

Two

Paul now makes the transition from his personal greetings to Timothy into the topics of the letter. He again emphasized the need for doctrinal purity. From the warnings and statements of events that have transpired in this letter, it is clear that this issue has become a serious threat to the integrity of the churches.

- ◆ All in Asia turned away (1:15)
- ◆ Words of false teachers are eating as gangrene (2:16-18)
- ◆ In last days grievous times will come (3:1)
- ◆ Evil men and imposters shall wax worse and worse (3:13)
- ◆ Will not endure sound doctrine; heap up teachers after their own lusts(4:3)
- ◆ Turn away from truth to fables (4:4)

Man's tendency to change God's law to suit his own desires must be continually warned against. To combat this problem, Timothy was told:

- ◆ Must hold fast to the truth himself (1:13-14)
- ◆ Commit these things to other faithful men (2:1-2)
- ◆ Suffer hardship as a good soldier of Jesus Christ (2:3)
- ◆ Charge not to strive about words to no profit (2:14)
- ◆ Give diligence, present yourself approved to God handle aright the word (2:15)
- ◆ Shun profane and vain babblings (2:16)
- ◆ Foolish and ignorant questions refuse (2:23)
- ◆ Abide in the things you have learned (3:14)
- ◆ Preach the word, be urgent in season and out of season (4:2)
- ◆ Reprove rebuke exhort with all longsuffering (4:2)
- ◆ Be sober, suffer hardship do the work of an evangelist. (4:5)

From all the above, it is clear that the primary role of an evangelist is to keep himself doctrinally pure and to urge others to do the same. His first duty is to hold fast to the pattern of sound words.

1 You therefore, my son,

With these two paths clearly set forth, Timothy must decide which one he will walk. He can turn away as all in Asia did, or he can follow the path of Onesiphorus. The conjunction "therefore" clearly ties this back to the previous words.

"oun... a conj. indicating that something follows from another necessarily; ... it is used in drawing a conclusion and in connecting sentences together logically, then, therefore, accordingly, consequently, these things being so... a. in exhortations (to show what ought now to be done by reason of what has been said), l. q. wherefore,..." (Thayer, p. 463-464; 3767)

Thus Paul exhorts Timothy regarding what he *"ought now to be done by reason of what has been said:"*

be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.

He is to be "strong"

"endunamoo... to make strong, endue with strength, strengthen... passively, to receive strength, be strengthened, increase in strength..." (Thayer, p. 214; 1743)

Paul wants Timothy to use the grace that is in Christ Jesus as his motivation to be made strong and endowed with strength. By meditating on all the "grace" that was given him when he entered Christ at baptism, Timothy will find strength.

"charis... grace; i.e. 1. prop. that which affords joy, pleasure, delight, sweetness, charm, loveliness: grace of speech... 2. good will, loving kindness, favor: in a broad sense... (favor i.e. act of favoring...) ... used of the kindness of a master towards his inferiors or servants, and so esp. of God towards men... the word charis contains the idea of kindness which bestows upon one what he has not deserved..." (Thayer, p. 665-666; 5485)

The kindness, good will and favor which Timothy had received when he entered Christ will more than compensate for the potential loss of liberty or even life he might endure by standing firmly. He must not cave in or be made ashamed now that the gospel was being severely persecuted. What men were doing had no bearing on the promised mercy of God. He must not waver or shrink back.

But my righteous one shall live by faith: And if he shrink back, my soul hath no pleasure in him. 39 But we are not of them that shrink back unto perdition; but of them that have faith unto the saving of the soul. Heb. 10:38-39

2 And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses,

Once again, Paul returns to the theme of this epistle. Timothy must hold the pattern of sound words. Though he is saying exactly the same thing, he now ties it back to the words of the apostles. The book of Acts recorded Paul taking Timothy with him as he preached the gospel and started churches in Philippi, Thessalonica, Berea, Athens and Corinth. Timothy had heard many sermons and attended many classes. He had heard many things from Paul. All of these things had made an impression on him. Paul never varied in his preaching, what Timothy had heard, many others had also heard. What makes this so powerful is stated by John:

"We are of God. He who knows God hears us; he who is not of God does not hear us. By this we know the spirit of truth and the spirit of error. 1Jn. 4:6

The things Timothy had heard were from Paul and Paul was "of God." When Timothy "heard," he proved he knew God. How they heard and responded to the words of the apostles and prophets determined truth and error.

commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.

Timothy is to "commit" all that he had heard from Paul to the future generation of faithful men.

"paratithemi... 2. Mid. to place down (from one's self or for one's self) with any one, to deposit; to intrust, commit to one's charge,.... to commend one to another for protection, safety, etc., ..." (Thayer, p. 486; 3908)

Paul's life and work was ending. Those who would continue his labor after he was gone must see to it that the work does not falter. In order to accomplish this, edification must continue. The work of the apostles and prophets must be continued by the evangelists pastors and teachers.

And he gave some (to be) apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; 12 for the perfecting of the saints, unto the work of ministering, unto the building up of the body of Christ: Eph. 4:11-12

Timothy's role in this is now further described. He is to "intrust, deposit and commit to one's charge" what he had learned among many witnesses. He must choose men who are "faithful - worthy of trust, that can be relied on." All evangelists must seek for faithful men and through teaching and example intrust to them the teachings of Scripture. This would ensure others would also be taught.

Here then is the Lord's simple plan. There is no hierarchy, no pomp and circumstance. Evangelists, pastors(shepherds) and teachers seek out faithful men and teach them. They in turn will become teachers, evangelists and pastors(shepherds) of the future and the will continue the process by teaching others also. In this way both time and distance would be overcome. As more and more were taught, new congregations would begin in other locations, and as those who were faithful grew old and passed on to their reward, others would take their place.

3 You therefore must endure hardship

If Timothy is going to fulfill the command to commit what he has heard from Paul among many witnesses, he must endure hardship. If the grace of God is to make him strong, he must endure hardship. When adversity comes and we cave in, it hurts our strength in the grace of God.

If you faint in the day of adversity, your strength is small. Pr. 24:10

There is nothing like enduring hardship to help one see that their faith is genuine and strong, and

there is nothing like caving in to hardship, that causes one to see how weak they are. If Timothy wanted to maintain his strength and honor, and thus maintain his feelings of esteem and value, he must endure hardship. The term “*endure hardship*” is defined:

“*sugkakopattheo...* (See *kakopattheo* to suffer hardship together with one... for the benefit of the gospel...” (Thayer, Joseph Henry; op. cit., p. 592)

“*kakopattheo...* to suffer(*endure*) evils (*hardship, troubles; to be afflicted...* used freq. of the hardships of military service...” (Thayer, Joseph Henry; op. cit., p. 320)

This is an interesting term. While we take *sumpathos* directly into English with sympathy and realize it means that we are willing to suffer along with the one who is suffering. The Greek *kakos* means evil, hardship, trouble. So we are sympathizing with the hardships of those who have suffered before us. Jesus would be the first and Paul and the other apostles followed. Now, Timothy must be willing to take on the same suffering with the same sympathy. As he teaches others he must also pass this along to them.

To fully illustrate the need for Timothy to see himself as joining in with the suffering of Jesus and Paul, Timothy, along with all Christians, he uses a soldier.

stratiotes ... (stratia) ... a citizen bound to military service; generally, a soldier, (Liddell and Scott Abridged Greek Lexicon. NT:4757)

Soldiers, under the command of generals, who are under Caesar, live their lives based on the circumstances they find themselves in. If there is peace, they work for peace. If there is war, they make the sacrifices necessary to fight the battles for the empire.

This perfectly illustrates those who are good soldiers of Jesus Christ.

Timothy, along with all Christians, and just like all military soldiers, must understand that the nature of the obligations and duties taken upon themselves when they decided to become the followers of Christ will sometimes lead into hardships, afflictions, troubles and trials. It is the very nature of being a soldier. Timothy therefore had an obligation to endure these troubles.

as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.

Paul uses “as” to help explain these hardships better:

“*hos...* an adverbial form of the relative pronoun HOS, HE, HO, which is used in comparison, *as, like as, even as, according as, in the same manner as, etc. ...*” (Thayer, Joseph Henry; op. cit., p. 680-682; 5613)

What the soldier fights for and the type of life he lives in this life is the perfect parable and figure for the relationship of Christians to Jesus. We are caught up in a great battle between good and evil that is exemplified in a symbolic way in Revelation:

And war broke out in heaven: Michael and his angels fought with the dragon; and the dragon and his angels fought, 8 but they did not prevail, nor was a place found for them in heaven any longer. 9 So the great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. ... 12 Therefore rejoice, O heavens, and you who dwell in them! Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and the sea! For the devil has come down to you, having great wrath, because he knows that he has a short time.” ... 17 And the dragon was enraged with the woman, and he went to make war with the rest of her offspring, who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ. Rev. 12:7-9, 12, 17

Satan is making war against us, seeking whom he may devour, his ministers, transformed into angels of light are also seeking to destroy us. We have all been warned to put on the whole armor of God, and have been encouraged that the weapons of our warfare are mighty.

Good soldiers of Christ are ready to suffer hardship with all other soldiers. This is not such an amazing thing when we look at the way things operate in this world. Many men give up their freedom to fight for the freedom of his loved ones and country. During that time he is completely loyal to his commanders, and is not allowed to go anywhere or do anything without permission. To

do so is to break the law. Soldiers make great sacrifices for their country. Some die in combat, others lose limb, others opportunities they could have had if they have not had to be soldiers. These men are to be highly commended for their sacrifices, and they become a very good example of what Jesus expects of his own people.

What follows are three analogies of how the good soldier of Jesus Christ can evaluate his service

There is a parallel between Timothy's present circumstances and that of other soldiers. Occasionally a military leader is captured and the men must carry on without him. The comparison therefore is very close to the kinds of things that can happen to the children of God. A soldier is a man who has decided, or been forced to give up a certain amount of his life in order to protect his country. During that time he is to be completely loyal to his commanders, and is not allowed to go anywhere or do anything without permission. To do so is to break the law. Soldiers make great sacrifices for their country. Some die in combat, others lose limb, others opportunities they could have had if they have not had to be soldiers. These men are to be highly commended for their sacrifices, and they become a very good example of what Jesus expects of his own people.

What follows are three analogies of how the good soldier of Jesus Christ can evaluate his service.

4 No one engaged in warfare entangles himself with the affairs of this life,

The term "engaged in warfare" refers to the time when the soldier is actually in the midst of a battle, or is on active duty.

"strateuomai... to make a military expedition, to lead soldiers to war or to battle, (spoken of a commander; to do military duty, be on active service, be a soldier; in the N. T. only in the mid. ... to fight... trop. of the conflicts of the apostolic office..." of passions that disquiet the soul..." (Thayer, Joseph Henry; op. cit., p. 590; 4754)

Whenever the soldier is called upon to be in active duty, he extricates himself from all earthly considerations. He does not allow the affairs of this life to hinder his being a soldier. While on active duty he is completely involved in being a soldier. The term "*entangles*" is defined:

"emplako... to inweave; trop. in pass., with dat. of thing, to entangle, involve in: II Tim. 2:4; II Pet. 2:20..." (Thayer, p. 208)

The idea is that of becoming so involved that one is entangled or woven into it and cannot easily extricate himself from it. When a Christian is so involved in this world that the sacrifices of being a soldier of Christ are becoming too difficult to make, then they are entangled in this world. The term "*affairs*" is defined:

"pragmateia... prosecution of any affair; business, occupation: plur. with the addition of tou biou, pursuits and occupations pertaining to civil life, opp. to warfare [A. V. the affairs of this life)..." (Thayer, p. 534)

When the hardships and difficulties of being a good soldier of Jesus Christ become too difficult or demanding, then we are too entangled and involved in this life. Each Christian must assess this question just as Timothy is to do so. We are not all as actively involved as soldiers, but none of us are exempt from this duty, and none so involved in the affairs of this life that they cannot take care of their obligations to their master.

A Soldier?

In the midst of one of my favorite songs is a phrase that always catches my attention. "***This is my Father's World***" describes the beauty of God's creation, but ends with "*in battle we must tread.*" This reminds us of those Scriptures that describe our present status as a Christian as a soldier fighting in a war. It is unwise for us to lose sight of this even for a moment in this age.

The Scriptures describe the victory won by Jesus' death on the cross as complete. Satan's head was bruised (Gen 3:15)! Jesus led captivity captive (Eph 4:8), bound the strong man (Mt 12:29); and through death brought to nought him that had the power of death, that is, the devil (Heb 2:14).

Jesus now has *the keys of death and of Hades*(Rev 1:18), and reigns as *King of kings and Lord of lords*(1Tim 6:15).

Though symbolic, John sums up what Jesus' accomplished as *“there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels going forth to war after this war was waged, the great dragon was cast down, the old serpent, he that is called the Devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world; he was cast down to the earth, and his angels were cast down with him”*(Rev 12:7-9). God is clear, the victory won in heaven was complete and final. *“Therefore rejoice, O heavens, and ye that dwell in them.”*(12:12) But as he turns his attention to those on the earth he gives a strong warning. *“Woe for the earth and for the sea: because the devil is gone down unto you, having great wrath, knowing that he hath but a short time, . . . he went away to make war with the rest of her seed, that keep the commandments of God, and hold the testimony of Jesus: (12:12, 17).*

No matter how we interpret this ‘symbolism,’ there is no doubt that God’s saints still on the earth are in the midst of a life and death struggle! The Devil is *‘making war’* against those *‘that keep the commands of God and hold the testimony of Jesus.’* *‘The devil as a roaring lion walks about seeking whom he may devour.’* (1Pet 5:8)

Paul tells us *‘the weapons of our warfare are mighty before God,’* (2Cor 10:4) warns us to *put on the whole armor of God,’* (Eph 6:11) also calls it *‘armor of righteousness,’*(2Cor 6:7) and *‘armor of light’* (Rom 13:12). He warned Timothy to *‘war the good warfare’* (1Tim 1:18) and *‘suffer hardship with me, as a good soldier of Christ Jesus’*(2Tim 2:3)

Do we see ourselves as *‘good soldiers of Christ Jesus?’* We sing *‘In battle we must tread,’ ‘the fight is on arouse ye soldiers brave and true,’ ‘soldiers of the cross,’* and *‘soldiers of Christ arise and put your armor on’* But has our thinking gone any further than these words others like them? As we arise in the morning is there urgency in our minds as we consider whether our armor is on and whether we will be victorious in any battles we may fight today? Does this vocabulary seem a little strange to us? How about the idea of *‘suffering hardship as a good soldier?’* If that were to happen today what would it be and how would we handle it?

Singing about being a soldier is one thing, being a soldier is something else. If we are really a *‘soldier of Christ’* who has truly *‘put our armor on’* then there is one passage that really ought to draw our attention and force careful thought:

No soldier on service entangleth himself in the affairs of (this) life; that he may please him who enrolled him as soldier. II Tim 2:4

This is the real issue isn’t it? We are at war. We are soldiers in a life and death spiritual struggle. These are realities we cannot deny. The only issue is whether we are soldiers prepared for battle or soldiers so *entangled* in the affairs of this life that we are no longer acting like soldiers at all. Are we competent enough in our battles that we can get the devil to flee?

Be subject therefore unto God; but resist the devil, and he will flee from you. 8 Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. James 4:7-8

We fight a *“spiritual host of wickedness in heavenly places.”* (Eph 6:12). They are fighting and waging war in deadly earnest. They know the time is short and they want to do as much damage as possible. Our time is also short. We want to do as much good as possible. With our armor on, doing battle with the sword of the Spirit, we can accomplish great good. (2Tim 2:26). Is this reality daily on our mind? 📌 *Alan*

that he may please him who enlisted him as a soldier.

Although it could be argued that Paul was involved, it seems better to understand this person as Jesus Christ “who enlisted him,” Timothy should strongly desire to please Him. This is the main motivation that keeps anyone from getting entangled in the affairs of this life:

“hina... a final conjunction(for from local direction, indicated by the adverb, the transition was easy to mental direction or intention) denoting purpose and end: to the intent that; to the end that, in order that;... it is used 1. prop of the purpose or end;... ” (Thayer, p. 302-304; 2443)

He wants to be pleasing to the one who enrolled him.

“aresko,... a. to please... b. to strive to please; to accommodate one’s self to the opinions, desires, interests of others...” (Thayer, p. 72; 700)

This term encompasses all that is necessary to please another person. You strive to do it, you accommodate yourself to accomplish it by catering to the opinions, desires and interests of others. In this case, it is the one who enrolled him as a soldier that Timothy is to accommodate and seek to please. A few important thoughts must be considered. First, the soldier must consider it an honor and privilege to serve. When Paul considered the great honor that God and Jesus had given him, he made these observations:

And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord who has enabled me, because He counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry, 13 although I was formerly a blasphemer, a persecutor, and an insolent man; but I obtained mercy because I did it ignorantly in unbelief. 14 And the grace of our Lord was exceedingly abundant, with faith and love which are in Christ Jesus. 1Tim. 1:12-14

But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me was not in vain; but I labored more abundantly than they all, yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me. 1Cor. 15:10

Paul wanted to please God and Jesus who had enabled and allowed him to become a part of the great conflict between light and darkness and good and evil. It is obvious then that our desire to seek to please is based on our gratitude for being able to serve. Without that, these words have little power. The term “enrolled as a soldier” is defined:

“stratologeō... to gather (collect) an army, to enlist soldiers... ho stratologesās [he that enrolled (him) as a soldier], of the commander 2Tim. 2:4...” (Thayer, p. 591)

When Jesus called us, He offered rest for our soul upon the condition of taking His yoke. Yet as the parable of the treasure in the field, those who sell all that they have will receive a hundredfold more in this life and in the life to come eternal life.

“Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. 29 “Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. 30 “For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.” Mt. 11:28 -30

“And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or lands, for My name’s sake, shall receive a hundredfold, and inherit eternal life. Mt 19:29-30

Yet the yoke is not something to minimize. It is a yoke of denial and a cross. Jesus did not come to bring peace, but a sword. All who take up this sword become soldiers of the cross.

Then He said to them all, “If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me. 24 For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will save it. 25 For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and is himself destroyed or lost? Lk. 9:23-25

“Do not think that I came to bring peace on earth. I did not come to bring peace but a sword. 35 For I have come to ‘set a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law’; 36 and ‘a man’s enemies will be those of his own household.’ 37 He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me. 38 And he who does not take his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me. 39 He who finds his life will lose it, and he who loses his life for My sake will find it. Mt. 10:34-39

When the time comes to endure hardship, we need to remember Jesus’ words and deal with anything that comes with fortitude in order to please Him who enrolled us.

5 And also if anyone competes in athletics,

Paul’s second analogy/parable comes from the Olympic games. Those who compete in such games have certain standards they must abide by. Paul begins with a hypothetical “if:”

“*ean*... a conditional particle (derived from *ei an*), which makes reference to time and to experience, introducing something future, but not determining, before the event, whether it is certainly to take place; if, in case, ... (Thayer, p. 162-163; 1437)

It doesn't matter where or when, when anyone competes in the public games in order to excel and show himself as a contender, then this one thing must hold true:

“*athleo*... to engage in a contest, contend in public games (e.g. Olypian, Pythian, Isthmian) ...” (Thayer, p. 14).

he is not crowned unless he competes according to the rules.

He cannot be crowned without certain conditions being met. The crown signified victory and honor:

“*stephanoo*... a. to encircle with a crown, to crown: the victor in a contest... b. univ to adorn, to honor...” (Thayer, p. 588)

It was given to the victor. But not just to any victor. Even today, simply crossing the finish line first does not in and of itself constitute a victory. There is more to it than that. The game must be fair, and the contenders must be honorable and just.

“*nomimos*... lawfully, agreeably to the law, properly...” (Thayer, p. 427)

This is as important if not more so than winning. Even our own proverb stresses this:

It doesn't matter whether you win or lose, but how you play the game.

This is especially true in the soldier of Christ. He must contend lawfully or all is lost. Christ is greatly concerned with the fairness and justice of his people. Without that, it just doesn't matter what else they accomplish.

Paul wants Timothy to consider carefully the meaning of this and have it permeate his being.

Competing in the Games  *Alan*

Everyone who competes in the games exercises self-control in all things. They then do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable (NAU) 1Cor 9:25

Every four years we watch nations gather to compete in athletic contests. We marvel at their strength, skill, and stamina. It is amazing to see what a properly trained body can accomplish. Through rigid training schedules they give it all they have. Self-control is exercised over food, sleep, event training and exercise. All for those few moments of glory and a hope for the prize.

The Holy Spirit wanted us to capture the emotions of these contests and apply them to our own efforts to receive the imperishable crown of eternal life. As we watch the self-control they exercise to master their event, how do our own efforts measure up? Can we honestly say we exercise the same degree of self-control to master our temptations as they have done to master their event? If this standard were used on the judgment day how will we compare?

Recent scandals have taught us that fairness in the competition is just as important as winning. There is no pleasure watching someone win by cheating. No matter how good an athlete or the amount of time and effort they put into their training, they are disqualified if they break the rules. Even after a decisive win, disqualification and stripping of a medal will occur if it is later determined steroids were used or a rule was broken. Paul's words ring as true today as when they were written, nearly 2000 years ago.

And if also a man contend in the games, he is not crowned, except he have contended lawfully. 2 Tim 2:5

Have we given careful thought to how this applies in the spiritual realm? We all know we must have a desire to show God our zeal and determination “*those who run in a race all run, but only one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may win*” (1 Cor 9:24), but what about this concept of contending lawfully. The point is clear. No matter what the results, if rules are violated all is in

vain!

How many times in Scripture has God made it clear that we must *not to go beyond what is written* (1Cor. 4:6) and that if we do not *abide in the teaching of Christ we have not God* (2Jn. 9)? How many times have we seen zealous people stripped of their prize because they did not compete according to God's rules? Cain was disqualified in his worship when he did not offer his gift by a *'hearing by the word of God'* faith. Nadab and Abihu were disqualified as priests when they brought *strange fire the Lord had not commanded them*. Moses was disqualified from entering the promised land when he *struck the rock and spoke unadvisedly with his lips*. Saul was disqualified from being king when he brought back some of the animals to sacrifice after God had said to utterly destroy them. This is exactly Paul's point to Timothy! You can't show God your zeal outside of his word and be successful!

We are in such terrible danger of this attitude today. If we have any of the *that we also may be like all the nations* then we may be tempted to change the rules to get results. When other churches grow by changing the rules it causes some to think we ought to do the same. We already see this among the more liberal churches of Christ. They change the work, worship and organization of the church all in the glorious quest to win souls.

Has God ever been more interested in results than *competing lawfully*? Samuel told Saul that *to obey is better*, are we listening? Paul *was already being offered and the time of my departure is come*. He had *fought the good fight, finished the course, and kept the faith*. Paul had always buffeted his own body to compete according to rules. *"I buffet my body and make it my slave, lest possibly, after I have preached to others, I myself should be disqualified."* (NAS) 1 Cor 9:27

No matter how much better an athlete could be by cheating it defeats the entire purpose of competition. Since *we walk by faith and not by sight*, it defeats the entire purpose when we begin *to lean upon our own understanding*. Our crown is based on our efforts to *trust in Jehovah with all our hearts*. We will only stumble if we change any of God's rules to gain some temporary results here. *Every plant my heavenly Father did not plant shall be rooted up*.

6 The hard-working farmer must be first to partake of the crops.

Paul's third and final analogy revolves around a farmer. Many of Jesus parables use farming as the vehicle to teach spiritual truths. The sower, tares, mustard seed, vineyard, fig tree, seed, husbandmen are all tools Jesus used to teach mysteries hidden from the foundation of the world.

"georgos... a husbandman, tiller of the soil..." (Thayer, p. 114)

With all the spiritual truths already revealed by Jesus, we only have to compare Paul's words here to determine which elements of farming the Spirit wanted Timothy to understand. It seems pointless to limit it though since everything Jesus said about farming could easily be a part of the hard working farmer. Yet Paul identified the type of farmer as "hard-working:"

"kopiao... 1. ... to grow weary, tired, exhausted, (with toil or burdens or grief)... 3. in bibl. Grk. alone, to labor with wearisome effort, to toil... of bodily labor... of the toilsome efforts of teachers in proclaiming and promoting the kingdom of God and Christ..." (Thayer, p. 355; 2872)

This is the dedicated farmer who rises before the dawn and finishes with the setting of the sun. He grows weary, tired and exhausted in his work. It is hard bodily toil that he exercises in his labor. James added that the hardworking farmer is also patient:

Therefore be patient, brethren, until the coming of the Lord. See how the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, waiting patiently for it until it receives the early and latter rain. 8 You also be patient. Establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand. Jas. 5:7-8

The thing about this farmer that Paul wanted Timothy to carefully consider he called a great necessity:

"dei... It is necessary, there is need of, it behooves, is right and proper; ... a. necessity lying in the nature

of the case:... necessity brought on by circumstances or by the conduct of others toward us... c. necessity in reference to what is required to attain some end... d. a necessity of law and command, of duty, equity... i. e. necessity established by the counsel and decree of God..." (Thayer, p. 126: 1163).

It is absolutely essential that the hardworking farmer partake of his fruits.

"metalambano... to be or be made a partaker... to partake of, take [some] food..." (Thayer, p. 405)

"karpos... (harvest i.e. the ingathering of crops)... 1. prop. the fruit of trees... 2. Metaph. that which originates or comes from something; an effect, result... work, act, deed..." (Thayer, p. 326)

Since this such an obvious conclusion, with Paul telling Timothy to carefully consider it, there is clearly something deeper involved. Every farmer "plows in hope: "

For it is written in the law of Moses, "You shall not muzzle an ox while it treads out the grain." Is it oxen God is concerned about? 10 Or does He say it altogether for our sakes? For our sakes, no doubt, this is written, that he who plows should plow in hope, and he who threshes in hope should be partaker of his hope. 11 If we have sown spiritual things for you, is it a great thing if we reap your material things? 1Cor. 9:9-11

So what are the fruits that a farmer partakes of, that allows him to plow in hope? First, he eats his own crops as they are the sustenance of his life. Second, he sells them to purchase his other needs. He must always be the first one to do this, or he is not plowing in hope since another will gain all the fruits of his labor.

So to what fruits of Timothy's labor in the gospel is Paul referring? There seem to be two clear answers. First, the fruits could be the material benefits the farmer and preacher gain from his hard work as Paul described above. But this doesn't really seem to fit the context. There is a much higher thought. As Timothy seeks the growth and development of those he preaches to, what about Timothy? All the time and effort he puts into his sermons and classes with the intent of bringing about a change in those who hear him are profitable to them. He is sowing spiritual things seeking growth, repentance and maturity. Shouldn't he be the first one to partake of his own efforts to strengthen others.

Meditate on these things; give yourself entirely to them, that your progress may be evident to all. 16 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. (1 Tim. 4:15-16).

Are the fruits the great benefits of the gospel itself that Timothy who is seeking to sow in the hearts of other must also be the first to partake of them himself? This appears to be the reason behind the Holy Spirit's strong condemnation of the Jews.

You, therefore, who teach another, do you not teach yourself? You who preach that a man should not steal, do you steal? 22 You who say, "Do not commit adultery," do you commit adultery? You who abhor idols, do you rob temples? 23 You who make your boast in the law, do you dishonor God through breaking the law? 24 For "the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you," as it is written. Rom 2:21-24

When the preaching doesn't match the conduct grave harm follows. All the fruit the gospel is to produce in the life of a Christian, the preacher must be the first to partake of, or he will be seen as a hypocrite. Consider God's words to Joshua.

Only be strong and very courageous, that you may observe to do according to all the law which Moses My servant commanded you; do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left, that you may prosper wherever you go. 8 This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success. Josh 1:7-9

It is not enough to preach that others should do these things. It is not enough for leaders to lead others to do God's will. The very fact that a preacher is exhorting others to make these changes should force him to be the first to do it himself.

The Hard Working Farmer

"The hardworking farmer must be first to partake of the crops" is the third *parable* Paul had asked Timothy to carefully consider (2Tim 2:4-6). The earthly side is easy. From the beginning those who tilled soil have done so in the *sweat of their face* (Gen 3:17-19), but the reward of the work always eased the burden: *"He that plows ought to plow in hope, and he that threshes, in hope of partaking"* (1Cor 9:10). By being the first to partake of the crops he received the fruit of his labor and great blessings. The blessing isn't the work. It is *"partaking of the crops."* But what does this have to do with Timothy?

This is not the first time farming was the foundation of a parable. Jesus used the sower and the barren fig tree in similar ways. In the sower (Mt 13) Jesus revealed that fruit is the sign of a good and honest heart. In the fig tree (Lk 13:6-9) he made the point that without fruit the fig tree had no value at all. That these were important conclusions was made evident when he spoke to his apostles about the vine and the branches (Jn 15). When he said *"My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit, and so prove to be my disciples"* he was emphasizing how important it was that the hardworking disciple be the first to partake of the fruits. By *"partaking of the crops,"* we *"glorify God"* and *"prove to be My disciples."* When the hard work brings no fruit, then *"every branch in Me that does not bear fruit, He takes away."* If we are not the *"first to partake of the crops,"* it is all in vain.

Look at the negative side first. This was Israel's failure. They never partook of the crops. *"You, therefore, who teach another, do you not teach yourself? You who preach: a man should not steal, do you steal? You who say, Do not commit adultery, do you commit adultery? You who boast in the law, do you dishonor God through breaking the law? For The name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you."* (Rom 2:21-28)

Hardworking spiritual farmers sow the word in the fertile soil of a good and honest heart. These same farmers are the first to partake of the fruits. The hardworking farmer sows God's commands within his heart. He *"meditates on them all the days of his life."* He is the first to partake of the crops when he keeps those laws in his own heart. No matter how *hardworking* he is, he is only hypocrite if he is not the *first to partake* of those crops. The terrible outcome of such *"hard work"* is to *"dishonor God"* and see *"the name of God blasphemed because of you."*

Imagine stopping at a fruit stand and talking to a farmer. "How good does the crop taste this year?" you ask. "Are you kidding," he replies "I would never eat that!" Not a very good advertisement is it?

Those who seek to influence others must first *"partake of the crops"* themselves. Paul illustrated the connection between hard work and partaking of the crops: *"Meditate on these things; give yourself entirely to them, that your progress may be evident to all. 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"* (1Tim 4:15-16)

Some of the harshest words Jesus spoke on earth were directed against those who though *"hardworking farmers"* had no intention of *"partaking of the crops."* *"Yea, they bind heavy burdens and grievous to be borne, and lay them on men's shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with their finger"* (Mt 23:4, 25-28) *"Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites:"* *"you cleanse the outside of the cup"* but inside are full of extortion and self-indulgence," *"you are like whitewashed tombs"* for *"you outwardly appear righteous to men, but inside you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness."*

What of us? Do we practice what we preach? Are we harder on others than we are upon ourselves. Never forget: *"why do you look at the speck in your brother's eye, but do not perceive the plank in your own eye?"* *"How can you say to your brother, let me remove the speck that is in your eye, when you yourself do not see the plank that is in your own eye? Hypocrite! First remove the plank from your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck that is in your brother's"*

eye” (Lk 6:41-42). “The hard working farmer is always first to partake of the fruits!”

7 Consider what I say,

These three things are to be carefully considered by Timothy. Like Joshua they are to be meditated upon day and night.

“noeo... 1 to perceive with the mind, to understand... absol. with the addition *te kardia*... w. an acc. of the thing, ... absol. i.q. to have understanding... 2. to think upon, heed, ponder, consider ...” (Thayer, p. 427; 3539)

He is to think upon them, ponder and seek to understand them. They are of great importance, and the lessons they teach will greatly help any child of God. Carefully consider Moses last words to Israel:

And Moses made an end of speaking all these words to all Israel; 46 And he said unto them, Set your heart unto all the words which I testify unto you this day, which ye shall command your children to observe to do, (even) all the words of this law. 47 For it is no vain thing for you; because it is your life, and through this thing ye shall prolong your days in the land, whither ye go over the Jordan to possess it. Deut 32:45-47

and may the Lord give you understanding in all things(KJV). for the Lord will give you understanding(ASV, NASB, ESV)

While the NKJV used “and,” it does not give the fulness of the definition of this conjunction. The later versions all used “for” which gives a fuller insight into the word.

“*gar*... denoting *truly therefore, verily as the case stands*, ... the reason and cause of a foregoing statement is added, whence arises the causal or argumentative force of the particle, *for*... or some previous declaration is explained, whence GAR takes on an explicative force *for, the fact is, namely*... thus the force is either conclusive, or demonstrative, or explicative and declaratory...” (Thayer, p. 109-110; 1063)

This is a promise following upon the need for him to ponder and grasp it. The Lord will give him the necessary help. The reason Timothy should seek to consider and ponder is the promise that by so doing, the Lord will give him the necessary understanding. The term “give” is defined:

“*didomi*... to give... A. absolutely and generally... B. In construction... I to give something to some one, - in various senses; 1. of one’s own accord to give one something, to his advantage; to bestow; give as a gift... 2. to grant, give to one asking, let have... 3. to supply, furnish, necessary things... 4. to give over, deliver, ... 5. to give what is due or obligatory, to pay: wages or reward... 6. DIDOMI is joined with nouns denoting an act or an effect...” (Thayer, p. 145-147; 1325)

The Lord is going to freely grant, supply and furnish the necessary things for Timothy to have a good understanding:

“*sunesis*,... 1 a running together, a flowing together: of two rivers,... 2. a. ... understanding... b. the understanding, i. e. the mind so far forth as it understands...” (Thayer, p. 604; 4907)

The Greeks had two rivers running together as a means of manifesting understanding. The one has the facts and truths, the other our mind seeking to grasp and apply. When these two rivers join into one we have mastered the subject. We say something similar in “putting two and two together.” It is just a way of manifesting understanding of a difficult situation. Once mastered, it is understood and there is no longer a gap between the question and the solution. They have run together. When first reading these analogies their words and our understanding may be in two different places. The Lord will bring the together and enlighten us.

Every evangelist must remember that there are two important conditions to the Lord granting us understanding. First is our own effort and second is our reliance on the Lord.

Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. 2 Tim 2:15-16

If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it

will be given to him. 6 But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for he who doubts is like a wave of the sea driven and tossed by the wind. 7 For let not that man suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord; 8 he is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways. James 1:5-8

2Tim 2:8-

There are some differences between the NKJV and NASB, that affect how we understand Paul's words. They are not based on the text, only a decision of word order. The NASB follows the Greek word order, while the NKJ moves the words and adds "that." The NAS seems simpler and preferable.

Remember that Jesus Christ, of the seed of David, was raised from the dead according to my gospel, NKJV

Remember Jesus Christ, risen from the dead, descendant of David, according to my gospel, NASB

8 Remember Jesus Christ,

There are so many things that keep Jesus in our remembrance. His life and death are the power behind the gospel. When we lose sight of it, the gospel loses its power to hold and move us.

On the first day of the week, we are to remember His body and blood.

Every time we witness a baptism we remember his death, burial, and resurrection.

When we end every prayer with "in Jesus name" we remember our one Mediator.

We must never lose sight of Jesus in our daily life. He is to be in our minds as we make every decision.

"Why do you call Me, 'Lord, Lord,' and do not do what I say? Lk. 6:46

Every day of our lives, through every challenge, every sin, every presecution and trial, we must be looking unto Jesus.

Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, 2 looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. 3 For consider Him who endured such hostility from sinners against Himself, lest you become weary and discouraged in your souls. 4 You have not yet resisted to bloodshed, striving against sin. (Heb. 12:1-4).

Paul's concern for Timothy centers on the great trials that lie ahead. No one can endure the terrible price of remaining faithful until death unless they are always "remembering."

"mnemoneuo... 1. to be mindful of, to remember, to call to mind... to think of and feel for a person or thing... 2. to make mention of..." (Thayer, p. 416; 3421)

Being mindful and calling to mind are two parts of remembering. First, we must always be mindful so that we can keep it in the forefront of our minds. As we keep these things ever present, the things we experience continually bring out new aspects of Jesus. It should not be that as we partake of the Lord's Supper we are just then remembering. It is already in our minds (we never forget), just new aspects of it come again.

In this passage, Paul specifies two especially important elements of our being mindful. His lineage and His resurrection.

of the seed of David,

The Scriptures speak of David's seed twice, both as the proof He was the Messiah.

Has not the Scripture said that the Christ comes from the seed of David and from the town of Bethlehem, where David was?" Jn7:42-43

the gospel of God 2 which He promised before through His prophets in the Holy Scriptures, 3 concerning His Son Jesus Christ our Lord, who was born of the seed of David according to the flesh, 4 and declared to be the Son of God with power according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead. Rom1:1-4

God had promised through the prophets that His son would come through Eve(Gen. 3:15), Abraham(Gen. 12:1-3), Judah (Gen. 49:9-10) and finally through David.

Jehovah has sworn unto David in truth; He will not turn from it: Of the fruit of thy body will I set upon

thy throne. Ps 132:11;

Once have I sworn by my holiness: I will not lie unto David: His seed shall endure for ever, And his throne as the sun before me. Ps 89:35-36;

Behold the days come, saith Jehovah, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and he shall reign as king and deal wisely, and shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely; and this is his name whereby he shall be called: Jehovah our righteousness. Jer 23:5

Prophecy, confirmation, and fulfillment are all within this remembrance. We must never lose sight of the evidence and the confidence these prophecies reveal. He is sitting on the throne of David as King of kings and Lord of lords. When a descendant of David again reigned on the throne and ruled, no one will vanquish Him.

"Yet I have set My King On My holy hill of Zion." 7 "I will declare the decree: The Lord has said to Me, 'You are My Son, Today I have begotten You. 8 Ask of Me, and I will give You The nations for Your inheritance, And the ends of the earth for Your possession. 9 You shall break them with a rod of iron; You shall dash them to pieces like a potter's vessel.'" Ps 2:6-9

They may win a temporary victory over a few of God's people in destroying their life or liberty as they did over Jesus. But our Jesus is the Master King! Timothy must never to forget this. They cannot conquer.

was raised from the dead

Not only was Timothy to remember Jesus as the seed of David, but also that He was raised from the dead. This brings up two important points. First, that Jesus faced a difficult situation very similar to the one Paul was now in for the same reason. Jesus was killed for His stand on the truth of the gospel. Second, He was now the victor. Living again in heaven, forever raised from the dead.

"egeiro... used intransitively and employed as a formula for arousing; properly, *rise*, i.e. *up! come!... to arouse, cause to rise...* 1. as in Grk. writ. fr. Homer down, *to arouse from sleep, to awake...* pass. *to be awaked, wake up...* 2. *to arouse, from the sleep of death, to recall the dead to life...* 3. in later usage generally to *cause to rise, raise*, from a seat, bed, etc. ..." (Thayer, p. 165; 1453)

according to my gospel,

Both these truths are clearly revealed in the gospel Paul preached and the one that He would now die for. The gospel is Jesus of the seed of David, raised from the dead.

"kata,... II with the Accusative... 3. it denotes reference, relation, proportion, of various sorts; a. distributively, indicating a succession of things following one another... b... *as respects; with regard to; in reference to; so far as relates to; as concerning;*...c. *according to, agreeably to*; in reference to agreement or conformity to a standard, in various ways (aa) *according to anything as a standard, agreeably to...*(bb) *in proportion to, according to the measure of...*" (Thayer, p. 328; 2596)

This is the good news Paul was preaching.

"euaggelion... 1. *reward for good tidings...* 2. *good tidings...* In the N.T. spec. a. *the glad tidings of the kingdom of God... the glad tidings of salvation through Christ; the proclamation of the grace of God manifested and pledged in Christ; the gospel...*" (Thayer, p. 257; 2098)

It is the gospel Peter preached in the very first sermon and the one Paul preached in his first sermon, and the one told the Corinthians was what he preached.

Therefore, being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him that of the fruit of his body, according to the flesh, He would raise up the Christ to sit on his throne, 31 he, foreseeing this, spoke concerning the resurrection of the Christ, that His soul was not left in Hades, nor did His flesh see corruption. 32 This Jesus God has raised up, of which we are all witnesses. Acts 2:30-33

He raised up for them David as king, to whom also He gave testimony and said, 'I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after My own heart, who will do all My will.' 23 From this man's seed, according to the promise, God raised up for Israel a Savior — Jesus— 29 Now when they had fulfilled all that was written concerning Him, they took Him down from the tree and laid Him in a tomb. 30 But

God raised Him from the dead. 31 He was seen for many days by those who came up with Him from Galilee to Jerusalem, who are His witnesses to the people. 32 And we declare to you glad tidings — that promise which was made to the fathers. Acts 13:22-23; 29-33

Moreover, brethren, I declare to you the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received and in which you stand, 2 by which also you are saved, if you hold fast that word which I preached to you — unless you believed in vain. 3 For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, 4 and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures, 5 and that He was seen by Cephas, then by the twelve. 1 Cor 15:1-6

What we first believed when we obeyed the gospel, we must remember and never forget. They give power to our faith and strength to our convictions.

9 for which I suffer trouble as an evildoer,

“For” here is actually “*in the midst of which*.” This is the only thing that had brought about the terrible circumstances he now faced. His preaching that Jesus was a risen king, sitting on the throne of David had caught attention of Rome. Whether this was the reason, or the excuse is impossible to say, but over time became the central reason for all persecution. Soon Christians would be asked if there was any king but Caesar, and their life or death would be determined by their answer. Because of Paul’s answer, he was now suffering trouble.

“*kakopatheo... to suffer(endure) evils (hardship, troubles; to be afflicted... used freq. of the hardships of military service...*” (Thayer, p. 320)

This word combines the evils and hardships he was forced to endure with the feelings it had created in his heart. He was having to endure the trials and hardships of a soldier for the gospel of the great king. He was also considered as an evil doer.

“*kakourgos... a malefactor... of a robber...*” (Thayer, p. 320)

Paul had become a wicked and evil man, because he was preaching the good news that Rome did not want to hear.

even to the point of chains;

The hardships Paul was enduring, and the general attitude held by some that those who preached Christ as God’s Messiah were evil doers to be treated like a robber or murderer had led as far and and up to the point of chains.

“*mechri,... as far as, unto, until; 1. it has the force of a preposition with the gen...and is used a. of time... b. of place... c. of measure and degree... so that he did not shrink even from death.*” (Thayer, p. 408).

Jesus had told Paul even from the very beginning when he was first called that it would lead to this:

But the Lord said to him, “Go, for he is a chosen vessel of Mine to bear My name before Gentiles, kings, and the children of Israel. 16 “For I will show him how many things he must suffer for My name’s sake.”

Now it had done so, and he was not ashamed and did not want anyone else to be either. He was a prisoner of the Roman empire for preaching Christ and the chain even at that moment held him fast.

“*desmios... bound, in bonds, a captive, a prisoner,...*” (Thayer, p. 129; 1198)

but the word of God is not chained.

Yet though the government held one the greatest proponents of Christianity, all it really had was one preacher, Paul had completed his work as an apostle by writing the books of the NT Scripture. They could no longer have any real impact on Jesus or His people because the Word had already been revealed and it could never be impacted by human will. He used a strong adversative to stress this point:

“*alla... an adversative particle... hence properly, other things sc. than those just mentioned. I But. So related to the preceding words that it serves to introduce 1. an opposition to concessions; nevertheless,*

notwithstanding:... 2. an objection... 3. an exception... 4. a restriction... 5. an ascensive transition or gradation, *nay rather, yea moreover*..." (Thayer, p. 27-28; 235)

Paul was bound, but not the Word of God! It is still doing its work throughout the Roman Empire and no one could stop it!

10 Therefore I endure all things for the sake of the elect,

The term "*therefore*" is made up of two Greek terms: "*dia.. through...* of the means/instrument by which anything is effected," and "*touto*, refers to what precedes... *for this very cause... for this reason...* prepares the reader or hearer and renders him attentive to what follows, which thus gets special weight"

Thus, through this very reason(with special weight) that the word of God is not chained! Nothing else matters than that. Once that has been completed and the salvation of all future generations secured, Paul can endure anything else.

"hupomeno... 1. *to remain i.e. tarry behind...* 2. *to remain i.e. abide*, not recede or flee; trop. a. *to persevere*: absol. and emphatic. under misfortunes and trials to hold fast to one's faith in Christ... b. *to endure bravely, bear bravely and calmly*: absol., ill-treatment..." (Thayer, p. 644)

This is the man who has already said,

Now when we heard these things, both we and those from that place pleaded with him not to go up to Jerusalem. 13 Then Paul answered, "What do you mean by weeping and breaking my heart? For I am ready not only to be bound, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus." Acts 21:12-13

For I think that God has displayed us, the apostles, last, as men condemned to death; for we have been made a spectacle to the world, both to angels and to men. 1Cor. 4:9-10

I tell the truth in Christ, I am not lying, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Spirit, 2 that I have great sorrow and continual grief in my heart. 3 For I could wish that I myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my countrymen according to the flesh, Rom. 9:1-4

There were great issues at stake. He must remain firm and persevere for the sake of the elect. His death would seal his own faith in what he was preaching. When one dies for what he believes in, it is a powerful testimony. The term *martyr* is the Greek word for witness. So it was not only for Paul's integrity and his "*gain*" but also "for the sake of" God's chosen ones.

according to my earnest expectation and hope that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but with all boldness, as always, so now also Christ will be magnified in my body, whether by life or by death. 21 For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain. 22 But if I live on in the flesh, this will mean fruit from my labor; yet what I shall choose I cannot tell. 23 For I am hard-pressed between the two, having a desire to depart and be with Christ, which is far better. Phil 1:20-24

Paul was doing this not just for himself, but also for the "elect."

"eklektos... choice, select ... hence, eminent: Rom 16:13 (cf. Ezek 27:24). ... 2. As in Inscr. (MM, Exp., xii), chosen; esp. as in LXX, of Israel, elect, chosen of God (Isa 65:9, Ps 105:43 , al.); (from Abbott-Smith Manual Greek Lexicon of the NT; NT:1588.)

God created the gospel to draw a certain type of people. Everyone who by their own freewill seeks to obey the gospel is one of God's elect. Those who through the years would be called by the gospel and thus specially chosen by God to inherit salvation. Paul knew it was critical that he remain faithful no matter what the fate.

that they also may obtain the salvation

Paul uses "*hina... to the intent that; to the end that, in order that; ... of the purpose or end*" to stress why he was enduring these things for the elect. He wanted to do his part to give the elect the opportunity to obtain salvation.

I now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up in my flesh what is lacking in the afflictions of Christ, for the sake of His body, which is the church, 25 of which I became a minister according to the stewardship from God which was given to me for you, to fulfill the word of God, Col 1:24-26

And I will very gladly spend and be spent for your souls; though the more abundantly I love you, the less I am loved. 2 Cor 12:15

He had spent his life doing anything and everything he could to help others be saved. He would hold fast to that until the very end to do his part to help as many as possible “*obtain*” salvation.

“tugchano... 1. trans. a. prop. to hit the mark(opp. to hamartanein to miss the mark), of one discharging a javelin or arrow,... b. trop. to reach, attain, obtain, get, become master of... 2. intrans. to happen, chance, fall out... to specify, to take a case as, for example...” (Thayer, p. 632)

It is the exact opposite of the term dtranslated “*sin*” becuase sin is missing the mark. But in thjis case Paul will do all he can so the the elect will hit the mark, to reach, obtain and attain to the great goal of salvation:

“soteria... deliverance, preservation, safety, salvation: deliverance from the molestation of enemies,... (Thayer, p. 612; 4991)

which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory.

This salvation is in the very person who brought about Paul’s persecution. It is in the very Christ who is of the seed of David and who is now raised from the dead. Paul cannot walk away from Jesus. He found the same dilemma Jesus gave to the other apostles.

From that time many of His disciples went back and walked with Him no more. 67 Then Jesus said to the twelve, “Do you also want to go away?” 68 But Simon Peter answered Him, “Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. Jn. 6:66-68

Along with every other blessing, salvation is also Christ.

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ, 4 just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love, 5 having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, Eph. 1:3-5

No matter where he leads, we must follow him if we are to retain that. This salvation will come “*with*” eternal glory.

“meta... a preposition, akin to mesos... and hence prop. in the midst of, amid, denoting association, union, accompaniment;... 1. With the genitive, 1. among, with... 2. of association and companionship, with...” (Thayer, p. 402-404; 3326)

In the midst and in association and accompaniment with this salvation is eternal glory.

“doxa,... As a translation of the Hebrew in a use foreign to Greek writings... splendor, brightness; 1. ...of the sun, moon, stars,... used of the heavenly brightness, by which God was conceived of as surrounded,... 2. magnificence, excellence, preeminence, dignity, grace... 3. majesty; a. that which belongs to God; and b. the kingly majesty which belongs to him as the supreme ruler; ... 4, a most glorious condition, most exalted state;... b. the glorious condition of blessedness into which it is appointed and promised that true Christians shall enter after their Saviour’s return from heaven... “ (Thayer p 155-156; 1391)

“aionios... 1. without beginning or end, that which always has been and always will be... 2. without beginning... 3. without end, never to cease, everlasting...” (Thayer, p. 20; 166)

This appears to begin immediately after we die.

And behold, two men talked with Him, who were Moses and Elijah, 31 who appeared in glory and spoke of His decease which He was about to accomplish at Jerusalem. Lk. 9:30-32

There is a majesty and excellence to this salvation which will never end. It will be glorious, blessed and exalted, and it will go on forever and ever.

11 This is a faithful saying:

Timothy has become quite accustomed to this expression from Paul. He used it in I Tim. 1:15; 3:1; and 4:9. It is his means of expressing something that he considers true under all circumstances and

at all times. The term “faithful” is defined:

“pistos... trusty, faithful; of persons who show themselves faithful in the transaction of business, the execution of commands, or the discharge of official duties... worthy of trust, that can be relied on...”
(Thayer, p. 514)

You can rely on this statement. It is worthy of your trust. It will never fail or be wrong. What Paul is about to say is a reliable collection of worthy thoughts that ought to be accepted under all circumstances.

for if we died with Him,

Paul rapidly reminds us of the process that led to this salvation and eternal glory. He began with “for”

“gar... truly therefore, verily as the case stands, by the use of this particle, either the reason and cause of a foregoing statement is added, whence arises the causal or argumentative force of the particle, for...” (Thayer, p. 109-110)

This is the reason and cause of the previous words. We have already “died with Him.”

“sunapothnesko... to die together with one... Mk. 14:31; sc. humas emoi, that ye may die together with me, ... “ (Thayer, p. 604)

Paul has made it abundantly clear the exact moment when we died with Jesus. It was in the final step of obedience to the gospel, in the action of baptism

Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? 4 Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. 5 For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection, 6 knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin. 7 For he who has died has been freed from sin. 8 Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him, Rom. 6:3-8

In Him you were also circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ, 12 buried with Him in baptism, in which you also were raised with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead. 13 And you, being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has made alive together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses, Col. 2:11-13

we shall also live with Him.

This too is expressed as what occurs in baptism. Baptism is our own death burial and resurrection that ties us to His. When we come up from out the water we are not living with Him.

“suzao... to live together with one... to live a new life in union with the risen Christ, i.e. a life dedicated to God... to live a blessed life iwth him after death...” (Thayer, p. 594)

12 If we endure,

The term endure is the same one Paul used in 2:10 to describe what he himself was presently doing:

“hupomeno... 1. to remain i.e. tarry behind... 2. to remain i.e. abide, not recede or flee; trop. a. to persevere: absol. and emphatic. under misfortunes and trials to hold fast to one’s faith in Christ... b. to endure bravely, bear bravely and calmly: absol., ill-treatment...” (Thayer, p. 644)

We have bear what must be borne. We must endure whatever must be endured. We have to show ourselves faithful by whatever trials and tribulations fall to us.

Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life. Rev 2:10

Then many false prophets will rise up and deceive many. 12 And because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold. 13 But he who endures to the end shall be saved. Matt 24:11-13

we shall also reign with Him.

This is something that will also occur after we are in glory. We are given glimpses of this, but it has not been fully revealed.

“sumbasileuo ... to reign together... metaph. to possess supreme honor, liberty, blessedness, with one in the kingdom of God...” (Thayer, p. 595)

“Worthy are You to take the book and to break its seals; for You were slain, and purchased for God with Your blood men from every tribe and tongue and people and nation. 10 You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to our God; and they will reign upon the earth.” Rev. 5:9-10

If we deny Him, he also will deny us.

The great temptation every Christian faces under persecution is to “deny” Him.

“arneomai... 1. to deny, i. e. [... to say...not, contradict]... 2. to deny, with an acc. of the pers., in various senses...a. ... of the followers of Jesus who, for fear of death or persecution, deny that Jesus is their master, and desert his cause [to disown]... b.. of those who by cherishing and disseminating pernicious opinions and immorality are adjudged to have apostatized from God and Christ... c. ...to deny himself... 3. to deny i.e. abnegate, abjure;... to renounce a thing, forsake it... 4. not to accept to reject, refuse something offered...” (Thayer, p. 74; 720)

If we deny Him, persecution will cease and we will be once again among them.

“If the world hates you, you know that it hated Me before it hated you. 19 If you were of the world, the world would love its own. Yet because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you. 20 Remember the word that I said to you, 'A servant is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you. If they kept My word, they will keep yours also.” John 15:18-21

But it comes at a great cost.

“Therefore whoever confesses Me before men, him I will also confess before My Father who is in heaven. 33 “But whoever denies Me before men, him I will also deny before My Father who is in heaven. 34 “Do not think that I came to bring peace on earth. I did not come to bring peace but a sword. 35 “For I have come to “set a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law”; 36 “and “a man’s enemies will be those of his own household.’ 37 “He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me. 38 “And he who does not take his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me. 39 “He who finds his life will lose it, and he who loses his life for My sake will find it.” Mt. 10:32-39

13 If we are faithless,

“apisteuo... 1. to betray a trust, be unfaithful... 2. to have no belief, disbelieve...” (Thayer, p. 57)

If we betray Him, turn our backs on him, stop believing in him. If we do not continue to do what we promised and fall back.

he remains faithful;

Jesus will always be faithful, no matter what we do. He will remain faithful. The term “remain” is defined:

“meno... to remain, abide; ... I. intransitively; in reference 1. to PLACE... a. to sojourn, tarry... b. tropically; ... not to depart, not to leave, to continue to be present... 2. to TIME; to continue to be, i.e. not to perish, to last, to endure: of persons, to survive, live... of things, not to perish, to last, stand... of purposes, moral excellences,... Heb 13:1...” (Thayer, p. 399)

“Faithful”

“pistos... trusty, faithful; of persons who show themselves faithful in the transaction of business, the execution of commands, or the discharge of official duties... worthy of trust, that can be relied on...” (Thayer, p. 514)

Jesus will always do exactly what he promised. Reread His words in (Mt. 10:32-39). He will do this.

Whatever we choose to do, faithful or unfaithful, he will always remain faithful and true to His words.

he cannot deny Himself.

“dunamai... to be able, have power, whether by virtue of one’s own ability and resources, or of a state of mind, or through favorable circumstances, or by permission of law or custom... to be able to do something... to be able, capable, strong, powerful...” (Thayer, p. 158-159; 1410)

“arneomai... 1. to deny, i. e. [... to say...not, contradict]... 2. to deny, with an acc. of the pers., in various senses...a. ... of the followers of Jesus who, for fear of death or persecution, deny that Jesus is their master, and desert his cause [to disown]... b.. of those who by cherishing and disseminating pernicious opinions and immorality are adjudged to have apostatized from God and Christ... c. ...to deny himself... 3. to deny i.e. abnegate, abjure;... to renounce a thing, forsake it... 4. not to accept to reject, refuse something offered...” (Thayer, p. 74; 720)

“God is not a man, that He should lie, nor a son of man, that He should repent. Has He said, and will He not do? Or has He spoken, and will He not make it good? (Num. 23:19).

that by two immutable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we might have strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold of the hope set before us. (Heb. 6:18).

“He who rejects Me, and does not receive My words, has that which judges him-- the word that I have spoken will judge him in the last day. (Jn. 12:48).

14 Remind them of these things,

How far back do “these things” take us? Is he to remind them of the soldier, athlete and farmer? To remember Jesus, Paul’s sufferings for the elect, the goal of salvation with eternal glory? To ever keep in mind the “faithful saying:”

- * If we died with him we shall live with him
- * If we suffer with him we shall reign with him
- * If we deny him he will deny us
- * If we are faithless, he will remain faithful.

All of these are important and there is no reason to limit the. Hence Timothy is to either read or quote the letter and then “remind” them.

“hupomimnesko... 1. actively, to cause one to remember, bring to remembrance, recall to mind... to put one in remembrance, admonish, of something... 2. passively, to be reminded, to remember...” (Thayer, p. 644)

There are some things that need to be kept in the forefront of our mind. Things that we need to be reminded to be certain that is the case. Peter said much the same thing.

For this reason I will not be negligent to remind you always of these things, though you know and are established in the present truth. 13 Yes, I think it is right, as long as I am in this tent, to stir you up by reminding you, 14 knowing that shortly I must put off my tent, just as our Lord Jesus Christ showed me. 15 Moreover I will be careful to ensure that you always have a reminder of these things after my decease. 2 Pet. 1:12-15

This is why preachers must preach the same things again and again. Even though they know them, they need to be reminded always.

charging them before the Lord not to strive about words to no profit,

This marks a transition. Up until now, Paul has been speaking to Timothy, the events of the past they have shared together, and person concerns he shares with Timothy about his spiritual growth and development. He hasn’t said anything about where Timothy is or about the churches. Now he begins to change to the circumstances and needs he sees within the church. Brethren need to be “charged” before the Lord.

diamarturomai ... a strengthened form of marturomai (dia, "through," intensive), is used in the middle voice; primarily it signifies to testify through and through, bear a solemn witness; hence, "to charge earnestly," (Vine's 1263)

As Vine points out, it is a strengthened form of testifying or witnessing. This is not only witnessing, but “it signifies to testify through and through,” or with solemn and earnest concern. This is a serious problem. Added to Timothy’s solemn and earnest testimony is the addition “before the Lord.”

“enopion... (i. q. ho en opi on, one who is in sight...) ... before, in the sight of any one... 1. of occupied place: in that place which is before, or over against, opposite, any one and towards which another turns his eyes... 2. before one’s eyes; in one’s presence and sight or hearing...” (Thayer, p. 219-220; 1799)

The emphasis of this term is on being in one’s presence, before one’s eyes, or in one’s sight and hearing. We are in the presence of the Lord. We are in His sight and hearing at all times. Since the Lord is always watching our every motive, word, and act, we need to be cautious that we are never guilty of “striving about words” to no profit.

“logomacheo... (...fr. logos and machomai); to contend about words; contextually, to wrangle about empty and trifling matters...” (Thayer, p. 380)

As is evident from the definition this is a compound word joining fighting and warfare with words. This is similar to Paul’s warning in his previous letter.

If anyone teaches otherwise and does not consent to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which accords with godliness, 4 he is proud, knowing nothing, but is obsessed with disputes and arguments over words, from which come envy, strife, reviling, evil suspicions, 5 useless wranglings of men of corrupt minds and destitute of the truth, who suppose 1Tim. 6:3-5

There will always be people seeking to set aside the clear teaching of Scripture by finding loopholes they can exploit. While the real meaning is obvious, they seek to twist the truth by arguing over words. Baptism is a burial, but many strive over that word. For the remission of sins means for the purpose of remission of sins, though some want to change the meaning of that word. We see strivings over the 1000 year reign, the earth will be here forever, Jesus is a god, not God. The meaning of *psallo*. On and on it goes to the point where there is nothing but controversy. Nearly every doctrine has someone who wants to strive about it and turn it into a meaning the Lord never intended.

Yet because of the controversies they create we find ourselves needing to contend for them. There are two key thoughts here. The first is “*to no profit*.” The preposition “to” generally means the place over which.

“epi... upon the surface of... after verbs of abiding, remaining, standing, going, coming, etc; of doing anything... C. with the ACCUSATIVE... I of place; 1. properly; a. of the place above, over which, our up, on, on to... after verbs signifying motion and continuance... c. it is used of persons over whom anything is done, that thereby some benefit may accrue to them,...” (Thayer, 231-236; 1909).

Hence in this case the striving has a direction and a motion and it is not toward anything profitable but just the opposite. There is “no profit” to them. First, a stronger “no” is used.

“oudeis... and not one, no one, none, no; it differs from meideis as ou does from me... 1. with nouns... 2. absolutely, ... nothing whatever, not at all, in no wise...” (Thayer, p. 462; 3762)

It completely excludes whatever it modifies. There is none, nothing whatever that is fit for use or useful about it. In no wise is it fit for use or useful. There is nothing about the above that has any useful or redeeming value.

“chresimos... (chraomai), ... useful, serviceable, good for use, good, apt or fit in its kind, ... present advantage, ... useful for something, (Liddell and Scott Greek Lexicon. 5539).

With a complete and absolute negation, there is nothing useful or serviceable in this striving. It has no purpose, no value, no profit or use.

This is the critical key. While those fighting against these people are contending for the faith that those who strive about words to no profit are seeking to destroy. Those who fight against these people are striving for profit. They are contending “for the faith.”

Beloved, while I was very diligent to write to you concerning our common salvation, I found it necessary to write to you exhorting you to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints. (Jude. 3).

Paul had to contend about the word “seed” in order to prove the Old law was done away in Christ. Jesus contended over the word “I am” to prove there is a resurrection from the dead.

Hence Paul’s condemnation here is not of contending earnestly for the faith. It is not about contending about the words of the gospel. It is not about seeking for the truth as for silver and gold and struggling to understand the meaning of every term. These are all profitable.

But those who want to turn aside after fables strive for an entirely different purpose and it is that purpose that creates the problem.

nor give heed to fables and endless genealogies, which cause disputes rather than godly edification which is in faith. 1Tim. 1:4

*But reject profane and old wives’ fables, and exercise yourself toward godliness. 1Tim. 4:7
and they will turn their ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables. 2Tim. 4:4*

not giving heed to Jewish fables and commandments of men who turn from the truth. Titus 1:14

to the ruin of the hearers.

Paul repeats the preposition to again stress the direction and motion this leads toward. This leads to "ruin."

"katastrophe...2 Peter 2:6, of God: "he condemned Sodom and Gomorrah to destruction"; fig. in 2 Tim 2:14: to the destruction/confusion of the hearers; (Exegetical Dict. the NT :2692)

This is where our catastrophe came from. Just as God destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah, those who strive about words to no profit destroy the hearer. Those listening to such words end in catastrophe.

15 Be diligent to present yourself approved to God,

The term diligence is defined:

"spoudazo... I. intr. to make haste, 1. of things, to be busy, eager, zealous, earnest to do a thing, ... absol. to be serious or earnest, II. trans., 1. to do anything hastily or earnestly, to be zealously pursued, ... 2. Pass., also, of persons, to be treated with respect, to be courted, ..." (Liddell and Scott Abridged Greek Lexicon NT:4704)

While Paul warned Timothy against striving about words to no profit, he also encouraged him "to be busy, eager, zealous, and earnest" in his attempts to be approved to God. Far from striving about words to no profit, he is striving to "present" himself approved in the way he handles the Scriptures.

"paristemi,... 1... a. to place beside or near... to set at hand; to present; to proffer; to provide:... to place a person or thing at one's disposal,... to present a person for another to see and question, ... to present or show... of the quality which the person or thing exhibits..." Thayer p 489)

The compound word (*para* - beside *istemi* to stand), basically means to place oneself beside or stand beside someone or something. In this case, Timothy is to stand himself beside God's approval. Thus he presents, proffers and places himself at God's disposal. He is to exert his energy, be zealous, eager, and busy in offering himself to God for His use as a worker who is "approved."

"dokimos... assayed, examined, tested, properly of metals, ... 1. of persons, approved, esteemed, notable, Lat. probus, Hdt.; 2. of things, excellent, notable, considerable, 3. Adv. really, truly, ..." (Liddell and Scott Abridged Greek Lexicon. NT:1384)

Its most common use was the testing of metals, like gold or silver, to see if they were pure. After a proper examination, they were certified as genuine and approved. When used of people, there is also a testing that approves and esteems. Timothy is to give his greatest diligence so that as God tests his character and love for the truth, he will pass the test and be approved and esteemed. This is what Job, Abraham, Moses, David and countless others did. They sought to give their very best to God, and God approved and esteemed them. This is what Paul set before Timothy as a goal to give one's greatest efforts to gain.

a worker who does not need to be ashamed,

All Christians are "workers," seeking to do the good works God prepared for us to walk in (Eph. 2:10). To offer oneself approved of God and not be ashamed one must be a worker.

"ergates... a workman: esp. one who works the soil, a husbandman, ... 2. Adj. hard-working, strenuous, II. one who practices an art, III. a doer, worker, (Liddell and Scott Abridged Greek Lexicon. 2010)

God wants *hardworking doers*. He seeks those willing to strenuously work toward this goal. FYet not just any worker. Jesus condemned the hard work of the Pharisees.

"Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you travel land and sea to win one proselyte, and when he is won, you make him twice as much a son of hell as yourselves. Mt. 23:15

Hard work can still lead to shame if it is not the proper work. If one doesn't want to be ashamed as a worker for the Lord then it will all be based on our work in His word.

rightly dividing the word of truth.

The entire passage rests on the term “rightly dividing.” It is the antithesis of “striving about words to no profit,” and the means by which one “presents themselves approved to God.” Consider the following definitions:

“*orthotomeo*... 1. *to cut straight... tas hodous* to cut straight ways, i. e. to proceed by straight paths, hold a straight course, equiv. to do right... 2. dropping the idea of cutting, *to make straight and smooth*... i. e. to teach the truth correctly and directly...” (Thayer, p. 453)

“*orthotomeo*... (*orthos* & *temno*) *to cut straight; to direct aright; to set forth truthfully, without perversion or distortion*...”

“*orthos*... (*oro*, *to raise up*) *erect, upright... plain, level, straight*...” Harpers Analytical Greek Concordance p 292

“*orthotomeo*... lit., to cut straight (*orthos*, straight, *temno* to cut), is found in II Tim. 2:15., “rightly dividing,” R.V., “handling aright” (the word of truth); the meaning passed from the idea of cutting or dividing to the more general sense of rightly dealing with a thing. What is intended here is not dividing Scripture from Scripture, but teaching Scripture accurately...” Vine Exp Dict. Vol I; p. 327

“*orthotomeo*... This occurs only in the Gk. bible and even here only a few times: Prv. 3:6; 11:5; II Tim 2:15... 1. At root is a usage current in profane Gk. in which *temno hodon* means “to lay down a way,”: “to build a road,”... 2. In the LXX we do not find *temno hodon*, but twice *orthotomeo hodon* denoting “to open a way:” ... Prv 3:6... Prv. 11:5. In content this corresponds to the fig. use of *Temno hodon* elsewhere in Gk. lit. The use of *orthotomeo* for the simple *temno* is based on the underlying Hbr. ... the Heb. Expression ... “the straight way: on which Yahweh leads his people or the righteous... In his conduct Timothy must “speak the word of truth aright,“ i.e., follow it... he follows this word of truth aright in his own life, and thus confirms it.: (Kittel Vol 8 p 112-113

I quote the four authors to show the similarities and differences between their definitions. All of them agree that it refers to the cutting of a straight line. It’s Old Testament background is that of a straight road or path to walk in. It’s two uses in Proverbs are instructive:

*In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall **direct your paths**.* (Prov. 3:6).

*The righteousness of the blameless will **direct his way aright**, but the wicked will fall by his own wickedness.* (Prov. 11:5).

The straight paths which the servant of God must walk are the straight ways of the word of God. Another idea centers on the pattern God showed Moses on the Mount.

“See that you make all things according to the pattern shown you on the mountain.” Heb. 8:5

Obviously, once Moses saw the pattern, he must cut straight to make it that way. In the same way the Scriptures offer the pattern of the church and it takes our greatest efforts to make sure we cut each doctrine straight and true.

16 But shun profane and idle babblings,

One cannot be approved of God and handle God’s word properly if they give any respect to the foolish notions of those who teach error. The diligent hard worker of God will “shun” them.

periistemi ... in the active voice, means “to stand around” (*peri*, “around,” *histemi*, “to stand”), Jn. 11:42; Acts 25:7; in the middle voice, “to turn oneself about,” for the purpose of *avoiding* something, “to avoid, shun,” said of profane babblings, 2Tim. 2:16; of foolish questions, genealogies, strife, etc., Titus 3:9 (Vine’s NT:4026)

When we hear such babblings we turn around and walk away, hence we are avoid and shun them. When you see this sort of thing beginning to materialize, shut it down and avoid it. This is the same concept as Jesus discussed in the Sermon on the Mount:

“Do not give what is holy to the dogs; nor cast your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn and tear you in pieces. (Mt. 7:6-7).

Sometimes it is not worth the time to even discuss things with people. When they only want to

babble and speak foolishness, shun and avoid it. The term “vain” is defined:

“bebelos... 1. accessible, lawful to be trodden; prop. used of places; hence 2. profane, equiv. to ...[i.e. unhallowed, common], ... of men profane i.e. ungodly...” (Thayer, p. 100)

They are not spiritual, they do not have their source in the Scriptures, they are the arts of the enemy(satan) and they should be shunned. In their day it was the judaizing teachers, the growing menace of gnosticism, and the continuing mystic ideas of idolaters such as those in Athens.

Then certain Epicurean and Stoic philosophers encountered him. And some said, “What does this babbler want to say?” Others said, “He seems to be a proclaimer of foreign gods,” because he preached to them Jesus and the resurrection. 19 And they took him and brought him to the Areopagus, saying, “May we know what this new doctrine is of which you speak? 20 “For you are bringing some strange things to our ears. Therefore we want to know what these things mean.” 21 For all the Athenians and the foreigners who were there spent their time in nothing else but either to tell or to hear some new thing. (Acts. 17:18-21).

In our own day, the new age movement, the concept of reincarnation, secular humanism, or any of the mystic ideas of the far east that either add to or take from the Scriptures should be viewed as vain babblings by God’s people. They are profane because they have no reliable source. The only reliable source of spiritual things is God. Satan has lied to the human race from the very beginning. The word of God is the only safe guide for us. The term “babbling” is defined:

kenophonis, fem. noun from kenós vain, and phōnē; a voice. Empty or fruitless speaking. In 1 Tim 6:20 and 2 Tim 2:16, ... senseless or wicked discourses, speeches that are devoid of any divine or spiritual character, fruitless as far as the satisfaction of man's need of salvation and the molding of Christian life and character are concerned. (Complete Word Study Dictionary: NT: 2757)

Paul considered any discussion outside of the Scriptures on spiritual matters to be empty, vain, and useless. This is strong language and it is needed today as much as ever.

The secret things belong to the LORD our God, but those things which are revealed belong to us and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law. (Deut. 29:29).

God has given us all things that pertain to life and godliness and has forbidden us to seek for things outside of His word as a lack of faith. We either accept this limitation and remain faithful to God, or we do not. If we do not, then there is no limitation and our faith will soon be as shipwrecked as that of the two men Paul mentions in the next verse. Such an inquiry never ends, it just leads further and further away, but it goes no where for there is no other reliable source of truth and knowledge but God.

for they will increase to more ungodliness.

Paul gives the reason for the above admonition. It doesn’t just lead to false ideas and false teaching. It leads to ungodliness. The conjunction “for” stresses this clearly.

“gar... a conjunction which acc. to its composition ge and ara(i.q. ar), is properly a particle of affirmation and conclusion, denoting truly therefore, verily as the case stands, ... the reason and cause of a foregoing statement is added, whence arises the causal or argumentative force of the particle, for... “ (Thayer, p. 109-110; 1063)

The reason they must be shunned is that they are productive of no good. There is no redeeming value to them. They lead to an “increase” in ungodliness.

prokopto probably a nautical tt. for “to make headway in spite of blows,” one of the many nautical metaphors in Gk. usage. Less likely is derivation from the work of the smith who “with the blow” of his hammer “lengthens out” iron. ... is originally used in a transitive sense: “to promote,” “to further,” the med. is used accordingly for “to get on,” ... the intransitive active which ... means “to go ahead,” “to make progress,” “to thrive,” (Kittel TWDNT 4298)

Ungodliness “makes headway,” is “promoted” and “furthered,” makes “progress” and “thrives” in an environment of striving about words to no profit leading to profane babblings. But that is not the only indictment here. Not only do they lead to ungodliness, but they lead to “more” of it. It is already

there when these disputes occur. Just to treat God's word in this manner is ungodliness. Reverence to His word is clearly the most obvious manner in which we would reveal the depth of our godliness. Without it, there is no ungodliness at all, and the more influenced others are to get involved in it, the "more" ungodliness will thrive.

"pleion... 1. greater in quantity: the object with which the comparison is made being added in the genitive,... adverbially, more, i.e. more earnestly, ... more widely, further... longer, ... 2. greater in quality, superior, more excellent..." (Thayer, p. 516)

It will increase to a greater and greater quantity of "ungodliness."

"asebeia...(asebes q.v.) want of reverence toward God, impiety, ungodliness..."

"asebes,... destitute of reverential awe towards God, contemning God, impious..." (Thayer p 79)

The Greeks used the root "*sebeia*" to worship, then added two prefixes *eu-sebia* is to worship well and denotes sacred awe and *a-sebeia*, without worship, without any sacred awe and no reverence. Again it must be emphasized that the manner in which one treats God's word reflects the nature of His godliness. If he treats God's word as sacred and refuses to speculate or argue about words to no profit he is manifesting godliness. If he continually seeks for new conflicts and is never settled in his trust and respect to God's word and especially to its limitations and silence, he is ungodly and the more he engages in such things the more his ungodliness will thrive and prosper.

17 And their message will spread like cancer.

The other consequence thing about such babblings is that they catch on. Yet their growth is illustrated with the worst possible type of progress. "Gangrene" or "cancer" are the greatest enemies of the human body. The more they grow the greater the damage.

gagraina... (grao or graino to gnaw, eat), a gangrene, a disease by which a any part of the body suffering from inflammation becomes so corrupted that, unless a remedy be seasonably applied, the evil continually spreads, attacks other parts, and at least eats away the bones..." (Thayer, p.106)

Thus the more this "spreads" the more damage is done.

nome ... pasture; fodder ... Jn. 10:9: "He will go in and out and will find pasture"; 2 Tim 2:17 fig.: the false teaching "will eat away like a cancer." (Exegetical Dictionary of the NT:3542)

Although this can be a good eating(like sheep), in this context it is the worst possible news. When cancer is in remission we breathe a sigh of relief, but if we are told it is growing again, we know we are in great danger. So also the church. When there is none of this activity, the church can have healthy growth, but if this enters into the body, it must be cut away as quickly as possible, or it will continue to grow.

Hymenaeus and Philetus are of this sort,

Paul offers two such individuals living in his day that he knew Timothy, and possibly the congregation where he preached were familiar with. We only know what he says about them here, and possibly(if he is the same person).

This charge I commit to you, son Timothy, according to the prophecies previously made concerning you, that by them you may wage the good warfare, 19 having faith and a good conscience, which some having rejected, concerning the faith have suffered shipwreck, 20 of whom are Hymenaeus and Alexander, whom I delivered to Satan that they may learn not to blaspheme.

18 who have strayed concerning the truth,

"strayed concerning the faith" very accurately portrays what happens when one leaves the safe confines of the gospel and begins their search for information elsewhere. The term "strayed" is defined:

"aistocheo... "to miss the mark, fail" (a, negative, stochos, "a mark"), (Vine's NT:795)

astocheo one who misses his aim (stochos, aim, target). To err, deviate in a figurative and spiritual sense, not to reach one's goal (1 Tim 1:6; 6:21; 2 Tim 2:18). (Complete Word Study Dictionary: NT

This is the only thing we know about these two men. For all these centuries this is their legacy. They missed the goal of all who obey the gospel. Instead of seeking and finding the truth, they have missed it entirely and gone off into error. Anyone who seeks to gain God's favor and find the truth will deviate and miss that aim if they allow these profitless studies of words to lead them away.

saying that the resurrection is already past;

In this case their inquiry into other realms of thought had led them to reject the clear teaching of the Scriptures. The resurrection is a focal point in the New Testament. It is the bedrock upon which the deity of Christ is based. Paul had already dealt with the subject in great detail to the Corinthians many years earlier. To say that the resurrection is already passed after reading the first letter to the First Corinthians is to deny the inspiration of the Holy Spirit for that book. It is to deny the apostleship of Paul and reject all his other writings. This is what the quest for such knowledge had done to them, and now it was threatening the faith of others as well:

and they overthrow the faith of some.

The term "overthrow" is defined:

"anatrepo... overturn, cause to fall ... Used literally in John 2:15 of Jesus' overturning the money-changers' tables ... in 2 Tim 2:18: upset the faith of some Titus 1:11, of false teachers in Crete who "are upsetting whole families." (Exegetical Dictionary of the NT: 396)

"anatrepo... , lit. to turn up or over(*ana*, up, *trepo* to turn), to upset, is used (a) literally, ... (b) metaphorically, in II Tim. 2:18, "overthrow (the faith of some); in Titus 1:11, R.V., "overthrow (whole houses)," A. V., "subvert..," i.e., households. (Vine NT:396)

They turn the faith of others upside down. They upset it, ruin it, destroy it. Faith is a precious and yet fragile thing. it can be overthrown by a false teacher who places seeds of doubt on one subject. If that one subject is destroyed in their mind, then just like cancer or gangrene, it begins to work on other parts of their soul and soon there is nothing left.

19 Nevertheless the solid foundation of God stands,

Although there are some who are “*striving about words to no profit, to the ruin of the hearers*” and others are pushing “*profane and idle babblings*” which “*spread like cancer,*” “*overthrowing the faith of some,*” they cannot move the solid foundation of God. Paul sums this up with “*nevertheless.*”

méntoi; conj. from mén (3303), indeed, and the enclitic toí (5104), yet. Indeed, truly, certainly, especially in neg. clauses and answers. ... With the meaning of though, yet, (Jn. 4:27; 7:13; 12:42; 20:5; 21:4; 2Tim. 2:19; Jude 8). With the meaning of indeed therefore, therefore then (James 2:8). (Complete Word Study Dictionary: NT:3305)

Literally “*indeed yet*” but translated “*though, yet, nevertheless*” in our translations. Hence although he is in the midst of making these strong warnings and giving dire prophesies, there is no reason for discouragement. Peter made the same point in speaking of Paul’s writings.

also our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given to him, has written to you, 16 as also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to understand, which untaught and unstable people twist to their own destruction, as they do also the rest of the Scriptures. 17 You therefore, beloved, since you know this beforehand, beware lest you also fall from your own steadfastness, being led away with the error of the wicked; 2Pet. 3:15-18

There will always be those who twist the scriptures to their own destruction. As long as we are aware of them and avoiding them, we remain in our own steadfastness, and have nothing to fear or be dismayed.

My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. 28 And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand. 29 My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of My Father's hand. Jn. 10:27-30

Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. Rom 8:37-38

Hence Paul’s warnings do not paint the full picture. There is more to this subject, more information that must be factored in and considered. Though it can eat as gangrene, though it can overthrow whole houses, though hearers can be subverted by false teaching, the firm foundation of God stands! . This is a strong affirmation of encouragement. The term “foundation” is a term used in the Scriptures to describe that which gives stability and permanence to anything.

“themelios (thema [i.e. thing laid down]), laid down as a foundation, belonging to a foundation,... the foundation (of a building, wall, city)... of the apostles as preachers of salvation, upon which foundation the Christian church has been built, Eph. 2:20...” (Thayer, p. 286-287; 2310)

It is evident from the definition that there is nothing to add. It means exactly the same thing in both languages. Firm or solid, the adjective that modifies it comes from a term that can mean firm and solid on the one hand and strong and immovable on the other.

“sterios... firm, solid, compact, hard, rigid... strong, firm, immovable... trop. in a bad sense, cruel, stiff, stubborn, hard...” (Thayer, p. 587)

Both ideas fit well with the foundation Paul is speaking of.

It might be a building, or it might be the convictions and truths upon which someone builds their lives. Jesus used the term this way at the conclusion of His sermon on the mount:

“Therefore whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock: 25 “and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it did not fall, for it was founded on the rock. (Mt. 7:24-25).”

Paul used it in a discussion with the Corinthians:

According to the grace of God which was given to me, as a wise master builder I have laid the foundation, and another builds on it. But let each one take heed how he builds on it. 11 For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. (1 Cor. 3:10-11).

The term “foundation” is defined:

Again, a foundation is the substructure of all buildings. No building can be any stronger than its foundation. No matter how elaborate the building, if it has a bad foundation it will not last long and it loses its value. The foundation of God is "firm:"

When building any structure this is the kind of foundation everyone wants to have. A firm, solid, compact, hard and rigid foundation will keep the home it is built upon safe. Any home built on this foundation will not be negatively impacted by it.

But Paul is not speaking about homes. He is speaking about people's lives. He is speaking about what God has to offer people who put their trust and confidence in Him. In spite of the false teachers, and in spite of all the error and ungodliness that exists, God has a firm foundation to offer His people and they have nothing to fear. The term "stands" is defined:

"histemi... I. TRANSITIVELY... to cause or make to stand; to place, put set; 1. univ... to bid to stand by... b. trop. to make firm, fix, establish... to cause a person or thing to keep his or its place... to establish a thing, cause it to stand i.e. to uphold or sustain the authority or force of anything... 2. to set or place in a balance; to weigh... II INTRANSITIVELY... to stand... 1. prop. ... a. to stand by, stand near,... to stand, I. e. continue safe and sound, stand unharmed... b. to stand ready or prepared... c. to be of a steadfast mind... to persist, continue, persevere..." (Thayer, p 307-308)

God has a foundation, it is a firm foundation, and it stands. It stands firm, is fixed and established, God has caused it to stand, and it is now upheld and sustained by His authority and force. It is solid, firm and immovable. Do the Scriptures give us enough information to know what this foundation is, or is Paul speaking of an overall concept? There are many choices. God never changes and cannot lie, the scriptures cannot be broken and will remain firm until the end. The church is founded on the deity of Christ.

Simon Peter answered and said, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." 17 Jesus answered and said to him, "Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah, for flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but My Father who is in heaven. 18 "And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it. Mt. 16:16-18

but if I am delayed, I write so that you may know how you ought to conduct yourself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth. (1 Tim. 3:15).

For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. (1 Cor. 3:11).

The deity of Christ and the His church are obviously a part of this foundation. So also are the apostles because they were given the task of revealing the Word of God which gives us this information.

So then ye are no more strangers and sojourners, but ye are fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God, 20 being built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the chief corner stone; Eph 2:19-20

having been born again, not of corruptible seed but incorruptible, through the word of God which lives and abides forever, 24 because "All flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of the grass. The grass withers, and its flower falls away, 25 But the word of the Lord endures forever." Now this is the word which by the gospel was preached to you. (1 Pet. 1:23-25).

Everything that is firm and leads us to remain steadfast and faithful is part of this foundation. Those who put their trust and confidence in God, who take Him at His Word and follow it. Those who build their lives on the deity of Christ and keep themselves pure in His church are built upon a firm foundation.

having this seal:

The term "seal" has a great role to play in this sentence. It gives the substance and stability to our trust in the foundation. What is a seal? We will first study the definition of the term. Interestingly enough the Greek term has the same meaning among Greek speaking people and in the Scriptures as it does today in our own culture.

"sphragizo... To set a seal upon, make with a seal, to seal; a. for security:... b. Since things sealed up

are concealed (as, the contents of a letter), *sphragizo* means trop. *to hide... keep in silence, keep secret... c. in order to mark a person or thing; hence to set a mark upon by the impress of a seal, to stamp:* angels are said... i.e. with the seal of God... to stamp his servants on their foreheads as destined for eternal salvation, and by this means to confirm their hopes, Rev. 7:3... Metaph... respecting God, who by the gift of the Holy Spirit indicates who are his... d. in order to prove, confirm, or attest a thing; hence trop. *to confirm, authenticate, place beyond doubt...* (Thayer, Joseph Henry; op. cit., p. 609 # 4972)

“sphagis... a seal; i.e. a. the seal placed upon books... b. a signet-ring:... c. the inscription or impression made by a seal... d. that by which anything is confirmed, proved, authenticated, as by a seal, (a token or proof)...” (Thayer p 609; 4973)

1. A seal reveals security: Nothing can be tampered with.

Thayer tells us that they used the term to describe a seal of security. When the Jews wanted to be certain no one entered the tomb of Jesus they put a seal upon it.

So they went, and made the sepulchre sure, sealing the stone, the guard being with them. Mt 27:66

We do exactly the same thing today with our electric meters which is sealed. The electric company has placed a lead seal on the opening and we cannot get inside to see or tamper with what is in there. After the tampering scare a few years back most medicines we purchase today are also sealed. They have a plastic wrap around the top and when you screw off the cap there is another paper covering the top. We do this for security. It is sealed to be certain no one has tampered with it.

2. A Seal marks and shows ownership.

The second meaning of this word is a mark or a seal or a stamp that shows ownership. God used a stamp or mark of some sort to put a seal on his people to protect them and to show his ownership of them both in Revelation and in Ezekiel.

And I saw another angel ascend from the sunrising, having the seal of the living God: and he cried with a great voice to the four angels to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea, 3 saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we shall have sealed the servants of our God on their foreheads. Rev 7:2-3

And it was said unto them that they should not hurt the grass of the earth, neither any green thing, neither any tree, but only such men as have not the seal of God on their foreheads. Rev 9:4

And the glory of the God of Israel was gone up from the cherub, whereupon it was, to the threshold of the house: and he called to the man clothed in linen, who had the writer's inkhorn by his side. 4And Jehovah said unto him, Go through the midst of the city, through the midst of Jerusalem, and set a mark upon the foreheads of the men that sigh and that cry over all the abominations that are done in the midst thereof. 5 And to the others he said in my hearing, Go ye through the city after him, and smite: let not your eye spare, neither have ye pity; 6 slay utterly the old man, the young man and the virgin, and little children and women; but come not near any man upon whom is the mark: and begin at my sanctuary. Then they began at the old men that were before the house. Ezek 9:3-6

Once again, we use this today. When we check out library books . They have an embossed seal that they use to prove ownership. We also have VIN numbers stamped on the frame of our cars. We often mark our possessions that have value with some means of identification. If we do then we have sealed them.

3 A Seal confirms authenticates and places beyond any doubt.

The third meaning and use for the seal in their day was to prove, confirm, or attest a thing; hence to confirm, authenticate, place beyond doubt. There are several uses of this in the Scriptures. The existence of the church at Corinth with the spiritual gifts they possessed was a seal of Paul's apostleship. Only apostles could confer those gifts and since they had them, Paul was an apostle.

If to others I am not an apostle, yet at least I am to you; for the seal of mine apostleship are ye in the Lord. 1 Cor 9:2

Abraham was God's faithful servant since he obeyed the call to leave his country. That was God's condition to give him all the blessings and he had already done it. But when he was 99, God gave him a seal. The sign of circumcision was the seal God gave to authenticate and place beyond doubt that he was righteous.

and he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had while he was in uncircumcision; that he might be the father of all them that believe, though they be in uncircumcision, that righteousness might be reckoned unto them; Rom 4:11

A third example was the authentication that God's firm foundation will always stand. There is no way that it can crumble because the Lord knows those who are his. Since he knows who they are and clearly identifies them as those who do not continue in iniquity, Those who depart from iniquity and are known to belong to the Lord are standing on this firm foundation. That is the seal.

Howbeit the firm foundation of God standeth, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his: and, Let every one that nameth the name of the Lord depart from unrighteousness. 2 Tim 2:19

Once again, we have exactly the same thing today in a notary seal. When we have very important documents to sign and we want to have it proven beyond doubt that we signed them we go to a notary public and they place a seal on the documents after we sign them that authenticates or confirms that it is genuine and the signatures as real.

The firm foundation of God is standing. It is sealed:

1. This seal reveals security: Nothing can be tampered with. God knows those who are His.

2. A Seal marks and shows ownership. God knows who are His

3 A Seal confirms authenticates and places beyond any doubt. God knows who are His.

Consider again the firm foundation

I write so that you may know how you ought to conduct yourself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth. 1 Tim 3:15-16

Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, 20 having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone, 21 in whom the whole building, being fitted together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord, 22 in whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit. Eph 2:19-22

We have been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, members of the church which is the pillar and ground of the truth. This is the firm foundation we live upon with Jesus being the Son of God undergirding the entire structure.

At the base of this great foundation are two inscriptions:

"The Lord knows those who are His,"

"Let everyone who names the name of Christ depart from iniquity"

Each of these form the seal in its entirety. One cannot exist without the other. The former leading to the latter and the latter being the basis for the former. The who are His, depart from iniquity, and He knows them because they have so departed.

"The Lord knows those who are His,"

The first portion of the seal is a great promise. It doesn't matter where you are, who you are with, what you are doing, or what is happening in your life. The Lord knows whether you are His or not.

The term “know” is defined:

“ginosko... univ. 1. to learn to know, come to know, get a knowledge of;... 2 to know, understand, perceive, have knowledge of... It in particular ginosko, to become acquainted with, to know, is employed in the N. T. of the knowledge of God and Christ, and of the things relating to them or proceeding from them... In classic usage... ginoskein, denotes a discriminating apprehension of external impressions, a knowledge grounded in personal experience ...” (Thayer, p. 117-118; 1097)

Perhaps as important as the definition is the knowledge of the tense Paul used to state it. The Lord knows, understands, perceives and has knowledge of those who are His. False teachers may fool men and they may fool us. We do not always know whether someone belongs to the Lord or not. But God always knows those who are His. He knows whether we belong to Him or not.

We never have to be afraid that we will be lumped in with the wicked and the unbelievers.

And then He will send His angels, and gather together His elect from the four winds, from the farthest part of earth to the farthest part of heaven. Mk. 13:27

Even in the worst situation, the Lord knows who belongs to Him. WeeYou will not be lost in the shuffle if you faithfully serve and trust Him. He will always know where you are and He will take good care of you.

and, “Let everyone who names the name of Christ depart from iniquity.”

While the first inscriptions bids us look outward to the great and mighty omniscience of the Lord and put our trust in His ability, the second inscription brings introspection and contemplation. Everyone who names the name of the Lord in an intimate manner has a certain obligation. Consider Peters words along the same line:

Therefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and rest your hope fully upon the grace that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ; 14 as obedient children, not conforming yourselves to the former lusts, as in your ignorance; 15 but as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, 16 because it is written, “Be holy, for I am holy.” 17 And if you call on the Father, who without partiality judges according to each one’s work, conduct yourselves throughout the time of your stay here in fear; (I Pet. 1:13-17).

But there shall by no means enter it anything that defiles, or causes an abomination or a lie, but only those who are written in the Lamb’s Book of Life. Rev 21:27

No one who becomes a Christian can do so without naming the name of Christ.

that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. 10 For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. Rom 10:9-11

“Therefore whoever confesses Me before men, him I will also confess before My Father who is in heaven. 33 But whoever denies Me before men, him I will also deny before My Father who is in heaven. Matt 10:32-33

But if we name His name as Lord, we must depart from iniquity. If we have not departed from iniquity then there is a serious problem. The term “depart” is defined:

“aphistemi... 1. transitively, to make stand off, cause to withdraw, to remove; trop. to excite to revolt... 2. intransitively, to stand off, stand aloof, in various senses... to go away, depart, from any one, ... to desert, withdraw from, one, ... to fall away, become faithless... to shun, flee from, ... Mid. to withdraw one’s self from absol. to fall away... to keep one’s self away from, absent one’s self from...” (Thayer, p. 89; 868)

It’s means to cause someone to withdraw or to remove themselves, to stand off or aloof from, to desert, to shun. It also means to keep one’s self away from, to absent one’s self from. With the aorist again, he sums up our action. It is a past action that still holds. It comes right up to the present moment. We would have to say “have departed” from iniquity. It was a decision made that we have never wavered from. There may be momentary lapses, but the decision to depart and hold ourselves away from was made and has never changed.

Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey the lusts thereof: 13 neither present your members unto sin (as) instruments of unrighteousness; but present yourselves unto God, as alive from the dead, and your members (as) instruments of righteousness unto God. 14 For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under law, but under grace. 15 What then? shall we sin, because we are not under law, but under grace? God forbid. 16 Know ye not, that to whom ye present yourselves (as) servants unto obedience, his servants ye are whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness? 17 But thanks be to God, that, whereas ye were servants of sin, ye became obedient from the heart to that form of teaching whereunto ye were delivered; 18 and being made free from sin, ye became servants of righteousness. Rom 6:12-23

So the second seal has to do with our own responsibilities and decisions. We made that decision when we were baptized. We have kept that decision even if we do sin from time to time(1Jn 1:8-9) we have kept it as long as our primary goal everyday is to name the name of the Lord and hold ourselves as far as we can away from “iniquity.”

“adikia,...1. injustice, of a judge... 2. unrighteousness of heart and life... 3. a deed violating law and justice, act of unrighteousness...” (Thayer, p. 12; 93)

“adikia... denotes unrighteousness, lit., “unrightness” (a, negative, dike, right), a condition of not being right, whether with God, according to the standard of His holiness and righteousness, or with man, according to the standard of what man knows to be right by his conscience. ...” Vine, Vol II P. 260)

If we are not striving to live up to the standards of both God and man to the best of our ability, then the great seal is contrary to us. The seal is not blanket approval of all who come to the Lord and seek to build a house there. It is both a promise and a solemn obligation. It is not easy, but it is not impossible either.

20 But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and silver, but also of wood and clay,

Although the NKJV uses “*but*,” most of the other translations (ASV; NASB; ESV) use the term “*now*” which notes a transition, but continues the thought of the previous verse.

dé; a particle standing after one or two words in a clause, strictly adversative, but more frequently denoting transition or conversion, and serving to introduce something else, whether opposed to what precedes or simply continuative or explanatory. Generally it has the meaning of *but, and, or also, namely*. (Complete Word Study Dictionary: NT :1161)

This is an illustration and elaboration on the foundation, the seal, along with the false teachers and defection of members. He uses a great home. The term “great” is defined:

“*megas... great*; 1. predicated a. of external form or sensible appearance of things(or persons); in particular, of space and its dimensions-- as respects... bb compass and extent; *large, spacious... gg. measure and height... long... b. of number and quantity, numerous, large... used of intensity and degree... of natural events powerfully affecting the senses, i.q. violent, mighty, strong... 2 predicated of rank, as belonging to a. persons, eminent for ability, virtue, authority, power; ... univ. eminent, distinguished... something higher, more exalted, more majestic... b. things to be esteemed highly for their importance, ... 3. splendid, prepared on a grand scale...*” (Thayer, p. 394-395; 3173).

This is a “great” home, a mansion, a wealthy and well stocked home. It is filled with many different utensils. The term “vessel” refers to all the utensils in a household.

“*skeuos... a vessel or implement of any kind, Ar., Thuc., etc.:-pl. in collective sense, furniture, house-gear, utensils, chattels, Ar.:-esp. of military accoutrements, equipment, Thuc., Xen.: baggage, luggage, Lat. impedimenta, Ar., Xen.:- the tackling or gear of ships, ...* (Liddell and Scott Abridged Greek Lexicon NT:4632)

As one walks into a great mansion, they will see things common to all homes and they will see things that only exist in the homes of great value. In average homes you will not see these things, but in a great home they will be there. Gold vessels, silver, precious materials, antiques, beautiful workmanship. Things set out to show, placed in positions of honor so that all who enter the home will see them.

The house of God is also a great house. Many of the living stones are made of gold, silver, or diamond and emerald. We are in this great house, both as living stones and as implements of many kinds. These correspond in the spiritual realm to all the great men and women who’s names are recorded in the Bible. They are the vessels unto honor that God has used for some great task. But alongside of those precious and beautiful vessels there are also common vessels. Vessels that simply have to be there. In any home there is a some type of garbage can, some type of broom, mop, bucket, scrub brush, etc.

Paul spoke of this same concept in Romans using the same term to describe vessels of wrath fitted for destruction and vessels of honor prepared for glory.

*So then he hath mercy on whom he will, and whom he will he hardeneth. 19 Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he still find fault? For who withstandeth his will? 20 Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why didst thou make me thus? 21 Or hath not the potter a right over the clay, from the same lump to make one part a vessel unto honor, and another unto dishonor? 22 What if God, willing to show his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering **vessels of wrath fitted unto destruction**: 23 and that he might make known the riches of his glory upon **vessels of mercy, which he afore prepared unto glory**, 24 (even) us, whom he also called, not from the Jews only, but also from the Gentiles? Rom 9:18-24*

The point is the same in both verses. Some men and women make themselves useful to God and are used for honorable purposes that will lead them to glory. Others refuse to be used by God so He finds other uses for them which like Pharaoh was not an honorable use at all.

some for honor and some for dishonor.

The term “honor” is defined:

“time...(fr. *tio*, to estimate, honor,...)... (a valuing, rating)... 1. a valuing by which the price is fixed; hence the price itself: of the price paid or received for a person or thing bought or sold... 2. honor which belongs or is shown to one: the honor of one who outranks others, pre-eminence... *veneration*, ... *deference*, *reverence*...” (Thayer, p. 624; 5092).

These are the precious costly and wonderful works of man. They are made of gold, silver, precious stones, wood and stone. They represent the best that man can accomplish. They are beautiful. On the other side are the things of “dishonor:”

“*atimia*... *dishonor*, *ignominy*, *disgrace*,... in a state of disgrace, used of the unseemliness and offensiveness of a dead body);... base lusts, vile passions, Rom 1:26...” (Thayer, p. 83)

These are the vessels used for the everyday tasks, cleaning floors, scrubbing, washing throwing away the garbage. They are things no one wants to touch. They are dirty and disgusting.

21 Therefore if anyone cleanses himself from the latter(from these - ASV; NASB; KJV), he will be a vessel for honor,

This “*therefore*” ties the foundation, the seals, and the illustration together.

“*oun*... a conj. indicating that something follows from another necessarily; [al. regarding the primary force of the particle as confirmatory or continuative, rather than illative...] Hence it is used in drawing a conclusion and in connecting sentences together logically, *then*, *therefore*, *accordingly*, *consequently*, *these things being so*... a. in exhortations (to show what ought now to be done by reason of what has been said), i. q. *wherefore*,... b. in questions, *then*, *therefore*... c. in epanalepsis, i.e. it serves to resume a thought or narrative interrupted by intervening matter... It serves to gather up summarily what has already been said, or even what cannot be narrated at length... e. it serves to adapt examples and comparisons to the case in hand...” (Thayer, p. 463-464; 3767)

Paul was not speaking about great homes and the beautiful things they possess, but using it to draw this conclusion that “follows necessarily. He spoke of God’s people and of their spiritual values and of holiness, of departing from iniquity, of the Lord knowing you belong to Him. He spoke of being built on the firm foundation, of the dishonor of Hymeneous and Philitus, and of the preparation that makes one a worker approved of God. In the section that begins in 2:14 Paul had spoken of both honorable and dishonorable things. The list might be as follows:

<u>Vessel unto Honor</u>		<u>Vessel Unto Dishonor</u>
2:14		Strive not about words to no profit Subverting the hearers
2:15	Handling aright the word	
2:16		Profane and vain babblings Increase to more ungodliness
2:17		Word eats like gangrene
2:18		Erred concerning the truth Faith of some overthrown.
2:19	Firm foundation of God stands God knows those who are His.	Christians depart from iniquity

The Christian must “*cleanse*” himself of the latter. The demonstrative pronoun(*touto*) refers to things that precede. Hence it can refer to any of the things on the right side of the above list. Most likely “*depart from iniquity*,” or “*shun profane babblings*.” Everything on the right side must be

cleansed if one wants to be a vessel unto honor.

“ekkathairo... to cleanse out, cleanse thoroughly... to avoid defilement from one and so keep one's self pure, II Tim. 2:21 with acc. of the thing by the removal of which something is made clean... [A. V. purge out]...” (Thayer, p. 195 NT:1571)

As stated on the seal, those who are the Lords must depart from iniquity. As long as that iniquity remains within, we can't be a vessel unto honor.

Do you not know that to whom you present yourselves slaves to obey, you are that one's slaves whom you obey, whether of sin leading to death, or of obedience leading to righteousness? Rom 6:16-17

If we want to be a vessel for honor, then we absolutely must purge and cleanse ourselves thoroughly and completely, day by day. Hence as we continue to set aside the sin that so easily besets us, we are departing from iniquity. To be a true servant of Christ, we must be cleansed and purged of these latter things so we can be sanctified and useful.

sanctified and useful for the Master,

As we cleanse ourselves from the vile and unproductive doctrinal iniquity above, we remove ourselves from the world and become *“sanctified:”*

“hagiazō... to make hagian, render or declare sacred or holy, consecrate. Hence it denotes 1. to render or acknowledge to be venerable, to hallow... 2. to separate from things profane and dedicate to God, to consecrate and so render inviolable... 3. to purify... a. to cleanse externally... to purify levitically... b. to purify by expiation, free from the guilt of sin... c. to purify internally be reformation of soul...” (Thayer, p. 6; 37)

This is a close synonym to the term cleanse, but while cleanse deals with the beginnings of sanctification, this term deals with the result. result. The consecration and purification that leads to being sanctified or holy in the sight of God. Once we become sanctified through a proper doctrinal and moral outlook from the Scriptures, we are then *“useful:”*

“Euchrestos... (eu and chraomai), easy to make use of, useful... (Thayer, p. 264)

Such a Christian is easy to make use of by Jesus. Jesus is here called the “master:”

*“Despotes... a master, lord... God is thus addressed by one who calls himself his *doulos*... Christ is so called, as one who has bought his servants,... rules over his church... and whose prerogative it is to take vengeance on those who persecute his followers... despotes ... was strictly the correlative of slave, *doulos*, and hence denoted absolute ownership and uncontrolled power...”* (Thayer, p. 130; 1203)

We should seek to be pleasing to Him as our Great Lord and Savior.

prepared for every good work.

By making ourselves easy for the master to use, we become prepared when good works need to be done. The term “prepared” is defined:

“Etoimazo... to make ready, prepare: absol. to make the necessary preparations, get everything ready...” (Thayer, p. 255)

Because they have made the necessary preparations, Jesus looks upon them as a well worn and broken in tool that is easy to use. Like a chisel in the hands of a master craftsman in wood, or a cutter in the master diamond cutters hand, some Christians present themselves to the Lord as a trustworthy and reliable tool that never lets Him down.

22 Flee also youthful lusts;

Though there appears to be a small break in the thought between 21 and 22, it is the same theme in moral instead of doctrinal format. Just as the things that affect the servant of the Lord in the doctrinal realm will remove them from useful service and place them into the vessels for dishonor pile, so also will morality. All Christian should be warned to feel the lusts of their youth. The term “flee” is defined:

“*pheugo... to flee*, i.e. a. *to flee away, seek safety by flight*: absol. ... b. *metaph. to flee(to shun or avoid by flight)* something abhorrent, esp. vices: ... c. *to be saved by flight, to escape safe out of danger...* d. *poetically, to flee away* i. q. *to vanish...*” (Thayer, p. 651; 5343)

This is the fleeing of the stinging wasp, the biting spider or snake, the roaring lion in the field. It is the fleeing of terror from grave danger. Though in the physical realm, most people are quite aware that when they are face to face with a rattle snake, or a black widow spider, that they are in grave danger. In the spiritual realm, it is not quite so clear. One may stand in front of the fiercest spiritual death-dealing animalistic lusts and not even see their danger. The death from spiritual lusts is as deadly, and mortal, and as lethal as all other forms of death. You know a lot about your own spirituality by how you deal with your lusts. Paul commands the mature to flee them. The word Paul selects for “youthful leads me to believe that he calls them youthful, because we all get them in our youth:

“*neoterikos... (neoteros, Q. V.), peculiar to the age of youth, youthful...*” (Thayer, p. 425)

These are lusts peculiar to youth. Before we have full knowledge, we opened doors that never should have been opened, but remained forever closed. Rash and dealing with powerful emotions our youth is a time of gravest trial. The Scriptures indicate that those in their 40's are still considered young.

And Rehoboam the son of Solomon reigned in Judah. Rehoboam was forty-one years old when he became king. 1Kings 14:21

But he rejected the advice which the elders had given him, and consulted the young men who had grown up with him, who stood before him. 1 Kings 12:8-9

Hence the time of youth seems to span the age of accountability to somewhere around the age of 40 - 50, as this is about where Timothy is at the time of writing. Lusts are strong cravings for things that are forbidden by God:

“*epithumia...desire, craving, longing... the desire directed towards... spec. desire for what is forbidden, lust...*” (Thayer, p. 238-239; 1939)

They are listed in many passages in the New Testament:

For all that is in the world — the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life — is not of the Father but is of the world. 1Jn. 2:16-17

“*For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies. 20 “These are the things which defile a man, but to eat with unwashed hands does not defile a man.” (Mt. 15:19-20).*

Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, 20 idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, 21 envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told you in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. (Gal. 5:19-21).

Therefore put to death your members which are on the earth: fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. 6 Because of these things the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience, 7 in which you yourselves once walked when you lived in them. 8 But now you yourselves are to put off all these: anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy language out of your mouth. (Col. 3:5-8).

Any of these things picked up in our youth should be run from as from any other dangerous thing.
but pursue righteousness,

Paul now uses a term with as strong a message put in the other direction. it is a powerful term for pursuing something in order to catch it:

“*dioko... 1. to make to run or flee, put to flight, drive away... 2. to run swiftly in order to catch some person or thing, to run after... to press on: fig. of one who in a race runs swiftly to reach the goal, 3. in any way whatever to harass, trouble, molest one; ... Pass. with a dat. denoting the cause, to be*

maltreated, suffer persecution on account of something ... 4. without the idea of hostility, to run after, follow after... 5. metaph. with acc. of thing, to pursue i. e. to seek after eagerly, earnestly endeavor to acquire... (Thayer, p. 153; 1377).

This was their common term for persecution because the persecutor was so zealous in chasing after those they wanted to harm. it was also used in the good sense of “*to seek after eagerly, earnestly endeavor to acquire...*” These are the things that all Christians who desire to be a vessel unto honor will be eagerly and earnestly seeking to acquire. They are the essence of what it is to be useful for our Master. He lists five attributes in this first part. Then continues with some further warnings. The first four of these terms are used many many times in the New Testament Scriptures. All God’s children ought to become experts on these as they are used so much. The term “righteousness” is defined:

“dikaiosune... the virtue or quality or state of one who is dikaios; 1. in the broad sense, the state of him who is such as he ought to be, righteousness... the condition acceptable to God... a. univ. ... the doctrine concerning the way in which man may attain to a state approved of God... b. integrity, virtue, purity of life, uprightness, correctness in thinking, feeling and acting...” (Thayer, p. 149; 1343)

This term refers to our obligations to duty. Our duty to God and our duty to our fellow man is all that it ought to be. We are living up to our responsibilities and keeping all the laws.

The most fundamental explanation of righteousness is the one we have experienced from our youth. From our earliest memories we can remember a keen sense of justice and fairness(*righteousness*). We knew instinctively when an unfair judgment(*unrighteousness*) took something from us. We knew if we had been cheated, and would often cry out “***That’s not fair!***” meaning “***That’s not righteous!***” A tattletale brother or sister who gave only half the story or a matter of discipline where the teacher or parent saw only half the picture left a bitter taste when injustice (*unrighteous judgment*) had been done. We also remember the pleasant sensation of satisfaction and joy when we were treated fairly and justly(*righteously*). There is nothing more satisfying in the midst of injustice(*unrighteousness*) to find a second witness who clarifies the matter and brings vindication(*righteousness*)!

The first to plead his case seems just, Until another comes and examines him. Pr 18:17

The strength of these feelings in our heart reveal what is left of “*the image and likeness of God*” within us. When first created in His image and likeness we were incapable of anything less than full integrity, fairness and justice. We were righteous as He is righteous.

An important and revealing paradox about fairness is seen in the difference between of how strongly we understand what is fair and just when we are cheated of it and how little concern we sometimes feel when we are unfair to another. Everyone becomes angry when treated unfairly or when they are the victim of injustice. Yet how much outrage is felt when they benefit when someone else is the victim of unfair and unjust treatment? While everyone hates to be cheated, many brag and consider themselves fortunate if they have benefitted from cheating another. Since it is selfishness that creates such a chasm in our understanding of righteousness, we must hunger and thirst for it if it is to ever become our possession. We have to feel the same sense of need for fairness and justice (*righteousness*) when we direct it toward another as we do when it is directed toward ourselves.

*“dikaios ... righteous, **observing divine and human laws**; one who is **such as he ought to be**... 1. in a wide sense, upright, righteous, virtuous, keeping the commands of God...”* (Thayer, p 148-149; 1342)

*“dikaiosune... the virtue or quality or state of one who is dikaios; 1. in the broad sense, the state of him who is such as he ought to be, righteousness... b. **integrity, virtue, purity of life, uprightness, correctness in thinking, feeling and acting...**”* (Thayer, p. 149; 1343)

tsedeg- justice, rightness, righteousness a) **what is right or just or normal**, rightness, justness (of weights and measures) b) righteousness ...5) **used of God’s attribute** c) righteousness, justice (in

case or cause) d) rightness (in speech) e) righteousness (as ethically right)

One who is “righteous” observes “divine and human law” and is therefore “such as he ought to be” in the sight of God. Since any partiality between the fairness and justice we seek to receive and that which we give to others is outrageous all who hunger for true righteousness seek the absolute standards dictated by God! This is the true “integrity, virtue, purity of life, uprightness, correctness of thinking, feeling and acting.” When we understand this fundamental element of righteousness, we will know that every sin cheats someone. Every sin is an act of unfairness and injustice. It robs someone of their possessions (stealing/coveting), integrity (false witness), life (murder), and family (adultery). Every law created by God was crafted to keep us from taking something that belongs to our neighbor or to our God. There must be no unfairness or injustice in the treatment of others. All God’s statutes are based on this:

138 You have commanded your testimonies in righteousness and very faithfulness. . . 144 Your testimonies are righteous for ever: give me understanding, and I shall live. . . 172 Let my tongue sing of your word; for all your commandments are righteousness. Ps 119:138, 144, 172

And Jehovah commanded us to do all these statutes, to fear Jehovah our God, for our good always, that He might preserve us alive, as at this day. 25 And it shall be righteousness unto us, if we observe to do all this commandment before Jehovah our God, as He hath commanded us. Deut 6:24-25

Though it may sound simplistic it is actually very profound. Righteousness is defined and explained by God’s Law. His testimonies, statutes and commands are the definitive standard of righteousness. This is profound because not one law was arbitrarily crafted to rule our conduct. All God’s testimonies, statutes and commands are a clear reflection of God’s own character. God’s laws are the mirror of God character and as we follow them we become more like God himself. Paul spoken in a similar way about the Lord and the law of Christ

But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord. 2 Cor 3:18

God’s laws reveal to us the manner in which God has always lived and how He expects those He has created to live. We were created “in His image and likeness.” At that time we lived as He lived and thought as He thought. So His law reveals His own righteous character.

For Jehovah is righteous; He loves righteousness: the upright shall behold His face. Ps 11:7

Righteous are you, O Jehovah, and upright are your judgments. . . 142 Your righteousness is an everlasting righteousness, and your law is truth. Ps 119:137, 142

8 O LORD God of hosts, who is like Thee, O mighty LORD? Your faithfulness also surrounds You ... 14 Righteousness and justice are the foundation of Your throne; lovingkindness and truth go before You. 16 In your name do they rejoice all the day; and in your righteousness are they exalted. Ps 89:8, 14, 16

Since righteousness is God’s way of life, the thoughts and emotions of righteousness are the pattern for our own. God is eternally righteous. He is eternally fair and just. It is “impossible for God to lie” and “there is no partiality with God!” The righteousness we hunger and thirst for is the true reflection of God’s own character.

So blessed are those who hunger and thirst “to observe divine and human laws.” Blessed are those who hunger and thirst to be “such as he ought to be” and were created to be. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for “integrity, virtue, purity of life, uprightness, correctness in thinking, feeling and acting.”

If we are still struggling with the exact direction our hunger and thirst will take us to be righteous, there is an important parallel that will help us better understand. Our righteousness is based on God’s own righteousness. When we seek to keep all God’s laws of fairness and justice, it will be righteousness to us. We see an exact parallel to this in *agape*—love. The same testimonies, statutes

and commands that define and reveal righteousness, all hang (depend, gain stability and strength) from *agape*–love.

Jesus said to him, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.” 38 This is the first and great commandment. 39 And the second is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ 40 On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.” Mt 22:37-40

Think about it! The definition of *Agape*-Love is nearly identical to righteousness in its application. While “*agape*–love” always acts in the “*best interests*” of others, “*righteousness*” always treats others “*fairly and justly.*” Therefore righteousness and love are synonyms: Two different ways of looking at the same commands. When we treat others fairly we are righteous and when we act in their best interests we act in love. God is righteous and God is love. When we act in love and we act in righteousness we reflect God’s character to others. So God’s law, testimonies, statutes and commands reveal righteousness and love with the same words. Note the comparisons between righteousness, love, and commands. Also how they relate to our relationship to God and to the devil.

*In this the **children of God** and **the children of the devil** are manifest: Whoever does not **practice RIGHTEOUSNESS** is not of God, nor is he who does not **LOVE his brother.** 1 Jn 3:10*

*Therefore, **whatever you want men to do to you, do also to them,** for this is the Law and the Prophets. Mt 7:12-13*

*If you know that **He is RIGHTEOUS,** you know that **everyone who practices RIGHTEOUSNESS is born of Him.*** 1 Jn 2:29

*Little children, let no one deceive you. **He who practices RIGHTEOUSNESS is RIGHTEOUS, just as He is RIGHTEOUS.*** 1 Jn 3:7

*Beloved, **let us LOVE one another,** for **LOVE is of God;** and **everyone who LOVES is born of God and knows God.** 8 **He who does not LOVE does not know God, for God is LOVE.** . . . 2 **By this we know that we LOVE the children of God, when we love God and keep His COMMANDMENTS.** 3 **For this is the LOVE of God, that we keep His COMMANDMENTS.** And His **COMMANDMENTS** are not burdensome. 1 John 4: 7-9; 5:2-4*

It is always difficult to take synonyms and see their minute differences. Righteousness is a word that specifically deals with the manner in which we treat our fellow man. If we are righteous then we seek to treat others fairly. We seek to be just and honorable. We never seek to take what is another’s or in any way benefit from them at their cost. Our highest goal is for our God to see us as fair and just, manifesting integrity and a desire to always do what is best for others and never harm them.

faith,

Faith refers exclusively to our relationship to God, the Bible as His Word, and Jesus Christ as His Son. It is defined:

“pistis... faith; i. e. 1. conviction of the truth of anything, belief... in the N.T. of a conviction or belief respecting man’s relationship to God and divine things, generally with the included idea of trust and holy fervor born of faith and conjoined with it... a. when it relates to God, PISTIS is the conviction that God exists and is the creator and ruler of all things, the provider and bestower of eternal salvation through Christ... b. in reference to Christ, it denotes a strong and welcome conviction or belief that Jesus is the Messiah, through whom we obtain eternal salvation in the kingdom of God... c. univ. the religious belief of Christians; d. with the predominant idea of trust (or confidence) whether in God or in Christ, springing from faith in the same... 2. fidelity, faithfulness, i.e the character of one who can be relied on...” (Thayer, p. 512-414; 4102)

Though faith refers to all avenues of collecting knowledge that bypasses our five senses, in the New Testament it refers exclusively to the convictions and strength of our believe in God.

6 But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and

that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him. (Heb. 11:6).

We cannot be useful to the master unless we eagerly pursue everything that leads to a stronger faith and flee from everything that tends to cause us to doubt.

love,

“*agape*,... a purely bibl. and eccl. word... in signification it follows the verb AGAPAO; consequently it denotes 1. *affection, good-will, love, benevolence*:... Of the love of men to men; esp of that love of Christians towards Christians which is enjoined and prompted by their religion, whether the love be viewed as in the soul or as expressed:... of the love of men towards God... of the love of God towards men... of the love of God towards Christ;... of the love of Christ towards men:...” (Thayer, p. 4-5; 26)

This is the greatest term in the Bible. It is the most all encompassing and useful of all the virtues.

- * Upon love hangs the law and the prophets Matt 22:37-40
- * should Love with all our heart, soul, and mind, Mark 12:30
- * God had Love when he sent His Son into the world. John 3:16 Romans 5:8
- * If we have love we keep Jesus commands. John 14:15,21,24
- * If we show love all men will know we are his disciples. Jn. 13:34-35
- * Love caused Jesus to lay his life down. John 15:13
- * Love is a universal debt we owe to all men. Romans 13:8
- * Love fulfills the law. Romans 13:10
- * Love edifies the one who has love. 1 Cor 8:1-3
- * Without love knowledge and sacrifices are meaningless. 1 Cor 13:1-3
- * love suffers long and is kind. 1 Cor 13:4
- * Love is greater than faith and hope. 1 Cor 13:13
- * Love motivated Paul to greater service. II Cor 5:14
- * Love is one of the fruit of the Spirit. Gal 5:22
- * Love will fill us with all the fulness of God. Eph 3:19
- * Love promotes the unity of the Spirit. Eph 4:2
- * love is the bond of perfection and is to be put on above all. Col 3:14
- * Love is one of the purposes for preaching pure doctrine. 1 Tim 1:5
- * Love is to be followed after by the man of God. 1 Tim 6:11; 2 Tim 2:22
- * All that we do should be done in love. I Cor 16:14
- * God is love. I John 4:7-12

It is a marvelous and wonderful attribute.

peace

This term is defined:

“*eirene*,... 1. *a state of national tranquility; exemption from the rage and havoc of war*... 2. *peace between individuals, i. e. harmony, concord*... 3. *security, safety, prosperity, felicity*, (because peace and harmony make and keep things safe and prosperous) ... 5. acc. to a conception distinctly peculiar to Christianity, *the tranquil state of a soul assured of its salvation through Christ, and so fearing nothing from God and content with its earthly lot, of whatsoever sort that is...*” (Thayer, p. 182; 1515)

Peace is a two-fold virtue. It is the wonderful state of the Christian who has sought for peace with God and his fellow man and has gained it. It is also the goal of all contact with others, to bring peace to them.

Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called sons of God. Mt 5:9

The universal need for the peacemaker is obvious in nearly every area of human interaction. It begins in the home when mothers and fathers bring peace to angry brothers and sisters. As people grow from infancy to adults, there is seldom a time where such guidance is unnecessary. In school, the teacher, principal, and coach must discipline the unruly to keep peace in the classroom. In sports where conflicts arise, a referee or umpire keeps the peace. When we add lawyers and judges in the courts, arbitrators and counselors in disputes, and elders and preachers keeping unity

in the church we begin to see the magnitude of what a peacemaker can do.

Any relationship can escalate into a conflict. Most of the time conflicts are resolved by the peacemaker in all of us. But sometimes a mediator who can build a bridge of compromise, contrition and forgiveness is essential. Conflicts spark arguments, arguments hurt feelings, and hurt feelings often lead to minor skirmishes. Sadly what begins small can intensify into open war.

Where do wars and fights come from among you? Do they not come from your desires for pleasure that war in your members? 2 You lust and do not have. You murder and covet and cannot obtain. You fight and war. James 4:1-2

*Angry words are lightly spoken, Bitt'rest thoughts are rashly stirred
Brightest links of life are broken By a single angry word. Song # 112*

Enter the peacemaker! When “wars and fights” break out and people lash out because of “angry words lightly spoken” or “bitt’rest thoughts rashly stirred,” someone has to intervene and try to pick up the pieces before the “brightest links of life are broken.” Yet the best peacemaker doesn’t speak the “angry words,” or upon hearing them absorbs the sting refuses to allow this “brightest link” to break.

Therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering; 13 bearing with one another, and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so you also must do. 14 But above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfection. 15 And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to which also you were called in one body; and be thankful. Col. 3:12-16

True peacemaking begins in the heart. When we choose “tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering;” over conflict. When we are willing to “bear with one another, and forgive one another” “even as Christ forgave you,” we are laying the foundation to become a “blessed peacemaker.”

In our world of anger, selfishness and lust, many put the worst possible motives on what others do or say. They see malice in a simple mistake or hear scorn when none was intended, leading to emotions and activities that destroy peace and harmony. The Holy Spirit identifies these things as deeds of the flesh and warned of grave consequences if we practice them.

*Now the deeds of the flesh are evident, which are: immorality, impurity, sensuality, 20 idolatry, sorcery, **enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions, 21 envying, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these, of which I forewarn you just as I have forewarned you that those who practice such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God. Gal. 5:19-21***

Every conflict offers two ways to become a peacemaker. If we are in the midst of these deeds of the flesh no matter how strongly provoked, we must control and remove them. If another is under their influence we absorb them and keep the conflict from escalating. Relationships take years to build and are too precious to lose. So we choose peace.

A soft answer turns away wrath, But a harsh word stirs up anger. Pr. 15:1

The Peacemaker

People who crush their old man to create peace are worthy of praise and honor and are highly useful to the Master. Although like meekness some see this as a weakness it is actually a powerful/mighty force for good bringing great rewards here, and great honor when we stand before Him in judgment. The word Jesus chose has three distinct meanings. Each of them is important and should be cultivated individually.

eireno-poiios ... a peacemaker... pacific, loving peace...” (Thayer p. 183; 1518)

eireno-poiios... a peace-maker, one who cultivates peace and concord. (Harpers Analytical p. 119)

eirenopoios "He who makes peace" in the Greek sense of the opposite of war... denotes the establishment of peace and concord between men... the reference is to those who disinterestedly come between two contending parties and try to make peace. These God calls His sons because they are like Him." (Kittel Vol 2 p. 419; 1518)

In these three definitions we see three distinct realms to develop and cultivate to become a peacemaker.

1. Love peace and see peace as the highest and greatest good to be cultivated between every one.
2. A great love of peace leads to being willing to pay any price short of compromise to maintain it.
3. The peacemaker is always motivated in any conflict to try to create peace by intervention and mediation.

1. The Peacemaker Loves Peace

Peace is a fruit of the Spirit and a natural affection of those still possessing the image and likeness of God. At the same time it a desire and longing, a state of mind and heart, and an attribute.

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law. Gal. 5:22-24

Peace reigns between love and joy. It is a quality every bit as important as longsuffering or kindness. In the kingdom of God, is listed between joy and righteousness. We must learn to see it as an attribute.

for the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. Rom. 14:17

Those with peace (a quality of mind not state of action) despise strife and abhor conflict. While many in the world enjoy and have a lust for strife, God's children love peace. A love of conflict and violence permeates the heart of the ungodly. It is what motivated the Roman Circus to offer gladiators fighting to the death, and the Christian thrown to the lions. We see it today in the popularity of violent films and the strife and conflict in soap operas. Once begun, bloodlust is impossible to satisfy, so films become more and more violent and the scenes offer less and less to the imagination. This is the violence that filled the earth before the flood.

The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence. 12 So God looked upon the earth, and indeed it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted their way on the earth. Gen. 6:11-12

Before it turns violent, it is a perverse pleasure in conflict and strife. Either watching or creating it is evil.

A wrathful man stirs up strife, but he who is slow to anger allays contention. Pr. 15:18

Cast out the scoffer, and contention will leave; yes, strife and reproach will cease. Pr. 22:10

Where there is no wood, the fire goes out; and where there is no talebearer, strife ceases. 21 As charcoal is to burning coals, and wood to fire, so is a contentious man to kindle strife. 22 The words of a talebearer are like tasty trifles, and they go down into the inmost body. Pr. 26:20-22

For as the churning of milk produces butter, and wringing the nose produces blood, so the forcing of wrath produces strife. Pr. 30:33

A perverse man scatters abroad strife; And a whisperer separates chief friends. Pr. 16:28

He that covers a transgression seeks love; But he that harps on a matter separates chief friends. Pr. 17:9

A worthless person, a wicked man, Walks with a perverse mouth; 13 He winks with his eyes, He shuffles his feet, He points with his fingers; 14 Perversity is in his heart, He devises evil continually, He sows discord. Pr. 6:12-14

These six things the Lord hates, Yes, seven are an abomination to Him: 17 A proud look, A lying tongue, Hands that shed innocent blood, 18 A heart that devises wicked plans, Feet that are swift in running to evil, 19 A false witness who speaks lies, And one who sows discord among brethren. Pr. 6:16-19

Anyone involved with these emotions and activities is not a peacemaker. If we are easily provoked or find perverse enjoyment in watching strife, then we do not love peace and are not spiritually minded. All true peacemakers abhor these things. They make us feel sick and are a disgusting abomination to us. There is no place in the heart of one who loves peace for strife or even to be entertained by strife. To have unity and oneness of heart and soul with others is a wonderful blessing based on this precious emotion and attribute. It is wisdom coming from above.

But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy. 18 Now the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace. Jas. 3:17-18

If we love peace, pursue peace, seek peace, are devoted to peace, and we abhor the corruption of strife and in seeking for peace then we become “*peaceable, gentle, and willing to yield.*”

2. The Peacemaker Pays any Price

With such peace within the heart, we have a precious possession to be guarded and protected. So when conflict arises we set aside any lust or desire created by mistreatment that leads to strife. No price is too high to keep peace and avoid conflict and strife.

If it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men. Rom.12:18

It is always possible for us to leave peaceably, unless we are forced to compromise integrity or truth. If forced to renounce faith or deny God it is no longer possible. But sacrificing our own dignity or self-importance though distasteful or difficult, is still possible. A genuine peacemaker will pay that price.

But I tell you not to resist an evil person. But whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn the other to him also. 40 If anyone wants to sue you and take away your tunic, let him have your cloak also. 41 “And whoever compels you to go one mile, go with him two. Mt. 5:39-41

Most American Christians find it very distasteful to be slapped, called names, taken advantage of, or compelled to do something in order to keep peace. But if it feels better and more normal to fight back to keep “self-respect,” we are still of this world. It is not “self-respect,” but a desire for personal vengeance seeking control.

Repay no one evil for evil. Have regard for good things in the sight of all men. 18 If it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men. 19 Beloved, do not avenge yourselves, but rather give place to wrath; for it is written, “Vengeance is Mine, I will repay,” says the Lord. 20 Therefore “If your enemy is hungry, feed him; If he is thirsty, give him a drink; For in so doing you will heap coals of fire on his head.” 21 Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good. Rom. 12:17-21

This is the path of the true peacemaker. When confronted with evil, a peacemaker refuses to be overcome by it. When contempt, hatred, or abuse leads others to scoff, mock, and even verbally or physically abuse, we overcome it with good. God will take care of the abuse and mistreatment.

He wants us to diffuse the conflict and keep it from growing if possible. If our efforts fail and they hate us anyway, the peacemaker still seeks peace.

My soul has dwelt too long with one who hates peace. 7 I am for peace; but when I speak, they are for war. Ps. 120:6-7

You have heard that it was said, You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy. 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, 45 that you may be sons of your Father in heaven; for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust. Mt. 5:43-45

The genuine peacemaker cannot be forced to create or increase strife. Strife is generated by the wicked, but not a son of God. The true peacemaker will love (*agape*) all enemies and do good to those who spitefully use and hate. In this respect Jesus did more than just preach, He lived it at His trial and crucifixion.

who, when He was reviled, did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten, but committed Himself to Him who judges righteously; 1 Peter 2:23-24

Our “Prince of peace” said: “Father forgive them for they know not what they do.” The blessed peacemaker follows Jesus in this, pursuing peace like a prize or goal, even accepting wrong to possess peace. In many cases, it is better to allow ourselves to be cheated than to generate strife.

let us pursue the things which make for peace and the things by which one may edify another. Rom. 14:19

Now therefore, it is already an utter failure for you that you go to law against one another. Why do you not rather accept wrong? Why do you not rather let yourselves be cheated? 8 No, you yourselves do wrong and cheat, and you do these things to your brethren 1Cor. 6:7-8

I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called, 2 with all lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love, 3 endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. Eph. 4:1-3

3. The Peacemaker Intervenes and Mediates

This is the most difficult role of a peacemaker. Whenever the peacemaker sees conflict, we long to bring peace and harmony. When we see brethren who are feuding, families without peace, neighbors who are bitter toward each other, we long to resolve the conflict. When we hear of slander or strife in a jealous co-worker seeking to get ahead by slashing another, the peacemaker longs to intervene. But peacemaking in the quarrels of others is fraught with peril, and God offers important advice.

He who passes by and meddles in a quarrel not his own is like one who takes a dog by the ears. Pr. 26:17

When we see conflict, first and foremost our goal is to try and help resolve the conflict. But if the quarrel is not ours and they do not want help then our next duty is to do no harm. There is a fine line between the peacemaker and the “busybody” or “meddler in other men’s matters.” (1Tim 5:13; 1Pet. 4:15). If we hear of a quarrel that is not our own, we are rebuffed when trying to help bring peace, and there is no sin, we keep their secret and do not gossip.

Where there is no wood, the fire goes out; and where there is no talebearer, strife ceases. Pr. 26:20

Yet there are times when a conflict must be resolved even though it is not our quarrel. Jesus was very clear that no matter who begins the conflict, both parties are responsible to end it as quickly as possible. Whether sin is involved, or just bad feelings, as much as it is within us, we need to be

at peace.

Therefore if you bring your gift to the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar, and go your way. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift. Mt. 5:23-24

Moreover if your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault between you and him alone. If he hears you, you have gained your brother. Mt. 18:15

Whether our brother or sister has something against us because of something we did or they did, we are commanded to go and be reconciled, either by showing them their fault, by admitting ours or both. It must never be our fault that an issue cannot be resolved.

For "He who would love life and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips from speaking deceit. 11 Let him turn away from evil and do good; let him seek peace and pursue it. 1 Pet. 3:10-11

Pursue peace with all people, and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord: Heb. 12:14

When feuding brethren cross the line into sin or it creates turmoil in the church, or their friendship with the world makes them an enemy of God, then we may be forced to "meddle in a quarrel not his own."

Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God. James 4:4

Every sinner is an enemy of God and every attempt we make to bring peace makes us a peacemaker. God wants all men to be reconciled to Him and has given that task to His peacemakers.

Now all things are of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation, 19 that is, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation. 20 Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore you on Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God. 2 Cor. 5:18-21

God wants us to be actively involved in this work, the greatest work of the peacemaker. All of us "were enemies and are now "reconciled to God" through the efforts of a peacemaker (Rom 5:10-11). "For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation, having abolished in His flesh the enmity" "thus making peace." Through his peacemakers, "He came and preached peace to you who were afar off and to those who were near" (Eph. 2:14-18).

All evangelism and church discipline is working as a blessed peacemaker.

They Shall be Called Sons of God

The desire to bring peace to those who have cut themselves off from others due to the terrible emotions of anger, wrath and bitterness is a quality so much in the image of God that Jesus reveals the true peacemaker is one of the sons of God. God is a peacemaker. He seeks for peace between Himself and fallen man, and He seeks for peace between man and man. God is the God of peace and Jesus the prince of peace.

*Now the **God of peace** be with you all. Amen. Rom. 15:33*

*Now may the **God of peace** Himself sanctify you completely; and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. 1Th. 5:23*

*For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given; and the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, everlasting Father, **Prince of Peace**. Isa.*

9:6

Jesus is the Mediator between God and man and when we join Him in this role of mediation we become God's sons.

For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus, 1 Tim. 2:5

There are many opportunities for Christians to enter into this work. Every lost soul is in need of it. Preaching to the lost is seeking to bring peace between a sinner and God. Those who see conflict between a husband and wife, a parent and child, or friends and brethren and seek to help them resolve their difficulties are also peacemakers.

Whenever a peacemaker sees a conflict, he seeks to resolve it. Whether he caused it or is bearing the brunt of it, he seeks for reconciliation and forgiveness.

If it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men. Rom. 12:18

with those who call on the Lord

"meta... a preposition, akin to mesos... and hence prop. in the midst of, amid, denoting association, union, accompaniment;... I. With the GENITIVE, 1. among, with... 2. of association and companionship, with... a. after verbs of going, coming, departing, remaining, etc. with the genitive of the associate or companion..." (Thayer, p. 402-404; 3326)

This is not a lone activity. It is not something that we do by ourselves, it is something we do in union, and association and accompaniment with all others who call on the name of the Lord. We do it in fellowship by each one helping the others along in them. Those who "call on" the Lord are a very special group of people. This term is defined:

"epikaleo... 1. to put a name upon, to surname.... Pass. with the force of a mid. ... to permit one;'s self to be surnamed... 2. ... the name of one is named upon some one, i. e. he is called by his name or declared to be dedicated to him... 4. to call upon... to invoke; mid. to call upon one for one's self, in one's behalf: any one as a helper... as a judge, i. e. to appeal to one, make appeal unto... 5. Hebraistically... to call upon by pronouncing the name of Jehovah... an expression finding its explanation in the fact that prayers addressed to God ordinarily began with an invocation of the divine name... I call upon (on my behalf) the name of the Lord, i. e. to invoke, adore, worship, the Lord, i. e. Christ... II Tim. 2:22;..." (Thayer, p. 239)

Number 5 captures its essence in this passage. It is an expression that stresses our calling on his name in prayer, to adore, worship and ask Him for things. All who call on the Lord in this manner are our closest brethren, friends and co-workers. Everything possible should be done to help all who call on the name of the Lord to gain these things.

*And it shall come to pass That whoever **calls on the name of the Lord** Shall be saved.' Acts 2:21*

*Then Ananias answered, "Lord, I have heard from many about this man, how much harm he has done to Your saints in Jerusalem. 14 And here he has authority from the chief priests to bind all who **call on Your name.**" Acts 9:13-14*

*Then all who heard were amazed, and said, "Is this not he who destroyed **those who called on this name** in Jerusalem, and has come here for that purpose, so that he might bring them bound to the chief priests?" Acts 9:21*

*And now why are you waiting? Arise and be baptized, and wash away your sins, **calling on the name of the Lord.**' Acts 22:16 NKJV*

*To the church of God which is at Corinth, to those who are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all who in every place **call on the name of Jesus Christ our Lord**, both theirs and ours: 1 Cor 1:2*

out of a pure heart.

The term "out of" is defined:

“ek... It denotes as well exit or emission out of, as separation from, something with which there has been close connection; opp. to the preposition EIS into and EN in: *from out of, out from, forth from, from...*” (Thayer, p. 189; 1537)

The source of all the above attributes is a “pure heart.” If the heart is not pure, then, to that degree, all these other things will be tainted. The term “pure” comes from the same root as “cleanses” in 2:21. It is defined:

“*katharos... clean, pure, (free from the admixture or adhesion of anything that soils, adulterates corrupts); a. physically... b. in a levitical sense; clean; i.e. the use of which is not forbidden, imparts no uncleanness... c. ethically; free from corrupt desire, from sin and guilt... free from every admixture of what is false, sincere... genuine blameless, innocent...*” (Thayer, p. 312; 2513)

When joined to the term “heart:”

“*kardia...* fr a root signifying to quiver or palpitate;... prop. that organ in the animal body which is the centre of the circulation of the blood, and hence was regarded as the seat of physical life:... 2. univ. *kardia* denotes the seat and centre of all physical and spiritual life; and a. the vigor and seat of physical life... b. the centre and seat of spiritual life, the soul or mind, as it is the fountain and seat of the thoughts, passions, desires, appetites, affection, purposes, endeavors [so in Eng. heart, inner man, etc.]... of things done from the heart i.e. cordially or sincerely, truly (without simulation or pretence... BB spec. of the understanding, the faculty and seat of intelligence... GG of the will and character... DD of the soul so far forth as it is affected and stirred in a bad way or good, or of the soul as the seat of the sensibilities, affections, emotions, desires, appetites, passions... 3. used of the middle or central or inmost part of anything, even though inanimate...” (Thayer, p. 325-326; 2588).

This term stresses the great need to have the center and seat of our being absolutely all that it ought to be. There is no use in the church or anywhere for the pretender. For someone who has not worked to purge out of his heart all the youthful lusts. We must be making progress in this realm or we will never be useful for the master.

Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God. Mt. 5:8

Purity is the natural state of everything God created. As long as things remain as God designed them, they remain pure and wholesome. This is true in both the material creation and within the heart and soul of man. God is our faithful Creator and has given us good and perfect gifts (Jas 1:16-18). The record of creation reveals that all that is in this world was very good. Everything is exactly as it should be. The world we live in, the body God gave us to enjoy it with and the heart and soul in His image and likeness are pure and clean. As long things are kept in this natural state, we have a purity that brings health, contentment, prosperity and peace.

Then God saw everything that He had made, and indeed it was very good. So the evening and the morning were the sixth day. Gen. 1:31

As with every designer, God has a complete understanding of what is essential for things to work perfectly. Everything creating danger or failure is carefully removed.

As Jesus reveals that the pure in heart are blessed, He is warning us against any impurity within the our heart that creates spiritual pollution or moral defilement. Even with the forgiveness His death purchased, and even with the grace God promised, there are still things that can destroy everything if we don't remove and purify them from our hearts. These impurities of “*flesh and spirit*” must be cleansed and purged if we are to be blessed.

Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God. 2Cor. 7:1

Pursue peace with all people, and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord: 15 looking carefully lest anyone fall short of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up cause trouble, and by this many become defiled; Heb. 12:14-16

It is of the highest importance that we learn to identify what is clean, pure and holy and to remove

all that is polluted and defiled due to contamination. We must be morally pure, spiritually pure and doctrinally pure. To graphically illustrate the terrible damage spiritual, moral and doctrinal pollution creates, consider the parable of the material creation. The affects of pollution on our environment and our health are devastating.

Pollution in the Material Creation

We have all witnessed the terrible consequences of pollution. God created all chemicals and elements, including radiation, oil, and natural gas for man to take dominion and use. But if they are not carefully monitored and safely stored, catastrophic pollution is always possible. When oil spills into the ocean or a tanker carrying concentrated chemicals breaks open near a lake or stream, there is contamination on a massive scale. We have all seen birds and sea life coated in oil or dead fish floating on the water. We read about the terrible consequences of the meltdown in Chernobyl and the horrific deaths from radiation poisoning.

While the pristine beauty of God's natural order always strikes our senses in a pleasing manner pollution sickens the senses. A rugged beach, even with crashing breakers creates awe and reverence, while a sandy one with warm clear water and gentle waves brings a sense of comfort. A mountain peak capped in snow at sunrise, the beauty of a mature forest in the fall as the leaves turn create a sense of serenity and peace. Our senses glory in the sights and sounds of such things. Where ever the purity of God's original design and plan are evident our entire being rejoices and feels good to be there.

Because we enjoy the taste and benefits of pure air and water or healthy food, we despise and are disgusted with all pollution or uncleanness. It revolts our senses and sickens our heart when we come into contact with gross pollution that defiles the land. The sight, smell, or taste of such contamination leads to a sense of sickness and disgust. If it doesn't taste good, smell fresh, look clean, or feel right, we turn away in disgust.

How blessed are those things in the material creation that are still pure.

Pollution in the Heart and Soul.

In this respect the human heart and soul mirror the material creation. Before sin in the garden, our knowledge of good and evil was limited, just as it is with God. God knows evil exists, but He has never been soiled or polluted with it and has never experienced it, "*for God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does He Himself tempt anyone.*" (Jas. 1:13-14). So when man(male and female) was created in the image and likeness of God, he too had never been sullied and defiled with evil. This was the great lie of the serpent. Man knew as much about evil as a being created in the image and likeness of God needed to know. They knew the difference between good and evil, but had never experienced its pollution. Adam and Eve were truly blessed to be pure in heart. Yet by their own choice they polluted themselves. They sullied their heart, contaminated their conscience and lost their innocence. The affects of this defilement damaged their relationship as husband and wife along with the pure and clean fellowship they had with God.

Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves coverings. 8 And they heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden. 9 Then the Lord God called to Adam and said to him, "Where are you?" 10 So he said, "I heard Your voice in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; and I hid myself." 11 And He said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you that you should not eat?" Gen. 3:7-11

The pollution of evil in the heart and soul is every bit as defiling and destructive as pollution in a lake or stream. As massive pollution in a lake kills everything it contacts, so the knowledge of evil, gained by experience, will kill everything it contacts. Although every child is born with a pure spirit and soul, with the same emotions and image as Adam and Eve, the pollution and defilement of sin

soon enters and begins the process of corruption and death.

But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed. 15 Then, when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death. James 1:14-15

Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned Rom 5:12

Paul described in detail how his own soul was polluted with the defilement of sin. As he became aware of the command not to covet, he knew it was God's law and he fought against feelings of covetousness. But as Adam and Eve, he was "drawn away by his own lusts and enticed." Finally, when that "evil desire" was "conceived in his heart, it gave birth to sin." At that moment, "sin revived and I died." Thus the pollution of sin entered into Paul's soul and death was the result.

But sin, taking opportunity by the commandment, produced in me all manner of evil desire. For apart from the law sin was dead. 9 I was alive once without the law, but when the commandment came, sin revived and I died. 10 And the commandment, which was to bring life, I found to bring death. Rom. 7:8-11

Through Ezekiel, God plainly revealed that each of us becomes impure, polluted and defiled because of similar decisions. We are not polluted because of what Adam and Eve did, or even because of what our own father and mother did. Each soul sins exactly as Paul and James described and each soul became defiled and contaminated because of that sin.

4 "Behold, all souls are Mine; The soul of the father As well as the soul of the son is Mine; The soul who sins shall die. ... 20 The soul who sins shall die. The son shall not bear the guilt of the father, nor the father bear the guilt of the son. The righteousness of the righteous shall be upon himself, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon himself. Ezek. 18:4, 20

Just as God made Adam and Eve in His image and likeness, so He also made us. We were all made upright, but each of us have sought out our own impurities and our own defiling ways.

Truly, this only I have found: That God made man upright, But they have sought out many schemes." Eccl. 7:29

No one stays pure. Each one chooses to open up areas that lead to pollution and defilement and the same terrible consequences of death and defilement come to all.

There is none righteous, no, not one; 11 There is none who understands; There is none who seeks after God. 12 They have all turned aside; They have together become unprofitable; There is none who does good, no, not one. 13 Their throat is an open tomb; With their tongues they have practiced deceit; The poison of asps is under their lips Rom. 3:10-13

This is what led Paul to warn Timothy and through him all of us about our youthful lusts.

Flee also youthful lusts; but pursue righteousness, faith, love, peace with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart. 2 Tim. 2:22

Every young man and woman makes choices and creates youthful lusts. Each child is drawn away by these lusts of the flesh and defiled. These youthful lusts remain in our heart, polluting and defiling us as they seek to regain control. We must flee them whatever they are. The great concern of our Lord as set forth in this beatitude rests in the terrible consequences of the pollution and contamination of sin. If sin is not cleansed and removed from our heart, there will be no blessing. Not even His death and all the love and mercy of God can help us if we do not continually cleanse ourselves and keep our heart pure.

The Pure in Heart

Both the material and spiritual/moral realms pollution and purity exist side by side. It is up to us to create a barrier that separates what pollutes, contaminates and defiles, from entering what is pure

and clean.

“katharos... clean, pure, (free from the admixture or adhesion of anything that soils, adulterates or corrupts); a. physically... b. in a levitical sense; clean; i.e. the use of which is not forbidden, imparts no uncleanness... c. ethically; free from corrupt desire, from sin and guilt... free from every admixture of what is false, sincere... genuine blameless, innocent... ” (Thayer, p. 312; 2513)

Purity is what is *“free from anything that soils, adulterates or corrupts.”* Purity is what is *“free from corrupt desire, from sin and guilt,”* and what is *“free from every admixture of what is false.”* This definition fits perfectly with all we have seen up to this point in the lesson. What God originally created is “free” from all contamination, pollution and defilement. Those who are pure are those who have guarded, protected and kept themselves safe from those things that defile and corrupt.

Every emotion and desire that creates a need in us is a gift from God that is pure, wholesome and “very good.” But they are all capable of being polluted and corrupted. Since God *“hates divorce,”* is a *“jealous God”* and will feel *“the wrath of God”* (Mal. 2:16; Ex. 34:14; Rom. 1:18), there is nothing inherently impure about hate, jealousy or wrath. Paul had a *“lust”* to *“depart and be with Christ”* (Phil. 1:23), so even lust itself is not defiling. But hate, jealousy, wrath and lust can easily be polluted and defiled. Wholesome ambition can be polluted into covetousness. Healthy sexual desire becomes defiling sexual lust when directed toward anyone but our own spouse. A godly desire for the punishment of the wicked can be contaminated into personal vengeance. Good drugs that bring healing and health can be corrupted into addictions that destroy all that is good.

If we want to be pure we must be careful about the pollution and corruption of all our emotions, desires, and needs. Anything that is wholesome and good can be contaminated and defiled. It can happen slowly over many years as Solomon’s wives turned away his heart, or it can occur in an instant as happened to David.

David’s Catastrophic Pollution

David’s glance on to Bathsheba’s rooftop as she bathed presented a catastrophic event in his heart and soul (2 Samuel 11). His mind was so polluted with lust and desire, that his heart seethed with its poison, and his good intentions and love for God were overwhelmed in an instant. Within moments he had violated two of the ten commandments and only a few weeks later violated a third.

Yet David was a man after God’s own heart. He was a man of faith, love and submission. He kept all God’s will. Yet the pollution of that glance overwhelmed it all. Though he quickly learned she was the wife of Uriah the Hittite (a trusted and valiant servant), and that the desire he felt for this woman was unlawful: *“You shall not covet your neighbor’s wife”* he did not repent. David was married at that time. The pollution could have been set aside and cleansed by repentance the moment he learned she was married. He could have then gone in to one of his wives. But the corrupted and polluted desire wanted a defiling fulfillment. This overwhelmed him and the pure and holy *“man after God’s own heart”* knowingly violated: *“You shall not commit adultery.”*

After the sin was committed and the desires sated, the pollution continued to build. David was not yet pure in heart. When he learned of her pregnancy, he sought to hide the sin by bringing Uriah home from battle. His heart was further polluted as he played the part of a hypocrite, treating the man he betrayed as though he were a friend. Instead of confessing his sin, he chose to hide it. He sought to entice the honorable Uriah to lay with his own wife, but the honor and integrity of Uriah thwarted him. He then stooped to making Uriah drunk in hopes that Uriah under the influence of alcohol would violate his conscience. All of this in an attempt to hide and cover his sin in lies and deception.

When all else failed, he did a terrible and vile thing that revealed the full depths of his polluted heart. It is hard to imagine even the most hardened man doing something so evil and disgusting. David sent his trusting and loyal servant Uriah back, carrying the very letter that asked Joab to put him in fiercest part of the battle and draw back to allow him to die (2 Sam. 11:14-15). Though he did

not lift his hand against Uriah, God charged him with breaking another of the ten commandments: "You shall not kill."

You have killed Uriah the Hittite with the sword; you have taken his wife to be your wife, and have killed him with the sword of the people of Ammon. 2 Sam. 12:9-10

David's heart was no longer pure. The morally defiling poison of that chance glance into the home of another man's wife created a terrible moral defilement within David's heart. Many things died as David allowed that pollution to remain within his heart day by day.

When I kept silent, my bones grew old Through my groaning all the day long. 4 For day and night Your hand was heavy upon me; My vitality was turned into the drought of summer. Ps. 32:3-4

David admitted that all the joy and gladness was quenched from his heart. He felt like his bones were broken. His heart was defiled and the joy of salvation was gone (Ps. 51). He described the extent of his moral defilement as a heavy burden. It made him feel like he was bent over with it. He went about mourning all day long, felt emotionally numbed and badly crushed. He could not stop groaning because of the agitation he felt within his heart (Ps. 38). Truly these sins had devastating affects! It polluted his heart and soul, and killed what was good as it took control (Jas. 1:14-15).

God sent Nathan the prophet to reveal to David the extent of his pollution and defilement in hopes that even at that late moment when all seemed lost forever, something could still be done. If David had not listened to Nathan and repented, his pollution would have led even the man after God's own heart to eternal destruction. David came so very close to losing everything. Once again let us consider a parable in the material creation.

Cleansing Pollution and Defilement in the Material Creation

Over twenty years ago a train derailment in the mountains of Northern California led to a tanker car bursting open in a canyon with a mountain stream flowing through it. A lethal concentration of a dangerous pesticide entered the river. In an instant, every living thing in or near the water died. A noxious cloud of green poisonous gas soon formed, coating all the plants and animals in the area and killing them.

Before the ruptured tanker could be removed, many miles of the stream had become contaminated and it slowly began to seep into Lake Shasta. Above the accident everything was still pure and pristine, alive and healthy, all was well. But all the water flowing downstream was lifeless, bringing death to all it contacted, hopelessly polluted. Experts were perplexed. No solution seemed possible. How could this pollution be contained and removed? How could life be restored to that which was now dead? Yet God's natural order was already cleansing away the pollution. The melting snow in the mountains was scouring the bottom of the river and diluting the poisons.

Although all the affects of the derailment have not yet been completely erased, fish and other life now live in the water. God's great wisdom is seen in the resiliency of His creation to bounce back from such catastrophic death and pollution. God has placed resiliency and powerful healing forces into His creation. Most disasters only need the passing of time to restore God's creative beauty and serenity to them. Vegetation, insects, animals and water life all have a powerful ability to bounce back. Lakes, rivers and streams cleanse themselves and are replenished with fish and life. The land becomes fertile, green and lush again. Animals soon return and before long, things return to their natural state. We should praise God for the great power of redemption He has placed within His physical creation. God's healing and regenerative power is seen in how quickly things can return to their natural state.

Cleansing Moral Pollution and Defilement in the Heart

So it was with David. As Nathan walked into David's presence, he had a great and important task. He sought to cleanse a polluted heart and save a sinner's soul. He was armed with the love, mercy,

and compassion of God. God had created the same cleansing, healing, and restorative powers for the human heart and soul that He did for His material creation. David's heart was as defiled and contaminated by moral pollution as that stream above, and Nathan was coming to scour and cleanse it. But the danger was great that for David nothing left was pure and that his mind and conscience were defiled.

To the pure all things are pure, but to those who are defiled and unbelieving nothing is pure; but even their mind and conscience are defiled. Titus 1:15

Yet David was cleansed just as the stream was cleansed and his defiled mind and conscience were cleansed because he listened and did exactly what needed to be done to be restored.

Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, Whose sin is covered. 2 Blessed is the man to whom the Lord does not impute iniquity, And in whose spirit there is no deceit. 3 When I kept silent, my bones grew old Through my groaning all the day long. 4 For day and night Your hand was heavy upon me; My vitality was turned into the drought of summer. Selah 5 I acknowledged my sin to You, And my iniquity I have not hidden. I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the Lord," And You forgave the iniquity of my sin. Ps. 32:1-5

This is how everyone one of us began our life as a Christian. We were so polluted and defiled within our heart that we were all dead. Everyone of us needed God's healing and cleansing power.

And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins, 2 in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience, 3 among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others. 4 But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, 5 even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved) Eph. 2:1-5

let us draw near with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. Heb 10:22

Since you have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit in sincere love of the brethren, love one another fervently with a pure heart, 23 having been born again, not of corruptible seed but incorruptible, through the word of God which lives and abides forever, 1 Pet. 1:22-23

The writer of Hebrews described the cleansing power of Christ's blood as the means by which our conscience was cleansed and purged. "how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without blemish to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?" (Heb. 9:14). Those of us who now have a pure heart should praise God for that cleansing power. Through the gospel we have been purged so completely that we are not even the same people. God described this in prophesy: "And I shall give them one heart, and shall put a new spirit within them. And I shall take the heart of stone out of their flesh and give them a heart of flesh, Ezek. 11:19

After a Gift of a Renewed and Purified Heart We Must Keep it that Way.

Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God.

Yet like David even after conversion and a long life of purity and holiness, keeping our hearts pure is still a high priority as pollution is always a frightening possibility. A seared conscience, a root of bitterness defiling the many, itching ears heaping up teachers after their own lusts, and those who allure through lewdness those who have escaped the pollution of the world and bring them back again like the sow to the mire must all be guarded against.

looking carefully lest anyone fall short of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up cause trouble, and by this many become defiled; Heb. 12:15-16

Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons, 2 speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their own conscience seared with a hot iron, 1 Tim. 4:1-3

For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; 4 and they will turn their ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables. 2 Tim. 4:3-5

they allure through the lusts of the flesh, through lewdness, the ones who have actually escaped from those who live in error. 19 While they promise them liberty, they themselves are slaves of corruption; for by whom a person is overcome, by him also he is brought into bondage. 20 For if, after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled in them and overcome, the latter end is worse for them than the beginning. 21 For it would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than having known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered to them. 22 But it has happened to them according to the true proverb: "A dog returns to his own vomit," and, "a sow, having washed, to her wallowing in the mire." 2 Pet. 2:18-22

Jesus wanted us to make a pure heart a high priority. It is never enough to be cleansed! We have to stay cleansed. Like the stream that scours the bottom and cleanses itself daily, so also we must scour our hearts daily with introspection, repentance and confession leading to forgiveness, a good conscience and purity of heart.

but if we walk in the light as He Himself is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin. 8 If we say that we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves, and the truth is not in us. 9 If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. 1 Jn. 1:7-9

But the goal of our instruction is love from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith. 1Tim. 1:5-6

David found no cleansing, no purging and no healing until he did these things. The pollution in his heart continued to defile and pollute until he repented and confessed. "*When I kept silent, my bones grew old Through my groaning all the day long,*" but when he used introspection, repentance and confession, "*I acknowledged my sin to You, And my iniquity I have not hidden. I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the Lord," And You forgave the iniquity of my sin."*

This is the difference! Our heart has a cleansing stream flowing through it. When "*The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, A broken and a contrite heart — These, O God, You will not despise.*" In this way, our heart is protected from the devastating possibilities each lust can lead to as sin seeks to become full grown and bring death.

Those who repent, confess, and feel remorse and contrition as soon as their hearts are defiled with sin have the cleansing power of Jesus blood healing and restoring their hearts. Those who do not repent immediately after they sin are allowing these defiling poison to remain. This is not walking in the light!

Those who live through an entire day of moral defilement without cleansing it are not walking in the light. If we can commit a sin without a broken and contrite heart(*godly sorrow leading to repentance - II Cor 7:7-11*) that compels us to beg God for forgiveness then our hearts are more like a swamp than a cleansing stream! David's defiling glance was compounded when he did not repent of his wicked thoughts and desires before they turned into deeds. They grew deeper when he did not repent of the adultery and grew to hypocrisy and murder. The defilement was not cleansed and removed until he repented and confessed.

Even as we read this, if we see in our own heart the devastation of a moral cataclysm, emptiness, desolation and devoid of spiritual life, never forget David! When things looked like they could never be fixed, he turned back to God and asked for a clean heart and the return of the joy of salvation . The wonderful end of that story was that God gave it to him! But this is not only for David. It is for

all.

Wash yourselves, make yourselves clean; put away the evil of your doings from before My eyes. Cease to do evil, 17 Learn to do good; seek justice, rebuke the oppressor; defend the fatherless, plead for the widow. 18 Come now, and let us reason together, says the LORD, Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall be as wool. 19 If you are willing and obedient, you shall eat the good of the land; Isa. 1:16-19

For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men, 12 teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age, 13 looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, 14 who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself His own special people, zealous for good works. Titus 2:11-14

We left the water of baptism with all our sins washed away. Though they were as scarlet and as red as crimson, God has made our hearts as white and pure as snow and wool. By grace our hearts were made pure, but what have we done with our hearts since? Now and always above everything else, we must guard our hearts.

Keep your heart with all diligence, for out of it spring the issues of life. Pr. 4:23

Our heart is the source of all that springs forth in our life. Our thoughts, words and deeds are all directed by what we allow to enter it. If we keep it pure, then everything else will be pure. We should be more concerned about purity within our heart than purity in our food.

Thus Jesus offered great praise to those who will do everything necessary to keep their hearts pure and keep all impurities out. The first thing we have to do is keep a close eye on what enters the soul through our eyes and ears. Like the psalmist, we have to make the decision to keep ourselves away from all polluting sources.

I will set nothing wicked before my eyes; Ps. 101:3

This means we have to be careful with television, radio, movies, books, evil companions, etc. A pure heart must be so important that we are willing to sacrifice any other thing to keep it pure.

Who shall ascend into the hill of Jehovah? And who shall stand in his holy place? 4 He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart; who hath not lifted up his soul unto falsehood, and hath not sworn deceitfully. Ps. 24:3-4

The perverse in heart are an abomination to the LORD, but the blameless in their walk are His delight. Pr. 11:20

God sees the perverted (*twisted, distorted, crooked, perverse*) as an abomination (*a disgusting thing, abominable*). He delights (*pleasure, favor, goodwill*) in those who are upright (*complete, whole, entire, sound, healthful, wholesome, unimpaired, innocent, having integrity*). Thus the way we use our hearts which are the seat of our emotions and intellect will lead to a response in God. If we use our hearts for the pure and the clean things He has decreed, then our heart is as pure as the water melting from the mountain snows and we will be greatly blessed. But if we have become deceitful and corrupt in our dealings with others or insincere in our use of God's word, then that becomes a polluting element entering the heart and polluting it entirely.

The context of this passage goes all the way back to 2:14. It began with a warning: “*strive not about words to no profit,*” and avoid “*profane and vain babblings*” which led to “*subverting the hearers,*” “*eating like gangrene,* and *overthrowing faith.*” The way to avoid these things is to “*give diligence to handle God’s word properly.* A “*vessel unto honor*” must “*purge himself*” from the above to become a “*useful for the Master.*” He concluded the section with a warning to “*flee youthful lusts*” and “*follow after righteousness faith charity, peace, and a pure heart.*” |

Paul now concludes the section by adding that a faithful evangelist must “*avoid foolish and unlearned questions*”

<p>2:22 avoid foolish and unlearned questions 2:24 Lord’s Servant must not strive gentle to all, apt to teach, patient 2:25 In humility instructing those 2:26</p>	<p>Generate Strife who oppose themselves. Repentance & know the truth Under the snare of the devil Taken captive to do his will</p>
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In order to be a vessel unto honor, in order to be meet for the master’s use, and in order to be approved of God rightly dividing the word of truth, all of the above must be carefully pondered and considered. These things have been placed here now so that each evangelist can see which category best fits his work.

23 But avoid foolish and ignorant disputes,

In order to be a vessel unto honor, the faithful evangelist must purge himself of certain types of disputes. Paul uses the term “avoid” to describe a complete removal and seeking to keep away.

“paraiteomai... 1. to ask alongside..., beg to have near one; to obtain by entreaty; to beg from, to ask for, supplicate... 2. to avert... by entreaty or seek to avert, to deprecate ... b. to refuse, decline... c. to shun, avoid... to refuse, reject...” (Thayer, p. 482; 482)

Although this word can be used in the good sense of beg or entreat, in the letters to Timothy and Titus it is always used of averting refusing, declining shunning or rejecting.

*But **reject** profane and old wives' fables, and exercise yourself toward godliness. 1Tim 4:7*

*But **refuse** the younger widows; for when they have begun to grow wanton against Christ, they desire to marry, 1Tim. 5:11*

***Reject** a divisive man after the first and second admonition, Titus 3:10-11*

Although most teachers like “*questions*” from the audience, these types of questions must be avoided and rejected. The teacher must simply state that there is not need to answer this type of question. Even coming up with such a question should be avoided.

“zetesis... a. a seeking... b. inquiry... c. a questioning, debate: Acts 15:2; .. d. a subject of questioning or debate, matter of controversy: I Tim. 1:4... II Tim. 2:23; Titus 3:9...” (Thayer, p. 272; 2214)

There is no such thing as a bad question if the motive is right, and there is no such thing as a good question if the motive is wrong. Of course if there is any doubt as to the motive, Timothy would not shun such a question, but he should never ask one. It is the mark of a vessel unto dishonor to ask a question not to receive an answer, but simply to be disagreeable, or simply to stir up trouble:

The term “foolish” is defined:

“moros... foolish... without learning or erudition... imprudent, without forethought or wisdom... empty useless,... impious, godless, (because such a man neglects and despises what relates to salvation)...” (Thayer, p. 420)

Some people just enjoy conflict. They enjoy bringing up points of controversy that do not even need to be dealt with since they make no difference. Certainly there are times when one must take a

strong stand against error, but there are other times when it makes little difference and a conflict that leaves everyone feeling torn down instead of built up by coming to services occurs. There is no point to some of the foolish questions people ask. They are without forethought and wisdom. They are empty and useless. When a class is being taught, give some thought to whether an argument really needs to result from a point taught or whether it truly is only a foolish dispute. Another side of this foolishness is much stronger. This is the term "fool" that Jesus used in the Sermon on the Mount:

"You have heard that it was said to those of old, 'You shall not murder,' and whoever murders will be in danger of the judgment. 22 'But I say to you that whoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment. And whoever says to his brother, 'Raca!' shall be in danger of the council. But whoever says, 'You fool!' shall be in danger of hell fire. Mt. 5:21-22

We should also avoid questions that lead to impiety and godlessness. There are some questions that cannot be answered. There are some questions that are foolish to ask.

Other questions are "ignorant:"

"apaideutos... without instruction and discipline, uneducated, ignorant, rude... zeteseis stupid questions, II Tim. 2:28..." (Thayer, p. 53)

They are stupid, ignorant rude questions. There is nothing instructive about them, and they manifest a lack of discipline in their being asked. These types of questions never come from earnest truth seeking people. They come from scoffers and from mockers. They come from those who enjoy sowing discord among their brethren.

These six things the LORD hates, yes, seven are an abomination to Him: 17 A proud look, a lying tongue, hands that shed innocent blood, 18 A heart that devises wicked plans, feet that are swift in running to evil, 19 A false witness who speaks lies, and one who sows discord among brethren. Pr. 6:16-19

They also come from the confirmed unbeliever and the false teacher who seeks to destroy one's confidence in the word of God. But regardless of the type of person they come from, they always lead to the same place:

Then they said to Moses, "Because there were no graves in Egypt, have you taken us away to die in the wilderness? Why have you so dealt with us, to bring us up out of Egypt?" Ex 14:11-12

Why has the Lord brought us to this land to fall by the sword, that our wives and children should become victims? Would it not be better for us to return to Egypt?" Num 14:3-4

Why have you brought up the assembly of the Lord into this wilderness, that we and our animals should die here? 5 And why have you made us come up out of Egypt, to bring us to this evil place? Num 20:4-5

The Pharisees did the same thing to Jesus.

Then the Pharisees went and plotted how they might entangle Him in His talk. Mt. 22:15-16

Tell us, therefore, what do You think? Is it lawful to pay taxes to Caesar, or not?" Mt. 22:17

Last of all the woman died also. 28 Therefore, in the resurrection, whose wife of the seven will she be? For they all had her." Mt. 22:27-28

"Teacher, which is the great commandment in the law?" Mt. 22:36

Are there such questions today? Why did Jesus make water into alcoholic wine? Ecclesiastes says there is a time to dance, but you preach it is a sin to dance? Where does it say in the Bible you can't use instruments? When did the gospel really start? Jesus was a Jew under the Law, how do we know if His words are Law or gospel? Where did God come from?

knowing that they generate strife.

There are two forms of this verb. The present tense is *oida* and the "Know" is defined:

"eido... lat. video... The tenses coming from eido and retained by usage form two families, of which one

signifies *to see*, the other *to know*... 1. *to see* 1. *to perceive*(with the eyes)... 2. lat. *video, to perceive by any of the senses*... 3. *univ to perceive, notice, discern, discover*... 4. *to see*, i.e. to turn the eyes, the mind, the attention to anything; a. *to pay attention, observe*... b. ... *to see about something* i.e. to ascertain what must be done about it... c. *to inspect, examine*... d. *to look at, behold*... 5. *to experience, any state of condition*... 6. *to see i.e. have an interview with, to visit*..." (Thayer, p. 172-174; 1492)

By using this term, Paul reminded Timothy of what he has already experienced. Both Timothy and Paul have seen this before in their travels together. They have seen it from the Jews seeking to bind the Law and from the Gentiles who were bringing in gnosticisim. Such questions overthrow whole houses. Timothy knows this, but we don't until we experience them ourselves. These questions often "generate" strife.

"*gennao*... 1. properly: of men begetting children... Pass. *to be begotten.... to be born*... 2. metaph. a. *univ. to engender, cause to arise, excite*..." (Thayer, p. 113)

The type of foolish and ignorant(stupid) questions spoken of above actually beget strife. The conflict did not exist prior to the questions, but it does after. They are the cause of strife, and the reason that it comes into being. The term "strife:"

"*mache*... *a fight, combat*; 1. of those in arms, *a battle*... 2. of persons at variance, disputants, etc., *strife, contention; a quarrel*..." (Thayer, p. 394)

When one argues doctrine on equal footing and common level ground, this can never happen. When discussions even reach the heated level of both sides striving to prove their points, it does not reach to this level. "*Contending earnestly for the faith*" is never wrong.

And certain men came down from Judea and taught the brethren, "Unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved." 2 Therefore, when Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and dispute with them, they determined that Paul and Barnabas and certain others of them should go up to Jerusalem, to the apostles and elders, about this question. Acts 15:1-2

But when the field is not level when a false teacher or one who does not a love for the truth and will not be swayed by it, then it leads to fighting, strife, contention and quarreling. This is what happened to Moses at the waters of Meribah which led to his being forbidden to see the promised land.

And the people contended with Moses and spoke, saying: "If only we had died when our brethren died before the LORD! 4 "Why have you brought up the assembly of the LORD into this wilderness, that we and our animals should die here? 5 "And why have you made us come up out of Egypt, to bring us to this evil place? Num. 20:3-5

"Take the rod; you and your brother Aaron gather the congregation together. Speak to the rock before their eyes, and it will yield its water; thus you shall bring water for them out of the rock, and give drink to the congregation and their animals." 9 So Moses took the rod from before the LORD as He commanded him. 10 And Moses and Aaron gathered the congregation together before the rock; and he said to them, "Hear now, you rebels! Must we bring water for you out of this rock?" 11 Then Moses lifted his hand and struck the rock twice with his rod; and water came out abundantly, and the congregation and their animals drank. 12 Then the LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron, "Because you did not believe Me, to hallow Me in the eyes of the children of Israel, therefore you shall not bring this assembly into the land which I have given them." Num. 20:8-12

That would have never happened if the children of Israel had not uttered such foolish and ignorant questions. It was the questions that led to the quarreling and bickering and lead to the strife and contention that caused Moses to lose entrance into the promised land.

24 And a servant of the Lord must not quarrel

The servant of the Lord spoken of above who is meet for the master's use will never quarrel. Paul uses the common term for a "slave" in the Roman Empire to emphasize the relationship of this servant to his Lord:

"*doulos*... 1. *a slave, bondman, man of servile condition*... a. properly... b. metaph. aa. *one who gives himself up wholly to another's will*... gg. *doulos tinos* devoted to another to the disregard of one's own

interests..." (Thayer, p. 157-158; 1401)

All Christians are such servants of the Lord, and as such are not to quarrel.

*"A disciple is not above his teacher, nor a **servant** above his master. 25 "It is enough for a disciple that he be like his teacher, and a **servant** like his master. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more will they call those of his household! (Mt. 10:24-25).*

*So likewise ye, when ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable **servants**: we have done that which was our duty to do. (Luke. 17:10).*

*Do you not know that to whom you present yourselves **slaves** to obey, you are that one's **slaves** whom you obey, whether of sin leading to death, or of obedience leading to righteousness? 17 But God be thanked that though you were **slaves** of sin, yet you obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine to which you were delivered. 18 And having been set free from sin, you became **slaves** of righteousness. Rom. 6:16-18*

All Christians are the slaves of Jesus and the slaves of righteousness. No such servant will ever seek to strive. It "must" never happen.

"dei... It is necessary, there is need of, it behooves, is right and proper; ... a. necessity lying in the nature of the case:... necessity brought on by circumstances or by the conduct of others toward us... c. necessity in reference to what is required to attain some end... d. a necessity of law and command, of duty, equity... l. e. necessity established by the counsel and decree of God..." (Thayer, p. 126: 1163).

There is absolute necessity in this "must." It is very important this never be done. It is counterproductive in every way. It creates strife in the church, ruins the reputation of the servant, and drives away the questioner. It is both "a necessity of law and command" and "necessity established by the counsel and decree of God."

So then, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath; 20 for the wrath of man does not produce the righteousness of God. James. 1:19-20

All discussions about the Scriptures are good and wholesome, but when they reach the level of "quarreling," then they have gone too far. It was this "quarreling" that caused the Jews to crucify Jesus, it was this "quarreling" that caused the Jews to stone Paul and to chase him from city to city. When servants of the Lord Jesus do allow their emotions to become so strong that they begin to fight and quarrel.

"machomai... to fight: prop. of armed combatants, or those who engage in a hand-to-hand struggle... trop. of those who engage in a war of words, to quarrel, wrangle, dispute... of those who contend at law for property and privileges..." (Thayer, p. 394)

This term is used both mentally and physically. In a Bible class, this would be the heated discussions that get out of hand, leading people to say things they which they had never said.

*I am the living bread which came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever; and the bread that I shall give is My flesh, which I shall give for the life of the world." 52 The Jews therefore **quarreled** among themselves, saying, "How can this Man give us His flesh to eat?" Jn. 6:51-52*

*And the next day he appeared to two of them as they were **fighting**, and tried to reconcile them, saying, 'Men, you are brethren; why do you wrong one another?' 27 But he who did his neighbor wrong pushed him away, saying, 'Who made you a ruler and a judge over us? Acts 7:26-27*

*You lust and do not have. You murder and covet and cannot obtain. You **fight** and war. Yet you do not have because you do not ask. Jas. 4:2*

but be gentle to all,

Paul places this "gentleness" in strong contrast to the "fighting" by using the term "alla:"

"alla... an adversative particle... hence properly, other things sc. than those just mentioned. I But. So related to the preceding words that it serves to introduce 1. an opposition to concessions; nevertheless, notwithstanding:... 2. an objection... 3. an exception... 4. a restriction... 5. an ascensive transition or gradation, nay rather, yea moreover..." (Thayer, p. 27-28; 235)

The servant of the Lord must be gentle:

“*epios*... mild, gentle, was frequently used by Greek writers as characterizing a nurse with trying children or a teacher with refractory scholars, or of parents toward their children...” (Vine, Vol 1; p. 144-145; NT:2261)

“*epios*,... 1. of persons, *gentle, mild, kind*, 2. of sentiments, to have *kindly feelings, a milder mood*... Active *soothing, assuaging*, of medicines, II., etc. ... a day *favourable* for beginning a thing, Hes. (Liddell and Scott Abridged Greek Lexicon. NT:2261)

Servants of the Lord must always be trying to get along with others at all costs.

If it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men. Rom 12:18-19

They must strive to be mild and gentle, just like a nurse who is training up children that she loves. The Lord’s servant seeks for a “*milder mood*,” and like a good medicine, soothing and calming. When such questions are asked, they should be dismissed by the teacher as questions unworthy of our time. The servant of the Lord must also be:

able to teach,

This term was used by the Holy Spirit in the qualification of being an elder. Which gives even stronger to the view that it has nothing to do with one’s innate ability to teach, and only has to do with one’s knowledge of the Scripture and their desire to impart it to others.

“*didaktikos*, ... *apt and skilful in teaching*.” (Thayer, p. 144; 1317)

Christians may argue that they cannot do it, but not successfully.

As for Saul, he made havoc of the church, entering every house, and dragging off men and women, committing them to prison. 4 Therefore those who were scattered went everywhere preaching the word. Acts. 8:3-4

But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear; 1Pet. 3:15

Walk in wisdom toward those who are outside, redeeming the time. 6 Let your speech always be with grace, seasoned with salt, that you may know how you ought to answer each one. Col. 4:5-6

There may differing degrees of abilities to teach. There may be some who are not blessed with the gift of easy discussion of ease in finding words, but all who love the Lord and are seeking to be an unashamed worker who handles the word aright in his own life can always explain it to others in his/her own way. We all need to become skilful in the teaching of the gospel if we are to be vessels unto honor.

patient,

Generally, there are two words for patient. The first is *makrothumeo* (*long suffering*) and *hupomeno* (*Enduring*). This is the only use in the NT. It is a complicated word that will take some time to fully understand.

“*anexikakos*... (*fr. the fut. of anechomai, and kakon...*), *patient of ills and wrongs, forbearing* II Tim. 2:24...” (Thayer, p. 44; 420)

anexikakos denotes “*patiently forbearing evil*,” *lit.*, “*patient of wrong*,” (from *anecho*, A, No. 1 and *kakos*, “*evil*”), “*enduring*”; it is rendered “*forbearing*” in 2 Tim 2:24. (Vine’s 420)

anecho from *aná* (303), in, and *echo* (2192), to have. To hold up or back from falling, e.g., the rain (Sept.: Amos 4:7). To hold in or back, restrain, stop. In the NT, only in the mid., *anéchomai* ... (cf. Acts 18:14). *To hold oneself upright, to bear up, hold out, endure*. (I) Spoken of things, *to endure, bear patiently*, with the gen. as *afflictions*(2 Thess 1:4). See Sept.: Isa 42:14. Used in an absolute sense (1 Cor 4:12; 2 Cor 11:20). (II) Spoken of persons, *to bear with, have patience with in regard to the errors or weaknesses of anyone* (Matt 17:17; Mark 9:19; Luke 9:41; 2 Cor 11:1,19; Eph 4:2; Col 3:13; Sept.: Isa 46:4; 63:15). ...” (Complete Word Study Dictionary: NT 430)

“*kakos*... *bad* 1. *univ. of a bad nature; not such as it ought to be*. 2. [morally, i.e.] of a mode of thinking, feeling, acting; *base, wrong, wicked*:... neut. *kakon*, *to evil* i.e. what is contrary to law, either divine or

human, *wrong, crime...* spec. of wrongs inflicted... 3. *troublesome, injurious, pernicious, destructive, baneful...* (Thayer, p. 320; 2556)

Hence it means to sustain, bear with equanimity and endure the evils, wickedness, wrongs and crimes of others. The specific context here is that of the persecution and conflicts that will come due to our stand on the truth.

25 in humility

“*en...*a preposition taking the dative after it;... Eng. *in, on, at, with, by among*. I LOCALLY; 1. of Place proper; a. in the interior of some whole; within the limits of some space... 5. used of that with which a person is surrounded, equipped, furnished, assisted, or acts... c. of that which one either leads or brings with him, or with which he is furnished or equipped; esp after verbs of coming, (*en* of accompaniment), where we often say *with ...*” (Thayer, p. 209-212; 1722)

By means of humility all servants of the Lord are to seek to accomplish some very special goals. Humility will be the instrument and tool through which these things can be accomplished. The term “humility” is defined:

prautes ... The meaning of *prautes* "is not readily expressed in English, for the terms meekness, mildness, commonly used, suggest weakness and pusillanimity to a greater or less extent, whereas ***prautes* does nothing of the kind**. Nevertheless, it is difficult to find a rendering less open to objection than 'meekness'; 'gentleness' has been suggested, but as *prautes* describes a condition of mind and heart, and as 'gentleness' is appropriate rather to actions, this word is no better than that used in both English Versions. It must be clearly understood, **therefore, that the meekness manifested by the Lord and commended to the believer is the fruit of power**. The common assumption is that when a man is meek it is because he cannot help himself; but the Lord was 'meek' because he had the infinite resources of God at His command. Described negatively, **meekness is the opposite to self-assertiveness and self-interest**; it is equanimity of spirit that is **neither elated nor cast down, simply because it is not occupied with self at all**. (from Vine's NT:4240)

Though the definitions above capture the meaning of the term, a look at its uses in the first century helps clarify and deepen them. It was used of things which soothe, calm and subdue. Like ointment in a wound, or calm words that soothe and angry man. It was also used of tamed and subdued animals. Those who will accept discipline and external control. the watchdog that can play gently with the owners child, yet attack an intruder. the horse that gently carries a man, yet can go into a full gallop at the word of its rider. It is also used of men to describe the perfect mean between too much anger, which cannot be controlled or subdued, and a spineless person who cannot take a stand for anything. It is used in many ways in the New Testament depending upon the context, but always these three areas stand out.

A. Moses Nos 12:3; 1-13 in regard to himself- calm

Ex 32:19-20, in regard to God he could wax hot.

B. Jesus Mt 11:29; Jn 2:13-17; I Pet 2:23

C. Jer 10:23 The height of meekness; having all our faculties under Gods control James 1:21;
Put the bit of God's word in your mouth.

correcting those who are in opposition,

If all that is involved in the definition of the term “humility” or “meekness” is properly applied and used as the instrument though which we come across to such people, then we are going to be vessels unto honor properly doing what the Lord expects of us.

The term “correcting” is a term usually used for children. It is defined:

“*paideuo...* 1. *as in class. Grk. prop. to train children.... pass. to be instructed or taught, to learn... to cause one to learn...* 2. *to chastise; a. to chastise or castigate with words, to correct: of those who are molding the character of others by reproof and admonition... b. in bibl. and eccl. use employed of God, to chasten by the infliction of evils and calamities...*” (Thayer, p. 473; 3811)

We are to instruct, teach, train, and cause them to learn. If necessary, we are also to chastise or castigate with words in order to correct them, but never with the loss of humility and gentle forbearance. But this is only to be done to those who “place themselves in opposition.” This term is defined:

antidiatithemi ... signifies "to place oneself in opposition, oppose" (*anti*, "against," *dia*, "through," intensive, *tithemi*, "to place"), 2 Tim 2:25. ..." (Vine's NT:475)

antidiatithemi ... , from *antí* (473), against, and *diatithemi* (1303), to dispose. In the NT, mid. ... to place oneself over against, to oppose oneself, be adverse, used as a part. noun in 2 Tim 2:25 meaning either those who directly oppose the gospel or those who are ill-disposed toward or unaffected by it. The latter meaning seems preferable because the Apostle directs Timothy to treat the *antidiatitheménous* , those whose attitudes are contrary or ill-disposed to the gospel, in a very different manner from the *anthistaménous* (436), opposers, those actually opposing the gospel, from whom he was to turn away (2Tim. 3:5,8)... " (Complete Word Study Dictionary: NT 475)

Anti means “opposite, over against, and *tithemi* means to set, place or put. Hence, whatever position you take, they take the opposite. They oppose the stance that God has told us to take. That which God has set down in His Word, they oppose.

if God perhaps will grant them repentance,

“*mepote*... 1. a particle of negation; *not ever, never*:... 2. a prohibitory conjunction; *lest ever, lest at any time, lest haply*,... In the N. T. use of this particle the notion of time usual to *pote* seems to recede before that of contingency, *lest perchance*, so that it refers to the preceding verb and indicates the purpose of the designated action... after verbs of fearing, taking care... to take heed, lest etc... 3. a particle of Interrogation accompanied with doubt... *whether ever, whether at any time; whether perchance, whether haply*... with the subjunctive: 2Tim. 2:25" (Thayer, p. 412-413; 3379).

Though there is some doubt about the matter, one never knows whether or not they might reach them and God will “grant them repentance. Since grant is in the subjunctive, it is a contingency. How does God grant this? Is there something within Him that changes, or is it the conduct of the preacher that gives them the opportunity they might otherwise never have had.

“*didomi*... to give... A. absolutely and generally... B. In construction... I to give something to some one, - in various senses; 1. of one's own accord to give one something, to his advantage; to bestow; give as a gift... 2. to grant, give to one asking, let have... 3. to supply, furnish, necessary things... 4. to give over, deliver, ... 5. to give what is due or obligatory, to pay: wages or reward... 6. DIDOMI is joined with nouns denoting an act or an effect... " (Thayer, p. 145-147; 1325)

Repentance is one of the greatest gifts God has given to man. Though it simply means to change ones mind, It is amazing that God has granted so much power to this change. By keeping ourselves humble, we pull ourselves out of the situation and it is between them and God. In such a case, God may still be able through the power of the word of God to convince them (faith) that they need to change their minds.

“*metanoia*... a change of mind: as it appears in one who repents of a purpose he has formed or of something he has done,... esp. the change of mind of those who have begun to abhor their errors and misdeeds, and have determined to enter upon a better course of life, so that it embraces both a recognition of sin and sorrow for it and hearty amendment, the tokens and effects of which are good deeds.” (Thayer, p. 405-406).

This is what such an attitude will require. It is why the Lord's servant will not quarrel with them, but instead with teach with humility hoping that this end will be brought about. Their attitude is so bad that only repentance can help.

so that they may know the truth,

The goal of all the above is set forth with the term “so that” which is defined:

“*eis*,... a Prep. governing the Accusative, and denoting entrance into, or direction and limit: *into, to, towards, for, among*. It is used II. *eis* after words indicating motion or direction or end; 3. it denotes the end; and a. the end to which a thing reaches or extends, i.e. measure or degree... b. the end which a

thing is adapted to attain... c. the end which one has in view, i.e. object, purpose;... d. the end by which a thing is completed, i.e. the result or effect... (Thayer, p. 183-186; 1519).

It is the same term used in Acts 2:38 and stresses the goal that it is reaching for. This is not simply the acquaintance they already have, but the knowledge necessary to bring about repentance. A rich enough knowledge of the truth that it develops into faith.

“*epignosis... (epiginosko q.v.) precise and correct knowledge; used in the N.T. of the knowledge of things ethical and divine... “epiginosko... to become thoroughly acquainted with, to know thoroughly; to know accurately, know well... 2. to know... a. to recognize... to recognize a thing to be what it really is...”* (Thayer, p 237; 1922-1921)

Since God’s word is “*truth*,” and faith comes by hearing the word, this knowledge of the truth will bring salvation.

26 and that they may come to their senses

“*Come to their senses*” is a single term in the original language.

ananepho "to return to soberness," as from a state of delirium or drunkenness (*ana*, "back," or "again," *nepho*, "to be sober, to be wary"), is used in 2 Tim 2:26, "may recover themselves" (RV marg., "return to soberness," KJV marg., "awake"), said of those who, opposing the truth through accepting perversions of it, fall into the snare of the Devil, becoming intoxicated with error; for these "recovery" is possible only by "repentance unto the knowledge of the truth." (Vine's NT:366)

“*ananepho... to return to soberness... (ek methes,)* Metaph.: II Tim. 2:26 ... to be set free from the snare of the devil and to return to a sound mind ["one’s sober senses"]...” (Thayer, p. 40)

It describes what occurs when one returns (*ana* - back again) to think sober and be wary again. The error and sin of this world can so overthrow the mind that it is under the influence so strongly that it does what alcohol does to the mind and no one can think clearly under that influence. With the proper attitude on the part of the teacher/preacher, there is still and always a chance to change even the most indoctrinated. Paul himself would be a great example of this and Stephen and those like him helped create this opportunity.

and escape the snare of the devil,

So many have been ensnared through error. Multitudes upon multitudes have been lost to the errors of this world that have grown up around the gospel, obscuring both the door and the path. But there is always a hope that some can be influenced to come out of that bondage and become free. It is that hope that should motivate all faithful servants of God to keep their own feelings out of the matter.

“*ek...* It denotes as well exit or emission out of, as separation from, something with which there has been close connection; opp. to the preposition *eis* into and *en* in: *from out of, out from, forth from, from...*” (Thayer, p. 189; 1537)

“*pagis,*... prop. that which holds fast... *a snare, trap, noose*; a. prop. of snares in which birds are entangled and caught,... as a snare, i.e. *unexpectedly, suddenly*, because birds and beasts are caught unawares,... b. trop. *a snare*, i. e. *whatever brings peril, loss, destruction*: of a sudden and unexpected deadly peril... of the allurements and seductions of sin... the allurements to sin by which the devil holds one bound...” (Thayer, Joseph Henry, op. cit. p. 472; 3803)

having been taken captive by him to do his will.

The definition of the term “*captive*” has created some difficulty.

zogreo lit. signifies "to take men alive" (from *zoos*, "alive," and *agreuo*, "to hunt or catch"), Luke 5:10 (marg. "take alive"), there of the effects of the work of the gospel; in 2 Tim 2:26 it is said of the power of Satan to lead men astray. The verse should read "and that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the Devil (having been taken captive by him), unto the will of God." This is the probable meaning rather than "to take alive or for life." (Vine's NT:2221)

Since this word means to take alive, and was used by Jesus to describe the power of the gospel,

it is hard for some to see how this same term could be used to describe what Satan has done.

For he and all who were with him were astonished at the catch of fish which they had taken; 10 and so also were James and John, the sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon. And Jesus said to Simon, "Do not be afraid. From now on you will catch men." Lk. 5:9-10

Since those under his dominion are spiritually dead, and it is in the perfect tense (an action that occurred in the past and the affects are still in place), it is a difficult concept to grasp. How can an act that led to be taken captive by Satan as being taken alive? There is no simple answer. Alive may only refer here to life under the sun.

But she who lives in pleasure is dead while she lives. 1 Tim 5:6-7