

State in Fide

First Letter to Timothy Adult Bible Study

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I. Chapter One - Contexts and Concerns

A. Personal Greetings

1. ***Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by command of God our Savior and of Christ Jesus our hope, ²To Timothy, my true child in the faith: Grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.***
2. Apostle by command - no one takes this honor upon himself
 - a. Heb 5:¹*For every high priest chosen from among men is appointed to act on behalf of men in relation to God, to offer gifts and sacrifices for sins. ²He can deal gently with the ignorant and wayward, since he himself is beset with weakness. ³Because of this he is bound to offer sacrifice for his own sins as well as for those of the people. ⁴And one does not take the honor upon himself, but he is called by God, just as Aaron was.*
3. Spiritual fatherhood - my true child in the faith
 - a. "...you have many guides but not many fathers. For I became your father in Christ Jesus through the Gospel (1 Cor 4:15)
 - b. For you know how, like a father with his children we exhorted and charged each one of you to lead a life worthy of God (1 Thess 2:10)
 - c. Timothy...as a son with a father has served me in the gospel. (Phil 2:22)

- B. Purpose
1. *³As I urged you when I was going to Macedonia, remain at Ephesus that you may charge certain persons not to teach any different doctrine, ⁴nor to occupy themselves with myths and endless genealogies which promote speculations rather than the divine training that is in faith; ⁵whereas the aim of our charge is love that issues from a pure heart and a good conscience and sincere faith.*
 2. Remain
 3. Rebuke
 4. Refocus - the aim our charge is¹
 - a. Love
 - b. Purity
 - c. Good conscience
 - d. Sincere faith
- C. Problem
1. *⁶Certain persons by swerving from these have wandered away into vain discussion, ⁷desiring to be teachers of the law, without understanding either what they are saying or the things about which they make assertions.*
 2. When we are not rooted we blow about, wander and our priorities become confused
 - a. Eph 4:¹¹*And his gifts were that some should be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, ¹²to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, ¹³until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ; ¹⁴so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the cunning of men, by their craftiness in deceitful wiles. ¹⁵Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ,*
 3. When we stop believing it is not that we believe nothing it is that we'll believe anything. (Chesterton)
 4. Vain discussions....teachers without understanding

¹Notice the order, it is important

D. Principle of the Law -

1. *⁸Now we know that the law is good, if any one uses it lawfully, ⁹understanding this, that the law is not laid down for the just but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and sinners, for the unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for manslayers, ¹⁰[sexually]immoral persons², sodomites³, kidnapers, liars, perjurers, and whatever else is contrary to sound doctrine, ¹¹in accordance with the glorious gospel of the blessed God with which I have been entrusted.*
2. Law is for the weak
3. Law describes the minimum requirements.
4. For the strong the law is a guide which sketches out the parameters of upright behavior. The strong however are already meeting these requirements. They do not “need” the law to spell out what they are already doing as those who yield to the love of God.
5. Hence, a man who loves his wife does not need a law which says, do not break her arm. Etc.

²Pornos

³More literally - “men who lie with men” - homosexuals

E. Personal Testimony -

1. ***¹²I thank him who has given me strength for this, Christ Jesus our Lord, because he judged me faithful by appointing me to his service, ¹³though I formerly blasphemed and persecuted and insulted him; but I received mercy because I had acted ignorantly in unbelief, ¹⁴and the grace of our Lord overflowed for me with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus. ¹⁵The saying is sure and worthy of full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners. And I am the foremost of sinners; ¹⁶but I received mercy for this reason, that in me, as the foremost, Jesus Christ might display his perfect patience for an example to those who were to believe in him for eternal life. ¹⁷To the King of ages, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory for ever and ever. Amen.***

2. Paul sees this in his own life. -
 - a. God Strengthens him - v. 12a
 - b. God Summons him - v. 12b
 - c. God Saves him in mercy - vv. 13-16a
 - d. God Shows him - vv. 16b

F. Problem and Purpose revisited -

1. ***¹⁸This charge I commit to you, Timothy, my son, in accordance with the prophetic utterances which pointed to you, that inspired by them you may wage the good warfare, ¹⁹holding faith and a good conscience. By rejecting conscience, certain persons have made shipwreck of their faith, ²⁰among them Hymenaeus and Alexander, whom I have delivered to Satan that they may learn not to blaspheme.***
 - a. Prophetic utterance? - Evidently Paul is referring here to the utterances of charismatically gifted people who apparently pointed to Timothy as a suitable candidate for the office of Bishop of Ephesus. The prophets of the early Church were charismatic members of local churches who wander about making predictions and revealing God's plan. Paul recognized them as possessing an important charism. (1 Cor 12:28-29; I Cor 14:29, 32, 37; Eph 2:20; 3:5; 4:11) In the early Church the office of prophet and teacher seem to have been more formalized as an office. Later they disappear from descriptions of Church ministries and tend to be more associated with Bishops, priests and deacons. For example consider this text from the Didache (C.A. 90-110 AD) and see how the two are still considered separately but are already beginning to merge: *Elect for yourselves, therefore,⁴ bishops and deacons,*

⁴The therefore here links this passage with the discussion that went before it and that discussion concerned the mandate to celebrate the Eucharist. Hence, with this context Bishops

worthy of the Lord, humble men and not lovers of money, truthful and proven; for they also serve you in the ministry of the prophets and teachers. Do not despise them for they are your honorable men together with the prophets and teachers.⁵ This all helps give us some understanding of the office of prophet and teacher. Why the office disappeared in the early Church is not entirely known but one explanation is that it become more and more synonymous with the clerical offices and is simply conflated with them.

b. ***whom I have delivered to Satan that they may learn not to blaspheme -***

- (1) These words may seem strong but they essentially mean that Paul has excommunicated them. In effect he hands them over to Satan so that they may learn that serving Satan is a lot harder than serving Jesus. Thus Paul's action is medicinal hoping that they will come to their senses.
- (2) He does the same thing in 1 Cor 5 which is worth reviewing here: *It is actually reported that there is immorality among you, and of a kind that is not found even among pagans; for a man is living with his father's wife. {2} And you are arrogant! Ought you not rather to mourn? Let him who has done this be removed from among you. {3} For though absent in body I am present in spirit, and as if present, I have already pronounced judgment {4} in the name of the Lord Jesus on the man who has done such a thing. When you are assembled, and my spirit is present, with the power of our Lord Jesus, {5} you are to deliver this man to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus. {6} Your boasting is not good. Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump? {7} Cleanse out the old leaven that you may be a new lump, as you really are unleavened. I wrote to you in my letter not to associate with immoral men; {10} not at all meaning the immoral of this world, or the greedy and robbers, or idolaters, since then you would need to go out of the world. {11} But rather I wrote to you not to associate with any one who bears the name of brother if he is guilty of immorality or greed, or is an idolater, reviler, drunkard, or robber -- not even to eat with such a one. {12} For what have I to do with judging outsiders? Is it not those inside the church whom you are to*

and deacons are mentioned together with the prophets and teachers. The context of these offices seem to be essentially liturgical and thus clerical.

⁵Didache 15:1.

judge? {13} God judges those outside. "Drive out the wicked person from among you." See how Paul hopes that the individual here will come to his senses, repent, and thus be saved on the day of the Last Judgement. Hence, excommunication from the Church is always conducted as a medical procedure, both to protect the whole body of the Church but also to save the individual, ultimately.

II. Chapter 2 -

A. Prayers for those in Authority -

1. ***First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all men, ²for kings and all who are in high positions, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life, godly and respectful in every way. ³This is good, and it is acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, ⁴who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.***

a. What - 1-2a

b. Why - 2b-4

c. A similar passage can be seen in 1 Peter 2:17: *Fear God, honor the emperor.* Remember the Emperor was the infamous Nero.

B. Principle of Unity -

1. ***⁵For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, ⁶who gave himself as a ransom for all, the testimony to which was borne at the proper time. ⁷For this I was appointed a preacher and apostle (I am telling the truth, I am not lying), a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth.***

2. The leader of our country may not always be to our personal liking. Our leader may not be our party. But ultimately we are one in God, for God is the God and Father of us all.

3. Paul links his own experience to this. He a zealous Jew was called to preach the Word to the Gentiles, a people he once considered foreign and barbarous.

C. Proper Priorities

1. ***⁸I desire then that in every place the men should pray, lifting holy hands without anger or quarreling; ⁹also that women should adorn themselves modestly and sensibly in seemly apparel, not with braided hair or gold or pearls or costly attire ¹⁰but by good deeds, as befits women who profess religion.***

2. Note how Paul exhorts both Genders in what they (stereo typically) most need to hear:

a. Men should pray and become holy. They spend much time in debating issues, exhibiting power and venting their anger, more time should be spent in prayer.

b. Women who are often preoccupied with their outward beauty and appearance should be more concerned to be adorned by holiness and finery of good deeds.

D. Perilous⁶ Principle!

1. ***¹¹Let a woman learn in silence with all submissiveness. ¹²I permit no woman to teach or to have authority over men; she is to keep silent. ¹³For Adam was formed first, then Eve; ¹⁴and Adam was not deceived, but the woman was deceived and became a transgressor. ¹⁵Yet woman will be saved through bearing children, if she continues in faith and love and holiness, with modesty.***
2. This sort of talk shocks the modern world. Many take offense but such talk and thus it is a perilous passage for modern ears. Yet, still we should ponder, what is God teaching us here.
3. This passage is written from a Jewish background. No nation ever gave women a bigger place in the home and family than the Jews. But officially the position of women was very low. In Jewish law she was not possessed of personal rights but was a possession of her husband or father. She was forbidden to learn law and had no part in the synagogue service. Men and women sat in different places in the synagogue as well. Men came to the synagogue to learn the Law but it was said that the woman's purpose there was to hear the law. Only men could proclaim the scriptures and a woman was absolutely forbidden to teach in a school, even in the earliest grades. She was also exempt from many of the ritual prescriptions of the Law. A strict Rabbi would never greet a woman on the street, even his own wife or kindred. A quick summary of the role of women would be that she bear children, send them to synagogue, attend to domestic concerns and leave her husband free to study in the schools. She had substantial authority in the running of the home but largely at the behest of her husband. In the Greek world too, women led a sheltered life. She lived in her own quarters into which no one but her husband came. She did not even appear at meals and was never to walk the streets alone. She was never to go to public assembly either.
4. A Number of different attitudes present themselves today to a passage such as this:
 - a. One solution is simply to insist that this is a cultural situation that Paul has described and it can be safely ignored today.
 - b. Another solution is to say that all the regulations in this chapter are mere temporary regulations to meet a given situation in Timothy's church at Ephesus.
 - c. Paul is speaking specifically of the Liturgical assembly and even more specifically of the preaching task. If this be the case, the

norm is still followed in Catholic worship. Although we permit women to act as lectors, we permit only priests and deacons to give the homily. Likewise, although it is less true today with the increasing role of the laity, Men largely exercise final authority in most parishes through their role of Pastor and Bishop.

(1) Paul teaches on this elsewhere and again, note the liturgical emphasis:

(2) 1 Cor 14:33 *As in all the churches of the saints,* ³⁴*the women should keep silence in the churches. For they are not permitted to speak, but should be subordinate, as even the law says.* ³⁵*If there is anything they desire to know, let them ask their husbands at home. For it is shameful for a woman to speak in church.* ³⁶*What! Did the word of God originate with you, or are you the only ones it has reached?* ³⁷*If any one thinks that he is a prophet, or spiritual, he should acknowledge that what I am writing to you is a command of the Lord.*

d. Paul means exactly what he says and we should observe it today. It is a same that most men have abdicated their responsibility in this area. This conclusion is the premise of the many "men's ministries" in the evangelical Bible Christians. Women should encourage the men in their life to root themselves in the word of God and then fulfill their role as the primary teachers and examples to their wife and children.

5. Was Paul simply what we would call today a "sexist?"

a. One immediate problem with asking this question is that the focus is on Paul and his culture, biases, and personal views. But this is a biblical text that we rightly call the "Word of God." Hence if we dismiss Paul, we also dismiss the word of God which is to be proclaimed in season and out of season and which remains true forever. Nevertheless, let us examine the question of Paul's possible sexism. Those who still insist on this view underscore the fact that Paul says "I permit" and hence is merely expressing his own opinion or advice.

b. Overall Paul seems to have had a good relationship with women and often praises their work. There were women prophets (1 Cor 11:1-13) and deaconesses (Rom 16:1). Priscilla with her husband Aquila was a valued teacher in the early Church (Acts 18:26). Euodia and Syntyche were women praised by Paul for laboring in the gospel (Phil 4:2-3). Philip the evangelist had four daughters who were prophetesses (Acts 21:9). The aged women were to teach (Titus 2:3). Paul held Lois and Eunice in high honor (2 Tim 1:5). And there is many a woman's name held in honor in Romans 16.

- c. When we read this passage then, we must keep the previous information in mind. Paul acknowledged and appreciated women's roles in the wider Church even though he says here that Men should ultimately lead and teach in the church.
- 6. Here then is a proposed solution to the dilemma of this passage. The dictate of silence⁷ has special reference to the liturgical assembly and the hierarchal structure of the Church. The work "hierarchy" comes from a Greek word which means (literally) "The rule of priests." Hence men (bishops, priests and deacons) may alone give the instruction (homily) in the liturgical assembly and men alone staff the hierarchy. But women do have their roles as teachers and proclaimers of the Gospel values in the wider society. This would especially be the case with their children and so Paul says, *Yet woman will be saved through bearing children, if she continues in faith and love and holiness, with modesty.*
- 7. This solution is not bound to please all but it does attempt to take into account the wider appreciation of Paul in regard to the role of women and his specific instructions given here. Rather than dismiss one text or the other, this solution attempts to take both into account.

⁷Though submission has a wider application

III. Chapter 3 - Church Leaders

A. Determining factors for a Bishop

1. *¹The saying is sure: If any one aspires to the office of bishop, he desires a noble task. ²Now a bishop must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, temperate, sensible, dignified, hospitable, an apt teacher, ³no drunkard, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, and no lover of money. ⁴He must manage his own household well, keeping his children submissive and respectful in every way; ⁵for if a man does not know how to manage his own household, how can he care for God's church? ⁶He must not be a recent convert, or he may be puffed up with conceit and fall into the condemnation of the devil; ⁷moreover he must be well thought of by outsiders, or he may fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.*

2. ***The office of Bishop** - The bishop (in Greek episcopus = overseer) was a priest who was in charge of some particular community. As a minister of the Church his role was one of teaching (v. 2), and governance (v. 5). His task was a demanding one and called for self-sacrifice and a life that was above reproach. In the earliest days the office of Bishop and Priest seem to have been almost synonymous. However, very soon, the priest came to take on more the more of deputy of the bishop. He could do many of the things that the bishop could do but not all (just as today). Thus every bishop is a priest but not every priest a bishop. The sacrament of Holy Orders, as we call it today is seen on three tiers: Bishop, priest and deacon. These offices were recognized as essential in the early Church and we should resist any notions that these offices are later "inventions" of the later Church. For example, consider this reflection by St. Ignatius of Antioch as he wrote to the Church at Tralles in about 98-100 AD: ...when you are obedient to the Bishop as you would be to Jesus Christ, you are living, not in a human way, but according to Jesus Christ...You must continue, then, to do nothing apart from the bishop. Be obedient to, to the priests as to the Apostles of Jesus Christ, our Hope...in the same way all should respect the deacons as they would Jesus Christ, just as they respect the bishop as representing the Father and the priests as the council of God and the College of Apostles. Apart from these there is nothing that can be called a Church.⁸ Thus, although the exact role of bishops priests and deacons in the early Church would still undergo some development and refinement, it is clear that the offices are present in their seminal form and considered an essential component of the Church.*

3. ***the husband of one wife**, - Paul obviously does not refer to polygamy here since that is forbidden to everyone. Nor does he seem to mean that a bishop is required to be married. But recall that the culture of the time was a lot like now. Both Jews and Gentiles dabbled in a great degree of divorce and remarriage. This was addressed by our Lord who denounced the practice and forbade it. (cf. Matt 5 and Matt 19). Nevertheless, many*

⁸Ep. ad Trall. 2 & 3.

converts to Christianity were a part of this culture of divorce. But even in the culture of divorce and remarriage everyone, then as now, recognized the ideal was that a person have been married only once. Paul thus taps into this preference and declares that a man who was called to be a bishop must have been married only once (implicitly even if his previous marriage practices took place before his conversion to Christianity). Thus he could be shown as a man who was stable insofar as the natural virtues are concerned.

a. In the early church celibacy was not a requirement for those who presided over the early Church communities. However, it very soon became customary to require celibacy. The writings of the Fathers of the Church and other ecclesiastical writers testify to the spread of voluntary celibacy as an ideal for sacred ministers since it was a profound sign of their total dedication to their ministry. Paul mentions this as an ideal in 1 Cor 7: *Now concerning the matters about which you wrote. It is well for a man not to touch a woman. {2} But because of the temptation to immorality, each man should have his own wife and each woman her own husband. {3} The husband should give to his wife her conjugal rights, and likewise the wife to her husband. {4} For the wife does not rule over her own body, but the husband does; likewise the husband does not rule over his own body, but the wife does. {5} Do not refuse one another except perhaps by agreement for a season, that you may devote yourselves to prayer; but then come together again, lest Satan tempt you through lack of self-control. {6} I say this by way of concession, not of command. {7} I wish that all were as I myself am. But each has his own special gift from God, one of one kind and one of another. {8} To the unmarried and the widows I say that it is well for them to remain single as I do. {9} But if they cannot exercise self-control, they should marry. For it is better to marry than to be aflame with passion.* The Church in the west from the beginning of the fourth, strengthened, spread and approved this practice by means of provincial councils and through the Popes. From the 4th century on there was a general requirement that priest of the Western (Latin) rite be celibate. The requirement was not always uniformly enforced but it grew to become so and became an absolute requirement by the time of the Council of Trent in the 16th century. The eastern rite Churches however have always allowed their priests to be married.

4. Snare of the devil - The Greek word *diabolos* translated here as devil can also be translated slanderer. Hence the phrase would read: "fall into the snare of slanderers" which makes a lot more sense in this context

B. Deacons -

1. ⁸*Deacons likewise must be serious, not double-tongued, not addicted to*

much wine, not greedy for gain; ⁹they must hold the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience. ¹⁰And let them also be tested first; then if they prove themselves blameless let them serve as deacons. ¹¹The women likewise must be serious, no slanderers, but temperate, faithful in all things. ¹²Let deacons be the husband of one wife, and let them manage their children and their households well; ¹³for those who serve well as deacons gain a good standing for themselves and also great confidence in the faith which is in Christ Jesus.

2. **Deacons** - In the early Church, deacons had charge of charitable ministrations and assisted in the liturgical and administrative direction of the community. We first see them in action in Acts 6:1-7 *Now in these days when the disciples were increasing in number, the Hellenists murmured against the Hebrews because their widows were neglected in the daily distribution. {2} And the twelve summoned the body of the disciples and said, "It is not right that we should give up preaching the word of God to serve tables. {3} Therefore, brethren, pick out from among you seven men of good repute, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we may appoint to this duty. {4} But we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word." {5} And what they said pleased the whole multitude, and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolaus, a proselyte of Antioch. {6} These they set before the apostles, and they prayed and laid their hands upon them. {7} And the word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied greatly in Jerusalem*

3. **The women likewise** - There is no way to decide if this refers to the wives of deacons or to an office of "deaconess." The Greek word *gynaikas* can be translated either as women or wives. There is little historical evidence that there was a formal office of deaconess in the early Church as we understand the office of deacon today. If the word deaconess is encountered it can mean: the wife of a deacon or women who had some special charge in dealing with women where it would be inappropriate for men to do so. For example, they may well have carried out baptisms for women since baptisms were conducted without clothing. In either case, there is no evidence that they received a formal office by the laying on of hands.
 - a. Some would use a scriptural reference such as this to indicate that women can be ordained as deacons. The reference here is ambiguous however. Many of the following questions are raised:
 - (1) What was the theological understanding of deacons at the time Paul writes? Did he, and the early Church have the same understanding that surely developed later? Remember that, although the role of deacon, priest, and bishop are clearly rooted in scripture, this does not mean that the

doctrines surrounding these levels of holy orders were fully developed or thought out at this time.

- (2) Did the early Church conceive of the diaconate as a part of holy orders?
- (3) What was the role of the deacon. Was there a different role for deacons and deaconesses?
- (4) Was the title deaconess simply the title for the wife of a deacon but merely title, not an actual functioning ministry in the Church?
- (5) These questions and many more make the whole question of woman deaconesses questionable at best. There is no evidence that they ever received a ministry by the laying on of hands (the outward sign of the sacrament of Holy Orders). We are certain that some women in the first 300 years of the Church had the title "deaconess" but we do not know exactly what they did. As was said, a likely role was the baptism of women. For the sake of modesty women usually baptized women. The most recent and most thorough study of this question of deaconesses is 500+ pages in length and concludes against the ordination of women as deacons. The author of that work goes to great lengths to show that although some women had the title of deaconess, their role was quite distinct from that of deacons.

C. Designation -

1. ***¹⁴I hope to come to you soon, but I am writing these instructions to you so that, ¹⁵if I am delayed, you may know how one ought to behave in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and bulwark of the truth.***
 - a. Notice that the Church is designated as
 - (1) Household of God
 - (2) Pillar and bulwark of the truth

D. Doxology

1. ***¹⁶Great indeed, we confess, is the mystery of our religion: He was manifested in the flesh, vindicated in the Spirit, seen by angels, preached among the nations, believed on in the world, taken up in glory.***
2. the order of ideas in this proclamation of faith is similar to most of the other Christological Hymns of the New Testament (cf Phil 2:6-11; Col 1:15-20; Heb 1:3) and probably reflects a good summary of the oral preaching and prayer of the earliest preaching of the Apostles: The Word, who existed from all eternity took flesh, preached a message of salvation for all the world, suffered, died, rose and now reigns in glory. Each of the three parts of this short credal-hymn expresses a paradox of the mystery by using phrases involving contrasts (Semites were very fond of this device).

- a. ***Manifested in the flesh, vindicated in the Spirit*** - Flesh here means human nature but it takes the Holy Spirit to call him Lord (1 Cor 12:3). To say he was vindicated (Justified) does not mean he had sins to be expiated. In the Bible, God's justice is His fidelity to his promises. Hence, God promised to save us and did so (in his fidelity (justice) to his promise) through Jesus Christ. We must access this truth through the Spirit which draws us to faith.
- b. ***seen by angels, preached among the nations*** - he angels have direct sight of Him always but we must come to know him through preaching for we walk by faith, not by sight (2 Cor 5:7).
- c. ***believed in the world, taken up in glory*** - The last words profess how Christ is glorified: on earth through faith in Him Phil 2:11; John 11:4, 40), in heaven, by his ascension to the right Hand of the Father where He is seated in glory.

- A. Prohibition of the Puritanical - *Now the Spirit expressly says that in later times some will depart from the faith by giving heed to deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons, {2} through the pretensions of liars whose consciences are seared, {3} who forbid marriage and enjoin abstinence from foods which God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and know the truth. {4} For everything created by God is good, and nothing is to be rejected if it is received with thanksgiving; {5} for then it is consecrated by the word of God and prayer.*
1. *Now the Spirit expressly says* - The Spirit here is the Holy Spirit. Paul likely refers to the revelation of some prophet in the early Church who in some way predicted a defection from the faith by some who previously had embraced it.
 2. *deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons* - False teachers and doctrines were a real problem in the early Church just as they are today. The apostles were always very strong in condemning false teaching and teachers. The early church leaders show an instinct for the fact that faith is far more than touchy-feely emotional state. It has content that must be believed and it is a way of thinking and seeing. Hence false teaching introduces blindness that causes falls. False teaching is a form of mental illness that causes errors in judgement and sorrow. Thus the early teachers and apostles were clear to denounce it and railed against it. Here are just a few samples of the sobering and searing condemnation of error and heresy in the early Church
 - a. 2 Thessalonians 2:3-12 *Let no one deceive you in any way; for that day will not come, unless the rebellion comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of perdition, {4} who opposes and exalts himself against every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, proclaiming himself to be God. {5} Do you not remember that when I was still with you I told you this? {6} And you know what is restraining him now so that he may be revealed in his time. {7} For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only he who now restrains it will do so until he is out of the way. {8} And then the lawless one will be revealed, and the Lord Jesus will slay him with the breath of his mouth and destroy him by his appearing and his coming. {9} The coming of the lawless one by the activity of Satan will be with all power and with pretended signs and wonders, {10} and with all wicked deception for those who are to perish, because they refused to love the truth and so be saved. {11} Therefore God sends upon them a strong delusion, to make them believe what is false, {12} so that all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness.*
 - b. 2 Timothy 3:1-9 *But understand this, that in the last days there will come times of stress. {2} For men will be lovers of self, lovers*

of money, proud, arrogant, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, {3} inhuman, implacable, slanderers, profligates, fierce, haters of good, {4} treacherous, reckless, swollen with conceit, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, {5} holding the form of religion but denying the power of it. Avoid such people. {6} For among them are those who make their way into households and capture weak women, burdened with sins and swayed by various impulses, {7} who will listen to anybody and can never arrive at a knowledge of the truth. {8} As Jannes and Jambres opposed Moses, so these men also oppose the truth, men of corrupt mind and counterfeit faith; {9} but they will not get very far, for their folly will be plain to all, as was that of those two men.

- c. *2 Timothy 4:3-4 For the time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching, but having itching ears they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own likings, {4} and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander into myths.*
 - d. *1 Corinthians 10:10-12 nor grumble, as some of them did and were destroyed by the Destroyer. {11} Now these things happened to them as a warning, but they were written down for our instruction, upon whom the end of the ages has come. {12} Therefore let any one who thinks that he stands take heed lest he fall.*
 - e. *Acts 20:29-30 I know that after my departure fierce wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; {30} and from among your own selves will arise men speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after them.*
 - f. *1 John 2:18 Children, it is the last hour; and as you have heard that Antichrist is coming, so now many Antichrist have come; therefore we know that it is the last hour.*
 - g. *1 John 4:1-3 Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are of God; for many false prophets have gone out into the world. {2} By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit which confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is of God, {3} and every spirit which does not confess Jesus is not of God. This is the spirit of Antichrist, of which you heard that it was coming, and now it is in the world already.*
 - h. *Matthew 24:10-12 And then many will fall away, and betray one another, and hate one another. {11} And many false prophets will arise and lead many astray. {12} And because wickedness is multiplied, most men's love will grow cold.*
3. ***forbid marriage*** - recall what we said earlier. We seem to be dealing here with some early form of Gnosticism. Since they believed matter to be evil, it was wrong to pro-create since this increased matter in the world and imprisoned spirit in matter.
4. ***enjoin abstinence from foods*** - all food is good because it belongs to

God's creation but the heretics, because they rejected material creation as evil had a whole list of foods to avoid. Some food had to be taken to survive, but much was to be rejected. Many non-Catholics have used this verse to reject the Catholic practice of abstaining from meat during Fridays of Lent. But it must be clear that we do this for a very different reason. Not because meat is bad or evil, but because it is good. We are asked to forego a good aspect of God's creation as a sacrifice, not because it is considered as loathsome. Paul has dealt with this topic in other areas as well:

- a. 1 Corinthians 8:1-10 (RSV) *Now concerning food offered to idols: we know that "all of us possess knowledge." "Knowledge" puffs up, but love builds up. {2} If any one imagines that he knows something, he does not yet know as he ought to know. {3} But if one loves God, one is known by him. {4} Hence, as to the eating of food offered to idols, we know that "an idol has no real existence," and that "there is no God but one." {5} For although there may be so-called gods in heaven or on earth -- as indeed there are many "gods" and many "lords" -- {6} yet for us there is one God, the Father, from whom are all things and for whom we exist, and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things and through whom we exist. {7} However, not all possess this knowledge. But some, through being hitherto accustomed to idols, eat food as really offered to an idol; and their conscience, being weak, is defiled. {8} Food will not commend us to God. We are no worse off if we do not eat, and no better off if we do. {9} Only take care lest this liberty of yours somehow become a stumbling block to the weak. {10} For if any one sees you, a man of knowledge, at table in an idol's temple, might he not be encouraged, if his conscience is weak, to eat food offered to idols?*
- b. 1 Corinthians 10:23-33 *"All things are lawful," but not all things are helpful. "All things are lawful," but not all things build up. {24} Let no one seek his own good, but the good of his neighbor. {25} Eat whatever is sold in the meat market without raising any question on the ground of conscience. {26} For "the earth is the Lord's, and everything in it." {27} If one of the unbelievers invites you to dinner and you are disposed to go, eat whatever is set before you without raising any question on the ground of conscience. {28} (But if some one says to you, "This has been offered in sacrifice," then out of consideration for the man who informed you, and for conscience' sake -- {29} I mean his conscience, not yours -- do not eat it.) For why should my liberty be determined by another man's scruples? {30} If I partake with thankfulness, why am I denounced because of that for which I give thanks? {31} So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God. {32} Give no offense to Jews or to Greeks or to the church of God, {33} just as I try to please all men in*

everything I do, not seeking my own advantage, but that of many, that they may be saved.

- c. Matthew 7:14 *It is not what goes into the mouth defiles a man, but what comes out of the mouth, this defiles a man.[Thus did he render all foods clean]"*

5. ***If you put these instructions before the brethren, you will be a good minister of Christ Jesus, nourished on the words of the faith and of the good doctrine which you have followed.*** - The good priest, the good preacher, teaches sound doctrine. Sound doctrine is not always the most pleasant thing for people to hear. But the good priest, like the good doctor will point out the good as well as the diseased. He will also prescribe cures, some of which are very painful, others more benign. Priests should be encouraged by their people when they preach sound doctrine. There has to be more to a good sermon than delivery, there must be sound doctrine, good teaching. Entertainment value must be secondary to correct content.

- B. Principle Point of the Preacher - ***{6} If you put these instructions before the brethren, you will be a good minister of Christ Jesus, nourished on the words of the faith and of the good doctrine which you have followed. {7} Have nothing to do with godless and silly myths. Train yourself in godliness; {8} for while bodily training is of some value, godliness is of value in every way, as it holds promise for the present life and also for the life to come. {9} The saying is sure and worthy of full acceptance. {10} For to this end we toil and strive, because we have our hope set on the living God, who is the Savior of all men, especially of those who believe. {11} Command and teach these things.***

1. The essential teaching is to live in a godly way that prepares us to meet God. Preaching is more than information it is preparation and aims for transformation. Timothy is not only to do this for others but also for himself.
2. ***Command and teach*** - Exhortation and instruction are fine but a bishop and pastor is more than a teacher. A bishop is to command, to insist. Perhaps he cannot compel obedience but he must insist upon it and command with consequences as necessary.

- C. Practices of the Preacher - ***Let no one despise your youth, but set the believers an example in speech and conduct, in love, in faith, in purity. {13} Till I come, attend to the public reading of scripture, to preaching, to teaching. {14} Do not neglect the gift you have, which was given you by prophetic utterance when the council of elders laid their hands upon you. {15} Practice these duties, devote yourself to them, so that all may see your progress. {16} Take heed to yourself and to your teaching; hold to that, for by so doing you will save both yourself and your hearers.***

1. Proclaim - 12-13
2. Preserve - 14

3. Practice (what you preach) 15-16

V. Chapter Five

A. Respect for elders - *¹Do not rebuke an older man but exhort him as you would a father; treat younger men like brothers, ²older women like mothers, younger women like sisters, in all purity.*

B. Real Widows -

1. Characteristics - *³Honor widows who are real widows...⁵She who is a real widow, and is left all alone, has set her hope on God and continues in supplications and prayers night and day; ⁶whereas she who is self-indulgent is dead even while she lives. ⁷Command this, so that they may be without reproach...⁹Let a widow be enrolled if she is not less than sixty years of age, having been the wife of one husband; ¹⁰and she must be well attested for her good deeds, as one who has brought up children, shown hospitality, washed the feet of the saints, relieved the afflicted, and devoted herself to doing good in every way.*

a. A little background on widows may prove helpful here. In most ancient societies, the independent woman did not exist. She was a member of a family and was dependant either upon her father or her husband. The position of a widow could therefore be difficult. She wore clothing to designate her position (cf Gen 38:14, 19) She could not inherit from her husband since that all went to the eldest son. If she was childless, she usually returned to her father's home (Gen 38:11; Lv 2:13). She could marry again. The upshot of it all was that a woman without a man to defend her rights was an easy victim for oppression. The widow had no defender at law either and therefore had no recourse when a judge was dishonest (Is 1:23; 10:2; 2 Sam 14:4ff; Lk 18:3). Widows were to be granted a share of the sacrificial festivals (Dt 16:11,14) and the tithes (Dt 14:28ff; Dt 26:12) and were permitted to glean the fields after the harvest (Dt 24:19-21) and the owner was not reap so thoroughly that he left nothing for them. Israelite law did extend protection to widows by prohibiting injustice against them (Ex 22:22; Dt 24:17) and even included curses upon those who practiced such injustices. However, the law was so general and unenforced that it was of little practical use in most particular cases. This is shown by the fact the prophets had to include the oppression of widows in the crimes with which they charge the Israelites (Is 1:17; Jer 7:6; Zech 7:10). Jesus himself spoke of those who "devoured the houses of widows (Mk 12:40; Lk 20:47). The early church made the case of widows a practical concern. It provided food for them (Acts 6:1) and Dorcas is praised because she made clothes for them (Acts 9:39). Care of widows and orphans is one of the two elements of genuine religion mentioned in James 1:27 It is also clear that, from the text we have in front of us here that the care of widows is rather well organized and thought out. The basic structure is this:

- (1) there was an approved list of widows who could receive assistance
 - (2) They had to be sixty years old or more and childless
 - (3) If they had relatives, the duty fell to them rather than the wider church.
 - (4) She must have and maintain a good reputation
 - (5) She must live a good life and be entirely devote to prayer and good works

- b. The text here describes the following qualities for widows
 - (1) Available - v. 5
 - (2) Altruistic - (unselfish) - v.6
 - (3) Advanced - v. 9a
 - (4) Anchored v. 9b
 - (5) Attested - v 10

2. Community Call - ***⁴If a widow has children or grandchildren, let them first learn their religious duty to their own family and make some return to their parents; for this is acceptable in the sight of God....⁸If any one does not provide for his relatives, and especially for his own family, he has disowned the faith and is worse than an unbeliever...¹⁶If any believing woman has relatives who are widows, let her assist them; let the church not be burdened, so that it may assist those who are real widows.***
 - a. Call - v. 4
 - b. Condemnation - v. 8
 - c. Cause - v. 16

3. Concern - ***¹¹But refuse to enrol younger widows; for when they grow wanton against Christ they desire to marry, ¹²and so they incur condemnation for having violated their first pledge. ¹³Besides that, they learn to be idlers, gadding about from house to house, and not only idlers but gossips and busybodies, saying what they should not. ¹⁴So I would have younger widows marry, bear children, rule their households, and give the enemy no occasion to revile us. ¹⁵For some have already strayed after Satan.***
 - a. Rule 11a
 - b. Reasons v. 13
 - (1) Want to marry
 - (2) Wander about (immaturity)
 - c. Recipe - v. 14
 - (1) Marriage
 - (2) Motherhood
 - (3) Mastery
 - d. Reality - v. 15

- C. Rules for Priests - ¹⁷*Let the elders who rule well be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in preaching and teaching;* ¹⁸*for the scripture says, "You shall not muzzle an ox when it is treading out the grain," and, "The laborer deserves his wages."* ¹⁹*Never admit any charge against an elder except on the evidence of two or three witnesses.* ²⁰*As for those who persist in sin, rebuke them in the presence of all, so that the rest may stand in fear.*
1. Respect - v. 17
 2. Remuneration - v. 18
 3. Restraint - v. 19
 4. Rebuke - v. 20
- D. Refrain from Partiality - ²¹*In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus and of the elect angels I charge you to keep these rules without favor, doing nothing from partiality.* ²²*Do not be hasty in the laying on of hands, nor participate in another man's sins; keep yourself pure.* ²³*No longer drink only water, but use a little wine for the sake of your stomach and your frequent ailments.* ²⁴*The sins of some men are conspicuous, pointing to judgment, but the sins of others appear later.* ²⁵*So also good deeds are conspicuous; and even when they are not, they cannot remain hidden.*
1. Principle - v. 21
 2. Particulars -
 - a. Not hasty - v. 22a
 - b. Not over-involved or overly influenced - v. 22b
 - c. No rush to judgement - v. 24-25
 3. Purely an aside - v. 23

VI. Chapter Six

- A. Slaves - *¹Let all who are under the yoke of slavery regard their masters as worthy of all honor, so that the name of God and the teaching may not be defamed. ²Those who have believing masters must not be disrespectful on the ground that they are brethren; rather they must serve all the better since those who benefit by their service are believers and beloved.*
1. Requirements - vv 1a, 2a
 2. Reasons 1b, 2b
- B. Servant of the Truth - *Teach and urge these duties. ³If any one teaches otherwise and does not agree with the sound words of our Lord Jesus Christ and the teaching which accords with godliness, ⁴he is puffed up with conceit, he knows nothing; he has a morbid craving for controversy and for disputes about words, which produce envy, dissension, slander, base suspicions, ⁵and wrangling among men who are depraved in mind and bereft of the truth, imagining that godliness is a means of gain.*
1. Command - 2b - 3
 2. Causes
 - a. Arrogant - 4a
 - b. Ignorant - 4b
 - c. Insolent - 4c - 5a
 - d. Resistant - 5b
 - e. Merchants - 5c
- C. Satisfaction - *⁶There is great gain in godliness with contentment; ⁷for we brought nothing into the world, and we cannot take anything out of the world; ⁸but if we have food and clothing, with these we shall be content. ⁹But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation, into a snare, into many senseless and hurtful desires that plunge men into ruin and destruction. ¹⁰For the love of money is the root of all evils; it is through this craving that some have wandered away from the faith and pierced their hearts with many pangs....¹⁷As for the rich in this world, charge them not to be haughty, nor to set their hopes on uncertain riches but on God who richly furnishes us with everything to enjoy. ¹⁸They are to do good, to be rich in good deeds, liberal and generous, ¹⁹thus laying up for themselves a good foundation for the future, so that they may take hold of the life which is life indeed.*
1. Principle - vv. 6-8
 2. Peril - vv. 9-10
 3. Prescription -
 - a. Focus on God - v. 17
 - b. Philanthropic - v. 18
 - c. Future oriented v. 19
- D. Stand Firm - *¹¹But as for you, man of God, shun all this [love of money etc]; aim at righteousness, godliness, faith, love, steadfastness, gentleness. ¹²Fight the good fight of the faith; take hold of the eternal life to which you were called*

when you made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses. ¹³In 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, ¹⁴I charge you to keep the commandment unstained and free from reproach until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ; ¹⁵and this will be made manifest at the proper time by the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords, ¹⁶who alone has immortality and dwells in unapproachable light, whom no man has ever seen or can see. To him be honor and eternal dominion. Amen..... ²⁰O Timothy, guard what has been entrusted to you. Avoid the godless chatter and contradictions of what is falsely called knowledge, ²¹for by professing it some have missed the mark as regards the faith.

1. Call - v. 11
2. Contest - v. 12
3. Charge - vv. 13-14
4. Context - vv. 15-20
5. Cling - vv. 20-21

E. Salutation - *Grace be with you.*