

# **STUDIES IN I TIMOTHY**

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### **1. NO OTHER DOCTRINE-INTRO TO I TIM. I Tim. 1:1**

**The Apostle Paul has always been one of the most loved and most hated of men. Thousands of books have been written about him, and many of them seek to blacken his name and cause men to despise him. For many he is too stern and narrow minded. He tries to pressure people into his own mold. He tells Timothy to charge others not to teach any different doctrine. Paul is opposed to freedom in teaching Christian truth. He felt that the truth has been revealed by God, and that it was comprehensive and conclusive. If anyone sought to change it or add to it, he was to be accursed.**

**Paul is really a thorn in the flesh of those theologians who delight in speculation. Paul had direct revelation from Christ, and**

**he was the theologian of the Christian church. Any deviation from his teaching is a deviation from the truth, and so he had to be stern about it. We must still test our doctrine today by its harmony with and conformity to the theology of Paul. Anything we hold as a doctrine, which is contradictory to Paul becomes a possible heresy. It was Timothy's task to keep the church of Ephesus on the right track.**

**It is just a good principle of biblical interpretation to keep in mind that nothing ought to be accepted as Christian doctrine if it contradicts what is taught by Paul. This principle will protect you from many man devised interpretations. Paul in telling Timothy to charge certain persons not to teach any other doctrine establishes clearly that all basic Christian doctrine was fully known by then, even if it was not fully developed in all of its implications. We want to consider the character of Paul himself, for he had the authority to forbid the teaching of anything that he had not taught.**

**Modern critics do not like Paul because of his big words and long involved sentences. His opinions about women and marriage have also gotten him into trouble with many. Paul was not infallible but men have gone so far in attempts to make him unlikable that they have even attacked his personal appearance. Renan called him an "Ugly little Jew," and the idea became so popular that became an accepted fact that Paul was little of stature, homely, weak, and with a bald head and bow legs. I had this impression myself until I read a book called The Character Of Paul by Charles Jefferson.**

**Jefferson points out that the negative description of Paul comes from a 3rd century novel, and that it is on this poor foundation that the enemies of Paul build their case for his unattractive appearance. The whole case collapses when you consider that when Paul came to Lystra and healed the lame man the people took him for a god. These pagans may have been superstitious and foolish, but they**

were not blind. All of the Greek gods were graceful and well-formed Hercules type men, and not bow-legged little homely Jews. If they could mistake Paul for Hermes or Mercury it is likely he was a real specimen of a man.

The fact of his surviving the stoning and enduring all kinds of trials, hardships, and sufferings, indicates that he was a man of marvelous physical strength. Paul might mean little, but that does not make the Apostle a little man anymore than it makes Paul Bunyan a midget. We cannot say that he was a New Testament Samson, but there is no reason to think that he was not a man as mighty in body as he was in spirit. Why should I hold a degrading image in my mind of such a great man when it is based on the testimony of those who did not like him?

As great as Paul was he was no god, and he knew it. He tore his clothes when the pagans of Lystra began to worship him. In spite of his great authority and power he was a very humble man in his own eyes. When he begins his letters by calling himself an Apostle, you will notice that he does not take credit for being in such a position. He always acknowledges that it is by the grace or will of God. It is God's doing and not his own. He wrote, "I am not worthy to be called an Apostle." He went even further and wrote, "I am less than the least of all saints." If Paul is stern, narrow and authoritative when he writes it is not because he is proud, but it is because of his office. He has an obligation before God to fulfill the great responsibility of establishing the church in the world that is based on sound and pure doctrine.

Look behind the official pronouncements and you will see a man of like nature with us. Paul could speak with an ultimate authority, which could forbid any other doctrine. And yet be perfectly willing to admit that he was not infallible. When Paul spoke as an Apostle to men he spoke with authority just as Jesus did. Paul, however, as

**a man never thought of putting himself on the same level with his Lord. Jesus could say, "Which of you convicts me of sin?" Paul could say, "I am the chief of sinners." Paul never pretended to be perfect or infallible. He admitted he only knew in part, and even near the end of his life he said he had not yet attained but was still pressing on.**

**Jesus is our ideal example, but Paul becomes our greatest example of what is attainable in this life. Jefferson wrote, "We need two examples, a sinless man, and a sinner who has repented. We need the inspiration of a man who never fell, and the encouragement of a man who fell and got up again. A perfect man reveals what the ideal is; a man defeated and finally victorious discloses what by God's grace we may ultimately become." Paul was held in high esteem by those who really knew him. They wept in Ephesus when he left them. They listened all night to him in Troas, and the Galatians would have dug out their eyes for him. The Philippians sent him presents again and again, and followed his travels with great interest. In Corinth he was exalted as a great teacher.**

**Paul had the amazing ability to keep his head in the sky and his feet on the ground. He was caught up to the third heaven and saw things that he could not communicate. He had visions, trances, and spoke in tongues, and yet he was healthy minded and practical. Many with such experiences become fanatical, but Paul did not. He never got carried away in attempts to become an authority on angels or demons, or heaven or hell. He was down to earth practical in his theology. When the ship he was on was going down he was calm and was used by God to save all the men on board, which was 275 men.**

**He was a man with marvelous spiritual gifts, but he never abused them or used them as ends in themselves. He wrote to the troubled Corinthians, "Thank God I speak in tongues more than any of you, but in church I would rather say five words with my own mind for**

**the instruction of other people than ten thousand words in a tongue which no one else can understand." Paul's concern for the practical kept him in a balanced position at all times. He never emphasized one truth to the point of excluding others. This is what happens to those who become fanatical over some aspect of the truth to the point of making it the whole of truth.**

**Paul was as practical as Jesus was. His goal was simplicity, and we see this as we study his letter to Timothy. He starts by stating his apostleship, not because Timothy had any doubt about his authority, but because it was not just a friendly letter, but an official letter that would be a guide for all the church. The whole church needs to recognize its authority and their obligation to teach no other doctrine than Paul.**

## **2. REVELATION IS SUFFICIENT Based on I Tim. 1:1-4**

**An English boy went into a store to get change for a sovereign, and the clerk asked him if it was good. The boy said, "Certainly it is good. I saw my father make it just this morning." The clerk, of course, refused to take it. Money, like truth, has the shadow of suspicion cast across it when it has been coined only this morning. Anything that you can really rely on will not be totally new. Even in the realm of science this is true. New products and new medicine are not as new as we might think. Nothing just discovered this morning would be on the market. It takes months and even years of research before things are ready for the market. Even that which is really recent in discovery is usually based upon older knowledge, and so it is not totally new, but an extension of what has gone before. The totally new and novel is seldom of lasting value.**

**A craving for what is strictly new is a sign of degeneration and superficiality in a culture. This is what was happening to the Greeks in Paul's day, and has happened time and time again in history. Acts 17:21 says in the NEB, "The Athenians in general and the foreigners there had no time for anything but talking or hearing about the latest novelty." Certainly masses of Americans are cultural cousins to these Athenians. Novelty is a must in our society. People feel only a fool believes and acts today the same as people believed and acted in the past. That which is the in thing must be something just coined this morning. Someone wrote, "So long as an artist is on his head, his painting with a flute, or writes with an etching needle, or conducts an orchestra with a meat axe, all is well, and plaudits shower along with the roses. But any plain man who tries to follow the unobtrusive canons of his art is but a commonplace figure."**

**This applies to every realm including the realm of theology. The men in the limelight today are those who are expounding the novel and the freshly coined ideas. They capture the minds of millions for a while, but then they become old hat, and people begin looking for something new again. This was the problem that Paul wrestled with in his day, and it is one that he urged Timothy to help him fight. It was a real battle, and Paul uses military language often. He tells Timothy to be a good soldier of Jesus Christ. He starts off in this first letter by stating that he was not an Apostle by his own choice, but that he was drafted by the Lord. God commanded him to be His ambassador to the Gentiles. He was inducted into the royal service of representing the Risen Redeemer. He loved being a soldier of the cross, and would have agreed whole heartedly with the poet who wrote,**

**Life can never be dull again  
When once we've thrown our windows open wide,  
And seen the mighty world that lies outside,**

**And whispered to ourselves this wondrous thing,  
We're wanted for the business of the King.**

**Paul felt one of his important tasks for the Lord was in keeping the churches on a solid foundation. This was no easy task in a world as filled with novel nonsense as his was. We often talk as if we were the only people to ever live in the last days, and that we alone must bear the burden of so much human folly. We would be ashamed of our complaints if we knew what others have gone through before us. Paul spent 3 and one half years in Ephesus going from house to house and teaching the believers sound Christian doctrine. In spite of all he did he has to urge Timothy to stay there and charge some to teach no other doctrine. Here were people who had the best Christian education experience possible, and yet they were in danger of falling into heresy and being led into fruitless speculation.**

**I think it can be said with plenty of evidence to support it that no group of Christians could long remain Christian in their thinking without the Bible being constantly read and expounded. If Churches degenerate to the place where they are no more than humanistic clubs, they have none to blame but themselves, for God has provided the means by which we are to stay on the right track. If men do not avail themselves of the means, they will certainly get off the main road and onto a side road of trivia. This very church of Ephesus where Paul and Timothy labored for years was still in trouble when John wrote Revelation. Christ was threatening to remove their candlestick if they did not return to their first love.**

**Anytime a Christian, or any group of Christians, thinks they have reached a plateau of security where they no longer need to have constant vigilance and self-examination, they are in grave danger. Christian truth must be applied to new situations constantly, and there must be new methods and new means, but in all of this there is the danger of losing the old old story. The**

**message must remain the same however unique and novel the methods of delivering it. Christian doctrine must be based on the clear teachings of Scripture however modern the words used to communicate it.**

**The Jews lost all practical relationship to the Old Testament revelation by using so many fables, myths and spiritual interpretations to communicate it, that they forgot the message of God and got all wrapped in their own stories and methods of communicating. This was the very danger the early church faced, and the danger, which eventually won out over a large portion of the church when they made tradition the authority. We see then the danger of believing something because it is old for that reason alone. This is as foolish and dangerous as the craze for novelty. There is only one test by which we can be sure of the truth of any doctrine, and that is its conformity to the Word of God. Paul having given this revelation to the Ephesians charges Timothy to prevent the teaching of any other doctrine.**

**The problem appears to have been from leaders and teachers who were Christians within the church, but who were more interested in their own thinking and clever ingenuity than the revelation of God. Had they been outsiders Timothy would have no authority over them, and they could not have cared less what he said. He could only, in that case, warn believers not to listen to them. But these were in the church, and so they were subject to his authority. You need to see this truth that the greatest problems of the church have always been caused by Christians and not unbelievers. Heresy and false teaching, and controversies of all kinds that have hindered the work of Christ have come about by God's own people, and not by the slander of the unsaved.**

**The darkest blots on the history of the church are those by the acts and attitudes of born again believers. If Christians could only**



**rid themselves of the sinful pride that makes them think they are infallible, they would cease to point fingers anywhere but at themselves when they seek to find the cause for their lack of power. Any deficiency in our personal lives, or in our local church, have their origin right here in our own hearts. We can blast the sinner and cry out that they will not listen. We can knock the liberal and say they have perverted the Gospel. But when all is said and done we have not answered the question we should be asking, and that is, what am I doing for Christ? Even if the whole world is wrong, the question is still, what am I doing that glorifies Jesus Christ?**

**The world was filled with error in Timothy's day, but his responsibility was to do his best in Ephesus. God does not hold us responsible for what is beyond our influence, but He does hold us responsible for an effective witness to those we can influence. If Ephesus could keep Paul, Timothy and the Apostle John busy, and still be far from what it should be, I have a hunch all of us could find enough need for improvement in our lives and church to keep us busy for the rest of our lives.**

**Paul was opposed to that which was impractical, and this is made clear in verse 4 where he says that we are not to give heed to fables. This is a distinct problem separate from other doctrine. It was not only the false and dangerous things that Paul feared, but the foolish and trivial things. He wrote to Titus in 1:14 and urged him also not to give heed to Jewish fables. The Jews wasted millions of man hours and mental potential in developing fables. They were not false doctrine but just worthless and a waste of time. Some feel that Greek mythology was also in Paul's mind. The Christian is not to get wrapped up in man made speculations, for they only steal time that could be given to learning and spreading the truth.**

**Paul also mentions endless genealogies. The whole ancient world had a passion for genealogies. Alexander the Great had an**

**artificial pedigree made up tracing his lineage back to Achilles on one side and Hercules on the other. Philo had all kinds of allegorical interpretations based on the Old Testament genealogies. Jewish scholars use to take each name in the genealogies and build up a whole story around it. It was all fiction and they were free to speculate as they chose and make each man whatever they wished. It was endless, of course, for there is no limit to what can be developed when there is no basis for any of it. It was all endless and fruitless based on nothing but imagination, and Christians are warned not to waste their time on such nonsense.**

**Human nature has a tendency to drift into the speculative and unknown, and develop controversy around the unprofitable. This prevents the Christian from facing issues that really matter. Controversy is often the method by which Christians avoid doing the practical will of God. They fool themselves into believing they are defending the faith when they are really doing nothing to demonstrate the faith. Paul says that what promotes questions and speculation is not good. It is what trains us in the faith that is good. That which has no practical value should not become a time consuming discussion among believers. If we cannot become more Christ like and built up in the faith by what we are discussing, we are wasting our time. The revelation that God has given us cannot be exhausted and so we are to be continuously reminded not to waste our time elsewhere, but to focus on it, for revelation is sufficient.**

### **3. THE END IS LOVE Based on I Tim. 1:5**

**Someone has said, "You can never win in the game of life if you**

**don't know where the goal posts are." You can't win in any game if you don't have a goal. Great men in every walk of life have been those with a goal, and a determination to reach it. It is difficult to be determined if you are not certain where you are going, and so the end must come before the means. The goal must be established, and then comes the best means for reaching that end. I remember a successful businessman who spoke to the students at Bethel one day, and he said that the very first rule in being successful is to set a goal and then strive to reach it. Studies show that the one thing they all had in common as America's most successful men was the ability to set a goal and pursue it. This principle applies to the spiritual realm as well.**

**Mathew Henry, the well-known Bible commentator, was not successful in producing the works he did because he was uniquely gifted. It was because he was a man who set goals and persisted in using every means necessary to reach them. He set out in 1692 to deliver a series of lectures on the questions on the Bible. He began with God's question to Adam, "Where art thou?" Twenty years later he finished the series on the last question in Revelation. When he set a goal he persisted to the end.**

**Paul wanted Timothy to be this kind of a pastor, and he wanted the leaders and teachers of Ephesus to be like this as well.**

**Therefore, he writes to Timothy and tells him to put an end to the nonsense of Christians getting all wrapped up in fables and genealogies. He urges them to make love the primary goal of their ministry. He then gives the three means necessary to arrive at this goal. They are a pure heart, a good conscience, and a genuine faith. Verse 5 in the RSV reads, "Whereas the aim of our charge is love..."**

**Phillips has it, "The ultimate aim of the Christian ministry, after all, is to produce the love which springs from a pure heart, a good conscience and a genuine faith."**

**Paul is giving a standard by which we can measure the success of our ministry. Whatever else we have done, if we have not aided men to move closer to the goal we have failed. The end is love, and if teaching and preaching does not make Christians more loving it is an ineffective means, for it is not doing what God intended it to do. If all the lessons and sermons you hear, and all the books and papers you read do not increase your love, then they are all for nothing, for that which does not move toward the primary goal is of no true Christian value. If your Bible knowledge only makes you clever in winning arguments, but does not increase your ability to love the unlovable, you are making no progress at all. The end is love says Paul. The goal of the Christian life is to be a channel through which the love of God can flow.**

**Paul took very seriously the exalting of love to the supreme place in the Christian life. In all of his letters it is the supreme goal, for to be filled with agape love is to be filled with Christ. To love and to be Christ like are synonymous. In Gal. 5:14 Paul writes, "The whole law is fulfilled in one word, you shall love your neighbor as yourself." The Old Testament is not to be used as a source of material for speculation, but as a source of material to be fulfilled by love. Alexander Maclaren, the famous English Baptist preacher, wrote, "The Apostle here lays down the broad principle that God has spoken, not in order to make acute theologians, or to provide material for controversy, but in order to help us love."**

**The number of persons won to Christ by argument and condemnation is from small to non-existent, but the number one through love is legion. No wonder Paul said that knowledge, eloquence and sacrifice are nothing without love. None of these things can open a man's heart to Christ. Love alone is the key to the human heart, and so it is the goal of the church's ministry in the lives of its members. Our lack is not power, but love. Paul said you can have all kinds of power and still be nothing without love. Love**

**is the key factor in every situation.**

**Paul was the greatest theologian of all time, but his goal was not to be a great theologian, but rather, to be a channel of God's love. He wrote to the Corinthians that the love of Christ constrains us. That was the power that drove Paul on and on with the Gospel. It was not some craving for controversy, or desire for adventure, but it was for the end of love that he was motivated. He then gives 3 means by which we are to reach that end of love. If we develop these three things we will be progressing toward the goal of love. Not any love will do, for it must be a love, which issues from these three things.**

## **1. A PURE HEART.**

**Just as a pure fountain sends forth refreshing water to the thirsty, so the pure in heart bring the refreshing attitude of love into a world of hostility. Jesus said that the pure in heart shall see God, and it follows that the pure heart which sees God will also see the need of men to see God, and so long to express the love of God in Christ that they may have the opportunity to do so. The more I read about love in the New Testament the more I realize how little Christians have moved toward this primary goal. Can it be because we are really not pure in heart? Have we neglected the means to the end to the point that we do not even recognize the nature of the kind of love that is to possess us and constrain us as it did Paul?**

**The impure heart harbors lust and not love. It is a form of love, which is selfish desire. Have we allowed agape love, which is the selfless love of Christ, to be lost and replaced with the natural eros love of desire? I think it is so, and so we cannot begin to reach Christian maturity until we become pure in heart. We need to be sanctified, and to learn those truths of God's Word that purify our attitudes and actions. We need to escape the pull of the world in all**

realms, and purify our hearts if we expect to reach the end of love, which is our goal. A church which is not succeeding to aid its people in attaining purity of heart is a church in danger of having a meaningless ministry of no use to the cause of Christ.

## **2. A GOOD CONSCIENCE.**

A bad conscience is the force behind much of Christian un-loveliness. The Christian who condemns rather than loves is often filled with guilt feelings. His conscience is bothered by his own sin and failure to be what he knows God wants him to be. And so rather than repent and receive forgiveness he lashes out in anger to punish others who are more guilty than he, and he seeks in this way to satisfy his own conscience. It is all futile however, and it only leads to frustration and greater guilt.

If the Christian is ever going to love others as he ought, he has got to love himself as he ought. He can never do this if he has a conscience, which is always condemning him. A Christian that dislikes and condemns himself cannot really love anybody. Therefore, a good conscience is essential in the Christian life. A good conscience is one that allows a Christian the freedom to love himself, and to love his neighbor as himself. This means that the doctrine of forgiveness of sin needs to be taught until all Christians understand fully the ministry of Christ's present intercession on their behalf.

Confession of sin, which played such a major role in the New Testament must be understood by Christians today. The Christian who does not know how to deal with his sin and his bad conscience is greatly handicapped, and he is unable to move along the path to the goal of love. A Christian who is always looking for scapegoats, and always complaining and griping is a Christian with a bad conscience, and he becomes a very poor channel for the love of

**Christ to be expressed to others. Any ministry that aids believers in maintaining a clear conscience is a ministry that is fruitful for Christ.**

### **3. A GENUINE OR SINCERE FAITH.**

**That is a faith that is not hypocritical. It is not simply a mask over the real person. There is a certain insincere kind of faith, which oozes piety all over on the surface, but it is only a shallow cover up over an impure heart and a bad conscience. Christians must be aware of the danger of a false faith, which is a faith built up around words they have learned, but which has no basis in experience. A sincere and honest faith will be practical and down to earth. Those who wonder off into myths, and who take adventures into the unknown seek to give the impression that this is a demonstration of real faith, but it is not so. Fantasy is not faith. A sincere faith brings forth love and a devotion to people, and not a devotion to fables and systems.**

**Any teaching that helps a believer to shed his mask and to live as he really is before God and man in simple trust is a kind of teaching that will be blest, for genuine faith will lead to the end of love. The implication of this advice to Timothy is that if a Christian lacks love the reason is because of a defect in one of these 3 areas-his heart, his conscience, or his faith.**

**In verse 6 Paul says that those teachers who have wandered away from these 3 things, and who have lost their sense of direction and goal, have ended up with an emphasis on what is vain. Whenever Christians get into foolish discussions it is because they have lost sight of their goal. The goal is love, and the means to that end are a pure heart, a good conscience and genuine faith. We have a clear goal and a clear revelation as to how to reach it. Our perpetual duty as Christians is to keep this ever before us, for all of**

**our teaching, preaching and discussion is of no ultimate value unless it moves us to reach the end, which is love.**

#### **4. LAW AND GOSPEL Based on I Tim. 1:7f**

**There is mystery enough in life without us adding unnecessary mysteries of our own making. For example, like the woman who evicted a man from her boarding house, and when she was asked why she did it she said, "Something mysterious is going on when a man hangs his hat over the key hole every time he comes in." She created the mystery for herself by her own snooping. Others create mysteries even by their attempts to help. Like the professor who came upon the man setting in his car whose tire was going low. The professor said, "I say, your tubular air container has lost most of its rotundity." The motorist blankly replied, "What?" The professor said, "The cylindrical apparatus which supports your vehicle is no longer inflated." Again the motorist responded, "I beg your pardon." The professor was determined to communicate his point, and he said, "The elastic fabric surrounding the circular frame whose successive revolutions bear you onward in space has failed to retain its pristine roundness." As the motorist scratched his head a little boy walking by shouted out, "Hey mister, you got a flat tire."**

**In spite of his vast vocabulary and comprehensive description of the problem, the professor only added mystery upon mystery to what was the simplest of problems. Truth is worthless as long as it is hidden in the obscurity of language. One might just as well be silent as to make sounds, which convey no meaning to the hearer. What is even worst is if they sounds convey a false meaning, or one which the speaker does not intend. This was the case with the Mexican who was just learning to speak English. His friend told**



him that a woman is pleased if you tell her how cool she looks. Not realizing the significance of the words he thought it was the idea that was important, and so he told his girlfriend she didn't look very hot. He learned that a little knowledge is a dangerous thing very quickly. It is dangerous because it assume too much. It over simplifies, and it does not grasp the implication involved.

All of these illustrations are similar to what can happen in theology when men like the boardinghouse owner begin to snoop into what is none of their business, and try to find out what God has revealed. Or when they like the professor get unreasonably wordy and complex about the simplest matters. Or when like the Mexican they convey just the opposite impression than what their intentions are because of their ignorance of the language. These were the kinds of problems that Paul faces at Ephesus, and he asked Timothy to help him with these problems. Some of the Gentile Christians were taking it upon themselves to become experts on the law. The Jewish law was, of course, precious to the Gentiles who became Christians, for it was the Jews who brought the Gospel to them, and it was the Jewish Scriptures that would be there source of knowing God's will.

Some wanted to spread the word and teach it that others might know what God has spoken. The problem was that they had zeal without knowledge, and this leads to more harm than good. These men were teaching without adequate understanding, and they were corrupting the purpose of the law. Paul asked Timothy to try and curb these self-ordained scholars. Their motive was all right, and Paul does not condemn the desire they had to teach. This was good, but they just did not have adequate equipment to do the job. They were not trained and so they didn't understand. Anyone who thinks that just being a Christian is all that is needed to understand the Bible understands neither the Bible nor history. Training is just as essential in Bible knowledge as it is in any other realm of knowledge. There has never been a great Bible expositor who was not well

**trained, either formerly or self-trained, as was the case with D. L. Moody.**

**No matter how committed and sincere a believer is, God cannot use him as a teacher if he is ignorant. However sincere a man is in getting people healed, I do not want him treating me unless he has some knowledge of the body and medicine. A man has got to have knowledge and understanding to be used effectively in any area of life. Ignorance has never qualified a man to teach anything, and least of all the law of God.**

**Paul is bothered by these teachers, for their very earnestness and zeal make them all the more dogmatic in their ignorance. When a man knows he loves the Lord, and knows his motive is the glory of the Lord, his ignorance is all the more dangerous, for he assumes that his love and zeal will guarantee that he speaks the truth. Unfortunately, this is not the case, and the ignorant tongue can spew out poison to corrupt the very people he hopes to purify with truth. Sincerity is no substitute for the facts. If a Christian does not know what he is talking about he had best be silent. The New English Bible translates verse 7, "They set out to be teachers of the moral law, without understanding either the words they use or the subjects about which they are so dogmatic." If it wasn't so tragic, it would be funny. Like the Mexican telling his girl she didn't look so hot without understanding what he was conveying. These Christian teachers were throwing around words, which they didn't even understand. Such nonsense is dangerous, for the one doing it can fall in love with his own concepts, and feel he has cornered the market on inspiration.**

**Much that goes on under these delusions is harmless, but Paul says they detract from the purpose of the church in edifying the saints and building them up in the truth, which leads to the end of love. It may not be positive evil, but it is vain jangling says Paul,**

**and it has no place in the church. There is even a danger of being aware how easily a subject can be perverted by the ignorance of men. It can lead you to dismiss or neglect an important part of God's Word. If every Tom, Dick and Harry starts spouting about love for every other Tom, Dick and Harry, it can discourage the Christian who has the highest concepts of love. He can be led to neglect that which is his own highest goal. He can be so disturbed by the nonsense and trash that he slips away from the field of Bible prophecy altogether. It is possible to get such a negative attitude toward all the perversion that you forget to pursue the truth itself.**

**Paul wanted to make it clear that he was not doing this. He was opposed to ignorant teaching of the law, but he was not opposed to the law. On the contrary, he says in verse 8 that we know the law is good if a man uses it lawfully. The problem, as Paul sees it, is not with the law at all, but with man's use of it. If used unwisely that which is good in itself can become an evil. The law is not just neutral, but Paul says it is a positive good, but it is conditional. It is not automatically good, but has to be used properly. A knife is good for cutting your meat, but bad for cleaning your eyes and ears. Every good thing can be used in a way that is improper, and then it becomes harmful and dangerous, and so it is with the law.**

**A proper use of law leads to liberty, but on the other side of this great value are the extremes of legalism and libertinism. Both of these extremes are the result of a false teaching concerning law, and both have plagued the church from the beginning. Paul deals with both extremes in this letter. The law can either add to the Gospel or detract from it, and so it is very important that the relationship between the two be understood by Christians. It is a vast subject, and we can only touch on it.**

**The basic thing to see here is that the law is good. The Christian is in no sense in favor of lawlessness, for this is a characteristic of**

depraved man at his worst. Paul puts the lawless first in his great list of evil men beginning in verse 9. The Gospel does not free men from the burden of law by abolishing it, but by fulfilling it, and by changing its character from an external force to an internal power. The church is itself under law, which is the law of her Head and King, the Lord Jesus, who said that all authority is given to Him, and so go into all the world and preach the Gospel. The very taking of the Gospel into the world is obedience to the law of the Lord. This is His command. He has also laid down the law of what our goal is to be, and that is to make disciples of all nations.

The difference between this and the Old Testament law is that it was an external rule threatening punishment, but the law of Christ is the law of love, which constrains from within and moves us to obedience, not out of fear of punishment, but out of love and gratitude. Paul could speak of his being a slave of Christ, and also of having great liberty in Christ. Both of these are unified in the law of love written on the heart. Being bound to Christ is being totally free when one chooses to be so bound. When a man is in love and plans to get married, no matter how others joke of the bondage and the chains, and the loss of liberty, he freely chooses it all because the fulfillment of his love is liberty to him. To be bound in love is the greatest freedom. So it is when we yield ourselves to be servants of the law of Christ. We become sons with perfect liberty to do all we please, for all we please to do is that which pleases Him. Law then can magnify the liberty of the believer and add to the benefit of the Gospel.

## **5. LAW AND GRACE Based on I Tim. 1:8**

The new bride said to her husband, "I took the recipe for that

cake you are eating out of my cookbook." "Good," responded the husband, "It never should have been put in there in the first place." Some feel this same way about the law being in the Bible. They see it as only an infringement upon their freedom, and they wish it were taken out. Others just ignore it, and they express the feelings of the lawless like this poem of Alfred E. Houseman:

The laws of God, the laws of man,  
He may keep that will and can:  
Not I, let God and man be decree  
Laws for themselves, and not for me.

He wants to be free from all law, but does not realize that this leads to total bondage rather than freedom. The freedom of the lawless eliminates everyone else's freedom. One person in a town with the freedom to use anyone he chose for target practice eliminates the freedom of all others to walk the streets. Total freedom from law for one man creates chaos for all men. Paul says the law exists to protect the law abiding from the lawless. This includes all of us to some degree, for all men are at least partially lawless. The value of the law is that it enables us to see our sin and our lawless nature so that the Gospel of grace really is good news to us. The law shows us what we are and condemns us. The Gospel shows us what God is, and what He has done to save us in spite of what we are. If we fail to respond to the Gospel, the law is still of great value, for it restrains the evil in us from becoming active, and if it fails to do that it meets out punishment as a last resort.

Paul makes it clear that the law is aimed at the lawless, and it is only properly used when used to restrain the lawless. When law is used in such a way that it becomes a burden to the just, then it is being used improperly. The Pharisees did this with the law, and they made it nothing but a heavy burden to the people. All of life was bound by laws which restrained the freedom of those who were

**not lawless, and this was not God's will. The law must be used in such a way as to allow freedom of the individual to respond to God in worship and service, and yet restrained him from abuses of freedom and the inclination to go to extremes. Some in Ephesus had neglected the value of the law for the Christian, and they went to far in their freedom. In verses 19 and 20 Paul mentions two men who rejected conscience and made shipwreck of the faith. They did not allow the law to do for them what it was meant to do.**

**Paul is the best example of the balance that should come into life under grace and law. He was a man free in Christ, and yet he could say in verse 15 that he was the chief of sinners. He had no delusions about himself. He knew that he still needed the restraining power of the law in his life. He knew the law was essential to keep the Christian conscience sensitive and aware of the need for forgiveness and cleansing. Who can read the Sermon on the Mount and not be made aware of the fact that he is still a sinner? When the law does this it is good, and it is of value in the Christian life. If it leads only to speculation it is vain and dangerous, for that can destroy the purpose of it in keeping us aware that we are still sinners.**

**The law is still essential in giving us a standard by which we are guided. Jesus said that if we keep His commandments we will abide in His love. The New Testament has its commandments just as the Old Testament did. To think that grace releases us from obedience to law is to suggest that God has ceased to be a God of order for New Testament believers. The fundamental meaning of the Greek word *nomos*, which is translated law, is order. The law of nature is the order of nature. The laws of the land are those rules that keep society orderly by preventing chaos. God has always been a God of order because it is a part of His very nature, and so law is eternal and plays a role in everything God does.**

**Grace does not release us from law, but only from the bondage of a law that could not be fulfilled. Jesus did not destroy the law, but instead He fulfilled it, and He thereby released us from the futile task of trying to be saved by being perfectly obedient to the law. This is impossible because our very natures are lawless. We are still under law, but it is no longer the basis for our relationship with God. We are saved by grace freely, and so we do not have to fear condemnation because we cannot keep the law. Now we seek to keep the law, not to be saved, but in gratitude for being saved.**

**The person who does not drive 90 miles per hour in a 30 mile per hour zone because of the penalty for doing so is under the Old Testament type law in his thinking. The person who does not do so because he cares about other people and property would not do it even if there was no external law, and he is operating under New Testament type law. Law that promotes love and stems from love is law that is used lawfully for the Christian. If law hinders love and burdens life, and destroys the joy of freedom in Christ, then it is a perverted use of law, and it is an unlawful use of the law.**

**This is illustrated in the concept of the tithe in Scripture. The Old Testament lays this down as a law, but the New Testament lays down the principle of giving generously as the Lord blesses. The Old Testament law leaves no room for freedom. It demands a definite stated percentage. The New Testament leaves it open, so there is the freedom to respond from the heart and not just from an objective standard. This means some give less and some give more than the ten percent, and this is better, for the gift then is dictated by an internal response rather than by an external pressure. In the Old Testament there was no choice, but in the New Testament there is no compulsion but that of the inner desire to share in the work of God. We are still under the law of giving, but it is now a law of liberty.**

**The Old Testament type law is still good for restraining the**

**lawless just because they fear the punishment, but it is not enough for the Christian. As long as we do not steal because an eternal law says not to, we are not being Christian, but are on the same level as the non-believer. As long as we do not kill just because the law says not to, we are no different than the children of disobedience who are restrained by that same law. The Old Testament type law is still essential for a world where man is fallen, for it is the basis for order in society. All national law is external law, but all of this kind of law can only restrain. It can never change the nature of persons. It is good because it restrains the lawless, but it is inadequate to change the lawless.**

**The law of grace, the law of liberty, the law of love of the New Testament is the law that must distinguish the Christian from the world. Jesus took the whole law and summed it up in loving God and our neighbor. In other words, He, by transferring the whole fulfillment of the law into the inner man through love, eliminated the need for external laws ideally. If you operate in every circumstance, and under every condition, in love, you do not need any external law to restrain or compel you. If I see a need, I do not need a law to compel me to do something if I love my neighbor as myself. If I have opportunity to sin, I do not need a law to forbid it if I love God with all my heart. Love fulfills all the law. Without love we can only fulfill the law in an Old Testament manner by merely being restrained.**

**If I do not kill a man I am angry with I obey the law not to kill, but I do not obey the law of love if I remain angry with him and wish he was dead anyway. Jesus puts this on the level with murder. If you are angry with a man enough to want to see him dead you break the internal law of love, and you are guilty, even though you do not break the eternal law. Jesus lifted law to the level of the heart, and now the Christian is one who is judged and rewarded, not according to his conformity to external rules, but to his obedience to**



**the law of love. However righteous one is in avoiding the breaking of external laws, if he is not one who responds to God and man in love, his righteousness is of the Old Testament variety, and is like that of the Pharisees. Our righteousness must succeed theirs, and this means ours must be a righteousness of the heart. We need to be obedient to the law of love, which alone is the proof that Christ dwells within us.**

**I am more and more convinced as I study Scripture and history that the only reliable basis on which to test the reality of one's salvation is love. Being orthodox, law abiding, and having all the right knowledge does not get one past the level of the Pharisees. Only obedience to the law of love reveals that one has been truly born from above. A man is only really under grace when he is free from the righteousness that is strictly a matter of obedience to external law. He who is under grace is one who is led of the Spirit, and when he obeys an external law it is not just out of fear of penalty, but out of love for the law giver, and out of love for those whom the law giver loves.**

**A Christian will be one who does not feel that God's law is a burden. It will be a blessing when used lawfully. Someone said, "Just laws are no restraint upon the freedom of the good, for the good man desires nothing which a just law will interfere with." Paul would agree, and so he does not want Christians to abuse the law by making it a burden, nor does he want to see men ignore its values. Legalism and libertinism are both dangerous forms of bondage. Love alone leads to freedom with order, and it combines the values of both grace and law. May God give us the wisdom to avoid the two extremes and fulfill the law in love.**

## **6. PATRIOTIC IN PRAYER Based on I Tim. 2:1-8**

**Paul was a man of authority who respected the authority of others. In Acts 23 it is recorded that he was struck on the mouth, and he began to rebuke the one who did it. Those who were near by asked, "Would you revile God's high priest?" Paul answered, "I did not know brethren that he was the high priest; for it is written, you shall not speak evil of a ruler of your people." Paul was patriotic, and we do not find him anywhere trying to stir up opposition to those in authority. He loved his own people and their government. He was a leader in it as a Pharisee, and he also had a high respect for the Roman government. It's laws of protection for its citizens saved him on several occasions.**

**In his letters he encourages believers to be the best possible citizens, and to obey their rulers. We want to examine his advice to Timothy along this line and see if can gain a new vision of how we can be more patriotic, and have it be a spiritual exercise. Patriotism is not good in itself, for one might be devoted to a very evil government and be a party to its evil by being so devoted. Christian patriotism, as brought out in this passage, is always good, even if one is a Christian under an evil government. It consists in a devotion to that government's highest well being by praying for its leaders. It is being patriotic in prayer that has been characteristic of the church in its relationship to the state.**

**In verse 1 Paul says that one of the first duties of believers is to pray for all men. When our daughter was very young she began to pray in her own words, and one of her most common prayers was, "Make everybody grow up and be good." This seems a little too comprehensive to be meaningful, and yet the attitude behind it is basic, for that is what Paul is saying in this passage. Prayer is to be comprehensive and all-inclusive. There is the concept of universality that runs all through this passage. We have words like**

**all men, all in authority, and ransom for all. Prayer is to be universal and for all men.**

**Paul breaks prayer down into 4 different categories. First you have supplications, which refers to a request for God's aid in fulfilling a specific need, which is keenly felt. Then you have prayers, which is more general, and is a requesting for those needs, which are always present, such as the need for wisdom and guidance. If I desperately need to know what to do in a specific situation, it is supplication. If I simply ask God to guide me in His will, it is prayer. The urgency of the need seems to be the main distinction. Then you have intercessions. This is a pleading for others, and it seems to imply that you are fulfilling a role, which they cannot do for themselves. Finally you have thanksgiving, which is an expression of gratitude for blessings already received. Paul feels this is a vital part of the prayer life, and we need to make sure we do not forget it by including it in all of our prayers.**

**Paul says that all these kinds of prayer are to be offered for all men. It is obvious that we cannot be praying for everybody. We would need the infinite mind of God for this. We cannot take this literally, and yet we dare not dismiss the universality of Paul's intention. He did not expect Timothy and the Christians he shepherded to pray for all those living on the earth, but he certainly meant that all people are included as objects of prayer, and objects of God's love and concern. It is a paradox, but I take it both literally and not literally at the same time. If you take it literally to mean all people then that includes the dead, and so this has been a proof text for prayers for the dead. It is obvious to the unbiased reader that Paul had no such thing in mind. So I do not take Paul's language as that inclusive, but I do take it to include all living people.**

**All people are to be prayed for, and none are to be excluded. Even evil men are to be prayed for. Many evil men become godly**

**men because people have prayed for them. The leaders who oppose all that is Christian are to be prayed for. They may repent and become Christians, but even if they do not they can make decisions that effect everyone, and they can make those that are of benefit to everyone. We need to remember that the man on the throne when Paul wrote this was none other than Nero, who was the most anti-Christian leader we can imagine. But Paul is urging Christians to pray for him, and Paul prayed for this man who would soon order the taking of his own life.**

**The value of this is to see how we must broaden our vision, and how our obligation as Christians goes beyond our own family, church, denomination and nation. We are to be universal in our concern. The cross breaks down all barriers of rank and race. We need never ask, should I pray for such and such a person, for even if they be an enemy of God they fall within the believers prayer life.**

**In verse 2 Paul gets more specific and connects prayer with the state. Separation of church and state does not mean the church has no concern for the state, or no influence on the state. The church has been the basic stabilizing factor in the state in many instances. This has been the case in America. Presidents all through our history have asked for the prayers of the people in order t have the guidance of God.**

**Back in 311 A. D. the Emperor Galerius asked for the prayers of Christians. The power of prayer in the history of politics has been amazing. In Ezra 6:10 Darius appeals to the Jews to offer sacrifice and to pray for him and his sons. Here was a pagan ruler requesting the prayers of God's people, and this is good in the sight of God to do so. God not only hears the prayers of unbelievers, but He also hears and answers the prayers of believers for unbelievers. On one occasion the Jews were even asked to pray for their pagan rulers in captivity. In Jer. 29:7 we read, "Also, seek the peace and**

**prosperity of the city to which I have carried you into exile. Pray to the Lord for it, because if it prospers, you too will prosper."**

**If all goes well with those who rule, then people will be free to pursue the things of God and develop resources for spreading the Gospel. America would not be what it is today as the center of Christian forces going out into all the world if our government had been opposed to Christianity. I do not doubt for a minute that the prayers of millions of God's people have been a primary cause for our nation being what it is. On the other hand, failure on the part of Christians to pray for all rulers may well be why America is becoming paganized. Only eternity will reveal to what extent neglect of being patriotic in prayer has been the cause of the decay of our nation. Being patriotic in prayer is a unique role that Christians play in politics.**

**The early church took Paul seriously. They made prayers for their leaders and pagan governments a major aspect of church life. Here is the prayer of Clement of Rome for the Emperor of Rome. This is found in his first letter to the church of Corinth, which was written in about 90 A. D. when the horrors of persecution were fresh in the mind of everyone.**

**"Thou, Lord and Master, hast given our rulers and governors the power of sovereignty through Thine excellent and unspeakable might, that we, knowing the glory and honor which thou hast given them, may submit ourselves unto them, in nothing resisting Thy will. Grant unto them, therefore, O Lord, health, peace, concord, stability, that they may administer the government which Thou hast given them without failure.... Do Thou, Lord, direct their counsel according to that which is good and well-pleasing in Thy sight, that, administering the power which Thou hast given them in peace and gentleness with godliness, they may obtain Thy favor. O Thou, who alone are able to do these things, and things far more exceeding good than these for us. We praise Thee through the High Priest and Guardian of our souls, Jesus Christ, through whom be the glory and majesty unto Thee both now and for all generations, for ever and ever. Amen!"**

**Here is patriotism in prayer in the first century, and the church continued this attitude, for it combines loyalty to one's government and God. God is supreme, but in no way does that make one less loyal to his government. Instead, it gives him a greater concern for his government to be the best. Theophilus of Antioch wrote, "The honor that I give the Emperor is all the greater, because I will not worship him, but I will pray for him. I will worship no one but the true and real God, for I know that the Emperor was appointed by Him. Those give real honor to the Emperor who are well-disposed to him, who obey him, and who pray for him."**

**Justin Martyr in his Apology wrote, "We worship God alone, but in all other things we gladly serve you, acknowledging kings and rulers of men, and praying that they may be found to have pure reason with kingly power." Tertullian wrote, "The Christian is the enemy of no man, least of all the Emperor, for we know that, since he has been appointed by God, it is necessary that we should love him, and reverence him, and honor him, and desire his safety, together with that of the whole Roman Empire." These are the attitudes of men who were persecuted by those very leaders they prayed for. These quotes from the early church fathers reveal that Christians took Paul seriously and practiced his advice. They prayed for all in authority even though those in authority often despised them, and sometimes sought to destroy them.**

**Their motive was just what Paul refers to here, for they wanted peace so that they might live a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness. The church is not to stir up trouble, but to seek to maintain peace so that it is free to witness to the saving power of Christ. Christians are to be the best citizens possible, and this calls for loyalty to the government as long as it is not directly opposing what is the clear will of God for His people.**

**In verse 3 Paul says this is good and acceptable in the sight of**

**God. He desires all of His people to be patriotic in prayer. They can survive and thrive under any government if there is freedom from restraint. Calvin is very strong in his words on this passage, for he says, "When we despise those whom God would have honored, it is as much as if we should despise Him." We may not always know who we ought to vote for, but we always know who we are to pray for. Paul makes it clear that we are to pray for all in authority. This means that Democrats who are Christians are to be praying for Republican leaders, and Republicans who are Christians are to be praying for Democrat leaders. Christians are to be praying for all, even their political enemies. This could make a major difference in the degree of peace we have in our nation, and that is the point of Paul in being patriotic in prayer.**

**This is not to say that there is to be no criticism of leaders. To say my country right or wrong is like saying my water pure or putrid. The critic may be more of a patriot than the silent citizen who does not protest what is folly. If we truly love our country we will be always seeking ways to improve it and make it better, and this will mean that criticism of what is lacking is valid. God has worked through many unbelievers to bring forth good for the whole nation, and that is why we keep on praying even for those who we disagree with in many ways. The worst leaders may still make decisions that are for the good of the people as a whole.**

**Paul is saying that no Christian can stay out of politics. If you are obligated to pray for politicians then you are involved on the highest level. The only way to stay out of politics is to stay out of the will of God on this issue of prayer for your leaders. It is a patriotic duty to pray, and it is a Christian duty to pray. This is more important than voting. In Paul's day nobody got a vote. They lived under a dictator, but it was still their duty to pray for him. It is one of the ways the Christians in any nation can help bring about change that is a blessing to the people. History is filled with examples of how customs**

**that were harmful to the people were changed by the influence of the minority of Christians who prayed for change. Since both godly and ungodly leaders are involved in making change possible it is a perpetual duty of Christians to be praying for all leaders and thereby be patriotic in prayer.**

## **7. THE ATONEMENT Based on I Tim. 2:4-6**

**One of the most often heard statements is that I never argue about politics and religion. The motive behind this is often a legitimate desire to avoid needless controversy that only arouses emotion but solves nothing. To avoid controversy, however, ought never be the goal of the Christian, for this could lead to never taking a stand on anything. We are to live a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness, but not at the price of ceasing to be Christian and spreading Christian truths. It is true that much controversy is better off avoided, but to avoid all controversy is to avoid all witness to the truth.**

**We have a pathetically poor vision of our task if we think that peaceful co-existence with error is our goal. Controversy cannot be eliminated if we are combating the false philosophies of the world. It is also true that controversy is almost impossible to avoid within the church if we really want to get a full grasp of biblical truth. There are a variety of viewpoints in Christian theology. If one is going to fully understand God's Word they need to examine both Calvinism and Armenianism. Margaret E. Kuhn in her book *You Can't Be Human Alone* offers a word of valuable insight.**

**"Church leaders have tended often to emphasize group consensus and agreement as virtues to be protected at all cost. They**



**have believed that agreement is absolutely necessary to hold a group together, without understanding that cohesiveness is not a matter of agreement, but of healthy interaction among group members with differing viewpoints, capabilities, and roles. Thus they avoid controversial issues and forego spiritual adventure for the sake of "Unity." Perhaps this is one important reason why church organizations go stale. If a group is too complete in its agreement, it loses its spirit, and there can be no real growth or change in its members, or of the group-as-a-whole. It becomes an aggregate of contented cows."**

**We certainly do not want to be a group of contented cows, and so we are going to consider one of the most controversial issues in theology. It concerns the question, for whom did Christ die? Orthodox Christians have taken two positions. The Armenian says the atonement of Christ was universal and for all men. The Calvinist says it was limited and only for the elect. There are some Calvinist who agree with the belief that the atonement was universal.**

**Lets begin our search for a solution to the controversy by examining the text in verse 4. Paul has urged believers to pray for all men, and specifically for those in authority, for this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior who, says Paul, wants all men to be saved. He is our savior now, but he is the potential savior of all men, and so pray for them. If they come to the knowledge of the truth, they can be saved just as we are. God's plan of salvation is as universal as His creation. He made all, and He is willing to remake all. All who receive the gift of His Son will have eternal life.**

**It is important to see here that God desires all men to be saved. It does not say He decrees all to be saved. If He did, we would be compelled to be universalists, who believe all will certainly be saved. Calvinists and Armenians agree that not all will be saved, but they**

**disagree as to why. Calvinists say that all men here does not mean all individual men, but all classes of men, such as the rich and poor, and Jews and Gentiles. God desires men of all classes to be saved. This is certainly true, but the Armenian says this does not cover the whole truth of the passage. God wants, not only men of all classes to be saved, but all men of all classes, and no one is excluded, for all can come to the knowledge of the truth.**

**The Gnostics, one of the great heretical groups in the early church, taught that only the elite could be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth. Gnostic comes from the Greek word used in verse 4, which is gnosis. They were the ones who had the saving knowledge, but most were too ignorant to grasp the truth. Paul made it clear that none are excluded, but that the saving truth is simple enough for all to grasp and be saved, and so all true Christians reject the Gnostic heresy. They agree that some knowledge is needed to be saved. It is the truth that makes men free. The intellect does play a role in our salvation, for it is only with the mind that a man can come to the knowledge of the truth. Calvin wrote, "Let us not separate salvation from the knowledge of the truth, for God does not mean to lie, nor deceive men, when He says when they come to knowledge of truth they shall be saved."**

**Both Calvin and Arminius agree that only those who come to knowledge of truth can be saved, but Calvin says many do not come because they are not of the elect. Arminius says that many do not come because they do not hear or do not respond to the truth when they do hear. Calvin says Christ did not die for those who do not respond, and that is why they do not respond. Arminius says that He died for them, but His salvation is not applied to them until they respond. Lets look at more detail in their arguments.**

## **I. CALVINISM AND THE LIMITED ATONEMENT.**

**If you take this verse literally that God wants all men to be saved, then, since all are not saved, it means that God's will is being defeated every day, and this gives us a picture of God as weak and not sovereign. And so it means that Christ cannot have died for all. He died only for the elect, and all of the elect are saved. This gives us a picture of God as sovereign, for all that He wills is accomplished. Christ died for the elect and every one of them will be saved, and so His death is completely successful. The atonement is an absolute victory, and it secures the salvation of every one for whom He died.**

**If Christ died for all men, then the atonement was not a total success, for there are men for whom He died who are still lost. They say this is near blasphemy to say that men will go to hell for whom Christ died. The death of Christ was not to make the salvation of all men possible, but to make the salvation of some men certain. In other words, Christ died just for the elect, and His death made absolutely certain that they would be saved. The non-elect are just left out and are doomed to hell, but this is better than all going to hell, they say. By Christ dying for the elect, at least all of them will be certainly saved. This is much better than an universal atonement that does not guarantee the salvation of anyone, but just makes it possible for every one to be saved.**

**You see the basic point here is that Calvinism says the idea that Christ died for all only makes salvation possible, whereas if He died only for the elect, it was to make salvation certain. It is better that some certainly be saved than that all possibly be saved. Certainty is the key idea. This seems to say that Calvinists think that only a minority will be saved, but this is not so. In general they believe that the vast majority of the human race will be saved. God in his grace will certainly elect more to be saved than lost. If you ask them why any should be lost they will only say that is known only to God in his higher purpose whose wisdom is beyond our comprehension.**

**I have pictured Calvinism in its best light. It would be easy to quote some who dogmatically and coldly assign masses to hell because God just did not make provision for them, but this would not represent the majority. As I have presented it, Calvinism is not hard to accept, for it is very optimistic and does exalt the sovereignty of God. It makes salvation certain for the elect, and not just possible for all. The problem is, it is still stuck with the view that Christ did not die for some people, and these people then are just hopeless eternal souls for whom no salvation is possible, and whose only end is eternal damnation. Since it is possible to gain all of the values of Calvinism and escape this difficulty by seeing that Christ died for all, I have rejected the limited atonement view and hold to the unlimited atonement view.**

## **II. UNLIMITED ATONEMENT**

**The most attractive aspect of the limited atonement view is its stress on certainty over against just possibility. This value, however, is not lost in the unlimited viewpoint. This view still recognizes the doctrine of the elect and predestination. It just rejects the idea that there are some who are not included in the provision of salvation. If this was true that some were excluded without hope, it would put God in the same position as the Levite and the priest in the parable of the Good Samaritan. They passed by on the other side of the helpless victim because they were busy, and he was of no concern to them. in the limited atonement view God passes by the non-elect, and He lets them go their way to hell with no thought of helping them because he cares only for the elect. This does not fit the revelation we have of God in Jesus Christ.**

**If people are lost without hope they would not feel awful for their folly in rejecting Christ, but they would cry out in hell against God who arbitrarily condemned them and chose others. As Wesley said, "His death was on behalf of all men; otherwise, those for whom**

**he did not die have every reason to complain." Wesley said of the limited atonement, "I could sooner be a Turk, a Deist, yea an atheist, then I could believe this. It is less absurd to deny the very being of God than to make Him out an almighty tyrant." Calvinism has been modified a great deal, but still the fact remains that if Christ did not die for all, He has arbitrarily left some to hopeless damnation.**

**Scripture is clear that God's plan includes all men, and every creature who will be lost will not be so because God made no provision. We read in I John 2:2, "And he is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the whole world." Verse 6 here in I Tim. 2 says, "Who gave himself a ransom for all." In 4:10 we read, "The living God, who is the Savior of all men, specially of them who believe." This gives a real clue to the whole problem. How can God be the Savior of all men? He has to have made provision for all men in Christ, but only those who believe will actually be saved. This means that though the atonement is unlimited, the application is limited. And so it comes out at the same place as Calvinism, but it makes the lost guilty for being lost because they do not believe, rather than making God guilty because he did not provide for their salvation.**

**In II Peter 2:1 we read, "...there will be false teachers among you. They will secretly introduce destructive heresies, even denying the sovereign Lord who bought them..." This verse shows that even those who will be lost were bought by the blood of Christ. Every man is potentially saved, but only those who believe are actually saved. Whosoever will may come, for the atonement is objectively universal, but it is applied subjectively only to those who actually come. God demands response from men before He saves. All could be saved, but all will not be saved because they will not respond.**

**This means that both views agree that not all men will be saved. The limited atonement view says it is because God has not made**

**provision for all. The unlimited atonement view says it is because even though provision is made for all, many will not come. Both are orthodox, and both are held by outstanding Christian leaders. Many factors determine why one will choose a view. My own conviction is that the passages that refer to Christ dying for all are clear, and they are tremendous news. You can preach and witness with confidence that all can be saved. If some could not, then you never know when you are wasting your time. I cannot escape the Scripture and logic that makes me convinced that Christ died for all people.**

## **8. LEARNING FROM YOUTH Based on I Tim. 4:12**

**A Sunday school teacher was telling her class of girls about how the children of Israel carried things out of Egypt, and of how the children of Israel carried the Tabernacle in the wilderness, and of how the children of Israel crossed the Red Sea, and of how the children of Israel built the temple. Finally one little girl interrupted and asked, "Didn't the parents ever do anything in the Old Testament?" We all know, of course that the parents were called children because all of God's people are called children. One of the things we know about children is that they tend to have conflict, and this is often the case between the elder children called adults, and the younger children called youth.**

**The battle of the ages has been a battle through the ages. The one thing we know for sure about the younger generation is that it will grow up to worry and complain about the younger generation. This has been the case ever since Adam and Eve saw their children going to the dogs. Ancient Assyrian tablets tell of the problems of society with youth. Ancient Greeks complained about youths bad**

**manners and contempt for authority. A record from 450 B.C. says, "Children are now tyrants and not servants of the household. They no longer rise when elders enter the room. They contradict their parents, chatter before company, gobble up their food and tyrannize their teachers."**

**Peter the monk wrote in 1274 A.D., "The world is passing through troubled times. The young people of today think of nothing but themselves. They have no reverence for parents or old age. They are impatient of all restraint. They talk as if they alone knew everything, and what passes for wisdom with us is foolishness with them." The poet has captured the whole history of adult and youth relationships in these few lines-**

**My granddad, viewing earth's warm cogs,  
Said things were going to the dogs;  
His granddad in his house of logs  
Swore things were going to the dogs;  
His granddad in the Flemish bogs  
Vowed things were going to the dogs;  
His granddad in his old skin togs  
Said thing were going to the dogs.**

**It is little wonder that man has not progressed morally and spiritually with such a persistent pessimistic philosophy hanging over the heads of every generation. A young person usually rises no higher than the level of adult expectation, and as long as adults expect them to go to the dogs many youth will remain slaves to their mere animal nature. Since today's adults were yesterday's dogs we could hardly expect things to be any different. This is why man can never find a solution to his folly apart from the Gospel of Christ, which can change human nature and send it climbing heavenward rather than downward to the dogs. Man's natural tendency is downward, and unless there is some factor introduced into his**

**nature, which is not available through any natural source, he can never escape the vicious cycle of wasting his youth like a fool, and then condemning the next generation for not seeing that they also are being fools.**

**Many non-Christians recognize the follies of their youth, and they are concerned that their children do not make the same mistakes, but it is usually a futile effort. Some having tried everything but Jesus have become total pessimists. W. H. Ireland, for example, wrote,**

**All the world's a mass of folly,  
Youth is gay, age melancholy;  
Youth is spending, age is thrifty,  
Mad at twenty, cold at fifty;  
Man is naught but folly's slave,  
From the cradle to the grave.**

**Most do not see things quite so dark as this, however, but they see the world as at least half hopeless. Adults think that hopeless half is the youth, and the youth think it is the adults. Christians ought to be able to rise above this limited vision and see that though people of all ages can be fools, so also people of all ages can be wise and saintly. The Scripture says that your old men shall dream dreams and your young men shall see visions. The ideal is when youth and adults are one in their relationship to God and in receiving His revelation.**

**The Bible honors both the old and the young. God sees great potential in both, and He has used both marvelously time and time again to accomplish His will in history. You have the infant Moses, the child Samuel, the teenage Joseph, the young man Daniel, the middle age King David, and old Methuselah. From the cradle to the grave all people are potential pearls in the treasure chest of God's purpose. The Christian can see youth going to the dogs as has every**



**other generation, but he can also see that by the grace of God those who receive Christ can surpass the older generation in godliness, and in reaching the world with the Gospel. Christian adults must recognize that they have not arrived. There is a great deal further to go in making Christianity relevant in our modern world. Adults must look to youth to do what they have not yet done. They must encourage youth and even learn from them.**

**Youth has a marvelous ingenuity for developing new ways to be unacceptable, but this ingenuity can be channeled right, and it can be used to develop new ways of communicating God's Word to lost people. A young person on the right track, who is captivated by the person and truth of Christ can teach adults plenty. Paul knew this, and that is why he chose a young man like Timothy to serve with him, and to go back to Ephesus to work out the problems there. Timothy had begun his service for Christ as a teenager. He has now grown into manhood, but compared to the vast majority of early church leaders he was still only a youth. Paul knew that the older Christians of Ephesus would not easily submit to being taught by young Timothy. That day was no different than any other. In fact, early Christians watched youth with an even more critical eye than we do today. Church leaders were expected to be older and more mature. This put young Timothy at a disadvantage. Paul wrote to Timothy and said in I Tim. 4:12, "Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in life, in love, in faith and in purity."**

**Paul's statement to Timothy abolishes adult domination in the spiritual realm. Mere passing of time does not make one a better Christian. It can even have the opposite effect. Age does not indicate what ones quality of soul is. A teenager can be a far more mature Christian than a 50 year old who found Christ at age 9, but who remained on that level the rest of his life. Paul is saying that youth dedicated to Christ can be an example worthy of being**

**imitated by those who are much older. It is possible for youth to teach adults something about Christian commitment, character and conduct.**

**This is a challenge that is greater than most youth can handle. Edmund Burke said, "The arrogance of age must submit to be taught by youth." This is nonsense unless the youth have, like Timothy, demonstrated in practical ways their devotion to Christ. It is only those young people who catch the vision of how important it is to live for Christ now who can ever be teachers of adults. Youth with a vision and a committed life to Christ can inspire the whole church. Youth looks ahead and not back to the good old days like older people tend to do. They have no grand old days, and so their dreams are about the future and the good new days ahead that they anticipate. This is an important outlook on life that the church needs. It needs the youth's point of view to keep from being discouraged.**

**The church needs the constant reminder to her youth that every generation is a whole new world to conquer. Alexander the Great is said to have wept at the early age of 29 because there were no more worlds to conquer. This can never be the attitude of the Christian, for every generation is a new world to conquer. Young people live in a world that has just begun. They live in a world of vast millions who are just beginning their own history. Christian young people must see this and yield their lives to Christ to reach this new generation. Young people reaching their generation would challenge Christians of every age to reach out to their own generation. Youth cannot reach the whole world, but if they reach their generation they will set an example for all generations, and that is God's will for Christian youth.**

**Paul said that Timothy was not to let others despise his youth, but he may not have even considered the thought that Timothy**

**might despise his own youth. This is one of the major problems among young people. They despise being young. Youth thinks of their youth like a disease, and the quicker you can get over it the better. They become fanatical in trying to become adults. If youth are going to the dogs faster today than ever before, it is because they are becoming more like adults faster than ever before. It use to be that dating was something a young person looked forward to as a step toward independent adulthood, but now they begin going steady as juniors. Most of the status symbols of youth are adult vices or possessions. Young people are conformists to the poor patterns of life established by adults.**

**Sex problems are so great among young people simply because they refuse to be young people. They despise being youth who have to wait, grow and learn. They want everything the adult world has now, and so they indulge in what was once for adults only. They quickest way to draw a crowd of teens is to advertise that it is for adults only. Adults know this too, that is why the most exploited people in the world are teenagers. Millions of dollars are spent every year in an attempt to get youth to choose adult vices.**

**Paul's advise to Timothy is relevant on this point, even though he was not looking from this point of view. Adults despise youth when they deprive it of its values. The Christian teenager must be one who resists the pressure of being an adult. You have many years to be adults, but only a short time to be a youth. Shakespeare said that youth is a stuff that will not endure. You need to make the most of your youth rather than try to eliminate it. It is to adulthood what the foundation is to a building. A good youth will determine one's values for the rest of life. The tragedies of millions of young lives are summed up in this poem:**

**The spring is past, and yet it hath not sprung;  
The fruit is dead, and yet the leaves are green;**

**My youth is gone, and yet I am but young.**

**This is the song of countless numbers of young people who despise their youth and sought to indulge in all the vices of adulthood. They do not realize the value of youth until they are forced by their folly to bear the burdens of adult life. Young people are to stay young as long as they can, and not let the world drag them into adulthood. They are to use their youth for the glory of God, and like Timothy, be an example of believers that will even teach adults. If you will be youth for Christ, you will also be adults for Christ.**

**It is one of the biggest mistakes that young people make when they fail to realize they can be examples to adults. We always think about adults being examples to the children, but it works both ways. Back in 1959 a 13-year-old boy by the name of Robert Hill read of how Dr. Schweitzer had started a work in Africa to heal the sick blacks who had no doctor. He wanted to help, but he had so little. He sent his little anyway. He sent one bottle of aspirin. The newspaper got the story of how he sent this one bottle and it spread all over Italy where he was because his father was in the U. S. Army and was stationed there. This boys example of concern to do his little part caused others to send their little as well. It ended up that 400 thousand dollars worth of medicine was sent to Dr. Schweitzer.**

**Little Robert was flown 7000 miles to visit Dr. Schweitzer in Africa. He was given this reward because his example led to thousands of people being cared for and cured. You do not have to wait until you grow up to be a great example. You can be that now, and you can lead adults to do greater things for God. God is looking for anyone who will love His Son, and then show the love of His Son to others.**

**A troop of Boy Scouts were on a summer hike in the woods**

when they came upon an old abandon section of railroad track that was about a block long. One by one the boys tried to walk the track but soon lost their balance and fell off. Two boys were whispering to each other, and then they suddenly shouted out that they could walk the whole length of the track and not fall off once. The rest of the boys teased them as big boosters and made it clear they doubted that these two were any better than the rest of them. They challenged the two to prove their boast, and that was what they were waiting to hear. They jumped up on the track opposite of each other and held out their hands, and with each helping the other balance they walked to the end easily. They were clever boys, but the fact is, all of us can be clever in life and do many things we could not do alone by giving each other a helping hand.

Jesus gave His hand to us so we could walk through life knowing that if we fall he would pick us up and help us keep our balance. He wants us to do the same for each other and give a helping hand. In 1860 just a few months before the Civil War began a girl named Juliette was born in Savannah, Georgia. She came to be called Daisy by her family and friends. Her father was a soldier in the Confederate Army. Her mother was from the North, and so her 3 uncles fought for the Union. This is what a Civil War is-a family fighting itself. Daisy had 3 sisters and 2 brothers, and it was a very happy home.

Her father was wounded by the Yanks, and her own uncle led the bombardment that sent shells into her own back yard. But being related to the victorious Yanks when they captured Savannah may have saved their lives, for they were permitted to leave the city and go to her grandfathers home in Chicago. As a young girl Daisy loved to play games with a large group of children. She loved to use her imagination and play helpful games like sewing things for a poor family. She worked hard in school, but she loved to draw so much she was often scolded for drawing in class. She had a need for

meeting needs. She saved another child from drowning. She would visit a woman that others avoided because she had a skin disease and she would read to her. She even helped her mother organize a hospital. She used her youth to help others.

When she grew up she married William Low at the age of 26. It was a marvelous wedding, but a grain of rice lodged in her ear and she went completely deaf in that ear. She moved to England with her new husband. At age 50 she felt useless after her husband died. In 1911 she met Sir Robert Bowden-Powell who had founded the Boy Scouts just 3 years earlier. His book on scouting for boys was a great success, and the movement was growing rapidly. He persuaded Daisy to start a company of girls and she did it. She invited every girl she could on Saturday afternoon. Only 7 girls came but they had a good time.

She went back to London and started a club for poor girls. Then she came back to Savannah, Georgia where she began the Girl Scouts Of America. She got other women involved and then moved on to start other clubs. In 1913 Daisy returned to Savannah to launch a national organization. She traveled widely to get the movement to spread across the country. In 1915 the first Girl Scout Convention was held in Washington, D. C. She did so much for girls because recognized their potential. She said, "The angel Gabriel couldn't make them take what they don't want." She was successful because she gave them what they wanted and what was good for them.

Daisy died on Jan. 17, 1927. She was buried in her Scout uniform. The nation honored her by naming a ship after her and in 1948 issued a commemorative stamp for her. Thirteen million girls have been trained around the world to be better citizens and better adults because of one girl who did not despise her youth.

**History is filled with stories of people who used their youth wisely and as a result became adults who made a major difference in the world. Don't waste this precious resource that so quickly passes away. Use it wisely and do not let any despise your youth, especially you. Dedicate it to the Lord Jesus Christ, and pray that God will make you an example of such value that even adults can learn from you.**

## **9. THE PARADOX OF MONEY Based on I Tim. 6:3-10,17-19**

**Someone said, life is an everlasting struggle to keep money coming in, and teeth, hair, and vital organs from coming out. Few have known this better than General Ulysses S. Grant. He led the armies of the North to victory in the Civil War, and was twice elected president of the United States. He was a fairly wealthy man when he retired from public office, but he proved that the wealthy have problems with money too. They make mistakes on a grander scale. Grant invested his capital in a new Wall Street investment firm operated by a smooth talking young man, whom Grant considered a financial wizard. If the ability to make money disappear was what he meant, then he was a wizard, indeed, for Grant lost everything, and at 62 he was penniless.**

**Among his many friends was Samuel Clemens who had published many successful books under the name of Mark Twain. Clemens convinced Grant he should write about the Civil War, and he would publish his book. Grant signed the contract and got to work producing two volumes that rank among the world's great military narratives. Grant got 10 thousand in advance, and his widow got 200 thousand in royalties. His heirs also got close to half a million. Clemens made a fortune on the deal, and he decided to try**

**it with two other famous generals. It didn't work, and Clemens had some reverses that led him to go bankrupt at age 59. He too made a come back, and when he died in 1910 he left his heirs over half a million.**

**These two famous men illustrate the universal battle of life-how to make money; how to keep it, and how to make it count. The Christian does not escape this battle at all. The Christian spends a large portion of life engaged in making, spending, giving, saving, and losing money. What makes this hard is the Christian is not endowed with any special gift that enables him to be any wiser than the non-Christian in his management of money. That is why the New Testament is so full of warnings about money, and the danger of being obsessed by it. There is also, as in our text, a lot of New Testament advice on how to use money wisely.**

**All of this would be unnecessary if Christians were just naturally financial wizards, but this is not the case. Martin Luther was one of the great theological minds of history, but he had no skill whatever with money management. At age 42 he had not yet saved a penny. When he married Katherine Von Bora she discovered he was a money management drop out, who let money slip through his fingers with no accounting for where it went. She had to tell their banker not to honor a draft unless she first approved it. She had to take over to protect him from himself. This story has been repeated over and over again in the lives of Christian leaders.**

**C.S. Lewis was one of the most brilliant Christians of the 20th century, but he had no sense of money management. When Joy Davidman married him, she found that he had thousands of pounds he didn't even know he had. He also had a small fortune in his checking account, and this was back in the day when there was no interest on it. She quickly got it into a savings account.**



**One of the reasons many genius type people are not good money managers is because money is not that important to them. They are preoccupied with other and greater things. Einstein, for example, sometimes used his check as a book mark, and then turned it into the library. Robert Frost wrote,**

**Never ask of money spent  
Where the spender thinks it went.  
Nobody was ever meant  
To remember or invent  
What they did with every cent.**

**It is admirable to be preoccupied with values greater than money, and not to be obsessed with it. Prov. 3:13-14 says, "Blessed is the man who finds wisdom, the man who gains understanding. For she is more profitable than silver and yields better returns than gold." Luther and Lewis were wise in devoting their minds to greater values than money management. But the higher wisdom yet is to know how to use money wisely without it being the dominant occupation of your mind. The Proverbs also speak highly of the values of money. Prov. 10:15-16 says, "The wealth of the rich is their fortified city, but poverty is the ruin of the poor. The wages of the righteous brings them life, but the income of the wicked brings them punishment." The balance life calls for both the avoidance of addiction to money, and the application of the advantages of money. In other words, money is a paradox. It is both dangerous and delightful; a curse and a blessing.**

**Paul says the love of money is the root of all evil, and Mark Twain said, the lack of money is the root of all evil. The one does not eliminate the other, for Twain's remark compliments Paul's. It is lack of money that leads people to such an obsessive love of it that they do all kinds of evil to get it. The point is, it is hard to say anything about money,**

either negative or positive, that cannot be demonstrated to be a valid statement. The poem, The Song Of Silver says,

Doug from the mountain-side, washed in the glen  
Servant am I or the master of men.  
Steal me, I curse you,  
Earn me, I bless you;  
Grasp me and hand me, a friend I shall possess you.  
Lie for me, die for me, covet me, take me,  
Angel or devil, I am what you make me.

This is just what Paul is saying in our text. Paul recognizes fully the paradox of money, and so he covers both sides by sharing warnings as to its dangers, and wisdom as to its delights. If we are going to open our homes to Christ, we will have to be aware that He is aware of how we see and use money. This is a vital part of our life for Him, for money is a major means by which we become a part of His upper class, which is the servant class. It is important that we have a good grasp of both the dangers and delights of money. First lets look at-

## **I. THE DANGERS OF MONEY.**

The primary danger is in its power to deceive us into believing it is a substitute for God. Paul says the eagerness to be rich has led some to wander from the faith. Moneytheism- the almighty dollar replaces monotheism. Christians can be deceived into thinking of it as a substitute for their love. They expect money to convey their love, and solve all problems in relationships. Joyce Landolf in her book, Tough And Tender writes, "We seem to have accepted money as the cure-all for every disease, need, or problem imaginable. A man who has not said one real thing to his wife in years shrugs his shoulders and says, 'I don't know what she wants-she's got everything. She can go out and buy anything. She's got the house,

**clothes, and tons of things. What else does she need?' He has made the money, bought the myth, and paid for it. All he has to show for himself is a large brick wall made up of material possessions which stand solidly between him and his wife. He thought his money would buy a bridge; instead it has built a wall,...."**

**That is why money is so dangerous. It makes so many people sincere in their conviction that it will be the cure-all. There are few human beings alive who have not sincerely thought that a million dollars would solve all of their problems. It could, in fact, do just that, but it could also add a whole new batch that you never dreamed of having. Paul says those who desire to get rich mess their lives up good. Paul must have had some good examples in his day, but we have many more in our day. Kit Konolige has written a book called, The Richest Woman In The World. It is a fascinating book, not about common place millionaires, but about those more rare people who have over 150 million. There are only between 400 and 500 such people in the United States, and 58 of them are women.**

**Before you turn green with envy, you need to know how much it cost to be this rich. First of all, you are usually widowed or divorced. If you are still married to a man who has not worked himself to death, you probably have an unfaithful husband, and a very unhappy relationship. There is an excellent chance that you hate your kids, and the feeling is mutual. Many are the stories like that of John Dodge of the auto fortune, who in 1983 sued his mother for 4 million. She had just gone on a world wide shopping spree and had spent 11 million, so she was short of cash. She gave him 500,000, and that started a fight. The feuds and scandals, and the disgraceful behavior of the rich is all on record. We don't have to go by faith in Paul's warning, for we have all we need by sight.**

**Palm Beach Florida is the home of the super rich where their motto is, anything worth doing is worth doing to excess, and they**

**lived by that motto. It is a materialistic paradise, but it is an Eden after the fall, with drugs, divorce, immorality, suicide, prejudice, and all of the miseries of the heart that you find in the ghetto. They drowned their sorrows in expensive champagne rather than cheap wine, but it does not lead to anymore happiness. Many of those rich people spend a fortune on psychoanalysis. They have guilts that rob them of their peace of mind, and they can't be bought off. They live so often in fear. They have fear of someone kidnapping their children; fear of being robbed, and all sorts of fears about losing their money.**

**They are often depressed, for they have nothing to do. They don't have to do anything, and so they do those things that people do who don't have to do anything: They play, go to balls, socialize, and seldom do anything creative. This leads to them missing so much of the joy of life, for they miss creative work. They never know if anyone likes them for themselves, rather than their money, and they usually learn the hard way that they are targets of many fortune hunters and con games. Their temptation to do evil is overwhelming, because they can afford to do anything, and few can escape being corrupted by such power.**

**The point of all this, and we haven't started to cover it all, is that Paul is right, and it can be documented by history and contemporary life-money is dangerous. If you start falling in love with it, you will end up married to a financial frankenstein. It is a monster of a monster that will make you pay a price to be rich that is not worth it. Most people can't afford to be rich, but they do not realize it until it is too late. It is true that all of these problems are experienced by the poor and the middle class as well, but they have the hope that money will solve their problems. The rich have no such hope. Let's look now at-**

## **II. THE DELIGHTS OF MONEY.**

**In verses 17-19 Paul stresses two positive delights of money by saying it is the key to enjoyment, and to the service of others needs. God has given us everything He says for our enjoyment, and with the excess we can pass it on and help others to enjoy life. Money wisely used is a major factor in happiness, both for time and eternity, for a wise use of it in time will lay up treasure for you in eternity. In this chapter where Paul warns about the danger of the love of money, he also makes it clear that money can be a powerful agent of love. Paul's point in saying the love of money is the root of all kinds of evil was not to get Christians to hate money, but to get them to see that a proper use of money can make it the root of all kinds of good. You cannot serve God and mammon, but you can serve God with mammon.**

**This paragraph of Paul deals with the other side of the paradox, and makes money the friend of the Christian, and the tool by which he does the will of God. The majority of the things we enjoy in life, and which give us pleasure and grateful hearts, are those things that we have been able to make our own because we have had money. There is joy, not only in having food, shelter, and clothing, and all the security and self-esteem these provide, but there is joy in being able to provide these for those we love. Paul says that those who do not provide for their own are worse than infidels. Our happiness as people, and as Christians, is directly involved with the money we have to provide for our family.**

**In order to be generous you have to have an excess of money. It is hard for a starving man with a piece of crust to be generous. Only those who have more than they need can do good deeds, and meet the needs of those who do not have the necessities. In other words, one of the delights of money is that it gives you the ability to be a source of enjoyment for those beyond your family. The reason it is more blessed to give than to receive is, because when you are a giver it means you have been blest with excess wealth, and you already**

**enjoy what the receiver does, plus you get the added joy of being the source of their enjoyment. The receiver is blest, but the giver is doubled blest, and this is one of the delights of money being wisely used. It is a powerful force for good in the world.**

**Obedience to all of Christ's commands to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, and in general meet the needs of suffering people, all depend on having money. The Good Samaritan could not have taken the beaten man to a inn and paid for his care had he not had enough money. His loving heart would not have mattered had he been broke, for he needed money to adequately meet this man's needs. Jesus could feed the 5,000 without an investment of funds, but He knows we cannot feed anyone without money, and so He knows that money is the key to caring about needy people. The ministries of the church all over the world depend upon God's people sharing their wealth.**

**Good money management enables the Christian to have more to give, and it helps the body of Christ do its job more effectively. Pharaoh saw in Joseph a man with a mind for management. He let him take over the management of Egypt's agriculture. Joseph developed a massive savings program, whereby he would save the abundance of the bountiful years to supply the need in the barren years. We do not know how many lives he saved, but on top of the Egyptian's, he saved his own family, and thereby the survival of God's people.**

**God's plan of salvation does include the idea of saving money, and the wise use of money. Jesus needed to earn money as a carpenter, and He needed a treasurer to take care of the purchases made for His band of disciples. There is no escape for the need for money, but if we have the right attitude, we can see it is a tool to help us be all that God wants us to be. You cannot be a steward of God if you do not have any money to manage.**

**Well done thou good and faithful servant was spoken to one who had managed his master's money wisely. The wise use of money is a key measure of our maturity as stewards of the master. Every ministry in history has had to deal with money, and when it is not done wisely the kingdom suffers, but when it is done wisely the kingdom prospers.**

**Evangeline Booth after 30 years of leading the Salvation Army had 70 million dollars in capital and property to leave to her successors. She lived a life of very careful economy, and even though she was offered the chance to live like royalty, and was given the chance to stay in the most luxurious places, she refused lest people think she was using donations for her benefit. Rich people knew she used her money to help the poor, and that is why she received checks for up to a half a million dollars.**

**R. G. LeTourneau was one of the greatest stewards of God in history. When the book, God Runs My Business, was published in 1941, he had already given 10 million to the cause of Christ. His motto was, "Not how much of my money do I give to God, but how much of God's money do I keep for myself." He recognized that all he had was a gift from God, and his job was to use it wisely for his master, and he did.**

**When Billy Graham and George Beverly Shea and Cliff Borrows, and others, sat down to plan the strategy of their evangelism, they looked at the issues that had to be corrected that made evangelists unpopular. The number one problem was money. The constant begging and manipulation of people for money gave evangelists a bad name. They wanted to be different, and they wanted to use money wisely, and this made Graham the major evangelist of this century. Back in 1952, a millionaire came to Graham. He said he would underwrite his ministry so that he would not have to worry about finances. Graham refused the offer, for he said he gets**

**thousands of letters a week with a dollar or five dollars in them, and he said, "My work would nose-dive immediately if they knew that a rich man was underwriting me."**

**All of live on both sides of the paradox of money, but the more we become aware of the presence of Christ in our lives, the more we will move from the dangers of money into the delights of money. One of the most dramatic examples of this is the life of Mary K. Beard. Evelyn Christensen titles her story in her book, What Happens When God Answers. She was abused by her alcoholic father who broke her back, all her ribs, and her nose twice. She ran away from home at 15 and married the first man she could find. He was a gambler and a thief. For 5 years she followed him in a continuous crime spree. She lived with beautiful clothes, jewels, and a costume built car. They lived for money, for it was their God.**

**They were eventually arrested and sentenced to 21 years in prison. Mary repented in prison and fell on the concrete floor, and gave her life to Christ. On March 16, 1973 this money worshiper became a worshiper of Christ, and what a chance this made in how she saw and used money. She first of all became the first woman in the United States to receive a graduate degree while serving time in prison. She gave her mind to Christ. She then decided to minister to people who did not have the money to enjoy some of the common blessings of life. Many prisoners families do not have money for Christmas presents, for example. She started what is called Angel Tree. Children of prisoners write down on a piece of paper what they would like, and these are hung on Christmas trees in churches, shopping malls, and public places. People take an angel from the tree and purchase the gift written on it. This nation wide project has provided presents for 31,500 children, as of 1987.**

**Jesus enjoyed being rich, for it was only by His infinite worth that He could purchase our redemption. If He had no worth, He**



could not have been our Savior. All giving depends on having. Having can be a delight as well as a danger. It was Christ's delight to give up His riches and become poor that we might be made rich. One of the reasons we can rejoice at communion is because it represents the basis for our inheriting eternal life and all the riches that accompany it. Thanks to Jesus we who love Him will be rich forever. The question for us is, is Jesus pleased with how we use what He has given us? Are others blest because we have learned to use money wisely? If so, then we are on the right side of the paradox of money.

#### **10. THE LOVE OF MONEY Based on I Tim. 6:6-10**

When a Mr. Blodgett won 25 thousand dollars on a TV program the master of ceremonies asked him what he was going to do with the money. He replied, "It will probably all go to charity." The audience broke into a tremendous round of applause while the band played for he's a jolly good fellow. After the excitement subsided the master of ceremonies turned to the winners wife and asked if that met with her approval. She responded, "Why certainly my name is Charity." Here was a man who knew how to avoid a fight about money. He simply surrendered. Most mates do not do so, however. Studies among students indicate that the cause for most arguments in the home are about money. One man said his home split up for religious differences. His wife worshipped money and he didn't have any. Many men complain that their wife's favorite book is the checkbook. Once they start one they can't put it down until they finish it. Robert Schuller said, "Whether a man ends up with a nest egg or a goose egg often depends on the chick he marries."

One of Henry Ward Beecher's favorite stories was about a young man who applied for a job in a New England factory. Asking for the owner, he was ushered into the presence of a very nervous man. He

said to the young man, "The only vacancy we have is vice-president. The man who takes the job must shoulder all my cares." The young man responded, "That is a tough job. What is the salary?" The owner replied, "I'll pay you ten thousand a year if you will take over all my worries." "Where is the ten thousand coming from," the young man asked suspiciously. "That my friend," replied the owner, "Is your first worry."

Worry over where the money is coming from has always been a wide spread practice. Epicurus, the ancient philosopher, said that being rich did not end your worries, but just gave you different worries. A modern writer said, "I know at last what distinguishes men from animals: Financial worries." This is not the whole picture, but it is a fact, and the fact of men being worriers over money is becoming more and more evident as prices continue to rise and taxes threaten to gobble up what inflation has not already devoured.

Bird images have always been common on money. One of the famous coins of Alexander the Great had an eagle on it, which is also true of our American currency. A modern poet sees in this a symbol probably not intended by the engravers. He writes, "Eagles on dollars are proper and right, because they symbolize swiftness of flight." Money talks, but for most people it never stays around long enough for a good conversation. Richard Armor said, "That money talks I'll not deny, I heard it once: it said goodbye." Money still talks today but it makes less cents.

All of this negative thinking about money as being a cause for worry and hard to hold on too is based on the assumption that money is good and nice to have in sufficient quantities. Why worry about it, or be concerned at its departure if it is not good? Christians have all the same complaints and so they too feel that it is good to have money, and that it is a positive good. Why then is the most

**famous statement in the Bible about money that, "the love of money is the root of all evil?" It is often misquoted as money is the root of all evil. But Paul does not intend to convey the idea that money is in itself evil in any way. It is the love of it, and the greed and avarice and covetousness this leads to that is the root of all kinds of evil. Failure to make this important distinction has led to many false attitudes based on this verse.**

**Before we look at what Paul is saying we must first look at what he is not saying. We must first speak in defense of money as a good thing. Paul knew that money was essential for maintaining the church. He urged Christians to give generously every week. He also sought to collect money for the poor Christians in Jerusalem. Paul was not anti-money man. He was only anti-avarice. Money can be used to fulfill the will of God and provide most everything man needs for happy and effective living. Even the higher things of life an spiritual experiences depend upon ones ability to buy good books, music, and art. But even the thousand and one commonplace necessities are not to be treated lightly. Many testimonies can be summed up in the words of an unknown poet.**

**Money ain't everything people declaim,  
To which I offer a faint  
And timid objection, and beg 'em to name  
A few of the things that it ain't.  
It's comfort and shelter from wind and from rain,  
It's chickens that stew in the pot,  
It's doctors and nurses when you are in pain  
What is there that money is not?**

**Money ain't everything-money won't buy  
Happiness, optimist shout.  
Still, it will get quite a lot that a guy  
Cannot be happy without;**

**It pays for the gas and the lights and the rent.  
It settles your bills at the store;  
Money ain't everything, but its percent  
Is ninety-nine point forty-four.**

**We might quibble with him on his percentage, but we must admit that even if money is not everything, it is plenty. All of the blessings of our heritage as Christians and Americans come to us because of money well spent. The first Christian church in Europe began in the house of Lydia. She was a woman of means who spent her money for the cause of Christ. Without men of means like Joseph of Arimathea, Jesus would not have had a tomb and a decent burial. Without men like Barnabas who gave so much to the early church, many who became Christians at Pentecost would have been poverty stricken. If time permitted, we could trace the history of Christian giving and show that everything we have to day for Christian growth is due to money well spent by those who have gone before. We have Bibles in abundance only because of wise Christian investments of the past.**

**Our political heritage is another story connected with money. In 1780 congress did not have enough gold and silver and had to go to paper money. Britain flooded the country with counterfeit money to try and paralyze business. The dollar sank to a worth of two cents, and there would have been economic collapse had not Robert Morris and a few other wealthy patriots come forward with their private fortunes to save the colonies from ruin.**

**Collectively we are all blessed because of the good power of money. On the individual level the same thing can be demonstrated from history. Abraham Lincoln at 18 was very poor. He had made a small boat and was asked by two men to take them to a steam boat out in the river. He did so and as he lifted up their trunk to them they each threw a silver half dollar in the floor of his boat. Later,**

looking back on this event, Lincoln considered it a turning point in his life and he said, "I could scarcely believe my eyes when I saw the money. I could scarcely credit that I, a poor boy, had earned a dollar in less than a day...the world seemed wider and fairer before me. I was a more hopeful and confident being from that time." Two unknown men spending fifty cents each changed the life a boy who went on to change the history of a nation, and whose image is now on our nations money. When was a dollar ever better spent, and who can deny the power of money for good?

The point of these illustrations is not to try and cover up the fact that the Son of God was betrayed for 30 pieces of silver, or the millions of other dastardly deeds done for money. The point is to give us a balanced perspective so that we are aware that the Bible and life support both a negative and positive view of money. In one situation money might represent the opposite of the kingdom of God, as when Jesus said, "You cannot serve God and mammon." In other cases the kingdom and money are made one, as when the kingdom is likened to treasure buried in a field, or to a pearl of great price. The biblical picture is not always one of God or gold, Christ or cash, salvation or silver. It is often master and money together, as when he who was rich became poor that we might be made rich, or as when we are said to be bought with a price. Jesus paid it all, and He was our ransom.

But you say, this is not the giving of money, but the giving of himself as a sacrifice for my sin. Yes, but this is precisely the concept of how money began in our heritage. It was in association with the sacrifice of life to God. In the ancient world food was the most important fact of life. It took most of man's time to supply himself and his family with food. Cooperation within the family in the getting and sharing of food was the first sharing of wealth. Rich men in the Old Testament were rich because of their large supply of food. Abraham and Job both had a great many cattle. The Roman

**word for money comes from their word for cattle. The word fee is believed to have derived from the Gothic word for cattle. The Indian rupee comes from the Sanskrit term for cattle. The word capital comes from a word which originally designated cattle counted by the head.**

**Why all this connection between money and cows? Because the original money was not coins but cattle. A bull was offered in sacrifice to a god with the idea in mind that it was an exchange for a good crop and protection. People gave their gods payment and expected something in return. The bull was the money they paid to their god. The bull became the standard unit of value in the Graeco-Roman world. At the sacrifice of a bull a man could invite his creditors, and they would be paid off with so much of the meat. The priest was likewise paid with part of the meat. When coins did develop they were made by the priests and minted in the temple. They had the images of bulls and the gods to whom the sacrifice was offered.**

**All of this helps us see the connection of Christ and money. As our ransom Jesus was our money. The lamb offered in the Old Testament was an economic sacrifice. You had to be well off to afford it, and if you were too poor you had to offer turtle doves or pigeons instead. The lamb was a significant part of your economic security. Jesus as the Lamb of God offered himself as a ransom price for all men. He did not buy us and redeem us with silver or gold, but with the original currency of life itself, which he gave in sacrifice. Economic terms are used all through the New Testament to describe this transaction. We are bought with a price, and our debt to God is paid in full. The cross settled our account with heaven, and now we can approach God, not as beggars and debtors, but as children of the kingdom. Jesus made us rich before God through His sacrifice. We have infinite credit in the bank of heaven and can draw on it daily as we pray for the forgiveness of our debts.**

**The value of all this is to see just how positive and precious the whole concept of money can be in relationship to the plan of salvation. It also helps us understand the negative of money better. Anything that has the power to counterfeit the power of Christ tends to become a great idol in competition with Christ. Because money does have great power, and because Christ has entered into an identification with riches as the Pearl of great price, it is very easy for man to slip from the worship of Christ to the worship of cash. Money can easily become the master of one's life, and that is why in spite of all the good things we can say about it we must also take heed to the negatives and see that the love of it is the root of all kinds of evil. Many feel that Paul was simply stating a common proverb of his day.**

**Democritus said, "Love of money is the metropolis of all evils." Phocylides put it, "The love of money is the mother of all evils." Philo spoke of, "Love of money which is the starting place of the greatest transgressions of the law." What Paul says here is not a special revelation from God, but a matter of observation which can be verified by men everywhere. From the biblical perspective, however, money is seen as a rival to God when it is loved. The love of God is the first commandment, and whatever causes men to deviate from this is a root from which every evil will spring.**

**Love for God must be supreme and exclusive. You cannot love and serve two masters. If you love God, you will use money as a means of expressing that love. If you love money you will use God as a means to increase your store of money. These are the very people that Paul is warning in this passage. It is dangerous to associate gain with godliness, and in verse 6 Paul warns Christians to stay away from those who do this. This is hard advise to follow when Christians get so filled with the world's values that they equate success with one's income bracket and promote tithing as a means of getting rich with God's help.**

**If money was evil in itself it would be easy to avoid its danger, but it is a powerful force for good too, and that is where the problem lies. Satan's best weapons are good things that can be abused. He comes as an angel of light, and this is what deceives the believer who is not aware of the danger of good as a source of evil. It was the goodness and beauty of the fruit that God had made that caused it to be such a temptation to Adam and Eve. The fall of man came by way of goodness misused. Evil is a parasite in this world, and it cannot survive on its own. It can only live and grow on that which is good. Evil that has no connection with good cannot last.**

**It is money's goodness that makes it a root from which all evil can spring. Money has very godlike qualities, and those who worship it could very well sing, "On cash the solid rock I stand, all other ground is sinking sand." They can point to the proof of their faith and show that money is the means by which man has gained all the things that he calls precious. Their motto is expressed by Mark Twain who said, "The lack of money is the root of all evil." Money worshippers have their concept of sin also. Listen to George Bernard Shaw when he says, "The evil to be attacked is not sin, suffering, greed, priest craft, kings craft, demagoguery, monopoly, ignorance, drink, war, pestilence, nor any of the other scapegoats which reformers sacrifice, but simply poverty."**

**Poverty or the lack of money is the root of all evil, and so the love of money is the key to salvation. Money can lift men from the miry clay of poverty and set them on the solid rock of plenty. What of those who are not of the elect, and who will not be good even when they receive the salvation which money offers? Shaw says that the god of money is a just god and will weed out the non-elect. He writes, "Not the least of its virtues is that it destroys base people as certainly as it fortifies and dignifies noble people." The god of money has its hell as well as heaven. Those on their way to the paradise of plenty have their high priests, who is the banker. He can**



**intercede for all of their needs, and when they enter the temple of his bank he can supply all that is necessary for forgiveness of debts and the purchase of happiness. Money can empower and lift from the burden of taxes, rent, doctor bills, and all other obligations. It can clothe the naked, feed the hungry, and supply all our wants. A worshipper of money can say, "I can do all things through cash that strengthens me."**

**It is plain to see that money is an easy god to love, and the worshipper of it can easily win converts to it. It is likely the most popular of all the religions of the world, even though it is never listed among the world religions. There is no doubt that we live in a materialistic world, but there is likewise no doubt that this has always been true. Jesus said in the parable of the sower that some who believe the Gospel get choked out by the deceitfulness of riches. Paul says in our text that believers who coveted riches had wondered from the faith. One of the main causes for people drifting from Christ and the church has always been the love of money. This precious friend can become our pernicious foe if we let it win our lives over to it rather than to Christ and Him alone. The goal of the study of money is to lead us to become good stewards in which we and our money become servants of Christ. Money then becomes a source of much good and blessing to us and through us.**

