

WRITER

This New Testament letter was written by the same author and to the same person as 1 Timothy. It was written by the apostle Paul to his beloved Timothy whom he had converted as a young man, and subsequently, chose to be a fellow worker in taking the gospel to the world (At 16:1-3; see "Writer" in intro. to 1 Tm).

DATE

According to the early writings of the church, Paul was beheaded in Roman imprisonment around A.D. 67. It is believed that this letter was written during this second imprisonment in Rome and shortly before his death (4:6-8).

The first letter was probably written immediately before or during the first imprisonment around A.D. 61 to 62. After the first imprisonment, Paul was set free. After a hurried trip through Crete, Ephesus and Macedonia, he was arrested again and sent to Rome. This was his last imprisonment during which he was martyred for preaching the gospel (See "Date" in intro. to 1 Tm).

THEME

In view of his imminent death, Paul exhorted Timothy to hold fast to sound teaching because of the presence of false teachers who were denying fundamental principles (1:13; 4:1-4). The theme of the book could be stated in the charge that Paul left with Timothy, "*Preach the word*" (4:2). In the midst of false teachings, and a world of erroneous religions and philosophies of men, Paul's final exhortation to Timothy centered around his stand for the word of God. An obsession with the word of God is the only guarantee to guard oneself against false religion.

PURPOSE

Apostasy from the word of God was developing in Ephesus and Asia Minor. Timothy was in the region of Ephesus, though according to 4:12, we would assume that

he was no longer working among the Ephesians. In the first letter, Paul dealt with the beginnings of what would in the 2nd century develop into the heretical teachings of Gnosticism. This theological philosophy of life developed into two extremes of belief. First, some Gnostics turned the grace of God into a license to live according to the flesh (3:1-9; 1 Tm 6:3-5; see Rm 6:1; Jd 4). Second, there were also those who adopted a legalistic asceticism (1 Tm 4:3). These Gnostics gave themselves over to the denial of the flesh (See "Historical Background" in intro. to 1 Tm). In view of the heresy of those who were denying fundamental principles of our faith, Paul wrote to Timothy in order to encourage him in his struggle to fight the good fight of the faith. In order to continue this fight, Paul urged Timothy to commit the things that he had heard to faithful men who would continue the teaching the word of God (2:2).

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

At the time of writing, Paul was in prison and on trial for his life (1:8,15,17; see 4:6-8). Only Luke was with him (4:10), for everyone else had left for various reasons (4:10). Paul had already had his first defense from which he was delivered from a sentence of death (4:16,17). However, he expected that the "second" defense would lead to his sentence of death (4:6). Therefore, he urged Timothy to come quickly, if possible, before winter (4:9,21). He wanted him to bring John Mark (4:11), and some clothing, with the books and parchments in order that he be able to continue his studies, a good example for every disciple (4:11,13).

Faithful Discipleship

(1:1-18)

Outline: (1) Loving greetings (1:1,2), (2) Evangelistic ministry of Timothy (1:3-12), (3) Holding fast to sound words (1:13-18)

Chapter 1

LOVING GREETINGS

1:1 *Apostle ... by the will of God:* Only a Christ-sent apostle could make this claim (Rm 1:1; 1 Co 1:1; Gl 1:11,12;

1 Tm 1:1,2). Paul was personally called by Jesus to be an apostle (At 9:1-19). Though others are called to do the will of God, Paul's personal calling was the will of God. **Promise of life:** Paul was called to be an apostle in order to preach the gospel that would bring life and hope to those who obeyed it (Ep 3:6; Ti 1:2; Hb 9:15; see Rm 6:3-6; 1 Jn 5:11). Since he was called out of the time when Christ-sent apostles were normally called (1 Co 15:8), then we would assume that his calling was for something other than being only a Christ-sent apostle (See comments in intro. to At). By the time this letter was written, Paul had accomplished the purpose for which he was called. He had fulfilled his ministry, and thus was again in Rome on trial on behalf of Christianity. We would conclude that his ministry was accomplished for more than the preaching of the gospel. During the first imprisonment, Luke, who was with him during that imprisonment, wrote the defense documents of Luke and Acts to Theophilus. Paul's presence in Rome, therefore, was not simply because he was arrested, but because God wanted him there. God wanted him to be put on trial in order that the case of Christianity might be put on trial before the highest court of the world. He was released from the first imprisonment because no cause of death could be found in him. During his second imprisonment he was to face his martyrdom in order to manifest his conviction that what he believed and had experienced in his life was true.

1:2 Beloved son: Reference here is to Timothy being one who was fathered in the gospel by Paul. We do not know when Timothy was taught and immersed by Paul (See At 16:1). In this address, Paul cherished the thought of Timothy's companionship, for he was a special evangelist with Paul in the early years of the preaching of the gospel (See 1 Co 4:15-17; 1 Tm 1:2).

EVANGELISTIC MINISTRY OF TIMOTHY

1:3 Pure conscience: In his service to work for God, Paul did not work against his conscience. Throughout his life, he always sought to do that which he believed was right (Compare At 22:3; 24:14-16; Rm 1:9; see comments 1 Tm

1:13). Though what he did before he was baptized was contrary to the will of God, he did such while thinking that it was the will of God. When he was confronted with the truth, however, he responded. Though steeped in the traditions of Judaism, he did not ignore the truth of the gospel for the sake of keeping the heritage of his fathers (Compare Mk 7:1-9). **Forefathers:** As his parents, Paul was faithful to his conscience toward God. The obedient faith of his God-conscious parents had been passed down to him. However, when he learned more, he followed his conscience to be obedient to God in all things. One of the powerful points of his conversion lies in the fact that he was willing to change from the heritage of his fathers in order to be obedient to the gospel. **I remember you:** Paul was on trial for his life, and yet, he remembered the spiritual needs of one who was struggling to guard the church against the attack of false teaching and behavior. As one studies through the exhortations of both 1 and 2 Timothy, he must keep in mind that Timothy was a faithful and concerned disciple. His faithfulness and concern for other disciples should be an example to all disciples who would seek to be servants of God. In the beginning of his ministry, Timothy was not designated to become a part of a special class of disciples to preach the gospel to the world (At 16:1-3). The elders who set him forth on his journey with Paul, did not lay hands on him in order that he be separated to a unique position, but to do the work of a disciple to go forth from their presence in order to preach the gospel. Every Christian, therefore, should receive the instructions of 1 and 2 Timothy as words of the Holy Spirit that are directed to every disciple. These instructions should never be set aside because they were instructions to a supposed "pastoral class" of disciples who held a particular position among the disciples.

1:4,5 Your tears: Timothy was a man of emotions (4:9,21; see At 20:37,38). He was a man of great concern for Paul and the work to which he had dedicated himself. **The genuine faith:** As a young man, Timothy had inherited an unwavering and sincere faith that had been handed down to him from his grandmother through his mother (1 Tm 1:5; 4:6). The spiritual leadership of

Lois and Eunice manifested itself in the faithful work of a grandmother and mother to continue their spiritual heritage through their children. Timothy was the third generation of this spiritual heritage. Therefore, through her faithfulness, Lois passed through her daughter Eunice, a spiritual legacy that affected thousands of people through her evangelistic grandson, Timothy. Timothy's grandmother and mother were of Jewish origin. His father was a Greek (At 16:1). No credit is here given for the spiritual heritage coming through the father. We could assume, therefore, that Timothy's father was not a believer, and thus, the spiritual example of the mother is exemplified in the fact that Timothy was given a spiritually sensitive nature through a mother who maintained her faith in the home of an unbelieving father (See comments 1 Pt 3:1-6).

1:6 Stir up the gift: A miraculous gift had been imparted to Timothy through the laying on of Paul's hands (See comments At 8:18; Rm 1:11). However, the situation in Ephesus was evidently of such a nature that Timothy was intimidated. He was not teaching with a confident spirit (1 Tm 4:14). In fact, he may have ceased teaching because of the intimidation of some arrogant false teachers who had opposed him. Since the exercising of the miraculous gift was subject to the control of the one who possessed it (1 Co 14:32), Paul here encouraged Timothy to use his gift. Since the Holy Spirit did not subjectively work in order to take control of anyone who possessed a miraculous gift, it was Timothy's initiative, and thus responsibility, to use the gift for the glory of God. The gift that Timothy had was possibly the gift of prophecy, and thus in his discouragement, he had ceased teaching the word of God to the disciples.

1:7 Power ... love ... sound mind: There should be no timidity or cowardice in the disciple who would be effective in his ministry to preach the gospel to the lost and edify the church through teaching. The love of lost souls and the church should give one confidence to overcome the hostility of the environment in which one works in order to carry out the responsibilities of an evangelist (Jn 14:27; Rm 8:15; 1 Jn 4:18; see Ep 6:10). Timothy was given

the power of the Holy Spirit (Compare At 1:8; Ph 4:13; Cl 1:29; 1 Th 1:5). He possessed the love of the lost and the brethren (Rm 5:5; Ep 3:16,17). He thus had a sound mind that was based on the truth whereby he should confidently proclaim the truth. When one understands that the message he knows is for the salvation of men, then he is able to overcome all obstacles in order that others have an opportunity to hear and obey the gospel. Once one understands that the truth he believes is necessary for the direction and security of the disciples, then he will with confidence continue to study and teach the word of God. Paul reminded Timothy that the word he taught came through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, and thus, it was to be confidently affirmed to all men (3:16,17).

1:8 Do not be ashamed: The judaizing Gnostics found it difficult to believe in God becoming flesh through Jesus Christ, and subsequently suffering on a cross as an atoning sacrifice for our sins (Mk 8:38; Lk 9:26; see comments Jn 1:1-14). However, Paul wanted Timothy not to be ashamed of the crucified Son of God on a cross (vss 12,16; see comments Rm 1:16). Neither does he want Timothy to be ashamed of his fellowship with him in his imprisonment for preaching the cross. Those who are ashamed of the gospel will avoid preaching the gospel to others (See comments Mt 10:28-33). If one is embarrassed to preach the cross, then he will not preach the gospel to the lost. People will subsequently not have the opportunity of hearing the gospel.

1:9 Called us ... according to His own purpose and grace: We are called by the grace of God that was manifested on the cross (2 Th 2:14; Ti 2:11). We are called by rendering ourselves to the appeal of God's atoning sacrifice for our sins, sins for which we could not atone through good works. It is significant to note that Paul says that God's purpose for calling us through His grace happened before the creation of the world. Therefore, the plan of the cross originated before the creation of the man for whom the cross would happen (Rm 8:28; 16:25; Ep 1:4; Ti 1:2; Rv 13:8). Redemption was planned before the creation of man in order to manifest the justice of God. In

creating man a free-moral individual with the right and ability to chose, and subsequently sin, then God had to establish a plan of redemption before He created man. Since the plan of redemption was in place before God spoke man into existence, then we cannot accuse God of creating an individual who had no hope of redemption from his own sin. **Not according to our works:** Paul wants us to know that no man meritoriously earned the calling. Men could not merit their own salvation because all have sinned (See comments Rm 3:9,10,20,23; Gl 2:16). No amount of good works would atone for sin. Therefore, God extended His grace toward man through Jesus. He did such even though no man deserved the atoning sacrifice on the basis of his own righteousness (Rm 5:8).

1:10 Now been revealed: The mystery of God's plan for man's salvation was hidden from the time before the creation of the world until the time it was revealed on the cross (See comments 1 Pt 1:10-12). It has now been revealed through Jesus (Ep 1:9). **Abolished death:** Physical death will come to all men (Hb 9:27). However, physical death is not a final termination to those who are in Christ. The second death will occur when one is separated from God who has the power to sustain us throughout eternity (See comments Mt 10:28; 2 Th 1:7-9). Through Jesus, however, one is kept in the presence of God, and thus, in the presence of God he has eternal life (1 Jn 5:11). **Through the gospel:** When Jesus died on the cross for our sins, He reconciled us to God who gives us life and immortality. Therefore, the good news (the gospel) of Jesus' death on the cross and His resurrection was revealed in order that we have an opportunity to obey the gospel. In obeying the gospel, we would have life and immortality that is in Christ (1 Jn 5:11; see comments Rm 6:3-6; 1 Co 15:1-4). Therefore, though the mortal body of the Christian dies, it will be resurrected to live forever in the presence of God (1 Co 15:26,54,55; Hb 2:14,15; see Jn 5:25,26).

1:11 Preacher ... apostle ... teacher: Paul was commissioned to proclaim the good news of the cross and resurrection (At 9:15,16; Ep 3:7). He was personally sent forth by Jesus. He proclaimed the gospel to the lost. The word

“preacher” refers to his mission of proclaiming the gospel to the lost. The word “apostle” refers to his being sent forth by Jesus to proclaim the cross and resurrection of Jesus to the lost. The word “teacher” refers to his ministry to the saints. One is a preacher in his ministry to the lost, but a teacher in his ministry to the saved.

1:12 I am not ashamed: Because of his firm belief in the historical event of the gospel (the cross and resurrection of Jesus), Paul was confident in his willingness to suffer persecution in preaching the gospel (Rm 1:16). He had seen the resurrected Christ. He was thus willing to endure all hardships because he knew that Jesus died on the cross and was resurrected from the dead (At 9:19; 20:22,23; 2 Co 11:16-31; see 1 Pt 4:19). He was ready at all times to die for Jesus (At 21:13,14). Such commitment is exemplified in the lives of those who do not consider unfaithfulness an option of life. Since our knowledge of Paul's confidence is recorded in Scripture, then we walk by faith that is based on his personal encounter with Jesus and the miracles that God worked through his hand (Rm 10:17). **I know whom I have believed:** Paul and the other apostles had personally experienced the miraculous manifestation of God in their lives. In this sense, therefore, they walked by sight. The one who maintains his faith today in the midst of persecution is more blessed because he walks by faith. He walks by faith since he has neither seen Jesus nor experienced the direct miraculous manifestation of God (See comments Jn 20:29). Our faith today is based on the testimony of those who personally experienced the Son of God and His works (See Jn 20:30,31; Rm 10:17). **That day:** Paul could have been referring to the day of His death, which day would be the day of his final judgment (vs 18; Hb 9:27). However, he could have also been referring to the final day at the end of time wherein all the righteous will be resurrected and embodied for eternal dwelling (1 Co 15:35-57). When one dies, his eternal destiny is sealed. However, it will not be until the final day when all will be raised, that Christians will be embodied for eternal dwelling (See comments 2 Co 5:1-8; 1 Th 4:13-18).

HOLDING FAST TO SOUND WORDS

1:13 *Hold fast:* The fact that Paul encouraged Timothy to hold fast to the words of truth implies that it is possible for one to fall away from the grace of God. Christians should make every effort to continue in the teachings of Jesus (See 3:14; Ti 1:9; Hb 10:23). They should continue in their belief of the event of the gospel (See comments 1 Co 15:1-4). ***The pattern:*** There is a distinct identity of truth that is to be believed and maintained by the Christian (1 Tm 6:3). God did not deliver truth to man in order that it be a legal system by which one must meritoriously measure his life in order to be saved (See comments Rm 3:20; Gl 2:16). Neither did He deliver to man a vague knowledge of how to believe and behave in order to leave men in obscurity. Timothy could never have held fast to something that was obscure. Since Paul instructed him to hold fast to the sound (“healthy”) teaching, then we assume that there is something definite and specific about the teaching to which the believer must hold. Since Timothy was in conflict with those who were teaching something that was contrary to what he had been taught by Paul, Paul here reminded him that he must continue in what he was taught. There was no new truth that was revealed to the church that did not come through the Christ-sent apostles (Jn 14:26; 16:13).

1:14 *The good thing:* It was the truth of the gospel—the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus (1 Co 15:1-4)—that was committed to Timothy. ***Keep by the Holy Spirit:*** The gospel was revealed to the apostles in that the Holy Spirit revealed to them that the crucifixion of Jesus was not just the execution of another Jew in Palestine (1 Co 2:10-13; Ep 3:3-5). They understood that the crucifixion of Jesus was the death of the Son of God for the sins of mankind only when the Holy Spirit revealed such to them. Therefore, Timothy must continue his belief in the sacrificial offering of the incarnate Son of God that was revealed through the Holy Spirit (Compare comments 1 Co 15:1-4). The gospel is the foundation upon which all revelation from God rests. Since the gospel event is true, then the rest of the truth that has been revealed to us through the apostles makes sense (See Jn 14:26; 16:13). ***Dwells in***

us: The Greek word *en* (“in”) must be understood metaphorically in reference to God simply because our earthly definitions of words cannot fully describe the being and presence of that which is beyond this world. Since the word “in” is used metaphorically, we would assume that more is revealed here than a simple understanding to locate the Holy Spirit within the disciple. God is spirit (Jn 4:24). Any effort to describe God’s omnipresence with words that express location in reference to human terms, is certainly inadequate in defining the presence of the Holy Spirit. This does not mean that the Spirit of God is not “in” the believer. However, it does mean that since this is at least true, Paul has more in mind when he uses the Greek word *en* in a metaphorical sense to describe the Spirit’s relationship with the believer. In this context of Paul’s discussion concerning the truth of the gospel, we would conclude that the Spirit dwells in us because we have conformed our lives to the truth of the gospel (See comments Ph 1:27; see Rm 6:3-6). The Spirit indwells both in “presence” and in our changed life in reference to the instructions of the Spirit through the Spirit-inspired word. However, we must not conclude that the existence of the Spirit is confined to the location of the physical bodies of believers. When speaking of God, it is in Him that we live, move and have our being (At 17:28). He is in us through the Spirit because we are in Him through our obedience of the gospel. Therefore, since we live within the omnipresence of God, it is not difficult to understand that those who have submitted their lives to His will have His presence in them. Nevertheless, we must conclude that there is a mystery about the presence of God that we do not presume to understand fully. The definitions of our earthly words cannot fully explain that which is above and beyond this world. Those who would be dogmatic in these areas of discussion, therefore, are seeking to confine God to the definition of our words, and thus, create and locate God after our own finite understanding.

1:15 *All those who are in Asia turned away from me:* This statement is possibly made on the background of Paul’s arrest and trial before the Roman court. No one

in Asia, where he had worked so long, would take a stand with Paul, for they were ashamed of the gospel in the face of possible arrest, trial and death (vss 8-12). However, regardless of their turning away from Paul because of possible persecution they might endure, Paul remained committed to his calling (vs 12). He did not allow the forsaking of the gospel by some disciples to discourage him from his commitment. Every disciple must realize that his relationship with God is personal, and thus does not depend on the faithfulness of others. We stand faithful because we stand in a direct relationship with the One who gave Himself for us. One's faithfulness as a disciple, therefore, does not depend on the faithfulness of others.

1:16 Grant mercy: At least the household of Onesiphorus was not ashamed to be associated with Paul in his imprisonment (4:19). **Ashamed of my chains:** This verse reveals the reason why others refused to be associated with Paul. They were intimidated by the power of the Roman government that had imprisoned Paul. They would not take a stand with Paul whose stand for the gospel was leading him to trial and death. The commitment of their faith, therefore, had been weakened by the government under which they lived (At 4:19,20). We must keep in mind that at the time all these events were happening, God was about to unleash the Roman Empire on national Israel in order to terminate the Jewish State. In the middle and latter part of the 60s, Jewish insurrection against Rome was growing. Rome eventually brought an end to national Israel in A.D. 70. Since the Romans considered Christianity to be another sect of Judaism, much of the persecution that they launched against Judaism was also directed against the Jewish Christians. It was thus the worst of times for being a Jew, but the best of times in reference to Christians having hope after death, for many would go to death as Rome began to launch state persecution against the church by the end of the 1st century.

1:17,18 Sought me out: When Paul arrived in Rome on his second arrest and imprisonment, Onesiphorus was not ashamed to be associated with him (See com-

ments Ph 1:15-18). **Find mercy:** Onesiphorus would find mercy in the grace of God (Mt 6:4; Mk 9:41). Paul makes this statement concerning Onesiphorus because Onesiphorus was not ashamed of the gospel (vss 8-12; Rm 1:16). Therefore, in his final day of judgment, his stand for the gospel would manifest his character that would be fit for eternal dwelling (vs 12). Those fellow Christians who show mercy and love toward God's servants here on earth will surely not lose their reward for such in the world to come (Mt 25:31-40) **At Ephesus:** We do not know the home of Onesiphorus. He was evidently in Rome when Paul arrived for his second imprisonment. However, because of Paul's statement here concerning his laboring with him while he was in Ephesus, he was possibly from Ephesus (See Hb 6:10).

Being Faithful To One's Ministry

(2:1- 4:22)

Outline: (1) Identity of a spiritual soldier (2:1-13), (2) Shunning useless discussions (2:14-26), (3) Social degeneration (3:1-9), (4) Remain steadfast (3:10-17), (5) Final charge to minister (4:1-5), (6) A farewell message (4:6-8), (7) Personal instructions (4:9-18), (8) Closing greetings (4:19-22)

Chapter 2

IDENTITY OF A SPIRITUAL SOLDIER

2:1 Be strong: God's grace is in Christ, into whom one is baptized (Rm 6:3-6). Strength in the realm of grace means motivated by one's salvation by grace (See comments 1 Co 15:10; 2 co 4:15). The more one understands and appreciates his salvation by grace in Christ, the more he is motivated by gratitude to do the work of the Lord (2 Co 4:15). Strength in the Lord, therefore, is the result of our growing in realizing that our salvation is the result of God's grace (Compare comments 1 Pt 3:18).

2:2 Timothy was the second spiritual generation removed from Jesus. Paul was instructed directly by the Lord (Gl 1:11,12). Timothy was instructed by Paul (1:13,14; see 1 Co 11:2; 2 Th 2:15). It was now the duty of Timothy to instruct faithful men in order to carry on this spiritual heritage and lineage. He was to instruct the faithful men he taught in order that they be able

to pass on teaching to others. This lineage of teaching began with the Lord and will continue through faithful men until the Lord comes again (See comments Mt 28:20). Those who would break this lineage of instruction have failed in their responsibilities as Christians, and thus, they have judged themselves unfaithful to the pattern of sound teaching. **Able to teach:** Emphasis here is not only on the personal ability of the individual to carry out the function of teaching. Emphasis is also on one's knowledge of that which was imparted to Timothy, and subsequently, imparted to the faithful men. It is the knowledge of the truth that qualifies one to teach the truth. One is able to teach the truth only when he knows the truth. The teacher, therefore, must be a student of the word of God (vs 15; 1 Tm 1:7).

2:3 Endure hardship: A good soldier who engages the enemy must expect hardship (1:8,12; 2:9,11; 3:8-13; At 14:22; 1 Co 9:7; 1 Tm 1:18; 1 Pt 1:6,7). Christians must remember that they are in spiritual warfare with the devil (See comments Ep 6:10-20). Satan, therefore, will launch every hardship against the disciples in order to discourage them from doing their work of preaching the gospel to the world.

2:4 The affairs of this life: Paul made tents in order to support himself in his ministry (At 18:3). However, he did not allow the making of tents to divert him away from the primary focus of his life, that is, the preaching of the gospel. No preacher should involve himself in those things that would lead him away from his focus to preach the gospel to the lost. One should not allow himself to become involved in the affairs of this world to the point that he would be diverted from his work as a messenger of Jesus to the lost (See Cl 3:1-3; see comments 1 Tm 6:7-10,17,18). If one would be well-pleasing to the Lord who enlisted him as a soldier, then he must focus the totality of his life on the work of the Lord (Rm 12:1,2).

2:5 He competes lawfully: One has no right to create a religion after his own emotional desires or traditions. If one commits himself to the Christian race, he must play by the rules of God, not man (4:7; see 1 Co 9:25). Many

who have called themselves after Christ are running according to their own rules (See comments Mt 7:21-23; compare Mk 7:1-9). Those who do not run the Christian race according to the word of God will be disqualified, and thus, directed away from God. When one follows the religious traditions of men, he is going in the wrong direction, for the religious traditions of men lead one away from God.

2:6,7 *Laboring farmer:* Those who have grown up on farms understand the illustration of Paul's statement here in comparing the hard work of the farmer with the work of evangelism (See 2 Th 3:8). At the end of the day, the farmer expects to eat from that which he labored to produce (See comments 1 Co 9:12-18). His labors have made him worthy to partake of that for which he labored. ***The Lord will give you understanding in all things:*** We would assume that Timothy possessed the miraculous gift of prophecy that he had received through the laying on of Paul's hands (1:6). However, regardless of the miraculous gift, James promised that God is able to give wisdom to those who ask of Him (Js 1:5). Paul's request here is that Timothy receive understanding (wisdom) from the Lord in order to deal with every situation in which he labored. God gives wisdom to apply the knowledge that we learn through diligent study (See 2:15; At 17:11).

2:8 *Remember that Jesus ... was raised:* In the heat of the spiritual warfare in which every disciple is involved, we must remember that the One for whom we struggle was raised from the dead (At 2:24; see comments 1 Co 15:1-4). Jesus was proved to be the Son of God by His resurrection (Rm 1:4). When one remembers that Jesus is the resurrected Son of God, then he has the courage to stand against all wiles of the devil. Our hope of resurrection from the dead gives us courage to endure even if it means death (Rv 2:10). ***My gospel:*** It was Paul's gospel in the sense that he personally shared the good news of the death and resurrection of Jesus with Timothy (Rm 2:16; 16:25; Gl 1:11). He had personally experienced the resurrected Jesus on the Damascus road, which encounter he evidently shared with everyone with whom he met on his journeys.

2:9 Paul suffered because he preached the gospel (1:8; Ep 3:1; Cl 4:3; see comments At 9:16). It was because of his preaching the gospel that he was in chains. **Word of God is not bound:** Governments and enemies of the gospel can chain the vessels through whom God works to proclaim the gospel. However, the word of God that permeates the hearts of men cannot be confined by the restraints of man (At 28:31; see 2 Tm 4:17; see comments At 4:19,20). The message of the gospel continues regardless of the death of those who proclaim it. For this reason, the message will continue to be proclaimed until the end of time.

2:10 For the elect's sake: The church is predestined to be elected out of the world when Jesus comes again. All those who free-morally choose to become members of the church, therefore, become a part of the group that will be elected out of the world for eternal dwelling. Individual members of the church are elect because it will be the church as the universal body of Christ that will be elected for salvation at the end of the world. For this reason, Paul was willing to suffer all hardships for the sake of the church (Ep 3:13; see 1 Tm 6:11; 2 Tm 3:10; 4:5; 1 Pt 1:2). **Salvation ... in Christ:** Salvation is only in Christ (At 4:12). In order to come into Christ, one must obey the gospel by immersion (See comments Rm 6:3-6). The phrase "in Christ" is not used in this context to refer to a location, but to a spiritual relationship. Those who have been baptized into this relationship have come into a union with the Father, Son and Holy Spirit that has eternal consequences (See comments Mt 28:19,20).

2:11 If we died ... we will also live: Christians have died with Christ by crucifying themselves with Christ (Rm 6:6; Ph 3:10). Those who have died, must, as Jesus, be buried. Those who have died, will subsequently be buried with Jesus in order that they might be raised to walk in newness of life (Rm 6:4,5). They now reign in life with Him as they walk in newness of life (Rm 5:17; 2 Co 5:17; 1 Jn 5:11; see 1 Th 5:10). There can be no resurrection if there is no burial.

2:12 Those who are reigning with Christ in this life are also those who are suffering with Him (Rm 8:17; 1

Pt 4:13). The evidence of one's reign with Christ in life, therefore, is his suffering with Christ. However, if we are not willing to confess Him through obedient living, then He denies that we are His (See Mt 10:32,33; Lk 12:9; 1 Tm 5:8; compare 2 Pt 2:1; Jd 4).

2:13 There are those who will free-morally choose not to remain with the body of Christ. They will fall away. However, Jesus will remain faithfully committed to His body, the church. He cannot turn away from the body that He purchased with His own blood, for He cannot turn away from Himself (At 20:28).

SHUNNING USELESS DISCUSSIONS

2:14 Words to no profit: There are certain conversations and debates in which disciples must not participate. The community of disciples must discourage one another from participating in disagreements over matters of opinion (See vs 23; 1 Tm 5:21; 6:4; see comments Ti 3:9-11). Participation in such senseless debates and discussions only leads to discouragement on the part of those who involve themselves in such. The context here refers specifically to judaizing Gnostics who engaged in useless discussions concerning their fables and genealogies of supposed deities and emanations. However, any argument concerning nonbiblical words, concepts or opinions is useless and discouraging for those who participate in such discussions. Useless arguments distract Christians from their work of saving the lost and edifying the church. It is the work of Satan to involve Christians in discussions that divert the energies and thinking of disciples away from what they are to be doing. We must never forget that it is Satan's work to encourage Christians to become involved in senseless discussions in order to develop strife among themselves.

2:15 Be diligent: Paul's command to Timothy here is broader than diligent study of the Scriptures. He concentrates on the totality of the Christian life in reference to one's relationship with Christ and his fellow disciple (See Rm 12:1,2). This would certainly include a diligent study of the word of God in order that one's life be directed by God. However, diligence in living the Christian

life is necessary in response to one's study. The study of God's word is of little value if one does not live and teach what he studies. **Rightly dividing the word of truth:** In view of what he has just said in verse 14, rightly dividing the word of God refers to determining what is Bible and what is not worthy of Bible discussion. Nonbiblical topics that have no foundation in the word of God are never worthy of dispute in reference to the Bible. When an erroneous theology or philosophy of man starts to invade the beliefs of the church, members must know the word of God well enough to understand what is Bible and what is not Bible. It is the Bible that must be taught in order to guard the church from those who would impose on the church their own theologies. Paul encourages Timothy to be diligent in correctly applying the word of God in order to stand against false teachings (See 1 Tm 4:13; 2 Pt 1:10). However, one can never determine a false teaching if he does not have a knowledge of the word of God (See comments Hs 4:6).

2:16 Avoid: Only through a knowledge of the word of God will one be able to determine that which he should shun. Those who are ignorant of the word of God will endlessly engage themselves in senseless discussions over nonbiblical issues. Christians are to turn away from worthless talk and arguments that would divert their attention from their work (1 Tm 6:20; see comments Ti 3:9-11). We must keep in mind that Paul is here giving Timothy a mandate concerning his involvement in senseless discussions over matters of opinion. When one determines, because of his knowledge of the word of God, that a discussion will digress to arguments over matters of opinion, then he must not show up at the meeting. **More ungodliness:** If one is led into the trap of arguing over senseless issues, then he will sin by being led into arguments over that which profits nothing toward spiritual growth. Dogmatic mentalities and harden hearts result from arguments over religious matters that have no biblical basis. When agreements are made in the heat of arguments over matters of opinion, denominational structures are established, which structures, or "doctrines," lead to the division of disciples who follow af-

ter the particular points of agreement. Christians must learn that they will agree to work together regardless of establishing any opinions or structures that would define any particular group. Christians must learn to allow freedom of thought in matters of opinion and methodology, lest they seek to bind on themselves as different parties those things wherein freedom must abound. If brethren agree to allow freedom in matters of opinion, then there is no reason to argue over such matters. It is simply a principle of brotherhood that all disciples understand that they have the freedom to function in those areas that do not affect salvational principles. Christians may have meetings to determine if a matter is in the realm of Bible knowledge. However, once a matter is determined to be only a matter of interpretation that has no reference to salvational doctrine, then in love, Christians must allow one another the privilege of maintaining unity in matters of disagreement.

2:17 *Their word:* If the church gives an opportunity for the contentious teacher to voice his erroneous views, the beliefs of those who promote senseless theologies that have no biblical basis will be given an opportunity to spread among the disciples. If one is teaching something that is derived from his personal studies of the word of God, then he should be allowed to speak those things that he has studied. However, the one who promotes as doctrine those teachings for which he has no biblical foundation should not be given a platform from which to promote such teachings among the disciples.

2:18 The two brothers Paul mentions in verse 17 were promoting those things that were contrary to salvational teachings. The teaching of the resurrection is fundamental to our salvation (1 Co 15:12-19). Since some Gnostics believed that matter was evil, they thus believed that the physical body would not be resurrected at the end of time. They taught that the Christian's resurrection from the grave of baptism was the only resurrection that he would experience. Therefore, the resurrection had already passed for every Christian. The Gnostics did not believe in the bodily resurrection that is yet to come (Jn 5:28,29; At 2:14-16; 1 Co 15:35-57; 1 Th 4:14-18).

2:19 The firm foundation: Regardless of the propagation of the erroneous theologies of men, the truth will prevail in the minds and hearts of those who seek God (Compare comments 2 Th 2:10-12; see Mt 24:24). Since the faith of Christians is built on the fact that Jesus is the Christ and Son of God (Mt 16:18,19; Jn 20:30,31), the church will continue to be a shining light in the midst of false teachings. **The Lord knows:** The seal of our salvation is the fact that God knows those who are saved because of their loyalty to Him (Nm 16:5; Jn 10:27,28). **Depart from iniquity:** Those who are saved are those whose behavior is after the nature of the One who knows them. Those who would be known by God, therefore, must live a righteous life (Rm 6:17,18). Being known by God, refers to one's behavior that conforms to the will of God. One may know the truth, but if he does not behave the truth, his knowledge is useless in reference to being known by God (See comments Jn 13:34,35).

2:20 In a great house: Paul's illustration teaches that among the disciples there are those who are known by God because of their godly behavior. God also knows those who are unfaithful because of their hypocrisy. The vessels of gold and silver are profitable for the growth of the body (Rm 9:21-23). The vessels of wood and clay are dishonorable because of their unrighteous living. Paul's point is that not all who are in the fellowship of the body are saved. Simply because one has his name on a church directory does not mean that he is enrolled in the book of life.

2:21,22 Cleanses himself: The responsibility for this cleansing is on the shoulders of the hypocritical Christian. He must repent. If one makes a conscientious choice to depart from unrighteousness, God will be able to work through him (3:17; 2 Co 9:8; see Ep 2:10). **Flee:** If young people would only do this when faced with temptation, they would deliver themselves from great heartaches and sorrow (1 Tm 6:11). A conscious effort must be made on the part of every Christian to separate himself from anything that would lead one into sin. The fact that Paul gives this mandate to Timothy means that Timothy is responsible for his obedience. **Pursue:** The way one

is to flee evil is to pursue righteousness. When we are constantly pursuing that which is right, then we are automatically fleeing from temptation. Idle minds are fertile soil for the generation of temptation that can lead to sin. In order to refrain from doing that which is evil, one must do that which is good. Simply refraining from that which is evil will not be permanent in one's life if he does not do that which is good.

2:23 Avoid foolish and unlearned questions: Paul here identifies that from which one must flee. In order to pursue peace with all men (vs 23), one must shun confrontation with those who seek to argue or debate over senseless nonbiblical issues. Paul is here commanding that disciples keep themselves away from useless controversies. Such controversies will only divert one from his focus, and thus, the lost will go without the preaching of the gospel. The flock of God will be hindered from being edified because the members' joy will be stolen in the heat of arguments (See vss 14-16; Ti 3:9-11). **Generate strife:** This is the reason why disciples must not argue over religious issues that are outside a biblical context. Those who would seek to bring into a biblical context of discussion those issues that have no scriptural foundation, are generating strife within the body. In their argument, they are seeking to bind where God has not bound. Those who are seeking to bind on the church that which God never bound, are thus generating strife among the disciples. These are those brethren who are to be marked for their divisive behavior and teaching, for they are seeking to bind where God has not bound (See comments Rm 16:17,18). These are those who have gone beyond that which is written (See comments 2 Jn 9,10). Christians must allow and protect one another's freedom to think and work freely in matters that do not conflict with fundamental teachings that have reference to our salvation.

2:24,25 Must not quarrel: This command could not have been more clearly stated than how Paul states it here. Every disciple must manifest an example of not quarrelling with their wives, children, friends and other members of the body (Ti 3:2). Disciples must not quar-

rel with one another in matters of opinion and disagreements over methods of ministry. **Gentle ... patient ... meekness:** Those who would refrain from a spirit of quarrelling must follow after these three personality characteristics. A person who quarrels does not have a gentle spirit toward others. He is not patient with the opinions of others. His desire to argue is the manifestation of his desire to maintain his pride. **Oppose themselves:** Those who would be characterized by an argumentative spirit are opposed to all that should be manifested by a Christian spirit. By their contentious nature they deny the righteous nature that should identify those who are of Christ. **Grant them repentance:** The word "repentance" is here used to stand for all that is necessary for the sinner to be restored to a relationship with God. On the part of man, one must allow himself to be convicted by the word of God (Hb 4:12), for it is through God's word that the sinner is convicted (Cl 4:3; see 1 Co 3:6). Repentant hearts that are convicted by the word of God will respond to God (See Hb 12:13). God gives forgiveness on the condition of the repentant heart (1 Jn 1:7-9). **Knowledge of the truth:** From the context of Paul's discussion, we know that his statement here emphasizes godly behavior that results from a repentant heart. One can intellectually understand what God would have him do. However, intellectual knowledge of the word of God is of no profit if one does not live what he knows. Therefore, in order to know the truth, one must live by the truth (At 8:22; 3 Jn 3).

2:26 Held captive: Those who have convinced themselves that their quarrelsome spirit over nonbiblical issues and senseless subjects is profitable, have deceived themselves into thinking that they are contending for the truth. They are actually contentious and cantankerous, and an occasion for trouble. They have fallen into a common trap (snare) of the devil (See Lk 15:17; 1 Tm 3:7 Hb 3:13). The devil deceives religious oriented individuals into creating havoc among the disciples by the propagation of their nonbiblical issues. Their contentious means by which they promote their teachings is evidence of their dysfunction as members of the body.

And thus, their arrogance often keeps them from repentance because they will not confess the error of their ways. For this reason, Paul said in verse 25 "if perhaps" in reference to their repentance and restoration to the flock of God. God would grant repentance (forgiveness) if they turned from their teachings.

Chapter 3

SOCIAL DEGENERATION

3:1 *The last days:* In the context of Timothy's generation about which Paul was writing, this would refer to an imminent apostasy that was at hand. Timothy and Paul were in the last days of national Israel, which days were prophesied by both Ezekiel and Daniel (See comments Mt 24). The persecution of Judaism in general, and Judaizing Gnosticism in particular, were about to come to an end with a devastating blow to Judaism throughout the Roman Empire (See 1 Tm 4:1; 2 Pt 3:3; 1 Jn 2:18; Jd 17,18). If Paul was writing around 66 or 67, then these were politically perilous times, since Rome was building its army in order to suppress Jewish insurrection. It was the last days for national Israel because Israel had completed her purpose for existence. God brought Israel out of Egyptian captivity and established her as a nation in order to fulfill the promises that He had made to the fathers (Abraham, Isaac and Jacob). That promise was to bring the blessing, the Redeemer, into the world for the salvation of all men. Once this purpose was accomplished, Israel was no longer needed (See comments Gl 3:26-29).

3:2-4 The nature of ungodliness that would manifest the degradation of society is here defined. Paul identifies the degradation of those who loved themselves (Ph 2:21), were covetous (2 Pt 2:3), boasters (Jd 16), haughty (1 Tm 4:6), blasphemers (1 Tm 1:13,20), disobedient (Rm 1:30; Ep 6:1-4), ungrateful, unholy, without care for others (Rm 1:31), unforgiving, slanderers, without self-discipline, cruel, despisers of that which is good, traitors (2 Pt 2:10), defiant, and hedonistic (Ph 3:19; 2 Pt 2:13). All these words would define the Israel that rejected and crucified the Son of God. These words also defined the character of the Israel that was taken into Assyrian cap-

tivity during the days of Isaiah. They also explain the moral character of Judah when she was taken into Babylonian captivity in 586 B.C.

3:5 Form of godliness: One would suppose that Paul is describing a society of nonreligious pagans. However, this statement identifies those of verses 2-4 as religious hypocrites who claimed some allegiance to God, and yet, they lived blasphemous lives contrary to all that Jesus was and taught (See 1 Tm 5:8; Ti 1:16). As in the days when both the northern and southern kingdoms of Israel were taken into captivity, the moral status of the society had digressed to the point where the people brought on themselves the judgment of God. **Turn away:** Timothy was not to associate with those who were of the moral nature of what is described in verses 2-4 (Mt 23:3; 2 Th 3:6; 1 Tm 6:5; see comments 1 Co 5:9-11).

3:6 Gullible women: These were those women whose minds were receptive to teaching concerning the satisfying of the lusts of the flesh. The theology of hedonistic false teachers finds receptivity in the hearts of those who desire to give themselves over to sin. This apostasy was at work among the disciples when Paul wrote (See 2 Th 2:7). However, the nature of the apostasy was that some disciples were being led into immoral behavior (Rv 2:20-23). This apostasy is always a threat to the church when societies become immoral. It is a threat because the disciples too often conform to the immorality that is accepted by society. The body of Christ is to be a moral culture that should influence the world in which the members live. However, the immoral culture of the world often influences the church.

3:7 The Gnostics of Timothy's generation illustrate those of every generation whose reasoning stumbles over carnal thinking. They can never understand truth because they seek that which appeals to the flesh (See comments 2 Th 2:10-12). It is not that truth is difficult to find. These religionists seek that which is the invention of their own imagination. They seek to construct a religion that conforms to the narcissistic inclinations of what appeals to themselves.

3:8 Withstood Moses: Jannes and Jambres resisted

God's designated leadership (Ex 7:11,12,22; 8:7; 9:11). They were once faithful, however, they allowed their arrogant hearts to lead them against truth and against the designation of Moses to lead God's people. By falling away, they became as those who opposed the truth. **Corrupt minds:** The apostasy of some only manifests what was always in their hearts (1 Tm 6:5). Corrupt minds focus on that which is against God. Corrupt minds are always suspicious of others. **Rejected:** As the standard by which all men will be judged (See Jn 12:48), the truth of God's word judged Jannes and Jambres, and all who would follow after them. They were disapproved by God because they lived contrary to the word of God (Rm 1:28).

3:9 As the true nature of Jannes and Jambres was eventually exposed before all, so the true nature of the ungodly disciples in the area where Timothy was laboring would also be manifested to all (See Ex 7:11,12; 8:18; 9:11). Paul does not tell us how these false teachers would be made known. The point is that they would, and that Timothy should be assured that he and the true flock of God would be delivered from their ungodly influence. Truth may be hidden or concealed for a period of time, but it will eventually be made known to those who are honest in heart.

REMAIN STEADFAST

3:10,11 Fully known my teaching: Timothy's life was the definition of the obedient believer. Paul had invested his life in the life of one who was conscientious about serving the Lord (See Ph 2:20,22; 1 Tm 4:6). **What persecutions I endured:** In his mission work into southern Galatia, Paul suffered great persecution in the cities of Antioch, Iconium and Lystra (See At 13:44-52; 14:1-20). He gives credit to the work of God behind the scenes for delivering him from such persecutions. We must conclude that since Paul wrote these words by inspiration, the Holy Spirit wanted us to know that though Paul's deliverance was not miraculous in a manner to be perceived through the senses, God was still working in some way in order to deliver him from death. We serve a God

whose ways are past finding out. It should not surprise us to hear the testimony of Paul that God works today in order to deliver his servants from peril. By faith we perceive His work in our lives.

3:12 Will suffer persecution: This is a principle of the Christian life in the midst of a world filled with evil doers who have given themselves over to the work of Satan. All those who would take a stand with Jesus will suffer as Jesus (See comments Mt 10:22,38,39; Jn 15:19; At 14:22; compare Ps 34:19). The intensity by which one lives his commitment for Jesus is often manifested by the intensity of the persecution. Since the disciples of Jesus have committed themselves to serve their Lord, they should not consider it strange that the lord of this world would launch every attack against them. Persecution, therefore, is sometimes evidence that one is living the godly life.

3:13 Grow worse and worse: If the wicked increase, then we would assume that the persecution would also increase. The imposters here would be a reference to those who presumed to be Christians, and yet, they have hidden within themselves a heart of ungodliness. In the historical context of this statement, we must remember that the Romans were moving toward a determined action to destroy national Israel. At the conclusion of the wars against the Jews, the city of Jerusalem would be destroyed in A.D. 70 (See comments Mt 24). Over one million Jews would be killed throughout the events about which Paul possibly refers in this context. These were perilous times for all Christians, especially the Jewish Christians (2 Th 2:1). **Deceiving:** Herein is the power of Satan in a world that does not seek truth (1 Th 2:3; 2 Th 2:9-12; 1 Tm 4:1; Ti 3:3; 1 Jn 1:8; 2:26). Satan needs to work no miracles in a world that is given over to following after the lusts of the flesh, lusts of the eyes and pride of life. Satan's work to appeal to the carnal desires of those who have given up a knowledge of God is more successful than any miracle he might work. The fact that the majority of the world lies in the deceptions of Satan is proof that Satan's work through deception is his means of work.

3:14,15 You continue: In times of great trial and perse-

cution, one must remember to continue with that which brought him to the point of persecution. Persecution for Jesus often declares that one is on the right course of life (See 1:13; Jn 8:31; 15:10; Ti 1:9). Therefore, in the midst of suffering for Christ, one must see the situation as a declaration that he is living the right life (See Rm 8:18).

From a child: Lois and Eunice had done their work well as grandmother and mother to the young child Timothy. The greatness of Timothy as a disciple can be traced back through his spiritual genealogy that came through his grandmother (1:5; see At 16:1). We must never underestimate the tremendous influence of godly parents. Their spiritual heritage will continue throughout their generations. **Holy Scriptures:** Reference here is to the Old Testament Scriptures that laid the foundation upon which the New Testament covenant was based (Compare Jr 31:31-34). Timothy was taught these Scriptures from his childhood. He was taught by his mother and grandmother. **Wise unto salvation:** The Old Testament Scriptures educated Timothy concerning the Redeemer who would come and fulfill all prophecy concerning the Messiah. The New Testament reveals to us today the fulfillment of all Old Testament prophecies that pertain to the Messiah (See Ep 1:9; 3:3-5; Cl 1:9; 3:16). **Salvation ... in Christ:** Since salvation is in Christ, then one must establish an "in Christ" relationship with Jesus. Since one is baptized into Christ, then in order to receive the salvation that is in Christ, one must be baptized (Rm 6:3-6).

3:16 All Scripture: The word "Scripture" originally referred to the Old Testament Scriptures. However, all New Testament documents were latter considered Scripture by the early Christians as they were added to the canon of Scriptures (See comments 2 Pt 3:15,16). When Paul wrote this statement around A.D. 66,67, almost all New Testament Scripture had been written. Therefore, the term "Scripture" would refer to all the books of our present Bible. However, this would not include the Old and New Testament apocryphal books because neither Jesus nor the New Testament writers considered them to be Scripture. **Inspiration:** This is from the Greek word *theopneustos* which is literally defined "God-

breathed" (See 2 Pt 1:20,21). Scripture did not originate from man. Though God allowed individuals to retain their vocabulary and literary styles of writing, through the Holy Spirit God's will was inerrantly recorded in the original autographs. Paul's original manuscript of this document, with his other letters, were written without error. **Profitable for teaching:** All Scripture is beneficial for teaching (Rm 4:23; 1 Tm 1:3; 4:13; see Rm 15:4). Scripture is the source from which all Christian teaching must come because all Scripture has come from God. Those who would claim to be disciples of Jesus, therefore, must continually refresh their knowledge of the word of God. Scripture is the means by which God instructs those who seek to be His children. One cannot be a disciple of Jesus unless he is guided in life by the inspired word of God. **Reproof:** God's word is profitable for motivating repentance in one's life and direction of his behavior (Hb 4:12). **Correction:** Obedience to the word of God will deter one from the wrong direction of life. **Instruction:** Study of and meditation on the word of God will mold one's mind for correct thinking and behavior. Those who seek to be disciples of Jesus must continually be instructed by God through their study of His word (Compare Rm 15:4; 1 Co 10:11).

3:17 May be complete: Reference here is to the direction of one's life in this world. God intended that what was revealed in Scripture would be sufficient for those who are hungering and thirsting after His direction (2 Pt 1:3). Therefore, the one who allows the word of God to direct his path in this life will find salvation at the end of his life (At 20:31; 1 Th 2:13). Since the word of God will be our only standard by which we will be judged (Jn 12:48), then it is imperative that we direct our lives according to what is written. **Thoroughly equipped:** The sufficiency of the word of God negates any necessity for religious traditions or creeds in the matter of godly living. One must come to the Scriptures with the attitude that within them lies wisdom and answers to all problems of life (2:21; Hb 13:21). With such an attitude toward the Scriptures, one will benefit from his study of God's word. The fact that the Scriptures are sufficient

to guide one to eternal dwelling, implies that one must trust in God speaking to him through the revealed word of God.

Chapter 4

FINAL CHARGE TO MINISTER

4:1 We would expect that Paul's last words to Timothy would be nothing less than what he states here. ***I charge you:*** This is a reaffirmation of Timothy's calling to be an evangelist to the lost (1 Tm 5:21). Though Timothy may have ceased from his work of preaching and teaching, he needed this encouragement by the apostle in order to take courage in fulfilling his destiny. ***The living:*** Jesus will be the judge of those who are living when He comes again (At 17:30,31). The meaning could possibly refer to those who are living in Christ. He will judge the righteous, for we must all stand before the judgment seat of Christ (2 Co 5:10). ***The dead:*** All the dead will be resurrected to receive final judgment (Jn 5:28,29; 2 Co 5:10). No one will be outside the authority of Jesus' right to judge all. An alternative interpretation would be that Jesus will be the judge of those who are spiritually dead outside Christ.

4:2 *Preach the word:* Since preaching refers to the proclamation of the gospel to unbelievers, then this charge is that Timothy assume his ministry of proclaiming the gospel to the lost. In view of the fact that all men will stand before the judgment seat of Christ, it is imperative that Timothy and all disciples assume their responsibility of proclaiming the lifesaving gospel to all men (See Jn 12:48). Paul's charge is that Timothy proclaim the gospel in the midst of all opposition. The subject of his preaching must be the word of God, not the theologies and philosophies of men. It is the gospel that brings newness of life, and thus, it is the gospel event of Jesus' death for our sins and His resurrection for our hope that must be proclaimed throughout the world (See comments 1 Co 15:1-4). ***Be ready:*** Through diligent study of the word of God and godly living, the man of God must always be willing to teach the word of God. Preaching the word must not be at the disciple's convenience, but

because men must know the gospel. **Reprove:** The power of the message is in the fact that it is based on the word of God (Hb 4:12). Through a knowledge of the Scriptures, Jesus must be affirmed to be the Christ and Son of God (Compare Jn 20:30,31; Ti 2:15). **Rebuke:** Those who are in sin must be reprovved for their sin (1 Tm 5:20; Ti 1:13; 2:15). The authority for reprovving and rebuking does not lie in the messenger, but in the message. **Exhort:** Those who are struggling to remain faithful must be encouraged with the word of God (1 Tm 4:13). **Longsuffering and teaching:** In order to change the beliefs and behavior of people, it takes much patient teaching (Ep 6:18). The evangelist should commit himself to the work of patiently teaching the word of God.

4:3 Will not endure sound teaching: Paul here forewarns Timothy of a time that is coming when those of his generation would not be content with the word of God (1:13; 1 Tm 1:10). They will turn away from the teaching of the word in order to listen to those things that please them. They will seek teachers that will proclaim those things that conform to their own desires (3:7,8; compare Mk 4:24; Lk 8:18; Hb 5:11). When people seek to create their religious beliefs and behavior after the ways of the world, they will reject the will of God. And when they reject the will of God, they will reject messengers who teach the will of God (See comments Mk 7:1-9).

4:4,5 Fables: Those people who are excited about speculations concerning the spirit world have turned aside from the truth (1 Tm 1:4-6; Ti 1:14). They are more fascinated with things they conjure up in their minds than the inspired word of God. Paul says they have given up the truth in order to satisfy their curious minds with senseless discussions about things for which there is no revelation from God. **Endure afflictions:** In order to be an effective evangelist, one must be willing to endure the affliction that comes with the work (1:18; 2:3; see At 9:16; 14:22). Preaching the word of God brings opposition from those who have determined to follow after religions that they have created after their own desires. **Do the work:** There is no room in the life of a disciple for laziness. Those preachers who are lazy do not take seri-

ously their calling to preach the word of God and work as an evangelist among the lost. We must keep in mind that the work of an evangelist is to be a herald of the gospel to the lost (At 21:8; Ep 4:11). Those evangelists who have ceased their proclamation of the gospel to the lost have either lost their calling to the lost, or they have become teachers of the word among the saved. They cannot fulfill their ministry as an evangelist to the lost if they do not refocus their lives on the lost (See Rm 10:14,15). **Your ministry:** Timothy was responsible for all those things that an evangelist must do to evangelize the lost and edify the saved. He was chosen by Paul to be an evangelist to the lost, and set forth by the laying on of the elders' hands (At 16:1-3). His ministry, therefore, was not to the church, but to the lost. With the work of an evangelist comes the responsibility of carrying out the work in the sight of God. For this reason, Paul charged Timothy to carry on with the work of an evangelist in order to accomplish the will of God in his life.

A FAREWELL MESSAGE

4:6,7 Poured out as a drink offering: The time had come for Paul's departure from this world (Compare Ph 1:23; 2:17; 2 Pt 1:14). The time of his death was probably around A.D. 67. From the writings of those who lived decades after this event, it is affirmed that Paul was beheaded in Roman imprisonment during the reign of Nero. **The good fight:** Paul was personally given his mission and ministry by Jesus around A.D. 40 to 42 on a road outside Damascus many years before this statement was made (At 9:15,16). He did not deter from his destiny (At 20:23,24; 21:12-14). Therefore, as a result of his determination to fulfill his God-given mission, he fought the good fight, finished his mission, and during the entire time of struggle, he kept the faith (See comments Ph 3:14). **The faith:** Since the article "the" is used with the word "faith," we would assume that Paul has in mind the body of truth that had been revealed from God. He had defended the faith that had been revealed to him (Jd 3).

4:8 Crown of righteousness: This was the victory crown that as worn by conquering kings when they re-

turned from battle. Because Paul remained faithful to his mission and the faith, there was reserved for him the victory crown (*stephanos*) (See Js 1:12). **That day:** This is the final day and conclusion of this present world (1:12). It is the day of finality wherein the righteous, in their embodied state, will pass to the new heavens and earth (2 Pt 3:13). This is the hope of the Christian, for all things for which God planned the earth and all its inhabitants will have been completed.

PERSONAL INSTRUCTIONS

4:9,10 Because his death was soon to come, Paul here urged Timothy to make haste to come to him in Rome. Paul desired that Timothy leave all prevailing problems that he was facing in Asia and come to him in these final hours of his life. **Demas:** We do not know if this is the Demas of Colossians 4:14 or Philemon 24. **Loved ... world:** It seems that Demas did not have his priorities right. We are not told what business he had in Thessalonica. However, we are told that it was a business that pertained to things of this world. It was a business that consumed the thinking of Demas to the point that he forsook the needs of Paul in order to follow after his love of the world (See comments Mt 6:19-34; 1 Jn 2:15; compare 1 Tm 6:6-10,17-19). Since the Thessalonian church was composed of some wealthy women, it may have been that he returned to the wealth of these disciples (See At 17:1-4). Whatever the case, Paul made the judgment that his return to Thessalonica was based on worldly motives. **Crescens ... Titus:** Crescens and Titus did not leave Paul's company for worldly reasons. They went out to continue their evangelistic responsibilities in Galatia and Dalmatia.

4:11 **Luke is with me:** Luke, the physician, was with Paul during Paul's first arrest in Judea and trip to Rome for the first imprisonment (See "Writer" in intro. to Lk). He remained with Paul during the first imprisonment. He was again with Paul in these final days of his life during this second imprisonment. **Mark:** On the first mission journey of Paul when he and Barnabas left Antioch, Mark eventually left the work (At 13:13; 15:36-41; see "Writer" in intro. to Mk). But now, Mark is profitable

to the ministry. He had spiritually matured to the point where the dying apostle wanted him in his company.

4:12 Tychicus: Tychicus was an evangelist who worked in the area of Asia Minor (At 20:4; Ep 6:21; Cl 4:7; Ti 3:12). Since Paul sent him to Ephesus, we would assume that Timothy was not in Ephesus at the time of the writing of this epistle. When the first letter was written to Timothy, Paul urged Timothy to stay in Ephesus in order to teach the disciples (1 Tm 1:3). The first letter was written anywhere from A.D. 62 to 65. This letter was written around A.D. 66,67. Therefore, since Timothy was not in Ephesus at the time Paul wrote this second letter, then we would assume that Timothy did not spend a long period of time in Ephesus after Paul urged him to go there in order to correct some problems. The point is that the evangelist should maintain his travels among the lost and churches in order to accomplish the work of an evangelist to preach the gospel to the lost and edify the church (Rm 10:15). Local disciples should be under the nourishment of the elders whose responsibility it is to teach and minister to the needs of the disciples (At 20:28). The work of evangelists is to go forth preaching the gospel to the lost (See comments 3 Jn 3-8). When evangelists are held up in one area by the pleas of local disciples, they fail in their mission to preach the gospel to other cities (See comments Lk 4:42-44).

4:13 Bring ... cloak ... scrolls ... parchments: Timothy was somewhere in Asia Minor, and thus, he had the opportunity to come through Troas on his way to Rome. The fact that Paul wanted him to bring the cloak would indicate that winter was coming in a cold jail (vs 21). Paul, the student, was facing the end of his life, and yet, he wanted to continue his studies (See 2:15). The scrolls were rolls of paper made from the papyrus plant. The parchments were of tanned animal skins that were used for writing. Parchments were also called vellum. We are not told what was written on these parchments, but we can assume that they were at least writings of the Old Testament Scriptures.

4:14,15 Reward: Those who do harm to God's evangelists are placing themselves in a situation where God

will take vengeance on them. Alexander did great harm to Paul (Compare At 19:33; 1 Tm 1:20; see Dt 32:35; Rm 12:19; Hb 10:30). His harm that he did against Paul was actually against God, for God was working through Paul. **Be on guard:** We would assume that this Alexander was not a Christian. He was evidently a very influential person of the community, and thus, had the authority to resist the preaching of the word of God by inflicting judgment upon the messengers of God.

4:16 No one stood with me: Reference here would be to Paul's preliminary trial before Nero's court. It was evidently a time of great stress among those who were with Paul. Paul stood alone as all evangelists must do at one time or another. On this occasion, Paul was forsaken because of fear. Because there was a great possibility that he would be condemned to death, all his associates who were with him at the time feared to be identified with his cause (See Lk 23:43; At 7:59,60).

4:17 The Lord stood with me: One must always remember that Jesus will remain faithful when everyone else flees (Dt 32:6). The security of the believer is in the fact that there is a presence of the Lord that is sensed, which presence continues to bring comfort in times of trial. **Strengthened:** We are not told that the Lord appeared to Paul in a miraculous manner as on other occasions in order to strengthen him (At 23:11). He simply stated here that the Lord strengthened him. We must assume, therefore, that in some way the Lord can give strength to those who are in dire situations as Paul was in during this imprisonment. **The preaching:** Paul was on trial in Rome on behalf of Christianity (See intro. to At). It was God's plan through Paul to put Christianity on trial before the highest court of the world in order that the message of the gospel be validated without question. Therefore, in the midst of the worst of circumstances, Paul continued his commission to proclaim the gospel before kings (At 9:15,16; Ph 1:12). **I was delivered:** Paul was delivered from death at his first defense (See 1 Sm 17:37; Ps 22:21). The verdict of the evidence against Paul during the first imprisonment affirmed the validity of Christianity. He was released. This second imprison-

ment would lead to the martyrdom of Paul, thus affirming that he truly believed that which he preached.

4:18 *The Lord will deliver:* Though one's body may be put to death, the enemies of God's people cannot destroy their souls and spirits that are in the tender care of the Lord (Ps 121:7; 2 Pt 2:9). For this reason, the saints need to have no fear of those who can destroy the body (Mt 10:28). The Christian's death is his deliverance from the evil of this world (Ph 1:21-24). ***To Him be glory:*** Since the Lord has the power to deliver us from this world, then to Him be all glory (Rm 11:36; Gl 1:4; Hb 13:21; 2 Pt 3:18). No man on earth is to receive the glory and worship that is due God. Even in his time of death, Paul gave all glory to God.

CLOSING GREETINGS

4:19,20 *Prisca and Aquila:* This married couple was a dynamic mission team throughout the establishment and edification of the early church (At 18:2; Rm 16:3-5; 1 Co 16:19; see comments At 18:18-20). In these final hours, Paul refers to Priscilla with an endearing name that he surely called her throughout his ministry with her and her husband, Aquila. This was a traveling couple who were continually on the move in order to preach the gospel. Though we have this brief record of this couple in reference to early evangelism, there were hundreds like them who went throughout the 1st century in order to preach Jesus (At 8:4). These were couples who were dedicated to the preaching of the gospel to the world. ***Onesiphorus:*** This brother may have been one of Paul's evangelistic traveling companions (1:16). ***Erastus:*** See At 19:22; Rm 16:23. ***Trophimus:*** See At 20:4; 21:29. ***I have left in Miletus sick:*** There must be some reason why Paul did not heal Trophimus. This statement could possibly affirm that miracles of healing were not given for the personal benefit of the disciples. If they were, one can only imagine why some might become disciples. The fact that miracles were not for self-healings, but for the confirmation of the gospel, is clearly manifested by this case and the case of Epaphroditus in Philippians 2:25-28 (See comments; also see comments Mk 16:17-20; Hb

2:3,4). This case may also indicate that miracles of confirmation were vanishing away by this time (See comments 1 Co 13:8-10). It is probable that miracles of confirmation had passed away with the consummation of national Israel in A.D. 70. By A.D. 70 God had confirmed the true Israel by faith, and in the destruction of national Israel, He revealed His disfavor with those who rejected the Messiah of God. Whatever the situation was in reference to Trophimus, we would assume that Paul would have healed him if he could. But the fact remains that he did not. We assume, therefore, that he did not because he could not, for the age of miraculous healing in confirmation of the gospel had by this time passed away. God would continue to heal throughout history only in a non-miraculous manner.

4:21,22 All the brethren: At this time in his imprisonment, the Roman brethren were with Paul. Though all had forsaken him on his first defense, the brethren were with him at this time in order to give him support. At least these who are mentioned here were brave enough to be associated with Paul during the time of his trials and imprisonment (See comments Ph 1:12-18). Their association with Paul meant that they were willing to be identified with the message that he so faithfully preached throughout his life. Disciples must not be afraid of associating with the gospel message.

Commentary by Roger E. Dickson
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ABREVIATIONS

OLD TESTAMENT

Genesis - **Gn**, Exodus - **Ex**, Leviticus - **Lv**, Numbers - **Nm**, Deuteronomy - **Dt**, Joshua - **Ja**, Judges - **Jg**, Ruth - **Rt**, 1 Samuel - **1 Sm**, 2 Samuel - **2 Sm**, 1 Kings - **1 Kg**, 2 Kings - **2 Kg**, 1 Chronicles - **1 Ch**, 2 Chronicles - **2 Ch**, Ezra - **Er**, Nehemiah - **Ne**, Esther - **Et**, Job - **Jb**, Psalms - **Ps**, Proverbs - **Pv**, Ecclesiastes - **Ec**, Song of Solomon - **Ss**, Isaiah - **Is**, Jeremiah - **Jr**, Lamentations - **Lm**, Ezekiel - **Ez**, Daniel - **Dn**, Hosea - **Hs**, Joel - **Jl**, Amos - **Am**, Obadiah - **Ob**, Jonah - **Jh**, Micah - **Mc**, Nahum - **Nh**, Habakkuk - **Hk**, Zephaniah - **Zp**, Haggai - **Hg**, Zechariah - **Zc**, Malachi - **Ml**

NEW TESTAMENT

Matthew - **Mt**, Mark - **Mk**, Luke - **Lk**, John - **Jn**, Acts - **At**, Romans - **Rm**, 1 Corinthians - **1 Co**, 2 Corinthians - **2 Co**, Galatians - **Gl**, Ephesians - **Ep**, Philippians - **Ph**, Colossians - **Cl**, 1 Thessalonians - **1 Th**, 2 Thessalonians - **2 Th**, 1 Timothy - **1 Tm**, 2 Timothy - **2 Tm**, Titus - **Ti**, Philemon - **Pi**, Hebrews - **Hb**, James - **Js**, 1 Peter - **1 Pt**, 2 Peter - **2 Pt**, 1 John - **1 Jn**, 2 John - **2 Jn**, 3 John - **3 Jn**, Jude - **Jd**, Revelation - **Rv**