The First Epistle of Paul to TIMOTHY

Greeting

1 [1]Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the command of God our Savior
and Sovereign Jesus Christ[1] our hope,[2] [2]to Timothy, true son by faith:
Grace, mercy, peace from God our[3] Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.

Opening considerations

Paul refers to their last conversation

[3]You recall that I urged you to remain in Ephesus, when I went into Macedonia, in order that you should command[4] certain persons to stop teaching a different doctrine [4]and occupying themselves with myths and endless genealogies,[5] which cause disputes rather than the godly training which is by faith.[6] [5]Now the goal of that command is love, out of a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith;[7] [6]some having strayed from these have been turned aside[8] to empty talk, [7]desiring to be teachers of the law, not understanding either what they say or the things that they affirm.[9]

What law is for

[8]Now we know that the law is good if one uses it correctly, [9]knowing that law is not made for a righteous person but for lawless and rebellious ones, for ungodly and sinners, for unholy and profane, for father-smiters and mother-smiters, for murderers,[10] [10]for fornicators, for sodomites,[11]

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[1] There is no article with 'Sovereign/Lord', so I take the phrase to be acting as a proper name. Perhaps 10% of the Greek manuscripts omit "Sovereign" (as in NIV, NASB, LB, TEV, etc.).

[2] The Father saves, the Son is our hope, and they chose Paul together—I wonder what the implications are.

[3] Perhaps 4% of the Greek manuscripts omit "our" (as in NIV, NASB, TEV, etc.).

[4] Evidently Paul deputized Timothy, giving him the authority to give commands, and the local elders would need to be informed about it.

[5] This sounds like Gnosticism.

[6] 'Disputes' are conducted on the basis of logic/reason, not faith, and God requires that we respond to Him in faith (see Hebrews 11:6).

[7] This is a beautiful picture, surely: a love that emanates from pure heart, good conscience and sincere faith will probably be quite similar to God's love.

[8] The verb is in the passive voice; once they strayed they came under outside influence (see Ephesians 2:2).

[9] This is typical of people whose ambition exceeds their mental ability—they end up faking it.

[10] I follow the best line of transmission, as well as a plurality of the Greek manuscripts, in rendering "father-smiter" rather than 'father-killer'. Since patricide and matricide are types of murder, why cite 'murder' three times? A normal list does not repeat items.

[11] The reference is specifically to those who play the role of the male in homosexual intercourse (anal sex), as distinct from catamites (1 Corinthians 6:9), who play the role of the female. From the Creator's point of view both are unacceptable forms of human behavior, and carried the death penalty (Leviticus 20:13).

for kidnappers,[1] for liars, for perjurers, and for whatever else is contrary to the sound doctrine [11]as defined by the Gospel[2] of the glory[3] of the blessed God, with which I was entrusted.[4]

The grace of God

[12]I thank Christ Jesus our Lord who enables me, because He considered me faithful, putting me into a ministry; [13]I, who was formerly a blasphemer and a persecutor and arrogant; but I was shown mercy, because being ignorant[5] I did it in unbelief; [14]the grace of our Lord overflowed, along with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus.[6] [15]Here is a trustworthy word, worthy of total acceptance: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners—of whom I am chief; [16]precisely for this reason I was shown mercy, that in me, the 'chief', Jesus Christ might display all his forbearance, as an example for those who are going to rely on Him into eternal life.[7] [17]Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, to God who alone is wise,[8] be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.

A charge to Timothy

Wage the good warfare

[18]Son Timothy, I am giving you this charge in accordance with the prophecies about you that lead the way,[9] that in them you may wage the good warfare, [19]holding on to faith and a good conscience[10] (which[11] some

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[1] Or, 'slave-dealers'.

[2] Notice that law is supposed to be based on God's Word. Only the Creator is competent to legislate morality. In a country run by Satan's servants, the judiciary is usually perverted so as to protect the criminal and punish the honest citizen. They often go further, declaring biblical values to be 'hate crimes'. Have you ever noticed that in such countries hating Jesus and hating Christians is never considered to be a crime? On the contrary, it is protected and encouraged.

[3] The Gospel reflects God's glory, and may even be said to be about that glory, since it reflects His character.

[4] If you are entrusted with something you are supposed to take care of it and protect it. Paul demonstrates this attitude.

[5] Paul was highly instructed in the Jewish religion, but was ignorant where it really mattered.

[6] I take it that Paul is saying that he received an outpouring of faith and love, as well as grace. Well, to transform Saul of Tarsus into Paul the apostle to the nations no doubt required a little 'extra'.

[7] If God could save Paul, He can save anybody—there is hope for any sinner; which calls for a doxology (next verse).

[8] Most modern versions, following 2% of the Greek manuscripts (of objectively inferior quality), omit "wise", leaving 'the only God'. To be sure, the God of the Bible is the only true God, so the shortened form is theologically correct, but He is also the only One who is totally wise, and that information should not be omitted on such poor evidence.

[9] "Lead the way" is in the present tense, and so does not refer to the past. Evidently those prophesies were of such a nature that they gave direction to Timothy's ministry, but he had to choose to follow them. The content of the "charge" is developed in chapter 2.

[10] When a person starts faking it he rejects a good conscience.

[11] "Which" is singular and refers to the good conscience, presumably: if you are not honest with the Faith, you lose it.

having rejected have suffered shipwreck concerning the Faith; 20of whom are Hymenaeus and Alexander—whom I have handed over to Satan that they may be taught[1] not to blaspheme).

About prayer

2 1Therefore I exhort first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions and thanksgivings be made on behalf of all men[2]—2on behalf of kings and all who are in authority, that we may live a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and dignity.[3] 3Because this is good and pleasing to our Savior God, 4who desires all men to be saved and to come into a real knowledge of Truth.[4] 5For there is one God, and one Mediator between God and men—a man![5]—Christ Jesus, 6who gave Himself as a ransom on behalf of all people (to be testified in its own seasons),[6] 7to which ransom I was appointed[7] a herald and an apostle—I am telling the truth in Christ, I am not lying[8]—a teacher of nations[9] in faith and truth.

8So I desire that the men in every place pray, lifting up holy hands without anger or argument.[10] 9Similarly the women also, dressing themselves in appropriate clothing, with modesty and good sense; not with

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1 The verb here is in the passive voice, which makes Satan the teacher! But I wonder how this works—if you are under Satan's tutelage, what are your chances? Unless it be that Paul is not talking about recovering them, but about making them see the extent of their stupidity (and as an object lesson to others). If they stop blaspheming, it will reduce the damage that they are causing.

2 The term "men" here is generic and can include women and children = all people. By putting four synonyms in a row Paul achieves an unusual emphasis on the importance of praying for everybody.

3 This is what God would like to see. War, turmoil and distress are not God's desire for mankind but result from men's bad choices. If everyone would obey God's laws we would have paradise on earth.

4 When people are in the middle of distress and turmoil it is difficult to pause and reflect on spiritual things. People who live in a tranquil society where godliness is promoted have every chance to come into "a real knowledge of Truth".

5 Wonder of wonders! God has provided a **man** to represent us! Of course He is also God, so He can represent both sides with complete competence—the best of all possible mediators!

6 Although Jesus Christ "gave Himself as a ransom on behalf of all people", obviously the exact time when a given people heard about it has varied considerably down through the last two millennia, and some have yet to hear! I take it that Paul is saying that God has a 'time' (*kairos*) for each people to hear, unless he is just saying that different people hear at different times.

7 Recall from 1:1 above that he was appointed by both Father and Son.

8 I wonder why he felt the need to say this to Timothy—or did he know that it would be read by many others? Perhaps 15% of the Greek manuscripts omit "in Christ" (as in NIV, NASB, LB, TEV, etc.).

9 Through his epistles he has taught many hundreds of ethnic nations—no wonder both Father and Son were involved in the appointing.

10 When a number of men are together, any competition tends to take place in the realm of ideas, often producing more heat than light; when a number of women are together, any competition tends to involve physical appearance. This sort of thing can happen even when people gather to pray (supposedly).

braided hair[1] or gold or pearls or expensive clothes, **10**but with good works, which is appropriate to women who profess godliness.

About women

11Let a woman learn in silence, in full subordination. **12**I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man, but to be in silence.[2] **13**For Adam was formed first, then Eve.[3] **14**Also, Adam was not deceived; rather, the woman, being deceived, became a transgressor.[4] **15**However, she will be saved through the Childbirth[5]—if they[6] continue in faith, love and holiness, with self-control.[7]

Qualifications

Of overseers

3 **1**Here is a trustworthy word: if a man aspires to the position of

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[1] Presumably the reference is not to simple braids, but adding fancy things to the hair in the braid.

[2] The crucial factor here is authority, and the underlying need is to protect the structure of the home, the foundational unit of society, including the church. If a woman teaches her husband in church, crossing the street to their house will not make her want to submit to him; human nature does not work that way.

[3] Paul appeals to God's purpose in Creation. God created the man first and gave him the responsibility to administer the earth. Later on He created the woman, using a part of the man's body, for the declared purpose of being his assistant (Genesis 2:18). An assistant does not give orders to the boss; nor does he make policy decisions on his own. The first woman did make a policy decision on her own, with catastrophic consequence.

[4] As a general rule (there are exceptions) a man tends to think things through before reaching a decision, so he can defend his choice on the basis of logical argument. A woman tends to be more intuitive and will decide on that basis, without being able to defend the choice logically (which tends to frustrate men no end). Whether that was why Eve could be so easily deceived, I am not prepared to say, but Paul uses that susceptibility as an argument in his case against allowing women to teach. Doctrine must be based on reason, not intuition—to teach is to define. Paul affirms that Adam was not deceived, so his choice was deliberate. To disobey the Creator was a policy decision that Eve, as assistant, had no business making—she rebelled against the role that the Creator assigned her. Her *fait accompli* left Adam with a difficult decision—let her die alone, or die with her. It is idle to speculate on why he decided as he did, but it was Adam's choice (not Eve's) that condemned the race to 'death through sin' (Romans 5:12-21).

[5] Note that 'she' refers to Eve, she is the antecedent. Neither Eve nor any other woman is saved by bearing a child. 'Childbirth' is accompanied by the definite article, in the Text, so it is "the childbirth". There is only one childbirth that could result in salvation for Eve, and the rest of us, the birth of the Messiah.

[6] Paul breaks the rules of grammar and switches from 'she' to 'they' in the middle of the sentence—what is true of Eve is applied to all women. Well, strictly speaking, since "they" has no antecedent I suppose it could include men as well, everybody (unless someone wants to argue that women are saved on a different basis than men [which I think would run afoul of other passages]). Still, the paragraph is about women. Any sisters in Christ who have been troubled by this verse, thinking they must bear a child, may relax on that score.

[7] So what happens if they do not "continue"?

overseer,[1] he desires a good work. [2]Now then, it is obligatory for the overseer to be above reproach, a one woman man,[2] temperate, sensible, respectable, hospitable, good at teaching, [3]not a drinker, not a bully, not corrupt [financially],[3] but gentle, peaceful, not greedy; [4]one who rules his own house well, having children[4] who obey him with due respect [5](for if a man does not know how to rule his own house, how can he take care of God's congregation?); [6]not a recent convert, lest being puffed up he fall into the same judgment that the devil did.[5] [7]Also, it is necessary for him to have a good reputation with those who are outside *the congregation*, so as not to fall into reproach and the devil's snare.[6]

Of deacons

[8]Similarly, deacons must be respectable, not deceitful, not heavy drinkers,[7] not corrupt [financially]; [9]holding the mystery of the faith with a pure conscience. [10]But let these also first be tested; then, if they are blameless, let them serve as deacons.

Of 'deaconesses'

[11]Similarly, women[8] must be respectable, not slanderers, temperate, trustworthy in everything.

Of deacons, again

[12]Let deacons be one woman men, ruling their children and their own houses well. [13]For those who have served well as deacons obtain for

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[1] The term here is usually rendered 'bishop', but today a bishop is one who has authority over a number of other pastors/presbyters/elders, whereas in the New Testament these four terms evidently refer to a single office in the church.

[2] That is what the Text says, strictly speaking, emphasizing the quality—a man who has only one wife, but has a wandering eye, would not qualify. However, the term 'woman' can also mean 'wife', and because of the reference to children in verse four most versions render 'wife'. The term "man" here refers exclusively to males; there is no room here for a female overseer.

[3] Some 30% of the Greek manuscripts omit "not corrupt [financially]" (as in NIV, NASB, LB, TEV, etc.). Who wants to offend those with the means to make substantial contributions to the church coffers? So why talk about shady dealings? The omission is surely inferior.

[4] Presumably adults who have left the 'nest' are not in view here.

[5] Pride brought about Lucifer's downfall (Isaiah 14:13-14).

[6] When a pastor is well known and respected in a community, any attempt to discredit him through false accusations will probably fail; the people know it isn't true. On the other hand, a new arrival is an easy target.

[7] An elder should not 'drink' (verse 3), while a deacon may, just not heavily! However, if he hopes to one day be an elder…

[8] That is what the Text says, just "women"—no article and no possessive pronoun. Because Paul returns to the deacons in verse 12, most versions take the reference here to be to their wives, but the grammatical construction of verse 11 is parallel to that of verse 8, which is parallel to verse 2. I take it that the grammar obliges us to see a third office in the congregation, one filled by women—deaconesses, or something of the sort. Counseling women can be dangerous for a man; certain matters are best handled by a mature, sanctified woman; if she has an official standing in the congregation, so much the better.

themselves a good standing and considerable confidence in the faith which is in Christ Jesus.[1]

God in flesh

14 Although I hope to come to you shortly, I am writing these things
to you 15 in case I am delayed, so that you may know how it is necessary
to conduct oneself in God's household, which is the Church of the living
God, pillar and foundation of the truth.[2] 16 Yes, the mystery of *our* reli-
gion is confessedly great: God was manifested in flesh,[3] was vindicated
in spirit, was revealed to angels, was proclaimed among nations, was
believed in the world, was received up in glory!

About doctrine

Things taught by demons

4 1 Now the Spirit says explicitly that in later times some will fall away
from the faith, paying attention to deceiving spirits and to things
taught by demons 2—through hypocritical liars, whose own consciences
have been cauterized,[4] 3 who forbid to marry and to eat foods that God
created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and really
know the truth. 4 For every creature of God is good, and nothing is to be
rejected if it is received with thanksgiving, 5 because it is consecrated
through the Word of God and prayer.[5]

A good servant of Jesus Christ

6 If you instruct the brothers in these things you will be a good ser-
vant of Jesus Christ, being fed with the words of the faith and of the
good doctrine that you have faithfully followed.[6] 7 But reject godless

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1 They become natural candidates for the office of elder.

2 My first impression would be that the truth should be sustaining the Church, not vice versa. But it is the Church that has the responsibility to promote and defend the truth in the society at large—in education, health, commerce, government, everywhere.

3 Instead of 'God', 1% of the Greek manuscripts (of objectively inferior quality) read 'who', and most modern versions follow this 1%. But 'who' is nonsensical (in the context), so most of them take evasive action: NEB and NASB have 'he who'; Phillips has 'the one'; NRSV, Jerusalem, TEV and NIV render 'he'. Berkley actually has 'who'! In the Greek Text the relative pronoun has no antecedent, so it is a grammatical 'impossibility', besides being a stupidity—what is so mysterious about someone being manifested in flesh? All human beings have bodies. In the absence of concrete evidence, the claim that this is a note lifted from a known hymn or poem becomes no more than a desperate attempt to 'save' a choice that besides being stupid is also perverse (because of the theological consequences). The pronoun can be accounted for as an easy transcriptional error, a simple copying mistake, so why not stay with the 98.5% (there are other variants)? "God was manifested in flesh"—now there you have a mystery! For a more detailed discussion, please see my book, *The Identity of the New Testament Text V*, footnote 2, on pages 176-178.

4 Be not deceived, the churches (with exceptions, of course) are filled with a variety of 'doctrines' of demonic origin. The enemy uses a certain type of person to 'sell' them.

5 I gain the impression that the dietary regulations in the Mosaic Law have been superseded. I may enjoy a pork chop if I first consecrate it. (The trouble is that many of us forget about the consecrating.)

6 To get to be a "good servant of Jesus Christ" is a process.

myths and old-wives' tales; rather, exercise yourself toward godliness. 8Now physical exercise has some value,[1] but godliness has value in all things, holding promises[2] for both this present life and the one to come.

A trustworthy word

9Here is a trustworthy word, worthy of total acceptance 10(which is also why we labor and suffer reproach):[3] We have set our hope on the living God, who is 'Savior of all men',[4] especially of those who believe.[5]

Watch your life and doctrine

11Command and teach these things. 12Let no one look down on your youthfulness,[6] but be an example to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit,[7] in faith, in purity. 13Until I come give attention to public reading [of Scripture], to exhortation, to teaching. 14Do not neglect the gift that is in you,[8] which was 'given' to you through prophecy with the laying on of the hands of the body of elders.[9] 15Cultivate these things; give yourself wholly to them, so that your progress may be evident to all. 16Take pains with yourself and the doctrine; persevere in those things,[10] because by doing so you will save both yourself and those who hear you.[11]

Relationships

5 1Do not rebuke an older man harshly, but exhort him as a father, younger men as brothers, 2older women as mothers, younger

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[1] Since a sick body definitely slows us down, we should give some attention to keeping physically fit.

[2] I follow 60% of the Greek manuscripts, including the best line of transmission, in reading the plural, "promises"—there are promises for down here and others for up there.

[3] Instead of "suffer reproach", perhaps 7% of the Greek manuscripts have 'strive' (as in NIV, NASB, TEV, etc.).

[4] This involves an exclusivist claim, which continues to give rise to opposition. If our God is "Savior of all men" then there cannot be any other 'saviors', at least not legitimate ones. Jesus Himself said, "I am <u>the</u> way, <u>the</u> truth and <u>the</u> life; <u>no one</u> comes to the Father except through me" (John 14:6). For preaching that exclusivist claim Paul suffered reproach, and anyone who follows his example today will also suffer.

[5] "Savior of all men" is a potentiality; for the salvation to become effective, one must believe into Jesus.

[6] As a professor of mine once said, "Your youth is not the problem; it's the immaturity that goes with it".

[7] Some 9% of the Greek manuscripts omit "in spirit" (as in NIV, NASB, LB, TEV, etc.).

[8] The obvious implication is that a gift <u>can</u> be neglected.

[9] According to 1 Corinthians 12:11 the Holy Spirit distributes gifts as He chooses, but it is to 'each one'. The impression I gain is that many (most?) Christians are not aware that they have a gift (or perhaps their church will not allow them to use it). But a prophetic declaration, backed by the authority of the body of elders, should remove all doubt. Note that "elders" is plural.

[10] Paul refers back to the "these things" at the beginning of verse 15, that refers to those in verse 13.

[11] Paul here emphasizes human responsibility. If Timothy goes astray, those who trust him in spiritual matters will also go astray; if he remains firm those who follow him will too. This reminds me of James 3:1. "My brethren, let not many of you become teachers, knowing that we shall receive a stricter judgment."

women as sisters, with all purity.

Honor true widows

3Give financial support to widows who are really 'widows'. 4But if any widow has children or grandchildren, let them learn first to demonstrate piety in their own household by repaying their parents, for this is pleasing[1] to God. 5Now she who is really a widow and desolate has set her hope on God, and continues in supplications and prayers night and day. 6But she who indulges in pleasure is dead while she lives.

7You should even command these things, so that they may be blameless. 8But if anyone does not provide for his own, and especially for those of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.[2]

9No widow should be enrolled unless she is at least sixty, a one-man wife, 10known for good works—she brought up children, she lodged strangers, she washed saints' feet, she relieved the afflicted, she devoted herself to every good work.[3]

About younger widows

11As for younger widows, do not enroll them; because whenever they are controlled by sensual desires rather than by Christ, they want to marry, 12coming under judgment because they have broken their first commitment.[4] 13Not only that, they learn to be idle, going around from house to house; and not only idle, but also gossips and busybodies, saying things they ought not to.[5] 14So I want the younger widows to marry, to bear children, to manage the home, to give the adversary no occasion for caustic comments. 15(In fact, some have already turned aside after Satan.)[6]

16If any man or[7] woman who is a believer has widows, let them relieve them and not burden the congregation, so that it may relieve those who are widows indeed.[8]

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1 Instead of "is pleasing", perhaps 15% of the Greek manuscripts have 'is good and pleasing' (as in AV and NKJV).

2 This is reminiscent of our Lord's word in Mark 7:9-13.

3 Wow! How is that for a 'job description'?

4 What "first commitment"? Looking carefully at verses 11 and 12, I take it that Paul is arguing as if some younger ones have already been enrolled—in order to be enrolled they would have had to commit themselves to a certain life style, which they would subsequently break.

5 The young have more energy than the old, and if that energy is not put to good use, it will be put to bad use; and the congregation should not finance such bad use.

6 It is not clear to me to whom the "some" refers, although the first 'candidate' would appear to be some younger widows.

7 Some 2% of the Greek manuscripts, of objectively inferior quality, omit "man or" (as in NIV, NASB, LB, TEV, etc.). The omission is obviously an inferior reading, and could be an easy case of 'similar beginning'.

8 Here is the 'bottom line' in this discussion about widows. The congregation would have limited material resources, and these should be reserved for the more needy cases. (Any semblance to a 'gravy train' is to be avoided.)

Honor elders

17 Let the elders who lead well be counted worthy of a double honorarium, especially those who labor in word and teaching. 18 For the Scripture says: "You shall not muzzle an ox while it treads out grain," and "The worker is worthy of his wages."[1]

19 Do not entertain an accusation against an elder except on the basis of two or three witnesses. 20 Those who are sinning rebuke publicly, so that the rest also may be in fear.[2]

Watch your step

21 I charge you in the presence of God and Sovereign[3] Jesus Christ and the elect angels[4] that you observe these things without prejudgment, doing nothing by partiality. 22 Do not lay hands [in ordination] hastily on anyone, do not *thereby* participate in the sins of others.[5] Keep yourself pure.

23 Stop drinking only water; use a little wine because of your stomach and your frequent infirmities.[6]

24 The sins of some men are obvious, leading the way into judgment,[7] while those of others trail behind. 25 So also the good works are obvious; even the ones that are not, cannot be hidden.

Slaves honor owners

6 1 As many as are under the yoke of slavery should consider their own owners to be worthy of full respect, so that God's name and doctrine not be slandered. 2 Those who have owners who are believers must not disregard them because they are brothers; instead they must serve them even better, because those receiving the good service are believers and beloved.[8]

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1 The part about the ox is a quote from Deuteronomy 25:4, definitely Scripture, but the part about the worker is a quote from Luke 10:7! Now this is very instructive. Paul, a former Pharisee, presumably ascribed the highest level of inspiration to the five books of the Law, so we expect him to call Deuteronomy Scripture. But for him to place Luke on a par with Moses is little short of incredible. Although there may have been close to twenty years between the 'publishing' of Luke and the writing of 1 Timothy, Luke was recognized and declared by apostolic authority to be Scripture not long after it came off the press, so to speak. But if Paul wrote this letter under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, as I believe, then God Himself is declaring Luke to be Scripture!

2 It appears that Timothy was to act as a 'deputy apostle' (something like a deputy sheriff).

3 Perhaps 5% of the Greek manuscripts omit "Sovereign" (as in NIV, NASB, LB, TEV, etc.).

4 I wonder what the angels have to do with it. Might the "elect" angels be a special class?

5 The point seems to be that if we are responsible for ordaining somebody, we become accomplices of what he subsequently does, at least in part.

6 A little homemade wine can be effective against diarrhea, which was presumably Timothy's 'infirmity'. And at that time not all drinking water would be pure.

7 I take the point to be that some sins are judged already in this life, but all will be judged at the final accounting.

8 Observe that there is no indication that a slave who converts to Christ should expect to be freed from that condition, even if the owner is a Christian.

Conclusion to 'Relationships'

Teach and exhort these things. **3**If anyone teaches differently and does not consent to sound words, the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine that accords with godliness, **4**he is conceited and understands nothing. Rather he is obsessed with controversies and hair-splitting word battles, from which come envy, strife, slanderings, evil suspicions, **5**constant wranglings of men with corrupted minds and destitute of the Truth,[1] who suppose that godliness is a means to financial gain.[2] Keep away from such people.[3]

Concluding considerations

Godliness with contentment

6Now godliness with contentment is great gain. **7**We brought nothing into the world and it is certain that neither can we take anything out.[4] **8**So having food and clothing we will be content with that. **9**But those who want to get rich fall into temptation and a snare and into many foolish and harmful desires, that plunge people into ruin and loss; **10**because the love of money is a root[5] of all kinds of evil; in their greediness some have been led away from the faith and have impaled themselves on many distresses.[6]

Lay hold on eternal life

11But you, O man of God, flee these things; rather pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance, gentleness. **12**Fight the good fight of faith; take hold of the eternal life into which you were called[7]—indeed, you confessed the good confession in the presence of many witnesses.[8] **13**In the presence of the God who gives life to all things, and of Christ Jesus who testified the good confession before Pontius Pilate,[9] I charge you **14**to keep this commandment without spot, blameless until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ,[10] **15**which He will manifest at the

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1 The clear implication is that these people have not been regenerated, and are being used by the enemy. There is no lack of such people in the churches.

2 The religious mercenaries are with us still.

3 Less than 3% of the Greek manuscripts, of objectively inferior quality, omit this last sentence (as in NIV, NASB, LB, TEV, etc.).

4 But if you belong to Christ you can send it on ahead, by investing in God's Kingdom here.

5 That is right, a root, not 'the' root. Love of money is only one of the causes that lead men to do evil.

6 As the Text says, "The way of the transgressor is hard" (Proverbs 13:15). Recall that the Sovereign said, "You cannot serve God and mammon" (Luke 16:13). Someone who switches from God to 'mammon' will probably never switch back.

7 "Flee", "pursue", "fight", "take hold"—these are things that are up to us; Paul is emphasizing human responsibility here.

8 Might this have been when he was baptized with water?

9 So just what was that "good confession"? The Lord demonstrated absolutely no fear, and told Pilate plainly that he could only do what the Father allowed.

10 Evidently Paul considered that the "appearing" could happen during Timothy's lifetime.

proper time—He who is the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings and the Lord of lords; **16**who alone has immortality, residing in unapproachable light;[1] whom no man has seen or can see; to whom be honor and eternal power. Amen.

To the rich

17Command[2] those who are rich in this present world not to be haughty, nor to rely upon the uncertainty of riches but on the living[3] God, who richly provides us with everything to enjoy; **18**they are to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous sharers[4]—**19**storing up for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, so that they may lay hold on the eternal life.

A closing exhortation

20O Timothy, guard the deposit![5] Turn away from the godless, empty chatter and inconsistencies of what is falsely called 'science'—**21**by professing it some have erred concerning the Faith.[6]

The Grace be with you. Amen.

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[1] But once we have been glorified I believe we will be able to approach and endure, even enjoy! Oh praise God!

[2] Paul commands Timothy to issue a command to the rich (see James 5:1-3).

[3] Some 7% of the Greek manuscripts omit "the living" (as in NIV, NASB, TEV, etc.).

[4] Whenever God blesses us with material abundance, it is not for us to hoard or squander on ourselves—it is to be invested in the Kingdom (there are various ways of doing that).

[5] What does Paul mean by "the deposit"? I suppose it would be the sum of revealed truth surrounding the person and work of Jesus Christ—a synonym of 'the Faith'.

[6] For many generations the theory of evolution has been foisted on the populace at large as 'science'. It dominates the schools, the media, the marketplace, the government. The spiritual damage has been incalculable—multiplied millions will spend eternity in the Lake because of it.