

Commentary on 1 Timothy Chapters 1 and 2 by Chuck Smith 7.7.24

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May memory verse Romans 6:8 (NKJV)

Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him,

June memory verse Romans 6:9 (NKJV)

knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, dies no more.

Death no longer has dominion over Him.

July memory verse Romans 6:10 (NKJV)

For *the death* that He died, He died to sin once for all; but *the life* that He lives, He lives to God.

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Tonight we will be studying First Timothy three and four. It is interesting as Paul writes to Timothy on several occasions, he uses phrases that are interesting to me. He said, This is a faithful saying, it's worthy of all acceptance. Here he says, beginning chapter three,

This is a faithful saying ([1Ti 3:1](#)),

Again, he'll say, "This is a faithful saying worthy of all acceptance." He'll say, "Without controversy." He speaks to Timothy with interesting phrases affirming the truth of what he is declaring to him. "This is a true saying,"

If a man desires the office of a bishop [or overseer], he desireth a good work ([1Ti 3:1](#)).

Not a good position, but a good work. The word "episkopos" which is translated here "bishop" is really a word that means an overseer

So "if a man desires this office of an overseer of the church, he desires a good work." But these are the qualifications for the man.

A Bishop then must be blameless ([1Ti 3:2](#)),

Now that ought to just about exclude anybody. He must be,

the husband of one wife ([1Ti 3:2](#)),

Now in none of the cultures in those days did a wife have the right of divorce. That was something that only the husbands had. And even in the Jewish culture, a husband could

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get a divorce for just about any cause. And even to that time, in the Jewish culture in many areas, polygamy was practiced. Josephus speaks about those that were had three or four wives. And polygamy was a practice even in that time in the Jewish community.

The church is to be a separate and distinct entity within the world. Standards that are higher than the world. And thus he establishes the standard for the "episkopos," a man who was an overseer in the church, he should be "the husband of one wife." He should be,

Temperate (1Ti 3:2),

That is, in his overseeing of the flock of God. He needs to take careful oversight. He needs to be,

Sober-minded, of good behavior, given to hospitality, and able to teach (1Ti 3:2);

So these are the beginning of the qualifications. Next of all, he's

Not to be given to wine, no violent (1Ti 3:3), That is, an abuser.

not greedy for money, but patient, not a brawler, not covetous; One that rules well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity; (For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?) He's not to be a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil (1Ti 3:3-6).

So this is what Paul instructs Timothy as the qualifications for an "episkopos," an overseer. Now if you will read Paul's letter to Titus, he gives to them the qualifications of a "presbytuos," an elder. And you find that as he gives the qualifications of an elder, they are pretty much similar to the qualifications of an "episkopos" or an overseer.

Next he turns to the deacons.

And likewise must the deacons be grave [or sober], not doubletongued, not given to much wine (1Ti 3:8),

Paul the apostle, in writing to the Corinthians, said, "All things are lawful for me, but all things are not expedient." Some things can impede my progress towards my goal. All things are lawful for me but not everything builds up. Some things tear me down. "All things are lawful for me," he said, "but I will not be brought under the power of any, or the influence of any" (1 Corinthians 6:12). God wants us to serve Him with a clear head, with a clear mind.

So a deacon not to be given to much wine. We are told "not to be drunk with wine, wherein is excess, but be filled with the Spirit" (Ephesians 5:18). They also are,

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not to be greedy of filthy lucre; Holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience. And let these also first be proved; then let them use the office of a deacon, being found blameless (1Ti 3:8-10).

So much of the same requirements for the elders are also for the deacons. Deacons are to prove themselves.

And even so wives (1Ti 3:11)

Now in our King James, you notice "must their wives" is added because the translators thought that he was probably referring to the wives of the deacons which is possible but it is also possible that Paul is just referring to the deaconesses. And that this is in reference to those women who would take a activity within the church body in the office of a deaconess. And "so also wives are to,"

be grave, not slanderers, sober, faithful in all things. And let the deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well. For they that have used the office of a deacon well purchase to themselves a good degree, and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus (1Ti 3:11-13).

And so Paul here writes the qualifications for these offices. And he said,

These things write I unto thee, I hope to come unto you shortly: But if I [don't, if I have to] tarry here awhile, I want you to know how you ought to behave yourself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and the ground of truth (1Ti 3:14-15).

Timothy was left at Ephesus by Paul to strengthen the church. It is to Timothy in Ephesus that Paul is writing and instructing him in the things of the government of the church.

Now having declared the qualifications for the deacons, the overseers and the deaconesses, again when you get to these qualifications we realize that very few people could really qualify for these offices. These characteristics and traits that are required for those in leadership roles are stricter than the average, you might say. It takes a life of commitment. And many people may, as the result of these requirements, feel unqualified to take a position of authority within the church. And so Paul in verse sixteen declares,

And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness (1Ti 3:16):

Godliness is godlikeness. Great is the mystery of being like God. These characteristics and traits that are described are the characteristics and traits of God. God wants us to be like Him. A man who is an elder in the church or an overseer in the church is really one of God's representatives to the people. And one of the most awesome responsibilities is that of being God's representative. People looking at the leadership to

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understand God. God wants me to be like Him so that as people look at me, they can understand what God is about. And that is all the understanding that many people will ever have of God is what they observe in the life of the followers of God. So each of us are God's representatives to the world. But those who take the position of an elder or an overseer have even a greater responsibility of being God's representatives to the people. And God doesn't take lightly how we represent Him.

James tells us that we should "not be many masters, knowing that we receive the greater condemnation" ([James 3:1](#)). We are told "unto whom much is given, much is required" ([Luke 12:48](#)). And so for those who in the position of overseeing, there is a tighter standard by which they must live. Blameless, of good reputation, really even outside of the church, by the manner of life that you live that it doesn't bring blame unto Jesus Christ or to the gospel of Jesus Christ.

It has been the sad tragedy of the church's history that not often does the leadership take that awesome responsibility of representing God seriously enough. Paul talks about falling in the snare of the devil. And Satan surely seeks to trap ministers. And it is always a tragedy and a very sad thing when you see a servant of God being trapped by the enemy because of the reproach that it brings upon the Gospel.

The problem, of course, is that Satan, I think, works harder on those who have a greater influence than those of lesser influence. I think that the more the Lord uses you, the greater are the temptations that the enemy places in your path. This past year, two of the most promising, talented of the young ministers in our Calvary Chapel outreaches fell into the snare of the enemy.

One, thank God, has been delivered and has been restored. But the other is still ensnared. And it grieves me. It breaks my heart because I love these young men like a father loves a son. And I was just so thrilled with their ministry, the effectiveness of their ministry, the effectiveness of their communication. Their ability to teach. It was a thrill to see what God was doing through their ministry and through their lives and say we're touching thousands of people. To see them ensnared by the enemy is a just a tragedy and a grievous thing to my heart.

As Paul the apostle described in Romans chapter seven, "I consent to the law of God that it is good. But I find that there is another law at work within my members, within my body. And the good that I would I do not: and that which I would not, I do" ([Romans 7:16,19,23](#)).

I consent to that which is good. But how to perform it, I just can't find. And we find ourselves in that position so many times. I consent this is right, this is good. That's what I ought to be doing. But how to perform it? That's where the problem lies. And he cried out, "O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from this body of death" ([Romans 7:24](#))? "Great is the mystery of godliness," being like God.

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It's a great mystery that has been solved. It was solved in the incarnation. So "without controversy, great is this mystery of godliness." But God solved the mystery through the incarnation of Jesus Christ for,

God was manifest in the flesh (1Ti 3:16),

A plain, clear, positive declaration that Jesus Christ is God. "God was manifest in the flesh." And the purpose of the incarnation was to bring man to a godlikeness or to help us to be like God. "God was manifest in the flesh,"

He was justified [or proved to be righteous] in the Spirit (1Ti 3:16),

The Spirit led Him in the wilderness to be tempted of the devil and He passed every test. He resisted the temptation. He remained true and obedient unto the first principles of God. He was "justified or proved to be righteous in the Spirit."

He was seen of angels (1Ti 3:16),

After His temptation, the angels came and ministered unto Him. Great is the mystery of being like God. "God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels." God dwells in a light that man cannot approach. Those who had visions of God never had a vision of a form. There was always just that brightness of the glory that shone forth from His being. Looking directly into a light, a brilliant bright light, all you can observe is just light.

So God, the glory of His presence so overwhelming. The brilliance that comes forth from this Creator of the universe. Call it energy or whatever you wish, that must be emanating forth from God. It is possible that the angels had never even seen the form but only the brilliance coming forth from His presence. Until He was "made flesh and He was then seen of angels." He was,

preached unto the Gentiles (1Ti 3:16),

As Paul tells King Agrippa concerning his Damascus road experience, he tells him that the Lord had called him to go unto the Gentiles, to turn them from darkness to light. From the power of Satan unto God. And then He was,

believed on in the world (1Ti 3:16),

All over the world, those who believe on Jesus Christ. Those who believe upon God who was manifest in the flesh. And then He was,

received up into glory (1Ti 3:16).

He said I came from the Father, I'm going to the Father. In His return to the Father, the cycle was complete. His ministry was accomplished. Jesus came to manifest to man

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what God is. And He was the true and the faithful witness. All that we need to know about God, we discover in Jesus Christ. "No man has seen the Father at any time but the only begotten Son which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath manifested him"

Chapter 4

Now the Spirit speaks expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils (1Ti 4:1);

Here Paul speaks of a departure from the faith. There are some who claim that such a thing is an impossibility. But "the Spirit speaks expressly, that in the latter times there would be some who would depart from the faith." Jesus in speaking of His return said, "When the Son of man returns, will he find faith on the earth?" (Luke 18:8) A question. He also told His disciples that because of the iniquity of the earth abounding, the love of many will wax cold. And so it means that living in the last days is going to be living under a great-pressured situation. We are finding that to be true.

Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron (1Ti 4:2);

I really wonder how these evangelists and all can really sleep at night with all of the gimmicks that they pull. "Speaking lies in hypocrisy." I don't know if you've been cursed to be on their mailing list or not. But we keep a file and the things that they can dream up to extract money from people. And you wonder, How can they do that? In the name of God, how can they tell such outlandish lies? The only answer is "their conscience has to be seared with a hot iron." They have no conscience. For them to live in palatial mansions, do the things they do and then get up and say, Friends, we need your money.

The conscience is seared with a hot iron. How in the name of God can they do these things? Except their conscience is just seared with a hot iron. Now in some of these last day weird things, there are those who will be,

Forbidding to marry (1Ti 4:3),

Of course, marriage is becoming almost a thing of the past. It's, "Move in with me." And there are so many just move-in relationships without marriage. That's the thing of the day.

Abstaining from meats, which God has created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth (1Ti 4:3).

A lot of the cult things and occult things get into vegetarianism. But Paul tells us these things meat is to

be received with thanksgiving (1Ti 4:4):

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Of course. For the meat is sanctified by the word of God and prayer (1Ti 4:5).

So pray over your meal and eat it.

If thou put the brethren in remembrance of these things, thou shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished up in the words of faith and of good doctrine, whereunto thou hast attained (1Ti 4:6).

So remind the brethren of these things, Paul said, writing to Timothy. If you do, then you will be a good minister of Jesus Christ as you nourish them in the words of faith, sound, good doctrine.

But refuse the profane and old wives' fables, but exercise thyself rather to godliness (1Ti 4:7).

Now you can waste a lot of time in earthquake scares, reading a lot of the junk that's published. Better to exercise yourself unto godliness.

Bodily exercise profits a little [or for a little] (1Ti 4:8):

Doesn't really forbid it. It's good, got a little profit to it. But more profitable is.

godliness it's profitable unto all things, having the promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come (1Ti 4:8).

Now Paul is saying the same thing about exercise. Physical exercise has temporal benefits. But godliness has eternal benefits. Now we are living in a day of you know it's sort of a craze, this physical exercise. Jogging, aerobic exercises. The other night my wife and I were eating at a restaurant, we looked across the street we saw all these heads bouncing up and down and all. And man, the whole time we were eating they were bouncing. I did admire them. And I didn't eat desert. But this bit of physical fitness, it's a craze, it's swept America. And that's alright. Paul's not really coming down on it. I mean, bodily exercise has some value. Toning up yourself and all, there's nothing wrong with that. But godliness, exercising yourself in godliness, hey, that you will reap eternal dividends.

There are things that have temporal values, there are things that have eternal value and a man who is wise will engage in those things of eternal value. He will choose the eternal over the temporal, if you're really wise. There are things that can bring you temporal gain. There are things that can bring you eternal gain. The man who is wise would choose the eternal over the temporal. So Paul is telling Timothy the same. Bodily exercise it profits. Timothy was a younger man, probably keeping in shape. It's fine. But hey, don't neglect the godliness, spiritual exercise. Now again,

This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance (1Ti 4:9).

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It's again Paul uses this phrase. It's a true saying, and it's worthy that all should accept it. And that is that the spiritual is superior to the physical or the material. That it is better to exercise yourself in spiritual matters than in physical matters. One has only temporary value; the other is of life now and also that which is to come, the eternal. And because of this declaration, Paul said, the superiority of the spiritual over the physical, which is the opposite of the worldly view.

Therefore we labor and we suffer reproach (1Ti 4:10),

The world reproaches us. They take an opposite view of this completely. The time in church to them is a waste of time.

because we trust in the living God, who is the Saviour of all men, specially of those that believe (1Ti 4:10).

Jesus died for the sins of the world. But only those who believe receive the forgiveness of sins. Jesus died to redeem the world, but He will only take His treasure out of it. And so He died and is the Saviour of all men, but specifically those who believe. He provided salvation for all men, but not all have received it.

These things [Paul said, you should] command and teach. Let no man despise thy youth (1Ti 4:11-12);

How old was Timothy? Well, he had been with Paul now traveling as a companion for fifteen years. Assuming that he was fifteen years old when he started out with Paul, and that's probably a little young, but let's say that he was only fifteen, he's at least thirty years old now. So he's not just a kid. When Paul said, "Let no man despise your youth," you shouldn't be thinking of some fifteen, sixteen-year-old kid. Timothy is probably thirty or more at this particular point. But when the elders were not really considered elders until they became fifty, there was that tendency to look down upon a younger man as lacking in the wisdom that comes from age and maturity. So "let no man despise your youth,"

but instead be an example of the believer, in the word, in your manner of life, in love, in the spirit, in faith, and in purity (1Ti 4:12).

Set the example, Timothy. Now what Paul writes to Timothy is good for all of us. We should be examples of what a Christian is. Paul said to the Corinthians, "You are living epistles, known and read of all men" (II Corinthians 3:2). As a Christian, the world is watching you. Be an example of the believer, not unto the believer but of the believer. What a believer should be. This is how a believer should live. This is how a believer should act and react. Be the example of a believer, in your words. The word "conversation" there is an old English word that it is just doesn't mean in you know in your conversing with each other, but in your manner of living, your total manner of living. Let it be as becomes godliness and Christianity. "In your love, the agape, in the spirit, in faith, in purity."

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Now till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, and to doctrine (1Ti 4:13).

So these are the three things that were done in the early church. The reading of the Scriptures. It was a very prominent and common practice in the early church when the Christians gathered together to read the Scriptures. These letters that Paul sent to the churches were to be read to the churches. So he tells Timothy, "Give attendance to the reading of the Scriptures." There's value in just the reading of the word of God. But then also the exhortation. As you are then prompting people to act upon the word. "To be doers of the word, and not hearers only" (James 1:22). Now trust in the Lord. Now give thanks to God. And so the exhorting of the people and then also to the doctrine.

And neglect not the gift that is in you, which was given to you by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery (1Ti 4:14).

So Paul here is mentioning how that when Timothy had hands laid upon him by the elders, they laid hands on Timothy and a prophecy came forth and in the prophecy, Timothy's ministry was declared, directed. And now Paul tells him, don't neglect that gift that was given to you by the word of prophecy when the elders laid hands on you.

Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them; that your profiting may appear to all. Take heed to yourself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this you will both save yourself, and those that hear you (1Ti 4:15-16).

Interesting. Take heed to yourself and to the doctrine. Continue in them: for in doing this you not only save yourself, but you save others. It is important that we are reaching out. Important for our own continuance that we go on and that we're pressing on and that we're reaching out. There's really no place for stagnation.

This is something that I think that we all ought to really carefully examine our own hearts. The Bible says, "Now let a man judge himself. For if we will judge ourselves, we will not be judged of God" (1 Corinthians 11:28,31). And I think that we should all examine our own hearts and our own present relationship to Jesus Christ. And as I examine my present relationship to Jesus Christ tonight, is there a time in my walk with the Lord that I was more fervent than I am tonight? Is there a time when I was more excited about the things of Jesus than I am tonight? Is there a time when I was more diligent in my serving the Lord than I am tonight? And if in the examining of your heart, your present relationship and your past experiences, if tonight you do not have a deeper, richer, more enthusiastic relationship with the Lord, then you are in a backslidden state.

If at any time in your walk with God, your relationship to Him was more richer, more committed than it is tonight, then you are in a backslidden state and you should be very careful about that. The Spirit speaks expressly concerning the last days. That because the iniquity of the world will abound, the love of many is going to wax cold. Are you one of those in which the love is waxing cold? And it should cause us very serious consideration.

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Jesus said to the church of Ephesus, "I have this against you, because you have left your first love. Now repent, do thy first works over; or else I will remove the candlestick out of his place" (Revelation 2:4-5).

Paul is saying to Timothy. "Take heed to yourself and to your doctrine, continuing in them for in saving others, you really save yourself." You see, you cannot minister unto others without being ministered to by the Lord. I've often said the best way to learn is to teach because you have to study so much more in order to be able to give out that in teaching a subject, you really learn the subject thoroughly. And the best way to learn is to teach. The best way to develop is to give. To give out. "Take heed to yourself and to your doctrine." Continue in them for in saving others, in reaching out to others, you'll find that it will be your own salvation. It will be your own enrichment. It will be to your own blessing, strengthening in the things of the Lord.