or with "skeletons in the closet" leaves himself open to reproach and to all sorts of Satanic temptations to "cover up" his record. Hence the importance of living a life that will earn the respect, not only of our fellow-believers, but also "of them that are without."

But the question may be asked: If a man could fulfil all the above qualifications, would he not be a *perfect* man? This question will be dealt with after we have discussed the office of *deacon*.

**THE OFFICE OF DEACON**

years. It is evident from Paul's letters that moral and spiritual maturity, more than mere age, was what qualified a man to be an "elder" or "bishop." Indeed, this is clearly brought out in the very passage we are considering.

\(^{40}\) Satan fell through pride (Isa. 14:12-17), and sought successfully to instill pride into man (Gen. 3:1-5).

\(^{41}\) Even prospective deacons (a lower position) must "first be proved," according to Ver. 10.
"Likewise must the deacons be grave, not double-tongued, not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre;

"Holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience.

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

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

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

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

- I Timothy 3:8-13

The deacon (Gr., diakonos), was the servant, or helper, of the church. Perhaps the Apostle did not employ the usual word for servant (doulos, bondservant) here, because the deacon, while ideally a bondservant of Christ, was not a bondservant of the church. Under the bishops, or overseers, the deacons were in charge, mainly, of the church's external affairs.

The reader will recall the appointment of the deacons in the Pentecostal Church. Administrative affairs were taking too much of the Apostles' time and this had had an adverse effect upon their prayer life and their ministry of the Word. Thus seven men were chosen, "men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom," to take charge of these practical matters (Acts 6:3-6). The result was that,

". . . the Word of God increased, and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly" (Acts 6:7).

This is doubtless the reason why deacons were also given an important role in the local assemblies under Paul. The Apostle, having outlined the qualifications for the office of bishop, now proceeds with the words, "Likewise must the deacons be. . . ."

"Grave" (Ver. 8). In a day of levity, sometimes even in the things of God, it is profoundly important that those who would serve the church, and thus the Lord, be serious-minded, recognizing the importance of their part, not only in their ministry to Christ and the church as a whole, but even in that to the overseers.
"Not double-tongued" (Ver. 8), or irresponsible in their talk, saying one thing to one person and something quite different to another. A deacon may be greatly tempted along this line for, in charge of the external affairs of the church, demands for his favor may arise from various quarters: e.g., which department of the Sunday School gets the best piano, which class will use this or that room, how high the heat should be turned up, etc. In such cases there may be great temptation to talk out of both sides of one's mouth, as we say, and even to tell an untruth to explain a given situation.

The deacons, then, says Paul, should not be "double-tongued."

"Not given to much wine" (Ver. 8). Here see our notes on Ver. 3. Just why he adds the word "much" in the case of the deacons we are not sure. We know that Paul suggested to Timothy, in view of his digestive problem and his "often infirmities," that he "use a little wine" as a medicine (I Tim. 5:23). Other bishops, with burdens generally heavier than those of the deacons, might do the same and unwittingly cause some of the deacons to imbibe more heavily. Considering the effect of intoxicating liquor upon many people, such deacons might, ere long, be "given to much wine." Such weakness and lack of responsibility would surely not be compatible with stewardship in the service of Christ.

"Not greedy of filthy lucre [base gain]" (Ver. 8). This trait too is discussed at Ver. 3, but Paul's caution applies as directly to deacons as it does to bishops. Deacons, in their particular field of service, might easily become greedy of personal gain. Normally the deacons have charge of the church offerings and general finances. How dangerous it would be, then, to appoint as a deacon, one who is not known to be scrupulously honest where the handling of finances is concerned. Also, the deacon might receive kindnesses from one or more of the wealthier members of the church and therefore might favor them for his own personal gain, even sometimes accepting gifts on the basis of what might almost be called a bribe.

"Holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience" (Ver. 9).

Here we have what is doubtless the most important qualification of all. "The faith," of course is the "one faith" of Eph. 4:5, the great body of doctrine committed to and proclaimed by Paul. This body of truth, as we know, was a mystery, a secret, until the glorified Lord revealed it to him (See Eph. 3:1-3; Rom. 16:25,26). It is assumed that the bishops would "hold" this blessed truth out of deep conviction, but this should be the case with the deacons as well, even though their ministry differed from that of the bishops.

A deacon is not a teacher per se, but would it not be a poor testimony to hold an office in the assembly while ill-informed about the message it is supposed to be proclaiming? Thus the deacon, as well as the bishop, should "hold the
mystery of the faith in a pure conscience.” He should not only have a clear understanding of the great doctrine of the “one Body,” with its “one baptism,” its heavenly position and prospect, its standing in grace, etc., but he should hold these truths “in a pure conscience,” i.e., he should not merely subscribe to them, but heartily, conscientiously believe them, stand for them, and live them.

Again, as with those considered for the office of bishop, no man should be chosen as a deacon who has not “first” been proved.” Then “let [him] use the office of a deacon being found blameless,” i.e., having been found blameless.

It is interesting to observe that where the qualifications of deacons are concerned their wives also are brought into the picture. This is not strange for, the deacon having to do so largely with the external affairs of the church, finances included, there is danger that the wife might unwittingly betray some confidence or spread some damaging rumor. Thus the Apostle says that the deacons’ wives too must be serious-minded, not slanderers, sober, and “faithful in all things.” What more precious possession can a godly deacon find than a wife who has the right attitude and is faithful, not only to him, but “in all things”? The wife of a deacon, or of a bishop, may greatly enhance her husband’s ministry by prayerfully following these instructions, or, she may utterly ruin it by disregarding them.

Like the bishop, the deacon must be a “one wife” man (Ver. 12), not only legally, but in heart. Also, he must rule his own family well.

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

One who serves well as a deacon, gains for himself the respect of those with whom he comes into contact - and therefore can exercise great boldness in the faith. 42

The reader will recall how Stephen, at first appointed a deacon, in charge of material matters, became a witness for Christ so effective that his adversaries “were not able to resist the wisdom and the spirit by which he spoke” (Acts 6:10). Likewise Philip, another deacon, went to Samaria at the scattering of the Jerusalem church, and preached Christ with such power that “the people with one accord gave heed to those things which Philip spoke” (Acts 8:6).

Many a faithful deacon has become a great pastor or bishop. Indeed the closeness of the deacon to the overseer or pastor has often been just the training he needed to become a pastor himself.

42 “the faith,” i.e., the things to be believed; “which is in Christ Jesus,” i.e., which is centered in Christ Jesus. Thus Paul’s, “We preach Christ. . . ."
The instructions of I Timothy 3, then, should be taken to heart by those who are, or who wish to be, used in the service of Christ, for there is nothing so calculated to give one liberty and power in witnessing for Christ as a clear conscience and a life beyond reproach. But "who is sufficient for these things"?

THE MYSTERY OF GODLINESS

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

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

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

- I Timothy 3:14-16

It should be fully understood that in I Timothy 3 we have the standards of character and conduct which should be found in bishops and deacons. If all these qualifications were fully met in all of our elders and deacons, the situation would, of course, be ideal. The fact is, however, that there are none, doubtless, who qualify in every way and few, if any, who fully meet any of these qualifications. It has rightly been said that if we waited for overseers and deacons who fully qualified in every way, we would have none at all.

The result is that some sincere church leaders have become discouraged and have said in effect: "I do not come up to these standards, therefore I should resign from my position." This would, of course, be the easy way out of a position the responsibilities of which all too few are willing to accept. But what satisfaction or blessing can there be in continuing, let us say, to be greedy of gain, or to fail to manage one's household well, or to be careless in one's talk, etc.? How much better for the elder or deacon with a keen sense of his unworthiness for the position, to say: "By the grace of God I will do my very best from this day on to fulfil every one of these qualifications to His glory." Indeed, to fail to take this attitude can only be to fail God.

Thus the Apostle closes his discussion with a brief consideration of godliness as such.
From Ver. 14 it is evident that while Paul hoped to come to Ephesus shortly to see Timothy, he was by no means certain of this. Therefore he wrote this epistle, as he says, "that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave [conduct] thyself in the house of God, which is the Church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth" (Ver. 15).

What a pity that so many religious people misunderstand this important passage of Scripture. It is quite common to read in church bulletins such exhortations as the following: "As you enter the house of God go reverently to your seat," etc., as though the building of wood and stone were the house of God. In the same way the main auditorium is often called "the sanctuary," as though God dwelt there.

Such people, sincere and religious though they may be, are living as it were in another dispensation, when God did have a physical temple on earth and His presence did abide in its sanctuary. But no physical building on earth today can properly be called "the house of God."

The Apostle proceeds to say that the house of God today is "the Church of the living God," and a church is not a building of wood and stone but an assembly of people (Gr., ekklesia). Thus the house of God today is the true Church, the assembly of believers, in which He dwells by His Spirit (Col. 1:24-27).

This is why, in Eph. 2:19-22, we read that those who have been reconciled to God through Christ are built into this living building:

"In whom all the building, fitly framed together, groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord:

"in [into] whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit" (Vers. 21,22).

In I Tim. 3:15 the Apostle, with the local church in mind, uses a most interesting symbol to describe a basic function of the Church on earth. He calls the Church "the pillar and ground," or, "the pillar and support" of the truth. It is to stand as a witness to divine truth. It is not to hide it, or alter it, or water it down for expediency's sake; it is to stand, alone indeed, but tall and bold as God's witness to the truth revealed from heaven.

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43 All evidently depended upon what, under God, Caesar's verdict would be. As we now know, he was "delivered out of the mouth of the lion" and evidently did enjoy a period of freedom before being apprehended again (II Tim. 4:17; cf. I Tim. 4:13).

44 This is not to deny that those who attend church services should conduct themselves with reverence appropriate to the worship of God.
This is a serious consideration here at the close of a chapter on bishops and deacons! What a responsibility rests upon men of God to seek only to know the truth, to obey it, and to make it known to others! What condemnation will fall upon those who, entrusted with God's Word, have tampered with it, altering it, watering it down, explaining it away, in order to maintain their own religious theories!

The presence of God and the maintenance of the truth are the two most important characteristics of the true Church and when, according to I Thes. 4:13-18, the members of Christ's Body are taken from this earth, the truth will be abandoned and the world, including the religious world, will be given up to a lie:

". . . because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved,

". . . for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie;

"That they might be damned, who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness" (II Thes. 2:10-12).

Is it strange, then, that the local church is called upon to be the very center of godliness (Lit. reverence, piety, devotion toward God) in a world at enmity with God? Thus I Tim. 3:16 says:

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

The subject here is clearly "the mystery of godliness," not the mystery of the incarnation of Christ, or of His deity, but of "godliness." Yet somehow this has been associated with the incarnation and deity of our Lord Jesus Christ, perhaps because of the words, "God was manifest in the flesh," in Ver. 16.

The author believes with all his heart in the virgin birth, the spotless humanity and the eternal deity of our Lord Jesus Christ. However it is a simple fact, it seems to us, that the particular subject here is not the Lord Jesus Christ, but "godliness." Godliness is the subject of this whole chapter, and ungodliness the opening subject of the next. It seems most natural, therefore, that the Apostle should close this section by saying, "Without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness."

In Ver. 9 we have "the mystery of the faith," and here in Ver. 16, "the mystery of godliness," and these two go naturally together. Moreover, "the mystery of godliness" here stands over against "the mystery of iniquity" in II Thes. 2:7,
as "the mystery of iniquity [or "lawlessness"] doth already work," so does "the mystery of godliness."

Most religious people are unaware of Satan's true character. He is not the grotesque creature we see painted on billboards and elsewhere. Eph. 2:2 calls him "the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience." Unseen, he incites them to lawlessness and rebellion against God. Moreover, II Cor. 4:4 calls him the very "god" of this world, or age, who blinds the minds of unbelievers lest the light of the good news of the glory of Christ should shine in and they should be saved.

How we, God's people, should thank Him for His grace to us in this connection, for in Eph. 2:2,3 we read that we ourselves were once "the children [Gr., huios, "grown sons"] of disobedience" and therefore "by nature the children [Gr., teknon, "born ones"] of wrath," but now, by grace, through faith, we have come to know and love Him. This likewise has been accomplished, not in some dramatic, outward way, but by the quiet inward working of the Holy Spirit. In contrast to "the mystery of lawlessness," then, we have here "the mystery of godliness."

Godliness, of course, is personified in the Lord Jesus Christ, as lawlessness will one day be personified in Antichrist, but simply reading I Tim. 3:16 it is clear that the passage does not refer primarily to Christ, but to godliness: "Great is the mystery of godliness."

In Heb. 10:20 our Lord's flesh is represented by the veil in the tabernacle. His flesh, like the tabernacle veil, did not reveal, but rather concealed the divine presence. True, our Lord was "made flesh" to "dwell among us," and when He walked this earth, His glory and deity were revealed in His words and works (John 1:14; 14:6-11), but this is different from making the phrase in I Tim. 3:16 refer to His incarnation.

Further, the words "justified in the Spirit," seem inappropriate when applied to Christ. Neither He nor His conduct needed thus to be justified. He was Justice personified.

Finally, if we make this verse apply to the Lord Jesus Christ the order does not hold good, for our Lord was "preached unto the Gentiles and believed on in the world" after having been "received up into glory," not before.

The arguments we have read and heard, making this passage apply to the Lord Jesus Christ, have seemed to us involved and "heavy." Naturally so, for the passage does not claim to be God's word on "the mystery of the virgin birth," or "the mystery of the deity of Christ," but His word on "the mystery of godliness." When we accept and consider it as such, all falls naturally into place.
In *godliness*, God is manifested in the flesh,\(^45\) also justified in the Spirit, observed by angels (Eph. 3:10), preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world and, finally, at the rapture, will be received up into glory with the Church itself.

Godliness, quietly at work in this world is indeed "a great mystery"; only the initiated recognize it. When the body of Christ is "received up into glory," however, both "the mystery of godliness" and "the mystery of iniquity" will have run their courses on earth. All will be brought into the open then as, first, we are "manifested with Him in glory" (Col. 3:4), and "then," three and a half years later, "shall that Wicked [one] be revealed" (II Thes. 2:8), the Great Imposter whom a Christ-rejecting world has eagerly followed (II Thes. 2:9-12). As a result the world will be plunged into the "great tribulation," a period of trouble such as the world has never known, nor will ever know again (Dan. 12:1; Matt. 24:21).

Let us thank God, then, that while the mystery of iniquity does its work among those who "receive not the love of the truth," the Word of God too, is doing its work in redeemed hearts as we read in I Thes. 2:13:

"For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because when ye received the Word of God, which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of man, but as it is in truth, the Word of God, which *effectually* worketh also in you that believe."

\(^45\) Ver. 16 reads in A.V., "God was manifest" etc., doubtless because the *aorist* tense is used in the Greek. We refer those Greek students who may have a problem with this to Dr. A. T. Robertson's discussion on *the aorist punctiliar and durative* in Chapter XVIII of his *Grammar of the Greek New Testament*, which opens with the title: "Complexity of the Subject" (i.e., of the Greek tense). On Page 831 he quotes Broadus as saying that "The Greek in truth is an aorist-loving language," but Robertson begins his profound discussion of the subject by saying, "The aorist tense, though at first confined to verbs of punctiliar sense, was gradually made [i.e., also made] on verbs of durative sense" (P.830).
Chapter VII - I Timothy 4:1-16

THE CLOSING DAYS OF THE DISPENSATION OF GRACE

THE GREAT APOSTASY

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

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

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

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

"For it is sanctified by the Word of God and prayer.

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

- I Timothy 4:1-6

WHICH LATTER TIMES?

The prophetic Scriptures have much to say about the "last," or latter, "days" and "times." It is clear, however, that Paul does not refer here to the latter times of prophecy, for these had begun at Pentecost and were graciously interrupted just as sin had risen to its height and the judgment of God was about to fall.

Nothing could be plainer than the words of Spirit-filled Peter at Pentecost:

"... This is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel;

"And it shall come to pass in the last days . . ." (Acts 2:16,17).
But what did Joel predict with regard to "the last days"? Two things: (1) that the Spirit would be poured out upon His own, and (2) that God's judgments would be poured out upon His enemies (See Acts 2:16-21; cf Joel 2:28-32).

The Spirit was indeed poured out upon His own (Acts 2:1-13), but the predicted judgment upon His enemies did not - has not yet come. Instead, when Israel rejected the kingdom of heaven and the King from heaven, and all was ready for the judgment to fall, God, in infinite grace, saved Saul, the flaming leader of the rebellion, and sent him forth as both the herald and the living demonstration of His infinite grace. It was he whom God used to usher in the present "dispensation of the grace of God" (Eph. 3:1-4).

As part of God's "eternal purpose," then, the prophetic program was interrupted; the earthly establishment of the kingdom was now held in abeyance, and Israel gradually - and temporarily - cast away (Rom. 11:15,25).

Thus Paul refers, in I Timothy 4:1, not to the latter times of prophecy, but to the latter times of the present dispensation of grace. In the latter times of prophecy there were to be specific signs heralding the return of the Lord Jesus Christ to earth to judge and reign. Some of these signs were: the manifestation of the Antichrist, the rebuilding of the temple at Jerusalem and the profanation of that temple, the sun turned to darkness and the moon to blood, etc., and it is with respect to some of these specific signs of Messiah's return that God's people were told:

"And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads, for your redemption draweth nigh" (Luke 21:28).

But no specific signs were given to herald the close of the present dispensation of grace or the coming of Christ to catch His own away from this earth. The dispensation of grace is timeless and signless in character. Nothing whatever is said as to how long it will last, or when it will be brought to a close, for every day is a day of grace, pure grace, and this grace is enhanced by the very apostasy which began in apostolic days and has continued to the present. To Paul the apostasy was already close at hand, and he instructed Timothy as to what to do about it but God, slow to anger and plenteous in mercy, has allowed it to continue for nineteen long centuries.

When Paul speaks of the "latter times," then, he refers to the latter times of the present dispensation of grace, speaking of trends rather than of specific events, and leaving the coming of Christ for His saints always imminent and the evangelization and salvation of the lost most urgent (II Cor. 6:1,2; Eph. 5:15-17). Of these "latter times," and the apostasy associated with them, the Holy Spirit had "spoken expressly," especially through Paul, as in Acts 20:29-31, where he
reminded the Ephesian elders that for three years he had warned them "night and day with tears," that serious spiritual defection was on the way.

Since "the dispensation of the grace of God" is a parenthesis, a dispensation within a dispensation, so to speak, we should consider briefly Peter's comments on the subject, found in II Pet. 3.

Peter, at Pentecost, had offered the return of Christ to earth (See Acts 2:30,31; 3:19-21), but with all his preaching and the preaching of the other apostles, Israel as a nation still remained unrepentant and Christ had not yet returned to earth when he wrote his epistles years later. Peter, therefore, knowing that the "last days" of prophecy had begun, looked upon this dispensation of grace as a reprieve for a guilty world, a delay in Christ's return to reign. Now that Paul had been raised up, Peter saw that it might be some time before Christ would return. Thus, some 27 years after Pentecost, he prepared his Jewish brethren in advance with regard to this delay:

"But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day" (II Pet. 3:8).

Let us thank God that this is not the poor excuse of some modern preacher for our Lord's continued absence. This was written by Peter at the dawn of the dispensation of grace.

**GOD'S INFINITE GRACE**

This element of timelessness is important in the consideration of the continued absence of our Lord and the delay in His coming for us, the members of His Body.

And what is Peter's explanation for the continued absence of Christ? It is not "slackness," he says, but "longsuffering" (II Pet. 3:9). God is not indifferent to the passing of time, as we so often are. At every tick of the clock He is aware of all the wickedness and treachery that takes place - and He hates it. But He is "longsuffering,"

"... not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance" (Ver. 9).

The delay, then, does not manifest laxity on God's part but longsuffering, not indifference but self-control, not weakness but strength.

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46 Every day of it is like 1,000 years to Him although, being infinite, 1,000 years is also "as one day."
When Johnny finds it hard to be good, when he has an off day, which requires the greater strength of character on mother's part, to lose her temper and beat him thoughtlessly, or to exercise self-restraint and discipline him wisely? A boiler does not show its strength when it blows up, scattering timber hither and yon, but when the pounds of pressure keep rising higher and higher and the boiler does not burst. Thus Peter says:

"The Lord is not slack concerning His promise ... but is longsuffering. . . "

And to this he adds the declaration that this longsuffering on the part of our Lord spells one, big, wonderful word: "S-A-L-V-A-T-I-O-N"!

"And account that the longsuffering of our Lord is SALVATION, even as our beloved brother Paul, also, according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you" (II Pet. 3:15).

It should be observed that in the next verse Peter declares that Paul, "in all his epistles," speaks of "these things."

As Peter’s special message had concerned the return of the Lord Jesus Christ to judge and reign, Paul’s had concerned the continued absence of our Lord and His extended session in heaven as the great Dispenser of grace to a doomed world.

And - touching fact - Peter, having recognized Paul as the apostle of the present dispensation of grace, (Gal. 2:9 and II Pet. 3:15,16), closes his second epistle with the exhortation:

"But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be glory, both now and forever. Amen" (Ver. 18).

These are Peter's last recorded words.

MAN'S RESPONSE TO GOD'S GRACE

But did Israel or the world rejoice at the grace of God in delaying the judgment? No, they remained rebellious against "God and His Christ." Did the Church rejoice in appreciation of this grand opportunity to "redeem the time" and proclaim salvation by grace through faith, far and wide? She did not.

As quoted by Sir Robert Anderson in his The Buddha of Christendom, Pp. 62,63, the writer of Lecture VIII of the Bampton Lectures for 1864, says:

"While the apostles wrote, the actual state of the visible tendencies of things showed too plainly what Church history would be.
"I know not how any man, in closing the Epistles, could expect to find the subsequent history of the Church essentially different from what it is. In those writings we seem, as it were, not to witness some passing storms which clear the air, but to feel the whole atmosphere charged with the elements of future tempest and death. Every moment the forces of evil show themselves more plainly. They are encountered, but not dissipated....

"The fact which I observe is not merely that these indications of the future are found in the epistles, but that they increase as we approach the close, and after the doctrines of the gospel have been fully wrought out, and the fulness of personal salvation and the ideal character of the Church have been placed in the clearest light, the shadows gather and deepen on the external history. The last words of St. Paul in the second Epistle to Timothy, and those of St. Peter in his second Epistle, with the Epistles of St. John and St. Jude, breathe the language of a time in which the tendencies of that history had distinctly shown themselves; and in this respect these writings form a prelude and a passage to the Apocalypse."

To this Sir Robert himself adds: "In very truth those 'last words' [i.e., of the apostles] were wrung from men depressed by patent signs of general apostasy."

This agrees with what we have written in earlier issues of the Berean Searchlight with regard to some of the ante-nicene fathers. In the very next century after Christ and Paul we find Irenaeus opposing Pauline truth. Whatever the alleged errors of the Marcionites47 of his day, Irenaeus sought to answer them by proving that Paul's message and ministry were not unique and separate from that of the twelve, and he partly misrepresents the Marcionites (much as "grace people" are misrepresented today), when he refers to them as "those who allege that Paul alone knew the truth and that to him the mystery was manifested by revelation"48 (Our italics).

Thus serious apostasy raged at and after Paul's departure, and this should teach us that those Bible MSS and writings of the fathers which were "nearest to the fountain," i.e., the earliest, are not necessarily the purest, as though the Apostle Paul had left behind him a Church united and pure. Indeed the words, "Where sin abounded grace did much more abound" (Rom. 5:20), have applied throughout the history of the professing Church as fully as they did to the world in Paul's day. If anything is evident in any published history of the Church, it is the fact that throughout the centuries of its existence grace has indeed been reigning (Rom. 5:21); otherwise the body of true believers would quickly have

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47 Our 1968 issue of the Encyclopaedia Britannica refers to Marcion as the first theologian of the second century who really tried to understand Paul's teachings.

been caught away, and God's judgment would long ago have fallen upon the world, including the religious world.

**DOCTRINES OF DEMONS**

The apostate teachings to which the Apostle particularly refers in I Tim. 4:1-3, were not to originate with men, but with Satanic spirits. "Some shall depart from the faith," he says, "giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils [Gr., daimonion, demons]" (Ver. 1).

It is a sad fact that comparatively few Christian believers clearly understand that Satan and the evil spirits operate primarily, not in the realm of the moral, but in the realm of the spiritual - seeking to corrupt the truth of God. Their masterpiece is not the drunkard or the harlot, but the renowned clergyman who stands in the pulpit of a popular church, denying the fundamentals of the Christian faith, and perverting the Scriptures.

But apostasy from the faith does involve morals too, for the apostates are as guilty as Adam and Eve were in turning from God's revealed truth to Satan's lie. Result: "their conscience, seared with a hot iron," they, like him whom they have believed, "speak lies in hypocrisy" (Ver. 2). This is a natural transition, for the reason Satan's "doctrines" appeal to them is because their hearts desire what Satan offers. In the final analysis men generally believe what they want to believe. The heart is not only "deceitful above all things," but "desperately wicked" (Jer. 17:9).

Our Lord called Satan the father of lies (John 8:44) and II Cor. 11:14 declares that to deceive men he is "transformed into an angel of light." And the passage goes on to say:

"Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works" (II Cor. 11:15).

How fully this agrees with I Tim. 4:1,2! Giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of demons, these religious leaders "speak lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron." 49

The scribes and Pharisees of our Lord's day protest to believe the Scriptures, but perverted them and added to them. They were the popular religious leaders of the day, but in Matthew 23, where the Lord pronounces His woes upon them, He calls them hypocrites no less than seven times. And indeed, throughout the chapter He describes them as hypocrites, clearly implying that it was chiefly they

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49 Such as men might use in branding.
who were responsible for His rejection by Jerusalem, Israel's capital city, whose apostasy He so bitterly lamented (Matt. 23:37-39).

We bring this all out to emphasize the fact that there are religious leaders - closer to home than many think - who, with already-seared consciences, "speak lies in hypocrisy" (I Tim. 4:2). It is important that we understand this, for the vast majority of Christian believers go on in "innocent" ignorance of the fact that some spiritual leaders would actually - and willfully - deceive them, a sin much easier to fall into than most of us realize. Such people are easily taken in, for they leave it to the pastor to tell them what is God's truth, instead of "searching the Scriptures daily," as the noble Bereans did, to see "whether those things were so" (Acts 17:11). And in their irresponsibility they fail to heed Paul's exhortation and warning:

"That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive" (Eph. 4:14).

If believers pondered more thoughtfully over the warning contained in the latter part of this verse, they might be more apt to practice Acts 17:11 and II Tim. 2:15.

CELIBACY AND FASTING

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

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

"For it is sanctified by the Word of God and prayer" (I Tim. 4:3-5).

Obviously the Apostle does not refer here to a total ban on marriage or food, for this would quickly terminate the human race. Rather he refers to a ban on the marriage of certain classes of people, and on the partaking of certain, or all, kinds of food on specific occasions. Such prohibitions are in force in some pagan religions - and in Roman Catholicism, and this is doubtless what the Holy Spirit foresaw when He inspired Paul to write this epistle.
Voluntary fasting is often commendable, and there may be good and valid reasons why an individual should not marry, but this passage deals with legislated celibacy and fasting. Note: "forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats [Gr., broma, food]." This can apply to none with greater force than to the Church of Rome, whose priests and nuns\(^{50}\) are required to remain unmarried (being married instead to the Church), and whose devotees are commanded to observe certain fasts. With regard to legislated celibacy, we cite here a passage from *Vatican II*, P. 893, Costello Publishing Company, Northport, N. Y.:

"For these reasons, based on the mystery of Christ and his mission, celibacy, which at first was recommended to priests, was afterwards in the Latin Church imposed by law on all who were to be promoted to holy Orders. *This sacred Council approves and confirms this legislation so far as it concerns those destined for the priesthood…*" (Italics ours).

*Vatican II*, of course, has much more to say about the priests of Rome than about her nuns, but the latter too (again, with rare exceptions) are forbidden to marry, along with all who are "promoted to holy Orders" (See above).

Thus the Church of Rome, according to her latest Council (early 1960s), continues to enforce legislated celibacy. In obedience to her authority her priests and nuns pledge themselves to remain unmarried.

But a pledge to a life of celibacy is a life pledge not to do that which God sanctions and, in a general sense, commands. And certainly Paul, here in I Tim. 4, denounces as "doctrines of demons" those teachings which forbid marriage.

The "Church," in reply, has used such passages as I Cor. 7:26, where the Apostle, referring to unmarried persons, says, "I say that it is good for a man so to be."

Rome fails to point out, however, that Paul here gives his personal advice (not a command) to certain people, in view of "the present distress" (Ver. 26). Evidently persecution was raging at that time. Furthermore, the Apostle prefaces this very statement with the words:

"Now concerning virgins\(^{51}\) I have no commandment of the Lord; yet I give my judgment, as one that hath obtained mercy of the Lord to be faithful" (Ver. 25).

And referring to widows, he closes this chapter with the words:

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\(^{50}\) With rare exceptions.

\(^{51}\) Male as well as female. Note ver. 26: "man."
"But she is happier if she so abide, after my judgment; and I think also that I have the Spirit of God" (Ver. 40).

This personal advice from Paul is also, of course, the inspired Word of God, nevertheless his reservations are most important, for they indicate that his advice in this case was personal, and temporary, being given only with "the present distress" in view (Ver. 26 and cf. Ver. 28, "I spare you"). Note how the apostle emphasizes this distinction:

I Cor. 7:10: "I command, yet not I, but the Lord."

I Cor. 7:12: "To the rest speak I, not the Lord."

I Cor. 7:25: "I have no commandment from the Lord ... I give my judgment."

I Cor. 7:40: "... after my judgment; and I think also that I have the Spirit of God."

Thus in the one case He speaks by revelation, as a spokesman for his exalted Lord (as he does in general throughout his epistles), but in the other he clearly gives his own personal advice with regard to a particular temporary situation.

But what is the general command from the Lord? We find it as far back as the first two chapters of Genesis, where we read that He created man "male and female" (1:27) and united them in marriage, declaring:

"Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife, and they shall be one flesh" (Gen. 2:24).

This is not a dispensational matter; it is creation's pattern, creation's norm, emphasized again and again throughout the Scriptures, and the Apostle declares that to teach otherwise is to "depart from the faith." To be more specific:

God declares that each bishop and deacon shall be "the husband of one wife" (I Tim. 3:2,12), and condemns those who teach otherwise. Rome does teach otherwise, "forbidding" her priests to marry.

God declares, through Paul, "I will ... that the younger woman marry" (I Tim. 5:14). Rome teaches otherwise, "forbidding" her nuns to marry.

At the beginning God said: "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him" (Gen. 2:18). Rome teaches that it is better for the man to be alone; that there is something more holy about celibacy than
about the married state. The tenth article of the decree of the Council of Trent on marriage, states:

"Whosoever shall say that the married state is to be preferred to a state of virginity, or celibacy, and that it is not better and more blessed to remain in virginity, or celibacy, than to be joined in marriage; let him be accursed!" (Albert Barnes' Notes on the New Testament at I Tim. 4:3).

This strong language almost makes of marriage a concession to a lower state of morality or spirituality and is emphatically condemned by the passages above. Indeed, in this matter Paul also gives us his personal advice for believers in general, gained from years of experience as a man of God and incorporated into the Word of God:

"Nevertheless, to avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband" (I Cor. 7:2).

In the light of this passage of Scripture - and the strong statement in Heb. 13:4 - would one not wonder where the danger of immorality lies, and would one not think that the Church of Rome would deem it more fitting to require that her priests should each be "the husband of one wife"?

Many more passages of Scripture could be cited to justify Paul in declaring that the prohibition to marry, so far from indicating superior spirituality, is a departure from the faith, a concession to evil spirits, and must, to some considerable degree, violate the conscience.

As to legislated fasting, the Scriptures are as plain. Believers engaged in earnest prayer may naturally feel led to refrain from partaking of food. This is why fasting and prayer sometimes go together in Scripture. Also, one might have personal convictions against partaking of certain foods (Rom. 14:2-4; I Cor. 8:1-7), and still others might refrain from eating certain foods out of deference to those who conscientiously object to them (I Cor. 8:9-13). All such voluntary fasting may be, not only permissible, but commendable. But the Scriptures teach no such thing as the legislated fasting of the Church of Rome. Even the dietary laws of the Mosaic dispensation had nothing in common with these, for the Mosaic Law was given directly by God (not by "the fathers," or a religious hierarchy), to teach important spiritual lessons to one particular people, for a temporary period of time (Heb. 9:10).

The Church of Rome has imposed innumerable rules on the subject of fasting, and some of these border on the ridiculous, but here we quote some of Rome's basic laws on the subject. Under Natural Fast, the Catholic Dictionary definition reads:
"the refraining from all food, liquid or solid, from midnight, such as is required for the lawful reception of holy communion."

And under **Fasting**:

"The law is that on a fast day one full meal may be taken and that after noon. Drink is not limited, but such liquids as soup count as food. Custom allows 2 or 3 ounces of dry bread or similar food at breakfast and 8 or 10 ounces of food at collation (q.v.), or according to local usage. Fasting is only imposed on those who are over 21 and under 59, but severe work, whether manual or mental, sickness and debility excuse from the obligation; in cases of doubt a dispensation may be asked for from the local parish-priest .... [fasting] is an act of penitence and physical mortification imposed by the Church for exercise in temperance and health of souls" *(Catholic Dictionary, Third Edition, Macmillan, New York).*

The words "law," "lawful," "required," "obligation" and "imposed," in the above, clearly indicate that the various fasts of the Church of Rome are *obligatory*, they are *required* by Roman Catholic law. And these laws are condemned by Scripture as emphatically as are the laws prohibiting marriage, and are classified as departures from the faith, and doctrines of evil spirits (I Tim. 4:1-3).

Paul is strong in his denunciation of the "command to abstain from meats [from *broma*, "food"], which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth" (I Tim. 4:3). The "truth" to which the Apostle refers takes us back again to the very first book of the Bible, where, at man's creation God said:

". . . Behold I have given you every herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in the which is the fruit of the tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat [food]" (Gen. 1:29).

Later, at the renewal of the earth, after the flood, He added animal flesh to this, saying:

"And the fear of you and the dread of you shall be upon every beast of the earth, and upon every fowl of the air ... and upon all the fishes of the sea; into your hand are they delivered.

"For every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you; even as the green herb have I given you all things" (Gen. 9:2,3).

While the Mosaic dispensation *temporarily* brought about limitations in diet for Israel alone, we are now living under "the dispensation of the grace of God" (Eph. 3:1-3). Under this dispensation the Apostle declares, with regard to food:
"For every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving:

"For it is sanctified by the Word of God and prayer" (I Tim. 4:4,5).

Indeed, it is with respect to those who would restrict us in such matters, saying, "Touch not; taste not; handle not;" that the Apostle declares we should not be subject to them (Col. 2:20,21).

Why should we go back from the Substance to the shadows? Why should we cast reflections on the finished work of Christ in this way, living as it were, in a past and temporary dispensation which only dimly foreshadowed all that Christ would do for us?

When God creates food for us and says, "Here, enjoy it and give thanks," is it not enormous presumption on the part of religious leaders to command: "Do not eat of it, for the health of your souls," as if we were still living under the Law and observing the Day of Atonement?

If the priests of Rome could create food they might have the right to withhold it from us, but God created it "to be received with thanksgiving." This is God's Word through Paul, His apostle for the present dispensation of grace.

Those who "believe and know the truth" understand why Paul so sternly condemns a requirement that, while pampering religious pride, robs God of the thanksgiving due Him.

The pastor who stands for these truths of grace and godliness, says the Apostle, is "a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished up in the words of faith and of good doctrine" (Ver. 6). "Health of soul," as the Church of Rome calls it, does not come through fasting and penance, through sacrificing food and mortifying the body. It comes through receiving the spiritual nourishment to be found in the Word of God.

"Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God" (Matt. 4:4).

"As newborn babes desire the sincere [pure] milk of the Word, that ye may grow thereby" (I Pet. 2:2).

"That we henceforth be no more children . . . but . . . may grow up (Eph. 4:14,15).

THE VALUE OF GODLINESS
"But refuse profane and old wives' fables, and exercise thyself rather unto godliness.

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

"This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptation.

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

- I Timothy 4:7-11

The "Profane" and old wives' fables," which Timothy was to "refuse," stand in juxtaposition to "the words of faith and good doctrine" of Ver. 6.

Pagan religions - and the traditions of Rome no less so - are replete with traditional stories, which are supposed to supply at least supporting evidence, if not final authority, for their claims. But the Apostle consistently opposes them as doing violence to the revealed Word and will of God.

Rome's religion is filled with stories, but what do they prove? Nothing. Yet these are often accepted as revealed truth, even when they are contrary to the Word of God. Little wonder the Apostle uses strong language in repudiating them, and bids Timothy to "refuse" them, i.e., to refuse to give them consideration.

"Rather," says the Apostle, "exercise thyself... unto godliness" (Ver. 7), i.e., occupying yourself with God, the things of God, the Word of God - and its main subject: Christ, the Son of God.

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

52 Not necessarily blasphemous, but secular, not having to do with spiritual matters.
53 The Greek muthos, used four times in the Pastoral Epistles, means simply story, not necessarily a story with a moral, as Aesop's Fables.
54 Or "a little," i.e., only for a little while, not for long.
Regrettably, many have lost the meaning of this passage by supposing that the words "bodily exercise," here, refer to physical gymnastics. Actually we have here another of Paul's famous metaphors. True, the noun "exercise," is *gumnazia* in the Greek, but the *same word* is used in the preceding verse, where Timothy is urged to "exercise" himself "unto godliness." Here the connotation is surely not physical but spiritual.

The *gymnasium* and the *stadium* are two of Paul's well-known metaphors. The *gymnasium* was the place where the athlete did his training, disciplining himself physically by strenuous exercises, by tests of endurance, of speed of reflex, and the like. The Apostle uses this word four times in his epistles, and consistently as a *spiritual metaphor*.

The *stadium* (Gr., *agon*), where the actual contests were held, is also used as a metaphor.

But does not the Apostle, in Ver. 8, refer to "bodily exercise"? Yes, but still metaphorically, as an answer to those who would discipline their followers by forbidding them to marry or commanding them to abstain from food. These restrictions, they say, bring health to the soul, but as we have seen, it is not by mortification of the body that we grow spiritually, but by the study of the Word, and true godliness.

Any moral or physical discipline may bring us some sort of profit, but such profit is at best meager and short-lived, but discipline in godliness gives bright hope both for this life and for that which is to come (Ver. 8). No person is so richly blessed as the one who is truly godly, nor is any used so effectively in the cause of Christ (I Tim. 6:6, "great gain"; II Tim. 3:5, "the power thereof).

There has been considerable discussion as to whether the "faithful saying" of Ver. 9 refers to that which precedes or to that which follows. We believe that it refers to that which we have already discussed. Paul would have Timothy emphasize again and again the superiority of *godliness* over mere religion. Then he goes on to say that he himself has both labored and suffered reproach because he trusts in "the living God, who is the Savior of all men, specially of those that believe" (Ver. 10). Paul's message and his very life, were the antithesis of the dead, formal religion which abounded in his day and still abounds in ours.

**GOD'S LOVE FOR ALL**

Verse 10 is a strong argument against the doctrine of Limited Atonement, the teaching that God does not love all men and that Christ did not die for all, but

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55 From which our word *gymnasium* is derived. The verb, *gumnazo*, is used in Ver. 7.
56 Along with the verb *agonizomai*, referring to the contest itself.
only for the elect. Clearly here we have a qualified statement against the background of an unqualified one. If the "all men" are the elect, who then are "those that believe"? (Here see also, Ezek. 33:11; John 3:16,17; Rom 3:22; 5:18; 11:32; II Cor. 5:14, I Tim. 2:4-6; Heb. 2:9; II Pet. 2:1; 3:9; I John 2:2)

But this verse also answers the Universalist, who teaches that "God is the Savior of all men," therefore all will be saved, but that He is the Savior "specially of those that believe," since believers will be saved in this life, but unbelievers not until the next.

This argument does not hold, however, for the passage does not say that God is the Savior first of those who believe, but specially of those who believe. This must indicate that He is the Savior of all men in a general sense, and the Savior of believers in a special, more particular sense. Thus He is potentially the Savior of all men, but is the Savior of believers in a special sense, just as the lifeguard at the beaches is such to all, but is so in a very special way to that man whom he actually saved from drowning.

Those who fail to see the truth of God's love for all miss one important aspect of the message of grace. One aspect is, of course, that we who are saved were saved by the purpose, love and power of God alone. But the other aspect is equally important.

God has made a bona fide offer of salvation to all men since Christ paid the price for all. Thus we can go to any poor sinner and say to him: "Your sins have been paid for; will you believe this and trust in the Lord Jesus Christ as your Savior?" This is the whole thrust of II Cor. 5:20,21, where Paul addresses the unreconciled thus

"Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God.

"For Gad hath made Him to be sin for us, [Him] who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him."

It is also the thrust of Ver. 19, where he says:

". . . God was in Christ [i.e., at Calvary], reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them, and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation."

Surely we need not enter into argument to prove that all this is an offer, an invitation, and that the lot of the unsaved is not changed just because Christ died for them. Rather Christ's death for the sins of all is the basis for God's offer of salvation to all. The trespasses of the unsaved are not imputed to them now;
they may be saved by simple faith because their sins were imputed to Christ. But if they reject the offer of reconciliation the greater condemnation will be theirs, first for all their sins (Rev. 20:12,13), and also for spurning the offer of salvation, the free gift of God, purchased for us at so great a cost by the Lord Jesus Christ (II Thes. 2:10).

The plan of salvation is not a technical matter; it is the expression of the love of God for guilty sinners. Dr. Harry Bultema once rightly said: "The lake of fire will but be the indignation of God, burning over love spurned."

The lost must be given to understand that salvation is not merely a matter as to whether or not God will one day save them. They must be given to see their desperate condition and to understand that they must either receive God's gift of salvation through Christ, or perish forever.

"These things command and teach" (Ver. I 1).

It is one thing to hold opinions, but quite another to stand for convictions; one thing to believe what the Scriptures say, but quite another to "command and teach" them, to hold them forth as the Word of God for "the obedience of faith."

**MEDITATE UPON THESE THINGS**

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

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

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

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

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

- I Timothy 4:12-16

The Apostle closes this part of his letter to Timothy with several practical exhortations as to godliness.

His counsel: "Let no man despise thy youth" (Ver. 12), is by no means to be considered an encouragement to Timothy to be belligerent and to fail to show due respect to those who might be older and wiser than he, lest they despise
him. The words that immediately follow: "but be thou an example...." clearly indicate his meaning. Timothy must not do or say anything that might cause others to despise his youth. Responsibility and fidelity are basic to true spiritual authority. Our Lord taught His hearers "as one that had authority, and not as the scribes" (Mark 1:22). His authority subjectively, came, not merely from what He knew, but from what He WAS, and in a lesser sense this was so with Paul, and should be so with every man of God (Here see also Tit. 2:7,15). Objectively, of course, our authority comes from the written Word of God.

In Ver. 13 the Apostle bids Timothy, while he himself is detained,\textsuperscript{57} to "give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine," three imperatives too readily neglected by many pastors.

Many men of God have, we feel, arbitrarily, interpreted the exhortation respecting "reading" to refer to the public reading of the Scriptures in the assembly. Others hold that it refers to "Scripture reading services," in which the Scriptures are read and expounded verse by verse.

As for the author, he believes that the Apostle here means exactly what he says: "give attendance to reading." It is a sad fact that some pastors, even some prominent pastors, are not readers, and to fail in this respect is to do "all the talking," rather than allowing other great men of God to talk to us. A pastor who is not a reader should begin at once to cultivate the habit. We pity illiterate tribes, but actually one who does not read is no better off than one who cannot read.

Of course the written Word of God would lie at the center of all Timothy's reading, and of course he would read the Scriptures publicly to his congregation at Ephesus, but why not let this passage say exactly what it does say. When we read into the Scriptures that which they do not say, we are bound to lose blessing.

With regard to this exhortation, and what he calls "private reading," John Wesley says: "Enthusiasts, observe this! Expect no end without the means" (Explanatory Notes Upon the New Testament, by John Wesley, at I Tim. 4:13). When we consider the many hours John Wesley spent in prayer, plus many more travelling by the most primitive means, plus still many more studying the Word and preaching, the weight of his words on this subject of reading is impressive.

But many pastors also neglect practical exhortation in their preaching, sometimes because they hesitate to tread on the toes of the very ones who need such exhortations! These should take the Apostle's counsel here, especially

\textsuperscript{57} Cf. footnote at 3:14
since it is impossible to teach the Scriptures adequately without including its practical exhortations.

Still other pastors are weak on doctrine. They love to talk about the things of every-day life, but fail to study the Scriptures, either as to their great basic doctrines, or so that they might "rightly divide" them. This is a great pity. In Paul's epistles and throughout the Scriptures much is made of the importance of doctrine. Indeed, it is because Scripture doctrine has not been sufficiently emphasized that multitudes have "departed from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of demons." Thus the Apostle urges Timothy, not to take these matters lightly, but even while Paul still remains absent, to "give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine."

As to Timothy's calling, we have already discussed his gift of teaching, and how, during Paul's early ministry the gift of prophecy was still in force. With such a young man as Timothy in their midst at Philippi, it is not strange that some person with the gift of prophecy should say, "This man will be greatly used of God," and that, as Paul determined to take him into his ministry, the elders should unitedly lay their hands upon him, thus identifying themselves with him and saying in effect, "We believe God has called you into this service. We will stand behind you." This would further confirm what the prophet or prophets had declared. And now, absent from the Apostle and responsible to God for the congregation entrusted to his care, Timothy reads Paul's exhortation with regard to his special gift: "Neglect not the gift that is in thee. . . ." Any believer who has been given any gift for service in the cause of Christ, should be honored and should show his gratitude by making the most of it. Indeed, in his second letter to Timothy the Apostle again urges him: "Stir up the gift of God, which is in thee. . . ." (II Tim. 1:6).

Years ago Dan Crawford of Africa said, "A midlin' doctor is a poor thing, and a midlin' lawyer is a poor thing, but deliver me from a midlin' man of God!" Clearly, Paul was of the same mind. The work of God is not for those who are careless and irresponsible. It is for those who are determined, by God's grace, to give it their very best. Thus the Apostle continues - and to a young man already so signally reliable as Timothy:

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

"Give it all you've got," says Paul. Don't just study the Bible in a superficial way; "meditate on these things." A lost art this! We should cultivate it more resolutely, not merely reading the Scriptures and giving them a bit of superficial thought, but meditating, ruminating, pondering, until God's Word yields to us its richest meaning and blessing. This will make the study of the Word sheer
delight. It did for the writer of the first Psalm, for he says of the truly blessed man,

"... His delight is in the law of the Lord; and in His law cloth he meditate day and night" (Ver. 2).

And this is not all, for he goes on:

"And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither, and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper" (Ver. 3).

If this was so with regard to the Old Testament Scriptures then, how much more must it be so with regard to the study of the whole Bible now, in the light of the mystery revealed to Paul and all the riches of the grace of God!

This section of the epistle closes with the searching exhortation:

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

Note: "unto thyself and unto the doctrine." Both are important. What you teach is obviously of vital consequence, but how this is received will depend largely upon how you live. The testimony of your lips will mean little if not confirmed by your manner of life.

Note too: "Continue in them." Many religious leaders are telling us that in these days of change and upheaval we must be ready to "move fast." Actually, it is more important to "stand fast" mid the swirling tides of apostasy. In his second letter to Timothy the Apostle says:

"... evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived.

"BUT CONTINUE THOU... " (II Tim. 3:13,14).

Men of God should not be affected in their stand by outward circumstances and popular beliefs. We are told of the prophet Daniel:

"And Daniel continued even unto the first year of king Cyrus" (Dan. 1:21).

He continued true to God in Israel, first as a captive under Nebuchadnezzar and, then under Belshazzar, then under Darius, and finally under Cyrus. Kingdoms rose and fell, but Daniel "continued."
And as we continue godly conduct and sound doctrine, God will use us to "save" both ourselves and those who hear us.

58 The word "save" has a broad range of meaning in Scripture. Here, evidently, it refers to deliverance from the apostasy of Vers. 1,2 and from spiritual shipwreck, from failure and disgrace in the Christian life.
Chapter VIII - I Timothy 5:1-16

THE WIDOW'S PENSION

A SENSITIVE PROBLEM

"Rebuke not an elder, but entreat him as a father; and the younger men as brethren;

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

- I Timothy 5:1,2

If only we could be transported back to Timothy's day and spend a month or two living with him and mingling with the members of his congregation, we might be in a better position to understand all the details of Paul's charge to him in I Tim. 5:1-16! There is, however, much that we can understand as we heed the exhortation to "meditate upon these things" (4:15).

A question that may well arise in the minds of thoughtful readers of this passage is: Why does the Apostle open this passage on pensions for needy widows with an exhortation to Timothy to show a proper attitude toward the elders and other members of his congregation?

As we ponder over this question will it not become evident that in so sensitive a matter as the distribution of financial aid to the needy within the assembly, personal preferences and prejudices might well assert themselves? Such factors as personal relationships, differing views as to worthiness, depth of need, etc., might well enter in. One of the most respected elders of the congregation, for example, might feel that a relative of his, a needy widow, is not being treated as generously as another, in his opinion, less needy or less deserving - and he might show that he is offended over this. Or, envy might enter in among those receiving such relief.

But would God's people act in such a manner? Some did in the Pentecostal Church (Acts 6:1), and some still do! We must always remember that the children of God are the children of Adam too.
We believe that it was with this factor of failing human nature in view, and with the possibility in view that actual inequities might prevail - and certainly with Timothy's comparative youth in view, that the Apostle gave him such detailed instructions about the matter, first cautioning him, however, that he should never rebuke an elder, but should "entreat him as a father," and should show due respect to the elder women and the younger men and women as well. Thus Paul did not ignore patent facts, but, like the apostles in Acts 6, did something about the problem.

This matter of showing respect for others especially for one's elders - is most important. When this writer was young it was sometimes said that of all the nations, the youth of the United States alone failed to show proper respect for their elders. This attitude on the part of the young has since become much more widespread, though in some countries the young still deeply respect their elders.

Disrespect for elders, however, is by no means confined to modern life (Rom. 1:30). Youth has always tended to be over-confident, and the Scriptures consistently warn against this tendency.

An apt illustration is that of King Rehoboam. He had inherited an unhappy situation from his father, Solomon. There was great unrest about the heavy taxes being levied, and a large delegation of the people of Israel had presented themselves before Rehoboam to complain and to seek better treatment.

Hereupon Rehoboam did the proper thing and consulted with the "old men" who had reigned with his father. They advised him to take a conciliatory course, but this was not the advice Rehoboam wanted to hear, so...

"... he forsook the counsel of the old men ... and consulted with the young men that were grown up with him, and which stood before him" (I Kings 12:8).

How typical, even today, for young men to go to each other rather than to their elders for advice, sometimes even in the most important matters.

The advice of the young men in Rehoboam's case differed diametrically from that of the old men. They advised him to show strength and to tell the people that their yoke would be made, not lighter, but much heavier (Vers. 10,11). Ah, this was more like it! The people must know that he is their king, not their servant! Thus at the appointed time the people came to present themselves again before him.

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59 How sensitively the Apostle adds, "with all purity," where Timothy's association with the younger women is concerned!

60 Although Rehoboam was then already 41 years of age (I Kings 14:21), somewhat older than Timothy was now, but surely not as mature.
"And the king answered the people roughly, and forsook the old men's counsel that they gave him;

"And spoke to them after the counsel of the young men (Vers. 13,14).

For that blunder Rehoboam lost most of his kingdom in a revolt that will not be reversed until the Lord's return.

True, God was working out His plans to discipline His wayward people, but this did not excuse Rehoboam for his folly and pride. Young men who truly desire to be used of God do well to consider carefully the story of Rehoboam.

WIDOWS INDEED

"Honor widows that are widows indeed.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

"Having damnation [condemnation], because they have cast off their first faith."
"And withal they learn to be idle, wandering about from house to house; and not only idle, but tattlers also and busybodies, speaking things which they ought not.

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

"For some are already turned aside after Satan.

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

- I Timothy 5:3-16

It seems evident from this passage that the local churches, or at least the church at Ephesus, kept rolls of needy widows who were eligible for pensions, for whose daily provision the churches made themselves responsible. In return these widows were expected to give what service they could to the congregation. This special care of destitute widows by the Church prevailed even in the Pentecostal era, as we have seen from Acts 6:1. It should be borne in mind that under the Roman Empire there were no such arrangements as Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid, Unemployment Compensation or Social Welfare.

The Church, therefore, felt morally responsible to offer financial relief to its needier members. It should be noted, however, that the Apostle was much more strict as to the expenditure of such monies than are many of our welfare agencies today.

The Apostle opens his instructions on this subject with the general statement:

"Honor widows that are widows indeed" (Ver. 3).

The English word honor evidently had a wider connotation four centuries ago than it does today. From our Lord's words in Matt. 15:4-6 it is clear that the Greek word at least included, or implied, financial responsibility. There our Lord declares that one who brought a gift toward the support of Israel's religion while his parents were in need was guilty of breaking the commandment: "Honor thy father and thy mother." And in Eph. 6:1,2 Paul commands that children should not only obey their parents, but should honor them. In the passage before us the Apostle directs that such honor - more than respect - should be accorded by the church to "widows indeed." But what are widows indeed? Which widows were eligible for this financial relief?

First, they must be truly needy.
"If any widow have children or nephews, let them first learn to show piety [reverence] at home, and to requite their parents: for this is good and acceptable before God" (Ver. 4).

"But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith and is worse than an infidel [unbeliever]" (Ver. 8).

Here we see again how frugally and responsibly the Lord's money should be used. Indeed, the Apostle explains further:

"If any man or woman that believeth hath widows, let them relieve them, and let not the church be charged; that it may relieve them that are widows indeed" (Ver. 16).

Second, no widow should be included who is under 60 years of age (See Ver. 9), for, though perhaps beginning to give enthusiastic service as pensioners, they are too apt to become restive and to marry again (Ver. 11), bringing condemnation (Ver. 12), or a feeling of guilt, upon themselves for having allowed the church to care for them and having now left their special place of usefulness for Christ. The word "faith," here, must surely be taken in its subjective sense. A Christian widow, married for the second time, surely did not thereby cast off her faith in Christ, but her faithfulness to Him in the ministry she had undertaken.

But there might be the real danger, as the Apostle points out in Ver. 13, that a young widow might become a gad-about, a gossip, and a busybody. This can apply not only to "The Merry Widow" of secular song, but even to Christian young women who are not truly dedicated to Christ.

Third, to be eligible for the widows' pension, she must have been "the wife of one man" (Ver. 9). With polygamy so widespread in Paul's day, he would guard against the possibility that an applicant for widows' aid might have another husband somewhere.

Fourth, a widow, to be eligible for the pension, must be:

"Well reported of for good works; [must have] brought up children . . . lodged strangers . . . washed the saints' feet . . . relieved the afflicted (and] diligently followed every good work" (Ver. 10).

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61 *Ekgonos* means simply descendants, or offspring, but in old English these were sometimes called nephews.

62 See the author's booklet, *The Faith of Christ*.

63 A service surely needed then and there!
Such requirements may seem unduly strict to us, the children of a soft generation, but think how they would tend to promote true godliness and good works in the church! In our irresponsible economy many people who are sound in body choose to collect unemployment compensation rather than to work for a living, since they can thus collect almost as much for doing nothing. But it goes without saying that a widow who could fulfill the above qualifications would be most apt to do what she could for the congregation in its service for Christ. And not the least of this will be her faithfulness in prayer (Ver. 5). How many dear Christian widows spend much time in prayer, always remembering to bring the servants of Christ and the needs of the cause of Christ before the throne of grace.

"But she that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth" (Ver. 6).

Self-gratification can never bring one, experientially, the life that every Christian should enjoy (See Rom. 8:6,12,13). Probably the widow who lived in self-indulgence did not need to have the church provide for her, and certainly she did not deserve it.

Note carefully the word "therefore" in Ver. 14:

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

It is in view of the inherent problems and temptations associated with young widowhood that the Apostle writes thus, though doubtless it also has its lessons for young unmarried women. The Church in America and much of the world today has departed far from the will of God expressed in this important passage, and many modern governments have made it unduly difficult for young parents to carry it out.

A DISPENSATIONAL LESSON

Before leaving this section of the epistle something should be said with regard to Verse 8, where a significant dispensational consideration is involved.

Our Lord, while on earth, had instructed His disciples:

"Consider the ravens: for they neither sow nor reap; which neither have storehouse nor barn; and God feedeth them: how much more are ye better than the fowls!" (Luke 12:24).

"And seek not ye what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink. (Ver. 29)."

64 The idea is not that of “fun” or diversion, but of self-indulgence.
". . . take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat; neither for the body, what ye shall put on" (Ver. 22).

"Sell that ye have, and give alms. . ." (Ver. 33).

Was this not a flat contradiction of the Scriptures as a whole and of the advice of Solomon, who said in effect, "You had better make provision for tomorrow. It will not always be summertime. The storms of winter are coming":

"Go to the ant, thou sluggard; consider her ways and be wise.

"Which, having no guide, overseer, or ruler.

"Provideth her meat in the summer and gathereth her food in the harvest" (Prov. 6:6-8).

How can we reconcile this with the words of our Lord in Luke 12? The answer is to be found in the very context itself, for it was because the long-promised kingdom was now at hand that He bade them sell their belongings and give alms:

"Fear not little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.


Ah, but Israel had rejected the King and His kingdom, and it is now held in abeyance until a future day. We are now living in what Paul, by inspiration, calls "this present evil age" (Gal. 1:4). Thus the Apostle bids us, as it were, to take Solomon's advice again for the present.

While on earth our Lord bade His disciples not to prepare for the morrow, but now, from heaven, He bids us through His apostle, Paul:

"If any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel [unbeliever] (I Tim. 5:8).

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65 The author goes into this subject in greater depth in his booklet, The Ant and the Raven.
Indeed, throughout Paul’s epistles the risen Lord instructs us, as it were, that *now* His commands to His disciples to dispose of their earthly goods and take no thought for the morrow, are no longer in effect. Now it is rather: "IF ANY WILL NOT WORK, NEITHER SHALL HE EAT" (See II Thes. 3:10), and "IF ANY PROVIDE NOT FOR HIS OWN ... HE HATH DENIED THE FAITH, AND IS WORSE THAN AN UNBELIEVER" (I Tim. 5:8).

Thus God teaches us, in "this present evil age," to give sympathetic aid to those in financial need, but not to those who can and should help themselves. This is an important lesson for our day, when millions of lazy, irresponsible people expect to be supported at the expense of those who bear more than their share of toil.

It is the lesson of Gal. 6:2 and 5 all over again: "Bear ye one another’s burdens" and "every man shall bear his own burden." What joy we would bring to others, and to ourselves, if we gladly helped to bear a brother’s heavy load, yet expected no help from others in bearing ours!67

66 I.e., "the faith" proclaimed by Paul (Gal. 3:23; Eph. 4:5), received by revelation from the glorified Lord.

67 Actually the word "burden" in Ver. 2 is the Greek *baros*, that which presses or bears down, while the "burden" in Ver. 5 is *phortion*, an assigned load, as the load of a ship or of a soldier’s knapsack.
BISHOPS AND PROSPECTIVE BISHOPS

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

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

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

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

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

"Lay hands suddenly on no man, neither be partaker of other men's sins: keep thyself pure.

"Drink no longer water, but use a little wine for thy stomach's sake and thine often infirmities.

"Some men's sins are open beforehand, going before to judgment; and some men they follow after.

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

- I Timothy 5:17-25

A superficial reading of the above passage might give one the impression that it has to do merely with Timothy's relationships with various segments of his congregation. The more this writer considers it, however, the more he is persuaded that the whole passage revolves around the subject of the bishopric, or overseership.

ELDERS WHO RULE WELL

First the Apostle utters a solemn injunction with regard to "elders that rule well" (Vers. 17-19), in which we learn again (1), that those who "rule" must be taken
from among the "elders." Also (2), the essence of their overseership, and (3), that they are to be highly respected.

Note: "the elders that rule well." Does this not again emphasize that the overseers, who "rule," should also be "elders"?

But the word "rule" is particularly appropriate here, for it reveals the essence of Scriptural "overseership." The word "rule," here, is the Greek proistemi, which is consistently - and correctly - rendered "rule" in the A.V., except in two cases where it could only be rendered "maintain" Tit. 3:8,14, both of which are exhortations to "maintain good works."

Does not this give us a clear insight into the meaning of the same word translated "rule" when applied to the overseers? Their function is not merely to give out orders. They are not to be dictators (I Pet. 5:3). We have enough of these in the professing Church today, so that in some denominations, and especially in the Church of Rome, the clergymen wield almost absolute religious authority. This, of course, enslaves the hearts, minds and consciences of men who cannot be commanded by God as were the "noble" Bereans for not taking even Paul's word for granted, but rather "searching the Scriptures daily, whether those things were so" (Acts 17:11).

The bishops, or overseers, then, were responsible to maintain the local ministry, to maintain order in the assembly, to keep it functioning Scripturally, etc.

Viewed in this light, how appropriate that the Apostle should declare that "elders that 'rule' well" should be counted worthy of "double honor," and especially "they who labor in the Word and doctrine" (Ver. 17). How invaluable to any local congregation is a pastor like Timothy, and other overseers who labor with him to keep the local church true to Christ and true to the Word of God! Such men are indeed "worth their weight in gold"- and gold, or money, is involved here, for in this passage again the word "honor" clearly involves showing special respect in a financial way. Those members of local churches who live in luxury themselves, while expecting those in the work of the Lord to somehow make ends meet, should read this passage thoughtfully:

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

"For the Scripture saith, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn. And, the laborer is worthy of his reward" (Vers. 17,18).

In writing about this law regarding oxen, Paul wrote to the ungenerous Corinthians:
"... Doth God take care for oxen?

"Or saith He it altogether for our sakes? For our sakes no doubt this is written, that he that ploweth should plow in hope; and that he that thresheth in hope should be partaker of his hope.

"If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your carnal [material] things?" (I Cor. 9:9-11).

It is not encouraging to a pastor to have to struggle to make ends meet, especially when there are those in his congregation who could so easily help to make his load lighter. And this would have a tendency to discourage him even as far as his own ministry is concerned, for it would indicate to him that the people under his ministry are not being greatly blessed.

While standing by what we have said about the pastor not being a dictator, it is a sad fact on the other hand that in some quarters there is a shameful lack of respect for those whom God has called to be overseers in the Church. How many congregations lightly esteem men of God who labor diligently to do them good! Here, in I Tim. 5:17,18, the Holy Spirit rebukes this attitude. The man of God who fulfills the qualifications of the first part of Ver. 17 should indeed be greatly respected - and the congregation should show it by their treatment of him.

But there is further encouragement here for those who study and teach the Word. All pastors and overseers are not naturally teachers. Some do their best, and receive God's blessing for keeping their hearers at least true to the Word. But God has given us some who are "pastors and teachers" (Eph. 4:11). This is delightful and helpful to the hearers, but few realize how much strength is drained from the pastor when he is engaged in intense study and meditation in the Word, and again when he pours himself out, as it were, in delivering his message to the congregation. "Much study is a weariness to the flesh" says Eccl. 12:12, and any teacher of the Word, who seeks to proclaim "the deep things of God" so that his hearers can understand them and be blessed by them, knows that preaching is also "a weariness to the flesh"! Thus the Apostle, after having urged "double honor" for the man of God who maintains the testimony well, adds the word "especially" with regard to those "who labor in the Word and doctrine."

With further reference to the respect due elder brethren, the Apostle continues:

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68 Granted, this is sometimes the fact of the matter. Yet the Corinthian church, doubtless the largest of Paul's congregations, did not sacrifice enough to meet even his meager needs, so that he had to make tents for a living even while conducting so strenuous an evangelistic campaign.
"Against an elder receive not an accusation, but before two or three witnesses" (Ver. 19).

An illustration may help here, to show the reason for this:

Two men, members of a large city church, generally walked to work together along a route that took them past their pastor's home. Generally they would note that the pastor was already up and about, probably having breakfast. One morning, however, they saw him standing, with arms outstretched, greeting and then embracing - his maid!? They were appalled and agreed not to utter a breath about the matter to anyone, both certain that so sincere a man of God as he would be troubled about this and that the Lord would deal with him about it.

Sunday after Sunday, however, the pastor brought seemingly powerful messages from the Word, and the two brethren wondered that he could stray so far from moral behavior and yet speak with such liberty.

Finally it troubled them so that they agreed to carry out I Tim. 5:19. They went to the official board of the church and, with great difficulty and hesitation, told them their story. The pastor was away at the time, but the board did the right thing and, upon his return, asked him to appear before them and explain the matter.

Thankfully, for the pastor, for the members of his board, and for the two brethren involved, the matter was easily explained. The maid had been unable to come to work that morning because of illness. Hereupon the pastor's wife, to surprise and please him, put on the maid's uniform and went to the kitchen to make breakfast ready. When she appeared, her husband rose, met her with outstretched arms, and embraced her! How well it was that the two brethren had taken I Tim. 5:19 seriously - and how grateful the pastor must have been to have had such men in his congregation, probably assuring them again and again that there was no need to apologize!

As to Ver. 20, the author is persuaded that in the light of the general context and especially of Ver. 22, the Apostle is still discussing elders and especially overseers.

"Them that sin,"69 he says, "rebuke before all, that others also may fear" (Ver. 20). It is one thing to respect a sincere man, even if only for his age or his position. But it is quite another to show or ask respect for a hypocrite, one who teaches godliness, but lives in sin. Of such, says Paul, examples should be made; they should be publicly rebuked that others may fear.

69 Present active participle; i.e., those who practice sin, or live in sin.
How consistently all this shows the importance of the office of the overseer and even the special responsibility devolving upon elder brethren in Christ. And the importance of this matter is further emphasized as Paul charges Timothy "before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect angels," to observe all this without personal preference or partiality (Ver. 21).

The author is, at this writing, an old man and has often observed the fact that while some may be offended temporarily as the pastor observes these solemn instructions conscientiously, most will respect and even love him for it in the end if he does so without partiality, not giving personal friends preference, but treating all on the same basis.

How appropriate, too, is the Apostle's caution not to "lay hands" on any man too readily, lest he unwittingly become a partaker of "other men's sins" (Ver. 22).

All who seek office in the church, or who might seem promising to the pastor, are not necessarily sincere and upright.

With some, the objections are evident, for their sins are "open beforehand," but this is not always the case. With some men "they follow after." These make a good showing at first, but their sins and failures are eventually revealed (Vers. 24,25), sometimes to the loss and sorrow of the assembly.

Thus, says the Apostle, don't too readily promote any man to position. You may regret it. Rather carefully investigate the background and life of any prospective overseer.

But what does verse 23 have to do with all this? Why is the subject of wine injected into this passage? The answer: With such responsibilities and the anxiety involved, it is not strange that Timothy should have digestive problems. Is it not a tender and beautiful thing, then, that the Apostle injects here among all his solemn charges!

"Drink no longer water, but use a little wine for thy stomach's sake and thine often infirmities" (Ver. 23).

Knowing of Timothy's utter sincerity and evidently suspecting that he would not touch intoxicating beverages, the Apostle prescribed a medicine to help him. Let no man suppose that this passage negates such passages as Prov. 20:1, but observe carefully the language of Paul's words here: "Use," as a means to an end, "a little," and this not as a "cordial," but as a medicine: "for thy stomach's sake and thine often infirmities."

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70 I.e., only water.
ANOTHER DISPENSATIONAL LESSON

The above proves that the era of healing powers had by then passed from the scene. The Apostle, who had healed so many with a word or a touch during his early ministry could not, certainly did not, do so now. Indeed he himself was called upon to endure physical infirmity, even though he had earnestly prayed for deliverance (II Cor. 12:7-9).

Similarly he could not heal Epaphroditus (Phil. 2:27) and had had to leave Trophemus at Miletum sick (II Tim. 4:20). All of them together had to learn the precious lesson of II Cor. 12, that God's blessing in sickness can be a greater triumph than deliverance from sickness, since God assures us: "My grace is sufficient for thee; for My strength is made perfect in weakness" (II Cor. 12:9), and the Apostle bears witness: "Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities ... for when I am weak, then am I strong" (Ver. 10).

Surely it must be obvious to the thoughtful believer that when we are well and strong in body we are more apt to forget our need of divine help, while when we are weak and ill we are apt to pray more earnestly and lean more heavily on Him, the source of our strength. Thus, in our infirmities, we take sensible measures to keep well, but in the final analysis commit ourselves to Him.

"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them that are the called according to His purpose" (Rom. 8:28).
Chapter X - I Timothy 6:1-21

GOD AND THE CHRISTIAN LIFE

GOD AND HUMAN RELATIONS

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

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

- I Timothy 6:1,2

This is indeed a passage against which the old Adamic nature, still puffed up with pride, rebels. Yet it is God's Word on the subject of human relations and, when humbly accepted, brings happiness and true blessing.

Ever since Cain killed Abel, unhappy human relations, have posed a problem which nations and organizations have found it impossible to permanently solve.

After some 4,000 years of trouble and strife, the long-promised "Prince of Peace" arrived and proclaimed a truly blessed way of life (Matt. 5,6,7) to prevail in the kingdom over which He was to reign according to prophecy (Jer.23:5,6). The King and His kingdom, however, were rejected - also according to prophecy - so that He returned to heaven a Royal Exile (Psa. 2:1-3; 110:1).

At Pentecost and immediately thereafter, Peter called upon Israel to repent so that Christ might return and bring in the prophesied "times of refreshing" (Acts 2:38; 3:19-21). For this brief period of time the disciples of Christ were "all filled with the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2:4) and did enjoy perfect human relations - a foretaste of kingdom blessing.

"And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul: neither said any of them that ought of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common . . . Neither was there any among them that lacked. . ." (Acts 4:32-34).

Peter's offer of Messiah's return was rejected, however, and the glorious reign of Christ on earth now awaits a future day, with the result that the darkness of

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71 About 5,000 men alone (Acts 4:4).
"this present evil age" has settled down upon the world, and our leaders continue to strive in vain to achieve any lasting improvement in the relations between the various races and classes of men.

After nearly 6,000 years of futile effort, men are still trying to bring "lasting peace" to a troubled world, too blind to see that there cannot be peace among fallen men who have rejected the "Prince of Peace."

The world's only hope is the return of the exiled Christ. Not until He comes back to earth will men "beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks" (Isa. 2:4). Not until He reigns will "peace on earth" be enjoyed to the full among nations and individuals (Jer. 23:5,6; Acts 3:19-21).

The foregoing, however, does not wholly apply to believers in Christ, for these may, by God's grace, experience good relations with each other - and more: blessed fellowship in Christ as members of His Body.

Apart from Christ men cannot know God (John 1:18; 14:6). Indeed, apart from Christ men cannot even know each other. The human ego stands in the way, and the "front" it erects. Only those who have acknowledged their sin and guilt, and have received salvation by faith in Christ who died for our sins - only these can enjoy true fellowship, for true oneness is to be found in Christ alone. Hence no two people can enjoy such close and blessed communion as two Christians -- two members of the Body of Christ. It is with believers, then, that we deal in our study of I Tim. 6, for only among them does there exist the possibility of truly blessed relations.

**GOD AND CHRISTIAN RELATIONSHIPS**

It is touching to see, in passages like Col. 3:18 - 4:1, how our exalted Lord steps down in grace to enter our lives, our homes, our businesses, to show us how to conduct them for His glory and our own blessing.

Much is written about human relations these days, but nothing that begins to compare with God's Word on the subject - nothing that begins to hold so much promise of blessed results. God's instructions for good human relations are as high above those of the world even the religious world - as the heavens are high above the earth.

**RANK, RIGHTS AND RIGHTEOUSNESS**

On every hand we are being told that "all men are equal." This has been repeated so often that most people accept it without question. This statement is, however, at best misleading.
It is true that before God all men are equal and we may thank Him that He is "no respecter of persons." But in relation to each other none of us are equal. The husband and his wife are not equal. Parents and their children are not equal. The employer and his employee are not equal. Citizens and their rulers are not equal, and certainly the motorist and that man in uniform are not equal when the motorist has been speeding! No two people are exactly equal - not even identical twins.

If anything makes for unhappiness it is anarchy and disorder-which stem from the claim that we are all equal. Thus God (as in Col. 3:18 - 4:1) exhorts us to recognize rank as He goes in each case to deal with the weaker party first, urging subjection and obedience, and then deals with the stronger, exhorting him to show an attitude of fairness and Christian love.

How different this is from the interminable human relations discussions in the world about us! Men are continually crying for their rights, supposing that they will gain true happiness if they can only get what's coming to them. But God says to His children: "Do what is right and you will be blessed." In a word, the world cries: "My rights!" while God emphasizes righteousness.

Granted, many inequities prevail while some are rich, some poor, some educated, some illiterate, some higher, some lower in rank. But order is always better than chaos and the believer recognizes that God, for His own good reasons, has ordained that there should be differences in station among men and this knowledge gives His people due respect for authority, seniority and rank. And this, in turn, makes for peace and harmony.

In the light of these basic observations, let us now turn to I Tim. 6:1,2.

First it should be noted that the word "servants" in I Tim. 6:1, is the familiar Greek word doulos, bondman. This word is used 126 times in the New Testament and simply means slave. Its Hebrew equivalent, ebed, is used hundreds of times in the Old Testament.

But did Paul believe in slavery; did God sanction it? In answer it should first be observed that all slavery in history is not to be placed in the same category as that which we, in America, have so sadly experienced in our past history. Here negroes in certain parts of Africa sold their own flesh and blood to white Americans, who then sold them as if they were nothing more than chattel.
In Paul's day, however, men were held as slaves for varied reasons. Even under the Law of Moses slaves were sometimes acquired in war as the spoils of victory (Deut. 20:13,14), while others, in default of debts could be sold, or could sell themselves, into slavery so that their masters could assume their debts for them, (Ex. 21:2; Lev. 25:47). Technically, Hebrew masters were not to subject their brethren to abject slavery, but were to treat them as hired servants (Lev. 25:39,40). However the "wages" paid often consisted of mere lodging, food and clothing-sometimes at the servant's wish so that the debt might be paid off the sooner. Thieves too could be sold into slavery (Ex. 22:1-4). There was also voluntary slavery (Deut. 15:16,17). And if all these forms of slavery existed in Israel, how many more might exist in pagan lands. Nor would slaves always be treated so humanely among the pagans as God commended the people of Israel to treat their slaves.

There were, then, various kinds of slavery in Paul's day, but whatever the particular circumstances, the condition existed as part of the prevailing culture. Now what should be done about it?

In Col. 3:18 - 4:1, where the Apostle deals with human relations in general, what does he suggest with regard to bondmen? Does he say: "Rise and rebel! Assert your rights?" This is the cry today, even in much less aggravated cases of injustice, where no actual slavery exists, but as a result great bitterness and deep hatreds are being engendered.

Certainly this approach to the problem is not based on the Word of God. There we read: "Servants [bondmen], obey in all things your masters according to the flesh." And this obedience, he goes on to say, should be sincere and from the heart: "not with eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but in singleness of heart ... heartily, as to the Lord" (Col. 3:22,23).

Four times in this brief passage, believing bondmen are reminded that their basic relationship is to the Lord; they are to be His slaves first of all:

"Obey ... heartily, as to the Lord ... knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward ... for ye serve the Lord Christ ... and there is no respect of persons [i.e., with Him]" (Vers. 22-25).

Hence before God the believing bondslave occupies a position not one whit lower than that of his master. In this connection the Apostle declares in I Cor. 7:22,23:

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72 Hebrew and Roman laws were not as lax as our American laws where bankruptcy was concerned. Men could not squander their funds in reckless business enterprises and the leave their debts unpaid by simply going into bankruptcy.
"For he that is called in the Lord, being a servant, is the Lord's freeman: likewise also he that is called, being free, is Christ's servant [bondslave]."

"Ye are bought with a price: be not ye the servants [slaves] of men."

The meaning is clear: it is the Lord who asks the believing bondman: "Do this for Me." Thus the bondman who thus submits himself to the Lord is not in bondage to any man, but only to Christ. And thus it is that the Apostle, here in I Tim. 6:1 says:

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

And he goes farther than this, curbing incipient rebellion among bondmen who might take advantage of the fact that their masters too are believers. To these he says:

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

At this point we could fill many pages with a discussion of that which the Apostle says to believing masters, but the subject here dealt with is God's will for the slave, the bondman. However, we do have a record of a letter Paul penned to one such master, Philemon, with regard to his slave, Onesimus.

It appears that Onesimus had robbed his master (perhaps for wages he felt were his due) and had fled to Rome. There, providentially, he had come to know Christ through the ministry of Paul.

Now that Onesimus was saved, Paul did not say: "You were right, and the money you took was coming to you." Far from it! Rather he sent him back to his master - that was simple obedience to the civil law. But, he also sent a letter to Philemon-the famous epistle bearing his name. In this letter the Apostle said:

"I beseech thee for my son Onesimus, whom I have begotten in my bonds:

"Which in time past was to thee unprofitable, but now profitable to thee and to me;

"Whom I have sent again: thou therefore receive him. . . .

73 I.e., of their services. How much better to have a believing master receive the benefit of one's service, than to be serving a godless unbeliever!
"For perhaps he therefore departed for a season, that thou shouldest receive him forever;

"Not now as a servant, but above a servant, a brother beloved, specially to me, but how much more to thee, both in the flesh, and in the Lord" (Vers. 10-16).

In all this the Apostle emphasizes, not rights but righteousness - and more, grace. He does not tell one what to demand from the other, but speaks to each about himself, and his responsibility to glorify God.

This would not be the world's solution to a similar problem, but then, the world does not know God, nor have the great champions of human "rights" experienced that which has brought believers so much blessing: "the renewing of your mind," an attitude which views other things in the light of God's Word, rather than viewing God's Word in the light of other things.

But the Apostle goes even farther than this.

THE WORDS OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST

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

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

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

- I Timothy 6:3-5

Strange it is that so often this passage has been used in attacks against those who recognize the unique character of Paul's apostleship and ministry. "Withdraw thyself from these dispensationalists," they say, "for they make more o the words of Paul than of 'the words of our Lord Jesus Christ,'" failing to notice the simple fact that Paul here insists that his words are "the words of our Lord Jesus Christ." Note the connection of his words here with the last words of the preceding verse:

74 Constantly stirring up to rebellion those whose "rights" they champion.
"These things teach and exhort. If any man teach otherwise. . . ." Otherwise than what? Obviously otherwise than "these things" which he had commanded Timothy to "teach," for these were "sound words,"75 they were "according to godliness." Indeed, they were "the words of our Lord Jesus Christ," committed to him by revelation (Gal. 1:11,12; Tit. 1:3).

How Paul insists upon this in his stern rebuke of the carnal Corinthians:

"If I come again I will not spare, SINCE YE SEEK A PROOF OF CHRIST SPEAKING IN ME" (II Cor. 13:2,3).

Thus it is to the exhortations of Vers. 1,2 of this chapter in I Timothy, that the Apostle bids us to "consent." To teach that he meant that believers should submit to the message of Christ on earth is to ignore the context, to pervert the gospel of the grace of God, and to make Paul - yea God - contradict Himself, for did not Paul write by inspiration:

"... Yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh,76 yet now henceforth know we Him no more" (II Cor. 5:16).

FROM SUCH WITHDRAW THYSELF

Those who stir up the various segments of society by calling upon them to rise and assert their rights are not teaching a "doctrine which is according to godliness," but one which arouses strife, bitter accusations, evil suspicions (Ver. 4), etc., all on the false premise that "gain is godliness" (Ver. 5), that if they had all the things they wish for it would mean that they were blessed of God. But such are "destitute of the truth" (Ver. 5).

"From such," says the Apostle, "withdraw thyself" (Ver. 5). They will do you no good with their temporal, materialistic outlook.

GODLINESS WITH CONTENTMENT

"But godliness with contentment is great gain.

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

"And having food and raiment, let us be therewith be content.

75 "Wholesome," here is rendered "sound" elsewhere, e.g., II Tim. 1:13.
76 As some of them may well have known Him.
"But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition.

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

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

- I Timothy 6:6-11

And now, in a beautiful play on words, the Apostle declares that "godliness with contentment is great gain." This is a lesson that the slave and his master, the poor and the rich both need to learn, for both may "will" to be rich - or richer- (Ver. 9), both may be gripped by "the love of money" (Ver. 10).

Happy is the believer who is godly and content! Happy is he who truly takes in the fact that "we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out." What good is it to be bent on acquiring more and more and still more of this world's riches when we will soon - all too soon - be forced to give it all up again? How much better to be bent, whatever our lot, on attaining to true godliness so as to enjoy more fully God's presence with us while here on earth and to be the better prepared one day to meet Him who gave His all, His very life, for us! The Apostle writes in a similar vein to the Hebrews:

"Let your conversation [conduct] be without covetousness, and be content with such things as ye have: for He hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee" (Heb. 13:5).

Jonathan Edwards well said: "Grace is the godly man's treasure; godliness the gain he covets."

Believers who "will be rich," actually invite temptation, setting a "snare," a trap, for themselves, with "many foolish and hurtful lusts," or desires, "which drowned men," i.e., the lost, "in destruction and perdition" (Ver. 9).

For some reason our translators felt that the definite article is implied in Ver. 10, but it is evident that the love of money is not "the root of all evil." A drunkard's over-indulgence does not spring from the love of money. David's sin with Bathsheba can hardly be attributed to "the love of money." Peter's sin in denying our Lord was not caused by "the love of money." Rather the sense is that the love of money is a root that is all evil. No good can spring from it. When the love of money takes root in a person's heart it can only bring forth evil fruit, and many believers who have coveted riches have, as a result, "erred from the
faith and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.,, Often the author has witnessed the planting of this evil root and has sadly watched it bring forth its evil fruit.

But the Apostle is not only thinking of slaves and their masters; he is also thinking of Timothy himself. What a tragedy it would be if "the love of money" should take root in him! Little wonder Paul, his spiritual father, warns him: "But thou, O man of God, flee these things" (Ver. 11). This expression is taken from the hunt. Flee from them as a deer pursued by the hounds. Flee from them as from mortal danger - mortal danger to your spiritual life. The Apostle has much to say about this in his Pastoral Epistles, and lays heavy emphasis upon it, doubtless because the temptation is so subtle.

How insidiously it works! The young pastor, when called into the ministry, did not mean to be untrue to his commission or to adulterate the message committed to him. It all happened so subtly.

He loved his people. He wanted them to love him, and rejoiced to see that they did. He got a taste of more money and better living. It would now be difficult to disappoint or hurt them. He has now received further light on the Word. But will they receive it? Oh, well, he need not preach everything he knows.

He finds upon indirect inquiry that they would not be very pleased to know what he believes. He maintains a discreet silence so as not to hurt them. However, it troubles him as he remembers that the Apostle Paul said, "If I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ" (Gal. 1:10), but gradually he has fallen into a form of simony and now it becomes more and more difficult to take an open stand for the truth. It pleases him that people do like him and show it by taking care of him so generously, but he becomes more and more hardened to his sin. He loses the sensitiveness he once had to the light God gave him from His precious Word. Indeed, the light he once had is gradually withdrawn until he finds himself a friendly opponent and then, little by little, a bitter enemy of those who would proclaim faithfully the whole counsel of God.

Yes, the sin of simony is subtle in its working and is more generally indulged in than is commonly supposed. We do not mean that faithful men are never loved by their people or generously provided for by them. But we do mean that the love of money, or of the things it will purchase, is a great temptation to unfaithfulness.

Hence the strong appeal from Paul to Timothy to "flee these things." Timothy was no mere "child of God"; he was now a "man of God," and with maturity comes greater responsibility. Thus he must not merely refrain from seeking riches; he must "flee" the desire to be rich, he must actively resist self-indulgence if he would save his ministry and his spiritual life from shipwreck.
And as Timothy must "flee" self-indulgence, he must "follow after" (another hunting expression) "righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness" (Ver. 11). These he must pursue vigorously, as the hunting dogs pursuing their quarry.

THE GOOD FIGHT

"Fight the good fight of [the] faith, lay hold on eternal life, where unto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses.

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

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

"Which in His times He shall show, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords:

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

- I Timothy 6:12-16

"I have read and profited by his writings. He was a sturdy and very able fighter." Thus wrote Lord Chaldecote of Sir Robert Anderson.

Many of us, too, have profited by Anderson's writings, and thank God that neither opposition nor allurement deterred him from making his magnificent contribution to the recovery of Scripture truth.

Indeed, has there ever been a representative man of God who was not a fighter? Could any servant of Christ ever find and proclaim further light on the Word without facing and resisting Satanic opposition?

Yet, alas, how few believers are ready to obey Eph. 6:10-18 in this respect! How few, comparatively, "put on the whole armor of God" and "fight the good fight of [the] faith"! Indeed, let one do so and a score of others will object: "Don't be negative." "Don't question the teachings of others; just teach what you believe." "The servant of the Lord must not strive."
While no child of God should go about, as it were, with a chip on his shoulder,” too many Christians seem to think that to get along sweetly and peacefully with everybody is the essence of spirituality. Perhaps this is because the vast majority of Christians are carnal and not spiritual. Surely they do not get their guidelines from the Epistles of Paul, nor even from the Bible as a whole. To Timothy, pastor at Ephesus, Paul writes:

"Fight the good fight of [the] faith; lay hold on eternal life" (Ver. 12).

Does not this imply that one who does not get into the battle for truth has failed to "lay hold on eternal life," to really get out of his life in Christ what it has for him? Paul surely sought to "lay hold" on that for which Christ had "laid hold" on him.\(^{78}\)

To the Ephesians themselves Paul had but recently written: ". . . be strong in the Lord .... Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil" (Eph. 6:10,11).

And, putting "the Sword of the Spirit" in one hand and "the shield of faith" in the other, he challenges them four times to "stand ... withstand ... stand ... stand!" And by God's grace we can:

"For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal [physical] but [they are] mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds" (II Cor. 10:4).

Thus in these letters to Timothy the Apostle's charge is: "War a good warfare.... Fight the good fight of the faith.... Endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ" (I Tim. 1:18; 6:12; and II Tim. 2:3). And at the close of his own mighty ministry he himself could say: "I have fought a good fight" (II Tim. 4:7).

We plead with those who have not yet put on the whole armor of God and gotten into the fray: the battle for truth is raging, but light is dawning and victory is at hand - and you asleep?

"It is high time to awake out of sleep.... The night is for spent, the day is at hand; let us therefore cast off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light."\(^{79}\)

When pondering over these things, Isaac Watts' great hymn often comes to the author's mind.

\(^{77}\) The Greek contains the definite article.

\(^{78}\) In Phil. 3:12 this term "lay hold" is rendered "apprehend."

\(^{79}\) The metaphor here is a striking one. It assumes that a battle is in progress in which you are needed. The nightclothes of indifference and careless living must be cast off as in haste, and the armor of light put on. Mark well: "the armor of light." The light of the Word is an armor - both offensive and defensive.
Am I a soldier of the cross,
   A follower of the Lamb?
And shall I fear to own His cause,
   Or blush to speak His name?

Must I be carried to the skies
   On flow'ry beds of ease,
While others fought to win the prize
   And sailed through bloody seas?

Are there no foes for me to face?
   Must I not stem the flood?
Is this vile world a friend to grace,
   To help me on to God?

Sure, I must fight it I would reign;
   Increase my courage, Lord.
I'll bear the toil, endure the pain
   Supported by Thy Word.

So important is this matter of standing, or standing up, for God's truth, that the Apostle solemnly charges Timothy before God and before the Lord Jesus Christ, to "keep this commandment without spot" until "the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Ver. 13,14), i.e., when he will be called upon to give an account at the bema (See I Cor. 3:12-15; 4:5; I Thes. 4:17; II Tim. 4:7,8).

The Apostle, of course, refers to the appearing of Christ to receive His own to Himself, for he follows this phrase with the words:

"Which [Who] in His own times ... shall show, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords;

"Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honor and power [authority] everlasting. Amen" (Vers. 15,16).

What glory awaits God's people! Now we serve our Lord as the ambassadors of an Exiled King, offering reconciliation to His enemies, often in vain, for still many despise Him and take His name in vain. But then! "Dedicated to the Lord" will be inscribed on the bells of the horses, on the dishes in the homes (Zech. 14:20,21), and will be the grand theme of Millennial joy! That blessed Savior, "whom having not seen we love," the Exiled King who has with such loving

80 I.e., intrinsically. Believers have immortality only in Him.
patience delayed His return to judge and reign, will then be worshipped and obeyed spontaneously as "King of kings, and Lord of lords!" That glorious day is coming-and we will enjoy it, indeed, "if we suffer [i.e., for Him] we shall also reign with Him" (II Tim. 2:12).

**CHARGE THE RICH!**

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

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

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

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

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

- I Timothy 6:17-21

Paul's admonition to "charge them that are rich" has nothing in common with Franklin Delano Roosevelt's "Soak the rich" program of the 1930s as the context clearly shows.

Had Timothy been living under the preceding dispensation, when our Lord was on earth, he would have had to tell the rich members of his congregation: "Sell that ye have, and give alms" (Luke 12:33). But in this very epistle the Apostle has already indicated that this program has passed from the scene. Indeed, instead of an "all things common" program such as was practiced at Pentecost, he now gives us explicit instructions that are more appropriate to "this present evil age":

"But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel [unbeliever]" (I Tim. 5:8).

Thus, earnestly as he has warned both pastor and people not to "will to be rich," earnestly as he has counselled them against the dangers of "the love of money," there was still the question of "them that are rich" (Ver. 17) - some perhaps had been born with large family fortunes - and he does not exhort them
to sell their holdings and distribute them for the common good. Rather he instructs Timothy to urge them, actually to "charge" them, as to their attitude under their particular circumstances. And how sensible and appropriate are his instructions:

1. That they "be not highminded." The temptation toward this attitude among the rich is very great, but it is not compatible with "godliness." Indeed, there is good reason for the rich to resist highmindedness, as the next phrase indicates:

2. That they "trust not in uncertain riches." How many rich people have learned by sad experience the truth of Prov. 23:5: "for riches certainly make themselves wings; they fly away as an eagle toward heaven." Indeed, many rich and self-centered, self-indulgent believers have been disciplined by God, for their good, as they have been stripped practically naked.

3. That they "trust in ... the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy." The term "living God," here shows that riches can become an idol which, in times of deepest trouble, can neither hear nor help. How much better, then, to bow in adoration before "the living God" and acknowledge Him as the One who has "given us richly all things to enjoy," realizing that we are merely His stewards, His trustees. If this is sincerely done the rest will follow naturally.

4. "That they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate" (Ver. 18). Note: "that they do good," not merely "be good." A rich believer may be godly in his moral conduct, yet be a veritable miser, clinging tightly for himself to that which God has entrusted to him. Hence Paul's "Charge them that are rich," to be generous contributors, gladly inclined to share with others. This is the sense of the last part of Ver. 18 and, of course, this joyful inclination to share with others would apply most importantly to sharing with others the riches of God's grace, sharing in the cost of making the blessed message known far and wide.

Thank God for the men and women of means who have used their wealth for His glory, investing generously in the cause of Christ. Such investments on the part of God's children comprise a sort of "spiritual nest egg" for "the time to come" (Ver. 19), for God will not forget their faithfulness to His cause when the time of rewards has arrived. And, indeed, this is an important way in which the rich may "lay hold on eternal life" (Ver. 19), getting out of the Christian life what it was meant to yield to them.

Ver. 20 is, perhaps, the most comprehensive and the most earnest of all of Paul's exhortations to Timothy:

"O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust, avoiding profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science, falsely so called:
"Which some, professing, have erred concerning the faith. (Vers. 20,21).

"That which is committed to thy trust" is, in the Greek, but two words: "that deposit," for a deposit is that which is committed to one's trust. We will have more to say about this in our notes on II Timothy, but here we point out merely that this deposit was "the form of sound words" (II Tim. 1:13) which Timothy had heard from Paul, and which Paul had received by revelation from his glorified Lord. Timothy was responsible to "keep," to guard, to defend, this great body of doctrine, whatever the cost. And to do this he must avoid all that is not vital, such as "profane and vain babblings [what disgust his words express!] and oppositions of science falsely so called," since some, professing to be scientifically-minded, had "erred concerning the faith" (I Tim. 6:20).

And what is the Apostle's very closing word?

"Grace be with thee. Amen."

To carry out all the instructions, commands, warnings, exhortations contained in this precious letter from his beloved friend and spiritual father, Timothy would indeed need the grace of God. But we may be sure that in moral and spiritual matters as well as in the realm of the physical, the Word of God to him would be:

"My grace is sufficient for thee, for My strength is made perfect in weakness" (II Cor. 12:9).

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81 The precise content of the message
82 In the sense of secular.
INTRODUCTION
to
THE SECOND EPISTLE OF PAUL TO TIMOTHY

PAUL'S CIRCUMSTANCES RADICALLY CHANGED

We come now to the last of Paul's epistles, written shortly before his execution at Rome, and with the knowledge that he was soon to die as a martyr for Christ. Thus this epistle holds for us a very special interest.

It is evident, as we read, that his situation has changed for the worse. He no longer writes about freedom of movement or about his plans for the future and, certainly, he is not allowed to dwell "in his own hired house," as had been the case when first held in bonds at Rome (See Acts 28:30).

The circumstances now must have been considerably less comfortable for the beloved apostle, who had labored so long and hard to bring salvation and blessing to others. In 4:13 he asks for a cloak and some reading material, and there are other indications that the circumstances were not pleasant and that he was not comfortable.

In his former letter to Timothy he had expressed the hope that he might still be able to visit his beloved son in the faith (I Tim. 3:14,15), but the sentence for his execution had now been pronounced and, by the grace of God, he could write Timothy that he was ready (II Tim. 4:4-6).

But there was more on the Apostle's mind at this time than his own welfare. Though he had labored so faithfully to make known the "gospel of the grace of God," a serious apostasy had set in and was growing steadily worse.

In I Timothy he had called the professing Church "the house of God," but now he describes it as "a great house," but does not call it the house of God. Moreover, he describes this "great house" as containing some vessels which bring honor to it and others which bring it dishonor (2:20, 21). It is not without significance that after the true Church has been caught away to be with Christ (I Thes. 4:16-18), what is left is described by the Apostle John as "the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird" (Rev. 18:2).

In addition to all this the Apostle was naturally concerned about Timothy's courage and endurance in the presence of so much unfaithfulness and corruption. Not that Timothy had not been outstanding in his fidelity to the truth, but he was young and delicate in health, and the apostasy was growing.
This is doubtless why the epistle has so much to say about standing and suffering for Christ and for the glorious message He had committed to Paul, and now to Timothy, for the present dispensation. It is also, evidently, why he so earnestly exhorts Timothy as to his conduct in the midst of the deepening decline in the Church.

What a help this epistle can be to the sincere believer now, with the shadows of ungodliness and apostasy deepening every day! How exactly its exhortations, encouragements and instructions fit our present circumstances!
Chapter I - II Timothy 1:1-5

PAUL TO HIS BELOVED TIMOTHY

THE APOSTOLIC GREETING

"Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, according to the promise of life which is in Christ Jesus,

"To Timothy, my dearly beloved son; grace, mercy, and peace, from God the Father, and Christ Jesus our Lord.

"I thank God, whom I serve from my forefathers with pure conscience, that without ceasing I have remembrance of thee in my prayers night and day:

"Greatly desiring to see thee, being mindful of thy tears, that I may be filled with joy:

"When I call to remembrance the unfeigned faith that is in thee, which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois, and thy mother Eunice; and I am persuaded that in thee also."

- II Timothy 1:1-5

AN APOSTLE BY THE WILL OF GOD

How consistently Paul introduces himself as "an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God." No man had better ascend the pulpit and minister to God's people if he has not been ordained to this ministry "by the will of God." In the case of Paul, however, this phrase has a deeper meaning. As we have seen from our studies in I Timothy, God had saved him, the chief of sinners, and had committed to his trust a wonderful message for all sinners. Explaining the reason for his conversion, he says:

"Howbeit, for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might show forth all longsuffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on Him to life everlasting" (I Tim. 1:16).

The meaning is clear. God had chosen him to be, not only the herald, but the living demonstration of the grace of God. He was to usher in "the dispensation of the grace of God" by the proclamation of "the gospel of the grace of God" (See Eph. 3:1-3; Acts 20:24).
The Apostle's reference to "the promise of life which is in Christ Jesus" (Ver. 1), is dealt with more fully in Tit. 1, though Timothy doubtless understood it. In Tit. 1:2 he declares that this promise of "eternal life" was made by "God, who cannot lie" and that He made this promise "before the world began." Clearly, He made this promise to Himself, and this is the "eternal purpose" of which the Apostle has so much to say. This promise of life was, of course, vested "in Christ Jesus," who was to pay the death penalty for all so that eternal life might be offered to all by grace. Thus in the 9th verse of this very chapter, we read that:

"[God] hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and [His own] grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began."

It is significant that in both passages the Apostle declares that it was given specifically to him to proclaim this glad news. Note:

"But hath in due times manifested His word through preaching which is committed unto me according to the commandment of God our Savior" (Tit. 1:3).

"But now is made manifest....

"Whereunto I am appointed a preacher, and an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles" (II Tim. 1:10, 11).

What light this sheds on Paul's opening declaration, here in II Tim. 1, that he is "an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, according to the promise of life which is in, Christ Jesus."

The revolt against Paul's apostolic authority as it has manifested itself during most of "the dispensation of the grace of God," has been nothing less than tragic. With such clear statements as those we have discussed above, in addition to a dozen or a score fully as clear, it is beyond understanding how, not merely Christians, but Christian leaders can deny the unique character of Paul's apostleship and make of him merely one of the apostles, and in some cases even one of the twelve apostles, as though he could have qualified for Judas' place.83

A DEARLY BELOVED SON

83 This subject is discussed at length in the author's Things That Differ, Pp. 122-125.
We saw in our study of I Timothy, how Timothy had been saved through Paul's ministry. Hence, in that letter he calls him "my own son in the faith" (1:2). Here in II Tim. 1:2, however, he calls him "my dearly beloved son." Timothy had gone through considerable testing since Paul had written to him and thus was now the dearer to him.

Again the Apostle, rather than wishing Timothy "grace and peace," his usual salutation, wishes him "grace, mercy, and peace," adding a tender note called forth, no doubt, by the troublous times and Timothy's delicate health.

In Ver. 3 the Apostle says, in the face of death,

"I thank God, whom I serve from my forefathers with pure conscience, that without ceasing I have remembrance of thee in my prayers night and day."

The Apostle thanked God that in his prayers Timothy naturally came to mind. He had been such a faithful friend and co-laborer. And observe, "I thank God, whom I serve from my forefathers with pure conscience."

PAUL AND THE BELIEVER'S CONSCIENCE

Paul has more to say about conscience than any other Bible writer. And he lived what he preached.

As he stood before the Sanhedrin he fixed his eyes intently on them, avowing that he - could they say as much? - had lived before God in all good conscience "until this day" (See Acts 23:1).

He had even conscientious (though conscientiously wrong) in his persecution of Christ (Acts 26:9), and while it is clear that he was not saved through obedience to his conscience, this characteristic of his make-up became the more strongly marked after his regeneration and enlightenment by the Holy Spirit.

Thus he could say to Felix:

"Herein do I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of offense toward God and toward man" (Acts 24:16).

And he proved this to Felix as he refused to yield to the temptation to seek freedom by giving him a bribe (Acts 24:26).

84 The Gr. for "son" is teknon, or "born one."
85 He adds "mercy" in his salutation to Titus too, for Titus' situation was in a way even more difficult than that of Timothy.
From his words in II Cor. 1:12 we learn something of what blessing a clear conscience can impart. There he says:

"For our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the world, and more abundantly to you-ward."

This is representative of many similar passages. Thus he consistently appealed to the consciences of others, saying to the Corinthian believers:

"[We] have renounced the hidden thing of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the Word of God deceitfully; but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God" (II Cor. 4:2).

Indeed, the Apostle emphasizes the importance of a clear conscience especially where financial matters are concerned. Not only did he exhort believers to "provide things honest in the sight of all men" (Rom. 12:17), but he himself was careful to practice this. In connection with the large contributions being made by the Gentile churches to the saints at Jerusalem, he wrote the Corinthians that along with Titus (sent to collect their contributions) he was sending another brother, who was well known to all the churches and appointed by them to travel with him in taking the gift to Jerusalem:

"Avoiding this, that no man should blame us in this abundance which is administered by us:

"Providing for honest things, not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of men" (II Cor. 8:20,21).

Indeed he had already written them:

"And when I come, whomsoever ye shall approve by your letters, them will I send to bring your liberality unto Jerusalem" (I Cor. 16:3).

When we consider that this letter represents not only Paul's words to Timothy, but God's Word to us, and especially to us pastors, we cannot help but feel that the reference in Ver. 3 to the matter of conscience is profoundly significant.

THE APOSTLE'S DESIRE
TO SEE TIMOTHY
In Ver. 4 the Apostle expresses his great desire to see Timothy once more, and adds, "being mindful of thy tears, that I may be filled with joy." Timothy's tears had evidently made their last parting the more difficult for Paul.

Remember that of all men Timothy had been closest to Paul through the years. He had labored and suffered with him since his early youth. Paul joins Timothy's name with his own in the salutation of six of his epistles and refers to him in others, so that Timothy is mentioned in the majority of Paul's epistles. Timothy had been imprisoned with Paul, apart from Paul and, it appears from Phil. 2:19, had visited Paul in prison at Rome. Thus it seems probable that Paul's reference to Timothy's tears recalls his sorrow at having to go back to Ephesus and leave Paul in prison. And now that Paul must soon leave this world the Apostle longs to see his "dearly beloved son" just once more.

Naturally now the Apostle's mind went back to those first days of his acquaintance with young Timothy and how he had rejoiced that the faith so deeply held by his grandmother Lois and his mother Eunice had since been so abundantly demonstrated in the life and ministry of Timothy himself.

How grateful we should be if we come from godly stock! And how earnestly parents should pray for God's help to raise their children in godly sincerity! True, salvation is not inherited, but seriousness of purpose may be inherited and may be cultivated by parental example and discipline.

Let us thank God, however, that salvation is by grace, through faith, so that even those who have not had the advantage of godly parents may be gloriously saved, and mightily used in God's service.

The author's father, once a godless comedian in the Netherlands, came to know Christ while trying to learn English out of a Dutch-English parallel-column New Testament. Through the Word the Spirit wrought in his heart and his whole life was revolutionized. As a result his, and mother's, love for the Word of God was passed on to all their eight children so that all were saved at early ages and all were soon engaged in the work of the Lord.

Perhaps the reader does not have such a heritage to rejoice in. But he can, like the author's father, rejoice in salvation by grace and dedicate his life wholly to Christ, thus giving his children, or his friends, such an example to thank God for.
"Wherefore I put thee in remembrance that thou stir up the gift of God, which is in thee by the putting on of my hands.

"For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.

"Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me, His prisoner, but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God."

- II Tim. 1:6-8

STIR UP THE GIFT THAT IS IN THEE

The above exhortation was called forth, no doubt, by Timothy's frailty and Paul's concern lest he waver in the fight just when a strong stand was so sorely needed.

As we read these verses, penned under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit by one who had himself weathered so many fierce storms and had come victoriously through so many hard-fought battles, they give us strength to stand for the Lord and for the glorious message He has committed to us.

With the apostasy raging about him, it would have been most natural for Timothy to become discouraged. He was not aggressive and his opponents were; thus there was a strong possibility that they might gradually silence him by causing him, in his modesty, to give way before them, in their belligerence.

"Don't let this happen," says Paul. "Stir up the gift which is in thee" (Ver. 6). The Greek for "stir up" actually means to "kindle up," to stir and fan into flame. Paul would have Timothy re-awaken the burning fire which had been kindled upon the altar of his soul.
Years before, Timothy had received his pastoral gift by the laying on of Paul's hands. It was this contact with the great apostle and other devoted men of God (1 Tim. 4:14), that the Holy Spirit had used to instill into him a deep desire and confidence to teach the Word. This took place before the close of the Pentecostal era, when the laying on of hands to bestow spiritual gifts was part of God's program.  

It is a fact, however, that entirely apart from the laying on of hands, God has given each believer some gift, some special ability or talent with which to serve Him, and He would have us "stir up" this gift and fan it into flame, i.e., to use it to the utmost for His glory.

The author has before him an article by a Christian leader, in which he rejoices that the controversy of a generation ago over the Pauline message is gradually diminishing and that grace believers are "cooling their controversial tone." While it is regrettably true that some go about with "a chip on their shoulder," as it were, this writer would do the cause of Christ and of grace much more good by exhorting flagging grace believers to rekindle the fire that once burned in their hearts as they began to see the exceeding riches of God's grace as revealed in the epistles of Paul.

It is all fine to have truth "on ice," all accurately and systematically classified, but it will not produce the desired results until it is translated into conviction, and is like a burning fire within us, a fire that compels us to speak out and urge its importance upon others.

A businessman stood with a crowd one night, watching firemen trying to extinguish a fire at a church. A friend, noticing him, called out, "Joe, this is the first time I've seen you at church!" Joe called back, "Well this is the first time I've seen a church on fire!"

The crying need of our day, then, is for "grace" believers who not only have the Pauline message "straight," but who are deeply convicted of its truth and of the urgent need to make it known, whose consciences will not allow them to remain silent about it. We need men of God who will earnestly pray the prayer of the Apostle Paul:

"... that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the gospel .... that therein I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak" (Eph. 6:19,20).

86 This, of course, has all been changed now, for in Heb. 6:1 the Apostle says, "Therefore leaving the principles [i.e., the elementary things of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation," and he includes in the list of foundation stones, the "laying on of hands." It is sad, these days, to hear the growing cry, "Let us go back to Pentecost," rather than, "Let us go on to perfection."
COURAGE FOR THE CONFLICT

Certain it is that it is not so much the indifference of the lost that keeps them from Christ as it is our indifference. Likewise it is not so much the indifference of the average church member that has rendered the Church so weak, as it is the indifference of their spiritual leaders.

Thus the Apostle writes, not to Timothy’s congregation, but to Timothy himself,

"God has not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.

"Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner, but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God" (Vers. 7,8).

If the pastor is truly on fire for the truth, his enthusiasm will spread through the congregation, for courage, like cowardice, is contagious. Thus Paul does not instruct Timothy to tell his hearers to be courageous; he urges him to be courageous.

Christians and Christian leaders, who are always sighing for peace and fear that the preaching of "the whole counsel of God" may bring controversy, should read this passage thoughtfully. Where the truth is proclaimed in the power of the Spirit Satan will oppose, but to fear him is to yield the battle by default. The spirit of fear, then, comes not from God, but from Satan. "For God hath not given us the spirit of fear, but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind." What a combination!

It is a touching fact that this passage was written by one who was soon to be beheaded for Christ! We would not have counted it strange if he had suggested to Timothy that perhaps he, Paul, had been too intense in his ministry and had urged Timothy to be somewhat more diplomatic. But no! Rather the watchword is Courage! So far from urging Timothy to "cool it," as we say, he urged him to stir up and fan the flame burning in his heart. Indeed, not only does he urge Timothy not to be ashamed "of the testimony of our Lord," but he adds, "nor of me, His prisoner."

This last is important. Many of Luther's followers were nominally "protesting Protestants," but they were not so outspoken as Luther. They thought diplomacy was the way to win the battle, and avoided Luther. They thought the reformation would be more successful after Luther was gone. This was so also of the late Pastor O'Hair. Because he obeyed Eph. 6:19 and opened his mouth boldly, some were ashamed of him - not of the message, but of him. Ah, but they were
ashamed of him because they were not obeying Eph. 6:19, but rather made the message of grace known in a clandestine or roundabout way that certainly made it appear that they were ashamed of the message.

Ah, but were Luther's followers less responsible than Luther to make known the great truths of the Reformation? Were O'Hair's followers, or those of the second generation, less responsible than O'Hair to open their mouths boldly to make known the mystery and its "exceeding riches of grace"? Indeed not! All of us who understand the great truths of the Pauline revelation are as responsible as he was, and as Timothy was, to be "partakers of the afflictions of the gospel" (Ver. 8).

But mark well, that those who take up the challenge are assured of all God's power to help them win the battle. Read it carefully, and rejoice - and act! "Be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God" Paul had experienced this divine enabling, for to the Thessalonians he writes:

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

It would have been natural for Timothy to be tempted to be distant toward Paul since his imprisonment - but it would have been wrong. Be a winner and the crowds will applaud your victory; but be an apparent loser and they will soon abandon you as they did our Lord and the Apostle Paul. What takes responsibility and courage is to stand in support of one who stands true to God and His Word no matter what the cost.

THE GOSPEL COMMITTED TO PAUL

"Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began,

"But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel;

"Whereunto I am appointed a preacher, and an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles.

"For the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day."
II Timothy 1 is one of those chapters we cannot hurry through. It contains so much vital truth, so much to encourage and establish the believer, so much hope for the unsaved, that a comprehensive consideration of its contents must soon fill many pages.

So often in Scripture, the Lord Jesus Christ is called our Savior and it is true that He went to Calvary for us, to bear the penalty for our sins. But in I Timothy and here again the Apostle refers to God (i.e., the Father) as our Savior (See I Tim. 1:1; 2:3; 4:10; II Tim. 1:8,9; cf. 1:3; 2:10,13; 3:4).

As we have seen in our studies in I Timothy, and indeed, here in II Tim. 1:1, the Apostle refers to that great promise which God made to Himself before the world began, His eternal purpose regarding everlasting life, vested in Christ who was to die for our sins (Cf., Tit. 1:2).

Also, since "God was in Christ [at Calvary], reconciling the world to Himself," His role now is that of Savior. It was through Paul, the chief of sinners, now so gloriously saved, that this great truth - and the grand offer of salvation by grace associated with it, was first made known (See I Tim. 1:11-17; II Tim. 1:9-11; Tit. 1:2,3).

Here, in II Tim. 1 the Apostle again emphasizes these great truths, as he says:

"[God] hath saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and [His own] grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began" (Ver. 9).

All - the Apostle emphasizes the fact again - all is of God, for it all comes to us according to His own "eternal purpose" ("given us in Christ Jesus before the world began"), and His own grace, offered freely to all because He satisfied the claims of righteousness "in Christ Jesus."

HOW AND WHEN?

Verse 10 should be very carefully considered, especially in the light of the passage which immediately follows.

87 To salvation (I Cor. 1:26), to a heavenly position in Christ (Phil. 3:14), to a position as His ambassadors (II Cor. 5:18-20; Eph. 4:1). Indeed, the Greek word klesis ("calling," Ver. 9) is the root of the word ekklesia (from ek, "out," and klesis "calling"), generally rendered Church. The true Church is God's "called-out" assembly. The word "holy," in this connection, is also most touching. The word (Gr., hagios) means to separate to oneself as sacred. Thus God has set us apart to Himself as His own in a special, sacred relationship.
God’s purpose and the grace, "given us in Christ Jesus before the world began," has now been manifested. The first question to ask here is How? How was it manifested? The answer is:

"...by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death... (Ver. 10).

Note carefully, this is how God's purpose and grace could now be manifested. Not when, but how. It could now be manifested because of our Savior's appearance on earth and His work in our behalf. Where the ushering in of the new dispensation is concerned we must often ask How? and When? Many otherwise difficult problems are often solved as we do this.

The Law (as a covenant) was abolished by the death of Christ (Gal. 3:13; Eph. 2:15; Col. 2:14), but it was surely not done away historically at that time. The eleven apostles, after the cross, were distinctly commissioned by the Lord to teach their hearers to "observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you" (Matt. 28:20). A glance at Matt. 23:1-3, Acts 3:1 and 22:12 will show that observance of the Mosaic Law was involved. Thus the abolishing of the Law in historical practice took place, not at Calvary, but after the raising up of Paul (Rom. 3:21), who was sent forth with a message different from that which the eleven had been sent to proclaim (Gal. 2:2). No one before Paul did, or could, rise to say, "But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested."

Similarly we read in John 1:17 that "grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." Mark well, this is how grace, consistent with truth, came. It came by Jesus Christ, through whose death God could justly offer the riches of His grace to sinners. But when, historically, did God usher in the dispensation of grace? The so-called "great commission" says nothing about it. Our Lord did not commission His apostles to proclaim salvation by grace through the finished work of Christ, nor did Peter do so at Pentecost. It is not until the raising up of Paul that we read how "the grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant" to him, the chief of sinners (I Tim. 1:12-15) as "a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on Him [Christ] to life everlasting" (Ver. 16). Moreover it is Paul, and no one until Paul, who asks:

"If ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward" (Eph. 3:2).

It is Paul, and no one until Paul, who refers to:

"...the ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God" (Acts 20:24).
How, then, was grace provided for us? By the finished work of Christ at Calvary. But when? When God raised up Paul to proclaim what had been accomplished at Calvary.

There are many other dispensational problems that are solved by simply asking How? and When? And this is particularly so where II Tim. 1:10,11 is concerned. The redemption wrought by the Lord Jesus Christ, says the Apostle, is "now made manifest" and "brought ... to light through the gospel" (Ver. 10). But go on reading:

"Whereunto I am appointed a preacher, and an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles" (Ver. 11).

Thus it was not until sin had risen to its height that God saved the chief of sinners, the leader of the world's rebellion against Christ and, in infinite love, sent him forth to proclaim "the gospel of the grace of God," and to show sinners what God had done for them at Calvary.

THE REASON FOR PAUL'S SUFFERINGS

"For the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed, for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day" (Ver. 12).

Excluding the vicarious sufferings of Christ in our behalf, the Scriptures record no instance of suffering so intense, so unremitting, so prolonged as that of the Apostle Paul. The long list in II Cor. 11:23 - 29 records but a small portion of these sufferings. Why did he, the apostle of such good news, have to bear all this?

The answer is clear. The same wicked being who so hated Christ that he entered into Judas and led him to betray our Lord to "the death of the cross," was the more embittered when he witnessed the riches of God's grace being proclaimed to sinners on the basis of the very death he had helped to bring about. Satan hates the gospel of the grace of God and hated Paul for proclaiming it so aggressively.

Satan, like Pharaoh of old, had been "taken in his own craftiness" and he and all his hosts were to find that their great "victory" at Calvary was in fact their utter and ignominious defeat.

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88 See the Author's booklet, How and When?
Imagine how Satan must have been held up to angelic ridicule as our Lord arose from the dead and the twelve, the one hundred and twenty, yes, and "more than five hundred brethren" went everywhere, crying from the house-tops: "He is alive! He is alive!" Diabolos, the great accuser, must already have read his ultimate doom in the resurrection of the One he had induced wicked men to crucify.

But if this was distressing and embarrassing to Satan, imagine his dismay when he discovered that he had tricked himself by having Christ crucified - that God had actually paid for man's sins by the death of Christ so that He might save even the chief of sinners, and send him forth to offer "redemption through His blood, the Forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace" (Eph. 1:7).

Thus Satan reached the climax of his career of deception when he deceived himself at Calvary! Hence his vicious opposition to "the gospel of the grace of God."

Ah, but the Apostle did not, as we have seen, advise Timothy to slacken his efforts in the battle to make Christ known. Rather he exhorted him to take his place in the front lines and press the attack.

As for himself, Paul was now about to be slain for Christ, but nobly he stood unashamed. The Lord Jesus Christ had committed a precious deposit to him; now he commits it to God, assured that "He is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day." We will have more to say about this precious deposit in Chapter III.

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89 The Author's book, Satan in Derision, deals with this subject at length in Chapter I.
"Hold fast the form of sound words which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love, which is in Christ Jesus.

"That good thing which was committed unto thee keep by the Holy Ghost which dwelleth in us.

"This thou knowest, that all they which are in Asia be turned away from me; of whom are Phygelius and Hermogenes.

"The Lord give mercy unto the house of Onesiphorus; for he oft refreshed me, and was not ashamed of my chain:

"But when he was in Rome, he sought me out very diligently, and found me.

"The Lord grant unto him that he may find mercy of the Lord in that day: and in how many things he ministered unto me at Ephesus thou knowest very well."

- II Timothy 1:13-18

The careful student of Scripture will soon notice that in addition to its general phraseology, the Bible, especially the New Testament, employs many special technical terms.

There are, for example, the political terms used by Matthew, the former publican, and the medical terms employed by Doctor Luke, etc. Paul uses more technical terms than any other: legal, military, architectural, athletic and other special terms, doubtless the result of his familiarity with Hebrew and Roman law, the Roman soldiery, Greek architecture, sports, etc.

Among the technical terms often overlooked by commentators are those which have to do with business and finance.
In I Timothy 6:20 and II Tim. 1:12-14, the Apostle uses the term *paratheekee* ("to put with") and *parakatatheekee* ("to put down with"). Whether in its shorter or longer form, the word simply means *deposit*, that which is committed and entrusted to another for safe keeping.⁹⁰

In I Tim. 6:20 and II Tim. 1:14, Timothy is exhorted to "keep," or guard this deposit, while in II Tim. 1:12, the Apostle, about to be slain for Christ, must now commit the safe keeping of this deposit to his Lord.

As Timothy could only keep this deposit "*by the Holy Ghost which dwelleth in us*" (Ver. 14), so Paul, about to depart this life, declares his assurance that "*He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day*" (Ver. 12).

It should be further noted that in I Tim. 6:20, "*that which is committed unto thee*" is simply *the deposit*. In II Tim. 1:12, however, "*that which I have committed unto Him*" is literally *my deposit*. But when we come to Ver. 14 we read the words "*that good thing which was committed unto thee.*" Here the deposit is called "good" (Gr., *kalos*).

In what sense is this deposit called "good"? In any complete English dictionary there are at least a dozen different definitions for the word *good*, and it is the same in the Greek. The word, then, has a broad usage and, as in English, the sense in which a thing is called good must be determined by the nature of the thing so called.

Thus the "good Shepherd" is the *kind* Shepherd; a "good soldier" is a *brave* soldier and one who is *willing to endure hardship*; a "good foundation" is a *solid* foundation; "good measure" is *abundant* measure; "good works" are works that are *morally right* or *generous*; "good fruit" is *sound*, *healthy* fruit; a "good steward" is a *faithful* steward; a "good diamond" is a diamond of *high quality*, hence *valuable* or precious.

The phrase "*that good deposit,*" is evidently used in this last sense and means literally, "*that precious deposit.*" This definition of *kalos* is consistent with the word *deposit* here, as well as with the context in general, for Paul here exhorts Timothy to "keep" (guard, defend) it "*by the Holy Ghost which dwelleth in us*" (Ver. 14), and declares that though he has suffered much (and must now depart this life), he is trusting God to keep this deposit safe (Ver. 12).

**WHAT IS THIS DEPOSIT?**

Just what is "*that precious deposit,*" or "*that good thing which was committed unto thee*"? Both the immediate and the larger context give us the answer.

⁹⁰ See the author's *Satan in Derision*, Pp. 172-175.
In I Tim. 6:20,21, the Apostle declares that those who opposed" that which was thus deposited with Timothy, had "erred concerning *the faith." The deposit referred to, then, must be "the faith" which had first been committed to Paul and then, through him, to Timothy: the "one faith" of Eph. 4:5. Then, between Vers. 12 and 14 of II Tim. 1, in both of which verses this deposit is mentioned, the apostle exhorts:

"Hold fast the *form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus" (Ver. 13).

Could the Apostle have stated any more clearly that the deposit to which he referred was the distinctive message, yes, the very words, which he had proclaimed and had charged Timothy to faithfully proclaim? Could "that precious deposit," then, be anything else than what the Apostle calls "*my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ according to the revelation of the mystery" (Rom. 16:25)? This was the "precious deposit" which Paul had fought and suffered to keep inviolate, and which he so earnestly besought Timothy to guard and defend.

HEARTACHE AND ENCOURAGEMENT

As we have seen, there is suffering associated with the proclamation of the message of grace committed to Paul, for Satan hates it with a bitter hatred. The Apostle here gives Timothy some of the specifics in his own experience.

"This thou knowest, that all they which are in Asia be turned away from me; of whom are Phygellus and Hermogenes" (II Tim. 1:15).

"Asia," here, is of course that *province in Asia Minor which Paul had so thoroughly evangelized during his three years at Ephesus. It is not to be confused with the Asia we know today. Even at that, however, the Apostle's statement that all those in Asia had turned away from him is a sad one in the light of Acts 19:10, where we read that "all they which dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks." Paul had labored earnestly to accomplish this. It took two years of daily disputation and teaching in "the school of one Tyrannus" (Ver. 9). And before his ministry at Ephesus was over there had been a grand, voluntary bonfire of occult books which the believers there had previously consulted and followed.

"And they counted the price of them, and found it fifty thousand pieces of silver,

"So mightily grew the Word of God and prevailed" (Acts 19:19,20).
Now, in this letter to Timothy, does the Apostle mean that all the believers in this area had now turned from the truth? Surely not, for at that very time Timothy was at Ephesus as the pastor of the Church there.

What Paul meant was rather that they had turned away from him in his hour of need, ashamed of his bonds and evidently afraid that they might be implicated in the charges against him if they stood with him.

Some commentators feel that there is evidence that it was at his return to Ephesus that Paul was arrested by Roman soldiers for the second time, and that it was at this time that the stampede, the flight of his friends there, took place, all afraid that they too might be arrested and perhaps even executed as accomplices with Paul in the "crime" of preaching Christ and the riches of His grace. In any case, the leaders in the Asian stampede away from Paul were evidently Phygellus and Hermogenes (Ver. 15).

Likewise, at Rome, the temptation of Paul's friends to avoid him would be great, stemming from the fear that they might lay themselves open to suspicion by visiting him. From 4:9-11 we learn of at least one who had "forsaken" him, while he says of two others simply that they had "departed." "Only Luke," he says, "is with me." Faithful Luke, "the beloved physician" (Col. 4:14), who had been so consistently at the Apostle's side to minister to his infirmities!

Doubtless the bitterest ingredient in Paul's cup of suffering - and one which he shared with his Lord was the fact that his closest friends had deserted him when he needed them most. Yet this did not embitter the great apostle. He well knew the ruthlessness of Rome. Thus he adds to his statement that at his first appearance before the Roman Emperor "no man" had stood with him: "I pray God that it may not be laid to their charge" (4:16).

Ah, but in addition to Paul's "beloved physician" there was another signal example of courage and fidelity. It was Onesiphorus - and probably his family with him (Ver. 16).

It must have been the greatest encouragement to Paul to have this brave man look him up in his prison at Rome. The Apostle's words imply that Onesiphorus might well have excused himself, saying, "I couldn't find him." "But," says the Apostle,

". . . when he was in Rome he sought me out very diligently, and found me" (Ver. 17).

He would not give up until he had found the Apostle among the hundreds, perhaps thousands of prisoners at Rome. And then, having "found me," says Paul, "he oft refreshed me, and was not ashamed of my chain" (Ver. 16).
What an inspiration! Picture the scene. One can almost hear him say to his wife: "Mother, I'm going to visit Paul, but it would mean so much to him if he could see you and the children too." And thus this brave man risked his life again and again and that of his family too - trusting the Lord for their safety - to go and have fellowship with the imprisoned apostle, perhaps bringing him food to refresh, and clothing to warm him.

Through all the nineteen centuries that Christians have read Paul's second epistle to Timothy Onesiphorus has been known as the man who was not ashamed of Paul's bonds, who did not turn away from the Apostle in his time of trouble, but rather risked his life to stand by him and encourage him. And, depend upon it, in heaven, through all the ages of eternity, he will be so known. God does not forget what we do for Him (Heb. 6:10).

Many others loved Paul, yes, but not enough to risk their lives or their liberty for him. Though he, who had brought so much happiness into their lives, was now languishing in a dark prison cell, they, who should have thanked God for him every day, were careful to stay out of the way, lest they become involved.

This is especially disappointing when we consider how affectionate these friends from Asia had once been toward Paul.

In Acts 20 we have a record of his touching farewell address to the Ephesian elders, and in Vers. 36-38 we read:

"And when he had thus spoken, he kneeled down and prayed with them all.

"And they all wept sore, and fell on Paul's neck, and kissed him.

"Sorrowing most of all for the words which he spoke, that they should see his face no more. . . ."

He had begun to pray, but could not continue, for soon all were weeping at the thought that they might not see their beloved apostle again. It is touching to see the grief-stricken group accompanying Paul to the waiting ship, there no doubt clinging to him until it became necessary for him to tear himself away. Can it be that many of these same people were now careful to make themselves scarce so as not to become implicated with him in a holy pursuit that a pagan government considered a crime!

And so we find the great Apostle now in a miserable Roman dungeon, awaiting execution, deserted by his own converts and alone, except for faithful Luke.
Shameful! you say. Yes, it was shameful, but the same thing is happening all about us today. How many there are, including even ministers of the gospel, who have been spiritually enriched through "the preaching of Jesus Christ according to the revelation of the mystery," the message that we find so powerfully set forth in the epistles of Paul. But they are ashamed to stand openly for this great message lest they lose a bit of popularity or suffer a bit of persecution. They will not pay in terms of salary, position, popularity, prestige, what it costs to stand for the Pauline message. These should heed Paul's exhortation in II Tim. 1:7,8. They should join him in his request for prayer in Eph. 6:19,20:

"And [pray] for me, that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the gospel,

"For which I am an ambassador in bonds; that therein I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak."

Finally, there has been some speculation as to why Paul says "the Lord give mercy unto the house of Onesiphorus" (Ver. 16). Had Onesiphorus previously committed some crime, and was he by now dead or away from home?

This author does not believe that either is the case. Paul would naturally use the word "mercy," because Onesiphorus had shown him mercy in his time of need. This reminds us of our Lord's words: "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy" (Matt. 5:7). Furthermore, it was normal to refer to a man's house as including himself.

In any case, it is inspiring to read of this man, who had already ministered to Paul in so many ways at Ephesus, now seeking the Apostle out among the Roman prisoners and ministering to him again and again. This must indeed have brought the Apostle much sunshine in his dark prison experience.
STRONG IN GRACE

THE METAPHORS OF PAUL

"Thou therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.

"And the things that thou has heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.

"Thou therefore, endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.

"No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier,

"And if a man also strive for the masteries, yet is he not crowned except he strive lawfully.

"The husbandman that laboreth must be first partaker of the fruits."

"Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of truth."

- I Timothy 2:1-6, and 15

BE STRONG

Paul's exhortation to Timothy to "be strong," reminds us of the Word of God to Joshua:

". . . As I was with Moses, so I will be with thee: I will not fail thee nor forsake thee.

"Be strong and of a good courage; for unto this people shalt thou divide for an inheritance the land, which I sware unto their fathers to give them.

"Only be thou strong and very courageous. (Josh. 1:5-7).

Moses, the representative of the Law, had died, and now Joshua was to lead the people into the riches of the land of Canaan. But there would be enemies there to keep them from appropriating these riches. Hence the exhortation to Joshua to be "strong and very courageous."
This, of course, was typical, for now, through the finished work of Christ, the covenant of the Law itself had died. Thus he says:

"But now we are delivered from the low, that being dead wherein we were held" (Rom. 7:6).

"Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us. . ." (Gal. 3:13).

"Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to His cross" (Col. 2:14).

So now, with the covenant of the Law done away Paul, as the representative of the risen, glorified Lord, was commissioned to lead us into the riches of our "Canaan" - all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ" (Eph. 1:3).

But as there were enemies in Canaan to prevent Israel from occupying the land and appropriating its blessings, so there are enemies in the heavenlies to keep us from occupying our position and appropriating our possessions there. Hence the Apostle, himself in need of boldness (Eph. 6:18-20), urges his followers to "be strong in the Lord" and prepare to do battle with Satan and his hosts (Eph. 6:10-17).

But while the exhortation in Eph. 6 is to be "strong in the Lord," Paul here in II Tim. 2:1, urges Timothy to be "strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus," the difference doubtless due to the fact that strong apostasy was by now raging and Timothy would need special grace in this special time of need.

Paul's second letter to the Corinthians reveals a wonderful fact about the strength gained from "the grace that is in Christ Jesus." The Apostle was suffering keenly from "a thorn in the flesh," and had thrice besought the Lord "that it might depart" from him, only to receive the answer:

"My grace is sufficient for thee, for My strength is made perfect in weakness" (II Cor. 12:9).

How often we, God's children today, have found this to be so! When we are strong and prosperous we tend to forget our deep need of God's grace, and to forget Him. But when we are weak and afflicted, we lean the harder and pray the more, and therein lies our strength. The Apostle certainly learned this lesson, for he goes on to say in the passage quoted from above:
"... Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

"Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake, for when I am weak, then I am strong" (II Cor. 12:9, 10).

What an encouragement, then, is the exhortation to "be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus"! Surely His grace will prove as abundantly sufficient for us in our small battles for Christ as it did for Paul in his much greater battles!

GATHER AN ARMY

But the Apostle urges Timothy to be more than strong, personally. "Gather an army," he says in effect, to stand with you in the battle. Don't merely stand; be aggressive; carry the battle to the enemy.

"... the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men who shall be able to teach others also" (II Tim. 2:2).

Every pastor should be a promoter - not first of his church organization, or of the projects he has advanced, but of the truth of God. "The same commit thou to faithful men who shall be able to teach others also." May God help us, His pastors today, to take this earnestly to heart, for it is so natural to place paramount importance upon our church and our ministry rather than upon God's Word and the message He has committed to us to proclaim to the world and the Church today.

THE ILLUSTRATIONS OF SCRIPTURE

THE OLD TESTAMENT TYPES

God uses many illustrations in His Word to help us to understand. In the Old Testament, so-called, the types stand out prominently: the ceremonial types, the historical types, the personal types, all used to illustrate precious divine truths.

Some teachers of the Word have held that these types related only to Israel; we do not. Nor do we subscribe to the cliche that if any of these types applied to "the dispensation of the grace of God" these truths would then have been "hid in the Bible" rather than having been "hid in God" as we read in Eph. 3:9.

An interesting fact about these types is that God's people of that day were not even told that they were types, much less what they typified. In the tabernacle,
for example, we have the great wide "door," the great brazen altar, the brazen laver, the lampstand, the table of showbread, the golden prayer altar, the great veil before the holiest place, the "ark," or coffin, of the covenant within, and the blood-sprinkled "mercy seat" upon it. All these now speak to us of Christ and His finished work, though at the time God did not give the people of Israel so much as a hint that this was so, or even that these parts of the tabernacle were meant to be types at all.

Thus the "mystery" was indeed "hid in God," for it is only now, in the light of Paul's Epistles (Eph. 1:6,9; 3:8,11; II Tim. 1:9, etc.) that we can look back and exclaim: "Now I see why Paul calls God's plan of salvation by grace through faith alone, 'His purpose,' and 'His eternal purpose, which He purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord,"' for, as the Apostle assures us, God's heart was full of these things even while Israel was still under the Law (Gal. 3:23).

All this is not to deny, of course, that the "mystery" revealed through Paul contains many additional, and precious, truths not foreshadowed in the types. Basically, the types confirm to us the fact that God's heart was filled with this glorious plan all the while.

Few, if any of our readers, we trust, will question the truth of Rom. 15:4:

"For whatsoever things were written aforetime, were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope."

Nor, we trust, will any question the Apostle's further statement in I Cor. 10:11:

"Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples (Gr., tupoi, types); and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world [or ages] are come."

OUR LORD'S PARABLES

The four records of our Lord's earthly ministry also contain many illustrations - illustrations of a different kind.

The synoptic gospels especially contain many parabolic illustrations, sometimes opening with such introductions as: "The kingdom of heaven is like. . ." (Matt. 13:33), or "Now learn a parables . . ." (Mark 13:28), or 'Whereunto shall I liken the kingdom of God?' (Luke 13:20).

Generally these parables were used to help His followers understand the message He proclaimed, but sometimes they were also used to baffle and
frustrate those who were determined not to accept His message (See Luke 8:10).

Sometimes the disciples themselves were confused by His parables, so that He had to explain them to them (See Matt. 13:36).

Thus our Lord's preaching was filled with parabolic illustration and even further explanations of these illustrations. He was teaching truths which it was not easy for them to immediately grasp.

**PAUL'S METAPHORS**

But when we come to the Epistles of Paul we find a type of illustration that is quite different still. We call Paul's illustrations *metaphors*. He might mention the name of a city, or person, or thing because it is in itself an apt illustration. He uses the temple, the soldier, the armor, the sword, the farmer, "wood, hay, stubble" (for the cheap things) and "gold, silver, precious stones" (for the valuable things). This is the type of illustration with which Paul's epistles abound. Thus a simple name, or word, or term might be used to throw a flood of light upon a truth he seeks to convey.

**WHAT GOD EXPECTS OF HIS PEOPLE**

At least five of these Pauline metaphors are found in II Tim. 2, and they tell us graphically what God expects of His people. They are the *steward* (Ver. 2), the *soldier* (Vers. 3,4), the *athlete* (Ver. 5), the *farmer* (Ver. 6) and the *craftsman* (Ver. 15).

**THE STEWARD**

"And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also" (II Tim. 2:2).

While this passage does not contain the word "steward," the idea is nevertheless that of *stewardship*, for a steward is one into whose hands precious possessions have been committed.

Some have supposed that a "steward" in Scripture is merely a servant. Not so. He was rather the head servant, the trusted servant into whose hands the master entrusted the dispensing of his affairs. Indeed, the word "steward" (Gr., oikonomos) is the root of the word "dispensation" (oikonomia), and indicates that *responsibility* is involved.

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91 Abraham had such a steward: Eliezer, who dispensed Abraham's affairs (Gen. 15:2).
Here the element of *fidelity* becomes profoundly important, even more so than ability, for one who has an able but *dishonest* person to manage his affairs is indeed in trouble. Therefore, in His stewards God looks for fidelity, faithfulness, *first*, then for ability. Thus in Luke 12:42 our Lord asks:

“Who them is that *faithful and wise* steward whom his lord shall make ruler over his household, to give them their portion of meat in due season?”

In Luke 16 we find a steward who was dismissed from his position because he was not trustworthy:

"There was a certain rich man, which had a steward, and the some was accused unto him that he had wasted his goods" (Ver. 1).

The result: He was told to close his books and leave, “for thou mayest be no longer steward” (Ver. 2).

To those who would entice Paul away from the "preaching of Jesus Christ according to the revelation of the mystery," he responded:

"Let a man so account of us92 as of the ministers of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God.93"

"*Moreover, it is required in stewards that a man be found faithful*" (I Cor. 4:1,2).

Thus God looks for faithfulness even before ability in His stewards, though both are important. And thus the Apostle exhorts Timothy:

"... the things that thou host heard of me among many witnesses, the some commit thou to *faithful* men who shall be *able to teach* others also" (II Tim. 2:2).

**THE SOLDIER**

"Thou therefore endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.

"No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life, that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier" (Vers. 3,4).

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92 Note: this is *how Paul wished to be known*.
93 Not all the mysteries, obviously, but those committed to him by the glorified Lord (Rom. 16:25; Eph. 3:2,3; Rom. 11:25; I Cor. 15:51,52, *et al*).
In the soldier it is **courage** and **self-discipline** that are important. It has been well said that the measure of a good soldier is not how much he can “give,” but how much he can **take,”** how much he can **endure** - how much it takes to make him give up.

It is a sad fact that many of God's people simply do not want to be soldiers. They are sure that the battle for the truth can be won by “**love**.” They decline to obey God's specific **order** to "**fight the good fight of the faith**" *(I Tim. 6:12).* Some even find fault with those who do stand as soldiers for Christ and wield the Sword of the Spirit in defense of the truth.

But if God does not wish us to be soldiers in the fight of the faith, why did He **command** us to be such in the first place, and why, in Eph. 6:10-20, does He urge us to "**be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might,**” instructing us to "**Put on the whole armor of God,**" naming each piece separately, so that not one might be missing? Why does He bid us to "**take the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God**"?

Does He mean that we should put our sword in the scabbard and go on dress parade, to show what fine soldiers we are? No! We are to **wield** the Sword of the Spirit,*" standing against the wiles of the devil,” and to keep standing until, "**having done all,**" we are still found "**standing.**"

Four times in this passage the word "**stand**" is used, and God has provided a **complete** armor so that we may be enabled to stand.

But there is more. A "**good soldier,**" says the Apostle, is careful **not to "entangle himself with the affairs of this life, that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier"** *(Ver. 4).*

General Lee, perhaps the greatest commander of the Civil War, said that the bane of the Southern armies was the string of carriages almost always nearby, carriages sent by rich plantation owners to make sure that their Johnnies might not lack anything. Ah, but this is not the life of a soldier. Far better if Johnny **did** learn to lack and suffer and bear and "**endure hardness**.” He would be the better soldier-and the better person for it. It is so easy to become "**entangled in the affairs of this life**" - and a devastating mistake for a soldier.

The "**draft,**" in the days of Rome, differed significantly from the draft we have known in America. The draftee did not merely receive a letter saying in effect, "**Your number has come up.**" Rather he received a visit from a representative of some Roman senator or other government dignitary. The representative revealed to him that "**Senator So-and-so**" had great respect for him and had

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94 The Sword, the Word of God, is the only **offensive** weapon.
chosen him - *him!* - to represent the great Empire on the field of battle, urging him to be brave and strong so that he might do credit to the name of the great Senator and please him well.

What a lesson! Should not we, who have been bought with the precious blood of Christ, be "good soldiers" for His sake, single-minded, and disentangled from the affairs of this life?

**THE ATHLETE**

"And if a man also strive for the masteries, yet is he not crowned except he strive lawfully" (Ver. 5).

In the Greek - and in old English - this verse refers to the *athlete*, and here the major requirement is *conformity to the rules*.

When the referee says to the boxer: "Now don't throw low punches, and when I tell you to break, break, clean," etc., the boxer must observe these rules. He cannot decide: "I'll wait until *just after* the bell has rung for intermission and then I'll give him one more blow, low in the abdomen!" The racer cannot decide to start running *just before* the signal, so as to get a head start! The participants in athletic competition *must abide by the rules of the game or be immediately disqualified*. In each game the rules are different from all the rest: tennis is different from baseball, and soccer from both, but in each case the participants *must abide by the rules for that game*.

This is important, for there are many Christians who do indeed make their own rules where doctrine and service are concerned. Think of the great attempt to return to Pentecost and its miraculous demonstrations! Pentecost was a fulfillment of prophecy, and the antitype of all the Pentecosts that had gone before. It was "when the day of Pentecost [the great antitype] had fully come" that the gift of tongues and other miraculous signs of our Lord's Messiahship were granted. There has never been another Pentecost except those observed by apostate Israel, and the signs of Pentecost also disappeared (I Cor. 13:8) with the raising up of Paul and the ushering in of "the dispensation of the grace of God" (Eph. 3:1-4; Acts 20:24).

Others make their own rules where the so-called "Great Commission" is concerned. They just decide for themselves *which record* of the commission is to be obeyed, and even *which parts* of any or all of them apply to the present dispensation. This is a simple case of making one's own rules.

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95 Though the feast will continue to be observed during the millennium, after the interruption of prophecy in the present dispensation (See Joel 2:28-32).
Years ago the author heard a preacher debate the subject of the "Great Commission" with Dr. Harry Bultema, of Muskegon, Michigan. The pastor finally said: "Well, where the Scriptures are concerned you have me, but until I feel it in my heart I'm not going to accept your view." Dr. Bultema answered sternly: "Go by the Word of God, brother, not by your heart; 'the heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked.'" Good answer! The Christian has no right to make his own rules, and this applies especially to those who minister the Word. He must go by the written Word of God, "rightly divided," or be disqualified from the contest (See I Cor. 9:27 and cf. II Tim. 2:15, where the word "castaway" and "approved" are the very opposite in the Greek: adokimos and dokinws, referring to the disapproval or the approval of participants in the contest - not, thank God, as His redeemed children).

How important, then, to heed the Spirit-inspired words of Paul in I Cor. 3:10:

"According to the grace of God which is given unto me as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon."

Do not decide for yourself that it is all right to build Mosaic or Petrine material on the Pauline foundation. Do not preach the Law, the Sermon on the Mount, or the gospel of the kingdom instead of the message we have been commissioned to proclaim: Christ, according to "the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began, but now is made manifest" (Rom. 16:25,26). If you fail to proclaim this gospel, unmixed with messages for other ages, depend upon it, you will not "receive a reward," at the Judgment Seat of Christ but, rebuked and embarrassed, will suffer loss" (Read carefully I Cor. 3:10-15).

THE FARMER

"The husbandman that laboreth must be first partaker of the fruits" (Ver. 6).

The "husbandman," of course, is the farmer, and who will question that he should be the first to partake of the fruits of his labor? He must spend long hours toiling in the field, plowing, sowing, reaping. Thus as in the steward God looks for fidelity and ability, as in the soldier He looks for courage and self-discipline, as in the athlete He requires conformity to the rules, so in the farmer it is "labor," diligent toil, He expects. This is what it takes to produce fruit from the ground (Gen. 3:17-19; cf. Jas. 5:7).

Doubtless one major reason why so many believers see so little fruit from their testimony is that they put so little into it. Others start, but soon become discouraged and settle down again into a near-useless life. Paul implies that it
is natural to become weary, discouraged or disillusioned, and finally to give up, as he exhorts:

"Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord" (I Cor. 15:58).

But not only is our labor "not in vain in the Lord," since He honors faithfulness; unremitting toil in His service also insures eventual reaping. This is a Scriptural promise that few have recognized.

In his epistle to the Galatians the Apostle emphasizes the relationship between personal, individual toil and personal reaping:

"And let us not be weary in well doing, for in due season WE shall reap IF we faint not" (Gal. 6:9).

THE CRAFTSMAN

"Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of truth" (Ver. 15).

Finally we come to the metaphor of the craftsman. While the Greek ergatees does not always refer to skilled workmen, it often does and certainly does in this case. The same word is used with reference to those who made silver shrines for their goddess Diana (Acts 19:25). In fact, in the preceding verse these are called "craftsmen" (Gr., technitees). Clearly, in our text, the Apostle refers to craftsmen, whose workmanship must be "approved" by God or who, if their work is poorly done, will stand before Him "ashamed."

In a very real sense those who serve God should be craftsmen. And how does one become a spiritual craftsman, skilled in his understanding and teaching of the Word of God? This is by no means just a gift. It takes "study." The word in the Greek means to "agonize," to apply oneself wholly to getting a thing done well, hence to diligently study the Word.

Does someone object that since the passage states that we must study to show ourselves "approved unto God," it does not refer directly to our study of the Word? Then we reply that it says we should study to please God by "rightly dividing the Word of truth."

RIGHTLY DIVIDING THE WORD OF TRUTH

A few words should here be said with regard to those who, as we believe, have dealt irresponsibly with the expression "rightly dividing," here in King James
Version. Some of our modern versions have changed the term "rightly dividing" to "rightly handling" (among them the Revised Standard Version, the New International Version and the New American Standard Bible). Thus the whole idea boils down to dealing correctly with the Bible, rather than dividing it correctly.

One might expect the translators of these modern - and badly corrupted - translations, to reject any thought of recognizing divisions in the Word of God. Generally speaking, they do not believe in "rightly dividing the Word of truth." But the Greek expression orthotomeo could not be plainer. It clearly means "to cut straight," so as to divide truths on one side from those on the other. And this the Scriptures themselves consistently instruct us to do.

Paul, in writing to the Romans, for example, makes a sharp division between law and grace. On the one side of this division (as under the Dispensation of Law) it would be wrong to fail to bring animal sacrifices for sin, while on the other side (as under the Dispensation of Grace) it would be wrong to bring them. This is only one of many examples, but it is an important one, and a telling demonstration of the importance of "rightly dividing the Word of truth."

Studying the Bible dispensationally may seem confusing at first, but actually it dispels confusion, solves difficult problems, reconciles seeming contradictions and lends power to the believer's ministry.

If I should step inside a modern United States Post Office, all would doubtless seem very confusing at first. But it would be a mistake to suggest piling all the mail neatly in one corner and handing it out promiscuously to all comers, as some would do with the Bible. The postal employees must "rightly divide" the mail so that each person may receive what is addressed to him. What seems like confusion to the novice is really a simplification of the work to be done in getting each person's private mail to him.

But "rightly dividing the Word of truth" does indeed require a kind of "agony," for "much study" is truly "a weariness to the flesh" (Eccl. 12:12). Yet such study can be most rewarding, far more rewarding than the intense application of any earthly craftsman to his task, for there is nothing that so delights the heart of the sincere child of God as one ray of clear light from that blessed Book, one problem simply solved, one seeming contradiction reconciled and the attendant confusion dispelled!

Let us not, then, shrink from the study involved in "rightly dividing the Word of truth," both for our own enjoyment and because thus, and thus alone, can we stand "approved unto God"; workmen who "need not to be ashamed."

CONCLUSION
Here in this one chapter, then, we have five of the metaphors of the Apostle Paul," and they show us what God expects of His children. As stewards He expects us to be faithful and competent. As soldiers we must show courage and self-discipline. As athletes there must be strict conformity to the rules. As husbandman we must be willing to work unremittingly. And as craftsmen He expects skill in "rightly dividing the Word of truth," so that we may not, one day, stand before Him ashamed, but may be gloriously "approved unto God."

**CONSIDER - REMEMBER**

"Consider what I say; and the Lord give thee understanding in all things.

"Remember that Jesus Christ, of the seed of David, was raised from the dead according to my gospel;

"Wherein I suffer trouble as an evil doer, even unto bonds; but the Word of God is not bound.

"Therefore I endure all things for the elect's sakes, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory.

"It is a faithful saying: For if we be dead with Him, we shall also live with Him:

"If we suffer, we shall also reign with Him: if we deny Him, He also will deny us:

"If we believe not, yet He abideth faithful: He cannot deny Himself.

"Of these things put them in remembrance, charging them before the Lord that they strive not about words to no profit, but to the subverting of the hearers.

"Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of truth."

- II Timothy 2:7-15

The words which open Verses 7 and 8 are obviously of great importance. O, that the spiritual leaders of the Church had paid closer attention to them and to the truths they introduce, centuries ago! "Consider," says the Apostle, and "Remember," yet few heed his earnest exhortation, or enquire carefully as to what it is he would have us consider and remember.

96 It was while still a teenager that the author first became absorbed in these metaphors through reading Dean J. S. Howson's book, *The Metaphors of St. Paul*, now long out of print.
"Consider what I say," says the Apostle, adding the prayer: "and the Lord give thee understanding in all things" (Ver. 7).

The instructed student of the Word, as he reads this verse, can hardly help thinking of the Apostle's words in Eph. 1:17,18, where he informs the Ephesian believers of his prayer:

"That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him,

"The eyes of your understanding being enlightened.

And indeed, here in II Tim. 2, the 7th verse, the apostle introduces the same subject as that which he unfolds in the Ephesian letter. His God-given message, received by revelation from the glorified Lord, is not to be confused with that of the twelve apostles. It does not concern Israel, and her future glory on earth, but the Body of Christ and her position and blessings in the heavenlies with Him. This, as we have seen, Satan hates and would hinder us from understanding. Thus the Apostle prays, not only in Eph. 1 and II Tim. 2, but in many of his writings, that we may be given divine wisdom to comprehend.

What, then, is it that Timothy - and we - should "Consider" and "Remember"? Read his declaration carefully:

"... that Jesus Christ, of the seed of David, was raised from the dead according to my gospel,

"Wherein I suffer trouble as an evil doer, even unto bonds; but the Word of God is not bound" (Vers. 8,9).

Was Paul's good news about the resurrection of Christ, then, different from that which Peter had proclaimed? Yes, it was.

Peter and the eleven had proclaimed the resurrection of Christ, David's Son, to sit on David's throne as King (Acts 2:29-31), but Paul had now been raised up to proclaim the resurrection of this same Christ, to confirm the believer's justification (Rom. 4:25), his oneness with Christ (Col. 2:12; Eph. 2:5,6) and the spiritual victory that may be his in Christ (Rom. 8:11,12; Phil. 3:10,11).

Peter, at Pentecost, had warned his hearers that the Christ they had crucified was alive again. Paul proclaimed the risen, glorified Christ as the great Dispenser of grace to a lost, condemned world.
As we have seen, Satan hates the proclamation of this message, and for it, says the Apostle:

"... I suffer trouble as an evil doer,\textsuperscript{97} even unto bonds. (Ver. 9).

Perhaps the reader has noticed that at Paul's last visit to Jerusalem, \textit{he} was arrested and imprisoned, but not any of the other apostles. They were left alone. Why? Doubtless it was because Satan, who is behind all persecution of men of God, particularly hates the message committed to Paul by the glorified Lord.

If this were the only passage which states that Paul was persecuted or imprisoned for preaching \textit{his} gospel we might interpret the words "my gospel" in some other way, but no honest person can do this in the light of the many Scripture passages which make it crystal clear that Paul was persecuted \textit{for proclaiming the particular message committed to him} by revelation from the risen, exalted Christ. Among these are the following, all stated with clear simplicity:

"\textit{For this cause I, Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles,}

"if ye have heard of the \textit{dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward:}

"How that by revelation He made known unto me \textit{the mystery.} (Eph. 3:1-3).

". . . \textit{the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in bonds.}" (Eph. 6:19,20).

"... \textit{the mystery of Christ, for which I am also in bonds}" (Col. 4:3).

"Be not thou therefore ashamed of \textit{the testimony of our Lord, nor of me, His prisoner. . .}" (II Tim. 1:8).

These four passages alone afford ample proof as to the meaning of Paul's words here in II Tim. 2:8,9: "... my gospel, wherein I suffer trouble as an evil doer, even unto bonds...... And they indicate how sinful it is for great Church leaders to water down the phrase, "my gospel," or alter it to make it appear that Paul's gospel was the same as that proclaimed by Peter and the eleven during the Pentecostal era.

\textsuperscript{97} For one of sensitive conscience this must have been the harder to bear.
Ah, but we did not complete Paul's statement in Ver. 9: "But the Word of God is not bound." And this is the basis for what he says in Ver. 10:

"Therefore I endure all things for the elect's sakes, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory."

Glorious truth! Because the Word is not bound, Paul's sufferings were not in vain, for "faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God" (Rom. 10:17).

"For the Word of God is quick [living], and powerful and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

"Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in His sight, but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of Him with whom we have to do" (Heb. 4:12,13).

Mark well: "the Word of God" - "[all are] manifest in His sight" - "[and all is opened to] the eyes of Him with whom we have to do."

The Bible is a living Book because in it God speaks through His Holy Spirit. This is why "hearing" comes "by the Word of God," as the Holy Spirit, to whom all is "naked and opened," convicts sinners of their need of Christ. And thus those who believe receive "the salvation which is in Christ Jesus, with eternal glory."

This, says the Apostle, "is a faithful saying" (Ver. 11), "For if we be dead with Him, we shall also live with Him." I.e., if by faith we recognize His death as our death, and have thus died with Him (Rom. 6:3), we shall also share in His resurrection life and thus in His "eternal glory." All this is part of the special message of grace committed to the Apostle Paul.

But in addition to salvation by grace, there are rewards the believer may earn by faithful conduct and service for Christ. Thus the Apostle goes on to say:

"If we suffer [i.e., with Him], we shall also reign with Him; if we deny Him, He also will deny us" (Ver. 12).

This has nothing to do with salvation by grace, but rather with our Christian conduct and testimony, by which we may one day "receive a reward" or "suffer loss" (I Cor. 3:14.15). As if anticipating any doubts which believers may entertain as to this, Paul continues:
"If we believe not, yet He abideth faithful: He cannot deny Himself" (Ver. 13).

The words "believe not" here are the opposite of the word "faithful" in the same verse. Indeed, the words "belief" and "faith" are often used interchangeably in the K.J.V. Thus the sense is: "If we are unfaithful, yet He abideth faithful: He cannot deny Himself." And thus salvation by grace, through faith, is distinguished from rewards for faithfulness.

Timothy was to remind his hearers of these things, charging them before the Lord, "that they strive not about words, to no profit, but to the subverting of the hearers" (Ver. 14). We will have more to say about this in connection with Vers. 16,17,23. But here we make the comment that forever dwelling on the "fine points" of words and phrases can serve no good purpose, while it is of paramount importance to "rightly divide the Word of truth" (Ver. 15), for only thus can we be "approved unto God," and stand before our Lord "unashamed" in that day. For further remarks on II Tim. 2:15 we refer the reader back to the subhead "The Craftsman," in the earlier part of this chapter.
Chapter V - II Timothy 2:16-26

NEGATIVES

WHAT TO AVOID

"But shun profane and vain babblings: for they will increase unto more ungodliness.

"And their word will eat as doth a canker: of whom is Hymenaeus and Philetus;

"Who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some.

"Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are His. And, let everyone that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity."

- II Timothy 2:16-19

How profoundly important it must be for God's people to keep to the vital truths of Scripture and to avoid debates about irrelevant and inconsequential matters. The Apostle, throughout the Pastoral epistles, has much to say about this and, indeed, in this chapter alone, sounds no less than three warnings against it, in each case pointing out its evil results.

Ver. 14: strive not about words, to no profit, but to the subverting of the hearers."

Ver. 16: "But shun profane and vain babblings: for they will increase unto more ungodliness."

Ver. 23: "But foolish and unlearned questions avoid, knowing that they do gender strifes."

The Apostle, though a profoundly learned man, even by this world's standards, here shows his contempt for secular wisdom and its fruitless debates, and warns Timothy against them. As Mr. George Williams has rightly said:

"Young men are by nature readily attracted by what claims to be new and intellectual. It is evident that the Apostle was anxious in this with respect to Timothy" (The Student's Commentary, at II Tim. 2).

98 I.e., secular (Gr., bebelos), as compared with sacred (Gr., hieros).
WRONGLY DIVIDING THE WORD OF TRUTH

Hymenaeus and Philetus provide an example of the results of such "profane and vain babblings," as the Apostle calls them, and of a failure to rightly divide the Word of truth. Hymenaeus is mentioned in I Tim. 1:19,20 as having "made shipwreck" of the faith, and is pronounced guilty of blasphemy.

Here in II Tim. 2:16-18 we learn that he and Philetus had both been attracting attention by teaching "that the resurrection is past already" (Ver. 18). Observe, they did not deny the resurrection; they misplaced it. They did not deny the Word of truth; they wrongly divided it and thus perverted it. Probably they based their argument on Paul's own words in passages like Eph. 2:5,6 and Col. 3: 1, but anyone reading these passages in the light of their contexts and of Paul's writings as a whole, will recognize clearly that the Apostle refers to the believer's position in Christ, not to a physical resurrection. Nor could Hymenaeus and Philetus have taught this error without an irresponsible use of Paul's words.

As a result they "overthrew the faith of some" (Ver. 18), who now had no hope of a bodily resurrection and, not surprisingly, their teachings led to further ungodliness, rather than stemming the tide, for dealing with God's Word in an irresponsible manner and, indeed, failing to rightly divide it, "eats like a canker [Lit., gangrene, Gr., gangraina]." How profoundly important, then, to obey II Tim. 2:15,16!

Let us thank God for Ver. 19! It is often difficult for us to tell who is truly saved and who is not, and this would be especially so in the case of Hymenaeus in the light of I Tim. 1:20. Thus it is well that it is not left to us thus to judge others. We may rest in the fact that "the Lord knoweth them that are His," while rather judging ourselves and making sure that we obey the latter part of this passage: "And, let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity."

MEET FOR THE MASTER'S USE

"But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some to honor, and some to dishonor.

"If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honor, sanctified, and meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work.

"Flee also youthful lusts; but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart."
"But foolish and unlearned questions avoid, knowing that they do gender strifes.

"And the servant of the Lord must not strive, but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient.

"In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth;

"And that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will."

- II Timothy 2:20-26

It is a noteworthy fact that while in I Tim. 3:15 the Apostle calls the professing Church "the house of God," he here refers to it as "a great house," discussing the kinds of people to be found in it. This is a further indication that the apostasy referred to in I Tim. 4 was growing. Indeed, the one-world Church that will be left after the true Church has been called to be with Christ, is called:

". . . Babylon . . . the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird" (Rev. 18:2).

How careful, then, should the builders of the Church on earth be - we stress it again - to rightly divide the Word of truth, for it is largely in this connection that the Church has been so sorely divided, confused and subverted. Paul, by divine inspiration, wrote:

"According to the grace of God which is given unto me as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon" (I Cor. 3:10).

To Paul God committed the "plans and specifications" for the Church of the present dispensation. Indeed, he himself laid the foundation in his teachings to the Church of his day. How careful his successors, then, should be as to how they build upon this foundation. But, alas, all too many spiritual leaders since Paul have taken material from other dispensations and have built them upon the foundation laid by the Apostle Paul. They have proclaimed the Law, the Sermon on the Mount, the Gospel of the Kingdom, etc., building these upon the Pauline foundation, as if "the dispensation of the grace of God" had never been ushered in. Thus the Apostle, already in his day, called the professing Church "a great house," with members, many of which, brought anything but honor to God. But he sounds a positive note as he instructs Timothy, and us, as to how to bring honor to "the Master" of the house.
As in a great house there may be a beautiful vase and the garbage pail, the piano and the scrub bucket, so in the Church there are various types of believers, and some bringing honor to God, and some dishonor. Obviously, the sincere child of God will desire to be "a vessel unto honor," but how? Ver. 21 gives the answer.

"If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honor, sanctified, and meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work."

The word "these," refers us back to those who treat the Word irresponsibly and "overthrow the faith of some," "subverting their hearers." The sincere believer should stand separate from such, sanctified, i.e., set apart as sacred to God, that he may be "a vessel unto honor" and "meet for the master's use."

Mark how sanctification precedes service in this passage - and in the plan of God. He wants no servants who are not set apart as sacred to Himself. True, it is the Holy Spirit who, in grace, first set us apart to God as His sacred possession. This aspect of sanctification is a once-for-all transaction (See Rom. 15:16; I Cor. 1:2; 6:11, etc.). But here he speaks of the sanctification of I Thes. 5:23; 1 Pet. 3:15, et al. As God in "His great love wherewith He loved us" says, "You are mine," so we, as the grateful objects of His love, should respond, "Yes, and I want to be wholly Thine." Then, only then, can we be "vessels unto honor... meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work."

But all this means that we too must cleanse ourselves from irresponsible conduct. In Ver. 22 we again have the double metaphor of the hunted, fleeing for his very life, and the hunter hastening to overtake his quarry. "Flee youthful lusts," he says, as if for your very life, and "follow righteousness, faith, love and peace" with the same intense energy. And note again: "Follow, etc., "with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart." Choose your friendships carefully.

And yet again - be sure that you avoid "foolish and unlearned questions," knowing that they only "gender strifes." How many hot heads and cold hearts this author has seen, as a result of intense debates about - practically nothing!

"And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient,

"In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God, peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth;

99 Again we remind our reader that at this time Timothy must have been well over 30 years of age.
100 The best way to overcome some sins is to flee from them.
"And that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will" (Vers. 24-26).

The word "strive," in Ver. 24, is by no means the same as that found in Phil. 1:27, where the Apostle bids us to "stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel." Thus the exhortation, "the servant of the Lord must not strive," in no way refers to fighting the good fight of the faith, for it is our responsibility to fight this fight as "good soldiers of Jesus Christ." The word "strive," here in II Tim. 2:24, is the Greek machomai, meaning to quarrel or dispute, and the servant of the Lord must indeed not be quarrelsome, but "gentle unto all men," etc., "in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves" (Ver. 25), i.e., who set themselves in opposition (as in Acts 18:6). This course of action has been used of God to win many to the truth, while heated debates have generally been fruitless. A meek and gracious approach has also been often used of God to help those deluded by Satan to "recover themselves" out of his "snare" (Ver. 26).

In considering this latter part of II Timothy 2, how readily the Apostle's words in Phil. 2:15,16 come to mind:

"That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation [generation, from genea], among whom ye shine as lights in the world;

"Holding forth the word of life ....... "
Chapter VI - II Timothy 3:1-17

PERILOUS TIMES

THE COURSE OF THIS AGE

"This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come.

"For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy,

"Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good,

"Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God;

"Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away.

"For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts,

"Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.

"Now as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith.

"But they shall proceed no further; for their folly shall be manifest unto all men, as theirs also was."

- II Timothy 3:1-9

A comparison of the above passage with the opening verses of I Tim. 4 indicates that while I Tim. 4:1-3 concerns *apostasy in the professing Church* during the present dispensation, II Tim. 3:1-7 rather concerns the *condition of the world* during this same time. In I Tim. 4:1 we read that "in the latter times some shall depart from the faith," while here in II Tim. 3:1 we read, "This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be. . . ." etc., followed by a catalog of the worst manifestations of fallen human nature rather than any mention of departure from the faith. Thus we have here the course of this world during the present age.101

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101 We have already demonstrated in our notes on I Timothy 4 that the "last days" to which Paul refers began during his own lifetime. They were the "last days," not of prophecy, but of the "dispensation of the
But while these verses contain a list of the simple characteristics of fallen human nature, and while, during the course of the present age these characteristics have periodically asserted themselves more boldly, yet it appears evident that never in this dispensation have they been so widespread in their manifestation. This is doubtless due to the advance of technology and especially to the invention of the radio and television, which bring the "wisdom" and wickedness of the world right into the home, where the impressionable minds of the young can be perverted. More essentially, however, II Tim. 3:1-9 is a record of the results of Satan's sway as the "prince" and "god" of this world (Eph. 2:2; II Cor. 4:4).

THE RESULTS OF SATAN'S SWAY

AN APPALLING RECORD OF HUMAN DEPRAVITY

The record opens with a reference, not to apostates, but to "men," in general, and indeed it accurately describes moral and spiritual conditions which we see all about us.

"Lovers of their own selves." How widespread is this self-centered attitude! Indeed, this humanistic attitude is taught as a philosophy of life in most of our colleges and universities. It begins with, "You must learn to accept yourself as you are." Then, "You must learn to like yourself," and ends with grand illusions about one's own importance. But it certainly is diametrically opposed to the attitude taught in Scripture and the attitude of godly men down through the ages (See Psa. 34:18; Isa. 57:15; 66:2; Job 42:6; Rom. 7:18,24,25).

"Covetous" (Gr., philargulos, "money-loving"). This same word is used in Luke 16:14, where the Pharisees are called lovers of money. And it is indeed a fact that the affluence, and the resulting greed, which has characterized the past decades have had an evil effect upon, not only society as a whole, but even upon many believers who have yielded to this form of covetousness. Hence the Apostle's repeated warnings to Timothy against it, as in I Tim. 6:10,11.

grace of God," and have been extended until the present only because God is longsuffering, "not willing that any should perish" (II Pet. 3:9). Surely grace has been reignining (Rom. 5:20,21)!

102 J. C. O'Hair has rightly said, "We are not looking for the signs of the times, for these are not the times of the signs." Yet it should be noted that in addition to the specific signs that will herald our Lord's return to earth, certain trends are also spoken of in this connection, trends which may indeed begin to develop in our day. In Dan. 12:4, e.g., Daniel is told to "shut up the words, and seal the book [i.e., of his prophecy], even to the time of the end; many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased." As we behold the unprecedented increase in travel and knowledge in the past few decades, may this not be a harbinger of things to come and cause us to await the more eagerly our Lord's coming for us?
"Boasters, proud, blasphemers." As to boasting, the lack of modesty from our highest rulers down, has been simply amazing. Seldom have we heard, "I will try, with God's help, to do so-and-so." Rather promises have been made with such self-assurance that the impression has been given that the person making them is near-omnipotent and can, without any doubt bring them to pass. And this attitude has filtered down through society as a whole and, indeed, is also taught as a philosophy of life in our institutions of learning. Self confidence! This, we are told, is what we need to succeed. But the Scriptures teach no such thing. There confidence in God is proposed as the key to true success (See Prov. 14:26; Psa. 118:8,9; Phil. 3:3-9).

There are, of course, many kinds of pride, but in Ver. 2 the word has the sense of arrogance, looking down on others. This follows naturally from boastfulness and is, in turn, the chief ingredient in blasphemy. Blasphemers are in the nature of the case arrogant. To the sincere believer it is almost frightening to hear, as we do these days, even women brashly taking the name of God or of Christ in vain, for we know that God does not overlook this haughty attitude.

It is true that His attitude toward sinful man is now that of a Savior, as we have already seen. He offers to the vilest sinner salvation by grace through faith. But to the haughty, who spurn this gracious offer, there is no prospect but that of the judgment of the Great White Throne (Rev. 20:11-15) and then it will be fully demonstrated that "the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh His name in vain" (Ex. 20:7). And if there be judgment for those who take that name lightly, what will be the lot of those who use it in anger and hate!

"Disobedient to parents." This is an evil that has become alarmingly prevalent in our day - and the more so because it only reflects the irresponsibility of the parents. How much, how very much is said, not only in the Old Testament Scriptures, but even in the epistles of Paul, the apostle of grace, about the importance of parents assuming their responsibility here! And even Paul himself does his "little" part to help the parents here, when he writes to the children: "Children, obey your parents in all things, for this is well pleasing unto the Lord" (Col. 3:20; cf., Eph. 6:1).

Here again the humanistic philosophies of our educational system are deeply involved. They teach, in direct contradiction to the Word of God, that children should not be spanked when disobedient and that they should not be rebuked, certainly not before others, lest they become emotionally inhibited! But this writer can bear personal testimony that both his father and his mother dealt him spankings and/or rebukes when called for, and it does not seem that he became emotionally inhibited! Indeed, the author's whole family of eight children have often thanked God for parents who disciplined them firmly and sensibly because they loved them.
It is the present generation of undisciplined children who are all too often involved in dope, liquor and illicit sex; who end up wrecking school rooms, burning up buildings, staging riots to emphasize their "rights," etc. Basically the problem has been that their parents threw up their hands when Johnny was but a small child, and exclaimed, "I can't do anything with him." And because they did not discipline Johnny sensibly, some of them are already so exasperated that they now beat him almost to death, or else let him tell them - and the world - what to do.

"Unthankful, unholy." All follows naturally here. This is not a day in which gratitude is readily shown for kindness done. Rather our children are being brought up in a society which professes to owe them a living, and as they grow up they expect this, no thanks to anybody. And this is again naturally followed by "unholiness." Here the Greek is anosios, the negative of the word for "holy" used in I Thes. 2:10. It denotes a negative attitude toward God, His Word and His will.

"Without natural affection" (Ver. 3). Sad words! Yet we see this characteristic spreading among us, as men abandon their God-appointed responsibilities in the home and women, who should be known for compassion and "natural affection," join in the loud clamor for "equal rights" with men. And this is not all, for only a few months prior to this writing, Chicago witnessed a downtown parade of more than 5000 homosexuals, all of them brazenly showing their scorn for "natural affection," men "in love" with men, and women with women. Lewd, wanton immorality! Add to this our great national sin, the murder of millions of unborn babies every year, and one can begin - just begin - to see how serious is Satan's attack upon family life, and why divorce and all its kindred evils are soaring to an all-time high.

All this has affected the Church too, and even among believers there is sometimes at least a lack of natural affection. Let us, with God's help, correct this without delay, so that every Christian home may be a refreshing oasis of natural affection and divine blessing.

"Trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good." The Greek aspondos may signify one who does not remain true to his promise, and probably does in this case, although in general usage the word means implacable, as the same word is rendered in Rom. 1:31. "False accusers," of course are slanderers, and the "incontinent," those who are without self-control, while those who are "fierce," are savage and brutal. Is it strange that all these should be "despisers of those that are good"?

"Traitors, heady, highminded" (Ver. 4). The word "traitors" (Gr., prodotai) is used only here, in Luke 6:16 and Acts 7:52, in the latter two of which it refers to the betrayers of Christ. The word "heady" simply means head-strong, and the
old English word "high-minded" is clear enough to those who use the King James Version of the Bible. Paul's epistles, especially, contain many warnings against this haughty frame of mind.

Again, it is natural that these three characteristics should be followed by the words, "lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God"? Men who are treacherous, headstrong and haughty clearly are self-centered, not God-centered. When we view, through the media, the multitudes that throng our places of amusement and entertainment, whether associated with drama and music, or baseball, football, basketball and a dozen other sports, we cannot but conclude that the masses are indeed "lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God." Nor does the word "more" here, contain the thought of degree. Actually the sense is that they love pleasures rather than God. And, sad to say, the Church is coming perilously close to fostering this attitude. The Church has largely gone into the entertainment business, and having drawn many by this approach, they must now keep entertaining them to keep them coming. The teaching of the Word, sad to say, is no longer the great attraction.

"Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof" (Ver. 5). Of course! All the world is religious! But how few experience the mighty power of true godliness! The meaning of the word is clear enough. In the 23 passages of the New Testament where the original word is found, in one or another of its grammatical forms, it is variously translated holy, pious, devout and godly. But what does the world know about the enormous spiritual power that true godliness exerts, except as they are affected by the godliness of sincere believers? For on every hand we see how true godliness convicts the lost, so that they are either angered by it or will trust Christ for salvation as the truth is presented to them.

The world has religion, but does not know Christ. They have the form but not the reality. May God help us believers, then, and grant that "the power of godliness" may be evident in our relationships with all those with whom we come into contact; that through our influence the lost may be saved and our fellow-believers encouraged, strengthened and inspired to stand true to God in these "perilous times."

The Apostle bids us to "turn away" from those whose characteristics he describes in this passage, but not before describing one more segment of this wicked world in these "last days" of the present dispensation of grace: the feminist. Referring to those mentioned above, he says:

"For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts,
"Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth" (Vers. 6,7).

"Of this sort," i.e., some of those listed above will make their way surreptitiously into households and mislead "silly" women, weighed down with sins and led on by various emotional impulses, "ever learning," but "never able to come to the knowledge of the truth." What a description of many homes in our maladjusted age! And by contrast, how refreshing to enter a godly home, where father and mother love the Lord and bring their children up to love and trust Him! Such a home is a bulwark of spiritual strength, from which we may expect well-adjusted children who will never need a psychiatrist!

The emphasis here is partly on those false "teachers" who, instead of teaching the truth of God's Word and establishing their hearers in the faith, find nothing better to do than to counsel the maladjusted with their worldly wisdom. Even more, however, it is upon those who, through their subversive efforts, have come to the place where they are forever talking about things they have "learned," but do not know the truth.

"Now as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith.

"But they shall proceed no further: for their folly shall be manifest unto all men, as theirs also was" (Vers. 8,9).

Jannes and Jambres, evidently, were the two leaders of the "wise men," or magicians who withstood Moses and Aaron in Pharaoh's court (Ex. 7:12). God allowed them, as they sought to duplicate Aaron's miracles, to go just so far, but always they were "taken in their own craftiness," until finally He allowed them to "proceed no further." And so it will be with Satan's modern "wise men," for "their folly," too, "shall be manifest to all men."

MORAL AND SPIRITUAL ISSUES

Perhaps the reader has already taken note of the fact that in describing the "perilous times" of the "last days," the Apostle does not refer to economic problems, or riots and bloodshed, or the terrible means by which men would one day wage war, or the dangers of land and air traffic, by which more people are killed each year in America than were ever killed in any of its wars.

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103 "Silly women" is one word in the original, but the English does not have a word for the Greek gunailarion. Actually it is a diminutive of women, but having nothing to do with physical size. It is used contemptuously.

104 Their names are found in ancient writings and on ancient monuments, but God does not name them until here in II Tim. 3:8!
Rather he describes the moral and spiritual condition of the times: "Men shall be lovers of their own selves ... without natural affection ... lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God," etc.

The real peril of our day, then, is not inflation, or depression, or a third World War. The real peril lies within the heart of man. And notice, in Ver. 5, that these conditions prevail in the midst of "a form of godliness." Many of them go to church, go through all the forms, and observe all the ceremonies, but know nothing of the power of godliness. What power do these forms and rituals have in comparison with a truly godly life?

The power of godliness is a subject which every true believer should consider very prayerfully in the light of the Word, for a truly godly life is a powerful instrument in God's hands to win the lost to Christ and to encourage fellow believers.

THE POWER OF GODLINESS EXHIBITED IN THE LIFE OF PAUL

"But thou hast fully known my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, long-suffering, charity, patience,

"Persecutions, afflictions, which came unto me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra; what persecutions I endured: but out of them all the Lord delivered me.

"Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution."

- II Timothy 3:10-12

How dramatically opposite are these virtues to the vices enumerated in Vers. 2-9! And such godly living, in the midst of an ungodly world, while used of God to bring salvation and blessing to sincere hearts, is bound to arouse the enmity of the ungodly, and of Satan, their unrecognized "prince" and "god."

Thus the Apostle speaks of persecutions and afflictions which he had endured for Christ, but out of which the Lord had graciously delivered him.

Paul's persecutions at Antioch (Acts 13:45,50) Timothy could not personally recall, for he had not been with the Apostle at this time. However, he would still be fully acquainted with the circumstances through his fellowship with saints who had been there. He would know how Paul's own countrymen had spoken against him, "contradicting and blaspheming," and how they had finally stirred up persecution against him and Barnabas and had "expelled them out of their coasts [borders]."
As to Paul's persecutions at Iconium and Lystra, Timothy may well have witnessed them personally, for in Acts 16:1,2 we learn that he was a native of Lystra and well known in both Lystra and Iconium. He would well recall how at Iconium the Jews had again stirred up persecution against Paul so that he was in danger of being stoned to death. He would recall, too, how at Lystra the Apostle's enemies had succeeded in stoning him, dragging him out of the city and leaving him for dead.

There is the strongest possibility that Timothy himself was present with the disciples who stood around the Apostle in that dark hour as, inexplicably, he rose to his feet and - brave man! - went straight back into the city whose residents had stoned him.

Paul Sadler has suggested the possibility that the Apostle refers to his "persecutions and afflictions" in these three cities in their chronological order, because they demonstrate the growing intensity of the opposition against his message. This may well be so. At Antioch the Jews, "filled with envy, spoke against" Paul's teachings, "contradicting and blaspheming," until finally he and Barnabas were "expelled" from the area (Acts 13:45,50). At Iconium "an assault was made" against them, and an attempt "to stone them" (14:5). At Lystra Paul's enemies actually did stone him, dragging him out of the city and leaving him for dead (14:19).

These and many other persecutions the Apostle had been through and he reminds Timothy: "Out of them all the Lord delivered me." He was no worse off for having gone through them. Indeed, these experiences had deepened and strengthened him spiritually and had made him a more-than-ever effective witness for Christ.

In thus encouraging Timothy, one would expect Paul to continue by saying, "And all who suffer for the Lord will be delivered," but not so. Rather he says:

"Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution" (Ver. 12).

He does this to challenge Timothy - and so God challenges us. It is something like Churchill's challenge to the British people when their backs were to the wall: "I have nothing to offer," said the great war leader, "but toil, blood, tears and sweat."

We must not forget that this is the age of Christ's rejection and that God in grace extends it and leaves His ambassadors here to offer to all His enemies, a free amnesty and blessed reconciliation through the death of His rejected Son (II Cor. 5:20,21). We are ambassadors, then, on enemy territory. We should understand this, and should understand that our message will often be spurned.
Let us then take the Apostle's challenge to heart. "Yea, and all who will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution."

Sad to say, many Christians, indeed many Christian leaders, seek first of all, not to fulfill their mission as Christ's ambassadors in the world, but to be accepted by the community, especially the religious community. Paul was not accepted by the community in any place where he ministered. He was now in prison for proclaiming the message committed to him, and as he wrote this very letter was awaiting execution by the sword.

The Apostle's bold stand for the message of grace had brought him persecution on every hand. As a mighty man of God he had dealt the opposition strong blows and, as Sir Robert Anderson once said, "He who deals hard blows must expect hard blows in return."

There in Verse 12, then, is the touchstone. "ALL that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." Does the reader love the Lord and rejoice that he is saved? Fine! But does he love the Lord enough to "suffer persecution" for Him? Does his godly life make his testimony effective enough to cause Satan, "the god of this world," to react?

Christianity is not merely something to enjoy; it is a message to proclaim with all the strength and wisdom and wealth God gives us, so that all may hear and that those who heed and believe may be saved and added to the Church, the Body of Christ. A Christian curled up on a bed of ease belies his name and should awake to hear and heed the words of Paul in II Tim. 1:8:

"Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me His prisoner; but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God."

CONTINUE THOU

"But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived.

"But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them;

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105 The story is told of a Roman soldier who for some cowardly act had been brought before Alexander the Great. "Is it true," asked Alexander, "that you bear the same name as I?" The soldier indicated that this was true. "Well then," said Alexander, "I will give you a choice: Either show greater courage, or change your name."
"And that from a child thou hast known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.

"All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:

"That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."

- II Timothy 3:13-17

We cannot look upon the words of Ver. 13 as predicting a sustained and steady increase of evil all through the course of the present dispensation, for then the condition would long ago have become wholly intolerable. Rather we must again bear in mind that the passage represents (1) Paul's word to Timothy regarding the immediate outlook, and (2) God's Word to His people in any part of the Church's history, to the effect that they should not expect any consistent improvement in moral and spiritual conditions, but rather the opposite. E.g., in the thrilling days of the Reformation one might have been beguiled into thinking that conditions were getting "better and better," but not so, for the Reformation itself carried with it the seeds of further apostasy in the Church and further ungodliness in the world. The same is true of the Great Awakening under the Wesleys and their fellow-workers.

Certainly Verse 13 refutes the doctrine that the teaching of Christianity will ultimately bring in the kingdom reign of Christ. Those who teach this have not yet learned that the "leaven" that leavened "the whole loaf," in Matt. 13:33, is not representative of the gospel, but of false teaching (I Cor. 5:6,7; Gal. 5:7-9).

But what is the Apostle's advice to Timothy in the light of these worsening conditions, made still worse by the fact that the deceivers have even deceived themselves, so that they can speak with some degree of conviction. Some neo-evangelicals teach that in these fast-changing times believers too should be prepared to "move fast," using whatever approach will be most apt to win the people of the world at a given time.

Not so Paul. He does not say, "Move fast"; he says, "Stand fast." "But continue thou," is the watchword. Do they forsake the Word or oppose it? Then, "I charge thee ... Preach the Word" (3:14, 4:1,2).

Some believers have a complex about their Christian convictions and speak of them apologetically when face to face with "the wise of this world." A thoughtful consideration of Prov. 9:10 and I Cor. 3:19, should encourage such, for actually the "intellectuals" of this world are those who assent to the theories of those who
agree with each other that they are intellectual. Dissent from them and you have automatically branded yourself an illiterate!

But has not the world made great progress, intellectually, since Paul's day? Of course! For one thing, our physicists have taught us how to kill each other much faster now. Moscow, London or Washington could be wiped out in a few minutes, and this is a considerable saving of time!

And think what has been accomplished in the field of electronics! We can now keep intelligent people glued to their TV sets for hours on end, their eyes riveted to shows which are often unwholesome and immoral, with an occasional "good" show set in between. And think of the time-saving devices in our homes! We are all saving so much time that we cannot even be hospitable to each other and our mental institutions are overcrowded with patients who have collapsed from enjoying all this leisure time.

Then consider our achievements in transportation! Our thoroughfares are crowded with automobiles whose drivers are getting jangled nerves in traffic jams and choking in the deadly carbon monoxide fumes, or else racing at high speeds, which is great fun until suddenly some object looms up ahead as if from nowhere. And the airplane! This is really something! We can now fly through the air with so much noise and commotion that sick and innocent people for miles around our larger airports are kept awake nights; it has become so important to get from one place to another fast, fast, fast.

But all this is nothing compared with what is going on in outer space. We now have all sorts of things orbiting around out there - and it's not all debris. It includes some very sensitive instruments, serving us faithfully from day to day. Indeed, men from our earth have actually landed on the moon and have brought some of its rocks and dust back with them. Soon, maybe, we will have people from beautiful New England, or the breathtaking Rockies, or the lovely shores of Oregon, living on its barren wastes! Wonderful prospect!

But as we keep probing farther and farther into space, we here live in a society whose wild, pagan music has all but replaced the beautiful melodies and harmonies of the classics, and whose twisted "art" reflects the bewildered confusion of our times; a society, many of whose children and young people are being corrupted, whose women are robbed and raped, and whose men, women and children are murdered in the streets.

And with all this reversed "progress" our institutions of learning go on filling their students' minds with still more of "the wisdom of this world."
But, as I Cor. 3:19 states: "The wisdom of this world is foolishness with God," and as Prov. 9:10 declares, "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." Thus the Apostle bids Timothy: "Continue in the things which thou hast learned and hast [by much evidence] been assured of knowing of whom thou hast learned them" (Ver. 14).

"Of whom" had Timothy learned these things? The human instrument was, of course, Paul, but surely the Apostle's intention here is to emphasize the fact that the revelation he had received from the glorified Lord, was the Word of God, for he continues:

"And that from a child thou hast known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus." (Ver. 15).

Most of the world's great ones are wise with regard to everything but what matters most, their eternal destiny. But Timothy, humbly brought up to read and study the holy Scriptures, had that which is able to make one "wise unto salvation," through faith in Christ.

And now, in closing this chapter, we come to one of the most important passages of Scripture. Many books have been written on the claims of this blessed passage.

"All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:

"That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works" (Vers. 16,17).

"All Scripture is God-breathed, and ... profitable"!

Thus the Apostle casts Timothy upon the Scriptures as his only recourse in this wicked and bewildering age. The inspired Word of God is the sole and sufficient provision for the man of God in the face of the most blatant apostasy and ungodliness.

"Evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse," he says, but "in the Bible you have all you need to cope with the situation." All else has dismally failed.

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106 The above six paragraphs, describing world conditions are taken partly from our book, No Other Doctrine.

107 Not everything that has been written, obviously, but all the sacred Scriptures.

108 The words "given by inspiration of God," lit., by the inbreathing of God, are but one word in the Greek, theopnustos, "God-breathed."
This is not to overlook the fact that, as previously stated in II Tim. 2:15, the Bible must be "rightly divided" to be rightly understood.

It should also be observed that one reason why the Apostle declares that "all Scripture" is God-breathed, is to emphasize the important fact that his writings too are thus inspired (Cf, I Tim. 4:1; II Tim. 1:9-11; 1:13,14; Tit. 1:2,3).

Let the man of God go to this Book, then, "for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness," so that he may be "perfect," or complete (as a man of God), and so "thoroughly furnished unto all good works."

Let us, believers, emulate Epaphras in praying for one another to this end. Epaphras, we are told, was "always laboring fervently in prayer" for the Colossian saints-not that they might enjoy each other's fellowship, etc., but that they might "stand perfect and complete in all the will of God" (Col. 4:12).
Chapter VII - II Timothy 4:1–8

THE LAST SOLEMN CHARGE

PREACH THE WORD

"I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom;

"Preach the Word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine.

"For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears;

"And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.

"But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry.

"For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand."

- II Timothy 4:1-6

We come now to Paul's last solemn charge to Timothy; more solemn than any previously voiced. It is a farewell commission from a faithful soldier of Jesus Christ, indeed, a high officer in the "armed forces" of the Spirit, to a successor in the conflict.

The Apostle takes Timothy into the presence of God Himself, commanding him before God and the Lord Jesus Christ to faithfully fulfill his responsibilities.

Yet there is a certain triumph about this passage, for, as he writes he has no thought of himself, but only for those he leaves behind, and for Timothy in particular.

But what about the latter phrase: "who shall judge the quick [living] and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom," for this judgment will not occur until after the close of the millennial kingdom.

In explanation, let us first take note that the Authorized Version translates the Greek kata ("at," in Ver. 1) by no less than 64 words and expressions! In
several cases it is rendered "according to," "as concerning," "in view of" and "by." Any of these would be appropriate to the context and in any case the connective and is implied. This writer holds the view that the Apostle here continues with his charge, the sense being: "I charge thee before God and the Lord Jesus Christ who shall judge the quick and the dead, and by [or "in view of"] His appearing and His kingdom."

Not only will the Lord Jesus Christ judge the unsaved living and dead at the Great White Throne (Rev. 20:11-15), but believers of this dispensation will be called upon to stand before Him at His appearing to catch away His own when the Body is complete, and it is at this bema, or "judgment seat," (Rom. 14:10) that our Lord will "reward" some, and appoint them to "reign with Him," while others will "suffer loss" and be "denied" this honor (See I Cor. 3:14,15; II Tim. 2:12).

All this is involved in the solemn charge to Timothy. Paul would surely receive a crown "at that day" (Ver. 8) and would reign with Christ in glory. Would Timothy, in the long run, be as faithful? Thus this most solemn of all of Paul's charges to him.

Mark well, that again the first responsibility which the Apostle presses upon his son in the faith is to "Preach the Word" (Ver. 2). There, in the Book, is the light men need in the darkness of the age; there is the life that is "the light of men"; there is the truth by which men are convicted of their sins and their need of Christ. There is the "doctrine" God's people need for guidance, the "reproof" they need when they go astray, the "correction" they need when they are mistaken, the "instruction in righteousness" they need when uncertain as to what is right and what wrong. There is the food they need for sustenance, the grace they need for courage to stand strong in the battle, the armor they need for protection and the weapons they need for victory. And best of all, there is a rich Mine, filled with precious gems to enjoy and to share with others!

The Apostle continues: "Be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and doctrine" (Ver. 2).

Note the absence of the connective "and" in this passage. He writes rapidly. The need and the responsibility are urgent. How sad, then, to witness the irresponsibility of so many who stand in the pulpit and preach ethics, politics, world betterment, etc., but do not "preach" or proclaim the Word, or perhaps merely use a text from that great Book as a "launching pad" for their own ideas, but do not teach it rightly divided.

109 I Cor. 3:13-15; 4:5; I Thes. 4:17; II Tim. 4:8, "at that day."
110 Alert, "on your toes."
PREACH THE WORD!

How appropriate is this charge, when we think it through, coming just before his prediction that:

"The time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears;

"And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables."

- II Timothy 4:3,4

How widespread is this attitude toward the Word today. Men do not wish sound, sensible teaching; they cannot endure it. Rather, remaining willfully blind to their wretched condition and seeking to fulfill "their own desires," they "heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears" (Ver. 3). The fact that these teachers offer only a Babel of confusion does not seem to bother them, as long as they do not teach the truth of the Bible. Indeed, turning their ears (willfully) from the truth, they are "turned unto fables." Note again that these "fables" are not of the Aesop variety; they are not parables, but fanciful stories. Sad to say an apostate Church provides such stories and even Fundamentalist organizations are increasingly doing so. Read your religious magazines and note how large a proportion of many of them are given to stories, written to encourage, to instruct or to promote. But a story can prove almost anything! Or go to your Christian bookstore. If it is an older one doubtless it once was largely filled with commentaries and other books given to the teaching of the Word. But now - most of them are largely filled with novels, biographies, success stories and everything but the teaching of the Word.

Yet, in spite of all this, the Apostle charges Timothy, "Preach the Word," for "faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the Word of God" (Rom. 10:17). There is no other means of salvation, nor of building up the saints. It is only as the Spirit of God uses His own Word to convict and convert, that men are saved and added to the Church, the Body of Christ.

MAKE FULL PROOF OF THY MINISTRY

"But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry.

"For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand."

- II Timothy 4:5,6
DO THE WORK OF AN EVANGELIST

Paul, though an Apostle, and above any bishop, was (outside our Lord Himself) doubtless the greatest evangelist of all time.

Such was the impact of his ministry that he and his co-workers were called, "these that have turned the world upside down" (Acts 17:6).

The Apostle’s ministry was far-reaching and the results lasting. His own extensive travels tell only part of the story of the incredible outreach of his evangelistic efforts, and the impact of his written ministry, especially, is still felt today.

It must be evident to those who read such passages as Acts 19:8-10 that Paul would not have fit into the evangelistic picture today. No evangelistic committee would even consider engaging him. They would say: "This man is too outspoken. He disputes with people and tries to persuade them to his way of thinking. Besides, he does things in such a small way; he wouldn't go very far."

Today’s evangelistic campaigns are generally run quite differently. "Big" men start big organizations and all agree on the way to produce results: "Let’s do it big." First, of course, they need big money, so they go to big businessmen and enlist their generous support to begin with, explaining that if they only have the funds to give them a good start they can have a well-run organization to appeal to the Christian public for their support. How to get the masses interested? Well, it must be a good show - a good Christian show, of course, but with considerable help from Hollywood and the sports world.\footnote{While we sincerely thank God for every actor or sports figure who has been brought to Christ, the work of Christ should not be promoted by showing these personalities off publicly. For this procedure there is no precedent in the Word of God.}

If the evangelistic committee has not already chosen the evangelist for their campaign they will undoubtedly look for a popular platform speaker; one who will be careful not to cause divisions, and who can work well with all, or certainly with most, of the denominational leaders, and one who will not defend his message or methods when these are criticized, but will simply go on, in a positive way, to show that "Christ is the answer."

Results? If you look at the campaigns the results look big, but if you look longer and more closely, you will find them small indeed. Today we have larger campaigns, better financed, better organized, better advertised and with incomparably wider outreach than those of former generations, yet ungodliness and superstition, rebellion and crime, are increasing faster all the time.
But have we not just considered God's Word to the effect that "evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived"? True, but it does not follow from this that God's people are without blame for this condition. The apostasy of Israel was predicted too - and the blame for this was laid chiefly on her spiritual leaders.

Paul was in every respect a Christian gentleman and most gracious. He had a fine sense of propriety and tact. Thus he surely did not enter the synagogues in city after city like the proverbial bull in a china shop. But he cared enough for souls to proclaim the Word boldly. His trumpet gave a clear sound, as he explained to his kinsmen how the long-promised Messiah and His kingdom had been rejected and how the kingdom was now vested in the crucified, risen, glorified Christ Himself. He cared enough to debate with them from the Scriptures and to seek to persuade them as to the truth of these things. Oh, that we had more such evangelists today! If we had such men of God we would doubtless also have the "every man evangelism" that prevailed under the so-called "Scofield-Darby Movement," when not only adult Christians, but even saved teenagers would not think of leaving their homes without a small New Testament in their pockets, praying that God would lead them to someone who needed Christ so that they could show him from the Word of God how to be saved.

It is not without significance that the great evangelistic and missionary thrust at the turn of the century (1870-1930) was contemporary with an equally great emphasis on teaching the Word of God-mostly expository teaching by men of God like Darby, Scofield, Erdman, Pierson, Moorehead, Maclntosh, Gray, Gregg, Newell, Pettingill, Ottman, Harris, Gaebelein, Ironside and others whom God was using not only to answer the "higher criticism" and "modernism", of their day, but to recover for the Church the blessed truths of grace, of the "one Body," and of the imminency of its rapture to be with Christ.

As Paul exhorted Timothy to "do the work of an evangelist," the time of his departure by cruel martyrdom was at hand, and ere long he would seal his testimony with his life's blood. But rather than thinking of himself or now simply "leaving everything with the Lord," he kept still planning for the future, still occupied with the ministry which the glorified Lord had committed to him many years previous.

To him had been committed the greatest revelation of all time and he was not about to abandon it now. There was still so much to be done, so many souls to be won, so much confusion to dispel, Timothy must now carry on the work with renewed vigor, without regard to the cost. Thus it is that we read in II Tim. 4:5,6:

112 We regret that Dean J. S. Howson's great book on The Character of St.Paul has long been out of print. It is a masterpiece on this subject.
"But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist; make full proof of thy ministry,

"For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand."

Timothy now, more than ever, must "watch" and "endure," for Satan is always on the alert with his "wiles" and "devices," to catch God's servants unawares and undo their testimony for Christ. One of these "devices" concerns the very work of evangelism which Paul charged him to engage in.

Strangely, some have concluded from Eph. 4:11 that the evangelist necessarily belongs to a different category from "pastors and teachers," or "teaching pastors." It is true that according to this passage some of God's servants are specially gifted and specially productive as evangelists, but we must not read into this passage more than it says.

Some have read into it that the evangelist need not be a teacher of the Word. He need not be well grounded in the Scriptures if only he can tell people in a simple way that Christ died for their sins.

This reminds the author of the converted performer who, contrary to I Tim. 5:22, had been immediately pushed forward by Christian leaders as an evangelist. It cost heavily to secure his services, but it was worth it; he could draw crowds, and the crowds, in turn, would bear the cost. He was barely grounded in the Scriptures, but what matter? He had such a way with him; he could tell such entertaining stories and had written several popular gospel songs. He was able to induce many to make "decisions" for Christ because he had come to the pulpit straight from show business. To quote his own words: "I leave doctrine to the theologians. I just preach Jesus."

But Paul was doubtless the greatest Christian evangelist that ever lived and he won the lost to Christ by teaching the great doctrines of sin, alienation, reconciliation, justification, etc. And today any evangelist worthy of the name must be well grounded in the Word, for souls are saved only as the Spirit uses the Word.

To look at this subject from the other side, there are those who suppose that the pastor or Bible teacher need not be an evangelist. As one pastor said to the writer some years ago: "Some of us are simply not evangelists and we should not try to be." But the pastor was wrong, dead wrong, for as we have seen, Paul wrote to Timothy, the pastor and Bible teacher at Ephesus:

"Do the work of an evangelist; make full proof of thy ministry" (Ver. 5).
Does this not clearly imply that the pastor, the Bible teacher, who does not do the work of an evangelist is deficient in his ministry? For one thing, such a pastor shows a shameful lack of concern for the lost, and for another he disobeys God's plain command, failing to appreciate the fact that God has committed to us all "the ministry of reconciliation," to be fulfilled as "the love of Christ constraineth us" (II Cor. 5:14-21).

If pastors and Bible teachers were more faithful in doing "the work of an evangelist," the general public would not be so readily taken in by the unscriptural and God-dishonoring methods of evangelism so popular in our day, methods which create much interest and make good statistics, but also do much to confuse and disappoint the hearers and to make void the Word of God.

From all this it should be evident that evangelistic campaigns are not revivals and should not be so called. Rather the pastor and the people of his congregation should experience true spiritual revival before planning an evangelistic campaign, and the true Church will have to experience such a revival, weak and ill as she is, before true, Scriptural evangelism again replaces its modern usurper.

HENCEFORTH A CROWN!

"I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith:

"Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day; and not to me only, but unto all them also that love His appearing."

- II Timothy 4:7,8

As the Apostle writes from his prison cell,113 we are once again taught an important dispensational lesson.

During the period covered by the Book of Acts, and especially during the early Acts period, God intervened openly in the affairs of men. During the Pentecostal period there were supernatural demonstrations, such as the gift of tongues and other miraculous signs. Later an angel delivered Peter from a prison cell (Acts 12:6-11) and still later, at Philippi, Paul was delivered by an earthquake (Acts 16:25-39), and indeed, Paul had spoken with tongues and had wrought many miracles during his early ministry.

But all this was changed now. There is no evidence of any angelic appearance, no earthquake, not even a voice from heaven to cheer and

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113 Many believe it was a dungeon under Nero's palace. Cf. Phil. 1:13.
encourage the Apostle. Rather he is left in his cell as "an ambassador in bonds."

This is because a new dispensation had been ushered in. The long-promised King and His Kingdom had been finally rejected even though God had borne the apostles witness "with signs and wonders, and divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost" (Heb. 2:4). He had now spoken His last word to mankind until He speaks to them in His wrath, and vexes them in His sore displeasure (Psa. 2:5).

Meantime, however, He has shown His great mercy and love by ushering in (through Paul) the present "dispensation of the grace of God" (Eph. 3:2,3), a signless, timeless dispensation never promised or predicted, and prolonged only according to the riches of His grace.

This is why we find not one word about any miraculous signs or divine interventions in Paul's later epistles. Rather he is Christ's ambassador in bonds, without any miraculous demonstration wrought in his behalf. And-what could demonstrate more clearly the character of the dispensation of grace, than the continued imprisonment of God's Ambassador of grace!

Yet it is from prison that the Apostle writes to the Philippians, "Don't worry about me! It's all turned out for the furtherance of the gospel, and isn't this just what we want?" (See Phil. 1:13-18). And to the Ephesians he exults about sitting "in heavenly places in Christ," with its "all spiritual blessings" (Eph. 2:6; 1:3).

Who, having experienced this position and these blessings would ever sigh for Pentecost? And if ever we find evidence of the superiority of the blessings of grace it is here in Paul's last recorded words to Timothy.

He writes from cruel bondage in Rome, having already been informed that Nero has pronounced his sentence: execution by the sword - and for what? For preaching Christ and the riches of His grace.

But with what a triumphant testimony he prepares to take his departure! "I am now ready to be offered." He does not mean that he is prepared to die; he has been prepared for that for many a year. But rather, that he is now about to be offered. But the really touching thing about this phrase is the word "offered." This is a Greek term for a libation, a "drink offering," poured out in thankfulness for Christ's death; his death added to the one vicarious death of Christ, and in appreciation of it. He uses the same symbolism in Phil. 2:17.
Thus the Apostle by no means despair, but rather offers himself to God in thanksgiving, and rejoices that his "departure,"\(^\text{114}\) or release, is at hand.

Long enough had he encountered the relentless opposition of devils and men in his tireless efforts to discharge his great commission! And now the Lord was calling His ambassador home! Soon he would soar heavenward "to be with Christ, which is far better!" What gain! (Phil. 1:21,23). And this while his very guards doubtless contemplated with regret the horrible experience he was about to undergo! But there is even more to gladden his heart.

Looking back over his service for Christ, he views himself first as a soldier, then as an athlete and finally as a steward, and in all three aspects he is gloriously ready to go and be with Christ.

"I have fought the good fight,"\(^\text{115}\) the same "good fight" he had so earnestly besought Timothy to wage, and which he had urged his beloved Philippiabrethren to wage (Phil. 1:27,28); "the good fight of the faith." Mark, he does not presume to boast that he had fought the fight well, though he had indeed fought more valiantly than any of us. But it was the fight, the battle, that was "good," i.e., for a good and right cause, and it was spiritual in character, whether wrestling with the principalities and powers in the heavenlies, or with men about the truth (Col. 1:28 - 2:1; Eph. 6:10-20). Oh that more soldiers could be enlisted for the Lord Jesus Christ in this conflict!

"I have finished my course," i.e., the race course. Again, he does not presume to boast that he has won the race, but that he had run the race and finished it. Ah, Paul did not only stand for the truth, or walk as a Christian should; he ran as in a race - as Christians should (See Phil. 3:13,14), and had finished it. He was not a "drop-out," nor had he been disqualified (See I Cor. 9:26,27, where "castaway" is the Greek adokimos, "disapproved").

This was what he had longed for even as "bonds and afflictions" confronted him. Hear him say it in his own words:

"But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God" (Acts 20:24).

Finally, "I have kept the faith," the faith which he had besought Timothy to "keep," to guard and defend, the "one faith" of Eph. 4:5. He had not done less than he had asked Timothy to do. As a steward of the "mysteries of God," and of

\(^{114}\) Gr., analusis, from which our analyze. I.e., a breaking up into its component parts, his spirit and soul now to be gloriously set free from his persecution-scarred body, with its aches and pains.

\(^{115}\) Textus Receptus has the definite article.
that whole body of truth which he calls "the mystery," he had indeed been faithful. But once again, he does not boast of any success in guarding "that precious deposit," but merely rejoices that he had guarded it.

As we look about us we see many who have "erred concerning the faith," or who, "concerning the faith have made shipwreck," or who have "departed from the faith." And we see others who have never really examined themselves "whether they be in the faith," and still others who, though they be "in the faith," do not clearly understand "the faith" to which Paul refers, the great body of heavenly truth revealed to him by the glorified Lord.

Surely the Church has not enjoyed "the unity of the faith," nor have its ministers as a whole fought "the good fight of the faith." Rather they have substituted human imagination for divine revelation and the will of man for the Word of God. How inspiring, then, to read the last words of the Apostle regarding himself. "I have kept the faith." And how does all this relate to his future?

"Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day; and not to me only, but unto all them also that love His appearing" (Ver. 8).

How careful again he is not to boast of any attainments of his own. That crown will be given, he says, not to him alone, but to "all them also that love His appearing." The coming of Christ, and meeting Him in a resurrected body filled his vision. He had truly "loved" "that day," even though it meant he must appear before "the judgment seat of Christ." He loved it and longed for it because then he would finally be with the One who had so loved him when a rebellious sinner and had so graciously saved him. But we must not overlook the fact that he had lived for Christ so that he could look forward to "that day" with eager anticipation. Do we? - For that "crown of righteousness" is reserved for "all them... that love His appearing."
Chapter VIII - II Timothy 4:9-22

FAREWELL REQUESTS

THE APOSTLE ALMOST WHOLLY ABANDONED

"Do thy diligence to come shortly unto me;

"For Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world, and is departed unto Thessalonica; Crescens to Galatia, Titus unto Dalmatia.

"Only Luke is with me. Take Mark, and bring him with thee, for he is profitable to me for the ministry.

"And Tychicus have I sent to Ephesus.

"The cloak that I left at Troas with Carpus, when thou comest, bring with thee, and the books, but especially the parchments."

- II Timothy 4:9-13

The closing verses of the epistle appear at first to give evidence that Paul was now somewhat distracted in his thinking, but even if so, a closer examination of his requests, bits of information, expressions of sorrow on the one hand and of strong faith on the other, go to make II Tim. 4:9-22 one of the most searching and inspiring passages of the Timothys, and one of the very richest in spiritual blessing.

Why does the Apostle urge Timothy to hurry to his side (Ver. 9), when it appears there would not be time for Timothy to reach him? Well, put yourself in his place. On the one hand he seems convinced that the end of his earthly career is imminently "at hand." He has finished his course. On the other, however, he recalls how many times God has delivered him when the outlook seemed hopeless, and who could tell how God might yet intervene. Also, this was a time when, more than ever, he needed Christian fellowship. It would mean so much now to have his beloved Timothy at his side. Thus, "Come quickly," he says,

"For Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world [or "age"], and is departed to Thessalonica; Crescens to Galatia, Titus unto Dalmatia."

For those who have not read the preceding part of this book, we repeat that we do not believe that the Greek aion always means "age." Sometimes it is used of environment rather than of time. Here, however, it appears that it should be "age," as rendered in the Authorized Version at Eph. 2:7; Col. 1:26; et al. It does
not appear that under such grave circumstances Demas would be attracted by the things of the world but rather that he was thinking of his *temporal* rather than his eternal welfare.

How sad! Demas, who had until recently been Paul's "fellow-laborer" (Col. 4:14; Phile. 24), had now abandoned the Apostle.

Before we condemn Demas too harshly, however, let us ask ourselves whether we have stood faithfully by Paul and his God-given message of grace, or whether temporal considerations have made cowards of us. The praise of men, financial advantage, prestige, power, popularity on the one hand and the fear of man, or straitened circumstances, etc., on the other, have made cowards out of many Christians, even Christian leaders. This is why Paul so earnestly exhorts Timothy:

"Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me His prisoner, but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God" (II Tim. 1:8).

How many a Demas in the Church of Christ needs to ask God to forgive him for his self-serving conduct and to pray for grace to stand boldly for that mighty message for which the Apostle Paul fought, suffered and died. How many a Demas should face up to the question: "Am I living for "that day," when I shall stand before Christ, or merely for the personal gain I can acquire in "this present evil age"?

It is thought-provoking that the Apostle does not say that Crescens and Titus had deserted him, so it is possible that they went with his sanction, but neither does he say that he had sent them on any errands. Also there is at least a tinge of sadness in his words in the following sentence, "Only Luke is with me." Thus it is also quite possible that, while not actually fleeing from the scene, Crescens and Titus had thought of "urgent" reasons why they ought to go to Galatia and Dalmatia, respectively. Does the reader ask with surprise and disappointment, "Would Titus leave Paul at such a time?" We ask, "Why not?" Why is this not at least possible? It would not be the first time that a timid servant of Christ (like Timothy) had stood firm, while a bolder personality (like Titus) had succumbed to fear.

But there is no doubt left in one's mind where Tychicus is concerned for the Apostle clearly states, "I sent [him] to Ephesus" (Ver. 12), perhaps to substitute for Timothy as he hastened to Paul's side. At least, where Tychicus is concerned, we know he did not desert Paul.

"Only Luke is with me" (Ver. 11). What a post the beloved physician filled now! Not only could he minister to Paul's infirmities, but he was now the Apostle's only
human comforter; the only one to whom he could speak his heart, the only one with whom he could pray! If Luke was to him "the beloved physician" in earlier days, surely he was thrice that now! Beloved Luke! He had been so long and so faithfully at the Apostle's side to minister to his infirmities and to provide what physical comforts he could, and now - the Apostle must have thanked God a hundred times over-he is still at hand! When all the others have fled, or, for whatever reasons, have left, Luke is still there to help and comfort!

"Take Mark, and bring him with thee, for he is profitable to me for the ministry" (Ver. 11).

Here is a remarkable example of the greatness of the Apostle's heart and of his determination, even now, to make known to others the blessed message committed to him.

The reader will recall how Mark, Barnabas' nephew, had been chosen to accompany Paul and Barnabas on Paul's first apostolic journey, but as soon as the going had gotten hard Mark had deserted the two men and had returned to his mother at Jerusalem (Acts 12:12; 13:13). His irresponsibility was the cause of a division between Paul and Barnabas later, when Barnabas wanted to take his nephew with them on another journey and Paul had flatly refused (Acts 15:36-40).

Yet it is touching, later, to find Paul writing to the Colossians: "If he [Marcus] come unto you, receive him" (Col. 4:10), and now to find Paul asking for him. This speaks both of the Apostle's generous and forgiving nature and of a change in Mark's life. And is it not significant that God chose Mark, the failing servant (He was an attendant, waiting on Paul and Barnabas, Acts 13:5)\textsuperscript{116} to write about the perfect Servant in his "Gospel According to Mark"!

**A CLOAK AND SOME READING MATTER**

Besides the requests to Timothy to hurry to his side and to bring Mark with him, the Apostle had had one more thing to ask. He wanted his cloak and some books and parchments, which Timothy would know about.

Evidently he was cold at times and needed the warmth of his cloak. But as to the reading matter, is it not touching to note that while he asked for his cloak for physical warmth, and "the books," doubtless for mental and spiritual stimulation, he considered "the parchments" the most important of all. "The books" would probably have been done on papyrus, but the Scriptures, due to their great importance were generally written with extreme care on parchment, which would be much more durable. Doubtless he had, for some reason left some part, or parts, of these Scriptures with Carpus.

\textsuperscript{116} "John" here is John Mark (Cf, Acts 12:25).
Troas, where Carpus lived, was not on the direct route to Rome, but was evidently on a route often taken which may, in the long run, have been the fastest way.

There was much on the Apostle's mind these days: the welfare of the Church at large, the incipient apostasy, Timothy's natural timidity, not to speak of serious thoughts associated with his impending execution. Yet there was in his heart an intense interest in the Word, even when - or rather, especially when - weighed down with all these vexing problems.

How important is this lesson from the closing words of one soon to be beheaded for Christ! How far the Church has strayed from such an interest in the Scriptures! How few pastors give due time to the study of the Word, and teach the Scriptures from the pulpit! And how deplorably few teach the Word rightly divided!

This can only mean that the vast majority of clergymen today are workmen whom God cannot "approve" and who will one day stand before Him "ashamed" (II Tim. 2:15). Such should, before it is too late, take a lesson from Paul who, in a lonely Roman cell, with a soldier always at hand, and faced with execution by the sword, still counted the study of the Word of God of paramount importance.

THE FINAL WORDS

"Alexander the coppersmith did me much evil: the Lord reward him according to his works:

"Of whom be thou ware also, for he hath greatly withstood our words.

"At my first answer no man stood with me, but all men forsook me - pray God that it may not be laid to their charge.

"Notwithstanding, the Lord stood with me, and strengthened me, that by me the preaching might be fully known, and that all the Gentiles might hear: and I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion.

"And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto His heavenly kingdom: to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

"Salute Prisca and Aquilla, and the household of Onesiphorus.

"Erastus abode at Corinth; but Trophimus have I left at Miletum sick.
"Do thy diligence to come before winter. Eubulus greeteth thee, and Pudens, and Linus, and Claudia, and all the brethren.

"The Lord Jesus Christ be with thy spirit. Grace be with you. Amen."

- II Timothy 4:14-22

The addition of the word "coppersmith" to Alexander's name suggests his identification with the Jew of Acts 19:33. It appears that the Alexander of Acts 19 was suspected of siding with Paul because he was a Jew, and the Ephesians doubtless despised him for making shrines for Diana, a heathen goddess, only for financial gain. They could have been assured, however, that he had no sympathy with Paul. Rather, he may well have been one of those Jews who hounded Paul wherever he went and testified against him in court. In any case, the Apostle says of this Alexander that he did him "much evil," and "hath greatly withstood our words" (Vers. 14,15).

There has been much discussion regarding the words, "the Lord reward him according to his works," which do indeed sound like an imprecation. If they are imprecatory in nature, two things must be taken into account. (1) Paul spoke - as we cannot - as an apostle, and (2) this was not a personal matter and his words by no means indicate any desire for personal revenge. There is too much evidence that the Apostle had a gracious, forgiving spirit, to conclude that here he is vindictive or malevolent. Rather he speaks in the sacred interests of the truth of God.

But many feel, as this author does, that the sense of the statement is not "May the Lord reward him," but "the Lord will reward him." In other words, "The Lord will take care of him."

Surely we do well to leave the enemies of the truth in God's hands, for but for God's grace we might well be His enemies. Besides, the Apostle himself exhorts:

"Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath, for it is written: Vengeance is Mine, I will repay, saith the Lord" (Rom. 12:19).

But looking back from the sad incidents associated with his last defense before the Roman Emperor he recalls his situation at his first defense:

"At my first answer no man stood with me, but all men forsook me: I pray God that it may not be laid to their charge" (Ver. 16).
The desertion by his friends at this time indicates the extremity of Paul's danger and the gravity of the charges laid against him. All those who might have testified in his behalf were afraid to become involved lest they jeopardize their own lives.

The Apostle understood their fears, however, and though he had so sorely needed their help at this time he still loved them sincerely and prayed that their cowardice might not be held against them.

Paul's situation at his "first answer" was very similar to that of his Lord. It is written of our Lord's apostles that at the time of His trial "they all forsook Him and fled" (Mark 14:50).

But there was a great difference in the results. Paul, unlike our Lord, was evidently not condemned to death at his first trial before Caesar, but rather was released to further pursue his ministry, going perhaps even as far as Spain (Rom. 15:24,28). Thus he goes on to say, with regard to his "first answer":

"Notwithstanding the Lord stood with me, and strengthened me; that by me the preaching might be fully known, and that all the Gentiles might hear: and I was delivered from the mouth of the lion" (II Tim. 4:17).

But what about his situation now? At his first trial before Caesar he had been "delivered out of the mouth of the lion," but now he stood condemned to execution by the sword. Could he speak of deliverance now? Yes, for he confidently continues:

"And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto His heavenly kingdom: to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen" (Ver. 18).

The word "heavenly," here, is the Greek epouraneous and refers to the "heavenly places" where, by grace, we are seated in Christ (Eph. 2:6) and are blessed with "all spiritual blessings" (Eph. 1:3). Thus the "kingdom" is that in which believers today already enjoy a place positionally. The Apostle refers to this in Col. 1:13:

"Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son."

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117 The question of whether or not Paul suffered two imprisonments at Rome, with a period of freedom between, is discussed at length in an Appendix to the Author's Acts, Dispensationally Considered, Vol. IV, and the incredible outreach of his total ministry is discussed in the Author's No Other Doctrine, Chapter Xill, under the title, The Epiphany of Grace.
The kingdom of God's dear Son will one day encompass the earth,\textsuperscript{118} where He will reign over Israel and the nations for a thousand years but we, His heavenly people, will not reign on earth at that time. Rather we will reign over it, much as "the principalities and powers in heavenly places" do now.

Thus the believing member of the Body of Christ, even in the face of death, may triumphantly look forward to deliverance from the adversities, sorrows and temptations of this life, and preservation "unto His heavenly kingdom."

In closing the Apostle sends greetings to Prisca (perhaps using Priscilla's more familiar name now) and Aquila, her husband, who together had been so faithful to him in the ministry (Rom. 16:3-5). Also "the house of Onesiphorus," for whom he had expressed such deep gratitude earlier in the epistle (1:16-18).

Ver. 20 gives further evidence that Paul had been released for a time after his first imprisonment, for he seems to speak of what has taken place but recently. If these things had taken place years before, they would no longer be news. This further implies that his second imprisonment was brief. It is entirely possible that soldiers had been sent to apprehend Paul for the second time to bring him to Rome basically to stand before Caesar again for sentencing and for his execution.

Ver. 20 also emphasizes the fact that the sign gifts had indeed vanished. He had had to leave Trophimus at Miletum sick. If the gift of healing had still been in order what could possibly have been the reason for Paul's writing to Timothy that he had left Trophimus, a faithful companion, sick along the way to Rome?

Erastus, the reader will recall, was the Christian Treasurer, evidently, at Corinth (Rom. 16:23) - fortunate city! And Trophimus the innocent cause of Paul's arrest at Jerusalem (Acts 21:29).

Once more injecting a plea to Timothy to hurry to his side, "before winter" if possible, the Apostle sends greetings from Eubulus, Pudens, Linus, Claudia and "all the brethren." These greetings had been received by Paul, perhaps by letter, to transmit to Timothy, and in spite of his own difficult circumstances he had not forgotten.

As in all his epistles, he closes with a benediction of grace: grace to save, grace to bless and use, and grace to sustain in times of trouble. This was the essence of his great message, the message for which he was soon to be beheaded by the sword.

\textsuperscript{118} For the present it is vested in the person of Christ, rejected on earth but exalted "over all" in heaven.
INTRODUCTION
to
THE EPISTLE OF PAUL TO TITUS

We have compared the characters of Timothy and Titus in our Introduction to the Pastoral Epistles, and have seen their dearness to Paul as his beloved and faithful sons in the faith. There are, however, a few additional things that should be said about Titus and Paul's letter to him.

Titus is not mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles, but is prominent in Paul's epistles, where he is mentioned no less than eleven times.

He was appointed to undertake tasks requiring a great degree of responsibility and tact, as e.g., the following:

1. He accompanied Paul as the Gentile representative to the great Council at Jerusalem, whence Paul had been sent to defend Gentile liberty from circumcision and the Law (Gal. 2:1-3).

2. He was sent by Paul to deal with serious irregularities in the church at Corinth, and particularly with their delinquency as stewards of the material wealth God had entrusted to them (II Cor. 8:6,16 and 7:15).

3. He was commissioned to "set in order" the things that were wanting among the believers on the island of Crete (whose inhabitants were widely known for their moral irresponsibility), and to "ordain elders in every city" whose moral and spiritual standards were compatible with Christian leadership (Tit. 1:12,13 and 5-9).

These were all sensitive assignments, calling for one with a high degree of both tact and firmness.

The author's notes on I Timothy as to time of writing (See P.xxii) apply to the Epistle to Titus as well. Most commentators agree, as does this writer, that I Timothy and Titus were probably written at about the same time. Perhaps this accounts for the fact that they have so much in common, particularly with respect to the appointment of elders and general godliness. I Timothy dwells more on doctrine, however (I Tim. 1:3-10), while Titus dwells more on discipline (Tit. 1:6-9).

If the wording of 11 Tim. 4:10-12 carries any implication that Titus abandoned Paul in his darkest hour, the dreadful circumstances—and some unknown to us—must certainly be taken into account (Only one person remained with him at the time: Luke, his physician), and full credit should still be given Titus for his many years of faithful and self-denying service for Christ.

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Chapter I - Titus 1:1-4

THE SALUTATION

THE PROMISE GOD MADE TO HIMSELF

"Paul, a servant of God, and an apostle of Jesus Christ, according to the faith of God's elect, and the acknowledging of the truth which is after godliness;

"In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began;

"But hath in due times manifested His word through preaching which is committed unto me, according to the commandment of God our Savior;

"To Titus, mine own son after the common faith: Grace, mercy, and peace, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, our Savior."

- Titus 1:1-4

In his two letters to Timothy, the Apostle Paul introduces himself as an apostle of Jesus Christ, "by the commandment of God" and "by the will of God," but in writing to Titus he calls himself "a servant of God, and an apostle of Jesus Christ" (Ver. 1).

Doubtless this difference must be accounted for by the fact that these two men were so different in character. Titus was by nature a strong personality and it behooved the Apostle to remind him at the outset that he himself was but a bondmen (Gr., doulos), a slave of God, whose very life and will belonged to God and not to himself (Cf. I Cor. 6:19, 20). Nor was this inconsistent with the fact that he was "an apostle of Jesus Christ," for he held this position only "by the will of God."

It was with respect to "the faith of God's elect, and the acknowledging of the truth which is after [i.e., consistent with] godliness" that Paul was thus chosen.

The word "godliness" here (Gr., usebia, and once Theosebia), does not occur in Paul's writings until we come to the Pastoral Epistles, and there it occurs eleven times. Little wonder, for in these epistles he girds Timothy and Titus to stand true to God in the face of a rising tide of apostasy and godlessness.\textsuperscript{120}

\textsuperscript{120} Here see our notes on II Tim. 3:10-12.
It is not without significance that the false religions of paganism are so largely impure, and irreverent to the claims of the one true God, but the truth of the Bible and of its "gospel of the grace of God" consistently produces godliness when taken to heart (See 1 Tim. 6:3-6). Sad it is that so many are unwilling to acknowledge the truth that will produce godliness in their lives. They would rather go on in sin, whether it be self-righteous pride or some moral depravity, than to heed "the gospel of the grace of God" and be saved from it. But we shall see what blessings could be theirs if they would but believe this good news.

THE PROMISE OF GOD

In Paul's day the island of Crete, now called Candia, had a very bad reputation. In Tit. 1:12 the Apostle says,

"One of themselves, even a prophet of their own, said, The Cretians are always liars. . . ."

And Paul adds, as his personal testimony, "This witness is true." Indeed, the author, in looking up the word Cretian some years ago, learned that in ancient times to say "You're a Cretian," was the equivalent of saying, "You're a liar."

Yet in this dark island the gospel of the grace of God had shone and assemblies of Christian believers had begun to gather. To these, and to Titus, their overseer and co-laborer in the evangelization of the island, Paul had written the wonderful words:

"In hope of eternal life which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began" (Ver. 2).

"The Cretians are always liars." Whether they say, "Yes" or "No," "I will" or "I will not," makes very little difference. Pay no attention to what they say, for they cannot be trusted or depended upon. They cannot even trust each other. Any among them who would find safety and security must look away from themselves and each other to "God, who cannot lie."

"The Cretians are always liars." "God ... cannot lie." What a contrast!

"God is not a man, that He should lie; neither the son of man, that He should repent: Hath He said, and shall He not do it? Or hath He spoken, and shall He not make it good?" (Num. 23:19).

How blessed to know that the promise of "eternal life" and all that goes with it was made by "God who cannot lie!" However, the force of this great fact is not fully felt until we enquire: To whom was this promise made, and when?
A PROMISE - TO HIMSELF?

Did God actually make a promise to Himself? Certainly. Why not? Have you, the reader, never made a promise to yourself? Of course you have, and probably your whole spirit, soul and body entered into it. By faith in God's Word and with all the determination in your soul, you clenched your fist and said to yourself. - "By the grace of God, I will - or I will not - do this or that."

Surely God did not make this promise to men, for man was not yet created "before the world [or the ages] began." And there is no evidence that He made a promise to angels about eternal life for man. Rather, then, He made this promise to Himself in the councils of the Trinity, far back in eternity past-a promise of eternal life for poor sinners! This promise could not have been made by a greater, for God made it. Nor could it have been made to a greater for He made it to Himself! Blessed assurance! How could this promise be more certain of fulfillment?  

THE PROMISE

The Apostle Paul has much to say about this promise, and it is strange indeed that so many have overlooked a truth so clearly taught in Scripture. In the passage before us he clearly states that God, who cannot lie, promised "eternal life ... before the world began" (Tit. 1:2), and other passages from Paul's pen make it clear and emphatic that this promise was "in Christ Jesus," i.e., that it was vested in Christ Jesus, who was to be the member of the Trinity to go to Calvary and die for our sins. We cite a few of these additional passages.

Il Tim. 1:1: "Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, according to THE PROMISE OF LIFE WHICH IS IN CHRIST JESUS."

Il Tim. 1:9: "[God] hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but ACCORDING TO HIS OWN PURPOSE AND GRACE, WHICH WAS GIVEN US IN CHRIST JESUS BEFORE THE WORLD BEGAN."

Eph. 3:11: "ACCORDING TO THE ETERNAL PURPOSE WHICH HE PURPOSED IN CHRIST JESUS OUR LORD."

Anyone even fairly familiar with Paul's epistles must know that this eternal purpose is the burden of his great message of grace. And all God's promises to us are but expressions of His promise to Himself, and their fulfillment the outworkings of His eternal purpose in Christ. Indeed, the unsaved also may take

121 The world boasts of its achievements in sending men to the moon and probing far out into outer space. But they could achieve none of this were it not that the God of creation can be relied upon, and His timetables trusted implicitly.
hold of this promise of God, who cannot lie. Does He say, "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners"? Then any poor sinner may take Him at His Word. Does He say, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved"? then we may take Him at His Word, trust in Christ, and be saved. Does He say, "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life"? Then believers in Christ may confidently say, "Thank God, I have everlasting life." And does He say, "He hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ"? then we may - we should - appropriate by faith the blessings His grace has bestowed.

When the Apostle, in Tit. 1:2, relates this promise to the "hope of eternal life," it must not be supposed that he means that now we merely hope for eternal life. Far from it! This word "hope," used so often in Paul's epistles, is the opposite of despair, not a mere variation from it. It is one of the brightest, most cheerful words of Scripture, indicating an eager anticipation of blessings most assuredly awaiting us. In Tit. 3:7 the Apostle again refers to "the hope of eternal life," declaring that believers, "being justified by God's grace," are made heirs of God "according to the hope of eternal life." Indeed, in Heb. 6:19, employing this same word, he says:

"Which hope we have as AN ANCHOR TO THE SOUL, BOTH SURE AND STEADFAST. . . ."

THE REVELATION OF THE PROMISE

If it is strange that so many have overlooked this promise and purpose of which the Apostle has so much to say, it is nothing short of amazing that the Church as a whole, along with her leaders, has failed to notice that this truth was revealed to Paul specifically by the glorified Lord in heaven. His writings could hardly be clearer as to this, yet some theologians even deny that it is so.

God did not reveal this purpose in Old Testament times, nor during our Lord's earthly ministry, nor even immediately after His death and resurrection. The Word clearly indicates that He had a very special person in mind through whom this sacred secret was to be made known: Paul, the chief of sinners, saved by grace. It is surely not from pride, but by divine inspiration that the Apostle himself is so emphatic as to this. How could he speak in plainer language than that of the passage we are considering:

". . . God, that cannot lie, promised [eternal life] before the world began:

"But hath IN DUE TIMES MANIFESTED HIS WORD THROUGH PREACHING WHICH IS COMMITTED UNTO ME ACCORDING TO THE COMMANDMENT OF GOD OUR SAVIOR" (Tit. 1:2,3).
And there are many other such passages just as clear, including the following:

"... His own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began,

"But is NOW MADE MANIFEST by\textsuperscript{122} the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ . . . WHEREUNTO I AM APPOINTED A PREACHER, AND AN APOSTLE, AND A TEACHER OF THE GENTILES" (II Tim. 1:10,11).

"That the Gentiles should be fellowheirs . . . and partakers of His promise in Christ, by the gospel:

"WHEREOF I WAS MADE A MINISTER, ACCORDING TO THE GIFT OF THE GRACE OF GOD . . .

"UNTO ME, WHO AM LESS THAN THE LEAST OF ALL SAINTS, IS THIS GRACE GIVEN, THAT I SHOULD PREACH AMONG THE GENTILES THE UNSEARCHABLE RICHES OF CHRIST" (Eph. 3:6-8).

In Gal. 1:11,12 he throws the certificate of his apostleship down on the table, as it were, introducing a defense of his God-given position with the words:

"I CERTIFY YOU, BRETHREN, THAT THE GOSPEL WHICH WAS PREACHED OF [BY] ME IS NOT AFTER MAN.

"FOR I NEITHER RECEIVED IT OF MAN, NEITHER WAS I TAUGHT IT, BUT [I RECEIVED IT] BY THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST."

And to the Corinthians, some of whom had also questioned his apostleship, he writes:

"... if I come again I will not spare,

"SINCE YE SEEK A PROOF OF CHRIST SPEAKING IN ME ..."

The "eternal purpose," God's promise made before the world began, and vested in Christ, and the revelation of this promise specifically through Paul, are dispensational truths too plain-and too important-to overlook or ignore. And so is the fact that the Apostle here declares that this revelation was "committed" to him, "according to the commandment of God our Savior" (Tit. 1:3).

\textsuperscript{122} Note: Not "at," but "by."
As we have seen in our studies of I Timothy, "the dispensation of the grace of God," committed to Paul, revealed God as our Savior, through the Lord Jesus Christ and His finished work of redemption.

"Being justified freely by His grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus" (Rom. 3:24).

Not that God did not save men in other dispensations, but both the significance and the emphasis were different. Salvation in Old Testament times was often spoken of as deliverance from temporal adversity or calamity (generally due to sin) rather than from sin itself, or from God's just and eternal judgment upon it.

But with the raising up of Paul God revealed Himself as our Savior from sin itself and from its dire results - and this by grace through faith in Christ alone (See our notes on I Tim. 1:1, and cf. II Cor. 5:18-21; I Tim. 2:3; 4:10; II Tim. 2:10). This great message, first committed to Paul, is now committed to us, and it is this message which Satan so bitterly hates.

THE COMMON FAITH

The Apostle addresses Titus much as he had addressed Timothy. He calls him "mine own son" (Gr., teknon, "born one"), indicating, doubtless, that Titus had come to know Christ through his own ministry. Also, as with Timothy, he wishes him God's "mercy" as well as His "grace and peace." But there is one significant difference.

He calls Timothy "my own son in the faith" (I Tim. 1:2), whereas he here calls Titus "my own son after the common faith." Why?

The answer is doubtless that Titus was a Gentile and he himself a Jew, yet they were one in a common faith. This is most significant when we consider that Jews and Gentiles had no such common bond in Old Testament times. And during our Lord's earthly ministry He distinctly instructed His twelve apostles:

". . . Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not:

"But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel" (Matt. 10:5,6).

Indeed He Himself was exclusively

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123 Any Gentile wishing to be accepted of God, was required to submit to circumcision and the Law and become a Jew by religion (Isa. 56:6,7; cf. Esth. 8:17).
"... a minister of the circumcision\textsuperscript{124} for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers" (Rom. 15:8; cf. Matt. 15:24).

Even at Pentecost the Gentiles were still excluded. Peter's message was to Israel alone (Acts 2:14,22,36), and concerned God's covenants with them (Acts 2:29,30; 3:25,26), for according to the program of prophecy Israel must first be redeemed before the blessing could flow to the Gentiles; hence the "you first" of Acts 3:26 (Cf. Mark 7:27).

But with the raising up of Paul the prophetic program was interrupted and all this was (temporarily) changed. Paul, that other apostle, was both a Hebrew and a Roman - both by birth (Phil. 3:4,5; Acts 22:28), and was commissioned to go to the Gentiles (Rom. 11:13) to tell them that now God had concluded both Israel and the Gentiles in unbelief "that He might have mercy upon all" (Rom.11:32). And thus it was that Titus and Paul were now one in a "common faith," the "one faith" of Eph. 4:4-6, with its "one body" and "one baptism" (Cf. I Cor. 12:13).

This common faith - we emphasize it - is the special message committed to Paul. Addressing Gentiles in his Ephesians epistle, he introduces, or reintroduces them to "the dispensation of the grace of God, which is given me TO YOU-WARD," and goes on to proclaim "the mystery ... which in other ages was not made known. . ." (Eph. 3:3-5).

"That the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body, and partakers of His promise\textsuperscript{125} in Christ by the gospel" (Ver. 6).

It is in the light of the revelation and fulfillment of this "eternal purpose" that the Apostle could now write to the Romans:

"For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek; for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon Him.

"For WHOSOEVER SHALL CALL upon the name of the Lord shall be saved" (Rom. 10:12,13).

How blessed it is to comprehend this God-given message of the "one faith" and the "one body" of believing Jews and Gentiles! For, "Remember," says the Apostle,

"... that ye being in time past Gentiles in the flesh ... were without Christ ... having no hope and without God in the world" (Eph. 2:11,12):

\textsuperscript{124} The Hebrew race.
\textsuperscript{125} The same "promise" of which he speaks in Tit. 1:2,3, "given us in Christ Jesus before the world began."
"But now in Christ Jesus, ye who sometimes [i.e., at one time] were far off, are made nigh by the blood of Christ" (Ver. 13).

Blessed union! Blessed communion of all the saints in Christ - based on one "common faith"!
Chapter II - Titus 1:5-16

ORDER TO BE ESTABLISHED

ELDERS TO BE ORDAINED

"For this cause left I thee at Crete, that thou shouldst set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed thee.

"If any be blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children not accused of riot or unruly.

"For a bishop must be blameless, as the steward of God; not self-willed, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre;

"But a lover of hospitality, a lover of good men, sober, just, holy, temperate;

"Holding fast the faithful Word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers."

- Titus 1:5-9

The phrase "set in order" (Ver. 5) indicates that disorder prevailed among the believers in Crete. The very same phrase is found in I Cor. 11:34 where the apostle, having given instructions as to irregularities in the Corinthian church, says, "The rest will I set in order when I come."

Evidently the disorder at Crete resulted largely from lack of organization and of duly appointed leadership. Not that organization of itself will produce order, but a growing church cannot have order without some degree of organization. Thus the Apostle enjoined Titus to "ordain elders in every city" to oversee the work.

It is evident from this passage that the Apostle used the words "elder" and "bishop" (overseer) interchangeably, where position was concerned. True, there might be men older in years who were not qualified to be overseers, but here the Apostle instructs Titus to "ordain elders" (Ver. 5) as "bishops" (Ver. 7). Specifically, he says: "Ordain elders ... if any be blameless.... For a bishop must

126 We do not take this to imply that there were Christian churches in all the municipalities of this large island, the flourishing center of what historians call the Aegean Civilization. Rather we take it to mean that bishops, or overseers, were needed for what we might call the "city churches." Any small locality might have a church composed of a few members who could easily work well together, but the larger churches would be located in the cities, and these would need overseers.
be blameless” (Vers. 5-7). These words "elder" (Gr., presbuteros) and "bishop" (episkopos) are also used interchangeably in Acts 20:17,28, the word "elder" expressing the dignity of the office and the word "bishop" its responsibility. We will therefore use them in the same manner in this commentary.

It should be noted that in this passage Paul instructs Titus to "ordain elders" in every city. Some have cited John 15:16 to prove that such ordination by men is unscriptural; that a man should simply know in his heart that he has been ordained to the pastorate by God. Hence the familiar claim: "I feel called to the ministry."

But the Scriptures clearly teach that such a "call" is not enough, for a man's hearers must recognize that he has been so called, or they will not give him due respect as he preaches to them. Also, it is a distinct advantage to the man of God to have the backing of his congregation, or of other men of God, if he goes to preach elsewhere; to have his listeners know that other sincere Christians testify: "We believe this man has been truly called of God."

This dual "ordination" is consistently taught in Scripture. When Peter reminded the disciples in the upper room that another was to be chosen to fill Judas "bishopric," they "appointed two men" (probably the only two who were eligible), and then prayed and "cast lots" so that God would clearly govern the outcome (Acts 1:20,23-26).

In Acts 13:2 the leaders of the church at Antioch were instructed: "Separate unto Me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them." God had called Barnabas and Saul to the ministry unto which the brethren at Antioch were now to "separate" them. Thus the brethren, having prayed and fasted, "laid their hands on them" and "sent them away" (Ver. 3), but the record goes on to say that they were "sent forth by the Holy Ghost" (Ver. 4).

In Acts 15:2 the brethren at Antioch "determined that Paul and Barnabas ... should go up to Jerusalem" to deal with the question of Gentile liberty from circumcision and the Law, but in Gal. 2:2 Paul declares: "I went up by revelation," i.e., by divine instruction.

In Acts 20:28 the Apostle states that "the Holy Spirit" had made the Ephesian elders " overseers" of His "flock," yet he lays great stress upon their responsibility to him and to those to whom they ministered.127

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127 The subject of church organization is discussed more fully in our comments on I Timothy. See Chapter 1, under The Organization of the Local Church.
THE QUALIFICATIONS FOR THIS POSITION

A CHARACTER BEYOND REPROACH

Again we find the word "blameless" here (Cf. I Tim. 3:2) and, indeed, here repeated for emphasis because of its importance: "If any be blameless ... for a bishop must be blameless" (Vers. 6,7).

The words "if any," in the light of Vers. 12,13, give the impression that it might not be an easy matter to find men thus qualified, but a moral character beyond reproach is nevertheless essential to effective leadership in the work of the Lord.

The bishop must be blameless "as the steward of God." He occupies a position of great responsibility as a steward of "the mysteries of God" and a dispenser of the riches of His grace, and he will only bring disgrace to his position and his Lord if he is less than responsible in his conduct or his finances.

Further, the bishop must be "the husband of one wife," and, by implication, a faithful, godly wife (Cf. I Tim. 3:11), for their children must not be such as are "accused of riot [Lit., profligate], or unruly" (Ver. 6).

WELL-TRAINED CHILDREN

The training of children is a most important undertaking for Christian parents, especially for those who desire to be used in the service of Christ and desire their children so to be used. We therefore devote a brief section to this subject. Bringing up children is not a simple matter, especially these days when so much is made of children's "rights." But the Scriptures have much to say on the subject, including the following:

"Train up a child in the way he should go; and when he is old he will not depart from it" (Prov. 22:6).

"... bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord" (Eph. 6:4).

If "blameless" parents with well-trained children were hard to find in Crete, we must with sorrow confess that such parents and such children are not over-numerous today for the words "disobedient to parents" express one characteristic of the "last days" of the dispensation of grace (II Tim. 3:1,2).

But how do children become "disobedient to parents," or "profligate and unruly"? There are doubtless many factors involved, but there is one way in which parents may unwittingly encourage their children to be unruly: Do not train them but always let them have their way, especially when they cry or show their temper. The author has never ceased to thank God for parents who did train
their children and made it a general rule not to give their children things they cried for, thus training them to ask politely for the things they wanted - and to accept "No" for an answer when their desires were not granted. Well does he remember crying to get his way, only to hear his mother's challenge: "Shall I give you something to really cry about?"

John Locke, the great legal mind of pre-Revolutionary times, left the subtleties of Aristotle and other Greek philosophers and ultimately became so interested in the Bible that he devoted the last fourteen or fifteen years of his life almost exclusively to the study of the Scriptures.

His biographer says that as he saw "the wisdom and goodness of God in the method found out for the salvation of mankind ... he could not forbear crying out, 'O the depth of the riches of the goodness and knowledge of God.' "

In 1695 Locke wrote a treatise on The Reasonableness of Christianity, and in 1690 he wrote Some Thought Concerning Education, beginning with the education of children. We quote part of this treatise here:

"The great mistake I have observed in people's breeding their children has been that this has not been taken care enough of in due season; that the mind has not been made obedient to discipline, and pliant to reason, when at first it was most tender, most easy to be bowed. Parents, being wisely ordained by nature to love their children, are very apt, if reason watch not that natural affection very warily; are apt, I say, to let it run into fondness. They love their little ones, and 'tis their duty; but often, with them, cherish their faults too. They must not be crossed, forsooth; they must be permitted to have their wills in all things; and, they being in their infancies not capable of great vices, their parents think they may safely enough indulge their little irregularities, and make themselves sport with that pretty perverseness, which they think well enough becomes that innocent age. But, to a fond parent that would not have his child corrected ... saying it was but a small matter, Solon very well replied, 'Ay, but Custom is a great one.'

"...Thus parents, by humoring and cockering them when little, corrupt the principles of nature in their children, and wonder afterwards to taste the bitter waters, when they themselves have poisoned the fountain. For when their children are grown up, and these ill habits with them, when they are now too big to be dandled, and their parents can no longer make use of them as playthings; then they complain that the brats are untoward and perverse; then they are offended to see them wilful, and are troubled with those ill humors, which they themselves infused and fomented in them. And then, perhaps too late, would be glad to get out those weeds which their own hands have planted,

and which now have taken too deep root to be easily extirpated. For he that has been used to have his will in everything as long as he was in coats, why should we think it strange that he should desire it, and contend for it still, when he is in breeches? Indeed, as he grows more toward a man age shows his faults the more, so that there be few parents then so blind as not to see them; few so insensible as not to feel the ill effects of their own indulgence."\textsuperscript{129}

Locke's observations are not only sensible; they are Scriptural. The Word of God affords much wise counsel on the bringing up of children but, sadly, too many Christian parents follow the advice of modern child psychologists rather than that of the Bible.

Through the years the author has had many parents tell him all their theories and philosophies about child psychology, who did not themselves have really happy families, largely because they failed to discipline their children - to see to it that their instructions were carried out, to insist on politeness and consideration, to make "please" and "thank you" important words in their vocabularies, and to spank them when necessary, or, if beyond the age for spanking, to exercise other forms of effective discipline, all the while showing true and warm affection for them.

One with far more penetrating insight than any modern child psychologist; indeed, one who wrote \textit{by divine inspiration}, said what every Christian parent should take to heart:

"He that spareth his rod hateth his son; but he that loveth him chasteneth him betimes" (Prov. 13:24).

"Chasten thy son while there is hope, and let not thy soul spare for his crying" (Prov. 19:18).

"Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child, but the rod of correction shall drive it far from him" (Prov. 22:15).

Granted, the physical frame was considerably stronger in Solomon's day, and beating a child with a physical rod is now even against the law in many places. Also, girls generally require gentler treatment than boys, but still the message comes through loud and clear: a child, to bring honor to its parents, must be disciplined, even physically "betimes" (perhaps with a good sound spanking). Here any book by a modern child psychologist might serve admirably if \textit{used in the right place}!

While the Pauline epistles do not teach a great deal about child training per se, they do confirm by direct implication the teachings of Solomon on the subject. Even here in Tit. 1:6, well-behaved children are included in the elders’ qualification for the office.

As the God-appointed head of his family, he is held basically responsible for their behavior.\footnote{When Saul saw David go forth against the giant Goliath, he did not ask, "Who is this youth?" but "Whose son is this youth?" (I Sam. 17:55).}

Are untrained, undisciplined children, then, apt to be well-behaved? God says what we all know to be true: that "foolishness is bound in the heart of a child" and that "a child left to himself bringeth his mother to shame" (Prov. 22:15; 29:15). Hence the importance of firm and loving discipline.

There is much more Scriptural counsel for these days in which "disobedience to parents" is so prevalent, but we must not digress further.

**OTHER QUALIFICATIONS**

**NEGATIVE**

The bishop must not be "self-willed," or "soon angry," but rather an understanding brother with an objective outlook.

He must not be "given to wine," or a "striker,"\footnote{One who uses physical violence.} and he must not be "given to filthy lucre." The Apostle has so much to say in his Pastoral Epistles about this greed for material gain, and about those who "teach things which they ought not, for filthy lucre’s sake" (Vers. 7,11), that this subject also deserves further consideration.

It is easy for a pastor to fall into a form of simony, engaging in sacred or spiritual things for material gain.

How insidiously it works! The young pastor, when called into the ministry, did not mean to be untrue to his commission or to water down the message committed to him. It all happened so subtly.

He loved his people. He wanted them to love him, and rejoiced to see that they did. He got a taste of more money and better living. It would now be difficult to disappoint or hurt them. He receives further light on the Word. But will they receive it? Oh, well, he need not preach everything he knows.
He finds upon indirect inquiry that they would not be very pleased to know what he believes. He maintains a discreet silence to please them. From time to time he is troubled as he remembers that the Apostle Paul said, "If I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ" (Gal. 1:10), but gradually he has fallen into this form of simony and now it becomes more and more difficult to take an open stand for the truth. It pleases him that people do like him and show it by taking care of him so generously, but he has become more and more hardened to his sin. He loses the sensitiveness he once had to the light God gave him from His precious Word. Indeed, the light he once had is gradually withdrawn until he finds himself, first a wavering opponent and then gradually a bitter enemy of those who would proclaim faithfully the whole counsel of God.

Yes, this form of simony is subtle in its working and is more generally indulged in than is commonly supposed. Nor are pastors alone guilty of it, for many gifted young men would doubtless be in the ministry today if it yielded large salaries, but because they had their hearts set on material gain they never got into full time service for Christ.

How solemnly, then, we should heed and emulate "our beloved brother Paul," as he says:

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

"Therefore seeing we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we faint not;

"But have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the Word of God deceitfully, but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God" (II Cor. 4:1,2).

We do not mean that faithful men of God are never loved by their people or generously provided for by them, but we do mean that the love of personal gain is a great temptation to unfaithfulness. Hence the many exhortations, especially in the Pastoral Epistles, to "flee" self-indulgence and to carry out faithfully the commission entrusted to us.

**POSITIVE**

Verses 8,9 deal with what the bishop should be and do. He must be "hospitable" or Lit., a lover of strangers. Happy is the pastor who naturally loves people, and enjoys their company. Also he must be "a lover of good" (Gr., philagathos) i.e., of good men and things. Here the former is qualified by the
latter. His fellowship will be wholesome and with wholesome people. How important is the company the pastor keeps!

Further, he must be sober, i.e., mentally under control (the opposite of intoxication), just and fair, holy in the sense of being devout, and temperate, i.e., self-controlled. All these virtues are often hastily passed over in our reading, but each is important in contributing to make the kind of person God can best use.

THE WORD OF GOD
AND OUR RESPONSIBILITY TOWARD IT

Among the qualifications of Tit. 1:6-9 there is one that is wholly spiritual in nature:

"Holding fast the faithful Word, as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers" (Ver. 9).

There are four passages in which the Bible calls itself "the Word," which we do well to consider here. In each case this term is introduced with an adjective describing some important characteristic of the Word, and adding a phrase indicating our responsibility toward it as such. For example:

As the "engrafted [or implanted]"132 Word" we should "receive it with meekness" since it is "able to save our souls" (James 1:21).

As the "faithful Word" we should "hold it fast" (Tit. 1:9), knowing that it is the Word of God, who "cannot lie" (Tit.1:2).

As the "Word of life" we should "hold it forth" (Phil. 2:16), knowing that it is the "incorruptible seed" that imparts life to the believer (I Pet. 1:23,25).

As the "Word of truth" we should "rightly divide" it (II Tim. 2:15), so as to understand and proclaim it correctly. The Word, when not studied dispensationally, or when wrongly divided, can change the truth into a lie.

HOLDING FAST THE FAITHFUL WORD

The overseer of the local church must not only have the necessary moral qualifications; he must be spiritually qualified as well. He must be, in the truest sense, a man of the Word. This will in turn make him a man of prayer and of true spirituality.

132 Gr., emphutos, "planted into." God's Word gets down underneath, as it were, and convicts men of sin.
This phrase "holding fast," here in Ver. 9, is one of intense energy and feeling. This is evident from its usage in the New Testament. Here it means to cling to the Word tenaciously, almost anxiously, lest we lose our grasp upon it.

But mark well, the Apostle is referring to overseers, and by inference to those who would be used of God. Thus he does not here encourage us to hold fast the faithful Word only for our own sakes: for comfort, encouragement, strength, etc., but for the sake of the truth and for the sake of others.

"Holding fast the faithful Word ... that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers."

Doubtless the Apostle calls God's Word "the faithful Word" here because he is writing to one who is ministering in an area where the word of those about him means little (1:12). But God "cannot lie." His Word is "faithful" and can be wholly relied upon.

But can we, His people, be relied upon? It is so easy to drift with the tide of current human opinion if we do not tenaciously "hold fast" the truths He has so graciously revealed to us. But if we do "hold fast the faithful Word" we shall "be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers."

The best way to answer the critics of the truth is to know the Bible well and to answer them with the Word, rightly divided (II Tim. 2:15). "Sound doctrine" is ever more effective than all the philosophical arguments unregenerate men can put forth. This applies, not only where pastors are concerned, but to God's people collectively as well. The Apostle Paul has been absent from this scene for many centuries now, but his Spirit-inspired words have been recorded for our profit. Let us, who profess faith in Christ, then, heed his exhortation in Phil. 1:27 as if it were addressed directly to us.

"Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ: that whether I come and see you, or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind, striving together for the faith of the gospel."

THE GAINSAVERS

"For there are many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers, specially they of the circumcision;

"Whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre's sake.
"One of themselves, even a prophet of their own, said, The Cretians are always liars, evil beasts, slow bellies."133

"This witness is true. Wherefore rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith:

"Not giving heed to Jewish fables, and commandments of men, that turn from the truth.

"Unto the pure all things are pure; but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure; but even their mind and conscience is defiled.

"They profess that they know God; but in works they deny Him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate."

- Titus 1:10-16

There was, of course, a special reason why Titus needed encouragement to gather men around him who would hold fast the faithful Word, for, referring to "the gainsayers," the Apostle explains:

"For there are many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers, specially they of the circumcision:

"Whose mouths must be stopped. . . " (Vers. 10, 11).

And the best way, the right way, to stop their mouths is not by force or human strategy, but "by sound doctrine."

Those of "the circumcision," at least many of them, were doubtless present at Pentecost, where some are mentioned as having come from Crete (Acts 2:5,11), but it appears that upon their return to Crete they had not even continued faithfully in the doctrine of the twelve, but had reverted to apostate Judaism with its Talmud and all its civil and religious laws-laws which seemed to excel even the Ten Commandments in righteousness, but which in reality condemned many practices which were wholly right and pure (Ver. 14; cf, Matt. 15:1-8).

The pagan Cretians, then, were a bad enough lot, but these circumcision believers were making things worse. They were a disgrace to their nation and to their God for they lived like the other Cretians, only they imposed a set of religious rites and restrictions as a sort of moral front - and they did this for gain (Vers. 10,11).

133 Lit., "lazy gluttons."
It is a striking fact that it is first of all with regard to those "of the circumcision," these fiercely religious people, that the Apostle says: "One of themselves ... said, The Cretians are always liars, evil beasts, lazy gluttons" (Vers. 10-12). To them, in their intolerant pride, nothing was pure (Ver. 15), yet they would "subvert whole households, teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre's sake" (Ver. 11).

Does the Apostle give them the benefit of the doubt in implying that at least some of them might have been saved, though badly misled? At least he directs Titus to "rebuke them sharply that they may be sound in the faith" (Ver. 13).

This question we must leave with God, for the Apostle concludes:

"They profess that they know God; but in their works they deny Him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate"¹³⁴ (Ver. 16).

Let us not assume too quickly that Paul could only be speaking of the unsaved here, for God's people too can deny Him by their works and be disapproved as His workmen. Solemn thought. (See II Tim. 2:12; I Cor. 3:12-15; II Cor. 5:10,11).

As we all consider our own sins and shortcomings we should humbly thank God that salvation is "the gift of God," provided "by grace" and received "through faith." Were it not so none of us would be saved.

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¹³⁴ Gr., adokimos, the opposite of dokimos, "approved," in II Tim. 2:15, hence disapproved, worthless.
"But speak thou the things which become sound doctrine:

"That the aged men be sober, grave, temperate, sound in the faith, in charity, in patience.

"The aged women likewise, that they be in behavior as becometh holiness, not false accusers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things;

"That they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children,

"To be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the Word of God be not blasphemed.

"Young men, likewise, exhort to be sober minded.

"In all things showing thyself a pattern of good works: in doctrine showing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity.

"Sound speech, that cannot be condemned; that he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of you.

"Exhort servants to be obedient unto their own masters, and to please them well in all things; not answering again;

"Not purloining, but showing all good fidelity, that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in all things."

- Titus 2:1-10

BUT THOU

In Paul's letters to Timothy and Titus he frequently challenges them with the words "but thou," or some similar phrase, indicating that a faithful pastor must be the kind of person Herbert Hoover called "a rugged individualist." He must not drift with the tide of permissive thought and practice; he must stem it. And
certainly he must not be "carried about with every wind of doctrine," but must be sound and strong in the faith. Six times, in his epistles to Timothy and Titus, the Apostle uses these words, "but thou," challenging his pastor-sons to true spirituality and godliness. We list them herewith.

In dealing with the apostate influences with which young Timothy is confronted, he says:

"Let no man despise thy youth, but be thou an example..." (I Tim. 4:12).

The thought is clear: Timothy must be careful not to say or do anything which might give men cause to despise his youth. Rather he must set an example for godly living.

Where the subject is "the love of money," he warns:

"But thou, O man of God, flee these things. . ." (I Tim. 6:11).

Discussing "the spirit of fear" vs. that "of power, and of love, and of a sound mind," he says:

"Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me, His prisoner, but be thou partaker of the afflictions of Christ according to the power of God" (II Tim. 1:8).

Let others be weak and cowardly but Timothy, as a man of God, must be prepared and willing to bear his share of "the afflictions of the gospel."

Will "evil men and seducers wax worse and worse" despite his preaching? In that case the challenge is:

"But continue thou in the things which thou has learned and host been assured of, knowing of whom thou host learned them" (II Tim. 3:14).

The message has not lost its validity or its vitality simply because some have rejected and defied it. It is the message God has committed to us, the only one that will save and truly bless: thus "continue thou in the course thou hast been following."

In view of the growing apostasy and of the fact that Paul himself will soon be departing this scene, he urges Timothy:

"But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry" (II Tim. 4:5).
And to Titus, also in view of latter-day apostasy, he says:

"But speak thou the things which become doctrine" (Tit. 2:1).

"Sound" doctrine, of course, is healthful, pure, solid doctrine, free from moral or spiritual corruption, the opposite of the "sick" teachings and practices which surround us today and with which Titus was surrounded (See 1:10-12).

And anything "becoming" is befitting. A man may wear a suit that becomes him, i.e., that fits well his size, build, complexion, personality. Thus Titus is exhorted to "speak those things which become sound doctrine," and these things are the very opposite of what the world looks upon as vital. They promote self-confidence, an aggressive attitude, self-service, their "rights," etc., while God urges love, patience, discretion, chastity, faithfulness, sincerity, etc. And the latter is sound, healthful doctrine. Were these virtues practiced today our society would not be so widely called "a sick society." But unregenerate men do not only live wrong; they think wrong, their doctrine is "sick," or unsound; they teach what can only produce moral and spiritual corruption.

THE KEY TO AN EFFECTIVE PASTORATE

Before leaving this passage it should be pointed out that the key to an effective pastorate is not only what a man teaches, but also what he is. This will be seen as we pursue the details of Tit. 2:1-10. A godly, spiritual pastor will be greatly used of God in teaching the godliness which this chapter exhorts - and vice versa.

The humblest pastor, one who has had little opportunity for formal training and may have few natural endowments, may take heart in the knowledge that ultimately the key to real effectiveness in the pastorate is true spirituality and godliness. And the greatest pastor, well educated and liberally endowed with natural talents, had better remember this, for a large and "successful" ministry is not necessarily blessed and honored of God, while a seemingly insignificant one may be richly blessed.

The Apostle Paul could refer to himself as "unknown, and yet well known," as "poor, yet making many rich" (II Cor. 6:9,10). He could boast no great organizational backing, yet even his co-workers were called "these that have turned the world upside down" (Acts 17:6).

The godly, spiritual pastor may know little about worldly matters, but will give much time to the study of the Word of God, and will be earnest and instant in prayer. He will not be self-satisfied or high-minded, but will walk humbly, begging God every day to make him the pastor he ought to be.
The godly, spiritual pastor will be "crucified unto the world," and will "flee youthful lusts." He will truly love the lost and the congregation God has entrusted to his care, and will toil unremittingly for their good. He will conduct himself as a servant of God and will trust God to use him for His glory. How can such a pastor be a total failure?

THE THINGS WHICH BECOME SOUND DOCTRINE

"The things which become sound doctrine" can be summed up in one word: godliness. Doubtless it is because ungodliness raged on the Island of Crete, and irresponsibility prevailed even among many believers there, that the Epistle to Titus is basically an epistle on godliness.

In Chapter 2 of the epistle, the Apostle gives instructions as to godliness for aged men and women, for young women and men, and also for servants. He does not, however, deal directly with each of these classes as he does with the various classes mentioned in the epistles to the Ephesians and the Colossians. Rather he instructs Titus as to how he may help these various persons to walk consistently with their profession.

THE AGED MEN AND AGED WOMEN

"That the aged men be sober, grave, temperate, sound in faith, in charity, in patience."

"The aged women, likewise, that they be in behavior as becometh holiness, not false accusers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things" (Tit. 2:2,3).

Again we come upon the word "sober," in Ver. 2, but here it is not the Greek sophron, which might be defined as being mentally under control - the opposite of intoxication - as we use the word today. Rather it is the Greek naphaleos, a close synonym, rendered "vigilant" in I Tim. 3:2. But the word sophron is used later in this same verse and is rendered "temperate" in KJV. How important it is for believers who are advanced in age to demonstrate maturity as well, not being given to foolish talk or conduct, but showing thoughtful vigilance and disciplined behavior.

The word "grave" speaks of calm self-possession, implying both the seriousness and dignity befitting "the aged men." Also, they must be sound in faith, love and patience (Ver. 2).

The instructions for "the aged women," are naturally somewhat different (Ver. 3). Their behavior must be such as becomes "holiness," or consecration to God. They must not be given to evil speaking (a by-product of gossip) or to much
wine. They must be "teachers of good things." What a prize to any congregation is a Christian woman who, by her example and her conversation teaches "good things," who goes about saying and doing good!

THE YOUNG WOMEN AND YOUNG MEN

"That they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children,

"To be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the Word of God be not blasphemed.

"Young men likewise exhort to be sober-minded (Tit. 2:4-6).

Note: Titus was to teach the aged women to be what they should be as Christians, so that they in turn might teach the younger women to be what they should be. And who would be better fitted to teach the young women to love even unlovable husbands than the older women? But did the younger women who were mothers need to be taught to love their children? In an environment such as Tit. 1:12,13 describes this might very well be so.

But here is that word sophron again, this time rendered "discreet," and doubtless rightly so in this context. Certainly indiscretion naturally accompanies intoxication, and Paul would have Christian young women demonstrate sober discretion. How this admonition is needed in our day! By their indiscretion many young women leave themselves open to all sorts of dangers. Hence the older Christian women should teach the younger ones to be careful about their appearance, their conversation, their conduct.

The word "discreet" naturally introduces the word "chaste" here. It is a sad commentary on life on the Island of Crete that the older Christian women should need to teach the younger to be "chaste," but the growing permissiveness of our times is making this admonition daily more appropriate to our own circumstances.

And "keepers at home"? The various Women's Rights organizations are doing all in their power to encourage mothers to make careers for themselves in the business world and in politics, and the complexity of modern life is, in many cases, making it almost impossible for young couples to manage financially if they do not both engage in gainful employment. Yet, we have here God's Word about the subject. He does not actually forbid young mothers to engage in gainful pursuits, but He does instruct the older women to teach the younger to be "keepers at home." Thus it should be the goal of young Christian mothers - with

135 The words "to be sober" are inherent in the Greek sophronizo.
the concurrence of their husbands - to fulfil God’s will in this matter, even at the expense of some of the luxuries to which our younger generation has become so accustomed.

We have seen in Verse 3 that the "aged women" were to be "teachers of good things." Here they are instructed to teach the younger women to be "good." As in our own circumstances, so at Crete, this exhortation was by no means superfluous. Indeed, the philosophies that have made so many in our day "despisers of those that are good," were already exerting a powerful influence in Titus' day, and perhaps especially at Crete.

The younger women were also to be taught to be "obedient to their own husbands" (Ver. 5), and all this love of family, discretion, chastity, care for the home, goodness and obedience to their husbands are integral to godliness where younger women are concerned. They are to practice this way of life "that the Word of God be not blasphemed" (Ver. 5).

Finally, the young man must be exhorted to be "sober-minded" (Ver. 6. Here the root is sophron again). As the teenager grows up to young manhood he should, more and more, put aside the irresponsibility of youth and seriously pursue a life of disciplined service for Christ. This is the only path to spiritual fruitfulness. There is no more worthy goal.

**TITUS' PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY**

"In all things showing thyself a pattern of good works: in doctrine showing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity,

"Sound speech that cannot be condemned; that he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of you" (I Tim. 2:7,8).

We have no clear evidence as to Titus' age, but it appears from the manner in which Paul exhorts him that he, like Timothy, was a young man. In Verse 6 the Apostle instructs Titus to exhort the aged men, the aged women, the young women and the young men, but his exhortations for the young men are briefest of all, probably because Titus himself was a young man and could best teach them by example. Hence the Apostle exhorts him: "In all things showing thyself a pattern of good works. . ." (Ver. 7). He had taken the same course with Timothy. After instructing him as to what to "command and teach," he hastens to add:

"Let no man despise thy youth, but be thou an example of the believers. . ." (I Tim. 4:12).
Titus’ own conduct and manner of life would have a far greater impact on the young men in his congregation than any amount of exhortations as to how they should conduct themselves. Hence the Apostle, in this one category, says in effect: "You must show yourself an example, a ‘pattern of good works, showing soundness in doctrine, along with a proper dignity and true sincerity" (Ver. 7).

Titus’ speech too, must be wholesome\textsuperscript{136} so that his adversaries may be put to shame, unable to say any evil thing of him (Ver. 8; cf. I Pet. 2:12,15; 3:16).

**EXHORT SERVANTS**

And now the Apostle again urges Titus to exhort still another segment of his congregation: the "servants," or bondmen, and again his instructions are: "Exhort them to obey their masters."

Did Paul favor slavery? Surely not. His letter to Philemon makes this clear. However, slavery - in more of its variations than American history has known it - was a fact of life to be reckoned with. Sanctioned as it was by law, the question now was what should be done about it. Should Titus incite the bondmen in his congregation to rebellion, calling upon them to assert their rights? Would this "adorn the doctrine of God our Savior" (Ver. 10)? Indeed not. It would rather cause division in the Church and foment disorder and violence in the world.\textsuperscript{137} Thus the God-inspired Apostle instructs Titus:

"Exhort servants to be obedient unto their own masters, and to please them well in all things; not answering again;"

"Not purloining, but showing all good fidelity; that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in all things" (Titus 2:9, 10).

Note the element of godly sincerity here: they are to serve their masters well, heartily obeying their instructions, and without "backtalk." Further they are not to purloin or pilfer, deciding for themselves that certain of their master's goods are due them. Rather they should show "all good fidelity," so meriting their master's trust and "adorning the doctrine of God our Savior in all things."

\textsuperscript{136} The word "sound," here, is tendered "wholesome" in I Tim. 6:3.

\textsuperscript{137} The author goes into the slavery question in greater depth in his notes on I Tim. 6:1,2.
Chapter IV - Titus 2:11

THE EPIPHANY OF GRACE

THE GREATEST REVELATION OF ALL TIME

"For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men."

- Titus 2:11

The last five verses of Titus 2 are profoundly important where both dispensational truth and godly living are concerned. We are therefore devoting two chapters to the discussion of these few verses.

THE DISPENSATION OF THE GRACE OF GOD

To the Apostle Paul was committed the greatest revelation of all time: "the dispensation of the grace of God" ( Eph. 3:2 ), a "mystery," "in other ages not made known," but first revealed to Paul, and through him to the other "apostles and prophets" ( Eph. 3:3-11; cf. Gal. 2:2; Col. 1:26,27 ).

Paul's ministry superseded that of Peter and the eleven as, upon Israel's continued rejection of Messiah and His kingdom, he became the apostle to the nations ( Rom. 11:13 ). Solemn recognition of this fact was given to all by the leaders of the twelve (including Peter himself) as they gave to Paul and Barnabas "the right hands of fellowship" (they "shook hands on it"), acknowledging Paul's divine commission to go to the Gentiles with his special message for them, and agreeing henceforth to confine their own ministry to Israel ( Gal. 2:2,7,9 ).

In connection with this commission Paul was also the divinely appointed minister of the Church of the present dispensation, "the Body of Christ" ( Col. 1:24,25 ).

No other Bible writer has one single word to say about "the Church which is [Christ's] Body." None of the other apostles mentions it. Not only would we seek in vain for such phraseology in their writings, but we would seek in vain for any discussion of the subject, for they do not discuss the Church of which believers today are members. But Paul, who wrote more books of the Bible than any other writer, deals consistently with those truths which concern "the Body of Christ."

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138 Composed of Jews and Gentiles reconciled to God in one body by the cross ( Eph. 2:14-16; I Cor. 12:13 ), as compared with the kingdom church, which had the earthly reign of Christ in view ( Matt. 16:15-18; 19:28; Acts 1:6; 3:19-21 ).
THE REVELATION LOST SIGHT OF

But this great revelation, and the glorious truths associated with it, have been largely lost to the professing Church.

The Church of Rome ignores the facts we have stated above, though they are clearly set forth in her own translations of the Bible. She insists that the true Church of today is a perpetuation of that which was founded by Christ while on earth, a kingdom over which Peter and the eleven were appointed to be the heads and rulers during His absence. And even though our Lord said nothing about a prolonged absence, or of any succession of such rulers, Rome declares that her present pope is a successor to Peter and, as such, the Vicar of Christ and the supreme Head of the Church on earth. Consistent with this she holds that she is laboring to fulfill the "great commission" given to Peter and the eleven, requiring water baptism for the remission of sins, and claiming to possess miraculous powers.

But Protestantism, while boasting freedom from the tyranny of Rome, has by no means emerged entirely from the shadows of the dark ages. She still suffers a Roman "hangover." While renouncing papal authority, she nevertheless still clings to the Roman teaching that the Church today is a perpetuation of that to which our Lord referred in Matt. 16:16-18 and that it is God's kingdom on earth. She too seeks to carry out the "great commission" given to Peter and the eleven—though halfheartedly, for the disagreements among Protestants as to water baptism, the work of the Holy Spirit, tongues and other miraculous signs are deep and wide. While professing to be working under the so-called "great commission," none of them obey its commands in their entirety.

Martin Luther, under God, shook Europe to its foundations with a partial recovery of Pauline truth, but the Protestant Church has done little to further that recovery, so that rather than recognizing the distinctive character of Paul's position as our apostle, most Protestants think of him only as one of the apostles, along with Peter and the eleven, some even teaching that Paul was God's choice for Judas' successor.

In taking so short a step away from Rome the Protestant Church has assumed a weak position, for if Paul is to be considered as one with the twelve, Rome can easily prove that Peter, not Paul, was appointed as their chief (See Matt. 16:19; Acts 1:15; 2:14,38; 5:29, etc.).

THE EXTENT OF PAUL'S MINISTRY

Since Christendom has strayed so far and so long from the great Pauline revelation, she has lost sight almost completely of the vastness of his ministry.
and influence, and the extent to which his message became known in the world. An example of this is found in what Bible scholars have done with Titus 2:11.

It is generally - and correctly - agreed that the Greek *epiphaneia* in this passage connotes a *conspicuous* or *illustrious* appearing, a *shining forth*, and that the phrase "all men" therefore does not signify each individual singly, but all men collectively; all mankind. But few can quite believe that under Paul's ministry the gospel of God's grace shone forth to all mankind, that its proclamation ever became worldwide in its scope. They conclude, therefore, that Paul could not have meant this in Tit. 2:11; that he must have meant only that the grace of God, *bringing salvation for all*, had appeared. This problem seems to have troubled many translators of this passage, for Bible translators have never been in agreement as to its true meaning.

One cannot help feeling that were it not for the translators' doubts that Paul *could* have meant that the message of grace had shone forth to all mankind, all of them, or nearly all, would have rendered the passage substantially as it is in the *Authorized Version*. Indeed, in view of these doubts it is significant that so many, at least of the older translations, have rendered it like the *Authorized*.

For reasons to be set forth in this chapter, however, we have no doubts about a worldwide epiphany of grace through Paul and his co-workers, and thus have no problem accepting the *Authorized* rendering just as it is.

**THE TWELVE AND THEIR COMMISSION**

Apart from Paul's statement in Tit. 2:11 there is much Scriptural evidence that his message *did* shine forth to all the known world. Before considering this evidence, however, let us first observe that the eleven, under Peter, had previously been sent to proclaim their God-given message to all mankind. In the records of their "great commission" three different terms are used to emphasize this: "all nations," "all the world," and "every creature [*Lit., all creation]*."


"*Go ye into ALL THE WORLD, and preach the gospel to EVERY CREATURE [*Lit., ALL CREATION]*" (Mark 16:15).

The reader is asked to remember well these three terms, for we are to find them used again in connection with the ministry of Paul.

The twelve (Matthias replacing Judas) *began* to carry out their worldwide mission, but never got beyond their own nation. We should always associate Acts 1:8 with Acts 8:1 in our study of the Acts, for Jerusalem, rather than turning to Messiah, so that the apostles could go on with their worldwide commission,
waged a "great persecution" against the Church there, with the result that "they [the believers] were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judaea and Samaria, except the apostles."

The twelve have often been charged with bigotry and unfaithfulness for remaining at Jerusalem at this time. In fact, however, it was rare courage and fidelity to their commission that kept them in Jerusalem while persecution raged and their very lives were in danger. They remained at Jerusalem for the same reason that the rest fled: because Jerusalem was not turning to Christ. The first part of their commission had not yet been fulfilled, therefore they were duty-bound to remain there.

The twelve did not remain at Jerusalem because they were prejudiced against the salvation of the Gentiles. There is too much Scriptural evidence against this. They remained there because they had a clear understanding of the prophetic program and of their Lord's commission (See Luke 24:45; Acts 1:3; 2:4). They knew that according to covenant and prophecy the Gentiles were to be saved and blessed through redeemed Israel (Gen. 22:17,18; Isa. 60:1-3; Zech. 8:13). Our Lord had indicated no change in this program. He had worked in perfect harmony with it. Even before His death He had insisted that Israel was first in God's revealed program, commanding His disciples not to go to the Gentiles or to the Samaritans, but to "go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel" (Matt. 10:6), and saying to a Gentile woman who came for help: "Let the children first be filled" (Mark 7:27). And later, in His "great commission" to the eleven, He had specifically stated that they should begin at Jerusalem (Luke 24:47; Acts 1:8).

Peter certainly indicated his desire that the commission under which he labored would bring about the fulfillment of the prophecies and of the covenant to Abraham, when he said to the "men of Israel."

"Ye are the children of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham, And in thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed.

"Unto you first God, having raised up His Son Jesus, sent Him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities" (Acts 3:25,26).

And Paul, though not working under this same commission, later also bore witness that Israel had been first in God's program, when he said to the Jews at Pisidian Antioch:

"It was necessary that the Word of God should first have been spoken to you..." (Acts 13:46).
It was only when Israel persisted in rejecting Christ and His kingdom that God began to set the nation aside, raising up Paul to go to the Gentiles with the good news of salvation "by grace," apart from covenant and prophecy, and "through faith," apart from works. It was then that Paul went to Jerusalem "by revelation" and communicated to the leaders there that gospel which he preached among the Gentiles (Gal. 2:2). And, as we have said, these leaders, including Peter himself, gave to Paul and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship in official, public recognition of the fact that Paul had been chosen by Christ as the apostle to the nations and that they were henceforth to confine their ministry to Israel (Gal. 2:7-9).

With this official recognition of the divine purpose the apostles at Jerusalem were "loosed" (Matt. 18:18) from their original commission to make disciples of all nations, and Paul alone could say:

"I speak to you Gentiles, inasmuch as I am the apostle of the Gentiles; I magnify mine office" (Rom. 11:13).

Let us mark well, then, that Peter and the eleven, who had originally been sent to proclaim the gospel of the kingdom to "all nations," "all the world," and "all creation," never completed their mission. Indeed, had they done so that dispensation would have been brought to a close, for our Lord had said concerning the tribulation period (then imminent, but later graciously postponed):

"And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations, and then shall the end come" (Matt. 24:14).

If, therefore, the pouring out of the Spirit had been followed directly by the pouring out of God's wrath (both predicted in Joel 2 as quoted by Peter in Acts 2), Israel would have turned to God in repentance and the twelve would have proceeded to proclaim "the gospel of the kingdom" to all nations. That dispensation would thus have been consummated; the end would have come. But rather than send the judgment immediately, God interrupted the prophetic program and revealed His secret, eternal purpose, sending Paul forth to proclaim to all mankind "the gospel of the grace of God" (Acts 20:24).

PAUL AND HIS COMMISSION

Surely no one even superficially acquainted with the Book of Acts or the Epistles of Paul will question the fact that sometime after our Lord's commission to the eleven, Paul was sent, as an apostle of Christ, to proclaim to all mankind "the gospel of the grace of God."

It is significant that the three terms employed in the so-called "great commission" to indicate its worldwide scope, are also used in Paul's epistles in
connection with his ministry. Only, whereas the twelve never got to "all nations," "all the world," or "all creation" with their message, Paul did with his, either directly or indirectly.

In closing his *Epistle to the Romans* the Apostle says:

"Now to Him that is of power to establish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began.

*But now is made manifest,* and by the Scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, MADE KNOWN TO ALL NATIONS for the obedience of faith" (Rom. 16:25,26).

And to the Colossians he writes concerning "the truth of the gospel":

"WHICH IS COME UNTO YOU, AS IT IS IN ALL THE WORLD; and bringeth forth fruit, as it cloth also in you. . ." (Col. 1:6).

". . . which ye have heard, and WHICH WAS PREACHED TO EVERY CREATURE WHICH IS UNDER HEAVEN [ALL CREATION UNDER HEAVEN]; whereof I Paul am made a minister" (Col. 1:23).

We do not deny that to those addressed "all the world" would doubtless mean all the known world, and "all creation" would likewise mean all creation as they knew it. But the point is that whatever these three phrases mean in the so-called "great commission" they must also mean in these statements by Paul, for the terms are exactly identical in the Greek.

We have seen how the twelve did not get their message to "all nations," "all the world" or "all creation," because, on the one hand Israel rejected it and on the other God had a secret purpose to unfold. But Paul, to whom this secret purpose was revealed, says he did get his God-given message to "all nations," "all the world" and "all creation."

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139 Lit., *prophetic writings*, i.e., his own writings, for he clearly refers to "my gospel," explaining that it had been "kept secret" and was only "now" made manifest.
Whereas the twelve never got beyond their own nation in carrying out their commission, it is written of Paul that during his stay at Ephesus "all they which dwelt in Asia [a province of Asia Minor] heard the word of the Lord Jesus" (Acts 19:10). To the Romans he writes: "From Jerusalem, and round about unto Illyricum, I have fully preached the gospel of Christ" (Rom. 15:19), and speaks of his plans to go to Spain (15:24), plans which may well have been accomplished between his two imprisonments. Even of his helpers it was said: "These that have turned the world upside down are come hither also" (Acts 17:6). And to the Romans again, he says: "Your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world" (Rom. 1:8).

THE AMAZING ENERGY WITH WHICH
PAUL PROCLAIMED GRACE

To the Romans the Apostle writes of his commission from the ascended Lord:

"By whom we have received grace and apostleship, for obedience to the faith among ALL NATIONS, for His name" (Rom. 1:5).

In his Ephesian epistle he writes:

"Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ;

"And TO MAKE ALL MEN SEE what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God. . ." (Eph. 3:8,9).

But while it is generally acknowledged that he was commissioned to proclaim grace to all nations, there are few who have quite realized the amazing energy with which the Apostle proclaimed this message in the face of the most relentless persecution, or the wide extent of his ministry and influence.

In Pisidian Antioch "almost the whole city" came together to hear the Word of God, but the unbelieving Jews, filled with envy, contradicted and blasphemed, and it was necessary for Paul and Barnabas to turn from them to the Gentiles.

"And the Word of the Lord was published throughout all that region.

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140 As to whether these Roman believers had been won to Christ through disciples from Pentecost and the Judaean Church, or through the ministry of Paul is discussed in the Introduction to the author's commentary on Romans Pp. XV-XVIII. We believe that the evidence for Paul's influence in the founding of the Church at Rome is conclusive.
"But the Jews stirred up the devout and honorable women, and the chief men of the city, and raised persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and expelled them out of their coasts" (Acts 13:49,50).

In Iconium, where he next preached the gospel, there was a city-wide impact, for we read that "the multitude of the city was divided,"

"And when there was an assault made both of the Gentiles, and also of the Jews with their rulers, to use them despitefully, and to stone them,

"They were aware of it, and fled to Lystra and Derbe....

"And there they preached the gospel" (Acts 14:5-7).

At Lystra the people first tried to offer sacrifices to Paul and Barnabas, thinking they were gods, but this attitude reversed itself completely when

"... there come thither certain Jews from Antioch and Iconium, who persuaded the people, and having stoned Paul, drew [dragged] him out of the city, supposing he had been dead" (Acts 14:19).

But the record goes on to say that "as the disciples stood round about, he rose up, and came into the city. . ." (Ver. 20).

Think of it: right back into the city where he had been stoned, supposedly to death!

Then, after preaching the gospel in Derbe, and teaching many,

"They returned again to Lystra, and to Iconium and Antioch,

"Confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith .." (Acts 14:21,22).

Returning to Antioch in Syria, from whence they had been sent forth, they found certain men from Judaea seeking to bring the Gentile believers under the Law of Moses. Result: "Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and disputation with them" (Acts 15:2).

The outcome of this conflict was that Paul and Barnabas went up to Jerusalem to settle the matter with the leaders of the Messianic Church there. On this occasion Paul took Titus, a Greek, with him as a test case and was later able to write to the Galatians: "Titus ... was not compelled to be circumcised either." And concerning those who would have had it so, he said:
"To whom we gave place by subjection, no, not for an hour; that the truth of the gospel might continue with you" (Gal. 2:5).

Think of the energy required for all this, not to speak of the courage and perseverance!

Next we find the Apostle going forth with Silas, and again it is peril, persecution and toil wherever he goes.

At Philippi he and Silas are beaten with many stripes and imprisoned, their feet locked in stocks. At Thessalonica "the Jews which believed not ... set all the city on an uproar" (Acts 17:5) and things became so dangerous that "the brethren immediately sent away Paul and Silas by night unto Berea" (Ver. 10). But the unbelieving Jews from Thessalonica followed him to Berea and "stirred up the people" there, so that this time "... the brethren sent away Paul to go as it were to the sea." (Acts 17:14).

At Athens he got "the cold shoulder" and "departed from among them" to Corinth, where he was able to remain for a year and six months, but not without tasting more opposition and persecution.

At Ephesus he went to the synagogue "and spoke boldly for the space of three months, disputing and persuading the things concerning the kingdom of God." Then, when "divers were hardened, and believed not" he "separated the disciples" from the unbelieving multitude and went with them to "the school of one Tyrannus," where he "disputed daily."

"And this continued by the space of two years, so that all they that dwelt in Asia [a province of Asia Minor] heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks" (Acts 19:8-10).

Indeed, before Paul left Ephesus so much had been accomplished that a voluntary public bonfire was held, at which those who had been won to Christ burned their pagan, occult books, amounting in value to 50,000 pieces of silver. "So mightily grew the Word of God and prevailed" (Acts 19:20). But this was followed by the great uproar at which Demetrius and the craftsmen who made silver shrines for Diana, the goddess of the Ephesians, stirred up the unbelieving masses to such a pitch that for two hours they kept crying, "Great is Diana of the Ephesians" (Ver. 34).

"And when Paul would have entered in unto the people, the disciples suffered him not" (Ver. 30).
Had not the disciples prevented him, the Apostle would have ventured right in among the frenzied pagan mob, perhaps hoping for an opportunity to address them.

Concerning his ministry in Asia Minor the Apostle wrote to the Corinthians:

"For we would not, brethren, have you ignorant of our trouble which came to us in Asia; that WE WERE PRESSED OUT OF MEASURE, ABOVE STRENGTH, INSOMUCH THAT WE DESPAIRED EVEN OF LIFE" (II Cor. 1:8).

Had not the Apostle toiled and suffered enough by now? Should he not stop?

Stop? At Troas, on the first day of the week, he preached in an upper room "until midnight" (Acts 20:7), then "talked a long while, even till the break of day" (Ver. 11), and then departed again to continue his journey to Jerusalem.

"And from Miletus he sent to Ephesus, and called for the elders of the church" and, exhorting them to stand fast in the faith, reminded them how he had faithfully served the Lord among them: "with many tears, and temptations, which befell me by the lying in wait of the Jews: and ... taught you publicly and from house to house" (Vers. 17-20). And with regard to the "bonds and afflictions" that now awaited him, he said:

"But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God" (Ver. 24).

In closing he reminded them: "by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears" (i.e., regarding the coming apostasy) and then commended them "to God and to the Word of His grace" (Vers. 31,32).

Finally he was able to write from Rome to his beloved Philippian friends:

". . . my bonds in Christ are manifest in all the palace, and in all other places" (Phil. 1:23).

He was known far and wide as having been imprisoned for the message of grace he proclaimed, and even in wicked Nero's palace a company of believers had sprung up, so that he could further write to the Philippians:

"All the saints salute you, chiefly they that are of Caesar's household" (4:22).
We have seen that while the Apostle labored at Ephesus "all they which dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus." Many of these, obviously, were reached through evangelists sent out from Ephesus while he ministered daily at the school of Tyrannus. These he had never even met personally. Yet, amazingly, he still labored zealously for these dear saints even while in prison, evidently sending messages to them, encouraging visitors from Colosse and using every possible opportunity to establish them further in the faith. Thus he writes to them with regard to this very effort:

"... I WOULD THAT YE KNEW WHAT GREAT CONFLICT I HAVE FOR YOU, AND FOR THEM AT LAODICEA, AND FOR AS MANY AS HAVE NOT SEEN MY FACE IN THE FLESH" (Col. 2:1).

How carelessly we are apt to read these amazing words!

Thus, under Paul's ministry there did take place a worldwide proclamation of "the gospel of the grace of God," so that he could write to Timothy about the epiphany, the shining forth, of God's grace to all mankind.

THE APOSTLE DIVINELY EMPOWERED

But how, even recognizing Paul's organized efforts to send the gospel to "the regions beyond," could one man have accomplished so much? What was the source of the amazing energy that took him from one uprising into another; that urged him on and on, even when lacking much-needed rest? How could he keep enduring stripes and imprisonments, stonings and shipwrecks, long journeys with perils of every sort? How could he go on bearing pain and hunger, weariness and watchings, cold and nakedness? And all these things, in addition to "the care of all the churches," he had already suffered by the time he wrote his Second Epistle to the Corinthians (See II Cor. 11:23-28). Indeed, in his First Epistle to the Corinthians he had written:

"EVEN UNTO THIS PRESENT HOUR WE BOTH HUNGER, AND THIRST, AND ARE NAKED, AND ARE BUFFETED, AND HAVE NO CERTAIN DWELLING PLACE" (I Cor. 4:11).

How could one man endure all this?

The answer is that he was divinely empowered, as the following passages indicate:

"BUT BY THE GRACE OF GOD I AM WHAT I AM; AND HIS GRACE WHICH WAS BESTOWED UPON ME WAS NOT IN VAIN; BUT I LABORED MORE
ABUNDANTLY THAN THEY ALL: YET NOT I, BUT THE GRACE OF GOD WHICH WAS WITH ME" (I Cor. 15:10).

"FOR HE THAT WROUGHT EFFECTUALLY IN PETER TO THE APOSTLESHIP OF THE CIRCUMCISION, THE SAME WAS MIGHTY IN ME TOWARD THE GENTILES" (Gal. 2:8).

"Hereunto I also labor, STRIVING ACCORDING TO HIS WORKING, WHICH WORKETH IN ME MIGHTILY (Col. 1:29).

"At my first answer [before Nero] ... all men forsook me....


Thus it was that the Apostle could write about "the epiphany of grace," the shining forth of grace, "to all mankind."

THE LIGHT DIMMED

But alas how the light has since been dimmed! How lightly men have esteemed the infinite grace of God! Indeed, it was during the Apostle's own ministry that he had to write to the Galatians:

"I MARVEL THAT YE ARE SO SOON REMOVED FROM HIM THAT CALLED YOU INTO THE GRACE OF CHRIST, UNTO ANOTHER GOSPEL" (Gal. 1:6).

For this Christendom has called the Galatian believers fickle, and many commentators have quoted the statements of certain Roman rulers to prove that the Gauls were by nature changeable. It is obvious, however, that politicians and statesmen from any age, including our own, could be cited to prove that the public is fickle! And the Apostle Paul would certainly have to say with respect to the Church as a whole, historically: "I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ, unto another gospel."

The declension which began during Paul's own lifetime continued apace, so that in the very first century after Christ and Paul we find Church fathers saying in effect: "Who is this Paul? He was not even one of the apostles." Rather than recognizing the authority of Paul's God-given message, these church leaders had it all confused with the kingdom message proclaimed by John the Baptist,
Christ (on earth) and the twelve, even to requiring water baptism for the remission of sins.

And this apostasy continued to worsen until the dark ages, when Rome held sway and a mixture of Christianity, Judaism and pagan idolatry prevailed.

Later the Church began to emerge from the darkness and superstition of Romanism as Luther, Zwingley, Calvin and others were used of God to recover Pauline truth. And, thank God, still greater advances were made later under such men as Darby, Scofield, Bullinger, Sir Robert Anderson and J. C. O'Hair. But much, very much, still remains to be done. Those who are now laboring to carry out the commission of the glorified Lord to us (II Cor. 5:14-21), who desire to recover and make known the blessed message of grace and glory, will have to pray and toil and sacrifice as never before to make any impression upon the indifferent masses - including indifferent Christians. Those who know the truth but maintain a discreet silence because they fear men, or "love the praise of men," yes, those who fail to proclaim the whole truth for "diplomacy's" sake all these will have to cast aside their selfish interests if the grace of God is to shine forth again with any degree of brightness.

OUR RESPONSIBILITY TO RELIGHT THE TORCH

We know, of course, that the millennium will be brought in by the return of Christ, not by the efforts of men. But we have not been discussing the millennium. We have been discussing God's revealed program for "this present evil age," the time of Christ's rejection and absence, and God has commanded us now to make the message of His grace known to all men. The fact that "evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse" does not relieve us of this responsibility. It is in this deepening darkness that we are to "shine as lights in the world, holding forth the Word of life" (Phil. 2:15,16), always remembering that once God's grace was made to shine forth to all mankind in spite of the most bitter and Satanic opposition.

In these critical times, shall we not then make it our one passion to understand God's Word, rightly divided, and to make it known to others, until the grace of God shines forth again as a blazing torch? Shall we not, must we not, put aside every other consideration and say with Paul:

"BUT AS WE [ARE] ALLOWED OF GOD TO BE PUT IN TRUST WITH THE GOSPEL, EVEN SO WE SPEAK; NOT AS PLEASING MEN, BUT GOD, WHICH TRIETH OUR HEARTS" (I Thes. 2:4).

Soon enough our Lord will appear in glory to take us out of this scene, and our work will be done. Now He would have His grace appear through us. Whatever
the opposition of Satan, then, or however deceitful its character, let us heartily say with the apostle of grace:


If we do this we shall also be able to say with him when we come to the end of the way:

"I HAVE FOUGHT A GOOD FIGHT, I HAVE FINISHED MY COURSE, I HAVE KEPT THE FAITH:

"HENCEFORTH THERE IS LAID UP FOR ME A CROWN... " (II Tim. 4:7,8).
Chapter V - Titus 2:12–15

DISCIPLINED BY GRACE

THE UPWARD LOOK

"Teaching us that denying [i.e., renouncing] ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world.

"Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ;

"Who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.

"These things speak, and exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no man despise thee."

- Titus 2:12-15

KNOWLEDGE NOT ENOUGH

The word "teaching," in Ver. 12, is not the Greek didasko, the usual word for "teach." It is rather the word paideuo. Out of the 13 times this word occurs in the New Testament, the King James Version has rendered it "chastise" 8 times. Thus this word bears the sense of training or discipline rather than the mere impartation of knowledge. In Acts 7:22, where the word is rendered "learned," it still has this sense: "Moses was learned [i.e., drilled, trained] in all the wisdom of the Egyptians."

But how lovingly grace disciplines! It has positively no equal as an incentive to God's people to live pleasing to Him. It does not thunder like the Law; rather it softens the heart, inclines the will and provides the power to put God's precepts into practice.

When we fail Him and then contemplate what our Lord, in matchless grace, has done for us, His grace puts us to shame, and we say: "Here I am committing the very sins for which my Savior poured out His life's blood that I might be forgiven and justified." We ask ourselves: "How can I continue to commit these sins?" and plead with Him at the Throne of Grace for help to honor Him in all we do and say. Thus God's grace has appeared... . .

"Teaching us that denying [i.e., renouncing] ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly [in our relation to ourselves], righteously [in
our relation to others], and godly [in our relation to God], in this present world"¹⁴¹ (Ver. 12).

THAT BLESSED HOPE

"Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ;

"Who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works" (Tit. 2:13,14).

A rich harvest of blessing was reaped for the Church in those years before and after the turn of the century when the great truth of the Lord's coming to catch away His own was recovered by men of God and the expectancy of His appearing became once more "that blessed hope" to multitudes of believers.

There was, however, one flaw in the argument for the imminent Rapture. Most of those who taught this truth failed to see clearly that, as part of the great revelation to Paul, it is exclusively the hope of the Body of Christ, the Church of this present dispensation.

Soon enough the old error of confusing other parts of Scripture with the Pauline revelation began to do its destructive work again, with the result that today Pre-millenarians, in increasing numbers, are asking whether it is quite certain after all that we will be caught up to be with Christ before the prophesied Tribulation and the outpouring of God's wrath upon the world.

Not standing squarely on Pauline ground, one after another has relinquished the "blessed hope" for the confusion that inevitably results from a failure to recognize the distinctive character of Paul's apostleship and message.

Now some are pointing to such passages as Matt. 24:6-9 and 29,30 to prove that the Church will go through the tribulation. Others have adopted a "mid-tribulation" view, holding that the Church will go through only the first half of the tribulation period, and will be caught away before the fearful outpouring of God's wrath in the "great tribulation." Still others hold the so-called "partial rapture" view on the basis of our Lord's exhortation to His disciples:

¹⁴¹ We remind our readers that the Greek aion does not always or necessarily mean age. It is the author's conviction that mostly, and certainly in such passages as Hebrews 11:3, it is an "environment word" rather than a "time word." The phrase, "so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear" forbids the departure from KJV, in the former part of this verse, to "the ages were planned by the Word of God." Hence it is not merely at this time, but in the midst of these surroundings that we are to live "soberly, righteously and godly."
"Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things. . ." (Luke 21:36).

According to this view only those "counted worthy" will be caught up at the rapture.

And thus the glorious prospect that Paul, by inspiration, holds out to the members of Christ's Body as "that blessed hope," is again being lost to growing numbers of sincere believers, simply because they fail to recognize it as a distinctly Pauline revelation.

It is a significant fact that in the very first epistle from Paul's pen he already refers to a prior hope for the members of the Body of Christ, the hope of a coming of Christ which precedes His return to earth to reign. In I Thes. 1:9,10 he recalls:

"... how ye turned to God from idols, to serve the living and true God,

"AND TO WAIT FOR HIS SON FROM HEAVEN.

And in I Thes. 4:16-18 he explains:

"For the lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first;

"Then we, which are alive and remain, shall be CAUGHT UP TOGETHER WITH THEM IN THE CLOUDS, TO MEET THE LORD IN THE AIR; and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

"Wherefore comfort one another with these words."

To those who remain blind to this important fact such passages as Matthew 24 must qualify, if not contradict, I Thessalonians 4, and any attempt to harmonize the Gospel records as to Christ's return with Paul's special revelation as to His coming for His own, must end in the most bewildering confusion.

But we who do recognize the distinctive character of Paul's apostleship and revelation have no such problem to vex us. To us "that blessed hope" glows - surely should glow - brighter as the days grow darker.\footnote{142 Doubtless the hosts of His attending angels. See the author's footnote on this subject in Acts, Dispersationally Considered, Vol. I, P.51.}

\footnote{143 The author deals with this subject in greater depth in his booklet, That Blessed Hope.}
THE UPWARD LOOK

After our resurrected Lord had responded to His disciples' question as to whether or not He would now "restore again the kingdom to Israel," and had commissioned them to bear witness to Him from Jerusalem to the uttermost part of the earth, an amazing incident took place:

"And when He had spoken these things, while they beheld, He was taken up; and a cloud received Him out of their sight.

"And while they looked stedfastly toward heaven as He went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel;

"Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, WHY STAND YE GAZING UP INTO HEAVEN? This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven.

"Then returned they unto Jerusalem. (Acts 1:9-12).

Why did the shining ones ask the eleven this question? Why should they not stand gazing up into heaven? Had not their blessed Lord just ascended there? Was it strange that even after He had disappeared out of their sight they should still stand there, faces as well as hearts turned upward?

We repeat: Why did the shining ones ask the disciples this question and then draw their attention back to earth again, assuring them that this same Jesus would return in the very same way in which He had gone? And note: after the angels had spoken to them they "returned unto Jerusalem."

We believe that the explanation to this problem lies in the distinction between the return of Jesus Christ to reign on earth and His coming to catch away His Church at the close of the present dispensation.

The question of the angels to the eleven should remind us of what Paul later wrote to the Philippians concerning the Body of Christ:

"For our conversation [Lit., citizenship] is in heaven, from whence also WE LOOK FOR THE SAVIOR, THE LORD JESUS CHRIST" (Phil. 3:20).

Our prospect, then, is heavenly in sphere, but this was not so with the eleven apostles. Surely no one will question that the Bible says that Messiah's kingdom is to be set up on earth. Jer. 23:5, one of literally hundreds of similar passages, says:
"Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth."

This is in perfect harmony with all Old Testament covenant and prophecy, as well as with "the gospel of the kingdom" which our Lord and His apostles proclaimed while He was on earth. And it explains why the angels gave the eleven to feel that they need not now be looking up toward heaven.

They had already been informed of the specific signs which were to herald their Lord's return to earth. When these signs began to appear, then they were to begin looking for Him. Before they appeared He could not come. Here let us consider Luke 21:25-28:

"And there shall be SIGNS in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations......."

"Men's hearts failing them for fear....... for the powers of the heavens shall be shaken.

"And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory.

"And WHEN THESE THINGS BEGIN TO COME TO PASS, THEN LOOK UP, AND LIFT UP YOUR HEADS, FOR YOUR REDEMPTION DRAWETH NIGH."

When, again and again, our Lord told His disciples to watch," it was of this time He spoke. He certainly did not mean that they should begin watching for His return immediately, for He had not yet gone away! No, there were specific signs which were to precede and herald His coming.

Thus the apostles went back to Jerusalem, soon to be empowered by the Holy Spirit for their work.

Already at Pentecost some of the "last day" signs began to appear. Peter said, "This is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel ... in the last days. . ." (Acts 2:16,17), and he added later:

"Repent ... the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord, and He shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you" (Acts 3:19-20).

All this was in line with Israel's hope - but not with our "blessed hope."
GRACE - AND THE ONE BODY

It was when Israel refused the offer of the promised kingdom and its divine King, that God postponed\textsuperscript{144} the establishment of the kingdom, and began to reveal a long-hidden secret, or "mystery": \textit{the dispensation of the grace of God} and the formation of "the Church which is [Christ's] Body." (See Eph. 3:1-11; 1:22,23; Col. 1:18, 24-29).

The Gentiles had long before rebelled against God and God had "given them up" (Rom. 1:24), and now Israel had joined the rebellion (Psa. 2:1-3; Acts 4:25-28; 8:1), with Saul of Tarsus as their leader. We read of Saul and of no other:

"As for Saul, he made havoc of the Church, entering into every house, and haling [Lit., dragging] men and women, committed them to prison" (Acts 8:3).

It was then that God in matchless grace stooped down and saved Saul, making him not only the herald, but the living demonstration of His grace as Paul, the apostle.

With the raising up of Paul \textit{"the gospel of the kingdom"} gave way to \textit{"the gospel of the grace of God,"} so that God is not now dealing with Israel and the nations as such, but with men as \textit{individuals}. All are viewed as the children of fallen Adam, but all may be reconciled to God through Christ.

"For God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that He might have mercy upon all" (Rom. 11:32).

"And that He might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby" (Eph. 2:16).

THE RAPTURE OF THE BODY IMMINENT

We too look for our Lord to come, but not to earth, on the Mount of Olives. We look for \textit{"the Lord Himself"} to \textit{"descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God,"} and when He does so come, \textit{"we which are alive and remain shall be CAUGHT UP ... TO MEET THE LORD IN THE AIR"}\textsuperscript{145} (I Thes. 4:16,17).

\textsuperscript{144} A planned postponement, of course.

\textsuperscript{145} Nowhere in connection with our Lord's return to earth do we read about any company of saints being "caught up" to be with Christ, as will the members of the Body, both resurrected and still "remaining" alive.
Nor do we look for "this same Jesus" that the eleven looked for. True, He will be the same as to identity, but not as to manifestation. The angel referred to the manner of His appearing when he said, "This same Jesus shall so come, in like manner......"

To us the Apostle Paul says:

"Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh: Yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now, henceforth, know we Him [i.e., Christ after the flesh] no more" (II Cor. 5:16).

As the heavens opened on the day of the ascension, "a cloud received Him out of their sight." They could not have beheld that which later blinded Saul - "a light ... above the brightness of the sun" (Acts 26:13).

All through the Old Testament we find that God appeared to Israel, His glory veiled in a cloud (doubtless of His attending angels). And so He will return again to earth, or earthly eyes could not behold Him.

But we are given a position now in Christ, in the epouraneous, the highest heavens, and some day we shall be changed" (I Cor. 15:51) so that we may actually dwell with Him in glorified bodies and share His glory.

They stood outside as "a cloud received Him out of their sight," and were assured that He would return in a cloud (Luke 21:27), but we, the members of the Body of Christ, are to be "caught up together ... IN the cloud" (I Thes. 4:17).

It is important to bear in mind that we, of the Body of Christ, have not been given one specific sign by which to determine when our Lord will come for us. Otherwise His coming for us would most assuredly not be imminent. Thus we need not wait for the revival of Rome, or the rise of Japan, or Antichrist, or the rebuilt temple. We are rather simply to wait for Him, serving as we wait, as Paul wrote to the Thessalonian believers in I Thes. 1:9,10:

". . . ye turned to God from idols, to serve the living and true God;"

"And TO WAIT FOR HIS SON FROM HEAVEN."

And, as we have seen, to the Philippian saints in Phil. 3:20:

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146 Luke 9:34 has Peter, James and John entering into the cloud, but the Greek here is eis, which often means only to come into contact with - and even this experience "they feared" - but the Greek en, used in I Thes. 4:17, means to be, or remain, within.
"For our conversation [or citizenship] is in heaven, from whence also WE LOOK FOR THE SAVIOR, THE LORD JESUS CHRIST."

And to Titus in Tit. 2:13:

"LOOKING FOR THAT BLESSED HOPE, AND THE GLORIOUS APPEARING OF THE GREAT GOD\textsuperscript{147} AND OUR SAVIOR JESUS CHRIST."

Thus grace "hath appeared" (Ver. 11), and glory will appear with our Lord's coming for us (Ver. 13) - who knows how soon! And thus every believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, every member of His Body, may, and should "keep looking up!"

WHY WE LONG TO BE WITH CHRIST

Why? Because He "gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a peculiar\textsuperscript{148} people, zealous of good works" (Ver. 14).

Think of it! He desires to have us for Himself! And to accomplish this He gave Himself for us, to die in agony and shame, that He might:

1. "Redeem us from all iniquity" with not one single sin laid to our charge, and

2. "Purify unto Himself a [special] people, zealous of good works," a people who, because he has thus drawn them to Himself, are eager to serve Him.

Under the Mosaic Law the terms were: "IF ye will obey My voice indeed ... THEN ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto Me. . ." (Ex. 19:5). But Israel never did or could "obey indeed." The Law was given only to show man his need of Christ, who would one day die at Calvary "to redeem" believing sinners "from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a peculiar people," not saved by works, but saved by grace and therefore "zealous of good works."

And how does He "purify unto Himself" this special people? The answer is, by the Word, as we learn from Eph. 5:25,26:

"Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the Church and gave Himself for it;

\textsuperscript{147} What a testimony to His deity?

\textsuperscript{148} Not odd, or strange, of course, but distinctive, unique, special.
"That He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the Word."

Thank God, we can proclaim to lost sinners that our Lord "gave Himself a ransom for ALL" (I Tim. 2:6), but in a deeper sense we can rejoice that He "gave Himself for US" (Tit. 2:14), yes, and each of us can apply this personally, exclaiming with Paul, "He loved ME and gave Himself for ME" (Gal. 2:20).

The Apostle closes this section with the directive:

"These things speak, and exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no man despise thee" (Tit. 2:15).

He well knew that Satan is opposed to the message of grace and that he will delude men, even some religious men, into opposing it. Thus Titus must not only proclaim the message of grace, but must "exhort" and "rebuke" those who oppose it "with all authority," the authority of the Word of God, allowing no man to despise him through careless word or deed.
Chapter VI - Titus 3:1-15

SUBJECTION TO THOSE IN AUTHORITY

THE LAST OF PAUL’S "FAITHFUL SAYINGS"

"Put them in mind to be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates, to be ready to every good work,

"To speak evil of no man, to be no brawlers, but gentle, showing all meekness unto all men.

"For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another.

"But after that the kindness and love of God our Savior toward man appeared,

"Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost;

"Which He shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior;

"That being justified by His grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life."

- Titus 3:1-7

CONSIDERING GOD’S GRACE TO US

This passage should be read thoughtfully again and again by those who desire to please God in these days of lawlessness, rebellion and strife.

According to these instructions true Christians will never follow the example of the agitator. It is not now our time to reign. This will come - if we have been faithful - when we go to be with Christ (II Tim. 2:12). But now the words that apply are subjection, obedience and even cooperation (Ver. 1), for not only are we to take our places under our rulers, so far as government is concerned, but we are to be "ready to every good work" which they may assign to us (Ver. 1).

The instructed and faithful Christian, therefore, will not incite others to rebellion. He will not take it upon himself to choose which laws he should obey
and which he should not. Indeed, he will at times even subject himself to laws that are oppressive and unjust.

And certainly he will not be a slanderer, or a brawler, but will be "gentle, showing all meekness to all men" (Ver. 2).

There is only one exception to this path of subjection, an exception which is latent in the command itself, namely, that since it is God, the Ruler of all, who commands us to be subject to our earthly rulers, we must not subject ourselves to them if they demand from us disobedience to God. We have an example of this in Acts 4:18-20; 5:28,29.

True Christians, then, will be the best citizens - and the best neighbors. They will uphold law and order and will promote respect for those in authority. They are not only saved by grace, but will show grace even to those who oppress and injure them.

"For we ourselves also were..." (Ver. 3).

The King James translators were correct in rendering the Greek heemis ("we") by the words "we ourselves" here, for the word is emphatic in the Greek. As we witness, and sometimes experience, the injustice and oppression of our rulers we must point the finger at ourselves, acknowledging that "we ourselves" were once guilty sinners in the sight of a holy God and have been saved only because of "the kindness and love of God our Savior toward man" (Ver. 4).

As Eph. 2:3-7 has it, we were "the children [Lit., full-grown sons] of disobedience" and therefore "by nature the children [Lit., born ones] of wrath, even as others."

"But God, who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us,

"Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ (by grace ye are saved),

"And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus:

"That in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us through Christ Jesus."

149 Here for the seventh time in the Pastoral Epistles we find the phrase "God our Savior." It is found nowhere else in the N.T., except in Luke 1:47, and there in a different sense. See the Author's notes on I Tim. 1:1.
In Ver. 5, the "we" is emphatic again, as it so often is in the Greek. We are "saved" from wrath, "not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy" (Ver. 5). Thus salvation is not earned by works of any kind, not even by the performance of religious rites, "but," he continues, "by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost." Washing by water baptism is a physical rite, but the washing of regeneration a spiritual reality.

This clearly indicates that with Paul a new dispensation was ushered in, for under the "great commission" given to the eleven the instructions were clear:

"He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned" (Mark 16:16).

And Peter at Pentecost, working under this commission, instructed his convicted hearers:

"Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost" (Acts 2:38).

But now, more than 30 years later, Paul declares that salvation is not gained by "works of righteousness," but "according to [God's] mercy" and "by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit."

This corresponds with Paul's testimony as to his own commission in I Cor. 1:17,18:

"For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel: not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect.

"For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness, but unto us which are saved it is the power of God."

At the time of Paul's conversion Ananias had said to him: "Arise and be baptized, and wash away thy sins" (Acts 22:16). Not that water could actually wash away sins, but at that time God required this rite for the remission of sins, as we have seen. But later the Apostle was able to write even to the failing Corinthian believers:

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150 Whether baptized or not.
151 That water baptism signified washing rather than burial is clear from the following passages, where the word baptizo or its derivatives appears and is either rendered "wash" or clearly indicates washing rather than burial: Mark 7:4,8; John 3:25,26; Acts 22:16; Heb. 9:10.
"And such were some of you, BUT YE ARE WASHED, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified, in the name of the Lord Jesus, and BY THE SPIRIT OF OUR GOD" (I Cor. 6:11).

This corresponds perfectly with what we have been reading here in Tit. 3:3-5:

"For we ourselves also were. . . .

But after that the kindness and love of God our Savior toward man appeared;

Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost."

Here we have one of those figures of speech in which one thing is spoken of in two ways. "The washing of regeneration" and the "renewing of the Holy Spirit" are one and the same operation. And in the next verse we have another figure of speech, in which the Holy Spirit is spoken of as being "shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior," i.e., through the finished work of Christ the Holy Spirit washes, or cleanses, us thoroughly. Or, again, as I Cor. 6:11 puts it, "Ye are washed ... by the Spirit of our God." And thus, "being justified by His [God] grace" we are "made heirs according to the hope of eternal life" (Tit. 3:7).

The words "according to the hope of eternal life," are most important here, for this is still another reference to the "hope of eternal life" spoken of in Tit. 1:2. We are not saved by the accomplishment of any religious rite, or any "work of righteousness," but by the grace of God, "which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began" (II Tim. 1:9), "according to the promise of life which is in Christ Jesus" (II Tim. 1:1).

**PAUL'S CLOSING WORDS TO TITUS**

"This is a faithful saying, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable unto men.

"But avoid foolish questions, and genealogies, and contentions, and strivings about the law; for they are unprofitable and vain.

"A man that is an heretic, after the first and second admonition reject:

"Knowing that he that is such is subverted, and sinneth, being condemned of himself.
"When I shall send Artemas unto thee, or Tychicus, be diligent to come unto me to Nicopolis: for I have determined there to winter.

"Bring Zenas the lawyer and Apollos on their journey diligently, that nothing be wanting unto them.

"And let ours also learn to maintain good works for necessary uses, that they be not unfruitful.

"All that are with me salute thee. Greet them that love us in the faith. Grace be with you all. Amen."

- Titus 3:8-15

PAUL'S "FAITHFUL SAYINGS"

We come now to the last of five "faithful sayings" found in the Pastoral Epistles.

As we have pointed out, a saying is any statement that is significant or important enough to justify frequent repetition, while a "faithful saying" is one that can be thoroughly relied and acted upon. The five "faithful sayings" of the Pastoral Epistles are as follows:

1. I Tim. 1:15, where the Apostle urges Timothy to keep telling his hearers again and again "that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief." How many Christian leaders tell their hearers often enough that "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners," but fail to give them the encouraging news that Christ Jesus came into the world to save even Paul, the chief of sinners. Perhaps this is because they take Paul's words here to be simply an expression of humility, not giving due consideration to his own explanation in the verse that follows.

2. I Timothy 3:1, where he urges Timothy to discourage his hearers from too readily seeking leadership. It is not the desire to be an overseer, or bishop, that is good; it is the office that is "good," in the sense of being a highly responsible position, so that "a bishop must be blameless" - and possess many other important qualifications (Vers. 2-7).

3. I Timothy 4:9, where the Apostle admonishes Timothy to point out to his hearers - and often - that godliness, rather than "bodily exercise," holds promise for the life that now is and for that which is to come (Ver. 8).

4. II Timothy 2:11,12, where he urges him to stress the great advantage of a sincere willingness to suffer for Christ.
5. Titus 3:8, where he calls upon Titus to "affirm constantly" the believer's responsibility to "maintain good works."

There are two significant comparisons to be made with regard to this last "faithful saying."

First, it should be compared with the Apostle's first "faithful saying" in I Tim. 1:15. There he declares that "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners" - even the chief of sinners. While here in Tit. 3:8 he presses home the responsibility of the saved sinner to "be careful to maintain good works."

But this passage should also be associated with Ver. 5 of the same chapter. In 3:5 he makes it crystal clear that salvation is "not by works," while in 3:8 he insists that those who *have believed* should "be careful to maintain good works" (Cf. Eph. 2:8-10).

As he had done in writing to Timothy, Paul here exhorts Titus to "avoid foolish questions, and contentions, and strivings about the law; for they are unprofitable and vain" (Ver. 9). This is further evidence that Titus had trouble with the legalists, who loved to get into discussions about the genealogies and fine points about the Law.

The circumstances have changed, but it is a sad fact that there are still with us today those who delight in arguing and quibbling about subjects that do not edify or instruct or help believers to live godly lives. Such, says the Apostle, must be avoided, and if any such do not respond to persuasion, even to formal admonition, the directive is: "A man that is an heretic after the first and second admonition reject" (Ver. 10), for with such it is no longer a question of doctrines or beliefs, but of a willful nature. "Such is subverted and sinneth, being condemned of himself" (Ver. 11). A third reprimand, therefore, was to terminate this brother's fellowship with the assembly.

This number three is familiar to us all as a number of termination. Well does the author remember his father saying to him, when a boy, "Now I've had to speak to you twice about this; if I have to speak to you again" - !!! The third reprimand, I knew, would be followed with a good sound spanking! In business too we have our "three days of grace," and the auctioneer cries "Going-going-gone!" or "First-second-third and last call!" And in sports - what boy does not know that in baseball three strikes make an out and three outs retires the side!

God used this principle with Israel, for after they had rejected the Father (in Old Testament times), "the Father sent the Son." And even when they rejected the Son, God did not yet cast them out, for *the Son sent the Holy Spirit*. But by now

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152 From the Gr., hairesis, factious, hence opinionated, self-willed.
153 I.e., if he does not heed the second admonition.
they had "set themselves ... against the Lord and against His Anointed," thus when they rejected and resisted the Holy Spirit, they were given up (Acts 7:51-53), and another apostle was raised up to usher in the present dispensation. For Israel, Pentecost was surely the "third and last call," for with Israel's rejection of even the risen, glorified Christ, so powerfully proclaimed by the Holy Spirit, Israel had committed the "unpardonable sin" (Matt. 12:31,32), and the nation was "cast away" (temporarily) as God began a new, unprophesied work among the Gentiles (Rom. 11:25; Col. 1:27).

**FINAL INSTRUCTIONS**

Tit. 3:12 appears to indicate that this letter was written during the interval between Paul's two imprisonments, or else that he felt sure he would soon be released, for he asks Titus to meet him at Nicopolis, where he has decided to spend the winter.

_Artemas_ is named only in this passage, but _Tychicus_ is well known. He was with Paul at Troas (Acts 20:4) as one of his co-workers, and twice Paul calls him "a beloved brother and a faithful minister" (Eph. 6:21; Col. 4:7). Later he was to send him to Ephesus, probably to take Timothy's place while Timothy hurried to Paul's side at Rome (II Tim. 4:9,12). _Zenas_ the lawyer, also, is mentioned only here, but _Apollos_ is well-known to us indeed.

**TWO CHRISTIAN GENTLEMEN**

Briefly, Apollos was a Jew from Alexandria, referred to in the Acts record as "an eloquent man, and mighty in the Scriptures." More than this, he was "fervent in spirit, [and] spake [and] taught diligently the things of the Lord" - as far as he knew them, for we read that he knew "only the baptism of John" (Acts 18:24,25), i.e., this is how far he had come in his knowledge of the program of God.

It is a splendid testimony to the character of Apollos that when Paul's friends, Aquila and Priscilla, "took him unto them, and expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly" (Acts 18:26), he evidently accepted their instruction with grace so that later his eloquence and his further knowledge of the things of God were ably used to "water" the teachings which Paul had "planted" at Corinth (I Cor. 3:6).

His eloquence and the spiritual power of his preaching, however, soon created a problem at Corinth, for they considered him Paul's chief rival in the ministry of

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154 The sin against the Holy Spirit was not "unpardonable" because the Holy Spirit was _greater_ than the Holy Father or the Holy Son, but because God had already spoken to Israel as the Father and as the Son and now the Holy Spirit's call would be the final one. There is no "unpardonable" sin in the present dispensation of grace (See Rom. 5:20,21; Eph. 1:7). One may indeed go into eternity with all his sins unpardoned, but not because one of them was unpardonable.
the gospel (I Cor. 3:4,5). Indeed, the record states that he "helped them much which had believed through grace" (Acts 18:27), so that it was natural that they should think so highly of him and that some should even prefer him, as a teacher, to Paul.

Thus Apollos unintentionally became involved in division and rivalry in the church at Corinth. One party boasted of him and another of Paul. There were others (I Cor. 1:12), but Apollos was chiefly involved, as we have seen.

Clearly neither Paul nor Apollos condoned, much less fostered this party spirit among the Corinthians. Indeed, it is touching to witness the humility of these two great men and their mutual consideration for each other.

In writing to the Corinthians about it later, Paul does not ask, "Was Apollos crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Apollos?" Father he makes little of himself, asking them, "Was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul? (I Cor. 1:13). Indeed, so sincere was Paul's humility as well as his confidence in Apollos and his affection for him, that he strongly urged him to return to Corinth just when the party rivalry was so great. And such consideration did Apollos have for Paul that in spite of Paul's urgent proposals he would not go to Corinth. In Paul's words: "As touching our brother Apollos, I greatly desired him to come unto you ... but his will was not at all to come at this time. . ." (I Cor. 16:12).

Evidently these two great men of God had been brought very close together through these experiences, for here in Tit. 3:13 the Apostle writes most solicitously of Apollos with regard to a forthcoming journey, to make certain that he will be well cared for and will lack nothing.

**GENEROSITY TO BE TAUGHT**

Paul's closing exhortation to Titus has to do with Christian generosity.

"And let our's [Lit., our own people] also learn to maintain good works for necessary uses [Gr., anagkaias kreias, "pressing needs"], that they be not unfruitful" (Tit. 3:14).

There is considerable evidence that Titus was a generous-hearted individual, but it would not be right for him to have to personally bear all the travelling expenses involved in the journey of Zenas and Apollos referred to in Ver. 13.

Titus must teach those of his congregation to be generous, especially when pressing needs arise. And note his wording carefully. He does not say, "that they may be fruitful," but "that they may not be unfruitful" (Ver. 14). To Paul an unfruitful Christian was a tragedy, and he well knew the natural tendency upon
the part of many believers to put God, not first, but almost last, where finances are concerned. In this area as well as in any other, an unfruitful Christian is indeed a tragedy.

When Paul's beloved Philippian brethren, who had already helped him so generously, sought him out and sent still another gift to help him with the work, he expressed his thanks to them with the closing assurance: "Not because I desire a gift; but I desire fruit that may abound to your account" (Phil. 4:10-17). His sincere reaction was not: "Look at all this material wealth I've gotten," but: "What faithful saints those Philippian believers are! And how they have grown!"

It is a sad concomitant to the affluent times in which we have been living that so many seemingly sincere Christians have been storing away more material wealth than they can ever use, or else spending it lavishly upon themselves, while the cause of Christ suffers, and multitudes of needy and bewildered souls go unreached. How timely were the words of Paul to the Corinthians on this subject - and especially his challenge:

"Therefore as ye abound in everything: in faith, and utterance, and knowledge, and in all diligence, and in your love to us, see that ye abound in this grace [the grace of giving] also.

"I speak not by commandment, but by occasion of the forwardness of others, and to prove the sincerity of your love" (II Cor. 8:7,8).

**FINAL GREETINGS**

The phrase "all that are with me" (Ver. 15) stirs up our curiosity. Was he at this time ministering in some local assembly? Or, did he have a large company of co-workers with him as when he had gone to Troas (Acts 20:4,5)? God has not seen fit to reveal this to us, but it does appear probable from this passage also that the letter to Titus was written by Paul between his two imprisonments, while he was free.

In addition to greetings to Titus from all those who are with him, he sends his personal greetings to "them that love us in the faith," closing with the benediction: "Grace be with you all. Amen."

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155 Other, poorer saints who were making such great sacrifices (II Cor. 8:1-5).