

SEVEN YEAR WHOLE BIBLE STUDY COURSE

Year Six **Fourth Quarter**
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FOREWORD

“THE WORK OF AN EVANGELIST”

“Do the work of an evangelist” (II Timothy 4:5)

“...a good minister.” (I Timothy 4:6)

Paul commanded Timothy to abide at Ephesus (I Timothy 1:3)

Church at Ephesus had ELDERS (Acts 20:17, 28; I Timothy 5:17)

1. “Charge some to teach no other doctrine” (I Timothy 1:3).
2. “War a good warfare” (I Timothy 1:18).
3. “IF I tarry long... behave... “ (I Timothy 3:15).
4. “Put the brethren in mind” (I Timothy 4:6).
5. “Be thou an example of the believers” (I Timothy 4:12).
6. “Give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine” (I Timothy 4: 13).
7. “Give thyself wholly to them” (I Timothy 4:15).
8. “Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine” (I Timothy 4:16).
9. “Them that sin rebuke before all... “(I Timothy 5:20).
10. “These things teach and exhort” (I Timothy 6:2).
11. “Fight the good fight of faith... “(I Timothy 6:12).
12. “Charge them that are rich... “ (I Timothy 6:17).
13. “Keep that which is committed to thy trust... “ (I Timothy 6:20).
14. “Be not thou therefore ashamed... “(II Timothy 1:8).
15. “Commit thou to faithful men... “(II Timothy 2:2).
16. “Put them in remembrance... “(II Timothy 2:14).
17. “Instruct those that oppose themselves... “ (II Timothy 2:25).
18. “PREACH THE WORD... “(II Timothy 4:2).

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WHOLE BIBLE STUDY COURSE

Year VI

Fourth Quarter

Lesson 40

Page 1

II Thessalonians 3

Memory Verses: II Thessalonians 3:6,14

Memory Verses:

“Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us... And if any man obey not our word by this epistle, not that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed” (II Thessalonians 3:6, 14).

PRACTICAL ADVICE

Paul closes II Thessalonians 2 with a prayer that “our Lord Jesus Christ Himself and God our Father, who has loved us and has graciously given us ETERNAL COMFORT and WELL-FOUNDED HOPE, encourage your hearts and strengthen you in every good work and word” (verses 16-17).

“Comfort” was originally to impart strength and cheerful energy, not merely exemption from trial and relief from affliction, or consolation in sorrow.

I. Direct Request for Their Prayers (II Thessalonians 3:1-5)

A. A humble request for their prayers (II Thessalonians 3:1-2).

“Finally, brethren, pray for us... “(II Thess. 3:1): Paul introduces his request for their prayers for himself by the word “finally.” The epistle is drawing to its close. Paul had Christian people everywhere praying for him. Specifically he asked the Roman Christians to “strive together with me in your prayers to God for me” for four things (Romans 15:30-32; see also II Cor. 1:11; Eph. 6:18-19; Cor. 4:3). The apostle requested of the Thessalonian Christians two specific things.

“That the word of the Lord may have free course...” Paul asks no prayers for his own ease, or worldly prosperity, but that he may be helped in spreading the gospel. He prays, “that the word of the Lord may run its course and be glorified as it was among you.” He wants the gospel to have a “triumphant career” everywhere, “even as it is with you.” The Thessalonians had received the gospel as the “word of God,” and obeyed it (I Thess. 1:2-7).

“And that we may be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men...” (II Thess. 3:2) The second object for which Paul covets their prayers is that “we may be rescued from those unbalanced and malicious people.” Paul was having trouble with unbelieving Jews at Corinth at that very time (see Acts 18:4-11). They were bitter against him. They “opposed and blasphemed” (Acts 18:6) or rejected the gospel “for all men have not faith,” or will not receive and believe the gospel. The prayers of the Thessalonian Christians in Paul’s behalf were answered (Acts 18:9-17).

Anyone who would try to prevent or stop the spread of the gospel here, or anywhere, is “unreasonable and wicked!”

If your boy or girl, or husband or wife were seriously ill, would it be TOO EXPENSIVE to spend \$1,000.00 to try to save him or her? If you were drowning, it would not be in bad taste to shout for help! What would you think of anyone who COULD but WOULD NOT make an effort to save such a drowning person? Let us search our hearts if we criticize or refuse to “seek” the lost or attend regular or evangelistic

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meetings of the church. When in bonds, Paul rejoiced that the word of God was “not bound” (II Tim. 2:9).

Today about two-thirds of the “book members” of the local church by OPEN NEGLECT of the church and the gospel do MORE HARM to the spreading of the gospel than OPEN INFIDELITY AND UNBELIEF OF THE UNSAVED! Can you conceive what would happen in the local church everywhere if the “uncommitted majority” would “STAND FIRM AND HOLD ON TO THE INSTRUCTIONS YOU LEARNED OF US, whether orally or by letter” (II Thess. 2:15)?

B. Paul prays that they may be faithful (II Thessalonians 3:3-5).

“But the Lord is faithful...” (II Thess. 3:3) If some men and women cannot be relied on, “The Lord is to be relied on, and he will give you strength and protect you from the evil one.” The apostle is certain that however bitter their persecution, however severe their temptations, the Lord in whom they have trusted will keep them “steadfast,” and “guard” them “from the evil one.” Is this a reminiscence of the Lord’s Prayer in Matt. 6:13?

“And we have confidence in the Lord touching you...” (II Thess. 3:4) Paul expresses his confidence in his converts. He believes they “practice and will practice what we suggested!” These “things” are not the exhortations that have already been given, but those which immediately follow and which form the substance of this last chapter of the epistle.

“And the Lord direct your hearts unto the love of God...” (II Thess. 3:5) In order that the Lord may show his faithfulness and make it possible for his children in the gospel truly and gladly to obey, Paul breathes out another brief prayer, that:

1. “The Lord direct your hearts into the love of God.” This is the “love” which God has revealed, and which He continues to bestow.

2. “And into the patient waiting for Christ.” This is the “patience,” the steadfastness, which Christ manifested and which He inspires and supplies.

If we foster divine love in our hearts, we shall patiently await Christ’s return! who knows WHEN He shall return? God does direct those who trust and obey Him (Prov. 3:5-6). Let us strive to be “patient” and “stead-fast” as our Lord was. We shall be “patient” in waiting for His return (John 14:1-3). How wonderful are those who PATIENTLY ENDURE for Christ (Rev. 2:10c).

II. Discipline of the Disorderly (II Thessalonians 3:6-15)

A. The disorderly described (II Thessalonians 3:6)

“Now we command you, brethren...” (II Thess. 3:6) Paul confidently expects them to obey the word of God through him to them (verse 4). Paul directs the “command” to the WHOLE CHURCH, not to some “bishop,” or “priest,” or “monsignor!”

“In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.” The solemn command is “in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ!” The “name” of Christ denotes all that Christ is and all that He has been revealed to be. In virtue of the fact that He is our Saviour, our Lord and our Master, we OBEY HIM and TRUST HIM! So Paul gives his “command” with the authority of an apostle who has been “called” and empowered by Christ. The WHOLE CHURCH IS TO CARRY OUT THE LORD’S COMMAND!

“That ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly...” The word “brother” designates ANY MEMBER of the church at Thessalonica. The “DISORDERLY” persons are described in a later sentence as those who “work not at all, but are busybodies” (verse 11). “Disorderly” is a military term, meaning OUT OF RANKS! These were LAZY PEOPLE who were taking advantage of the “love” of the

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church (I Thess. 4:9, 10), and making their expectation of the immediate appearance of the Lord an excuse for ABANDONING THEIR ORDINARY OCCUPATIONS. They were CLAIMING THE RIGHT TO BE SUPPORTED by the brethren who had the means!

“And not after the tradition that he received of us.” “Tradition” refers again to the definite ORAL INSTRUCTION GIVEN TO THE THESSALONIANS BY PAUL DURING HIS STAY WITH THEM. He had taught them how to live orderly, industrious, and exemplary lives. Such Holy Spirit given instructions were to be OBEYED.

This is NOT “tradition” in the sense used by our Roman Catholic friends. Such “tradition” enables them to make binding on their followers their teaching on Purgatory (593 A.D.), the kissing of the Pope’s feet (709 A.D. See Acts 10:25-26; Rev. 19:10; 22:9), the CELIBACY of the priesthood decreed by Pope Hildebrand, Boniface VII (1079 VS I Tim. 3:2-5, 12; Matt. 8:14-15), and the forbidding the CUP to the laity in the Council of Constance (1414 A.D. VS Matt. 26:27; I Cor. 11:26-29). We must also reject the doctrine of PAPAL INFALLIBILITY (1870 Vs. II Thess. 2:2-12; Rev. 17:1-9; 13:5-8, 18).

As New Testament Christians we do not believe that man-made “traditions” are “of equal authority with the Bible” as the Council of Trent – decreed in 1545! Read II Pet. 1:21, II Tim. 3:15-17.

B. Reasons for withdrawing from the disorderly (II Thess. 3:7-15).

1. Paul’s example (II Thess. 3:7-9).

“For yourselves know how ye ought to follow us...” (II Thess. 3:7) Paul had not been a lazy idler while among them, nor was he “disorderly” in any sense. He set them an “example” of tireless industry. That the heathen might not misunderstand his motives, Paul refused to “eat anyone’s food without pay; instead, we did hard and heavy work night and day, so as not to impose on any of you” He made tents to support himself (Acts 18:1-3).

“Not because we have not power... example... follow us.” (II Thess. 3:9) Paul is SENSITIVE on his RIGHT to RECEIVE ADEQUATE SUPPORT. He had the “right” to be supported by his converts. “Even so hath the Lord ORDAINED that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel” (I Cor. 9:14). For Christians not to pay their minister adequately is to ROB GOD’S SERVANT of that which they owe him (Gal. 6:6-8). Paul waived his “right” to strengthen the force of his example “which you should follow!” He wanted to cast out the disposition of idleness and begging among them since they are hostile to the spirit of Christ among able-bodied people!

2. His specific teaching (II Thess. 3:10).

“For even when we were with you, this we commanded you...” (II Thess. 3:10) Paul commanded that one who refused to work for his food should be refused support by others. There is no obligation resting upon a Christian or a church to HELP or feed an idle, lazy sponge who CAN but WILL NOT WORK. An economic parasite is not to be tolerated in the New Testament Church! If a man refuses to work WHEN HE IS ABLE TO DO SO, let him starve! Do not feed him. This is a piece of plain workshop morality all can understand (see Gen. 3:19).

“Walter Winchell in The Cincinnati Enquirer Tuesday, July 12, 1966, states in “Times Square Rounder: The husky leader of a local group (he’s on welfare) was on a TV program where he was offered a job. He grinned: ‘WHAT’S WRONG WITH BEING ON WELFARE?’ Insiders say that if Gov. Rockefeller and Mayor Lindsay shoved able-bodied people off relief rolls, there would be no need to raise taxes in N.Y.”

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Christian taxpayers and church members have a clear, divine directive on dealing with “welfare abusers!” Let us have the courage to apply the principle to the politicians and “chiselers” at every level from our churches to the federal government!

3. A serious situation (II Thess. 3:11-15).

“For we hear that there are some that walk... disorderly... busybodies.” (II Thess. 3:11) The word was brought, doubtless, by the messenger who returned to Paul. They were “busy only with what is NOT THEIR OWN BUSINESS.” The first persecution at Thessalonica had been fostered by a number of fanatical loungers, sewer “rats” (Acts 17:5). Some theological “dead-beats” and some men and women will let others support them, or their church, and piddle away their time in laziness or in stirring up trouble for those who are busy about the Master’s business! Paul charged and directed such a REPENT and go to work (verse 12). There are jobs a-plenty for those who WANT TO WORK – anywhere, anytime!

“But ye, brethren be not weary in well doing.” (II Thess. 3:13) Do not tire in the path of duty. “Do the lovely thing without weakening” (Berkeley).

“Do you ever get TIRED OF YOUR WORK?” a member asked me. “No,” I replied, “but I get tired in the work!” There’s a difference, friends!

“And if any man obey not our word by this epistle...” (II Thess. 3:14) In spite of his explicit command and exhortation previously addressed to the idle and disturbing element, Paul knows that some may continue in their wrong course. He insists that the WHOLE CHURCH discipline such persons.

“Note that man”: Put a tag on that man. Whether this is to be done in a public meeting, or by letter, Paul does not say.

“And have no company with him, that he may be ashamed.” Disobedience to authority, disorderly conduct in the church cannot be regarded with indifference. The character of the Christian community must be maintained. The idle and meddlesome members must be deprived of all association and fellowship with the other members of the brotherhood. The idle busybody must be made “ashamed” of his course by seeing that the entire church repudiates it.

“Yet count him not as an enemy, but...” (II Thess. 3:15) The real purpose of discipline is to SAVE THE OFFENDER. No matter how severe the penalty, the spirit with which it is imposed must be a spirit of pity and love. “Warn him as a brother.” Prayerfully study Matt. 18:15-17, I Cor. 5:5, 9-1, 13.

III. A Delightful Conclusion (II Thessalonians 3:16-18)

“Now the Lord of peace Himself give you peace...” (II Thess. 3:16) This tempestuous epistle comes to a peaceful close like a golden sunset after a day of a storm. The opening chapter is with “flaming fire,” “vengeance” and “eternal destruction” (II Thess. 1:8-9) The second chapter deals with the impious, Satanic “man of sin.” (II Thess. 2:3-4), “whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming.” (II Thess. 2:8) The last chapter concerns the discipline of disorderly “busybodies” Yet again and again is heard the gentle voice of prayer. So the letter concludes with Paul’s petition for peace. The Lord Jesus whose characteristic is peace, can alone give real peace of the heart and to the world (John 14:27). Through Him we have “peace with God.” (Rom. 5:1) Paul prays that such peace may be granted the Thessalonian Christians “always by all means at all times under all circumstances.”

“The Lord be with you all!” The Lord Himself promised to be with His own “always” (Matt. 28:20) The prayer is for “all” – for those disturbed by the death of friends, for disturbed by the predicted return of

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Christ, for those whose deportment or conduct requires the discipline of the church. A living and present Lord can meet the need of “all” who look to Him for help.

“The salutation of me Paul with mine own hand...” (II Thess. 3:17) Paul had dictated the letter, but he now signs or autographs the epistle as a mark that it was his own.

“The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ...” (II Thess. 3:18) Familiar benediction. It is just like that of I Thess. 5:28 with the addition of “all.”

QUESTIONS

1. How does Paul close II Thessalonians 2:16-17?
2. What humble request did Paul make of the Thessalonians (II Thess. 3:1)?
3. For what two things did Paul ask the believers to “pray” (II Thess. 3:1, 2)?
4. Was Paul in the habit of asking Christians to “pray for” him (Rom. 15:30-32; II Cor. 1:11; Eph. 6:18-19)?
5. Can you cite four things he requested Roman Christians to “strive together with me in your prayers to God for me” (Rom. 15:31-32)?
6. Who is always “faithful” (II Thess. 3:3)?
7. Did Paul believe the Thessalonians would “do the things which we command you” (II Thess. 3:4)?
8. Into what two things will God direct a Christian’s heart (II Thess. 3:5)?
9. From whom are Christians to “withdraw yourselves” (II Thess. 3:6)?
10. Who is to do this “withdrawing” (II Thess. 3:6)?
11. Can you show the difference between “tradition” as used by Paul and that used by our Roman Catholic friends (II Thess. 3:6)?
12. Did Paul have a “right” to be paid by the Thessalonian Christians (II Thess. 3:7-9)? Why did not Paul take pay from them (II Thess. 3:8)?
13. What command did Paul give (II Thess. 3:10)? Is the church, Christian, or country under obligation to help an able-bodied person who can, but won’t work?
14. “What’s wrong with being on relief” when you can work, but won’t?
15. What did Paul tell the Thessalonian “busybodies” to do (I Thess. 3: 11-12)?
16. In what are we not to be “weary” (II Thess. 3:13)?
17. “If any man obey not our word by this epistle,” what should a Christian do (II Thess. 3:14)? Why?
18. How are we to treat a “brother” from which the church has withdrawn fellowship (II Thess. 4:15)?
19. Who alone can give us “peace” (II Thess. 3:16; Rom. 5:1, John 14:27)?
20. By what “token” did Paul mark this epistle as his, and how does he close it (II Thess. 3:17-18)?

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WHOLE BIBLE STUDY COURSE

Year VI

Fourth Quarter

Lesson 41
I Timothy 1

Page 1
Memory Verses: I Timothy 1:15

Memory Verses:

“This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief” (I Timothy 1:15).

SOUND DOCTRINE

Nearly all that can be known about Timothy must be learned from the New Testament. He was Paul’s SPIRITUAL CHILD or “my own son in the faith” (I Tim. 1:2). He was born in the Asiatic district of Lycaonia. He was a native of Lystra (Acts 16:1). His mother Eunice was a Jewess, and was a godly woman as was his grandmother, Lois (II Tim. 1:3). His father was a Greek. Timothy was carefully trained in the “Holy Scriptures” (II Tim. 3:15).

Pastoral Epistles

I and II Timothy and Titus are called “Pastoral Epistles” since they were written to missionaries who were in charge of infant churches in lands only partly evangelized. They were written to guide Timothy and Titus as “pastors” or “shepherds” of the FLOCK, or CHURCH, as they ordained “elders” and “deacons” and corrected false teaching which threatened to overthrow the true gospel.

I Timothy was written about 65-67 A.D. as Paul was passing through Macedonia, possible at Philippi, or Corinth.

I. The Salutation (I Timothy 1:1,2)

“Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ...” (I Tim. 1:1) Paul begins this epistle by declaring his apostleship. Timothy was at Ephesus. Paul affectionately writes to remind him to be steadfast in the faith in the midst of many dangers to which the young minister was exposed in the pagan city of Ephesus. “An apostle” is “one who has been sent.” It applies to that group of men who were appointed by Christ in person. He gave them supernatural powers as “witnesses” of his resurrection. Jesus told Paul, “I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness” to “the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee” (Acts 26:16, 17, 13:2).

“According to the commandment of God.” God commanded Paul to resist the false teaching that arose within the Ephesian church. Paul warned the “elders” of Ephesus that false leaders or “grievous wolves” would arise and pervert the gospel (Acts 20:29, 30). See Rom. 16:26, Titus 1:3.

“God our Saviour”: God is “our Saviour” through His Son Jesus Christ (John 3:16). Jesus died in our behalf, thus giving us “hope” of life here and beyond the grave (Eph. 2:12).

“Unto Timothy, my own son in the faith...” (I Tim. 1:2) No fleshly relationship existed between Paul and Timothy. Paul preached the Gospel of our “Lord Jesus Christ,” Timothy obeyed it, and hence became Paul’s “own son in the faith,” Paul came the second time to Lystra about 51 or 52 A.D. We do not know the age of Timothy at that time. He was called “a youth” (I Tim. 4:12). He may have been about twenty. Timothy

was converted on Paul's first missionary journey (45-48 A.D.). He joined Paul on his second missionary journey (Acts 16:3).

He was with Paul in the first imprisonment in Rome (Phil. 1:1; 2:19-22; Col. 1:1; Philemon 1). Later he was in Ephesus where this epistle is addressed to him, "Make haste to visit me soon" (II Tim. 4:9) was Paul's urgent request of Timothy. We do not know whether Timothy reached Rome before Paul died for the gospel's sake. Tradition says Timothy suffered martyrdom under Nerva Domitian (Roman Emperor 81-96 A.D.). This would make him a co-worker with the Apostle John.

"Grace, mercy, and peace..." "Grace" is unmerited favor to the quilts in its fullest form "Mercy" concentrates upon the evil of the one who receives, and upon God the giver of such great blessings. "Peace" is the experience of a soul in harmony with God. Is Paul delicately suggesting to the young preacher of his continual need of humility, since he, too, has received "Grace, mercy and peace, from God our Father and Jesus Christ our Lord"?

This contains a message for all modern ministers, too. It reminds them that while God grants "Grace, mercy, and peace" through our Lord Jesus Christ to "the uttermost" (Heb. 7:25), still as ministers of His Word they all "come short of the glory of God" (Rom. 3:23). Hence they all need continually to cast themselves upon the "mercy" of God!

Note how Paul here "Christ Jesus" our Lord with "God our Saviour (Father)" as the source of all these blessings. This divine Saviour he calls "Christ our Lord."

II. A Charge Concerning the Misuse of the Law (I Timothy 1:3-11)

"As I besought thee to abide still at Ephesus..." (I Tim. 1:3) When Paul left Ephesus, he left Timothy there to RESTRAIN CERTAIN FALSE LEADERS who had arisen in the congregation, from preaching a FALSE GOSPEL. These "grievous wolves" constituted Timothy's main problem (Acts 20:29-30). They appear to have been the same brand as those in Crete, with whom Titus had to deal, basing strange teachings on apocryphal Jewish legends connected with Old Testament genealogies.

"Charge some that they teach no other doctrine." Timothy was left at Ephesus as a trusty evangelist to counteract the errors that were arising there. He was not left as a BISHOP OVER THE CHURCH, These false teachers were doubtless the Judaizers who insisted that the Gentiles could not be saved unless they were circumcised and kept the law of Moses (Acts 15:1f).

"Doctrine." There was no uncertainty as to the CONTENT of the Christian message. Paul says it is "the glorious gospel of the blessed God" (verse 11). He summarizes it in the familiar saying "that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief" (verse 15). He declares "The purpose of our instruction, however, is LOVE THAT RISES OUT OF A PURE HEART, A CLEAR CONSCIENCE, and UNDISGUISED FAITH" (verse 5),

"Neither give heed to fables..." (I Tim. 1:4) "Fables" are invented, imaginary occurrences, a part of the tradition handed down from generation to generation. The Targums, Jewish sacred books written by the rabbis, are largely fables. Some in Ephesus were teaching "fables" instead of the Word of God. Others taught their own opinions and convictions.

"Endless genealogies." Jews laid much stress on their ability to trace a distinct and unbroken line to Abraham. Why?

1. Possessions of different tribes could be kept in the families.
2. Levites were kept separate as only they could minister to sacred things.
3. It would keep clear the lineage of the Messiah.

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Herod the Great, an Edomite king under Rome, ruled Palestine from 37-3 BC He destroyed the “genealogies” which was Providential. Canaan was no longer to be the land of the Jew, the Levitical priesthood had served its purpose in bringing the nation to Christ, and the END of the law – Christ – had come (Col. 2:14-17). Such “genealogies” have no value in the Lord’s church. They “furnish disputes rather than acceptance by faith of God’s administration.”

“Now the end of the commandment...” (I Tim. 1:5): The purpose and “end” of God’s law is that men may be led to DO GOD’S WILL Things essential to a pure and holy love:

1. “A pure heart,”
2. “A good conscience,” and
3. “Faith unfeigned,” sincere faith.

“From which some... have turned aside.” (I Tim. 1:6) Some had turned from “love” based on the above three principles, It is an awful thing to turn deliberately from the pure truth (II Pet. 2:19-22). They “turned off into empty talk.” They desired to be known as “teachers of the law” (verse 7), although they did not understand the force of their own assertions or the nature of the themes they debated! They needed someone to teach them,

“But we know that the law is good, if a man uses it lawfully...” (I Tim. 1:8) Paul respected the law. However, the law was not made to teach “fables,” “endless genealogies,” and foolish fancies. These false teachers at Ephesus asserted that the law was good, but made a wrong use of it.

“Knowing this, that the law is not made for a righteous man...” (I Tim. 1:9): Law is not given to justify righteous men, but to restrain, condemn and punish the wicked. Paul lists a long catalogue of sins, common in the Gentile world, all of which were condemned by the law. Everything is forbidden which is opposed to the Gospel of Christ (verses 10-11).

“Men-stealers.” (Verse 11) These ‘kidnapers’ stole men and sold them into slavery.

“According to the glorious gospel... committed to my trust.” (I Tim. 1:11) This gospel is the **STANDARD BY WHICH EVERYTHING IS TO BE TESTED** (see I Thess. 5:21). To deny this is “contrary to sound (healthful) doctrine” (verse 10).

III. A Christian’s Thanksgiving (I Timothy 1:12-17)

“And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me...” (I Tim. 1:12) Mention of the Gospel, calls forth an exceedingly beautiful passage which is at once a song and a testimony. The apostle illustrates the beauty of the Gospel from his own experience.

Christ Jesus selected Paul to be an apostle because Paul was true to his conscience. He was willing to die for what he believed to be right. Thus God “counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry.”

“Who was before a blasphemer...” (I Tim. 1:13) A slanderer of the name of Christ! He was “a persecutor, and injurious.” He consented to the death of Christians. When Stephen was stoned “the witnesses laid down their clothes at a young man’s feet, whose name was Saul” (Acts 7:58). He thought he was doing God’s will in “breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord” (Acts 9:1). Of course, Saul was SINCERE; but he was SINCERELY MISTAKEN (Acts 23:1f). He thought Jesus was an imposter, not the Saviour of the world. Saul “obtained mercy, for in unbelief I acted ignorantly,” he affirms.

“And the grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant...” (I Tim. 1:14) God in His mercy made Saul an example of His grace and mercy. Saul’s eyes were opened; he became a believer and was filled with love of Christ. His salvation had come through “faith!”

“This is a faithful saying... Christ Jesus came... to save sinners.” (I Tim. 1:15) “For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost” (Luke 19:10). Thank God Jesus came into the world for the sake of “SINNERS” and to solve for them the supreme problem of the world. He came to “SAVE SINNERS!” Christ came to bring “salvation” from the GUILT, POWER, and ultimately from the PRESENCE OF SIN. He came to bring us all to a life of service, of holiness and of fellowship with God (I John 1:7-9).

“Of whom I am chief.” Paul felt he was the first of “chief” of sinners because he persecuted the church of God (Gal. 1:13), men and even women (Acts 22:4f, 26:11). He had sad memories of those days.

“Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy...” (I Tim. 1:16) Paul becomes the “specimen” sinner as an encouragement to all who come after him. Put your trust in Christ “for life eternal;” in Him there is “unlimited patience” and mercy for the obedient believer. Paul is “a pattern” I Follow him in obedience today (I Cor. 1:1; Heb. 3:15).

“Now unto the King eternal...” (I Tim. 1:17) This noble doxology is a burst of gratitude for God’s grace to Paul. Other doxologies are found in Gal. 1:5; Rom. 11:36; 16:27; Phil. 4:20; Eph. 3:20-21; I Tim. 6:16. “The King eternal” is King of the ages. He is “immortal,” or incorruptible (Rom. 1:23). “Invisible” is an epithet of God in Co. 1:15, “the only God” who is “Unto the ages of ages” (Eph. 3:21). It is not a “rumor,” it is a FACT that GOD IS NOT DEAD!

IV. The Clear Encouragement and Warning (I Timothy 1:18-20)

“This charge I commit unto thee...” (I Tim. 1:18) The “charge” referred to in verses 3 and 5.

“According to the prophecies...” Timothy had a spiritual gift imparted to him “with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery” (I Tim. 4:14). “Stir up the gift of God, which is in thee by the putting on of my hands” (II Tim. 1:6). Being selected by the will of God, Timothy was commanded to “war a good warfare” and hence fulfill the “predictions made long ago about you” (Goodspeed).

When Timothy first comes before us “he was testified to” by the brethren (Acts 16:2). He began his ministry rich in hopes, prayers, and predictions. Now in a trying place of service in Ephesus Paul says, “Timothy, my son, put up a splendid fight, possessed of faith and a clear conscience” (verse 19a).

“Some... have made shipwreck.” (I Tim. 1:19) “For some have thrown these qualities overboard and have shipwrecked their faith!” Every Christian and minister must be “possessed of faith and a clear conscience”! Faith can live in us only so long as we obey in conscience the thing which faith demands and approves (James 2:17-26).

“Of whom is Hymenaeus...” (I Tim. 1:20) A heretical teacher “who concerning the truth... erred, saying that the resurrection is past already” (II Tim. 2:17). He tried to “shipwreck” the faith of true believers.

“Alexander.” Of Alexander nothing is known, unless the Alexander of Acts 19:33 had become a Christian. He had once been Paul’s devoted friend. Paul is not the first not the last minister to be forsaken by fair-weather friends (II Tim. 4:10).

“Delivered unto Satan.” They were excluded from the church (I Cor. 5:5, II Tim. 2:16-18). The purpose of discipline is to correct and set right the erring one. If the sinner repents, thank God and receive him back into full fellowship. If he refuses in willful and stubborn rebellion, reject him from the fellowship.

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QUESTIONS

1. Who wrote this letter, and why (I Tim. 1:1)?
2. To whom was the letter written (I Tim. 1:2)?
3. Why did Paul refer to Timothy as his “son in the faith” (I Tim. 1:2; Acts 16:1-3)?
4. Who was Timothy’s mother? Grandmother? Father? In what had Timothy been carefully trained (Acts 16:1-3; II Tim. 1:3; 3:15)?
5. Why are I and II Timothy and Titus called “Pastoral Epistles”?
6. Is I Timothy concerned primarily with conduct in the home, in the church, or in the state (compare I Tim. 3:15)?
7. When was I Timothy probably written?
8. Why was Timothy left “at Ephesus” (I Tim. 1:3; Acts 20:29-30; 15:1f)?
9. Can you name three essentials to “pure” and holy love (I Tim. 3:5)?
10. To what had some of the teachers in Ephesus turned (I Tim. 1:6-7; Acts 20:17, 29-30)?
11. Who should be “apt to teach” in the church, and “oversee” all teaching in the local church (I Tim. 3:2; Acts 20:28-31)?
12. Why is “law” given (I Tim. 1:8-10)? Is Paul’s catalogue of sins still common?
13. By what standard is the Christian’s conduct to be judged (I Tim. 1:10b, 11)?
14. What two things did Christ do for Paul before “putting” him into the ministry (I Tim. 1:12)? Why (I Tim. 1:13)? Is it possible to “be sincere,” and yet be “sincerely mistaken” (Acts 23:1f)?
15. What “faithful saying” is “worthy of all acceptance” (I Tim. 1:15)?
16. How was Saul’s (Paul’s, Acts 13:9) to be used (I Tim. 1:16)? What noble doxology followed it (I Tim. 1:17)?
17. What was Paul’s “charge” to Timothy (I Tim. 1:18, 3, 5)?
18. What two things must one hold if he would “war a good warfare” (I Tim. 1:18)?
19. What sins did Hymenaeus and Alexander Commit (I Tim. 1:19-20; II Tim. 2:17-18; 4:14-15)?
20. For what purpose did Paul “deliver” them to Satan (I Tim. 1:20; I Cor. 5:5; II Tim. 2:16-18)?

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WHOLE BIBLE STUDY COURSE

Year VI

Fourth Quarter

Lesson 42
I Timothy 2

Page 1
Memory Verse: I Timothy 2:8

Memory Verse:

“I will therefore that men pray every where, lifting up hold hands without wrath and doubting” (I Timothy 1:8).

PRAYER LIFE IN THE CHURCH

Timothy was not only charged to see that “sound” or healthful doctrine was taught at Ephesus (I Tim. 1:3-5, 18), but he was to lead the church to “deliver unto Satan” the false leaders (I Tim. 1:18-20). In chapters two and three, the apostle Paul gives GENERAL REGULATIONS OF CHURCH LIFE (I Tim. 2:1-3:16).

Public Worship

I Timothy 2 deals with public worship. Properly conducted public worship is a difficult task. “It demands tact and wisdom and discipline, and it taxes the powers of the mind and heart. Upon its rightful discharge depends in large measure the spiritual life and development of Christian congregations and the value of their appointed services.”

Timothy was “besought” to guide the whole church at Ephesus in a rightful and acceptable public worship of praise, prayer and preaching (I Tim. 1:3), and “charged” to “war a good warfare” in “holding faith, and a good conscience” (I Tim. 1:18, 19).

I. The Proper Scope of Public Worship (I Timothy 2:1-7)

“I exhort, therefore, that, first of all ...” (I Tim. 2:1) Paul’s “first” request was upon the conduct of public worship. Timothy was at once to begin to carry out Paul’s instructions – the “charge” which “bade him teach ALL MEN to put their whole trust in the Savior of sinners.”

“Supplications.” This word signifies requests for particular benefits or blessings (Luke 1:13; Phil. 1:4; II Tim. 1:3). “Prayers”: For direct and specific blessings as we need them. Prayer is COMMUNION WITH God. Prayer implies that God is a PERSON ABLE AND WILLING to HEAR US (I Pet. 3:12). Since God created the laws of nature, He still governs and preserves all His creatures and their actions. God requires that we pray to Him. This demands that we be obedient children at His. “The Lord is far from the wicked, but He HEARS THE PRAYER OF THE RIGHTEOUS” (Prov. 15:29). “He who turns away his ear from hearing (and doing, of course) the law, even his prayer is an abomination” (Prov. 28:9).

“And giving of thanks”: The Ephesian Christians were to give thanks for all the blessings that they have. How GOOD GOD IS TO US ALL! “It is of the Lord’s mercies that we are not consumed, because His compassions fail not. They are NEW EVERY MORNING: GREAT IS THY FAITHFULNESS” (Lam. 3:22,23). Our hymns may well be “prayers” in their substance, and our “prayers may properly be voiced in the form of hymns.”

“For all men.” The SCOPE of prayer is universal – all saints and sinners NEED our prayers. Nero at that time was the Roman emperor (54-68 A. D.). This shows that prayers and intercessions should be made for BAD RULERS as well as for GOOD LEADERS. “Kings and all who hold high position” (verse 2)

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NEED the prayers daily of those who are governed. Such leaders possess the widest power for evil and for good.

NO mention is made of PRAYERS FOR THE DEAD, though! Prayers for the dead and the SIGN OF THE CROSS began about 310 A. D.

“That we may lead o quiet and peaceable life...” (1 Tim. 2:2) We are to pray that those who RULE or LEAD US may be so overruled of God that Christians shall live and worship in “peace.” We are to pray that leaders will throw no hindrance in our way of worship and service of God. The captive Jews in Babylon were to PRAY for that wicked city. “PRAY unto the Lord for it: for in the PEACE THEREOF SHALL YE HAVE PEACE” (Jer. 29:7).

This prayer for the city’s “peace” does not mean support or participation in Babylon’s affairs, or approval of its course. Such “prayer” is PROPER in Corinth, Ephesus, Russia, China, Covington, Kentucky, and wherever YOU ARE!

ONLY when PUBLIC ORDER is properly preserved are Christians free to lead “a quiet and peaceable life.” Think about any war-torn country. CHRISTIAN HOME LIFE is virtually impossible in such a land! Our prayers must not be SELFISH, but reach out in sympathy to “ALL MEN” everywhere! “Such praying is wholesome and is WELCOME in the presence of God our Savior” (verse 3). To PLEASE GOD is the HIGHEST MOTIVE that can influence a Christian,

“God... will have all men to be saved...” (I Tim. 2:4): It is God’s WILL and WISH that “ALL MEN EVERYWHERE” “repent and “come to the knowledge of the truth” (II Pet. 3:9, Acts 17:30, 31).

While God WANTS “ALL MEN” to be saved, ONLY THOSE WILL BE SAVED who meet the conditions of salvation (Heb. 5:9). Men must hear (Rom. 10:17), “believe” (Acts 16:31), “repent” (Acts 2:38), confess that “Jesus Christ is the Son of God” (Acts 8:37), and “arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord” (Acts 22:16). “No man cometh unto the Father, but by me,” said Jesus (John 14:6).

When God’s will depends on God, it always comes to pass. When it depends on man, sometimes it comes to pass and sometimes it does not. It has been well marked out that the saved are made up of “whosoever will”, while the NON-ELECT consists of “whosoever WON’T”!

“For there is one God...” (I Tim. 2:5) There is “ONE GOD,” not MANY GODS, who desires the salvation of “all men!” God loves “all men”, and they come within the saving purpose of God. Polytheists, men who worship many gods, would not pray for “all men.” One who believed in a pagan Roman god would not pray for Carthaginians. Such gods were enemies of each other. Our God is “ONE GOD,” the God of “ALL MEN” (John 3:16, Mark 16:15, 16).

“One mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.” A “mediator” is one who stands between parties at variance to reconcile them. Therefore the Virgin Mary and the Saints must be REJECTED AS INTERMEDIARIES. It would make Christ a liar to act otherwise since He said: ‘NO man cometh to the Father, but by me.’ (John 14:6)

“Who gave Himself a ransom for all...” (I Tim. 2:6) Because Jesus gave Himself in life and in His ATONING DEATH on the cross, a way of deliverance from the guilt and power of sin has been opened for “ALL MEN”! It is the duty of EACH CHRISTIAN in EACH CHURCH TO “PRAY” for the conversion of “ALL MEN,” and to “testify” or proclaim that salvation through Jesus Christ. “Today” is the “due time” to do it!

“Whereunto I am ordained a preacher...” (I Tim. 2:7) Jesus Christ – chose and appointed Saul (Paul) to be a “herald or proclaimer rather than one who teaches an old truth” (Acts 26:16-19). The Judaizers denied that Paul was thus chosen with the authority of “an apostle!” Paul spoke the truth. He was not lying

about his divine appointment to the Gentiles. Here alone Paul calls himself “a teacher of the Gentiles in faith” and truth. Elsewhere he calls himself an “apostle” (Rom. 11:13), “minister” (Rom. 15:16), and “prisoner” (Eph. 3:1).

II. The Position of Men and Women in Public Worship (I Timothy 2:8-15)

“I will therefore that men pray every where...” (I Tim. 2:8) Having shown that public prayer is UNIVERSAL in its SCOPE, Paul now shows the spirit in which “prayer” is to be offered, and stresses the behavior of the worshippers.

God through Paul declared that Jew and Gentile alike should “pray.” The force of the command, however, is not upon this restriction as to the – persons who are to lead in worship but upon the SPIRIT IN WHICH THEY ARE TO PRAY.

“Lifting up holy hands.” The “lifting up dedicated hands” was a familiar posture in prayer. Paul is not here insisting upon a POSTURE OF THE BODY, but upon the STATE OF THE HEART. Those who pray are to be free from the practice of sin. They must be YIELDED TO TELE SERVICE OF GOD (Job 17:9; Psa. 24:4; James 4:8; I Pet. 2:9). No man should pray who is not known as an earnest and consecrated man of God.

“Without wrath and doubting.” Angry feelings can have NO PLACE IN THE HEART of one who really prays – in PUBLIC, or PRIVATE (Phil. 2:14; Luke 24:50).

“In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel...” (I Tim. 2:9) Turning to the matter of the DEMEANOR and POSITION OF WOMEN, we must remember that Paul was dealing with affairs in Ephesus. Behind the picture of the CHRISTIAN WOMAN AS HERE PORTRAYED is that of many of the women of the Greek communities, and it was to save the women of the Church from any CONFORMITY to DEBASED IDEALS that these passages were written.

Women were commanded to come to worship, giving more consideration to what they WEAR IN THEIR HEARTS, than to what they WEAR ON THEIR BODIES.

It is scriptural and right for women to “dress themselves modestly and prudently in becoming attire, not adorned with braided hair and gold or pearls or expensive clothes, but, as is appropriate for women who profess religion, with good works!”

A woman attended a revival meeting. She was invited to go forward and accept Jesus Christ as her Saviour and Lord, and be “baptized into Christ” the same hour of the night (Gal. 3:27, Heb. 3:15).

“O, dear no,” she emphatically said, “I couldn’t go forward. I have a runner in my stocking”! She was more interested in WHAT was ON HER BODY than in WHAT was IN HER HEART!

“Showy dress and ornaments” are in bad taste everywhere, but especially at public worship of Almighty God.

“Shamefacedness.” In describing the conduct of modest, Christian women, Paul uses one word that since the days of Wycliffe has been rendered into of the corrupt spelling “shamefacedness.” The word has nothing to do neither with the “face” nor with “shame” as we use that word. “Shamefastness” is that conduct which is “held fast” by proper self-respect. It denotes demeanor that is restrained by true womanly reserve. Such women shrink from all that is indelicate and vulgar.

“Braided hair.” “Braided” or plaited hair. “The Gentile women were much given to arranging the hair in plaits over the head, with bands of gold. Such vain and idle show at worship is forbidden, as well as wearing of pearls, or costly array!” Then gold or pearls were interwoven in the hair, causing it to glisten in the light.

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“But ...with good works.” (I Tim. 3:10) A Christian woman may “adorn” her life by many kindly and helpful deeds. Good DRESS and good WORKS must be combined (I Tim. 5:10-14; Titus 2:3-5). To be a good wife and mother, to keep her house clean and inviting is a vital work for every Christian woman. A woman is Queen in her home! Is this not the true “career” of a Christian woman?

“Let the woman learn in silence...” (I Tim. 2:11) In PUBLIC WORSHIP the PLACE OF WOMAN is that of a Quiet LEARNER. She is NOT TO REPLACE or SUPPLANT MAN AS LEADER of the worship in the public assembly of the church (I Cor. 14:33, 34). She is not “to teach or to DOMINEER OVER MEN” (Goodspeed). She is to be in “complete submission” to the authorized teacher of the church.

“But I suffer not a woman to teach...” (I Tim. 2:12): Women are riot to become the authorized teacher of the church in the public worship. MEN did public preaching in the church, NOT WOMEN. This verse and I Cor. 14:33-34 do not teach that women have NO PLACE in the work of the Lord. In the Old Testament, Deborah was a JUDGE AND PROPHETESS (Judges 4:4). Huldah was a prophetess (II Chr. 34: 22 f). Joel predicted that in the Christian dispensation “the sons and daughters should prophesy “ (Joel 2:28).

Peter declared that Pentecost, in part, “is that which was spoken by the – prophet Joel” (Acts 2:14). Philip had “four daughters, virgins, which did prophesy” (Acts 21:9).

Women are commanded to TEACH. Women may do any work in the church except be elders, deacons, or evangelists. This work in New Testament times was restricted to men.

“For Adam was first formed, then Eve.” (I Tim. 2:13) Paul gives two reasons for insisting upon choosing a man rather than his wife for the position of PUBLIC TEACHER in the Christian assembly:

1. Adam was first in creation (verse 13).
2. Eve was first led into transgression (verse 14).

Man by his priority in creation has some responsibilities that place upon him unique responsibilities.

“And...the woman being deceived was in the transgression.” (I Tim. 2:14) While “Adam was first formed,” it was Eve who was FIRST LED INTO transgression. Adam acted in accordance with his own choice and WITH HIS EYES OPEN. “The woman, deluded as she was, experienced the transgression.” Is a woman, because of her greater trustfulness, more easily led into false beliefs and hence less qualified to be a public teacher of Christian truth? I’m sure Paul did not mean that a woman is mentally or morally or spiritually inferior to a man. All the men and women I know (I’m first you know) are not perfect. “ALL have sinned” (Rom. 3:23). Both are on the same plane before God; both need saving from their sins (Rom. 6:23).

“Notwithstanding she shall be saved in childbearing...” (I Tim. 2:15) God laid work upon the fallen, sinful, Adam. “To the woman He said, I will greatly increase your pregnancy troubles; you will suffer birthpangs; yet, you will be drawn to your husband and he will dominate you.” (Gen. 3:16, Berkeley)

Paul affirms that the woman “will, however, be KEPT SAFE through the childbearing, if with self-control she continues in faith and love and consecration!”

Was Paul a Woman hater?

Some “elect ladies” of today dub Paul a “woman hater”! Is he?

Paul’s writings, under God, have done more to EMANCIPATE WOMAN, more to secure her social, civil and political rights, than the productions of any other author who could be named in all Christian history. Woman’s highest happiness is enjoyed ONLY in those countries where the Christian principles set forth by the apostle Paul are accepted and obeyed!

Does verse 15 also refer to the fact that Christ, the Saviour of all men, would come into the world through the childbearing of women? Even if sin did come into the world through woman (verse 14), so did the Saviour!

QUESTIONS

1. What was Timothy “charged” to do at Ephesus (I Tim. 1:3-5, 18-20)?
2. With what does Paul deal in I Tim. 2:1-3:16?
3. For whom are Christians to pray (I Tim. 2:1, 2)?
4. Are Christians to pray for wicked rulers (I Tim. 2:2)?
5. Can you define “supplications” and “prayers” (I Tim. 2:1)?
6. Is there any mention made in the New Testament of PRAYERS FOR THE DEAD? When did this practice arise?
7. If a “king” and “all that are in authority” preserve public order, what results for the praying Christian (I Tim. 2:2)?
8. What is “good and acceptable in the sight of God” (I Tim. 2:3)?
9. How many people does God want to be saved (I Tim. 2:4)?
10. Who will be saved (Heb. 5:9; Rom. 10:17; Acts 16:31; 2:38; 8:37; 22:1; John 14:6)?
11. Who is the “mediator between God and men” (I Tim, 2:5, John 14:6)?
12. For whom did Christ “give himself a ransom” (I Tim. 2:6)?
13. By whom and for what purpose was Paul “ordained” (I Tim. 2:7; Acts 26:16-19; Rom. 11:13; 15:16; Eph. 3:1)?
14. What is God’s will for “men... everywhere” (I Tim. 2:8)?
15. What are women especially to consider as they come to the public worship (I Tim. 2:9)?
16. Who did the public preaching in the church (I Tim. 2:11-12)?
17. What did Deborah do (Judges 4:4)? Huldah (II Chron. 34:22f)?
18. What was Joel’s prophecy (Joel 2:28), and did Peter say about it (Acts 2:14)? Who had “four daughters, virgins, which did prophesy” in the early church (Acts 21:9)?
19. Who was “first formed” and first “deceived... in the transgression” (I Tim. 2:13-14)?
20. What is the meaning of “she shall be saved in childbearing” (I Tim. 2:15, Gen. 3:16)?

YEAR 6 - LESSON 43 - PAGE 1
WHOLE BIBLE STUDY COURSE

Year VI

Fourth Quarter

Lesson 43

Page 1

I Timothy 3

Memory Verses: I Timothy 3:1, 13

Memory Verses:

“This is a true saying, If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work... For they that have used the office of a deacon well purchase to themselves a good degree, and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus” (I Timothy 3:1, 13).

ELDERS AND DEACONS

Elders and deacons are necessary to the well being of the New Testament church. After Paul instructed Timothy as to the public worship of the church, he next gave directions as the permanent organization of the church.

For the first time in the New Testament, we have listed the qualifications and duties of elders and deacons. Both offices are referred to in Acts 6:1-7, and in Philippians 1:1.

When men and women have obeyed the gospel and meet together, they form a congregation – they have congregated. It is necessary that they have some kind of organization in order that “all things be done decently and in order” (I Cor. 14:40). This insures that the Lord’s work will be done. “Everybody’s business is nobody’s business.” God has ordained a particular form of government for each congregation. Let us carefully study His plan for the leaders of His Church.

I. Qualifications of Bishops (I Timothy 3:1-7)

A. A trustworthy “saying” (I Timothy 3:1).

“This is a true saying, If a man desire the office of a bishop...” (I Tim. 3:1) If referring to the office of “a bishop,” Paul quotes with approval a popular saying; “Whoever aspires to the office of overseer is out for a splendid task.”

“Bishop”: From “episkopeo,” and means “overseer.” “Bishop” refers to the safe officer, elsewhere called “presbyter” or “elder.” In Acts 20:17 Paul calls the “elders” of the Ephesian church for a conference at Miletus. In Acts 20:28 he calls the same men “overseers,” or “bishops.”

The officer described as a “bishop” in I Tim. 3:1 is referred to as “elder” in I Tim. 5:17-19. Their duties are the same.

Paul left Titus in Crete, “that thou should set in order the things that are lacking, and ordain ELDERS in every city” (Titus 1:5). In describing the qualifications of an “elder” he calls him a “bishop” in Titus 1:7!

In I Peter 5:1, 2’ the apostle addresses “elders” and commands them to exercise the office of “bishops” over the flock, “Bishop” then means to act as an “OVERSEER,” or take the oversight of a church.

ONE CHURCH MANY BISHOPS

The Ephesian church had “ELDERS” or “BISHOPS”. A church may have as many “bishops” or “elders” as may be needed to do the work of the local church. However, the New Testament knows nothing of ONE BISHOP presiding over a number of churches! Man invented that form of church dictatorship!

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“He desireth a good work.” The “saying” indicates that the position of “bishop” or “elder” was one not merely of honor or of ease, but involved “WORK” of the highest and most beneficent sort. It intimates that some really aspired to the office. Paul does not rebuke such aspirations. When one receives a “call” to the ministry of being an “elder” or “bishop” or “pastor”, this “desire” is simply deepened into a sacred conviction of duty.

B. The character of “bishops” (I Timothy 3:2, 3).

“A bishop then must be blameless...” (I Tim. 3:2) He “must be above reproach,” not a man who merely has committed no offense. He must be one whose conduct gives “no handle” which could be laid hold of to injure his reputation.

“The husband of one wife.” “One at a time, clearly” (Robertson). Literally, “a man of one woman.” “Only once married” (Goodspeed). Polygamy is forbidden. This does not forbid the marriage of a man whose first wife died. After a second marriage, he would still be “the husband of ONE WIFE!”

“Vigilant,” means temperate. He is watchful over himself in restraining the appetites. “Sober.” Sober-minded. “Discreet,” means not excitable or passionate, but self-restrained. Not flippant or flighty, nor a Gloomy Gus. “Of good behavior”: Orderly, decent conduct that corresponds to his inner life.

“Given to hospitality.” This is a Christian virtue (Rom. 12:13; Heb. 13:1, 2). Poor inns, slow means of travel, poverty-stricken and persecuted Christians made “hospitality” of vital importance. “Elders” or “bishops” were to set a worthy example to the flock of entertaining fellow-Christians. “Apt to teach.” “Bishops” must be men who have the knowledge and 2:24-26).

“Not given to wine...” (I Tim. 3:3) He is not to be “one who sits long at (beside, ‘para’) his wine.” He must not be a drunken brawler. “No striker.” One who in anger resorts to physical force. Ungoverned in temper. Not “a fist-fighter.” “Not greedy of filthy lucre.” He must be no lover of money, not a miser like Silas Marner. He must not be willing to use WRONG MEANS to obtain money, nor anxious for sudden riches. “But patient...” Genial, not bitter and impatient even to the forward and unpleasant. “Not a brawler.” The elder must be conciliatory. “Not covetous.” He cannot be pursuing riches above all else.

C. The temperament of “bishops” or “elders” (I Timothy 3:4, 5).

“One that ruleth well his own house...” (I Tim. 3:4) He knows how to train his children to be obedient. He LEADS THEM in the right way to become worthy men and women. The same qualities are needed in training the members of the “family of the faith.” “TO RULE” is to “STAND BEFORE” – not as a tyrant, but as an example or guide. Such a “ruler” will lead his own children, and the church, to respect him and honor God. He “presides beautifully over his own home!”

“For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how...” (I Tim. 3:5) “For if a person does not know enough to manage his own home, how will he take of God’s church?” The local church is described as belonging to God. Only Paul in the New Testament so describes the church (Acts 20:28).

D. The experience of a “bishop” (I Timothy 3:6).

“Not a novice, lest...” (I Tim. 3:6) “Not a new convert,” one recently converted. Paul and Barnabas “ordained them elders in every church... prayed with fasting... commended them to the Lord, on whom they believed” (Acts 14:23) as they retraced their steps on the first missionary journey. The church at Ephesus would have a number of men of experience. A “newly planted” Christian could be easily rooted up. A “novice” might be puffed up with self-conceit and vanity and so fall under the doom incurred by the devil. He would thus cease to be a minister of light, and he might become an instrument of darkness.

E. The reputation of a “bishop” (I Timothy 3:7).

“Moreover he must have a good report of them... without.” (I Tim. 3:7) His conduct had the respect and commendation of all fair men. Even bad men have a sense of justice in them which makes them give a “good report” of such a “bishop”! Bishops are to avoid the “snare of the devil” as “pride” or “conceit” (I Tim. 3:6), and “love of money” (I Tim. 6:9). There are many other “snares,” doubtless.

This list of qualifications for the office of “bishop,” “elder,” “presbyter,” or “pastor” is not to be regarded as exhaustive. Note the qualifications demand moral rather than mental excellence, They refer more to temperament, tact, experience, and reputation than to intellectual gifts. Do not regard intellectual gifts are unnecessary, however. Remember II Timothy 2:15?

II. Qualifications of Deacons (I Timothy 3:8-13)

“Likewise must the deacons be grave...” (I Tim, 3:8). The ancient church understood that the seven appointed in Acts 6:1-7 were the FIRST DEACONS, They were not called deacons, but filled the OFFICE of a DEACON. They distributed alms to poor Grecian widows. They “wait tables.” They became “helpers” or “assistants” to the “bishops” or “elders.”

Feeding the poor with the contributions of the church is just as spiritual as preaching the gospel! Here the office and qualifications of a deacon are described. “SEVEN” men were enough to meet the need in Jerusalem. The NEED, anywhere, determines the number of deacons in a local church.

“Grave”: Dignified, serious in their work.

“Not double-tongued.” Like Bunyan’s “Mr. Two-Tongues,” One placed between two persons and saying one thing to one, another to the other. “Not given to much wine.” “Not holding the mind on much wine. That attitude leads to over-indulgence” (Robertson). “Not greedy of filthy lucre.” Money in itself is not evil. The deacon must not use evil ways of getting money.

“Holding the mystery of the faith...” (I Tim. 3:9) “Mystery” means those truths that could only be known to a man by direct revelation from God (II Tim. 3:16-17). The gospel is God’s revealed “mystery” to all believers. “The mystery of the faith” means the knowledge of Christ and His salvation. This was to be regarded as a sacred treasure and those who held it in their hearts were to keep their consciences clean from any stain.

“And let these also first be proved then...” (I Tim. 3:10) Deacons must be men fully tested, not “novices” or recently converted men. How the proposed deacons are to be “first” tested before approved Paul does not say. A period of on-the-job-training, or a careful examination of their past would “test” the proposed deacon. Only when found “blameless,” or serve the church as a deacon!

“Even so must their wives be grave...” (I Tim. 3:11) The word in the Greek may mean “women” or “wives.” It is rendered “wife” in verse 12. The requirements here mentioned are such as may well be regarded proper for all women workers in the church, whether deaconesses, the wives of deacons, or other women performing similar tasks.

These women must be “grave,” or conduct themselves with the same dignity as the deacons.

“Not slanderers.” The devil is the chief slanderer (Eph. 6:11). “She-devils” in reality. “While men are more prone to be double-tongued, women are more prone than men to be slanderers” (White).

“Sober.” Deacons should be temperate and sane, and not governed merely by their emotions. “Faithful in all things”: Absolutely reliable and trustworthy. Godly, Christian women can best meet the needs of the women and girls in the church.

“Let the deacons be the husbands of one wife...” (I Tim. 3:12) Deacons must be “faithful husbands,” or “husbands of one wife” who lead their own houses well. They are to be men who are “ruling their children and their own houses well.”

“For they that have used the office of a deacon well...” (I Tim. 3:13) Christian men who meet the high requirements, both as to private life and as to official conduct, “take a worthwhile step upward for themselves with considerable conversational freedom in the faith that centers in Christ Jesus”. They may grow into elders!

To be faithful as a deacon will “secure a high position in the church and in God’s favor.” Philip and Stephen became evangelists (See Acts 6:1-7, 10; 7:54-60; 8:5). To do one job well is to be prepared for a bigger and better job.

III. The Importance of the Church (I Timothy 3:14-16)

“These things I write... hoping to come unto thee shortly.” (I Tim. 3:14) Paul wanted to visit the church at Ephesus again. Knowing the uncertainty of his plans and the possibility of delay, he has written Timothy that he as minister might understand how to act. The purpose of all the apostle had written was that men might know “HOW... TO BEHAVE... IN THE HOUSE OF GOD.” Christians as yet had no separate houses of worship. It is conduct as members of God’s family that Paul has in mind.

“Church of the living God.” The church is not a human, but a DIVINE INSTITUTION. The LIVING TEMPLE OF GOD is built of “LIVING SPIRITUAL STONES” – men and women. The temple of Diana, one of the seven wonders of the ancient world, was at Ephesus. Diana’s temple is in ruins. The LIVING CHURCH MARCHES ON!

“The pillar and ground of the truth.” The church is the foundation and support of the truth. The church preaches the truth, transmits it from generation to generation. The essential glory of the church is “THE TRUTH” (John 14:6).

“And without controversy...” (I Tim. 3:15) Undoubtedly.

“Great is the mystery of godliness.” The “mystery” that God has revealed to us in the gospel in order to make men godly. The gospel is GREAT!

“God was manifest in the flesh.” “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God... And the Word be-came flesh and tented among us, and we viewed His glory” (John 1: 1, 14).

“Justified in the Spirit.” “Vindicated by the Spirit.” Christ was vindicated in his own spirit (Heb. 9:14) before men by overcoming death and rising from the dead (Rom. 1:3f).

“Seen of angels.” Angels were at the open tomb (Matt. 28:2-7) and at the ascension (Acts 1:10-11). With singing angels announced His coming (Luke 2:8-15), they predicted His RETURN, and now they stand about His throne!

“Preached unto the Gentiles.” The reigning Lord sent Paul unto the Gentiles (Acts 26:16-18). This was Paul’s glory (Eph. 3:1,8). See I Tim. 2:7.

“Received up into glory”: After the ascension “into heaven,” Jesus was seated “on the right hand of God” (I Pet. 3:22; Heb. 12:1-2). Into a sphere brighter and better than the world in which we live our Lord has entered, and to it He will bring “every creature” (Mark 16:15, 16) who believes and OBEYS the gospel (Heb. 5:9; John 14:6).

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Six elements enter into “the mystery of godliness,” elements all of which are fully revealed in the gospel of Jesus Christ. Whether these words which are “perfect poetry” were borrowed from an early Christian hymn, or whether Paul first wrote them, they are of supreme importance. The CHURCH that supports and maintains them is “the pillar and ground of the truth”!

There have been varied renderings of this passage. That of Humphreys in the Cambridge Bible is very illuminative.

Who in flesh was manifested,
Pure in Spirit was attested;
By angels’ vision witnessed,
Among the nations heralded;
By faith accepted here,
Received in glory there!

QUESTIONS

1. Did Paul think that “elders” and “deacons” were essential to the well being of the New Testament church (Phil. 1:1; I Cor. 14:40)?
2. What “saying” did Paul quote in I Timothy 3:1?
3. What church officer is described in I Timothy 3:1-7? Is the office to be “desired”?
4. Can you give Scriptural proof that the title of “bishop” is identical with “elder” and “overseer” (Acts 20:17, 28; I Tim. 3:1; 5:17-19; Titus 1:5, 7; I Pet. 5:1, 2)?
5. What is the responsibility of the “overseers” or “elders” (Acts 20:28; I Pet. 5:1-3)?
6. May a local church have as many “bishops” or “elders” or “pastors” as may be needed to do the work of the local church?
7. Does the New Testament know anything about ONE BISHOP OVER a NUMBER of CHURCHES? Who invented the diocesan method of church dictatorship?
8. By whom are “elders” and “deacons” selected (Acts 6:1-7; Titus 1:6-9)?
9. Can you enumerate the sixteen negative and positive qualities which the “elder” or “bishop” must have (I Tim. 3:1-7)?
10. How many of these refer to his character (I Tim. 3:2-3)?
11. How many qualifications refer primarily to his home life (I Tim. 3:2, 4-5)? What is the meaning of “the husband of one wife”?
12. How many refer to his reputation before the world? His attitude toward money? To his teaching ability?
13. What reward is promised to the faithful elder (I Pet. 5:4)?
14. What is the danger of placing young, inexperienced Christians in places of great responsibility (I Tim. 3:6; III John 9, 10)?
15. Can you name nine positive and negative qualifications a deacon “MUST” have (I Timothy 3:8-10)?
16. Do our churches DEMAND these qualifications of their officers today? Should they? Honestly, are not all these qualities demanded of EVERY CHRISTIAN?
17. What are the four qualifications for a deacon’s “wife” (I Tim. 3:11)?
18. What reward is promised to the faithful “deacon” (Tim. 3:13)?
19. What three names are used for the church (I Tim. 3:14)?
20. What six facts make up the “mystery of godliness” (I Tim. 3:16)?

YEAR 6 - LESSON 44 - PAGE 1
WHOLE BIBLE STUDY COURSE

Year VI

Fourth Quarter

Lesson 44
I Timothy 4

Page 1
Memory Verse: I Timothy 4:8

Memory Verse:

“For bodily exercise profiteth little: but godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come” (I Timothy 4:8).

THE WALK OF A TRUE BELIEVER

No minister or leader of a church can escape the pain of having false teachers appear among the members of the church. The apostle Paul warned the Ephesian elders at Miletus, “After my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise speaking perverse (distorted) things, to draw away disciples after them. Therefore WATCH... “(Acts 20:29-31).

Christians on Guard!

God’s leaders in every generation must always be on their guard. Like true sentries, we must detect and dispatch the enemy of New Testament truth, **WHENEVER** or **WHEREVER** he or she arises!

At times it may even be necessary to discipline, **PUBLICLY**, church officers whose influences is undermining the peace and faith of the church. “In the presence of all, correct those who went wrong, so that the rest may be awed” (I Tim. 5:20, Berkeley).

The first duty of a minister, or servant of the church, is to counteract such evil teaching and influence by right living and sound teaching. Hence, Paul’s

I. Warning Against False Doctrine (I Timothy 4;1-5)

“Now the Spirit speaketh expressly...” (I Tim. 4:1) The Holy Spirit makes two kinds of revelations in the Bible:

1. A revelation to an individual for his obedience, and

2. A revelation by inspiration to enable those inspired to work miracles and teach others. God’s Spirit on the Day of Pentecost took possession of the tongues of the apostles and gave the very words then spoken (Acts 2:4, 14-36, 40). See Acts 8:29, II Thess. 2:3, and Matt. 3:17.

Paul has just given a summary of Christian doctrine in order to emphasize the need of **PROPERLY ORGANIZING THE CHURCH** which is the “pillar and ground of the truth” (I Tim. 3:15). Attacks are certain to be made upon the faith of which the Church is the appointed support and stay. Is that not why Paul said only properly qualified persons were to conduct the public worship (I Tim. 2:8), and to serve as “officers” of the church (I Tim. 3:1-13)?

“In the latter times” means future times. How far away is not specified. “Some shall depart from the faith.” Apostasy, or standing away from the truth, arose early in the New Testament church (II Thess, 2:3). “Grievous wolves” (Acts 20:29, 30) appear in every generation, and in every church. Some marks of apostasy are now given.

YEAR 6 - LESSON 44 - PAGE 2

“Giving heed to seducing spirits...” Spirits which “deceive” and lead men away from the TRUTH of God’s Word, or substitute man’s way for God’s way, are giving us “doctrines of devils,” or demons. Such doctrines are suggested by evil demons, agents of the devil (see I Tim. 2:14). These demon-taught doctrines are voiced THROUGH HUMAN AGENTS, by men who in “hypocrisy” and under the guise of being spiritual leaders, “SPEAK LIES”! Now you know who originated the “GOD IS DEAD” furor! Contrast a Methodist theologian’s “Christian atheism” (a contradiction of terms), and the words of Jesus: “Ye BELIEVE IN GOD, believe also in me. ... He that hath seen me hath seen the Father” (John 14:1, 9).

No greater “hypocrisy” was ever practiced than that of the devil when he persuaded Eve to believe that eating the forbidden fruit would BRING GOOD to her. He knew that it would BRING DEATH – spiritual and physical – to her (Rom. 6:23; I Cor. 15:22).

“Conscience seared with a hot iron” (I Tim. 4:2): Evil men become hardened and insensible to truth and right. To NEGLECT the truth is to “SEAR” your conscience. All habitual liars have done this. Peter under fear denied his Lord, and “repented” of it (Luke 22:31-34, 55-62). Judas carried the moneybag of Jesus and the apostles. He kept stealing small sums from the treasury. His doom was SEALED by his “seared” conscience (Matt. 27:3-5, Prov. 29:1).

“Forbidding to marry...” (I Tim. 4:3) TWO MARKS of the FALSE TEACHERS are given in verse three, Paul never taught COMPULSORY CELIBACY – state of being unmarried, or one bound by vows NOT TO MARRY. Paul advised marriage under most conditions (I Cor. 7:1-2). He regarded it as a divine ordinance. For a “bishop” or “elder” or a “deacon” Paul declared it proper for one to be “the husband of one wife,” and to be the head of a godly household (I Tim. 3:2, 4, 12).

Paul admits that under the “present distress” (I Cor. 7:26), a special crisis in history, or to perform some particular task for the church, one might remain unmarried if he has the gift of celibacy (I Cor. 7:7-9).

It is FALSE TEACHING when some say that a man or woman who never marries is MORE HOLY THAN THOSE WHO DO MARRY!

Pope Hildebrand, Boniface VII, decreed the CELIBACY of the Roman Catholic priesthood in the year 1079. This resulted in monasticism and a celibate clergy – both contrary to Scripture, common sense, and nature! Jesus imposed no such rule, nor did any of the apostles. Peter was a married man (Matt. 8:14-15)! God ordained marriage. Normally each man and woman should marry (Gen. 2:18, 24).

“And commanding to abstain from meats...” Or from foods of various kinds, and not simply from flesh. Abstinence from meat foods and conjugal intercourse was one of the errors of Gnosticism, even developing in Paul’s day. It grew to gigantic proportions. The heresy or false teaching is now “almost extinct, except as its remains are found in the pretended celibacy of the Roman priesthood and other periodical fasts from animal foods” (Halley). Of course, fasting might be a means to a worthy end. This is a matter for personal decision and action.

Fasting on Fridays and during LENT were imposed by the Roman church in the year 998, by popes said to be interested in the commerce of fish. A BULL, or permit to eat meat, some authorities say, began in the year 700 A.D. This is against the plain teaching of the Gospel (Read Matt. 15: 2, 6-11, I Cor. 10:25).

“For every creature of God is good... nothing to be refused.” (I Tim. 4:4) God ordained marriage and created foods to be enjoyed by “those who believe and understand the truth... partake of WITH THANKSGIVING.” Everything God made, animate and inanimate, if it is good and healthful for you, should be thankfully received and used! Receive all God’s created blessings with a prayer that we might use them as God directs and thus be blessed of Him in the using (verse 5). Remember that God did not CREATE ONE DROP OF ALCOHOL!

II. The Why of Godly Living (I Timothy 4:6-10)

“If thou put the brethren in remembrance of these things...” (I Tim, 4:6) “Impress upon them what has just been written.” Timothy is here exhorted to withstand such FALSE DOCTRINE by SOUND TEACHING and by personal piety. A “good minister” must daily “point this out to the brethren” (II Pet. 1:12-14). He must rebuke those who “forbid to marry” or those who command Christians to “ABSTAIN FROM MEATS!”

“Nourished up in the words of faith and of good doctrine...” Timothy knew the Old Testament “FROM A CHILD” (II Tim. 3:14-15). Paul trained him in the gospel (II Tim. 3:16), and told him to “STUDY...” (II Tim. 2:15). Up to this point Timothy had faithfully done his work. Paul urges him to continue as a “good minister.”

Today a “good minister” must teach God’s Word. Why will faithful ministers “go along” with a Uniform Lesson plan which hops, skips and jumps from Genesis through Revelation and covers about thirty-five per cent of the Bible, when our WHOLE BIBLE STUDY COURSE from Genesis through Revelation is available? ALL MEMBERS of the New Testament church are MINISTERS, but those who LABOR IN WORD AND DOCTRINE, are “ministers” in a special sense!

“But refuse profane and old wives’ fables...” (I Tim. 4:7) Timothy is told to “shun those unholy and old-womanish tales,” as that physical things are “evil” and not from God! The Jewish rabbis had made “marvelous additions” to the Old Testament, and many heathen myths and legends flourished. Instead of following the foolish and evil practices of the false ascetics, Timothy is to reject them all.

“Exercise thyself rather unto godliness.” He is to refuse to allow the lawful appetites to RULE his WILL. A pure heart must CONTROL THE BODY. To flog the body with chains or bones, to exist on bread and water, to refrain from the marriage relationship as the false teachers at Ephesus advocated was WORSE THAN USELESS’

“Bodily exercise profiteth little...” (I Tim. 4:8) Physical training does have its benefits. It will produce a Greek Marathon runner, a Jack Dempsey, Joe Louis, or a Muhammad Ali!

At Ephesus one can see the remains of the stadium where the athletes displayed their skills.

There is a HIGHER DISCIPLINE, of the spirit that brings to us UNLIMITED GOOD – now, and through eternity! The Christian, normally, has the BEST OF EVERYTHING HERE – and HEREAFTER. To “follow” him, Jesus wants us to “deny” ourselves only of that which harms us (Matt. 16:24). Regardless of the cost, it “PAYS TO SERVE JESUS, IT PAYS EVERY DAY” (Matt. 16:26-27). I DARE YOU TO “Prove God” and SEE FOR YOURSELF!

“This is a faithful saying...” (I Tim. 4:9) A trustworthy saying. Verse 8 is referred to. Everybody ought to believe and do it. Christians, don’t TRUST to “bodily exercise”, the setting of rules, observances and fasts on Friday or during Lent, enforced bodily abstinences, ceremonies and pilgrimages to GET YOU TO HEAVEN! Such things “profit little.” Those who BELIEVE IN and OBEY Jesus Christ and serve HIM “to the end shall be saved” (Matt. 10:22). Place your “hope in the LIVING GOD who is the Saviour of all people, particularly of believers” (verse 10). If you are called upon to “suffer reproach” for the sake of Christ and are “faithful” to Him, He will give you the eternal crown of life forever in heaven (II Cor. 11:21-27; Rev. 2:10c; II Tim. 4:8)!

III. Warm Encouragement to Faithful Service (II Timothy 4:11-16)

A. Commands to the preacher (I Timothy 4:11-12).

YEAR 6 - LESSON 44 - PAGE 4

“These things command and teach” (I Tim. 4:11): The above truths Paul commands Timothy to “command and teach” to all men. God wants “ALL MEN” to repent and OBEY CHRIST (II Pet. 3:9). It is man’s highest duty to trust and obey God. In view of the false teaching at Ephesus, it was imperative that a “faithful minister” preach “ALL THE COUNSEL OF GOD” (Acts 20:27, 32). The man of God must speak out with “authority” (Matt. 28:18-20).

“Let no man despise thy youth...” (I Tim. 4:12): His age might have tempted Timothy to keep still even in the face of obvious errors of teaching and practice. He was probably sixteen when Paul chose him as a travelling companion (Acts 16:1-4). He had been with Paul possibly sixteen years. At Ephesus were teachers and leaders who may have been twice his age. Their false asceticism gave them a reputation for saintliness. They were revered because of their advancing years, yet they must be rebuked and publicly admonished by the young minister whom Paul had sent to represent him and to order aright the affairs of the church.

Age is a relative thing. Whether a leader is twenty-one and fifty-five, he must without fear or favor “command and teach” the truth! Timothy was to “become in speech, in behavior, in love, in faith, in purity, and example before the believers!” So should all leaders be “an example.”

B. Timothy’s public work (I Timothy 4:13).

“Till I come, give attendance to reading...” (I Tim. 4:13) As to the public work which Timothy is to render, Paul specifies three things. By “reading” Paul means the public reading of the Scripture. It must not be done listlessly, thoughtlessly and badly. The Christian minister must “give heed” and “go ahead” with this essential work; Printed books were unknown. The knowledge of the Scriptures had to be communicated in this way.

“To exhortation.” “The preaching” (Berkeley). This requires preparation and careful thought.

“To doctrine.” “The teaching.” By the two public functions of the minister, “preaching” and “teaching,” Paul does not mean for the “exhortation” to precede the “instruction,” but the reverse in actual public work. Exhortation needs teaching to rest it upon, a hint for preachers today!

“Teaching” is a task not confined solely to the pulpit, although it is to begin there. Acts 20:20, 31.

C. Timothy’s private work (I Timothy 4:14-15).

“Neglect not the gift that is in thee...” (I Tim. 4:14) An allusion to the “special spiritual gifts given to him for the duties of an evangelist. These were given, and were essential, in that first age.” Elders had laid their hands upon him in the solemn service of ordination when Timothy was set aside as a minister of Christ; they recognized the gracious gift for teaching and administering to the church which the Holy Spirit had bestowed upon Timothy. This gracious gift Timothy must not “neglect!” Read II Tim. 1:6, I Tim. 1:8.

“Meditate upon these things...” (I Tim. 4:15) “Cultivate these matters.” Talent used multiplies; not used, talent is taken from the possessor and lost by him (Mat. 25:24-30). Leaders must not be lazy, timid or fearful of doing their duties! “Live in them, so that your advance may be evident to everyone.” Let each be “up to his ears” in our Lord’s work, and sticking to the task daily.

D. Timothy’s general attitude, and its result (I Timothy 4:16).

“Take heed unto thyself...” (I Tim. 4:16) The minister and teacher needs to PREPARE sermons and lessons, but also himself. One who is giving constant heed to his own character, to his mental and spiritual growth, will be certain to “save thyself, and them that hear thee.”

QUESTIONS

1. Did Paul predict that false leaders would arise “after my departure” from Ephesus (Acts 20:29-31)?
2. What did Paul call such leaders?
3. What were the elders told to do?
4. May it be necessary to discipline publicly some wrong doers (I Tim. 5:20)?
5. Did the Holy Spirit “expressly” predict a “departing from the faith” (I Tim. 4:1)?
6. Can you name two kinds of revelation by the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:4, 14-36, 40; 8:29; II Thess. 2:3; Matt. 3:17)?
7. What is the meaning of “latter times” (I Tim. 4:1)?
8. If men “depart from the faith,” to what have they given heed (I Tim. 4:1)?
9. Why do false teachers and leaders “speak lies in hypocrisy” (I Tim. 4:2; Luke 22:31-34, 55-62; Matt. 27:3-5)?
10. Can you name two marks of false teachers (I Tim. 4:3)?
11. Who decreed the celibacy of the priesthood, and why do we think it is evil (I Tim. 3:2,4,12; I Cor. 7:26,7-9; Matt. 8:14-15; Gen. 2:18,24)?
12. Is it wrong for a Christian to eat roast beef on Friday, or any day he can afford to eat it (Matt. 15:2, 6-11; I Cor. 10:25; I Tim. 4:4-5)?
13. How was Timothy to combat such false teaching (I Tim. 4:6-7, II Pet. 1:12-14)?
14. What “profits little” (I Tim. 4:8)? What is “profitable unto all things” and why (verses 9-10)?
15. How old was Timothy at this time, and what did Paul say about this “youth” (I Tim. 4:11-12)?
16. To what three things was Timothy to “give heed” (I Tim. 4:13)?
17. To what “gift” does Paul refer in I Tim. 4:14: 1:8; II Tim. 1:6)?
18. Does this admonition apply to every minister today? Why (I Tim. 4:15; Matt. 25:24-30)?
19. To whom is Timothy to “take heed” (I Tim. 4:16a)?
20. What reward is promised to the minister who faithfully “continues” in such a ministry (I Tim. 4:16b)?

YEAR 6 - LESSON 45 - PAGE 1
WHOLE BIBLE STUDY COURSE

Year VI

Fourth Quarter

Lesson 45

Page 1

I Timothy 5

Memory Verse: I Timothy 5:21

Memory Verse:

“I charge thee before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect angels, that thou observe these things without preferring one before another, doing nothing by partiality” (I Timothy 5:21).

THE WORK OF A TRUE BELIEVER

“To the work! To the work! We are servants of God,
Let us follow the path that our Master has trod.
With the balm of His counsel our strength to renew,
Let us do with out might what our hands find to do.”
– Fanny J. Crosby

Paul on the way to Macedonia, northern Greece, made a big request of Timothy, “DO STAY in Ephesus so that you may warn certain people not to teach erroneously. Do not pay attention to invented stories and interminable genealogies such as furnish disputes rather than acceptance by faith of God’s administration... I CHARGE YOU with these instructions, Timothy my son... that you may with their aid PUT UP A SPLENDID FIGHT, possessed of faith and a clear conscience” (I Tim. 1:3, 18-19).

Timothy must deal with the members of his flock as individuals, “in addition to addressing them at public gatherings,” The “Cure of Souls” can be accomplished only by personal contact.

Not only must the leader know how to conduct public worship (I Tim. 2:1-7), who SHOULD or SHOULD NOT TAKE PART IN IT (I Tim. 2:8-15), he must “be careful and faithful in his public reading of the Scripture, in exhortation and instruction” (I Tim. 4:6-16).

Timothy is now instructed HOW to CONSIDER and TREAT those under his care according to their AGE, POSITION, NEED and DIGNITY.

I. The Old and the Young (I Timothy 5:1, 2)

“Rebuke not an elder...” (I Tim. 5:1) An aged man, not a minister as “bishop” in I Tim. 3:2. “Do not chide an older man, but address him as a father.” “Elder” here means only those advanced in years, for the term is put in contrast with the elderly women, the young men, and the younger women. Older people, and younger ones, too, can be very trying. Respect for age must temper the form of rebuke. Timothy is to treat them “as a father.”

Maves and Cedarleaf in “Older People and the Church” have shown that the proper treatment of the aging is “A New Frontier of the Church.”

“And the younger men as brethren.” If admonition is needed, you should do it in and from love. You may fellowship with them, but do not stoop to folly with them.

“The elder women as mothers...” (I Tim. 5:2) The young minister is respect and reverence “older women as mothers and the younger as sisters, with absolute purity.”

II. Christian Treatment of Widows (I Timothy 5:3-16)

A. Widows in distress (I Timothy 5:3-8).

“Honour widows that are widows indeed” (I Tim, 5:3): “Honor” means not only proper respect and consideration, but financial support. The church at Ephesus was probably ten years old, and had its BENEVOLENT WORK well developed and carefully administered.

“Widows” who have neither husband nor children are “widows in-deed.” Such are left desolate. They must conduct themselves with becoming dignity. Such widows are not to be dealt with as paupers, or to be degraded with a dole, but treated as Christians whom the church holds in honor.

God demands proper treatment for widows (Ex. 22:22-24, Deut. 24: 17-19). In the early church at Jerusalem, the “widows” were honored with support (Acts 6:1). Thank God this church has always striven to help the “widow, or fatherless child.” Those of us who TITHE and give LOVE OFFERINGS above the tithe, have helped put a little “extra” in the homes of “widows!” We put a radio in such homes so they can tune in our Glad Gospel Hour every Sunday from 7:30 - 8:25 P.M.! Our Home Department takes the Lord’s Supper into the home of every sick and aged shut-in “UPON the FIRST DAY of the week” (Acts 20:7). A widow who is a “widow indeed” grabbed my hand and wept with joy when I delivered her a radio last Sunday. “Now I can join in the service with you, too!”

“But if any widow have children... “ (I Tim. 5:4): Those who have “children or grandchildren” (Goodspeed), rather than “children and nephews” are not to be regarded as helpless. It is a “FIRST” to learn that “charity begins at home”!

“Requite their parents.” Children must repay with love and tender regard the parents in their helpless old age. Think of the love, patient and sleepless care they showed for us in our helpless infancy and youth. Such love God accepts as service to Him. There is no “CORBAN” business here (Mark 7:11). No acts of “piety” toward God will make up for impiety towards parents. “Honour thy father and mother... That it may be well with thee” (Eph. 6:1, 3).

“Now she that is a widow... trusteth in God.” (I Tim. 5:5) Being without husband, children, or close kin, she “hath placed her hope (and KEEPS IT) ON GOD!” Paul does not say she should pray “all night and day.”

“But she that liveth in pleasure is dead...” (I Tim. 5:6) A widow of private means “who lives voluptuously is dead while existing.” In contrast to the widow who feels her bereaved condition and draws near to God, the widow who “LIVES FOR PLEASURE” is spiritually “dead!” She is to receive NO HELP FROM THE CHURCH.

“And these things give in charge...” (I Tim. 5:7) Teach the whole church how to treat WORTHY and WORTHLESS WIDOWS.

“But if any provide not for his own... denied the faith... worse than on infidel.” (I Tim. 5:8): If any child (son or daughter) or grandchild does not care for his widowed mother or grandmother, he is guilty of criminal neglect before God. Many godless heathen would care for their parents. For the Christian NOT TO CARE FOR HIS AGED LOVED ONES makes him “WORSE THAN AN INFIDEL!”

B. Widows employed or maintained by the church (I Timothy 5:9-16).

“Let not a widow be taken into the number under threescore years old...” (I Tim. 5:9) Or enrolled as a “worthy widow.” She must be at least sixty years old. Worthy widows “apparently had some kind of church work to do, such as caring for the sick, the orphans,” and other duties for which such godly women were preeminently fitted.

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“The church in Ephesus had to be extremely careful with its women servants, for the women servants of the temple of Diana were prostitutes” (Halley).

“The wife of one man”: Can scarcely mean that a widow twice married was ineligible for church support, for Paul at once urges younger widows to “marry” (verse 14).

“Well reported of for good works...” (I Tim. 5:10) “Good works” and good character were required. The “good works” are named.

“If she have brought up children.” She must have been a good mother, in case she had been granted children. She was to be a lady who had “lodged strangers,” showing that she was hospitable (read Heb. 13:2; Rom. 12:13). She must have “washed the saints’ feet,” not literally, but as the phrase indicates, she must have been ready to render humble ministries to her fellow Christians. She must “have relieved the afflicted,” giving sympathy to all who were in distress. In short, she must have lived a life of loving service, having “diligently followed every good work.” None would be too low or degraded to receive her kindness, sisterly help and counsel as such a widow visited in their homes. Truly such a “widow” is a ministering angel (John 13:5, 14, 15; Gen. 18:4, Rom. 12:15).

“But the younger widows refuse...” (I Tim. 5:11) Those under sixty years of age were not to be financially assisted. They are ABLE TO WORK! Let them SUPPORT THEMSELVES.

“Wax wanton... will marry.” “Wanton” implies indulging in desires in spirit and conduct in opposition to Christ. “They want to marry, and they become guilty of breaking their prime engagement.” Because of their very youth, “the younger widows” might feel the restraints of such sanctity and seriousness as widows supported by the church were supposed to lead, and they might incur the charge of UNFAITHFULNESS TO CHRIST. That is, they would by their marriage BREAK THE PLEDGE MADE WHEN THEY WERE PLACED UPON THE ROLL OF DEPENDENT WIDOWS, In giving up “their first faith” (verse 12), they would become vicious gossips “wandering around the houses,” and “tattlers” (verse 13).

“I will therefore that the younger women marry...” (I Tim. 5:14) “So I would have young widows marry again, bear children, man-age a home, and afford the opponent no incentive whatever for slandering.” In presiding over a growing family, “the younger women” will not have time to GAD ABOUT as “gossips and busybodies!” “Adversary” probably means an unbeliever who is eager to spread an evil report of a professing Christian. Such as used by our Adversary, Satan.

“The apostle distinctly forbids the CONVENT SYSTEM which not exists in the Roman church” (Johnson).

“If any man or woman that believeth have widows...” (I Tim. 5:16) In any of the Ephesian Christians have “widows” among their relatives, let them support them, “so that the church may not be burdened and the needy widows be looked after” by the church! There will always be a demand upon the church for relief and aid, and this must be given gladly and liberally as God through His people supply the means to aid those who are most truly in need.

III. Concerning Elders (I Timothy 5:17-25)

“Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy...” (I Tim. 5:17) The church leaders called “bishops” in I Tim. 3:2 are here called “elders”. Their qualifications are given in I Tim. 3:1-7, Here their treatment is out-lined. Such of the success or failure of the work of a minister will be due to the officers of the particular church he serves. This was true of Timothy’s ministry in Ephesus, or in the church you now serve.

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“Worthy of double honour...” Such “elders” are worthy of the RESPECT and FINANCIAL SUPPORT of the local church – at Ephesus where Timothy was now minister, or in Covington where I serve.

“Labor in the word and doctrine” refers to those “elders” who devoted their full time to preaching and teaching – while others did not. This is “The class that we call preachers, or pastors. That support is referred to in verse 18” (B. W. Johnson). Liddon says this is “honorarium,” BOTH HONOUR AND PAY and so “DOUBLE”!

“For the scripture saith...” (I Tim. 5:18) See Deut. 25:4; I Cor. 9:9, 14; II Tim. 2:6. It was taught in the Old Testament that the ox treading out the corn should not be muzzled! If the ox is not fed, he will not “tread out the corn” after a few hours! Feed him or he will die.

“And, the laborer is worthy of his reward.” Note that Paul says this “IS SCRIPTURE”! Therefore, Luke’s gospel was written and in Paul’s hands when he wrote I Timothy. He calls this Gospel SCRIPTURE. “For the laborer is WORTHY of his hire” (Luke 10:17). Our Lord commanded the support of His ministers, Paul sanctioned it, and the church believed that one who is engaged in preaching the gospel, and in similar sacred ministry should receive proper remuneration from the church that receives such services.

“Against an elder receive not an accusation...” (I Tim. 5:19) If discipline of “elders” or “bishops” became necessary, “accusations” against them must be supported by “two or three witnesses.” “One witness shall not rise up against a man for any iniquity, or for any sin... at the mouth of two witnesses, or at the mouth of three witnesses, shall the matter be established” (Deut. 19:15). Timothy was not to “entertain a charge against an elder unless it was supported by two or three witnesses!” Then, as now, BUSYBODIES were whispering against their leaders.

“Them that sin rebuke before all...” (I Tim. 5:20) OPEN SIN should be OPENLY REBUKED. “In the presence of all, CORRECT those who went wrong, so that the rest maybe awed” I whether they be “elders” or Mr. Average Christian at Ephesus, open sinners should be rebuked before the church. Do not hush the matter up privately.

“I charge thee before God...that thou observe these things... doing nothing by partiality.” (I Tim. 5:21) For this triad of God, Christ, and “the elect angels” see Luke 9:26. “Elect” in the sense of the “holy” angels who kept their own principality (Jude 6) and who did not sin (II Pet. 2:4). Paul shows his interest in “angels” in I Cor. 4:9; 11:10.

“Observe these things.” Paul knew the timidity of Timothy. He “CHARGED” him to “OBSERVE THESE SUGGESTIONS without discrimination; that you act with no favoritism”!

“Lay hands suddenly on no man...” (I Tim. 5:22) “Lay hands of ordination on one hastily.” Untried men are not hastily to be ordained, because they are “kin” to a member of the present elders, deacons, or rich members! When a man’s FITNESS for the high office of “elder” is known, then ordain him – not before.

“Neither be partaker of other men’s sins”: He who appoints an UNFIT _ MAN to an office becomes in a certain sense responsible for that man’s sins. “Keep thyself pure.” Keep on keeping yourself pure.

“Drink no longer water, but use a little wine for thy stomach’s sake...” (I Tim. 5:23) Paul now gives Timothy some personal directions. Timothy refrained from the use of wine and strong drink. That was an age of wine drinking, yet Timothy refrained from its USE EVEN WHEN SICK, as a – matter of Christian purity, and a GOOD EXAMPLE TO OTHERS.”

YEAR 6 - LESSON 45 - PAGE 5

The apostle is anxious about Timothy's peculiar physical condition, and he gives the young evangelist a MEDICAL PRESCRIPTION. It was a "little wine," and it was "for the good of your stomach and your recur-ring illness." This passage is no comfort to those who quote it to justify the use of wine as a beverage. Let them quote I Cor. 8:13 and Romans 14:2 1!

"Some men's sins are open beforehand..." (I Tim. 5:24) Open sins are seen by all. Their discipline is instant and open to all. Secret sins may not be seen of men, but they will be fully manifested at the judgment.

"Likewise the good works of some are manifest beforehand..." (I Tim. 5:24) "Equally so are good works readily observed; while those who are otherwise cannot remain hid." "There is comfort here for modest preachers and other believers whose good deeds are not known and not – blazoned forth. They will come out in the end" (Robertson)! See Matt. 5: 14-16.

QUESTIONS

1. What big request had Paul made of Timothy (I Tim. 1:3, 18-19)
2. Does I Timothy 5 deal primarily with Timothy's relationship to God, or to other Christians?
3. How was Timothy to treat an aged man (I Tim. 5:1)?
4. How was Timothy to regard the "younger men" (I Tim. 5:1)?
5. How was the young minister to treat "older women" (I Tim. 5:2)? "Younger women"?
6. What class of needy Christians is prominently before us in I Tim. 5:3-16?
7. Who is a "widow indeed" (I Tim. 5:3)?
8. Who has the first duty of supporting "widows" (I Tim. 5:4, 16)?
9. Does God demand proper treatment for "widows" (Ex. 22:22-24; Deut. 24:17-19; Acts 6:1)?
10. Can you contrast the "widows" in I Timothy 5:5-6?
12. What are some of the "good works" a "widow indeed" should have done to "be taken into the number" (I Tim. 5:9)?
13. How does Paul's commandment forbid the CONVENT SYSTEM of the Roman church (I Tim. 5:1 1f)?
14. What does Paul tell the "younger women" to do (I Tim. 5:12-15)?
15. What is the meaning of "double honor" (I Tim. 5:17)?
16. Can you give two reasons why a minister should be paid (I Tim. 5:18; Deut. 25:14; I Cor. 9:9, 14; Luke 10:17; II Tim. 2:6)?
17. If discipline of an "elder" or "bishop" becomes necessary, how many "witnesses" must support the "accusation" (I Tim. 5:19, Deut. 19:15)? Is this still true in our civil courts?
18. Why was open, willful sin of an "elder" to be dealt with openly (I Tim. 5:20)?
19. Did Paul forbid Timothy to show "favoritism" or "partiality" and what wise direction is given (I Tim. 5:21-22)?
20. Is "use a little wine for thy stomach's sake" a medical prescription of Paul for ailing Timothy's "infirmities," or a justification for the use of wine as a beverage to satisfy modern addicts (I Tim. 5:23)?

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WHOLE BIBLE STUDY COURSE

Year VI

Fourth Quarter

Lesson 46
I Timothy 6

Page 1
Memory Verse: I Timothy 6:12

Memory Verse:

“Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, where-unto thou art also coiled, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses” (I Timothy 6:12).

LOVING ADVICE TO TIMOTHY AND OTHERS

In I Timothy 5 Paul showed Timothy how to treat four important groups of Christians. They are (1) “An older man” (I Tim. 5:1); (2) “And the younger men” (I Tim. 5:1b); (3) “Elder women... younger” women – the “real widow” and the widow “who lives voluptuously” (I Tim. 5:2-16), and (4) “Elders that rule well”, the equivalent of our minister today (I Tim. 5:17-25).

The lesson includes the proper treatment of “servants as are under the yoke” (I Tim. 6:1), which is the introduction of our lesson today.

I. Concerning Slaves (I Timothy 6:1-2)

“Let as many servants as are under the yoke...” (I Tim. 6:1) “Under the yoke of slavery.” In the early days of Christianity slavery was universal throughout the Roman Empire. It was recognized and established by law. Many questions arose. Should a master who became a Christian set his “slaves” FREE? Should a “slave” who accepted Christ demand his freedom? How should Christian “masters” and “slaves” TREAT EACH OTHER?

“Servants... count their own masters worthy of all honor.” Even though the “master” was a heathen, or unbeliever, Christian “slaves” were not to be insolent or unruly, or insist upon social and political equality, or STIR UP REVOLUTION. Christ did not propose to break up slavery by violence.

Jesus “recognized the relationship, regulated it, and put in operation principles that in their workings would so mold public sentiment as to break down ALL EVIL RELATIONS AND SINFUL INSTITUTIONS.” If a Christian “slave” or a HEATHEN “master” was not as honest, faithful, or hard-working as a NON-CHRISTIAN SLAVE, he would thus MISREPRESENT THE CHRIST and CAUSE GOD to be BLASPHEMED BY HIS OWNER, or “master.”

“And they that have believing masters...” (I Tim. 6:2) Paul re-cognized that “believers” could be “masters.” In Christ and the church “master” and “slave” were “ONE,” now “BROTHERS” with equal rights. This spiritual relationship might influence and modify the civil relationship, but DID NOT DISSOLVE IT.

Slavery was to be DESTROYED not by putting a spirit of insubordination into “slaves,” but by PUTTING A CHRISTIAN SPIRIT INTO THEIR MASTERS. Converted slaves were not to “despise” their “masters,” but inhere to regard them as “brethren,” and render faithful service to them. Being a Christian will make a man do a good job of whatever he is doing, He will be a better “slave,” a better “master,” a better laborer, or a better supervisor.

“These things teach and exhort.” Some evil-minded teachers had been teaching differently and arousing discontent and a rebellious spirit among the “slaves.” A “slave” may be FREE IF HE CAN; but if not, he is to be a GOOD “SLAVE.” Compare I Cor. 7:20-24; Eph, 6:5-9; Col. 3:22-25; Titus 2:9, 10. Thus the gospel abolished slavery, NOT by DENOUNCING IT, but by teaching the BROTHERHOOD OF MEN IN CHRIST! To follow this principle will abolish all evils that degrade men and women. No social order can exist in peace or be enduring which denies this principle of Christian brotherhood!

II. Warnings against Disputations and Covetousness (I Timothy 6:3-10)

A. False teachers denounced for vanity (I Timothy 6:3-5a).

“If any man teach otherwise...” (I Tim. 6:3) If any teacher presents anything contrary to that of the inspired apostle, REJECT HIM AND HIS “new” gospel. There is a DIVINE STANDARD of truth (Gal. 1:6-9), “even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ” such as Matthew 22:21, 5:39. False teachers were INCITING DISCONTENT and SOCIAL REVOLUTION of “slaves” against their “masters.” Such teachers were “proud,” or “conceited without understanding, with a morbid craving for controversy and a war of words, such as result in envy, wrangling, slander, bad suspicions, perpetual contention between people of depraved minds and defrauded of the truth, who think of godliness in terms of acquisition” (verses 4-5a).

“Corrupt minds.” “Depraved minds.” These false teachers once had the truth, but they corrupted it by their unfaithfulness and conceit. They were motivated by VANITY.

B. False teachers denounced for avarice (I Timothy 6:5b-10).

“Supposing that gain is godliness...” (I Tim. 6:5b): These false teachers of a “different doctrine” had entered the church for worldly gain. Their chief error was in looking upon Christianity as a means of financial profit, “who think of godliness in terms of acquisition.” Christians are to “withdraw” from such teachers!

To this evil Paul replied that “godliness with contentment is great gain, indeed.”

“Contentment” is a condition of the heart, and is not dependent on time, place, or circumstance. Such a spirit brings “great gain” here and its greatest gain in eternity.

“For we brought nothing into this world...” (I Tim. 6:7) “Naked I came forth from my mother’s womb, and naked I shall return” to the grave (Job 1:21). I have conducted many hundreds of funerals; there are NO pockets in shrouds! Nothing the world can give makes any real addition to the man himself. His real good consists in his moral and spiritual being, not in any wealth or possessions he may gather around him.

“And having food and raiment let us be... content.” (I Tim. 6:8) What we eat and what we wear is all the material good we get out of riches. The true Christian will be satisfied when his needs are supplied. Paul is not praising poverty, nor declaring it a crime to own property. He is REBUKING AVARICE in FALSE TEACHERS, and showing that “contentment” is independent of poverty or riches!

“But they that will be rich...” (I Tim. 6:9) Paul warns Timothy against the perils of greediness whose SOLE AIM IS TO LAY UP TREASURES on earth! Such a goal of life will get one into “temptation” to use right or wrong means to pile up money. As riches increase, such men will develop many “thoughtless and hurtful cravings such as plunge people into destruction and ruin.” “Children,” said Jesus, “HOW DIFFICULT it is (for those who trust in wealth) to enter the kingdom of God” (Mark 12:24). It is not so much the possession of wealth, but the TRUST IN WEALTH that constitutes the danger!

“For the love of money is the root of all evil...” (I Tim. 6:10) Paul does not speak disparagingly of money. It may be the instrument of all kinds of good. However, the “LOVE OF MONEY,” the lust of gold, the passion for gain, creates the atmosphere out of which evil of every kind may Spring.

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This greedy “love of money” is the source of every sin. Men murder, cheat, lie, rob, run saloons, gambling houses, brothels – ALL “FOR THE LOVE OF MONEY.” Judas “for the love of money” sold the Master for “thirty pieces of silver” (Matt. 27:3). All who use unjust means to get money “err from the faith,” and “pierce themselves through with many sorrows”. This refers to the pangs of conscience, the miseries of unsatisfied greed, and the conscious failure of making a living but not a life!

IS THIS SUCCESS?

In 1923 a group of the world’s most successful financiers met at the Edgewater Beach Hotel in Chicago. Collectively, these tycoons controlled more wealth than there was in the United States Treasury, and for years, newspapers and magazines had been printing their SUCCESS STORIES and urging the youth of the nation to follow their examples. Twenty-seven years later, let’s see what happened to them.

CHARLES SCHWAB was the president of the largest independent steel company. He lived on borrowed money the last five years of his life, and died penniless. ARTHUR CUTTEN was the greatest wheat speculator. He died abroad insolvent. RICHARD WHITNEY was the president of the New York Stock Exchange. He was released some time ago from Sing Sing.

ALBERT FALL, a member of the President’s Cabinet, was pardoned – from prison so he could die at home. JESSE LIVERMORE: The greatest bear in Wall Street. He committed suicide. LEON FRASER: The president of the Bank of International Settlement. He committed suicide. IVAR KRUEGER: The head of the world’s greatest match monopoly. He committed suicide.

ALL of these men learned HOW TO MAKE MONEY, but their “reaching after” money shipwrecked their “faith,” and “pierced” them through with many “sorrows!” Is it wise to make GOLD one’s GOD (Matt. 16:24-27)?

III. “Fight the Good Fight of Faith” (I Timothy 6:11-16)

“But thou, O man of God, flee these things...” (I Tim. 6:11) An appeal is made to Timothy, who is addressed, “O man of God.” The note of the appeal is threefold: “Flee,” “follow,” “fight.” The expression, “O man of God,” is one devoted to the service of God, formerly a prophet but now all faithful Christians (I Sam. 9:6, 8; I Kings 13:1, 4, 8; II Tim. 3:17).

The minister and every Christian ought to “Flee” pride, the “love of money,” and all things evil.

“Follow after righteousness...” Timothy is urged to strive earnestly for a character pleasing to God and “GO AFTER RIGHTEOUSNESS, godliness, faith, love, patience, gentleness.”

“Fight the good fight of faith...” (I Tim. 6:12) The Christian life is a “contest.” Such “faith” calls on the Christian to “fight” the evil that seeks to destroy his soul. Victory is to be had only by FAITH IN CHRIST. The prize is “eternal life.”

“Called... professed a good profession before many witnesses.” Timothy had made the good confession of his faith in Christ when it was costly to confess Him (Heb. 13:23). Jesus before the Sanhedrin (the highest Jewish tribunal during the Greek and Roman periods, composed of 70 members plus the president, who was the high priest) confessed that He was the Christ, the Son of God. On the basis of that confession, the Sanhedrin condemned Jesus Christ to death and hurried him to Pilate, as the Romans reserved the right of the death penalty (John 18:33-34).

“I give thee charge in the sight of God...” (I Tim. 6:13) This refers to the whole moral content of the gospel. We MUST ADORN the gospel with our lives. False teachers had dishonored the gospel by their

conceit and evil greed. Timothy is charged “in the sight of God, who giveth life to all things.” The One who is the Source or Preserver of all beings will protect and deliver Timothy, and us, however great the perils that may surround him.

Timothy is further “charged” in the presence of “Christ Jesus, who before Pontius Pilate witnessed a good confession,” that he may be fearless and uncompromising in his witness of the truth. The EXACT “CHARGE” Paul now specifies: “I charge you to keep the PRINCIPLES stainless and irreproachable until the appearance of our Lord Jesus Christ.” “Appearing” refers to the Second Coming of our Lord Jesus Christ (John 14:1-3; Acts 1:8-11; Matt. 24:27-31; Mark 13:32). We do not know the “day” or “hour” when Christ shall “come again” I When he is ready as the “blessed and only Potentate, the King of Kings, and Lord of lords,” possessing all “power” in “heaven and in earth” (Matt. 28:18). He will “come again” to reward the righteous and punish the wicked.

“Who only hath immortality...” (I Tim. 6:16) “The one who alone has immortality.” Domitian (51-96 AD, Roman emperor 81-96 AD) demanded that he be addressed as “Dominus et Deus noster.” Emperor worship may be behind the use of “monos,” “alone,” here. Christ is the SOURCE from whence there comes to man “eternal life” (John 5:26).

“Dwelling in the light.” Surrounded by the divine splendors that no mortal can gaze upon.

“Amen.” The “Amen” marks the close of the doxology as in I Timothy 1:17.

IV. Fitting Postscript (I Timothy 6:17-21)

A. A charge to the rich (I Timothy 6:17-19).

“Charge them that are rich in this world...” (I Tim. 6:17) The final “charge” to Timothy brought to the mind of the apostle the peril which threatened those who were “rich” in the “now age,” in contrast with the future. Some of the Ephesian Christians were “rich.” Private property is not wrong, and a minister must not intimate that a man is sinful or dangerous because he is “rich.” Paul addresses wealthy Christians, warns them against putting a false confidence in their riches, and urges them to make a wise use of their wealth (verses 17-18). Such use of “uncertain riches” will spread the gospel, help others, and be the means laying up “treasure in heaven.”

B. Final charge to Timothy (I Timothy 6:20, 21a).

“O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust...” (I Tim. 6:20) This last “charge” is a summary of the whole epistle, a solemn reminder to guard the gospel against the assaults of false teachers. He is to preach and live the gospel. Those who refuse to do this have “erred concerning the faith”!

God has given to each Christian the “trust” of the apostolic gospel. He must “keep” or guard it, share it with those around him, and through these believers to those who come after.

“Avoiding profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so called... erred.” (I Tim. 6:20b, 21a) Timothy is warned to “Keep away from the irreligious and empty discussions and contradictions of what is falsely called knowledge, which some people have claimed, and so have missed the faith.” These false teachers have been aiming in the wrong direction. Real religion is not a matter of logical subtleties but the application of truth to life.

C. Paul’s benediction (I Timothy 6:21b).

“Grace be with thee. Amen.” (I Tim. 6:21b) The benediction, “Grace be with you,” is a characteristic ending for Paul’s letters. The “grace” he invokes is elsewhere expressed as “the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ.” It is that “unmerited favor” upon which all believers need to rely, and especially those who serve as

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ministers of the flock of God. “You” is plural. Paul probably had in mind the whole church at Ephesus. This indicates that these Pastoral Epistles were not intended to bear merely personal instructions to the minister addressed, but guidance for the whole society of believers – then and now.

QUESTIONS

1. Can you name four classes of people whom Paul showed Timothy “how” to treat (I Tim. 5:1-16, 17-25)?
2. What advice is given to “slaves” (I Tim. 6:1, 2)?
3. What advice is given to “masters” (I Tim. 6:1-2)?
4. How will the teaching of Christ destroy slavery (I Tim. 6:2; I Cor. 7:20-24; Eph. 6:5-9; Col. 3:22-24; Titus 2:9-10)?
5. “If a man teach otherwise” than Paul instructs, of what is he charged (I Tim. 6:3-5)?
6. Into what false supposition had these “men of corrupt minds” fallen (I Tim. 6:5)?
7. What will “godliness” bring to us (I Tim. 6:6)?
8. What is true of our entrance into, and our departure from, this world (I Tim. 6:7; Job 1:21)?
9. What is sufficient to give contentment (I Tim. 6:8)?
10. What is the danger of willing to be “rich” (I Tim. 6:9)?
12. In what way did the seven financial tycoons of the Edgewater Beach Hotel “fail” as seemingly they made GOLD their God (Matt. 16:24-27)?
13. What three-fold appeal did Paul make of Timothy (I Tim. 6:11-12)?
14. Before whom did Timothy and Christ Jesus make “a good confession” (I Tim. 6:12-13)?
15. “In the sight of” whom did Paul give the “charge” to Timothy, and what was the “charge” (I Tim. 6:13-14)?
16. “Who is the blessed and only Potentate”, and what attributes does He have (I Tim. 6:15-16)?
17. Does Paul teach that it is wrong to have “riches” in one’s possession (I Tim. 6:17-19)?
18. What is Paul’s seven-fold charge to the “rich” (I Tim. 6:17-18)?
19. What kind of “science” does the Bible oppose (I Tim. 6:20)?
20. What will be the effect up on one who follows “science falsely so called” (I Tim. 6:21)?

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WHOLE BIBLE STUDY COURSE

Year VI

Fourth Quarter

Lesson 47

Page 1

II Timothy 1

Memory Verse: II Timothy 1:12

Memory Verse:

“For the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day” (II Timothy 1:12).

LOYALTY IN SPITE OF SUFFERING

The book of Acts closes with Paul in prison in Rome about the year 63 A. D. II Timothy was written by the apostle Paul from Rome, “probably early Autumn of 67 or Spring of 68 A. D.” (Robertson)

Second Imprisonment

After his release from his imprisonment (Acts 28:30-31), Paul probably went to Ephesus. This was surely before Nero set fire to Rome in A. D. 64. The apostle “besought” Timothy to “abide still at Ephesus” (I Tim. 1:3) and set the church in order.

The great fire in Rome occurred in 64 A. D. Nero himself burned the city. He was a great builder, though an inhuman brute. In order to build a new and grander Rome, Nero set fire to the city and fiddled in glee as Rome burned.

The people suspected him; historians have commonly regarded it as a fact that Nero was the perpetrator of the crime. To divert suspicion from himself, Nero accused the Christians of burning Rome.

The Bible makes no mention of Nero’s persecution of Christians, though it happened in Bible times. It is the direct background of at least two New Testament books, I Peter and II Timothy, and was the persecution that brought Paul to his martyrdom, and Peter also (if tradition is to be trusted).

Tacitus

Our source of information is Tacitus the Roman historian (55? - after 117 A. D.). He knew that Christians did not burn Rome. But somebody had to be made the SCAPEGOAT for the Emperor’s crime. The Christians were a new and despised sect of people, mostly from the humbler walks of life, without prestige or influence, and many of them were slaves. Nero accused them of BURNING ROME. He ordered their punishment.

Punishment

In and around Rome Christians were arrested and put to death in the cruelest ways. They were CRUCIFIED, tied in skins of animals and thrown into the arena to be worried to death by hungry, fierce dogs for the entertainment of the people. Others were tied to stakes in Nero’s gardens, pitch poured over their bodies and their burning bodies used as torches to light Nero’s gardens, while he drove around NAKED in his chariot indulging himself in his midnight revels, gloating over the dying agonies of his victims. Only God knows how many were thrown to the wild beasts in the Coliseum.

Paul Rearrested

From Ephesus, Paul probably went to Philippi as he had hoped (Phil. – 2:24). Titus was left at Crete (Titus 1:5), Trophimus was left at Miletus sick and Erastus at Corinth (II Tim. 4:20) while Paul intended to winter at Nicopolis (Titus 3:12). Probably while at Nicopolis, the apostle made an emergency trip to Troas, but was **ARRESTED WITHOUT WARNING** at the house of Carpus and taken to Rome for his second imprisonment.

Imprisonments Contrasted

The second imprisonment was very different from the first one in these ways:

1. Then he had his own hired house. Now he was kept in close confinement.
2. Then he was accessible to all. Now even Onesiphorus could only find him with difficulty and great risk (II Tim. 1:16-17).
3. Then Paul was the center of a large circle of friends. Now he was almost alone (II Tim. 4:10-12).
4. Then Paul hoped for speedy liberation. Now he expected to die (II Tim. 4:6),

Why II Timothy Written?

Paul had appeared before Nero. His case had been adjourned (II Tim. 4:16, 17). He expected to appear before the Emperor Nero “before winter,” and wrote Timothy who had been liberated to come at once with John Mark (II Tim. 4:9, 11, 13, 21), Timothy did not reach the apostle before he died in early June 68 A. D.

The aged apostle gives Timothy his “SWAN SONG,” his farewell, warned him against heresies, and encouraged him to zeal, courage and patience. This Second Epistle of Timothy is the most personal of the Pastoral Epistles. Is there any other letter so tender, so touching and with such an appeal? Every paragraph is packed with emotion, every sentence **THROBS WITH THE PULSE BEATS OF A GREAT HUMAN HEART!**

I. A Solemn Salutation (II Timothy 1:1-2)

“Paul...” (II Tim. 1:1) For the last time the Apostle addresses his dear young friend, Timothy. In Paul’s day, it was a fixed custom to begin a letter with one’s name, as today it is the custom to close a letter with a complimentary ending and signature.

“An apostle.” Paul intends to convey a note of authority. He is about to write a **PASTORAL EPISTLE**, not just a personal note, but a letter to a minister who is in charge of an important church who needs encouragement and counsel and a deepening conviction of the dignity and importance of his task. Divinely chosen of God, Paul spoke with authority (Acts 9:12-19).

“Of Jesus Christ by the will of God...” Originally the word “Jesus” was the personal name and “Christ” is an official title. In time these terms were freely interchanged. Jesus had proved to be the Christ, and the Christ had been known men as Jesus of Nazareth.

Paul first knew his Master as the risen “**CHRIST**,” always thought of him as the **DIVINE CHRIST** who had borne the human name of Jesus, and whom he loved and adored as “Christ Jesus!” Three times in this salutation Paul repeats the blessed title.

“To Timothy, my dearly beloved son...” (II Tim. 1:2) Paul tenderly loved his “**SON**” in the gospel who had proved himself worthy of such affection.

“Grace, mercy and peace...” These three, Paul feels, include all that he could wish for Timothy in this and the world to come.

II. A Striking Thanksgiving (II Timothy 1:3-5)

“I thank God...” (II Tim. 1:3) As usual in his letters, Paul follows the opening salutation with a thanksgiving and a prayer. Here the thanksgiving is for the “unalloyed faith” (verse 5) of Timothy and the petition is that Timothy no way be restored to Paul. The thanksgiving and the prayer are closely entwined, as in other letters (Rom. 1:9-10; I Cor. 1:4-8; II Cor. 1:3-4; Eph. 1:3; Phil. 1:3, 9-11; Col. 1:3-10; I Thess. 1:2-3; II Thess. 1:3).

“Whom I serve from my forefathers with a pure conscience...” The apostle had a pious ancestry (Acts 24:14; 26:5; Phil. 3:4-7). Her had served God with a “pure conscience” (Acts 23:1) before he became a Christian. He felt he was doing God service when he voted to stone Stephen (Acts 26:9-11; 7:57-60)! He was conscientious, but he was conscientiously WRONG!

“Being mindful of thy tears...” (II Tim. 1:4) Even though he was in prison, Paul greatly desired to see Timothy. The lonely prisoner called to mind the “tears you shed”: Was this an allusion to the “tears” of Timothy as a boy when Paul “rose up” after being stoned at Lystra (Acts 14:19-20)? Or the scene at Miletus (Acts 20:19)? Or the time of their last parting, or at Troas when the Roman soldiers seized Paul and hustled him off to Rome on the humiliating, but FALSE, charge of setting fire to the city (II Tim. 4:13). If Timothy could come, it would make Paul “perfectly happy!”

“When I call to remembrance...” (II Tim. 1:5) As Paul looked back, he saw Timothy from his youth up a believer.

“Unfeigned faith.” “Unalloyed faith” is sincere, pure faith. It was handed down from Grandmother Lois to her daughter Eunice. They planted the gospel seed in Timothy’s heart where it found fertile soil (Phil. 2:20).

Family religion is a matter of supreme importance. It is a tragedy for parents to fasten vile habits, diseased minds, and bodies upon children. The parent who by neglect teaches his children that Bible reading, church attendance, prayer, and honesty with God in material things just DO NOT MATTER is GOING TO ANSWER TO GOD FOR SUCH NEGLECT! “HOW shall we escape, if we NEGLECT SO GREAT SALVATION” (Heb. 2:3)? There would never have been a Timothy at Lystra IF LOIS AND EUNICE had been an UNSTABLE and FAITHLESS as some mothers and grandmothers in this church (Acts 16:1-5)!

III. Reasons Why We Should Be Loyal in Spite of Suffering for the Gospel (II Timothy 1:6-14)?

A. An exhortation’ to renewed zeal (II Timothy 1:6-7).

“Wherefore I put thee in remembrance that thou stir up the gift of God...” (II Tim. 1:6) Paul’s immediate purpose in writing this epistle is to summon Timothy to Rome. His larger purpose is to prepare Timothy for the approaching death of his beloved leader and to encourage Timothy to be faithful to his task as minister of the great Christian Church at Ephesus.

“Stir up the gift of God”: Timothy did not have the “rugged, restless energy of Paul.” He was timid, self-conscious and fearful. He needed to “KEEP ALIVE THE FLAME OF GOD’S GRACIOUS GIFT,” to REKINDLE, to STIR INTO FLAME his “gift of God.” This was “the supernatural gift which he received by the imposition of the apostolic hands of the presbytery; the gift of miraculous powers, by the imposition of the hands of an apostle” (I Tim. 4:14). “Gift... through the imposition of my hands.”

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“God hath not given us the spirit of fear... “ (II Tim. 1:7); “There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment” (I John 4:18). “FEAR was the LEADING PRINCIPLE of the law of Moses, LOVE in that of Jesus Christ.” All cowardice, all dread of danger, all shrinking from doing one’s duty does not come from God, but from the devil. God gives us the spirit of “power and love and self-control,” “a sound mind!”

B. An exhortation to courage (II Timothy 1:8-12).

“Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord...” (II Tim. 1:8). In view of the spiritual equipment that God has given to him, Timothy is urged not to be ashamed either of his testimony of Christ, or of Paul who has been imprisoned for his “LOYALTY TO CHRIST!” “For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth...” (Rom. 1:16). Timothy and all of us should be “partaker of the afflictions of the gospel.” In spite of persecution, Timothy is to be loyal to the gospel. Think what would happen IF EACH PERSON WHO CLAIMS to be a MEMBER of the body of Christ in this church would RISE TO SUCH A PLANE OF LOYALTY AS THIS! “The power of God” is the same. All God needs is for channels through which His power can flow.

“Is you life a channel of blessing? Is the love of God flowing thru you?
Are you telling the lost of the Saviour. Are you ready His service to do?
Make me a channel of blessing today, make me a channel of blessing I pray;
My life possessing, My service blessing, make me a channel of blessing today. Amen.”
– H. G. Smyth.

“Who hath saved us...” (II Tim. 1:9) God through Christ has saved us through the gospel of the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ (I Cor. 15:1-4). He saved us not because we deserved or earned salvation, but through the “appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ” (verse 10).

“Abolished death...” (II Tim. 1:10) Christ “rendered death in-effectual.” He took away from death its power and will finally destroy death altogether (I Cor. 15:26), Christ holds the KEY to every grave. At the end of the word, when He speaks the word, ALL IN THEIR ORDER WILL LIVE AGAIN (John 5:25). “Life and immortality” are given to us through Jesus Christ. Death no longer has terror for us (I Cor. 15:26, 55, Heb. 2:14).

“I am appointed a preacher... apostle... teacher of the Gentiles.” (II Tim. 1:11) Christ chose Paul to take this message of hope to the Gentiles (Acts 9:15-16; 20:22-23). “Preacher” means proclaimer of the gospel or one declaring to those who never heard it-- foreign missionaries. “Apostle,” with direct personal authority from Christ. “Teacher,” instructor of settled Christian communities, our ministers today.

Five Assertions

1. Looking back: “I was appointed” (verse 11).
2. Thinking of the present, Paul said
 - 1) “I also suffer” (verse 12).
 - 2) “I am not ashamed” (verse 12).
 - 3) “I know” Him (verse 12).
3. Invoking to the future: “I am persuaded” (verse 12).

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“I know... he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day” (II Tim. 1:12): “My deposit” or “That which I have committed unto him,” my whole interests, life, body, soul and spirit. He leaves all in God’s hands with perfect confidence.

C. An exhortation to guard God’s truth (II Timothy 1:13-14).

“Hold fast the form of sound words...” (II Tim. 1:13) “Hold to the pattern of wholesome teachings, which you heard from me, centering by faith and love in Christ Jesus.” Paul commands Timothy to “HOLD FAST” the form of sound words that had been committed by the Holy Spirit. Every Christian should “speak as the oracles of God” (I Peter 4:11).

Today we should “SPEAK WHERE THE BIBLE SPEAKS and remain silent where the Bible is silent.” Let us “CALL BIBLE THINGS by Bible names and do Bible things in Bible ways.” Ministers, elders, deacons and teachers, it is HIGH TIME for us to “STUDY...” (II Tim. 2:15) The WHOLE BIBLE STUDY COURSE! The “whole counsel of God” (Acts 20:27) ought to be taught in every church, every where, “without ceasing”!

“That good thing... keep.” (II Tim. 1:14) “Guard that precious entrusted deposit by the help of the indwelling Holy Spirit within us.” He was to keep it true, and be true to it by the Holy Spirit. This charge is more meaningful in the light of the desertion of many of Paul’s former friends.

IV. A Sad Contrast (II Timothy 1:15-18)

A. Deserters (II Timothy 1:15).

“...all they which are in Asia be turned away from me.” (II Tim. 1:15) Paul refers to former friends in Roman Asia, the small province that was a fraction of what we know as Asia Minor. Of course, he still has many loyal friends at Ephesus where Timothy is ministering. When Paul was arrested, some upon whom he depended DESERTED HIM when their Friendship was needed most. Paul mentions “Phygellus,” “little fugitive,” and “Hermogenes,” “born of Hermes.” Of these two nothing more is known. They have attained the immortality of disgrace by their defection from the great apostle of Christ. Are we DESERTERS or DEVOTED Christians (see Phil, 4:3, Rev. 22:18-19)?

B. Devoted friend (II Timothy 1:16-18).

“The Lord grant mercy unto the house of Onesiphorus...” (II Tim. 1:16) “Onesiphorus” means, “bringing profit!” At great risk to himself, “he sought... and found” Paul in Rome. He often visited and cheered the apostle (verse 17). The hope or desire of Paul for Onesiphorus was by no means of the character of those petitions that are commonly offered for the dead. TRUE FRIENDSHIP remains TRUE to the end – of life here. Let us, too, be faithful to the end (Rev. 2:10c).

QUESTIONS

1. When was II Timothy probably written?
2. Do you think Paul was released from his first imprisonment (Acts 28:30-31)? Why?
3. Who was Emperor of Rome at this time? Can you describe him, and his treatment of the Christians?
4. Where was Paul probably arrested without warning and taken to Rome for the second imprisonment?
5. Can you contrast the first and second imprisonments?
6. Why was II Timothy probably written (II Timothy 4:16-17,9,11,13,21)?
7. Whose authority chose Paul to be “an apostle” (II Tim. 1:1; Acts 9:12-19)?
8. How did Paul address Timothy in this second letter (II Tim. 1:2)?
9. Why did Paul desire to see Timothy (II Tim. 1:4)?
10. What do we know of Timothy’s family (II Tim. 1:4, Acts 16:1, 2)?
12. Of what was Timothy told to be “unashamed” (II Tim. 1:8; Rom. 1: 16)?
13. According to what are Christians “saved” and “called” (II Tim. 1:9)?
14. In what sense has Christ “abolished death” (II Tim. 1:10)?
15. Can you enumerate five assertions made by Paul (II Tim. 1:11-12)?
16. Whom did Paul “know” (II Tim. 1:12)? Who does the “committing” and who does the “keeping” (II Tim. 1:12)?
17. What “good thing” had been committed to Timothy (II Tim. 1:13-14; I Tim. 1:18-19; 4:6; 6:11-14)?
18. To what should we “hold fast” (II Tim. 1:13)? How should every Christian speak?
19. What did Timothy “know” (II Tim. 1:15)? Are there “deserters” today?
20. How did Onesiphorus show his love for Paul (II Tim. 1:16-18)?

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WHOLE BIBLE STUDY COURSE

Year VI

Fourth Quarter

Lesson 48

Page 1

II Timothy 2

Memory Verse: II Timothy 2:15

Memory Verse:

“Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth” (II Timothy 2:15).

THE COMPLETE PICTURE OF A CHRISTIAN

When the going is tough, false “friends” forsake you. During his second imprisonment Paul from his Roman prison wrote to Timothy at Ephesus: “This thou knowest, that all they which are in Asia be turned away from me” (II Tim. 1:15).

One day Jesus fed “about five thousand” men (John 6:10). The next day when our Lord insisted that He was “that bread which came down from heaven” (John 6:35, 48), “many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him. Then Jesus said unto the twelve, ‘Will ye also go away?’” (John 6:66, 67)?

True friends stick – in fair or foul weather. Thank God for many who, like Onesiphorus, will fight and die with you, but who won’t desert the cause of Christ and you as his faithful “soldier” (II Tim. 1:16-18).

In II Timothy 2 Paul gives a complete picture of a Christian workman whom God can “approve!”

I. Endures Hardship for thy Sake of Spreading the Gospel (II Timothy 2:1-13).

A. A comprehensive exhortation (II Timothy 2:1).

“Thou therefore, my son, be strong in the grace...” (II Tim. 2:1) Paul exhorts his son in the gospel, Timothy, to depend upon Christ who alone can give all needed grace, a gift unmerited but also unlimited. Men like Phygellus and Hermogenes may “desert” just when they are needed most (II Tim. 1:15). Others like Onesiphorus will receive the “grace that is in Christ Jesus” and “endure to the end” and “be saved” (Matt. 10:22). To Paul Jesus said, “My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness” (II Cor. 12:9). Let us all eagerly seek divine help and apply it to our needs today!

B. A specific command (II Timothy 2:2).

“And the things that thou hast heard of me... the same commit thou to faithful men.” (II Tim. 2:2) Timothy received the gospel as a “trust” from Paul his teacher in the presence of “many witnesses.” The apostle here specifically commands that Timothy “commit” or “deposit” the gospel with “faithful men,” evidently the “bishops”, or “elders” or “presbyters” (I Tim. 3:1-7, 5:17). Why? The sacred “deposit” of the truth must be safeguarded. Men must be selected who are trustworthy, and “able to teach others also.” Only those who accept God’s Word as “given by inspiration of God” (II Tim. 3:15-17) should ever be allowed to teach or preach in the Bible school or church,

C. A sure hardship and certain reward (II Timothy 2:3-13).

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“Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ” (II Tim. 2:3): As Paul continues to urge upon Timothy faithfulness in his office as minister at Ephesus, he declares that hardship will be inevitable, but that reward is certain. He urges Timothy to “share our hardships” as a “noble soldier of Christ Jesus.”

Paul often uses this military metaphor (I Cor. 9:7; II Cor. 10:3f; I Tim. 1:18). He called Epaphroditus “my fellow-soldier” (Phil. 2:25). To “endure hardness” is to bear persecution, deny oneself and labor for the salvation of others.

“No man that warreth entangleth himself...” (II Tim. 2:4) The “soldier” to do good service must devote himself entirely to the soldier’s life, giving up worldly affairs. To be a good minister, God’s man must do “one thing” (Phil. 3:13) – “study” and “PREACH THE WORD” (II Tim. 2:15, 4:2). Every waking moment must be devoted to study, prayer and service. A “good soldier” is ever eager to please the Captain of his salvation, Christ Jesus. We are enlisted for life. We are under His discipline and must give Him strict obedience.

“That he may please him...” Every Christian must daily “please” Christ who has “called” us and “saved” us through the gospel (I Cor. 15:1-4). Paul does not forbid the Christian to be an honest merchant, typist, railroad coworker, or to use secular callings as a MEANS OF SUPPORT. He was a “tentmaker,” you know (Acts 18:3).

A wealthy meat packer was once asked what his life’s work was. “My life’s work is to serve God and spread the gospel. I pack pork to pay the expenses.” Do you think a Christian should become so “entangled” with his means of making a livelihood that he never comes to worship, or pock out to share the gospel with others? Do you think this verse forbids the taking on of such things as clubs, lodges, and pleasures that sap one’s strength and ability and means AWAY FROM THE CHURCH and our Lord?

“And if a man also strive for masteries... not crowned, except he strive lawfully.” (II Tim. 2:5): Timothy must regard himself as an athlete, ready to subject himself to sacrifice and discipline and to endure an agony of effort.

In the games of the Greeks to which Paul refers, rewards were offered to him who would win. Each entrant must abide by all rules of the game, or he “does not get crowned unless he competes fairly.” In striving for the “crown of righteousness” (II Tim. 4:8), we must all “fight a good fight” (II Tim. 4:7) according to our Captain’s will (Matt. 28:18-20, John 14:23-24).

“The husbandman that laboreth must be first partaker of the fruits.” (II Tim. 2:6) If the farmer wishes to have a crop, he must labor according to the laws of nature. It takes patient, self-sacrificing toil to produce the benefits and fruits of that labor. Unlike the soldier or the athlete, there is no glamour or peril or applause in the monotonous toil of the farmer. Yet halo matter how obscure the task or how dreary the time, he “goes forth with weeping, certain at last to know the joy of the harvest. He cannot fail of his reward.

“Consider what I say...” (II Tim. 2:7) Paul uses three illustrations of the soldier, athlete and farmer to tell Timothy about leading the Christian life. All three must deny themselves and suffer in order to receive the reward. The soldier denies himself the world, the athlete obeys rigid training laws, and the husbandman labors and waits for a reward. So we Christians must be content to “deny” ourselves, to suffer and to wait for our reward. Have we reflected and grasped the meaning of hearing the “cross” to gain an incorruptible crown (II Tim. 4:8; I Pet. 1:3-5)? Without a “cross” there can be no “crown!”

“Remember that Jesus Christ...” (II Tim. 2:8) The resurrection of Jesus Christ is the cardinal fact that proves His claim to be the Messiah, the Son of God. Our Lord suffered a shameful death, but He was raised in triumph and crowned with glory and honor (Phil. 2:5-11). Paul preached this gospel everywhere – even in prison.

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“Wherein I suffer trouble...” (II Tim. 2:9) For “my gospel” which he preached to the Gentiles, Paul was now facing death. While he was “bound,” “the word of God is not bound” or shackled. “No chain or prison wall can bind the word of God!”

“Therefore I endure all things...” (II Tim. 2:10) The apostle is willing to endure the hardship and shame, because in the providence of God believers are being saved by faith in the Christ whom Paul preaches, and having been chosen of God in time past, are being made heirs of “eternal glory.”

Countless Christians across the centuries have felt the same compulsion. “God, give me Scotland, or I die,” was the agonizing cry of a lover of God and man! Are you willing to suffer, and weep and die in order to win souls to Christ?

“It is a faithful saying...” (II Tim. 2:11) Paul brings to its climax his argument as to the sure reward of steadfast service by quoting a “saying” which, because of its rhythmic and balanced arrangement, seems to be a portion of an ancient hymn:

“If we died with him, we shall also live with him:
If we endure, we shall also reign with him;
If we deny him, he also will deny us:
If we are faithless, he abideth faithful;
FOR He cannot deny himself.”

“For if we be dead with him...” The first two lines place in striking contrast death acrid life, submission and sovereignty. The reference is to “death” to the old life, and “burial” into the DEATH OF CHRIST AT BAPTISM (Rom. 6:4, 5, 8; Col. 2:12); see also Rom. 8:17; Matt. 19: 27-28, Col. 3:3).

We Christians die in order to live. Our suffering with Christ “works out for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.”

“If we deny him...” (II Tim. 2:12) “But whosoever shall deny me before men,” said Jesus, “him will I also deny before my Father is in heaven” (Matt. 10:33), If we “confess” Him, He will “confess” us “before my Father which is in heaven.” We do well to heed this warning.

“If we believe not...” (II Tim. 2:13) “If we play Him false, He will Himself remain faithful; for He cannot play false to Himself.” The fourth line breathes a note of hope. Even though our faith may waver and we may distrust the power and care of our Lord, “He abideth faithful.” Peter’s courage failed, but the Lord restored him (Matt, 26:58, 69-75; John 21:15f).

Our Lord will surely disown those who finally are faithless, yet He is “faithful and righteous to forgive.” “He cannot deny Himself.” He is certain to pardon, to strengthen and reward the faithful Christian.

II. Exercise of Timothy’s Responsibility to the Church (II Timothy 2:14-26)

A. The exercise of power (II Timothy 2:14-19).

“Of these things put them in remembrance...” (II Tim. 2:14) Here the emphasis is upon sound doctrine, or teaching. Paul had urged Timothy to appoint well-qualified men who may serve as teachers. He exhorts him to put these officers in remembrance of the hardship involved in ministerial service, but also of its rich and abiding reward.

“Charging... that they strive not about words to no profit.” This is an injunction full of meaning to the Christians of all ages. There are many religious discussions that are profitless, and some are injurious. Let us “indulge in no WAR of WORDS; it helps no one and it completely upsets the listeners.” If men contend in pride, stubbornness and self-conceit, such disputes result in loss of temper and even in the weakening of faith.

“Study to show thyself...” (II Tim. 2:15) Timothy is urged to enforce his teachings by his own example. “Do your utmost to present yourself to God approved, a workman who has no cause to be ashamed, correctly analyzing the message of the truth.” The aim of “study” is to show ourselves “approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed.”

“Rightly dividing.” The particular work in which Timothy is engaged is described as “rightly dividing the word of truth.” The Revision reads, “Handling aright.” It is a figure that might mean “plowing a straight furrow,” or “cutting the stones straight.” Since Paul was a tent-maker, he knew how to cut straight the rough camel-hair cloth.

The truth is to be presented clearly, truthfully, and within exactness that cannot be denied. For example, Acts 2:38 applies to those out of Christ. If this verse applied to those in Christ, who sin, it would require that I be immersed every time I sin.

“But shun profane and vain babblings...” (II Tim. 2:16) Timothy is to preach the truth. He is to “keep away from those unholy, empty discussions, for they lead people further on into godlessness!” “Profane” is unholy.

“And their word will eat...” (II Tim. 2:17) “Profane and vain babblings” eat or gnaw like a spreading disease, like a cancer.

“Of whom is Hymenaeus...” Hymenaeus is probably the one mentioned in I Tim. 1:20. We know nothing is known of Philetus.

“Who concerning the truth have erred...” (II Tim. 2:18) They “erred” in thinking that Christ teaches “only amoral resurrection, a resurrection of the soul to a better life.” This error was taught in Corinth (I Cor. 15:12). Christ preached a resurrection of the body (John 5:29, 29, Acts 24:14-16).

“Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure...” (II Tim. 2:19) Such “error” played “havoc with the faith of some.” God’s foundation stands firm. His promises are sure. Upon this “firm foundation” Paul imagines two inscriptions, one written from the divine side and one from the human side:

1. “The Lord knoweth them that are his.”
2. “Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.”

We need not be too much distressed by false teachers. We must not fear that they can destroy the Church. The Lord distinguishes between the false and the true. He will discover, he will punish and reward: “The Lord knoweth them that are his.”

If we profess to be Christians, we must separate ourselves from all that is wrong and sinful either in belief or in practice. We must “stand aloof from wickedness,” all unrighteousness.

B. The exercise of love (II Timothy 2:20-23).

“But in a great house...” (II Tim. 2:20) As in a house there are vessels of honor and dishonor, gold and earthen, so in the house of God, the church, there are even some earthy materials. Paul pictures TWO CLASSES by comparing them with the DIFFERENT VESSELS or utensils that are found “in a great house.” Some are put to distasteful and unpleasant uses; others are “vessels” of “honor,” which are associated with dignity and delight.

“If a man therefore purge himself from these...” (II Tim. 2:21) Some men in a professing church can be used only as warnings and examples of the periods of apostasy. On the other hand, a man who will keep himself uncontaminated by false teachers and by error, will be like a “vessel of gold and of silver,” a “utensil for noble use, set apart and useful for the Master, prepared for good service of every sort.”

“Flee also youthful lusts...” (II Tim. 2:22) Even the conscious possession of truth in the face of growing error has its temptations, especially for a young man who has enjoyed such opportunities for

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learning as had Timothy under the teaching of Paul. We may conclude that he refers not so much to bodily appetites as to the temptations of a young minister to pride, conceit, dogmatism, contentiousness and to a display of his own wisdom, either in exploiting false theories or in defending the faith. Paul admonishes him to “Go in pursuit of integrity, faith, love, peace, in fellow-ship with those who invoke the Lord out of pure hearts.” “Decline those foolish and uncultured discussions, as you know they breed quarrels” (verse 23).

C. The exercise of discipline (II Timothy 2:24-26).

“And the servant of the Lord must not strive...” (II Tim. 2:24) This is true of all Christians, but especially of the Christian minister. He must be “gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient,” Even when unbelieving men oppose him, he must seek with all meekness to lead them back to the truth. Such men are to be brought to “repentance” (verse 25). When the gospel has been fully stated, then to turn from Love and Light is to convict oneself of having something evil in the heart or in the life.

“And that they may recover themselves...” (II Tim. 2:26) Paul declares that false teachers who have erred from the truth have really fallen under the “snare of the devil, under whom they had been taken captive.” They may be recovered from the devil’s snare, but only by the power of God who may give them “repentance!” God will HONOR HIS WORD if it is honorably preached. He will give his faithful servant the joy of seeing souls delivered from the powers of darkness and death!

QUESTIONS

1. Who will probably forsake you when the going gets “tough”, and can you give two examples of “deserters” and name the “deserted” (II Tim. 1:15; John 6:10, 35, 48, 66, 67)?
2. Do you think Onesiphorus was a friend of Paul (II Tim. 1:16-18)? Why?
3. In what did Paul exhort Timothy to “be strong” (II Tim. 2:1; II Cor. 12:9)?
4. Why was Timothy to impart the truth to others (II Tim. 2:2)?
5. By what different names did Paul refer to Christians in this chapter (II Tim. 2:1-3, 6, 15, 21, 24)?
6. What is the Christian’s responsibility as a “soldier” (II Tim. 2:3, 4)?
7. Is the athlete “crowned, except he strive lawfully” (II Tim. 2:5; 4:7-8; John 14:23-24)?
8. Against what seven dangers are believers warned (II Tim. 2:4, 5, 14, 16, 20-23)?
9. What does the “husbandman” do (II Tim. 2:6)?
10. Have you grasped the meaning of bearing the “cross” to gain an incorruptible “crown” (II Tim. 2:7; 4:8; I Pet. 1:3-5)?
11. Why is the Christian to “remember... Jesus Christ” (II Tim. 2:8)?
12. What comforting assurance is given in II Tim. 2:9?
13. Why was Paul willing to “endure all things” (II Tim. 2:10)?
14. When did the Christian die with Christ (II Tim. 2:11)?
15. If we deny Christ now, when will He “deny us” (II Tim. 2:12)?
16. What is the Christian’s responsibility as “a workman” (II Tim. 2:15)?
17. To what is the false doctrine of Hymenaeus and Philetus compared (II Tim. 2:17-18)?
18. What is the effect of this false teaching upon “some” (II Tim. 2:18)? How did it affect the “foundation of God” (II Tim. 2:19)?
19. What will be the result of separation from evil (II Tim. 2:20-23)?
20. What method should the “servant” of the Lord pursue (II Tim. 2:24-26)?

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WHOLE BIBLE STUDY COURSE

Year VI

Fourth Quarter

Lesson 49
II Timothy 3

Page 1
Memory Verses: II Timothy 3:16,17

Memory Verses:

“All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works” (II Timothy 3:16, 17).

A PICTURE OF THE “LAST DAYS”

A Christian, who wishes to be a GOLDEN VESSEL of “HONOR” in His Master’s service, MUST BE A CLEAN VESSEL (II Tim. 2:19-22). He must “Flee also youthful lusts” (verse 22), avoid unprofitable questions and speculations which FALSE TEACHERS RAISE (verse 23), and gently but firmly seek to get false teachers to come to “repentance” and thus escape the “snare of the devil” (verses 25-26).

If ANYONE, regardless of his sin, will “repent” or DIE TO THE PRACTICE OF SIN, God will FORGIVE HIM (II Pet. 3:9; Acts 2:38; 17:30-31). Today we see the

I. Folly of False Teachers (II Timothy 3:1-10)

A. The coming of difficult days (II Timothy 3:1).

“This know also, that in the last days...” (II Tim. 3:1) While we are to do every honorable thing without compromising the truth to win false teachers to “repentance” (II Tim. 2:25-26), there are evil men who arise in the church will NEVER REPENT or be reclaimed. It is impossible to reclaim a man who willfully keeps on crucifying the “Son of God AFRESH, and puts him to an open shame” (Heb, 6:6). Timothy is warned that opposition to the truth will continue and will grow even more intense, He is to be neither surprised nor dismayed. Christ and His apostles have made it clear that we live in an age of continual conflict between evil and good. TRUTH will ULTIMATELY TRIUMPH and its enemies will be put to shame.

“The last days.” Here Paul seems to refer to the close of the era in which we now live, “the last days,” of the age between the ascension of Christ and His RETURN. This return Paul does not regard as IMMEDIATE or IMMINENT. In his Pastoral Epistles Paul is MAKING DEFINITE PROVISION FOR the PERMANENT ORGANIZATION and the CONTINUING MINISTRY OF THE CHURCH! Paul does affirm, however, that in the period between the DEPARTURE and the RETURN of the LORD, “troublesome times are impending” (Berkeley). The Revision has “grievous times shall come.” These “times” are to be “grievous” BECAUSE of CONDITIONS not only in the WORLD, but even in the CHURCH! It is of the church that Paul is speaking. “Troublesome times are impending” for those who would be FAITHFUL TO CHRIST. They will be seasons of TRIAL, in which the PATH OF DUTY will not always be PLAIN, nor the demands of DUTY EASY TO PERFORM.

The devil through false teachers makes a continual determined effort to CORRUPT THE TRUTH (read Matt. 7:15-23; II Thess. 2; 1 Timothy 4; 11 Peter 2; Jude and Revelation 17).

B. The characteristics of false teachers (II Timothy 3:2-9).

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“For men shall be lovers of their own selves...” (II Tim. 3:2) Paul uses a series of striking terms to describe the false teachers of the “last days.” In these it is difficult to find any special arrangement or division. However, they begin with two Greek words that are closely associated, “LOVERS OF SELF” and “LOVERS OF MONEY,” and they close with two words that are strikingly contrasted, “LOVERS OF PLEASURE” and “LOVERS OF GOD.” Between these FOUR WORDS are FIVE GROUPS of THREE TERMS EACH, comprising an appalling list of EVIL CHARACTERISTICS:

1. Glorifying in self, an attempt to pass for a man of greater consequence than one really is:

“Boastful”: Empty pretender.

“Proud” means contemptuous of others. “Haughty.”

“Blasphemers.” “Revilers” or “abusive.” Denotes those who actually “abuse” and “revile” their fellow men. So these terms indicate sins against both TRUTH and LOVE.

2. A wrong relationship to parents, benefactors, and to God Himself.

“Disobedient to parents.” “Unfilial.” Disobedience to parents under the law of Moses brought stoning upon the rebellious son (Deut. 21:18-21). Christ taught us to OBEY our parents in ALL THINGS EXCEPT WHERE THAT DISOBEDIENCE would cause a child to DISOBEY GOD (Matt. 10:37; Acts 4:18-20).

“Unthankful.” Children who are “disobedient to parents” are unusually UNGRATEFUL to all who may show them kindness. INGRATITUDE is one of the WORST CRIMES (Luke 17:17). Do YOU APPRECIATE what your parents HAVE, DONE and ARE DOING FOR YOU? Are you grateful for those who faithfully serve you in this church? If not, you are a wicked, false, unthankful and “unholy” person, NOT CONSECRATED to God, and defiled with sin.

3. Vices in striking rebuke to the words of our Lord (Matt. 5:43-44).

“Without natural affection...” (II Tim. 3:3) without affection for parents or children. Even dumb brutes have attachment for their offspring. Men and women without are worse than brutes.

“Trucebreakers.” They will not be bound by an oath or held by any engagement or obligated by any promise, Or they may readily promise ANYTHING, but never intend to do anything!

“False accusers.” Slanderers.

4. The libertine, the churl and the worldling described.

“Incontinent”: With no self-control over his passions or appetites. “Fierce” means brutal, like a savage or wild beast. “Despisers of those that are good.” Hostile to every good thought and work, “with no love for the good.”

5. Those who are treacherous to their fellow men, reckless and marked by self-conceit.

“Traitors...” (II Tim. 3:4) Ready to betray any person or trust committed to their keeping. Benedict Arnolds in the church! “Heady.” “Rash” or “headstrong.” “High-minded.” “Conceited,” “puffed up.”

“Lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God.” “Pleasure-loving rather than God-loving.” Would you RATHER SEE A SHOW, engage in some recreation, or GO VISITING rather than come to prayer meeting, or to the Lord’s Supper? If so, you classify yourself (see Matt. 7:21-23; John 14:23-24).

“Having a form of godliness...” (II Tim. 3:5) They CLAIM to be followers of Christ, but are not actually. They have the OUTWARD FORMS without the reality. They are BOOKED, but not BORN AGAIN; COUNTED, but NOT CONSECRATED; RECEIVED, but NOT REGENERATED!

“From such turn away.” Avoid such people. All who pretend to be Christians while living a degraded life are to shunned UNLESS THEY REPENT and get out of the snare of the devil (II Tim, 2:25-26). A New Testament Church is under obligation to EXCLUDE a man from the fellowship of the church who persists in REFUSING TO LIVE THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST (I Cor. 5:5, 11; II Thess. 3:6; Matt. 18:15-19). It never

hurts an apple tree for a rotten apple to fall off, nor is a church injured by excluding a willful rascal or a member who will not repent of his sins? WHY?

“For of this sort are they which creep into houses...” (II Tim. 3:6) These stealthy “creepers” by their seductive influences lead “silly women,” “little women,” or “society ladies” astray. This is a contemptuous reference to evil men and women. They promise these sin-laden women freedom from sin to ease their guilty consciences. Such women are “EVER LEARNING” (verse 7), greedily listen to every “NEW THOUGHT” that comes along, and REJECT THE REVEALED WORD OF GOD!

“Recall Schweinfurth the false Messiah of forty odd years ago with his ‘heavenly harem’ in Illinois and the recent infamous ‘House of David’ in Michigan to understand how these Gnostic cults led women into licentiousness under the guise of religion or of liberty. The priestesses of Aphrodite and of Isis were illustrations ready to hand” (Robertson, Volume IV, page 264).

“Now as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses...” (II Tim. 3:8) Paul finally compares the TEACHERS OF ERROR, against whom Timothy was warned, with Jannes and Jambres. These Egyptians withstood Moses when he was attempting to convince Pharaoh of the power of God, and to incline him to yield to the will of God (Targum of Jonathan on Exodus 7:11). “So do these men oppose the truth, corrupt thinkers as they are and COUNTERFEITS so far as faith is concerned.” Such men are morally depraved and devoid of all real knowledge of the gospel. “Reprobate” means they have abandoned the truth. They are so given over to sin that they have lost the ability to distinguish between good and evil.

“But... their folly shall be manifest unto all men.” (II Tim. 3:9) Such false teachers will do many harms, but there is a point beyond which they can never advance. False teachers then and now cannot STAND BEFORE THE TRUTH “for their SHALLOWNESS will be obvious to everyone, as was the case with those mentioned.”

II. Follow Faithful Leaders (II Timothy 3: 10-13)

“But thou hast fully known my doctrine...” (II Tim. 3:10) The apostle referred to his own manner of life and service as affording an EXAMPLE of what Timothy’s experience must necessarily be. He referred to his “teaching,” his “conduct,” his “purpose,” and his “faith,” his “longsuffering,” his “love,” and his “patience.”

Timothy faithfully FOLLOWED the instructions given by Paul with sympathy and approval. The teaching, life and sufferings of Paul were the MEANS through which Timothy’s conversion was brought about.

“Persecutions...” (II Tim. 3:11) Repeatedly Paul endured stoning, scourging, and imprisonments for His Master’s sake (II Cor. 11:23-33; Acts 13:45, 50; 14:1-19; 16:22-24). “But one of them all the Lord delivered me.”

“Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.” (II Tim. 3:12) Timothy is warned that he must expect similar experiences if he is to be loyal to the truth. Suffering is the common experience of all faithful ministers of the gospel. In that age PERSECUTION WAS INSEPARABLE from a devoted Christian life. A Christian faithful in all things in any age or era will doubtless be persecuted. Sometimes it is ridicule and opposition of various sorts,

“But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse...” (II Tim. 3:13) Timothy need not expect times less difficult than those in which Paul has lived. “But wicked men and imposters will GO ON FROM BAD TO WORSE, deceiving and being deceived.” Paul bade Timothy and us to be thoroughly furnished.

III. "THOROUGHLY FURNISHED UNTO ALL GOOD WORKS" (II Timothy 3:14-17)

"But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned..." (II Tim. 3:14) Timothy need not be swerved from the truth. He is to refuse to NEED FALSE TEACHERS and CONTINUE IN THE TRUTH he had "LEARNED and has been assured of." He had learned the Old Testament from his "Grandmother Lois, and they mother Eunice" (II Tim. 1:5). His beloved teacher, Paul, had further taught him the gospel message.

"And that from a child thou hast known the Holy Scriptures..." (II Tim. 3:16) He had been TAUGHT from the FIFTH YEAR the "HOLY SCRIPTURES" (Deut. 6:6-9, 20-25). Parents, are you teaching your children God's Word? The Bible is our MOST PRECIOUS POSSESSION.

THE BIBLE is the ONE ANTIDOTE against APOSTASY and CHURCH CORRUPTION. The Roman Catholic Church PUSHED THE BIBLE ASIDE, and brought on the DARK AGES. The Protestant Church REDISCOVERED THE BIBLE, but NOW NEGLECTS IT! Widespread disregard of the Bible by the present day Church is positively appalling. Many prominent leaders not only NEGLECT THE BIBLE, but with great intellectual pride, in the name of "modern scholarship," resort to every conceivable means to UNDERMINE its DIVINE ORIGIN, and TOSS IT ASIDE as a PATCHWORK of HEBREW THOUGHT!

"Wise unto salvation." The "sacred writings" pointed him to Christ, through faith in whom Timothy is saved. "The law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith" (Gal. 3:24).

"All scripture is given by inspiration of God..." (II Tim. 3:16) "All Scripture is inspired of God" (Berkeley). This form is a definite ASSERTION of DIVINE INSPIRATION. The American Revised reads: "EVERY SCRIPTURE INSPIRED OF GOD..." Here inspiration is assumed. Grammatically either is correct. Here Paul is discussing the VALUE and the USE of "the Holy Scriptures." Their inspiration is not called in question. He has been saying that Timothy, from childhood, has known these sacred writings which can make him "wise unto salvation."

"All scripture... is profitable for doctrine." Teaching. This refers to the authoritative quality that constitutes the foundation on which the building is to go forward.

"Reproof" is testing. "For correction" Refers to bringing back into the true line.

"For instruction in righteousness." Refers to training by discipline, toward consummation. The Scriptures, therefore, provide the foundation on which to BUILD, a METHOD for testing the building in the course of erection, a FORCE EQUAL to "correcting" mistakes, and the SUPPLY for carrying out the enterprise to perfection.

"THAT the man of God may be perfect..." (II Tim. 3:17) The purpose throughout is to make "COMPLETE" the man of God, but this perfection of the instrument is not the ULTIMATE GOAL. That is reached in the work that the COMPLETE MAN of God is to perform. The sequence is suggestive, and if we STUDY it from the EFFECT to the CAUSE we see what was evidently in the mind of the apostle. The matter of SUPREME IMPORTANCE was the WORK COMMITTED TO TIMOTHY. In order to do this TIMOTHY MUST BE COMPLETE, "well-fitted and adequately equipped for all good work!" In order to REACH this COMPLETENESS his character must RESULT from the power of the "Holy Scriptures." In order to OBTAIN THIS HE MUST "ABIDE" THEREIN!

QUESTIONS

1. What period of the church's history is described in this chapter (II Tim. 3:1)?
2. Is it God's will that we should be ignorant of these "perilous times" (II Tim. 3:1)?
3. What will men "love" in these "last days" (II Tim. 3:2, 4; I Tim. 6:10)?
4. Can you name three things that characterize one who glories in self (II Tim. 3:2)?
5. What three things denote a wrong relationship to parents, benefactors, and to God Himself (II Tim. 3:2, Deut. 21:18-21)?
6. What three vices are in striking contrast to the words of our Lord (II Tim. 3:3, Matt. 5:43-44)?
7. Who are described in the fourth group (II Tim. 3:3b)?
8. What are the characteristics of those in the fifth group (II Tim. 3:4a)?
9. How is Timothy to treat those who have only "a form of godliness" (II Tim. 3:5; I Cor. 5:5, 11; II Thess. 3:6; Matt. 18:15-19)?
10. What kind of people will be easily led away by these "false" teachers (II Tim. 3:6)?
12. Who were the magicians who "withstood Moses" (II Tim. 3:8; Ex. 7:11, 12, 22; 8:7, 18; 9:11)?
13. What are three characteristics of "false teachers" (II Tim. 3:8b)?
14. Whom did the Holy Spirit set forth as an example to Timothy (II Tim. 3:10, 11)?
15. What nine things did Timothy "fully know" (II Tim. 3:10-11)?
16. Will anyone who lives "godly" escape persecution (II Tim. 3:12)? What is the trend of evil men during these "last days" (II Tim. 3:13)?
17. How long had Timothy known the "Holy Scriptures" (II Tim. 3:14-15)? What are the "Holy Scriptures" able to do?
18. How was "all scripture" given (II Tim. 3:16)?
19. For what is the scripture "profitable" (II Tim. 3:6)?
20. For what does the "scripture" fit the "man of God" (II Tim. 3:17)?

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WHOLE BIBLE STUDY COURSE

Year VI

Fourth Quarter

Lesson 50

Page 1

II Timothy 4

Memory Verses: II Timothy 4:6,7

Memory Verses:

“For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith” (II Timothy 4:6, 7).

PAUL’S LAST WORDS

Men about to die do not use “idle words!” Probably no passage in all the epistles of Paul contains so stirring an appeal as does this final charge to Timothy, his “son in the gospel,” and dear friend. The apostle knew the day of his execution was fast approaching. Not sure that he would ever see Timothy again, he writes this last solemn, sacred charge to the faithful minister at Ephesus.

I. Preaching in Perilous Times (II Timothy 4:1-6)

A. A twofold charge (II Timothy 5:1-5).

“I charge thee...” (II Tim. 5:1) These last words invoke the names of God and of Christ to give it solemnity. “The Lord Jesus Christ” is named in His capacity of Judge, who shall not only “judge” Timothy’s hearers, but himself.

“Quick and the dead.” “LIVING and the dead.” At the time of that coming Timothy possible may be living, but Paul realizes that he himself will then be among “the dead.” By that “appearing and his kingdom” which will follow, Paul charges Timothy to heed this last command.

“Preach the word...” (II Tim. 4:2) Timothy was not suspected of any unfaithfulness. However, Paul declares that he has a solemn obligation to preserve the PURE WORD OF GOD and the peace and prosperity of the church. He would leave in the New Testament a record to all preachers of the Word in future generations a pattern of HOW TO BE FAITHFUL and DILIGENT in all their work. Timothy is to keep on proclaiming the Word, as a herald of Christ. The gospel ALONE must be preached. The Scriptures EQUIP a man for his work for Christ (II Tim. 3:16-17).

“Be instant in season, out of season.” (II Tim. 4:2) Be ready on every occasion to teach, exhort, and admonish. Be ready and urgent in every phase of the ministry at all times. “Reprove” wrong teaching with the idea of bringing the fault home to the offender. See Eph. 5:11. “Rebuke” sins and wrongs persisted in. A sharper word than “reprove.”

“Exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine.” Kindly encourage to greater faithfulness those who are weak, disheartened, and ready to give up. His spirit must be that of forbearance. His METHOD must be that of “doctrine” or teaching – give grounds for correct belief and principles of right action.

These FIVE IMPERATIVES ring out with all the directness of military commands. EVERY LOYAL MINISTER OF CHRIST must obey their injunctions IN EVERY AGE AND LAND! The tense in which these words appear in their Greek original implies that these activities are to continue right up to the coming of the Lord.

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“For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine...” (II Tim. 4:3): Paul urges Timothy to fulfill his ministry while it will do some good, for the “time will come when” these professing Christians will “not tolerate wholesome instruction.”

“But after their own lusts... having itching ears.” “To satisfy their own desires,” these spiritual counterfeits “will gather up teachers that will tickle their ears”!

“And they shall turn away their ears from the truth...” (II Tim. 4:4) Refusing sound doctrine, these hearers will run from teacher to another. Unsettled and restless, they want their ears tickled by some new sensation. They want only that which pleases their own fancy, that which gratifies the itching of their own ears. They welcome a host of teachers who offer to meet their religious needs without INSISTING UPON MORALITY. They refuse to listen to the presentation of truth and “wander off to hear myths,” or fables. Those who REJECT REVEALED TRUTH are most apt to become the dupes of impostors and victims of frauds! An Old Testament prophet describes such in this day (Hosea 4:6-10).

“Turned unto fables.” Purely rabbinical, or oral law or tradition, illustrated and enlarged by the sayings and comments of the more famous Jewish rabbis. In the time of our Lord Jesus they constituted “a supplement to the written Law of Moses” (Matt. 15:3).

Rabbi Jehuda collected the TRADITIONS (2nd century A. D.) under the name of MISHNAH. After they were written down, a further need was felt for a commentary on them. This COMMENTARY on the MISHNAH was called the GEMARA (completed at Babylon about the end of the 5th century A. D.). We TOGETHER know the MISHNAH and GEMARA as the TALMUD.

Some today prefer “myths” to the “truth,” even as some “wander away” from the Gospel to “New Thought,” or any other fad that will give a new momentary thrill to their itching ears and morbid minds.

“But watch thou in all things...” (II Tim. 4:5) “But amid it all, KEEP YOUR HEAD”! “Do not shrink from hardship” for the truth’s sake.

“Do the work of an evangelist”: From the story of Philip who alone in the New Testament is called “the evangelist” (Acts 21:8-9) we may conclude that the term did not imply a special order of the ministry, but a definite kind of work, particularly preaching to the unconverted. So this exhortation is much like saying to Timothy and his fellow ministers are not to be satisfied with mere pastoral duties among members of their own flocks, but should continually be seeking for the salvation of other souls.

B. Paul was ready for death (II Tim. 4:6).

“I am now ready...” (II Tim, 4:6): Paul was “READY” for service (Rom. 1:15), “I am READY not to be bound only, but also to DIE at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus” (Acts 21:13). NOW He was “READY TO BE OFFERED” as a sacrifice for Christ. He was Poured OUT as an offering as his blood was shed (see Num. 15:1-10). “At hand.” His enemies had predetermined his death and it was near.

II. Picturing the Christian Life under Three Figures (II Timothy 4:7-8)

A. As a soldier, likening life to a fight (II Timothy 4:7a).

“I have fought a good fight.” (II Tim. 4:7a) The figure is drawn from the Grecian games. Paul is saying, “I have fought the grand fight; my life has been a brave struggle, but I have never been daunted by opposition.”

B. As an athlete, likening life to a race (II Timothy 4:7b).

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“I have finished my course” (II Tim. 4:7b): Drawn from the Grecian games also. The race is run to the END. Paul used this metaphor also of himself to the elders at Ephesus (Acts 20:24). Then the “course” was ahead. Now it is BEHIND him. Paul had known what it was to “lay aside every weight” (Heb. 12:1) and to “run with patience the race” that was set before him. During all his long life of effort there had been no flagging because of weariness or faintness of heart.

C. As a trustee, likening life to a sacred trust (II Timothy 4:7c, 8).

“I have kept the faith.” (II Tim. 4:7c) Paul has not deserted. He has KEPT FAITH with Christ. He had not shrunk from confessing the faith when death stared him in the face. To be “FAITHFUL UNTO DEATH” is the only true success (Rev. 2:10c). The gospel is a sacred trust. Guard it.

“Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness...” (II Tim. 4:8): Paul looks beyond death and speaks of the crown that awaits him. “The crown given for righteousness.” In the Greek games, athletes contested for crowns of laurel or pine – corruptible crowns. It is a “crown” for Paul that comes as a REWARD for the righteous life that he had lived for Christ.

Paul mentions this “crown,” not in the spirit of selfish exultation; like all the preceding statements, this contains encouragement for Timothy to live as Paul has lived, to serve as he has served, and to regard death as he regards it. The apostle adds that the “crown” is also for “all them that have loved his appearing.” It is natural for all Christians to love the thought of the glorious appearing of our Lord, His spiritual presence is to the Christian a blessed reality; His visible appearance in glory is their constant hope.

“The righteous judge.” “The just judge” is the umpire who makes no mistakes who judges us all (II Cor. 5:10).

III. Paul, the Man Marked by Special Traits

A. Sigh over loneliness (II Timothy 4:9-12, 21).

“Do thy diligence to come shortly unto me.” (II Tim. 4:9): Paul was lonely. Since Paul’s “departure is at hand,” he urges Timothy to “Do your best to come to me soon” (Goodspeed). “Make haste to visit me soon...” (Berkeley).

“Do thy diligence to come before winter.” (Verse 21) Come “before – you may be prevented by storms, before I may be in greater need of the cloak you are to bring, before my next summons to stand before the judgment seat of Nero.” It is a pathetic appeal. Its chief interest lies in the question that it naturally raises. DID Timothy reach Rome, in reply to this appeal, before Paul was condemned and executed? It is likely so. Otherwise Timothy would not have suffered the imprisonment to which reference is made in Hebrews (13:23).

“For Demas hath forsaken me...” (II Tim. 4:10) Demas was ONCE A FAITHFUL WORKER during Paul’s first imprisonment (Col. 4:14; Philemon 24). He forsook Paul when he was awaiting trial the second time before Nero. This is willful DESERTION of the Gospel, and Paul. Do you suppose Demas found happiness at Thessalonica as he served the “world, the flesh, and the devil?”

“Cresens to Galatia, Titus unto Dalmatia.” “Cresens” is not named elsewhere. Titus was well known as one of Paul’s companions. Dalmatia was the district east of the Adriatic in Illyricum, where we know churches were already planted. Titus is remembered as the faithful delegate who accomplished for Paul most delicate tasks in Corinth and in Crete (Titus 3:12).

“Only Luke is with me.” (II Tim. 4:11) Luke is with Paul now in Rome as during the first Roman imprisonment (Philemon 24; Col. 4:14). “The beloved physical” was faithful to the last.

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“Take Mark, and bring him... profitable to me for the ministry.” “Get hold of Mark and bring him along.” He seems at this time to have been at Ephesus. Mark has become an inspiration for those of us who have known the bitterness of failure in the service of Christ. His early life had been marred by a grievous fault. He forsook Paul and Barnabas at Perga and “departing from them returned to Jerusalem” (Acts 13:13). Paul spurned his companionship on the second missionary journey as that of a COWARD and a DESERTER. Mark, however, redeemed his reputation and so convinced the apostle of his sincerity, his devotion and his worth, that he is not summoned to aid Paul in an hour of supreme danger, and in circumstances from which other friends were ready to flee!

“And Tychicus have I sent to Ephesus.” (II Tim. 4:12) He probably carried this letter, and was to supply Timothy’s place at Ephesus. He is mentioned several times (Acts 20:4; 21:29; Col. 4:7-9; Titus 3:12; Eph. 6:21). He would travel by routes that had become familiar to him in the service of his famous friend.

B. Desire for bodily comfort (II Tim. 4:13, 21a).

“The cloak that left at Troas with Carpus... bring.” (II Tim. 4:13) “Hurry to arrive before winter!” The apostle requests that Timothy bring with him the heavy “cloak” which had been left at Troas. He will need it in the damp, cold prison.

“And the books... parchments.” The papyrus “books” and the leather “parchments.” They may have been Old Testament rolls, or Paul’s own letters. This adds a touch of human interest and enables us to see the aged sufferer in the damp prison cell, shivering in the chill of an approaching winter. It flashes a further light upon that indomitable spirit who, in circumstances of deepest distress, was eager to continue work with his manuscripts and books. This is a note of reality. No forger would have inserted here such a request.

C. Suffering through an enemy (II Tim. 4:14-15).

“Alexander the coppersmith did me much evil...” (II Tim. 4:14): This Alexander was an enemy of the gospel. He warned Timothy against “Alexander the coppersmith.” This metalworker “displayed considerable ill will toward me. The Lord will pay him back to the measure of his doings. You, too, beware of him, for he strongly opposed our messages” (verse 15). Paul never doubted but that the sovereign Lord would finally adjust all penalties and rewards.

D. Lament over lack of legal aid (II Tim. 4:16).

“At my first answer no man stood with me...” (II Tim. 4:16) “In my first defense no one supported me.” No one dared stand by his side, and no ADVOCATE (lawyer) would plead his case, or speak a word in his favor.

“But all men forsook me.” “They all DESERTED ME.” It was the last year of Nero’s reign. The times were terrible. In the supreme crisis of his life, in his hour of greatest need, Paul finds himself without a friend, deserted, with NO COMRADE or HELPER to sympathize, to comfort or to sustain. “May it not be counted against them!”

IV. Paul, the Saint, Marked by Special Traits

A. Glorious Testimony concerning the Lord (II Tim. 4:17).

“Notwithstanding the Lord stood with me...” (II Tim. 4:17) Clearly Jesus appeared to Paul now at this crisis and the climax as he had done so many times before. The Lord “strengthened” or “poured power into me” (Phil. 4:13). See Matt. 10:19-20; 28:20. Before a great audience in the Forum Paul made his own

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defense. Instead of being intimidated and silenced before Nero, this defense enabled Paul to give the gospel to the whole world for all time.

“I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion.” This is probably a proverbial expression indicating deliverance from a great danger. No special enemy is here denoted. Paul merely means that he was delivered out of his imminent peril. Some have thought it meant that he was delivered from being thrown to the lions.

B. Confidence in the Lord (II Timothy 4:18).

“And the Lord shall deliver me from evil work...” (II Tim. 4:18) Paul is not afraid of death. He will find his triumph in death (Phil. 1:21f). ‘I he Lord had delivered Paul in the past. The “lord will rescue me from every evil act and will save me for his heavenly kingdom.” This was Paul’s final doxology, his Swan Song, to Christ as in Rom. 9:5, 16:27.

C. Salutation and benediction (II Timothy 4:19-22).

“Salute Prisca and Aquila...” (II Tim. 4:19) Paul sends a closing salutation to Priscilla (or Prisca) and Aquila, and to “the house of Onesiphorus.” Paul had mentioned the latter Christian household with deep affection in an earlier part of his epistle. It is only natural that in dispatching the letter to Ephesus he should include this loving farewell.

Prisca and Aquila had been Paul’s fast friends since the days he lived with them in Corinth (Acts 18:1-4). Paul gladly sends them an affectionate remembrance.

“Erastus abode at Corinth...” (II Tim. 4:20) It cannot be deter-mined whether this Erastus is to be identified either with the treasurer or Corinth (Rom. 16:23), or with the messenger sent by Paul to Macedonia (Acts 19:22).

“Trophimus have I left at Miletus sick.” He traveled with Paul on his third missionary journey. That Paul was compelled to leave him sick at Miletus would seem to indicate that even Christians cannot always claim by faith deliverance from disease, and that even the chief apostle could not cure a suffering friend. In sickness and in health our prayer must be, “The will of the Lord be done.”

“Do thy diligence to come before winter.” (II Tim. 4:21) Timothy could not come in the winter; navigation was suspended.

“Eubulus greeteth thee...” Of the persons here named nothing further is known, unless this “Linus” is he who, according to tradition, was appointed as bishop of Rome in the days of the early simplicity of that sacred office. The mention of his name and those of his associates gives another proof of historic reality to this letter. The absence of all mention of the official position of Linus indicates that these words must have been written at the early date commonly assigned to this epistle. This assures us, I think, that we are here reading the last authentic words of the Apostle Paul.

“The Lord Jesus Christ be with thy spirit.” (II Tim. 4:22) This is the closing benediction of Paul’s ministry. “Grace be with you” is such as would be expected from Paul. The one theme of all his preaching and teaching had been “grace.” The way of grace is the way of the Lord’s fellowship. It is by “grace” that the Master abides with the spirit of His servant. Paul invokes the blessings of his everlasting Lord, and prays that divine grace may be granted to sustain and keep the **WHOLE CONGREGATION** of believers.

Shortly after this epistle was written, Paul had his second hearing, was sentenced to death, was led out of the city at the Ostian Gate to a place called the Three Fountains, and there was beheaded. All early tradition, and the Fathers, among them Clement, one of his companions, supports this view.

QUESTIONS

1. Before whom did Paul charge the young minister, Timothy (II Tim. 4:1)?
2. When, and before whom, must every minister give account (II Tim. 4:1)?
3. What is the minister commanded to “preach” (II Tim. 4:2)?
4. How is he commanded to preach (II Tim. 4:2)?
5. How will the hearers receive the Word in the “last days” (II Tim. 4:3-4)?
6. What will the people follow in choosing their teachers (II Tim. 4:3)?
7. What four things was Timothy commanded to do (II Tim. 4:5)?
8. How did Paul refer to his martyrdom (II Tim. 4:6; compare Phil. 1:23)?
9. What three things could Paul truthfully say at the close of his life (II Tim. 4:7, Phil. 4:13)?
10. What reward did he anticipate (II Tim. 4:8)?
11. By whom was this “crown of righteousness” to be given (II Tim. 4:8)?
12. How is it possible for EACH OF US to receive a like crown from our Lord (II Tim. 4:8)?
13. What was Paul’s touching request (II Tim. 4:9, 21)?
14. For what did Demas forsake Paul (II Tim. 4:10, I John 2:15-17)?
15. In what two ways did Paul, under the shadow of death, reveal his compassion for the ministry (II Tim. 4:11, 12)?
16. Who only remained with Paul (II Tim. 4:11)?
17. What personal request did Paul make of Timothy (II Tim. 4:13)?
18. Who did Paul much “evil” (II Tim. 4:14), and to whom will all such give account?
19. For what purpose did the “Lord stand by” Paul, and “strengthen” him (II Tim. 4:17)?
20. To whom did Paul commit his future (II Tim. 4:18) and with what note does Paul close the letter (verses 19-22)?

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WHOLE BIBLE STUDY COURSE

Year VI

Fourth Quarter

Lesson 51

Page 1

Luke 1

Memory Verse: Luke 1:76

Memory Verse:

“And thou, child, shalt be called the prophet of the Highest: for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare His ways” (Luke 1:76).

THE COMING HERALD

Luke, the writer of this Gospel, according to Eusebius of Caesarea (260? -340 A. D.), was a native of Antioch in Syria. He was a Gentile. He is mentioned three times in the New Testament. “Luke, the beloved physician...” (Col. 4:14). “Only Luke is with me” (II Tim. 4:11), “Lucas, my fellow-laborer” (Philemon 24).

In Acts the “we” or “us” passages indicated he is WITH THE APOSTLE. PAUL (Acts 16:10; 20:4; 21:18; 27:1).

“The Most Beautiful Book”

Renan the French historian and skeptic (1823-1892) called Luke “the most beautiful book in the world.” More pictures have been painted from this gospel than any of the other three. The special emphasis of Luke is the Humanity of Jesus. Representing Jesus as the Son of God, Luke features His kindness toward the weak, the suffering, and the outcast.

Why This Lesson?

Today we turn aside from our regular lesson series to study about John the Baptist, “The Coming Herald,” who went “before the face of the Lord to prepare His ways” (Luke 1:76) – two Christmas themes.

I. The Author’s Preface (Luke 1:1-4)

“Forasmuch as many have taken in hand...” (Luke 1:1) This is Luke’s introduction to his book. He describes how he prepared himself to write his gospel. He explains that many narratives of Christ had been written, that these were EYE WITNESSES and ministers of the word, that he had made a careful examination of all these sources of information, and then accurately wrote out under the Spirit’s influence this “most beautiful book!”

It is commonly thought that Luke wrote his Gospel about 60 A. D. while Paul was in prison in Caesarea. He followed it with the Book of Acts during Paul’s imprisonment in Rome the next two years. The Gospel of Luke and Acts are addressed “Theophilus,” and are in a sense two volumes of one work.

“Most excellent Theophilus...” (Luke 1:3): The name means, “A lover of God.” See Acts 1: 1. Of him nothing more is known. Luke wanted this early Christian to KNOW that his FAITH RESTS on “AN IMPREGNABLE HISTORICAL FOUNDATION” (Alfred Plummer). The purpose of Luke was to confirm the faith of Theophilus and give him “CERTAINTY” in a day of confusion and chaos.

II. The Birth of John Announced (Luke 1:5-25)

A. The birth of John the Baptist foretold (Luke 1:5-13).

“There was in the days of Herod... “ (Luke 1:5) The time was “in the days of Herod,” called “the Great” (73?-4 BC). He was the Roman king of Judea 37-4 BC. Herod was cruel, cunning, cold-blooded king, forever marked with infamy as he “SLEW ALL THE CHILDREN the were in Bethlehem ... from two years and under” (Matt. 2:16) in an attempt to kill baby King Jesus!

“A certain priest named Zacharias...” An aged man, not the chief priest. He belonged to the “Course Abijah.” All the priests were divided into twenty-four courses or classes. “That of Abijah was the eighth course” (I Chron. 24:10). Each course took charge of the temple worship in succession, for a week at time, from Sabbath to Sabbath, twice per year. His Elizabeth was of a priestly family. “To be a priest and married to a priest’s daughter was a double distinction”—It would be like a preacher married to a preacher’s daughter.

“And they were both righteous before God...”(Luke 1:6) “Both lived uprightly before God.” They obeyed God from the heart. Great men are born of godly parents.

“And...Elizabeth was barren.” (Luke 1:7) Being childless was a grief to her. Godliness is no guarantee against sorrow or disappointment. The births of Isaac, Samson, Samuel, and John the Baptist were all contrary to nature, and were faint foreshadows of the greater miracle which took place in the birth of our Lord.

“And...he executed the priest’s office before God...” (Luke 1:8) Zacharias, “Jehovah has remembered,” came on duty once in twenty-four weeks, He was chosen to go into the Holy Place “to burn incense” (verse 9), a type of prayer (Rev. 8:3).

It was only ONCE in a lifetime that a priest obtained the lot of going into the Holy Place and burning incense on the golden altar before the Holy of Holies. “It was the great moment of Zacharias’ life, and his heart was no doubt alert for the supernatural” (Ragg).

“Ascending the steps to the Holy Place, the priests spread the coals on the golden altar, and arranged the incense, and the chief operating priest was then let ALONE WITHIN THE HOLY PLACE TO AWAIT the signal of the president to BURN THE INCENSE. It was probably at this time that the angel appeared to Zacharias” (Vincent).

“And the ...people were praying without.” (Luke 1:10) Two apostles “went up together into the temple at the hour of prayer, being the ninth hour” (Acts 3:1), or 3:00 P.M. The multitude outside the temple were all engaged in prayer in deep silence, as the incense was offered.

“And there appeared unto him an angel of the Lord...” (Luke 1:11) One of God’s invisible messengers who became visible (I Kings 6:17). There had been no appearance of an angel for about 400 years, or since Malachi. He stood “on the right side of the altar of incense,” the place of honor and dignity (Acts 7:56). His name was “Gabriel” (verse 19), which means “Hero, or mighty one of God.” “Appeared” is the form used by Paul of the resurrection appearances of Jesus (I Cor. 15:5-8). “There is no use in trying to explain away the reality of the angel. We MUST CHOOSE BETWEEN ADMITTING an OBJECTIVE APPEARANCE AND A MYTH” (Plummer).

“But the angel said... FEAR NOT... thy prayer is heard” (Luke 1:13) This FIRST CELESTIAL MESSAGE at the dawning of the New Testament dispensation is ONE OF CHEER. For what had Zacharias been “praying” for a son, or for the salvation of his people, or for both?

“Thou shalt call his name John.” That is, “The God-given,” or “The Lord is gracious.”

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B. The song of Zacharias (Luke 1:14-25).

“And thou shalt have joy and gladness...” (Luke 1:14): A word for extreme exultation. The coming of a prophet will indeed be an occasion for rejoicing.

“For he shall be great in the sight of the Lord...” (Luke 1:15): How different is this form being “great” in the sight of men (I Samuel 16:7).

“Shall drink neither wine nor strong drink.” He was to be a Nazarite (Num. 6:2-4). He was to drink no kind of intoxicant. The HERALD of our Lord was true to his vow. Samson was a Nazarite you remember (Judges 13:3-5).

“He shall be filled with the Holy Ghost...” See verse 41.

“And many... shall he turn to the Lord their God.” (Luke 1:16) I he EVENT on which all Old Testament prophecy converged WAS AT HAND – the arrival of the Messiah. The closing Old Testament utterance was that Elijah would reappear as his harbinger or forerunner or herald. Gabriel tells this aged priest that his child, yet to be born, is the ONE TO WHOM THAT PROPHECY POINTED (verse 17). Jesus later so interpreted the passage (Matt. 11:12-14). John was the Elijah CHOSEN TO USHER IN THE MESSIANIC KING!

“And Zacharias said... ‘Whereby shall I KNOW THIS?’” (Luke 1:18) It was too good to be true. He wanted a sign. Zacharias demanded proof and gives the reason for his doubt. He prayed FOR THIS BLESSING, and was not skeptical like the disciples in the house of Mary about the return of Peter (Acts 12: 14f).

“I am Gabriel...” (Luke 1:19) The word of such a messenger was sign enough. He is named also in Dan. 8:15-18. Seven angels “stand before God” (Rev. 8:2).

“And behold, Thou shalt be dumb...” (Luke 1:20): The penalty of his unbelief. The sign was a rebuke and a blessing. It rebuked the unbelief of the aged priest, yet it strengthened his faith. He was smitten with dumbness that was to continue until Gabriel’s promise was realized. He was unable to speak until at last his lips were opened in glad thanksgiving. Unbelief is never joyous; infidelity has no songs.

“And... be beckoned... remained speechless.” (Luke 1:22): He could not dismiss the people, who “waited... and marveled” (verse 21), with the usual benediction (Numbers 6:23-26). When his week’s work was finished, “he departed to his own house,” probably Hebron, a city in the hill country of Judea (verses 23, 39).

“And... his wife Elizabeth conceived.” (Luke 1:24) Out of mixed feelings of modesty, humility, devotion and joy she gave herself to uninterrupted worship and thanksgiving, until her seclusion was interrupted by the visit of Mary. She thanked God for taking the reproach of being childless (verse 25; Gen. 30:23). Would that all “mothers” who abandon, give away or kill babies had this godly attitude toward childbearing.

III. The Birth of Jesus Announced (Luke 1:26-38)

“And in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God...” (Luke 1:26): This prediction to Mary, the virgin (verse 27), of the BIRTH OF JESUS is recorded by Luke with marked dignity, delicacy and reserve (verses 28-33). This PREDICTION is the CROWN OF ALL PROPHECY.

Only Matthew and Luke tell of the BIRTH and CHILDHOOD of Jesus. Luke records it more fully than Matthew, each narrating different incidents.

MATTHEW

The Genealogy, 1:1-17.
Notice to Joseph, 1:18-25.
Visit of Wise Men, 2:1-12.
Flight to Egypt, 2:13-15.
Murder of Children, 2:16-18.
Return from Egypt, 2:19-23.

LUKE

Notice to Zacharias, 1:5-25.
Notice to Mary, 1:26-38.
Mary and Elisabeth, 1:39-56.
Birth of John, 1:57-80.
Birth of Jesus, 2:1-7,
The Shepherds, 2:8-20.
Presentation, 2:21-38.
Return to Nazareth, 2:39.

“Then said Mary... How...?” (Luke 1:34): Mary expresses astonishment but not unbelief at the annunciation. Gabriel gave her a sign of the truth of his promise (verses 35-37), to which Mary was beautifully sub-missive: “Behold the handmaid of the Lord. Be it unto me according to thy word” (verse 38).

IV. Mary Visits Elizabeth (Luke 1:39-56)

A. Mary visits Elizabeth (Luke 1:39-45).

“And Mary... went... and saluted Elizabeth.” (Luke 1:39-40): This meeting of the mother of the PREPARER OF THE WAY and the Mother OF HIM for whom John was to PREPARE THE WAY was glorious. Mary and Elizabeth were “cousins” (verse 36) or “relatives” (Goodspeed).

“And... Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost. And she spake... “ (Luke 1:41-42) Elizabeth, filled with the Holy Ghost, expressed the homage which her unborn child offered to his Lord (verses 42-45). It is to be noted that the Bible does not contain the phrase “Mother of God,” but “mother of my Lord” (verse 43).

B. Mary’s song of praise (Luke 1:46-56)

1. Recognition of God’s grace upon her (Luke 1:46-49).

“And Mary said, my soul doth magnify the Lord...” (Luke 1:46) The name of the song which Mary sang, the MAGNIFICAT, has come from the first line in its Latin form, Magnificat anima mea Dominum. The model is that of the ancient hymn sung by Hannah when her heart, like that of glory, was rejoicing in the promised gift of a son. Mary’s language is in part drawn from the Psalms. She was with Elizabeth three months (verse 56) and rejoiced at the birth of John (verse 36)!

“...God my Saviour.” (Luke 1:47): Mary, by this word, reckons herself among that which was lost. She obtained salvation, not from herself, but from Jesus (John 14:6). While recognizing the honor bestowed upon her, she dwells on her unworthiness and declares her submission (verses 48-49).

2. God exalts the humble, and brings low the proud (Luke 1:50-53).

“And his mercy is on them that fear him... put down the mighty.” (Luke 1:50,52) In contrast with the blessedness of those that fear the Lord, “the mighty” or proud are pictured as “scattered” like the hosts of a defeated army. “He hath filled the hungry with good things; and the rich he hath sent empty away” (verse 53).

3. God will exalt humble Israel as He promised Abraham (Luke 1:54-55).

“He hath helped his servant Israel... As he spake... to Abraham.” (Luke 1:54-55) Mary sees the promises of God to Abraham fulfilled in the birth of her Son. In this saving help to Israel, God is showing that he has not forgotten the mercy “toward Abraham and his seed” promised to the “fathers” of old (Gen. 12:1-3; 13:14-17; 15:5). ONLY in Christ Jesus can be realized all the promises to Israel, all the hopes of the ages!

V. The Birth and Naming of John the Baptist (Luke 1:56-80)

A. The birth of John the Baptist (Luke 1:56-67).

“Now Elizabeth... brought forth a son.” (Luke 1:57) John the Herald of our Lord was born. No wonder the neighbors and kinsfolk magnified the Lord for His mercy in granting a child (verse 58).

“And... they called him Zacharias.” (Luke 1:59-60) On the eighth day Jewish male children were circumcised and named (Gen. 17:12). Females were named when they were weaned. The neighbors followed the custom of naming the son after the father. Elizabeth corrected them (verse 60). The matter was referred to Zacharias (verses 61-62).

“And he asked for a writing table... His name is John” (Luke 1:63) Zacharias was still dumb, unable to speak. “He asked for a writing” tablet and wrote, “His name is John” to the amazement of all. The faith of Zacharias that had trembled in the presence of the divine promise was restored when he wrote on the slate the name of the babe. This was a return from the point of unbelief, and the exercise of will in the appointed way (verses (64-67). His thanksgiving was voiced in a hymn that for centuries has been sung daily in Christian worship. A hymn of nativity, only one stanza refers to the birth of John. The whole burden of the thanksgiving refers to the approaching birth of Jesus and to the salvation that He is to bring.

B. Zechariah’s prophecy (Luke 1:68-80).

1. Redemption of Israel accomplished in gift of Christ (Luke 1:68-69).

“Blessed be the Lord God of Israel...” (Luke 1:68) The hymn gets its name from this word, and is called the Benedictus. This chapter ends with the third song of the new era. It came from the lips of a priest of the chosen people. It was a song of salvation.

“He hath visited and redeemed his people.” God had come back in the person of the Holy Spirit to His people. Since the death of Malachi, some 400 years before, God had not communicated with His people.

“And hath raised up an horn of salvation...” (Luke 1:69) All allusion to Christ. The horn was a symbol of power, of saving power. He is to appear as a son and heir of David the king.

2. Prophecies and covenant fulfilled (Luke 1:70-72)

“As he spake by the mouth of his holy prophets...” (Luke 1:70). The second stanza indicates that salvation “from our enemies” (verse 71) is in fulfillment of the promises made by the prophets and cherished by the ancient fathers (verse 72). He was Abraham’s promised “seed,” Jacob’s SHILOH, Moses’ GREAT PROPHET. The whole volume of Scripture prophesied of Him.

3. The nature of this salvation (Luke 1:73-75).

“The oath...” (Luke 1:73) Sec Gen. 22:16, 17. God promised to bless Abraham’s (Heb. 6:13-14), which oath was to be entirely fulfilled by the coming of the Messiah.

4. Zacharias addresses his own son (Luke 1:76-77).

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“And thou, child... prophet of the Highest... go before.” (Luke 1:76) He declares that John is to be recognized as the prophet of God whose divine mission is to announce SPIRITUAL REDEMPTION IN THE REMISSION OF SIN through God’s Son (verse 77).

5. The source of all the blessings (Luke 1:78-79).

“The dayspring... hath visited us.” (Luke 1:78) Christ is the morning light, the rising sun (Mal. 4:2). The gospel brings LIGHT (John 3:19).

“And the child grew...” (Luke 1:80): John kept growing in strength body and’ spirit in the “deserts” or wilderness of Judea. Here he had plenty of time to commune with God before his public ministry began.

QUESTIONS

1. How many times is Luke mentioned in the New Testament (Col. 4:14; II Tim. 4:11; Philemon 24)?
2. What words indicate Luke is with Paul (Acts 16:10; 20:4; 21:18; 27:1)?
3. How did Renan the skeptic describe the gospel of Luke?
4. What was the mission of John the Baptist (Luke 1:76)?
5. Why did Luke write his gospel (Luke 1:1, 4)? When was it written?
6. To whom was Luke written (Luke 1:3)?
7. “In the days” of what Herod (Luke 1:5), and for what bloody deed is he known (Matt. 2:16)?
8. What was the age, character, and work of Zacharias (Luke 1:5b-10)?
9. For what had Zacharias been praying (Luke 1:13)?
10. Did Zacharias believe Gabriel (Luke 1:18)? What penalty did unbelief bring to him (Luke 1:20, 64)?
11. What attitude did Elizabeth have as the mother-to-be of John (Luke 1:24-25)?
12. To whom and for what purpose was Gabriel sent to Nazareth “in the sixth month” (Luke 1:26-33)?
13. Did Mary express astonishment or unbelief at Gabriel’s announcement (Luke 1:34, 38)?
14. Why did Mary visit Elizabeth (Luke 1:36, 39-40)?
15. How did Elizabeth respond to Mary’s salutation (Luke 1:41-45)?
16. In her Magnificat, what does Mary call God (Luke 1:47)? Into how many sections is the song divided (Luke 1:46-46)?
17. Did the neighbors and “cousins” correctly name the new baby (Luke 1:57-60)? How did Zacharias correct them (Luke 1:61-67)?
18. What is Zacharias’ hymn called (Luke 1:68)? Into how many sections is it divided (Luke 1:68-69)?
19. Who alone fulfills prophecy, and what will his mission accomplish (Luke 1:7-77)?
20. Where did John stay until “his showing unto Israel” (Luke 1:80)?

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WHOLE BIBLE STUDY COURSE

Year VI

Fourth Quarter

Lesson 51

Page 1

Luke 2

Memory Verse: Luke 2:7

Memory Verse:

“And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.”

THE BIRTH OF CHRIST

Some 700 years before Christ was born, the prophet Micah had foretold that the coming Messiah would be born in Bethlehem of Judah (Micah 5:2). Previously, we studied the BIRTH of John THE BAPTIST, the FORERUNNER of Jesus (Luke 1:5-25, 57-80). Today we shall study “The Birth of Christ.”

Gospels Contrasted

What is told in Luke 1 and 2 is not found in the other gospels, except the bare statement that Jesus was “born in Bethlehem in the days of Herod the king” (Matt. 1:25-2:1), and the return to Galilee (Matt. 2:22-23). In Matthew Jesus is pictured as a King. At His birth king Herod “was troubled” on his throne (Matt. 2:3)! Magi adore him, offering kingly gifts (Matt. 2: 1-2, 11).

Luke represents Jesus as the IDEAL MAN, and the story is of human interest. It describes two obscure peasants journeying from their northern home in Nazareth to Bethlehem. There was “NO ROOM FOR THEM IN THE INN” (Luke 2:7). The first to visit Baby Jesus were humble shepherds from neighboring plains. Gabriel announced the birth of Jesus to Mary (Luke 1:26-38), and to Joseph in Matt. 1:18-25).

I. The Arrangements for the Saviour (Luke 2:1-5)

“And... a decree from Caesar Augustus.” (Luke 2:1) This ruler was the nephew and heir of Julius Caesar, the first of the Roman Emperors. “He took the name of Augustus in compliment to his own greatness; and our month August is named for him. He was born in Rome September 23, 63 B. C. He defeated his rival, Antony, at Actium, and the beginning of the Roman Empire may be reckoned from Sept. 2, 31 B. C. He reigned till A. D. 14. Though Herod ruled Judea as king, he was dependent upon and servant of Augustus Caesar.

“That all the world should be taxed.” It was a CENSUS, not a taxing, though taxing generally followed and was based on the census, “The world” was the Roman Empire which embraced all the world then known to civilization – all southern and western Europe, western Asia and northern Africa.

“And this... was FIRST made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria.” (Luke 2:2) A definite allusion by Luke to a series of registrations instituted by Augustus, the second of which is mention by him in Acts 5:37. Josephus describes this “second” one. It was supposed by some that Luke confused the two. W. M. Ramsay in LUKE THEY PHYSICIAN has proven by inscriptions that a periodical fourteen-year census in Egypt is given in dated papyri back to AD 6. This is in the time of Augustus. The first would the then be 8

BC 8 in Egypt. It was delayed a couple of years in Palestine by Herod the Great for obvious reasons, that would make the birth of Christ about BC 6 which agrees with the other known data.

“When Cyrenius...” Critics attacked Luke on the ground that Cyrenius was only governor of Syria ONCE and that AD 6 is shown by Josephus (Ant. XVIII. 1.1). Ramsey has proven in LUKE THE PHYSICIAN that Cyrenius was TWICE GOVERNOR in Syria (BC 5-1; 6-11 AD) and that Luke is correct here also. Read Robertson’s LUKE THE HISTORIAN IN THE LIGHT OF RESEARCH, pages 118-129.

“Syria” was a Roman province that included all Palestine, and area four or five times as large lying to the northeast of Palestine.

“And all went to be taxed...” (Luke 2:3) Or enrolled or registered.

“Every one into his own city.” The Romans enrolled each person at the place where he was their residing, about permitted the Jews to thus return to their ancestral or tribal cities and enroll themselves as citizens of these cities. “His own city” was the city where his ancestors had been settled WHEN JOSHUA DIVIDED THE LAND (Joshua 13-18), and where the family register was kept.

“And Joseph also went up from Galilee... Nazareth.” (Luke 2:4) Only legal necessity could have made Joseph and Mary his wife journey from Nazareth to Bethlehem, five miles south of Jerusalem to be enrolled in their ancestral city.

“City of David... Bethlehem.” The birthplace of Jesus was a center of historic associations. It was the “city of David,” his birthplace (I Sam. 17:12). Micah marked it as the birthplace of the Messiah (Micah 5:2; Matt. 2:5.6). It was the home of Ruth. Fifteen miles to the south was Hebron, the home of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. To the northwest ten miles was Gibeon, where Joshua made the sun stand still. Socoh was 12 miles west, where David has slain Goliath. Jerusalem was 5 miles north; there Abraham paid tithes to Melchizedek (Gen. 14:18-20) and magnificent capital of David and Solomon was there. This was also the scene of the ministry of Isaiah and Jeremiah, as well as the center of God’s age-long effort to reveal Himself to mankind!

A decree of Imperial Rome requires Joseph and Mary to go to Bethlehem, just as the child Jesus is about to be born. Thus God makes the DECREE of a PAGAN EMPIRE to be the instrument of fulfilling His own prophecies! “Bethlehem” means, “house of bread,” and thus becomes the birthplace of Him who said, “I AM the LIVING BREAD” (John (6:51).

“...with Mary... great with child” (Luke 2:5) She, too, belonged to the house or family of David (Luke 3:23-38). Joseph had married Mary as the angel Gabriel had bidden him (Matt. 1:24f; Luke 1:27).

II. The Advent of the Saviour (Luke 2:6-7).

“And so it was... days were accomplished that she should be delivered.” (Luke 2:7) Everything was ready for the coming of the Messiah, and while Mary and Joseph were in Bethlehem Baby Jesus was born. As they journeyed the 100 miles from Nazareth to Bethlehem, Mary and Joseph were probably ignorant of the fact that they were helping to fulfill the prophecy that pointed to Bethlehem as the birthplace of Baby Jesus!

“And she brought forth her firstborn son...” (Luke 2:7): “Firstborn” naturally means that she “afterwards had other children and we read of brothers and sisters of Jesus. There is not a particle of evidence for the notion that Mary refused to bear other children because she was the mother of the Messiah” (A. T. Robertson, Vol. II, on “Luke”).

“And wrapped him in swaddling clothes...” Mary did not have a doctor or nurse in the hour of her labor and birth of Jesus. This was a part of the humiliation of the King of Heaven, and Mary herself “wrapped him in swaddling clothes” –long, narrow cloth in which newborn children were closely wrapped.

“And laid him in a manger...” The feeding trough of beasts of burden. The cattle may have been out of the hills or the donkeys used in traveling may have been feeding in this stall or another near.

“Because there was no room for them in the inn.” The inn was a lodging house of “khan” or the guestroom adjoining a private home. Here it is thought to have been the latter, probably the home of their Davidic kin, the same ‘house’ where the Wise Men later came (Matt. 2:11).

Crowds for the census had taken all the rooms in the lodging houses. A more lowly birth could scarcely be imagined (read Phil. 2:5-11). Had this innkeeper realized that the King of Heaven wanted to be born in his humble lodging house, I know he would have made room for Jesus even if it had been necessary to ABOVE OUT ALL OTHER GUESTS! Do YOU have ROOM IN YOUR HEART for Jesus Christ today (Gal. 2:20, Rev, 3:20f)?

III. The Announcement of His Birth to Shepherds (Luke 2:8-14)

A. Appearance of the angel of the Lord (Luke 2:8-9).

“And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field...” (Luke 2:8) The flock was too far from the fold to be led back to it at night. Such shepherds abide in the fields, even in the dead of winter. In these same pastures David had fought the lion and the bear to protect the sheep (I Sam. 17:34f). This may have been the temple flock. The shepherds would “keep watch” by turns over their flocks to protect them from robbers or wild beasts, and to keep them from straying.

“And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them...” (Luke 2:9) “Stood by them” (Goodspeed), not floated above them in the heavens as usually pictured by artists. God’s greatest news is revealed to humble men – shepherds. They were not vexed by an ambition to be famous. They were men of a devout and reverent spirit (I Cor. 1:26-28).

“And the glory of the Lord shone round about them...” The Shekinah or BRIGHT CLOUD which symbolizes the divine presence (Ex. 24:16; I Kings 8:10, Rom. 9:4). This “glory” made them “sore afraid.” This glory was seen by Paul (Acts 22:6-11), Stephen (Acts 7:55), and three apostles (Matt. 17:5).

B. The message of “the angel” (Luke 2:10-12).

“And the angel said unto them, ‘Fear not...’” (Luke 2:10): “Perfect love casts out fear” (I John 4:18).

“I bring you good tidings of great joy.” The way to PARDON and PEACE with God was about to be thrown open to all mankind, “I bring you news of a great joy” (Goodspeed). Christianity is a thing of joy here and leads to joy eternal.

“To all people.” God intends “ALL PEOPLE” to have this joy (II Pet. 3:9). Jew as well as Gentile can come to the Saviour (Rom. 3:19, 23-31). If Christ has “ROOM” in the hearts of “ALL MEN EVERYWHERE” (Acts 17: 30-31) AS GOD INTENDS, we would not have our boys on the battlefields ANYWHERE. Wars would be NO MORE! What are you doing and GIVING to spread this message of “JOY” – here and around the world?

“For unto you is born this day ...a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord” (Luke 2:11): He was born in Bethlehem to “save his people from their sins” (Matt. 1:21). He was “born” as a GIFT TO ALL MEN (John 3:16). Messiah is the Hebrew and Christ is the Greek for our English word “Anointed!” Prophets, priests and kings are anointed. Jesus held all these three offices for the whole human race for all eternity.

Jesus’ Birthday

It is now celebrated on December 25. “The early Christians made no record of the date of Christ’s birth; we find no mention of December 25 earlier than the fourth century. The Eastern Church celebrated Christ’s birth by a feast called Epiphany, which means manifestation. They chose January 6 as the date for

this feast, for they reasoned that if the **FIRST ADAM** was **BORN** on the sixth day of creation, the second Adam must have been born on the sixth day of the year! The Western Church celebrated Christ's birth on the 25th of December by a feast called **NATALIS**, which means **NATIVITY**. But Pope Julius I (A. D. 337-352) designated December 25 as the proper day, and the Eastern churches soon united with the Western churches in observing this day. The custom has become **UNIVERSAL**, We do not observe this day because of the Pope's decree, but **BECAUSE OF THE TRADITION ON WHICH THE POPE'S DECREE WAS FOUNDED**" (J. W. McGarvey, **THE FOURFOLD GOSPEL**, page 29).

"And this shall be a sign unto you..." (Luke 2:12): This was to certify the message of the angel to the shepherds. "Ye shall find the Babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger." "What fearful odds! What a strange contrast! Idolatry on the throne (in the person of Augustus Caesar), and the **FOUNDER OF A NEW RELIGION AND A NEW EMPIRE, LYING IN A MANGER**" (McGarvey).

The "sign" was not itself miraculous; the **PREDICTION OF IT WAS SO**. The 'sign' consisted of three tokens – the Babe, the "swaddling clothes," and the manger.

C. The heavenly choir (Luke 2:13-14).

"And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host..." (Luke 2:13) "The angel" was the name of the Angelic prince sent from heaven to direct arrangements for the Son of God's arrival (Luke 1:19, 26). We assume he was the angel who appeared to the shepherds (Luke 2:9, 13). He was the one sent to Joseph (Matt. 1:24); he directed the flight Egypt (Matt. 2:13, 19). He had given to Daniel the Seventy Weeks Prophecy (Daniel 9:21). How interested he was in human redemption! He's one of those we first want to meet when we all get to Heaven.

"Multitude of the heavenly host." The event was too important to be heralded by any one angel. **ALL HEAVEN WAS INTERESTED IN THE DEPARTURE OF ITS PRINCE** and marveled at the grace of the Father who sent Him (I Pet. 1:12).

"Heavenly host" is God's army. Angels who are represented as a "HOST" surrounding the throne of God (I Kings 22:19; Psa. 103:21; Matt. 26:53 Rev. 19:14), **GOD'S ARMY ANNOUNCED PEACE – ETERNAL PEACE**.

"Glory to God in the highest..." (Luke 2:14) In the highest heavens (Psa. 148:1). The message of the angel and the **CHORUS of the HEAVENLY HOST** are of special interest as **REVEALING HEAVEN'S OUTLOOK on the BIRTH OF Jesus**.

1. "Glory to God in the highest," and

2. "On earth peace, good will toward men." "Peace on earth among men in whom He is well pleased." "And on earth peace among men of His favor." The angels invoke blessing on God and peace upon man. Peace between God and man, and **ULTIMATELY PEACE BETWEEN MAN AND MAN!** Real peace on earth exists **ONLY AMONG THOSE WHO ARE THE SUBJECTS OF GOD'S GOOD WILL**. The Revised Version reads: "And on earth peace among men in whom he is well pleased."

IV. The Shepherds Visit the Child (Luke 2:15-20)

A. Their decision (Luke 2:15).

"And...the shepherds said one to another, let us now go..." (Luke 2:15) The shepherds began to speak, each to the other. It suggests also repetition, they kept on saying, "Let us **GO STRAIGHT TO BETHLEHEM** and let us view this event that the Lord has made known to us."

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B. Their visit to the manger (Luke 2:16).

“And they came with haste, and found Mary... Joseph, and the BABE lying in a manger” (Luke 2:16) The shepherds promptly obeyed the heavenly vision. They had no doubts, no questions, or hesitations.

C. Their witness to what they had heard and seen (Luke 2:17-18).

“And when they had seen it, they made known abroad the saying...”

(Luke 2:17) The shepherds became the first evangelists. Among the heralds of Christ we note one great prophet, John the Baptist, and one learned Pharisee, Paul. The rest are shepherds, fishermen, and publicans. Their Gospel of God has triumphed over the wisdom of men (I Cor. 1:26-29; II Cor. 4:7). The shepherds were moved to publish by the SAME SPIRIT which motivated the lepers at Samaria (II Kings 7:9) “And every one who heard it, marveled at the things that were told them by the shepherds” verse 18, Berkeley). The gospel story excites wonder! The more we ponder it, the more wonderful it becomes!

D. The silent mother (Luke 2:19).

“But Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart.” (Luke 2:19) The silence of Mary contrasts with the talkativeness of the shepherds. It is the duty of Christians both to ponder and to publish the gospel! The things were meat and drink to her. She could not forget. Did Mary keep also a Baby Book? Mary would go over each detail in the words of Gabriel and of the shepherds and compare the sayings with the facts so far developed and brood over it all with a mother’s high hopes and joy!

E. Their consequent joy (Luke 2:20).

“And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God...” (Luke 2:20) They did not make his glorious occasion an excuse of neglecting their humble duties.

“Glorifying.” Because of the greatness of that which had been revealed.

“And praising God.” Because of the goodness of that which He revealed.

“For all the things that they had heard and seen...” Jesus came in exactly the manner in which His coming had been spoken of or described by the angels a few hours before. He came just as the prophets had described it centuries and centuries before. God’s Word holds good for eternity as truly as for one day. The shepherds doubtless passed to their reward during the thirty years which Jesus spent in seclusion prior to entering upon his ministry. The rest of their common place life was noir filled with MUSIC OF PRAISE, and their night watches lit by the glory of God, which could never entirely fade away!

V. Jesus Circumcised and Named (Luke 2:21)

“And when eight days were accomplished for the circumcision of the child...” (Luke 2:21) The naming was a part of the ceremony of circumcision as is shown also in the case of John the Baptist (Luke 1:59-66). Joseph doubtless performed the rite. By this rite Jesus was “made like unto his brethren” (Luke 2:16-17). He became a member of the covenant nation and become a debtor to do the “whole law” (Gal. 5:3). “His name was called Jesus” (see Luke 1:31, 59).

VI. The presentation of Jesus (Luke 2:22-39)

VII. Jesus Visits Jerusalem in His Twelfth Year (Luke 2:40-52)

The final section of this chapter covers a period of thirty years in the life of our Lord, giving us a picture of the Boy dedicated to the things of His Father. It tells first of His GROWTH, and then of His ADVANCEMENT until He arrived at MATURITY and readiness for His mission!

QUESTIONS

1. Who foretold 700 years before Christ was born the city where the messiah would be born (Micah 5:2)?
2. Who announced the birth of Jesus to Mary (Luke 1:26-38), and to Joseph (Matt. 1:18-25)?
3. Can you name the Caesar who gave a decree “that all the world should be taxed” (Luke 2:1).” What do you think was the primary purpose of the enrolling?
4. Is there an error in Luke 2:2, or was this really the “FIRST registration” under Cyrenius the governor of Syria? What was the area of Syria?
5. For what purpose did “everyone” go “into his own city” (Luke 2:3-4)?
6. To what famous city did Mary and Joseph go? Name some of the historic associations of the city (I Sam. 17:12, Gen. 14:18-10)?
7. Do you think that Mary and Joseph were conscious of the fact that they were helping to fulfill the prophecy that pointed to Bethlehem as the BIRTHPLACE of BABY Jesus?
8. What is the meaning of “brought forth her FIRSTBORN SON” (Luke 2:7)?
9. Why was Jesus “laid in a manger?”
10. Where did the wise men find Jesus (Matt. 2:11)?
11. Do you have “ROOM” in your heart for Jesus today (Rev. 3:20; Gal. 2:20)?
12. To what lowly men did “the angel” appear (Luke 2:8-9)? What “shone round about them” (verse 9)? How did they react?
13. What was the message of “the angel” and for whom was it intended (Luke 2:10-12; II Pet. 3:9; Rom. 3:19, 23-31; Acts 17:30-31)?
14. On what day do we celebrate the “birth” of our “Saviour, which is Christ the Lord” and WHY (Luke 2:11)?
15. The “sign” consisted of what three tokens (Luke 2:12)?
16. Who appeared with “the angel” and for what purpose (Luke 2:13-14)?
17. What decision did the shepherds make (Luke 2:15)? With what spirit did they come (Luke 2:16)? “And when they had seen it” what did they do (Luke 2:17-18, 20)?
18. What are we told about Mary (Luke 2:19)? Simeon (Luke 2:25-39)?
19. What do we know of Jesus from his birth to twelve years of age (Luke 2:21, 42)? From 12 until he was “about thirty years of age” (Luke 3:23)?
20. Whom only did Jesus recognize as “my Father” (Luke 2:49)? In what ways did Jesus “INCREASE” (Luke 2:52)?