



**THE
PASTORAL
LETTERS OF
PAUL**

.....
OSWALD A. WAECH

**LIVING WAY
BIBLE STUDY**

Living Way Bible Study, Inc. is an auxiliary of the Pacific Southwest District of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS). All studies are written and/or edited by LCMS pastors. We have been providing studies to churches throughout the U.S. and Canada since 1982.

For a *suggested* donation of \$1-per-lesson within a study (e.g., 23-lesson study of John is \$23) you receive an original of the study, from which you are then free to make copies for your class. Please honor our copyright of these materials.

As a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization that relies solely on freewill donations, additional donations are much appreciated and enable us to continue to produce and promote the study of God's Word.

If you have any questions or comments on this study, please contact us. We are always eager to hear from our students and appreciate your comments.

Living Way Bible Study, Inc.

info4LWBS@aol.com

www.livingwaybiblestudy.org

 facebook.com/livingwaybiblestudy

Copyright © 1982, 2015 by Living Way Bible Study, Inc.

This study has been revised and updated in 2015 to include quotations from the English Standard Version, along with the 1984 NIV.

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced in any form without permission from Living Way Bible Study, Inc.

WELCOME TO LIVING WAY BIBLE STUDY (LWBS)

LWBS is a practical course of study with a special emphasis on the application of God's Word to the life of the individual. While emphasizing practical application, LWBS presents each book of the Bible as the holy, inspired, Word of God, the confessional position of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

Our purpose is to help equip believers to live joyfully in God's redeeming love and to share with others God's plan of salvation.

It is our prayer that the Holy Spirit will use this study to help you grow in your knowledge and appreciation of our God and His Word. *"But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."* 2 Peter 3:18

STUDY STRUCTURE

LIVING WAY BIBLE STUDY SUGGESTS THIS FOUR-STEP METHOD

1. *PERSONAL* – The student prays for guidance from the Holy Spirit and answers the Personal Application (P.A.) questions at home using only the Bible (no commentaries).
2. *SMALL GROUPS* – The class meets for an opening and divides into small groups of 8–10 people. The small group leader guides the group through the P.A. questions, encouraging each to share their answers and discuss further as time allows.
3. *THE MESSAGE* – The lecture or message is given by a pastor or layperson who has researched the material and presents the study, giving personal insight and augmenting, but not duplicating, the author's comments.
4. *THE NARRATIVE* – The author's comments or narrative, along with the P.A. questions for the next lesson, are given out at the end of the class. At the next class meeting, before answering the P.A. questions, the small groups may choose to review the author's comments of the last lesson, and share what each has highlighted as meaningful or important.

With this four-step method the student has the opportunity to study the particular section of Scripture covered by the lesson from four different approaches. This emphasizes the Bible text and gives the student an understanding and ownership for each section studied.

Each lesson should be stapled together according to the number of the lesson in the right-hand corner of the page. The P.A. questions for the next week should be attached after the author's narrative for the current week, as they will be the home study for the next class session.

The first meeting of the class is an introduction to the study. Since the members of the small groups have no P.A. questions to discuss at the first meeting, they may use the time to get acquainted or to tell what they hope to receive by studying this course. At the first meeting, the lecturer presents background information about the course, using the Introduction lesson as a guide.

THIS PAGE IS INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK

THE PASTORAL LETTERS OF PAUL

OSWALD A. WAECH

16 LESSONS

AUTHOR INFORMATION	I	LESSON 8 : 1 TIMOTHY 6:1-21	34
		Personal Application – 2 Timothy 1:1-18	37
BIBLIOGRAPHY	II	LESSON 9 : 2 TIMOTHY 1:1-18	39
LESSON 1 : INTRODUCTION	1	Personal Application – 2 Timothy 2:1-26	42
Some Thoughts to Ponder	2		
Paul's Letters to Timothy, Titus and Philemon	3	LESSON 10 : 2 TIMOTHY 2:1-26	44
Personal Application – 1 Timothy 1:1-4	5	Personal Application – 2 Timothy 3:1-17	47
LESSON 2 : 1 TIMOTHY 1:1-4	7	LESSON 11 : 2 TIMOTHY 3:1-17	49
A Short Biographical Sketch of Titus	8	Personal Application – 2 Timothy 4:1-22	51
Biographical Sketch of Philemon	8		
Personal Application – 1 Timothy 1:5-20	9	LESSON 12 : 2 TIMOTHY 4:1-22	53
LESSON 3 : 1 TIMOTHY 1:5-20	11	Personal Application – Titus 1:1-16	56
Personal Application – 1 Timothy 2:1-15	14	LESSON 13 : TITUS 1:1-16	58
LESSON 4 : 1 TIMOTHY 2:1-15	16	Introduction to Titus	58
Personal Application – 1 Timothy 3:1-16	19	Titus, Chapter 1	59
LESSON 5 : 1 TIMOTHY 3:1-16	21	Personal Application – Titus 2:1-15	61
Personal Application – 1 Timothy 4:1-16	23	LESSON 14 : TITUS 2:1-15	63
LESSON 6 : 1 TIMOTHY 4:1-16	25	Personal Application – Titus 3:1-15	65
Personal Application – 1 Timothy 5:1-25	27	LESSON 15 : TITUS 3:1-15	67
LESSON 7 : 1 TIMOTHY 5:1-25	29	Personal Application – Philemon 1:1-25	69
Personal Application – 1 Timothy 6:1-21	32	LESSON 16 : PHILEMON 1:1-25	71

THIS PAGE IS INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK

AUTHOR INFORMATION

OSWALD A. WAECH

LWBS Courses: *Pastoral Letters of Paul*

Graduate of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, MO in 1936

1976 Concordia Seminary, Springfield conferred honorary Doctorate Degree

1936–1954 Served Gethsemane Lutheran, Buffalo, NY

1954–1962 Served as LCMS' Evangelism Secretary, St. Louis. Director of Open House Mission and Spiritual Life Mission

1962–1979 Served as Presidential Administrative Assistant in the Pacific Southwest District – promoted stewardship and evangelism in congregations

1979–1994 Served as Assistant Pastor at several Lutheran Churches:

Holy Cross, Cypress, CA

Trinity Lutheran, Whittier, CA

Shepherd of the Hills, Alta Loma, CA

Served as District Mission Counselor – laid the groundwork for opening new missions

Speaker on the Lutheran Program broadcast, Long Beach, CA for nine years

Author of tracts and pamphlets on evangelism and stewardship, including guidelines on "How to Witness"

Served eight years as Chairman of Synod's Evangelism Committee

Essayist for six District Conventions

Married the former Marion Korn of Buffalo – Have four children

Called to glory, June 1, 2010 at age of 98

THIS PAGE IS INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK

BIBLIOGRAPHY

THE PASTORAL LETTERS OF PAUL



The Holy Bible, New International Version® NIV® Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984, by Biblica, Inc.®

The Holy Bible, English Standard Version, ESV Copyright © 2001, 2007 by Crossway Bibles, a division of Good News Publishers.

This study has been updated to include quotations from the English Standard Version, along with the 1984 NIV

THIS PAGE IS INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK

PAUL'S LETTERS TO TIMOTHY, TITUS AND PHILEMON

3

PERSONAL APPLICATION – 1 TIMOTHY 1:1–4

5

• • •

“The hand that wrote the indictments against the early Christians now penned letters to the congregations which he had established, and to his fellow workers who were his assistants.”

• • •

The apostle Paul was a great letter writer. Fully one-third of the New Testament is made up of letters from the pen of this man known as the “Apostle to the Gentiles.” Paul was the greatest missionary who ever lived, next to Christ, and the greatest trainer of missionaries, next to Christ. (Paul’s name was changed from Saul to Paul in Acts 13:9. Paul means “small” and quite likely was a reference to his stature.) He loved to keep in touch with his converts. These letters are so lofty that at times it’s difficult to follow his thought pattern. He can ascend to the “third heaven,” gyrating around in outer space so that even the Roman Governor Festus is moved to exclaim, “Paul, you are out of your mind; your great learning is driving you out of your mind” (Acts 26:24). At other times, Paul can be so plain that even a child of three can understand that Christ “loved me and gave himself for me” (Galatians 2:20).

Paul addressed most of his letters to congregations which he had founded. In these letters he offers further instruction, exhortation, encouragement, and admonition. Very likely, they were circular “round robin” letters passed from one congregation to another. Some are quite lengthy and others are brief. It is quite possible that Paul dictated these letters to a scribe or “amanuensis,” such as: Luke, his personal physician, or Timothy, or Mark, or Aristarchus, or Epaphras, and perhaps others. There are those who believe that Paul’s “thorn in the flesh” was impaired vision (Josephus) and that is why he mentions writing “with a large hand” or in large letters. However, this is purely conjecture since his “thorn in the flesh” is nowhere explained in the Scriptures.

● ● ● ● ● ● ● ●

We all need to get a clear vision of what the church should be if it wants to imitate the early Christian church. It should be a Spirit-filled, praying, worshiping, studying, fellowship which places little emphasis on anything which does not contribute to the spiritual growth of the body of Christ.

● ● ● ● ● ● ● ●

SOME THOUGHTS TO PONDER

Our modern-day churches would do well to ponder on Paul's advice to these early churches and their pastors. The average American is not impressed with what most mainline churches are doing. Whether we like it or not, perhaps this explains why many independent, informal, store-front type churches are filled to overflowing and proliferating quite rapidly. They are filling a vacuum which exists in many staid and traditional churches.

Many of our old-line denominational churches are barely holding their own with little statistical growth. It would be well for us to pose the question, "How can we improve?" The author feels that we often equate promotional activities with religious accomplishments; that we often spend first-rate energy on second-rate causes. If we inquire about the Bible classes, church services, and the evangelism program of the average congregation, I think we will find the answer as to why many churches are on the decline. To many people, the local church is a pleasant place to drop off the children for

Sunday school, to attend occasionally, and to meet like-minded people. It is a place to raise enough money through bazaars, lunches, dinners, and bake sales to keep the church open and pay the staff an adequate salary. It is no easy matter to change a modern parish into "a redemption center of the Holy Spirit;" a center where the Gospel tells us that salvation is free by grace, by faith, and by the blood of Jesus (Ephesians 2:8-9).

We all need to get a clear vision of what the church should be if it wants to imitate the early Christian church. It should be a Spirit-filled, praying, worshiping, studying, fellowship which places little emphasis on anything which does not contribute to the spiritual growth of the body of Christ. To be specific:

- 1) It had a soul-shaking experience with Jesus Christ. Jesus had polarized their lives and they were on fire for Christ. People came to watch them burn!
- 2) It was a believing fellowship which attempted great things for God and expected great things from God. It was not concerned about self-preservation but about Gospel-propagation.

3) The early church was like a beehive with much coming in and going out, but the coming in was to charge their batteries for going out to the uttermost parts of the world to turn the world right side up for Christ.

4) It had a strong faith that “with God all things are possible.” There was an awareness of the forgiveness of sins through faith in Christ. The burdens of guilt, dread, and anxiety were lifted from their hearts.

Here are some positive suggestions for today:

1) Start having Sunday *worship* services which omit professionalism and formalism (these generate what someone has called “spectatoritis”). Simplicity and congregational participation should be the keynote. Worship should be meaningful and joyous!

2) Multiply teaching opportunities through large and small Bible study classes; at church, in homes, and in neighborhoods.

3) There should be a small corps of dedicated lay people who set goals and who “keep everlastingly at it” until those goals are realized.

PAUL’S LETTERS TO TIMOTHY, TITUS AND PHILEMON

It is the author’s opinion that the pastoral letters of Paul are timely, as apropos, as fresh and up-to-date as the morning newspaper propped up beside your morning cup of coffee. They are chock full of fatherly and pastoral advice and admonition to young pastors and to young and old Christians. It is my hope and prayer that you will find this study profitable and enlightening.

Who was this man who wrote these letters? He was born in Tarsus in Asia Minor about the year AD 1, the son of Jewish parents who belonged to the tribe of Benjamin. He was named Saul, after King Saul, the hero of the tribe of Benjamin. He received a thorough religious and secular education, graduating from the University of Tarsus, and sitting at the feet of the learned Gamaliel, who was more than a rabbi — a rabban — famous for his theological acumen. Later in life, Saul was received into the strict order of the Jewish Pharisees although he was a Roman citizen by birth.

As a Pharisee, Paul was not unfamiliar with the teachings of Christ - the “WAY” as it was called. As “a Hebrew of Hebrews,” his whole nature revolted in hatred and disgust against the witnesses who claimed that Christ had risen from the dead; that He was the promised Messiah; and that through faith in Him a believer had forgiveness of sins, life and salvation. Paul took upon himself the office of “chief persecutor of the Church,” breathing out “threats and murder” as Luke, his physician and historian, openly declares. When Stephen, the first martyr, was stoned, Saul was consenting to his death (Acts 8:1–3).

• • • • •

Fully one-third of the New Testament is made up of letters from the pen of this man known as the “Apostle to the Gentiles.” Paul was the greatest missionary who ever lived, next to Christ, and the greatest trainer of missionaries, next to Christ.

• • • • •

Such was the man who was on his way to Damascus with letters from the Sanhedrin to persecute the Christians there when he was “Son-struck” blind at high noon. “Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?” Saul questioned: “Who are you, Lord?” And the Lord said “I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting” (Acts 9:1–19). (Please note that Jesus identifies Himself with the Church.) In that instant, Saul realized he was fighting on the wrong side. “What shall I do Lord?” (Acts 16:10). Jesus told Paul, “Rise and enter the city, and you will be told what you are to do.” Paul obeyed, and when Ananias laid his hands on Paul’s head, his eyesight was restored and he arose and was baptized.

Three days later, this fiercest of Christ’s foes was preaching the faith which once he despised (Acts 9:20–23). At first there was skepticism, and then great rejoicing as the word passed from mouth to mouth that Paul was proclaiming Jesus in the synagogues saying, “He is the Son of God.” Christ called Paul to be an apostle (eyewitness), a chosen vessel, especially to the Gentiles.

The hand that wrote the indictments against the early Christians now penned letters to the congregations which he had established, and to his fellow workers who were his assistants.

PERSONAL APPLICATION

1 TIMOTHY 1:1-4

Heavenly Father, guide my study of Your young servant, Timothy. Help me always to apply Your Words to my own life. In Jesus Name, Amen.

1. Paul need not present his apostolic credentials to Timothy, his “true child in the faith.” Why do you think he stresses his apostleship and for whom else was this letter intended?

-
2. In Acts 16:1, we learn Timothy was from a “mixed marriage.” What does the Bible teach about “mixed marriages” (between a Christian and unbeliever)? (cf. 2 Corinthians 6:14; Genesis 24:3, 28:1; Nehemiah 13:25)

What is meant by a Levirate marriage? (Deuteronomy 25:5-10; Matthew 22:24).

-
3. In our multicultural society, mixed marriages are very common. What effect, in your opinion, do they have on the nation, the church, the holy estate of matrimony (Hebrews 13:4)?

-
4. Recount Paul’s call to the apostleship as related in Acts 9:1-19, 22:4-16, 26:13-18). This was the highpoint of his life and he rejoiced to recount the event.

-
5. Paul’s credentials were unquestionable. Which words in 1 Timothy 1:1 constitute his divine call?

-
6. Observe, Jesus is called “God our Savior.” How else is He described in 1 Tim. 1:1 and in John 8:12 and 14:6?
-

7. On which two occasions did the Father call Jesus “my Son”? (Matthew 3:16–17, 17:5)
-
8. According to Colossians 1:13–20, who is Christ?
-
9. Give two reasons why Paul calls Timothy “my own son” (1 Timothy 1:2 KJV).
-
10. Which words (vv.1–4) do you recognize as the benediction?
-
11. In v. 3, Paul reminds Timothy that he left him in Ephesus to charge certain persons not to teach any different doctrine. We think this is a reference to Gnosticism. Try to define Gnosticism (cf. Bible dictionary and Galatians 1:6-9).
-
12. Timothy must also take care to prevent disputing about fables, genealogies and strife of words. Can you think of some modern fables and disagreements which hinder the spread of the Gospel?
-
13. What essential element must be present if there is godly edifying? (Hebrews 11:6)
-
14. In your own words, what is true faith?
-
15. Timothy had been Paul's companion and co-worker for almost 12 years. What compliment does Paul pay him in 1 Corinthians 4:17?
-

A SHORT BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF TITUS	8
BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF PHILEMON	8
PERSONAL APPLICATION – 1 TIMOTHY 1:5-20	9

● ● ● ● ●

“These letters written to Timothy, Titus, and Philemon were written somewhere between AD 61 – 68, the dates usually given for Paul’s imprisonment and martyrdom in Rome.”

● ● ● ● ●

It would be correct to call Timothy “Paul’s spiritual child” (1 Timothy 1:2). Legend has it that it was Timothy who found Paul when he was stoned and left for dead at Lystra in Asia Minor. It is said that he noticed a spark of life in the battered body and took him to his home which was a mixed family of a pagan father, a mother, Eunice, and a grandmother, Lois, who were Jewish believers in Christ. Paul was nursed back to health in this household. If that be true, we can understand why the bond of affection between Paul and Timothy was so close. Paul owed his life to young Timothy, and this bond welds hearts into an indissoluble union. No wonder Paul called him “my true child in the faith,” and also says of him in 2 Timothy 3:15: “And how from infancy you have known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.” Thank God for mothers and grandmothers who teach us the Word of God in the home!

Paul loved Timothy and admired his outstanding personality traits (Philippians 2:19–22). His name comes up for mention more than any other in Paul’s writings, and he is often in Paul’s presence (2 Timothy 4:9, 21).

Timothy is first mentioned in Acts 16:1, from which we infer that he lived in Lystra (cf. Acts 20:4). As stated, from the days of his childhood he was instructed in the sacred writings of the Old Testament by his mother, Eunice, and grandmother, Lois (2 Timothy 1:5). Through Paul, they learned that Jesus Christ is the fulfillment of the Old Testament.

The result was that all three became Christians (Christ's ones). This took place on Paul's first missionary journey.

When on the second missionary journey, Paul and Silas came to Derbe and Lystra; Timothy became an active member of the group. It was at this time that Paul had Timothy circumcised (to avoid unjust criticism), and in all probability he was also ordained by the elders of the local church, with Paul himself taking part in this solemn laying on of hands (1 Timothy 4:14; 2 Timothy 1:6).

Timothy then accompanied the missionaries by crossing over into Europe to Philippi and Thessalonica. He also helped in Berea, where he and Silas were left behind to minister to the infant church while Paul went on to Athens (Acts 17:10–15). He was later sent to Thessalonica to strengthen the Christians there (1 Thessalonians 3:1–2). He rejoined Paul in Corinth (Acts 18:1–5), and worked with Paul to plant the seed of the Gospel.

Timothy also accompanied Paul on his third missionary journey and was at his side during his three year stay in Ephesus. From there, Timothy was sent to Macedonia and Corinth. He was probably also with Paul in Jerusalem (1 Corinthians 16:3), and during Paul's imprisonment in Rome the two were in close contact (Philippians 1:1; Colossians 1:1; Philemon 1:1).

Timothy is next found in Ephesus, and it was here that he received the letter we now call 1 Timothy. Later, another letter arrived from Paul who was facing execution, urging his friend and co-worker to come to him before winter (2 Timothy 4:9, 21). We should like to believe that Timothy heeded the request, and that he was at Paul's side when he was beheaded outside Rome, where he received the crown

of everlasting life (2 Timothy 4:6–8). What a beautiful swan song!

A SHORT BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF TITUS

Here's another of Paul's co-workers, a young pastor mentioned only in Paul's letters, especially in 2 Corinthians. He was a Greek; a son of Gentile parents (Galatians 2:3). Because Paul refused to have Titus circumcised as demanded by the Judaizers, Titus stands out as an example of a believer who is justified by faith in Jesus alone without the deeds of the Law. He was sent by Paul to work among the Corinthians and helped to solicit the offering for the poor saints in Jerusalem (2 Corinthians 8). He accompanied Paul to the Island of Crete to organize the churches there. He worked with Paul on his third missionary journey and proved to be a bold, courageous, and consecrated young missionary.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF PHILEMON

Philemon's name means "loving" and that's what he was as evidenced by the fact that he had a "house church" in his home of which Archippus was the pastor. Philemon's wife was named Apphia and, quite evidently, he was wealthy (no sin in that if you recognize God as the Giver and use His gifts to His glory). Like other well-to-do people, he was the owner of many slaves (more of this when we get to the letter which has to do with a runaway slave by the name of Onesimus). This little letter written from prison in Rome and addressed to Philemon of Colossae is a model in kindness, courtesy, and tact. We should learn to write letters like that!

These letters written to Timothy, Titus, and Philemon were written somewhere between AD 61 – 68, the dates usually given for Paul's imprisonment and martyrdom in Rome.

PERSONAL APPLICATION*1 TIMOTHY 1:5-20*

Dear Lord guide our study as we recognize You as our King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, to Whom be honor and glory for ever and ever. Amen.

1. Review verses 1-4. Where does Paul want Timothy to work and what kindly word does he use?

2. Compare some of the doctrines being taught with false doctrines we might confront today.

3. What should be the goal of our study of the Word? (v. 5)

If people "turn aside" from this goal, what happens? (vv. 6-7)

4. Of what value is the Law? (v. 8)

5. According to John 13:35 and Romans 13:10, what is the fulfilling of the Law?

6. For whom is the Law intended? (vv. 9-10)

7. The Jews used the Law unlawfully for the purpose of justification. What is the main purpose of the Law? (Romans 7:7)

If you can remember, state the three purposes the law serves.

8. How does Paul describe the Gospel in verse 11?

9. Who calls and enables men to ministry? (v. 12; Acts 26:15-17)

10. Paul never got over the fact that he had been a blasphemer, persecutor, and a violent man (Acts 9:1ff). But what did Paul obtain because he did it “ignorantly”? (vv. 13-14)

Ignorance may be an extenuating circumstance, but it is no excuse. See Luke 12:48 and explain.

11. With what words does Paul describe himself in verse 15?

This is an excellent verse to memorize. Do you think it applies to you? Explain.

12. Verse 16 tells us that Paul was a pattern for other sinners. If Jesus’ “long suffering” (KJV), “unlimited patience” (NIV), could save Paul, how does that make you feel about yourself?

13. In verse 17, we have a beautiful doxology. Mention some of the attributes Paul ascribes to God in this verse.

14. Consider Paul’s charge to Timothy to “fight the good fight.” Review this chapter for several ingredients that would help in such warfare.

15. In the closing verses of this chapter, Paul mentions two people whom he had delivered to the devil. In the light of Matthew 18:15-17, what does this mean?

• • •

“Timothy’s task will be to let the fresh and wholesome winds of sound doctrine make the Word of God clear, for the winds of Gnosticism had infected and distorted the truth of the Gospel.”

• • •

The epistle of Timothy can be divided into three sections: (1) 1:3 to 3:16, (2) 4:1 to 6:2, (3) 6:3 to 6:21. Each of these sections is introduced by an indictment of Gnosticism, followed by a presentation on how this evil is to be combated and overcome.

This “different doctrine” is first of all uncertain, based on human search for knowledge, and not on divine revelation. Second, it is a matter of vain and empty words which only lead to arguments and “much ado about nothing.” In striking contrast, Paul urges Timothy to present Christ Jesus as the Son of God who died a real death on the cross for the sins of all men (1 Timothy 2:6). He must present this Christ as the Way, the Truth, and the Life, the mystery of God “manifested in the flesh” (1 Timothy 3:16).

Timothy’s task will be to let the fresh and wholesome winds of sound doctrine make the Word of God clear, for the winds of Gnosticism had infected and distorted the truth of the Gospel. The Gnostics, like the modernists today, taught: (a) That the world was not created by God; (b) That man’s alienation from God is not due to the fall into sin by Adam and Eve; (c) That redemption consists in being freed from the care and concerns of this world. This freedom can come only by “gnosis”, i.e., a higher knowledge; (d) That the mission of the Savior is to impart this knowledge not to all men, but to a select few; (e) That those who have this higher knowledge must free themselves from the influence of the world by abstaining from certain foods and from marriage. (Note that sometimes such negative prohibitions have the

opposite effect, for instance, the sexual life of men was considered to be a matter of moral indifference.) Is it any different today? (Lust masquerades for love; license for liberty.)

Never has the Bible-based orthodox theology stood in more public disrepute than it does today. The old theology of salvation by grace through faith in Christ is boycotted as if it were heresy. As a Christian congressman recently stated: “The persecution of Bible-believing, Christ-honoring Christians has begun.” The charge is made that a theologian who accepts the inerrancy and inspiration of the Bible is guilty of paper idolatry and is to be regarded as a false prophet!

The treatment of the historic Christian faith by the media, especially the motion picture industry and the press borders on the “damning with faint praise” as Shakespeare would say. Less than 5% of U.S. citizens are avowed atheists — and the vast majority claim to be Christians — but you would never know it by attending the movies, watching TV, or going to a play. Not only is the language obscene, but usually religion is the butt of ridicule and contempt. Secular humanism has a strangle hold on this generation as it undertakes the impossible task of pulling itself up by “its own bootstraps.”

Of far greater import is the fracturing of loving relationships in the family, also in the parsonage. According to statistician, G. Lloyd Rediger, 50% of marriages end in divorce and 37% of all clergy are seriously considering divorce. Lyle Schaller, famous church consultant, states that the divorce rate among clergy has quadrupled in the last 20 years. You can be sure “we have a tiger by the tail.”

The results of broken homes — and broken lives — are only too apparent in the crime and corruption of today. May God have mercy on America!

In verse 8, we read, “we know that the law is good, if one uses it lawfully.” The main purpose of the law is to show us our sins (Romans 7:7). If we did not have the law to show us where we are wrong, we would not realize the need for grace which saves through faith (Ephesians 2:8–9). It is the grace of God that changes men’s hearts, but the terrors of the law should act as a restraint for wickedness of all kind.

The trend of thought of the Gnostics would lead inevitably to an utter distortion of the glorious Gospel our blessed God proclaimed (1 Timothy 1:11). God as Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier disappears in favor of man-made laws about food, marriage, family, and government. The Old Testament rings with praise and adoration to God the Father who made all things good and who blessed man by creating him “in his likeness,” i.e., holy without sin. For the Gnostics, law became the main thing with its “do this,” or “don’t do that,” making the Gospel of no effect. And when sin is not recognized as guilt, there can be no real redemption.

Paul never got over the fact that he had been a blasphemer and persecutor. Paul did it ignorantly. Ignorance can be an extenuating circumstance but it is no excuse. And Paul never forgot this! Verse 15 gives us Paul’s confession: “Here is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners—of whom I am the worst.”

• • • •

*Never has the Bible-based orthodox theology
stood in more public disrepute than it does today.
The old theology of salvation by grace through
faith in Christ is boycotted as if it were heresy.*

• • • •

In verse 18, we find Paul's charge to Timothy to let the fresh and wholesome winds of sound doctrine into the house of God. And keep on emphasizing that which from a child he has known, namely, that we are made wise unto salvation through faith in Jesus Christ (Sola Gratia, Sola Fidei, Sola Scriptura). He must, as a good minister of Jesus Christ, not be known for what he opposes, but rather for what he preaches and teaches; the good news of salvation in Christ. And he must make sure that his helpers are men and women of like character. Down with Gnosticism; up with the Gospel!

Paul wants men and women who have been "trained" (Titus 2:11–12), seasoned, selfless, wise, gracious men and women whose faith has borne fruit in their homes, their marriage relation, in the training of their children (1 Timothy 3:2, 4:12), and in their daily living.

Timothy was a good man for this task, not only because he was both Jew and Greek, but because he had been Paul's companion and co-worker for so many years. Paul had great confidence in Timothy and sent him as a "trouble shooter" to Thessalonica (1 Thessalonians 3:1–2), to Corinth where there were divisions and ungodly living (1 Corinthians 4:17, 16:10), and to Philippi.

During Paul's Roman imprisonment, he pays a beautiful tribute to Timothy in Philippians 2:19–22. But Paul also knew that Timothy was young, that he had stomach problems, and that he was by nature timid and hasty. And so, Paul writes to the Corinthians: "He is doing the work of the Lord, as I am. So let none despise him" (1 Corinthians 16:10–11, RSV).