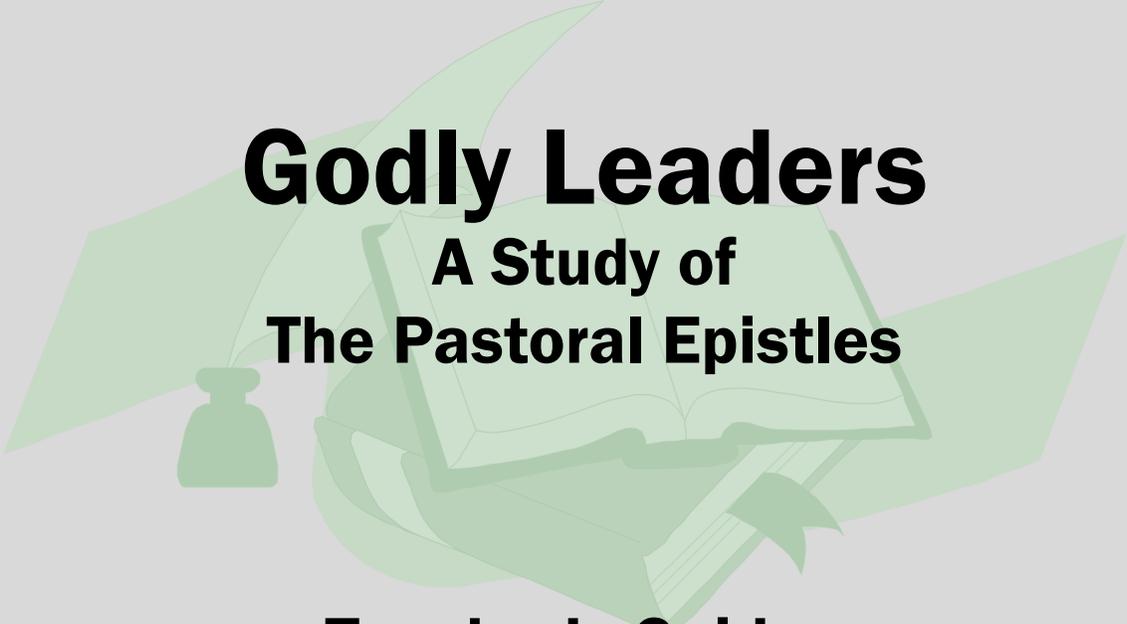


To The Testimony!
Bible Study Materials



Godly Leaders
A Study of
The Pastoral Epistles

Teacher's Guide

“To the law and to the testimony! If they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.” Isaiah 8:20

Pastor Kevin Hobi

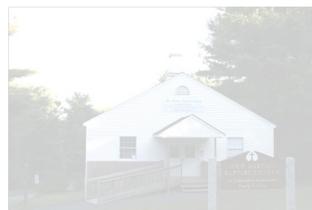
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Teacher's Guide

**New Boston Baptist Church
New Boston, New Hampshire**



www.newbostonbaptist.org

Pastor Kevin Hobi

*Godly Leaders: A Study of the Pastoral Epistles —
Teacher's Guide*

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The Doctrinal Foundation of *To The Testimony!* Materials:

We believe that the autographa of the 66 books of the Old and New Testaments were verbally inspired by God, and so they constitute inerrant, ultimate, and infallible authority in all matters of faith and practice, as well as any other matter that they may address. We are thankful for God's providential work of preservation, and we appreciate faithful translation and textual criticism.

We believe in one God who exists eternally in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

We believe that Jesus Christ is the incarnate Son of God, virgin born, fully God and fully man, that He lived a sinless and miraculous life, that He died as a vicarious atonement for the sins of mankind, and that He arose bodily from the grave.

We believe that men are conceived in sin. Their only hope of redemption and salvation from hell fire is personal faith in Christ's work on the cross on their behalf. Saving faith involves repentance, requires a prior work of God's Spirit, and produces evidence of a changed and fruitful life.

We believe that Christ will return soon. We are premillennial and pretribulational in our eschatology, and we affirm Ryrie's *sine qua non* of dispensational hermeneutics: (1) God's glory is central to God's plan; (2) an ecclesial distinction must be maintained between Israel and the local church; and (3) a literal one-to-one correspondence must be followed in the hermeneutics of prophecy and fulfillment.

We believe in the autonomy of the local church, the separation of church and state, two church offices, and two ordinances. We are Baptist in our polity.

We believe that Christians ought to live with separatist convictions, a desire to be holy and to separate from those who do not. We desire to be passionate about our stand against the unbelief of liberalism and the compromise of new evangelicalism.

Teaching Goals Reflected in *To the Testimony!* Materials:

Teaching the Bible must begin with the truth of 2 Tim. 3:15: "the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus." The first demonstration of the power of the Word of God in a life is the salvation of the soul. Wisdom unto salvation through faith in Christ is the product of the Spirit of God's illumination of those who study the pages of the Bible. The Bible teacher ministers so that men and women might come to know Jesus Christ as their personal Savior. This is his first work. No man will understand the Bible until he has first made peace with its Author (1 Cor. 2:12-14). There is no dichotomy between teaching God's Word and winning souls to Christ (1 Tim. 4:16).

The next goal of the faithful teacher of the Bible is spiritual maturity for his students. 2 Tim. 3:16-17 expresses this desire well: "that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." Teaching *all Scripture* perfects

God's people. Hobby horses and trendy topics can be tempting as popular substitutes for a disciplined and expositional commitment to *all Scripture*. Balance is also important to faithfulness to *all Scripture*. Overlooking some Scriptures with an unbalanced focus on others can skew theological conclusions. The faithful teacher may not solve all the mysteries theological systems seem to solve, but his balanced approach to disciplined exposition will treat all sound doctrine fully.

Another commitment the teacher must make to reach his goal of spiritually mature students is practical application. Many teachers are willing to profit from the Scripture in the area of doctrine, but they are afraid to use the Bible as a tool of reproof and correction. Teachers have to be negative at times and practical at all times. The Scripture was not meant merely to give us something to think about, but to give us something which changes our lives. God has revealed His will because He desires men to obey (Deut. 29:29).

2 Tim. 4:1-5 concludes our understanding of the teacher's mission. Paul does not promise Timothy that crowds will applaud his superior techniques and entertaining methods. He simply tells him that doctrine will require endurance. Our students must learn how to endure Bible teaching in order to grow. We need to be careful not to make the Bible too easy. In our efforts to take away the pain of Bible study, we very well may rob our students of the gain God desires for them.

Suggestions For Using *To The Testimony!* Materials:

Preparation:

Your *To The Testimony!* materials will require that you spend time with your Bibles. You should begin by working your way through a student lesson. Prayerfully read the related passages. As you study the passages covered by the lesson, write down the answers and applications which you desire to emphasize to your class in response to the questions you find in the student lesson. This preparation will help you see the lesson from the student's point of view, and it will ensure that your students are fed from your labors. Working through a lesson will also help you understand what may be unclear to your students and what may need clarification during the class time. You may develop questions of your own for class time.

After completing the student version of the lesson, consult your teacher's manual for the answers, applications, and commentary resources found there. Emphasize the conclusions the Lord brought to your mind during your personal study, and use the teacher's manual to supplement that understanding. When you complete this process, you should prayerfully consider the effect you want these passages to have on your students. Write down two or three main applications, attitudes, or actions you want the students in your class to adopt as a result of that lesson.

Presentation:

As a teacher of the Bible, you want to encourage learning in your students. Learning is accomplished not simply by hearing a lecture in the classroom, but also by wrestling with the material in a personal way. As a teacher, you want to encour-

age discussion in the classroom to reward those who have wrestled with the material on their own. Listening can be as important to teaching as instructing. Your *To The Testimony!* materials are especially suited to encourage classroom discussion. The class format should include time for students to volunteer their answers to the student manual questions. This is the core of the learning process during the classroom session.

In addition to the student responses, the classroom session should focus attention on the applications the Lord has placed on your heart for your class. The student responses will often serve as a lead-in for a point you want to emphasize. The student's attention is usually especially well-focused just after another student responds to a question.

To The Testimony! materials contain some special tools in addition to the lesson questions, which are designed to help encourage discussion in the class. Key words highlight key points in the simple *From The Honeycomb* word studies. Use these at your discretion to help clarify a key word or drive home a key application. *Interesting Insight!* paragraphs are excerpts from other authors relevant to the lesson. The design here is to help students value the work others have done to help us understand the Scripture. *Real Life?* boxes conclude many of the lessons in order to challenge the student to apply in a practical situation the principles and applications you have taught him. These situations will help to make the convictions your students are developing more concrete and real.

Pace:

A given number of lessons may or may not require the same number of weeks. Pace yourself. Tangents can be tremendous learning adventures in the classroom, and good class discussion will occasionally mean that a full lesson will not be possible in one week. Each lesson follows an outline, and these can be used to help break down the lesson into more manageable pieces. It is important not to overwhelm your class in order to obtain an arbitrary rate of progress. Give your class time to learn and digest what they are learning. Regular review is important to the learning process.

About the Author of *Godly Leaders—A Study of the Pastoral Epistles*:

Kevin Hobi has been the pastor of New Boston Baptist Church in New Boston, NH since August 2007. New Boston Baptist Church is an independent fundamental family in Christ that is honored to associate with the Northeast Regular Baptist Fellowship of Churches and the American Council of Christian Churches. Kevin is also a member of the IBFNA and the FBFI. Kevin's ministry experience includes 11 years of service as Associate Pastor at The Baptist Church of Danbury, CT.

Kevin trusted Christ as his personal Savior as a boy growing up under the ministry of Pastor John Ashbrook and Bible Community Church. He is a graduate of Mentor Christian School, a day school ministry of that church. He trained for ministry at the Bible Institute of Ohio and Bob Jones University, earning a BA in history,

and an MA and PhD in theology. He also earned an MBA from Western Connecticut State University.

Kevin and his wife Maureen have been blessed with three children: Brandon, Kara, and Kent, a daughter-in-law Carrie, and a son-in-law Matt.

The Purpose of *Godly Leaders*:

The purpose of the *Godly Leaders* Bible study lessons is to teach the content of the Pastoral Epistles and to develop a discerning conviction in students about what makes a church leader a godly leader. The world assesses leadership skills according to a different standard than does Scripture. Our students need to understand clearly this difference and to discern good leaders from bad ones in a scriptural way. In addition, your students will be challenged by Paul's instruction to his chief lieutenants to accept greater leadership responsibility for the work of the Lord at your local church.

The lessons seek to be both practical and balanced, without generating speculative controversy. They are not a study in systematic theology (asking, "What is true?"), but rather one that seeks to implement the tools of biblical theology (asking, "What is revealed?"). The admonition of Deut. 29:29 is a guiding principle: "The secret things belong unto the Lord our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law."

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The Lesson Plan for *Godly Leaders*:

Lesson 1: "Three Leaders and Their Three Letters" - Overview

Your students shall be able to give the general purpose of each of the Pastoral Epistles, succinctly summarize the ministry and character of Timothy and Titus, and appreciate the relationship they had with the apostle Paul.

Lesson 2: "The Call to Leadership" - 1 Timothy 1

Your students shall learn the difference between the values used by the world when selecting leaders and the call issued by the Lord when selecting leaders. This understanding will give them a greater appreciation for the leaders God has given them as well as direct them to glorify the Lord for His gift of leadership to the church.

Lesson 3: "Good Followers of Godly Leaders" - 1 Timothy 2

Your students shall develop a conviction regarding the role of their own faithfulness to the success of their godly leaders. They shall see the critical importance of prayer to the local church ministry and be challenged to take on more responsibility in this important work. In addition, Christian ladies in your class will see the spiritual power of a faithfully submissive testimony in the local church in today's world of selfishness and individualism.

Lesson 4: "What a Godly Leader Must Be" - 1 Timothy 3

Your students will develop discernment in regard to who their leaders should be and why. They will appreciate and admire in a greater way the leaders God has given to them as they develop a solemn respect for the office those leaders fill.

Lesson 5: "Leadership Against Apostasy" - 1 Timothy 4

Your students will develop discernment in regard to the threat of apostasy. They shall develop convictions concerning their need to separate from apostates, which shall bolster a godly stand taken by those who lead them.

Lesson 6: "The Godly Leader's Care for People" - 1 Timothy 5

Your students will understand the responsibility of the local church when it comes to social work. This understanding will help them set priorities for both their own service for God as well as their expectations regarding the service of the local church. In addition, they shall prepare themselves with a Biblical perspective to be more valuable participants in the business meetings of the local church ministry.

Lesson 7: "Godly Financial Leadership" - 1 Timothy 6

Your students shall form a godly attitude about money with this lesson. This attitude will replace the materialism the world seeks to instill within them at every turn.

Lesson 8: "Leading Difficult People" - Titus 1

Not all people are easily led. Your students will commit themselves to support leaders even when they need to deal with difficult people. Your students shall constitute a stabilizing force in difficult times having developed the convictions studied here.

Lesson 9: "The Fruits of Godly Leadership" - Titus 2-3

The results of good leadership are very practical in nature, but they are not altogether obvious to sinful man. Your students shall apply the fruits of godly leadership to the way they live their lives while rejecting the world's artificial and shallow standard for a successful local church ministry.

Lesson 10: "The Conscience of Godly Leaders" - 2 Timothy 1

Your students will see the importance of a clear conscience to the local church ministry. They shall see the threat that fear and intimidation pose to the maintenance of a clear conscience, and they shall resolve to support their godly leaders so as to encourage and strengthen them.

Lesson 11: "A Godly Leader's Strength" - 2 Timothy 2

Weak leadership is a curse to any work of God, but when it comes to spiritual things, we live in a day which holds weakness with great esteem and strong leadership with great contempt. Your students shall develop spiritual strength and seek to strengthen their godly leaders.

Lesson 12: "Difficult Days for Leaders" - 2 Timothy 3

Your students will expect godly leadership to be hard. They shall sympathize with the struggles of their godly leaders and do all they can to help them endure.

Lesson 13: "The Legacy of a Godly Leader" - 2 Timothy 4

The results of godly leadership are not complete unless the legacy of that leadership is also considered. Paul looks back with satisfaction on a life of godly leadership in this passage, and he looks ahead hoping to have a legacy that endures. Your students will see themselves as part of the legacy of their godly leaders, and they will resolve to see that legacy endure for generations to come by God's grace.

In the pages of the teacher's guide, sections also included in the students' lessons appear in gray.

Lesson 1
“Three Leaders and Their Three Letters”
Overview

Purpose:

Your students shall be able to give the general purpose of each of the Pastoral Epistles, succinctly summarize the ministry and character of Timothy and Titus, and appreciate the relationship they had with the Apostle Paul.

In a Nutshell:

Lesson 1 will introduce you to the Pastoral Epistles, 1 Timothy, Titus, and 2 Timothy, all letters of the Apostle Paul. Although not called the “Pastoral Epistles” until the 18th century, these three books of the Bible have been guiding local churches in regard to their leadership since the days Paul authored them under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. In Lesson 1 you will learn who Timothy and Titus were and the key themes of the letters Paul wrote to them.

To the Testimony!

Who was Timothy?

Acts 16:1-3 1. Our first introduction to Timothy, the recipient of two of the Pastoral Epistles, is found in Acts 16 at the start of Paul's second missionary journey. In this introduction, Luke gives us Timothy's name and two details regarding his background in verses 1-2. What are those two details? How did they contribute to Paul's desire to make Timothy a part of his mission team?

Answer: We are told (1) that Timothy was part Jewish and part Greek and (2) that he had a good reputation among the churches of Lystra and Iconium. Undoubtedly a disadvantage for him in many respects, Timothy's cross-cultural heritage made him a perfect fit for the work Paul had in mind. As the church represented a coming together of Jew and Gentile (1 Cor. 12:13), Timothy's background embodied this reality. In addition, his reputation for faithfulness helped him pass the rigorous requirement of the Apostle Paul which Mark had recently failed only a few verses earlier (Acts 13:13, 15:36-40).

Application: God's call in Timothy's life illustrates two important leadership principles for us. First, the most unlikely leader in the world's eyes is often the most likely leader in God's eyes (1 Cor. 1:26-29). What the world may have seen as a disadvantage, Timothy's dual heritage, the Lord most certainly saw to be an advantage that equipped Timothy for the work of the gospel to the Gentile world. The second principle we see here is that Paul looked for someone with a reliable track record before entrusting additional responsibility. This is where Mark fell short in Paul's view (Acts 15:38), but Timothy passed that test. Good leaders begin

as good followers.

Notes: _____

1 Thess. 3:1-8 2. You may remember from Acts 17:1-10 that God had given fruit in Thessalonica. Yet jealous Jews ran Paul out of town before he had much of a chance to disciple this young church. He worried about them in Athens, and so he sends Timothy back to Thessalonica. What was Timothy's assignment? What character traits would the assignment have required of young Timothy?

Answer: Timothy's assignment was to return to Thessalonica to strengthen and encourage the faith of these new believers who were suffering under persecution. The assignment would have required courage of the young missionary.

Application: The Thessalonian assignment was evidently the first time Timothy was asked to take the lead in caring for the needs of a church. Training godly leaders for God's work means asking people to do things they have never done before. We ought to be willing to do new things for God. And we ought to be patient followers of those who are trying to lead for the first time.

Notes: _____

1 Cor. 4:14-21
16:10-11 3. Ancient Europe was the ground-breaking focus of the second missionary journey of Paul. We learn about the backbone of Timothy as he worked with some of these challenging churches. One example was Timothy's assignment to follow up on the letter of 1 Corinthians to the troubled Corinthian church. What do we learn about Timothy from this assignment?

Answer: We learn that Timothy was on the one hand faithful (4:14-21), but on the other hand fearful (16:10-11).

Application: Paul trusted Timothy like he trusted himself with the challenging work of setting the Corinthian church straight. We learn that Timothy was faithful even in the face of a difficult assignment. But it is also encouraging to realize that Timothy was no spiritual giant who was immune to the natural misgivings of real people in the work of the Lord. God uses

us in our faithful frailty, not because we have obtained impregnable strength. We need not be perfect to be used of God, only willing and faithful.

Notes: _____

Phil. 2:19-24 4. Whereas the Corinthian assignment displayed Timothy's backbone, the Philippian assignment shows us his heart. What set Timothy apart in the mind of the Apostle Paul according to these verses?

Answer: The selfless care for other people that Timothy demonstrated set him apart in the mind of Paul. Timothy had a track record which said that he cared for the Lord's business, not his own ambitions. This trait gave Paul confidence that Timothy could be trusted in his absence.

Application: "All seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's." This is a sad but true commentary on how we operate. Timothy was greatly used of God because he continually set aside selfish ambitions for the cause of Jesus Christ. We need to do the same.

Notes: _____

Interesting Insight!

Compare 2 Timothy 4:9-13 with Hebrews 13:23.

"Thus A. Nairne hazards 'the guess that both the author [of Hebrews] and Timothy may have been brought to Italy by the peril of their master S. Paul – that S. Paul has perished in Nero's persecution, that Timothy has been imprisoned, and that the freedom of both Timothy and the author is now assured' (*The Epistle of Priesthood* [Edinburgh, 1913], p. 432). W. F. Howard similarly suggests that Timothy, having been summoned to Rome by Paul (2 Tim. 4:9ff.), was compromised by his association with the apostle and imprisoned . . . ('The Epistle to the Hebrews', *Interpretation v* [1951], pp. 80ff.)." [F. F. Bruce, *The Epistle to the Hebrews* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1964), p. 414, fn. 128.]

Application: The last we read of Timothy appears to be Hebrews 13:23, where we find him being released from prison. Some commentators believe this happened after Timothy responded to Paul’s request for a visit in his final epistle. Timothy loyally carried out Paul’s final requests at great personal risk of peril. The selfless loyalty Timothy displayed was not always rewarded by the world, but it is this trait which, in part, made him a godly leader.

Notes: _____

Who was Titus?

Gal. 2:1-5 5. The book of Acts does not refer to Titus by name, but we learn about him in the letters of Paul. We know from Galatians 2 that Paul knew Titus before the second missionary journey of Acts 16 because he accompanied Paul to the Jerusalem Council narrated in Acts 15. What other significant fact do we learn about Titus which created a stir at the Jerusalem Council?

Answer: We learn that Titus was a Greek who was never circumcised. Most likely a Galatian home-town boy, Titus probably came to know Paul during his first missionary journey through Asia. Shortly after his conversion, this young believer became the test-case for the doctrine of circumcision before the Jerusalem Council.

Application: Titus was a believer who learned early on to stand for the truth. The raging circumcision controversy became a very personal issue for this young believer, yet he showed the courage to do right, not quitting in the face of criticism from those who should have known better.

Notes: _____

2 Cor. 8:1-6, 16-17 6. In addition to his ministry on the island of Crete, Titus was given an important assignment at the church at Corinth, the undesirable task of fund-raising. For obvious reasons, this responsibility is sometimes not a popular one among godly leaders. What virtue did Titus demonstrate in carrying out this responsibility?

Answer: Titus demonstrated enthusiasm for an unappealing task. His work at Crete was also

undesirable work due to the nature of the people he worked with, the Cretans (Titus 1:12). In spite of the difficulty of the task, Titus approached the work with great enthusiasm and initiative.

Application: It is a blessing in the work of God when a servant of the Lord does not need to be asked to get something important done. Paul complements Titus' service because he did more than he was asked to do (vv. 16-17). Initiative is an important character trait which glorifies the Lord.

Notes: _____

What Is the Purpose of the Pastoral Epistles?

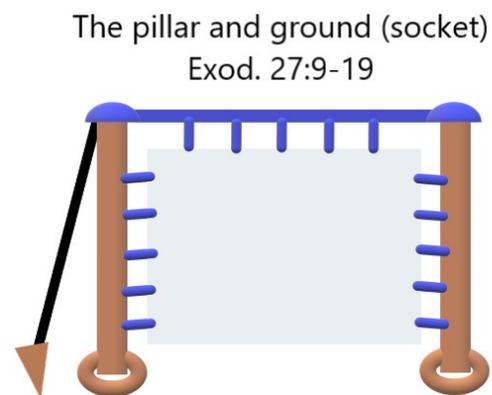
1 Tim. 3:14-15 7. The key passage regarding the purpose of 1 Timothy is 3:14-15. Here Paul states plainly his purpose for writing. What is that purpose?

Answer: Paul wrote to Timothy to provide specific instruction regarding the behavior of believers in the local church.

Application: It is significant that Paul refers to the local church as “the pillar and ground of the truth.” *Pillar* speaks of holding something up or high, and the church must hold the truth high for all to see. *Ground* speaks of an anchor or mooring. God has established the local church as a mooring for His truth among men from one generation to the next.

Together, Paul's *pillar and ground* are an allusion to the pillars and sockets that held the tabernacle curtain in place, directing worshippers to the correct way into the presence of God. The pillars and sockets were brass, whereas the cap on the pillars, the fillets between the pillars connecting them, and the hooks from the pillars to the curtains were all silver. Silver came from melted down redemption money, so it would remind Israel of their redemption from Egypt. Brass in the tabernacle structure speaks especially of the humanity of Christ, like its gold depicted His deity. Local churches, as the body of Christ on earth today, hold up the pure truth that points sinners to the only gate that can give entrance to the presence of God – Jesus is the only way. They are enabled to do so by virtue of their redemption.

Each pillar was held up by a cord that connected the pillar to a stake, part of which was under ground, and part of which was above ground. Some see here the cords of God's love tying His churches to the gospel, Jesus's death, burial, and resurrection.



What had for ages past been the advantage of the Jew in the tabernacle and later the temple (Romans 3:1-2) now has become the trust of the local church. The local church is the vehicle for the furtherance of God's gospel truth on earth during this present age, which began with Pentecost and awaits the Lord's appearing. It is not the Christian mission agency nor the Christian university which are pillars and grounds of the truth. It is Jesus's local churches. The gospel work of the Lord in this day and age is the work of the local church.

Notes: _____ For more on tabernacle symbolism, see Stephen F. Olford, *The Tabernacle: Camping with God* (Neptune, NJ: Loizeaux Brothers, 1971).

Titus 1:5 8. Titus' assignment on Crete discloses another key purpose of the Pastoral Epistles. He was to set in order things which had gotten out of order on that island. How was he to accomplish this task? What does this say about the purpose of the Pastoral Epistles?

Answer: Titus was to restore order by ordaining elders in the cities of Crete. Godly leadership is critical to godly churches, and so developing godly leaders is an important purpose for the Pastoral Epistles.

Application: Where there is a dearth of leadership there is a reigning disorder in the work of God. The Pastoral Epistles challenge us as God's people to take on leadership responsibility for the glory of the Savior and the furtherance of His church. No Christian can study these letters of Paul without being asked of the Spirit of God to assume more responsibility for the work of God in the local church.

2 Timothy 1:8 2:3 3:12 4:5 9. 2 Timothy is more personal and less official than the other Pastoral Epistles. Here leadership lives in the heart-to-heart context of Paul's relationship to Timothy. Look up the verses listed, one from each chapter. What is their common theme? What does Paul want Timothy to understand in regard to his leadership responsibility?

Answer: The theme of these verses, and the main message of 2 Timothy, is that spiritual leadership is hard, not easy. The task is for soldiers and martyrs, not business professionals and scholastics.

Application: Paul had fallen on hard times, but as he looks back on his ministry he does so with the wisdom of experience, which had taught him that his entire ministry had been a good fight, a marathon course, a hard work for the glory of Christ. Christian leadership is not for the fainthearted compromiser looking to make a name for himself, but for the enduring man convinced of his call from God to the fight, someone who wants nothing more than to be faithful to the privilege of that call.

Notes: _____

Interesting Insight!

“I love the Word of God. I esteem it above all. I find my heart so inclined. I desire it as the food of my soul. I greatly delight in it, both in reading and hearing of it . . . I love the ministers and the messengers of the Word.”

– Matthew Henry, age 11.

[Quoted in Kevin T. Bauder et al., *A Conservative Christian Declaration* (Middletown, DE: Religious Affections Ministries, 2014), 77.]

Lesson 2
"The Call to Leadership"
1 Timothy 1

Purpose:

Your students shall learn the difference between the values used by the world when selecting leaders and the call issued by the Lord when selecting leaders. This understanding will give them a greater appreciation for the leaders God has given them as well as direct them to glorify the Lord for His gift of leadership to the church.

In a Nutshell:

Where do godly leaders come from? How does a church find good leadership? The call of God to His work is the means by which He provides leadership for the local church. This is very different from the world's concept of leadership, and this lesson will help you appreciate that difference.

To the Testimony!

Paul and Timothy Demonstrate the Call of God to Leadership

| | |
|---|--|
| 1 Tim. 1:1-2 Acts 9:1-16 Acts 13:2 | 1. Many people in the world today would like the answer to the question, "How can I become a great leader?" Much money is spent on books, seminars, and college tuition with the hope of developing great leadership or management skills. As we read Paul's customary opening, in which he identifies himself as the author and Timothy as the recipient, we also read about how Paul happened to become a great leader, an apostle. How did Paul become a great leader for God (v. 1)? How is this different from how the world finds its leaders? |
|---|--|

Answer: The phrase which identifies how Paul became a great leader is "by the commandment of God our Savior, and Lord Jesus Christ, which is our hope" (v. 1). It was the commandment of God which made Paul a great leader of the people of God.

Specifically, two passages of Scripture disclose the content of the commandment Paul is referring to here in 1 Tim. 1:1. Acts 9 is Luke's account of the conversion of Saul of Tarsus, alias Paul. In Acts 9:6 Jesus issues the first commandment Paul ever heard in regard to his apostleship, "Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do." Saul of Tarsus did not yet realize it, but Jesus Christ had made a decision which would result in Paul's becoming the leader he did. In verses 15-16 the Lord declares, "for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel; for I will show him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake." This commandment of God in the life of Paul resulted in his preaching Christ (Acts 9:20).

The second passage that contains the specifics of the commandment of God concerning Paul's apostleship is Acts 13:1-3. Saul, a prophet/teacher at Antioch, is issued this command from

the Holy Spirit, "Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them."

Application: God's call is how someone becomes a great leader for God. The world takes another approach altogether, and that approach creeps into the thinking of churches at times. Paul was not an apostle because he had studied that profession in college, nor because he had demonstrated a propensity for leadership, nor because his physical stature was formidable, nor because he had led a successful career, nor because he was the best and the brightest around. Paul was a leader for God because God commanded him to be that. God had called him to be a leader. God had chosen him as a special vessel. This is how God gets His leaders.

Notes: _____

1 Tim. 1:12-16 2. In verses 12-16, Paul goes into more detail regarding what made him a great leader for God. In Phil. 3:4-6, we have a similar testimonial from Paul, only here Phil. 3:4-6 he is describing what made him a great leader for Jewish organizations. How do Gal. 1:13-14 the two "resumes" differ? What is different about the way the world chooses its leaders and the way God chooses His?

Answer: The difference between the two passages is that the world chooses its leaders based on "confidence in the flesh" of man (Phil. 3:4), whereas God chooses His leaders based on the "mercy," "grace," "faith[fulness]," "love," and "long-suffering" of the Lord (1 Tim. 1:13-16). God's leaders become God's leaders because God is merciful, gracious, faithful, loving, and patient. God's leaders do not become God's leaders because they bear extraordinary credentials (though they at times may).

Application: If we truly understand that the only way a man can become a leader for God is for God to exercise great mercy, grace, faithfulness, love, and patience in choosing and equipping that man, we will have some humble men leading our people and some appreciative people following those men. Leadership is actually a gift from God to the churches (Eph. 4:11). This suggests that God is calling and providing leaders for His people through His great mercy, grace, faith, love, and patience.

Notes: _____

Acts 9:26
1 Cor. 1:26-31
2 Cor. 12:7-10

3. How did Paul's background render him a particularly unlikely candidate for the work God had called Him to do? What lessons do we learn about God's approach to choosing His leaders and accomplishing His work from Paul's example as an unlikely candidate (v. 13)?

Answer: Paul's background rendered him an unlikely candidate for the work God had called him to do in at least three ways:

1. Paul was “a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious” (v. 13) against the church of Christ, yet Christ chose him to be its greatest proponent. This confused even the people of God for a time in Jerusalem (Acts 9:26).
2. Paul was a “Hebrew of the Hebrews” (Phil. 3:5), yet Christ chose him to be a special vessel to carry the gospel to the Gentile world and to battle on the front lines against the Judaizers of Jerusalem and the falsehood of circumcision (Acts 15:1-2, 22:21, 1 Tim. 2:7).
3. Paul had serious health problems (2 Cor. 12:7-8, Gal. 6:11 [eye trouble]), yet Christ chose him to a rigorous life of travel, stress, persecutions, and the authoring of Scriptures (Gal. 6:17, 2 Cor. 11:23-33).

Application: When it comes to accomplishing His work through His leaders, God is most likely to use the unlikely. If you or I had to hire someone to do the work Paul did, I doubt that we would have pulled Paul's resume as he traveled the road to Damascus and considered him perfect for the job. Rarely does God use the man who seems to have everything going for him by nature. More often, God chooses to use the man who has a lot going against him by nature. 1 Cor. 1:26-31 gives us the primary reason why this is so. Men are prone to boast in their ability, wisdom, and strength, yet the purpose behind God's work is that all boasting should be boasting about the Lord. The work of God is exactly that--God's work. It is not the work of man. And it is easier for men to appreciate this fact and to give God the glory for His work, when God uses unlikely leaders to mightily accomplish His wonderful work.

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Acts 9:19-30
Acts 11:22-26
Gal. 1:15-2:1
Matt. 25:21, 23

4. We get the impression from verse 12 that Paul's call to be an apostle did not come automatically with his conversion in Acts 9. Christ Jesus our Lord needed to see an important quality in Paul before He enabled Paul and placed Paul in the ministry. What is this quality, and how was it developed in Paul before his call in Acts 13:2? What does this teach us about how God calls men to leadership?

Answer: According to verse 12, Paul was put into the ministry by the Lord because the Lord considered Paul a faithful man. Paul came to the point where the Lord knew that Paul could now be trusted with greater responsibilities. This implies refusing to quit in the face of the adversity of lesser responsibilities. Paul met with adversity from day one as a new believer in Christ. He narrowly escaped Damascus with his life (Acts 9:23), was misunderstood by most disciples in Jerusalem (Acts 9:26), again for fear of his life was sent into obscurity (Tarsus, Acts 9:30), battled nagging health problems he did not have before he was saved (2 Cor. 12:7-8), and served humbly as the assistant of the more experienced Barnabas (Acts 11:25-26, 13:1; note that Barnabas is mentioned first and Saul last). All of these and, no doubt, many more experiences of Paul's life served as testing grounds for faithfulness. Paul passed these tests, and God put him into the ministry.

Application: Paul's example teaches an important principle about how God goes about selecting leaders for great tasks. This principle is clearly stated in the parable of the talents, "thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things" (Matt. 25:21, 23). It has been said that a man must learn to be a good follower before he can be a truly good leader. The world often tries to prove that axiom wrong, but it agrees with Scripture. God expects faithfulness at the small tasks already given before responsibility for larger tasks is rewarded. Faithful people are most often people who are easily taken for granted. Usually, they are simply plugging away at small tasks in relative obscurity. You have to work hard at recognizing their accomplishments for what they are, because none of those accomplishments have made headline news. You will not make a name for yourself by teaching faithfully the Junior Sunday School class, for instance. Such distinguished service does not go unnoticed by the Lord, however, for He is the one who calls faithful men to leadership responsibilities. Like Him, God's people should look for faithful men to lead them, not necessarily gifted men, a tested life, not necessarily a big name.

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| 1 Tim. 1:17 Psalm 24 | 5. As Paul finishes his testimonial concerning the call to the ministry God gave him, he breaks into a joyful statement of praise, which teaches us the ultimate purpose of Christian leadership. What is this ultimate purpose, and what are some less worthy "ultimate purposes"? |
|-------------------------------|---|

Answer: The ultimate purpose is to glorify the King eternal, the triune God. We do not usually think of the church as having a King. Yet God Himself is King. No leader appointed by the King deserves honor and glory; only the King deserves honor and glory. The King is eternal, without beginning or ending; leaders are temporary. The King is immortal, not subject to a decaying physical body; leaders get sick and worn out. The King is invisible, unapproachable due to the light in which He dwells; leaders are visible, warts and all. The King is God alone, without equal; leaders are one of many, replaceable and limited. Consequently, the glorification of the King ought to be the primary focus of the ministry of God's leader.

Application: God's leaders must be intent on the glorification of their King as the primary focus of their ministry. There are many other less worthy motivations prevalent in Christian groups today. Some leaders are greatly concerned with what will bring honor and glory to themselves. Building crowds, raising money, even winning the lost and meeting the needs of people are less worthy ultimate goals. Ministry ought to carry on even when these other things are not accomplished, but ministry ought to be cut short when the King is not glorified. Scripture teaches that it can be God's will that He be glorified when crowds are small (Gideon's 300 men), money is short (Phil. 4:12), the lost are rejecting the gospel (Noah's ministry), and people with needs will prefer having their ears scratched to their hearts changed (2 Timothy 3-4). But it is never God's will that ministry carry on where He is not glorified.

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1 Tim. 6. Some may argue that Paul was different: "No one today hears the command
1:18 or charge from the Lord to enter the ministry the way Paul did." Yet Timothy,
4:14 though different in circumstance from the Apostle Paul, also received a com-
mand, a charge, a call to the ministry. Paul refers to this call in verse 18 and
again in 4:14. Both passages suggest that a clear understanding of the call of
God was critical to Timothy's position as a leader of God's people. This call was
communicated via specific "prophecies," a medium somewhat less astounding
than that of Paul's Damascus road experience, but none less effective. What
does Paul encourage Timothy to do with the revelation of his call to the minis-
try? What does this say about the importance of a sense of God's calling to the
success of a leader's ministry?

Answer: Timothy is instructed by Paul to use the revelation of God's call in his life as a tool by which he might "war a good warfare." The settled conviction from God's clear direction that God had called him was critical to Timothy's success in fighting the battles of the ministry.

Application: The responsibility of leadership in the work of the Lord is warfare. It can be a bloody and painful experience at times. Warfare is not rose gardens and sweet peace. Warfare is the smell of gun powder and danger lurking on every front. Knowing that we are going forward in that warfare because the call of God has directed us means knowing that the Lord is always with us in the battle. No matter how heated the fray, the settled conviction of the call of God is the weapon whereby God's leader will be able to war a good warfare. In times of distress he can remind the Lord that it was He who called him to battle, and on those grounds, he can expect the deliverance of his Captain. The enthusiasm of a volunteer may wane and weaken, but the call of the Captain to war remains ever true.

Counterfeits Exist Who Fail to Demonstrate the Call of God to Leadership

1 Tim. 1:3-11
1:18-20

7. There are many religious leaders, some well respected, who were never called of God, and so should have never become religious leaders. This has always been the case (Jer. 14:14-15). Such was the case in Paul's day, and Paul gives Timothy instruction as to how to recognize this group of religious leaders. The key difference between false religious leaders and men called of God centers on their doctrine or teaching. In verses 3 and 4, Paul gives the teaching of false religious leaders a series of names. In verses 10 and 11, Paul names the teaching of men called by God. He goes on to compare the results of the two types of doctrine or teaching and finally the way the two interpret the law. Summarize a difference you see between true teaching and false teaching with the chart below.

| <u>Characteristic:</u> | <u>Teaching of False Leaders:</u> | <u>Teaching of Men Called by God:</u> |
|---|--|---|
| Names given their teaching: | (vv. 3, 4, 6) 1) "other doctrine," 2) "fables", 3) "endless genealogies", 4) "vain jangling" | (vv. 10, 11) 1) "sound doctrine", 2) "glorious gospel of the blessed God" |
| Results of their teaching: | (vv. 4, 20) 1) "questions" 2) "shipwreck", "excommunication", "blasphemy" | (vv. 4, 5, 19) 1) "godly edifying which is in faith" 2) "charity out of a pure heart" 3) "a good conscience" 4) "faith unfeigned" |
| Their teaching about the Mosaic Law: | (vv. 7-10) 1) lack of "understanding" 2) Salvation is by the works of the law (i.e., the law is made for a righteous man). | (vv. 7-10) 1) knowledgeable and lawful 2) The law makes a man lawless, disobedient, etc., not righteous. |

Application: The Teaching of False Leaders: "Other doctrine" is one compound word in Greek. The two parts to this one word are (1) *another* (*hetero-*) and (2) the Greek word for *doctrine* or *teaching*. The Greeks actually had two words for *another*. *Heteros* meant *another of a different kind*, whereas *allos* meant *another of the same kind*. Paul is actually calling the teaching of these men *teaching of a different kind*, or *different doctrine*. God's people should be aware of new and different doctrine. We should not always need to hear some new or different thing, but be content with the truth.

Fables and *endless genealogies* refer to two age-old methods of distorting the Scripture so as to make it support different doctrine. The first, *fables*, is the practice of adding to the Scripture tales and legends that are not a part of the inspired canon. The Jewish legends Paul was prob-

ably referring to can be found in the Talmud. Today, the pluralistic emphasis on comparative religion with many roads leading to God depends heavily on tales and legends which have never been a part of God's Word. Whole movements and cults have as their foundation tales and legends (e.g. *The Book of Mormon*). The use of the apocrypha by the Roman Church to support the dogma of purgatory and praying for the dead is a tragic example of the danger of extrabiblical fables.

Endless genealogies refers to the allegorical method of interpretation of true Scripture. Rather than literally understanding the genealogies of the Old Testament to simply list generations of Jewish people, these interpreters could make the genealogies say things they were never intended to say and find deep truths in them which support their different doctrine (e.g. *The Book of Jubilees*). One present-day example of the deception of this method is the Mormon teaching that the two sticks combining into one in Ezek. 37:15-17 is actually *The Book of Mormon* uniting with the Bible as God's truth. This passage actually teaches the future reunification of Judah and Israel, and has nothing to do with *The Book of Mormon*.

The results of such teaching are disastrous and life-destroying. Its claim to truth is based on falsehood and misunderstanding. This falsehood leads to questions and faith-destroying doubt. The end of a faith destroyed is a shipwrecked conscience and a blasphemous doctrinal position. Note from 2 Tim. 2:17 and 4:14 that Hymenaeus and Alexander remained a bitter cancer for the work of God through Paul.

Finally, all poor handling of the Scripture will propagate a works salvation through law-keeping and lead people away from the saving grace of Christ.

The Teaching of Men Called by God: The word translated *sound* means *sound in the sense of healthy*. Paul calls the teaching of men called by God *healthy doctrine*. He also tells us that this teaching is in accord with the life-changing gospel Paul had been preaching. Doctrine that is based on the truth is doctrine that changes the life through faith in Christ. It brings health to the spiritual condition of a man and constitutes good news for the soul.

Teaching that is academic and theoretical is not in view here. We are not dealing with good theory and lofty thoughts. Good teaching will bring the conviction of the Holy Spirit, demand a change in the life, and motivate the spiritual condition to greater service for God.

The health of the doctrine results in spiritual good health for God's people. God's people grow spiritually under healthy doctrine. They are furthered in their faith (v. 4). The key to this result is that the teaching is based on a sincere faith in the Scriptures. If the Bible teaches it, we teach it. If the Bible does not teach it, we refuse to teach it no matter the consequences. The result of this approach is a good conscience. There is open communication of convictions and Biblical support for those convictions. No man has to pretend to subscribe to error in order to be accepted. No Bible doctrine has to be based on a misinterpretation of Scripture nor a refusal to consider the evidence.

The highest result of sound doctrine, healthy teaching, is love from a pure heart. Love represents the end of maturity for the Christian, the greatest virtue attainable (1 Pet. 1:5-7, 1 Cor. 13:13), but this virtue is impossible without a pure heart and a holy life (Matt. 24:12). Sound doctrine will produce both.

Finally, sound doctrine is teaching based on the gospel of grace. The law is understood as that which makes men guilty before God, not righteous. It is because of the sacrifice of Christ on the cross that righteous may be imputed to them by faith alone.

Real Life?

Last Sunday, Community Baptist Church got the word they had anticipated for some time now. After 25 years of distinguished service, Pastor Smith had announced his retirement effective next month. Pastor Smith had started Community Baptist Church after pulling a group out of the American Baptist Convention over liberalism. For most of the church's 200 members, the news was unsettling though not unexpected. Many of them had never had another pastor, and the thought of considering any one else as their pastor was a new and unwelcome thought. Pastor Smith was a gifted expositor, wise counselor, and experienced leader. Some of the elderly had known him for his entire 25 years of ministry at CBC. Many were concerned that replacing him was going to be a difficult, if not impossible, task.

Over the years, the church had a number of assistant pastors. For the past twelve years, Pastor Jones has served as the assistant. Pastor Jones is well-liked and well-known by most. He had grown up in CBC's Christian day school where he was known as the class clown. God had gotten a hold of his heart as a sophomore in college and had called him to the ministry. He studied hard and averaged B's. He had managed his way through seminary, somehow cramming three years of work into five. All of his ministry experience was with CBC where he preached Wednesday evenings and directed the Christian Education program of the church. God had blessed his faithful work. One of the happiest days of Pastor Jones's life was the day the church ordained him eight years ago.

News of Pastor Smith's pending retirement spread rapidly, and the pulpit committee was flooded with resumes of good men who desired to candidate. During the first of the committee's meetings, Pastor Smith surprised the deacons by asking them to consider Pastor Jones as a candidate. Though the idea had naturally surfaced in the minds of the deacons, most had quickly dismissed it. Pastor Jones was no Pastor Smith, and they just felt that he was not the caliber of leader they were looking for. Besides, the resume of a college professor who had also pastored three different churches over the past twelve years and authored five well-known books on the family had already caught the eye of most of the men.

How can the principles of God's call to leadership help CBC's pulpit committee make their recommendation to the church?

Answer: The committee needs to understand that the way God calls men to positions of leadership differs from the way the world calls men to positions of leadership. The reasons why the deacons had not considered Pastor Jones need to be examined in the light of 1 Timothy 1. The question should not be, "Is the potential next man another Pastor Smith?", but rather, "Has the potential next man been called of God to this ministry?" Second, the pulpit committee needs to understand that someone who seems an unlikely candidate is actually a more likely candidate in the eyes of the Lord (1 Cor. 1:26-31). God chooses the weak things of the world to defeat the strong things. Finally, faithfulness in that which is least seems to be a bit underrated in the committee's approach. By contrast, name recognition seems a bit overrated. It may be that it is not God's will for Pastor Jones to be the next pastor, but to fail to prayerfully and scripturally consider this possibility is to fail to do God's will.

Lesson 3

“Good Followers of Godly Leaders”

1 Timothy 2

Purpose:

Your students shall develop a conviction regarding the role of their own faithfulness to the success of their godly leaders. They shall see the critical importance of prayer to the local church ministry and be challenged to take on more responsibility in this important work. In addition, Christian ladies in your class will see the spiritual power of a faithfully submissive testimony in the local church in today's world of selfishness and individualism.

In a Nutshell:

Good followers help produce good leaders. With chapter 2, Paul begins his specific instruction concerning how local churches are to behave. Before dealing with the specific qualifications of good leaders in chapter three, Paul touches on what makes for good followers here in chapter two. Every follower plays an important role in bringing successful leadership to the local church.

To the Testimony!

Prayer Is Critical to Following Godly Leadership

1 Tim. 2:1-8 1. Remember that Paul's purpose behind this letter, according to 1 Tim. 3:15, is to give instruction regarding what local churches ought to do (Lesson 1, question 6). What does verse 1 of this chapter teach us about the role of prayer at the local church? See if you can identify the proper priority, content, and scope for the prayer life of a local church from this verse. How can you help your church improve in these areas?

Answer: Verse 1 teaches us something about the priority of prayer, the content of prayer, and the scope of prayer at the local church.

The phrase, “I exhort therefore, that, first of all,” says something about the priority of the work of prayer. There is a sense in which Paul clearly states that prayer is supposed to come first in the work of the local church. Prayer is how things are accomplished at the local church. It is how the work of God is manned (Matt. 9:37-38), how it is paid for (Matt. 6:11), and how it is empowered (James 5:16).

Paul also emphasizes the importance of prayer by using four synonyms for prayer, which teach us about the content of the prayers of a local church. The use of four synonyms for prayer indicates that our prayer life as a church should be well developed and mature. The content of our prayers should be thorough and selfless. *Supplications* emphasizes Christian service through specific requests for specific needs faced by the people of God. This word is used to tell us that Anna served the Lord with her prayers and fasting (Luke 2:37), that we

can help the servants of God through our prayers (2 Cor. 1:11), and that we can accomplish much through prayer (James 5:16). *Intercessions* and *giving of thanks* are somewhat synonymous in 1 Timothy, indicating the importance of a thankful spirit when we pray. Both words are employed together again in 1 Tim. 4:4-5 in regard to giving thanks for the food we eat. Thankfulness is often the last part of the prayer life to be developed and the hardest one to be maintained.

Finally, verse one teaches us something of the scope of our prayer. The local church has a far-reaching responsibility when it comes to the work of prayer: "on behalf of all men." Some Christians cannot get beyond praying for themselves. Some can get beyond praying for themselves, but they cannot get beyond praying for their families. Some can get beyond their families, but they cannot get beyond their local church ministries. God wants us to get even beyond praying for our church ministry. We have a responsibility to pray for all men, for our communities, our country, and beyond.

Application: Ordinarily, the prayer service of a typical, good local church is the poorest attended service of the week. This says something about the actual priority the people of good churches are putting on prayer. We need to realize that having a low priority on prayer means having a low priority on manning the work of God, on paying for the work of God, and on empowering the work of God. Our recruitment efforts, offerings, and service activity for God are all necessary, but it is God's answer to the prayers of His people which make these activities spiritually powerful. Many people today do not like to think about work when they think about church. Church is simply the place they go to have their spiritual needs met. "Worship is OK. But work? No way!" This is a far cry from Paul's exhortation, "that, first of all" Christians pray, that they pray thorough and selfless prayers, and that they maintain a concern for "all men" in their prayer life.

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1 Tim. 2:2 2. Verse two tells us specifically to pray for government officials, and then we are told a specific reason why we should pray for them. What is that reason? Has God answered this specific prayer in the affirmative in America today? Support your answer.

Answer: The reason we should pray for our government officials is that "we may lead a quiet and peaceable life" at the same time we are leading a life "in all godliness and honesty." Paul's instruction is to pray for government leaders so as to ask God for religious freedom. The preservation of freedom to live a godly and honest life ought to be the primary political focus of the Christian, and it ought to be what drives the church's prayer for government officials. God has given America religious freedom today. It is currently impossible for Chinese

Christians to live a quiet and peaceable life while they maintain a godly and honest life. Many choose godliness and honesty, but to do so, they must sacrifice quietness and peace. God has given the people of America the freedom to live a godly and peaceable life for over two centuries. Baptists played an important role in the development of the separation of church and state as did other groups such as the Quakers.

Application: Today, the freedom to live in a godly way is under attack. For example, monopolistic government control of a tax-funded, humanistic system of education threatens the ability of Christian families to raise their children in both a godly and peaceable way. They must fund a state-controlled school much the same way our earliest forefathers had to fund a state-controlled church. Yet Scripture no more assigns the education of children to the province of the state than it does the work of the local church. In addition, equal rights legislation looms as a threat to the well-being of local churches. Churches which refuse to ordain women or admit homosexuals to membership may one day find themselves saddled with a destructive property tax burden, or worse. Religious freedom is a gift from God in response to the prayers of God's people for their government officials. The ability to lead a quiet and peaceable life at the same time we live a godly and honest life is an important concern for local churches, and a critical prayer request. Woe to us if we lose the liberty God has given to us because we took it for granted and failed to pray for it. The prayer meeting attendance figure at the typical fundamental Baptist church does not bode well for religious freedom in the future of America.

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| 1 Tim. 2:3-4 | 3. Godly and honest believers living with the blessing of religious freedom is a good thing in the eyes of God our Savior (verse 3). Why does God approve so strongly of religious freedom and godly lives (verse 4)? What does this say about God's purpose in providing religious freedom and our use of religious freedom as Christians? |
| 2 Chron. 7:14 | |
| 1 Cor. 15:34 | |

Answer: God approves so strongly of religious freedom because He desires “all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.” God has an evangelistic purpose in the provision of religious freedom to a land. He desires the salvation of all men, and religious freedom furthers that purpose. There is also an evangelistic purpose in leading a godly and honest life as well. Peace and tranquility are of no use to the gospel unless godly and honest lives are taking advantage of that condition to spread the gospel. God is more likely to take the blessing of religious freedom away if His people are unwilling to live godly lives so as to spread the gospel of salvation.

Application: There has been an official rift between the idea of godliness and the idea of evangelism since the spread of Rick Warren’s seeker-sensitive, purpose-driven movement. Many Christians believe that if you are too godly or too righteous, you will never reach anyone. The trend for more than a generation now has been that if you want to win a sinner, you have to become as much like that sinner, as acceptable to that sinner, as possible. The verses in our passage would argue against this trend, as would 1 Cor. 15:34. There we see clearly that the cessation of sin, not compromise with it, is the key to spreading the knowledge of God through evangelism. It is godliness and honesty which agree with the desire that all men be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth, not compromise and manipulation.

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1 Tim. 2:5-6
Acts 4:12
John 14:6

4. In Paul's day many idols were worshipped as gods. In our day, many roads to God and “your personal view of God” are advocated. How does the truth of 1 Tim. 2:5-6 conflict with each of these false religious beliefs?

Answer: First, Paul tells us that there is only one God. All idols are false counterfeits. In addition, God's existence does not depend on your personal view of Him. God is the true and only God, whether or not sinful man happens to see Him in that light. To define God for yourself rather than to know Him as He is revealed in Scripture is simply another form of creating your own gods, a form of idol worship.

Second, there is only one road to God. Jesus Christ is the only mediator between God and all men. There is no other mediator for the Hindus of India, the Buddhists of China, the Muslims of the Middle East, or the secularists of Europe. Praise God for the many works in those lands which are bringing men to the true Mediator, the Lord Jesus. The reason Christ is the only road is that He gave Himself as the ransom for all men (see “From the Honeycomb,” p. 31).

Application: Cultural Christianity as a whole has left the truth of this passage behind. Christ is only one of many options for the majority of Americans who consider themselves “Christian.” Pluralism and toleration are the spirit of the age, and yet there is not much toleration for the one-mediator truth of Scripture. The one thing a pluralistic, tolerant society will not tolerate is an exclusivist, intolerant message. The gospel of God is such a message. We see from this passage that the truth of Scripture is an exclusive (one-mediator) and intolerant message (“neither is there salvation in any other,” Acts 4:12; “no man cometh unto the Father but by Me,” John 14:6). Ultimately, the one thing our society will not tolerate is the saving gospel truth of the Scripture. The god of this world has made sure of this (2 Cor. 4:4).

From the Honeycomb

“a ransom for all”
1 Tim. 2:6

The word translated *ransom* is used only here in the New Testament, but a close synonym is used by Christ in Matt. 20:28 and Mark 10:45 which means *payment*. The word here in 1 Tim. 2:6 is the same word used by Christ with the Greek preposition *instead of* tacked onto the beginning of the word. Hence, this word not only emphasizes payment, but payment instead of someone else, or substitutionary payment.

A ransom is a payment for the release of another person. It is a substitutionary payment because the person being released should have made the payment himself. A common usage for the word *ransom* in the first century world was in the realm of slave trade. The ransom of a slave was the money paid to free that slave, to release him from slavery. In what way is Christ “a ransom for all”?

Answer: Christ is the ransom for all because His life was the price paid to the holy God for the salvation of men. Christ not only paid the price; He was the price paid. It cost Him not His money, but “Himself.” Those who trust Christ's payment are viewed by God as released and freed from the bondage and judgment of sin. Christ's payment was substitutionary because it was a price which should have been exacted of us. Yet it is a debt we could not pay, not even with an eternity in hell fire.

Application: Holy God demands payment for sin. We cannot understand what makes Christ a ransom unless we first understand why the price had to be paid – God is holy. The phrase in verse 6 translated “to be testified in due time” can also be translated “a well-timed witness.” As God's holiness prepared to execute judgment on us in the courtroom of heaven, Christ paid the price for us and now testifies, as it were in the nick of time, that the price has been paid. He is not only the payment; He is also the ongoing “receipt of payment,” a living witness to the fact that the price has been paid.

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1 Tim. 2:7-8 5. In verse 8 Paul brings us back to prayer as the key to being a good follower of godly leaders. He says, “I will therefore that men pray.” His use of the term *therefore* makes us look at verse 7 and see that his desire for prayer from God's people is due to the fact that God had called him to an enormous responsibility. He could not be an effective leader without the prayers of God's people. What else does verse 8 teach us about what our prayers should be like?

1 Pet. 3:7
James 4:8

Answer: Our prayers should be from hands which are holy. We do not normally think of our hands getting involved in the act of praying unless we are thinking of a charismatic service, many of which are full of noise and confusion. *Holy hands* is a figure of speech which indicates that we need to be living holy lives. Our actions need to be backing up our prayers. Paul is no more telling believers to put their hands up in the air than is James telling believers to use soap and water in James 4:8. The point here is that our hands are the instruments of our labor or activity (1 Cor. 4:12, Eph. 4:28, 1 Thess. 4:11), and that activity needs to be characterized by holiness in order for our prayers to be heard (cp. 1 Pet. 3:7). In addition to holiness, we need to be at peace with our brothers ("without wrath," see also James 3:9-12), and we need to be asking in faith ("without doubting," see also James 1:6).

Application: Powerful prayer takes more than bowing your head and closing your eyes. It is a lot of work. It requires a change in the lives of God's people. Habits will need to be dropped. Bitterness against a brother or sister will need to be corrected. Decisions will need to be made by faith, not by sight. Yet good followers of godly leaders must be powerful prayer warriors if God's work is to be accomplished. Powerful prayer requires a holy life.

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Sisters in Christ are Critical to Following Godly Leaders

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| 1 Tim. 2:9-10 | 6. Here in chapter 2, Paul gives about as much space to the role of women in following godly leadership as he does to the role of prayer in following godly leadership. He begins this section by stating that Christian women are supposed to "adorn" themselves. What does it mean to adorn something? How are Christian women suppose to accomplish this? Does this passage require Christian women to wear plain clothes, no make-up or jewelry, never curl their hair, and to avoid smiling as some Amish and Mennonite groups teach? Support your answer. |
| Gen. 24:51-53 | |
| Prov. 31:10-31 | |
| Song of Sol. 4:1-16 | |

Answer: To *adorn* means to *make beautiful* or to *decorate*. Paul's point here was never that Christian women should be ugly. In fact, it was the opposite, that Christian women should be beautiful. The oppression of Islam in this regard comes to mind as something God never intended for sisters in Christ. They are to accomplish becoming beautiful with the use of modest clothing, discretion ("shamefacedness" is *sophrosunes*, a word related to the Greek word, *sophia*, meaning *wisdom*, see Prov. 11:22), and good works. When Paul says "not with" jewelry etc., he is saying, "do not rely on those things to make yourself beautiful, Christian woman." He is not forbidding the use of these things. He is forbidding the reliance upon them as substitutes for modesty, discretion, and good works in the task of making oneself beautiful.

Song of Solomon 4 makes clear that the appearance of a Christian woman is also an important part of her testimony. She is to be attractive to her husband especially. When Solomon compliments his bride's necklace and perfume, he is not committing sin, he is being a good husband (Song of Sol. 4:9-10). The point is one of emphasis. Prov. 31:10-31 describes the virtuous woman. Twenty-one of the verses describe her good works; only one verse (v. 22) refers to her attractive clothing. But none of this was meant to teach that attractive clothing, jewelry, and perfume are evil. Finally, Scripture teaches that a cheerful countenance is a sign of a joyful heart and a good testimony (Prov. 15:13, Phil. 4:4-5). Conversely, a sad countenance can be associated with hypocrisy (Luke 9:29), and an angry countenance is connected to a backbiting tongue (Prov. 25:23). "Shamefacedness" requires discretion of Christian women, not abstinence from make-up.

Application: There are few things as self-centered as a woman who adorns herself with the world's standard of beauty. The mirror is an appropriate device for such a person, because self is where her focus is. A woman who makes herself beautiful with God's standard does not need the mirror as often, because her focus is not on self. In fact, the most beautiful demonstration of a selfless lifestyle is the Christian woman humbly serving her family and others with modesty, discretion, and good works. This is the Lord's definition of a true work of art, adornment's finest expression.

Notes: _____

1 Tim. 2:11-15 7. Paul never leaves any doubt about the role of women in the local church. Much time has been spent by today's religious proponents of feminism trying to rid themselves of what Paul plainly says in this passage. Inevitably, the issue boils down to one of Biblical authority. If we accept the Bible as the Word of God, we have to accept and practice what Paul says about the role of Christian women. What is the role of Christian women in the local church (verse 11)? What is it not (verse 12)? Why is this so (vv. 13-15)?

Answer: The role of Christian women in the local church is to "learn in silence with in all subjection." Their role is not to be a teacher of men nor to exercise any kind of local church leadership authority. Women should not be pastors, because this office is specifically designed by God to constitute the leadership of the local church. This is not to say they should not teach other women and children in a setting such as Sunday School or a ladies Bible study. To the contrary, those with these gifts must do so (see Titus 2:3 and 2 Tim. 1:5).

In spite of the claims of evangelical feminists, the reason Paul teaches this about the role of women is not some unusual circumstance found only in Ephesus where Timothy was, nor is it that Paul misunderstood the abilities of women. It is rather that this role agrees with God's

creative order (“Adam was first formed, then Eve,” v. 13) and that it agrees with the lessons of the Fall from Genesis 3 (vv. 14 and 15). On this latter point, Paul points out that the woman fell because she was deceived, and the man fell without being deceived. Satan found the woman a more ready prey for his deception than he did the man. Adam was constituted to be the leader, and Eve the helper. Satan knew that his task of deception would be easier with the helper than with the leader. And he knows that the same is true today (compare Paul's use of the terms *old wives tales* in 4:7 and *silly women* in 2 Tim. 3:6). In fact, the Fall of Man is the first episode in which a woman led a man. Though at times a necessary evil, such an arrangement simply disagrees with God's order and consequently invites spiritual failure.

Application: The role of Christian women is extremely important when it comes to the testimony of the local church. Any fool can stand up and declare that his way is right. But when Christian ladies order themselves to follow and serve according to God's plan, the world around must stop and hear what their godly leader has to say. At no other time in the history of the church have Christian ladies had so great an opportunity to make so profound a statement to the wicked, lost world around about God's saving grace which sets them apart. The key to this statement, however, is voluntary, enthusiastic, and committed subjection. May God give us ladies who thankfully take advantage of this opportunity rather than chafe and complain about the order God has established.

Notes: 1 Tim. 2:15 is a tough passage to interpret. A couple of helpful points seem to be clear, however. The verse does not teach that childbirth would be an easy process for godly women for at least two reasons. First, the phrase, “she shall be saved” refers to Eve, not all Christian women (Rienecker, *Language Key of the Greek New Testament*, p. 492). The verse is talking about saving Eve, not all Christian women. Second, the phrase “saved in childbearing” could better be translated as “saved through childbearing [*dia teknogonias*].” This preposition is also found in Acts 15:11, “through the grace. . .we shall be saved” and in 1 Cor. 15:1-2, “the gospel. . .by which also ye are saved” (Ardnt & Gingrich, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*, p. 798) This data leads us to believe that just as grace is doing the saving in Acts 15:11 and the gospel is doing the saving in 1 Cor. 15:1-2, so in 1 Tim. 2:15, childbearing is doing the saving of Eve.

Given these two facts about the verse: (1) Eve is being saved and (2) she is being saved through childbearing, we then need to make a decision about what Paul means by Eve's salvation. The Greek word for *saved* [*sozo*] can be understood in both a soteriological (the doctrine of salvation) and a less theological sense. In this verse it can be referring to the salvation of Eve's soul, what we normally think of when we mention God's work of salvation, or it could mean the preservation of Eve in some other sense.

Bible students who see the word referring to the salvation of Eve's soul teach that “childbearing” refers to the incarnation of Christ, the seed of the woman in Gen. 3:15 (see Homer A. Kent, Jr., *The Pastoral Epistles*, pp. 112-117). Yet this interpretation does not seem to connect well with the next phrase in the verse, “if they [Christian women] continue in faith and charity and holiness with sobriety.” It would seem to teach that Eve's soul is saved through her seed, Christ, if Christian women continue to be faithful. Yet the salvation of Eve's soul has nothing to do with how Christian women live. In addition, this interpretation

attributes some profound theology to a somewhat confusing statement. When it came to foundational theology, especially the doctrine of salvation by grace, Paul's style is very precise and articulate under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. His lack of clarity here, albeit still under the Spirit's work of inspiration, may come from an awkwardness he feels about the topic at hand, which is unknown to the Apostle when addressing soteriology.

It is more likely that Paul meant *saved* in a less theological sense. If so, he would not be speaking here of the salvation of Eve's soul, but rather of the salvation of Eve's in some other way, perhaps the saving of her reputation as the representative of womanhood, for instance. That Paul believed in the headship of Adam is clear. Perhaps the phrase *through childbearing* is his way of assigning the same kind of headship to Eve in relation to her daughters. If so, this recovery of Eve's reputation as the representative first female believer, in spite of the nature of her fall, is accomplished by her offspring, Christian ladies who live godly lives.

Paul has just finished exposing a relative weakness in the nature of womanhood by noting that Eve was deceived when she sinned. If Paul had stopped there, his discourse would have left us with a very low view of Eve and womanhood in general, and very little hope that sisters in Christ could be a blessing to God's church. But Paul does not desire to leave us with that impression. Instead, he goes on to say that Eve did bear daughters who can, by God's grace, save Eve's reputation (and with it the way womanhood is perceived) by not being deceived by Satan in their day. His point may be that the greater potential for female deception can be overcome by the continuance of her daughters in godliness. In spite of Eve's sin and confusion, Christian women today can be living saviors of Eve's reputation as the mother of all women. They can demonstrate by their godly lives the true value of the testimony of womanhood to the work of God, victorious over the enemy's deceptions. The key is to resist the enemy's deceptive and seducing spirits through humble submission.

Real Life?

Carol and John had been members of Bible Baptist Church for five years. Though John was from a different town, they had met at a Christian college, married, and made the decision to settle in Carol's home town. The reason for their decision was that Carol's family was unsaved, and they hoped to lead these loved ones to the Lord some day.

The couple had met with nothing but resistance in witnessing to Carol's family. The problem was basically that her family felt they were too "smart" to be saved. It was unreasonable, they felt, to believe that there was only one way to heaven. "What about the millions of Hindus and Buddhists? What is God going to do with them?" One uncle, a Quaker, stated often that he believed the Bible but also accepted every religion as true. Carol would reply that if he felt that way, why not attend BBC and learn the Bible better? "After all, Uncle Joe, if every religion is true why not try ours?" Notwithstanding, Uncle Joe was emphatically opposed to attending BBC, even for special occasion services. One day, Uncle Joe arrived for a visit. The next morning Carol and John invited him to join them for family devotions, and to their surprise, Uncle Joe agreed. John thought a minute about a good passage to read that morning. Why might 1 Timothy 2 have been a good choice for John in view of Uncle Joe's participation?

Answer: No passage states clearer or more succinctly God's desire for men to be saved, the nature of the provision for man's salvation as a ransom for sinners, and the exclusive nature of the gospel, one God and one Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus.

“What a Godly Leader Must Be”**1 Timothy 3****Purpose:**

Your students will develop discernment in regard to who their leaders should be and why. They will appreciate and admire in a greater way the leaders God has given to them as they develop a solemn respect for the office those leaders fill.

In a Nutshell:

Not everyone can be the leader the local church requires. Only men with the qualities specified here in chapter 3 qualify. It is a demanding list for a flawed human being and one which ought to inform our appreciation for our godly leaders' need for God's grace and protection, and for our love and support.

To the Testimony!**What Is a Bishop?**

1 Tim. 3:1 1. Paul has a unique way of designating what he calls “true saying[s]” or “faithful saying[s]” in the Pastoral Epistles (see 1 Tim. 1:15, 4:8-9, 2 Tim. 2:11, and Titus 3:8). Paul's point is not that his other sayings are untrue or unfaithful, but rather that he wants to emphasize the veracity and trustworthiness of what he is saying in these special phrases. What does Paul want to emphasize as especially true in this passage (verse 1)? Why might the emphasis be necessary? Why would some wrongfully view the statement as false?

Answer: The statement Paul wants us to emphasize as trustworthy is, “If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work.” This is not often the opinion of the average Christian layman, let alone the average Christian young person. The perception of first-century Christians may have been no different. The difficult life of Timothy may have at times discouraged acceptance of the validity of this “true saying.” Timothy's bad stomach and frequent “infirmities” were well known and remembered by the Apostle Paul (1 Tim. 5:23). Some in Ephesus may have known of Timothy's heartburn/ulcer and in light of it sincerely questioned whether the office of a bishop were such a good work after all.

Application: Paul wants to emphasize that the office of godly leadership is a good work. It is by nature good and should be thought of as good by Christian people. Too often, thoughts of headaches, heartburn, poverty, or heavy responsibility replace the thought of goodness when it comes to our general perception of the office of a bishop. Complaining about the length of the message on the way home and other similar insightful discourses around the Sunday dinner table teach the next generation that the office of leadership in the work of

God is anything but good work. Instead, they become convinced that the work of leadership is a pain in the neck! This is nothing more than a useful lie from our enemy. You will notice from verse 1 that the call to the office of a bishop involves the development by God of a desire for the office. Critical to the development of this desire in the hearts of future leaders is the opinion of God's people that this work is indeed desirable. We should work hard at trusting this trustworthy statement, "The office of a bishop is a good work," and we should teach it convincingly to the next generation.

From the Honeycomb

What is a *bishop*?

Greek: *episkopos*

Episkopos, from which we get our word *Episcopal*, means literally *one who oversees*. Today we think of bishops as high-ranking denominational officials with regional responsibilities. This is not what is meant by *bishop* in Scripture, however. *Epi-* is a preposition which means *over*, and *skopos* is a word that refers to *sight* (like *telescope* or *microscope*). The word is used once in reference to the Lord Jesus where it is tied to the synonym *Shepherd* or *Pastor*: 1 Peter 2:25, "For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls." We also see the idea of shepherding or pastoring connected to bishop in Acts 20:28-30 and 1 Peter 5:2. The following passages use the word *episkopos* in conjunction with another key synonym besides *shepherd* or *pastor*. Read the passages, find the other synonym, and answer the question, "What is a bishop?"

Acts 20:17, 28

Titus 1:5-7

1 Peter 5:1-4

Answer: The other synonym is *elders*. The words *pastors*, *elders*, and *bishops* all refer to the same office that Paul is referring to in 1 Tim. 3:1. There is only one office, but three different names or labels for the officers. The names *pastor* and *overseer/bishop* emphasize the work of the office, whereas the name *elder* emphasizes the character of the office. Every New Testament pastor was also a bishop/overseer and an elder. Every New Testament bishop/overseer was also an elder and a pastor. Every New Testament elder was also a pastor and a bishop/overseer. A bishop, then, is simply a man called to the ministry of the pastorate, "according to the commandment of God," much the same way Paul was called to be an apostle (1 Timothy 1:1, Lesson 2).

Local church bishops/pastors/elders are never called *apostles*, although the apostles did function as bishops/pastors/elders in local churches (1 Pet. 5:1). Including Paul, only twelve men held apostolic authority (Acts 1:26, Rev. 21:14), although all laborers sent out into the harvest field are apostles in a different sense, similar to our term *missionary*.

Other bishops share recognition and responsibility for the call of God in a new bishop/overseer/pastor through the laying on of hands in ordination (1 Tim. 4:14, 5:22). Early in the church's history, the apostles and their representatives were especially charged with

appointing bishops or pastors for the churches (Titus 1:5, Acts 14:23 [this decision may have included a church vote]). But later in the New Testament, we find the local church recognizing the call of a man and appointing him by majority vote to the office of the pastorate. Paul recognizes this decision method as authoritative, on a par with his own appointment of Titus (2 Cor. 8:16-24). Today, recognizing the role of both other leaders and the authority of the local church in Scripture, independent Baptist churches ordain pastors with the vote of a local church upon the examination and recommendation of a council of other pastors.

It is instructive to understand the readiness of the apostles to identify with the ministry of the bishop/elder/pastor. In 1 Pet. 5:1, Peter refers to himself as "also an elder." God not only gave the churches apostles, prophets, and evangelists, but also pastor-teachers (Eph. 4:11). This passage seems to put the likes of Paul and Barnabas in the same category of leadership as the pastors they were leaving behind in churches. Paul mentions that the commandment he had received, the call to the ministry, he was entrusting to Timothy (1 Tim. 1:1, 18), and now Timothy was to entrust that ministry to faithful men (bishops/elders/pastors) who would teach others also (1 Tim. 5:22, 2 Tim. 2:2). In contrast, the apostles viewed the work of the deacon as an improper distraction for their office (Acts 6:2-4).

Therefore, the bishop/elder/pastor bears the same sense of vocational calling the apostles did, to leave the nets and follow the Lord (John 21). We are given instruction concerning the compensation of bishops/elders/pastors (1 Tim. 5:17-18), but never the compensation of deacons. Finally, we should note that when we read about this office of the local church in the New Testament, we usually find more than one man at the church occupying it (Acts 13:1, 20:17, 14:23, Titus 1:5). Spiritual dictatorships were never God's plan for local churches, but rather a plurality of men called to full-time Christian ministry who find accountability a valuable component of their mutual care for one another.

Application: We have spent a good deal of space answering the question, "What is a bishop?" The reason for this is that it is critical to understand who exactly God empowers to oversee and shepherd the church of God. These men are held especially responsible before the Chief Shepherd for the watch of the flock. They will give a special accounting (Heb. 13:17). Men who are not called of God to this work will not have to give that accounting, and these men, good men though they may be, should not occupy the office.

Some fundamental churches see two types of elders/bishops/pastors in their interpretation of some New Testament passages. The first type they cite is that of "teaching elders," whom they normally call their *pastors*. They see these men as vocationally called of God, ordained, and worthy of compensation. The second type is comprised of "ruling elders." These men are not vocationally called to the ministry, nor ordained under the same rigor as teaching elders or pastors. They are, however, responsible for the administrative aspects of local church ministry.

These groups emphasize the plurality of elders in New Testament local churches. They see this plurality as critical to the principle of accountability in leadership. They then argue that not all of the New Testament elders/bishops/pastors could have been on the payroll of those churches. One popular passage cited by the proponents of this interpretation is 1 Tim.

5:17, where the phrase, “especially they who labor in the word and doctrine,” seems to intimate that there may typically be elders who do not labor in the word and doctrine, men who are not called to preach and teach. Instead, the ministry of ruling or administration is especially allocated to these men.

In response, Baptists are convinced that it is vitally important that the connection between teaching and ruling be maintained in the office of a bishop. Fundamentalists believe in Biblical authority. The ultimate authority in the church is the Bible. This is the reason God places the responsibility of implementing Scripture's authority (ruling or overseeing) on those who are called to be the teachers of the Scripture, the source of that authority. Pastoring (shepherding, overseeing, ruling) is inextricably linked to teaching in God’s design for this leadership role (Eph. 4:11). The two cannot be separated into two different offices. Consequently, in 1 Tim. 5:17, we are told that not only do good elders rule well, they also labor in the Word and doctrine. In fact, the very essence of good ruling is laboring in the Word and doctrine. Both ruling and teaching are necessary to do the job God wants done as an elder.

This verse also indicates that the vocational call of God to full-time ministry is necessary to the office. It may have been that the financial conditions of first century local churches precluded the full compensation of all elders in the New Testament, but this would not change the nature of the call nor the character of the office. Paul worked as a tent maker, but that status was inappropriate and temporary in view of the call of God in Paul's life. The call of God changed Paul's occupation in time, but Paul's occupation was never allowed to change the call of God (1 Cor. 9:6-18). Therefore, no modification of the office of an elder ought to be practiced to accommodate the service of men who feel no call of God to choose the ministry of the Word and prayer over the service of tables or a career (Acts 6:2-4). Such men are, no doubt, wise and godly men, but they are not called to be bishops as defined by Scripture.

What Must a Bishop Be?

1 Tim. 3:2-3 2. What must a bishop be? Let's start with verses two and three where Paul enumerates a dozen quick but profound descriptions of what the life of a bishop must be. In Greek, Paul's statement emphasizes the word *must*. This kind of life is mandatory for the office of an overseer, not optional. The chart below will direct you to a definitive passage which will help you develop a definition for each of a pastor's mandatory qualifications. Complete the chart by defining each qualification after reading the passage.

| <u>Qualification:</u> | <u>Passage:</u> | <u>Definition:</u> |
|--------------------------------|------------------------|--|
| blameless | Luke 20:20-26 | literally, “someone who cannot be grasped or held,” above reproach. |
| the husband of one wife | Matthew 5:27-32 | literally, “a one-woman man,” someone who is pure in relation to women |

| <u>Qualification:</u> | <u>Passage:</u> | <u>Definition:</u> |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|---|
| vigilant, sober | 1 Peter 5:8-9 | maintaining a sense of the adversary's presence, staying watchful |
| of good behavior | Ecclesiastes 12:13 | duty-oriented before the Lord |
| given to hospitality | 3 John 1-8 | willing to open the home and provide for the needs of others |
| apt to teach | 2 Timothy 2:2 | well-trained in the Scriptures and faithful in the teaching of them |
| not given to wine | Proverbs 31:4-7 | avoiding addictions, especially alcohol, through abstinence |
| no striker | 2 Timothy 2:24-26 | not looking for a fight |
| not greedy of filthy lucre | Matthew 6:19-24 | in the service of God, not money |
| patient | 1 Peter 2:18 "gentle" | the opposite of "froward" or "unreasonable", considerate |
| not a brawler | 2 Timothy 2:23-26 | uncontentious, will address situations with his temper in check |
| not covetous | Philippians 4:10-20 | willing to be content with much or with little |

Application:

1. *blameless*: This is the qualification which describes in summary what God's man must be. When it comes to the character of his life, a pastor is not to give the evil world around us any handle with which to grasp him and pull his ministry down. In Luke 20:20, we are told that the enemies of Christ wanted to "lay hands on him" physically (v. 19), but they could not. Their second choice, then, was to "take hold of" Him verbally. (v. 20) Verse 26 mentions that "they could not take hold of Him." This is the idea of being blameless. The life of the man of God needs to give the enemy of God nothing to take hold of by which he might destroy the ministry.

Because blameless is the crowning qualification, it is important to recognize two things that blameless does not refer to. First, blameless does not refer to the character of a man's life before salvation. If such were the case, the apostle Paul would have been unqualified for the ministry. He calls himself "the chief of sinners" (1 Tim. 1:15) and was well known by early Christians as "he which persecuted us in times past" (Gal. 1:22-24, Acts 9:26). Paul had a well-known past replete with being a striker and a brawler (see 1 Tim. 3:3). He was one of the murderers of the first martyr of the Christian church (Acts 7:54-8:1). This record at first negatively impacted his ministry, but God had called him anyway, and God only calls blameless men. Therefore, blameless should not be interpreted to include the impact of a man's record as a lost sinner on his reputation, but rather the clear testimony of a godly life through salvation by grace (Gal. 1:24).

Second, blameless does not mean immunity to the false and malicious attacks of God's enemies. Although Christ demonstrated this immunity in Luke 20, the schemes of the enemies of Christ finally did pay off. Christ was tried and publicly crucified because the lies of His enemies had convinced the mob that He was a blasphemer and a political threat to the temple and province (Luke 22:66-23:2). Yet Christ never ceased to be blameless. In spite of the deception at hand, "certainly this was a righteous man" (Luke 23:47). Ultimately, then, blameless is a character trait that does not fail before the false opinions of deceived men and women, even though it is a trait that has everything to do with a pastor's public testimony. In the end, the truth about a man who lives the truth will present him blameless to the glory of God.

2. *the husband of one wife*: This is a phrase that has been interpreted to mean a number of different things. Each Sunday School teacher should understand and be committed to his pastor's position on the interpretation of this phrase in its relationship to divorce and remarriage and the call to leadership. Unity on this subject is critical to the teaching ministry of the local church. Our purpose is not to replace the direction of your pastor here, but rather give emphasis to what this phrase implies about the character of the man of God. All good men agree that this phrase requires us to look beyond the divorce record of a man to see additionally whether that man is living a life that is pure sexually. Is he committed to and in love with his wife? (Eph. 5:25). Does he treat the other women in the church as mothers and sisters in all purity? (1 Tim. 5:2). Is he committed to a clean mind and pure eyes? (Matt. 5:27-32). Does he take appropriate measures to ensure that there is no opportunity for impropriety or misunderstanding? (1 Tim. 5:14). A strong family is important for a strong ministry, and the strong family begins with a strong relationship between the man of God and his wife.

3. *vigilant, sober*: These are two words we often find paired in Scripture. Where we see one, we also see the other. The character trait indicated by these words is the opposite of a drunkard's lifestyle. Life is not one big game for the man of God. He is not looking to ignore or shun the battle and the problems of life, but rather he is ready to face these things and fight the good fight. Many today are looking for a pastor with a great sense of humor or a down-to-earth personality, someone who will always look on the bright side and try to focus on the best in people. This description falls short of vigilance and soberness. In contrast, God's man is keenly aware of heaven's battle and works to please the Lord, not men.

4. *of good behavior, hospitable*: The leader of God's people must practice what he preaches. His heart and life ought to be an open letter for all the people of God to see (Phil. 4:9, 2 Cor. 6:11). Leaders not only teach with their teaching, they are expected also by God to teach with their living, to be examples or patterns that the people of God can see and emulate (1 Pet. 5:3). Good behavior involves the life before and after the pulpit ministry. Hospitality opens the home life for inspection and learning to God's people. Television pastors and YouTube preachers fall short here. The television broadcast covers the pulpit only, not the life. Only those demonstrating a godly life which can be seen openly by God's people are qualified to lead those people.

5. *apt to teach*: 2 Tim. 2:2 describes the kind of men who should be leading God's people more succinctly than does 1 Timothy 3. There Paul emphasizes faithful teaching by men who have had the Christian doctrine entrusted to them. The point here is not that every pastor will be a gifted expositor. The gifts and abilities of men will vary. Rather, the point here is that every pastor will be a faithful and trained teacher. This should mean Bible school or seminary where it can. But it should always mean that the man of God is working hard studying for teaching, continuing or persevering in that responsibility, and faithfully fulfilling his call to teach before God. No where do we find that the pastor must have great ability to administer programs or manage projects, but we do see emphasized over and over that he must be a man who can teach God's Word.

6. *not given to wine*: Prov. 31:4-7 makes clear the principle that leadership and alcohol do not mix. The risks are too great and are simply not to be taken by the man called to lead God's people (Prov. 20:1, 23:29-35). The addictive powers of alcohol are emphasized in the Scripture, as is the directive to avoid temptation (James 1:14-18). These principles argue for abstinence in the lives of all Christians, especially in the lives of Christian leaders whose example all Christian people are directed to follow.

7. *no striker, patient, not a brawler*: This may have been the area which gave the Apostle Paul the greatest challenge as a leader of God's people. His past as a persecutor of the church, his fallout with Barnabas (Acts 15:38-41), and his bold and public confrontation with Peter (Gal. 2:11) all indicate that Paul had a propensity for dealing with problems in a quick and forceful way. This is not to say that Paul was wrong in these situations, only that it may have been the style that came easiest for him. Patience and gentleness were qualities Paul had to work at. Paul was not one to back down from a good fight, nor should we be. Yet the shepherd of God's people must be one who is known for fighting the wolves, not the sheep. The man of God must learn to fight the good fight without being unnecessarily contentious or argumentative. Otherwise, that man is not qualified for the ministry.

8. *not greedy of filthy lucre, not covetous*: The point here is not that men called to the ministry have to drive beat-up cars, never own a home, and receive a poor paycheck. In fact, the opinion of the church ought to be the opposite of this view in their treatment of their pastor. The Romish “vow of poverty” is unscriptural, and it should not dominate our thinking when it comes to pastoral compensation (1 Tim. 5:17-18). The point here, however, is that the man of God can be content in poverty if his circumstances in ministry require that of him. He is not motivated by a desire to be rich, or even a desire to have more. A pastor should be scripturally committed to provide the needs of his family. But with much or with little, the qualified man will set an example for the flock in terms of thankfulness, fidelity, and generosity.

Notes: _____

From the Honeycomb

"take care of the church of God"
Greek: *epimeleomai*

Paul uses a rare New Testament word to describe the work of the pastorate. It is used only here in 1 Tim. 3:5 and at the end of Luke 10:34, “and *took care of him*.” Take a look at Luke 10:30-35, find out what this kind of care involves, and answer question number 3.

1 Tim. 3:4-5 3. Paul goes on to deal with the family of the qualified man. His emphasis is that these men should lead their families. This role is not sub-contracted to the wife or the kids. His children ought to be doing what he wants, not what they want. He has not become contented to see his children disobey the Lord. He is rather dealing with them as the leader of his home. Paul then says that this family leadership is necessary for a pastor to “take care of” the church of God. Check the “From the Honeycomb” exercise and explain what this word implies about the ministry of a pastor.

Answer: The care of a pastor is comparable to the care of the Good Samaritan. It is a thorough care, one which requires sacrifice and time. It is not a convenient work prescribed only for the hours of 9 to 5. It is an on-demand kind of work.

Application: This kind of work can put a lot of pressure on the family life of a pastor. Therefore, it is essential that a man lead his family well. The ministry of a pastor is the ministry of a pastor's family. They too, will have to sacrifice if the church of God is to be cared for. A pastor needs to prioritize good management of his household that he might manage well the church of God. Sometimes good management of the family is abdicated for the cause of managing well the church. This too is unscriptural.

1 Tim. 3:6-7 4. The condemnation of the devil and the snare of the devil are threats to the ministry of the pastor. How are these things to be avoided by those commissioning leaders through the examination of their qualifications?

Answer: The condemnation of the devil is to be avoided by demanding a spiritual maturity in leadership. No novices are to be entrusted with the office of a bishop because the responsibility will go to their heads. The devil was condemned because he was lifted up with pride, and the office of a bishop will have the same disastrous effect on a novice Christian. The snare of the devil is related to avoiding reproach and exhibiting the quality of blamelessness before those outside the church. Here, a man's reputation in the community is in view. Satan would like nothing better than to destroy the effectiveness of a ministry by legitimately destroying the reputation of the minister.

Application: Realism is preferable to idealism in the work of the ministry. That is not to say that there is no place for idealism, but rather that the pastorate is more like a marathon than a sprint. God is not looking so much for the man who runs fast, but for the man who keeps on running. A man who is experienced in the work of God understands that victory is slow and takes time. Those lacking experience often have the desire to build big quickly. Paul warns that the core problem here is pride. Mature believers are believers who have failed enough to walk humbly and faithfully before the Lord over the long haul.

A pastor ought to be someone who pays his bills on time. He should not be living on the government dole or in state-subsidized housing. He should pay his taxes and keep his affairs in order. He should mow his yard and trim his bushes. He should vote and be known as a responsible citizen and a good neighbor. His reputation is critical to the success of the ministry of the local church. This also implies that he should be around long enough for the community to know who he is. A good local church ministry is not the ministry that hires another mystery man as its pastor every two or three years. It is rather the church whose man has a good reputation with those who are in the community.

Notes: _____

What Must a Deacon Be?

1 Tim. 3:8-13 Acts 6:1-8 5. Verses 8-13 cover deacons, the other office of the local church (Phil. 1:1). This section begins with the word *likewise* because many of the qualifications of the deacon are the same as the qualifications of the bishop/pastor/elder. An important one is missing, however, and this gives us some understanding of the difference between pastors and deacons. The name *deacon* means *servant* and the name *pastor* means *shepherd*, and so the names of the offices describe the difference between their roles as well. What is the difference between the role of pastors and the role of deacons?

Answer: The missing qualification for deacons is apt to teach. It is not required of deacons that they be especially called to or faithful in teaching. The ministry of the Word is not their ministry; their ministry is rather one of leadership through service. They are special examples of service, and provide leadership for the service needs of the local church. Pastors, on the other hand, are responsible for the teaching, administration, and shepherding of the flock.

Application: Some view the pastor as the one who does the teaching and the deacons as the administrative group. In this context, deacons are not viewed as servants primarily, but as members of an executive board. This practice is different only in a semantic way from the view that there are two kinds of elders, teaching and ruling. Clearly, the terms *bishop/overseer* and *pastor/shepherd* involve leadership through administration, whereas the term *deacon* implies nothing of the kind. Administration is supposed to be connected to teaching, not disjointed from it, because our authority is the Word of God. Deacons should view themselves as servants, not administrators. They execute their office while waiting on tables, active in the field for the Lord, not behind closed doors making key decisions.

Notes: _____

What Is a Church?

1 Tim. 3:14-16 6. We learned in Lesson 1 the purpose of 1 Timothy from this passage, “that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself” in the local church. Paul gives the church three distinct names in this passage. What are they, and what do they imply about the ministry of the local church (verse 15)?

Answer: The three names are “house of God,” “the church of the living God,” and “the pillar and ground of the truth.” “House of God” is terminology that was once applicable to the tabernacle and temple. It speaks of God’s dwelling place on earth. “The church of the living God” reminds us who is in charge. Each local church is Jesus’s summoned flock, for He has purchased it with His own blood (Acts 20:28). “The pillar and ground of the truth” implies that the local church ministry is God’s plan for the ministry of His truth in this age. In the prior age it was the nation of Israel which was entrusted with the Law of God (Rom. 3:1-2, 9:4), but now it is local churches who have the responsibility to minister God’s truth to mankind. That truth is centered on the gospel, the mystery of godliness, the Son of God incarnate given for the salvation of the world. See pp. 15-16 for more detail on Paul’s “pillar and ground” allusion.

Application: It is important to understand that the local church is in view in this context (see v. 5), so these lofty terms apply to every true church like our own. The assembly of believers constitutes a special dwelling place of God on earth (Matt. 18:17-20). The local church is not a building. It does not have a mailing address. The local church is a covenanted people, God’s household dwelling together with Him, being used of Him to accomplish His work and minister His truth. This is a holy calling indeed for every believer. Churchless Christianity is not a biblical religion.

Lesson 5
“Leadership Against Apostasy”
1 Timothy 4

Purpose:

Your students will develop discernment in regard to the threat of apostasy. They shall develop convictions concerning their need to separate from apostates, which shall bolster a godly stand taken by those who lead them.

In a Nutshell:

Paul addresses the importance of battling false teachers in chapter 4. Our godly leaders need to take a stand against apostasy. That stand is easier to take when the people of the local church have strong convictions against apostasy. This lesson will help you strengthen those convictions.

To the Testimony!

The Counterfeit Leader—the Apostate

1 Tim. 4:1-5 1. We learned in Lesson 4 that the church is responsible for the ministry of God's truth in this age (1 Tim. 3:15, 4:3). Some Bible students have believed that this ministry of the church will be successful to the point of establishing the kingdom of God on earth in preparation for Christ's second coming. They were called *postmillennial*, meaning that they believed the success of the church age would usher in Christ's millennial reign on earth. Christ returns only after (*post*) His kingdom on earth is enjoyed by the church. In contrast, the *premillennial* view states that Christ must return before (*pre*) the millennium can be enjoyed on earth and that He will come after the church age. The church age is not a time of great success in their view, but rather a time of great struggle punctuated with times of apostasy or “falling away” from the faith. Verse 1 tells about these times of great apostasy or “falling away” in the last days, the church age. How does this falling away happen? Who causes it? Who are the agents of it?

Answer: Apostasy is accomplished through the work of “seducing spirits” and “doctrines of demons.” Deception and lies are at the heart of the apostasy of the last days. People who think that they are finding the faith will actually be falling away from the faith. Satan will use religion and religious teachers to lead men away from the truth entrusted to local churches in this age. The agents of apostasy will be men who have religious authority in the eyes of the world (verse 3).

Application: It is important that we understand that the Bible teaches that times will get worse and worse in the church age, not better and better (see also 2 Tim. 3:1, 13, 4:3-4). Though gloriously interrupted at times by bursts of revival, the church age is a time when

comparatively few will accept the truth once delivered to the saints (Matt. 7:13-14). With increasing momentum people will be deceived in apostasy. Believers who understand this warning of Scripture can be better conditioned to resist that apostasy. Those who believe that times will get better and better are susceptible to the deceptive spirit of apostasy. Its doctrines of demons make claims that sound good on the surface but lack truth: "Doctrine divides, love unites!"; "The majority is moral!" The ecumenical movement and the new evangelical movement, both empowered by the charismatic movement, are examples of the kind of progress made in our day that will one day build the one-world church of the antichrist. Old doctrinal walls, which for centuries have divided truth from error, are torn down in the name of unity and false religious virtue. Neither "the truth" nor "the faith" bear much relevance in days of apostasy, only one-world unity, tolerance, and common religious experience.

Notes: _____

1 Tim. 4:3-5 2. What two age-old attacks on the truth does Paul mention as popular among apostates? What authority does Paul cite to combat this falsehood?

Answer: An attack on the sanctity of marriage and dietary restrictions are the two age-old attacks of apostates Paul mentions here. These false doctrines still exist in false religion today in many forms. The effort in most false denominations to legitimize homosexuality is the format for today's attack on the sanctity of marriage. A more ancient attack has been the Romish vow of celibacy. Vegetarianism is advocated by false teachers who maintain an evolutionary view of human and animal life. They equate eating animals with eating humans, and so degrade the value of human life. Other results of human degradation in our society today are abortion and euthanasia.

Paul cites God's creative design and the Word of God as authorities against these falsehoods. Homosexuality and the vow of celibacy are wrong because God's work of creation and His written Word teach that they are wrong. Degrading human life is wrong because God's work of creation, the image of God in man, and His Word also teach against this falsehood (Genesis 9:3, Acts 10:12-15).

Application: Without the work of God in creation and the authority of the Word of God, man has no basis for understanding right from wrong when it comes to the value of marriage and the value of human life. A lifelong, monogamous, heterosexual marriage is right because God designed it and commanded it. If we do not recognize the design of God, nor the command of God, we lose all basis for our view that traditional marriage is right. It is suddenly downgraded to merely one option among the many others: polygamy, homosexuality, celibacy, fornication, bestiality, incest.

Human life is more valuable than animal life (humans can eat animals) because God designed

it that way, and God commanded it that way. Replace God's design and command with evolution, and you are left with animals and humans on equal footing. If animals can be eaten, so can humans. If humans cannot be eaten, then neither can animals. Apostasy leaves the faith in regard to God's creation and God's Word, and craziness reigns as a consequence in society's view of marriage and the value of human life. Gender dysphoria is the latest consequence.

1 Tim. 4:6-9

3. Apostasy is supported by doctrines of demons and seducing spirits. The four philosophies in the chart below are four doctrines of demons, which men are following in the apostasy of today's false religion. They represent sayings that are unfaithful, unworthy of acceptance. By contrast, Paul gives us trustworthy instruction in verses 6-9. Read the definition of the philosophy below, state why it is wrong, and give a right view from verses 6-9, which addresses the error of that philosophy.

| Philosophy: | Definition: | Error: | Scriptural Response: |
|--------------------|--|---|--|
| eclecticism | choosing what appears to be best in many religions | fails to recognize that truth mixed with error is dangerous | we are to be nourished up in good doctrine, words of faith (v. 6), only this |
| ecumenism | promoting a globally organized unity among religions | sacrifices the truth and forsakes the faith to construct this unity | we ought to point out (put in remembrance) error, not overlook it (v. 6) |
| pluralism | each religion should be respected as equally valid | certain religions do not lead to godliness nor hold the promise of life to come | we should discipline ourselves to respect the truth leading to godliness (vv. 7-8) |
| tolerance | sympathy for beliefs differing from one's own | false belief destroys lives and offends God and should not be tolerated | we should shun certain religious teaching, not tolerate it all (v. 7) |

Application: Seducing spirits influence the attitudes of the world to hold in high esteem the doctrines of demons listed above. An eclectic approach to religion is seen as intellectually superior to an exclusive approach. Ecumenism is viewed as an exciting and effective means of world peace or political and religious progress. Pluralism and tolerance agree in a certain way with religious freedom and human rights. The ideas represented by the words *fundamen-*

talist, separatist, exclusivity, and intolerance are all billed as threats to society. This is the seducing spirit of the age. It is seducing because doctrines of demons are attractive to the sinful heart. It is a spirit because it involves satanic influence on the values of our society.

2 Peter 2 4. Our study of apostasy would be incomplete without a reading of 2 Peter 2. With a fire that only a fisherman like Peter could express, he warns believers against men who “after they have known [the way of righteousness], . . . turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them.” This is apostasy. The dog returning to his vomit and the sow to her mire are Peter's descriptions of the apostate. They should be ours as well. Read 2 Peter 2, and list three descriptions of your own for apostates. With three sentences beginning with “Apostates are,” describe these men in your own words.

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| Apostates are |
| Apostates are |
| Apostates are |

Answer: Here are some characteristics Peter emphasizes: apostates are religious leaders (v.1), false and deceptive (v.1), covetous and greedy (v.3), disrespectful of authority (v.10), immoral (vv. 13-14), eloquent deceivers (vv. 17-19), fully aware of the truth and their rejection of it (vv. 20-22).

Application: Christian people need to get used to the fact that the Bible does not speak in glowing terms of false religious leaders. The discourse of Peter that describes these highly respected men lacks the eclectic, ecumenical, pluralistic, and tolerant spirit to which we have become so accustomed in our day. Christ spoke a similar message in Matthew 23. Apostates are tombs that are white-washed on the outside, but filled with the bones of dead men on the inside (Matt. 23:27). It is of paramount importance that Christians of this generation, the day of apostasy, the last days, remain committed to boldly describing in an exclusive, separatist, intolerant way the uncleanness nature of these men. One cannot teach 2 Peter 2 without doing exactly that.

Notes: _____

The Godly Leader—the Faithful Man

1 Tim. 4:6-10 5. Paul again cites a faithful saying in verse 9. He is referring to his comparison of developing godliness with physical exercise. How are physical exercise and developing godliness alike? How are they different?

Answer: Physical exercise is similar to developing godliness in that it takes a spiritual form of exercise or discipline to develop a godly life. The godly life develops effortlessly no more than does the physically fit body. The disciplines of godliness involve eating right spiritually (v. 6, “nourished on the words of faith and good doctrine”), refusing to eat wrong spiritually (v. 7, “refusing profane and old wives’ fables”), and a willingness to toil for the reward spiritually (v. 10, “For therefore we . . . labor”).

Godliness is different from physical exercise because its benefits are eternal, not temporal. Faith in the promise of the life “which is to come,” a trust in the saving work of God, which brings eternal life, is an indispensable commitment that makes the disciplines of a godly life possible (1 Cor. 15:19, 32). Bodily exercise is focused on benefits to be experienced in this life, whereas many of the benefits of godliness come to us only in the life to come.

Application: The lessons of this comparison are two. First, godliness does not come easily nor cheaply. It takes hard work and strict discipline to develop a godly character and live a godly life. It is normal for godliness to be difficult labor, not a lot of fun. Discipline can be simply understood as making yourself do things because they are right, not because you feel like doing them. You cannot be simply doing what feels good at the moment and obtain godliness. Doing what feels good will leave the Christian with an ungodly life, just like eating only what tastes good and doing only what is relaxing will leave the athlete with a body that is out of shape. Bible study, prayer, and local-church labors for Christ develop a godly life. Each one demands strict discipline.

The second lesson is that godliness requires living for the eternal, not the temporal. "Never sacrifice the permanent on the altar of the immediate" (Dr. Bob Jones, Sr.) is the motto of godly living. Living a godly life makes no sense at all if there is no promise of a life to come. The philosophies which say, “Eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow we die!” or “The one who dies with the most toys wins!” may make more sense than godliness if this life is all that we have to look forward to. But because we have a hope that is eternal, we can invest our lives in godliness so that we shall be reaping rewards for eternity to come!

Notes: _____

1 Tim. 4:11-16 6. Paul completes this chapter by firing off a list of six solemn directives for Timothy, the leader of God's people. His last statement of the chapter gives us a sense of the importance of godly leadership (verse 16). This statement tells us what is at stake when it comes to the ministry of a godly leader. Begin with verse 16, identify what is at stake with the ministry of God's leader, and then list the directives which must be followed in order to have success in that ministry. Then finally summarize in your own words the ministry of a successful pastor.

What is at stake (v. 16): Nothing short of God’s work of the salvation of souls is at stake in the ministry of the pastorate (1 Cor. 1:21). The godly pastorate will harvest the salvation of the lost. The pastorate that fails will mean disgrace to the gospel.

The Directives:

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| Verse 11: “command and teach these things” | Verse 14: “neglect not the gift that is in thee” |
| Verse 12: “be thou an example” | Verse 15: “meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them” |
| Verse 13: “give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine” | Verse 16: “take heed unto thyself and to the doctrine; continue in them” |

What is ministry success? Ministry success is to faithfully teach the Word of God in precept and life. God promises that His Word will never return void (Isa. 55:11; 1 Cor. 3:6).

Application: Paul evaluated the ministry of the pastorate in terms of fidelity to the Word of God. His concern was not that a pastor should be respected relative to the size of his Sunday School, the extent of his itinerary, the number of radio stations that carry his messages, his oratory skills, or the buildings he builds. He is evaluated in the eyes of God in terms of how well he studies, lives, and teaches the Word of God. Any apostate can build big Sunday Schools, maintain an extensive itinerary, get on the radio and TV, display great oratory skills, and build big buildings. The apostate cannot, however, faithfully study, live, and teach the Word of God. We ought to evaluate men who fill the pastorate in the same terms Paul does here. The stakes are very high. God's work of salvation will be either advanced or hindered by the work of the pastor, nothing in between. This work must be faithful to the Word.

Notes: _____

Real Life?

Joe had just landed his first real job since graduating from Christian college last spring. He was a good Christian young man, and he felt strongly that the Lord had provided this new position as an accountant for one of the leading firms. Joe had never lived in the South before, and part of his settling process was going to be deciding on a new church home. Joe was single. One of the features he was hoping for in a new church was a strong singles’ fellowship.

Joe first tried Bethel Baptist Church because it was the closest to his condominium complex. He learned a lot that morning, and the pastor's instruction reminded him of the teaching he had grown up with back home. Joe thought that the church was unusually small though. As he looked around, he did not see anyone who seemed to be close to his age group. The pastor seemed somewhat concerned as he took the offering about a number of bills that the church had gotten behind on. Joe noticed that the general demeanor of the pastor seemed kind of down. He looked discouraged.

The following week, Joe stopped in to First Baptist Church. He was surprised at the size of the singles' class. They actually gave Joe a copy of their summer activities listing a series of camping trips, ball games, concerts, rallies, and special events on a weekly basis. The morning message was shorter than Joe was used to and the music a bit faster, but the people sure were friendly. He was surprised to hear that there would be no service that evening, but the singles were going to go down to the beach together for a sunset fellowship. They were expecting about 50 people Joe's age.

What advice would you give Joe in making the decision he faces about where to attend church?

Answer: Joe would do well to evaluate the ministries he is exposing himself to relative to their faithfulness to God's Word. This is how the Lord evaluates a ministry. Faithfulness to God's Word is going to be a struggle. We learned from this chapter that godliness is a discipline. It involves doing things because they are right, not because they are fun. Also, Joe should give thought to what he will be able to invest for eternity in each of the ministries. Living for today may make that summer schedule of activities look mighty attractive, but living for eternity may mean that the best place to invest his gifts and service are at the place that appears to need them the most.

Lesson 6

“The Godly Leader’s Care for People”

1 Timothy 5

Purpose:

Your students will understand the responsibility of the local church when it comes to social work. This understanding will help them set priorities for both their own service for God as well as their expectations regarding the service of the local church. In addition, they shall prepare themselves with a Biblical perspective to be more valuable participants in the business meetings of the local church ministry.

In a Nutshell:

The social gospel dominates much of false religion today. Whereas the church of the New Testament followed the Great Commission to teach the Scripture and preach the gospel, many churches today prioritize feeding the hungry and political activism. In 1 Timothy 5, we learn a Biblical perspective related to the church’s social responsibility. In addition, the importance of caring for leaders is an emphasis of the chapter, which all members of local churches need to take to heart.

To the Testimony!

A Caring Disposition

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| 1 Tim. 5:1-2 Matt. 12:46-50 John 19:26-27 Luke 2:49 | 1. The theme verse of the Pastoral Epistles, 1 Tim. 3:15, tells us that the local church is God's household, His dwelling and that of His family. The first verses of chapter five remind us of this truth. Jesus spoke very directly about family priorities. How did the Lord prioritize His natural family versus the people of God? What does referring to the local church as <i>brethren</i> indicate about what our priorities should be? |
|--|--|

Answer: Paul wants Timothy to care for the people of the local church as though they were fathers, mothers, brothers, and sisters. Jesus made clear that the tie to His disciples was more important to Him than the tie of flesh and blood. He was committed more to those who were busy doing the will of God than He was to those of his own natural family. Clearly, Christ's point is not that the interests and needs of his natural family were to be neglected (John 19:26-27), but where those interests conflicted with doing the will of God, Jesus was clear that He

Application: The instruction of Christ and Paul is clear. The people of God, who are accomplishing His will, ought to be treated like family. Other passages make clear that we ought also to care for and respect the needs of our natural families. But family commitments should

never be used as an excuse for not accomplishing the will of God, nor as an excuse for a lack of commitment to the family of God, the local church. Doing the will of God can often be hindered by family relationships. The will of God and the will of family often conflict. Many cannot come to church because of a family picnic, or to prayer meeting because of a desire to spend time with the family. Paul's point is that the people of God, the local church, are not to be treated as anything less than family. Ideally, the whole natural family will be committed to the family of God. No conflicts should exist. But when they do, God's will ought to prevail over the desires of family.

Notes: _____

From the Honeycomb

We often here 1 Tim. 5:1 quoted as instruction for how younger people are suppose to treat older people. This is certainly a good application for the verse, but there is more here. Paul is telling Timothy how to treat older men, older women, younger men, and younger women. Verses 1-2 cover the relationship we ought to have with other Christian people, men and women, young and old. This is the general disposition God expects in our treatment of others, and it is comprised of two commands: "Rebuke not, but entreat." The point here is not that Timothy could never correct someone older than he. It is rather a description for how we as Christians ought to treat one another.

The word translated *rebuke* is *epiplasso*. It is used only here in the New Testament. It is an intensified form of *plasso*, which is used in Rev. 8:12, "the third part of the sun *was smitten*." The word *plasso* means *to strike*. The word *epiplasso* means *to strike at* or *to strike upon*. It is a very strong word. Paul is telling Timothy to keep his temper in check when dealing with Christian people. Do not strike out at them.

Look up the passages below. Each contains a form of this word where the blanks appear. Fill in the blanks, and then define the word *entreat* (*parakaleo*) in your own words. What does *entreat* say about how we should treat Christians?

Acts 16:40, "and when they had seen the brethren, they _____ them"
2 Cor. 10:1, "Now I Paul myself _____ you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ"
1 Thess. 2:3, "For our _____ was not of deceit" (see vv. 7-8)
Heb. 1:13, "But _____ one another daily, while it is called Today"
1 John 2:1, "And if any man sin, we have an _____ with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous."

Answer: *Parakaleo* means literally *to call along side* (*para* – *along side* + *kaleo* – *to call*). The emphasis of the word is that the person *entreating* and the person *entreated* are together on the

same side. This word describes the positive side of the responsibility that family-living in the local church requires. As Christians in a local church, we deal with one another as though we are on the same side, members of the same family, serving the same Lord, striving for the same purposes.

Application: When the author of this lesson series first became the pastor of New Boston Baptist Church (NH), he was privileged to know the friendship of a parishioner named Donald Peaslee. Mr. Peaslee was the oldest in his congregation and the first to go home to the Lord during his ministry at NBBC.

Mr. Peaslee enjoyed a unique hobby. He liked to construct latch-hook rugs, often creating his own designs on a blank canvas. One he constructed specifically for his pastor, which today is kept on the desk in the pastor's study. The rug pictures a covered bridge that Mr. Peaslee remembered from his grandfather's farm.

Mr. Peaslee explained that his grandfather had a pull-horse that feared crossing the covered bridge. The animal would proceed without disturbance until coming to the doorway of the bridge, at which point he would come to a full stop. No amount of coaxing from the wagon could make the animal proceed over the bridge. Only when the farmer dismounted his wagon, coming along side the horse to take up its reins and gently walk beside the animal, would it agree to go over the bridge with its master.

Mr. Peaslee hoped his young pastor would learn the lesson of the farmer and his pull-horse. He wanted him to remember that this is the best way to treat people. He was not a Greek scholar, but he knew well the meaning of Paul's command to Timothy — *parakaleo, entreat*.

Notes: _____

Caring for People in Need: Widows

1 Tim. 3:3-16 2. Today, apostate denominations, with little doctrine left to teach their people, have found something to preach in the "social gospel." Rather than addressing the spiritual condition of sinful hearts, this teaching addresses the physical condition of empty stomachs. Soup kitchens, consignment shops, orphanages, hospitals, and psychological counseling ministries are now the concerns of churches that at one time emphasized evangelism and fidelity to God's Word. Little is said in the New Testament about the social responsibilities of the local church ministry, but we do find some treatment of this subject. James tells us that pure religion involves visiting orphans and widows (James 1:27), and Luke chronicles the food service of widows from the start of the church's history (Acts 6:1).

Paul's instruction in this chapter is the most specific teaching we have on the principle of social responsibility for the local church. Let's begin in Acts, however, where that responsibility is first taken up. Who is not to be active in the social responsibilities of the local church? Why not (Acts 6:1-4)?

Answer: The apostles or pastors of the Jerusalem church did not want to be actively involved in the widow's soup kitchen ministry. The reason for this was that it was a distraction to their ministry of the Word and prayer.

Application: God never intended for pastors of local churches to focus their ministry on addressing social needs. The focus of the work of the pastorate is the ministry of the Word and prayer. The world expects men in the ministry to be involved in curing the social ills of society, but God expects His men to be involved in changing the hearts of men with the Word of God and prayer.

Notes: _____ For historical perspective on the social gospel, see David Beale, *In Pursuit of Purity: American Fundamentalism since 1850*, pp. 77-78 .

1 Tim. 5:3-8 3. Paul begins addressing the need to care for widows with some general principles in verses 3-8, and then he goes on to specifics in verses 9-16. One of the general principles Paul mentions in regard to the care for widows is that the recipients of the church's financial support should be too poor to live in sinful pleasures (verse 6). If the widow has enough to play the lottery and to buy the alcohol, the widow is not poor enough to deserve help from the church. Another principle is that those worthy of the church's assistance are Christians (verse 5). Paul never envisions the local church helping widows who do not know the Lord. Give another principle Paul mentions in this passage concerning a church's social responsibility and the verse which supports that principle.

Answer: Another principle, and the foremost emphasized by these verses, is that the local church should be used as a last resort in the realm of meeting social needs. Paul puts the local church under no social mandate here. On the contrary, the mandate belongs to the family of the widows. Verse 8 condemns the man who refuses to provide for his own.

Application: It is conceivable that verse 8 means that local churches should not have to care for widows in our modern-day economy. Life insurance provides an opportunity to fulfill the mandate of verse 8, which was unavailable to the first-century Christian. Given this option and the mandate to provide for our own, Christians ought to use life insurance if they can. In most cases, social security insurance will also play an important role today. Whatever the approach, the family is responsible before the church. This is a far cry from the call to social ac-

tion proposed by today's apostates. Their emphasis on social remedy includes a mitigation of the ministry of the Word and prayer, the responsibilities of Biblical gospel ministry.

Notes: _____

1 Tim. 5:9-16 4. Paul talks a lot about refusing social assistance in his instruction on providing it. He mentions that social assistance can produce an idleness that is unhealthy spiritually, and so younger women are to be refused (vv. 13-15). What other reason does Paul give for refusing younger widows? What does this imply about what was expected of widows who were supported by the church (vv. 9-12)?

Answer: Paul states that the possibility of remarriage is a reason for refusing to give social assistance to a widow in need. Qualified widows were to be at least sixty years old so that there would be little or no possibility of remarriage. This implies that social assistance involved a major commitment on the behalf of those who were being assisted. Paul is not trying to say that it is wrong for widows to remarry. He taught the opposite of this (Rom. 7:1-3). He is saying that you cannot fulfill the commitment to the local church, which is required of those receiving social assistance from the church, if you remarry. The commitment is too demanding to allow for that.

Application: Social assistance was never a free handout in the New Testament local church. Receiving social assistance involved a commitment to service. It was the kind of commitment that could not be carried out by a married woman who had to care for her household. It was the kind of commitment that could only be fulfilled by a godly woman with a history of good works (vv. 9-10).

Notes: _____

Caring for People in Leadership: Pastors

1 Tim. 5:16-18 5. Paul seems to move rather abruptly from widows to pastors in this passage. At first glance, *elders* (or pastors) seems to be a topic entirely unrelated to *widows*. If we read this passage carefully, however, we can catch Paul's natural progression from widows to elders. Pastors and the widows of this passage have a common source of income, the local church. How are pastors to be viewed differently from widows when it comes to remuneration? What reason does the passage give for this difference?

Answer: The philosophy behind providing social assistance for the widows of the local church was supposed to be one of reluctance. The church was supposed to be a last resort option. If there were another way to provide the widows' income, "let not the church be charged" (v. 16). On the contrary, Paul seems to want to ensure that this reluctance does not spill over into the responsibility of supporting the pastors or elders. On the heels of protecting the church from added expense in the area of social responsibility, Paul advocates spending more on the pastors who are doing a good job. The reason the local church should be enthusiastic and not reluctant in its support of pastors is given in verse 18. The pastor is the God-appointed ox who treads the corn. He is the laborer who is worthy of his reward. When it comes to legitimate compensation of the staff of the local church ministry, the widows were not considered the oxen. It is the pastors whom God has appointed the worthy laborers who should be rewarded.

Application: There is no end to the ways a local church can spend its limited resources: greater programs, bigger facilities, maintenance men, song leaders, social needs. But it is important for a church to recognize that the one thing the local church is commanded in the New Testament to spend its money generously on is the salary of the pastors.

Notes: _____

1 Tim. 5:19-25 6. Paul now touches on a subject that seems to remind him of Timothy's stomach troubles. Right in the middle of this section, he gives Timothy the health tip for his stomach (v. 23). Timothy had evidently maintained abstinence from wine for the sake of his testimony, but Paul told him to go ahead and use a little wine for medicinal purposes. Paul is not trying to teach Timothy about wine in this section. What is he addressing? Why might this topic give Timothy ulcers?

Answer: Paul is dealing with the topic of disciplining elders. Perhaps no responsibility gives the leaders of local churches more stomach trouble than does the responsibility of dealing with unfaithful leaders.

Application: One of the important things this passage assumes is the presence of a leader, in this case Timothy, to provide leadership for the task of disciplining leadership. The office of the pastor is most often plural in the New Testament local church, and this plurality provides accountability to the office that would not otherwise exist. Although ultimate accountability is to the church itself and never another leader, the local church needs proper leadership to Biblically exercise the authority it has. This responsibility assumes the presence of other leaders who can lead the local church to deal with the problems in a leader's life in a Biblical way.

Paul's instruction also makes this critical assumption. Absolute power corrupts absolutely, and God's leaders are not exempted from the truth of this axiom.

Clearly, most smaller churches have not been blessed with multiple pastors. In this context the pastors of sister churches, who can help in a time of leadership crisis, should be known by the congregation, A godly pastor should explain to God's flock where to turn should they ever have a problem with himself.

1 Tim. 5:19-25 7. Verse by verse, this passage gives critical principles in regard to leadership accountability. The chart below contains a reference for the principle, a scrambled key word that summarizes the principle, and a place for stating the principle. Each key word begins with the letter *P*. Read the verse, unscramble the word, and write out a principle found there designed to protect the local church from poor leadership.

| Verse | Scrambled Word | Key Word | Principle of Accountability |
|-------|----------------|------------|---|
| v. 19 | YUPLLITAR | PLURALITY | The accusation against an elder or pastor should come from more than one source. |
| v. 20 | CPLTYIIB | PUBLICITY | <i>Publicity</i> is defined by Webster as <i>the state of being public</i> . Sinful leaders should be rebuked publicly. |
| v. 21 | IIAPAYRTAL | PARTIALITY | No double standard or partiality ought to be practiced. Ties to truth are more important than ties to people. |
| v. 22 | NPVERNTIOE | PREVENTION | The best approach to leadership accountability is prevention. Let a man prove himself first. |
| v. 24 | CEPIETNA | PATIENCE | Our calling is not to fetter out every suspicion. God will make a man's sins open beforehand if He wills. |

Application: Dealing with leadership accountability is not an easy task. Protection means that only accusations substantiated by more than one, preferably three or more, should even be entertained at all by the other leaders in the church. The basic principle here is that the pastor

should be insulated against accusation in general. Preaching the truth produces enemies, and our approach to the discipline of a pastor ought to begin with this understanding.

Publicity or publicly refers to the nature of the rebuke. The point is not that we need to take out a full page ad in the local newspaper. The enemies of God will take care of that (2 Sam. 12:14). The point is that the rebuke needs to be as public as the sin and its consequences. Those who have exposure to the sin need to have exposure to the rebuke. This will produce a godly fear.

No partiality means that there should be no double standard for men in leadership. Ties to the truth should be more important than ties to people. How much a man gives in the offering or how popular a man is with the people should not influence the process of holding a sinning leader accountable for his sin.

Prevention is the best approach to leadership accountability. Men should be proven before invited to lead. They should lead because they have been called of God to do that, not because they have been coerced or even elected. No one should feel that they are doing the church a favor by fulfilling the call to leadership. Qualified men should be proven over time.

Patience refers to our general demeanor when it comes to leadership accountability. We should not be in a big hurry to bring someone down. Some sins, says the apostle Paul, are never open beforehand. He does not indicate that it is our responsibility to make them open either. This is God's place. When God makes a sin open, we then are responsible to deal with it. This dealing should always be balanced with an understanding of the good accomplished through the life of God's servant as well (v. 25).

Real Life?

Pastor Smith was approached by a concerned church member, Mrs. Jones, after the Sunday morning service. She felt that the church was not doing enough for the homeless people of the city. "The Episcopal church puts us to shame," Mrs. Jones announced one Sunday morning. "They have a soup kitchen, a shelter, and a consignment shop for the homeless. We don't seem to do any of that kind of thing around here. I wasn't going to share this with you, but I may as well because it is something you should know. I have been sending my weekly tithe to the soup kitchen over there where I believe it will do some real good. It seems all we ever do around here is preach and pray. That is all good and fine, but what about the people who have nothing to eat on the streets? We need to do something about this apathy around here, or I may need to find another church." How can 1 Timothy 5 help Pastor Smith respond to Mrs. Jones' concerns?

Answer: Mrs. Jones' approach reflects none of the reluctance we see in 1 Timothy 5 for charging the church. She understands none of the key principles that are to guide local churches in the financial support of needy people. If Mrs. Jones truly feels more strongly about empty stomachs than she does the cause of the gospel, she needs to be kindly rebuked on this point. The Episcopal church she refers to likely has done too much damage to the cause of the gospel to put any faithful pastor to shame with its soup kitchen.

“Godly Financial Leadership”

1 Timothy 6

Purpose:

Your students shall form a godly attitude about money with this lesson. This attitude will replace the materialism the world seeks to instill within them at every turn.

In a Nutshell:

Finances are an important part of your Christian testimony. They also relate to how we ought to behave in the household of God, so Paul devotes a chapter to this important topic. You will develop a godly attitude about finances as you study chapter 6.

To the Testimony!

A Godly Work Ethic

1 Tim. 6:1 1. The history of what we today call *employment* is actually rooted in the concepts of slavery and serfdom. No doubt, there have been times at work when your experiences with your job have taken you back to these roots. Slavery is a concept that Americans find repulsive, cause for revolution and rebellion. “All men are created equal,” and yet the inequality of the master and his slave will always be a part of the workplace. Downsizing and foreign competition can create hardship for even the modern employee. People can be difficult to work with and for. We have our share of negative experiences at work today. How does the Lord want us to respond? Why does He want us to respond this way?

Answer: Paul's phrase for what we would refer to as an *employee* is “servant under the yoke.” A yoke, of course, is a heavy wooden frame designed to keep two oxen together as they work. Service “under the yoke” is a hard life. Paul recognized that the worker's condition was a hard and oppressive one at times. Many first century Christians were slaves.

And yet, Paul's instruction is not that the slaves organize, revolt, rebel or even go out on strike. His instruction is to count the master “worthy of all honor.” The reason Paul gives for this disposition is that “the name of God and His doctrine be not blasphemed.”

Application: The Christian employee needs to recognize that the name of God and the doctrine of God are at stake every day he shows up for work. The key to defending and protecting the name of God and the doctrine of God is to give respectful honor to your boss. It should not take long for the office, shop, or plant to figure out that you are a Christian. The first time you bow your head before lunch, refuse to use profanity when the context calls for it, decline the offer to use alcohol, pull out your Bible during the break, or share your testimony with another employee, the word will be out to everyone that you are one of those “born again types.” A godly Christian worker cannot avoid this. The name of God will be at stake

every day he shows up for work.

But the defense of that testimony is really a rather simple matter as Paul states it. It does not require preaching to your boss or getting all your fellow employees to a Bible study. It requires only a respectful honor and hard work. Showing up on time, doing more than you are asked to do, and keeping a positive team-oriented attitude are examples of this disposition. This is not an easy task when year after year layoffs are announced, wages remain frozen, and demands are more than should be reasonably expected. But even in today's employment environment, respect for the employer is how the name of God and the doctrine of God powerfully impact others in the workplace.

Notes: _____

1 Tim. 6:2 Gal. 6:10 2. What is Paul trying to guard against in verse two? Why would Paul need to do this? How else might this principle apply in areas other than employer-employee relations?

Answer: Paul is trying to guard against taking advantage of Christian employers or masters. Paul has to do this because he knows that there is a rationale for taking advantage of other Christians when it comes to finances. It states that we should take care of our financial dealings with unbelievers before believers because our testimony is at stake with unbelievers, whereas believers will always understand.

In regard to the relationship between an employee and an employer, the employee may develop the false impression that the employer will understand if a work commitment is broken in favor for a commitment to an unbeliever, or even to the Lord. "I could not get to work on time today, boss, because the deacon's meeting ran late last night. I knew you would understand." Paul calls this attitude disrespectful and wrong. This faulty rationale is often used when paying bills, tithing, or fulfilling contractual commitments between two believers.

Application: Paul teaches that Christians should be treated better than unbelievers, not worse, when it comes to business relationships and financial commitments. When looking at a limited check book balance, a tithe envelope, a car repair bill from the town garage, and a Christian plumber's invoice, the Christian man ought to address the tithe envelope and the plumber's invoice first.

In addition, the Christian plumber should have done the work cheaper and more thoroughly than he would have had he not been working on the pipes of those who are "faithful and beloved, partakers of the benefit." The offering commitment to the financial responsibilities of the local church should not be the "plug" figure calculated after all other expenses and savings goals have been met. It should be the first priority of our family budget.

Notes: _____

1 Tim. 6:3-5 3. When Paul speaks of teaching "otherwise" in verse 3, he uses the word *hetero-didasko*, the same word he used in 1 Tim. 1:3 ("other doctrine"). Read 2 Thess. 3:6-15 to get a more thorough presentation of Paul's teaching regarding the work ethic. First, define Paul's work ethic from verse 10 of that passage. Then from 1 Tim. 6:3-5, how are men who teach "otherwise," when it comes to a Scriptural work ethic, described? How should we respond to this teaching?

Answer: A Scriptural work ethic is summarized by 1 Thess. 3:10, "if any would not work, neither should he eat." In our day, it is unthinkable that anyone would take the position that someone should not eat. For Paul, it was unthinkable that someone should not work. Those who teach otherwise are described as proud and ignorant. Gain is equated with godliness by these men. They do not recognize any higher good or more worthy cause than the cause of material gain. We ought to withdraw or separate from such teachers .

Application: The Bible's teaching on work is absolute truth. Eating should be the reward for working. This truth has little to do with whether you are a Republican, a Democrat, or something in-between. It is not simply a political point of view. Many government systems exist today that feed people who refuse to work. Public education's chief tenet is that the government should provide an education to all children free of charge. For families who do not pay local taxes, this is a form of eating without working. Even parents who do pay local taxes do not incur the full cost of their children's education. Other welfare systems are built entirely on the socialist economic philosophy that views gain as godliness, or the highest good.

Yet it is an act of pride and false teaching to propagate such social systems, not simply a liberal point of view. It is sin to participate in a system that allows you to eat without working. This is not to be confused with government-administered insurance programs such as social security and unemployment. Here, the eating is still connected to the working because the beneficiaries have contributed over time to the coverage these programs provide. This also has nothing to do with taking a lawful tax deduction. That is not a government subsidy, only the correct way to figure your lawful income tax. Those unable to work are certainly not in view here. The principle is that able-bodied Christians should have nothing to do with receiving welfare, subsidized housing, food stamps, or other government dole programs that allow the able-bodied recipients to eat without working.

A Godly Contentment

1 Tim. 6:6-10 4. Contentment is the settled conviction that having our needs supplied is enough (verse 8). Paul calls this disposition "great gain" because it keeps us from focusing on things that do not last (verse 7). What is the opposite of con-

tentment according to this passage? What is the spiritual impact of this opposite disposition on the life of a Christian man or woman?

Answer: The opposite of contentment is having a “will to be rich” and a “love of money.” Contentment is the sincere and settled belief that riches and more money cannot make life better. The opposite of contentment is the belief that they can. Contentment is critical for the financial health and, more importantly, the spiritual health of the Christian. A lack of contentment manifests itself in the priorities of the life. Paul says that the love of money is “coveted after.” It takes time and energy to love money and to desire to be rich. Many highly motivated people are people who are not very content. Working through church services though given the option not to, gambling, speculative trading, a lack of generosity, and willingness to compromise standards for political gain at the job can all be manifestations of the love of money and a desire to be rich. The spiritual impact of such practices is characterized by Paul as temptation, a snare, foolish and hurtful lusts, drowning in destruction and perdition, turning from the faith, and much sorrow. The spiritual danger here is real.

Application: The desire to be rich is a trap. There is a fine line between a Scriptural work ethic and the desire to be rich. That line is to be maintained by contentment, a willingness to have only what we need. We need to be especially careful with our young people here. The typical young person living at home does not have to work in order to survive. Their work is entirely optional. In addition, most jobs available to young people, such as restaurant work, child care, and retail work, involve work on Sunday or in the evening during scheduled services such as prayer meeting. A man or woman who has to feed a family may have no choice. But the young person who is allowed to deliberately choose making money they do not need to survive over attending church services may well be falling into the snare Paul warns of in this passage. The enemy could be destroying the tender spiritual potential of these young people with the love of money and the desire to be rich.

Notes: _____

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| 1 Tim. 6:11-14 | 5. Paul calls Timothy a “man of God” in verse 11. A man of God does not live according to the philosophy “gain is godliness.” He flees materialism, follows godly discipline, and fights the battles of faith having publicly committed his life to these causes. The Lord Jesus also made a public “confession” (verse 13). |
| John 18:33-38 | Read that confession in John 18:36. How should Christ's confession affect how important material gain is to us? |
| Matt. 6:33 | |

Answer: Christ lived for a kingdom that is not of this world. The position Christ took before Pilate made no sense to Pilate, because Pilate had lived his life for the materialism of this world. Materialism is Satan's primary tool for distracting the people of God away from living for the kingdom which is not of this world (Matt. 6:33). Remember that Satan offered Christ

the kingdoms of this world if He would worship Satan (Matt. 4:9).

Application: Fleeing materialism, following after a godly and disciplined lifestyle, and fighting the battle of faith are the spiritual byproducts of the commitment that has laid hold of eternal life, “the kingdom not of this world,” the appearing of the Lord Jesus. When we see that there is a kingdom that is not of this world, which is worth living for, the trap of material gain will lose its allure. Keeping the commandment without spot or rebuke means living for the kingdom to come, not the possessions of the kingdoms before us now.

Notes: _____

1 Tim. 6:13-16
Luke 12:13-21

6. We have seen how Christ's confession before Pilate ought to affect our view of materialism. Now after reading verses 13-16, how should the nature of God affect how important material gain is to us?

Answer: God is the source of all life (v. 13), the blessed and only Potentate or Enthroned Ruler, the King of kings, and Lord of lords, the only immortal One, the invisible One who dwells in light unapproachable, and the Worthy Recipient of eternal honor and power. Given this nature of God, the believer ought to recognize that living for material gain is failure to live for the Ruler of the universe, the source of all life, the Giver of all things. The man Christ cites in His parable in Luke 12 failed this way. Living for his barns and produce, he was not prepared to meet the One who had given him all and could take it back in a moment. He was a fool.

Application: Idolatry is at the root of materialism. To live for riches, money, and possessions is to fail to live for God. The nature of God is such that all mankind ought to live to please His smallest bidding. Unregenerate man cannot and will not do so. Believers can and should. May it never be said of us by the Giver of all life, “Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee. Then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided?”

Notes: _____

From the Honeycomb

What does the name *Potentate* say about our God?

The Greek word is *dunastas*, a word related to the Greek word for *power*. It is the word from which we derive the word *dynamite*.

Look up the usage of this word in Luke 1:52, and try to explain what this word says about the nature of God: "He hath put down the _____ from their seats, and exalted them of low degree."

How is God the blessed and only Potentate?

Answer: *Potentate* is a term that describes God on His throne (note the word *seats* in Luke 1:52). He is the Ultimate Authority and Sovereign Ruler over all things. This view of God ought to keep us from allowing materialism to rule our lives.

Notes: _____

A Godly Charge to the Rich

1 Tim. 6:17-19 7. The Bible never teaches that it is a sin to be rich, only that it is a sin to desire to be rich. It is possible to be rich and not be materialistic. What characteristics will be true in the life of a wealthy believer if that believer is not materialistic?

Answer: A wealthy believer who is living for the Lord and not materialism will be characterized with humility, faith, good works, and a generosity that demonstrates his anticipation of the kingdom yet to come.

Application: Anyone can say that they are not materialistic. A believer who has been blessed by the Lord must demonstrate in an active way a life that demonstrates he is not materialistic. There is a special responsibility the rich believer bears in this regard before the Lord. This is a special charge just for him. He must make sure he is humble. He is not too good for anything nor anyone. He leads a life of faith, not sight. He is a man of prayer who trusts the Lord, not his bank account, for his daily bread. He is actively involved in good works at the church. He is willing to roll up his sleeves and help get the Lord's work done. It is not enough for him to stand back and whip out his checkbook every once in a while. He gives himself, not just his money. Finally, he is amazingly generous. As the rich fool of Luke 12 stuffed his barns, so the godly rich wiseman will stuff the work of the Lord with the Lord's provision in his life, "laying up in store" for himself a sure reward in heaven.

Notes: _____

A Godly Investment

1 Tim. 6:20-21 8. Paul uses a banking term when he says, “that which is committed to thy trust,” in verse 20. Today, we would call it a *deposit*. We trust a bank with our deposit for safe-keeping, and Paul entrusted to Timothy the doctrine of God and the responsibility of the churches for safe-keeping. Real estate ventures and risky foreign investments have caused some banks to break the trust of their depositors in the past. What did Timothy have to guard against in order to keep the trust the Lord had deposited with him? What must pastors do today in order to keep the “deposit” of the Lord safe?

Answer: Timothy needed to avoid and expose false teaching in the first century. So must pastors today. The final instruction Paul gave to Timothy, the instruction designed to keep the deposit of God's work safe with Timothy, was the instruction to separate from false teachers. To do less is to violate the trust of God's work and calling.

Application: Believers today are influenced by the eclectic, ecumenical, tolerant spirit of the age. When a godly pastor takes action to avoid false teaching, exposing it as “profane and vain babbling,” he is often thought of as crude or off on a hobby horse. Local church congregations need to appreciate the fact that the separatist convictions of their leaders are critical to the safe-keeping of the work of God entrusted to those leaders. The norm today is the breaking of this trust. But so have been banks that fail. Neither are right before the Lord.

Notes: _____

Real Life?

Parker Patterson heard it again on the radio as he drove home from work that evening. It was the end of the month, the car payment had left him scraping bottom, the VISA bill was due again, the mortgage payment was just around the corner, and anticipating the evening ahead with his checkbook and calculator, Parker was intrigued by what he heard, “65 million dollars! You won't win if you won't play!”

The state lottery was setting a record that week, and the whole office, with the exception of Parker, had pooled together to buy 500 tickets. He enjoyed musing about what life would be like with a bank account like that. As things stood now, his bills would be covered because Parker was getting paid next Wednesday, but \$65,000,000 was another story. First would come the mortgage burning party (after an appropriate tithe, of course), then the Mercedes, next the vacation home on the coast, and finally the life of bliss on the golf course. His co-worker, John, told him that he had until tomorrow to kick in his 20 bucks, and that he was “nuts” if he did not give it a try.

Parker laughed as he thought of what would happen if the office pool won, and he was the only odd man out. The firm would shut down, and he would lose not only the winnings, but also his job! As he pulled up the driveway, he checked his pocket for a 20 dollar bill. What counsel would the apostle Paul have shared with Parker if the two sat down for dinner together that evening? How would that counsel be different from that of co-worker John?

Answer: Paul would review with Parker the importance of contentment. Desiring money as the source of ultimate happiness is a spiritually destructive thing to do. Parker is not “nuts” for refusing to put in his \$20. He is being a good steward of the money the Lord provided to him. Making a decision based on a desire to be rich is never making the decision of a good steward. John is obviously a man who does not understand much about the great gain of godliness accompanied by contentment. Parker should know better than John, in spite of the financial pressure he faces.

Notes: _____

Lesson 8
“Leading Difficult People”
Titus 1

Purpose:

Not all people are easily led. Your students will commit themselves to support leaders even when they need to deal with difficult people. Your students shall constitute a stabilizing force in difficult times having developed the convictions studied here.

In a Nutshell:

Not all people are easily led. This lesson will challenge you to commit yourself to support leaders even when they need to deal with difficult people. Local churches need the stabilizing strength of people whose commitment to truth is stronger than their feelings for people.

To the Testimony!

The Authority Required for Dealing with Difficult People

| | |
|--------------------------------|--|
| Titus 1:1 Matt. 23:11 | 1. Paul does not spend as much time on himself in the introduction of Titus as he did in the first chapter of 1 Timothy. But he does use his salutation to state a few things about himself. What two labels does Paul use for himself in verse 1? Think about what the labels mean. How are they different? |
|--------------------------------|--|

Answer: The two labels are *servant of God* and *apostle of Jesus Christ*. The term *servant* actually refers to the lowest form of slave in the first century world. This term starkly contrasts the lofty term *apostle*, a rank which some wrongly felt was too high for Paul (2 Corinthians 11). The terms together emphasize the combination of humility and authority, which is required in the godly leader .

Application: God's great leaders begin with the realization that they are the lowliest of slaves. Paul had plenty of credentials. He was well educated, and more importantly called of God as an apostle. But he never lost sight of the fact that he was the lowly slave of the Lord. This perspective can be especially important when dealing with difficult people. The temptation for the leader of God will be that certain people are not worth his time and energy. Paul's disposition was that his time and energy had the value of the time and energy of a bond-slave.

Notes: _____

Titus 1:1-4 2. Paul speaks of God's eternal plan for the salvation of sinners when he describes his ministry. His servitude and apostleship were utilized for the faith of God's elect. What did Paul's leadership have to do with the promise of eternal life made by God "before the world began" (vv. 2-3)? What does this say about the way people should have responded to Paul's leadership?

Answer: Paul understood that his ministry was an important part of the eternal plan of God for the salvation of man. Before the world began, the promise of eternal life existed, and Paul had a role to play in that promise. His role was to “manifest [God's] word through preaching.” The result should have been a heightened appreciation and respect from God’s people in response to Paul’s preaching. Viewing the ministry of God's leader in the context of God's eternal plan is important to the way we appreciate and respect our leaders today.

Application: Local church leaders are not simply the men the church hired a few years ago to lead the work. They are men whom God has appointed as part of the salvation plan He crafted before the world began. When the “due time” of verse 3 in that plan comes, God gives a leader to a people for the manifestation of His Word through preaching. This is simply the continuation of God's fulfilling His eternal promise of eternal life. He is a God who cannot lie, and the appointment of preachers is how he keeps His promise to provide the proclamation of His saving Word.

Notes: _____

From the Honeycomb

v. 3, *preaching (kerugma)*
"proclamation or announcement by herald"

This is a word that refers especially to giving the gospel to the lost. Here is a list of verses where we find this word used elsewhere in the New Testament. After each verse, write a note about what that verse teaches us about preaching to the lost world around us.

Matt. 12:41:

1 Cor. 1:21:

1 Cor. 2:4:

1 Cor. 15:14:

2 Tim. 4:17:

Answer: Preaching to the lost needs to be direct and confrontational at times (Matt. 12:41), filled with the power of God rather than the wisdom of man (1 Cor. 1:21, 2:4), founded on the message of the resurrection (1 Cor. 15:14), and faithful in times of persecution and hardship (2 Tim. 4:17).

Notes: _____

The Character Required for Dealing with Difficult People

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|---|---|
| Titus 1:5-8 2 Sam. 12:13-14 Ps. 15:4 | 3. The purpose of Titus's ministry in Crete was to ordain elders (bishops/ overseers/ pastors, v. 7) in every city. This would set in order what was lacking in the ministry of these local churches. God uses godly leaders to give a godly order to His work. These leaders should have a godly character, and this character is described by Paul with another list of qualifications in verses 6-8. Which qualification or characteristic is repeated here? Why would Paul emphasize this qualification when dealing with difficult people? |
|---|---|

Answer: Paul repeats *blameless* in this list (vv. 6, 7). This seems to be the theme characteristic of the list. All other qualifications have their purpose in achieving a blameless life. This is especially important when dealing with difficult people, because it is the enemies of God according to 2 Sam. 12:13-14 who will blaspheme God's name if God's leader fails to maintain a blameless life the way David failed. Difficult people will be looking for the crack in the armor, and a godly character that demonstrates blamelessness is critical when dealing with them.

Application: Ps. 15:4 makes the point that a righteous man will honor those that fear the Lord and disrespect those that are vile. The opposite is true for the difficult parishioner. He finds it easy to disrespect those who fear the Lord and to honor those who are vile. He will criticize the pastor for failing to stop by, but praise the sports hero with an ungodly lifestyle for getting on base. In this environment the man of God must be sure to give no legitimate handle to his enemies with which they can pull down his ministry, and with it the work of God.

Notes: _____

The Method Required for Dealing with Difficult People

Titus
1:9-11

4. A popular topic among apostate Baptists has been is “intellectual freedom.” Some conservatives in denominations like the Southern Baptist Convention continue to support the ministries of false teachers at their seminaries because they claim that Baptists have always held to “intellectual freedom.” Traditional distinctives like the separation between church and state and soul liberty have been misconstrued to mean that each individual has a right, an “intellectual freedom,” to believe and teach what he wants. (Jump ahead to *Real Life?* for an illustration of this view in action.) What do verses 9-11 teach about the pseudo-Baptist idea called “intellectual freedom?”

Answer: Paul teaches that there are religious teachers “whose mouths must be stopped.” There are certain religious teachers we should not give any time to, let alone equal time. We should not give false teachers a chance to speak in our church, not even in the name of “intellectual freedom.” The concept called “intellectual freedom” is entirely unscriptural. The intellect of the Christian teacher is not free. It is to be bound to the Word of God.

Application: The point of the separation of church and state is not that every belief ought to be given equal respect by the people of God, but rather that the federal, local, and state governments ought to be restrained from establishing religion or prohibiting the free exercise of it. This conviction recognizes that human government is far more likely to establish false religion than true religion. Believers have always been responsible before the Word of God for doing everything in their lawful power to prohibit the free exercise of false religion in their lives and ministries through the teaching of the Word and separation. Separation and teaching are our Scriptural tools for the work of "prohibiting the free exercise" of false religion. Only in Old Testament Israel did the Lord ever intend civil government to be such a tool.

In addition, the doctrine of soul liberty includes the individual’s accountability before God. The point is not that each man has the right to define for himself truth and error, but rather that each man is responsible as an individual to follow the truth and not the error. Although none can decide for him, he must decide correctly for himself. Liberty in this context never means freedom to follow error, but rather a personal, individual responsibility to follow the truth. Following error is always a violation of God's law, and the consequence should be separation from God's people. False teachers should be silenced by godly leaders in the church.

Notes: _____

From the Honeycomb

What is a *gainsayer*? (Titus 1:9; *antilego*)

Look up the other usage of this word, and define the term *gainsayer*:

Acts 13:45, "But when the Jews saw the multitudes, they were filled with envy, and _____ those things which were spoken by Paul, contradicting and blaspheming."

Acts 28:19, "But when the Jews _____ it, I was constrained to appeal unto Caesar."

Acts 28:22, "But we desire to hear of thee what thou thinkest; for as concerning this sect, we know that every where it is _____."

Titus 2:9, "Exhort servants to be obedient unto their own masters, and to please them well in all things; not _____."

Answer: A *gainsayer* is someone who speaks against God's truth. A godly leader must be able to refute those who oppose the Word of God with their philosophy and teaching. Leaders who are known for compromise and cooperation with gainsayers are unfaithful to their responsibility as a godly leader.

| | |
|------------|---|
| Titus 1:12 | 5. Paul moves on from the false teachers, with whom godly leaders must deal, to another set of difficult people, the Cretans themselves. Here he is not focusing on false teachers but on those who might "give heed" to this false teaching. |
| Psalm 26 | How does Paul describe Cretan society in the first century? Would this be a fair characterization of American society today? Why or why not? |

Answer: The Cretan society is characterized as full of liars, animalistic, and full of lazy gluttons ("slow bellies"). American society has seen a tremendous turn toward these characteristics over the last few generations. It is the official position of the system that educates our children in this country that human life is not to be distinguished from animal life. The result is too many graduates behaving like animals. Animals do not marry, and marriage has suffered great setbacks in recent generations. Animals do not respect life. They kill at will to meet their needs. The legal sanctioning of abortion and open discussion of the benefits of euthanasia reject a uniquely human respect for uniquely human life. Liars abound in American society. Image is everything. The goal is to win, not to tell the truth. It matters not what is being said, only that the presentation not be boring. Information flows in the form of sound bytes through mass media to reflect a point of view or hidden agenda rather than the truth. In addition, laziness is coupled with gluttony as never before in this country. Fewer and fewer consumers are also producers. Too many are looking for a free ride, and the federal government has become the place to find it. The national debt is testimony to the lazy-glutton spirit that is prevalent in our age. As a country, we have not worked for all that we have spent. Recreation and leisure are billion dollar industries.

Application: Christians should not be liars, animalistic, or lazy gluttons. Our honesty, integrity, piety, and industry ought to show the world around us that we are different. The tempta-

tion for the child of God living in the world is to adopt the characteristics of the culture around him, but God expects him to be different. It is tragic when secular writers can cite deceit, immorality, and laziness among God's people.

Note that Paul quotes the writings of one of the Cretan prophets or religious teachers. He then evaluates the quotation as true (v. 12). This does not mean, however, that Paul endorsed other religions as an authoritative source of truth. False religions have teachings that may be true, but this does not make them a legitimate authority or source of truth. Demons possess the truth of monotheism (James 2:19), but this does not mean that we ought to obtain our doctrine of monotheism from demons. We might note that they are correct on this particular point, but we do not quote them as our authority. Paul uses the Cretan prophet, not to find the truth about Cretans, but to emphasize the truth of what God says about the Cretans with the phraseology and style he found in those writings. Paul was a well-read person, and we also ought to read widely with an ability to evaluate what we read. Possessing true sayings, however, is not the same as possessing authority from God as a source of truth.

Notes: _____

Titus 6. How must godly leaders deal with people like the people of Crete?
1:13-14
2 Chron.
17:7
Jer.
1:10

Answer: A godly leader's ministry requires the courage to “rebuke them sharply.” In the case of Cretans, the problem is not low self-esteem, difficult trial, or stressful situations. The problem is overt sin. We do not need to work hard at appreciating, understanding, or relieving such people. We need to be faithful at sharp rebuke.

Application: One of the distinguishing features of the teaching ministry of a faithful leader is that leader's willingness to be negative. You cannot “rebuke sharply” someone who is a liar, evil beast, or lazy glutton without saying something negative, something that those people do not want to hear. Pulpit ministries that are founded on the premise that a positive tone is important to a successful ministry cannot faithfully teach the way Paul indicates here. In Crete, the tone of faithful pulpits was negative far more often than it was positive. The ministries of Jeremiah and Micaiah were also faithful to this principle. These leaders had a responsibility called, “rebuke sharply.” In the godless land of 21st century America, God expects the same from His pulpits today.

Notes: _____

Titus 7. In verse 15 Paul refers to the Jewish teaching that some foods were unclean and some were clean. This is the same issue we saw in 1 Tim. 4:3-5. Here he describes those who follow that teaching as defiled and unbelieving. He describes their mind, conscience, words (profession), and works. With regard to which of these four aspects of behavior do these people appear to be righteous and faithful? How can we recognize someone who is defiled and unbelieving? What should be our criteria for evaluating people the way Paul did?

Answer: Words are cheap. This aspect of behavior can easily make a defiled unbeliever look like a righteous believer. In spite of the sin in their lives, the people of Crete could still “profess that they know God.” Our criteria for evaluating the profession of people who claim to be believers are their works. Those who are disobedient to God's Word and worthless to God's work should be viewed as defiled and unbelieving, no matter how good their profession sounds.

Application: God not only wants the words to be right, He wants the mind, conscience, and works to be right too. Christians ought to be discerning. We ought to expect a commitment that runs deeper than mere profession when it comes to distinguishing believers from unbelievers. For this reason, Baptists hold believer’s baptism to be an important evidence of true saving faith and consequently a prerequisite for church membership.

Notes: _____

Real Life?

Rick worked with Joe, a member of a Southern Baptist church in town. Joe had joined the company about a year ago, and Rick was happy to have another Christian he could work with. For five years he had worked the shipping/receiving docks of Trucking Inc. without much sympathy from his co-workers. They knew he was a Christian and did not want much to do with him. Rick will never forget how happy he was when Joe actually tried to witness to him in the back of a trailer they were off-loading together.

One Monday morning Joe looked a little down. When Rick asked if everything were OK, Joe

assured him it was. Joe was troubled, though, by something his pastor told him yesterday. Joe had heard that one of the Christian colleges his church supported had hired a man who believed in evolution rather than creation. Joe's daughter, Barbara, attended the school, and Joe's concern was more than academic. He thought his pastor would be able to help, but to Joe's dismay, the pastor said he did not see a problem with the school. He said that Baptists believe in soul liberty and intellectual freedom. He assured Joe that evolution was wrong, but then told Joe that, as Baptists, we recognize the individual right of someone to believe in evolution. According to Joe's pastor, Baptists have always held this view.

Rick was also a Baptist. He attended Grace Baptist Church, an independent church where they had just finished this lesson in Sunday School. He understood Joe's concern for his daughter and opened his Bible to Titus 1. What do you think Rick shared with his friend Joe? (See question 4)

Answer: See question 4.

Lesson 9
“The Fruits of Godly Leadership”
Titus 2-3

Purpose:

The results of good leadership are very practical in nature, but they are not altogether obvious to sinful man. Your students shall apply the fruits of godly leadership to the way they live their lives while rejecting the world's artificial and shallow standard for a successful local church ministry.

In a Nutshell:

The results of good leadership are very practical in nature, but they are not altogether obvious to sinful man. You need to apply the fruits of godly leadership to the way you live. You will also want to reject the world's artificial and shallow standard for a successful local church ministry after this study.

To the Testimony!

The results of a fruitful leadership ministry.

Titus 2:1 1. When Paul encouraged his young pastor, Titus, to have a fruitful ministry, he did not talk much about how big he hoped his crowd would be or the numbers he hoped Titus tallied on his bus route. Big crowds and full buses are great, but they are not the standard by which God's people are to judge the fruit of a man's ministry. Paul used a different standard. What is the standard for a fruitful ministry? What should we use to measure the level of fruitfulness when it comes to godly leadership?

Answer: Sound doctrine or the healthy teaching of the Word of God is the standard by which Paul measured the ministry of a godly leader. As he begins to tell Titus what the fruits of his ministry ought to be in chapters 2 and 3, he states that all his ministry to God's people must become or measure up to sound doctrine. This reference point is mentioned by Paul repeatedly as he describes the fruits of a godly leadership ministry. In verse 5 he makes the point that not blaspheming the Word of God is critical, and in verse 10 the goal is to adorn the doctrine of God.

Application: God never measures a man's leadership ministry in terms of the number of his followers, but rather in terms of the character of his followers. The standard which measures this character is the Word of God. This scriptural principle of godly leadership is easily missed in today's humanistic world. Paul tells Titus to lead people in such a way that the character of their lives “becomes sound doctrine.” This is the goal and the standard of success. The most the Lord Jesus ever said about numbers of followers was that in the presence of two or three, “there am I in the midst of them” (Matt. 18:20). It is difficult for carnal believers to think in these terms. The world believes that the great leader wins the election, gains

the influential position, raises the capital, and excites the crowds. There is too much of this worldly philosophy in the church of Christ today. We must guard our hearts against this false definition of success.

Notes: _____

Titus 2:2-8 2. Godly leaders produce followers with godly character. *Character* can be one of those terms that we have trouble defining, even though we know what it means. Paul defines *character* for us in this passage in a specific way. He categorizes Titus' followers into four groups, and then he gives a specific list of character traits, which applies to that group. The groups are (1) older men (v. 2), (2) older women (v. 3), (3) younger women (v. 4), and (4) younger men, the group to which Titus belonged (vv. 6-8). List the character traits for each group, and then state in summary what Paul seems to be emphasizing with each group.

| Group: | Character Trait: | Paul's Emphasis for this Group: |
|---------------|--|---|
| Older Men | sober, grave, temperate, sound in faith, in charity, in patience | Paul's emphasis for this group is spiritual maturity. David prayed, "Remember not the sins of my youth" (Psalm 25:7). This group no longer has this excuse. They are no longer beset with the sins of their youth. They personify spiritual maturity for the local church. The body may grow old and sick, but the spirit is to continue on sound or healthy in faith, love, and endurance. These men do not retire from this role in the local church. |
| Older Women | holy behavior, not false accusers or gossips, not addicted to wine, teachers of young women | Paul's emphasis for this group is an exemplary discipline or self-control. These are to be women who positively, not negatively, impact the spiritual development of others. They do this with exemplary holy behavior, refraining from the sharp tongue of gossip which flows so naturally, and teaching younger women to care for their families. Their commitment to self-control means that some widows among them need not remarry (1 Tim. 5:13). |
| Younger Women | sober, love their husbands, love their children, discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands | Paul's emphasis for this group is their family responsibility. He assumes that the younger women are married. God made Eve to be the helper of Adam, and as a rule, younger women are called by God to care for husbands and children. They should desire this work rather than a personal career or an independent life-style. This work involves love for husband, obedience to husband, love for children, and the keeping of the home. |
| Younger Men | sober-minded, pattern of good works, uncorrupted doctrine, gravity or maturity, sound speech | Paul's emphasis for this group is spiritual leadership. He sees Titus as the pattern or example for young men in the local church. He was someone others should be able to follow. The various ministries of the local church ought to be led by godly young men in the prime of their strength and effectiveness. Paul looks to them to confront the opposition to God's work. |

Application: Although there is much overlap in the character traits of the four groups Paul mentions, he does have a purpose in mentioning each of the groups separately. It is not stereo-typing to say that each group has its specific role. By addressing each role separately, Paul seems to be combating a natural sinful tendency each group has away from its role.

Paul emphasizes a commitment to family in the lives of young women. In the world's view, women who are content as “keepers at home” are behind the times. The woman of the 21st century simply cannot be satisfied with such a role. Yet in the Lord's view, women who are content as “keepers at home” are a fruit of godly pastoral leadership.

Younger men seem to have a tendency away from local-church leadership. Often in local churches, we see motivated women and apathetic men. Retirement and idleness can be the dangerous tendency for fatiguing older men and women. Saints whose families are grown and gone should not become disconnected from the church family, nor should they retire from the family of God. God expects them to set the example of spiritual maturity and to get involved in the lives of those younger than themselves in a caring spiritual way.

The fruits of godly leadership involve the development of these character traits in these groups of Christians committed to these important roles. Paul does not give Titus attendance goals for each group; he describes the character each should develop. But note that the passage assumes that the groups need one another. Churches suffer when young men and women go off to college never to return, and when older men and women become snowbirds looking for warmer weather. These are not evils, but they are expensive in terms of the strength of any local church, which may find itself missing a Pauline category of necessary gifted talent.

Notes: _____

| | |
|-----------------|--|
| Titus 2:9-10 | 3. <i>Fidelity</i> is a term that banks like to use to describe themselves. They want their depositors to know that they can be trusted. Fidelity is a trait that godly leadership ought to produce in the “servants” or employees found in their congregations. It should be known that Christian employees can be trusted. The result is the adornment of the doctrine of God. How does a Christian employee demonstrate fidelity to his employer? |
|-----------------|--|

Answer: Fidelity is practical in the workplace. From a positive perspective, fidelity at work requires first obedience when told to do something, and then doing more than you are told so as to please your boss in all things. Negatively, the Christian employee does not steal from his employer (purloining), and he never demonstrates an argumentative spirit.

Application: Above all else, Paul desires that Christian employees maintain a conscientious understanding of how their performance on the job impacts the reputation of the doctrine of

God (see 1 Tim. 6:1, Lesson 7). It is more common to think only of how performance will impact a review or a paycheck. Most of what Paul says in this verse, however, can be found on a typical employer’s annual review sheet. Most employers rate an employee’s performance in regard to (1) how well he meets the requirements of his job description (obedience), (2) how far he exceeds those requirements (“please them well in all things”), (3) how well he works with others (“not answering again”), and (4) whether or not he is giving them their money's worth (not stealing, tardiness problems, frequency of sick days, productivity levels, etc.).

Notes: _____

Titus 3:1-2 4. We need to jump ahead to chapter three for one last result of fruitful godly leadership, responsible citizenship. Scripture never argues for political revolution as a means of accomplishing the will of God, and yet there have been times in which godly people disobeyed their government with God's blessing. Each of the passages listed below documents an example of God's blessing on civil disobedience. Read the passage. Describe the justification for the act of disobeying civil authority. Then, below the chart, state the justification for Christian civil disobedience. When is it right for a Christian to disobey the government?

| Passage: | Justification For Disobedience: |
|----------------|---|
| Exodus 1:15-22 | Killing the baby boys of Israel would have been committing murder, a sin which God forbids. |
| Joshua 2:1-7 | Producing the spies would have been opposing God’s revealed will that they be hidden and protected. |
| Esther 4:13-17 | God’s providence had made clear that the purpose behind Esther’s royalty was the defeat of Haman’s plan, which required violation of the law. |
| Daniel 3:8-12 | Worshipping images is clearly forbidden in Scripture. |
| Daniel 6:6-16 | Daniel did not recognize the authority of a law that violated the law of God--that men not pray. |
| Acts 4:13-20 | God had commanded Peter and John to preach. Men commanded their silence. They obeyed God rather than men. |

Answer: Justification for civil disobedience in Scripture always involves a choice between doing the will of God and doing the will of the government. Most often, it is possible to do both, because it is God’s will that we obey government (Rom. 13:1-7). When it is not, the will of God ought to prevail, and the will of the government ought to be disobeyed.

Application: God's people are a law-abiding people. They disobey the law of government only when it conflicts with the law of God. Because government derives its right of authority from God, it loses that right when it conflicts with the authority of God. Decisions to disobey government in Scripture were made by men and women who were asked by their government to disobey God's will. As they did so, they were careful to maintain the disposition of gentleness that Paul advocates in Titus 3:2. This disposition is a far cry from disobedience for the purpose of political activism or legislative change, even when that activism involves deep moral issues. No one in Scripture disobeyed government for the purpose of changing government. They disobeyed government for the purpose of obeying God's Word. Changing government is a noble goal, but it is no justification for civil disobedience.

The foundation for a fruitful leadership ministry.

Titus 2:11-12
Rom. 5:20-21

5. God's grace is the cornerstone of the foundation of a fruitful leadership ministry. Simply put, *grace* means *undeserved favor or kindness*. Some modern-day Christians have taken the convenient position that grace involves no requirements because grace is undeserved. They charge believers who have high standards or rules of conduct with legalism. In their view, Christians who emphasize personal separation from worldliness in regard to habits, dress code, entertainment alternatives, and church worship are Christians who live under the law, and not under grace. What does this passage teach us about God's grace, which conflicts with this modern view of grace? How should these characteristics of God's grace be reflected in a godly leadership ministry?

Answer: The emphasis of verse 12 conflicts with the modern view of grace described above. Grace does not preclude standards; it teaches and requires them. Grace is that mighty work of God, which battles and conquers sin (Rom. 5:20-21). It does not excuse, permit, or tolerate sin. From a negative perspective, Paul tells Titus that grace teaches Christians to maintain standards that keep them separate from "ungodliness and worldly lusts" (v. 12). On the positive side, these standards demonstrate a serious commitment to godliness "in this present world." Conformity to our modern world's worldliness is clearly something true grace forbids.

Application: Paul's primary application is to Titus' leadership ministry. Titus should have high standards of holiness for the people of God. Teaching abstinence from tobacco and alcohol, modest and appropriate standards of appearance, separation from places of worldly entertainment, and worship standards that recognize the Lord as "high and lifted up" (Isa. 6:1) ought to be regular emphases of the teacher entrusted with the doctrine of grace.

Notes: _____

From the Honeycomb

Two things/persons? Or two names of one thing/person? Titus 2:13

Take a look at the two sentences below:

1) "Let me introduce to you the pastor and the father of Jonathan."

2) "Let me introduce to you the pastor and father of Jonathan."

Did you notice the difference? The difference in content is that the first sentence adds the word *the* before the word *father*. The difference in meaning is that in the first sentence I most likely am introducing to you two different people. In the second sentence, I am introducing to you one person who is both the pastor and father of Jonathan. That little word *the* makes a big difference.

We have the same kind of difference in Greek, only the Greek language is a bit more strict about it. The rule, somewhat simplified, is that if one definite article (*the*) is used, only one thing with two names is being referred to. If two definite articles are used, two things are being referred to. Take a look at two of the phrases we find in Titus 2:13 (my translation):

1) "the blessed hope and glorious appearing"

2) "of the great God and Savior of us, Jesus Christ."

Paul is talking about one coming with two names in the first phrase, not two comings. And Paul is talking about the One who is coming in the second phrase, not Two. Both sentences have only one definite article. The hope that encouraged Paul was that he would one day see Jesus Christ appear, who is his Savior and his great God!

Titus 2:13-15 6. The Christian's hope also contributes to fruitful results of godly leaders. As discussed in the "From The Honeycomb" box, verse 13 is a profound affirmation of the deity of the Lord Jesus. As you read verse 14, what parallels do you find between the Christian's hope and God's grace from question 5? How do they compare in their impact on the way we choose to live?

Answer: The fulfillment of the believer's hope is the coming of Christ for His church, the event we call the rapture. Paul does not call it *rapture* here, but he treats it as the physical consummation of spiritual redemption. The parallels with the grace of God are that the Christian hope, the imminent return of Christ, will produce the same high standard of holiness in God's people as is taught by the grace of God (vv. 12 and 14).

Application: There is again a negative and a positive aspect to the separated life taught by the Christian hope, just as there was to the separated life taught by the grace of God. Negatively, we are redeemed "from all iniquity." Positively, we are purified as a special possession of God, enthusiastically engaged in accomplishing His will.

Notes: _____

Real Life?

Rick Anderson, the senior deacon at Bethel Baptist Church, came home from prayer meeting somewhat discouraged. Tops on the list of prayer requests again this week was that list of church bills that needed to be paid. Worn out, he sat down and happened to turn on a special TV news show on one of the national networks featuring a documentary on something called, "The Vineyard Movement." Rick was intrigued. The reason for the documentary and national media attention was the phenomenal growth rate this "conservative Christian denomination" (as the news man put it) was experiencing.

As the show progressed, it became obvious that the movement did not represent true Bible conservatism as the news media claimed. From what Rick could discern, the movement had a strong bent toward the charismatic movement and away from the Bible. Pastor Jones had just finished a good series on the error of the charismatic movement. But the businessman in Rick forced him to pay special attention to the techniques advocated by the movement to build church numbers. Bethel had been behind on bills for a while, and Rick wished that their congregation had more members to help carry the load. The movement conducted regular surveys among its members and community so as to tailor more closely their ministry to the desires of those they wanted to have attend. The result had been the introduction of a well-attended and popular drama night. Coats and ties were replaced with shorts and tank tops, and the morning message was cut to only 10 minutes of the morning service time. A jazz band was set up where most would expect to find the organ, and a hot-dog and hamburger ice-cream bar lined the lobby, complete with Sunday afternoon big screen football.

Rick recognized a lot of parallels in the documentary with a seminar he attended at work on "Customer Value." He was in sales, and the seminar dealt with how to know what your customers want and how to deliver it to them. It emphasized that this methodology was essential to the survival of any business in the fast-paced world of the 21st century. He began to think about what he was seeing. "Does the Bible really teach that we have to meet multiple times on Sunday? Do we really need an hour long message? What about that coat and tie thing? I must confess that even I would rather not wear one. I wonder what Pastor Jones might think of this?" Rick taped the show for his pastor.

Pastor Jones was preparing this lesson on the fruits of godly leadership for Sunday School. He planned on using parts of Rick's tape as an illustration. Do you think he was planning on using it as a positive or negative example? Why?

Answer: The tape displays a negative example of a worldly view of ministry results. The results of a godly ministry center on the character of those in the pew, not the number of them. The modifications to traditional church designed to increase numbers by pleasing attenders will not produce lives that become sound doctrine.

Notes: _____

“The Conscience of Godly Leaders”**2 Timothy 1****Purpose:**

Your students will see the importance of a clear conscience to the local church ministry. They shall see the threat that fear and intimidation pose to the maintenance of a clear conscience, and they shall resolve to support their godly leaders so as to encourage and strengthen them.

In a Nutshell:

Godly leaders need to serve God with a clear conscience. They ought to do what they know is right. Paul encourages Timothy to serve God that way in this chapter, and he cites intimidation and fear as the greatest threat to the conscience of a godly leader.

To the Testimony!***The Constants of a Godly Conscience.***

2 Tim. 4:6-7 Phil. 1:23-25

1. The book of 2 Timothy has a commonality with Paul's earlier letter to the Philippian church in that both were written by Paul while undergoing imprisonment (2 Tim. 1:16, Phil. 1:13). Philippians (along with Colossians, Ephesians, and Philemon) is one of the letters of Paul called “The Prison Epistles.” A few years later, Paul was again imprisoned prompting the writing of 2 Timothy. As you read the passages noted, what difference between the imprisonments becomes immediately apparent? What does this difference teach us about God's plan for godly leaders?

Answer: Paul's circumstances in Philippians both parallel and contrast with his circumstances in 2 Timothy. They were both written from prison, although from different kinds of imprisonments. The Philippian imprisonment is described for us in Acts 28:30-31 as two full years of free ministry and opportunity. His Philippian imprisonment caused the furtherance of the gospel (Phil. 1:12), enjoyed the companionship of many believers--even some from Caesar's household (Phil. 4:21-22), and maintained an unshakable confidence in the hope of renewed freedom and reunion with loved ones (Phil. 1:23-25). The year was probably A. D. 63.

The following year, Nero blamed the Christians for the burning of Rome. Times changed, and the joyous anticipation of release in the Philippian epistle gives way to the solemn certainty of death, when Paul is again arrested, imprisoned, and writing this final letter to Timothy. There is no talk of the furtherance of the gospel in 2 Timothy, only the coming of difficult days (2 Tim. 3:1). Even Paul's closest comrades deserted him with few exception, and the noblemen of Caesar's household were nowhere to be found (2 Tim. 4:16). Anticipation of release is replaced with resignation to certain death (2 Tim. 4:6-7).

Application: God's plan for godly leaders at times involves the joy and victory of the Philipian imprisonment, and at times the sullen endurance of costly setbacks as described in 2 Timothy. It is the view of carnal modern church movements that truly godly leaders are also always joyous and victorious leaders, and that this joy and victory can only be realized in positive circumstantial outcomes. 2 Timothy teaches us that godly leaders are willing to keep the faith when facing certain negative outcomes, when victory means overcoming defeat by enduring it rather than avoiding it, when joy means simply the deep faith of a man of sorrows. God's people should expect God's leaders to have down times as well as up times, times of the hope of release and times of certain death.

Notes: _____

2 Tim. 1:1-2 2. Paul's circumstances had taken a terrible turn for the worse. Nero's hatred of Christians had flared up with the burning of Rome, and the winds of change, which accompanied that historical event, brought tragedy to the life and ministry of the apostle Paul. Verses 1 and 2 tell us about some things that never changed for Paul. What are the constants he mentions, which provided a source of strength in his trouble?

Answer: Paul refers to four constants in his brave opening to this great letter, which seem to strengthen him as he writes: (1) the call of God in his life, "an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God", (2) the promise of eternal life even in the face of death, (3) the loyal encouragement of a friend he called his son, and (4) the ever-present source of grace, mercy, and peace--the care of the triune God.

Application: The opening of this last letter of Paul seems to summarize all that was strengthening him in his greatest hour of distress. He was not an insurrectionist who had plotted the destruction of Rome; he was an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God. God's leaders will be defamed with many despicable accusations by God's enemies, but the call of God, which made them God's leaders, must remain a strengthening constant. God's call does not change with the opinion of man. Paul emphasizes his calling throughout this chapter (vv. 3, 9, 11).

The promise of life was not simply academic theology to Paul in 2 Timothy 1. This is not a casual reference to a doctrine he had memorized. Paul knew he was going to die at the cruel hand of Nero, but he knew just as well the promise of life in Christ. Paul emphasizes the power of God over death throughout the chapter (vv. 10, 12).

Timothy was Paul's special friend, for when he faced certain death, Paul's impulse was to write Timothy. There were, no doubt, many reasons for this, but one surely was that Timothy could be counted on as a faithful friend. This faithfulness was a source of strength to Paul in his lowest hour. Paul refers to this friendship throughout the chapter (vv. 3-6).

Finally, all is well where we have access to the grace, mercy, and peace of the Lord. Paul's personal relationship with the triune God was a strengthening constant in his hour of need, which gave him grace, mercy, and peace for each new day, tragic though those days were. Not only were the Father and Son sources of this strength, but the Holy Spirit gave power, love, and a sound mind (vv. 7, 14).

Notes: _____

The Characteristics of a Godly Conscience.

2 Tim. 3. Paul refers to his own "pure conscience" and to Timothy's "unfeigned faith" in this passage. These men served the Lord from the heart. There was nothing ulterior or insincere about them. But Paul makes clear that neither his pure conscience nor Timothy's unfeigned faith was without precedent. What precedent does Paul cite for a pure conscience and an unfeigned faith? What does this teach us about the importance of a godly heritage to leading with a pure conscience?

Answer: Paul cites his forefathers, the prophets of old, and Timothy's mother and grandmother as the precedents for the pure conscience and unfeigned faith he and Timothy had served the Lord with over the years. Godly leaders respect their godly heritage. They do not seek to distance themselves from it. They identify very closely with those who have gone before, and they seek to be like them.

Application: It is not the new and exciting that God uses; it is the tried and true. Certainly, if any generation had right to lay claim to the title, "new and improved," when it comes to the work of God it is the generation of Paul and Timothy, the first century church. It was an epoch time in the work of God. Yet Paul remembers the faith of those who went before.

Each generation carries the torch of a pure conscience and an unfeigned faith passed to it by the previous generation. Those who seek to distance themselves from the faithful ones who have finished their course are those who choose to distance themselves from a pure conscience and a faith unfeigned. A godly heritage is to be emulated, not corrected or outdone.

The whole New Evangelical philosophy of ministry is based on the conviction that the heritage passed down by godly fundamentalism was inept and flawed. Old-time fundamentalism was an embarrassment to the proponents of this "New" and improved variety. And each generation of New Evangelicals seems to break with the previous for some new method or teaching, until finally there is only "New" and no "Evangelical" in the men and movements of this persuasion.

Notes: _____

2 Tim. 1:6-7 4. What did Paul indicate was the greatest threat to Timothy's clear conscience and unfeigned faith? What threatened to violate Timothy's conscience and bring inconsistencies to his faith? How was Timothy to battle this threat?

Answer: Fear threatened to damage the unfeigned-faith testimony of Timothy. He was to battle that threat with his ordination gift empowered by God's Spirit. Timothy was to be continually rekindling (*stir up* in the Greek present tense indicates continual action) the gift related to his ordination. 1 Tim. 4:14 indicates that the core of this gift was teaching the Word of God. Timothy's teaching was to be powerful, loving, and discerning.

Application: God's leaders sooner or later face the realization that a choice must be made between the fear of man and fidelity to the responsibility of the Word of God. Those who succumb to the fear of man have forsaken a pure conscience and a faith unfeigned. They have bargained away their commitment to faithfully teach the whole counsel of God, leaving out emphases unpopular to the men they fear.

Notes: _____

2 Tim. 1:8, 15-18 5. Paul lists for Timothy two choices Timothy had before him in verse 8. What were the two choices? Did Timothy have other choices not mentioned by Paul? Why or why not?

Answer: The choices Paul mentioned are (1) be ashamed or (2) suffer. There were no others.

Application: These are the only two choices Paul mentions because these were the only two choices available to Timothy. In the days of wicked Nero, it was clear that those who refused to be ashamed would suffer, and those who refused to suffer would be ashamed. There was no middle ground. Phygelus and Hermogenes demonstrate what being ashamed is all about by simply "turning away." In contrast, Onesiphorus demonstrates the diligence involved in suffering for the testimony of the Lord. It takes very little effort to be ashamed, but suffering with the Lord instead of being ashamed requires much.

Today, Christians scramble for the middle ground. They do not want to be ashamed of the Lord, but they do not want to suffer either. This verse makes it clear that there really is no middle ground to be found. Those who refuse to suffer are ashamed. Paul's direction to Timothy was to actively join in as a partner in suffering for the sake of the gospel in a day of great opposition, risk, and pressure. We need to work at taking the position of suffering with the testimony of our Lord who suffered for us. To do nothing is to turn away and become ashamed.

Notes: _____

The Making of a Godly Conscience.

2 Tim. 6. We see again in verse 11 the Apostle Paul strengthened by his sense of calling to the ministry as a prophet, apostle, and teacher of the Gentiles. In verses 9-10, he refers to an even more significant calling, one shared by all true believers, the calling of the gospel itself. What does Paul teach us about the call of the gospel, the doctrine of salvation, in these two profound verses?

Answer: (1) The gospel call saves from sin and calls a man to holiness (v. 9). (2) The gospel call is for those who will trust God's grace, not for those who trust their works (v. 9). (3) The gospel call is rooted in the eternal plan of God for the salvation of a soul (v. 9). (4) The gospel call is made available through the Savior, Jesus Christ. He conquered death and revealed the way to life, for such He is: "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No man cometh unto the Father, but by me" (John 14:6).

Application: The thrill of the gospel never left the Apostle Paul. He was thrilled with the fact that he had been rescued from his sin, that his mission in life was a holy one, that it was all of grace planned by God before the world began, and that Jesus Christ had made it so by His resurrection victory over death. These truths are what Paul's life was all about. So should it be for all who have been saved by the gospel call.

Notes: _____

The Chief Work of a Godly Conscience.

From the Honeycomb

Gr: *paratheke*, "deposit, property entrusted"

This word is used three times in the New Testament, all in the Pastoral Epistles. We saw it in 1 Tim. 6:20, where it is translated, "that which is committed to thy trust." It is also in 2 Tim. 1:12, "that which I have committed," and in 2 Tim. 1:14, "That good thing which was committed unto thee."

Paratheke is always used with the same command word, a word that tells us what should be done with the entrusted property. This word is *phulasso*.

Phulasso is used in each of the verses above, as well as each of the passages below:

Luke 11:21, "When a strong man armed his palace, his goods are in peace."

Jude 24, "Now unto Him who is able to you from falling."

2 Thess. 3:3, "But the Lord is faithful, who shall stablish you, and you from evil."

1 John 5:21, "Little children, yourselves from idols."

What does the word *phulasso* mean?

Answer: *Phulasso* means "keep, guard, or protect" in all of these contexts. This is what must be done with the valuable *paratheke*, or "entrusted property of another." We must keep, guard, and protect what belongs to the Lord and has been entrusted to our care.

Notes: _____

2 Tim. 1:12-14 7. Verse 12 speaks of a deposit we entrust to the Lord, and verse 14 speaks of a deposit the Lord entrusts to us. Guarding this deposit is the chief work of a godly conscience. What is Paul referring to when he speaks of "that which I have committed unto him" in verse 12? What is he referring to when he speaks of "that good thing which was committed unto thee" in verse 14? What do we trust the Lord to protect? And what does He trust us to protect?

Answer: Verse 13 is a good place to look for the answers to these two questions. That verse

indicates that we are to trust the Lord to protect our faith, our love, and our commitment to hold on to the truth. This pretty well sums up our entire being and purpose for living. These are the things we entrust to the Lord for safe-keeping. The Lord entrusts to us sound words, the Word of God, the doctrines of the faith. We are to stand guard on His behalf, and on behalf of His Word.

Application: The life of a Christian is a life of trust. We trust the Lord with our lives and eternal destiny, being convinced that He can guard us from the judgment day. The Lord has entrusted to us His eternal truth, and the Holy Spirit enables us to guard it against error, compromise, ignorance, and deception.

Notes: _____

Real Life?

“Our wonderful God only wants your greatest success and your perfect happiness! Send your gift now, and let Him give you all the blessings he has in store for you.” So concluded the inspiring TV message entitled, “Rejoice!”, by Reverend Billy Star, broadcasting from the Bright Lights Christian Church and Family Vacation Resort and Conference Center.

Pete turned it off before the ad for the upcoming Caribbean cruise package had a chance to come on. He had been laid off for nearly a month now, and for the first time in his life he missed a mortgage payment on his house. He had prayed and committed the need to the Lord, but somehow the answer had not come, at least not yet. He thought back to the time when he had bought the house. He was not living for the Lord then, but he was making big money as a part owner of a popular downtown bar. When he got right with the Lord, he sold his interest in the bar for far less than what it was worth. Finding work as a former bar tender had not been easy, and Pete was beginning to wonder whether he had done the right thing. He could walk into almost any bar with his experience and land a good paying position. As he sat down for another meal of beans and rice with his family, he asked the Lord to help him forget about the pressure he faced.

How might the principles of 2 Timothy 1 be an encouragement to Pete?

Answer: Two principles are especially applicable to Pete's circumstances. The first is that God's plan for the servants He loves includes valleys as well as mountain tops. The apostle Paul's imprisonment in 2 Timothy was far different than his experience in Philipppians, but this does not necessarily mean that he took a wrong turn somewhere in-between. God was still with Paul, and still using Paul. Second, Pete should be warned about the impact fear can

have on a godly conscience. He had left the tavern business for reasons related to a godly conscience. His faith is unfeigned. Pete needs to make sure that fear does not strip him of these blessings in times of pressure.

Notes: _____

“A Godly Leader’s Strength”

2 Timothy 2

Purpose:

Weak leadership is a curse to any enterprise, but when it comes to spiritual things, we live in a day that holds weakness in great esteem and strong leadership in great contempt. Your students shall develop spiritual strength and seek to strengthen their godly leaders.

In a Nutshell:

Weak leadership is a curse to any enterprise, but we live in a day that holds weakness in great esteem and strong leadership in great contempt, especially when it comes to spiritual things. This lesson will challenge you to develop spiritual strength and to seek to strengthen your godly leaders.

To the Testimony!

The Elements of Strong Leadership.

| | |
|--------------------------|--|
| 2 Tim. 2:1 1:15-18 | 1. The chapter break at 2 Timothy 2 marks for us the beginning of Paul's emphasis on strength in Christian ministry, but his command to “be strong” is connected to the last part of the previous chapter by the word in 2:1, “therefore.” What is the word <i>therefore</i> there for? Why does Paul tell Timothy that he needs to be strong? |
|--------------------------|--|

Answer: Paul says “be strong” because others had been weak. The trend of the day was to turn away from God's leaders and the responsibilities of spiritual leadership. Timothy was to be strong against the current of spiritual weakness in his day.

Application: Our day is a day of weak leadership. Many have turned away or fallen away as the Scripture predicted would be the case (2 Tim. 3:1). The man who is strong, dogmatic, outspoken against sin, and faithful to the end is a man who is not well appreciated by the value set of weak Christians today.

Notes: _____

2 Tim. 2:2 2. Paul expected Timothy to be strong, but he did not expect Timothy to be a perpetual loner. There is strength in numbers, and this verse tells us how those numbers are to be developed in the local church. How do the ministries of local churches grow according to this verse?

Answer: The principle of multiplication through discipleship is the principle of numerical growth in the work of God. It is not enough for one or a few to be responsible for adding people through evangelism. The work of numerical growth is not complete until those added are themselves adding others. This only happens when those who are saved are faithfully taught to the point of learning how to faithfully teach.

Application: Here in verse 2, Paul is especially thinking of perpetuating the work of God through the perpetuation of strong leadership. The humanistic approach to church growth maintains that strong leadership does not bring in the kind of numbers weak leadership can. Whole denominations such as the Vineyard movement have been developed on the premise of allowing followers to dictate the nature of the ministry, rather than the leaders. Short messages, worldly lifestyles, low standards, fast music, and social causes are typical characteristics of such ministries, not strong leaders. People in spiritual rebellion are attracted to a lack of spiritual leadership, but strong leadership is nevertheless God's instruction for numerical growth. Developing strong leaders who can develop other strong leaders is the scriptural methodology for perpetuating the work of God. This involves both evangelism and discipleship/teaching, as outlined in the Great Commission (Matt. 28:19-20).

Notes: _____

2 Tim. 2:3-7 3. Strength is a very practical virtue, and there are practical things that must be done in order to ensure strong spiritual leadership. In this passage Paul gives three illustrations that teach us an important principle about maintaining strong leadership in the local church. Complete the chart below listing the illustrations and the principles they teach.
 Acts 6:2-4
 3 John 9-11

| | | | |
|------------------------------------|---|----------------------------------|------------------------|
| Verse: | vv. 3-4 | v. 5 | v. 6 |
| Illustration: | soldier | athlete | farmer |
| How to maintain strong leadership: | eliminate distractions that sap endurance | follow the rules, accountability | rewarding compensation |

Application: Paul was very practical when it came to the maintenance of strong leadership. This strength was not to be found somewhere in the mystical powers of a leader's great immunity to weakness. Leaders are real people who need practical encouragement to stay strong.

The first principle is to eliminate strength-draining distractions from the leader's life and responsibilities. The apostles faced this kind of distraction in Acts 6, where men were assigned the responsibility of freeing them from distraction. They were to give themselves to the ministry of the Word and prayer.

Next is the principle of accountability, making sure our leaders follow the rules. Breaking the rules of morally honest leadership will make them weak, so they need to know that they cannot break the rules and get away with it. Few if any athletic events have no rules. Nearly all involve some kind of referee or judge to make sure that the rules are being followed. The referee in the life of a leader is the local church led by other strong leaders. A leader needs to be accountable to the local church, a local church that is well led by other leaders in this important work of accountability. This is one reason why plurality of leadership is an emphasis in the New Testament. A local church leader who has total preeminence has made himself a Diotrephes (3 John 9-11). He may say he is accountable to his church, but he has rendered them so leaderless in this important work of accountability that he is in effect accountable to no one but himself. Such a man's ministry may appear strong, but at the core it is weak with the temptation to break the rules of moral ministry.

The third principle of strong leadership is the principle of rewarding compensation. Contrary to the dogma of the Romish vow of poverty, the Bible teaches that rewarding compensation is critical to strong local-church leadership. A good salary encourages tenure and independence, both important elements of strong spiritual leadership. The verse specifically mentions that the hard-working farmer should be the first to share in the harvest. This says much about the priorities of the local-church budget. Salary is number one. Few forces of evil are as effective at weakening leadership as the force of financial insecurity or instability. Churches should be very reluctant to assume heavy amounts of debt for this very reason as well. In addition, they should feel strongly about their leaders' right to personal property. A parsonage can save the church a lot of money, but it is not always the best option for the cause of strong spiritual leadership.

Notes: _____

2 Tim. 2:8-10 4. Some would say that Paul did not have much to live for sitting in Nero's cell, awaiting gruesome execution. In this passage he states that he did, declaring, "Therefore, I endure" (v. 10). Here we see what motivated Paul to go on as a strong leader in trying circumstances. What motivated this strong leader?

Answer: Paul was motivated by the gospel. Three themes of the gospel seemed to especially keep him going in this passage. (1) Paul was motivated by the gospel's resurrection of Christ (v. 8-9). The power of the resurrection was worth living for and dying for with confidence. It could not be bound, though Paul surely was. (2) Paul was motivated by the gospel's eternal plan. He was suffering for the salvation of the chosen (v. 10). His suffering was not pointless, but under the sovereign plan of God its purpose was to bring salvation to souls. God was in control, and suffering had an eternal purpose found in Him. (3) Paul was motivated by the gospel's eternal glory (v. 10). Suffering lasts for a moment, the glory goes on forever.

Application: Strong leaders must find their motivation in the power of the gospel over death, the sovereign plan of God, and the everlasting glory of heaven. The motivations that draw on the material and temporal will dry up and fade. Leaders who are so motivated will not be strong. God's man must be moved to the work by truth that never fails, Jesus Christ, His gospel, His plan, and His future.

Notes: _____

From the Honeycomb

As Paul contemplates what keeps him going, he remembers a well-known verse. This may have been part of a hymn he sang with Silas in the Philippian jail, and which he still found himself singing in his Roman cell. Whatever its origin, it was an encouragement to the apostle, and it becomes a part of infallible Holy Scripture as Paul recalls it under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit in this epistle. A few translation points are important to our understanding of these verses however:

Some may think they are reading about a believer losing his salvation when they read, "if we deny him, he will deny us; if we believe not. . ." (vv. 12-13). But two things are clear in Greek, which are not as clear in the KJV. They will help us to see that this passage agrees with the doctrine of eternal security (Rom. 8:30).

1. The phrase "if we deny him" is different from the other phrases "if we be dead," "if we suffer," and "if we believe not." It is the only conditional phrase to use the future tense. We can show this difference by translating the four phrases in an expanded way to show how the Greeks would have interpreted the tenses used:

“If we died with Him (and we certainly did)”
“If we suffer (and we certainly do)”
“If we someday deny Him (and some shall)”
“If we are unfaithful (and we certainly are)”.

Paul purposefully switched to the future tense in the third conditional phrase, because he did not want to indicate that all professing believers deny the Lord. Paul knew some who had, and he was sure others certainly would, but of those Jesus says, “I never knew you” (Matt. 7:20-23). Jesus does not say, “I knew you once, but now no longer.” Those who once professed Christ publicly and later deny Him, were never really His to begin with in spite of their miracles and empty claims (1 John 2:19).

2. One more translation point is helpful here. You will notice above that we translate *believe not* with the word *unfaithful*. Paul uses a format that indicates that the condition is true--all believers (“we”) do this, so the translation “believe not” is to be understood in the sense of faithlessness, not denying the faith. All Christians are unfaithful from time to time. No true Christian ultimately denies the faith. The phrase is a play on words with the following phrase, “He abideth faithful.” The opposite of “faithful” is “unfaithful”, not “believe not.”

Hence, the verses agree with eternal security. Those who deny Christ in an ultimate sense were never really His. Jesus never knew them. And even when those who are His are unfaithful, like Peter’s tragic denials, the Lord abides faithful. To be unfaithful to us would be to deny Himself, and He simply cannot do it.

Notes: _____

2 Tim. 5. How do the first two phrases of the faithful saying indicate that it is im-
2:11-12 portant for Christians to not get the proverbial cart before the horse spiritually?
Luke How should these phrases affect a Christian's sense of motivation?
9:23
1 Cor.
15:31

Answer: We must die before we can live. We must suffer before we can reign. The Christian life is about the dying and the suffering. The Christian's after-life is about the living and the reigning. Jesus requires that we take up our cross daily (Luke 9:23). Paul practiced this (1 Cor. 15:31). Those who picked up crosses in the first century world did so to carry them to places like Calvary for their execution. The point is daily death to self, self-denial.

Application: There is often a lot of emphasis on living and reigning in today's Christianity,

but very little on self-denial and duty-bound endurance of suffering. We are told that Christ will make us healthy and rich, never that he may make us sick and poor. We are motivated by a sense of delight, not a sense of duty. When not delighted, the commitment of many to duty wanes. Yet, the verse that comforted the old apostle, who had no money, whose health was failing, and whose days were numbered, was the verse that taught that this life is a time for self-denial and suffering hardship. The glory is yet to come. Our sense of motivation and expectations for life ought to reflect the same faith.

Notes: _____

The Work of Strong Leaders.

2 Tim. 6. Usefulness is the key to this passage (vv. 20-21). Strong leaders have work to do, and this passage emphasizes being useful to God's work. Paul instructs Timothy about things that will make him useful, and things which will make him useless. Summarize this instruction by creating two lists. Under the heading "To Be Gold," list what Paul says makes Christians useful. Under the heading "To Be Wood," list what Paul says makes Christians useless.

| To Be Gold: | To Be Wood: |
|--|--|
| v. 15 studious, diligent, accurate Bible emphasis vv. 19-21 separation from the likes of Hymenaeus and Philetus, religious teachers whose doctrine is in error v. 22 fellowship with those who are pure and are pursuing righteousness, faith, love, and peace v. 24-26 patient kind teaching | v. 14, 16-18 academic, cold-hearted theology, quirky new interpretations and false doctrine v. 22 youthful lusts, immature desires and ambitions v. 23 quarrels with speculative fools |

Application: A Bible emphasis and a willingness to separate where one is lacking are the keys Paul mentions to being useful. Chasing the philosophy and ambitions of the world, careless treatment of Scripture, and failure to separate from those who act this way will render a leader useless.

Notes: _____

Real Life?

County Baptist Church is situated in a mid-sized town with a congregation of about 150. Pastor Smith, who lives with his family in the home he bought 10 years ago on West Lane, has been with the church about 15 years. He draws a salary that enables him to pay his bills on time, afford Christian education for his kids, save for their college, and even prepare for his retirement. The church has had a number of assistants under Pastor Smith's tenure, and each one has grown under his care. Each one is still ministering in either County Baptist, a neighboring church they planted, or on the mission field supported by the church. The facilities of the church are modest but well cared for by the deacons and other men of the church.

City Baptist Church has a congregation of 300 with weekly offerings that resemble those of County Baptist. A few years back the church purchased a state-of-the-art facility complete with parsonage and gymnasium. Attendance took off, but the mortgage puts a heavy strain on the resources of the church. With the parsonage they were able to offer their new pastor a much reduced salary greatly enhancing their cash flow situation. They were also able to save money by cutting the secretary and janitor positions. The pastor was given the responsibility of finding volunteers with the understanding, of course, that he should try not to do all the work himself. The church was located close to a Christian camp and university which enjoyed the loyalty of some of the church's members, but which had taken recent positions that concerned the pastor.

Which scenario exhibits a healthier environment for strong leadership. How so?

Answer: The challenges facing the leadership of City Baptist have potential for weakening pastoral leadership. These challenges are not faced in the same degree by County Baptist, and the difference is perhaps noticeable best in the shorter tenure of the pastor at City Baptist.

At County Baptist the faithfulness of the Lord's servants are helping keep ministry distractions from the pastor. In addition, the principle of accountability, with multiple men on staff, and the principle of rewarding compensation are strengthening factors helping County experience strong leadership, but some of these virtues seem to be missing at City.

One cause of the difference at City Baptist could be their large mortgage burden. Debt can very quickly turn the financial priorities away from the care of godly leaders. Loyalty to para-church organizations, which competes with loyalty to the local church, also weakens pastoral leadership, especially if these ministries are not aligned doctrinally and philosophically with

the doctrine and covenant of the church, and the godly convictions of the pastor.

Every faithful pastor must count it a privilege to serve the Lord in any way he can. Certainly, no one is too good to mow the lawn, and any godly pastor would consider it a privilege to serve the Lord this way. But the concern of the church as a whole must be how best to encourage the pastor to follow Paul's command, "Be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus." The enemy wants God's leaders to be weak. The church can be a conduit of this strengthening grace if they make these principles a focus of their ministry for the Lord.

Notes: _____

Lesson 12
“Difficult Days for Leaders”
2 Timothy 3

Purpose:

Your students will expect godly leadership to be hard. They shall sympathize with the struggles of their godly leaders and do all they can to help them endure.

In a Nutshell:

Godly leadership is hard, not easy. We need to sympathize with the struggles of our godly leaders and commit ourselves to their support as we study Paul’s description of difficult days for leaders.

To the Testimony!

The Source of Difficulty.

2 Tim. 3:1, 13
Luke 18:8

1. In Titus 1 we learned about leading difficult people in a difficult place, the island of Crete. 2 Timothy 3 is a broader variation on the same theme in that this chapter speaks of difficult times, the last days. Paul wants Timothy to understand the times and how they fit into the plan of God. To do this, we need to understand what Paul means when he refers to “the last days.” Read the From The Honeycomb exercise, and then note two general characteristics of these days which Paul emphasizes in verses 1 and 13 of our passage.

Answer: Paul describes these days in a general sense as perilous or difficult (v.1), and as deteriorating (v. 13, "worse and worse"). He is clear that the church age would be a difficult period for leaders, one in which spiritual conditions proceed from bad to ever worse. The last days are a time of apostasy (1 Tim. 4:1), and the older the church age gets, the worse the apostasy spreads (Luke 18:8).

Application: It is important to understand that the Bible teaches that the work of the church age for believers is going to be difficult and that the age is going to deteriorate. When Jesus asks the rhetorical question, “shall He (Christ) find faith on the earth?”, the implied answer is “No, He will not.” Those who believe that the church age is a period of great hope on earth and spiritual success in society maintain an emphasis in ministry, which fails to recognize the Bible’s clear teaching about the “last days.” They undoubtedly also fail to read the newspaper.

“Doom and gloom” doctrine is not entertaining, but it is scriptural for the church age. This conviction, along with the commitment to interpreting prophecy in a normal--not allegorical--sense, makes a Bible student a “premillennialist.” A premillennialist believes that the church age precedes, with increasingly difficult days, Christ’s 1000-year literal reign. These days are

abruptly interrupted with judgment during the Day of the Lord, the Great Tribulation period. A premillennialist believes in the necessity of separation against apostasy and the general deterioration of the world. Their low expectation for the reformation of society gives their ministries a distinctly non-political flavor, and they see separation of church and state as vital to the work of God. Most premillennialists also believe that the church will be raptured prior to the 7-year tribulation, after which Christ comes to literally conquer the world and reign.

A postmillennialist equates the church age with the millennium by emphasizing a spiritual reign. In their view, Christ's coming is put after the spiritual reign of Christ, which we are experiencing today. His coming is therefore, post- (or after) the millennium. Their emphasis is on the church's success and progress, which prepare the world for the second coming of Christ. They feel great enthusiasm for religious inclusion and political influence. Separation of church and state is an inhibition to the establishment of the kingdom of God in their view.

An amillennialist denies that Christ will reign literally from Jerusalem at all. Their eschatology is heavenly, not earthly in its orientation. Their allegorical approach to the Scriptures wipes out many of its promises about Israel's future. Instead, their allegorical interpretation of these promises views them as fulfilled by the church.

Notes: _____

From the Honeycomb

What are "the last days?"

1. They are days whose prophetic purpose is the establishment of the kingdom of the Messiah, Jesus Christ, in Jerusalem. He shall rule the world once His kingdom is established.

Genesis 49:1, 10
Isaiah 2:2
Micah 4:1
Acts 2:17-21 with Joel 2:28-32

2. They are days that began with the first coming of Christ.

Hebrews 1:1-2
1 Peter 1:19-20

3. They are days that anticipate and find their completion in the judgments associated with the second coming of Christ, also known as the Day of the Lord.

Acts 2:17-21 with Joel 2:28-32
 2 Peter 3:3-10

4. They are the days that include the church age in the plan of God.

1 Timothy 4:1-6
 1 John 2:18
 James 5:3
 Jude 18

Notes: _____

2 Tim. 3:2-5 2. Times will be difficult because men will be immoral and ungodly. Paul says that those who live like this ought to be avoided by godly Christians (v. 5). The present tense Paul uses for the command *avoid* indicates that this separatist stand must be a constantly renewed commitment in the life of the believer. Below are listed the Ten Commandments from Exodus 20. Spend some time thinking about the immoral characteristics Paul mentions by listing them under the commandment they violate.

| Commandment: | Violating Characteristic of the Last Days: |
|--------------------------------|---|
| No other Gods. | lover of self v. 2, boastful v. 2, proud v. 2, heady v. 4, high-minded v. 4 |
| No idols. | lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God v. 4 |
| Do not use God's name in vain. | blasphemers v. 2, form of religion but denying its power v. 5 |
| Remember the Sabbath as holy. | unholy v. 2 |
| Honor parents. | disobedient to parents v. 2 |
| Do not murder. | fierce v. 3, despisers of those that are good v. 3 |
| Do not commit adultery. | without natural affection v. 3, uncontrolled (incontinent) v. 3 |
| Do not steal. | trucebreakers v. 3 |
| Do not lie. | false accusers v. 3, traitors v. 4 |
| Do not covet. | covetous v. 2, unthankful v. 2 |

Application: Although there is much overlap in Paul's description of the last days, the pervasive theme is that of selfish humanism, the belief that self is god. Secular humanism is the foundational philosophy of the last days, a violation of the first and foremost commandment, "Love the Lord your God." It is not a man's religion that holds any power over him (v. 5), it is his insatiable lust to gratify self. Such is the deteriorating condition of difficult days today. Families are destroyed, churches crumble, and nations fall because men live for self in an unprecedented way in the last days. These conditions make godly leadership very difficult.

Notes: _____

2 Tim. 3. The last days will be a good fit for the leadership of some religious leaders.
3:5-7 They will find opportunity, not difficulty, in the conditions of society. What kind of people respond especially well to ungodly leadership (vv. 6-7)?

Answer: The prey of ungodly leaders is described by Paul as "silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lust, ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth." Though specifically applicable to women with a lustful appetite for the deception of a handsome false-teacher, this description can be applied more broadly to those who enjoy learning so long as it never brings a reckoning to their sinful condition. This is the all-form-no-power religion we read about in verse 5.

Application: The attendance of certain church congregations will be booming in the last days. The leadership of many, who are willing to tolerate and accommodate sin in the lives of those who follow, will be well-financed and well-attended. These followers enjoy learning, love their sin, and welcome the deceptive teaching that is able to bring the two together. The charismatic movement thrives on these conditions in our day.

Notes: _____

2 Tim. 4. Jannes and Jambres are new names to us today, but they were common to
3:8-9 Paul and Timothy. The spiritual Laurel and Hardy of the Jewish world, these
Exod. men are referred to in the *Targum of Jonathan* as the magicians of Egypt refer-
7:10-13 enced in Exod. 7:11. Paul tells us that these men withstood Moses and that their
folly became exposed. Read Exod. 7:10-13. How did they withstand Moses, how
were they exposed, and what was the effect on Pharaoh?

Answer: They withstood Moses by duplicating and counterfeiting his work. They turned rods into serpents just as Moses did. They were exposed when Moses's serpent ate their serpents. The effect on Pharaoh was a harder heart. The counterfeit ministry of these men caused Pharaoh to harden in his sinful rebellion against God.

Application: In spite of the fact that Jannes and Jambres were exposed as counterfeits, Pharaoh's heart was still hardened. The success of counterfeits like these is not really rooted in their effectiveness at deception, but in the willingness of people to be deceived. So it will be in the last days.

Notes: _____

2 Tim. 3:10-12 5. Paul references his own ministry as a contrast to the deceptive work of the popular false leaders of the last days. Today, many of these leaders guarantee their followers success, healing, and prosperity should they follow in a faithful way. What guarantee does Paul offer godly people living in the last days?

Answer: Paul guarantees that all who live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution. This contrasts bluntly with the guarantees of those who build their following today with empty promises of success, health, and prosperity.

Application: Godly Christians need to resign themselves to the reality of persecution in the last days. A policy of persecution avoidance in the life of the believer will lead only to ungodliness. Paul states that to live godly is to suffer persecution, and try as we may, the truth of that statement simply cannot be denied. Paul's point is not to look for a fight (see 1 Tim. 2:2 and Lesson 3, question 2), but rather to look for the fight to come. If we are unwilling to suffer and struggle, we will not live godly lives in the last days.

Notes: _____

The Sword for the Difficulty.

2 Tim. 3:14-17 6. The end of chapter three is one of the most doctrinally significant passages in regard to what we ought to believe about our Bibles. The faith Paul asserts in the inspiration of the Bible was reinforced by what he had seen and experienced

of its mighty power. He speaks of the Scripture's power first with reference to its impact on Timothy (vv. 14-15), and secondly with reference to its impact on the man of God (vv. 16-17). How was Timothy affected by the power of the Scripture? What should the effect be on the man of God?

Answer: Timothy's childhood was impacted by the Scripture. It had taught him how to believe such that his soul was saved. He had been impressed with the lives of his teachers, who provided an example for his own commitment to continue on. He not only learned the Scripture, but he had become convinced of its veracity and authority. He believed it from the heart, and it changed his life.

The man of God is impacted in that the Scripture makes the Christian grow. Doctrine, reproof, correction, and instruction change his the life and equip him unto good works.

Application: The Bible is a book to be lived, not just a book to be read. It is a book that saves and changes the life, not simply one that informs the intellect. The power of the Scripture was at the heart of the faith in its authority that Paul and Timothy shared. They had known its impact, and so must we in order to use it correctly. We must be saved by it, changed by it, and forever perfected by it if we are to really understand and believe it as God intends.

Notes: _____

2 Tim. 3:16 7. The phrase "inspiration of God" is actually one word in the original, *theopneustos*, meaning *God-breathed*. Read 2 Pet. 1:21. How is the truth, "All scripture is inspired by God" different from the exclamation that "Shakespeare was truly inspired when he wrote Hamlet"?

Answer: We are talking about an act of human will when we refer to the inspiration Shakespeare enjoyed as he wrote. The inspiration of the Scripture, by contrast, is a direct act of God. The word *theopneustos* clearly declares this amazing truth. The words of Scripture are the very words of God.

Application: The Bible never tells us exactly how inspiration happened, although Christians have proposed various theories. Critical to our faith as Bible believers, however, is not understanding the specific mechanics of a mysterious act of God, but rather the affirmation of the authority of the end result.

The doctrine of the verbal-plenary inspiration of the Bible emphasizes the end result. *Verbal* refers to the very Greek, Hebrew, and Aramaic words having been specifically chosen by God for His scriptural revelation, and *plenary* refers to the entirety of the 66 books – no section is

uninspired or merely man-made. We cannot pick and choose the Scripture we view as inspired of God, for “All Scripture” is as Paul says.

Fundamental Christians believe that the very words of the original manuscripts, every jot and title, of all of the 66 books of the Old and New Testaments were the product of a miraculous direct act of God called inspiration. Because they are the very Words of God, they are without error and constitute the sole and ultimate authority in regard to orthodox faith, practice, and any other category they happen to address.

Just as Paul teaches here the inerrancy and authority of Scripture, so also does he teach the sufficiency of Scripture for the good works of God’s people. It is Scripture that thoroughly furnishes the man of God unto every good work. We do not need to look to other authorities for this furnishing under the mistaken assumption that the Bible, the written Word of God, is not enough to give us the teaching, the reproof, the correction, and the instruction we need.

One theory proposing how the miracle of inspiration happened, which is popular among some fundamental groups, is the dictation theory. This theory proposes that God used the writers of Scripture much the same way a typist uses a typewriter or a secretary would take dictation for a letter.

This theory agrees with the doctrine of verbal-plenary inspiration in that both affirm that the end product is the very Word of God in its detail and entirety. But it is important to not confuse convenient conjecture with good doctrine. While dictation does a good job illustrating the results of inspiration, it falls short of describing the process as it purports to do.

We know, for instance, that Tertius, not Paul, performed the transcribing service for the Epistle to the Romans. Paul was the author, not the transcriber (Rom. 1:1, 16:22). He clearly claims to be writing to the Romans, whereas a transcriber like Tertius would never make such a claim, for it would be unfounded. To view the author as God and the writers as mere transcribers does not agree with the authors' claims to authorship we find in the Bible. Under this paradigm, some verses become impossible (ex., the Holy Spirit would never dictate to Paul that He did not remember whom Paul had baptized – 1 Cor. 1:16; more simply, the *I* of this verse is Paul, not the Holy Spirit). Consequently, the dictation theory of inspiration fails to agree with the teaching of the Bible.

Notes: _____

Real Life?

Pastor asked Bob if he would consider teaching the Junior Boys Sunday School class for the summer term. A Bible major at Christian University, Bob was actually interested in teaching

and willing to serve. After responding quickly in the affirmative, he later found himself a bit disappointed. Although he would not admit it to his pastor, his new duties did not excite him.

The Junior Class assignment did not seem to take full advantage of the training he was receiving in theology at school. He had studied hard and was excited about what he had to share, but most of that was on an adult's level. Getting down on the Junior level was going to be awkward for him, and he just did not seem to feel the same enthusiasm he did while anticipating an adult class assignment. He even felt a tinge of embarrassment over the assignment while phoning his schoolmate, Jeff, about how the summer at the church was going.

How should Timothy's childhood provide encouragement and instruction to Bob about the importance of his Junior class?

Answer: Bob is a good man and wants to do a good work, but he does not have a very good appreciation of the importance of the Word of God in childhood. The most influential impact of the power of God's Word in Timothy's life happened during his childhood (2 Tim. 3:15). Bob's emphasis needs to shift from exciting facts to powerful change when it comes to the goals for his teaching. All lives are equally valuable. When the goal is to change the life, it does not really matter what academic level you are working on. Teaching the Word of God is never about academics. It is about salvation and Christlike obedience.

Notes: _____

“The Legacy of a Godly Leader”

2 Timothy 4

Purpose:

The results of godly leadership are not completely understood unless the legacy of that leadership is also considered. Paul looks back with satisfaction on a life of godly leadership in this passage, and he looks ahead hoping to have a legacy that endures. Your students will see themselves as part of the legacy of their godly leaders, and they will resolve to see that legacy endure for generations to come by God's grace.

In a Nutshell:

The results of godly leadership are not completely understood unless the legacy of that leadership is also considered. Paul looks back with satisfaction on a life of godly leadership in this passage, and he looks ahead hoping to have a legacy which endures. Followers are an important part of the legacy of godly leaders. We have examples to follow and a future to serve.

To the Testimony!

The Charge Left Behind.

2 Tim. 4:1
 Luke 16:28

1. Paul begins his last words to his spiritual son Timothy in this chapter. Although he hopes Timothy can come soon, he recognizes that accomplishing this request would take some diligence on the part of Timothy (verse 9). Paul is writing as one whose time of departure is at hand (verse 6), one whose future on earth is uncertain. The occasion was a solemn one and called for a solemn final “charge.” The word Paul uses here, *charge*, is a serious one used sparingly in the New Testament. One usage is Luke 16:28, where it is translated *testify*. Who uses the word in that verse and what makes that occasion a solemn one?

Answer: The rich man uses this word as he asks Abraham to send Lazarus back to life to warn or “charge” his five brothers concerning the dangers of the hell fire, which the rich man was experiencing at that very moment. The occasion is a solemn one because the reality of hell made it so. This word *charge* is obviously one filled with weighty concerns, issues of eternal life and eternal death.

Application: Just like Paul's good-bye to Timothy was solemn, not sentimental, the Christian life involves more solemnity than sentimentality. Timothy was to heed a charge. His responsibilities were serious, and the consequences of failure to fulfill those responsibilities were severe. Every Christian needs to understand the Christian life in the context of a charge, a series of responsibilities which has eternal life or death implications. Too many Christians focus on warm feelings and fuzzy thoughts rather than on the seriousness of the charge we have from

the Lord. They want comfort from the Lord, not a charge; but these serious responsibilities simply do not go away.

Notes: _____

From the Honeycomb

The phrase, “before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ” (verse 1) can be more literally translated, “before the God and Christ Jesus.”

In 1 Tim. 5:21 the phrase, “before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect angels” can be more literally translated, “before the God and Christ Jesus, and the elect angels.”

In 2 Tim. 2:14 Paul speaks of making a charge “before the Lord.”

Review the principles we learned in the From The Honeycomb exercise in Lesson 9, and explain how this phrase in 1 Tim. 5:21 and 2 Tim. 4:1, “before the God and Christ Jesus” teaches us that Christ Jesus is God:

Answer: The use of the definite article (*the*) only one time in this phrase indicates that we are reading two names of the same one being: God who is Christ Jesus. Although in an incidental way, Paul clearly affirms the deity of Christ in the construction of this phrase. Note that in the phrase that includes the elect angels, the definite article is repeated with the angels because they are not part of this same one being, but are different beings.

Notes: _____

2 Tim. 4:1 2. This charge of Paul is a solemn one because it is Paul's last word to Timothy. What else makes this charge a solemn one according to verse 1?

Answer: The charge is solemn because it is executed in the presence of the sovereign God and Judge, Jesus Christ. Timothy would answer to Christ someday for the responsibilities Paul was here laying before him.

Application: Timothy would not need to answer to Paul in regard to the charge he was receiving from the great apostle. Timothy would answer some day to the Lord Jesus Christ. The

presence of Paul could no longer be the source of motivation it had been for young Timothy. Paul was soon to pass, but the presence of the Lord would remain. True godly leadership finds its most solemn motivation in the presence of the Lord Jesus, the ultimate Judge. Shallow is the leadership of men and movements, which depends on the presence of a great man for motivation to fulfill the charge we have from the Lord. Faithful is the man who is moved by the presence of the Lord, not men, not even great men.

Notes: _____

2 Tim. 4:2, 5 3. We learned in Lesson 5, question 6, that a leader's ministry ought to be evaluated in terms of fidelity to the Word of God. Paul's final charge to Timothy, "Preach the Word, . . .reprove, rebuke, exhort," reinforces our conviction in this regard. The ministry of the Word of God is the chief duty of the faithful leader. Paul's charge also emphasizes a character trait that is essential to the faithful execution of this responsibility. What is it?

Answer: The character trait is consistent patience, or patient consistency. Stamina is more important than homiletics when it comes to preaching the Word.

Application: Paul does not say to preach the Word in an entertaining way, he says to do so in a patient and consistent manner. The ministry of the Word is akin to the farmer and his crops. The bearing of fruit takes great time and patience. Anyone schooled in the essentials of public speaking can preach a good sermon, but it takes a lifetime of faithfulness to preach the Word the way the apostle charged Timothy to preach the Word. Paul does not simply say preach a good sermon. He says preach the Word, apply it to the field of the Lord, and patiently use it to harvest fruit that lasts.

Notes: _____

2 Tim. 4:3-4 4. Paul promises Timothy a certain result as he executes his charge to preach the Word. What is this result? What temptation would Timothy face when experiencing this result?

Answer: The result promised by Paul is that many would reject the sound doctrine of Timothy's patient preaching. They would find men who simply tell them what they want to hear. The temptation Timothy would face in the context of dwindling crowds and low offerings

would be that of scratching the ears of his listeners, telling them what they want to hear rather than the rebuking truth of the Word.

Application: Paul's point to the leader of God is that you must choose either a limited message or a limited crowd. If you choose a limited message, avoiding reproving and rebuking doctrine, you may build a bigger crowd. If you choose to faithfully preach the Word, you can expect to lose much of your crowd from time to time. Paul expected Timothy to faithfully practice the latter choice, and he promised Timothy a smaller crowd if he did.

Notes: _____

The Course Left Behind.

2 Tim. 5. It is not the man who looks ahead with enthusiasm for the work of God who
4:6-8 is ready for the reward of the Lord; it is the man who is looking back with that
2 John joy who is ready. Many start well, but fewer finish well. 2 John 8 warns against
7-11 losing our reward as Christians. Why did Paul not lose his reward (verse 7)?
Why have some leaders lost their reward (2 John 7-11)?

Answer: Paul anticipated the crown of righteousness with confidence because he knew that he had fought well, finished the job, and kept the faith. 2 John indicates that many have lost their reward because they failed to fight against false teachers. In the final analysis, the crown of righteousness goes to the man who is willing to fight for the faith to the very end. Paul was such a man.

Application: The great danger for any fundamentalist is the temptation to quit fighting. Militancy is a virtue, which is appreciated little in our day of tolerance and apathy. The call to fidelity is also a call to spiritual arms (2 Cor. 10:4). One cannot finish the course with his reward in tact unless he has fought the good fight to the bitter end. To do less than fight is to fail to keep the faith. There is no crown of righteousness for such a man, for he has loved something more than the appearance of his Lord.

Notes: _____

The Concerns Left Behind.

2 Tim. 4:10-15 Ps. 55:12-15 6. Whereas Paul loved the appearing of the Lord, Demas loved this present world, abandoning Paul in his time of greatest need. Alexander is described by Paul as one who did Paul much evil and vigorously opposed his teaching. After reading Ps. 55:12-15, whom would you say hurt Paul the most? Why?

Answer: Psalm 55 teaches that there is something especially hurtful about betrayal. God's leader can ready himself for the attack of an outright enemy. He can see the opposition coming. There is no defense against the betrayal of a trusted comrade, however.

Application: As destructive as the enemies of God can be to the work of God, the abandonment of a professing Christian who chooses to love the world can be even more devastating to the Lord's leader. A good man's abandonment can be more devastating to the work of God than an evil man's opposition. New Evangelical compromise with the world has done more damage to the future of God's work than liberalism's opposition was ever able to accomplish.

Notes: _____

2 Tim. 4:16-22 7. After a lifetime of faithful ministry, Paul came to the hour of his greatest danger and experienced the tragic plight that no man stood with him. In spite of all the service he had rendered to so many for so long, none of these came to Paul's aid at his lowest hour. What can God's leader expect to find on that lonely day when no man stands with him?

Answer: Paul found the Lord standing with him when no one else would. The Lord strengthened Paul and used him even on that terrible day. Paul saw the deliverance from the lion's mouth as a foretaste of the ultimate deliverance entrance to God's heavenly kingdom would bring. We know from history that what the lion failed to do, the sword later did, but even in death at the hands of the executioner, the Lord stood with Paul and delivered him.

Application: Loneliness is one of the major weapons Satan uses against God's leaders. Paul had the victory because he saw the Lord standing with him by faith. But Christians need to do their best to let God's leaders know that they do not stand for truth alone. We must fight the battles with them so as to overcome the devastating power of loneliness in battle.

Notes: _____

Real Life?

“Another negative message on the doom and gloom conditions of society,” complained Deacon Jones to Deacon Smith. “I am glad that there were no visitors today. I am sure that if there were, they would never come back. To tell you the truth, I wonder why I put up with it myself. It seems as though I am always depressed after I listen to Pastor. He rides these negative themes and seems to never look on the bright side. I just don't see our church growing much under this tone of preaching. I read an article in the paper about a congregation on the West Coast that has grown 300% over the last two years. In the interview their pastor said he only tries to help people fall in love with Jesus. Our pastor never seems to talk about falling in love with Jesus, only sin and all that is bad in the world. I want to talk to pastor about it, but I don't want to do it alone. Would you go with me?”

How can Deacon Smith respond with the help of 2 Timothy 4?

Answer: Deacon Smith needs to let Deacon Jones know that he disagrees with his assessment of their pastor's faithful preaching. Verses 3 and 4 would be a good place to start in his defense of the pastor and the preaching of the Word. The time has come when crowds are built through limited messages. Those who refuse to limit their message will not build the same crowds, but they will be faithful to the Lord's charge in their life to preach the Word, negative truth included. The fruit of such a ministry will be changed lives, if not big crowds.

Notes: _____

