

# 1 Timothy – How to Behave in the Local Church

By  
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Timothy was Pastor of the Christian “assembly” at Ephesus (1 Timothy 1:3). He was a young man. That is made clear by expressions in both letters to him and by references in the book of Acts. Paul’s references also leave us in no doubt that Timothy was very dear to him. 1 Timothy was written from Greece between 64-66 A.D.

The two epistles to Timothy are a “charge” from Paul to Timothy. We are told this at least ten times in the two letters.

Looking particularly into the first letter we see that it’s over-all subject is the local “church” or “assembly” of Christian believers and the pastor-in-charge.

The first 17 verses of chapter 1 give a preliminary explanation why the letter was being written, and end with a doxology.

The “charge” itself begins at the first verse of chapter 2, and then the letter breaks into two clear parts. Chapter 2 and 3 concern the assembly and its conduct. Chapters 4, 5 and 6 concern the minister and his conduct.

The theme of 1 Timothy is quite clear in 3:14 & 15

*14. Although I hope to come to you soon, I am writing you these instructions so that,*

*15. If I am delayed, you will know how people ought to conduct themselves in God’s household, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and foundation of the truth.*

Paul states here very simply that there is a standard of behavior for the church of God and that he is writing to Timothy to enable him to know it.

It is not enough to say to a child who is misbehaving, “behave yourself!” if the child does not know what is expected in the way of good behavior. He must be told first what good behavior is. 1 Timothy does this for the child of God in relation to the church of God.

# 1 Timothy 1 - The Church and Its Message

## Salutation - (1:1, 2)

Paul first of all introduces himself as an apostle of 'Christ Jesus'. Apostle is a "sent one", so Paul is simply stating that he had been divinely appointed to missionary work.

Paul's authorship was "by the command of God our Savior and of Christ Jesus our hope".

This emphasizes that Paul had not chosen the ministry by himself as a means of livelihood; neither had he been ordained to this work by men. He had a definite call from God to preach, teach and suffer.

Jesus Christ is "our hope". This reminds us of Colossians 1:27 "Christ in you, the hope of glory". Our only hope of getting to heaven is found in the person and work of the Lord Jesus.

The letter is addressed to Timothy, who is described as "a true son in the faith". This may indicate that Timothy was saved through the apostle, perhaps during Paul's first visit to Lystra (Acts 16:6-20). But the general impression in Acts is that Timothy was already a disciple when Paul first met him (Acts 16:1, 2). In that case the expression "true son in the faith" means that Timothy had the same spiritual and moral qualities as Paul; he was a true descendant of the apostle because he manifested the same character.

**Grace** means all the divine resources needed for Christian life and service.

**Mercy** speaks of God's compassionate care and protection for one who is needy and prone to fail

**Peace** means the inner tranquility that comes from leaning on the Lord. These three blessings come from God our Father and Jesus Christ our Lord.

The deity of Christ is implied in this verse in that Paul speaks of Him as equal with the Father.

The expression "Christ Jesus our Lord" stresses the Lordship of Christ. Whereas the word "Savior" occurs 24 times in the New Testament, the word "Lord" occurs 522 times.

## Charge to Silence False Teachers - (1:3-11)

It seems that after Paul's first imprisonment at Rome, he visited Ephesus with Timothy. When Paul moved on to Macedonia, he instructed Timothy to stay in Ephesus for a while to teach the word of God and to warn the believers against false teachers. From Macedonia, Paul apparently traveled south to Corinth, and it was perhaps from that city that he wrote this first letter to Timothy.

**1:3** The apostle is saying in effect: "Just as I previously instructed you to stay in Ephesus when I went to Macedonia, so I am repeating those instructions now".

The principle false doctrines in question were Legalism and Gnosticism. Just in case Timothy was tempted to run away from these problems, Paul is telling him to stay on the job.

Timothy was also exhorted to charge these men not to pay attention "to myths and endless genealogies". It is impossible for us to know definitely what these myths and genealogies were. Some connect them with legends that had arisen among some Jewish teachers. Others think they refer to the myths and generations of the Gnostics.

Such worthless subjects serve only to provoke questionings and doubts in people's minds. They do not produce "God's work – which is by faith".

The whole plan of redemption is designed by God, not to stir up doubts and disputes (controversies), but rather to induce faith in the hearts of men.

True believers should not be devoting their attention to such valueless themes as myths and genealogies, but rather should devote themselves to the great truths of the Christian faith, which will bring blessings and inspire faith rather than doubt.

**1:5** Perhaps the most important thing to understand in this verse is command does not refer to the Law of Moses or the Ten Commandments, but to the charge of verse 3 and 4. Paul is saying that the goal or aim of the charge which he has just given Timothy is to produce not just good doctrine but "love, which comes from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith."

These things always follow when the gospel of the grace of God is preached.

Love includes love to God, to other believers, and to the world in general. It must spring out of a pure heart.

This love must be the outcome of sincere (un hypocritical) faith, that is faith that does not wear a mask.

False teachings could never produce these things which Paul lists, and certainly they are never the outcome of fables and endless genealogies!

It is the teaching of the grace of God that produces a pure heart, a good conscience, a sincere faith, and therefore results are love.

**1:6** We see that some had wandered away from these things, that is, from a pure heart, a good conscience, and sincere faith.

**1:7** The false teachers referred to in the previous verses maintained that faith in Christ was not sufficient for salvation. They insisted that a man must be circumcised or in other ways must keep the law of Moses. They taught that the law was the believer's rule of life. This false teaching has been present in every century of church history, and it is the plague which has been most successful in corrupting Christians today.

In its modern form, it states that although faith in Christ is necessary for salvation, a person must also be baptized (infant baptism), or keep the law, or do penance, or give money etc.

A man does not become a Christian by doing these good works, but rather he does these good works because he is a Christian.

**1:8** Paul makes it very clear that there is nothing wrong with law. (Romans 7:12). But the law must be used lawfully. It was never given as a means of salvation (Acts 13:39; Romans 3:20; Galatians 2:16, 21; 3:11).

The law is to be used in preaching and teaching as to produce conviction of sin. It should not be presented as a means of salvation or as a rule of life.

**1:9** The law is not made for a righteous person. If a man is righteous, he does not need a law. That is true of the Christian. When he is saved by the grace of God, he does not need to be placed under the Ten Commandments in order to be saved and to live a holy life.

**1:10-11** "Sound Doctrine". Correct teaching, in keeping with that of the Apostles (see 1 Timothy 1:10; 6:3; 2 Timothy 1:13; 4:3; Titus 1:9).

The teaching is called "sound" not only because it builds up the faith, but because it protects against corrupting influence of false teachers.

"Gospel" from the old English gospel, "good story" or "good news", which accurately translates the Greek word "Ευαγγελιον". (Mark 1:1)

This is the Gospel... which was entrusted to the apostles. It is the Good News that centers on the glorified Lord Jesus Christ and tells men that He is not only Savior but Lord as well.

### **Thanksgiving for the True Grace of God - (1:12-17)**

**1:12** In the preceding passage, Paul has been describing the false teachers who were seeking to impose the law on the believers in Ephesus. He is now reminded of his own conversion. It was not through law-keeping but by the Grace of God.

The Apostle had not been a righteous man but the chief of sinners. Verses 12-17 seem to illustrate, the lawful use of the law from Paul's own experience. The law was not to him a way of salvation, but rather a means of conviction of sin.

First of all he bursts out into thanksgiving to Christ Jesus for His enabling grace. The emphasis is not on what Saul of Tarsus did for the

Lord but what the Lord did for him.

Apostle Paul could never get over the wonder that the Lord Jesus not only saved him but counted him faithful, appointing him to His service. The law could never have shown such grace. Rather, its inflexible terms would have condemned the sinner Saul to death.

**1:13** That Paul had broken the Ten Commandments before his conversion is evident from this verse. He speaks of himself as formerly a blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent man.

But Paul “was shown mercy”. Why? Because he did these things “in ignorance and unbelief”.

In persecuting Christians, he thought he was doing God's service. With all the zeal and energy he possessed, he sought to defend the honor of God by killing the Christians. Many insist that zeal and sincerity are the important things with God. But Paul's example shows that zeal is not enough. In fact, if a man is wrong, his zeal only makes the wrong more intense. The more zeal he has, the more damage he does!

**1:14** Not only did Paul escape the punishment he deserved (mercy), but he also received abundant kindness which he did not deserve (grace).

“Where sin increased, grace increased all the more”. (Romans 5:20).

The grace which came to Paul was accompanied by “Faith and love that are in Christ Jesus”.

**1:15-17** This is the first of five “trustworthy sayings” in the Pastoral Epistles. This is a trustworthy saying because it is the word of God, who can neither lie nor be mistaken.

The pre-existence of Jesus the Savior is suggested in the words “Christ Jesus came into the World”. Bethlehem was not the beginning of His existence. He had dwelt with God the Father from all eternity, but He came into the world as a Man on a specific mission.

Why did He come? “To save sinners”. It was not to save good people. There were none! Neither was it to save those who kept the law perfectly (none had done this either).

In a general sense these verses mean that no one should despair, no matter how wicked they might be. They can be comforted with the thought that since the Lord has already saved the chief of sinners, they too can find grace and mercy by coming to Him. By believing on Him, they too can find eternal life.

As Paul thinks of God's marvelous dealings with him in grace, he bursts out into this lovely doxology. “Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory for ever and ever. Amen.” (v.17)

## **Restatement of the Charge to Timothy - (1:18-20)**

**1:18** The charge mentioned here is no doubt the charge Paul had given Timothy in verse 3 and 5 to rebuke false teachers.

To encourage his son Timothy to carry out this important commission, Apostle reminds him the circumstances which led to his call to Christian service.

“In keeping with the prophecies once made about you” seems to mean that before Paul met Timothy a prophet had announced that Timothy would be used by the Lord in His Service.

Paul tells Timothy, if he should ever become discouraged in the work of the Lord, he should remember these prophecies and thus be inspired and stimulated to “Fight the good fight”.

**1:19** In this warfare, he should “hold on to faith and good conscience”. It is not enough just to be doctrinally accurate as to the Christian faith. One may know his doctrine well, and yet not have a good conscience.

Some of those living in Paul's day “had rejected these (faith and a good conscience) and so have shipwreck their faith”.

These who had made shipwreck of the faith were true believers, but they simply had not maintained their faith.

**1:20** Hymenaeus and Alexander were believers who had made shipwreck.

Adam Clarke the British scholar explains this verse as follows:

Of whom is Hymenaeus and Alexander. Who had the faith but thrust it away? Who had a good conscience through believing, but made shipwreck of it? Hence we find that all this was not only possible, but did actually take place, though some have endeavored to maintain the contrary; who confounding eternity with a state of probation, have supposed that if a man once enter into the grace of God in this life he must necessarily continue in it to all eternity.

Thousands of texts and thousands of facts refute this doctrine. Delivered unto Satan. For the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit might be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus. See what is noted on 1 Corinthians 5; what this sort of punishment was no man now living knows. There is nothing of the kind preferred to in the Jewish writings. It seems to have been something done by mere apostolical authority, under the direction of the Spirit of God.

Hymenaeus, it appears, denied the resurrection, 2 Timothy 2:17-18; but whether this Alexander is the same as "Alexander the coppersmith." 2 Timothy 4:14, or the Alexander in Acts 19:33, cannot be determined. Probably he was the same with the "coppersmith." Whether they were brought back to the acknowledgment of the truth is not clear. From what is said in the Second Epistle the case seems extremely doubtful. Let him who most assuredly standeth take heed lest he fall.

# 1 Timothy 2 - The Church and Its Members

## Regarding Prayer - (2:1-8)

Paul has concluded his first charge to Timothy concerning the false teachers, and now he moves on to the subject of prayer. It is generally agreed that this passage has to do with public prayer, although there is nothing in it that would not be equally applicable to one's private devotional life.

**2:1** Prayer for everyone is both a privilege and an obligation. It is a great privilege for us to be able to speak to God in behalf of our fellow men. And it is an obligation, too, for we are debtors to all with reference to the good news of Salvation.

The Apostle lists four aspects of prayer – requests, prayers, intercessions and thanksgiving. It is rather difficult to distinguish between the first three.

In modern usage, request (supplication) has the thought of strong and earnest pleading, but here the thought is more that of specific requests for specific needs. Prayer here is a very general term, covering all kinds of reverent approaches to God.

Intercessions describe those forms of petition in which we address God as our Superior in behalf of others.

Thanksgiving describes prayer in which we pour out our hearts in gratitude to Him.

In other words, this verse is saying that in praying for everyone we should be humble, worshipful, trustful and thankful.

**2:2** Special mention is made here of "Kings and all those in authority." These must have a special place in our prayers. Elsewhere, Paul has reminded us that the authorities that exist are ordained of God (Romans 13:1) and that they are ministers of God to us for good (Romans 13:4).

The New Testament teaches that a Christian is to be loyal to the government under which he lives, except when that government orders him to disobey God. In such a case his first responsibility is God.

A Christian should not engage in revolution or in violence against the government. He may simply refuse to obey any order that is contrary to the word of God and then quietly and submissively take the punishment.

The reason the Apostle gives for praying for rulers is "that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness."

**2:3** We should pray for all men, including kings and those in authority. God's desire is for the salvation of all men. Therefore we should pray for all men.

**2:4** This verse explains further what we have already pointed out in verse 3. "God wants all men to be saved" (Ezekiel 33:11; John 3:16; 2 Peter 3:9). Therefore, we should pray for all men everywhere.

This verse is very clear about the divine and the human aspect of salvation. It says that man must be saved. The verb here is passive; man cannot save himself but must be saved by God. This is the divine side of salvation.

But in order to be saved, man must come to the knowledge of the truth. God does not save men against their will. Man must come to Him who said: "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life". This is the human side.

From this, it is clear that this verse does not teach universal salvation. Although God wants all men to be saved, yet not all men will be saved.

**2:5** God is one; therefore, He is the God of all men. As the one God, He desires the salvation of all men. If He was one of many gods, He would be concerned only about His own worshippers.

Secondly, one is Mediator between God and MEN. Therefore, no man can come to God in any other way. A mediator is a go between, a middleman who can stand between two and communicate with both.

Paul identifies the Mediator as the Man, Christ Jesus. This does not deny the deity of the Lord Jesus. In order to be the Mediator between God and men, He must be both God and Man. The Lord Jesus is God from all eternity, but He became man in Bethlehem's manger.

Verse 5 summarizes the message of the OT and NT - ONE GOD was the message of the OT entrusted to Israel; ONE MEDIATOR is the message of NT entrusted to the church.

As Israel failed in her responsibility by worshipping idols, so the church has failed in her responsibility by introducing other mediators – Mary, saints, clergy, etc.

**2:6** The emphasis is on the fact that God desires the salvation of all men. Here this is further shown by the fact that Christ Jesus “gave Himself as a ransom for all men.”

This means that the work of the Lord Jesus on Calvary’s cross was sufficient to save all sinners. It does not mean that all will be saved, since man’s will is also involved.

“The testimony given in its proper time” means that the testimony concerning Christ’s substitutionary work was to come in its own time. The same God who desires the salvation of all men and provided the way of salvation for all men, has decreed that the gospel message should go out in this age in which we live. All of this is designed to demonstrate the overwhelming desire on the part of God to bless mankind.

**2:7** As a final demonstration of God’s desire for the salvation of all men, Paul says that he was appointed a preacher and an apostle.

Then, as now, Gentiles constituted the greater portion of the population of the world. It was not to one small segment of mankind, such as the Jews, that the apostle was sent, but rather to the Gentile nations.

He speaks of himself as a preacher and an apostle and a teacher.

A preacher is literally a herald, a proclaimer of the gospel.

The duties of an apostle may be broader, he not only preaches the gospel but plants churches, guides local churches in matters of order and discipline, and speaks with authority as one sent by the Lord Jesus Christ.

A teacher expounds the word of God in such a manner that it will be understood by the people.

To give added emphasis to what he is saying, Paul confirms his claim to be a teacher to Gentiles by the words “I am telling the truth, I am not lying.” The words true faith may describe the faithful and honest way in which the apostle carried out his teaching ministry, but more probably they describe the contents of his teaching. In other words, he taught the Gentiles in matters pertaining to faith and truth.

**2:8** The subject of public prayer is now resumed, and this time our attention is directed to those who should lead the people of God in prayer.

In the original language of the NT, there are two words which may be translated as men. One word means mankind in general, whereas the other means men in contrast to women. It is the second word that is used here. The apostle’s instruction is that public prayer should be led by the men rather by the women. And it means all men, not just the elders.

Three qualifications are added, applying to those who are to pray publicly. First of all, they should lift up holy hands. The emphasis here is not so much on the physical posture of the one praying as on his inward life.

His hands should be holy hands. The hands here are figurative of the man’s entire manner of life.

Secondly, he should be without anger. This points out the inconsistency of one who is given to displays of temper.

Rising in the local church to speak to God in behalf of those assembled. Finally, he should be without doubting.

This may mean that he has faith in the ability and willingness of God to hear and answer prayer. We can summarize these qualifications by saying that a man should exhibit holiness and purity self-ward, love and peace man ward, and unquestioning faith God ward.

## **Regarding Women - (2:9-15)**

**2:9** Having discussed the personal requisites of the men who lead in public prayer, the apostle now turns to the things which should characterize the women who are in the congregation. First of all, he states that they should dress modestly, with decency and propriety.

John Chrysostom gives a definition of modest dress: And what then is modest? Such as covers them completely and decently, and not with superfluous ornaments; for the one is decent and the other is not. What? Do you approach God to pray with brodered hair and ornaments of gold? Are you come to a ball? A marriage feast? A carnival? There such costly things might have been seasonable: here not one of them is wanted. You have come to pray, to ask pardon for your sins, to plead for your offenses, beseeching the Lord...Away with such hypocrisy!

Propriety means avoiding anything that would cause shame. It carries the thought of being modest and discreet.

Moderation means that a woman will be moderate in her dress. On the one hand, she will not seek to attract attention to herself by expensive, conspicuous fashions. These might tend to provoke admiration or even jealousy from those who should be worshipping God. On the other hand, she should avoid attracting attention to herself by wearing clothes that are drab or old-fashioned. The

Scriptures seem to teach a moderate policy in regard to clothing.

Braided hair would not necessarily exclude simple braids, which might be very modest, but rather an elaborate adorning of the head with showy hairdos. The use of jewelry or expensive clothing as a means of self-exhibition is surely inappropriate at the time of prayer. (1 Peter 3:3-4)

**2:10** The best way for a Christian woman (and man) to preach is with her life. A woman who professes to worship God practices good works.

Later in this letter (5:11-14) Paul warns about idle women who wander from house to house and give Satan opportunity to lead them into sin.

**2:11** "A woman should learn in quietness and full submission." This is consistent with the rest of Scripture on this subject (1 Corinthians 11:3-15; 14:34-35).

**2:12-14** When Paul says: "I do not permit a woman to teach" he is speaking as inspired of God. This does not represent Paul's own personal prejudice as some say. It is God who decrees that women should not have public teaching ministries in the church. The only exceptions to this are that they are permitted to teach children (2 Timothy 3:15) and women (Titus 2:4). Neither is a woman "to have authority over a man." That means that she must not have dominion over a man.

It is a fundamental principle in God's dealings with mankind that man has been given the headship and that woman is in the place of subjection. This does not mean that she is inferior; that is certainly not true. But it does mean that it is contrary to God's will that the woman should have authority or dominion over the man.

**2:15** This is one of the most difficult verses in the Pastoral Epistles, and many explanations have been offered. Here are three possible meanings of this verse:

1. It is a simple promise from God that a Christian mother will be saved from death in the physical act of childbearing. However, this is not always true, because some godly, devoted Christians have died in the act of bringing life into the world;
2. It speaks of the godly woman who finds fulfillment in her role as a wife and mother in the home;
3. Childbearing refers to the birth of the Messiah, and that women are saved through the One who was born of a woman. However, this does not seem to satisfy the sense of the verse since men are saved in the same way. No one could suggest that the verse means that a woman receives eternal salvation by virtue of becoming a mother of children; this would be salvation by works, and works of a most unusual nature!

No one must think that because woman's ministry is limited or in the home that it is any less important than that which is more public. It has been said: "The hand that rocks the cradle rules the world." At the Judgment Seat of Christ, it is faithfulness that will count and this is something that can be exhibited in the home as well as in the pulpit.

# 1 Timothy 3 - The Church and Its Members

## Regarding Elders and Deacons - (3:1-13)

**3:1** The second trustworthy (faithful saying in 1 Timothy has to do with the work of overseers (Bishops) in the local church.

Overseer (Greek *Επισκοπος* - Episkopos): In the Greek culture the word was used of a presiding official in a civic or religious organization. Here it refers to a man who oversees a local congregation. The equivalent word from the Jewish background of Christianity is "Elder".

The terms "overseer" and "elder" are used interchangeably in Acts 20:17, 28; Titus 1:5-7; and 1 Peter 5:1-2.

An overseer is a Christian man of mature experience and understanding who assist in exercising godly care over the spiritual life of a local fellowship. He does not rule by lording it over the believers, but rather he leads by his spiritual example.

Today, "bishop" signifies a church official who exercises authority over many local congregations.

A bishop is the same as an overseer. The same word translated "bishop" in this verse is translated "overseer" in Acts 20:28.

A bishop or overseer is the same as an elder. The same men who are called elders in Acts 20:17 are called overseers in Acts 20:28 (Titus 1:5 and 1:7).

Elders are the same as presbyters, for although this word is not found in the NT, the English word "elder" translates the Greek word "πρεσβυτερος" (presviteros). Thus, the words "bishop", "overseer", "elder", and "presbyter" all refer to the same person.

Actually the word translated "elder" (presviteros) is sometimes used to describe an older man and not necessarily one who is a leader in the church (1 Timothy 5:1), but most other times "elder" describes a man recognized in a local church as one who exercises pastoral care among the believers.

Only the Holy Spirit of God can make a man an "overseer" (elder). This is clear in Acts 20:28. The Holy Spirit lays a burden on a man's heart to take up this important work and also equips him for it. There is the tendency to think this is a dignified, ecclesiastical office, entailing little or no responsibility, whereas overseer ship is actually humble service among the believers; it is work.

**3:2** The qualifications of an overseer are given in verses 2-7. They stress four main prerequisites: personal character, the witness of the home, able to teach, and a measure of experience.

These are God's standards for any who would exercise spiritual leadership in the local church. Some say that no one can measure up to these standards. However, this is not true. An argument like that robs the Sacred Scriptures of their authority and permits men to take the place of an overseer who have never been qualified by the Holy Spirit.

"The overseer must be above reproach" (blameless). This means that no charge of serious wrong can be sustained against him. It does not mean that he is sinless, but rather that if he does commit a sin, he makes it right with both God and man. He must be above reproach.

Secondly, he must be "the husband of but one wife". He should be a married man, but not polygamist.

There should not be any unfaithfulness or irregularity in his marriage. His moral life must be above question.

Temperate refers not only to matters of food and drink, but also to the avoidance of extremes in spiritual matters.

Self-controlled (sober-minded) means that an overseer must not be rash or frivolous. He must be serious, earnest, discerning, and discreet.

An overseer must be respectable (of good behavior), that is, he must be orderly, decent, and correct in his appearance and conduct.

Hospitable signifies that he is a lover of strangers he seeks to be a blessing to all who come to his home.

An overseer must be able to teach. As he helps those with spiritual problems, he must be able to use the Scriptures and explain the will

of God in an effective way. He must be able to feed the flock of God (1 Peter 5:2) and use the Scriptures in refuting those who bring false doctrines (Acts 20:29-31).

It does not necessarily mean that an overseer must have the gift of teaching, but rather that in his house-to-house ministry, as well as in the church, he must present, teach the doctrines of the faith and explain the Word of Truth, and be ready and willing to do it.

**3:3** The expression “given to drunkenness” (NIV) or “given to wine” means: addicted to alcoholic drinks. The original Greek word is “παροινον” which means: “excessive drinker”.

The overseer (bishop) must not be a man who overindulges in wine or alcoholic drinks and thus causes quarrels and abusive brawling, etc.

“Not violent” means that this man does not use physical violence on another. For instance, if he is a master, he never hits his servant or worker.

An elder must be “gentle”. In his work, in his church he will need patience, and a spirit of humility.

He must not be quarrelsome, contentious and arguing about every little thing. He does not insist on his own rights but is even tempered and congenial.

An overseer must not be a lover of money, (covetous). Here the emphasis is on the word “lover”. He is concerned with the spiritual life of the people of God and refuses to be distracted by a strong desire for material things.

**3:4** In order to be recognized as an overseer, a man “must manage his own family well and see that his children obey him.” This qualification would apply as long as a man’s children are living in his home. After they have gone off and started to raise their own families, there would no longer be the same opportunity for demonstrating this subjection. If a man manages his own house well, he will avoid the extremes of undue harshness and unrighteous leniency.

**3:5** It is very clear that unless a man is able to manage his own home (family) how will he be able to manage God’s church? In his own home, the number of persons is comparatively small. They all are related to him, and most of the members are younger than him. In the church, on the other hand, the numbers are much greater, and with this increase in numbers there goes a corresponding diversity of temperaments. It is obvious that if a man is unfit to manage in a smaller sphere, he would be clearly disqualified for the larger.

Verse 5 is important because it defines the work of an elder. It is to take care of God’s church. Notice it does not say “to rule” the church of God. An elder is not a despot or even a benevolent ruler, but rather one who guides the people of God as a shepherd guides the sheep.

**3:6** Not a recent convert (a novice). A recent convert to Christianity or a person who is young in the faith, is not qualified to be an overseer (a bishop). The work requires men of experience and understanding in the faith. The danger is that a recent convert may become conceited and fall under the same judgment as the devil. This does not mean the judgment which Satan brings on a man, but rather the judgment which fell on Satan himself because of his pride. He sought a high position for which he was not qualified, and as a result, he was brought low.

**3:7** An overseer is a man who must have a good reputation in the community. Outsiders refer to unsaved neighbors, co-workers etc. Without this good testimony, he becomes subject to the accusations of men and may fall into the devil’s trap. And once the devil has caught a man in his trap, he holds him up to ridicule, scorn and contempt.

**3:8** Apostle Paul now moves on from overseers (elders, bishops) to “deacons” (Διακονος). In the New Testament a deacon is simply one who serves. It is generally understood that a deacon is one who cares for the temporal affairs of the local church, whereas overseers care for its spiritual life.

This understanding of the duties of deacons is largely based on Acts 6:1-5, where men were appointed to care for the daily distribution of funds to widows in the church.

The qualifications for deacons are very similar to those of overseers, although not as quite as strict. One notable difference is that it is not required that a deacon should be able to teach.

“Deacons are to be men worthy of respect.” They must be “sincere” (not be double-tongued. KJV), that is, they must not give conflicting

reports to different persons or not different times. They must be consistent.

“Not indulging in much wine.” The New Testament does not forbid the use of wine. But even though the moderate use of wine is permitted, the Christian must also consider his testimony in regards to this matter.

Deacons must not be greedy for money, “not pursuing dishonest gain.”

**3:9** Deacons must be sound in doctrine and in life. They must not only know the truth; they must live it.

**3:10** Deacons must first be tested”, as in the case of elders. This means that they should be observed for some time and perhaps even given some minor responsibilities in the local church. As they prove themselves to be trustworthy and faithful, then they can be advanced to greater responsibilities. “Then let them serve as deacons.” As with overseers, the emphasis is not so much on an ecclesiastical office as it is on service for the Lord and His people.

**3:11** This verse apparently refers to the “wives” of deacons, or to the wives of overseers and deacons. The wives of those who are given responsibilities in the church should certainly be women of Christian testimony and integrity, such as will help their husbands in their important work.

However, the same word used for “wives” may also be translated “women” “γυναῖκα”. If so, this translation would permit the additional interpretation of women deacons. There were such women in the early church, e.g. Romans 16:1, where Phoebe is spoken of as a servant (same word as “deacon”) of the church at Cenchrea. A clue as to the type of service which these women performed in the church is given in Romans 16:2, where Paul says of Phoebe that she has helped many, including him.

Whichever interpretation one accepts, these women must be “worthy of respect”, dignified and sober.

They must not be “malicious talkers”, spending their time gossiping about others. They must be “temperate”, showing self-control and restraint.

Finally, they must be “trustworthy in everything”.

This might not only mean true to the Christian faith, but also dependable, loyal, and worthy of confidence. They should be able to keep personal confidences and family secrets.

**3:12** The apostle now returns to the subject of deacons. He first specifies that they must be “the husband of one wife.” The interpretation of this expression has been given in connection with verse 2 of this chapter. Like the overseers, the deacons must be above reproach in their married life.

They, too, must manage their children and their own houses well. This does not mean that men must be autocratic and arrogant, but it does mean that their children should be obedient and a testimony to the truth.

**3:13** A person who faithfully discharges an assignment, even if it is a small matter, will soon come to be respected and highly valued for reliability and devotion.

### **Behaving Believers - (3:14-16)**

**3:14** The Apostle had written the preceding with the hope of seeing Timothy soon. These instructions, however, might refer not only to what proceeds but also to what follows.

**3:15** - Paul recognized the possibility of being delayed, or even not getting to Ephesus at all. Actually, we do not even know whether he ever was able to rejoin Timothy in Ephesus. And so if he was delayed for too long, he wanted Timothy to know how people ought to conduct themselves in God’s household.

In the preceding verses, Paul has been instructing how elders (overseers), deacons (servers), and their wives ought to behave. Now he explains how Christians in general should behave in the house of God.

God’s household is here defined as the church of the living God, the pillar and foundation of the truth.

In the OT God dwelt in the tabernacle and temple, but in the NT He dwells in the church. The church of the living God, and this

contrasts it to a temple in which there are lifeless idols.

This church is the pillar and foundation of the truth. A pillar was not only used to support a structure, but very often a pillar was set up in a public market place and notices were posted on it. It was thus a proclaimer.

The church is the unit on earth which God has chosen to proclaim and display His truth.

It is also the foundation of truth or supporting structure. This pictures the church as that which is entrusted with the defense and support of the truth of God.

**3:16** When Paul says that the mystery of Godliness is great. He does not mean that it is very mysterious but that the previously unknown truth concerning the Person and work of the Lord Jesus is very marvelous and wonderful.

He appeared in a body refers to the Lord Jesus, and particularly to His Incarnation. True godliness was manifest in the flesh for the first time when the Savior was born as a Babe in Bethlehem's manger.

Taken up in glory is generally agreed to refer to His Ascension to heaved after the work of redemption had been completed.

This verse reminds us of the Hymn "One Day":

Living, He loved me; dying, He saved me;

Buried, He carried my sins far away;

Rising, He justified freely forever:

One day He's coming – Oh, glorious day!

-Charles H. Marsh

# 1 Timothy 4 - The Church and Its Minister

## A Good Minister - (4:1-5)

**4:1** There are two ways in which the Spirit might be thought of as speaking clearly. First of all, what Paul is about to say was certainly given to him by divine revelation. But it might also mean that throughout the Scriptures, and particularly in the later times will be characterized by departure from the faith.

Later times (latter times) means "in later times," periods of time subsequent to that time when the apostle was writing.

Some will abandon (depart) the faith. "Apostatize" from the Christian faith, renouncing the whole system in effect, by bringing in doctrines which render its essential truths null and void, or denying and renouncing essential doctrines to the Christian system (way) of Salvation. A person may hold all the truths of Christian faith, and yet render them of none effect by holding other doctrines which counteract their influence, or he may apostatize by denying some essential doctrine. Things taught by demons do not mean teachings about demons, but rather doctrines which are inspired by demons or have their source in the demon world.

**4:2** The word hypocrisy suggest "wearing a mask". How typical this is of false doctrines and cults! They try to hide their true identity. They do not want people to know the system or false doctrine with which they are identified. They masquerade by using Bible terms and even singing Christian hymns. Not only are they hypocrites, but they are liars as well. Their teaching is not according to the truth of God's word.

Their conscience has been seared as with hot iron. They bear the marks of their hypocrisy as evidently and permanently in their conscience in the sight of God as those who have been cauterized by a branding-iron for their crimes do in their bodies in the sight of all to see. It was customary in ancient times to mark those with a hot iron who had been guilty of great crimes, such as sacrilege

Perhaps early in their lives their conscience had been tender, but they suppressed it so often and sinned against the Lord so much that now their conscience has become insensitive and hardened. They no longer have any fear of contradicting the word of God and teaching things they know are untrue.

**4:3** Two of the doctrines of demons are now stated.

The first is the teaching that it is wrong to marry. This is directly contrary to the word of God. God Himself instituted marriage, and He did this before sin ever entered the world. There is nothing unholy about marriage and when false teachers forbid marriage, they are attacking what God ordained.

They forbid people to marry, pretending that a single life was much more favorable to devotion and the perfection of the Christian life. This sentiment was held by the Essenes, a religious sect among the Jews; and we know that it is a favorite practice of the Roman Catholics who oblige all their clergy to live a single life by a vow of celibacy.

The second teaching of demons is to abstain from certain foods.

Such teaching is found among spiritists, who claim that the eating of certain foods hinders one in contacting the spirits. Also among theosophists, Jews and Roman Catholics, certain foods are forbidden, some always, others at particular times.

The pronoun which may refer to marriage and the foods. Both were created by God to be shared by us with Thanksgiving. He did not intend them only for the unbelievers but for those who believe and know the truth.

**4:4** For everything God has created is good. Both foods and marriage are creations of God, and nothing is to be rejected if it is received with thanksgiving.

**4:5** Because it is consecrated by the Word of God and prayer. The Word of God sets apart both food and marriage for man's use.

Food is consecrated in Genesis 9:3 and Mark 7:19.

Marriage is set apart in 1 Corinthians 7 and Hebrews 13:4

## **A Godly Minister - (4:6-12)**

**4:6** By instructing the brothers (brethren) about these things mentioned in verses 1-5 Timothy will be a good minister of Christ Jesus. Minister means “servant”. He will be a servant, brought up in the truths of the faith and of the good teaching that you have followed up to this time.

**4:7** In this section, Paul is thinking of Christian service as a form of athletic contest. In verse 6, he spoke of the suitable diet for one who is serving Christ – he should be nourished in the words of the faith and of the good doctrine. In verse 7, he speaks of training that has godliness.

The apostle advises Timothy to have nothing to do with godless myths and old wives tales. He must not fight them or spend a lot of time on them. Rather, he is to disdain them, to treat them with contempt. Old wives tales (fables) make us think of Christian Science, which was founded by a woman, seems to appeal especially to elderly women, and teaches tales instead of truth.

Instead of wasting time on myths and tales, he should train himself to godliness. Such training involves reading and studying the Bible, prayer, fellowshiping and witnessing to others. Stock says, “There is no such thing as drifting into godliness; ‘the stream of tendency’ is against us”. There must be training and effort.

**4:8** Here two kinds of training are contrasted. Physical training has certain values for the body, but these values are limited and of short duration. Godliness, on the other hand, is good for one’s spirit, soul, and body, and is not only for time but for eternity as well.

As far as life is concerned, godliness yields the greatest joy, and as far as the life to come is concerned, it holds promise of bright reward and of capacity to enjoy the glories of that scene.

**4:9** It is generally agreed that this verse refers back to the saying about godliness. The fact that godliness is of eternal value is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance.

**4:10** For this we labor and strive. The “this” mentioned here is the life of godliness. Paul says that this is the great goal toward which he puts all his efforts. To the unbelievers this would not seem a worthy aim in life. But the Christian sees beyond the passing things of this world and sets his hope on the living God. This hope can never be disappointed for the very reason that He is the living God, who is the Savior of all men, and especially of those who believe.

God is the Savior of all men in the sense that He preserves them in the daily providence’s of life. But he is also the Savior of all men in the sense pointed out previously – that He has made adequate provision for the Salvation of all men. He is the Savior of those who believe in a special way because they have availed themselves of His provision.

We might say that He is the potential Savior of all men and the actual Savior of those who believe.

**4:11** These things probably refers to what Paul has been saying in verses 6-10. Timothy is to command and teach such precepts, continually bringing them before the people of God.

**4:12** At the time of this letter, Timothy was probably between thirty and thirty-five years of age. In contrast with some of the elders in the assembly at Ephesus, he would be a comparatively young man. That is why Paul says don’t let anyone look down on you because you are young. This does not mean that Timothy is to put himself on a pedestal and consider himself immune from criticism. Rather, it means he is to give nobody occasion to condemn him. By being an example for the believers, he is to avoid the possibility of justified criticism.

In speech refers to Timothy's conversation. His speech should always be that which should characterize a child of God. He should not only avoid such speech as is distinctly forbidden, but also such as would not be edifying for his hearers.

In life (conduct) refers to one's entire demeanor. Nothing about his behavior, manner of acting should cause reproach on the name of Christ.

In love suggest that love should be the motive for conduct, as well as the spirit in which it is carried out and the goal toward which it strives.

In faith probably means "in faithfulness", and carries the idea of dependability and steadfastness.

In purity should characterize not only his acts but his motives as well.

### **A Growing Minister - (4:13-16)**

**4:13** This verse probably refers primarily to the local church, rather than to Timothy's personal life.

However, we should not leave out the thought of private devotions from this verse. Before Timothy could exhort and teach the word of God to others, he should first make it real in his own life.

**4:14** We are not told exactly what gift had been given to Timothy – whether evangelist, pastor, or teacher. The general drift of meaning of these Epistles would lead us to think that he was a pastor-teacher.

However, we do know that the gift was given to him by prophecy with the laying on of the hands of the elders. The process is seen in Acts 13. In verse 2, the Holy Spirit singled out Barnabas and Soul for specific work. Then the local church fasted and prayed and laid their hands on Barnabas and Soul and sent them away (v.3). This same policy is followed by many local Christian communities today.

**4:15** The words be diligent in these matters can be translated "cultivate" this thing in your life. Paul wants him to be always advancing in the thing of the Lord.

**4:16** By continuing in the things Paul has been writing about, that is, reading, exhortation and instruction, Timothy would save both himself and those who heard him.

# 1 Timothy 5-6 - The Church and Its Minister

## To Older Saints - (5:1-2)

**5:1** This verse introduces a section on Timothy's behavior toward members of the Christian family among whom he would be working. Being younger and perhaps more aggressive, Timothy might be tempted to become impatient and resentful with some of the older man; therefore, Paul instructs Timothy not to be harsh, but exhort them as if they were his father. It would be improper for him, as a younger man, to assault an older man with verbal blows.

There might also be the danger of Timothy manifesting an overbearing attitude toward the younger men. And so Paul tells him that he is to treat the younger men as brothers; he is to be just like one of them and not have a domineering attitude toward them.

**5:2** Older women are to be regarded as mothers and treated with the dignity, love, and respect that is due to them.

Purity should characterize all his dealings with younger women. Not only should he avoid what is positively sinful, but he should also steer clear of acts of indiscretion or any behavior which might have the appearance of evil.

## To Widows - (5:3-16)

From verses 3-16, Paul takes up the subject of widows in the local church and the treatment which should be given to them.

First of all, the church should honour those who are really in need. A real widow is one who has no other means of support but totally depends in God. She has no living relatives who will care for her.

**5:4, 5** A second class of widows is described in this verse. These are the ones who have children or grandchildren.

In such cases, the children should learn to show practical godliness at home by looking after (repaying) their mother (or grandmother) for all that she has done for them. The verse teaches clearly that religion (piety) begins at home.

It is poor testimony to the Christian faith to speak loudly about one's religion and then to neglect those who we are related to.

"For it is pleasing to God." When Christians take care of loved ones who are without support, in Ephesians 6:2 Apostle Paul clearly teaches: *"Honor your father and mother" – which is the first commandment with a promise.*

**5:6, 7** In contrast to the godly widow of verse 5 is the one who gives herself to pleasure. Timothy is to warn such widows against living for pleasure and is also to teach Christians to care for those who are related to them and are destitute.

**5:8** The seriousness of failing to provide for his relatives, and especially for his immediate family, is emphasized here. It constitutes a denial of the faith. When a Christian fails to do this, he denies by his actions the very truths which Christianity teaches. Such a person is worse than an unbeliever for the simple reason that many unbelievers show loving care for their own relatives. Also, a Christian can thus bring reproach on the name of the Lord in a way that an unbeliever cannot do.

**5:9, 10** It appears from verses that a definite list of names was kept in each local church, indicating those widows who were cared for by the church. Paul here specifies that no widow should be thus enrolled under sixty years of age.

In order to be enrolled, a widow must have been above reproach, without suspicion of immorality and have a reputation for having performed such good works as should characterize a spiritual believer.

Washing the feet of the saints. Even though a menial service or task, but necessary because of dusty roads and the wearing of sandals.

John 13:14- *Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet.*

In short, in order to be enrolled on the list of a local assembly, this widow must have diligently devoted herself to all kinds of good deeds.

**5:11** *"As for younger widows, do not put them on such a list".*

Probably those who were received into such a list promised to abide in their widowhood. But as young or comparatively young women they would probably desire to marry again and so break their commitment to serve Christ.

This desire might become so strong at times that one of these young widows might even marry an unbeliever. Not that the apostle condemns their remarrying as a “crime” in itself, but because it was contrary to their dedication to Christ.

**5:12** At one time she professed the greatest loyalty and devotion to the lord Jesus Christ, but now when the opportunity comes along to marry someone who does not love Christ, she forgets her initial vows or pledges to Christ and goes off with the unbeliever.

Apostle Paul is not criticizing young widows for marrying. As a matter of fact he urges them to marry (v.14). What he finds fault with is their spiritual decline, their throwing divine principles to the wind in order to get a man.

**5:13** For the local church to assume full financial responsibility for the younger widows might encourage them to be idle, with its associated evils. Instead of attending to their own responsibilities, they might become gossips and busy bodies, occupying themselves with subjects that are none of their concern.

**5:14** Paul therefore states that as a general principle, it is preferable that *“younger widows to marry, to have children, to manage their homes and to give the enemy no opportunity for slander.”*

Of course, Paul realized that it would not always be possible for every young widow to remarry. But he is simply laying down a general principle to be followed whenever possible.

**5:15** *“Some have in fact already turned away to follow Satan.”*

Slight deviations from a right line may lead to an infinite distance from Christ..

**5:16** If any Christian man or woman have poor widows, which are relatives, let them help them – provide them with the necessities of life, and not burden the church with their maintenance, *“So the church can help those widows who are really in need”*.

The length of this passage (3-16) shows that it is an important subject in the mind of the Holy Spirit, and yet it is one which is greatly neglected in most church today.

**5:17** The rest of this chapter deals with elders. First of all, Paul lays down the rule that “Elders who direct the affairs of the church well are worthy of double honour.” “Direct,” does not mean to control, but be the example. Such elders are worthy of double honour. Honour might mean respect, but it also includes the idea of financial reimbursement

Double honour includes both ideas. First of all he is worthy of respect from God’s people because of his work, but also, if he is devoted to the work fully, he is also worthy of financial help. “Especially those whose work is preaching and teaching”

**5:18** Two Scriptures are introduced here to prove the statement that such honour should include financial support. The first is Deuteronomy 2:4, and the second is taken from Luke 10:7. This verse is especially interesting in connection with the inspiration of the Scriptures. Paul takes one verse from the O.T. and one from the N.T. places them side by side on the same level, and refers to them both as the Scripture. It is obvious from this that Paul considered the N.T. writings as of equal authority with the O.T. These Scriptures teach that an ox which is used in the harvesting process should not be deprived of a share of the grain. Also, a worker is entitled to a portion of the fruit of his labour.

**5:19** Since elders occupy a position of responsibility in the church, they become a special target of Satan’s attack. For this reason the Spirit of God takes steps to guard them against false accusations.

The principle is laid down that no disciplinary action should be taken against an elder unless the charge can be corroborated by the testimony of two or three witnesses.

Actually, this same principle applies to disciplining any church members, but it is emphasized here because there was a special danger of elders being unjustly accused.

**5:20** In the case of an elder who had been found guilty of sinning in such a way as to harm the testimony of the church, such a man should be publicly rebuked. This action impresses all believers with the seriousness of sin in connection with Christian service and serves as a strong deterrent in the lives of others.

**5:21** In dealing with matters of discipline in the local church, there are two dangers to be avoided. The first is favoritism, and the other partiality. It is easy to be unfavorably prejudiced against a man and thus to prejudice the case. Also, it is all too easy to show partiality toward a man because of his wealth, position in the community, or his personality. Thus Paul charges Timothy in the sight of God and Christ Jesus and the elect angels, to obey these instructions and not judge a matter before all the facts are known or show favor

toward a man simply because he is a friend or well known. Each case must be judged as in the sight of God and the Lord Jesus.

Elect angels are those who have not been involved in sin or rebellion against God, but kept their first estate.

**5:22** Here Timothy is warned against haste in recognizing newcomers. Neither should he identify himself with men whose characters are unknown to him, lest in so doing he share in their sins.

Not only is he to keep himself morally clean but also pure in the sense of free from association with the sins of others.

**5:23** This is a parenthetical comment. Apostle Paul advises Timothy to “stop drinking only water, and use a little wine.” This verse should never be used to condone excessive use of wine.

There is no doubt that it is real wine that is referred to here and not just grape juice. It is doubtful that grape juice even existed at this time, since grape juice is made by pasteurization a process not yet known then. The fact that it was real wine is implied in the expression a little wine. If it was not real wine, then there would be no sense in saying that only a little should be used.

**5:24, 25** In these verses the apostle seems to go back to the discussion in verse 22 where he had been warning Timothy against haste in laying hands on other men. Timothy is advised to be alert to hidden sins as well as to good deeds in the lives of candidates for ordination.

The lesson to learn from all this is that we should not judge a person on first acquaintance, but rather allow time for true character to show itself.

## **To Servants (Slaves) - (6:1-2)**

**6:1** The conduct of slaves is now brought before us. Apostle Paul is speaking of slaves who are converted to the Christian faith and who are under the yoke of slavery. First of all, he speaks to slaves who have unsaved masters. Should slaves in such a case rebel or run away? Should they do as little work as possible? On the contrary, they should consider their masters worthy of full respect. This means that they should give them due respect, work obediently and faithfully, and in general seek to be a help rather than a hindrance.

The motive for such service is that the testimony for Christ is involved. If a Christian slave were to act rudely or rebelliously, then the master would blaspheme (slander) God's name and the Christian faith. He would conclude that believers are not trustworthy. This verse reminds us that no matter how low a person's position may be on the social scale, yet he has every opportunity for witnessing for Christ and bringing glory to His name.

Every true believer should know that he/she is a bond servant of Jesus Christ. He/she has been bought with a price; he/she no longer belongs to himself/herself. Jesus Christ owns him/her – spirit, soul, and body and deserves the very best he or she has.

**6:2** This verse deals with slaves who have believing masters. Doubtless there would be a very great temptation for such slaves to show less respect for their masters.

Just because a master was a Christian did not mean that the slave did not owe him honour and service. The fact that the master was both a believer and a brother should influence the slave to serve him faithfully.

Christian masters are here spoken of not only as faithful brothers (in Christ), but also as those who are benefited. This is generally taken to mean that they, too, are sharers in the blessings of salvation.

However, the words might also be understood to mean that since both slaves and masters are interested in doing god, they should serve together, each trying to help the other.

The words to teach and urge (exhort) these things doubtless refer to the preceding instructions to Christian slaves. The present-day application would be, of course, to the employer-employee relationship.

## **To Trouble-Makers - (6:3-5)**

**6:3** Paul now turns his attention to those who might be disposed to teach new and strange doctrines in the church.

These men do not agree to the sound instruction of our Lord Jesus Christ. Sound or (wholesome KJV) here means health-giving words. Such were the words and instructions which were spoken by Jesus when He was here on earth and which are found in the Gospels

and the entire N.T. This doctrine is the sound instruction of our Lord which encourages and promotes godly behavior.

**6:4** Such men are conceited (proud). They claim to have superior knowledge, but actually they know or understand nothing. As Paul mentioned previously, they do not know what they are talking about. They have an unhealthy interest in controversies and quarrels about words. The word unhealthy (obsessed KJV) literally means to be sick. These men are not spiritually healthy, and instead of teaching healthful words, as in the previous verse, they teach words that produce sick saints. They raise various questions that are not spiritually edifying and strive over words.

As a result, their teaching stirs up envy, strife, malicious talk and evil suspicions.

**6:5** These constant frictions come from men of corrupt minds. Lenski says: *"The diseased state of the mind consists in a corruption and disintegration - the mental faculties no longer function normally in the moral and the spiritual field. They do not react normally to the truth."*

Also, these men have been robbed of the truth. At one time, they had the truth, but because of their rejection of the light, they have been robbed, deprived of the truth they once had.

These men thought that godliness was a means to financial gain. Apparently, they choose to be religious teachers as a profession in which they are well paid for a minimum of work. They make the holiest of vocations a money-gaining craft.

This not only reminds us of the hireling shepherds who pose as Christian ministers but have no real love for the truth, but it also makes us think of the commercialism which has become so common in Christendom-the sale of indulgences, games of lottery, bazaars and sales, etc. *"Keep yourself pure"* (5:24). We are commended to steer clear of such ungodly professors.

## To the Rich - (6:6-10)

**6:6** Just as the previous verse gave a false definition of gain, so this verse gives the true meaning of the word. The combination of godliness with contentment is great gain.

Godliness without contentment would give one-sided testimony. Contentment without godliness would not be distinctively Christian at all. But to have real godliness and at the same time to be satisfied with one's personal circumstances is more than money can buy.

**6:7** This verse reminds us of our Lord's instruction that we should trust our heavenly Father for the supply of our needs.

There are three times in life when we have empty hands-at birth, at the time we come to Jesus, and at death.

This verse reminds us of the first and the last. We brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it.

Before Alexander the Great died, he said: *"When I am dead, carry me forth on my bier, with my hands not wrapped in cloth, but outside, so that all may see that they are empty."*

**6:8** Contentment consists of satisfaction with the basic necessities of life. Our heavenly Father knows that we need food and coverings and has promised to supply these. The Christian should seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and God will see that he does not lack the essentials of life.

The word translated clothing here means covering and can include a place to live as well as clothing to wear. We should be content with food, clothing, and a place to live.

**6:9** Verses 9-16 deal directly with those who have an insatiable desire to be rich. Their sin is not in being rich, but in coveting to be so. Those who want to get rich fall into temptation, and a trap that Satan sets for them. In order to achieve his/her goal, he/she is tempted to use dishonest and often violent methods. Such methods include gambling, speculation, fraud, perjury, theft, and even murder.

The desire becomes so strong that he/she cannot deliver himself/herself from it. People who set their mind to become wealthy often fall into many foolish and harmful desires.

There is the desire to *"keep up with the Joneses."*

In order to keep maintain a social level in the community they are often driven to sacrifice some of the really worthwhile values in life.

They become so occupied with material things that they become drowned in destruction and ruin, in their ceaseless desire for wealth, they neglect their eternal souls.

**6:10** The love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Not all evil in the universe comes from the love of money. But it is certainly one of the great sources of many varieties of evil.

It is not money in itself which is spoken of, but the love of money. Money can be used in the service of God in a variety of ways where only good would result. But here it is the passionate love and desire for money that leads to sin and shame. One particular evil of the love of money is now mentioned, that is, a wandering from the faith. In their desire for wealth, men neglect spiritual things, and it becomes difficult to tell whether they are saved or not. Not only did they lose their grip on spiritual values, but they pierced themselves with many grieves. And finally they meet God, either unsaved or empty handed.

Matthew 12:36-37

**36.** *“But I tell you that men will have to give account on the day of judgment for every careless word they have spoken.*

**37.** *For by your words you will be acquitted, and by your words you will be condemned.”*

### **Closing Charges to Timothy - (6:11-21)**

**6:11** Timothy here is addressed as a man of God. This title was often given to prophets in the OT and described a man who was godlike in his behavior. It may indicate that Timothy had the gift of prophecy. The opposite of man of God is “man of sin”, as found in 2 Thessalonians 2. The man of sin will be the very embodiment of sin. Everything about him will make men think of sin. Timothy is to be a man of God, a man who will make men think of God and glorify God.

In his service for Christ, Timothy should flee from conceit (v.4), impurity (v.5), a discontented spirit (vss.6-8), foolish and harmful desires (v.9), and the love of money (v.10). He should pursue Christian character – the only thing he can take with him into heaven. Here the elements of Christian character are given as righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance, gentleness.

**Righteousness** speaks of justice and integrity in our dealings with our fellow men.

**Godliness** is Godlikeness.

**Faith** might also mean faithfulness, or dependability.

**Love** speaks of our affection for both God and our fellow men.

**Endurance** has been defined as patience (steadfastness) under trial, whereas

**Gentleness** is kindly and humble disposition.

**6:12** Not only is Timothy to flee and to follow, but he is also to fight. Here the word fight does not mean to combat, but rather to contend. The word is not taken from the battlefield but from the athletic contest. The good fight spoken of here is the Christian faith and the race connected with it. Timothy is to run well in the race. He is to take hold of the eternal life. This does not mean that he is to strive for salvation. That is already his possession. But here the thought is to live out in daily practice the eternal life which was already his.

Timothy had made his good confession in the presence of many witnesses. Perhaps this refers to his baptism, although it might also include his whole subsequent testimony for the Lord Jesus Christ.

**6:13** The apostle now delivers a solemn charge to Timothy, and he does it in the presence of the two greatest witnesses. First of all, the charge is given in the sight of God who gives life to everything. Even if men succeed in killing Timothy, yet his faith is in the One who raises the dead.

Secondly, the charge is given in the sight of Christ Jesus. He is the great example of the good confession. Before Pontius Pilate, He witnessed the good confession.

Though this may refer to all the Saviour’s word and actions before the Roman governor, it perhaps points particularly to His statement in John 18:37 *“You are a king, then!” said Pilate. Jesus answered, “You are right in saying I am a king. In fact, for this reason I was born, and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone on the side of truth listens to me.”*

The confession was made before Timothy as an example to be followed in bearing witness to the truth.

**6:14** Keep this command without spot or blame. Some think this refers to the command to fight the good fight mentioned above. Others suggest it refers to the message of the gospel, or the revelation of God as given in the Word of God.

The expressions without spot or blame apply to Timothy rather than to the command. In keeping the commandment Timothy is to

maintain a testimony that is without spot and blame.

In the NT, our Lord Jesus Christ's appearing is constantly held before the believers.

**6:15** When the Lord Jesus Christ comes back to reign upon the earth, men will realize who is the blessed and only ruler. The appearance will manifest who is the true King. The day is coming when it will be clearly shown that He is the King of kings and Lord of lords.

**6:16** When Jesus appears, men will also realize that it is God alone who has immortality or deathlessness. At the resurrection, believers will receive bodies that are immortal (1 Corinthians 15:53, 54) but God has immortality in Himself.

God lives in unapproachable light. This speaks of the bright, shining glory which surrounds the throne of God. Man in his natural form would be vaporized by this splendor. Only those who are accepted by God and complete in Christ can ever approach God without being destroyed.

To this one, be honour and might (power) forever. Amen.

Paul closes his charge to Timothy with this ascription of homage to God.

**6:17** Apostle Paul spoke earlier at length about those who desired to be rich. Here he deals with those who are rich already. Timothy should command them not to be arrogant. This is a temptation to the wealthy. They should not put their hope in wealth. Money has a way of sprouting wings and flying away. The only sure thing in this world is the Word of God.

Therefore, the rich are exhorted to put their hope in God who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment. Material things cannot produce real enjoyment God is the Source of true enjoyment.

**6:18** The Christian is reminded that the money he possesses is not his own, but it is given to him as to a steward. He is responsible to use it for the glory of God and for the well-being of his family and fellow men.

He should use it in the performance of good deeds and be willing to share it with those in real need. Willing to share expresses the idea that he should be ready to use it wherever the Lord may indicate.

**6:19** This verse emphasizes the truth that it is possible for us to use our material things in such a way in this life that we will reap eternal dividends. By using our funds in the work of the Lord at the present time, we will lay up treasure for ourselves for the coming age. In this way, we take hold of the life that is truly life.

**6:20** Now we come to Paul, final exhortation to Timothy. He is encouraged to guard what has been entrusted to him. This probably refers to the true doctrines of the Christian faith.

He is to avoid godless chatter and the opposing ideas of what is falsely called knowledge. Godless chatter is empty talk about matters which are not profitable.

**6:21** Paul realized some who called themselves Christians had been involved with false teachings and had wandered from the faith. These closing verses bring before us the great dangers of so-called intellectualism, rationalism, modernism, liberalism and every other "ism" which disregards or waters down Christ.

Grace be with you. This benediction is Paul's "trademark", because only God's grace can keep His people on the "strait and narrow" way. Amen.