

# 1 Timothy

## 1

*Summary: Paul writes to Timothy, his 'true child in the faith,' who has been left in Ephesus to confront false teachers promoting myths, endless genealogies, and speculative teachings that produce controversy rather than God's plan of faith. Paul clarifies the proper use of the law — it is for the lawless, not the righteous — and then offers his own testimony as the foremost of sinners who received mercy so that Christ's perfect patience might be displayed. The chapter closes with a charge to Timothy to fight the good fight, holding to faith and a good conscience, and warns about Hymenaeus and Alexander who have shipwrecked their faith.*

*What Makes This Remarkable: Paul's self-description as 'the foremost of sinners' (v. 15) is one of the most quoted passages in Christian devotional tradition. The 'faithful saying' formula (pistos ho logos, v. 15) appears five times in the Pastoral Epistles and nowhere else in Paul, marking distinctive material. The vice list in verses 9-10 is unusual in following the structure of the Ten Commandments, connecting the law's proper use to its specific prohibitions.*

*Translation Friction: The authorship of the Pastoral Epistles is debated among scholars — some attribute them to Paul, others to a later Pauline disciple. We render the text as it stands without adjudicating authorship. The vice list in verses 9-10 includes arsenokoitais ('men who have sex with men'), a compound word whose precise scope and meaning are debated. We render the Greek term and note the interpretive issues.*

*Connections: The charge to Timothy anticipates the military language of 2 Timothy 2:3-4 and 4:7. The 'faithful saying' formula recurs at 3:1, 4:9, 2 Timothy 2:11, and Titus 3:8. The reference to Paul's conversion echoes Acts 9, 22, and 26. Hymenaeus appears again in 2 Timothy 2:17.*

<sup>1</sup>Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the command of God our Savior and of Christ Jesus our hope, <sup>2</sup>To Timothy, my true child in the faith: Grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord. <sup>3</sup>As I urged you when I was leaving for Macedonia, remain in Ephesus so that you may instruct certain people not to teach different doctrine <sup>4</sup>and not to occupy themselves with myths and endless genealogies. These promote speculation rather than the advancement of God's work, which is by faith. <sup>5</sup>The goal of this instruction is love that comes from a pure heart, a good conscience, and a sincere faith. <sup>6</sup>Some have strayed from these and turned to meaningless talk, <sup>7</sup>They want to be teachers of the law, but they do not understand what they are saying or what they so confidently assert. <sup>8</sup>Now we know that the law is good, if one uses it legitimately, <sup>9</sup>Knowing this, that the instruction of Moses is not fashioned for a upright man, but for the lawless and

disobedient, for the ungodly and for sinners, for unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for manslayers,. <sup>10</sup>For the sexually immoral, for those who practice homosexuality, for slave traders, for liars, for those who swear falsely, and if there be any other thing that is contrary to healthy teaching;. <sup>11</sup>In keeping with to the glorious gospel of the blessed God, which was committed to my trust. <sup>12</sup>I am grateful to Christ Jesus our Lord, who has strengthened me, because he considered me faithful, appointing me to his service, <sup>13</sup>Indeed, who was prior to a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious — but I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief;. <sup>14</sup>The grace of our Lord poured out on me abundantly, along with the faith and love that come through Christ Jesus. <sup>15</sup>The saying is trustworthy and deserving of full acceptance: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am the foremost. <sup>16</sup>But I received mercy for this reason: so that in me, as the foremost, Christ Jesus might display his perfect patience as an example to those who would come to believe in him for eternal life. <sup>17</sup>To the King of the ages, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen. <sup>18</sup>This charge I entrust to you, Timothy my child, in accordance with the prophecies previously made about you, so that by them you may fight the good fight, <sup>19</sup>Holding trust, and a righteous conscience. Which some possessing placed away concerning faith have made shipwreck;. <sup>20</sup>Among them are Hymenaeus and Alexander, whom I have handed over to Satan so they would learn not to blaspheme.

## TRANSLATOR NOTES

1. The title 'God our Savior' (theou sōtēros hēmōn) is distinctive to the Pastoral Epistles (cf. Titus 1:3, 2:10, 3:4) and draws on Old Testament language for God as Israel's savior (Isaiah 43:3, 11). Christ is called 'our hope' (tēs elpidos hēmōn) — not merely the object of hope but hope itself personified. The phrase kat' epitagēn ('by command') frames Paul's apostleship as military commission, not personal choice.
1. [TCR Cross-Reference] Quotes Isaiah 43:3. The TCR rendering of that OT passage preserves the Hebrew source text and documents the translation decisions behind it.
2. The adjective gnēsiō ('genuine, true, legitimate') indicates a deep spiritual bond — Timothy is Paul's authentic spiritual offspring. The greeting adds 'mercy' (eleos) to the usual 'grace and peace,' a distinctive feature of the Pastoral Epistles' greetings to individuals (cf. 2 Timothy 1:2). Mercy may be added because Timothy faces a difficult pastoral situation requiring divine compassion.
3. The verb heterodidaskalein ('to teach different doctrine, to teach otherwise') is a compound found only in the Pastoral Epistles (here and 6:3). It implies deviation from the established apostolic teaching rather than mere theological innovation. The vague 'certain people' (tisin) avoids naming them initially, though Paul names two in verse 20.
4. The 'myths' (mythois) and 'genealogies' (genealogiais) likely refer to speculative elaborations on Old Testament narratives — possibly Jewish-Gnostic or proto-Gnostic traditions. The noun oikonomia ('stewardship, plan, administration') has a rich theological range — here it refers to God's redemptive plan or strategy, which operates through faith (en pistei), not through speculative knowledge.
5. The telos ('goal, aim, end') of the paraggelia ('instruction, command') is not theological knowledge but love (agapē). Three sources of genuine love are named: a pure heart (inner motivation), a good conscience (moral integrity), and sincere faith (anypokritos — literally 'unhypocritical,' without pretense). The false teachers have missed all three.
6. The verb astochēsantes ('having missed the mark, having strayed') uses archery imagery — they aimed at love but missed. The noun mataiologian ('meaningless talk, empty discussion') characterizes the false teaching as vacuous — it produces noise without substance.
7. The compound nomodidaskaloi ('teachers of the law') is used only here and in Luke 5:17 and Acts 5:34. The irony is sharp: they aspire to teach the law but comprehend neither their own words nor the subjects they pronounce upon. The verb diabebaiountai ('make confident assertions, insist strongly') makes their ignorance more damaging — they speak with unwarranted authority.
8. The wordplay on nomos ('law') and nomimōs ('lawfully, legitimately') is deliberate — the law must be used in accordance with its own purpose. Paul affirms the goodness of the law (cf. Romans 7:12, 16) while qualifying its proper application.
9. The vice list follows the order of the Ten Commandments: the first pairs (lawless, rebellious, ungodly, sinful, unholy, irreverent) correspond to the first table (duties toward God); the next items follow the second table (duties toward others). Patrolōis kai mētrōlōis ('those who strike fathers and mothers') corresponds to the fifth commandment, and androphonoi ('murderers') to the sixth.
10. The list continues through the Decalogue: pornois (sexually immoral, seventh commandment), arsenokoitais (a compound of arsēn 'male' + koitē 'bed,' appearing in the Septuagint language of Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 — the precise scope of this term is debated among scholars), andrapodistais ('slave traders, kidnappers,' eighth commandment — enslaving people), pseustais ('liars') and epiorkois ('perjurers,' ninth commandment — false witness). The phrase hygiainousē didaskalia ('sound/healthy teaching') is a distinctive Pastoral Epistles expression, using medical imagery — true doctrine promotes health.

10. [TCR Cross-Reference] This verse quotes Leviticus 18:22 — see the TCR rendering of that passage for the Hebrew source text and translation decisions.
11. The phrase to euangelion tēs doxēs tou makariou theou ('the gospel of the glory of the blessed God') is a remarkably dense genitive chain. The gospel is characterized by God's glory, and God is described as makarios ('blessed, happy') — a term usually reserved for humans in Paul but here applied to God (cf. 6:15), a distinctive feature of the Pastoral Epistles.
12. The verb endynamōsanti ('having empowered, having strengthened') is the same root Paul uses in Philippians 4:13 ('I can do all things through him who strengthens me'). The appointment to diakonia ('service, ministry') flows from Christ's assessment of Paul's faithfulness — yet the next verse reveals that Paul's 'faithfulness' was preceded by blasphemy and persecution.
13. The three self-descriptions intensify: blasphemōn ('blasphemer' — against God), diōktēn ('persecutor' — against the church), and hybristēn ('violent, insolent aggressor' — the same word used in Romans 1:30). Paul's ignorance (agnoōn) does not excuse his actions but explains why mercy was possible — he was not sinning against known truth (cf. Numbers 15:27-31 on inadvertent vs. deliberate sin).
13. [TCR Cross-Reference] References Numbers 15:27-31 — the TCR OT rendering of that text provides the Hebrew source and explains the translation decisions involved.
14. The verb hypereplenasen ('overflowed, super-abounded') is a Pauline intensive — where sin abounded, grace hyper-abounded (cf. Romans 5:20). Grace did not merely match Paul's sin but overwhelmed it. The paired nouns 'faith and love' (pisteōs kai agapēs) describe what grace produced in Paul — the very qualities the false teachers lack (v. 5).
15. The formula pistos ho logos ('faithful is the saying, the saying is trustworthy') introduces what may be an early Christian confession or hymnic fragment. The core proclamation — Christos Iēsous ēlthen eis ton kosmon hamartōlous sōsai ('Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners') — is a compact statement of incarnational soteriology. Paul's claim to be prōtos ('foremost, first, chief') is present tense (eimi, 'I am'), not past — he does not merely recall his former persecution but maintains a present consciousness of unworthiness.
16. Paul's conversion becomes a paradigm — a hypotypōsis ('pattern, model, outline') for all future believers. If the 'foremost of sinners' could receive mercy, no one is beyond reach. The noun makrothymia ('patience, longsuffering') describes Christ's restraint in the face of Paul's active persecution — a patience that endured until Paul's transformation. 'Eternal life' (zōēn aiōnion) is the ultimate goal of belief.
17. Paul breaks into a doxology — the overflow of gratitude from his testimony. Four attributes describe God: basilei tōn aiōnōn ('King of the ages' — sovereign over all time), apthartō ('imperishable, immortal'), aoratō ('invisible'), and monō theō ('the only God'). The SBLGNT does not include 'wise' (sophō), which appears in some manuscripts. The phrase eis tous aiōnas tōn aiōnōn ('to the ages of the ages') is the strongest expression of unending duration in Greek.
18. The military imagery — strateūē ('fight, serve as a soldier') and strateian ('campaign, warfare') — frames Timothy's ministry as a battle. The 'prophecies previously made about you' (proagousas epi se prophēteias) likely refer to prophetic words spoken over Timothy at his commissioning (cf. 4:14). These prophecies are not mere encouragement but equipment for spiritual combat.
19. The verb enauagēsān ('shipwrecked') is vivid — faith is a vessel that can be wrecked on the rocks of a rejected conscience. The 'good conscience' (agathēn syneidēsīn) from verse 5 returns: it is not optional equipment but essential to the integrity of faith. Those who pushed away (apōsamenoī, middle voice — 'pushed away from themselves') their conscience destroyed their own faith.
20. Paul names the offenders — Hymenaeus reappears in 2 Timothy 2:17. 'Handed over to Satan' (paredōka tō satana) parallels 1 Corinthians 5:5 and likely refers to expulsion from the community — outside the protective sphere of the church, they are in Satan's domain. The purpose is remedial: hina paidētōsin ('so that they may be disciplined/educated') — the verb paidēuō means to train as a child, to educate through correction. Even this severe action aims at restoration, not destruction.

## 2

**Summary:** *Paul instructs that prayers be offered for all people, especially for kings and those in authority, so that believers may live peaceful and godly lives. He grounds this universal concern in the nature of God, who desires all people to be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth. A christological statement declares one God and one mediator between God and humanity — the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all. Paul then gives instructions about how men should pray and how women should conduct themselves in the assembly, including a controversial instruction about women not teaching or exercising authority over men.*

**What Makes This Remarkable:** *Verses 5-6 contain what many scholars consider an early Christian hymn or creedal formula: 'one God, one mediator... who gave himself as a ransom for all.' The phrase 'ransom for all' (antilytron hyper pantōn) is unique to this passage and represents one of the clearest universal atonement statements in the New Testament. The instructions about women (vv. 9-15) have generated more interpretive debate than almost any other passage in Paul.*

*Translation Friction: Verses 11-15 regarding women's roles in the assembly are among the most debated texts in the New Testament. We render the Greek as written without imposing either complementarian or egalitarian interpretive frameworks. The reference to Eve's deception (v. 14) and salvation 'through childbearing' (v. 15) are notoriously difficult and we note the major interpretive options without choosing among them.*

*Connections: The prayer for authorities parallels Romans 13:1-7 and 1 Peter 2:13-17. The mediator language connects to Hebrews 8:6, 9:15, 12:24. The ransom statement echoes Mark 10:45. The discussion of women's roles relates to 1 Corinthians 11:2-16 and 14:34-35, though the relationship among these passages is debated.*

<sup>1</sup>First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people, <sup>2</sup>Pray for kings and all those in authority, so that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in complete godliness and dignity. <sup>3</sup>This is good and pleasing in the sight of God our Savior, <sup>4</sup>Who will possess all people to be saved, and to arrive to the knowledge of the truth. <sup>5</sup>For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and humanity — the man Christ Jesus, <sup>6</sup>Indeed, who offered himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time. <sup>7</sup>For this I was appointed a herald and an apostle — I am telling the truth, I am not lying — a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth. <sup>8</sup>Therefore I want the men in every place to pray, lifting up holy hands, without anger or quarreling. <sup>9</sup>Likewise, I want women to adorn themselves with proper clothing, modestly and with self-control, not with braided hair or gold or pearls or expensive clothing, <sup>10</sup>However, (which becometh women professing godliness) with good deeds. <sup>11</sup>Let a woman learn quietly with all submissiveness. <sup>12</sup>I do not permit a woman to teach or to exercise authority over a man; rather, she is to remain quiet. <sup>13</sup>For Adam was formed first, then Eve, <sup>14</sup>Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the sin. <sup>15</sup>Yet she will be saved through childbearing, if they continue in faith and love and holiness with self-control.

#### TRANSLATOR NOTES

1. Four types of prayer are listed: *deēseis* ('supplications' — specific requests arising from need), *proseuchas* ('prayers' — the general term), *enteucheis* ('intercessions' — approaching God on behalf of others, literally 'petitions'), and *eucharistias* ('thanksgivings'). The phrase *hyper pantōn anthrōpōn* ('for all people') establishes the universal scope that the entire chapter develops.
2. The prayer for political rulers is pragmatic rather than political — stable governance allows peaceful Christian life. The noun *eusebeia* ('godliness, piety') is a key term in the Pastoral Epistles (appearing 10 times in 1-2 Timothy and Titus) and describes the outward manifestation of reverence for God. The noun *semnotēs* ('dignity, seriousness, respectability') describes conduct that commands respect.
3. The adjective *apodekton* ('acceptable, pleasing, welcome') indicates that universal prayer aligns with God's own character and desire. The title 'God our Savior' (*toū sōtēros hēmōn theou*) recurs from 1:1, connecting God's saving character to his desire that all be saved (v. 4).
4. The verb *thelei* ('desires, wills, wants') has been debated for centuries: does God's desire necessarily produce its result? We render the Greek without imposing either universalist or particularist frameworks. The phrase *epignōsis alētheias* ('full knowledge of the truth') implies not mere information but deep, experiential understanding. Salvation and knowledge are paired — being saved involves knowing truth.
5. This verse may preserve an early creedal formula. The numerical emphasis — *heis* ('one') repeated — stresses exclusivity: one God (echoing the Shema of Deuteronomy 6:4) and one mediator. The term *mesitēs* ('mediator, go-between') implies someone who stands in the middle, connecting two parties. Christ's humanity is emphasized — *anthrōpos Christos Iēsous* ('the man Christ Jesus') — because a mediator between God and humans must share in both natures.
5. [TCR Cross-Reference] This verse quotes Deuteronomy 6:4 — see the TCR rendering of that passage for the Hebrew source text and translation decisions.
6. The noun *antilytron* ('ransom, substitute payment') is unique to this verse in the New Testament. It intensifies the related word *lytron* (Mark 10:45) with the prefix *anti-* ('in exchange for, in place of'), emphasizing substitutionary exchange. The phrase *hyper pantōn* ('for all') completes the universal scope established in verses 1 and 4. The 'testimony at the proper time' (*to martyriōn kairos idiois*) indicates that this redemptive act has been publicly declared at the divinely appointed moment.
7. Three roles describe Paul's commission: *kēryx* ('herald, proclaimer' — one who announces a king's message), *apostolos* ('apostle, sent one'), and *didaskalos ethnōn* ('teacher of the Gentiles'). The parenthetical oath — *alētheian legō, ou pseudomai* ('I tell the truth, I do not lie') — is striking (cf. Romans 9:1, 2 Corinthians 11:31) and may respond to challenges to Paul's authority in Ephesus.
8. The verb *boulomai* ('I want, I desire, I intend') expresses authoritative will. The noun *andras* ('men, males') is gender-specific here (not the generic *anthrōpoi*), establishing a parallel with the instructions to women in verse 9. Lifting hands in prayer was standard Jewish and early Christian practice (cf. Psalm 134:2). The qualifications — 'without anger' (*chōris orgēs*) and 'without quarreling' (*dialogismou* — 'dispute, argument') — suggest the Ephesian church had conflict-ridden worship.

8. [TCR Cross-Reference] References Psalm 134:2 — the TCR OT rendering of that text provides the Hebrew source and explains the translation decisions involved.
9. The adverb *hōsautōs* ('likewise, in the same way') connects women's instructions to the men's in verse 8. The noun *katastolē* ('clothing, deportment, demeanor') refers to the overall presentation. The virtues *aidous* ('modesty, reverence') and *sōphrosynēs* ('self-control, sound judgment') contrast with extravagant adornment. The specifics — braided hair (*plegmasin*), gold (*chrysiō*), pearls (*margaritais*), expensive clothing (*himatismō polytelei*) — were markers of wealth and social status in Roman society that could create division in worship.
10. The noun *theosebeian* ('reverence for God, godliness') is the feminine counterpart to the *eusebeia* that characterizes the entire letter's moral vision. The true adornment of a godly woman is not external display but *ergōn agathōn* ('good works') — conduct that reflects character.
11. The verb *manthanetō* ('let her learn') is actually a positive command — women are to learn, which was not universally accepted in the ancient world. The noun *hēsychia* ('quietness, stillness') does not necessarily mean total silence but a receptive, non-disruptive posture (the same word is used in verse 2 for the 'quiet life' of all believers). The noun *hypotagē* ('submissiveness, proper order') describes alignment with established authority structures.
12. The verb *epitrepō* ('I permit') is present tense — some scholars read this as a universal principle, others as a situational directive addressing the Ephesian context. The verb *authentein* ('to exercise authority, to domineer') occurs only here in the New Testament, and its precise meaning is debated: it may mean 'to exercise authority' (neutral) or 'to domineer, to usurp authority' (negative). The range of meaning affects whether the prohibition targets all authority or only improper authority. We render with the standard translation while noting the interpretive complexity.
13. Paul appeals to the creation narrative (Genesis 2:7, 21-22) as the basis for his instruction. The verb *eplasthē* ('was formed, was molded') echoes the Septuagint of Genesis 2:7, 8. Whether the temporal priority of Adam's creation establishes a permanent hierarchical principle or describes a culturally mediated application is debated among interpreters.
13. [TCR Cross-Reference] References Genesis 2:7 — the TCR OT rendering of that text provides the Hebrew source and explains the translation decisions involved.
14. Paul adds a second argument from Genesis 3: Eve was *exapatētheisa* ('thoroughly deceived') while Adam was not (*ouk ēpatēthē*). This does not absolve Adam — Romans 5:12-21 makes Adam fully responsible for the fall. Paul's point may be about susceptibility to deception in a context where false teachers were specifically targeting women (cf. 2 Timothy 3:6), rather than a universal statement about women's intellectual capacity. The relationship between this argument and the broader Pauline corpus remains debated.
14. [TCR Cross-Reference] Echoes Genesis 3:16. See the TCR's OT rendering for the Hebrew behind this passage and the translation rationale.
15. This is among the most difficult verses in the Pastoral Epistles. The phrase *sōthēsetai dia tēs teknogonias* ('she will be saved through the childbearing') has been interpreted as: (1) women will be preserved safely through the physical process of childbirth; (2) women will be saved through the Childbirth — the birth of Christ (the definite article *tēs* may point to a specific birth); (3) women will find their salvation expressed through faithful motherhood; (4) the curse of Genesis 3:16 will not have the final word. The shift from singular 'she' to plural 'they' (*meinōsin*) broadens the application. We render the Greek directly and note the complexity without selecting one interpretation.
15. [TCR Cross-Reference] This verse quotes Genesis 3:16 — see the TCR rendering of that passage for the Hebrew source text and translation decisions.

### 3

**Summary:** *Paul outlines the qualifications for overseers (episkopoi) and deacons (diakonoi) in the church. An overseer must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, sober-minded, self-controlled, hospitable, able to teach, not a drunkard, not violent, gentle, peaceable, not a lover of money, and must manage his own household well. He must not be a recent convert and must be well regarded by outsiders. Deacons similarly must be dignified, not double-tongued, not addicted to much wine, not greedy, holding the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience. Women (whether deacons' wives or female deacons) must likewise be dignified and faithful. The chapter concludes with a christological hymn: 'Great indeed is the mystery of godliness.'*

**What Makes This Remarkable:** *The qualifications for church officers focus overwhelmingly on character rather than competence or charisma. The only skill-based requirement is 'able to teach' (v. 2). The christological hymn in verse 16 — six clauses in three couplets — is widely regarded as a pre-Pauline hymn fragment that Paul quotes. Its structure moves from incarnation to exaltation in rhythmic parallels.*

**Translation Friction:** *The phrase 'husband of one wife' (mias gynaikos andra, v. 2) is debated: does it prohibit polygamy, remarriage after divorce, remarriage after a spouse's death, or require marital faithfulness? We render literally and note the debate. The 'women' (gynaikas) in verse 11 could be deacons' wives or female deacons — the Greek is ambiguous, and we preserve that ambiguity.*

*Connections: The overseer qualifications parallel Titus 1:5-9. The deacon qualifications have no exact parallel but relate to Acts 6:1-6. The christological hymn echoes Philippians 2:6-11 and Colossians 1:15-20 in its hymnic structure. The 'pillar and foundation of truth' (v. 15) imagery connects to Ephesians 2:20-22.*

<sup>1</sup>The saying is trustworthy: if anyone aspires to the office of overseer, he desires a noble task. <sup>2</sup>Therefore an overseer must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, sober-minded, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, <sup>3</sup>Not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of dishonest profit. But patient, not a brawler, not covetous. <sup>4</sup>He must manage his own household well, with all dignity keeping his children submissive. <sup>5</sup>Because if a man know not how to rule his own home, how will he take care of the church of God? <sup>6</sup>He must not be a recent convert, or he may become puffed up with conceit and fall into the condemnation of the devil. <sup>7</sup>Moreover, he must be well thought of by outsiders, so that he may not fall into disgrace and into a snare of the devil. <sup>8</sup>Deacons likewise must be dignified, not double-tongued, not addicted to much wine, not greedy for dishonest gain. <sup>9</sup>They must hold the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience. <sup>10</sup>And let them also be tested first; then let them serve as deacons if they prove blameless. <sup>11</sup>Women likewise must be dignified, not slanderers, sober-minded, faithful in all things. <sup>12</sup>Let deacons each be the husband of one wife, managing their children and their own households well. <sup>13</sup>For those who serve well as deacons gain a good standing for themselves and great confidence in the faith that is in Christ Jesus. <sup>14</sup>I am writing these things to you, hoping to come to you soon, <sup>15</sup>But if I am delayed, you will know how people should conduct themselves in God's household, which is the church of the living God — the pillar and foundation of the truth. <sup>16</sup>Great indeed, we confess, is the mystery of godliness: He was manifested in the flesh, vindicated by the Spirit, seen by angels, proclaimed among the nations, believed in throughout the world, taken up in glory.

#### TRANSLATOR NOTES

1. The 'faithful saying' formula (*pistos ho logos*) introduces the second such statement in the letter (cf. 1:15). The noun *episkopē* ('office of overseer, oversight') gives us the later English word 'bishop,' but in this period the role was local church leadership, not the hierarchical office that developed later. The verb *oregetai* ('aspires to, reaches for') is positive — desiring leadership is commendable when the character qualifications are met.
2. The overarching qualification is *anepilēmpton* ('above reproach, without anything to take hold of against him'). The phrase *mias gynaikos andra* ('a one-woman man') literally means 'a man of one woman.' Interpretations include: (1) prohibition of polygamy; (2) prohibition of remarriage after divorce; (3) prohibition of remarriage after widowhood; (4) requirement of marital faithfulness ('a faithful husband'). The last reading has the strongest contextual support. The list moves from personal character to social skills to a specific ability (*didaktikon*, 'able to teach').
3. The qualifications shift to negatives — what an overseer must not be. *Mē paroinon* ('not given to much wine, not a drunkard') does not necessarily prohibit all wine consumption but excessive drinking. *Mē plēktēn* ('not a striker, not violent') prohibits physical aggression. The positive counterpart is *epikeikē* ('gentle, yielding, forbearing') — a word Aristotle described as justice tempered by mercy.
4. The verb *proistamenon* ('managing, leading, caring for') is the same word used for church leadership in 1 Thessalonians 5:12 and Romans 12:8. Paul treats household management as a proving ground for church leadership. The noun *semnotētos* ('dignity, seriousness') may modify the father's manner of leadership rather than the children's behavior.
5. The verb *epimelēsetai* ('will care for, will take charge of') is the same word used for the Good Samaritan's care (Luke 10:34-35) — leadership is a form of caregiving, not dominion. The logic is from lesser to greater: the household is a microcosm of the church.
6. The noun *neophyton* ('newly planted') gives us the English 'neophyte.' The verb *typhōtheis* ('puffed up, conceited, clouded') literally refers to smoke — pride clouds the mind. The phrase *krima tou diabolou* ('condemnation of the devil') could mean: (1) the same condemnation the devil received for his pride, or (2) the condemnation that the devil brings upon the prideful. Both readings fit the context.
7. The phrase *tōn exōthen* ('those outside') refers to non-Christians — the overseer's reputation in the wider community matters. The 'snare of the devil' (*pagida tou diabolou*) adds to the devil's activity from verse 6: pride leads to condemnation, bad reputation leads to entrapment. A leader with a compromised public reputation becomes vulnerable to Satan's exploitation.
8. The noun *diakonous* ('deacons, servants, ministers') denotes those who serve — the role is defined by service rather than authority. The qualifications parallel the overseer's but with some differences: no teaching requirement, more emphasis on integrity in speech (*mē dilogous*, 'not double-tongued' — saying different things to different people). The term *aischrokerdeis* ('greedy for dishonest gain') suggests deacons may have handled community funds.
9. The phrase *mystērion tēs pisteōs* ('the mystery of the faith') refers to the revealed content of Christian belief — the truth previously hidden but now made known through the gospel (cf. v. 16). A 'clear conscience' (*kathara syneidēsei*) means their inner life matches their outward profession — the same concern Paul raised in 1:5, 19.

10. The verb dokimazesthōsan ('let them be tested, examined') is the same word used for testing metals (cf. 1 Thessalonians 5:21). A period of evaluation precedes service — deacons are not self-appointed but community-assessed. The adjective anegklētoi ('blameless, without accusation') sets a high bar: no credible charge can be brought against them.
11. The Greek gynaikas ('women') could mean: (1) wives of deacons, (2) female deacons (deaconesses), or (3) women in general. The parallel structure hōsautōs ('likewise') — used for deacons in verse 8 — suggests a third category of church workers rather than merely deacons' wives. Romans 16:1 identifies Phoebe as a diakonos, supporting the existence of female deacons. The adjective diabolous ('slandering') is literally 'devil-like' — the devil (diabolos) is the slanderer par excellence.
12. The household management requirement repeats from the overseer qualifications (v. 4) but in condensed form. If verse 11 refers to female deacons, then verse 12 resumes the male deacon qualifications. The phrase mias gynaikos andres ('men of one woman') mirrors verse 2.
13. The noun bathmon ('step, standing, rank') may refer to social standing in the community, spiritual advancement, or both. The parrēsian ('boldness, confidence, freedom of speech') indicates that faithful service produces inner assurance and outward courage in the faith. Service is not merely duty but a means of spiritual growth.
14. Paul signals that the letter is a temporary substitute for his personal presence. The phrase en tachei ('soon, quickly') expresses hope rather than certainty — Paul does not know when he will arrive.
15. Three metaphors describe the church: oikos theou ('household of God' — a family), ekklēsia theou zōntos ('assembly of the living God'), and stylos kai hedraiōma tēs alētheias ('pillar and foundation of the truth'). The architectural imagery is powerful: the church supports and displays truth as a pillar holds up and displays a building. The phrase 'living God' (theou zōntos) distinguishes the true God from the dead idols of Ephesus (cf. Acts 19).
16. The SBLGNT reads hos ('who, he who') rather than theos ('God'), which appears in later manuscripts — the difference in uncial script is minimal (OC vs. ΘC) and the original reading was likely the relative pronoun. The six clauses form three antithetical pairs: flesh/Spirit, angels/nations, world/glory — moving between earthly and heavenly spheres. This is widely regarded as a pre-existing hymn that Paul quotes. The verb edikaiōthē ('was vindicated, was justified') in reference to Christ means his claims were confirmed, not that he needed moral justification. 'Taken up in glory' (anelēmphthē en doxē) refers to the ascension.

## 4

*Summary: Paul warns that the Spirit explicitly predicts that some will depart from the faith in later times, following deceiving spirits and teachings of demons. These false teachers forbid marriage and require abstinence from certain foods — practices Paul refutes by affirming that everything God created is good and is sanctified through the word of God and prayer. Paul then gives Timothy personal pastoral directives: train yourself in godliness (which has value both for the present and the coming life), do not let anyone look down on your youth, set an example in speech, conduct, love, faith, and purity. He is to devote himself to the public reading of Scripture, to exhortation, and to teaching, and not to neglect the gift given through prophecy and the laying on of hands.*

*What Makes This Remarkable: The ascetic practices condemned here (forbidding marriage, requiring food abstinence) suggest a proto-Gnostic or Jewish-ascetic influence in Ephesus that viewed the material world as inherently evil. Paul's response affirms the goodness of creation — a fundamental Jewish-Christian conviction. The statement 'godliness is of value in every way' (v. 8) and the 'faithful saying' of verse 9 provide one of the Pastoral Epistles' most positive theological affirmations. The charge to Timothy not to neglect his gift (v. 14) reveals that even Spirit-given gifts require active cultivation.*

*Translation Friction: The phrase 'in later times' (en hysterois kairois, v. 1) is debated — Paul may view these times as already present or as still future. We render the Greek temporal reference without imposing a specific eschatological timeline. The 'faithful saying' formula in verse 9 is unusual because what precedes and what follows could each be the saying referred to.*

*Connections: The food laws discussion connects to Romans 14:1-4, 14:14-23 and Colossians 2:16-23. The training metaphor anticipates 2 Timothy 2:5 and 4:7-8. The laying on of hands (v. 14) parallels Acts 6:6, 13:3 and 2 Timothy 1:6. The 'public reading of Scripture' (v. 13) reflects synagogue practice adopted by the early church.*

1Now the Spirit expressly says that in later times some will depart from the faith, devoting themselves to deceitful spirits and teachings of demons, 2Speaking lies in hypocrisy. After their conscience seared with a hot iron;. 3They forbid people to marry and order them to avoid certain foods. But God created those foods to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe

and know the truth. <sup>4</sup>For everything created by God is good, and nothing is to be rejected if it is received with thanksgiving, <sup>5</sup> Since it is sanctified by the message of God and prayer. <sup>6</sup>If you put these things before the brothers and sisters, you will be a good servant of Christ Jesus, trained in the words of the faith and of the good teaching that you have followed. <sup>7</sup>Have nothing to do with irreverent, silly myths. Rather, train yourself for godliness, <sup>8</sup>Physical training has some value, but godliness has value in every way, since it holds promise for both the present life and the life to come. <sup>9</sup>The saying is trustworthy and deserving of full acceptance. <sup>10</sup>For to this end we toil and strive, because we have set our hope on the living God, who is the Savior of all people, especially of those who believe. <sup>11</sup>Command and teach these things. <sup>12</sup>Let no one despise you for your youth, but set the believers an example in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith, in purity. <sup>13</sup>Until I come, devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to exhortation, and to teaching. <sup>14</sup>Do not neglect the gift that is in you, which was given to you through prophecy with the laying on of hands by the council of elders. <sup>15</sup>Practice these things, immerse yourself in them, so that your progress may be evident to all. <sup>16</sup>Keep a close watch on yourself and on the teaching. Persist in this, for by doing so you will save both yourself and your hearers.

## TRANSLATOR NOTES

1. The adverb *rhētōs* ('expressly, explicitly, in so many words') indicates a clear prophetic utterance, not vague prediction. The phrase *en hysterois kairois* ('in later times') is less urgent than the 'last days' (*eschatais hēmerais*) of 2 Timothy 3:1 — it describes a future period without specifying when. The 'spirits' (*pneumasin planois*) are not human false teachers but spiritual entities whose deceptive influence produces false teaching.
2. The verb *kekautēriamenōn* ('having been seared, having been branded') uses medical/branding imagery — their consciences have been cauterized, rendered insensitive like burned flesh. The passive voice may suggest the searing was done to them by the 'deceitful spirits' of verse 1, not merely by their own choices.
3. The two prohibitions — forbidding marriage and requiring food abstinence — reflect an asceticism that views the material world as corrupting. Paul counters with a creation-affirming theology: these things were 'created' (*ektisen*) by God 'for receiving with thanksgiving' (*eis metalēmpsin meta eucharistias*). The qualifier 'those who believe and know the truth' does not restrict enjoyment but identifies those who understand creation's goodness.
4. Paul echoes Genesis 1 where God declares each element of creation 'good' (*kalon*). The phrase *pan ktisma theou kalon* ('every creature/creation of God is good') is a direct theological rebuttal of any dualism that considers the material world evil. The qualifying condition is *eucharistia* ('thanksgiving') — gratitude sanctifies the reception of God's gifts.
4. [TCR Cross-Reference] Echoes Genesis 1. See the TCR's OT rendering for the Hebrew behind this passage and the translation rationale.
5. The verb *hagizetai* ('is made holy, is sanctified') does not mean the food was previously unholy but that it is consecrated for use through two means: *logos theou* ('word of God' — possibly a prayer of blessing, a scriptural declaration like Genesis 1's 'it was good,' or the gospel itself) and *enteuxeōs* ('prayer, intercession'). The meal prayer sanctifies ordinary food by acknowledging God as its source.
5. [TCR Cross-Reference] This verse quotes Genesis 1 — see the TCR rendering of that passage for the Hebrew source text and translation decisions.
6. The verb *entrophomenos* ('being nourished, being trained') is a passive participle — Timothy is simultaneously nourishing the church and being nourished by sound doctrine. The phrase *kalēs didaskalias* ('good teaching') contrasts with the 'teachings of demons' in verse 1. The verb *parēkolouthēkas* ('you have followed, you have closely traced') implies not just intellectual understanding but personal adherence to the teaching.
7. The adjective *graōdeis* ('old-womanish, silly') was a common ancient rhetorical dismissal — the characterization is cultural, not gender-based. The verb *gymnaze* ('train, exercise') is from the athletic gymnasium — godliness requires the same deliberate, disciplined effort as physical fitness. This sets up the comparison in verse 8.
8. Paul does not dismiss physical training (*pros oligon estin ōphelimos*, 'is of some value') but relativizes it. Godliness (*eusebeia*) surpasses it because its benefits extend beyond the present life (*tēs nyn*) into the coming life (*tēs mellousēs*). The 'promise' (*epangelian*) attaches both temporal and eternal rewards to godliness — it is not merely heavenly insurance but transforms present existence.
9. The third 'faithful saying' formula in the letter (cf. 1:15, 3:1). Whether this refers back to verse 8 or forward to verse 10 is debated. The content of verse 8 — godliness is universally profitable — fits the formula well and is the more likely referent.
10. The SBLGNT reads *agōnizometha* ('we strive, we struggle') rather than *oneidizometha* ('we suffer reproach') found in some manuscripts. The phrase *sōtēr pantōn anthrōpōn* ('Savior of all people') has been debated: some read it as affirming universal salvation, others as affirming God's universal saving intent which is actualized especially (*malista*) in believers. The word *malista* ('especially, most of all') does not negate the universal statement but qualifies it — God's saving work extends to all but is fully realized in those who believe.
11. The two imperatives — *parangelle* ('command') and *didaske* ('teach') — combine authority with instruction. Timothy is both to require obedience and to educate understanding.

12. Timothy's 'youth' (neotētos) in ancient terms likely means he was under 40 — not necessarily what moderns would call young. The antidote to age-related dismissal is not assertion of authority but exemplary character. Five areas of example are named: logos ('speech'), anastrophē ('conduct, way of life'), agapē ('love'), pistis ('faith'), and hagneia ('purity'). The SBLGNT does not include en pneumati ('in spirit'), which appears in some manuscripts.
13. The noun anagnōsei ('reading') with the definite article refers to the formal, public reading of Scripture in the assembly — a practice inherited from the synagogue (cf. Luke 4:16-21, Acts 13:15). The three activities — reading, exhortation (paraklēsei), and teaching (didaskalia) — form the core of early Christian worship. Timothy is to ensure these continue in Paul's absence.
14. The charismatos ('gift, grace-gift') is a specific endowment for ministry, given at a definable moment through two means: prophētias ('prophecy' — inspired speech identifying Timothy's calling) and epitheseōs tōn cheirōn tou presbyteriou ('laying on of hands by the elder council'). The command mē amelei ('do not neglect') implies that spiritual gifts can atrophy without active cultivation. The 'council of elders' (presbyteriou) suggests a collective commissioning body. Second Timothy 1:6 adds that Paul himself participated in this laying on of hands.
15. The verb meleta ('practice, cultivate, meditate on') implies active engagement, not passive contemplation. The phrase en toutois isthi ('be in these things, immerse yourself in them') calls for total absorption — Timothy's ministry should be his consuming focus. The noun prokopē ('progress, advancement') was a Stoic term for moral growth, here applied to visible pastoral development.
16. The dual focus — seautō ('yourself') and tē didaskalia ('the teaching') — insists that personal character and doctrinal fidelity cannot be separated. The verb epimene ('persist, continue, remain') demands sustained commitment. The promise that Timothy will 'save' (sōseis) both himself and his hearers does not mean Timothy replaces Christ as savior but that faithful ministry is the instrument through which Christ's saving work reaches people.

## 5

*Summary: Paul instructs Timothy on relating to different groups within the church: older and younger men and women. He then provides extensive guidance on caring for widows, distinguishing between those who qualify for church support (truly desolate, over sixty, with a record of good works) and those whose families should provide for them. Younger widows are encouraged to remarry rather than enroll on the widow list. Paul addresses the compensation and discipline of elders, warns against partiality, and offers personal health advice about wine. The chapter closes with observations about the visibility of sins and good works.*

*What Makes This Remarkable: This chapter provides the most detailed early church organizational material in the New Testament. The widow enrollment list (vv. 9-16) reveals a formal structure for benevolence that included criteria for eligibility. The instruction to give elders 'double honor' (v. 17) and the scriptural argument for compensating church workers (v. 18) represent early Christian thinking about ministerial support. The personal note about wine (v. 23) offers a rare glimpse into Timothy's health and Paul's pastoral concern for his protegee.*

*Translation Friction: The restrictions on younger widows (vv. 11-15) and the language about their potential behavior ('they grow wanton,' 'learn to be idlers,' 'gossips and busybodies') reflects ancient patriarchal assumptions about women's vulnerabilities. We render the Greek faithfully and note the cultural context without sanitizing or editorializing. The command to 'drink a little wine' (v. 23) has been variously interpreted regarding total abstinence debates.*

*Connections: The care of widows connects to Acts 6:1-6, James 1:27. The 'laborer deserves his wages' saying (v. 18) quotes Deuteronomy 25:4 and Luke 10:7 (or a common tradition). The requirement for two or three witnesses (v. 19) follows Deuteronomy 19:15. The laying on of hands (v. 22) connects to 4:14 and 2 Timothy 1:6.*

1Do not rebuke an older man harshly, but appeal to him as a father, to younger men as brothers, 2Treat older women as mothers, and younger women as sisters, with complete purity. 3Honor widows who are truly widows. 4But if a widow has children or grandchildren, let them first learn to show godliness to their own household and to make some repayment to their parents, for this is pleasing in the sight of God. 5She who is truly a widow, left all alone, has set her hope on God and continues in supplications and prayers night and day, 6However, she that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth. 7Command these things as well, so that they may be above reproach. 8But if anyone does not provide for his own relatives, and especially for members of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever. 9Let a widow be enrolled if she is not less than sixty years old, having been the wife of one husband, 10Well reported of for righteous deeds. If she

possess carried up offspring, if she have lodged strangers, if she have washed the saints' feet, if she have relieved the afflicted, if she have diligently followed every good work. <sup>11</sup>But refuse to enroll younger widows, for when their desires draw them away from Christ, they want to marry, <sup>12</sup>They bring judgment on themselves because they have broken their original commitment. <sup>13</sup>Besides that, they also learn to be idle, going from house to house, and not only idle but also gossips and busybodies, saying things they should not. <sup>14</sup>So I would have younger widows marry, bear children, manage their households, and give the adversary no occasion for slander. <sup>15</sup>For some have already strayed after Satan. <sup>16</sup>If any believing woman has relatives who are widows, let her care for them. Let the church not be burdened, so that it may care for those who are truly widows. <sup>17</sup>Let the elders who lead well be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in preaching and teaching. <sup>18</sup>For the Scripture says, "You shall not muzzle an ox while it treads out the grain," and, "The laborer deserves his wages." <sup>19</sup>Do not accept an accusation against an elder except on the evidence of two or three witnesses. <sup>20</sup>As for those who persist in sin, rebuke them in the presence of all, so that the rest may stand in fear. <sup>21</sup>In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus and of the elect angels, I charge you to keep these rules without prejudging, doing nothing out of partiality. <sup>22</sup>Do not be hasty in the laying on of hands, and do not share in the sins of others. Keep yourself pure. <sup>23</sup>No longer drink only water, but use a little wine for the sake of your stomach and your frequent ailments. <sup>24</sup>The sins of some people are conspicuous, going ahead of them to judgment, but the sins of others only follow later. <sup>25</sup>So also good works are conspicuous, and even those that are not cannot remain hidden.

## TRANSLATOR NOTES

1. The noun *presbyterō* here likely means 'older man' rather than the office of 'elder' (that topic begins at v. 17). The verb *epiplēxēs* ('rebuke sharply, strike at') is strong — Timothy should correct with family-appropriate respect, not public confrontation. The church is envisioned as a family with generational dynamics.
2. The addition of *en pasē hagneia* ('in all purity') specifically in reference to younger women is practical: a young pastor relating to younger women must maintain absolute propriety. The four-part schema (older men, younger men, older women, younger women) covers the entire congregation through family metaphors.
3. The verb *tima* ('honor') likely includes both respect and material support — 'honor' in this context has financial implications (cf. v. 17 where 'double honor' clearly includes payment). The phrase *ontōs chēras* ('truly widows, widows indeed') establishes a category: not all women who have lost husbands qualify for church support.
4. The verb *manthanetōsan* ('let them learn') — the subject is the children or grandchildren, not the widow. Family responsibility takes priority over church benevolence. The noun *amoibas* ('repayments, returns') frames the care of parents as reciprocal — children are repaying what they received. The KJV's 'nephews' reflects 17th-century English meaning 'grandchildren' (*ekgona*).
5. The qualifying portrait: a 'true widow' is *memonōmenē* ('left alone, isolated') with no family support, *ēlpiken epi theon* ('has set her hope on God' — perfect tense indicating settled trust), and devotes herself to continual prayer. This describes both her need (desolate) and her character (devoted).
6. The verb *spatalōsa* ('living in self-indulgence, living for pleasure') describes a widow who uses her status to pursue luxury rather than godliness. The paradox *zōsa tethnēken* ('living, she has died') is a spiritual death that coexists with physical life — a sharp rebuke that distinguishes genuine need from entitlement.
7. The adjective *anepilēmptoi* ('above reproach, not open to accusation') applies to both the widows and the families — the entire system of care must be conducted blamelessly.
8. The harshness of Paul's verdict — 'worse than an unbeliever' (*apistou cheirōn*) — underscores the seriousness of family responsibility. Even pagans care for their own; a Christian who fails to do so has contradicted the faith at its most basic level. The verb *ērñētai* ('has denied') is the same word used for denying Christ (2 Timothy 2:12).
9. The verb *katalegestho* ('let her be enrolled, let her be put on the list') indicates a formal register — the 'widow list' was an official church institution. The age requirement of sixty and the phrase *henos andros gynē* ('a one-man woman' — the feminine parallel to the overseer requirement in 3:2) establish formal criteria. This is not merely charity but an organized role.
10. Five examples of 'good works' illustrate the character required: child-rearing (*eteknotropēsēn*), hospitality (*exenodochēsēn*), foot-washing (*hagiōn podas enipsēn* — indicating both humility and practical service), caring for the afflicted (*thlibomenois epērkesēn*), and general devotion to good works. Foot-washing was a menial task usually performed by slaves or the lowest-ranking household member (cf. John 13:1-17).
11. The verb *katastrēniasōsin* ('to grow wanton against, to be drawn away by desire against') is rare and implies sensual desire that conflicts with a commitment — in this case, the enrollment may have involved a pledge of dedication to the church. The concern is not that remarriage itself is sinful (v. 14 encourages it) but that breaking a formal commitment constitutes unfaithfulness.

12. The noun *krima* ('judgment, condemnation') and the phrase *tēn prōtēn pistin* ('the first faith/pledge') are debated: *pistin* could mean 'faith' (they have abandoned their Christian faith) or 'pledge' (they have broken their enrollment vow). The enrollment context favors 'pledge' — they made a commitment they are now breaking. The KJV's 'damnation' is too strong for *krima*, which can mean 'censure' or 'adverse judgment.'
13. The verb *periechomenai* ('going around, visiting') describes house-to-house movement that becomes an occasion for *phylaroi* ('gossips, chatterers') and *periergoi* ('busybodies, meddlers' — the same word root as in 2 Thessalonians 3:11). The 'things they should not say' (*ta mē deonta*) may include spreading false teaching, which ties this passage to the broader concern about heterodox influence.
14. Paul's preference (*boulomai*, 'I want, I desire') for younger widows to remarry is not a prohibition of celibacy but practical pastoral counsel in context. The verb *oikodespotein* ('to manage a household, to be master of a house') assigns significant domestic authority to women. The 'adversary' (*tō antikeimenō*) could be Satan, human opponents of the church, or both.
15. The verb *exetrapēsan* ('have turned aside, have strayed') recurs from 1:6 — the same word for the false teachers. Paul implies that some younger widows have already followed the path he warns about, making this not hypothetical but pastoral response to actual situations.
16. The SBLGNT reads *pistē* ('believing woman') rather than *pistos ē pistē* ('believing man or woman') found in some manuscripts. The economic logic is clear: private family support frees the church's limited resources for those who have no other support. The verb *eparkeitō* ('let her care for, let her assist') is the same used for the enrolled widow's good works in verse 10.
17. The noun *presbyteroi* now clearly refers to the office of elder (not merely older men as in v. 1). The 'double honor' (*diplēs timēs*) likely includes both respect and financial remuneration — verse 18 confirms the financial dimension. The phrase *malista hoi kopiōntes en logō kai didaskalia* ('especially those laboring in preaching and teaching') distinguishes a subset of elders whose primary ministry is verbal — suggesting that not all elders preached or taught.
18. Two quotations support financial compensation for elders: Deuteronomy 25:4 (the working ox must be fed) and a saying attributed to Jesus in Luke 10:7 (the laborer deserves wages). The remarkable fact is that Paul introduces both with the formula *legei hē graphē* ('the Scripture says'), placing a saying of Jesus on equal authority with Old Testament Scripture — one of the earliest indications of written gospel traditions being treated as authoritative.
18. [TCR Cross-Reference] References Deuteronomy 25:4 — the TCR OT rendering of that text provides the Hebrew source and explains the translation decisions involved.
19. The protection of elders from false accusations follows the Mosaic requirement of multiple witnesses (Deuteronomy 19:15, which Jesus also cited in Matthew 18:16). The higher standard protects leaders from manipulation while still allowing legitimate charges. The verb *paradechou* ('accept, receive, entertain') means not that accusations cannot be heard but that they should not be acted upon without corroboration.
19. [TCR Cross-Reference] Echoes Deuteronomy 19:15. See the TCR's OT rendering for the Hebrew behind this passage and the translation rationale.
20. The present participle *hamartanontas* ('those sinning, those who persist in sin') indicates ongoing sin, not a single lapse. Public rebuke follows the failure of private processes (v. 19). The phrase *enōpion pantōn* ('in the presence of all') makes the correction communal — the entire congregation witnesses it. The purpose is deterrent: *hina kai hoi loipoi phobon echōsin* ('so that the rest may fear').
21. The solemn adjuration — invoking God, Christ, and the elect angels as witnesses — gives this charge the gravity of a courtroom oath. The warnings against *prokrimatos* ('prejudging, prejudice') and *prosklisis* ('partiality, favoritism') address the two great temptations of church discipline: deciding before hearing evidence and playing favorites. The 'elect angels' (*eklektōn angelōn*) are the holy angels who serve as witnesses of human conduct.
22. The 'laying on of hands' (*cheiras epitithei*) likely refers to ordination (cf. 4:14) rather than restoration of the fallen, though both interpretations have support. The warning against haste means: do not ordain without adequate evaluation (cf. 3:10). 'Sharing in others' sins' (*koinōnei hamartiais allotriais*) means that premature ordination of an unqualified person makes the ordainer complicit in the subsequent failures.
23. This personal aside reveals that Timothy had been drinking only water (*mēketi hydropōtei* — 'no longer be a water-drinker'), possibly as an ascetic practice or to avoid any appearance of impropriety. Paul overrides this with practical medical advice: *oinō oligō* ('a little wine') as a digestive aid. In the ancient world, wine was commonly used medicinally and was often safer than water. The verse interrupts the flow of instructions, suggesting it was a parenthetical pastoral concern.
24. Paul returns to the theme of evaluating people for leadership. The point is practical: some people's disqualifying sins are immediately visible (*prodēloi*, 'evident, conspicuous'), while others' sins are hidden and only emerge later (*epakolouthousin*, 'follow after'). This is why hasty ordination is dangerous (v. 22) — time reveals what is hidden.
25. The parallel is encouraging: just as hidden sins eventually surface (v. 24), hidden good works will also become visible. The phrase *krybēnai ou dynantai* ('cannot remain hidden') assures Timothy that genuine godliness, even when unrecognized initially, will eventually be revealed. This gives both warning and encouragement for the evaluation process.

## 6

**Summary:** *Paul instructs enslaved people to honor their masters so that God's name is not blasphemed, and specifically addresses those with believing masters. He then returns to the problem of false teachers who use godliness as a means of financial gain, contrasting their mindset with the principle that godliness with contentment is great gain. The famous warning about the love of money follows: those who desire to be rich fall into temptation and a snare. Paul charges Timothy to flee these things and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance, and gentleness. The letter closes with a magnificent doxology to God as 'the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords, who alone has immortality.'*

**What Makes This Remarkable:** *The statement 'the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil' (v. 10) is one of the most frequently quoted and misquoted verses in the Bible — Paul says love of money, not money itself. The closing doxology (vv. 15-16) is among the most exalted descriptions of God in the New Testament, drawing on Jewish liturgical traditions about God's transcendence. The 'good confession' Timothy is charged to maintain (v. 12) connects to Jesus's testimony before Pontius Pilate (v. 13), linking Timothy's pastoral courage to Christ's ultimate witness.*

**Translation Friction:** *The instructions to enslaved people (vv. 1-2) must be read in the context of ancient slavery, which was pervasive and varied in form. Paul does not endorse slavery but addresses the reality of enslaved believers within existing social structures. The 'deposit' (parathēkē, v. 20) that Timothy must guard has been interpreted as the body of apostolic teaching, anticipating 2 Timothy 1:12, 14.*

**Connections:** *The slavery instructions parallel Ephesians 6:5-9, Colossians 3:22-4:1, Titus 2:9-10, and Philemon. The love-of-money warning echoes Ecclesiastes 5:10 and Jesus's teaching in Matthew 6:19-24. The 'good confession' connects to Matthew 27:11 and John 18:36-37. The doxology echoes Deuteronomy 10:17, Daniel 2:47, and Revelation 17:14, 19:16.*

<sup>1</sup>Let all who are under the yoke as slaves regard their own masters as worthy of all honor, so that the name of God and the teaching may not be blasphemed. <sup>2</sup>Those who have believing masters must not be disrespectful on the ground that they are brothers; rather, they must serve all the more, since those who benefit from their good service are believers and beloved. Teach and urge these things. <sup>3</sup>If anyone teaches a different doctrine and does not agree with the sound words of our Lord Jesus Christ and the teaching that accords with godliness, <sup>4</sup>Indeed, he is proud, knowing nothing, but doting concerning questions and strifes of words, whereof comes envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings, <sup>5</sup>and constant friction between people whose minds are corrupted and who have lost hold of the truth. They think that godliness is a way to make money. Stay away from them. <sup>6</sup>But godliness with contentment is remarkable gain. <sup>7</sup>Indeed, since we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. <sup>8</sup>But if we have food and clothing, with these we will be content. <sup>9</sup>But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation, into a snare, into many senseless and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction. <sup>10</sup>For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. It is through this craving that some have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many sorrows. <sup>11</sup>But as for you, O man of God, flee these things. Pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance, gentleness. <sup>12</sup>Fight the good fight of the faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called and about which you made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses. <sup>13</sup>I charge you in the presence of God, who gives life to all things, and of Christ Jesus, who in his testimony before Pontius Pilate made the good confession, <sup>14</sup>That you keep this commandment apart from spot, unrebukeable, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ. <sup>15</sup>At the proper time, God will reveal Christ — God, the blessed and only Ruler, the King of kings and Lord of lords. <sup>16</sup>Indeed, who only has immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach to. Whom no man has seen, nor can see — to whom be honour and authority everlasting. Amen. <sup>17</sup>As for the rich in this present age, charge them not to be haughty or to set their hopes on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who richly provides us with everything to enjoy. <sup>18</sup>They are to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share, <sup>19</sup>Indeed, laying up in store for themselves a good foundation opposed to the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life. <sup>20</sup>O Timothy, guard the deposit entrusted to

you. Avoid the irreverent babble and contradictions of what is falsely called 'knowledge,' <sup>21</sup>Indeed, which some professing have erred concerning the faith. Grace remain with you. Amen.

## TRANSLATOR NOTES

1. The phrase *hypo zygon douloi* ('slaves under the yoke') acknowledges the burden of slavery without endorsing it. The motivation for honorable conduct is the reputation of God — *hina mē to onoma tou theou kai hē didaskalia blasphemētai* ('so that God's name and the teaching may not be blasphemed'). Disobedient Christian slaves would give outsiders reason to malign both God and the gospel.
2. A specific problem: some enslaved Christians with Christian masters were using their shared faith as grounds for insubordination — 'we are brothers, so why should I serve you?' Paul argues the opposite: shared faith should increase rather than decrease the quality of service. The phrase *hoi tēs euergeias antilambanomenoi* ('those who receive the benefit') likely refers to the masters benefiting from the slaves' service, though it could also mean both parties benefit from the relationship. The tension between spiritual equality and social hierarchy was a real challenge for early Christian communities.
3. The verb *heterodidaskalei* ('teaches differently') returns from 1:3, forming an *inclusio* for the letter's central concern. 'Sound words' (*hygiainousin logois*, 'healthy words') uses the medical metaphor characteristic of the Pastoral Epistles. The phrase *tois tou kyriou hēmōn Iēsou Christou* ('those of our Lord Jesus Christ') may refer to Jesus's own teachings or to the apostolic tradition about Christ.
4. The verb *tetyphōtai* ('is puffed up, is clouded with conceit') recurs from 3:6. The verb *nosōn* ('being sick, having an unhealthy craving') extends the medical metaphor — while sound teaching is 'healthy,' the false teacher is diseased, craving (*nosōn*) controversies (*zētēseis*) and word-fights (*logomachias*). The five fruit of false teaching — envy (*phthonos*), dissension (*eris*), slander (*blasphēmiai*), evil suspicions (*hyponoiai ponērai*), and the constant friction of verse 5 — describe a community being destroyed from within.
5. The noun *diaparatribai* ('constant friction, mutual irritation') occurs only here in the New Testament. The false teachers' fundamental corruption is described at three levels: corrupted minds (*diephtharmenōn ton nous*), deprived of truth (*apesterēmenōn tēs alētheias*), and mercenary motivation (*nomizontōn porismon einai tēn eusebeian* — 'thinking godliness is a means of profit'). The mercenary motive is the climactic accusation.
6. Paul redefines 'gain' (*porisimos*): true profit is not financial enrichment through religion but *eusebeia meta autarkeias* ('godliness with contentment'). The noun *autarkeia* ('contentment, self-sufficiency') was a key Stoic virtue meaning independence from external circumstances (cf. Philippians 4:11-12). Paul Christianizes it: contentment comes not from self-mastery but from trust in God's provision.
7. This proverbial wisdom echoes Job 1:21 ('Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked I shall return') and Ecclesiastes 5:15. The logic is simple: material wealth has no eternal portability. The textual variant *hoti* ('because') or *dēlon hoti* ('it is clear that') does not affect the meaning significantly.
7. [TCR Cross-Reference] Draws on Job 1:21. Consult the TCR rendering of that passage for the underlying Hebrew and the rationale for key translation choices.
7. [TCR Cross-Reference] Draws on Ecclesiastes 5:15. Consult the TCR rendering of that passage for the underlying Hebrew and the rationale for key translation choices.
8. The two essentials — *diatrophas* ('food, sustenance') and *skepasata* ('coverings' — which could include clothing and shelter) — define the baseline for contentment. The verb *arkesthēsometha* ('we will be content, we will be satisfied') is a future of resolution — 'we will consider these sufficient.' This is not asceticism but a rejection of acquisitiveness.
9. Paul targets not wealth itself but *boulomenoi ploutein* ('those who desire to be rich') — the craving for wealth. The sequence is a downward spiral: temptation (*peirasmon*), snare (*pagida*), many foolish and harmful desires (*epithymias pollas anoētous kai blaberas*), and finally ruin (*olethron*) and destruction (*apōleian*). The verb *bythizousin* ('plunge, drown') is nautical — those pursuing wealth are pulled under like a sinking ship.
10. The Greek *rhiza pantōn tōn kakōn* ('a root of all evils') lacks the definite article before *rhiza*, so 'a root' is more accurate than the KJV's 'the root.' The noun *philargyria* ('love of money, avarice') is the specific vice — not money itself but the love of it. The verb *perieperian* ('pierced through') is violent imagery — they have impaled themselves on their own desires, and the result is *odynais pollais* ('many sorrows, many pains'). The wandering (*apeplanēthēsan*) from faith completes the pattern: doctrinal error, moral compromise, and financial corruption are interconnected.
11. The address *anthrōpe theou* ('man of God') is an Old Testament title for prophets (1 Samuel 9:6, 1 Kings 17:18, 2 Kings 1:9) — Paul identifies Timothy with the prophetic tradition. The six virtues to 'pursue' (*diōke*) are: righteousness (*dikaiosynēn*), godliness (*eusebeian*), faith (*pistin*), love (*agapēn*), endurance (*hypomonēn*), and gentleness (*praypathian*). The pattern is twofold: flee (*pheuge*) the dangers and pursue (*diōke*) the virtues — the Christian life involves active movement in both directions.
11. [TCR Cross-Reference] Quotes 1 Samuel 9:6. The TCR rendering of that OT passage preserves the Hebrew source text and documents the translation decisions behind it.
11. [TCR Cross-Reference] Quotes 1 Kings 17:18. The TCR rendering of that OT passage preserves the Hebrew source text and documents the translation decisions behind it.
11. [TCR Cross-Reference] Quotes 2 Kings 1:9. The TCR rendering of that OT passage preserves the Hebrew source text and documents the translation decisions behind it.

- 12.** The verb *agōnizō* ('fight, compete, struggle') is athletic/military — the same word family used throughout both letters to Timothy. The noun *agōna* ('fight, contest, struggle') is the struggle itself. The 'good confession' (*kalēn homologian*) likely refers to Timothy's baptismal confession or ordination vow, made publicly (*enōpion pollōn martyron*, 'before many witnesses'). 'Take hold of' (*epilabou*) the eternal life suggests grasping what has already been given — eternal life is both present possession and future hope.
- 13.** God is described as *zōogonountos ta panta* ('giving life to all things') — a title that grounds the charge in God's sovereign power over life. Christ's 'good confession' before Pilate (*martyrēsantos epi Pontiou Pilatou*) parallels Timothy's confession in verse 12 — Timothy's courage is modeled on Christ's courage. This is one of the few places in the Epistles that names Pontius Pilate, rooting the gospel in historical specificity.
- 14.** The 'commandment' (*entolēn*) refers to the entire charge entrusted to Timothy — his apostolic commission. The adjectives *aspilon* ('unstained, spotless') and *anepilēmpton* ('above reproach') apply to Timothy's faithfulness in keeping it. The time horizon is *mechri tēs epiphaneias* ('until the appearing') of Christ — Timothy's duty extends to the *parousia*.
- 15.** The doxology begins. God is described as *makarios* ('blessed, supremely happy'), *monos dynastēs* ('only Sovereign, sole Ruler'), *basileus tōn basileuontōn* ('King of those who reign'), and *kyrios tōn kyrieuontōn* ('Lord of those who exercise lordship'). These titles directly challenge imperial claims — in a Roman world where Caesar claimed supreme sovereignty, Paul declares that only God holds true power. The phrase *kairois idiois* ('at the proper time') places the timing of Christ's return under God's sovereign control.
- 16.** Three divine attributes complete the doxology: *athanasian* ('immortality' — God alone inherently possesses deathlessness; all other immortality is derivative and gifted), *phōs apositon* ('unapproachable light' — God's essential nature is so radiant that no creature can draw near), and invisibility (*hon eiden oudeis anthrōpōn* — 'whom no human has seen or is able to see,' echoing Exodus 33:20). The doxology closes with *timē kai kratos aiōnion* ('honor and eternal dominion') and the solemn *Amēn*.
- 16.** [TCR Cross-Reference] Quotes Exodus 33:20. The TCR rendering of that OT passage preserves the Hebrew source text and documents the translation decisions behind it.
- 17.** After the doxology about God's transcendence, Paul returns to practical instruction for wealthy believers. Two prohibitions: *mē hypselōphronein* ('not to be arrogant') and *mēde ēlpikenai epi ploutou adēlotēti* ('not to have set their hope on the uncertainty of wealth'). The positive alternative — hope in God who provides *plousios* ('richly') *eis apolausin* ('for enjoyment') — is remarkable: God is not stingy but generous, and his gifts are meant to be enjoyed, not hoarded.
- 18.** The verb *agathoergein* ('to do good') and the phrase *ploutein en ergois kalois* ('to be rich in good works') redefine 'wealth' — true riches are generosity, not accumulation. The adjectives *eumetadotous* ('generous, ready to give') and *koinōnikous* ('ready to share, sociable in giving') describe open-handed living. The progression from 'do good' to 'be rich in good works' to 'generous' to 'ready to share' intensifies the call to active generosity.
- 19.** The verb *apothēsaurizontas* ('storing up treasure') echoes Jesus's teaching in Matthew 6:19-20 — generosity in the present stores treasure for the future. The phrase *tēs ontōs zōēs* ('the real life, the life that is truly life') distinguishes genuine life from mere existence — what passes for life among the wealthy may not be life at all. The verb *epilabōntai* ('take hold of') echoes verse 12, creating a thematic ring around the closing section.
- 20.** The noun *parathēkēn* ('deposit, what has been entrusted') is a banking term for something placed in trust for safekeeping. Timothy must protect the body of apostolic teaching — not innovate upon it or allow it to be corrupted. The 'falsely called knowledge' (*pseudōnymou gnōseōs*) may anticipate the later Gnostic movement or refer to proto-Gnostic claims already present. The word *gnōsis* ('knowledge') with the prefix *pseudo-* ('false') brands the opponents' intellectual claims as counterfeit.
- 21.** The verb *ēstochēsan* ('have missed the mark, have swerved') returns from 1:6, forming a final inclusio. Those who claimed superior 'knowledge' actually missed the target of faith. The closing 'Grace be with you' (*hē charis meth' hymōn*) uses the plural *hymōn* ('you all'), suggesting the letter was intended for the wider community, not Timothy alone. The SBLGNT does not include 'Amen.'