

Bible Lessons



**"Beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord,
we are CHANGED" II Cor. 3:18**

ADULTS -- YOUNG PEOPLE

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Bible Lessons for Adults and Young People

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Theme for Fourth Quarter, 1992

Our studies for this quarter will be the two epistles of Paul, the apostle of the Lord Jesus Christ, which he wrote to Timothy, his beloved son in the gospel. According to Acts 16:1,2 Timothy, or Timotheus, was the son of a believing Jewish woman. All that was said of his father was that he was a Greek. Adam Clarke thinks that his father was probably dead and that he lived with his mother, Eunice, and his grandmother, Lois. These are mentioned in II Timothy 1:5. Timothy drank in the doctrine of the Saviour who was preached by Paul, and he became a faithful supporter of the truth and a dear companion of Paul. Paul spoke to the Philippians of Timothy that he knew of no man who would care for them like Timothy, differing from those who "seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's." He also said that as a son with a father, Timothy had served with him in the gospel.

As it had been with the Philippian and Thessalonian brethren, Timothy was very close in heart with Paul. Adam Clarke is of the opinion that the first epistle to Timothy was written after Paul's release from prison in Rome, when no doubt he visited the Church at Ephesus and found those holding to the law of Moses busily employed in spreading their erroneous doctrines.

It is generally believed that the second epistle of Paul to Timothy was written after Paul was imprisoned the second time at Rome, not long before he suffered martyrdom. Paul's language gives evidence that such was the case.

We will study the various teachings and instructions that Paul gave to Timothy in these two epistles. These are instructions given from an aged worker for the Lord to a young minister. There is much spiritual counsel and soul food found therein. We trust that everyone who studies these lessons will be edified and benefited by the light of the Holy Spirit shining through them. —Leslie C. Busbee

OCTOBER 4, 1992

THE PURPOSE AND DESIGN OF THE GOSPEL

1 Timothy 1:1 Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the commandment of God our Saviour, and Lord Jesus Christ, which is our hope;

2 Unto Timothy, my own son in the faith: Grace, mercy, and peace, from God our Father and Jesus Christ our Lord.

3 As I besought thee to abide still at Ephesus, when I went into Macedonia, that thou mightest charge some that they teach no other doctrine,

4 Neither give heed to fables and endless genealogies, which minister questions, rather than godly edifying which is in faith: so do.

5 Now the end of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned:

6 From which some having swerved have turned aside unto vain jangling;

7 Desiring to be teachers of the law; understanding neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm.

8 But we know that the law is good, if a man use it lawfully;

9 Knowing this, that the law is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and for sinners, for unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for manslayers,

10 For whoremongers, for them that defile themselves with mankind, for menstealers, for liars, for perjured persons, and if there be any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine;

11 According to the glorious gospel of the blessed God, which was committed to my trust.

12 And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry;

13 Who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious: but I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief.

14 And the grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant with

faith and love which is in Christ Jesus.

15 This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief.

16 Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might shew forth all longsuffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting.

17 Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen.

MEMORY VERSE: Now the end of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned. I Timothy 1:5.

CENTRAL THOUGHT: The design of the Lord God in His commandments and the gospel of His Son Jesus Christ for the soul of man is that love flow out of a pure heart, a good conscience, and a true faith that is without pretence or vain show.

WORD DEFINITION AND CLARIFICATIONS: *My own son in the faith*" (v. 2): Paul said in I Corinthians 4:15: "For though ye have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet have ye not many fathers: for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel." Between those who minister the Word of God and those who believe and obey there is the loving relationship of parent and child. "*Fables*" (v. 4): The Greek word translated here is the term "myth" which means a fictional tale or story. Clarke labeled these idle fancies, of which no people ever possessed a greater stock than the Jews, their Talmud abounding with them. "*Endless genealogies*": It seems that the Jews placed much importance in genealogies, which are recorded tables of the family histories. Particularly of great importance were those pertaining to the Messiah and the Levitical Priesthood. Matthew and Luke both used genealogies to trace the lineage of Christ back to Abraham and even to Adam. But Clarke says that Herod destroyed the public records and after this the Jews could only refer to records by memory or from imperfect tables that individuals had preserved. Thus to

employ genealogies gave rise to much dispute and uncertainty. Paul discouraged their use, and pointed souls to the spiritual life in Christ and the inspiration of the Holy Spirit as a more sure testimony of Jesus Christ. *"The end of the commandment"* (v. 5): The purpose and design of the gospel of the Saviour. *"charity"*: divine love. *"faith unfeigned"*: faith not pretended but genuine and true. *"Swerved"* (v. 6): missed, erred, deviated from the truth. *"Perjured persons"* (v. 10): people who make false oaths or who violate an oath.

LESSON BACKGROUND

Paul is endeavoring in our lesson today to strengthen Timothy's stand for the truth against the elements of the law-spirit that followed the gospel wherever it went. There seems to be an inclination or weakness in man to want to lord over his fellow man with a dominating law attitude. It is pride that causes anyone to dominate another, seeking to assume a superior position of power and authority by whatever means they can do so. And so often it is through the religious realm that man finds a way to employ his pride. It is easy to forget while holding and setting forth the law just what the law is for. Many law-enforcement personnel have been guilty of using the law and the power that they were entrusted with as law-enforcement officers wrongfully. It seems to be a weakness in man to do this. A righteous man who loves God and his fellow man will be far less apt to violate laws and mandates. Laws are instituted to combat the influence of lawless and ungodly people, people who have no standard but their own selfish lusts and greed. The gospel of Christ is good news to the sinner, a way to escape the curse of wickedness unto a life of uprightness and honesty before God and man. The laws of God are to be written in the heart and the affections by the Holy Spirit, and the result of this New Testament work is a life filled with fruits against which there is no law. Paul, in keeping the law of Moses, found himself going against and breaking a greater law, the law of love. This love was manifest in Christ against whom he was fighting. Thus Paul was very thankful for the mercy shown to him and the grace given to be saved and transformed into a new creature in Christ. —Leslie C. Busbee

QUESTIONS:

1. What is the real purpose of the commandments of the Saviour?
2. How is love out of a pure heart and a good conscience and true faith better than just keeping a law?
3. Is it possible to be strict and holding to the law and still not be saved?
4. Is it possible for a man to use the law unlawfully?
5. Why is it necessary for a society to have laws and law enforcement agencies?
6. Who is the law made for?
7. Why is the law not made for a righteous man?
8. Can we be saved by keeping the law?
9. What was it that saved Paul?
10. For what purpose did Paul feel that such mercy was shown to him?

ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS

The doctrine of being saved by grace and not by keeping the law of God is not clearly understood as it should be. An unsaved person who has a sense of guilt for his sins can scarcely comprehend of the grace of Jesus so freely given to blot out his sins. He or she feels so unworthy of God looking upon them in His free favor. This is why we should listen carefully and with an open mind to the gospel of Christ. It states the true facts of God's lovingkindness and tender mercies. Paul had done many things that he was ashamed of. But he knew that the mercy of the Lord was great toward him because he realized that through ignorance and in a state of unbelief toward God he had done the things that he was so sorry for. This is true concerning all of us. What we do while under the power of sin is done in ignorance and unbelief. We are guilty, caught in the trap of sin and condemnation. As one put it like this: We are dead in our sins and buried in the graveyard of the law, but mercy and grace unlocks the gates and calls us forth to a resurrected life! Yes, Justice called, but Mercy answered! The law is given to help a man realize how

sinful and undone he is. But this is but to lead him to Christ for the remedy of his sin. The real purpose of the law was to bring us to Christ.

We see by the law that we are condemned and guilty. Thus we turn imploringly to Christ, and He hears our guilty plea for mercy. Paul felt like he was at the head of the list of the worst of sinners. But God had shown mercy to him and Paul wanted it to be a testimony thereafter of the goodness of God to such an unworthy sinner that he was. As we look upon the mercy shown to Paul after all he did against Christ, it will help us to know that the Lord will be merciful to us, also.

—Leslie C. Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

In verse 12 of our lesson Paul described his divine ministerial ordination. "And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry." These are the words of a true minister, for they are saturated in humility. Every God-called minister must feel himself unworthy of the honor to serve Him. When humility is lost, a minister ceases to be a minister and becomes a personally motivated orator. In verses 13 and 14 Paul went on to speak of the grace manifested in the call of such a person to the ministry, and of the further grace by which he was sustained in that ministry. Verse 15 tells us the burden of the ministry which was given to him.

"This is a faithful saying. . ." There are some religions which are based on relics which are supposedly hold-overs from Christ's time. In holding forth these curiosities, there is not definite proof of their authenticity, so such statements are used as "It is said. . ." or "It is believed. . ." The gospel of Christ is more than just a supposing. A minister of Christ does not hold forth the gospel in this manner, as you would a relic, but as something which is active in his life, and with a "That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you. . . ." I John 1:3.

". . . worthy of all acceptance. . ." Paul is getting ready to divulge the heart and soul of his ministry, which is that "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." That is a simple message, but preached under the anointing of the Holy Spirit, it is a message that reaches the farthestmost parts of the

darkened souls of mankind. It exposes secrets that are covered by rebellion against God, and replaces the decaying effects of sin with opulent life. The telling of this Gospel is not only acceptable, but the instigator and the product of this Gospel is more than just satisfactory. The acceptance of salvation means that it is provided for you. It is like being invited to someone's house to eat and hearing them say, "You don't have to bring anything; just yourself." Christ asks, He provides, and He wants nothing but ourselves. If we take anything else, He'll reject it. This is what the Gospel is all about, and what leads to "...charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned."

—Wayne Murphey

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OCTOBER 11, 1992

**MEN AND WOMEN IN ALL GODLINESS
AND HONESTY**

I Timothy 1:18 This charge I commit unto thee, son Timothy, according to the prophecies which went before on thee, that thou by them mightest war a good warfare;

19 Holding faith, and a good conscience; which some having put away concerning faith have made shipwreck:

20 Of whom is Hymenaeus and Alexander; whom I have delivered unto Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme.

2:1 I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men;

2 For kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty.

3 For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour;

4 Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.

5 For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus;

6 Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time.

7 Whereunto I am ordained a preacher, and an apostle,

(I speak the truth in Christ, and lie not;) a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and verity.

8 I will therefore that men pray every where, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting.

9 In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array;

10 But (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works.

11 Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection.

12 But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence.

13 For Adam was first formed, then Eve.

14 And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression.

15 Notwithstanding she shall be saved in childbearing, if they continue in faith and charity and holiness with sobriety.

MEMORY VERSE: There is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time. I Timothy 2:5,6.

CENTRAL THOUGHT: Godliness, honesty, faith, charity, holiness, and sobriety are to mark the true Christian before God and before men.

WORD DEFINITIONS AND CLARIFICATIONS: *The prophecies which went before on thee* (v. 1:18): It is possible that some inspired man of God in that time may have uttered a prophecy concerning Timothy before his birth or while he was a child. If this was the case, Paul was encouraging him to act in all things conformably to those predictions. On the other hand we might safely and truthfully say that we all have prophecies that have preceded us. All the prophecies of the Old Testament were given with us in mind. I Peter 1:12 spoke of the prophets who ministered not unto themselves, but unto us. It is for us to take their challenge and prophecies to heart and let them not be in vain concerning us. *"Whom I have delivered unto Satan"* (v. 1:20): Paul, through the power and authority

of the Holy Spirit had actually pronounced judgment upon these two men in an earnest effort to turn them from their error. He spoke in I Cor. 5:5 about delivering someone unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus. Just what this sort of judgment was like we do not know. "*Supplications*" (v. 1): entreaties and petitions. "*Mediator*" (v. 5): a go-between. "*ransom*" (v. 6): a price paid to redeem or bring back. "*Modest apparel*" (v. 9): apparel fit and becoming to Christ. "*shamefacedness*": reserve, bashfulness, not wanting to be seen or displayed. "*sobriety*": soberness, soundness of mind. "*broided hair*": hair decorated and interwoven with ornaments and colors. Adam Clarke remarks at this point: "When either women or men spend much time, cost, and attention on decorating their persons, it affords a painful proof that within there is little excellence, and that they are endeavoring to supply the want of mind and moral good by the feeble and silly aids of dress and ornament." "*Let the woman learn in silence*" (v. 11): Women would be better off spiritually and in every other way if they would follow the counsel that Paul is giving in these scriptures. Only through the anointing of the Holy Spirit and in His order should a woman undertake to put herself forward to teach and assume leadership. "*She shall be saved in childbearing*" (v. 15): The woman who is willing to bear being subject and in silence to her husband will be blessed of God and preserved in her child-bearing times as she maintains holiness and faith and love with soberness and humility.

LESSON BACKGROUND

The saints of the most High God are the salt and preserving element of the earth, and it is through their prayers and righteous lives that the hand of judgment and destruction by God's wrath is withheld. The gospel is preached and those who are redeemed from sin must live lives that are consistent with the name and nature of their Redeemer. Men and women both are to live, act, dress, and conduct themselves after a godly manner. These standards are vital for the success and promotion of the gospel of Christ. Women are to faithfully wield their

gracious power and influence for the good of their families and the souls of men. Godliness and holiness and sobriety are indispensable to the hope and welfare of all.

—Leslie C. Busbee

QUESTIONS:

1. What kind of warfare is Paul encouraging us to engage in?
2. What did some put away concerning faith and made shipwreck?
3. How can prayer help us to lead a quiet and peaceable life?
4. What happens when those in authority are without the holy influence of godliness and truth?
5. Why is wrath and doubting not to have any place in our lives?
6. Why is outward and artificial adorning a detriment to spirituality?
7. What is the adorning that God would have us all to wear?
8. Why is it God's plan for a woman to be in silence and subjection?
9. Instead of usurping authority what can a woman do for her husband?
10. How can a woman be saved in childbearing?

ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS

Oh, how sublime and blessed is the life of a Christian! His standards of conduct, dress, and attitude are on a much higher level than the carnal ways of men and women of the world. In the first place the Christian resorts to prayer and faith in God rather than money, power, or the admiration of men. A Christian prays not just in Church services, but he prays wherever he goes. He constantly lives in an attitude of prayer. He prays for all men. He does not enter into the strife of politics and the races of man against man for pre-eminence. Rather than this, he intercedes to God on the behalf of his lot in life and for his fellow man. Prayer is his sole weapon and

stay. He lives so that he can raise his hands up to heaven with confidence in God and with love and forgiveness to his fellow creatures of earth. He does not shrink from his responsibilities of home and family. Here he exerts an influence that will inspire his children to want to live for God. Sad it is that many men are never heard to pray or lead in family worship! What a mistake so costly and destructive! And in like manner holy women are called upon to live a life that is different from the world. Dress is a big item in a woman's life! That is why Paul stressed it in our lesson. Women want to be pretty and this seems to be the paramount thing in their life. They go to all ends to obtain beauty that they feel will win the admiration of their fellow creatures, especially that of the men! Paul warns and counsels against this sort of thing. He tells us the kind of beauty that a woman should adorn herself with. He tells the kind of adorning to be avoided. The outward adorning and decorating of the body is not pleasing to God. It gives indication of pride and feeds that pride. Shunning display and vain show, a woman should live in quietness and meekness, in subjection to her husband. In this attitude of humility and silence of spirit she can wield an influence that will help her husband to be the man he ought to be. Bringing forth her children that God gives her, she can fill the caption: "The hand that rocks the cradle rules the world." Oh, the Christian way is the better way! Let us love and follow it all our mortal days and reap the harvest of such holiness and godliness in eternity!

—Leslie C. Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Cyrus, king of Persia, after a famous victory, took prisoner a noble prince, with his wife and children. When they were brought into the tent of the victors, Cyrus said to the prince, "What will you give me to set you at liberty?" The prince replied, "I will give you half that I possess." Cyrus exclaimed, "And what will you give me if I release your children?" The prince answered, "I will give you all that I possess." Cyrus questioned him still further, saying, "But what will you give me if I set your wife at liberty?" Now the wife of the prince was very good and beautiful, and her husband fondly loved her; and looking upon

her, he replied, "If you will restore my wife to liberty I will lay down my life." Cyrus, won by the true nobility of the sacrifice offered by that devoted man, immediately set them at liberty without any recompense whatever. That evening, when the prince and his wife were rejoicing together over their freedom, he said, "Did you not think Cyrus a very handsome man?" His wife replied, "I did not notice him sufficiently well to tell." The prince exclaimed, "Why, where were your eyes?" She answered, "I had eyes only for him who said he would lay down his life for me."

We are the Lord's because He gave Himself as a ransom for all. He has redeemed us from the chains of destruction, and has delivered us from the prison of spiritual death. Because of this our eyes are totally upon Him. The things which many of this world find great importance in, are dimmed in the estimation of the Christian. Since our allegiance is to Christ, we follow Him in humility and in the fulfillment of our place as Godly men and women. —Wayne Murphey

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OCTOBER 18, 1992

QUALIFICATIONS FOR LEADERSHIP IN THE CHURCH OF GOD

1 Timothy 3:1 This is a true saying, If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work.

2 A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach;

3 Not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous;

4 One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity;

5 (For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?)

6 Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil.

7 Moreover he must have a good report of them which are without; lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.

8 Likewise must the deacons be grave, not double-tongued, not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre;

9 Holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience.

10 And let these also first be proved; then let them use the office of a deacon, being found blameless.

11 Even so must their wives be grave, not slanderers, sober, faithful in all things.

12 Let the deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well.

13 For they that have used the office of a deacon well purchase to themselves a good degree, and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus.

14 These things write I unto thee, hoping to come unto thee shortly:

15 But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.

16 And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.

MEMORY VERSE: And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory. I Timothy 3:16

CENTRAL THOUGHT: To be a God-blessed and successful leader in the Church of God one must have in his heart and life the qualities and character that reflect the image of our Lord Jesus Christ.

WORD DEFINITIONS AND CLARIFICATIONS: *Bishop* (v. 1): The Greek word for bishop is "episcopos" (from which comes the word "episcopal") which means one who superintends or oversees; a watchman. *"A good work"*: the Greek text says "an excellent work". *"Vigilant"* (v. 2): watchful. *"Apt to teach"*: fit to teach. *"No striker"* (v. 3): The word "striker" here in the Greek means one who is quarrelsome and a fighter. *"Not greedy of filthy lucre"*: not a lover of money. *"Ruleth well his own house"* (v. 4): Presides over or manages well his own

household. *"gravity"*: dignity, reverence, and respect. *"Novice"* (v. 6): One newly come to the faith. *"Deacon"* (v. 8): the meaning of the Greek word *"diakonos"* from which comes our word *"deacon"* is one who runs errands or attends; a waiter on tables; one who does the menial duties. The words *"minister"* and *"servant"* can also be applied here. It is a very important place in the church to fill and whoso fills it well with the spirit of Christ will have a great reward. *"Double-tongued"*: One whose word is uncertain and whose testimony cannot be trusted. *"Purchase to themselves a good degree"* (v. 13): acquire for themselves an honourable standing. *"Without controversy"* (v. 16): Clearly revealed beyond all question or doubt. *"Great is the mystery of godliness"*: Great is the secret of piety. Piety is defined as love, reverence, and respect for God.

LESSON BACKGROUND

Any institution whether it be of God or man must have leadership. It must be directed and overseen wisely if it is to succeed. This is true with the Church of God. Christ is the Head, but He uses qualified men and women to work with Him in governing and overseeing the souls of men that He has redeemed. In our lesson today Paul lays down the guidelines for the qualifications of the leaders in the Church. The first is the bishop, or overseer. He has the spiritual aspect of the work of the Lord to work with. He feeds the souls of the people through his preaching, teaching, and counselling. He comforts, encourages, challenges, reproves, instructs, nourishes, sustains, and above all sets a pattern for all to follow. The deacon attends to the less important matters that concern the welfare and happiness of the members, serving in whatever capacity the need might require. Both of these offices have qualifications that are laid out in our lesson. Both offices offer a great reward of spiritual blessing to the faithful soul who will earnestly seek to fulfill these qualifications. —Leslie C. Busbee

QUESTIONS:

1. Is the office of a bishop or deacon something to be desired?

2. Why are the qualifications of these offices so strict and high?
3. How would being a lover of money disqualify a person?
4. Why would having two wives disqualify a person?
5. How can an unruly household hinder a person from effectiveness?
6. Why is it important for a minister's wife to be an example, also?
7. Why is it not wise to give such an office to one newly saved?
8. Does the laity have cause for expecting such a high standard?
9. Are these qualifications only for the ministers?
10. Can you explain how God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, and seen of angels?

ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS

The standards for the qualifications of leaders in the Church of God are for everyone to follow. Every child of God should strive for perfection and excellence. Where does God get His material for the ministry but from among the congregation and its members? If a person will earnestly follow the leadings of the Spirit of the Lord and His Word, faithfully measuring to the standard of the stature of Christ, he or she will be prospective material for the ministry. Satan has deceived some into thinking that being a minister is not a desirable vocation. And they have drawn back from consecration and dedication to service, thus forfeiting their spiritual progress and more often to the destruction of their experience with God. Such is a foolish and needless thing to do. Being a minister for the Lord with His Spirit blessing and leading you is the greatest and most rewarding vocation you can ever follow. The requirements are high and the labor is long and hard, but the retirement and reward for such a life of service is out of this world! To desire to be a worker for the Lord with a selfless and willing spirit is an excellent desire. The Lord needs faithful workers who will bear responsibility and the burden of leadership. People need to forsake the love of money and the strife of tongues and give themselves to the Lord and

let Him qualify them for positions of responsibility and service. Great is the mystery of godliness! It is the greatest thing that ever happened in time. God manifested Himself in human flesh in the person of His beloved Son. Jesus was led by the Spirit in everything He undertook to do. He overcame the temptations of the flesh and bore the image of the Father faithfully. Angels beheld Him and honored and protected Him. They ministered to Him on the mount of temptation and comforted Him in the dark garden of Gethsemane. He was declared before the nations as the eternal Son of God. Men believed on Him, worshipped and followed Him. He was received up into eternal glory, leaving a promise to come again and claim His own for eternal dwellings above. And would a person be so foolish to refuse to have a part of the work of such a glorious enterprise? Oh, if only people could see the blessedness of such a life! They would gladly offer themselves as living sacrifices to the service of the Master for the length of their days!

—Leslie C. Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

"And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness." There are many things concerning the workings of God which man will never be able to explain. The world contains many intelligent men, and machines and techniques of discovery, but God is beyond the realm of them all. "God was manifest in the flesh." Christ came from a heaven which is beyond the penetration of man, and the metamorphosis by which He changed from spirit to human is anything but normal. Jesus' mother was told by a heavenly being, "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the highest shall overshadow thee; therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God." Luke 1:35. That is the closest that we will ever understand concerning what happened, until we experience the reverse change from mortal to immortal. Christ was "justified in the Spirit." Can you imagine a baby being born who didn't throw ugly fits? Yet Christ was born without the carnal nature within Him. We are made to say as Job expressed, "Canst thou by searching find out God? canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection?" Job 11:7.

He was "seen of angels." Even the angels in heaven looked upon this marvelous happening with wonder. Peter wrote that the angels desire to know about these mysteries. I Peter 1:12.

"Preached unto the Gentiles." Here was a surprise to those of Christ's time. Christ was sent to the Jews and they expected Him to be their leader. They were the chosen of God, and to human reasoning it would not have been politically expedient for Him to have anything to do with any other nationality. And considering the hostilities between the Jews and other people, we understand how it was a mystery that He was "believed on in the world."

The crowning mystery is how Christ was "received up into glory." There isn't much to say about this spectacular event, except that indeed, it happened.

God's workings cannot be explained; they are much better experienced. And those who work for God must, by faith, accept these events as being true, and have the mystery of godliness contained in their souls. —Wayne Murphey



OCTOBER 25, 1992

GODLINESS PROFITABLE UNTO ALL THINGS

I Timothy 4:1 Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils;

2 Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron;

3 Forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth.

4 For every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving:

5 For it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer.

6 If thou put the brethren in remembrance of these things, thou shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished up in words of faith and of good doctrine, whereunto thou hast attained.

7 But refuse profane and old wives' fables, and exercise thyself rather unto godliness.

8 For bodily exercise profiteth little: but godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.

9 This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance.

10 For therefore we both labour and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the Saviour of all men, specially of those that believe.

11 These things command and teach.

12 Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity.

13 Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine.

14 Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery.

15 Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy profiting may appear to all.

16 Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee.

MEMORY VERSE: For bodily exercise profiteth little: but godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come. I Timothy 4:8

CENTRAL THOUGHT: We are to be on our guard and keep clear of the seducing spirits in the world around us and exercise ourselves rather unto godliness and holiness, being good examples of what real children of God are.

WORD DEFINITIONS AND CLARIFICATIONS: *Conscience seared with a hot iron*" (v. 2): This means that their sense of right and wrong is so deadened as if it was cauterized by a branding iron. *"Sanctified by the word of God and prayer"* (v. 5): Although in the Old Testament time certain meats were forbidden and counted as unclean, in the New Testament all meats are to be received with thanksgiving and nothing to be refused. Through prayer and the power of the Word of God the meat is cleansed and fit to be eaten. *"Profane and old wives' fables"* (v. 7): silly stories.

LESSON BACKGROUND

Paul uttered a prophecy of something that most surely came to pass. The Roman Catholic Church has fulfilled this prophecy in their forbidding of their priests to be married. There are many other seducing spirits and doctrines of devils raging in our world today. Oh, how we need to exercise ourselves unto godliness and holiness! Paul is giving us good instructions in our lesson today, worthy of our attention and obedience. Everyone needs to have a vision of the pure and holy life God wants us to live. We need to work at it from day to day. Giving attendance to reading, to exhortation, and to teaching is a very important and beneficial exercise. Many people slight this kind of activity. And many have never learned the wise and wholesome art of meditation. We need to take time to think, study, ponder, and thoughtfully consider what God is speaking to us. Taking heed to the true doctrine of Christ and continuing therein will help us save ourselves and those who listen.

—Leslie C. Busbee

QUESTIONS:

1. How did Paul know that some would depart from the faith?
2. How is a person's conscience seared?
3. How are we to feel toward the foods that God has given us?
4. Is prayer at mealtime an important activity?
5. What do words of faith and good doctrine do for us?
6. How can we exercise ourselves unto godliness?
7. What profit is there in being godly?
8. How can we keep from being affected by people who would despise our youth?
9. What profit is there in giving attendance to preaching of the Word?
10. How can we give ourselves wholly to the Word of God?

ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS

There is a way that we can overcome all the perils of this deceived and mixed up world we live in. And that is to be sure

to exercise ourselves unto godliness. Now we hear a lot said today about bodily exercise such as running, walking, swimming, bicycle-riding, etc. And we are sure that such activities are helpful to one's health in many ways. But this is nothing compared to the good that we will receive by exercising ourselves unto godliness. Godliness is profitable in every way. If we will be godly and follow after holiness, we have the promise from God that He will care for our natural health as well as our spiritual health. One way to exercise ourselves unto godliness is to develop and maintain a good constant prayer life in our secret closet. No one gets very far with God without a consistent prayer life.

Prayer is the greatest exercise that one can engage in. It really is. Then there is Bible reading and study. Oh, it is so good to study the scriptures and pray! The Lord sees our eager hearts and minds and His Spirit will respond to our hungry hearts and will bless our souls with inspiration and revelations of His beauty and grace through the avenue of His precious Word. Young people, this is such an important part of your spiritual success and development! If you neglect to exercise yourself unto godliness you will not prosper in the Lord. You will get lean and weak in your soul. Attend every service that you can possibly be in. Never deliberately avoid a one. And when you go, discipline yourself to pay attention and fix your mind on what is being said. Do not indulge in conversation and play during service. Be earnest and sincere. Have your Bible open and follow the message diligently. Take time to be alone with God and meditate on His word and commune with Him. Let this be the number one aim of your life, to live for God. The Lord sees that earnest desire and effort you are making toward Him. He will respond with blessings that will enrich and strengthen your life for eternity. God bless you.

—Leslie C. Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Timothy was a young man, and needed the advice and encouragement which Paul had to give. The time of youth is a very pivotal place in life. It can determine whether a person is a blessing to many, or whether one's influence is marred. Paul

wrote, "Let no man despise thy youth." This doesn't mean that a young person should take an aggressive stand in order to be recognized, but it bears forth the truth that depending on how the youth behaves determines how much he will be respected. It doesn't mean that in order to be held in highest esteem a young person must act like an old person. Everyone likes to see the freshness of youth; the invigorating anticipation of life. It is sad to see a young person withered and dried in spirit, just because of wanting to be counted as an "elder." This doesn't tend toward a happy and fulfilled life. One young person committed suicide and left a note which said, "Died of old age at twenty-one."

One of the first things Paul told Timothy was to realize that there are people and beliefs which are contrary to godliness and wholesome living. Young people should be instructed and brought up to know these type of things. They should be reared so that they are neither naïve nor skeptical concerning things of religion and the church. If they aren't, they will have a hard time becoming established in the things of the Lord, even in later life.

The positive side of Paul's advice was for Timothy to give himself to reading, meditation and sharing with others. Doing these things is acting in a responsible way. Youth is a time when it is easy to be foolish; not living in the realities of life. This is what tends towards profane and old wives' fables.

I might add that what Paul told Timothy is good for everyone; no matter what age they are. Age is not a guarantee to wisdom, and a person never reaches the point where he no longer needs to apply himself to those things that are profitable.

—Wayne Murphey

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NOVEMBER 1, 1992

THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE CHURCH TOWARD WIDOWS

1 Timothy 5:1 Rebuke not an elder, but entreat him as a father; and the younger men as brethren;

2 The elder women as mothers; the younger as sisters, with all purity.

- 3 Honour widows that are widows indeed.
- 4 But if any widow have children or nephews, let them learn first to shew piety at home, and to requite their parents: for that is good and acceptable before God.
- 5 Now she that is a widow indeed, and desolate, trusteth in God, and continueth in supplications and prayers night and day.
- 6 But she that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth.
- 7 And these things give in charge, that they may be blameless.
- 8 But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel.
- 9 Let not a widow be taken into the number under threescore years old, having been the wife of one man,
- 10 Well reported of for good works; if she have brought up children, if she have lodged strangers, if she have washed the saints' feet, if she have relieved the afflicted, if she have diligently followed every good work.
- 11 But the younger widows refuse: for when they have begun to wax wanton against Christ, they will marry;
- 12 Having damnation, because they have cast off their first faith.
- 13 And withal they learn to be idle, wandering about from house to house; and not only idle, but tattlers also and busybodies, speaking things which they ought not.
- 14 I will therefore that the younger women marry, bear children, guide the house, give none occasion to the adversary to speak reproachfully.
- 15 For some are already turned aside after Satan.
- 16 If any man or woman that believeth have widows, let them relieve them, and let not the church be charged; that it may relieve them that are widows indeed.

MEMORYVERSE: Rebuke not an elder, but entreat him as a father; and the younger men as brethren; the elder women as mothers; the younger as sisters, with all purity. I Timothy 5:1, 2.

CENTRAL THOUGHT: God wants His Church to make provisions to care for widows who are widows indeed, who have a good report of faith and good works, and who are desolate and in need of care and support. The children and nephews of widows are to assume the first responsibility for their care.

WORD DEFINITIONS AND CLARIFICATIONS: "*Nephews* (v. 4): The Greek word here not only implies nephews, but also grandchildren or any other descendant. "*To requite their parents*": to render due recompense to their parents. We owe before God care and provision for our parents when they become aged and are unable to care for themselves. "*Widow indeed*" (v. 5): a real widow. "*These things give in charge*" (v. 7): Command and enjoin these things. "*Wax wanton against Christ*" (v. 11): Begins to go after the flesh and the luxury of this present life with no regard to Christ and His will. "*Tattlers and busybodies*" (v. 13): Gossipy talkers and meddlesome run-arounds.

LESSON BACKGROUND

There have always been widows and orphans to care for in the realm of the Church. One of the first problems that the apostles encountered was the care of the widows. Acts 6:1. In our lesson today Paul gives explicit instructions concerning this matter. He makes it very plain that the first party who is responsible for the care and provision of widows are the children and immediate family. It is good and acceptable before God for children to assume the care and support of aged parents who are unable to care for themselves. They took us into their homes when we were unaware of what was going on. They did enough for us the first two years of our lives that we can never repay. Now if there are no immediate family members who can take the responsibility of caring for a widow, then the Church has a responsibility about it. However Paul gives some strong requirements concerning this. Only widows who are really widows will come under the responsibility of the Church. And He gives the stipulations of who are the true widows. This is also to be applied to widowers, men who are

in need of care. The true widow is one who has lived for the Lord and is trusting in God and faithful in prayer. For such a one God has charged the Church the care and support that they need.

—Leslie C. Busbee

QUESTIONS:

1. Why does Paul make a distinction concerning widows indeed?
2. Who is a widow indeed?
3. Who has the first responsibility of caring for the widow?
4. What was the age limit on a widow to be taken in by the Church?
5. What were the requirements of a widow indeed?
6. What usually happens when anyone becomes dissatisfied with Christ?
7. What did Paul recommend that the younger women do?
8. Should a widow be put into a nursing home when her children could keep her in their home?
9. How did Paul look at people who neglected to provide for their own family or household?
10. What causes a person to be indifferent or careless concerning the care of their parents?

ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS

Commandment No. 5 of the Ten Commandments that God gave to Moses in Exodus 20:12 reads: "Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee." This commandment is still in force today. It is only right and proper that we should honor and respect and be ready to support and care for our parents.

When their years bring them to the place where they are no longer able to care for themselves it is the loving duty of a son or daughter to see that they are cared for. If at all possible it is right and best to take them into their own home and family circle. And not only then, but all along the journey of life through the progression of the years there should be an earnest care and love for mother and father shown and

expressed. This is good and well pleasing unto the Lord. Whoso deliberately neglects or mistreats his father or mother is entreating the wrath of Almighty God. Oh, the sad condition across our society! Thousands and thousands of old mothers and fathers languish in nursing homes neglected and forgotten while their children are selfishly indulging in material gain and pleasure. There is coming a recompense day. And how sad that many elderly people are responsible for the way they are being treated because of how they have brought up their children in a Godless atmosphere, neglecting their God-given responsibility to love, cherish, and nourish their children in the admonition of the Lord! God would have the hearts of the fathers and mothers turned back to their children, and the hearts of the children back to their parents. Here is one of the basic needs and causes for trouble in our society. And things will never improve as long as this condition persists. This first commandment was one with a promise, a promise of long life. What can be the outcome of a failure to obey this commandment?

—Leslie C. Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Children taking responsibility for their parents doesn't begin when the parents are 80 and the children 50. Paul said for the children to first learn to shew piety at home. This is a relationship that begins when children are young and at home. The parents must teach the children respect and responsibility. Then it is only natural that the parents will be well cared for in their old age. The things that Paul wrote would be hard sayings to those who hadn't learned these things in their youth.

If widows met the qualifications set forth in order to be supported by the church, there would be very few who would have need of it. Those who raise children and follow after every good work are in effect assuring they will be cared for when they are unable to care for themselves.

Once Napoleon saw certain of his soldiers force off the road a peasant woman carrying a large bundle so that they might pass. He ordered them: "Respect the burden." There may be circumstances in which children will need to take care of parents who haven't been the parents they should be, and

don't meet the qualifications Paul listed. In this case the need must be respected even if the person can't be.

—Wayne Murphey

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NOVEMBER 8, 1992

WHOLESOME WORDS OF GODLY DOCTRINE

1 Timothy 5:17 Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine.

18 For the scripture saith, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn. And, the labourer is worthy of his reward.

19 Against an elder receive not an accusation, but before two or three witnesses.

20 Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear.

21 I charge thee before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect angels, that thou observe these things without preferring one before another, doing nothing by partiality.

22 Lay hands suddenly on no man, neither be partaker of other men's sins: keep thyself pure.

23 Drink no longer water, but use a little wine for thy stomach's sake and thine often infirmities.

24 Some men's sins are open beforehand, going before to judgment; and some men they follow after.

25 Likewise also the good works of some are manifest beforehand; and they that are otherwise cannot be hid.

6:1 Let as many servants as are under the yoke count their own masters worthy of all honour, that the name of God and his doctrine be not blasphemed.

2 And they that have believing masters, let them not despise them, because they are brethren; but rather do them service, because they are faithful and beloved, partakers of the benefit. These things teach and exhort.

3 If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness;

4 He is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about ques-

tions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings.

5 Perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness: from such withdraw thyself.

MEMORY VERSE: Some men's sin are open beforehand, going before to judgment; and some men they follow after. Likewise also the good works of some are manifest beforehand; and they that are otherwise cannot be hid. I Timothy 5:24,25.

CENTRAL THOUGHT: We should be very diligent to consider and weigh every precept of the doctrine of godliness, for in the counsel therein there is safety, peace, and spiritual progress.

WORD DEFINITIONS AND CLARIFICATIONS: "*Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn*" (v. 18): In those olden times grain was threshed by oxen trampling on it on a threshing floor. The ox was not to be muzzled or kept from eating some of the grain that it was threshing. Paul is likening the ox to the ministers of the gospel who are to live of the gospel. (I Corinthians 9:14.) "*Elect angels*" (v. 21): ministers chosen of the Lord to proclaim the message of salvation. "*Lay hands suddenly on no man*" (v. 22): Do not be hasty to join up with or to accuse any man. Ponder the paths of your feet, and let all your ways be established. Prov. 4:26. "*Drink no longer water*" (v. 23): The general sense of the text appears to be thus: No longer drink water alone, but use a little wine for your health's sake. It is a well known fact that a little wine cannot harm a person, but is rather beneficial to the body. It is when people drink wine at an excess without any control or temperance that the harm is done. The frame of the general feeling of godly people is to leave wine alone altogether, and this is the safest thing to do. The apostle's instruction to young Timothy at this point was personal advice, not to be used as basis for doctrine. "*Somemen's sins are open beforehand*" (v. 24): Better is it to confess and open our sins now and send them on to the judgment of God than to hide them and have them follow us to the final judgment. "*Dotting about questions and strifes of*

words" (v. 6:4): hankering after and harping on things of no value or importance. "*Evil surmisings*": wicked suspicions.

LESSON BACKGROUND

Paul, in our lesson today, is giving warnings and instructions concerning our relationship with others. He speaks first of the elders. Those who labour in the word of God and the doctrines of the gospel and whose lives back up their preaching are to be held in respect and honour by the children of God. There is a tendency to lightly esteem the ministers because they are not engaged in material efforts, but those whose souls are being fed by the servants of the Lord will want to honour them by supporting them and seeing that their needs are met. He quotes from Deut. 25:4 when he says, "Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn. The saying, "The labourer is worthy of his reward (or hire)" finds its basis in Deut. 24:14,15 where the Lord instructed those who hired people to work for them to pay them that very day and not let the sun go down or wait until the morning. Jesus, when he sent out the seventy by twos to go before his face, told them to remain in whatever house they were received and eat what was given, saying, "For the labourer is worthy of his hire." Each mandate of counsel given here is for our good to consider and remember. The doctrine according to godliness being backed by the wholesome words of the Lord Jesus is certainly worthy of our highest esteem and faithful obedience.

—Leslie C. Busbee

QUESTIONS:

1. Why is a faithful servant of God who labours in the word and doctrine worthy of such honour?
2. How can muzzling the ox be relative to our dealings with the ministers of the gospel?
3. Why should we be very hesitant about receiving an accusation against an elder who has been faithful in the service of the Lord?
4. Would we need the Lord's help and guidance in rebuking someone before others?

5. What could happen if you would, hastily and without serious thought, strike another person with accusation or criticism?

6. What are some of the things that we must do to keep ourselves pure?

7. How can a person open up their sins beforehand and send them on to the judgment?

8. What will happen to the person who hides their sins and refuses to open them up beforehand?

9. What kind of person is it who will not consent to the wholesome words of the doctrine according to godliness?

10. Why would a person think that gain is godliness?

ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS

The doctrine which is according to godliness and the fear of God is not a popular thing. But it is the pathway to life everlasting. To be a real Christian one must be held together by strong convictions and standards that will keep him from being polluted by the evils around him. Beware, young people, of the loose and careless way of life that most people are following! It is a slippery and a dangerous path that heads downward to hell. Be careful of your attitudes toward the leaders of God's people, the elders who preach and teach the Word of life. Many people have erred and gotten into serious trouble with the Lord because of being critical and disrespectful toward the servant of the Lord. Be careful about accepting accusations against a faithful minister who has been blessed of the Lord. Only before two or three witnesses should a charge be considered. There is a word that can be used along with our lesson today, and it is a word that needs to be employed more and more. And that word is "caution". The Bible has many cautions. We are dealing with the Almighty God and we need to be careful. We are dealing with our precious souls, and great caution should be employed. Sin, life, death, judgment, holiness, godliness, heaven, hell, and other serious Biblical terms should be handled with the greatest of care. Caution: We have but one life that determines our eternal destiny. Handle with care!

—Leslie C. Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

"Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine. For the scripture saith, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn. And, the labourer is worthy of his reward." I Tim. 5:17, 18.

"Some want to leave out considerations for the minister. He is expected to visit the sick, be on call twenty-four hours a day, have the message, pray, keep the prayer-meeting going, etc., yet when it comes to money 'the Lord will take care of him, if he is God's minister,' some will conclude. Is this Bible teaching? 'They that preach the gospel shall live of the gospel.' A 'living' is not merely what will keep a man himself from want. If he is an all-around man, he will have a wife and probably children. They are all to 'live' by the gospel, not just struggle to live. The flock is to see that they are cared for. Many times a minister is called to come and pray for someone who lives many miles from his home, but is not given enough to pay for his gasoline. Yes, the minister will go and will just look to the Lord to supply. He will not complain or grumble, yet are the laity doing their duty? God knows if a person can't afford to give the minister any money. If he can't, that is acceptable unto the Lord and the Lord will take care of the minister. This has to be done many times. But if a person can and won't, then I am afraid that person will be in trouble with the Lord.

"Because we lived by the gospel, one person said to me, when I hesitated to let them do something for me, that I ought to be used to receiving because I had lived on charity most of my life. Now I didn't feel that way, because my father worked in the gospel and we children worked also. So I didn't feel that it was charity. We worked for what we received. The minister works and deserves to be supported."

—Marie Miles (Written in 1975.)



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NOVEMBER 15, 1992

**FLEEING FROM COVETOUSNESS
TOWARD ETERNAL RICHES**

1 Timothy 6:6 But godliness with contentment is great gain.

7 For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out.

8 And having food and raiment let us be therewith content.

9 But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition.

10 For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.

11 But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, and meekness.

12 Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and has professed a good profession before many witnesses.

13 I give thee charge in the sight of God, who quickeneth all things, and before Christ Jesus, who before Pontius Pilate witnessed a good confession;

14 That thou keep this commandment without spot, unrebukeable, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ:

15 Which in his times he shall shew, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords;

16 Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honour and power everlasting. Amen.

17 Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy;

18 That they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate;

19 Laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life.

20 O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust,

avoiding profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so called:

21 Which some professing have erred concerning the faith. Grace be with thee. Amen.

MEMORY VERSE: For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows. I Timothy 6:10.

CENTRAL THOUGHT: We are to deny ungodliness and the love of money which so many around us are seeking after, and follow after those spiritual treasures that will enable us to lay hold on eternal life in that last great day.

WORD DEFINITIONS AND CLARIFICATIONS: "*Potentate*" (v. 15): Mighty ruler of great authority. "*Willing to communicate*" (v. 18): Being liberal and ready to help others. Verses 20 and 21 in the Greek text read: "O Timothy, guard thou the trust, avoiding the profane empty sounds and oppositions of the falsely named knowledge; which some having professed, concerning faith missed the mark."

LESSON BACKGROUND

Today we will complete our study of the first epistle of Paul to Timothy. He completes his letter with warnings concerning the love of money, pointing us to richer treasures in that blessed world to come. The love of money being the root of all evil is probably the biggest temptation that presents itself to a person as they travel through this world. Many have fallen prey to its snare causing them to lose their faith and hold on God and in the end their precious souls as well. Covetousness, the love of money, is a captivating and blinding power that bewitches unsuspecting souls. It truly is something we need to be warned against. The benefit that money might provide ends abruptly at the hour of death and affords no hope thereafter.

To lay hold of eternal life in Christ and to follow after those things that will be a good foundation for our eternal dwelling is the most profitable vocation we can enter.

—Leslie C. Busbee

QUESTIONS:

1. What is the real gain and why?
2. What is there about earthly riches that make it a trap or snare?
3. Is there any evil in this world that is not somehow influenced by the love of money?
4. Can a person prosper spiritually who is seeking to be rich in this world?
5. What are we to do concerning this love of money?
6. What are the things that we would do most well to see after?
7. Where will all the material wealth be when the King of kings and Lord of lords appears to judge this wicked world?
8. If we are wealthy in this world what must we do?
9. How can we lay up in store for ourselves a good foundation so that we can lay hold on eternal life?
10. What danger is there in knowledge that is not backed by the Word and the Spirit of God?

ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS

I am thinking of a scene in the Pilgrim's Progress that shows a poor beggarly dressed man raking and sifting in sticks, straws, and muck. His head is bowed as he looks intently into the filth of the ground he grovels in.

But right above him stands one with a celestial crown shining so beautifully. It looks as though if he would but lift up his head the crown would be on his head. But he pays no mind to the heavenly offer. He just continues to exercise himself with the muck rake. How true this is with many of us today! Material things have a way of taking possession of our hearts and minds. We are so intent upon earthly gain, prosperity, and security that we forget the eternal values. We seem not to realize that these fleeting things of earth will soon pass away and we will pass away with them. Many today are caught in the snare of earthly love. Problems mount up, disappointments come, and sorrows increase. But it seems they never learn. They keep plugging away at that old phantom called Success. Some seem to make a headway for a time and

then after awhile they begin to fall. Death comes, life goes. It repeats the tale that so often has been told. And all this is done right in the presence of the high calling and invitation of God in Christ Jesus! He offers us the true riches. He pledges to supply our earthly needs as well. But He bids us to seek for the things that will help us to lay hold on eternal life, namely, righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, and meekness. We are to seek after, follow, and pursue these things that they be a vital part of our lives. These are the things that will enable us to lay hold of life eternal with Jesus in the end. Oh, are they not worth while? Let us heed the counsel of our beloved Paul that he gave to young Timothy. Let us join them in that world to come where we can enjoy the true riches forever and ever.

—Leslie C. Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

A person makes great strides in this life when they learn how to use money, and not let money use them. The absolutely only way to be content in life is to be able to put worldly goods in their proper perspective. Sometimes it takes the facing of death to do so. Once there was a man on his death-bed who had a rich present sent to him by someone from another country. "Alas!" said he, looking coldly upon it, "This is a mighty fine thing here in this country; but I am just going to a country where it will be of no service to me." It is a pity that so many seem to spend all of their healthy years before this truth dawns upon them. But I like the way one king in a story put it. Walking out one morning, he met a lad at the stable-door, and asked him, "Well boy, what do you do? What do they pay you?" "I help in the stable," replied the lad; "but I have nothing except victuals and clothes." "Be content," replied the king, "I have no more. All that the richest possess beyond food, raiment, and habitation, they have the keeping of, or the disposing of, not the present enjoyment of."

In our lesson Paul warned against covetousness. This is a trait that is easier to battle against if clearly defined. I like what Bro. Clifford Wilson wrote about covetousness one time. "Somehow, covetousness is nearly always associated with money, but that is only a minor factor, and, we might add, one

of the less harmful. If my coveting of money causes me to fail to contribute to the work of the Lord as I should, actually I am hurt most, for the work of the Lord will go on anyway. But suppose I fail to coveting power or preeminence in the work of the Lord. No generous consideration of others exists where covetousness dwells, so I begin to run my fellow-laborer down and belittle his efforts in an effort to enhance my own. I become willing to dictate direction and force procedure. . . . Such business genders strife and confusion among the people, all because of covetousness." —Wayne Murphey



NOVEMBER 22, 1992

**THE SPIRIT OF POWER, OF LOVE, AND OF A
SOUND MIND**

II Timothy 1:1 Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, according to the promise of life which is in Christ Jesus,

2 To Timothy, my dearly beloved son: Grace, mercy, and peace, from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.

3 I thank God, whom I serve from my forefathers with pure conscience, that without ceasing I have remembrance of thee in my prayers night and day;

4 Greatly desiring to see thee, being mindful of thy tears, that I may be filled with joy;

5 When I call to remembrance the unfeigned faith that is in thee, which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois, and thy mother Eunice; and I am persuaded that in thee also.

6 Wherefore I put thee in remembrance that thou stir up the gift of God, which is in thee by the putting on of my hands.

7 For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.

8 Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God;

9 Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began,

10 But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel:

11 Whereunto I am appointed a preacher, and an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles.

12 For the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.

13 Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus.

14 That good thing which was committed unto thee keep by the Holy Ghost which dwelleth in us.

16 The Lord give mercy unto the house of Onesiphorus; for he oft refreshed me, and was not ashamed of my chain:

17 But, when he was in Rome, he sought me out very diligently, and found me.

18 The Lord grant unto him that he may find mercy of the Lord in that day: and in how many things he ministered unto me at Ephesus, thou knowest very well.

MEMORY VERSE: Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God. II Timothy 1:8.

CENTRAL THOUGHT: We need to be strong for Christ's sake and the gospel, not being ashamed of the testimony of the Lord before the world, and willing to suffer anything that He wills to bring us through.

WORD DEFINITIONS AND CLARIFICATIONS: "*Pure conscience*" (v. 3): the word conscience refers to the moral consciousness or awareness, the faculty by which we know right from wrong. A pure conscience means a clear and unoffended conscience, a way of sincerity and earnestness toward God that kept his heart tender and impressionable concerning what pleased the Lord. "*Unfeigned faith*" (v. 5): true or genuine faith. "*Stir up the gift of God*" (v. 6): Kindle up the free gift of God, the calling and Holy Spirit working by fervent prayer, meditation, and exercise. "*By the putting on of my*

hands." The laying on of hands of the senior ministry in conjunction with the anointing of the Holy Spirit is a means of extending the great work of God into qualified and consecrated vessels. *"Be thou partaker"* (v. 8): Be a partner, or participate in the sufferings that accompany the work of God. *"Abolished death"* (v. 10): rendered death powerless. *"He is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day"* (v. 12): The Greek text renders this: "He is powerful to guard the trust of me until that day." *"That he might find mercy of the Lord in that day"* (v. 18): In that great day when the Lord appears in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that refuse to obey His gospel we want to find mercy in the Lord to escape the awful judgments of the Lord and be saved eternally.

LESSON BACKGROUND

This second epistle of Paul to Timothy is evidently written from Rome after Paul had been imprisoned the second time. He went, according to tradition, from this imprisonment to martyrdom. The tender, loving, and fervent spirit of the beloved and aged apostle is felt in this moving letter to his dearly beloved son in the gospel. His expression of faith in the Lord and love for His work is clearly seen. Notice he labels it all the holy calling of the Lord, not according to our works, but according to God's own purpose and grace willed to us in Christ before the world was created. Paul was not ashamed because of his sufferings, because He was persuaded of Christ as his Friend keeping his sacred trust to save Him from the wrath of God that would be poured out upon the world in that last great day. We have included these last three verses of this first chapter because it tells of a brother who was so gracious to Paul through the years and during his imprisonment at Rome. Onesiphorus and his household often refreshed and relieved Paul and sought him out eagerly in Rome and found him to minister to him. Note what Paul said concerning this brother finding mercy of the Lord in that day, in that same day that Paul was living for. This is such a serious thought! We will all be standing before the Lord in that day! Let us live as Paul lived, and be ready to meet the Lord in that day of all days.

—Leslie C. Busbee

QUESTIONS:

1. Is keeping a conscience clear and void of offense important? Why?
2. What value are tears in the Christian life and ministry?
3. What was communicated from grandmother Lois to her offspring?
4. How are we to stir up the gift of God that He has given us?
5. What kind of spirit does God want us to have?
6. What is God faithful to give in the time of afflictions?
7. Do we prosper spiritually when we draw back from adversity in the work of the Lord?
8. What was Paul assured that his life and activities were part of?
9. What did Paul have committed unto Christ concerning that day?
10. What did Paul desire concerning Onesiphorus?

ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS

Paul was a prisoner at Rome. He was soon to come to the end of his pilgrim journey. He had a deep satisfaction that he had lived for the Lord Jesus. We have the loving and tender words that he wrote to young Timothy. How dear this young brother was to him! Young people, can you not see what a blessing your life could be by being consecrated and all-out for the Lord! As you live carefully and prayerfully before God and your fellowman there will be a wave of influence for the comfort and encouragement of others. So sad it is that so many young people live for money and pleasure and the passions of flesh! Such living does not bring forth fruit for the Lord, and it does not bring happiness nor satisfaction neither. But, oh, for a life of fervency in the Spirit and service for the Master! The years will pass so swiftly. They did for Paul. The time will soon come for you to take your journey out into the great beyond. And the life that you live for Jesus will be your great anchor as you face the surging billows of death. The Lord saves us for a purpose, His purpose. Our own works are useless and vain. We need to get yoked up with the Lord, and let Him work His works in us.

Let us be brave and strong for the Lord! God does not give us a spirit of fear and timidity. He gives us a spirit of courage and comfort and strength. There are things to suffer, there is great work to do. Do not draw back from what reproach and shame that you will bear in being identified with holiness and purity and godliness. Embrace it and love it forever! It is your safeguard to eternal mansions in the sky! There is a great day coming when the Lord will call this world to judgment. We will all be there. Oh, let us commit to Christ the safe keeping of our souls and live for Him through this short life! He will be there to claim us as His special jewels and save us from the wrath of the wicked. Oh, it will be worth it all to find mercy of the Lord in that day!

—Leslie C. Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

"There are many good men and women in the Bible about whom we would like to know more. One of these is honest Onesiphorus. He belonged to that guild who are unfortunately too scarce; he was a friend in need.

"He was a man who lived above appearances; or, rather, he looked at outside appearances in the true light. He knew the image and superscription of Jesus when stamped on a soul, and honored it for Jesus's sake. How tenderly the old prisoner, Paul, remembered him! He says that Onesiphorus 'oft refreshed him.' It was like a cup of cold water to see the Ephesian brother's face, and to have a grasp of his hand. Probably Onesiphorus sought Paul out as soon as he came to Rome. He finds him in the clutch of Nero's guards. The timid have turned their backs on him, and left him in the lion's paw. There he is; Nero's captive, but Christ's freeman! There is an iron on that arm that was stretched out over the listening multitude on Mars Hill; that arm that shook off the viper into the fire at Melita; that arm which had written so many an epistle inspired of heaven. The old weather-beaten body was very likely in a cell.

"I love to think of the true-hearted Ephesian as coming to that den. All Nero's imperial court are not of as much account to him as that old man with a chain on his wrist. He is 'not ashamed' of that chain.

"There is a lesson in this story of fidelity, which is worthy of study and imitation in our times. Oh for more like unto Onesiphorus in our Churches! Oh for more of that brotherly sympathy which rates men rather from their principles than their social position. Paul's poverty and unpopularity made him all the dearer to his friend in need." —Author Unknown



NOVEMBER 29, 1992

BEING A GOOD SOLDIER OF JESUS CHRIST

II Timothy 2:1 Thou therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.

2 And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.

3 Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.

4 No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier.

5 And if a man also strive for masteries, yet is he not crowned, except he strive lawfully.

6 The husbandman that laboureth must be first partaker of the fruits.

7 Consider what I say; and the Lord give thee understanding in all things.

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

9 Wherein I suffer trouble, as an evildoer, even unto bonds; but the word of God is not bound.

10 Therefore I endure all things for the elect's sakes, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory.

11 It is a faithful saying: For if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him:

12 If we suffer, we shall also reign with him: if we deny him, he also will deny us:

13 If we believe not, yet he abideth faithful: he cannot deny himself.

14 Of these things put them in remembrance, charging them before the Lord that they strive not about words of no profit, but to the subverting of the hearers.

MEMORY VERSE: No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier. II Tim. 2:4.

CENTRAL THOUGHT: To be a good soldier of Jesus Christ, one must be strong in spirit to endure hard battles and difficulties, not being entangled with the fleeting things of this natural life, striving and labouring according to the leadings of the Lord, and always living up to what we present to others.

WORD DEFINITIONS AND CLARIFICATIONS: "Hardness" (v. 3): hardship and evil. V. 4 in the Greek text is good: "No one serving as a soldier involves himself with the occupations of life so that the one having enlisted him he may please." V. 5 is rendered: "It behooves the toiling husbandman first of the fruits to partake." V. 9: "In which I suffer evil, even unto chains, as an evil doer, but the word of God is not chained."

LESSON BACKGROUND

We are continuing Paul's second epistle to Timothy. Because we are being a partaker of the grace of Christ and the eternal purpose of God from the beginning, we must be strong soldiers of the cross facing a hostile world full of evil powers that seek to withstand us. There are battles to fight and hard places to endure. We must beware of the tangling snares that are thick around us. Snares of debt and financial pits of woe we must avoid. The organizations and institutions of men we must stay out of. False doctrines and churches are every where. They are snares. We must keep straight out and clear for the Lord and His truth. We must strive, but we must strive lawfully. Those who strive in the big games of the world have to go by the rules. We who strive for the eternal prize must follow the law of Christ. And we must never put the word of God on others unless we are measured up to it first. Paul gave these instructions and then urged us to consider, weigh up, and

ponder what he said. He knew that the Lord alone could give understanding. But understanding comes only to those who will reflect and weigh up the words of counsel.

—Leslie C. Busbee

QUESTIONS:

1. Can the Lord use a fearful person who is always afraid of stepping forth for Him?
2. What kind of men need to be entrusted with the gospel?
3. Can a person be a good soldier laden down with distractions?
4. What are some of the things that we must stay clear of if we want to be soldiers for Jesus?
5. Will there be people who were zealous and active in religious work who will be rejected in that day?
6. Can our preaching carry much weight if we are not measured up to the word of God?
7. Will the Lord give us understanding if we do not take time to weigh up and consider His word?
8. What benefit is it to us that Jesus Christ was raised from the dead?
9. What was Paul glad of even though he was in bonds and chains?
10. What will be our lot if we partake of Christ's death and suffer with Him?

ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS

I remember a time in my life when I was faced with a great responsibility that I could hardly face up to. It just seemed so great, so heavy, so hard. I had worked with an older minister couple for some time and had enjoyed working with them. But the time had come when on account of age and affliction they were stepping down and leaving. They were turning it over to me to carry on in their stead. Oh, how poor and needy and unable I felt! It weighed on my heart so heavily! One evening I was lying down resting, but my mind was on the great thing I was facing. All of a sudden the scriptures began to pour into my mind from places where the Lord said, "Be strong!" Oh, how it encouraged me and made me to know that He wanted

me to take hold of faith and strength to face what He was giving me! It was a great lesson to me, too. I've thought about it many times. The Lord wants us to be strong, not strong in our own selves, but strong in the confidence of Him and what He can do through us. God cannot use a fearful person who will not step forth for him. Whoever is of a fearful heart needs to hear the message and take hold of strength anew. There are many hard things to be encountered along the way of life. It is not going to be a bed of roses. He who would take the prize must fight the giants who will meet him. Only those who are willing to suffer with Christ will reign with Christ. It is one thing to start out in the Christian life, and it is quite another thing to finish it up with victory. So let us all be strong in faith, fearing not what may come against us. We have a mighty Captain who is leading us on to certain victory. He arose from the dead triumphant in eternal glory. He bids us follow Him through the garden and the tomb unto life eternal! —Leslie C. Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Undoubtedly there were times during Paul's imprisonment when his bonds were very depressing to him. He was accustomed to being up and about, visiting the different churches and encouraging and inspiring the saints. Now what could he do? His encouragement was that the Word of God could not be bound. And so his letters to the churches prove that yet today. He was imprisoned in order to keep him from preaching the Gospel, yet because of the imprisonment, his testimony of the Gospel is in the homes of millions, nineteen hundred years later.

The reason the Word of God cannot be suppressed is because it contains the good news of freedom. The concept and desire to be free cannot be eradicated from the hearts of men and women, because they were created to be free. This is well illustrated by the political changes the world has recently gone through from Communism to Democracy. Man's soul was also fashioned to be free, and it will always seek for that spiritual liberty. Many mighty men of this world have zealously endeavored to stamp out the news of Christ's death and resurrection, beginning with Pilate, who admonished the soldiers that were

at the tomb. Yet through the Scriptures, and from the lips and hearts of Christians today, freedom still rings forth.

It is told that once a girl lost her canary bird. Her father, who was mayor of the town, gave strict orders that the gates of the city be shut so that the creature might not escape. However, the bird was soon over the hills and far away, despite the locking of the gates. It is just as inconceivable that the gospel can be bound as it was that the gates would confine the canary. This eternal truth should be an encouragement to all of us in being good soldiers for Jesus Christ, and facing the problems which we experience. Victory is on the side of the believer.

—Wayne Murphey

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DECEMBER 6, 1992

SHOWING OURSELVES APPROVED UNTO GOD

II Timothy 2:15 Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

16 But shun profane and vain babblings: for they will increase unto more ungodliness.

17 And their word will eat as doth a canker: of whom is Hymenaeus and Philetus;

18 Who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some.

19 Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, Let everyone that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.

20 But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some to honour, and some to dishonour.

21 If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work.

22 Flee also youthful lusts: but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart.

23 But foolish and unlearned questions avoid, knowing that they do gender strifes.

24 And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient,

25 In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth;

26 And that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will.

MEMORY VERSE: If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work. II Timothy 2:21.

CENTRAL THOUGHT: If we will purge ourselves from every ungodly power and influence of this world and consecrate ourselves wholly to the Lord and His work we can be a vessel unto honour and useful for Him.

WORD DEFINITIONS AND CLARIFICATIONS: V. 15: The Greek text reads: "Be thou diligent to present thyself approved to God, a workman unashamed, cutting straight the word of the truth." "*Profane and vain babblings*" (v. 16): wicked empty soundings; fruitless discussions. "*Their word will eat as doth a canker*" (v. 17): The Greek says, "Their word will have pasture like a gangrene sore." "*Seal*" (v. 19): This word in the Greek means a stamp or insignia guarding against change or misapplication, and also impressed as a mark of privacy or genuineness. We will notice that this is a double seal, one part upon God, "The Lord knoweth, or approveth, them that are his", and one part upon His own, "Let every one that nameth the name of the Lord depart from iniquity." V. 21: The Greek text is good: "If therefore anyone should thoroughly cleanse himself from these, he will be a vessel for honour, having been cleansed (sanctified or made holy), and of good use to the master, having been prepared for every good work." "*unlearned questions*" (v. 23): questions whose answers are not instructive or beneficial. V. 24,25 is expressed in the Greek text thus: "But it behooves the servant of the Lord not to quarrel, but to be gentle to all, fit to teach, enduring evil, in meekness admonishing those

being opposed; perhaps God may give to them a change of mind to a knowledge of truth."

LESSON BACKGROUND

Knowing that there are all kinds of evil influences and powers of darkness and error all around us in this world, the apostle encourages and challenges us to diligently pursue God's way so that we can stand approved of Him and be fit for His sacred use. There are those whose words (despite their outward appearance and profession of piety) will eat out the vitality of faith, hope and love in Christ if we listen to them. There are many fantastic and extreme ideas promoted on the scriptures. These wild-headed proponents are very active and zealous in putting forth their reasonings. We have to be on guard against them. Not every one who professes to be godly is worthy of our trust and confidence. There are many things that even if they were proven to be right are not beneficial to godliness. He likens the work of God and the scope of humanity to a great house wherein are many different kinds of vessels. There are the bowls and pans used in the preparation of foods. These must be clean and kept clean. Then there is the trash can, the slop bucket, the grease trap, the dust pan. These are important vessels but they are not honourable vessels like the vessels used for food. What kind of vessel do we want to be? If we want to be used to administer the holy food for the souls of men, we must purge ourselves from all iniquity and be clean for the Lord. But if we are unwilling to cleanse ourselves thus, we may find ourselves as a trash depository. It is up to us what kind of vessel we are going to be.

— Leslie C. Busbee

QUESTIONS:

1. Are there many dangers in the world that threaten our success?
2. Whose approval should we seek above all to have?
3. Is it possible for a person to mis-apply the scriptures?
4. What has God done to insure safety for His foundation?
5. Can all the vain babblings of men threaten the seal of God? Why?

6. What are vessels to honour usually used to convey?
7. How can we be sure that we will be a vessel unto honor for Christ?
8. What are some of the youthful lusts we are to flee?
9. What kind of attitude and spirit are we to maintain toward souls?
10. Who is it that gives repentance to a person to cause them to change?

ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS

A person will not be long seeking to please God and work for Him when he or she will run up against the powers of error and false doctrine. A brother picked up a large man hitchhiking one day. This man informed him that God the Father and His Son fell out and that the Son was kicked out of heaven into the earth, and that he was that Son. The brother who had picked him up said that he felt the power of the devil so strong in that man that for several days he had a fight with the devil. God finally gave him the victory.

When I was just getting started in the work of the Lord I went to visit a man that I had heard about who might be interested in the truth. I found an awful spirit of false doctrine. Oh, how talkative he was! He denied the Holy Trinity, the Godhead of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. He said that they were all one person and that one person was Christ. Oh, how he misused the scriptures! At a campmeeting once I noticed a man that seemed to be an humble sweet spirited man, and how he dismissed the service one day with such a fervent prayer. That man caught me outside afterward and informed me that the scriptures teach that the devil was a man! I answered that the devil worked in men. But this man insisted that the devil was a man. He later even got up publicly and tried to put over his ideas. We have people walking the streets and going from house to house energetically promoting their weird and fanatical doctrines. False teachings cover our planet like a cloud. We are not to be unkind or impatient with such. In meekness uphold the scriptures. We need to study the Word and spend much time in prayer seeking to know the truth. But it is God who will enlighten. We cannot change

people, but God can work with hearts. Let us be encouraged and determined to follow after the Lord in all things and keep ourselves pure and holy so that He can use us as vessels unto honour for His cause.

—Leslie C. Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

In a previous lesson we studied where Paul wrote Timothy that "God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind." II Tim. 1:7. This is important to us so that we will be able to avoid foolish and unlearned questions as Paul wrote in today's lesson. There are some things which we will never understand until we pass from this world into the celestial realm, yet some will argue these irrelevancies to the point of strife.

There is an ancient Turkish story which relates the experience of a certain man who went to a wise man and proposed three questions. First, "Why do they say God is omnipresent? I do not see Him in any place; show me where He is." Second, "Why is man punished for his crimes, since whatever he does proceeds from God? Man has no free will, for he cannot do anything contrary to the will of God; and if he had power he would do everything for his own good." Third, "How can God punish Satan in hell fire, since he is formed of that element; and what impression can fire make on itself?" The wise man took up a large clod of earth, and struck him on the head with it. The man went to an acquaintance and said, "I proposed three questions to a certain wise man, who threw a clod of earth at my head and made my head ache." The acquaintance, having sent for the wise man, asked, "Why did you throw a clod of earth at his head, instead of answering his questions?" The wise man replied, "The clod of earth was an answer to his speech. He says he had a pain in his head; let him show me the pain, and I will make God visible to him. And why does he exhibit a complaint against me? Whatever I did was the act of God; I did not strike him without the will of God. What power do I possess? And as he is compounded of earth, how can he suffer pain from that element?" This was answering the fool according to his folly.

—Wayne Murphey



DECEMBER 13, 1992

STANDING ON GOD'S WORD IN PERILOUS TIMES

1 Timothy 3:1 This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come.

2 For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy,

3 Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good,

4 Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God;

5 Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away.

6 For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts,

7 Everlearning, and neverable to come to the knowledge of the truth.

8 Now as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith.

9 But they shall proceed no further: for their folly shall be manifest unto all men, as theirs also was.

10 But thou hast fully known my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, charity, patience,

11 Persecutions, afflictions, which came unto me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra; what persecutions I endured: but out of them all the Lord delivered me.

12 Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.

13 But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived.

14 But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou has learned them;

15 And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.

16 All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is

profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:

17 That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

MEMORY VERSE: All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works. II Timothy 3:16,17.

CENTRAL THOUGHT: Regardless of how perilous the times may be in these last days, we must hold to the truth of the Bible and let the Holy Scriptures make us wise unto salvation by means of the faith which is in Christ Jesus.

WORD DEFINITIONS AND CLARIFICATIONS: "*Perilous times*" (v. 1): Times that will reduce our strength; dangerous and difficult. "*blasphemers*" (v. 2): People who speak vulgarly, abusively, and indecently against God. "*without natural affection*" (v. 3): hard-hearted toward kindred. "*trucebreakers*": people without peace or reconciliation. "*incontinent*": without self-control. "*traitors*" (v. 4): betrayers, people who will not be true to commitments and friendship. "*heady*": one who rushes headlong without counsel or wisdom. "*highminded*": puffed up, inflated with self conceit. "*silly women laden with sins*" (v. 6): foolish women who are piled up and loaded with sin. "*Jannes and Jambres*" (v. 8): These were the Egyptian magicians who stood up against Moses. "*reprobate*": disapproved or unqualified. "*seducers*" (v. 13): imposters, deceptive phonies.

LESSON BACKGROUND

We are continuing our study of the second epistle of Paul to his son in the gospel, Timothy. In our lesson today we have warnings that we need to take to us personally, for we are truly in the last of the last days. People are surely living up to this prophecy. But Paul appeals to young Timothy to hold fast to the faith that he has gained in the Lord Jesus, referring to the fact that from a child he had been taught the sacred scrip-

tures. We today who have received light from heaven through the Holy Bible can rejoice for this, too. And we need to continue in these things, and be assured that they are true and afford great eternal gain.

—Leslie C. Busbee

QUESTIONS:

1. What kind of perils or dangers are we facing in these last days?
2. Is there any danger of us being affected by the way the people of the world are?
3. What can we do to keep from being affected by them?
4. What can make us wise unto salvation?
5. What are the holy scriptures profitable to us for?
6. How can we become acquainted with the holy scriptures and what they teach?
7. What makes people neglect to read and study the Bible?
8. What else must we do along with reading and studying the Bible?
9. Is God going to hold us responsible for what He has spoken in the Word?
10. How can we safeguard our souls from the perils of false doctrine?

ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS

It is a great blessing to be acquainted with true saints of God who have lived the life of godliness and faith before us. Those who have taught us the word of God and have manifested the spirit of Christ are precious treasures to our souls. They help hold us from being moved by the enemy and other influences that are not right. We need to be careful to keep a respectful attitude toward the older ministers and not receive accusations against them unless it is well founded by two or three witnesses. And we need to guard against the enemy trying to make us feel that they are offending us if the older ministers try to counsel or to instruct us. That is where many have slipped off the track spiritually. They get to the place where they will not receive instruction. Let us continue in the

things which we have learned, being assured of the faithfulness and humility of those dear brethren who have taught them to us. I heard about one young minister who met with a false doctrine in the congregation. This doctrine taught that if the father and mother were both saved and sanctified, then their children would be born with no sin principle, sanctified from birth. The teaching bore a great amount of influence and pressure and human reasoning with it. But while seeking the Lord earnestly in prayer the young minister thought of the scripture which is verse 14 of our lesson. "Continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them." There are so many evil and treacherous spirits loose in the world. They press in on us and try to find a place to work. Oh, let us be strong and stand for the truth as it has been revealed to His saints! Let us be faithful to search the scriptures and pray the Holy Spirit to guide us through this life. The Lord will lead us aright and keep us in the way that leads to heaven if we will seek earnestly to follow Him with all of our hearts. —Leslie C. Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

I am convinced there is a vast storehouse of knowledge in the Bible that has not been tapped. Generally it is hard times and problems that cause a person to flee to the Scriptures, looking for refuge, sustenance, instruction and strength. In this third chapter of Timothy, Paul foretells that in the last days the ungodly will flourish in their evil, thereby bringing persecution upon the godly. Perhaps this is the catalyst that will cause the light of understanding to be increased in God's people at this particular time of providential events. (Zech. 14:7).

The Bible holds the answer to all the ills of the world; whether they be spiritual, social, financial or psychological. The sooner in a person's life that the scriptures are relied upon, the earlier he will find peace and the more useful to God he can be. Paul reminded Timothy that he had known the Holy Scriptures from a child. Childhood also qualifies as a perilous time. One lady, in talking on the subject of juvenile education, said, "Well, as for myself, I have made up my mind never to put

my child under religious instruction until he has arrived at years of discretion." The principle party to whom she was speaking, replied, "If you neglect your child all that time, the devil will not."

—Wayne Murphey

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DECEMBER 20, 1992

**THE FINAL TESTIMONY OF A GALLANT
CHRISTIAN SOLDIER**

II Timothy 4:1 I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom;

2 Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine.

3 For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears;

4 And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.

5 But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry.

6 For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand.

7 I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith.

8 Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.

9 Do thy diligence to come shortly unto me:

10 For Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world, and is departed unto Thessalonica, Crescens to Galatia, Titus unto Dalmatia.

11 Only Luke is with me. Take Mark, and bring him with thee: for he is profitable to me for the ministry.

12 And Tychicus have I sent to Ephesus.

13 The cloak that I left at Troas with Carpus, when thou comest, bring with thee, and the books, but especially the parchments.

14 Alexander the coppersmith did me much evil: the Lord reward him according to his works:

15 Of whom be thou ware also; for he hath greatly withstood our words.

16 At my first answer no man stood with me, but all men forsook me: I pray God that it may not be laid to their charge.

17 Notwithstanding the Lord stood with me, and strengthened me; that by me the preaching might be fully known, and that all the Gentiles might hear: and I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion.

18 And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom: to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

MEMORY VERSE: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing. II Timothy 4:8.

CENTRAL THOUGHT: If we will fight the good fight of faith until we have finished our course in this world we have hope of a crown of eternal glory in Heaven with our blessed Saviour Jesus.

WORD DEFINITIONS AND CLARIFICATIONS: *"Quick and the dead"* (v. 1): the living and the ones who have died. *"Be instant in season and out of season"* (v. 2): "Be thou urgent whether in prosperity or adversity, where there is opportunity or when there is none; strive to make one." -Clarke. *"reprove"*: refute by argument, prove the false to be false. *"rebuke"*: reprove cuttingly and severely those who will not abandon their sins. *"exhort"*: comfort the weak, discouraged, fearful, and oppressed. *"having itching ears"* (v. 3): The Greek says "tickling the ears"; desiring to hear fine speaking but not willing to obey the truth. *"evangelist"* (v. 5): a proclaimer of good news. *"make full proof of thy ministry"*: The Greek says, "Do thou fully perform thy service." *"my departure"* (v. 6): my dissolution; the separation of the soul from the body. *"kept the faith"* (v. 7): guarded the faith. *"who love his appearing"* (v. 8): Who first loved his appearing in the gospel and who are earnestly looking forward to His second appearing. *"Do thy*

diligence" (v. 9): earnestly endeavor. "*much evil*" (v. 14): The Greek says "many evil things openly showed." "*the mouth of the lion*" (v. 17): if not a literal lion or beast or vicious man, this could mean any threatening and imminent danger. "*Amen*": Ratification or acceptance of truth: "So be it!"

LESSON BACKGROUND

We now come to the final instructions of Paul's loving epistle to his son, Timothy. It is a touching expression of loving counsel and strong testimony of faith and hope. Very soon he knew that he would be taking his last journey and would lay down his life for what he stood so steadfastly for. He encourages Timothy to be strong in the work of the Lord, warning him against the evils and dangers that are along the way. And then he gives his testimony that he is ready to go and of the bright future that shines out there before him. He was desiring Timothy to come soon to be with him. He mentioned Demas who at one time had been with Paul as he was included in the salutations of Paul in Col. 4:14 which he wrote from Rome probably during his first imprisonment. But Demas allowed material things to invade upon his soul, just like many today are doing. The love of this present world is an enemy faction against Christ. "Only Luke is with me." There is something sweet and special in those words! Faithful Luke! Lord, help us to be faithful. It is probable that Crescens and Titus had gone on sacred missions to the other places named. He wanted Timothy to bring Mark with him. Yes, this was the same Mark, Barnabas' sister's son who at one time had been a point of controversy because of Paul's refusal to allow him to accompany them on the mission for the Lord. (Acts 15:38.) But Mark had proven himself a true worker for Jesus and Paul requests his presence now. Oh, the courage and hope we see in Paul's words! How it ravishes our hearts to earnestly seek to go all the way with the Lord and meet this blessed brother with Jesus and all the true saints someday in Heaven!

—Leslie C. Busbee

QUESTIONS:

1. What was Paul's earnest charge to Timothy?
2. Is giving out the word of God always convenient and easy to do?
3. Is there a danger of people wanting to hear a preacher just to enjoy the fine speaking and eloquent tongue?
4. What are the serious things about being a minister?
5. How did Paul feel about his soon departure from this life?
6. Did fighting a good fight and keeping the faith have anything to do with his expectation of a crown?
7. Who else can have hope of a crown besides Paul?
8. What comes to mind when we think of Luke staying with Paul?
9. How did Paul feel about it when everyone forsook him?
10. What was Paul expecting the Lord to do for him in the future?

ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS

As Paul prepared to take his leave to mansions built above
He left a testimony sweet, a message full of love,
Addressed to Timothy, his son, begotten through the Word,
Whose faith responded to the gospel which through Paul
was heard.

Exhorting him to preach the Word and all times instant be,
He warned him of the itching ears and things that he
would see.

But heeding not the storms of life and sorrows manifold,
He wanted to encourage him to be serene and bold.

For he was ready to depart from earth's dark tangled scene,
His faith was strong, his hope was bright, his testimony
keen.

He saw that crown of righteousness reserved for him to
wear,

He knew it was for everyone who willed the cross to bear.
Some had forsaken him for dross, but Luke was by his
side,

The coppersmith had brought him woe, and did the
 truth deride.
 But still he knew his faithful Friend had never failed to be
 His firm support and advocate and would continually.
 Oh, friend, today we journey forth on life's great mission
 field;
 There's work to do for Christ and souls are needing to be
 healed.
 Take courage and be strong in faith wherever you may be,
 And do your best to stand the test and brave life's raging
 sea.
 Oh, keep the faith no matter what may come against your
 way,
 Be prayerful, humble, and sincere; renew the fight each
 day;
 Not bitter at life's letdowns nor dismayed whate'er befall,
 Remember what is promised to the faithful after all.
 Someday the time of your departure will loom up before
 your face,
 And you will see the ending of a valiant Christian race;
 Oh, may it be with you like Paul a testimony brave
 Will help you make a landing safe across death's
 threat'ning wave.

—Leslie C. Busbee

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Of all that Paul wrote to the churches, this chapter
 probably gives more insight into Paul's personal life than any
 other. The opening verse places a shroud of urgency, serious-
 ness and responsibility upon the second verse. Paul charged
 Timothy to "preach the word." Because Paul had done it, he
 could say, "For I am now ready to be offered. . . I have fought
 a good fight. . . Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of
 righteousness. . ." There is nothing more worthy of being
 distributed for the consumption of the soul of man than the
 word of God. It is the only thing that will bring peace and
 salvation.

"Do thy diligence to come shortly unto me." Unthinkable
 as it may seem, Paul, the stalwart and victorious man of God,
 felt a need of earthly companionship. Christians never reach

the point where they no longer need each other. Salvation gives us a love for the brethren and it yearns to be requited; fulfilling a spiritual and emotional need.

Paul requested that Timothy bring his cloak. It was probably cool and damp where he was confined. It is debatable as to what the requested books contained, but evidently Paul needed something other than just his own thoughts to pass the time. We can become stale and stagnant in our mind and soul if we are continually submerged in only our thinking. Vitality of mind, freshness of spirit and the ability to be a blessing to others is dependant on our ability to continually broaden our perspective through God's revelations to others.

—Wayne Murphey

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DECEMBER 27, 1992

REVIEW TEST ON I AND II TIMOTHY

This will test your memory of the truths that Paul set forth in our series of lessons. You may take it orally together as a group or quietly each one to himself. You will notice that on some blanks the first word of the answer is given. You may also use this test as a re-study guide, especially if you make a score you are not very happy with. There are 50 statements taken from our study, some having more than one blank. Each statement carries a value of 2 points. The 2 points can be divided into as many blanks as the individual statement contains. The answers are on a following page.

PLEASE WRITE THE CORRECT WORD IN EACH BLANK

I TIMOTHY

1. Now the end of the commandment is _____ out of a pure heart.
2. We know that the law is good, if a man use it _____.
3. The law is not made for a _____ man, but for the _____ and _____. (any two of the 14 kinds of sinners mentioned)

4. Christ Jesus counted me faithful putting me into the _____.

5. I obtained mercy because I did it ignorantly in _____.

6. Christ Jesus came into the world to save _____.

7. Holding faith and a good conscience; which some having put away concerning faith have made _____.

8. Prayers are to be made for all in authority, that we may lead a _____ and peaceable life.

9. There is one God and one _____ between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.

10. I will that men pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands, without _____ and _____.

11. Women should adorn themselves in _____ apparel, not with broided hair, or _____, or pearls, or costly array.

12. She shall be saved in childbearing, if they continue in faith, and charity, and _____ with sobriety.

13. A bishop must be _____, the husband of _____.

14. The Church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the _____.

15. God was manifest in the f_____, justified in the S_____, seen of a_____, preached unto the G_____, believed on in the w_____, received up into g_____.

16. God has created meats to be received with _____ of them which believe and know the _____.

17. Meat is sanctified by the word of God and _____.

18. Bodily exercise profiteth _____.

19. Godliness is _____ unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and that which is to _____.

20. Be thou an _____ of the believers.

21. Rebuke not an elder, but entreat him as a f_____, the younger men as b_____, the elder women as m_____, the younger women as s_____, with all purity.

22. She that is a widow indeed trusteth in God, and continueth in supplications and _____ night and day.

23. She that liveth in pleasure is _____ while she liveth.

24. Thou shalt not muzzle the _____ that treadeth out the corn.

25. Some men's sins are open beforehand, going before to _____, and some men they follow after.

26. Godliness with _____ is great gain.

27. We brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing _____.

28. And having food and raiment let us be therewith _____.

29. For the _____ of _____ is the root of all evil, which while some coveted after, they have erred from the _____.

30. But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after r_____, g_____, f_____, l_____, p_____, m_____.

31. Christ is the blessed and only Potentate, the _____ of _____, and _____ of _____.

32. Laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come that they may _____ of eternal life.

II TIMOTHY

33. God hath not given us the spirit of fear, but of _____, and of _____, and of a sound mind.

34. Our Saviour Jesus Christ hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the _____.

35. Thou therefore endure _____ as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.

36. No man that warreth entangleth himself with the _____ of this _____.

37. A man who strives for the mastery is not crowned except he strive _____.

38. The husbandman that laboreth must be first partaker of the _____.

39. If we be dead with him, we shall also _____ with him.

40. Let everyone that nameth the name of Christ depart from _____.

41. If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto _____, sanctified, and meet for the Master's _____.

42. The servant of the Lord must not _____.

43. This know that in the last days _____ times shall come.

44. Having a form of godliness, but denying the _____ thereof.

45. The holy scriptures are able to make thee wise unto _____.

46. All scripture is given by _____ of God.

47. Preach the _____.

48. I have fought a good _____, I have finished my course, I have kept the _____.

49. Henceforth there is laid up for me a _____ of righteousness, which the Lord will give me at that day; and not to me only, but unto all them also that _____ his appearing.

50. And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto his heavenly _____.



ANSWERS FOR REVIEW TEST ON I AND II TIMOTHY

I TIMOTHY

1. charity, or love. 2. lawfully. 3. righteous, lawless, disobedient, ungodly, sinners, unholy, profane, murderers of fathers, murderers of mothers, manslayers, whoremongers, defilers with mankind, menstealers, liars, perjured persons. 4. ministry. 5. unbelief. 6. sinners. 7. shipwreck. 8. quiet. 9. mediator. 10. wrath, doubting. 11. modest. 12. gold. 13. holiness. 14. blameless, one wife. 15. truth. 16. flesh, Spirit, angels, Gentiles, world, glory. 17. thanksgiving, truth. 18. prayer. 19. little. 20. profitable, come. 21. example. 22. father, brethren, mothers, sisters. 23. prayers. 24. dead. 25. ox. 26. judgment. 27. contentment. 28. out. 29. content. 30. love, money, faith. 31. righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness. 32. King of kings, Lord of lords. 33. lay hold.

II TIMOTHY

33. love, power. 34. gospel. 35. hardness. 36. affairs, life. 37. lawfully. 38. fruits. 39. live. 40. iniquity. 41. honour, use. 42. strive. 43. perilous. 44. power. 45. salvation. 46. inspiration. 47. word. 48. fight, faith. 49. crown, love. 50. kingdom.



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