

*Paul's Epistles
to
Timothy*



*Bible Study Series
By
Victor A. Tawadrose*

www.oasisoflivingwater.com

Introduction

This introduction is actually for both epistles, and if there is any difference, it will be pointed out in due time.

Author:

Paul without any doubt, for he mentioned his name as the writer in 1st Tim. 1:1 and in 2nd Tim. 1:1.

An important remark is due here, because unfortunately there is a sect of people who call themselves theologians who delight as usual in attacking the plain truth of the Scripture ignoring what is mentioned above. They maintain that a devout follower of Paul wrote them in the 2nd century, and they offer 5 supposed evidences to prove their view, and these are:

- 1) The historical references in the epistles cannot be harmonized with the chronology of Paul's life given in the book of Acts. But they forgot that Luke the writer of the book of Acts recorded to the most excellent Theophilus (Luke 1:3 & Acts 1:1) as a continuation to what he recorded in the Gospel of Luke, what he eye-witnessed only and of course omitted what he did not see. And in such case we cannot ignore the early fathers of the church in the 1st century who witnessed and wrote.
- 2) The false teaching of Gnosticism described in the epistles reached its pinnacle in the 2nd century while the epistles were written in the 1st century. But while this is true, yet the teaching of Gnosticism started in the 1st century even before the time of writing the epistles, for Paul warned about false teaching in most of his other epistles.
- 3) In the 1st century, the church was not that organized as mentioned in the epistles. But again they forgot that what Paul wrote about organizing the church was for Timothy to start doing which was not there before. Not only that, but they forgot that Paul and Barnabas started organizing the church and appointing **elders** in their first missionary trip (Acts 14:23). And again the Holy Scripture tells us that Paul in his epistle to the Philippians, he sends his greeting to all the saints in Philippi and the **bishops and deacons** (Phil. 1:1), and we all know that he wrote Philippians long before his first epistle to Timothy; as a matter of fact he wrote Philippians during his first imprisonment, while he wrote 1st Timothy after he was released.
- 4) The epistles lack the great themes of Paul's theology. They forgot something called priority, and Paul's priority at the time of writing these epistles was to organize the church and to warn against false teaching, not for theological doctrines.
- 5) The Greek vocabulary of these epistles contains many words not found in Paul's other letters, nor in the rest of the New Testament. Again here they forgot that he was dealing with problems which were not quite apparent earlier, but I can even add to that, that the epistles did not contain a good

number of words mentioned in the other epistles, nor in the New Testament as well, and again that was because he was dealing with different problems at that time, and he was not teaching or discussing theological doctrines. So, as you see, there is no foundation for whatever they claim.

Date:

The first epistle was written between 62 and 64 A.D. probably 63 A.D. shortly after his release from his first imprisonment.

As for the second epistle, Paul wrote it in 67 A.D. while he was in prison in Rome just before his martyrdom by decapitation.

However if we agree to what the theologians said above, then all these dates are considered wrong, though they are not, because they are supported by history and historians.

To whom:

To his disciple and companion and faithful servant of God, Timothy, as obvious from 1st Tim.1:2 & 2nd Tim. 1:2.

Purpose:

These two epistles and the one to Titus are called now the pastoral epistles, because in them Paul instructs both Timothy and Titus as how to run the church, how to appoint a governing board of elders and deacons to help in the ministry, and how to correct heresies and false teaching. But early in the first century they were known as the pontifical letters because they were written to the pontifex which means the priest, the controller of the church, then they were called the personal epistles because they were written to persons, not to churches as the rest of all Paul's epistles except the one to Philemon.

Background:

The last account Luke gave us in the book of Acts was that Paul was put under house arrest in Rome (Acts 28:30) awaiting his trial by Augustus Caesar.

Then according to the church history, and from the other epistles he wrote, we can easily deduct that he was released, and went with Timothy to visit all the cities where he preached before. When he arrived at Ephesus, he was appalled by the heresies and false teachings which plagued the church there. So he did what was necessary, he left Timothy behind to complete his work there and moved along to Macedonia, and there he wrote the first epistle.

Then he was arrested and imprisoned again by Emperor Nero after the great fire of Rome being the leader of the sect of people whom they call themselves Christians, as he used them as a scapegoat to clear his name as the one who set fire to the city of Rome, although the Roman people were quite convinced that he was the one, and many Roman historians wrote confirming that.

While in prison in Rome awaiting his eminent death, he wrote the second epistle.

Theme:

Although these epistles are pastoral in nature yet they expressed many theological truths such as:

In the 1st epistle, he talks about the proper function of the law (1:5 – 11); salvation (1:14 – 16, 2:4 – 6); the attributes of God (1:17); the fall (2:13, 14); the person of Christ (3:16 & 6:15, 16); the election (6:12); and the second coming of Christ (6:14, 15).

And in the 2nd epistle he talks about salvation by God's sovereign grace (1:9, 10; 2:10), the person of Christ (2:8; 4:1, 8), perseverance (2:11 – 13), and inspiration of the Scripture (3:16, 17).

Challenging verses:

There are several verses in the 1st epistle which raised a lot of discussions and questioning such as:

- 1- The false teachers mentioned In 1st Tim. 1:3. Who are they?
- 2- The genealogies mentioned In 1st Tim. 1:4. What does he mean by that?
- 3- To be delivered to Satan mentioned In 1st Tim. 1:20. What does it mean?
- 4- What is the extent of atonement mentioned in 1st Tim. 2:4 – 6 & 4:10?
- 5- The teaching Paul mentioned about women in 1st Tim. 2:9 – 15.
- 6- How women could be saved by bearing children as in 1st Tim. 2:15?
- 7- What does he mean by the elder should be the husband of one wife?
How about the singles and the divorced as in 1st Tim. 3:11?
And does he mean the deacons' wives or the deaconesses?
- 8- Can a Christian lose his salvation as in 1st Tim. 4:1?
- 9- Who are the widows mentioned in 1st Tim. 5:3 – 16? Are they needy women ministered to by the church, or an order of women ministering to the church?
- 10- Does the double honor mentioned in 1st Tim. 5:17, 18 refer to respect or money?

As for the 2nd epistle, there are no major challenges.

All these will be discussed in due time when we come across them in our study.

Who is Timothy?

A Greek young man (1st Timothy 4:12) who was a long time companion and a fellow worker of Paul.

His mother Eunice was a Jewish believer (Acts 16:1 & 2 Tim. 1:5) and his father was a Greek (Acts 16:1). His mother was faithful in teaching him the Holy Scriptures since his childhood. (2 Tim. 3:14,15)

Him, his mother and his Grandmother Lois, probably were converted to Christianity during Paul's first missionary visit to Lystra, their hometown. (Acts 14:8 - 21).

His name in Greek is Timotheos which is composed of two words; the first word is Time which means honor, and the second word is Theos which means God.

So the whole word means honor to God, or he who honors God. And no body knows if this is his pagan name or is a name given to him after conversion. On his second missionary trip, passing back by Lystra (Acts 16:1 - 3), Paul found in Timothy a man of love and zeal to serve the Lord. So, he asked him to join them (Paul and Silas) in the work of God. But the purpose of Paul without doubt, not to take him as co-worker but to train him to continue what he had begun after his death as we shall see in the closings of his epistles.

But because he was Greek, Paul had to have him circumcised (Acts 16:1-3) so that he would not be a stumbling block to the Jews, because as we notice, although Paul was called the Apostle of the Gentiles, yet the Holy Scripture tells us that in every city Paul passed by, he preached the good news of salvation in the Synagogues first.

Apart from accompanying Paul in his travels, we should not forget his great work of correcting the Heresies and false teachings and also establishing the governing system in the churches of Ephesus and Corinth. (1Cor. 4:17 & 1Tim. 4:12)

On many occasions, Paul called him "Son" (Philippians 2: 22). And he was well entrusted by Paul (Phil 2:19, 20) as being as faithful and caring as he is. Having full confidence in his abilities, Paul sent him to few side missions (Acts 19:22; 1 Cor. 4:17 & Phil. 2:19).

Paul mentioned him in several of his Epistles such as 2nd Corinthians, Philippians, Colossians, 1st & 2nd Thessalonians and Philemon.

He was imprisoned in Rome and then released; for the Holy Scripture tells us that Paul asked Him to go to Rome (2Tim. 4:9, 21). Then he was released from Prison (Heb. 13:23).

And that is the last we hear of him in the Holy Scripture.

As for the missionary trips he made with Paul, we shall know about it when we study Paul's missionary trips.

Paul's First Epistle To Timothy

Outline:

- 1) Greeting** (1:1, 2).
- 2) Instructions concerning false doctrine** (1:3 – 20).
 - a- The false doctrine at Ephesus (1:3 – 11).
 - b- The true Doctrine of Paul (1:12 – 17).
 - c- The exhortation to Timothy (1:18 – 20).
- 3) Instructions concerning the church** (2:1 – 3:16).
 - a- The importance of prayer (2:1 – 8).
 - b- The role of women (2:9 – 15).
 - c- The qualifications for leaders (3:1 – 13).
 - d- The reason for Paul's letter (3:14 – 16).
- 4) Instructions concerning false teachers** (4:1 – 16).
 - a- The description of false teachers (4:1 – 5).
 - b- The description of true teachers (4:6 – 16).
- 5) Instructions concerning Pastoral responsibilities** (5:1 – 6:2).
 - a- The responsibility to sinning members (5:1, 2).
 - b- The responsibility to widows (5:3 – 16).
 - c- The responsibility to elders (5:17 – 25).
 - d- The responsibility to slaves (6:1, 2).
- 6) Instructions concerning the man of God** (6:3 – 21).
 - a- The peril of false teaching (6:3 – 5).
 - b- The peril of loving money (6:6 – 10).
 - c- The proper character and motivation of man of God (6:11 – 16).
 - d- The proper handling of treasure (6:17 – 19).
 - e- The proper handling of truth (6:20, 21).

1) *Greeting* (1:1, 2)

Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ:

Apostle, is from the Greek word “**Apostolos**” which means the one who has been sent or messenger, and it was used in the ancient Greek as a person who has been sent to represent the king or his country, i.e. “**Ambassador**”.

So, Paul here says that he represents a king. This is not new to Paul for he had always seen himself as an ambassador to his Lord and King Jesus Christ; and we can see that in his epistle to the Ephesians 6:20 where he says “**I am an ambassador in chains**” reflecting on his imprisonment when he wrote it.

That is what every Christian should be, because we have to represent our King to those who do not know Him. It is such a high honor to be Royal servants

By the command of God:

The Greek word that is translated command means decree, which is uttered by the King and never changed or annulled. In other words he feels that he has been given a commission by God and he wouldn't rest till he accomplishes it. A Christian all his life is “**on His Majesty's service**”.

Then he describes Jesus as being “**Our Savior and Our Hope**”.

The words (savior and salvation) have been mentioned in the Old Testament as well as in the New Testament.

:In the Old Testament, we find that Moses used it as the rock of his salvation (Duet. 32:15), and in 2nd Sam. 22:3 we find David praising God saying “my shield and the horn of my salvation.” Then the psalmist says that the good man will receive righteousness from the God of his salvation (Ps. 24:5).

In the New Testament, we find Mary in her song of praise after seeing her cousin Elizabeth, saying “my soul magnifies the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God my savior (Luke 1:46, 47). And Simeon after seeing the Baby Jesus said “Lord, now You are letting Thy servant depart in peace, according to Your word; for my eyes have seen Your salvation”.

In the pagan world, we find the Romans calling their general Scipio their hope and salvation, and the Greeks calling their god of healing “their savior and hope. Then we find Nero the crazy Roman Emperor who set fire to Rome, calling himself “savior and hope”.

So Paul is using this title knowing that every body will identify with it whether Jews, Christians or Pagans.

But the core of the subject is, God is our savior because He loves us, and John 3:16 puts it quite that “**God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life**”.

Then the word “**Hope**” is of great value to every Christian since we believe that Jesus is our hope.

Long before Jesus' time, the psalmist said "Why are you cast down, O my soul? Hope in God ".(Ps. 43:5)

And Paul tells the Colossians that God willed to make known to them the riches of the glory of His mystery among the Gentiles which is "**Christ in them the hope of glory** (Col. 1:27).

And John says that every one who thus hopes purifies himself as God is pure (1st John 3:2, 3).

And the fathers of the early church talked about hope, such as Ignatius who in his letter to the Ephesians said "be in good cheer in God the Father and Jesus Christ our common hope.". And Polycarp who wrote in one of his letters "Let us therefore persevere in our hope and the earnest of our righteousness, who is Jesus Christ".

But we as Christians have hope in Jesus Christ because He imputes in us moral victory and self-conquest, victory over the circumstances which we encounter, and above all victory over death.

Then Paul addresses Timothy as true son in faith.

There are many reasons as why Paul should call him his son:

- 1- He is much younger.
- 2- He is his begotten son in faith for he was converted through him.
- 3- An expression of affection. Look at it this way, if Paul had that much affection for those he preached everywhere as evident from his writings in his epistles, how much more would he be affectionate to all his co-workers and companions who persevere with him day and night? We can sense that very clearly in his letter to Philemon verse 10 where he appeals to Philemon on behalf of Onesimus whom he begotten while in his chains, then in verse 12 he says "receive him, that is, my own heart (Bowels)".

Then after announcing himself as the writer of the letter, and to whom it is sent, he advances to the greetings.

Grace, mercy and peace:

Paul's hallmark is always a blessing to the recipients of his epistles.

Here he blesses Timothy by three words; let us discuss it one by one.

Grace:

- a- Grace is originally a Greek greeting. It can only be translated to the English language as charm being characterized as lovely, sweet and winsome or pleasing and lighthearted thing which usually applied to persons though not always so.
- b- In the New Testament, it carries the meaning of something unearned and undeserved. It is usually used in contrast to work. Paul says that God's election of His chosen people is not by works but by grace (Rom. 11:6).
- c- Grace is universal for the Jews as well as the Gentiles, for the Greeks and the Barbarians, for slaves and free, for men and women, for children and elders.

How beautiful is the grace of God! No wonder why John Newton sang out loud: "**Amazing grace, how sweet the sound that saved a wretched like me.**" And I add my voice to his; and above all, it is free.

Peace:

Peace is a Hebrew greeting which includes everything that causes the welfare of a person whether money, health, children, possessions of any kind, work, trade, and all what makes for a man's good.

Mercy:

- a- It is both a Greek and Hebrew word and is often translated as loving kindness.
So, simply Paul says to Timothy "May God be good and kind to you".
- b- The psalmist uses it in the meaning of "Help in time of need".
In almost all Paul's epistles, he uses only two words for his greetings, which are grace and peace, but it might be as well that he added it here at the time where Timothy needed that help from God for he was facing a lot of problems that needed the wisdom of God to solve it.
- c- The apostolic use of mercy was in connection with salvation, as Paul says "The Gentiles should glorify God for that mercy which has rescued them from sin and hopelessness (Rom. 15:9).
And Peter says" It is by God's abundant mercy that He has given us the living hope of resurrection (1st Peter 1:3).

2) Instructions concerning false Doctrine (1:3 – 20)

- a- The false doctrine at Ephesus (1:3-11)

It is obvious from these 9 verses that there was some sort of heresies which started to plague the church in Ephesus. Paul describes these heresies as being idle tales and endless genealogies. Let us see what each means:

Idle tales:

In the ancient world there was a lot of stories expressed and circulated by their poets about their gods; such as a certain god would have come down to earth and married a mortal maid and established a certain city for his offspring; and the people were obsessed and possessed by such tales which were useless and did not benefit any one, and so Paul called it idle.

Useless genealogies:

The ancient world (whether Jews or Gentiles) had passion for genealogies. We can easily see that in the Old Testament where there are whole chapters dedicated to who begat who. We can also see a glimpse of this in the genealogy of Jesus as mentioned in Mat. 1:1-16 and Luke 3:23-38.

And in the ancient Greece, it is said that Alexander the great constructed a special pedigree for himself tracing his ancestors back to Achilles and Hercules. And for Christianity at its infancy at that time, it would have been the easiest thing in the world to get lost in endless and fabulous stories about origins and imaginary genealogies.

That was very dangerous and threatening from two directions:

- 1) For the converted Jews, they were still hanging on to their past and the teachings of their Rabbis.
- 2) For the converted Gentiles, they were no less than the Jews concerning these matters, and again they were still hanging to it.

This may be a warning to us never to allow Christian thinking not to get lost in speculations which do not benefit.

But this threatening danger came on a much greater scale from the Greek side where at that time **Gnosticism** was brewing in the Greek minds and thoughts. And we find it especially in the background of the Pastoral Epistles, the letter to the Colossians, and the gospel and letters of John.

And here, I do not mind spending some time to give a short resume about it. It simply states that spirit is altogether good, and matter is altogether evil, and since God is spirit, then He is altogether good. And since the whole world is matter, and matter is evil, then the whole world is evil.

And since God is good, then He couldn't touch matter, so He couldn't have possibly created the world.

So, God has put out series of emanations, which brought Him far away and distant from this evil world that He would handle it at a distance. And the farthest emanation which is far away from God is very near and intimate to the evil matter. So the farthest emanation would not even know about God and may be even antagonistic to God. And that is how their thought developed and brought them to the belief that there must be two gods, one is good and the other is evil and this is the one who created the world.

Then their thoughts developed more to the association of the god of the Old Testament to the evil god who created the world, and the God of the New Testament to the good or true God. And they made of Jesus to be the nearest emanation to the good or true God. So in essence they didn't put Jesus as God. So now we can see how dangerous and threatening that line of thought to our Christian belief especially in a church in its infancy as expressed earlier.

From the above we can conclude that Gnosticism is based on intellectual thoughts which are beyond the grasp of the common person to understand. So God has blessed certain number of people who would be highly intellectual to be able to understand it, and these are placed in the group of emanations nearer to God.

No wonder Paul was very disturbed by the appearance of Gnosticism in the church, and we can see it clearly in what he wrote in these two letters to Timothy. And as example we quote here some of it:

1st Tim. 1:4 "Nor give heed to fables and endless genealogies."

1:17 "Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, to God who is wise."

2:4 "Who desires all men to be saved and to come to know the truth."

2:5 "For there is one God and one mediator between God and men."

4:7 "But reject profane and old wives' fables."

4:10 "Because we trust in the living God Who is the savior of all men."

6:4 "He is proud knowing nothing, but obsessed with disputes."

6:20 "Avoiding the profane and idle babblings and what is falsely called knowledge."

2nd Tim. 2:16 “But shun profane and idle babblings.”

4:4 “They will turn their ears away from the truth and be turned aside to fables.”

But the danger of Gnosticism was not only intellectual, but it has also very serious moral and ethical consequences.

As we said before the spirit is good and the matter is evil, and since the body is matter, then it is evil, and here they have two opposite views:

- 1) Since the body is evil, then it should be despised and held down. So they forbade men to marry in order to suppress the bodily instincts. They also put very strict laws on foods because the needs of the evil body must as far as possible be eliminated. That is why Paul talks about food in 1st Tim.4:3, 4. Also Gnostics looked at God’s creation as being evil, while Christians look at it as being a noble thing and good gift of God.
- 2) The other view which is completely opposite is that since the body is evil, then it really doesn’t matter what one can do with it. So man can use his body in the most licentious way and it makes no difference, and that is why Paul talks about that in 2nd Tim. 3:6 and in Titus 1:16.

There is still another consequence which concerns the resurrection of the body. Christians believe that after death we shall be resurrected in a spiritual body (1st Cor. 15:42-46), but the Gnostics say there is no such thing as the resurrection of the body (2nd Tim. 2:18).

In the ancient world, whether Jews or Gentiles, they believed that the law is for the bad, but the good are above the law. However there should be law to control the way we live.

Our Christian goodness does not come from fear of the law or judgment, but from fear of disappointing the love of Christ and grieving the Holy Spirit Who dwells in us. Did we ever ponder on the fact that sin breaks God’s heart?

The law whether God’s or worldly governments’ condemns those who break it. In the Kingdom of God there is no law other than the love of God within our hearts, but in our earthly world, things are different, and here Paul lists the sins which must be controlled and condemned by the law. Of course he listed the sins which were prevailing at that time, which paints the church as a tiny island of purity in a vast ocean of viciousness and nastiness. But it doesn’t differ that much from our present time. Let us discuss this list:

Lawless:

They are those who know the law, yet deliberately violate it to satisfy their desires and ambitions.

Insubordinate or undisciplined:

They are those who defy authority, and refuse to obey orders. They are either too proud or too unbridled to accept any control.

Ungodly:

They are those who actively and positively choose the way away from or even against God.

Sinners:

They are those who have no moral standards left, and of useless and lax

character.

Unholy:

They are those who are even worse than the mere lawbreakers. They violate the ultimate decencies of life such as the incidence mentioned by Paul in 1st Cor. 5:1 about the man, who slept with his step mother; or as in the ancient world where a brother marries his sister,

Profane:

They are those who blaspheme, desecrate the sacred things or show irreverence toward them. They disrespect and belittle worshipping God and His laws. They soil everything they touch.

Murderers of fathers and mothers:

They are those who not only physically kill their parents, but also abuse them morally or physically such as striking, insulting, and breaking their hearts.

Under Roman law, the son who strikes his parents was liable to death.

And in the Old Testament, the 5th commandment states that one should honor his father and mother.

And one must always remember that the cruelest blow is not to the body but to the heart.

Murderers and manslayers:

The Old Testament specifically forbade killing in the 6th commandment, and in the New Testament, Jesus broadened it also to include anger (Mat. 5:22).

Fornicators and sodomites:

One cannot imagine how sexual immorality was legalized and permitted in the ancient world, and I mean by that the Heathen world. From Greece westward to India eastward, it was reported how they used their idol worshipping for prostitution. For example in Corinth, the temple of Aphrodite (The goddess of love) had attached to it a thousand priestesses to practice what they called sacred prostitution to bring them nearer to the goddess. These priestesses would go out in the streets at night and solicit their trade on passers by; and the law makers in Athens legalized prostitution and public brothels and to use the revenue to build and maintain their goddess temples.

As for sodomites and homosexuality, it is a well known fact that 14 out of the first 15 Roman Emperors were homosexuals. Some of them went even further to legally marry other men and live with them. It was also a common practice for married men in Rome and Athens to keep aside a man for sexual pleasure.

So, now we can imagine how difficult it was for converted Pagans to follow the new Christian moral code.

It has been truly said that Chastity was the one completely new virtue which Christianity brought into this world.

Kidnappers:

The word kidnap is composed of two parts: kid means a child, and nap means to abduct or take away usually by force.

So, the kidnappers are those who abduct or steal by force.

Here it refers to kidnappers of slaves. And slaves do not necessarily mean the black race. Caucasians were also abducted according to the need for them in the market place. In the Pauline era slavery was an integral part of the ancient

world (Greek and Roman Empires), and kidnapping of slaves was a very lucrative business.

Slaves especially those from Greece constituted very precious possessions, because they were very skilled in art, music and Greek literature.. Their value in the market place varied from few dollars (as few as 40-50) to as high as 5,000 dollars according to their age, beauty, sex, and skill.

So, one can understand why kidnapping of especially beautiful or especially accomplished slaves was a common feature of the ancient life.

Aristotle in his time declared that civilization was founded on slavery, and that there were certain men and certain women who existed only to perform the menial tasks of life for the convenience of the cultured classes.

Liars and perjurers:

These are the ones who did not hesitate to twist the truth to gain dishonorable ends.

Anything else contrary to:

1) Sound teaching:

The word in Greek which is translated “**sound**”, literally means “**Health giving**”. So Paul here is saying that Christianity is an ethical religion. It does not only teach moral life but also teaches rules for healthy life. In other religions, a notoriously wicked and evil man, may be esteemed very religious just because he observes the rituals as appears to others. Those are the ones who feel that washing themselves with water purifies them from all adultery and abominations they committed earlier in the day. Those are the ones who would be sitting in their worship place praying and yet at the same time thinking of the best way to cheat others. They are the ones who give alms in public and hasten to rob others in their trade. They are the ones who fast and go to pilgrim and yet lie and kill; but not so in Christianity. We must remember that worshiping in Christianity is not observing “**Rituals**”, but it means living a pure and clean life and practice what we claim we are.

2) Glorious Gospel:

Our gospel (good news) is glorious because it gives the news of forgiveness for past sins and the power to conquer it in the days to come. It is the good news of mercy, God's cleansing, and God's grace.

3) Comes from God:

The Christian gospel is not the discovery of man; it is the revelation of God. It is the power of God which offers help in time of need.

4) Comes through men:

As Paul says, it was entrusted to him to bring it to others.

God offers all these good news through messengers to share them with others. We must remember that it was not only Paul's job, but it is the job of every Christian to share all these good news with others, and Paul tells the Corinthians and us: “**Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us.**” (2nd Cor. 5:20)

As one can see, Paul has painted a vivid picture of the atmosphere and conditions in which the early church grew up, and can also understand why Paul

wrote these Pastoral Epistles to warn against such things.

b- The true Doctrine of Paul (1:12-17)

Then Paul gives thanks to God. Let us see for what:

1) **Because he was chosen by Christ.**

It seems to me that Paul felt he was lost and then was found. We all know the story of his conversion. It is a very beautiful story mentioned in Acts chapter 9. It is simply as Paul saw it. He was lost in the maze of zeal to his religion that he couldn't find his way out; and all of a sudden, a hand touched him, the hand of the Lord whom he is fighting and persecuting. And when he asked "what do You want me to do?", the voice of the Lord told him to proceed to Damascus and there he will be told what to do. God chose him to do a certain task; and then we hear the same voice again telling Ananias that Paul is a chosen vessel for Him. Paul seems to never forget that.

2) **Because God put His trust in him.**

How can anyone trust the person who persecuted him? How can God trust Paul who persecuted His people and killed and imprisoned and forced them to blaspheme and ran them out of their homes and cities? We ask how, but it is the divine choice and trust. Paul can never forget that; he was forgiven, chosen, and entrusted to be His ambassador to the nations.

3) **Because God had appointed him to a great commission.**

He was appointed to be honored to serve the Lord even to death. Listen to what he told his company and his friends when they urged him not to go to Jerusalem: "**What do you mean by weeping and breaking my heart? For I am ready not only to be bound, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus**" (Acts 21:13).

4) **Because God had empowered him.**

He knew that God never appoint any person for a task without giving him the power to do it. That is why he always said "**Jesus Christ enabled me to do**"

Isn't that a powerful assurance that God always provides us with the necessary power to do what He wants us to do?

After giving thanks, Paul then talks about the mercy of God on him because his action of persecuting the church was out of ignorance. And here one asks if he is saying that according to his previous Jewish background, or is it that he really felt and experienced the unconditional mercy of God? I shall explain what I mean:

A- The Jews believed that the sacrifices they offered to God for forgiveness of sins, apply only to the sins which are done unintentionally or were done out of ignorance, which means that sacrifices never atone for deliberate sins.

B- They also believed that sacrifice can never atone for sin, unless the sinner comes with a contrite heart.

Let us see how this applies to Paul's case. Whatever he did against the church, he did with ignorance before he experienced the unconditional love and mercy of Jesus Christ who forgave him. So according to his Jewish belief, he should be forgiven, but did he come with a contrite heart? Obviously Yes. But what brought him to this stage? There are two factors:

- a- His heart was broken by the kindness and mercy of Jesus Christ, and this he refers to in verse 14 by saying that the grace of God was exceedingly abundant.
- b- The way he was treated by Christians after his conversion such as Ananias who opened his eyes and called him brother in spite of his bad history (Acts 9:10-19). And Barnabas stood by him when the church in Jerusalem regarded him with suspicion (Acts 9:26-28).

According to this beautiful outcome we can see three factors in the conversion of any person, and these are:

- 1) **No one can seek God unless God has sought him first.** In Paul's story, we find that God started first. He appeared to him on his way to Damascus and told him what to do.
- 2) **The will and response of man.** Again we can observe that from Paul's story. Some one as stubborn and insistent as Paul could have not listened to what God told him. After all he has his own free will. And his will was to choose to listen and obey God.
- 3) **This third factor is important to every Christian.** Because in Paul's story again we find that, had the Christian brothers treated him badly, he would have persisted more and more to harm the church. But he saw Christ personally and **he saw him again in the brothers who did good to him afterwards.**

So, it is our duty as Christians to show others the way to Christ by our deeds toward them. We must also give thanks to those who showed us Christ, whose words and example brought us to Him, and we must strive to be the influence which brings others to Him.

They say "it take a man to confess he is wrong". That is what I see here in Paul. He has the courage to confess his sins; and to whom? To his disciple (considering that the master or teacher can never confess to his disciple while the opposite is correct) who is much younger, for in verse 13, he admits that he was formerly a blasphemer, a persecutor and an insolent man. Let us discuss briefly what does this mean:

Blasphemer:

He insulted the church, meaning the believers; he threw hot and angry words at them, and accused them of crimes against God forcing them to blaspheme.

Persecutor:

He used every possible means permitted under the Jewish law to annihilate the Christian church.

Insolent man:

The word for insolent in Greek describes the man who is out to inflict pain for the sheer joy of inflicting it and to hurt and grieve people in such a way to induce shame on the one who is hurt, and simply finds a delight in his own cruelty. That

is how Paul was before experiencing the love and mercy of God. He remembered that and it must have caused grief and sorrow in his heart, so much so that he described himself as the chief of sinners (v. 15)

It may be true that Paul never forgot that he was forgiven, but it is also true that he may have never forgot what he had done either.

But why Paul would never forget his sins, after all it was done in the past and it was done in ignorance and he was forgiven? And why does he declare it in a letter which he knows well that it will be circulated and read in all the churches?

There are four reasons for that:

1) To keep him from pride:

It is said that John Newton, the great preacher and hymn writer, always kept a reminder of his sins fixed on the door of his library where he cannot fail of seeing it every time he goes in and out, so that he cannot think or feel at any day how great he is.

It does man good to remember his sins; it saves him from spiritual pride.

2) To keep him in continuous gratitude to God for His forgiveness:

And also to keep inflaming the love of Jesus in his heart.

When we remember how we have hurt God, those who love us, and our fellowmen, and when we remember how they all forgave us, this must awake the flame of gratitude within our hearts.

3) To constantly urge him to a greater effort:

It is true that God's love to us is undeserved, but when we love any one, we cannot help but trying always to show our love in every possible way. So also when we remember that it was for us that Jesus suffered humiliation and death on the cross, it must compel us to demonstrate our love to Him also.

4) To be a constant encouragement to others:

When one is approaching a very serious operation, it will tremendously encourage him when he sees a person who had the same operation and complete recovery was achieved. When people look at Paul the chief of sinners, and see how he was forgiven, wouldn't that make them feel encouraged that they will be forgiven too?

c- The exhortation to Timothy (1:18 – 20)

The first part of this passage indicates that Timothy must have been sorted out by the prophets to deal with the problem of heresies in the church, and that would have certainly been by the effect of the Holy Spirit. Look at what Amos have said in the past: **“Surely the Lord does nothing without revealing His secret to His servants the prophets.”** (Amos 3:7) Certainly the problem of Gnosticism had reached the ears of the Apostles, and they had a meeting where they decided to dispatch Timothy for this task, exactly like when it was time to spread the good news of salvation to the Gentiles, the Holy Spirit Told the prophets in Antioch to set apart Paul and Barnabas for the work for which He had called them.” (Acts 13:1 – 3).

So in verse 18 Paul charged Timothy to wage the good warfare, according to the prophecies previously made concerning him.

So in essence he tells Timothy that he has been chosen by God and cannot let Him down neither would he put the men who chose him down.

So, we should be aware that when God calls any one of us for a task to do, we dare not refuse it.

Then Paul says “I commit to you”, which is translated “I entrust you” in other versions, which means giving something valuable to keep it safe.

So, what Paul is saying here is: “Timothy, into your hands I am placing a very valuable sacred trust. See that you do not fail.”

God also puts His trust – His honor and His church - in us, let us not disappoint him and see that we do not fail.

Now we need to know what he is entrusted for. The Holy Scripture says “That you may wage the good warfare and in other translations the good campaign. Both mean a continuous action, not one battle or one war, but a war that takes a whole long life.. So we must remember that we are summoned to a long war which goes as long as life does. You can call it a marathon of war.

But this war is not unpleasant, it is a joyful and delightful one in which the warrior is not a slave of duty but a faithful soldier willing to die for his King.

Fine, now a soldier going to war must take weapons with him. Then what are the weapons which Timothy is told to take. They are two:

1) Faith. V.19

One must have faith that the cause he is fighting for is just and good, even in the darkest hour, the faith that will not shrink.

2) Good conscience. V.19

The conscience obliges the person to live in accordance with his own doctrine. A Christian, who does not live according to his doctrine, has lost his conscience, and so he has no weapon to fight with.

Then Paul closes this chapter by mentioning two members of the church who caused trouble and grieved Paul, these are Hymenaeus and Alexander who wrecked their own lives. He mentioned their names again in his 2nd letter to Timothy (2:17 & 4:14 successively).

What did they do?

1) Rejected the guidance of conscience. They listen rather to their own desires than to the voice of God.

2) Relapsed into evil practices. When God is pushed away, all beauty of life goes away too.

3) Were taken to false teaching. This is the ultimate result to pushing God away from one’s life. It starts by doing wrong. Then he tries to find a verse in the Holy Scripture to justify what he has done. So he twists the verse to fit his purpose.

Such people are useless and dangerous. So Paul says that he delivered them to Satan. What does this mean?

!) He could mean excommunicated them. This is a Jewish thought. In the Old Testament, if a man does evil, he is rebuked in public. If this doesn’t work,

then he is cast out from the synagogue for a period of 30 days. If this doesn't work, then he is banned which makes him a person accursed and cast out from society of men and fellowship of God. And this is what the Jews called handed over to Satan.

2) He could mean that he barred them from the church and turned them loose in the world. This thought is based on the assumption that the church is God's territory and the world is Satan's territory.

3) He could mean that he prayed to God to inflict some bodily or physical pain on them so that they may repent and come back with a humble contrite heart. This thought was based on the belief that Satan is the source and cause of all bodily afflictions and diseases and was practiced in the Old Testament (Job 2:6, 7) and in the early church as we see it in the story of Ananias and Sapphira in Acts 5:5, 10; and in the story of blinding Elymas in Acts 13:11. And we notice that Paul did not aim at total physical destruction of these two men but to prick them enough that they may wake up and not to blaspheme.

3) Instructions concerning the church

(2:1 – 3:16)

a- The importance of prayer (2:1 – 8)

At the beginning of this chapter, Paul urges Timothy to pray and make requests for **all** men. This is the universality of the Gospel. Few references are due here: For God so loved the **world** (John 3:16); He reconciled the **world** to himself (2nd Cor. 5:18, 19); He said that when He is lifted up he will draw **All** men to Him (John 12:32); He gave Himself ransom for **All** (1st Tim. 2:6); He desires **All** men to be saved (1st Tim. 2:4).

Every body is included from the slave to the Emperor and from the ignorant to the wise. There are no class distinctions.

It also includes the good and the bad. The church exists to edify the believer and to welcome the unbeliever to be saved.

For a true Christian there is no such thing as enemy in this world.

There should be no one outside our prayers for God desires all people to be saved.

There are four words for prayer:

1) Request:

No one will make a request unless he needs something. So prayer begins with a sense of need. This sense of inability to cope with what we face in life is what makes us look for higher power for help.

2) Prayer:

The only difference between request and prayer is that request can be made to either man or God, but prayer is only made to God.

There are few things which man cannot give when he is requested to, such as forgiveness, strength, certainty which God only can give.

We may have no response because we take our needs to the wrong place.

3) Petition:

It was originally used for common people taking the meaning of holding an intimate conversation with a person, then it was upgraded to mean to enter into a king's presence and submit a petition to him.

This tells us that we have the right to enter into the presence of our King and Lord and bring our petitions up to Him.

4) Thanksgivings:

Prayer does not always mean asking for things, but it also means thanking God for things. Most of us when praying, we bring up a long list of complaints to God and we forget to thank Him for all the other great things He has done for us.

In the pagan world, the people used to bring gifts and put it at the feet of their Idols as an appreciation and thanksgivings.

Let our prayers be a delightful aroma of praise and thanksgivings.

It was a cardinal principle of the communal church prayer to pray for Kings, Emperors and all who are in authority, even if they are persecutors of the church. Paul here is reminding Timothy to do so.

It is amazing that the church no matter how much they suffered from Kings and Emperors, yet it was absolute must to pray for them. Peter says "Fear God, honor the Emperors (1st Peter 2:17).

Tertullian wrote:" We pray for our rulers for the state of the world, for the peace of all things, and for the postponement of the end." Then he added:" Since we know that he has been appointed by God, it is necessary that we should love him, revere and honor him and desire his safety".

Now since we know that we should pray for our rulers, then we must know what to pray for:

1) Peace:

For the freedom from wars, from rebellion, and from anything which would disturb the peace.

2) Godliness and reverence:

Godliness is described as reverence to God and man. It can also describe the person who is so pious, devoutly religious, who would not take any step away from the will of God, just upright, self-controlled and temperate.

As for reverence it carries the meaning of having grace and dignity showing on him. He never forgets the holiness of God or the dignity of man.

Then Paul ends this passage by the greatest truths in Christian faith:

A) There is one God:

This is against the Gnostic belief that there is a Good God and an Evil God.

Our God is the one whom we call Father whose nature is love.

B) There is one Mediator: The man Jesus Christ

Paul says that because the Jews believed that the angels are mediators, and for the Greeks there were also so many mediators who interceded for the gods on their behalf.

There is an interesting fact that we should know, which indicate that the Jews believe that the Ten Commandments were delivered by angels to Moses. This is evident in Galatians 3:19 where Paul says that the law (commandments) was appointed through angels by the hand of mediator. Both the Jews and the

Greeks thought that a man cannot have a direct access to God. Unfortunately there are some sects of Christians who also believe the same, and they pray for the angels and certain saints to intercede for them. But thanks to Our Lord Jesus Christ who removed every barrier between God and the people; and that is why He taught us to address God as our Father when we pray.

Then Paul goes on to call Jesus the one who gave His life a ransom for all. This simply means that it cost Jesus His life and death to tell men of the love of God and to bring men home to Him.

The Christian must not only feel the wonder of the story of Christ's redemption for mankind but also think out its meaning for himself and for the world.

b- The role of women (2:9 – 15)

Few points here must be observed:

A) Prayer:

1) The old Jewish attitude in praying was to outstretch both arms with the palms upward, and the early church inherited this attitude from them, although Tertullian a famous early Christian pioneer said that this attitude depicted the attitude of Jesus upon the cross.

They also believed that when praying one should lift up holy hands; this is according to what Isaiah said that God will not listen to those whose hands are full of blood (Is. 1:15). That is why Paul says here "lifting up holy hands." But as usual the Jews and unfortunately some Christians interpret the word of God literally rather than understanding what it means. It simply means that one must not pray to God while he has no intention to repent his sin and continue doing it. Does this mean that a sinner should not pray to God? Certainly not; but a sinner would be accepted when he prays to God confessing his sin and repenting. Any one can pray to God, but He listens to the one who comes with a contrite heart.

2) He who prays must have no anger in his heart. Human and divine forgiveness goes hand in hand. God will not forgive a person so long as that person does not forgive others (Mat. 6:15); and that is why Jesus taught us in the Lord's Prayer which we recite every Sunday in church and perhaps in other times at our homes. **"and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us."**

Jesus also said **"If you are offering your gift at the altar (meaning praying), and there you remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar; and go first be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift."** (Mat. 5:23, 24).

3) He who prays must not have doubts in his mind. Whatever we pray for, we must believe that God will answer in His own way and according to His own will. Before a person prays for healing he must believe in his heart that God is capable of healing him.

B) Women:

Before judging what Paul has said if it is wrong or right; let us first discuss the background of the people at that time..

The community of people at that time was composed of Jews (converted or not), and Greeks (converts or not).

The Jews treated the woman as a thing to be possessed. She has no saying in anything. She was there only to please her husband and produce children. She has no rights like the slave. She was under complete disposal of her father before marriage and under her husband after marriage. She was neither to be taught nor to teach. She cannot participate in the synagogue activities; and if she goes for worshipping, she should listen, shut up in a certain section of the synagogue or in a gallery. She should not be taught the law. A strict Rabbi said that teaching the law to a woman is like casting pearls before swine.

The man's prayer in the morning was to thank God that He did not create him a Gentile, a slave, or a woman.

The Greeks were even worse. The woman had no value whatsoever and had no rights. Again she was under complete disposal of her husband. She was there for sexual enjoyment and for producing children. She was secluded in her own quarters and not to appear anywhere else. She even would not sit on the same table with her husband and male children. If she had to go out, she should be chaperoned. In Corinth 1000 priestesses were acting prostitutes to bring money for the maintenance and repairs of the temple of Aphrodite, and in Ephesus women did the same for the Temple of Diana.

So living in this manner, the women's sole enjoyment in life was in elaborate dressing and braiding their hair.

Now after knowing all this background, we can see that if a woman took an active part in the church like teaching or even discussing, she would be considered a loose woman, and inevitably the church will be branded as a resort of loose women. Neither Paul then nor we now would like our church to be branded like that, if our society is the same as theirs.

At any rate these early church regulations were not permanent, but they were deemed necessary at that time. And we can see where Paul stands regarding this subject from what he said in Galatians 3:28 where he says "**There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.**" And that is where we stand now.

Furthermore women have great status in the New Testament. We should not forget Mary Jesus' mother who bore, raised, and trained him; nor should we forget Mary Magdalene who had the privilege to follow Jesus and to be the first to see Him after His resurrection; and many more like Priscilla (Acts 18:20), Euodia and Syntyche (Phil.4:2, 3), the four daughters of Philip the evangelist (Acts 21:9), Lois and Eunice the grandmother and the mother of Timothy (2nd Tim. 1:5) and many more who were mentioned by name in Romans 16.

As for the phrase that women will be saved by childbearing, it is a little bit difficult to understand, unless Paul refers to Mary the mother of Jesus who saved all.

Nevertheless, each Jewish woman who gets pregnant would wish deep in her heart that she would be carrying the Messiah who will save all.

But this could be valid if a Jew said it, not Paul because he knew very well that the Messiah had already come.

c- The qualifications for leaders (3:1 – 13)

This section deals with the government in the church of God, and he starts by the bishop.

Caring for the congregation started long time ago in the time of Moses who appointed 70 men to help him to take care of the children of Israel in the wilderness (Num.11:16).

Then after they settled in the Promised Land, elders were elected in every synagogue. These were the real leaders of the community and they did everything for them from leading in worshipping to settling their disputes.

The Spartans had the board of the elders in their government.

The Roman had the Senate which means the elders.

In Egypt at the time of the New Testament, there were elders in every village.

And the word elder in some of the New Testament versions is translated as bishop. And just for our knowledge the word bishop literally means overseer or superintendent.

And as we know, Paul and Barnabas in their 1st missionary trip appointed elders in every city they preached the gospel (Acts 14:23).

Titus was instructed by Paul to appoint elders in all the cities of Crete (Titus 1:5)

Enough for the history of eldership, and let us now look into the qualifications and the duties of the elder.

The Elders:

- 1) They are set apart in public, no secrecy about it.
- 2) They have to undergo a period of testing (V.10). One has to test the material he is building with.
- 3) They were paid for the work they do (1st Tim. 5:18). We must notice here that such a leader is not working for wages. He is working free, but it is the duty of the church to supply him with the means to live.
- 4) They are liable to censure (1st Tim. 5:19 – 22). They have to answer for their stewardship to God and to the people.
- 5) They have to preside over the assembly and to teach the congregation. This means a double duty of administration and teaching.
- 6) The recently converted should not be appointed to this office for two reasons:
 - a- Lest they become inflated with the sense of self importance. We must remember that through his pride Lucifer rebelled against God.
 - b- The conceited leader is a bad example to others inside and outside the church and his unworthy conduct becomes ammunition to the outsiders who criticize Christians and their church, and to the insiders who are young in faith.
- 7) They must know well how to rule their homes, for if they cannot, then how can they rule the church (V. 4, 5)?
- 8) They must be well thought of and respected by those who are outside the church (V. 7), for by their good conduct they can represent Christ to others.

Now how their character should be?

In fact what Paul says here about the character of the Christian leader (elder),

coincides very well with what the Heathen Stoic thought about their leaders.

1) He must be of such fine character as to be beyond criticism.

The Christian leader may not be fully able to arraign perfection, but the fact remains that he must seek to offer to the world a life of such purity that he leaves no loopholes for criticism.

2) He must be married to one wife.

That was because at that time the heathen men as well as a good number of the Jews practiced polygamy.

Josephus the well known Jewish historian wrote: "By ancestral custom a man can live with more than one wife".

But the fact here is that singles are excluded, and that is very simple to understand; for how can we expect a single man to solve a family problem whether it concerns a wife, a son, or a daughter?

And being married to one wife does not mean he cannot marry after his wife's death, but it means literally one wife at a certain time and generally loyal with no other women in his life meaning not playing around. We must observe that chastity was **never** heard of in the heathen world, and it is said that **the totally new virtue that Christianity brought to the world is chastity.**

And in as much as marriage was desirable, divorce was much easier in the two worlds (Heathen and Jews) most of the times for no reason at all. And the wives as mentioned before had no rights again in both worlds. As a result to that, the Jewish women refused to marry and Jewish men grew old without marriage, and that was very difficult for the men because a Jewish man must marry otherwise he would not be considered a man. So to solve this problem a Rabbi called Simon Ben Shetah introduced a legislation by which the husband can only keep the dowry which his wife gave him at marriage so long as they are married, but if he divorces her, he is absolutely liable to repay it even if he had to sell his hair. This checked divorce to a great extent.

Now we can understand why Paul wrote this restriction about being a husband to one woman only..

The Christian church must demonstrate the chastity, the stability and the sanctity of the Christian home.

3) He must be sober.

He must not over-indulge in wine.

In the ancient world wine was continually consumed. The water supply was very inadequate and sometimes dangerous, so wine became the natural drink.

That is why later in this letter, Paul tells Timothy: "No longer drink only water, but use a little wine for your stomach's sake and your frequent infirmities." (1st Tim. 5:23). And the custom then was to mix three parts of water with two parts of wine to make the water drinkable.

So far wine is o.k., but it is bad when the person indulges in it and get drunk, and the writer of the Proverbs said:" Strong drink is given to those who are ready to perish (Prov. 31:6). And in another place he says:" Wine is a mocker, strong drink a brawler (Prov. 20:1). And again he says:" Who has woe? Who has sorrow? Who has contentions? Who has complaints? Who has wounds without cause? Who has redness of eyes? Those who linger long at the wine" (Prov.

23:29, 30). And in the same chapter verses 31, 32 “Do not look at the wine when it is red, when it sparkles in the cup, when it swirls around smoothly, at the last it bites like a serpent, and stings like a viper. And at the end he says: “When shall I awake, that I may seek another drink?”, indicating addiction.

And the Holy Scripture is full of terrible stories of what happened to people through over-indulgence in wine. Look at what happened to Noah (Gen. 9:18 – 27), and what happened to Lot (Gen 19:30 – 38), and to Amnon (2nd Sam. 13:28, 29).

And the drunk was disgraced in both the Heathen world and the church.

4) He must be of sound mind.

He must also be discreet, self-controlled, and having complete control over sexual desires. He should have entire command over passions and desires.

5) He must be of good conduct or well behaved.

This describes a man whose life is beautiful, and in whose character all things are harmoniously integrated, whose inner control issues outward beauty.

Briefly he should be the one in whose life Christ shines.

6) He must be hospitable.

This is a quality on which the writers of the New Testament stressed, for example Paul wrote to the Church of Rome to practice hospitality (Rom. 12:13), and Peter wrote “Practice hospitality ungrudgingly to one another (1st Peter 4:9). The Christian leader must have an open heart and an open house.

In the early churches there were many wandering teachers and preachers who needed accommodation in their travels. The conditions of the inns were very filthy swarmed with bugs in the bed sheets like fleas and lice. Moreover the inn-keepers them selves were pirates who used to steal the guests’ possessions and hold them for ransom. So to find accommodation in a Christian home was such a blessing.

7) He must have an ability and desire to teach.

Instruction in Christianity is the prime duty of the Christian preacher or leader. The dilemma we face nowadays is that most Christians do not know what they believe in. The second duty is to practice what he preaches. Even the man with no gift of words, can teach by living in a way which reflects his master’s grace.

8) He must be the man who assaults no one.

The early regulations of the Apostolic Canons indicate that, “**if a bishop, priest, or a deacon smite a believer, he should be deposed, for nowhere has the Lord taught this. When he was smitten, He smote not**”.

It is very unlikely that a Christian leader smite another Christian nowadays, but bullying, irritating,, and ill-tempered speech fall into this category.

9) He must be gentle.

Aristotle describes gentleness as being the quality which corrects the law, when the law errs because of its generality. It is the spirit which rectifies and redresses the injustice of justice. It is for the judge who looks to the character of the accused on the long run and not in the present moment.

On the other hand it recognizes the danger that ever waits upon the assertion of legal rights, lest they should be pushed into moral wrongs. This means abuse of the law.

A gentle person remembers the good rather than the evil, and if there is a matter of debate he can settle it in love not in court.

10) He must be a man of peace.

The real Christian leader must not want more than peace with his fellow-men.

11) He must be free from the love of money.

His services should not be for gain or for profit. There are values which are far beyond all money prices.

Many of the qualifications of the deacons are the same as for the elders.

However, there is one that is added:

12) Not double-tongued. This is translated in some versions as straight, which means speaking with two voices saying one thing to one and another to another. This of course is hypocrisy and smooth talk.

And it is clear that the deacon, who does well in his office, can be promoted to a higher office which would be an elder, and he would have gained experience and confidence that he can look any man in the face.

Then Paul moves on to advice about the deacons' wives or other women engaged in similar service.

There are some other tasks of kindness which men cannot properly do, this falls in the domain of women who can easily and comfortably do in helping other women, such as instructing female converts, and in particular presiding and attending at their baptism which was by total immersion.

In helping others, things may be heard, so repeating it may cause irreversible damage.

We must understand that Paul forbade women to gossip not because he disliked women as many think, but it was the style of life that forced it, for men worked during the day, but women did not work and stayed at home, so it was inevitable that they have to pass the time talking to each other.

These women must also have dignity. Christianity liberated women from the slavery which was forced on them by the different societies whether Jews or Greeks. But the danger of misuse of that liberty was always there. So it was inevitable that some regulations have to be enforced which enabled women to hold their position in the church in a proud way.

d- The reason for Paul's letter (3:14 – 16)

In these three verses, Paul explains why he wrote all the other pastoral epistles. He says "To tell men how to behave within the church. This means how to walk and converse. It describes man's whole life and character, especially his relationship with others.

This is very important because the church congregation is a body of people who in essence love God and each other, otherwise the church will not function.

And here Paul puts four functions of the church:

1) The church is the household of God.

This means that it is the family of God.

A broken family cannot function, so also is the church, for unless all members act

as brothers who love each other and care for each other, it will not function.

2) The church is the Assembly of God.

The word assembly in Greek literally means those who answered and accepted the call; and in this case it is the call of God. This doesn't mean that God is selective as some people always think.

God sends out the call to all people, and few respond.

3) The church is the pillar of the truth.

The church's duty is to hold up the truth in such a way that all people may see it. This is the explanation that seems most logic. But there is another explanation. Paul wrote this letter to Timothy who was at that time doing God's work in Ephesus. The People of Ephesus worshipped the goddess Diana (Acts 19:28) whose temple was so magnificent that it was considered one of the Seven Wonders of the World. One of its features was its pillars which were 127 in number and each one was a master piece of art in itself. And each one of them was a gift from a king. They were made of marble and some were studded with Jewels and overlaid with gold. So, here Paul may mean that the Church displays the magnificent truth.

4) The Church is the ground (buttress) of the truth.

As we all know the buttress is the support of the building, which keeps it standing intact.

In this world where the majority unwelcome the truth, the church supports it against all who seek to destroy it.

What are the secrets which God has revealed to us?

1) He was manifested in the flesh.

This stresses the humanity of Jesus. Through Him we can identify with God, as one said "Look at Jesus and you will see the mind and the heart and the actions of God in a form that man can understand".

2) He was justified in the Spirit (vindicated by the Spirit).

This statement is a little bit difficult to understand.

a- It could mean that Jesus through out his life on earth was sinless by the power of the Holy Spirit to whom He perfectly submitted Himself.

b- it could mean that all His claims were vindicated by the power of the Holy Spirit who dwelt in Him. This is evident from the incidence when the scribes and Pharisees accused Him that He healed by the power of the devil, He answered that if He casts out devils by the Spirit of God, then the Kingdom of God had come upon them (Mat. 12:28).

c- It could refer to the Holy Spirit Descending on Him when He was baptized. (Mat. 3:16).

d- And lastly it could be in reference to the Resurrection. He was crucified as a criminal but through the power of the Holy Spirit, He rose again.

However, no matter how we take it, it means that the Spirit is the power Who proved Jesus to be what He claimed to be.

3) He was seen by angels.

Again this statement can be interpreted in three ways:

a- It may refer to Jesus' being before He came to earth.

b- It may refer to His life on earth. The Holy Scripture tells us that after He was

tempted by the devil, the angels came and served Him.(Mat. 4:11 & Mark 1:13).
c- Lastly it may refer to Paul's statement that Jesus brought the truth even to the angelic and demonic powers who had never known it (1st Cor. 2:7, 8).
In view of all that it means that the work of Jesus is so tremendous that it includes both heaven and earth.

4) He was preached among the Gentiles.

Jesus did not come for one nation; He came for all nations, and is the savior of the whole wide world. There are many references to that in the Holy Scripture but I'll mention two only:

a- In your seed **all the nations** of the earth shall be blessed (Gen 22:18).

b- For God so loved **the world** that He gave His only begotten Son , that whosoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life (John 3:16).

5) He is believed on in the world.

It is marvelous to notice that after Christ's death and resurrection, the number of believers were 120 (acts 1:15). Seventy years later the word of salvation had spread allover from Palestine to Rome. And now the whole world knows about Jesus Christ and His salvation.

6) He was received (taken) up in glory.

Of course this refers to His ascension.

The story of Jesus begins and ends in heaven. He lived as a servant. He was branded as a criminal. He was crucified as a curse. He resurrected to declare victory and He ascended in glory.

4) Instructions concerning false teachers

(4:1 – 16)

a- The description of false teachers (4:1 - 5)

In the latter times:

The Jews believed in two ages: The present age and the age to come.

The present age is altogether bad and in the grip of the evil powers.

But **the age to come** is the perfect age of God and all goodness.

But the present age will not end smoothly into the age to come, because in between there comes **the day of the Lord** (Also called the Last day or the day of visitation). On that day the world would be shaken from its foundations, and there will be a last supreme battle with evil, then a last universal judgment, then the age to come.

All the apostles were Jews and they were so taught, and this is reflected in their writings.

So Paul says that in the latter times which would be understood as the times just before the last day or the day of the Lord, there will be heresies and false teachers who will lead many astray. This all has been predicted by Jesus in

Matthew 24, and in Mark 13:22., and Paul looks for the emergence of the man of sin, the son of perdition who would set himself up against God (2nd Thess. 2:3). Those false teachers appeared in Ephesus where Timothy was. They were smooth-tongued, hypocrites, and their consciences were branded (seared with hot iron) by Satan. Satan recruited them to oppose the men of God.

As mentioned earlier, the heresies in Ephesus were mainly Gnostic. We mentioned also that the whole core of Gnosticism is that: spirit is good and matter is evil. Consequently food is evil because it is matter; and the body is also evil because it is matter, so it is not right to feed the evil body. So the heretics taught that men should abstain from food. They also taught that men should abstain from marriage for the instincts of the body are evil and must be entirely suppressed.

This belief came to its highest point between monks and hermits of the 4th century mostly in Egypt where they lived in the desert spending their lives mortifying the flesh by not eating uncooked food, abstaining completely from meat, tying themselves to a pole standing up all night so that it would be impossible to sleep, deliberately eating salt in mid summer and then abstain from water, or neglecting cleaning their bodies till vermin drops from their bodies when walking because they believed that clean body means unclean soul.

But they forgot that God created everything good “**And God saw everything that He had made and behold it was very good**” (Gen. 1:31). He created food to nourish the body “**Every moving thing that lives shall be meat for you**” (Gen. 9:3). And He created male and female for the purpose of marriage “**God created man in His own imagemale and female He created them, and God blessed them, and God said to them, be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth** (Gen. 1:27, 28).

However they did not believe in that because as mentioned earlier the god who created the evil world is an evil god.

All we have are God’s gifts by which we live, move and have our being, so much so that we forget that they are gifts of God. We must give thanks for His inexpressible gifts, and share it with others.

As for those who still believe in mortifying their bodies to please God, they must understand that the true Christian does not serve God by enslaving himself with rules and regulations.

b- The description of true teachers (4:6 – 16)

This passage is packed with practical advice to all who serve God.

1) It tells us how to instruct others. The Greek word for instruct is not to give orders, but rather to advise or suggest. It is a gentle, modest and humble word. The leader who teaches should not be dogmatic forcing his views, but rather as if he is telling the others what they already know. Guidance given in a gentle way will always be more effective than bullying instructions.

2) It tells us how to face the task of teaching. A teacher must be continually learning. He must daily know Jesus before he can introduce Him to others.

3) It tells us what to avoid. Timothy is advised to avoid unprofitable tales. One can easily get lost when branching away from the subject discussed.

4) It tells us what to seek. Christian must seek soul training. There is a reason for that. In the ancient world especially in Greece body training was of utmost importance for the person who competes in Olympics and other competitive occasions. So every city was full of Gymnasia. But the ancient world was riddled with homosexuality, and the gymnasia were the hot beds for this particular sin. That is why Paul advises Timothy to train in godliness because it will benefit the whole body and soul, and its effect lasts till eternity.

5) It tells us that our goal is to live godly so that we can be with God in eternity. The greatness of the goal makes the toil worth while.

As expected a leader should be mature enough to be able to lead the congregation. It is laid down in the apostolic canons that a bishop should not be below the age of 50. Timothy was far younger than that. He was about 30 – 32. That was a minus in his credentials since most of the congregation is older than him. So he was looked at as being immature to be a leader. So Paul advises him to let no one despise his youth. This is very difficult to achieve except by proving his fitness for leadership by his conduct which should be above reproach. So what can he do to achieve that?

1) First is by love (Agape). The person who can offer love regardless of all what is told against him has that Agape; and that is the unconditional love that God has for us. The love for a spouse or children is an emotion that comes from the heart, but the love for others especially those who seek hurting you comes from the will. This is the Agape of God which is His will is to love the entire world; it is not an emotion.

2) Secondly is by loyalty. It is the loyalty to Christ no matter what the circumstances are.

3) Thirdly is the purity. This is the hallmark of the Christian.

Governor Pliny reporting to his superior about the Christians in Bithynia, said: "They are accustomed to bind themselves by an oath to commit neither theft, nor robbery, nor adultery; never to break their word; never to deny a pledge that has been made when summoned to answer."

The service in the early church was composed of reading the Scripture, followed by teaching, then a word of exhortation, and lastly it ends with prayer.

Paul here is telling Timothy to do that. So we shall discuss each separately.

A) Reading the Scripture:

In the time of the early church there was no books available except the Old Testament, and these were in the form of scrolls made either of parchment or papyrus; and of the New Testament whatever available of it were the letters written by Paul, Peter and John, and whatever was written of the gospels which were called the memoire of the apostles which circulated between the churches. So the beginning of the service was by one of the members standing up and reading some of these scriptures.

B) This is followed by teaching:

Teaching in any church is essential, since people differ in their understanding and interpreting the doctrines according to their maturity in faith, and also in their

levels of education. There is no use in exhorting a Christian unless he knows what he believes in. The pastor who has dedicated several years of his life studying the doctrines of our faith would be the best person to expound the word of God.

C) Then exhortation:

After teaching the word of God, the teacher should teach how to apply the Christian truth in our lives and to act accordingly.

D) Then it ends by prayer:

People gather in the church in the presence of God because He promised to be amidst our gatherings. So there is no use of our worship unless we talk to Him. It is even rude and impolite if He is amidst us and we do not talk to Him.

That is what Paul advised Timothy to do.

Then he moves to list the duties of the leader:

1) He is set apart for a noble task:

A leader of a church is commissioned by the Church. So he must always remember that his noble task is towards the community he serves.

2) He should always replenish his theological faculties:

Paul advises Timothy to continuous reading. Paul himself did that in spite of the fact that he was busy travelling mostly on foot or by sea, yet he made the time to read. At the end of his 2nd letter to timothy, he urged him to come soon and to bring with him the books especially the parchments which he left in Troas (2nd Tim. 4:13).

3) He is to concentrate on what he does:

Looking after many things may dissipate his energy and looses concentration on the most important matters.

4) He must progress in what he is doing:

A leader who does not progress becomes stagnant over the years and the stagnant will be left behind and ultimately he will fail his mission.

5) Instructions concerning pastoral responsibilities

(5:1 – 6:2)

a- The responsibility to sinning members (5:1, 2)

As For reprimanding the wrong-doers, it is always difficult to do In a graceful way, and it is even more difficult to reprimand a person who is older than the leader. Rebuke or reprimand is not usually taken easily by others. It hurts and may even lead to resentment. In a congregation it may even lead to leaving the church. So a leader must be careful how to deal with such problems.

In these two verses, Paul tells Timothy how to deal with that. In love and respect one can point out some points without hurting others' feelings especially the elders. I have fond memories of my father who was always keen to teach us - his children - how to respect elders regardless of their social status; standing up in respect for them when they arrive and rushing to secure a chair for them to sit. So Paul tells Timothy to treat the elder as father, for no body rebukes his father

even if he doesn't like what he does; and to treat the elder women as mothers, and the younger men and women as brothers and sisters. Isn't that the brotherly love that Jesus taught us?

b- The responsibility to widows (5:3 – 16)

The early church established a system of helping the needy especially the widows (Acts 6:1); but actually the credit should be given to the Jews who established that system long before.

The definition of a widow is the person who lost his or her spouse. And though presently we use this term generally for those whose spouse died, yet it was not so in the early church, because most of the converted pagan men had more than one wife (we have seen before that Paul stressed on the fact that the church leader, whether an elder or a deacon should be a husband of one wife).

So after conversion, he cannot be a polygamist; so he had to depart with all of them except the one whom he wishes to live with, even if all the wives were also converted.

These ones who had been sent away were also considered widows because in a sense they have lost their husbands.

These too have to be taken care of by the church.

But there is a point here to be observed. The widows or even any needy who has children or relatives, then they should take care of them, so that the church can take care of those who are in need and no one to help. The Greek law was very definite that the duty of the children is to support their aged parents.

And the 5th commandment states that one should honor his parents (Duet. 5:16). And Aristotle in the ancient times said we must help our parents before others, since we owe our nourishment to them who are the authors of our being, even before ourselves.

Unfortunately in our days many children expect the State to look after their parents. But helping the parents to the Christian should be highly esteemed as a gesture of love, honor, and respect.

Lastly, the church support to the needy should not be considered a license for the children to neglect their parents.

It has been postulated that in the church of Ephesus, there was an official order of elderly women who were set apart for special services. This could be true because the regulations of the apostolic constitutions laid it down that three widows shall be appointed, two to persevere in prayers for those who are being tempted, and the third was to assist women who are sick ready to perform day or night duties. Such women were not ordained like the elders or deacons, but they were set apart by prayer for the work they had to do; and they should be not less than 60 years old, and also they must fulfill seven qualifications:

1) They must be an example of purity and fidelity.

2) They must have earned an attested reputation for good works. Nothing discredits a church like unworthy office worker, and of course the opposite is true.

3) They must have nourished children which could have been their own or rescued by them from the hands of those who would turn the abandoned children into prostitutes and slaves.

4) They must have been hospitable to strangers; for the open door of the Christian home is always a precious thing for strangers especially in a time when the inns were very filthy, expensive and notoriously immoral.

5) They must have washed the feet of the saints. Washing the feet was a menial task performed by slaves. We should not take it literally, but it means that she would be willing humbly to do the menial services in the church, for which she may receive no thanks or recognition.

6) They must have helped those in trouble, especially for those who were persecuted for their faith.

7) They must have devoted themselves to all good works, obeying Christ and helping others.

As you see these are the qualifications by which every Christian should adorn him or herself.

There are other qualifications which Paul did not mention, but they are laid down in the apostolic constitutions, such as being meek, quiet, gentle, sincere, discreet, not given to evil-speaking, not double-tongued, not busybody, and others which all amount to be a good example for others.

The last section may seem strange; but it reflects the condition of the society in which the early church found itself. In that society it was practically impossible for a single or a widowed woman to earn her living in an honest way. There was no trade or profession open for her, so inevitably she would be driven to prostitution; so the Christian widow had to remarry or dedicate herself to the service of the church otherwise she would be sitting idle, and in that case she would tend to gossip, repeat tales from house to house each time with an addition of a little malice, so she becomes a busybody. And of course this is a good field for Satan to play his tricks. That is why Paul advises that the younger women should get married and look after her husband and children. As for verses 11 and 12, Paul means the ones who dedicated themselves to Christ, then changed their mind later. He feels that for a woman to dedicate herself to Christ, and then she has taken Him as her groom, and later if she leaves him then this is a sin as being divorced from her living husband (because Jesus Christ is alive). We must not argue if divorce is right or wrong, but the Rabbinic law says that the woman is bound to her husband so long as he lives.

c- The responsibility to elders ((5:17 – 25)

There are few points here to be observed:

(1) Every one who works deserves his wages. Jesus said “**The laborer is worthy of his wages**” (Luke 10:7); and in the Old Testament “**You shall not muzzle an ox while it treads out the grain**” (Deut. 25:4). But those who work more, says Paul, should be rewarded double in honor and wages, especially those who work hard in teaching and preaching.

(2) The Jewish law states that no man should be condemned on the evidence of one witness only; it should be two or more (Deut. 19:15). Paul stressed on that.

(3) The church must never condone sin. If a member persists in sin, he or she should be publicly rebuked. This may sound humiliating, but it is justified if it turns him or her to the right track.

(4) Leaders in the church should perform their job with no partiality or favoritism. No one is above the law of the church; and let no one think that he or she can do wrong and get away with it.

(5) Membership of the church is never to be treated lightly. So Paul advises Timothy not to be hasty in approving or appointing any one to an office in the church before he is fully sure about the eligibility of that person to the office which he shall take..

It was the custom in the early church as it was in the ancient world to put the hands on the one who did wrong but came back repenting. So it may be that Paul is telling Timothy not to be hasty in doing that till he is quite sure that his repentance is genuine.

Verse 23 is about drinking wine which some people take it as a license to indulge in drinks. But the reason that Paul said to Timothy not to drink water only but to drink a little wine for his stomach's sake, was for two reasons:

(A) In the ancient time the water sources and its storage were very filthy and unhealthy. So water was practically undrinkable. So it was the custom to mix two parts of wine with three parts of water to make it drinkable knowing scientifically or not that wine removes the filth from the water.

(B) Timothy was sickly all the time and having trouble with his stomach, probably because of that bad water. So Paul tells him not to drink water alone, but to take a little wine for that reason. We should also put in mind that all the remedies they had were wine and olive oil. And they used them for everything. So perhaps Paul was prescribing that as a remedy for his frequent infirmities.

Man sees the deeds of others, but God knows their intentions. This holds good for the good and evil deeds. There are some whose sins are apparent to every one. But there are others who live in utter sin but not apparent because they live under false pretence of righteousness.

In the same token, there are some whose good deeds are apparent to all, but there are also some who do good in secret. But whether good or evil, God sees it all. So let us not judge others by the appearance, and leave the judgment to God.

d- The responsibility to slaves (6:1, 2)

On the first look at this passage, one may get the impression that it is instructions to the converted Christian slaves as how to behave towards their Christian masters versus their Pagan masters. This is true, but it is actually for all of us who work under or for some body else. So the advice here is to do our Job in full capacity with no murmuring or complaints, knowing that spiritual equality does

not give us the license to be slack or inefficient; and knowing also that we willingly are serving our masters, fellowmen and above all our heavenly Master. There is a very important note I should discuss it here. There are so many Christians who feel that Paul advocates class distinction and approves of slavery, otherwise he should have called for freedom from slavery. We must not be hasty into judgment. The fact which most of us are unaware of is that there were 60 million slaves (more white than blacks because the people of every conquered country were taken as slaves) all over the Roman Empire who were treated very badly not only because they were private possessions whose masters can do anything they wish to them, but because of their huge number they were a threat to the Empire if ever happened that they rioted; the thing which would have certainly happened if Paul called for freedom of slaves. This would have certainly resulted in civil war, mass murder, and a complete discredit to the early church. But as a wise master builder and of course through the guidance of the Holy Spirit, he left this matter for the time where Christianity and its loving doctrines permeated slowly into the world, and slaves were freed voluntarily and not by force.

6) Instructions concerning the man of God *(6:3 – 21)*

a- The peril of false teaching (6:3 – 5)

The early church was not in proper order as our present church. There was no permanent teacher settling in a certain church. They were travelers from one city to the other. So until the time when he passes again in his round trip, any one could stand up and preach. This created competition; as which of them would have delivered the best speech. And because their biblical knowledge was limited, so they started fabricating doctrines of their own. Soon enough it became a means to gain money out of it. These were the false teachers. But that was not something new, because the Pagan world was full of something like that especially in Greece where the people were very eager to hear some one talking. So there were some who called themselves Sophists which means men of wisdom what travelled from one city to another delivering speeches and attracting people around them, and they earned lucrative living from that. Paul describes them as:

1) Proud or conceited. His target was not to display Christ but himself. Our present societies are not immune to that. There are lots of them whose main concern is to gain followers for themselves than for Christ; and more concerned to press their own views rather than to present the word of God.

2) Obsessed with disputes and arguments over words. He speculates and then argue based on these speculations. Arguments about doctrines do not necessarily make a good Christian. Arguments about Theological statements do not make a good Christian either. As one of the earlier Christian fathers said:” to

know Christ is not to speculate about the mode of His incarnation, or if He is equal or inferior to the Father, but to know His saving benefits”.

This style of living may well be nothing other than a mode to escape from the challenge of Christian living.

3) Never speaks the truth in love. He is always suspicious of those whose opinions are different from his. And when his views are not accepted, he becomes angry, envious, full of rage even to the extent of verbally attacking whom he considers as opponent; all because he is driven by self exaltation.

4) He commercializes religion. He is making career out of his preaching. He is not out there to preach salvation and the love of God, but to fill his pocket and belly.

From such persons Paul advises Timothy to separate himself.

b- The peril of loving money (6:6 – 10)

The Greek word for contentment means complete self-sufficiency in which the frame of the mind is completely independent of all outward things carrying the secret of happiness within itself. So it means the happiness that comes from within and not from without, as would be caused by possession of things.

When Epicurus the Greek philosopher was asked about the secret of happiness, he answered “**Add not to a man’s possessions but take away from his desires.**” A rabbi once was asked who is rich, and he answered he who is content with his lot,

A true Christian knows that all the things in the world will not make a man happy if he knows neither friendship nor love.

A Greek philosopher once said, “**I came naked to this world, and I will leave it naked. There are no pockets in the shroud to keep what I have collected.**”

However, there are two things that a person can take to God:

- 1) Himself in a pure shameless status presentable To God.
- 2) His relationship with God.

Content comes when we find our wealth in the love and friendship of God.

The love of money, not money itself, is the root of all evil, says the Scripture.

The love of money may lead to serve desires and lusts. It may facilitate the path to wrong- doing.

There are some special dangers involved in the love of money:

- (1) It produces the thirst for more. A Roman Wiseman said the love of money is like drinking sea- water; the more you drink of it the more you become thirsty.
- (2) It makes man selfish. It fixes man’s thoughts upon himself, and others to him become mere means or obstacles in the path of his enrichment.
- (3) It is founded on the illusion of security. This is false because money cannot buy happiness, love, or children; and it cannot insure against sorrow and death.
- (4) Its end result is anxiety not security. The more one gathers the more he fears losing it.
- (5) It paves the wrong path. It can easily lead a man into wrong ways of getting

it, leading at the end to sorrow and remorse especially when he is caught by the authorities; not only that but he may lose his health running to get it.

c- The proper character and motivation of a man of God (6:11 – 16)

Now the epistle is coming to its end.

So Paul is addressing Timothy as **Man of God**. This is one of the great Old Testament titles. It was given to Moses (Deut. 33:1). Then it was given to all the prophets and messengers of God as in 1st Sam. 2:27; 9: & 1st Kings 12:22.

This is a great honor to be bestowed on Timothy to be put in the same rank as being a prophet or messenger of God. This is perhaps to remind him that he is commissioned by God His king and Lord.

Then he asks him to pursue some important virtues.

1) Righteousness: This is the head of all virtues. It means to be right in the eyes of God.. The righteous man is he who does his duty to God and to his fellow-men.

2) Godliness: This is the virtue of the man who never ceases to be aware that all his life is lived in the presence of God.

3) Faith: This is the virtue of the man who lives all his life faithful and loyal to God because he believes in His promises

4) Love: This is the virtue of the man who, even if he tried, could not forget the love of God for him and for his salvation.

5) Patience: This doesn't mean to sit folded-handed doing nothing about his afflictions. It is a victorious endurance. It is the virtue which does not accept the afflictions of life but conquering them.

6) Gentleness: This is the virtue of the man who never blazes into anger yet he stands for what is right. It is the man who forgives yet knows how to correct. It is the man who lives humbly yet pride of his calling from God.

Then Paul reminds Timothy about the foundations on which he stands:

A- His calling: This means the vows he took when he was baptized. In the early church baptism was for all adults who were originally Pagans and then came to faith. The baptized person confesses his faith and witnesses to all men that he has taken Christ as his Savior and Lord.

B) His good confession: As Jesus Christ confessed before Pontius Pilate that He is King (Luke 23:3), then suffered, so also he who confesses Him as King and Lord must also suffer.

C) That Christ will come again. The Christian is not working to satisfy men but to satisfy God. In all what he does he must always ask himself is this good enough to win the approval of Christ?

D) That God is the King of Kings: He is the Lord of every Lord. He is the only One who possesses the gift of eternal life. He is the One whose holiness and majesty, no one can ever dare look upon them.

d- The proper handling of treasures (6:17 – 19)

In this passage Paul sends a message to the rich people in the congregation:

1- Not to be proud. They must not think they are better than others or look down at others, and never to set their hopes on wealth because things change.

2- Use wealth for good. They must be willing to share with their fellow-men.

By this they build for themselves a good foundation in the world to come.

Christianity does not say that wealth is a sin, but how to use it. If it is used for nothing but to feed his pride, then it will ruin his soul. But if it is used to help and bring comfort to others then it will enrich his soul.

e- The proper handling of truth (6:20, 21)

As we mentioned in the very beginning, the name Timothy means he who honors God. In this passage, it may well be that Paul is reminding Timothy of his name and what it means.

1) Guard what was committed to your trust. The word trust in Greek literally means deposit whether in a bank or with a friend. This deposit must be kept safe and be returned in full when demanded. In Christianity it is the same. We must keep what we have been given safe so that when it is demanded in time we must give it back in full. We have been given the word of God and we must keep it safe and see that it will be given back to those who have not heard of it. If we cannot give it back then all the others including our children are robbed of such a precious message. We are not only the possessors but also the trustees of this faith. What we have received we must also hand on.

2) Avoid the profane and idle babblings and contradictions of what is falsely called knowledge. Here Paul is simply advising Timothy not to make the church a battle-ground of theological arguments and debates. Christianity is not something to argue about, but something to live by.

Jews and Greeks equally used to argue about anything and even more about nothing, but they found pleasure in that. This usually left them with doubt and uncertainty in what they believed in.

Then he closes by the grace of God with all.

Paul's Second Epistle To Timothy

Outline:

- 1) Greeting and thanksgiving** (1:1 – 5).
- 2) The perseverance of a man of God** (1:6 – 18).
 - a- The exhortation (1:6 – 11).
 - b- The examples (1:12 – 18).
 - i- Paul (1:12 – 14).
 - ii- Onesiphorus (1:15 – 18).
- 3) The patterns of a man of God** (2:1 – 26).
 - a- Paul (2:1, 2).
 - b- A soldier (2:3, 4).
 - c- An athlete (2:5).
 - d- A farmer (2:6, 7).
 - e- Jesus (2:8 – 13).
 - f- A worker (2:4 – 19).
 - g- A vessel (2:20 – 23).
 - h- A servant (2:24 – 26).
- 4) The perils of a man of God** (3:1 – 17).
 - a- Facing apostasy (3:1 – 9).
 - b- Defeating apostasy (3:10 – 17).
- 5) The preaching of a man of God** (4:1 – 5).
 - a- The charge to preach (4:1, 2).
 - b- The need for preaching (4:3 – 5).
- 6) Concluding remarks** (4:6 – 18).
 - a- Paul's triumph (4:6 – 8).
 - b- Paul's needs (4:9 – 18).
- 7) Paul's farewells** (4:19 – 22).

1) Greeting and thanksgiving (1:1 – 5)

Paul calls himself Apostle. Apostle is derived from the Greek word Apostolos which means messenger. So according to the Holy Scripture he is a messenger of God. And of course the question here would be to whom and for what?

By the will of God:

This phrase indicates that he was chosen and commissioned by God to do a certain job. God choose people to do certain jobs. He chose Moses to lead His people out of Egypt. He chose Samuel to be the prophet for Israel. He chose David to reign on the kingdom of Israel. And one can talk and talk about the choices of God, but we should not forget that God has also chosen each and every one of us to do a certain job.

According to the promise of life which is in Jesus Christ:

Here is the why. He wanted him to be the instrument of spreading the good news of the new life that went out of Him to all the people through Jesus Christ. So, as that was God's purpose with Paul, it is His purpose with us also. From Adam people inherited the sinful nature which led to death, but in Jesus Christ people were granted eternal life; which was God's promise fulfilled. Then Paul expresses the purpose of his letter which is inspiring and strengthening Timothy for his task in Ephesus which was a great burden and responsibility on him; since as we know from the 1st letter that he was battling against the heresies which were serious threat to the church there.

So, Paul reminds him of certain facts:

1) His own confidence in him:

Nothing can encourage a person more than expressing your confidence in him. He in turn wouldn't fail this confidence.

2) His family's background:

He came from a believing family, his mother Eunice and grandmother Lois; and sure he wouldn't fail them either.

3) Him been set apart:

Timothy was set apart by the Holy Spirit and by laying Paul's hand on him. Once this happens then the honor of the church and its reputation is set in his hands, and he ought not to fail the Holy Spirit.

4) The spirit of the Christian:

The qualities which should characterize a Christian leader are:

a- Courage: There is no fear in the heart of those who serve the Lord because He always watch for them.

b- Power: He gives us power to cope with the afflictions which cross our way. He gives us the power to stand up for the truth. And above all the power to keep our faith unshaken.

c- Love: No one can serve Christ without loving his fellow Christians especially who belong to the congregation of saints.

d- Sound mind: This is the divinely given self-control which enables a man to lead others.

2) The perseverance of a man of God (1:6 – 18)

a- The exhortation (1:6 – 11)

On account of the above, Paul tells Timothy that he should not be ashamed to bear witness to our Lord, for eight reasons:

1) It is the gospel of power:

At the time Paul wrote this epistle, the suicide rate was at its highest ever. One of the ancient thinkers wrote: “god gave men life, but still he gave them a greater gift of being able to take their own life.” So, the gospel is the power of life, the power to conquer self, the power to master circumstances, the power to go on living when life is unlivable, and at last the power to be a Christian at the time when Christians were hated to death.

2) It is the gospel of salvation:

In the gospel there is rescue from sin. It liberates man from the grip of Satan. It also liberates us from slavery to our old bad habits.

3) It is the gospel of consecration:

It is the power to help us walk the road to holiness. It is the power which sets us apart to serve our Lord.

The man who has known the saving power of the gospel is a changed man in his business, in his pleasure, in his home, and in his character.

4) It is the gospel of grace:

We should always remember that grace is not work (Rom. 12:). Salvation is granted freely by God, to unworthy people who are us. We cannot make ourselves holy to be accepted by God. On the contrary, he accepts us to make us holy. In the parable of the prodigal son, his father accepted him as he was, then he ordered the servants to wash him and give him the best suit to dress and the family ring to put on his finger. If it is for our works, then we are the most miserable. He loves us out of His grace.

5) It is the gospel of God’s eternal purpose:

It is wrong to say that God’s love is something that came by the New Covenant or Testimony, but His love was before the foundation of the world; and it was His purpose to save humanity before the foundation of the world because He foreknew that humanity in the person of Adam will sin and disobey Him.

Love is one of God’s attributes, and he never changes (James 1:17). The fact that the ancient world did not recognize His love does not mean that He did not love them in the past.

6) It is the gospel of life and immortality:

Jesus Christ through His death on the cross brought life to the world. And through His resurrection, He conquered death and brought immortality (1st Cor.

15:55).

7) It is the gospel of service:

It is the gospel which initiates the believer to tell others about the cause of hope which is in him. It is the gospel which makes us serve and preach the love of God to others. Look at what Paul says in verse 11: he says that through the gospel, he was made a herald, an apostle, and a teacher. Herald in our text here, is the person who brings good news usually from the king; and apostle is the messenger or ambassador of the king; and teacher is the one who teaches the word of the king. These are the three functions by which the Christian should serve the Lord.

8) It is the gospel of Jesus Christ:

The gospel or good news is fully displayed through the manifestation of Jesus Christ, who came at the time when humanity was in a terrible need for a savior.

Here is another point which I should not leave this passage without referring to it. In verse 8, he tells Timothy that he should not be ashamed of witnessing for God or for him (Paul) His prisoner. We know that the so called the prison epistles are the epistles which Paul wrote during his first imprisonment in Rome awaiting his trial by Augustus Caesar. These are four (Ephesians, Colossians, Philippians, and Philemon. So obviously the letter to Timothy was not one of them. And so it must be during his second imprisonment awaiting his second trial by Nero who ordered him to be decapitated.

b- The examples (1:12 – 18)

i- Paul (1:12 – 14)

Paul here uses the word entrusted deposit, and this was a sacred duty of the ancient world, not only in Greece but also in other countries like most of the Middle Eastern countries. When a person wishes to keep something precious in a safe place till the time when it is needed, he puts it with a person whom he trusts for safe-keeping; and when time comes for retrieving that deposit by himself or by his heirs, it is expected to be given back in full.

So, Paul says that he entrusted God with his deposit, and by that he means that he entrusted his work and his life to God. We must remember that at the time of writing this epistle, he was in prison awaiting his doomed end of decapitation at the hands of Nero. However he says, it doesn't matter for I have put my work and my life in the hand of God who will keep it safe. But why was he so sure about that? The answer comes soon after; because he knows **whom** he had believed in. I have highlighted the word "whom" because he did not say what I had believed in. It was not the intellectual knowledge of a creed or a theology, but it was his intimate and personal knowledge of God. Such a loving, kind and faithful God can never fail him.

Let us take that as an assurance for us to commit everything to the hands of our loving God.

Then he turns around and applies the same to Timothy. He tells him to safeguard the trust God reposed in him. So, it is not only that we are sure that God keeps our trust in Him safe, but also that we in turn should keep His trust in us safe. That is because God does His work on earth through entrusted men whom He knows they shall do His will, listen to what God says about Paul though he was persecuting the Church “**he is a chosen vessel of Mine, to bear my name before Gentiles, kings , and the children of Israel.**” (Acts 9:15). And the trust that God had reposed in Timothy was the oversight and the edification of the church which will be achieved by:

1) Hold fast to the truth of the word of God and maintain its purity and refuse false and misleading teaching. Our solid belief is that **Jesus is Lord** (Phil. 2:11), and any teaching that denies Jesus this unique status, is false teaching and should be refused and discarded.

2) Must be loyal and faithful to Jesus Christ whose he is and whom he serves. Not only that but he must always have hope and confidence in God’s promises.

3) Never cease to love others and see for their highest good, and manifest the love of God to others.

ii- Onesiphorus (1:15 – 18)

In this passage, Paul states that his friends deserted him probably out of fear, exactly as what had happened to His Master before. Two of the most influential Roman personalities were married to Jewesses who probably bad mouthed Paul branding him as a dangerous troublemaker and disturber of public peace. This way Paul would be held on a political charge against the Emperor with a sure ultimate result of death. Of course no one would like to befriend him at that time. All did flee away except one man named Onesiphorus from Ephesus who when in Rome, looked diligently for Paul in spite of the risks involved till he found him, and he kept being loyal to him and served him, and he was neither ashamed nor fearful of Paul’s chains; considering it an honor to be attached to and to serve a faithful man condemned to death for the sake of His Master Jesus Christ.

The name Onesiphorus means profitable and he was so indeed.

As for Hermogenes and Phygelus, the Holy Scripture purposefully did not mention anything about them except branding them as traitors to Paul and consequently to the word of God.

Now, there is another thing that is worth mentioning, and that is what Paul says in verses 16 and 18. In verse 16, he says may the Lord give mercy to the family of Onesiphorus; and in verse 18, he says may the Lord grant him (Onesiphorus) mercy in that day. It is true that it is customary in the Middle East that people ask for mercy for those who are dead; and that is why some scholars feel that Onesiphorus was dead at the time of writing this epistle, but this is not necessarily so especially when uttered by an apostle of the Lord like Paul who very well knows that the mercy of God can be asked for and granted at any time whether the person is deceased or not. Furthermore, if we theoretically accept

that Onesiphorus was dead yet his family was still alive.

Now, assuming that Paul prayed for a dead person, this is a very interesting thought to think about. Praying for the dead has long been in a bitter and confusing dispute. Some scholars believe that prayer for the dead profits them nothing, and some others feel that it is a good gesture to remember our loved ones who have parted momentarily from us, in our prayers, and some others believe that since we believe in resurrection to come for judgment, then the prayer may help them on that Day of Judgment. However no matter what each and every one of us believes in, let us look intently at what Paul says here. He says “**May the Lord grant mercy**”. This in itself is a wish and not a prayer, it is a good gesture from Paul in remembrance of such a good and faithful person who risked his life to be with and serve him during his last days on earth at the time where every body else deserted and fled away from him. Remember that we always mention those whom we loved and admired in our prayers; however I do not believe that we do that for the purpose of helping them on the Day of Judgment.

3) The patterns of a man of God 2:1 – 26)

a- Paul (2:1, 2)

In these two verses, Paul has pointed out three points:

1) Reception of faith:

This is founded on :

a- Hearing: It was from Paul that Timothy heard the truth of Christian faith.

And Paul says in Romans:” So then faith comes by hearing (Rom. 10:17)

b- Witnessing; others attested to that truth and confirmed it.

We may not be able to teach or preach, yet we can witness to how that truth affected and changed our life.

2) Transmission of faith:

We have been privileged to receive this faith, but we are also committed to transmit that faith to the next generation

Paul urged Timothy to count himself an intermediary between the apostolic age and the ages to come.

3) To whom should faith be transmitted?

To faithful reliable men who preserve it unblemished and in turn teach it to others.

The Christian church depends on a **living unbroken chain of teachers** which links us back to Jesus Christ the author of our faith.

Then Paul paints seven pictures:

b- A soldier

Most of the pictures and scenes which Paul painted in his epistles were a reflection of what he had seen and witnessed in his travels. For example he saw

the green corona or crown on the heads of the victorious athletes in the Greek Olympiads, he saw the parades of the returning victorious armies in Rome, and so on, and here in verses 3 and 4, he paints the picture of the soldier who is fighting for what he believes in, and points out four points:

1) The soldier's service must be consecrated:

Once a soldier is enlisted, he is dedicated and has committed himself to be a soldier and nothing else. This does not mean that the Christian must not do anything else; he still lives in this world and must earn his living; but whatever task he is engaged in, he should demonstrate his Christianity. He must sort himself out to show Christ in his life.

2) The soldier's first duty is obedience:

The first thing the soldier is taught is absolute obedience to the command given him. So also the first duty of the Christian is complete obedience to the voice of God even if he does not understand the reasoning behind it.

3) The soldier is conditioned to sacrifice:

The Christian must always be ready to sacrifice himself, his wishes, and his fortune for God and for his fellow-men., remembering all the time that Christ left His heavenly status and came down to earth to sacrifice Himself.

4) The soldier is conditioned to loyalty:

When the Roman soldier joined the army, he took an oath of loyalty to his Emperor. His supreme virtue is faithfulness unto death. The Christian must also be loyal to Jesus Christ regardless of whatever tribulation crosses his path. The writer of Hebrews wrote to the recipients of his epistle encouraging them in their afflictions "You have not yet resisted unto blood." (Heb. 12:4).

c- An athlete (2:5)

Then in this verse, he paints the picture of athlete. He says that the athlete does not win the crown of victory unless he dedicates his whole life-time to excellence in the contest he has chosen observing very diligently its rules. Here as in the picture of the soldier, a Christian's life must be concentrated upon his Christianity. There is no such a thing as a part-time athlete or a part-time soldier. Then, what are the characteristics of the athlete which are in Paul's mind?

A) He must be a man of discipline and self-denial:

He must discipline himself to continuous training regardless of any outside influential circumstances. So also our Christian life must be disciplined. There are times when we are tempted to relax our standards, but let us not fall in this trap if we really want to reach our goal.

B) He must observe the rules:

An athlete cannot win unless he plays the game by its rules. So often, the Christian may find himself in a position where he has to defend his faith, and the discussion may be fierce and even bitter, but the Christian must play the game by the rules and standards of his Christianity which is love, and he must carry that love into every debate in which he is engaged.

d- A farmer (2:6, 7)

And in these two verses, he paints the picture of the toiling farmer who works hard to receive the first fruits of the harvest.

But what are the characteristics of this farmer?

1) To be content:

He must work and then wait for the fruits to come. To him there is no such thing as quick results. The Christian too, must work and wait. So often he sows the seed of the word and do not see an immediate result. May be several years later a person who heard the word is confronted by a serious difficulty, and then he may remember what he had heard earlier and get to experience the love and the mighty hand of God.

2) To be prepared to work at any hour:

At the time of harvest, farmers may work day and night collecting the crops. The Christian is not expected to work day and night, but at least he should be available to work from dawn to sunset; after all Jesus Himself said that He ought to work while it is day (John 9:4), and the day to the Jews was 12 hours.

So, from these three pictures we see that the soldier is upheld by the thought of final victory, and the athlete is upheld by the vision of the crown, and the farmer is upheld by the hope of the harvest. Each of them submits to the discipline and the toil for the sake of the glory to come.

The Christian also toils and struggles and at the end there will be joy in heaven. Paul also painted the same three pictures in 1st Cor. 9:6, 7, 24 – 27.

e- Jesus (2:8 – 13)

As we can see, Paul in this chapter is exhorting Timothy, so after talking about receiving and transmitting faith, he paints the three pictures of the soldier, the athlete, and the toiling farmer, he then in this passage exhorts him to remember Christ. So let us see what remembrance he should have of Christ:

1) That He is risen from the dead:

The verb used in Greek, means an action which happened and ended in the past, but it means continuity of it. So Paul talks here about a risen and ever-present and living Lord.. And here is the power of our faith, for we do not believe in a memory of the past, but in an existing living in the present and forever. So we should not fear, for we know and are certain that He is with us everywhere we go.

2) That He is born of the seed of David:

Here he reminds Timothy of both the Deity and Humanity of Jesus Christ. He should remember a person in the flesh who trod our roads, lived our life, faced our struggles, and so He knows what we are going through.

3) The good news (gospel) He brought:

How hard it is to live as Christian in this world, cannot be compared with the good news of liberation from sin and victory over eternal death which was awaiting us.

So Paul is encouraging Timothy and each one of us to remember Christ Who is the Omnipresent, His sympathy based on His Humanity, and the good news of the glory awaiting us.

As we mentioned before, Paul was in prison in Rome awaiting his execution. He was considered a political criminal by the Roman authorities since he is the leader of those miserable outlaws called Christians who according to Nero have set the great fire of Rome which was actually kindled by Nero's servants on his orders on the famous day of July 19, 64 A.D. as reported by Tacitus the famous Roman Historian. So Paul was faced by a false accusation which he couldn't escape. Add to that the bad mouthing of the Jews about him and the Christians as being a secret underground organization which is disturbing the peace and undermining the Roman Empire. As a matter of fact I consider this second epistle as a farewell sermon to his beloved and faithful spiritual son and long-time co-worker Timothy as well as to all the churches he established to whom they owe their spiritual freedom..

However, in spite of all that, Paul was not dismayed and was far from despair. He had two great uplifting thoughts:

A) Though he was bound, nothing could bind the word of God:

Authorities can chain and kill a man for the truth he believes in, but they cannot chain nor kill the truth. Paul was quite sure that the Roman authorities could never find a prison which could confine nor contain the word of God.

Authorities no matter how mighty they are cannot kill the immortal.

B) His suffering was not pointless, but profitable to others:

The Church has been founded on the blood of the martyrs. Let us not forget Stephens, James the son of Zebedee, Peter, Paul, nor the Christians who were immersed in tar and oil and set on fire to lighten the city of Rome and Nero's gardens at night, who though vanished into ashes, yet their flames still lightening the world and will continue to do so till the end.

Under the present circumstances, when Paul in verse 11 says, if we die with Him, we shall also live with Him, he certainly doesn't mean what he said before in Romans 6:4, 8 regarding the baptism, but he talks about his eminent physical death which will take him to eternal life with Christ; and by this he is actually comforting Timothy, and assuring him about his own final destination as well.

Then in verse 12a he says if we endure, we shall also reign with Him; and this also goes very well with what is said about verse 11, and what is also said in 4: 7 & 8 **"I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith; finally there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will give it to me on that day, and not me only, but also to all who have loved His appearing"**.

And in verse 12b he says if we deny Him, He also will deny us. This is actually an echo to what Jesus Himself had said in Matthew 10: 32 – 33.

And in verse 13, he shows us the nature of God, for if a man may deny himself, God is faithful and cannot deny Himself. This is also documented in the Old Testament where it says "God is not man that he should lie, or a son of man that

he should repent (numbers 23:19).

f- A worker (2:14 – 19)

On a first glance at verse 14, one may think that Paul repeats himself. This may be true, but we must not forget that Paul is warning against false teaching mainly Gnostics whose aim was to make Christianity a sort of philosophy rather than a founded faith. Words no matter how philosophical it may be cannot solve problems and cannot replace action. It is not even true that talk and discussion can fully solve intellectual problems. Jesus said "If any one wills to do God's will, he shall know concerning the doctrine, whether it is from God or whether I speak on My own authority." (John 7:17). So it is not a matter of talk or discussion, but doing the will of God.

Furthermore too much talk and discussion may lead to doubt and shaken faith especially to those who are babes in faith.

In this passage, Paul urges Timothy to present himself as a servant of God who has been tested and approved by God to carry this task. And the term he uses in Greek means purified by fire as in gold, and it also means a stone which is fit to be fitted into its place in a building.

So since he has been tested and approved by God, then he has nothing to be ashamed of.

Then he urges him to rightly divide the word of truth which means in Greek to drive a straight road across the country, and it was also used to mean to plough a straight furrow across the field, and lastly it was used to describe the work of a mason who cuts and squares a stone to fit in the building.

So if we take the three Greek meanings, we find that Paul is urging Timothy to drive a straight road through the truth, or plough a straight furrow across the field of truth, and takes every section of the truth and fits it in its correct position.

On the other hand, Paul describes the false teachers as progressing further and further into ungodliness, who progress or rather regress in the opposite direction away from God.

The aim of all Christian discussions should be to bring man nearer to God.

Then he names two of these false teachers, Hymenaeus and Philetus, who say that the resurrection has already happened. Of course they do not refer here to the resurrection of Jesus, but to the resurrection of the Christian after death, and they base their teaching on what Paul had said in Romans 6:4, 8 that the believer dies at the moment of baptism and rises again to a new life.

Others taught that a man lives in his living children after his death. Meaning they keep carrying the name of the family generation after generation.

The problem with this teaching is that it found an echo in both the Jewish and the Greek side of the church.

As for the Jews, they were two sects: the Saducees who did not believe in the resurrection of the body, so they welcome any teaching that says there is no resurrection. The other sect was the Pharisees who believed in the resurrection

of the body, but their problem was that they were wealthy materialists who had so big a stake in this world that they were not interested in any world to come. So they also welcomed any teaching that says there is no resurrection.

As for the Greeks, they generally speaking believed in immortality but not in the resurrection of the body. They believed that God is Spirit, and the life in man was a spark of that Spirit. That spark of Spirit of God goes back to God after the death of man. This is a noble belief but it clearly abolishes personal survival after death. Furthermore they believed that the body which is evil is just a tomb for the spirit to live in while man is alive and then it is discarded and becomes useless after the spark of the spirit leaves it. And so the Greeks also welcomed any teaching that says there is no resurrection.

As for us Christians we believe that our personality or call it identity is kept after death, which means you will still be you and I will still be me, but in a different body, because no one will conceive that the person who was smashed completely in an accident will be resurrected smashed; or the one who died of cancer or any other disease will be resurrected with the same cancer or the same disease he had before death. And to support what I am saying, I will show you two scenes from the New Testament:

The first scene: is mentioned in Luke 16:19 – 31. This is the scene of Lazarus and the rich man, mentioned by Jesus Himself. The rich man recognized Father Abraham though he never saw him before.

The second scene: is mentioned in Matthew 17:1 – 8. This is the scene of the mount of Transfiguration. Here Peter, James and John recognized and identified Moses and Elijah though they never saw them before.

And let us not neglect what Paul said in 1st Cor. 15:51 – 53 “Behold, I tell you a mystery: we shall not all sleep, but we shall be **changed** - In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised **incorruptible**, and we shall be **changed**. For this corruptible must put on **incorruption**, and this mortal must put on **immortality**.”

So, any teaching (regardless of how noble it seems to be) which abolishes the Christian personality or identity undermines the core of Christian faith.

g- A vessel (2:20 – 23)

Paul here talks about the foundation of God, and he means the church which is founded by God. He describes it as being solid, and having the seal of being genuine and the lawful ownership and the brand mark which indicate the maker or the designer. Moreover the word seal would indicate the purpose for which it is designed. And he means here that the church has a seal which shows at once what it is designed to be. Now what is written on this seal?

1) “The Lord knows those who are his.” This was first mentioned in Numbers 16:5, and then Jesus explained it in detail in Matthew 7:22.

2) “Let everyone who names the name of Christ depart from iniquity.” This also is quoted from Numbers 16:26 then explained by Jesus in Luke 13:27.

These two quotations give us two broad principles about the church:

- a- a-The Church consists of those who belong to God Who owns them.
- b- The Church consists of those who have departed from unrighteousness and iniquity, whose faces are turned to righteousness. This does not mean that they are perfect, for they may fall, yet they have set their faces to the right direction. However in every house there are all kinds of vessels, gold, silver, wood clay, some have honorable use and others have dishonorable use. So also is the church so long as it is an earthly institution it will be a mixture versus the heavenly church which will be pure and well adorned to be a fit bride for her groom. This is the eternal truth which Jesus stated long before in the parable of the wheat and tares in Matthew 13:24 – 30, 36 – 43. and also in the parable of the dragnet in Matthew 13:47, 48. In both parables Jesus teaches that the church is necessarily a mixture which will be separated on the Day of Judgment. So, since the judgment is His, let us keep ourselves from the influence of corruption, we shall be rewarded by the special honor of serving Him.

h- A servant (2:24 – 26)

In this passage, Paul lays down the foundations of behavior, the Christian leader should adorn his life with:

A) Stay away from youthful lusts:

This is not limited to the passions of the flesh, but it also include:

1- Impatience; Only when we get older, that we realize that too much hurry, can do far more harm than good.

2- Self-assertion: That is when we become intolerant to others' opinions, and fail to see the good points of view which others have.

3- Passion to argue: That is when we spend nights and days arguing, and end up with more and more unsolved problems.

4- Love of novelty: That is when we tend to condemn things simply because they are old, and accept others just because they are new, disregarding the value of experience in the old views.

B) Pursue righteousness:

This is to be right in the eyes of God, not in one's own eye; and also to give God and man their dues.

C) Faith:

To be loyal and reliable. Both come from complete trust in God.

D) Love:

To seek the highest good for others, no matter what they do to us, putting away all bitterness and all desire to vengeance.

E) Peace:

This is the right relationship of love with God and with others.

All these should be sought in the company of those who call upon the Lord.

The Christian must never seek to live detached from others. He must find his joy in the Christian fellowship.

F) Avoid foolish and ignorant discussions:

In the modern church, arguments are almost always foolish and senseless, and

most of the time are about things that are quite clear in black and white in the Holy Scripture with no grey zone; take for example there has been discussion about homosexuality for years and years in the past and unfortunately it will continue for years and years to come. Nothing comes out of that except enmity and division; and we have seen splitting of some churches because of that subject of homosexuality again.

G) Must not quarrel, but be gentle to all:

We must point out the wrong to correct it, but this can and must be done in a kind and gentle way; and never seek to hurt others' feelings.

H) Able to teach:

To know the truth and keep it for one's self, does not do the church any good. So, those who know the truth must teach it to others so that the entire congregation must be edified.

I) Patient:

To follow the Lord's example. He was reviled but did not revile back. He accepted lots of insults and humiliations, yet he did not strike back.

J) In humility correcting opponents:

One can always discipline and correct in gentleness with great care not to cause unnecessary pain. One can always lead the horse to water but one cannot force him to drink.

The whole goal from all the above is in hope that God may awaken repentance and desire for the truth in the hearts of those who have been caught in the snare of the devil.

4) The perils of a man of God (3:1 – 17)

a- Facing Apostasy (3:1 – 9)

This has been mentioned before, but there is no harm in repeating it. To the Jews, time has been divided into two: the present age, and the age to come. The present age is evil, and the age to come belongs to God. The land mark between the two ages is the Day of Judgment. But before the Day of Judgment comes which will be the end of the present age, there will be very difficult times; and that is what Paul is talking about here in this verse. In these difficult times, evil will gather itself for its final assault, and the world in both its physical and moral foundations will be shaken and there will be terror, violence, menace danger, and the final show down of the forces of evil. We may be experiencing some of this nowadays. However this head to head collision will end by the final triumph of God in final battle Armageddon mentioned in Rev. 16:16.

In verse 1 we mentioned the Jewish thought about the difficult times.

Here in verses 2 - 5, Paul describes it as he was inspired. So, he paints to us a ghastly terrible picture of the godlessness which will happen; and we shall discuss them one by one:

A) Self-centeredness:

Love of self is the basic sin from which all others flow. Once a person loves himself, he severs the love to God and to his fellow mankind from his life.

B) Love of money:

We must remember that Timothy at the time of this epistle was in Ephesus which was described as the Treasure house of the ancient world and the Vanity Fair of Asia Minor, where it was the center of the trade roads from as far east as the Euphrates to as far west as Rome and vicinity. It may well be the great Babylon described in Rev. 18:12, 13.

It is to be remembered that man may lose his soul far easier in prosperity than in adversity, since he assesses the value of life by what he possesses.

C) Boasting:

The Greek origin of this word was defined by Plato as the claim to good things which a man does not really possess. And Aristotle defined it as the man who pretends to have credible qualities which he does not possess. And strange enough Cyrus the Persian king defined it as the person who pretends to be richer and braver than he actually is, or the person who promises to do what he cannot do for the sake of some gain. And Socrates said that such persons are found every where but worse of all are the politicians who gull their countrymen into the belief that they are the only fit for the job.

D) Arrogance:

Though the common thought that arrogance is the same as boasting, yet there is a subtle difference between both; for boasting is the action of a swaggering creature who tries to bluster his way into power and eminence and no one can possibly mistake him; yet arrogance is in the heart which no one can see, and the arrogant may even seem to be humble on the surface but his heart is full of contempt for everyone else; and as Barclay says, he has a little altar in his heart where he bows down before himself.

E) Blasphemy:

This word is usually associated with insult against God. A pride person has no regard to others including God Himself. They feel they are in no need for people and God. The Jewish Rabbi considered Blasphemy as an unforgivable sin and so also Christ considered it the same.

F) Disobedience to parents:

Respect and obedience to parents was highly regarded in the ancient world.

Striking a father was regarded as murder in the Roman law.

Honor thy father and mother in the Ten Commandments, was given priority over murdering, stealing and false witnessing.

It is really disgraceful to see the youth nowadays disrespecting their parents.

G) Thanklessness:

This is disregarding the debt one owes to God and to his fellowmen, and it is a response of ingratitude to the kindness and the blessings which God has bestowed on us.

An honorable person pays his debts and respect to others, but the dishonorable loses all these.

H) Ungodliness:

This means offense against both written and unwritten laws which are part and parcel of the essence of life, which are also the fundamental decencies of life, such as a brother marrying his sister, or a son marrying his mother. It also

describes the person who finds gratification in his lower passions without feeling shame about it.

I) Unloving:

The family cannot exist without human affection, even the closest ties mean nothing to them.

J) Unforgiving:

This describes a man who is so dishonorable that he carries in his heart unrelenting bitterness, that he will never come to terms with the person he quarreled with.. But we should always be reminded with the last words our Lord Jesus Christ uttered on the cross;” **Father, forgive them**”.

K) Slandering:

Satan is the patron saint of all slanderers. If a man loses his whole fortune, he may start again, but if he loses his good name, he suffers irreversible damage. It is very easy to start a malicious rumor, but it is virtually impossible to stop it or to erase the damage it caused.

There is slandering everywhere even in our churches nowadays.

L) Uncontrollable self:

A man who cannot control his desires is slave to them, and a slave cannot master anything.

M) Brutality:

The Greek word applies more to a savage wild beast than to a human being. It denotes a savagery which has neither sensitiveness nor sympathy.

A dog may be sorry when it has hurt its master, and you see it coming to ask for its master’s love and attention, but there are people who do not care if they hurt others.

N) Despising good:

He who feeds his mind on cheap literature will end up despising the great masterpieces. He loses the taste for good things. Such a person finds no enjoyment in the company of good people.

O) Treachery:

We must remember that this epistle was written at the peak time of Christian persecution by Rome, where around that time, Peter was crucified head down, and about a year later, Paul was beheaded. So there were lots of informers who survived and earned their living by informing about innocent Christians and where their about. And there were those who would revenge themselves on an enemy by informing against him. And Paul here might as well be thinking of those who wanted to settle an old score against others.

P) Headstrong:

This describes the person who is swept on by passion and impulse to such an extent that he is totally unable to think sensibly.

To stop and think before taking action, so often saves us from hurting others and probably hurting ourselves as well.

Q) Haughtiness:

Men will become swell-headed and inflated with conceit, and self-importance.

A good Christian must always remember that His master and Lord walked on this earth meek, humble and lowly in heart.

R) Loving pleasure rather than God:

Such people place their own wishes in the center of life. They worship self instead of God.

S) Having the form of godliness:

They retain the outward form of religion, but they know nothing of the Christian dynamic power which changes the lives of mankind. It is not unusual to see such sleek personalities in the church.

There is no doubt that Christianity has liberated women from the unjust treatment they received before; but on the other hand there were the false teachers who abused this privilege. As we have already seen that most of the pagan thoughts were basically Gnostic, and that they believed that spirit is altogether good, and matter altogether evil. And since the body which is matter is altogether evil, then it doesn't really matter to indulge in all physical desires. So the false teachers spread these thoughts in between the women especially the elite and the rich who some elected to break their marriages and some others elected to indulge into lower instincts and promiscuous relationships.; and in either case the homes and families were destroyed.

It is Paul's charge that such people are willing to learn from anyone, and yet never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.

Intellectual curiosity can never take the place of moral earnestness.

Probably most of us know the story of the two Egyptian magicians who opposed Moses mentioned in Exodus 7:11; 8:7; 9:11. However the Holy Scripture does not mention their names. But the names Jannes and Jambres were mentioned in several Jewish common writings not related to the Bible. There are so many different legends mentioned about these two characters in these writings which we do not have the space nor the time to discuss them here. But the whole idea is that they were defeated at the end, and that is what Paul wants to convey to our attention as to Timothy that opposing the word and work of God is always defeated at the end. And the history of the church proves to us that the false teaching may find a flourishing soil for a while, but it is bound to shrivel and die at the end.

b- Defeating apostasy (3:10 – 17)

In these verses, Paul contrasts the conduct of Timothy, his loyal disciple, with the conduct of the heretics who were doing their best to destroy the church.

A disciple has to follow his teacher, but the word "**Follow**" in Greek means to follow in every aspect of life, i.e. to follow physically as well as mentally and spiritually.

Then Paul moves to list the things in which Timothy has been his disciple in

which we also sense the duties, qualities, and experience of an apostle.

A) Duties:

- 1- **Teaching:** He who teaches Christ, must first know Christ quite well and experience His fellowship before he can teach Him to others.
- 2- **Training:** An apostle must not only teach but also train others to do the same.

B) Qualities:

- 1- **Purpose:** A Christian must aim to a goal in all what he does.
- 2- **Faith:** He must also have faith in all God's promises and commands.
- 3- **Patience:** He must not loose patience with whom he teaches even if they seem not responding.
- 4- **Love:** This is the attitude of bearing everything others do or not do. He must train himself not to be bitter or angry, and should never seek anything but the utmost good for others. To love means to forgive and care as Jesus did and still does for us. .

C) Experience:

Endurance: All apostles especially Paul have faced lots of sufferings in their ministry and they had to endure. This is not a passive bearing of suffering. It is the spirit which does not passively accept suffering, but the spirit of conquering it. Timothy may have or may have not witnessed Pau's sufferings, but he must have heard of it, and so to him Paul was a perfect example of endurance.

In all this, Paul was sure of two things:

- a- Temporary persecution will ultimately end into glory.
- b- There is no future for the ungodly; he will go from bad to worse.

Then he appeals to Timothy to remain loyal to all the teaching he had received knowing its reliable sources (his mother, grandmother and Paul).

Paul here calls to remembrance his genuine faith which dwelt first in his grandmother Lois, and his mother Eunice (2nd Tim. 1:5), and the knowledge of the Holy Scripture since his childhood (v.15). Of course Paul meant here the Old Testament, because the New Testament was not written yet. And we must notice in verse 16 that he wrote all the Scripture which includes both the Old and New Testaments, to make a distinct difference between them and the Gnostic and other heretic books which are man-made and not inspired.

This inspired Scripture is useful for doctrine, reproof, correction and instruction in righteousness. Let us then find out about the usefulness of the Scripture:

A) Gives wisdom which will bring salvation:

By reading the Holy Scripture, one cannot help but finding the wisdom to understand the truth in it; the truth that tells us about the loving nature of God, and how He does not wish that any one should perish because He simply created us to live and not to die. It tells us about Him being the essence of eternal life; and how He offered His beloved son a sacrifice for our sins, that we may live.

This is the wisdom which one cannot find in any other book.

B) It teaches:

A church without a bible class is missing an essential tool by which people would

know about Christ, because how would they know unless someone tells them (Rom. 10:14).

C) Reproof:

This means that the Scripture is valuable for convincing man of the error of his ways, and leading him to the right path.

Let us not forget that beautiful song, “**amazing grace how sweet the sound**” and the man who wrote it who was once lost and then found and who was blind and now he can see. That was John Newton, the famous and well known to be the most wicked slave trader of all times, and how he was lead by the Scripture to see the error of his ways; his life was changed completely, and became a true man of God, and he fought and fought till he got the authorities to legally forbid and abolish slavery.

D) Correction:

Paul wrote to the Galatians that if anyone even an angel teaches them with anything different from he taught them, let him be cursed (Gal. 1:8, 9).

So, we must examine every teaching, and reject it if it contradicts the teaching of the Bible.

E) Equipment for every good work:

Believers must make themselves useful to God and to others. Keeping the good news to oneself is selfishness and leads to cold spiritual life and ultimately to spiritual death.

5) The preaching of the man of God (4:1 – 5)

a- The charge to preach (4:1, 2)

In these verses, Paul is charging Timothy to do the task without failing, and he reminds him with three things concerning Jesus:

1) Jesus Christ is the Judge of the living and the dead:

One day, Timothy will stand at the Judgment Seat, and would be longing to hear the verdict “**Well done good and faithful servant, enter into the joy of your Lord**”. He is not looking for the praise of men, but he is looking for the smile of satisfaction on his Master’s face.

If all Christians set aside the self-centered attitude, and long for the praise of our Lord, then we don’t care about what people think of us.

2) Jesus Christ is coming (appearing) back:

The word appearing in its Greek meaning was particularly used for the appearance of the Roman Emperor either at the throne or when visiting any city or town. And obviously when the Emperor is due to visit any city, everything is put in perfect order, the streets were swept and garnished to fit for the reception of the Emperor. So Paul is conveying this picture to Timothy, telling him to be ready for the reception of the appearance of the Lord. Do your work in such a way that all things will be ready whenever He appears.

3) Jesus Christ is King:

At that Day all kingdoms will vanish, but His Kingdom will come.

So Paul urges Timothy and all of us to do our work in such a way to demonstrate our worthiness to be citizens of His Kingdom.

So, how can Timothy and of course all Christians prepare for that appearance?

A) Preach the word:

The Christian should preach what he believes. The successful teacher is he who preaches what he believes. In all actuality, no one can preach what he does not believe into except the hypocrite.

B) Be ready in season and out of season (Be persistent):

Peter in his 1st epistle say “**And always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you with meekness and fear.**” (1st Peter 3:15). The Christian must count every time an opportunity to speak for Christ.

That is the readiness required of every Christian who sincerely serves God.

C) Convince:

The Christian must convict the sinner of his sin. This does not mean to condemn or judge him, but it means to make him aware of his sin in a loving and kind way. Christianity is based on making each one seeing himself as he is.

D) Rebuke:

A word of warning and rebuke would often save a brother from sin and shipwreck. But this rebuke must be in a brotherly manner. It is not for us to set ourselves as judges of anyone, nevertheless it is our duty to set things straight when it is needed.

E) Exhort:

Rebuke may drive a brother to despair and he may be lost permanently, but exhortation and a word of encouragement wins the fallen.

F) Longsuffering and teaching:

This simply means patience, never get mad nor irritated, never despair, and never consider any person beyond salvation, because God is He Who is capable of changing him, not you.

b- The need for preaching 4:3 – 5)

A brother may fail, but this is not a sin, it is probably lack of knowledge, so our duty is to teach so that everyone may find the right path.

Here Paul warns Timothy that the day will come when the foolish listeners find interest in false teaching and open their ears to foolish doctrine. So he urges Timothy to:

1) Be watchful in all things:

The Greek word for watchful means to be sober and self-contained which means complete control of all his faculties,

2) Endure afflictions:

As mentioned before, the word endure is not a passive acceptance of suffering, but to conquer it and make the best out of it.

3) Do the work of an evangelist:

Evangelist is the one who brings good news. This means not only to preach but

also to do, so that people can emulate him.

4) Fulfill the ministry:

Our chief ambition in life is to serve God, and be of use to the church and the society we live in.

6) Concluding remarks (4:6 – 18)

a- Paul's triumph (4:6 – 8)

Paul knew that his end is near; he was a good warrior, and time has come to lay down his arms that Timothy may pick them up.

The ancient Greeks used to pour out a cup of wine after every meal as a sacrifice or libation to the gods or it could be as a thanksgiving to the gods. He is applying this picture to himself saying that the time has come when he should be poured out as a sacrifice to God. He was so faithful to his ministry that he felt that all what he has done is not enough, and he would still love to give his life to God as a thanksgiving.

Then he says that the time of his departure is at hand.

The Greek word he uses for departure has several beautiful meanings:

1) To unyoke an animal from whatever cart it is pulling, to give it rest: So death to Paul was rest after a long toil.

2) To loosen a bond or shackles: So death to Paul was a release from the bonds of the Roman prison to the glorious liberty in heaven.

3) To loosen the ropes of the tent and move on: There is no doubt in all his travels; he struck a tent everywhere he settled. Now it is time to strike camp again in his last and greatest journey of all. He is going to be with God.

4) To loosen the mooring-ropes of a ship: To Paul death was to loosen the mooring-ropes of his ship in order to sail across the waters of death to the safe harbor of eternity.

What a beautiful picture! After all that, how can he or any Christian fear death? There is another meaning which the Arabic translation implies, and that is the disintegration of an object to its basic elements; and the body disintegrates into dust after death. But this takes a long time to happen; therefore I do not think that Paul meant that because he said "**At hand**".

Then in verses 7, 8, Paul reminisces, so he moves on to paint another picture, the picture of the Greek games which he probably had watched several times:

1) I have fought the good fight:

The ancient Greeks were fond of athletic competitions. We should remember the Olympic games of Athens preceded by the Isthmian games of Corinth.

The good Athlete who works very hard preparing for the competition, would always say I have fought the good fight regardless of the final results. By this he means that he has done his best. And that is what Paul is saying here that he has done his best.

2) I have finished the race:

It is always easy to start a race, but sometimes it is not that easy to finish it, so

many collapse just before the end line. The one who finishes the race has to be praised regardless the order of finishing. There is a great satisfaction in reaching the goal.

3) I have kept the faith:

This phrase can be interpreted in three ways:

a- Pertaining to the games, it means I have kept the rules. At the Olympic games, athletes come from all over the world to compete, and they all gather the night before the games start, and swear a solemn oath in front of the gods that they have spent at least ten months training, and that they will run an honorable race, and that they will use no tricks against their opponents.

b- Pertaining to business, it means I have kept the conditions of the contract, or I have been true to my engagement. So, Paul could be saying that he engaged himself to serve the Lord and he never failed that engagement.

c- Pertaining to actual faith, it means I have never lost confidence and hope in the Lord's promises in spite of all the sufferings, afflictions and imprisonment even at this moment of death.

Then, still in the games there will be a prize for the winner, and that is what Paul says in verse 8. That prize is a crown. In the games, the laurel wreath was the greatest honor that the athlete could be crowned with, but in few days it will dry and wither off. But the crown which Paul is talking about is the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the **Righteous Judge** will give to him. And here he is contrasting the unrighteous judge Nero who is going to decapitate him in few days with the righteous judge Jesus Christ. He is looking forward to hear His voice saying "**Well done good and faithful servant, enter into the Joy of Your Lord.**"

b- Paul's needs (4:9 – 18)

Paul starts this passage by urging Timothy to do his best to come to him at his earliest for his company have forsaken him, then he mentioned names of some betrayers and some faithful and some who gave him trouble .

Demas:

His name was mentioned in two epistle of Paul beside this one.

In Philemon verse 24, he is listed as one of a group called by Paul as his fellow-workers.

In Colossians 4: 14, he was just mentioned without any comment.

And here in this epistle, he left Paul because he loved the present world.

From the three descriptions, one can sense that his spiritual degeneration was gradually happening.

No one can tell why or how; but Barclay puts three guesses:

1) It may be that he followed Christ without counting the consequences.

Believers before knowing Christ were conformed to the world and its standards, and life was running easily for them. But after knowing Jesus they find that the Christian standards are entirely different and do not conform to the world's, and so life becomes difficult for them.

So, it could be that Demas was swept into the church in a moment of temporary emotion, but when he encountered unpopularity, persecution, loneliness and imprisonment, he found out that was not what he bargained for and so he quit. This is a practical lesson for all Christians for afflictions and suffering are bound to come, simply because we are not conformed to this world.

2) It may be the weariness of the years. They have a way of taking our ideals away and of lowering our standards.

3) It may be that he found out that the wide door of this world is much easier to tread than the narrow door of Christianity

It may be our duty in Christian honesty to tell people of the price of suffering that may await them, before we give them the good news of salvation.

In the New Testament era, the name Demas was used as a shortened form for Demetrius; this was mentioned twice in the New Testament; Once in Acts 19:25 where Demetrius the leader of the silversmiths who made silver shrines for the goddess Diana in Ephesus and who led a big riot against Paul. The second mention was in the third epistle of John verse 12, where John vouches for him as a man of good report and of all truth; and here Barclay puts a far fetched suggestion that it could have been the bad Demetrius mentioned in Acts who was then intrigued by what Paul preached and was converted and followed Paul and became one of his fellow-workers, then he slipped away and left Paul, then at a later time, the grace of God worked in him again and that is the one mentioned in 3rd epistle of John.

Luke:

He says Luke alone is with me. The Holy Scripture does not tell us much about Luke, but as it appears in this verse, he turned out to be one of the loveliest characters in the New Testament.

1) We know that he is the writer of the gospel according to Luke. We also know that he is the writer of the book of Acts, and from that book we know that he accompanied Paul in most of his travels except the first mission.

There are several verses in the book of Acts where we are certain that he was with Paul, because he mentions “**We**” and “**Us**”, and since he is the writer then he must have been with Paul at that time. We also know that he was with Paul in prison or at least visit him regularly at the time of writing this epistle because Paul says so. We also know from Acts 27 that he was with Paul on the ship to Rome for his first trial. And here there is a very interesting and noble point to know, because under the Roman law, a Roman prisoner travelling to Rome to be tried at the Emperor’s seat is allowed to have two slaves accompanying him on the ship to serve him and look for his needs; accordingly Luke must have enrolled himself as a slave to be allowed to accompany Paul.

No wonder Paul talks affectionately about him as will be seen next.

2) His name was mentioned in two other places in the New Testament: once in Colossians 4:14 where Paul describes him as the beloved physician. Luke may have not been much of an evangelist, but God have gifted him with the art of healing which he used to comfort and ease off the pains which Paul had suffered whether from beating, stoning or imprisonment. He was very kind to Paul, and kindness sinks in the heart and cannot be forgotten.

3) The second place where he was mentioned was in Philemon 24 where Paul calls him his fellow-laborer; so obviously he did not limit himself to be a doctor but he worked and labored for the Lord.

4) There may be another possible reference to him in 2nd Cor. 8:18 where Paul speaks of the brother who is famous among all the churches; that brother was identified by the early churches as Luke. So he is the type of man of whom all speak well.

Mark:

Them Paul says” bring Mark with you for he is useful to me for service.

This is also famous in his own way, for he is the man who redeemed himself.

Mark was very young when the church began. It was in the house of his mother Mary (Barnabas’ sister) where the disciples (The early church) used to gather after Christ’s ascension and where peter headed after being released from the prison by the angel of the lord when Herod was planning to kill him (Acts 12:12). He accompanied his uncle Barnabas and Paul in their first missionary trip (Acts 13:5), but unfortunately he felt home sick and departed from them in Pamphylia and returned to Jerusalem (Acts 13:13).

Then on their second missionary trip, Barnabas planned to take Mark his nephew (Colossians 4:10) with them, but Paul absolutely refused to take a quitter for the second time with them, and as a result a fierce contention happened between them and they departed from each other, and Barnabas took Mark and sailed to Cyprus, while Paul took Silas and headed to Asia minor (Acts 15:36 – 40).

Then for a long time after that the Holy Scripture kept silent about him, till we see that when Paul was writing to the Colossians during his first imprisonment in Rome, the Holy Scripture tells us that Mark was with him, and actually he recommended him to the church in Colosse and charged them to receive him. And now at the end of Paul’s life he asks for him to be with him and Timothy for service.

We do not know what happened to Mark after that, but tradition brings him to be the founder of the Church in Egypt.

However, Mark should be an example of encouragement to us, for after failing in his early life, he became a very useful man for God’s service. And still to this day, Christ can make the cowardly spirited man a brave one for His service.

Crescens:

we know nothing about him except his name.

Titus:

He was one of the most faithful co-workers to Paul who calls him a true son in our common faith (Titus 1:4). And when the trouble with the church at Corinth had been worrying Paul, he sent them Titus to mend things (2nd Cor. 2:13; 7:6, 13; 12:18). He went with Paul to Crete at a time somewhere between Paul’s 1st and 2nd imprisonments, then Paul left him there to take care of the church there (Titus 1:5), and went back to Ephesus. The last we hear about him is that traditionally the Bishop of Crete for life.

Tychicus:

This is a Greek name meaning “By Chance or accidental”.

He was a native of Asia Minor, and one of Paul’s fellow laborers.

His name with Trophimus, was first mentioned as a companion of Paul during portion of his return trip from his 3rd mission (Acts 20:4). Trophimus completed the trip with Paul to Jerusalem (Acts 21:29), but Tychicus remained behind in Asia Minor probably at Miletus (Acts 20:15, 38).

Then the Holy Scripture tells us that he was with Paul at Rome in his first imprisonment (Col. 4:7 & Eph. 6:21-22).

The next reference to him is in Titus 3:12 where Paul writing probably from Ephesus saying that he may send Tychicus to Crete; but in 2nd Tim. 4:12 during his 2nd imprisonment, Paul writes that he has sent Tychicus to Ephesus.

There is a thought suggesting that Trophimus and Tychicus were brothers as being together associated with Titus (2nd Cor. 8:16-24) in collecting for the poor saints of Judea.

He delivered the epistle to the Colossians (Col.4:7), and the epistle to the Ephesians (Eph. 6:21).

Alexander the coppersmith:

Paul says he did him much harm. We do not know what he had done, but there is a suggestion that he was informer because the word used by Paul in the Greek language means a person who lays information against another person: and it may well be that Alexander went to the Roman authorities with false information against Paul which led the authorities to put Paul in prison again after he was acquitted, and ultimately led to his decapitation.

Then he asked Timothy to bring some of Paul's belonging which he had left behind previously in the house of Carpus in Troas such as the cloak (It must have been cold in the prison), the papyrus rolls (Biblia) which is translated into English as books, and the parchments which could be Paul's personal legal documents such as his certificate of Roman citizenship or more likely it could be copies of the Hebrew Scriptures which were usually written on animal skin. Sometimes history has a strange way of repeating itself, for 1500 years later, William Tyndale was lying in prison (Because he dared to translate the Bible) awaiting his death exactly as Paul was, and he requested from a friend to bring him warm woolen clothing because it was cold and damp in the prison, and above all his Hebrew Bible exactly as Paul requested.

What is written in verses 16 – 18 is practically word to word with what is written in Psalm 22 and with what Jesus said on the cross, and now Paul awaiting his eminent death is remembering that:

- 1) All men had forsaken him. It is true that out of fear for their life at a time like that no one would like to show that he has even a remote connection to a condemned man doomed to die, but Jesus Christ would not leave him, for He promised that He will never leave His own till the end of the world. Paul believed that and recorded it in these verses; and who would be of great comfort at a time like this except our loving and caring God?
- 2) Paul till the end did not fail his mission and he pressed proclaiming Christ even

in the Roman court. They cannot harm him more than death and he is willing to welcome that so he would be with Christ.

3) Paul was looking beyond to something more safe and assuring and more worthy to die for.

7) Paul's farewells (4:19 – 22)

Then as in all his epistles, Paul ends by greetings to:

1) Priscilla and Aquila whose home was ever a church wherever they settled, and who also risked their life for him (Acts 18:2 ; Romans 16:3 and 1st Cor. 16:19).

2) Onesiphorus who looked diligently for Paul till he found him in prison (2 Tim. 1:16) and did not fear for his life although tradition tells us that he had paid it for that.

3) Erastus whom Paul sent once as his emissary to Macedonia (Acts 19:22) and apparently was in the Church of Rome.

4) Trophimus who the Jews accused Paul of bringing him into the Temple though he was a Gentile, the incident which led to arresting Paul and imprisoning him for two years in Caesarea.(Acts 20:4 & 21:29).

And greetings from:

1) Linus Later there is a legend that puts him as the first Bishop of Rome.

2) Pudens and Claudia There is also a legend that Claudia was a British Princess who came to live in Rome and became a Christian and got married to Pudens. Whether these legends are true, no body knows.

At the end of this epistle, Paul commends his friends to the presence and the Spirit of the Lord, and as always with what would be called a Benedict, he says Grace be with you, Amen.

May God Bless You All

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