**1 Timothy**

**“Help Wanted, Apply Within”**

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**“*Guard what was committed to your trust*”**

**1 Timothy**

**1:1-2**

**“Help Wanted, Apply Within”**

**I. Introduction**

**II. Vs. 1-2 The writer, reader and greeting**

**I. Introduction**

100 years ago on January 20th 1914 an article appeared in a London newspaper announcing Britain’s Sir Ernest Shackleton’s planed Antarctic expedition, it was accompanied by a “***Help Wanted***” add that read: “*Men wanted for hazardous journey, small wages, bitter cold, long months of complete darkness, constant danger, safe return doubtful. Honor and recognition in case of success!*” Amazingly thousands of men applied for the opportunity to “*boldly go where no other had gone before.*” Such has been the case countless times when world exploration offers have been made. Yet, there remains an ongoing “***Help Wanted***” add at the door of every church in the world, placed there by none other than Jesus and only a sparse few of His Church have answered. It might read something like this: “*Wanted men and women for a difficult work of helping to build MY church. You will often be misunderstood, even by your coworkers. You will face constant attack from an invisible enemy. You may never see the results of your labors, and your full reward will not come until after your work is completed. Your work may cost you your home, health, ambitions, and even your life.* ***Please apply with in*!**” Signed, Jesus! Essentially that is what this letter by Paul to his young protégé Timothy is all about. In spite of all the demands, Church history is full of men and women who have filled out the application and gone to work reaching the lost world. Timothy was just such a man who took that sign from the church door and got to work at the age of 16 and as Paul took up pin and parchment he was serving at Ephesus. These six chapters follow a very deliberate outline with five specific charges for Timothy about fulfilling the work to which he had applied for. You will find those specific charges at the end of the theme of each of those 5 sections:

1. **1:1-20 *The Church and its message***: **1:18-20 The message at work**
2. **2:1-3:16 *The Church and its members***: **3:14-16 Proper conduct at Church**
3. **4:1-16 *The Church and its minister***: **4:11-16 Exercises for ministers to stay fit**
4. **5:1-25 *The Church and its ministry to its self***: **5:21-25 Ministry’s do’s and don’ts**
5. **6:1-18 *The Church and its ministry to the world***: **6:20 Guard what was committed to your trust**

**II. Vs. 1-2 The writer, reader and greeting**

Vs. 1a In this letters introduction we are introduced to three things:

The writer: Paul

The reader: Timothy

The greeting: Grace, mercy and peace from God the father and Jesus Christ our Lord

For Paul to be the writer of this letter requires his release from his Roman imprisonment recorded for us in Acts chapter 28 and his continuation of missionary work. The problem is that we have no complete history on this. We can however using the New Testament this history after his first imprisonment in Rome. In his letter to the Philippians he anticipated his release from Rome and it is possible that his Jewish accusers from Jerusalem never made the difficult journey to appear at his trial. Fulfilling his promise to the Philippians Paul sent Timothy to Philippi to tell them of his release while he went to Ephesus, in spite of his words to the Ephesian Elders at Miletus that he would never see them again. He no doubt visited other churches in the region like Colossi before rejoining Timothy in Ephesus. He then left Timothy in Ephesus while he traveled to Macedonia to strengthen the Churches there but was delayed and that is when he wrote this letter Timothy around A.D. 62-63 perhaps from Philippi. He later sailed to the Island of Crete where he left Titus to continue the work there while he went on to Corinth where he met up with Apollos and Zenas who were about to go to Crete so Paul wrote a letter to be sent by them to Titus on Crete. He instructed Titus to join him in Nicopolis after Artemas replaced him. Some believe that it was here that Paul traveled to Spain and perhaps even the British Island with Titus as he had planned while imprisoned in Rome. In an early church history document called “*Clement of Rome*” the church historian says that before the end of the 1st century Paul reached the limits of the West. Paul was most likely in Spain from A.D. 64-66 then returned to Greece then Corinth, Miletus and Troas where he was arrested. In His 2nd letter to Timothy he asks him to bring his writing’s and his coat that were left behind after his arrest in Troas. The burning of Rome at the hand of Cesar Nero in A.D. 64 where he blamed the Christians had made Christianity illegal and he was imprisoned soon after where he wrote his 2nd letter to Timothy in A.D. 67. After his first court trial in which he was condemned and Paul was awaiting execution by beheading when in his 2nd letter to Timothy he urged him to see him before his death.

The three letters of 1st and 2nd Timothy and Titus are a radical departure in Paul letters as they are all written to people instead of Churches and have become known as pastoral because of the intimate words that he uses is writing them. I said a few weeks back that Christians often fail to recognize the medium that God choose to use to communicate His truths to His people, personal letters. As such these truths are incased in human love between friends and are extremely relational.

Vs. 1b Elsewhere Paul refers to himself as an apostle “*by the will of God*” but here he says that he is by the “*commandment of God*” which is a word that comes from a King thus a royal command. I believe that these were words of great comfort to Paul as there are times where we know that we are operating in the will of God but in so doing we have great adversity and distress and can begin to question if we heard God right. Ah but when we are doing what God has commanded we expect adversity and aren’t as prone to 2nd guess God’s calling because of adversity.

It is interesting to note the formality of Paul’s introduction as he addresses himself as “*an apostle of Jesus Christ, by the commandment of God our Savior and the Lord Jesus Christ.*” It is odd that Paul would start this extremely intimate letter to a young man whom he refers to as his son in the faith, this way. It would be similar to my children and grandchildren referring to me as pastor instead of Dad or Gran-pee. It is safe to assume that Paul didn’t need the recognition from Timothy and that Timothy clearly recognized Paul’s God given authority. What this suggests is that Paul clearly expected that this personal letter would be read by more than his son in the faith and that churches would one day refer to it as profitable for teaching, doctrine and instruction for all the churches. He had warned in Acts chapter 20 that after his departure “*savage wolves would come into the church not sparing the flock of God*”, and this was written before Timothy was left in Ephesus. This first letter to Timothy has a lot to do with the ministry of the Church…its character, nature and function in the world. Paul’s 2nd letter to Timothy centers on the message that the Church is to share. **Those two themes go hand in hand as the church must “*walk its talk*” as the church is not about where they meet but rather the reason for their meeting**! We are to be a people who meet for the sole purpose of Jesus sharing His work and life to all!

Vs. 2a It is not surprising that Paul would write this letter to Timothy to exhort him to continue to answer the call and wage the good warfare for the kingdom of God, (1:18). That he would continue establishing people who will carry on the work entrusted to them, as he had been unable to do so while imprisoned:

* He encouraged Timothy to maintain his own devotional life so that he would continue to be of use for the Master in chapter 4 verses 12-16.
* Finally Paul told timothy to guard what was committed to his trust.

Timothy had been acquainted with Paul for 20 plus years since Acts 14 when he was around 16 and first met Paul in his home town of Lystra so it’s no wonder that Paul refers to him as his son. These two men had a father-son relationship and Paul carried deeply for Timothy and his situation where he had left him in a great commercial and pleasure resort of the shores of the Mediterranean Sea full of wickedness. When Paul first come to Ephesus the city began to riot because the silver idol trade had been adversely affected because so many of those who had purchased multi breasted silver idols of the Fertility goddess Diana stop buying trinkets.

Paul calls Timothy a “*true son in the faith*” as he had demonstrated that belief in the truth is not intellectual agreement but rather obedience to what we hold as truth. ***The mark of Christian maturity is when a person recognizes that our faith is NOT a pop quiz in which we merely need to answer the question correctly. No, it is a lifestyle of living out what we say we believe***! I have found that as a Christian I will be faced with either altering the word to fit my lifestyle or I’ll have to alter my lifestyle to fit the word! Timothy, Paul declares, was of the later thus a “*True Son in the faith*!” Yet I find it refreshing that even though Paul asserts that character assessment of Timothy he still goes on throughout this letter to write five charges for Timothy to continue to guard what was committed to him! No doubt some of that was because of the continual infiltration of the church by those who were false teachers, something that he alludes to in verse 3-4. Clearly one of those false teaching had to do with a wrong understanding of the Old Testament Law, verses 7-9. The false teachers were trying to regulate people’s conduct by imposing regulations but were failing to recognize the power of grace and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit in subduing our fallen nature. ***What the law cannot conquer love can***! The can only show the ungodly how powerless they are to curb a sinful lifestyle. The law describes for us how love acts, it doesn’t commit adultery, it doesn’t kill or character assonate it’s brother, it doesn’t take what doesn’t belong to it etc. It was love that changed Paul from sinner to saint not the law as verses 12-15 indicate.

No doubt the closing of the introduction continued to speak to Paul’s heart as he wrote of God’s “*grace, mercy and peace*” the trifecta continual resources available to each and every believer from God the Father and Jesus Christ our Lord! If you were to cross reference this greeting with Paul’s other letters you would find that “MERCY” has been added and you will also find it added in his 2nd letter to Timothy as well as his letter to Titus in fact Paul only includes it when writing those three pastoral letters. Mercy is God’s grace distributed for deliverance from adversity and I think every pastor I know loves to know that mercy is available for us.

**1 Timothy**

**1:3-7**

**“Love from a pure heart, good conscience and sincere faith”**

**I. Introduction**

**II. Vs. 3-4 Billion’s for bobbles**

**III. Vs. 5-7 A reason to love God more**

**I. Introduction**

The 2nd part of a letter, for purpose of identification, is the statement of purpose or the reason for the letters essential writing. In this case we will find it in chapter 1 verses 3-7. Five years had elapsed from when Paul had personally warned the Ephesians elders that “*Savage wolves*” would come in and not spare the flock of God. The first chapter taken as a whole is Paul’s instruction to Timothy of what his work in Ephesus will involve which based upon the content was two things:

1. Vs. 1-7 Timothy was to stop some false teaching that was going around the Church, which in part centered on the Old Testament law.
2. Vs. 8-11 Second Timothy was to teach clearly the proper use of the Law of Moses in the Christian life.

This suggests the extreme value Paul and the early Church placed upon teaching in the church. The central task of the pastor is to “*feed the sheep*” entrusted to the pastor. Jesus didn’t instruct Peter to entertain the sheep, or to flees the flock He told him to feed and tend the flock of God. Paul expected those that taught to be consistent with apostolic revelation and the words of Jesus. In verse 11 Paul defines this as “*the glorious gospel of the blessed God which was committed to my trust*.” The Church exists to declare the truth and anything that deviates from the truth must not be taught.

**II. Vs. 3-4 Billion’s for bobbles**

Vs. 3 Paul employs a military term as “***urge***” means to give strict orders from a commanding officer and he will use this word 8 times in his two letters to Timothy. Pastors must never forget that we are not hirelings of the church we serve we are servants under our Master the King of Kings as such we are called to pass on orders to our fellow soldiers. The order was plain “*Do not allow others to teach truth apart from the truth that Paul taught.*” Thirty two times in these pastoral letters “*doctrine, teach, teaches or teacher*” appears and it is clear by this that teaching the word of God to the people of God held the primary position within the church.

There are a lot of subjects that may interest us that we can engage in healthy debate but these must not be the subject of our time together. Paul doesn’t call them heretics or blasphemers so that tells me that these were good men that had begun to introduce ideas that were derived from human philosophy, and man’s opinions. In verse 6-7 it seems that at least some of these teaching were centered on wrong interpretations of the Old Testament that included “*fables and endless genealogies*”, verse 4. There can be differing gifts, subjects and styles among teachers but their must not be differing truths! The Word of God by the Spirit of God is the most powerful weapon the Christian has to correct error and deliver people from bondage to freedom. Timothy was sent by Paul to correct the weakness in the Church at Ephesus in biblical illiteracy! This was to be done two ways:

1. Opposing the faulty teaching
2. Pointing out why it was faulty…(fables, genealogies)

Vs. 4 “***Fables***” is where we get our English word myths from and it means *an invention, a fiction or falsehood, something without historical reality*. The genealogies that Paul refers to were not just the ones found in our Bibles but ones that had been added onto with additional tales and allegorical interpretations to which Paul calls them endless because they led to no truth or conclusions. These fables didn’t further saving grace instead they distracted people from it as people chased after people’s pet fancy and speculations. A few years back there was the “*Bible Code*” that interpreted the Old Testament based upon the contention that it contained mathematical formulas that a newly discovered code could be used to unlock with a computer. The formula was said to enabled a person to discover biblical prophecies for 3000 years. Dr. Elijahu Rips claimed that “*Everything from the Holocaust to Hiroshima, from the moon landing to the collision of a comet with Jupiter*” was in these codes. *So people went out and bought his book and spent time reading it looking into the codes of past historical events he claimed his code pointed to* ***and no time into applying the truths of the Bible for their own lives***.

Notice having said this that Paul uses the word “***rather***” which is a word that is meant to contrast the things that only lead to disputes with that which would be leading us into “*godly edification which is in faith*”. Saint’s **all teaching should lead us into three things**: ***a greater understanding into the character and nature of God, a greater awareness of who we really are as God sees us and finally we ought to be attuned to how God is moving us closer to Himself and away from our flesh***! **Far too often the church has spent too much time on topics that trigger the imagination while neglecting the word of God that transforms the heart**. The world is in desperate need of people who have had and are continuing to have **transformational encounters with the Word of God**. There are two truths that are essential for Christians to know and apply:

1. ***The end of our former life***: This is best seen in Christ’s death for our sin and reminds us that we too have died to our former life. Our natural fallen state no longer has power over us; we have been delivered from its dominance because we have died.
2. ***The beginning of our new life***: This is best seen in the resurrection of Christ where we live a new empowered victorious life. We also take on a new identity as well as a new sufficiency.

These two truths are the cornerstone of our faith and together make up the New Covenant: ***Jesus died that we might live; we die that He might live through us***! It was this truth that caused Paul to write down in Corinthians, “*If any man be in Christ he is a new creation, old things have passed away, behold all things become new*.” To the Ephesians he wrote to “*put off the old man, concerning your former conduct….be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and put on the new man which was created according to God.*.” finally to the Romans Paul wrote that we are “*to consider ourselves dead unto sin and alive unto God*.” The teachers Timothy was sent to correct were spending time on teaching that did nothing but cause folks to argue. These false teachers had gone after novelties instead of the meat of the word and the outcome was that the church was becoming less in the areas of “*love from a pure heart, love from a good conscience and love from a sincere faith*” and more known for giving heed to fable’s and endless genealogies that only led to disputes and divisions.

**III. Vs. 5-7 A reason to love God more**

Vs. 5 It is abundantly clear from this passage that ***the purpose of the gospel is to alter the way we live, not to provide us with philosophical trivia***. It is easier to share with people our view of predestination and free will then it is to share with someone personally how God is causing your life to be more of Him and less of you. That ought to illustrate for us what is the weightier matters and what is mere idle discussions. You can always tell if the word of God is having an effect on you because if it is you will become more compassionate, patient and tenderhearted towards those you are around. You can’t legislate love, you can’t make people love their enemies….this is the fundamental fallacy with Islam as a religion you cannot force someone to love anything be fear and intimidation, they will comply but they will not love! Love is fundamentally a choice that is wooed by love to love as well. **Love comes from a dynamic triple inner work**:

1. **From the heart**: Paul describes that as coming from a “*pure heart*” The purity of one’s devotion to God will be seen in a person’s love towards others. Love always begins from a pure heart because our action of love comes from His action of love which produced our pure heart.
2. **In the conscience**: Paul describes love that comes out of a person’s inner awareness of the quality and character of a person’s own actions and attitude. The word “conscience” appears 6 times in Paul pastoral letters and means to “*know with*” which refers too inner judge that accuses us when we have done wrong and approves us when we have done right.
3. **From sincere faith**: Litteraly a faith without hypocrisy, love that comes not out of words but out of action. Finally love from a sincere faith our actions are a constant circle back to His action…we love Him because He first loved us.

Vs. 6-7 Amazingly these false teachers were not folks who had never heard the truth but rather they were people who had received and believed the truth but had since “*strayed and turned aside to idle talk*”. At times Christians get board of the simplicity of God’s love and chase after the “*higher hanging fruit*” of speculation and other minor aspects of the bible like how many angles can fit on the head of a pin. *These believers had become* *biblical vagabonds’ wondering around from speculation to human philosophy moving with the popular fads; defending their fanciful position at each turn*. You see them today in churches that like bird migration seem to migrate from one church to another following the numbers in search of what’s exciting and entertaining! The fads don’t have to be false they just have to excite the flutter of wings for birds of a feather to fly off just to see where the others are flying too. Sometimes a church can be the place where these birds fly too but most of the times they become a tree of empty branches. This sad truth becomes all the more disturbing when this flight pattern is called “*church growth*” instead of sheep switching pastures. **In the landscape of Western Evangelicalism churches are spending more time trying to attract other birds then they are reaching the lost**!

Popularity becomes the driving ambition of those that have wondered away from the simplicity of the gospel. They desire to be famous known as “*teachers of the law*” and soon “***ambition and pride***” instead of “***love and humility***” define their character. With regards to truth: *A virtuous person may be ignorant, but ignorance is never a virtue. Love of God is not the same as knowledge of God; but if a person loves God knowing little about Him, they will love God more knowing more from knowing more about Him.* ***Every new thing known about God is a new reason for loving Him***.

**1 Timothy**

1. **The Church and its message**
2. **1:8-11 The message in the past**

**1:8-11**

**“Laying down the Law”**

**I. Introduction**

**II. Vs. 8-9 I’m not okay, and neither are you**

**I. Introduction**

One of the difficulties of teaching “*verse by verse*” though the Bible is at times it is very difficult to divide the passage to fit into the time constraints of two services. How much can I cram in to the time I have and still give it the importance needed? I had just that dilemma this week and as I was studying on ***the purpose of the 10 commandments in the life of the believer.*** I decided that it was too important to take verses 8-11 as I had too much material even after editing my notes. Thus we will be looking at this important section for the next two weeks instead of the one that I originally attended. Clearly part of the teaching that was causing disputes was the miss understanding of the Old Testament Law so in verses 8-11 Paul wants to set the record straight with regards to the place that the Law of Moses has in the Christian life.

Paul is writing and warning Timothy about ***misdirection*** in teaching that left unchecked would cause a decline of biblical maturity in believers and through that a decline in the work of Christ in the world. Paul had defined biblical maturity for us in chapter 1 verses 4-5 by revealing to us two important things: **What biblical teaching is** and **What biblical teaching produces**:

1. **Vs. 4 What biblical teaching is**: That which builds up the individual believer into more and more the image of God by trusting in Him. As I said in my rabbit trail last week it involves two specific teachings best seen in two works of Christ: His death and His resurrection! Biblical teaching must have these two exhortations: Jesus died that we might live, therefore we die to self-centeredness that He may life through us!
2. **Vs. 5 What biblical teaching produces**: We will know that is taking place when LOVE is manifested in our lives by way of a threefold manifestation of this LOVE from: A pure heart, good conscience and sincere faith.

***I believe that these standards of biblical maturity is how Jesus plans to build His church.*** Looking at Jesus’ original blueprint when compared to what we now see has been built leads me to ***SIX conclusions***:

* Because Jesus’ plan requires for the individual believer to “*die daily*” to self-centeredness, many in the evangelical world have sought to redefine church maturity based upon things that they can manipulate like “*nickels and noses*”.
* This has led to Church leaders having to redefine success and changed the aim of the great commission in Matthew 28:19 from “*making* ***disciples*** *of all nations*” to “*making* ***decisions*** *of all nations*”. No doubt this has happened because in large part the evangelist has found that getting a person to profess Jesus is far easier than getting people to “*observe* ***ALL*** *things that Jesus commanded*”.
* This redefining has left the evangelical church in ruins as our outreach is primarily towards those who are in church just not the same one that we are a part of. It has also made the individual believer more self–centered as Jesus’ transformation of them is not the aim.
* Since that is no longer the aim, the reason for attending church had to change from transformation to information at best or entertainment at worst!
* This in turn has produced a church that has become a band of **spectators** instead of **participants** that like the old “*Burger King*” add are coming to church to “*have it there way*” instead of “*being transformed*” into folks who desire that their lives would be all about Jesus’ having His way in us! The individual believer “***goes to church***” instead of realizing that they “***are the church***”!
* Finally of even greater concern is the obvious idolatry of this kind of redefinition of church; since the mission of Christ has been changed, so too has the focus of the Church as the “*Church*” is on the throne instead of “*Jesus*”. This is seen when people identify more with the church they attend, servant they listen to or denomination they belong too. The focus is all about getting people more dependent upon the church instead of closer to Jesus. The church’s main focus has become their own relevance and becomes all about creating a mission statement and programs that get people to “*Go to church*” instead of fulfilling the great commission of Matthew 28 of the Church going to the world and making disciples!

**The obvious question is**: “*What does this have to do with some in the church of Ephesus where Timothy was pastoring emphasizing the Old Testament Law of Moses through its teaching in the church*?” The answer to that question is Paul’s subject in these verses before us. The Law of Moses as a basis of right standing before God takes the emphasis off of ***internal personal transformation*** and on too ***external compliance*** as the basis of our right standing before God. And that external compliance is subjective as we are free to define it one way for us and another way for someone else! The Church and individual believer then becomes all about “**DOING RIGHT**” instead of the work of Christ in causing them to “**BE RIGHT**”. The Church ends up looking like the description that Paul gave Timothy in his 2nd letter in chapter 3, verse 5 where he said that they “*have a form of godliness, but deny its power*”. That apparently was the problem with the church at Ephesus and the reason why he sent Timothy to correct the condition. Paul makes **four statements about the Law of Moses** in verses 8-11, the first two we will deal with today the following two next week.

1. Vs. 8 “*The law is good if one uses it lawfully*”.
2. Vs. 9a “*The law is not made for the righteous person*”.
3. Vs. 9b-10 “*The law is for the ungodly and insubordinate*”.
4. Vs. 11 “*The law is according to the glorious gospel*”.

**II. Vs. 8-9 I’m not okay, and neither are you**

Vs. 8 **First**: “*The law is good if one uses it lawfully*”. This immediately does two things:

* First, it does away with the thoughts of some Christians that as believers we are completely delivered from anything to do with the Law of Moses or the 10 commandments.
* Second, it clarifies the problem with the Law of Moses as being that people don’t use it “*lawfully*”.

The reason why the Law of Moses is good is because God himself gave it. Neither Moses nor Charlton Heston wrote them, they were twice written by the hand of God. As you study those commandments you realize that they reflect the character of God as well as His ideal of how His creation of mankind should behave in His creation. They represent God’s righteous demands for all human behavior. Paul’s words that he wrote to the Romans years earlier in chapter 7 verse 6 where he said that the Christian has been “*delivered from the Law*” does not mean that the Law has no use in the Christian life as Jesus indicated in His sermon of the Mount that “*He had not come to abolish the law…but to fulfill it*.” The problem with the Law has nothing to do with the Law and everything to do with what it has to work with…you and me. And as it relates to Paul’s words to Timothy its miss use! The person has no right to complain to the computer manufacture that their computer is not functioning properly when they are not using it for its proper use and instead are using it as a garbage disposal!

Vs. 9a **Second**: “*The law is not made for the righteous person*”. Here Paul defines for us the proper use of the Law of Moses by saying that “*it* *is not made for the righteous person*”. Its usefulness has to do with the “*unrighteous person*” which he will outline in three pairs of two groups for which the Law of Moses is useful also in verse 9:

* “*The lawless and insubordinate*”
* “*The ungodly and for sinners*”
* “*The unholy and profane*”

In Paul’s threefold pairs he clearly wants Timothy and us to understand that the law still has a lawful usefulness in the Christian’s life but that usefulness has **nothing to do with** “*making a Christian right before God*”. Trusting in Jesus’ work on the cross is the only thing that can make a person right with God. That is exactly what Paul had written to the Romans years earlier in chapter 8 verse 3 what he said, “*For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God did by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh*.” The Law of Moses has a righteous standard that insists that humanity lives in accordance with that standard so that humanity can function up to the full potential of His design. When we fail to live up to our Makers design we “*miss His mark*” which is the meaning of the word “*sinners*”. When we “*miss the mark*” we simply receive Jesus finished work on our behalf and instantly become those who have been made right because of Jesus work. That is what Paul wrote to the church at Corinth in his 2nd letter saying, “*If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold all things have become new*.” ***We are no longer under the Law of Moses as a basis of winning approval from God because He has made us acceptable in the beloved***! Contrary to the popular philosophy of today; “*I’m not okay, and neither are you*!” we are both in desperate need of a savior. The basic use of the law is to restrain wickedness!

**1 Timothy**

1. **The Church and its message**
2. **1:8-11 The message in the past**

**1:9b-11**

**“Laying down the Law (Part 2)”**

**I. Introduction**

**II. Vs. 9b-10 Being transformed from what I was to what He is**

**III. Vs. 11 In accordance to the glorious gospel**

**I. Introduction**

Last week we started examining ***the purpose of the 10 commandments in the life of the believer.*** Paul had already said in verse 4 that this teaching was causing disputes but he had also warned Timothy about the ***misdirection*** this teaching left that would cause a decline of biblical maturity in believers. The Law of Moses took the emphasis off of ***personal transformation*** and on too ***external compliance*** as the basis of our right standing before God. Left undealt with would cause the Church to end up looking like the description that Paul gave Timothy in his 2nd letter in chapter 3, verse 5 where he said that they “*have a form of godliness, but deny its power*”. Paul made **four statements about the Law of Moses** in verses 8-11, the first two we saw last week and we take up the next two today.

1. Vs. 8 “*The law is good if one uses it lawfully*”.
2. Vs. 9a “*The law is not made for the righteous person*”.
3. Vs. 9b-10 “*The law is for the ungodly and insubordinate*”.
4. Vs. 11 “*The law is according to the glorious gospel*”.

**II. Vs. 9b-10 Being transformed from what I was to what He is**

Vs. 9b-10 **Third**: “*The law is for the ungodly and insubordinate*”: The law according to Paul is for **two distinct groups** the first of which Paul lists in three pairs of two groups mentioned above who the Law of Moses is useful for:

* “*The lawless and insubordinate*”
* “*The ungodly and for sinners*”
* “*The unholy and profane*”

The first thing to note is that in each of these pairs they describe not what a person ***DOES*** but rather what a person ***IS***! These pairs describe attitudes and outlook on life or a person’s nature…in simple **the unregenerate**. I suppose that reading this list could cause a person to feel either superior to someone else or inferior depending on their condition but the truth is every person starts out in life as these three categories, as none righteous no not one!

The 2nd group is described starting with the words “*For murders*” in verse 9 and ending with the words in verse 10 “*anything that is contrary to sound doctrine*”. This group is the opposite as the above group as it has everything to do with ***what a person does***. Paul lists 4 categories of who the law is for based upon what they do:

1. **Murders**: Of fathers and murders of mothers and manslayers
2. **Fornicators**: Sexual immoral people heterosexual as well as homosexual
3. **Kidnapers**: Liars, and perjurers…those that lie
4. **Any other thing**: Contrary to sound doctrine

Simply put ***the law is made for the fallen nature also known as the flesh whether that is active in the unbeliever or in the believer***!

**The Law of Moses reveals three things**:

1. ***It reveals the only acceptable standard of behavior before God, both in outward actions as well as inward thoughts***.
2. ***The 10 commandments put’s everyone under the same standard***. *According* ***to Romans 5:20 the Law of Moses caused us to recognize sin more***. Paul writes, “*The law entered that the offence might abound*”. He also explains this in Romans 7:7 saying “*I would not have known sin except through the law. For I would not have known covetousness unless the law had said, you shall not covet*.” Many people believe that the 10 commandments are given to help them stop sinning. But in realty the 10 commandments are given to cause each of us to realize that there is no sin insignificant and that God does not keep two sets of books: *Yours and all those whose sins you judge as intolerable. You know where some folks have* ***prejudices*** *and we have* ***convictions****, some have a* ***bad temper*** *but we have* ***righteous indignation****, some* ***gossip*** *why we are just* ***sharing our opinions****….****for prayer of course*!**
3. ***The Law of Moses demands the same punishment for all those that break the standard eventually our death***. The Law shows no mercy, it lets no one off the hook, it sets up the same standard as Jesus said in Matthew 7:1-2 “*Judge not, that you be not judged. For with what judgment you judge, you will be judged*…” Soon we discover that we are hopelessly and helplessly lost! We are broken and cannot do right because we are self-centered beings. The law becomes our custodian, our prison guard as we are bound in our own filth and corruption longing to be set free from the prison bars of our life. What we believed was freedom we came to realize is our capture and we long for the freedom that only our Savior Jesus can bring.

It is easy to understand why those who don’t know Jesus need Jesus but what about those of us who act at times as if we don’t know Jesus? Well the Law of Moses reminds us that we are in constant need to be restored. The Law reminds us of the same three things:

* ***It helps us define sin***
* ***It applies the same standard of righteousness***
* ***It points out the foolishness of thinking that we can achieve righteousness any other way then trusting in Jesus***

There is however one thing that the Law of Moses can no longer do to us believers that it still does to unbelievers: ***The Law of Moses can no longer insist on punishment*** as Paul wrote in Romans chapter 8 verse 1 “*There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus.*” Because of Jesus, God is our Father not our executioner.

**III. Vs. 11 In accordance to the glorious gospel**

Vs. 11 **Fourth**: “*The law is according to the glorious gospel*”: **Paul finishes the four truths about the Law of Moses by applying it within the confines of the “*glorious gospel*”**. And that brings up **four points**:

1. ***We must recognize that as believers in Christ we can never attempt to apply the Law of Moses to correct our lawlessness and make us righteous***. We cannot try harder next time because our self effort will have no ability to make us righteous as we have already been made righteous in Christ. If trying harder worked then we are saying that we can be made right by our works instead of by grace. Instead what we do is recognize that based upon the Law we have moved from His righteousness to our own and repent and accept His righteousness which is only by faith.
2. ***The only form of discipline in accordance with the Law of Moses is found in Jesus words in Matthew 18***. There we follow the threefold process of discipline upon a believer. The purpose of this is so that the unrepentive professing believer will:

* ***Recognize*** what they are missing in fellowship with God.
* ***Realize*** that they are not true believers.
* There is no penance, no sanction, no punishment, instead just a continual attempt to reach them for Christ as you would an unbeliever.

1. ***We are NOT to impose standards upon our fellow believers that God does not, they are our brother and sisters we are not their Lords***. Legalism always tries to set up a series of rules for other people, telling them what they have to do. ***Laws and rules are necessary for life, but they do NOT change a heart***! And until a heart is changed no amount of rules will have any lasting effect upon a life.
2. ***Only by bringing people who are redeemed back to who they now are in Christ can the Spirit of God effect transforming change***. ***Rules and regulation define social morality but do nothing to help personal morality***. A law may prevent me from:

* **Stealing from my neighbor but does nothing to prevent me from coveting his possessions**.
* **A law can discourage me from leaving my wife and my children, but it can’t stop me from making their life a living hell**.
* **A law can inhibit me from killing my enemy, but it can do nothing in keeping me from hating him and making him feel my hate**.

***The law can within limits regulate my behavior but it cannot:***

* ***Cleanse my mind***
* ***Purify my heart***
* ***Alter the poison of my worst intentions, only Jesus can do that*!**

***The Law of Moses can drive us to a fresh revelation of our need of His love and that is what it was designed to do all along***!

**1 Timothy**

1. **The Church and its message**

**2. 1:12-17 The message in the present**

**1:12-17**

**“From Blasphemer to Believer”**

**I. Introduction**

**II. Vs. 12-13 Before and after**

**III. Vs. 14-15 Happy to be lost**

**IV. Vs. 16-17 Praise for God’s patience**

**I. Introduction**

Paul knew that instruction on the use of the 10 Commandments in the Christian life was not enough, he needed a personal example of its proper use. But where could he find just such an example? ***He need look no further than the mirror and who better to be that example than one who prior to knowing Jesus was the greatest miss user of the law known***. Paul writes about his own conversion some **6 times** in the New Testament **not** because he thought highly of himself but because he thought highly of the Lord who had saved a wretch like him. What a stark contrast to the 1967 a New York Times bestseller that remained on that list for 20 years. Its title and content obviously appealed to the populace at large. The tile of this book by Thomas A Harris MD was “*I’m OK, You’re OK*” and became the bible for the popular “*self-esteem*” movement. Reading the section before us would completely contradict this very popular notion as a basis of self-esteem instead Paul’s title would have been “*I’m not OK, and neither are you*”!

**II. Vs. 12-13 Before and after**

Vs.12 Timothy’s work was no small task:

* Rome under Nero had begun to crack down upon those idolaters who refused to worship Caesar as God.
* In Ephesus years earlier there had already been a riot caused in the name of Christ because so many people had abandoned the worship of Diana for Christ and there is little doubt that they didn't have good feelings towards this so called sect.
* The Jews also were not in favor of Christianity largely because they felt that it was a threat to their way of life.
* Then within the church there were those who influenced by the above kept wanting to tweak the message to accommodate others.

No wonder Paul had to keep on encouraging Timothy to do the work God had called him too as he faced so much opposition.

Paul tells Timothy when you are experiencing doubt do to opposition to, “*Thank Christ Jesus our Lord who has enabled me, because He counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry*." It was God's enabling that sustained Paul and caused him to stick at the task in spite of extreme opposition. Timothy had experienced firsthand how Paul had been treated upon his evangelistic outreaches. *There was no positive media campaign, no launch luncheon hosted by the important business and political figures of the city*. No, Paul was greeted by hostel crowds of folks that were committed to killing him. What powered Paul on was the love of the truth that since God had transformed him, He could transform anyone! Timothy's home town of Lystra was an example of the Lord strengthening Paul as he and Barnabas went into the city and at first were well received then the crowds turned on them and took Paul outside the city and stoned Paul until they believed he was dead; the church prayed over Paul and he went back into the same city and continued teaching about Jesus. That is one of the invisible realities of the truth of the gospel... “*Compelling evidence that those who carried the truth about Jesus were so convinced of the reality of Jesus life and work that they risked everything for no earthly reward or benefit*”.

Of further encouragement to Timothy was that the “*Lord counted him faithful putting him into the ministry*”. That realization puts the responsibility of success fully upon the Lord and not upon Paul. ***God in spite of his personal failures called Paul into His service***. The interesting truth is that based upon Paul's testimony in verse 13 is that it is often the negative destructive aspects to our life that God uses.

Vs. 13 Paul’s own testimony of the gospel is that he “*was* ***formerly*** *a blasphemer, a persecutor, and a insolent man...*" The 10 commandments **hadn’t** changed him, the basis of his transformation was Jesus. In fact as a young man he was blinded by the Law and failed to understand that what he was using to hound others should have been hounding him. How incredible is the gospel that in spite of confessing that he was a “*blasphemer, a persecutor and an insolent man*” that he had “***obtained mercy***”.

**III. Vs. 14-15 Happy to be lost**

Vs. 14 As another example of the superiority of the gospel to the 10 commandments Paul offers up the “*exceedingly abundant grace and love he encountered in Jesus Christ.*” In Paul’s letter to the Romans (5:5) he wrote that “*where sin did abound grace did much more abound!*” The law pointed out that sin, did abound but it offered no solution it only directed him towards Christ. Paul expounds on **three things that Jesus gave him that the Law never did:**

1. ***Grace***: No greater comparison between what the work of the 10 commandments and the work of the gospel can be found as ***the Law demands justice for those actions*** whereas the gospel through faith in Christ enables a person to not only “**NOT** get what they deserve, which is the ***definition for mercy*** but "***get what they don't deserve, which the definition of grace***" because Jesus has received upon Himself what the Law demanded. Paul describes this grace with two very descriptive words “*exceedingly abundant*” which tells me that even though his debt was great the supply was far beyond his need.
2. ***Faith***: Jesus provided “**FAITH**” which is **best defined** as the “***ability to see things realistically, the way they really are***”. Jesus gives every believer the ability to see and experience LIFE as it really is. This reality ***isn’t pessimistic*** in fact it is the opposite as it is ***extremely positive*** as we are more than conquers in Christ.
3. ***Love***: Finally where the 10 commandments offers judgment ***Jesus offers LOVE***. Not just of Him but because of Him for others as well. We are no longer into ***comparing*** ourselves with others we are into ***compassion***. Our obedience isn’t to appease Jesus instead we desire to obey because the Love of Christ constrains us and enables us to say no to ungodliness.

Vs. 15 Too further illustrate the superiority of the Gospel verses the Law of Moses of the 10 Commandment’s Paul again uses himself as the example this example is to look not at the before and after picture alone but rather to understand the difference in the aim of the Law of Moses verses the Gospel.

* The aim of the Gospel is: “***Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am the chief***”!
* The aim of the 10 Commandment’s is to: “***Reveal that we are sinners in need of being saved***”!

Paul employs a Jewish way of expressing himself that was meant to call attention to what he was about to say much in the same way that Jesus did when he would say “*Truly, truly, I say to you…*” it was their way of say, “*All right now pay attention, this is very important*!” Five times in Paul’s two letters to Timothy he uses this same way of getting Timothy’s attention. “*Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners*.” Many people miss understand the purpose of Jesus’ first coming: “Jesus came to seek and save that which was lost. The difficulty is not in His coming but rather that those that He is seeking to save don’t want to admit that they are lost sinners. Some folks just believe that they are not in need of being saved but Jesus puts everybody in spite of education, environment and religious expression or the lack there of in the same boat which is **sinking**! ***Fallen humanity becomes obsessed with casting their fellow ship mates overboard instead of realizing they are in the very same boat***!

Furthermore Jesus’ coming is more than just recognizing our **ONE TIME** need to be saved as Paul is very careful to say: “*Christ came into the world to save sinners, of whom* ***I am*** *chief.*” The important revelation with regards to Paul’s need to be saved is not at one time he saw himself as the worst sinner he had ever the displeasure of knowing. No, the amazing truth is the use of the words “***I AM***” which tells us that Paul wasn’t looking backwards at his past life but viewing himself in his present condition and he still found that he was the worst sinner he had ever met and was in just as much a need to be saved NOW as he was prior to his relationship with Christ. This two word phrase must be placed in the context of his other letters where he wrote in:

* Galatians 2:20, “*I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me; and the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God*”?
* Second Corinthians 5:17: “*If any man is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has passed away, behold, the new has come*”?

Paul had not forgotten his transformation, neither is this some humble exaggeration. Paul meant every word as he is thinking in terms of still having to deal with his own flesh that needs to be crucified with Christ, to be recognized as dead. This old nature of ours still gives us fits and Paul found that dealing with his was a full time job. ***Our areas of weakness can return to us in an instant no matter how long we have been a follower of Jesus, how much of the Bible we have memorized or how much time we have in prayer***! ***After 30 plus years of walking with Jesus, 26 years of studying His word I still remain my biggest prayer request***!

**IV. Vs. 16-17 Praise for God’s patience**

Vs. 16 Having made his confession about his present and continual need for Christ Paul makes yet another startling claim for the superiority of the Gospel when compared to the Law of Moses as he says; “*for this reason I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might show all long-suffering as a pattern to those who are going to believe on Him for everlasting life*.” **God looks for not the best candidate but the person in the greatest need, the proudest person, and the fellow that was voted “*least likely to ever become a follower of Christ*.”** The reason for this is that God can use that person to be an example to others who were voted “*least likely to ever become a follower of Christ*.” Much can be said of the mercy of God, the Love of God but have you considered the “***patience of God***”? God’s transformation of our nature must have “***patience***” at the beginning as He knows how many times we will fail and we will need to fall afresh upon His grace and mercy to restore us. Timothy may have been pondering his own failure when facing such opposition and Paul’s words would have come as a glass of water to a parched man. We know this to be the context as the words “*for this reason*” speak of the present and continual need of Christ that Paul daily realized.

Vs. 17 Having written out the superior benefits of the gospel in continual transformation Paul can’t contain himself and breaks forth in spontaneous praise!

**1 Timothy**

1. **The Church and its message**

**3. 1:18-20 The message at work**

**1:18-20**

**“A good conscience not a bad memory”**

**I. Introduction**

**II. Vs. 18 Two important truths**

**III. Vs. 19a Two weapons that win**

**IV. Vs. 19b-20 Two examples**

**I. Introduction**

The charge that Paul writes to Timothy about is the same one he mentioned in verse 3 that he not allow folks to major in minors. He has made his case clear that only the gospel has the ability to transform a heart and to continue to do so. Since we were created to have fellowship with the living God and that His goal is our growth more and more into the image of His Son anything that doesn’t lead to that aim is a colossal waste of time! But what are the biggest enemies we face? In this section Paul mentions them and surprisingly they deal with faith and a good conscience. Some say that, “*The key to a good conscience is a bad memory*.” But a good conscience is best defined as “*the inner voice which warns us that somebody may be looking*.” The truth is bad doctrine usually starts with bad conduct.

**II. Vs. 18 Two important truths**

Vs.18 This verse offers **two important truths for every Christian**:

1. **Who has called us**: Like a general to his younger officers Paul commits this fight into the hands of his commanders who will entrust it to their men. ***Casting vision*** is a key ingredient to waging war. Timothy’s commission came from multiple words from God and since He was confident of His choice then nothing should be able to dislodge this confidence. Every person I know will face situations and circumstances in this life that will cause us to lose confidence in God’s direction for our life…confidence will not be regained my a mere pep talk from your fellow sojourners but it will be regained when you spend time with the commander and chief who called you to service!
2. **What we have been called too**: It is equally important not only that you know who called you but also to what you have been called to as Paul summarizes not only this letter but the Christian life when he writes: “*That by them you may wage the good warfare*.” ***Saint’s the fundamental truth about the Christian life is that it is essentially a battle***! There have been many a disillusioned Christian because once they gave their heart to Christ they were of the understanding that life was going to be easy from here on out…only to soon come to the realization that life on many fronts has become far more difficult.

* We are battling ourselves…in ways that we never knew of prior to faith in Christ
* We are battling satan and a world system under his control….that we once were allegiance with
* We may be battling those friends, family and co-workers who suddenly find us not practicing their life style
* We may be battling our former religious practice that we now find contrary to our new faith

There is **something missing in this admonishment**: ***Missing is any statement or assurance of survival or option given Timothy by which he may escape the battle***. I believe that Paul means to explain to Timothy, that **the battle that we are engaged in is not one where the victory is based upon our “*survival*”**. ***The victory is gained not by our survival but rather by God’s truth being on display…we are not the end goal, His life transforming truth is***! The greatest example of this is to be found in Jesus who did not hide away in some unreachable palace but dealt with life of the battle field of the open square, among people who hated Him dealing with all the dangers of everyday life that in the end cost Him His earthly life. And I remind you that it was in His death that victory was won not in the preservation of His earthly life! We are called to “***wage the good warfare***” and the proof that we have is **not** our survival but rather it is to be found in our death to self! We are to live as one author put it, ***redemptively***! But we must realize that with warfare we have an enemy and in fact we Christians have three. Paul in his letter to the Ephesians made it plain in chapter 6 verse 12 that people are not one of the three as we are told that “*we do not wrestle against flesh and blood*..”. Instead we have three steady foes that will not stop in their attempt to cause us not to die to self:

* **The World**: The world is the philosophy that continues to insist that “***I***” am all that really matters. It insists that “***My***” pleasure is all that is important and that I must give in to the pursuit that is all about “***Me***” and my happiness. After all I “***deserve***” the best and I must take my happiness and pleasure now no matter how temporary it might be.
* **The fallen flesh of our old nature**: This is the part of our old nature and is dedicated to “***self***” living and loving, it loves anything illegal, immoral and fattening. There is a little poem that expresses the attitude of this fallen flesh: *I had a little party this afternoon, was very small, just three guests invited in all; Me, Myself and I! It was Me who ate all the sandwiches, and Myself who drank up all the tea, ah but it was I who ate the pie and passed the cake to Me who ate it to*!
* **The devil**: Paul warned of him in Ephesians 6:11 saying that we need to be on guard against the “*wiles of the devil*”. He will be using the above two enemies we face to cause us to be our former self, while the “***New You***” will want to live like Jesus, the devil will be pulling you back. That is “waging the good warfare” that he has admonished Timothy to be engaged in.

Paul dos not encourage Timothy the way in which I would have thought he would, as he does not say the following truths:

1. 1 John 4:4: ***He that is in you is greater than he that is in the world***
2. 1 Peter 1:5: ***We are kept by the power of God through faith***
3. Jude 24: ***He is able to keep you from falling and to present you faultless before His presence in glory***

Instead Paul simple reminds Timothy of his love for him as he calls him his son, then reminds him of God’s precious promises that called him into ministry. **Love is such a stronger motivator of truth then merely hearing truthful words**!

**III. Vs. 19a Two weapons that win**

Vs.19a Paul anticipates that Timothy may have wanted more than motivation, he would want some weapons in which to defeat these three and Paul supplies two that many a Christian have according to Paul have cast aside causing them to be shipwrecked.

1. **Having faith**: Paul reminds Timothy of weapon of trusting in what God’s word has promised! **That is all faith is…TRUST**! And the truth about trust is we all have it the question is: ***What is our trust IN***? Paul tells Timothy to defeat the three great enemies that we need we will need to trust only in God’s word! We are often defeat because we don’t trust god’s word instead we trust the lies and false promises of the world system, flesh and the devil. Those three are always going to get you to go after things quickly before you stop to assess the consequences. They also over emphasize the temporary pleasure while not mentioning the long term destruction and cost involved in the pursuit of pleasure. This was the attack that the devil successfully launched at Adam and Eve as he got them to distrust God’s provision saying that God was withholding something that was essential and that if they trusted him they would see. So through every day we are faced with believing the lies our trusting in the truth of God’s word.
2. **A good conscience**: Many people have a misunderstanding as to what a “*good conscience*” is, they associate it with feeling and emotions. They have slogans and adds that say, “***If it feel good do it***!” But a “*good conscience*” has nothing to do with feelings and everything to do with ***ACTIONS***! We know right from wrong not of feelings but rather of actions. A “good conscience” is what happens when we act towards God’s word and reject the lies of the threefold enemy. A good conscience is also what convicts us when we have trust a lie instead of the truth which will result in our agreeing with God about our misplaced trust as we turn back to trusting and acting on His word instead of a lie. A “good conscience” is like a gyroscope for our heart which resists any tendency to deflect it and it will warn us that what we are contemplating to trust in and act on is contrary to truth and it will cause us to get off course.

These two weapons work in conjunction with each other and Paul wrote of the impact of these two weapons in 2 Corinthians 10:4-5 when he said, “***The weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ***.” These are the two great weapons at our disposal to defeat our enemies:

* **To know what is right**: Trust in God’s word above anything and anyone else
* **By the power of God to act upon it**: Act upon the truth no matter what

**IV. Vs. 19b-20 Two examples**

Vs. 19b-20 Paul mentions two men who rejected trusting and obeying the truth and have become stranded and alone away from truth. Hymenaeus and Alexander were not men who didn’t know nor hadn’t obeyed the truth for at one time they were. No, they were men who stopped doing so and had become lost! In Paul’s 2nd letter to Timothy he wrote that Hymenaeus taught that the resurrection of the believers in Christ had already happened which cause some to walk away from Jesus. Hymenaeus didn’t start by teaching falsely, he started much more subtly than this as he just choose not to practice the truth in some area of his life. Paul also warns of Alexander in his 2nd letter to Timothy saying that he did much harm and that they needed to be aware of him. Their departure from truth was not a sudden compulsive act but rather a slow abandonment, a course of spiritual deterioration that has taken a great deal of time.

I may seem to some that Paul’s words that he “*delivered to satan that they may learn not to blaspheme*” to be quite vindictive but that is not the case. Paul knew satan, he will lie and lure away a believe from truth then abuse him, seek to destroy him. Delivering a person over is a hopefully cause a person to realize what they have abandoned in Christ, the love and joy that came from obedience to the truth. They will tire of the slop of pigs that satan offers and return to the abundance of food at the banquet table of our Father the King of Kings! Oh dear saints in need not come to this….we can know what is right now and we have the power in Christ to act upon what is right…so will we choose to do so?

**1 Timothy**

**B.) The Church and its members**

**1. 2:1-8 Preeminence of prayer**

**2:1**

**“Much prayer, much power”**

**I. Introduction**

**II. Vs. 1a Why prayer**

**III. Vs. 1b Three types of prayer**

**IV. Vs. 1c Praise**

**I. Introduction**

Having discussed the importance of ***proper doctrine*** within the local church Paul now moves on to discuss the ***proper devotion*** within the church. When People think of the church most think only of Sunday, they believe that is the only day that the church has any relevance into people’s lives. The truth is what happens on Sundays is only a tape measure or thermometer of what ought to be happening throughout the week. I recall the story of a Christian father with his son as they were touring a historical church building in another town. As they went into the sanctuary the boy asked his dad what the bronze plaque on the wall was for. The father glanced at it and said, “*Son that’s a memorial to remember all the people who have died in the service*.” The boy didn’t quite understand as he related it to his own church and asked his dad, “*Which service did they die in, the first or the second*?” Too many folks that have died spiritually in the public worship service at church as they haven’t realized what this time is for. Chapters 2-3 bring in the 2nd division in the main teaching which is to instruct on the order and leadership of the local church. This will be divided into two groups:

1. 2:1-15 The order of the public worship service
2. 3:1-13 The qualifications for leadership within the local church

The first order to set straight is public worship service which has **three elements:** ***PRAYER***, ***PRAISE*** and ***PREACHING***. We shall only look at ***prayer*** this morning.

**II. Vs. 1a Why prayer**

Vs. 1 The use of the phrase “*first of all*” does ***no***t refer to time but importance. Paul is saying that “*prayer*” is the most important part of public worship. Before discussing important issues as the qualifications for leadership, or how to run benevolence within the church Paul sets out to prioritize the Church service and first on that list is prayer. It is a sad truth that prayer has for the most part lost its number 1 status. In most churches if you announce a banquet or some other activity people will come out for it but if you announce prayer very few folks show up. Most churches more time is spent on the announcements than they do in prayer. It is one of if not the reason for the decline of the western Evangelical church. The truth is where there is “***Much prayer, there is much power! But where there is little prayer there is little power!***” The practice of public prayer cannot be regulated and forced by outward command it must be prompted by inward conviction of need. Jesus quoted from two passages in the Old Testament (Isa. 56:7 and Jer. 7:11) in Matthew 21:13 saying “*It is written*, *'My house shall be called a house of prayer,'* *but you have made it a* *'den of thieves.'”* Paul put prayer first for **two very good reasons:**

1. ***Prayer focuses our attention on our sole resource right at the start***: As we come into prayer our hearts may be heavy with need but by carrying them to the throne of grace to the one that promised in Matthew 11:30, “*My yoke is easy and My burden is light*” we can empty our heavy load. Peter encouraged us in 1 Peter 5:7 to “*cast all our cares upon Him, for He cares for you*.” There is never a better place to start a church service then to unload all our cares at His alter. Jesus invited us to do so in Matthew 18:20 saying “*where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am in the midst of them*.” In John 14:14 Jesus said, “*Ask anything in My name, I will do it*.” I’m not sure how we as a church can encourage this better but I wonder how much more glorious our time together with Jesus would be if we started with a time where we take the cares of our heart and bring them to the one that cares for us. Perhaps we could offer communion and prayer prior to service as well as after service? Or maybe we could have prayer cards that we could spend time in prayer over for those who wish? The challenge we have is to fit all into an orderly time frame.
2. ***Prayer puts everything into perspective***: Many times as we get up and get ready we become preoccupied with our own daily grind just to get to church or we start to focus on what we have to accomplish after church. But when we get together and hear the real life burdens of our friends and family our hearts move off of ourselves and onto other’s needs. Without starting with prayer first we can succumb to the notion that what we are about to encounter is “*all about us*”. We are not at the center of our own universes, God is a God who cares for the hurts and heartaches of all humanity. We are here to come to work, and prayer is working wisely, baring others burdens before the Lord in prayer. E.M. Bounds, that great prayer warrior once said, “*It’s a great thing to be willing to go to men for God, but it’s a better thing still to be willing to go to God for men!*”

Many Christians have abandoned going to church completely and even more don’t see it as a priority as they say that they can just worship at home watching TV or walking out in the forest. I suppose that this is true to an extent as God is not limited to only being in a Church building. But Hebrews 10:25 tell us to “*Not forsake the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching*.” ***We gather not just to receive but to give to each other a little of our time to help carry someone else***. We are a community of believers who ought to have the Navy Seal mentality of no man left behind! Almost every week someone come up to me and tells me how their time here this hour and half has changed their life and I always say the same thing, PRAISE THE LORD. You see I know that it was not me nor someone else that has changed their life it was that they through the Holy Spirit have had an encounter with Jesus who has done just as He said He would do when we are gathered in His name, He was here! The Psalmist Asaph was experiencing an extreme difficulty theologically: “*Why the wicked seem to prosper while those that love God seem to suffer.*” He said in Psalm 73 verse 16-17 that trying to understand this was so painful it had begun to affect his witness of God until he went into ***the sanctuary of God***! It was there as he lifted up that dilemma that he gained perspective.

**III. Vs. 1b Three types of prayer**

Vs. 1b There are over seven different words for prayer and four of those seven are used as we see the **variety of prayer**.

1. **Supplication**: The word literally means a petition or request of the people. These were request and needs of the people, situation or circumstances of peoples pains, struggles, pressures and heartaches that they were going through. But **unlike** the word “***prayer***” below these are requests that that the body of Christ can also get involved in. Like the request that may come in for a person in need of food and the Holy Spirit prompts you by reminding you that that you have the means to answer that request. The early church was doing what Paul had said they should be doing in Galatians 6:2 “*bearing one another’s burdens and so fulfilling the law of Christ*.” One way in which we do this is by the use of what call our “*prayer chain*” where the needs and requests of the people come to be prayed over by those who have requested to be on the list to pray over the needs of others. ***I don’t know why someone wouldn’t want to be a part of this unless they just didn’t have a way to receive the list.*** Twice in the last week people who have been placed on this list for prayer have contacted me to say that because of those prayers God has worked in a powerful way to spare their life or the life of a loved one. This list can be **anonymous**, but it is **confidential** and we try to be **very concise** to the **specific need** so as to not to be weighed down to reading through it.
2. **Prayers**: This word in the Greek means prayer but it also is the word used for worship. The difference between “***Supplications***” and “***Prayers***” is that this is a request that **ONLY** God can meet. This is the kind of request where we have the privilege of lifting up our brother or sister who has a burden, suffering or heartache that requires only us to bring it before the everlasting throne of grace, peace and comfort. These are the kinds of needs that I don’t have answers for, and the great thing is that I don’t have too nor do I need to explain it before God so He can grasp enough of it to help. No, he knows before I ever have the privilege have carrying this burden before the King of Kings. We are to bring those requests before the Lord like the friends of the paralytic did by removing the roof of the house and lowering their buddy to the floor in front of Jesus to receive His touch.
3. **Intercession**: This word in the Greek literally means an interview an “*intimate request made by a friend to a king on behalf of someone else.*” This is a wonderful expression of corporate prayer as we are children of the King and come to our Heavenly Father in the intimacy of that relationship sharing with a special need that someone else has. There is an old Hymn that put it this way: “***You are coming to a King, with great petitions to bring, for His love and power are such that no one can ever ask too much***!” Far too much of our public “***Intercession***” sounds like we have **mixed up who we are praying too**. I often hear well intentioned intercession sound like this: “*Father God, I want to bring Old Fred too you now, He has just gone into the hospital, and the Dr. has told him he has a spot on the left lung about a ¼ inch in length that they used a MRI to detect. Father God, it would be real nice if you could visit him at St. Pats he’s in room 703 and will be their tell Friday the 7th*.” Now, I know the intension of the heart is good but God the Father is all knowing and everywhere present, and all powerful. But that prayer has mixed up who the hearer is. The way that request was made shows that it was intended for human ears to hear. Now, if the person prayed to God the Father the prayer would sound more like this: “*Father God, please touch Fred, you are Great Doctor, touch him and heal him according to your will and plan, reveal yourself and your presence to him Lord so that he would know your love. Thank you Lord for I know that you are going to do wonderful and great things for Fred, Amen*!”

**IV. Vs. 1c Praise**

Vs. 1c Next Paul brings up in conjunction with prayer the 2nd aspect of the Sunday worship service and that is PRAISE! Singing God’s praise is the natural and normal way of expressing ourselves our self’s after we have come to Him in prayer as we begin to praise Him before we ever have received answer to our prayers. ***We aren’t just singing songs, we are praising God***! Over the years I have had folks come and complain about worship and generally what they are complaining about is style and I always tell them that ***the worship music isn’t for them, it’s too God***. He is far more interested in the heart that is praising Him then He is into the tempo and style of the music! How else can we explain why God recognizes the poor quality of sound some folks like me have and God accepts it as worship? Like most things in a Church service people just forget who they are singing too. Ah, but you watch the same folks at a sporting event or a sale at their favorite store and man are they excited and animated singing the praises of the teams win or price they got on sale. Why can’t we get that excites about our Lord who “*Only does great things*” on our behalf? I think there ought to be some unhindered alleluias, some heart felt spontaneous applause to our Heavenly Father. At very least just a little more passion in our thanksgiving. These songs are “*Love Songs*” to our Savior, expressions of our heartfelt gratitude for all that He has done and is doing on our behalf.

**1 Timothy**

**B.) The Church and its members**

**1. 2:1-8 Preeminence of prayer**

**2:1c-7**

**“The challenge of prayer”**

**I. Introduction**

**II. Vs. 1c-2 Twofold effect of our prayers**

**III. Vs. 3-4 The aim of prayer**

**IV. Vs. 5-7 Four truths**

**I. Introduction**

Paul started the 2nd chapter of his letter to Timothy with the elements and order of the worship service, now he gives Timothy the aspects of what “***Prayer***” will accomplish if we devote ourselves to this. We will be challenged to pray for “*all men*” and specifically for “*kings and all who are in authority*” and with our current political climate many will find this difficult. But I remind you that long before the broken campaign promises of past and present presidents there was a world political figure named Augustus Caesar so named because he thought himself the “*highest One*.” He said in his own way, “*No new taxes*” and “*If you like your insurance and doctor you can keep it!*” but broke those campaign promises by raising taxes and sending the young couple named Mary and Joseph to a different doctor in a different city. Little did he realize that this broken campaign promise was being used to fulfill biblical prophecy of Micah 5:2? So the August one was really being led by the Almighty One who was guiding the birth of His Son to Bethlehem. Saints we have never met a person that doesn’t need prayer nor a person that we cannot or should not pray for! Jesus said in Matthew 5:44 “*But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you.*”

**II. Vs. 1c-2 Twofold effect of our prayers**

Vs. 1c-2 The greater question based upon the text is, “*Who shouldn’t we pray for*?” as Paul starts out in verse 1 saying “*all men*” and by that he does not mean for the church to pray for all mankind as that would be a very long service. What he means is **all mankind without exceptions or distinctions**. And I’m not certain if this was Paul’s intent but it works quite well with our current dislike for Politian’s Paul says, “*Just so you know the depth by which I mean there ought to be no exceptions, pray for those who have the responsibility to regulate the affairs of your life, those who are over you*.” The emphasis in this passage is upon the little three letter word ALL as Paul uses the word 5 times in the first seven verse.

Early Christians were often accused of being against the state as they wouldn’t worship the King as they worship a higher King, but here we see that Paul encourages the believers to not worship the king but to pray for him. Now it is safe to say that there were scantly few of those leaders in Paul’s day that were godly but yet Paul still says to pray for them. We are to pray for kings and even for bad presidents because they are in positions of authority by the predetermined counsel of God. Paul had recently been released from imprisonment because of his faith in Christ by the cruelest Roman Emperor Nero, yet as Paul wrote this letter to Timothy he was including Nero! ***I’m afraid that far too often the Christian in history has been far too quick to pick up arms instead of bend their knees in prayer***.

Next Paul mentions “*and all who are in authority*” which would include all subordinate positions in government all the way down to the local levels without bias, even those that are unrighteous and ungodly, cruel and vicious! Now we can that God would open the eyes of their hearts that He would transform their lives but the truth is that God doesn’t have to do so to use them. Proverbs 21:1 tells us “*The kings heart is in the hand of the Lord, like the rivers of waters; He turns it wherever He wishes*.” We need only to turn the pages of our Bibles to read of kings like Nebuchadnezzar, Cyrus the Persian and others who are called the “*servant of God*” even when their hearts weren’t right with God and they were punishing God’s people. The result of our prayers for those in Government is that we can expect that our prayers will have a **twofold affect**:

1. **Leads the citizens of all society into “*a quiet and peaceable life...*”**: Wow, saints have you ever thought about this fact that peace and peacefulness of our society lay in the hands of those who believers who pray? Conversely the opposite is also true, when God’s people aren’t praying for the government. In 2 Chron 7:14 God say to His people, “*if My people who are called by My name will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land*.” Would you categorize this time we are living in as quiet and peaceable? If not we now know the reason why, God’s people are not humbling themselves and praying for the leadership of the nation! By the way, “*complaining about leaders is not the same thing as praying for our leaders*!”
2. **Leads the citizens of the Kingdom of God “*in all godliness and reverence*.”**: The first result when we pray for those in leadership over us in our Government is **outward**, **a peaceful life.** The 2nd thing we can expect is **inward transformation** that will result in us becoming more ***godly*** and ***reverential***.
3. ***Godly***: This word in the Greek is not normally translated “*godly*” as it means “*a consciousness of what is required in life with respect to God, your fellow man, and yourself.*” Paul says, when we pray for our leaders we will go through life knowing what is required of us in all circumstances and situations. Praying for those who govern us will cause us to ***better understand***:

* **What is really happening**
* **Why they act and behave the way they do**
* **The forces and pressures that are at work against them in society**

As such we don’t get all amped up and angry at them and instead because of praying for them we are able to live with a sense of assurance and confidence in spite of the world we live in.

1. ***Reverence***: The word in the Greek would better be translated “*respectful or courteous*” we will treat our fellow human better when we are praying for them as we realize that they just like us are a victim and not the problem. When we pray for those over us we will become more courteous and grace filled people.

**III. Vs. 3-4 The aim of prayer**

Vs. 3 Prayer accomplishes the will of God. Paul tells us that prayer is the means by which God opens people’s hearts to the gospel that they may become believers. Prayer is the first thing that God uses to “*till the ground*” for the seed of the gospel that it may bring forth fruit in its season! When God’s people pray for folks, even though they have heard the gospel multiple times prior, they will start hearing and light will begin to creep into dark hearts.

Vs. 4 He desires “*all men*” to be saved to come to the knowledge of the truth! And again the word all here means “*without distinction*” He has no bias towards anybody all kinds of people can be saved. ***Let’s put this to the test, let’s put on the prayer group people we know that are away from the knowledge and experience of the love of God and watch what God will do in opening their hearts***!

**IV. Vs. 5-7 Four truths**

Vs. 5-7 Gods desire is that “*all men*” to be saved and Paul clarifies the way in which prayer will accomplish this as he lists ***four specific truths with regards to the means of man’s salvation***:

1. There is “*One God…”*: There is only One God, there is not a god for the Muslims, a god for the Hindus’ a god for the Buddhist’s. No there is One God and one way for a person to come into a relationship with God.
2. There is “*one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus*”: There is no other means possible by which man can know God except through Jesus. When Jesus walked upon this other people marveled not because they believed that He was God, they marveled because He was like no other man in the way He lived, spoke and interacted with others. Jesus said it in John 14:6 “*No man come to the Father except through Me*.” Saints the truth is ***there are many paths to Jesus but there is only one path to God and that is through Jesus***! Jesus said in Matthew 7:14 “*Narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it*.”
3. There is One *who gave Himself a ransom for ALL.*.” The Perfect Lamb of God paid the price and through His death we have been set free from the penalty and power of sin. Some folks say that there are many different ways in which you can relate to that One God and that they have chosen to relate to that God thorough Islam, or Mormonism but there is only one way to relate to God and that is through the perfect man Christ Jesus. Jesus gave Himself so that all kinds of people, from every walk of life may come to Good through Him.

Vs. 6b-7 Finally Paul mentions the 4th and final truth with regards to mankind’s salvation as well as the third aspect of what goes into the Church worship service preaching the Word of God. There is only one gospel, one truth to be taught with regards to mankind’s salvation and that is teaching the good news about Jesus. Paul was appointed to that very work to speak the truth about Jesus into every type of person to Jews and gentiles a like. You can see why the priority of the Church worship service is design for prayer, praise and preaching so that God can change broken hearts and ruined lives! This is what “*body life*” with in these walls is supposed to be and by the power of God working through us I pray it is what we are growing into. We need to realize like what God said through Jeremiah 29 that we are only going to be in our Babylon 70 years so go ahead get married, have children, build houses, have a carrier but don’t get to attached because you are only going to be here 70 years are so.

**1 Timothy**

**B.) The Church and its members**

**2. 2:8-15 Propriety of women**

**2:8-10**

**“Dressed for prayer”**

**I. Introduction**

**II. Vs. 8 The heart of the man who prays**

**III. Vs. 9-10 The heart of the woman who prays**

**I. Introduction**

There are times when studying the New Testament that you really wish you could call on the writer to do a little Q and A as to just what he was thinking about. But that’s just not possible as we approach this passage which is one of the more disputed verses in the entire bible. Of utmost importance is the **context** of this passage we are about to study: Paul is writing to Timothy about the proper order of the worship service and he has said that it involves three things, PRAYER, PRAISE, and PROCLAMATION. Paul spent a good deal of time dealing with both the aspects and objects of prayer. Here in this section Paul touches on men’s and women’s roll within the confines of the worship service. Paul said that corporate and private prayer within the Church enables society to live peacefully and for the Christian to live wisely within the world they have been placed. He went on to say that prayer is an effective and powerful instrument for the salvation of all mankind. In fact in verse 4 the phrase “*who desire* **ALL MEN** *to be saved*” includes all kinds of humanity (men, women, boys and girls) without distinction. The focus of verses 8-10 is still on the subject of prayer but here Paul is writing about having an atmosphere in which prayer can be made that will cause it to be more effective. Specifically Paul addresses the attitudes of both men in women within the Church setting and how this ought to look so as to maximize the effectiveness of prayer.

**II. Vs. 8 The heart of the man of prays**

Vs. 8 First Paul says, “*I desire that the men pray everywhere*…” some have taken this out of context and have taught this to mean that when in public **ONLY** men should pray but that is not what Paul is saying. Instead what he is saying is **WHEN** men pray in public they should do so in a ***threefold way***. It is clear that Paul’s concern is not **WHO** prays but rather **HOW** they pray. Paul writes of **three essentials for effective prayer for men, UPWARD, OUTWARD and INWARD**:

1. **UPWARD: Holy hands**: This is characteristic of a Jewish synagogue where men prayed while standing with their arms lifted up. **This was an outward posture that symbolized an inward heart; the hands were opened, facing out and up and in so doing they were saying in prayer to God that “*I’m letting go, I have nothing to hide and I’m keeping nothing back in my communication with you*.”** Interesting that we read Paul’s admonishment of the position of our hands and head in prayer and it is **not** folded hands and head bowed, yet we have taught our children to do this. The reason I suspect is that ***a child with hands together and head bowed and their eyes closed is a child that will not get into too much trouble***. But now that we are adults we can entertain the idea that there is far more liberty in our physical position in prayer. We can walk and pray, drive a car and pray, lie down with are face to the ground and pray as it’s not the position of the body that matters it’s the position of the heart. Holy hands speak of a set apart life where we are no longer practicing sin, Psalm 66:18 reminds us that if we regard sin in our heart, the Lord will not hear our prayer.
2. **OUTWARD: Without wrath**: The first essential was upward as men needed to check their heart before God. This next essential deals with an outward behavior and requires us to live without anger towards our fellow man. When we approach God we need to first deal with our hearts before those whom we have held a grudge or resentment towards before we go before the Lord in prayer.
3. **INWARD**: “*Without*” **doubting**: This last essential deals with an inward aspect of our heart as we must have trust and not be in dispute with God about the request or the outcome. ***It is clear that what Paul is saying is that when men pray in public they needed to be doing so in a way that is consistent with their private life, towards God and towards their fellow man.*** Paul didn’t care about making the prayer pretty to the ears of their fellow man but he wanted them to be aware that what they were saying publically to God had better be true to what is in their own hearts! I believe that Paul nails public prayer for men, as the issues he raises here for men really haven’t changed as we often battle wanting to be seen by others as open to God when in reality we want to control God and we want to be seen as spiritual but in reality we are not what our prayer is to others.

**III. Vs. 9-10 The heart of the woman who prays**

We live in a day of the equality of women, the thought that men and women can do everything the other can but as popular is that notion is, physically it just isn’t true on both sides. The fact remains that men and women are created differently, not better and worst but different and together they make a perfect pair. So on the place of women and men in the local church Paul write down God’s heart. First he deals the artificial beauty of this world where women are valued primarily upon their appearance contrasted against the true beauty of women which is based upon the character of her heart. The truth is that women whose value is rated upon the artificial and temporary attraction of the externals will garner attention but in the end it will be at the expense of lasting affection and security. The inward beauty of a gentile and quiet heart may not attract the temporary attention but it will win lasting affection and security.

1. Vs. 9 The phrase “*in like manner also, that the women*…” is a phrase that means “*in like manner to men, women are to* ***pray***” and again this is an indication of the public involvement of women in the early church service. Taking this passage alongside Paul’s first letter to the Corinthians in chapter 11 he writes, “*every woman who prays or prophesies…*” it is clear that he intended women to pray and expound scripture but that they need to do so demonstrating agreement with the principle of headship established in the body of Christ which is what was meant by “*head covering*” in that passage. Paul goes on to deal with ***HOW*** they are to be mindful of a few attitudes of the heart. He wants to make sure that like the men their public prayer is not a mere outward show for others to see. And just like the above instruction with men one deals with outward and the other inward: That “*the women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with* ***propriety*** *and* ***moderation****, not with braided hair or gold or pearls or costly clothing*”.

* **Propriety asks**: “*Is it appropriate for the occasion? Is it over-dressed or under-dressed? Is it going to call inappropriate attention to myself*?”
* **Moderation asks**: “*Is it moderate? Is it just too much – or far too little*?” Moderation looks for a middle ground.

Paul was not trying to regulate women’s fashion; what he is trying to establish is the attitude behind the way some women came to public prayer which was demonstrating that they were far more interested in being seen by others then being seen by God. It is interesting that the word “*modest*” means “*decent and orderly*” and is where we get our English word “***cosmetic***” from. I am in no way suggesting that women should not wear makeup, only that they should avoid the extremes so as not to draw attention away from the Lord either positive or negative. Ephesus was a wealthy and commercial community and it seems as though some women were competing for attention and popularity. “***The fanciest clothing and expensive hairdo’s are no substitution to a godly character and good works***”, Paul says! **Remember ladies, glamor and glitz can be applied from the outside but the true beauty of godliness can only come from the inside**! Phyllis Diller once said that, “*She would spend three hours a day in the beauty shop….and that was just for the estimate of what work needed to be done*.” Just because someone dress down doesn’t mean that they aren’t trying to attract attention as some churches have emphasized that women wear their hair in a bun with a cover put on no makeup and generally try to look as plain as they can. But that in its self is trying to be noticed for being spiritual. It is not what is on the outside that God is impressed with but rather what is on the inside.

1. “*Which is proper for women professing godliness, with good works*”: Instead of the outward preparation for prayer just like the men, women needed to be focused on the inward heart. All this will be seen in her talk matching her walk as she will be not just talking but noted for doing “*good works*”. We have some truly beautiful and outstanding women in this fellowship who have what Peter described in 1st Peter 3:4 as an “*adornment of the hidden person of the heart,…the incorruptible beauty of a gentile and quiet spirit, which is very precious in the sight of God*.” ***In other wards their outward beauty is only succeed by their inward beauty towards the Lord***!

**1 Timothy**

**B.) The Church and its members**

**2. 2:8-15 Propriety of women**

**2:11-15**

**“The hand that rocks the cradle”**

**I. Introduction**

**II. Vs. 11-12 Silence?**

**III. Vs. 13-14 Priority not superiority**

**IV. Vs. 15 Rocking the cradle**

**I. Introduction**

We come now to that controversial passage in First Timothy chapter 2 verses 11-15. As I said last week the importance in facing any difficult section of scripture is to approach it with an open heart and fresh eyes. It matters not what you think it means nor what the culture today says it must mean; no students, what matters is what it ***does mean*** and we must aim to inquire of the Holy Spirit the original intent of the writer to the readers of this letter. **There are three keys as to unlocking the meaning of this passage**:

* **Context**: This is always an important first step as “context” asks what is the occasion of the writing of this letter, what if any truth does this shed upon the meaning of the passage.
* **Word meanings**: It is also important that we define English translated words to what the original readers would have understood the word to mean. Sometimes the translators in their well-meaning attempt to use the shortest amount of English words fail as the word has a broader scope than the use of the word as the context of the phrase bears out.
* **Illustrations**: Finally it is important to look carefully to determine whether or not Paul uses “***cultural***” or “***creational***” illustrations. If this was a localized situation then we could safely expect that Paul would illustrate his point with “***cultural illustrations***”. But if it was a ***general*** or ***universal*** truth then we would expect that the Holy Spirit would have planted in Paul’s mind “***creational illustrations***”. The importance of this fact can help in determining if what Paul is speaking of is still a truth that the church ought to obey or if it was merely a truth that this specific church should obey.

**II. Vs. 11-12 Silence?**

Vs. 11 The topic of the church service is still the focus when Paul changes from the place of women in prayer to ***the place of women in teaching the word***. At issue for us is what exactly does Paul mean when he says in verse 11 to “*learn in silence*” and verse 12 “*to be in silence*”? The same word “*silent*” in verses 11-12 is also found as an adjective in verse 2 rendered “*quiet*” where **no one interprets** this word to mean that as citizens we are to live silently. There the word means that ***we are to live without being a hassle or hassling others***. Paul uses the same word in 2 Thessalonians chapter 3 verse 12 that believers are to “*work in* ***quietness*** *and eat their own bread*” and again he is not saying that they should work in silence but that ***they should work in a way that is peaceable and peaceful***. Paul’s use of the word means that women are to learn “***peaceably***” as are the men, ***not argumentatively***. He is saying that women are ***ALWAYS*** to be “*peaceable learners*” but he is **NOT** saying that they **ALWAYS** be learners and **NEVER** be teachers of any type. What is at issue is **the attitude of the women** Paul is addressing in Ephesus which seems to have been ***assertive, argumentative, aggressive and stubborn in nature***. The way this is worded in English implies something that Paul didn’t mean and that is that women were “***ALWAYS*** *and* ***ONLY*** *to be learners while men were* ***ALWAYS*** *and* ***ONLY*** *to be teachers*”. Paul is saying is that **WHEN** women are in the position of learners or teachers, that they do so without an attitude that is aggressive, loud and challenging in an assertive way.

Vs. 12 We move into a further detail explanation of Paul’s with regard to women teaching in the church service. This is **not a prohibition of women teaching** “***anywhere, anytime to anyone***!” When Paul wrote his letter to Titus he instructs older women to teach younger women. There was also indication that women instructed men in ***specific cases*** as with in Acts 18:24-28 where Aquila and Priscilla take Apollos aside and instructing him further of the doctrine of the grace and love of Christ.

The key to understanding this passage is the proper translation of the word “***authority***” *over a man* in verse 12. The word in the Greek means to “***domineer, to usurp authority, to take what is not yours***” and in the context deals with women “*taking over the church and becoming the final authority on teaching and teachers*.” I believe that this passage should not be stretched to be used with regards to leadership as clearly there were women in the early church involved in leadership roles. But the question is, “***Can a woman be a pastor***” and that depends on the context of how a person uses that word.

* If the word “***pastor***” is being used biblically to mean a “***shepherd***” then the answer is **YES** as women have been shepherds of flocks since the beginning of the Church. Their “**FLOCKS**” have been made up of women, children and in ***specific situations*** men and they have been faithfully guiding them through the word of God. In fact we have many such Women “*pastors or shepherds*” here in our fellowship.
* If the word “***pastor***” is being used in the ***conventional*** sense of the word where they are the “***final authority***” on teaching and teachers with in the local church (***which is the way that Paul is using the word in this sentence***) then Paul says the answer is **NO**.

This is further illustrated by **silence** in the fact that there were no women apostles or ***conventional pastors*** in the early church. There were many godly women serving in the early church, Jesus mother Mary, Mary Magdalene just to name a few, yet Jesus didn’t appoint any to that position. At the time of Pentecost when the Holy Spirit was poured out there were many women present that fit the specific qualifications of an apostle mentioned by Peter but none were given this position. In all the New Testament letters we don’t read of any women given the position of a ***conventional pastor***. This has nothing to do with giftedness or capabilities as there were and are many godly and gifted women available but there was never one put into the position to become the final authority on teaching and teachers within a local church. Paul is saying that the church should not recognize women as the ones having authority in the church regarding matters of doctrine and Scriptural interpretation. Whatever teaching is done by a woman must be done in submission to the men God has appointed to lead the church. If a women Bible teacher was teaching at a different time then our Sunday morning teaching then people would be free to attend or not attend so she would not be usurping any authority over men.

**III. Vs. 13-14 Priority not superiority**

Vs. 13-14 It is to that “***conventional***” pastor position that women are denied and Pail lists **two illustrations** as reason and neither are taken from the **culture** of the day instead they are drawn from **creation**:

1. Vs. 13 “*For Adam was formed first, then Eve*”: The first reason for male authority in the church is found in **the priority of creation**; Adam (**man**) **was created first, and given original authority on earth**. The first command God gave to the human race is found in Genesis 2:16-17: “*Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die*.” This command was **not** given to woman at all. In fact Eve was not yet created from Adam as he was given the job of tending the garden and naming the animals which was to examine them and name them based upon their characteristics. This took a considerable amount of time as Adam researched each animal noting that they came in pairs male and female yet he saw that there was not one animal suitable for companionship for him. So from Adam’s side God formed Eve to which Adam exclaimed “*Wow-man*” as he said “*I’m calling her this because she has taken* ***a long time to get here****.*” And now you know fellas that our wives being late isn’t there fault they were created that way! In this example we must keep in mind that “*priority*” **does not equal** “*superiority*” as ***men and women were both created in God’s image***. The issue is authority of which God establish by creating man first before Eve.
2. Vs. 14 “*For Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived, fill into transgression*”: Paul 2nd argument also comes from creation and deals with mankind’s fall into sin as Eve was deceived while Adam’s sin was with his eyes wide open. ***The difference in the sin of Adam and Eve, flows from their difference in authority***. Adam had a God given authority Eve did not have, but he also had a God given responsibility Eve did not have. Eve’s sin was the violation of God’s order of authority as she usurped her husband’s authority to which Adam listened instead of following God’s word. Eve was deceived not by the desire to do something wrong but rather with a heart that wanted to be more godly. Women have that wonderful quality and desire to have a relationship with God. They want to extract everything they can from God’s word, to worship and Satan knows this about them. This very desire makes them more susceptible to deception. **Paul’s point is that there is a difference in creation between the leadership roles of men and women**.

Paul is saying, women have a different role within the church and being the final authority on teaching and teachers does not fall into that role because God did not create her that way! Women are to teach, pray and exercise their gifts within the body of Christ adding qualities to church life that men cannot because they have been created by God differently. The point is not to focus on what we are not created by God to do but instead to put into practice what we are called to do.

**IV. Vs. 15 Rocking the cradle**

Vs. 15 The translation of this verse into English causes the confusion as we need to define two phrases “***saved***” and “***bearing children***”. The word “*saved*” holds the key to understanding the meaning of “*bearing children*” as Paul writes “*she will be* ***SAVED******through******CHILDBEARING***.” We know that SAVED cannot refer to a woman’s regeneration as a lot of women believers have not had children. In 1 Timothy 4:16 Paul writes to Timothy saying, “*Take heed to yourself and to the doctrine. Continue in them, for in doing this you will* ***SAVE*** *both yourself and those who hear you*.” Timothy didn’t need to be born again, the context the word “SAVED” means to be “*fulfilled, to find significance*”. Paul’s statement to women it that they would find their “*Significance, uniqueness, sphere of influence within the body of Christ with regards to teaching primarily through bearing children and instructing them to continue in the faith and love of Christ*.” The primary ministry of women is not to run the church, but to care for the home and raise children to the glory of God and they will have abundant opportunities to minister the Word in their local fellowships as well. Truly the “*Hand that rocks the cradle rules the world*!”

**1 Timothy**

**B.) The Church and its members**

**3. 3:1-7 Purity of elders**

**3:1-7**

**“Help wanted”**

**I. Introduction**

**II. Vs. 1 Working for money, member or the Master?**

**III. Vs. 2-3 Personal traits**

**IV. Vs. 4-5 An example at home**

**V. 6-7 A veteran of good reputation**

**I. Introduction**

Here in this section we have the qualifications for leadership in the local church but over the years depending upon your church back ground the names of these leaders has changed. Regardless of the title when you look at the Bible you have two designated groups called “***elders*** and ***deacons***”. When you compare the qualifications for bishops here with the list for elders in Titus 1:5-9 you will see that Paul uses those two words interchangeably as they are the same office. ***This office was not a position where natural gifting’s or worldly success granted a person the position instead it is a position that can only by recognized though observing Christian maturity visible in godly character***. Paul goes on to list recognizable qualifications of Christian character for a man to exhibit if he is to be considered for the position of elder or pastor.

**II. Vs. 1 Working for money, member or the Master?**

Vs. 1 According to Ephesians chapter 4 verses 11-12 ***the Lord Himself gave*** some to be missionaries, some that were gifted to speak forth the heart and mind of Christ, some that were called to evangelize and some that were called to care for and instruct believers. That’s an important detail as **the Lord did not call for an election from the general church**, instead He had established leadership appoint these believers after a sometime of observing them based upon the qualifications found in verses 2-7. The first thing Paul does is show **two important truths about this position of an “*elder*” within the local church**:

1. “*If a man desires the position of a bishop*”: The word “*desires*” means to “***stretch oneself out after***” and implies study and effort to equip oneself for leadership. Paul makes it plain that a person “*desiring*” the position is good for **it will require Christ like characteristics that are only attainable through the Holy Spirit empowerment and the servant’s death to self-centeredness**. ***The problem with some in church leadership is not to be found in the desire nor the position but rather that some desire the position without the empowerment of the Spirit and the death to self***!
2. “*He desires a good work*”: The word rendered “*good*” means “***valuable and virtuous***” and we learn that this is a ***calling*** not a ***career*** within the body of Christ. The Church must not fall into the trap of looking at its leadership as the world often does when appoints people like ***corporations*** or ***country clubs***. The leadership of the local Church is not the invention of man. The corporation and the country club run their organization either for **MONEY** or for **MEMBERS** but the Church does not **run its organization for the benefit of MONEY our MEMBERS but rather for the benefit of our MASTER**! The position is a “*good work*” not a good retirement plan, a good position, but a ***good WORK*** where a man answers this call by saying, “***Here I am send me***”. Elders are **not** to serve in a manner that supplants Christ as if He was no longer a part of the Church but as invisibly as possible to demonstrate that Christ is still present and available daily for each and every believer. People have forgotten the most important part of the great commission found in Matthew 28:18-20 which started with Jesus’ **authority**, followed by **His command** to go, make disciples, baptize and teach but ended with the most important truth for each believer ***that He will always be with His Church to the end of time***.

**III. Vs. 2-3 Personal traits**

Vs. 2-3 First Paul gives **TEN guidelines of what to look for in the character** of those who serve as overseers or Elders in the Church. Then he will follow that by **where it will be first seen**, then he concludes with **two other things to consider before appointing leadership:**

1. **Blameless**: The word has to do with the person’s character and means that they are to be “*above reproach*”. That doesn’t mean that they never do anything wrong as we wouldn’t ever find a person that would qualify. The word means that when they have done something wrong they handled it right, by being open, and accepting responsibility, seeking reconciliation and desiring to live righteously.
2. **Husband of one wife**: Literally this says a, “*one woman man*” and when Paul was writing this letter to Timothy he was in Ephesus a culture that was dominated by Greek thought which thought that a man ought to have three women in his life:

* *Mistress*: For conversation
* *Concubine*: For pleasure
* *Wife*: For children

Paul says, no you need to be a one woman man!

1. **Four personal character traits**: Here Paul focuses in on **four person character traits** that describe a person who is a leader.
2. ***Temperate***: The word means calm and describes a person that doesn’t easily lose their cool but it also describe a person who doesn’t quit or give up. What a great personal trait for leadership is a person who won’t give up and displays this by remaining calm.
3. ***Sober-minded***: Some render this word as meaning “*sensible*” as the root word means to exhibit self-control. He must possess a serious attitude about his work for the Lord, not lazy or hap hazard in their duty. That’s the idea here, living with the inward peace and discipline of life because we are living as “***loved***” people.
4. ***Of good behavior***: Here the word means to live orderly, not living with your life going this way or that with a bunch of unfinished projects. The best way to describe the meaning of this word is that the person in leadership needs to be a “***Doer***” as well as a “***Dreame***r” otherwise his dreams will remain just that!
5. ***Hospitable***: Finally they need to be people who are willing to open their home and their lives to strangers as well as friends. People who are desiring to open their lives to others. What a great quality as often it is our hospitality towards others that open hearts to the word.
6. **Able to teach**: Elder need to be able to rightly divide the word of God. He must be able to recognize false teaching as well so as to guard the sheep from wolves. To be a teacher requires first and foremost a person to desire above being in front of folks a heart that wants to learn.
7. **Not given to wine**: The word means that the elder is not to be getting drunk or becoming intoxicated. It doesn’t mean that they are not to drink wine it means that they are never to get drunk. I always think it is a wise practice when in public not to do so in case there is a weaker brother or sister who has struggled with alcohol abuse.
8. **Not violent**: The elder must not be an angry man, they must not be looking for an argument or looking to attack someone else who has a different view. I love being around the leadership that can have and does have differing views but doesn’t attack the other person with a different view and instead is willing to listen and discuss.
9. **Not greedy for money**: He must not be into leadership for what he can get out of it but instead what he can put into it! Far too often the church has made the mistake at looking only for those people of wealth and influence who put their interest above the cause of Christ.
10. **Gentile**: Someone who is willing to listen to people and be able to take criticism without reacting. Not a person who lords over others but instead rolls up their sleeves and gets to work.
11. **Not quarrelsome**: The word means not a stubborn person, a person who insists on their pint of view at all costs. Short tempers make for short ministries!
12. **Not covetous**: This isn’t only speaking about money as you can covet, popularity, possessions and positions as well. Not a person who wants what others have.

**IV. Vs. 4-5 An example at home**

Vs. 4-5 Now Paul describes where these qualities will be most on display, the home. The first place to see if this is the right person for leadership in the church is to see how well their home is running. How does he treat his wife, if he is married, how do his children behave and so on? Paul is not saying that the “*elders*” home must be free from defect only that when it has problems how the does the elder handle those difficulties? There ought to be a balance of love and discipline in the home as that is what we want to see in the church. The home ought not to be a place ruled by a dictator but rather a loving shepherd who leads by example.

**V. 6-7 A veteran of good reputation**

Vs. 6 Not a novice and word here means “*newly planted*” thus it refers to both to a new believer as well as a younger person, who lacks the experience and maturity to lead. It is not the successes that define a man it is the disappointments that reveals his true character. There are far too many “***personalities***” in the pulpit and it has caused people to take their eyes off of the Person and work of Jesus all for the ego of man! A mature man knows that he must die so that Christ may life through him, he knows that it is “***The Necessity***” that Christ get ALL the glory.

Vs. 7 Lastly, an elder must have a good reputation among those outside the church. Over the years I've had many occasions to meet people who were not believers but knew people who were a part of the fellowship and it’s always an interesting observation to see how they respond to the question, “*Do you know so and s*o?” If they say, “*Yes, they are so kind, such a hard worker, wonderful person to deal with etc…*” then I know they have a “*good reputation*” among those that are not believers. There have been occasions where I’ve asked do you know so and so and their facial expression and words tell me that folks don’t much care for their witness. Elders are “*over seers*” or to be “*looking over*” to see what the Lord is doing with His people, utilizing the opportunities that He brings forth this is why it is a “*good work*”. God has set His church in the center of society and given us the opportunity to impact our communities with morality, kindness and compassion. He has granted us the opportunities to speak His word into the lives of those around us.

**1 Timothy**

**B.) The Church and its members**

**3. 3:8-13 Proven deacons**

**3:8-13**

**“Time to kill the spider”**

**I. Introduction**

**II. Vs. 8 General characteristics of those that serve**

**III. Vs. 9-10 Threefold demonstration**

**IV. Vs. 11 Four characteristics of a deaconesses**

**Vs. 12-13 Two results of good service**

**I. Introduction**

The primary difference between Elders and deacons is that elders guide the ministry in prayer and teaching the word whereas the deacons guide the church in the physical functioning of the fellowship. Things such as administration, distribution and other general areas of need within the local church. Two weeks ago we looked at the structure of the church with the **characteristics** and **qualities** of an elder today we look at the same two aspects of a person who is a deacon or what makes a deacon “*deek*”. Some have noted that ***Biblical maturity happens when the believer takes of the bib and puts on the apron***. But even those that serve need to be reminded to grow. There once was a deacon who was found of praying, “*Lord God help me clean out the cob webs of my life*!” Week after week, year after year he prayed the same prayer until one fella couldn’t take it anymore and stood up and said, “**Lord don’t do it, don’t just clean out the cobwebs, KILL that darn spider**!” Saints I pray that as we study this area on church leadership we take the time not just to ask the Lord to clean out our cobwebs but to kill that darn spider!

**II. Vs. 8 General characteristics of those that serve**

Vs. 8 There are two striking differences in the church between elders and deacons:

1. ***The absence of gender with regards to deacons***: In chapter 3 verse 1 Paul had wrote Timothy that “*If a* ***MAN*** *desires the position of an elder,* ***HE*** *desires a good work*.” But right off the bat we notice the position of a deacon is not gender specific as Paul writes, “*Likewise deacons must be reverent…*” The ***likewise*** is not linked to the gender of the male elders but rather to the godly characteristics and qualities.
2. ***Their beginnings in Acts chapter 6***: There arose over a dispute over the distribution of goods to the needy Greek speaking the Hebrew speaking Jews. It seems that some of the Greek speaking Jews felt that the distribution was not equable between these two groups and that the Hebrew speaking Jews were getting more of the benevolence. At first the apostles tried to handle this but it became too time consuming as they began to neglect the prayer and teaching of the word to (as they put it) wait on tables. God used adversity to establish leadership.

In Acts chapter 6 verse 3 the apostles list **three qualifications all deacons MUST have**:

1. **Good reputation**: Their character must be in full view of the congregation. You can see why when you know of the conflict between the two sides. What interests me is that of the 7 men chosen all of them have Greek names suggesting that they were all Greek speaking Jews. Yet apparently they were so well respected that none of the Hebrew speaking Jews felt slighted by their promotion.
2. **Full of the Holy Spirit**: The reason these 7 men were accepted by both sides has everything to do with them being “*full of the Holy Spirit*”. You cannot behave in the flesh if you are “*full of the Holy Spirit*”, you cannot carry your prejudices forward if you are “*full of the Holy Spirit*”. No one saw these 7 as Greek or Hebrew speaking they saw them only as those who spoke and acted consistently in the heart and mind of Christ.
3. **Full of wisdom**: They were to display the gift of wisdom. The difference between wisdom and knowledge is:

* **Knowledge** is the *accumulation* of truth
* **Wisdom** is the *application* of truth

We are not to be just **collectors** of truth, we are instead to be **possessors** of truth putting it into practice every day.

**Four personal qualifications**:

1. ***Reverent***: Just like the quality in elders above they are to be “*doers*” as well as “*dreamers*”. A deacon by their very nature is a person who “***completes tasks***”. There are many folks today that have great vision but just never seem to compete a thing instead they just move from one dream to another and seem to be more excited about the dream then they are in seeing it get finished.
2. ***Not double-tongued***: The meaning of the word is saying one thing and doing another. A man who speaks the truth the first time, with no intent to deceive. Deacons are people who are believable, straight shooters and not into saying different things to different people just to gain favor.
3. ***Not given to much wine***: This is the same word that was applied to elders in verse 3 and doesn’t mean that they are never to drink intoxicating substances, but that they are “**Never to Get Drunk**”. I have met Christians over the years who have said to me that either publically or privately that they like to “***Take the edge off***” as they differentiate between fallen down drunk and tipsy. The Bible doesn’t draw that difference as Paul says in Ephesians 5: 18 that we are not to be “***drunk*** *with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit*”. ***If you are truly interested in “taking the edge off” I’d suggest you try the Holy Spirit instead of distilled spirits as intoxicating drink has never taken any edge off but sure has added a few***!
4. ***Not greedy for money***: They are not to be materialistic, a person whose values are influenced by opportunities for personal gain. It’s a tragic truth that you can see this even in God’s church where people miss use the funds that the Lord has laid upon the hearts of His people to give to go to work for His glory. Those that handle the finances need to be people who are “***not greedy for money***”.

**III. Vs. 9-10 Threefold demonstration**

Vs. 9-10 Three things that they have to have demonstrated among the body of Christ.

1. ***Holding the mystery of the faith***: A “*mystery*” in the bible is not something that is mysterious and past our understanding but rather something that was beyond our understanding but is now understandable because of the Spirit of God working through the Word of God. A deacon must be a person who can communicate the simple truths of the Bible simply! Elders are called upon to “*teach*” the Word of God whereas deacons are to “*hold*” the Word of God.
2. ***With a clear conscience***: This phrased means that they are to practice what they preach with regards to the truths of God’s word. Deacons may not be called on to teach the Word regularly but they are called to live out what they believe daily.
3. ***Let these also first be tested***: The word implies time as well as observation in which they have a measurable record of dependability, willingness and loyalty in serving Christ and His people. There is no shortage of biblical illustrations to observe: First a servant, then a ruler!

* Joseph served 13 years before he became 2nd ruler in the land of Egypt.
* Moses cared for sheep for 40 years before God called him.
* Joshua also spent better than 40 years before he led the nation of Israel after Moses. David spent years tending his father’s sheep then was hunted by Saul for another 15 years before he realized the throne.
* Paul was making tents for 14 years.

**IV. Vs. 11 Four characteristics of a deaconesses**

Vs. 11 Paul now moves to deaconesses as he addresses four personal qualification for women who serve. In verse 11 the word “***their***” is italicized which can mean by the use of the word that it is a reference to the wife of a deacon but I believe that because of the above passage in verse 2 that this verse isn’t about the deacon’s wife but rather about the women that serves. In Romans 16 we read of a deaconess named Phoebe who served at the port city near Corinth, so clearly the early church had women who served in this capacity. ***These women have four things that should characterize their lives before they serve***:

1. ***Reverent***: Just like their male counterpart women deacons must take be task completers. Vision is a wonderful thing but nothing will get completed if all a person has is vision.
2. ***Not Slanderers***: The word used is diablos and in Titus 2:3 in older translations is “*she-devils*”. Apparently while men in Ephesus were more prone to being double tongued (*saying one thing and doing another*) the women were more prone to gossip and slander. Scientific studies indicate that on average women have 7000 more words a day then do men and Paul is saying that *those that serve as deacons need to make sure that they use those words to build other up not tear others down*!
3. ***Temperate***: This word can refer specifically to a woman’s alcohol consumption but it is a general word that includes all habits. Women deacons ought to live in a way that doesn’t indulge the things of this life, be that eating, shopping, working etc.
4. ***Faithful in all things***: They are to be “*trustworthy*” and faithful individuals who when given something to do will see it to completion. Paul will conclude speaking on both men and women deacons in verse 13 that those that serve with these traits “*obtain a good standing and great boldness in the faith…*” In other words when a servant is faithful in the little things God will grant them greater opportunities.

**Vs. 12-13 Two results of good service**

Vs. 12-13 Paul closes with a general word of instruction to both male and female deacons.

1. The first admonishment is clearly addressed to the male, married deacon and like the elder above they are to be a “one woman man” this of course in not insisting that they be married or that they have never divorced as Paul had both of those situations. Rather this is a statement that says that they are to have eyes for only their wife!
2. Furthermore they are to manage their homes and their children well. It doesn’t mean that they never have any problems only that they know how to handle those problems when they arise. I have found that you can best view how a person is going to lead others by examining how they live their home life.

Paul concludes with **two results when the service of a deacon is done the right way**:

1. **Obtain a good standing**: First it will cause a sense of appreciation on the part of those they serve. Those they serve will appreciate their service and often tell them what it means to them or take them out to lunch. These 80 or so folks are not paid here on earth for their service their reward is laid up in heaven but it is nice for them to hear a thank you from time to time to encourage them.
2. **Great boldness in the faith**: Paul says that Christ will give you even more boldness and greater desire to share His love with others. Isn’t that great that service produces greater opportunities? Saint’s the healthiest thing you can do for your spiritual life and wellbeing is get involved and serve others. If you want to experience more joy, more peace and boldness then get involved.

**1 Timothy**

**B.) The Church and its members**

**5. 3:14-16 Proper conduct at Church**

**3:14-15**

**“A case of spiritual amnesia”**

**I. Introduction**

**II. Vs. 14 Important words**

**III. Vs. 15 Three phrases that describe the Church**

**I. Introduction**

An Oxford atheist professor in a debate said, “*It doesn’t really matter whether a person has a belief system that is biblical or godly. The important thing is that they believe in something*.” To which the believer he was debating replied, “*Imagine, Professor, that you’re in downtown Los Angeles and its 2 AM and your car breaks down. You get out and hear footsteps, you turn to see 10 big young men walking towards you. Would it make a difference if you knew that they had just come from a Bible study?*” This last Sunday “***60 Minutes***” aired the story of Nicholas Winton, a 104 year old man and former London stock broker, who at the age of 29 in 1938 began a mission to save Jewish Children from death in Prague Czechoslovakia. Over a few months he was able to get 669 children out of certain death back to England just before Hitler invaded. One of the saved children wrote a book on his act calling it, “***The Power of Good***”. Those grown children gave him a ring with an engraved inscription from the Talmud that says, “*Save one life, save the worl*d.” Christian philosopher Francis Schaeffer once said, “*The greatest creativity ever given is the ability of men, by their choices, to change the course of history*.” Saint’s that is why God in His wisdom has given His Church His creativity to engage in “*The Power to do Good*” to “*Save one life*” and by doing that we have the power to change the world!

**II. Vs. 14 Important words**

Vs. 14 Ephesus was the 2nd largest city in the Roman Empire, a center of commerce, culture and beauty. It boasted in its most prominent feature, “*The Temple of Diana*” which was ***dedicated to the worship of sex***. I suppose that the Ephesus of America would be Hollywood or Las Vegas. Paul had sent Timothy to this church to keep them on tract so that they would not lose focus of what their mission was. To date in this letter Paul has wrote to Timothy about making sure that he continue to teach the importance of Jesus and not allow others to teach things that would get them off tract. Timothy was given careful instructions on prayer, praise and the proclamation of the word of God. He was given practical guidelines on identifying the characteristics of leaders who the Holy Spirit is raising up.

***But here the letter takes a turn and clearly Paul thought that what he was about to write to Timothy was of upmost importance as he couldn’t risk that this information wait upon his hopeful arrival, he needed to make sure that Timothy and the church he pastor had this information immediately***! What could be so important for the Church to know that it couldn’t wait? **They needed to know who they are**! One of the difficulties facing the church in Ephesus apparently is the same one facing the modern evangelical Church in America “*A Loss of Identity*” or simply ***spiritual amnesia*** where **we have forgotten who we are in Christ**. So Paul lists **three truths with regards to who the church**.

**III. Vs. 15 Three phrases that describe the Church**

Vs. 15 Paul uses **three very descriptive phrases in telling us what the Church is**:

1. ***The house of God***: The use of this phrase is deliberate on Paul’s part as he could have said “*Tabernacle*” or “*Temple*” but he doesn’t instead he calls the church the “*House of God*”. The use of this phrase causes the reader to think of family, intimacy and warmth. We have become so accustomed to think of the Church as a building instead of a family. This isn’t something new as Solomon fought this same concept on the day he dedicated the temple he prayed in 1 Kings 8:27 “*The heaven and heavens of heaven cannot contain you; how much less this house that we have built*.” If the “*House of God*” is not the Church building then what is? Well according to Hebrews 3:6 we Christians are the dwelling place of God….Saint’s ***God doesn’t in habit cold buildings in inhabits His people***. That’s why Jesus said where ever there are two or three gathered together in My name their I AM in their midst. If that doesn’t excite you then you probably ought to check your pulse. The view of the Church as the house of God not only is the view of a family but it also reveals to our heart that God is a loving Father who lives with us as our close friend.
2. ***The Church of the Living God***: In the Greek this word “*Church*” was used to describe political assemblies where business was transacted by qualified citizens. The word is used 100 times in the New Testament but always to identify the local church as “*called out one*”. “***Called out ones***” describes us being called out of our former life but that isn’t all we are as **Paul puts that word together with what we are called into, “*the living God*”**. He wrote this to Timothy in close proximity to the famed temple to Diana where they worship a multi breasted meteorite that had fallen from the sky as an idol. They built this elaborate building that was one of the ancient wonders of the world around a weird looking rock and worshipped it. *Now before we look down on the ancient world for their worship of an odd shaped meteorite that came from the heavens there are folks today that worship people they call Rock Stars and some of them are pretty weird looking as well.* In contrast to the lifeless idols Paul says the Church is intimately connected to the LIVING GOD apart from which the world would not function as everything and everyone draws its life and vitality from what He has created. When Paul had come into Athens, *that great intellectual city of the Greeks*, he noticed idols to everything imaginable in fact he even saw an idol with the inscription “*To the Unknown God*”. He took that opportunity to make known the God they declared they didn’t know and even quoted a Greek poet who said of God, “*In Him we live and move and have our being*.” Every living creature draws its breath by the grace of God; saint’s that’s the God we know and are a part of relationally. God has committed Himself to us and is so confident in His finished work in us that He has only us to use to reach those who as of yet have no relationship with Him. Every Church that gathers in His name and every Christian has at their disposal a power that is completely self-sustaining and is waiting to be released upon the hearts of humanity to transform lives. Oh how we the church have forgotten our resources and free access to the Holy Spirit through prayer. *The Church of the Living God is anything but boring and dull its combustible waiting to power up that which God in His wisdom has released us to empower*. The book of Acts is proof of its power that cannot be harnessed to accomplished what we want be is can be led by the Spirit to accomplish what He wants.
3. ***The pillar and ground of truth***: These are ***architectural terms*** that remind us of our foundation as well as structure. We are built upon the Rock of truth Jesus Christ of which Jesus said nothing could ever dislodge us from. ***The problem of lack of effectiveness within the church today is that we have forgotten or never knew just who we are in Christ***. We know this because *we try to subdue the world with the weapons of the world:* ***Fame, money, technology and public relations***. But the Bible tells us in 2 Corinthians 10:4 that “*The weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God*….” Paul uses two dramatic words to describe us “***Pillar of truth***” and “***Ground of truth***”. Both those words describe the primary way in which we are to function in this fallen world, TRUTH.
4. ***Pillar of truth***: Pillars in the ancient world were several feet thick and used to support structures that were built upon them. But pillars were also used in ancient or biblical times to fasten public edicts upon where they would be in full view of all. The church **isn’t** the foundation of truth but it has been placed upon that Truth it is the pillar because it holds up the truth for all to see. The Church is like a pharmacy in that we dispense that which enables folks that are broken to live life as they were intended too whole and healthy, full of life and joy! Go back in every generation and examine the world’s great learning institutions observe the folks who have studied at those universities and examine their lives and you will see that even with those degrees ***they still have the same problems they always have prior to their education***. Ah but go back and study those same generations of folks who have sat at the feat of Jesus, walked with Him throughout their lives and see that they live victoriously not bound by that which defeats the rest of society. It is as the “***Pillar of truth***” that we boldly proclaim to a lost world that there is an alternative to the confusion they are living.
5. ***Ground of truth***: Not only are we to proclaim and live out that which we can live the rest of life on we are to proclaim the foundation which is Jesus. There is a sense that the church in American is stuck in a dichotomy: ***In one sense we are the most educated church the world has ever seen but at the same time it is the most biblically illiterate Church the world has ever seen***. The reason for this is that the Church only intellectually knows but doesn’t believe what it knows. Some of the reason for this is that it isn’t being taught as people are being given truth but they don’t know how it connects to the Word of God. People are also given information without any real conviction for application and it is application that through the Holy Spirit will lead to personal transformation!

That is why Paul wanted Timothy to remind these Ephesian believers who they were in Christ so that they would see their ***mission as believers with changed lives taking the message of Christ into the world***. ***Where ever you have God’s people, you have the Church and whatever those Christians are doing is the work of the Church***. ***Saints we have been sent into the world to change the course of history, to make a difference in one life at a time starting with our own.*** That will be the focus of Paul next talk with us the “*Mystery of godliness*” the inner working of personal change!

**1 Timothy**

**B.) The Church and its members**

**5. 3:14-16 Proper conduct at Church**

**3:16**

**“Living whole in a fractured world”**

**I. Introduction**

**II. Vs. 16a The truth about Humpty Dumpty**

**III. Vs. 16b Three secret truths**

**I. Introduction**

Last week we focused our attention upon Paul’s threefold description of the church:

* ***House of God***: We are the family of God
* ***Church of the living God***: We are called out of the world and called into living God
* ***Pillar and ground of truth***: We are in the business by our lives and words of tearing down the illusions that people are being deceived by.

In that description we learned the amazing truths of who we are in Christ and the possibilities that we now have to change the course of history one soul at a time. There is one sole reason why this is a reality,…..are you ready for this? ***GOD DWELLS AMONG HIS PEOPLE***! His church is made of ordinary people like you and me as His channels to release the power and life among this world. Furthermore God is so confident of this that He has no other plan. This morning our focus is upon one single verse that most believe was an early church hymn that was sung as a confession of faith. This one verse is “***THE TRUTH***” that everything else is built upon it is the pillar and ground that Paul spoke about in verse 15. With Jesus we can forget the manuals on how to do things better because we have Emmanuel who has transformed us.

**II. Vs. 16a The truth about Humpty Dumpty**

Paul frames this with the words, “*And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness*:” When Paul describes this as a great “*mystery*” he doesn’t mean that what he is about to say is impossible to figure out instead he means that what he is about to reveal is THE significant truth and that there is nothing more important than this. The fact that this truth was a sung by believers causes us to realize that to those who are not believers in Christ this still is a secret. We need only to look at our own lives to see what this revealed secret has done, a sort of before and after of our life experience.

* **Before**: We were plague with the same “*death, disease, despair and disillusionment*” that every other human experienced. We tried to fill the holes of our life with any and everything (*good, bad or indifferent*) that would give us a moments rest from the awfulness of the life we experienced. But all we saw is a grave yard of ideas and ideals, people’s attempts to escape the inevitable. Hegel the German philosopher described this groping as, “*History teaching us that history teaches us nothing*.” The reason for this is that we are missing pieces of truth about ourselves because we are missing truths about God and our relationship to Him.
* **After**: When we have come to faith in Christ and discovered the mystery Paul describes, victory becomes our way of life. We are more than mere survivors, we are conquerors in Christ. We aren’t numbing our life down to get by, we are stimulated by living a new life. We are no longer satisfied by temporary happiness of escaping things, we are filled with endless joy and peace despite our present circumstance. Life has meaning and purpose and our passion becomes taking as many with us as we can.

Paul also tells what realm this truth is in when he calls it the “mystery of godliness” the actual Greek word does not contain the word for “God” in it and the closest English translation would be “*wholeness*” William Barclay defined the word by saying that godliness is, “*Living in such a way that you are aware of what life requires of you*.” In the 70’s we used to say that we need to “*Get our lives together*” which of course infers that we weren’t together and instead were fractured. Paul is about to reveal **THE SECRET of living whole in a fractured world**. The simplest explanation to our fractured existence it that we are like Old ***Humpty Dumpty*** who had a “*Great* ***FALL***”. And like Humpty all the king’s horses and all the king’s men couldn’t put Humpty back together again. But what Paul declares here is that what the world’s kings couldn’t do the KING of KING did not by merely putting us back together, He created us a NEW!

**III. Vs. 16b Three secret truths**

Vs. 16b The secret to wholeness is not a philosophy, the secret is a Person! And not just any person but ***God the Son who is revealed in three pairs of contrasting truth that are both visible and invisible***.

1. **God was manifested in the flesh, justified in the spirit**: What this is saying to us is that Jesus appeared as a man normal in appearance, He entered life as a man as we did. He understood life in this fallen world as we do, hard work, pain, and loss of a loved one, poverty, rejection and suffering were all the experiences that He experienced. Jesus ate and slept experienced the same bodily functions as we do. Paul wants us to know that Jesus being “**THE SECRET**” is to be understood in the application of Him to every situation and limitation that we have. There is no new situation that can come up that some little words will pop up and say, “***Sorry* *this application of Jesus will not work in making your life whole***”. Even though Jesus lived life looking like an ordinary man in a world full of corruption He didn’t affect Him the way it does us, He was never not whole, He always functioned as “*perfect* *man*”. When John looked back upon his experiences with the Jesus in this world some 70 years later he wrote in John 1:14 that, “*The Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth*.” Jesus had a daily beauty in life through every situation that made the rest of humanity look ugly by comparison. His grace, compassion, love, and mercy always on display for everyone. That is what Paul means by the phrase “*justified in the spirit*” as there was a continual witness the reality that in every situation and circumstance that Jesus faced He always acted “***right***”. The **Father testified to this in three separate occasions**:

* Matthew 3:17: At the **beginning** of Jesus’ ministry at His baptism
* Matthew 17:5: At the **mid-point** of His ministry as he was transfigured
* John 12:28: Finally at the **end** of His ministry just before his crucifixion

Jesus always acted in words and deeds as a person perfectly secure in His Father’s love. Jesus passed this acceptance onto us as we are told by Paul in Ephesians 1:6 that we are “*accepted in the Beloved*”! Jesus earned this designation because He always did right we have inherited this designation by trusting in Jesus work as God the Father sees us in His Son. When the world is rattling our life and we are being persuaded to see ourselves in the eyes of the world Jesus breaks through and reminds us that we belong to Him and are loved in a way that nothing can ever separate us from His love.

1. **Seen by angels, preached among the Gentiles**: These are invisible “*seen by angels*” and visible truths “*preached among the Gentiles*”. The word “seen” in the Greek is where we get our English word “*eyeball*”, which tells us that the angels studied Him, He was under their constant observation. They were at His birth, completely amazed at His incarnation having seen Him glorified in heaven. They were there to strengthen Him at the beginning of his ministry during those 40 days and nights of temptation in the wilderness. They were with Him in the garden of Gethsemane watching as He dropped great drops of blood. They stood watch over His tomb and stood beside His disciples as He ascended into glory. These angels knew His majesty as they worshipped Him, for His power and greatness. But there is one thing they never knew personally: ***The greatness of His forgiving love.*** As our sin was placed upon Him who knew no sin they understood something that they had never seen prior the height, depth, breath and length of God’s redeeming love! That is why it is left up too forgiven mankind who alone has experienced the love of God to proclaim Jesus. We of all of God’s creation understand what our Creator has done out of love to those who rejected Him. What an amazing privilege it is to tell folks as lost as I was that they can experience His unending love. “*There is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved*”, Save Jesus!
2. **Believed on in the world, received up in glory**: Not only is applying Jesus to our lives guaranteed to transform us but applying Him will work any time and any place in the world. People have testified from all walks of life, from every geographical location, from every age and from every state of moral decay of the change that has occurred in their life simply because they have trusted in Him. No matter how bad our personal fall and failure, how badly broken and foolish our decisions have been with Jesus there is a 100% certainty of change. That is the power only Jesus has to change lives when we in the world believe upon Him, it’s a miracle that has been happening for thousands of years and those of us who have received Him are a part of that miracle. When Jesus was here on earth only those who could speak with Him or came near Him could be transformed. If He was in Jerusalem and you were somewhere else and needed Him to change your life you were out of luck. But His Ascension means that He is perfectly able to transform your life everywhere at any time with everyone. We now live life presently in His power that is constantly available to us! ***Christianity is not a way of doing special things. It is a special way of doing everything.*** It’s an everyday, moment by moment life He offers us as Ruth Graham placed over her kitchen “*Divine service performed here three times daily*”.

That’s what Christianity is, ***Jesus is the secret of life***. He is how we live whole in a fractured world! Christianity is not a religion, religion is man’s quest groping, fumbling is search for something that can get through the day. Christianity is about a living person who has made victorious living available for all who will trust Him, He is the great mystery of life that will no longer be a mystery if you simple trust Him.

**1 Timothy**

**C.) The Church and its minister**

**1. 4:1-5 Examples of unfaithful ministers**

**4:1-5**

**“Lies that effect lives”**

**I. Introduction**

**II. Vs. 1a The world’s fastest…lie**

**III. Vs. 1b Wrong is right?**

**IV. Vs. 2 Do as I say**

**V. Vs 3-5 Did God really say?**

**I. Introduction**

In **chapter 1** Paul wrote to Timothy about ***the Church and its message***, in **chapter 2-3** Paul wrote about ***the church and its members*** but here in **chapter 4** Paul writes about ***the church and its ministry***. And in so doing Paul will encourage Timothy three ways:

1. Vs. 1-6 Be a good minister
2. Vs. 7-11 Be a godly minister
3. Vs. 12-16 Be a growing minister

It’s never a pleasant to talk about false teaching but it is all through the New Testament. In fact Paul had warned the Ephesian elders in Acts 20:28-31 that false teachers would invade the church and based upon this verse they had arrived. Saints, satan first tried to beat the church but the blood of the saints only seemed to birth more believers. So he changed strategies and decided to join the church and seduce it into ***indifference*** and ***indulgence***. I believe it is harder to be a Christian today as we don’t have to stand the test of persecution like the early church. But listen up dear ones “*doctrines of demons*” don’t just stop at the door of the church, there are plenty of false teacher behind pulpits today. One televangelist received a letter from a man diagnosed with cancer and replied that they just needed to send in “*seed faith money*” and he guaranteed healing, to which the man and his wife did. The problem was when the evangelist followed up by another request for more money with a healing guarantee that arrived six month after the man had died.

**II. Vs. 1a The world’s fastest…lie**

Vs. 1 Paul starts off this next section with a dramatic phrase, “*Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving head to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons.*” While I personally believe that the Lord’s return can come at any moment I don’t believe that this phrase is meant to suggest a prophetic time table as the words mean a, “*Relative time from the prediction, now coming true (a present danger).*” Paul says that during these seasons “*some will depart from the faith*” and John describes this in his letter of 1 John 2:19 saying, “*They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us; but they went out that they might be made manifest, that none of them were of us*.” **Any and every teaching that seeks to lesson our need for and dependence upon the person and work of Jesus is a false teaching and a departure**. But just how can you determine the false teachers from the truth? **Paul gives four characteristics of false teachers both then as well as now.**

1. Vs.1a **They are empowered by satan**: This is the only place in all of Paul’s letters where demons are specially mentioned. Paul says the origins of these false teachings are “*deceiving spirits*” and as such we learn that false teaching though communicated through men does not originate from men. Satan is an imitator not a creator and he seeks to imitate authority in teaching in an attempt to lead people astray. False teaching doesn’t arrive at the door step of our hearts and pleasantly say, “***Hello, I’m a deceiving spirit and what I want to share with you today is a lie that I’d like you to believe***!” The first test of any teaching is what it says about the person and work of Jesus. Any teaching that seeks to minimize or need and dependence upon Jesus is a false teaching. Paul warned these very believers that false teachers would come from within the church not from without only.

**III. Vs. 1b Wrong is right?**

1. Vs.1b **They lead people astray**: The goal of satan in false teaching is to seduce people and get them to depart from the truth. The goal is not to get people in the church to become more dependent upon Jesus but rather to leave that and get people more dependent upon their group. Paul’s not talking about a person “***losing***” their faith, he is speaking about a person “***leaving***” their faith! God will not force a person who intellectually agreed with the person and work of Christ to remain if they choose to leave, He will let them. Jesus’ interest is in winning folks by His love and truth to set them free from bondage. But false teachers and cults do the opposite they seek to steal believers from the truth and freedom so they can enslave them to their group. Apparently demons are ***theology majors*** as they have elaborate systems to their false teaching. There is an old saying that says that: “*A lie travels by express, while the truth goes on foot*” And unfortunately far too many people are in a hurry when it comes to truth and don’t take the time to research where the lies they are believing in are taking them!

**IV. Vs. 2 Do as I say**

Vs. 2 ***Paul reveals for us the way in which these lies enter into humanity as people become victims as well as vessels of demonic propaganda***.

1. Vs. 2 **They are hypocrites**: False teachers preach one thing but practice another, generally they lack integrity and honesty. They compartmentalize their lives and branded their conscious so they no longer feel conviction. Every time a person affirms something as truth with our lips but deny it with our actions we deaden our consciences a little more. A false teacher is not just wrong in what they say but they are wrong in how they live! Believing behaving always go together. Paul gives two ways that this takes place:
2. ***Speaking lies in hypocrisy***: The word “*hypocrisy*” carries the idea of something lofty or alluring. To be a “*good lie*” there has to be something that will make its appeal to something we want. Wrinkle cream must promise to get rid of those wrinkles and make a skin look like it did as a baby. So with false teaching there is a promise of something that we want but there is also a promise that the only way you can get the desired result is through their exclusive product..
3. ***Having their own conscience seared with a hot iron***: To become a **vessel** of false hood as well as a **victim** a person has to get to the place where they have seared their own conscience and morality to where their conscience offers up no moral restraint before or after their behavior. This will lead to a person’s actions and words completely lacking compassion or mercy. They become cruel in their pursuit and proclamation of the lie. At first folks believe the lie, then they become a part of the lie and in time they no longer believe the lie but still push the lie.

**V. Vs 3-5 Did God really say?**

Vs. 3-5 Not only does false teaching lead to doctrines of demons it also presents legalism that parades its self as piety. People who have a conflict between what they know is right and their conduct often choose to reject the truth and embrace a lie so they can continue to practice sin! People who have a conflict between what they know is right and their conduct often choose to reject the truth and embrace a lie so they can continue to practice sin!

1. Vs. 3-5 **They deny God’s word**: The false teachers in Ephesus combined Jewish legalism with Eastern **Asceticism** which is a lifestyle characterized by abstinence from worldly pleasures in pursuit spiritual goals. They taught that remaining unmarried was more spiritual then being married but that isn’t what God said in Genesis 2:18. We need to be concerned with groups that want to change God’s institution of marriage. Furthermore they wanted to dictate diets as it controlled their followers. Jesus stated all food clean in Mark 7:14-23 and He taught that lesson to Peter in Acts 10. **Saint’s there is a big difference between self-denial and denying self**.

* **Denying self**: Is what Jesus said in Luke 9:23 “*If anyone will come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me*.” You aren’t saying, “*I’m giving up this or that to reveal my dedication to God*!”
* **Self-denial**: Is an attempt to earn favor from God apart from simply trusting Him, it’s a way in which we can say by our actions, “*You owe me one God*!”

Paul’s argument is that God created these foods, He created marriage, and these are His ideas. Instead of thinking that God owes us one by not enjoying the blessings, we should be thankful and see the things that He has provided as a gift! Food isn’t wrong it’s a blessing a gift! Marriage that He has ordained isn’t wrong it’s a gift! The key is to be found in a heart that is truly thankful because when we are thankful we recognize that everything we enjoy and have is a gift from a gracious God. ***Think of it this way***: If you gave someone a gift to someone would you want them to open it and enjoy it? Or would you rather them keep it in the box and come to you later and say, “*Hey, that gift you gave me I’ve never opened it, never enjoyed it and I did that so that you could owe me a favor later on*.”

We need to take everything as a gift, our life, breath, family, friends, clothing, food and even our adverse circumstance and trails, all are a blessing and a gift from God! You and I have been so blessed and with every breath we breathe we ought to be thanking Him for the gift of life!

**1 Timothy**

**C.) The Church and its minister**

**2. 4:6-10 Exhortations to faithful ministers**

**4:6-10**

**“Training for life”**

**I. Introduction**

**II. Vs. 6a Stay the course**

**III. Vs. 6b-10 Five good habits**

**I. Introduction**

I started pastoring at 29 and pioneered my first church at 30, man what was I thinking or better yet what were those who attended that church thinking….as a matter of fact *what were you thinking*? All alone in that city with my wife and two little ones starting a church without any experience, there were so many times I just didn’t have answers for the things I was experiencing. I bet that was Timothy’s experience when he was left in Ephesus, “*Man I wish Paul was here right now I sure could use his advice*.” Friends…..

* ***The trouble with youth is that experience comes with time of which you have just purchased the watch***.
* ***The trouble with maturity is that you have experience and time but you can’t remember where you put the watch***!

That’s why I love Paul’s letters to young pastors as Timothy has the energy and Paul the experience which comes out on every page of these letters. As a young pastor I poured over these letters to gain insight and as a mature pastor I still love them if for no other reason than to find my watch! A pastor must teach about three things that are like road signs:

* **Where we are going:** *Missoula 45 miles*
* **How we are to get there:** *Highway 93 speed limit 65*
* **What to watch out for:** *Road construction ahead double fines*

Paul has covered the “*What to watch out for*” sign last week and this week he covers “*How we are going to get there*”. He will do this by giving us athletic illustrations that are 5 “***good habits***” that ensure our successful arrival at our destination.

**II. Vs. 6a Stay the course**

Vs. 6a The general tone of this section of the letter is that of a warning and it suggests that Paul knew Timothy extremely well as he knew that such a warning would not have been misconstrued as lack of confidence. ***With all of this adversity that Timothy was facing the warning does not take on the tone of looking OUT for situations and circumstances, instead Paul’s warnings are aimed INWARD to deal with his own reaction to those situations and circumstances***.

Saints, maturity **doesn’t give you the advantage** in having experienced everything life can throw at you, **maturity gives you the advantage of knowing how YOU are going to react to the things you experience**! First thing Paul warns Timothy amounts to, “**STAY THE COURSE**”! Adversities greatest advantage is confusion as it causes us to question the road we are on and specifically if it is the right one. Paul reminds Timothy that the road he is on is directed by Jesus and thus it is assured that in His timing it will reach the destination! Paul says that in “*staying the course*” he will be a good minister. The word “*minster*” is **not** referring to a “*position*” but instead it is referring to an activity, “***serving***”! “*Tim*”, Paul say’s “*If you stay on course you will be good at what you do, serving*!” That’s always something that you need to evaluate about yourself: “*Is my failure because of bad technique or do I only need to keep practicing what I’m doing*?” ***That’s a very good question to ask yourself when things aren’t going well because you can practice bad habits for the rest of your life and no matter how much you do they will never turn into good habits***!

**III. Vs. 6b-10 Five good habits**

Paul goes on to list five “***good habits***” that Timothy only needed to keep practicing:

1. **Vs. 6b Watch what you eat**: Paul says to Timothy, “*nourished in the words of faith and of good doctrine*”. This dietary advice is not dealing with the physical life but with the spiritual life to which Paul is saying in essence “*garbage in, garbage out*.” One of the favorite tricks on junk food on the packaging is that it is, “***Fortified with 15 essential vitamins***”. But I have yet to hear a professional athlete or an Olympian say that they owe all their success to consuming large quantities of “***Hostess Ding Dongs and Twinkies***” that were “*Fortified with 15 essential vitamins*”. What are you putting into your mind and your spiritual life? What are you feeding on spiritually daily? Not everything that you feed upon is junk food, something’s just have ZERO nutrients or far less then healthy things like “*the word of faith and good doctrine*”. Not only was Timothy to be “*nourished*” in the words of faith and good doctrine he was to “*carefully follow*” what he learned. There is a twofold formula to becoming a good servant “***feed***” upon truth and then “***follow***” truth! **The Bible isn’t only the “*greatest story ever told*” it is the “*greatest truth ever lived*”**! This goes far beyond knowing that the four gospel are not “*John, Paul, George and Ringo*” or that an “*epistle*” is not the wife of an “*apostle*”.
2. **Vs. 7a Keep focused**: Paul says, “*Reject profane and old wives’ fables*”. This habit is stated in the negative and is **a warning against intellectual distractions**. There were a lot of godless and stupid myths in the first century church that Paul warns Timothy will be an endless source of distraction. The word for “*godless*” is the word that is rendered elsewhere as “*common*” which suggests that they were very popular with the society. Second they were not only popular but **goofy**, spread around by folks who had too much time on their hands. These fables have no basis in reality, they are just pure nonsense yet many believers got caught up in the distraction. Some of these fables are found in so called Christian groups that claim they have another gospel and speak about ancient cultures that never existed. Others are popular because of the media and countless movies about space aliens in “*galaxies far, far away*”. Friends, you don’t have to taste the poison to be a good exterminator!
3. **Vs. 7b-8 Be balanced**: “*Exercise yourself towards godliness*”. It is clear reading Paul’s letters that he had a good deal of interest in sporting events as he mentions them quite frequently. The word rendered “godliness” means “*wholeness* or *balanced*” and these verses suggested that we ought to keep our spiritual life fed and our physical life strong in order to be effective. This speaks about our training regimen where the focus is on being a servant that has developed spirit, soul and body to maximize their usefulness for God’s service. The balance comes in where we want to make sure we train the areas that most effect our service which would first be exercising our spiritual lives, then making sure that our physical bodies can keep up.
4. **Vs. 9 Pay attention**: Five times in this letter Paul writes, “*This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance*” and it is his way of saying, “*This is very important*!” Not only does this refer to what Paul has just said about balance it also speaks to a general application of being aware in life, a heightened awareness, a game face in life. We should not take ourselves too seriously but we must take what and who we are called to extremely serious. It’s amazing the difference we experience when we are prepared for life as we have far more confidence through the difficult situations and circumstances. Saint’s there is a great need today for Christians to wake up and start taking each day a bit more serious.
5. **Vs. 10 Victory is ours**: “*We trust in the Living God*”, Paul says. As important as the four truths are above; “*Good Habits*” wouldn’t guarantee success apart from this fifth truth. **This habit has nothing to do with a practice and everything to do with where we are putting our trust, the Living God**. The sad truth is we can look at these four “*good habits*” and begin to trust in our “*good habits*” instead of the living God! We can and should “*both labor and suffer reproach*” but if our confidence is in those things we will not attain victory. The great purpose of this life is the shaping of our character by truth and the Holy Spirit. Godly character is far more important than athletic accomplishments and trophies. Spiritual exercise is not easy and will require both labor and suffering reproach, (verse 10). We can be assured this victory because “***Positionally Jesus is the Savior of all men but Practically He is the Savior of those who trust in Him***.”

The Greek culture put a huge emphasis on physical physique but Paul says that such emphasis was short lived at best. One study discovered that for every hour spent in the gym it may increase your life up to an hour. But we know that this isn’t endless as even fitness guru Jack LaLanne died in 2011 at the age of 96. There is a need for bodily exercise but no amount in the Gym will land you in eternity. Ah but spend the time and effort in ***God’s Gym*** of the word of God and you will be fit for this life and the life to come, and you won’t got sweaty and smelly.

* If you have to choose between “***working out***” and “***worshipping out***” you would be better off choosing **worshipping**!
* If you have to decide between “***body building***” or “***bible study***” choose **bible study**!

Sure you can do deep knee bends to increase the strength in your legs but you would be far better off bending your knees in prayer and building up your faith. Alan Redpath said, *Any battle -- for victory, power, or deliverance from ourselves or from sin -- which is not based constantly upon the gazing and the beholding of the Lord Jesus, with the heart and the life lifted up to him, is doomed to failure.*

**1 Timothy**

**C.) The Church and its minister**

**3. 4:11-16 Exercises for ministers to stay fit**

**4:11-16**

**“Correcting yourself to correct others”**

**I. Introduction**

**II. Vs. 11-12 Let and Set**

**III. Vs. 13-16 The work of the Word**

**I. Introduction**

Have you ever wondered what would happen to the church if everyone was just like you? This could be a ***glorious* responsibility** or a ***grave* possibility** depending upon your growth and maturity in Christ but one thing is for certain; it wouldn’t take long to determine where you really were as you witnessed your life in others. It was 35 years ago today, Donna and I were on our honeymoon and the very first day we walked out of the Holiday Inn and over to the Barnyard Shopping Center and into D’Lanor Jewelers where I met my future boss Ron Hinges. I had made our wedding set while employed at a store in Modesto and was quite proud of my accomplishments. But when compared to all the handmade items in the store I was dumbfounded. Ron came over to talk to us and soon discovered that I was working as a goldsmith, he took a look at our rings and was polite but I knew they were nowhere close to the masterpieces in his cases. He asked, “*How long Dale have you been working as a goldsmith*?” Facing those cases with all those beautiful items on display I timidly bleated out, “*One year*”. His response shocked me as he said, “*That’s great Dale you will only have to unlearn one year of bad habits, when you come to work for me*.” And with that backhanded job offer I entered a great adventure learning from a master. I look at these pastoral letters of Paul to Timothy and Titus in much the same way as **Timothy was learning ministry at the feet of a master**.

**II. Vs. 11-12 Let and Set**

Vs. 11 By the time Timothy was placed as the pastor of Ephesus the church was pretty well established with seasoned elders and leaders. It was some of those leaders who according to the first chapter verses 3-4 were engaged in false teaching that Timothy was called to correct. To make matters worse these were some of the same men who Paul had also trained but were a good deal older and more experienced then he was. That’s what this section is all about, “***How to stay on the right path while correcting those who are going the wrong way***.” Paul starts out in verse 11 saying, “*These things command and teach*” but in verses 12-16 you will read that every sentence is an exhortation not to others but to Timothy. The word “command” is better rendered “*proclaim*” or “*announce*” and carries the idea of calling ones attention to something. That reveals a very important truth: “***The best way to correct others is by making sure you are correct****!*” Charles Spurgeon warned, “*Beware of being like some, who go about with theological revolvers in their ecclesiastical trousers*.” The Bible isn’t to be used like a flame thrower to burn the truth into people instead it must be modeled and lived out before people!

Vs. 12 Paul gives **6 things to check in your own life before you attempt to check someone else’s life, the first two are found in verse 12**. In some versions the first two are distinguished by two words with only one letter difference; “***LET*** *no one despise your youth*” and “*but* ***SET*** *an example to the believers*..”

1. **NEGITIVE**: “***LET*** *no one despise your youth*”: This doesn’t mean that Timothy was to go around and take issue with anyone that took issue with his age, instead it meant that Timothy should be making sure that he came across well to people especially those that were older and more experienced then he was. There was this young King of Syria named Ben-Hadad who gathered up his armies against the Ahab King of Israel saying “*Your silver and your gold are mine; your loveliest wives and children are mine*.” And Ahab said “*Just as you say…all that I have are yours*.” But Ben-Hadad shot back “*That’s not enough, my armies shall raid all the houses of whatever is pleasant to their eyes in all of Israel*.” They went back and forth until Ben-Hadad said he was not going to not leave any dirt in Samaria to which Ahab said, “*Let not the one who puts on his armor on boast like the one who takes it off*!” Often what folks reject isn’t the truth we speak of but the way we presented the truth. We must make sure that we check our ego’s at the door!
2. **POSITIVE**: “*but* ***SET*** *an example to the believers* ***in word****,* ***in conduct****, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity.*” Having first told Timothy **what not to do** Paul can tell him **what to do** **in two ways these ought to be demonstrated**:
3. **What you say**: “*In Word*”
4. **What you do**: “*In conduct*”

These **four qualities ought to come through “*What you say*” and “*What you do*”**:

* 1. **Love**: Above all else in word and conduct we need to be loving. You must not be arrogant, negative or critical. Our correction of others will always go further when we are loving in words and deeds.
  2. **Spirit**: Next the person must in words and action be a person who relies on the power and presence of the Holy Spirit.
  3. **Faith**: In words and deeds we are to be people who trust in only the Lord and His word.
  4. **Purity**: Finally, we must be in word and deed someone who is pure.

**III. Vs. 13-16 The work of the Word**

Vs. 13 Here we see public ministry and specifically the work of teaching the Word of God and again the emphasis is inward before it is outward, as Paul says that Timothy was to make certain that his time in the word involved **three things**:

1. **Reading**: “*What does the Word God* ***SAY***?” **OBSERVATION**
2. **Exhortation**: “*What does the Word of God* ***MEAN***?” **INTERPRETATION**
3. **Doctrine**: “*What does the Word of God mean to* ***Me***?” **APPLICATION**

The Church needs to hear the “***Word of God***” from taught from “***A man of God***”, “***led by the Spirit of God***” who carefully has implanted the Word of God first in his own heart.

Vs. 14-16 Paul continues on by explaining to Timothy **threes steps to how this is accomplished**:

1. Vs. 14 **Inspiration** “*Do not neglect*”: Dear ones there is only One great Bible teacher and that is the Holy Spirit. We must always remember before we open up the text to pray that the Holy Spirit will teach us. You have heard me often say that a bible teacher must never “***study to teach, they must always study to learn***.” I’ve also said that the most important person that needs to hear the message of the word of God is the person preparing the message because if it doesn’t first and foremost transform my heart it will do little good to the others that will hear it. I also believe and the Bible confirms that “teaching” the Word of God is a gift of the Spirit and that gift will become evident as you will teach and it won’t matter who.
2. Vs. 15 **Preparation** “*Meditate on*”: This 2nd stage takes time and to give a typical message for me is around 20 hours of work per study. I realize that folks tend to think that I go online to “sermons are us” and purchase the messages but I can assure you that is not the case. I outline the entire book to start with that each individual message, and chew it over, research the words and history in the context. Essentially, I tear it apart to examine it and then put it back together. I have often heard that “***A bible that is well worn and falling apart usually belongs to a person who isn’t***!”
3. Vs. 16 **Perspiration** “*Take heed to yourself*”: This is the personal side of the Word as it must remain personal to the reader and this will come as you WORK HARD at applying it into your life. With all the years I’ve been studying the Bible I have yet to find a verse that doesn’t apply to me. My biggest problem is not trying to make sense out of the verses that are hard to understand but rather trying to apply the ones that aren’t! I’ve been working on “*Loving my neighbor as myself*” for 33 years and I still haven’t mastered it yet but I keep at it. My goal isn’t to memorize the passages, my goal is to be transformed by the passages. When Paul says, that in so doing he will be able to “save both himself and his hearers” he is not speaking of eternal salvation he is speaking of maturity and application.

Timothy was to grow in his walk with Christ as that would silence his critics and inspire his comrades’ as they would desire to imitate him. ***No shepherd can lead his sheep to pastures that he has not gone himself***! If you want the fellowship to be more loving than the pastor must be more loving! Furthermore if I’m not willing to grow towards Christ I am not stagnate I’m going backward. During our trip I watched children get on those “people movers” at the airport and they would turn around and face backwards and stand still but even though they weren’t moving they were still going backward, that’s the case for us if we are not moving forward in our walk with Jesus.

As God’s servants we must:

* Preach the Word
* Practice the Word
* Progress in the Word

**1 Timothy**

**D.) The Church and its ministry to its self**

**1. 5:1-16 Ministry to the elderly and needy**

**5:1-16**

**“We are family”**

**I. Introduction**

**II. Vs. 1-2 Friends, Foes or Family?**

**III. Vs. 3-16 Proper benevolence**

**I. Introduction**

Paul established the way in which Timothy was to correct believers while pastoring in the established church in Ephesus, now moves to some of the things he needed to address. I wonder if Timothy wrote Paul a laundry list of “*What do I do about this problem*” type of questions. While in the Transkei area of South Africa the student’s favorite time was after our teaching through the book of Ephesians when they could just fire away questions at me. I got the sense that they didn’t get much opportunity to ask practical questions with regards to difficult subjects. What may be difficult in our culture and time may not be difficult for another culture and another time but one thing is for certain, when we allow the Word of God to transform our hearts God will direct us in the proper application of truth.

**II. Vs. 1-2 Friends, Foes or Family?**

Vs. 1-2 First Paul tells Timothy general words about how to address folks. This is a very profound truth for pastors as it suggests that, “***The way you treat people depends entirely on how you see them***!” In our society we tend to look at folks as either “***friends***” or “***foes***”. That’s because the world system in which we live tends to look at people as **objects** that are there to either help us get ahead of others, “***friends***” or keep us from getting ahead, “***foes***”. ***But Paul’s view of humanity is not a competition but rather a journey*** and because of the difference we are to view folks in the church as “***FAMILY***”.

* **Older men**: Are fathers who have more experience, those who have dealt with and survived more crises in their lives, who have developed a greater degree of understanding and wisdom that comes from life. This view would generate communication that was kind, humble and respectful which always has a better opportunity of being received.
* **Younger men**: Are brothers, they are not our rivals, our competitors! They are instead those that we are journeying through life with. We have their backs and they ours. They know all our faults and we theirs as we share the same battles and through Christ will gain the same victories. Because of this view there ought to be an openness in our communication and a compassion in our speech, as we also struggle in the same areas.
* **Older women**: Are mothers, we are to give them the kind of respect and care you would give your own mother. Men we need to view these precious saints not as “old ladies” but as “mothers” who have devoted their lives to making sure our bellies were fed, our shoes were tied and our hearts were warmed!
* **Younger women**: Are sisters therefore we are to treat them with all purity! Treat them with love, protect them from harm keep your intentions pure, Paul says. I have noticed that in our society that sometimes this goes the other way as well so single gals these single men are your brothers. In Solomon’s book dedicated to romantic love in a marriage is a three time repeated phrase to the “*Daughters of Jerusalem*” that says to “***Not stir up nor awaken love until it pleases***”. Translation: Ladies do not artificially stimulate romantic involvement, don’t work at being sexy to lure men because that’s not what you want men to value you only as being sexy. There is a place for that and it’s called marriage!

**III. Vs. 3-16 Proper benevolence**

Vs. 3-16 Paul can now address the specific problem of benevolence and how to properly treat the “widows” of the fellowship. The first controversy that came up within the Church dealt with the distribution of food as the Greek speaking Jews felt that the Hebrew speaking Jews were getting a greater portion. At this time almost everyone married and most women were entirely dependent upon their husbands to financially provide for them. When a woman found herself without her husband she was in a grave situation fiscally. The church established a fund to care for those widows that meant the specific requirements to be placed in the churches care as Paul lists **five qualifications** they must meet.

1. Vs. 3-4 **Real widows**: They had to be women who had no family to help them. If they had children or grandchildren, then the responsibility to care for their mother or grandmother fell upon the family not the church. That is one of the problems I see in our Westernized society as many families are not caring for their own members and are instead relying upon society, the government or the church to care for its members. Today, our society has life insurance, independent income and pensions as widows have the opportunity to continue to have their needs meet. But in the rare cases where they have none of the above available widows are not to be the primary financial responsibility of the Church. Widows in the Church who had families are not to be put on the benevolence fund.
2. Vs. 5-7 **Spiritual characteristics**: At the top of this list was their commitment to intercessory prayer day and night. In contrast Paul says that if a widow is only living for worldly pleasure she is dead while she lives, in other words she is missing out on what true living is. These older widows are to be fulfilling their calling by being other centered being a blessing to all. They are to live in such a manner that no accusation could stand because of their character.
3. Vs.9-10 **Physical characteristics**: We are going to come back to verse 8 in a moment but in verses 9 and 10 Paul lists **three physical characteristics**:
4. **Vs. 9a At least 60 years old**: This is an interesting requirement as most folks only lived to their 60’s which suggests that this was to be a select few that were willing to dedicate what short time they had left to full time ministry. I suppose today Paul would bump that age requirement up some as women live longer but the general idea here is that this wasn’t to be a long term ministry but a short term ministry.
5. **Vs. 9b A one man woman**: This is the same word used for an elder and deacon and refers to their devotion to their husbands while they were living. We know this because Paul speaks in verse 14 of the younger women marrying and clearly he would not be disqualifying them for future consideration if their husbands were to pass away at a later date. She must have not been a lady who was involved in multiple relationships outside of marriage or inside of marriage but was devoted to her marriage.
6. **Vs. 10 A woman of good reputation**: She needed to have good references where folks could look at **four areas where she had exceled** such as:

* Brought up here children well
* Shown hospitality as she opened up her home to others
* Washed the feet of the saints. In those days they wore sandals and when someone came into your house you would bring out a wash tub and mother would often perform this humble task to do whatever it took to make someone feel welcome.
* She had also been involved in relieving the afflicted, or cared for the sick and burdened.
* Generally this 60 year old lady had committed her Christian life to being a blessing, in every way possible.

1. Vs. 11-13 **Not young widows**: Paul points out several things that would disqualify widows. It is clear that Paul viewed this injunction to older widows as a fulltime ministry opportunity not something to fill the time up with until they found a man to remarry. The problem these younger widows had, according to Paul, was a sense of entitlement where they got on the payroll and it stunted their spiritual dependency upon the Lord. Their lack of maturity would cause a misuse of time which would lead to going from house to house wasting time becoming busybodies and gossips. Today I suppose we would say that ***some*** younger single women without children just love drama and get all caught up in other peoples’ business.
2. Vs. 14-15 **Learn to be home makers**: The home has always been the foundation of society. This is not to say that women shouldn’t work outside of the home but that their primary work in the home has been a great blessing to societies. Our country has for far too long suffered from absentee father but now many children have become latch-key children because their mothers have abandoned them as they chase after materialism.

Vs. 8, 16 We left this verse until now as to deal with whose responsibility it is to care for all those who do not meet the Biblical understanding of widowhood. This responsibility is to be primarily met by their relatives as they are to “*relieve them*” and Paul continues to say, “*and do not let the church be burdened, that it may relieve those who are really widows*”. In verse 8 Paul said that to not do so was tantamount to “*denying the faith*” and that they “*worse than unbelievers*”. It was a shocking and disgraceful thing not to meet the needs of your parents in biblical times. You could not hold public office if your parents had emotional and physical needs that you were unwilling to step up and meet. No family action better reveals true Christian character than Christian children visiting and caring for their elderly parents. It is a wonderful ministry to go into some of these nursing homes where these precious saints because of health reasons now live as Mike and Trudy do to provide a church service. I’m blessed to spend weekly time with my children and grandchildren and we love to have them over and just spend time together it is something that my children didn’t have the opportunity to do with their grandparents.

**1 Timothy**

**D.) The Church and its ministry to its self**

**2. 5:17-20 Ministry to leaders**

**3. 5:21-25 Ministry’s do’s and don’ts**

**5:17-25**

**“Take me to your leader”**

**I. Introduction**

**II. Vs. 17-18 Compensating elders**

**III. Vs.19-21 Correcting elders**

**IV. Vs. 22-25 Commissioning elders**

**I. Introduction**

Hamilton airport recently had an antique fly-in and one of the planes on display was one that they had removed some of the panels so you could see all the inner workings of the plane. I had no idea that all of that engineering lay behind the metal panels hidden out of sight. That’s what Paul is doing for us in this letter to his young “son in the faith” Timothy as he is writing about the hidden under workings of the church that most folks never see and some may not care too much about. No one enjoys chaos be that a cluttered store, a highway that has ground to a halt or an institution that doesn’t function. Paul is dealing with church leadership that can become dysfunctional. The most important thing to correct in this world today, is not our government, our schools, our health care, or even our economy….No the most important thing that must be corrected in the world today is the operating of the church. All of the things mentioned above were very dysfunctional in the first century but God didn’t go about fixing those things He made the establishment of His church the priority and maintaining its functionality is what most of the New Testament letters are about. We now have countless years of history that concur with this as we can see that a healthy functioning church regulates the society but a dysfunctional church is regulated by the society.

**II. Vs. 17-18 Compensating elders**

Paul has some words for Timothy in his relationships to elders in three areas:

* Vs. 17-18 **Compensating elders**
* Vs. 19-21 **Correcting elders**
* Vs. 22-25 **Commissioning elders**

Vs. 17-18 **Compensating elders**: The nature of the early church made it a necessity to have itinerant or traveling Bible teachers instead of each fellowship having one full time pastor/teacher. These men devoted themselves to full time service and had no time to earn a living. The “elders” Paul is referring to here are the same ones he mentioned in chapter 3 verses 1-7. The difference is that in chapter 3 Paul emphasized their “***work***” calling them “overseers” and here he emphasizes the “***worker***” calling them an “elder”! The word Paul uses to define their work is an unfortunate translation as, “RULE” makes it sound as if these individuals are “Bosses” over the people. The right translation would be “LEADS” and is the word translated elsewhere as “*leadership*”. **The elder is not driving the church**, he is “*leading*” the church and is worthy of “honor” Paul says. There were ***two types of leadership*** at this time and for sake of clarification they were:

* ***Leading elders***
* ***Teaching elders***!

Though according to Paul in chapter 3 verse 2 they all needed to be “***able to teach***” not all elders were called upon to teach all the time, their primary responsibility was to lead the church and most of them had full time jobs outside the church. Teaching elders were those that because of God’s call, gifting and the Holy Spirit’s clear anointing had been given the task of equipping the saints for the work of the ministry. The church needs both those who help keep it organized and those who help keep the church feed in the word of God. To have those who are in leadership without the teaching is like trying to organize a room full of two year olds. Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God, thus the 2 work in tandem. If the teaching elder is faithful in feeding and leading the people Paul says they are worthy of “***double honor***” and the word honor is where we get the word “*honorarium*”. It is Jesus’ plan that the needs of His servants be met by their local fellowships and God blesses the churches that honor Him by doing so. To show that this wasn’t just a New Testament idea Paul quotes an Old Testament passage out of Deut. 25:4 where Moses said that the ox that was being used to thresh the wheat were not permitted to be muzzled from eating while they worked. In 1 Corinthians chapter 9 verses 9-10 Paul interprets the meaning of that beyond just oxen to pastors and works in the church as well, because as far as we know oxen can’t read. Paul also quotes Jesus when He said something very similar to His disciples as He sent them out 2 by 2 into the villages in Luke chapter 10 verse 7 saying for them to “*remain in the same house, eating and drinking such things as they give, for the laborer is worthy of his wages*.” In 1 Corinthians chapter 9 verses 9-10 Paul interprets the meaning of that beyond just oxen to pastors and works in the church as well, because as far as we know oxen can’t read. Paul also quotes Jesus when He said something very similar to His disciples as He sent them out 2 by 2 into the villages in Luke chapter 10 verse 7 saying for them to “*remain in the same house, eating and drinking such things as they give, for the laborer is worthy of his wages*.” That being said the teaching elder must never choose this as a way of making a living, this is not a career path it is a calling.

**III. Vs.19-21 Correcting elders**

Vs. 19-21 **Correcting elders**: Church discipline is a challenging situation and like many families usually goes on to two extremes:

* No discipline: Which cause the church like the family to be unruly and in disarray
* Extreme discipline: Which cause folks to be stifled in their creativity and bound in legalism instead of grace

The balance is what is needed and this is especially true with leadership. The lack of correcting the leaders causes many within the church to become disillusioned with the church. The purpose of all Christian discipline is restoration not revenge and this is true with the elder as well. The word restore is a medical term that means to set a fracture and this takes patience and tenderness to accomplish. To set any bone the first thing you will need to do is ascertain all the facts and this usually today requires an x-ray. Paul tells Timothy to make sure that he takes the time to do a thorough examination of the facts by hearing the offence from multiple credible witnesses and if that is not brought forward he is not to even hear the matter. Rumor, opinion and accusations are not enough unless supported by many witnesses. Some folks just like to have “***shepherd’s pie***” for lunch and those cases are not what Paul has in mind. The accused has the right to face their accusers in the court of law and the church as well. You would handle this situation much as you would in Jesus’ admonition in dealing with sin found in Matthew 18. There Jesus says, “*If your brother sins against you, go to him and tell him his fault, between you and him alone; if he repents, you have gained your brother*..” End of story nothing else needs to be said it’s settled. Paul also says when dealing with correcting leadership that it needs to be open and aboveboard, no back allies or under the counter politics have any place in the church. If the leader is guilty then he should be disciplined publically and his offence known. He should be given the opportunity to repent and if he does he should be forgiven and if forgiven the matter ought to be forgotten. If the matter requires removal then forgiveness doesn’t necessarily mean instant reinstatement, instead it means a process by which restoration needs to be applied and evaluated over time. Paul warns against prejudice and partiality in dealing with elders as there ought to be no sense of reading into the situation or offence. I know this to be true with regards to myself: “***I’m never as good as people believe me to be and I’m always a great deal worse than people say that I am***.” But thank God that **His love never fails, His mercy is knew every moment and His grace is always sufficient**.

**IV. Vs. 22-25 Commissioning elders**

Vs. 22-25 **Commissioning elders**: The challenge in selecting elders is that only God knows the thoughts and intents of the heart, so Paul tells Timothy to wait on the Lord to reveal where they truly are. The church must not make necessity the qualification in appointing people to positions of authority. It is dangerous to the health and wellbeing too place a new believer or a new member in a place of leadership in the church. Paul goes on to say that, “*some peoples sins are clearly visible while others take time to see and the same can be said of their good works*.” Investigation and patience aid in the appointment and placement of the right people in the right positions. This doesn’t do any good after the fact but can sure save a church a lot of stress by applying it ahead of time. Small churches like our self can look for warm bodies to fill spots but when you do that without making sure the person is who the Lord wants you can cause a lot of damage as it is always easier to get a person into a position then it is too get them out. Oft times the leadership shares in the responsibility of a person’s sins as they were the ones that placed them into the position in the first place. To not deal with and offending leader to share in their sins and to pass them on to another unsuspecting fellowship to multiply the sin. We humans have a way of putting our best foot forward when we meet people, trying to make a good impression but you can only really know a person over time and not just seeing them when they are trying to present themselves to you, that’s what Paul is saying with leadership, take your time observe them in many situations. Personally **I like to see how people serve to know how they will lead**! In verse 23 Paul gives some personal council to Timothy with regards to drinking of wine and we need to remember that ***the bible does not demand abstinence, it denounces drunkenness***! “***The very injunction of Paul implies that he regarded wine as a medicine for the sick, and not as a beverage for the well***!”

**1 Timothy**

**E.) The Church and its ministry to the world**

**1-2. 6:1-10 Serving while at work and in society**

**6:1-5**

**“Gonna have to serve somebody”**

**I. Introduction**

**II. Vs. 1-2 Freedom from self**

**III. Vs. 3 Two truths about truth**

**IV. Vs. 4-5 Part of the problem**

**I. Introduction**

When Paul pined this letter to Timothy ½ the population or around 60 million were slaves in the Roman Empire. Because this was the condition of the world at the time of Christ and the birth of His Church, slavery became an immediate challenge of the early first century church. It is apparent by reading the New Testament letters that both slaves and masters were coming to Christ. Workers today give up control of their time, talent and choices for a price and become the “*willing slave*” for the agreed time. Oh the worker today is far better than the Roman slave who worked 24 hours a day only for room and board their entire life without the hope of ever being freed. Today’s worker, comes to Friday and says, “TGIF” as they have the weekends off, they get a certain amount of vacation time and the hope of one day being freed in what some call retirement. But friend, as Bob Dylan once wrote: “*You may be an ambassador to England or France, You may like to gamble, you might like to dance, You may be the heavyweight champion of the world, You may be a socialite with a long string of pearls. But you're gonna have to serve somebody, It may be the devil or it may be the Lord, But you're gonna have to serve somebody*.” Old Bob was right and this section is going to provide some answers about relationships where we either work for someone else, or someone works for us.

**II. Vs. 1-2 Freedom from self**

Vs. 1-2 These two verses present a troubling fact in the New Testament as it is clear that Paul did not out and out denounce slavery. Though the Bible doesn’t denounce slavery, neither does it approve of it. The influence of the New Testament upon those 60 million slaves of the 1st century caused the end of slavery by the end of the 2nd century. Historians admit that the Bible had a major influence in eliminating slavery in every society is has been read. Of further interest is that the method of liberation was mainly personal transformation instead of armed revolt. The pressure wasn’t placed upon the slavery from the outside it was eliminated from the inside as both slaves and masters looked at each other through their conversion in a new way. It was not uncommon for a master and a slave to go to church together, where the slave would be an elder in the church, and the master expected to submit to the slave’s spiritual leadership! God is not only interested in liberating us from temporary situations and circumstances He wants to set us free from the most oppressive tyrannical dictator we have ever had the displeasure of meeting. This fellow is so crafty that he has most folks devoted to himself, pampering him, thinking that everything revolves around him, he gets us to fight everything and everyone so that we will only serve his interests. You know this person well though he has many different names but three names are enough for us to unveil him or her, “***ME, MYSELF and I***”. God in His wisdom uses other oppressors on the job to free us from ourselves. We have to deal with that person and they are just a bear to deal with, every day they frustrate us and we can’t see how they ever got put in the place over us but the Bible says that we are to regard them “*worthy of all respect*”. “*Why has the Lord allowed this situation*.” I submit to you that ***God is using the boss to free you from self***. Your freedom will come when you regard them “*worthy of all respect*” when you become more concerned that your behavior towards this tyrant may cause “*the name of God and His doctrine to be blasphemed*.” It is when we become more interested in being instruments of God’s grace and reflecting His glory day in and day out no matter who our oppressors are that we become truly free.

Paul address those slaves who had believing masters and may feel since God has made us one they should get special favors or a better position. The Bible recognizes and equality of believers before the Lord slaves and Masters and the quicker we treat each other with the love of Christ the faster such horrible things as slavery can be abolished.

**III. Vs. 3 Two truths about truth**

Vs. 3 Paul says that if folks can’t treat each other as Christ would then ill respective of their position they are serving themselves. There will always be people who will oppose this and in fact stand up against you when you teach but **Paul reminds Timothy principals with regards to truth**:

1. ***Vs. 3a Truth is caught not fought***: “*If anyone teaches otherwise and does not consent to the wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ*..” Loving those who oppose you is not a “***good suggestion***” it is a “***divine commandment***”. ***Today there are folks just shouting at each other and the way they are both behaving it’s hard to determine which one is right because they are both behaving wrong***. It makes it even more difficult to present a **reasonable rebuttal to the philosophy or practice that I disagree with** because others have just tried to out shout them. Being in the right creates a greater responsibility to present truth in a way that reasonable people can clearly hear without getting lost in the way in which it was presented. We are to communicate with “***wholesome words***” and if we aren’t sure what those words would sound like we need only look at the words of Jesus.
2. ***Truth is demonstrated not demanded***: “*to the doctrine which accords godliness*.” The word “*godliness*” is the same word Paul has written elsewhere in this letter and means “*wholeness*”. Jesus’ truth when applied and obeyed makes me whole. If you want to know if what a person believes is right, don’t listen to what they say alone, ***look at what this truth has produced in their life***! Jesus in Luke 11:23 said, “*He who is not with Me is against Me, and he who does not gather with me scatters*.” **Saint’s by our actions we are doing one of three things with controversy**:
3. **Escalating**: This happens *when rhetoric becomes more important than behavior*. The end result of this is that you will gather a following of like-minded folks polarizing and uniting those who disagree with your position. Much of escalation revolves around gathering a group who will go to battle trying to determine. Like 2nd graders picking a team for doge ball seeing who can avoid the ball and who has a strong arm so then can bean the opposition.
4. **Perpetuating**: These battles become a one ups-man-ship by publically calling their opponent a name, attacking the person not just what they disagree with. This of course leads the other side to retaliate with a little heavier attack and soon they are going at each other. The conflict grows and grows to where soon no one knows what the real issue is only what horrible action was just perpetuated on them and how they need to get even.
5. **Motivating**: The final way we can choose to handle controversy is by behaving contrary to the way the world does. We can put on Christ and motivate those from both sides by loving even those that we don’t see eye to eye with. When we choose to motivate instead of escalate and perpetuate we have already won because we have beaten our biggest opponent, ourselves.

We don’t have to agree with their point of view but we must not engage in name calling and slander. It is a rare thing to see civil disagreement these days, where people who have completely different values and views discuss their opinions without slamming each other. ***I’ve long felt that if you have to attack a person because of their opinions it is most likely because you don’t have the ability to present your own***!

**IV. Vs. 4-5 Part of the problem**

Vs. 4-5 Paul tells Timothy that there are **three reasons why folks choose** to ***escalate***, ***perpetuate*** instead of ***motivate***.

1. Vs. 4a **Conceit**: “*He is proud, knowing nothing*”. When you listen to some folks it’s clear that they are impressed with themselves. They show this be becoming angry with folks who don’t agree with them. What conceit reveals to folks is that they are really quite insecure. Whenever you have contention it’s safe to say that at least one of the parties involved is full of themselves. I think it’s always a sign of maturity when people are willing to admit that they don’t know something. Paul said that he didn’t know anything as he ought to and that he purposed to know nothing except Jesus Christ and His crucifixion.
2. Vs. 4b **Controversy**: “*But is obsessed with disputes and arguments over words*.” There are some who just thrive on controversy, they live for the drama. **They don’t know what they believe but they are willing to die for it.** Sometimes these folks find a place within the body of Christ and love to gossip about this and that. They don’t feel good unless they have stirred up things and made folks miserable. They love the strife, reviling and evil suspicions it make they feel better about themselves.
3. Vs. 5 **Contentment**: Others Paul says use this as a means for personal gain as they view life only by what they can get out of it. They get involved in church life as a way of furthering their business or obtaining help to maintain their life style.

To these wrong motives Paul says withdraw from them, don’t associate with folks that are like this. The best way to handle folks like this is out love, out live and out last them. I have found that if I disagree with a person’s position that I can bear much more weight on might point of view if I treat them as I would treat Christ. Oh I may not be able to win them to my point of view but by my behavior towards them others may be convinced of the truth. Christians ought to be like “*good eggs*” and when things get all mixed up they don’t get “*scrambled*” and when things begin to heat up they don’t get “*fried*”, they are able to keep their hearts from becoming “*hard boiled*”!

**1 Timothy**

**E.) The Church and its ministry to the world**

**1-2. 6:1-10 Serving while at work and in society**

**6:6-10**

**“Who’s in your wallet?”**

**I. Introduction**

**II. Vs. 6 Money can’t buy contentment**

**III. Vs. 7 Money can’t be taken with you**

**IV. Vs. 8 Money has limited value**

**V. Vs. 9-10 Money can ruin your life**

**I. Introduction**

In verse 5 Paul told Timothy that some teaches were trying to make ***a profession off of religious profession***. They were in the business of religion, making a buck was what they really worshipped and they took advantage of the people. What motivated these folks was the same as Balaam, that Old Testament nemeses of Israel, who spelled prophet,… P.R.O.F.I.T. Paul had already addressed the concept of providing for the teaching elder but this was a far cry from that. There are those today who are nothing more than “***religious racketeers***” out to take from the gullible and have amassed vast fortunes. Poor does not mean godly and rich ungodly; nor the other way around. There were many remarkably godly men in the Bible who were unbelievably rich, such as Abraham, David, and Solomon. The Psalmist in Psalm 62:10 warned this saying, “*If riches increase, do not set your heart on them.*” ***In these five verses Paul reminds Timothy of four things about money and wealth with regards to what it can and cannot buy***.

* **Vs. 6 Money cannot buy contentment**
* **Vs. 7 Money cannot be taken with you**
* **Vs. 8 Money has limited value**
* **Vs. 9-10 Money can ruin your life**

**II. Vs. 6 Money can’t buy contentment**

Vs. 6 Today’s prosperity teachers miss translate this verse as they teach “***Godliness will bring you great gain and make you content***.” But that’s not what this verse says. 90% of all leaving in the U.S. are wealthier than the world’s population. That which should be a means to support life is made the goal of life! Some have been to egger to pluck the rose of wealth and were pierced by thorns.

1. Vs. 6 ***Wealth cannot bring contentment***: Paul defines for us what true wealth is and in so doing he tells us what true wealth is not: ***True wealth is not defined by what you possess but rather by Who possess you***! It is not what you have that determines your wealth, it’s Who has you. Contentment means “*inner sufficiency that allows us to be at peace in spite of outward circumstances*”. True contentment comes from godliness in the heart not cash in the hand! Our great gain is to be found in our “*Godliness*” or “*wholeness*”. There are those that define contentment in terms of little children, “***Getting whatever you want, whenever you want it***!” This wrong definition causes people to be rootless and restless as they seek things to dead the pain of living an empty life. A better way of describing “*contentment*” is “***Wanting only what God has given you***!” Paul defined it best in his words to the Philippians in chapter 4 verse 11-13 where he said, “*Not that I speak in regard to need, for I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content: I know how to be abased, and I know how to abound Everywhere and in all things I have learned both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me*.” Jesus said in Luke 12:15 **“***Take heed and beware of covetousness, for one's life does not consist in the abundance of the things he possesses*.”

**III. Vs. 7 Money can’t be taken with you**

1. Vs. 7 ***Wealth is not lasting***: To make sure that Timothy would have ample illustrations to share with those that had a misconception of wealth he uses “*birth and death*” to clarify exactly what he means, “*we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out*.” Whatever wealth a person amasses in this life goes to someone else, most likely the government. The answer to the question often asked about a wealthy person at their death is; “*How much did they leave behind*?” and the answer is always the same, regardless of their earthly fortune, EVERYTHING! I’ve done a lot of funerals but I have yet to see one with a U-Hall behind the Hearse!

**IV. Vs. 8 Money has limited value**

1. Vs. 8 ***Wealth is needed for the necessities***: The word clothing can be rightly translated as covering and includes all types of covering from the elements’ both clothing and shelter. Jesus said in Matthew 4:4 that, “*Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.*” Saint’s it is in relationship with God that that you have true contentment as we have security and peace. I have found that the proof of this can only really be discovered when what we inadvertently placed our contentment in “health, wealth, etc.” is taken away. It is easy to fall prey to the materialistic world when we are being pounded into its form constantly but we mustn’t allow the world to dictate our true value, our true contentment. The poet Thoreau said, “*A man’s wealth is proportionate to the number of things he can afford to do without*!” Too many folks today know the “**PRICE**” of everything but the “**VALUE**” of nothing as they have become glutted with luxuries and have forgotten how to enjoy the necessities.

**V. Vs. 9-10 Money can ruin your life**

1. Vs. 9-10 ***Wealth can cause destruction***: The phrase “*those who desire to be rich*” is translated “*those who* ***WILL*** *be rich*” as they have an appetite for more and more things in order to feel happy and successful. Servants of Christ must never ask, “*How much will I get? But rather “How much can I give*?” There are **five things we believers must be aware of** that are progressive in nature or we will be ripped off from our true riches and security?
2. Vs. 9a ***Desire***: “*Those that desire to be rich*”: First Paul says this is all because of desire, and the question is how much is too much? Verse 10 is often miss quoted as it is **the desire to be rich**, not money that is the root of all kinds of evil. Paul is speaking of the craving for riches, the desire to have more and more money. There is a difference of providing for your family and spending every waking moment chasing after dollars as your objective. Life is more than the pursuit of wealth as Jesus said in Matthew 6:25 “*Do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink; nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing*?”
3. Vs. 9b ***Temptation***: “*fall into temptation*”: Second Paul says that we need to realize that this will come at us constantly in temptation. It happens when we see something that we become convinced that we “*Just can’t live without*”. Merchants have become very cleaver at seducing us as they make the item appear as a necessity, they package it in a way that makes it appealing and offer it at a discount. It is ***a very present danger to become possessed by your possessions***. In Matthew 19 Jesus encountered the rich young ruler who had become possessed by his possessions when he said that, “*the young man went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions*.”
4. Vs 9c ***Captivity***: “*and a snare, ..into many foolish and harmful lusts*…”: We can become seduced by our desire and it won’t be long before the things you desire will take the place of people you love. Our society is littered with cast off children who have become neglected as their parents pursued wealth and luxury. This captivity doesn’t just place you in bondage it places those who love you there as well and can be cruel, callous, neglectful as well as shameful.
5. Vs. 9d ***Death***: “*which drown men in destruction and perdition*”: Stay on this tract and you will become way over your head drowning in what at once was only a desire. We see these folks all the time and wonder how they got there. They chased after the desire and soon they didn’t have enough money for the necessities because they spent their hard earned dollars after their wants.
6. Vs. 10 ***Idolatry***: “*which some of strayed from the faith*”: Paul says, that the roots can be very difficult to get rid of in our lives, as the roots can always send out more shoots. One of those shoots is the “*straying from the faith in their greediness*…” In Matthew 13:22 Jesus gave the interpretation of the parable of the sower where He said, “*He who received seed among the thorns is he who hears the word, and the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and he becomes unfruitful*.” Saints that’s ***the difference between worshipping Jesus and worshipping materialism***: When you worship Jesus you are worshipping Him who was pierced for our sins, but when you worship materialism it will require of you to become pierced with many sorrows.

There are folks who live there whole lives determined to arrive at their desired destination. They have sold everything to get there, pursued after it their entire life but as they arrive at the destination they find it not at all what they were thinking. It is at that moment that a person can realize that “***They strived so hard to get to a place where they could HAVE everything they wanted but now they realize they have nothing they want***!” They have “***destination sickness***” and it is the result of chasing after riches. Hey friend instead of chasing after the dollar chase after what is written on the dollar “***In God We Trust***”!

**1 Timothy**

**E.) The Church and its ministry to the world**

**3. 6:11-16 Serving sober mindedly**

**6:11-12**

**“How to get rich and stay that way”**

**I. Introduction**

**II. Vs. 11-12 Four “F” verbs**

**I. Introduction**

Paul warned Timothy about the pursuit of wealth as a means of contentment and now tells him how to maintain “***godliness with contentment***”. One of the studies done on the lack of contentment of wealthy people looked at where the most content people in the world lived and rated them by 65 countries. The results were unexpected according to a 2003 “***World Value Survey***” published by the British magazine “*New Scientist*”. The top three most contented countries where people live are Puerto Rico, Mexico and Nigeria with a staggering less GDP, (Gross Domestic Product) that measures the average personal buying potential per person. When looking at those countries they offer far less “*peace and security*” or “*education or health*” then does the US, as all three of those countries are near the bottom according to the 2003 U.N. Human Development Indicators. The study found that they had two things that other countries had less of:

1. **A strong sense of community**
2. **Frequent, enthusiastic community celebrations**

US research supports this as people in the US describe **the quality of life being the highest when their personal relationships with their family, friends and community are the strongest**. Dr. Fordyce describes this as the “**Happiness Law of Diminishing Returns**” which states: ***Any area of achievement that adds to happiness will only do so to a certain mid-point then it will begin to have the opposite results***. Saints, we Christians ought to have ***the strongest sense of community*** and the greatest reason to have ***enthusiastic community celebrations***. The question is how do we appropriate God’s resources to this end?

**II. Vs. 11-12 Four “F” verbs**

Paul gives Timothy four verbs all of which are in the imperative and as we know are action words that Timothy can do to appropriate the riches that are ours in Christ. I have interpreted these to all start with the letter “F” to help our memories:

1. **Vs. 11a FLEE**: This verb has to do what we are to shun but Paul in this verse doesn’t tell Timothy what to shun instead it is a reference to the characteristics of the false teachers he wrote about in the proceeding verses. Timothy was to **shun three attributes** that summed up the false teachers both then and now:
2. **Conceit**: These fellows were full of themselves while proclaiming they were full of wisdom. Any knowledge that puffs us up, makes our intelligent the object of admiration is not something that we need to learn or emulate. I for one already possess way too much of this kind of knowledge.
3. **Combativeness**: Second these false teachers seemed to have a love for controversy, they were always trying to form a faction, some redefining of truth that made them a little better then there brothers and sisters.
4. **Covetousness**: Finally they had an appetite for material wealth, theirs was the pursuit for making a buck and showing it by their life style.
5. **Vs. 11b FOLLOW**: Or as Paul puts it “pursue” and then goes on to list **six things** that Timothy should follow and divides them into **two groups**, the first is towards God, “***righteousness, godliness and faith***”. The 2nd three is towards your fellow man, “***love, patience and gentleness***”.

**God**:

1. ***Righteousness***: Paul is not referring to “rightness” as a behavior but rather as a belief, as in we are trusting in Jesus’ rightness and that is the way we now see ourselves as living in His rightness that has covered our wrongness as we are now made right in Jesus’ rightness. This belief is what gives us believers as sense of security and stability as our focus and self-worth is based upon what God has done for us not upon what we have done or in my case not done.
2. ***Godliness***: The 2nd thing Timothy was to follow after was wholeness or balance in life. Very easy for us to get out of balance living in this world as we correct something lacking only to make give it to high a priority in life which will cause to again become out of balance. Timothy was to pursue the balance that aided him in being a whole person not overly focused on one thing. You see folks that can be dominated by one passion, one topic or one mood and their life becomes a flat spot. Hard to move forward when you have flat spots in life.
3. ***Faith***: Next Paul wants Timothy to continue to pursue faithfulness or loyalty to God, an awareness that you have committed your life to God. Paul understood that many times a person’s interest and hunger for God is at its peak when we first come into a relationship with the Lord then like our earthly relationships begins to wane. Hey saint’s as it relates to Jesus we shouldn’t be looking behind us at the “good ole days” but looking forward as the best is yet to come. Jesus ought to still be the most exciting person you have ever met and spending time with Him daily your greatest excitement.

**Man**: Paul now moves on to **three words that describe how Timothy should treat our fellow humans.**

1. ***Love***: The first word is a familiar one “Love”! Throughout the word we are exhorted to “*Owe no many anything, accept the debt of love*” and “*love one another*”. I believe that this is always an appropriate question to ask yourself, “*Are my actions, and words displaying Christ’s love*?” We would all be better off if that was a regular concern for our lives. That is how you can gage your progress spiritually, ae you becoming a more loving person.
2. ***Patience***: The 2nd word Paul gives Timothy to follow with regards to our fellow sojourners has to do with our endurance towards others. Refusing to give up on someone, even though they have failed numerous times. I’ve always been amazed at the effort folks will put into new relationships that aren’t willing to put into old ones. We are called on to support the weak, to come along side and bare each other’s burdens.
3. ***Gentleness***: Finally Paul says that they are to treat folks with gentleness, a compassionate heart towards others. Six things to check each day; three towards God three towards are fellow man. Six things to ask: “*How am I doing in these six things*?”
4. **Vs. 12a FIGHT**: The third action word Paul gives Timothy is at the start of verse 12 where he says, “*Fight the good fight of faith*”. The Christian life is not a playground it is a battleground and as such it will be a constant fight. Our enemies will not surrender, they will not give in and go home. Our enemies are twofold satan and our fallen natures. Satan is so crafty he will get you to think that people are your problem and he will get you fighting against each other instead of focusing on the victory won in Jesus through His death and our appropriation through our death to self. We could make a shorter work and get to celebration at lot quicker if we got to dying instead of trying to kill the other person.
5. **Vs. 12b FASTEN**: The final verb for Timothy is “***lay hold***” or **fasten** and it is associated with “*eternal life, to which you were also called and have confessed the good confession in the presence of many witnesses*”. I like simplicity and here Timothy is told keep the right perspective and in case he wasn’t sure what that perspective was Paul tells him it is the same perspective in life that he was “***called***” to “***confessed***” in and that he had done so in the “***presence of many witnesses***”. Saint’s this “*eternal perspective*” in life reminds us that this isn’t our home, we are just passing through. It reminds us that Jesus is at the center of all we love and live for. Dear ones nothing in this world ought to be able to “dislodge” us from Jesus.

Next week we will hear from Paul about keeping your eyes on the Prize as he reveals truths regarding Jesus and His Unique Majesty. This will enable us to appropriate the riches in Christ which will guarantee that we will be content people. You see saints a lot of our problems stem from us failing to recognize just who it is we have trusted in. This problem, that issue, these unsurmountable odds would be overwhelming if our Jesus was just an ordinary man, some mere prophet or religious teacher who got swept away in political intrigue of the day. But dear ones that is not who our Jesus is, so take a deep breath put on a smile because he is Mighty to save!

**1 Timothy**

**E.) The Church and its ministry to the world**

**3. 6:11-16 Serving sober mindedly**

**6:13-16**

**“Focus”**

**I. Introduction**

**II. Vs. 13-14 Focused obedience**

**III. Vs. 14-16 Meet your Majesty**

**I. Introduction**

None of those four verbs (***Flee, Follow, Fight and Fasten***) would do Timothy any good if he didn’t have the right **FOCUS**! His focus must be obedience to Jesus Christ. One of the biggest problems Christians face in obedience happens when they no longer realize the characteristics of person they are to be obedient too. We simply lose focus on the character and nature our God who we are to honor and be accountable too. There must be in every believer a single-mindedness towards God if we are too live a contented life. Timothy, like us, would be tempted and tested to take his eyes of the Lord, thus the urging of his mentor Paul to (*keep this commandment without spot, blameless until our Lord Jesus Christ’s appearing*,..) verse 14.

**II. Vs. 13-14 Focused obedience**

Vs. 13 Here Paul reminds Timothy of **three truths** with regards to his ***Focused Obedience***:

1. ***In the sight of God***: First, Timothy is reminded as to whom this obedience it aimed, God. Our obedience is to the One that has secured our victory. The soldier that enters the battle must obey to have ***ANY*** hope of victory but the Christian soldier must obey because they have the **CERTAIN outcome of victory**, not just the possibility of it. If we keep our focus on the Lord we will gain the victory no matter what the battle looks like. Thus we understand that the only weapon our enemy has to defeat us is to get us not to obey.
2. ***Who gives life to all things***: Second, Timothy is reminded that there is **no short cut**, no way around obedience. God gives life and no one else can do that, if you want life then you will have to obey even if it means your death.
3. ***Christ Jesus who witnessed the good confession before Pontius Pilate***: Finally, Timothy is reminded that there is **no second place**, there is no white flag surrender no compromise in our obedience. Jesus was obedience to the very end, all He needed to do to save his life was say, that the religious leaders misunderstood Him and that He wasn’t the Son of God. Since the outcome is certain the no cost is to great as the only thing that can happen that would cause us not to experience the outcome is to not to obey!

Vs. 14 Knowing the above three truths with regards to “***Focused Obedience***” Paul give Timothy **three keys to obedience**:

1. ***Without spot***: Simply put Timothy’s obedience couldn’t be “***spotty***” he couldn’t expect the victory with spotty obedience. His sacrifice needed to be **CLEAN**.
2. ***Blameless***: Second it needed to **CONSISTANT**, which was towards the Lord not to be seen by men. The consistency needed to be in every area of his life not just some areas.
3. ***Until our Lord Jesus Christ’s appearing***: Finally it need to be **CONTINUAL** not just for a time but until the Lord returned.

Paul pulls back the curtains to reveal the majesty of Jesus so that what we appreciate of the riches will forever be attached to the person of our Lord. Paul reveals to Timothy **3 truths regarding Jesus**.

1. Vs. 13a ***Giver of life***: The first thing Paul reveals is that God is the “*giver of life*”. To those of us who get beat down and are in need of life we only need to remember that God is the giver of life. Have you come to the place you can’t go on, not one more step? Well great news God will give you His strength, He will renew you to keep going forward.
2. Vs. 13b ***Sustainer of truth***: Jesus “*confession*” was nothing more than agreeing with Pontius Pilate’s confession which if denied would have spare Jesus’ earthly life. That’s what obedience is, by our obedience we are revealing whether we believe that Jesus is who He claimed to be. There will be times in our life where the expedient thing for us to do is denying the truth about the Word of God but remember Jesus who spoke the truth even to his own destruction, what a great example we have in Jesus.
3. Vs. 14 ***Returning Messiah***: As we recall this truth about our Jesus we are reminded that this chaotic world, where everything seems to be against us has been defeated by our soon returning Jesus. The commandment that we are to keep is the same one that Jesus gave just before His death in the upper room, “*Love one another*”. Sometimes we behave as if we are living in eternity, but Paul reminds Timothy that it is the here and now that is ending. Ray Stedman put it this way, “*The One who was here in weakness is coming again in great strength and will fill the horizon of life.*”

**III. Vs. 14-16 Meet your Majesty**

One of the biggest problems Christians face in obedience happens when they no longer realize the characteristics of person they are to be obedient too. We simply lose focus on the character and nature our God who we are to honor and be accountable too. Paul lists 3 more truths concerning Jesus:

1. Vs. 15a ***Only Potentate***: He is the One who alone has all power and strength, who rules over the universe from an occupied throne in heaven.
2. Vs. 15b ***King of kings and Lord of lords***: The seeming majesty of any other ruler through time pales in comparison to the splendor and greatness of Jesus. With all the world’s armies, terror attacks, political injustice going on in the world today this verse reminds us who really has all the power. Knowing this brings to us security and peace even in the most troubling of times.
3. Vs. 16 ***Unique in Majesty***: Finally Paul reveal to Timothy that Jesus has **three attributes that are Unique to Jesus which makes Him one of a kind**:
4. Vs. 16a ***Alone has immortality***: This is the immortality that says that He has always been and always will be. That means there can never be any surprises, no “*never saw that coming*” experiences. He can never be defeated and this is what was behind Paul’s words in Romans where he said, “*O death where is your sting, where is your victory*?”
5. Vs. 16b ***Dwelling in unapproachable light***: Jesus is 100% perfect in every way and can never do wrong. He will not be judged but will be the only Judge, the standard by which all others will be judged. Paul is revealing that there will never another person or truth that will supplant Jesus as He is dwelling in unapproachable light. You don’t have a savior who can only save in certain circumstances, you have in Jesus the very one that spoke light into being dwells in unapproachable light.
6. Vs. 16c ***To whom be honor and everlasting power***: The invisible God became a visible Man so that He could suffer all the same sufferings as we do, experience all the disappointments we do in life and yet conquer them on our behave enabling us to be more then conquerors in Christ. Jesus hasn’t lost a step, He isn’t less of God because He became a man, He is the same yesterday, today and forever.

Saints a lot of our problems stem for us failing to recognize just who it is we have trusted in. This problem, that issue, these unsurmountable odds would be overwhelming if our Jesus was just an ordinary man, some mere prophet or religious teacher who got swept away in political intrigue of the day. But dear ones that is not who our Jesus is, so take a deep breath put on a smile because he is Mighty to save!

**1 Timothy**

**E.) The Church and its ministry to the world**

**4. 6:17-19 Serving as a blessing**

**IV. 6:20-21 Closing**

**6:17-21**

**“The best thing in life”**

**I. Introduction**

**II. Vs. 17-19 The biggest bang for the buck**

**III. Vs. 20-21 Master’s decree**

**I. Introduction**

These final words to Timothy give us great insight into the relationship between these two friends. You will notice the personal and parental tone of this section by the three time repeated use of the word “***YOU***”. In chapter 6 verses 6-10 Paul warned Timothy about making life about ***attainment*** instead of ***contentment***. It is easy to lose an eternal perspective, to begin to think that life is all about the here and now. In this personal letter, with that still very much on his heart, Paul digressed even more personal in verse 11-16 saying to Timothy, “*But you, O man of God*”; in contrast to those that have made ***attainment the measure of contentment*** make obedience the measure of your contentment. Now he closes out this letter and goes back in verses 17-19 to again speak generally about the right use of money before closing in verses 20-21 again with a personal note. Saints this is a very timely word for us living in the US as I believe that “***If the US economy was like a game of musical chairs and the music stopped, scant few would find a place to sit. So our government’s solution: Instead of building more places to sit, don’t stop the music***!”

**II. Vs. 17-19 The biggest bang for the buck**

Vs. 17 The emphasis in verses 6-10 was in the negative about wealth and left to these words a person could get the impression that it is wrong to be rich. Paul says that the problem is not wealth, the problem is the attitudes and actions of the person whom it has been entrusted too.

1. ***Vs. 17 Attitude***: Paul lists **three reasons** why a person should **NOT let** “***assets change their attitude***”.
2. **False sense of superiority*:*** “*Command those who are rich in this present age not to be haughty*”: First Paul says that worldly wealth can produce a “***False sense of superiority***”. Worldly wealth has the unfortunate ability to negatively affect a person’s attitude, ill regardless of how they have attained it. Jesus warned about this in Matthew 13:22 speaking about the “*deceitfulness of riches*”. Wealth can cause a sense of “***self-deception***” that can cause a person to think they are “*worth more*” than someone else therefore they are better than that person. But the truth is we are all worth the same as, “***the blood of Jesus***” was what was paid for us all rich and poor. There are no aristocrats, no blue bloods just saved sinners!
3. **False sense of security**: “*Nor trust in uncertain riches..*” Worldly riches can disappear overnight for a variety reasons outside of our control. Jesus gave a few of those reasons in Matthew 6:19-20 when he said “*Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal*..” Folks can place all their money under the mattress or in a fault and still find that what they had placed their security in is now all but vanished as it has been devalued.
4. **False sense of satisfaction**: “*but in the living God, who gives us richly all things to enjoy*.” Apparently God was the first to start the popular phrase, “*The Best things in life are free*!” God is the ultimate giver as He is the one that has created the individual talents, given the person the education and experience as well as the opportunities to obtain worldly wealth. A lot of folks take credit for what they are convinced is their own personal superiority as they have out done others but in reality it is God who has allowed them to obtain the wealth. The bible is clear there is “***No piety in poverty anymore then there is righteousness in riches***”. **The question is how are we to maximize the enjoyment of our blessing with regards to our worldly wealth?**
5. ***Vs. 18 Actions***: Paul gives Timothy the specifics on “***How to get the most out of your money***”. In Acts 20:35 Paul tells the Ephesian elders what Jesus had said that “*It is more blessed to give than to receive.*” The best way to enjoy your worldly wealth is by spending your blessing to bless others Paul says. There is no better way to get a greater return on your money than infesting it in making other people happy by relieving someone else’s distress and wealth has a unique way of being able to do that. **Paul tells us three actions we can take with our affluence**:
6. **Do Good**: This statement is general and not specific, it need not be applied personally with our own firsthand knowledge of how it went to work. Paul is not speak about “***good intentions***” he is speaking about “***good actions***”. Use the treasure God has enabled you to obtain to help those in need, to relief those who are hungry, to support the work of the gospel in some area. All of which can be as simple as your giving to some organization where you don’t know the person or persons that are benefiting from the gift. I have found over the years that you can never out give God. I have heard many a testimony form folks who were financially stressed, barely squeaking by and heard a message like this one and started to invest in doing good and then saw an increase. Let’s take the test together and make a further investment in doing good this month and see if God doesn’t increase our ability to do so next month.
7. **Be rich in good works**: The difference between “*do good*” and “*be rich in good works*” is that the later has a personal element to it. It implies that the person with the gift is personally involved in distributing it. Here the person is not merely handing out cash to an organization they are actively involved in serving and putting to use their gift. They are serving at the food bank, going on a short term mission work, etc. Here the idea is helping people help themselves a “***hand up***” as well as a “***hand out***”!
8. **Ready to give, willing to share**: Procrastination is the enemy to being a blessing as we say, “*When I get a little extra, I’m going to us it to bless others*” which is a great intension that is seldom realized as it seems that something always comes up. It is the attitude that Peter and John manifested in Acts chapter 3 when they were heading into the temple and lame beggar ask for some money and Peter said, “*Silver and gold I do not have, but what I have I give to you…*” God never asks us to give what He has not provided but He does command us to give what He has given us so that others can, “*In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise and walk*.”

Vs. 19 Paul now concludes with **two increases** when you are willing to invest your treasure to bless others.

1. “***Storing up for themselves a good foundation for the time to come***”: The old adage is true: ***You can’t take it with you, but based upon this verse you can send it ahead through blessing others with your wealth***! The first increase deals with the future, as we are told that our investment in blessing folks from our treasure will lay up rewards in heaven. I personally believe that the treasure in heaven isn’t monetary or material but rather the people you have invested in will be there to greet you some of which you will meet for the first time never knowing them here on earth but because of your investment they became believers.
2. “***That they may lay hold on eternal life***”: Though the words “*eternal life*” seems to be pointing again to the future but the words “*that they may lay hold of*” is in the present tense thus what Paul is speaking is a present action that has a present benefit they will carry throughout eternity***. Using your wealth as a way to bless others that causes both the giver as well as the recipient to experience a little heaven now***. Jesus said in John 10:10 that He had come that “*they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly*.” Jesus uses a word here for life that doesn’t mean just eternal life but rather the zest or full abundant life now that will carry on into eternal life without end. To uses your God given resources as a blessing is to maximize your enjoyment here and now that will carry on forever. Wealth used this way becomes a great and wonderful adventure where excitement and pleasure way out lives the temporary material world of here today gone tomorrow.

**III. Vs. 20-21 Master’s decree**

Vs. 20-21 Here we come to Paul’s final words in this letter to his beloved son in the faith, Timothy. It starts with an exhortation guard or use rightly what God has given you. Throughout this letter Paul challenged Timothy to guard the truth against the counterfeits, as well as those who simply didn’t choose to obey the truth. Saint’s we know the difference between what it right (TRUTH) and wrong (philosophy of this world), it has been entrusted to our care and resides far more in how we live then what we intellectually agree with. Dear ones we must guard the truth by using it, living by it that is the best way to not allow someone to take it from us or to alter it making it less then what it is. Paul says, “*Don’t buy into the profane and idle babblings, the contradictions of what is falsely called knowledge*”. There are those that have a Master’s degree and those of us who have believed the decree from the Master!