

LESSON TEXT: 1 Timothy 1:1-20

Prepared by Paul T. Butler

INTRODUCTORY COMMENTS:

Timothy, his mother Eunice and grandmother Lois, lived at Lystra (mid-south of modern Turkey). His father was a Greek and his mother a Jewess. Timothy was converted by Paul on his first missionary journey (Acts 14). Paul's love and respect for Timothy was consummate: "I have no one like him...as a son with a father he has served with me in the gospel" (Phil. 2:19-24). From the days of his childhood, Timothy had been reared in the Jewish Scriptures by his mother and grandmother.

Paul, released from his first imprisonment at Rome A.D. 63, heads toward Asia Minor, leaves Titus at Crete (Titus 2:5) and is met by Timothy at Ephesus. Paul then leaves for Macedonia telling Timothy to remain and nurture the church. From Macedonia Paul writes to these two preacher-boys and gives them the Holy Spirit's mandate for the located ministry.

The discussion of sound doctrine in chapter one of 1 Timothy indicates the subject is of **first importance!** Preachers and churches are under apostolic charge to give **priority to Biblical doctrine**. This is not only a revelational imperative, it is incontestably logical. Only correct knowledge leads to the true meaning of life which leads in turn to personal virtue and benevolence. This is exactly the order as Paul stated it to Timothy. Sound doctrine has as its end, "love out of a pure heart and a good conscience and faith unfeigned" (1:5).

Don DeWalt wrote, "The purpose for Timothy's stay in Ephesus was a doctrinal problem. He was to do a job of teaching. Paul felt it to be a very urgent matter. There was and is a norm of truth. Any deviation from this norm is serious and must be corrected...Any teaching, different from, or added to the one already delivered by the apostles, is to be rejected and corrected." *Paul's Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 1961, College Press, pg. 36. The preeminent ministry of evangelists and elders is the teaching of orthodoxy ("straight-thinking") thus refuting heterodoxy (other-than-straight-thinking). This is repeated and repeated in Paul's letters to Timothy and Titus.

QUESTIONS:

- 1) How seriously are we to take the word "charge" Paul laid on Timothy? 1:3
- 2) What were the myths and speculations Christian evangelists would need to bring to a halt in churches then? 1:4 **Today?**
- 3) What is godly edifying in faith? (KJV & RSV both true to Greek text) 1:4
- 4) Are there vain janglings (KJV 1:6; Gr. *mataiologian*, literally, futile reasonings) among Christians today? What are they?
- 5) What law tells us how to use the law lawfully? 1:8 Is it inhumane to lay down the law to the lawless and disobedient? Why not just forgive?
- 6) Should sodomy (Gr. *arsenokoitais*, literally, male coitus) be punishable by law 1:10 Why is it classified with murder and other capital crimes here? Does it have anything to do with Christian orthodoxy?
- 7) Is blasphemy the chief sin? What is blasphemy? 1:13 Forgivable?
- 8) Why did Paul receive mercy for his sins? 1:13,16 Why did you?
- 9) Can Paul really mean Christian evangelists (preachers) should go at their jobs like waging war? 1:18
- 10) What is conscience? 1:19 How do we get a good one?

FROM THE MOUTHS OF BABES

After the church service, a little boy told the preacher: "When I grow up, I'm going to give you some money. "Well, thank you," the preacher replied, "but why?" "Because my daddy says you're one of the poorest preachers we've ever had."

"I go to church to hear preached the mind of Christ, not the mind of man. I want to hear expounded the truth contained in the Scriptures, the kind of preaching that gets its power from, 'Thus saith the Lord.'

Such preaching is hard to find these days.—J. Howard Pew, former Chairman Sun Oil Co.

LESSON TEXT: 1 Timothy 2:1-15

Prepared by Paul T. Butler

INTRODUCTORY COMMENTS:

Dr. James Kennedy of Coral Gables, FL, said: "Most people think of the church as a drama. The minister is the chief actor, God is the prompter, and those in attendance are the critics. What is actually the case is that the congregation is the chief actor, the minister is the prompter, and God is the critic."

In a certain college registrar's office the personnel were busy compiling statistics about student religious preferences. The category was titled: "Church Preference." There were the usual number of denominational names written in, but a neatly lettered form, filled in by an architecture major, nonplused them. It read, "Gothic."

Many people today have a very insular view of what worshipping God means. It is most often thought of (and practiced) as done on one day per week, in buildings specified as "churches," where certain liturgies and rituals are performed. **In our subjective-oriented society today** many people have confused worshipping God with being entertained and uninhibited display of emotions. Worship of God may include liturgy, ritual and emotion, but all under the **rational** and **orderly** control of the individual worshiper (1 Cor. 14:15,20,26,32,40). Worship is never done, *en masse*. It is always an individual function!

1 Timothy chapter 2 clearly instructs us that the **proper** sphere for the worship of God is **every place** (2:8). As a matter of fact, there were no specially built and designated church *buildings* until as late as A.D. 250. Early Christians worshiped God in homes, marketplaces, school buildings, and under trees. The early N.T. church considered of first importance in worship the preaching-teaching of the word of God. It also prayed, gave money, observed the Lord's supper, and had congregational singing when it met together. But being a good citizen, a good home-maker, a good neighbor, and a good employee was considered worshipping God as well! You will want to be in Bible School to learn what God's word says about some very sensitive and important issues that are as relevant as your morning newspaper!

QUESTIONS:

- 1) Why would Paul begin instructions to an Evangelist, "First of all..." to pray especially for kings and all in high positions? 2:1-2 What is the antecedent of "Therefore" or "Then" in 2:1?
- 2) If Evangelists are to pray for a quiet and peaceable life, should they involve themselves further in the matter? How? 2:2
- 3) Are Church and State, then, co-responsible for redemption's proclamation? 2:4 (see also Rom. 13:1-7; 2 Pet. 2:13-17) What is the State's responsibility?
- 4) Does the only God and one mediator hear Muslim and Hindu prayers? 2:5
- 5) What knowledge was Paul appointed a preacher to teach? 2:7ff
- 6) What is "adorn" (Gr. *cosmio*)? 2:9 What is "modestly and sensibly?" (see also 1 Pet. 3:1-6).
- 7) Are women permitted to teach or not? 2:11-12 (Cf. Titus 2:3-5; 1 Cor. 14:33f)
- 8) What does the Garden of Eden have to do with all this? 2:13 (cf. 1 Cor. 11:3f) Perhaps the Bible should be culturally updated?
- 9) What if a woman can't bear a child---is she lost? 2:15 What does Paul mean here?
- 10) How does all the above fit into worshipping God?

ON THE LITE-SIDE OF WORSHIP

The lady of the house had invited some friends to dinner. At the table she turned to our 6-yr-old daughter and said, "Would you like to say the blessing?" "I wouldn't know what to say," the tot replied. "Just say what you hear Mommy say," the mother said. The little girl bowed her head and said: "Dear Lord, why on earth did I invite all these people to dinner?" Warren J. Keating, preacher, says that the best prayer he ever heard was: "Lord, please make me the kind of person my dog thinks I am."

A Frenchman once commented that Americans have three idols: size, noise, and speed. Worship runs in the opposite direction. It does remind us of the greatness of God, but it also reminds us of our littleness. Worship is being still and knowing God. Worship is waiting upon the Lord. ---1000 Windows

LESSON TEXT: 1 Timothy 3:1-16

Prepared by Paul T. Butler

INTRODUCTORY COMMENTS:

God's servants should be men of spiritual perception, maturity, experience and responsibility. Undoubtedly Paul is describing the character or behavior of an **evangelist** as well as that of a **bishop**, a **deacon**, and a **teacher** in this chapter. J. B. Phillips paraphrases 1 Tim. 3:15: "At the moment of writing I hope to be with you soon, but if there should be any considerable delay then what I have written will show you the sort of character men of God's household ought to have. It is, remember, the Church of the living God, the pillar and the foundation of the truth."

The Church is, therefore, the **pedestal** (Gr. *stulos*) upon which the TRUTH is **seated** (Gr. *hedraion*). The Church is the showcase of the truth but *not* the *source* of the truth as Roman Catholicism claims. The unchurched, Biblically-illiterate world sees the TRUTH only as the leaders of the Church practice it in every-day life. The unchurched millions hardly ever attend the corporate worship services! And the high-profile, ordained officers (evangelists, elders, deacons, teachers) bear tremendous responsibility to so live as to make the Church seen as the pillar and bulwark of the TRUTH.

It is an awesome challenge for those would become officers and leaders in the Church. Think how most of the world must see the Church today! Christendom divided because of unbelief, cultural bias, doctrinal aberrations, differences of opinions held as divine law, hurt feelings among its leaders; **a moral breakdown of epidemic proportions in its leadership**. So the Church is unable to attract the brightest and best to fill its offices. The world looks at the Church's leaders and members and asks, Is the TRUTH showcased *there*?

Since the world looks primarily to the Church's leadership for the TRUTH, what responsibility does the Church membership bear? Both the Church and the Bible college need constant refocusing on this issue. Has the Church majored too much in the peripheral? Has it encouraged and assisted its leaders to a truth-bearing public image? Do the church members take a positive visible and verbal stand for the TRUTH in their every-day living? Is the Church and its auxiliaries aiming for excellence and constancy in training new leadership? **HOW SHOULD WE BEHAVE IN THE CHURCH OF THE LIVING GOD?**

QUESTIONS:

- 1) What is a bishop (Gr. *episcopos*)? 3:1 The same as an elder? (cf. Titus 1:5) How old should an elder be?
- 2) **Must** a Christian man be married before he seeks the office of a bishop? Deacon? 3:2,12
- 3) May a **woman** become an elder? Paul said "if *anyone desires* the office..." 3:1 They do in Episcopal and Presbyterian churches. Is exclusive male leadership in the church culturally outdated?
- 4) What is there in a man's household that reveals his leadership ability? 3:4,12
- 5) Why should the Church care what outsiders think about its elders and deacons? 3:7,10
- 6) Should this be true of the Church's evangelists (preachers)? (see 1 Tim. 4:11-16; 2 Tim. 2:1-26)
- 7) What is the mystery of the faith and what are deacons to do with it? 3:9
- 8) What degrees (Gr. *bathmon*, literally, step, rank, standing) do good deacons earn? 3:13
- 9) Is Christianity a "religion" (RSV) (Gr. *eusebeias*, lit. venerate-well, adore, be very devout)? 3:16 Why call our religion "God" (KJV), "Who" (RSV)?
- 10) How was "He" (Gr. *hos*, masc. pers. pronoun) vindicated or justified in the Spirit? 3:16

THE "LEADER'S" PRAYER

Lord, when I am wrong, make me willing to change. When I am right make me easy to live with. So strengthen me that the power of my example will far exceed the authority of my rank.

The supreme quality for a leader is unquestionably integrity.

---Dwight D. Eisenhower

LESSON TEXT: 1 Timothy 4:1-16

Prepared by Paul T. Butler

INTRODUCTORY COMMENTS:

An expose of the beliefs of many future preachers was made by *Redbook* magazine in August of 1961. The publishers hired one of the top pollsters in the nation to survey a full representation of our seminaries which are supposedly preparing men for Christian service in Protestant churches. Of the ministers in training, 56% rejected the virgin birth of Jesus; 71% rejected that there was life after death; 54% rejected the bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ; 98% rejected a personal return of Jesus to this earth.

Glide Memorial Methodist Church in San Francisco has this "Call to Worship" in their printed bulletin on Sunday and recited by the leader: "We are all of us Christians---Jews, liberals, Bolsheviks, anarchists, socialists, Communists, Keynesians, Democrats, Civil Righters, Beatniks, ministers, moderate Republicans, pacifists, teach-inners, doctors, scientists, professors, Latin Americans, New Africans, Common Marketers, even Mao Tse-Tung. Doubtless. From Lyndon Johnson to Mao Tse-Tung, we are all Christians." This church once preached the true Gospel and was known for its evangelistic power. Today, its doctrine is apostate and its morality, reprobate. It has become a haven for **practicing** (i.e., unrepentant) dope addicts, homosexuals, and other criminals.

Why do such apostasies happen? Is the truth of God so *inaccessible* or *obscure* that professing Christians cannot find it? Does God's truth have no *objectivity*--or is it only subjective, having its origin and meaning determined by an individual's feelings and preferences? To the contrary, "**We must conclude** (from 1 Tim. 4:1-16) **that the body of belief was so well defined that defection from it could be immediately known.**" *I Timothy*, by Don DeWelt, College Press.

It is the responsibility of the Church's leadership (evangelists, elders, deacons & teachers) to be nourished on the words of faith and ...good doctrine and to put these instructions before the brethren. That is the primary end for which the Church's leadership must toil and strive. PTB

QUESTIONS:

- 1) What does "expressly" (Gr. *hretos*) mean? 4:1 Where or how has the Spirit said expressly there will be departures from the faith? (cf. 2 Pet. 2:1f).
- 2) Are all followers and teachers of falsehood giving heed to deceitful spirits?
 - 1) 4:1 Are any of them innocently duped? (cf. Rom. 1:20; 2:14; 3:12; Eph. 2:3).
 - 3) Who sears (Gr. *cauteriazō*) man's conscience? 4:2 How? cf. Titus 1:10-16
 - 4) Is **everything** God created really good? 4:3-4 When are things un-good? How is the good distinguished from the un-good?
 - 5) Why must we train **ourselves** in godliness? 4:6-7 Doesn't godliness just happen to us? Aren't we born with it?
 - 6) What does the teaching of the true **words** of faith 4:6 have to do with it?
 - 7) Does being a Christian leader really demand exhausting **toil** and tortuous **striving** 4:10 Why? How candid should leadership training be about this?
 - 8) Should youths be Church leaders? 4:12 How young? Will older Christians follow young leaders?
 - 9) Why is reading of scripture important for a leader? 4:13,15 Can a young person learn enough from scripture to become a leader while still young?
 - 10) To what extent is a leader to devote himself to these duties? 4:15

Let us ask...for emotional stability, intellectual alertness, and well-adjusted personalities in our leaders. That individual who cannot satisfactorily cope with the stresses of his own life is going to find it difficult to help in the stresses borne by others.

---W. F. Lown, in the *Christian Standard*, 9/9/61

LESSON TEXT: 1 Timothy 5:1-24

Prepared by Paul T. Butler

INTRODUCTORY COMMENTS:

UPI reported sometime back that a dictionary of modern magical words had been compiled. It was called *Buzzwords: A Guide to the Language of Leadership*. It was described as a guide to the inside vocabulary of upper-level leadership. It contained about 600 buzzwords and their definitions. Its author said his magical buzzwords conveyed convincingly the *impression* (emphasis ours) the speaker knew all you needed to know about any topic being discussed. The buzzwords could also be used to obscure the issue and throw everybody else into helpless confusion. The author illustrated this by rewriting the 23 Psalm: "The Lord is my external-internal integrative mechanism, I shall not be deprived of gratifications for my vice-roygenic hungers or my need-dispositions. He motivates me to orient myself towards a non-social object with effective significance. He positions me in a non-decisional situation. He maximizes my adjustment..."

Quite the contrary, Church leadership is not maintained by abusing people or confusing and obscuring issues. Godly leadership requires selflessness, communicativeness, integrity and simplicity. Those who want to follow cannot unless the way is clearly, unequivocally and lovingly shown. Those who are following will become disillusioned and turn aside if the leader lacks integrity. Followers will lose hope and give up if the leader complicates purposes, goals, and expectations. One man has said: "Leadership is a serving relationship that has the effect of facilitating human development."

General of the Army, Dwight D. Eisenhower said: "In order to be a leader a man must have his follower's confidence. The supreme quality for a leader is unquestionable integrity. Without it no real success is possible. If a man's associates find him guilty of phoniness, if they find that he lacks forthright integrity, he will fail. His teachings and actions must square with each other. The first great need, therefore is integrity and high purpose."

QUESTIONS:

- 1) Why would Paul have to exhort the young leader, Timothy, to treat his elders as he would his father? 5:1 How should elders treat young leaders?
- 2) What is the Church's responsibility to honor real widows? 5:3 What is the widow's family's responsibility?
- 3) Is it Church doctrine that a man must provide for his own house? 5:8 What is the responsibility of Church leadership in this matter?
- 4) Why does a widow have to be 60 yrs. old to be enrolled? 5:9-10 Should Christian leadership require her to do all those good works before helping her?
- 5) And, isn't it rather cruel to refuse to enroll younger widows? 5:11 Should church leaders have the right to tell them to get married?
- 6) Should Church leaders be concerned about the Church's reputation? 5:14
- 7) Might the Church today have elders who labor in preaching and teaching? 5:17 What is the congregation's responsibility to them?
- 8) What is a young leader's response to rumors about an elder? 5:19 Does this hold true about all that is being said? Might leaders be guilty of favoritism?
- 9) Was it Timothy's responsibility to rebuke in the presence of all those elders who persisted in sin? 5:20 Wouldn't that be meddling?
- 10) Why would Paul advise the young preacher Timothy to drink a little wine? 5:23?

The man who gives his children habits of industry provides for them better than by giving them a fortune.

---Richard Whately

I would give no thought of what the world might say of me, if I could only transmit to posterity the reputation of an honest man.

---Sam Houston

LESSON TEXT: 1 Timothy 6:1-21

Prepared by Paul T. Butler

INTRODUCTORY COMMENTS:

Frank A. Clark said, facetiously, “To be popular a preacher must distinguish between important problems and trivial ones---and preach about the trivial.” Immanuel Kant, 18th cent. philosopher said: “Seek not the favor of the multitude; it is seldom got by honest and lawful means. But seek the testimony of the few; and number not voices, but weigh them.”

Church leaders should not be appointed through “popularity contests,” but by their faithfulness to teaching and practicing Biblical truths. The Biblical mandate, as Paul gave it to the young preacher, Timothy, in 1 Tim. 6:1-21, is positive preaching and teaching “which accords with godliness” and negative preaching and teaching against haughtiness and worldliness.

One man has said: “To avoid criticism do nothing, say nothing, be nothing.” It is very nearly inevitable that Church leaders will be criticized. Joseph Addison wrote: “It is folly for an eminent man to think of escaping censure, and a weakness to be affected with it. All the illustrious persons of antiquity, and indeed of every age in the world, have passed through this fiery persecution.” Paul encouraged Timothy that as a leader of God’s Church he was not to have a spirit of timidity, but a spirit of power and love and self-control (2 Tim. 1:7).

When leaders of God’s Church actually teach and urge...and charge the virtues and deeds mandated in 1 Tim. 6 as **duties**, they will not be popular---not even in the Church! “As an example...brethren, take the prophets...” (Jas. 5:10). Think of Moses, Elijah, Amos, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, John the Baptist. And, then, there was Jesus, and Paul, and Polycarp, and John Huss. Even Alexander Campbell was slandered and persecuted. Church leaders must expect to be unpopular (if they lead as the Bible mandates), not be affected by it, and remain faithful to Christ. Those who are led by godly leaders should give obedience, cooperation and recognition to such men (1 Cor. 16:13-20; Heb. 13:17).

QUESTIONS:

- 1) Could the instructions to slaves 6:1-2 apply to employees today?
- 2) What usually results when a Church leader becomes, as J.B. Phillips paraphrases 6:3-4, “a conceited idiot.” What is his unhealthy (Gr. *nosos*, sick) interest NIV?
- 3) What motivates a conceited Church-leader to controversy, disputation, wrangling (Gr. *diaparatribai*, diatribe)? 6:5b Does controversy sell?
- 4) What is contentment (Gr. *autarkeias*, self-sufficiency)? 6:6 Would you be content with just food and clothing? With weaknesses, insults, hardships... (2 Cor. 12:12). What makes you content?
- 5) Does **all** the evil in the world really spring from the root of the **love** of money? 6:10 Maybe just *one* of the roots of all evil is the love of money?
- 6) Honestly, is faith a fight, and a battle (Gr. *agona*, agony) for you? 6:12 Why? Is believing in Christ supposed to be a struggle?
- 7) What is “the” commandment Church leaders are to keep? 6:14 Keep the faith?
- 8) Should a Church leader talk much about what Christians are to do with their money? 6:17f Why not just keep quiet about it?
- 9) Can you identify the false knowledge (Gr. *pseudonumou gnosis*, lit. pseudo-named knowledge) of which Paul speaks? 6:20 It is the antithesis (Gr. *antitheseis*, contrary position) of **true knowledge**.

The People have a right to the Truth as they have a right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. It is *not* right that they be exploited and deceived with false views of life, false characters, false sentiment, false morality, false history, false philosophy, false emotions, false heroism, false notions of self-sacrifice, false views of religion, of duty, of conduct and manners.

---*The Responsibilities*, by Frank Norris, 1903

Dishonesty, cowardice and duplicity are never impulsive.

----George A. Knight

LESSON TEXT: 2 Timothy 1:1-18

Prepared by Paul T. Butler

INTRODUCTORY COMMENTS:

The 2nd letter to Timothy is the last epistle we have from the pen of the great apostle Paul. One preacher wrote, "I have often found it difficult to read these short chapters without finding something like a mist gathering in my eyes. The writer's heart beats in the writing." The letter was written from a Roman prison about A.D. 67, shortly before Paul's martyrdom.

Paul's second imprisonment was very much different from his first. At his first imprisonment, he had his own hired house; at the second, he was kept in close confinement. Formerly, he was readily accessible to all seekers; presently, it was difficult and risky for even Onesiphorus to find him (1:16-17). Then, he was the center of a large circle of friends; now, almost none (4:10-12). Then, he hoped for speedy liberation; now, he expects to die shortly (4:6-7).

But this epistle is no swan song it is a conqueror's challenge. It is a dying veteran's charge to the young recruit to "Carry on!" It is graphic, forceful, strongly emotional, full of vivid remembrances and vital anticipations. He wrote this letter to encourage his "son" in the faith, Timothy, to steadfastness. And, like the first epistle to Timothy, the key thought is the **church as the pillar and ground of the truth**, and the **evangelist's responsibility for the proclamation of that truth in its purity**.

False teaching had crept into the church opening the doors to great worldliness and utter godlessness. Paul's antidote was for the **evangelist** to give **diligence** to make himself approved to God, a workman that did not need to be ashamed, **rightly handling the word of truth** (2:15). Only the **word of truth** is inspired from God and profitable for doctrine, reproof, correction and instruction in righteousness. Only the **word of truth** is able to make the man of God complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work (3:16-17). Never are preachers wiser nor do they fulfill their function as **evangelists** better than when they preach the word...in season and out of season, reproving, rebuking, exhorting with all longsuffering and doctrine (4:2).

QUESTIONS:

- 1) Why does Paul call Timothy **his** "son"? 1: 2 Paul wasn't even married? Is the water of Christian baptism "thicker than the blood" of fleshly descent?
- 2) What's with this man Timothy---men aren't supposed to cry 1:4 are they?
- 3) What is sincere faith? 1:5 Is there any other kind of faith?
- 4) Can parents pass on their faith to their children? 1:5 To what extent? How?
- 5) Is timidity (Greek *deilias*, cowardice) the antithesis of self-control (Greek, *sophronismou*, sound-mindedness) 1:7 How?
- 6) How did God give us grace before the beginning of time? 1:9
- 7) If Jesus destroyed death why do we still die? 1:10
- 8) What convinced Paul that his deposit was under guard? 1:12
- 9) What was the pattern (Greek *hupotuposin*, causal-type) Timothy heard from Paul? 1:13
- 10) Why did **everyone** desert Paul? 1:15

"Truth forever on the scaffold, Wrong forever
on the throne---
Yet that scaffold sways the future, and,
behind the dim unknown,
Standeth God within the shadow, keeping
watch above his own."
---James Russell Lowell, 1844

**"Every violation of truth is not only a sort
of suicide in the liar, but is a stab at the health
of human society."**
---Ralph Waldo Emerson, 1841

"Preaching is the Most Important Ministry of the Church. The Spoken Word will never be superseded as the main agency in extending the Gospel of Christ...The PULPIT is the TEACHING AGENCY of the Church." ---*Halley's Bible Handbook*, Henry H. Halley, 24th ed.

LESSON TEXT: 2 Timothy 2:1-26

Prepared by Paul T. Butler

INTRODUCTORY COMMENTS:

Dr. Orville Brill presented a lecture at the Ozark Christian College Preaching/Teaching Convention in February 1976, entitled, *The Care and Nurture of a Layman*. Dr. Brill is writing to encourage preachers from one who sits in the pew. He writes:

“In an assembly of Christians, we shouldn’t have to remind ourselves that, above all else, Jesus must be preached from our pulpits. I believe that too many of us are teaching and preaching *about* the Bible, when we ought to be teaching and preaching the Bible. It seems to me that expository preaching, the setting out or exposing and expounding and explaining the Word of God, is a rare commodity in too many of our pulpits...and that is to our shame. Preachers, we’re hungry for the Word. We need that kind of food or we’ll die. Topical sermons are fine, and practical applications are needed, but first of all make sure that your preaching includes a good heavy portion of verse by verse exposition of the Scriptures. If I’m thoroughly filled and trained in the Word, God will help me to take care of the application....there are too many starved, spiritual illiterates in our pews for some of us to justify the kinds of things we teach and preach. It doesn’t make sense....to worry about the fact that we are still on milk and baby food, when (preachers) persist in holding back the meat. I can assure you that God has equipped us to digest meat, if you’ll just feed it to us.”

In an AP wire article, Joplin Globe, 9/22/93, Dr. Thomas Skill of the University of Dayton did a study of how preachers are portrayed on American television. He says, “...the ‘tube’ depicts Christian leaders (i.e., preachers) as mostly useless and irrelevant...their significance is minimized...they’re presented as shallow, marginal figures with little influence on life...as lacking real Christian leadership qualities...in any meaningful way...When Christian leaders are portrayed, it usually is in some *background* or *peripheral role* (emphasis mine), such as at a wedding or funeral, rather than giving *information* about their perspectives..” We know that!

The only way that will ever be changed is for preachers of the Gospel to take to heart Paul’s charge to the young evangelist Timothy in his last letter to him. “The Word of God is not fettered” (2:10)---
PREACH IT AND LIVE IT!

QUESTIONS:

- 1) Was Timothy charged to train others to become preachers? 2:1-2 How?
- 2) Is preaching really as exacting as soldiering, athletics, and farming? 2:3-7
- 3) If it is, what kind of training should prospective preachers have?
- 4) Why does Paul **CONTINUALLY** remind all his readers that Jesus is risen from the dead? 2:8
- 5) What does Paul mean, “...if we are faithless, he remains faithful.” 2:13
- 6) What is entailed in rightly (correctly) handling the word of truth? 2:15
- 7) Is it possible to upset someone else’s faith? 2:18 How?
- 8) How may those who belong to the Lord depart from iniquity? 2:19 What’s the secret of resisting sin? See Rom. 8:12-17; 12:1-2; Col. 3:1-17, etc.
- 9) What are youthful passions? Can youths shun them? How? 2:20-22
- 10) How can anyone preach/teach the Gospel without getting into a quarrel? 2:23-26 What about Christian debating? Unity meetings?

“The preaching of the Gospel of Jesus Christ remains, yet, the single most important task to which a Christian human being can commit himself and his talents...when you begin to think of priorities, preaching is the highest on the list...because our world is now embroiled in a war of ideas, the idea that it is only through Jesus Christ that the world can be reconciled to God must ring through the din of battle with enthusiasm and clarity. This calls for preaching!”

---Harold W. Ford, Dean, Pacific Christian College

www.soundbiblestudy.com

LESSON TEXT: 2 Timothy 3:1-17

Prepared by Paul T. Butler

INTRODUCTORY COMMENTS:

Clipped from the Joplin GLOBE, Saturday, December 2, 1967: "NEW YORK (AP) --- When the Rev. George C. Serbe Jr. became pastor of the Lutheran Church of the Resurrection near Cape Kennedy, Fla., he thought he'd need to tailor the church message especially for space-oriented technologists. But it turned out differently. After extensive intimate talks with members of his 'moonport' congregation, with its heavy concentration of engineers and other scientists, he concluded 'from what they told me that they needed basic, simple' exposition of Christian theology. While they were highly educated in electronics and similar fields, he said, many of them emphasized that they were 'biblically and theologically illiterate.' They wanted help in understanding---he person and nature of God---and in relating 'His teachings and purposes to their own daily lives'....he says he has found that the gist of his message needs to be the straight 'good news of the gospel.'"

History shows that preaching is a barometer of the life of the Church. When the preaching has been dynamic, the Church has been strong; when it has been insipid, the Church has been weak. P. T. Forsyth wrote in *Positive Preaching and the Modern Mind*, "...I will venture to say that with its preaching Christianity stands or falls." And Emil Brunner, in one of the most audacious claims made in our nuclear space age, said in his book, *Revelation and Reason*, that "where there is true preaching, where, in the obedience of faith, the Word is proclaimed, there, spite of all appearances to the contrary, the most important thing that ever happens upon this earth takes place."

Paul wrote to Timothy when Nero was on the throne of the Roman Empire and there was a great persecution of Christians. Some Christians were recanting their faith in Christ in order to escape torture and death. Others were "staying the course" and suffering. Paul emphasized in this 3rd chapter that **the inspired word of God would make the "man of God" complete, equipped for every good work.**

QUESTIONS:

- 1) When are the "last days" to occur of which Paul speaks? 3:1 see 1 Cor. 10:11
- 2) Why does Paul include **ingratitude** among these horrible sins? 3:2-4
- 3) How do men hold the form of **piety** (Gr. *eusebeias*) and deny the power of it? 3:5 see Matt. 23:1ff.
- 4) To what *extent* are we to **avoid** such people? 3:5
- 5) Will these characteristics **really** be plain to **all**? 3:9
- 6) Will **all** who live godly lives be **persecuted** or only those of the first century? 3:12-13
- 7) What is **inspiration** when it refers to God's "scripture"? 3:16
- 8) Is the Bible **really** able to train the man of God so that he may be "**complete, equipped for EVERY good work**"? 3:16-17 What about medicine, agriculture, carpentry, etc., etc.?

"It is not 'current themes' that should be preached on, but rather the great themes of the Scriptures that touch men's lives, converts them, fills the churches, and satisfies the hungering soul."

---James Boice Montgomery, *Christianity Today*, 12-20-74

"The Greek mathematician Archimedes, in the third century B.C., made a statement that has been quoted many times: 'Give me a lever long enough, and a fulcrum strong enough, and single-handed I can move the world.' Joseph Conrad, however, answered him by saying, 'Don't talk to me of your Archimedes' lever....Give me the right word and the rich accent and I will move the world.' The 'right word' needed by American churches today is 'preaching,' preaching based on the 'right accent' of a dynamic theology of preaching. With it, we can still move the world for Jesus Christ."

---Paul Eppinger, in *Christianity Today*, 6/9/67

LESSON TEXT: 2 Timothy 4:1-22

Prepared by Paul T. Butler

INTRODUCTORY COMMENTS:

David Strauss, of German rationalism and unbelief, after spending years of his life trying to dispense with God, said near his death, "My philosophy leaves me utterly forlorn! I feel like one caught in the merciless jaws of an automatic machine, not knowing at what time one of its great hammers may crush me!"---from *3000 Illustrations*, by Walter B. Knight

Francois Voltaire, noted French philosopher and infidel ranted against Jesus during his years of health, shouting, "Curse the wretch!" He said at one point in his life, "In 20 years, Christianity will be no more. My single hand shall destroy the edifice it took 12 apostles to rear." Some years after his death, his printing press was employed in printing New Testaments. Near his death he said to his doctor, "I am abandoned by God and man! I will give you half of what I am worth if you will give me six months of life. Then I shall go to Hell; and you will go with me. O Christ! O Jesus Christ!" Knight, *op.cit.*

Thomas Paine, infamous skeptic and unbeliever during the American War for Independence, at death's door cried, "I would give worlds if I had them, that *The Age of Reason* had never been published. O Lord, help me! Christ, help me! O God, what have I done to suffer so much? But there is no God! But if there should be, what will become of me hereafter? Stay with me, for God=s sake! Send even a child to stay with me, for it is Hell to be alone. If ever the Devil had an agent, I have been that one." Knight, *op.cit.*

Contrast with those statements, the valedictory on his own life by the apostle Paul, "...the time has come for my departure. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day--and not only to me but also to all who have longed for his appearing." 2 Tim. 4:6-8, NIV

WHAT A BLESSED HOPE WE HAVE AS CHRISTIANS! A HOPE BASED NOT ON PHILOSOPHY OR FEELING, BUT ON HISTORICAL EVIDENCE! Be in Bible School next week to learn about that crown of righteousness awaiting you at the end of the race.

QUESTIONS:

- 1) Is it significant that contemplating his imminent death, the apostle would be charging Timothy to preach the word? 4:1
- 2) Why tell Timothy to be urgent (RSV), or be instant (KJV)? 4:2
- 3) Why does Paul hook preaching to teaching in these verses? 4:2-3
- 4) What's wrong with people accumulating teachers to suit their own likings? 4:3-4 Do you?
- 5) What is the **work** of an evangelist? 4:5
- 6) What all is involved in fighting the good fight, finishing the race, and keeping the faith? 4:6-7 Isn't this working for one's salvation?
- 7) What do you visualize as being the crown of righteousness? 4:8
- 8) Who was Alexander the coppersmith and why did he oppose Paul's message? 4:14 (see Acts 19:33)
- 9) How many people should we estimate are to be included in Paul's statement, "...to proclaim the word fully, that **all** the Gentiles might hear it"? 4:17

"The best of all is, God is with us" ---John Wesley on his deathbed.

Consider what these fundamental preachers accomplished although limited by lack of rapid transportation and communication.

- a. More than 2000 came to Christ through John S. Sweeney's preaching
- b. 90 additions during a 6-week meeting by W. H. Hopson in Cincinnati
- c. 8000 came to Christ because of Benjamin Franklin's preaching
- d. Thousands were won by Tolbert Fanning
- e. In Paris, MO, the merchants of the town closed their businesses every morning at 10 o'clock to attend the gospel meeting where D. S. Burnett was preaching
- f. J. V. Updike and James E. Hawer, as a gospel team, baptized 10,000

J. D. Murch says of these men: "They carried their Bibles with them... The gospel they preached was characterized by simplicity....Every statement was bolstered by passages of scripture."
---Richard L. Jones, *Christian Standard*, 9/3/66

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