



# Epistles III

International Alpha Bible Course  
by Ralph Vincent Reynolds

## **EPISTLES**

### **Part III**

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**INTERNATIONAL ALPHA BIBLE COURSE**

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## Lesson One

### PAUL'S FIRST LETTER TO TIMOTHY

#### Part I

##### A. TIMOTHY

Timothy was born in Lystra (Acts 16:1-2) and converted under Paul's ministry during the apostle's first visit to Derbe and Lystra (Acts 14:6-22). Although Timothy's mother, Eunice, was a Jewess, his father was a Greek. Since there is no mention of his father, it is possible that he died when Timothy was very young. At any rate, Timothy was raised by his mother, Eunice, and his grandmother, Lois, who daily taught him the Holy Scriptures (II Timothy 1:5; 3:15).

It seems that Timothy did not enjoy the best of health (I Timothy 5:23), but he was always an example in his spiritual life. He certainly had a special place in the affections of the apostle Paul. When Paul returned to Lystra on his second missionary journey, he found his young convert, Timothy, who was already well known at Lystra and Iconium for his zeal and faith. Paul was impressed with Timothy and decided to take him into his party, probably to replace John Mark. Paul joined the elders in laying hands on Timothy and ordaining him to the ministry (II Timothy 1:6; 4:5). Before ordaining him, however, the apostle circumcised him. Paul was opposed to the Gentiles being circumcised as a requirement for salvation and refused to permit the circumcision of Titus. Nevertheless, Timothy was part Jew and would be preaching to the Jews. To remove any prejudice, Paul "took and circumcised" Timothy (Acts 16:3).

Timothy accompanied Paul into Macedonia and had an active ministry at Berea, Athens, Corinth, and Ephesus. When Paul's end drew near, it was Timothy that he yearned to have with him and for whom he especially sent (II Timothy 4:9, 13). Tradition states that after Paul's death, Timothy ministered in the Ephesian church. This would make him a co-worker with the apostle John. Timothy was martyred under Nerva or Domitian.

##### B. PAUL'S FIRST LETTER TO TIMOTHY

I Timothy, along with II Timothy and Titus, is called a "Pastoral Epistle." It is known by this name because it is addressed to a young minister. This letter was written by Paul after his first imprisonment and during a period of travel in Mace-

donia while Timothy was still at Ephesus (I Timothy 1:3). We cannot be certain of the date, but it may have been in the spring of AD 63.

Paul's purpose was to help Timothy in carrying out some difficult assignments. Timothy was to check the evil influence of certain false teachers. The welfare of the church necessitated that these teachers be refuted. Timothy was also given definite instructions concerning his work in the church.

A simple outline of I Timothy could be:

- I. Doctrine and Prayer – Chapters 1 and 2
- II. Ministry and Apostasy – Chapters 3 and 4
- III. Pastoral Responsibility – Chapters 5 and 6

## C. SALUTATION

### Scriptural Reference:

“Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the commandment of God our Saviour, and Lord Jesus Christ, which is our hope; Unto Timothy, my own son in the faith: Grace, mercy, and peace, from God our Father and Jesus Christ our Lord” (I Timothy 1:1, 2).

In the salutation Paul identified himself as the writer and declared his apostolic authority. He is an apostle by the commandment of God.

Tenderness and love were expressed as Paul addressed Timothy as “my own son.” Timothy was saved under Paul's ministry, but Paul loved him as he would his own son.

The expression “God our Saviour” is found only in the Pastoral Epistles. It is a positive proof of the deity of Jesus. **Jesus, our Savior, is God!**

## D. THE NEED OF SOUND DOCTRINE

### Scriptural Reference: I Timothy 1:3-7

Paul exhorted Timothy to charge the church to teach only sound doctrine. Timothy was told to leave off subjects that only cause questions. Heretical teaching and

attention to myths and genealogies produced speculations and controversies instead of godly living. Paul had given Timothy his instructions, now he tells him to “do it.” Apparently Paul felt that he should prod Timothy.

Sound doctrine will lead to love, a pure heart, a good conscience, and true faith. There were false teachers who were ambitious and desired to be teachers of the law. These men were ignorant of what they were teaching which led only to vain arguments and foolish talk. They did not understand the purpose of the law.

## **E. THE PURPOSE OF THE LAW**

**Scriptural Reference:** I Timothy 1:8-13

Paul declared that the Law was not for the righteous man but for the lawless and disobedient. He made a list of men for whom the Law was made: men who were rebellious and lawless, men who are irreverent and profane, those who attack and kill their parents, murderers, homosexuals, kidnappers, liars, perjurers, and everyone who oppose wholesome teaching.

Paul confessed that before his conversion, he had been a blasphemer and a persecutor. He found mercy, however, because he did it in ignorance and unbelief. This statement of the apostle should always be considered with the teaching of the unpardonable sin (Matthew 12:31-32). It was Paul’s ignorance which permitted him to find forgiveness. It certainly is a different matter for a man to blaspheme willfully. The purpose of the law is to bring under judgment the lawless and disobedient.

## **F. PURPOSE OF CHRIST’S COMING**

**Scriptural Reference:** I Timothy 1:14-16

One of the clearest statements regarding the incarnation to be found anywhere is given here by Paul. “Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners” (verse 15). Jesus ministered to the sick and suffering, but the main reason for being born in Bethlehem’s manger was to save sinners. Every gospel preacher should always keep this statement uppermost in his mind. Paul confessed that he was the greatest of sinners before he was saved.

## G. ONLY ONE ETERNAL GOD

### Scriptural Reference:

“Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honor and glory for ever and ever. Amen” (I Timothy 1:17).

When Paul burst out in a note of praise because of the fact that he, the chiefest of sinners, had been saved, he declared that He is the only God. The only God whom Paul worshiped is eternal, immortal, invisible, and full of wisdom.

## H. NEED FOR DISCIPLINE

### Scriptural Reference: I Timothy 1:18-20

Paul charged his son in the gospel to put up a good fight. He told Timothy to hold the faith and a good conscience.

Two men who had made shipwreck of their faith are mentioned: Hymenaeus and Alexander. These men were blasphemers who opposed sound doctrine. They are mentioned again in Paul’s second letter to Timothy (II Timothy 4:14; 2:17). These men were delivered to Satan, not for damnation, but for discipline (I Corinthians 5:5). This type of discipline simply meant that they were no longer within the security and protection of the church. As such they were exposed to the attacks of Satan until they were brought to a place of repentance.

## I. EXHORTATION TO WORSHIP AND PRAISE

### Scriptural Reference: I Timothy 2:1-8

The second chapter continues Paul’s exhortation, giving instructions for prayer and worship. He wrote that men should pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands without anger and unbelief. It is God’s will that all men should be saved. Therefore, it is His will that prayers should be made for all men which will include both sinners and saints. The church is instructed to pray for our governments and those who are in authority. This included praying for Nero, the emperor of that time, who had set fire to Rome and persecuted the saints.

Not only did Paul instruct Timothy regarding those for whom Christians should

pray, but he defined the kind of prayers: supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks. He also described how men ought to pray. They should pray without anger, resentment, or division among them, lifting up hands which are clean and holy.

We are given the foundation for all prayer and worship: one God and one Mediator, the man Christ Jesus. Jesus, in His humanity, has become our Mediator. Because of this, we know that God will hear and accept our prayer and thanksgiving.

## **J. WOMEN'S PLACE IN WORSHIP**

**Scriptural Reference:** I Timothy 2:9-15

In the latter half of I Timothy 2, we find some very important teaching regarding the place of women in worship.

Timothy was given instruction regarding a godly woman's appearance and manner of dress. Women who profess godliness do not need adornment. Their good works will be their adorning. They are to dress modestly and sensibly with appropriate apparel. They are not to dress with elaborate hair arrangement, with jewelry or expensive clothing.

Not only is the outward appearance to be holy, but the spirit and attitude must be right. Women are to be in subjection to men. They do not have the authority to tell men what is right and wrong. They are to learn in quietness and submissiveness.

"Women should listen and learn quietly and humbly. I never let women teach men or lord it over them. Let them be silent in your church meetings" (I Timothy 2:11, 12, The Living New Testament). The thought here is not to rob women of the right to worship or be used by God in soul winning. It means that they must know their proper place and never usurp authority over men.

Women are the weaker vessel. Eve was deceived in the original transgression; Adam was not. Part of the curse of womanhood was sorrow in childbearing, but there is a promise to those who are faithful that there will be no danger in childbearing (verse 15).

In verse 15, there is a second meaning which should be considered. To understand this thought, we shall quote the Amplified Bible. "Nevertheless, the sentence upon women of pain in motherhood does not hinder their souls' salvation, and



they shall be saved if they continue in faith and love and holiness, with self-control; through the childbearing, that is by the birth of the divine child." Women shall be saved by the birth of Jesus providing they continue in holiness. There is no place for unconditional eternal security here!

## Lesson Two

### PAUL'S FIRST LETTER TO TIMOTHY Part II

#### A. CHURCH OFFICERS

##### Scriptural Reference:

"This is a true saying, If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work" (I Timothy 3:1).

Apart from the five-fold ministry named in Ephesians 4:11 (apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers), there are four other titles used for church officers: elders, bishops, presbyters, and deacons. The word translated *bishop* means "overseer" and is the same as "elder" and "presbyter."

It is indicated in Philippians 1:1 that there are two offices in the church which are separate from the rest of the congregation: bishops and deacons. The same leaders are called elders and bishops in Titus 1:5 and Acts 20:17, 28. We may conclude that the spiritual leaders in the church may be called elders, bishops, or presbyters. The teaching that a bishop is the head of a diocese is based on a man-made system rather than the Bible.

The word *deacon* means "one who ministers." The deacon is to minister to the physical needs of the church. Paul did not condemn those who were desirous to be used by God in the role of leadership. Paul referred to a saying of that time: "There is a popular saying: To aspire to leadership is an honorable ambition" (I Timothy 3:1, NEB). He did not refute this statement but emphasized this "good work" by giving the high qualifications of both bishops and deacons.

#### B. QUALIFICATIONS OF A BISHOP

##### Scriptural Reference: I Timothy 3:2-7

As we study the qualifications of a bishop, it can readily be understood how it can be called a "good work." Anyone who would desire such an office has a noble ambition. In general, a bishop had to be a man possessed of high moral qualities, a teacher, one in control of his own family, and spiritually mature. It will be profitable

to study the qualifications as given by the apostle Paul:

1. *Blameless* – above reproach
2. *Husband of one wife* – faithful to one (living) wife
3. *Vigilant* – hard working
4. *Sober* – thoughtful and orderly
5. *Good behavior* – courteous
6. *Given to hospitality* – hospitable
7. *Apt to teach* – a good teacher
8. *Not given to wine* – Does not drink intoxicating beverages
9. *No striker* – not a brawler
10. *Not greedy of filthy lucre* – not a lover of money
11. *Patient* – forbearing disposition
12. *Not a brawler* – not quarrelsome
13. *Not covetous* – not greedy of wealth
14. *Rules well* – his own house
15. *Not a novice* – not a young convert

There are some comments which may be made regarding these qualifications, The statement “husband of one wife” definitely refutes the celibacy of Rome’s priesthood. It is also implied here that he who has a wife and godly family is to be preferred to a bachelor. However, this does not make marriage mandatory to being a bishop, for there is record of some of the apostles and of Paul’s companions not being married. Paul placed emphasis upon the bishop maintaining a well-disciplined and hospitable home. He must have his children under control and obedient. Otherwise, how could he have the oversight of the church? The admonition against being a novice warns against the danger of pride which would cause him to fall into the same condemnation with the devil.

### C. QUALIFICATIONS OF A DEACON

**Scriptural Reference:** I Timothy 3:8-13

It is significant that the qualifications for a deacon are similar to those of a bishop. We shall comment on those which are added to those of the bishop:

1. Not double-tongued – not indulging in double talk
2. “They must be men who combine a clear conscience with a firm hold on the deep truths of our faith” (verse 9 -The New English Bible).

### 3. First be proved – undergo scrutiny

Special attention is given to the character of the wife of a deacon. She must be sober, faithful, and not slanderous. It would seem that if the wife was worldly, she could disqualify her husband from the office of a deacon.

The student should note carefully verse 13. To clearly understand this, we quote from a modern version: "For those who have filled the deacon's office well gain for themselves an honorable standing, and acquire great boldness of speech in their faith in Christ Jesus" (Weymouth). Examples of this would be Stephen, the first martyr, and Philip.

## D. PAUL'S REASON FOR WRITING THESE INSTRUCTIONS

### Scriptural Reference:

"These things write I unto thee, hoping to come unto thee shortly: But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth" (I Timothy 3:14, 15).

Although Paul hoped to see Timothy, he wrote these instructions. Something might delay him, and it was essential that the church would be properly ordered. The church holds high the truth of God. Therefore, it was vital in the welfare of the church that the church leaders meet the proper qualifications.

## E. GOD MANIFEST IN THE FLESH

### Scriptural Reference:

"And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory" (I Timothy 3:16).

Here Paul burst into a hymn of praise with a poetic statement of truth declaring the deity of Jesus. It is clear that the apostle was referring to Jesus, emphasizing the incarnation in harmony with the doctrine of the virgin birth. It should be noted that Jesus Christ was God manifest in the flesh. By the presence of the Spirit, Christ's ministry was vindicated and proven true in all His claims. The final vindication of Christ was His resurrection and ascension. This song of praise absolutely proves the deity of Jesus. He is very God and at the same time, perfect man.

## F. WARNING AGAINST HERETICAL TEACHING

**Scriptural Reference:** I Timothy 4:1-5

Paul gave a warning against the apostasy of the last times of which the Holy Spirit has clearly spoken. There will be those who will turn their back upon truth and listen to deceitful spirits and devil-inspired doctrines. These false teachers will speak lies so often that their consciences will no longer trouble them. Paul likened their consciences to scarred skin resulting from the hot branding iron.

Paul named two of these devil-inspired lies: they were not to marry and not to eat meat. Asceticism was taught as a virtue. The apostle declared that every creature is created by God, is to be received with thanksgiving, is to be eaten with thanksgiving, and is sanctified for food by prayer. We should never eat without thanking the Lord and praying that God would sanctify the food.

## G. EXHORTATION TO BE A GOOD MINISTER

**Scriptural Reference:** I Timothy 4:6-8

Timothy was told that he would be a worthy pastor if he would give these instructions to the church. Timothy was also instructed not to waste time arguing about foolish ideas and silly myths. He was to spend his time in the exercise of keeping spiritually fit. Physical exercise has some value, but spiritual exercise is much more important. Spiritual exercise would cause him to be a better Christian and has the promise of eternal life.

## H. EXHORTATION FOR TIMOTHY'S PERSONAL LIFE

**Scriptural Reference:** I Timothy 4:9-16

Paul gave Timothy excellent advice for his personal Christian life. Even a young person can be a profitable worker for the Lord; Timothy was not to allow others to think less of him because of his youth. In every phase of his life, he was to be an example for the believers. He was to be an example to the believers in the following:

1. Word – speech
2. Conversation – manner of life

3. Charity – love
4. Faith – faithfulness
5. Purity – chastity

Timothy was then told not to neglect but to use the spiritual endowments which were imparted to him by prophetic utterance when the elders laid their hands upon him at his ordination. Meditation is almost a lost art in these days, but Timothy was exhorted to meditate upon the instructions Paul gave him. Not only was he to thoughtfully remember them, but he was to incorporate them into his life so that his progress would be evident to all. He was to watch carefully his teaching and to persevere in them himself. If he did this, both he and those to whom he ministered would be saved.

## Lesson Three

### PAUL'S FIRST LETTER TO TIMOTHY Part III

#### A. PROPER RESPECT TO BE SHOWN

**Scriptural Reference:** I Timothy 5:1-2

Respect is a necessary quality of being a Christian. When respect is lost for each other, respect is soon lost for the house of God and for God Himself. A person's speech and actions will reveal his attitude.

Timothy was instructed regarding the attitude to be shown in respect of age:

1. *Older men* were never to be spoken to sharply but respectfully as if they were a father.
2. *Younger men* were to be treated as brothers.
3. *Older women* were to be treated as mothers.
4. *Younger women* were to be sisters, and one was to have only pure thoughts regarding them.

#### B. WIDOWS

**Scriptural Reference:** I Timothy 5:3-16

In the days of the early church, there were no relief agencies to assist the needy. Apparently, this became the direct responsibility of the church. Paul wrote to the Galatians, "Only they would that we should remember the poor" (Galatians 2:10).

It was the problem of ministering to the widows in the early church (Acts 6) which brought about the appointment of deacons. The need of ministering to widows was in the Ephesian church and Paul gave Timothy explicit instructions.

In this passage, Paul divided the widows into four groups:

1. Widows who have children or grandchildren who should take the re-

- responsibility of providing for their family
2. Widows who sought only pleasure and spent their time running around gossiping
3. Young widows who should marry again and have children
4. "Widows indeed" who were poor and alone in the world

The church was to be responsible for this last group of widows who were entirely alone and desolate. These widows looked to God for their help and spent much time in prayer. These widows who were going to be supported by the church had to meet certain conditions:

1. She had to be at least sixty years of age.
2. She had had only one husband in her life.
3. She must have had a good reputation for her good deeds.
4. She must have been a good mother.
5. She must have been hospitable.
6. She must have had ministered to the saints and helped the sick.
7. She must have shown kindness to all.

In this passage regarding widows, the student should give attention to two verses especially:

Verse 6—One who lives in pleasure and self-indulgence is dead spiritually.

Verse 8—A person who will not provide for his own household is not a Christian and is worse than the heathen.

### C. HONOR OF ELDERS

**Scriptural Reference:** I Timothy 5:17-20

The ministers who faithfully labor in preaching and teaching should have double honor: be highly appreciated and be paid well. The ox should be permitted to eat as he works threshing the grain; likewise, every laborer is worthy of his hire. Paul gave instructions that no accusation should be considered against a minister unless it is confirmed with the testimony of two or three witnesses. The testimony of just one person should never be accepted against a minister. However, when one is proven guilty and persists to continue in sin, he should be rebuked in front of the whole church so that all will fear and not follow his example.



## D. PERSONAL ADMONITION

**Scriptural Reference:** I Timothy 5:21-25

In these closing verses of chapter 5, Timothy is admonished to take proper care of his body for his health's sake and to keep himself pure.

Since Paul dealt with disciplining an elder in verses 19 and 20, it would appear that the next two verses deal with the same subject. The instructions given here are:

1. Deal with each matter without partiality or personal prejudice.
2. Do not be hasty in discipline.
3. Do not be lenient nor condone sin.
4. Keep himself untainted from the sins of others.

The thought of not laying hands suddenly on any man also has the meaning of not being hasty to ordain a minister.

Apparently, Timothy did not have good health. In those days, the water supply was not always pure. In traveling, it would be necessary to drink something other than water. Paul recommended to Timothy that he drink a little wine for medicinal reasons. In no way can this be interpreted as giving license for social drinking of alcoholic beverages.

The last two verses of the chapter should be interpreted within the context. This should be connected with, the warning against hasty action. Some men's sins are open, and the right decision can be made. In the case of others, time will reveal a man's true condition.

## E. SERVANT-MASTER RELATIONSHIP

**Scriptural Reference:** I Timothy 6:1-2

In the early church, there were cases where masters and servants, even slaves, were in the same congregation. They were to treat each other as brothers in the Lord. The servants were to show proper respect to their masters. When they did not show respect, the Lord's name and His Word were brought under reproach.

## **F. WARNING AGAINST COVETOUSNESS**

**Scriptural Reference:** I Timothy 6:3-12

Paul strongly instructed Timothy to teach the truth. Those men who would deny the wholesome teachings of Jesus, which are the foundation for a godly life, are both proud and stupid. Timothy was told to keep away from these men who only stir up arguments which end in jealousy and anger. They did not know how to tell the truth and believed that the ministry was a means to make money.

Worldly gain is one of the greatest weaknesses and temptations to fight against. It is great gain to be content with godliness. We should be content with enough to eat and clothes to wear. There is no sin in money itself, but the love of it is the source of evil. Covetousness leads men astray and plunges them into ruin and destruction. Timothy was exhorted to run from all these evil things but pursue righteousness and godliness. He was to hold fast to eternal life and fight on for God.

## **G. FINAL ADMONITIONS**

**Scriptural Reference:** I Timothy 6:13-21

Paul charged Timothy, in the sight of God, to obey his orders irreproachably and without fault until Jesus returns. At that time, Jesus will reveal who is the only Sovereign, the King of Kings, and Lord of Lords, dwelling in unapproachable light.

Timothy was to charge the rich not be high-minded. They were to share with others and store up a treasure in eternity. Timothy was to give a deaf ear to foolish arguments and to keep that which is committed to his trust. Some of these foolish arguments are called science, but it is falsely named.

## Lesson Four

### PAUL'S SECOND LETTER TO TIMOTHY Part I

#### A. PAUL'S SECOND LETTER TO TIMOTHY

This second letter to Timothy is the last letter of the New Testament that Paul wrote. It contains his final words of exhortation and his personal testimony just before his death. It is important that this epistle be read and studied carefully.

The Book of Acts closes with Paul in prison about AD 63. During this first imprisonment, Paul lived in his own home, had a group of friends with him, and was treated fairly well for being a prisoner. He was acquitted and returned to Greece and Asia. He was arrested again about AD 66 and taken back to Rome, accused apparently of having part in the burning of Rome.

During this second imprisonment, he was in chains and in a dungeon. Because of the danger, all his friends forsook him except Luke. Paul boldly defended himself and was successful in having the sentence of death delayed (II Timothy 4:17); nevertheless, he knew that martyrdom was facing him. Under these circumstances he wrote his second letter to Timothy shortly before he was beheaded in AD 68, the last year of Nero's reign.

Paul had several reasons for writing the letter. He desired to encourage Timothy to remain loyal to the Lord. Paul was experiencing deep loneliness, and he longed to see Timothy and Mark again. Also, he requested that he would have his cloak and some books brought to him.

This letter permitted Paul to leave a last testimony of his victorious ministry. He knew that he was going to be executed for a crime of which he was not guilty. His friends had forsaken him to suffer alone, yet Paul did not utter a word of complaint or regret. He ended his ministry with an exultant cry of triumph.

It is not known if Paul ever saw Timothy again.

## **B. PERSECUTION UNDER NERO**

Nero desired to build a new and grander Rome. In AD 64 he set fire to the city and fiddled while it burned. In order to avoid suspicion of setting the fire, he accused the Christians of burning Rome. Multitudes of Christians were arrested and put to death in the most horrible ways. They were thrown to wild beasts and others burned as torches to light Nero's gardens.

It was at this time that Paul was arrested the second time and undoubtedly was accused of the crime. Paul was free at the time of the fire and was a leader in the church. Paul knew that there was no hope of escape. It was while he was waiting for the time of his departure that he wrote his final letter to Timothy.

## **C. INTRODUCTION**

**Scripture Reference:** II Timothy 1:1-5

Timothy was Paul's son in the gospel. He loved Timothy dearly. He addressed him as "my dearly beloved son." When they parted company the last time, Timothy wept. Paul remembered those tears and longed to see Timothy again. This would make his happiness complete. Paul's prayer for Timothy is clearly expressed in The Living New Testament:

"How I thank God for you, Timothy. I pray for you every day, and many times during the long nights I beg my God to bless you richly" (II Timothy 1:3 LNT).

Timothy was a third generation Christian. Salvation is not hereditary, but there is a spiritual quality that is passed from generation to generation. His mother, Eunice, and his grandmother, Lois, possessed a sincere faith and both lived lives of absolute faith in Christ. This shows that the faith of parents can be passed on to the next generation and that children can follow the example of their parents.

## **D. PAUL'S ASSURANCE**

**Scriptural Reference:** II Timothy 1:6-14

Although Paul was suffering in chains, he did not complain. In his exhortation to Timothy, he was positive and radiated confidence and boldness.

In this passage of Scripture, he gave Timothy a five-fold exhortation:

1. To stir up the gift of God (verse 6)
2. To not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord (verse 8)
3. To be a partaker of the afflictions of the gospel (verse 8)
4. To hold fast sound teaching (verse 13)
5. To keep that which was committed to him by the help of the Holy Spirit (verse 14)

To “stir up the gift” means to rekindle and keep the fire blazing. It is the very opposite of quenching. Generally, the best way to stir up the gift is to use it. In an active ministry, one puts to use the gift God has given to him.

Although Paul was suffering, he was not afraid, and he was not ashamed. God did not give him the spirit of timidity and cowardice. Instead he had been given the spirit of power and love with a well-balanced mind. Paul had been appointed a missionary to the Gentiles, and because of this, he was suffering in prison. However, he was not ashamed. The reason for his confidence is expressed in verse 12: “I know whom I have believed.” He was fully persuaded that God would keep that which he had committed. The secret is in “knowing” the Lord. To know God is far more than just giving mental assent to a spiritual truth.

## E. DISAFFECTION AT EPHESUS

**Scriptural Reference:** II Timothy 1:15-18

Paul was fond of the Ephesian church. He remained here longer than any other place. He possibly had his greatest revival here. It was a great distress to him at this moment of need to know that the Christians from Asia forsook him. Apparently the danger was too much for them. He wrote, “All the Christians who came here from Asia have deserted me; even Phygellus and Hermogenes are gone” (II Timothy 1:15, The Living New Testament).

Paul was so thankful for Onesiphorus who often visited and encouraged him. His visits revived Paul like a breath of fresh air and he was never ashamed of him being in prison. Paul stated that when Onesiphorus reached Rome, he searched diligently everywhere for him and finally found him. Paul reminded Timothy that he knew how Onesiphorus had ministered to him while still in Ephesus.

## F. PAUL'S EXHORTATION TO TIMOTHY

### Scriptural Reference: II Timothy 2

Paul exhorted Timothy to be strong in grace which is found only in Christ Jesus. As a minister of the gospel, he was likened to each of the following:

#### 1. A Steward (II Timothy 2:1-2)

Timothy had been entrusted with great truths. His responsibility was to teach trustworthy men who will, in turn, teach others. This is the great test of an able teacher. Truths must be taught so clearly that they will be passed on. Timothy was a steward of these truths of the gospel to see that men would be so indoctrinated that they, in turn, would become able teachers.

#### 2. A Soldier (II Timothy 2:3-4)

Timothy was to take his share of hardships and sufferings as a good soldier. As a soldier he had given up all claims to anything in a material sense. He must not get entangled in any enterprises of civilian life. He must be wholly dedicated to obeying and pleasing his Commander-in-Chief.

#### 3. An Athlete (II Timothy 2:5)

The word translated "striveth for the masteries" is the root from which we get the English word *athlete*. Paul had turned from referring to a soldier to that of the Greek athlete. The winner did not get the prize unless he obeyed the rules.

#### 4. A Husbandman (II Timothy 2:6-7)

Paul reminded Timothy that, like a farmer, if he would work hard, he would be paid well. It is the hard-working farmer who has the right to be the first partaker of the fruits.

#### 5. A Sufferer (II Timothy 2:8-13)

Let us quote from The Living New Testament which states two verses very clearly:

"Don't ever forget the wonderful fact that Jesus Christ was a Man, born into King David's family; and that He was God, as shown by the fact that He rose again from the dead. It is because I have preached these great truths that I am

in trouble here and have been put in jail like a criminal. But the Word of God is not chained, even though I am" (II Timothy 2:8-9 LNT).

Paul had suffered in order to bring eternal life to those whom God has chosen. Timothy was reminded that if he was willing to suffer with Christ in order to preach the Word which was not bound, one day he would reign with Christ.

#### **6. A Student (II Timothy 2:14-19)**

Timothy was exhorted not to get into arguments and foolish talk which would lead people into ungodliness. This kind of empty talk would eat like a cancer. Paul gave an example of this in mentioning two men, Hymenaeus and Philetus, who taught that the resurrection was past already. In order to preach the Word correctly, Timothy had to be a student of God's Word. By so doing, he would never be ashamed.

#### **7. A Servant (II Timothy 2:20-26)**

In a house there are dishes of gold and silver which are used for special occasions when guests are entertained. In the same house are dishes of wood and clay which are used for garbage. If one will separate himself from contaminating and corrupting influences, he will be used by Christ as a vessel set apart for honorable purposes. In order to be such a vessel, Timothy was exhorted to run away from evil desires and follow that which is virtuous and good and to fellowship those who love the Lord and have pure hearts.

Timothy was told to avoid ignorant questions which breed quarrels. The minister of the gospel must never have a fighting spirit. He must be firm but gentle. If he remains humble and gentle, he is more likely to convince men of truth. They then can escape the trap the devil has set for them. Emphasis should be placed on verse 24: "The servant of the Lord must not strive." He is a teacher and instructor of truth, not a fighter.

## Lesson Five

### PAUL'S SECOND LETTER TO TIMOTHY Part II

#### A. CONDITION OF MAN IN THE LAST DAYS

**Scriptural Reference:** II Timothy 3:1-9

Paul described the condition of man in the closing days of this church age. He wanted Timothy to be aware that it will be a time of stress and trouble just before the return of our Lord. "You may as well know this too, Timothy, that in the last days it is going to be very difficult to be a Christian (II Timothy 3:1, The Living New Testament).

The reason that men will be in such a depraved and wicked condition will be that they will be lovers of their own selves and lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God. The sad and tragic thing will be the fact that they will maintain a profession of being Christians. They will have the outward form of salvation, but the power will be denied. The word *denying* used here is a strong word which implies knowing and yet decisively rejecting the truth. It should be noted that the conditions describing these apostate church members are very similar to the description of the heathen found in the first chapter of Paul's letter to the Romans. It is a sad thing when those with a form of godliness can be described in similar terms as the heathen.

We shall comment on a few of these terms describing these apostate church members of the last days:

1. *Covetousness* – loving money, which is the root of all evil
2. *Blasphemous* – evil speakers, revilers
3. *Disobedient to parents* – rebellious and not respectful of parents
4. *Unthankful* – ingratitude will be a common sin
5. *Without natural affection* – natural love will be perverted; men will be lower than animals in their affections
6. *Incontinent* – without self-control, no self-discipline



7. *Heady*—head-strong
8. *High-minded*—puffed up

These men are the sort who seduce women burdened with sin. They are always studying but never receive the truth. In fact, they resist the truth like the Egyptian magicians, Jannes and Jambres, who opposed Moses. “They have dirty minds, warped and twisted and have turned against the Christian faith” (II Timothy 3:8, The Living New Testament). Timothy was instructed to avoid such people and turn from them. This admonition is especially pertinent to us who are living in the last days.

## B. PAUL’S EXPERIENCE

**Scriptural Reference:** II Timothy 3:10-13

Those who opposed the gospel will not succeed. The Lord will expose their deceit until it becomes well known. This will be fully manifested at the return of Christ.

Paul used himself as an illustration of God’s ability to deliver. He reminded Timothy of the persecution suffered at Lystra on his first missionary journey. It is not clear whether Timothy witnessed this or not. However, Timothy was familiar with the events. The Lord delivered Paul out of them all, and it did not change Paul’s manner of living. Timothy knew well Paul’s teaching, behavior, love, and patience. All of this was a testimony of God’s faithfulness. Nevertheless, the workers of iniquity will not be stopped, but will become worse and worse. Because of this, those who live godly will suffer persecution.

## C. ADVICE TO TIMOTHY

**Scriptural Reference:** II Timothy 3:14-15

Timothy must keep on believing the things he had been taught. Timothy knew how he had been taught the Scriptures as a child. It was this knowledge of the Scriptures which made him wise to accept salvation by trusting in Jesus.

## D. PURPOSE OF THE SCRIPTURES

**Scriptural Reference:** II Timothy 3:16-17

Every Scripture is given by inspiration of God. This phrase “inspiration of God” is a simple word meaning “God-breathed.” Since every Scripture is God-breathed, it is profitable in several ways:

1. *Doctrine*—this is teaching. The word *doctrine* is found at least twenty-one times in the New Testament, nineteen of which are in Paul’s epistles.
2. *Reproof*—the Scriptures will bring conviction
3. *Correction*—improvement
4. *Instruction in righteousness*—training in righteousness
5. *Perfect, thoroughly furnished in good works*—completely perfected in doing good

## E. THE CHARGE TO TIMOTHY

**Scriptural Reference:** II Timothy 4:1-5

Timothy was charged to be faithful and constant in his Christian life. Many will be turned away from the truth; Timothy must prove himself faithful and make full proof of his ministry. When Jesus returns to set up His kingdom upon earth, He shall judge both the dead and the living. This was a great incentive for Timothy to be faithful.

There are nine imperatives in verses 2 and 5:

1. *Preach the Word*—There is a difference between preaching the Word and preaching about the Word. Timothy was to preach the Word.
2. *Be instant*—Be ready when it is convenient and when it is not.
3. *Reprove*—Convict.
4. *Rebuke*—Charge.
5. *Exhort*—Earnestly beseech or entreat.
6. *Watch*—Be alert and sober.
7. *Endure afflictions*—Suffer hardships.
8. *Do the work of an evangelist*—Preach the gospel to the lost.
9. *Make full proof of thy ministry*—Completely fulfill your ministry.

The importance of the charge is emphasized by the knowledge that men will not listen to true teaching, but their itching ears will turn to lies that will satisfy their carnal natures.

## F. PAUL'S FINAL TESTIMONY

**Scriptural Reference:** II Timothy 4:6-8

These verses are some of the most thrilling in the Bible. Here Paul gave his val- edictory. The old warrior of the cross looked back over a long, hard-fought strug- gle and cried out, "I have conquered." In a short time the executioner's ax released Paul's soul. His welcome home must have been a great triumphal entry. He shall receive a crown of righteousness which will also be reserved for all who love His appearing.

## G. CONCLUSION

**Scriptural Reference:** II Timothy 4:9-22

In the conclusion of the epistle, Paul requested Timothy to come to him as quickly as possible. He repeated this with a request that he would try to come be- fore winter. When he came he was to bring Mark, for he was profitable to Paul. He also was to bring Paul's coat which he left in Troas with Brother Carpus and the books, especially the parchments.

At this time only Luke was with Paul. Demas had left for Thessalonica, Cre- scens for Galatia, and Titus for Dalmatia. Demas had loved the good things of this world and so forsook Paul.

Paul warned Timothy about Alexander, the coppersmith. Undoubtedly this is the same Alexander mentioned in I Timothy 1:20 who had been disciplined for opposing the gospel. He had openly opposed Paul and it is possible that he wit- nessed against Paul at his trial. Paul had no one to testify for him at his trial. He had to defend himself and by so doing preached a sermon that the heathen world heard. By his own defense, he was delivered from the mouth of the lion.

## H. NAME OF SOME CHARACTERS MENTIONED IN THIS EPISTLE

1. *Alexander*, a coppersmith who did Paul much harm. He had made ship- wreck of his faith and had been disciplined by Paul.
2. *Carpus*, a Christian living at Troas.
3. *Claudia*, a Christian woman who sent greetings to Timothy.

4. *Crescens*, one of Paul's helpers. He was said to be one of the seventy sent out by our Lord. He preached in Galatia, later in Gaul.
5. *Erastus*, one of the deacons at Ephesus, accompanied Timothy into Macedonia.
6. *Eubulus*, a Christian at Rome.
7. *Hermogenes*, one of the Christians who turned away from Paul.
8. *Hymenaeus*, one of the earliest of the Gnostics.
9. *Jannes*, one of the Egyptian magicians who opposed Moses.
10. *Jambres*, another of the Egyptian magicians.
11. *Linus*, the first bishop of Rome after the apostles.
12. *Onesiphorus*, a Christian from Ephesus who ministered to Paul at Rome.
13. *Philetus*, a disciple of Hymenaeus who interpreted the Scriptures.
14. *Phygellus*, one who turned away from Paul.
15. *Pudens*, a Christian friend of Paul who was martyred by Nero.
16. *Tychicus*, a native of Asia who was the bearer of two of Paul's letters.

## Lesson Six

### PAUL'S LETTER TO TITUS

#### A. TITUS

Titus was one of Paul's converts, for Paul addressed him as being his "own son after the common faith" (Titus 1:4). Titus became one of Paul's trusted and devoted companions. He was a faithful worker for the Lord. By nationality, he was a Greek (Galatians 2:3) and had been converted to Christ out of heathenism. Paul had assigned to him some important matters dealing with the Corinthian church in which Titus had been successful. Later Paul left him on the island of Crete to organize the church there.

It would seem that Paul took Titus with him to Jerusalem at the first church council when the matter of circumcision for the Gentiles was being settled. Apparently Titus was a test case. Paul resisted having Titus circumcised and, as far as we know, Titus was never circumcised. On the other hand, Timothy who was half-Jew was circumcised because of his testimony.

#### B. THE ISLAND OF CRETE

Crete is the largest island in the Mediterranean Sea. It lies southeast of Greece, between the Aegean and the Mediterranean Seas. It is a mountainous island, about 150 miles long and from seven to thirty miles wide. It is the home of an ancient civilization. The Cretans were daring sailors and famous bowmen, but they were notorious for their bad moral practices.

There is no definite record of the beginning of the church in Crete. However, there were Cretans present at Jerusalem on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2:11). In all probability these Cretans who returned home carried the gospel with them and established the Cretan churches. These churches in Crete had allowed the moral conditions of the island to creep in and, therefore, Titus had much to do.

## C. PAUL'S LETTER TO TITUS

The epistle to Titus was written about the same time as the first epistle to Timothy. Their contents are quite similar. Timothy was in Ephesus, obeying the instructions of Paul, as Titus was in Greece. Both men were appointing elders and setting their churches in order.

Apparently after Paul's first imprisonment, he visited Crete, being accompanied by Titus, and left Titus there. This epistle was written between Paul's first and second imprisonments, possibly in AD 63.

The epistle placed in Titus' handwritten instructions and authority for his work in the churches on the island. It also gave Titus a personal message and information concerning Paul's plans to spend the winter at Nicopolis (Titus 3:12). He notified Titus that he was sending a replacement and desired Titus to join him at Nicopolis.

## D. SALUTATION

**Scriptural Reference:** Titus 1:1-4

In the salutation, there are three statements that should be noted. Paul named himself the "slave of God." He was first God's slave and then God's apostle. Paul recognized that he was owned by God and that he had no say in God's will in his life. It was only for him to obey. Second, Paul connected the hope of eternal life with the acknowledging of the truth and the life of godliness. This hope of eternal life is for God's elect and had been promised before the ages of time began. Finally, another matter which should not be passed over is the clause "God cannot lie." He is the Truth! *There is no error in Him!* Although God can do all things, yet there is one thing that He cannot do – He cannot lie!

## E. SETTING THE CHURCHES IN ORDER

**Scriptural Reference:** Titus 1:5-9

In setting the churches in order, the main work for Titus was ordaining elders in each city. These were actually pastors and the word *bishop* was also used. The qualifications for them are listed here and are similar to the qualifications listed by Paul to Timothy. These ministers were to have a good reputation, living with only one wife and having faithful children who were not wild or disobedient to their parents. The elders were not to be proud, impatient, drunkards, fighters or greedy. They were to enjoy having guests in their homes and be sensitive men who were clean-minded. They were to believe the truth and understand the doctrine so that

they could teach others and show those who disagree with them where they were wrong.

## F. DEALING WITH FALSE TEACHERS

**Scriptural Reference:** Titus 1:6-16

In these churches there were false teachers who had to be stopped. They were mainly Judaisers who were teaching for monetary gain. The phrase, “filthy lucre’s sake,” simple means “greedy for money.” Paul quoted from the Cretan poet, Epimenides, in verse 12. In the Living New Testament this quotation is given: “Ye men of Crete are all liars. They are like lazy animals living only to satisfy their stomachs.”

Paul said that these false teachers had already led whole families away from the grace of God and they had to be rebuked sharply.

A person who is pure of heart sees purity in everything. A person whose heart is evil finds evil in everything (verse 15). In the last verse of this chapter, Paul declared that a person is known by his life. One may profess to know God, but if his life is rotten, it is evident that they do not know God.

## G. SOUND DOCTRINE

**Scriptural Reference:** Titus 2:1-10

Paul instructed Titus to teach sound doctrine. This is wholesome teaching dealing with right living for Christians. Sometimes there are those who claim that doctrine is not important, but doctrine deals with every aspect of Christian living. Here Paul gave instructions to several groups:

1. **Older men** were to be serious, sensible, believing the truth, and living a life of love and patience.
2. **Older women** were to be quiet, respectful, not slanderous, gossipers, or heavy drinkers. They were to be teachers of that which is right.
3. **Young women**, taught by the other women, were to live quietly, to love

their husbands, to love their children, to be sensible, clean-minded and spend their time in their homes, to be kind and obedient to their husbands.

4. **Young men** were to be self-disciplined and to take life seriously.
5. **Slaves** were to obey their masters and do their best to satisfy them. They were not to talk back nor steal but show themselves trustworthy.

## H. THE BLESSED HOPE

**Scriptural Reference:** Titus 2:11-14

The gospel of salvation is now offered to everyone. With this comes the realization that men will turn from godless living and sinful pleasures and live godly in this present world. This same gospel which brings salvation and teaches godly living also teaches that we should be looking for that blessed hope. This blessed hope is the appearing of the great God and our Savior. This teaches us that Jesus Christ is both the great God and Savior. It also teaches that the hope of the church is the return of Jesus for His saints and the purpose of His dying for us was that He might redeem us from all sin.

## I. PRACTICAL INSTRUCTIONS

**Scriptural Reference:** Titus 2:15; 3:1-11

Titus was to teach the church to obey civil authorities. Citizens of heaven should be good citizens here on earth. Christians were not to slander anyone. They were not to be quarrelsome but to be gentle to all men.

Titus was to avoid unprofitable arguments and controversial ideas which would only cause division. A heretic was to be admonished twice. After the second admonition, he was to be rejected and Titus was instructed to have nothing more to do with him.

The statement in verse 5 is very important. We are not saved by our works of righteousness but by His mercy, by the cleansing bath of the new birth and indwelling of the Holy Spirit. Emphasis should be placed upon the truth expressed here.

## J. CLOSING

**Scriptural Reference:** Titus 3:12-15



Paul gave some final instructions to Titus. He stated that he would be sending either Artemas or Tychicus to Crete to take Titus's place. Titus then was to join Paul at Nicopolis. When he came to Nicopolis, he was to bring Zenas and Apollos. We do not know too much about Zenas, but it would seem that he would be the only Christian lawyer mentioned in the Bible. Titus was given the final instructions to help Zenas and Apollos in every way he could and this example would teach the Christians to help those who need assistance.

## Lesson Seven

### PAUL'S LETTER TO PHILEMON

#### A. THE EPISTLE TO PHILEMON

This short letter is one of Paul's most beautiful epistles. It is a private letter which concerned a personal problem and gives us a deep insight of the apostle's dealings with his converts. Here we find Paul's devoted love to individual souls which was one of the reasons for his success as a missionary.

Philemon was a wealthy resident of Colosse and a respected and faithful lay member of the church. He and Paul were intimate friends, and he had been converted under Paul's ministry.

The city of Colosse was located a few miles from Laodicea, on the trade route between Ephesus and the Euphrates. Some of the believers in Colosse met in the home of Philemon. This showed that Philemon was a man of means, owning a house large enough to accommodate the church. He also was a slave owner. It may seem strange that he owned slaves, but in his days, slavery was commonly accepted and would seem no different than having hired domestic servants. Sometimes both master and slave were Christians (I Timothy 6:1-2). For this reason, Paul gave instructions for Christian slaves as well as masters.

Onesimus was a slave who belonged to Philemon. He was a clever young man. Several years after Paul had left Asia and was imprisoned at Rome, Onesimus stole money from his master, Philemon, and ran away to Rome. Undoubtedly, he had met Paul in Philemon's home at an earlier date. At Rome, he found Paul in prison and was converted under his ministry.

This epistle was written while Paul was imprisoned the first time, at about the same time as his letter to the Colossians, possibly AD 62. It was a beautiful letter, interceding for the runaway slave and appealing to Philemon to receive Onesimus back as a Christian brother.

#### B. INTRODUCTION

**Scriptural Reference:** Philemon 1-3

Paul introduced himself as the writer of the letter and described himself as a

prisoner of Jesus Christ. He assumed the position of a supplicant. As the Lord's bondsman, he was going to plead for another bondsman. Six times in this letter, Paul made reference to his imprisonment. This certainly must have had a tremendous appeal to Philemon.

Timothy is mentioned in the salutation, but this does not mean that he assisted in the writing of the letter. It does mean that Timothy completely agreed with Paul on the matter contained in the letter. Timothy is called "our brother." It is assumed that he was well known to Philemon and that Timothy was keenly interested in Onesimus.

Apphia was Philemon's wife. The fact that her name appears after Philemon would show the close relation. She would definitely have an interest in the return of Onesimus and would influence the position of her husband. We cannot be sure of the relation of Archippus to Philemon. But the fact that his name is mentioned here revealed that he had connections with the household. It is suggested that Archippus was Philemon's son. It should be noted that Philemon was spoken of as being a fellow laborer while Archippus was described as being a fellow soldier. One was a companion of Paul in toil, the other Paul's companion in the ring of battle.

### C. THANKSGIVING FOR PHILEMON

**Scriptural Reference:** Philemon 4-7

Paul wisely did not immediately introduce the purpose of his letter but expressed his love for Philemon. Word had come to the apostle how Philemon had demonstrated his love for the Christians by ministering to them. This love for the church on the part of Philemon meant much to the Christians. When the report came to the apostle, it refreshed and encouraged Paul. Paul expressed grateful thanksgiving for the nobleman in Philemon's character. His love for Philemon is expressed by one word, *brother*. The position of this at the close of the expression of thanksgiving placed great emphasis upon Paul's love and appreciation for Philemon. With this expression of Christian love, Paul was now ready to make his appeal.

### D. THE APPEAL FOR ONESIMUS

**Scriptural Reference:** Philemon 8-17

As a runaway slave who had stolen from his master, Onesimus could expect scourging and possibly crucifixion under Roman law. As a Christian, he could have remained in Rome and never had gone back. But this would not have been the correct thing to do and certainly would never have made restitution. Paul advised him to return to his master and wrote this letter of appeal for reconciliation upon the part of Philemon.

The name *Onesimus* meant “profitable.” Paul laid emphasis upon this and reminded Philemon that while Onesimus had been unprofitable in the past, he was now profitable both to Philemon and to Paul. Paul spoke of himself as being “the aged and now also a prisoner of Jesus Christ.” At this particular time, Paul was about sixty years of age, a veteran in the gospel. He trusted that the fact of his years of service and the price that he had paid for the gospel would influence Philemon.

The appeal to Philemon was that Onesimus would be received back, not just as a slave, but as a brother beloved in the Lord. Paul appealed to Philemon that he would receive Onesimus just as he would receive Paul himself.

#### **E. THE PLEDGE OF PAUL**

**Scriptural Reference:** Philemon 18-22

To remove the last hindrance that might arise in the mind of Philemon concerning the matter, Paul pledged to repay any debt that Onesimus owed. As Onesimus would not be able to make monetary restitution, Paul assumed the debt incurred. As the spiritual father of Onesimus, he assumed the obligation for him. Paul put his own signature to the letter to make it legal and binding. It is possible that Paul wrote this entire epistle with his own hand. Paul reminded Philemon that he owed him a greater debt than Onesimus owed Philemon. However, this did not take away from Paul’s sincerity in pledging to repay any obligation owed to Philemon by Onesimus.

#### **F. CONCLUSION**

**Scriptural Reference:** Philemon 23-25

At the conclusion of his letter, Paul mentioned his hope to visit Colosse and requested Philemon to prepare him lodging. He mentioned several friends and sent greetings from them. Epaphras was also from Colosse and was well known to Philemon. He was the founder of the Colossian church and was with Paul at Rome. The other four men mentioned are described as being Paul’s fellow workers. It

should be noted that Demas is mentioned here as an honorable associate with Paul. It is said that Demas later forsook Paul, "having loved this present world" (II Timothy 4:10). It would seem that Paul, writing the letter, had no doubt as to the outcome of the matter. He knew that Philemon would accept Onesimus back as a brother. In verse 21 Paul wrote, "Knowing that thou wilt also do more than I say," hinting that Paul expected Philemon to free Onesimus. We have no proof of what really happened. However, tradition states that Philemon did receive him back and gave Onesimus his liberty. This tradition also states that Onesimus became a minister of the gospel and a bishop in Berea. This, of course, we cannot prove, but we certainly would like to believe it.

#### **G. THE LESSON TAUGHT IN THIS EPISTLE**

This epistle is a beautiful story of forgiveness and reconciliation. There are two main lessons here that we should note.

1. Paul brought the gospel to Onesimus and became the one who plead for Onesimus' reconciliation with his master. It is not enough just to preach the gospel and to win a convert; the minister is responsible to see that the convert is fully restored and does the right thing in every way.
2. The importance of restitution is taught here. Onesimus could have remained in Rome as a Christian and never returned to Colosse. By returning, he was making restitution. Certainly, restitution has a very important place in the plan of salvation!

## Lesson Eight

### THE LETTER TO THE HEBREWS

#### Part I

##### A. THE EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS

This epistle, along with that of James, was written to Christian Jews. The Epistle of James was written to the Christian Jews scattered abroad, while the Epistle to the Hebrews was written to the Christian Jews at Jerusalem.

Hebrews was written before Jerusalem was destroyed in AD 70 and while the Jewish Temple was still standing with magnificent splendor. The rituals and sacrifices were still being carried on. The probable date of the writing is between AD 62 and AD 68.

This epistle is written in eloquent style and occupies a very important place in the Scriptures. It is a commentary on the Book of Leviticus and explains the significance of the Jewish rituals. In this epistle we are taught that we have passed from the realm of shadows into that of reality. It shows that Christianity is not a religion merely of anticipation, but of participation.

##### B. AUTHORSHIP

The Epistle of the Hebrews is anonymous and we cannot be certain regarding the identity of the author. It has been suggested that it might have been written by Luke, Barnabas, or Apollos. However, there are some strong reasons for concluding that this epistle was written by the apostle Paul:

1. The writer was associated with Timothy (Hebrews 13:23).
2. The writer was in bonds (Hebrews 10:34; 13:19).
3. The writer was writing from Italy (Hebrews 13:24).
4. The writer was a Jew who was very familiar with the Jewish history and religion.
5. The teachings are the same and the presentation of these doctrines are similar to those found in the other Pauline Epistles.

It is safe to conclude that Paul was the author. Some have claimed that Paul wrote this epistle in Hebrew and then it was translated into Greek by another, possibly Luke. This would explain the difference, if any, in the style of Greek used.

This assumption is quite acceptable.

### C. THE THEME OF THE EPISTLE

The theme of this epistle is two-fold:

1. To exalt Jesus Christ as the full revelation of God and to hold Jesus up so that He might occupy our whole attention.
2. To warn the Hebrew Christians against apostasy. Because of the persecutions the church suffered and because the ancient religion of the Jews was right before their eyes in Jerusalem, there was the continual temptation to return to Judaism.

### D. KEY WORDS

We might consider five key words:

#### 1. **Better**

This is the main key word of the epistle. The epistle is a series of contrasts between the good things of Judaism and the better things of Christ. Jesus Christ is better than angels (Hebrews 1:4). We also read of a better hope (7:19), a better covenant (8:6), a better sacrifice (9:23), and a better resurrection (11:35).

#### 2. **Perfection**

This word with its corresponding verb and adjective occurs eleven times (Hebrews 6:1).

#### 3. **Eternal**

This word also is found several times (Hebrews 5:9; 6:2; 9:12; 13:20).

#### 4. **Heaven or Heavens**

Attention is directed to the fact that the realities of the Christian faith are not earthly.

## 5. Partakers

The epistle teaches that the realities of the Christian faith are matters of actual experience.

### E. EXHORTATIONS AND WARNINGS

#### 1. Warnings

There are several warning passages in this epistle:

- a. Hebrews 2:1-4 – Not to be careless nor negligent
- b. Hebrews 3:7-4:13 – Not to be unbelieving
- c. Hebrews 5:11-6:20 – Not to degenerate
- d. Hebrews 10:26-39 – Not to despise
- e. Hebrews 12:15-29 – Not to depart

#### 2. Exhortations

There are several exhortations addressed to “us.” These are an excellent series of Bible studies, and “we” should consider them seriously.

- a. Hebrews 4:1 “Let us therefore fear.”
- b. Hebrews 4:11 “Let us labor.”
- c. Hebrews 4:16 “Let us therefore come boldly.”
- d. Hebrews 6:1 “Let us go on unto perfection.”
- e. Hebrews 10:22 “Let us draw near.”
- f. Hebrews 10:23 “Let us hold fast.”
- g. Hebrews 10:24 “Let us consider one another.”
- h. Hebrews 12:1 “Let us lay aside every weight.”
- i. Hebrews 12:1 “Let us run with patience.”
- j. Hebrews 13:13 “Let us go forth.”
- k. Hebrews 13:15 “Let us offer the sacrifice of praise.”

### F. THE FULL REVELATION OF GOD

**Scriptural Reference:** Hebrews 1:1-3

The opening sentence is one of the most beautiful passages in the entire Bible. Here the deity of Jesus Christ is set forth. Here it is stated that Jesus is the brightness of God’s glory and the express image of God’s nature or substance. In Jesus Christ we have the expression of the essential nature of God. The invisible God



was made known by the visible Son. All that God is, we find in Jesus Christ. Jesus is set forth as the effulgence in whom and by whom the glory of God is manifested. Jesus told Philip, "He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father" (John 14:9).

The "express image of His person" may be translated "exact impress of the substance of Him." The "impress" comes from the Greek word *character*, which denotes the instrument used in engraving. The substance of God is Spirit and the exact expression is the man, Christ Jesus.

Since the world began, God has been speaking to man at different times and in different ways. Beginning with Adam and ending with Malachi, a period of more than 3,500 years, God spoke to man by the prophets. From Malachi until Christ, there were 400 silent years. Now God has spoken by a full revelation of Himself in Jesus Christ.

In this opening statement of Hebrews, there are given definite proofs of the deity of Jesus.

1. He is called the "Son of God" (Hebrews 1:2, 8).
2. He is called "God" (Hebrews 1:8).
3. He is called "Lord" (Hebrews 1:10).
4. He created the worlds, the universe (Hebrews 1:2, 10).
5. He sustains all things (Hebrews 1:3).
6. He is the savior of sinners (Hebrews 1:3).
7. He is the express image of God (Hebrews 1:3).
8. He is heir of all things (Hebrews 1:2).
9. He is seated in the place of power (Hebrews 1:3).
10. He is greater than angels (Hebrews 1:4-8).

## G. BETTER THAN ANGELS

**Scriptural Reference:** Hebrews 1:4-14

Angels occupy a very prominent place in the Bible and are held in high esteem. We find here a comparison between angels and Jesus Christ. This is not to take away any honor or respect for the angels but rather, by the comparison, to emphasize the greatness of Jesus Christ. The superiority of Jesus over the angels is shown in five ways:

1. The angels are ministers or servants; Jesus is the begotten Son (Hebrews 1:5, 7, 14).
2. The angels are commanded to worship Him; Jesus is the worshiped One (Hebrews 1:6).
3. Angels are creatures; He is the Creator (Hebrews 1:7-12).
4. They are ministers of salvation; Jesus is the Author of salvation (Hebrews 1:13, 14).
5. Jesus is the Ruler of the age to come; angels are subjects (Hebrews 2:5).

The role of angels is given in verse 14. They are ministers to the heirs of salvation. They are servants of God. The angels have a message that is real but yet limited. They are inferior both to Jesus Christ and the heirs of salvation.

Angels are glorious and powerful, but Jesus Christ is more glorious and more powerful. He is so *much better* than the angels (Hebrews 1:4).

## Lesson Nine

### THE LETTER TO THE HEBREWS Part II

#### A. A SOLEMN WARNING AGAINST NEGLECT

**Scriptural Reference:** Hebrews 2:1-4

If the word spoken by angels was true and dependable and should be heeded, how much more should the word spoken by the Lord, witnessed to by signs, miracles and the gift of the Holy Ghost, be heeded. There was no escaping the judgments that followed every transgression and disobedience in the Old Testament. Therefore, there is no escape if this great salvation is neglected. Neglect could mean failing to give attention to prayer, Bible study, church attendance, etc. It could also mean becoming careless because of the love of this world.

There is much meaning in the adverb *so*. This salvation is not only great, but it is “so” great. Why is it so great?

1. It is the only salvation. There is no other.
2. The price that was paid for it makes it great. Jesus gave His life on the cross for it.
3. It embraces the whole world. It is for all men regardless of class, color, or culture.
4. It saves to the uttermost. It just doesn't make a man religious, but it regenerates him.
5. There is power to save all men no matter how deep into sin they may have fallen.

We had better not drift away from the gospel spoken, for if we neglect it, we are lost, and certain judgment awaits us.

## **B. THE HUMANITY OF CHRIST**

Christ became the Son of Man that men might become the sons of God. He took our nature in order that we might have His. Christ did not take the nature of angels because He did not come to redeem them. He came to redeem man and was made in the likeness of man. As a man He lived, as a man He died, and as a man He is our Mediator (I Timothy 2:5).

It is only right that in our studies we emphasize the deity of Jesus. However, while we are worshiping Him as God, we must not forget His humanity. He partook of our weaknesses. He experienced weariness, loneliness, rejection, hunger, thirst, and temptation. Because of this, He is able to strengthen us when we have such needs. He is a merciful and compassionate High Priest.

## **C. MORE WORTHY THAN MOSES**

**Scriptural Reference:** Hebrews 3:1-6

Here Paul showed the superiority of Christ over Moses. The Hebrews were requested to consider Jesus who is the Apostle and High Priest of our profession. Moses was considered the savior and leader of Israel, and as such, he had been the apostle of God to the Israelites. Next in importance was their high priest, Aaron, who acted as mediator between them and God. Moses saved the Israelites from physical death and bondage; Jesus saves believers from spiritual death. Aaron went once a year into the Holy of Holies, but he could not bring the people there. Jesus opened up the way to bring us into the presence of God.

Moses was a faithful servant in the house of God. Jesus is the Lord over the house. He is also the builder of the house and is worthy of more honor. In verse 6 we read that we are actually this house if we hold fast and firm to the end. No place for unconditional eternal security expressed here!

## **D. WARNING AGAINST UNBELIEF**

**Scriptural Reference:** Hebrews 3:7-19

The remainder of chapter 3 is an admonition to listen to God's voice and obey. Moses led the children of Israel through the wilderness to the border of the Promised Land. They failed to enter Canaan because of unbelief. The sin of unbelief is great. Note the expression in the twelfth verse: "an evil heart of unbelief." Unbelief is evil. It is sinful. Unbelief is equivalent of calling God a liar. Unbelief will exclude millions from heaven. Unbelief also robs believers of joy, peace, and power which

are rightfully theirs.

Sin is deceitful (verse 13) and as such hardens the hearts. We are told to exhort one another daily. We are to be concerned for each other lest a Christian's heart should be hardened through unbelief and turn back to Egypt. In verse 14 we read that we are partakers of Christ if we hold our faith steadfast to the end. Again, we find that there is no place for unconditional eternal security expressed here!

## E. GOD'S REST

**Scriptural Reference:** Hebrews 4:1-3

The key word in this chapter is *rest*. This is mentioned nine times in a chapter of sixteen verses. The rest described here is God's rest. This is not physical rest but rather a peace and satisfaction which comes with a finished work. On the seventh day God rested from His works. In what way did He rest? Was He physically weary? He could have continued indefinitely speaking worlds into being without becoming weary. God's rest is a cessation of work and a deep peace in a completed mission. It is heart rest which only comes through full faith in what God has done.

God has a rest for His people (verse 9). This rest becomes a reality in the heart of the born-again child of God. It is the Holy Ghost rest.

"For with stammering lips and another tongue will he speak to this people. To whom he said, This is the rest wherewith ye may cause the weary to rest; and this is the refreshing" (Isaiah 28:11, 12).

If this rest is a cessation from one's own works, what is the meaning of verse 11 where we are told to labor to enter into rest. It is actually an exhortation not to become careless and disobey God. It is a matter of diligently believing God. The reason for this diligence is that God's Word is living and powerful, cutting deep into our innermost thoughts and judging the purposes of the heart. All things are naked and exposed to His eyes. Therefore, we should fear lest we come short of entering His rest through unbelief (Hebrews 4:1-16).

## F. CHRIST'S PRIESTHOOD

**Scriptural Reference:** Hebrews 4:14-5:14

One of the main themes of the epistle is the comparison of Christ with the Levitical priesthood. They were of the tribe of Levi; Jesus was of the tribe of Judah. They offered animal sacrifices; He offered Himself. They died; He lives!

Paul showed that Christ met the qualifications for the office of priesthood. He had been divinely appointed or ordained. He was sympathetic and compassionate. His human nature was superior to that of the high priests of Judaism. He was sinless. The high priest of Judaism must belong to the Aaronic priestly order. Christ belonged to a higher order, that of Melchisedec. In every way He was superior to the Levitical priesthood.

Paul told the Hebrews that they were full of hearing and were still spiritual babes. Therefore, they found these truths difficult to understand.

Since our High Priest was tempted in every point as we are, He is compassionate. Therefore, we with confidence may approach His throne and find grace to help when we are in need (Hebrews 4:15, 16).

## **G. A SOLEMN WARNING AGAINST APOSTASY**

**Scriptural Reference:** Hebrews 6:1-20

The message of this Epistle to the Hebrews is not to go back but to go on to perfection. They were to grow and mature as spiritual Christians. They were warned against going back, for they could lose their souls.

The foundation of a building is very important. We cannot ignore the foundation, but we construct it firmly to build there on. Likewise, there are foundational doctrines, six in number, upon which we are to build and perfect our lives. They are:

1. Repentance from dead works
2. Faith toward God
3. Doctrine for baptisms (both water and Spirit)
4. Laying on of hands
5. Resurrection of the dead
6. Eternal judgment

These foundational doctrines are all very important, but we don't stop there. We go on. We are either going forward or backward. It is very perilous to go back.

Some would claim that the warning given in verses 4-6 is not given to born-

again Christians. However, we should note that:

1. They were once enlightened.
2. They tasted of the heavenly gift.
3. They were partakers of the Holy Ghost.
4. They tasted of the Word of God and eternal powers.

These have to be men with the born-again experience. The warning shows the serious danger of apostasy. A backslider who sins may find restoration through repentance, but one who cannot find repentance, cannot find forgiveness. The seriousness of going back on truth is great. The apostate never finds restoration. How important it is to hold fast to the truth of God's Word!

## Lesson Ten

### THE LETTER TO THE HEBREWS PART III

#### A. MELCHISEDEC

**Scriptural Reference:** Hebrews 7:1-28

The comparison of the priesthood of Jesus Christ with that of Aaron is continued. In this chapter, Melchisedec is shown to be greater than Abraham who is greater than Aaron. Since Christ is of the order of Melchisedec, He is, therefore, greater than Aaron.

Who was Melchisedec? He is mentioned three places in the Scriptures: Genesis 14; Psalm 110, and here in Hebrews. Some believe that he was the king of a city, Salem. However, the Scriptures make it very clear that he was a theophany, an appearance of God in human form. Let us list a few of the reasons why this is a fact:

1. He was greater than Abraham, for Abraham paid tithes to Him.
2. He was better than Abraham, for He blessed Abraham (verse 7).
3. He was King of Righteousness and King of Peace. These titles are reserved for God only. No human can qualify.
4. He was without father and mother. Only Jesus Christ can meet this description. He had no earthly father and Mary was only the mother of His humanity. She was not the mother of God.
5. He had neither beginning of days nor end of life. Jesus is the first and the last and abides a priest continually.
6. He was made like the Son of God. This appearance of God pre-figured the actual incarnation.
7. Melchisedec was a Priest-King. This dual office was reserved for Jesus only. At Babel judgment came because they tried to join these two offices. King Saul lost his crown for the same reason.
8. If there was already a man with the revelation of the true God living in Canaan, Abraham's call and revelation would have been greatly nullified.

The order of Melchisedec did not depend upon human ancestry but upon an everlasting priesthood. The order of Melchisedec superseded the Aaronic order and was superior to it. Therefore, the priesthood of Jesus Christ was superior to the



Levitical priesthood. Because of this, we have a High Priest who is able to save to the uttermost (verse 25). He ever lives to make intercession. He is holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners. Since He was sinless, He did not offer sacrifice for His own sins. Rather He made one sacrifice for the sins of the people when He offered up Himself (verse 27).

## B. A BETTER COVENANT

**Scriptural Reference:** Hebrews 8:1-13

In this chapter we read of a better covenant built upon better promises (verse 6). A covenant is an agreement between two parties. One promises to do certain things if the other party will do certain things. On the mount, God gave Moses careful instructions and the leader was shown a pattern of a building he was to erect. This Tabernacle was designed to be a type of eternal realities and the principles of redemption. The covenant given to Moses was known as the Old Covenant. It was faulty because it was incomplete. It merely prepared the way for the gospel. It was also faulty because it did not provide man with power to carry out his part of the covenant.

The New Covenant is built upon better promises. The old promises related mainly to this present life, but the new promises pertain to the life to come. In the Old Covenant the promises were dependent upon God's Word, "I will." Six times in this Scripture we find the promise "I will." In the New Covenant the word *if* does not occur. The New Covenant depends upon what God does, not upon man's work.

1. I will make a new covenant.
2. I will put my laws into their mind and write them in their hearts.
3. I will be to them a God.
4. I will be merciful to their unrighteousness.
5. I will remember their sins no more.

When Jesus forgives sins, He forgets. Under the New Covenant the sins of God's people are blotted out. It is as if they never had been committed. In the New Covenant there is mercy and compassion. The New Covenant is grace.

## C. THE NEW TESTAMENT

**Scriptural Reference:** Hebrews 9:1-28

The Jewish Tabernacle was compared with the true Tabernacle not made with hands. Paul described the Old Testament Tabernacle, and every Bible student should be familiar with the Tabernacle plan.

The high priest entered the Holy of Holies once a year to obtain annual redemption. Jesus entered once to obtain eternal redemption. The high priest offered the blood of animals; Christ offered His own blood.

The New Covenant is called “The New Testament” (verse 15). A testament is a will which becomes effective after the death of the testator. The New Testament became effective upon the death of Jesus Christ upon the cross.

In this chapter there are some verses with which the Bible student should be very familiar:

Verse 22—The shedding of blood is essential to the remission of sins. A bloodless religion can never save!

Verse 27—There is no escaping death. Every man must die and face judgment. The only exception will be the church when Jesus catches away His bride.

Verse 28—Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many. This does away with any mass in a religious service. Calvary needs never be repeated.

It is stated three times that Christ appeared:

1. He appeared as a sacrifice for sin (verse 26).
2. He appears as a priest (verse 24).
3. He will appear the second time without sin unto salvation (verse 28).

#### **D. ONE SACRIFICE FOR SIN**

**Scriptural Reference:** Hebrews 10:1-18

The fact that the sacrifices of the Old Testament had to be repeated over and over proved that they failed to accomplish the purpose of the sacrifice, the putting away of sin. In this Scripture Paul emphasized the completeness and sufficiency of Christ’s sacrifice. Note the emphasis on these expressions: one sacrifice (verse 12); one offering (verse 14); forever (verses 12, 14). After He had offered this one sacrifice for sin, He sat down in the place of power. The expression “sat down” denotes that the work of redemption is finished for all eternity.

## E. AN EXHORTATION TO STEDFASTNESS

**Scriptural Reference:** Hebrews 10:19-37

The latter part of chapter 10 is an exhortation to steadfastness. This exhortation may be studied in three parts:

### 1. **Our Privileges Together with Duties and Responsibilities** (Verses 19-25)

Since Jesus, our High Priest, rules over God's household and the veil in the Temple has been torn, it is our privilege to walk into the Holy of Holies, the very presence of God. We have this right because our hearts have been cleansed by the blood of Christ and because we have been baptized in Jesus' name. There is no longer any room for doubt or questioning about our salvation, for Jesus is faithful to His Word.

In response to this, let us be helpful and kind to each other. Let us not be careless about church attendance. Let us encourage and exhort each other, especially since Christ's return is close at hand. Every Christian needs to have a church home and be faithful in attendance and support. If there is no church to attend, he should either move or start a new assembly.

### 2. **A Stern Warning is Given** (Verses 26-31)

Paul described the seriousness of deliberately and willingly rejecting the Savior after experiencing salvation. There are two extreme teachings on this Scripture, both of which are false. Some would teach that no backslider may be reclaimed. Others go to the other extreme and teach that this Scripture is not referring to backsliders but only Christ rejecters who have only heard the gospel.

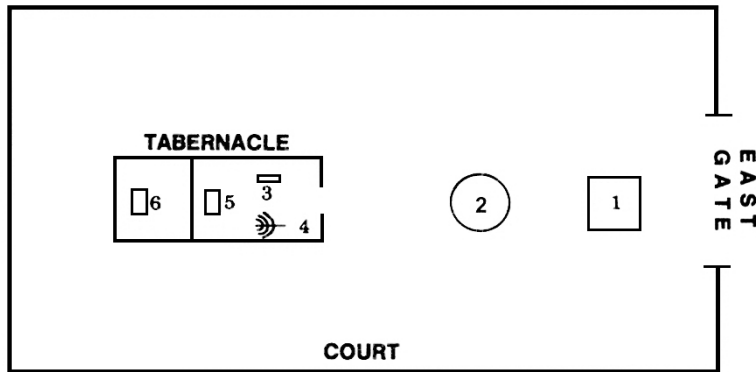
Backsliders may be restored. But there is a very serious danger they may never be restored if they deliberately turn back into the world. This Scripture is dealing with backsliders who despise what God has done for them. There is no other salvation, and if he despises the blood of Jesus and the ministry of the Holy Spirit, he becomes a lost soul facing the fearful judgments of God.

### 3. An Encouragement (Verses 32-38)

The Christian Hebrews were told to remember the wonderful days of their conversion. They suffered ridicule and persecution and sympathized with others suffering the same thing. They accepted cheerfully the confiscation of their belongings, knowing that they had better things waiting for them.

Do not throw away this happy trust in the Lord. Keep on patiently doing the Lord's will, for the Lord will not delay His return!

## F. THE TABERNACLE PLAN



### Furniture

- |                       |                        |
|-----------------------|------------------------|
| 1. Brazen Altar       | 4. Golden Candlesticks |
| 2. Laver              | 5. Altar of Incense    |
| 3. Table of Shewbread | 6. Ark of the Covenant |

## Lesson Eleven

### THE LETTER TO THE HEBREWS Part IV

#### A. CONTEXT

##### **Scriptural Reference:**

“Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man drawback, my soul shall have no pleasure in him” (Hebrews 10:38).

Chapter 11 of this epistle is extremely important. Every Christian should be familiar with the chapter because of the importance of faith in his own life. This is known as the “faith chapter.”

This exposition on faith is linked back to the statement in Hebrews 10:38, “Now the just shall live by faith.” This is a quotation from the Old Testament, “But the just shall live by his faith” (Habakkuk 2:4). We can understand the importance of this Scripture when we remember that this was the truth revealed to Martin Luther, bringing about the Reformation. It is quoted by Paul on two other occasions:

“For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith” (Romans 1:17).

“But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident: for, The just shall live by faith” (Galatians 3:11).

It has been suggested by one writer that Paul placed the emphasis in Romans on righteousness, in Galatians on faith contrasted with the law, and in Hebrews on the verb “shall live.” We are inclined to agree.

#### B. DEFINITION OF FAITH

**Scriptural Reference:** Hebrews 11:1-3

This chapter is introduced with a description of faith. It is trust in the unseen. It is not trust in the unknown. The word *substance* is the “foundation” upon which our faith is based. It is not just a matter of whether we believe, but rather whom do we believe. Faith is placing trust in the foundation which is God’s Word. It is explicit trust in God’s promises. The things we hope for may not be seen, but they are not unknown. The writer of these Bible notes once drove five miles across a lake with his car in the spring of the year with approximately six inches of water on top of the ice. All the way across there was no sight of ice, but it was there. The journey was finished safely because under the water was the ice. It could not be seen, but it was not unknown.

In some ancient manuscripts the word *substance* is the word meaning “title deed.” This verse could read, “Faith is the title deed of things hoped for.” Faith gives valid claim to the things hoped for. Faith is the soul’s eye which sees the unseen and gives evidence of the reality of the unseen. It is also the soul’s hand which reached out to grasp these realities.

It must always be remembered that faith is not passive but active. In all the illustrations which follow in this chapter, this truth is emphasized. Faith is not a dormant thing but a living, active force.

The worlds were not created by faith, but our understanding of creation is a matter of faith. Our faith is not placed in the unproven false theories of evolution but rather in God’s Word. Faith allows us to understand the truth of how the universe came into existence. God spoke and it was! The universe which we see came into existence from the invisible. God spoke and creation took place. This shows the importance of having trust and confidence in God’s Word, which is the foundation of our hopes and also the reality of the invisible.

## **C. BEFORE THE FLOOD**

**Scriptural Reference:** Hebrews 11:4, 5, 7

In this faith chapter we are given a list of sixteen characters who exhibited victorious faith. The exploits of the faith of many others are also mentioned. These lived in every dispensation of the Old Testament, which reveal the importance of faith in every age. Three people are mentioned who lived before the flood:

### **1. Abel**

Abel showed his faith in worship. He offered a more excellent sacrifice than Cain. Undoubtedly Adam had instructed both his sons. Abel obeyed and offered a blood

sacrifice by faith. Obedience and faith made it a sacrifice acceptable to God. Cain rejected the necessity of blood being shed for his sins. Consequently, his sacrifice was one of unbelief and disobedience.

Abel was murdered because of his faith, but after all these years Abel still speaks. Faith, obedience, and substitutionary death are still essentials to salvation.

## **2. Enoch**

Enoch showed his faith in close companionship with God. God and Enoch were inseparable companions. He had a beautiful testimony that he pleased God. Because of this, he did not experience death. He became a type of the New Testament church to be raptured.

## **3. Noah**

Noah showed his faith by his obedient works. Like his great grandfather, Enoch, he was a preacher of righteousness and a worker of righteousness. He was moved with fear to the saving of his house. He had never witnessed a deluge, but he believed God's warning. He obeyed God, and God pronounced him righteous because of his faith.

Noah's example should mean much to us today. We have not seen the judgment pronounced upon this world. We have not witnessed the eternal torments of a devil's hell. However, God has spoken and we, too, should be moved with fear to the saving of our house.

## **D. PLEASING GOD**

### **Scriptural Reference:**

"But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him" (Hebrews 11:6).

There are three indispensable things named in the Epistle to the Hebrews:

1. Blood—Hebrews 9:22
2. Faith—Hebrews 11:6

### 3. Holiness – Hebrews 12:14

Without the shedding of blood, there is no remission of sins. Without holiness, no man shall see Jesus when He returns for His church. Without faith, we cannot please God. To please God, one must believe that **He is** (present tense). He is not just a God of the past and unknown future, but God of the eternal present. We must believe that He is “The Great I AM.” If we pray diligently, He will meet our needs *now*. Without this type of faith, we cannot please God.

## E. PATRIARCHS

**Scriptural Reference:** Hebrews 11:8-22

### 1. Abraham

The Jewish nation was brought into existence by a miracle as the result of the strong faith of Abraham and Sarah. Their faith did not depend upon human reasoning or natural laws. God had promised and here was the foundation of their confidence. God’s Word was sufficient. For twenty-five years they waited, but their faith remained steadfast. There was no visible evidence that their faith would be rewarded, but they still believed God.

When Abraham was called, he promptly obeyed. He did not know where he was going. He had been promised a place for an inheritance. He believed God and therefore was willing to live in tents. He looked not only for an earthly Canaan, but also a real city whose builder and maker was God.

His greatest test came with the offering up of Isaac. His faith and obedience went hand in hand. He believed; therefore, he obeyed. Since God had promised him Isaac, he believed that God would raise him from the dead. This was a remarkable testimony of the patriarch’s faith, for up to that time there was no example of a resurrection taking place. Again, it was faith in the unseen.

### 2. Isaac

Isaac showed his faith by believing God for the future and blessed his sons accordingly.

### 3. Jacob

Jacob believed God that He would fulfill His promise concerning the land of Canaan. He gave instructions concerning his burial and blessed his two grandsons



giving them an inheritance.

#### 4. Joseph

His predictions concerning the departure of the children of Israel from Egypt rested only on faith. Because of his faith, he gave instructions concerning his bones.

### F. THE FAITH OF MOSES

**Scriptural Reference:** Hebrews 11:23-29

The parents of Moses, Amram and Jochebed, showed their faith by hiding Moses, their baby, for three months. God rewarded them by giving Moses back into his mother's arms. She taught her son about God, and it is evident that she did her work well when we see the faith of Moses.

Moses showed his faith best in the decisions he made. He waited until he was forty years of age before he made his decisions known. He made the following choices:

1. He refused to be an Egyptian prince.
2. He chose to suffer affliction rather than enjoy the pleasures of sin.
3. He chose the reproach of Christ rather than the treasures of Egypt.
4. He forsook Egypt and did not fear the king's anger. He was able to do this by faith as seeing Him who is invisible. Through faith he kept the Passover, recognizing the blood atonement, and crossed over the Red Sea as on dry land. Because of unbelief, the Egyptians were drowned.

### G. OTHER HEROES OF FAITH

**Scriptural Reference:** Hebrews 11:30-38

We find other heroes of faith mentioned here. Also, we read of the accomplishments of faith. In many of these instances, we know from Scripture just whom is being referred to. We shall mention a few:

1. *Rahab* – saved the spies and then saved herself by placing the crimson cord in the window

2. *Gideon* – waxed valiant in fight.
3. *Barak* – subdued kingdoms.
4. *Samson* – from weakness was made strong.
5. *Jepthah* – defeated armies.
6. *David* – obtained promises.
7. *Daniel* – stopped the mouth of lions.
8. *Elijah* – raised the dead.

## H. BETTER THING PROVIDED FOR US

**Scriptural Reference:** Hebrews 11:39-40

The last two verses of this chapter are very meaningful. To help us understand this statement, we shall quote from The Living New Testament:

“And these men of faith, though they trusted God and won His approval, none of them received all that God had promised them. For God wanted them to wait and share the even better rewards that were prepared for us” (Hebrews 11:39, 40, The Living New Testament).

## Lesson Twelve

### THE LETTER TO THE HEBREWS Part V

#### A. LOOKING UNTO JESUS

**Scriptural Reference:** Hebrews 12:1-4

We are exhorted to run with patience the race set before us and not to become weary. The heroes of faith listed in chapter 11 now are described as a great cloud of witnesses. These witnesses are now spectators in a great arena and are watching our race with keen interest. They finished the race victoriously and now encourage us to do the same.

In order to win the race, one must strip himself from everything that is superfluous and sinful. Anything that would hinder must be cast aside. Every Christian has his weak points and some sins tempt him while others do not. He must recognize the sins which would trip him up and lay them immediately to one side.

In running the race our eyes are not to be upon the crowd of spectators but rather on Jesus. He is the author and the finisher of our faith. He is also our perfect example. Jesus endured the cross and despised the shame. Because of His patient endurance, He has reached the seat of power.

“Consider him” means to compare yourself with Him. When you compare yourself with Jesus, you will not give in to weariness, because you have not yet had to suffer martyrdom in fighting against sin.

#### B. THE PURPOSE OF CHASTISEMENT

**Scriptural Reference:** Hebrews 12:5-11

The very fact that we receive chastening is a proof that we are God’s children. The chastisement here is expressive of discipline, not punishment. There is a contrast brought out between the human and divine Father, between pleasure and

profit. God's purpose is that we might be partaker of His holiness.

Discipline at the time it is administered is a matter of pain and must be endured. In this matter of discipline, we are exhorted not to forget (verse 5), not to despise (verse 5), not to faint (verse 5) but rather to endure (verse 7) and to be in subjection (verse 9).

### C. EXHORTATION TO HOLINESS

**Scriptural Reference:** Hebrews 12:12-17

In our race we are not to give in to weak knees but to strengthen ourselves and run in a straight course. Each Christian is to travel a straight road so that even the lame will not stumble.

The word *follow* in verse 14 is to "pursue." We are to pursue peace and holiness. Peace relates to our fellow men and holiness to God. Without sanctification we cannot hope to see God when He returns for His church. We are exhorted to look diligently and are warned against four conditions overtaking us:

1. Lest any man fail the grace of God
2. Lest any have a root of bitterness
3. Lest any be a fornicator
4. Lest any be a profane man

Particular attention should be given to the warning against a root of bitterness. To harbor malice in the soul can bring havoc in a church. *One person* may be bitter, but the *whole body* may be defiled.

Esau is described as a profane person. This refers to the secular and common. Such a person will follow only where his earthly appetites lead. Esau lost his birthright and could never regain it. Let us take warning!

### D. THE COMPARISON OF SINAI AND ZION

**Scriptural Reference:** Hebrews 12:18-29

The comparison between Sinai and Zion is another strong exhortation not to return to Judaism. The sight of Mount Sinai with its darkness, fire, and storm was terrifying—so much so that even Moses shook with fear. How different this was to Mount Zion, the heavenly Jerusalem, and a great company of angels, the church whose members are registered in Heaven and to Jesus Himself. The children of Israel

did not escape when they refused to listen to Moses. How terrible it will be not to listen to the One who speaks from Heaven!

When God spoke the first time, the earth shook. Next time, He will shake also the heavens and sift out everything without solid foundation. Since we have a kingdom nothing can destroy, we should serve God with godly fear.

## E. PRACTICAL EXHORTATIONS

**Scriptural Reference:** Hebrews 13:1-6

The closing chapter is made up of exhortations relating to practical duties of Christians:

1. **Brother Love** (Verse 1): Love for each other in the Lord must continue. This is one of the strongest proofs that we are Christians.
2. **Hospitality** (Verse 2): It was the duty of a Christian to show hospitality. There would seem to be a reference to Abraham entertaining the angels (Genesis 19).
3. **Compassion for the Suffering** (Verse 3): We are not to forget those in jail. We are to show compassion to all who suffer.
4. **Chastity** (Verse 4): Marriage is honorable in the sight of God. Marriage vows are to be kept, for God will punish those who commit adultery.
5. **Contentment** (Verses 5 and 6): The strong reason for being content and satisfied is that God is with us constantly and takes care of those who trust Him.

## F. RESPECT FOR THE MINISTRY

**Scriptural Reference:** Hebrews 13:7, 8, 9, 17

Ministers watch over the souls of the saints. It is a very profitable thing when they can give an account of your soul with joy. For this reason, we are admonished to remember, consider, obey, and submit ourselves to our pastor.

Not only are we to obey the ministers in the church, but we are to be established in the eternal truths of God's Word. Jesus Christ is unchangeable, the same yesterday, today and forever! His Word likewise does not change! Unfortunately, many Christians are fickle and gullible. They are always looking for some strange doctrine. We are warned against it, for it is a good thing to have our hearts established.

## **G. WITHOUT THE CAMP**

**Scriptural Reference:** Hebrews 13:10-16

Jesus suffered outside the gates of Jerusalem. He also suffered outside Judaism or the Jewish religion. Because of this, there is a definite separation for each of us. We must suffer outside the confines of the religious world. We must be willing to bear His shame, knowing that this world is not our home. We look forward to our everlasting home in heaven.

## **H. CONCLUDING PRAYER**

**Scriptural Reference:** Hebrews 13:18-21

Paul made a prayer request for himself and then wrote a brief prayer for the Hebrews. His main request was that God would make up to them wherein they lack in order to do God's will. He desired that they would be fully fitted for their task.

## **I. CONCLUSION**

**Scriptural Reference:** Hebrews 13:22-25

In his concluding remarks, Paul exhorted the Hebrews to listen patiently to his words for the epistle was a short one. Timothy was no longer in jail and would shortly come to them. The Italian Christians sent their greetings.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Self Help Test: Epistles III**

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**Lesson One**

1. Describe Timothy's background.
2. What is a "Pastoral Epistle"?
3. What is the outline for I Timothy?
4. What is sound doctrine? What will it lead to?
5. What is the purpose of the law?
6. Why did Christ to into the world?
7. Quote I Timothy 1:17.
8. Explain Paul's teaching regarding worship and praise.
9. Explain Paul's position on the role of women in worship.

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### **Self Help Test: Epistles III**

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#### **Lesson Two**

Fill in the blanks.

1. \_\_\_\_\_ means "overseer."
2. \_\_\_\_\_ means "one who ministers."
3. Six qualifications for a bishop are:
  - a.
  - b.
  - c.
  - d.
  - e.
  - f.
4. The wife of a deacon must be \_\_\_\_\_,  
\_\_\_\_\_, and not \_\_\_\_\_.
5. "God was \_\_\_\_\_ in the flesh, \_\_\_\_\_ in  
the Spirit, \_\_\_\_\_ of angels, \_\_\_\_\_  
unto the Gentiles, \_\_\_\_\_ on in the world,  
\_\_\_\_\_ up into glory" (I Timothy 3:16).
6. Paul instructed Timothy be an example in \_\_\_\_\_  
(speech), \_\_\_\_\_ (conversation), \_\_\_\_\_  
(love), \_\_\_\_\_ (faithfulness), and \_\_\_\_\_  
(chastity).



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**Self Help Test: Epistles III**

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**Lesson Three**

1. What were Timothy's instructions regarding:
  - a. Older men
  - b. Younger men
  - c. Older women
  - d. Younger women
  
2. What did Paul teaching regarding widows?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
3. How should the discipline of an elder be handled?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
4. Why is covetousness dangerous?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
5. What final instruction did Paul give Timothy?

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### **Self Help Test: Epistles III**

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#### **Lesson Four**

Mark true or false

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Paul's second letter to Timothy was the last New Testament epistle that he wrote.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Paul wrote the letter while exiled on the Isle of Patmos.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Many Christians were persecuted under the Roman emperors.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Timothy was Paul's grandson.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. The faith of a parent can be passed on to the next generation.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. Paul was not ashamed because he knew whom he believed and was persuaded that God was able to keep that which Paul had committed unto him.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. Paul was thankful for Onesiphorus who often visited him.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. Paul likened Timothy's role of a minister to that of a steward, soldier, athlete, husbandman, and a student.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. Timothy was instructed to avoid ignorant questions which bred arguments.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. Timothy was exhorted to run away from evil desires and to follow after righteousness.

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**Self Help Test: Epistles III**

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**Lesson Five**

1. How did Paul describe the conditions of man in the closing days of the church age?
2. Will those who oppose the gospel succeed? Why?
3. What is the purpose of the Scriptures?
4. What charge did Paul give Timothy?

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### **Self Help Test: Epistles III**

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#### **Lesson Six**

Mark true or false.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Titus was one of Paul's converts and became one of Paul's trusted and devoted companions.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Crete is the largest island in the Mediterranean Sea and the home of people known for loose morals.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. The letter to Titus was written at the same time as Paul's epistle to the Ephesians.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Titus was instructed to ordain elders in each city.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Paul stated that an elder could not be married.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. The older women were to teach the younger women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children, to be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. The Christian's blessed hope is the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. God's grace has appeared only to a select few.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. Because they are citizens of a heavenly kingdom, Christians have no need to obey civil laws.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. A man is saved by his works of righteousness.

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**Self Help Test: Epistles III**

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**Lesson Seven**

Short Answers

1. Describe Philemon's hometown.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. What was the relationship between:
  - a. Paul and Philemon
  - b. Paul and Onesimus
  - c. Onesimus and Philemon
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
3. What role did Paul assume in his appeal to Philemon?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
4. On what bases did Paul make his appeal on Onesimus' behalf?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
5. What pledge did Paul make to Philemon?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
6. What lessons are taught in this epistle?

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### **Self Help Test: Epistles III**

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#### **Lesson Eight**

1. To whom was the Epistle to the Hebrews written?
  
2. When was the epistle written?
  
3. What is the theme of Hebrews?
  
4. List three things that the writer warned against.
  - a.
  - b.
  - c.
  
5. List six things that the writer exhorted the Hebrews to:
  - a.
  - b.
  - c.
  - d.
  - e.
  - f.
  
6. List five proofs of the deity of Jesus.
  - a.
  - b.
  - c.
  - d.
  - e.

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**Self Help Test: Epistles III**

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**Lesson Nine**

1. Why did the writer of Hebrews describe our salvation as “so great”?
2. How was Christ more worthy than Moses?
3. Why is unbelief a sin?
4. What is the Christian’s rest?
5. How is the priesthood of Christ better than the Aaronic priesthood?
6. List the six foundational doctrines:
  - a.
  - b.
  - c.
  - d.
  - e.
  - f.





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**Self Help Test: Epistles III**

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**Lesson Eleven**

1. The writer of Hebrews stated, "Faith is the substance . . . ."  
What is the meaning of *substance*.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. How was the faith of the following men shown:
  - a. Abel
  - b. Enoch
  - c. Moses
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
3. Why is faith essential to salvation?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
4. How did Abraham react to his greatest test of faith?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
5. How did Moses demonstrate his faith?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
6. List three other heroes of faith:
  - a.
  - b.
  - c.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Self Help Test: Epistles III**

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**Lesson Twelve**

1. Who is the cloud of witnesses mentioned in Hebrews 12:1?
2. What is the purpose of chastisement?
3. Compare Zion to Sinai.
4. What did the writer teach the Hebrews concerning respect for the ministry?
5. What did the writer teach concerning hospitality, compassion, and chastity?