

OVERVIEW & OUTLINE

1 Timothy

The evangel according to Paul

“To make known the secret of the evangel” (6:20)

BOB EVELY

2012.

“God, Who is the Saviour of all mankind, especially of believers.”
1 Timothy 4:10

*All Scriptures taken from the Concordant Literal New Testament
and the Concordant Version of the Old Testament unless otherwise noted.
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Santa Clarita, CA 91387 (www.Concordant.org)*

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About the Author

Paul begins by identifying himself as the writer of this letter (1:1) Let us recall the commission Paul received on the road to Damascus: *He is a choice instrument of Mine, to bear My name before both the nations and kings, besides the sons of Israel.* (Acts 9:15-16) And we know from Acts that Paul did go first to the synagogues to proclaim Christ to the Jews, and then to the Gentiles. Peter, John, James and other New Testament writers had a commission to Israel only. Paul alone was commissioned to go to the Gentiles.

We cannot assume Paul's message to the Gentiles was the same as the message proclaimed by the others unto Israel. Paul stressed that the gospel he proclaimed was not received from man, *but it came through a revelation of Jesus Christ.* (Galatians 1:11-12) If he preached the same gospel, why would he not have studied under the Twelve who had heard and observed Christ Himself during His earthly ministry? And why would Paul refer to his proclamation as "my evangel" instead of "the evangel?" (Romans 2:16; 16:25-26). Paul notes that he had been entrusted with the evangel of the Uncircumcision, and Peter had been trusted with the evangel of the Circumcision. (Galatians 2:7). He did not say that his was the evangel to the Uncircumcision; but of the Uncircumcision. It was a different message, and this can be clearly seen if we examine the details. Paul is the only one to have mentioned the rapture in 1 Thessalonians 4:13, or the expectation of the body of Christ in the celestials in Ephesians 2:6. Israels' expectation was always upon the earth, not in the celestials or heavens.

Paul was abandoned by nearly all at the end of his ministry (see 2 Timothy 1:15; 4:16; Acts 21:20). Note in the Acts passage that when Paul returned to Jerusalem he was opposed not by unbelieving Jews, but by believing Jews who were zealous for the law – a clear signal that Paul's message was different than that of the Twelve, and as a result Paul was opposed by Jewish *believers*.

Paul, in his writings, refers to a mystery that had been previously concealed, but which he was now revealing as God had instructed him. ... *His body, which is the ecclesia of which I became a dispenser, in accord with the administration of God, which is granted to me for you, **to complete the word of God** ... the **secret** which has been **concealed** from the eons and from the generations, yet now was **made manifest** to His saints ...* (Colossians 1:24-16) ... *by revelation the secret is made known to me ... the secret of the Christ, which, in other generations, is not made known to the sons of humanity ...* (Ephesians 3:3-5)

Clearly Paul was commissioned to address a group not previously addressed by the Twelve (the Gentiles), with a different message that had been revealed to him not by man but by Christ Himself.

The address on the envelope (1:1)

From: Paul

To: Timothy

This is a personal letter to one man, Timothy. Thus it differs from Paul's letters to this point that were directed to the ecclesia in various places. We must take care to distinguish between general truths for the ecclesia, and those things intended for one man (Timothy) in his unique position.

False teachings (1:3)

Paul asks Timothy to remain in Ephesus to speak against false teachings. Some were teaching *differently* (from Paul's evangel). Some were heeding *myths*. Some were heeding *endless genealogies* (which seems to imply an emphasis on the flesh).

Some want to teach the law (1:5)

Timothy's charge is to encourage love out of a *clean heart, a good conscience and unfeigned faith*. But some were turning aside, wanting to teach the law.

Those wanting to teach the law do not understand. The law is ideal if it is used lawfully. But the law is not laid down for the just (1:9). We recall that the believer is justified (Romans 3:28, Romans 5:1, Galatians 2:16, Galatians 3:23-25), and is dead to the law and to sin (Romans 7:1-6, Galatians 2:19), so the use of the law among believers is not proper.

Instead, the law is *for the lawless and insubordinate, the irreverent and sinners, the malign and profane, thrashers of fathers and thrashers of mothers, homicides, paramours, sodomites, kidnapers, liars, perjurers ...* (1:9-10). And while some of these behaviors unfortunately exist among believers, Paul's point is that the purpose of the law was to address these issues among the unrighteous. Later came the implementation of God's grace in a more powerful way ... justifying the believer, freeing him from the law, and reckoning him as dead to sin and alive in Christ.

In short, there is no place for the law in the midst of this grace. Paul fought the commingling of law and grace in Galatians, and he continues to fight it here.

Paul's case is a "pattern" (1:12)

Paul was formerly a *calumniator*, a *persecutor* and an *outrager* with respect to Christ Jesus. But instead of experiencing wrath, he was shown mercy ... since he did these things in ignorance and unbelief. We see in Paul a *pattern* (1:16) for those who oppose Christ ... persecuting, ridiculing, failing to believe ... as Paul once did. Paul was shown mercy. *The grace of our Lord overwhelms* (1:14).

Christ came into the world to save sinners ... and Paul was the *foremost* of sinners (1:15). In showing Paul mercy, Christ was displaying patience, and a *pattern of those who are about to be believing on Him for life eonian* (1:16).

Did you catch this? Under the "old rules" Paul's opposition and persecution of Christ would have warranted rejection and wrath. This is often preached today ... rejection and wrath upon those that fail to believe. Yet Paul who deserved rejection and wrath was instead shown mercy, and his case became a pattern for others who would be led to believe. Will any escape this mercy? Remember Paul's words ... *the grace of our Lord overwhelms* (1:14).

"King of the eons"

In verses 16-17 the Greek *aion* is used in a variety of interesting forms.

Those believing will find *life eonian*. To translate this *eternal life* would be an incorrect manipulation of the Greek. The point here is that believers will experience life in the eons to come. This does not mean that life will cease once the eons have concluded. The believer will put on immortality (1 Corinthians 15:54) and will therefore continue to live at the conclusion of the eons. But the point of this present passage is that the believer will have life in the eons to come. Let us not alter the Greek by injecting our theological understandings. Let us instead seek to render the Greek accurately, lest we fail to correctly handle the Scriptures and hinder our ability to understand God's revelation to us.

In verse 17 Paul uses the phrase *King of the eons*. Some say this proves that *eons* (plural) must mean *forever*, since Christ is immortal. Again; let us not inject our theological understandings into the translation effort. I have five children ... Cris, Dusty, Chad, Kari and Scott. When I find myself in the midst of Chad's friends I may say, "I am the father of Chad." Does this mean I am not also the father of my other four children? No ... it is simply that in that context of Chad's friends I seek to identify myself as his father. So also in the context of the eons ... these finite periods of time in which man's history is recorded in the Scriptures ... Christ is the *King of the eons*.

Lastly, in verse 17 we see the phrase *for the eons of the eons*. If eon (singular) or eons (plural) means eternity, then what purpose would there be in saying *eons of the eons*? If we fail to notice the distinctions in the various forms of *aion* as used in the Greek, and if we simply inject our theological understandings regardless of the form ... saying *eternal* when that seems to fit

and *age* when eternal clearly does not fit the context ... then we will fail to grasp the rich meaning of God's revelation to us.

A close study of the Scriptures seems to tell us of five distinct eons or ages in the history of mankind. Eon (singular) is speaking of one of these periods of time. Eons (plural) speaks of more than one of these periods of time. *Eons of the eons* is like saying "two or more ages in particular, in the context of all five ages" (if five is the correct number ... that is simply my observation). The last two eons are those following the return of Christ to the earth. Paul is emphasizing these two glorious eons in his benediction ... *Now to the King of the eons, the incorruptible, invisible, only, and wise God, be honor and glory for the eons of the eons! Amen!*

Timothy's charge – the "ideal warfare" (1:18)

Timothy is charged to war *the ideal warfare, having faith and a good conscience*. Some have thrust away their faith ... Hymeneus and Alexander are two examples offered by Paul. And Paul gives these up to Satan *that they may be trained not to calumniate*.

Those who believe and who reject the faith are not, then, lost forever. Paul gives them up to Satan (the Deceiver) for constructive purposes ... so they are trained not to calumniate, or speak evil of the truth.

To live a quiet life (2:1)

Paul encourages prayer for government leaders who he sees as serving a valuable purpose. They allow us to be leading *a mild and quiet life in all devoutness and gravity, for this is ideal and welcome in the sight of our Saviour*. Take note of the behaviors that are ideal and welcome in the sight of our Saviour ... *a mild and quiet life ... and devoutness*.

Remember that the government in Paul's day did not adhere to Christian principles, and it probably condoned many behaviors and lifestyles that were unacceptable to Christians. Yet Paul did not advocate reform, criticism or overthrow of that government. Instead he recognized that despite its flaws it served a purpose ... to maintain peaceful conditions so that believers could live a quiet life.

God's will ... the salvation of all mankind (2:4)

Consider closely these verses, for they are clearly contrary to the common orthodox belief in eternal torment.

... God, Who wills that all mankind be saved and come into a realization of the truth. (v. 4)

For there is one God, and one Mediator of God and mankind, a Man, Christ Jesus, (v. 5)

Who is giving Himself a correspondent Ransom for all (the testimony in its own eras), (v. 6)

For which I was appointed a herald and an apostle ... (v. 7)

So it is God's will that all mankind be saved. Remember also that God is operating all things in accord with His will (Ephesians 1:11). That being the case, what can prevent the salvation of all from happening? Some say it is man's stubborn, free will that stands in the way; but are we saying that the Creator is unable to *lead* every last one of mankind into a realization of the truth, if that is His will? Remember that Paul refers to the Lord's grace as *overwhelming*, and Paul himself was most certainly led in a very overwhelming way to the truth on the road to Damascus.

Some say that if all are saved then Christ's death upon the Cross becomes unnecessary. Far from that ... it is not only necessary, but far more effectual than orthodoxy would claim. For Christ gave Himself as *a correspondent Ransom for all* (not just for some). Just as death came to all mankind through Adam, so life comes to all mankind through Christ, the correspondent, one-for-one Ransom for *all*. *Correspondent ransom* differs from the simple notion of ransom. The thought expressed in the Greek is the idea of equivalence. It is a one-for-one (i.e. "correspondent") ransom of all mankind.

What is meant by *the testimony in its own eras* (1:6)? I believe this means that the realization of the truth by all mankind is a progressive thing. Some of us have been gifted with faith in this present age, but others do not yet see. But they will see in a future era. As Christ's Ambassadors we are to proclaim the correct evangel ... pleading with mankind to be reconciled to God (2 Corinthians 5:18-21). But many within Christianity today spend all of their time preaching Old Testament wrath, warnings of eternal torment, observance of the law, and multitudes of teachings that are not intended for this present era. We mix the law and grace and distort the truth. Thousands of different churches teach thousands of different and contrary things, breeding confusion.

Satan, the Deceiver, has done a good job of hiding the truth that is so clear in the Scriptures. Orthodoxy is often his instrument for hiding the truth and breeding confusion. Rejoice ... for it is God's will that all mankind be saved and come to a realization of the truth, and *nothing* can prevent that from happening.

Men to pray ... women in subjection (2:8)

Men are instructed to pray in every place. Women are to dress modestly, as would be appropriate for expressing reverence for God. Women are to learn in quietness, and in subjection, and are not to be teaching or domineering over a man ... remembering that Adam was created first and thereafter Eve, who then was deluded.

Is all of this a rule to be observed in all eras and in all situations, or is it pertinent to the specific situation Paul was then dealing with in the ecclesia? Before we quickly cast this off as “situational,” let us not simply do so out of convenience so we can feel good about condoning women teachers and preachers in our current day. If we are quick to do so, we can simply cast off any Scriptures we do not like as situational.

One thing that seems to imply these passages are situational is the fact that there were woman teachers within the ecclesia that were condoned by Paul. Priscilla (wife of Aquilla) is an example.

Could it be that women in the ecclesia in Paul's day had gotten out of hand, and were creating discord and falsehoods that needed to be addressed? I think this was the case, but there is also a hierarchy designated by God that must be considered; for the sake of peace and unity within the ecclesia. Note Paul's reasoning which goes beyond the current situation he faced. *For Adam was first molded, thereafter Eve, and Adam was not seduced, yet the woman, being deluded, has come to be in the transgression.*

One last point in this section before we move on. What is meant by the words, *Yet she [woman] shall be saved through the child bearing ... (2:15)*? Despite the fact that the woman was deceived and introduced the transgression upon mankind, woman will also give birth to the Man who will bring salvation from sin. The definite article “the” that precedes “child bearing” seems to be speaking of a single, specific child bearing; not child bearing in general.

Qualifications for supervisors (3:1)

The organized church in our present day has built an intricate system of bureaucracy which seems quite different from the ecclesia's simplicity as found in the Scriptures. While there is certainly some structure to the ecclesia, leadership seems to be far less formal than the present day world of bishops, archbishops and popes. And even within most Protestant denominations or independent churches, great power is often vested in the clergy. But in Paul's day we see a loosely bound ecclesia that simply recognized elders (those more mature in the faith), supervisors (from the Greek episkopos, and often translated bishop in English translations today), and servants (from the Greek diakonos, and often translated deacon).

Those in Paul's day that did assume a leadership role had certain qualifications.

Supervisors

- ✓ Irreprehensible
- ✓ The husband of one wife
- ✓ Sober
- ✓ Sane
- ✓ Decorous (of good behavior)
- ✓ Hospitable

- ✓ Apt to teach
- ✓ No toper (given to wine)
- ✓ Not quarrelsome, but lenient
- ✓ Pacific
- ✓ Not fond of money
- ✓ Controlling his own household ideally
- ✓ Having his children in subjection with all gravity
- ✓ No novice (which would make the person more prone to conceit)
- ✓ Having an ideal testimony

Servants

- ✓ Grave
- ✓ Not double-tongued
- ✓ Not addicted to much wine
- ✓ Not avaricious (greedy)
- ✓ Having faith with a clear conscience
- ✓ Tested
- ✓ Their wives also to be grave, not adversaries, sober, faithful
- ✓ Husbands of one wife
- ✓ Controlling children and their own households ideally

Behavior in the ecclesia (3:14)

After outlining these qualifications for those supervising and serving within the ecclesia, Paul expresses that he wants to stress *how one must behave in God's house, which is the ecclesia of the living God, the pillar and base of the truth*. [Note that "God's house" is not a building as some understand it to be. God's house is the ecclesia ... the people comprising the body of Christ.]

So while the qualifications were stated for supervisors and servants, they are an expression of proper behavior within the entire ecclesia.

Let us observe the basis for this behavior. *Avowedly great is the secret of devoutness, which was manifested in flesh, justified in spirit, seen by messengers, heralded among the nations, believed in the world, taken up in glory* (3:16). The secret of devoutness is Christ! Let Him be our example.

In future eras some will fall away (4:1)

In subsequent eras some will be withdrawing from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and the teachings of demons, in the hypocrisy of false expressions, their own conscience having been cauterized; forbidding to marry, abstaining from foods ...

Paul warns of a future day when there would be a falling away from the faith. He does not seem to speak of a full turning away from God, but instead a deception that grows to the point where there are *false expressions* (incorrect understandings) and legal requirements added to faith (forbidding marriage, rejection of certain foods). And there are *profane and old womanish myths* in

the midst of the ecclesia (4:7) ... perhaps one of the reasons Paul forbid women to speak or lead in that context.

How is Timothy to address all of this? *By suggesting these things to the brethren, you should be an ideal servant of Christ Jesus, fostering with the words of faith and of the ideal teaching which you have fully followed (4:6).* In short, Timothy is to speak of the true faith, with true teachings, in the midst of this falling away. No promise is made for success in reversing the apostasy, but in *suggesting these things to the brethren* Timothy will be acting as an ideal servant of Christ Jesus.

Think about this for a moment. We tend to think that Paul planted churches and they grew in number through the years to become the churches of today. But here Paul talks of a setback ... a falling away among believers. We do not hear of this apostasy being reversed in Paul's day, so when exactly do we think this happened in the history of the church? When, following the death of the apostles, did believers finally make doctrinal correction? I would suggest that the majority of the church is still in apostasy today, having set aside Paul's teachings while continuing to add law to grace, just as in Paul's day. The truth was never found in the majority ... not in the days of the prophets, in Jesus' day, in the days of the apostles, or even today. Seek truth from the Scriptures, not in the church fathers, the creeds, orthodoxy, or the organized churches of today ... all of which are steeped in the traditions of men.

Exercising in devoutness (4:8)

Again we see Paul stressing the need for devoutness ... and devoutness requires exercise, just as we might exercise the body.

The Saviour of all mankind (4:10)

... God, Who is the Saviour of all mankind, especially of believers.

Many Bible teachers claim that this means God is the saviour of all mankind, but this only is effectual for those who believe in this lifetime. But the word here is *especially*, not exclusively. God is the Saviour of all mankind, and in a special way this affects believers. We who believe can realize and enjoy the expectation we have for things to come once this life has ended, while those who do not believe do not enjoy that assurance. We who believe know that we will live in the eons to come, after the resurrection and snatching away of believers into heaven as promised in 1 Thessalonians 4:13 and following. Some will not experience life in the eons to come. But nothing will prevent God from ultimately becoming the Saviour of all mankind at the end of the eons, as expressed in 1 Corinthians 15:20-28. Remember, it is God's will that all mankind be saved and come to a realization of the truth (2:4). Nothing can prevent that from happening.

While the Saviour of all mankind is truth, Paul was experiencing reproach for speaking the truth (4:9). Remember that many among Israel objected to Paul taking his evangel to the Gentiles, and to proclaim that God is the Saviour of

all mankind would have been extremely objectionable to the believers among Israel in his day.

But this truth is also objectionable to many Christians in our present day. Paul says to Timothy, *These things be charging and teaching* (4:11). But if Timothy were alive today, and if he were to teach these things in most traditional churches, he would be reproached as Paul was. There is among believers today very limited reception of the truth that God is the Saviour of all mankind ... where most prefer the distorted message of eternal torment which is in actuality an affront to and a blasphemy of God.

Timothy is to be an example (4:12)

Paul calls upon Timothy to be a model for the believers,

- ✓ In word
- ✓ In behavior
- ✓ In love
- ✓ In faith
- ✓ In purity

Paul instructs Timothy to read, to entreat and to teach. And his progress should be apparent to all.

“You will save yourself” (4:16)

It seems odd to hear Paul say, *Be persisting in them [teachings], for in doing this you will save yourself as well as those hearing you*. Can one save himself? We have a tendency from our church upbringing to think that *saved* always means the same thing. But the meaning of *saved* can vary from one instance to the next, depending on the context. In some Old Testament examples, *saved* might simply mean saved from being killed by enemy soldiers. In this present context Timothy would be saving himself, as well as those hearing him, *from withdrawing from the faith ...* since that is the context of Paul's letter.

Treat those in the ecclesia as family (5:1)

If entreating within the ecclesia becomes necessary, the other person should be entreated as a father, brother, mother or sister.

Widows (5:3)

Pauls' extensive comments demonstrate that the care of widows was a problem in the ecclesia of his day. Widows were to be honored ... those *who are really widows*.

Those widows that had children should look to their families for support. *If anyone is not providing for his own, and especially his family, he has disowned the faith, and is worse than an unbeliever* (5:8).

No widow was to be *listed* if less than sixty years old ... and then only if they had been the wife of one man and attested by ideal acts. "Listing" seems to imply a formal system to determine which were truly widows and deserving of support from the ecclesia. And if supported by the ecclesia they were to serve ... nourishing children, being hospitable, washing feet and relieving the afflicted.

Younger widows (those under sixty) were to be refused (presumably because they had the ability to care for themselves and should not be burdensome to the ecclesia). Younger widows were expected to marry, bear children and manage their own households.

Respect for elders (5:17)

Let elders who have presided ideally be counted worthy of double honor, especially those who are toiling in word and teaching ... Worthy is the worker of his wages. But those who are sinning are to be exposed in the sight of all, that the rest may have fear.

Instructions to Timothy (5:21)

Do nothing from bias. On no one place hands too quickly. (In other words, don't be hasty in recognizing leaders within the ecclesia.) ... *Keep yourself pure. No longer drink water only, but be using a sip of wine for your stomach and your frequent infirmities.* (What happened to prayers for healing? It seems that God's administration has changed, and grace is now sufficient.)

Slaves (6:1)

Slave owners are to honor their slaves, and slaves having believing owners should not despise them but should slave for them. In others words, there is to be mutual respect. Why? *Lest the name of God and the teaching may be blasphemed.* All is done toward the glorifying of God.

False teachings (6:3)

If anyone is teaching differently and is not approaching with sound words, even those of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the teaching in accord with devoutness, he is conceited, versed in nothing, but morbid about questionings and controversies, out of which is coming envy, strife, calumnies, wicked suspicions, altercations of men of a decadent mind and deprived of the truth Here is a caution for those who are teaching. Are we seeing controversies? Envy? Strife? Let us check ourselves to be sure our teachings are correct.

And note that it is possible to use even the words of our Lord incorrectly. This would seem to imply that the words of Jesus from His earthly ministry may not always apply in all situations in all eras. I believe this is what is meant by *correctly cut* or *rightly divide* the Word of God (2 Timothy 2:15). Always consider the context and what group of people are being addressed by the words of Scripture. We cannot assume, for example, that which was spoken to Israel in a particular era applies to believers in our present era.

Devoutness & contentment (6:6)

Now devoutness with contentment is great capital; for nothing do we carry into the world, and it is evident that neither can we carry anything out. Now having sustenance and shelter, with these we shall be sufficed. Now those intending to be rich are falling into a trial and a trap and the many foolish and harmful desires which are swamping men in extermination and destruction. For the root of all evils is the fondness for money, which some, craving, were led astray from the faith and try themselves on all sides with much pain.

How much more we often crave beyond *sustenance and shelter*. But the goal Paul sets here is contentment. And the danger of having a fondness for money is that it can lead us away from the faith.

Note how often Paul uses the word *devoutness* in this epistle. Devoutness seems to carry the meaning “well-reverence,” or the revering of right things. In Paul’s context the word seems to denote the revering of God and the things of God, as contrasted with the revering of worldly pursuits such as money.

Correct behavior for believers (6:11)

While fleeing from the love of money, Paul notes behaviors that are to be pursued. *Righteousness, devoutness, faith, love ... with endurance, suffering and meekness.*

Avow the ideal avowal in the sight of many witnesses. (In the subsequent verse we see our example ... Jesus Christ as He testified the *ideal avowal* before Pontius Pilate.)

God is vivifying all (6:13)

God, Who is vivifying all ... (To vivify is to make alive.) ... keep this precept unspotted, irreprehensible, unto the advent of our Lord, Christ Jesus, which, to its own eras, the happy and only Potentate will be showing ... All are not vivified at the same time, nor is the knowledge of this precept (vivification of all) made known to all at the same time; but in its own eras.

He alone has immortality (6:16)

The common belief that the human soul is immortal comes from Greek philosophy. Here we see the Scriptures clearly teaching that only Christ has immortality. It will only be at the resurrection that we *put on immortality* (1 Corinthians 15:54). When we die we will cease to have any form of life and will lie in the grave totally dependent upon God to resurrect us, as Christ Himself laid in the grave totally dependent upon God to do so. Yet we die with the assurance that God promises to do just that ... to resurrect us at some future point when we will put on immortality, thereby rid of the enemy (death) forever.

Do not rely upon riches ... be rich in ideal acts (6:17)

Those who are rich in the current eon be charging not to be haughty, nor yet to rely on the dubiousness of riches, but on God ...

... be doing good acts ... be rich in ideal acts ... be liberal contributors, treasuring up for themselves an ideal foundation for that which is impending. The focus for the believer should not be in the present eon, but in that which is impending. That is where the real life exists.

Guard truth (6:20)

O Timothy, that which is committed to you, guard, turning aside from the profane prattling and antipathies of falsely named knowledge, which some are professing. As to the faith, they swerve.

Obviously some professed to teach knowledge, when really it was profane (unimportant or useless) prattling. Timothy's charge was to guard truth against such things.

EPILOGUE.

For this is ideal and welcome in the sight of our Saviour (2:3). What are some behaviors we find noted in 1 Timothy that are ideal and welcome in our Lord's sight?

- ✓ Love, out of a clean heart, a good conscience and unfeigned faith (1:5, 6:11)
- ✓ Faith and a good conscience (1:18-19, 6:11)
- ✓ To lead a quiet life (2:2)
- ✓ Devoutness (2:2, 3:16, 4:8, 6:5-6, 6:11)
- ✓ Gravity (2:2)
- ✓ Irreprehensible (3:2)
- ✓ Husband of one wife (3:2)
- ✓ Sober (3:3)
- ✓ Sane (3:3)
- ✓ Decorous (3:3)
- ✓ Hospitable (3:3)
- ✓ No toper (3:3)
- ✓ Not quarrelsome (3:3)
- ✓ Pacific (3:3)
- ✓ Not fond of money (3:3)
- ✓ Controlling one's own household ideally (3:4)
- ✓ Having an ideal testimony (3:7)
- ✓ Grave (3:8)
- ✓ Not double-tongued (3:8)
- ✓ Not addicted to much wine (3:9)
- ✓ Not avaricious (3:9)
- ✓ Contentment (6:6)
- ✓ Pursue righteousness (6:11)
- ✓ Meekness (6:11)
- ✓ Be rich in ideal acts (6:18)
- ✓ Be liberal contributors/givers (6:18)

Appendix

Key Words & Phrases

Believer

A “believer” is one who believes God. Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness. We are not provided with an exhaustive list of exactly what Abraham believed, and some of his decisions seemed to display a degree of doubt or misunderstanding as to what God had in mind (e.g. fathering a son through Hagar, instead of waiting on God to deliver Isaac through Sarah). But whatever the specifics, we simply read that Abraham believed God and it was reckoned as righteousness.

Churches today like to create lists of what one must believe to be a Christian. These lists vary from one church to another, so that should tell us something. Some say we must believe in the concept of the Trinity. Others say we must believe that hell is eternal. Some say we must be water baptized. Some even specify the precise mode of water baptism.

The problem is that we are often driven by the fear of what God will do to us if we don't believe all of the right things. One slip, and we think that makes us a non-believer and destined for eternal torment. We are thinking in terms of what we must believe, at a minimum, to be “saved.” We place no real trust in God and His grace. We think we must **do** something to be saved, even if this **doing** is simply mustering-up the right formula of belief.

But there is not really a formula or list of what one must believe. The fact is that through God's Word, and through the person of His Son, God has spoken. We are asked to believe; period. We don't fully understand all details, and some understand more details than others, but we are not asked to fully understand all details of God's revelation; only to believe.

Here's something else to think about. If believing was something we could muster-up on our own, we could boast about that, couldn't we? I could say I am smarter than those who don't believe, since I have the intelligence to believe while they do not. But aren't we told that salvation is totally a gift from God, lest any should boast? (Ephesians 2:9)

I don't think *anyone* could be a believer, unless God enables that person to believe. Without God's help, the entire world would be non-believers destined for God's judgment. But rather than abandon this hopeless lot called humanity, God chooses **SOME** and enables them to believe, not because He loves them more but because He has a purpose for them that will ultimately lead to **ALL** being reconciled to God. That's God's method; to choose **SOME** to act as His instruments so that **ALL** will ultimately be reconciled to Him. After all it is God's will that all mankind be saved (1 Timothy 2:4), and God is operating all in accord with the counsel of His will (Ephesians 1:11).

If you think that every person has the ability, on his own, to become a believer by having enough intelligence to believe, consider the following:

- The apprehensions of the unbelievers are blinded by the god of this eon (Satan).^{2 Cor 4:3}
- To the Philippians belief on Christ was “graciously granted.”^{Philippians 1:29}
- Not one is just; not one is understanding; and not one is seeking out God.^{Romans 3:10-11}

With all of this being true, is it even possible for a single person to believe on their own? Or, like Lydia (Acts 16:14), are we dependent upon God to open up our heart to believe?

A “non-believer” is one who does not believe. Doubting Thomas is a good example. Thomas knew what Jesus had said about His approaching resurrection, just like the other apostles did. Upon hearing the testimony of those returning from the empty tomb, the others believed. But not Thomas. He would not believe until he could see for himself, and touch Jesus. But did Jesus cast him away for his failure to believe? No; He allowed Thomas to see and touch Him.

Some will believe in this current lifetime, by faith. Others will not believe until they can see for themselves. But one way or the other, there will come a day when every knee will bow before the Lord, and when all are reconciled to God the Father.

Death

The Greek philosophers have us convinced that our souls are immortal. But we are told that only Christ is immortal (1 Timothy 6:16). When we die our body returns to the soil, and our spirit returns to God Who gave it (Ecclesiastes 12:7). But our soul, which was generated when God animated the soil with His spirit, goes to an *unseen place*. The word in Greek is *hades*, and in the Hebrew it is *sheol*.

Convinced that we are immortal and that our soul must be accounted for, most Bible translators use *hell* for *hades* if the passage is referring to one who is wicked, or *grave* if the passage is referring to one who is righteous. But the fact is that every person, righteous and wicked alike, go to *hades*; the unseen place. Here we have no consciousness (see Ecclesiastes 9:5 and Psalm 6:5). This is why those who are dead are sometimes referred to as asleep, where we

also have no consciousness. We are totally dependent upon God to resurrect us, as He has promised to do. At the time we are resurrected, we will *put on immortality* (1 Corinthians 15:53-54).

Some will object, pointing to passages such as Luke 23:43 when Jesus tells the thief on the cross beside Him, *I say to you, today you will be with Me in paradise*. But all such passages are either mistranslated or misinterpreted, because the translator believes we are immortal and renders the translation with that bias. As for Luke 23:43, since there is no punctuation in the original Greek the placement of the comma in this sentence is an interpretation. Based on what we know from elsewhere in the Scriptures about death, the passage should have been translated: *I say to you today, you will be with Me in paradise*.

Others will object, saying: "Are you saying my loved one is not in heaven right now?" Personally I am comforted just as much knowing that my loved ones are asleep, and that the next conscious moment they will experience will be with the Lord. And furthermore, what becomes of us is not determined by our own wishes or desires, but by God Who created us and Who is in full control of our destinies.

Eon / Eonian

This is one of the most misunderstood words in the Bible. The Greek word *aión* and its Hebrew equivalent *olam* clearly do not mean endless or eternal, but refer to fixed periods of time with a beginning and an end. Thus the many variations we see in the Scriptures:

- ✓ Eon (singular)
- ✓ Eons (plural)
- ✓ Before the eons
- ✓ End of the eon (singular)
- ✓ End of the eons (plural)
- ✓ Eon of the eons
- ✓ Eons of the eons
- ✓ The oncoming eons
- ✓ The impending eon
- ✓ This eon
- ✓ The current eon

Most Bible translations treat this word very inconsistently, sometimes using *eternal* and other times *age* when eternal will not fit. But such inconsistent handling of the word causes much of what God has revealed to us to be lost or

confused. The adjective form *eonian* refers to something that takes place during one eon, or during several eons.

Some believe that phrases acclaiming Christ as *King of the eons* (1 Timothy 1:17) prove that eons must mean eternal, since Christ is immortal. I have five children ... Cris, Dusty, Chad, Kari and Scott. When I find myself in the midst of Chad's friends, I may say, "I am the father of Chad." Does this mean I am not also the father of my other four children? No; but when in the context of Chad's friends I may identify myself as Chad's father. Likewise, within the context of the eons ... these finite periods of time in which man's history is recorded in the Scriptures ... Christ who is immortal may be described as the *King of the eons*.

Well known and respected preacher and author G. Campbell Morgan expressed it best, noting there is no word in the Greek that translates to our English word *eternal* and which means endless. When God is described as an *Eonian God* this does not mean He is not, in fact, eternal. It is just that the Bible talks about things as they exist or occur in this time period known as the eons. God is eonian, but He will also continue to exist after the eons are concluded.

Hell

When we see this word in an English translation, it comes from one of three Greek words; *Hades*, *Gehenna* or *Tartarus*. Hades simply means *unseen*. It is the temporary destination for everyone when they die, righteous and wicked alike. The flesh returns to the soil, the spirit returns to God, and the soul goes to *the unseen place* (hades). The Hebrew *sheol* in the Old Testament is the equivalent to *hades* in the Greek. Bible translators have tainted the pure Word of God with their opinions and theologies. When they find *hades* or *sheol* with reference to one who is wicked, they translate it "hell." But when they find the same word with reference to one who is righteous, they translate it "grave" or "death." If we look at *hades* and *sheol* in every instance where they occur, we will see they simply refer to the unseen place where the soul goes immediately upon death.

Gehenna refers to a physical location outside of Jerusalem; the Valley of Hinnom. Jesus makes reference to this place when He speaks of the disgraceful burial place for certain criminals executed in the age to come. But it is not a place where souls are cast "forever and ever" to be tormented.

Tartarus is a place where wicked spirits (demons) are imprisoned. No person is ever said to be cast into Tartarus.

Salvation / Saved

This is an interesting word. If you were raised in the church, you'll immediately think you know what "saved" means ... that you are saved from eternal torment.

The word saved is used many times in the Bible. It sometimes means one's life is saved from being killed by an enemy. It sometimes means saved from disease (equivalent to being healed). Most often in the New Testament it means saved from the indignation or tribulation that we read about in Revelation.

Whenever we encounter the word *saved* we should seek from the context to understand *saved from what?* The believer in this present age is saved from God's indignation that will come upon the earth following "the rapture" (1 Thessalonians 4:13ff). But it is important to remember that ultimately all will be saved from death, indignation, tribulation, etc. For it is God's will that *all* mankind be saved (1 Timothy 2:4), and God is operating *all* in accord with the counsel of His will (Ephesians 1:11).

A Word about Bible Translations

Today there are many different Bible translations to choose from. Many of the newer ones have been written for financial gain (to sell Bibles). And those written with the intent to provide an easy-to-read translation incorporate the translators' opinions and theologies into the translation, making them *interpretations* instead of pure translations. Many different Hebrew or Greek words are often translated using a single English word, making it impossible to recognize distinctions without using laborious study helps. The translators have done this because they have determined there is no practical difference between the various Hebrew and Greek words; but what if they are wrong? Similarly, a single word in the Hebrew or Greek is often translated using different English words with drastically different meanings. Here the translators assume to know that God was using a single word to refer to very different ideas. Could the translators be wrong in their assumptions?

I appreciate the Concordant Version, not because I trust the translators more than other translators, but because of the methodology used. Great care was taken to allow the reader to distinguish between different Greek or Hebrew words. Whenever possible, an English word is only used for a single Greek or Hebrew word, and each Hebrew or Greek word is translated using the same consistent English word or idea. There is a keyword concordance in the back

of the New Testament that allows the reader to look at all other instances where the same Greek word was used, thereby checking the translation. This methodology may make the translation more difficult to read, but it also preserves the distinctions made in God's Word in the original languages, and it prevents the bias of the translator from creeping into the translation as much as is humanly possible.

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