

# INTRODUCTION TO THE FIRST LETTER TO TIMOTHY

The Letters to Timothy and Titus deal more with church organization and church culture than any of the other Letters. These belong to the closing period of Paul's life. *Ramsay* places First Timothy and Titus in the period between Paul's release and his second imprisonment (63-66 A.D.). He places Paul's second imprisonment in 67 A.D., and thinks Second Timothy was written during this time, with Paul's execution coming shortly after this. (See introduction to Second Timothy.) As Paul writes this Letter to him, he would be in his early thirties (*1 Tim. 4:12*).

We meet Timothy in *Acts 16:1* (see notes there). Timothy is a *second generation Christian!* The Jews called the child of a Jewish mother and a Greek father a MAMZER (bastard), and he would have had no access to the synagogue without being circumcised. As *Malphurs* points out, only the fact that his devout mother and grandmother were Christians could explain the unusual fact that they had not circumcised him. *Malphurs* thinks Timothy's father was a "Gentile converted to Judaism," and that he was in the crowd on Pentecost and was baptized into Christ at that time. Therefore, this young man grew up in a Christian home! Either Lystra or Derbe was his *home town*, and he probably was "buried with Christ in the liquid grave" during the time of *Acts 14:6* (Johnson thinks so). He could not have been more than fifteen at that time, and some estimates would make him as young as ten years old.

Timothy had *grown up with* the Old Testament Scriptures (the Septuagint). Paul took him as a *traveling assistant* (*Acts 16:3*), and gave him (one of) *the gifts from the spirit* (*2 Tim. 1:6*; evidently the *ability to direct others*). In order to make it easier to work with the Jews, Paul had Timothy

circumcised (*Acts 16:3*). Timothy worked hard to spread the Good News of Christ and to teach and train the new Christians and form them into communities (churches). *MacKnight* thinks that after Paul's release from his first imprisonment, Timothy went with him to Judea (compare *Heb. 13:23*), going through Crete on the way. Then visiting the Colossian and Ephesian churches, and Timothy was left at Ephesus, where he is when Paul writes these Letters to him. Some think Timothy was still at Ephesus when Revelation was written, and that he is the *angel* (preacher) of the church in Ephesus (*Rev. 2:1*). Traditional history says he died a martyr's death, killed by the mob during the festival of Artemis (compare *Acts 19:28-34*, for a similar mob), sometime in the last decade of the first century. See also the introduction to Second Timothy.

# THE FIRST LETTER OF PAUL TO TIMOTHY

**1** From Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by order of God our Savior and Christ Jesus our hope—

<sup>2</sup>To Timothy, my true son in the faith:

May God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord give you grace, mercy, and peace.

## Warnings against False Teaching

<sup>3</sup>I want you to stay in Ephesus, just as I urged you when I was on my way to Macedonia. Some people there are teaching false doctrines, and you must order them to stop. "Tell them to give up those legends and those long lists of names of ancestors, because these only produce arguments; they do not serve God's plan, which is known by faith. <sup>5</sup>The purpose of this order is to arouse the love that comes from a pure heart,

**1** Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the command of God our Savior and of Christ Jesus our hope,

To Timothy my true son in the faith: <sup>2</sup>

Grace, mercy and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.

## Warning Against False Teachers of the Law

As I urged you when I <sup>3</sup> went into Macedonia, stay there in Ephesus so that you may command certain men not to teach false doctrines any longer nor to devote <sup>4</sup> themselves to myths and endless genealogies. These promote controversies rather than God's work—which is by faith. The goal of this <sup>5</sup> command is love, which comes from a pure heart, a good conscience and a sin-

1. **An apostle of Christ Jesus.** One purpose of this letter was to show Timothy's authority, so Paul makes it plain that he writes as an apostle. **By order of God.** The *circumcision party* tried to undermine the authority of Paul. For this reason, he often repeats the fact that it was by God's own order that he is an apostle, sent to the Gentiles (*Acts 9:15; Rom. 1:1*). Some think a comma should be placed after "Christ Jesus," and understand Paul to be saying: "I Paul write this letter by the order of God."

2. **To Timothy.** Paul calls Timothy "my true son," because: (1) he brought him to Christ (*1 Cor. 4:15-17*); (2) the followers of the prophets were called *sons* of the prophets.

3. **I want you to stay in Ephesus.** Timothy was not a "bishop" in the modern sense, but a teaching evangelist (*compare note on Eph. 4:11*). It was his mission to teach the new Christians, to appoint church leaders (elders), to train workers, and to oppose false doctrines. **You must order them to stop.** This must refer to the *circumcision party* in the church, since Timothy would have no authority over outsiders. Paul does not mention the names of these people, but Timothy knows them. He is to put a stop to their false teaching!

4. **Tell them to give up.** The *circumcision party* had picked up elements of Greek mysticism and blended these with Jewish tradition. They used this to "prove" that salvation comes only through obeying the Law of Moses. See note on *Titus 1:14*. **Legends.** These are myths invented by the teachers of the Law. **Long lists of names.** Philo, a Jew of Alexandria, had built up a mystical interpretation of these lists of names, in which they were symbolic of different conditions of the soul. See note on *Titus 3:9*. **They do not serve God's plan.** These false doctrines can only produce arguments. They tear down and destroy, rather than build up!

5. **The purpose.** Love is not produced by the things which the *circumcision party* were teaching. Since love is so vital to the life of the church (see notes on *Rev. 2:4-5*), Timothy must stop those who teach these divisive things. Instead, they are to arouse the love that every Christian must have!

a clear conscience, and a genuine faith. <sup>6</sup>Some men have turned away from these and have lost their way in foolish discussions. <sup>7</sup>They want to be teachers of God's law, but they do not understand their own words or the matters about which they speak with so much confidence.

<sup>8</sup>We know that the Law is good, if it is used as it should be used. <sup>9</sup>It must be remembered, of course, that laws are made, not for good people, but for lawbreakers and criminals, for the godless and sinful, for those who are not religious or spiritual, for men who kill their fathers or mothers, for murderers, <sup>10</sup>for the immoral, for sexual perverts, for kidnappers, for those who lie and give false testimony or do anything else contrary to the true teaching. <sup>11</sup>That teaching is found in the gospel that was entrusted to me to announce, the Good News from the glorious and blessed God.

### Gratitude for God's Mercy

<sup>12</sup>I give thanks to Christ Jesus our Lord, who has given me strength for my work. I thank him for considering me worthy, and appointing me

cere faith. Some have wandered away from these and turned to meaningless talk. They want to be teachers of the law, but they do not know what they are talking about or what they so confidently affirm.

We know that the law is good if a man uses it properly. We also know that law is made not for good men, but for lawbreakers and rebels, the ungodly and sinful, the unholy and irreligious; for those who kill their fathers or mothers, for murderers, for adulterers and perverts, <sup>10</sup>for slave traders and liars perjurers—and for whatever else is contrary to the sound doctrine that conforms to <sup>11</sup>the glorious gospel of the blessed God, which he entrusted to me.

### The Lord's Grace to Paul

I thank Christ Jesus our <sup>12</sup>Lord, who has given me strength, that he considered me faithful, appointing me

6. **Have turned away.** They have completely missed the target at which they are shooting! They have lost their way, as these foolish discussions have blinded them to what is **TRUE!**

7. **They want to be teachers.** They are "saviors of mankind," who think they are doing God's will by their devotion to the Law of Moses. **But they do not understand** either the results of their words, or the nature and meaning of the Law about which they speak.

8. **We know.** "The Law itself is good; and both it and the gospel promote good conduct. But the Law cannot be used to teach legends and long lists of names of ancestors." Compare *2 Tim. 2:5* and note.

9-10. **It must be remembered.** "Law" is not given to put men right with God, but to stop those who do evil and to punish them. See note at the end of *Rom. 3:31*.

11. **That teaching.** The true teaching. The Good News of Jesus Christ is based on the **FACTS** of God's act in him to set men free. The true teaching is based on the **AUTHORITY** of Christ. These false teachers claimed they were teaching the gospel (see *Gal. 1:6-9* and notes).

12. **Who has given me strength.** "I cannot talk about my part in preaching the gospel without thanking God for forgiving my sins and mistakes, and for appointing me to serve Him and giving me the strength to do it!"

to serve him, <sup>13</sup>even though in the past I spoke evil of him, and persecuted and insulted him. But God was merciful to me, because I did not believe and so did not know what I was doing. <sup>14</sup>And our Lord poured out his abundant grace on me and gave me the faith and love which are ours in union with Christ Jesus. <sup>15</sup>This is a true saying, to be completely accepted and believed: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners. I am the worst of them, <sup>16</sup>but it was for this very reason that God was merciful to me, in order that Christ Jesus might show his full patience in dealing with me, the worst of sinners, as an example for all those who would later believe in him and receive eternal life. <sup>17</sup>To the eternal King, immortal and invisible, the only God—to him be honor and glory forever and ever! Amen.

to his service. Even though I <sup>13</sup> was once a blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent man, I was shown mercy because I acted in ignorance and unbelief. The grace of <sup>14</sup> our Lord was poured out on me abundantly, along with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus.

Here is a trustworthy say- <sup>15</sup> ing that deserves full acceptance: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners—of whom I am the worst. But <sup>16</sup> for that very reason I was shown mercy so that in me, the worst of sinners, Christ Jesus might display his unlimited patience as an example for those who would believe on him and receive eternal life. Now to the King <sup>17</sup> eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory for ever and ever. Amen.

**13. Even though in the past.** Neither Paul himself (nor his enemies) could ever forget what he had done. **But God was merciful to me.** Not only in forgiving Paul's sin, but in allowing him to serve Him! Note that even when Paul persecuted and insulted Christ (Christ's church), he did not do it to rebel against God. He did it to serve God, and when he discovered he was wrong, he changed!

**14. His abundant grace.** The point is that God's grace outweighs Paul's sin!!! It may be that Paul's enemies (especially the circumcision party) tried to discredit and disqualify his *apostleship* by pointing to his great sin in trying to destroy Christ's church. **Gave me the faith and love.** By *faith*, Paul means "the understanding of the power and wisdom of God, which showed him that God does not need anyone to serve him by means of persecution and cruelty (things which are un-Godly)." By *love*, Paul means the *frame of mind* that allowed men to choose for themselves in matters of religion (as he did himself). [It is difficult, but necessary, to achieve a balance between "stopping error" and permitting "free choice."]

**15. This is a true saying.** Compare *Titus 1:9* and note. **Christ Jesus.** This is a "statement of faith!" Paul, a sinner who had been saved, was a proof of this *statement*. **I am the worst of them.** Probably his enemies said this. But Paul has no false modesty. The more you learn about God, the more you realize your sinfulness!!! See *1 John 1:8-10*.

**16. For this very reason.** See notes on *Acts 9:1-2*. If God was willing to save "Saul the Destroyer," it ought to serve as proof that God is willing to save all who come to Him through Christ!!!

**17. To the eternal King!** This is Paul's *song of praise* to the God who forgave him and saved him! Compare *Rom. 16:25-27*; *1 Tim. 6:16*. **Invisible.** This *identifies* the ONLY God from the idols who were visible.

<sup>18</sup>Timothy, my child, I entrust this command to you. It is according to the words of prophecy spoken long ago about you. Let those words be your weapons as you fight the good fight, <sup>19</sup>and keep your faith and clear conscience. Some men have not listened to their conscience, and have made a ruin of their faith. <sup>20</sup>Among them are Hymenaeus and Alexander, whom I have handed over to the power of Satan, so that they will be taught to stop speaking evil of God.

### Church Worship

**2** First of all, then, I urge that petitions, prayers, requests, and thanksgivings be

Timothy, my son, I give 18 you this instruction in keeping with the prophecies once made about you, so that by following them you may fight the good fight, holding 19 on to faith and a good conscience. Some have rejected these and so have shipwrecked their faith. Among 20 them are Hymenaeus and Alexander, whom I have handed over to Satan to be taught not to blaspheme.

### Instructions on Worship

**2** I urge, then, first of all, that requests, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for everyone—

18. I entrust this command to you. What Paul said in *verses 3 and 5*. According to the words of prophecy. Compare *Acts 13:1-3* and notes. The Holy Spirit selected Timothy (speaking through the prophets), and these words spoken *identified* Timothy as one who had the potential to do the work. Paul gives both Timothy and Titus lists of rules and qualifications so they will be able to identify those persons who can be church leaders and church helpers. **Let those words.** "The words of prophecy placed an obligation on you. As you think of these things, it will give you courage and strength to do your job well!" See *1 Tim. 4:14; 2 Tim. 1:6*.

19. **And clear conscience.** "To fight the good fight, you must keep your faith, but also a clear conscience. You can do this by refusing to use the unethical methods of the false teachers." **Have not listened.** "Faith is a ship, and conscience is the pilot. Some men have not listened to their pilot, and have wrecked their ship of faith on the rocks of sin." See Paul's strong impeachment of false teachers in *Gal. 1:6-9*.

20. **Hymenaeus and Alexander.** *MacKnight* thinks these belong to the circumcision party. Hymenaeus is mentioned again in *2 Tim. 2:17-18*; and Alexander is probably the one mentioned in *2 Tim. 4:14-15*. **To the power of Satan.** That is, put out of the church, but compare note on *1 Cor. 5:5*. Apostles had the power to punish severely (see *Acts 13:8-12* and notes). *MacKnight* thinks this was not done through the church at Ephesus, but directly by Paul himself, as he had the authority to do.

1. **First of all, then.** It is plain that Paul here speaks about church worship. But see *verses 8 & 15*. Yet at this time, worship had not been *divorced* from ordinary life, as it has in our time. If the church-meeting is viewed as "The Assembly" in the sense of a *discrete entity*, it is easy to begin believing that the church only exists when "The Assembly" has come together. **I urge that.** Paul does not fear the circumcision party, and he boldly urges that Christians pray for the people of all nations and religions. Paul uses four words to describe prayer in general, so that every kind is covered. Paul understands better than we do, the relationship of Christian to non-Christian (*1 John 5:19*), but he also knows that God's purpose is to save as many as possible! Every Christian must have that same attitude!!! "God's act in Christ is available to all mankind! My own work among the Gentiles is one example of God bringing His estranged children home."

offered to God for all men; <sup>2</sup>for kings and all others who are in authority, that we may live a quiet and peaceful life, in entire godliness and proper conduct. <sup>3</sup>This is good and it pleases God our Savior, <sup>4</sup>who wants all men to be saved and to come to know the truth. <sup>5</sup>For there is one God, and there is one who brings God and men together, the man Christ Jesus, <sup>6</sup>who gave himself to redeem all men. That was the proof, at the right time, that God wants all men to be saved, <sup>7</sup>and this is why I was sent as an apostle and teacher of the Gentiles, to proclaim the message of faith and truth. I am not lying, I am telling the truth!

<sup>8</sup>I want men everywhere to pray, men who are dedicated to God and can lift up their hands in prayer without anger or argument.

for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness. This is good, and pleases God our Savior, who wants all men to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth. For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all men—the testimony given in its proper time. And for this purpose I was appointed a herald and an apostle—I am telling the truth, I am not lying—and a teacher of the true faith to the Gentiles.

I want men everywhere to lift up holy hands in prayer, without anger or disputing.

2. **For kings and all others.** Whether they are "worthy" has nothing to do with it. Christians are to pray for all who are in authority, no matter who they are or what they are! [It is very possible that the circumcision party opposed praying for non-Christians.] **That we may live.** *Plummer* writes: "Only in the attitude of mind which makes us pray and give thanks for our fellowmen is the tranquillity of a godly life possible." *Johnson* takes this to mean the prayers ask God to overrule the authorities to allow Christians to live and worship in peace. But this might contradict *1 Thess. 3:3*.]

3. **This is good.** The habit of praying for rulers and all men (mankind).

4. **Who wants all men to be saved.** This is why God acted in Christ! He has made salvation available to everyone who will seize it (*Rev. 22:17*).

5. **For there is one God.** "Not many gods, as the pagans think." **And there is one.** "Not one for Jews and another for Gentiles!" God's act in Christ is universal, not restricted to any one nation as was the Law. **The man Christ Jesus.** Our High Priest understands us (*Heb. 4:14-16*)! As Paul writes, there was a danger that the *humanness* of Christ would be denied. Compare *1 John 5:6* and note.

6. **Who gave himself.** See *John 10:17-18* and notes. The entire earthly career of Christ Jesus, from his virgin birth to his ascension, was to redeem (*Rev. 5:9-10*) all men. Compare *2 Cor. 5:14*; *Rom. 5:18* and notes. **That was the proof.** The right time for proving Christ gave himself to redeem all men, was after he had done it. Compare *Acts ch 2*. *MacKnight* writes: "So that, since Christ gave himself for all, it is certainly the will of God that we should pray for all."

7. **And this is why.** To tell the Good News of God's act in Christ! See *Acts 26:18*. **I am not lying.** Some tried to discredit Paul's appointment to be an apostle. Also, what he taught contradicted what they believed! He strongly affirms the TRUTH of what he preaches. Compare *Rom. 1:9*; *2 Cor. 11:10*; *12:19*; *Gal. 1:20*.

8. **I want men everywhere to pray.** *White* takes this to mean: "That the men should conduct public worship." But this would force "everywhere" to mean "in places of public worship." *MacKnight* writes: "Everywhere By this precept, the apostle condemned the superstitious notion both of the Jews and Gentiles, who fancied that prayers offered in the temples were more acceptable to God than prayers offered anywhere else. - The worshipping of God in all places was foretold as the peculiar glory of the

<sup>9</sup>I also want women to be modest and sensible about their clothes and to dress properly; not with fancy hair styles, or with gold ornaments or pearls or expensive dresses, <sup>10</sup>but with good deeds, as is proper for women who claim to be religious. <sup>11</sup>Women should learn in silence and all humility. <sup>12</sup>I do not allow women to teach or to have authority over men; they must keep quiet. <sup>13</sup>For Adam was created first, and then

I also want women to dress modestly, with decency and propriety, not with braided hair or gold or pearls or expensive clothes, but 10 with good deeds, appropriate for women who profess to worship God.

A woman should learn in 11 quietness and full submission. I do not permit a 12 woman to teach or to have authority over a man; she must be silent. For Adam 13 was formed first, then Eve.

gospel dispensation. *Mal. 1:11.* "F. I. Stanley writes: "The rest of the chapter is used in telling Timothy how to teach men to lead the kind of life that Christian men and women should live. Frankly, it has nothing to do with the assembly [public worship], but with the daily lives of men and women." **Can lift up their hands.** Ancient Christians often prayed with their hands held above their heads, with their eyes looking up toward the sky. **Without anger or argument.** See *1 Tim. 1:3-4* and notes.

9. **Women to be modest.** Probably no one applies this verse only to the church meeting. It certainly speaks to everyday life, just as *verse 8* does. Notice that *modest* here refers to *overdressing*. **Not with fancy hair styles.** The point here is not to dress in such a way as to "show off." Read Isaiah's description in *Isa. 3:16-24*. *Tertullian* writes: "What is the use of showing a decent and Christian simplicity in your face, while you load the rest of your body with the dangling absurdities of pomps and vanities?" Compare *1 Pet. 3:1-6* and notes.

10. **But with good deeds.** *Ellicott* takes this as *adding good deeds*. I do not understand Paul to specifically forbid women to braid their hair, etc., but to forbid them to *show off* in their use of such things and so put to shame the poor of their group (compare *1 Cor. 11:22* and note). "Actions speak louder than words!" Compare *Acts 9:36-39*.

11. **In silence and all humility.** "Silence" is *HESUCHIA* = not bossy, not meddlesome. A different word is used in *1 Cor. 14:34-35*. But the key to understanding these next verses is "to whom it is directed."

12. **I do not allow women.** *White* says: "This refers of course only to public teaching, or to a wife's teaching her husband." But *verse 13* points to a man-woman relationship. *F. I. Stanley* sees this parallel to what Paul says in *Eph. 5:22-28*. The relationship of husband and wife is exactly the same as that of Adam and Eve. If we view this chapter in that way, we see Paul talking about: Our country; Our rulers; Our prayers; Our clothing; Our having children. He deals with life in general, and not just church worship only. Adam and Eve did not make the first church-meeting, but they were the first husband and wife = home. Compare *1 Cor. 11:7-12*. **They must keep quiet.** This is *HESUCHIA*. See note on *verse 11*. Since scripture cannot contradict itself, what Paul says here must be understood in view of the things said in other places. *C. R. Nichol* writes: "That Women are to teach in the Christian Dispensation is a matter of prophecy (*Joel 2:28-30; Acts 2:17*). Not only did Joel and Peter declare that women would teach, but the record is clear that Philip had four unmarried daughters who did prophesy, they taught (*Acts 21:9*)! But to teach under conditions which will place woman in authority over man, for her to refuse to recognize the leadership of man, for her to refuse to be in 'subjection' to man, is to flaunt sex relationship, and that is a sin." [From "God's Woman."]

13. **For Adam.** Paul shows that the fact that Adam was created first, sets a pattern for rank. Woman is subordinate, but not inferior. Compare *1 Cor. 11:11-12*.

Eve. <sup>14</sup>And it was not Adam who was deceived; it was the woman who was deceived and broke God's law. <sup>15</sup>But a woman will be saved through having children, if she perseveres in faith and love and holiness, with modesty.

And Adam was not the one 14  
deceived; it was the woman  
who was deceived and be-  
came a sinner. But women 15  
will be kept safe through  
childbirth, if they continue  
in faith, love and holiness  
with propriety.

### Leaders in the Church

**3** This is a true saying: If a man is eager to be a church leader he desires an excellent work. <sup>2</sup>A church leader must be a man without fault; he must have only one wife, be sober, self-controlled, and orderly; he must welcome strangers in his

### Overseers and Deacons

**3** Here is a trustworthy say-  
ing: If anyone sets his  
heart on being an overseer,  
he desires a noble task. Now 2  
the overseer must be above  
reproach, the husband of  
but one wife, temperate, self-  
controlled, respectable hos-

14. **It was the woman who was deceived.** Paul says "woman," rather than "Eve," to emphasize sex rather than individual. Adam is representative of every male; Eve of every female. In them we see the different psychology between man and woman. Eve's sin was unbelief. She was deceived and broke God's law. Paul says Adam was not deceived. Note that God treats Eve's unbelief more severely than Adam's deliberate act (see *Gen. 3:16*).

15. **But a woman will be saved.** *Lipscomb* thinks this shows woman's role to be: having children and taking care of them (the husband-wife relationship). *MacKnight* says: "However, though Eve was first in transgression, and brought death on herself, her husband, and her posterity, *the female sex shall be saved* equally with the male, *through childbearing*; through bringing forth the Saviour; *if they live in faith, and love, and chastity* [holiness], *with that sobriety* [modesty] which I have been recommending." Compare *1 Tim. 1:14* and note. Probably Paul says some of these things to refute those who said that woman was guilty of destroying the human race. Certain religious sects have taught that a woman has no soul. Paul shows us, that if woman brought sin into the world, she also brought the Savior into the world! "Salvation is the goal of both man and woman. They both achieve great happiness in working out the primal penalty which God placed on Adam and Eve." [It is argued there were no women apostles, but neither were there any Gentile apostles. However, there were no women church leaders (elders) or evangelists in the church of the First Century.]

1. **A church leader.** Here for the first time the qualifications and work of church leaders and church helpers are examined. Without a doubt, the first Christians took the synagogue as a model or pattern for work and worship. This was doubtless God's *providence* at work. Compare notes on *Acts 2:44-45* about the new attitude found in Christians. Paul here praises those who have lawful ambition, and tells how to measure them. [The titles "elder" and "deacon" are used in "standard English" in an unbiblical way, because of the practices in many church groups. See note on *Eph. 4:11*.]

2. **A man without fault.** This is the basic qualification. He is one who "practices what he preaches." **Only one wife.** History shows that the church in later centuries took this to mean: "If he is married at all, he must not have more than one wife." But the Jewish view would certainly have been: "He must be a married man with children (at least one child)." Christianity does not forbid remarriage after the death of the spouse (see *1 Cor. 7:8-9, 39*), so "only one wife" is not violated by a widower who remarries. **Sober.** Not one who *runs to extremes*. **Self-controlled.** Sensible; one who thinks before he acts. **Orderly.** Systematic, well-behaved, an organizer. [It is not often that a good preacher could make a good church leader as well.] **Welcome strangers.** This was essential, because persecution often made Christians homeless. **Able to teach.** He must have both the knowledge and the ability to communicate it to others. In this fact, the "church leader" and the "evangelist" overlap in their duties.

home; he must be able to teach; <sup>3</sup>he must not be a drunkard or a violent man, but gentle and peaceful; he must not love money; <sup>4</sup>he must be able to manage his own family well, and make his children obey him with all respect. <sup>5</sup>For if a man does not know how to manage his own family, how can he take care of the church of God? <sup>6</sup>He must not be a man who has been recently converted; else he will swell up with pride and be condemned, as the Devil was. <sup>7</sup>He should be a man who is respected by the people outside the church, so that he will not be disgraced and fall into the Devil's trap.

pitable, able to teach, not 3  
given to much wine, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money. He must manage his own 4  
family well and see that his children obey him with proper respect. (If anyone does 5  
not know how to manage his own family, how can he take care of God's church?) He 6  
must not be a recent convert, or he may become conceited and fall under the same judgment as the devil. He must 7  
also have a good reputation with outsiders, so that he will not fall into disgrace and into the devil's trap.

Deacons, likewise, are to 8  
be men worthy of respect, sincere, not indulging in much wine, and not pursuing dishonest gain. They must 9  
keep hold of the deep truths of the faith with a clear con-

### Helpers in the Church

<sup>8</sup>Church helpers must also be of a good character and sincere; they must not drink too much wine or be greedy; <sup>9</sup>they should hold to the revealed truth of the faith with a clear con-

3. **Not be a drunkard.** Not an alcoholic. **Or a violent man.** One who has an *explosive* temper! **Gentle and peaceful.** He and the other church leaders (there were always more than one in each congregation) act as **ARBITRATORS** of the problems that come up in the life of the congregation. **He must not love money.** He must not be one who thinks religion is a way to get rich (*1 Tim. 6:5*).

4. **Able to manage his own family.** A man's actual character will be seen in the *general* character of his own family. **With all respect.** He must be able to *earn* the respect of his own children.

5. **For if.** "If he does not have the ability to manage so small a group as his own family, how will he be able to take charge of the messianic community?" Note that each church-group was managed by a *board* of two or more church leaders.

6. **He must not be.** Remember the churches were made up of many who had come from paganism, and whose moral standards had been very low. Compare *1 Pet. 4:2-4*. A man must have been a Christian long enough to demonstrate the reality of his faith. Yet notice Paul appointed church leaders in only a few years time after beginning a congregation. See notes on *Acts 14:23; 20:17*. **As the Devil was.** See *2 Pet. 2:4*.

7. **By the people outside the church.** This is one of the proofs of his sanity of judgment. Also, since he will in effect be an advertisement for the messianic community (church), he must not be a social outcast. [*MacKnight* thinks this refers to the time before he became a Christian, but I think *1 Pet. 4:2-4* proves that we are to ignore what a man (or woman) may have been before they became a Christian. Past mistakes should not be allowed to veto present ability.]

8. **Church helpers.** See note on *verse 1*. They are not to be alcoholics, or those who think religion is a way to get rich.

9. **They should hold.** To the revealed truth of God's act in Christ (see *1 Cor. 2:6-10*). **With a clear conscience.** That is, fear or self-interest will not cause them to either conceal or disguise this truth. See note on *1 Tim. 1:19*.

science. <sup>10</sup>They should be tested first, and then, if they pass the test, they should serve. <sup>11</sup>Their wives also must be of good character, and not gossip; they must be sober and honest in everything. <sup>12</sup>A church helper must have only one wife, and be able to manage his children and family well. <sup>13</sup>Those who do a good work win for themselves a good standing and are able to speak boldly about their faith in Christ Jesus.

### The Great Secret

<sup>14</sup>As I write this letter to you, I hope to come and see you soon. <sup>15</sup>But if I delay, this letter will let you know how we should conduct ourselves in God's household, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and support of the truth.

science. They must first be 10  
tested; and then if there is  
nothing against them, let  
them serve as deacons.

In the same way, their 11  
wives are to be women worthy  
of respect, not malicious  
talkers but temperate and  
trustworthy in everything.

A deacon must be the hus- 12  
band of but one wife and  
must manage his children  
and his household well.  
Those who have served well  
gain an excellent standing  
and great assurance in their  
faith in Christ Jesus.

Although I hope to come 14  
to you soon, I am writing you  
these instructions so that, if 15  
I am delayed, you will know  
how people ought to conduct  
themselves in God's house-  
hold, which is the church of  
the living God, the pillar and

10. **They should be tested first.** *MacKnight* thinks this was done by announcing the names of the candidates to the congregation, so that any charge of misconduct could be searched out. God's servants are chosen from those who are *without fault*.

11. **Their wives.** The Greek word may mean either women or wives. The fact that no mention is made of the church leader's wives implies this is something special. *Johnson* thinks these are either deaconesses or the wives of the church helpers. Probably these were wives who were also church helpers themselves. Many things a church helper would be required to do, could only be done by a woman, especially in the East. See notes on *Rom. 16:1-2; Acts 6:1-6; 1 Tim. 5:9-10*.

12. **Only one wife.** See note on *verse 2*. **Be able to manage.** See notes on *verses 4-5*. A church helper does not manage the affairs of the church, but he (or she) will be deeply involved in the lives of the members, especially at times of crisis.

13. **Win for themselves.** Even the wicked must come to respect those who show so much kindness and mercy in helping the poor, the sick, and the persecuted. **Able to speak boldly.** Love in action builds up the one who does these things, whether he is a church helper or an ordinary Christian. See *James 2:18*. Perhaps *boldness about their faith* grows out of *love in action!*

14. **I hope to come.** We do not know whether Paul did visit Ephesus, but some think he did on his way to Crete.

15. **But if I delay.** "I would much rather speak with you in person, but because life is so uncertain, I have written you this letter. It will show you how we ought to live as members of God's household." [God's house is built of living stones (*Eph. 2:19-22*), not brick and mortar.] **The pillar and support of the truth.** Truth if revealed to isolated individuals, no matter how many, would soon be dissipated in the world. But the messianic community (church), in which truth is given an objective and real existence, forces the world to become aware of it, and is its own *credential*. Compare *Heb. 10:25*.

<sup>16</sup>No one can deny how great is the secret of our religion.

He appeared in human form,  
was shown to be right by the Spirit,  
and was seen by angels.  
He was preached among the nations,  
was believed in the world, and was  
taken up to heaven.

### False Teachers

**4** The Spirit says clearly that some men will abandon the faith in later times; they will obey lying spirits and follow the teachings of demons. <sup>2</sup>These teachings come from the deceit of men who are liars, and whose consciences are

foundation of the truth. Beyond all question, the mystery of godliness is great:

He appeared in a body,  
was vindicated by the Spirit,  
was seen by angels,  
was preached among the nations,  
was believed on in the world,  
was taken up in glory.

### Instructions to Timothy

**4** The Spirit clearly says that in later times some will abandon the faith and follow deceiving spirits and things taught by demons. Such teachings come <sup>2</sup>through hypocritical liars, whose consciences have been seared as with a hot iron.

16. **No one can deny.** The secret is the disclosure to mankind of practical religion (*1 Cor. 2:6-10*). No one can deny the claims of Christianity are tremendous!!! **He appeared.** The Logos took a human body of flesh and blood! See note on *John 1:14*. **Was shown to be right.** The Jewish leaders said he was a phony. The Holy Spirit showed he was right, by raising him from death!!! See *John 16:8-11* and notes. **Was seen by angels.** Angels were at the empty tomb, were the first to see the Risen Christ, and told the women. [The same Greek word means *angel* and *messenger*. Some think this may refer to those who saw him after he raised from death, and were messengers who told others about it.] **He was preached.** Compare *Matt. 24:14* and note. [This could refer to making salvation available to the Gentiles (*Acts 15:12-18* and notes).] **Was believed.** See *John 17:21*; *2 Thess. 1:10*; *1 Thess. 1:9-10*. **Was taken up.** See *Heb. 9:11-12* and notes. **GOD HAS MADE ALL OF THESE THINGS KNOWN IN THE MESSAGE OF THE GOOD NEWS!!!**

1. **The Spirit says.** "Although the church supports the truth by preserving the secret of our religion in the world, the Spirit revealed to me and to others who are inspired, that apostasy will take place in the church itself. In fact, this is going on right now (*2 Thess. 2:7*)." It was "standard practice" for a prophet to speak out against the sin and sinners of *his own time*, in the form of a prediction. See also *2 Tim. ch 3*; *Acts 20:29-30* and notes. **Lying spirits.** Those who falsely claim to speak by inspiration. See note on *1 Cor. 12:3*. **Teachings of demons.** This may mean: (1) worship of the dead, evil spirits, and angels (one manuscript adds to this verse: *'For they will be worshipers of the dead, as in Israel also they were worshiped'*); (2) evil spirits will themselves "think up" the false teachings and give them to men.

2. **These teachings come from.** The great mass of mankind are merely deceived, and can be taught the truth of God. But these men are active agents of the Devil. This is examined in notes on *Rev. ch 13*. "These teachings which I am about to mention, come from men who are liars. As hypocrites, they pretend to be very holy and humble. But unlike the pagans who have an active conscience (*Rom. 2:15*), these have a dead conscience and are *amoral*. But you will be able to recognize them by the way they act (*Matt. 7:15-20*)."

dead, as if burnt with a hot iron. <sup>3</sup>Such men teach that it is wrong to marry and to eat certain foods. But God created these foods to be eaten, after a prayer of thanks, by those who are believers and have come to know the truth. <sup>4</sup>Everything that God has created is good; nothing is to be rejected, but all is to be received with a prayer of thanks; <sup>5</sup>because the word of God and the prayer make it acceptable to God.

### A Good Servant of Christ Jesus

<sup>6</sup>If you give these instructions to the brothers you will be a good servant of Christ Jesus, as you feed yourself spiritually on the words of faith and of the true teaching which you have followed. <sup>7</sup>But keep away from those godless legends, which are not worth telling. Keep yourself in

They forbid people to marry <sup>3</sup> and order them to abstain from certain foods, which God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and who know the truth. For everything <sup>4</sup> God created is good, and nothing is to be rejected if it is received with thanksgiving, because it is consecrated by the word of God and prayer.

If you point these things <sup>6</sup> out to the brothers, you will be a good minister of Christ Jesus, brought up in the truths of the faith and of the good teaching that you have followed. Have nothing to do <sup>7</sup> with godless myths and old wives' tales; rather, train

**3. Wrong to marry.** Even Paul taught that marriage was sometimes not the best answer (*1 Cor. 7:26*), but these will teach that marriage is wrong in itself. This false idea was very quickly introduced into the church by some who claimed marriage was the invention of the evil god (Satan). They said it was sinful to bring children into this world to be unhappy and to eventually die. Out of this grew the idea that only celibacy is holy. The worship of demons and the forbidding of marriage go hand in hand. **To eat certain foods.** With Greek thought viewing the body as "evil and anti-spiritual," it was easy to misuse such scriptures as *Rom. 8:13*. These false teachers said it was "holy" to deny your body the better grade of food. They generally prohibited either all meats or certain kinds, and some lived on bread and water. These things are still found among certain religious communities. **But God created these foods.** The Devil is not the one who is the Creator!!! False teachers were saying that the evil god (Satan) created the world and all that is in it. Some who claim to be Christians show by their actions that this is what they believe! Truth tells us that God is the Creator, and He created these foods to be eaten so that our physical bodies may preserve their measure of health.

**4. Everything.** This points back to *Gen. 1:31*. See what Jesus said in *Matt. 15:10-20*. This shows that all dietary rules have been repealed, especially those of the Law.

**5. Because.** See how Paul applied this in his own actions (*Acts 27:35*). [There was a closer association in the minds of the early Christians between the ordinary act of eating and the Lord's Supper (Holy Meal), than of us today. They still ate the Supper in the context of a meal (*Acts 20:7* note). Compare *John 21:11-13*.] **Make it acceptable.** "The word of God (*Acts 10:15*) and your prayer of thanks make it acceptable. God uses this food to bless you. And even though I did not mention it, this same logic applies to marriage, which God himself also created to bless you."

**6. These instructions.** "You must teach the truth about these things I have just mentioned, to warn the brothers about the false things that some will teach." **As you feed yourself spiritually.** "If you are to be a good servant of Christ, you must feed yourself spiritually, as you did in the past (*2 Tim. 1:5; 3:15*). Christian growth is vital (*Heb. 6:1-3*), both to yourself and to those whom you must teach!"

**7. But keep away from.** "Some things appear to have wisdom (*Col. 2:20-23*), but in truth they may be destructive. Those godless legends (*1 Tim. 1:3-4*) are an example of what I mean. These things actually **IMPEACH** the goodness of the Creator, and so turn many away from Him!" **Keep yourself in training.** True Christian *asceticism* is not essentially of the body, although the human body is the means by which the spiritual nature is stirred and influenced. Compare *1 Tim. 2:2; 1 Thess. 4:11; 1 Cor. 9:27*.

training for a godly life. <sup>8</sup>Physical exercise has some value in it, but spiritual exercise is valuable in every way, because it promises life both for now and for the future. <sup>9</sup>This is a true saying, to be completely accepted and believed. <sup>10</sup>That is why we struggle and work hard, because we have placed our hope in the living God, who is Savior of all men, and especially of those who believe.

<sup>11</sup>Command and teach these things. <sup>12</sup>Do not let anyone look down on you because you are young, but be an example for the believers, in your speech, your conduct, your love, faith, and purity. <sup>13</sup>Give your time and effort, until I come, to the public reading of the Scriptures, and to preaching and teaching. <sup>14</sup>Do not neglect the spiritual gift that is in you, which was given to you when the prophets spoke and the elders laid

yourself to be godly. For <sup>8</sup> physical training is of some value, but godliness has value for all things, holding promise for both the present life and the life to come.

This is a trustworthy saying <sup>9</sup> that deserves full acceptance (and for this we labor and strive), that we have put our hope in the living God, who is the Savior of all men, and especially of those who believe.

Command and teach these <sup>11</sup> things. Don't let anyone look <sup>12</sup> down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in life, in love, in faith and in purity. Until I come, devote <sup>13</sup> yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to preaching and to teaching. Do not <sup>14</sup> neglect your gift, which was given you through a prophetic message when the body of elders laid their hands on you.

8. **But spiritual exercise.** The Greeks spent a lot of time training and developing their bodies for the Games. In this same way, Christians are to think of themselves as *in training* for Eternity! [MacKnight thinks this may mean: "The false humility and severe treatment of the body seems wise, but it has no real value."]

9. **This is a true saying.** What he just said in *verse 8*.

10. **That is why.** Paul examines this in *2 Cor. 6:1-10*. Neither physical exercise, nor severe treatment of the body, nor animal sacrifice, nor the power of any idol - can make you happy, either here or in Eternity!!! Note that eternal life begins now, in this present world, for those who love God! Compare *John 10:10*.

11. **Command.** In the point of time, you first teach, and then command. This command must refer to basics which have been accepted, but are in danger of being forgotten. "Timothy, there will be times when you must speak out with the authority you have as an evangelist. Silent example or mild suggestion may not be enough." For an example, see the Lord's warning to Ephesus in *Rev. 2:4-5* and notes.

12. **Do not let.** "Do not let anyone ignore what you say just because you are young. Use your authority, which belongs to the rank of an evangelist." Timothy was probably in his early thirties, but the first century worshiped age. Anyone under fifty years old was "just a kid." Compare *John 8:57*. The church leaders were probably all older than he was, and there was a real danger that they (or the false teachers especially) would look down on him. **But be an example.** "Your life should be good enough to set a pattern for others."

13. **To the public reading.** Since the printing-press had not yet been invented, books were hand-made and scarce. Public reading of the Scriptures was an important part of the church meeting.

14. **Do not neglect.** "Do not fail to make use of the spiritual gift that you received when I laid my hands on you (*2 Tim. 1:6*), at the time you were publicly *identified* as an evangelist of the Good News." Compare notes on *Acts 13:1-3; 16:1-3*.

their hands on you. <sup>15</sup>Practice these things and give yourself to them, in order that your progress may be seen by all. <sup>16</sup>Watch yourself, and watch your teaching. Keep on doing these things, because if you do you will save both yourself and those who hear you.

### Responsibilities toward Believers

**5** Do not rebuke an older man, but appeal to him as if he were your father. Treat the younger men as your brothers, <sup>2</sup>the older women as mothers, and the younger women as sisters, with all purity.

<sup>3</sup>Show respect for widows who really are widows. <sup>4</sup>But if a widow has children or grandchildren, they should learn first to carry out their religious duties toward their own family and in this way repay their parents and grandparents, because that is what pleases God. <sup>5</sup>The woman who is a true widow, with no one to take care of her, has placed her hope in God and continues to

Be diligent in these matters; give yourself wholly to them, so that everyone may see your progress. Watch 16 your life and doctrine closely. Persevere in them, because if you do, you will save both yourself and your hearers.

### Advice About Widows, Elders and Slaves

**5** Do not rebuke an older man harshly, but exhort him as if he were your father. Treat younger men as brothers, older women as mothers, 2 and younger women as sisters, with absolute purity.

Give proper recognition to 3 widows who are left all alone. But if a widow has children 4 or grandchildren, these should learn first of all to put their religion into practice by caring for their own family and so repaying their parents and grandparents, for this is pleasing to God. 5 The widow who is all alone puts her hope in God and continues night and day to pray

15. **Practice these things.** The preacher, and every Christian as well, must practice what they preach if they expect to succeed in their life as a Christian. Compare *Eph. 4:13-16*.

16. **Both yourself and those who hear you.** This is the special honor and reward of those who are servants of God! Compare *Ezekiel 33:9; Rom. 10:14-17*.

1-2. **Do not rebuke an older man.** Because Timothy, as an evangelist (see note on *Eph. 4:11*), would have the duty of "rebuking error and correcting faults (*2 Tim. 3:16-17*)," Paul tells how this is to be done. The wise leader must treat the people as individuals. Each age and condition needs separate treatment, and Paul divides them into four groups. Since the church is a *family*, it cannot be run like the army! **With all purity.** There must not be any hint of scandal. As a young man, Timothy must be especially careful.

3. **Show respect for widows.** We can identify four types of widows in what Paul writes here. (1) The true widow (*verse 5*); (2) The widow with children or grandchildren (*verse 4*); (3) The widow who gives herself to pleasure (*verse 6*); (4) The listed widow (*verse 9*). Widows were helpless in the harsh world of the first century. The church quickly showed a sense of responsibility toward their welfare (see *Acts 6:1-6* and notes).

4. **Children or grandchildren.** In normal family relationships, it is the Lord's will that children and grandchildren take care of their parents and grandparents. See *verse 8*.

5. **Who is a true widow.** She has no children or close relatives at all. See Anna (*Luke 2:36-37* and notes).

pray and ask him for his help night and day. <sup>6</sup>But the widow who gives herself to pleasure has already died, even though she lives. <sup>7</sup>Give them this command, so that no one will find fault with them. <sup>8</sup>But if someone does not take care of his relatives, especially the members of his own family, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.

<sup>9</sup>Do not add any widow to the list of widows unless she is more than sixty years old. In addition, she must have been married only once, <sup>10</sup>and have a reputation for good deeds: a woman who brought up her children well, received strangers in her home, washed the feet of God's people, helped those in trouble, and gave herself to all kinds of good works.

<sup>11</sup>But do not include the younger widows in the list; because when their desires make them want

and to ask God for help. But the widow who lives for pleasure is dead even while she lives. Give the people these instructions, too, so that no one may be open to blame. If anyone does not provide for his relatives, and especially for his immediate family, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.

No widow may be put on the list of widows unless she is over sixty, has been faithful to her husband, and is well-known for her good deeds, such as bringing up children, showing hospitality, washing the feet of the saints, helping those in trouble and devoting herself to all kinds of good deeds.

As for younger widows, do not put them on such a list. For when their sensual desires overcome their dedication to Christ, they want to

6. **Who gives herself to pleasure.** Being cut loose from her husband by his death, she is living an unholy life. This means she is spiritually dead, so long as she continues to live this way. It would be the responsibility of the church leaders (who might work through the listed widows) to work to reclaim this spiritually dead widow. See *Gal. 6:1*.

7. **Give them this command.** Especially the things said in *verse 4*.

8. **But if someone.** The Christian faith includes the law of love! Even unbelievers take care of their own families. [Note that the Essenes were not allowed to help their relatives without special permission from their leaders. But they could help anyone else they pleased. See also the strange custom in *Matt. 15:3-6* and notes.]

9. **Do not add.** A *listed* widow meets certain qualifications; is supported directly by the church; and is in a sense the female counterpart of the church leader. She is primarily a teacher, in contrast to the female church helper (*1 Tim. 3:11* and note). **More than sixty years old.** This is a special requirement, only for a *listed* widow. If she is under sixty, *verse 14* applies. **Married only once.** She must have been a married woman (see note on *1 Tim. 3:2*). She could not have been a prostitute or a concubine.

10. **Have a reputation.** Her past life demonstrates her character and faith. **Who brought up her children well.** Either her natural children, or foster children. This demonstrates her ability. **Received strangers.** Shown her attitude and love by helping those made homeless through persecution. **Washed the feet.** This shows humility and a willingness to serve others. Paul surely is thinking of *John 13:5-15*. **To all kinds of good works.** This sums it all up. She is one who has practiced what she claimed to be.

11. **But do not include.** A younger widow, one under age sixty, must not be made a *listed* widow. See *verse 9*. Remember Paul is speaking about those who want to be included in the list of specially privileged church-widows. It is implied that those on the *list* made a special promise to remain a widow and spend all their time serving Christ. Not everyone would be happy and satisfied doing this, and so Paul specifically forbids the younger widows from being considered for this service.

to marry, they turn away from Christ, <sup>12</sup>and so become guilty of breaking their first promise to him. <sup>13</sup>They also learn to waste their time in going around from house to house; but even worse, they learn to be gossips and busybodies, talking of things they should not. <sup>14</sup>So I would rather that the younger widows get married, have children, and take care of their homes, so as to give our enemies no chance of speaking evil of us. <sup>15</sup>For some widows have already turned away to follow Satan. <sup>16</sup>But if any woman who is a believer has widows in her family, she must take care of them, and not put the burden on the church, so that it may take care of the widows who are all alone.

<sup>17</sup>The elders who do good work as leaders should be considered worthy of receiving double pay, especially those who work hard at preaching

marry. Thus they bring judgment on themselves, because they have broken their first pledge. Besides, they get into the habit of being idle and going about from house to house. And not only do they become idlers, but also gossips and busybodies, saying things they ought not to. So I counsel younger widows to marry, to have children, to manage their homes and to give the enemy no opportunity for slander. Some have in fact already turned away to follow Satan.

If any woman who is a believer has widows in her family, she should help them and not let the church be burdened with them, so that the church can help those widows who are all alone.

The elders who direct the affairs of the church well are worthy of double honor, especially those whose work is

**12. Breaking their first promise.** Not because they get married, but because after having made a promise to devote themselves to this teaching mission, they "go back on their promise" by leaving it to get married.

**13. They also learn.** They do not have the maturity required for this teaching mission of going from house to house. For those who have the strength (*gift*, 1 Cor. 7:7) to live unmarried in order to give their time and energy to the direct service of God, it is better not to marry again. But there is no *special blessedness* in the fact of being unmarried, especially if the motive for remaining unmarried is a selfish one (such as: to avoid having to take care of a home and family, and to have lots of leisure time for personal pleasure). For this reason, Paul specifies that such widows must be at least sixty years old (*verse 9*).

**14. That the younger widows get married.** None are to be placed on this list but the aged. There are to be no young nuns. It will be better if the widows under sixty years old get married again. No chance of speaking evil of us. Compare 1 Pet. 2:12; 3:16.

**15. For some.** This certainly speaks of something worse than a second marriage, and clearly points to such things as mentioned in *verse 13*.

**16. But if any woman.** This shows that what Paul said in *verses 4, 7, 8* applies to women as well as to men. [In this section on widows, Paul has been speaking specifically about widows who are *listed widows*, who are teachers supported out of the church treasury. Certainly the church can help other widows who are unable to help themselves because of sickness, etc. But only certain ones can be made *listed widows*.]

**17. The elders.** This is another name for a church leader. See note on 1 Tim. 3:1. **Double pay** = generous support. **At preaching and teaching.** Some church leaders (and some church helpers) were also evangelists.

and teaching. <sup>18</sup>For the scripture says, "Do not tie up the mouth of the ox when it is treading out the grain," and, "The worker deserves his wages." <sup>19</sup>Do not listen to an accusation against an elder unless it is brought by two or three witnesses. <sup>20</sup>Rebuke publicly all those who commit sins, so that the rest may be afraid.

<sup>21</sup>In the presence of God, and of Christ Jesus, and of the holy angels, I solemnly call upon you to obey these instructions without showing any prejudice or favor to anyone in anything you do. <sup>22</sup>Be in no hurry to lay hands on anyone for the Lord's service. Take no part in the sins of others; keep yourself pure.

<sup>23</sup>Do not drink water only, but take a little wine to help your digestion, since you are sick so often.

preaching and teaching. For 18  
the Scripture says, "Do not  
muzzle the ox while it is  
treading out the grain," and  
"The worker deserves his  
wages." Do not entertain an 19  
accusation against an elder  
unless it is brought by two or  
three witnesses. Those who 20  
sin are to be rebuked public-  
ly, so that the others may  
take warning.

I charge you, in the sight 21  
of God and Christ Jesus and  
the elect angels, to keep these  
instructions without partial-  
ity, and to do nothing out of  
favoritism.

Do not be hasty in the lay- 22  
ing on of hands, and do not  
share in the sins of others.  
Keep yourself pure.

Stop drinking only water, 23  
and use a little wine because  
of your stomach and your  
frequent illnesses.

18. For the scripture says. See note on *1 Cor. 9:9*. Paul also quotes *Luke 10:7* and calls it *scripture*. Peter includes Paul's writing in the term *scripture* (*2 Pet. 3:16*).

19. Unless it is brought. As an evangelist, Timothy might be forced to hear accusations against an elder (church leader) who would be older than himself. This is in harmony with *1 Cor. 6:5*. But he is to ignore such things unless two or three reliable witnesses bring this accusation. (This is to prevent sore-heads and troublemakers from making false charges.)

20. Rebuke publicly. "Those who are found guilty of sin, by the word of reliable witnesses, you are to rebuke in public as a warning to the others, so they may be afraid to commit similar sins." This does not conflict with *verse 1*, because it is not treating him *harshly*, but bringing the thing out into the open. Compare *Gal. 6:1*.

21. I solemnly call upon you. This is a solemn obligation which Paul places on Timothy. He must not "play favorites," but impartially deal with the matters mentioned in this Letter. Some think this implies that Paul was afraid Timothy would be too mild in dealing quickly with the problems which would come up in church life. Paul's many references to angels show that he firmly believed in the ministry of angels (*Heb. 1:14*).

22. To lay hands on. No one should be appointed to serve, until he (or she) has been thoroughly examined. A ceremony of "laying on hands" was used to identify those appointed for special service. Compare *1 Tim. 4:14; Acts 13:3*. [The congregation did the choosing. See *Acts 6:2-3* and notes.]

23. But take a little wine. Probably the false teachers prohibited the light wines that were then used. Compare notes on *1 Tim. 4:3; Col. 2:16; John 2:10*. This gives some indication of Timothy's state of health. The Expositor's Greek Testament has Paul saying: "I do not mean you to practice a rigid asceticism; on the contrary, I think that you are likely to injure your health by your complete abstinence from wine; so, be no longer a water-drinker, etc." Johnson says the water of that region is not good, and he spent a fearfully sick day at Ephesus in 1889 because of the water there.

<sup>24</sup>The sins of some men are plain to see, and their sins go ahead of them to judgment; but the sins of others are seen only later. <sup>25</sup>In the same way good deeds are plainly seen, and even those that are not so plain cannot be hidden.

**6** All who are slaves must consider their masters worthy of all respect, so that no one will speak evil of the name of God and of our teaching. <sup>2</sup>Slaves belonging to masters who are believers must not despise them because they are their brothers. Instead, they are to serve them even better, because those who benefit from their work are believers whom they love.

### False Teaching and True Riches

You must teach and preach these things.

The sins of some men are 24  
obvious, reaching the place  
of judgment ahead of them;  
the sins of others trail behind  
them. In the same way, good 25  
deeds are obvious, and even  
those that are not cannot be  
hidden.

**6** All who are under the  
yoke of slavery should  
consider their masters worthy  
of full respect, so that  
God's name and our teaching  
may not be slandered. 2  
Those who have believing  
masters are not to show less  
respect for them because  
they are brothers. Instead,  
they are to serve them even  
better, because those who  
benefit from their service are  
believers, and dear to them.  
These are the things you are  
to teach and urge on them.

**24. Are plain to see.** This refers back to *verse 22*. Since keeping an unfit man in a place of service makes the one who appoints him responsible, in a sense, Timothy may have been very afraid he might make a mistake in such things. "In the case of some, it will be such an 'open and shut case,' that you will have no doubts about it. Their sins will clearly disqualify them. With others, their sins are hidden, and only time will reveal them. For this reason, don't be in any hurry to appoint people."

**25. In the same way.** "The good deeds of some will be so plain that you will not need to examine them very closely. Their reputations declare what they are. And even the good deeds that are not so plain will come out in time."

**1. All who are slaves.** Christianity is to *leaven*, not *displace*, the existing social order. Compare *1 Cor. 7:20-24* and notes. Many of the Christians were slaves. Because the Law (*Exod. 21:2*) would not allow anyone to be made a slave for life without his own consent, the Circumcision Party taught that slavery was an illegal thing, if it was *involuntary*. They used this teaching to try to entice slaves to join their Party. As an apostle, Paul condemns this false teaching. **Must consider their masters worthy.** "Christian slaves must consider their unbelieving masters worthy of all respect and obedience, so that no one will speak evil of God or the Good News. We do not want them to think Christianity destroys the political rights of individuals." We meet this same slave problem in *Eph. 6:5; Col. 3:22; Tit. 2:9; Philemon; 1 Pet. 2:18*.

**2. Who are believers.** Christianity does not destroy social and political differences. Instead of leading slaves to rebel, it makes them better and more faithful workers. Christianity changes the attitude of masters (when they believe) and this takes the harshness out of slavery. For as masters drink in the spirit of Christianity, they will be good and kind to their slaves, and even set them free, when this seems best. But since the slave is under a moral obligation to serve his master well, this is doubly true when the master is a brother in Christ. **Teach and preach.** False teaching will wreck a congregation. Teaching and preaching the truth will combat this. See notes on *Acts 21:13-14*.

<sup>3</sup>Whoever teaches a different doctrine and does not agree with the true words of our Lord Jesus Christ and with the teaching of our religion <sup>4</sup>is swollen with pride and knows nothing. He has an unhealthy desire to argue and quarrel about words, and this brings on jealousy, dissension, insults, evil suspicions, <sup>5</sup>and constant arguments from men whose minds do not function and who no longer have the truth. They think that religion is a way to become rich.

<sup>6</sup>Well, religion does make a man very rich, if he is satisfied with what he has. <sup>7</sup>What did we bring into the world? Nothing! What can we take out of the world? Nothing! <sup>8</sup>So then, if we have food and clothes, that should be enough for us.

#### Love of Money

If anyone teaches false doctrines and does not agree to the sound instruction of our Lord Jesus Christ and to godly teaching, he is conceited and understands nothing. He has an unhealthy interest in controversies and arguments that result in envy, quarreling, malicious talk, evil suspicions and constant friction between men of corrupt mind, who have been robbed of the truth and who think that godliness is a means to financial gain.

But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it. But if we have food and clothing, we will be content with that.

3. **Whoever teaches a different doctrine.** Compare *1 Tim. 1:3-7* and notes. The "slave problem" was an outgrowth of this (see note on *verse 1*). **And does not agree.** What Paul taught was "the true words of our Lord Jesus Christ." Compare *Luke 10:16; Gal. 1:6-9*.

4. **Is swollen with pride.** "He really knows nothing of either the Jewish or Christian revelation of God, even though he claims to completely understand both!" **Unhealthy desire to argue.** These men have a *passion* for arguments and "splitting hairs." See notes on *1 Cor. 2:1-2*. They have a morbid interest in trivial matters. Compare *Matt. 23:23-28* and notes. **And this brings on.** Their "unhealthy" attitude brings on five things: **Jealousy.** Especially about the success of Christianity, which the circumcision party felt *downgraded* the Law of Moses. **Dissension.** Compare *Phil. 1:15* and note. One who "stirs up trouble." **Insults.** Quarrels lead to *name calling* and *insults!* **Evil suspicions.** The sick imagination of people who are spiritually psychotic. Compare *3 John 10* and note.

5. **And constant arguments.** A diatribe. Bitter and constant wrangling which turns people down "blind alleys," and makes it impossible to "get on with the job." **Who no longer have the truth.** The Greek implies that the truth was *stolen* from them while they were busy with other things. Compare *Titus 1:13-14; 2 Tim. 4:3-4*. **Is a way to become rich.** The false teachers saw "easy money" in Christianity, and they *distorted* the truth to divert money into their pockets. This seemed to be especially true of the teachers who belonged to the circumcision party. Compare *Phil. 3:18-19; 2 Cor. 11:12; 12:17-18; Titus 1:11; 2 Pet. 2:3*.

6. **Well, religion does.** Paul takes their *motivation* and turns it around. Religion does make a man rich, but not in the things they wanted. *The treasures of heaven belong to you as a Christian!!!* God gave you his Son; he gave you his Spirit; he gave you his Word. He emptied heaven and gave it all to you (*1 Cor. 3:21-23*). But the real "pay-off" of Christianity comes in Eternity!!! **If he is satisfied.** See *2 Cor. 9:8; Phil. 4:11; Matt. 6:25-34*.

7. **Nothing!** "He said, 'I was born with nothing and I will die with nothing. The Lord gave, and now he has taken away. May his name be praised!'" (*Job 1:21*).

8. **So then.** Because we must leave all material things behind when we leave this world. If we have food and clothes, we should be satisfied. However, Paul is not saying that we must take a vow of poverty, only that we must not make material wealth our goal and motivation.

<sup>9</sup>But those who want to get rich fall into temptation and are caught in the trap of many foolish and harmful desires, which pull men down to ruin and destruction. <sup>10</sup>For the love of money is a source of all kinds of evil. Some have been so eager to have it that they have wandered away from the faith and have broken their hearts with many sorrows.

### Personal Instructions

<sup>11</sup>But you, man of God, avoid all these things. Strive for righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance, and gentleness. <sup>12</sup>Run your best in the race of faith, and win eternal life for yourself; for it was to this life that God called you when you made your good profession of faith before many witnesses. <sup>13</sup>Before God, who gives life to all things, and before Christ Jesus, who made the good profession before Pontius Pilate, I com-

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9. **Who want to get rich.** It is not the fact of *being rich*, but **COVETING** these things. "An honest man will lead a full, happy life. But if you are in a hurry to get rich, you are going to be punished" (*Prov. 28:20*).

10. **For the love of money.** Not money itself, but the **LOVE** of it! Many misquote this. Money itself is harmless, and can be used to feed the poor, preach the gospel, etc. But the **LOVE** of money makes men cheat, lie, steal, etc., and even murder! Note the character of Judas (*John 12:6*), which eventually led him to *sell* Jesus (*Matt. 26:14-16*). **Wandered away.** *Chrysostom* explains this with the example of an absent-minded man who goes past his destination without knowing it. Some are so eager to have money, that they forget where they really want to go!

11. **Avoid all these things.** Every Christian is a man (or woman) of God. Therefore, they each must avoid the *love of money* (which the false teachers had). **Strive for.** Do your best to seize these things and make them part of your life.

12. **Run your best.** *AGONIZOU* can be translated both "fight" and "run" (in the sense of competing in a race). [A different word is used in *1 Tim. 1:18*] "*Run your best in the race*" had become a slogan of the Games. The Greek shows a continuous *running*. **And win eternal life.** Eternal life is not achieved, but seized! Even though "Christ on the cross" is the sole basis for our being "put right with God," still there is a human element in the sense that we must firmly *hold on* to Christ our Salvation!!! The false teachers had *let go*. Using the symbolism of the Games, Paul says to *win eternal life for yourself!* **Good profession of faith.** In our language, "confession" has to do with guilt. *We profess or declare* our faith in Christ. Compare *Matt. 16:16; Acts 8:37*.

13. **Before God.** This is a solemn obligation which Paul places on Timothy (and every Christian), but it is also a word of encouragement!!! **Before Pontius Pilate.** See *John 18:33-37*.

mand you: <sup>14</sup>Obey the commandment and keep it pure and faultless, until the Day our Lord Jesus Christ will appear. <sup>15</sup>His appearing will be brought about at the right time by God, the blessed and only Ruler, the King of kings and the Lord of lords. <sup>16</sup>He alone is immortal; he lives in the light that no one can approach. No one has ever seen him, no one can ever see him. To him be honor and eternal might! Amen.

<sup>17</sup>Command those who are rich in the things of this life not to be proud, and to place their hope, not in such an uncertain thing as riches, but in God, who generously gives us everything for us to enjoy. <sup>18</sup>Command them to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready

confession, I charge you to <sup>14</sup> keep this commandment without spot or blame until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ, which God will <sup>15</sup> bring about in his own time —God, the blessed and only Ruler, the King of kings and Lord of lords, who alone is <sup>16</sup> immortal and who lives in unapproachable light, whom no one has seen or can see. To him be honor and might forever. Amen.

Command those who are <sup>17</sup> rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment. <sup>18</sup> Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to

**14. Obey the commandment.** To *obey* and to *keep* (preserve intact) are opposite sides of the same coin. I understand the commandment to be what Paul has said in *verses 11-12*. It begins with the *good profession*, in which we reach out through faith to seize Christ (See notes on *Acts 2:37-38*). *MacKnight* understands the *good profession* to be a continuous profession of faith before all mankind. **Until the Day.** Compare *1 Thess. 5:23*.

**15. His appearing.** In *verse 14*, Paul tells Timothy to remember that Christ is coming again. We all look forward to this! But no one knows the time when this will happen - no one but God himself (*Matt. 24:36*)! Jesus discouraged his apostles when they wanted to pry into this matter (*Acts 1:7*). **At the right time by God.** We look to the past and see there how God has worked things out at the right time. Paul reminds us of who our God is, with a doxology of praise!!! "Don't worry about *when* Christ will come! Our God will take care of that, at the right time!!!"

**16. He alone is immortal.** This simply means that God is entirely separate from every created thing, which includes angels and the Devil. God alone is *UNCREATE* (independently existent, without either beginning or end). [On the *Trinity*, see note on *Rom. 16:27*] **No one has ever seen him.** Moses is not a contradiction to this. Compare *Deut. 5:4-5; Gal. 3:19*. *MacKnight* says that from this text, some of the ancient fathers inferred that the Divine Person who appeared to the Patriarchs and Israelites was not the Father, but the Son. Compare note on *John 8:24*.

**17. Command those.** Being rich is not a sin, but being in love with this world is! *The things of this life* puts worldly wealth in the right perspective. **Not to be proud.** Here is the real danger. Pride could lead to despising others. **But in God.** He is the real source of everything we have!!! He is the only source of eternal life!!!

**18. To do good.** This is the right way to use worldly wealth. Honest wealth, rightly used, blesses both those who give and those who receive. Christianity teaches a new principle of life (*Eph. 4:28*).

to share with others. <sup>19</sup>In this way they will store up for themselves a treasure which will be a solid foundation for the future. And then they will be able to win the life which is true life.

<sup>20</sup>Timothy, keep safe what has been turned over to your care. Avoid the godless talk and foolish arguments of "Knowledge," as some people wrongly call it. <sup>21</sup>For some have claimed to possess it, and as a result they have lost the way of faith.

God's grace be with you all.

share. In this way they will lay up treasure for themselves as a firm foundation for the coming age, so that they may take hold of the life that is truly life.

Timothy, guard what has been entrusted to your care. Turn away from godless chatter and the opposition of what is falsely called knowledge, which some have professed and in so doing have wandered from the faith.

Grace be with you.

19. **In this way.** "The only way you can *take it with you* is to use it in the right way now!" This does not imply *degrees of reward*, since God awards eternal life through the merit of *Christ on the cross!!!* See notes on *Matt. 20:13-14*. Note that a wrong use of this world will disqualify us for eternal life (*Matt. 25:31-46*).

20-21. **Timothy, keep safe.** These last two verses are a summary of the entire Letter. The gospel turned over to Timothy to keep and to pass on (*2 Tim. 2:2*), is the true account of Jesus as the Son of God, the fact that he is a descendant of David and Abraham, his birth by a virgin, his teaching, his miracles, his death, his raising from death, his going back to the Father, his return to raise the dead and judge the world. In other words, it is *God's act in Christ to set men free!!!* **Knowledge.** This is the force of distortion, which began its work as soon as the Good News was preached that first Pentecost. We see it in the *circumcision party*, with their legends and long lists of names of ancestors, their false pride, and their unhealthy desire to argue and quarrel about words. Paul was a *restorationist*, because he called Christians back to the purity of the Good News!!! Compare note on *2 Tim. 2:16*.