

November 9, 1999

1 Timothy 1

Introduction

The two books of Timothy are Pastoral Epistles that is, instructions to Timothy as to how he is to conduct himself as a pastor, or man of God, as he fulfills his calling to instruct God's people in the ways pleasing to the Lord.

Quickly reading over the chapters, there are some outstanding points. The two books of instruction to Timothy are basically the same, with the same basic warnings given to Timothy:

First, Paul continually emphasizes *sound doctrine*. And on the other hand, he emphasizes things *which minister questions, rather than godly edifying*.

He condemns unsound doctrine, e.g., *profane and vain babblings*, (words that do not profit, but undermine the hearer), &c.: 1 Timothy 1:4, 4:7, 6:4, 20, 2 Timothy 2:14, 16, 24. 2 Timothy 2:23-26, Paul warns against striving over questions that have no hard and fast answers; striving, or arguing, over those questions give the devil opportunity to work.

Second, Clarke places the date of this letter in the first year of Gessius Florus, governor of the Jews. Florus was a wicked man, who was very oppressive against the nation. Herod mentions his oppression in his speech to the Jews who were preparing to revolt against Rome. I mention this to point out that though the civil authority was very oppressive during this time, much more than it is today, Paul does not mention that oppression. Rather, he exalts the law in this first chapter, and he deals with the religious oppression of the false teachers throughout the book.

Note: the danger to the Gospel Church is not from civil government; rather, it is from false teachers who corrupt sound doctrine. In my opinion, antinomianism and Dispensationalism (both only recently accepted as orthodox, within the last 200 years) have been two of the most destructive doctrines

Third, he continually stresses the importance of Christian leaders studying and then teaching *sound doctrine*: 1 Timothy 1:3, 4:13, 16, 6:3, 2 Timothy 1:13, 2:15, 3:15-17, 4:2-4.

Note: *sound doctrine* in Timothy's day was established from the Old Testament.

Fourth, Paul continually emphasizes the necessity of living an exemplary life before the people: 1 Timothy 1:16, 3:7, 4:12, 2 Timothy 2:19 (a general command to all who name the name of Christ), 3:10, 4:5 (*make full proof*).

Fifth, Paul reminds Timothy of his responsibility to follow through with the gift he has as the result of Paul's laying on of his hands, 1 Timothy 4:13, 2 Timothy 1:6.

Sixth, these books were to warn Timothy and to protect him from heresies; and the main heresy of Timothy's day was the efforts of Judaism to maintain its hold on Christianity. These books, as were all of the New Testament books, were written during the time of the transition of the worship of the Creator from the old Jewish manner through the Temple at Jerusalem to the new Christian manner through the temple of Christ's body. The book of Hebrews was probably the main book for establishing the transition. The New Testament books did not complete the proper separation between Judaism and Christianity; that separation was finally established with the destruction of Jerusalem.

I must say from what little reading I have done, the modern temper (1850 to the present) of Christianity, generally, is to reestablish the connection between Judaism and Christianity that is, Christians themselves are now clamoring for the reintroduction of the Judaism, *i.e.*, they are looking forward to, praying for and financially supporting the rebuilding of The Temple in Jerusalem where the old temple sacrifices can be reestablished, particularly the Red Heifer.

Note: The Lord God, after Christ replaced the Temple and its service, despised the old Temple rites so much that he sent Rome to destroy it and its influence in the Gospel Church. What will the Lord God do today against the modern Christian temper that does all within its power to reestablished what the Lord himself destroyed, both with the blood of Christ (Calvary) and with the blood of his enemies (Rome slit their throats)?

Unless there is a genuine return to the Orthodox Faith, as clearly defined in the New Testament (Christ did away with all that, and it is now an abomination to God), there will be some very unpleasant events to remove that foolish hope from Christian thought.

I Timothy 1

The following basically follows OLB's paragraph divisions, primarily because of where the periods separate the sentences.

Vv. 1-4.

This book opens typical of Paul right up front, he establishes his authority to write what follows: *Paul an apostle of Jesus Christ. Apostle* a delegate, or messenger, specifically applied to the twelve. An *apostle* had to be personally called, instructed and sent forth by Christ with orders from Christ, among other things. Though *born out of due time*, and thus unable to be one of the original twelve, Paul makes a point of proving he fully met the qualifications. (Acts 9 & 26, Gal. 1:10ff.)

By the commandment... He was not only sent forth specifically by the Lord God, *commanded*, but he tells Timothy that he is writing according to the specific command of the Lord God. (Acts 9:15, 26:16, 17.)

God our Saviour... This is a strong statement, and is confirmed many times in the New Testament Christ is the Jehovah God of the Old Testament, and this Creator God took the body of flesh to pay the sin debt for his people. (See Jn. 1, 1 Jn. 1, Heb. 1, Ps. 106:21, &c.)

Which is our hope... Though Paul was called with a special calling by Christ Jesus, we also are called specifically, *by name*. (Jn. 15:16.) Christ is *our hope*. That hope is not found in man any more than was Paul's. Note also that *our home* is here and now, not some where off in the future, though that *hope* involves the future. The hope is a present hope; it is a hope that works now for the King.

Note:

To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory: (Col. 1:27.)

Though knowledge, wisdom and education in the sound doctrines of Scripture are important, our hope is in Christ Jesus; our hope is the Spirit of God working in and through us. Certainly, we must be able to present sound doctrine to influence men for Christ, but the final responsibility is the Spirit's, who alone can bring repentance.

Anything that undermines the hope of the Spirit accomplishing anything in us, in society or in those around us, is a lie of the devil. Our hope is Jesus Christ not only for our eternal life, but also if we will see anything

accomplished in this life for the Lord God.

Unto Timothy... Though these letters were written specifically to Timothy, they establish practical things that must be used in all ministries that are established by God. These books, along with Titus, establish proper church order as well as the qualifications for godly leadership. They present warnings to ministers as to how to be effective in their activities for the Kingdom.

Note that the first church was already established in Jerusalem and under the care of that church. Acts records that church. Paul recognized the authority of that church to call him into question about taking the gospel to the Gentiles, *e.g.*, Acts 21:15ff. So Paul gives the moral guidelines for leadership in the church as the original apostles will pass off the scene. Obviously, there was no need for such instruction while the apostles were still in the leadership. Through Timothy, the Spirit establishes proper church discipline and leadership.

My own son in the faith... Did Paul lead him to the Lord? I doubt it, for he speaks of the faith already present in Timothy before he met him. (Acts 16:1, 2.) So this probably means that Timothy was called into the ministry under Paul, or that Paul took him under his wing to train him.

Grace, mercy, and piece, from God... Note the order: *Grace*, God working, according to his sovereign plan, in us both to will and do his good pleasure; *mercy*, God's pardon and free justification in Christ; *peace* with God is the end result of *grace* and *mercy*.

V. 3, Paul had urged Timothy to remain at Ephesus (Paul wrote Ephesians to the church there) while he went to Macedonia. The reason Timothy was left at Ephesus was to hold the church (the Believers) there to the truth. As I have noted several times elsewhere, it is obvious from Paul's writings that the Judaizers followed him around. Paul would preach the gospel and establish a Gospel Church; then he would move on to the next place. After he left the community, the Judaizers would come, teaching that the new Believers, though they had believed the gospel, still had to follow the old Jewish manner of worship through the Temple at Jerusalem. The motive behind the false teachers was revealed while Christ was still alive:

47 Then gathered the chief priests and the Pharisees a council, and said, What do we? for this man doeth many miracles. 48 If we let him thus alone, all men will believe on him: and the Romans shall come and take away both our place and nation. (Jn. 11.)

The religious leaders rightly understood that the increase of Christ's spiritual power over people meant the end of their religious power over the people (we will lose our place), as well as the end of their physical nation as established under Moses (they feared Rome would see Christ's followers as a threat as they accepted Christ as Lord rather than Rome). They meant for Christ's death to put an end to the threat to their power, but, as we know, it only strengthened his hold over people. They meant for Christ's death to protect the physical nation of Israel. I should also mention that an ungodly state also sees the true Christian religion as a threat.

Sadly, modern *Christianity* does not seem to be a threat to the state as god, for the average church seeks state permission to exist. Billy Graham and Bill Gothard have both been welcomed in Russia, which, in my opinion, does not speak highly of either.

When the death of Christ did not stop the increase of his followers, and thus the threats they understood, they moved to undermine the gospel, telling the new converts that they must continue in the Temple worship. They were confident that if the people would continue in that worship, both their strength and their nation would be secure. I believe their assumption was right, for God himself moved to destroy forever both their power through the Temple and the old Jewish nation.

Paul left Timothy in Ephesus to counter the Judaizers' efforts to keep people under the control of the religious leaders at Jerusalem.

V. 4, *Neither give heed*, or don't pay any attention to.

Fables legends, traditions, old wives tails, anything that is not true. Note that evolution fits very well here, being a *fable*. Christians must not pay any attention, nor give any credence to things we know are not true. Of course, some things that we know are true must not be studied out. (Eph. 5:12 *For it is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret.*)

Endless genealogies this, no doubt, referred to the family tree kept by the Jews to show from what tribe they were, particularly to prove themselves of the tribe of Levi, from which the priests and teachers of the law came (the tribe of power and authority in the old Jewish order). In order to have any place of authority in Israel, one had to prove his *genealogy*.

Paul tells Timothy that the emphasis in the Christian religion is on *godly edifying* in the faith.

Genealogies The Jews had scrupulously preserved their genealogical tables, for the Messiah had been promised through the house of David. Matthew took his genealogy in the descending, and Luke in the ascending line. Whatever difficulties we might have with the two, the Jews had no such difficulty, for even his most determined enemies could not challenge his claim to be the promised son of David even when Christ applied Psalms 110:1 to himself.

Observe:

ALL WAS THEN CERTAIN; BUT WE ARE TOLD THAT HEROD DESTROYED THE PUBLIC REGISTERS; HE, BEING AN IDUMEAN, WAS JEALOUS OF THE NOBLE ORIGIN OF THE JEWS; AND, THAT NONE MIGHT BE ABLE TO REPROACH HIM WITH HIS DESCENT, BE ORDERED THE GENEALOGICAL TABLES, WHICH WERE KEPT AMONG THE ARCHIVES IN THE TEMPLE, TO BE BURNT. SEE EUSEB. H. E., LIB. I. CAP. 8. FROM THIS TIME THE JEWS COULD REFER TO THEIR GENEALOGIES ONLY FROM MEMORY, OR FROM THOSE IMPERFECT TABLES WHICH HAD BEEN PRESERVED IN PRIVATE HANDS; AND TO MAKE OUT ANY REGULAR LINE FROM THESE MUST HAVE BEEN ENDLESS AND UNCERTAIN. IT IS PROBABLY TO THIS THAT THE APOSTLE REFERS; I MEAN THE ENDLESS AND USELESS LABOR WHICH THE ATTEMPTS TO MAKE OUT THESE GENEALOGIES MUST PRODUCE, THE AUTHENTIC TABLES BEING DESTROYED. THIS, WERE ALL OTHER PROOFS WANTING, WOULD BE AN IRRESISTIBLE ARGUMENT AGAINST THE JEWS THAT THE MESSIAH IS COME; FOR THEIR OWN PROPHETS HAD DISTINCTLY MARKED OUT THE LINE BY WHICH HE WAS TO COME; THE GENEALOGIES ARE NOW ALL LOST; NOR IS THERE A JEW IN THE UNIVERSE THAT CAN SHOW FROM WHAT TRIBE HE IS DESCENDED. THERE CAN, THEREFORE, BE NO MESSIAH TO COME, AS NONE COULD SHOW, LET HIM HAVE WHAT OTHER PRETENSIONS HE MIGHT, THAT HE SPRANG FROM THE HOUSE OF DAVID. THE JEWS DO NOT, AT PRESENT, PRETEND TO HAVE ANY SUCH TABLES; AND, FAR FROM BEING ABLE TO PROVE THE MESSIAH FROM HIS DESCENT, THEY ARE NOW OBLIGED TO SAY THAT, WHEN, THE MESSIAH COMES, HE WILL RESTORE THE GENEALOGIES BY THE HOLY SPIRIT THAT SHALL REST UPON HIM. (*Adam Clarke*)

Herod, who was later eaten by worms (Acts 12:21-23, AD 44), was appointed by Rome over this province, and was given the title of king. He was very zealous concerning his post and title, even killing all the infants that might challenge his place. Clarke above says that Herod destroyed all the genealogical tables out of jealousy, an action entirely within his character. Though Clarke gives no date for Herod's actions, we can assume it was

soon after the *wise men* showed up looking for the King of the Jews in Matthew chapter 2.

The Jews worked hard to preserve full and accurate records in order to establish the purity of descent, especially regarding the priesthood. We see that care exhibited by Ezra. In the usual mode of exaggeration, it was asserted, that, if all the genealogical studies and research had been put together, they would have amounted to many hundred camel-loads. (Edersheim, *Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*, i.9.) Edersheim refers to Herod ordering the burning of the official register, for reasons not difficult to infer. Accordingly, it is totally impossible to officially trace any Jewish lineage back past Herod's destruction. Rome also burned the Archives that were kept at Antioch. (Josephus, *Wars*, VII.3.4, 4. Now, after these misfortunes had happened to the Jews at Antioch, a second calamity befell them, the description of which when we were going about we premised the account foregoing; for upon this accident, whereby the four-square market-place was burnt down, as well as the archives, and the place where the public records were preserved, when Jerusalem was destroyed.) I could find no date for Herod's order, but Rome's actions would have been before the fall of Jerusalem, AD 70.

Questions Paul warned Timothy against the endless study of genealogies. The warning was not against family tree studies as are being done today, but the emphasis placed upon genealogies by the Judaizers. Paul said that such study produced more questions than answers, and did nothing to promote godliness among the people. Note that Herod, who died AD 44, destroyed the genealogies before 1 Timothy was written, AD 56, or as late as AD 64, 65. So by the time Paul writes to Timothy, the genealogies could only have been from family records, for the official records were gone. Hence:

First, after Christ, any study of Jewish genealogy for the purpose of establishing a link to Abraham, Aaron or David was a foolish waste of time. **Second**, when such studies are made, the studies are of fables and family traditions, for there were no official records other than what was preserved by Matthew and Luke to Christ.

Christian Identity is again identified as totally unbiblical in its attempt to trace a supposed history to Abraham or to Jacob-Israel.

Vv. 5-11

As I mentioned in the short introduction, a primary emphasis in these two letters to Timothy is **sound doctrine**. Paul commands Timothy to personally pursue sound doctrine and to impress on others the importance of the same.

V. 5, *the end of the commandment...* The theme of the two letters tells us that Paul is, more than likely, referring to the command he gave Timothy, v. 3, *that thou mightest charge some that they teach no other doctrine*. The *commandment* is to study and develop *sound doctrine*, for it is sound doctrine, not fables and genealogies, that build up in faith and godliness. The purpose of *the command* to pursue *sound doctrine* is to develop *charity* genuine and pure love toward God and toward man, *i.e., a pure heart and a good conscience and faith unfeigned* or sincere.

Unfeigned, or not hypocritical. THE APOSTLE APPEARS TO ALLUDE TO THE JUDAIZING TEACHERS, WHO PRETENDED FAITH IN THE GOSPEL, MERELY THAT THEY MIGHT HAVE THE GREATER OPPORTUNITY TO BRING BACK TO THE MOSAIC SYSTEM THOSE WHO HAD EMBRACED THE DOCTRINE OF CHRIST CRUCIFIED. (*Clarke*)

We could, however, add in here with no harm to Scripture that the *commandment* refers to the Ten Commandments, meaning that *a pure heart, a good conscience and faith* is based upon the Commandment, not on one's personal ideas or feelings, but this stretches the context a little.

V. 6, the date of the letter is as early as 56, or as late as 65. Regardless, note that Paul said that *some* had already *swerved* from the sound doctrine. The Judaizing teachers did their work:

having swerved--literally, "having missed the mark (the 'end') to be aimed at." It is translated, "erred," #1Ti 6:21 2Ti 2:18. Instead of aiming at and attaining the graces above named, they "have turned aside (#1Ti 5:15 2Ti 4:4 Heb 12:13) unto vain jangling"; literally, "vain talk," about the law and genealogies of angels (#1Ti 1:7 Tit 3:9 1:10); #1Ti 6:20, "vain babblings and oppositions." It is the greatest vanity when divine things are not truthfully discussed (#Ro 1:21) [BENGEL]. (JFB)

Implied here is that *some* started on the right Christian path, but were sidetracked by *vain jangling*, or vain talk about the law, which they did not properly understand, v. 7, and by improper interest in genealogies of angels.

Here again we have a clear condemnation of the Christian Identity movement—it seeks to literally study the genealogies of angles, tracing a supposed seed line from a supposed (only an extremely wicked mind can suppose such a thing) relationship between fallen Satan and Eve, resulting in Cain. Then Identity seeks to tract that supposed line from Cain through the flood, through the time of Christ and to the present. I have not doubt that some who now believe the devil's seed line doctrine lie started on the right path, but they got sidetracked with vain talk, *i.e.*, empty talk about fables and speculations.

V. 7, *Desiring to be teachers of the law..* The goal of those of v. 6 was to be respected teachers of the law; they gave lengthy, empty answers to knotty questions, in order to exalt themselves in the eyes of others.

Empty talk... Paul is confronting the problem of the false teachers trying to get the converts to return to the Temple, and they were using the Temple law to keep the new Jewish converts to Christ in subjection to the Temple. (Cf. Titus 1:14, 3:9.) These false teachers were also corrupting the Gospel of Grace with works of the law, *e.g.*, Yes, you need Christ, but you also need to continue to honor the Temple, Galatians chapter 3.

Paul tells Timothy that those who add the law (Temple law in this case) to grace, including the Ten Commandments, don't know what they are talking about—understanding neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm.

LEGALISM could be defined thusly—1) attempts to add works of the Ten Commandments to grace for salvation, and 2) attempts to add the works of the Temple laws to Christ after salvation, which was the problem faced by the first church. However, Christian salvation must contain works of the Ten Commandments, or it is not salvation, James 2:17, &c.

V. 8, the law is only lawful if it is used properly—its purpose, whether Temple law or the Commandments, is to draw men to Christ. Though the Temple and its laws are gone, the Commandments continue by showing men how to live, as they define what is right and wrong.

If men use it lawfully. However, bad men use good laws *badly*, and thus make good laws bad. They use the law, whether God's or civil, to increase their power and authority over people. Hence, the religious leaders used the good laws of God, both the Temple laws and the Commandments, for evil purposes—to retain and increase their power and authority.

Good laws used badly... 2 Timothy 2:5 tells us that a man must *strive lawfully* if he will receive the crown. Implied is that the best of men—properly using the law will lose their reward before God if their motives in using the law are wrong, a fact known only to them and to the Lord.

Vv. 9, 10, the purpose of the law is to keep sin in check. Paul's list here basically protects the other person. The purpose of the law is to lead men to Christ, whether moral or ceremonial. The moral law shows man how far short he is of the righteousness of God, and how much he needs a saviour. (Rom. 3:18-20, 5:20. Note that the more sin abounds, the more grace abounds: 1) the more a man sees his sin, the more he sees the greatness of God's grace; 2) the more sinful a man is, the more grace must be given from God to turn him from that sin; and

3) there is no sin too great to be forgiven and overcome by God's grace.) Then by faith in Christ, his new nature is *righteousness*, which should naturally live for the glory of God.

Though the Ten Commandments have no power to condemn Christians to the eternal results of sin, they are still to have power to control the Christian's life, *i.e.*, we are not antinomian, or lawless, but love his Law and Commandments, Psalms 119:97, 113, 163.

Lawless refuse to be bound by the law, *e.g.*, Psalms 2. Note that the more lawless the man desires to be, the more oppressive the laws and the enforcers of those laws need to be. Oppressive civil government is the promised result of citizens who desire to be *lawless*. Christianity is to make *law abiding* citizens, and thus civil government is not as oppressive.

We should define *law* man's laws or God's laws? My opinion is that he speaks here of God's laws, for he defines the rest in terms of God's laws. Man's laws become overbearing and oppressive when men turn from a Christianity that obeys God's laws, as proved throughout history.

Disobedient refuse to acknowledge or to be subject to authority; they are uncontrollable or anarchists. The first commandment requires willful submission to God's authority.

Ungodly and sinners irreverent toward God. Those who do not worship God; fearing not God, they openly sin against him, Romans 3:18.

Unholy totally polluted, unclean within and without. Romans 1:21, they *became vain in their imaginations*, continually imagining evil against his brother, Zechariah 7:10, violating the second commandment. (See Gen. 11:6.)

Profane deserving exclusion from the outward participation in religious worship, as they violate the third and fourth commandment. (JFB)

Murderers of fathers... not actually murder their fathers and mothers, but the serious breakdown of the family, in violation of the sixth commandment. (JFB)

Manslayers offenders of the sixth commandment, murder.

Whoremongers offenders of the seventh commandment, immorality of all kinds.

Men-stealers slave-dealers, or those who carry on traffic in humans, particularly those who steal persons to sell them into bondage. (This practice is very common today selling both boys and girls into sexual prostitution, as well as selling organs.) The eighth commandment forbids theft, which covers much more than stealing people; it includes stealing a man's liberty. It forbids what civil government is doing today in slowly stealing individual liberty.

Liars offenders of the ninth commandment. They speak falsely in order to draw others contrary to the truth, particularly after their own way of thinking.

Perjured persons in this case, the offenders of the ninth commandment break their word or commitment or promise of any kind, without just, *i.e.*, Biblical, reason.

Any other thing offenders of the tenth commandment, *Thou shalt not covet*. Note that this commandment not only includes the previous commandments, but covers everything that the previous commandments may have missed. And so Paul makes a sweeping statement that covers *every other thing*.

Paul, in the previous verses (vv. 6-8) has condemned the *van jangling*. He identified the *janglers* as the *teachers of the law* who did not use the law properly. Then Paul defines the purpose of the law, vv. 9, 10. In other words, those who profess to be teachers of the law must use the law to speak out strongly against the violators of the law, vv. 9, 10, which actually is the Ten Commandments.

V. 10, *doctrine* is mentioned again, as it was in vv. 3, 4. Paul's continual emphasis in his letters is *doctrine, sound doctrine*. His instructions are particularly to pastors that they teach their people *sound doctrine*. However, my experience has been that the average Christian does not want sound doctrine, for that is not exciting; he wants something to make him forget his troubles for a time; he does not seem to want something to remind him of his troubles to the point he must deal with them. He is not wanting answers, *sound doctrine*, that require a change in life-style; rather, he is looking for an excuse for his life-style, or an escape from his troubles. (See my notes in 1 Timothy 5:17ff.)

V. 11, *According to the glorious gospel... the glorious gospel* is freedom from the Temple laws and assurance of eternal life through faith in the work of Jesus Christ our Lord. However, *the glorious gospel* is also freedom from the power of sin, and that freedom contains the power to live an holy life, even as he is holy. (See Matt. 5:48, Phil. 1:27, Heb. 12:14, 1 Pet. 1:15, 2:9, 1 Thess. 4:3-7, &c.)

A gospel that does not result in holy living according to the Ten Commandments is not *the glorious gospel of the blessed God, which was committed to Paul's trust*.

Observe:

First, the purpose of the law is to keep the sins listed in check, which are basically defined by the Ten Commandments. The purpose of the law is not to control people, but to control sin. It is an unlawful use of law to use it to control people, *i.e.*, make law abiding people do what the powers may want them to do. The problem is, however, it is the civil authority that has the power of the sword to enforce unlawful laws, so the people many times have no choice.

Second, the Commandments will keep sin in check regardless of the motives of those enforcing the law, v. 8.

Third, Romans 13 fits here, for civil government was given the power of the sword to enforce the law in order to protect others. The purpose of civil government is to keep these things, vv. 9, 10, from having dominion in the world again, as they did before the flood. (Gen. 8:5.) Accordingly, as long as civil government keeps these evils basically in check, it is legitimate. I have dealt with this statement so many times elsewhere that I will not again, other than just say, *Evil men are in places of authority because of God's hand against sin under authority*. In other words, the leaders reflect the attitudes of the average Believer toward the Redeemer King.

Sadly, civil government seems to have turned the world upside down as it appears to reward evil and punish good.

Fourth, we cannot blame civil government for stealing individual liberty, for people willingly gave up their liberty when they gave up Biblical Christianity. (2 Cor. 3:17.) Freedom is in Christ (Jn. 8:36), and when people turn from Christ, they lose their freedom. Freedom is free from the hold of *the law of sin and death, i.e.*, free from the power of sin by the work of Christ. (Rom. 8:2.) When people and pastors avoid or even flee from the law, they are placing the people into bondage to sin, and then into bondage to oppressive civil authorities.

Fifth, though Paul wrote during the time of great oppression by the civil authority, he in no way undermined that authority. He simply told what the purpose of the law is.

Vv. 12-17

Who hath enabled me seems to contradict *counted me faithful*. In other words, the Lord is the one who makes us faithful, for we cannot be faithful on our own. Paul did say, however, that the Lord enabled him, and for that he was thankful.

I suppose the key is v. 14, *And the grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant...* The grace of God, *i.e.*, desire and power to please him, was stronger than his sins listed in v. 13. (Compare with the lawful use of the law, vv. 9, 10. Paul's conversion is so well-known, there is no need to discuss it here, Acts 9.)

Ignorantly in unbelief tells us that God is particularly merciful to those who do not know the truth, but are zealous for what they do know. However, this brings up the question: How about the zealous Muslims and Hindus who kill Christians?

I obtained mercy is probably the answer. Paul believed he was serving the Lord God as revealed through Moses, but not yet revealed through Christ. Paul's revelation was that the God of Moses was also the Lord Jesus Christ.

Came to save sinners, a statement confirmed by Paul's experience.

For this cause tells us why Paul obtained mercy. Paul was a chosen vessel for God to show a particular work through. It is good to compare ourselves to Paul (1 Cor. 4:16, 11:1), for that is why God worked a special work of grace in him, *for a pattern...*

Jesus Christ is our basic pattern, but in Paul we see a totally naturally born man living almost a super human, godly life. He continually says that that life was lived by him by the power of the Spirit of God. (Gal. 2:20.) Therefore, we have no excuse for not living an holy life, *e.g.*, Paul. Admittedly, it was a special mercy shown to him by the Lord, but we have the same Lord and the same mercy.

V. 12, *And I thank Christ Jesus*, and then v. 17, *Now unto the King eternal...* This section expresses Paul's thankfulness to the God of heaven for what he has done through him.

Note 1: no sin is too much, nor any sinner too hardened in his sin to be beyond the reach of God's mercy and grace.

Note 2: it was the mercy and grace of God that not only called Paul to *longsuffering*, but that same mercy and grace made him thankful for that call to *longsuffering*. The natural man dreads such *longsuffering* for the gospel's sake, but the Spirit changes that attitude.

1 Corinthians 4:7 *For who maketh thee to differ from another? and what hast thou that thou didst not receive? now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?* (See Rom. 11:35.)

Paul made it clear that any motive or ability to even praise the Lord came from above.

V. 17, here Paul bursts forth with thanksgiving and praise to the Lord for doing what he had just listed. He took a hardened sinner and made a saint worthy of following by all Christians following him. Paul gives a short description of the Lord God:

Eternal he inhabits eternity.

Immortal eternally the same, yesterday, today and forever.

Invisible everywhere and at all times, yet invisible to men and angels. He works behind all events in heaven and earth to accomplish his perfect will. The contrast here is with the false gods and idols of this world. Being the *Invisible God*, he forbade any images at all that might be used to depict him.

Wise God that is, skilled, expert. Being *invisible* and working behind all things, he forms the best plan, and

uses the best means to bring that plan to pass.

Vv. 18-19

I have dealt with these passages many times elsewhere.

The Christian life, and particularly the ministry that Timothy is being instructed in, is a serious *warfare*. It is not for the weak nor faint. Paul's two letters to Timothy emphasize the *warfare* he will be involved in as a leader in the Christian community. (2 Tim. 2.)

A few thoughts here:

First, Paul says that a man who desires the *office of a bishop* desires a good thing (1 Tim. 3:1), but any man who desires such an office needs his head examined. He is desiring to be on the very front lines of battle against the world, flesh and the devil. I also realize that most *bishops* seek that place because of the life of ease offered there by compromised and worldly churches.

It is an unusual man who desires to be on the front lines of the hottest battles where the bullets are flying.

Second, the proper desire is placed in the man's heart by the Spirit of God. Entering the ministry is either a godly desire or a human, fallen desire. (1 Tim. 1:12.) If the Spirit did not put us in the ministry, then who did?

Third, I would almost say that those who are in the ministry and their ministry does not involve *longsuffering* (cf. v. 16), are not there by God's call, nor are they in God's ministry. The ministry is a *spiritual warfare* of the most serious nature. Note that *warfare* speaks of a protracted conflict, not just a battle here and there.

Fourth, the warfare is fought according to the terms established by the *prophecies which went before* Timothy. Paul may be referring to those things he has already spoken, or that may have been already written down—the rules of engagement as established in the Old Testament. And those rules must be studied and adhered to if there will be victory. Those rules not only include rules of engagement, but personal rules, *faith* in the word and power of God, and godly living—clear conscience.

Those involved in the war, particularly *bishops*, must fight according to the rules established by God, which gives a clear conscience. Those rules were established in the Garden, and expanded on throughout the word of God. Christ gives us the example, as does Paul.

Faith brings up a point. The lack of faith that the Lord can subdue the hardest sinner, and thus the whole world, to himself (Christ) by his grace (vv. 12-16) and without the literal sword hanging over people's head, is not faith. I wonder if maybe Christianity has been *delivered unto Satan* for its lack of faith.

Good conscience speaks of the Christian's armor, Ephesians 6:13ff.

Paul continually stands against the Temple service at Jerusalem. Part of the Lord's condemnation of that service after Christ was that those things could never cleanse the conscience, 1 Timothy 1:5, Hebrews 9:9, 14, 10:2, 12.

Note that *Biblical faith* will result in a *good conscience*, for *Biblical faith* will result in complete trust in Christ and holy living. The two must go together.

Put away... faith, that is, they turned away from sound doctrine, or turned from the truths of the Christian faith. Paul emphasizes *sound doctrine*, and now he illustrates what happens when folks turn from *sound doctrine*.

Shipwreck—life without a firm basis, *sound doctrine*, leaves the Believer open to the strong winds of false

doctrine. Many lives are upon the rocks because they were not based upon sound doctrine.

Hymeneus and Alexander were victims of their departure from *faith* and a *good conscience*.

Delivered to Satan sure sounds like 1 Corinthians 5:5. The man there was evidently saved, and the threat of deliverance to Satan called him to repentance. Thus implied is that *Hymeneus and Alexander* were saved, yet they departed from the *faith once delivered to the Saints* that is, *sound doctrine*.

In this case, *Hymeneus and Alexander* were delivered by apostolic authority, as directed by the Spirit. However, in 1 Corinthians 5:5, it was done by the assembled church. Both resulted in the unrepentant sinner being captive to Satan's desires for him.

20. HYMENAËUS--THERE IS NO DIFFICULTY IN SUPPOSING HIM TO BE THE HYMENAËUS OF 2TI 2:17. THOUGH DELIVERED OVER TO SATAN (THE LORD OF ALL OUTSIDE THE CHURCH, AC 26:18, AND THE EXECUTOR OF WRATH, WHEN JUDICIALLY ALLOWED BY GOD, ON THE DISOBEDIENT, 1CO 5:5 2CO 12:7), HE PROBABLY WAS RESTORED TO THE CHURCH SUBSEQUENTLY, AND AGAIN TROUBLED IT. PAUL, AS AN APOSTLE, THOUGH DISTANT AT ROME PRONOUNCED THE SENTENCE TO BE EXECUTED AT EPHESUS, INVOLVING, PROBABLY, THE EXCOMMUNICATION OF THE OFFENDERS (MT 18:17,18). THE SENTENCE OPERATED NOT ONLY SPIRITUALLY, BUT ALSO PHYSICALLY, SICKNESS, OR SOME SUCH VISITATION OF GOD, FALLING ON THE PERSON EXCOMMUNICATED, IN ORDER TO BRING HIM TO REPENTANCE AND SALVATION. ALEXANDER HERE IS PROBABLY THE COPPERSMITH WHO DID PAUL MUCH EVIL WHEN THE LATTER VISITED EPHESUS. THE DELIVERING HIM TO SATAN WAS PROBABLY THE CONSEQUENCE OF HIS WITHSTANDING THE APOSTLE (2TI 4:14,15); AS THE SAME SENTENCE ON HYMENAËUS WAS THE CONSEQUENCE OF SAYING THAT THE RESURRECTION IS PAST ALREADY (2TI 2:18; HIS PUTTING AWAY GOOD CONSCIENCE, NATURALLY PRODUCING SHIPWRECK CONCERNING FAITH, 1TI 1:19. IF ONE'S RELIGION BETTER NOT HIS MORALS, HIS MORAL DEFICIENCIES WILL CORRUPT HIS RELIGION. THE RAIN WHICH FALLS PURE FROM HEAVEN WILL NOT CONTINUE PURE IF IT BE RECEIVED IN AN UNCLEAN VESSEL [ARCHBISHOP WHATELY]). IT IS POSSIBLE THAT HE IS THE ALEXANDER, THEN A JEW, PUT FORWARD BY THE JEWS, DOUBTLESS AGAINST PAUL, AT THE RIOT IN EPHESUS (AC 19:33). (JFB)

Blaspheme here implies that the failure of the Biblical faith that results in a clear conscience is to *blaspheme*, *i.e.*, speak reproachfully, or to be evil spoken of. The *unfaithful* Christian will be evil spoken of by the non-Christians, for they are hypocrites, and the unconverted will be quick to point that out.

Implied is that Christians *blaspheme* God when they: 1) live unholy lives; and 2) fail to believe that the Lord indeed can, and will, subdue the world unto himself, as taught by passages such as 1 Corinthians 15:24 and Hebrews 10:13?

Learn, and Satan is the schoolmaster here. Here these two learn faith and obedience through the efforts of Satan against them. (Satan is simply a servant of God here on this earth.)

Conclusion:

Are Pre-mils blasphemers? They certainly lack faith that the Lord can subdue hardened sinners and a wicked world to himself. Is Christianity *delivered unto Satan* because of its lack of faith and holy living?

Paul did not say that *Hymenaeus and Alexander* were lost, but that they were now given over to Satan to be done which according to Satan's pleasure, in this life. (Cf. 1 Cor. 5.) Someone has said, There's nothing worse than dying in the Devil's slaughterhouse.

We could say that there is nothing worse than a society, albeit Christian, being turned over by God to Satan. And it certainly seems that modern society has been given over totally to the Wicked One. Proof: unusual weather patterns, terrible moral decline and public worship of Satan becoming accepted.