

The Letters to Timothy and Titus

**Missional Texts
from a
Missionary
Statesman**

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ABBREVIATIONS

AB	Analecta Biblica (series)
AD	Anno Domini
ANF	<i>Ante-Nicene Fathers (series)</i>
BAGD	Bauer, Arndt, Gingrich, and Dander, <i>A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament And Other Early Christian Literature</i> (1979)
BBET	<i>Beiträge Zur biblischen Exegese und Theologie</i>
CBQ	<i>The Catholic Biblical Quarterly</i>
cf	compare
chap(s).	chapter(s)
CUP	Cambridge University Press
DSB	The Daily Study Bible Series
ed.	Edition
eds.	Editors
ESV	English Standard Version
EQ	<i>The Evangelical Quarterly</i>
<i>Exp. Tim</i>	<i>The Expository Times</i>
f. (ff.)	and the following verse(s) or page(s)
f/n	footnote
Gk.	Greek
GNB	The Good News Bible
HNTC	Harper's New Testament Commentaries
IB	The Interpreter's Bible
ICC	International Critical Commentary
Ill	Illinois
IVP	Inter Varsity Press
JAC	Jahrbuch für Antike und Christentum
JB	The Jerusalem Bible
JBL	<i>The Journal of Biblical Literature</i>
JETS	<i>Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society</i>
JGRCJ	<i>Journal Greco-Roman Christianity & Judaism</i>
JSNT	Journal for the Study of the New Testament
JTS	<i>Journal of Theological Studies</i>
KJV	King James Version
Loeb	The Loeb Classical Library (series)
LXX	Septuagint (pre-Christian Gk. Translation of the OT)
MA	Massachusetts
MD	Maryland
MI	Michigan
MS (MSS)	manuscript(s)
NA26	Nestle-Aland Greek New Testament, 26 th Ed (1979)
NCB	New Century Bible Series
NCBC	New Century Bible Commentary
NEB	New English Bible
NIBC	New International Biblical Commentary
<i>NIDNTT</i>	C. Brown, ed. <i>The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology</i> (1975-78)
NIGTC	New International Greet Testament Commentary

NIV	New International Version
NT	New Testament
NTC	New Testament Commentary (series)
NTM	New Testament Message (series)
<i>NTS</i>	<i>New Testament Studies</i>
OT	Old Testament
OUP	Oxford University Press
PE	Pastoral Epistles
PNTC	Pelican New Testament Commentaries
Repr	Reprint
RSV	Revised Standard Version
RV	Revised Version
SNTSMS	Society of New Testament Studies Monograph Series
SPCK	Society for the Presevation of Christian Knowledge
TBC	Torch Bible Commentaries
TDNT	G. Kittel and G. Friedrich, eds. <i>Theological Dictionary Of the New Testament</i> , trans. G.W. Bromiley (1964-72)
UBS	United Bible Series
UP	University Press
v. (vv.)	verse(s)
WBC	Word Bible Commentaries

Introduction to ‘the Pastoral Epistles’

The two Letters to Timothy and the Letter to Titus are usually considered together as the Pastoral Epistles. It was back in the thirteenth century that Thomas Aquinas (1225-74) referred to 1 Timothy as, ‘a pastoral rule, which the apostle [Paul] committed to Timothy’. However the designation of all three Letters as ‘the Pastoral Epistles’ came much later. The first to do so was D.N. Berdot in 1703 followed by the German scholar Paul Anton (1661-1730), through whom the title became popular. He used the term collectively in a course of lectures delivered at the University of Halle in 1726-7.¹ Knight² can observe, ‘The name has since become a permanent fixture and serves today not only as an appropriate but also as a convenient way to refer to the three letters as a collective whole’.

Entitling these Letters as ‘the Pastoral Epistles’ is understandable – especially as they can be placed late in Paul’s life and can be seen (not just 2 Timothy alone) as almost his last will and testament. This of course would also explain Paul’s pastoral style of address throughout all three books. But in spite of this traditional designation, does their content and motivation really suggest a different title? It may be better to simply refer to them as ‘Letters to Timothy and Titus’, as has recently been advocated in some main-line commentaries and let them be interpreted more as individual books while still acknowledging their inter-relationship³. So the approach here in this work will be to lay aside the traditional designation ‘Pastoral Epistles’ and simply refer to them with reference to their addressees, Timothy and Titus. However we wish to take a further step which has two aspects to it.

Considering their proposed occasion and content, the aim will be to highlight that the Letters first have a clear ‘missionary outlook’⁴ i.e., one needs to consider them more as ‘Missional texts’. This description will require further comment now at the outset, as the term ‘missional’ and the description ‘the mission of God’ which will also be used throughout could for some raise immediate questions as to what is being affirmed by the use of these concepts. To identify the three Letters as ‘Missional texts’ needs justification to some degree and certainly the concept ‘the mission of God’ is a definition which can vary greatly as to meaning. It has been employed to convey a narrow evangelical position or in contrast, even a broad ecumenical understanding.

Regarding the phrase ‘the mission of God’ there is a plethora of understanding in modern missiological discussion.⁵ One problem is the relationship between the terms ‘evangelism’ and ‘mission’. Bosch discusses whether these particular terms are synonyms or in fact different realities. Concerning the term ‘evangelism’ he identifies 6 differing positions and then 4 when it comes to the

¹ See P.N. Harrison, *The Problem of the Pastoral Epistles*, Oxford University Press, Humphrey Milford, Oxford, 1921, p.13; D. Guthrie, *The Pastoral Epistles*, Inter-Varsity Press, Leicester, England; W.B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1996, p.17.

² G.W. Knight, 111, *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, NIGTC, ed. I. Howard Marshall and W. Ward Gasque, Eerdmans, Grand Rapids; The Paternoster Press, Carlisle, 1992, p. 3.

³ P.H. Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, The New International Commentary on the New Testament, Wm. B Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids, 2006, p.30. He suggests that the term ‘cluster’ may be one way of describing the inter-relationship of these three books. Note that earlier Kümmel could also affirm, ‘They presuppose the same false teachers, the same organization, and entirely similar conditions in the community. They move within relatively the same theological concepts and have the same peculiarities of language and style’. W.G. Kümmel, *Introduction to the New Testament*, tr. H.C. Kee. 2nd ed., Nashville, Abingdon, 1975, p.367.

⁴ C. E. Ho, ‘Do the Work of an Evangelist: The Missionary Outlook of the Pastoral Epistles’, PhD Diss. University of Aberdeen, 2000. There is missionary urgency and the importance of the role of teaching and preaching is underlined. See also Ho, ‘Mission in the Pastoral Epistles’, in AJ Kostenberger, TL Wilder (eds.), *Entrusted with the Gospel: Paul’s Theology in the Pastoral Epistles*, B&H Academic, Nashville, 2010, p.241-267.

⁵ See D.J. Bosch, ‘Evangelism: Theological Currents and Cross-Currents Today’, p.4-17 in P.W. Chilcote and L.C. Warner, *The Study of Evangelism: Exploring a Missional Practice of the Church*, Eerdmans Publishing, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 2008. This book has 30 highly significant essays related to this area of study.

use of the term 'mission'! In the present work the phrase will be used with broadly similar meaning to that of Stott¹ in his important work, *Christian Mission in the Modern World*, where mission is evangelism and social action, with evangelism being primary. Commenting upon the Lausanne Covenant which proposes this position Stott comments, 'How can we seriously maintain that political and economic liberation is just as important as eternal salvation?'²

Secondly, the churches were threatened with serious heretical teaching, generally understood as characterised by Jewish and proto-gnostic elements. The heresy will be discussed throughout the exegesis. One can recall that in Acts 20v29³ Paul spoke to the Ephesian elders 'I know that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you not sparing the flock. Also from among yourselves men will rise up speaking perverse things to draw away disciples after themselves'. It now had happened! E.g. 1 Tim. 4v1-7, 6v3-5; 2 Tim. 2v15-18, 3v1-9, 4v3-5; see also the churches in Crete Tit. 1v10-16, 3v9. This was a critical time. Heresy and departure from the truth was on the increase in spite of all of Paul's warnings. If this was the state of things in the first century it is even more critical today. In this situation Paul did not hesitate in using strong words of rebuke and condemnation. See for example Mounce's references⁴ to how Paul describes his opponents:

Foolish, understanding nothing...a sickly craving for speculation...corrupted in their minds...advancing into ungodliness...senseless babblers...hypocrites, liars...worthless for any good work...or for the gospel...perverted...unholy...wanting prestige...money...sex...pleasure...they do not accept Paul's or Timothy's authority.

If we are in positions of leadership or of influence, it is our responsibility to be alarmed about the sad situation of the doctrinal deviations prevalent today and engage in forthright condemnation of it. But also it is vital to be among those who will positively preach the health-giving doctrine (1 Tim. 6v3; 2 Tim. 1v13) or gospel so that sinners can find peace and certainty in Christ and then as God's people be instructed and built up in the faith. So our commission is two-fold. Involvement in the missionary enterprise or the mission of God is vital! As is the condemnation of false teaching and the strengthening of God's people. It is hoped that the reader will reserve judgement on our approach to these Letters until they have had opportunity to read what is written in the work itself.

There is first of all clear justification for the proposed missionary character and missional emphasis of these Letters. Is Paul not Paul 'the Missionary', who was called by God, sent to the Gentiles (Acts 9v15-16; 13v1-3; 15v12; 16v6-10; 22v17-21; 26v12-18; 28v23-28)? Were his major epistles not written during the period of his most energetic missionary labours, in fact most of them to believing communities which had come into being as a result of his missionary activities? Note that the Letters to Timothy and Titus were sent as a follow up to missionary journeys (1 Tim. 1v3-4; Tit. 1v5). Verkuyl affirms Paul is a missionary 'without peer, a person whose very life was an obedient response to his Lord's call to mission.'⁵ The importance of Paul in any modern theology of mission written today can hardly be exaggerated. For Bosch⁶ Paul is "first and foremost to be understood, also in his letters, as apostolic missionary".

Considering the writings more as missional texts is supported by the content of all three Letters. Paul perceives his Christian calling in missional terms (1 Tim. 1v11-12; 2v7; 2 Tim. 1v10-11; Tit. 1v3) and his concern in these letters is that the churches maintain a more effective missionary witness. In 1 Timothy Paul urges the Ephesians to live in such a manner that their behaviour will not hinder the

¹ J.R.W. Stott, *Christian Mission in the Modern World*, Falcon Books, London, 1975.

² Stott, *Christian Mission in the Modern World*, p. 36. The

³ Scripture references will be taken from the New King James Bible, published by Thomas Nelson in 1982.

⁴ W.D.Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, Word Biblical Commentaries, Nelson, Nashville, 2000, p. lxxii-lxxiii.

⁵ J Verkuyl *Contemporary Missiology: An Introduction* Grand Rapids, W.B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1978, p.113.

⁶ D J Bosch *Transforming Mission; Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission*, Maryknoll, New York, Orbis, 1995, p.124.

message of salvation but rather affirm it (1 Tim. 2v10; 3v2-7, 15; 4v12; 5v14, 25; 6v1). So it appears that character for mission is one of Paul's primary concerns in 1Timothy. Timothy himself is to be so committed to the mission task that he will 'save both yourself and those who hear you', (1 Tim. 4v16). The challenge is for him to so fulfil Paul's mission strategy for Ephesus, outlined in the Letter, so that he will be blameless when he gives account at Christ's coming again, (1 Tim. 6v14).

Likewise, Paul's short Letter to Titus, reveals a similar emphasis – the church communities are to advance the knowledge of the truth which accords with godliness. The mission task is spelled out clearly – the hope of eternal life, promised before time began is to be proclaimed in the preached word (Tit. 1v2-3); leaders in Crete must evidence blameless character (1v5–9) in contrast to those who are morally defective (Tit. 1v10–16). Paul again spells out in detail the qualities of Christian character necessary from all ages that accord with the missionary activity of the church (Tit. 2v1–15). The reality of their salvation is to be manifestly seen in good deeds (Tit. 3v3-8). Weiland¹ confirms:

The letter presents itself as a missionary text and it is entirely plausible that in the context of early Christianity's Gentile mission language and concepts could have been sought whereby a Jewish messianic faith could answer the aspirations of the wider Hellenistic world.

Finally, in 2 Timothy the positive mission theme of the Pastorals is emphasised again. Note again the opening statement of Paul's proclamation of 'the promise of life' (2 Tim.1v10); of the exhortations to Timothy to 'stir up' his gift (2 Tim.1v6) and to stand with Paul in sharing the gospel (2 Tim.1v8, 13-14). It is also seen in the emphasis for Timothy to pass on the truth (2 Tim.2v1-2) since the word of God is not chained (2 Tim.2v9); again, he must become thoroughly equipped to rightly divide the word of truth (2Tim.2v15), continuing in the God-breathed scriptures and engaging in the missionary enterprise in preaching that word with urgency in light of the appearing of Christ and the coming judgement (2 Tim.4v1-4). Finally, involvement for Timothy in the mission of God calls for appropriate behaviour (2 Tim.4v5). Paul has been strengthened by the Lord to fully preach the mission message; now Timothy must carry on the missionary task (2 Tim.4v17-22). Paul's vision is that all the Gentiles must hear!

So, the missionary theme can be traced through all three pastoral letters. Are they not therefore missional texts from a mature missionary statesman about to depart to receive his crown (2 Tim. 4v 6-8)?

There has been recognition of this to some degree by a number of scholars. In recent years Wright's² insight was generally accepted; it is 'not just that the Bible contains a number of texts which happen to provide a rationale for missionary endeavour but that the whole Bible itself is a "missional" phenomenon.' It can be maintained that this emphasis is clearly reflected in the Letters to Timothy and Titus.

Regarding these particular letters Towner³ also states that the godly lifestyle outlined in them was motivated by concern for the on-going witness in the mission of the church. In his later commentary he claims that in various ways the three letters articulate a theology of mission. 1 Timothy and Titus focus upon the threat to the gospel and the mission and 2 Timothy is written very much to prepare Paul's younger co-worker to carry on with the apostle's missionary endeavours⁴. So there is a positive mission theme throughout the pastorals. Ho⁵ also claims that the letters have 'an underlying

¹ G. W. Wieland, *The Significance of Salvation: a Study in Salvation Language in the Pastoral Epistles*, Paternoster, Milton Keynes, 2006, p. 212.

² C.J.H. Wright, 2006, *The Mission of God: Unlocking the Bible's Grand Narrative*, IVP, Nottingham, 2006, p.22.

³ P.H. Towner, *The Goal of our Instruction: the Structure of Theology and Ethics in the Pastoral Epistles*, Journal for the Study of the New Testament Supplement Series, 34, Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1989, p.21-45.

⁴ Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, p.55-56.

⁵ Ho, 'Mission in the Pastoral Epistles', in AJ Kostenberger, TL Wilder (eds.), *Entrusted with the Gospel*, p226.

missionary outlook'. They are mission-oriented documents sent to the church in Ephesus and Crete in the historical reality of the 1st century AD. This is an important claim which needs to be given greater consideration.

Some will readily acknowledge that in the letters the mission theme needs to find a place among others (the false teaching, prayer, the choice of church leaders, ethical concerns, one's attitude to wealth, Christology and the doctrine of God) and are satisfied with this. But in the light of Paul's own calling and the missionary enterprise in which all three, Paul, Timothy and Titus and also the churches in Ephesus and Crete are expected to be engaged, should not the missionary character or missional emphasis be the necessary lens through which everything must be understood and interpreted? Mission is foundational to everything. Paul's missionary heartbeat can be heard throughout.

But as we noted earlier, Paul not only had a heart for the lost but was concerned to bring a forthright challenge to the heretical teaching which was still on the increase. Bishop Handley Moule on his work on 2 Timothy¹ notes that 'Christianity... trembled *humanly speaking* on the verge of annihilation'. The challenge or response to the heretical teaching involved adherence to what Mounce² calls 'right belief' and the adoption of 'right behaviour', i.e., that correct doctrine applied to everyday life, which will be made clear from various passages in the Letters themselves.

This second aspect to the teaching in the three Letters should not be underplayed. Paul was deeply concerned about this departure from the faith and as was emphasised above the need for it to be forthrightly challenged, both with clear warnings, the exposure of error and faithful teaching of the apostolic truth (1 Tim. 1v3-6, 18; 4v4-6; 6v20; 2 Tim. 1v8, 13, 2v1-2, 14-18, 23-25, 4v2-5; Tit. 1v11-13, 2v7-8, 3v9-11). One feels compelled to stress again that we are still in the last days (1 Tim. 4v1-3; 2 Tim. 3v1-9) and this means that the same charges that were brought to Timothy and Titus are required of every preacher of God's word. We have a great responsibility and are accountable to God! It is time to face again the solemnity of our calling as it is expressed in Jas. 3v1; Acts 20v17-27 esp. v26-27; Ezk. 33v6-7. God himself could charge Ezekiel, 'I have made you a watchman...hear a word from my mouth and warn them for me!' Remember that Timothy's charge to 'preach the word' was given, 'before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who will judge the living and the dead at his appearing and kingdom' (2 Tim. 4v1-2). Therefore our accountability is no less than his.

One final observation should be made. In these letters it can be maintained that as far as Paul was concerned the local churches are at the very centre of the mission of God. This of course has been much discussed. It has been questioned whether the Apostle Paul expected the early Christian communities to be involved in centrifugal (out-ward-directed) missionary work like his own labours, or in his epistles generally, disputed or otherwise, was he simply exhorting the local church believers to attract others more passively by their exemplary lives?

A significant response to this issue was given by Plummer³ who writes on the theme of Paul's understanding of the church's mission and whether he expected the early Christian communities to evangelise. Plummer affirms that the general apostolic missionary obligation did devolve upon each local congregation. That is, 'each church, as a whole (not simply individuals within it), inherited the apostles' obligation of making known the gospel.'⁴ How does he arrive at this conviction? It is not because of Paul's citation of the Great Commission from the Gospels or reference to the activity of the

¹ C.G.H. Moule, *The Second Epistle to Timothy*, The Devotional Commentary Series, Religious Tract Society, 1905, p.18, cited in Stott, *Guard the Gospel: the Message of 2 Timothy*, Inter-Varsity Press, London, 1973, p. 21.

² Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, p. lxxvii – lxxx.

³ R.L. Plummer, *Paul's Understanding of the Church's Mission: Did the Apostle Paul expect the Early Christian Communities to Evangelise?*, Milton Keynes, Paternoster 2006.

⁴ Plummer, *Paul's Understanding of the Church's Mission: Did the Apostle Paul expect the Early Christian Communities to Evangelise?* p 48.

Holy Spirit as in the Acts of the Apostles, but because of the dynamic nature or effective force of the Gospel itself, as it is expressed through the word of God. There is a clear link between the powerful gospel (Rom.1v16; 1Cor.1v17-18) and Paul's proclamation of it in his missionary work (1 Cor.14v36; 1Thess.1v5; 2Tim.2v8-9; Col.1v5-7; 1Cor.4v15; Rom.15v18-19). That same Gospel is then the dynamic force active in the churches (1Thess.2v13-16; Col. 3v16-17; 1 Cor.15v1-2). 'The same word that indwells apostles also indwells ordinary Christians in the church. In each case, the word cannot be contained'.¹ This dynamic nature of the gospel is in continuity with Old Testament references to 'the word of the Lord'. In 2 Tim. 2v10 Paul emphasises that while he is suffering 'to the point of chains, the word of God is not chained'. It has power to convict, to enlighten, to guide (cf. Heb. 4v12).

Plummer also analyses certain texts he considers to be 'Pauline imperatives for the church to engage in mission'.² (p. 71). There are texts where Paul commands the church to proclaim the gospel (Phil. 2v16; Eph.6v15; 1 Cor.4v16; 7v12-16; 11v1; 14v23-25) and texts concerning 'passive witness' (2 Cor. 6v3-7; 1Thess.2v5-12; Tit.2v1-10). Many would agree that this distinction should not be made when it comes to the church's witness, which should be seen as gospel-determined existence, involving both lifestyle and proclamation - holistic.

Some have found weaknesses in Plummer's work (submitted first as a PhD thesis to the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary), particularly when it comes to the Greek Syntax and interpretation of various terms³. But the general argument appears to be sustained concerning the power of the word in the life of the community. The conviction is that individual churches as the gospel is received and believed continues to work within them as they become extensions of the apostles' ministry and of the effective, self-diffusing word.

Of course the so-called Pastoral Epistles were written to individuals and not directly addressed to the churches in Ephesus and Crete. However it is clear that they were intended for more than just their addressees – see comments on 1 Tim. 6v21; Tit. 3v15; 2 Tim. 4v22. So the word-based mission message as it came from the great apostle's heart with all its urgency and clarity would motivate the whole community. As he was involved in the great mission of God, he expected the churches he planted to do the same.

Finally, one should note Larkin's⁴ perspective in his study of NT mission:

The New Testament is a missionary document, containing preaching (the Gospels), model mission history (Acts), and letters written primarily by missionaries while on mission...The documents themselves, more often than not, are aimed at encouraging these Christians in mission.

For Merkel⁵ also, in Kostenberger's *Entrusted with the Gospel*, the church at the centre of God's mission and at the centre of Paul's teaching for Timothy and Titus. In an earlier article Kostenberger⁶ can explain Paul's strategy:

¹ Plummer, *Paul's Understanding of the Church's Mission: Did the Apostle Paul expect the Early Christian Communities to Evangelise?* p 50.

² Plummer, *Paul's Understanding of the Church's Mission: Did the Apostle Paul expect the Early Christian Communities to Evangelise?* p 71.

³ Review of R. L. Plummer's 'Paul's Understanding of the Church's Mission', in www.academia.edu/842635 by J. D. Dvorak, McMaster Divinity College, JGRChJ 5, 2008, R60-R65

⁴ W.J. Larkin Jr. And J.F.Williams, eds., *Mission in the New Testament: An Evangelical Approach*, Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1998, p. 1.

⁵ B.L.Merkle, 'Ecclesiology in the Pastoral Epistles', in AJ Kostenberger, TL Wilder (eds.), *Entrusted with the Gospel: Paul's Theology in the Pastoral Epistles*, B&H Academic, Nashville, 2010, p173-198.

⁶ A.J. Kostenberger, 'Mission', in TD Alexander, BS Rosner (eds.), *New Dictionary of Biblical Theology*, IVP, Leicester, 2000, p.667.

Paul's aim was to establish Christian congregations in strategic (urban) centres from where the gospel could spread further to the surrounding regions. In the Pastoral Epistles Paul emphasizes that God is the Saviour of all (1 Tim 2:3-4; 4:10; Tit. 2:10-11; 4:4) and provides the post-apostolic church with a pattern of organisation which its leadership must satisfy.

So approaching the Letters to Timothy and Titus from a missionary perspective is not to manipulate the content. It is recognised that the reader of this work will need to be convinced before any acceptance of such an approach.

Note the methodology which will be used throughout. The aim is to produce a volume which will be particularly impact Pastors and students as well as the general reader.

First of all, questions of authorship and purpose need to be addressed – are the Letters authentic? This is not a secondary issue, a matter to be relegated to just a few final comments at the end of an introduction. Whether we have here Pauline fragments, pseudepigraphic writings, post-dated second century Pauline theology to reintroduce the apostle to the church in some way or genuine Letters of Paul should matter for those who claim to be evangelical Christians and hold to a high view of scripture. So we will seek to establish that Paul's Letters to Timothy and Titus are just that – what they claim to be and to interpret them within this interpretative historical framework.

Next, a small but important range of commentaries have been selected i.e., W.D. Mounce, I.H. Marshall, P.H. Towner, G. W. Knight and more occasionally others including W Hendriksen, J.R.W. Stott, D. Guthrie, G.D. Fee and B. Witherington aimed at informing the reader of different understandings of the teaching of the Letters. Naturally the choice of these works reflect the high regard in which they are held. They will act as a guide to interpretation – although their analyses will not always be accepted in what is considered by the writer to be the true interpretation of the text.

Greek words which are considered helpful for understanding the teaching of the Letters are highlighted and then transliterated, so that all may benefit. Where there are topics which require additional comment or clarification, these are given more expansive treatment in the few Further Comment sections included throughout the work.

Again the book will include occasional practical observations throughout¹ which will highlight valuable lessons for those involved in the ongoing mission of God today. Also, the work, as the Contents pages will display will be set out in basic outlines demonstrating how one could preach or share in a uncomplicated manner the teaching of the Letters.

This is where the real motivation for all this work is concerned. First, to alert the reader to Paul's warnings of false teaching but also building upon the foundation of the sound teaching or interpretation of the Letters (with the help of the various commentaries) to seek particularly through their application to challenge and then inspire the readers to fulfil the great apostle's desire to turn away from heresy and hold to and proclaim the truth by life and lip, i.e., to take their place in the work of mission which God has planned for them to fulfil.

Focus upon the Letters to Timothy and Titus

These letters belong to the period at the end of Paul's ministry. They provide us with important teaching from the great missionary apostle as to how his younger associates, Timothy and Titus

¹ Part 1 of Ben Witherington's commentary on the Pastoral Epistles and the Johannine Epistles concludes with a section entitled 'Bridging the Horizons' where he attempts to apply the text to situations today. This is a helpful approach - although in his case the particular way in which he emphasises that the Pastorals are 'situation-specific documents' when it comes to a passage like 1Timothy 2v8-15 limits to a degree their application. Ben Witherington 111, *Letters and Homilies for Hellenized Christians*, Vol.1: *A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary on Titus, 1-2 Timothy and 1-3 John*, Downers Grove, InterVarsity Press, and Nottingham, Apollos, 2006, p.383-390.

(really apostolic delegates and part of Paul's missionary team) should warn, instruct and lead the churches in Ephesus and Crete. Basically they were to challenge these Christian communities to remain faithful to the gospel and adorn a godly lifestyle in order that they might be effective in the ongoing mission of God.

One should note Paul's missionary strategy throughout most of his ministry. He would often choose what were provincial capitals or leading cities like Philippi or Thessalonica for Macedonia, Corinth for Achaia, Ephesus for Asia etc. Or he would encourage the founding and growth of churches as he did on the island of Crete. So we have mission in strategic centres,¹ mission in the main centres of communication, culture, commerce, politics, and religion. His missionary teams could then move out into the country towns and villages. In some places Paul would prolong his stay – one-and-a-half years in Corinth; over two years in Ephesus. He would also send members of his team back to strengthen recently planted churches (1 Thess. 3v12) – or encourage them to stay when necessary – as is the case here (1Tim. 1v3; Tit. 1v5). The Holy Spirit must lead in all things. Sometimes there would be a follow-up letter (e.g., 1 Thess. 3v6-13 or letters of warning, instruction and guidance as is the case in the Letters to Timothy and Titus).

1 Timothy was therefore written to supplement Paul's oral and written teaching given to the church in the past. As one locates Ephesians in the period of Paul's first imprisonment in Rome in Acts 28 (Eph. 3v1; 4v1; 6v19-20), this first letter to Timothy becomes a missional call to his colleague to bring the church back to the basics of sound belief and godly behaviour set out within as far as adherence to the apostolic teaching is concerned. We noted that Paul had warned the elders in Ephesus of the danger of false teaching even as far back as Acts 20v29-30. He now brings an urgent challenge to Timothy - the mission message must not be lost – in the first century and of course the call comes to us again in the twenty-first century.

As for the epistle to Titus, Paul had been with Titus on Crete for a while (Tit. 1v5). He is concerned about the ongoing mission of the churches on the island. The Apostle writes to him about the need to put in place able and faithful elders who can positively teach the sound gospel as opposed to the 'Jewish fables' (Tit. 1v14) of the false teachers. Also Titus must challenge the Christian community to adopt a godly lifestyle, in the light of Christ's first and second coming, (Tit. 2v11-14). For Wieland², the author of Titus 'sees the practical urgency of behavioural transformation in a setting of mission and witness'.

The gospel had been brought to Crete but things were difficult. One problem was because of the temperament of the people, Tit. 1v12. 'The prophet of their own' would be expected to brag about them rather than criticise them. But this was not the case. The individual is generally understood to be Epimenedes (600BC approx.) mentioned by Clement of Alexandria and Jerome³.

Their character was so marked that it gave rise to the noun 'Cretism' = 'to lie' and 'to Cretize' = 'to speak like a Cretan', with the Greek *krhti,dzw krētidzō* meaning 'to live like a Cretan'. So Paul insists that the lifestyle of the Christian was to be different – they are to 'adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things', (Tit. 2v10). Here we have the continuing mission of the church in a largely non-Jewish pagan environment, but also troubled by the Judaizing influence of local teachers highlighting

¹ Bosch *Transforming Mission; Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission*, p.130.

² Wieland, *The Significance of Salvation: a Study in Salvation Language in the Pastoral Epistles*. p.263.

³ Clement of Alexandria, *Stromata*, 1.59.2; Jerome, *Commentariorum in Epistulam ad Titum* p.707. See A.T. Hanson, *The Pastoral Epistles*, NCB, Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1983, p. 176; Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, p.397f.

Jewish myths and fables thrown into the mix – what Wieland¹ can identify as ‘creative missional engagement with a particular Hellenistic context’. This recognition of a missionary setting on Crete, ‘provides a more satisfactory reading of Titus’.² The church is in the early stages of its establishment with a clear need for someone like Titus to guide them in laying solid foundations and to encourage them to live out the mission message, which their newly appointed elders would impart to them, as they seek to continue with their dual witness of word and lifestyle until Christ comes.

When it comes to 2 Timothy, Paul is a prisoner in harsher circumstances than in the Acts 28v30-31 ‘house-arrest’ and only Luke is with him. It is the last letter from this missionary statesman; he can write ‘The time of my departure is at hand’, 2 Tim.4v6. Timothy had therefore a key role for the future in the ongoing mission of God – he must ‘hold fast’ to the truth and also ‘commit (the faith) to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also’, (1 Tim. 1v13–2v1-2). So the positive mission theme of the pastorals takes precedence again in Paul’s personal word to Timothy as the apostle reviews Timothy’s sound teaching from infancy by those who have been concerned to see that he knew the inspired scriptures. Paul’s wants to see his missionary commitment and sacrifice repeated in his younger colleague. He must preach the word because of the urgent need of the mission message in light of Christ’s appearance, his kingdom and coming judgement, (2 Tim. 3v10-4v5). Paul reminds Timothy of his earlier experience, ‘The Lord stood with me and strengthened me, so that the message might be preached fully through me and that all the Gentiles might hear’, (2 Tim. 4:17). Paul’s principal concern to the very end, while there was yet time, is to be involved in the ongoing mission of God i.e., to get the gospel out by words and acts appropriate to this present age of grace. He himself had done this ‘fully’ before the representatives of the Gentiles at the centre of the empire in Rome – Timothy will have the greater privilege (and of course the solemn responsibility) to carry the mission message to all.

Concerns in the Letters to Timothy and Titus: a Summary

By way of summary, one can say that there is much to be gained from focussing upon the teaching of these Letters. They can be taken together at this point as reflecting a number of issues burdening the great missionary apostle which should concern us as well as these first-century Christian communities. Does Paul not write of ‘the latter times’ and ‘the last days’ and of a mission lifestyle until the ‘glorious appearing’ of our great God and Saviour’, (1Tim. 4v1; 2 Tim. 3v1; Tit.2v13)? Therefore the teaching reaches down into our situation and we have a similar responsibility to heed as they.

- The Letters have much to say about mission lifestyle in an alien culture. We should understand this as one of the main reasons for them. Paul’s two representatives in Ephesus and Crete are not to get embroiled in controversy with the false teachers, 1 Tim.4v7-8; 6v5, 20; 2 Tim. 2v14-19; 3v5, 13-14; Tit. 3v9-11. They are to rebuke and challenge them but to turn from them – even discipline them, Tit. 3v9-11 - to proclaim the true mission message and live that message out day by day³. Paul stresses that in living a life of personal godliness the people of God can commend the gospel to others, 1 Tim. 4v8-9; Tit. 2v11-14. This call to ‘godliness’ is often made and there are what some have called ‘Household’ rules, e.g. 1 Tim. 6v1 has a list of duties for Christian slaves. Titus 2 has more ‘household’ rules for the different groups in the Cretan Christian community. In the context of mission Paul is urging his younger colleagues and the Ephesian and Cretan communities to life in

¹ Wieland, *The Significance of Salvation: a Study in Salvation Language in the Pastoral Epistles*. p.163, see p 101.

² Wieland, *The Significance of Salvation: a Study in Salvation Language in the Pastoral Epistles*. p.169.

³ R. G. Gruenler, ‘Mission-Lifestyle Setting of 1 Tim 2:8-15’, *JETS*, vol. 41, no. 2, 1998 p. 216 states ‘My view will be that Paul’s foremost concern in the pastorals is founded on (1) the mission work of Christ as the ground, (2) the mission mandate to the Church as the consequence, and (3) a Christian lifestyle that will maximize the mission witness both outside and within the Church as the believer’s responsibility’.

such a manner that their behaviour will not become an obstacle to the message of salvation but rather exemplify and enhance it.

- We are frequently warned by Paul to be on our guard against heresy/false teaching spreading like gangrene in the church¹.
- There is nothing more important than upholding and proclaiming the truth of the gospel or the apostolic faith over against every form of error, 1 Tim 1v11-12; 2v5-7; 3v16; 4v6-7; 6v20; 2 Tim. 1v10-11; 2v1-2, 14-15, 23-24; 4v1-5, 17; Tit. 1v3; 2v1; 3v8-9. The mission message must be shared and the Gentiles need to hear.
- There is teaching here regarding leadership in the churches and the Letters present particularly - in contrast to the false teachers - the spirituality God requires of those who would minister as elders and deacons, 1 Tim. 3; 5v17f.; Tit.1v5-16. There are also occasions where Paul encourages Timothy and Titus to set a godly example to the Christian communities in Ephesus and Crete and to develop their own godly character, personal spiritual growth and giftedness, 1 Tim. 4v7-8, 11-16; 6v11-16; 2 Tim.1v6-7; 2v1-7, 22-26; 3v14-4v5; Tit. 2v7-8; 3v8-11.
- Note the authority with which Paul writes as a missionary apostle, directing his younger colleagues, 1 Tim. 1v3-4; Tit. 2v15; 3v8, 12-14. He gives them five faithful sayings – 1 Tim.1v15; 3v1; 4v9; 2 Tim. 2v11; Tit. 3v8. It is not necessary to see these as early creedal statements but that they are there to call for the confident acceptance of certain theological and ethical affirmations, over against the errors of the false teachers.
- Note also the emphasis upon the God-breathed Scriptures, 2 Tim.3v14-4v1-5, the foundation which undergirds the mission message. Furthermore Paul affirms that Scripture is not only inspired but necessary and sufficient. Therefore among competing messages, the Letters inspire confidence that we have in our hand the word of God and we are urged to preach it, to recognise its worth in a mission context both for guiding believers and reaching the lost.
- The letters challenge us that when it comes to prayer, we ought to have a mission outlook, namely, a world vision, 1 Tim. 2v1-8.
- Paul endeavours to give us timely warnings and guidance in facing the possibilities of misplaced affection when it comes to the challenge of materialism, 1 Tim. 6v3-19.
- He confronts the believers with regard to their responsibility to care for the needy, 1Tim.5v3-16.
- The Letters present positively the important role of women, 1 Tim. 2v9-15; 3v11; Tit. 2v3-5.
- They encourage us to be faithful in suffering for Christ, 2 Tim.2v8-13; 3v10-14.
- They call us to affirm the uniqueness of the mission message – Christ is the only mediator as ‘man Christ Jesus’; he is also Righteous Judge, 1 Tim. 2v5; 2 Tim. 4v8.
- They give to us a fresh understanding of the greatness of God, 1 Tim.1v17; 6v15-16.
- Note that there is a quotation of the Lord’s words and an acceptance of them as ‘Scripture’ – 1 Tim. 5v18, cf. Deut. 25v4; Matt.10v10; Luke 10v7. Was there a little book containing sayings of the Lord available?

¹ Wieland, *The Significance of Salvation: a Study in Salvation Language in the Pastoral Epistles*, p.263.

- The responsibility and urgency of getting out the mission message before the end of the age is stressed again and again by Paul, 1 Tim. 3v16, 4v8-10, 6v11-15; 2 Tim. 1v6, 11-12; 2v9-10; 4v1-5, 17-18; Tit. 1v2-3; 2v11-15; 3v8-9.
- Paul calls for spiritual power, instead of formalism, 2 Tim. 1v7; 3v5

Many of these issues will be discussed further throughout the exegesis, in the practical applications and the Further Comment sections.

Note that these Letters of Paul do not include some of his most common theological themes. But they in no way depart from Paul's foundational teaching. There is a focus upon the 'gospel', which glorifies God (1 Tim. 1v11) and is a mission message for 'all men', (1 Tim. 2v4), who are 'sinners' (1 Tim. 1v15). It is about how Jesus Christ appeared' (2 Tim. 1v10; Tit. 2v11f.), gave himself 'a ransom' (1 Tim. 2v6; Tit. 2v14) by which he delivers us from 'every lawless deed'. By his giving of himself, he 'abolished death' bringing 'life and immortality to light' (2 Tim. 1v 10). This gospel proclaims Jesus as the 'one mediator' now 'risen from the dead' and he is also 'the righteous judge', (1 Tim. 2v5; 2 Tim. 2v8; 4v8), a message worth suffering for, (2 Tim. 1v8). The good news is articulated as about 'salvation', which finds its origin in God the Saviour (1 Tim. 1v1; 2v3; 4v10; Tit. 1v3; 2v10; 3v4) and in his gracious purpose which he purposed 'before time began' (2 Tim. 1v9). This salvation is by grace (Tit. 2v11), not through works (Tit.3v5; 2 Tim. 1v9).

Though Paul often in these Letters uses 'faith' in a generic sense or without specific referent (1 Tim. 1v4, 5, 14, 19; 4v12; 6v11; 2 Tim. 1v5, 13; 2v18, 22; 3v10; Tit. 1v1) he does write of salvation through faith in Christ (2 Tim. 3v15) who is also Saviour (2 Tim. 2v10; 3v15). God in his love and by his mercy saved us (Tit. 3v5); regenerating, justifying us (Tit. 3v5), giving us 'eternal life' – the greatest gospel benefit - (1 Tim. 1v16), a blessing 'promised' (2 Tim. 1v1), a hope which is certain (Tit. 1v2; 3v7) which brings us at Christ's second 'appearing' (1Tim. 6v14; 2 Tim. 4v1, 8; Tit.2v13) to his 'kingdom' (2 Tim. 4v1). We must endeavour to truly 'lay hold' on this eternal life (1 Tim. 6v12, 19).

Paul can use the adjective 'faithful/believing' more often in these Letters than anywhere else. He can use it of the trustworthy mission message (1 Tim.1v15; Tit.1v9); of believing people (1 Tim. 4v3, 10; 5v16; 6v2) and for the faithful behaviour to which response to the message should lead (1 Tim.1v12; 3v11; 4v12; 2 Tim. 2v2) i.e., to a life of 'godliness' (1 Tim. 2v2; 4v7-8; Tit. 1v1). So 'believing' is the proper response to the message (1 Tim. 1v16) and that belief should lead to a lifestyle of 'good deeds' (Tit. 3v8).

Paul can stress that the basis of the mission message is 'truth' – the acceptance of the good news is described as coming to 'the knowledge of the truth' (1 Tim. 2v4; 2 Tim. 2v25, 3v7); to 'know the truth' is continued present belief and while Timothy is to 'rightly divide the truth' (2 Tim. 2v15), the false teachers deviate from the truth (1 Tim. 6v5; 2 Tim. 2v18; 4v4; Tit. 1v14). The apostolic doctrine can be described as 'the faith' (1 Tim. 1v19; 4v1; 5v8; 6v10, 21; 2 Tim. 3v8; 4v7); this message has been entrusted to Paul (1 Tim. 1v11; Tit. 1v3); he has entrusted it to Timothy (1 Tim. 1v18) so that he in turn could entrust it to faithful men (2 Tim. 2v2). Paul can affirm that appropriating the true message is 'health giving' using *u'gai,nw hugainō* (to be in good health) for the individual and the entire local church – words (1Tim. 6v3; 2 Tim. 1v13); doctrine (1Tim. 1v10; Tit. 1v9; 2v1); speech (Tit. 2v8) and faith (Tit. 1v13; 2v2) are so described.

The Authenticity of these Letters

Until the nineteenth century the conviction that the Letters to Timothy and Titus were written by Paul to his younger colleagues went relatively unchallenged. But at that time things were to change.

Schleiermacher¹, considered by many to be the ‘father’ of modern critics, questioned the Pauline authorship of 1Timothy on stylistic and linguistic grounds. He noted the ‘literary oddities’ within 1 Timothy and concluded that the letter was nothing more than the patchwork of an imitator, a ‘zusammentragenden Nachahmer’. Schleiermacher’s assessment was soon followed by Eichhorn’s rejection in 1812 of all three Letters². Further intensive studies by Baur (1835), Holtzmann (1880), Dibelius were so influential that the outcome was that scholars generally were convinced that the Pastorals were not authentic³. This state of things has continued until the present with many questions asked about their early reception and authenticity⁴.

Are the Letters to Timothy and Titus completely the work of Paul? Or, are they pseudepigraphic writings – the accepted ‘orthodoxy’ of most modern scholarly opinion – written by an unknown author to address concerns in the second century church and refute heresy? Or again, as some have suggested, are there fragments written by Paul but put into a wider framework by someone else, especially someone whose motive is to reintroduce the great apostle to the church?⁵ Contrary to largely current thinking it will be maintained that they are by Paul for a number of reasons.

External Evidence

It seems certain that early Christian writers in the late first century and early second AD were acquainted with these Letters and ascribed them to Paul.⁶

In spite of doubts expressed by some scholars, and arguments to the contrary, it appears that Polycarp (c. AD 117) cites 1 Tim.6v7,10⁷ in his *Letter to the Philippians* 4.1. and frequently reflects

¹ F.D.E. Schleiermacher, ‘Über den sogenannten ersten Brief des Paulos an den Timotheos: Sendschreiben an J. C. Gass’, *Berlin, 1807*, reprinted in *Sämmtliche Werke*, 32 vols., Berlin: G. Reime, Vol. I, part 2, 1836, p.317.

² J.G. Eichhorn, *Einleitung in das Neue Testament*, Leipzig:Weidmannischen Buchhandlung,1812, Vol. I, part 3, pp. 315-410.

³ F.C. Baur, *Die sogenannten Pastoralbriefe*, Tübingen: J.G. Gotta’schen, 1835; H.J. Holtzmann, *Die Pastoralbriefe kritisch und exegetisch behandelt*, Leipzig: Wilhelm Engelmann 1880; M. Debelius, *Die Briefe der Apostels Paulus an Timotheus I, II und Titus*, Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 1913; P. N. Harrison, *The Problem of the Pastoral Epistles*, published 1921.

⁴ Among the many who have rejected Pauline authorship and advocated that they are pseudonymous are: Debelius and Conzelmann, Barrett, Brox, Hanson, Karris, Quinn and Wacker, Collins, Bassler. Knight however, who himself advocates Pauline authorship, could list other scholars in the nineteenth and twentieth century who, while still a minority, also shared this view, responding to many of the disputed questions, namely; Allford, Eliocott, Huther, Plummer, Lightfoot, Hort, Godet, Bernard, Weiss, White, Parry, Wohlenberg, Lock, Robertson, Schlatter, Zahn, Spicq, Jeremias, Simpson, Guthrie, Hendrikson, Kelly, Holtz, Ridderbos, Bürki, Fee. Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, p. 22. We should add Mounce, Towner, Johnson, and Witherington who have supported generally this view. Marshall insists that the Letters reflect Pauline theology.

⁵ The first approach is called by Mounce ‘the Fiction Hypothesis’; the second, the ‘Fragment Hypothesis’. Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, p. cxviii-cxxiii. See later treatment of Mounce’s position.

⁶ Bernard seeks to give a full list of citations and allusions to the Letters in the Early Fathers. J.H.Bernard, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 1899, Repr. Thornapple Commentaries. Grand Rapids, MI Baker, 1980.

⁷ While the quotation is without attribution, Johnston supports the view, contra Dibelius and Conzelmann, that both works are not simply from the same wisdom tradition but there are direct links in specific wording citing the references in a passage which ‘as he clearly indicates is a florilegium drawn from Paul’s letters’. L. T. Johnston, *Letters to Paul’s Delegates: 1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, Titus*, NTC Valley Forge, Penn., Trinity Press International, 1996, p.23. See also M. Dibelius and H. Conzelmann, *The Pastoral Epistles*, Hermeneia, Tr. P.Buttolph and A. Yarbro, Philadelphia, Fortress, 1972 p.2. Marshall, who in the Preface to his commentary is careful to explain that he ‘constantly attempted to discover the truth and to refrain from dogmatic statements where the evidence is insufficient’, still must express the view that, ‘The fact that it is Polycarp who of all the AF(Apostolic Fathers) furnishes the strongest evidence for the use of the Pauline corpus generally strengthens the case that he is also referring to the PE rather than echoing language that was current in the church’. Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, p. xiii-xiv; p. 3.

phrases from the Letters.¹ In addition, the author of *1 Clement* (late first cent.) knew at least Titus (see 1 Clem. 2.7; 60.4; 61.2 which reflects the language of Tit. 3v1; 1Tim. 2v7; 1v17²) and Ignatius knew all three Letters.³ Again, they were known and used by Justin Martyr (c AD 140) also and Irenaeus, bishop of Lyons and a disciple of Polycarp in his *Adversus Haereses* (c 180) frequently cites these Letters and is the first to cite them using Paul's name.⁴ Already in the second century they were translated and included in the Syriac and Latin versions.

Tertullian makes the point that Marcion must have known and rejected these Letters since he omits them from his canonical list.⁵ The reason for Marcion's disfavour is that there is teaching in these epistles about the law, 1 Tim. 1v8 and about the inspiration of the Old Testament, 2 Tim. 3v16 which would not have suited his thinking. His writings will be dated in the first half of the second century – so his knowledge of these Letters must pre-date this.

These early citations and allusions highlighted above surely cause a problem to those who would hold a late date for the Letters since it appears to contradict the evidence from the end of the first century and the early second century. For those who would still question the claims to early attestation, Marshall's⁶ reminder is important:

The lack of knowledge of the PE in this period is to be compared with the rather similar state of affairs surrounding several of the accepted Pauline letters. There is nothing unusual about the low degree of proven usage of the PE in the context of the general difficulty of establishing knowledge and use of the accepted Pauline letters.

There are said to be around 450 references to these Letters in second century writings in Volume 1 of *Biblia Patristica*, the beginnings of extracanonical Christian literature up to Clement of Alexandria and Tertullian.

Note that as well as not being quoted as Pauline by Marcion, they are not in the Chester Beatty Papyri, 200-250 AD. This collection of writings lacks the beginning and the last seven pages.⁷ It would be quite a feat for any copyist to get these Letters into that short space – even though an examination of the Papyri shows that the copyist's writing grows smaller towards the end. The Papyri also lack Philemon and 2 Thessalonians and is quite fragmented and therefore difficult to base conclusions

¹ These are set out by Hendriksen *1 & 11 Timothy and Titus*, London, Banner of Truth Trust, 1972, p.31-32. The links between Polycarp and these Letters forced some to suggest that this disciple actually wrote them. But this should be accepted for what it is – the problem for some of accepting an early date for these letters. As Marshall to be true to the evidence makes the point, 'The difference in style from the letter of Polycarp is decisive against composition by Polycarp himself, and the closeness in phraseology is insufficient to justify ascribing the PE to a colleague of his. It remains most plausible that Polycarp is a witness to early knowledge of the PE'. Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, p. 5.

² Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, The New International Commentary on the New Testament, p.4 n.6.

³ Marshall acknowledges that 'The committee responsible for *The New Testament in the Apostolic Fathers* found it highly probable that 1 and 2 Tim. were known and used by Polycarp, and quite likely that they were known and used by 1 Clement (Tit.) and Ignatius (all three)'. Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, p. 3. Bernard responding to the suggestion that similarities between 1 Clement and The letters to Timothy and Titus are because of some common church atmosphere affirms that they were 'too close to admit of any other hypothesis save that Clement wrote with the language and thoughts of the Pastorals in his mind'. Bernard, *The Pastoral Epistles*, p.xix. Regarding Ignatius, Kelly comments, '...the Ignatian letters (c110) seem to echo passages ...so closely that only excessive caution refuses to admit direct dependence'. J.N.D. Kelly, *A Commentary on the Pastoral Epistles*, HNTC: New York, 1963; reprinted in Thornapple Commentaries, Grand Rapids, MI Baker, 1981, p.3.

⁴ C Spicq, *Saint Paul: Les Épîtres pastorales*, 4th ed. 2 vols. Etudes Bibliques 29. Paris:Gabalda, 1969, 1: p. 167-168.

⁵ See Tertullian *Marc.*5.21.

⁶ Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, p. 5.

⁷ Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, p. 6.

upon¹. According to Quinn², the Letters appear to mark a new beginning in the extant Pauline codices with a distinction between Letters to churches and Letters to individuals. He points out that 1 Timothy is clearly longer than 2 Thessalonians. Therefore, he states:

Probably this point marks the seam where two second-century collections of Paul's letters were joined, a collection of letters to churches (at times including Hebrews, as in P46 and the archetype of B) and a smaller collection of Pauline letters addressed to individuals (also arranged in almost all extant codices with the longest first and Philemon, the shortest, last).

Therefore, it is possible that the Pauline Letters identified as 'personal' were simply omitted.³

Internal Evidence

The Letters to Timothy and Titus all claim to be by Paul. Yet scholars have raised certain issues.

Historical issues.

- There are new names not mentioned elsewhere – Onesiphorus, 2 Tim. 1v16.
- Certain facts cannot be fitted into the Acts of the Apostles. Paul had been to Crete. But there is no news of his being there in Acts.
- In 2 Tim. 4v20 Trophimus is left sick at Miletus. When was this? Acts 20v4; 21v29 shows him with Paul on his last journey to Jerusalem.

But it is possible to fit all these things in after he was released from house arrest at Rome in Acts 28v30-31. It can be claimed that he went east rather than west to Spain as he had originally planned, Rom. 15v23-25, and into this last missionary journey we can put these facts. Then he left Trophimus sick; then was in Crete, travelled into Macedonia and was then rearrested just before his death. So these mission activities belong to a time not recorded in Acts. Certainly when he was under house arrest in Rome Paul expected to be released, Phm 22; Phil. 1v25; 2v19-24. There were more mission opportunities to follow and we find something of that ministry here.

Ecclesiastical issues

Ecclesiastical arrangements are said to be too advanced for Paul's time. It is claimed that the Paul we know from other epistles is not interested in church officers – he is too concerned about the Lord's return. It is suggested that these Letters imply that some time may have passed. In 1 Tim. 3 Timothy is to see that elders are appointed but the direction is given 'Not a novice', v6. So the Letters must have been around for some time. But this does not mean that they are so late that we are dealing with a whole new generation.

It is not true to say that Paul is not interested in church organisation and the fact that he speaks of the Lord's return does not mean that he is neglecting the needs of the church. We have not got a 2nd century bishop - the elder is an overseer, Tit. 1v5-7. There is nothing that does not fit a first century situation. Timothy and Titus were Paul's personal representatives or apostolic delegates in a special position in his missionary team. For Marshall⁴, we should not underestimate 'the importance of the Pauline concept of apostolic missionaries, a body of people charged with the creation, establishment and ongoing care of local congregations but who remained essentially separate from them'.

¹ D. Guthrie, *New Testament Introduction*, 4th ed. Downers Grove, Ill.: Intervarsity Press, 1990, p. 611.

² J.D. Quinn and W. C. Wacker, *The First and Second Letters to Timothy*, William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, Michigan/Cambridge, UK, 2000, p.3. See also J.D. Quinn, '146 – The Pauline Canon', CBQ 36, (1974), pp. 379-385.

³ Johnston, *Letters to Paul's Delegates*, p.3.

⁴ Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, p.172.

Doctrinal issues

Some scholars have pointed out that there are differences compared with Paul's other Letters.

- God's Fatherhood is not mentioned except in the salutations.
- Christ's Sonship is not prominent here.
- The word 'saviour' is applied to God, not to Christ, 1 Tim.2v3; 4v10.
- The Holy Spirit is mentioned only three times, 1 Tim. 3v16; 4v1; 2 Tim. 1v7.
- Paul's great phrase 'in Christ' is said to be missing.
- The word 'faith' is seen here as a body of Christian belief – sound teaching, rather than trusting Christ.
- The five faithful sayings are nowhere else in Paul. Some of course suggest that here we have a later catechetical framework.
- There is no mention of the faith and works controversy.
- Would Paul write 'save yourself', 1 Tim.4v16, to Timothy?
- The problems of attributing to Paul the statement 'saved in childbearing', 1 Tim.2v15.
- There are different kinds of heresies mentioned here – denial of the resurrection, 2 Tim. 2v18; rigid asceticism (forbidding marriage, abstinence from food), 1 Tim.4v3. Is this reflecting a kind of Gnostic belief of the second century?

There are a number of things which ought to be clarified by way of response.

Here Paul will have a particular practical approach. As one would expect, missional texts will be a combination of different elements – exhortation, ethical and practical guidance, with any theological teaching focussed primarily upon any deviation from the mission message.

In the Letters God's fatherly goodness is implied. He is called Father only twice in the main body of 1 Corinthians and Romans. The Holy Spirit is not mentioned much also in Colossians and 2 Thessalonians.

What of God the saviour? There is nothing here that he could not have written elsewhere. Christ is also called saviour in Tit. 2v13. Again, 'In Christ' may be used in a slightly different way but 9 times it is applied to spiritual qualities i.e. grace, faith.

The faith/works controversy is not relevant here. Again, faith is also used as a body of doctrine in Gal.1v23. Concerning Timothy saving himself, ought we not to note what Paul wrote in similar fashion in 1 Cor. 9v27 about the danger of being 'disqualified'? The reference in 2v15 can also be clearly Pauline in the context of what he is teaching in 1 Timothy 2 regarding the unique ministry of women. In the exegesis it will be discussed whether it should be interpreted as physical preservation or salvation through the birth of a child = Christ. Rather, it will be maintained that it can best be interpreted as simply evidence in the life of the mother of her own salvation/spirituality as she then influences her precious children, much as Lois and Eunice influenced Timothy, 2 Tim. 1v5.

Paul has given other summaries of the faith, so 'faithful sayings' are not out of place – in fact *in place* when one is writing in a context of the influence of false teaching which must be rejected and of doctrine and practice that is worthy of all acceptance. Also, with regard to the Gnostic-type teaching of 1 Tim. 4v3-4 and denial of the resurrection, remember that 2nd century Gnosticism had to have roots in the 1st century.

Linguistic issues.

There are linguistic differences. The style is different from what Paul has written elsewhere. Also note, there are certain words in these Letters which are not found in his other writings – godliness (10); healthy or sound teaching (9); faithful sayings (5); the deposit (3). In fact, 36% of the words in the Letters are not found elsewhere in Paul. Actually, there are 176 separate words nowhere else used in

the NT. Some claimed that the language is very like that of second century writers – the Apostolic Fathers.

It is clear that the Letters are brief to make statistical assessments. Again, one should remember that the Letters were written to individuals, rather than churches, to personal missionary colleagues, and the content reflects this. Also, it should be noted that much of the vocabulary said to be 'different' from the accepted Pauline corpus is found in subjects not taken up in those Epistles. There are other places in Paul where there are certain words not found in other of his letters. Again, it is significant that all the 176 words mentioned *are* found elsewhere in writings before 50AD – so they are not just 2nd cent. words. Note that deSilva¹ queries, 'Paul could use 2177 different words in the other ten letters, why should he not add another 306 in the Pastorals?'

Many have pointed out that typical Pauline particles² and conjunctions are missing in these Letters (e.g., 'therefore', 'since', 'but now', 'with the result that', 'is it not?') But deSilva³ has stressed that these words and phrases are more used in letters which involve argument like Galatians or Romans, diological or diatribal forms, whereas these are Letters to instruct friends in the things that need to be done.

Some scholars are open to suppose that while Paul was the author, behind the writings, Luke may have been have been the amanuensis, or there are others who would attribute the Letters more directly to Luke himself. This suggestion of a link with Luke in some form is by no means new.⁴ Moule's⁵ lecture on 'The Problem of the Pastoral Epistles: A Reappraisal' re-established this approach as a viable proposal. While Strobel⁶ could seek to provide a positive comparison of the language and style of the Lukan correspondence with these Letters, Brox⁷ denied any evidence for the Lukan authorship of or even influence upon them. Quinn⁸ however suggested that short notes from Paul were subsequently edited and elaborated into a third volume to follow Luke and Acts as a kind of epistolary appendix completing the history of Paul up to his approaching death. But the Letters to Timothy and Titus do not actually tell us what finally happened to Paul, nor can they be considered as some form of historiography. Would some associate of Paul write such statements as 2 Tim. 4v9;21 after Paul's death?

Wilson⁹ also developed the earlier proposals. He maintained that the Letters were written by the author of Luke-Acts but are post-Pauline and this influential individual is apparently not Luke the Physician of the NT! He finds some 37 words in both Luke-Acts and here, but nowhere else in the NT, plus 27 in both of these sources used only rarely elsewhere. Again Wilson finds stylistic traits in Luke-Acts and these Letters which are rarely used elsewhere, while 4 of these are missing from the other Paulines. There are parallels in the use of verbs and certain expressions and ideas, with, in both cases, 10 of each missing from the other epistles. The hypothesis is that 'After he had written Acts,

¹ D. deSilva, *An Introduction to the New Testament*, Downers Grove, Ill. IVP Academic, 2004, p. 737.

² There are 214 particles in the earlier Epistles but 112 of these do not occur in these Letters. See Marshall, *Pastoral Epistles*, pp. 59-61.

³ deSilva, *An Introduction to the New Testament*, p. 737.

⁴ In H.A. Schott, *Isagoge Historico-critica in Libros Novi Foederis Sacros*, 1830 quoted in Harrison *The Problem of the Pastoral Epistles*, p.52 n1.

⁵ C.F.D. Moule, 'The Problem of the Pastoral Epistles: A Reappraisal,' *Bulletin of John Rylands Library*, xlvii, 1964-1965, p.434. He proposes that 'Luke wrote all three Pastoral Epistles. But he wrote them during Paul's lifetime, at Paul's behest, and in part (but only in part), at Paul's dictation'.

⁶ A Strobel, 'Schreiben des Lukas? Zum sprachlichen Problem der Pastoralbriefe,' *NTS*15 (1969) 191-210.

⁷ N.Brox, 'Lukas als Verfasser der Pastoralbriefe?' *JAC* 13 (1970) 62-77.

⁸ J.D.Quinn, 'The Last Volume of Luke: The Relation of Luke-Acts and the Pastoral Epistles', in *Perspectives on Luke-Acts*, ed. Charles Talbert, Danville, Va.: Association of Baptist Professors of Religion; Edinburgh, T&T Clark, 1978, pp. 62-75.

⁹ S.G. Wilson, *Luke and the Pastorals*, London, SPCK, 1979, p.3-4.

Luke gained possession of several travel notes, written by Paul at various points in his career – the so-called “genuine fragments” of the Pastorals – and used them as a peg on which to hang his pseudonymous letters.¹ Thus in a sense he follows Harrison’s ‘Fragment theory’² here.

It is true that there are definite similarities of language and style shared between Luke/Acts and these Letters and this issue does need to be addressed. Note that Witherington³ has a full discussion of the similarities. The ‘non-Pauline’ words reflect a more Hellenistic style of writing than the earlier Epistles. There are a number of Latinisms (he mentions that 160 possible words and phrases have been identified by Hitchcock⁴) with many in 2 Timothy, seemingly written from Rome, but the others, he suggests, possibly written earlier (with Luke’s input in some form) from Philippi, which was a Roman colony and where Latin would be also in use.

Witherington also notes other contacts in language. In both sources *euvsebei*, a *eusebeia*⁵ ‘godliness’ and cognates are found - and only in one other NT book – 2 Peter, which does mention a collection of Paul’s letters (2 Pet. 3v16). Again in both are found ‘The living and the dead’, (2 Tim. 4v1; Acts 10v42); the athlete metaphor, ‘finishing the race’ (Acts 20v24 also 13v25; 2 Tim. 4v7); the language of ignorance, (Lk. 23v34; Acts 3v17; 1 Tim. 1v13); the word *timē* *timē*⁶ used to refer more to a ‘honourarium’ in Acts 28v10; 1 Tim. 5v17. There are more linguistic parallels also where medical language is now found (especially with reference to the influence of the false teachers and their unsound doctrines); in a metaphorical sense (Lk. 5v31; 7v10; 15v27 [also 3 John v2]; ‘to be well’ used in a literal sense; 1 Tim. 1v10; 6v3; 2 Tim. 1v13; 4v3; Tit. 1v9, 13; 2v1-2; – plus ‘to be ill’, 1 Tim. 6v4, in a metaphorical sense – is such language betraying the presence of Dr. Luke?). Also the use of ‘to preserve alive’ (Lk. 17v33; Acts 7v19; 1 Tim. 6v13) and the corollary ‘to catch alive’ (Lk. 5v10; 2 Tim. 2v26), as one example among many, - terms only found in Luke-Acts and these Letters.

Witherington also notes interesting Greek phrases found mainly in both sources. These include⁷:

- Literally, ‘for this reason’ or ‘for which cause’ *DiV h]n di hēn* 2 Tim. 1:6,12; Lk. 8:47; Acts 22:24.
- Literally, ‘by which way’ *o]n tro,pon hon tropon* 2 Tim. 3:8; Lk. 13:34; Acts 1:11.
- ‘together with’ or ‘meanwhile’ *a[ma de. kai. hama...kai* 1 Tim. 5v13; Acts 24v26; Col. 4v3; Phm. 22.
- ‘more’ *evpi. plei/on epi pleion* 2 Tim. 2:16; Acts 4:17.

Again he highlights ‘more substantive phrases’ like ‘fulfilling their ministry’ Acts 12v25; 2 Tim. 4v5; ‘to give repentance’ Acts 5v31; 11v18; 2 Tim. 2v25; ‘the living God’ Acts 14v15; 1 Tim. 3v15; 4v10; a ‘hope they wait for’ Acts 24v15; Tit. 2v13; ‘servant of God’ Acts 16v17; Tit. 1v1; ‘to acknowledge with gratitude/thanks’ Acts 24v3; 1 Tim. 4v3-4. In his judgement while Luke-Acts needs to be considered in terms of ‘sheer vocabulary’, it is particularly useful to compare the book of Acts with these Letters when it comes to style as ‘it is only in Acts that Luke moves from a less Semitic to a more Hellenistic and Gentile-friendly style of writing and diction’.⁸ The so-called Miletus speech (Acts 20v13-38) sounds very much like the Paul of these Letters, since Witherington finds in the writings to Timothy

¹ Wilson, *Luke and the Pastorals*, p.4.

² Harrison, *The Problem of the Pastoral Epistles*. This theory will be highlighted from time to time.

³ Witherington, *Letters and Homilies for Hellenized Christians*, Vol.1: *A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary on Titus, 1-2 Timothy and 1-3 John*, p.57-62.

⁴ F.R. Montgomery Hitchcock, ‘Latinity in the Pastorals’, *Exp. Tim* 39 1927-1928, pp. 347-352.

⁵ The word *euvsebei*, a *eusebeia* is found in 1 Tim. 2v2; 3v16; 4v7, 8; 6v3, 5, 6, 11; 2 Tim. 3v5; Titus 1v1 but elsewhere only in Acts 3v12; 2 Pet. 1v3, 6, 7; 3v11.

⁶ The word normally is translated ‘honour’.

⁷ One can add ‘be sound’, ‘healthy’ *u`gainw* in the Letters (9); Luke (3); 3 John (1).

⁸ Witherington, *Letters and Homilies for Hellenized Christians*, Vol.1: *A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary on Titus, 1-2 Timothy and 1-3 John*, p.61.

and Titus what he considers to be a very similar rhetoric. So, in light of the evidence outlined above Witherington¹ himself, asserts that the data:

better supports the theory of Pauline *and* Lukan involvement in these three letters...Lukan shaping of the Pastorals...a combination of Pauline and Lukan style...the voice is the voice of Paul, but the hand is the hand of Luke...a symbiosis of the two thinker's styles...they fit into the chronology of Paul's own life and Luke's as well.

How should we comment in light of these parallels? One noted first the judgement of Moule, Wilson, and Quinn in response to Lukan influence in these Letters. But, in a review of Wilson, Marshall² is convinced that with regard to Luke-Acts and these Letters, the striking differences as well as similarities need to be carefully weighed. While there are similarities with Luke-Acts, there are many more linguistic links between the Letters to Timothy and Titus and the rest of the Pauline corpus. Knight³ summarises and comments on Marshall's figures:

While Luke-Acts and the PE share *exclusively* 34 words out of the total of 554 common to both bodies of literature, the PE and the other ten Paulines share exclusively 55 words out of the total of 574 common to the two groups of Epistles. These figures are all the more significant since Luke-Acts has a larger vocabulary than the Pauline corpus. On this basis the Pauline authorship of the PE is much more in line with the linguistic data than would be Lukan authorship.

Knight also writes further about what he considers to be the relationship of Paul and Luke and the outcome of the comparative studies of Strobel, Wilson and Marshall. The similar terms, phrases and style can have a different explanation. Luke and Paul had shared a lot of travel and time together – particularly the Roman imprisonment and afterward. Paul mentions him in Col. 4v14; Phm.24; 2 Tim. 4v11 as a 'fairly constant companion' who will have influenced 'Paul's linguistic reservoir'. Therefore he claims⁴:

The PE are what one would expect under these circumstances: They are primarily Pauline, but their second greatest element is what they share with Luke-Acts. This may have come about just through the linguistic impact that Luke had on Paul, but it might also be that Luke was the secretary whose language was sometimes utilized by Paul as he formulated the contents of the letters. In any case, the connections between Luke-Acts and the PE and between Luke and Paul are so striking and inherently interrelated that one must ask whether this may not be a significant factor in the solution to the linguistic phenomena of the PE.

It is clear that there is evidence of a Lukan relationship when it comes to these Letters. But all the Letters are attributed to Paul (1 Tim. 1v1; 2 Tim. 1v1; Tit. 1v1), while Luke is 'with' him (2 Tim. 4v11). It is strange that if Luke had a major role as author in some sense, that Paul does not acknowledge it. It is important to remember Rom. 16v22, the reference to Tertius 'who wrote this epistle' and yet no-one questions that the mighty work of Romans is from Paul. Similarly, however Luke may have been involved, it is best not to engage in conjecture or to make speculative suggestions of some greater role for Luke than Paul's amanuensis. Even when one considers Paul's situation in the harsher circumstances in 2 Timothy (1v8; 2v9) Paul does not appear to have handed over the writing of the work in any substantial sense to Luke, when one considers the thoroughly personal nature reflected in so much personal comment in the Letter.

Two final comments. In the past, as was noted above, a few scholars suggested that in the Letters to Timothy and Titus we have genuine fragments of Paul, put into a wider framework. Normally in the

¹ Witherington, *Letters and Homilies for Hellenized Christians*, Vol.1: *A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary on Titus, 1-2 Timothy and 1-3 John*, excerpts from pp.58-61.

² See I.H. Marshall, Review of S.G.Wilson, *Luke and the Pastoral Epistles*, JSNT, 10 (1981), p.72.

³ Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, p. 49.

⁴ Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, p. 51.

past the response has been to ask why would these fragments be preserved? Or if the supposed writer lived in the sub-apostolic age he must have been a spiritual giant, so why is he unknown to the church? Again, do the Letters not have a vastly superior quality to that of the 2nd cent. Fathers? Serious consideration of the evidence presented above of the links with Luke-Acts and Luke himself will rule out any need for acceptance of the Fragment Hypothesis. Even more significant is the fact that an increasing recognition of the relationship between these Letters and the other Paulines, plus similarities to the vocabulary and style of Luke-Acts strengthen the argument for Pauline authorship. Knight¹ can affirm, 'Some form of the Lucan hypothesis short of exclusive Lucan authorship apart from Paul thus becomes a supporting element in the argument for Pauline authorship'.

The date of the Letters is hard to fix precisely, except perhaps 2 Timothy which can be dated just before end of Paul's life in Rome, 2 Tim. 1v17; 4v16-18 – say 67AD. Above it was noted that Witherington² suggested that the earlier Letters were likely written from Philippi with Lukan 'involvement'. He places the last of the Captivity Epistles (Philippians) as written from Rome in AD62. It is clear in that Letter that Paul hopes God will open up a way for him to be able to return to Philippi (Phil. 1v25-26; 2v23-24). Note that Paul is in Macedonia when he writes 1 Timothy (see 1v3). Again, we shall see that Paul was planning for Titus to leave Crete and meet him in Nicopolis (Tit. 3v13) in the winter of AD 64-65. So the Letters could be dated at around that time.

Further Comment: Modern Scholars - Authentic or Pseudonymous Letters: a Summary

Most modern scholars will not allow Paul to have written the Letters to Timothy and Titus – hence the need for further discussion. What follows is a brief summary of where in the overall spectrum of views a selection of recent works often referred to in the exegesis are to be found with regard to this subject

G.W. Knight

Knight³ enumerates the repeated and pervasive personal references or self-testimony that the author makes about himself and his relationships with the addressees and other individuals. He observes that it is not difficult to see why the almost unanimous consensus of the church until the 19th cent was that these Epistles were written by Paul. Knight also outlines this attestation in the early church – the only exceptions of all three Letters as Pauline are the heretics.

He discusses the relationship to Acts and the other epistles. A second imprisonment would be in accord with the expectations of the Prison Epistles, the temper of Acts, particularly the statements of Festus and Agrippa and with the conditions reflected in the Letters themselves. The usual critical arguments regarding authorship since the nineteenth century are outlined followed at each point with a balanced approach pretty much in keeping with the broad arguments already given in support of the Epistles being of Pauline authorship. He does however suggest, as was pointed out, the influence of Luke whose companionship with Paul meant that the Missionary apostle had a language arsenal which helps explain the similarities that these Letters have to the Lukan correspondence. He explains that this factor provides supporting evidence for attributing the letters to Paul.

Regarding pseudonymity, he discusses the ethical question involved in pseudonymous authorship and those who would deny that deception and untruthfulness were involved in this practice. Such a view would for them be to impose the standards of a later time. But Knight is not so sure. Since Paul had stressed the importance of a 'mark', the greeting 'with his own hand' in 'every letter' (2 Thess. 3v17) and makes similar statements elsewhere (1 Cor. 16v21; Gal. 6v11; Col. 4v18; Phm. 19), so that

¹ Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, p. 52.

² Witherington, *Letters and Homilies for Hellenized Christians*, Vol.1: *A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary on Titus, 1-2 Timothy and 1-3 John*, excerpts from p.66.

³ Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, pp 4-52.

letters would not be falsely attributed to him, Knight¹ suggests that 'it is not too much to say that this perspective set the tone and the norm for the early church. Thus it is not accurate to characterize this perspective as foreign to the early church and imposed upon it by those living in a later day'.

G.D. Fee

Fee² expressed the view that the crucial matter in writing a commentary on these Letters is authenticity. He makes the important point that whether these writings are pseudonymous or otherwise fundamentally affects everything else. For Fee, the letters are from Paul and he from this perspective he deals with the matter of the recipients; the historical situation of Paul; occasion and purpose; theology, including gospel, ethics, eschatology; church order. The question whether Paul used a different amanuensis or Luke could be attractive but at the end are really conjecture. Fee sets out the usual argumentation for seeing the Letters as pseudonymous; he waning of Paul's influence; the false 'Gnostic' form of teaching and the move forward from a 'charismatic' to the need for a more organised structure of leadership, seeking to bring the church back to preserving Pauline traditions. In his opinion such an approach does not fit the proposed purpose of the Letters and he asks 'why three Letters and why 2 Timothy at all?'

W.D. Mounce

Mounce in his Word commentary³ provides a full treatment of questions regarding authorship in his introduction. He includes Spicq's⁴ support of Pauline authorship in his discussion of a number of the issues. He outlines the Fiction Hypothesis – a second century total fabrication, to make Paul's message relevant, or oppose second-century heresy; the Fragment Hypothesis mentioned earlier – a person collected a few genuine fragments of Paul's writing and wove them into three fabricated letters to preserve them and present Paul's message to a later church; the Amanuensis Hypothesis which for him, best explains the internal and external evidence. He still urges a measure of caution, which is not always evident in the literature. He quotes Fee, 'In the final analysis the decision rests upon what impresses one more, the clearly Pauline nature of so much, or the seemingly divergent nature of much'.⁵

A number of themes are discussed in the text as they occur and word studies the first time the word is found. There is an emphasis throughout of the relationship between theology and practical Christian life-style. He has stressed the continuing relevance of these Letters for the Christian community today.

He includes an excursus on pseudepigraphy, explaining that some scholars have tried to insist that this very approach *is* an assertion of authoritative tradition (in fact, the sharing of the same inspiration as the original author) and since it was a recognised approach did not raise moral issues. Addressing a few issues relevant to these Letters he focuses upon the real question as to whether the church at large *recognised* and *accepted* letters that they knew to be pseudepigraphical. It is clear that external evidence shows that the church did not accept epistolary pseudepigraphy⁶. Why would any pseudepigrapher include so many historical and personal allusions and casual statements such as the whereabouts of Paul's companions? One must accept a writer 'who castigates the Ephesian opponents for their lack of morality and conscience and for their deception of the Ephesian church and at the same time attempts to deceive his readership. To me this is not credible'.⁷

¹ Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, p.47.

² G.D. Fee, *1 and 2 Timothy, Titus*, NIBC, ed. W. Ward Gasque, Vol. 13, Peabody: Hendrickson, 1998.

³ Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, Word Biblical Commentaries.

⁴ C. Spicq, *Saint Paul: Les Épîtres pastorales*, 4th ed. 2 Vols.

⁵ Fee, *1 and 2 Timothy, Titus*, p.14 in Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, p. cxxix.

⁶ See p. cxxiv, the Muratorian Canon, Eusebius on the *Gospel of Peter*; Tertullian on the *Acts of Paul*; the evidence from Paul himself.

⁷ Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, p. cxxvii.

A. Kostenberger

Kostenberger¹ discusses Ancient Pseudonymous Epistles and points out that while Gospels and even Acts type material are found, *Epistles* are exceedingly rare. It is difficult for a pseudonymous letter to perform the same functions as an authentic letter. He argues (1) The two extant Jewish sources, the 'Epistle' of Jeremiah and the 'letter' of Aristeas, can neither really be classed as an epistle. (2) In the apostolic era far from the acceptance of pseudonymous epistles, there is actually real concern that letters might be forged (2 Thess. 2v2) – thus Paul writes of the 'distinguishing mark' in all his letters (1Cor. 16v21; Gal. 6v11; Col. 4v18; 2 Thess. 3v17; Phmn. 19). (3) In the second century Tertullian reports that an Asian presbyter was removed from office for forging a letter in Paul's name (*On Baptism* 17). Also Serapion, bishop of Antioch, at the end of the 2nd century sharply distinguished between apostolic writings and those that 'falsely bear their names' (cited in Eusebius, *Eccl. Hist.* 6.12.3). Therefore, 'On the basis of this evidence it seems doubtful that the early church would have been prepared knowingly to accept pseudonymous letters into the Christian canon'.²

Again, the term 'overseer' and 'elder' are interchangeable in these Letters and attest a two rather than a three-tiered structure. Paul and Barnabas already provide evidence of interest in church structures in Acts 14 v23 in AD 50. Finally, it is possible that a later imitator could fabricate pieces of information to lend weight to his work but why go to the extent of inventing numerous details like what is found in 2 Tim. 4v9-21? A point of note is that 'there is little (if any) extant instance of this kind of "fictive epistolary" genre in the first and second century AD'.³

T. Wilder

T Wilder also in his PhD thesis on pseudonymity and the New Testament, revised and published in *Pseudonymity, the New Testament, and Deception: an Inquiry into Intention and Deception*, claims that the early church used both the authorship and content of a writing as criteria for authenticity and would not permit pseudo-apostolic works to be read in the churches alongside apostolic ones; there is no evidence of pseudonymity as a convention among orthodox Christians and they did not regard with indifference the fictive use of an apostle's name. The concept of intellectual propriety was present in the ancient Greco-Roman world. Writers could use certain literary practices to protect their work. Wilder⁴ explains:

A writer could protect his work by: (1) pronouncing a curse in the document to warn others against altering it (see Rev 22: 18-19); (2) binding the authorial attribution with the text by means of a seal or an acrostic; (3) making known the document's size by citing the exact number of lines/stichoi in it (see, e.g., the very end of Josephus's *Antiquities*); (4) informing others of what the work contained in chronological order; or (5) using trusted friends to circulate his writings before they could be altered or distorted.

He also mentions the practice of authentication by inscribing a personal signature, as Paul did, although this was not in fact a regular practice in ancient letter writing in the Greco-Roman era.

I.H. Marshall

Marshall's introduction to the Letters to Timothy and Titus (said by him to be written in collaboration with Philip Towner, whose own commentary will be treated next) requires fuller treatment than the others since it is somewhat unique in its claim that these works undoubtedly express Pauline theology but not Pauline authorship! He commences his commentary in highlighting the unity of the three

¹ A. Kostenberger, 'Hermeneutical and Exegetical Challenges in Interpreting the Pastoral Epistles' in A. Kostenberger and T. Wilder, Eds. *Entrusted with the Gospel; Paul's Theology in the Pastoral Epistles*, B&H Publishing Group, Nashville, Tennessee, 2010,

² A. Kostenberger, 'Hermeneutical and Exegetical Challenges in Interpreting the Pastoral Epistles', p.6.

³ A. Kostenberger, 'Hermeneutical and Exegetical Challenges in Interpreting the Pastoral Epistles', p.7.

⁴ T Wilder, *Pseudonymity, the New Testament, and Deception: an Inquiry into Intention and Deception* Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2004, p.42.

Epistles. Differences are simply due to the situations addressed. The Epistles represent the variations we ought to expect when composed by one author 'whose thought was liable to development and change'.¹ Titus is covered first because it is thought to address a less developed and complex situation than 1 Timothy and could have been composed before it.

On the matter of Attestation and Canonicity, among the Apostolic Fathers the somewhat limited knowledge of the Letters to Timothy and Titus is similar to the accepted Paulines, although there is no dispute concerning later second-century usage. As to genre, each has the ancient form of a letter; 2 Timothy fits most closely into the genre of a personal paraenetic letter; Titus is more like a set of instructions from a superior person to his agent, although it does have a personal conclusion; 1 Timothy, which has few personal touches, and Titus would be better seen as mandates.

Concerning structure, he outlines Hanson's² approach, who finds nine types of material, six source and three, while partly relying on traditional materials, directly composed by the author himself. He also highlights interrupted themes, and connective phrases – in all written in the manner of OT wisdom literature with few logical connections and no unifying theme or development of thought. This is why Hanson gives only a list of paragraph headings rather than looking for a more elaborate structure. Marshall sees some sources as possible, material not in written form which could be used creatively by the author and adapted. Taking this approach he also rules out Miller's³ suggestion simply of compilation in *The Pastoral Letters as Composite Documents*, Cambridge, 1997. He outlines his understanding of the structure of all three works. 2 Timothy seems to reflect the more random thoughts of an older man composing a letter under difficulties in contrast to the more orderly, cooler tone of 1 Timothy and Titus.

Marshall explains the widespread support for identifying the heresy in the Letters as a form of Gnosticism.⁴ Differing somewhat from the general approach, he suggests that what we see here is a combination of Jewish, Christian and ascetic elements, and possibly we look more for a group of Jewish Christians, 'perhaps travelling teachers with an ascetic streak, who were active within the Pauline mission area'.⁵ The law, which they interpreted allegorically, was important to them and from it they produced a radical set of ascetic restrictions regarding purity. They claimed true knowledge of God with conversion tantamount to a present rather than a future resurrection. The teaching would appeal to women, since it advocated greater emancipation from married life and domestic duties. The teaching removed Christ from his central position as saviour and mediator, with religion becoming a matter of speculations, diverting adherents from what really mattered. The teachers' greed for money and their immorality is condemned.

Marshall proceeds to discuss the Ecclesiastical Situation or state of development reflected in the letters. On the matter of local church leaders, he notes that Titus is given the task of appointing elders/bishops for the first time in at least some of the congregations (1v5-10). He helpfully points out that if this is a later fictitious representation of an earlier and not the actual situation 'it is not clear why the writer has not spoken in more general terms of appointment rather than of making new appointments where none existed before'. Therefore it is more likely that we are dealing with the actual contemporary situation.

Regarding Ephesus and the appointment of elders and deacons, there is nothing to suggest that church order is far advanced. It appears that in all three, real situations are being addressed. He affirms that the character of life in the churches which is reflected in the letters can be paralleled from

¹ Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, p.1.

² A.T.Hanson, *Studies in the Pastoral Epistles*. London: SPCK, 1968.

³ J.D. Miller, *The Pastoral Letters as Composite Documents*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1997.

⁴ See his discussion on the views of Paul's opponents, p.44-46 and his attempt to identify the opposition by seeking to relate it to other known movements, p.46-51.

⁵ Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, p.51.

Paul's own lifetime - or fit the immediate post-Pauline period. At least the point is made that the church situation does not require us to assign the letters to a later date.¹

Marshall does however propose a possible scenario in which the Letters were produced in a circle which included the historical Timothy and Titus who set down what they had learned (does he mean received?) from Paul but 'were sufficiently their own men not to imitate his speech in detail, nor to express their theology in his way but were creative in expressing Pauline thought in a fresh idiom'.² Dealing with Author and Recipients, which he links together, he first helpfully presents the two opposing views of scholars today. The minority of scholars see these Letters as the work of Paul, whether directly or indirectly by the use of a secretary/amanuensis (see the footnote, listing Jeremias, Spicq, Simpson, Guthrie, Hendriksen, Kelly, Holtz, Fee, Knight, Lea and Griffin, Johnson, Oden, Towner and Stott)³. The majority however, take it almost as an unquestioned assumption that (a) the alleged differences from Paul's acknowledged writings in style and thought or (b) some scenario which leads to an explanation involving pseudonymous composition of the three writings means that they are not the work of Paul.

Marshall himself reminds us that the heretical teaching and the ecclesiastical background fit comfortably into the time at the end of Paul's life and the period immediately following. He proceeds to explore Language and Style looking at the vocabulary, syntax and rhetorical style of the Letters and acknowledges that in his opinion they are distinctive in the Pauline corpus. No real case can be made out for the theory of literary dependence on the acknowledged letters of Paul – for him, the echoes are too faint.

He accepts that the theory of the second imprisonment raises fewer problems than attempting to fit 1 Timothy and Titus into an earlier period of his life. As for the suggestion by Harrison⁴ that the Epistles are artificial compositions in which fragments of actual Pauline Letters have been incorporated (see summary of Harrison's theory and also his revision of it⁵), there have been various problems raised e.g. the 'fragments' having the same style as the rest and the question why all of the material was not preserved. Marshall however suggests that the possibility of fragments in later compositions should not be ruled out – in fact the extent of underlying Pauline material could be greater than Harrison allowed! But he finds it difficult to accept the contemporary view, to simply regard the personal details as fictitious and see them as in reality modes of conveying paraenesis in veiled form. He states, "It must be stressed that paraenetic purpose and authentic composition need not be mutually exclusive possibilities".⁶ But one can comment surely they are either fictitious or genuine and there can be no middle ground. As genuine they can still have a paraenetic purpose.

Discussing the recipients, he highlights the difficulty for Paul as author in the nature and manner of the instruction imparted to those who had been his fellow labourers for many years. Would they have needed the kind of elementary instruction in the letters? What of the formal and impersonal character of the writings and the plural form of the final blessings, which suggest that they were meant to be shared with a wider audience?

Marshall is convinced that the letters were addressed to individuals with concerns as to how they will exercise their ministry. In 2 Timothy it is the personal life and witness of the church leader, with 1 Timothy and Titus primarily concerned with the men themselves, or if post-Pauline to the people leading the congregations. For him, the ecclesiastical situation, with a more formal type of teaching

¹ Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, p.55-56.

² Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, p.54.

³ n67, p.58.

⁴ Harrison, *The Problem of the Pastorals*.

⁵ Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, p.73.

⁶ Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, p.74.

ministry; the nature of the theology expressed creatively in new ways and the picture of Paul set forth as a saint and a martyr, leads him to cast doubts upon the traditional defence of direct Pauline authorship.¹

In seeking another hypothesis he rules out pseudonymity, expressed either as a decline into early catholicism or an endeavour to maintain Paulism in a changed situation and written much later to preserve his influence for a new generation. Clearly, deceptive pseudonymity especially in writings which emphasise preserving the true teaching is difficult to maintain. Instead he proposes the use of another term, 'allonymity' or 'allepigraphy'. Yet one might ask if this approach is really any less deceptive? Especially as the supposed Letters to Timothy and Titus *are not* really to Timothy or Titus! For Marshall, we should associate the letters with the leaders of the churches in the areas mentioned in the texts themselves, Crete and Ephesus, rather than his two missionary colleagues!. The tendencies which can be noted in Paul's lifetime continued and required the type of response he would have given. The letters were produced 'allonymously' in the name of Paul, addressed – in my view therefore, just as falsely as any pseudonymous composition – to his immediate helpers, to represent the kind of thing Paul would have said! He sees a key role for 2 Timothy, (see its general character; the call to broaden the circle of orthodox teachers; the personal opposition to Paul which characterised his lifetime) coming *before* the others which were a second step by the same author (possibly done in concert with the historical Timothy and Titus) to present Pauline teaching, to deal with the growing opposition to Paul in some congregations! But rather than classing 2 Timothy as more 'general' is it not in fact more 'personal' or more directly to Timothy? See 1v2-8; 2v1-3, 14-15, 22-26; 3v5-15; 4v1-5, 9-16, 19-21.

It is doubtful if the author can be Luke, since the style is different from Luke/Acts – although, for Marshall 'it is possible that Luke was the amanuensis to whom the original letter to Timothy that forms the basis of 2 Timothy was dictated'.² He mentions Timothy himself, or Titus or someone from Paul's circle of friends, Eubulus, Pudens, Linus (apparently his favourite³) and Claudia (2 Tim. 4v21). So 2 Timothy may be 'based' on an authentic last letter of Paul to Timothy, and 1 Timothy and Titus coming after it 'can reflect in part what Paul wrote or said to them on earlier occasions' ⁴, although one cannot now sort out the sources.

Therefore it appears that Timothy and Titus were not really the real recipients of the Letters addressed to them but they were for leaders of the congregations in Ephesus and Crete. Marshall cannot see the problem regarding the authorship of these Epistles of not being able to identify someone who must have been an influential person, probably located in Rome, capable of considerable theological skill, able to put his own stamp on material and able to produce a set of letters marked by a unified and fresh exposition of Pauline theology!

In support of his suggestion Marshall lists the fact that the opposition directed against the Pauline understanding of Christianity points to the period immediately after Paul's decease; the undeveloped nature of the heresy, with the new feature of the speculative use of the OT; the undeveloped church leadership, with early catholic features absent; the theology close to that of Paul; evidence of a transition from the period of Paul's personal ministry; the writing of 'orthodox' works in the name of early Christians, which was more likely to happen soon after their death. All these for him apparently liberate these Epistles from the problem of deceit which pseudonymity requires and allows the writer the freedom to write in his own style. Marshall simply accepts that 'the personal details in 2 Timothy

¹ Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, p.77-79.

² Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, p.88, f/n.

³ Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, p.88.

⁴ Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, p.89.

are most probably drawn from actual Pauline notes', and 'with the passage of time the origins of the letters were forgotten and they were assumed to be by Paul himself'.¹

The final section of the introduction deals with the theology of the epistles. The negative verdict of many scholars of the quality of their Christian thought is outlined first. Marshall lists a lack of concern with doctrine, said to reflect a limited grasp of it; the loss of charisma and its replacement by office; the church was losing its 'cutting edge' and settling down; the concern for organisation rather than theology and an unimaginative author lacking literary verve and the cut and thrust of argument. He endeavours to present a more positive evaluation.

Among others scholars he refers to Becker² who suggests that Paul's thought has a coherent centre which is expressed contingently in the different human situations which he faced. He explains that Becker argues that the centre of Paul's thought is the apocalyptic understanding of the future triumph of God inaugurated in the Christ-event. These Letters are part of the literature in which the insights of Paul are ignored, trivialised or misunderstood.³ For Marshall, claiming apocalyptic to be the central theme of Pauline theology is to over-emphasise the future triumph of God and not grasp the fundamental significance of Jesus and the present effects of his work. He is happy rather with Ridderbos' claims that the centre of Paul's theology is the saving activity of God in the advent and the work, particularly in the death and the resurrection of Christ and that this theme is developed in a redemptive-historical, eschatological framework. Adopting this understanding of the centre of Pauline thought and retaining Becker's idea of coherent core and contingent application, Marshall explores 'whether the PE represent a valid contingent application of this central coherency to a specific situation, or whether they represent a misunderstanding of it, or even a simple repetition of it that does not carry us any further'.⁴

Two preliminary general points are highlighted. First, the same building of practice upon doctrine found in Paul's thinking is here e.g. 1 Tim. 2v1f and v3-7 and 3v16 which, for Marshall, is 'the hinge' of the letter. The faithful sayings act as the warrants for ethical instruction and Titus 2v11-15 and 3v4-7 also forms the basis of such instruction. Thus with Towner⁵, *The Goal of our Instruction*, Marshall sees in these Letters the Christ-event and salvation is the focal point and centre of gravity as theology and ethics come together. A helpful insight as these lie at the very centre of the mission message.

Secondly, it is important to note that, for Marshall, traditional material is used creatively. The language used reveals that there is no distinctive vocabulary which would immediately identify the material which the author himself had not composed. Everything is couched in the typical vocabulary and style of the Letters having been elaborated and expanded, specifically into the current situation e.g. see how Mark 10v45 is used in 1 Tim. 2v4-6 and again in Titus 2v14 where it is developed again differently to fit the context of godly living expressed in good works. For Marshall, this type of material, which also includes the faithful sayings are not just 'word-for-word repetitions of material in the Pauline letters. Rather it is presented as material which Paul himself would have regarded as tradition', with the doctrinal basis for the practical teaching 'being reshaped creatively in the light of the current situation'.⁶

What for Marshall, is the core of Christian understanding? It is first its Christology, which while going beyond what he calls 'the genuine Pauline epistles' is firmly rooted in tradition but takes up and develops the concept of 'epiphany' in a way that would be effective in the Hellenistic world (can Paul

¹ Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, p.92.

² J. C. Becker, *Paul the Apostle: The Triumph of God in Life and Thought*, Edinburgh, T and T Clark, 1980.

³ see p. 99, f/n 136 for a summary of Becker's negative view of the letters.

⁴ Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, p.100.

⁵ Towner, *The Goal of our Instruction: the Structure of Theology and Ethics in the Pastoral Epistles*, p.225.

⁶ Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, p.101.

himself not do this?). Jesus has appeared as God manifest and will reappear = 'the hinge' of 1 Tim. 3v16. For Marshall, the writer is seeking to join together God and Jesus in a fresh new way and making clear the position of Jesus as the agent of salvation. So the understanding found in Paul where Jesus Christ is firmly placed alongside God the Father as the source of grace and peace yet as man is given to redeem – see Gal. 4v4 - is simply being expressed in a new way. The second core is its soteriology, Jesus presented as giving himself to redeem, with his work bringing justification, with the point already expressed in Rom. 3 – salvation not by works of law, being emphasised more strongly that salvation is not by human works. 'In the light of these considerations it is clear that the PE share the same coherent core of theology as the Pauline letters'.¹

Marshall maintains that the core finds expression in the contingencies of the new situation. Church order is not as it is usually understood as a retreat from Paul and the freedom of the Spirit in the congregation, but rather a development into a new Pauline kind of leadership or the system of eldership carried forward from the haphazard recognition simply of older people, to people who possessed character for leadership, Timothy and Titus representing the second-generation of leadership, functioning in a similar way to Paul himself. The letters also reveal the use of a fresh term *eusebeia*, godliness which expresses a proper attitude to God and others.

But what are the other items, central and vital to Pauline theology which have been neglected or opposed? Marshall discusses the lack of references to the fatherhood of God, but suggests that the concept is present; the Spirit's activity is seen in prophetic proclamation and regeneration (1 Tim. 1v18; 4v1, 14; Titus 3v5); union with Christ is here (1 Tim. 1v14; 2 Tim. 2v1, 11; 3v15) although the references are limited because the author is not dealing with the doctrinal basis for spiritual living; salvation is apart from works and by grace (Titus 3v5), which is foundational to Paul's own understanding.

In conclusion Bultmann is mentioned as grudgingly recognising that the heart of Pauline theology is here – and for Marshall, even in a greater measure than Bultmann was prepared to allow. So he rebuts the view that these Letters neglect central aspects of Paul's theology. This is what is positive about Marshall on this issue. At least he will not allow the theology here to be divorced from Paul. The Epistles share the same coherent core of theology as the Pauline letters. It is his own theology here. But why not allow Paul's theology to be Paul's theology? Yet Marshall can simply state that from the discussion 'It is clear that the author of the PE is his own man and not a mere repeater of Paul's ideas'.² In effect this view - allonymity - is not very different from the deception of pseudonymity – someone writing his theology in Paul's name.

So if, as has been maintained, in these Letters we have the heart of Pauline theology, the coherent core; if, as has been affirmed earlier there are really no absolute incompatibilities historical, ecclesiastical or doctrinal – even linguistic, is it not time to move away from the majority assumption? There appears to have been a too ready acceptance of pseudonymity. The time has come to allow Paul, writing in a different time-frame, in new situations, certainly in the case of 2 Timothy in very difficult circumstances, to be seen as responsible for all three letters. There appears to be no need to even concede what has been suggested here – some necessity for allonymity. In reality, such an approach robs Timothy and Titus of the Letters and makes nonsense of the historical setting and foists the teaching upon unknown leaders of the churches in Ephesus and Crete. Is this not as deceptive as pseudonymous writings?

P.H. Towner

P.H. Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, in The New International Commentary series has given us a substantial work which must be included within the general discussion of modern

¹ Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, p.102.

² Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, p.107.

treatments of these Epistles. The postulation of the commentary is that the Letters are three separate letters written by the Apostle Paul to his co-workers Timothy and Titus.

Towner looks at the early centuries, matters of canonicity and external attestation. There is nothing particularly new here. He proceeds to consider the modern consensus which does need to be discussed before any evaluation of the letters themselves. The Traditional paradigm (the minority interpretation) is considered first giving a list of the main commentators who have followed this conviction. He discusses the attempt to place 1 Timothy and Titus within the movements of Paul in Acts and 2 Timothy in the detention of Acts 28v30-31. Regarding 2 Timothy he points out the obvious problem of Timothy being absent in this epistle while he appears to be present in the Captivity Epistles.

When it comes to the modern interpretation, he makes use of Dibelius who found differences in subject matter and language and the presence of 'early catholic tendencies', which meant that these Letters were 'set into the second century as if into concrete'.¹ While this is the core of the general consensus other points have been made which are said to show that here we have post-Pauline writings. The 'Pastor's' theology shows evidence of distance and distinctiveness from the authentic Paul. They are late, dealing with new problems and Timothy and Titus are 'fictive' figures from the past! The Letters do not create a different theology but interpret Paul for later practical situations.

Often the interpretation is rigid and rests upon assumptions and creative reconstructions. Towner makes the telling point that the device of pseudonymity while attested in Intertestamental Judaism and Greco-Roman philosophical schools as acceptable this was not the case in early Christianity. Also there is not the necessary time difference with regard to Paul for this to be acceptable. Even in subsequent generations letters written in Paul's name were excluded from the canon. The evidence is that in the earlier period these letters were generally received as coming from Paul, apart from the heretic Marcion and a few others. These are strong arguments.

Towner suggests also that one should not rule out too quickly the possibility of fitting the letters into Acts – he mentions Acts 20v1-3. Again one can agree that when it comes to the style of the 'undisputed' letters there has not been enough recognition of a number of factors like the use of dictation, Paul's ability, and the particular occasion which could determine the style adopted. In addition the dissimilarities of the 'undisputed' epistles among themselves have not always been recognised by the majority camp. Towner makes the useful point that when the restricted mini-corpus (ruling out Colossians, Ephesians and 2 Thessalonians) is abandoned the issue of dissimilarity is greatly reduced.

While the above is very helpful there are other points which are less certain. Towner wishes to view the letters more as individual works – he explains that the majority adopts what he considers to be a rather simplistic view of the three letters as a corpus. There is not the evidence for the existence of some kind of Pauline school or community which might have the authority in the eyes of the later church (2nd cent.) to accomplish such a feat.

But from a personal point of view what is the problem here? It appears quite acceptable to understand as many scholars do, that as far as the canon was concerned Paul's letters were organised according to length, and there is no problem for this to be true for both the letters to churches and also to individuals (see Quinn earlier on External attestation²).

Coming to the middle position adopted by Marshall Towner reminds his readers of the fact that the epistles have always been attested as Pauline and nothing else and so the 'allonymity' position remains somewhat implausible.

¹ Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, p.17.

² p.2

Towner is positive concerning the leadership of the churches in Ephesus and Crete. There is only evidence of decentralized leadership and not some kind of monarchical episcopate or highly complex level of organization which has yet evolved. If one questions the authenticity of the letters certainly the roles of both Timothy and Titus here conform to patterns of them in the other letters.

There are shared elements of theology with other Pauline letters in these epistles. Salvation in Jesus Christ involving a dominant epiphany theme is intersected by traditional elements. Other soteriological emphases complete the picture – Christ's death 'for us', redemption not by human effort and Christ's return to complete our salvation. The importance of the Pauline mission is also stressed here. Timothy stands in the same line of fulfilment of the eschatological promise to that of Paul - linked to his mission to the Gentiles. The references to the Holy Spirit – five of them – still reflect a Pauline understanding as does the more extensive teaching on the Christian life. Leadership includes qualifications, personal commitment to the mission and holiness, while the authority and use of scripture is stressed. In each letter the Christology assumes a distinctive shape. These are linked in a distinctive 'cluster' within the other Pauline letters.

For Towner, the authorship problem cannot finally be solved but neither has anything like a compelling case been made, individually or collectively to exclude the possibility that here we have actual individual letters to historic persons and situations. He suggests that we accept that in comparing the Epistles with the undisputed Paul a lateral relationship within the same historical scope. He claims that one can speak of reasonable doubt having been established regarding the majority view.

J.D. Quinn and W.C. Wacker

One example of the majority view comes from Quinn and Wacker, *The First and Second Letters to Timothy*. A number of issues are discussed.

First, who wrote these Letters? Are they by Paul? They acknowledge that this is the case if you accept the title/text. But the language is different. Some suggest a member of his entourage, but it is claimed that the problem is the above will not adequately account for the church orders and domestic codes in Titus and 1 Timothy – and the ministerial orders also. So Quinn considers that a generation has passed. In his opinion it is 'indefensible' that these Letters are by Paul. He points out that some favour either a 2nd generation 70-110CE OR 3rd generation – but acknowledges if this is the case, that it is 'striking' why they do not quote Paul. So he favours 70-100CE and opts for 80-85 CE.

Second, why were they written? There is an emphatic apologia for Paul here that fits the decades immediately after his execution. The aim? To counter the 'shame' of his end.¹ It appears that Jewish Christianity was still a live option. Again, the PE would be a correction which would have been received and read 'not as individual letters from the Paul of history but as a 'characterisation' of the great apostle and his teaching for the new generation. Concerning where they were written, he discusses Ephesus. Possibly an Ephesian leader with a deep attachment to the Pauline apostleship of the previous generation wrote the PE. So they could be written in the name of Paul to the Ephesian Christians. Or possibly Rome. An author could have composed the collection to rehabilitate the apostle martyred in that city. In fact the aim may be to propose him as a teacher for the urban churches in the whole central Mediterranean area. BUT the question could be posed why not just one letter if that was the purpose?

Again, further to their purpose, it appears that for Quinn and Wacker they were aimed at the continuity of the Pauline mission to bring all to faith in and to the worship of Jesus. Also to emphasise that there was a common faith and worship, a common ethic, Christian ministries which accord with Pauline precedents. Finally, to prepare for future problems with Gnostics and Marcion. However, they have

¹ Quinn and Wacker, *The First and Second Letters to Timothy*, p20.

another future = godliness 1 Tim. 4v8-9.

Final Comments

Proposals for the use of either pseudonymity or allonymity in the composition of the Letters to Timothy and Titus appear very difficult to maintain when one looks at the nature of the Letters. Their final form as one reads them should surely make either case unconvincing.

First, the claim as far as authorship is concerned. They are from Paul the apostle – a similar claim to that of the other Pauline Letters 1 Tim. 1v1; Tit. 1v1; 2 Tim. 1v1; his former life, (a blasphemer, persecutor, wrathful aggressor, and his life-changing experience from God 1 Tim. 1v12-14), is in full accord with what we know of him from elsewhere Acts 9v1; his relationship with both Timothy and Titus his spiritual sons and chosen delegates and, as Knight¹ claims, ‘the constantly recurring directions...are a pervasive note in these letters cf. 1 Tim. 1v3,18; 3v14; 4v6-16; 5v21-25; 6v11-14, 20; Tit. 1v5; 2v1, 6-8, 15, 3v12; 2 Tim. 1v3-8, 13-14; 2v1-3, 7, 14-16, 22-26; 3v1, 10-17; 4v1-5, 8, 11, 13, 15, 21-22.’

Secondly, specific events, places 1 Tim. 1v3; Tit. 1v5, promised visit 1 Tim. 3v14-15; cf. 4v13, persons, Tit. 3v12-13; 2 Tim. 1v16-18; 4v9-13, present circumstances – his imprisonment 2 Tim. 1v12; 2v9; his close relationships with Timothy and his mother and grandmother 2 Tim. 1v5; 3v11-15 would surely be methodologically difficult to maintain in pseudepigraphic documents. Thirdly, one should highlight the final chapter of 2 Timothy. Paul’s present circumstances, his various requests to Timothy – his charge to him 4v1-5; his coming departure 4v6-8; the appeal for his younger colleague to come soon, in the light of Paul’s fellow-workers being sent to different locations 4v9-12; 20-21; the need for his cloak and books left in Troas 4v13 and for Timothy to bring Mark who will be ‘profitable... for the ministry’ 4v11; the news of Paul’s first defence and his confession of faith in the Lord 4v17-18 by no means lend any support to those who suggest pseudonymity or allonymity, rather than the almost unanimous consensus until the 19th century that the letters – all three of them, whether viewed individually or collectively, whether with the involvement of Luke or some other amanuensis, were from Paul. We cannot forget Kelly’s² judgement regarding pseudonymous writings:

It is one thing to publish under the name of Paul or some other apostle a treatise, whether in the form of a letter or of something else, which the author sincerely believes to express the great man's teaching, or which he even believes to have been disclosed to him by the self-same Spirit which used the great man as his mouthpiece. It is quite another thing to fabricate for it a detailed framework of concrete personal allusions, reminiscences, and messages, not to mention outburst of intensely personal feeling, which one knows to be pure fiction but which one puts together with the object of creating an air of verisimilitude.

This is in reality the position some scholars have apparently been prepared to accept – if we concede that the letters to Timothy and Titus are pseudepigraphic documents. This is a long way from the affirmation concerning the nature of the convictions Paul had about his preaching and writings expressed in 1 Thess. 2v13 – it was not ‘the words of men, but as it is in truth the word of God...’ and to Timothy that the ‘things you have heard from me’ were on a level with the OT scriptures; as ‘all scripture is given by inspiration of God’, 2 Tim. 3v16 (see discussion in the passage).

In closing, It is important to summarise Witherington’s full discussion of the theme ‘The Issue of Epistolary Pseudepigrapha’ in his *Letters and Homilies for Hellenized Christians*³. In discussing the issue of pseudepigraphal writings and epistolary pseudepigrapha, he makes the point that often commentators seem to show a passive acceptance of the issue of pseudonymous writings in the NT

¹ Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, p.4.

² J.N.D. Kelly, *The Pastoral Epistles: 1 & 11 Timothy Titus*, A&C. Black (Publishers) Limited, London, 1986, p.33.

³ Witherington, 111, *Letters and Homilies for Hellenized Christians*, pp.23-38.

as if there are no problems of deception or truth-claim issues involved. But as we have already noted this is not really the case and so, for Witherington, some factors need to be recognised.

First, he simply points out the fact is that an acceptance of pseudonymity in a writing in the NT 'makes an enormous difference in the way one reconstructs the history of early Christianity and the development of its theological and ethical thinking'¹. He expresses a further negative opinion, 'These letters contain so many personal details and appear to be addressing a particular historical situation that it is hard to avoid the conclusion, if they are pseudepigraphal, that there is an intent to deceive'². One thing to remember is that the nearer the writings were to the time of their supposed author, the more difficult it would be to convince the reader that they were authentic.

Witherington acknowledges that there were pseudepigraphal apocalyptic works both in early Judaism (e.g. portions of the *Enoch* corpus) and in early Christianity (e.g. the *Apocalypse of Peter*). Although by no means all will follow him here, he is willing to find source or composite documents in a couple of NT books but also affirms that 'One cannot, however, demonstrate that about ancient ad hoc letters. By "ad hoc" I mean situation-specific letters written to a particular audience'³. This of course will rule out the Letters to Timothy and Titus.

He explains that the manner in which the early church fathers in the second and third-centuries viewed this issue of authorship and intellectual propriety, and the ethics of pseudepigraphy must not be forgotten. He points out that there were indeed clear objections by second and third-century Christians to these practices. Among examples he mentions that the Muratorian Canon, makes note of the *Epistle to the Laodiceans* and the *Epistle of the Alexandrians* as 'forged in Paul's name'. He refers to the document 3 *Corinthians* composed by a bishop in the second century, out of admiration for Paul. When he confessed to being the author Tertullian explains that he was removed from his ecclesiastical position (*Bapt.* 17). Similar treatment befell the Asiatic presbyter who composed the *Acts of Paul and Thecla* (= *Acts Paul 3*). Witherington (as Kostenberger earlier) also mentions Bishop Serapion of Antioch, who around A.D. 200 first approved and then rejected the reading of the *Gospel of Peter* in Rhossus in Syria and Salvian, the priest from Marseilles, who is called to book by his bishop for forging a document in the name of Timothy around A.D. 440. There was a story involving the Emperor Claudius and a man found guilty of forgery. Claudius had the forger's hands cut off once he was convicted of the crime (*Claud* 15). Witherington could have given many more examples, but considers these are quite sufficient to make the point.

Finally, he finds support in F. E. Torm⁴ who concluded, 'The view that religious circles of Greco-Roman antiquity 'understood pseudonymity as a literary form and straightway recognized its rightness' is a modern invention.' So Witherington affirms, 'Pseudonymity was not seen as an acceptable literary practice; rather, it was seen as a serious literary problem in the Greco-Roman world, and it could even incur criminal penalties'.

To return to an earlier discussion, while Witherington⁵ may be over enthusiastic concerning Luke's contribution to these Letters, his comments are helpful to a degree:

In my judgement, the real dividing line between a genuine letter and a pseudepigraphon is whether the material comes from the mind of a particular person, not whether it fully reflects that person's grammar and syntax and vocabulary. To this I would add that a genuine letter comes not only from the mind,

¹ Witherington, 111, *Letters and Homilies for Hellenized Christians*, p.23.

² Witherington, 111, *Letters and Homilies for Hellenized Christians*, p.30.

³ Witherington, 111, *Letters and Homilies for Hellenized Christians*, p.24.

⁴ F.E. Torm, *Die Psychologie der Pseudonymität im Hinblick auf die Literatur des Urchristentums*, Studien der Luther-Akademie 2 (Gütersloh: Bertelsmann, 1932, p.19. in Witherington, 111, *Letters and Homilies for Hellenized Christians*, p36.

⁵ Witherington, 111, *Letters and Homilies for Hellenized Christians*, p.26

but also from the hand, of the author, or is inscribed upon the author's request or behalf. This seems to have been well within the scope of ancient views of what counted as authorship.

Both pseudonymity or allonymity seem to fall short even of this. More so, if we emphasise the similarities that the Letters to Timothy and Titus have – rather than the differences - with the undisputed Paulines and especially if we take into account the Captivity Epistles as well. In spite of the accepted 'orthodoxy' of modern times regarding these Letters, nothing has persuaded us to approach them in any other way except as historical letters from Paul the missionary apostle to his younger co-workers in the specific situations of Ephesus and Crete.

1 Timothy

Paul's Movements.

The epistle presents Paul involved in mission activity, travelling apparently without hindrance in the east. He has been released from house arrest in Rome, Acts 28v30-31. There is nothing in any of the three personal letters to his missionary colleagues to indicate that he has gone west to Spain. It appears that he has returned to the former scene of his labours (see Phil.1v25-26; 2v23-24 and Phm. 22 for hope of his release and return). He and Titus had been in Crete, Tit. 1v5 and he had travelled to Ephesus with Timothy with the hope of returning in the near future, 1 Tim. 3v14-15; 4v15. At Ephesus they discover the false teachings which were now in danger of undermining the church. Paul had apparently excommunicated the two ringleaders, Hymenaeus and Alexander, 1 Tim. 1v19-20, but because he had to press on to Macedonia in his missionary journeys he left Timothy to stop the influence and spread of such teaching, 1 Tim. 1v3. On his arrival in Macedonia, he wrote this letter to Timothy.

So for Paul, the mission of God must go forward. Part of the responsibility in furthering that mission was the importance of keeping the local church faithful to the true faith and expose and deal with false teaching by removing those who promote it. In Ephesus, Timothy was key (as Titus was in Crete). It appears that the church heeded the challenge and responded effectively as Rev. 2v1-5 reveals (sadly the loss of their 'first love' was to be their downfall – witness the state of Christianity in that region of Turkey today). Tragically that zeal for maintaining the true doctrine and holding to the mission message of Paul has been lost in many places today. Where are the champions for the truth?

A Suggestion as to the Occasion and Purpose of the Letter.

As far as the occasion and purpose of 1 Timothy is concerned, one reason is clearly stated in 1v3 – to prevent the growing influence of the false teachers. But chapter 2 and 3 deal with matters of public worship and the character of the church's leaders and conclude with the statement 'that you will know how you ought to conduct yourself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth' (3v15). This is a statement of purpose also. So many scholars accept that the false teachings serve as the OCCASION of the epistle, but argue that 'church order' is the proper antidote to the false teachers (see the discussion about them being in leadership later) and that this is the overriding PURPOSE of the work.

Why not see both combined? Paul does not write directly to the church, but about the church through Timothy and to get him to carry out the most difficult task of challenging the heretical teaching, stopping the erring elders and among other tasks, making sure there was teaching especially for women who were being led astray by the false teachers (see on the younger widows, 5v13). So the guidance is for the church which is to receive it and submit to it – 1 Tim.6v21 'grace be with you' is plural, for all, not just for Timothy. So faithful teaching of the word of God is needed here and faithful men to do it. True leadership must be put in place. Mission is lost – if we allow truth to be lost.

Outline of 1 Timothy:

No doubt there are different ways to outline the teaching in this Letter. The suggested structure of 1 Timothy can be based on what is clearly a key statement, 3:14-15: 'That you may know how you ought to conduct yourself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth'. This text emphasises three aspects of the missionary obligation. A mission lifestyle - the need for conduct worthy of a people who belong to God who are truly the 'house of God' or those within whom God dwells. The mission message - such a company needs to be firmly grounded in the truth and ought to be seeking to make it known – mission witness. In light of this, one can outline the epistle as follows:

- Chapter 1 Maintaining Doctrinal Faithfulness to the Truth in the House of God
Upholding the sound doctrine v3-4; v18-19; in "keeping the faith" Timothy must be prepared to fight for it. True doctrine is so important in the mission of God.
- Chapter 2 Public Worship in the House of God
This involves public prayer with a world vision and public teaching.
- Chapter 3 Leadership in the House of God
Guidance concerning the characteristics or spiritual qualities required of elders or deacons
- Chapter 4 Godliness and the House of God
There is emphasis upon sound doctrine and godly lifestyle – mission witness.
- Chapter 5 Relationships in the House of God
Directions are given regarding older men; younger men; older and younger women; widows and the elders.
- Chapter 6 Contentment in the House of God
A warning about grasping after wealth and guidance for the rich.

1 Timothy 1 Faithfulness to the Truth in the House of God

Opening Address

V1-2 sets before the reader one of the traditional ways Paul would introduce an epistle:

The Writer – 'Paul an apostle of Christ Jesus, by the commandment...' The name 'Paul' only is used with NO co-senders – significant for those who consider that the work is from the mind of Paul, and the hand of Luke. With regard to his name 'Saul', it is found only in Acts.

The claim is that Paul is the writer. It is not just that we have Pauline theology in the Letters or someone writing in Paul's name. See the introduction for full discussion of these points.

Paul claims that he was an 'apostle of Christ Jesus'. It is true that on some occasions the term can simply identify those who are appointed to carry out specific tasks by the churches (Phil. 2v25) but in its more technical sense it refers to someone who has seen the risen Lord and has been appointed by him to preach the gospel. This is clearly true about Paul.¹ This means that his teaching carries apostolic authority. So, Hendriksen² points out, the Letter to Timothy is not just some friendly tête-a-

¹ Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, p. 95.

² Hendriksen, *1&11 Timothy and Titus*, p.49.

tête; it may be cordial but 'it rises above the purely human level' as Paul was sent and commissioned by 'Christ Jesus' and spoke with Christ's delegated authority.

His calling was by commandment. This commandment was from God 'our saviour'. Eight times God is called 'saviour' in these Letters and four times the title is applied to Christ (1 Tim. 1v1; 2v3; 4v10; 2 Tim. 1v10; Tit. 1v3,4; 2v10,13; 3v4,6). Although the designation is not used in the earlier epistles, there Paul can frequently ascribe the work of saving men to God (e.g., 1 Cor. 1v21; Eph. 2v4,5,8; Phil. 1v28 God by this title is identified as the initiator of the salvation plan; Jesus the 'saviour' is the one by his death that secured salvation for us. Jesus Christ is also the one who is here called 'our hope'. Hope in the NT has within it the element of absolute certainty and therefore anticipation, which is lacking in the modern use of the word. So Jesus is the one who secured eternal life for us by his death and will certainly come to bring us into its fullness. This is the mission message.

The Recipient – Timothy is called his 'true son' in the faith. Timothy was from Lystra and was the product of a Jew/gentile marriage. His Christian mother was Jewish and his pagan father, a Greek (Acts 16v1; 2 Tim. 1v5). It is thought that Timothy was converted when Paul was there on his first missionary journey. The second Letter to Timothy also speaks of the godly influence his mother Eunice and grandmother Lois had upon him (2 Tim. 1v5; 3v15). But Paul uses language of Timothy which he employs of those who were converted through him (Phm. 10).

Timothy was gifted – he was noticed by the leaders locally, in fact 'He was well spoken of by the brethren who were at Lystra and Iconium', (Acts 16v2); his gifts were confirmed by prophesy, which still operated at that time in the history of the church (1 Tim. 1v18; 4v14). Paul added him to his missionary team, possibly as a replacement for John Mark (Acts 15v36-41). He submitted to circumcision so that he would not be hindered in his ministry among Jews. He was young (in 1 Tim. 4v12 Paul can write, 'let no one despise your youth'; in 2 Tim. 2v22 he urges him 'Flee also youthful lusts'), probably in his mid-thirties¹. That he was quite a timid young man is suggested by the way Paul had to encourage him to be bold and take the necessary stand for truth: 'Charge some that they teach no other doctrine', 'wage a good warfare', (1 Tim. 1v3; 18); also he reminds him that 'God has not given us the spirit of fear', (2 Tim. 1v7). He was not strong physically with reoccurring stomach problems (1 Tim. 5v23). He and also Titus became apostolic delegates to convey his teaching to the churches in Ephesus and Crete (1 Tim. 1v3-4; Tit. 1v5).

Paul grew to love young Timothy; in 1 Cor. 4v17 he calls him 'my beloved and faithful son' and commends him to the Philippians 'as a son with a father he has served with me in the gospel', Phil. 2v22). Paul certainly had confidence in Timothy, such confidence that he would send him on individual missions for him, (1 Thess. 3v1-6; 1 Cor. 4v17). Towner² makes the point that the situation that is revealed here regarding Timothy 'corresponds to the numerous other references to him as being on assignment somewhere away from Paul'. Paul calls him his 'fellow worker', Rom. 16v21 and in 2 Tim. 1v4 Paul recalls Timothy's tears and longs to see him so that he may be filled with joy.

It seems that Timothy responded well to the challenges he faced. Paul continues to encourage him in the second letter, 'Do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner, but share with me in the sufferings for the gospel according to the power of God' and 'Hold fast the pattern of sound words you have heard from me; again, 'Be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus', (2 Tim. 1v8, 13; 2v1-2). Timothy must 'endure afflictions' and 'be diligent to come', (4v5, 9). He must beware of Alexander the coppersmith, (4v14-15). He even became a prisoner for Christ for a time (Heb. 13v23).

¹ J.R.W. Stott, *The Message of 1 Timothy and Titus*, IVP, Leicester, 1996, p.37.

² Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, p. 98. See 1 Cor. 4v17; 16v10; Phil. 2v19; 1 Thess. 3v2; cf. Acts 17v14,15; 19v22.

That God took up Timothy is an encouragement and a reminder that he can use very ordinary people who depend upon him. You may feel inadequate, weak, unskilled for service. But God can do extraordinary things with ordinary people who trust him, who have an unusual measure of dependence upon him.

The Greeting – ‘grace, mercy and peace’. The insertion of ‘mercy’ between grace and peace in this greeting is unique to the greetings of 1 & 2 Timothy. He desired that his younger colleague might continue to know these precious blessings from their source in God and through the channel – Jesus Christ who was his Lord.

There was ‘grace’. He had known the saving grace of God back in Lystra and could now be ‘daily strengthened’ *evndunamou endunamou*¹ / in that same grace (2 Tim. 2v1). The verb is present for it is a constant enabling and passive since the strength is not from any inner source but imparted in dependence upon him.

Then came ‘mercy’ which should remind him of God’s special care in time of need – like the *hesed* in the OT. With his knowledge of the OT (‘From a child he had known the holy scriptures’, 2 Tim. 3v15) Timothy would be reminded of the fact that God, his God was one who would be there for him especially when he would be in situations that could overwhelm him.

Finally, ‘peace’ would remind him not just that he had experienced ‘peace with God’ (Rom. 5v1) but that he could know personal serenity in every demanding and dangerous situation (through prayer for kings and all who were in authority it is possible to ‘lead a quite life in all godliness and honesty’, (1 Tim. 2v1-2).

The rest of the chapter can be expounded by using the following basic outline:

Timothy Must Remain at Ephesus v1-3

Paul urged Timothy to stay at Ephesus in order to challenge the false teachers, who were teaching (Paul uses the present tense) the wrong use of the law. Ephesus was a city of possibly 50,000 which made it the third largest city in Asia Minor.² It was strategic ‘a communications hub’³ when one was travelling either east or west. So for mission it was perfectly placed to carry the message quickly to others, as it had already proved to be in Acts during Paul’s second missionary journey Acts 19v. This is one reason why Paul was so concerned that the message would not be corrupted.

There was a large Jewish presence in the city according to Josephus (*Ant.* 14.225-27; 16.162-73), which explains the interest in Jewish myths and fables. Knight⁴ points out that the indefinite personal pronoun *tinej tines* here ‘certain persons’, makes clear that more than one but not all the teachers had gone astray. They were teaching a different doctrine – Paul uses *e`terodidaskale,w heterodidaskaleō*⁵ which is found only here and again in 6v3 in the NT (also in 1QH 4:16 and a later letter of Ignatius to Polycarp, 3:1). One is reminded of the apostle’s use of *e`teroj heteros*⁶ in Gal. 1v6-7 for the preaching of a false gospel, contrary to his God given message. Knight⁷ makes the point that in a sense Paul defines the meaning of *e`terodidaskale,w heterodidaskaleō* by the comments in 6v3 of

¹ The verb is *evndunamo,w endunamoō* present imperative passive second person singular.

² Until recently the population estimate was put at 250,000, but this figure has now been considered because of the city and its environs to be unrealistic. See J.W. Hanson, “The Urban System of Roman Asia Minor”. In Bowman, Alan; Wilson, Andrew. *Settlement, Urbanization, and Population*. Oxford Studies on the Roman Economy 2. Oxford, England: Oxford University Press, 2011, p. 253.

³ Witherington, 111, *Letters and Homilies for Hellenized Christians*, p.186.

⁴ Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, p. 72.

⁵ This Greek word translated ‘a different doctrine’ is used with the content of the teaching in view.

⁶ *e`teroj heteros* ‘another’ gospel, which was not another, for there was no other.

⁷ Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, p. 72.

the false teachers who advocated 'a different doctrine and does not agree with sound words, those of our Lord Jesus Christ, and with the doctrine conforming to godliness'. Timothy was to 'command' (see also 4v11; 5v7; 6v13-14, 17) them to stop such teaching. How seriously do we take such teaching today? Have we allowed the mission message to be substituted by a 'different' doctrine?

It is important to be clear about Timothy's role in Ephesus. Timothy is really acting as an apostolic delegate associated with the apostolic mission, bringing authoritative correctives/commands on behalf of Paul. This is also true about Titus as we will also see (Tit. 1v5). The point to note is that it is a mistake to identify either Timothy or Titus as pastors, or to seek to equate their ministry with such. They would have been sent to deal with specific problems in the name of the apostle. They were under Paul's direction, part of his mission team and their commission was not long term but it would be intended that they move on when their work was done (Tit. 3v12 shows that Titus will leave Crete and later would be sent to Dalmatia (2 Tim. 4v10; Timothy will come to Rome (2 Tim. 4v9, 21). So the ministry of these two young men really constituted an extension of Paul's authority and the teaching they are urged to bring reflects the commands of the apostle.

The false teachers were occupied with or devoted to 'fables' or myths (*muqoj muthos*) and 'endless genealogies' (*avpe,rantoj genealogi,aij aperantos genealogiais*); 'endless' in the sense of only producing constant argument, stressing that they are useless and bring no results). Again, 'genealogies' identifies the content as being concerned with OT characters and even possibly OT family trees? Paul also identified them as 'teachers of the law' (1v7). This was a term used elsewhere of Jewish teachers (Luke 5v17; Acts 5v34). These two descriptions can be combined, and we can add the description in Tit. 1v14 concerning the teaching of 'Jewish fables'. Thus we learn something of the content of the false teaching. The heresy also appears to have had some influences from early Gnosticism (see 1 Tim. 6v20, where their teaching is referred to as that which is falsely called 'knowledge' *gnōseōs*; also the fact that they 'profess to know God' Tit. 1v16).

Here we do not have fully developed Gnosticism which would affect the dating of these Letters¹, but what seems to have been Jewish in nature (Tit. 1v10 mentions that the deceivers were 'of the circumcision' and 3v9 identifies their disputes as 'strivings about the law'). The teachers were taken up with useless speculation, involving fantastic stories about famous figures, about genealogies i.e. the false teachers were wasting their time in all kinds of fanciful tales regarding ancestors from the past.

Stories about early biblical characters and genealogical lists occur in the more speculative noncanonical Jewish writings² and this kind of literature was known to be popular among Jewish communities. Such works could be used or rather misused to influence the believers towards the 'deeper' kinds of piety that the false teachers were advocating – see the extreme practices of 4v1-3.

¹ Knight, after a reasonably full discussion remains a little uncertain as to what the terms 'myths and genealogies' refer to, but is clear about some things. Genealogies do not refer to the Gnostic systems of aeons as they were never so-called; if this was intended, Paul would have gone more fully into the content, not simply refer to them with a passing allusion; and as stated above Gnosticism in any clearly developed form (he refers to E. Yamauchi, *Pre-Christian Gnosticism*, London, 1973), is later than the NT. Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, p. 73-74. See also Witherington, 111, *Letters and Homilies for Hellenized Christians*, who in 'A Closer Look', p.341-347, discusses the opponents of Paul. He stresses the importance of not reading later Gnostic ideas into the text as the false teachers appear to be more like those in Colossians 2 than those dealt with by Irenaeus and others in the second century. This of course, will effect our whole interpretation of the Letters – if we are dealing with first-century documents and not a second-century church situation.

² E.g. *Jubilees* (circa 135-105 B.C.), a fanciful account of OT history from creation to Sinai; *Pseudo-Philo. Liber antiquitatem biblicarum* (circa A.D. 70) also recalls the OT story from creation until the death of King Saul. Note also the reference to Jannes and Jambres, 2 Tim. 3v8, who were according to Jewish tradition the two chief magicians of Pharaoh's court who sought to duplicate the miracles of Moses. *The Targum of Jonathan* inserts their names into Exodus 7v11. Here is an example of the focus upon OT stories, or the relating of tales about ancient figures.

For them, simple stories could reveal fantastic truths. So these teachers of the law had a focus upon wider OT concerns with incipient Gnostic elements which were resulting in controversial speculations which in nature resulted in false conjectures and deception, rather than 'godly edification'.

This phrase *oivkonomi,an qeou/ oikonomian theou* has been rendered differently by translators. We should note that *oivkonomi,a oikonomia* can be related to the administration or plan of action carried out by an *oivkono,moj oikonomos* a 'steward' or 'manager'. Paul can use the word *oivkonomi,a oikonomia* for his stewardship or management related to the sharing of the gospel or the revelation of the mystery 1 Cor. 9v17; Col. 1v25. The Ephesian readers would also be aware of the use of the term in Eph. 1v10; 3v9 where it is used in connection with the administration of God's plan in the fullness of time and the revelation of the mystery previously hidden in God but now revealed through the apostolic gospel teaching. One should also note that in v5 this phrase is called *paraggeli,a parangelia* a 'command' or 'instruction' Therefore one can suggest that here the words have a deeper meaning than 'edification', relating to the administration or unfolding of God's plan of salvation in the apostolic gospel. So there is a contrast between the disruption caused by the false law teaching and the defective understanding of God's will for his people which resulted from this teaching, rather than the sound apostolic gospel revelation apprehended by faith and the teaching concerning the ordering of the church, its worship, leadership, the needy etc¹.

Timothy should stay. A new sentence begins v5-7 with either Timothy's assignment presented as a contrast (use of *de*² 'but') or more likely the continuing of the contrast between the false teaching and the true. The *te,loj telos*³ 'goal', or 'end' of the commandment is now made clear. Paul's motive here is his love for the Christians at Ephesus, his sincere desire to recover them from heresy, and see them restored to a true faith (1v5-6), a faith he possessed. It is love from a pure heart, understood as the locus of the human personality the seat of the emotions and intentions. Also 'a good conscience', here is that which moves a person to appropriate behaviour. It involves a self-consciousness of one's actions and attitudes before God. Conscience in these Letters is in the case of believers either 'good' (1v5, 19) or 'clear' (3v9; 2Tim. 1v3); of unbelievers we read of a conscience 'seared' (4v2) or 'corrupted' (Tit. 1v15).

But 'some' (1v6) had missed the mark in seeking the path of truth and turned aside - the verb is *evktre,pomai ektrepomai*, sometimes used in medicine of a 'dislocation'. Here the use of the passive with the middle sense indicates that they have 'turned *themselves* aside'⁴ from the apostolic gospel of faith to empty words, or useless teaching.

It appears that in contrast to Galatia and Corinth where the troublesome teachers were outside and had infiltrated (Gal. 2v4; 2 Cor. 11v4), here they were within the ranks even of the leadership! Remember Acts 20v30 for Paul's last warning when he was saying farewell to the Ephesian elders, 'of your own selves...speaking perverse things'. So was the heresy among the leaders? Clues to this are that those who were troubling the church were teachers (1v3, 7; 6v3), which was the elders' role; a significant part of the letter is given over to the character, qualifications and discipline of church elders (3v1-13; 5v17-25); do we not have two of the leaders of this group named and excommunicated (1v19-20)? Again, there is the probability of the existence in Ephesus of house churches – is this part of the significance of the 'everywhere' of 1 Tim. 2v8? The picture is not of a large church split but house-churches capitulating to leadership which has gone astray (1 Tim. 5v13; 2 Tim. 3v6; Tit. 1v11). This explains the urgency in sending this letter.

Towner⁵ is helpful here when he writes of what could be considered to be central as far as the Letters to Timothy are concerned:

¹ For a full discussion of the use of *oivkonomi,a oikonomia* here, see Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, p. 75-76.

² The Greek *de* used as a contrast 'but', with a fresh thought.

³ The Greek *te,loj telos* can sometimes refer to the result of an action but here to its purpose or goal.

⁴ Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, p. 79.

⁵ Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, p. 55.

The importance of the gospel message and the missionary enterprise is underscored in these letters. Two factors shape the way in which the apostolic teaching is described. Terms such as 'sound doctrine' (1 Tim 1: 10; 2 Tim 4: 3; Titus 1: 9) and 'word of truth' (2 Tim 2: 15, 18) reflect the conflict with opponents and the need to set the Pauline gospel in stark contrast to the false or incomplete teachings being spread in the churches. The term 'deposit' (*paratheke*) views the gospel as a commodity entrusted by God to Paul and by Paul to Timothy (and others...1 Tim 6: 20). In 2 Timothy (1: 12, 14) this conception is part of the broader theme of handing over the Pauline mission and gospel to Timothy...in 2 Timothy where the imminence of the apostle's departure and the threat posed by heresy are in view, the accent shifts to the idea of the secure transmission of 'the deposit' to the next generation.

Here is one of the very real dangers the church faces in any country. Leaders/pastors who can be influenced by false doctrine. It is not enough to assume that all are sound in the faith just because they are pastors. For example, since freedom came to many countries in Eastern Europe in the 90's the door was opened not just to truth coming from the west but also error. A flood of false teaching can enter through some who have now been able to preach in these countries and of course through the books that are being printed and read more widely. It has always been the practice of groups of churches and individual fellowships world-wide to require potential pastors to affirm their soundness in doctrine before they are accepted and ordained. One can see why there is always a need for a clear statement of faith which includes all the basic doctrines held to be vital to the preservation of the faith – the deposit entrusted to us by God to share with a needy world.

In v7 with an introductory participial phrase Paul uses irony of his opponents. They 'desire' to be 'teachers of the law' – a term which was also used of Jewish teachers, like Gamaliel. The 'law' is the Mosaic law which is Paul's usual meaning when he uses this word and what follows in v9-10 would support this view. So it appears that the OT law was central to their teaching but Paul in an emphatic statement writes that they do not understand (the present tense of *noew noeō*¹ stresses their continuing inability to understand) what they are saying or what they so 'confidently affirm'. The verb² used is about giving one's opinion in a firm, dogmatic tone. So, basically, they do not know what they are talking about. Their rejection of the apostolic gospel, the only true mission message, involved a complete misunderstanding of the OT and especially the purpose of the law.

So they were treating the law as a base for their conjectures. Paul wants to say that God had given the law for a much more serious purpose. He wishes to affirm the real usefulness of the law in relation to the apostolic gospel which was being preached.

Timothy Must Recognise the True Use of the Law v8-11

The law is good if one uses it properly. Paul points out: 'We know that the law is made not for the righteous but lawbreakers...' In other words, the law - the 10 commandments - is useful here not for the believer but the unbeliever - it can show us that we are sinners and reveal to us our sin.

Stott³ reminds us of the Lutheran doctrine of the law which was settled at the Formula of Concord in 1577. This specified a three-fold use of the law. It is a means to the preservation of human society (Rom.13v1ff); a summons to repentance and faith (Gal. 3v24) - to lead to Christ; and a direction for the church to determine the conduct of believers (Rom. 8v4; 13v8). These are generally referred to as *usus politicus*; *usus pedagogus*; and *usus normativus*.

Most people see these three uses of the law. The one Paul emphasises here is the second – to reveal our sinfulness. The law will show us where we are in the wrong with God. We ought to note that scholars generally think that in The Letters to Timothy and Titus the subject of the law is not central or

¹ The verb 'to understand', here is a present active participle, nominative, masculine plural.

² *Diabebaiō, mai diabebaiōmai* here as an indicative middle, third person plural, *diabebaiou/ntai diabebaiountai*

³ Stott, *The Message of 1 Timothy and Titus*, p 47.

a main theme (as it is in Galatians and Romans); but the false teaching IS central and that involved wrong teaching about the law. So the theme of the law is more significant than many have actually recognised.

Paul begins by affirming that the law is 'good' - we are reminded of Romans 7 - it comes from God, it has divine authority. But it is only good if you allow it to have its proper role within its intended purpose and not, as was happening, misuse it. It is not for the righteous (is this a reference to Paul's theology of justification by faith - see Tit. 3v7 - or just Christian believers who submit to the law as a moral code?). Knight¹ makes the point that what Paul is saying is that 'the law is not given to apply in some mystical way to people who are already "righteous" i.e., those already seeking to conform to the law. It is, rather, given to deal with people who are specifically violating its sanctions and to warn them against their specific sins...'

Paul set out for us various examples of law-breaking, using masculine plurals – not the sins but the individuals who commit them - with the first examples given in pairs. Or is it possible that Paul is referring to the two tables of the law? He is reminding his readers of how the law made clear our DUTY to GOD first and then our DUTY to our NEIGHBOUR. Taking this approach 'The lawless and insubordinate', could be understood as linked more with the general statement of the law's purpose i.e. that it is given for those who are clear violators of God's law and rebels, those who reject God's authority.

In this approach the description 'ungodly' which now comes first will focus upon the 1st commandment. The NT uses *sebo,mai sebomai* for the worshippers of the true and living God (e.g. Acts 16v14; 17v4,17; 18v7), and those who fail to glorify and to worship God could be identified by the adjective *avsebh,j asebēs*²; *a`martwlo,j hamartōlos*, 'sinners' reminds us of the 2nd commandment as men are idolaters and Ex. 20v6 LXX uses *a`marti,aj pate,rwn hamartias paterōn*³ 'the iniquity of the fathers' in this context; the 'unholy' break the 3rd commandment since they take the name of the Lord in vain; and the 'profane' refers to Jewish transgression of the 4th commandment, or those who profaned the Sabbath day (see Lev. 19v12 LXX for the use of the verb 'profane', although the theme is slightly different).

The next five also allude to commandments 5-9. One should note that as Knight⁴ suggests the sins are stated in 'aggravated forms' as some of them are found in Ex. 21v15ff., where the commandments of Ex. 20 are specifically applied. In fact, he is convinced that when the OT generally applied the principles of the law it was used in the very specific way of highlighting people's sins – emphasising its ethical application rather than how the false teachers were using it.

Regarding 'killers of fathers and killers of mothers' or 'smiters of fathers and mothers'; one remembers Ex. 21v15 itself, 'And he who strikes his father or his mother shall surely be put to death', where for Israel the law concerning violence to fathers or mothers is seen as a capital crime. Such behaviour towards fathers and mothers clearly transgressed the 5th commandment.

'murderers' or 'manslayers'. Obviously this can be related to the 6th commandment, 'you shall not kill', - see Ex. 20v13 and especially 21v12 which highlights intentional manslaughter.

'adulterers and perverts' or 'fornicators and those who defile themselves with mankind'; a reference to heterosexual and homosexual sinners breaking the 7th commandment. (The Greek word *avrsebokoi,toj arsenokoitos*, is a combination of *avrshn arsēn* [male] and *keoith keoitē* [bed], used of

¹Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, p. 83.

² Greek *sebo,mai sebomai* as stated, identifies in the NT true worshippers of God while the opposite are *avsebh,j asebēs* meaning 'godless' or 'irreligious'; here the dative masculine plural is used, an alpha privative. The adjective is only here in these Letters although the noun occurs in 2 Tim. 2v16; Tit. 2v12.

³ *a`martwlo,j hamartōlos* is not of course an alpha privative, but continues in Greek the alliteration. We see in v15 what God has done for such. The words occur together again in 1 Pet. 4v18; Jude v15. Note the Greek *a`marti,aj pate,rwn hamartias paterōn* used as explained in connection with the sin of idolatry.

⁴ Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, p. 83-84.

the marriage bed in Heb. 13v4. It seems to refer back to the Leviticus texts which prohibit 'lying with a man as one lies with a woman' i.e. it refers to practising homosexuals)¹. One should not seek to specify the sin here as only sex with young boys, or homosexual prostitutes but just the act itself is identified. Mounce² points out that whatever the specific of this word, 'it denotes a type of illicit sexual activity that breaks the seventh commandment'.

'kidnappers' AV 'menstealers', forbidden by the 8th commandment, again with an allusion to Ex. 21v16. NIV has 'slave traders'. One must see here a call for appropriate conduct within an existing social practice – see Paul's teaching elsewhere on slaves and masters in Eph. 6v5-9; Col. 3v22-24; esp. 1 Tim. 6v1-2; Tit. 2v9.

'liars and perjured persons' breaks the 9th commandment. The second term is found once again in Zech. 5v3 LXX, for one who has sworn falsely. This focus is especially taken up in Ex. 23v1-3, 6-8.

Paul leaves the 10th out but he has been giving examples and he includes anything else contrary to the sound doctrine i.e. the doctrines of the gospel. The reference to sound doctrine will be found often in these letters - 6v3; 2 Tim. 1v13; 4v3; Tit. 1v9, 13; 2v2, 8. This is a medical metaphor which is applied to the healthiness of the apostolic teaching. He is no doubt thinking of the contrary false teaching here. The term is used in both of its occurrences in this letter in contexts which contrast it with *heterodidaskaleō*, teaching contrary to that of the true gospel.

In v11 he writes of the source/origin of the sound teaching - the glorious gospel of the blessed God³ which is the message of salvation revealing God and his glory in the coming of Christ – which was now committed to his trust. Here is the mission message, a helpful, healing, life-giving message – note the use of *hugainō*, a medical term. .

This is the problem here with the work of the false teachers. As we pointed out, the law reveals God's ethical standards/demands. It was given no doubt with the purpose of showing men their awful sinfulness, how far they had fallen short of what God required. This was being lost in the teaching of the false law-teachers. In v20 we will be introduced to one of these false teachers and 2 Tim. 2v17-18 reveals something of his teaching. It appears that Paul wishes to summarise in this later reference what was central to the false teaching and explains that they were, 'saying that the resurrection is already past'. When one links this to 1 Tim. 4v1-4 and the reference to creation, the forbidding of marriage and abstinence from 'foods which God created to be received with thanksgiving', one can detect more clearly something of the nature of the heresy. The false teachers saw in the law and especially in its genealogies and creation stories the idea that believers had somehow moved beyond the present existence and salvation in a sense was being fully realised. Like the Philippians they thought that they were 'already perfected', Phil. 3v12. This would seriously impinge on any teaching that the law showed up our sinfulness. Their gospel - if you could call it a gospel - promised too much too soon without a recognition of the sinfulness of sin revealed by the law - hence the emphasis that is to follow (v12-17) where Paul admits that he was the chief of sinners, v16. So with these teachers it appears that the emphasis on the awful sinfulness of sin revealed by the law was lost!

In preaching the gospel - if we have been like Paul 'appointed a preacher' (1 Tim. 2v7), we ought to recognise the importance of getting people first of all to the place where they realise that they are condemned sinners. What is the point of calling on our hearers to 'come to Jesus' if they have no clear idea why they have to come? They need to be made to see that they are sinners condemned, under the wrath of God, and without hope, apart from the salvation proclaimed in the gospel. How can we make them aware of the fact that they are lost and condemned? Of course one answer is to

¹ *avrsenokoi, toj arsenokoitos* continues the alliteration here. See also 1 Cor. 6v9-10 which is the only other NT occurrence.

² Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, p.39.

³ Only in 1 Timothy in the NT is 'blessedness' (*maka, rioj makarios*) ascribed to God (1v11; 6v15). This concept is often used in Philo. It presents God, not as an object of blessing, but as experiencing within himself the fullness of blessedness.

preach the 10 commandments, to challenge their consciences as to the many, many ways they have transgressed - to use the law as Paul is advocating here. It is those who realise their sin who will flee to the saviour, 'the one mediator between God and man'. Such an emphasis is clearly missing from much preaching today.

Timothy Must Remember the Experience of Paul v12-17

Timothy must remember that Paul himself was an example of these things. Paul's own conversion shows how one can be guilty or condemned by the law as a sinner and yet be saved by God's mercy and grace. He is 'a paradigm of the saved sinner'¹. Paul focuses on his personal experience of God's mercy – mercy to the greatest of sinners - which makes clear the general possibility of that same mercy 'to all who believe', (v16).

Paul reminds Timothy of what the Lord has done for him. He is filled with wonder and gratitude for his salvation and at the fact that Christ should have considered him at all. He testifies to:

What he had received.

First, he writes of God, 'who had enabled me ...putting me into the ministry'. He refers to the inner strength the Lord had given him. If God gives you a work to do for him, he will give you the strength. 'He counted me faithful'. It was faithful commitment to God's word and his commandments that was the basis why God took him up and used him.

Where he had been with God.

Where did he previously stand with God? 'Formally' to. *pro,teron to proteron* he had spoken evil of Jesus Christ and his messianic claims – thus he was 'a blasphemer'. He was a persecutor and 'injurious' – the word is *u`bristh,j hybristēs*, violent, seething in anger, vicious, finding satisfaction in insulting and humiliating other people. In Rom. 1v30 it is a sin characteristic of the pagan world.

How he was saved. He knew God's 'mercy' and then 'grace' overflowed to him – Paul is using language which suggests abundance, *u`perepleo,nasen huperepleonasen* - the compound verb means to abound 'above its usual measure' in an attempt to express the superabundance of God's grace to him (1v14). He was saved through faith which led him on to a heart filled with love for the Lord. Or alternatively as Knight² proposes, Paul's experience of Christ brought him from unbelief and hatred of God's people into the realm of faith, not just the initial act but the sphere of faith, in an ongoing relationship with Christ, plus love for the Christian community (1 Cor. 13v13; Eph. 1v15; 1 Thess. 1v3, 3v6; 2 Thess. 1v3).

Towner³ comments upon the new manner of existence for Paul, 'in Christ Jesus'. Surprisingly for some the phrase is nine times in the letters to Timothy. 'Despite less diversity of application...there is little to suggest that these letters to Timothy reflect a non Pauline use of the phrase.' Twice we have the sphere of life or faith 'in Christ Jesus', 2 Tim. 1v9; 3v12; the rest express certain qualities basic to Christian existence, 'faith and love', 1Tim.1v14; 2 Tim. 1v13; 'faith', 1 Tim. 3v13; 2 Tim. 3v15; 'life', 2 Tim. 1v1; 'grace', 2 Tim. 2v1; 'salvation', 2 Tim. 2v10. The phrase sets out the mystery of our union with Christ and the sense of our new and renewed status, 'expressing a dynamic existence that is eschatological, relational and existential'.

This salvation came through Jesus Christ. He makes this clear in a 'trustworthy' saying – with four more in the Pastorals (1 Tim. 3v1; 4v9; 2 Tim. 2v11; Tit. 3v8). Why the use of this affirmation in these Letters? Paul's gospel or his teaching had experienced many attacks in the past. The 'trustworthy saying' formula is a way whereby he can add affirmation to its apostolic authority, and by using this formula for the various aspects of his teaching reject the heretical alternative of the false teachers as that which does not belong to the category 'faithful'. 'When Paul states that the *lo/goj logos* is *pisto,j*

¹ Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, p. 105.

² Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, p. 98.

³ Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, p. 142.

pistos he is saying that it is a faithful presentation of God's message (cf. 2Tim. 2v2).¹ Only his gospel is 'worthy of all acceptance' with *paj pas* 'all' meaning wholehearted appropriation and application to yourself.

So yes, the law brings condemnation, but the good news/gospel announces salvation. 'Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners' - Paul has created a new saying which really reflects the existing tradition with regard to the coming of Christ, see Mark 2v17, 'I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance'; Luke 19v10 'for the Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost'; and John 18v37 'You say rightly that I am a king. For this cause I was born and for this cause I have come into the world, that I should bear witness to the truth'. The mission of God in Christ concerned his 'coming into the world', which for Hendriksen², includes incarnation, suffering, death. The 'world' is an important emphasis in light of what we will see, appears to be exclusivist and elitist nature of the heresy in the Letters. He came for sinners. 'The juxtaposition of *world* and *sinners* shows that *world* is an *ethical* concept. The reason for his entrance into this realm of sin is given in the words "sinners to save"...the paradoxical *coming* was, after all, fully justified and gloriously motivated.'³

Concerning 'sinners', Paul claims that he was the worst - here the word is *prw/to,j prōtos* meaning not the first one saved, but foremost or chief. Remember his admission in Acts 22v4 to the Jerusalem mob, 'I persecuted this Way to the death, binding and delivering into prisons both men and women'. See also 1 Cor. 15v9-10.

Why he obtained mercy. 'I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might show all long-suffering, as a pattern to those who are going to believe on him for everlasting life'. His conversion was an example of what God – here it is Jesus Christ - could do. He demonstrated his unlimited patience, the full extent of his forbearance. He did this *prw/to,j prōtos* 'first' in Paul for others to see, those who would also believe *evpV auvtw/| ep'autō* 'on him' depicting saving faith in Christ, using the prepositional phrase 'to repose one's trust upon'.

This was therefore Paul's – and our – glorious mission message. You are not beyond God's mercy. Neither are those to whom one may witness or preach the gospel. All those who repent and truly believe on him will receive everlasting life, which is the supernatural life of God and Christ and is eternal. The whole passage, showing Paul's sin and Christ's saving work, which in believing results in everlasting life, is meant to be seen to discredit the law teachers. They have no such clear message of good news.

V17 Paul breaks out into a spontaneous doxology. Here God is affirmed as 'king', (see Ps. 10v16; 74v12; Jer. 10v10) but in distinction from all earthly rulers, even the emperor, he is 'the king eternal'. Also he is the 'immortal' God, a quality proper to God alone and 'invisible' in contradistinction from the materialistic views of Gods in pagan idolatry. Finally Paul affirms that he is 'the only God', highlighting his supremacy.⁴ To such a one must be ascribed all 'honour and glory', an esteem for which he is alone worthy. It is clear from the various references in his epistles that Paul never forgot what the Lord had done for him. That such a great God could send his own son, demonstrate to us mercy and impart to us eternal life demands the response of the highest praise. The Greek says 'to the ages of the ages' – praise beyond time and on into eternity. The final *avmh,n amēn* means that Paul is looking for a response from Timothy and the hearers of the letter. Can you affirm it also?

¹ Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, p. 99.

² Hendriksen, *1 & 11 Timothy and Titus*, p.78.

³ Hendriksen, *1 & 11 Timothy and Titus*, p.78-79. Note how he continues, 'It was *to save sinners* that Christ Jesus came into the world. He did not come to help them save themselves, nor to induce them to save themselves, nor even to enable them to save themselves. He came *to save them!*'

⁴ Knight makes the point that adding *sofo,j sophos* 'wise' probably reflects the influence of Rom. 16v27, Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, p. 105.

Timothy Must Resist the False Teaching v 18-20

In v18 Paul returns to personal instruction (the use of the second person pronouns 'you' and his personal tone). Timothy is again identified as his spiritual 'son' and here Paul brings to him the charge (using *paraggeli*, an *parangelian*, which could be an apostolic command) with which he began the chapter (1v3). Through the prophecies, which still operated in the apostolic age, Timothy (or Paul, but more likely Timothy, 4v14) had received assurances about his calling. The command and the assurances were the motivation for what he must now do. He is to defend the truth (see 6v12). He must 'wage a good warfare', a military metaphor which was used widely by various writers in the Hellenistic world to describe life, or the moral struggle and this type of imagery is also used often by Paul¹. Paul is reminding him that God has entrusted him with this task. So Timothy is to stand for the truth, hold to the true faith and keep a clear conscience himself (v19), meaning that he ought to possess his own personal sense that he is being obedient to God. The missionary obligation is to know the truth, to hold on to it by preaching and teaching it – and live it out in obedience with a conscience that is clear.

Paul now as he often does presents a contrast. Rather than doing this, Hymenaeus (see 2 Tim. 2v17-18, the only other reference to him, where we learn more of the nature of the heresy as has been discussed above AND the fact that in spite of the discipline taken here he continued to oppose the Pauline mission and doctrine²) and Alexander have pushed away violently the strivings of conscience and made shipwreck of the faith (v20). Some suggest there is also no need for this person to be the same Alexander as in 2 Tim. 4v14, since it was a common name, but he could be the same opponent who because of Paul's discipline had moved elsewhere. Or if different individuals, both men are still active. Towner³ reminds us again of the nature of the problem here. Paul is alluding to the heretical decision to return to an external, law-based and ascetical 'faith' (1v3-4, 7, 8-10a; 4v1-3). He takes the reference to 'shipwreck' *nauage*,w *nauageōv* literally in 2 Cor. 11v25 'to break a ship in pieces' now here spiritual, as a personal reference to their own faith rather than that they had caused damage to the mission of God or 'the faith'. The subject of the verb is the collective 'some' from whom two important individuals are then named.

Paul exercising his apostolic authority, reveals 'I have delivered (them) to Satan' or handed them over to Satan – so almost certainly they were excommunicated. See also for similar references, 1 Cor. 5v5, 'deliver such a one to Satan', and v13, 'put away from yourselves that wicked person'. Here Hymenaeus and Alexander were almost certainly elders, as it was the elders who were to teach, (1 Tim. 3v2). They come under Paul's official censure. Here the first person singular verb implies a more direct involvement than the language of 1 Corinthians. Towner⁴ makes the point that several texts (Matt. 18v15-17; 1 Cor. 5v5; 2 Cor. 2v5-11; 2 Thess. 3v14-15) would seem to indicate that 'handing over to Satan' involves the last stage in removal from the church, i.e. removed from the sphere of God's protection into the world where Satan still held sway. We have not reached the more severe punishment of death, imposed directly from God, mentioned in other texts (Acts 5v1-11; 1 Cor. 11v30).

Regarding this action, it is important to note that the intention was that it should not be permanent or irrevocable. Its design was remedial – that the lesson might be learnt. The goal is reclamation. So 'That they be taught not to blaspheme' reminds us that this form of 'teaching' while severe was intended to bring improvement. The aim is that the individual is made to realise that their beliefs and actions are displeasing to God and that his people also see it as such. We should however note that the verb *paideu*,w *paideuō* is in the passive voice which means that the remedial education is with God. But if God works in the heart of the offender and brings him to personal repentance is there not -

¹ See Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, p. 157, n.14: 1 Cor. 9v24-25; 2 Cor. 6v7; Phil. 1v27-30; 3v12-14; Eph. 6v11-17; Col. 1v18-2v2; 2 Cor. 6v7; Phil. 1v27-30; 3v12-14; Eph. 6v11-17; Col. 1v18-2v2.

² Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, p.160.

³ Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, p. 158-159,

⁴ Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, p.161.

with clear evidence of that repentance - the possibility of restoration by/to the community? Often we can act in discipline, but we are not ready to act again in love. See the example of Paul's appeal for the forgiveness of the man who stood against him and had been disciplined in 2 Cor. 2v5-11.¹

Note the identification of their sin as 'blasphemy'. In v13 Paul has also used this concept of his own per-conversion torah and legalistic zeal. So it appears that Paul viewed the law-teachers and their speculative approach to the OT in a similar way. Their teaching of the law was very far from what it should have been. It dishonoured God, distorted the truth and was in opposition to the true teaching of the apostolic Gospel. We need this clarity of thinking when it comes to a lot of what passes for theological teaching today.

Further Comment on the Wrong/Right Use of the Law

Paul can write about the troublesome teachers of the law 1v7. What is the Christian's relationship to the law? Paul's teaching in Romans and Galatians can help us here.

1. The GOODNESS of the Law.

Rom. 7v12 emphasises, the law is 'holy and just and good'. The law is holy or sacred, because it reflects the character of him who gave it. The law is righteous or just in that it makes no unfair demands on people. It is good in that it has our welfare in mind and helps us to evaluate sin correctly. Gal. 3v19 reminds us that it was ordained by angels.

2. The USEFULNESS of the Law.

(a) It showed up our sinfulness bringing to us 'a knowledge of sin', Rom. 3v20, for it was a revelation of what God expected one to be. We all came short of it.

(b) It also showed sin up in its true character i.e. as transgression, 'the likeness of the transgression of Adam', Rom. 5v14. He transgressed a command and once the law was in place so do others who sin.

(c) Sin in a sense through the law was made more sinful because it became the conscious disobeying of definite commandments, 'the law entered that the offence might abound', Rom. 5v20.

(d) It stimulated sin, Rom. 7v7-13. It is not that the law itself is sin but sin receives an opportunity by the law when it forbids it. When the law comes upon men with its prohibition, sin springs into action and awakens in man a desire for what is forbidden by the commandment. It 'produced in me all manner of evil desire'. In this sense it can be understood that desires are "by the law", Rom. 7v5, and sin is "dead" apart from the law. When we have a law prohibition then a man's fallenness provokes resistance to it.

(e) So the law which was intended 'to bring life', Rom. 7v10, brought death. It was an instrument of condemnation, 'the law brings about wrath', and death, Rom. 4v15; 7v9. In fact, the law brought sin, which already existed and 'was in the world' but was not yet committed under the law, to its utmost development, Rom. 5v13. It is not that the law is responsible for this tragic situation. It is sin in man that makes the law an instrument of death. The sinfulness of man's nature made him incapable of giving the obedience the law demands. Rom. 8v7 states, 'the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can it be'.

(f) In Galatians the law is identified as a *paidagōgos* (a slave attendant in charge of a minor in a family), showing to all men their bondage and shutting them up to faith as the only way of salvation. So the law was introduced to show men their guilt and need of salvation and to 'bring us to Christ', Gal. 3v24.

(g) The wonderful truth is that Christ met the claims of the law against men and the condemnation under which they stand, 'Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us', Gal. 3v13. Thus the law was upheld, 'we establish the law', Rom. 3v32. When a person has

¹ See Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, p. 111-112.

placed faith in Christ and is thus identified with Christ in his death and resurrection he is freed from the bondage of the law and its condemnation. This is expressed clearly in Rom. 7v1-4.

3. Our DEADNESS to the Law.

Rom.7 v1-4 affirms that we have been delivered from the law by the death of Christ. Paul explains that marriage is a contract between two people until they are separated by death. So as death terminates a marriage, death - the death of Christ - has delivered us from our bondage to the law (v4). We shared Christ's death. 'you also have become dead to the law through the body of Christ'. The death penalty for sin prescribed by the law has been borne by Christ our substitute. Therefore because the demands of the law have been met in Christ by his death, we are no longer under the law's condemnation but under grace. 'There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus', Rom. 8v1.

4. The WEAKNESS of the Law

In Romans 7v14 - 8v4 Paul explains the inner conflict of the believer. He is said to be a servant of two masters. With his mind he serves the law of God, loving it and wanting to keep it. But with his flesh he serves the law of sin. In other words, if left to himself he is a helpless creature, the slave of sin, 'to will is present with me, but how to perform that what is good I do not find', (7v18). So the law can show us how we ought to live, but it could not give us the power – see Rom. 8v3, 'what the law could not do'. It was 'weak' because of our flesh. But God has acted. He sent his son and 'condemned sin in the flesh' i.e. in Christ's flesh, for he took our sin upon himself, he became the sacrifice. Paul says that God sent his son 'on account of sin', i.e. as a sin offering *kai. peri. a`marti,aj kai peri hamartias* – this is the regular phrase in LXX for a sin-offering. He became the sin offering for me and now there is no condemnation.

Also we can now overcome the power of the flesh. He has given the Holy Spirit (Rom.8v1f) to indwell us and so that by his power 'The righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit'.

5. The RIGHTEOUSNESS of the Law.

Rom. 8v4 reveals that the righteousness of the law will be seen as we walk in the enabling power of the Holy Spirit. Paul emphasises that we are not in the flesh but in the Spirit (8v5-9). We live in the realm of the Spirit and so 'we are debtors', (v12) to walk in the Spirit's power. For 'by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body', (v13). Positive occupation in the things of the Spirit delivers us from the power of the flesh.

6. The OLDNESS of the Law.

Rom. 7v6 stresses that we do not walk in the oldness of the letter. We must not understand our responsibility to be like the old situation of the Israelites. The law had a particular application to them in their circumstances but the application will be different for us today. This is clear when we look at the OT covenant stipulations of the law. There were over 600 stipulations in the covenant which the nation of Israel were expected to observe as signs of their devotion to God. Four of the OT books contain these stipulations, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy. But none of its stipulations are binding upon us unless they are renewed in the New Covenant.

Some stipulations of the Old Covenant have clearly not been renewed in the New Covenant. *Civil Law*, with its various penalties when one was tried in Israel; *Ritual Law*, which gave details of the priest's duties, details of the sacrifices, animals to be used, their ceremonial killing, cooking and eating, all part of the OT worship of God. Jesus' once for all sacrifice has brought these sacrifices to an end. But there are certain aspects of the *Ethical Law* actually restated in the New Covenant. See Matt. 5:21-48, Eph. 6v1-3. These can be considered part of the New Testament 'law of Christ', Gal. 6v2.

G Fee and D Stuart summarise:

Included in such a category would be the ten commandments, since they are cited in various ways in the New Testament as still bearing upon Christians (see Matt. 5:21-37; John 7:23), and the two great commandments from Deuteronomy 6:5 and Leviticus 19:18. No other specific Old Testament laws can be proved to be strictly binding on Christians, valuable as it is for Christians to know all of the laws.¹

The commandments do not of course include the 4th commandment. Believers met from the beginning on the 1st day of the week John 20v19; Acts 20v7, although the principle of rest one day a week is something that we ought to remember. Actually, the rest of God into which we enter in Hebrews 4v9-11 is the fulfilment of the Sabbath.

So Sabbath observance is NOT required of NT Christians – it was not one of the stipulations agreed at the Council of Jerusalem which Gentile Christians were asked to observe to maintain harmony or social contact with their Jewish brethren. In fact there was no requirement to general submission to the Jewish law and in particular no need either for circumcision, or Sabbath observance; only the bare minimum of requirements was laid upon the Church, abstinence from idol meat, from blood, from things strangled and from immorality, Acts 15v28-29. 'It seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things...if you keep yourselves from these you will do well'. But no Sabbath observance.

Therefore Paul can stress that we live in the newness of the Spirit, but the law's principles are still important. The righteousness of the law is really filled out in the teaching of Jesus e.g. in the Sermon on the Mount and in fact, in the whole of the NT. Here we do not have a different standard since the law reflects the character of God. The Christian life for Paul is basically life in the Spirit which is living a life of obedience or righteousness through the Holy Spirit's enabling.

To conclude, someone might ask "So Is the law still binding upon the Christian?" The answer must be yes and no. No, in the sense that our acceptance with God does not depend on keeping it. We cannot keep it but are condemned by it. But Christ has taken this condemnation upon himself for us at the cross. Rather than obedience to an external code, as we surrender to the indwelling Spirit and by his enabling, "the righteousness of the law is fulfilled...."

This is so different from what the law teachers were seeking to teach.

There is another issue concerning the law and the gospel which needs to be made clear but can only be touched upon. This concerns recent discussion on what is called The New Perspective. The main scholars who have been influential in this area have been E P Sanders, James Dunn and N T Wright².

Sanders assessment of the Judaism of Jesus' day is that it was not a religion of works righteousness. James Dunn also stressed the point that when Paul wrote that we are justified by faith, not by works of the law he did not mean merit earning works but just Jewish badges i.e. you did not need to take on certain elements of Judaism like circumcision, Jewish feasts, Sabbath to become a Christian but you could just be saved by faith – he is leaving out the negative aspect, not by our own merit, and really just giving us half a gospel. N T Wright affirmed that we have been reading Paul through Lutheran eyes and identified the affirmations concerning justification and imputed righteousness as just assurances that we are part of the Covenant people of God – again only half a gospel.

What was the nature of Judaism in the first century?

The traditional viewpoint of the Judaism of Paul's day i.e. before Sanders and a few others has been to see it as largely legalistic with a perverted understanding of the role of the law. It is true that when the law was first given it was not with the purpose of achieving a right relationship with God by means

¹ G Fee and D Stuart, *How to Read the Bible for All it is Worth*, Scripture Union, Bletchley 1993, p154.

² E P Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, London, SCM, 1977; *Paul, the Law and the Jewish People*, Philadelphia, Fortress; James D.G. Dunn, *Romans 1-8*, Word Biblical Commentary, 38A, Word Books, Dallas, Texas, 1988; and N T Wright, *The Climax of the Covenant*, T & T Clark, 1991; *Justification: God's Plan and Paul's Vision*, SPCK, London, 2009.

of obedience. Israel already had a relationship with God by means of His election or choice of them and by redemption from Egypt. The context of the law was the covenant and this was instituted by the gracious act of God. The law did not constitute them God's people but provided Israel with a standard through which the covenant relationship could be preserved.

But following the exile the law came to occupy a primary position and keeping it was of vital importance, in the light of God's past judgment on the nation for their disobedience. The observance of the law became the basis of God's verdict on the individual and that which determined his fate in the world of the hereafter - it had reached the position of intermediary between God and man. So it can be maintained that in first century Judaism the law was therefore viewed as the unique means to acquire for oneself merit, reward or righteousness before God and the instrument given by God to subjugate the evil impulses within. It is this Jewish legalistic perversion which treats the law as a means of accumulating good works and earning one's own salvation against which Paul contends.

So can Judaism in Jesus' day not be described as seeking acceptance through merit, contra Sanders? One can cite, as an example of Judaic thought in this regard, *Sirach*, also known as *Ecclesiasticus*, a second-century B.C. Jewish writing that teaches quite clearly that human good deeds atone for sins. Also Sanders has ignored Flavius Josephus' frequent insistence that God's grace is meted out in response to merit, and he simply discounts the first century AD work of 4th *Ezra* as an atypical exception. Again, the Qumran document states: "For I belong to the God of my vindication and the perfection of my way is in his hand with the virtue of my heart. And with my righteous deeds he will wipe away my transgressions."

When the scriptures affirm (Rom. 3v26; Gal. 2v16) that we are justified by faith 'not by works of the law', they are not simply stressing that we do not need to take on certain Jewish practices to become Christians, but they are making clear that we are not justified by obedience to the law or by the deeds of the law but simply by faith in Christ's finished work. By faith righteousness is imputed to the believer – the many statements in Romans 4 concerning Abraham's assurance of acceptance through righteousness 'counted' to him – and to ourselves, 4v22-25 cannot satisfactorily be explained as just us becoming part of the new covenant.¹

1Timothy2v1-15 Public Worship in the House of God

In this letter Paul is no doubt looking beyond Timothy to whom he writes to the Ephesian church. He wants Timothy to regulate the life and worship of the church because of the problems there have been. He is dealing more now with the conduct of public worship. Hendriksen² suggests the following approach:

- V1-7 Section A When the church gathers for worship, prayers must be made 'on behalf of all men'.
- V8-15 Section B Both the men and the women must behave properly:
 1. The men in every place of public worship must lift up holy hands;
 2. The women in getting ready 'to go to church' must dress becomingly and at the place of worship must show that they understand and have accepted their divinely ordained position.

Paul deals with two main aspects of the church's worship, prayer with a world vision and the respective roles of men and women in public worship.

Often we lose sight of the emphasis of mission in the PE. Yet it is clearly here in a number of ways.

¹ See Robert L Reymond, http://www.knoxseminary.org/Prospective/Faculty/KnoxPulpit/rreymond_sanders-dunn.html See also C. E. B. Cranfield, in *On Romans and Other New Testament Essays*, "The Works of the Law' in the Epistle to the Romans", p.15ff., who rejects Dunn's understanding of this phrase and insists it still means 'obedience to the law'. John Piper. *The Future of Justification*, IVP 2008 available to download.

² Hendriksen, *1 & 11 Timothy and Titus*, p.90.

- The mission message is emphasised here. It is ‘sound doctrine’ (1 Tim.1v10; 2 Tim.4v3; Titus 1v9) and ‘the word of truth’ (2 Tim.2v15,18) as opposed to the false teaching being spread by the ‘law teachers’. It is ‘the deposit’ *th.n paraqh,khn tēn parathēkēn* (1 Tim.6v20) entrusted by God to Paul and then to Timothy (2 Tim. 1v14)
- The mission answer to man’s need – ‘Christ gave himself a ransom for all’ (2v5-6) – is highlighted here.
- Mission Christology proclaims that Jesus is the ‘one mediator between God and men’, (2v5).
- Paul’s calling to preach to the Gentiles is here (2v7). He is ‘appointed a preacher...a teacher of the gentiles in faith and truth’.
- The Christian communities in Ephesus and Crete had a responsibility in this mission (1 Tim.3 v7; 5v14; 6v1; Titus 2v5, 9; 3v2, 8). The name of God must not be blasphemed but whether it is the elders, the younger widows, slaves, wives, in fact the community generally must have a lifestyle that impacts the society in which they live. But here there is another emphasis.
- the mission of God moves forward only by prayer ‘for all men’ (2v1-4).

Towner¹ highlights the allusions to the OT in the phrase in v8 *evn panti. to,pw| en panti topō*, ‘in every place’. Following the theological arguments for universal mission men are commanded to pray like this. The phrase ‘in every place’ in the NT is only in Paul (1 Cor. 1v2; 2 Cor. 2v14; 1 Thess. 1v8) and in using it in relation to gospel proclamation it is alluding to Mal. 1v11, the theme of universal gentile worship, ‘For from the rising of the sun, even to its going down, my name shall be great among the Gentiles: in every place incense shall be offered to my name, and a pure offering; for my name shall be great among the nations, says the Lord of Hosts’. Here are to be the fulfillers of the OT promise, Paul, Timothy, Titus and the Christian communities by their lifestyle in Ephesus and Crete.

And the mission of God must go on after Paul with 2 Timothy written to encourage Paul’s younger colleague to be ready to carry the message on, (2 Tim. 1v6-14; 2v1-7; 3v10-17; 4v1-5, 6-18). Timothy must not be ashamed (2 Tim. 1v8) a command which Towner² points out has echoes of Romans 1v16 and the confession ‘I am not ashamed’ (v12) echoes verses like Isaiah 28v16; 50v7-8. ‘The Lord God will help me; therefore I will not be disgraced. Therefore I have set my face like a flint, and I know that I will not be ashamed’. Paul and Timothy stand in the same line of the fulfilment of the eschatological gospel promise in the mission of God to the Gentiles. We also stand in that same situation, having the same calling; we are carrying on the mission of God, whether we are preachers, elders, young widows, wives, servants, or simply Christians in the local Christian community.

Now we focus on the passage.

In v1 we see the universal scope of our responsibility in prayer. Is Paul still saying something about the problem at Ephesus? The word ‘therefore’ would suggest this. The ‘law-teachers’ may also have been influenced by an elitism in which the gospel was restricted to a privileged number. But Paul has stated that Christ came ‘to save sinners’ – not just Jewish sinners. Four times Paul stresses the point. Prayers are to be offered for all men. God’s will have all men to be saved (v3-4); Christ gave himself a ransom for all (v6); Paul was a teacher of the faith to all nations (v7). Stott³ sees this repetition as deliberate. Fee⁴ also notes that the one clear concern running through the passage is that the gospel is for everyone (‘all people’, v1, 4-6, 7). The church’s prayers and the proclamation concern everyone. So the content and even the length of the passage on prayer (2v1-7) imply that this was a problem at Ephesus so it is ‘almost polemical in character’.⁵

How We Are to Pray v1.

¹ Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, p.55-56.

² Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, p.56.

³ Stott, *The Message of 1 Timothy and Titus*, p.60.

⁴ Fee, *1 and 2 Timothy, Titus*, p.62

⁵ Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, p.417.

The Church must pray. Paul writes, 'first of all', meaning not primacy of time but primacy of importance¹. Guy King² suggests that we might differentiate between these various expressions in the following way – 'supplications' are prayers of particular import; 'prayers' are prayers of general import; 'intercessions', are prayers of wider import and 'giving of thanks', is prayer of grateful import.

True, 'supplications' carries the idea of intercession about particular needs, needs that are critical and deeply affect us. But also the verb from which the noun is derived has the idea of having an audience with the king!

While 'supplications' may suggest needs that are more urgent or related to specific situations, difficult situations, 'prayers', will be the exhortation which concerns the bringing those needs which are always present, general needs. We are urged to bring them as petitions into the presence of the Lord.

Again, 'intercessions' is specific prayer for individuals. See Acts 12v5, where the church prayed particularly for Peter. The Holy Spirit does this for us, Rom.8v27, and Jesus our High Priest, Heb. 7v25, who 'ever lives to make intercession for us'. Do we do this for others?

Next is 'giving of thanks'. Here is thanksgiving or gratitude for what the Lord has done for us already. He owes us nothing. And he is saddened by ingratitude as with the ten lepers when only one returned to give him thanks (Luke 17v17).

Who We Are to Pray For. V1-2 'all men, for kings...'

Stott³ refers to the occasion when he was on holiday and attended public worship. The minister was away on holiday so the elder led the pastoral prayer. He prayed that the minister would enjoy a good vacation, two sick ladies in the congregation might be healed and that was all. It took 30 seconds. 'I came away saddened, sensing that this church had worshipped a little village God of their own devising. There was no recognition of the needs of the world, and no attempt to embrace the world in prayer'. He continued, 'I sometime wonder whether the comparatively slow progress toward peace and justice in the world, towards world evangelization, is due more than anything else to the prayerlessness of the people of God'. Is this where we are failing? Do our prayers embrace the world as well as our family and local church neighbourhood?

F.B Meyer, of Melbourne Hall, Leicester once stayed in the home of A.B. Simpson, the founder of the Christian and Missionary Alliance. Early the next morning Mr. Meyer went quietly downstairs, thinking he was the first one up. But through the partially open door to the study he could see A.B. Simpson in prayer. He had a globe of the world in front of him, and he would put his finger on a spot, and pray. Then he would spin it, put his finger on another spot, and pray. Then, as F.B. Meyer watched unnoticed, A.B. Simpson leaned forward and took the whole globe in his arms, and hugged it, and cried.

The reference to praying 'For kings' is quite remarkable since at the time there were no known Christian rulers existing in the known world. We are reminded of Jeremiah's encouragement to the people carried away from Jerusalem to Babylon, 'Seek the peace of the city where I have caused you to be carried away captive and pray to the Lord for it, for in its peace you will have peace', Jer.29v7; also Ezra 6v10 which makes the appeal, 'pray for the life of the king and his sons'.

The term 'king' was used of the Roman emperor in the Greek speaking world; here it can be just a generalising reference to Roman emperors or Roman client kings. 'All who are in authority' will refer to any kind of lower official, all holding imperial positions throughout the empire.

Tertullian stated, 'We pray also for the emperors, for their ministers and those in power, that their reign may continue, that the state may be at peace, and that the end of the world may be postponed'.⁴

¹ Guthrie *The Pastoral Epistles*, p. 79.

² G.H. King, *A Leader Led*, Marshall, Morgan and Scott, London, 1976, p.45

³ Stott, *The Message of 1 Timothy and Titus*, p.61

⁴ Tertullian, *Apology*, translated by T.R. Glover, Loeb Classical Library, Heinemann, 1931, 39.2.

Paul writes that the outcome of this type of praying is 'that we may live a quiet and peaceful life in all godliness and reverence'. He is thinking first of freedom from war and civil strife, similar to the Hellenistic ideal. So in the mission context of 1 Tim.2 seeking God for 'all in authority' can lead to circumstances that make witness possible. Peaceful conditions will facilitate the preaching of the gospel.

Note some important teaching about church and state (implied here).

1 It is the duty of the state to keep the peace and protect its citizens from whatever would disrupt their lives.

2 Also there is the duty to punish evil and promote good so that the church should be free to worship God and propagate the gospel.

3 On the other hand there is the duty of the church to pray for the state and its leaders and to thank God for good government.

Prayer to God can affect the situation and God can save the worst – he saved Paul. See also Jonah 3v5-10; Daniel 2v46-49; 3v28-30; 4v34-37. The people need to realise that there is a God in heaven.

What are 'godliness' and 'reverence'? The words are *euvsebei,a|* and *semno,thj* *eusebeia* and *semnotēs*. The word *eusebeia* is used often by Paul in these letters (1 Tim.2v2; 3v16; 4v7, 8; 6v3, 5, 6, 11; 2 Tim. 3v5; Titus 1v1) but elsewhere only in a few places in the NT (Acts 3v12; 2 Pet. 1v3, 6, 7; 3v11). Therefore our understanding of this word is important for Paul's view of the community's Christian lifestyle.

Towner¹ focuses upon these two words. Concerning *eusebeia* he highlights its use in Hellenistic ethical thought, and specifically its use in the cult of Artemis. In Greek culture it expressed the attitude of reverence towards persons and things (ancestors, living relatives, rulers, i.e. respect for the various orders within life), with their subsequent religious orientation since they were all under the care of the gods. The Roman equivalent to *eusebeia* was *pietas* which referred to the same various things which commanded respect. While the use of the concept in the Greco-Roman environment and especially the connection with Artemis is clear, for Towner it is the concern in Hellenistic Judaism with the Diaspora Jewish community to interpret its faith for contemporary non-Jewish society which is important. They used it to express in Greek the interrelationship between the knowledge of the one true God, the fear of the Lord and the resulting conduct which results from this. This is what determined its meaning in the NT. At its basis is the concept of knowing God and the behaviour that ought to follow from this knowledge. This alone is authentic Christianity, in its inward and outward aspects. It is set over against *avse,beia* *asebeia* 1 Tim. 1v9; 2 Tim.2v16; Titus 2v12, 'ungodliness'. 'What his opponents presented to the churches as "godliness" Paul exposed as being superficial and empty of a genuine knowledge of God, despite their assertions to a better knowledge of the divine'.²

Yet it appears that Paul used the word more widely than simply as a response to his opponents. Because of the extensive use of *eusebeia* in these letters it becomes clear that he is responding to how it was popularly employed in Greek and Roman ethics and in the cult of Artemas. Contemporary culture needed to face the challenge of the Christian gospel that this prized cardinal virtue was attainable only through the true knowledge of the only God (1 Tim. 1v17) and by faith in Christ, the only mediator (1 Tim. 2v5) 'who gave himself a ransom' and by the power of the Holy Spirit (2 Tim. 1v7).

Regarding *semnotēs* and its word group, the meaning in secular Greek and among Hellenistic Jewish writers and Judaism is outward dignity, seriousness, respectability, reverence in conduct and speech, behaviour that is deserving of respect. Paul also employs the related words in these Letters to describe the conduct of leaders (1 Tim.3v4, 8, 11) who are to show respectable, dignified conduct in contrast to the culture, insincere speech, drunkenness, dishonesty and slander. Also, what was

¹ Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, p.171-175.

² Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, p.174.

expected of the leaders was expected of all (Tit. 2v2, 7). This is the missological witness needed for the contemporary culture.

So what can we say about 'godliness' in these writings?

- As far as the NT is concerned 'godliness' is most prominent here in these Letters to describe the truly Christian lifestyle.
- It is the Christ-event which lies at its basis (1 Tim.3v16). Titus also reminds us of this, Tit. 2v11-12, 'The grace of God that brings salvation has appeared...that denying ungodliness...we should live...godly (euvsebwn/j eusebōs the adverb)... in this present age'.
- Its source is the true knowledge of God revealed in the gospel and involves commitment to the truth (Tit. 1v1; 1 Tim. 6v3-6, 'the doctrine which is according to godliness' (v3).
- It is a lifestyle which the Christian is called to pursue (1 Tim.4v7; Tit. 2v12).
- It contrasts with the behaviour of the false teachers whose theology was divorced from upright living.
- It is a comprehensive term for the Christian life
- It is the mission lifestyle, the witness in an alien culture.

'Godliness' is an absolutely vital lifestyle to influence the local community. Again and again we are warned in these Letters of the damage which can be done by local believers not living as they ought. Whether we are in leadership or simply local members, both old or young, the message is clear. In the choice of acceptable elders, they 'must have a good testimony among those who are outside', 1 Tim. 3v7. Older widows should have 'a reputation for good works' and the younger must 'give no opportunity for the adversary to speak reproachfully' 1 Tim. 5v9, 14 and again to so live with their husbands 'that the word of God may not be blasphemed', Tit. 2v5. Slaves must so respect their masters 'that the name of God and his doctrine may not be blasphemed', 1 Tim. 6v1. The younger men in Crete by life and lip must so live that 'an opponent may be ashamed, having nothing evil to say of you', Tit. 2v6. One recalls the discussion with a local spiritual leader in Romania and his sad assessment, deeply felt, about the witness of some local churches. Because of things that had happened in the past and unacceptable behaviour on the part of some local Christians in various villages, he commented, 'It would be better to bulldoze down some local churches and start again!' He felt that this was the only way the witness could be maintained. In certain situations there is a need to 'repent and do the first works', Rev. 2v5.

In v3-4 the prayers of v1 are in accordance with God's will. Such praying 'is good and acceptable in the sight of God our saviour'. There is a link here with a statement found a number of times in Deuteronomy (Deut. 12v25, 28; 12v19; 21v9) where we have acts which can meet the standard of God's commandments. Also the word 'acceptable' avpo,dektoj *apodektos* reminds us of Leviticus where the use of dekto,j *dektos*, the LXX reference e.g. Lev. 1v3f refers to sacrifices acceptable to God. So the emphasis is that the community's several forms of intercession are pleasing in God's sight. As 'saviour' here, the word that presents him as the ultimate source of salvation, he encourages his people to be involved for it is through their prayers for all men that this salvation can be accomplished! Towner¹ reminds us of the vital nature of this prayer ministry. 'It is not simply an optional church practice that pleases God, but a practice as integral to the church's life with God as was sacrifice in the time before Christ'. What does it mean to us? When the church prays are we never there? We have an obligation. Here there is an exciting possibility - we can be truly involved by our prayers in the mission of God, what he is doing in the world!

Why We Should Thus Pray. V3-7

The apostle focuses FIRST upon **God and All People**.

The reason that the church should embrace all people in its prayers is that this is the compass of God's will – to save all humankind. Paul is aware that the 'law-teachers' had a nationalistic spirit and considered that only the 'initiated' would be blessed. But the Letters to Timothy and Titus have a

¹ Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, p177.

universal emphasis (1 Tim. 2v1, 4, 6; 4v10; 2 Timothy 1v11; 4v17; Tit. 2v11). However, Paul was not a universalist, see 3v6, which speaks of falling into condemnation; 5v24 of sins that bring us down into judgement; and 6v9, with the reference to 'destruction and perdition'.

Some scholars have at this point felt obliged to focus upon certain statements here and discuss them in relation to the whole matter of election. I refer to the assertions, 'God wills'; 'all men'; 'to be saved'. This may prove useful, but we need to be careful not to miss the point of the passage and the intention of the apostle.

First, 'God wills'; the verb *qe,lei thelei* should be understood in a strong sense 'to will' not in a weak sense 'to wish'. See its use in this sense in Rom. 9v18; 1 Cor. 4v19; 12v18; 15v38; Col. 1v27. See also 1 Cor. 12v18 and 12v11. So there is no need to see some weakened sense here and suggest that *thelei* just expresses a mere desire, while the real purpose is to save only a limited number. Certainly also we should understand 'saved' not of physical salvation or preservation but in its full spiritual sense. The context of 1 Timothy with the exclusiveness seemingly advocated by the false teachers, means that *thelei* is better understood as God's universal intention to save. This also of course effects one's interpretation of 'all men' or 'all humankind'. Rather than a discussion on election in which the interpretation will be 'all kinds of men/people' i.e. a particular election¹, this statement simply continues the theme of universality in the passage. Here it is the gentile mission (v7) which is in mind. The breadth of God's will or his salvific purpose includes the non-Jewish world.

So this is how we ought to interpret *pa,ntaj avnqrw,pouj pantas anthropous*. Rather than meaning 'all people without exception', which would be an affirmation of 'universalism', ignoring the emphasis of the requirement of faith (1 Tim. 1v16; 3v16; 4v10; 2 Tim. 1v5; 3v15; Titus 1v1; 3v8) or, alternatively, meaning 'all the elect' or 'all kinds of people', 'the context shows that the inclusion of gentiles alongside Jews in salvation is the primary issue here...universal accessibility to God's salvation...'² God's will – contrary to the mistaken views of the false teachers – is that both Jew and gentile will 'come to the knowledge of the truth'. It was no doubt written to emphasise that there is work to do throughout the world, that the church should forsake its introverted and esoteric mindset, or an 'ourselves alone' mentality and recognise that they must be involved in the mission of God to reach 'all peoples' backed up by real prayer. As the church of the twenty-first century we must examine our own mindset and ask what we are doing as participants of the mission of God. How many are we seeking to see 'come to the knowledge of the truth'? This final statement views conversion as the rational decision of people hearing the real message of truth, in contrast to the false teachings of the law teachers. So Paul here has used a hendiadys, spelling out more fully the meaning of 'to be saved' earlier in the verse³.

This God who wants all men to be saved has not a number of ways for this to happen. There is only one mediator between God and humans.

Christ and All People v5-6.

Paul affirms, 'There is one God'. This is an abbreviation of the *Shema* (Deut. 6v4) the Jewish affirmation of faith which reflects belief in the living God over against the many gods of the gentiles. Paul has used it before (Gal. 3v20; 1 Cor. 8v6; Eph. 4v5-6) and in Romans 3v29-30 where he writes of a God who includes gentiles as well as Jews in the one way of justification.

¹ Hendriksen, *1 & 11 Timothy and Titus*, p 93-94.

² Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, p.427

³ We note that first in the Letters to Timothy and Titus the human rational understanding involved in salvation is described with the use of the verb 'to come to', the knowledge of the truth (1 Tim. 2v4; 2 Tim. 3v7) or 'to believe and know the truth' (1 Tim. 4v3), but Paul still recognises that this is through the gift of God, a God who can 'grant them repentance, so that they may know the truth', (2 Tim. 2v25); or 'the faith of God's elect and the acknowledgement of the truth', (Tit. 1v1). Divine sovereignty and human responsibility must be held together.

'There is one mediator'. The word here is *mesitēs*, known from the legal or commercial world as a negotiator who can help two parties to make a transaction or to settle a dispute. Job himself longed for this, 'Nor is there any mediator between us, who may lay his hand on us both', Job 9v33. In theological use the word will involve effecting reconciliation between sinners and a holy God.

Stott¹ outlines 3 positions with regard to other religions and the relationship of Jesus Christ to them.

- 'exclusivism' Jesus is the only saviour/salvation is only by faith in him. It involves inclusivism in one sense i.e. a universal offer of salvation – but in Christ.
- 'inclusivism'. Jesus Christ is the saviour, but he saves different people in different ways, especially through their own religion.
- 'pluralism' This involves accepting the independent saving validity of the different religions, denying uniqueness to Christ.

In Paul's day there were many religions, 'many gods' and 'many' lords'. However Paul affirmed that there was only ONE GOD and ONE MEDIATOR. Paul writes of 'the man Christ Jesus'. In the previous chapter he was linked with the Father and he was pre-existent. But here the 'mediation' was accomplished by Christ in his humanity and through his human death for us. In the Greek text there is no article here just *anthrōpos* (*anthrōpos*) Christ Jesus which points more to his nature and attributes as human. His birth as man or his complete participation in humanity was necessary if his 'human' death was to be representative for us, in solidarity with us and substitutionary, 'as a ransom'. A ransom was the price paid for the release of slaves, for their deliverance. Here we read of the *antilutron* – the exchange price which was the ground through which we have been delivered. Morris² expresses the word here as 'substitute-ransom' highlighting the use of the preposition *anti*. The verse says he gave 'himself', *heauton* a reflective pronoun emphasising that his death was a voluntary self-offering. Also this death was for all – effectively of course bringing salvation to all who believe, 4v10 – but the use of 'all' points to the universal emphasis of the whole passage.

The Gospel for All People 2v7.

Now in this time witness must be given. Paul has been appointed (the passive voice is used to stress that this is God's initiative) as a herald or proclaimer of the gospel to the Gentiles and an apostle – he asserts this strongly, 'I am speaking the truth in Christ and not lying'. This assertion has been variously understood, but probably is best understood with regard to the whole argument against the exclusiveness of the false teachers and to emphasise the universal obligation to share the gospel with all men. Paul is therefore also 'a teacher of the Gentiles'. The words 'In faith and verity' have led to various suggestions as to interpretation. Some regard it as referring to the content of the teaching, 'a teacher of the true faith'; but most likely they mean teaching/heralding the gospel faithfully and in sincerity throughout the world i.e. Paul was a true and faithful teacher.

Further Comment

When God choose Paul to preach the truth of the gospel to the gentiles, (see also 1 Tim. 3v16; 4v10; 2 Tim. 1v11; Tit. 2v11; 3v4) he demonstrated his will to bring the good news of the one mediator to all people and so the whole world ought to be the subject of the church's prayers and its mission. Have we recognized our responsibilities? 'Our place in the continuation of this ministry to the entire world should be obvious'.³

What Should Characterise Those Who Pray v8.

Should this verse be linked with v1-7 or with what is to come? Is it not better to allow it to 'belong' to either section? Certainly *boulomai oun* 'Therefore I desire' seems to parallel v1

¹ Stott, *The Message of 1 Timothy and Titus*, p.68-69.

² L Morris, *The Apostolic Preaching of the Cross*, Tyndale, London, 1965, p.51.

³ Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, p189.

which begins in a similar way, Parakalw/ ou=n *parakalō oun* 'Therefore I urge' and so it can be maintained that here we begin a new section. The theme concerns more the appropriate behaviour of men and women when the church assembles for worship - the duties of men in relation to prayer; the duties of women when it comes to their adornment and their public role in the church. But the subject is still linked at least initially with prayer and prayer 'in every place' – so we can accept that it looks backwards and forwards¹.

In v8 we learn that on the subject of prayer, men are to pray 'in every place', where public prayer is offered. Towner sees here an OT intentional allusion by Paul. He explains that the phrase 'in every place' seems to be rather ordinary until one discovers that it is found in the NT only in Paul (1Cor.1v2; 2 Cor. 2v14; 1 Thess.1v8) and used in each case in connection with the gospel of Jesus Christ in ways that pick up the prophecy announced in Mal. 1v11 of the future universal worship of the gentiles.. 'For from the rising of the sun even to its going down my name shall be great among the Gentiles: In every place incense shall be offered to my name, and a pure offering; for my name shall be great among the nations, says the Lord of hosts'. So Towner² explains: 'These echoes place the Ephesian church in the salvation-historical position of "fulfillers" of the OT promise that the nations would worship God – Paul's own mission to the gentiles (2v 7; 2 Tim.1v11) has become the church's mission as well'. One recalls the earlier discussion of Plummer's work concerning Paul's conviction that the early Christian communities would be involved directly in evangelism³. So each has their part to play – as do we also.

Note that praying was to be based on a holy life. They must 'lift up holy hands, without wrath or doubting'.

What does Paul mean by this reference to 'lifting up holy hands' as they prayed? First, the normal posture of prayer was to stand, (Neh. 9v5; Gen. 18v22; 1 Sam. 1v26; Mark 11v25; Luke 18v11, 13; Rev. 7v9). But also we read of eyes lifted up, (Ps.25v15; 121v1), or lowered, (Luke 18v13), and also David sat before the Lord, (2 Sam. 7v18) or there is reference to people kneeling, even prostrating themselves, (Num. 14v5; 16v4, 22, 45; Deut. 9v18, 25-26; Jos. 5v14; Jdg. 13v20; Dan. 6v10; Jos. 5v14; 1 Kings 18v42). Again, the raising of hands was another way to express one's appeal to God and need for his action on our behalf, (Exod. 9v29; Ps 28v2; 63v5; 77v2; 134v2; 141v2; 143v6; Lam. 3v41; 1 Kings 8v22, 54; Neh. 8v6; Isa. 1v15). So we find a wide range of variation in the worship of the people of God. One can also note Hendriksen's unhappiness with one particular very familiar way of coming to God, 'The slouching position of the body, while one is supposed to be praying, is an abomination to the Lord'.⁴ But whether we stand, sit, bow down, kneel, fall upon our faces, or whether our hands are spread, lifted up or clasped together seems not the most significant thing – it is the attitude of the heart which is important AND holiness of life. There was the practice of washing the hands as the priest entered the sanctuary, Exod. 30v19-21. This outward cultic purity symbolised the need for purity of heart and life. So 'lifting up holy hands' emphasised that prayer if it is to be heard must come from those who are living a holy life, Ps. 24v3-5; Isa. 1v15-17. Knight⁵ considers that the reference to 'hands' was used by Paul because he had this particular concern for holiness.

The particular aspects of holiness which were required in this situation of the intercessors is expressed in these words 'without wrath and doubting'. Concerning the first word *ovrgh*, *orgē* 'wrath' or 'anger', it is often used by Paul with reference to the wrath of God, (Rom. 1v18; 2v5, 8; 3v5; 4v15; 5v9; 9v22; 12v19; 13v4; 1 Thess. 2v16; 5v9; Eph. 5v6; Col. 3v16) and the day of wrath (Rom. 2v5; 1 Thess. 1v10). But he also uses it of the wrath or anger of believers and urges them to refuse to

¹ Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, p. 130, takes it as a transitional verse, but for the convenience of paragraph structure places it with v1-7. .

² Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, p56.

³ See p. 10, Plummer, *Paul's Understanding of the Church's Mission: Did the Apostle Paul expect the early Christian Communities to Evangelise?*

⁴ Hendriksen, *1 & 11 Timothy and Titus*, p 103.

⁵ Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, p. 129.

allow it to control them (Eph.4v31; Col. 3v8). Concerning the second word *dialogismo*, *dialogismos* 'doubting' is one possible translation, for the word is used in places of a person's thinking, but it can also describe an argument, see Phil 2v14, 'do all things without murmuring and disputing'. In the context, this is likely the sense here. So for intercessors they must have a life that reflects holiness, a rejection of anger or disputing, free from any controversy. Their hands are not to be 'soiled' with anger and argument. As Jesus himself insisted, reconciliation must precede worship, (Matt. 5v22-26). It is a fact that often our prayers are being hindered by wrong attitudes that distance believers from one another. We mean attitudes which are basically selfish and sinful that lead to wrong actions which do not maintain or foster good relationships. So the mission of God is hindered.

It seems that a divisive spirit had invaded the Christian community with disturbances in the worship services. For the men, prayer that is acceptable must come from people in right relationships with one another. But there was inappropriate behaviour from *both* men and women. Now he turns to women at worship and focuses upon dress, hairstyle, jewellery and their public role in relation to the men. That he is still thinking of women in the context of worship can be seen from the use of 'likewise'.

Women and their adornment.

These few verses (v9-15) are clearly the most controversial in all these Letters. Correct hermeneutical principles are important here if we are to rightly interpret Paul's teaching. The whole section and not just v 11-12 are involved as will become clear.

Regarding this passage, there appears to be three basic contemporary interpretations presented by various scholars, although there may be some minor variations in detail:

(a) A group of conservative interpreters who, although they may vary in some details, read this passage as affirming basically that public teaching in the church or the elder's role, who exercises the teaching office, was restricted to men. For women to exercise such a role was incompatible with their creationist position of submission over against men, who have the God-given authority. Paul is giving directions which are universally binding on the church throughout all ages.¹

(b) The feminist interpreters who tend to adopt the same approach of the passage as the first group, but in fact tend to affirm it more strongly! The aim of the letter is plainly to put women firmly in their place by any means and assert the superiority of men in a patriarchal system. For them the passage should be rejected as a reversion from the Pauline idea of equality expressed in Gal. 3v28. Again, the Letters reflect a post-Pauline authority pattern imposed as a convenient way of protecting the church.² The passage is considered unacceptable when it comes to NT standards. But how can modern commentators openly reject this letter to Timothy, when the next (2 Tim. 3v16) affirms that 'ALL SCRIPTURE is given by inspiration of God'? Others, while rejecting the feminist approach are not ready to accept that Paul's teaching here is universally binding on the whole church. Therefore they suggest another explanation.

(c) Interpreters who are sympathetic to the ministry of women in teaching and church leadership affirm that the passage does not generally prohibit such activities. They argue that the passage reflects either an unusual ecclesiastical situation (the influence of the heresy/false teachers on certain women) or the particular cultural situation in Ephesus at the time and so the teaching is 'culture-specific' or even 'Ephesus-specific' and should not be universalised. Concerning the latter, Paul seeks 'a reasonable solution' because of the missionary necessity of maintaining dialogue with the culture.³

It seems best not to comment further at this point on these positions but to reserve our response until later and also to seek to allow the exegesis to determine the interpretation of this passage.

¹ See *Women in the Church*, ed. A. J. Köstenberger, T. R. Schreiner, and H.S. Baldwin, Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1995, said to be one of the best treatments of the subject from this perspective.

² See E.S. Fiorenza, *In Memory of Her: A Feminist Theological Reconstruction of Christian Origins*, SCM Press, London, 1983.

³ Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, p193.

It appears that the false teachers were having the most success among some of the Christian women of Ephesus. Scholars point especially to the women addressed here in 2v9-15 and also refer to 2 Tim. 3v5-9. For Moo¹, the false teachers were calling upon the women to give up traditional female roles. The opponents taught asceticism, including abstinence from food and marriage (1 Tim.4v3) and Paul's teaching that the younger widows should remarry and have children (1 Tim. 5v14, 2v15) suggests that family roles were being devalued. He points out that it may be that such views were rooted in the false belief that Christians were already in the full form of God's kingdom and that in a sense they have been taken beyond the things of this world spiritually and so things like sex, food, male/female role distinctions were no longer relevant to them. Certain beliefs had arisen from an unbalanced emphasis on certain aspects of Paul's teaching that Christians were 'raised with Christ' (Eph. 2v6; Col. 2v12; 3v1) and that in Christ there is 'neither male nor female', (Gal. 3v28).

The Letters respond to this problem of false teaching as we have already seen in chapter 1. This is also the case here in chapter 2. Fee's comments here on this passage can serve as an interesting introduction:

This then is the point of the whole – to rescue these women and the church from the clutches of the false teachers. Their rescue includes proper demeanour in dress, proper demeanour in the assembly (including learning in all quietness) and getting married and bearing children.²

Of course, at this point we should note that Fee sees himself among the scholars who would fit into the (c) group above. In fact he makes a difference between two levels of instruction in the NT teaching; some of it is intended to be what he calls general, eternal and universal; other teaching is said to be only particular, local and culturally relative. Concerning Paul's statement in 1Tim.2v11-12, it 'is specifically related to the problem in Ephesus. He obviously did not take this position about women in general'.³ But there is a fundamental problem with this approach. Mounce makes the point:

...even if Paul were addressing specific false teachers, it does not follow that in addressing a cultural issue the principal behind the application somehow becomes culturally encumbered outside that culture; the principal of modesty would remain a principle even when applied to a culture of braided and jewellery-adorned hair.⁴

This is why we can proceed with the careful exegesis of these verses (v9-15) and apply them to the church today. They are just as relevant now as they were when first written – all of them.

Paul has referred to men who must be careful of certain sins into which they might fall in the public assembly (v8); now women also must beware of other sins to which they could be open.

We should remember that Paul is being positive, 'I want women to adorn themselves'. Stott⁵ makes the point that there is no biblical encouragement for the women of Ephesus to neglect their appearance or conceal their beauty. But women are to dress/adorn themselves in respectable attire with modestly and moderation. They must not be like many of the women at Ephesus. Stott⁶ also refers to J.B. Hurley who suggests that Paul has in mind the elaborate hair-styles which were fashionable among the wealthy, and also the styles worn by the courtesans who were employed in the temple of the goddess Diana. They wore their hair in enormously elaborate arrangements with

¹ D.J. Moo, 'What Does It Mean Not to Teach or to Have Authority over Men? (1 Tim. 2:11-15)', in *Recovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood*, ed. J. Piper and W. Grudem, Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 1991, p.179-93.

² G.D. Fee, 'Issues in Evangelical Hermeneutics', *CRUX*, p59, quoted in Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, p. 110.

³ Fee, *1 and 2 Timothy and Titus*, p 77.

⁴ Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, p.112.

⁵ Stott, *The Message of 1 Timothy and Titus*, p.83.

⁶ J. B. Hurley, *Man and Woman in Biblical Perspective: A Study in Role Relationships and Authority*, IVP, 1981, p.199, in Stott, *The Message of 1 Timothy and Titus*, p.84.

braids and curls interwoven or piled high like towers and decorated with gems, gold or pearls¹. So his general guidance is that Christian women should adorn themselves, not in expensive, extravagant clothes; they should be modest not vain, chase not suggestive i.e. not to the excess of the other Ephesian women. So we have a warning against immodesty and extravagance. For a married woman so to dress in public was tantamount to marital unfaithfulness. Also women are discouraged from dressing in a manner that would distract others in worship. Rather they are to adorn themselves with good deeds or the actions which can benefit others. For Knight², the *avlla alla* 'but' contrasts good works with immodest attire and makes the ultimate emphasis fall on the former. In fact Paul is not just advocating modesty in dress but that more time and energy be spent on spiritual adornment. They can thus provide evidence of their faith, or the evidence of their godliness.

Towner³ points out the acceptance of the dress code is linked with a deeper set of values. The women are to 'adorn themselves...with propriety and moderation'. The terms used here *aivdou/j* and *swfrosu,nhj* *aidous* and *sōphrosunēs* were words used by various writers at that time in discussions about the modesty of wives. In fact the second term was seen as the central cardinal virtue applied to wives setting them apart as most able to honour their husbands. Towner highlights particularly the work of Winter, and accepts that Paul has chosen to use language and themes to enable him with his missionary vision to connect with the culture and especially the secular appraisal of the 'new woman'.⁴ To this discussion we will return as we now look at the question of the women and teaching and authority.

Regarding *aivdou/j* *aidous*, the word suggests a moral repugnance for doing that which is dishonourable, going beyond the limits of womanly reserve and modesty. The second, *swfrosu,nhj* *sophrosunēs* is self-control or basic self-mastery in the area of the passions and desires. But the real emphasis as suggested above is on 'good works', here in the Letters to Timothy and Titus emphasized continually as evidence of true salvation, just as elsewhere in his earlier epistles Paul can constantly repudiate them as a means or basis for salvation.

Women and their role.

When it comes to v11-12, many scholars have tried to limit the instructions here. Stott⁵ has set out the main attempts to 'soften' what they consider the so-called harshness of Paul's teaching and on his enumeration of the arguments I now draw. They advocate:

1. This was Paul's personal opinion, not his authoritative command. 'I want' *boulomai* *boulomai* is a wish and 'I do not permit' *evpitre,pw* *epitrepō* should be understood as "Personally, I do not allow'. Fee of course will claim that 'it lacks the thrust of a universal imperative'.⁶

But the use of the first in these Letters (three times) has the ordering of apostolic authority (see G Schrenk, *TDNT* 1, p. 632); the second in the parallel passage in 1 Cor. 14v34, 37, is identified with

¹ Knight observes that pearls were considered very precious, in more demand even than gold. The adjective *polutelh,j* *polutelēs*, signifies 'very expensive' clothing. The suggestion is of ornate jewellery and extremely expensive clothing involving inordinate expense and time and a similar mode of dress, as Hurley also suggested, to courtesans and harlots. But Knight maintains, 'It is the excess and sensuality that the items connote that Paul forbids (cf. James 5:1-6), not braids, gold, pearls, or even costly garments, in and of themselves'. *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, p. 135-136.

² Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, p.136.

³ Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, p206.

⁴ See Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, pp. 205- 210, where he makes numerous references to this work: B.W. Winter, *Roman Wives, Roman Widows: The Appearance of New Women and the Pauline Communities*, Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 2003. The outer dress of the woman would signal either her modesty and marital faithfulness or her availability. The approved apparel of the wife as a sign of fidelity and respectability was the *stola* a robe-like garment, while the clothing of the prostitute was the more colourful and revealing *toga*.

⁵ Stott, *The Message of 1 Timothy and Titus*, p.84-86.

⁶ Fee, *1 and 2 Timothy and Titus*, p. 77.

the teaching of the law and the Lord's command. For Knight¹ 'Paul's use of first person singular present indicative (Rom. 12:1,3; 1 Cor. 4:16; 2 Cor. 5:20; Gal. 5:2,3; Eph. 4:1; 1Thes. 4:1; 5:14; 2 Thes. 3:6; 1 Tim. 2:1,8) demonstrates that he uses it to give universal and authoritative instruction or exhortation (cf. Especially Rom. 12:1; 1 Tim. 2:8).'

2. The reference is only to wives, not to women in general and in some way the teaching is only to regulate the private relation of the wife to the husband, not to the public role of the woman in the church. It is true that *gunh*, *gynē* 'woman' and *avnh,r* *anēr* 'man' *can* mean wife and husband, but the whole chapter relates to public worship and v8-15 define gender roles in it with a reference that seem to be wider than to married couples only. If we limit the meaning to wives does this mean that the single women are free to do as they please?

3. Paul is referring to noisy disturbances and interruptions only. So is the reference to women's unruly chatter? But submission as well as silence seems to mean that here we are dealing with more than simply noise.

4. Paul is pointing out that women are not to be domineering. She must not start lecturing her husband in public or be autocratic. But Knight² following a study of the word *αὐθεντεῖν* *authenthein* (see also below) and how it is used elsewhere – it is only here in the NT, but not now known from a few other sources – explains that we are better to leave it as it stands and interpret it not negatively as it often is of usurping authority but simply as 'to have or exercise authority'.

5. Paul placed limitations on women because they lacked education. Paul could have made this clear if that was the point. What about the uneducated men?

So men should pray in holiness, not necessarily lifting up their hands, women adorn themselves in modest, decency and good works, and not assume or reverse roles. They are to learn, a positive encouragement – different from that of the attitude of the Rabbis (they said, 'Better to burn the Torah than to teach it to a woman'). But we need to see that they are to 'learn', not to 'teach'. In Greek the verb is the first word in the sentence and stands first in importance and contrasts with the previous word 'to learn'. They learn/are taught, not to teach, but to fear and to be obedient, (Deut. 31v12).

It is the elders who are 'apt to teach' (3v2) and they are singled out for honour (5v17). Women and of course other men are to learn from them. The women were not to be taken in by the teaching of the false teachers – see 2 Tim. 3v6.

Paul uses *ἡσυχία* *hēsuchia* 'in silence' or 'quietness'. Not disrupting may be better. 1 Cor. 11v5 for Mounce³ 'secures a vocal role for women in the public worship service', but 1 Cor. 14v34-35 prohibits them from being disruptive.

'To exercise authority' over the man. The word is *αὐθεντεῖν* *authenthein* which occurs nowhere else in the NT and is rarely used elsewhere. As pointed out above many scholars have suggested that it is a certain style of teaching by women which is prohibited i.e. in a domineering coercive way or manner. But would Paul limit such instruction only to the women and not to other men?

It appears that the word is used with the emphasis more on the fact that women will not exercise a leadership role with regard to the teaching office in the church, which is of course the role of the elders.

His argument for male headship rests on the order established at creation, v13. For Paul, this means that God intended men to take the lead and the woman was to compliment him. Eve's folly in challenging this led to disaster. In fact when the serpent approached Eve and interacted only with her, he was subverting the pattern of male headship.

In v14 Paul does not say that Adam was without guilt; in fact Paul is making clear that he sinned wilfully, he was not deceived as Eve was. Adam's presence with Eve can be seen as implied but he

¹ Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, p. 140.

² Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, p. 141.

³ Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, p. 118.

said nothing. For Mounce¹, 'His sin of omission occurred at the same time as Eve's sin of commission'.

Paul uses Gen.2 for the pattern of headship and submission and then focuses on chapter 3 to emphasise what can happen when God's order is forsaken. Eve was tricked, but this does not mean that she was not responsible for her actions as the increased pain in childbirth shows (Gen.3v16). This is not to suggest that women are more gullible than men. Paul is just referring to the particular type of sin here. The implication is that the women of Ephesus were also being deceived by the false teachers, just as Eve was. That deception was coming from the same source as in the Garden, (1 Tim. 4v1).

What happened in Eden had continuing consequences - the Greek used here *ge,gonen* \ *gegonen* is in the perfect tense, 'has come' into transgression.

Women and God's Assurance. v15

It seems that Paul does not see women in positions of authority in the church. But he adds a further encouragement for women, 'she will be saved through childbearing if they continue...' What does this mean?

Is it as some interpret it, that she will come safely through childbirth? But many have not. The problem with this view is that Paul always uses 'saved' in a spiritual sense.

So is it better to understand the statement as being saved through the birth of the Child i.e. Christ? There is a definite article before 'childbearing'. Knight², who advocates this view, asks us to consider the context and the vocabulary, the future passive *swqh,setai sōthēsetai* with a deliverance effected for Eve by another, a future deliverance through the seed of the woman i.e. Christ.

Paul has been writing about the fall but Gen. 3v15 brings deliverance from the serpent who deceived Eve. Does he wish to assert the inclusion of women and their role in God's plan of salvation? Eve usurped Adam's role and sinned; God in grace gave her a unique role in the plan of salvation. We must never forget what we owe to a woman. Christ's birth was clearly prophesied.

Again, Wieland³ suggests that the connection with Gen. 3 in the context is there to point to the actual childbearing involved in the promise to Eve in Gen.3v15 which really serves the author's polemical purpose in affirming the activity of procreation against the ascetic disapproval highlighted in 1 Tim. 4v3.

But is it not the case that in this context she will be saved as she accepts her role in motherhood? Rather than eldership she is to faithfully live for Christ and teach her family, see the example of Lois and Eunice, 2 Tim. 1v5; 3v15. So children can be saved through the mother's faithful and loving service in family life. Some will question this as it savours of salvation by works and ask about Eph. 2v8-9⁴. But remember 1 Tim. 4v16 where in this very letter Timothy can by his dedication and calling 'save himself' and those who hear him.

So the Ephesian women will be saved if they come to faith, continue in it, and let that faith be expressed before her family, living in love, holiness and modesty.

Further Comment

It is important to note how Towner⁵ understands the above verses. We have already seen how he considers that the church could not have been immune from the influence of the 'new woman' ideology, especially the more wealthy among them. Paul highlighted from a well-known depiction of

¹ Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, p. 142.

² Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, p. 146

³ G. W. Wieland, *The Significance of Salvation: a Study in Salvation Language in the Pastoral Epistles*, Milton Keynes, Paternoster, 2006.

⁴ Note the comments of Knight who as was pointed out advocates that the reference is to the birth of Messiah. 'This would make salvation for women conditional on a work and specifically on a work that not all are able to perform'. Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, p. 146. This comment seems contrary to his earlier acceptance in v10 that 'good deeds are an outcome and expression of salvation...', p.137.

⁵ Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, p208-239.

wealthy and immoral women a list of items of adornment and fashion. First, 'braided hair' refers to the fashion of styling and piling of the hair on top of the head – in contrast to the modesty of the model Imperial woman. Second, jewellery, 'gold or pearls', which were signs of ostentation and that which points to the dress code of the highly paid prostitute.¹ In addition when we come to v11-12 Towner suggests that these women were also affected by the heretical teaching of the false teachers. He discusses v12, 'I do not permit' and the following two infinitives, 'to teach' and 'to assume authority over a man'. In spite of attempts by some to restrict the prohibition any real grounds for this are lacking and it must be seen either as a command or as an *ad hoc* solution.² The verb *didaskō* 'to teach' and the word group for Towner are clearly used over against the heresy in the transmission of the apostolic gospel and here refers to authoritative teaching in the worship gathering as one assumes the office or role of teacher.

He maintains that the sparse but important evidence of women taking part in various aspects of ministry in the Pauline churches - he refers to Priscilla and Aquilla (Acts 18v26); Junia (Rom.16v7) and other women (Rom. 16v1-3; Phil. 4v2; 1 Cor. 14v26) and the progressive 'new women' paradigm of Winter – and the influence of the Gal. 3v28 view in Christian existence and ministry' plus misunderstandings about eschatology, would have led men and women to seek to implement promised freedoms, without the appropriate balance. As a result certain Pauline letters, including 1Timothy, are intent on reining in those caught up in such exuberance!

Towner suggests, although the evidence is fragmentary, that there were three reasons which lay behind Paul's prohibition of women teaching in the worship assembly.³ (1) Some wealthy women had come under the influence of a too fully realised eschatology (6v20-21; 2 Tim. 2v18). (2) They had stepped into the role of teaching through some element of the heresy – it was not accidental that the teaching on women following the domestic life is in v15 or Paul's exposure of the false teachers' prohibition of marriage in 4v3. (3) The influence of the 'new woman' culture which the women would no doubt wish to share with others. These things 'led Paul to put a stop to the teaching activities of Christian women'.⁴

More space is given to his response to the second infinitive, 'to assume authority over' the man. The fact that the term is rare leads him to discuss two dominant elements in the background of the text. First, the heresy. In the time of the Spirit's fullness, with an overrealized outlook, the Genesis curse on women might be regarded as lifted. At least the false teachers had an opportunity to befriend and deceive with such teaching wealthy women (wives or widows). Again, the cultural movement already mentioned, the influence of which is seen in the flouting of the dress code, could have led to problems of male authority over women. Paul's use of the Genesis creation is then discussed.

Towner suggests, having examined the references to the creation account at some length, the apostle was responding to a heretical speculative reading of the early chapters of Genesis. All need to be reminded of the woman's complicity in the fall and the unfinished nature of Christian existence, and Paul does so in a way that illustrates the deception of the women/wives in Ephesus by the false teachers. He finally urges them to see the importance of following their traditional role as mothers, which will, if they continue in it result in the salvation of them and their respective families.

Does this mean that Towner should be seen as endorsing the traditional approach and encouraging the view that this teaching ought to be universally applied? I am afraid not. While he will not suggest that the text is non-Pauline or should be jettisoned because it does not express a liberating

¹ Towner also makes the same observation as Knight earlier that pearls were actually considered to be the most valuable – in fact three times more valuable than gold. They used them to adorn their hair, fingers, ears, even their clothes and sandals.

² Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, p217.

³ Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, p219-220.

⁴ Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, p220.

perspective he seeks a way to explain why the passage seems to diverge from that new gospel direction. In his view, it is the circumstances, Paul's teaching about the universal mission of God and the church's participation within it which leads him to write to the community as he does. The instructions reflect 'a mission and witness coloration'.¹ It is fear for the church's reputation and witness which is at stake! Too much, too fast might endanger the church's credibility and message!

What can we say about all of this? We can agree with him when he questions the Feminist total rejection of Paul's teaching here either as it came directly from him or, as most would suggest, later. But it is the case that there are many conservative who will not follow him when he advocates that this important section of 1 Timothy was only a type of ad hoc prohibition or emergency legislation for the present crisis.

(1) To claim that it was because of the witness of the church in its mission that liberty which was being accepted elsewhere was prohibited is difficult to maintain. Rather one can ask would Paul have set this teaching in the whole context of world mission and witness if it only applied to Ephesus? In 2v1-2 prayer is to be offered for 'all men' to a God who will have 'all men to be saved' through the one mediator who died 'for all' and now in 2v8 we have the reference that men are to pray 'in every place' but the second half of the verse plus the verse/verses to follow concerning the women – we are led to believe – ONLY CONCERN women in the church at Ephesus. The world context in which the teaching for the women is set surly means that it has a general and universal application throughout all ages.

(2) Towner did discuss the genesis stories and propose their misinterpretation by the false teachers. Many would agree with him here. But that does not change the fact that the teaching concerning male headship from the Genesis account is the valid interpretation. This teaching is still to be accepted and surly applies in every age.

(3) There may be certain aspects in the culture of Ephesus with which scholars can identify. But there must be very little of the teaching concerning these matters which cannot still be applied today. Most will acknowledge that at worst there are still 'principles'. But with Towner's approach to such 'emergency' legislation where are the 'principles'?

One should also note Stott's comment regarding our approach to this kind of passage:

The danger of declaring any passage of scripture to have only local (not universal), and only transient (not perpetual) validity is that it opens the door to a wholesale rejection of apostolic teaching, since virtually the whole of the New Testament was addressed to specific situations. Whenever we can show that an instruction related to a particular context, shall we then limit it to that context and declare it irrelevant to all others?²

However, he himself suggests that best way to approach a passage like 2v8-15 is to apply to it the 'principle of cultural transposition'. Using this concept he attempts to hold the view that the submission-authority themes are permanent and universal (grounded in creation) but the silence-teaching may not be. But for some this is an unconvincing approach.

A few points can be made then. First, thinking again about Towner, Paul is not simply compromising his teaching elsewhere because of expedience. It seems clear that as we will see in ch.3 – and of course in Titus 1 as well - it was the elders who were to teach and these were to come from among the men. Stott may wish to recognise a teaching possibility for women. One can state that this passage does not prohibit women being involved in some teaching and preaching ministries, service therefore both inside and outside the home – but not the eldership.

The problem today is a wrong equating of one's worth with one's function or role. There is equality in the kingdom of God but men and women still have different functional roles. When it is claimed that

¹ Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, p237.

² Stott, *The Message of 1 Timothy and Titus*, p.77-78.

certain roles are not for women immediately we are accused of assigning to them a diminished personal worth. But it is unscriptural to equate worth with role. In the trinity there is equality of persons but eternal division of roles. Again remember 1 Cor. 15v28 in the final state, there is the subordination of the Son to the Father. 'Now when all things are made subject to him, then the Son himself will also be subject to him who put all things under him, that God may be all in all'. If we equate worth with role then we are saying that God the Son must necessarily be of less worth than God the father, because he has accepted to be subject to him. So women have equal worth in the kingdom of God and in the body of Christ regardless of role.

I Tim. 3v1-16. Leadership in the House of God.

We have noted how Paul gave directions regarding the urgent need to challenge the false teachers, ch1; directions regarding engaging in public worship, including the roles of men and women, ch2; now in ch.3 he includes directions regarding those who are called to teaching, caring for and serving the House of God, the Church of the Living God. In fact it is here he sets out the personal qualities necessary to effectively serve God.

A comment is necessary in response to the suggestion that the church in these letters has moved on from being a charismatic community under the dynamic leadership of the Holy Spirit to a more formal institution with fixed offices of elders, overseers, deacons, even the claim that Timothy and Titus were exercising more a role similar to that of Monarchical Bishops. Coming to 'faith' has now given way to 'the faith', a formal creed and reaching out in 'mission' has been replaced by preserving the truth. But it can be maintained that often there is an underestimation of order in the earlier epistles and a similar underestimation of 'charasmata' in the letters to Timothy and Titus. Concerning the earlier letters, for teachers financially supported and evidence of formal leadership note Gal. 6v6; 1 Thess. 5v12; Rom. 16v1; Col. 4v17; Phil. 1v1; see also Acts 14v23. For the more dynamic spirituality of the Letters to Timothy and Titus see 1 Tim. 1v18; 4v1, 14; 2 Tim. 1v6-7, 14; Tit. 3v5. While it is true that charismatic gifts are not mentioned in these Letters, neither are they mentioned much in the rest of Paul's epistles. The Letters of the New Testament are all 'occasional' writings i.e., particularly focussed on the needs of the individual churches and this is clear whether we are reading 1 Corinthians or the Letters to Timothy and Titus. The true understanding of the role of Timothy and Titus as apostolic delegates and other aspects of a supposed early Catholicism are dealt with elsewhere.

It is clear that the major problems in the Ephesian church was stemming from the leadership. It appears that in the church false teachers were perverting the gospel and preaching a message which ultimately stemmed from Satan (as Paul will go on to show in ch. 4v1-5). Note again the emphasis on character – in fact the first 'blameless' or 'above reproach' stands out as a kind of title over all the qualities – the rest spell this out in greater detail. Mounce¹ makes the point.

This is one of the overriding concerns of the PE. The church has not guarded its reputation, and the misconduct of the false teachers is bringing it more and more into disrepute. Timothy must be sure that its leaders are above reproach.

The grammar of the passage seems to bear out this concern. First 3v2-6 is one long sentence which begins with this emphasis and 3v7, the new sentence, repeats the initial concern.

Gruenler² also makes clear the missional motives here:

That character for mission is Paul's primary concern in 1 Timothy is further confirmed by the standards by which leaders in the church are to be selected (1 Tim 3:1–16). Since Acts 20:17–18 gives evidence that elders were already present at Ephesus, Paul repeats the criteria for their selection. The setting of

¹ Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, p. 153.

² Gruenler, 'Mission-Lifestyle Setting of 1 Tim 2:8-15', p. 226.

1 Timothy would indicate that as some men and women are not showing proper deportment in the church and are damaging its reputation, so standards for leadership roles need to be reviewed in order that “you will know how people are to conduct themselves in God’s household” (1 Tim 3:15). There are influential leaders in the church who are also damaging its reputation and hindering the gospel. This is a ground missional exhortation and crystallizes Paul’s reason for writing the letter.

One should note that there are three lists of qualities for the overseers or elders in the Letters to Timothy and Titus; 1 Tim.3v1-7; 5v17-23; Tit. 1v5-9. The similarities are what you would expect and it should also be noted that in each there is still this overriding emphasis on character.

The Elders

God intends his church to have leaders, in ch.3 they are named *evpi,skopoi episkopoi* ‘overseers’; v2 and in ch.5v17,19 *presbu,teroi presbuteroi* ‘elders’. In 3v8 Paul also refers to *dia,konoi diakonoi* ‘deacons’. Note that Paul and Barnabas on their first missionary journey as they returned they appointed elders in the new churches, Acts 14v23. Again, when Paul writes to the church in Philippi he addresses the ‘saints...bishops (overseers) and deacons’. It will be suggested that the bishops are appointed to a ministry of oversight, while the deacons engage in a ministry of service.

Leadership is not simply a human arrangement, Eph. 4v11 and it is the work of the Holy Spirit to assign the leaders, Acts 20v28. Timothy is instructed how he may identify such men in the church. Nothing is mentioned here in this chapter about the appointment of the leaders and some have then suggested that while the material is presented as if it were instruction for Timothy it was really meant for the church. However Titus seems to have been directly involved in Tit. 1v5 and 5v22 indicates that Timothy also was to have a role in any appointments. First we meet the overseers.

The Terms Themselves

Note that we should not understand the word ‘bishop’ here in v1 as applying to the modern day use of the term. Stott¹ admits that ‘the “monarchical episcopate” (a single bishop presiding over a college of presbyters) cannot be dated earlier than Ignatius of Syrian Antioch, c. AD 110’. In NT times the terms were interchangeable for the same office (see Acts 20v17, 28; 1 Pet. 5v1-2; Tit. 1v5-7). It seems that the term ‘elder’ was of Jewish origin, denoting dignity, seniority; the term ‘bishop or overseer’ was Greek, indicating the function.

One should note the earlier discussion concerning Timothy’s position in Ephesus. He is nowhere included in the structure of the Ephesian church (nor is Titus in the Cretian communities). He is not the bishop, but a temporary apostolic delegate under Paul’s direction asked to remain for a while because of a specific problem.

A Good Work

The chapter begins with ‘a faithful saying’, v1. This is the second faithful saying in these Letters (see 1 v15-16). It could point back to 2v15 and would allow all the sayings to relate to the theme of salvation. But the dignity of this calling in the church is likely what is being stressed, especially if some of the false teachers had been former elders and their defection or their discipline had created a vacuum. Also, one can see how that the statement here in v1b could be passed down through future tradition.

So Paul states, ‘If a man desires the position of a bishop, he desires a good work’. This statement has caused some comment and raised certain questions. Is it not wrong to desire or have ambitions concerning this position? The office should seek the man, not surely the man the office?

Note that although praise is implied in the statement it is not definitely expressed. It is the position that is stated to be excellent or good. We must remember that in the early history of the church to hold such a position meant sacrifice and possible death. For Hendriksen², in such a time an incentive and

¹ Stott, *The Message of 1 Timothy and Titus*, p.90.

² Hendriksen, *1 & 11 Timothy and Titus*, p.118.

a word of implied praise was not out of place. People were willing for the sacrificial tasks in the early days.

The phrase here is *kalou/ e;rgou kalou ergou*, 'a good work'. Knight¹ suggests that the word *e`rgon ergon* is not being used in the general sense of work as deed or action. He opts for the translation 'task' as bringing out the best sense of the word here. Paul claims that the task is a good or excellent one - *kalos kalos*. The task is expressed in v2 as to oversee (*evpi,skopoj episkopos*) and to teach (*didaktiko,n didaktikon*), and also v4-5, rule (by implication, but clearly expressed in 5v17) and take care of the church of God. Note it is not the elder's church, but God's church. He has such a love for it that he purchased it 'with his own blood' (Acts 20v28). He has planned that this love he has for his church be expressed through the ministry of the overseers/elders who will watch over the church, impart the true doctrine to them in their teaching, exercise rule over and care for God's people.

Spirituality – the Vital Qualification

v2-7 list the qualifications if one is to function in such a position. The elder must have a favourable testimony from three groups, church members, the family and outsiders. None should be able to point the finger. He must be 'blameless'. The adjective *avnepi,lhmpton anepilēmpton* describes a person who not only is 'above reproach' but is deservedly considered to be so.²

(a) The reputation he has to have among CHRISTIAN BELIEVERS, v2-6.

The statement 'above reproach' can be taken as a type of heading, as Hendriksen explains³, for all the eleven items as follow -

positive. He must be the husband of one wife. It is not that he is required to be married. The emphasis in the Greek is on the word 'one' and not just on the married state. Also, if marriage was required it would rule out Paul and Timothy from such a ministry. In addition, if the text was insisting on the elder having a wife then by implication he must have at least two children. Some might suggest the verse was to rule out polygamy, but this does not appear to have been a problem among Christians.⁴ It is best to interpret this that the elder is required to be entirely faithful to his wife at all times, an example of strict morality, 'one wife's husband'. What if his wife died and he married again? As Knight⁵ has stated:

It would be strange for the apostle of liberty, who considered widows and widowers "free to be married.....only in the Lord" (1 Cor.7v39) and who used this principle of freedom to illustrate his teaching on the law (Rom. 7v1-3), to deny this freedom to a potential church officer whose spouse had died.

This is an important statement because the false teachers had forbidden marriage (1 Tim. 4v3) and sexual promiscuity was common (2 Tim. 3v6). The emphasis is the same for deacons (3v12) and in Titus (Tit.1v6), where this exhortation is first there also, and for Mounce⁶ suggests that marital faithfulness was a serious problem in the Ephesian church.

He must also be temperate. The reference has a figurative sense as 3v3 refers to literal drunkenness. So the meaning is that the elder will be clear-headed, demonstrating balanced sober thinking. He will

¹ Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, p. 155.

² J.N.D. Kelly, *A Commentary on The Pastoral Epistles*, HNTC, Harper & Row, New York, 1964, p. 80

³ Hendriksen, *1 & 11 Timothy and Titus*, p.119.

⁴ This is Mounce's opinion after a discussion of the evidence – 'even if it existed among the Jews', Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, p. 171.

⁵ Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, p.158. For a full discussion of the various issues here related to this phrase, see p. 157-159.

⁶ Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, p. 170.

also be self-controlled, a master of himself. In control of his behaviour, his emotions and impulses. 'He must not only talk well but walk well'.¹

First, he will be honourable - that which causes a person to be regarded as respectable by others, outward demeanour stemming from the inward quality of self-mastery - and hospitable (a practice in fact, required of all believers, Rom. 12v13; Heb. 13v2; 1 Pet. 4v9, because of the dangers of travel and economic uncertainty), a word that is translated in Quinn and Wacker² as 'one who likes guests'. Then 'able to teach' *didaktiko,n didaktikon*, an adjective not otherwise found in the NT, except in 2 Tim. 2v24, with reference to Timothy. It is the only ministry gift listed here among aspects of character and involves having the ability to give guidance and instruction to those who require it. It is expanded in Tit.1v9f. So it is expected that leaders will be chosen from among those who give evidence of this gift.

negative. 'Not a drunkard'. The word occurs only again in Tit.1v7 in relation to elders. It usually is a reference to excessive drinking, one who lingers beside his wine. The same stipulation is repeated again for deacons in v8, and for older women in Tit.2v2. That it is repeated on these separate occasions points to the fact that such drinking was a serious problem for the churches in Ephesus and Crete. Later we learn of Timothy and his total abstinence (1 Tim. 5v23). Linked to the first prohibition here and also in Tit.1v7 is another Greek word *plh,kthj plēktēs* again found only here in the NT, making clear that such drinking leads to violence. So elders were not to be violent as drunks can be; not ready for a fight or bullying people – ever verbally.

Again they must not be greedy for money but gentle, peaceable, 'making allowances for slowness, awkwardness, even rudeness in others',³ and so willing to put up with a lot. Showing reasonableness, tolerance – a Christ-like quality, 2 Cor. 10v1. These two adjectives are used of the Christian lifestyle in Tit. 3v2. The description 'gentle' is used in LXX for a quality within God; elsewhere of judges and of kings.⁴ To be 'peaceable' is explained by Towner⁵ as follows: 'this irenic, constructive demeanour would heal rifts caused by bitter argument, aid in uniting the congregation, and positively contribute to the leader's public reputation'.

An important contrast when it comes to the false teachers is the reference to financial gain, 'not greedy for money'. This was a common vice in the Greco-Roman culture. All in leadership, (3v8; Tit. 1v7) need to be warned. This vice will be highlighted more clearly in 6v5f. The opponents were teaching not because of the needs of the people but just in order to get money. This was the real motivation. Here, with the elders, the opposite is clearly implied, not characterised by greed but self-sacrifice for others.

(b) The reputation he must have among FAMILY MEMBERS v4-5.

The term here is *oi;kou oikou* used not as 'house' but 'household' or 'family'. The challenge concerns how he manages his family. A man must evidently be able to govern his family/children graciously and command their respect, maintaining his personal dignity in the process, before he takes on the management of the church, the family of God. Hendriksen⁶ has noted that the very first and the last of the requirements describe the elder's relationship to his family. It is similar when we come to deacons (v12). This must be regarded as of great importance.

¹ King, *A Leader Led*, p.59.

² Quinn and Wacker, *The First and Second Letters to Timothy*, p.246.

³ King, *A Leader Led*, p.61.

⁴ Used of God in 2 Macc. 2:22; of political figures in Philo, *Virtues*, 148 and *On the Special Laws* 4.23 and of kings in Josephus, *Antiquities* 15.14,177. Noted by Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, p. 253.

⁵ Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, p. 253.

⁶ Hendriksen, *1 & 11 Timothy and Titus*, p 127.

Such management must be carried out 'with true dignity', or in such a manner that 'The father's *firmness* makes it *advisable* for a child to obey, that his *wisdom* makes it *natural* for a child to obey, and that his *love* makes it a *pleasure* for a child to obey'.¹

Paul is referring to children who are still in the home i.e. minors. In Tit.1v6 the requirement is that he must have *pista tekna pista tekna*, faithful children, 'not accused of being wild or disobedient'. Should '*pista*' be understood as believing or as faithful? It is used in both senses in these Letters. The context here, with the parallel in 1 Tim. 3v4-5, provide some important pointers as to interpretation. The qualifying statement here "not accused of dissipation or rebellion" emphasizes behaviour and seems to explain what it means for *tekna* to be *pista*. Likewise 1 Tim. 3v4 speaks of the overseer "keeping his children under control with all dignity". Knight makes the point:

In both cases the overseer is evaluated on the basis of his control of his children and their conduct. It is likely "having faithful children" is virtually equivalent to 1Tim.3v4. If that is so then *pista* here means "faithful" in the sense of "submissive" or "obedient", as a servant or steward is regarded as *pistos* when he carries out the requests of his master.²

Note, as mentioned briefly above, it is unlikely that Paul meant that only a married man with at least two children could be an overseer. He was writing in light of the normal situation. Did not Paul commend singleness and use himself as an example (1 Cor.7v32f; v7-8; 9v5)?

Mounce³ notes the use of *prosth/nai prostēnai* in v5 which can mean to govern or to lead. The second idea is expressed when it comes to the cognate *prosta,tej prostates* which means 'protector'. So we have the idea here of the father's role as not being dictatorial but caring and protecting his children. So in the church he must not be autocratic but be a caring leader who serves. This is clear when Paul links the concept with *evpimelh,setai epimelēsetai* in v5 'to take care of'.

He must be a man of some experience, not a recent convert, or *neo,futon neophuton*, meaning 'newly planted' Christian v6. Ephesus had been in existence for about ten years and therefore Timothy could be selective in his choice of leaders. The same statement is not found in the pioneer work in Crete in Titus 1.

There are two possible dangers here for Timothy to remember. Putting ill-prepared people into office could first of all lead to them being 'puffed up with pride'. A fascination with authority may be too much for some and rapid promotion could lead to being filled with pride. This could very well lead to their downfall - through pride – into the same condemnation into which the devil also fell, understanding the phrase as an objective, rather than a subjective genitive⁴. (It is interesting that the same word to be puffed up is used of the false teachers (1 Tim. 6v4; 2 Tim. 3v4).

Note that on his first missionary journey Paul did not appoint elders in every church until he revisited those churches (Acts14v23). People have to be spiritually mature.

(c) Above reproach as far as OTHER OUTSIDERS are also concerned, v7.

As mentioned earlier in our comments about 'godliness', Paul often emphasises his concern about the opinion outsiders will have for the witness/testimony of the church (1 Tim. 5v14; 6v1; Tit. 2 v5, 8, 10; 3v2, 8; 1 Cor. 10v32; Col. 4v5; 1 Thess. 4v12). Such outsiders often know more about the person since he is among them every day living in the local community or work situation. If he does not have the respect of outsiders it will prove a stumbling block for the gospel. This witness was concerned with

¹ Hendriksen, *1 & 11 Timothy and Titus*, p 127.

² Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, p 290.

³ Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, p. 178.

⁴ Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, p 164.

the effectiveness of the church's mission in the world. To fail in any of the qualities Paul has outlined could result in a loss of credibility.

What does Paul mean by 'the snare of the devil'? Is it that the individual may consider that his bad conduct has not hindered him in achieving success so he will attempt to get away with more, falling into the devil's trap and under the devil's power?

The elder who guards himself in these matters saves himself and the church from falling into disgrace and a complete loss of credibility. The word *ovneidismo,j oneidismos* 'reproach' carries with it the idea of bringing reproach upon themselves, extreme disgrace.

Another way¹ of presenting the qualifications Paul is asking Timothy to seek to find in prospective elders are as follows:

His marriage v2 a one-woman man, fidelity.

His self-mastery v2 temperate, self-controlled and respectable/honourable.

His openness v2 hospitable – *filoxenon philoxenon* accusative case, literally 'a love of strangers'.

His gifting v2 'able to teach'. The elder must be a student of the word and competent to teach it to others either from the pulpit or one to one in a counselling situation.

His temperance v3 not snared by alcohol.

His temperament v3 not violent – including verbal abuse - but gentle.

His handling of money v3 See the testimony of Samuel at the close of his life's ministry, 1 Sam. 12v1-5 and Paul's past witness to the Ephesian elders Acts 20v33-35.

His family life v4-5 what a man is at home is so important.

His servant heart for God's people v5 – caring for the church of God.

His spiritual maturity v6 there is need for true humility and experience to serve as an elder.

His public testimony v7 there must be evidence of reality, stability and a genuine confession before others. If an elder does not have a good testimony in the village or town how will the church be effective in its mission to reach them?

Paul now moves on in his instructions to Timothy to deal with another group:

Deacons.

The position of deacon is referred to in Phil. 1v1; 1 Tim. 3v8-13 and in the ministry of the seven in Acts 6v1-6, although in this case the word deacon does not occur - a cognate noun and verb are employed. Is this evidence that this ministry was still only in an embryonic state? See also Rom. 16v1, where Phoebe is referred to as 'a servant' of the church using the noun *dia,konoj diakonos*².

One should note the suggestions of Campbell³ that the word deacon refers to the head of the household church. He was an assistant to the overseer who was responsible for a number of such churches. But the picture we have in Ignatius is of the deacon who worked with overseers in the local congregation.

Some might suggest that the word (or the word-group) simply refers to any type of serving ministry – the primary meaning was 'to wait at table' - and Paul can use it of all kinds of service and of different workers.⁴ But in 1 Tim. 3v8, 12 it clearly refers to a special function in the church, those who are

¹ Some summary descriptions were gleaned from J.R.W. Stott, *The Message of 1 Timothy and Titus*, p.92f.

² The feminine form of the word 'deacon' only is found in the fourth century in canon 19 of the Council of Nicea. See J.G. Davies, 'Deacons, Deaconesses and the Minor Orders in the Patristic Period', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 14, 1963, p.1, n.1.

³ R.A. Campbell, *The Elders: Seniority within Earliest Christianity*, Studies in the New Testament and its World, T & T Clark, Edinburgh, 1994.

⁴ E.g., 2 Cor. 3v7-9; 5v18; Rom. 11v13 for the work of the gospel in general; of the ministry of giving, Rom. 15v31; 2 Cor. 8v4; 9v1, 12, 13; of the tasks of church leaders, 1 Cor. 16v15; Eph. 4v12; Col. 4v17; to the work of Timothy, 1 Thess. 3v2; 1 Tim. 4v6; 2 Tim. 4v5.

working alongside the elders and the verb in 1 Tim. 3v10, 13 carries the specialised meaning of 'to serve as a deacon'. So the provision of guidelines regarding spiritual qualities in choosing deacons means that here we have not just general service but the singling out of particular individuals. But there is no mention of any teaching or authority/rule as with elders in the list of deacons' qualifications (see 1 Tim. 3v2; 5v17; Titus 1v7). It appears that the references therefore to two ministries are found in the early (Acts), middle (Philippians) and later time frames of the NT church – and in different geographical areas.

The guidance given to Timothy for the appointment of deacons has, as with the elders, mainly to do with character.

Deacons, must also be 'above reproach', v10 – the word is *avne,gklhtoj anenklētos*, which only used by Paul in the NT, is a synonym of *avnepi,lhmptoj anepilēptos* in v2. An initial positive quality 'dignified' is followed by three negatives which together can present someone who is irreproachable, which is finally summed up in the term 'blameless' (v10). Further requirements follow in v11-13. Mounce¹ helpfully points out that six of the characteristics are directly parallel to that of an elder.

Both the office of church leader and the office of church worker require the same type of person: a mature Christian whose behaviour is above reproach....most of the requirements stand in opposition to the opponents' behaviour.

Stott² again is helpful here in the way he sets out the qualities of those who serve as deacons and to his outline I have added some additional comments.

In v8 he writes about *self-mastery*. The four words in this verse form a natural grouping, sincere in their behaviour, truth talkers, in control of themselves as far as wine and money are concerned.

The word *dilo,goj dilogos* is found only here in the NT and literally means 'double-tongued'. It can be explained as to say one thing while thinking another or saying one thing to one person but another to someone else. Guthrie³ points out that it also can be translated as 'talebearer' suggesting the danger of being a gossip rather than understanding the need for confidentiality. The reference to 'given to much wine' is in the present tense and suggests a habitual consumption of alcohol.

'Not greedy for money' the subject occurring again here (see v3) suggests that Paul is particularly concerned about the new church workers having the right attitude as far as money is concerned, probably because of the past experience with the covetous false teachers who were no longer among them. In any ministry in the church the leaders must not be motivated by financial gain, but rather by a willingness to spend and be spent for others. Here the deacons probably had responsibility for the church's finances and were involved in the day-to-day needs of the poor.

Paul explains in v9 that they must have *orthodox convictions*. The word 'mystery' can stand for the sum total of the revealed truths of the faith i.e. the mystery, which is the faith. Unlike the false teachers who had rejected the voice of conscience (1v19) and even 'cauterized' it (4v2) by continually disregarding it, they must maintain a clear conscience (1v6) holding on to God's revelation with sincere and strong conviction. Paul was insistent that any who were appointed as deacons would hold firmly to the truth or the doctrine which had been delivered to the church. The word *e;contaj echontas* here means 'holding to, possessing', and expresses solid unreserved commitment to the faith; holding it rather than teaching it, which was the elders' responsibility. They must not make shipwreck of the faith, 1v19. In summary, with the mention of 'conscience' it is clear that deacons are to live according to the ethical principles of the revealed faith.

¹ Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, p. 195.

² Stott, *The Message of 1 Timothy and Titus*, p.100.

³ Guthrie, *The Pastoral Epistles*, p95.

Finally Stott points out that they must be *tested and approved*. They should have a period of time – note the temporal *prw/ton prōton*, ‘first’ to prove their worth and for the church to see the emergence of their gifts and the type of service that they can render. We have almost the concept of probationers here.

Certainly here we have the parallel of instructions to Timothy in 5v22, 24-25 where the theme is the care necessary to be taken in the appointment of elders. Was this examination for the prospective deacons to show that they were without reproach? It is here that one finds the reference to deacons being ‘blameless’ – a term mentioned above. Regarding *avne, gklhtoi anenklētoi* Towner¹ claims that the word is used with the legal sense of the term still in the background, and so ‘it means to be free of any charge of civil or domestic impropriety’. It is used again of elders in Titus 1v6-7.

Then we have v11. *A Commendable Home Life*. Is Paul now moving to the home life of the deacon in this verse or rather in the next (v12)?

Notice how v11 begins, The AV translates it ‘Even so must their wives be...’ Also NKJ has ‘wives’. It is strange that the wives of elders are not mentioned, if this is the meaning. AV margin has ‘Women in like manner must...’ NIV text = ‘Deacon’s wives’; NIV margin = ‘deaconesses’.

The word here is *gunai/kai yunaikai* or the singular *gunē, gunē* and can be translated ‘wife’ (3v2, 12; 5v9; Tit. 1v6) or ‘woman’ (2v9, 10, 11, 12, 14). So is the reference to deacon’s wives or deaconesses?

In support of the second: Deaconesses

We have ‘in like manner women’; this phrase in v8 starts a new category and is parallel to how deacons are introduced in v8; there is no definite article or possessive before ‘women’ which we should expect if the reference was to deacon’s wives (the NIV has added ‘their’); there is a reference elsewhere to Phoebe and the word deacon is used of her (Rom. 16v1); v11 gives a comparable list of qualifications similar to that for the deacons themselves; the elders’ wives not mentioned so why should those of the deacons be?

In support of the first: Deacons’ Wives

These women are not called deacons as Phoebe was; the reference to them is sandwiched between qualifications for deacons; there is no reference to marital faithfulness which could be expected in the light of v2 and v12; in addition, a reference here to ‘wives’ fits in with the next verse which refers to deacons being married, v12. Deacons’ wives are mentioned, when the wives of elders are not, because of the more practical ministry of deacons in which their wives can also be involved. This is also the reason for the special qualifications required of the women.

Knight² advocates that here we should see the deacon’s wives and supports this view with the following arguments. First, would Paul, who was always wise concerning sexuality (cf. e.g., 2v9; 5v11, 15; perhaps 5v6) suggest women as deacons’ assistants, rather than their wives? Again, there is no reference if women were in view for them to be ‘the wife of one husband’, as there is for elders and deacons and in the qualifications for older widows, (v2, 12; 5v9). Also, if wives are in view one understands the point that the qualifications of a deacon also involve his wife’s qualifications i.e., he could be disqualified from service if his wife is not worthy! Regarding the omission of the definite article before *gunai/kai yunaikas* in the whole passage Paul refers to the various individuals, whether, elders, deacons, children, anarthrously. Finally he makes the point that it is not said of the women that they be ‘beyond reproach’, ‘because it is not they, but their husbands, who have been elected to and put into office.

¹ Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, p. 265.

² Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, p 171-173.

These women, be they wives or church workers, (it would be the elders, not the deacons, who would provide authoritative leadership for the church) are to live so that they are worthy of respect; like the deacons they are to have control of their tongue and tell the truth, 'not slanderers', (the word actually is *diabolos*, the same term translated 'devil' and suggests the spreading of lies) and be trustworthy in everything, showing complete reliability (v11).

Paul now comes to/continues with the deacon again in v12 and expresses the same conditions as laid down for the elder as far as marital fidelity and management of his home and family is concerned set out in v2, 4-5.

Here Paul explains that deacons have a *glorious motivation*. Just as there was encouragement expressed for men to take up the eldership at the beginning of ch.3, so now the deacons are similarly encouraged. Those who have served well will have a standing of honour in the esteem of God but probably more the church. The word 'well' *kalw/j kalōs* here means 'in the right way' or 'commendably' and in fact 'permeates Paul's treatment of church officers (cf. vv.4,12 and especially 5:17)'¹. They also should be marked by 'great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus'. Some may suggest that the 'great boldness' has to do with their fearless witness but the reference to faith in Christ Jesus and the relationship with him may mean that Paul is referring to a greater confidence about their own spiritual standing in the grace of God which has enabled them, i.e., the assurance of their salvation.²

So here in both elder and deacon we discover a core of Christian qualities which all leaders should exhibit. These qualities are vital for the ongoing mission of God in that region – in fact in any region. Note that the quality of the ministry of elders and deacons will also influence the healthiness of the church.

The Church and the Truth

The reason for the epistle becomes clear here. It was that the Christians might know the conduct which is appropriate for God's church. Paul is in Macedonia and he senses that he may be delayed. He writes these instructions (*tauta* is 'these things' i.e., his full teaching in all of these Letters) because he is anxious that they know now ahead of his own return what God expects of them.

Stott³ reminds us, 'Thus by a deliberate providence of God the NT letters came to be written and have been preserved for the edification of the church in subsequent generations'. Without these the church would be like a rudderless ship or a mapless traveller. But now we are aware what the plan of God is.

Paul writes to Timothy 'so that you may know how you ought to conduct yourself...' This section would remind the church at Ephesus of Timothy's role and authority as the apostle's delegate. In him we have Paul's presence - in spite of his absence. Included in 'these things' mentioned above of which Timothy was to speak would be Paul's teaching in 2v1-3v13. The things taught there is how the people ought to conduct themselves – the use of *dei/ dei* 'it is necessary' reminds us of the obligation to live like this.

The believers at Ephesus are the 'House or Household of God'. The translation 'house' might be more appropriate since he also employs building terms i.e., pillar, foundation. The Living God dwells in his people. They are 'the Church of the Living God'. Just as the Living God dwelt in the sanctuary of Israel, so God dwells in the universal church by his Spirit. We have his presence and power within. Yet we can use the term also 'household'. Knight⁴ makes the point that although building terminology is used, since conduct focuses upon the interaction of members of God's family, most modern

¹ Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, p 173.

² Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, p.497.

³ Stott, *The Message of 1 Timothy and Titus*, p.103.

⁴ Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, p 180.

translations have opted for 'household'. It is true that we need to recognise God is our Father and that we are part of a family. Fellow-Christians are brothers and sisters and relationships among his people are so important. Remember we noted that we are members of 'the church of the Living God'. The phrase *evkkhlhsi,a qeou/ zw/ntoj ekklēsia theou zōntos* involves the use of an OT phrase (Jos. 3v10; 2 Kgs. 19v4, 16; Ps. 42v2; Isa 37v4, 17; Hos. 1v10; Dan. 6v20), affirming that God is the only God – 'living' in contrast to the dead idols; he is also the source of life, 'who communicates life and salvation to believers in Christ (1 Tim. 1v16; 4v8-10) and gives them the vitality of life for service and obedience (1 Thess. 1v9; cf. Heb. 9v14)'.¹

We are 'the pillar and ground of the truth'. Both 'pillar' and 'ground' are architectural terms and convey certain images. The first 'pillar' is *stu/loj stulos*, (see Gal. 2v9; Rev. 3v12; 10v1 and in the LXX of the two pillars of Solomon's temple, 1 Kgs. 7v15 named Jachin 'he shall establish' and Boaz 'in him is strength'; see also 2 Kgs. 25v13ff.; 2 Chron. 3v15ff.; 4v12ff.). The second, *e`drai,wma hedraiōma* 'ground', will also relate to a building and Hanson² proposes the translation 'foundation', rather than 'prop' or 'stay'. So the idea of the pillar is something which supports or upholds something, while the 'foundation'³ speaks of firmness or a solid base. In the situation of the challenge coming from the false teaching, the church in its deacons and elders are called to see that the church is first of all grounded in and then upholds or makes known the truth in word and deed. Here we have the continuation of the missionary challenge of chapter 2. Have we held fast to the truth and do we conform to its teaching, seeking to manifest it continually in our lifestyle?

Now we come to what the church is called upon to proclaim. In v16 we have a powerful confession of faith. The words 'without controversy' can be translated as 'undeniably' or 'by common consent'. The word implies that what are expressed here are truths which are unanimously held by true Christians. Again, 'the mystery of Godliness' needs explanation. The term 'mystery' is a common word for something previously hidden but now unveiled. Here it is the plan of God in Jesus Christ and what he has accomplished. The term 'godliness' refers to the Christian lifestyle or Christian existence that results from the revelation of the mystery, born out of true faith – see discussion of 'godliness' in 2v2.

The mystery is centred in Jesus Christ, his person and work. There are foundational truths about Jesus Christ which have been made known, and are to be made known. These are 'undeniably great'. Does Paul recall the cry of Diana's worshippers who shouted for two hours, 'Great is Diana of the Ephesians' (Acts 19v28, 34) and so he affirms 'Great is the mystery of godliness'?

Some ask whether Paul is quoting an early hymn. Or do we have a doctrinal climax, a creedal affirmation or solemn public confession? Various attempts have been made to seek to establish origins, but it is best to simply begin with Paul and seek to understand what he meant to convey from these verses.

As far as style is concerned we have six lines which closely resemble one another. Each begins with a verb with a similar ending and they are all in the aorist tense and in the passive mood. All end also with a noun in the dative case. The whole begins with a masculine relative pronoun 'who' or 'he' as a reference to Christ⁴ and he is the subject of the six verbs that follow.

¹ Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, p. 181.

² A T Hanson, *Studies in the Pastoral Epistles*, London, 1968, p5ff.

³ With regard to the Greek word *e`drai,wma edraiōma*, the cognate adjective *evdrai/oj hedpaios* means 'steadfast, or 'firm', 1 Cor. 7v37; 15v58; Col. 1v23.

⁴ There are late variants of what is considered to be the original *o]j hos*. First a change to *o` ho* the neuter relative pronoun which would agree with the neuter Greek word 'mystery'. Or a change to 'God' *qe,o]j theos* – sometimes this word was written in shortened i.e. *Qj, Ths*, using the capital first letter of the word, which is very similar. However because the 'mystery' is a person (Christ) one can see why the masculine pronoun *`Oj Hos* could have been used.

The verses have been organised either into two strophes of three lines or three strophes of two lines. The first gives us two lines with the opposite ideas (flesh/Spirit and world/glory) and the other lines are said to act like a refrain. The first strophe then is said to refer to Jesus upon earth and the second points to him as the exalted Lord. The three sets of two lines give us contrasting couplets with a proposed chiasmic structure. Also the couples are said to alternate between earth and heaven. Both of these are interesting but not all scholars are fully convinced. There are more who suggest that here we have the story of Jesus chronologically or historically. The problem for some is the final one; but that problem is not insurmountable.

It is affirmed that he appeared in a body (literally 'in flesh') – a reference to his incarnation, and asserts that he became a real man in his earthly existence. This has already been emphasised in 1 Timothy – see 1v15, 2v5. Again the purpose of his incarnation is in the background here – his death for others as a ransom.

He was vindicated by the Spirit. If the word is 'spirit', contrasting him becoming flesh then it will mean 'declared righteous, showing himself to be the Son of God in respect to his spiritual nature'. But the reference may rather be to his vindication by the Holy Spirit in his life and even his resurrection. First, his was a life lived in the power of the Holy Spirit (Lk. 4v1,14; Matt. 12v28) and also in the resurrection by the Spirit, (1 Pet.3v18) God affirmed Jesus' innocence – there was no reason for him to be put to death.

He was 'seen by angels'. This is true of many occasions; Matt. 28v1-7; Lk. 2v13, 22v43, 24v4; Mk. 1v13; Acts 1v10-11. Angels were present again and again according to the Gospel records. But is it not in keeping with the chronology to see here Christ's triumphant exaltation/entrance into heaven and the display of his victory there to the heavenly hosts?

Now we come back to earth, back to the mission of God. 'Preached unto the nations' reminds us that the gospel is centred in him; he is its content and here there is the emphasis on the universal scope and responsibility of making him known to all nations. This does not exclude Jews as well. Here is the missionary task.

'believed on in the world' reminds us of the spread and success of the gospel and the basic way of salvation (1 Tim. 1v16, 4v10; 2 Tim. 1v12, 3v15; Tit. 3v8). But how will they hear without a preacher? 'Taken up into glory'. For some this is a problem, for it seems to bring us back to the ascension which we reached chronologically earlier. His exaltation will be then understood just as the foreshadowing of his final epiphany in power and glory. But it may be better with Towner to see here not just the exaltation when he was seen in heaven by the heavenly host but 'is a more likely description of the status of "glorification" conferred in and through exaltation'.¹ This statement can then his present status and authority as judge (1 Tim. 6v14-16; 2 Tim. 4v1,8,18).

So here we have the truth in which the church is first of all to remain grounded. Seeing that this happens is the responsibility of the leaders. Then this truth, which of course is centred in Christ, is to be proclaimed - like a statue set up on a pillar – the 'beautiful' message for all to hear and believe. This is their mission and ours. The aorist tenses used in this statement do not really signify completion but facts. This story has happened – these things are facts which men and women can accept. They present a Christ in whom one can place their whole trust for eternity. This is the mission message.

1 Timothy 4v1-16 Godliness and the House of God

In this chapter we come to the exhortation concerning personal godliness among God's people (the house of God). There is a contrasting *de. de* 'but' in v1 which highlights the seriousness of the heresy/false teaching which was influencing so many in Ephesus from that of the truth centred in the Jesus Christ of 3v14-16. Timothy's responsibility as far as Paul is concerned is to challenge it and, as

¹ Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, p. 284.

a young man, to endeavour to live a godly life before the church (4 v1-16). The chapter divides into three with the main divisions marked by the imperatives in v6 and v11.

The False Teachers and their Deceitfulness V1-5.

In spite of the churches' guardianship and proclamation of the truth, the Holy Spirit had revealed that some will abandon the faith – here there is a strong word – 'aposticize'. They would abandon the body of truth or true doctrine for heresy.

Verse 1 reads, 'in the latter times'. This is a term which is parallel to the phrase 'the last days', 2 Tim. 3v1ff. It is clear that these times have already begun, for Timothy was to avoid such people himself in 2 Tim. 3v5. Here in fact as Knight¹ points out Paul writes of a present situation (v3-5) and urges Timothy to instruct the church members in this matter 'here and now' (v6). The last days/latter times really denote the Christian era between 1st and 2nd coming, see also Heb. 1v1-2. The emphasis here is of the doctrinal departure that is part of the moral and theological deterioration prophesied for the last days.

'The Spirit expressly says'. The question is how and when this was all revealed? Paul does not indicate whether the prophecy he refers to was given either by Jesus (e.g. Matt 24v10-11)² or Christian prophets in the churches as in Acts 21v 4, 10-14 or just through the apostle himself (as he himself had warned them of the future rise of false teachers in Acts 20v29-30).

The text says 'some' will depart from the faith. The word is rather vague and is used also in 1v3,6,19; 4v1; 5v15,24; 6v10; 2 Tim. 2v18, which Towner suggests should be taken as 'an intentional expression of disrespect'.³ It refers to the false teachers themselves and to those who were influenced by them. They were turning away from 'the faith', the term that sums up the Christian way.

On the surface here we have human agents – certain teachers, probably elders, who were speaking erroneous things with some people listening to them. But beneath the surface we have the real source of the false teaching – the activity of evil spirits or demons. People were 'giving heed' or devoting themselves to a heretical message which had its origin with 'deceiving spirits' and then referring to the content of the false teaching, Paul speaks of 'doctrines of demons'.

Clearly belief in the activity of the demonic was the orthodox view in the early church and should not be written off as simply a rhetorical device. So while Paul can write of the influence of the Holy Spirit in revelation of the character of the latter times, he can also pinpoint the activity and influence of deceiving spirits. Why do some accept the first but seem to be uncomfortable with the latter?

Stott writes, 'The bible portrays the devil not only as the tempter, enticing people into sin, but as the deceiver, seducing people into error'.⁴ Sometimes we wonder why intelligent and highly educated people can seemingly believe things which seem so unbelievable, why many can be caught up with various philosophies and cults or New Age teaching. Is Paul not giving us the answer here? Concerning *daimoni*, *daimoniōn*, 'demons', Knight⁵ points out that the term is used 53 times in the Gospels, usually in the words of Jesus; also it is found four times in 1 Cor. 10v20-21.

V2 The doctrines were mediated through teachers, who spoke lies in hypocrisy, having consciences which were 'seared'. The word *hypokrisis* in the NT came to mean 'two-faced, deceptive', in the sense of acting outwardly in a certain way while being different inwardly, pretending to be pious but having evil motives. The things they are teaching appeared to be true but were false and evil,

¹ Knight *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, p 189.

² But when Paul refers to Jesus' teaching elsewhere he seems to acknowledge it, Acts 20v35; 1 Cor. 7v10; see also 1 Tim. 5v18.

³ Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, p. 289.

⁴ Stott, *The Message of 1 Timothy and Titus*, p. 111.

⁵ Knight *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, p 189.

contradicting the truth. They are labelled 'liars' or 'false speakers'¹ for their deception was intentional since they themselves did not really believe what they were saying.

They did not respond to but deliberately stifled their consciences. The word *kausthria*,zw *kaustēriazō* was a word used of branding animals with a red hot iron and cauterising wounds. Rather than simply suggesting that the false teachers are 'branded' with the devil's ownership² or as a penalty e.g., where the word could be used of a mark that would stop a slave running away, since nothing is said about who brands or why, the former use is to be preferred. So the reference is to the conscience about which Paul has already referred (1v5, 19; 3v9), which here was not operating as it should. When skin, a nerve or superficial tumour is cauterized, it is destroyed by burning and so rendered insensitive. This is the meaning here, for the false teachers had previously refused to obey the truth and now Paul uses a perfect participle 'have seared' to reflect their true state. They were insensitive to the difference between right and wrong. So beware! No matter how self-effacing, humble and soft spoken certain modern teachers 'appear' to be, the test must always be whether what they say is firmly grounded in the scriptures. So the vital point remains, what was the content of their teaching? The fact is, they had another 'mission' message and both they and their message were to be rejected.

V3 They were teaching a false asceticism. Marriage and food relate to the two most basic appetites of the human body. These were being denied³. It appears in fact that the false teachers were affirming that meat was intrinsically evil, which goes beyond the views of 'the weak' in 1 Cor. 8 and Rom. 14.

There has been a good deal of discussion as to the background of the heretical teaching in this particular passage.⁴ As to origins, it is not necessary to find here the restrictions concerning marriage and food in the second century debates of Gnostic dualism⁵, to look to the development of this type of attitude in e.g., *The Acts of Paul and Thecla*, where Paul is presented as the promoter of an ascetic lifestyle, or some who are identified in Irenaeus⁶, for we can find such parallels in the first century. The Essenes of Qumran were said by Josephus⁷ to 'reject pleasures as an evil, but esteem continence.....to be virtue', and to 'neglect marriage'. Yet it must be acknowledged that they seemed to lack the strict food asceticism highlighted here.

It is Towner⁸ who roots the teaching in Paul's ministry. Issues of sexual relations, marriage and rules about foods were debated in Pauline churches as Paul's letters reveal. He discusses the connections he finds between 1 Corinthians and 1 Timothy. He finds in both an overrealised eschatology, as was pointed out already in the exegesis of chapter 1, although in even 1 Timothy this view may have been in its early stages (cf. 1Tim.1v20; 2 Tim. 2v27. Second Timothy has the claim of the false teachers 'the resurrection is already past'). This is then linked with the questions about marriage etc., compared to the life lived more fully in the Spirit (1 Cor.7). But he does find certain differences between both books as to the outlook regarding food.

¹ The word is *yeudologoj pseudologos* which expresses more than a 'liar'; There is the notion of definite false statements, F. Rienecker and C. Rogers, *Linguistic Key to the Greek New Testament*, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1980, p. 625, quoting W. Robertson, *The Expositor's Greek Testament*, 5 vols., 1956, Eerdmans, Grand Rapids.

² See Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, p.238.

³ We note Paul's use of *brw/ma brōma* here in v3. This means that he is thinking of solid food – see 1 Cor. 3v2, where he contrasts it with milk in his discussion about spiritual immaturity.

⁴ Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, p.533-35 discusses nine possibilities, some not necessarily opposed to one another.

⁵ See R.F. Collins, *1 and 2 Timothy and Titus: A Commentary*, The New Testament Library, Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2002, p. 114-17.

⁶ Irenaeus refers to the Encratites in the second century who were led by Titian and advocated celibacy and also 'introduced abstinence from eating what they call "animate" food, ungrateful to the God who made it all'. In Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, p.535.

⁷ Josephus, *Antiquities*, 18.21; *Jewish War*, 2.120-21.

⁸ Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, p. 294-95.

Whether these connections between both books can be sustained or not, it is in 1 Timothy that, for Towner, the Ephesian opponents seem to be involved in some kind of 'spiritual' exegesis of OT stories, and in the case of Genesis, there appears to be a call to return to pre-fall patterns of living. He points out that 'before the fall into sin, sexual relations had not been initiated and meat was not sanctioned for food until Gen. 9:3'.¹ Towner has to recognise the problem that Gen. 1v27-28 causes with the prohibition of marriage in 1 Tim. 4v3. However we view these suggestions, it does appear that the problems with food restrictions and marriage in various Pauline churches, the belief that it was 'spiritual' to be ascetic (see Col.2v16-23) and the ideas of living in the resurrection era, with paradise or Edenic conditions to be restored, would make it clearly possible for the false teachers to influence some to believe that they could, and in fact should, anticipate it already in the here and now. All this would help explain the use of the Genesis account in ch.2 to counteract the manipulation of Genesis materials², also the reference to 'childbearing' of 2v15, the teaching here in ch. 4 and how Paul encourages the younger widows to remarry in 5v14 (see also 3v2, 12). Earlier in 1 Cor. 7 Paul had acknowledged that singleness gives more opportunity to devote one's full time to serving the Lord (v32, 35), but still has affirmed that marriage was a gift from God (v7) and legitimate (v28). In this those listening to the false teachers were being deceitfully misled.

Here Paul does not really deal with the first prohibition i.e. marriage. As we have seen, he has already given his answer explicitly elsewhere and implicitly in the above references in the letter and so he moves on to the second, (v 3-5). Paul argues that we cannot refuse food for two reasons. First God created it to sustain us (Gen. 1v29; 2v9, 16; 3v2; 9v3; Deut. 26v11). This is the Creator's purpose, expressed clearly in a purpose clause (eivj meta,lhmyin eis metalēmpsīn) that such food is 'to be received', in fact we should receive it 'with thanksgiving', understanding that it is the gracious gift of the Creator God. Paul particularly stresses that it is the believers who 'have come to know the truth' who should receive it. By implication the outlook of their opponents is erroneous, in spite of the claim that *they* had the knowledge. The one article toi/j *tois* used for both 'those who believe and know the truth' suggests that there are two ways of referring to the Christians and that they *only* know the truth.

In v4-5 Paul expands on his argument. The use of the word kalo,j *kalos* 'good' is surely an allusion to Genesis 1v31, where God pronounces all things 'good'. The use of the Pentateuch in this verse will be deliberate, in light of the false teachers and their fascination with the OT, particularly the Genesis material. So no food should be rejected i.e., considered unclean (cf. Mk. 7v15; Acts 10v10-15, 28; Rom. 14v14; 1 Cor. 25-26; Tit. 1v14-15), Such rejection is firmly repudiated - it is ouvde.n avpo,blhton *ouden apoblēton* 'nothing to be refused' i.e. of all God has created, but should be accepted 'with thanksgiving' – repeated again from v3. Such prayerful gratitude is the conscious acknowledgement of God's provision and our acceptance of his gift. Thanksgiving always accompanied meals in Judaism and the early church, (Mk.6v41; 8v6; 14v22-23; Acts 27v35; 1 Cor. 10v30; Rom. 14v6). How thankful are we for what God gives us? See the example of Christ, (Mk. 6v41; 8v6; 14v22-23; Lk. 24v30).

Rather than adding any further thought in v5 Paul summarizes and reiterates the argument of v3-4. The verb a`gia,zw *hagadzō* is being used in the general sense of being declared fit, acceptable, or good for use or consumption – pointing back to God's declaration in v4 and the thankful response expected³. So Paul is arguing that food is consecrated twice over – objectively as God made all things and pronounced his verdict upon it that it is 'good'; then subjectively by grateful prayer. So we have

¹ Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, p. 295.

² See the enthusiastic proposal of this in Gruenler, 'Mission-Lifestyle Setting of 1 Tim 2:8-15'.

³ Knight *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, p 192.

God's word to us¹ warranting us to use the creation gift and our word to God, acknowledging the gift as our appropriate response to him and asking his blessing upon it². So the sanctification is complete – both ways.

A False Mission Message

Beware of those who have advocated some kind of Christian asceticism as the path to spirituality. People can be deluded into the idea of a compensatory righteousness. They will not face up to their sinfulness, their lying, dishonesty, immorality, disobedience i.e., inner wickedness and so they try to sooth their conscience by abstinence from certain things in an attempt to please God and delude themselves that they have righteousness. Be aware of the dreadful demonic deceit here, when this is proposed by so-called religious leaders as a way of acceptance when the true gospel points us to trust in Christ and his sacrifice, rather than in ourselves as the answer for our sin. We must not take away from the sufficiency of Christ's work on the cross for us.

The message here is to recognise the basic goodness of created things, everything God has created like food, the world of nature and marriage, family and sex. Concerning the latter, sadly in the centuries that followed sexual love came to be regarded as evil. Tertullian and Ambrose accepted that even the extinction of the human race would be better than sex between a man and his wife. Augustine often would counsel married people to abstain. The Council of Trent affirmed that virginity was to be seen as superior to the married state. Roman Catholicism prohibited marital intimacy on certain days of the year – finally in fact more than half of the days of the year. While singleness, which was mentioned earlier is referred to by both Jesus and Paul – for some (Matt. 19v12; 1 Cor. 7v7), the teaching of scripture is clear that celibacy is not the will of God generally for Christians. Yet Paul is not opposed to *spiritual* discipline in the pursuit of godliness as we will shortly see.

The Believers and True Godliness v6-10

Verse 6 affirms that in response to the false teaching, Paul's theology of creation (Tau/ta *tauta* 'these things') must be set before the believers by Timothy. In this way he will be a good minister or servant of God - 'good' in the sense of approved by God. There is a pattern here which occurs throughout the letter. Paul first sets out the heresy and what is wrong with it (1 Tim. 1v3-17; 4v1-5; 6v2b-10) and then comes the exhortation to Timothy to stand firm and challenge it with sound teaching (1 Tim. 1v18-20; 4v6-16; 6v11-16). The chapter as we have seen is more concerned with Timothy's response to the heresy (teaching the true mission message) than details about the heresy itself. The passage also includes commands for Timothy, although the false teachers are still in view.

Paul calls upon him to seek to be godly in life. It is here that true godliness, rather than the asceticism of the false teachers becomes the focus and Paul makes clear that his mission is to bring people throughout the world to the knowledge of the only true Saviour-God and his salvation, which can lead to the godliness he writes of.

In teaching as Paul commands, Timothy will show how he has been nourished on the truths of the faith. The verb is evntre,fw *entrephō* 'to nourish', a word which has in its background the image of feeding or bringing up children. With regard to Timothy, the present participle is used suggesting a continual process, the hearing/reading and inwardly digesting of the truth, first described as 'the words of faith' i.e., the body of doctrine of the Christian faith; also as 'the good doctrine' in contrast to the false teaching. So the truthfulness of the apostolic gospel is stressed when compared to the

¹ Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, p.546, outlines seven suggestions as to what 'the word of God' means, but all things considered, as was discussed earlier, Gen. 1v31 'the divine oracle' as God declares all food edible is the best explanation.

² The Greek word for prayer is evnteuxij *enteuxis* which is a more general word for prayer signifying a 'request', rather than specific thanksgiving. Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, p.547, suggests that it signifies a request for God to cleanse or consecrate what may have been 'defiled' by idolatry.

'doctrines of demons'. Paul makes clear that Timothy in contrast to the 'some' of v1 has 'carefully followed' the true teaching, the verb *parakolouqe,w parakolouthēō*, here in the perfect tense¹, suggests following a path begun in the past and continuing or persevering into the present (see also 2 Tim.3v10).

Having commended Timothy for the path he was following, Paul now using the imperative, calls upon him to 'reject' (see also the use of the word in 1 Tim. 5v11; 2 Tim. 2v23; Tit. 3v10) this false teaching described under two terms; first *be,bhloj bebēlos*, meaning 'profane', 'lacking any sacred character' and *graw,dej mu,qouj graōdeis muthous* meaning stories characteristic of old women, a sarcastic label which was often used in philosophical polemic². The word 'myths' convey the idea of a tale fit only for children but also reminds us of the first use of the word in 1 Tim. 1v4 for the 'fables' of the false teachers where the OT was overlaid with absurd legends and bizarre symbolism. So Paul is also interested in a good spiritual diet, but it involves this rejection of the junk teaching of bad doctrine and feeding upon the true doctrine.

In place of the heretical Timothy must take a different path, (v8). He must 'exercise himself to be godly' – like an athlete. He must commit himself to a life of genuine spirituality 'which would include all the ethical teaching contained in the letter'.³ Paul admits that physical training is of some value – he uses the Greek words *gumnazw gymnazō* 'to exercise' and *gumnasi,a gymnasia* 'exercise', with a background in Greco-Roman culture of the development of the body for the athletic contest. As a young man Timothy knew the importance of taking exercise and that training was important for athletes intending to compete in the games. But the benefits while useful – some would say indispensable for good health - are limited, and it was more important not to neglect 'the truths of the faith and the good teaching' for spiritual health: they are valuable in every way. What he says about bodily exercise is not to be taken as any disparagement of it: Paul in writing of the profitability of bodily exercise uses the word *ovli,goj oligos* 'little' which means 'a little' i.e., within its own limits it is of some value. But the fitness of the soul is even more important, not just for some things but for all. Not for this short time here but for eternity. Responding to the gospel and going on to live a godly life brings the promise of eternal life into one's present life and it carries on into the age to come.

The third 'faithful saying' occurs in v9 (see also 1v15; 3v1). To what does it refer? Some scholars consider it refers to v8⁴ or only v8b; v10 or v10b only. Marshall⁵ is persuasive in suggesting that a backward reference is surely required but v10 is a kind of backup comment – and the use of *ga.r gar* 'for' supports this. It appears to be more a personal statement.

Paul urges Timothy to give himself vigorously to the pursuit of godliness. The youth in the gymnasium will exert himself to the utmost; he will discard every handicap to equip himself better for victory. How does this compare with our dedication to greater godliness? How can we pursue it? Meditating upon the word of God and allowing the word of God to change you - that is the way to be godly.

Verse 10 makes the point. For this we labour and strive – do we? Many never pick up a bible or think about the teaching they receive from God's word. The words Paul uses are challenging. First *kopia,w kopiaō* is also his word for manual labour (1 Cor. 4v12; Eph. 4v28; 2 Tim. 2v6) and means to work hard, to work until one is weary. The second *avgwni,zomai agōnizomai* refer to the tremendous effort extended for the work of God. We should note as Knight⁶ points out that both are present tense verbs pointing to a continuous effort.

¹ Knight *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, p 195.

² Knight *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, p 195.

³ Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, p. 306.

⁴ Knight *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, p 198-204.

⁵ Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, p.554.

⁶ Knight *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, p 202.

We however labour and trust in the Living God. The present tense of the participle 'living' indicates his unending existence and his ability to give life continually now and forever. Note how he is described as 'the saviour of all men especially of those who believe'.

Paul is not a universalist¹, yet he writes of God as the saviour of all, not just that he wants to be. Or is he the preserver of all? But Paul in these letters uses salvation language of spiritual salvation and not physical². The answer may be in the word translated 'especially' (ma,lista *malista*). It is also so used in 1Tim. 5v17, 2 Tim. 4v13 and this is generally translated 'especially those who labour in the word and doctrine' and 'especially the parchments'. But Skeat, citing other examples from papyrus letters, maintains that the word in some places (Tit.1v10-11) can be understood as providing a further explanation or definition of the previous statement and so translates it as 'that is...' ³. Therefore here it can be translated 'to be precise', 'namely, I mean', or 'in other words'. So Paul is in the second statement simply modifying or clarifying the first. God is the Saviour of all, i.e. of those who believe. This is the true gospel, the mission message. You cannot be saved unless you believe. Guy King⁴ puts it like this, 'potentially of all men, actually of all who believe'.

Timothy and his Personal Faithfulness v11-16

Paul now comes to the problem faced by Timothy as a young leader. He makes a direct appeal to him – using in fact ten imperatives! He is exhorted to command and teach (both present imperatives which means that this must be done habitually and continually) 'these things' (8 times in the letter). In other words, he was to keep passing on at Ephesus these teachings about godliness which Paul had exhorted him to do. The words 'command' and 'teach' involve authoritative apostolic instruction brought by Timothy as Paul's representative.

But he was relatively young (around 35?) with responsibilities beyond his years. He may have found that some were jealous of him or others lacked respect for him because he was young. Those who are older often find it difficult to accept younger people and lack placing confidence in them. Younger people on the other hand, can become frustrated when in spite of theological training they are given no responsibility, even perhaps, no opportunity. If Paul was prepared to trust younger men and send them even with the awesome responsibility of apostolic delegates should not we?

Paul exhorts Timothy that the way for people not to 'look down' but 'up' on him was to manifest in personal and public ways the following godly lifestyle. It is clear that the spiritual qualities Paul looks for in Timothy are intended to be a paradigm for others, not least for all those in ministry.

– He should 'continually be', present imperative, an example. The Greek word tu,poj *tupos* means 'pattern', 'model'. See also Tit. 2v7 where it is used of Titus. It means that both Timothy and Titus should have a quality of life that others will see and desire to follow. Mounce⁵ suggests we see here the particular word picture of 'a mold that should be pressed into the lives of others so that they attain the same shape'. Paul now reveals different aspects of this life using five prepositions and short phrases. He was to show an example in the way he spoke i.e., in personal conversation or everyday speech (if a leader gets into trouble it is usually with his mouth! Remember Prov. 10v19; 13v3; 18v13) and in the way he lived, 'in conduct', referring to his way of life, both actually encompassing his public relations with others. He was to show 'love' i.e., love to others, *all* others, having a genuine concern

¹ To interpret this phrase in the sense that all are actually saved would be inconsistent with Paul's teaching elsewhere as Knight has explained. Some people are regarded as bearing God's retribution and the penalty of eternal destruction, (e.g., 1 Thess. 1v10; 2 Thess. 1v7-10), Knight *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, p 203.

² See 1 Tim. 1v1; 2v3; 4v10; Tit. 1v3, 4; 2v10, 13; 3v4, 6; 2 Tim. 1v10.

³ TC Skeat, "Especially the Parchments": A note on 2 Timothy IV.13', *JTS* 30, (1979), p. 173-177. See Knight *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, p 203-204, who favours this interpretation.

⁴ King, *A Leader Led*, p.45

⁵ Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, p. 259.

for their welfare, in contrast to the greed of the false teachers; and 'faith' or faithfulness/trustworthiness. Finally 'purity', a`gnei,a *hagneia* and refers not only to chastity in matters of sex but purity of act and thought.¹ It occurs again in these Letters in 1Tim. 5v2, where Paul expects Timothy to treat younger women as sisters, 'with all purity'. So the word has sexual connotations as above.

– Paul has highlighted his personal conduct first, now he turns to his ministry. But remember, godly conduct creates respect, authority in the pulpit. He should continue in his teaching ministry. There are three aspects in ministry which Paul calls for, all based on a single imperative. That the three aspects of ministry all have a definite article can convey that they were all aspects of public worship. The exhortation to engage in them 'until I come' means that these are the things he would be doing if present.

So Timothy must continue in the public reading of scripture, which had roots in the OT e.g., in Nehemiah 8v2-8 when Ezra the Scribe read to the men and women of Israel 'from morning to midday...day by day'. It was a common practice in the synagogue (Lk. 4v16; Acts 13v15, 27; 15v21) and then in the Christian churches (1 Thess. 5v21; Col. 4v16; Rev. 1v3). This activity of reading scripture laid the basis for the next two activities, its preaching and exposition. He must BOTH exhort and teach. This is a very important part of public worship – not all of it – but it must not be closed out as it is central. Exhortation had in mind changing one's behaviour or mission lifestyle on the basis of what the word of God revealed. Timothy must also teach doctrine, the body of apostolic truth called here in the letter 'the teaching', (4v6, 16; 6v1, 3). The most effective preachers are those who have persevered as life-long students of the word of God. Note that for Guthrie², the present imperative tense of prose,cw *prosechō* 'to give attention to', not only urges continuous action but suggests previous preparation in private. It is true that the Spirit can guide us at the moment of public preaching, but it is spiritual neglect not to seek the enlightenment of the Spirit in real study and preparation before that moment. So the preaching was drawn out of the scriptures read. There needs to be engagement with the word and exposition. Hughes and Chapell make the serious point of what is lacking often today in preaching:

The congregation hears the text read and waits in anticipation for its exposition – only to be disappointed when the text is never alluded to in the next thirty minutes. Or, more commonly, the text is handled superficially with no serious engagement of its meaning. The preacher mouths its words, but there is no substance...Sometimes the text is so encrusted with stories and jokes that it is unseen and unheard. Other times it is distorted because it is preached through a therapeutic, political or social lens.³

– He should seek to develop his gift and not neglect it. His gift was recognised from the very beginning publicly when Paul (see 2Tim. 1v6) and the council or body of elders in his local church (the presbute,rion *presbuteron*) had identified with him in his sense of God's call. (The word is used here and also by Luke to refer to the Jewish court in Jerusalem, Lk. 22v66; Acts 22v5). Later concepts of ordination should not be read anachronistically back into the primitive situation reflected here in this verse. So Paul reminded Timothy of his gift, but it had to be used and cultivated.

– Timothy should put his heart and soul into the work and what is to come implies total commitment. These last two verses contain four imperatives and are deeply personal. Timothy must give his whole concentration to the work. The word used by Paul is *meleta,w meletaō* can mean 'meditate' but also 'practice' or 'take pains with something'. Timothy is to pay close attention to the instructions given, but such meditation should always result in action so that he may put them into practice. The suggested

¹ W. Lock, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Pastoral Epistles*, ICC, T. & T. Clark, Edinburgh, 1966, p.53.

² Guthrie, *The Pastoral Epistles*, p 109.

³ R.K. Hughes & B. Chapell, *1-2 Timothy and Titus: To Guard the Deposit*, Crossway Books, 2000, p. 116.

meanings of the present participle *isthi* of the verb 'to be' are, 'be wrapped up in these things' or 'be absorbed in them', or 'let these things be your constant care'. Guthrie¹ suggests that the mind is to be immersed in these pursuits as the body in the air it breathes. He must live and breathe these things. Others ought to see his progress in all the areas mentioned, his example, his competence in the scriptures and in the development of his gift. The word *phaneros* means 'visible', plainly to be seen', (cf. Phil. 1v13). Timothy's position in leadership meant that he had a very public role and his life would be plainly observed.

- He must 'watch closely' his personal life and his doctrine. This reminds us of Paul's earlier exhortation to the elders in Ephesus, 'take heed to yourselves and to all the flock', (Acts 20v28). There is need for balance here. His doctrine must be backed up by a godly life or people will not listen to him or take seriously what he says. In fact your study of doctrine is all-important and has everything to do with your life, because what you believe about God will determine how you live. Stott² has pointed out that it is possible to be so busy in the Lord's work that one does not have time for the Lord himself; so concerned for the wellbeing of others that you could neglect your own relationship with God. So he is to watch his life and he should also take heed of the doctrine, applying it first to himself before expecting to see it in the lives of others. The truth must transform us first. To 'take heed' does not mean a passing glance. So are you living your life close to God? Are you diligent in the study of scripture so that you have something to impart when you preach? Are you making sure that the church is grounded in the truth? Or do you rise to preach with nothing to give, no refreshment to offer, with no real engagement with the word of God?

- He must persevere in these things – either the two aspects of his life just mentioned or more likely all that Paul has called upon him to do. Thus he would 'save himself' as well as those who continued to listen to him. This idea of 'saving oneself' should not trouble us as it is Pauline (see Rom. 11v14; 1 Cor. 7v16; 9v22). Paul has already stated that God was the saviour (4v10); Christ came to save sinners (1v15); he is the only mediator (2v5) and we are saved by faith (1v16; 4v10), but we have to also persevere – the ultimate evidence that we are the Lord's (1 Tim. 2v15; Heb. 3v14). Paul wishes Timothy to be an effective instrument in the hand of God the saviour and if he lives a godly life he could be a blessing to those who heard him (generally 'hearing' carries the idea of hearing the word believingly) preach the message of the gospel, the true mission doctrine, at Ephesus.

What a picture of faithfulness! Many of these characteristics stand in contrast to the conduct of the false teachers. It is through such dedication that Timothy will help further the true mission of God.

1 Timothy 5v1-25 Relationships in the House of God

Chapter 4v11-16 brought to Timothy instructions about his own behaviour and commitment in the fellowship at Ephesus. This is followed by an emphasis on Timothy's ministry as apostolic delegate for Paul in Ephesus – see the second person imperatives (5v1, 3, 7, 11, 19, 20, 21, 22, and 23). Paul talks about relationships in the Family of God or God's Household.

The Whole Family – how to treat them

Paul begins with the different age groups in the church. His counsel is set out in a single Greek sentence, (v1-2). The older members are to be treated with respect – showing love like that of a father and a mother. Younger members of a similar age to that of Timothy are to be treated as brothers and sisters – being careful with them displaying sensible restraint and absolute purity.

Regarding the 'older men', Paul uses *presbuteros* which is the word also used for leaders later in the chapter (v17, 19) since they would be drawn from that group normally; but here it

¹ Guthrie, *The Pastoral Epistles*, p. 110

² Stott, *The Message of 1 Timothy and Titus*, p. 124.

will mean all – leaders or any others in this age bracket. In verse 2 Paul also uses the feminine form *presbute,ra presbutera*, found only here in the NT for ‘older women’. In fact the words for ‘younger men’ and ‘younger women’ are all gender variations of both these words used of the older members of the church family in v1.

Timothy is not ‘to rebuke’ an older man, the word suggesting very severe, almost violent, censure, meaning that he must not speak with a harsh disciplinary attitude, but (note the adversative *avlla. alla*) rather ‘exhort’ him, present imperative tense, in correcting him, treat him with respect – as a father. Mothers were held in high esteem in the culture and so Timothy, when it was necessary, was not to speak to them in harshness but was to show due regard to them.

With younger men and younger women Timothy again is to ‘exhort’ them (the one verb is used for all four groups) as in one sense as peers members¹ of the same age group. With the sisters here Paul has for Timothy ‘a special word of caution’² with ‘all’ - meaning absolute – ‘purity’, referring to sexual purity. Timothy must avoid situations and contact where he might leave himself open to be tempted or even accused; he must avoid even all appearance of evil. There must be no possibility of suspicion in his relationships with them that might damage his reputation.

Paul turns to three more particular groupings, widows, presbyters and slaves. These groups are linked by the use of the Greek word ‘honour’ (5v3, 17; 6v1). Like every family, the Christ community is a fellowship of giving and receiving.

Widows – how to help them v3-8.

The teaching concerning widows is the longest in the whole letter and implies that there was a problem at Ephesus requiring some serious and urgent attention.

Scripture has much to say about widows. In fact it honours such in a way which most cultures do not. They are deserving of special honour, protection and care, (Ps. 68v5; Deut 10v18; Ex. 22v22ff; Deut 14v28-29; 24v17, 19; Prov. 15v25; see also Isa. 1v17, 23). Jesus himself committed his widowed mother into the care of John, John 19v26-27. The early church also showed their concern, (Acts 6v1ff; 9v39, 44; Jas.1v27). The instructions are divided into two paragraphs (v7 separates them) each introduced by a main verb.

Leaving aside the verses concerning younger widows at the moment, there is a difference of opinion among scholars as to whether other main references refer to two groups of widows, ‘supported’ widows and ‘serving’ widows. Widows are to be honoured, here meaning that they are to receive financial support, v4, 8, 16; then widows to be registered. One should note that the same ‘honour’ is mentioned with regard to elders so it must be understood as material provision as well.

What of the suggestion that there are two groups of widows with the second being an actual order of widows who served in the church? Both Lock and Kümmel, for example, identify here an official list of widows, an ecclesiastical office, in the service of the church.³ It must be acknowledged that there is a mention in Ignatius and Polycarp of this type of service, and clearly in Tertullian in the 3rd century there was a group who were registered and gave themselves to prayer, nursed the sick, cared for the orphans, visited Christians in prison, evangelised pagan women and taught female converts in preparation for their baptism. But there does not seem to be an actual appointed serving order of widows in the Ephesian church. All that really is here is the meeting of a destitute widow’s need. When one considers the shorter life span of that time sixty years of age was old, not the moment to

¹ Knight *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, p 214. He also makes the point that Jesus also refers to disciples as family members, Matt. 12v49, 50 par; Mk. 3v34,35; Lk. 8v21; cf. Mk. 10v30.

² Knight *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, p 215.

³ Lock, , *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Pastoral Epistles*, p. 57; W. G. Kümmel, *Introduction to The New Testament*, p.382.

begin to take on an active role in service. In fact the service here is past service in earlier life which is really only evidence of past godliness and therefore evidence that such a widow should be supported to make her latter years if possible – not crisis years.

Widows are to be 'Honoured' - supported

Knight points out that Paul uses the second person singular imperative *ti,ma tima* 'honour' which means that he is instructing Timothy. But there are plural verbs in v4 and v7, with the repeated indefinite 'any' of v4, 8 and 16 and the clear reference to the church in v16b which make certain that he is instructing the Christian community *through* Timothy. The use of *tima,w timaō* here by Paul will point back to its use in the fifth commandment – the only other occurrence of the verb is in the quotation of the commandment in Eph. 6v2.

It appears that the church was supporting some widows that their close relatives or family should have been supporting. Paul insists that the first line of care in the support of these widows was family (5v4, 8, and 16). The social background of the Greco-Roman world and the dowry system needs to be grasped here. When a woman was married a dowry always accompanied her. If her husband died there were two possibilities. A widow could stay in her husband's family to be cared for by a new kurioj *kurios* or 'lord', likely her son, the person now in charge of the dowry; or she could return to her father's home and take the dowry with her. This legal provision gave the widow financial security, being maintained either by her son or her father. – they had a moral and a legal responsibility which relieved the church. The church's support should be limited to those who were 'widows indeed', or widows in the fullest sense, with no family or dowry or relative to help her. So the factors that were necessary for church support were as follows:

- (1) Real financial need – no family or relative.
- (2) Sixty or over and have given evidence of practical godliness v9-10. But not -
- (3) The younger widows v10-15. Their physical drives will make them want to remarry; to depend upon church support at this younger age would encourage idleness and opportunity to simply become gossips. They are actually counselled to remarry, v14.

The passage needs now further comment.

Paul makes clear to Timothy that widows with 'children' or 'grandchildren' (Knight's¹ understanding of *e;kgona ekgona*, although other descendents may also be included), of course who would be adults themselves, should learn first of all to put their religion into practice by caring for their own, (v3-8,16). Paul writes that they ought (*prw/ton prōton*, meaning 'first' or the first priority, is to 'show piety' at home. The word 'piety' is *euvsebei/n eusebein* related to the 'godliness' word group which in these Letters sums up true Christian behaviour which is expected of all believers.

There were two motives here (a) as a way of repaying their own parents and grandparents who cared for them while they were young. It is an ungracious and ungrateful way to refuse help and interest after all that they have done for you. (b) It is pleasing to God. Such action accords with God's will, the God who in scripture commands us to honour our parents and who is committed to the widow. In fact, the neglect or mistreatment of widows is presented as an example of sin (Job 24v21; Ps. 94v6).

Note Paul urges that we should put this right - 'learn first to put their religion into practice at home' (v4), before any other service outside, on the platform, in the church etc.

In v5 Paul turns to the widow with no surviving relatives who puts her hope in God and continues day and night to pray – like Anna Lk.2v36-37. Perfect tenses are used here in this verse; she is 'left alone' – the continuing state, but also she has 'fixed her hope' in God – she has a 'posture of hope'², a settled attitude towards God. 'Night and day' is a phrase that Paul often uses to express constancy of

¹ Knight *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, p 217.

² Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, p.341.

devotion, continuing in specific prayer requests and intercession for general needs (see 2v1) before God.

Different is the widow of v6, who is presented as a dramatic contrast. She lives for pleasure – the verb is *spatala,w spatalaō*, which means ‘to give oneself to pleasure’ to live for herself, to live in indulgence. Here we have a hedonistic lifestyle (which would not rule out but might even suggest sexual sin), rather than living for God and his kingdom. This kind of life is, in reality, spiritual death (this is the third perfect in these few verses; she has ‘died’ and continues in that state), whatever the outward appearance of life. Some suggest that if there was no support from church/family the alternative here really means prostitution.

Timothy must give the people of God this teaching, v7. ‘The destitute widow was not to be Timothy’s own responsibility, but the church’s. They must work out a practical programme for the care of widows. This was vital, as the purpose *i[na hina* clause expresses, ‘that they may be blameless’. We remember 3v2, the need to be ‘beyond reproach’. Paul is always thinking of mission, the public witness of the church and the need for a true Christian witness to the lost. If families fail to follow the teaching of Paul through Timothy, they are going to bring reproach on themselves and the church. What testimony does your church have in this particular area before the world?

He has given the positive reasons why relatives should care for destitute widows (v4); now he gives the negative counterpart in v8. Those who fail to care for their parents have denied the faith; they sink below the level of the pagans. Paul affirms that they are in fact morally ‘worse’ than such. Knight¹ explains that Paul sees the professed believer who knows the 5th commandment and disobeys it is ‘worse’ than the unbeliever who only have the law ‘written on their hearts’ (Rom. 2v14-15).

As medical care increases people are living longer. Especially as things will further develop Geriatric wards, hospitals and Nursing Homes will not be able to cope. This is clear if elderly relatives are abandoned by their own relatives. Throughout scripture, not just the present passage only, there is a fundamental Christian duty to provide for our relatives.

***Widows are to be Registered* v9-11**

Paul now sets out for Timothy the qualifications for listing those widows without family support who should be helped by the church. The word Paul uses is *katale,gw katalegō*, - it is only here in the NT. It means ‘to chose, reckon as’ and in its strongest sense ‘to select, enlist, enrol’, meaning in the passive that the name can be entered on a official list². The three qualifications for the register were age, past faithfulness within marriage and good works, the last being expanded upon. Is it not implied that there was an already existing list which needed to be revised?

First, she will be over sixty – the Greek reads, ‘having reached the age of not less than sixty years of age’. This was the age that was considered to be elderly (Lev. 27v7) i.e. real old age. It would be the time when someone might think of relying on others to meet any material needs. This condition would rule out younger widows who were considered able to remarry.

Second, there is a look back at her past life. She must have been faithful to her husband – compare 3v2. She will have been ‘a one man woman’ (the reverse of what was required of the elder and deacon, 3v2, 12), whose marital fidelity will be well known.

Third, something else is well known about her – her work. Paul gives some examples. She cared for her children in every sense including spiritually – her own and perhaps even other children. The false teachers forbade marriage (1 Tim. 4v3) and probably childbearing (1 Tim. 2v15) but here with the widow to be enrolled, her commitment in the past as a mother to her children was praiseworthy. In the

¹ Knight *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, p 221.

² Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, p.591.

past she had provided hospitality to travellers efficiently, as the mistress of the house, when she was still married, so making possible the advance of the mission of God. Also she was open to engage in even the menial tasks. In a dirty and dusty land, she had washed the feet of others, which was usually done by slaves – the type of service which no other would undertake.

Finally, she was known as one who has ‘relieved the afflicted’. The reference will be to those in any kind of affliction or distress in an age where there was very little sympathy and sufferings of many sorts abounded.

Paul adds a general summarising comment that she was one who was ready for any kind of good work. The Greek says ‘wholeheartedly following’ all kinds of good deeds and zealous in seeing them through. These things, in a situation of destitution qualify the widow for enrolment for the church’s loving support.

It seems better to understand all the above as past evidence of her godliness, which in a sense affirms that she should be given help, rather than some stipulation of present ministry, as Knight¹ implies. Rather, she has reached old age, when she needs to be cared for, instead of caring for others.

Younger Widows who will not Remain Single

Paul now reminds Timothy that he must refuse to enrol the younger widows. He will give a different set of instructions for them (v14). There are two reasons why they should be refused.

(1) These younger widows can give in to their natural sexual impulses and will turn from Christ and marry non-Christians. ‘They bring judgement on themselves’ or condemnation because they started but did not continue. They have cast away their first faith (taking *pi,stij pistis* as it is generally used in the Letters to Timothy and Titus, rather than ‘pledge’, either her marriage vows to her first husband or the enrolment among the church’s widows). The wife would be required to follow the religion of her husband. So remarriage to an unbeliever would involve actual rejection of the widow’s first faith or commitment to Christ.

(2) They are not really dedicated to Christian service. They may have been receiving some support from the church and so have too much time on their hands and so they become idle. They are said to be busybodies, not content to be taken up with their own concerns, but going from house to house ‘saying things which they ought not’. The word which is often translated ‘given to gossip’ has the idea also of ‘talking nonsense’ or talking with nothing to say of value. This may be the sense here (see below).

It should be made clear that this is not meant to be seen as a general statement of the character of all widows, but the young widows who have been influenced by the heresy in the Ephesian church. Fee² thinks that this should be referred to the women of 2 Timothy 3v6-7 whom the false teachers have won over. They were disrupting the house groups spreading the false doctrines or speculations and myths. The phrase, saying things ‘they ought not’ uses *de,onta deonta* which is the participle of *dei/dei* ‘it is necessary’. Here it seems to refer to the fact the widows were discussing things which should not be spoken – really the heresy, which should not be mentioned and really involved talking nonsense, as noted above.

In v14 Paul counsels (*bou,lomai boulomai*, also 1 Tim.2v8; Tit. 3v8, expressing apostolic direction) that the younger widows were to re-marry which should not be seen as a contradiction of 1 Cor. 7. where singleness is commended. Knight³ makes the important point here that while ‘Paul desired that

¹ Knight *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, p 221-222.

² Fee, *1 and 2 Timothy and Titus*, p.122.

³ Knight *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, p 228.

others serve the Lord with the undivided attention of single persons, he recognised that whether God has given one the gift of singleness or the gift of marriage is decisive’.

When the younger widows would re-marry and take up their household duties they would have their hands full looking after children and managing their homes and this would not give the enemy a chance to slander them. Some have already been tripped up by him as the above verses reveal (v15). Following Satan is the real alternative if one is not following Christ and doing the will of God. But here Paul makes the point that the young widows should follow his direction so that the enemy or adversary could not have opportunity to slander them. The reference to the adversary, using the definite article, must be Satan since he is mentioned in the next verse. But no doubt he can use the community as those who will express this criticism. Towner¹ makes the point that the protection of the church’s reputation is all-important as Paul’s real concern is the mission of the church and the promotion of the gospel (1 Tim.6v1; Titus 2v5, 10). What kind of a reputation does your church have in your local village or community? Do your personal actions hinder or help in the mission of the church – the mission of God?

In v16 Paul returns to the main theme of the passage. Believing men or woman (although in what are considered the best MSS the responsibility is laid upon the believing woman only) should recognise the responsibility of providing support for the destitute widow. Are the later MSS seeking to distribute the responsibility more fairly, yet not understanding the culture and the place the woman has as mistress of the house? She would really have the responsibility in the extended family for providing the practical support for the destitute widow. So he reminds Timothy that widows with relatives should be helped, not by the church but these relatives – relieving the church to allow it to help those who had no possible means of relief.

Two principles emerge. There is no general handout to all widows but the church’s welfare provisions are to be limited to those in genuine need. If some have alternate family support, they should recognise their obligation of care. All of us must accept responsibility for our own relatives. The church’s sense of social responsibility is not to encourage irresponsibility in others. Government welfare programmes should supplement but not replace either individual or family obligations. But the important point also here is the reputation the church has in the local community. Bigger issues are at stake, namely, the mission of God in a local community.

The Elders – How to Honour Them v 17-25

A new section begins here but the link with the previous section is the repetition of the theme of honour. The focus is upon elders² who serve (the perfect tense affirms that these men have been and are now at present in place). Paul calls for respect for them, support for them, the discipline of elders and the need for care in their appointment. The introduction of the second person singular imperative in 5v19-23 points to Timothy’s oversight of these things. Underlying the teaching here must be a difficult church situation with some who have fulfilled their appointed ministry with great credit and others who were causing concern - hence the guidelines for the discipline of elders, grounds for accusation and rebuke. It is clear that the heresy had reached to or was being promoted by some in leadership, as has been suggested (note 1v3, 18-20; 4v1-7; 2 Tim. 2v17-18).

The Rule of the Elders v17

For Calvin and many reformed churches Paul is identifying two kinds of elders - ruling and teaching elders. This is not expressly said and in 3v2 all elders have to be apt to teach. In splitting the elders as above, the adverb *malista* *malista* is understood as ‘especially’, which is said to show that there

¹ Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, p.357.

² The terms *presbuteroi* *presbuteros* and *episkopoi* *episkopos* ‘elder’ and ‘overseer’ are interchangeable references to the same group of leaders (Titus 1v5; Acts 20v17, 28). The term ‘elder’ suggests that much of the leadership in the church comes from the older men, while the term ‘overseer’ refers more to function.

were those among the elders who are separated from the others and have this particular task. Knight makes the point that the adverb here most likely means 'that is' and Paul is adding a further description of those he has already mentioned, not identifying a subgroup¹.

The elders are to rule well. The Greek participial *proestw/tej proestōtes* is used here of men who are set before or at the head of the church to 'rule, lead, direct'; note the word, which is only used in Paul in the NT, also includes the sense of 'care for', with which it is linked in 1 Tim. 3v4-5. So with the elders there is ADMINISTRATION. They have the strength of personality to command respect and obedience. There would be all sorts of practical problems arising for which there was the need for wisdom. The phrase 'rule/lead well', (*kalw/j kalōs*), as has been briefly mentioned, is also used in 3v4,5,12, concerning a man's home life, now is here applied to proficiency in guidance and administration of the church.

But likely from among them there were those engaged more in EDIFICATION. They 'labour in the word and doctrine'. To labour is *kopia,w kopiaō*, which is to labour until one is exhausted. In 4v10 it was noted that Paul can use this word for exhausting physical work, but more often he uses it for his own mental and spiritual labours in ministry as an apostle (1 Cor. 15v10; Gal. 4v12; Phil. 2v16; Col. 1v29; 1 Tim. 4v10) and the labours of others (1 Cor. 15v10; 16v10; 1 Thess. 5v10). Teaching and preaching is demanding work, not just a matter of getting up on Sunday and saying whatever comes into your head. There should have been thorough, time consuming, painstaking preparation. Labouring in the 'word' conveys the concept of preaching and the second 'doctrine', *didaskalia,a| didaskalia* 'teaching' can link this ministry with 1 Cor. 12v28-29, the 'teachers' or Eph. 4v11, the 'pastor-teachers' of the church.

Paul affirms that these faithful elders who led well/taught well should be considered by the church as worthy of double honour. They were in a situation where there was a battle going on with the heresy. Those who in preaching and teaching maintained the apostolic faith and were upholding the truth. are deserving of even more praise and recognition. His evaluation suggests that there had been already a problem caused either by abuses committed by other elders or certainly by the presence of the heresy among them.

The Reward of the Elders. v18

We noted the affirmation that faithful elders were 'worthy of double honour'. We are all prone to discouragement and need to be reaffirmed. The kind of honour here also involves remuneration as the quotes make clear. Double means 'two-fold' – Knight² suggests 'both honor and honorarium'. The word *timh, timē* was used for a physician's honorarium. In Duet. 25v4 the oxen which trample the corn with their hooves on the threshing floor, or pull a sled over it, are labouring for the food of man, but they are fed as they go along. There is an *a fortiori* argument here - if God is concerned with animals, how much more... See also 2 Chron. 31v4 where support for the priests and the Levites was commanded of the Jerusalem dwellers. Paul actually quotes Deut. 25 in 1 Cor. 9v9 and takes it as a principle written 'for our sake' and applies it to those in the service of God.

That remuneration/support was a practice operating in the churches seems clear (first, the text highlighted, 1 Cor. 9v4-14; but also 2 Cor. 11v8-9; Gal 6v6; 1 Thess. 2v6). Note Paul also quotes as 'scripture' Luke 10v7. With Paul's connections with Luke (2 Tim. 4v11) he would have access to his sources. Knight³ points out that *h` grafh, hē graphē* is used in the NT exclusively with a sacred meaning and understands that the present tense *le,gei legei* with God directly speaking indicates the

¹ Knight *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, p 232; also see the discussion in 1 Tim. 4v10,

² Knight *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, p 232.

³ Knight *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, p 233.

present and immediate relevance of the scriptural principle. Note also that here Jesus' words are given the equal weight to that of OT scripture.

The point here in all of this is that the worthy leader is to receive sufficient support from the church. Those who devote all their time in the service of the church deserve to be paid by the church. Not only is this principle taught in the OT but Jesus himself instructed it, as did Paul. Yet it should be noted that Paul was willing to seek to support himself if that was necessary.¹

The Rebuke of an Elder V19-21

Paul now gives Timothy further instruction, namely, do not take seriously a charge against an elder without sufficient witnesses (this appears to be a private meeting with the elder); if he is guilty of the accusation and persists in sinning he must suffer rebuke before the whole church without partiality that all the elders may be made aware of their accountability.

It is possible that charges had been brought against one or more of the elders. Was it some involvement with the heresy or another type of wrongful behaviour? Timothy can act for Paul with the authority of an apostolic delegate. One must guard against believing any matter too readily. Accusations or charges should only be accepted when there are two or three witnesses. We are reminded that in the OT to sustain a charge and bring a conviction this was the case, (Deut. 17v6; 19v15). See also Matt 18v16; 26v59-60. The meaning here seems to be, 'Do not entertain an accusation...' unless there are two or three witnesses'. Timothy is not to even listen to gossip or even a serious charge if it is only made by one person. Every charge must be endorsed by several responsible people. If this was obeyed it would have saved many pastors from unjust criticism and unnecessary suffering.

'those that sin'. It appears that the context is still focussed upon the elders and not the believers in general (although the principle could be extended to all). So Paul is now dealing with the situation where charges have been allowed to stand against an elder and the sin has been revealed. The Greek here is 'those who are sinning', present active participle, and this can suggest that the first stage of discipline i.e. the private rebuke (Matt. 18v15-17; Tit. 3v10) has not solved the problem and brought repentance. Now a more public rebuke must follow. As Stott² has pointed out, the present tense is used = habitual, continual failing. Elders who are admonished privately but fail to repent and 'persist in sin' (RSV) must face as a last resort the sadness and scandal of a public showdown. So one sad failure could be dealt with quietly, but when there is a regular occurrence the right to secrecy is forfeited. Such a rebuke would be publicly painful but necessary that others may be warned. So for Stott³, 'private sins should be dealt with privately, and only public sins publicly', Matt. 18v15ff. Knight⁴ takes basically the same view:

The implication of Mt.18:15ff. is that a sinner is publically rebuked ("tell it to the church," v17) only when the other steps have failed. Presumably, the same principles apply in this setting and are assumed rather than stated.

The reproof is *evnw,pion pa,ntwn enōpion pantōn* 'before all'. It is possible that this means before all the other elders, but with Matt. 18.17 in mind the reference is most likely the whole church. This could involve removal from leadership (1 Tim. 1v3; Tit. 1v9) or even excommunication (1 Tim.1v20; Tit. 3v10). Paul makes the point (v20) that such action will mean that the other elders and 'the rest' (*oi` loipoi. hoi loipoi*) of the congregation can then see the seriousness of the sin (cf. Deut. 19V20).

¹ 1 Cor. 4v12; 2 Cor. 11v7-9; 1 Thess. 2v9; 2 Thess. 3v8-9; Acts 18v3. But this should not be taken as the best arrangement.

² Stott, *The Message of 1 Timothy and Titus*, p.138.

³ Stott, *The Message of 1 Timothy and Titus*, p.139.

⁴ Knight *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, p 236.

But Timothy must be even-handed and fair, not prejudiced against, or favouring the individual. Not jumping to conclusions of either guilt or innocence. In v21 Paul backs this up with a solemn charge (only in two other places is this repeated, 1 Tim. 6v13; 2 Tim. 4v1), revealing his apostolic authority, but also he reminds Timothy of the fact that he always acts under the gaze of heaven – a reminder of the two or three witnesses – here God, Jesus and the elect angels, who are the chosen instruments both of preservation and judgment (Heb. 1v14; Rev. 16v1). “Before God” Is a reminder that one is living and acting in the very presence of the God who gives life to all and before whom one is responsible’.¹

The Reserve Concerning Elders v22

Paul now gives guidance as to how to prevent the difficult disciplinary situations he has been dealing with in the above verses. The second person singular means that as Paul’s delegate Timothy must take the lead in this procedure. In making appointments, Timothy must ‘lay hands suddenly’ on no-one. Laying on of hands here in these letters is mentioned elsewhere in the ritual of recognition and appointment, (1 Tim. 4v14; 2 Tim. 1v6). He must not act hastily in an individual appointment for then he would be a partaker of the man’s sins. The Greek here is *tace,wj taxēōs*, which can mean in this context ‘too quickly, hastily, at once’ (cf. 2 Tim. 4v9). The warning is that if Timothy as the apostolic representative carelessly appoints someone who is unqualified (because of his sin) he will in a sense share (the word is the familiar *koinwne,w koinoneō* ‘to share, participate in, have fellowship with’) the guilt of their future sinful actions (cf. 2 John v11). He must keep himself pure even in this. So he must by exercising care, not place himself and the elders in a difficult predicament.

Now follows a personal word to Timothy about his health. It seems clear that he had been refraining from wine. Clear injunctions in the Letters to Timothy and Titus against drunkenness give evidence of the abuse of wine, both in Ephesus and Crete, (1 Tim. 3v3, 8; Tit. 1v7; 2v3).² This is particularly stressed when it comes to elders and deacons, and this must also be the reason for Timothy’s abstinence; he did not want to become addicted to wine himself.

Leaders must be above reproach. Therefore, although here we have a personal reference, the inclusion of this direction by Paul is by no means out of place or to be viewed as a gloss. It fits well here into the flow of the discussion since Paul has been focussing in v22 upon the appointment of new elders. Now Timothy was being recommended to take a little wine as a medicine for health grounds. His abstinence had been detrimental to his health but he had been refraining from help for his stomach because of the misuse of alcohol he had witnessed. So Timothy, while Paul is not saying he should stop drinking water entirely, should use a little wine because of his physical problems. Note the use of *ovli,goj oligos* ‘little’ as a careful qualification of this recommendation so that neither Timothy or any others may misunderstand or misuse this statement³.

Is it not true that many Christians drink wine today, not as a medicine, but for pleasure? ‘Use’ suggests limiting it to a dose; ‘a little’ and not a lot. The use of this verse as an endorsement for social drinking is unwarranted. The use of alcohol here is strictly medicinal. There are no grounds for taking this verse as a licence for indulgence. The bible is full of warnings against strong drink. Knight⁴ makes the point that the five Pauline occurrences of *oivnoj oinos* ‘wine’ (Rom. 14v21; Eph. 5v18; 1Tim. 3v8; here; Tit. 2v3) all have this tone and the first emphasises that not drinking wine is better than causing one’s fellow Christian to stumble. Also there is no evidence of non-alcoholic wine in the bible. Wine was a fermented beverage.

¹ Knight *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, p 238.

² There is no evidence to suggest that the false teachers were abstaining from wine as well as meat, 1 Tim. 4v3.

³ Knight *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, p 240.

⁴ Knight *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, p 240.

Paul now in v24-25 acknowledges that in sometimes assessing individuals for eldership, if the directions given are not followed mistakes can occur. When it comes to 'sins' some are obvious and easily discerned. So it will be clear to Timothy that these individuals are not suitable to be chosen for this office. Not laying hands on them hastily will give time for their unsuitability to become clear and thus the need for an accusation, two or three witnesses, the public rebuke (and the sharing of the sins by appointing them, v22) will not take place. Thus some men's sins are exposed and go before them to judgement – for Knight¹ this is judgement by humans to make it meaningful in the context. But it is also possible that in fact Timothy is almost seen as a participant in the judicial process, a process which takes in the eschatological judgement.

Also v25 makes the point that the good deeds done on behalf of others like the sins already mentioned are clear - *pro,dhla*(*prodēla* 'evident'. So the suitability of some for eldership will be already obvious. But also there are others whose good deeds are not public or presently clear and at first sight they may not appear to be qualified. But these deeds cannot really be concealed – they will become manifest even though they are not immediately evident or are 'now otherwise'. So Timothy if he adopts a cautious approach will find these people as well.

These observations are meant to assure him that sometimes appearances are apt to be misleading. Human beings may be different from what they appear at first sight. Verse 24 and 25 are really parallel, first stating the same truths about sin and about good deeds. Time is necessary to discover the true worth or otherwise of a candidate for the pastorate. So Timothy must not rush into this. As far as assessing individuals for leadership much concerning the qualities of the individual cannot be readily seen. Stott calls it the iceberg principal - with nine-tenths of a person being hidden from view. He can maintain:

Here are five qualities which are needed by Christian leaders in their dealings with others for whom they are responsible: appreciation (affirming outstanding performance), fairness (not listening to unsubstantiated accusations), impartiality (avoiding all favouritism), caution (not reaching hasty decisions), and discernment (looking beyond the outward appearance to the heart). Whenever these principles are in operation, mistakes will be avoided, the church will be preserved in peace and love, and God's name will be protected from dishonour.²

Here we have wisdom and it is true that such qualities should be beginning to appear if one is to be considered for office. But even when things go wrong, Timothy can be sure that God is ultimately in control. In the last analysis everyone stands under divine judgement (v24). All are finally accountable to him. But Timothy is to work according to the principles laid down to make himself blameless in the solemn matter of appointments. In summary, as Mounce³ maintains:

In appointing elders Timothy would have to be avoid being hasty. He would have to be patient and wait to see the true character of applicants because not only sin but also good deeds are not always immediately apparent.

This is the main teaching of these closing verses.

1Timothy 6v1-21.

The Slaves – How to Guide Them 6v1-2

¹ Knight *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, p 241.

² Stott, *The Message of 1 Timothy and Titus*, p.141.

³ Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, p.321.

Here we have the next group in this section – Christian slaves¹ and their relationship with their masters. The use again in 6v1 of *timh*, *timē* ‘honour’ makes clear that these verses carry on the same theme from 5v3.

Slavery is an abomination and a denial of human personhood. But it was deeply embedded in the structures of Graeco-Roman society. All well-to-do people had slaves, some several hundred. Not just domestic servants but teachers, managers, soldiers, craftsmen, accountants and farmers would be slaves. It is believed that there were more than 50 million of them in the empire and around one third of the inhabitants of Rome were also slaves. It is clear slavery was a fundamental accepted component in the social order. Suddenly ending it would have brought about the collapse of society. However by the time of the Christian era slaves would often have the opportunity of being set free (manumission of slaves). Paul set forth principles, which undermined the very concept of slavery and did finally lead to its general abolition². Note that, as Mounce³ has pointed out in this very letter (1Tim. 1V9), ‘slave trading comes under the scope of the prohibition against kidnapping’.

Paul’s teaching here in ch.6 reverts to first third person imperatives and then in v2b to the second person singular, for Timothy is to communicate these things as Paul’s apostolic delegate.

In v1 to be ‘under the yoke’ - *u`po. zugo.n hupo zuyon* - was an expression that was used often metaphorically as a term for slavery (LXX e.g., Lev. 26v13; Is. 9v4; Ezk. 34v27), or of bearing a burden like slavery (social oppression, Gen. 27v40; 2 Chron. 10v4; Is. 47v6, the yoke of the law, Acts 15v10; Gal. 5v1). Jesus uses it of an obligation to be submissive or obedient (Matt.11v29-30) – although there may be a contrast here as Jesus’ yoke was not tyrannical. Guthrie observes that the phrase draws attention to the situation in which many masters simply regarded their slaves as ‘little more than cattle’.⁴ In using this phrase, Paul does not seem to draw a distinction between the attitude of believing and non-believing masters, *contra* Knight⁵. ‘As many as’ {*Osoi hosoi*, is general and appears to refer to all slaves and again, to suggest that Christian masters may not perceive their slaves as ‘under the yoke’ seems not yet possible in the contemporary situation.

To those slaves who have a master who is not a believer they should give full respect – ‘so that’ or ‘lest’ the *i[na mh. hina me* clause expresses an evangelistic concern. The mission of God, his name⁶ and the teaching of the apostles or the gospel is at stake. ‘All’ honour emphasises the carrying out whatever duties are assigned faithfully and without question. As elsewhere, the serious concern is the church’s and the individual’s testimony before outsiders (1 Tim. 5v14; Tit. 2v5; Jas. 2v7; 2 Pet. 2v2). A church without a good testimony has no real voice or the possibility of gospel witness. We must remember that most people then and now would have had no direct contact with the church and so can only judge Christianity from what they see in those who are nearest to them, in a home, street or a workplace.

Those who have believing masters (v2) must not take advantage of them because of their faith. Knight⁷ points out that the focus upon slaves who could be disrespectful to their Christian masters is

¹ When Paul is exhorting different groups of Christians, he generally includes slaves, (Eph. 6v5-9; Col. 3v22-4v1; Tit. 2v9-10). So also does Peter, (1Pet. 2v18-20).

² Although it is generally understood that slavery is now *de jure* illegal in all countries, *de facto* there are similar practices which continue today in many places throughout the world – even in the UK.

³ Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, p.331.

⁴ Guthrie *Pastoral Epistles*, p.121.

⁵ Knight *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, p 244.

⁶ Paul has in mind an OT echo from LXX Is. 52v5 ‘my name is blasphemed continually’. See also Ezk. 36v20. The believing slaves are warned not to be like the Jews of the OT. Rather than provoking unbelievers to slander God’s name once again, as with others in the community their godly lifestyle should adorn the name and make their God and his message attractive to unbelievers, (Tit. 2v10).

⁷ Knight *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, p 242-3.

actually the introduction of a 'new problem'; the earlier letters focus generally upon a slave's work. Also we should note that Christian masters are not addressed as they were in the Prison Epistles. Have they submitted to the earlier teaching of Paul on the treatment of slaves (e.g., Eph. 6v9) so that there was no need to repeat it here? Conversely, are the Christian slaves now taking advantage of the new attitude of their masters?

So Paul admonishes them that they must not show them less respect (the command is in present tense which suggests that the aim is to stop something already happening), 'but', *avlla. alla*, introduces the contrast, 'rather' *ma/llon mallon* should serve them better - the word is intensive and indicates that the Christian master should be even more certain of superior service. Yet often in the modern world, it is because 'the boss' is a believer that the Christian servant could have a hidden contempt and a concealed insubordination. But the masters, because of their faith, ought to be beloved, (not here 'beloved' by God, although true, but by their Christian slaves) and the fact that they are brothers should be as was pointed out, a stimulus to service. So the believing slaves had equality of status within the church (Gal. 3v28), but accepted their social inferiority in the household.

The function of v2b is *contra* Mounce¹ to sum up the previous section before a new one commences. Timothy was to urge the brothers to 'honour' widows, elders and now masters. 'These things', v2, possibly looks back at all the teaching in the letter, as many scholars suggest; certainly it will have reference to the immediate context (5v1-6v2). The contrast now to Timothy's teaching is what follows.

The False Teachers – How to Recognise Them

In v3-5 Paul comes to a fifth group - false teachers, who have been very much in his mind throughout the letter. Here we find his final condemnation of them. Paul does point out that there are true teachers like Timothy, who pass on what the apostle has taught (in fact he defines the nature of this teaching). He then exposes the character of the false teachers and the false doctrine. He also links their conduct to a misunderstanding of godliness and shameful financial motives. Paul claimed that these false teachers have deviated from the faith, split the church and love money. Timothy is to withdraw himself from them.

-They have completely deviated from the truth.

There is a standard of Christian belief which Paul in these Letters calls the 'teaching', 'sound words/instruction', the truth', the faith', 'the command' and 'what has been entrusted'. But they have taught otherwise. Paul calls the false teaching *e'terodidaskalew heterodidaskaleō* (the word appears in the NT only here and in 1v3) where *e'teroj heteros* means 'other', 'different', because it strays from apostolic instruction.

So they have not attached themselves to or adhered to the 'sound words', here *u`gai,nw hugainō*, where Paul again uses medical language for the healthiness of the apostolic teaching. This is the first use of the phrase in Timothy – it is found again in 2 Tim. 1v13. The combination 'sound teaching' is more common, (1v10; 2 Tim. 4v3; Tit. 1v9; 2v1 and again, Tit. 2v8 'sound speech'). Have we adhered to what is scriptural and sound?

The teaching actually consists of the sound words of the Lord Jesus Christ. The meaning here is not the actual words or teaching of the Lord Jesus Christ or even a Gospel like the Gospel of Luke², but more likely describes healthy words about the Lord Jesus, rather than as Towner, the origin and also

¹ Mounce, suggests that it be included with the following verses, *Pastoral Epistles*, p.336. But if it serves as a transitional statement throughout the epistle is it not better to summarise what was previously taught? See Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, p.638, who suggests that it refers back to the teaching of the epistle – at least to 5v3-6v2.

² The suggestion of Spicq; see Guthrie *Pastoral Epistles*, p.123.

the authority of the teaching¹. He supports this view by noting that the full appellation occurs again in this chapter where it is looking forward to Jesus' final appearance and authority as Judge (6v14-16). To agree with Paul is therefore to agree with Jesus' authoritative words. But it may simply refer to teaching about Christ which also agrees with the Apostle's teaching.

It also is teaching which is *kata kata* 'according to', meaning either teaching which 'leads to' or is 'in accordance with' godliness, a reference to its content. There is not much difference here for the end result is the same. It is teaching which is designed to promote or produce godliness in those who submit to it. To engage in other teaching and thus disagree with the apostolic is to teach something which is not healthy, since it does not produce healthy or godly living; it is to be conceited and understand nothing, v4.

-They have caused division in the church. The false teacher is divisive. All of v3 has been an 'if' clause (the protasis of a conditional sentence) with v4-5 the 'then' clause (the apodosis). The false teacher here has a morbid (the word is 'sick' *nosw/n nosōn*— only here in the NT but usually describes spiritual or mental illness, used here in contrast to the 'sound' teaching of v3) interest in mere speculations or trifles. The word 'controversies' suggests that which goes beyond the stage of a useful exchange of ideas² leading to 'word battles'. These feed other sinful activities, in fact Paul lists five moral defects, 'envy' (the resentment of another's status and a desire to replace them), 'strife' (the spirit of contention), malicious talk (slander of and verbal abuse of other teachers), evil suspicions (the undermining of the possibility of trust on which relationships are based, thinking the worst of each other) and constant friction (the disputations that result from the former vices). These are the sins of the men of corrupt minds (the perfect tense of the participle³ indicates a settled condition of the mind, the organ of rational discernment where the gospel is processed and grasped. But their rejection of the apostolic doctrine has robbed them of the truth. Their teaching is not an altered gospel; it is a message that is wholly another. Therefore, in contrast to apostolic doctrine, they consider that godliness is a means of gain, a matter of the pocket and not a matter of the heart⁴. So Paul accuses them of unworthy motives.

-They are devoted to money. Their only interest in their work is if it is financially rewarding. We do know that Ephesus enjoyed great opulence - see the problem with the traders when Paul's teaching began to hit their pockets (Acts 19v23). Paul himself had to make clear that he was not guilty of such a charge (1 Thess. 2v5). Timothy must withdraw himself from them. Since money was the underlying passion of the false teachers, Paul now seeks to deal some of its dangers generally.

1 Timothy 6v6-21 Contentment in the House of God

Evaluating Wealth or Riches

Money holds pride of place for many in their ambitions, in their conversation and in their possessions. Paul speaks of something better. He repeats the two key terms, 'gain' and 'godliness' but in such a way that he can correct their misunderstandings and their distortion of values. He will disconnect true godliness from wealth, shifting the direction of meaning. In repeating the term 'godliness' Paul reminds his readers that it has a higher level of meaning way beyond what the false teachers considered it involved. He has already affirmed this in the epistle. Godliness is not about acquiring more material things or greater possessions. So in v6-8 Paul makes clear what profit there is in godliness in the Christian life. He affirms, 'godliness with contentment is great gain'. So with an

¹ Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, p.394.

² Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, p.395.

³ Knight quotes 2 Cor. 4v4, 'The God of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving', claiming that the perfect passive here also has the devil in view, Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, p.252.

⁴ Guthrie *Pastoral Epistles*, p.124.

ironical turn of phrase Paul insists that godliness is great¹ gain – but godliness is about *spiritual* gain and also it involves not a grasping after possessions, the material limitations that the false teachers motives, but contentment. It is the term contentment which shows that godliness has a spiritual thrust. The Greek noun contentment αυτα,ρkeia *autarkeia* (found elsewhere only in 2 Cor. 9v8) was a well-known concept in Stoic philosophy where it affirmed the value of ‘self-sufficiency’. One needed the self-mastery to be able to be unaffected by ‘things’ i.e. possessions or what life can throw at you, to be independent of circumstances, to even resist the force of adverse circumstances. Of course Paul has always made clear that any ‘self-sufficiency is only possible through Christ (Phil 4v13)². So as Towner makes clear:

Godliness is not about acquiring better and more material things; it is instead an active life of faith, a living out of covenant faithfulness in relation to God, that finds sufficiency and contentment in Christ alone whatever one’s outward circumstances might be.³

Paul contrasts contentment - those who have the necessities of life (6v7-8), with covetousness – those who love money and are possessed of a passion to get rich (v9-10). We brought nothing⁴ into the world and⁵ can carry nothing out. This was already expressed clearly in Job 1v21; Ps. 49v16-17; Eccl. 5v14. Our life is a brief moment between two moments of nakedness. ‘The acquisition of things has no ultimate or final benefit, despite what the false teachers supposed (v5; cf. Lk.12:20)’.⁶ Paul’s word for ‘clothing’ is skepa,sma *skepasma*, literally, ‘a covering’, which means chiefly clothing, but also house. Knight⁷ suggests that the plural probably means that it should not be restricted to one or the other – therefore ‘sustenance and coverings’ will summarise the necessities of life. So as long as we have food and clothing and a shelter we have what we need for the short journey - we will be content – Paul is using the future indicative passive of avrke,w *arkeō*. In a sense, here he has generalised the teaching to all believers. We cannot escape it. He will add shortly 6v17-19, further teaching to the already rich, but here it is the need to turn from materialism and covetousness. If we have more than the basics then it can be gratefully received and enjoyed; but it should not be considered a necessity and then it will not destroy our contentment of what God gives us.⁸ Contentment of the mind springs from a faith perspective that is impacted by a conviction of what the future holds.

Coveting Wealth or Riches

In v9-10 the focus are those who have not - the covetous poor - who want to get rich and are motivated by the love of money. In fact he shows that their desire to get rich destroyed them. Paul uses three terms to show the spiritual dangers they faced. They can fall into ‘temptation’, the temptation to dishonest ways or engaging in underhand actions to gain money. The next term moves things forward from enticement to actual entrapment – they are snared.⁹ Then the precise nature of the snare is spelled out – they fall into ‘many foolish and harmful desires’. The word ‘foolish’ suggests ignorance of God’s ways and will (cf. Titus 3v3) but the emphasis will not just be intellectual but also moral; ‘harmful’ because of what these desires if allowed to captivate the person will result in; they ‘plunge or sink’ – buqi,zw *buthizō* which means to cause someone to drown and is used in Luke

¹ Marshall *The Pastoral Epistles*, p.636, suggests that the adjective ‘great’ almost carries the sense of ‘real’ and serves to define wealth in spiritual terms.

² In Philippians 4v11 Paul actually uses the adjective αυτα,ρkhj *autarkēs* of his own example for others.

³ Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, p.399.

⁴ The emphatic ουδe,n *ouden* ‘nothing’ stresses this point.

⁵ The word is o`,ti *hoti* usually ‘because’, here being used in a weakened sense meaning ‘and’.

⁶ Knight *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, p254.

⁷ Knight *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, p. 255.

⁸ Knight points out that Paul’s teaching here reflects that of Jesus in Matt. 6v24-34; Lk. 12v16-32, Knight *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, p255.

⁹ The Greek word is pagi,j *pagis* ‘snare’ and in the two other occasions of its use in these Letters, the Devil is involved (1 Tim. 3v7; 2 Tim. 2v26). That he is behind the temptation here is clearly implied.

5v7 of a boat going under – the individual will sink in ‘ruin and disaster’, two words that warn of irretrievable loss.¹

Paul can still have the false teachers in the back of his mind but the warning seems more general now (he uses *tou.j avnqrw,pouj tous anthrōpous*, ‘men’. Godliness is the way to real gain; greed is loss. Note, you do not have to be wealthy to fall into greed – in fact the danger may be even more intense for those who have not much money.

Paul writes that ‘the love of money is a root² of all kinds of evil’. Note that it is not money which is evil but the love of it³; again, it is not ‘the’ root but ‘a’ root of ‘all kinds of evil’, here *kakw/n kakōn* the genitive plural of *kakos* ‘evil’ is used. So Paul is affirming that the love of money leads to many evils, selfishness, cheating, fraud, lying, robbery, envy, even murder. Greed lies behind marriages of convenience, drug pushing, pornography, the exploiting of the weak, and the neglect of good causes. So people have beautiful homes through perhaps hard work – but at what cost? Cold hearts? Neglected children? Lack of church involvement?

It is this passion to have money and to be rich that has led to the false teachers being undone – the ‘some’ of v10? The indefinite *tine,j tines* is how Paul normally refers to them. Two things are said about them. They have rejected the apostolic doctrine (the definite article with *pi,stij pistis* points to the Christian faith in an objective sense) and so in their chosen course of the pursuit of gain they have been tormented (the Greek verb *peripei,rw peripeirō* sometimes can be translated as ‘impaled’ and certainly the word group describes a deeply-felt pain⁴) perhaps with unfulfilled aspirations of wealth, with the pain which comes through betrayal of friends in pursuit of money and the pangs of a disregarded conscience. But pursuing godliness with the heart not snared by a passion for money and the mind not preoccupied but exhibiting contentment will lead to a very different lifestyle. We can see this as Paul turns to address Timothy – ‘but as for you’.

The charge to Timothy brings to a climax all the obligations and the instructions he has been given. It is almost like a renewed commission. Using four imperatives he exhorts Timothy to flee the things which have ensnared others, to follow and faithfully guard what has been committed to him and to take hold of the life that is really life. Using a fifth imperative (v14), he urges that these exhortations be fulfilled until the coming of Christ. Of course, since the exhortations are written they will be public for the whole of the church in Ephesus.

Reference is made to Timothy’s past gracious calling as the beginning of his witness and Paul actually highlights the example of Christ in his humanity as an example of faithful witness. Once again, such faithful confession is to be maintained until the experience of the future realization of the appearing of Christ.

Paul addresses him, ‘But you’ which in the Greek is emphatic,⁵ and then as ‘O man of God’ (6v11). In the OT this appellation was reserved for the leaders of Israel and applied to men like Moses (Deut. 33v1; Jos. 14v6); Samuel (1 Sam. 9v6); David (2 Chron. 8v14); prophets (1 Kings 13v1, 7; 2 Kings

¹ Guthrie *Pastoral Epistles*, p.126. The occurrence of the two words so close in meaning may suggest complete destruction – a better suggestion than that the first refers to bodily destruction and the second to spiritual or that the first is present destruction, the second, eternal. See Knight *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, p. 256.

² Knight points out that statements similar to this were well known in Jewish and non-Jewish works. One which was closest was from Greek antiquity, ‘The love of money is the mother-city of all evil’. But since none of these statements contain the word *r`i,za riza* it is likely that the Christian community coined this proverb rather than modified an existing statement, Knight *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, p. 257.

³ It is this fixing one’s heart on possessing money which breaks the first commandment of the Decalogue, to love God. Knight *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, p. 257.

⁴ Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, p.348.

⁵ Paul uses ‘but you’ to challenge Timothy and Titus to be different from the false teachers (2 Tim. 3v14; 4v5; Tit. 2v1).

23v17). Remember how it was applied to Elijah in 1 Kings 17v24 and to Elisha in 2 Kings 4v9? But we should remember that when the description is applied to Timothy in 2Tim.3v12-17 he is being addressed as a typical believer¹ not just a church leader and so he is here an example for all believers. Also one is reminded of how in the NT people are called 'saints' and so are to be saints. Timothy is called a 'man of God' and so is to be a 'man of god'.

He is being contrasted with the false teachers. In summary, Timothy is being urged to 'flee', 'to separate consciously from the things they do and seek and to "pursue" the authentic virtues of godliness they lack'.² This description 'man of God' would manifest itself in Timothy in three ways.

Ethically. Paul uses the present imperative in v11. Negatively, he is to 'keep on fleeing' the love of money and the evils associated with it; positively he is to 'keep pursuing' six virtues, which are listed in pairs.³ Righteousness, or moral uprightness – conduct which is in submission to God's will and godliness, as expressed throughout the letter, a life oriented towards God, both virtues being observable conduct; faith in the sense of trust or faithfulness to the truth or integrity and love which serves and sacrifices; endurance or being patient in difficult circumstances maintaining the faith and love highlighted and gentleness or patient self-control with difficult people, even in engaging with the false teachers so that they may be led to repentance as in 2 Tim. 2v25.

Doctrinally. Using what appears to be athletic metaphors⁴, Paul exhorts him to fight as well as flight. Fight the good fight of the faith (see 2 Tim. 4v7 for an almost identical statement relating to Paul himself), from which some had wandered, (6v10, 21), means to hold to, publically stand for and proclaim the apostolic truth. There is a great tide of false teaching sweeping across the world. The question is will you stand up against it and preach the true doctrine? The tense here is again a present imperative, so the mission of God must go on in these terms.

Experientially. Timothy must 'take hold of eternal life'. The emphasis is not here on losing it but rather on its present experience. Eternal life means the life of the age to come, the new age, which Jesus had inaugurated. It is both a present possession and a future hope. These Letters to Timothy and Titus themselves make this clear; 1 Tim.1v16; 2 Tim. 1v10 refer to the present; Tit. 1v2; 3v7 point to a future hope. So here the emphasis will be on the present possession of eternal life. To this blessing Timothy had been called (the verb in the aorist passive voice, referring to God's act of calling) and made good confession in the presence of many witnesses - a reference to his conversion and baptism, as he would be expected to make a public confession or a solemn public affirmation of faith. Note *evpilambabomai* *epilambanomai* means 'to take hold of, grasp...sometimes with violence' and 'to take hold of, in order to make one's own' (see the example of other uses of the concept Matt. 14v21; Acts 16v19; 18v17; 21v30; 21v33). He had already received eternal life - now he must live it to the full.

¹ Marshall *The Pastoral Epistles*, p.657.

² Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, p.408. The teaching is repeated in 2 Tim. 2v22.

³ Knight points out that the list here shares a number of key words and concepts similar to five other Pauline lists (2 Cor. 6v6-7; Gal. 5v22-23; Col. 3v12-14; 2 Tim. 2v22-25; 3v10. His assessment that these virtues are grouped together is worth consideration i.e. the first two concerns one's relationship with God; the next two are 'animating principles of the Christian life'; the last two represent the believers relationship with the hostile world, Knight *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, p. 261-262.

⁴ The Greek is *avgwni,zou to.n kalo.n avgw/na agonizo ton kalon agona*, literally 'agonize the good agony', which relates to either a grueling race or a boxing contest. Knight makes the point that for Paul the important thing is not the particular image but the basic idea of the 'struggle' – although he does not consider that in this instance the reference is to the content of the faith (contra above). Knight *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, p. 263.

Paul issues a solemn charge to Timothy before God the life-giver and the exalted Christ. It expresses, as elsewhere, Paul's authority as Christ's apostle (1 Thess. 4v11; 2 Thess. 3v4, 6, 10, 12; see also 1 Tim. 1v3) He is to be faithful for two reasons -

The good confession expected of Timothy and us is required, because the earthly Jesus made it first of all in his own testimony before Pontius Pilate, the Roman governor of Judea (AD 26-36), who is often referred to (46x) in the Gospel accounts). There are earlier Christological references to Christ's humanity in the letter (1v15; 2v5-6; 3v16). Here Paul refers to what could be called the hour of his greatest testing or apparent weakness in his trial before Pilate. It is possible that he had in mind the tradition preserved in John 18v36-38 where the specific verb *martureō* is used, since here Paul also moves from the previous verb to confess (*homologeō*), used of Timothy to that used by Christ in the Fourth Gospel. Again, for Knight¹ the significance of Christ's confession as King is that it became the basis of their 'justification' of Christ's crucifixion (note John 19v12-16 – particularly v12). Here is the example for Timothy, the faithful testimony of Jesus before Pilate. He had already done what Paul calls upon Timothy to do.

The charge is now expanded in v14. The second person pronoun *se* 'you' is Paul's direct address to Timothy as *Su*. *Su* was in v11. The commandment is all that Paul has outlined in the letter². Timothy must 'keep' it, i.e. be obedient, in fact, be blameless and irreproachable in the doing of it. Why must he do this?

The second ground of the charge is now given, as Paul sets out the time frame of Timothy's obedience. Until the 'appearance' of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is then that he will give account and his blamelessness must be seen. The word 'appearance' is *epifaneia* which occurs elsewhere in the Letters to Timothy and Titus (2 Tim. 1v10; 4v1,8; Tit. 2v13), as does the related verb *epiphainō* 'to appear' (Tit. 2v11; 3v4). The word group had a long tradition of usage in the Hellenistic and Roman world³ and in the Greek OT and Second Temple literature it was adopted to describe the appearances and saving interventions of God. Paul can employ these words of both Christ's first and second coming. With regard to his first coming, It can be maintained that the pre-existence of Christ is also implied in the context (2 Tim. 1v9-10; 1 Tim. 1v15; 3v16). Also that the appearing of Christ has a lasting impact and influence because of what he accomplished. In fact present Christian lifestyle, is challenged by the two appearances, as Paul will stress in Tit. 2v11-14.

Concerning Christ's second coming, Paul is certain of the event but uncertain of the time. All this is in God's hands and he will bring it to pass in his own time (v15; see also 2v6; Titus 1v3, which refer to the mission of God between the two appearances). The readiness to leave things in his hands is because of what we know of him. Will Timothy be blameless and irreproachable when Christ comes? Will we?

The assertion of God's sovereign control leads Paul on to worship him in a majestic doxology which even exceeds that of 1v17. He is the blessed God, he has within himself the fullness of blessedness:⁴

¹ Knight *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, p. 266.

² Marshall *The Pastoral Epistles*, p.665.

³ For example, when the victories of Augustus which brought the *pax Romana* to the Imperial provinces were being honoured, he was referred to as the 'saviour' who 'when he appeared' exceeded all the anticipated 'good tidings' (*eu`angeli, on euangelion* or gospel) concerning him. See Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, p.418 who quotes from the translation of N. Lewis and M. Reinhold, eds., *Roman Civilisation*, (New York: Columbia University Press), 1955. Was Paul not only wishing to communicate in language that would be understood in the culture, but to make clear the superiority of the 'epiphany' of Christ and the real blessings of peace with God, security and hope which it brought?

⁴ Marshall *The Pastoral Epistles*, p.666, makes the rather implausible suggestion that it means that he is to be pronounced fortunate by his worshippers in his exalted state. Better Knight who affirms with the support of Lock

he is the 'only Potentate', reminding us of the monotheistic affirmation that he is God alone, with the word *duna,sthj dunastēs* expressing the truth that his might is not derived but is inherent; he is also the King of Kings and Lord of Lords i.e., the King of those who reign as kings and Lord of those who rule as lords¹, descriptions which affirm his sovereignty over all other powers and are a protest against pagan polytheism.

Paul now in v16 moves on from God's power or might to ontology. He is immortal, and although other gods, rulers, emperors and military heroes were said to possess this quality, it is ascribed to God alone and he inherently possesses it². With him is the characteristic of eternity.

Reflecting the background of the Exodus account e.g. Exodus 33v17-23, (see also the Psalms which continue to conceive of God as light, Ps. 89v15; 103v2), Paul affirms that God is transcendent, dwelling in unapproachable light, absolutely holy, beyond the reach of sinful people (apart from God's grace) and any darkness, whether of falsehood or evil; and invisible, which also echoes the same Exodus passage, being beyond human sight and so human apprehension and can only be known as he has pleased to make himself known. Also the threat of death in the Exodus account is not here.

Paul can depart a little from his normal conclusion to a doxology and instead of ascribing 'honour and glory' (see 1v17), here uses 'honour and everlasting might' – *timh. timē* 'honour' emphasises the reverence and respect that is due to God alone; *kra,toj kratos* which is always used of God in the NT; in doxologies in 1 Pet. 4v11; 5v11; Jude 25; Rev. 1v6; 5v13; with *timh timē* only here and Rev. 5v13³ really emphasises God's sovereign and unfailing power which Paul affirms is *aivw,nion(aiōnion* eternal. Some of the language may very well have in mind the claims that were made and the veneration which was being offered in Emperor worship of which Ephesus was a centre⁴. The *avmh,n amēn* 'Amen' 'so let it be' invites all who read (Timothy and the Ephesian believers) to affirm this ascription of worship and praise to God alone (see also 1v17).

As Paul presents the only God it is clear that he is singularly unlike all the human claimants to divine status; these few sentences spell out the sheer distance of God from all humans. The church at Ephesus was no doubt constantly faced with the political/religious *euangelion* of the Imperial authorities and the local Artemis cult. Here Paul can affirm to Timothy the far-surpassing claims of the only God and his *euangelion*, what he has done for men in the appearance of Christ as man. This great God, whose power was unfailing, would enable him to fulfil his commission in Ephesus.

Handling Wealth or Riches

In 6v17-19 Paul reverts to the topic of money after his necessary digression to warn and exhort Timothy (v11-16). So this section is not a later insertion into the letter at a time when wealthy Christians came into the church. Note doxologies do not elsewhere come at the end of letters (e.g. 1v17; Rom. 1v25; 11v36).⁵ So Paul is 'a passionate person' who can burst into glorious praise to God in his letters.⁶ So it is quite common in Paul's style for this kind of thing to happen. Therefore, in this chapter we have two complimentary paragraphs (v6-11 and v17-19) which both handle the theme of money. The need for this second section is clear. Since earlier he has written of a godly acceptance or sufficiency (in Christ) in whatever circumstances we find ourselves in, in contrast to a life motivated by greed (as with the false teachers), he now wishes to set out further principles for how to live with wealth. So we could say that in v6-10 Paul addresses the Christian poor and in particular highlights

that God is the one who is all happiness in himself and then bestows it on others. Knight *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, p. 269.

¹ Knight *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, p. 269.

² God himself as 'immortal' is the source of all life. We are only immortal and exist after death because God has created us like this. But he alone is the absolute sovereign of life.

³ Knight *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, p. 271.

⁴ Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, p.361.

⁵ Marshall *The Pastoral Epistles*, p.668.

⁶ Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, p.365.

the problem of those who have a passion to get rich (v8), while in v17-19 it is the Christians who have money and need to be challenged not to think of themselves of greater worth than others and need to consider also how they ought to be using it. Note that Paul does not ask the rich to divest themselves of their riches. He rather warns the rich of the dangers of wealth (negative instruction), and then lays down certain obligations (positive instruction). It is all about a godly lifestyle even when God has blessed you with money.

Again in v17 Timothy is urged to convey Paul's apostolic instructions which are given in a single sentence in Greek involving a series of infinitive clauses which set out the full details of the exhortation, concluding with the eternal reward of those who respond faithfully to what God desires. Basically the rich believers are warned of 'a mistaken orientation toward wealth and ...a correct orientation toward God'.¹

Negative: the dangers they face. These are set out in two negative attitudes.

The first danger is pride, v17a. The verb *u`yhlofrone,w hupsēlophroneō* is a rare word and is only here in the NT. Where it was used elsewhere in the ancient world it carried the idea of arrogance or being high-minded. Mounce² points out that it is a compound of *u`yhlo,j hupsēlos* 'haughty' and *fronei/n phronein* 'to think' and speaks of adopting a particular mindset of superiority, an attitude which would definitely be divisive in the church. Wealth tends to make people feel self-important and contemptuous of others where they have persuaded themselves that they are superior to others – today they can boast of their car, house, furniture, exotic vacation or yacht etc. An air of distance is created between them and others.

Second danger is false security, 'putting their hope in wealth'. Here the perfect tense is used of their devotion to another master. The same tense is also used of this concept elsewhere in 1Timothy (4v10; 5v5) but there the reference is to the condition of a settled trust or expectancy in God himself. The danger of trusting in wealth is clearly stressed here by the noun phrase 'the uncertainty of wealth'. The phrase simply reflects the transitory nature of material things spelled out on many occasions in scripture.

Wealth is so uncertain in the modern age. Many people have gone to bed rich and have woken up poor. Therefore as Paul makes clear, proper trust is not in a thing but a person, not wealth but God, 'who richly provides us with everything to enjoy'. This is an important addition and means that we are not being asked to exchange materialism for asceticism, especially in the inclusion of the experience of 'enjoyment'. God is able to grant richly a gracious and sufficient provision to continue to meet (present participle) our need. This statement is included as a way of testifying to God's generosity so that the rich may not trust in another source but live with their hope in God.

Wealth can spoil life's two paramount relationships – God and our neighbour. The first of these statements looks back; the second forward to what is to come.

Positive: the duties they have. Wealth is not a sin, but rather carries a tremendous obligation or duty. In fact, the well-off must emulate the generosity of God expressed in the previous verse. Their obligations are set out in three infinitive phrases.

The rich are to do good, a genuine commitment to work for the benefit of others, that which corresponds to the divine pattern (Acts 14v17, the only other use of the word). They are to be rich (*ploute,w plouteō*) which means 'to abound' in good deeds. The last infinitive phrase has two complimentary expressions of gratitude, to be generous and willing to share, an attitude of liberality and the action which comes from it. Mounce³ points out that Paul starts with the general, 'do good',

¹ Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, p.425.

² Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, p.366.

³ Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, p.367.

moves to the more specific ‘good deeds’ and then makes clear that he means they should be generous in giving to others. Therefore the need to give freely is presented as part of God’s will. But on the other hand wealth can make people lazy – they have everything they want and so they do not need to exert themselves. Often reference is made to ‘the idle rich’. How do we measure up to all of this? Knight¹ makes the point that:

Paul is instructing the rich through Timothy how they are to utilize both their riches and their lives in a truly rich way, i.e. by sharing and being rich in good deeds, and thus investing their lives (and their wealth) in that which will lead to permanent treasure.

Finally, here in v19 Paul encourages the Ephesian believers to view wealth from an eternal perspective. We recognise the influence of the teaching of Jesus in Matthew 6v19-20 where the related simple verb ‘to lay up treasure’ is to be found. The compound form of the verb here in 1 Timothy using *avpo apo* suggests that the rich are to take ‘from’ what they have in order to lay a good foundation with the time to come in mind. The concluding *i[na hina* purpose clause emphasises the reason for laying up spiritual wealth, ‘to take hold of the life that is truly life’, a statement similar to that in v12. Knight² explains that *zwh, zōē* is used in these three Letters as normally Paul would do elsewhere of spiritual life which is given to the believer through Christ (2 Tim. 1v1, 10), which has a future dimension as well as a present dimension (1 Tim. 4v8) and this is clearly marked out by the use of *eternal* life (1v16; 6v12; Tit. 1v2; 3v7). The word *o;ntwj ontōs*, as in other occurrences (5v3, 5, 16) is ‘real’ or ‘true’.

So it is affirmed here that the eternal life proclaimed in the Good News is the real life but the point is that we can take hold of it now. Here it is not a matter of the rich buying their way to heaven but a demonstration of the reality of their faith and spirituality in a life of genuine goodness and liberality. Jesus had already revealed this (Matt. 7v21; 25v34-40, 46b) and so Paul is also making this point. Therefore in 1 & 2 Timothy and Titus we are saved by God’s grace and mercy alone (1 Tim. 1v12-17; 2 Tim. 1v9; Tit. 4v5-8), but that grace is manifested as real when it moves us to serve him and he deigns to accept our imperfect service and rewards us for it. Those who give to and serve him will never suffer loss.

The church was God’s witness in the city of Ephesus and throughout Asia. The way they used their money was also vital in that witness and in the mission of God and this is why Paul dealt at length with this important theme.

6v20-21. A Charge to Timothy Himself.

In his final personal charge to Timothy Paul reverts to the false teachers, whose activity has been lying behind the entire letter. Therefore, the letter begins and ends in the same way as Paul reshapes and reaffirms the opening exhortations (1v3-5, 18-20). So as Mounce³ points out, the conclusion may not sound as grand as finishing with a doxology, but Paul had more serious concerns when he wrote to Timothy. The result is that there is no real greeting but a finish that attests the urgency of the situation. He contrasts two types of teaching, Timothy is to guard the former and turn away from the latter. The first is a ‘deposit’ entrusted to Timothy’s care. He must hold true to it and pass it on to others. He must turn away from godless chatter and the ideas of what is falsely called knowledge. In professing these notions some have missed the mark.

¹ Knight *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, p. 274.

² Knight *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, p. 274.

³ Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, p.370.

First in v20 Paul expressly names Timothy just as he had at the beginning of the letter in 1v2, 18. Paul starts with an expression of his emotion addressing Timothy personally using '+W Timo,qee(' 'O *Timothee*' the vocative, which adds solemnity and urgency.¹

We can say that here there is evidence of the overall purpose of the letter. Timothy is to 'guard the deposit' which is said to refer to the practice in the Jewish, Greek and Roman cultures of placing something on trust in the keeping of another. The reference as to what the 'deposit' is has been spelled out in other parts of the letter (1 Tim. 1v11, 18; 2v7; 3v9). It has to be seen as the gospel or the faith that which has been 'the centre of attention in the letter'.² Guarding it will involve, for Timothy, preserving it and proclaiming it as part of the Pauline mission to the Gentiles. We ought to take note that guarding the faith means proclaiming the faith!

A further exhortation to Timothy is to avoid the heresy. So, as above, he was to 'guard' (aorist active imperative) the truth, but 'avoid' is a present continuous participle i.e. he is to avoid the false teaching continually, every day. It is interesting that the same word (evktre,pomai *ektrepomai* 'to go away from' is used of the false teachers in relation to the true doctrine (1 Tim. 1v6; 5v15; 2 Tim. 4v4). So Timothy is to take the exact opposite road from that of the false teachers with regard to the heresy. He must avoid the temptation to explore and seek to delve into the myths which might draw him away from God and truth.

The false teaching is first 'godless chatter'. The first is emphasising that the teaching is 'profane' (be,bhloj *bebēlos* meaning 'worldly' or 'permitted to be trodden') or unhallowed; the second has the idea of empty, senseless or useless talking (see 2 Tim.2v16 where the whole phrase is repeated). These teachings are also described as 'contradictions or opposing ideas of what is falsely called knowledge'. This gives us more information and says two things about the heresy. It is made up of 'opposing ideas'. The word here (avntiqe,seij *antitheseis*) is the accusative feminine plural of avnti,qesij *antithesis* which is only found here in the NT. In the past it was interpreted as possibly something similar to Marcion's employment of the term *Antitheseis* as the title for his Gnostic speculations – even that this was a reference to his work, which would involve a very late date for these Letters - or to some rabbinic-style instruction. But now the consensus appears to be that it refers to either the self-refuting nature of the heresy or its contradiction of the apostolic teaching.³ 'A term that crystallizes what Paul says elsewhere concerning the false teaching and those who are involved in it (cf. 6v3-5; Tit. 1v9-14, especially v9; 2 Tim. 2v25; 3v8...)'⁴.

Finally, the last phrase emphasises that any claim that the false teaching may make regarding knowledge is simply false. It may resemble knowledge but it contains none! The word 'knowledge' here does not refer to later Gnosticism but has reference to the beginnings of something which would develop at a later stage.⁵ Those (Paul uses tinej *tines* 'some') who professed this knowledge has resulted in them 'going astray with regard to the faith' the latter referring again to what one believes.

'Grace be with you' is Paul's final benediction. It is also identical to that of 2 Tim. 4v22 and Tit. 3v15 being almost the same. Knight claims that there is no reference to the source of this blessing as by this stage it would be evident whose grace he intended.⁶

¹ Knight *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, p. 276.

² Marshall *The Pastoral Epistles*, p.676. For the other possibilities before accepting the same meaning see Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, p. 276.

³ Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, p.432.

⁴ Knight *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, p. 277.

⁵ We should note the references to the incarnation and the human Jesus, which the later Gnostics denied, 1Tim. 1v15-16; 2v5-6; 3v16; 6v13.

⁶ Knight *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, p. 277.

The *u`mw/n humōn* 'you' is plural in a wide range of well-attested MSS. Paul expected that the letter would be read to all the believers and that he had them also in mind when writing. This grace was clearly Paul's desire for them all. It was grace to guard the truth, reject the false, follow or so submit to Paul's teaching so that they would be godly in life and thus assist in the spread of the Gospel as part of the mission of God.

The gospel or the faith is a divine revelation to be preserved and proclaimed. The whole teaching of 1 Timothy is a clarion call for faithfulness to the word of God and the rejection of error so prevalent today. The false teaching here was not coming from outside the church but was present within it (see 1 Tim. 1v20). We are in a similar situation to that of Timothy. How we respond will impact the church of the 21st century. Faithful preaching and the resultant godly living are vital for the progress of the mission of God in any culture.

TITUS

The reason for dealing with Titus before 2 Timothy is that Titus is in the same time-frame as Paul's first letter to Timothy. Regarding the nature and contextual setting of the writing, Wieland can maintain, 'This missionary letter has in view an early stage in the establishing of Christian witness in the inhospitable environment of pagan Crete, further complicated by a Judaizing opposition'¹. This comment is a help for the reader in situating the Letter and giving guidance to its overall purpose.

Suggested Outlines and Themes

The letter to Titus and its teaching in the on-going mission of God in the island of Crete can be outlined as follows:

1v1-4 Introduction: Paul's Apostolic Ministry and Greeting to Titus

1v5-9 The Careful Choice and Appointment of Church Elders.

1v 10-16 The Damaging Effects of False Teaching.

2v1-10 Instruction for Different Groups Regarding Duty and Doctrine.

2v11-15 The Effect and Power of the Two Appearances of Christ.

3v1-2 The Civil and Social Responsibilities of the People of God.

3v3-8 The Motivation to Adopt a Mission Lifestyle - God's Salvation in its Three Tenses.

3v9-13 Final Instructions

There are really **THREE Major Themes** –

Christian Elders in contrast to the false teachers (Ch. 1).

Christian Homes - our duty to each other, influenced by the two comings of Christ (Ch. 2).

Christian Relationships in public life (Ch. 3).

In summary, the letter to Titus sets before us – **Christian Duty in the Church, the Home and in the World.**

TITUS 1v1-16 Christian Duty Regarding the Church

The opening section of the epistle is the longest and most detailed of these three Letters² and even of most of the writings of Paul. Here we have a single Greek sentence (v1-4) where Paul highlights his ministry as apostle and greets Titus.

The True Apostle v1-3

Three observations can be made. First, noting the clear stress on Paul's ministry here in the opening verses one can judge that Paul had to reaffirm his apostolic authority because of the opposition faced

¹ Wieland, *The Significance of Salvation: a Study in Salvation Language in the Pastoral Epistles*, 2010, p. 160.

² Quinn affirms that the length and content of this opening section here suggest that it was meant to actually form the opening of the Pastorals. But this is not clearly indicated on the evidence of the content of these verses. See Quinn and Wacker, *The First and Second Letters to Timothy*, p.19-21.

by him and also of course Titus from the false teachers in Crete.¹ Second, the introduction serves to highlight a number of key terms which are later developed in various contexts. Here we have 'faith' (1v1,4; 1v13; 2v2, 10; 3v15); 'godliness' (1v1; 1v11; 2v12); 'hope' (1v2; 2v13; 3v7); 'eternal life' (1v2; 3v7); 'saviour' (1v3, 4; 2v10,11,13; 3v4-6). Third, since all these concepts also occur as related, even central, to Paul's ministry, they affirm the truthfulness of the apostolic mission message over against that of the heretics. It was in Paul's ministry and preaching that the disclosure of the fulfilment of the divine promise took place, v3.

In v1-3 Paul calls himself a slave of God and an apostle of Christ. So first Paul identifies himself and then confirms here his relationship with God. He is a *dou/loj qeou/ doulos theou* 'servant of God', a phrase which is unique for Paul to use, since generally he calls himself 'a servant of Jesus Christ'. While this phrase will remind readers of OT figures who also were so described, Moses (Ps.105v26); David (2 Sam.7v4, 8; Ps.77v70); prophets (Jer. 7v25; 25v4; Amos 3v7), Paul may very well have in mind in this context the local culture in the Roman world, where slaves were the property of their masters and lived a life of total submission and obedience. This is more likely since he ends v3 by referring to the fact that he was under the command of God for the preaching of the promised revelation (see also 1 Tim.1v1). Again, there is an emphasis upon God at work in the epistle to Titus (God's elect 1v1; God's promise 1v2; God as saviour, 1v3;2v10; 3v4; the commandment of God, 1v3; God the father, (1v4); stewards of God, 1v7; God's grace, love and mercy, 2v11; 3v4-5). Paul is here his obedient servant.

The term 'apostle' signifies one called, commissioned, equipped and authorized by Jesus Christ himself to be his inspired messenger of the promised revelation now entrusted to him. Jesus Christ is therefore the one who also sent Paul and he is 'thus understood to be the Lord of the mission entrusted to Paul'.² For us as for Paul, the mission is commanded. But he was the agent of revelation. Here also Paul as 'apostle' expresses the authority with which he writes to Titus and of course through him to the Churches in Crete.

Why was he so called? The rest of the introduction (v1-3) brings out the reasons. Paul's mission as apostle is expanded upon using three prepositional phrases, *kata. kata* (v1), *evpi epi* (v2), and *kata kata* (v3).

He is called 'for the faith of God's elect', the NT people of God, chosen and drawn to him, who are in direct continuity with OT Israel. This affirms that those who have come to faith through the apostle are truly God's people. The purpose seems to be *kata. kata* 'according to' their faith = to nurture, strengthen it and bring it a deeper level of understanding and experience - to greater godliness, the appropriate lifestyle. It is not enough simply that our faith enables us to understand the full content of the gospel. It fails to reach its purpose if it stops short of leading us into a life fully consecrated to God in godly living. Has our faith produced the proper behaviour in us which is to be the outcome of faith – a mission lifestyle? For Paul, all his converts had an important role in the mission of God!

It is founded upon (*evpi, epi* which here highlights the basis of this life of godliness – the promise) the confident expectation of eternal life (the ultimate experience of it is in heaven), which God, who does not lie, in contrast to the Cretans (v12), had promised before time began, and now has revealed it to the world through the gospel which Paul preached. Here in v3 the 'due time' is *kairoj kairos* which is the opportune time. Paul is commanded to make this promise known, since he is entrusted with this

¹ Some have suggested that such an emphasis on Paul the apostle's own apostolic authority and calling here is evidence that the letter is in fact, post-Pauline. What we have is said to be the attempt by a later pseudepigrapher to seek to promote Pauline teaching as authoritative for the church. But such a focus as one finds here by Paul in the introduction to Titus is not unique to the Letters to Timothy and Titus, e.g. Romans 1v1-17; Gal.1v1-24. In putting himself at the centre of God's revelation, thus making clear his own authority he is in turn authenticating the ministry of Titus.

² Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, p.666.

task – it is ‘committed to me’ by the commandment of God. It is really this promise which motivates his mission commitment. Are we not motivated also? Again, the God who commanded Paul has commanded us to proclaim his revealed promise. It is in ‘his word’, v3.

Further Comment

In these Letters to Timothy and Titus one finds some precious descriptions of Paul’s God –see 1 Tim. 1v17; 6v15-16. Tit.1v2 gives us another, ‘God, who cannot lie’. Politicians lie = promises are soon broken; The Public lie = claiming benefits while still working; Partners lie = marital infidelity abounds on every hand; Here Paul claims that Cretians lie – as noted elsewhere one of their own (The individual is Epimenedes mentioned by Clement of Alexandria and Jerome who in 600BC made the accusation). But Paul writes to Titus about a God who does not lie. It is useful to trace the word ‘cannot’ in the scriptures:

John 8v21 A PEOPLE WHO CANNOT COME in their sin

John 3v3, 5 A PHARISEE WHO CANNOT SEE/ENTER without being changed at the centre of their being – born again

Acts 4v20 APOSTLES WHO CANNOT BUT SPEAK of what God has done

Mark 15v31 A SUBSTITUTE WHO CANNOT SAVE HIMSELF – AND OTHERS.

Luke 16v26 A MAN WHO CANNOT PASS from the other side of the fixed gulf, since in this life he failed to repent

Now Titus 1v1 A GOD WHO CANNOT LIE.

The subject here is eternal life. HE PROMISED IT Rom. 5v12 man brought down into condemnation, but God promised can have eternal life! HE PROVIDED IT in sending his son, 1 John5v11. = by his death. HE PRESENTS IT Rom. 6v23 = the gift of the God who cannot lie. WE CAN POSSESS IT 1 John 5v12; John 17v2-3. WE CAN BE AT PEACE CONCERNING IT. 1 John 5v13 He does not lie. Got his promise for it now! John 6v68.

The Spiritual Son v4

In v4 the Letter is ‘to Titus’. He was converted through Paul – he calls him ‘my son’, not by any blood relationship or legal adoption, but his son spiritually. As a gentile he was accepted as part of Paul’s missionary team, note without circumcision, Gal. 2v3-5; cf.v10), but through the same means of faith (‘common’ here means ‘shared’) as Paul a Jew.

The Galatian’s passage makes clear that he had been with Paul from early days in Paul’s mission outreach. Also Paul had such confidence in him that he sent him to Corinth in the crisis situation of their broken relationship with the great apostle (2 Cor. 2v12ff; 7v5-7), and the result had been their repentance and remorse. Titus also was involved in dealing with the important matter of the collection (2Cor. 8v5-6; 16-18). So he had been used so mightily in the past, a longstanding and faithful co-worker. Now, following Paul’s release from house arrest in Acts 28, as the apostle resumed his missionary travels he left Titus in Crete, just as Timothy remained in Ephesus, to deal with the difficulties caused by the false teachers. He did not intend him to stay forever in Crete – see 3v12, where Artemas or Tychicus would come and Titus would meet Paul again in Nicopolis. So he was not the appointed bishop of Crete¹.

The Letter is not as personal as those sent to Timothy and Paul’s use of Titus in the past means that he does not need the same encouragements as one finds in 1 and 2 Timothy, the challenges to the younger Timothy not to be ashamed, to hold fast, to stir up his gift. The Titus Letter is however still direct and focussed upon Paul’s faithful co-worker, more than the two sent to Timothy.

¹ Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, p.876; contra J.D. Quinn, *The Letter to Titus*, AB35, New York, Doubleday, 1990, p.84.

Witherington¹ aptly describes Titus as he worked alongside Paul as ‘a crisis –intervention specialist’ who had proved himself over many years working with Paul. An individual with such a gift can be invaluable in a Comunitati (a group of Churches in a region) of the Baptist Union of Romania, or an Association of Churches. Here Titus has a three-fold responsibility:

Ch.1 To appoint qualified elders in every town; these were to combat the false teachers

Ch.2 To teach the practical realities of Christian behaviour

Ch. 3 To remind the believers of their wider social responsibilities and summon Titus to join him at Nicopolis near the Adriatic coast for the winter, once Artemas or Tychicus had arrived in Crete to replace him (3v11). He went later north along the coast to Dalmatia (2 Tim. 4v10).

His customary Christianised greeting expresses his desire for Titus - grace and peace. Note also in v4 how he identifies Christ as *tou/ swth/roj h`mw/n*, *tou sōtēros hēmōn*, ‘our saviour’, in anticipation of the ethical emphasis to a godly and peaceful lifestyle in ch. 2v14 & 3v1-6 based upon the theological motivation of what Christ has done for us through his death. So God is the source, the originator of salvation and Christ is the means. Caesar, in spite of his title *sōtēr*, has no role.

Crete lies south of the Aegean Sea in the Mediterranean at a strategic navigational point for sailing (Acts 27v7). This importance for trade meant that it would be influenced by many different groups and religious teachers from all around the Mediterranean world, including Jews and Jewish Christians (Acts 2v11). Mounce points out that there are indications from outside sources that there were large numbers of Jews in Crete.² It was also early reputed to have many cities.³ It appears that Paul and Titus must have had a fruitful ministry in mission evangelism in some of the cities on the island, but as yet had not been able to consolidate the work or appoint elders (see Paul’s former strategy in Acts 14v21-23). Therefore Paul left Titus facing two immediate needs in the Christian community:

-To strengthen what was left unfinished. The main way to consolidate the life of the church would be to complete the second task, appoint gifted pastoral oversight.

In ch.1v6-16 Paul sets out in stark contrast the true elders he called on Titus (note the *evgw*, *egō* ‘I’ of apostolic authority; and the ‘I commanded you’, v5 i.e. Titus has full apostolic authority) to appoint, with the false teachers whom the elders were to silence.

Note that here at the beginning there is no thanksgiving section – Paul, as in 1 Timothy, gets straight to the heart of the problem – ‘unfinished work’,⁴ the vital appointment of faithful teachers/leaders. It appears that we are dealing with a young church receiving elders for the very first time. Note that there is no direction here as in 1 Tim. 3v6 - avoiding the appointment of the younger.

The Chosen Elders v5-9

The teaching overlaps with 1 Tim.3. Note that the bishop and elder are said to refer to the same person. So the functional description of ‘overseer’ *evpi,skopoj episkopos* is also introduced as in Acts 20v28. God intended there to be a team, a team of elders in every town (*kata. po,lin kata polin*, ‘in every city’ or ‘city by city’, used in the distributive sense). The plural *presbute,rouj presbuterous* will refer to several elders to be appointed in each city. Every church which is mentioned in Asia Minor and its Provinces or Palestine with leadership either associated with Paul and his associates, James or Peter has a plurality of local leaders (Acts 14v23; 15v2, 22-23; 16v4; 20v17, 28; 1 Tim. 3v1ff; 5v17; 1 Pet. 5v1-4). This is seen in both Jewish and Greco-Roman settings. As elsewhere so here, there is no monarchical bishop over the country or no bishop over other elders in a city or a local church.

¹ Witherington 111, *Letters and Homilies for Hellenized Christians*, Vol.1: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary on Titus, 1-2 Timothy and 1-3 John, p.90.

² Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, p.396.

³ Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, p.287.

⁴ Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, p. 287.

The main function of the elders was to care for the people of God - as a steward, dispensing spiritual food to the household. Paul's emphasis that they needed to be blameless can indicate that the congregation had a say in the selection process. Note also the use of *ei; ti,j evstin ei tis estin* 'if anyone is', suggesting that anyone with the following qualities may be eligible. So when Paul refers to Titus's responsibility to 'ordain' *kaqj,sthmi kathistēmi* Knight¹ suggests that he is referring just to the final stage of the appointment. It is clear that Titus himself stands apart from these structures – he is never identified as an elder or bishop.

Elders must be blameless in marriage and family life, v6.

As in 1 Tim. 3v2 the overall requirement for elders is stated i.e. they must be 'blameless' or 'above reproach', as failure here will affect the reputation of the church in the local situation and greatly hinder the witness.

Paul then starts at home. An elder must be 'the husband of one wife'. This should not be understood as ruling out the unmarried or those who have married again, but the unfaithful and even the polygamous. Paul is simply writing of the usual situation in life and that marital and sexual fidelity are required of any leader. Again, any children should manifest evidence of being 'faithful' or under their father's authority in an ordered home-life.²

Blameless in character and conduct v7-8.

Paul lists five negatives (all using *mh. mē*) in the accusative in agreement with the word overseer.³ The elder must be master of himself; he must not be self-willed, manifesting itself in stubbornness or arrogance. At the root is a fundamental selfishness putting others down to promote oneself.

Leadership brings prestige and power and some may be tempted to misuse these. Some may become proud of their promotion, hence increasing their own vanity. They will not be prepared to listen to criticism or advice, will lord it over others and become headstrong, autocratic, or as v7 states, quick-tempered ('peppery') (*ovrgi,loj orgilos*, only here in the NT but see Prov. 21v19; 22v24; 29v22). Self-control rather is important since they may have to minister to difficult and demanding people. It is clear that an 'explosive' lack of self-control renders one unfit for leadership in the church.⁴

They must not be addicted to drink, which must have been a real problem in the culture of Ephesus and Crete since it is mentioned in all the lists (1 Tim. 3v3, 8; Tit. 1v7; also 2v3). Although people in leadership usually have a forceful disposition they will not be violent but gentle and not ride roughshod over people. Again, they must be motivated by service, not greed or seeking to profit, again an emphasis in all three lists of qualifications. The word *aivscrokerdh,j(aischrokerdēs* 'greedy for money' is sometimes used of those who take from others even though they already have in abundance what they desire to take.⁵

Contrasting (*avlla. alla* 'but') the five negatives, there are six positives, largely self-explanatory, with a seventh outlining a ministry responsibility. The elder must be hospitable, since in the setting of Crete it would be vital that one's home be open for worship and to receive those involved in the spread of the gospel, what with the dangers of travel and the poor reputation of inns. The elder also must love what is good i.e. his desire for the believers must be that they manifest the good qualities God wants them

¹ Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, p. 288.

² Note the discussion of this in 1 Timothy 3. The suggestion there was made that it should not be read as 'believing children', p. 70.

³ Note the switch from 'elders' in v5 to 'overseer' in v7. This is still the same person – with a similar pattern in Acts 20v17; 20v28 and in 1 Peter 5v1-2. The second use here of 'overseer' is about the function of the elders. Mounce points out that the force of *ga,r gar* 'for' is easily overlooked. It ties the discussion together and argues against the suggestion that the overseers are distinct from the elders, Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, p.390. See also Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, p. 149,160.

⁴ Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, p.688.

⁵ Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, p. 291.

to have (cf. Phil. 4v8). He must be sensible in judgement, upright in his dealings with people, also holy and devout toward God and self-controlled (evgkrath,j *enkratēs* has a sexual connotation in 1 Cor. 7v9). The last few here do not appear in the list in 1 Tim. 3 and may reflect a more immature community still struggling to put behind it depraved patterns of behaviour.¹ Then in the final virtue, a transition is made to ministry.

Unimpeachable in doctrinal orthodoxy. Paul moves from home and family, character and conduct, to their grasp of the truth. They must clearly be faithful to the true message, 'the teaching' of the apostles, the identifiable body of instruction called in these three Letters 'the teaching' (v9; 2v1; 1 Tim. 1v10; 2 Tim.1v13, 2v2, 3v10), 'the faith' (v13; 1 Tim. 3v9, 4v1), or 'the truth' (v14; 1 Tim. 2v4, 3v15, 4v3, 6v21), or 'the deposit' (1 Tim. 6v20; 2 Tim.1v12, 14), also 'even the words of the Lord Jesus Christ' (1 Tim. 6v3) - now bequeathed to us in the NT. This teaching must be 'held firmly', and requires the elders unreserved personal adherence to and acceptance of the word he has heard. The i[na hina purpose clause outlines the real outcome of all in which he has been grounded. He is not simply to enjoy a grasp of the truth itself but he has been equipped to be involved in the mission of God! He is to engage in a two-fold ministry, indicated by the repetition of kai. *kai...kai* 'both...and', a ministry of instructing and refuting. The first points to the fact that he is to urge or exhort his hearers to accept the sound doctrine and respond to it – it will produce spiritual healthiness - and the second carries the meaning of not simply just contradicting but actually overthrowing the arguments of those who speak against the truth. It is clear that such a man has been called essentially to a teaching ministry that necessitates a teaching gift. It can be maintained that here the requirement of 1 Tim. 3v2 'apt to teach' is being elaborated upon. Mounce² makes the point that if elders are not devoted to scripture, then they are not fit to serve or take this office.

The omission of any reference to the age of the elder (cf. 1 Tim.3v6), as noted earlier, reveals a church still in a mission context where it is growing and there are not a predominant number of mature believers. The reason he is to appoint elders in every town is that there are many false teachers leading the people astray. The emphasis here is that the best way to rebut and refute error is to multiply the number of true teachers. Paul now writes of those who were seriously troubling the believers.

The False Teachers v10-16

In these verses we find a basic contrast to the qualities of the overseer just highlighted.

The number of the false teachers.

They were 'many' (v10) so the threat was serious and urgent action was required. They are 'insubordinate' and refused to submit to apostolic authority or to the true teaching. They were engaging in empty fruitless talk; what they were teaching did not only edify, but it led people astray.

The identity of false teachers.

He refers to them as 'those of the circumcision' (v10). It seems clear from certain references that they are a Jewish group obsessed with 'Jewish myths' (v14) and genealogies and the law (3v9). The phrase 'of the circumcision' may well mean nothing more than the fact that they were Jewish, not that they were practicing circumcision. He further describes them as teaching 'the commandments of men who turn from the truth'. It appears that these Jewish Christians (see also Acts 10v45; 11v2; Gal.2v12; Col. 4v18) were adding to the word and causing the believers to be led astray from the truth.

The influence of the false teachers.

¹ Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, p.165.

² Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, p.393.

They cannot be either ignored or tolerated but must be challenged and silenced because of their growing influence. They are not only deceiving individuals but disrupting whole households (v11) (house churches?) or families. Remember especially the prohibitions of marriage in 1 Tim. 4v1-3. Were existing marriages also under threat?

The motives of the false teachers.

Paul has no problem with teachers receiving remuneration for their work (1 Tim. 5v17-18) but here he highlights the real motive of the false teachers – it was dishonest gain (v11), from which all true teachers must be free (v7). Households were not only accepting the teachings but giving practical support to the teachers, who were happy to live off them!

The character of the false teachers.

Concerning v12 the Greeks coined the phrase *krhti,zw krētizō* for to 'lie' or 'cheat', and the noun *krhtismoj krētismos* for a 'falsehood'. Paul refers to 'a prophet of their own' usually identified as Epimenides¹ (the 6th cent. BC Cretan teacher) who joked that the absence of wild animals on the island was made up for by its human inhabitants. They were known to be marked by deceit, greed and sloth. The apostle now applies these traits to the false teachers troubling the church. They were the present deceivers, lazy gluttons, feeding upon the generosity of the people, corrupt. In v13-14 we learn that Paul's motives are upright, not to humiliate the Cretans, but to rescue them from error and to establish them in the truth. Titus is to 'rebuke them', i.e. the Cretan believers so that they, being in the faith, will remain 'sound' in it.

The errors of the false teachers.

They are enthusiastic concerning Jewish fables (v14a) and paid attention to the commands of men (v14b). Towner points out that the latter is a technical term going back to Isaiah 29v13 where teaching is characterised as human and therefore substandard, in effect, obscuring the truth. See also Jesus (Matt. 15v9; Mk. 7v7) and Paul (Col. 2v22). Concerning the 'commands', 'The use of the plural deepens the contrast between the singular apostolic teaching (from God) and the diverse false teachings (of human origin...)'.² They were substituting commands or rather traditions of human origin only, and in fact rejecting the truth. As in v1 the 'truth' is God's revelation, the apostolic gospel, the true mission message. Their doctrines were lies, human opinions only.

The impurity of the false teachers.

Here Paul links the false teachers to the rules regarding ritual purity (v15). We remember the teaching in 1 Tim. 4v3-5. This reference to purity implies that we are dealing with Jewish practices and Jewish teachers. Paul refers to 'those that are pure'. He is referring to the true believers. People are cleansed from sin through Christ's death, cleansed by faith, Tit. 2v14; Acts 15v9. So to them Paul writes 'all things are pure'. The assurance is that they do not need to fear contamination from food. It is clear from other scriptures that defilement is not contacted from eating certain foods, Mk. 7v14-20; Lk. 11v41; Rom. 14v6; 1 Cor. 10v30; 1 Tim. 4v4-5. But he then writes of those who are rather defiled – the perfect participle indicates a state of being. They are the false teachers. They have not believed, but are trusting in their asceticism to make them pure; they are disobedient to the gospel and deny the true way. They are the defiled! For them 'nothing is pure'. Their mind and conscience is defiled. With the mind they receive the truth (God's revelation), but they do not approve it. As the conscience evaluates the information provided by the mind, (the will of God and patterns of behaviour) their inoperative or seared consciences do not make the correct decisions but approve false doctrines and

¹ Epimenides was well-known and regarded as a prophet by Plato, Aristotle, Cicero and others. (see p.13 n.3). There is nothing stated here to suggest that the apostle considered him as a prophet in the Biblical sense. It is just that his judgement about the people is true – in a similar way when John 11v51 refers to Caiaphas, Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, p.199.

² Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, p.705.

inferior ethics and so they are defiled.¹ In fact their inner defilement, as in the teaching of Haggai 2v10-14, pollutes all they touch.

The rejection of the false teachers.

They profess a better knowledge of God (v16) – an indication of their Jewishness (Jer. 10v25), but their works are a denial of that knowledge. Paul of course is insisting on the interconnectedness of faith and works. God is the object of both verbs – ‘they profess to know’/‘they deny’ by their actions. The rest of the verse stresses the true reality of their condition in language that connects with the OT where it accuses the people of idolatry and paganism. The first term ‘abominable’ relates to OT cultic defilement caused by ritual impurity and idolatrous worship (Lev. 11v10,12,13,23; Deut. 27v15; see also Deut 23v18; Prov. 17v15). The second ‘disobedient’ identifies them clearly with pagan unbelievers (Isa. 30v9; Jer. 5v23; Zech. 7v12).

In a sweeping summary, Paul affirms that they are unfit or disqualified from doing anything good. In fact he maintains that they are therefore set outside the people of God for there is nothing that they can do that is acceptable since they are disobedient to or dismissive of the word of God. They have not stood the test (v16) and are ‘disqualified’, base, *avdo, kimoī adokimoi*. (see Rom. 1v28; 2 Cor. 13v5-7; 2 Tim. 3v8). In Prov.25v4; Isa. 1v22 the word describes the dross in the refinement of silver.²

Note Paul’s strategy here. He was disturbed at the presence of false teachers in the church. The Letters to Timothy and Titus are full of allusions to deceivers, empty talkers, speculators, divisive instructors and hypocritical liars. The question is how Paul considered this situation could be remedied? What was his strategy in the face of spreading error?

As was noted, when false teachers increase, we must multiply the number of true teachers. Titus was to appoint elders in every town (v5) who would hold fast to God’s reliable word, teach it faithfully and refute those who contradicted it. Stott makes the important point:

This is why the key institution in the church is the seminary or theological college. In every country the church is a reflection of its seminaries. All the church’s future pastors and teachers pass through a seminary. It is there that they are either made or marred, either equipped and inspired or ruined. Therefore we should set ourselves to capture the seminaries of the world for evangelical faith, academic excellence and personal godliness. There is no better strategy for the reform and renewal of the church.³

Have we made it our goal to be well taught in the word and equipped to thus provide the answer to the errors which are increasing on every hand? Are we grounding the people of God in the truth or are we abandoning them? Many churches have few to teach them. These are vital questions in light of the mission of God.

TITUS 2v1-15 Christian Duty in the Home

From the activities of the false teachers Paul now turns to the responsibilities of Titus as a true teacher. In v1 he stresses, ‘but as for you’, an important statement which is missing in NIV. The words occur 5 times in these Letters, a paraenetic device exhorting Titus to take a different course from that of the false teachers. It expresses the familiar call for the people of God to be different, 1 Tim. 6v11; 2 Tim. 3v10, 14, 4v5; Tit. 2v1. It serves almost as a title for all that follows. Paul’s focus is now not on the church but on the home – or rather the Christian household which would be wider than the modern family, taking in the whole retinue of slaves involved in many activities for their master.

¹ Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, p.709.

² Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, p.711.

³ Stott, *The Message of 1 Timothy and Titus*, p.184.

So here we are to learn not only how we ought to behave as Christians but also why we must be characterised by a true godly mission lifestyle. Paul provides instruction how to have a life marked by true godliness (2v1-10) and then makes clear the reason why we are obligated to live like this (2v11-15) - the motivation. Some will see v11-15 as disconnected from what is before. But v11 begins with *gar* 'for' and really gives the theological reasons or basis for the directions given in v1-10. The teaching must be seen as a whole. There is even a concluding summary that serves almost as a bridge from the theological motivation to the next section of paraenesis (v15).

Titus must teach 'sound doctrine' which will bring God's people (1v3) spiritual blessing and is in accord with the body of teaching already mentioned. He must also teach the things which are 'in accord' with it i.e. the practical duties which arise from it. Paul now does this himself - he outlines some detailed ethical instructions that Titus is to pass on, which are then seen to be founded actually upon the two comings of Christ and really required by these. There are five different groups: older men (v2); older women (v3); younger women (v4-5); young men (v6), with Titus included as an example for them (v7-8) and slaves (9-10).

Exhortations for All from Paul **The Older Men.**

In the NT *presbutēs* refers always to 'older men' rather than church 'elders'. Paul highlights four qualities to be found in such men. They need first to be 'sober' or if it has here its metaphorical use 'clear-minded'. The literal sense of sobriety should not be overlooked in the light of v3. Drunkenness and gluttony (v12) were common in the society. The older men were to have no part in it.

They must be marked by *semnos*, which means to be dignified, serious, qualities which will lead to respect from other people. It is also expected of deacons (1 Tim. 3v8) and the women of 1 Tim. 3v11. They are also to be self-controlled, which is a key quality here as it also mentioned when it comes to older women (v4), younger women (v5), younger men (v7) and the elders of 1 Tim. 3v2; Tit. 1v8. It is so important to live self-controlled lives, in contrast to the culture around, Tit. 1v12 and especially in the light of what Christ has done for us, Tit. 2v12. They also are to be sound or spiritually healthy in the three cardinal Christian virtues of 'faith' (the emphasis here is not faith in the creedal sense but similar to the others mentioned and the use in similar lists of virtues (1Tim. 4v12; 6v11; 2Tim. 2v22; 3v10) meaning i.e. personal trust in God, 'love', selfless service of others and 'endurance', constancy and perseverance in the path of God's calling and will in the face of opposition, trying circumstances and discouragement. So older men are to display a living dynamic faith!

The Older Women.

The second group Paul writes of are the older women, and the word *presbutis* is found only here in the NT. The instructions (v3) continue in almost a parallel way (Paul uses the transitional term 'likewise' or 'similarly') to that of the older men and finally, through a purpose statement (v4) the younger women are to be indirectly instructed by the older ladies. The qualities for both groups respectively are very similar to 1 Tim. 3v11; 5v14.

Four areas are singled out for them. First, they are to be reverent in the way they live, as befitting a holy person, carrying this demeanour into daily life. Here we have an inner condition or character that cannot be hidden but will necessarily manifest itself outwardly.¹

Two moral failures are to be avoided, if one is to achieve the desired goal i.e. they cannot become backbiters or scandalmongers and be snared by wine. These sins were known to be prevalent in the

¹ Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, p.244, Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, p.722.

Cretan way of life when it came to older women – drunkenness and slanderers of others. As far as slander is concerned, the word is *dia,bolej diabolos*, which elsewhere in these Letters can be used for the devil (1 Tim. 3v6, 7; 2 Tim. 2v26), since it is the activity for which he is known, but obviously here inspires in others. The sin of slander is mentioned elsewhere in 1 Tim. 3v11; 5v13.

The language of enslavement – using the perfect passive participle - ‘addicted to much wine’ warns of the dangers which existed in the society at the time. When it comes to every list concerning the appointment of church leaders the danger is highlighted, (1 Tim.3v3,8; Tit.1v7; see also 1Tim. 5v23). Instead of using their tongues for slander, they are to use them to teach what is good. The emphasis is not that the women were ‘good teachers’ but on the content of what they teach.¹ Mounce² makes the point that context shows that this refers not to an official teaching position in the church (1 Tim.2v11-12) but rather to informal one-to-one encouragement. The older women, experienced in life, marriage and rearing children, are encouraged to take the younger women under their care and assist them as they face new situations and responsibilities. This is a ministry the men cannot do.

Titus is to teach the older men and women and later the younger men. But the older women were to have a vital role sharing their wisdom and experience with those who were younger. There is no major break here, but Paul has joined together both groups of women using a *i[na hina* ‘in order that’ clause.

The Younger Women.

Seven qualities are expected of the younger women, closing with a motivating reason to so live. They are to be encouraged to love their husbands and love their children. Towner³ discusses the use of *swfroni,zwsin sōphronidzōsin* and suggests that the young women were being influenced by the ideals and morality (or lack of it) of the new Roman woman, which was effecting the Cretan culture. Embracing the ‘values’ of the ‘new woman’ would have led to a rejection of traditional commitment to the household and endorsed a new sexual freedom rather than sexual fidelity to one’s husband. The verb in this context has to carry the meaning of a figurative slap in the face i.e. to call someone back to their senses!

The substance of this ‘wake up call’ includes all seven qualities in the present verses. First, the two qualities of loving one’s husband, which was regarded as evidence of a good wife in both Hellenistic and Jewish cultures, and loving one’s children which was also highly valued (1 Tim. 5v10); both sum up basic domestic responsibility.⁴ Paul urges further that the younger women are to be ‘self-controlled, pure’ and ‘keepers at home’. The first two qualities carry the clear message of the expectation of sexual fidelity. What of the expectation that they will be ‘working at home’, *oivkourgo,j oikourgos*? Here we have a rare word which does not mean that women are being told to ‘stay at home’ and are therefore prohibited from being ‘professional women’. Rather, she must realise that if she accepts the vocation of marriage she has duties at home. J.B. Philips translates ‘home-lovers’. Women are also to be ‘kind’, perhaps in the context meaning ‘hospitable’.

Can these six qualities be grouped in three pairs? First, loving husbands and loving children which were already joined together in literature at that time and concern relationships in the home. The second pair would involve personal piety, self-controlled and pure and the third would focus upon actions with regard to those who are around her.⁵

¹ Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, p.246.

² Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, p.410.

³ Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, p.725.

⁴ Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, p.726.

⁵ Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, p. 308.

Finally, she is to accept the leadership of her husband – a constant theme in Paul (1 Tim. 2v11; Col. 3v18; Eph. 5v21-23). The present middle participle here means ‘continually submitting oneself’ which means voluntary submission. Note the use of *ivdi, oij idiois* ‘one’s own’ to make the point that Paul is focussing upon husbands here. So *u`pota, ssw huptassō* refers to being under authority to men in a church situation (1 Cor. 14v34; 1 Tim. 2v11) and to their husbands. Mounce¹ makes an insightful point, ‘In both the husband/wife and master/slave relationship, Paul does not allow the former to demand submission but instructs the latter to give it’.

The concluding words, ‘that God’s word may not be dishonoured’ reminds us of Isa. 52v5. Paul makes clear on three occasions here his concern for the mission of the church – the impact that the life of the individual believer can have on non-Christians (v5, 8, 10).

The Younger Men.

Just as for the other groups ‘likewise’ there is to be an appeal to the young men (v6). They are to be urged - a strong appeal - to develop one quality - self-mastery – the key term of the section, which really can be understood in a comprehensive sense taking in the others that have been stated – Paul writes of ‘all things’ *peri. pa,nta peri panta*. If we take the ‘all things’ to refer to the preceding appeal then that allows *seauto.n seauton* ‘yourself’ to be emphatic, which is appropriate here.

Just as the older women were examples for the younger so Titus was to be to the young men. They are to be encouraged by a consistent example in Titus, to whom Paul now speaks directly. We are imitative by nature and need models to give us direction, challenge and inspiration. Titus should influence them first by showing ‘an example of good works’. This emphasis on being a model or example is found often in Paul (1 Tim. 4v12; 1 Thess. 1v7; 2 Thess. 3v9; Phil. 3v17). Titus was to be a *tu,poj tupos*, a mould into which others can be impressed², not as the false teachers who were unfit examples (Tit. 1v16). The theme of ‘good works’ is important throughout the Letters to Timothy and Titus, especially in Titus (Tit. 2v14; 3v1, 8, 14; 2 Tim. 2v21; see also 3v17), although it is made clear that such works do not save (Tit. 3v5; 1 Tim. 1v12-17; 2 Tim. 1v9).

But not only is he to be his example in his service but in his teaching which ought to have three qualities, to be marked by ‘purity’ or ‘integrity’, taken as a reference to Titus’s character, the pure motives he had. Also ‘seriousness’ is a clear indication of the manner of teaching. We must be serious in preaching for the eternal welfare of our listeners is at stake. Lastly there is a focus upon the content of his teaching – it has to be in soundness of speech that cannot be condemned. Titus is to preach the truth, the apostolic doctrine, with clear motives and in seriousness and the outsiders will have nothing of substance to say against his preaching. It is of course clear that the apostolic doctrine will be condemned by some. The idea here is that no charges can justifiably be brought against the preaching of the word. Towner suggests that the letter gives evidence of the fact that the Jewish-Christian teachers were a dominant threat to the Pauline mission and here the singular ‘one who opposes’ is most likely a reference to them or to a ringleader among them.³ Paul’s aim is that ‘shame’ will fall upon these men since Titus’s integrity will mean that they will be discredited. Nothing bad can be said about ‘us’ – note Paul uses the plural and thus includes himself, possibly all who preach.

Two things to note. Once again, the need for such transparency and faithfulness that the mission of God in Crete will not be hindered, but advanced. In our own culture we have to share Titus’s manner of teaching. Are we truly concerned about where people will spend eternity?

Slaves

¹ Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, p.412.

² Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, p.413.

³ Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, p.733-4.

In v9-10 Paul now focuses upon a sixth and final group in the church communities and in the family households in Crete i.e. slaves. They are often addressed in Paul's letters (Eph. 6v5ff; Col. 3v22ff; 1 Tim. 6v1ff; 1 Cor. 7v21ff). Unlike the others groups there is no age distinctions here. That masters are not mentioned likely means that Paul is focussing upon how Christian slaves are to live serving unbelieving masters (note that the term *despo,thj despotēs* here is suggested to refer better to non-Christian masters;¹ but what of 1 Tim. 6v2 where the term is used of those who have faith?). However, one can acknowledge that there were probably in this first-century situation more unbelieving masters than those who had turned to Christ (1 Cor. 1v26-29).

Here we have first a basic command followed by four others which set out the details in contrasting pairs and a final purpose clause. Slaves are exhorted to subject themselves to their own masters. As for their work, they must try to please their masters by conscientious service and to be polite and respectful. They are to be honest and not to pilfer from them (*nosfi,zw nosphizō* means generally petty larcenies, pilfering, but can describe more serious theft, Acts 5v2-3). The positive contrast (*avlla. Alla*, a strong adversative) is for them to be dependable and to demonstrate that they can be trusted in every way. The verb *evndeï,knumi endeiknumi* means not just to prove but to demonstrate powerfully and show visibly. 'Good' fidelity will mean perfect or whole-hearted fidelity.

There is a purpose in all of this – note the *i[na hina* purpose clause. So they can make the gospel attractive. As was noted, three times in these verses Paul has stressed his concern for our witness in the mission of God to the non-Christian world, (v5, 8, 10). The word 'adorn' the doctrine is *kosme,w kosmeō* meaning to put in order, or make beautiful either physically or spiritually (Matt. 12v44; 23v29 25v7; Lk. 21v5; Rev. 21v19; 1 Tim. 2v9; 1 Pet. 3v5). So the testimony of the Christian slaves would commend the gospel or make it credible. The doctrine is the teaching about God the saviour and their lives would demonstrate how God saves people and transforms them! These slaves would be so different from the normal picture of slaves, obstinate, dishonest, lazy. So a life lived in very ordinary circumstances – as many of our lives are – can still make such a powerful impact for God!

But why are the believers in Crete – old men and women, the young and Christian slaves to so live as Paul urges here?

Obligations for All from God

The reasons for such behaviour or the doctrinal foundation are the two comings or two appearances of Christ, 'the grace of God... appeared' (v11), 'the glorious appearing'(v13) – a manifestation of grace and glory.

Verses 11-15 are purposefully linked with what Paul has just taught from v1-10 – see the connecting *ga.r gar* 'for' and v15, the closing link back to v1. They emphasise in one long sentence two motivations for the lifestyle he has encouraged the different groups of Christians referred to in the first part of the chapter to adopt. The grace of God appeared to redeem or deliver us from sin; we ought also to live in holiness because of the hope/certainty of the glory of God which is yet to appear.

Further Comment

Regarding the word 'to appear' *evpifai,new epiphaineō* Luke has the only use of this word apart from when it is used of Jesus Christ's appearances. The ship carrying Paul ran into a terrible gale and drifted helplessly in the sea. The sky was so overcast by day and by night that for many days the sun nor the stars 'made no epiphany', (Acts 27v20). The stars were still there but they did not appear. Apart from this occasion the word is used 4 times of Christ's first coming (Lk. 1v79-79; 2 Tim. 1v10; Tit. 2v11, 3v4) and 6 times of his second coming (Acts 2v20; 2 Thess. 2v8; 1 Tim. 6v14; 2 Tim. 4v1, 8; Tit. 2v11, 3v4). Paul is making the point that the two comings of Christ should have a powerful impact upon us as far as lifestyle is concerned. We noted in 1 Tim. 6v14² the claim in the 'good news' proclaimed concerning the results of the 'appearing' of Augustus that his victories were said to have

¹ Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, p. 314.

² See p. 100.

made a real impact for good in the Imperial Provinces. Paul here is asking what impact upon us have the appearances of our Great God and Saviour had?

v11 'The grace ...It is not that the grace of God came into existence when Christ came - God has always been gracious - but grace appeared visibly in Jesus Christ. It is seen in his birth, his life, but above all in his atoning death. It 'appeared to all men' in the sense that what his death achieved is offered to all men, 'all groups of people',¹ even slaves.

Paul personifies this grace. Grace the saviour became also grace the teacher. Grace finds her 'teaching power' from the first great revelation of herself. We cannot separate out theology or our theoretical affirmations from practice.

Grace exhorts us to (negatively) renounce our old life, 'ungodliness and worldly passions', and live (positively) a new one in self-control, fair dealing and in touch with God. We should live as Paul has outlined in the earlier verses, because Christ came to deliver us from the things of the old life. This was the purpose of his coming! So we cannot continue to live like this but must adopt the new lifestyle Paul has outlined. Witherington reminds us that 'renounce' here is an aorist participle which reflects a 'decisive turning point in the work of grace in an individual's life'.²

Paul also reminds Titus that the one who appeared in grace will reappear in glory. It is not the appearance of two persons, 'the great God and our saviour' but the appearance of one who is both! There is only one definite article which covers both nouns.³ Christ will come to perfect our salvation. Of course, one should remember that he is also coming as judge (2 Tim. 4v1). We cannot continue with the sinful habits of the old life and so must turn from them now in the present. Then Paul returns naturally to the first coming, using negative and positive aspects concerning salvation; 'he gave himself for us', not just to secure our forgiveness but 'to redeem us from (negatively) all iniquity and purify (positively) for himself a people who are his very own, eager to do what is good'. Paul uses here OT language of the exodus and Israel's redemption from Egypt to be God's people. See in the LXX Ex. 19v5; Deut. 7v6; 14v2; 26v18; Ezk. 37v23 – where the Deuteronomy texts reflect the same concern for holiness as here.⁴ Again, the phrase 'zealot of good works' may allude to the reference in Deut. 26v18 'a peculiar people...to keep his commands'. – or reflect the redemption from lawlessness that Christ's death achieves for us here. What his first coming was to achieve, his second will test or review.

Our redemption is from sin to live as Paul has presented earlier in the chapter. Older men are to be dignified and mature, older women reverent and teachers of the young, younger women are to be good wives and mothers and the young men, self-controlled; Titus must be a good model and slaves conscientious and honest. We renounce sinful ways and actions because Christ came to deliver us from all of that and to purify us to be his people and we must live also in the light of the appearing of Christ who is coming to review our commitment to holiness. Until then they must devote themselves to good works – an emphasis throughout Titus, (2v7,14; 3v1, 8 – also elsewhere in Paul, 1 Cor. 3v13-14; Eph. 2v10; Col. 1v10; 2 Thess. 2v17); but it is also made clear that salvation is by God's mercy, through Christ's death for us and 'not by works of righteousness which we have done', 3v5.

Summary

¹ Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, p.422.

² Witherington 111, *Letters and Homilies for Hellenized Christians*, Vol.1: *A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary on Titus, 1-2 Timothy and 1-3 John*, p. 143.

³ Witherington reminds us also that in pagan inscriptions the phrase 'God and Saviour' is generally used to designate the one person, the emperor or king, whether Ptolemy 11 or Julius Caesar. Again he points out that nowhere in the NT do we read of the *epiphaneia* of God the Father. Witherington 111, *Letters and Homilies for Hellenized Christians*, Vol.1: *A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary on Titus, 1-2 Timothy and 1-3 John*, p. 146.

⁴ Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, p. 328.

So we are reminded here that God does everything in his time. The comings of Christ (both of them) have not only been Divinely Planned but Divinely Timed. Both comings have been highlighted and we are living between the times. How then were the Christians at Crete to live between the times and how are we to live? In the letter Paul has given us glimpses of THE CRETAN CULTURE, what were the national characteristics of the Cretans in Titus' time. We noted in 1v12 how Epimenides described the inhabitants of the island as 'evil beasts and slow bellies,' or 'lazy gluttons, liars'. So considering the letter overall, the Cretans were a society marked by lying, greedy and sensual, gluttons (1:12), drunkards (1:7, 2:3), insubordinate (2:5, 2:9, 3:1), self-indulgent (1:8, 2:2, 5, 6). Our own society can be not much different from this. But Paul has been calling for a godly mission lifestyle to mark the CRETAN CHRISTIANS in 2v1-10, older men; older women; younger women; younger men and slaves in the household. Three times in these verses Paul has stressed his concern for our mission witness to the non-Christian world, (v5, 8,10).

This is how we are to live between the times. Our lives are to be attractive. This is what will tell in this post modern age. What people see is what will matter. But why should we live like this - why try? Clearly because of THE CRETAN CHRIST – his first coming; his second coming. Paul emphasises here that Christ came not to save us from hell but from sin. For the sake of the Mission of God and because of all the he has done for us in Christ, we are to live between the times, in holiness, 'zealous of good works' expecting his second coming to review our commitment to him...

Affirmations for All from Titus

In v15 Paul emphasises that the lifestyle set out in v1-10 and the motivation in what God and Christ have done for us, all the teaching which brings spiritual health (v1) are to be stressed. The imperative present is used three times and Titus is exhorted to 'keep on speaking' these things, to continue to encourage the believers to respond to the challenge of what has been done for them and not to fail to rebuke them if they are careless and neglectful 'with all authority' – not just because he is Paul's delegate, but because he is calling for a response to what God has done. No-one was to disregard or resist this teaching – and as we shall see in ch3 the opening verses imply that the Cretans were marked with a restlessness particularly to Roman authority. So they above all must be obedient to God.

TITUS 3v1-15 Christian Duty in Public Life

Chapter 1 and 2 outlined Duty in the Church and Duty in the Home; now Paul focuses upon the Cretan Christian community's Duty in the World, or society. Paul's methodology follows the same pattern as in chapter 2, ethical instruction based upon theological truth revealing practical obligation. So Christian duty is grounded upon a Christian doctrine which emphasises the full purpose of salvation. They have a strong motivation – because of what God has done for them.

What Titus Must Do

'Remind the people'. Another imperative for Titus as *la,lei lalei* 'speak' in 2v1,15. The verb makes clear that the Christian community on Crete had already been taught these things. The present tense here would mean that there is need for a continual emphasis. Jesus also had to do this, Matt.16v9. As far as we are concerned, often we have to take time to make the 'old' truths new and the forgotten truths fresh. The pronoun *autou,j autous* 'them' means surely the believers generally. The context (2v15) suggests that the word should not be limited to Jewish Christians¹ or slaves (2v9-10)². The command is followed by a number of infinitives. So the chapter opens in a single Greek sentence (v1-2) where Titus was to remind the Christian community of their witness, first before the rulers or authorities³ (v1), then with everybody in general (v2).

¹ Quinn, *The Letter to Titus*, p.182-185.

² P. Trummer, *Die Paulustradition der Pastoralbriefe*, BBET, 8 Frankfurt: P. Lang, 1978, p. 143, 240.

³ For Marshall, the two nouns together cover all possibilities, governmental officials, imperial, national or local, *The Pastoral Epistles*, p.300-301.

What the Cretan Christians Ought to Do

Paul begins with their relationships with rulers. He knows the turbulent character of the Cretans. Crete had been subjugated by Rome in 67 BC and since then was continually restless. They were 'to be submissive', 'to be obedient', with this second verb still pointing back to the authorities. The first can refer to recognition of an authority and the second the outcome in actual obedience, the concrete reality. But of course they need not forget Acts 5v29. In addition, they were not to be law-abiding only but to be public spirited as well, to 'be ready'. The emphasis on 'whatever is good', for Stott, 'not only clarifies our responsibility but limits it. We cannot co-operate with the state if it reverses its God-given duty, promoting evil instead of punishing it, and opposing good instead of rewarding it'.¹ Yet here the emphasis appears to be on being ready for any 'good work' and by the use of *pa/n pan* 'any' clearly goes beyond just public civil actions.

Paul focuses upon relationships with others in general in the community. This is clear as he speaks of 'no-one, all men'. Paul highlights four social attitudes, two negative, two positive. They were to slander no-one (see also 1 Tim. 6v4; 2 Tim. 3v2) and avoid quarrels - see 3v9). So they were not to speak against, nor fight against others. This means that they must be neither offensive nor argumentative in speech or behaviour. Positively, they were to be 'peaceable' and gracious – both required also of elders (1 Tim. 3v3). Then lastly, they were to manifest 'gentleness' toward all people, involving humility, courtesy, or consideration. One is reminded of the characteristics of Christ so that Paul could appeal to the Corinthians 'by the gentleness and meekness of Christ' (2 Cor. 10v1). This is the mission lifestyle which will impact others.

Further Comment

We have noted that this emphasis has already been made in the epistle (1v16; 2v14) – Mounce in fact considers that these references to good works tie the whole epistle together.² Here there is really a challenge to adopt this approach generally before everyone, government officials or others and of course to see to it that your Christian lifestyle is really being manifest in practical ways.³ Are we 'ready' for this? It is so important in the ongoing mission of God. There is also a likely contrast to the lifestyle of the false teachers, 1v16, who were 'unfit for doing anything good'. In the context the believers' lifestyle is spelled out in what follows – how they can commend their faith.

Because of What God has Done

Paul now shows why he advocates these things – 'because' (*ga,r gar*) omitted by NIV. 'We ourselves were once anti-social...but God saved us'. Here we find the same approach as in chapter 2v1-14. Believers must adopt a certain lifestyle because of what God has done for them. We will see that once they were not very nice people to know as we will see (v3), but God saved them.

Paul now gives a comprehensive but concise and typical⁴ account of salvation in two Greek sentences, first what they were and then what they had become through grace. Everything hinges upon the main verb in the section, 'he saved us'.

Their Fallenness Led to His Kindness

Paul actually includes himself and Titus here with all men. Is there a listing of seven vices, following the seven virtues of v1-2? 'We ourselves were once foolish, disobedient' The adverb *pote tote* means 'formally, at one time'. 'Foolish' or *avno,htoi anoētoi* means ignorant of God, without spiritual

¹ Stott, *The Message of 1 Timothy and Titus*, p.199.

² Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, p.445.

³ Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, p.302.

⁴ Towner makes this point. 'The statement is very Pauline in thought and language. It denies the role of human effort in salvation, describing it rather as God's work, mediated by the Holy Spirit, producing a justification grounded in his grace'. Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, p.775.

understanding, with the adjective ‘disobedient’ some suggest forming a contrast to the obedience asked of the Christian community. But here their disobedience must be seen as towards God, Tit. 1v16 – a rejection of God’s authority over them. They were also ‘deceived’, astray in their thinking and convictions, the sense this participle carries elsewhere in the Letters to Timothy and Titus, i.e., 2 Tim. 3v13. The account of their former life continues with their enslavement to ‘all kinds of’, (Gk. *poiki,loj poikilos*), passions, a word which can have a neutral sense but normally is used of evil desires, (see 2v12; 1 Tim. 6v9; 2 Tim. 3v6) and ‘pleasures’, *h`donai/j hēdonais*, which should also be taken with a negative meaning here.

The vice list ends with four forms of wickedness that sum up their attitude and relationship with others. The first two are inner attitudes, feelings of malice, wishing people harm, and envy, the mental inner seething of dissatisfaction because of those who have what they desire. These attitudes were expressed outwardly in being hateful, in the sense of being detestable¹, and also hostile in one’s relationships with others. But the emphasis that Paul wants to underline is that when we were so evil God changed us!

It should be obvious that they could not save themselves. This of course is one of the major delusions of the modern age, the teaching that salvation comes not from without (someone else coming to our rescue) but within (discovering yourself and your own resources). Paul here makes clear that this is not the case. The fourth faithful saying (see v8) in the Letters to Timothy and Titus may be understood as beginning here.² The source of salvation is certainly not in us (v3) but in the kindness and the love of God, which is brought to us through the Lord Jesus and effectually by the operation of the Holy Spirit. God’s mercy is extended to the helpless who cannot save themselves and as we will see shortly, Paul writes of God’s justifying grace, which reaches out to the guilty and undeserving. The faith of believers is not mentioned until v8. This is not unexpected as the emphasis is upon what God himself has done, through Jesus Christ and the regenerating, renewing work of the Holy Spirit.

Mounce in fact advocates one further clarification which he considers is ‘almost universally missed’, namely, that the whole passage v4-7 does not refer to the time when a person believes, but focuses upon the saving event which ‘appeared’ and on God’s intentions. The verses are not about the appropriation of salvation by the individual believer; this is indicated by the use of plural pronouns and the purpose clause using *i[na hina* in v7, rather than the indicative, i.e. ‘in order that we might be justified...heirs’.³

The word for ‘kindness’ sometimes is used for human kindness, but more often it signifies the goodness of God towards men, (Rom. 2v4; 9v23; 11v22; Eph. 2v7). This suits the context here being used along with *filanqrwpi,a philanthrōpia*, which can be understood in its etymological sense as love for people in general.

This goodness and love of God our saviour ‘appeared’. The ‘epiphany’ (2v11-14; 1 Tim.6v14) is used again but here it is the goodness and love of God appeared – the emphasis is more focussed on God than on Christ as has been suggested above – theological rather than Christological. Also Paul may be contrasting the virtues that ought to mark the emperor – the words are said to belong to the

¹ The word *stughtoī, stugētoi* is found only here in the NT. Mounce suggests that here the passive sense is being used i.e., detestable, loathsome, rather than the active sense of hating God or people, because of the presence also of the next description, ‘hating one another’, *Pastoral Epistles*, p.446.

² It can be acknowledged that it is an open question where the Faithful Saying in Titus 3 begins. It may be with v3, the revelation of our need for God’s initiative – although Knight considers that this is ruled out by the introductory words which tie it to v2. Also v3 is a separate sentence from v4-7. He points to the *de de* of v4 which ‘carry’ the reader from v3 to the saying and the evidence of Codex Sinaiticus which separates v4 from 3. Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles: a Commentary on the Greek Text*, p. 347-350.

³ Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, p.438.

worship of the Imperial cult¹ and appear in other descriptions of rulers and pagan gods.² However, it is in God alone as saviour that true goodness and love for men are really revealed. But how did we receive that salvation?

Our Hopelessness Led to His Fullness

Here at v5 we reach the heart of Paul's theological statement – 'God saves believers not because they were deserving but because he is a merciful God'.³

First Paul writes negatively. It came not through any righteousness of ours. Human effort is ruled out. 'Not because of works of righteous which we have done' (this is a recurring theme in Paul, Rom. 3v21-28; 4v2-6; Gal. 2v16; Eph. 2v8-9; Phil. 3v9; see also 2 Tim.1v9). The phrase *ouk ex ergōn* 'not from works', fits more easily with the concept of a work's righteousness than any 'badges' of Judaism proposed in New Perspective ideas.⁴ Paul is writing of 'an unqualified exclusion of human effort, not just in any Jewish sense'.⁵ The concept of hopelessness is truly here. Secondly, the positive aspects: It was not through any righteousness of ours, but⁶ it was through God's mercy. Knight points out that *ev,leoj eleos* is used. Here is found the origin and basis of our salvation.

From the why of mercy now we have the how, the fullness of what God has done in his mercy.⁷ This salvation came through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit. All three nouns, washing, rebirth, renewal, follow the prepositional phrase *dia. dia*. Some will try to advocate that there are two operations with the renewing of the Holy Spirit to follow the earlier blessings. But the use of one preposition may be taken to indicate a single complex experience or event initiated by the Holy Spirit in regeneration. So while the term *avvnakai,vwsij avakainōsis* can be found again in Rom.12v2, for the 'renewing of the mind', here it must be interpreted as a once-for-all renewal as part of initial conversion.

Again, for some the reference to 'washing' is taken to apply to the rite of baptism⁸. It is true that in the NT there is a close relationship between repentance and baptism but baptism is not taught or understood as a means of salvation/regeneration. Especially here in this passage the whole emphasis, rather than focussing upon man and what he might do in response to the proclamation of the good news, is upon God and the work he does in us 'through the Holy Spirit'. One should note that the word *loutro,n loutron* 'washing' has a variety of uses in the NT; ordinary washing (Matt. 6v17; Lk. 5v2; Acts 16v33; 1 Tim. 5v10; 2 Pet. 2v22); ritual cleansing (Matt. 15v2; 27v24; Lk. 11v38; Mk. 7v3-4; Acts 9v37; Heb. 6v2; 9v10) and can also describe an inner cleansing apart from any ritual act (Eph. 5v25-27; Rev. 7v14; 22v14) and so here in Tit. 3v5. The teaching here would call to mind the new covenant promises of Ezk.36v25-27 which combine the images of sprinkling with water, cleansing, inner renewal of the heart and the gift of the Holy Spirit. No doubt in the NT at conversion, a person's repentance would be followed by baptism with its particular symbolism which acted out the total spiritual cleansing and rebirth publically (Acts 22v16). But as Mounce maintains, 'It does an injustice to Paul's theology and that of the PE to view baptism as a means of salvation'.⁹ God in conversion, gives the Holy Spirit, cleansing the heart by faith, Acts 15v8-9.

¹ Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, p.778, fn. 33.

² Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, p.447.

³ Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, p.447.

⁴ See e.g. Cranfield, in *On Romans and Other New Testament Essays*, "'The Works of the Law' in the Epistle to the Romans", p.15ff and the discussion of the law and the New Perspective in 1 Timothy, p. 48-51.

⁵ Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, p.779.

⁶ Paul uses the adversative particle *avlla*, to affirm the contrast with the previous statement.

⁷ Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, p.448.

⁸ J.H.Bernard, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 1899 Repr. Thornapple Commentaries, Grand Rapids, MI, Baker, 1980, p.178; Quinn, *The Letter to Titus*, p.217

⁹ Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, p.439.

Now Paul refers to the role of Christ in the fulfilment of the promise. 'Poured out ...through Jesus Christ'. This is high Christology. The salvation event and the giving of the Holy Spirit is a kind of co-action of God and Christ. The use of saviour here (v6) brings into focus the redemption wrought by Christ on the cross (2v13-14). We are also reminded of the fact that it is the exalted Jesus who gives the promised Holy Spirit (Acts 2v33, 38). The word *plousi,wj plousiōs* 'richly' reminds us of how greatly God has blessed us (1 Tim. 6v17; 2 Pet.1v11).

In v7 we are also justified (a common Pauline¹ statement, Rom. 3v24) and made heirs, (again, see Rom. 8v15-17; Gal. 4v4-7). Hopelessness has truly given way to fullness. The status has already been conferred. It is 'by his grace' and the emphatic demonstrative pronoun *evkei,nou ekeinou*, the grace 'of that one', points back to Christ the antecedent in v6. We should note that all the events of v4-7 are coincidental, saved/washed/renewed/justified/heirs(adoption)/given assurance that believers are in process² of coming into the fullness of the experience of eternal life, i.e. an unclouded fellowship with God.

The real message is of course that because of what God has done for us we cannot live as once we did (v3), but as Paul outlined in 3v1-2. This becomes clear in v8. Verse 3-7 is given as the motivation to take seriously the commands of v1-2.

Our Readiness because of his Graciousness

Verse 8 gives us a 'Faithful Saying'. As has been pointed out, there are five in the Letters to Timothy and Titus and this is the only one in Titus. As noted above, the formula can be taken as referring back to possibly v3-7, the two previous Greek sentences, for the majority of scholars, more likely v4-7. The reference to 'good works' and 'these things' in v8 forms a link with v1 and 3v9, the transition back to Titus, 'but...you avoid', second person singular, indicates the beginning of a new section.

Paul now emphasises that 'those who believe in God', the 'us' in v5, have a responsibility in the ongoing mission of God through their witness as the Christian community on Crete. Titus is urged to make sure (see below) that the believers understand the implications of the theology that has been set before them. Mounce explains that the perfect tense 'have believed' has the full sense of a completed action which has continuing obligations.³

Paul returns to the use of *bou,lomai, boulomai*, 'I want' or 'I desire' which should be taken its authoritative sense as in 1 Tim.2v8; 5v14. This is clearly the case here especially when the word is linked to the strong *diabebaiou/sqai(diabebaiousthai*, which Mounce translates 'to insist emphatically'⁴ upon. The teaching has a status of an apostolic edict. 'These things' which Titus is to stress could include both the lifestyle of v1-2 and the theological motivation upon which it is based. It is not likely that the teaching of ch. 2 is meant since 2v15 already serves as the boundary for that teaching.

Towner considers that 'those who have believed in God' indicate that the Christian community in Crete falls into the character of the 'newborn'. He points out that much of the teaching in the letter could be seen as the principles of elementary Christianity⁵. It is possible, as already suggested, that the community may not have a long history behind them and this kind of teaching about lifestyle is

¹ Some will try to question that the language is truly Pauline because of the precise wording. Why does Paul not speak of 'justification by faith' here? But Paul can write of justification without mentioning faith (see 1 Cor. 6v11) and believing is mentioned in the context of the passage, v8.

² Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, p.789.

³ Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, p.452.

⁴ Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, p.452.

⁵ Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, p.791.

what one would expect. They must be careful – fronti,zw *phrontizō* means ‘make it their intention’ or ‘set their mind upon’ devoting themselves to good deeds – a reminder of the teaching in 3v1. The phrase ‘These things’ is best interpreted as applying to the immediate antecedent just referred to. The *kalw/n e;rgwn kalōn ergōn* or good deeds are described using two adjectives, the first closely linked, *kala. kala*, affirming the value of these actions – they are ‘excellent’ and also ‘profitable’ – they are making an influence - for men, which reminds us of the ‘everyone’ of 3v2. It is in living out their faith in commitment to others, manifesting something of God’s own ‘kindness and love’ (3v4), that they can make an impact and be involved in the ongoing mission of God in Crete. So we also, in our own culture.

Final Personal Messages to Titus

He has already been urged to insist upon certain things (2v15; 3v8); now in his teaching he must avoid certain things. First, four things are highlighted.

He is to avoid profitless controversy

First, he must avoid foolish questions¹, those which were speculative and actually stupid (1Tim.4v7; 2Tim.2v23); also those fascinations like the false teachers of 1 Timothy 1 with ‘genealogies’ which were involved fanciful stories or speculations concerning various ancient worthies (see 1 Tim. 1v4); the last two refer to the chaos, strife, (1 Tim.6v4) and discord (battles, 2 Cor. 7v5; Jas. 4v1) produced by these quarrels about the interpretation of the law. To get involved with such teachers and teaching was ‘unprofitable’ (a deliberate contrast to v8 ‘profitable’) and fruitless. The verb *perii<sta,nai periistanai* in the middle voice has the idea of ‘go around so as to avoid’ or to ‘shun’.² Good advice.

He is to deal with contentious people.

Here Paul sets out a corrective process that involves three stages. Note it was aimed at the recovery of the individual.

He must confront a divisive person once and then a second time. The term *ai`retikoj hairesitikos* does not yet have its later technical meaning of ‘heretic’ but here refers to the divisiveness caused by false teaching or practice. The noun *nouqesi,a nouthesia* ‘warning’ no doubt includes the idea of admonition, instruction, correction with the genuine desire to recover the individual as in 2 Tim. 2v25-26. Only after the second attempt (see also Matt.18v15-17) if the divisive person remains unrepentant and refuses the opportunity of forgiveness and restoration, is he to be rejected. ‘Have nothing to do with him’. Whether this refers to a formal excommunication (1 Tim.1v20) or to social ostracism (Rom. 16v17) is not made plain. But to repudiate him is right, for the community needs to be protected from such influence (note Tit. 1v11). After two warnings and two steadfast refusals to listen to Titus you may be sure that such a person is warped - the perfect tense of *evkstre,fw* points to the fixed state of this condition, having a distorted mind – and so ‘keeps on sinning’ (here Paul employs the present tense for in spite of knowledge of error they continue); such people are plainly guilty and self-condemned.

He must join Paul at Nicapolis and send Zenas and Apollos on their way.

The kind of things mentioned here are similar to the closing sections of other Pauline letters, Rom. 16v1-23; 1 Cor. 16v1-24; Col. 4v7-18; Phm. 23-24. It is easier to accept that these details situate the letter within the historical context of Paul’s ministry rather than seeking to come to terms with them as having a pseudepigraphical fictive character to give the epistle a ‘Pauline look’ to impress a third generation of readers!

Paul intends to replace Titus with other members of his team, either Artemas or Tychicus. We do know a little about the second, namely Tychicus (Acts 20v4; Eph. 6v21; Col. 4v7; 2 Tim. 4v12). Was

¹ The phrase is used elsewhere of the false teachers (1 Tim.1v3-7; 2Tim.2v23). So, Paul is thinking of his opponents, not people in general. Note they seem to be active in both Ephesus and Crete.

² Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, p.453.

Artemas (otherwise unknown to us¹) the one finally chosen to take over from Titus as in 2 Timothy 4v12 Tychicus is sent to Ephesus, possibly to relieve Timothy? Once his replacement arrives and Titus fulfilled Paul's instructions for him in ministry, he was to endeavour (the verb is *spoudazō*, 'do your best') to meet Paul in Nicapolis. Most see the reference to the large city on the west coast of Achaia. It was two hundred miles across the Adriatic Sea to Brindisi, Italy where the Via Appia would take travellers on to Rome². Spending the winter in this busy port town would provide many opportunities for making the mission message of the Gospel known to others similarly laid up there. The use of 'there' (*evkei/ ekei*) and not 'here', leads Mounce³ to understand that Paul had not yet arrived in Nicapolis. It might still be midsummer when Paul was writing, which would allow Titus time to fulfill his ministry in Crete and then travel there. So perhaps Paul was still in Macedonia. In 2 Timothy 4v10 Titus is said to have gone to Dalmatia, which is north by land from Nicapolis.

He must learn to meet practical need and see 'our people' dedicated to good works.

The reference in v13 to 'send' Zenas and Apollos promptly on their journey suggests that they had carried the letter to Titus in Crete and needed the necessary supplies to return or go on their way. There is a play on the words here – the verb *spoudazō* in v12 is now followed by the cognate adverb *spoudai, wj spoudaiōs* 'do your best' for them. Titus must help them in practical ways so that they may have all that they needed. He is to be an example of the hospitality expected of all believers in the first century ((Rom. 15v24; 1 Cor. 16v6, 11; 2 Cor. 1v16; 3 Jn.6). In fact it appears that Paul in v14 is suggesting that their arrival will give opportunity for the whole Christian community, 'our people' to be involved. Exactly the same language is used as in 3v8 'to maintain good works'. In fact it is suggested that this is the theme of the epistle – the practical necessity of good deeds (Titus 1v16; 2v7, 14; and 3v8). The theological emphases are there to motivate to sacrificial service, a godly lifestyle.

So the arrival of these men will give to the believers the opportunity to become practically involved in meeting urgent needs – a learning experience for the future. The point is that this experience of practical ministry was to lead to a lifetime of such service. Thus their lives can be fruitful for God, (see also Eph. 5v9; Col. 1v6,10). The final call is for them to recognise that Christianity must be practical and Christians must be fruitful – if they are to be really useful in the mission of God.

Final greeting and benediction

In 3v15 Paul encourages Titus by stressing the fact that 'everyone with me' is remembering him – important in the lonely hour. Do we also engage in this type of intercession? The apostle also asks Titus to greet those who love him in the Cretan community.

To all he sends a genuine prayer-wish that they may know much of God's enabling grace for the mission lifestyle that Paul has set before them. The final plural *pa,ntwn pantōn* indicates again that the teaching in the letter is essentially for the whole community.⁴ Of course, also for us.

2 TIMOTHY

The Nature and Setting of 2 Timothy

Paul's two letters to Timothy and the letter to Titus were among the last things Paul wrote before his death. We need to constantly remind ourselves that this second letter to Timothy did not come from

¹ Lock mentions a late tradition that he was one of the seventy disciples, p. 158. His name is derived from the Greek goddess Artemis, the patron god of Ephesus (Acts 19v24-35).

² This Nicapolis was founded by Augustus after his defeat of Mark Antony at Actium in 31B.C. and the name means 'city of victory'. Because of the meaning of the name and its history, it was popular as a name and in fact, seven cities in the ancient world are so-called. But most scholars are satisfied to accept that Paul refers to Nicapolis in Epirus, on the coast of Achaia.

³ Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, p.458.

⁴ Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, p.460.

the pastor's study, but from some 'dismal underground dungeon with a hole in the ceiling for light and air'.¹ Paul is a 'prisoner' (2 Tim. 1v8); in chains (2 Tim. 1v16; 2v9); cold, with little to occupy him (2 Tim. 4v13); with his preliminary hearing over (2 Tim. 4v16-17) expecting at any moment his final trial and 'departure' (2 Tim. 4v6-8). Paul is enduring his second Roman imprisonment (2 Tim. 1v17). Yet his concerns are not for himself but for the preservation of the truth and the progress of the gospel i.e., the continuance of the mission of God. Timothy is the one who must faithfully carry on the work (2 Tim. 1v6-8; 13-14; 2v1-2; 14-15; 3v14; 4v1-2, 5). Thus the letter reflects Paul's triumph over real suffering (he is 'the Lord's prisoner' and 'the word of God is not bound' although he is; to suffer death with him is to live and reign with him, 2 Tim. 1v8; 2v9, 11-12). Therefore here we have a very moving personal letter, with a genuine human touch, expressing a note of victory. With this Letter having such personal and heartfelt characteristics, how could one be persuaded that it be accepted as pseudonymous?

The approximate time in the writing of 2 Timothy can be traced in this way:

Paul is released from his Acts 28 imprisonment after which he travels to Crete and Ephesus (1 Tim. 1:3; Tit. 1:5). Titus is left behind in Crete and Timothy in Ephesus.

Did he go on to Colosse to Philemon as he had planned – Phm.22?

He travels to Macedonia (visited Philippi, Phil. 2v24) and there he writes 1 Timothy and Titus.

In Tit. 3v12 he revealed to Titus that he planned to winter in Nicopolis on the Adriatic Coast. So did he in the following spring perhaps travelling to Spain? Clement (AD96) in his letter to the Corinthians referring to Paul states, 'he went to the western limit'.²

Paul likely revisits Timothy in Ephesus, (1 Tim. 3v14-15); leaves Trophimus, who is ill, behind at the nearby port of Miletus (2 Tim. 4v20); goes on to Troas, where he stays with Carpus and left behind the cloak and the books, (2 Tim. 4v13).

He now sets out for Corinth where Erastus remained (2 Tim. 4v20; Rom. 16v23) and leaves for Rome. It appears that the Neronian persecution has broken out and Paul is rearrested, either on the way or in the city.

Paul writes 2 Timothy during his final imprisonment. It is clear that his martyrdom is imminent.

There is no testimony from the Early Church that challenges a release from the house arrest of Acts 28v30-31 and second imprisonment. In fact any that we do have, 1 Clement, Muratorian Canon, Eusebius, the accepted tradition, are supportive.

This was a critical time. Heresy was still on the increase in spite of all that Paul had written in 1 Timothy. Bishop Handley Moule as was noted earlier claimed that 'Christianity... trembled *humanly speaking* on the verge of annihilation'.³ As Paul suffers in prison he writes a very personal letter to young Timothy and through him, his last instruction to the church. He reminds Timothy that the gospel of Jesus Christ is now committed to *him*. He was a crucial young leader for the furtherance of the mission of God in the future.

Critical times have arrived for the truth, for the gospel, in both the West and the East, none more so than at the moment. Who will 'not be ashamed' of the mission message, 'hold fast', 'preach the word'

¹ Hendriksen, *1 & 11 Timothy and Titus*, p.234.

² *1 Clement* 5:5-7, translated by H. Bettenson, ed. and tr. *The Early Christian Fathers*, London, 1956, p.52. Stott makes the point that Clement may be referring to Italy, but writes, 'as allusion to Gaul or Spain – or even Britain (as some have suggested) – seems more likely', J.R.W. Stott, *Guard the Gospel: the Message of 2 Timothy*, p. 17. The Muratorian Canon (AD 180) also has a similar reference to Paul's release and journey to Spain. See D.J. Theron, *Evidence of Tradition*, Grand Rapids, Baker Book House, 1958, p.109. Finally, Eusebius also in the fourth century writes of Paul's release and second imprisonment, *Historia Ecclesiastica*, ii. 22.2. See H.K. Lake, and J.E.L. Oulton, Eds. and Tr., 1926-32, 'Eusebius' *The Ecclesiastical History*, 2 vols. Loeb Classical Library. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.

³ C.G.H. Moule, *The Second Epistle to Timothy*, Short Devotional Studies on the Dying Letter of St. Paul, Religious Tract Society, 1905, p.18, cited in Stott, *Guard the Gospel: the Message of 2 Timothy*, p. 21.

and 'commit the truth to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also' (2 Tim. 1v8; 13; 2v1-2; 4v1-2)?

Outline of 2 Timothy:

One can follow Stott¹ in our attempt to outline the book. He has focussed upon the charge given to Timothy:

Chapter 1	A Charge to Stand for the Gospel – Hold on to it.	1:8,13.
Chapter 2	A Charge to Faithfully Hand on and to Suffer for the Gospel	2:2, 12
Chapter 3	A Charge to Continue in the Gospel	3:12, 14
Chapter 4	A Charge to Preach the Gospel	4:1-2

Hendriksen's² outline also focuses upon upholding and sharing the truth:

Chapter 1 HOLD ON TO IT

A - As Lois and Eunice did.

B – As I do – never ashamed of the gospel

C – As Onesiphorus - not ashamed of my chain.

'Stir into full flame the gift of God' v6

'Do not be ashamed' v12,16

'Hold on to...the sound words' v13

'That precious deposit guard' v14

Chapter 2 TEACH IT

A – It brings great rewards and is glorious in content.

B – Vain disputes, on the contrary, serve no useful purpose

'The things which you have heard...entrust to faithful men...able to teach others also' v2

'Suffer hardship along with (us)' v9

'The Lord will give you understanding in all things' v14

'A servant of the Lord must be...qualified to teach' v24

Chapter 3 ABIDE IN IT

A – Enemies will arise, who have its form, not its power

B - Knowing that it is based on the sacred writings as you learned from trustworthy persons

'Grievous seasons will come' v1

'But you have followed my teaching, conduct, purpose' v10

'Continue in the things which you have learned' v14

Chapter 4 PREACH IT

A – In season, out of season, be faithful, for apostasy is coming. Remain faithful as I am about to set sail

B – personal information.

'I charge you' v1

¹ Stott, *Guard the Gospel: the Message of 2 Timothy*, p. 21.

² Hendriksen, *1 & 11 Timothy and Titus*, p 216-222.

‘Preach (Herald) the word’ v2

‘Do the work of an evangelist: your duties as a minister discharge to the full’ v5

These approaches to summarising this Letter are helpful and provide insights into the purpose of Paul in writing as he did. They have been very useful in seeking to give a lead in how to set out the overall theme and enable us to understand what were Paul’s intentions.

2 Timothy 1v1-18 Hold Fast to the Mission Message – Do not be Ashamed of it

The Calling Paul Accepts v1-2

These verses, consisting of a single Greek sentence, are based on the customary structure of a Greco-Roman letter – the sender’s name, the recipient and the greeting, now, of course, Christianised. Here it is focussed upon God’s imprisoned servant.

Paul begins by emphasising **The Nature of His Position**. He was ‘an apostle’. An apostle was one sent by Christ as a witness to act and write on his behalf¹. Thus he had authority, was an agent of revelation (Eph.3v5; Rom.16v25-27), involved in the mission of God to make known the Gospel (2 Tim.1v11; 1 Tim. 1v11-16; 2v7). Why sound this note of authority as he writes to his personal friend and colleague Timothy? We must remember that Paul is writing not just to his younger friend but through him to the believers a message which was meant to clearly emphasise, although he was absent, Paul’s authority (2 Tim. 2v14; 4v22). Also, the reminder that in being an apostle, and thus an agent of revelation, emphasised the fact that Paul’s gospel had come from God. Timothy therefore is being encouraged not to be ashamed of it.

But note **The Origin of His Appointment** ‘by the will of God’. This is the first of two prepositional phrases which add further light on aspects of his apostleship. He did not simply choose to be an apostle but was such by divine appointment. This statement is found in other Pauline salutations (1 Cor. 1v1; 2 Cor. 1v1; Eph. 1v1; Col. 1v1. The first epistle has ‘according to the command *evpitagh*, *epitagē* of God’, 1 Tim.1v1); here it is *dia qelh,matoj qeou/ dia thelēmatos theou* ‘by/through to the will of God’. In life and ministry, we must always seek to be in the will of God, to live by the command of God. Although our calling may not have been as dramatic as that of Paul’s, (Acts 22v12-16), have we lost sight of the fact that we also should always be seeking to know the will of God?

The second prepositional phrase which uses *kata*. *kata* can be interpreted as emphasising **The Purpose of His Call**, ‘according to the promise of life in Christ’. This is really a summary of Paul’s Gospel and his mission mandate.² For Knight it is the object and intention of Paul’s apostleship³. The theme of the promises is the Messianic salvation foretold by God through the prophets in the past and now announced in Paul’s gospel of eternal life. What a message he has! His calling was to proclaim eternal life and present the Christ who can impart it to believers. This calling Paul had accepted. Note that ‘in Christ Jesus’, is a typical Pauline phrase (see e.g., Rom. 3v24; 8v39) and it is found 72 times; elsewhere there are 2 uses in 1 Peter. The phrase is 9 times in the Letters to Timothy and Titus, in fact, 7 times in 2 Tim. In Tit. 1v1-3, the parallel salutation, God is identified as the one who is the source of the promise and as here Christ is the channel, either in a ‘mystical sense’ = given through union with him, or in an ‘instrumental’ sense as the one through whom God’s saving plan is effected. This eternal life can be imparted right now and experienced on into the future (1 Tim. 4v8). What a mission we have to announce this message!

Paul also writes of **The Closeness of His Relationship** with Timothy, ‘my beloved son’. Paul was not Timothy’s natural but spiritual father. The term ‘beloved’ certainly emphasises intimacy and approval

¹ Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, p 363.

² Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, p.441.

³ Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, p 364.

more than the greetings in 1 Tim.2v2; Tit. 1v4. Paul had earlier used this phrase of Timothy in 1 Cor. 4v17, also adding there the term 'faithful'. It appears that when Paul first preached the good news in Lystra (Acts 14v6-7) Timothy effectively heard and a few years later had so grown spiritually that he was well thought of by all the brethren in Lystra and Iconium (Acts 16v1-2). We should note that Paul did not forget those who were converted through him.

He further expresses **The Prayerful Nature of His Greeting**. He writes to Timothy of 'grace, mercy and peace'. This greeting, identical to that of 1 Timothy, has three elements, each one mentioned again in the present letter, 'grace' (1v9;2v1; 4v22); 'mercy' (1v16,18) and 'peace' (2v22). It is a heart-felt prayer that God will sustain Timothy. 'Grace' to enable and strengthen; 'mercy' that he will know God's compassion and kindness and 'peace' that he may face life's changing experiences and the challenges of ministry with acceptance, calmness and tranquillity.

Further Comment

It is clear as Mounce points out that the tone of the salutation in 2 Timothy is more personal compared with the more authoritarian salutation in 1 Timothy. So although the note of authority is still present, the salutation sets the stage for a personal letter.¹ For Marshall² also the whole letter is more 'personal' than 1 Timothy and it is significant for him that the personal character of the salutation is already giving evidence of this. Also he explains that commentators who assume pseudonymity hold that the highlighting of Paul's apostleship and the close relationship of Timothy to him is actually to stress the apostolic commission of Timothy himself. For Marshall, these points however do not require a Post-Pauline setting and, in his opinion, it is possible that the letter is intended for church leaders who have received their commission from Timothy. This appears to be just about half-way to the full acceptance of the Pauline authorship of the letter. But the overall personal nature of so much in 2 Timothy, as he acknowledges, would surely point to more than just Marshall's view - allonymity, rather than pseudonymity. We have to let the great apostle be personally responsible for the teaching here.

The Colleague Paul Encourages v3-7

Paul focuses upon Timothy here at the beginning of the Letter. For the future, from a human point of view, so much depends upon him (1v13; 2v1-2, 15, 22;3v14; 4v1-5, 9, 21). What was Timothy's location? Knight points to Ephesus because of 1v18; 4v19; is Tychicus, mentioned in 4v12 the bearer of the letter? Alexander the coppersmith (4v14-15) is associated with Ephesus, 1 Tim.1v20.

Paul begins this the last of his letters also as he began almost all of them – with thanksgiving. In fact, here v3-5 is a single sentence. The heart of the passage is '**I give thanks** because...**I remember** your sincere faith'. See v3,4,5. We should note with Marshall³ that thanksgiving is missing from the other Letters to Timothy and Titus. He admits that it gives evidence of a more personal letter.

'God, whom I serve' is in the present tense. His service was not intermittent but constant. Here Paul employs not the usual word for serve but *latreuō*, that used by Paul in Acts 27v23; Rom. 1v9, 25; Phil.3v3. It was employed (1) of cultic duties by priests; (2) of offering prayer, praise and worship; (3) of the whole of life as service to God, Luke 1v74. Here Paul uses it to describe his ministry in the mission of God. Paul is moving from his own faithfulness and using it as a challenge and an encouragement for Timothy to be faithful, v6-8; 13-14. Also, by the use of this cultic word and in the reference to his 'forefathers', meaning the OT fathers of the faith, is Paul reassuring the

¹ Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, p.465.

² Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, p.683-4. Another view of 2 Timothy was that it was written first, before 1 Timothy. This is the suggestion of those who in the past considered that the letters were based on Pauline fragments and the amount of personal reference here suggests that the author used up most of the genuine fragments in doing so! See B.S. Easton, *The Pastoral Epistles*, London, SCM Press, 1947.

³ Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, p.688.

congregations associated with Timothy that both he and his colleague stand in true succession to Israel, *contra* any possible claims of the false teachers?

The words expressing service 'with a clear conscience', are an expression of consistent faithfulness of life and testimony, in spite of the fact that he has been imprisoned. Here Paul claims a consciousness of transparency before God. Knight¹ explains that mankind is made in God's image and God himself is inherently known by man. So also his standards are inherently present to the human conscience (cf. Rom.1v18ff. especially v32, and then Rom. 2v15, where conscience is correlated with 'the work of the law written in their hearts').

Conscience is not an altogether reliable instrument because of the effects of sin – it can be 'weak' (1 Cor.8); 'seared' (1 Tim.4v2) or 'defiled' (Titus 1v15), but is still the moral evaluator within. Marshall² of course, makes clear that Paul is not referring to all of his life here, but the reference is to his service as an apostle. Having a clear conscience meant that when Paul drew near to talk to God, there was nothing that God needed to say to him first.

Paul prays for Timothy on every occasion in which he prays. The phrase 'night and day' refers to the two main divisions of his earthly existence. Mounce³ makes the point that Paul as a Pharisee would have regular times for prayer and this prayer schedule he would carry over into his life as a Christian. However, in those prayer times the adjective 'constantly', reflects the fervency of Paul's intercession for Timothy.

Further Comment

Marshall⁴ comments on the purpose of this kind of thanksgiving in Pauline correspondence. In his opinion it is not to offer an actual prayer (not for him possible if in fact Paul has not personally written this as Marshall's position on authorship requires!) but rather to be a 'prayer-report', to give news of Paul's interest and to bring encouragement to the readers. Other scholars will not be prepared to rule out the fact that Paul is actually praying as he writes or possibility dictates. Had he not a heart continually orientated towards God? Again, the term for prayer, *dehsij deēs/s* is 'request' or 'prayer' which suggests specific requests before God in intercession.⁵ For Timothy here, he is assured that Paul is always remembering him and is convinced of the reality of his faith. In this chapter, we learn why Paul is remembering him. Paul's exhortation to Timothy is that he may be a defender of the Gospel. 'Do not be ashamed'... 'Hold fast' (v8, 13). He is also to 'endure hardness', (2v3) and also as far as Paul is concerned to have 'carefully followed' (3v10), 'continuing' (3v14), emulating his commitment in ministry and mission.

As Paul thinks of Timothy, he recollects the moment they parted – perhaps Paul is remembering the parting which is mentioned in 1 Tim. 1v3. At that time Timothy could not hold back his tears. Paul longs to see Timothy again. It would make his joy complete. The three verses which all refer to remembering in some way reflect what Guthrie⁶ describes as 'the apostle's reminiscent mood'. Here in v5 we have the end of the long Greek sentence (v3-5) and we reach what was the reason for Paul's thankfulness regarding Timothy, namely, his faith. For Mounce⁷ Paul's purpose throughout the entire paragraph is to weave together different themes all intended to encourage Timothy.

¹ Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, p.78.

² Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, p.691.

³ Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, p.469.

⁴ Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, p.689-90.

⁵ Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, p.451.

⁶ Guthrie *The Pastoral Epistles*, p.137

⁷ Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, p.474.

His Sincere Faith.

He was converted through Paul. The word 'sincere', *avnupokri,toj anupokritos* means 'genuine, without hypocrisy'. The word *u`pokri,thj hupokritēs* is associated with Greek theatres where the actor dressed up and pretended to be someone else. When you take the place of being a Christian are you just playacting, pretending to be something you are not? Chapter 2v19 teaches that God knows our hearts and those who are really his. But reality was the quality which marked Timothy. The word 'faith' has the general New Testament and Pauline meaning of genuine trust in Christ and reliance upon God.

His Godly Upbringing.

We can never emphasise enough the importance of a godly upbringing. The most formative influence on each one of us has been our parents and our home.

Timothy's faith dwelt first in the two women in his life, his mother and grandmother. Eunice was a Christian Jewess, Acts 16v1, (was Timothy's father an unbeliever?) as was her mother Lois before her. (*ma,mmh mammē*, is used of mother and grandmother in Greek Literature but here must mean grandmother as Timothy's mother is also mentioned). Paul is convinced that Timothy like them had a faith which was a continuing spiritual reality. Marshall¹ stresses that the suggestion that the account is fictional, which a pseudonymous writing requires, is very weak.

The key was that they instructed Timothy in the scriptures (3v15, 'from a child'). DL Moody's father died at the age of 41. His mother was left with 7 children to bring up. Her neighbours encouraged her to put the family into care. 'I Trust in God' was her response. In her simple way she trained her children in the ways of the Lord. This played a significant role in the conversion of her son Dwight, who was used greatly of God. It all commenced with a godly home life and with a mother who was concerned for the spiritual well-being of her children. Have our children been in reality abandoned in a village somewhere, while we seek to acquire a higher standard of living away from the country? Have we robbed them of the joy of family life? Or have we yielded to the pressure to leave them at home because we mistakenly think that once on a Sunday is enough for them to be under the word of God?

His Special Gifts

In 1 Tim. 4v14 he was not to 'neglect' the gift; here he is to 'keep (it) in full flame, stir up the inner fire'. The word is *avnazwpurei/n avazopurein* and Mounce² suggests that it would be possible for the preposition *ana* in this compound verb to be given the full force of 'again'. So the idea could be 'rekindle', NRSV and this would suggest that Timothy had not been using his gift as he should and must begin again. But most commentators, including Mounce himself, point out that this does not appear to be the general picture in the NT of Timothy, who Paul relied upon on many occasions. Paul rather is encouraging him to keep on with what he is doing, keep his gift burning brightly, as Marshall³ also suggests. Remember Romans 12v11 – keep your spiritual fervour. Wait upon God for its constant renewal.

But what is this gift? Commentators like Knight, Fee, Marshall and Towner⁴ consider it is the gift of God's Spirit. Is it not rather that the various abilities for ministry or mission which Paul refers to elsewhere (Rom. 1v11; 12v6; 1 Cor. 1v7; 7v7; 12v4, 9, 28, 30-31) are meant? Mounce⁵ in fact considers that the reference is for Timothy 'to fan his spiritual gift of evangelism (2 Tim. 4v5) into full

¹ Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, p.695.

² Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, p.476

³ Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, p.696.

⁴ Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, p.370; Fee, *God's Empowering Presence: The Holy Spirit in the Letters of Paul*, Peabody, MA, Hendrickson Publishers, 1994, p. 785-789; Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, p.697; Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, p.457-460.

⁵ Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, p.476.

flame to do battle with the Ephesian opponents' and this would not be out of place in the letter. But overall the spiritual gift of ministry generally (not just the narrower concept of evangelism), appears to fit better in this context. As for the first suggestion - did Timothy not receive the Holy Spirit at conversion?

Regarding the laying on of hands, it is true that there were occasions in Acts where in the growth of the church when new significant stages were reached i.e., the gospel being received by Samaritans or by John's disciples (Acts 8v17-18; 19v6) the laying on of hands was mentioned in connection with the gift of the Holy Spirit, but such occasions were special and not normative for the church today. Yet this act was also common in apostolic days (Acts 6:6) and was evidence of confidence in and identification with someone's sense of calling and a means of setting a person aside for the service of God. Considered in this way, there is no problem with the earlier reference in 1 Tim. 4v14 to the elders also laying their hands on Timothy. They expressed confidence in Timothy and so did Paul.

His Divine Enabling.

Timothy mission gifting or ministry was to be exercised in the power of God through the Holy Spirit. All Timothy's weaknesses could be overcome by God's power. Note that, as with the last verse, it would be better to understand *pneu/ma pneuma* here as 'spirit', the individual's disposition rather than 'Spirit', the Holy Spirit. Yet of course these abilities are all through that same Spirit's enabling! What has been 'given to us', are spiritual abilities or qualities to be exercised in the power of the Holy Spirit.

First comes the negative, 'fear'. In 1 Cor. 16v10 it is implied that Timothy might in certain circumstances be fearful. Quite a few commentators suggest that Timothy most likely was a timid person, reluctant to take an open stand for the gospel. Mounce¹ however, claims that we cannot simply translate *dieli,aj dielias* as 'timidity' and relate it to Timothy as suggesting that he was a shy, timid person. The word means 'cowardice', the sense used in the LXX nine times and in his opinion, it is doubtful that Paul would describe his younger colleague as a coward. So for Mounce, it appears here merely as a foil to emphasise what Paul means by power. Yet the tone throughout the letter with the many occasions when Paul calls on Timothy to be faithful and stand up to the false teachers, means that Paul surely was speaking directly to him to be brave in his mission ministry.

Power is an attribute of the Holy Spirit in the NT, Luke 4v14; Acts 1v8; Rom. 15v13, 19; Eph.3v16. There is power in the fullness of the Spirit. As Towner² points out, in the context, power will enable Timothy to be bold in his witness for the truth, in spite of the threat of suffering (2 Tim. 1v8,13). Also love would be the manner in which Timothy's gifts would be exercised, love for the Lord, love for the lost, love for his fellow believers. God's Spirit would also give Timothy a soundness of judgement or the self-mastery or a self-control over one's thoughts or actions glorifying to the Lord. So there is a contrast here – it will become clear later that the opponents of the apostles and the church have a form of godliness but deny the power (3v5); but Timothy has been given power through the Holy Spirit.

His Personal Obligation.

Since God has given Timothy the spirit not of cowardice but of power, he exhorts him, 'Do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord' (v8). Is there an echo of Rom. 1v16 here – not to be ashamed of the gospel?

Knight³ points out that *kurioj kurios* (Lord) is a reference to Christ (see 1v2). He is the Sovereign Master of every believer. Often in these Letters he is so named, 1v16,18;2v7,14,19,22,24; 3v11;4v8,14,17,18,22; 1Tim.1v14. Paul is not referring to the testimony 'borne by the Lord' i.e. his

¹ Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, p.479.

² Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, p.462.

³ Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, p.372.

own death, but using the objective sense, his missional testimony 'concerning the Lord'. It is Timothy's preaching which is in view (see 1Cor.1v6).

He should also not be ashamed to associate with Paul. He had been re-arrested and put in chains and nearly all had forsaken him. The word 'prisoner' *de,smioj desmios*, usually refers to prisoners in jail, and should be accepted as the natural interpretation of 1v16; 4v6-22. Paul sees himself as 'his' (the Lord's) prisoner, not that of the emperor. 'Christ's purposes were not controlled by Rome, but in fact superintended by the emperor'.¹ Timothy should not shrink from being involved in the mission of God, proclaiming the gospel and be ready to share the same suffering as Paul.

The phrase here, 'according to the power of God', using *kata. kata*, does not mean that he should be willing to suffer for the gospel – *because* in it there is saving power, but that as Paul's young colleague as he is involved in proclaiming the message and meets opposition for doing so, he can be sure of strength *according to* the measure of the resources of might found in God himself. This fits the context well following as it does from v7. There is power from God for us to enable us in our mission witness if we seek him and depend upon him.

For Mounce² this theme of suffering ties the epistle together. Paul is not ashamed to suffer (1v12); Timothy should share as a good soldier (2v3); Paul suffers for the gospel (2v9); Timothy should note this and realise that all who live godly lives will suffer persecution (3v12); he must be prepared for this himself (4v5). Are we prepared for shame and suffering? Many of God's children have had to suffer greatly for Christ and their witness concerning him.

Mounce³ suggests v6-14 contain four basic admonitions: Remember your gift (v6-7); don't be ashamed of Paul or the gospel (its nature is outlined), but be willing to suffer for it (v8-12); hold to the gospel (v13); guard the gospel (v14). For him also, almost every word and the theology as a whole are fully Pauline and betray no indication of a non-Pauline origin. The parallelism of v9-10 will be the product of Paul's creative and Semitic mind.

The Mission Message Paul Proclaims

So the mention of the gospel (v8) leads on in v9-12 to an interpretation and exposition of its main elements and Paul's appointment to preach it and his response. The whole section is one long sentence in the Greek text. There are four occurrences of *euvaggelion euangelion* in the Letters to Timothy and Titus, 1 Tim. 1v11; here in v8, 10 and 2v8. Timothy is being encouraged to endure his suffering by remembering the greatness of the salvation he has himself experienced and is called to proclaim. The section has a balanced rhythmical form which has led some to consider that it may have been part of a hymn, but for Marshall⁴, with the content appropriate to the context and no introductory formula it seems certain that the language is that of the author. As stated by Mounce above, one can go further and affirm that surely the terminology employed and the theology expressed means that we can claim that these verses are fully Pauline. Paul sets out the truths about salvation proclaimed in the gospel:

The mission message points back to the SOURCE of Salvation – it is in God himself and is according to his eternal plan.

The gospel makes known the MEANS of Salvation – it may have been planned in eternity but is effected in time through the 'appearing of our saviour Jesus Christ'; he has 'abolished death' and brought 'life' by his death on the cross.

It reveals the BLESSINGS of salvation – life and immortality.

It also stresses the BASIS of Salvation – through God's grace and not by human works.

¹ Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, p.479.

² Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, p.474.

³ Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, p.474-475.

⁴ Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, p.700-701.

Finally, it highlights God's effectual CALL to salvation – a call by means of the proclamation of the gospel of which Paul has been appointed a preacher.

First in v9 there is the call (an aorist tense, expressing a complete act in the past) to this salvation. Knight¹ explains that *kaleō* is used in the New Testament and especially in Paul of a 'call' that is effectual i.e. of the choice of a person for salvation (Rom. 8v30; 9v11; 1 Cor.1v9; Gal. 1v6; 5v8; 1 Thess. 5v24). God calls us effectively by means of the proclamation of the gospel. Note also that here it is revealed that God calls us 'with a holy calling'. The dative *klh,sei a`gi,a| klēsei hagia* may be a dative of means (a) 'called through a holy calling' i.e. coming from a holy God; (b) a dative of interest or intention, he called us *to* a holy life; (c) a dative of quality by which we were called i.e. in a holy manner. Mounce is unwilling to make distinctions here. A holy God issues a holy call for believers who are called to a different lifestyle, from a life of sin to a life of holiness. He already commented earlier in his *comment* section that it should also be noted: 'Whereas much of the Pastoral Epistles concentrates on proper conduct, vv 9-10 give a solid theological foundation for righteous living'.²

This salvation was not based upon anything that we had done. Marshall points out that the phrase 'according to works' is used by Paul to make clear the basis of God's judgement on sinners (Rom. 2v6; 2 Cor. 11v15; 2 Tim. 4v14; cf. 1 Pet. 1v17) so that the stress here is that although God judges on the basis of deeds, he does not save on that basis³. Our salvation has nothing to do with human merit (Titus 3v5). Paul stresses that it is because of God's 'own purpose and grace'. Note that *ivdi*, an *idian* 'his own' first stresses 'purpose', the sovereignty of God's decision⁴ or eternal plan but particularly highlights 'grace', contrasting it with *ta. e;rga h`mw/n ta erga hēmōn* 'our works'. Grace is not just God's unmerited favour as some suggest, but favour *against* merit i.e. when we deserve the opposite i.e. only wrath (Eph. 2v3; 5v6)! Knight⁵ also suggests that 'in Christ Jesus' signifies that God's grace is brought to us in Christ's person and work.

This point is made here. Our salvation is because of what Christ has done. God's purpose in our salvation, his plan worked out before creation, has been revealed in history, in the appearance of Christ the Saviour in the present time. The word for the coming of Christ – his epiphany, has already been found in various places in 1 Timothy and Titus. It is used exclusively of Christ and refers either to his second coming, or as here to all that his first coming involves, incarnation, death and resurrection and what that coming accomplished. To sum up, here it highlights the saving intervention of God in Christ.

Paul proceeds to highlight the results of his appearing, namely, in contrasting participles, the blessings that flow from his death.

Negatively, he 'abolished death'. This cannot mean that he eliminated it, as we know from everyday experience. The verb *katarge,w katargeō* means that he 'destroyed' or 'rendered ineffective' death. Other NT texts emphasise this reality. Jesus defeated death or overthrew it so that it cannot be victorious over the believer who need have no fear of it (Heb.2v15). Death is a 'falling asleep' and a positive 'gain' since, it is the gateway to being 'with Christ' which is 'far better' (1 Thess. 4v14; Phil.1 v21, 23). Though a believer dies, he shall 'never die' (John 11v25-26). Death can never separate us from God (Rom. 8v38-39). Or as Mounce suggests concerning this phrase, it may refer to (1) the sting of death, its pain now removed because beyond the grave lies life and incorruptibility (2) death as a punishment for sin, the ultimate power in Satan's arsenal (3) it may refer to spiritual death,

¹ Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, p.374.

² Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, p.481.

³ Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, p.704.

⁴ Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, p.483.

⁵ Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, p.375.

eternal separation from God, from which Christ frees us (see also Knight¹). Mounce admits that these distinctions may be overly subtle:

While Timothy and all believers must wait until the final consummation to see death destroyed (1 Cor.15v26), in essence death has already been destroyed by Christ's work, and believers can live their lives in complete assurance of what has happened and will happen.²

Positively, Jesus brought life and immortality to light. For Marshall,³ the two terms form a hendiadys, i.e., immortal life. 'This life is not created by Christ. Rather it already exists in the divine sphere, and what Christ does is to reveal its existence and the possibility of sharing in it'. Mounce,⁴ makes the point that 'life' is a common Pauline topic (37 times) describing not mere physical life but the fullness of life that is the present experience of the eschatological existence promised to believers through Jesus Christ. The word 'immortality' *aphtharsia* avfqarsi,a is really 'incorruptibility' which is characteristic of God's existence (1 Tim. 1v17). Here being connected with 'life' it means to be immortal, involving triumph over death and existence in the divine realm. This alternative reality – eternal life – is available in Christ. For Knight⁵ the word 'us' designates the Christian community as a whole (cf. 2v11-13), even though it may be particularly applied to Paul and Timothy, as the designation of those 'called' by God indicates.

Christ offers life and immortality to all who depend upon him. He has brought these to light in that he manifests them in the supernatural and spiritual life believers receive. The blessings are also to be revealed in the preaching of the gospel as we will see. So Stott⁶ writes of God's Gospel – its character (what it is) – man's re-creation and transformation into the holiness of Christ; its source (where it comes from) – not in virtue of our works but in virtue of God's eternal purpose in grace; its ground (on what it rests) – Christ's appearance and abolition of death. So in these verses we have a summary of the mission message.

Paul's Calling v11-14.

Paul is now constrained to refer to his calling and his own part in the proclamation of this message. Towner⁷ sees Paul as presenting himself as a model for Timothy, and then the charge for him to be faithful.

Paul first explains that he was 'appointed', set apart for the gospel, a statement which is similar to 1 Tim.2v7, without the emphasis on Paul's ministry to the gentiles, which is not needed here. The passive voice assumes that the readers will grasp that his appointment was by God. Paul presents a comprehensive outline of his ministry. There are three aspects to Paul's service:

A herald – the word is kh/rux *kēru*x found also in 1 Tim. 2v7 and 2 Pet. 2v5, which identifies Noah as 'a preacher of righteousness'. Mounce⁸ explains that in the culture a herald was a 'crier' at public sales, religious ceremonies, or one proclaiming official actions (like new taxes) and announcing the freedom of slaves. A herald would announce the beginning of public games, each participant and the name of the winner's father, or also he would announce the arrival of a king or his orders. The important requirements of this vocation were that he had a loud voice and to be able to repeat accurately what he had been told. 'Its basic meaning is not so much to "to preach the gospel" as "to

¹ Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, p.376.

² Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, p.485.

³ Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, p.704.

⁴ Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, p.485.

⁵ Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, p.374.

⁶ Stott, *Guard the Gospel: The Message of 2 Timothy*, p.40.

⁷ Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, p.473.

⁸ Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, p.92.

make public” (cf. Mark 1v45; 5v20; 7v36; Luke 8v39). What an example Paul was for Timothy – and of course ourselves!

An apostle – Paul had seen the risen Lord and had been commissioned by him. He had established churches and had been a receiver and a custodian of divine truth.

A teacher – this encompasses his pastoral care, letters and public ministry. Paul’s involvement in the mission of God was total.

Because Paul engaged in these ministries, he suffered – or is suffering, the present tense is used. This is the theme to which all has been moving. What these verses are saying is that there is an underlying principle that gospel proclamation, ministry and suffering, persecution, go hand in hand, or as Towner puts it, ‘His experience is paradigmatic’.¹ All this has the purpose of exhorting Timothy to embrace suffering by himself following the example of Paul in heralding out the gospel. There is a clear link with v8.

Paul had previously affirmed in the Roman epistle that because of the gospel’s power to salvation and a new standing of righteousness before God by faith he was not ashamed of it (Rom. 1v16-17); now on the far side of suffering and a Roman prison facing death, his mind set is the same, ‘nevertheless, I am not ashamed’. It is the language of 2 Cor.4v8-9.

Paul’s Confidence

‘I know’ continues the attitude of assuredness prevalent throughout the discussion. The intensely personal nature of the discussion is seen in the number of first-person verbs Paul uses.

‘In whom I have believed’ is a reference not to belief in a creedal sense; it is Paul’s general use of the word to mean personal trust in God. When Paul states ‘I have believed/trusted’ he is using the perfect tense meaning ‘I have believed – and still do’, or ‘I am fully convinced’ – and still am.

Note Paul refers to *th.n paraqh,khn mou, tēn perathēkēn mou*, my deposit’. ‘My deposit’ is a common word used literally and figuratively of money, documents, the things people left in the temple or with friends for safekeeping. So is this ‘deposit’ to be interpreted as something God has entrusted to Paul or something Paul has entrusted to God? For some, Paul is referring primarily to his confidence in God to guard the gospel entrusted to him or his ministry – see e.g. Guthrie, Stott, Ridderbos, Barrett and Kelly. For others it is his salvation, himself, his life – Calvin, Fee, Hendriksen, Barclay and Lock.

It is understandable that one might propose it is a reference to the gospel God has entrusted to his servant, since the gospel has been the theme of in almost every verse since v8. Again in v14 the same word ‘deposit’ is used of the gospel (see also 1 Tim. 6v20). It also would suit the apostle’s great desire that Timothy would remain true to the gospel and seek to pass it on to others (2 Tim. 2v2).

But God does not guard the gospel. It seems better to see this statement by Paul as referring to what the apostle has entrusted to God. So should we see here Paul himself and his final salvation? For Mounce², it seems that the verse more naturally refers to what the apostle had committed to God. The context also of suffering with God able to guard his life lends support to this view. Again, ‘until that day’ fits better with Paul’s soul being kept safe. Marshall³ is attracted to the second but finally prefers to see it as what Paul is entrusting to his successors. But the opening affirmation points to something Paul has placed into God’s care and keeping. Again, Timothy is being encouraged in the face of suffering to entrust himself to God since he is the one who – in Christ – abolished/nullified the power of death and can preserve us even through it.

¹ Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, p.474.

² Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, p.487-488. See also Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, p.279-280.

³ Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, p.711.

Paul's Concern

These verses continue the guidance Paul has for Timothy. Here the apostle returns to his direct appeal to Timothy (v8). Now he is to 'hold fast' to the gospel and 'guard it', in the face of the heresies from the false teachers whom he will refer to later, 2v14ff; 3v1ff; 4v3ff. So just as God guards Paul's (and Timothy's) life, he in turn must guard¹ the fundamental truths expressed in the gospel.

The Challenge Paul Brings v13-14

Timothy was to hold or guard (use of the present imperative) the 'sound words', the apostolic pattern of truth, the mission message. The concept of 'sound words' or 'healthy words' is a theme of these Letters. Acceptance of the true gospel brings such blessing, making the Lord's people spiritually healthy, in contrast to the false teachings of the opponents which only spread like gangrene (2 Tim. 2v17).

'Which you heard from me' reminds us that Paul's desire is for the passing of the gospel from one trustworthy person to another. Mounce² explains that Paul was entrusted with the message (1 Tim. 1v11; 2v7 Tit. 1v3; 2 Tim. 1v11; 1 Cor. 9v17; 11v2; Gal. 1v1; 2v7; 2 Thess. 2v15; 3v16); it was entrusted to Timothy (1 Tim. 1v18; 2 Tim. 1v13-14; 2v2; 3v14), who in turn was to entrust it to other faithful men (see the verses to come, 2 Tim. 2v2). For him this is not a formal transfer of power and creed which is found in the second century; it is simply an emphasis on preserving the true gospel, based upon the teachings of Christ and the apostolic interpretation of his life and death. This emphasis is in other letters of Paul (Rom. 16v17; Gal. 1v12; Eph. 4v12; Col. 2v7; 2 Thess. 2v15) and it would be natural for him to stress this here, as Paul knows that the time for him to guard the deposit is about to end.

It is not sufficient to just guard the gospel – *how* we guard it is important. It should be 'in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus'. What is meant here? Certainly the meaning must include the emphasis that Timothy must personally believe what he is teaching to others. There must be wholehearted acceptance of these fundamental truths. He must also have faith in God to enable him to proclaim it in the face of opposition. He ought to be motivated also by love for the Lord whose truth it is and for the people since he seeks their spiritual blessing. So for Stott³, Timothy and Paul (and ourselves also) are to communicate the gospel, today in fresh ways; suffer for the gospel rather than trim it or eliminate the elements that cause offence and to guard the gospel, keeping it pure and complete at all costs. But he also must have love in his heart as he seeks to make it known.

Timothy was to guard the mission message in God's strength; by the indwelling Holy Spirit - See 1 Cor. 6:19. For Knight⁴ the appeal comes full circle – it begins and ends with God's Spirit and his power. The Spirit of God within Timothy would strengthen him enabling him to make the true message known. Here is where you will find the unction to proclaim God's truth – in the experience of the Spirit's power. Thus we can be effective in the mission of God.

The Abandonment Paul Discloses

Paul provides Timothy in v15-18 with negative and positive examples to back home his exhortation to him. Lock⁵ sees them as incidents of cowardice and courage. This is a very personal revelation by Paul and Mounce⁶ makes the point with a number of commentators that they surely point to authenticity – and adds that even those who consider the Letters as non-Pauline will find here an authentic fragment.

¹This is the word used of the soldiers who guarded Peter – Acts 12:4.

²Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, p.489.

³Stott, *Guard the Gospel: The Message of 2 Timothy*, p.47.

⁴Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, p.382.

⁵Lock, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Pastoral Epistles*, p.89.

⁶Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, p.492.

Paul refers to those who forsook him – the reference seems to focus upon personal abandonment (me *me* ‘me’ is used) rather than that of the gospel, although a rejection of Paul’s teaching may also be included. Their desertion of course makes Timothy’s loyalty all the more important.¹

‘All in Asia deserted him’. It does not mean every single person since obviously Onesiphorus (v16-18) and Timothy, who was in the principal city, Ephesus, had not forsaken him; it is not likely a reference to the Asians who were in Rome – even if they returned to Asia; nor is there any indication that it is the leaders only² which is difficult since the word *pa,ntej pantes* ‘all’ is used; it surely means Christians in general.

Two men are mentioned specifically, Phylegus and Hermogones, who may have been leaders in the church or friends/fellow workers like Demas (4v10). They are not mentioned elsewhere in the New Testament. Although Hermogenes is referred to in the Apocryphal *Acts of Paul and Thecla* as a coppersmith who along with Demas ‘were full of hypocrisy and flattered Paul as if they loved him’.³ The implicit appeal here in 2 Timothy is for Timothy not to do as these men have done. The contrast is with the commitment of Onesiphorus, v16-18. This loyalty is set out in these verses in one single Greek sentence.

The Commitment Paul has Valued v16-18

The positive example for Timothy is the bravery and dedication of Onesiphorus. He is only referred to here in the New Testament but again as Hermogenes he is named in the second-century apocryphal *Acts of Paul and Thecla*. His household is mentioned in 4v19; so it appears he was an Asian from Ephesus. He is referred to here with the intention of encouraging Timothy to emulate him.

Paul writes, ‘May the Lord grant mercy to the household...’ Note that a householder will be someone who is quite well off, having property, land and slaves. Paul desires that Onesiphorus’ household be blessed with God’s mercy. Later he expresses the same desire of mercy for Onesiphorus himself (v18). This hope here for his family should not necessarily be understood as a prayer of intercession to God. It can be interpreted in a similar fashion as Rom. 15v5; 2 Thess. 3v16, i.e. Paul’s wish.

Is it possible that Onesiphorus has been arrested? Is their master dead? We do not know. It may simply mean that he was separated from them if he had just left Paul. So Paul was thinking of his family since they were currently without him. It also should be noted that while ‘mercy’ in v18 is associated with ‘that day’ it can be granted by God in the present – ‘mercy’ is a present blessing in 1v2 and Paul also experienced it when he was converted (1 Tim. 1v13-16). So Paul desires the compassionate care and protection of God for this household without their master. Concerning Onesiphorus, the following qualities are seen in this man:

Perseverance

Onesiphorus had perseverance and stickability. He searched hard for Paul at Rome and did not give up until he found him.

Note that only here is the place of Paul’s imprisonment mentioned i.e. Rome. Mounce⁴ points out that the conditions of Paul’s imprisonment seem much more difficult than those of Acts 28v23, 30-31. This was no open house but a secure, possibly remote location – see also 2v9 where he is treated as a ‘serious criminal’. Yet Onesiphorus would not be put off from finding him. It is always very important to get alongside someone when they are in trouble. Have you ever gone out of your way to do this?

¹ Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, p.711.

² Hendriksen, *1 & 11 Timothy and Titus*, p237-238.

³ E. Hennecke, *New Testament Apocrypha*, Ed. W. Schneemelcher. 2 Vols. Philadelphia: Westminster, 1963, 2:353.

⁴ Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, p.492.

Courage

Onesiphorus was not ashamed of Paul's 'chains', for Knight¹, to be understood as similar references elsewhere i.e. in a literal sense. Onesiphorus showed a depth of commitment to Paul, and was prepared to run the risk of being regarded as a sympathizer or an accomplice by the authorities as well as friends, neighbours and business associates.² The implications of all this for Timothy are clear (v8). Onesiphorus is an example of courageous loyalty.³

Encouragement

He had often brought encouragement to Paul, v16. The verb carries the idea of reviving or refreshing someone. See its cognate in Acts 3v20 'refreshment' and in Rom. 15v32 'have a time of rest with'. Did he bring food provisions? Or, with Knight⁴, was it more likely that it was his presence which inspired Paul? Note that 'often' this had happened. The adverb is in an emphatic position. He is a prime example of one who constantly and sacrificially exercised a ministry of encouragement.

Dedication

Paul recounts how Onesiphorus had helped many – or 'served' many (the verb is *diakoneō* diakone,w) in the Ephesian church. He was therefore true to his name which means 'a bringer of profit'. He was properly motivated in his attitude toward God and others as a servant. He had a servant heart. The varied forms of service Onesiphorus was committed to is conveyed by the use of the neuter plural *o[sa hosa* variously translated in the English versions as 'all the service' (RSV); 'the many services' (NEB); 'how many ways' (NKJV); 'how many things' (ESV).

Further Comment

Paul's desire for Onesiphorus in v18 has been interpreted by some as an example of prayer for the dead. But this wish is not a prayer for some kind of post-mortem salvation as if sufficient prayer might sway the Lord to grant this and is hardly an allusion to the advice given in 2 Macc. 12:43-45.⁵ In reply, it can be said firstly, that it is possible that this brother may have died but as mentioned above, it may be that he was simply separated from his family at this particular moment. Again, Knight⁶ can point out that Paul can speak of a man's household (1 Cor. 1v16) and of 'that day' (v12) when he himself was still alive and also other believers (4v8). Again, he can pronounce an eschatological blessing on a church while the people are still alive (1Thess. 5v23). It should be noted also that Paul's wish is not directly addressed to God, as prayer is, but is a statement of Paul's hopes for Onesiphorus concerning 'that day'. May the Lord grant to him.... that day'. Note the wordplay here. 'May he who found me, find mercy on that day'.

It can be maintained that this hope is in keeping with the teaching of the NT generally concerning believers and 'that day' i.e., evidences of mercy in the life of Onesiphorus demonstrate the reality of his relationship with Jesus, (see also Matt. 5v7; 10v42; 25v36; Rom. 2v5-11; James 2v12-13). Therefore this reference in 2 Timothy is not about Paul praying for the dead. Paul is simply looking forward to the judgement seat and that God will remember the goodness of his servant to Paul, goodness which is evidence of his genuine faith.

Note that *kurioj kurios* 'Lord' is used twice by Paul in v18. It appears that the first is a reference to Christ and the second to God himself – it is through Christ's person and work and by faith in him that one finds acceptance i.e., demonstrates the reality of their faith in the grace of mercy when they stand before God on 'that day'.

¹ Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, p.384.

² Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, p.483.

³ Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, p.484.

⁴ Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, p.384.

⁵ See Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, p.485; Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, p.497.

⁶ Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, p.386.

In conclusion, Paul reminds Timothy of knowledge they already both share about Onesiphorus. Timothy knew of the many ways (their variety and number is conveyed by the neuter plural *hosa*, which also has an emphatic position in the text) Onesiphorus had served Paul while he was in Ephesus. Thus Paul reinforces his plea to his younger colleague not to be ashamed of him or the mission message but hold fast to the truth.

The whole section provides examples for Timothy of desertion and dedication, shame and courage and in fact here there are lessons for all readers, even in the twenty first century.

Chapter 2v1-26 Be Strong in the advancing of the Mission Message – Do not engage in Foolish Disputes

Paul has set before Timothy in 1v15-18 examples of ‘shame and courage’¹. Here in chapter 2 the theme is that of encouragement for Timothy as to how he can be used so that the mission of God can continue. Initially Paul is using a number of imperatives variously set out by different commentators.² These also have illustrative material backing them up.

The passage begins with a call to Timothy to be strong – ‘you then’, stands first for emphasis and serves the same purpose as ‘but you’ in 1 Tim. 6v11; 2 Tim. 3v10, 14; 4v5; Tit. 2v1. The use of *ou= n* *oun* ‘then’ or ‘therefore’ is pointing back also to the preceding concerns as well as giving exhortation in the light of those concerns. The repetition of the personal reference ‘my son’ (see 1v2) emphasises again the nature of the bond between spiritual father and son.

‘Be strong’ v1 – if he had stopped there his call would have been pointless. But he does not ask Timothy to be strong in himself; instead to ‘be strengthened by means of the grace that is in Christ Jesus’. The verb *evndunamou/ endunamou* is present passive imperative which affirms the possibility that Timothy can be constantly and daily strengthened by God himself. Knight³ points out that the verb is consistently used in the NT of spiritual strength – 7 times with 6 of them in Paul. All this enabling of course is undeserved and so Paul can affirm that it is only by ‘grace’ that we can know God’s power in our lives. This grace and the power which is possible are also ‘in Christ Jesus’ i.e., through faith in Christ and constant fellowship with him. But the point to also notice here is that God’s daily empowerment can be experienced, not by a select few, but all those who are in Christ. In a sense this first imperative can be taken as a kind of overall exhortation emphasising the empowerment through which with all that Paul asks of Timothy in this chapter can be accomplished. There are a full range of encouragements for Timothy here.

Commit the Truth to Faithful Men

In v2 the second imperative in the chapter is for Timothy to identify certain men and pass on the apostolic doctrine to them, i.e. to a wider group of teachers. Paul writes of the things you have heard *parV evmou/ par’emou* ‘from me’, words hard to fit with the view that the writing is pseudonymous – or even involving allonymity. In light of this statement affirming direct teaching, the phrase ‘through many witnesses’, using the preposition *dia. dia*, is best understood as ‘in the presence of many witnesses’,⁴ (as TNIV, RSV, REB), i.e., what Timothy (and others who can confirm it) had heard on many occasions from Paul, rather than in some sense hearing second hand from others, even as has been suggested, after Paul’s death. For Knight it is ‘public teaching testified to and known not just by Timothy or some few friends and colleagues but by “many witnesses”...in the sense of numerous’.⁵

¹Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, p.487.

² Towner sees three imperatives, ‘be strong,’ ‘entrust’ and ‘join in suffering’ which are related to what has gone before, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, p.487; Marshall, finds four imperatives which determine the structure of this part, v1f, 3, 7, 8, *The Pastoral Epistles*, p.721.

³ Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, p.389.

⁴ Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, p.490.

⁵ Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, p.390.

One is reminded of Paul's statement in Acts 20v20, 27, 'kept back nothing...taught you publically...the whole counsel of God'. Marshall¹ also takes this view, i.e., the witnesses are not to be limited either to elders, Christian preachers or Timothy's relatives, but are more probably the many people who heard Paul, the church in general. All this teaching, known to Timothy, must now be 'committed' *para,qou parathou*, second aorist middle imperative², to faithful men.

The emphasis on those to whom the teaching is to be committed is that they must be *pistoj pistos* 'faithful' men. The word here is to be taken as faithful, trustworthy, rather than believing, which is generally assumed. Knight³ points out that the word *avnqrw,poij anthrōpois* 'men' should be understood as males – as it is used elsewhere in the NT (Matt. 19v5; 1 Cor. 7v1; Eph. 5v31), and as 1 Tim. 2v11-3v5 can be taken to affirm, where we have men as elders, since these are referred to as ruling over their own households.

It is to be noted as Mounce⁴ explains that v2 be interpreted in light of the historical situation. 'It is not the formal institutionalizing of apostolic succession for the preservation of the Christian creed'. Things are still at a primitive stage. Timothy is to impart Paul's teaching to other gifted men in the local Christian congregations so that they can in turn seek to ground the local believers in the true doctrine. Here is our responsibility – fundamental truths the mission message, must be passed on to others in the churches. The 'things which you have heard', the apostolic truth is now to be found in the New Testament scriptures. Is the truth being preserved and shared? Or do you remain silent concerning some elements of it? But then Timothy was also to:

Endure Hardness as a Good Soldier

Paul now uses three metaphors; first comparing Timothy as a good soldier and then using the images of the athlete and the farmer (v3-7). So in v3 we have the third imperative in this chapter with the *sun* compound 'suffer hardship with'. Paul of course has spoken of himself in terms of suffering, 1v8; 2v9, 12. The simple form of the verb is used in 2v9;4v5. Now Timothy must be prepared to suffer as a good soldier. The adjective *kalo,j kalos* 'good' will mean 'praiseworthy or outstanding'⁵ and 'Christ Jesus' is the one he serves and who has enlisted him. The discipline needed in this calling is outlined in v3. The soldier must not become 'entangled'⁶ in matters which would be a hindrance to his devotion and single-mindedness in carrying out the commands of his commander – even though the path may involve suffering. In serving the Lord, Timothy did experience the hardship of imprisonment (Hebrews 13:23). Suffering persecution is highlighted in 2 Tim. 3v12 – but also, suffering does not always come from without.

Stott⁷ makes the point that Paul's experiences in prison gave him opportunities to watch Roman soldiers and think on the parallels to the Christian life. He had come to understand that a good soldier of Rome did not get caught up in civilian affairs. He quotes Tertullian in his *Address to Martyrs*, ch.2 *para*. 3, 'No soldier comes to the war surrounded by luxuries, nor goes into action from a comfortable bedroom, but from the makeshift and narrow tent, where every kind of hardness is to be found.' He must share in suffering with his fellow soldiers.

¹ Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, p.726.

² In the NT the middle voice of this verb has the sense of 'entrust', Lk. 12v28; 23v46; Acts 14v23; 20v32; 1 Tim. 1v18; 1 Pet. 4v19.

³ Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, p.391.

⁴ Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, p.504.

⁵ Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, p.392.

⁶ The word *evmple,kein emplekein* 'to entangle' occurs again in the NT only in 2 Pet. 2v20 where it is used of entanglements in the corruptions of this world.

⁷ Stott, *Guard the Gospel: The Message of 2 Timothy*, p.52-53.

He must also be willing to avoid distractions in the work and be single-minded, giving one's undivided attention to the work. Yet we need to be clear that the good soldier is not asked to avoid all secular activities, but rather 'entanglements' which, though they may be perfectly innocent in themselves, may hinder him from serving the Lord. Mounce¹ makes this point that Paul here is not asking Timothy to be hermitlike, celibate, or have nothing to do with secular life. One can be involved without being entangled. He must avoid other commitments which could prevent single-mindedness in serving Christ so that one can give undivided attention to carrying out his will for our lives. This will then 'please him who has enlisted him' – note the emphasis as elsewhere in Paul on pleasing God, Rom. 8v8; 1 Cor. 7v32-34; 1 Thess. 2v15; ; 4v1.

The teaching here challenges the Christian pastor. He is called to be single-minded in caring for God's people. True, at times Paul was involved in 'tentmaking' or working to support himself; but that was because he wanted not to put any obstacle in the way of the gospel. However, the general principle is that 'those who preach the gospel should live off the gospel', 1 Cor. 9v1-18. A church has an obligation to support its pastor. He can then be free to pursue his calling in a way that pleases the Lord. How can it be justified before God – now and at the judgement of Christ – if a man gives himself sacrificially to teach and pastorally care for church members who never see it as their responsibility to support him? Metaphors from athletics and farming follow, emphasising devotion and then reward. Timothy must:

Submit Lawfully like the Athlete to God's rules

In v5 Paul makes plain that when anyone competes in e.g. the Olympiad or Isthmian games, there is a condition for the athlete to be 'crowned'. Here we are reminded of the wreath, the *stephanon* given to the victorious runner. In 2 Tim. 4v8 Paul can write of the 'crown of righteousness', elsewhere, in 1 Cor. 9v25, of striving not for a perishable but an imperishable crown.

When Paul uses *evan...tij ean...tis* he is going beyond Timothy and in saying 'if anyone' he is thinking of all believers. The exceptive clause which follows the apodosis states that the individual cannot be crowned 'unless he competes lawfully'. The word *nomi,mwj nomimōs* also in 1 Tim. 1v8 and used here with emphasis means 'to compete in accordance with the rules'. There are two possible meanings as Paul uses this word. As Mounce² explains, it can refer to the Greek rule that specified a ten month period of preparation before the games, with the oath to Zeus that all the sacrifice, self-discipline, effort and pain had been undergone and also the punishment if the athlete lied; or it may refer to competing lawfully in the actual contest, adhering to the rules of the race. Both would fit here. The first focuses more on the suffering theme of v3; but the reference to the victor's crown may point more to the actual contest and submission to the commands of Christ. In effect it will mean to obey God's moral rules, as Rom. 8v4 maintains. There is need for righteousness of life in every department of life – the alternative is disqualification from effectiveness in the mission of God and from God's final reward. Many start well but lose their way in life or end badly – see 1v15; 4v10. Now the third metaphor, v6-7, the farmer. Timothy must:

Labour Unsparingly like the farmer in the work of God

For Hendriksen³, Timothy and others must fight wholeheartedly, like a soldier; compete like an athlete according to the rules and toil energetically like a farmer. The soldier must stand firm; the athlete must play fair and the farmer must work hard. The farmer here is *gewrgo,j geōrgos* referring to the peasant farmer who lives off the land. Again, the word used for hard work, *kopia,w kopiaō* is, as was

¹ Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, p.508.

² Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, p.510; see also JND Kelly, *Commentary on the Pastoral Epistles*, Black's New Testament Commentaries, London: A.&C. Black, 1963, p.175-176; HA Harris, *Greek Athletes and Athletics*, 3rd.ed. Westport CT; Cornwall UP, 1979, p.170-178.

³ Hendriksen, *1 & 11 Timothy and Titus*, p249.

explained elsewhere, labour that produces weariness and Paul often uses it of the Christian mission ministry, 1 Cor. 15v10; Phil. 2v16; Col. 1v29, even in these Letters in 1 Tim. 4v10; 5v17.

The emphatic position of this verb makes clear that this is where the emphasis of the metaphor must be placed. Work in the Middle East depended as much on sweat as on skill. Like Paul, Timothy needed to be a hard-worker in the mission of God. The hard-working farmer will receive a crop, Deut. 20v6, Prov. 20v4 and his work will mean that he can have first call on the produce of the land. The word *die* 'must' means something like 'it is fitting'. But what does *proton* 'first' signify? There are differing suggestions here. Does it mean just he gets the share first? Even before the owner of the land? Before others farmers who were lazy? Or thinking of the spiritual application, does it mean that he himself is blessed by the teaching? Or is it a reference to him seeing the spiritual results in the life of his converts or his heavenly reward? Is it his remuneration? For Knight¹ the word 'first' is just part of the imagery, while Mounce² makes the point that it is not simply about the minister being paid. It seems better to keep Timothy in mind and others who will be involved in serving the Lord. So as Hendriksen³ it is better to see here a spiritual intention. If you exert yourself fully in the work of the Lord, you are the first to receive the reward; you will be blessed in what you do (Jas. 1v25); your will be blessed by knowing God's presence and power with you; your faith will be strengthened; your love deepened; your joy increased as you see God at work in changing lives, fruitfulness, spiritual growth, Rom. 1v13; Phil. 1v22, 24; Gal. 5v22-23.

Do we work for Jesus? Do we labour to the point of exhaustion in mission ministry? Mary laboured, Persis laboured, Rom. 16v6,12; Paul laboured, 1 Cor. 15v10; 2 Cor. 6v5; Gal. 4v11; Phil. 2v16. Let us not spare ourselves but be ready to work hard for the Lord.

In v7 Timothy is to take time to reflect seriously (another imperative - *no,ei noei* in an emphatic position) on the three models (soldier, athlete, farmer) and on what Paul has been saying. Paul gives Timothy a promise; the Lord, by a divine enabling, if he takes seriously the exhortation, will give him understanding – insight – into 'all things', i.e., into all the intended applications of what Paul has been saying. These three metaphors sum up how Timothy and we ourselves ought to commit ourselves in the mission of God, in kingdom ministry. So we ought to be ready for hardship, as a soldier and do not let yourself be sidetracked or diverted from your ministry (entangled); submit your whole life to the teachings of God's word and give yourself wholeheartedly to the work of the Lord. Next, Timothy is:

Suffer faithfully as Others also have

Paul has earlier called upon Timothy to be ready to suffer hardship, (v3). Now he underlines this appeal by the example of Jesus (v8) and Paul himself (v9-10) and stresses again that suffering will be the lot of all believers, (v11-13)⁴. A Faithful Saying incorporated here stresses the future reward for those who endure. The section here can be identified by the use in v8 of the second person singular imperative 'remember' and the imperative of v14 'remind'.

Here there is a command – Paul uses the present imperative. Timothy must first of all constantly 'remember' Jesus Christ and his resurrection. Two comments about the order of the Greek must be made. First the names, 'Jesus Christ'. Only on a few occasions in these Letters (1 Tim. 6v3, 14; Tit. 1v1, 2v13, 3v6) and only here in 2 Timothy does Paul use the Lord's two names in this order. Is this only stylistic or is it how his name was spoken in the Christian community? It may rather be that Paul wished to emphasise Christ's humanity by using the name 'Jesus', given at his birth, first. Timothy is to always remember that Jesus, the one who was God's anointed, the Christ, in his suffering was brought down among the dead, but was 'raised'.

¹ Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, p.395.

² Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, p.510.

³ Hendriksen, *1 & 11 Timothy and Titus*, p249.

⁴ Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, p.396.

The second observation is the mention of the resurrection before his descent from David. This is clearly intentional. The perfect participle stresses that Jesus Christ 'has been raised' and the fact that he is still alive and exalted.¹

The mention of Jesus being 'from the seed of David', which follows here, in fulfilment of Nathan's prophecy from 2 Sam. 7v1-17, esp. v12, 16; Ps. 89v3-4, 27-29; see also Matt. 1v1, 20; 2v5ff; 9v27; 12v23; 15v22; 20v30, 31; 21v9, 15; 22v41-45; Mk.10v 47, 48; 12v35-37/Lk. 20v41-44; Lk. 1v27, 32-33; 2v4-5; 18v38-39; John 7v42; Acts 2v25-36; 13v23; Rom. 1v3; Rev. 5v5; 22v16, points to his messianic status and earthly life. This order also emphasises for Marshall and Mounce,² his vindication by God, who raised him from the dead – important encouragement for Timothy, facing the reality of suffering.³ Here is a promise which can sustain him when facing the threat of persecution, see 1v10.

The words 'according to my gospel' follow. The phrase is also found in Rom. 2v16; 16v25. Again, 'our gospel' occurs at 2 Cor. 4v3; 1 Thess. 1v5; 2 Thess. 2v14. So Jesus Christ who died and was raised is at the very heart of Paul's mission message which Timothy is also called to proclaim.

But Paul is not finished with examples of suffering for he can add his own, v9. Actually, v8-10 is one sentence in the Greek text. 'For which' is a relative pronoun, but used here not so much as a subordinate clause but as a link revealing the fact that his suffering was due to him actively proclaiming the gospel. Here he reminds Timothy that his suffering (Paul uses the present tense, describing the current situation) was to the point of 'chains' – like a 'serious criminal' – the word *kakou/rgoj kakourgos* is also used only in Lk. 23v32, 33, 39 for a common criminal who has committed serious crimes. So Paul is deliberately emphasising the stark and serious nature of his sufferings for Timothy to recognise.

But (avlla. *alla*, with full adversative force) Paul can make the point that while he may be fettered, the word of God cannot be fettered! He is likely not thinking so much of others who in the past and no doubt presently continue to preach while he is bound (see Phil. 1v12-18, for example), but of his own witness at his trial, 2 Tim. 4v16-17. Certainly, this understanding should be included here. The word of God can still work powerfully while its sharers may be chained. You cannot imprison the gospel. The Greek has the perfect tense for 'not bound' affirming that neither in the past nor now at present can its power or effectiveness be curtailed. This was the point made earlier of the effectiveness of the mission witness of a local church making known the entrusted word.⁴

In v10 Paul explains that there is a reason beneath his readiness to face suffering. It is for the salvation of others that he endures all (using *pa,nta panta* 'all' – although not specified) these things⁵. The theme of these verses with regard to Timothy is in the word *u`pome,nw hupomenō*, 'to endure' – see also 1 Cor.13v7 and as an example of his sufferings, 2 Tim. 3v10-11, 4v16-17. Paul's young servant is also to persevere. It reflects the main aim of all the verses i.e., encouragement from 1v3-2v13 and leads on to the faithful saying to come, v11-13.

Paul has been willing to yield himself to God to be used by him in sharing the gospel with others – whatever the cost. The aim is that they may obtain ('they also' is emphatic in the Greek text) the salvation that is *evn Cristw/| VIhsou/ en Christō lēsou*. Here as elsewhere in Paul salvation is only

¹ Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, p.734.

² Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, p. 735.

³ 'Meaningful' especially for Timothy in this context, Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, p.397.

⁴ See Plummer, *Paul's Understanding of the Church's Mission: Did the Apostle Paul expect the Early Christian Communities to Evangelise?* p. 12.

⁵ For Marshall, the meaning here is 'whatever may happen', *The Pastoral Epistles*, p.736. Note Rom. 8v37 also.

‘in Christ’. He now writes of how he believes that God can draw people to himself through his own ministry, i.e., *tou.j evklektou.j tous eklektous*, ‘the elect’.¹ Paul cannot do this but God can – as his servant shares the gospel. Are we also available to be used by God in this glorious ministry? Timothy – and ourselves – are being challenged to yield our gifts and faculties that they might be fully available to be used in the mission of God.

Note the phrase *meta. do,xhj aivwni,ou meta doxēs aiōniou*, ‘with eternal glory’. God’s salvation in Christ is present but also future. What a future! As Knight² explains:

The realm of existence in which his splendour is everywhere and immediately present and, as here, of that in which the redeemed participate in a marvellous and endless way, as they behold his splendour in a full and direct way (cf. 1 Jn. 3v2; Rom. 5v2; 1 Cor. 2v8; 2 Cor. 3v18; Eph. 1v17; Phil. 3v21; Col. 3v4; 2 Thess. 1v9, 2v14; Titus 2v13).

Such a future should also encourage Timothy to endure whatever the cost. Mounce³ also suggests that here there is the reversal of Rom. 3v23, the glory lost through sin but to be restored to the elect in the eschatological kingdom. The verses that follow draw out the practical implications of what the previous verses affirm.

A Faithful Saying

We noted earlier that Faithful Sayings are unique in these Letters to Timothy and Titus. In v11-13 we find the fifth and final one. The key thought is still enduring or a readiness to suffer (see v10, 12). First, just a comment on the setting of this Saying. The previous statement is personal by Paul, not some kind of doctrinal statement – ‘my gospel’, ‘I suffer’, ‘I endure’, so the formula can be generally understood as pointing forwards⁴. But it provides the basis for the attitude taken in the previous verses. Also the conjunction *ga.r gar* ‘for’ in the first line is there to bring out the practical or ethical challenges of what has previously been written.

Whatever the pre-history, if any, which cannot be established⁵, it is best to consider how the material has been formulated by Paul in the present. The first two lines are examples of synthetic or constructive parallelism. They do not express an identical thought, but there is a progressive correspondence between the two propositions. ‘We have died with Christ; we suffer with him, being faithful. It is the same group. Then for them the assurance is ‘we shall live with him/reign with him’.

The alternative is expressed also in synthetic parallelism. ‘If we deny him/are faithless to him’, then ‘he will also deny us’ i.e., he must remain faithful on his part to deny us! Divine faithfulness is a wonderful comfort to those who are faithful to him, but an earnest warning to those who might be tempted to be disloyal. Mounce⁶ can write of four ‘lines’ here involving, Conversion, Perseverance,

¹ For different treatments of this verse, see Hendriksen, *1 & 11 Timothy and Titus*, p.252-253, and Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, p.504-505. The reference could be to the Church, those already in Christ and of course Paul can apply OT terms for Israel to the Church. But with the emphasis on preaching the gospel, 1v8,11; 2v8 it is likely that Paul has in mind others yet to be reached, those who will become part of the NT people of God and experience salvation in the present and in all its fullness in the future.

² Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, p.400. See also 1 Thess. 2v12; Rom. 8v18-30; 2 Cor. 4v17.

³ Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, p.515.

⁴ Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, p.400; Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, p.735; Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, p.501.

⁵ Knight suggests ‘an original hymn’ but does not explain, *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, p.401; also Hendriksen can write that here possibly we have lines of a ‘martyr’s hymn’, *1 & 11 Timothy and Titus*, p.254. Yet Mounce, can make the point that Paul is quite capable of writing in such paralleled structure as is found here, *Pastoral Epistles*, p.501.

⁶ Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, p.515-517.

Judgement and finally, Faithlessness. For Hendriksen¹, there are two main themes throughout, loyalty to Christ will be rewarded and disloyalty will be judged.

What does Paul mean when he uses the compound verb, 'we died with him'? Mounce² links this with Conversion. Timothy should think back to his conversion/baptism experience and how these should impact his present life. For Marshall³ the reference is to a past death to sin, or certainly to self. The 'will live with' is future life but the present life in union with Christ is also implied.

We can understand this statement as our death in Christ/will live in terms of Rom. 6v2-4, 8, rather than some sense of the martyr's death. God saw us in Christ on the cross and judged us in Christ, so we died to sin and condemnation judicially and potentially have been delivered from sin's power over us. A measure of the power of our future life is made real to us in our fellowship with Christ in the present.

The second (v12) is almost exactly parallel to the first. Here as Mounce has highlighted (see above) is the theme of Perseverance. 'Endure' connects to v10 and the use of the present tense is issuing Timothy and any readers/hearers with a daily continuing challenge to stand firm in suffering (see also Tit. 2v2; Heb. 12v7; Jas. 1v4; 2 Pet. 1v6). The promise of reward is in the apodosis and is expressed in a further *syn*-verb, 'they will reign with him', a verb that means to share rule as a king with somebody who is himself king and judge; to share his glory.⁴ When Christ returns the faithful are said to sit and judge with him, (1 Cor. 6v2-3)! This actual verb is only found again in the NT in 1 Cor. 4v8. But see also for the promise, Matt. 19v28/Lk. 22v30; Rom. 5v17; 1 Cor. 6v2; Rev. 5v10; 20v4,6; 22v5. The second pair of statements presents the contrasting positions. The opposite attitude to identification with Christ is denial. There is a similar thought in the saying of Jesus in Mt. 10v33/Lk. 12v9.

This next line which expresses the thought of denial uses the future – is it at any time from that moment in the future? Here Paul affirms 'He (i.e., Christ) will also deny us'. For Mounce (see above), this is Judgement. Again the future tense points to Christ denying such at the future judgement – remember his chilling words, 'I never knew you'. Christ will act in judgement upon those who profess his name but have only a profession of allegiance to him without the reality. Concerning those who would deny Christ, Mounce⁵ reminds us of the historical context, i.e. it applies in the first instance to the Ephesians, especially Hymenaeus, Philetus (2v17), possibly to the deserting Asians (1v15), also Timothy but then even Paul and of course, all believers. Mounce⁶ also explains that *kavkei/noj kakeinos* is a crasis of *kai*, *kai* and *evkei/noj ekeinon* and continues the pattern of the two previous 'then' clauses introduced by these words and so creates an emphatic contrast between the human and divine activity. So here is the divine response to their denial.

In v13 the theme is Faithlessness (Mounce, above), or we could say, acts of unfaithfulness. Marshall⁷ quotes Spicq and Kelly for the meaning, 'if we fail to live up to our profession'. Then Paul affirms 'he (Christ, as in v12) remains faithful'. Is this a promise or a warning? Does this mean that Christ remains faithful to the faithless, despite their failures i.e. he will be gracious to them and upon repentance will forgive them. Or as, Marshall⁸, that in spite of the unfaithfulness of his people Christ will remain faithful to his purpose in the final salvation of his people and so believers should reject unfaithfulness. For others it seems that the meaning is that Christ remains faithful to his warnings and

¹ Hendriksen, *1 & 11 Timothy and Titus*, p256.

² Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, p.516.

³ Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, p. 741.

⁴ Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, p. 740.

⁵ Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, p. 517.

⁶ Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, p.517.

⁷ Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, p. 741.

⁸ Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, p. 742.

will act in judgement upon those who fail to be faithful to him. He cannot be untrue to himself. So Paul in the words 'He cannot deny himself' is issuing a warning.

One is impressed with Knight's¹ understanding that this verse gives an expression of the frailty of the believer, involving less than what he describes as a hardened and final denial. God's faithfulness is generally used of his faithfulness to gospel promises (2 Cor. 1v18-20); faithful to us in temptation (1 Cor. 10v13); protection from the evil one (2 Thess. 3v2); the sanctification and preservation of his people (1 Thess. 5v24; Heb. 10v23; 11v11; 1 Pet. 4v19; 1 John 1v9; Rev. 1v5; 3v14; 19v11). So since the apodosis becomes the opposite of the protasis, the concluding statement is added to give the reason for Christ's faithfulness – because of his own nature. He cannot be untrue to himself. God will be faithful to his covenant. Here we are reminded of the doctrine of the immutability of God. All the first-person plural 'we' verbs here point back to the elect and it is difficult to accept that the last refers to a different group.

All of the above (v8-13) is designed to challenge Timothy – and encourage him – to continue with his ministry as Paul had done and even Jesus Christ; to be involved in the mission of God, to make it a priority whatever the cost. We should not miss the point that there are those in the Christian community who also need to be continually reminded – Paul uses a present imperative – of these truths and especially the Faithful Saying, (v14a). Again, the command may not only refer to what Paul has already taught but also what was to follow in v14-26. But who are those whom Paul wishes to be reminded of these things? The teachers or the whole congregation? Timothy himself has been the main focus in the previous verses and while it may be that Paul has in mind 'the elect' of v10, it is more likely that it will be the chosen teachers of v2 who were to be appointed. Now Paul continues to encourage Timothy. He must:

Rightly Divide the Word of Truth

Concerning v14-26, Marshall² finds here the pattern of a negative command followed by a contrasting positive command, which in turn is followed by a further negative command, taking the initial thought further (v14/15/16a,22a/22b23). The constantly repeated theme is how to deal with the opposition in the church. There is a brief insight into the heresy given in v18.

In these verses we learn what Timothy is to teach the Christian community; although it is mostly concerned with Timothy's own behaviour. We noted that he must constantly remind the chosen teachers (Paul's present imperative); in fact, he is to 'solemnly charge' (also 1 Tim. 5v21; 2 Tim. 4v1) them using the verb with the intensifying preposition *dia* *dia* plus the prepositional phrase 'before God'.

They must not engage in verbal quibbling – 'fight about words' - the verb *logomacei/n* *logomaxein* is found only here in the NT and one is reminded how the Jews enjoyed debating the obscure part of their law, while the Greeks debated the latest ideas. Such contention was to have no place in the Christian Church. Knight³ maintains that Paul is not concerned here with hair splitting but serious dispute about the meaning and significance of words relating to the Christian faith. Why then would he urge Timothy and the others to refrain from being involved? It is better to understand this as simply 'hair-splitting'. This kind of disputing was of 'no value' or no practical use in seeking to build people up but in contrast would only ruin those who get involved - *katastrofh*, *katastrophē* 'ruin' emphasises the catastrophic damage⁴ that such interest in this kind of thing can cause – the word being found again

¹ Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, p.407.

² Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, p. 743.

³ Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, p.410.

⁴ Probably here means more than 'upsetting'. Guthrie, *The Pastoral Epistles*, p.159, points out that etymologically it means turning upside down. But this does not fully convey the spiritual harm that such entrapment brings.

only in the description of the ruin of Sodom and Gomorrah (cf. LXX Gen. 19v29; 2 Chron. 22v7; Prov. 1v18; 2 Pet. 2v6). Such involvement can lead to serious spiritual consequences - v18 speaks of the overthrowing of the faith of some people. Then he gives the balancing positive instruction.

First, using another imperative, he exhorts Timothy to be diligent¹ or do his utmost to engage in a ministry approved by God. He is to be an example of how to have the right approach in handling the scriptures, the word of truth. His teaching must be profitable and edifying, in contrast to negative and harmful effects of useless controversies. In what do we major?

He is 'to present himself to God', used in Eph. 5v27; Col. 1v22,28 with an adjective of making people acceptable to God and so here with the idea of so handling the word as to know God's approval upon his work. Timothy is a 'workman' and an such is to be 'tried and true' – as Mounce² translates *do,kimoi dokimos* i.e. he must rightly divide the word of truth. Marshall³ points out that the word workman has taken on the sense of missionary, church worker in Christian circles (2 Cor.11v13; Phil.3v2). Rightly dividing is expressed by a verb which has been used in a number of senses e.g. to cut a straight road, plough a straight furrow, sew a straight seam, to be direct in one's speech. It has the idea here of one who does not deviate from preaching the truth. Stott⁴ interprets:

He doesn't make crooked the straight paths of the Lord – on the contrary, he handles the word with such scrupulous care that he both stays on the path himself, keeping to the highway and avoiding the byway, and makes it easy for others to follow.

The shame that any workman feels when the incompetence of his work is detected is applied here to the Christian ministry. The Christian teacher should be able to continually submit his work to God for his approval. Walter Kaiser lecturing on hermeneutics warned of the dangers of not being diligent in the interpretation of many texts in preaching. He quoted 'Wonderful things in the bible I see; some of them put there by you and by me!' Are we endeavouring to truly bring out the sense of what God is saying in a text or passage or simply forcing our own interpretation upon them – making them say what we want to say? Handling God's revelation in this manner is to distort it, perhaps even to deny it. All this guidance was so vital for Timothy, the chosen teachers of v2 – and we ourselves.

It appears that Paul is now moving on to consider more serious deviations from the truth in v16-18. The faithful preacher will 'shun' profane and vain babblings. While this exhortation is similar to that of v14, Paul makes clear the seriousness of the outcome. This kind of disputing concerning the truth will not build up the believers but in effect can undermine their faith and turn them away from God. This is what is meant 'by increase to more ungodliness'. For Mounce⁵ these kinds of disputes are in direct opposition to God, cf. 1 Tim.6v20, and 'What we say is really what we are.' Heretical arguments are profane and futile. The dire effect is pointed out. The spread of false teaching is compared to gangrene, *ga,ggraina gangarina*, a known medical term from at least the fourth century BC for the decay of flesh in a part of the body which is steadily advancing. Knight⁶ points out that the present tense of the imperative 'avoid' means that this is something which Timothy must constantly seek to do. The false teaching is as we have seen both godless and gangrenous.

In v17b-18 Paul here alludes to a number of false teachers when he uses 'their' and then shows that he is not afraid to name two heretics whose unwholesome teaching had caused spiritual sickness in the church. For Hymenaeus see 1 Tim.1v20 (here we discover he is still active), but for Philetus

¹ Paul uses *spouda,zw spoudazō* again in these Letters (4v9,21) with the meaning of 'hasten'; here it has the meaning of 'to be zealous, eager, make every effort to'.

² Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, p. 525.

³ Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, p. 748.

⁴ Stott, *Guard the Gospel*, p.68.

⁵ Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, p.526-527.

⁶ Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, p.410.

nothing else is known. The false teaching seems when linked to 1 Tim. 4v3, 'forbidding to marry' etc. to suggest that they had a low view of the material world and the human body and held that in some sense believers were already resurrected and in their 'glorified state'. Paul elsewhere has used the term *avna, stasij anastasis* for Jesus' bodily resurrection (Rom. 1v4, 6v5; Phil. 3v10) and the resurrection of believers (1 Cor. 15v12,13,21,42). It is not acceptable to apply this word only to a spiritual experience. Such teaching takes away from the fundamental belief in Christ's bodily resurrection and the certainty of the believers' future hope. Some, but not all have been deeply affected by this teaching. Here, in effect, Paul 'reapocalypticises' the concept.

It is so important to be well taught so that error can be refuted as it appears¹. It is important not to read later ideas which were not fully formed into the text.

In v19 Paul affirms that despite the false teaching and the possibility of some being led astray, Timothy should recognise that what God has done in people's lives will not be destroyed. Using *me,ntoi mentoi* here as an adversative, 'nevertheless' he insists that even though the false teachers are at work and some are being influenced by their teaching, the foundation God has laid in Ephesus and elsewhere still stands² firm. There are two reasons for this. What Knight³ calls 'God's electing knowledge of his own and the fact that such true believers will abstain from wickedness'.

Paul was fond of the metaphor of a building to represent the church (1 Tim. 3v15; 1 Cor. 3v10-15; Eph. 2 v19-23). For Marshall⁴ here we should understand that God's church, characterised by its possession of the truth, represented by faithful believers in Ephesus, is certain to stand firm, despite the activities of the opponents. Mounce⁵ rather suggests that it is individuals who are more in view, cf. 'those', v19, 'everyone naming the name of the Lord'. They will not be swayed by heresy. There appears to be little difference really between these two positions – since the individuals are the church!

On ancient buildings inscriptions were engraved to indicate their purpose. Seals also were used in identifying objects and particularly to affirm ownership. God has put his seal on the church by a double inscription:

Secret and invisible – the Lord knows them that are his (Paul here is alluding to LXX, Numbers 16:15, using *ku,rioj* instead of *o` geo,j*). God was able to differentiate between the false and the true at the rebellion of Korah and just as the sad incident did not really decimate the number of Israel so the false teaching will not fundamentally effect the church in Ephesus; the foundation God has laid will remain.

Public and visible – those who name the name of Christ will depart from iniquity (is the allusion here to Num. 16v26 or Is. 52v11?). Here is the sign of true spiritual life – they show that they are God's children by their holy lives. Bengel remarks that the imperative 'let everyone ...depart' implies the power to depart - and the blessedness of those who depart. Men such as Philetus and Hermogones showed by their life and teaching that they really did not belong to the Lord. But as far as Timothy is concerned he must:

Be a Vessel Clean and Ready

There is a close connection between the metaphor of an edifice to describe the church in the previous verse and the call to turn away from iniquity in verse 19-22. Here however, it is not the external structure of the 'great house' which Paul refers to but the contents, particularly the various utensils,

¹ See Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, p. 753 for a full discussion.

² The verb 'stands' is *e[sthken estēken* which is the perfect indicative active used here intransitively, meaning 'to stand firm' or 'continues to stand'.

³ Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, p.415.

⁴ Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, p. 755.

⁵ Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, p.529

which are in mind. Paul is referring to the Christian community in its broadest sense i.e. the different people found within the professing church, including in this context, the false teachers. In a great house both types of vessel would be seen, the wooden or earthen and the precious. The gold and silver vessels were designed to function for honourable uses. The wood and clay vessels are for dishonourable uses. While for Mounce¹ the metaphor can be pressed too far, it seems clear that the honourable vessels are God's servants while the ignoble are false teachers. As Hendriksen² explains, the genuine members are destined for honour (Matt.25v34-40); the others, for dishonour (see Matt.25 v 41-45; 1 Sam 2v30b; Rom. 9v21). A man must effectively cleanse himself from these with their defiling practices and evil doctrines and then he can be a vessel unto honour, wholly set apart for the Lord and his work. He will be useful to his master who can then exercise full authority over him. He is prepared for every good work that his master may choose. So it is not as Marshall³, that a dishonourable vessel can be cleansed. This is not the point; rather that the faithful servant must cleanse or separate *himself* from the defilement caused by fellowship with those who fail to preach the truth of God (1 Cor. 5v11,13; 2 Cor. 6v14-7v1).

By acting upon Paul's exhortation, Timothy would be an instrument 'sanctified' (perfect passive participle) separated and thus in a condition of usefulness to his master i.e. God – prepared (another perfect passive participle) for every good work i.e., for a variety of ongoing ministries or forms of service in the mission of God that one may be called by God to do (2 Tim. 3v17; Eph. 2v10).

The next verse (v22) is closely linked to what is before. For Knight⁴, to be the kind of vessel God wants Timothy must flee youthful lusts (v22a) that may be a particular problem to him. Stott⁵, and also Marshall to a certain degree, understands these not only as a reference to the sensual sins but also youthful self-assertion, selfish ambition, headstrong obstinacy, arrogance, although Marshall further suggests that these may be in others, rather than Timothy himself; and he was to pursue godliness, moral righteousness, faith, love and peace in good company, 'with all that call upon the Lord out of a good heart' i.e., those who share the same desires for holiness and progress in godliness, crying to God for such. The list shares three items with 1 Tim.6v11 and three with Gal.5v22-23. Most people are engaged in 'pursuit', but it is the pursuit of a happy family; the pursuit of a successful career; the pursuit of a hobby. How many of us are pursuing the life God requires?

Avoid Senseless and Spiritually Damaging Disputes

Timothy should also refuse the kind of 'speculations', senseless and actually spiritually damaging questions already referred to earlier that result only in disputes (v23). In v24, the term *douloj* *doulos* 'servant' is applied for the first time in 1 & 2 Timothy to him. So Paul emphasises the nature of Timothy's – and our - relationship with God. The Lord's servant must be totally under the control of his master. No longer a slave to sin but a slave of God.

Gently but Faithfully seek to lead to Repentance

From this point Paul is much more specific in what he has already dealt with in a more general way.⁶ Also he turns from the more personal problems to those in Timothy's relationships with others. So Timothy must not be quarrelsome but gentle, manifesting the general quality of kindness to all; he must be skilful in teaching, patient when wronged; 'patient' denotes an attitude of patient forbearance towards those who oppose him or dispute with him.

¹ Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, p.531-532.

² Hendriksen, *1 & 11 Timothy and Titus*, p.270

³ Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, p.761-763.

⁴ Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, p.420.

⁵ Stott, *Guard the Gospel*, p.73; Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, p.764.

⁶ Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, p.419.

Another quality is developed at greater length – meekness or humility, v25. Here we see divine and human resources working hand in hand. As Timothy humbly but faithfully instructs his opponents in the truth, God can use his attitude and arguments to bring them to repentance. The idea is described by Marshall¹ as conveying in a ‘pregnant sense “to come to one’s senses”’, v26.

Timothy’s opponents are ensnared by the devil, v26. By Timothy’s caring attitude they would see the love of Christ in action. The devil has taken them captive (the concept of taking captives alive and being held captive, is conveyed by the perfect tense). Paul uses a purpose clause. So with what purpose has the devil done this? It is in order that they might do the will of that one who took them captive.² So Timothy must manifest the qualities of a well grounded and effective leader who can be used of God to bring people to repentance leading them away from error and the entrapment of the devil (v26).

What a chapter of encouragement for Paul’s younger colleague! We also must take all this teaching to heart – its encouragements and warnings. Only by taking seriously all that Paul has affirmed can we see the mission of God advance.

CHAPTER 3v 1-17 Continue in the Mission Message – Do not be Diverted by the Evil Nature of the Last Days

Timothy has been made aware of the defection in Asia and the presence of opponents in the church. Now the extent of the danger becomes a theme and is expressed in detail. In v1-5a we have a general prophecy of the last days giving us a list of evil or rather evil-doers. The list is concluded with a warning in v5b. In v6-9 the present tense is now used with a more specific reference to the effects of the opponents on some women who have been led astray by them. So the false teachers are identified in two ways – seen as part of the final upsurge of evil and then compared with the opponents of Moses in their opposition to the truth.

In the first section the use of the future tense demonstrates that the evil is already known to God; it should not take the believers by surprise and is under the control of God. For Mounce,³ the future tense does not rule out the present inception of the increasingly evil days to come. We are also reminded that heresy and immorality go hand in hand.

Marshall⁴ has entitled and structured the section 3v1-4v8 as ‘Ungodliness and the Consequent Need for Faithfulness and Truth’.

- (a) Prophecy of Increasing Ungodliness in the Church 3v1-9.
- (b) Paul’s Example and Teaching and the Importance of Scripture 3v10-17.
- (c) Closing Charge to Timothy 4v1-8

While the division is useful, it is questionable that Paul is referring to the church rather than the society in which the church lives and witnesses. “Men will...” appears to point to those outside the church – although it must be remembered that the ‘spirit’ of the age can also influence and penetrate the church.

Mounce⁵ makes the useful point that although at first sight the ‘vice list’ (common in Paul) appears to be general there is a close connection to the situation and the opposition in Ephesus and ‘Paul ties the behaviour of the opponents to the eschatological prophecies and spells out the consequences of their sins’.

¹ Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, p.767

² Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, p.426

³ Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, p.544

⁴ Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, p.768

⁵ Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, p.542

The Perilous Times of the Last Days v1-5

Paul is making Timothy aware that the evil and moral laxity all around was not a passing situation - in fact it was a permanent characteristic of the present age. How are we to understand this? It must be recognised that the last days began with the ministry of Christ on earth to the time of the Lord's return, (Hebrews 1:2). So here the whole period is depicted between the 1st/ 2nd appearance of Christ. In support of this view, note how the shift from the future to the present in v6, for Marshall,¹ shows that the period has already begun. Also one can comment that it is not some kind of mask falling off a second century writer's face as he had been deceitfully trying to put everything into the mouth of Paul.

Paul uses a present imperative for Timothy, 'know this'. The adjective terrible (*calepo,j chalepos*) meaning 'hard' or 'difficult', which can be understood as either 'hard to bear' e.g. in the case of physical or mental pain, or 'hard to deal with, violent, dangerous'. It was used in Classical Greek of wild animals and of the raging sea. The only other time it is used is in the story of two Gadarene demoniacs, who were so savage and untamed that Matthew describes them as 'so fierce – *calepo,j chalepos* – that no-one could pass that way' (8v28). This describes the kind of period the Christian community should expect in the last days – painful and perilous, hard to endure and hard to cope with.

Moral Conduct v2-4. Actually, 19 characteristics are described here; so it is the second longest vice-list in the NT. There are points of contact with Romans 1. There is stress generally on self-centredness², for Marshall, especially in the first five characteristics, but the rest generally describes the immoral tendencies which result. The list makes use of wordplays and begins and ends with misdirected love, self-love and love of pleasure.³

Marshall⁴ points out that there are parallels in Hellenistic sources, both Greek and Jewish; it is especially close to Philo and 1 QS 4.9-11. So the characteristics are those that would generally be regarded as evil. He suggests that the opening item sets the tone for what is to follow and the last one(s) wraps it up. For him, as for Mounce, the dominant theme is that people are self-centred rather than God-centred. This affects their relationships with other people so that they think only of their own interests, conducting themselves often violently to get their own ends.

'Lovers of themselves' - self centred, with an admiration of oneself and an interest only in what suits or pleases them.

'Lovers of money' - when sometimes material possessions become the chief object of our affections. Then God is displaced in their lives. Paul has shown us that the love of money is the root of all kinds of evil, 1 Tim. 6v10. It was made clear earlier that such love also disqualifies one for eldership and the office of a deacon, 1 Tim. 3v3, 8; Tit. 1v7. The word is found elsewhere in the NT only of the Pharisees, Luke 16v14.

Note again that Mounce⁵ has highlighted the '*philos* compounds' both at the beginning and end of the list. He also makes the point that when one's love for God is replaced by love for oneself and the material world, then all the other vices naturally flow from it.

'Boasters' – sometimes used of boasting of things that are in fact not there. In Judaism it gives evidence of a self-sufficiency which leaves out God.

'Proud' or haughty, disdainful. For Marshall,⁶ having a high opinion of oneself and scorning others.

¹ Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, p.769

² Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, p.542

³ Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, p.430.

⁴ Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, p.772

⁵ See note 2.

⁶ Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, p.773

'blasphemers' – the word is generally used of denying the majesty of God by speaking of him in a disrespectful way. As the words following have to do with antisocial behaviour the broader thought of slander may also be here.¹

For Mounce,² probably the meaning is abusive in speech, since the vices are generally directed towards people and not toward God.

The next 5 seem to refer to family life and can be grouped together.

'Disobedient to parents' one can speak of the neglect of the God-given authority in the home which has led children into disobedience and rebellion against their parents. (Eph. 6v1)

'ungrateful' signifies not thankful or appreciative – not only to God but others as well.

'Unholy' as opposed to pious ο'σιος (*hosios*) a word sometimes used in Classical Greek of filial respect.

'Without Love' points to a lack of natural human affection.

'Unforgiving' or implacable, means incapable of being appeased or placated. Guthrie³ defines it as 'Hostility that admits to no truce'. For Towner, 'it describes the harshest of attitudes, one which refuses reconciliation and thus leads to the destruction of relationships and lives'.⁴ The rest are general descriptions:

'Slanders', a word (six times) which is used of the Devil, the Accuser in the singular.

'Without self control' expressing the idea of responding to one's desires irrespective of the outcome with no real control. This is the opposite of what is required of an elder, Tit.1v8.

'Untamed' reflecting someone who is uncivilised or ungovernable like an animal which has not been tamed.

'Not lovers of good' really means that these people are strangers to all goodness. Note the opposite is expected of elders in Tit.1v8.

'Treacherous' refers to someone who is disposed towards betrayal. It is used of Judas (Lk.6v16) and of the Jews (Acts 7v52).

'Rash' reflects a recklessness or thoughtlessness in word or deed.

'Conceited' means to be high minded or puffed up. This is the only participle in the list, meaning 'swollen with pride'. See the same idea expressed in 1 Tim. 3v6; 6v4.

'Lovers of pleasure instead of lovers of God'. The statement does not suggest the asceticism of 1 Tim. 4 is in mind.⁵

All the above reflect unsocial, anti-social behaviour.

Paul writes of a 'form of godliness, an outward form of religion with no inward reality. It should be noted that there would still be those who profess religion in the last days. But it would not be a religion of 'power'. For Towner⁶ the word 'form' lays stress on pretence, for there would be those who claim a more 'spiritual' experience than the imprisoned apostle, a better knowledge of God. Religion in the last days will have an emptiness about it – no doubt it still functions, but it has become simply a social thing. The Greek here is δυναμις *dunamis* which is understood by Marshall⁷ as 'the vital power for Christian living, given by the Holy Spirit to believers'. One is reminded of the earlier references to 'power' already in the epistle, where 1v7-8 and 2v1 can refer to the reality of God's power through fellowship with him where we are strengthened by the Holy Spirit.

The call to 'turn away' is stronger than just avoiding contact and suggests that they must be kept out of the church.

¹ Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, p.773

² Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, p.545

³ Guthrie, *The Pastoral Epistles*, p.169.

⁴ Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, p.557.

⁵ Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, p.775

⁶ Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, p.560.

⁷ Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, p.775

The False Teachers of the Last Days v6-9

Paul reveals to Timothy Satan's tactics. The pseudo Christian teachers are seen as using insidious methods to infiltrate the Christian community. They attack the vulnerable and gullible. At Ephesus a group of unstable and immoral women had been the prey of the false teachers. The word rendered 'silly' women *gunaikarion* literally means 'little' which probably conveys feebleness i.e. they were 'weak' or 'feeble' in the faith. Marshall¹ makes the point that to see a general devaluation of women here is mistaken in view of the positive references elsewhere, 1 Tim. 2v11; 5v3; 2 Tim. 1v5; 3v14; Tit. 2v3-5. One should also note the strong condemnation of the men here.

Satan will often use those who are weak and unstable to gain a foothold. They were 'laden' with sins which means literally 'to heap up' and suggests a culmination of sins which had become so unbearable that any solution offered is clutched at. They were swayed by various impulses and are ready to listen to any sort of advice – 'ever learning', but their minds had become so fickle and warped that they had become incapable of attaining the 'knowledge of the truth'. The main quest is for the sensational and so they fall an easy prey to pseudo-Christians teachers. Knight² points out that because they are learning heresy and not gospel truth they 'never really learn the truth that can make them free'. Again, Marshall³ proposes that there is perhaps the suggestion of people receiving an endless series of lessons, perhaps for a fee, and contrasts this with 3v15, where a study of the scriptures can lead to saving knowledge. Note that it is Mounce⁴ who highlights the articular 'the homes' may refer to the well known or well to do homes, rich and influential, capable of accommodating and also paying the teachers, rather than, as Towner⁵, the vulnerable young widows. The sins are not defined but were possibly sins of their past, troubling the conscience, from which the false teachers could promise release or in some way allow them to be indifferent to them.

As an example of what he has been saying, Paul draws an historical parallel between these men and two magicians who opposed Moses. For Marshall⁶ the point here is that the problems faced by the church are the same kind as those faced by Moses and that just as those attacks failed so will these also. So Paul refers to Jannes and Jambres, who were, according to Jewish tradition, the two chief magicians of Pharaoh's court. They are not named in the OT text, although one of the Targums (Targum of Jonathan) inserts their names into Exodus 7v11 (They are then named in various Jewish and early Christian literary works). These magicians attempted to duplicate the miracles of Moses.

The key word is that the magicians 'opposed', 'resisted' Moses. He is seen as the representative of God in his day and an appropriate antitype for those who now opposed the gospel. 'The truth' here is the good news, the mission message or the apostolic doctrine. Their minds are regarded as not functioning properly as a guide to correct belief and moral principles. Like the magicians who could not keep up with the miracles of Moses, so is the case with the false teachers. They will delude for a season, but in time their folly will be unveiled. The magicians failed to copy Moses' miracle of the gnats (Ex. 8v18-19) and failed to deal with the boils (Ex.9v11). The opponents of Timothy will also finally fail. The truth of God will stand and error while it may take in a few weak people will not ultimately triumph.

The Living Example for the Last Days

So Paul reveals that the last days will bring a serious decline in morals; an empty show of religion; the spread of false teaching. Now Timothy is directly addressed, and he is encouraged to be different and if necessary to stand alone. In fact, he is encouraged to remember the consecrated life of his great mentor. 'You have followed me faithfully up until now. Continue to do so'. As Mounce points out

¹ Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, p.777

² Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, p.434.

³ Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, p.777

⁴ Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, p.548.

⁵ Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, p.561.

⁶ Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, p.778

Paul's 'but you' is a strong contrast with the previous verse. The present imperative *me,ne mene* 'remain' calls for daily steadfastness.

In v10 'You have followed' *parakolouqe,w parakolouthēō* means literally 'to follow a person as he goes somewhere and walk in his footsteps'. Figuratively, it will suggest paying attention to or following with the mind i.e. accepting Paul's teaching and making it his own. Timothy is not to be a detached observer, but becoming a dedicated disciple, to emulate Paul. The contrast from the first paragraph is obvious – men were described as following their own inclinations (lovers of self, money and pleasure); Timothy had followed an altogether different standard i.e. Paul, who goes on to list the characteristics of his own life – nine virtues or experiences. He is not boasting but has reasons for doing this. There are two forms of objective evidence pointing to the genuineness of his teaching, namely, the life he lived and the sufferings he endured. Paul will urge Timothy to emulate his godly example and witness.

The list has nine elements with the typical development of the last (here two). 'It moves from teaching to way of life and the characteristics especially required in a missionary facing attack, concluding with the actual painful experiences themselves'¹. For Mounce, Paul begins with the most important items that present a visible and significant contrast to the opponents, i.e., 'the opponents' errant teaching (1Tim.1v6-7) and aberrant behaviour (2 Tim.3v6-9) are the main causes of Timothy's problems in Ephesus'².

The Life He Lived.

Paul's Teaching – Timothy was exhorted to guard Paul's teaching (1:12). It was to be the pattern for the rest of Timothy's teaching. Paul had given Timothy the foundation which he was to build upon. He was to commit this teaching to others. But the point here is that the evidence of the genuineness of his teaching is in his dedicated and godly manner of life and endurance. Paul is so convinced of his position that he both practises what he preaches and is prepared to suffer for it!

Paul's Behaviour – It is clear that Paul's whole life was given over to God. His whole demeanour, behaviour and desires were God centred. The word *avgwgh/| agōgē* 'way of life' is often used as the imitation of a model. It is found only here in the NT and can be understood as presenting 'a life patterned after Christ and lived on the basis of the knowledge of the will of God'.³

Paul's Purpose – here he refers to the spiritual ambitions which motivated him and made life meaningful for him. The reference is to having a firm resolve, a commitment to carry out what he felt called to do. His chief aim was to please the Lord in every way. He declared in Acts 20:24 that his life was worth nothing to him except that he might finish the race the Lord had marked out for him. For Paul to live was Christ.

Paul's Faith – here the meaning is likely to be his personal trust in God, rather than certain beliefs. Often when Paul was in a critical situation, the Lord would always provide a way of escape (e.g., when Paul was in the path of God's choosing in the midst of the storm, the Lord assured him that he would see him through, Acts 27v21-25).

Paul's Patience – Paul had great patience, a quality in Christ himself (1Tim.1v16), which he can produce in believers through the Spirit (Gal. 5v22). He had patience first with the Lord's people and then in the trials he had to endure. He was able through the grace of God to display tolerance towards aggravating people.

Paul's Love – even when God's people did not love Paul, his love remained the same for them (see the Corinthian church in 2 Corinthians). Here we have Paul's love towards both God and man, in contrast to the false teachers' love of self.

Paul's Endurance – it has been noted that 'persecutions' *diwgmōi/j diōgmois* always refers to persecutions for religious reasons in the NT.⁴ Paul kept going when things were tough. 'Afflictions' is a

¹ Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, p.783

² Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, p.557.

³ Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, p.571.

⁴ Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, p.784

more general word which means 'suffering', 'misfortune'. The final two items are linked and really set out from the others by the use of the plural and the reference to actual events.

The Suffering He Endured.

Paul now recounts specific examples of his suffering for Christ in three Galatian cities. Timothy was a citizen of Lystra and probably as a youth witnessed the occasion of Paul's suffering there. The apostle's bearing during these trying times may well have made a deep impression upon his mind and been a factor in influencing him. The events mentioned from Paul's personal history occurred during his first missionary journey.

Pisidian Antioch – By decree of the Emperor Augustus it had become a Roman colony in 25BC and by the time Paul visited was prosperous, influential, with elite families who were the first from the eastern provinces to take their seat in the Roman Senate¹. After a lengthy Sabbath sermon where Paul recounted the history of Israel, the Jews were outraged because Paul's message condemned them and brought hope for the Gentiles. The Jews persecuted Paul and expelled him out of the city, (Acts 13v14-52).

Iconium – An important city at the crossroad connecting the provinces of Macedonia, Achaia and Asia with Rome. The Jews again stirred up the people after another tremendous response to Paul's mission preaching. On hearing of a plot to kill him, Paul fled secretly out of the city.

Lystra – Another Roman military colony founded by Augustus in 26BC. Paul and Barnabas were 'heroes' in this city after healing a lame man – in fact the people led by the priest of Zeus were fully set on worshipping them; but not for long. Jews again stirred the people up against Paul, dragged him out of the city and stoned him leaving him for dead. As his disciples gathered around him he miraculously recovered. Mounce² suggests that possibly Timothy witnessed the stoning. Acts 16v1 (the second missionary journey) does not say that Paul had just got to know Timothy.

Paul affirms that the Lord rescued me from all these serious trials. The language echoes Ps. 33v18-19 as Paul interprets his suffering in the light of the righteous sufferer in the Psalms who is preserved by God. So while God did not always remove Paul's trials he did bring him through them.

The Persecution He Expected

Marshall³ points out that what happened to Paul is presented as typical of what can happen to 'all' God's people. The Greek construction emphasises this with the use of the word *pa,ntej pantes*. The inevitability of persecution is further explained in v13. Mounce makes the important point that v12-13 generalize the truth of Paul's experience of persecution and suffering making it the experience of Timothy and all Christians. Again, it 'hammers the final nail into the coffin of any aberrant gospel that preaches an abundant life devoid of persecutions'.⁴ 'All who desire', of course, expresses not a mere passing desire, or whimsical wish but a resolve or commitment of the will. Here with the reference to persecution, the genuine as opposed to the false are distinguished.

Paul makes the point that the spiritual state of the society is not upward – evil men and impostors will go from bad to worse deceiving and being deceived. The word translated impostors *go,hj goēs*, only here in the NT, is literally 'wizards' and was probably suggested by the earlier allusion to the Egyptian magicians (v8).

¹ Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, p.573.

² Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, p.577.

³ Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, p786.

⁴ Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, p.560.

For Marshall¹ the statement refers to the present triumph of evil (3v1-9). But for him the horizon is only the time then present and the immediate future, while interestingly the long-term horizon gives a different perspective (4v1, 8, and 14). He also emphasises that the word 'impostors' originally meant 'sorcerer' and connects these with the magicians who opposed Moses and so for him he suggests that Paul is thinking of the Ephesian opponents and not evil people in general. But is Paul not outlining the general triumph of evil and evil men in society? There will be and are many opponents who as Paul, using traditional derogatory alliteration affirms, deceive others out of their own deception.²

The Continued Commitment for the Last days

Paul now addresses Timothy again, 'But as for you'. They 'go on' in evil from bad to worse, Timothy is to 'continue' or abide in what he has learned and believed. He goes in the opposite direction from this alternative gospel. There are two reasons why he must abide in the truth, or must be satisfied with what he has already received.

First, because of the character of those from whom he has learned it – Paul and his grandmother and mother, who had taught him the OT from his infancy (cf. 1v5). He knew their integrity and he can rest assured that he himself has not been deceived. Mounce³ makes the point that basing the reliability of the gospel message upon the character of the teachers is a positive counterpart to Paul's critique of the heresy based on the 'false teachers' illicit behaviour. So commodity and character was a standard way of measuring truth claims in the culture of the time.⁴

The second reason is his own knowledge of the OT Scriptures which he was taught. So he should remain loyal to what had come to believe because it was from the OT and from the apostle Paul and his own family members. 'Holy' is used of the Scriptures only here in the NT. The rejection of the myths and genealogies does not involve a rejection of the OT properly understood.

In contrast to the unstable women of v6 who were convinced by almost any teaching, Timothy had been convinced by the truth. He was to continue (the verb *me,nw menō* is used elsewhere especially in the Johannine writings for remaining in an accepted teaching, 1 John 2v24, or of one's relationship with Christ, John 15v1-3) on the straight road of truth, allowing no one to shift him. Timothy was to hold fast to the things that he was convinced of, the matters which he had formed strong convictions about. At the present time, not many people have strong convictions about theological matters – and often they are concerned with tradition rather than truth.

Timothy had a rich background of Scriptural teaching. His mother and grandmother had taught him when he was a child. Education was initiated when the child was very young – Hendriksen⁵ refers to 1 Sam. 1v27,28; 2v11,18,19; Josephus, *Against Apion*, 1.12; Susanna 3; VI Macc. 18.9. Such education was God-centred, involving the *verba et gesta*, 'words and deeds' of God. Mounce⁶ points out that rabbinic sources say that it was the responsibility of every father to instruct his sons in the Torah starting when they were five or six; they generally began with Leviticus! In the case of Timothy the teachers were his grandmother and mother. The Greek for 'from a child' in *bre,foj brephos* and has been used of a baby or infant, even an unborn child (Luke 1v41, 44; 2v12, 16; 18v15; Acts 7v19). Paul had also nurtured him. So the OT was written on his heart since he was a child. How vital it is to train our children in the word of God; this begins in the home and of course the church also has a responsibility.

¹ Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, p.786

² Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, p.578.

³ Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, p.563.

⁴ Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, p.581.

⁵ Hendriksen, *1 & 11 Timothy and Titus*, p.297.

⁶ Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, p.568.

'The Scriptures', were the second source of Timothy's confidence. The word was possibly used without the article. There is evidence in early Jewish literature that the anarthrous plural (without the article) was a technical expression for the Hebrew Scriptures. For Mounce¹ it is possible that the phrase includes more than just the OT. The fact that Timothy can be made wise unto salvation specifically through faith in Christ Jesus for him suggests that here we should think also of the gospel. While the NT writings were not formally classified as 'Scripture' until Irenaeus (AD 180), the process began earlier, 2 Peter 3v15-16.

The statement 'wise unto salvation' reminds us that the Bible is essentially a handbook of salvation. Its over-arching purpose is to teach not facts of science which men can discover by their own empirical investigation, but facts of salvation. The whole Bible unfolds the divine scheme of salvation – it would not be known apart from the biblical revelation. This salvation is appropriated only through faith in Christ Jesus. The mere reading about salvation in Scripture is ineffective in securing salvation unless faith is in operation, faith centred in Christ. Yet here Paul is affirming that the Scriptures have a power that is in contrast to the impotence of the false teachers (3v5). The mission message has the power to change people at the very centre of their being.

The God-Breathed Revelation for the Last Days

Two fundamental truths are asserted now about Scripture, its origin (where it comes from) and its purpose (what it is intended for).

First, a general statement. Marshall² points out that not only do the Scriptures lead to salvation for believers but their God-inspired character means that they are also able to provide such positive teaching and correctives to evil that the man of God will be prepared for every good task in the mission of God.

Source or Origin

'All Scripture is inspired by God' The phrase 'inspired by God' is a single word in the Greek *geo,pneustoj theopneustos*. This means all Scripture is 'God breathed'. These words and in fact the whole verse needs careful interpretation. Some scholars have translated thus, 'every inspired Scripture has its use', or 'every Scripture inspired by God is also...' Such a rendering could place a double limitation upon scripture. It would suggest that not all Scripture is inspired and that therefore not all scripture is profitable, but only those parts which are inspired. Since the Greek sentence has no main verb, it is certainly legitimate, grammatically speaking, to supply the verb 'is' after, rather than before, the adjective 'God-inspired' and so translate 'every God-inspired Scripture is profitable'. The argument against this construction is that it does not do justice to the little word 'and - kai. kai which comes between the two adjectives "God-inspired" and 'profitable'. The 'and' suggests that Paul is asserting two truths about Scripture, namely that it is both inspired and profitable, not merely one. So we should keep the English text 'all Scripture is God-inspired and profitable'. Guthrie points out that it is not the inspiration of Scripture which is being discussed, but the profitableness of it. 'Timothy is not being informed of the inspiration of Scripture, for this was a doctrine commonly admitted by Jews, but he is being reminded that the basis of its profitableness lies in its inspired character'³.

What does the statement mean 'all Scripture'? For Stott⁴ it seems possible that this comprehensive expression includes the two sources of Timothy's knowledge just mentioned i.e. 'what you have learned (from me)' and 'the sacred writings'. True, nowhere does Paul call his writings 'Scripture', but Stott points out that on a number of occasions he gets very near to it. He certainly directs that his

¹ Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, p.563.

² Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, p.790

³ Guthrie, *The Pastoral Epistles*, p. 176.

⁴ Stott, *Guard the Gospel: The Message of 2 Timothy*, p.101.

letters be read in the public assemblies, no doubt alongside OT readings. He calls his message ‘the word of God’, 1 Thess. 2v13.

Paul wrote with a great sense of authority. This authority was based on his sense of divine vocation and appointment as an apostle. One important aspect of Paul's apostleship was his consciousness of being a medium of revelation (Rom.16v25-26; Eph.3v5). He has the conviction that he writes the commands of God (11 Thess.3v6, 14; 1 Cor.14v37). His letters are to be read publicly and heeded (Col.4v16-17; 2 Cor.2v9). He claims to have the Holy Spirit (1 Cor.7v40) and the mind of Christ (1Cor.2v16). He emphasises his divine call and authority to build up Christ's church (2 Cor.13v10; Gal.1v6f.). Paul's immediate successors recognised that authority (2 Pet.3v15). This is a claim to inspiration. So the affirmation here is not that Scripture has been ‘breathed into by God’ but that it has been ‘breathed out by God’ – this is what *geo,pneustoj theopneustos* expresses.

The Holy Spirit superintended the authors as they wrote 2 Pet.1:21. God in inspiring men to write did not eliminate or suppress their personalities. In fact the individuality of the author was in no sense destroyed. His environment, education, experiences, endowments, were raised to the highest level (John 14v26) as the Spirit would suggest to his mind the very words which were appropriate to express the divine truth. So each writer had his own theological emphases, e.g. the nature of Paul's writing compared to John. Also God's inspiration also did not rule out the writers doing their homework. Luke searched all the available documents in order to root the story of Jesus in historical facts.

Marshall also discusses these verses quite fully. Regarding the possibility that Paul is referring to ‘every inspired Scripture’, Marshall¹ makes the point that to think that there is some Scripture that is not inspired is ‘unlikely to be a view held by either the author or his opponents’. This interpretation is unnatural. The real point that Paul is asserting is that the opponents preach Jewish myths and human commandments (Titus1v14) which stem ultimately from demons (1Tim. 4v1). By contrast, Timothy's message comes from God and is therefore profitable.²

The word here ‘God-breathed’ is possibly coined by Paul himself. Marshall informs us that the concept developed in Rabbinic Judaism where it was believed that the law was written or dictated by God, but the prophets and the writings were inspired by God. In Hellenistic Judaism the idea of inspiration was dominant.

The main thrust of the sentence lies in the second adjective. The writer declares that the Scriptures are inspired, as a datum with which his readers would agree and uses this as a basis for the point that he wants to stress: whatever is divinely inspired is therefore useful³.

Note also the supporting insight by Mounce who makes the point that the word *geo,pneustoj theopneustos* is typical of words formed with – *tos*; it is passive (‘scripture is God-breathed’) and not active (‘scripture emits God's breath’), i.e. is inspiring.

In discussing the word *pa/sa pasa* Mounce asks whether it is to be translated ‘each, every’ or ‘all’? He makes the point that if understood as ‘each’ then the reference will be to the different scrolls that make up the biblical text and therefore the reliability of the entire text; if it is understood as ‘all’ it simply views scripture as a whole. Each is grammatically possible. The suggestion that the meaning could somehow be ‘every’ suggesting only some portions of Scripture ‘seems foreign to the text... Paul is encouraging Timothy to centre his ministry on Scripture because it comes from God... it is out

¹ Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, p. 793.

² Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, p.570.

³ Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, p.795

of place within the context to introduce the note of the supposed unreliability of some of Scripture'¹. The point is that every single element comes from God².

Purpose or Result

It is clear that first of all the goal of Scripture is to bring us first to salvation, v15. But once saved Scripture is useful for positive and negative purposes:

Note Paul writes that Scripture is for 'teaching and reproof' – for teaching the truth and refuting error. To build up the Lord's people and to guard them from going astray into error. The fact is we cannot live without the word of God. It remains central in the mission of God.

There are actually four phrases about the usefulness of Scripture. The repetition of the preposition stresses the individual importance of each of the elements.

Some suggest they be seen as two pairs relating to belief (positive and negative) and action (negative and positive) – for Mounce 'orthodoxy and orthopraxy'³. Other scholars suggest a chiasmus with terms for teaching/education and conviction/correction. Or we may understand them as chiasmic i.e. (a) Scripture instructs positively in doctrine and (b) convicts of heresy; likewise Scripture (b) corrects improper behaviour and (a) educates positively in righteous behaviour.

So the value of the Scriptures for teaching is also stated. They are for teaching, giving us knowledge of God's revelation and will; for reproof, where there are errors of doctrine or behaviour; now the positive 'correction' – when we go astray the Word brings us back. It also brings training in righteousness – the word of God directs us in doing the will of God, walking in the path of righteousness. Here we have the comprehensive nature of the mission message entrusted to us.

So these verses deal with both creed and conduct. The Scriptures can bring the 'man of God' to maturity. Is it the 'man who belongs to God' or as in the OT a title of respect for some spokesmen, or the men called to positions of leadership in the church? Should we not understand it as all three? Here Marshall⁴ suggests the reference is to Christian leaders. But I am not sure we ought to limit this or expect this only of leaders.

The whole point here is that only through a diligent study of the Scriptures and obedience to them will the man of God become 'complete, equipped for every good work'. The words used convey the following, 'complete' or 'able to meet all demands' and 'to put something in full working order'. So the word of God equips the servant of God. It provides all we need for this life. 'The emphasis is on the sufficiency of Scripture to provide the knowledge and direction for Timothy's ministry'⁵; not only for Timothy's ministry but for us all. It will equip us for every good work.

2 Timothy 4v1-22 Preach Forth the Mission Message – Do not Delay in Coming to Me

In this chapter we have recorded some of the last words of Paul. Mounce⁶ divides these verses as follows: 3v10-4v8 should be seen as a cohesive unit, linked to the personal discussion in 4v9-22 and made up of four paragraphs. The first (3v10-13), second (3v14-17), and fourth (4v5-8) commence with the same phrase 'but you'; 4v1-4 is set off by nature of the charge, which develops out of 3v6-17 and its focus upon the heresy. Most commentators call this section Paul's 'last will and testament'.

¹ Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, p.566.

² Towner is inclined to advocate that Paul is affirming that divine inspiration applies evenly text by text to the whole of the OT because of his understanding of the single term 'Scripture', *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, p.585-588.

³ Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, p.570.

⁴ Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, p.796.

⁵ Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, p.571.

⁶ Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, p.555.

The Final Charge v.1-5

In v1 the verb 'charge' *diamartu,romai diamarturomai* was used of testifying under oath. Paul is standing in full view of the court of heaven as he commits the charge to Timothy. He places him 'under oath' to comply with the charge. It is 'a scene of solemnity'¹. There is a sense of urgency which comes through here because of the gravity of the problem and that Paul's departure is drawing near.

The charge (with God and Christ Jesus – co-actors in judgement as in salvation, 1v2) was also in light of the second coming of Christ, who will judge (Paul uses the present active participle of *me,llw mellō* 'who is about to') the living and the dead. His 'appearing' and 'kingdom' form like an hendiadys and suggest 'his appearing in his kingdom'. So while Paul can refer to the present aspect of God's kingdom (Rom. 14v17; 1 Cor. 4v20; Col. 1v13) often he writes as he does here of the final consummation and ultimate victory of Christ (1 Cor. 6v9; 15v24; Gal. 5v21; Eph. 5v5; Col. 4v11). Timothy needed not to fix his eyes on the awful state of things but upon God and his all-knowing and soon returning Lord. Timothy may be hesitant by disposition, but he must remember Jesus Christ the coming judge and king. His work will be recalled and he must give account. Timothy's life – in fact the ministry of us all - is on display before God and Christ.² The content of the charge is set out in five imperatives.

The Preaching v.2

A Mighty Proclamation

'Preach the word'. It is not simply that he was to preach, but he was to preach 'the word', God's word, which God has spoken. Here is the mission message. Timothy will know what Paul is referring to – The apostolic body of doctrine passed on from Paul; the Scriptures Timothy had been taught since he had been a child. Paul had already told Timothy that the Scriptures were profitable for all things: now he tells him to 'preach' them. The preacher was like a herald. One who was commissioned to make a public proclamation. Matthew Henry³ notes: 'Not our own notions or fancies we are to preach, but the pure plain Word of God.' He was to 'preach' it = proclaim or herald the word., not just deliver a moral or religious discourse of any kind and in any way i.e. in the weakened sense in which 'preach' is often understood today. We need to maintain a desire for solid biblical teaching. For Mounce⁴ 'preach' is to proclaim aloud. Timothy was actually being encouraged to take Paul's place in the ongoing mission of God.

An Urgent Proclamation

'Be instant in season and out of season.' The verb *evpi,sthmi ephistemi* means 'be urgent' or 'to be ready, be on hand, stand by'. Here it can be understood as 'Never lose a sense of urgency'. In matters of life and death the preacher must never be lethargic. He must convey the urgent importance of what he is preaching. He is to be on duty at all times. When the time is convenient and when it is not convenient. It is always time to preach the word of God. Paul seemed to be in an 'out of season' situation, but he still preached the word. Mounce⁵ discusses the subjective understanding – Timothy is to preach whether he is prepared or not – and the objective understanding – no matter about the opponents opposition. Most prefer the second, but Mounce does not rule out either.

A Faithful Proclamation

'correct, rebuke and encourage' – Timothy is not to be timid. With the full authority of the Scriptures, he is to correct, rebuke and encourage. The word for rebuke is a strong word, the same word our Lord used when rebuking the evil spirits. Some have doubts and they need to be corrected; others

¹ Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, p.571.

² Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, p.571.

³ Matthew Henry, *Commentary on the Whole Bible*, vol. VI (accessed November 2012).

⁴ Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, p. 573.

⁵ Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, p.573.

have fallen into sin and need to be rebuked; others are haunted by fears and cast down by troubles and need to be encouraged. The first list of ministry activities closes with this note of encouragement. Mounce¹ suggests that the four imperatives beginning with 'preach' plus the above loosely parallel the four prepositional phrases in 3v16.

A Patient Proclamation

'with great patience' – a phrase which now qualifies the above imperatives. Timothy is not to subject his hearers to pressure tactics. Sometimes he might think that there was no response. He is to wait upon the Lord and allow God to work within people's hearts. Christian reproof without the grace of longsuffering has often led to a harsh, censorious attitude intensely harmful to the cause of Christ. For Mounce² this exhortation prepares Timothy for the difficulties described in v3-4 and the Ephesian situation.

An Instructive Proclamation.

'with all instruction' – Timothy is to have the enthusiasm of the herald, yet his teaching should involve the most painstaking and thorough style of instruction.

Mounce³ gives a useful summary:

:

As it conflicts with the Ephesian heresy, he will need to confront the false teachers and their teaching, rebuke those who will not listen to him, and exhort those who will listen and follow the true gospel...Timothy must have complete and total patience and his teaching must inform his preaching, confronting, rebuking and exhorting...what [Paul] says is true of all Christian ministers, just as much of Paul's instruction elsewhere goes beyond Timothy.

The Perversion v.3-4

Paul is giving a second basis upon which to give the charge of v1 – see the word *ga.r gar* (because) which introduces the paragraph. Before the coming there were going to be dark days. People cannot bear the truth. He expresses it both negatively and positively. 'They will not endure sound doctrine'... but accumulate teachers... 'according to their own desires'. They pile them up, teacher upon teacher. One is reminded of Jer. 5v31, 'The prophets prophesy falsely and my people love to have it so'; and Ezk. 33v32 where Ezekiel was 'unto them as a very lovely song of one who has a pleasant voice and can play well on an instrument; for they hear your words but they do not do them'.

They prefer the sensational and the speculative, rather than good doctrine which would build them up. Timothy needed to be teaching the truth (sound teaching) because wholesome doctrine was becoming more and more unpopular. The Ephesians are surrounding themselves with teachers who offer what their evil hearts want to hear rather than listening to Timothy and the gospel. Once they leave the straight road of truth, fanciful fables and myths satisfy their disorientated imaginations. They do not seem aware that truth has been left behind. The word *knhqo,mai knēthomai* 'itching', generally translated as 'itching ears' is used figuratively of curiosity that looks for interesting and spicy bits of information or what is sensational or novel. The false teachers will scratch the itching ears.

'But as for you' = is now used for the third time, 3v10; 14. He repeats his call for Timothy to be different. He must not take his lead from the prevailing 'theological fashions' of the day.

The Persistence v.5

The four imperatives all make the same point, namely the need for perseverance in the mission of God, (3v10).

¹ Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, p.573.

² Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, p.574.

³ Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, p.573.

'Be sober in all matters'. While this exhortation may be about avoiding drunkenness it is more concerned with a coolness of spirit, clear-mindedness. Guthrie¹ notes: 'An unruffled alertness in every aspect of the work.'

'Endure hardship' The theme of being prepared to suffer has been prominent in the letter. So Timothy is to be a good soldier of the Gospel and is to persevere.

'Do the work of an evangelist'. The word 'work' is used elsewhere for the elders duty (3v1). Concerning the description 'evangelist', in Acts 21v8 Philip is so described and see also 8v4,12,35 and 40 for examples of this work). Towner² makes the point that the distinction found in Eph. 4v11 and the association of the work with the travelling ministry of Philip suggests that the word is pointing to Timothy's ministry within the mission to the Gentiles, rather than some settled work or office within the Ephesian church. We are reminded that the 'good news is not just to be preserved against distortion; it is to be spread abroad'³.

'Discharge all duties'. The same verb is used of Paul and Barnabas when they had completed their relief work at Jerusalem, Acts18v25. So Timothy is to fully fulfil his ministry as Paul gathers up all the former exhortations. Clearly, here again, the note of obligation is being sounded. The mission of God must continue, as Paul will stress below.

V6-8 form the final paragraph in this section, with the change from the second to the first person, setting out Paul's present(v6), past(v7), and future(v8) – These verses give us 'a powerful conclusion to the third section of the epistle (3v10-4v8) as well as the epistle as a whole'⁴.

The Final Chapter v.6

'You must'.... For I'...

Towner⁵ notes here the theme of succession when it comes to Timothy, who had been his coworker and apostolic delegate. Paul's ministry is reaching its conclusion. Timothy is to step into the gap. The apostle's example, now set out is to be his younger colleague's template.

He likens his life to a libation or drink offering. In the OT God prescribed that for certain offerings the Israelite would bring a measure of wine and pour it over the altar. Mounce⁶ make the point that the present tense here stresses that the process has begun, and the passive voice that God, not Rome is in control, despite appearances. Stott⁷ also notes 'So imminent is his martyrdom, that he speaks of the sacrifice having already begun.' This is of course conveyed by the inclusion of the adverb, *hvdh ēdē*, 'already'. Paul's whole life had been a sacrifice. Now he faced the supreme sacrifice – offering up his life. Paul can use this same imagery at times with different emphases, (see Phil. 2v17, 4v6). He now uses another word to point to his death.

The Departure v6

The word 'departure' *avna,lusij analisis* seems to have become the regular word for death, but its metaphorical origin should not be forgotten. It denotes the striking of a tent, or the loosing of a vessel, the release from shackles. Already the anchor is weighed, the ropes are slipped and the boat is about to set sail for the other shore. Spriq⁸ cites an interesting parallel in sailors offering a libation before setting sail. What might seem the end to Timothy appears to the apostle as a glorious new era when he will be released from all his present restrictions. We should note that death for the Christian is simply a departure to heaven and Paul saw his death as his finest hour.

¹ Guthrie, *The Pastoral Epistles*, p. 179.

² Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, p.608.

³ Stott, *Guard the Gospel: The Message of 2 Timothy*, p.112.

⁴ Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, p.577.

⁵ Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, p.609.

⁶ Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, p.577.

⁷ Stott, *Guard the Gospel: The Message of 2 Timothy*, p.113.

⁸ Spriq in Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, p.578.

The Dedication v.7

Paul's motive here simply is to provide encouragement for Timothy. He looks back over 30 years of ministry and describes it factually, not boastfully, with three metaphorical statements of its usefulness. The parallel structure adds to the solemnity of the pronouncements, and the objects placed first in the Greek text with the definite articles draw attention not to what Paul had done but to the fight, the race and the faith.¹

The Fight – 'the good fight' – not that he had fought well, but as Mounce² makes clear, that the fight of the Christian ministry is inherently good and is worth the battle. Paul had earlier encouraged Timothy with similar words ((1 Tim. 6v12). Towner suggests that we consider that Paul has in mind the athletic contest but still regards the application as necessarily broad 'viewing the whole of life as an intense struggle against an opposition in which spiritual power must be matched by personal commitment and resolve to endure to the end of the contest'.³

The Faith - as a custodian of the truth Paul had kept what had been entrusted to him by God. Paul didn't compromise, desert or defect. Earlier in Antioch he was even willing to withstand Peter for the sake of the truth (Gal. 2v11f). He had guarded the deposit of revealed truth.

Some suggest that this statement is about Paul 'keeping faith', (see Marshall's discussion, and the view that it suggests his perseverance⁴). However Mounce⁵ explains that when Paul uses the definite article he generally means 'the faith' in the objective creedal sense of the Christian faith.

The Finish – Paul had run a good race. The course was the course mapped out for him by his Lord. Paul makes no claim to have won the race, but to have stayed the course, see Acts 20v24. For Mounce⁶, it is not that the race is won, otherwise Timothy's ministry would be unnecessary. It is that Paul has done his part in the mission of God; Timothy must carry on.

It is easy to start things but it is harder to finish them. Paul could use the perfect tense for all three expressions because what was begun in the past was still true at that moment in the present.

The Delight v.8

The Crown

The use of *loipon* here involves more than merely a logical or sequential use; the meaning is 'henceforth' and the end of Paul's lifetime of service is being underlined. Paul would be awarded a crown, not a laurel wreath, which would be awarded in the athletic contest (1Cor.9v26), but an incorruptible crown which is the crown of righteousness⁷. This crown is not so much the reward for Paul's holiness of living. The crown is the believer's full realisation of God's righteousness. Mounce⁸ defends Paul here. He is not just bugling his accomplishments – he has mentioned his failures (1 Tim. 1v12-17) and God's provision (2 Tim. 2v1). In v1 Paul has used the images of Jesus' coming and v8 is a repetition of the most common theme in 2 Timothy – encouragement.

¹ Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, p.579.

² Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, p.579.

³ Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, p.612.

⁴ Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, p.808.

⁵ Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, p.580.

⁶ Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, p.580.

⁷ Towner informs us that the language or imagery used here was 'current' at that time but there is no likelihood of any connection. Wisdom 5:15-16 states: 'But the righteous (*dikaioi dikaioi*) live forever, and their reward is with the Lord...therefore they will receive a glorious crown and a beautiful diadem from the hand of the Lord'. He also notes *Letter of Aristeas* 280: 'God having granted you a crown of righteousness'. Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, n. 104, p. 615

⁸ Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, p.580.

The Coming

The crown was for all who await Christ's coming, here as Judge. Paul does not use *krith,j(kritēs* elsewhere but can use *kri,nw krinō* of Christ rather than God (Rom. 2v16; 1 Cor. 4v5; 2 Cor. 5v10). In this passage Christ's role as judge has already been stressed (v1). The Emperor Nero may declare the apostle guilty and condemn him to death, but there will soon be a magnificent overturning of Nero's verdict, when the Lord, the righteous judge declares him righteous.

The Company

The apostle is quick to add that the crown is not a special reservation for himself alone. The same reward awaits 'all who love his appearing', not just those who accept it will happen. The perfect tense suggests that they have loved his appearing in the past and will continue to love it in the future until that moment. The unbeliever dreads it, but the believer does not fear it, being prepared for it. Those who have entered by faith into his first coming appropriating it personally to themselves can look forward to his second coming. Will we love his appearing?

The Final Movements

Paul continues with second person imperatives to Timothy and guidance to help him. Twice Paul urges Timothy to lose no time in coming to him, v9, 21. The request is similar to that of Tit. 3v12 with the adverb 'quickly' adding a note of urgency to what the verb *Spouda,zw spoudazo* 'make every effort' has already stressed. This is in view of Paul's circumstances. The reason for the urgent request is because of what was happening with three members of Paul's team.

The Desertion of Demas.

He is mentioned in Col. 4v14; Phm.24 as one of Paul's close associates who appears to have been fully involved in the work. Now tragically, we learn that he has 'deserted' Paul, *evgkatalei,pw egkataleipō* (see Matt. 27v46; Mark 15v34; 2 Cor. 4v9; Heb. 13v5). The contrast between those who love Christ's appearing and those who loved the present world is brought out not only by the use of the same verb (*avgapa,w agapaō*) but also by the fact that *aivw,n aiōn* denotes the world under aspects of time, thus emphasising the difference between the present and future age sequences. He has fallen in love with the values or the comforts of this present age.

Servants of the Lord, Cresens, mentioned only here in the NT, and Titus, are going in different directions, one to Galatia and the other to Dalmatia - as explained in Titus 3, the southwestern part of Illyricum - both to areas where Paul had previously engaged in mission work (Rom. 15v19).

Luke is still there. One senses his loneliness. He asks for people to keep him company (for human friendship is the loving provision of God for mankind (Gen. 2v18)).

He wants Mark to come. 'he is profitable to me'. Precious evidence that when one fails miserably it is possible to start again and prove useful in God's work. See Acts 12v25; 13v13; 15v38, 39. Also Col. 4v10; Phm 24; 1 Pet. 5v23. Here is evidence for the ability to change as far as both of these men are concerned. Mark overcome his earlier problems to develop into a dependable and 'useful' coworker, and Paul able to move beyond an earlier rejection of Mark and change his mind concerning his younger colleague. He could be trusted again.

Regarding Tychicus, he is probably the one to relieve Timothy and who takes this letter to him, v12. The cloak, v13 is a heavy outer garment, made normally from goat hair, hide or wool which often doubled as an outer protective garment to cover the owner while he slept. The cloak would keep him warm and 'the scrolls, especially the parchments' would keep him occupied. He wished to be busy to the end. Some do not see the need of books at all. Paul never would have thought this.

That such a statement could be found in a 'fictional' pseudonymous account, as some scholars could propose, is difficult to accept.

The Final Warning v14-15

Paul gives a serious warning about Alexander the coppersmith or the worker in bronze. This man is not likely to be the heretic of 1 Tim. 1v20, or the orator Acts 19v33, for the name was a common one. If he was the first some suggest that the epistles should be reversed. This is not necessary as the act might just as easily follow. If the second, he has kept his grievance and nursed his grudge as people can do for a long time.

Towner¹ in fact is attracted to the view that the one mentioned in the warning may very well be the Alexander of 1 Tim. 1v20. If he was expelled from the church along with Hymenaeus he may have located in Troas – an association of metalworkers is known to have existed there – and Timothy would pass that way.

In personal terms and placed emphatically in the Greek text Paul informs Timothy about this man, 'He did *me* a great deal of harm'. Does this mean that he was the informer responsible for Paul's second arrest? A.T. Hanson claims that literally translated it means 'informed many things against me' and Towner² also points out that the verb can also carry the meaning 'to bring charges against'. If this happened at Troas Paul may have been arrested there quickly with no opportunity to take necessary provisions with him. If Timothy was coming through Troas to see him(v13), then he must be warned also about this man.

'He greatly withstood our words' – either the *lo,goi logoi* 'words' of Paul, or the Christian doctrine Paul and his fellow-labours preached or his defence if Alexander was witness for the prosecution. It is likely that it is the gospel witness Paul is referring to – his own and that of the others who served with him. As far as the opposition of Alexander, Paul curbs any resentment he may be tempted to have and is able to leave this man to God citing the words of Ps. 62v12 concerning him.

The Final Witness v16-18.

Paul recounts for the encouragement of his younger servant his final experiences with regard to his desertion by his friends - but not by the Lord - and his fulfilment of his great passion – to reach 'all' the Gentiles. Some suggest the reference is to his first imprisonment and the proclamation of the gospel to follow. But this seems a more recent event. It can be the first hearing or preliminary investigation – called the *prima actio* before his formal trial – the *secunda actio*³. Roman law would have permitted him to employ an advocate and call witnesses. Towner⁴ makes the point that the verb *paragi,nomai paraginomai* generally refers to the arrival or the presence of someone, but here where Paul includes the dative pronoun 'for me', the meaning he suggests is a 'presence which provides assistance or support' in the way of giving evidence or testimony on his behalf and not just moral support. Obviously the suggestion is that some could have done this but there were none to stand at his side. The verb used here 'to desert' is the same as that used of Demas in v4v10; see also 1v15. There are said to be 9 verbal similarities between Ps. 22 and v10 and v16-18 of this chapter. See also Mark 15v34, the cry of forsakenness from the cross. Was Paul reminded as Jesus was of this Psalm in the hour of his desertion?' He has no bitterness but prayed like his master that their sin might not be charged against them. Concerning those who deserted him, their motives were not as Alexander, through malice, but because of fear- so Paul's response is different.

Have you deserted the church and the eldership? Or have you turned away from someone when you should have turned to them? Or are you fully committed to the church's activities and the advance of the kingdom in the ongoing mission of God? Is the leadership deeply disappointed sometimes

¹ Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, p. 631

² Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, p. 631

³ A.N. Sherwin-White, *Roman Society and Roman Law in the New Testament*, Oxford, Clarendon, 1963, p.49ff; 276-277.

⁴ Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, p. 636.

because of your absence? 'I pray God....' We are accountable to God for how we live our lives, 2 Cor. 5v10. God will recall everything about our lives one day.

The desertion of his friends is mentioned to bring into greater prominence the divine presence and assistance. Like Jesus, Paul knew that he was not alone (John 16v32) He testifies to the Lord's presence at his side (see also other earlier experiences in Paul's life, Acts 18v9-10; 27v23; and note that the verb *paristēmi* 'stand by' or 'to be present' is used in LXX Exod. 34v5 of Moses, 'the Lord descended in a cloud and stood near to him'; then of God's people in Ps. 108v31).

The Lord gave to him the gift of inward strength (the verb is *evndunamo,w* *endunamoō* as in 2v1 and Phil. 4v13) which fortified him so that he was empowered (there is an emphatic personal pronoun *diV evmou/ di'emou* 'through me' which stresses his role¹) to preach the gospel 'fully' to all the Gentiles present and led to his rescue (at least temporarily) from the lion's mouth. He preached the message 'fully'. Does this involve actually setting the example himself - what he had asked of Timothy, preaching 'out of season'? Is he also referring to preaching the message in its fullness? Or is it simply that he did it in the Forum to the Roman public, the most representative audience in the world and before the imperial bench?

Most will take the words 'that all the Gentiles might hear' and propose that they must be understood metaphorically. The opportunity given to Paul of pleading his cause in the official centre of Rome, the mistress of the nations, can this be taken as in a sense the "fulfilling" of the preaching of the gospel? This is because of 'all the gentiles' may reflect the 'cosmopolitan' character of the audience². So Paul in a sense saw the realisation of his great goal or purpose, Acts 28v28. Here is Timothy's model as far as the mission of God is concerned.

The 'lion' does not mean that he was thrown to the lions – he was a Roman citizen. Is this a reference to Nero or Satan or Paul's human persecutor in court? Whatever, he is the NT Daniel. He is confident that the Lord will deliver him from every evil work – not from death, for he is expecting it (v6) – but all that is outside God's plan for him. He will be saved for 'his heavenly kingdom', although dispatched from an earthly one.

V19-21 The Final Greetings

In closing his letter he greets some people that Timothy will also know and gives some news of those who are no longer with him.

First he mentions Prisca or Priscilla and Aquila. When they left Rome Aquila worked as a tentmaker in Corinth and Paul worked with them as well, Acts 18v1-3. Aquila was a Jew and native of Pontus, Acts 18v2. When Paul was homeward bound in his second missionary journey he made a brief stop at Ephesus and left the two there – they had been travelling with him. There they taught Apollos the way of God more perfectly, Acts 18v18-25. On his 3rd missionary journey he sends 1 Corinthians from Ephesus and adds a greeting from Aquila and Priscilla and 'from the church that is in their house', 1 Cor. 16v19. When he arrives later in Corinth he writes to the Romans and Priscilla and Aquila are there. The Romans' greeting is the fullest and warmest, Rom. 16v3-5. Now here they are back in Ephesus. It is interesting to note that in four of the six occurrences of the two names, Prisca is mentioned first. Is she the more spiritual or active of the two? Some may suggest that she is first simply as an expression of Christian courtesy.³ Paul names Aquila first only in 1 Cor. 16v19 where he refers to 'the church in their house'. Does it reflect his leadership role?

¹ Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, p. 642.

² Towner suggests that Rome was for Paul the symbolical cosmopolitan centre of 'the nations' and to preach there marked the fulfillment of his calling within his missiological perspective, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, p.644.

³ Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, p. 475

Paul includes a greeting to the family of Onesiphorus who in 1v16 had not been ashamed of Paul's chain. Is Paul indicating that Onesiphorus is now dead and his family must emulate his former ministry and example? Or is he simply en route home or travelling elsewhere?

Towner makes the point that:

At the end, he is concerned for friendships that he had made over the years, and desires that these friends know of his continued feelings for them in the hardest of times.¹

Paul now gives information about two other fellow-workers, Erastus and Trophimus. These names are also mentioned close together in Acts in connection with Paul's third missionary journey when Timothy was also with him. Hendriksen² suggests that Paul may before his arrest have travelled from Spain perhaps, east; then north and west, (via Miletus, Troas, Corinth, to Rome. Erastus had stayed in Corinth and Trophimus had been left in Miletus sick. In the NT occurrences of *avsqhne,w astheneō* the reference is to physical illness, (e.g., Matt. 25v39; Jn. 4v46; Phil. 2v26f; Jas. 5v14). Often Paul was used by God to heal, but that was not always the case; here he had to leave his fellow-worker behind sick. So these were his former companions, and here, using the same imperative and infinitive as v9, he exhorts Timothy to come to him, before the onset of winter when sea travel or mountain passes would be dangerous. Paul is no doubt convinced his departure is near.

There were other local believers who were there still with him. Eubulus, Pudens, Linus³, and one woman, Claudia. When Paul has gone such must bear the burden of ministering to the churches and seek to further the kingdom in the ongoing mission of God.

Paul rounds off the list with the standard way of closing such greetings, 'all the brothers and sisters', allowing him to include all the local Christian community in that location.

Paul finishes with a prayer and a benediction (v22). First, in his prayer 'The Lord be with your spirit', he uses the singular. This is no doubt directed to Timothy. The 'Lord' is Christ himself, (v8,14,17,18) and Paul is referring to his spiritual, but none the less real, presence.

Then, 'grace be with you' is rather plural and is directed to all the church, and all who read this letter. It is similar in form to that of 1 Timothy (1 Tim. 6v21) and Colossians 4v18.

Both Timothy and the believers would need 'the helping presence of the Lord and the grace he bestows'⁴ in the days that lay ahead.

Paul would be confident that, having both, the mission of God, within which he had played such a influential and powerful role would continue until Christ's appearing.

FINAL COMMENTS

Having a purpose and setting goals are important. Purpose comes first – a God-inspired purpose. Once we have a spiritual purpose then we can set realistic goals to achieve it. Paul himself gives us the example of this in Rom. 15v22-26 when he reveals the purpose of continuing in his mission ministry by going to Spain. Once the purpose is clear then he sets goals – get to Jerusalem with the gift for the poor believers; then start out for Rome to encourage the believers and be encouraged (Rom. 1v11-12) and from there continue his mission journey to Spain itself. A strategy like this is so important – even although the plans Paul set out were altered somewhat – he arrived in Rome as a prisoner! But the time spent there (two years in his own rented house, Acts 28v30-31) was not lost

¹ Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, p. 649.

² Hendriksen, *1 & 11 Timothy and Titus*, p.332.

³ Towner points out that some early traditions named him as the first bishop of Rome. See *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, p. 654, n29. See Marshall's view that he is a key figure in Paul's circle of friends and in the writing of 2 Timothy and possibly all these Letters, *Pastoral Epistles*, p. 88.

⁴ Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, p. 656.

time – we have the Prison Epistles. But Paul right to the end was living with a purpose and setting goals to achieve them. His younger colleagues and we ourselves should seek to follow his example.

First note that his main personal purpose at this stage in his life and ministry was expressed in 2 Tim. 4v6-8; the purpose for the churches in Ephesus and Crete was that they might remain true to the faith and reject the false teaching and to live such a lifestyle that the mission of God may be furthered. To achieve this his goal was that Timothy and Titus might challenge and refute the false teaching and see that faithful elders were set in place. In addition, they must so make their lives available that the mission of God would continue after his approaching homecall. Note then, Paul's goals for the churches and finally for his two colleagues.

FIRST – HIS GOALS FOR THE CHURCHES

In 1 Timothy the goal for the local church was 'How to behave ...in the house of God'. Involves for Ephesus sound teaching of the apostolic doctrine/the faith from Timothy (Rev.2v1-7 gives the evidence that as far as maintaining purity of doctrine they became very zealous – but not in 'first love'); real intercession based on a world vision; godly leadership of elders/deacons; proper care of the destitute widow and others in need; godliness in lifestyle, good works and freedom from entrapment by the evils brought by the love of money.

Titus also had goals for the churches there very similar. Sound and godly leadership able to teach and convince regarding the true doctrines of the faith; a Christian community which is beautiful in lifestyle adorning the doctrine of God in all things; good citizens maintaining a lifestyle of civic submission, kindness and loving care.

Finally, in 2 Timothy again the main goal is maintaining and handing on the apostolic doctrines of the faith. Preaching the truth revealed in the scriptures. Taking the mission of God further after Paul's impending 'departure'.

HIS GOALS FOR THE LEADERS, TIMOTHY AND TITUS

LEADERSHIP IN THE 1 & 2 TIMOTHY AND TITUS

A few good reasons why these Letters can be chosen to focus attention upon when it comes to leadership.

1) These Letters have more teaching on church organisation (including elders, deacons) than anywhere else in the NT. See 1 Tim. 3v 5 and Tit. 1:

The particular problem being new elders required to replace those who had been identified as false teachers even excommunicated. Concerning Elders or Deacons, there is no higher standard of one to the other. There are various areas mentioned concerning their particular witness and relationships.

PERSONAL- Mature people, Stable, Self Controlled, Free from weakness in the area of Drink, Violence, Argumentativeness, Money and Pride.

RELATIONAL – Faithfulness in Marriage, Control of children, Hospitable

SOCIAL – A good standing among those who are outside.

2) The Letters set out the close relationship between Paul the Apostle and his younger colleagues, Timothy and Titus. Paul was delivered from house arrest in Acts 28v31 and travelled back to the East. He left Titus in Crete and Timothy in Ephesus and travelled on to Macedonia but writes to them. Regarding 2 Timothy, Paul is back in prison in Rome – see 2Tim. 1v8 and 17; 2v9; 4v16 - 17.

Paul, to use a modern term, was really acting as a mentor and often wrote not just through Timothy and Titus to the particular churches but also wrote to them personally.

3) The Epistles have an emphasis on a Godly lifestyle and example – which was to mark the Christian community but also Timothy and Titus – See 1 Tim. 4v7, 11-16; 6v11–12; Tit. 2v7. There is a demonstration of Paul's readiness to work with others. This is discussed by Derek Tidball in *Ministry by the Book* quoting FF Bruce, *Apostle of the Free Spirit*. FF Bruce refers to Dr. Samuel Johnston and

his statement that one of his friends or relatives was an unclubbable man, he maintains that Paul was rather, clubbable, sociable, gregarious. Some men hold things so closely around themselves they give no attention to the preparation of others who will step into their shoes. Tidball refers to the Indian proverb: 'Nothing grows under the banyan tree'. Since it spreads itself so widely, nothing has a chance to grow under it!

But Paul had sought to grow these two young leaders. The relationship with Timothy goes back to Acts 16v1-4 when Timothy went with Paul on his second Missionary Journey. He could send him at times on different missions – 1 Thess. 3v13. 1 Cor. 4v16-17; 16v10 – 11. Then Phil. 2v19 – 24. Now Timothy was his 'Apostolic Delegate' in Ephesus who must hold fast and not be ashamed to pass the truth on to faithful men.

Titus also was a true son in the common faith, a Gentile, Galatians 2v3, he was also a trusted travelling companion from earlier days sent to Corinth 11 Cor. 2v 13; 7v 6 – 16; 8v16 – 24.

The Letters contain much teaching that both these men were to deliver to the churches in Ephesus in Crete but also contained a lot of exhortation for them personally. 1 Tim. 4v 6–16; 6v11–16. 2 Tim. 1v 3–14; 3v10-4v5

For Titus see 2v 7–8; 2v15 – 3v 11.

4) The Nature of the Epistles. These letters have threats, disappointments, the successes and the failures, the warnings and the encouragements and the continuing confidence that Paul had in the power of the Word and the Gospel – again they reflect his burden for the ongoing Mission of God in which Timothy and Titus and the Churches must play a central role.

Tidball on calling to the ministry explains that we can ask ourselves two questions: one PERSONAL, the other CONTEXTUAL.

1. PERSONAL - Who am I? In other words what do I see as my particular calling in pastoral leadership? What are my burdens? Or how has God particularly gifted me?

Therefore what are my strengths and the distinct contribution I might make to the church?

2. CONTEXTUAL – What are the needs of this church at this particular time? Or what is the context in which this church is called to minister at this particular time?

REFLECTION – Do I with my particular gifts fit this situation?

CHRISTIAN LEADERSHIP IN THE LETTERS TO TIMOTHY AND TITUS: A SUMMARY

The Apostle Paul's Encouragement of his Younger Colleagues. One can highlight three areas:

- PERSONAL SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT:

Godliness	1 Tim. 4v7; 6v 5–6
Example	1 Tim. 4v12; Tit. 2v7. (a pattern of good works)
Purity	1 Tim. 5v2; 2 Tim. 2v19–22 (a clean vessel)
Freedom from Love of Money	1 Tim. 6v10–11
Personal Conduct	2 Tim. 2v22
Perseverance	2 Tim. 2v1

– IN MINISTRY INVOLVMENT :

Avoid Harmful Disputes	1 Tim. 6v21; 2 Tim. 2v23; Tit. 3v 9
Handling the Word of God Faithfully	2 Tim. 2v14–15
Exhort and Teach	1 Tim. 4v13; Tit. 2v7–8,15
Developing Your Gift	1 Tim. 4v14–16; 2 Tim. 1v 6–7, 14

– COMMITMENT TO THE MISSION OF GOD :

Not to be Ashamed	1 Tim. 6v12–13; 2 Tim. 1v8
Hold Fast to the Truth	1 Tim. 1v18–19; 2 Tim. 1v13–14; Tit. 2v7
Committing the Truth to Faithful Men	2 Tim. 2v2
Enduring Hardness	2 Tim. 2v3–4
Submission and Obedience	2 Tim. 2v 5
Labouring in the Work of God	2 Tim. 2v6-7
Preach the Inspired Word/Gospel	2 Tim. 3v16-4v5
Encourage the Believers in Lifestyle and Loving Care	Tit. 2v1–10; 3v8, 14; 1Tim. 5

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