

2 Timothy – How to Behave in the Local Church

By

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Introductory Greetings to Timothy - (1:1-5)

1:1 Paul introduces himself at the outset of the Letter as an apostle of Christ Jesus. He had been commissioned to special service by the glorified Lord. This appointment was not by men or through men, but directly through the will of God. Also, Paul speaks of his apostleship as being according to the promise of life that is in Christ Jesus. God has made a promise that all who believe in Christ Jesus will receive eternal life. Paul's call to be an apostle was in harmony with this promise. In fact, if there had been no such promise, there would have been no need of an apostle like Paul.

1:2 Timothy is addressed as my dear son. It cannot be definitely proved that Timothy was actually converted through the ministry of Paul. Their first recorded meeting is found in Acts 16:1 where Timothy is described as already being a disciple before Paul came to Lystra. At any rate, the apostle looked on him as a dear son in the Christian faith. As in 1 Timothy, Paul's greeting consists of grace, mercy and peace. These blessings flow from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord. Here is another instance where Paul honours the Son just as he honours the Father.

1:3 In his characteristic style, Paul once again breaks into thanksgiving. As we read this, we should remember that he was writing from a Roman dungeon. He had been imprisoned for preaching the gospel and was now treated as a common criminal. The Christian faith was being actively suppressed by the Roman government, and many believers had already been put to death.

In spite of all these adverse circumstances, Paul can begin his letter to Timothy with the words, *"I thank God!"* The apostle was serving God with a clear (pure) conscience, as his forefathers had done. Although his forefathers were not Christian, they were believers in the living God. They worshipped Him and sought to serve Him. They held "the hope and resurrection of the dead", as Paul pointed out in Acts 23:6. That is why he could say, in Acts 26:6,7a:

6. And now it is because of my hope in what God has promised our fathers that I am on trial today.

7. This is the promise our twelve tribes are hoping to see fulfilled as they earnestly serve God day and night.

Next Paul speaks of his constant remembrance of Timothy in his prayers, night and day.

Paul knew that his own time of service was rapidly coming to a close. He knew that Timothy would be left alone, humanly speaking, to carry on his witness for Christ. He knew of difficulties that would face him and so he prayed continually for this young warrior of the faith.

1:4 How it must have touched Timothy's heart to read these words! The apostle Paul was longing to see him. This was certainly a mark of special love and esteem and it speaks eloquently of the graciousness, tenderness, and humility of Paul. Perhaps it was the last time they parted that Timothy broke down, His tears had made a deep impression on his elder co-worker, and now he longed to be with Timothy again so that he may be filled with joy.

J.H. Jowett used to say: *"Tearless hearts can never be heralds of the passion. When our sympathy loses its peng, we can no longer be the servants of the passion."*

1:5 In some way or other, Paul had been reminded of Timothy's sincere faith. His faith was genuine, true, and did not wear a mask.

But Timothy was not the first in his family to be saved. Apparently, his Jewish grandmother Lois had heard the good news of salvation and accepted the Lord Jesus as Messiah. And her daughter Eunice, also a Jewess (Acts 16:1), had become a Christian. In this way, Timothy had come to learn the great truths of the Christian faith, and he represented the third generation in the family to trust the Saviour.

Notice that faith is said to have lived in Lois. It was not there as an occasional visitor, but as an abiding presence with them. Paul was persuaded that that was the case with Timothy also. It was a genuine faith that Timothy would maintain in spite of all the trials which he might have to face in connection with it.

Exhortations to Timothy - (1:6-2:13)

1:6 Because of his godly family background and his own faith, Timothy is urged to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in him. We are

not told what the gift of God is. Some take it to mean the Holy Spirit. Others understand it to mean a special ability of Christian service, for instance, the gift of an evangelist, pastor, or teacher. It seems clear that Timothy had been called into Christian service and had been given some special abilities.

Here he is encouraged to fan (kindle) the gift into a living flame. He should not become discouraged by the general failure around him. Neither should he become professional in his service for the Lord and lapse into a comfortable routine. Rather, he should be concerned to use this gift more and more as the days grow darker and darker.

The gift was in Timothy through the laying on of the apostle's hands. This is not to be confused with the ordination service which is practiced in clerical circles today. This means exactly what it says – that the gift was actually given to Timothy at the moment Paul laid his hands on him. The apostle was the channel by which the gift was conferred.

1:7 Facing martyrdom himself, Paul takes time out to remind Timothy that God has not given us a spirit of timidity (fear) or cowardice. There is no time for fearfulness or timidity.

But God has given us a spirit of power. God has also given us a spirit of love. It is our love for God that casts out fear and makes us willing to give ourselves for Christ, whatever the cost may be. It is our love for our fellow men that makes us willing to endure all kinds of persecutions and repay them with kindness.

Finally, God has given us a spirit of self-discipline.

What this verse is teaching is that God has given us a spirit of self-control or self-mastery. We are to use discretion and not to act rashly, hastily, or foolishly. No matter how difficult our circumstances are, we should maintain balanced judgment and act soberly.

Timothy is told that he should not be ashamed. In verse 12, Paul states that he is not ashamed. Finally in verse 16, we read that Onesiphorus was not ashamed.

It was a day when preaching the gospel was a crime. Those who would witness publicly for their Lord and Saviour were persecuted. But this should not discourage Timothy. He should not be ashamed of the gospel, even though it involves suffering. Neither should he be ashamed of the Apostle Paul in prison. Already some of the Christians had turned their backs on him. Doubtless they feared that to identify themselves with him would invite persecution and possibly death.

Timothy was exhorted to join Paul in his sufferings for the gospel by the power of God. In other words, he should not try to avoid any disgrace that might be connected with it, but rather join with Paul in enduring such disgrace.

1:9 Apostle Paul has been encouraging Timothy to be zealous (6-7) and courageous (8). Now he explains why this is the only reasonable attitude to take; it is found in God's wonderful dealings with us in grace. First of all, He saved us. This means that He delivered us from the penalty of sin. He constantly delivers us from the power of sin, and in the future He will deliver us from the very presence of sin. Also, He has freed us from the world and from Satan.

God has called us to a holy life. The Christian's holy calling is described in some detail in Ephesians 1-3, especially in chapter 1. There we learn that we are adopted as sons, redeemed through His blood, forgiven and given eternal life. (In addition to this holy calling, we have a high calling, Phil.3:14, and heavenly calling, Hebrews 3:1).

This salvation and calling are not because of anything we have done (our works). In other words, they were given to us by God's grace. This means that we did not deserve them, but rather deserved the very opposite. This is explained by the words but because of His own purpose and grace. Why should God have so loved ungodly sinners that He was willing to send His only Son to die for them? The only possible answer is: because of His own purpose and grace. The reason for His action did not lie in us. Rather, it lay in His own great heart of love. He loved us because He loved us!

His favor was given to us in Christ Jesus before the beginning of time. This means that in the past eternity, God had wonderful plan of Salvation. He determined to save guilty sinners through the substitutionary work of His Son. He decided to offer eternal life to as many as would accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour. The method by which we could be saved was planned not only before we were born, but even before the beginning of time.

1:10 The same gospel that was designed in eternity was revealed in time. It was revealed through the appearing of our Saviour, Christ Jesus. During the days of His flesh, He publicly proclaimed the Good News of Salvation. He taught men that He must die, be buried and rise from the dead in order that God might save ungodly sinners.

He destroyed death. But how can this be, when we know that death is still very common in the world? Before Christ's resurrection, death ruled as a cruel tyrant over men. It was a dreaded enemy. The fear of death held men in bondage. But the resurrection of our Lord Jesus is a pledge that all who trust in Him will rise from the dead to die no more. It is in this sense that He has annulled death. He

has robbed it of its sting.

Death is now the messenger of God which brings the Soul of the believer to heaven. It is our servant rather than our master. Not only has Jesus annulled death, He has brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. In the O.T. period most men had a very vague and misty idea of life after death. They spoke of departed loved ones as in sheol, which simply means the invisible state of departed spirits. Although they had a heavenly hope set before them, yet for the most part they did not understand it clearly.

Since the coming of Christ, we have much greater light on this subject. For instance, we know that when a believer dies, his spirit departs to be with Christ, which is far better. He is absent from the body and at home with God. He enters into eternal life in all its fullness.

The O.T. saints did not have this knowledge it was brought to us through the appearing of our Saviour, Christ Jesus.

1:11 It was to proclaim this glorious gospel that Paul was appointed a herald (preacher) and an apostle and a teacher.

A herald is a preacher whose function is to publicly proclaim a message. An apostle is one who has been divinely equipped, and divinely empowered. A teacher is one whose function is to indoctrinate others; he explains the truth in an understandable manner so that others may respond by faith and obedience.

1:12 It was because of his faithful performance of duty that Paul was suffering imprisonment and loneliness. He had not hesitated to declare the truth of God.

No fears for personal safety had sealed his lips. Now that he had been arrested and jailed, he still had no regrets. He was **not** ashamed, neither should Timothy be ashamed. Although Paul could not be confident as to his personal safety, he was completely confident as to the One whom he had believed.

Though Rome might succeed in putting the Apostle to death, men could not touch his Lord. Paul knew that the One who he had trusted was able. Able to do what? Able to guard what I have entrusted to Him. For that day. Some think he means his life, which he had put, as it were, into the hands of Christ in order that he may receive it again in the resurrection, at the great day. Others understand this to refer to the gospel. In other word, although the Apostle Paul himself might be put to death, yet the gospel could not be hindered. Some think that it is his soul's salvation. Perhaps it is best to take the expression in its broadest sense. Paul was persuaded that his entire case was in the best of hands. Even as he faced death, he had no misgivings. Jesus Christ was his Almighty Lord, and with Him there could be no defeat or failure. There was nothing to worry about. **That day** is a favorite expression of Paul. It refers to the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, and particularly to the Judgment Seat of Christ when service for Him will be brought into review and when the kindness of God will reward the faithfulness of men.

1:13 Keep as the pattern of sound teaching. It is not just that he is to be loyal to the truth of God's word, but that he is to cling to the very expressions by which this truth is conveyed. In our day, it is sometimes suggested that we should not use such old-fashioned expressions as "being born again" or "the blood of Jesus." People want to use more sophisticated language. But there is a subtle danger here. In abandoning the scriptural mode of expression, they often abandon the very truths which are communicated by these expressions. Therefore, Timothy should keep as the pattern of sound teaching.

With faith and love in Christ Jesus.

Faith credits the divine doctrines.

Love reduces them all to practice.

Love includes not only love to God, but also love to our fellow believers and to the perishing world around us.

1:14 The good deposit refers to the gospel. The message of saving love had been entrusted to Timothy. He is not told to add to it or to improve on it in any way. His responsibility is to guard it with the help of the Holy Spirit who lives in us. Timothy was admonished to stand true to the word of God. He would not have to do this in his own strength. The Holy Spirit would supply all that he needed for the task.

1:15 As the Apostle thinks of the dark clouds gathering over the church, he is reminded of how the Christians in Asia had deserted him.

It is likely that the Christians in Asia severed their connections with Paul when they learned that he had been arrested and imprisoned. They forsook him at the very time he needed them most. Probably their reason was that they feared for their own safety. They neither visited him nor confessed faith in Christ.

He cannot be speaking of any general defection of the Asiatic churches, but of those who had professed a special friendship for him.

Phygelus and **Hermogenes** were two of the persons of whom he complains; but who they were or what office they held or whether they were leaders in the movement to dissociate themselves from Paul, we cannot tell.

1:16 Onesiphorus had acknowledged him and continued to do so; he and his household ministered to him in prison, and were not ashamed of their imprisoned pastor nor of the cause for which he was in disgrace and suffering. As Onesiphorus showed mercy to Apostle Paul, Apostle Paul prays the Lord show mercy to him and his household.

1:17 When Onesiphorus went to Rome he searched hard until he found Paul. He was in prison that is why he found him with great difficulty.

1:18 May the Lord grant that he will find mercy from the Lord on that day. This is either a prayer to God for His mercy on that great day at the hand of Jesus Christ, the Judge, or only a Hebraism for *“God may grant that in the great day he may receive the mercy of the Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.”*

2:1 To be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus means to be courageous with the strength which His grace provides, to go on faithfully for the Lord with the undeserved ability that comes through union with Him.

2:2 Not only is Timothy to be strengthened himself, but he is to provide for the spiritual straightening of others. He is responsible to transmit to others the inspired teachings which he had received from the apostle.

Paul was soon to pass off the scene. He had faithfully taught Timothy in the presence of many witnesses. Timothy's own day of service would be short at best, and he, too, should prepare others to carry on as teachers.

It has often been pointed out that there are four generations of believers in the verse, as follows:

1. The Apostle Paul.
2. Timothy and many witnesses.
3. Faithful men.
4. Others.

This Scripture emphasizes the importance of every-member evangelism. If each believer truly did his part the world could be evangelized within a generation.

Notice that Timothy is to entrust the truth to reliable men, that is men who are believers and who are themselves dependable. These men should be qualified to teach others.

2:3 Paul is using a wealth of similes in this chapter to describe Timothy:

1. Son (v.1);
2. Soldier (vss3,4);
3. Athlete (v.5);
4. Farmer (v.6);
5. Worker (v.15);
6. Vessel (v.21);
7. Servant (v.24)

Like a good soldier of Christ Jesus, Timothy should endure suffering and hardship. (For a list of the many hardships Paul himself endured, see 2 Corinthians 11:23-29).

2:4 The soldier described in this verse is one who is on active duty. Not only that, but he is in the thick of the combat. No soldier in such grim **circumstances gets involved in civilian affairs.**

Does this mean that those who are in the Lord's service should never engage in secular occupations as well? Certainly not! Paul himself worked as a tentmaker while he was preaching the gospel and planting churches.

He testified that his own hands ministered to his necessities.

2:5 The figure now changes to an athlete who competes in the games. In order to receive the reward, he must obey the rules of the

game. So it is in Christian service.

How many fall out before they reach the finish line, disqualified because they did not maintain an unquestioning obedience to the word of God!

What are some of the rules in connection with Christian service?

1. The Christian must practice self-discipline (1 Corinthians 9:27).
2. He must not fight with carnal weapons, but with spiritual ones (2 Corinthians 10:4).
3. He must keep himself pure.
4. He must be patient.

Someone has said: "A spare time Christian is a contradiction in terms; a man's whole life should be one strenuous endeavor to live out his Christianity in every moment and in every sphere of his life."

2:6 The hardworking farmer should be the first to receive a share of the crops. According to all, principles of righteousness, the one who labors to bring forth the crops has a prior right to participate in them.

This would serve as an encouragement to Timothy, should he ever become discouraged in his labor for the Lord. Although many will participate in the harvest, yet Timothy's labor of love would not go unnoticed. Indeed, he would be the first to receive of the fruit of his own labor.

2:7 But there is more in these three illustrations of Christian service than appears on the surface. Timothy is exhorted to consider them and to meditate on them. As he does so, Paul prays that the Lord will give him understanding in all things. He will realize that the Christian ministry resembles warfare, athletics, and farming. Each of these occupations has its own responsibilities, and each brings its own reward.

2:8 At this point, the apostle reaches the high-water mark in his series of encouragements to young Timothy. He comes to the example of the Lord Jesus, and he can go no higher. His is an example of suffering followed by glory.

Remember Jesus Christ, raised from the dead descended from David. The thought is not that Timothy is to remember certain things about the Lord Jesus, but rather that he is to remember the Person Himself, alive from the dead.

In one sense, this verse is a brief summary of the gospel which Paul preached. The crucial point in that gospel is the resurrection of the Savior. Not the crucified Jesus but the vision of a risen Lord is held up before Timothy.

The expression descended from David is a simple statement that Jesus is the Christ, the descendant of David, in whom the Messianic promises of God are fulfilled.

Constant remembrance of the Savior's Person and work is essential for all who want to serve Him.

2:9 It was for proclaiming the gospel outlined in verse 8 that Paul was now chained in a Roman prison. He was looked upon as a criminal. There was so much to discourage. Not only was the Roman Government determined to put him to death, but some of his own Christian friends had turned away from him.

And yet in spite of these bitter circumstances, Paul's happy spirit soars high above the dungeon walls. He forgets his own problems when he remembers that God's ward is not chained.

2:10 Because of the irresistible nature of the gospel, Paul was willing to endure everything for the sake of the elect. The elect here refers to the Gentiles, elected by God's goodness to enjoy every privilege formerly possessed by the Jews, and, in addition to these, all the blessings of the gospel: the salvation of Christ here, and eternal life and glory hereafter.

2:11-13 These verses are thought by some to be from an early Christian hymn. Whether that is so or not, they certainly present some very important principles concerning man's relationship to the Lord Jesus Christ.

If we died with him. That is: As surely as Christ rose again from the dead, so surely we will also live with him.

If we endure, we will also reign with him.

If we disown him, he will also disown us;

If we are faithless, should we deny the faith and apostatize, He is the same, as true to His threatenings as to His promises; cannot deny, act contrary to, himself.

Fidelity Verses Apostasy (2:14-4:8)

2:14 Timothy is to remind them of these things, that is, the things of verses 11-13. But to whom does Paul refer with the word them? He probably refers in a general sense to all Timothy's hearers and in a special sense to those who were introducing strange and wrong doctrines. This is evident from the remaining part of the verse, where those who obviously occupied the place of teachers or preachers are warned against quarreling about words. Apparently there were those who made great issues over the technical meaning of certain words. Instead of building up the saints in the truth of God's word, they were only undermining the faith of some who heard them.

Dinsdale Young warns:

"It is so easy to become a theological crank-so readily are we engrossed with questions that are of no supreme moment. Life is too brief and too busy for the wasting of brain and heart on what is not formative of character. When a world awaits evangelization, it ill becomes us to be forever either sauntering or hurrying along doctrinal byways. Keep to the highways. Be true the greater verities. Emphasize essentials, not incidentals. Do not emulate the victims of panic in the days of Shamgar and of Joel, who left the highways unoccupied and walked through by ways."

2:15 Timothy should do his best to present himself to God as one approved. His efforts should be concentrated on becoming a workman who does not need to be ashamed. This he could do by correctly handling the word of truth. This expression means to handle the scriptures correctly, to treat truth fully without falsifying it.

2:16 Godless chatter (Profane and idle babbling KJV) are teachings that are irreverent, evil, and useless. It is not profitable for the people of God and should be shunned. Timothy is not instructed to combat these teachings but rather to treat them with disdain, not even dignifying them with his attention.

One serious thing about these chatterers is that they are never static. They always become more and more ungodly. It is so with all forms of error. Those who teach error must be continually adding to it.

This explains the new doctrines and pronouncements that are constantly being issued by false religious systems.

And, the more these doctrinal errors are expanded, the more ungodliness results.

2:17 The way in which evil teachings spread is compared to gangrene. Most of us know only too well how this dreaded disease spreads rapidly in the human body, destroying tissue wherever it goes. Gangrene refers to the mortification of part of the body when it is cut off from its normal supply of blood and nutrition.

Elsewhere in the N.T. evil doctrine is likened to leaven, which, if allowed to spread, will eventually effect the whole lump of meal.

Two men are named whose teachings were corrupting the local church. They were **Hymenaeus** and **Philetus**. Because they failed to handle the word of truth correctly, they take their place with others in God's hall of shame.

2:18 Their false teaching is here exposed. They told the people that the resurrection has already taken place. Actually, they spiritualized the resurrection and scoffed at the idea of a literal rising of the body from the grave. Paul recognized this as a serious threat to the truth of the Gospel.

They destroy the faith of some by teaching a corrupt doctrine. These men earned for themselves an undesirable entry in God's eternal book.

2:19 As Paul thinks of Hymnaeus and Philetus and their false teaching, he realizes afresh that dark days are coming upon the church. Unbelievers have been accepted into the local church. Spiritual life is at such a low ebb that it is often hard to tell true Christians from mere professors. Christendom is a mixed multitude, and the resulting confusion is devastating.

In the midst of such a condition, Paul finds comfort in the assurance that God's solid foundation stands firm. This means that whatever has been established by God Himself will endure in spite of the falling away of many from the truth in the church.

The church is God's solid foundation. This foundation has two inscriptions on it: There is a divine inscription stressing the security of the church and the other inscription emphasizes the human responsibility to turn away from wickedness. In other words those who claim to be Christians must prove the reality of their claim (profession) by lives of holiness and godliness. The true Christian should

have no dealing with unrighteousness.

2:20 In this illustration, we understand that the large house refers to Christendom in general. In a broad sense, Christendom includes believers and claimers (professors) - those who are truly born again and are walking the Christian walk and those who are nominal Christians living carnal lives.

In this large house there are articles (vessels) of gold and silver but also of wood and clay.

Articles of gold and silver would refer to genuine believers, holy, sincere, and useful teachers and members.

Articles of wood and clay refer to false heretical teachers and their followers, such as Hymenaeus and Philetus.

2:21 Here Timothy is instructed to separate himself from evil men and especially from evil teachers and their false doctrines.

If a man cleanses himself from the latter. Timothy is not instructed to leave the church, but rather to separate himself from evildoers and avoid contamination from false doctrines.

If a man keeps himself free from evil associations, he will be an instrument for noble purposes. God can use only clean vessels in His holy service.

“Be pure, you who carry the vessels of the Lord.” (Is.52:11)

Such a man will also be holy in the sense that he will be set apart from evil to the service of God. He will be useful to the Master – something to be desired by all who love the Lord.

Finally, he will be prepared to do any good work. He will be ready at all times to be used in whatever way his Master may dictate.

Fidelity Verses Apostasy (2:22-4:8)

2:22 Not only is Timothy to separate himself from wicked men, but he is to separate himself from the evil desires of the flesh. Evil desires of youth may refer not only to physical appetites but also to the lust for money, fame and pleasure. They may also include self-will, impatience, pride, etc.

Timothy was probably about 35 years of age at this time. Therefore, evil desires of youth do not necessarily mean such lusts as would be particularly characteristic of a teenager but would include all the unholy desires that would present themselves to a young servant of the Lord and seek to divert him from the path of purity and righteousness.

Not only is Timothy to flee; he is also to follow. There is the negative and the positive.

He should pursue righteousness. This simply means that his dealings with his fellow men, saved and unsaved, should always be characterized by honesty, justice and fairness.

FAITH – fidelity to both God and man.

Hiebert defines it as “sincere and dynamic confidence in God.”

LOVE – cannot be limited here to love to God alone, but must also include love for the brethren and for the world of lost sinners. Love always considers others; it is essentially unselfish.

PEACE – carries the idea of harmony and compatibility.

These virtues are to be followed with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart. Just as in verse 21 Timothy was warned to separate himself from wicked men, so here he is taught to associate himself with Christians who are walking in purity before the Lord.

A true believer must not walk the Christian life in isolation, but rather he must take his place as a member in the Body and seek to work with his/her fellow members for the good of the Body.

2:23 In the course of his Christian ministry and walk, Timothy would often be faced with foolish and stupid questions that would have no real benefit connected with them. Such arguments should be refused because they only produce quarrels.

2:24 Although the Lord's servant must content for the truth, yet he must not be contentious or argumentative. Rather, he must be kind to everyone and approaching men with the purpose of instructing them rather than of winning an argument. He must be patient with

those who are slow to understand and even with those who do not seem to accept the truth of God's Word initially.

2:25 The Lord's servant must gently instruct, those who oppose him, in the hope that God will help them understand the truth.

That God will grant them repentance leading them to a knowledge of the truth. At first, this might seem to suggest that there is some question as to God's willingness to grant repentance to these people. That, however, is not the case. The fact of the matter is that God is waiting to forgive them if only they will come to Him in confession and repentance. God does not withhold repentance from anyone, but men are so often unwilling to admit that they are wrong.

2:26 The servant of the Lord should so deal with erring men that they may come to their senses and escape from the trap of the devil, who has taken them captive to do his will.

The Coming Apostasy (3:1-13)

3:1 The apostle now gives Timothy a description of the conditions that will exist in the world prior to the Lord's coming. The list of sins that follows is very similar to the description of the ungodly heathen in Romans 1. The last days referred to here are the days between the apostolic period and the appearing of Christ to set up His kingdom.

3:2 We cannot study these verses without being struck by the repetition of the word lovers. In verse 2, for instance, we find lovers of self and lovers of money. In verse 3, without love, not lovers of good. In verse 4, we read of lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God.

In verses 2-5 nineteen characteristics of mankind during the last days are given. We will simply list them and give synonyms that explain their meaning:

Lovers of themselves – self-centered, conceited, egotistical.

Lovers of money – greedy for money and wealth.

Boastful – full of great swelling words, braggarts.

Proud – arrogant, naughty, overbearing.

Abusive – blasphemers, evil speakers, profane, insulting, contemptuous.

Disobedient to their parents – rebellious, uncontrolled.

Ungrateful – unthankful, lacking in appreciation.

Unholy – profane irreverent, impious, holding nothing sacred.

3:3 Without love – unloving, hard-hearted, unfeeling, callous.

Unforgiving – implacable, refusing to make peace, refusing reconciliation.

Slanderers – spreading false and malicious rumors.

Without self-control – men of uncontrolled passions, dissolute.

Brutal – savage, unprincipled.

Not lovers of the good – haters of whatever or whoever is good.

3:4 Treacherous – traitors, betrayers.

Rash – reckless, headstrong, self-willed.

Conceited – haughty.

Lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God – Those who love sensual pleasure but not God.

3:5 Outwardly these people seem religious. They make a profession of Christianity, but their actions speak louder than their words. By their ungodly behaviour, they show that they are living a lie. They want to be religious and to have their sins at the same time.

Have nothing to do with them. Timothy is exhorted to turn away from all such people.

The Man of God's Resource in View of the Apostasy - (4:1-8)

4:1 Paul now begins his final solemn charge to Timothy. He does so **in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus.**

All service should be carried out with the realization that it is watched by God's all-seeing eye.

In this verse, the Lord Jesus is spoken of as the One who will judge the living and the dead, and in view of his appearing and his kingdom. The Lord Jesus is the One who will judge the living and the dead but no time is specified. Christ's appearing and His kingdom

are presented by Paul as motives for faithful service.

We know from other scriptures that the Second Coming is not the time when He will judge the living and the dead. The wicked dead will not be judged until the end of the thousand-year reign of Christ, according to Revelation 20:5. The believer's service will be rewarded at the Judgment Seat of Christ, but these rewards will be manifested at Christ's appearing and his kingdom. For instance, those who have been faithful will rule over ten cities (Luke 19:17).

4:2 In view of God's present observation of His servant and of His future reward, Timothy should preach the Word. And he should do it with a sense of urgency, availing himself of every opportunity. The message is in season at all times, even when some might think it to be out of season. As a servant of God, Timothy will be called upon to correct, that is, to prove or refute. He will have to rebuke what is false. He will be required to encourage or exhort sinners to believe and saints to go on for the Lord.

In all of this, he must be unfailing in patience and in careful instruction of sound doctrine.

4:3 In verses 3-6, the apostle gives two strong reasons for the charge he has just given. The first is that there will be a general turning away from sound doctrine. The second is that Paul's time of departure is at hand.

The apostle foresees a time when people will show a distaste for health-giving teaching (sound doctrine). They will fully turn away from those who teach the truth of God's word. Their ears will itch for doctrines that are pleasing and comfortable.

To satisfy their lust for new and gratifying doctrine, they will gather around them teachers who will tell them what they want to hear.

4:4 The lust for inoffensive preaching will cause people to turn their ears away from the truth to myths. It is a poor exchange – to sacrifice truth for myths – but this is the wretched reward of those who refuse sound doctrine.

4:5 But you, keep your head in all situations.

Adam Clark says: "It is possible to be overtaken in a fault, to neglect one's duty, and to lose one's soul. Watching unto prayer prevents all these evils."

Timothy should be serious in his work, temperate, and well-balanced. He should endure hardship and suffer willingly whatever hardships might come to him in his service for Christ.

Do the work of an evangelist. That is: Preach Christ crucified for the sins of the whole world; for this, and this alone, is doing the work of an evangelist, or preacher of the good News of peace and salvation by Christ.

4:6 For I am already being poured out like a drink offering. Paul was now about to be poured out like a drink offering. He likens the shedding of his blood in martyrdom to the pouring out of a drink offering over a sacrifice (see Ex. 29:40; Num. 15:1-10). Paul had previously likened his death to drink offering in Phil. 2:17.

The time has come for my departure. Here Paul is saying: the time of my (spirit's) release (from the body) is at hand and I will soon go free to meet my Lord.

4:7 At first glance, it might seem as if Paul was boasting in this verse. However, such is not the case. The thought is not so much that he had fought a good fight, but rather that he had fought and was still fighting the good fight, namely, the fight of faith. He had spent his energies in the good contest. Fight here does not necessarily mean combat, but might just as well indicate an athletic contest.

Even as he wrote, he realized that the strenuous race was nearly over. He had been running on the course and was in sight of the goal.

Then, too, Paul had kept the faith. This means not only that Paul himself had continued to believe in and obey the great doctrines of the Christian faith, but also that, as a steward, he had guarded the doctrine which had been committed to him and had passed it on to others in its original purity.

4:8 The Apostle, here continuing with the same figure of speech, uses the metaphor of the wreath given to the winner of a race (1 Cor. 9:25). The crown of righteousness is the reward which God, in His kindness, has promised to them who are faithful to the grace He has bestowed upon them.

The Lord is here spoken of as the righteous Judge, but the thought is not that of a criminal court judge but of one at an athletic contest whose job was to declare the victor and to give the crown.

The crown of righteousness is the wreath that will be given to those believers who have exhibited righteousness in their service. Indeed,

it will be given to all those who have loved Christ's appearing.

If a man really longs with affection for the coming of Christ and lives in the light of that event, then his life will be righteous and he will be rewarded accordingly.

Personal Requests and Remarks - (4:9-22)

4:9 Paul, the aged, longs to have the companionship of his younger brother in the Lord. He therefore urges him to do his best to come to Rome in the near future. The Apostle was feeling keenly the loneliness of his imprisonment in Rome.

4:10 One of the bitterest experiences in Christian service is to be forsaken by those who were one's fellow laborers. Demas had been a friend of Paul's, a fellow believer and a fellow worker. But now Paul was in prison, Christians were being persecuted, and the political climate was distinctly unhealthful for Christians. Instead of loving the Lord's appearing, Demas fell in love with this world, and so he deserted Paul and went to Thessalonica.

The Apostle then adds that **Crescence** had gone to Galatia, and **Titus** to **Dalmatia**.

4:11 The beloved Doctor Luke Was the only one who maintained contact with Paul in Rome. How much it must have meant to the Apostle to have the spiritual encouragement and professional skill of this great man of God!

Mark went with Paul and Barnabas on their First Missionary journey, but then left them at Perga to return home. When it came time to go out on the Second Missionary Journey, Paul did not want to bring Mark along because of the young man's previous retreat. When Barnabas insisted that Mark should accompany them, the matter was resolved by Paul's leaving for Syria and Cilicia with Silas, while Barnabas and Mark went to Cyprus. Later on, Paul and Mark were reconciled, and here the Apostle specifically asks for Mark as one who is helpful to him in his ministry.

4:12 Those who believe that Timothy was in Ephesus when Paul wrote this letter to him suggest that the Apostle sent Tychicus to Ephesus as a replacement during Timothy's approaching absence. They suggest that Paul's meaning here is: *"But Tychicus I am commissioning to go to Ephesus"*.

4:13 The cloak here may be either an outer garment or a bag used for carrying books. It is generally understood to refer to the former here.

There is no agreement as to the difference between **Scrolls** and the parchments. Were they portions of Scripture? Were they some of Paul's Letters? Were they papers which he would be using at his trial? Were they blank pieces of papyrus or parchment which he wanted to use for writing? It is impossible to decide definitely. But the strong suggestion is that even in his imprisonment the Apostle wanted to keep busy with his writing and his reading.

4:14 Alexander the metalworker may have been the same one referred to by Paul in 1 Timothy 1:20 as having made shipwreck of faith. In any event, he had done a great deal of harm to the Apostle. We can only speculate as to the nature of his evil. Linking this verse with the verses that follow, it seems probable that Alexander testified against the Apostle and brought false charges against him.

4:15 This verse anticipates Timothy's arrival in Rome. He too should be on his guard against Alexander, last he, too, suffer at the hands of this evil man. It is not unlikely that Alexander strongly opposed Paul's message by opposing his testimony at the public hearing.

4:16 Paul is probably still thinking of the events of the past few days. His first defense means the first opportunity which he was given to defend himself at this, his last trial. It does seem sad indeed that no one came to his support. No one would come to his defense, but there is no bitterness in his heart for all that. Like the Savior before him, he prays that it may not be held against them.

4:17 He may have been forsaken by men, but the Lord stood at his side. Not only so, he was divinely strengthened to preach the gospel at his trial. The message went forth, and a Gentile law court heard the message of Salvation.

The expression *"I was delivered from the lion's mouth"* is a way of saying that Paul was granted a temporary delay. The trial was continued. The danger was temporarily averted.

4:18 When Paul said the Lord will rescue me from every evil attack, he did not imply that he would be delivered from execution. He knew that the time of his death was drawing near (v.6). What then did he mean? Doubtless he meant that the Lord would save him from doing anything that would be a blot on the closing days of his testimony. The Lord would deliver him from denying His name, from cowardice, or from any form of moral breakdown.

Not only so, but Paul was sure that The Lord would bring him safely to his heavenly kingdom.

And then the Apostle bursts into ascription of glory be to God for ever and ever. Amen.

4:19 Now Paul sends greetings to a married couple who had served with him often in spreading the gospel. **Priscilla** and **Aquila** first met Paul in Corinth, and then traveled with him to Ephesus. They lived for a time in Rome (Tim. 16:3), and, like Paul, were “tentmakers”.

Onesiphorus was mentioned in 1:16 as one who had often refreshed the Apostle and had not been ashamed of his imprisonment.

4:20 Perhaps **Erastus** is the same one who was treasurer of the city of **Corinth** (Rom. 16:23).

Trophimus is mentioned in Acts 20:4 and 21:29. Converted in Ephesus, he had accompanied Paul to Jerusalem. Here we read that Paul had left him in Miletus sick. This statement is important in showing that, although the Apostle had the miraculous power of healing, he did not always use it. The miracle of healing was never employed as a matter of personal convenience, but rather as a testimony to unbelieving Jews as to the truth of the gospel.

4:21 Timothy should do his best to get there before winter, and the weather made travel difficult or impossible.

Next we have greetings to Timothy from **Eubulus, Pudens, Linus, Claudia, and all the brethren**. These names might seem of little consequence, but they are a touching reminder, that one of the special joys and privileges of Christian service is the ways in which friendships are created and enriched.

4:22 And now Paul brings his last Epistle to a close speaking to Timothy in particular, he says: **“The Lord be with your spirit”**. Then, addressing all those who were with Timothy at the time he received the letter, the Apostle adds: **“Graced be with you.”** Here he puts down his pen. The letter is finished. His ministry is ended. But the fragrance of his life and testimony abides with us still.

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen. (Phil. 4:23).