

LOCAL CHURCH PRIMER: PROPER LEADERSHIP AND CONDUCT IN THE HOUSEHOLD OF GOD

A Devotional Commentary on the Book of 1 Timothy

by Paul G. Apple, January 2001

**TO COMBAT FALSE TEACHING AND TO FIGHT THE GOOD FIGHT OF FAITH,
THE MINISTRY OF THE LOCAL CHURCH MUST BE:
FORTIFIED WITH PRAYER
STRUCTURED AROUND GODLY LEADERSHIP
ABOVE REPROACH IN SHOWING HONOR TO
DESERVING SPECIAL GROUPS
FOCUSED ON ETERNITY**

For each section:

- Thesis statement ... to focus on the big idea
- Analytical outline ... to guide the understanding
- Devotional questions ... to encourage life application
- Representative quotations ... to stimulate deeper insight

1 Timothy 3:15 *“I write so that you may know how one ought to conduct himself in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and support of the truth.”*

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OUTLINE OF 1 TIMOTHY

GUIDELINES FOR PROPER LEADERSHIP AND CONDUCT IN THE LOCAL CHURCH

TO COMBAT FALSE TEACHING AND TO FIGHT THE
GOOD FIGHT OF FAITH, THE MINISTRY OF THE LOCAL
CHURCH MUST BE:

FORTIFIED WITH PRAYER

STRUCTURED AROUND GODLY LEADERSHIP
BY MEN OF PROVEN CHARACTER WHO
PERSEVERE IN:

- PRACTICING GODLINESS AND
- PROCLAIMING SOUND DOCTRINE

ABOVE REPROACH IN SHOWING HONOR TO
DESERVING SPECIAL GROUPS

- QUALIFIED WIDOWS
- CHURCH ELDERS
- EMPLOYERS (BOSSES IN THE
WORKPLACE)

FOCUSED ON ETERNITY RATHER THAN
DISTRACTED BY THE FUTILE SPECULATIONS
AND MATERIALISTIC SPIRIT OF THE FALSE
TEACHERS

1:1-2 OPENING GREETINGS

APOSTOLIC AUTHORITY NURTURES THE NEXT GENERATION
OF SPIRITUAL LEADERSHIP

I. (1:3-20) CHARGE TO COMBAT FALSE TEACHING AND TO FIGHT THE
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A. ACTIVELY OPPOSING FALSE TEACHING

1:3-11 NIP FALSE TEACHING IN THE BUD

FALSE TEACHING MUST BE ACTIVELY OPPOSED IN ORDER TO ACCOMPLISH THE DIVINE OBJECTIVES OF:

- PROMOTING GOD'S PROGRAM FOR THIS CHURCH AGE
- HITTING THE TARGET OF LOVE
- EXPOSING REBELLIOUS SINNERS
- GUARDING THE GOSPEL MESSAGE

B. MAGNIFYING THE GRACE OF GOD

1:12-17 AMAZING GRACE HOW SWEET THE SOUND THAT SAVED A WRETCH LIKE ME!

FOR THE FOREMOST OF SINNERS, THE PRIVILEGE OF SERVICE AND THE PARADOX OF SALVATION MAGNIFY THE GRACE OF GOD

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- OBLIVIOUS TO MORAL DISTINCTIONS AND
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HOW TO RELATE PROPERLY TO CERTAIN SPECIAL GROUPS OF PEOPLE IN THE CHURCH -- PART II -- SPECIAL HONOR FOR ELDERS

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6:2B-5 CALLING A SPADE A SPADE (OR A FALSE TEACHER A FALSE TEACHER)

FALSE TEACHERS PROMOTE HERESY AND STIR UP DIVISION AND STRIFE

B. CONTENTMENT IS THE ANSWER TO A MATERIALISTIC SPIRIT

6:6-10 ALL THAT GLITTERS IS NOT GOLD

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C. MARCHING ORDERS FOR THE MAN OF GOD

6:11-16 MARCHING ORDERS FOR THE MAN OF GOD -- CAPTURE THE FLAG
5 PERPETUAL PRIORITIES FOR A MAN OF GOD TO ENSURE A SUCCESSFUL MINISTRY

D. FOCUS ON ETERNITY

6:17-21 FINAL INSTRUCTIONS -- TRUE RICHES

FOCUS ON WHAT IS REALLY VALUABLE IN LIGHT OF ETERNITY

TEXT: 1 TIMOTHY 1:1-2

TITLE: OPENING GREETINGS

BIG IDEA:
**APOSTOLIC AUTHORITY NURTURES THE NEXT GENERATION
OF SPIRITUAL LEADERSHIP**

I. AUTHOR = PAUL

A. His Authority = "*an apostle of Christ Jesus*"
one sent by God

Ellicott: "didn't merely derive his commission from Christ, but belonged to Him."

B. His Authentication = "*according to the commandment*"

Wiersbe: "This word means 'a royal commission.' Both Paul and Timothy were sent by the King of kings!"

Campbell: "The word ... is derived from two Greek words which literally mean to *arrange upon* or *put an order upon*. The noun form used here suggests that God was the one who had arranged, ordered, and mandated that Paul should be an apostle."

Guthrie: "a man under orders"

1. "*of God our Savior*"

2. "*and of Christ Jesus, who is our hope*"

Kent: "As the Father is the fountain of our salvation, so Christ is the embodiment of our hope. We are looking for Him to return (Titus 2:13). In Him are all our expectations. Our basis for eternal life with all its glories lies in the fact of our union with Christ..."

Hendriksen: "'*our Hope*' -- the very foundation for our earnest yearning, our confident expectation, and our patient waiting for the manifestation of salvation in all its fulness."

II. RECIPIENT = TIMOTHY

A. Family Relationship = "*my true child*"
tone of tender love, intimacy

Campbell: "...'*genuine*', spiritually legitimate, and true child in the faith. This word speaks of one who is the opposite of being illegitimate, spurious, or a phony."

B. Faith Orientation = "*in the faith*"

Paul wanted the church to know that he validated Timothy's faith and sound doctrine

III. GREETING AND BLESSING

A. Content

1. *"Grace"*
2. *"Mercy"*

Kent: "Mercy (eleos) is what Timothy and all believers need daily when conscious of failure."

3. *"Peace"*

Towner: "At the outset, Paul thus reminds Timothy that God's unearnable love and peace will overshadow his servant even in the most difficult of circumstances."

B. Source

1. *"from God the Father"*
2. *"and Christ Jesus our Lord"*

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DEVOTIONAL QUESTIONS:

- 1) Reflect on the loyalty that the original apostles had to their Master = the one who had called and commissioned them and sent them out on such a perilous mission. How deep and intense is our loyalty to Christ Jesus?
- 2) Do we have our Hope firmly fixed on the person of Christ and the expectation of His return? What tends to distract us from focusing on our hope or discourage us?
- 3) Do we know of any false teachers who are illegitimate pretenders to a family relationship with Christ (in contrast to the example of Timothy who is legit)?
- 4) Are we daily drawing upon God's resources of grace, mercy and peace which are intended for our benefit?

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QUOTES FOR REFLECTION:

Towner: "At the core of the false teaching Timothy faced was an out-of-balance view of

salvation: the heretics proclaimed that the End had come and the resurrection had occurred... and the return of Christ was all but forgotten. Here at the outset Paul begins to assert his balanced theology: this is the age of salvation, but salvation's completion awaits the Second Coming of Christ, *our hope*."

Campbell: "Timothy was a genuine child *in the sphere of the faith*, in the sphere of *that which was believed*, or in the sphere of a given *body of truth and doctrine*. In other words, Timothy was a genuine child in holding fast to the truth which Paul had committed unto him (cf. 6:20; 2 Tim. 2:2), which is synonymous with the message and *Gospel of the Mystery* (cf. Eph. 3:8-9; Rom. 16:25)."

Kent: "Timothy's task in Ephesus was the most difficult he had ever faced. He needed all the gifts of God's grace. A tradition, recorded by Eusebius, says that Timothy was later beaten to death by a mob in Ephesus because of his arraignment of the idolatrous immorality of the worship of Diana."

Hiebert: "This assertion, in the very salutation, of the writer's apostolic authority is indicative of the contents of the letter. It is not simply a note of personal friendship. It is addressed to Timothy as the apostle's personal representative at Ephesus. While addressed to him personally, the letter has an official character. It is intended to certify to the churches with whom Timothy is dealing that the instructions it contains are authoritative and that Timothy is authorized to act as the delegate of Paul himself."

TEXT: 1 TIMOTHY 1:3-11

TITLE: NIP FALSE TEACHING IN THE BUD

BIG IDEA:

FALSE TEACHING MUST BE ACTIVELY OPPOSED IN ORDER TO ACCOMPLISH THE DIVINE OBJECTIVES OF:

- **PROMOTING GOD'S PROGRAM FOR THIS CHURCH AGE**
- **HITTING THE TARGET OF LOVE**
- **EXPOSING REBELLIOUS SINNERS**
- **GUARDING THE GOSPEL MESSAGE**

INTRODUCTION:

Soccer Illustration: nothing worse in soccer than an "own goal" where you kick the ball into your own goal by mistake

Are we shooting at the proper goal in our teaching? Are we promoting "the administration of God which is by faith?" Are we hitting the target of love? Are we exposing rebellious sinners as we use the Law lawfully? Are we being faithful to the stewardship we have received of the glorious gospel of our blessed God?

I. (:3-4A) FALSE TEACHING MUST BE ACTIVELY OPPOSED.

A. Nipping False Teaching in the Bud = a Priority for the Apostle Paul

1. Exhortation to Combat False Teaching Bears Repeating
"As I urged you upon my departure for Macedonia"

2. Opposing False Teaching can take Precedence over Missionary Expansion
"remain on at Ephesus"

Timothy and Paul both would have naturally preferred to continue on together

Hendriksen: "Paul, alarmed by the encroachment and influence of dangerous doctrines, once more impresses upon Timothy the idea that this surely is not the time for him to leave Ephesus."

Stedman: "... the teaching is the most important aspect of the ministry of a church. It must be kept pure and unsullied."

3. Nipping it in the bud requires the proper exercise of Authority
"instruct certain men not to teach ..." -- sense is "command"

B. Identification of False Teaching

1. Teaching that Differs from Orthodoxy -- *"strange doctrines"*

2. Teaching that Majors on Speculation

- a. *"myths"*
- b. *"endless genealogies"* -- tiresome in detail; limitless
- c. *"which gives rise to mere speculation"*

Ellicott: "Rabbinical fables and fabrications -- whether in history or doctrines ... the fables and genealogies supplied questions of a controversial nature, but not the essence and principles of the divine dispensation."

Introducing some aspect of human philosophy; in this case with a Jewish rabbinical slant

II. (:4B) SOUND TEACHING WILL PROMOTE GOD'S PROGRAM FOR THIS CHURCH AGE

A. Goal --

"rather than furthering the administration of God"

Bassler: "The phrase usually refers to God's administration of the universe, including the divine plan for the universe and the divine execution of that plan (see Eph 1:10; 3:9). This more general sense is probably intended here, for there are hints throughout these letters of a divine plan operating in the universe and coming now to fruition (2:6b; 6:15; 2 Tim 1:8-10; Titus 1:2)."

B. Motivation:

"which is by faith"

Rather than characterized by a questioning, doubting spirit

III. (:5) SOUND TEACHING WILL HIT THE TARGET OF LOVE

A. Goal -- *"But the goal of our instruction is love"*

not intellectual satisfaction which puffs one up in pride

B. Motivation:

1. *"from a pure heart"*

2. *"and a good conscience"*

Guthrie: "involves proper self-judgment ... you must have the right standard and your life must be in harmony with the standard so that your conscience is approving, not condemning"

3. *"and a sincere faith"*

Stedman: "Now just as error can be detected by what it produces, so too can truth be detected by what it produces. Paul tells us what it is: *"the aim of our charge is love that issues from a pure heart and a good conscience and sincere faith."* Here is how you can tell, almost at a glance, what is going on in a church. If a church is giving itself to some subtle form of human philosophy, it will result in endless speculation. (Paul will enlarge on that in just a moment.) But if the truth is being taught and preached and believed, it will always result in a loving congregation. Love is our aim. Love involves activity; speculation involves the mind. Love involves persons, service, compassion, involvement, care, time. That is the way you can tell the difference. The great thrust of the gospel is to produce loving people.

IV. (:6-10) SOUND TEACHING WILL EXPOSE REBELLIOUS SINNERS BY MAKING PROPER USE OF OT LAW

A. (:6) Identification of False Teachers (continued) -- as Rebellious Sinners

1. A Turning Aside = Apostasy

"For some men, straying from these things, have turned aside"

2. A Focus on "Fruitless Discussion" -- not hitting the mark

B. (:7a) Motivation of False Teachers -- "wanting to be teachers of the Law"

Guthrie: "Their main interest was to rival contemporary Rabbinical exegesis, rather than to expound the gospel."

Hendriksen: "wanted to be novelty teachers"

C. (:7b) Ignorance of False Teachers

"even though they do not understand either what they are saying or the matters about which they make confident assertions."

Kent: "cf. sermon notes of a pastor: 'Logic is weak, Yell louder at this point.'"

D. (:8-10) Proper Use of the Law

1. The Law is Good if used Properly

"But we know that the Law is good, if one uses it lawfully"

2. The Purpose of the Law

a. Negatively -- "not made for a righteous man"

b. Positively -- for Rebellious Sinners

1) *"but for those who are lawless and rebellious"*
refuse to obey authority; throw off the law

2) *"for the ungodly and sinners"*
they have no regard for the will of God and His standards of holiness

3) *"for the unholy and profane"*

4) *"for those:*

a) *"who kill their fathers or mothers, for murderers"*

b) *"and immoral men and homosexuals"*

c) *"and kidnappers"*

d) *"and liars and perjurers"*

5) *"and whatever else is contrary to sound teaching"*

V. (:11) SOUND TEACHING WILL GUARD THE GOSPEL MESSAGE

A. The Gospel Message is Precious Because it Comes from God
"according to the glorious gospel of the blessed God"

B. The Gospel Message is a Sacred Stewardship from God
"with which I have been entrusted"

DEVOTIONAL QUESTIONS:

1) A good exercise is to track through this list of ungodly behavior and match up the verses here in 1 Timothy with the specific Ten Commandments given in Exodus.

2) Am I more interested in messages that engage my mind to think in a novel way about doctrine, or am I more interested in messages that engage my will and my heart to act on what I know in matters of obedience and loving others?

3) Is there hypocrisy in my teaching in the sense that I claim to know and understand much more than my life attests to? Is the fruit of my doctrine seen in my godly behavior?

4) In what ways this past week have I been a faithful steward of *"the glorious gospel of the blessed God"*?

QUOTES FOR REFLECTION:

Ellicott: "The false teachers, on the contrary, assumed that the law was designed for the righteous man, urged their interpretations of it as necessary appendices to the Gospel."

Bassler: "These people are not identified by name (cf. 1:20), a frequent tactic in this letter and in other polemical writings of the period ... The effect is to portray the troublemakers as shadowy figures with an indistinct past and to obscure their actual numbers and influence. They are apparently, however, members or former members of the church and not outsiders, for they are subject to instruction by a church leader (v.3; see also Titus 1:13) and have '*deviated from*' the sincere faith they apparently once had (v. 6; see also 4:1)."

Barnes: Re vs 6 -- "Vain talk, empty declamation, discourses without sense. The word here used does not mean contention or strife, but that kind of discourse which is not founded in good sense. They were discourses on their pretended distinctions in the law; on their traditions and ceremonies; on their useless genealogies, and on the fabulous statements which they had appended to the law of Moses."

Liddon: "The Ephesian teachers are mistaken in their ideas about the Law of Moses (vv. 7-10).

Mistake 1 in respect of their own capacity for discussing it. Their wish is to be '*lawteachers*', somewhat on the Jewish pattern. But in point of fact they understand neither the phraseology which they employ, nor the subject respecting which they speak so positively (ver. 7).

Mistake 2 in supposing that the law, as an outward rule, is designed to help the Christian dikaios. Yet for him it does not exist as an external code, confronting and condemning his conscience; because the Holy Spirit has made it the guiding principle of his inward being. Rom. viii.4. (ver. 9)."

Stedman: "The church there was under severe attack. Paul had said this would happen. The 20th chapter of Acts tells of Paul's last recorded visit to Ephesus where, from the port of Miletus, he called to him the elders of the church at Ephesus. In that 20th chapter there is a marvelous, beautiful word of farewell to these elders from the apostle. In the midst of it, in Verse 29, he says to them:

'I know that after my departure fierce wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; and from among your own selves [i.e., from among the eldership] will arise men speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after them.' {Acts 20:29-30 RSV}

This was written before Timothy was left at Ephesus. Evidently, these conditions the apostle had anticipated had already come into being. The church was under attack from '*fierce wolves from without*,' and '*perverse teachers from within*.' Therefore, it needed an apostle's authority. Now, Timothy was not sent to Ephesus as a bishop or as an elder. (There were already elders at the church there -- the men whom Paul had addressed in

Chapter 20 of Acts.) Rather, Timothy was sent as an apostolic representative, that is, as Paul's substitute, as a bridge from the days of the apostolic leadership of the early church to the more permanent leadership of eldership oversight, guided by the Scriptures, as the Lord intended. The New Testament Scriptures had not yet been written. Timothy, therefore, as the representative of the apostle, constituted the source of scriptural revelation to the church at Ephesus, as the Apostle Paul himself had done."

Stedman: Re the gospel message -- "There are two essentials in the gospel. All through Scripture the emphasis is on these two things:

First, the gospel declares there is a total ending of the old life. This is symbolized for us and conveyed to us, historically, by the cross of our Lord Jesus. The dying of Jesus meant that something about our natural humanity was brought to an end. We are delivered from it. It is dead. It is totally ended.

The second aspect is the impartation of a new life which is totally sufficient for the believer to live on. That is symbolized for us and conveyed to us, historically, by the resurrection of Jesus from the dead.

There are the two great facts and foci of the gospel: The dying of Jesus, which eliminates the old life, and the resurrection of Jesus, which imparts to us a whole new identity, a whole new basis to live, so we can be new people, no longer hung up by the old bondages and inhibitions that once kept us from being what we wanted to be. That is the gospel. That is the good news.

The essence of Christianity is life. That is the key, the fact from which all else flows. The gospel is the way whereby God has found a means of freeing us from our old life and giving us a new way to live. Remember how John puts it, '*He who has the Son has life, and he that has not the Son of God does not have life,*' {cf, 1Jn 5:12}. It is a mistake to identify the essence of Christianity as a judicial statement by God.

I think that is where the Reformers went astray. Martin Luther and the others merely saw justification by faith as being the decision of God (the Judge) that we were forgiven for our sins. Now, justification does include that -- the Reformers were quite right about that -- but it is more than that. We are forgiven for our sins because we share the life of Jesus. What he is, we are -- that is the central truth of the Christian faith.

Paul says it in Colossians, '*Christ, who is our life, shall appear, ...*' {Col 3:4 KJV}. He says it in Corinthians, '*If any man be in Christ he is a new creation, old things have passed away, behold all things become new,*' {cf, 2 Cor 5:17 RSV}. That is why, throughout his letters, Paul constantly is exhorting us to '*put off the old man which we died to in Christ and put on the new,*' {Eph 4:22-24, Col 3:9-10}; to '*consider yourself dead unto sin and alive unto God,*' {Rom 6:11}. That is the good news. That is the gospel."

TEXT: 1 TIMOTHY 1:12-17

TITLE: AMAZING GRACE HOW SWEET THE SOUND THAT SAVED A WRETCH LIKE ME

BIG IDEA:

FOR THE FOREMOST OF SINNERS, THE PRIVILEGE OF SERVICE AND THE PARADOX OF SALVATION MAGNIFY THE GRACE OF GOD

Def. of Paradox: "a statement or proposition seemingly self-contradictory or absurd, and yet explicable as expressing a truth";
How could Christ Jesus choose to save someone who was so undeserving as Paul?
How could Christ Jesus exalt such a one to the highest realm of Christian service?

I. (:12-14) THE PRIVILEGE OF SERVICE EXTENDED TO THE FOREMOST OF SINNERS MAGNIFIES GOD'S GRACE AND SPURS THANKSGIVING

A. (:12) Thanksgiving for the Privilege of Service

1. Thanksgiving Based on the Strengthening Provided by God's Grace

"I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who has strengthened me"

Pres. Tense -- ongoing gratitude; emphatic by position

Wuest: "God clothed him with strength"

2. Faithfulness is the Key to Serving the Lord Effectively

"because He considered me faithful"

This was the Lord's way of viewing Paul as regards his divine appointment and enablement (cf. how Christ looked at Peter and said "You are Simon the son of John; you shall be called Cephas (which translated means Peter)."

This verb followed by the double accusative = "look upon, consider someone or something" -- Acts 26:2; Phil. 2:3,6; 3:7-8; 1 Tim. 6:1

3. Ministry must be seen as a Privilege -- a High Calling

"putting me into service"

Much preferred to being put on the shelf

B. (:13) Testimony of the Foremost of Sinners

1. Description of His Former Life -- *"even though I was formerly"*

a. Blasphemer -- certainly he cursed the name of Jesus; stood opposed to the deity of Christ, viewing Him as an imposter

Kent: "denotes evil and injurious speech directed usually against God"

b. Persecutor -- Acts 8:3; 9:1-5; 22:4-5; 26:9-11; Gal. 1:13
inflicted physical harm on those who would hold to allegiance to Christ

c. Violent Aggressor -- cf. Rom. 1:20 -- like a bully (**Wiersbe**)

Campbell: "depicts a person involved in insolent, violent, and outrageous conduct"

2. Appropriateness of Mercy -- "*And yet I was shown mercy because*"

a. Due to Ignorance -- "*I acted ignorantly*"

b. Due to Unbelief -- "*in unbelief*"

Kent: "In the Old Testament a distinction is made between those who sinned through ignorance (including moral weakness) and those who sinned presumptuously (*with a high hand,* Num. 15:30, A.S.V.)."

C. (:14) Trumpeting of the Grace of God

1. Abundant Nature of God's Grace

"and the grace of our Lord was more abundant"

2. Accompanying Faith and Love

"with the faith and love which are found in Christ Jesus"

Hiebert: "standing in contrast to the unbelief and hatred of his previous life, speak of the change which God's grace wrought within him."

II. (:15-16) THE PARADOX OF SALVATION OF THE FOREMOST OF SINNERS PROVIDES AN ENCOURAGING MODEL FOR ALL WHO WOULD BELIEVE

A. (:15a) Global Goal = Christ Came to Save Sinners

"It is a trustworthy statement, deserving full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners"

Pre-existence can be implied from this statement of the purpose of Christ's First Advent

B. (:15b-16) Mercy Model = Christ Saved Me, the Foremost of Sinners

1. Extreme Example -- argument from the greater to the lesser

"among whom I am foremost of all"

Kent: "No one can say he is too sinful to be saved since Christ has saved Paul."

no limit to the transforming power of God's grace

2. Model of Christ's Perfect Patience

"And yet for this reason I found mercy, in order that in me as the foremost, Jesus Christ might demonstrate His perfect patience"

Hiebert: "'Longsuffering' is the divine attribute of God whereby He does not at once punish the sinner but forbears long under provocation and gives him opportunity to repent."

3. Intended Audience

"as an example for those who would believe in Him for eternal life"

III. (:17) DOXOLOGY

A. Divine Attributes of the King -- the sovereign over all the universe and over both this age and the age to come

1. *Eternal*

2. *Immortal*

Campbell: "one who is not corruptible, imperishable, indestructible"

3. *Invisible*

B. Worthy Worship of God

1. *Honor*

Campbell: "the idea of putting a high price on God, esteeming him to be of supreme value, and acknowledging that he is worth more than everything else"

2. *Glory*

Towner: "Testimony leads to worship"

C. Duration of the Worship -- *"forever and ever"*

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DEVOTIONAL QUESTIONS:

1) Are we in service or out of service when it comes to faithfully serving the Lord? Do we have a sense that God has sovereignly placed us in the proper opportunity for service?

2) Are we relying for the power and effectiveness of our ministry on that special sovereign empowering by God?

3) Do we ever view ourselves or others as outside of the long reach of God's arm when it comes to salvation, transformation, or deliverance?

4) Do we take time to worship the eternal King as we reflect on His amazing mercy and grace in our life?

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QUOTES FOR REFLECTION:

Wuest: "God saw that the fiery, zealous, intense Pharisee would be just as fiery, zealous and intense in the proclamation of the gospel as he was in its persecution when saving grace was operating in his being ... demonstrated his confidence in Paul by putting him into the ministry."

Kent: "The factor which makes this testimony of Paul such a telling one in the light of the legalistic danger at Ephesus is that all of these previous traits of Paul occurred while he was a zealous exponent of the Law. In fact, it may be asserted that the Law produced these characteristics in him, as he became more and more a fanatical defender against its supposed enemies."

Hiebert: "His own case is the best illustration of the true relation of the law to the Gospel and clearly shows how deep is the contrast between the Gospel and the speculations of these false teachers."

Campbell: Re vs. 12 -- "The aorist participle makes it clear that the first thing Christ did was to place Paul into a ministry. The word translated '*ministry*' conveys the idea of service and work related to the Gospel. Jesus Christ sovereignly saved Paul and sovereignly put him into the ministry of the Gospel of the Mystery (Acts 9:15-16; 2 Tim. 1:11). As one who had been sovereignly placed into the ministry to make known the truth of the Body of Christ, the Church, the Lord '*counted*', considered, and evaluated Paul as being faithful."

Towner: "First, strength for Christian life and ministry comes from Christ. Paul's ministry was marked by the manifestation of spiritual '*power*' -- his work brought results, but he does not explain them on the basis of his seminary education, up-to-date methods or personal charisma. Instead, he credits and thanks Christ for empowering him.

Second, the right to participate in ministry is established solely by Christ. Paul's thanksgiving extends to the consciousness of having been considered faithful to be appointed to his service."

TEXT: 1 TIMOTHY 1:18-20

TITLE: FIGHT THE GOOD FIGHT

BIG IDEA:

**SUMMARY OF PAUL'S CHARGE TO TIMOTHY:
FIGHT TO PROTECT SOUND DOCTRINE**

**I. THE GOOD GUYS -- THE RESPONSIBILITY TO MAINTAIN SOUND
DOCTRINE FALLS TO DIVINELY APPOINTED LEADERS**

A. The Responsibility (to Maintain Sound Doctrine) is a Sacred Trust

"This command I entrust to you ..."

speaking about the charge laid out in vs.3 that Timothy remain on at Ephesus and *"instruct certain men not to teach strange doctrines"* -- and since it is Pres. Tense may also refer to instructions yet to come in this epistle (3:14; 4:6, 11; 6:2)

Guthrie: "As often in military contexts ... it conveys a sense of urgent obligation. Timothy is solemnly reminded that the ministry is not a matter to be trifled with, but an order from the commander-in-chief."

B. The Responsibility Must be Passed Along to Trusted Leaders

"to you, Timothy, my son"

Spiritual leaders must receive this charge and view it as their personal responsibility

C. The Responsibility Must be Fulfilled by Those Whom God has Sovereignly Appointed to the Task

"in accordance with the prophecies previously made concerning you"

Wiersbe: "Paul also reminded Timothy that God had chosen him for his ministry. Apparently some of the prophets in the local assemblies had been led by the Spirit to select Timothy for service."

Guthrie: "... the words testify not only to the complete confidence of Paul that Timothy was God's choice as his successor, but to the endorsement of that choice by the Christian communities with which Timothy was associated."

D. The Responsibility is Clear (Transition to the next point)

"Fight the good fight"

II. THE BATTLE -- MAINTAINING A GOOD CONSCIENCE WITH RESPECT TO

THE TRUTH IS WHERE THE BATTLE LINES ARE DRAWN

A. Timothy is Charged to be Faithful in This Area

"keeping faith and a good conscience"

Guthrie: "We need not restrict faith here to '*right belief*' as Easton does, although that aspect is undoubtedly included. It appears to epitomize the spiritual side of the Christian warrior's armour."

Stedman: "I find a great deal of misunderstanding, even among Christians, on what the conscience is. Many feel that the conscience is given to us to teach us the difference between right and wrong. But nothing could be further from the truth. No, the conscience is given to us, rather, to resist any deviation from the truth, from the right and the wrong that we know. If you think it is given to us to indicate what is wrong or what is right, you will begin to rely upon your feelings to determine right and wrong. That is where many go astray -- many young Christians, especially. They think their conscience is their feelings; and if they feel something is right then they do it..."

The conscience is given to us so that when we know what is right and what is wrong, it insists that we do the right and avoid the wrong. But it is the Word of God that teaches us what is right and what is wrong. Conscience is like a gyroscope, set in a certain direction, which resists any tendency to deflect it. Conscience, however, can be set in a wrong direction, then it will guide us wrongly. Revelation, the Word of God, is what tells us what is right and what is wrong. Conscience is given to us to help us know when we are beginning to fail, or fall away from that right path.

In other words, a good conscience is a synonym for an obedient heart which wants to do what God says is right. That is what Paul is talking about. Wherever God speaks, and you know what he tells you to do, regardless of what your flesh or your feelings say, obey; do what God says. That is the way to maintain a good conscience. If you fail, correct it instantly by the provision that God has made: confess, repent, set it straight, then go on with God."

B. False Teachers are Exposed as Having Proved Unfaithful in This Area

"which some have rejected and suffered shipwreck in regard to their faith"

Campbell: "The word '*faith*' is used here with the article '*the*' preceding it. This is very significant for it means that Paul has in mind *the faith*, the body of truth which is believed, the Gospel of the Grace of God ..."

Our faith is centered around *the faith*

III. THE BAD GUYS -- SEVERE DISCIPLINE MUST BE ENFORCED AGAINST

FALSE TEACHERS

A. Who are They and What False Doctrine Did they Teach?

1. Hymenaeus - apparently taught that the resurrection was already past;
denial of the reality of the bodily resurrection for believers
2 Tim. 2:16-18
2. Alexander -- very common name in that day (cf. 2 Tim. 4:14)

B. What was the Nature of the Severe Discipline?

"whom I have delivered over to Satan" (cf. 1 Cor. 5:5)

C. What was the Purpose of the Severe Discipline?

"so that they may be taught not to blaspheme"

Wiersbe: "When a Christian refuses to repent, the local fellowship should exercise discipline, excluding him from the protective fellowship of the saints, making him vulnerable to the attacks of Satan."

Guthrie: "... the purpose was remedial and not punitive. However stringent the process the motive was mercy, and whenever ecclesiastical discipline has departed from this purpose of restoration, its harshness has proved a barrier to progress. But this is no reason for dispensing with discipline entirely, a failing which frequently characterizes our modern churches."

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DEVOTIONAL QUESTIONS:

- 1) Do we do a good job of communicating our confidence in individuals to encourage them in the difficult tasks they face? Do others encourage us as Paul does here to Timothy?
- 2) What are the primary weapons of this warfare for sound doctrine?
- 3) How sensitive are we to the promptings of our conscience? Have we developed callouses in certain parts of our conscience?
- 4) Paul certainly knew the pain and hardship of being shipwrecked. What are some elements of this analogy that Paul is trying to apply in this spiritual realm?

* * * * *

QUOTES FOR REFLECTION:

Hendriksen: "The good conscience -- one that obeys the dictates of the Word as applied

to the heart by the Holy Spirit -- is the rudder, guiding the believer's vessel into the safe harbor of everlasting rest."

Hiebert: "These false teachers treated the matter of maintaining their spiritual integrity as a minor matter as they played fast and loose with the Scriptures. When their conscience goaded them they '*thrust*' from them their good conscience. The word implies the violence of the act required."

Towner: "Here the believer is cast in the role of a soldier who is ordered out into battle. The weapons of this soldier, however, are not clever argumentation or inescapable logic, things that we might think best suited to debates with false teachers. On the contrary, Timothy is to avoid debates (2 Tim 2:23-25). Nor is the soldier's objective the destruction of his opponent. Appropriate strategy includes instructing, correcting erroneous views and urging repentance ... The minister's weapons for this fight are the gospel and godly concern for the spiritual condition of the opponent. The goal is to protect the faith of those whom the false teachers seek to influence and, if possible, to win back those who have strayed (1:5). Only the gospel is sufficient for such work, as Paul has just taken great care to illustrate (1:11-16)."

Barnes: "It cannot be supposed that they were open and bold blasphemers, for such could not have maintained a place in the church, but rather that they held doctrines which the apostle regarded as amounting to blasphemy; that is, doctrines which were in fact a reproach on the divine character.... A blasphemer openly expresses views of the divine character which are a reproach to God; an errorist expresses the same thing in another way -- by teaching as true about God that which represents Him in a false light, and to suppose which, in fact, is a reproach."

Stedman: "The fundamental nature of Christianity is that it is a warfare in which we are all involved; and there is no exit until the end. The moment you began your Christian life, by faith in Jesus Christ, you entered a lifelong battle. And this struggle is not intended to be easy. Many Christians today forget that. Helped along somewhat by a lot of misleading teaching on the television and other media, there is a widespread attitude today that when you become a Christian God began working for you so everything has to work out. People are being taught that they are in the will of God because bridges appear mysteriously across the chasms of life. Rubbish! If that is the sign of being in God's will, then Paul was out of God's will most of his life. He knew he was in a battle, and he tells Timothy that he too is going to be in a battle.

The object of this warfare is not to survive to the end of life, as many Christians think. Even non-Christians are fighting the battle to keep healthy and stay alive. Everybody is engaged in that battle. That is not the Christian warfare. Paul is talking about being a Christian, about living a Christ-like life in the midst of dangerous pressures and countering forces. That is the battle. In other words, to be realistic in a world of illusion, to not chase after all the fantasies that the world falls for, to not allow yourself to think wrongly about what is going on in society, but to get God's point of view, to see things the way they are and to deal honestly, realistically and openly with everything that

comes -- that is the battle."

TEXT: 1 TIMOTHY 2:1-7

TITLE: ONLY ONE MEDIATOR BETWEEN GOD AND MAN

BIG IDEA:
OUR MISSIONARY VISION MUST BE A GLOBAL ONE

I. A GLOBAL MISSIONARY VISION IS ROOTED IN PRAYER

A. Prayer for Men from All Nations Without Prejudice

1. This Exercise of Prayer must be a matter of Priority
"First of all, then, I urge ..."

Paul is beginning his instructions regarding how the church should conduct itself; he starts off with an emphasis on prayer as our fundamental means of participating in the Great Commission on a global level; First, in order of importance; Paul has a number of other important exhortations to make later in this epistle.

2. This Exercise of Prayer takes a Variety of Forms

Kent: "These terms are not mutually exclusive. Several are synonyms. Rather than attempting the precarious task of drawing hard and fast distinctions among them, it is better to regard them as aspects or elements of genuine prayer. It is highly probable that each of these aspects will appear in every public prayer."

- a. *Entreaties* -- petitions for answers to specific needs
- b. *Prayers* -- more general word
- c. *Petitions* -- intercessions; a pleading in the interest of others
(Hendriksen)
- d. *Thanksgivings* -- make sure we never omit this important aspect

3. This Exercise of Prayer Must Be Global and without Prejudice or Distinction
"be made on behalf of all men"

B. Prayer Especially for Political Rulers

1. For Whom?
 - a. *"for kings"*
 - b. *"and all who are in authority"*

Kent: "the lesser officials appointed by the supreme ruler to govern

various areas"

2. Why? -- "*in order that we may lead a tranquil and quiet life*"

Towner: "What is sought is the best of conditions for expanding God's kingdom, not simply a peaceful life."

Hiebert: "Paul believed that prayer made a definite difference in national affairs and brought about conditions favorable to the furtherance of the Gospel."

How? -- "*in all godliness and dignity*"

Towner: "the description of the manner of Christian living ... contains hints of witness. *Godliness* is Paul's term in the Pastorals for 'genuine Christianity'; it brings together knowledge of and faith in God and the observable response of lifestyle. *Holiness* (NIV), better translated as 'seriousness,' suggests a deportment of respectability that is evident to observers. The manner of life here described has the evaluating eye of the observer in mind (1 Tim 3:7; 6:1; Tit 2) and is meant to recommend the gospel to those who look on."

Hendriksen: "The first seems to refer to a life which is free from outward disturbance; the second, to a life which is free from inner perturbation. Paul exhorts the Thessalonians to be ambitious about '*living calmly*'."

II. A GLOBAL MISSIONARY VISION IS CONSISTENT WITH GOD'S HEART

A. Peaceful Political Climate Promotes a Global Missionary Vision

"This is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior"

B. God's Desire is for the Salvation of Men from All Nations Without Prejudice

1. *"who desires all men to be saved"*

2. *"and to come to the knowledge of the truth"*

Stedman: "Here is a particular place where the word *all* has to be clearly understood. It does not mean "all without exception." It means "all without distinction," without bias toward anybody. All kinds of people might be saved. There are no human barriers to men and women coming to God. It does not matter what the color of your skin is, what your social class, your background, may be, your national origin or the state of your heart, how bad you have been, etc. Paul stresses that there are no distinctions. God desires all kinds of people to be saved."

III. A GLOBAL MISSIONARY VISION IS CONSISTENT WITH THE MINISTRY

OF CHRIST

A. The Only Mediator Between God and Man

1. *"For there is one God"*

Hendriksen: "There is not one God for this nation, one for another; one God for slaves and one for free men; one God for rulers, one for subjects."

2. *"and one mediator also between God and men"*

3. *"the man Christ Jesus"*

Towner: "His main point is simply that the existence of only one God implies that the gift of salvation is extended to all. Therefore, the church's participation in the mission enterprise must involve earnest prayer for all people. Yet at the same time there is an exclusiveness implied by Paul's logic. Salvation is linked solely to the one mediator, Christ, and therefore to the gospel about him. The church as the sole guardian of this message (3:15) is the sole means by which God's salvation can be extended to all. Consequently, the church's prayer for the salvation of all people is not optional or subsidiary in the least. It is intrinsic to the church's reason for existing and to the accomplishment of the larger evangelistic goal."

B. The Only Ransom to Buy Men Back From Slavery to Sin

"who gave Himself as a ransom for all, the testimony borne at the proper time"

- Voluntary
- Substitutionary

Hendriksen: "Christ's death as a ransom, to satisfy God's justice, must be proclaimed. It was the intention of God that when 'the appropriate seasons' or 'favorable opportunities' arrived, the fact that God desires all men to be saved and to come to the acknowledgment of the truth, should be made known."

Guthrie: "Since the words follow immediately the profound statement about Christ's saving work, it is best to assume that *'the testimony'* intended is God's act in sending His Son at the appointed time (cf. Gal. iv. 4)."

Lenski: "Before this, in the *'seasons'* of the Old Testament, there were and could be, strictly speaking, only promises and prophecies about the will of God for all men and about this Mediator for all of them. Now there is *'this testimony'* that all the promises and prophecies are fulfilled."

II. A GLOBAL MISSIONARY VISION IS CONSISTENT WITH THE MINISTRY OF PAUL

A. Divine Appointment

"And for this I was appointed":

B. Ministry to the Gentiles as:

1. *"a Preacher"*
2. *"and an Apostle"*
3. *"as a Teacher of the Gentiles"*

Lenski: "The great host of men were Gentiles; God make adequate provision to have the truth of the gospel brought also to them."

C. Veracity of His Testimony

"(I am telling the truth, I am not lying)"

D. Sphere of Ministry -- in connection with:

1. *"in faith"*
2. *"and truth"*

* * * * *

DEVOTIONAL QUESTIONS:

- 1) What is our first response when we are frustrated by the political process and by the lack of Biblical standards on the part of our country's leaders? Do we really believe that our prayers can make a difference in this political arena?
- 2) Do we desire to live *"a tranquil and quiet life"* for our own comfort and fulfillment or so that we will be freed from oppression and persecution in order to better worship God and aggressively fulfill the Great Commission?
- 3) If God *"desires all men to be saved"* why does He not save everyone? What type of *"desire"* is referenced here? What is the meaning of *"all men"*? How does this mesh with the Biblical teaching regarding election?
- 4) Is our missionary vision fueled by a burden that people have an opportunity to respond to the message about the only mediator between God and men, the one who paid the only ransom that can redeem them from their sins?

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QUOTES FOR REFLECTION:

Towner: "He does envision a prayer ministry, one that will be attentive to every aspect

of the gospel enterprise, from the initial planning and opening of doors for preaching (Col 4:3), to seed-sowing and boldness to preach (Eph 6:19), to thanksgiving for changed lives (1 Thess 1:2). The prayer he has in mind is specifically related to the evangelistic mission.

Hendriksen: Re emphasis on "*all men*" -- "Several expositors feel certain that this means every member of the whole human race: every man, woman, and child, without any exception whatever... Nevertheless ... in certain contexts this simply cannot be the meaning: cf. Titus 2:11; Rom. 5:18; I Cor. 15:22 ... Here it means 'all men without distinction of race, nationality, or social position,' not 'all men individually, one by one.'"

Earle: Re mediator -- "To be of any use, a bridge across a chasm or river must be anchored on both sides. Christ has closed the gap between deity and humanity. He has crossed the grand canyon, so deep and wide, between heaven and earth. He has bridged the chasm that separated man from God. With one foot planted in eternity, he planted the other in time. He who was the eternal Son of God became the Son of Man. And across this bridge, the man Christ Jesus, we can come into the very presence of God, knowing that we are accepted because we have a mediator."

Stellhorn (quoted by **Lenski**): "The basic error of our own religiously muddled, in the worst sense unionistic times that everything depends on faith as a general confidence of the heart in a Higher Being and little or nothing on the contents of this faith, surely has no support in Paul as little as in Christ or in general in the New Testament ... What relates to faith and truth, to faith as the saving confidence of the heart and to truth as the contents and ground of this faith, to preach and to teach that, to expound and to inculcate that is his (the preacher's) office, this he must take into the pulpit, this he must make the all-controlling object of his study and work, and nothing else. All else dare serve only this one thing."

Stedman: "The first assignment the Apostle Paul gave to Timothy in regard to the church at Ephesus was to correct the teaching, which had begun to drift from the apostolic revelation into controversial areas that were destructive to faith. Timothy was to set that straight, using Paul as his model. He was also to stress the need for obedience -- that people actually do what they teach. That is always the first step toward vitality in a Christian's experience.

In Chapter 2 of First Timothy we now come to the second assignment the apostle gave to Timothy, and that is to set in order the public worship of the assembly in Ephesus. That is a relevant subject for us, because that is why we come together every Sunday morning. Public worship is a very revealing indication of what is going on in a church...

Tertullian, one of the early church fathers who lived in North Africa at the close of the second century, gave us a list of some of the things he prayed for the Emperor:

First, for long life;
Second, for secure dominions;
Third, a safe home;
Fourth, a faithful senate;
Fifth, for righteous people; and
Sixth, for a peaceful world.

That is how the early Christians prayed for governmental leaders."

TEXT: 1 TIMOTHY 2:8-15

TITLE: UNDERSTANDING THE DIFFERING ROLES OF MEN AND WOMEN IN THE CHURCH

BIG IDEA:

THE CHURCH NEEDS BOTH GODLY MEN AND GODLY WOMEN TO FULFILL THEIR PROPER ROLES

I. EXPLANATION OF THE DIFFERENT ROLES

A. Men Need to Lead in Prayer in the Public Assembly

1. Action -- *"Therefore, I want the men in every place to pray"*

Wuest: "The word '*therefore*' is resumptive, picking up again the general topic of public worship from which Paul digressed in verses 3-7."

Wuest: "wherever Christian congregations assemble"

2. Heart Attitude

- a. *"lifting up holy hands"*

- b. *"without wrath and dissension"*

Wuest: "freedom from irritation towards our fellowmen, and confidence toward God"

Kent: "a reference to that spirit of argumentation or disputing, whether with others or within oneself, a spirit which has no place in true prayer."

B. Women Need to Dress Modestly and Focus on Good Works

1. Issue of Dress

- a. Positively: *"to adorn themselves with"*:

- 1) *"proper clothing"*

- 2) *"modestly"*

- 3) *"discreetly"*

- b. Negatively:

- 1) *"not with braided hair"*

- 2) *"and gold or pearls"*

- 3) *"or costly garments"*

2. Issue of Good Works

- a. *"but rather by means of good works"*
- b. *"as befits woman making a claim to godliness"*

Guthrie: "a woman's dress is a mirror of her mind. Outward ostentation is not in keeping with a prayerful and devout approach."

Wiersbe: "The contrast here is between the artificial glamour of the world and the true beauty of a godly life."

C. Women Need to Receive Instruction

(rather than Teach or Exercising Authority over Men)

1. Action: *"receive instruction"*

2. Heart Attitude:

- a. *"quietly"*
- b. *"with entire submissiveness"*

3. Limitations

- a. Not allowed to Teach (men in public church gatherings)
"But I do not allow a woman to teach"
- b. Not allowed to Exercise Authority over Men (in the church)
"or exercise authority over a man"
- c. Must *"Remain Quiet"*

Wiersbe: "'*Silence*' is an unfortunate translation because it gives the impression that believing women were never to open their mouths in the assembly. This is the same word that is translated '*peaceable*' in verse 2. Some of the women abused their newfound freedom in Christ, and created disturbances in the services by interrupting. It is this problem that Paul addressed in this admonition."

D. (By Implication) Men Need to Teach and Exercise Authority in the Assembly as Appropriate

1. Teach
2. Exercise Authority

II. REASONS FOR THE DIFFERENT ROLES

A. Argument from Priority of Creation

"For it was Adam who was first created, and then Eve."

Lenski: "The creative order certainly reveals God's intent, that Eve was not to direct, rule, supervise him, that she was not to be the head, but he."

B. Argument from Susceptibility to Deception (in the Garden of Eden)

"And it was not Adam who was deceived, but the woman being quite deceived, fell into transgression."

III. SPECIAL OPPORTUNITY FOR WOMEN TO EXCEL

"But women shall be preserved through the bearing of children if they continue in faith and love and sanctity with self-restraint."

Hiebert: "'Child-bearing' denotes the proper sphere in which the woman finds the true fulfillment of her destiny. It speaks of the highest ideal of Christian womanhood. It brings out that which is noblest and best within her being. Paul's thought naturally includes the training of the children in a Christian home. It stands in opposition to the sphere of public teaching which was closed to her."

Wiersbe: "Paul laid down a general principle that encouraged the believing women of that day. Their ministry was not to 'run' the church, but to care for the home and bear children to the glory of God (1 Tim. 5:14). Their home congregations would give them abundant opportunities for teaching the Word and ministering to the saints."

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DEVOTIONAL QUESTIONS:

- 1) Do we give enough attention to prayer in our public worship services? Are godly men given the freedom and opportunity to lead in prayer? Do we find prayer boring and difficult to hold our attention?
- 2) Do women dress appropriately in our assembly and devote themselves to good works in a manner befitting godliness? What types of good works do you think Paul had in mind?
- 3) What types of pressure are being exerted on men and women to deny their unique roles when it comes to the propriety of teaching and exercising leadership in the church? How much stronger is this pressure today than it was 75 years ago?
- 4) What are some of the different views of the difficult passage of vs. 15? What are some of the practical applications that result from the different views? Is the subject of

the second half of the verse ("*they*") the *women* already mentioned or their *children*?"
What is the nature of the "*salvation*" or "*deliverance*" mentioned?

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QUOTES FOR REFLECTION:

Wuest: "The kind of teacher Paul has in mind is spoken of in Acts 13:1, I Corinthians 12:28, 29, and Ephesians 4:11, God-called, and God-equipped teachers, recognized by the Church as those having authority in the Church in matters of doctrine and interpretation. This prohibition of a woman to be a teacher, does not include the teaching of classes of women, girls, or children in a Sunday School, for instance, but does prohibit the woman from being a pastor, or a doctrine teacher in a school. It would not be seemly, either, for a woman to teach a mixed class of adults."

Campbell: "The thing that Paul is disapproving of is not fine clothing, but the expenditure of money for such clothing. It appears to us that the main reason Paul was against braided hair with gold, pearls, and the finest of clothing was probably the cost. Instead of women selfishly parading excessive money on their physical persons they should be using it for the furtherance of the Gospel."

Kent: "Paul does not aver that the woman was mentally, morally, or spiritually inferior to man. But it was she who was deceived in the matter of doctrine. By taking leadership over the man, she ate first and then gave to her husband to eat. Thus the Fall was caused, not only by disobeying God's command not to eat, but also by violating the divinely appointed relation between the sexes. Woman assumed headship, and man with full knowledge of the act, subordinated himself to her leadership and ate of the fruit (Rom. 5:19). Both violated their positions. This subordination of woman to man is not Paul's invention. It is rooted in the very nature of the sexes and was put there by God Himself."

Hendriksen: "Note the following Prayer Postures:

(1) *Standing*: Gen. 18:22; I Sam. 1:26; Matt. 6:5; Mark 11:25; Luke 18:11; Luke 18:13.
(Note the contrast between the last two passages. It makes a difference even how and where one stands.)

(2) *Hands Spread Out or/and Lifted Heavenward*: Ex. 9:29; Ex. 17:11,12; I Kings 8:22; Neh. 8:6; Psalm 63:4; Psalm 134:2; Psalm 141:2; Is. 1:15; Lam. 2:19; Lam. 3:41; Hab. 3:10; Luke 24:50; I Tim. 2:8; James 4:8...

(3) *Bowing the Head* Gen. 24:48 (cf. verse 13); Ex. 12:27; II Chron. 29:30; Luke 24:5

(4) *The Lifting Heavenward of the Eyes*: Psalm 25:15; Psalm 121:1; Psalm 123:1,2; Psalm 141:8; Psalm 145:15; John 11:41; John 17:1; cf. Dan. 9:3; Acts 8:55

(5) *Kneeling*: II Chron. 6:13; Psalm 95:6; Is. 45:23; Dan. 6:10; Matt. 17:14; Mark 1:40; Luke 22:41; Acts 7:60; Acts 9:40; Acts 20:36; Acts 21:5; Eph. 3:14

(6) *Falling Down with the Face Upon the Ground*: Gen. 17:3; Gen. 24:26; Num. 14:5, 13; Num. 16:4, 22, 45; Num. 22:13, 34; Deut. 9:18, 25, 26; Jos. 5:14; Judg. 13:20; Neh. 8:6; Ezek. 1:28; Ezek. 3:23; Ezek. 9:8; Ezek. 11:13; Ezek. 43:3; Ezek. 44:4; Dan. 8:17;

matt. 26:39; Mark 7:25; Mark 14:35; Luke 5:12; Luke 17:16; Rev. 1:17 Rev. 11:16
(7) *Other Postures*: I Kings 18:42 (bowing, with face between the knees); Luke 18:13
(standing from afar, striking the breast)."

Hendriksen: Re vs. 15 -- "Adam already perceived that by God's grace the curse of child-bearing (think of its painful character) was changed into a blessing (Gen. 3:20). Because of the prospect of child-bearing Adam's wife was named Eve, that is 'Life' (the mother of all living). Paul takes up this thought and develops it. Child-bearing will mean salvation for the Christian mother, for what Christian mother does not experience inner delight, joy, blessing, and glory in seeing the image of her Savior reflected in little ones who belong to him?..."

The complete thought is therefore as follows: if the women members of the church will abide in faith and love and sanctification, meanwhile exercising proper self-control and reserve, they will find their joy and salvation in bearing children to God's glory, yes, in all the duties and delights of Christian motherhood...

I reject the following explanations

(1) 'She will be saved by means of The Childbirth' (that is, the Birth of Christ).

(2) 'She will come safely through child-birth.'

Objection: both of these ideas are foreign to the present context. In addition, Number (2) assigns a meaning to the verb which in the present context is not warranted. See the verb in 1:15 and 2:4.

(3) 'By means of bearing children she will be rescued from everlasting damnation and will merit everlasting glory.'"

TEXT: 1 TIMOTHY 3:1-7

TITLE: OVERSEEING THE CHURCH OF GOD --
QUALIFICATIONS FOR ELDERS -- ABOVE REPROACH

BIG IDEA:
**SPIRITUAL LEADERSHIP (OVERSEEING THE CHURCH OF GOD)
REQUIRES MEN OF PROVEN CHARACTER**

I. (:1) CHURCH OVERSIGHT IS A GOOD WORK TO PURSUE

A. Introduction: Importance of the subject
Another "*trustworthy statement*"
something that can be relied on

B. Lofty Goal for Men
"*if any man aspires*"
Present Tense -- ongoing desire and pursuit; not just a one-time wish
"to stretch one's self out in order to touch or grasp something" **Thayer**

Lenski: "If someone met these qualifications there was ample opportunity to serve in this office, although still dependent on the needs of the congregation."

C. Explanation of the Office = "*Overseer*" or "*bishop*"
looking after, caring for, administering (**Thayer**)
different emphasis, but same office as:
1. "*Elder*" -- emphasis on age and maturity and wisdom and experience
2. "*Pastor*" -- emphasis on the shepherding role

D. Explanation of the Form of Local Church Govt. = Plurality of Elders

Contrasted with other forms of church government
- Congregational
- Baptist
- Episcopalian -- Hierarchical with Bishop
- Catholic -- Hierarchical with Pope at the top
- Presbyterian = very close at the local church level

E. Aside: Comparison Between Senior Pastor Model and No Senior Pastor Model
(Note: Timothy not charged with creating these offices; they already existed and were understood as such in the local church; he just had to see that only qualified men served in these capacities)

cf. paper on the internet on this subject:
http://www.talk-101.com/users/dabrash/pages/art/resp_jm.htm

F. Characterized as a Good Work

"it is a fine work he desires to do"

viewed as a work, not as an office or a position to be filled; a ministry requiring strenuous effort and tireless labor

II. (:2-7) ELDERS MUST MEET SPECIFIC CHARACTER QUALIFICATIONS

(The parallel passage of Titus 1:6-8 is very important in this study since it proves that neither list is exhaustive, and that the order in which the qualifications are presented is not rigid. These two passages must be studied in conjunction to see the full picture.)

These are Necessary, Mandated Requirements -- "*must be*"

A. General Requirement: "*above reproach*" with his fellow church members
everything else is a more specific definition of this general requirement

Thayer: "not open to censure, irreproachable"

B. Morally Pure -- "*husband of one wife*"

What is prohibited here? much debate

- 1) possibly polygamy -- but not widely practiced at the time (Hiebert)
- 2) any type of remarriage
- 2) possibly remarriage just after divorce (Wiersbe, Kent)
- 3) possibly more of a general character trait = devoted to his one and only wife
-- main issue being how he treats his wife right now

Towner: "the point of the phrase is probably not how often one can be married, not precisely what constitutes a legitimate marriage (that the marriage of the candidate is legitimate is assumed), but rather how one conducts oneself in one's marriage."

C. Self-controlled

1. "*temperate*" -- NIV -- "keep your head in all situations"

2. "*prudent*" -- sound-minded; curbing one's desires and impulses

Lenski: "soundness and balance in judgment, not unstable; not given to quick and superficial decisions based on immature thinking"

Wiersbe: "He must have a serious attitude and be in earnest about his work. This does not mean he has no sense of humor, or that he is always solemn and somber. Rather it suggests that he knows the values of things and does not cheapen the ministry or the Gospel message by foolish behavior."

3. *"respectable"* -- orderly; used of a man living with proper decorum
- D. *"hospitable"* -- primarily taking in Christian strangers for food and lodging
- E. *"able to teach"*
- F. Peaceable
1. Not Quarrelsome
 - a. *"not addicted to wine"*
 - b. *"or pugnacious"* = someone who carries a chip on their shoulder and is quick to get into a fight; be a peacemaker instead of a troublemaker
 2. Gracious with Others
 - a. *"gentle"*
 - b. *"uncontentious"*
- G. Not Greedy -- *"free from the love of money"*
- K. Proven Responsible -- *"manages his own household well"*
 Proof = *"keeping his children under control with all dignity"*
- Why is this important?
"if a man does not know how to manage his own household, how will he take care of the church of God?"
- L. Not a Novice in the Faith -- *"not a new convert"*
- Why is this important?
"lest he become conceited and fall into the condemnation incurred by the devil"
- M. Final Summary: Good Reputation with Unbelievers --
"And he must have a good reputation with those outside the church"
- Why is this important?
"so that he may not fall into reproach and the snare of the devil"

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DEVOTIONAL QUESTIONS:

- 1) To what extent do we make it more easy or more difficult for mature men in our local church to aspire to the office of pastor/elder/overseer than we see here in the NT qualifications? Do we truly emphasize character (as we see in this passage) rather than

academic credentials and performance?

- 2) How do these qualifications serve as a guide and a goal for all members of the church -- even though they are set forth in the context of requirements for elders?
- 3) How do we evaluate someone's reputation with those who are "*outside the church*"? How do we solicit this information and take it into account when we evaluate a candidate for eldership?
- 4) How does this emphasis on evaluating someone's character and the management of their own household mesh with the modern day common practice of candidating where you know very little about the person's background and responses to everyday life situations?

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QUOTES FOR REFLECTION:

Kent: Re vs. 2 -- "It is also clear from this statement and from succeeding ones that the overseer must be a male. Every adjective used in this list is masculine. The name '*overseer*' is masculine. The use of the expression '*husband of one wife*' proves that men are being referred to. The duty of superintending the church (v. 5), which is the very nature of the office, excludes women (according to I Tim. 2:12). Thus we find no women elders or bishops in the New Testament."

Kent: Re "*husband of one wife*" -- "there must be no record of divorce or other marital infidelity in the candidate, even before his conversion. A very practical reason for this restriction is seen. Extremely embarrassing complications might occur in the church if the minister's divorced wife, mistresses, illegitimate children, or children of other marriages should come to light... Another reason why the moral (marriage) qualification can reach back to the unsaved state is because this is God's standard for all society, not just for the church (Matt. 19:8)."

Hendriksen: "On the one hand, the requirements for office are high enough so that persons with outstanding moral defects are excluded from office and in face from any position of considerable responsibility in the church.
Yet, on the other hand, these requirements are low enough so that almost any member in good standing and of deserved reputation can qualify. Sinlessness, material riches, exceptional cultural attainment, these are not required.
Accordingly, a group of converts which displays a manifest lack of such qualities as are here mentioned is not yet ready to be organized into a congregation."

TEXT: 1 TIMOTHY 3:8-13

TITLE: *SERVING THE CHURCH OF GOD --
QUALIFICATIONS FOR DEACONS -- MEN OF DIGNITY*

BIG IDEA:

SERVING THE CHURCH OF GOD IN THE PRIVILEGED ROLE OF DEACON ALSO REQUIRES MEN OF PROVEN CHARACTER AND RESPECTABLE FAMILIES

INTRODUCTION:

Wiersbe: "The first deacons were appointed to be assistants to the apostles. In a local church today deacons relieve the pastors/elders of other tasks so that they may concentrate on the ministry of the Word, prayer, and spiritual oversight."

I. (:8-12) QUALIFICATIONS FOR DEACON

A. General Qualification -- *"men of dignity"*

B. Men of Integrity

1. Trustworthy -- *"not double-tongued"*
not a liar or a gossip; you can trust what he says

Earle: "has the idea of saying something twice, with the bad connotation of saying one thing to one person and something else to another... Metaphorically, the word means 'insincere' ..."

1. Self-controlled -- *"not addicted to much wine"*
3. Honest -- *"or fond of sordid gain"*
4. Good Conscience in Faith and Practice --
"but holding to the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience"

C. Men of Proven Experience

"And let these also first be tested then let them serve as deacons if they are beyond reproach."

D. Men with Exemplary Wives -- *"women must likewise be"*

Note: talking about wives of deacons rather than an office of deaconess

Ryrie: "Most likely a reference to the wives of the deacons, rather than to a separate office of deaconess, since the qualifications for deacons are continued in v. 12. If he had a different group in mind, it would seem more natural for Paul to have finished the qualifications for deacons before introducing the office

of deaconess."

Hiebert disagrees: "The ancient interpreters generally took the view that the reference is to deaconesses. The New Testament gives indication that deaconesses existed in some apostolic churches. Phoebe is called 'a deacon of the church that is at Cenchrea' (Rom. 16:1, Gr.)."

1. General Requirement: *"dignified"*
2. *"not malicious gossips"*
3. *"temperate"*
4. *"faithful in all things"*

E. Men of Good Homes

1. *"husbands of only one wife"*
2. *"good managers of their children and their own households"*

II. (:13) REWARD FOR FAITHFUL SERVICE

A. Prerequisite: Faithful Service

"For those who have served well as deacons"

B. Reward -- *"obtain for themselves"*

1. *"high standing"*

Hiebert: "The word '*standing*' means '*a step*' and so denotes an advanced position. Paul is not speaking of the ecclesiastical advancement of the deacon to the overseership, nor is he speaking of the future reward in glory. The reference is to the excellent community standing and recognition which they require through their having rendered good service."

Possibly refers as well to excellent standing with God?

2. *"great confidence in the faith that is in Christ Jesus"*

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DEVOTIONAL QUESTIONS:

- 1) Should we view the office of deacon as a stepping stone to the eldership (i.e. you prove yourself first in this realm of responsibility and then possibly move up to elder) or view them as two very distinct offices with different types of individuals better suited for one or the other?
- 2) Do you think this passage favors the inclusion of women as a separate office of deaconess or is it talking about the wives of deacons here?
- 3) How does this passage impact the debate over the Christian's abstinence or temperate use of alcohol? What was different about their situation as opposed to today?
- 4) What can we do to increase our "*confidence in the faith*"? What is meant by that expression? Apparently all Christians do not have the same level of confidence in the faith.

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QUOTES FOR REFLECTION:

Guthrie: "The list of qualities specified is closely akin to the preceding, but there are significant variations. Once again an element of seriousness is prominent, for such a quality would naturally call out a due measure of respect. The word *doubletongued* (*dilogos*) could sustain the meaning '*tale-bearer*' suggesting the idea of gossipers, a tendency which would be all too easy yet damaging for the holder of the deacon's office. The meaning may, however, be *doubletongued*, i.e. speaking one thing to one person and something different to another.

The two further comments forbidding wine addicts and men with insatiable appetites for base gain are both expressed in stronger terms than in the case of the overseers, no doubt because their house-to-house visitation would expose them more pointedly to these evils."

Liddon: "Intellectually -- holds the true '*mystery of the faith*,' the long-hidden but now revealed Truth, which faith apprehends (ver. 9). Morally -- clings to a pure conscience, as the only atmosphere in which faith will live (ver. 9)."

Barnes: Re "*not greedy of filthy lucre*" -- "The special reason why this qualification was important in the deacon was, that he would be intrusted with the funds of the church, and might be tempted to appropriate them to his own use instead of the charitable purposes for which they were designed."

Lenski: Re "*confidence in the faith*" -- "To have served excellently for some time places one beyond any timidity or hesitation and makes him act with boldness and assurance. The acquisition of such boldness in faith, the blessed faith that rests in Christ Jesus, is the most satisfying reward and the incentive to proceed on this tried course."

TEXT: 1 TIMOTHY 3:14-16

TITLE: CONSTITUTION OF THE CHURCH OF THE LIVING GOD

BIG IDEA:

THEME OF 1 TIMOTHY: THE CHURCH OF THE LIVING GOD MUST BE STRUCTURED AROUND APPROPRIATE STANDARDS FOR CONDUCT AND THE COMMON CONFESSION OF UNION WITH CHRIST

INTRODUCTION:

Importance of Structure in the Local Church -- not just do whatever you please, however you want;

There are standards about who is eligible to serve as an elder or deacon;

There are standards about how we should conduct ourselves in the church

It matters to the Lord Jesus what type of leadership is over His flock; these are not optional items: cf. context of Chapter 3:

an overseer MUST be above reproach;

likewise deacons men of dignity

The local church is of supreme importance to Christ -- He is the head over His body = the church

I. (:14-15) APPROPRIATE STANDARDS OF CONDUCT FOR "THE CHURCH OF THE LIVING GOD"

A. Urgency of Communicating the Appropriate Standards for Conduct

1. *"These things"* must be communicated

"I am writing these things to you"

2. Personal Visit is Preferred but may be Delayed

a. Prefers to Visit

"hoping to come to you before long"

b. Anticipates being Delayed

"but in case I am delayed"

3. Written Letter is Necessary in light of the Urgency (email would be even better!)

"I write so that"

B. Significance of the Appropriate Standards for Conduct

"you may know how one ought to conduct himself"

C. Importance of the Church

1. "Household of God"

this is a family affair; relationships are important

2. "Church of the Living God"

related to the living God; represents the living God in the world -- can't be a dead church

Stedman: "The Apostle Paul uses two descriptive phrases here to tell us what that was. He calls the church, '*the house of God*,' which suggests intimacy and warmth, a family gathered; and then he calls it, '*the church of the living God*,' which suggests excitement and power. That was what the church was, and is; that is the nature of the church.

D. Priority of the Truth -- "*pillar and support of the truth*"

II. (:16) COMMON CONFESSION OF THE SIGNIFICANCE OF OUR UNION WITH CHRIST -- "*THE MYSTERY OF GODLINESS*"

A. Summary of this Confession -- "*And by common confession great is the mystery of godliness*"

1. THE COMMON CONFESSION

churches tend to emphasize their distinctives; what makes them different; here we will look at the fundamentals; what we have in common as the true Church of Jesus Christ; probably vs. 16 was sung or recited as an early creed or hymn

2. THE REVEALED SECRET OF GODLINESS

a. "Mystery"

We all love a good mystery. Our concept of a mystery = a whodunit?
Where we have to use all of our reasoning powers to piece together the different clues and figure out the answer.

Here we are talking about a Great Mystery --

Great = "Mega" like megabucks; like megachurch / like huge

When God says something is Mega, it's really huge

Called a Mega Mystery -- but not the type of mystery that we could ever figure out on our own;

NT concept of mystery: truth previously hidden, which when revealed by God is understood only by the believer through the Holy Spirit

What a privilege: God is going to clue us in on one of His Mega Mysteries.

b. "*Godliness*" = piety, devotion by men towards God;
these are not abstract truths about Christ that are being presented

the type of piety expressed in a life that is well-pleasing to God;

You want to be a good Christian: here is the secret:

Everything is wrapped up in our Union with Christ

We have looked at the summary of the Confession; now let's look at the DETAILS:

B. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE LIFE OF CHRIST

Different ways to treat the structure of these 6 sayings:

- 1) treat as couplets = contrast between visible realm and invisible; chiastic structure
- 2) treat as 2 groups of 3 -- which is my preference

1. "REVEALED IN THE FLESH"

Answers the Question: WHAT IS GOD LIKE?

Interesting paradox:

"veiled in flesh the Godhead see"

combination of:

self-concealment: "emptied Himself" (Philip. 2)

self-disclosure: John 1:14-18

Heb. 1:1-3 God has revealed Himself in His Son = the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature

Heb. 2:7 made Him for a little while lower than the angels

Heb. 2:14 Christ took part of flesh and blood

2. "VINDICATED IN THE SPIRIT"

Answers the Question: CAN CHRIST BE TRUSTED?

The claims Christ made as to His righteousness and His Sinlessness are all true

The Resurrection was the ultimate vindication

Rom. 1:4 "who was declared the Son of God with power by the resurrection from the dead, according to the spirit of holiness, Jesus Christ our Lord"

"justified" = forensically declared just and righteous; God's seal of approval on His Son

"This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased. Listen to Him"

pronounce a verdict on character, conduct and deeds as to whether they are righteous or not

Stedman:

"This is what is meant by the phrase, '*justified in spirit.*' We are being given here the secret of the inner life of Jesus. The word '*justified*' means the same thing here that it means in Romans 5:1:

'Being, therefore, justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.'

Justified is what is true of us, and it was also true of Jesus. It means, '*made righteous.*' There was a continual witness being borne to the spirit of Jesus that he was righteous before God. That means he was fully accepted and acceptable to God. He was loved and cherished and desired and looked after with deep affection and concern. That was the secret of his serene and untroubled character. That is what kept him calm and

panic-proof in the midst of all the pressures and dangers in which he walked."

Titles for the Messiah:

Acts 7:52 "the coming of the Righteous One"

Acts 3:14 "you disowned the Holy and Righteous One"

Satan, the accuser of the brethren, the roaring lion who seeks to devour us, likes to sneak up on us and plant doubts about whether we can really trust Christ to do this or that:

Sure God commands you to trust Him and not be anxious or worry --
but that's impossible

Sure God says it will be more than worth it to sacrifice all to follow Him --
but that's a lot of bunk; you'd better provide your own riches and
security for the future

3. "BEHELD BY ANGELS"

Answers the Question: HOW MUCH DOES CHRIST LOVE ME?

Stedman:

"The word '*seen*,' as it is used here, is the word from which we get our English word, 'eyeball.' Jesus was eyeballed by the angels. They watched him all the time. They studied him; that is the idea. He was constantly under observation by angels."

Angels had been used to seeing Him in Glory previous to the Incarnation;
How they must have marveled at how poor He became for our sakes so that we could
become rich

2 Cor. 8:9 "For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He
was rich, yet for your sake He became poor, that you through His
poverty might become rich"

Function of angels = "ministering spirits" to minister to Jesus and proclaim His glory;
job was certainly made more difficult by His placing Himself at risk

Angels were present at:

Proclamation of the birth of John the Baptist, His forerunner to Zacharias (Luke
1:11-20)

"Gabriel who stands in the presence of God -- sent to bring the good
news"

Mission of John the Baptist: "to make ready for the Lord a people
prepared for Him"

Proclamation by Gabriel to Mary regarding the virgin birth (Luke 1:26-38)

Jesus shall be great and shall be called the Son of the Most High and will
reign forever from the throne of David

He will be conceived by the Holy Spirit and will be holy

Proclamation of His birth to Joseph (Matt. 1:20-25)

Conceived by the Holy Spirit

Jesus = He shall save His people from their sins

Immanuel = God with us

His birth: announcement to the shepherds in the fields (Luke 2:8-14)

a Saviour which is Christ the Lord

Did He come as a king in a royal palace?

No, you will find a babe wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying
in a manger

Warning to Joseph to flee to Egypt for protection from Herod (Matt. 2:13-18)

"out of Egypt did I call my son" -- strange prophecy

Assurance to Joseph that the coast was clear to return to Nazareth (Matt.
2:19-23)

"that he should be called a Nazarene" -- strange prophecy

His baptism by John the Baptist (Matt. 3:13-17) the heavens were opened

surely the angels had a good view although not specifically mentioned
here

His temptation: angels ministered to Him (Matt. 4:11)

His agony in the Garden (Luke 22:43)

Surprisingly absent during His agony on the cross: 3 hours of darkness

(Song: "He could have called ten thousand angels to destroy the world
and set Him free")

Matt. 26:53

Especially: at His resurrection!

Matt. 28:2-8

At his ascension back up into glory: Acts. 1:9-12

promising His Second Coming

Stedman:

"I remember an old hymn that we used to sing when I was a new Christian:

Holy, holy, holy, is what the angels sing,

And I expect to help them make the courts of heaven ring.

But when we sing redemption's story, they must fold their wings,

For angels never felt the joy that our salvation brings."

C. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF MY LIFE = UNITED TO CHRIST

1. PARTICIPATION IN PROCLAMATION -- "PROCLAIMED AMONG THE NATIONS"

Answers the Question: WHAT IS MY MISSION HERE ON EARTH?

Response to Revelation of the Godhead in the flesh is Proclamation

2. PARTICIPATION IN FAITH -- "BELIEVED ON IN THE WORLD"

Answers the Question: WHAT RESULTS CAN I EXPECT FROM MY PROCLAMATION?

Response to Vindication of Christ is Faith in Christ

3. PARTICIPATION IN GLORY -- "TAKEN UP IN GLORY"

Answers the Question: WHERE AM I HEADED?

Response to the Earthly Life, Death and Resurrection of Christ (as beheld by angels) is Eternity in Glory

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DEVOTIONAL QUESTIONS:

- 1) How does our current culture show a disdain for any emphasis on structure?
- 2) How do we relate to one another in our church as we would to those in our same household?
- 3) Why the emphasis on the church of the "living" God?
- 4) In what ways does Satan try to accuse us and undermine our confidence in the righteousness we enjoy by virtue of our union with Christ?

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QUOTES FOR REFLECTION:

Towner: "The church exists to protect and promote the truth. Paul employs building imagery in the last descriptive phrase to characterize the church in terms of one of its major functions... As the '*supporting foundation*' (one idea is expressed rather than two) of the truth, the believing church is the guardian and communicator of the gospel in the world. This aspect of the church also demands from believers appropriate conduct: godly leadership, that the message might not be discredited, and corporate prayer for the missionary enterprise, that the message might be spread."

Wiersbe: "It is likely that the *pillar* aspect of the church's ministry relates primarily to displaying the truth of the Word, much as a statue is put on a pedestal so all can see it..."

The local church puts Jesus Christ on display in the lives of faithful members.

As a *bulwark*, the church protects the truth and makes sure it does not fall..."

Guthrie: "It is noticeable that nowhere in the hymn is the death or resurrection of Christ mentioned, a surprising thing if this letter is Paul's own work. But if he is here citing a current hymn and citing only a part, it is at least possible that the part not cited contained these great truths. The part preserved can hardly represent a complete Christian creed, and indeed is not intelligible apart from some doctrine of the cross and resurrection being assumed."

Bassler: "When the author conceptualizes the social structure of the church as a household, he is following a familiar pattern, for Greek and Roman philosophers viewed the family as the microcosm of the empire. What strengthened the one, strengthened also the other. Therefore Aristotle devoted Book I of his Politics to the household and concluded this Book with the observation that 'every household is part of a state, and these relationships [i.e., husband and wife, father and children, master and slaves] are a part of the household, and the excellence of the part must have regard to that of the whole' (1260b). During the rule of Augustus, Dionysius of Halicarnassus made a similar observation: 'every state, since it consists of many houses, is most likely to enjoy tranquility when the lives of the individual citizens are untroubled' (Roman Antiquities 2.24.2)."

Stedman: "Paul describes the role of the church in two dramatic words: the church is the '*pillar*' and the '*bulwark*' of the truth. The great reason for the existence of the church is to introduce truth back into a world saturated with error, with fantasy, a world that follows will-o'-the-wisp ideas that are paraded and exalted as though they were the acme of knowledge and wisdom. We live in a confused world and it is getting more confused all the time. In fact, if you are not confused it is because you are not thinking clearly! The church is called upon increasingly to speak the truth in the midst of that confusion, to point out that the Emperor does not have any clothes on, and to speak things that everybody thinks are heresy and radicalism because they are so different from the confusion of the society around us."

TEXT: 1 TIMOTHY 4:1-5

TITLE: PROPHECY OF APOSTASY

BIG IDEA:

APOSTASY RESULTS FROM THE POWERFUL DEMONIC DECEPTION PROMOTED BY FALSE TEACHERS WHO ARE:

- OBLIVIOUS TO MORAL DISTINCTIONS AND
- LEGALISTIC IN COMMANDING FALSE ASCETIC PRACTICES

I. APOSTASY IS ALL AROUND US AND INCREASING

A. Inevitability of Apostasy -- Don't be Surprised by it!

"but the Spirit explicitly says"

God wants us to be warned about the danger and to be on the Alert';

God is clear in what He says -- make no mistake about it

B. Timing of Apostasy -- *"in later times"*

This is something that is going to continue to take place time and again in these latter times which began with the First Coming of Christ

C. Extent of Apostasy -- *"some"*

Don't want to Exaggerate the Danger -- only some will fall prey; not all

D. Definition of Apostasy -- *"will fall away from the faith"*

to stand off from; fall away

Hiebert: *"The faith' here denotes the doctrinal truths of the Christian faith. The verb 'fall away,' or 'apostatize,' denotes not an unintentional fall but a deliberate withdrawal from the faith once professed. An apostate is not one who gives up his profession of being a Christian, but one who forsakes the truth of the Christian faith."*

II. APOSTASY RESULTS FROM THE POWERFUL DEMONIC DECEPTION PROMOTED BY FALSE TEACHERS

Those duped will pay attention to these False Teachers because they are:

A. Energized by *"deceitful spirits"* -- Emphasis on the false teachers

B. Indoctrinated with *"doctrines of demons"* -- Emphasis on the false teaching

III. THESE FALSE TEACHERS ARE OBLIVIOUS TO MORAL DISTINCTIONS

A. Hypocritical Liars -- *"by means of the hypocrisy of liars"*

B. Devoid of any Conscience -- *"seared in their own conscience as with a branding iron"*

Hiebert: "Through their hypocrisy their conscience, from constant violation, has become seared and rendered incapable of further feeling the compunctions of conscience."

Wiersbe: "Just as a person's flesh can be 'branded' so that it becomes hard and without feeling, so a person's conscience can be deadened. Whenever we affirm with our lips something that we deny with our lives (whether people know it or not), we deaden our consciences just a little more. Jesus made it clear that it is not religious talk or even performing miracles that qualifies a person for heaven, but doing God's will in everyday life (Matt. 7:21-29)."

Kent: (prefers an interpretation emphasizing a more radical searing) -- "The conscience has been made insensitive to right and wrong because of some radical act of perverting the truth. The conscience is man's sensitiveness to right and wrong based on his standard. If the standard is perverted, then its action becomes altered. It is cauterized and fails to respond. The verb ... depicts this perversion of truth as a violent and radical action. The writer suggests that act to have been the time when the religious teacher deliberately turned away from the instruction of God's Word and permitted Satan's demonic hosts to take control of his mind and thought."

IV. THESE FALSE TEACHERS ARE LEGALISTIC IN COMMANDING FALSE ASCETIC PRACTICES

A. *"men who forbid marriage"*

not talking about voluntary celibacy for the cause of Christ, but mandatory celibacy

B. *"and advocate abstaining from foods"*

Fernando: "Asceticism appeals to certain Christians who are troubled by their failures in the spiritual life. They are looking for something extra which they can do to speed their growth in godliness. Asceticism seems to provide an answer to this quest. The struggling Christian reasons that it is because of desires for earthly things, such as sex, food, and clothing, that he keeps falling into sin. So, he tries to do away with these evil desires and join that superior band of Christians who have chosen to go 'all the way' in their commitment to Christ."

Stedman: "The reason is that at the heart of asceticism is a conviction that self-denial somehow pleases God. It can be very earnest, very sincere. Often Christians fall into this error in their early Christian days, thinking that if they deny themselves in some way God is going to be pleased, and their status in his sight will be advanced. That is why some Christians love to get up early in the morning, or memorize hundreds of

verses of Scripture, or pray on their knees for long periods of time, etc. These practices, which in themselves are not wrong, nevertheless become wrong because their motive (that of gaining God's favor by self-denial) is wrong."

V. THE ONLY SAFEGUARD IS GRATEFULLY UNDERSTANDING AND PRACTICING THE TRUTH IN ACCORDANCE WITH GOD'S WORD AND PRAYER

A. Understanding the Truth -- from the Perspective of God's Creation

1. Insight from the Goodness of Creation --

a. *"which God has created to be gratefully shared in"*

Asceticism is not compatible with Biblical Creationism

b. *"For everything created by God is good"*

2. Insight based on Spiritual Qualifications

a. *"those who believe"*

b. *"and know the truth"*

B. Practicing the Truth -- with an attitude of gratitude and in accordance with God's Word and Prayer -- *"nothing is to be rejected if it is received"*:

1. With an attitude of gratitude -- *"with gratitude"*

fundamental importance of thanksgiving; recognizing the goodness of God and His wonderful gifts to us -- all that we have to enjoy comes from Him

2. In accordance with God's Word -- *"for it is sanctified by means of the Word of God"*

3. In accordance with Prayer -- *"and prayer"*

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DEVOTIONAL QUESTIONS:

1) How important is the doctrine of creation in our theology? Why is it so important to vigorously oppose the false theory of evolution?

2) Are we constantly educating our conscience with the proper standard of God's code of holiness? How sensitive are we to our conscience? Are there any areas where we

have allowed our conscience to become dull?

3) Do we view false doctrine as errors invented and perpetuated by the imagination of men, or as devilish lies promulgated by the demons from the gates of hell?

4) Do we take God's good gifts for granted or do we enjoy what He has provided with true thanksgiving and consecration?

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QUOTES FOR REFLECTION:

Expositors: "In this sort of prophetic waning or denunciation, we are not intended to take the future tense too strictly. Although the prophet intends to utter a warning concerning the future, yet we know that what he declares will be hereafter, he believes to be already in active operation. It is a convention of prophetic utterance to denounce sins and sinners of one's own time under a form of a predictive warning."

Fernando: "The ascetic says we must destroy the flesh. The hedonist says we must indulge the flesh, so he dedicates himself to the pursuit of pleasure even at the cost of his principles. The biblical Christian says we must consecrate the flesh by '*the word of God and prayer*.'... To consecrate the flesh is to surrender it to God and let him direct us into using it according to his will. The flesh becomes a means of fulfilling the will of God, which is the best way to use the flesh, for the will of God is '*good, pleasing and perfect*' (Rom. 12:2)."

Towner: "It does not take much imagination to see that the Creator's act of giving and the believer's act of receiving (and enjoying) the gifts of creation are both part of a conscious communication process meant to strengthen the bond between Father and child. Furthermore, the communication is intimate, for only believers (v. 3) can enter fully into it. There are undoubtedly implications here that go beyond the dinner table to include the Christian's appreciation of the environment in general, but the starting point for developing this kind of understanding is the recognition through prayers of thanksgiving of God's gracious provisions. Neither the true gospel nor the life of salvation in this present age calls for ascetic denial. Rather, they encourage responsible use and enjoyment of God's creation."

Lenski: "The great danger is that today false doctrines are not recognized as coming from demons unless they deny the faith *in toto*, as if the devil is not cunning enough to begin with little lies, as if only those that are as big as mountains come from him."

Wallis: "The things God has provided by his creative word are set apart by his directions for their use (Gen 1:29-31; 2:4,5), and are further sanctified as a testimony of our heavenly Father's faithfulness and care when received with prayer, thankfulness, and understanding (cf. I Tim 6:17)."

Stedman: "These groups make their appeal in various ways: some appeal to the emotions, some to the intellect, some to the will, to the pride of mankind. But they all have one common characteristic. This characteristic is indicated in this passage by the way the apostle moves from the central truth of Christianity, "*the mystery of wholeness*" (the person of our Lord and his work) expressed in Chapter 3, Verse 16, to the sharp and stark contrast of this "*departure from the faith*." Thus Paul seems strongly to suggest that the central focus of all error is to present a different Jesus; that is the key mark of deceit."

TEXT: 1 TIMOTHY 4:6-16

TITLE: JOB DESCRIPTION OF A SPIRITUAL LEADER

BIG IDEA:

WHAT THE CHURCH NEEDS MOST OF ALL ARE SPIRITUAL LEADERS WHO WILL PERSEVERE IN PRACTICING GODLINESS AND PROCLAIMING SOUND DOCTRINE

INTRODUCTION:

Context:

Yes, it is important for men and women to fulfill their God-ordained roles in the church;

Yes, it is important for the qualifications of elders and deacons to be upheld;

Yes, it is essential for the church to be structured around proper conduct and a true confession of Christ;

Yes, it is important for the Danger of Apostasy to be recognized and combated;

But what really is the Job Description of a Spiritual Leader?

WHAT THE CHURCH NEEDS MOST OF ALL ARE SPIRITUAL LEADERS WHO WILL PERSEVERE IN GODLINESS AND SOUND DOCTRINE

I. (:6-10) IN ORDER TO TEACH SOUND DOCTRINE EFFECTIVELY YOU MUST FIRST FEED ON SOUND DOCTRINE AND PRACTICE GODLINESS

A. (:6) Feed on Sound Doctrine

1. You must Practice what you Preach

"In pointing out these things to the brethren"

The leader is one among the brethren, not above them in terms of what standards he must live by; he is never above the law and accountability

Fernando: "The Greek word used here literally means, 'to place under.' Timothy was to place before the believers these truths so that they become like stepping stones upon which a person could traverse on treacherous ground. The task of the teacher is not simply to spoonfeed Christians by always telling them what to do. Rather, he placed truth before them so that they could use it to walk in faithfulness, while other misleading voices constantly clamored for their attention."

Campbell: "placing truth under, undergirding"

2. The Goal = to be "a good servant of Christ Jesus"

3. The Nourishment -- "*constantly nourished*"
 - a. "*on the words of the faith*"
 - b. "*and of the sound doctrine*"
 - c. consistent with the apostolic model
"*which you have been following*"
- B. (:7a) Avoid Worldly Fables
"*but have nothing to do with worldly fables fit only for old women.*"
Hiebert: "The first adjective points out that there is nothing sacred about them, while the other indicates their futile, senseless nature; they are nothing but silly fictions, fit only for senile, childish old crones to chatter about."
- C. (:7-8a) Practice the Disciplines of Godliness
 1. Command -- "*discipline yourself for the purpose of godliness*"
 2. Reason --
 - a. "*for bodily discipline is only of little profit*"
 - b. "*but godliness is profitable for all things*"
- D. (:8b-10) Live for Eternity -- Why?
 1. Because of the Eternal value of Godliness
"*since it holds promise for the present life and also for the life to come*"
 2. Because of the Significance of this Emphasis on Eternity
"*It is a trustworthy statement deserving full acceptance*"
 3. Because Living for Eternity is Worthy of All Our Effort
"*For it is for this we labor and strive*"
 4. Because of the Eternal Nature of God
"*because we have fixed our hope on the living God*"
 5. Because of the Universal Saving Efficacy of God
"*who is the Savior of all men*"

"*especially of believers*"

II. (:11-16) BE AN EXAMPLE TO THE FLOCK BY PERSEVERING IN PRACTICING GODLINESS AND PROCLAIMING SOUND DOCTRINE

- A. (:11) Instruct Others to Focus on Sound Doctrine and Godliness
 - "Prescribe and teach these things"*

- B. (:12) Model Godliness in Your Speech and Conduct -- Continue to Be an Example!
 - 1. Lifestyle Modeling is especially critical for Younger Leaders
 - "Let no one look down on your youthfulness"*

 - 2. Areas of Lifestyle Modeling
 - a. *"speech"*

 - b. *"conduct"*

 - c. *"love"*

 - d. *"faith"*

 - e. *"purity"*

 - 3. Goal: *"show yourself an example of those who believe"*

- C. (:13) Proclaim the Word of God in Every Way Possible
 - 1. Proclaiming the Truth will Protect Against the Danger of False Teachers
 - "until I come"*

 - 2. Modes of Proclaiming the Truth -- *"give attention to"*
 - a. *Public reading of Scripture*

 - b. *Exhortation*

 - c. *Teaching*

- D. (:14) Make Maximum Use of Your Spiritual Gift for Teaching and Leadership
 - 1. Warning -- *"Do not neglect the spiritual gift within you"*

 - 2. Reminder -- *"which was bestowed upon you through prophetic utterance"*

 - 3. Confirmation -- *"with the laying on of hands by the presbytery"*

- E. (:15-16) Summary -- Focused Intensity Will Reinforce the Effectiveness of Your Example
 - 1. Activity of Focused Intensity
 - a. *"Take pains with these things"*

 - b. *"be absorbed in them"*

c. *"Pay close attention to"*

2. Sphere of Focused Intensity

a. Practicing godliness -- *"to yourself"*

b. Proclaiming sound doctrine -- *"and to your teaching"*

3. Duration of Focused Intensity

"Persevere in these things"

3. Goal of Focused Intensity

a. Makes your Example more Effective

"so that your progress may be evident to all"

1) Progress in spiritual growth

2) Progress in ministry effectiveness

Wiersbe: "a Greek military term. It means 'pioneer advance.' It describes the soldiers who go ahead of the troops, clear away the obstacles, and make it possible for others to follow. As a godly pastor, Timothy was to grow spiritually so that the whole church could see his spiritual progress and imitate it. No pastor can lead his people where he has not been himself."

b. Insures Salvation -- *"for as you do this you will insure salvation"*

1) *"both for yourself"*

2) *"and for those who hear you"*

Fee: "Salvation involves perseverance; and Timothy's task in Ephesus is to model and teach the gospel in such a fashion that it will lead the church to perseverance in faith and love, and hence to final, eschatological salvation. Thus both paragraphs in this section conclude with the great concern of the gospel--people's salvation (cf. 1:15; 2:4-6; 4:10)."

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DEVOTIONAL QUESTIONS:

1) Contrast the value of the minister of the gospel who edifies others for their eternal benefit to that of the physical surgeon who repairs the physical body for the purpose of this temporal life. What sort of preparation and study should be invested in each case? What sort of hours and hard work are required for maximum effectiveness? What sort of honor and respect should be accorded? What sort of rewards will accrue?

2) What types of issues must a minister of the Word devote himself to and what types of issues must he avoid (or beg off debating)? How important is the concept of sound doctrine throughout the Pastoral Epistles?

3) What is the pathway to respect and to gain a hearing for the proclamation of the Word of God according to verse 12? How much time and involvement in the lives of others does it take to make this happen?

4) Do we neglect the public reading of Scripture today in our worship services? Is this just a different emphasis since we all have written copies of the Word today to use on our own? What is the difference in emphasis between exhortation and teaching? Do we give due place to each in our public worship? Is the Word of God central in every case?

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QUOTES FOR REFLECTION:

Hiebert: "The reason why they thus labor and strive is '*because we have our hope set on the living God.*' The construction (*epi* with the locative) pictures the hope as resting on God as the only true foundation of hope. The perfect tense indicates that this hope has permanently been set on '*the living God.*' Their hope is not fixed on the dead idols of heathenism, but on the true and living God, who is himself life and the Fountain of life, and who is, therefore, able to fulfill his word' (Harvey)."

Guthrie: "The three pursuits to which Timothy is bidden to devote himself until the apostle's arrival are concerned with his public ministry, although the verb *prosecho* (*give attendance*) implies previous preparation in private. *Reading* is generally understood as '*reading aloud*' to the people under his charge, and there is little doubt that the reading of the Old Testament is here in mind. The Church carried on this synagogue practice and made it a basic element of Christian worship. As in the synagogue so in the Church, the reading of Scripture was followed by an *exhortation* (*paraklesis*) based upon it, but in Christian worship a special place was reserved for *doctrine* (*didaskalia*) which consisted of instruction in the great truths of the Christian faith."

Campbell: "The message to follow is not only reliable, but it is also '*worthy of all acceptance*' ... i.e., it merits and deserves being accepted and welcomed. There is no question about it, the message that God through Christ has provided salvation deserves and merits acceptance by all, but the fact is that only few welcome this message. Jesus Himself attributed this rejection to men's sin (John 3:19-20). Furthermore, He says, 'no one is able to come to me except the Father who has sent me draw him' (John 6:44). Paul also affirms that even though the salvation message should be readily welcomed by all; yet in actual practice only the elect consider it worthy of acceptance (Rom. 9:11-16)."

Hendriksen: Re vs. 10b -- "The true explanation is found, it would seem to me, by making a thorough study of the term *Savior* in a passage of this kind. The final phrase '*especially of those who believe*' clearly indicates that the term is here given a twofold application. Of all men God is the Savior, but of some men, namely, believers, he is the Savior in a deeper, more glorious sense than he is of others. This clearly implies that when he is called the Savior of all men, this cannot mean that he imparts to all everlasting life, as he does to believers. The term Savior, then, must have a meaning which we today generally do not immediately attach to it. And that is exactly the cause of our difficulty. One must study this term in the light not only of the New Testament but also of the Old Testament and of Archaeology... not only is he a kind God, hence the *Soter* (Preserver, Deliverer) of all men, showering blessings upon them, but he is in a very special sense the *Soter* (Savior) of those who by faith embrace him and his promise, for to them he imparts salvation, everlasting life in all its fulness ..."

Kent: Re vs. 10b -- "Temporal-eternal interpretation. This view looks upon God's salvation as one. As applied to unbelievers it includes preservation and deliverance from various evils and the bestowal of many blessings during this life. To believers, however, this salvation does not end with earthly life but goes on for all eternity."

Hiebert: "Notice that the salvation is not procured '*by doing*' but '*in doing*' this. We are not saved by our faithful performance of our duties, but the faithful performance of our duties is the sphere within which our salvation is realized. A pastor unfaithful in doctrine and morals is saving neither himself nor his congregation. Salvation here means more than preservation from false teaching, although that is included. Salvation here has its full soteriological significance."

Fernando: "As we have seen, our response to false teaching is many faceted. First, we must know what this false teaching is. Second, we must not be afraid to condemn it. Third, we must show why it is wrong. Fourth, we must be faithful in guiding those we lead to a proper response to this false teaching. Fifth, we must make sure that we are constantly exposed to the true teaching."

TEXT: 1 TIMOTHY 5:1-16

TITLE: CERTAIN WIDOWS ARE THE CHURCH'S RESPONSIBILITY

BIG IDEA:

HOW TO RELATE PROPERLY TO CERTAIN SPECIAL GROUPS OF PEOPLE IN THE CHURCH -- PART I -- SPECIAL HONOR FOR WIDOWS

I. (:1-2) HOW TO RELATE PROPERLY TO THE YOUNG AND THE OLD IN THE CHURCH (based on age and sex distinctions)

A. Men

1. Older

a. Negative -- "*Do not sharply rebuke an older man*"
"*Elder*" used here in a nontechnical sense with respect to age.

b. Positive -- "*But rather appeal to him as a father*"

Stedman: "Hidden in that verse is another one of those profound psychological insights so frequently found in Scripture, which says that the way you treat people depends on how you see them. Paul is suggesting that if Timothy sees every older man in the congregation as a father, then he will treat him with a natural deference and respect."

2. Younger -- "*to the younger men as brothers*"

B. Women

1. Older -- "*the older women as mothers*"

Gromacki: "with kindness, respect, and dignity"

2. Younger -- "*and the younger women as sisters, in all purity*"

Important that we relate to the entire cross-section of ages and types of people in the church. Don't restrict your fellowship just to those who are most like you.

II. (:3-16) HOW TO CARE PROPERLY FOR THE WIDOWS IN THE CHURCH

God has always been concerned with proper care of widows: Deut. 10:18; 24:17; Isa. 1:17; Deut. 14:29; Ps. 94:6; Mal. 3:5 (**Wiersbe**)

A. (:3) General Principle

1. Stated -- "*Honor widows*"

2. Clarification -- "*who are widows indeed*"

Important distinction in this passage = what does it mean to be a

"widow indeed"

B. (:4-8, 16) The Immediate Family Has Primary Responsibility

1. (:4) Children or Grandchildren Must Make Provision

"but if any widow has children or grandchildren, let them first learn to practice piety in regard to their own family, and to make some return to their parents; for this is acceptable in the sight of God."

Hiebert: "The children owe their parents a great debt which they can never fully repay for all the love, patience, and self-sacrificing care bestowed upon them during their infancy and childhood. For them to make this requittal 'is acceptable in the sight of God.'"

2. (:5-6) The Widow Should be Devoted to God Rather Than Pleasure

a. No Immediate Family to Provide for Her

"Now she who is a widow indeed, and who has been left alone"

b. Evidence of Devotion to God

1) *"has fixed her hope on God"*

2) *"and continues in entreaties and prayers night and day"*

c. Not Wasting Her Life in Pursuing Pleasure

"But she who gives herself to wanton pleasure is dead even while she lives"

Hiebert: "Her frivolous, selfish, sensual existence is not true life; it fills none of life's true ends; and, as to any real value to herself or to others, she is practically dead' (Lipscomb and Shepherd). She is alive in the flesh but is dead spiritually."

3. (:7) Proper Conduct Requires Authoritative Teaching

a. Method = Authoritative Teaching -- *"Prescribe these things as well"*

b. Goal = Good Reputation -- *"so that they may be above reproach"*

4. (:8) Warning to the Immediate Family

"But if anyone does not provide for his own, and especially for those of his household, he has denied the faith, and is worse than an unbeliever."

5. (:16) Final Reminder

"If any woman who is a believer has dependent widows, let her assist them, and let not the church be burdened, so that it may assist those who are widows indeed."

C. (:9-10) Qualifications for Inclusion on the Widow Care List

"Let a widow be put on the list only if"

these are obligatory requirements; not optional

1. Age Requirement -- *"she is not less than sixty years old"*
2. Faithful in Her Marriage -- *"having been the wife of one man"*

Wiersbe: "We have met this same requirement before, for bishops (3:2) and for deacons (3:12). The implication is that the widow was not a divorced woman. Since younger widows were advised to remarry (5:14), this stipulation cannot refer to a woman who had a temporary second marriage after the death of her husband. Faithfulness to one's marriage vows is very important in the eyes of God."

3. Reputation for Good Works -- *"having a reputation for good works"*

- a. Faithful child-rearing -- *"if she has brought up children"*

Does this mean that these children must have died or not undertaken their responsibility to support this widow?

- b. Hospitality -- *"if she has shown hospitality to strangers"*

- c. Service -- *"if she has washed the saints' feet"*

- d. Compassion -- *"if she has assisted those in distress"*

- e. Summary -- *"if she has devoted herself to every good work"*

D. (:11-15) Younger Widows Should be Excluded from the Widow Care List

1. Clear Statement -- *"But refuse to put younger widows on the list"*

Implies that they will come and make such a request

2. Obvious Temptation -- putting them in a Compromising Position where they have made a pledge which they will have trouble fulfilling

"for when they feel sensual desires in disregard of Christ, they want to get married, thus incurring condemnation, because they have set aside their previous pledge"

3. Danger of Becoming Idle and Disruptive

(Opportunities for visitation and ministry could easily be abused by younger widows)

- a. Idle

"And at the same time they also learn to be idle, as they go around from house to house"

- b. Disruptive
"and not merely idle, but also gossips and busybodies, talking about things not proper to mention"

Hiebert: "His real reason for the restriction is not the conservation of the financial resources of the church but the spiritual welfare of its members. To place these youthful widows on the roll for permanent support would be to expose them to special temptations whose subtle operations Paul had witnessed.

4. Advantages of Remarriage

"Therefore, I want younger widows to get married"

- a. Opportunity to *"bear children"*
 - b. Opportunity to *"keep house"*
 - c. Opportunity to maintain a good reputation
 - 1) Positive -- *"give the enemy no occasion for reproach"*
 - 2) Negative -- *"for some have already turned aside to follow Satan"*
- Guthrie:** "by which is probably meant 'given themselves to immoral conduct'.

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DEVOTIONAL QUESTIONS:

- 1) What is the direct connection pointed out in this passage between idleness and sin? How do we raise our children in a way that they do not have too much time on their hands?
- 2) What is the nature of the *"pledge"* referred to in vs. 12? Does this involve their commitment to faith and devotion to Christ? or some type of vow of remaining a widow to serve God more effectively ...?
- 3) In today's culture, how should believers care for their widows? Is a nursing home or retirement home biblically acceptable? How do present-day Social Security benefits, pensions, insurance policies, etc. affect these guidelines given here?
- 4) What are some unique ministries that widows can have in the church today? How can they be especially effective?

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QUOTES FOR REFLECTION:

Hiebert: "The basic thought in the word 'widow' is that of loneliness. The word comes from an adjective meaning 'bereft' and speaks of her resultant loneliness as having been bereft of her husband. The added word 'indeed' places the emphasis upon those whose circumstances are characteristic of real widowhood."

Barnes: Re vs. 10 -- "This is one of the characteristics of true piety. A sincere Christian will, like God, be the friend of all that is good, and will be ready to promote every good object according to his ability. He will not merely be the friend of one good cause, to the neglect of others, but he will endeavour to promote every good object, and though from peculiar circumstances, and peculiar dealings of Providence, he may have been particularly interested in some one object of charity, yet every good object will find a response in his heart, and he will be ready to promote it by his influence, his property, and his prayers."

Fee: Re vs. 11-12 -- "Although Paul does not say so here, one wonders whether the problem is not related to what he says in 1 Corinthians 7:39, where he conceded remarriage to Christian widows. She is free to remarry, he says, only it must be '*in the Lord*' (GNB, '*but only if he is a Christian*'). What seems to be envisioned in the present passage is a remarriage that includes abandoning her faith in Christ; that is, here sensual desire is more important than her faith in Christ to the point that she would marry a non-believer in order to fulfill that desire....
the word *pistis*, as it does elsewhere in these letters, means '*faith in Christ*' or '*the faith*,' and her judgment comes in a kind of remarriage that has inherent in it an abandoning of Christ himself." ??

Campbell: "As Paul unfolds his domestic plan for the young widows, a plan designed to deprive the adversary of a launching pad, his purpose is to eliminate every *cause for reviling*. Many of the translations have failed to carry over into English the dual aspects of what Paul is saying here. First, he does not want a single base for launching an attack to be given to the adversary. Second, if the adversary gets such a base he will use it as a '*cause for reviling*' ... On the one hand Paul is talking about *gaining the base* from which to attack, and on the other hand he is speaking about *the attack itself*, i.e., '*reviling*' ..., *abusing*, and *reproaching* the Lord and His people."

Stedman: "Brief as it is, three times in this passage the apostle has underscored the responsibility to take care of older people. It is not always necessary to have them live in the home, though that is the usual and probably the best relationship, but sometimes physical requirements might mean that they be taken care of elsewhere.

It is also clear, as William Barclay points out in his commentary on this passage, that this lays a responsibility not only on family members to take care of the older parents, but on the older parents to be the kind of people who can live at home with their younger children. There is a dual responsibility here. Sometimes older parents can be so

crotchety, grouchy, complaining, and interfering that it is not possible for them to live in the home. Scripture allows for adjustment of these principles to fit the situation; each family must decide for itself. But basically it is clearly underscored that it is the privilege, indeed the responsibility of families to take care of their older parents...

God is interested always in the helpless, the weak, the lonely, the discouraged; and one of the major obligations of Christians is to minister to those needs. That is why the church exists; that is why Christian love has entered into our lives, that we might meet the needs of those who would otherwise be neglected, lonely, despairing. The apostle says it is something God is pleased with. Also it is only fair return for those years when the children were helpless and their mothers and fathers dedicated themselves to taking care of them, getting nothing back from the children at all."

TEXT: 1 TIMOTHY 5:17-25

TITLE: SPECIAL HONOR FOR ELDERS

BIG IDEA:

HOW TO RELATE PROPERLY TO CERTAIN SPECIAL GROUPS OF PEOPLE IN THE CHURCH -- PART II -- SPECIAL HONOR FOR ELDERS

I. (:17-18) RECOGNITION OF EXCELLING ELDERS

A. Double Honor Deserving to those Who Excel

1. Based on Ruling Well to Oversee the Church

"Let the elders who rule well be considered worthy of double honor"

This work of oversight is the main function of the elder (3:4-5); "Elder", "bishop", "pastor" -- all refer to the same group of individuals.

"Rule" does not mean lord it over; simply refers to leadership and oversight.

Kent: "The work of the elder must not be taken for granted by the congregation. Evaluation must be made and when real excellence appears, it should be recognized and commended."

2. Based on Working Hard to Proclaim the Word

"especially those who work hard at preaching and teaching"

B. Double Honor involves Respect and Remuneration

C. 2 Supporting Illustrations -- based on Scripture -- *"For the Scripture says"*

1. *"You shall not muzzle the ox while he is threshing"* -- Deut. 25:4; 1 Cor. 9:9

2. *"The laborer is worthy of his wages"* -- (Deut. 24:15) Luke 10:7

Kent: "No other meaning can be gotten from Paul's construction than that he places both quotations on the same level (joined by *kai*, and) and terms them Scripture (*he graphe*). Paul wrote this letter in A.D. 62-63, and Luke's Gospel was probably written before A.D. 60. Hence this verse is further evidence that the writings we call New Testament Scripture were recognized as such during the lifetime of their writers, and we may suggest in many cases from the time of writing."

II. (:19-21) REBUKING OF ERRING ELDERS

A. (:19) Protection Against Frivolous Accusations

"Do not receive an accusation against an elder except on the basis of two or three witnesses" Deut. 17:6; Matt. 18:16

Practically speaking, how is this possible without gossip and trying to enlist others to come with you?? Does this mean two or three coming to the elder

board independently or at the same time?

Kent: "These witnesses are not thought of as appearing at the trial, but rather at the time when the disciplinary process is first contemplated. Unless the evidence is sufficient and practically certain, no action should be initiated against an elder. This safeguard of the elder is a wise one. No person is more subject to Satan's attack in the form of gossip and slander than God's servant."

B. (:20) Public Rebuke When Necessary

1. Necessitated by Stubborn Rebellion

"Those who continue in sin"

Shows that there is opportunity given for them to repent

2. Requires Public Rebuke

"rebuke in the presence of all"

Must be a reference to the entire church, since the other elders are the ones administering the rebuke

Fernando: "Leaders are to be examples to God's people of the beauty of virtue. But when they fail, they become examples of the ugliness of sin. So when a leader sins, it becomes a very serious concern for the church. The church must face up squarely to the fact that the one who was expected to be a model of godliness has become just the opposite, so he must be rebuked in front of those to whom he was a poor example. What an awesome responsibility leadership is!"

3. Protects the Other Elders (and the Flock) Against Sinning

"so that the rest also may be fearful of sinning"

a. Primarily the other elders are in view

Abuse of the office is always a potential

Elders can wrongly think that they are above God's law

b. Also has application to the entire flock

C. (:21) Partiality Outlawed in Every Case

1. Seriousness of the Procedure

"I solemnly charge you in the presence of":

a. *"God"*

b. *"and of Christ Jesus"*

c. *"and of His chosen angels"*

Stedman: " Timothy might well have felt inadequate, but notice whom the apostle summons to his aid, whom he says is watching: "in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus and of the elect angels." God the Father is involved. He is at

work in the congregation. He knows what is going on; nothing is hid from his eyes. Christ Jesus, Lord of the church, head of the body, is present also. Jesus can work from within. He can touch men's consciences; he can get at their hearts. And the elect angels are involved, these personages whom the book of Hebrews tells us are as "ministering spirits sent forth to minister to those who shall be the heirs of salvation," {Heb 1:14 KJV}. I do not know exactly what these angels do, but it is very important and significant. Paul tells Timothy not to be intimidated. If it requires action, act -- patiently, lovingly, thoughtfully, carefully -- but act."

2. Impartiality Comanded -- *"to maintain these principles without bias"*

3. Partiality Outlawed -- *"doing nothing in a spirit of partiality"*

III. (:22-25) RESTRAINT IN ENLISTING ELDERS

A. (:22) Caution: Don't be Too Quick to Ordain an Elder

1. Warning Against Ordaining elders too quickly
"Do not lay hands upon anyone too hastily"

2. Culpability -- *"and thus share responsibility for the sins of others"*

3. Responsibility for Personal Purity -- *"keep yourself free from sin"*

B. (:23) Aside: Holiness Does not Require Unwise Asceticism

"No longer drink water exclusively, but use a little wine for the sake of your stomach and your frequent ailments."

Stedman: "In writing this, Paul very likely was reminded of something about Timothy that he felt needed correction. Timothy, evidently, was leaning too far toward total abstinence from wine. We know there was a lot of public drunkenness in Ephesus at that time. The reaction of almost all Christians to public drunkenness is, 'I don't want anything to do with that.'

There has sprung up in the church a widespread attitude that the Christian position about drinking should be one of total abstinence; that no Christian ought to drink at all. But that completely sets aside the record of the Scriptures that our Lord drank wine, and so did the apostles.

Paul is evidently warning Timothy about total abstinence, especially because it was affecting his health. Timothy had not taken a balanced position. Paul warns him, 'For your health's sake, don't do this.'"

C. (:24-25) Explanation: Cautious Examination over Time will Reveal the Truth

1. Sins will eventually be Evident

a. *"The sins of some men are quite evident, going before them to judgment"*

b. *"for others, their sins follow after"*

2. Good Works will eventually be Evident

a. *"Likewise also, deeds that are good are quite evident"*

b. *"and those which are otherwise cannot be concealed"*

Stedman: "Some men are skillful at hiding sin. They appear to be very dedicated, committed people, but there is rotten evil in their hearts all the time. If you get into the habit of electing people to office or appointing them into some responsible position without giving time to observe them you will get into trouble. 'Time will tell,' the world's proverb says. Let some time go by. God will bring it out. Get close to them. The closer you get the more obvious their evil will become.

But it works the other way too. Some men appear retiring and quiet, yet they may be very good men. Such men may make the very best elders. So do not rush men into leadership. If they have something good going on quietly in their lives, even when these are not conspicuous, Paul says, they cannot remain hidden. God will bring it all out if you get close to them. Abraham Lincoln's famous dictum, 'You can fool all of the people some of the time, and some of the people all of the time, but you can't fool all of the people all of the time,' is a wise word in choosing elders."

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DEVOTIONAL QUESTIONS:

1) Presbyterian churches typically make a hard and fast distinction between "teaching" elders and "ruling" elders (based primarily on vs. 17). These two different categories of elders are then ordained on a different basis and function on a different basis. Is this distinction valid? What can we learn about the nature of church government and the proper functioning of a plurality of elders from this passage?

2) Have we ever seen any instances of elders being *"rebuked in the presence of all"* for their sin? Why has the local church become so lax in the area of exercising discipline?

3) What process for examining and investigating the character and works of a prospective elder have we established in order to avoid the problem of recognizing a man as an elder prematurely? Do we follow these safeguards in every case?

4) How does verse 23 refute the notion that all that is required for healing is sufficient faith? How would Paul and Timothy view the use of medicine and doctors? What contribution does this verse make to the controversy over the Christian's use of alcohol?

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QUOTES FOR REFLECTION:

Kent: "What is included in *time*? The word means honor, price, compensation. The usage of *time* in the sense of pay or price is well established. (Matt. 27:6, 9; Acts 4:34; 7:16; I Cor. 6:20 are clear examples of this use.) Since the next verse employs a quotation used elsewhere by Paul (I Cor. 9:9) to argue for the right of the minister to be supported by those whom he benefits, the idea of remuneration must be included in *time* here. Thus the writer concludes that the double honor refers to a proportionate increase in respect and appreciation, which includes adequate remuneration, for those who excel in their superintending and teaching ministry."

Hendriksen: Re *double honor* -- adopts the view of Lenski = "honor as elders, extra honor as those who rule excellently"

"Nevertheless, this double honor must not be so interpreted as if any idea of remuneration is completely excluded from it ... An elder deserves to be honored; particularly if his labor excels in quality. This honor is due especially to those who labor in preaching and teaching... The explanation which I have given does not imply that *every* elder, or even every excellently ruling elder receive a salary. All who rule well deserve double honor, and in the case of those who devote themselves entirely to church-work this implies the right of remuneration."

Fernando: Re "*pure*" in vs. 22 -- "Three times in this book the work '*pure*' has appeared in connection with the leader's life-style (see 4:12 and 5:2). As we have said before, this word carries the dual idea of moral purity and integrity of motive. Only as Timothy was pure would he be consistent in enforcing high standards on other leaders in the church. Only then would he be qualified to rebuke and discipline others who had sinned. If the church was to have dedicated people in positions of responsibility, its key leaders would have to set the standard of total dedication to Christ. If such dedication was missing, the poison would gradually spread like gangrene throughout the whole body, causing spiritual bankruptcy in the community."

TEXT: 1 TIMOTHY 6:1-2A

TITLE: HONOR IN THE WORKPLACE

BIG IDEA:

HOW TO RELATE PROPERLY TO CERTAIN SPECIAL GROUPS OF PEOPLE IN THE CHURCH -- PART III -- SLAVES TO MASTERS

cf. Eph. 6:5-10; Col. 3:22-4:1

I. (:1) SLAVES NEED TO HONOR THEIR MASTERS

A. Governing Principle: Slaves, Honor Your Master

"Let all who are under the yoke as slaves regard their own masters as worthy of all honor"

Wuest: "The designation 'bondservants' is added in explanation of *under the yoke*, which implies a hard and disagreeable condition."

B. Reason: To Maintain a Good Reputation

"may not be spoken against":

1. For *"the name of God"*

2. For *"our doctrine"*

II. (:2A) EVEN (ESPECIALLY) IF THEIR MASTERS ARE FELLOW BELIEVERS

A. Special Situation: Having a Believer for a Master

"And let those who have believers as their masters"

B. Danger: Taking Advantage of the Family Relationship

"not be disrespectful to them because they are brethren"

cf. how too often someone is very nice to everyone else, but when it comes to their immediate or extended family members, they are less than gracious

C. Exhortation: Go the Extra Mile

"but let them serve them all the more"

D. Extra Motivation

"because those who partake of the benefit are believers and beloved"

1. Your master is a fellow believer

2. Your master is beloved -- both by God and should be by you
3. You both will benefit from such obedient service

Wuest: "Since slavery was a common and accepted institution at that time, it would hurt the cause of Christianity for Christian slaves to rebel against their masters."

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DEVOTIONAL QUESTIONS:

- 1) How do these principles apply in a culture where the relationship between employee and employer has so much more legal protection provided?
- 2) What makes our employer "*worthy of all honor*"? What can he do or say to give up that right to our respect and honor?
- 3) Does our life properly adorn the gospel and uphold the reputation of our Lord and the reputation of the truth for which we stand?
- 4) What are the benefits of having a believer for a boss? What are some of the added pressures or special difficulties?

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QUOTES FOR REFLECTION:

Lenski: "If a Christian slave dishonored his master in any way by disobedience, by acting disrespectfully, by speaking shamefully of his master, the worst consequence would not be the beating he would receive but the curses he would cause his master to hurl at this miserable slave's God, his religion, and the teaching he had embraced."

Hiebert: "They are to have an inner attitude of genuine respect for their masters which finds outward expression in word, manner, and conduct."

Bassler: "Most social groups in Greco-Roman society (e.g. clubs, guilds, and associations) were fairly homogeneous. Christian groups, on the other hand, were composed of members from various levels of society--Jew and Greek, slave and free, male and female--but they met in circumstances in which social standing was to have no significance (Gal. 3:28). They ate together at table, and they called each other '*brother*' and '*sister*,' although they may have been, in fact, master and slave. This ethos of equality within the church was in some tension with the social realities of their lives outside the church, especially in the extended family, which was hierarchically defined. It created real problems for church members who had to move between these social worlds or deal with other church members in terms of both social worlds."

Stedman: "Many of you here this morning are 'wage slaves,' you work for wages. You have made an agreement to sell a portion of your time and labor to some company or employer, and you receive a certain sum of money in return. You are functioning as a servant or a slave for that period of time. You are a lot better off than the slaves of the New Testament times. You get paid for your work, but they did not get paid anything; they worked only for their room and board and a few pieces of clothing now and then. You are able to take the weekend off. At the end of the week you can say, 'Thank God it's Friday,' but they could not; they were slaves twenty-four hours a day for their entire lifetime, with very little hope of ever being freed again."

Stedman: "I am always amazed at the attitudes some Christians have when they do business with other Christians. They seem to feel that the fact that they are buying something from a Christian businessman means that he ought to give them a discount or favor, or treat them in a different way than he would any other customer. Some men have told me that they hate to see a Christian come into their stores because they know they are going to be asked for some special favor. I do not know what it is about some Christians that makes them think that way, but it reveals that they are using Christianity to their own advantage."

Paul turns this idea around. He says, rather than thinking you deserve special favors because of your Christianity, you ought to remember that these men are your brothers. You ought to be trying to find a way to bless them and go beyond what others would do in your courtesy and respect toward them. You do not have to pay them more than you would anyone else, but you ought to treat them with additional courtesy because they are brothers, 'believers and beloved.'"

TEXT: 1 TIMOTHY 6:2B-5

TITLE: CALLING A SPADE A SPADE (OR A FALSE TEACHER A FALSE TEACHER)

BIG IDEA:

FALSE TEACHERS PROMOTE HERESY AND STIR UP DIVISION AND STRIFE

The book ends with the same subject featured at the beginning = denunciation of false teachers.

**I. (:2B-3) FALSE TEACHERS PROMOTE HERESY --
FALSE TEACHING IS RECOGNIZED AS THAT WHICH IS CONTRARY TO
SOUND DOCTRINE**

A. (:2b) Exhortation to Preach Sound Doctrine (which is in accordance with practical godliness)

"Teach and preach these principles"

Pres. Impvs. - keep on teaching and preaching these principles

Guthrie: "... could refer to what precedes, but seem more illuminative when regarded as introductory to what follows (as RSV). Timothy is to stand out in obvious contrast to those who *teach otherwise...*"

B. (:3) Identification of That Which is Contrary to Sound Doctrine

1. Identified by the Standard of Systematic Theology

a. *"If anyone advocates a different doctrine"*

b. *"and does not agree with sound words"*

2. Identified by the Standard of the Teaching of Christ

"those of our Lord Jesus Christ"

3. Identified by the Standard of Practical Godliness

"and with the doctrine conforming to godliness"

II. (:4-5) FALSE TEACHERS STIR UP DIVISION AND STRIFE

A. Root Problem: Inflated Perspective of Their Own Understanding of Truth

1. *"he is conceited"*

Knowledge puffs up; Pride is the root problem

Wiersbe: "A believer who understands the Word will have a burning heart, not a

big head (Luke 24:32; and see Dan. 9:1-20)."

Gromacki: "He is like a balloon that is fully blown up. Paul earlier condemned the sudden promotion of a new believer into a position of leadership because pride could overcome the latter (3:6). One of the marks of the apostates in the last days is that they will be 'highminded' (II Tim. 3:4; same word). God hates the 'proud look' (Prov. 6:17). A person puffed up with self-importance is on the brink of spiritual self-destruction."

2. *"and understands nothing"*

Not just understands a little ... but understands nothing!

B. Unhealthy Emphasis: Controversial Subjective Speculation

1. *"but he has a morbid interest in controversial questions"*

2. *"and disputes about words"*

C. Disruptive Impact: Stirring up Division and Strife

"out of which arise":

1. *"envy"*

2. *"strife"*

3. *"abusive language"*

4. *"evil suspicions"*

5. *"and constant friction"*

D. Root Problems - continued

1. Sick Mind

a. Depraved -- *"men of depraved mind"*

b. Deprived -- *"deprived of the truth"*

2. Sick Heart -- Only spiritual motivation = greed for material gain

"who suppose that godliness is a means of gain"

Hiebert: "They conceived of their show of godliness as a profitable commercial investment, a lucrative business, advancing one's worldly interests."

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DEVOTIONAL QUESTIONS:

- 1) Why does Paul always associate true doctrine with godly behavior? Why is doctrine so minimized today as if there is a dichotomy between sound doctrine and godly behavior or as if sound doctrine represents mere dead orthodoxy?
- 2) How does pride affect our thought processes and our evaluation of self? How does pride feed on itself in a cyclical way?
- 3) Trace the connection between envy and strife throughout the Scriptures. Why are these always seen as a tandem?
- 4) Why do we see so many religious charlatans today on TV and elsewhere in the media making a mockery of the gospel by their obvious motivation of greed and materialism? Was it the same in Paul's day?

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QUOTES FOR REFLECTION:

Kent: "True doctrine based upon Christ issues in genuine piety and godliness of life. If a man's motive in preaching and teaching is wrong, sooner or later this evidence of wrong doctrine and wrong living will appear. Therefore, when these evidences do appear, the cause of the trouble must be sought in the motive of the false teacher."

Earle: "A morbid craving for controversies and arguments is not the sign of good health, either psychologically or spiritually. Even well-intentioned theological discussions sometimes have a tendency to degenerate into mere word-battles or exercises in semantics."

Stedman: "Those who ignore *'the teaching which accords with godliness'* are always doing three things in any situation of controversy. First, they are escalating it. If you teach somebody to get even, to take vengeance into his own hands when his neighbor throws garbage over the fence, by putting gophers in his lawn or throwing dirt on his washing when it is hanging out in the back yard -- your evil minds will think up plenty of things to do, as will mine -- what you are doing is immediately escalating the situation. The neighbor has to do something worse in return, and so conflict grows.

And it not only escalates, it polarizes: others join the fracas. Your neighbors, your family and others get in on the act. Soon you have one community opposed to one another, fighting one another, writing nasty letters to the newspaper, and attacking each other.

Then third, it perpetuates the situation...

The apostle says there are three motives that prompt one to act this way:

The first is conceit. Though he knows nothing, he thinks he knows everything, Paul says. *'He is puffed up with conceit, though he knows nothing.'* When you listen to some of these adherents of various causes, how profound they can sound, how convinced they are that they have the only right view, and how angry they become at anybody who opposes them! This always reveals conceit.

Many, many years ago as a young Christian I was involved in a controversy between Christians. Somebody stood up in a meeting once and quoted the proverb, *'Only by pride comes contention.'* I never forgot that. Whenever you have contention somebody is acting out of pride -- probably both sides to some degree. It is only when that pride is recognized and you are willing to lose face (which is another expression for pride) and knowledge that you are wrong, that the contention ceases.

The second motive is that there is a love of controversy, a craving for a fight. There is a definition that says, 'An Irishman does not know what he believes but he is willing to die for it.' Some people cannot get along unless they get a fight going. Such people come into churches and before very long they will whisper something here and then something there. Soon they have people calling each other up, and a fight begins. Then they feel good; something exciting is happening. This reveals a morbid love of controversy, of word-wrangling, and debating over the meanings of phrases and words.

The third motive is that such an individual sees gain as his only objective in life. Why is he religious? Why is he a Christian? Why is he in church? Because it is a big help in making money. It gives him a respectable position. A lot of people are involved in the church because of the honor and deference that comes from those who show a concern for religious values. Many a man has come into the church because it will advance him in his business. Paul says that is a terrible motive. It is part of the devil's philosophy."

TEXT: 1 TIMOTHY 6:6-10

TITLE: ALL THAT GLITTERS IS NOT GOLD

BIG IDEA:

CONTENTMENT PROTECTS AGAINST THE SNARES OF MATERIALISM

I. (:6) THESIS: CONTENTMENT CONTRIBUTES GREATLY TOWARDS GODLINESS

A. Review: The Pursuit of Godliness Can be Misguided (Apart from Contentment)

Remember the False Teachers from vs. 5:

"who suppose that godliness is a means of gain"

B. The Goal Must be Spiritual Gain Not Material Gain

"But godliness actually is a means of great gain"

C. Contentment Makes the Difference

"when accompanied by contentment"

Phil. 4:12-13

II. (:7-8) CONTENTMENT EMBRACES GOD'S PLAN FOR OUR SUCCESS

A. (:7) Nature Proves the Futility of Materialism (cf. Job 1:21)

1. Our Birth -- Look at our Entrance into this Earthly Life

"For we have brought nothing into the world"

2. Our Death -- Look at our Departure from this Earthly Life

"so we cannot take anything out of it either"

Kent: "Thus the gaining of material acquisitions must be of only temporary significance. Therefore, the few things we actually need while on earth need not unduly disturb the minds of godly people."

B. (:8) God Provides the Essentials for Contentment

"And if we have food and covering, with these we shall be content"

Stedman: "The apostle says all we need is food and clothing -- provision for the maintenance of life (food), and protection from the elements that would destroy life (shelter and clothing). God provides those for us, and with that simple lifestyle man can be content. That is what Jesus meant when he said, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God," {Matt 4:4 RSV}. It is the knowledge of God that gives contentment; it is fellowship with the Lord of Glory that makes the heart rejoice, giving us peace and a sense of worth and security. That is the true contentment, Paul says."

III. (:9-10) MATERIALISM OPENS ONE UP TO A WIDE RANGE OF DESTRUCTIVE TEMPTATIONS

A. Materialism is Defined at the Motivational Level

1. *"those who want to get rich"*
2. *"the love of money"*

B. Materialism and Temptation Are Directly Linked

1. *"fall into temptation"* -- indicates a yielding to that temptation
2. *"and a snare"* -- catching the victim in a trap
3. *"and many foolish and harmful desires"*

Kent: "Such lusts are senseless (*anoetous*) for they cannot be logically defended, nor do they bring real satisfaction. They are also harmful (*blaberas*), for they do great damage to one's character and spiritual life, and they dissipate one's energies and call away one's interest from spiritual activity."

4. *"root of all sorts of evil"*

Stedman: "When you are living to be rich, breathing it every day, working at it as your great objective, that, Paul says, is a deep root of evil in your life. You know what a root is. If you find a big, luxuriant weed growing in your back yard and you cut it down, although it looks like you have gotten rid of the weed you have not because the root is still there. After a while the root will send forth another shoot, and if you are not Johnny-on-the-spot, soon there will be another weed the same size or bigger than the first one. That is what the love of money is like, the apostle is saying. You can eliminate some of the problems that it creates but there will be another one along very shortly, because the root is still there, constantly producing evil in your life, creating situations that are disastrous to you and to others."

C. Materialism Can Result in a Course of Destruction

1. *"which plunge men into ruin and destruction"*

Hendriksen: "Note the progressive and climactic character of the movement which is portrayed here. First, these men are described as desiring the wrong thing, namely, material wealth. Soon they lose their footing and fall into temptation and a snare and numerous senseless and hurtful cravings. Finally, these cravings plunge them into ruin and destruction. Wretched men! They have guided their vessel to the very brink of the cataract, which, in its turn, plunges them into the awesome depths."

2. *"some by longing for it have":*

- a. "have wandered away from the faith"
- b. "and pierced themselves with many a pang"

Hiebert: "The Christian faith which they once professed has become displaced by their love for money as the chief goal of their lives. Added to this fateful negative loss is the positive damage of self-inflicted sorrow, '*and have pierced themselves through with many sorrows.*' In their eagerness to pluck the fair flower of wealth they have pierced and wounded themselves with its sharp, unsuspected thorns. A condemning conscience assails them and destroys their happiness, while they suffer under their poignant disillusionment."

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DEVOTIONAL QUESTIONS:

- 1) What is the difference between "*money* being the root of all sorts of evil" and "*the love of money* being the root of all sorts of evil"?
- 2) How can we check ourselves out at the motivational level to determine whether we are driven more by *materialism* or by a desire for *godliness*? What is our *contentment* level?
- 3) When have ever suffered some type of lack of either *food* or *covering*? How faithful are we at expressing our thankfulness to the God who is so faithful to us? Does this add some significance to the request in the Lord's Prayer: "Give us this day our daily bread"?
- 4) What are some of the biographical illustrations of rich men who have pursued materialism to the hilt and have died in a state of *ruin* and *destruction*?

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QUOTES FOR REFLECTION:

Kent: "The Christian should find his contentment in true godliness, for this is a means of gain which material acquisitions can never be. The word *autarkeia* (from *autos*, self, and *arkeo*, suffice, be content) signifies a satisfaction or sufficiency in oneself, not connected with outward circumstances. Paul is not praising poverty, or declaring property a crime. He merely says that real contentment, which is independent of poverty or wealth, finds its satisfaction in the spiritual blessings which come to the soul of him whose life is godly."

Hendriksen: "The truly godly person is not interested in becoming rich. He possesses inner resources which furnish riches far beyond that which earth can offer. Hence, with

respect to this genuine godly life Paul continues: *And it is great gain, namely the (practice of) godliness with soul-sufficiency.* This is the life of true devotion to God. It is *'of benefit in every way'*... Such Christian living springs from the source of -- and is accompanied by -- soul-sufficiency.

The truly pious individual has peace with God, spiritual joy, assurance of salvation, the conviction that *'to them that love God all things work together for good, even to them that are called according to his purpose'* (Rom. 8:28). Hence, he feels no need of *'ample (earthly) goods stored up for many years,'* which can never satisfy the soul (Luke 12:19, 20). He is content with what he has. Cf. Phil. 4:10-13. For, earthly possessions do not pertain to the *'self,'* which is clear from the fact that *nothing did we bring into the world, (just as it is evident) that neither are we able to carry anything out of it.'*

Stedman: "Paul says that when you fall into temptation, and give way to this lust for more things, you create a snare for yourself. By that, he means that your possessions will soon begin to possess you. Everyone who has had any success in obtaining some of the things they desired soon discovers this. I am sure many of you could bear testimony to this. As soon as you get a shiny new car, an expensive gadget, a new home with all its comfort, etc., it immediately introduces a whole new range of worries. You have to get insurance on it, you have to buy locks to make sure that it is not taken away from you, you must be available many times when you would rather be away, because your possessions demand that you take care of them.

Possessions also change your relationship with others. You discover that people are treating you differently because you have something that is a symbol of prestige or status. People no longer treat you for who you are; they are treating you for what you have, so you begin to get suspicious of your friends and your friendships. You can even get involved in court cases, lawsuits, etc. All this enters when the love of money starts to possess you. That is the snare involved."

Gromacki: "Paul set forth three principles of life that the greedy teachers either rejected or ignored. First, success is spiritual and inward, not material and outward (6:6). The apostle took the erroneous statement of the false teachers, corrected it, and applied it to his readers. Christ promised the abundant life (John 10:10). Thus a believer not only can have *'gain'* (*porismos*) in this life, but also *'great'* gain...

Second, an understanding of the exact nature of life recognizes the superiority of the eternal and spiritual to the temporal and material (6:7)... Spiritual purposes therefore should not be centered in or measured by objective, material accumulations...

Third, possession of the basic necessities of life should foster contentment (6:8)."

TEXT: 1 TIMOTHY 6:11-16

TITLE: MARCHING ORDERS FOR THE MAN OF GOD -- CAPTURE THE FLAG

BIG IDEA:

5 PERPETUAL PRIORITIES FOR A MAN OF GOD TO ENSURE A SUCCESSFUL MINISTRY

I. KEEP FLEEING MATERIALISM

"But flee from these things, you man of God"

Pres. tense -- continuous action

Kent: "The designation '*man of God*' is one often employed of prophets (e.g. I Sam. 2:27), characterizing the individual as belonging to God and representing Him... Timothy is reminded that the minister (as is every Christian) is a man who belongs to God, rather than one whose heart is possessed by desire for wealth."

Gromacki: "The imagery conveyed by the command to flee is that sinful practices are chasing the believer constantly. To avoid being caught, the believer must develop and maintain moral stamina. Joseph fled the enticements of Potiphar's wife (Gen. 39:12), But David fell into the immoral trap of his own making (II Sam. 11:1-4). The imperative indicates personal accountability for successful obedience or sinful disobedience."

II. KEEP PURSUING CHRIST-LIKE CHARACTER

"and pursue":

(Some view as three pairs)

A. "*Righteousness*"

B. "*Godliness*"

Gromacki: "The word denotes general piety and holy conduct. It stresses devotion to God through worship and reverence."

C. "*Faith*"

D. "*Love*"

E. "*Perseverance*"

F. "*Gentleness*"

III. FIGHT THE GOOD FIGHT OF THE FAITH

"agonize the good agony"

Gromacki: "The verb connotes strategy, strength, and stamina."

Wuest: "The verb is in the aorist imperative, referring to a single act rather than a process. It refers to the habitual act of fighting the good fight, but takes no note of the process, rather emphasizing the result."

IV. POSSESS ETERNAL LIFE TO THE FULLEST -- CAPTURE THE FLAG

"take hold of the eternal life"

Kent: "He is to live in the light of his great possession. He is to make it practical in daily life. For the one who has really laid hold on eternal life, earthly treasures do not seem so important."

complete appropriation

A. Consistent with your Calling

"to which you were called"

B. Consistent with your Testimony

"and you made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses"

V. PERSEVERE IN OBEYING THE WORD OF GOD

A. Witnesses to the Charge

1. God the Father -- Gave you a Good Start / Sustains you

"I charge you in the presence of God who gives life to all things"

2. Christ Jesus -- Modeled a Good Finish

"and of Christ Jesus, who testified the good confession before Pontius Pilate"

Gromacki: "He thus declared and defended the truth of God's redemptive purpose even though He knew that He would be delivered to be crucified. He is subsequently identified as *'the faithful and true witness.'* (Rev. 1:5; 3:14)."

B. Purity of the Charge

"that you keep the commandment":

Hiebert: "The entire truth of the Gospel which he has confessed and which he has been commissioned to preach and to defend is here unified under the singular noun *'commandment.'* It is his duty constantly to be preserving it as a priceless treasure..."

1. *"without stain"*

2. *"or reproach"*

C. Duration of the Charge

"until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ"

Bassler: "Here it is the second coming that is called an epiphany ... emphasizing the fact that that event, which constitutes God's decisive intervention on behalf of the faithful, will make manifest the divine glory of the risen Jesus (Titus 2:13)."

(:15-16) DOXOLOGY

A. Sovereign of the Universe -- Eternal Dominion

1. He Will Accomplish His Plans in His Timing

"which he will bring about at the proper time"

2. He is the Unique and Benevolent Sovereign

"He who is the blessed and only Sovereign"

Gromacki: "Both He and His sphere of authority are marked by happiness and prosperity. Since He is blessed, He can impart His blessedness to those who meet the spiritual qualifications of His reign. The Beatitudes all begin with this same word (Matt. 5:3-11)."

3. He is Over All Authorities

a. *"King of kings"*

b. *"Lord of lords"*

Gromacki: "The basis of the charge is found within the purposes of the sovereign God of the universe. Since God controls the events of time, which will ultimately end in Christ's appearing, Timothy had to recognize that he would eventually be accountable to Him for the obedience to the Pauline charge."

B. Immortal, Transcendant and Invisible -- Maximum Honor

1. Immortal -- *"who alone possesses immortality"*

Bassler: "While Greeks and Romans claimed immortality for their heroes and emperors ... this doxology insists that God alone is untouched by death."

2. Transcendant -- *"and dwells in unapproachable light"*

2. Invisible -- *"whom no man has seen or can see"*

C. Blessing

"To Him be honor and eternal dominion! Amen."

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DEVOTIONAL QUESTIONS:

- 1) When have we found ourselves trying to Flee without trying to Pursue ... or trying to Pursue without being careful to Flee? Compare Paul's other analogy to putting off the old man and putting on the new man. You can never be growing effectively unless you are doing both sides of the equation.
- 2) How can we more fully appropriate the eternal life which we already possess? How can we lay hold of it in a more tangible fashion? Why do some believers seem to stall out at a certain level in their Christian experience?
- 3) Are we actively looking for the *appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ*?
- 4) How are we able to more effectively worship God as we understand more about His person and His basic nature? What does the sovereignty of God mean to me? His immortality? His transcendence? His invisibility???

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QUOTES FOR REFLECTION:

Bassler: "... a carefully crafted complement to the argument of verses 3-10, a positive example of church leadership that stands in stark and deliberate contrast to the negative behavior of the opposing teachers ... This positive portrait is communicated through exhortations to Timothy, in which a virtue list replaces the vice list that described the moral consequences of the opponents' teaching, the promise of the reward of eternal life replaces the threat of ruin and destruction, and the good confession replaces crass greed as the driving force for behavior."

Hiebert: "This statement of the termination of the charge shows that the writer did not conceive of the return of Christ as some event in the remote future. Like the other New Testament writers, Paul kept the truth of the Lord's return in the foreground of his thinking and hopes."

Fee: Re God living in light -- "The description reflects Psalm 104:2. It arose in Judaism in conjunction with the concept of his blinding glory, which no human eye can see (cf. Exod. 24:15-17; 34:29-35; 1 Kings 8:11). The motif of God as pure light is played on from several angles in the Johannine literature (John 1:7-9; 3:19-21; 1 John 1:5-7)."

Wallis: "God is here characterized by an accumulation of titles and ascriptions of majesty and power noteworthy even in Paul, and indeed, in the entire Scripture. The ideas are parallel to 1:17 but are more fully expressed. Paul's thought moves from God's manifestations to men as Potentate and King through his sovereign prerogative of

immortality, back to his mysterious and inscrutable being, and leads to the final ascription of honor and eternal omnipotent sway."

TEXT: 1 TIMOTHY 6:17-21

TITLE: FINAL INSTRUCTIONS -- TRUE RICHES

BIG IDEA:

FOCUS ON WHAT IS REALLY VALUABLE IN LIGHT OF ETERNITY

Balances the warnings in vs. 6-10 so that those who are already rich don't feel necessarily condemned, but can view these riches from the proper perspective as God's blessing to them to be used for His glory.

I. (:17-19) FINAL INSTRUCTIONS TO THE RICH -- INVEST YOUR EARTHLY RICHES FOR ETERNITY

A. Danger of Earthly Riches

1. Can Cause one to become Conceited

"Instruct those who are rich in this present world not to be conceited"

2. Can Divert one's Trust from God

a. Negative: Don't trust in riches

"or to fix their hope on the uncertainty of riches"

Why? Riches are uncertain -- Prov. 23:4-5

Gromacki: "The value of hope rests upon the innate strength of the one on whom it is placed. Rich men's folly was to put hope upon things. They literally set their hope 'upon the uncertainty of riches'... The irony is that they put hope on uncertainty; not even upon the riches themselves. The uncertainty is caused by the brevity of life (James 4:13-17) and the relative value of money, which is affected by inflation, war, and other complicated factors. Solomon warned, 'He that trusteth in his riches shall fall' (Prov. 11:28). Jesus used the parable of the rich fool (Luke 12:16-21) to illustrate the folly of this false security."

b. Positive: Trust in God

"but on God"

Why? *"who richly supplies us with all things to enjoy"*

B. Opportunity Afforded by Earthly Riches = to meet the needs of others

1. *"Instruct them to do good"*

Fernando: "Before Paul asked the rich to give, he told them to be rich in good deeds. It is not enough for them to dole out funds in a detached way. They must become involved with deeds of kindness. It will help others and also help

them to live complete lives."

2. *"to be rich in good works"*

3. *"to be generous and ready to share"*

Fee: "The 'enjoyment' of 'everything' as God's generous gift leads away from 'high-mindedness' and false security to the freedom of giving generously... Hence true 'riches' is found in the giving, not in the having."

C. Potential for Great Reward for Eternity and Abundant Life Right Now

1. Great Reward for Eternity

"storing up for themselves the treasure of a good foundation for the future"

2. Abundant Life Right Now

"so that they may take hold of that which is life indeed"

Wiersbe: "'That they may lay hold on the life that is real' would express it perfectly. Riches can lure a person into a make-believe world of shallow pleasure. But riches plus God's will can introduce a person to life that is real and ministry that is lasting."

Gromacki: "When a believer lives for eternity, he better enjoys the reality of eternal life in the present. He recognizes the continuity between the two realms of personal existence."

II. (:20-21) FINAL INSTRUCTIONS TO TIMOTHY -- GUARD THE TREASURE OF THE FAITH

A. Primary Focus -- *"O Timothy, guard what has been entrusted to you"*

2 Tim. 1:12-14

Campbell: "What is this deposit that Paul instructs Timothy to guard? In Second Timothy 1:12, Paul says, *'for I know in whom I have believed, and I have been persuaded that he is able to guard my deposit unto that day.'* Paul affirms here that he himself has a deposit ... This deposit was directly revealed to Paul by Jesus Christ (Gal. 1:12; cf. 1 Cor. 2:6-10; Eph. 3:2-11; 1 Thess. 2:13). The contents of this deposit had previously been kept secret but were revealed to and through the Apostle Paul (1 Cor. 2:7; Rom. 16:25-26; Col. 4:3-4). Paul also speaks of that which Christ deposited with him as being *his Gospel*, i.e., *my Gospel* (Rom. 2:16; 16:25; 2 Tim. 2:8). He also refers to this truth deposited with him as being *the Gospel of the Grace of God* (Acts 20:24). In summary, the word *'deposit'* is used by Paul with reference to the distinct body of truth for the Church revealed to him."

Kent: (does not try to maintain the same meaning across all the references to "deposit" in 2 Timothy) -- "Here Paul's meaning is clearly the Gospel in its wider connotation, the true doctrine of Christian faith, as opposed to the heresy and worthless speculation of false men."

B. Distractions to Avoid

1. *"avoiding worldly and empty chatter"*

Gromacki: "The noun (*'vain babblings'*) literally means 'empty sounds or voices.' These babblings have no doctrinal content. They make no positive contribution to spiritual development."

2. *"and the opposing arguments of what is falsely called knowledge"*

Guthrie: "The false teachers were claiming quite naturally that their teaching was the true *science* or knowledge (*gnosis*), a characteristic certainly not confined to second-century gnosticism. It is evident in all the modern cults which claim an exclusive grasp of true *'knowledge'*."

C. Examples to Avoid

"which some have professed and thus gone astray from the faith"

Hiebert: "By their professed adherence to this spurious teaching they have tragically strayed from the path of Christian truth. Their example constitutes a solemn warning which Timothy must hold up before the congregations."

BENEDICTION

"Grace be with you"

* * * * *

DEVOTIONAL QUESTIONS:

1) Based on our modern day standard of living, should many of us consider ourselves in the "rich" category as pertains to these instructions? Does inclusion in this category of the rich depend more on an absolute standard based on a worldwide comparison or more on a relative standard based on one's own culture?

2) When we increase our expenditures and expand our standard of living do we take into account lost opportunities to invest for eternity and to be generous in meeting the needs of others?

3) How can rich people determine where their confidence lies? How can they be sensitive to where they are manifesting pride or false security? What will humility look like on their part?

4) What type of "*worldly and empty chatter*" and "*falsely called knowledge*" do we face in our day?

* * * * *

QUOTES FOR REFLECTION:

Barnes: "The idea is, that they should not value themselves on account of their wealth, or look down with pride and arrogance on their inferiours. They should not suppose that they are any better men, or any nearer heaven, because they are wealthy. Property really makes no distinction in the great things that pertain to character and salvation. It does not necessarily make one wise, or learned, or great, or good. In all these things, the man who has not wealth may be vastly the superior of him who has; and for as slight and unimportant a distinction as gold can confer, no man should be proud. Besides, let such a man reflect that his property is the gift of God; that he is made rich because God has chosen to arrange the things so that he should be; that it is not primarily owing to any skill or wisdom which he has; that his property only increases his responsibility, and that it must all soon be left, and he be as poor as the 'beggar that lies at his gate;' and he will see ample reason why he should not be proud."

Fernando: "The ascetic heretics in Ephesus had been insisting that the truly spiritual must renounce material possessions entirely, a very unbiblical position. According to the biblical doctrine of creation, God made this world good, which means its material resources are also good. If they are used responsibly according to God's purposes, they can be legitimately enjoyed. The word used for enjoyment here is a strong word. The Christian has been gifted with joy by God. And part of this Christian joy is experienced when Christians use material things in a responsible way."

Bassler: "The concept of God as generous provider undergirds the author's admonitions concerning the proper attitude towards, and use of, riches. The wealthy are not admonished to rid themselves of their riches (which God has provided), but to rid themselves of their reliance on them and to use God's rich generosity to enable rich generosity of their own."

Wiersbe: "We are not owners; we are stewards. If we have wealth, it is by the goodness of God and not because of any special merits on our part. The possessing of material wealth ought to humble a person and cause him to glorify God, not himself."

Campbell: "It appears that the poor are those who do not have the basic needs of food, clothing, and shelter (v. 8); the intermediate group are those who do have these basic requirements for sustaining healthy lives, and the rich are those who have more than what is needed for these basics (v. 9). In summary, the standard by which we determine who is poor, who is not poor, and who is rich, is, does one not have, have, or have superfluously food, clothing, and shelter (cf. 6:8)? In applying this standard the key word is need determined by these basic requirements (Acts 2:45; 4:35; 20:34 Rom.

12:13; Eph. 4:28; Phil. 4:16, 19; I John 3:17)."

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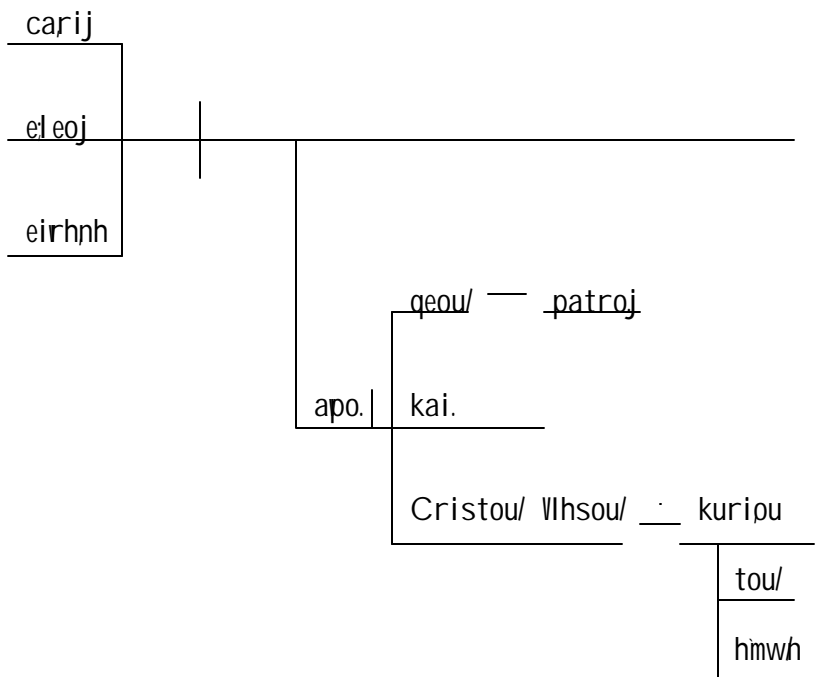
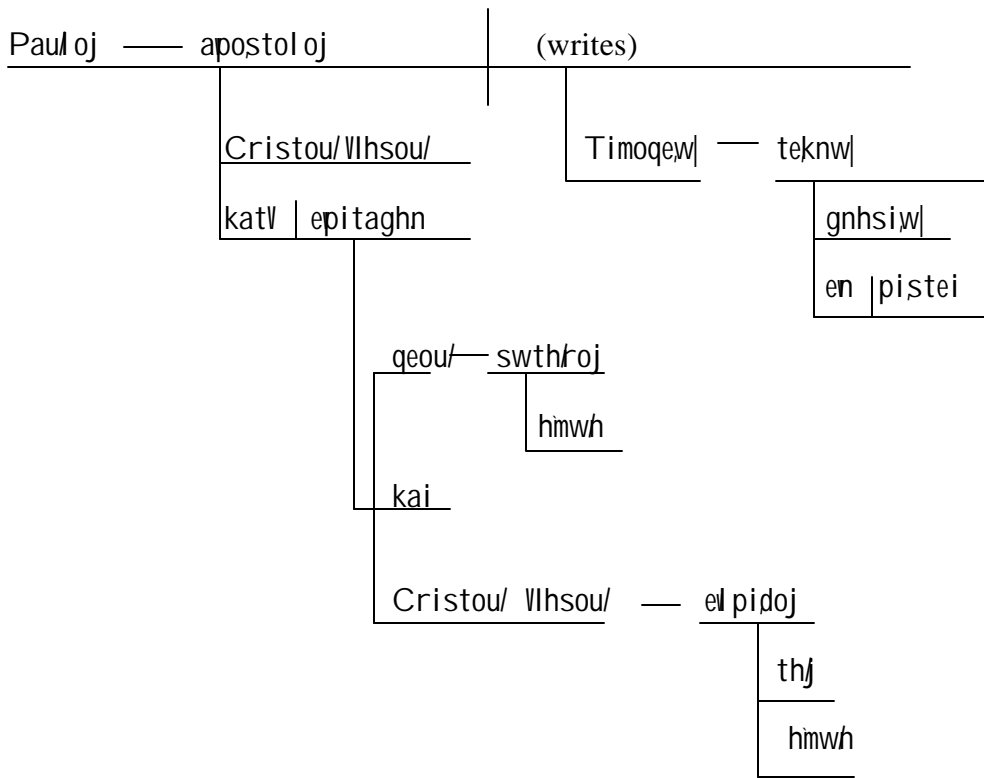
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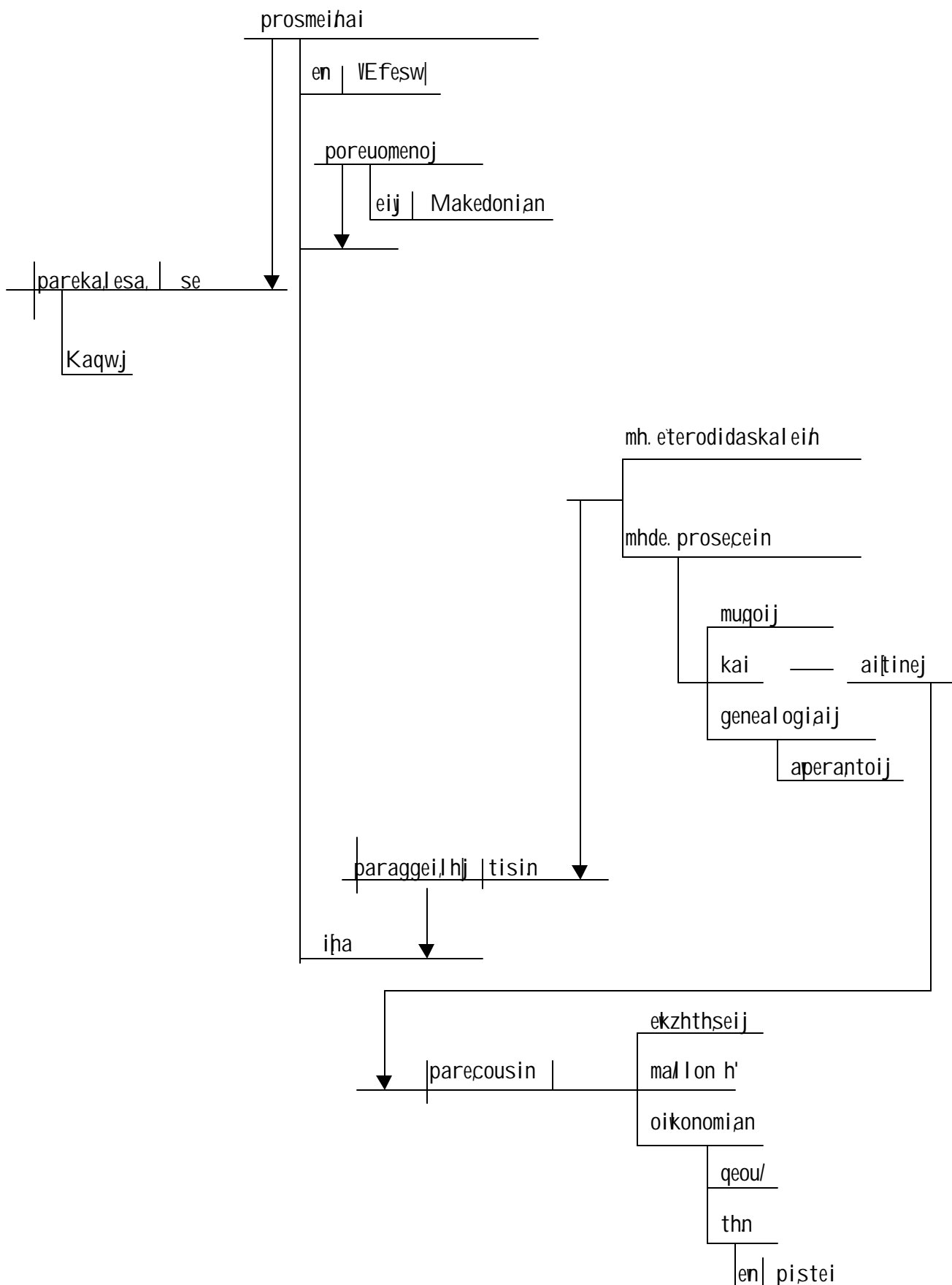
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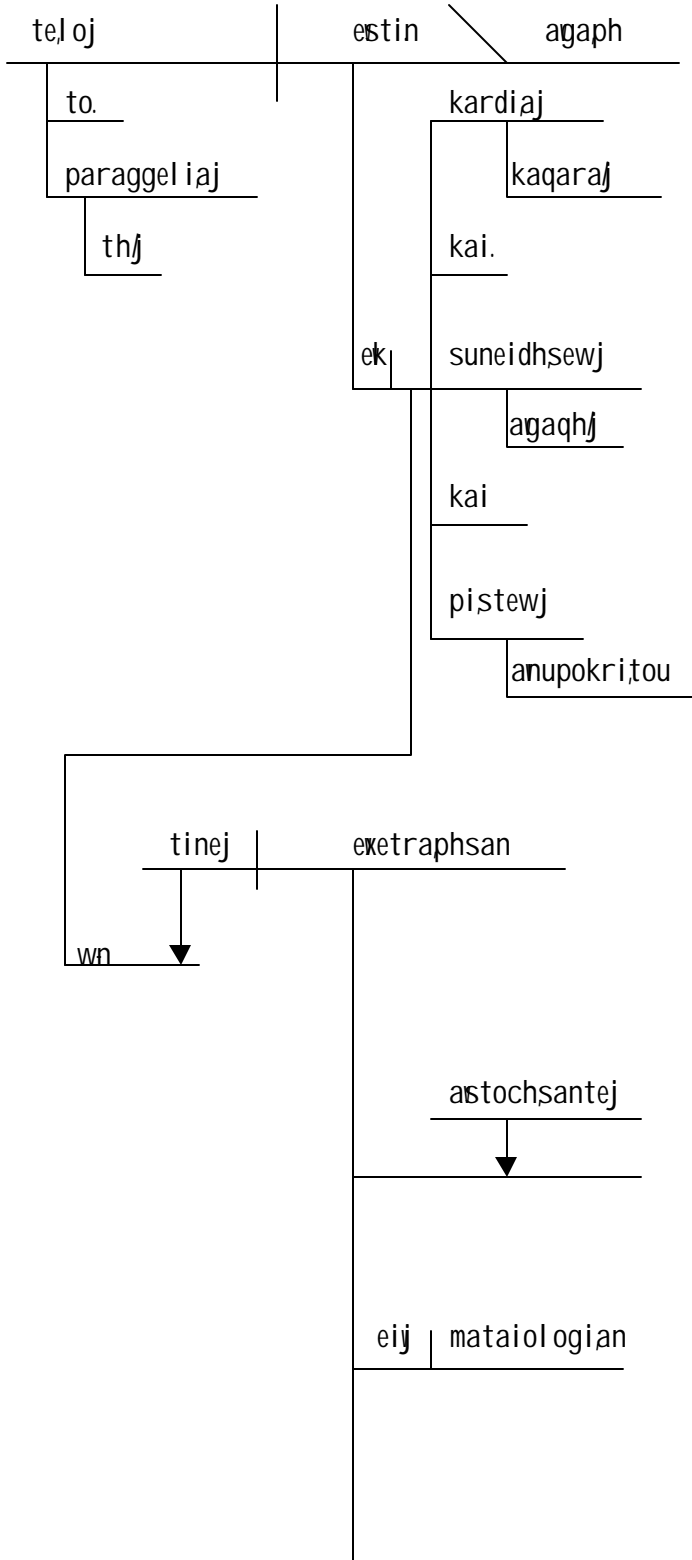
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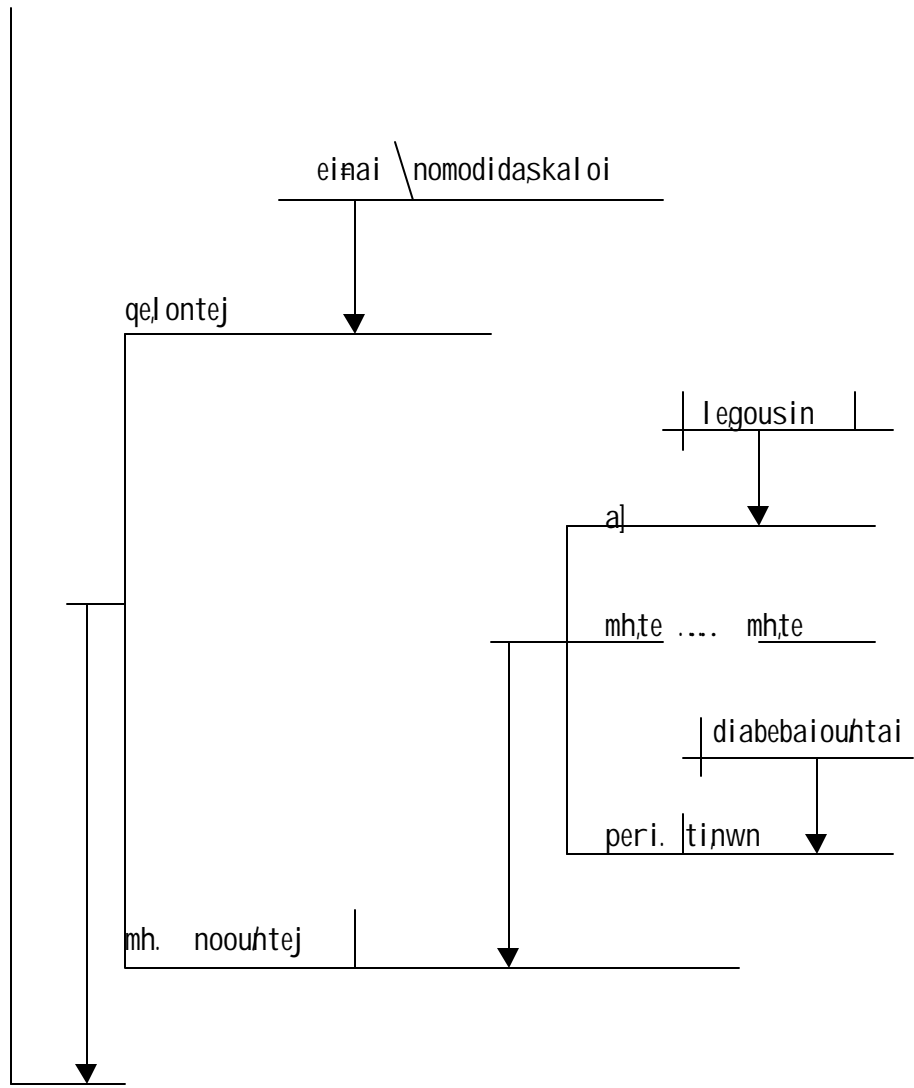
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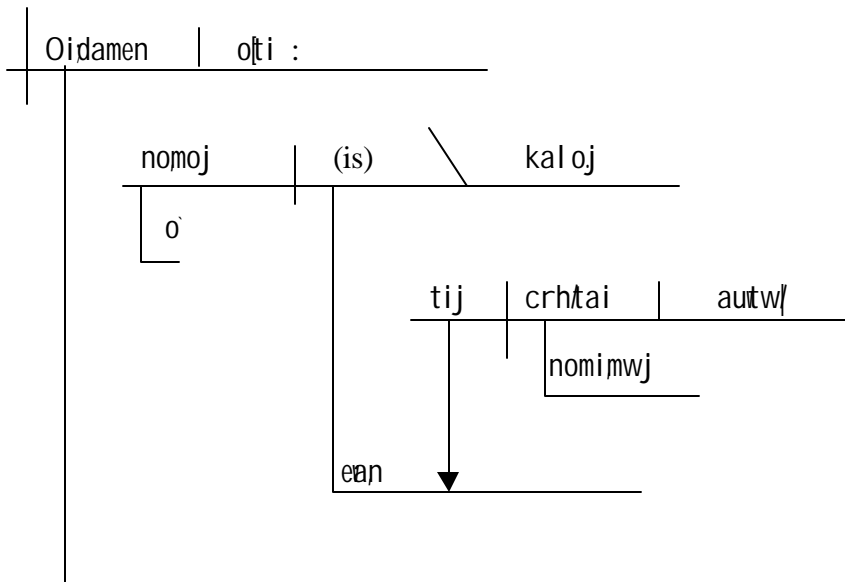


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