



PT Butler

Bible Study Notebooks

Study of 1st and 2nd Timothy

prepared by P. T. Butler Th.D

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These Bible study notes are provided for your use in the preparation of teaching the holy scriptures. They were meticulously prepared over many years to serve the Kingdom of God and aid in the growth of Christians of any age. Please use them in combination with prayer and diligence to promote the clear and honest declaration of God's word.

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TEACHER'S NOTES 1 Timothy

prepared by Paul T. Butler

1 Tim. 1:1-20

Paul used the Greek word, (*parangeilies*, related to the word from which we get *angel* which means, “messenger”) which, according to W. E. Vine in *Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words*, is, “a proclamation, a **command** or **commandment**, is strictly used of commands received from a superior and transmitted to others.” Paul was an **apostle**. Only in that sense would he be “superior” to Timothy---only in the hierarchy of “offices” given by God to the church. Paul would never think of himself “superior” to Timothy in any other way. But what he said to Timothy about “**charging**” certain persons **not to teach any different doctrine**, etc., was to be taken as an **apostolic commandment!** Paul used the same Greek word in 1:18 to reiterate that what he was saying about correct doctrine was **imperative!** Speaking from his office as an apostle, Paul would be speaking (writing) the inerrant, authoritative revelation of Jesus Christ! What Paul said was “the word of God.” AND THE LEADERSHIP OF THE CHURCH TODAY HAD BETTER PAY ATTENTION TO PAUL’S INSTRUCTIONS TO THIS YOUNG EVANGELIST. Elders, deacons, preachers, teachers are all recipients of the same **apostolic commandment!** When the apostle Paul told a church (the church at Corinth) how to correct its doctrinal, moral, relational and worship problems, he said the proclamation of the gospel facts was of **first importance** (1 Cor. 15:1-11).

The Jewish religion of the 1st century was saturated with mythology it had assimilated during the exile of the Jews in Babylon. Mysticism, the occult, and a form of Gnosticism, was taught orally in the rabbinical schools of the 1st century. All this mythology was later committed to writing in the Zohar or Kabbalah (i.e., Cabala). One may see much mythology in the Talmud as well. Creation, the law, the prophets, the history of the Jews, etc., was all accommodated to mysticism in the Kabbalah. Today we have the mysticism of Catholicism associated with Christianity. We also have the mysticism of liberal theology associated with Christianity. Millions of unchurched people know Christianity only by the **mysticism they see associated with it today**. Those who believe the Bible to be inerrant history are in a minority. Everyone else sees the Bible as one big book of myths and fables and historical inaccuracies.

The Greek word, *oikonomian*, is translated, “edifying” in KJV, “training” in RSV, and “work” in NIV. It means literally, “to build a house.” Paul charges Timothy that those who are proclaiming “myths” are **not** building godliness but ungodliness. If people are going to be **edified** (built up) in their faith in God, it won’t be through “myths.” Many people think such modern myths as Santa Claus, the Easter Bunny, the Wizard of Oz, Cinderella, etc. are “harmless.” I tend to think that the less credibility and time reading or discussing such trivialities, and the more time we give to teaching Biblical history and reality, the more we will **edify** people’s faith in God. What is the point in **continually** feeding oneself on the unreal, the make-believe, the fantastic, the pretend? It is escapism. The Bible is wholly realistic. It does not see anything through false-rosy-glasses. It deals with life and beyond as God

knows it and reveals it--**realistically!** **LET'S HAVE LESS "STORIES" AND MORE BIBLE!**

Mataiologian, the Greek word translated "futile reasonings" or "meaningless talk" (NIV), is translated "vain janglings" in the KJV. "Vain" means, "empty, useless, void." One has only to listen to the **endless, repetitious, stupid**, talk on TV & Radio, or read the periodicals (newspapers and magazines) to see that **most (95%)** of the talk going on in the world is VAIN! If one does not talk about what the **Bible** talks about, in the **way** the Bible talks about it, what else is there to talk about? There is a "vast wasteland" out there in the secular world and it is offering nothing but mirages to thirsty souls looking for words that have **realistic, honest, absolute meaning**. Attempting to solve the world's problems, or any individual's problems, without speaking what the Bible speaks is **futile and hopeless "psycho-babble."** Paul describes the 1st century Roman society of his day as having become "futile in its thinking, their senseless minds were darkened...claiming to be wise they, became **fools**, and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images...." There was plenty of evidence to that civilization that reality was not to be found in their mythological suppression of the truth. In creation itself there was evidence of God's reality. They were without excuse and so is civilization in our age! The secular world of conversation and writing is vast wasteland of inanities and trivialities. Souls hungering for meaning, purpose and relevancy will only be fed by the Bread come down out of heaven, the Bread of Life, Jesus (Jn. 6:25-63).

The Law by which **all other law** "is used lawfully" is the **Law of God**. That is contained in the Bible, the whole Bible, and nothing but the Bible! God's "law" is God himself. God has revealed as much of himself in his human-language-written Word, as is necessary for the **administration** of all man-made secondary or tertiary laws. God has never said man is prohibited from making second or third level laws on his own by which to socialize and protect humanity from the evil that exists in the world. God, in fact, has "ordained" human governments for that very purpose. BUT, (and it is a huge "but") whatever laws man may devise and institute and execute, must be made and executed within the parameters of the Divine Law. All law and order ultimately resides in Jehovah-God. **Order is law, and law is order.** All human laws, whether those of the U.S., Russia, China, Africa, *etal.*, come from God. Man cannot be a social being without some law. There were laws even in the pristine, sinless Garden of Eden (the law prohibiting eating of the tree of knowledge of good and evil; the law that man should multiply, that man should till the earth). There is no authority (government, law, etc.) except that which has been instituted by God (Rom. 13:1ff). All law is good **if law is used "lawfully."** Everyone knows that "good laws" can be abused and misused and perverted to accomplish "bad" ends. This is done by wicked and unregenerate people all the time! Paul says in this context that "lawful" use of the law is to be "in accordance with the glorious gospel of the blessed God..." In other words, the **principles** by which the **precepts** of both civil and religious law is to be used are revealed in the Bible. For more discussion on this question, see *What The Bible Says About Civil Government*, by Paul T. Butler, pub. College Press, pp. 75-82. The interesting statement of Paul here is that the "law is not for the just, but for the unjust." Christians should not have to be constrained or controlled by law--the love of Christ **controls** Christians (see 2 Cor. 5:14ff). But those who are not Christian have to be controlled by

coercion, by force, by **law**.

Yes! Indeed, the word Paul uses here in 1 Tim. 1:10 unequivocally means homosexual behavior. It is the Greek word, *arsenokoitais*, literally, “male coitus.” God is serious about this **perversion** of divinely-created human sexuality. First, it is **unnatural and irrational behavior** (if it is “good” it ought to be practiced by every human being, but if universally practiced would result in genocide); second it is forbidden by God in both the O.T. and the N.T. (Lev. 18:22; 20:13; Deut. 23:17,18; Rom. 1:26-27; 1 Cor. 6:10; 1 Tim. 1:10); third it will inexorably (by divine laws of “nature”) have self-destructive and socially-destructive consequences (Rom. 1:26-32). God is extremely **serious** about this matter and made it a crime/sin punishable by **death** in the O.T. In our civilization it ought, at least, to be a civil felony punishable by 30-40 yrs. of incarceration. Some **severe** deterrent should be the penalty for such behavior since it is clearly responsible for the spread, if not the origin, of HIV and AIDS. If people want to practice such behavior, lock them up together where they may practice it among themselves and let them experience, in all its stark reality, the consequences of such behavior! For more on this issue see, *What The Bible Says About Civil Government*, *op.cit.* pp. 169-170. Homosexually-inclined people may be redeemed by the grace of God and the Gospel of Christ, just like adulterers, fornicators, liars, thieves, etc., but impenitent homosexual **behavior** certainly cannot be tolerated in the Church!

Blasphemy means, “to speak evil of...” When a person “blasphemes” God he declares that the absolutely **good God** is **evil**. Blasphemy is “contempt, irreverence, defiance, ridicule, insult.” Blasphemy is rebellion, anarchy, nihilism, all wrapped into one attitude and behavior. To make another god, or to call oneself “god” is blasphemy, for both are decisions to “dethrone” the One True God. Blasphemy is, in effect, cursing God (not just cursing, but damning God). The Pharisees were near to blasphemy when they said that Jesus had cast out demons by the power of the devil (Matt. 12). They might be excused for not **then** recognizing Jesus as the divine Son of God (because he had not been resurrected yet from the dead---the ultimate sign of who he was, the “sign of Jonah”). But should they continue to call Jesus’ message and works the “works of the devil” **after** his resurrection, they **would, indeed, be guilty of blasphemy!** Sir Bertrand Russell, in his book, *Why I Am Not a Christian*, goes on record as blaspheming Christ. Madalyn Murray O’Hair went on record as blaspheming God, the Bible, Jesus, heaven, and everything else Christian. Russell’s philosophy, humanistic-logical positivism (i.e., words, language can never have any definition or meaning beyond that which is absolutely physical and material), and Madalyn Murray’s philosophy of complete humanistic-atheism have done irreparable damage to millions of souls through “higher education.” Blasphemy of God, Christ, the Bible, the Holy Spirit, is the **ultimate sin**.

Paul received mercy for his sins because he was obedient to the command of Christ to go into Damascus and find all that was appointed for him to do. He was then obedient to the revealed command of Christ’s word to him through Christ’s messenger, Ananias, to “rise and be baptized, and wash away thy sins.” See Acts 22:6-16. Paul was **not** given mercy for his sins because of anything he was as a Jew, a rabbi, or a man who **thought** he was doing God a service by persecuting Christians. He received mercy because

he **believed in Christ, repented of his sin (changed his mind about Christ), and obeyed Christ's command to be immersed in water for the remission of his sins.** Any human being in the world today may receive mercy for their sin (no matter how heinous the sin) by the same plan of salvation. It is as simple as that and as profound as that. Christ's vicarious death paid the penalty for human sin, therefore, he has the right to tell humanity what to **do** to receive mercy for their sins. And he has told the world what to do through the words of the apostles in the New Testament (beginning with Acts 2:38).

That's exactly what he said, and exactly what he meant! Christian preachers are not the only ones in this "war." All Christians are (see 2 Tim. 2:3; Gal. 5:16-17; Ep. 6:10-20; 2 Cor. 10:3-5; Jas. 4:1-10, etc.). In Jude 3 we are told to "contend for the faith once for all delivered to the saints." The word "contend" is a translation of the Greek word *epagonizesthai*, from which we get the English word, "agonize." It was a word from both the Greek athletic and military vocabulary meaning "struggle, fight, contend." Peter says the Christian must "abstain from the passions of the flesh which war against your soul" 1 Pet. 2:11 Yes! Christian preachers, elders, deacons, teachers, church members **MUST FACE UP TO THE REALITY THAT BEING A CHRISTIAN MEANS SPIRITUAL STRUGGLE, AGONIZING WARFARE IN THE MIND.** We are not playing games here! The battlefield is not in the emotions----the battlefield is in the mind. The war is for "thoughts and imaginations" as Paul uses in 2 Cor. 10:5 the two Greek words, *logismous*, from *logos*, or reasoning, arguments, and *noema*, which means mental device or thinking process. **THE BATTLEFIELD IS THE MIND!** That is why "evangelists" and "elders" must be able "give instruction in sound doctrine and...confute those who contradict it" (Titus 1:9). Christian "soldiers" need to sharpen their "swords" (the word of God) **every day** just like a good U.S. Marine keeps his "piece" (rifle) cleaned, oiled, and ready instantly.

The "conscience" is what God gave humans to judge them in their thoughts and actions. The conscience **does not tell anyone WHAT is right or wrong.** Conscience only tells people that they are **GUILTY** because they have done wrong, or **INNOCENT** because they have done right. It is the **intellect** by which humans **decide WHAT is right and what is wrong.** It is logic, the rational part of the human being which weighs the facts (or evidence) and **KNOWS** what is right or wrong. When people **KNOW what** is right and do wrong instead, they have made a deliberate decision of the will to think or behave contrary to what is **logical** and **sensible**. That is what Paul means when he said, "For what can be **known** about God is **plain** to them, because God has shown it to them....and has been clearly **perceived** in the things that have been made...So they are **without excuse** for although they **knew** God they did not honor him as God...they became futile in their **thinking** and their **senseless minds were darkened...Claiming to be wise they became fools...etc.**" (Rom. 1:18-23). When a person deliberately chooses to do opposite of what he **KNOWS** to be the truth (the right), his **conscience** "condemns" him (Rom. 2:14-16). Since we have **ALL** sinned (done wrong), we **ALL** stand condemned by our consciences. Isn't it **AWESOME** that God has put within each one of us a "judge"? It really is an act of the love and grace of God that he did so. By doing so God is trying to give his free-willed creatures every opportunity to **REPENT**. But when people go **against** their conscience time after time after time, it eventually becomes "calloused"! If we repent, and seek the Lord's forgiveness in the way(s)

the Lord has provided for forgiveness, **we can have a CLEAN CONSCIENCE** (see for example, Heb. 10:1-18; 1 Pet. 3:21; 1 Jn. 3:16-20).

TEACHER'S NOTES 1 Timothy

prepared by Paul T. Butler

1 Timothy 2:1-15

1. It is of **first importance** to pray for kings and rulers, etc., so that we may lead a “quiet and peaceable life, in all godliness and honesty.” If we do not have **civil** and **social order**, it will be very difficult, if not impossible, to preach the gospel to the lost and to worship God according to the dictates of the individual’s rationale. We should pray for our rulers that they might become Christians---if not, that they might have some concept of what God expects of them, and a willingness to abide by it. I seriously doubt that most politicians today really understand that they are **stewards of civil government on behalf of Almighty God, and that they shall be held responsible for what they do with that stewardship!** We should pray for law and order throughout the world so that missionaries may take the gospel to all the earth.

2. It is not only important to **pray** for rulers, it is important that Christians get **involved in Christian citizenship**, i.e., vote, petition the Congress for grievances, serve in the military when necessary, even become officials in the government. On pages 250-252, *What The Bible Says About Civil Government*, P. T. Butler, College Press, are listed **40 Bible believers who were officials in civil government** (that is more than there are prophets, apostles, evangelists, and churches listed). No Christian should **ever** let an election day go by (no matter how insignificant he thinks it may be) without casting his vote! This is especially true of American Christians! We have been so **blessed by God** in this free, prosperous and powerful country, we **must**, as Christians and Americans, **insist** that our lazy, indifferent, neighbors get out and vote. I believe God is extremely disappointed in America when less than 50% of those eligible to vote do so in some elections, and even less in other elections! If I were made “king” of America I would make it a **crime** to not vote in any election (which is, of course, a contradiction to having a “free” America). **BUT THINK ABOUT IT!** Literally **millions** of men and women have paid the supreme sacrifice (laid down their lives) so that every living American citizen may enjoy freedom and the right to vote for their government officials, taxation, and etc. It is **un-Christian** to refuse to vote and express your reasoning and opinion to your congressmen about our government! There is no such thing as a Christian uninvolved in civil government!

3. I believe that **civil government** is mandated by God to play a peculiar part in God’s plan to redeem the world! There are three (3) institutions ordained by God through which he intends redemption (salvation) to be administered to a fallen and sinful world---they are, not necessarily in order of importance but in chronological order of their institution (a) the family; (b) civil order/government; (c) the spiritual kingdom of God on earth, the church (in the O.T. Israel was the church). Clearly, Rom. 13:1-7 and 1 Pet. 2:14-17 indicate that **civil government** has a redemptive role to play in maintaining civil order, and the text here in 1 Tim. 2:1-3 connects “salvation” to the “quiet and peaceable” life rulers and kings are supposed to ensure. It is the role of civil government to keep the peace, by law and by coercion, when necessary (that includes arresting criminal behavior and punishing it

commensurate with the crime). It is the responsibility of civil authorities to **remove from the civil society** (whether by incarceration or execution) those persons who manifest by their crimes that they do not wish to live in an ordered, crime-free society. It is **not** civil government's role to order citizens to think in a certain way, or to vote in contradiction to their opinions, or to inhibit free speech and free press. HOW MUCH DO YOU KNOW ABOUT YOUR AMERICAN CONSTITUTION?

4. I would think God "hears" all human utterance whether verbal or mental. He knows our thoughts before we think them and he certainly knows every word we speak. That would include all prayers, Jewish, Muslim, Hindu, or Buddhist. It may even be that God **answers** prayers of all non-Christians who **sincerely want to know and obey the truth** (cf. Acts 10:4) and in some providential intervention into the affairs of men will give sincere praying persons an opportunity to know the truth. However, I do **not** think God would **honor**, let alone **answer** any prayer from anyone who has no desire to know and do the truth. It is clear from 1 John 5:14 that if anyone asks for anything that is **according to God's will** he shall have it. But it is also clear from John 5:23 that whoever does not honor the Son (Jesus) does not honor the Father (God). No world religion (other than Christianity) honors Jesus as Lord, therefore, none of the world's religions except Biblical Christianity honor God. In fact, they are an abomination to God---just as any religion in O.T. times except the Law of Moses was an abomination to God. There are definitely occasions when God says he will NOT hear prayers (Isa. 1:15; Micah 3:4; Jer. 11:14; 14:11. etc.).

5. Paul was appointed to preach the "knowledge of the truth" which is the Gospel of Christ. That Gospel includes the facts concerning the "ransom" Jesus paid on the cross, and that Jesus alone is our "mediator" (advocate, representative, intercessor) to God. It includes "**the faith**"---all the doctrines of the New Testament---and nothing but the doctrines of the N.T. because "**the faith**" has been once for all delivered unto the saints (Jude 3) by the apostles in the N.T. There is a plethora of preaching and teaching going on in churches across the world today that is NOT THE TRUTH NOR IS IT "**THE FAITH**" **because it is in contradiction to the New Testament**. Many people today seem to have the idea that they can say anything they "feel in their hearts," believe anything they "feel in their hearts," and "do whatever their hearts" lead them to do and call it "faith in Jesus" (including Oprah Winfrey). But that is not what Paul preached and taught! And it isn't what God approves (Num. 15:39; Prov. 14:12; 16:2; 18:2; 19:20; Jer. 17:9-10, etc.)

6. The English word "adorn" in this text is a translation of the Greek word *kosmos*, and it is used twice in 1 Tim. 2:9, indicating Paul was being **emphatic** about this. The Greek word *kosmos*, means, literally, **orderliness**. It is the word from which we get the English word, *cosmos*, *cosmological*, *cosmetics*, etc. There is **order** in the universe so we call it a *cosmos*. Cosmetics are designed to bring order out of disorder or chaos. In one place in the text *kosmos* is translated, "adorn," and in the other place it is translated, "modestly." Two other Greek words in this text (2:9) are significant. They are *aidous* and *sophrosunes*. *Aidous* would be best translated, "proper," and *sophrosunes* is best translated "soberly." So, you see, there is no allowance for Christian women to be frivolous, vain, bizarre, **immodest**, improper, disorderly, or flippant about their "adornment" or dressing. But the same thing is

said of Christian men. In fact, elders are to be men of *kosmion*, “**orderliness**” (1 Tim. 3:2). If Christians want to “dress-up” any part of themselves so that the world will take notice, it should be the putting on of good works and godliness. There is more to **modesty** than apparel along with orderly apparel it also involves the man and woman fulfilling their God-mandated **roles properly or “modestly”** in the hierarchy of the family and the Church as we will see in the rest of this chapter.

7. Paul does not equivocate here! Translated literally from the Greek text it would read, “A woman, in silence let (her) learn in all subjection; but to teach, a woman, I do not permit, nor to exercise authority of (over) a man but to be in silence.” (See also 1 Cor. 14:34-35). Yet, we have Paul writing to Titus (Titus 2:3) saying the older women should “teach” (Greek, *kalodidaskalous*) the younger women to be sober, love their husbands and children, to be discreet, chaste, homemakers, good obedient to the husbands, that the word of God not be blasphemed. There is some “teaching” that Christian women may do (in the home to children, and in the church to other women). As Don DeWalt pointed out in his commentary, *Paul’s Letters to Timothy and Titus*, College Press, 1961, pp. 55-56, “The expression ‘I permit not’ is not to be passed off lightly as local or temporary, as we have heard it done in too many places. Paul speaks with divine authority to us as well as to the church at Ephesus...In the public meetings where men are present, women are not to teach, nor in any way ‘lord it over’ them, but in contrast they are to be ‘in quietness....’” Biblical absolutes do not change with cultural or civilizational change. Paul could not have been more **absolute** than to say, “...but to teach, woman I do not permit, nor to exercise authority over a man...”

8. It was out of man (who was created first) that woman was made. Man was a separate being before woman was created (see 1 Cor. 11:9). Man was made to be the leader in the male/female equation. When that is usurped, disaster follows. We quote Don DeWalt again, *op.cit.* p. 56, “Man holds a direct relationship of responsibility to God; the woman relates through the man to God, i.e., in the husband and wife relationship. **Only when this arrangement was altered did the first pair lose Paradise.** The social position of the woman is as well established in the order of **temptation** and **sin** as in the order of creation. The woman was altogether deceived by the serpent and came into transgression...Adam was indeed a sinner, and responsible for his own action as well as his relationship to his wife. If Adam is the head of the woman, why does he not act like it? Both Adam and Eve were out of place. *However, the only point being made here is that in the nature of the two, one is made to lead and the other to follow.*” (Emphasis, ours). In other words, it was when woman usurped her place in God’s ordained hierarchy of human nature, became the leader instead of the follower, that sin **first** came into Paradise! As Paul points out in 1 Cor. Ch. 11, woman’s role as “follower” in no way demotes her into a second class role in creation. Man cannot fill woman’s place any more than woman can fill man’s.

9. Paul is saying **metaphorically**, that woman’s salvation is to be found in her God-mandated role (wife-hood and mother-hood), **IF** she continues in “faith with love and holiness with modesty.” Woman will not be saved if she disregards the “place” God has ordained for her and usurps the divine hierarchy for humanity in both the home and in the church (and, in my opinion, in civil government because government is the third redemptive institution

ordained by God for this world). This seems to me to be the intent according to the **context**. There are other Bible exegetes who think Paul means to say that, "...though Eve was first in transgression, and brought death on herself, her husband, and her posterity, the **female** sex shall be **saved** equally with the male, through child-bearing; through bringing forth the **Savior**; if they live in faith.....etc." I think that is less likely Paul's intent here in light of the discussion about woman's **proper role** in the marital equation.

10. All the above fits into the worship of God because God has **decreed** the hierarchical roles of man and woman in the work of the Church on earth. When males do not **lead** in the work of the Church, God is not being properly worshiped in the Church. It is just as simple as that! There's always someone who will say, "But I know of a little church where the men were so scarce, the women had to take positions of leadership because the men wouldn't do it." Yes, I know that has happened in a **few** instances, but I also know that practically every one of those congregations sooner or later closed down because men would not take the role of leadership! Male leadership is God's decree at least in the home and the church and I would think if in these two units of society it would also be God's intent in other aspects of society (business, government, etc.). But I guarantee you that such an opinion as mine is very much politically **incorrect** in the secular world and in lots of other religious circles!

TEACHER'S NOTES 1 Timothy

prepared by Paul T. Butler

1 Timothy 3:1-16

The Greek word translated “bishop”, *episkopes*, or “episcopate” in English means literally, “to visit in order to care for, to take care of.” “Elder” in the strictest sense of the word is, in Greek, *presbuteros*, from which we get the English word, “presbytery, Presbyterian.” The term, *episkopes*, (sometimes translated, “overseer”) indicates the character of the work involved which is **caring for God’s church as a shepherd cares for his flock**. The term, *presbuteros*, or “elder” indicates the maturity and spirituality of those called to lead the Church. You can see that the term *episkopes*, or “bishop” does not have as its primary meaning, “to rule.” That does not mean, however, that elders (“bishops”) are not to be obeyed! It is clear from many passages in the N.T. that **qualified** elders are to be submitted to and followed (Titus 1:5-9; 3:1-2; Heb. 13:7-8; 13:17, etc.). Elders/Bishops should be old enough to command the respect of those they lead; they should be old enough to have experience in leadership; they should be old enough to have gained a thorough knowledge of the Bible and have interacted with other human beings enough to know how to “encourage others by sound doctrine and refute those who oppose it” (Titus 1:9); they should be old enough to have gained self-control over their emotions and temperaments and over their fleshly urges.

I don’t know that being **married** is an **absolute** requirement for the office of Elder/Bishop. There might be a circumstance in a congregation (just beginning) that not enough otherwise qualified married men would be available to lead the congregation---I doubt that would be the case in one out of 10,000. It is clear that having had the experience of being the head of a home and rearing children is emphatically stated by the apostle Paul, not only to Timothy, but to Titus as well. I have served as the preacher in a church where one of the elders was married but he and his wife had never had any children, although he served as an elder and she taught a children’s S.S. class! They had been in those positions for many years so I did not “rock the boat.” If I had my preferences, it would not have been that way, but I did not think it was worth making a division in the congregation (and that would definitely have happened) just to have my preferences. In my opinion from the experience of serving with this “elder” for a number of years, there were others in the congregation who would have been more spiritually in tune with “shepherding the flock” than the man who had never “shepherded a flock of his own at home.”

Paul is clear enough about the eldership being strictly filled by males only, that there should be no argument contending that women may be “elders.” It may seem rationally desirable, emotionally desirable, socially desirable, and in all other ways desirable to have women as “elders” or “deacons” in leadership positions in the Church but the Scripture clearly prohibits it! Personally, I believe women may “visit people in order to care for them” (literal meaning of *episcopos*, or “bishop”), they may “serve” the congregation in many practical ways (literal meaning of *diakonon*, or “deacon”), thus **practically doing** some of the

work of both “elder” and “deacon.” But there is no scriptural warrant for electing women to either the **office** of “elder” or “deacon.” Further, it is my personal opinion that women should not be ordained by the Church as “evangelists” or “preachers.” I’m not certain that I could cite a “thus saith the Lord” for that but I think the **inference** in Paul’s epistles to Timothy and Titus about the **office** of evangelist and preacher that it is to be for males only. Certainly the prohibition against women “teaching and exercising authority over men” would apply to evangelist and preacher as well as elder and deacon. The Bible is never “culturally outdated!” Some sections of it may apply to past “dispensations” and perhaps some **few** references about general behavior may apply only to an ancient culture, but as far as the structure (polity) of the Church is concerned it is to be as stated in the Bible until the end of time.

When the wife and children of a husband and father respect him, obey him, love him, learn from him and **follow** him in all the circumstances and demands of life, then (if he is a Christian) he is clearly qualified to be considered for leadership in the Church. All those characteristics are in the Greek word *proistemi*, which is usually translated, “rule.” But it means to “rule in the sense of leading.” NIV translates it “manage his children and his household well...” but that is not a good translation. There are other qualifications, of course, which have to do with how he is evaluated by those outside the Church and outside his own home. But if he fulfills the family part, he will surely fulfill the other part as well. Of course, to be an “elder” he should not be a “novice.” He should have some years of experience behind him for his own good as well as the Church’s. He should, of course, **desire** to be an elder. That is as important as the other qualifications. I’ve seen men take the office of elder and deacon when they **didn’t** want to but, since no one else would do so, they did so. I’m not sure that is the best situation.

The Church is to be a **beacon of light and truth and goodness (helpfulness)** to the outside world. It should be above reproach in its dealings with businesses, with other institutions of the society such as government, law enforcement, education, and family life. It must show the compassion of Christ, the love of truth above falsehood, and the Church must be without guile. It must guard against appearing to be hypocritical or wishy-washy in respect to sin and crime. All these attributes the Church must hold up verbally and in practice like a light shining in a dark place. There is no other organized institution on the face of the earth that can be looked to for those attributes. That should be apparent from history and from current events. The Church **must care about its “reflection” upon the community** for it cannot ever hope to attract people to its doctrine until the world knows about its love. Francis Shaeffer said in one of his books, that concern about doctrine is within the Church; concern about compassion is without the Church. The world does not care about doctrine until it sees the Church cares about compassion. This must be evident especially in the leadership of the Church for that is what they are to **lead** the membership toward!

Yes, indeed! The word Greek word, *euangelistes*, (“evangelist”) is found in only 3 places in the N.T. (Acts 21:8; Eph. 4:11; 2 Tim. 4:5). In each of these 3 references the word is apparently restricted to a particular **office** or function in the N.T. Church. So, there is an

“office” of “evangelist.” Paul’s language is too emphatic and precise to allow us to shrug it off as simply instructing Timothy to “preach the gospel.” The contextual use seems to indicate something far more definite and particular, i.e., an “office” of leadership in the Church. (See the article *The Evangelist in the New Testament*, Christian Standard, Jan. 21, 1961, pp. 7-8, Paul T. Butler concluding, that there **is**, indeed, an office of “**evangelist**.”) The scholarly book, *The Church and the Ministry in the Early Centuries*, by Thomas M. Lindsay, late, professor in the Glasgow College of the United Free Church of Scotland, recounting very early Church history wrote, “There was another official. The congregation is told to appoint a Reader. He is to be an experienced Christian. His duty is to read the Scriptures during Divine Service, and it is required that he should have a good voice and a clear delivery. He is told to come early to the church on the Lord’s Day. He is to be able to expound the Scripture that he has read. He is to remember that he ‘fills the place of an evangelist.’” Dr. Lindsay took his information from the original sources of the apostolic canons, A.D. 140-180. This practice of the evangelist reading or relating the Scriptures and then **expounding** them was not, however, an innovation of the 2nd century. Paul instructed Timothy to train himself for such a task and commanded him thus to read and teach.

There’s nothing “mysterious” (in the modern connotation of the word “mysterious”) about the Christian faith. **What** God **did** through Jesus Christ in **history** is **not inscrutable**. **What** God has **said** about what he **did** through Christ is not unknowable. The Gospel was, of course, a “mystery” until God **revealed it** in the historical deeds of Jesus Christ and in the preaching and writings of the apostles in the New Testament. The Greek word *musterion* transliterated (not translated) in the N.T. “mystery,” (e.g., Col. 1:26,27; 2:2,12; 1 Cor. 2:6-16 13:2; 14:2; Eph. 1:9; 5:32; 6:19; Rom. 16:25, etc.) means primarily (says W.E. Vine) “that which is known to the “initiated.” It was a word used in the Greek world of “mythological religions” to denote the “secret” rites of the mythological cults. **Why** God did what he did, and **how** God **could** do it in the way he did it is unknowable to the human mind until God reveals as much of it as he desires. **What** God wants man to **believe** and **do** about what Christ has done is **not unknowable!** The best we can do to explain **why and how** an absolutely holy, just, and sovereign God could offer pardon for sin against him in the vicarious death of the completely innocent Jesus, is to compare it to **human love**. But human love is in no way able to reach the depths of **divine love**. So, there are still some “secret” things in the bosom of God that remain a “mystery” to man (see Deut. 29:29). So Paul means here that deacons must “hold” (believe and practice) the **revealed** doctrines of the New Testament “with a clear conscience.” They must not try to be deacons in the Church and continually violate the doctrines of the Gospel (“mystery”) which are now **revealed** in the N.T.

The Greek word *bathmon*, literally denotes a step or stair-step. Paul uses the word metaphorically to mean “rank, position, or degree-up.” Deacons who minister well (*kalos diakonesantes*) acquire for themselves a good rank (*kalon bathmon*). To be a good deacon (one who ministers) in the Church of the Lord Jesus Christ, is an honorable, esteemed place to be! Deacons who minister well should be held in high regard by the members of any congregation. The **functioning** of the congregation depends to a large amount on their “ministering.” Everyone knows what “ministering” is. Doctors and nurses do it, mothers and

fathers do it, politicians are supposed to do it, policemen and soldiers do it, and school teachers and school staff members do it. THEY SERVE OTHERS BEFORE THEMSELVES! They deserve any compliments they get if they are doing their ministering well! Deacons will some day hear, "Well done, good and faithful servant, because you were faithful over 2 cities, I will put you over 10 cities."

The Greek word translated "religion" in the RSV (1 Tim. 3:16) is *eusebeias*. It is a compound of *eu*, meaning "well or good," and *sebomai*, meaning "veneration, devotion, piety." The word translated "religion" in James 1:26-27 is *threskeia*, which denotes the ceremonial aspect of a religion of ritual. Both the KJV and the NIV translate *eusebeias*, "godliness" and are better translations because the word specifies more of the internal attitude of devotion, adoration, and Godward-attitude. The Latin word *religo* means "a binding together or tying fast that which was dissolved." The "mystery of our religion" (RSV) is a very poor translation because there is no "our" in the Greek text. The sentence should read, "Confessedly, great is the mystery of godliness." And the "**godliness**" being referred to is not ours, but **his (that of Jesus Christ)**. The next sentence begins, "Who (not "God" as in the KJV) was manifested in flesh....etc." Of course, since it is talking about Jesus Christ, who was God-manifested-in-the-flesh" then the sentence is indeed talking about God-incarnated. So the subject which is being called a "great mystery" is **the incarnation of God in Jesus Christ**. AND THAT IS CERTAINLY A "GREAT MYSTERY" BUT A REVEALED ONE. The "binding together or tying fast" of the Christian (i.e., his "religion") to God's grace is the "mystery-revealed" in Christ's incarnation. Or, as the Greek word would have it, our "veneration, devotion and piety" is a result of the godliness of Jesus Christ and his imputed grace to us. No human being knows **precisely how and why** that came about. We simply believe it **did!**

And that is what the rest of verse 16 is all about! That the INCARNATION OF GOD **did take place**, we are able to believe because we have **EVIDENCE THAT IT DID!** God was "manifested in the flesh," and "vindicated" (Gr. *edikaiothe*, "justified") in the spirit" which means his spiritual claims to be God in the flesh were **vindicated by evidence**. He was not a "liar" when he said he was equal with God. The **vindication or justification** was in his miracles. Remember the lame man let down through the roof---Jesus said, "So that you will know that the Son of man has authority on earth to forgive sins, I say to you, take up your bed and walk." And John wrote, "Many other signs Jesus did in the presence of his apostles which are not written in this book, but these are written that you might believe that Jesus is the Anointed of God (Messiah)." Paul wrote, Jesus was **declared to be the Son of God with power BY the resurrection from the dead** (Rom. 1:4). So we may paraphrase 1 Tim. 1:16, "Great indeed is the mystery of what God is like, but he was manifested (revealed) in the flesh, and that he **was** revealed in the flesh has been **vindicated** (or, **proved**) by the fact that his deity was attested to by angels, it was preached among the Gentiles, it was believed all over the world, and he ascended back to heaven in his glorified state." All of this was seen by eyewitnesses. The **fact** that God can become incarnate is no longer a "mystery" for it has been demonstrated with sufficient evidence to be believed all over the world. **How and why** God chose to redeem man by incarnating himself will remain, to a large extent, a mystery to the limitations of the human mind. We have no human experience with which to

compare it so as to completely understand it.

TEACHER'S NOTES 1 Timothy

prepared by Paul T. Butler

1 Timothy 4:1-16

The Holy Spirit (through the teachings/writings of the apostles) has said “**expressly**” (Greek, *hretos*, literally, “**in words**,” NIV translates *hretos*, “clearly”) that some would depart from the faith in statements like Acts 20:29-32; 2 Thess. 2:1-12; 2 Pet. 2:1-22; 1 John 2:18-29; 4:1-12; 2 John 6-10; Jude 3-23, etc. The important point is that the Holy Spirit predicted this **with words**. It was not done esoterically or extra-Biblically. It was **specified in human language to the apostles who wrote it down** so that all succeeding generations might know it in their own language. These prophecies of the apostles have come true, and are still coming true, and are indisputable evidence of the inerrancy and inspiration of the Scriptures. It is my opinion that 2 Thess. 2:1-12 is an apostolic prophecy of the great apostasy of Roman Catholicism. There is no single, ONE, “antichrist” for John clearly defines “antichrist” as anyone who refuses to acknowledge that Jesus is God’s Anointed and was indeed, God-incarnate! John says there are “**many**” antichrists (plural). There are antichrists in every generation of history. Apostasy in a multitude of forms continues to this day. All the cultists, humanistic theologians, atheists, and agnostics are people who have “departed from the faith” somewhere down the years of their existence. Paul says in Romans 1:18-20 that what can be known about God, his eternal power and deity, ***is*** (not “may be”) plain to them for the invisible things of him ***are*** (not “may be”) clearly ***understood*** by the things that are made.

Yes! All followers and teachers of **falsehood** are “giving heed to deceitful spirits!” These “spirits” do not necessarily have to be demons or supernatural spirits. John says, “test the **spirits**, because many **false prophets** have gone out into the world” (1 John 4:1-2). John goes on to say that the way the Christian may “test” all these “spirits” is to see if they say the same things as the apostles have said in the New Testament. If they do not, they are “false prophets.” (1 John 4:2-6). Of course, all falsehood ultimately originates with the devil (John 8:44-47) who has nothing to do with the truth and is a liar and the **father** of lies. But the devil has **many human accomplices** who are willing to do his will (John 8:44-45) and lie and spread falsehood. The devil doesn’t need to send his “demons” around to seduce and hurt people any more because he has so many **human helpers**. **NONE OF THE DEVIL’S HELPERS ARE DUPED!** They all aid and abet the arch-criminal because they want to do so. There is **plenty** of evidence concerning what is truth and what is falsehood (Rom. 1:18-20; 1 John 1:1-4; 4:1-6; John 20:30-31, etc.). All humans have to do is keep their mind free of prejudice and think logically about the evidence God has revealed to them, and they can come to the truth about God.

Interestingly the Greek word translated “seared” is, *kekausteriasmenon*, is the word from which we get the English word, **cauterize**. It means to “burn with a hot iron so as to sear, or scab it over.” The only way God is involved in “scabbing over” human consciences and making them impervious to being energized is that he has presented the truth of his existence and his incarnation in Jesus Christ the Son of God so clearly, plainly, and

abundantly, it cannot be **logically** denied and therefore, has to be **morally** rejected. And since God has created human beings with the freedom to choose truth or falsehood, it only stands to reason that the **more often** a human being **rejects** the truth in favor of falsehood, the **more callous** his mind and will and emotions will become to **accepting the truth**. There are four types of “hearts” as Jesus categorized them in the parable of the soils. There is the “hard-as-a-rock” heart that is **absolutely and totally** impervious to the “seed” of truth when it is sown; there is the “shallow, rocky” heart that frivolously and emotionally receives the “seed” of truth, but when the “sun” of hot persecution, mockery, scoffing comes, the “fruit” withers and dies; there is the “thistle” infested heart that receives the “seed” until the “cares and pleasures” of worldliness grow up in it and chokes the “fruit” to death. Finally there is the “good” heart that is **honest, receptive, understanding and grasping** for the truth which receives it and bears “fruit” an hundredfold. All except the last “heart” are “scabbed over” by their own doing. God never gives a temptation or test that man cannot bear and always gives the way of escape.

Yes, **everything** God created, he created **good** (Gen. 1:12,18,21,25,31). When he created man and woman he said they were “**very good**.” And many things God created “good” in the beginning are still “good.” What is not “good” in God’s created world today are things which human beings have **perverted or prostituted** away from their “good” purpose, or what God has “subjected to futility and decay” (Rom. 8:20-21). And even what God has subjected to futility and decay has been done for the “good” of mankind (Rom. 8:28-29). The first source of information as to what is “good” and what is “not good” is, of course, the **revealed** will of God, the **Bible**. The second source of information as to good and not good is the **morally-honest, rational** thinking of man. God made man capable of thinking rationally and logically. Logic, order, rationality, reality all originate and have their source in God. Some things in God’s creation as it is presently under “futility and decay” have to be determined to be good or bad by human experimentation and wisdom. God tells us in the Bible all the things that are good and bad which we cannot discover with our own knowledge. We simply trust him and believe what he says. But he hasn’t revealed in the Bible lots of things that have been subjected to futility and decay so we have to find those out the “hard way.” When experience and logic tell us certain things are bad when used improperly, we should have the good sense and honesty to stay away from them.

We must **train ourselves** in “**godliness**” because we have begun at some point in our lives to **train ourselves in ungodliness**. The word for “train” in the Greek text is *gumnaze*, which is the word from which we get the English, *gymnasium*. A gymnasium in ancient Greek was a place where athletes trained through “agonizing or striving.” Our Christian experience (life) is likened to an athletic contest, as well as a war (2 Tim. 2:5; 3:6-8; 1 Cor. 9:24-27). And no one receives the crown if they “run aimlessly,” do not “exercise self-control,” and do not “compete according to the rules.” The author of Hebrews uses the same metaphor in Heb. 5:14. How do athletes train? They repeat over and over and over the things that contribute to winning. They train until they have reached the limits of endurance and train until they can **exceed** the limits of endurance. They devote and dedicate every fiber of their being to their training. They focus their minds and wills on the prize and on winning the prize. Hale Irwin doesn’t win trophy after trophy and millions of dollars on the

golf course by just playing a round of golf now and then. He **practices every day**, many hours each day.

Please notice---Paul does not say in 4:6, “in faith”---he says “in **the** faith.” Whenever the word “faith” is preceded by the definite article, “**the**” it means a **specific body of doctrine**. “**The faith**” includes all the teachings of the Bible---especially the New Testament----properly interpreted by the rules of rational hermeneutics. In other words, properly interpreted by the rules of *hermeneutics* (meaning, the science of methodological interpreting of anything written whether the Bible or a cook-book), there may be some things that applied only to those who heard them in the first century or centuries soon thereafter and other things that apply always in every century until the end of time. “**The words of the faith**” were “the good teachings” (Gr. *tes kales didaskalias*) of Christ which were in both the O.T. and in the words of the apostles as they are revealed the New Testament. There is **no** way for any human being to **know** what godliness is and how to attain it **without** the Bible, properly interpreted. What godliness is and how to attain it **does not come to us genetically or subjectively**. What godliness is and how it is attained has been **objectively revealed in the Bible!** That revelation **believed and obeyed** will produce godliness. It is that simple and that profound. Nothing more, nothing less!

If you don't think being a Christian leader demands exhausting **toil** and **striving** you have **not read the N. T.** You expected me to say, “If you don't think being a Christian leader demands exhausting toil and striving you haven't been a Christian leader”---didn't you? Knowing about what will befall a Christian leader comes **first** from the revealed word of God, **and second**, from human experience. The apostles had to **tell** their Christian listeners and readers about the **trials and sufferings** that were to come their way. Peter even had to write, “Beloved, do not be **surprised** at the fiery **ordeal** which comes upon you to prove you, as though **something strange were happening to you.**” 1 Pet. 4:12. And Paul had to teach the Thessalonians that they should not be moved by their afflictions because he told them that they were to suffer as a part of the “**lot**” of Christians (1 Thess. 3:3-4). We learn from Philippians 1:27 that we are to “strive” for **the faith of the gospel**. Living the Christian life as a **ministry** can actually exhaust you at the end of each day. Not only must one struggle with his own thoughts and behavior, he must care for and evangelize unbelievers at every opportunity he gets. All that in addition to working at a job! Unbelievers get to work at their job and then go home to relax and they don't have to guard their thoughts, words and deeds (except not to break the law of the land). They do not struggle with their consciences, with caring about others. **BUT THE GOOD NEWS IS**, Jesus said, “Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you **rest**. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me; for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find **rest** for your souls. For my yoke is **easy**, and my burden is **light**.” Matt. 11:28-30

Clearly, “youths” as that word is defined today, should **not** be church leaders. Today we define “youths” as those all the way from infants to 21 years of age. But the word “youth” was probably defined differently in the first century. A “**man**” was probably 25-30 years old (or even older). A 18-year-old male would not be considered a “**man**.” Teenagers should not be placed in positions of leadership. First, they do not have enough experience

with the vagaries (ups and downs) of life. Second, they could not command the respect of people older than they are. Age as a requirement for leadership most often outweighs other qualifications with older people. When I was first called to be the minister of a church I was a freshman at OCC. Several other students, juniors and seniors, had been considered but in age they were 10 years younger than I. The elders called me because I was a family man of 10 years experience already even though my Bible college years were less than the others. By all this I do not mean to say that young men of the age of 20-21 can't **teach** and **sponsor** youngsters younger than they, but I do not believe 18-21 yr. old "youths" should be put in crucial leadership places where they have to make spiritual or material decisions all on their own. Timothy was probably 25-30 yrs. of age when Paul wrote him, "Let no one despise your youth, but set the believers an example in speech and conduct, in love in faith, in purity." I know----many young men are called into military service when they are 18, but I'm here to tell you that they don't get positions of leadership at 18! Leadership in the military (and most other secular vocations) comes only after some years of training and experience and demonstration that they are capable of leading others. I was 18 when I enlisted in the U.S. Navy. I earned my leadership position in the Navy only after years of training and experience. I think the recent practice of young men in Bible college serving as "interns" with older preachers in congregations before these young men step out to become the sole preacher of a congregation has gone a long way to remedy a serious situation in our congregations of a number of years ago.

Certainly young men of Timothy's age could learn enough from the Scriptures and mentors, like Paul, to become "preachers" because preachers mainly **taught** the Scriptures. Elders and deacons did all the shepherding and other work of the congregation. Paul seems to counsel Timothy here to **concentrate** his energies to learning the Scriptures and **teaching** them and to **learn how to set the correct example of what a young man ought to be** so that he might "progress" (4:16) into a position of leadership as he grew in experience and age. Later (ch. 5) he will caution Timothy **not** to try to "take charge" and "set the elders straight." Reading of Scripture is important to any one who **teaches** or **leads** in the flock of God. Paul will say in his second epistle to Timothy, "All scripture is inspired by God and **profitable** for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for **training** in righteousness, that the man of God may be **complete, equipped for EVERY good work**. It is difficult to teach young men in a classroom **how to do the practical things of ministering to a congregation**. Most of that has to be learned by **doing** those practical things in the actual situations where they occur because nearly every situation is different. But a young man can be equipped **from the Bible** with everything he needs to preach and teach.

When a young man is **preparing** to become a leader, and when a man actually becomes a **leader**, he could do nothing better than **devote himself** the reading, preaching and teaching of the Scriptures. Congregations would do well to relieve their leaders (preachers and elders) of as much of the practical needs of the congregation and **see that preachers and elders have TIME** to study the Scriptures and **prepare** to preach and teach. Too many preachers and other leaders are so burdened with administration of the practical things of a congregation they don't have time to prepare sermons and lessons that **instruct and edify** the members of the congregation. I think the apostle Paul would be appalled at

the small amount of time most preachers give to preparing sermons and lessons today. Preaching is “**reasoning from the Scriptures** (Acts 17:2; 18:4,19; 1 Pet. 3:15). Preaching is not just telling stories or discussing the news!

TEACHER'S NOTES 1 Timothy

prepared by Paul T. Butler

1 Timothy 5:1-24

Paul had to exhort Timothy to treat his elders as he would his father because it is the tendency of young men who have been placed in high profile places to want to be “big-shots.” No one is born humble! And humility is a learned, acquired virtue. Young people have to be **taught** to respect those older and wiser than they. Of course, sincere respect has to be **earned**. It was often a difficult thing for me to “respect” a few of my superior officers when I was in the Navy because I knew that morally, and sometimes technically they did not deserve it (i.e., they lacked the expertise someone of their rank should have had). **However**, we were always taught in the good old USN that we saluted (respected) the uniform and what it “represented” (i.e., chain of command) rather than the “man.” It doesn’t hurt young people to **show respect** to those older than they, even if they think their elders do not deserve it because of some character flaw the younger may have observed. God’s Biblical hierarchy of the human race (see Proverbs & the Prophets) insists that the young should, by submission, respect their male and female elders. The same measure of respect is due women from younger men. **Much of that decorum has been lost on the last two or three generations of American young people.** The TV and the Movies are to blame for much of it! But the home and the **church** and our educational systems have their share of the blame, too. “Sloppiness” in dress, manners, language, and attitudes contributes to disrespect. **The Bible teaches all the way through (O.T. and N.T.) that youngsters are to be respectful toward those older than they.** Elders should treat young men in or out of the church as they would want to be treated (i.e., follow the “Golden Rule”). Older people should not exhibit contempt for persons because they are young.

The ancient church had much more responsibility in the area of financial aid than the church in modern society. In America almost every Christian widow would have Social Security and/or some other means of financial support. Many young widows are able to find gainful employment in today’s work place to **partially** support themselves and whatever family they might have. Today’s older widows would have S.S. and probably some retirement funds. **But that’s not all the SUPPORT Christian widows need.** They also need spiritual and “social” support (that is, they need companionship as much or more than they need financial aid). The same need for spiritual and social support would have been needed in the early church in addition to financial aid since there was no Social Security and there was hardly any “middle-class”---you were either poor or rich and widows had to depend either on **family** to care for them or the church. Today’s church, however, has a New Testament responsibility to do for its widows **whatever the widows might need**---financially or spiritually. Such **needs** of **any** of a congregation’s members, young or old, widowed or not, **comes BEFORE church buildings, ministerial salaries, and missions.** However, just as in the first century, it is the Christian widow’s **family** (i.e., sons, daughters, grandchildren) that has the **first** responsibility to care for the widow’s needs. I am old enough to remember when there were **no** “Senior Citizens retirement centers.” About all that was available to old people whose families would not care for them was what was called, “the

Poor Farm” many of which were nothing more than asylums for the insane! LET CHRISTIAN LEADERS REMEMBER THE OBLIGATION OF THE CHURCH IN THIS MATTER---THE LORD WILL NOT HOLD A CONGREGATION GUILTLESS THAT IS INDIFFERENT TOWARD MEMBERS IN DIRE NEED!

It certainly is a part of **the faith** (N.T. doctrine) that believers must provide for their own families. This is such a **serious matter** that Paul says if believers do **not** provide for their own, they have **denied the faith**. It is interesting that in 5:3 Paul says any believing **widow** who has children or grandchildren, she should **first** learn her religious (“pious”) duty to her own family and make some return to her parents. In pagan society it is a great temptation for widows, young or old, to neglect their own families and think of themselves only, even to self-indulgence and abandoning their families. It even happens today! But in 5:8 Paul apparently shifts to the “man” of the house because he uses the masculine pronoun. “If anyone does not provide for **his** relatives (Greek, *idion*, “his own people”) and especially for his own family (Greek, *oikeion*, “his own household”), he has disowned the faith and is worse than an unbeliever” (RSV). There are not very many sins in the Bible with that kind of consequence! The Greek word translated, “provide” is, *pronoiei*, and means, literally, “take thought for, be mindful of.” It does not mean simply “put food on the table.” It would include providing everything the family needs, i.e., counsel, discipline, role-modeling, etc. Since this is directed pointedly to Christians, it essential that all Christian fathers and mothers engaged in vocations (church, health-care, civil-service) that demands long, odd, over-time hours arrange **time to CARE for their families**.

There may be two reasons, but the primary reason according to the text is that **younger widows** if “enrolled” (taking a pledge to remain a widow) would certainly feel **obligated to remain a widow and serve the church in that state**. But it would be difficult for a **younger widow** to continue in a **celibate status**. She would probably renege on her **pledge** of devoting herself totally to serving Christ. That would be breaking a vow. Second, **younger widows** in a celibate state would “learn to be idlers, gadding about from house to house...busybodies, saying what they should not.” Apostolic doctrine is emphatic that those who are able-bodied should be engaged in some “gainful” occupation, especially home-making for women and a trade for men. **Older widows** would be much less likely to renege on their pledge of celibacy to serve the Lord with their full time. They would be beyond child-bearing age, and **probably** have no more family obligations unless they came under the admonition of 5:3.

It is not cruel to *refuse* to enroll younger widows or it would not be in the N.T.! And it would not be unscriptural or improper for the elders of the church today to counsel **all young women to get married**. The apostolic doctrine is inerrant. But disregarding that for a moment, it was wise for the church to require younger widows to get married, especially in a culture where women would not easily have found vocational and social support. While it is not “politically correct” today to think it, I personally think our modern American society would be much sounder, morally, economically, and politically if almost all women were homemakers (staying at home). **There are enough unemployed men in our country to fill all the jobs and positions outside the home now filled by women**. I am not a woman-

hater. I've been married to one woman since the day we married on November 20, 1948. And she worked outside the home, **but only after our children were reared**. Even then, she did not have to do so. But I still think, while it's *probably* impossible now, if women were to stay home as home-makers, the country would survive and **prosper**.

Church leadership must be **concerned** about the church's **reputation** in its community and throughout the world. Notice the context in which Paul says our "enemy" may find opportunity to "revile us." It has to do with the proper place of women in society (especially in the church). The proper place of women as far as the church should be concerned is concentrating on keeping a home. That should require staying home. Christian families should not have "latch-key" children. I know it is difficult for one salary to "keep up with expenses" in our modern society, but in our home in the early years we suffered numerous "inconveniences" in order for mother to stay home (we had no air conditioning, only one car, no new furniture, our clothes and furniture were 80% hand-me-downs, etc., etc.). It can be done!

Very few elders today "labor in preaching and teaching" as they did in the ancient church. A generation or so back there were "preaching elders." That was before most of our present day Bible colleges were founded. My great grandfather was a self-taught, "preaching elder" in Missouri Christian Churches. With a proliferation of churches in the early days of the Restoration Movement, and a paucity of "trained" preachers, it necessitated that many rural Christian Churches have one of the elders do the preaching or "teaching" as sermonizing was often called. These men were usually supported by a very small cash stipend but with an abundance of other necessities of life. The church today certainly **could** have a "preaching elder" or a plurality of them if it wished. But with the large congregations and a much more urban society it would require such elders to have some training beyond their secular vocations. If a congregation wished to do that it would be obligated to give financial support because "ministry" today would necessitate such an elder to devote full time to preaching.

First, the "leader's" (and I think the "rebukers are the elders---see next question) responsibility concerning "rumors" about an elder (and this probably means any elderly person) is to never admit the rumor without the evidence of two or three witnesses. That is scriptural, legal, fair, and loving. Members of the congregation should always be given the benefit of doubt and presumed innocent until **evidence** (or confession) is shown to the contrary. Such caution follows Jesus' "Golden Rule" about judging in the Sermon on the Mount. Second, if someone in the congregation **persists** in a flagrant sin, they are to be "rebuked in the presence of all." Now that takes some courage on the part of the leadership of the church! A Church of Christ, in recent years, was sued in civil court for taking the "drastic" steps of discipline clearly outlined in the Scriptures. The plaintiff lost the case, but it still took integrity on the part of that church to do as the Scriptures ordain, because the tendency would be to not want to be dragged into court. Third, the "rebukers" must keep the apostolic process of church discipline "without favor, doing nothing from partiality."

The "rebukers" are "the **elders** who rule well"---because "elders" (v. 17) is the

nearest antecedent to “Never admit any charge against an elder...etc.” A “young” man would have a very difficult time “rebuking” an “elder.” All through the Bible (O.T. & N.T.) it is considered impertinent for young people to be rebuking their elders. Remember the 42 small boys attacked by the she-bears for calling Elisha “baldhead”? 2 Kings 2:23-24. Of course the boys were ridiculing the prophet while in this text we are considering rebuking someone for persistent sin. Nevertheless, when anyone is to be “rebuked **in the presence of all**” the congregation, it should be the **elders** who do so, for **they** are charged with church discipline! In a recent *WORLD* magazine (9/19/98), in an article, “Sin and silence,” the author, R. Albert Mohler, Jr., recounts that he (and I quote) “issued a public call for President Clinton’s congregation in Little Rock, AR, to exercise church discipline as mandated by Scripture. Some Christians were outraged that anyone would call for such a thing in this ‘enlightened’ age...The church cannot tolerate known sin without exposing its members to peril and bringing ruin to its gospel witness. Christians are sinners saved by grace, and are to watch over each other in love, even as we watch ourselves....The president’s sin demands a spiritual response. The strange silence of the church is a sign of its weakness, timidity, and fear before the world. We should fear a far greater danger. One of the most influential church manuals of the last century recorded a warning familiar in its day: ‘When discipline leaves a church, Christ goes with it.’ We cannot say we were not warned.” (unquote). Far from meddling, church discipline, scripturally administered, is an attempt to “gain a brother” and save a soul.

The big question, of course, is it **fermented** wine Paul is advising Timothy to “drink for the sake of (his) stomach and...frequent ailments.” I believe it **was fermented, but mixed with water so that it would not inebriate Timothy**. Commentators may say what they will about all the different uses of the Greek word for wine, *oinos*, but **fermented wine MIXED WITH WATER** (some say as much as 10 parts water to 1 part wine) was the common table drink for Jew or Gentile or Christian in the first century. It would make no sense at all for Jesus to be accused of being a “glutton and drunkard” (Lk. 7:34) if all Jesus drank at the many “dinners” he attended was Welch’s grape juice---Jesus in effect said he drank wine in this text. No where in the N.T. is total abstinence from fermented grape juice commanded **except in the case of causing a brother to stumble**. Harold Fowler has the best and most thorough discussion of this matter in a special study in his book, *THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW, Vol. II*, pp. 526-533, 1972, College Press. There is probably more alcohol content to “Ny-Quil” than the “wine” Timothy was advised to drink. In ancient times there were not many beverages that were safe to drink. The safest way the ancients could make water safe to drink was to mix it with **fermented wine**. Ancient Christian leaders Cyprian and Clement of Alexandria (A.D. 200-250) insist that the communion cup consist of a mixture of fermented wine and water. Paul was advising Timothy to drink “wine” for medicinal purposes. Drunkenness is severely condemned in both the O.T. and the N.T. Some doctors today, even Christian doctors, advise certain patients to “drink a little wine” for their “infirmities.”

TEACHER'S NOTES 1 Timothy

prepared by Paul T. Butler

1 Timothy 6:1-21

Indeed, the instructions to slaves, 6:1, **do** apply to **employees** today. All those “employed” by someone else are, in effect, **indentured slaves or servants**. Anyone who applies for a “job” today signs a contract (or agrees) to work at the task, in the manner in which the owner or employer stipulates in return for certain wages, salary and/or benefits. If the employee does not perform according to the contract, he is “fired” and must *indenture* himself to someone else. Of course, **slavery** in the sense that a person is taken against his will and made to work against his will, and owned by those who have taken him, and is traded and sold like property, is no longer legal in America (although it is in many countries throughout Africa and other places today). Totalitarian and communistic governments today enslave their subjects very much like slavery in America from 1700 to 1864. It would have been difficult to “regard” one’s “master as worthy of all honor” had one been a slave in America in the 18th & 19th centuries. But slavery in America was no more oppressive (probably even less in most instances) than slavery in the Roman empire in the 1st century! Paul uses the Greek word *doulos* in 6:1 so he is not talking about a “hired servant,” but a slave in bondage. So if Christian **bond slaves** were told to **honor** (and Paul is emphatic, *passes times*---the same word used about “honoring” one’s parents) their masters **so that the name of God and the gospel may not be defamed**, it well behooves employees to “honor” (respect) their employers (see Philemon).

Those who teach what is contrary the apostolic doctrine (the gospel) have a “sickness” (Gr. *nosos*). They are sick in their brain, sick in their souls, and are addicted to self-importance and conceit. Such a sickness results in controversy, disputation, envy, dissension, slander, base suspicion, and wrangling. Those who teach a false godliness are mentally corrupted and bereft of the truth. It is a “sickness” brought on by an inordinate desire to get rich by teaching the falsehoods that many people want to hear. Such false teachers will, “in their greed exploit” with false words those “unsteady souls” who love carousing (read it for yourself in 2 Pet. 2:1-22). Peter likens such false teachers to “irrational animals, creatures of instinct, born to be caught and killed...” **ANYONE PROPOSING TO TEACH THE WORD OF GOD HAD BETTER TEACH WHAT IT SAYS, LIKE IT SAYS IT!** The teaching of the Bible is **SERIOUS BUSINESS!** And those who teach it had better **not make the “making of MONEY” their objective**. Yes, full-time preachers deserve to be paid as Paul already wrote to Timothy (4:17-18; also 1 Cor. 9). And they deserve a “worthy” wage. But for preachers and teachers of God’s word, “there is great gain in godliness with contentment.”

MONEY or “gain” is what motivates “conceited” church leaders to controversy and wrangling. **Controversy and mysticism “sells.”** Very few people ever get excited about **revealed truth**. Most people today **vehemently** deny that the Bible is **absolute, revealed truth**. So, any controversial disputation attacking the Bible “sells.” Sinners don’t want God **telling them what to do about their sin**. This sinful world is “ripe for the picking” by the

devil's army of unbelievers. You and I both know that **most** (not all) of the purveyors of "miraculous healing," and "end times upon us" preaching today are in it for the MONEY! And they're making big bucks! Those preachers (remember Jim and Tammy Baker) love controversy and mysticism because it makes them famous. They are like big-time sports figures, politicians, movie-stars, and media stars who incite controversy because they feed off of the stupidity of people who are always looking for the thrill and excitement of something **different than the plain old truth**. It has always been so and will always be so until Jesus comes and straightens the world out about false teaching! THEN WHAT?

Contentment! A rare jewel of a virtue! The Greek word is *autarketas*, and means, "self-sufficient." It probably means, "I am satisfied." English synonyms for "content" are "satisfied, serene, gratified, cheerful, resigned." "Contentment" is **learned** as we see from Philippians 4:11. We are not born contented! Actually, I firmly believe that only a Christian can **learn to be content about the issue of material things in this life**. Unbelievers are *never* content with what they have materially! Some unbelievers are so discontent with their material status they will rob, steal and kill to get what they desire. Others will lie or otherwise compromise truth and exploit others to get what they want. That's because unbelievers think this is the only world they will have and the only life they will ever have, so they do as Paul said in 1 Cor. 15, "eat and drink for tomorrow we die." WHAT IS YOUR "CONTENTMENT" QUOTIENT? How "much" do you have to have to be satisfied, serene, cheerful? Paul said it correctly to Timothy, "There is **great** gain in godliness **with contentment**; FOR we brought nothing into this world, and we **cannot** take anything **out** of the world...." **GODLINESS** is the only "currency" of heaven. That's the **ONLY** thing you can put in heaven's bank! All the rest is doomed to dust and ashes! Are you satisfied with food, clothing and shelter? That's all the birds have, and the heavenly Father takes care of them (Matt. 6). This was brought home to me with a BANG when my parents died. They were not rich, by any American measurement. They had accumulated lots of "things" (most of which were not worth very much). However, what they had accumulated **ALL** stayed here when they "left" for heaven! Not one tool, not one dish, not one stitch of clothing went with them! FAITH in the **promises** of God (which are found in his word, the Bible) is the **only source** of real contentment. Did you know that the word "covetousness" in the Bible does not necessarily mean wanting what my neighbor has—it means "always wanting more, period"?

In the Greek text the definite article ("the") is absent before "root" in verse 10. When the definite article is missing the **indefinite** article ("a") is usually assumed. The sentence would then read literally, "For **a** root of all the evils is the love of money...." If this exegesis is correct there are numerous "roots" to all the "evils" and "the love of money" is only **one** of them. It does jibe with experience that "the love of money" is certainly one of the more **significant** roots of all the evils. Just think for a few minutes---HOW MUCH EVIL HAS BEEN DONE IN THIS WORLD BECAUSE OF THE **LOVE OF MONEY!** Millions of people have been robbed, assaulted, starved to death, murdered all because someone was not content with what they had. Clearly, self-gratification in the areas of sexual urges is another "root" of evil. The lust for human power is another root of evil. If there is a "tap-root" that sinks deeper than all the other "roots of evil" it is **selfishness, ingratitude--the mother of all sins** (Rom. 1:21). That is why the Gospel of Christ demands "death to selfishness." That is

why Paul wrote, “The love of Christ **controls us**, because we are **convinced** that one has died for all; therefore **all have died**. And he died for all, that those who live might live **no longer for themselves, but for him** who for their sake died and was raised.” 2 Cor. 5:14-15

Yes, indeed---FAITH IS A FIGHT AND BATTLE FOR ME. At least being **obedient** to **the** faith is a struggle. And I suspect it is for everyone who is a Christian. What else is faith but living in accord with what one believes! It clearly was a struggle for the apostle Paul (see Romans 7:15-25). Most of us have no difficulty in the intellectual acknowledgment that the Bible is what it claims to be and that Jesus is who he claimed to be. But living the life of “righteousness, godliness, faith, love, steadfastness and gentleness” is a struggle. Paul told Timothy to “aim at” (Greek, *dioke*, “pursue”) that kind of life. Well, I’m “pursuing” it but I can’t ever fully catch up with it! I **am** fully trusting in the **grace of Christ** to let me eventually (in heaven) catch up to it. His **grace** is my only hope! And that is the answer to the next part of the question. Yes, believing in Christ **is** supposed to be a **struggle**. If it were not we would be smugly self-righteous and lost. The struggle of faith is likened to a “fight” or a “war” in 1 Cor. 9:25-26; 2 Cor. 10:3-5; Gal. 5:16-26; 1 Tim 1:18-19; Phil. 3:12; 1 Pet. 2:11-12, and numerous other places. The victory is not won until we go home to be with the Lord.

“The commandment” could be translated, “*This* commandment.” That would mean Paul is referring to fighting the good fight of faith, and keeping the good confession Timothy made, which Christ also made before Pontius Pilate. What was Christ’s confession before Pilate? You can read it in John 18:33-38. It is that he, Jesus, is king of all worlds, this world and the next world, the other world, and that he came into this world to bear witness to the truth. Furthermore, everyone who is of the truth hears (obeys) Jesus’ voice. Jesus said it plainly in John 14:15, 21, 23; 15:7, 10, 12, 17, etc. The “good confession” is that Jesus Christ is God’s Anointed (Messiah) and Savior to those who believe and enter into covenant with him. The covenant is that Jesus offers us vicarious atonement (grace) for our sins, if we continue faithfully in our “struggle” to pursue a life of godliness.

Church leaders should say what the New Testament says about money, as much or often as the N.T. talks about money. And **money or “possessions”** was one of (perhaps the one) the subjects Jesus spoke about most often! That’s because “possessions” consume so much of our time and energies each day. We can’t and don’t stay quiet about it. It permeates our thoughts and conversations every day. One of the great advantages of the College Heights C.C. system of studying from the Bible, book and chapter, in a rotation is that the subject of money comes up **as** we study **through** the Bible, and thus the elders and preacher do not have to appear to be “harping” on one subject, whatever the subject. **Let the Bible do the talking about money.** The same is true of all other subjects the church needs to hear (evidences, baptism, evangelism, sin, forgiveness, civil government, love, faith, etc., etc.). Our system is also a great help to the preacher in having to decide from one Sunday to the other what his sermon *subject* will be. It is decided (with an exception here and there) by the chapter we study. I can’t tell you what a struggle it was for me as a preacher at a church to come up with two sermons each week until I stumbled on to this method by myself. Preachers and S.S. teachers know months ahead what the scripture text will be and thus can be gathering materials for the lesson well in advance.

Paul uses the Greek word *antitheseis* from which we get the English word, **antithesis**, to describe the “false” (Greek, *pseudonumou*) knowledge he warns Timothy about. The KJV uses the word “science” to translate the Greek word *genoseos* which is translated, “knowledge” in both RSV and NIV. Actually, the English word “science” is generic for “knowledge” or “to know.” There was even in the 1st century a lot of “knowledge” that was **pseudo** (false) knowledge. It made a claim to be “knowledge” but it was “profane” and “empty” (Greek, *bebelous*, “profane, polluted, defiled” and *keno* + *phonias*, “empty + sound, or useless, vain, void”). It was all “hot air.” This is what the Greek philosophers met to do every day in Athens on the Aeropagus (Acts 17:21)---arguing and orating about nonsense, empty, polluted “science” or knowledge. It reminds one of modern day TV and radio “talk shows.” Some people laugh off these “talk shows” as being indifferent and insignificant. But Paul says such nonsense is certainly not indifferent because it is **antithetical--OPPOSED** to the true faith. Millions of people are “**missing the mark**” every day spouting **pseudo** (false) knowledge. Any utterance that claims to be “knowledge” that is “contradictory” to the Bible is “godless chatter.” Paul entreats Timothy---“**TURN AWAY!**”

TEACHER'S NOTES 2 Timothy

prepared by Paul T. Butler

2 Timothy 1:1-18

Paul calls Timothy his “son” and uses the Greek word, *tekno*, which would be better translated, “child.” Actually, Paul calls Timothy his *agapeto tekno*, or “beloved child.” Paul uses *tekno* to call Onesimus, the slave, his “child” (Philemon v. 10), and to call Titus his “child.” It is more generic than the Greek word, *huios*, which is always used to denote Jesus as the Son of man or the Son of God. Paul considered these men his “sons” by having “begotten” them through nurturing them in the Christian faith as a father would nurture a son he had begotten genetically. Indeed, the water of Christian baptism IS thicker than the “blood” of genetic descent. There is an old adage that says, “blood is thicker than water” which originated from an effort to declare that genetic family ties are more binding than the ties that bind us together in Christ---WRONG! **Jesus said numerous times that He takes PRECEDENCE OVER any and all family ties---mother, father, brother, sister, or children**, (Matt. 10:37-38; Lk. 14:25-33). He even told the crowds that in his own life God, the Father, came **before** his earthly mother and brothers and sisters Mark 3:31-35; Luke 8:19-21. Sunday School teachers, preachers and Bible college teachers have **hundreds** of “children in the faith.” We all have “mothers & fathers” in the faith.

Who said “men aren’t supposed to cry”? The Lord Jesus cried (Jn. 11:35), Peter wept (Matt. 26:75), Paul says of himself numerous times that he cried (Acts 20:19, 31; 2 Cor. 2:4, etc.). Many of the O. T. saints wept (esp. Jeremiah who wrote *Lamentations*). The world might be a better place if more Christian men **did** weep and cry over the things the which believers in the Bible wept! Timothy wept when he saw what Paul had to endure to proclaim the Gospel; Timothy wept when he had to be separated from Paul. And Paul **remembered!** I felt like weeping when I had to leave my Christian brethren in California to come to Ozark Bible College. I **did** weep when I retired from OCC. I wept so much when my daughter answered the invitation to come to Christ I couldn’t perform the baptism. I have wept over my own sins and the sins of brethren. I feel like crying for my nation right now over the ungodliness of some of our political leaders. I wept when I was in the Korean war and had to be away from my wife when our first child was born. Who says men aren’t supposed to weep?! **Let the tears begin!**

A “sincere” faith is an “unfeigned” faith. The Greek word translated “sincere” is, *anupokritou*, literally, “without hypocrisy.” The Greek word *hupokrisis*, was a word used to describe “play-acting” or “pretense.” Add the Greek privative *a* to any word and it means, “without.” So a **sincere faith** is a **faith without pretense**. May anyone really **pretend** to have faith in God or faith in Christ? YES, a person may **pretend** to others, but NO he cannot pretend to God about faith, for God searches the mind/heart and knows it. I don’t believe any individual may actually pretend to himself about whether his faith is sincere or not---because of CONSCIENCE. Therefore, it is possible for some who are good “play-actors” like the Pharisees were in Jesus’ time to fool others by doing “religious” things and keeping their inner-most unbelief secret. Others may **not** “pretend” about their unbelief and act out their

infidelity in sinful actions. In the last analysis, it is ONLY the true Christian that ever **wrestles** with his own conscience as to whether his faith is sincere or not. And **that** is a pretty clear signal (when a person keeps on wrestling with his inner-most sincerity) that such a person IS a Christian.

The answer to this question is YES and NO. Parents may “pass on their faith in Christ” to the extent that they can do all in their power to nurture, teach, guide and supply role models of true faith in Christ. But that is as far as they can go. Eventually, (probably around 12 or 13 yrs. of age) an individual needs to make a conscious decision for **oneself** that they can believe what they read in the Bible on the basis of some evidence. Because, by that age a person is beginning to make such individual decisions about believing in what they are being taught in school (i.e., about science, mathematics, languages, etc.), about trusting other individuals, trusting everything they see and hear **ON THE BASIS OF SOME EVIDENCE THAT APPEALS TO THEIR ABILITY TO REASON**. Never forget, 12 and 13 yr.-olds **DO** have the curiosity to want to know, and the power to form rational, logical conclusions. They are very perceptive about the difference between what is said, and what is real or what is done. Both **parents and the church MUST PUT LOTS OF EMPHASIS ON EVIDENCES FOR FAITH FOR TEENAGERS!**

The Greek word translated “spirit of fear” KJV and “timidity” RSV, NIV, *deilias*. It is **never** used in the good sense of “fear of God” etc. like the Greek words *phobos* and *eulabeia*. The word *deilias* is used in Matt. 8:26; Mark 4:40 and Revelation 21:8 as here in 2 Tim. 1:7. Actually, “timidity” may not be the best word to translate the Greek--- “cowardliness, faintheartedness, dastardliness” might be better. It is a FEAR born of faithlessness, born of distrust, of dismay. This may be seen in Jesus’ rebuke to the disciples in Matt. 8:26 and Mark 4:40. Jesus said, “Why are you afraid? Have you no faith?” and the fact that the word is used in Rev. 21:8 along with “murderers, polluted, fornicators, sorcerers, idolaters, and liars” shows how **serious** this kind of “timidity” or “**cowardice**” is to God. NOW the word translated “self-control” is *sophronismou*, and literally means, “sober-mindedness, or sound-mindedness” as in Rom. 12:3; 2 Cor. 5:13; 1 Tim. 3:2; Titus 1:8; 2:4,6,12; 1 Pet. 1:13; 4:7. So cowardice and “sound-mindedness” are **opposite** to one another. Only Christians are able to face life and death without being cowards. Only Christians see life and death with the reality of sound-mindedness because they see these things through SINCERE FAITH in the promises of God.

Paul’s statement, “This grace was given us in Christ Jesus before the beginning of time” is similar to statements about what God had “prepared” or “kept secret” **before the foundations of the earth** (see Matt. 13:35; 25:34; John 17:24; Eph. 1:4; Heb. 4:3; 1 Pet. 1:20; Rev. 13:8; 17:8). God prepared the “kingdom” from the beginning of time; he chose us “in Christ” before the foundation of the world; he finished our “rest” from the foundation of the world; he “destined” Jesus for us before the foundation of the world. **None** of God’s plans for the redemption of creation are “accidents.” Nothing ever “slipped up on God.” Yet some dispensationalists hold that the “church age” is a “parenthesis” of time slipped into the eschatological scheme of things because God tried to set up his kingdom on earth when Jesus came the first time, but the Jews and Romans crucified him and the “kingdom” was not

set up. So they say God is going to set up his “millennial kingdom” after the “rapture” and “great tribulation.” That theory would say in effect, God was **surprised** and had to “go to plan B.” That theory says the church is **not** the kingdom! **That contradicts so many statements in the scriptures it is ridiculous!** GOD HAD ALL THIS SET IN MOTION **BEFORE** THE WORLD WAS CREATED!

We still die, even though Jesus has “destroyed death,” because “flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable.” We **must** die, *physically* (“flesh and blood”) so we may **inherit** the “imperishable.” Heaven has no place for flesh and blood. Flesh has to “return to the dust from whence it came” before we can enter heaven. We will have **new** “bodies” (1 Cor. 15:35-58; 2 Cor. 5:1-10), they will be “glorious” bodies, but they will be **different** from our present bodies which were “subjected to futility...and decay” (Rom. 8:18-25). Our **new** bodies will **never** grow weary, become ill, or die---because Jesus has “destroyed death.” Actually, Christians do not **die** in the Scriptural sense of “death.” Christians have “passed from death to life” (John 5:25). Whoever lives and believes in Jesus shall **never die** (John 11:26). Jesus said that those who believe in him **HAVE** life, **present** tense.

Don DeWalt comments, “We much prefer the thought that God is guarding that which He (God) has committed to Paul. This interpretation fits the context. Paul is suffering now, but the work will yet be carried on. What Paul has kept will be passed on to others and to yet others. How good to know we have living proof of God’s power to guard and keep, in the Gospel which we proclaim. When Paul is called upon to give an account of his stewardship, he will be able to show a grand profit for the owner. Will we be able to say as much?” *Paul’s Letters to Timothy and Titus*, Don DeWalt, 1961, College Press, p. 203. Paul told Timothy, “guard what has been entrusted to you...” ! Tim. 6:20. And Timothy is told to “guard the truth that has been entrusted to you by the Holy Spirit...” 2 Tim. 1:14. W. E. Vine thinks that which was “committed” or “deposited” or “entrusted” is the Gospel “deposited” with Paul and Paul “deposited” it to Timothy, and Timothy was to “guard and deposit” it to others (2 Tim. 2:1-13). **The truth has to be GUARDED.** There are people who would **pervert it.** Even TODAY **“truth has fallen in the public squares”** Isa. 59:14-15 Millions of people in America have no inkling that truth is absolute. They have been taught that truth is **relative**----relative to what **they want** and what they **decide it is.** That is, if you can determine what “is” “IS”! Paul was “convinced” that what God had deposited with him (the Gospel) was “guarded” because it was validated by **factual history.** God’s deposit to the world (the Gospel) came through “the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ who...destroyed death and ...brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel.” Christians have a HUGE task before them to “guard” the deposit of the Gospel by persuading, convincing and convicting an unbelieving world that the good news of God is **absolute history.** HISTORY CANNOT BE ERASED NO MATTER HOW ANYONE “FEELS” ABOUT IT! In our “postmodern” world, Christians must constantly insist that faith in God and Jesus Christ unto salvation has to do with “putting on a new nature which is being renewed **in knowledge**” (Col. 3:10), or of “being transformed by the **renewing of the mind**” (Rom. 12:1-2), that “faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ” (Rom. 10:17). This is why Paul wrote to Timothy **twice**, ordering him to “guard” the deposit entrusted to him, and to “avoid” what is

falsely called “knowledge.” (1 Tim. 6:20; 2 Tim. 1:14).

The English word “pattern” is a translation of the Greek word, *hupotuposin*, from which we get the word, “type.” Literally it means “a **mark** made by the striking of some object upon another object.” John used *tupos*, “type,” to record “doubting” Thomas’ words that he would not believe the Lord had been risen unless he saw the nail “prints” (*tupos*) in Jesus’ hands (i.e., the “mark” made by the nails). Paul is using the word metaphorically to Timothy, referring to the **fundamental facts of the gospel** as Paul had preached them and taught them to Timothy (and thousands of others). Paul’s **pattern** may be found in 1 Cor. 15:1-58; 2 Cor. 5:14-15, and many other places). The word *hupotuposin* is a compound word, *tupos* with a prepositional pre-fix which **emphasizes** that Paul’s **fundamental facts of the gospel** form the “object” which is used to strike other objects to make their **mark** on the object struck. The gospel facts imprint the nature of God upon the human soul. Alexander Campbell said it this way:

“The work of redemption (the gospel facts) is a system of works, or **deeds**, on the part of Heaven, which constitute the most splendid series of moral facts which man or angel ever saw. And they are the proof, the argument, or the demonstration, of that regenerating proposition which presents God and *Love* as two names for one idea. When these **facts** are understood or brought into immediate contact with the **mind** of man, as a moral seal or **archetype**, they delineate the **image of God upon the human soul**. *All the means of grace are therefore, only the means of impressing this seal upon the heart,—of bringing these moral facts to make their full impression on the soul of man.* Testimony and faith are but the channel through which these **facts**, or the hand of God, draws the image on the heart and **character** of man.” *The Christian System*, Alexander Campbell, (1/2/1835), 2nd ed. 6/13/1839, pub. Standard Publishing Co., no date, p. 91 (bold face, mine)

We don’t know exactly why so many “turned away” from Paul. He says “all who are in Asia” turned away from him. He means Asia Minor (modern Turkey). Asia Minor was the **focus** of the early persecutions of the church by the Roman Empire (the Revelation was addressed to the “seven churches of Asia Minor”). Many Christians denied the faith to save their lives and their property and thus were those “with the mark of the beast” (Rome) upon them. Later, in this same epistle, Paul will say Demas was “in love with this present world” and had deserted him (2 Tim. 4:10). It was a death-sentence during the latter reign of emperor Nero for anyone to **publicly** profess the Christian faith and try to evangelize others. The church had to go “underground” to survive. Being **in love with this present world** has caused many Christians to deny Christ even in the 20th century. Imagine how lonely Paul must have felt that **not one** of his converts from Asia Minor had made a move to minister to him in prison. He had put his life on the line numerous times to deliver the gospel of salvation to them (see 2 Cor. 1:8-11 and Acts chapters 13-21).

TEACHER'S NOTES 2 Timothy

prepared by Paul T. Butler

2 Timothy 2:1-26

Clearly, Timothy was “charged” to “entrust to faithful men” what he had “learned” from Paul, so that these “faithful men” would be able to teach others also. What had Paul taught (and was teaching him) to be and do? **Paul was teaching him to be an “evangelist” (i.e., a preacher) of the Gospel.** Therefore, Timothy was “charged” to train others to become, at the very least, proclaimers of the Gospel. Whether “entrust” means “train” in the sense we now “train” young men in Bible colleges to become “preachers” we do not know. But whatever it was, Paul wanted Timothy to **produce** faithful men who would be **able to teach others also**. The church must **perpetuate** this as an ongoing mission in each generation or there will soon be none “able” to teach others also. Whatever method the church uses will have to suit the culture and the time. **BUT IT MUST BE DONE, AND IT IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE CHURCH TO DO IT!** And if the church chooses to do it through Bible colleges, then the church must support the Bible colleges with finances and recruits.

If anyone thinks preaching is not **exacting** all they have to do is try it for one month. Preaching requires very little physical exertion. It does, however, require (at least it should) **tremendous mental and psychological (spiritual) exertion**. Ministering the gospel demands logic, resourcefulness, and mental acuteness. Preachers certainly need training in Bible content, Biblical hermeneutics, philosophy, logic, grammar, Biblical languages, etc. etc. But when it comes to the requirements of courage, integrity, human interaction, supplying the needs of the sinful and bereaved, dealing with human idiosyncrasies, etc., they need another kind of training! Jesus found that he had to take his *trainees* “away by themselves to a lonely place, to rest awhile” (Mark 6:31-32). We may be bringing young men into the pulpit ministry or “senior ministry” much too soon in their age (experience) if we urge them to take such a position immediately out of Bible college. Are they “trained” sufficiently to handle such a burden of stress on their minds and emotions? How do they get the training to handle all the situations and circumstances of a ministry on their own? Certainly not from classroom notes alone! We need churches to furnish “intern-ships” where young men fresh out of Bible college can “learn” by hands-on experience under the tutelage of an experienced minister.

Paul begins 2:8 with “Remember” Jesus Christ, **risen from the dead**, because that is the central fact of the gospel. That is the “peg” of history upon which all our hopes for the next life hang! Paul said the resurrection of Christ was **of first importance** in 1 Cor. 15:1-11 and in this text (1 Cor. 15) Paul emphasized that the resurrection of Christ was not just some “emotional” whim we have based on the coming and going of the seasons (spring following winter, etc.). His resurrection is based on credible, tested, validated eyewitness accounts recorded in an historical document called the Bible. All our ethical standards, all our reasons for living and doing anything at all (including working, playing, socializing, producing music, art, scientific discoveries, *ad infinitum*) **hinges on that fact!** If the resurrection of Christ is not a fact of history, we might as well “eat and drink” like animals, “for

tomorrow we die.” 1 Cor. 15:32. The resurrection of Christ is the **motive for any and all ministry** for if Christ is not raised then our preaching is in vain and our faith is in vain. If **for this life ONLY** we have hoped in Christ, we are of all men most to be pitied. If Christ is not raised, close the church buildings down---or turn them into bars and dance halls! **Only the constant remembrance of this fact** will supply the faith, courage, self-control, and endurance needed to preach the gospel. The motive for ministry is not numbers, not applause, not budgets, not even missions---but the resurrection of Christ.

Paul is trying to encourage the young evangelist, Timothy, who is going to have to endure trials as Paul has, so Paul says, “endure everything for the sake of the elect as I have” because **Christ is faithful**. The **FAITHFULNESS** of God was demonstrated in the death and resurrection of Christ. Paul wrote, “All the promises of God find their, ‘Amen’ in him (Christ).” 2 Cor. 1:20-21. In other words, the redemption of creation worked out in the historical life, death and resurrection of Christ was God’s **AMEN (“so be it”)** to every promise God has ever made concerning forgiveness, justification, and salvation in heaven! The writer of Hebrews put it this way: “So when God desired to show more convincingly to the heirs of the promise the unchangeable character of his purpose, he interposed HIMSELF with an oath” (Heb. 6:17). If we are faithless, but repent, he is faithful to forgive and save in heaven! If we are faithless and refuse to repent, he is faithful to sentence to hell! **GOD KEEPS HIS WORD! HE PROVED THAT IN THE INCARNATION OF CHRIST!**

The Greek word translated, “rightly dividing” or “correctly handles”, *orthotomounta*, and is a compound word. The prefix *ortho* is used frequently in English medical language. *Ortho* means “straight.” An orthopedic physician “**straightens** bones, or **corrects** bent or broken bones” The remainder of the Greek word, ---*tomounta*, means “to **cut through** or across.” The word compounded was often used by engineers to speak of “cutting a road straight ahead.” Paul was exhorting Timothy to “cut straight” when he dealt with the word of God. He wanted Timothy to GET IT **CORRECTLY** delivered to his audiences! The Greek word *spoudason* which is translated “Study” in KJV, or “do your best” in RSV and NIV, literally means, “exert oneself, give diligence, hasten, be careful, be earnest.” Thus the charge to Timothy **specifically deals with “handling” the word of truth**. The evangelist’s (preacher’s) fundamental **diligence** is to be given to **preaching the word of truth CORRECTLY**. **IT DOES MATTER HOW PREACHERS AND EVERYONE ELSE “SLICE”** (i.e., interpret and proclaim) THE WORD OF TRUTH---THE BIBLE!

Yes, indeed! It is possible to upset someone else’s faith. **FALSE TEACHING** is the fundamental way to “upset” the faith of others. **Simply read 2 Peter 2:1-22**. That is what the Pharisees and Sadducees were doing to God’s people in Jesus’ day. It is what idolatrous Jews were doing to their own people during the days of the prophets----**FALSE TEACHING!** That is why Paul emphasizes to Timothy that he **must give diligence to teach correctly the word of truth**. Paul mentions those who were “disputing about words.... (whose) talk will eat its way like gangrene...among them are Hymenaeus and Philetus, who have **swerved from the truth** by holding that the resurrection is past already.” The bottom line is this: it hasn’t been primarily hypocritical **living** that has “upset” the faith of some---it has been atheistic, unbelieving teaching of **falsehood**. Of course, hypocritical living by a

Christian would do serious damage to the proclamation of the Gospel, but destroying someone else's faith is through false teaching (read also Rom. 1:18-32).

Those who belong to the Lord may "depart from iniquity" just like anyone else does---QUIT IT! Daniel told king Nebuchadnezzar, "...break off your sin by practicing righteousness, and your iniquities by showing mercy to the oppressed.." (Dan. 4:27). **We** may quit by **exercising** the **self-control** which is the fruit of the Holy Spirit. If we could not have any self-control, the Bible would not expect us to exercise it!!! We are **not** to expect the Holy Spirit to do for us what we can do for ourselves! He is sent to **help** us but he does **not suspend** the capacities and responsibilities with which God endowed each human being. The Holy Spirit does not "control" us---**we** control "us." **WE** are given the power to think, decide, will, and act when we are born. God expected Adam and Eve to exercise those powers for good even before the "serpent" beguiled them (see 2 Cor. 11:3). We have the power in our human nature to direct our minds (thoughts) and the Holy Spirit does not overpower us and direct our minds contrary to what we would choose. It's all a matter of **choice!**

Paul used the Greek word, *epithumias*, which is often translated **lusts**. God created us with "passions" or "urges" as we define the word "passions" today. But God did not create us to **lust**. "Lust" has the connotation of **obsession**. It also connotes **selfishness**. "Lust" means "passions" out of control! Youthful "lusts" are the natural "urges" (urges for procreation, accumulation, self-protection, self-identity) **out of control, gone to excessive obsession and selfish gratification**. God made us with the urge to procreate, but not to do so outside the parameters of Divine Law; he made us with the urge to accumulate food, shelter, etc, but still within the parameters of his will revealed in the Bible---not to steal or rob; he made us with the urge to protect our lives and the lives of others, but not by denying our faith in him. You get the point. It takes lots of reasoning, supervision, discipline, and love from parents and other older people to help young people keep their "urges" within the boundaries of God's Word. **BUT IT CAN BE DONE! All it takes is WORK** by parents, Christian leaders, and the young people themselves! The Psalmist wrote, "**How can a young man keep his way pure. By guarding it according to thy word. With my whole heart I seek thee; let me not wander from thy commandments. I have laid up thy word in my heart, that I might not sin against thee.**" (Psa. 119:9-11) **THAT'S HOW!**

Paul wrote, "If possible, so far as it depends upon **you**, live peaceably with all." (Rom. 12:18). The Christian should never argue, discuss, dialogue, debate, or contend for the faith with the purpose of agitating or angering any other person. Some love to debate in order to deceive and exploit their opponents. Some love to argue to elevate (they think) themselves by humiliating their opponents. Having said all that, however, it is **nigh on to impossible to proclaim the unadulterated truth of God's word without angering some**. Paul wrote to the Galatians who were already Christians, "have I become your enemy by telling you the truth?" (Gal. 4:16). Furthermore, the gospel cannot be proclaimed without "arguing" (in the good sense of the word) or contending for the evidence to **prove** the truth of the gospel! ANYONE who has ever spoken up for the truth as it is in God's Word knows this

is **true!** If you don't think so, just write a letter to the editor of the Joplin Globe using the **Bible** to say illicit sex, boozing, lying, cheating, pornography, abortion is **WRONG**. **You cannot teach God's word without "arguing."** It is interesting that the RSV uses the word "argue" to translate the Greek word, *dialegomenos*, since it is the word from which we get the English, "dialogue." "Dialoging" is "arguing."

TEACHER'S NOTES 2 Timothy

prepared by Paul T. Butler

2 Timothy 3:1-17

The “last days” started when Christ came to accomplish redemption and institute the church. This is confirmed by the quotation of Joel in Peter’s sermon in Acts 2. It is confirmed by Paul’s statement in 1 Cor. 10:11 when he says, “Now these things...were written down for **our** instruction, **upon whom the end of the ages HAS COME.**” Notice--- “our” and the past tense, “has come.” The Christian “age” or “dispensation” is the LAST age. **We are in the “last days” and have been ever since Christ came and the church was established.** The O. T. prophets spoke of the coming of the Messiah as “the last days” “the time of the end” etc. The O. T. prophets were **NOT** (not once) speaking of the **second** coming of Christ. It would have been irrelevant of them to speak of the “second” coming of Christ when they had such a difficult time convincing people of his “first” coming! Therefore, Paul is saying to Timothy, in effect, “Timothy, do not think that just because Christ has now come, completed redemption and established his **kingdom**, that the world is going to come into some utopian, golden era of goodness and peacefulness. No! Actually, during the ‘last days,’ of which the old prophets spoke so glowingly, members of Christ’s **kingdom** will see the following things happen---(those things listed in 3:1-9).” The **end of the world** will come **suddenly, without any signs**, and there will be no other “**ages or times.**” **ETERNITY will take place.** Jesus said that EIGHT times (Matt. 24:36---25:46).

“Ingratitude” is included among other horrible sins, because **ingratitude is a horrible sin.** In fact, ingratitude may be the “**mother of all sins.**” Paul says the ancient Roman civilization’s fall into depravity, degradation, and animalism was caused initially by **ingratitude** (Rom. 1:21)--- “for although they knew God they did not honor him as God or **give thanks to him...**” Proverbs has much to say about ingratitude. Those who are ungrateful are usually arrogant, envious, exploitative and uncompassionate. Gratitude is not inborn. It is something that has to be taught and learned. One of the most important things a child is ever taught is to be **thankful.**

The way in which men “hold the form of piety and deny the power of it” is to play-act, i.e., become hypocrites. Hypocrites give a “show” of religiosity but they renounce the *dynamics* of true faith. In other words, all the religious “deeds” they do are from a false **source or motivation.** The true **source** of goodness is **faith** in the person of Jesus Christ---his claims, his accomplishments, his promises. **MANY** people **do** religious (benevolent, ritualistic) things, but their motivation is not the “power” of the **facts** of the gospel (Jesus’s deity, his atoning death, his factual-bodily resurrection, etc.). If we go through the motions of being religious, but do so because of some trust in ourselves that we can be good enough to meet God’s absolute standards, we are hypocrites.

To “avoid” such people, does not mean we should never speak to them, never be of

some help to them when they are in need. It **does mean** we should “avoid” becoming so involved with them that we give them the idea we **sanction** their unbelief and hypocrisy. We should beware of them because their **words and ways** are usually very **seductive**. **We would be better off to AVOID such people UNTIL they have desperate need or they come to us and sincerely want to know the truth!** Jesus never avoided an opportunity to talk to Pharisees when they **came to him** and asked him questions or **invited** him to dine with **them**. But neither he nor the apostles “chummed around” with Pharisees. There is no need for us to be “friends” with such people until they repent of their sins. We’re not talking about the “run-of-the-mill” non-believer here---we’re talking about corrupt, reprobate, depraved in mind kind of people. Jesus refused an invitation to visit Herod the king because Herod was just such a person! Don’t give your bread to dogs nor cast your pearls before swine!

The Greek word Paul uses for “folly” is *anoia*, literally, “without-mind.” Their “brainlessness, senselessness, insanity” will be **clear** to everyone. It will do them no good to “hold the form of *piety*” without having the source of true power for piety. Their play-acting will be **clear** to all. The Greek word for “clear” is *ekdelos* and is the same word used by the maiden in the court of the high priest when she told Peter, “thy speech betrayeth thee” (KJV), or, “your accent gives you away” (NIV). No one will long be fooled by those who say they are Christians but deny the resurrection of Jesus to be historical fact. Anyone with an ounce of intelligence would see that such a posture is a “no-brainer.” For example, the book *The Passover Plot*, which was a “best-seller,” bases all of its **denials** of the **historicity** of the Gospel accounts on what its author, Dr. Schonfield, calls, “the **Lost Teaching Document**.” Any 12-year-old could see through that!!! If the **Document is Lost** how does Dr. Schonefield know there was a *Passover Plot*? The same is true of religious hypocrisy. Children are usually the quickest to see it. We have hundreds of thousands of “Christians” in this “brainless” position today----holding to a religious form but denying the true source of it! And they’re not all theologically “liberal.” Lots of them are the “charismatics” who hold the form of Christian piety, but they deny the true source (the Bible) and make their own emotions or some **alleged** extra-Biblical revelation the source.

This may sound like a politician, but whether **all** who live godly will be **persecuted** or not may depend on how you *define* **persecuted**! I have been mocked (and perhaps denied some civil rights) because of standing for Christian principles on a few occasions; mocked because I devoted so much time and resources to the church on a few occasions; mocked because I carried my Bible on a few occasions, but physically abused for my faith----not yet! My life may not have been **godly** enough to have been *physically persecuted*. **But Christians by the millions are BEING persecuted this very day in many areas of the earth!** I do thank God nearly every day for his grace that has allowed me to be an American and live in a land where my personal faith is “protected” (for the most part) by civil laws. But I am mature enough (and have studied history enough) to know that could **change drastically** in America. There is definitely a war of terrorism being waged by **Islam** against Judaism and any **Christians** who get in the way of Islam’s intention to make the whole world Moslem in faith! Fifty years ago it was the Communist “religion” that persecuted Christians (and still does in Cuba and China, etal.). All it would take in America for Christians to be persecuted is

for Bible-believing Christians to forfeit their **voting power** in favor of financial “promises” and dependence on a “hand-out” government (regardless of which political party is in power). Once the government gets its citizens **dependent** on it for **everything from birth to a living to death**, that government (and its powerful leaders) will seek to eradicate Christianity because the Bible stands for **CIVIL FREEDOM, free enterprise, non-welfare state, law and order, truth in government, justice for criminals, etc. etc.**

The Greek word translated, “inspired” by both KJV and RSV, is *theopneustos*. This is a very SIGNIFICANT word! The NIV translates it correctly, “God-breathed.” I do not know that there is a Greek word in all the NT that would qualify to be interpreted, “inspired.” If there is it would probably be something like, *enpneustos*. Of course, the Greek verb *pneo* (and derivatives) and the Greek noun *pneuma* (and derivatives) are words used many times in the NT. **God-breathed** is **literally** how the “inspiration” of the Scriptures occurred. My dictionary says “inspire” means “to breathe or blow into or upon...” but gives a more modern meaning, “to draw forth or bring out.” If we took literally the first English dictionary meaning, it might be close to the Biblical translation of *pneustos*, but it would **not** be a translation of what Paul wrote to Timothy because it would leave out the word *theo* which means “God.” Peter confirms Paul’s definition of the “inspiration” of the Scriptures (2 Pet. 1:20-21) when he says, “First of all you must understand this, that no *speaking forth* (“prophecy”) of Scripture came about by the *speaker’s* (“prophet’s”) **own loosing** (*epiluseos*, “liberating, letting loose, explanation”). For not by the will of man was Scripture (“prophecy”) borne along at any time, but men being borne along by the Holy Spirit spoke from God.” Henry Thiessen stated the Biblical concept of “inspiration”---- “Inspiration is that inexplicable power which the divine Spirit put forth of old on the authors of Holy Scripture, in order to their guidance even in the employment of the words they used, and to preserve them alike from all error and from all omission.” **The point Paul is making here is that the Bible has its origin in God---not men.**

Paul logically concludes, *ipso facto*, that the Bible (God-breathed Scripture) is **profitable (useful)** for **indoctrinating** (Gr. *didaskalian* “teaching”), for **proving** (Gr. *elegmon* “giving evidence”), for **correcting** (Gr. *epanorthosin*, there’s that word, *ortho* again, from which we get “orthodoxy,” “orthopedics”----i.e., straightening-out) and for **training** (Gr. *piadeian*, “rearing-up”) in righteousness **in order that** the man of God may be **fitted** (Gr. *artios* and *exertismenos*,---{same root word} “given the gear, equipped, supplied, thoroughly furnished”) for **every good work**. It is the God-breathed-out word (the Scriptures) that **equips** every man or woman of God for **every good work**. Christians don’t need to copy the ways of the world or take the advice of the world to find out what the “good” works of God are and how to do them. **THEY NEED ONLY TO READ THEIR BIBLE!**

TEACHER'S NOTES 2 Timothy

prepared by Paul T. Butler

2 Timothy 4:1-22

It is **very** significant that, contemplating his imminent death, Paul charged Timothy to “preach the gospel.” Paul, facing death by having his head severed with a Roman sword, could have been “fretting” about lots of things. He could have been whining about the injustice of it all. He could have been placing blame on lots of people---especially the Jews and the Judaizers. He could have been working on conspiracies to try to escape imprisonment. He could have been writing lots of letters to officials begging for his life. He could have written a recantation of his Christian faith. But this **shows** that Paul knew he was engaged in something that was BIGGER than himself, BIGGER than Timothy, BIGGER than **earthly life and death**. For most people there’s nothing BIGGER than earthly life and death. But for Paul, the **proclamation** of the gospel was THE MOST URGENT THING ON THE FACE OF THE EARTH! Put yourself in Paul’s circumstances, if you can, and try to guess what your mind would have been **dwelling on during those long hours awaiting death!**

W. E. Vine says the Greek word translated “urgent” (*epistethi*) means, **assault, attack**. In other words, Paul is ordering Timothy to **preach** like a company sergeant would order troops to **assault** an enemy position! Paul uses the phrase, “**the word**” which would include more than the content of the four Gospels. It would include the O. T. and the apostolic epistles (those written up to that point) as well as the Gospels. Much present day preaching has lost the **urgency** exhibited by the first century evangelists and most preachers would never think of preaching as **an assault, or an attack**. But, Jesus spoke of his ministry as an **assault** upon Satan’s “kingdom” and a “plundering” of it (Matt. 12:25-30). Paul spoke of the Christian proclamation of the gospel as carrying on a “war” with divine power to **destroy strongholds** and bringing every **thought into CAPTIVITY to Christ** (2 Cor. 10:3-5). Paul told Christians to prepare themselves for war (Eph. 6:10-20) and even an offensive war (**an assault**) of “contending” by taking up the “sword of the Spirit.” John, in the Revelation, pictured the **church** being under **assault** by the ungodly powers of Satan through the Roman empire. All those trained in “warfare” know the best defense is a good offense! The ministry of the church today should be AN ASSAULT UPON UNBELIEF WHEREVER IT REARS ITS UGLY HEAD!

Paul “hooks” preaching to teaching because **preaching** should **primarily** be **teaching**. Whenever Paul had an audience, whether in a Jewish synagogue, by a river-side, among Athenian philosophers, on board ship, in jail, **HE TAUGHT AS HE PREACHED**. Paul wrote to the Colossians, “Him we proclaim, warning every man and **teaching** every man in all **wisdom**, that we may present every man mature in Christ.” (Col. 1:28). We will say it again, preaching is **not** “performing.” Preaching is **not** “entertainment.” Preaching is not primarily to “enthuse” people, or manipulate people, or exploit people. **PREACHING IS TEACHING THE WORD OF GOD!** That is what **convicted** people to become Christians in the first century; it has been the cause of the **growth of the church in EVERY CENTURY**. It will

make the church grow today---BECAUSE PEOPLE WANT THE ABSOLUTES OF GOD'S WORD IN A WORLD OF THE RELATIVITY OF EVERYTHING ELSE!

There's nothing wrong with "liking" a particular "teacher" better than another. What's wrong is "liking" a teacher **because** he "scratches your itching ears." That is, following a teacher because he tells you **only** those things (most of which would probably be false) which "strokes" your ego, eases your conscience against your sinfulness, and puts the blame for your unrighteousness on someone else. That is what false teachers did in Paul's day, and that is what they continue to do today. Peter says, "In their greed...they ...exploit you with false words...they entice unsteady souls...they promise freedom, but they themselves are slaves of corruption; for whatever overcomes a man, to that he is enslaved." (2 Pet. 2:1-22). Even the O.T. repeatedly emphasizes **teaching**---both in the Law and the Prophets and Psalms. Jesus considered himself the **Teacher**---and it was predicted that the Messiah would be **The Teacher** (Isa. 30:19-22). Choose your Christian "teacher" (and any other kind of teacher) well because your soul depends on it!

The **work** (Gr. *ergon*, this is the generic word in Greek for **work**) of an evangelist is fundamentally defined in the NT as **teaching** (see 1 Tim. 1:3; 4:6,11,13,16; 6:11; 2 Tim. 2:2,14,24; 3:16; 4:2; Titus 2:1). The foregoing references all used the word **teach**. If one goes through 1 & 2 Tim. & Titus and writes down all the *inferences* to **teaching** one sees that "preaching" according to the apostle Paul is essentially **teaching**. There are other "duties" mentioned in the "Pastoral Epistles" such as "rebuking, exhorting, proving, correcting, reminding, testifying, commanding, public reading of scripture, charge, appoint elders, avoid myths and controversies and dissensions and quarrels over the law." Then Paul also charges these evangelists with a certain life-style. **BUT THE "WORK" OF AN EVANGELIST IS PRIMARILY---TEACHING!** There is no other **work that even comes CLOSE to being as SIGNIFICANT as that of the "evangelist" who is to TEACH THE TRUTH OF GOD.** The elders of every Bible-believing-congregation **MUST** insist that their "evangelist" **GIVE HIMSELF TO STUDYING THE WORD, PREACHING/TEACHING FROM THE WORD** and keep him from getting involved in all the **peripheral "stuff"** that others in the church might think he should be doing!

Paul did not say he had **won** the "fight" himself---he was simply in the battle. He knew how the "fight" was going to end, because Christ has accomplished the victory. Paul did not say he had **won** the "race" himself---he was simply approaching the "finish line." Lots of racers don't win, but they all "finish" the race. Paul knew Jesus had finished in "first" **for** him. Paul did not say he had been perfectly obedient and kept the law of God perfectly. He said he had "kept the faith." He trusted in Christ for his salvation, not in himself. So, Paul's claim in this benediction upon his life **is not a testimony of working for his salvation.** If you read Paul's evaluation of himself in Romans 7 you will understand Paul did not think he could justify himself before God. And then when you read Romans 7, you will understand Paul had faith in the **grace** of God for his justification.

I visualize my “crown of righteousness” to be given me at the judgment day when Christ says, “Because you believed in me and entered into covenant with me, you are completely exonerated of all your sins, you are cleansed and made perfect by my atonement for you.” Thus I will be “enthroned” as it were, over sin and death, because for me Jesus “condemned sin in the flesh” and conquered death in a mortal body so that I “will bear the image of the man of heaven” (1 Cor. 15:49). I will be given the victor’s wreath because Christ “gives us the victory” (1 Cor. 15:57). This will be an **eternal victory and reign**.

Was this “Alexander the coppersmith” the “Alexander who was a Jew who lived in Ephesus (Acts 19:33-34)? We don’t know for certain. If he is this may be the time and the person to whom Paul refers. Apparently when Paul was in Ephesus his preaching had almost destroyed the “idol-making” business there. There was a huge “town-meeting” at the “theater” in the city. It appears that the Asian Gentiles held **all Jews** in Ephesus “guilty-by-racial-connection” to Paul. They believed **all Jews** were like Paul and were preaching against idolatry. So the Jews of Ephesus “shoved” (Gr. *probalonton*, “threw forth”) “Alexander” into the middle of the arena to defend them against this raging crowd. The Jews of Ephesus wanted their Gentile neighbors to know they were not “with” Paul. When the crowd realized Alexander was a “Jew” they shouted him down and he was unable to make his defense, and was probably in danger of being assaulted himself. The city clerk “saved his bacon” and saved the angry citizens of Ephesus from “creating a riot.” The city clerk probably also saved Paul and his Christian brethren from being attacked. **But somehow, sometime, Alexander the coppersmith had done “many evils” to Paul.** Paul simply turned it over to the Lord knowing “Alexander” would be repaid by the Absolute Judge of all the earth.

When Paul said the Lord delivered him from his **first** imprisonment “so that through him the message might be fully proclaimed and all the Gentiles might hear it” we must assume “**all**” is to be somewhat qualified. Surely, there must have been a Gentile here or there in the whole world of Gentiles of that day who had **not** heard the message. There were **some** Gentiles in the British Isles, in Gaul (France), in Persia, in Egypt who, surely, must **not** have heard the message. But, having said that, Paul did **spread** the message so widely, in the centers of civilization, that the message did “go” to the ends of that first century civilization (see Rom. 16:26; Col. 1:23). Remember, also, that there were people from Persia, Asia Minor, Egypt, Italy, Arabia, etc., etc. at Jerusalem on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2:8-13) to hear Peter’s sermon and some of them must have become Christians. They would take the message to the “ends of the earth.”

Introduction to Paul T. Butler Th.D

Paul was born in Springfield Missouri and graduated from Conway High School prior to enlistment in the US Navy. He began serious bible study with correspondence courses from San Jose Bible College. He later enrolled in Ozark Bible College and acquired his Bachelor of Theology degree June of 1961. He received a Master of Biblical Literature degree from Ozark in May of 1973. He received a Doctorate of Theology from The Theological University of America in October of 1990.

Paul taught at Ozark Christian College from 1960 to 1997. He also served many years as registrar for the college.

Introduction to the Sound Bible Study project.

The Sound Bible Study project is a cooperative effort of Christian educators and Jordan Media Enterprises LLC to provide the serious examination of the Scriptures for the conscientious student. All the teachers are experienced educators who have spent countless hours in the classroom on both sides of the lectern. The audio recordings and written notes are made available for those who wish to learn God's Word at a collegiate level but have been unable to matriculate. There is no intention to compete with the many faithful Bible schools, but rather to serve along side and strengthen both the student and the teacher for a stronger and more effective Kingdom of God that knows how to properly divide the Word of God.

