

Abounding Grace Christian Church

A Study of Paul's First Letter to Timothy – Part 8

I. Exposition of Chapter Three (Continued).

A. Verse 2 (Continued) – “A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, temperate, sober-minded, of good behavior, hospitable, able to teach;”

1. “...temperate...” – “‘to be restrained,’ pertaining to behaving in a sober, restrained manner”¹
2. “...sober-minded...” – “‘to behave in a sensible manner,’”²
3. “...good behavior...” – “‘pertaining to being modest in the sense of moderate and well ordered’”³
4. “...hospitable...” – “‘to showing hospitality to strangers’”⁴ Dr. Craig Keener adds:

“Hospitality’ included taking in trustworthy travelers as guests. Welcoming strangers and visitors was a universal virtue, but because inns in antiquity usually functioned also as brothels, Jewish people in the Diaspora were especially willing to take in fellow Jewish travelers, as long as the travelers bore letters of recommendation certifying their trustworthiness. Ideally, eating together at table was supposed to form a permanent bond of friendship.”⁵

5. “...able to teach...” – “‘apt and skillful in teaching’”⁶ - Concerning this qualification, Warren Wiersbe writes:

“Teaching the Word of God is one of an elder’s main ministries. In fact, many scholars believe that ‘pastors and teachers’ in Ephesians 4:11 refer to one person but to two functions. A pastor is automatically a teacher (2 Tim. 2:2, 24). Phillips Brooks, famous American bishop of the 1800s, said, ‘Apt to teach—it is not something to which one comes by accident or by any sudden burst of fiery zeal.’ A pastor must be a careful student of the Word of God, and of all that assists him in knowing and teaching that Word. The pastor who is lazy in his study is a disgrace in the pulpit.”⁷

B. Verse 3 – “...not given to wine, not violent, not greedy for money, but gentle, not quarrelsome, not covetous;”

1. “...not given to wine...” – “‘a person who habitually drinks too much and thus becomes a drunkard’”⁸

Dr. Thomas Constable adds the following:

“Not overindulging in wine (Gr. *me paroinon*, v. 3) means not a brawler, playboy, slave of drink, or drunkard (cf. Titus 1:7; 1 Cor. 11:21). Paul evidently used wine to represent any enslaving substance. We are probably correct in extending its meaning to include any destructive addiction (drugs, gambling, pornography, etc.).”⁹

2. “...not violent...” – “‘a person who is pugnacious and demanding—‘bully, violent person’”¹⁰. William Mounce adds the phrase; “one apt to strike.”¹¹ Constable adds:

“Not a bully (Gr. *me plekten*, v. 3; Titus 1:7; lit. a giver of blows) describes a person who resorts to physical or verbal violence in order to vent his anger and/or to settle disputes.”¹²

3. “...not greedy for money...” – “‘pertaining to being shamefully greedy for material gain or profit’”¹³

There are many Christian leaders today, who seem to have fallen into this. They emphasize money to an extreme and, though we can’t be sure what’s in their heart, they give the impression of greed by living a lavish lifestyle (cf. 1 Timothy 6:4; Titus 1:11). In his book entitled; “*The Midas Touch*”, Kenneth E. Hagin attempted to bring balance and correction to those who were taking the prosperity message to an extreme. In his introduction he writes:

“During my more than sixty-five years of ministry, I have often dealt with the issue of prosperity for believers, insistently emphasizing a balanced, scriptural approach. I have observed many teachings and practices that have both helped and hindered the Body of Christ. I have seen some faithful men of God stay the course and move accurately with the truth of the Word and the Spirit, resulting in great blessing for a host of believers. Unfortunately, I have also seen many others become sidetracked by extremism, ultimately shipwrecking their ministries and hurting and disillusioning many people in the process.”¹⁴

4. “...but gentle...” – “‘suitable; fair, reasonable; gentle, mild, patient’”¹⁵ Concerning this word, *The New American Commentary* asserts:

¹ Johannes P. Louw and Eugene Albert Nida, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament: Based on Semantic Domains* (New York: United Bible Societies, 1996), 751.

² *Ibid.*, 752.

³ *Ibid.*, 747.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 454.

⁵ Craig S. Keener, *The IVP Bible Background Commentary: New Testament*. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1993), 612-613.

⁶ Joseph Henry Thayer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament: Being Grimm's Wilke's Clavis Novi Testamenti* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House., 1977)

⁷ Warren W. Wiersbe, *The Bible Exposition Commentary*, vol. 2 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1996), 220.

⁸ Louw and Nida, 772.

⁹ Thomas L. Constable, *Notes on 1 Timothy* (<http://www.soniclight.com>: Sonic Light Publication, 2023), 72.

¹⁰ Louw and Nida, 756.

¹¹ *Mounce Concise Greek-English Dictionary*, William D. Mounce and Rick D. Bennett, Jr. (e-sword version 1993).

¹² Constable, 73.

¹³ Louw and Nida, 291.

¹⁴ Kenneth E. Hagin, *The Midas Touch* (Tulsa, OK: Faith Library Publications, 2000), xiii.

¹⁵ *Mounce Concise Greek-English Dictionary*, William D. Mounce and Rick D. Bennett, Jr. (e-sword version 1993).

“In contrast to practicing violence, the Christian leader is to be ‘gentle’ or forbearing in his relationships to troublemakers. The ‘gentle’ man uses elasticity in supervision and is flexible rather than rigid. Synonyms for ‘gentle’ include yielding, kind, forbearing, and considerate.”¹⁶

5. **“...not quarrelsome...” – “pertaining to a lack of conflict and contention”¹⁷**

6. **“...not covetous...” – “pertaining to not being desirous or greedy for money—‘not loving wealth, one who does not love money’¹⁸ William Mounce adds the meaning of “generous.”¹⁹**

C. **Verses 4-5 – “...one who rules his own house well, having his children in submission with all reverence (for if a man does not know how to rule his own house, how will he take care of the church of God?);” – The way a man manages his family is an indication as to how well he will be able to take care of the family of God (the church).**

1. **“...one who rules his own house well...” – The word “rule” means; “to so influence others as to cause them to follow a recommended course of action—‘to guide, to direct, to lead’²⁰ – From this we see that a man is not to rule in the sense of controlling, or as a dictator, but as a gentle guide who influences his family toward the things of God. The primary way this is done is through leading by example. Parents need to be consistent in their lifestyle and words.**

2. **“...having his children in submission with all reverence...” – Though no family is perfect, this is stating that the bishop’s (elder’s; pastor’s) children should not be of the rebellious sort. His children should have, and show “reverence” (respect) for their parents for, if not, it indicates that perhaps they’re witnessing hypocrisy within the home. Warren Wiersbe adds the following thoughts:**

“If a man’s own children cannot obey and respect him, then his church is not likely to respect and obey his leadership. For Christians, the church and the home are one. We should oversee both of them with love, truth, and discipline. The pastor cannot be one thing at home and something else in church. If he is, his children will detect it, and there will be problems.”²¹

D. **Verse 6 – “...not a novice, lest being puffed up with pride he fall into the same condemnation as the devil.”**

1. The word “novice” means; “newly planted” or “new convert.” Dr. Thomas Constable writes:

“Not a new convert (Gr. neophutos, v. 6) also requires a judgment call. How new? There should be evidence that he can function as an elder (teaching, leading, defending the faith, etc.) without becoming conceited. Inherent in the idea of conceit is the notion of being blinded or beclouded. Some interpreters believe that Paul meant that conceit is what put Satan where he is: under God’s judgment. So the church should guard new converts from it by keeping them back from premature appointment as elders.”²²

2. **“...lest being puffed up with pride he fall into the same condemnation as the devil.” – The words, “...puffed up with pride...” are one word in the Greek and mean; “to be so arrogant as to be practically demented—‘to be insanely arrogant, to be extremely proud, to be very arrogant’²³**

3. The word “condemnation” means; “the sentence of a judge the punishment with which one is sentenced.”²⁴

4. **“...the devil...” – “literally ‘slanderer’); the principal supernatural evil being.”²⁵ (Cf. Isaiah 14:12-15; Ezekiel 28:11-19).**

“He must not be a new convert, or he may [develop a beclouded and stupid state of mind] as the result of pride [be blinded by conceit, and] fall into the condemnation that the devil [once] did.” – 1 Timothy 3:6 – Amplified Bible

E. **Verse 7 – “Moreover he must have a good testimony among those who are outside, lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.” – This is stating that church leadership should have a good reputation with those outside the church. If they are badly spoken of, it shouldn’t be based on truth.**

1. **“...reproach” - to speak disparagingly of a person in a manner which is not justified²⁶**

2. **“...the snare of the devil.” – Concerning this, Duane Litfin writes:**

“Paul’s thought here seems to be that church leaders, as representatives of the congregation, are constantly susceptible to the snares of the devil (cf. 2 Tim. 2:26). Satan likes nothing better than to disgrace God’s work and God’s people by trapping church leaders in sin before a watching world. It is important therefore that overseers achieve and maintain a good reputation before unbelievers.”²⁷

¹⁶ *The New American Commentary*, 1, 2 Timothy, Titus, Vol. 34, Thomas D. Lea & Hayne P. Griffin Jr. (Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing, 1992)

¹⁷ Louw and Nida, 495.

¹⁸ Ibid., 300.

¹⁹ *Mounce Concise Greek-English Dictionary*, William D. Mounce and Rick D. Bennett, Jr. (e-sword version 1993).

²⁰ Louw and Nida, 464.

²¹ Warren W. Wiersbe, *The Bible Exposition Commentary*, vol. 2 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1996), 221.

²² Thomas L. Constable, *Notes on 1 Timothy* (<http://www.soniclight.com>: Sonic Light Publication, 2023), 74-75.

²³ Louw and Nida, 764.

²⁴ Joseph Henry Thayer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament: Being Grimm’s Wilke’s Clavis Novi Testamenti* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House., 1977)

²⁵ Louw and Nida, 144.

²⁶ Ibid., 432.

²⁷ A. Duane Litfin, “1 Timothy,” in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, ed. J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck, vol. 2 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1985), 737.