I TIMOTHY 1

PARAGRAPH DIVISIONS OF MODERN TRANSLATIONS*

UBS[4]	NKJV	NRSV	TEV	NJB
Salutation	Greeting	Salutation	Introduction	Address
1:1-2	1:1	1:1	1:1	1:1-2
	1:2a	1:2a	1:2a	
	1:2b	1:2b	1:2b	
Warning Against False Doctrine	No Other Defense	The Defense of the Truth	Warnings Against False Teaching	Suppress the False Teachers
1:3-7	1:3-11	1:3-7	1:3-7	1:3-7
1:8-11		1:8-11	1:8-11	1:8-11
Thankfulness for Mercy	Glory to God for His Grace		Gratitude for God's Mercy	Paul On His Own Calling
1:12-17	1:12-17	1:12-17	1:12-17	1:12-17
	Fight the Good Fight			Timothy's Responsibility
1:18-20	1:18-20	1:18-20	1:18-20	1:18-20

READING CYCLE THREE (from "A Guide to Good Bible Reading" p. vii)
FOLLOWING THE ORIGINAL AUTHOR'S INTENT AT THE PARAGRAPH LEVEL

This is a study guide commentary, which means that you are responsible for your own interpretation of the Bible. Each of us must walk in the light we have. You, the Bible, and the Holy Spirit are priority in interpretation. You must not relinquish this to a commentator.

Read the chapter in one sitting. Identify the subjects. Compare your subject divisions with the five modern translations. Paragraphing is not inspired, but it is the key to following the original author's intent, which is the heart of interpretation. Every paragraph has one and only one main subject.

1. First paragraph
2. Second paragraph
3. Third paragraph
4. Etc.

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* Although they are not inspired, paragraph divisions are the key to understanding and following the original author's intent. Each modern translation has divided and summarized the paragraphs. Every paragraph has one central topic, truth, or thought. Each version encapsulates that topic in its own distinct way. As you read the text, ask yourself which translation fits your understanding of the subject and verse divisions.

In every chapter we must read the Bible first and try to identify its subjects (paragraphs), then compare our understanding with the modern versions. Only when we understand the original author's intent by following his logic and presentation can we truly understand the Bible. Only the original author is inspired—readers have no right to change or modify the message. Bible readers do have the responsibility of applying the inspired truth to their day and their lives.

Note that all technical terms and abbreviations are explained fully in Appendices One, Two, and Three.

WORD AND PHRASE STUDY

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 1:1
[1]Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus according to the commandment of God our Savior, and of Christ Jesus, *who* is our hope,

1:1 "Paul" This is a Greek name meaning "little." Most Jewish families of the diaspora (Paul was from Tarsus of Cilicia) named their children with a Jewish name and a Greek name. Before Acts 13:13 he is called Saul ("asked"). This is the name of the first Hebrew king from the tribe of Benjamin (as was Paul, cf. Acts 13:21; Rom. 11:1; Phil. 3:5). In Acts 13:13, "Saul" suddenly changes to "Paul."

▣ **"an apostle"** This is one of two common Greek words for "send." This term has several theological usages.

1. the rabbis used it as one called and sent as an official representative of another, something like our English "ambassador" (cf. II Cor. 5:20).
2. the Gospels often use this term of Jesus being sent by the Father. In John the term takes on Messianic overtones (cf. John 4:34; 5:24,30,36,37,38; 6:29,38,39,40,57; 7:29; 8:42; 10:36; 11:42; 17:3,8,18,21,23,25; 20:21)
3. it is used of Jesus sending believers (cf. John 17:18; 20:21)
   a. the original twelve inner circle of disciples (cf. Acts 1:21-22)
   b. a special group of Apostolic helpers and co-workers
      (1) Barnabas (cf. Acts 14:4,14)
      (2) Andronicus and Junias (KJV, Junia, cf. Rom. 16:7)
      (3) Apollos (cf. I Cor. 4:6-9)
      (4) James the Lord's brother (cf. Gal. 1:19)
      (5) Silvanus and Timothy (cf. I Thess. 2:6)
      (6) possibly Titus (cf. II Cor. 8:23)
      (7) possibly Epaphroditus (cf. Phil. 2:25)
4. an ongoing gift in the church (cf. Eph. 4:11)
5. Paul uses this title for himself in most of his letters as a way of asserting his God-given authority as Christ's representative (cf. I Cor. 1:1; II Cor. 1:1; Eph. 1:1; Col. 1:1; II Tim. 1:1). Even in a personal letter like I Timothy, this authority is important
   a. his authority gave Timothy authority
   b. he is combating false teachers
   c. the letter was obviously read to the entire church.

▣ **"of Christ Jesus"** These terms are part of the fuller title "the Lord Jesus Christ." These three titles all have individual significance.

2. "Christ" is the Greek translation of the Hebrew *Messiah* (Anointed One). It asserts Jesus' OT status as God's promised one sent to set up the new age of righteousness.
3. "Jesus" is the name given to the baby in Bethlehem by the angel (cf. Matt. 1:21). It is made up of two Hebrew nouns: "YHWH," the covenant name for deity, and "salvation" (cf. Exod. 3:14). It is the same Hebrew name as Joshua. When used alone it often identifies the man, Jesus of Nazareth, son of Mary (ex. Matt. 1:16, 25; 2:1; 3:13,15,16).
4. "Lord" (used in 1:1 in KJV) is the translation of the Hebrew term *adon*, which meant "owner, husband, master, or lord." The Jews became afraid of pronouncing the sacred name YHWH lest they take it in vain and break one of the Ten Commandments. Whenever they read the Scriptures, they substituted *Adon* for YHWH. This is why our English translations use all capitals LORD for YHWH

in the OT. By transferring this title (*kurios* in Greek) to Jesus, the NT authors assert His deity and equality with the Father (this same thing is done by the grammar of v. 2 with one PREPOSITION referring to God the Father and Jesus the Son, cf. I Thess. 1:1; II Thess. 1:1,2).

▣ **"according to the commandment of God our Savior"** This is another literary way of asserting Paul's apostolic authority. Paul's ministry was the "will of God" (cf. II Tim. 1:1) and "the commandment of God" (cf. Titus 1:3). This probably refers to Paul's call on the road to Damascus and the information revealed through Ananias (cf. Acts 9:1-22; 22:3-16; 26:9-18). Paul did not volunteer!

▣ **"God our Savior"** This is an OT title for YHWH's care and deliverance of Israel (cf. Isa. 19:20; 43:3,11; 45:15,21; 49:26; 60:16; 63:8), especially through the coming Suffering Servant (cf. Isa. 52:13-53:12). This title is used of God the Father in Titus 1:3; 2:10 and 3:4 and of God the Son, Jesus, in Titus 1:4; 2:13 and 3:6. This is another way of theologically linking the Father and the Son.

This was one of the NT titles for YHWH which was used of Caesar. The Caesars of Paul's day claimed to be "Lord," "Savior," even "divine." Christians reserved these titles uniquely for Jesus and because of this they were seen as traitors and were persecuted and died by the thousands in the first and second centuries.

▣ **"and of Christ Jesus our hope"** Paul often uses this term in several related senses. Often it is associated with the consummation of the believer's faith (cf. I Tim. 1:1). This can be expressed as glory, eternal life, ultimate salvation, Second Coming, etc. The consummation is certain, but the time element is future and unknown.

1. the Second Coming (cf. Gal. 5:5; Eph. 1:18; 4:4; Titus 2:13)
2. Jesus is our hope (cf. I Tim. 1:1)
3. the believer to be presented to God (cf. Col. 1:22-23; I Thess. 2:19)
4. hope laid up in heaven (cf. Col. 1:5)
5. ultimate salvation (cf. I Thess. 4:13)
6. the glory of God (cf. Rom. 5:2; II cor. 3:12; Col. 1:27)
7. assurance of salvation (cf. I Thess. 5:8-9)
8. eternal life (cf. Titus 1:2; 3:7)
9. redemption of all creation (cf. Rom. 8:20-22)
10. adoption's consummation (cf. Rom. 8:23-25)
11. a title for God (cf. Rom. 15:13)
12. OT guide for NT believers (cf. Rom. 15:4)

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 1:2

[2]To Timothy, *my* true child in *the* faith: Grace, mercy *and* peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.

1:2 "To Timothy" The Pastoral Letters follow the typical Greek letter form: (1) from whom; (2) to whom; and (3) a prayer/wish.

SPECIAL TOPIC: TIMOTHY

A. His name means "one who honors God."
B. He was the child of a Jewish mother and a Greek father and lived in Lystra (cf. Acts 16:1). The Latin translation of Origen's commentary on Rom. 16:21 says Timothy was a citizen of Derbe. This is possibly from Acts 20:4.

C. He was instructed in the Jewish faith (or Christian faith) by his mother and grandmother (cf. II Tim. 1:5; 3:14-15).
D. He trusted Christ during Paul's first missionary journey (cf. Acts 17:49-14:25).
E. He was asked to join Paul and Silas' missionary team on the second journey (cf. Acts 16:1-5), apparently to take John Mark's duties. He was confirmed by prophecy (cf. I Tim. 1:18; 4:14).
F. He was circumcised by Paul in order to work with both Jews and Greeks (cf. Acts 16:3).
G. He was a dedicated companion of Paul and became his Apostolic delegate. He is mentioned by name more than any other of Paul's helpers (17 times in 10 letters, cf. Rom. 16:21; I Cor. 4:17; 16:10; Phil.1:1; 2:19,22; Col. 1:5; I Tim. 1:2; II Tim. 1:2; Titus 1:4).
H. Paul affectionately calls him "my true child in the faith" (cf. I Tim. 1:2); "my beloved son" (cf. II Tim. 1:2); "my true child in a common faith" (cf. Titus 1:4). Also notice I Cor. 4:17.
I. He was apparently in Rome when Paul was released from prison and accompanied him on his fourth missionary journey (cf. Col. 1:1; Philemon 1).
J. He is called an "apostle" in I Thess. 2:6 in the sense of an ongoing spiritual gift for the churches (cf. Eph. 4:11).
K. Two of the three Pastoral Letters are addressed to him.
L. He is last mentioned in Heb. 13:23 (but chronologically in II Tim. 1:2).

▣ **"*my* true child"** "My" is not in the Greek text. "Child" is *teknon*, which means a legitimate child. Paul saw himself as Timothy's spiritual father (cf. Titus 1:4; II Tim. 1:2; 2:1).

▣ **"Grace, mercy *and* peace"** Notice the commonality and differences in Paul's opening greetings:
1. "Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ" (cf. Rom. 1:7; I Cor. 1:3; II Cor. 1:2; Gal. 1:3; Eph. 1:2; Phil. 1:2; I Thess. 1:2; Philemon 1:3)
2. "Grace to you and peace from God our Father" (cf. Col. 1:2)
3. "Grace to you and peace" (cf. I Thess. 1:1)
4. "Grace, mercy and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord" (cf. I Tim. 1:2; II Tim. 1:2)
5. "Grace and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Savior" (cf. Titus 1:4)

Notice that there is variety, but some elements are standard.
1. "Grace" begins all greetings. It is a Christianized form of greeting focusing on the character of God.
2. "Peace" is the result of humans trusting in the trustworthy God.
3. "Mercy" is another way of describing God's character and is unique in Paul's writings, used only in I and II Timothy. This term was used in the Septuagint to translate the Hebrew term *hesed* (i.e. covenant loyalty). God is gracious and trustworthy.
4. The Father and Son are mentioned in each greeting (in I Thess. they are mentioned in the previous phrase). They are always grammatically linked. This was one way the NT writers asserted the full deity of Jesus of Nazareth. This is also true of the use of the OT titles for YHWH applied to Jesus (i.e. Lord and Savior).

▣ **"Father"** The Bible uses human categories (anthropomorphisms) to describe deity as an aid to time-bound, sinful mankind. The most common biblical metaphors relate to the family: (1) God as Father, as parent (mother and father), as near kin (*go'el*); (2) Jesus as Son, as brother, as husband; (3) believers as children, as adopted children, as bride.

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 1:3-7

[3]As I urged you upon my departure for Macedonia, remain on at Ephesus so that you may instruct certain men not to teach strange doctrines, [4]nor to pay attention to myths and endless genealogies, which give rise to mere speculation rather than *furthering* the administration of God which is by faith. [5]But the goal of our instruction is love from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith. [6]For some men, straying from these things, have turned aside to fruitless discussion, [7]wanting to be teachers of the Law, even though they do not understand either what they are saying or the matters about which they make confident assertions.

1:3 "Ephesus"

1. It was the largest city of the Roman province of Asia Minor. It was not the capital, though the Roman governor lived there. It was a commercial center because of its excellent natural harbor.
2. It was a free city, which allowed it to have its own local government and many political freedoms, including no garrison of Roman soldiers.
3. It was the only city which was allowed to hold biannual Asian Olympic games.
4. It was the site of the Temple to Artemis (Diana in Latin), which was one of the seven wonders of the world of its day. It was 425' by 220' with 127 columns which were 60' tall, of which 86 were overlaid with gold (see Pliny's *Hist. Nat.* 36:95ff). The image of Artemis was thought to have been a meteor which resembled a many-breasted female figure. This meant that there were many cultic prostitutes present in the city (cf. Acts 19). It was a very immoral, multicultural city.
5. Paul spent more than three years in this city (cf. Acts 18:1ff; 20:13). He stayed there longer than any other place.
6. Tradition asserts that it became the Apostle John's home after Mary's death in Palestine.
7. Paul and Timothy must have traveled here together after Paul was released from Roman imprisonment in Rome. It is the first geographical information about Paul's fourth missionary journey. Notice he was moving on to Macedonia.
8. Eusebius (a third century church historian) relates the tradition that Timothy was later stoned in Ephesus because of arguments with the followers of Diana.

▣ **"so that"** This is a *hina* (purpose clause), which means "in order that" (1:10,18,20; 2:2; 3:15; 4:15; 5:7,16,20,21; 6:1,19).

▣ **"may instruct"** This is a military term "to give strict orders" (cf. vv. 5,18; 6:13). Paul is affirming Timothy as his Apostolic delegate.

▣ **"certain men not to teach strange doctrines"** Normally Paul, like all first century writers, would include a prayer of thanksgiving, an expected introductory item of Greek letters. However, in both Galatians and I Timothy the situation (i.e. opposing false teachers) demanded a deviation from the normal pattern. There is much modern academic speculation about these false teachers. They seem to combine aspects of Jewish and Greek thought (like the false teachers of Colossians). In this context they are characterized by

1. strange doctrines
2. attention to myths
3. attention to endless genealogies
4. mere speculation

Some commentators relate these to Gnosticism's aeons or angelic spheres (*plērōma*) between a high good god and lessor gods/angels, the least of which molded/formed evil matter. The Jewish element is obvious in:

1. "teachers of the Law" (1:7-10)

2. "Jewish myths" (Titus 1:14; II Tim. 4:4)
3. "disputes about the Law" (Titus 3:9)
4. "those of the circumcision" (Titus 1:10)
5. possibly the origins of the Messiah in Titus 3:9a

▣

NASB "to teach no other doctrine"
NRSV "to teach different doctrine"
NRSV "teaching false doctrine"
TEV "teaching false doctrine"
NJB "to spread wrong teaching"

This is a PRESENT INFINITIVE of a compound term *heteros* (another of a different kind) plus *didakalin* (the thing taught). The adjective *heteros* is also used to describe inappropriate teaching in Acts 17:21; II Cor. 11:4; and Gal. 1:6-7.

In *The New International Biblical Commentary*, p. xiv, one of my favorite commentators, Gordon Fee, asserts that this verse is crucial in interpreting the purpose of I Timothy. In his opinion it is not primarily a "manual of church discipline," but a refutation of false teachers/teaching (and I agree).

1:4 "nor to pay attention to myths and endless genealogies" Because of the references to Jewish Law (vv. 7-10 and Titus 3:9b), to circumcision (Titus 1:10) and Jewish myths (Titus 1:14 and in II Tim. 4:4), it seems obvious that these teachings were Jewish in nature. It is possible that it refers to the speculative origins of the Messiah (cf. Titus 3:9a).

Irenaeus and Tertullian thought Paul was prophetically speaking to later gnosticism's aeons or angelic levels between the holy god and a lesser god (or Elohim/angel) who formed matter. Gnosticism is a system of thought that is known from writings from the middle of the second century. From these writings we know of their extensive lists of angelic levels between a high good god and the lesser spiritual beings. However, these gnostic lists are never characterized in contemporary Christian, Jewish, or Gnostic literature by the terms "myths" or "genealogies."

The subject of gnosticism has been greatly advanced by the archaeological discoveries of gnostic texts such as Nag Hammadi. These writings are now available in English, *The Nag Hammadi Library* by James M. Robinson and Richard Smith.

▣

NASB "give rise to mere speculation"
NKJV "which cause disputes"
NRSV "that promote speculations"
TEV "which only produce arguments"
NJB "only foster doubts"

It is possible to get so involved in the study of Christianity academically that we forget why we are studying God's word (cf. Titus 3:8; Matt. 28:19-20). This is exactly the reason that Pietism developed out of the Reformation tradition. Mind and heart must both be yielded and energized by God's Spirit.

▣

NASB "rather than *furthering* the administration of God"
NKJV "rather than godly edification"
NRSV "rather than the divine training"
TEV "they do not serve God's plan"
NJB "instead of furthering God's plan"

This is the term for "household manager" used for believers' stewardship of the gospel message. It refers to God's gracious plan for mankind's salvation through faith in Christ (cf. Gen. 3:15; II Cor. 5:21; Eph. 2:8-10; 2:11-3:13).

▣ **"which is by faith"** There is a real difference between "myths," "genealogies," "speculations," and faith. Faith is based on the historical truth of the gospel, not theories. Faith comes from the promises of God (cf. Gal. 3:14,16,17,18,21,22,29), not the philosophical preponderance of humans (cf. I Cor. 1:18-31). One is based on revelation, the other on human speculation. One honors God and the other magnifies the human thinker.

This is not meant to depreciate godly scholarship but to differentiate divine revelation from human reason, speculation and discovery. Believers are called to love God with their "minds" (cf. Matt. 22:36-37; Mark 12:28-30; Luke 10:27) and to pass these truths on to their children (cf. Deut. 6:7,20-25).

1:5 "love from a pure heart" The goal of Paul's charge to believers had a three-fold component.

1. love from a pure heart
2. love from a good conscience
3. love from a sincere faith.

In Hebrew "heart" was used for the seat of the intellect, emotions, and will (cf. Deut. 6:5-6).

▣ **"a good conscience"** There is not an OT counterpart to the Greek term "conscience" unless the Hebrew term "breast" implies a knowledge of self and its motives. Originally the Greek term referred to consciousness related to the five senses. It came to be used of the inner senses (cf. Rom. 2:15). Paul uses this term twice in his trials in Acts (cf. 23:1 and 24:16). It refers to his sense that he had not knowingly violated any expected duties toward God (cf. I Cor. 4:4).

Conscience is a developing understanding of believers' motives and actions based on (1) a biblical world-view; (2) an indwelling Spirit; (3) a knowledge of the word of God. It is made possible by the personal reception of the gospel.

Paul uses this term twice in chapter 1, once in relation to his own developed sense of the will of God (cf. 1:5) and once in relation to the willful rejection of the false teachers (cf. Titus 1:15), including Hymenaeus and Alexander (cf. 1:19). These false teachers have had their consciences seared (cf. 4:2).

▣ **"a sincere faith"** Paul uses this adjective three times to describe (1) faith (cf. I Tim. 1:5; II Tim. 1:5); and (2) love (cf. II Cor. 6:6 and also I Pet. 1:22). It has the connotation of genuine, real, or sincere which is opposite of "counterfeit" which describes the false teachers (cf. vv. 19-20).

1:6-7 These verses further characterize the false teachers in very Jewish categories

1. they strayed from the goal of ethical teachings (cf. v. 5)
2. they turned aside to
   a. "fruitless discussion" (NASB)
   b. "idle talk" (NKJV)
   c. "meaningless talk" (NRSV)
   d. "empty speculation" (NJB)
3. they wanted to be teachers of the Law
4. they do not understand the Law
5. they make confident assertions about things they do not understand
6. verses 9c-10 seem to reflect the Ten Commandments

The tragedy of false teachers is either (1) their spiritual blindness, which is often expressed in sincerity, or (2) their willful rejection of light, not just ignorance.

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 1:8-11

[8]But we know that the Law is good, if one uses it lawfully, [9]realizing the fact that law is not made for a righteous person, but for those who are lawless and rebellious, for the ungodly and sinners, for the unholy and profane, for those who kill their fathers or mothers, for murderers [10]and immoral men and homosexuals and kidnappers and liars and perjurers, and whatever else is contrary to sound teaching, [11]according to the glorious gospel of the blessed God, with which I have been entrusted.

1:8-11 This is one long sentence in Greek. It clearly reveals one continuing purpose of the Mosaic Law, especially as it relates to moral living.

1:8 "But we know" Paul has several "views" of the Law

1. it is good and from God (cf. Rom. 7:12,16)
2. it is not the way to righteousness and acceptance by God (it can even be a curse, cf. Gal. 3)
3. it is still God's will for believers because it is God's self-revelation (Paul often quotes the OT to convict and/or encourage believers)
4. Believers are informed by the OT (cf. Rom. 4:23-24; 15:4; I Cor. 10:6,11), but not saved by the OT (cf. Acts 15; Rom. 4; Gal. 3; Hebrews)
5. it functions in the new covenant to
   a. show sinfulness (cf. Gal. 3:15-29)
   b. guide redeemed mankind in society
   c. inform Christian ethical decisions

It is this theological spectrum from cursing and passing away to blessing and permanency that causes the problem in trying to understand Paul's view of the Mosaic Law. In *A Man in Christ*, James Stewart shows Paul's paradoxical thinking and writing:

> "You would normally expect a man who was setting himself to construct a system of thought and doctrine to fix as rigidly as possible the meanings of the terms he employed. You would expect him to aim at precision in the phraseology of his leading ideas. You would demand that a word, once used by your writer in a particular sense, should bear that sense throughout. But to look for this from Paul is to be disappointed. Much of his phraseology is fluid, not rigid. . . 'The law is holy' he writes, 'I delight in the law of God after the inward man' (cf. Rom. 7:12,22) but it is clearly another aspect of *nomos* that makes him say elsewhere, 'Christ had redeemed us from the curse of the law (cf. Gal. 3:13)" (p. 26).

▣ **"if"** This is a THIRD CLASS CONDITIONAL SENTENCE which means potential, but contingent, action. The Mosaic Law must be used in an appropriate manner and not as a legalistic agenda (cf. Rom. 2:27-29; 7:6; II Cor. 3:6).

1:9 "but for those who are lawless and rebellious" Paul includes several lists of sins in his writings (cf. Rom. 1:29-31; 13:13; I Cor. 5:11; 6:9-10; Eph. 5:5; Col. 3:5; I Tim. 6:4-5; II Tim. 3:2-4; Titus 3:3). They are similar to the lists of vices of the Greek moralists (Stoics). This list describes those for whom the Law still has relevance (i.e. sinners). The Law as God's agent to convict of sin is fully discussed in Gal. 3.

▣ **"lawless"** This meant "no recognized authority." These false teachers had rejected the moral aspects of the Mosaic Law. They had become a "law" unto themselves (no conscience).

▣ **"rebellious"** This meant "not under authority." They wanted to be authorities unto themselves.

▣ **"ungodly"** This meant "knowledgeably irreligious." They were not ignorant, but self-blinded.

▣ **"unholy"** This means the opposite of God.

▣ **"profane"** This meant "to trample the holy." They claimed to be spiritual, but by their very acts they demonstrated their worldliness.

▣ **"those who kill their fathers and mothers"** If this list reflects the Decalog, then this may reflect lack of the respect/honor which is due parents (cf. Exod. 20:12; Deut. 5:16).

▣ **"murder"** In the Decalog this refers to non-legal, premeditated murder (cf. Exod. 20:13; Deut. 5:17).

1:10 "immoral men" This meant "sexually immoral" and may refer to Exod. 20:14 and Deut. 5:18. Sexuality without bounds has always characterized false teachers.

▣

NASB, NJB	**"homosexuals"**
NKJV, NRSV	**"sodomites"**
TEV	**"sexual perverts"**

There is much modern cultural pressure to accept homosexuality as an appropriate alternate lifestyle. The Bible condemns it as a destructive lifestyle, out of the will of God for His creation.

1. it violates the command of Gen. 1 to be fruitful and multiply
2. it characterizes pagan worship and culture (cf. Lev. 18:22; 20:13; Rom. 1:26-27; and Jude 7)
3. it reveals a self-centered independence from God (cf. I Cor. 6:9-10)

However, before I leave this topic let me assert God's love and forgiveness to all rebellious human beings. Christians have no right to act hatefully and arrogantly towards this particular sin, especially when it is obvious that all of us sin. Prayer, concern, testimony, and compassion do far more in this area than vehement condemnation. God's Word and His Spirit will do the condemning if we let them. All sexual sins, not just this one, are an abomination to God and lead to judgment. Sexuality is a gift from God for mankind's well-being, joy, and a stable society. But this powerful, God-given urge is often turned into rebellious, self-centered, pleasure-seeking, "more-for-me-at-any-cost" living (cf. Rom. 8:1-8; Gal. 6:7-8).

▣ **"kidnappers"** This may be further evidence that the entire list parallels the Ten Commandments. This is a rabbinical interpretation of "thou shalt not steal" (cf. Exod. 20:15; Deut. 5:19). The rabbis assert that it refers to kidnaping of slaves (cf. Exod. 21:16; Deut. 24:7); however, the immediate context seems related to perverse sexuality (i.e. the sexual use of a slave girl, cf. Amos 2:7, or the use of young boys for homosexual perversity).

▣ **"and liars and perjurers"** This may relate to the Commandment "you shall not bear false witness against your neighbor" (cf. Exod. 20:16; Deut. 5:20).

▣ **"and whatever else is contrary to sound teaching"** If we continue to compare this to the Decalog then this must refer to "coveting" (cf. Exod. 20:17; Deut. 5:21). However, Paul seems to end his list of sins in Rom. 13:9 and Gal. 5:21 in the same general sense (i.e. without specific reference to coveting).

▣ **"sound teaching"** We get the English word "hygiene" from this Greek word. This term is used in the NT 11 times; 9 are in the Pastoral Letters. It speaks of teachings that make believers spiritually healthy.

This concept (though different phrasing) is a repeated theme in the Pastoral Letters (cf. I Tim. 1:10; 4:6; 6:3; II Tim. 1:13; 4:3; Titus 1:9,13; 2:12,8). In this context it is parallel to "the gospel of glory" in v. 11.

The difficult contemporary application of this text relates to modern believers being able to define "false teachers." How does one differentiate between items of personal preference and culture versus crucial doctrinal issues? The answer must lie in the Apostolic preaching of the gospel, especially as it relates to the person and work of Christ and how humans receive the benefit of Christ's work and live in light of the gospel's mandate of Christlikeness.

1:11 "the glorious gospel" This is literally "the gospel of the glory of the blessed God." This is parallel to the "sound teaching" of v. 10. God has revealed how to respond to Him and other humans in appropriate (gospel) and inappropriate (Mosaic Law) ways. The new covenant in Christ is the final arbitrator of what is necessary and appropriate for believers.

The term glory (*doxa*) is very difficult to define. In the OT the Hebrew term *kabod* means "to be heavy" and thereby valuable and honorable. It had a special derived sense when used of YHWH (cf. Exod. 16:7) in connection with the *shekinah* cloud which represented His presence. This cloud was a pillar of fire. Therefore, *kabod* took on a radiant, brilliant connotation (cf. Exod. 24:17). In the OT it becomes a way of referring to God Himself (cf. Isa. 59:19). This is why John 1:14 becomes so significant. Jesus and/or His gospel are identified fully with the blessed God of the OT, YHWH.

▣ **"blessed God"** This word for "blessed" is used for God, only here and in 6:15. It is the same term used in the Beatitudes of Matt. 5 (i.e. "happy," "content"). The implication of the idiom is that YHWH is worthy of praise.

▣ **"which I have been entrusted"** This is an AORIST PASSIVE INDICATIVE of *pisteuō*, the general term for faith, trust, or believe in the NT. Here it is used in the sense of "to entrust something to another" (cf. Luke 16:11; Rom. 3:2; I Cor. 9:17; Gal. 2:7; I Thess. 2:4; I Tim. 1:11; Titus 1:3; I Pet. 4:10).

Paul believed that God had made him a steward of the gospel for which he would give an account (cf. I Cor. 9:17; Gal. 2:7; I Thess. 2:4; Titus 1:3).

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 1:12-17

[12] I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who has strengthened me, because He considered me faithful, putting me into service, [13]even though I was formerly a blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent aggressor. Yet I was shown mercy because I acted ignorantly in unbelief; [14]and the grace of our Lord was more than abundant, with the faith and love which are *found* in Christ Jesus. [15]It is a trustworthy statement, deserving full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, among whom I am foremost *of all.* [16]Yet for this reason I found mercy, so that in me as the foremost, Jesus Christ might demonstrate His perfect patience as an example for those who would believe in Him for eternal life. [17]Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God, *be* honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.

1:12 "I thank Christ Jesus our Lord" This is one of the rare occasions when Paul directs his prayer to Christ instead of the Father. He possibly does this here because it was Jesus whom he heard on the Damascus road (cf. Acts 9:4-5; 22:7-8; 26:15). Paul believed and then Jesus

1. strengthened/enabled/empowered him (cf. Phil. 4:13; II Tim. 4:17)
2. considered him faithful/trustworthy
3. put him to ministry (cf. Acts 9:15).

The rest of this paragraph is devoted to Paul's amazement that God could love, forgive, and use a sinner like him. If God could do this for Paul, He could do it for anyone, even the false teachers and those influenced by them.

This type of doxology that seems to break into the context is characteristic of Paul's writing. Expressing his theology often caused him to burst into praise and thanksgiving. Paul often used the Greek term *eucharisteō* or *eucharistia* to express thanks, but the term here is *charin*, which is formed from the stem of the term "grace" (*charis*). This term is rarer in Paul's writing (cf. I Tim. 1:12; II Tim. 1:3). However, both are used apparently interchangeably in the Corinthian letters, therefore, they are probably synonymous for Paul, with little or no distinctiveness implied.

1:13 "blasphemer" This must refer to Saul's beliefs and statements about Jesus before his conversion.

▣ **"a persecutor and a violent aggressor"** (cf. Acts 8:1-3; I Cor. 15:8-9; Gal. 1:13)

▣ **"I was shown mercy"** This is an AORIST PASSIVE INDICATIVE. God/Christ had mercy on Saul the violent persecutor. If he can receive mercy, anyone can receive mercy. This reveals clearly the character of God and how far His love and mercy extends to sinners.

▣ **"because I acted ignorantly in unbelief"** In the OT, sins of ignorance could be forgiven by sacrifice (cf. Lev. 16). In Romans Paul clearly asserts that God holds humans responsible for the light they have. An example of this truth is that before the Mosaic Law, God did not hold humans responsible for violating its precepts (cf. Acts 17:30; Rom. 3:20,25; 4:15; 5:13,20; 7:5,7-8; I Cor. 15:56). This same truth is also seen in those who have never heard the gospel (cf. Rom. 1:18-2:29). They are responsible for the light they have (from creation, Rom. 1:18-23 and an inner moral witness, Rom. 2:14-15). This is called "natural revelation" as opposed to "special revelation" (i.e. the gospel).

1:14 "the grace of our Lord" The key in Paul's theology about salvation was the character of God, not the performance of mankind. Fallen humans' only hope is in the settled, merciful, gracious character of God, expressed in Christ (cf. Eph. 1:3-14; 2:4,8-9).

▣ **"more than abundant"** This is literally "super abundantly." It is a characteristic compound with *hyper* created by Paul (cf. Rom. 5:20, 8:37; II Cor. 7:4; Phil. 2:9, 4:7; I Thess. 3:10, 5:13; II Thess. 1:3). "Where sin increased, grace abounded all the more" (Rom. 5:2).

▣ **"with the faith and love which are *found* in Christ Jesus"** There are several interpretive issues involved in this verse.

1. Should "Lord" (v. 14) refer to YHWH (cf. v. 17) or Jesus? In context YHWH is best.
2. Should God's gift of grace be linked to faith and love, which are also gifts in Christ (cf. TEV, NJB)?

Surely Paul's conversion (cf. Acts 9) was an act of grace. Paul was chosen and acted upon. His response was not an act of unaffected free will! His needs were met in God's grace and Jesus' actions. Paul received heaven's gifts and then lived them out to others.

Notice that God's provisions for salvation come only through Christ. He is God's answer to fallen mankind's needs in every area (cf. vv. 15-17).

1:15 "It is a trustworthy statement deserving full acceptance" This phrase is used 5 times in the Pastoral Letters (cf. 3:1, 4:9; II Tim. 2:11; Titus 3:8). It is used much like Jesus' "amen, amen" (translated "truly, truly" or "verily, verily") to introduce significant statements. It is one of several words and phrases that lift up and describe apostolic truth

1. "Word of God" (cf. I Tim. 4:5; II Tim. 4:2; Titus 2:5)
2. "word of our Lord" (cf. I Tim. 6:3; II Tim. 1:13)
3. "words of truth" (cf. II Tim. 2:15)
4. "words of faith" (cf. I Tim. 4:6)
5. "teaching" (cf. I Tim. 1:10; 11 Tim. 4:3; Titus 1:9, 2:1)
6. "deposit" (cf. I Tim. 6:20)
7. "truth" (cf. II Tim. 1:14; 2:18, 25; 3:7,8; 4:4)
8. "the Gospel" (cf. I Tim. 1:11; II Tim. 2:8, 10, 11)
9. "the faith" (cf. I Tim. 6:21; II Tim. 4:7)
10. "Scriptures" (cf. II Tim. 2:15-16)

▣ **"Christ Jesus came into the world"** This implies Jesus' pre-existence (cf. John 1:1,15, 8:57-58, 16:28, 17:5; I Cor. 8:9; Phil. 2:6-7; Col. 1:17; Heb. 1:3; 10:5-8), which was a major doctrinal issue related to His deity (He was incarnated, not created). This may address the gnostic aspect of these false teachers.

▣ **"to save sinners"** This is the purpose of Christ's coming (cf. Mark 10:45; Luke 19:10; I John 2:2). Also it shows the basic tenet of the gospel concerning fallen humanity's need for grace (cf. Rom. 3:9-18,23; 6:23).

▣ **"I am foremost"** The greater the light, the greater the consciousness of sin (cf. v. 16; I Cor. 15:9; Eph. 3:8). Paul felt guilty over his persecution of the church (cf. Acts 7:58; 8:1; 9:1-2; 22:4,19-20; 26:10-11), but felt empowered by God's grace, love, and provision for sinners through Christ's finished work (cf. v. 16).

1:16

NASB	**"perfect patience"**
NKJV	**"all longsuffering"**
NRSV	**"the utmost patience"**
TEV	**"full patience"**
NJB	**"inexhaustible patience"**

This is a compound Greek term (*makros* and *thumos*) for "restrained wrath." This term is often used of God in the Greek OT, called the Septuagint (cf. Num. 14:18; Ps. 86:15; 103:8; Joel 2:13; Nah. 1:3). It also characterizes God in the NT (cf. Rom. 2:4; 9:22; I Pet. 3:20; II Pet. 3:15). It is meant to characterize His children also (cf. II Cor. 6:6; Gal. 5:22; Eph. 4:2; Col. 1:11; 3:12; II Tim. 3:10; 4:2).

▣ **"as an example"** Paul's testimony of salvation from an arch rival to the trusted Apostle to the Gentiles reveals the depth and width and height of God's grace.

▣ **"for those who would believe in Him"** Jesus prays for those who would believe in Him in John 17:20-26. Although the Gospel of John uses the preposition *eis* often to express the object of human faith, Paul normally uses *epi* (cf. Rom. 4:5,24; 9:33; 10:11; I Tim. 1:16; also notice Acts 9:42; 11:17; 16:31) or just the DATIVE (cf. Gal. 3:6; Acts 18:8; 27:25). There seems to be no theological difference between (1) believing into (*eis*); believing in (*en*); believing on (*epi*); or the use of the DATIVE CASE without a preposition (cf. I John 5:10).

Paul, like John, sometimes uses *hoti* (i.e. believe that), which emphasizes the content of faith (cf. Rom. 6:8; I Thess. 4:14). The gospel is (1) a person to welcome; (2) truths to believe; and (3) a life to live.

SPECIAL TOPIC: JOHN'S USE OF "BELIEVE"

John primarily combines "believe" with a PREPOSITION

1. *eis* means "into." This unique construction emphasizes believers putting their trust/faith in Jesus
   a. into His name (John 1:12; 2:23; 3:18; I John 5:13)
   b. into Him (John 2:11; 3:15,18; 4:39; 6:40; 7:5,31,39,48; 8:30; 9:36; 10:42; 11:45,48; 17:37,42)
   c. into Me (John 6:35; 7:38; 11:25,26; 12:44,46; 14:1,12; 16:9; 17:20)
   d. into the Son (John 3:36; 9:35; I John 5:10)
   e. into Jesus (John 12:11)
   f. into Light (John 12:36)
   g. into God (John 14:1)
2. *en* means "in" as in John 3:15 (Mark 1:15)
3. the DATIVE CASE with no PREPOSITION (I John 3:23; 5:10)
4. *hoti,* which means "believe that," gives content as to what to believe. Some examples are
   a. Jesus is the Holy One of God (6:69)
   b. Jesus is the I Am (8:24)
   c. Jesus in the Father and the Father in Him (10:38)
   d. Jesus is the Messiah (11:27; 20:31)
   e. Jesus is the Son of God (11:27; 20:31)
   f. Jesus was sent by the Father (11:42; 17:8,21)
   g. Jesus is one with the Father (14:10-11)
   h. Jesus came from the Father (16:27,30)
   i. Jesus identified Himself in the covenant name of the Father, "I am" (8:24; 13:19)

Biblical faith is in both a person and a message! It is evidenced by obedience, love, and perseverance.

▣ **"eternal life"** This is a major recurring theme in John's theology. It is a current reality (cf. John 3:36; 5:24; 6:47,54) as well as a future hope given to those who know the Father and trust the Son (cf. John 17:2-3).

Paul uses this term as a way of referring to the life of (1) the new age; (2) the kingdom of God; or (3) resurrection life (cf. Rom. 2:7; 5:21; 6:22,23; Gal. 6:8; I Tim. 1:16; 6:12,19; Titus 1:2; 3:7). Only God is immortal; only God can give life. He gives eternal life to those who trust His Son by faith.

1:17 "the King" This doxology is similar to 6:15-16. It reflects the language of the later synagogue ("the King of the Universe") and the Jews of the diaspora (the term "eternal" was used of God by Philo of Alexandria).

It is quite possible that Paul is quoting a creed or hymn of the early church as he does in 3:16; 6:15-16 and II Tim. 2:11-13.

▣ **"Eternal"** This is the same adjective used in the phrase "eternal life" in v. 16. It is literally "of the ages," which may be a metaphor of eternity or a reference to the Jewish concept of two ages: (1) a current evil age characterized by independence and rebellion (angel and human) and (2) a coming promised age of righteousness brought by the Spirit and implemented by the Messiah.

The "already and not yet" tension of eternal life characterizes the current period where these two Jewish ages are overlapped because of the new revelation concerning the two comings of the Messiah, one as Savior, and a later one as King, Lord and Judge.

▣ **"immortal"** This is literally "incorruptible." It refers metaphorically to the ever-living, only-living One (YHWH from the Hebrew verb "to be"; cf. Exod. 3:14). Only God has life in Himself (cf. Rom. 1:23; I Tim. 1:17; 6:16). All other life is a derived gift and a stewardship. It comes only through the grace of the Father, the work of Christ (cf. II Tim. 1:10), and the ministry of the Spirit.

▣ **"invisible"** This is used in the sense of the spiritual realm (cf. Col. 1:15) or possibly YHWH as the unseen God (no images, cf. Exod. 33:20; Deut. 4:15; I Tim. 6:16).

▣ **"the only God"** This refers to Jewish monotheism (cf. Deut. 6:4-6; Jude 25). This context reflects the unique biblical world-view of the OT. The Bible presents mankind with a faith perspective beyond the five senses.

1. there is one and only one God (cf. Gen. 1:1; Exod. 8:10; 9:14; Deut. 4:35-39; I Sam. 2:2; II Sam. 7:22; 22:32; I Kin. 8:23; Ps. 86:8,10; Isa. 43:11; 44:6,8; 45:6-7,14,18,21-22; 46:5,9; Jer. 2:11; 5:7; 10:6; 16:20)
2. He is a personal, creator, redeemer God (cf. Gen. 1-2; 3:15; Ps. 103-104)
3. it gives a promise of hope and restoration by means of Messiah (cf. Isa. 53)
4. faith in Him repairs the breach of rebellion (the gospel)
5. whosoever believes in Him may have eternal life (the gospel)

The Textus Receptus, following the Greek uncial manuscripts $\aleph^{c}$, D^{c}, K, L, and P, adds "wise." This addition is absent in the Greek manuscripts $\aleph^{*}$, A, D^{*}, F, G, and H^{*}. It may be a scribal addition to match Rom. 16:27.

▣ **"*be* honor and glory"** This is basically the meaning of the OT term *kabod* (cf. v. 11). It is used several times in Revelation along with other praises (cf. 4:9,11; 5:12,13; 7:12).

In the OT the most common Hebrew word for "glory" (*kabod*) was originally a commercial term referring to a pair of scales which meant "to be heavy." That which was heavy was valuable or had intrinsic worth. Often the concept of brightness was added to the word to express God's majesty (cf. Exod. 15:16; 24:17; Isa. 60:1-2). He alone is worthy and honorable. He is too brilliant for fallen mankind to behold (cf. Exod. 33:17-23; Isa. 6:5). God can only be truly known through Christ (cf. Jer. 1:14; Matt. 17:2; Heb. 1:3; James 2:1).

The term "glory" is somewhat ambiguous: (1) it may be parallel to "the righteousness of God"; (2) it may refer to the "holiness" or "perfection" of God; (3) it could refer to the image of God in which mankind was created (cf. Gen. 1:26-27; 5:1; 9:6), but which was later marred through rebellion (cf. Gen. 3:1-22). It is first used of YHWH's presence with His people (cf. Exod. 16:7,10; Lev. 9:23; Num. 14:10).

▣ **"forever and ever"** This is literally "ages of the ages," a Semitic idiom for eternity (cf. Gal. 1:5; Phil. 4:20; II Tim. 4:18). This same term is used in v. 16 for "eternal life" and in v. 17 for "King eternal."

▣ **"Amen"** See Special Topic at 6:16.

NASB (UPDATED) TEXT: 1:18-20

[18]This command I entrust to you, Timothy, *my* son, in accordance with the prophecies previously made concerning you, that by them you fight the good fight, [19]keeping faith and a good conscience, which some have rejected and suffered shipwreck in regard to their faith. [20]Among these are Hymenaeus and Alexander, whom I have handed over to Satan, so that they will be taught not to blaspheme.

1:18 "command" Paul uses several military terms in this chapter: (1) "command" (vv. 3,5,18) and (2) "fight the good fight" (v. 18; cf. II Cor. 10:3-6; Eph. 6:10-17). This paragraph (i.e. vv. 18-20) returns to the false teachers' theological issue of vv. 3-7.

▣

NASB, TEV "entrust"
NKJV "commit"
NRSV, NJB "giving"

This is a PRESENT MIDDLE INDICATIVE. Paul entrusted the work of the gospel to Timothy (just as Jesus had entrusted it to him) to pass on to other faithful men (cf. II Tim. 2:2).

This term is used of (1) Jesus entrusting Himself to God in Luke 23:46; (2) believers entrusting themselves to God in Acts 14:23; and (3) Paul entrusting believers to God in Acts 20:32.

▣ **"in accordance with the prophecies previously made concerning you"** Timothy received both spiritual giftedness and prophetic confirmation by the church in Lystra at the time of the laying on of hands (cf. 4:14). This phrase can mean (1) "made about you" (cf. NRSV) or (2) "led me to you" (cf. RSV).

▣ **"fight the good fight"** Often the Christian life is depicted as an athletic event or warfare, as here. The prophecies concerning Timothy enabled him to continually and courageously fight the good fight like Paul (cf. PRESENT MIDDLE SUBJUNCTIVE, cf. II Tim. 2:3-4; II Cor. 10:3-6; Eph. 6:10-17).

1:19 "keeping faith and a good conscience" The good fight involves having (PERFECT ACTIVE PARTICIPLE)

1. faith
2. good conscience

Both of these are mentioned in 1:5. They are mentioned again because the loss of them is the very reason some members of the church have shipwrecked their faith. Faith could refer to either (1) Christian doctrine or (2) Christian living. Both are crucial.

We learn from II Tim. 2:17 that Hymenaeus was involved in doctrinal deviation (asserting the resurrection had already taken place) and godlessness (cf. II Tim. 2:16). The other named person, Alexander, can <u>not</u> be the silversmith mentioned in II Tim. 4:14 and Acts 19.

Their rejection of truth and godliness was not due to deception, but willful rejection (AORIST MIDDLE [deponent] PARTICIPLE of *apōtheō*, cf. Acts 7:39; 13:46; Rom. 11:1).

▣ **"which some have rejected and suffered shipwreck in regards to their faith"** See Special Topic: Apostasy at 4:1.

1:20 "I have handed over to Satan" This is a very difficult phrase. Biblical precedents are God using Satan to tempt Job (Job 2:6), the Spirit thrusting Jesus into Satanic testing (Mark 1:12), and Paul turning a believer over to Satan in order to purify him so that he may ultimately be restored (I cor. 5:5). Notice the stated purpose in v. 20 is to teach them not to blaspheme. It may refer to excommunication from the believing fellowship. God's temporal discipline is always redemptive. God uses Satan to test human beings (cf. Gen. 3; Job 1-2; Zech. 3). In a sense, Satan is a tool of God. It is Satan's rebellion against God, his desire for independence, that makes him evil, not his tempting duties.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

This is a study guide commentary, which means that you are responsible for your own interpretation of the Bible. Each of us must walk in the light we have. You, the Bible, and the Holy Spirit are priority in interpretation. You must not relinquish this to a commentator.

These discussion questions are provided to help you think through the major issues of this section of the book. They are meant to be thought-provoking, not definitive.

1. Why does Paul assert his apostleship in a personal letter to Timothy?
3. What was the nature of the heresy at Ephesus?
4. How are Christians related to the Law of Moses?
5. How did Paul view his ministry? (v.12)
6. Why does he repeat his testimony so often? (v. 16)
7. What were Timothy's orders? (v. 18)
8. Did Hymenaeus and Alexander fall from grace? (v. 19)
9. What is a "good conscience?" (v. 19)
9. What does it mean to hand someone over to Satan? (v. 19)