

1 Timothy

1:1 Paul, an apostle of the Messiah Jesus according to the command of God our Savior and the Messiah Jesus our hope¹ **1:2** to Timothy, my genuine child in the faith—grace, mercy, and *shalom* from God the Father and the Messiah Jesus our Lord.²

1:3 In so far as I persuaded you to remain in Ephesus while I proceeded to Macedonia, it was so that you may command some there not to teach differently,³ **1:4** nor to pay attention to myths and endless speculations, which bring about controversies rather than God's program of instruction in the context of belief.⁴

1:5 And the goal of this instruction is love from a pure heart, a good understanding, and an unhypocritical belief,⁵ **1:6** from which some have lost their way and wandered into worthless talk,⁶ **1:7** while desiring to be teachers of the Torah, but not understanding either what they are saying or the things about which they are speaking confidently.⁷

1:8 And we know that the Torah is good, if someone declares it correctly,⁸ **1:9** because we know this, that the Torah does not exist for a "righteous" person, but for the lawless and rebellious, for the ungodly and sinners, for the unholy and disrespectful, for killers of mothers and fathers, for murderers,⁹ **1:10** for sexually immoral people, homosexuals, kidnappers, liars, perjurers, and whatever else is contrary to sound teaching,¹⁰ **1:11** which is according to the gospel of the glory of the blessed God, with which I was entrusted.¹¹

1:12 I thank the Messiah Jesus, our Lord, for making me capable, because he considered me a person of the faith when he put me into service,¹² **1:13** even though I was formerly a blasphemer and persecutor and arrogant person. But I was shown mercy in that I acted ignorantly in unbelief.¹³ **1:14** And the grace of our Lord super-abounded while accompanied by the belief and love in the Messiah Jesus.¹⁴

1:15 The message is faithful and worthy of all acceptance, that the Messiah Jesus came into the world to save sinners, among whom I am foremost of all.¹⁵ **1:16** Nevertheless, on account of this I was shown mercy so that the Messiah Jesus may demonstrate in me, the foremost, all patience as an example for those who in the future would believe in him for eternal life.¹⁶

1:17 Now, to the King of the ages, to the immortal, invisible, only God, be honor and glory into the ages of ages. Amen.¹⁷

1:18 I exhort you, my child Timothy, with this exhortation, in accordance with the prophecies which have led the way for you, that you fight the good fight with them,¹⁸ **1:19** that you may have belief and a good understanding, which some have rejected and suffered shipwreck in regard to their belief,¹⁹ **1:20** among whom are Hymenaeus and Alexander, whom I have given over to Satan in order that they be taught not to blaspheme.²⁰

2:1 First of all, therefore, I urge that prayers, requests, petitions, and thanksgivings be made on behalf of all men,²¹ **2:2** including kings and all who are in a high position, so that we lead a tranquil and calm life in all proper regard and serious reverence for God.²²

2:3 This is good and acceptable before our Savior, God,²³ **2:4** who desires all men to be saved and to come to an understanding of truth.²⁴ **2:5** For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man, the Messiah Jesus,²⁵ **2:6** who gave himself as a ransom for all, the witness for its own times,²⁶ **2:7** for whose purpose I was appointed a spokesman and apostle (I speak the truth; I do not lie), and a teacher of the Gentiles in belief and truth.²⁷ **2:8** Therefore, I desire the men in every place to pray while lifting up holy hands without anger and dispute.²⁸

2:9 Likewise also I want their wives, with reverence and right thinking, to adorn themselves with modest dress, not with elaborate hairstyle and gold or pearls or expensive clothing,²⁹ 2:10 but what is fitting for wives—proclaiming regard for God through good works.³⁰

2:11 Let a wife learn in calmness in all submissiveness.³¹ 2:12 But I do not allow a wife to teach and dominate her husband, but to exist in calmness.³² 2:13 For Adam was formed first, then Eve.³³

2:14 And Adam was not deceived. But while the wife was being deceived, he came into transgression.³⁴ 2:15 And he will be saved through childbearing.³⁵

If they remain in belief, love, and holiness with good-thinking, 3:1 the statement is reliable.³⁶

If anyone aspires to be an overseer, he desires a good work.³⁷ 3:2 Therefore, it is necessary for the overseer to be beyond criticism—a man of one woman, level-headed, wise, morally behaved, a lover of strangers, a skillful teacher,³⁸ 3:3 not a drunkard, not a bully, but gentle, peaceable, free from the love of money,³⁹ 3:4 guiding well his own household, having children in submission with all reverence,⁴⁰ 3:5 (but if someone does not know how to guide his own household, how will he take care of the gathering of God?),⁴¹ 3:6 and not a new convert, so that he not become conceited and fall into the judgment of the devil.⁴² 3:7 And it is also necessary that he have a good testimony from those outside so that he does not fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.⁴³

3:8 It is necessary for God's agents likewise to be worthy of respect, not double-tongued, not addicted to much wine, not shamelessly greedy for money,⁴⁴ 3:9 holding on to the mystery of the faith with a pure understanding.⁴⁵ 3:10 And indeed let these be authenticated first. Then, let them serve because they are innocent of wrongdoing.⁴⁶

3:11 It is necessary for their wives likewise to be worthy of respect, not liars about people, level-headed, trustworthy in everything.⁴⁷

3:12 Let God's agents be men of one woman, guiding well their children and their own households.⁴⁸ 3:13 For those who serve well gain a good standing for themselves and much confidence in the belief which is in the Messiah Jesus.⁴⁹

3:14 I am writing these things to you, while hoping to come to you before long,⁵⁰ 3:15 but, if I am delayed, so that you may know how it is necessary to conduct oneself in the household of God, which is the gathering of the living God, the pillar and foundation of truth.⁵¹

3:16 And beyond question the mystery leading to godliness is great—

He was revealed in the flesh,
was justified by the Spirit,
was seen in conjunction with the *angeloi* [messengers],
was proclaimed among the nations,
was believed in the world,
and was taken up in glory.⁵²

4:1 And the Spirit clearly says that in times afterwards some will fall away from the faith because they are paying attention to deceitful spirits and teachings of demons,⁵³ 4:2 by means of the hypocrisy of liars who have had their own understanding permanently marked as with a branding iron,⁵⁴ 4:3 who hinder marriage and abstain from foods, which God created for sharing with thanksgiving for those who believe and who understand the truth,⁵⁵ 4:4 because the whole creation of God is good, and nothing is to be rejected but received with thanksgiving.⁵⁶ 4:5 For it is set apart in light of the statement of God and prayer.⁵⁷

4:6 By pointing out these things to the brothers, you will be a good servant of the Messiah Jesus, being skillful with the words of belief and of the good teaching which you have followed.⁵⁸ 4:7 And

reject pointless and useless myths, and instead train yourself towards godliness.⁵⁹ **4:8** For bodily training is profitable for a few things, but godliness is profitable for all things, because it contains the promise of life for now and the future.⁶⁰ **4:9** This statement is reliable and worthy of all approval.⁶¹

4:10 Towards this we labor and strive, because we have hoped in the living God who is the Savior of all men, especially of believers.⁶² **4:11** Proclaim and teach these things.⁶³

4:12 No one should belittle your youthfulness, but be an example of believers by means of your speaking, your lifestyle, your love, your belief, and your complete dedication.⁶⁴ **4:13** Until I come, pay attention to reading, to helping, to teaching.⁶⁵ **4:14** Do not neglect the spiritual gift in your case, which was given to you through a prophecy along with laying on of hands by the group of elders.⁶⁶ **4:15** Take care in regard to these things, be in these things, so that your progress will be evident to everyone.⁶⁷ **4:16** Give close attention to yourself and to teaching. Remain in them, for by doing this you shall indeed save yourself and those who listen to you.⁶⁸

5:1 You should not harshly rebuke an older man. Instead, appeal to him as a father, to young men as brothers,⁶⁹ **5:2** to older women as mothers, and to younger women as sisters—in all dedication.⁷⁰

5:3 Honor widows, the real widows.⁷¹ **5:4** And if any widow has children or grandchildren, let them first learn to act well towards their own house and to give back a payment to their parents, for this is acceptable before God.⁷² **5:5** And the real widow and the one who has been left alone has hoped in God and continues in entreaties and prayers night and day.⁷³ **5:6** But the one who indulges herself beyond the boundaries of moral propriety has died although she lives.⁷⁴ **5:7** And command these things so that they may be blameless.⁷⁵ **5:8** And if someone does not take care of his own, and especially his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.⁷⁶

5:9 Let a widow be enrolled who is not less than sixty years old, the wife of one man,⁷⁷ **5:10** being witnessed in good works—if she has raised her children, if she shows hospitality, if she washes the feet of the saints, if she helps those in trouble, and if she devotes herself to every good work.⁷⁸

5:11 But refuse younger widows, for when they are drawn away from the Messiah by their impulses, they desire to marry,⁷⁹ **5:12** incurring condemnation because they rejected the first belief.⁸⁰ **5:13** And at the same time the women are learning to be idle as they go around to houses. And not only are they idle but also gossips and busybodies, being speakers of things that are not fitting.⁸¹

5:14 Therefore I want young women to marry, to bear children, to run a household, and that no one give an opportunity for reproach to the enemy.⁸² **5:15** For already some have turned away to follow after Satan.⁸³ **5:16** If any believing woman has widows, let her assist them and let not the assembly be weighed down in order that it may assist those who are really widows.⁸⁴

5:17 As for the elders who lead well, let them be worthy of twice the honor, especially those who labor in the message and teaching.⁸⁵ **5:18** For the scripture says,

You shall not muzzle an ox when it is threshing <Deuteronomy 25:4>,

and

The laborer is worthy of his wages <summary of OT principle found in Leviticus 19:13, Numbers 18:31, Deuteronomy 24:15, etc.>.⁸⁶

5:19 Do not receive an accusation against an elder, except on the basis of two or three witnesses.⁸⁷ **5:20** Reprove the sinners before everyone in order that the rest may also have fear.⁸⁸

5:21 I solemnly charge before God, the Messiah Jesus, and the chosen *angeloi* [messengers] that you guard these things without partiality, while doing nothing according to favoritism.⁸⁹

5:22 Do not lay hands quickly on anyone, and do not share in the sins belonging to others. Keep yourself dedicatedly pure.⁹⁰ (**5:23** No longer drink water, but use a little wine on account of your stomach and your frequent ailments.⁹¹) **5:24** The sins of some men are very obvious, leading before them to judgment, while the sins follow after some.⁹² **5:25** Likewise also good works are obvious, and the works that have a characteristic otherwise are not capable of being hidden.⁹³

6:1 As many as who are slaves under the yoke, let them consider their own masters worthy of all honor so that the name of God and the teaching of the gospel are not blasphemed.⁹⁴ **6:2** And let those who have believing masters not despise them, because they are brothers. Instead let them rather be their slaves, because those who devote themselves to acts of goodness are believers and beloved.

Teach and proclaim these things.⁹⁵ **6:3** If someone teaches differently and does not agree with sound words from our Lord Jesus the Messiah and with teaching that is according to godliness,⁹⁶ **6:4** he has become proud, knowing nothing. Instead he has an unhealthy desire for debates and disputing of words, out of which come envy, strife, false ideas, evil opinions,⁹⁷ **6:5** and constant arguments among men who have been corrupted with respect to their minds and been deprived of the truth, supposing that godliness is the means of gaining wealth.⁹⁸

6:6 But godliness with contentment is a great means of gaining “wealth.”⁹⁹ **6:7** For we have brought nothing into the world, so that we can take nothing out.¹⁰⁰ **6:8** And if we have food and clothing, we shall be content with these,¹⁰¹ **6:9** while those who desire to get rich are falling into temptation and a trap and many foolish and harmful desires, which sink men into destruction and ruin.¹⁰² **6:10** For the love of money is the root of all kinds of evil, which some, desiring it, were led astray from the faith, and they pierced themselves through with many pains.¹⁰³

6:11 But you, O man of God, flee from these things, and pursue righteousness, godliness, belief, love, perseverance, and gentle humility.¹⁰⁴ **6:12** Fight the good fight of belief. Take hold of eternal life to which you were called, and to which you confessed the good confession before many witnesses.¹⁰⁵

6:13 I charge you before God who gives life to everyone and before the Messiah Jesus who bore witness to the good confession before Pontius Pilate,¹⁰⁶ **6:14** that you keep the instruction by being spotless and without reproach until the appearing of our Lord Jesus the Messiah,¹⁰⁷ **6:15** which He will reveal in their own times—

The blessed and only Ruler,
The King of those who reign as Kings and
The Lord of those who rule as Lords,¹⁰⁸
6:16 The only One having immortality,
The One dwelling in unapproachable light,
Which no one among men has seen and is able to see—
To Him be honor and eternal sovereignty. Amen.¹⁰⁹

6:17 To the rich in this age, charge them not to be arrogant and not to place their hope in the uncertainty of riches, but in God who causes all things richly for us for our enjoyment,¹¹⁰ **6:18** to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and sharing,¹¹¹ **6:19** while they store up for themselves a good foundation for the future, in order that they may take hold of life indeed.¹¹²

6:20 O Timothy, guard what has been entrusted to you, while avoiding worldly, foolish talk and contradicting statements of that which is falsely called knowledge,¹¹³ **6:21** on account of which some, because they profess it, have lost their way concerning the belief. Grace be with you.¹¹⁴

¹ Παῦλος ἀπόστολος Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ κατ' ἐπιταγὴν θεοῦ σωτῆρος ἡμῶν καὶ Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ τῆς ἐλπίδος ἡμῶν – Paul greets his audience, Timothy, in these first lines of the letter. He states that he is an “apostle,” one of 13 authoritative and inerrant spokesmen for the Messiah, who is Jesus of Nazareth. And he became an apostle by means of God’s and Jesus’ “command” for him to do so, i.e., according to God’s sovereign directive that could not be overturned and by means of Jesus’ direct interaction with Paul on the road to Damascus as told in Acts 9.

Cf. **Romans 16:26** but now is manifested, and by the Scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the eternal God (κατ' ἐπιταγὴν τοῦ αἰωνίου θεοῦ), has been made known to all the nations, leading to obedience of faith. This is the one and only God, who is also the Savior, champion, and heroic deliverer of people like Paul and Timothy by virtue of the fact that He rescues them from His eternal condemnation and destruction and fights for them in their lives to cause them to persevere in their belief throughout their lives. Sinners deserve God’s condemnation and destruction because of their inherent evil. Thus, God rescues them when He chooses from what they deserve and grant them what they do not deserve—eternal mercy and life.

And the Messiah Jesus is the “hope” of eternal salvation and life for chosen and believing sinners, because it is through his advocacy, mediation, and intercession that they can be confident that they will obtain God’s eternal mercy and life in the Kingdom of God (cf. 2:5 For there is one God and one mediator also between God and men, the man Christ Jesus).

Paul initially met Timothy in Lystra on his second missionary journey from A.D. 50-54 (cf. Acts 15:36-18:22). He may be writing this letter from Macedonia in northern Greece in between writing 1st and 2nd Corinthians and during his third missionary journey from A.D. 54-58 (cf. Acts 18:23-21:17, especially 20:1-4) while Timothy is in Ephesus at Paul’s request. Timothy must eventually leave Ephesus and catch up with Paul in Macedonia, because 2nd Corinthians is written by both Paul and Timothy and Luke mentions that Timothy is accompanying Paul when he later leaves Corinth (cf. Acts 20:1-4). Therefore, this letter is basically Paul’s first letter to the Ephesian Christians, and he is revealing his immediate concerns about them after spending around three years there (cf. Acts 20:31).

Cf. **1 Timothy 2:3** This is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior.

Cf. **1 Timothy 4:10** For it is for this we labor and strive, because we have fixed our hope on the living God, who is the Savior of all men, especially of believers.

² Τιμοθέω γνησίῳ τέκνῳ ἐν πίστει, χάρις ἔλεος εἰρήνῃ ἀπὸ θεοῦ πατρὸς ἡ καὶ Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν – Paul is writing to his apostolic co-worker Timothy, whom he considers to be his own “child” of authentic and genuine belief in God and Jesus as the Messiah, because Paul was the one who first taught Timothy the gospel to which God caused him to respond with genuine belief during Paul’s second missionary journey (cf. Acts 16:1-3 in the cities of Derbe and Lystra).

In typical fashion, Paul wishes God to continue to grant Timothy His sovereign work of His Spirit within him to cause him to be a genuine believer and follower of Jesus. He also wants God to grant him mercy (cf. 1:13), which in Hebrew would be His *hesed* (in Hebrew), that includes God’s actions based upon His choice to be loyal to those whom He has chosen and in whom He has already worked to produce a heart of commitment to Him for the sake of receiving His forgiveness. He also wants God to grant him His peace which in Hebrew would be *shalom*, His eternal wholeness of life which we acquire in its complete form when Jesus returns and he establishes on earth the beginning stage of the Kingdom of God.

³ Καθὼς παρεκάλεσά σε προσμεῖναι ἐν Ἐφέσῳ πορευόμενος εἰς Μακεδονίαν, ἵνα παραγγείλῃς τισὶν μὴ ἑτεροδιδασκαλεῖν – Paul had left Timothy in Ephesus in western Turkey while he made his way west into northern Greece, i.e., Macedonia, and towards Corinth because of his concern for the issues there after his third letter to them (his “letter of sorrow”). And he had commanded Timothy to stop any approach and ideas different from the apostolic message and the way that Jesus and the apostles studied and interpreted the Old Testament from entering as truth and the manner to do Bible study into the conversation of the Ephesian Christians.

It is interesting that this is even happening after Paul has spent so much time in Ephesus (as much as 3 years – Acts 20:31, “Therefore be on the alert, remembering that night and day for a period of three years I did not cease to admonish each one with tears.”), that there are people within the Christian community who are not willing to think about the Old Testament and obey it as he had even though he is an apostle. Instead, they are wandering off into emphasizing the Mosaic Covenant. Plus, in the light of the language which Paul uses here and how Jews used the approach of the rabbis that led to lengthy (and what Paul is saying in this paragraph were “endless speculations”) conversations about how to do righteousness but in effect ignored the substantive issue of the depth of people’s sin and their need for the crucified Messiah Jesus to intercede on their behalf at the final judgment, Paul wants these Christians to stay on track when it comes to learning and doing the gospel.

This also makes sense in light of what Paul also says to the elders of Ephesus in Acts 20:25-30, “**20:25** And now, behold, I know that all of you, among whom I went about proclaiming the kingdom, will no longer see my face. **20:26** Therefore, I testify to you today that I am innocent of the blood of all men. **20:27** For I did not shrink from declaring the whole purpose of God to you. **20:28** Be on guard for yourselves and for the whole flock, among whom the Holy Spirit has appointed you overseers, to shepherd the gathering of God, which He purchased with His own blood. **20:29** I know that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock, **20:30** and from among your own selves, men will arise, speaking perverse things in order to draw away the disciples after them.”

Thus, keeping people on track with the truth of the gospel is vital in a community of Christians, but it is also difficult because of how easily people grab onto worldly approaches to even the New Testament and to ideas that lead them away from the fundamental issue of their sin and God's mercy and then incorporate all this into the "biblical" message, as is shown by what Paul says in this letter and in others. So Timothy's responsibility as Paul's right-hand man and someone who understands the apostolic message as well as he does because of Paul's having instructed him in it was to encourage Christians to hold onto only the correct approach and ideas of the gospel and not allow others to lead them away from it—especially here towards erroneous Judaism.

⁴ μηδὲ προσέχειν μύθοις καὶ γενεαλογίαις ἀπεράντοις, αἵτινες ἑκζητήσεις παρέχουσιν μᾶλλον ἢ ὁικονομίαν θεοῦ τὴν ἐν πίστει – Paul knows that people can talk forever, using "endless speculations," about the minutiae of righteous behavior and probably even come to false conclusions, "myths," from the Mosaic Covenant. And these discussions probably result more often than not in endless controversies among people. Paul would rather the Ephesian Christians talk about the apostolic message centered in the whole Bible and God's plans and purposes for this creation with Jesus as the focal point, which is the only truly legitimate information within the sphere of authentic, biblical belief. Paul is encouraging Timothy to urge the Ephesian Christians to pursue discussion of the latter and to avoid the former. A possible Jewish Christianity as revealed by Paul's letter to the Galatians is where Jesus becomes simply an add-on to the Mosaic Covenant, which remains the focus of Jews' attention in the midst of their endless discussions of moral behavior.

And the problem with putting any religious system of endless moral discussions, even a Christian one, at the center of one's relationship with God instead of the gospel of Jesus and Jesus himself is that it leads to diminishing the significance of human sin, God's grace, and Jesus' death and resurrection. Rather than constantly relying on God's loving and kind initiating in one's life, a person more and more relies on his own religious performance of even moral actions to please God.

Cf. [2 Timothy 4:4](#) and will turn away their ears from the truth and will turn aside to myths.

Cf. [Titus 1:14](#) not paying attention to Jewish myths and commandments of men who turn away from the truth.

These two verses help identify the "myths" as 1) erroneous conclusions and ideas contrary to the biblical truth of the gospel of Jesus as the Messiah, regardless of the religious or philosophical context of the ideas, and 2) most likely coming from the Jewish community which has misunderstood the OT and created a man-made religion out of what God originally intended. And in this passage and in Ephesus, it makes sense that Paul is constantly having to confront the error of his present-day Judaism wherever he goes.

Cf. [Titus 3:9](#) But avoid foolish controversies and discussions and strife and disputes about the Law [Mosaic Covenant], for they are unprofitable and worthless.

This verse further confirms that the controversial conversations that Paul wants to avoid pertain to endless and false discussions regarding the OT Torah and especially the Mosaic Covenant.

⁵ τὸ δὲ τέλος τῆς παραγγελίας ἐστὶν ἀγάπη ἐκ καθαρᾶς καρδίας καὶ συνειδήσεως ἀγαθῆς καὶ πίστεως ἀνυποκρίτου – In v. 4 Paul said that those who are teaching Torah incorrectly are misunderstanding "God's program of instruction" (ἡ ὁικονομία θεοῦ). Here in v. 5 he calls it God's "instruction" (τῆς παραγγελίας) so that I have included the word "this" in my translation. Therefore, this is Paul's and Timothy's and the other apostles' and apostolic co-workers' "instruction," the proper way to understand the Old Testament and the message which Jesus brought to his apostles

Paul also says that the "goal" of this "instruction" is different from that of the teachers who misunderstand the Bible. Instead of looking at the Bible as simply a set of moral commandments and instructions where the emphasis is on right living, even though right living is good and that which we sinful human beings should pursue, they should see it as describing God's plans and purposes for bringing about a group of people who will inhabit the eternal Kingdom of God and live under the rule of Jesus as their king.

Therefore, Paul says that the "goal" of the Bible and its instructions is "love," by which he mostly means love of God. People are not intended from the Bible just to live their lives well. They are instead intended to love God for all His eternal plans and purposes.

And the way that people can love God, Paul says, is from a "pure heart," which is to say from an inwardness and subjectivity that has been changed by God and made interested in and accepting of the truth of the Bible in its entirety. A dirty heart is one that is unwilling to regard God for who He is and to embrace what He has presented through the biblical authors. But when God changes a sinner's heart, this abject resistance to God's truth in the Bible melts away, and person finds himself fundamentally attracted to this truth and God's instructions. This is a pure and clean (single-minded) heart with respect to the gospel, from having a good understanding of the nature of reality as it pertains to God and sinful human beings, and from having belief which is not just for show and pretentious, but is genuine and authentic.

Thus, loving God and His plans and purposes is first and foremost the result of authentic belief in the gospel of Jesus, in contrast to the focus on the religious system of the Mosaic Covenant as set forth within the erroneous Judaism of Paul's day. Obeying the ritual and ceremonial commandments of the covenant is minimal in comparison to loving God from a changed heart. This is similar to James' point that "faith without works is dead." Basically, faith without true love of God (and of people) is vacuous and fake.

As I said, a "pure heart" is a committed, inward orientation to God and His promises of eternal mercy, salvation, and

life. This is also a constant and unchangeable orientation because of the work of the Spirit of God within an authentic believer.

Paul also says that loving God comes from a "good understanding" (συνειδήσεως ἀγαθῆς), which is an accurate intellectual grasp of the good news of Jesus as the Messiah who rescues us from God's wrath, condemnation, and destruction and who instructs us to love God (and one another). I do not think that Paul means a "good conscience" as many Bibles translate this word. The context refers to bad teachers who are misunderstanding the OT so that Paul's concern is that the Ephesian Christians understand God correctly ultimately through the message of Jesus as King, Priest, and Prophet. This correct understanding also places Jesus at the center of a person's understanding of God, even for Jews who still have a national obligation to the Mosaic Covenant. They all understand that God's project is about rescuing sinners from His eternal condemnation and destruction and therefore much more than simply telling people how to live their lives and engage in moral behavior.

An "unhypocritical belief" means that a person is not simply observing how other Christians act, speak, and believe and then parroting them as if one is following a script in a play, which is what the Jews tend to do by focusing on their good and moral actions as instructed from the Bible, but know and love God for His eternal plans and purposes and then to believe Him and act as a Christian from a changed heart. This would mean that the Christian would still act and believe this way even if no other Christians were around in whose social club he could be a member. Certainly, it is helpful to have especially the apostles through what is revealed in their writings to be a good model to emulate, but the necessity and reality of each Christian's belief and actions comes from a genuine and authentic heart of belief, not just from knowledge of biblical, moral instructions.

⁶ ὧν τινες ἀστοχήσαντες ἐξετράπησαν εἰς ματαιολογίαν – Paul is clearly not interested in all the talk of the people who are focused on the Jewish religion derived from the OT, talk and talk about the minutiae of moral behavior that probably even extends beyond moral behavior to actions that are not necessarily moral in their nature (which tooth brush should I use) so that this talk instead of genuine love for God is dominating their lives.

It thus makes the most sense to see the referent of ὧν as the things which Paul has just mentioned as the goal of his instruction in v. 5, from which the "some men there" in Ephesus have departed because they are not listening to the apostolic instruction of the gospel. Instead, they concern themselves with the religious system of the Mosaic Covenant as a result of the teaching of men who are focused on it and not on Jesus the Messiah and what it truly means to be a follower of him.

As a result, they "have lost their way" from the truth and "wandered into worthless talk" that is ignoring the primary focus of the Bible and of God.

1 Timothy 6:21 which some have professed and thus gone astray (ἡστόχησαν) from the faith. Grace be with you.

⁷ θέλοντες εἶναι νομοδιδάσκαλοι, μὴ νοοῦντες μήτε ἃ λέγουσιν μήτε περὶ τίνων διαβεβαίουνται – Paul is saying that even though people are students and teachers of the Bible, they may be like these other teachers who can tell you exactly what the Bible says about how to live morally before God but who do not really grasp the actual message of the Bible regarding God's eternal plans and purposes through Jesus the Messiah. They, like the false teachers about whom John speaks in his letters, are speaking "from the world/cosmos" and misunderstanding the Bible. Their ideas about the Bible are not differently spiritually from the ideas of the rest of the world which is hostile to God and the Bible.

In Paul's context, the "worldly" ideas that were combined with the truth could be described as a human invention that overlay the Mosaic Covenant, resulting in an overemphasis on the rituals and ceremonies of the covenant as the emphasis of God only to promote righteous people, thus turning the Bible into a religious system without a heart of true love for God. As a result, these students and teachers "speak confidently" about the Bible but do not actually understand the Bible and what they have studied. And in Paul's day this was happening right within the Christian community, certainly not unlike our day where many kinds of Christian religious systems have been derived from a misunderstanding of both the NT and the OT.

⁸ Οὐδ' αὖν δεῖ ὅτι καλὸς ὁ νόμος, ἐάν τις αὐτῷ νομίμως ᾠκλήται – Here "good" probably includes every characteristic which Paul would attribute to the OT—its inerrancy, its truthfulness about God and His plans and purposes, its eternal benefits, etc. But this goodness of the Bible/OT is valuable only if someone understands it correctly and states its ideas correctly. Contaminating it through a false approach that results in the false ideas of focusing on its religious and moral instructions to the exclusion of its teachings about God's overall eternal plans and purposes would be to state its ideas in a non-Torah fashion, i.e., not torahly.

⁹ εἰδὼς τοῦτο, ὅτι δικαίῳ νόμῳ οὐ κεῖται, ἀνόμοις δὲ καὶ ἀνυποτάκτοις, ἀσεβέσιν καὶ ἁμαρτωλοῖς, ἀνοστοῖς καὶ **βεβήλοις**, πατρολώαις καὶ μητρολώαις, ἀνδροφόνους – The way the bad teachers are using their Bibles is to teach themselves and people who they think are "righteous" because they are focused on the Mosaic Covenant and its religious and moral instructions. Paul says that its purpose is to reveal how sinful people are and motivate them to seek God's eternal grace and mercy for the sake of obtaining eternal life.

These sinful people are "lawless and rebellious" because they are looking at themselves accurately and grasping just how deep their sin is and its problem so that they would never think of themselves as "righteous" the way these bad teachers think of themselves.

These sinful people are also "ungodly and sinners" because they recognize that, before God changed their inwardness by His Spirit, they disregarded God and the Bible even if they thought they were studying and following the Bible.

They also recognize that they are truly sinful and desperately need God's grace and mercy through Jesus as the crucified Messiah to obtain salvation and eternal life. In other words, they fully recognize that they cannot obtain any

of God's blessings and promises by their own efforts and making themselves worthy through their religious obedience to the Mosaic Covenant.

These sinful people are also "unholy and disrespectful" where the first word means just plain evil and the word βέβηλος is used three times in 1 Timothy (1:9, 4:7, 6:20), once in 2 Timothy 2:16, and once in Hebrews 12:16. The context is always people who are abject rebels against God, i.e., those without respect for God. The verb βεβηλόω is used in Ezekiel 20:13 for לָלֵךְ to refer to the Israelites' rejecting the sacred nature of the Sabbath day according to the Mosaic Covenant. This sounds like the issue in Genesis 3 where Satan encourages Eve to decide for herself what is moral and not consider what God says to be sacred and divinely special such that it should never be ignored or considered by human beings to be something which can be set aside without divine consequences. Therefore, this word is not unlike ἀσεβέειν = ungodly, referring to people who ignore and reject God and all of the biblical truth about Himself and His plans and purposes.

These sinful people are also "killers of fathers and mothers" because they are unwilling to honor their mothers and fathers as the ten commandments instruct the Jews to do so under the Mosaic Covenant.

Thus, Paul is saying that the Torah exists to communicate God and His justice and mercy to people who deserve His justice and should seek His mercy, i.e., all human beings except of course Jesus of Nazareth. In this context, Paul is implying that the teachers of the Torah who are wandering into worthless talk do not consider themselves the abject sinners that they are, thus considering themselves capable of pleasing God through their obedience to the Mosaic Covenant (maybe even making themselves worthy of God's blessings). Thus, "righteous" should be in quotes as referring to those who think they are righteous by virtue of their obedience to the Mosaic Covenant.

¹⁰ πόρνοις ἀρσενοκοίταις ἀνδραποδισταῖς ψεύσταις ἐπιόρκοις, καὶ εἴ τι ἕτερον τῇ ὑγιαίνουσῃ διδασκαλίᾳ ἀντίκειται – Continuing with the list of sinful people who will benefit from a correct understanding of the Old Testament Torah, there are also "sexually immoral people" (πόρνοις), i.e., those who engage in sex outside of marriage. Then, there are also homosexuals and pederasts (ἀρσενοκοίταις), i.e., those men who engage in sex with men, homosexuals, and by extrapolation those women who engage in sex with women, lesbians. In Paul's day, a pederast was a young man who engaged in homosexual activity with a younger boy. This practice seems to have been accepted within Greek culture even prior to the first century A.D. Paul lists it along with the generic term for sexual immorality. Then, the sinful people who are helped by an understanding of the Torah are kidnappers (ἀνδραποδισταῖς), liars (ψεύσταις), and perjurers (ἐπιόρκοις), i.e., people who intentionally inject false ideas about others into their conversations.

Thus, all these sinful behaviors plus "whatever is contrary to sound teaching" (εἴ τι ἕτερον τῇ ὑγιαίνουσῃ διδασκαλίᾳ ἀντίκειται) are prohibited by biblical teaching and the gospel of Jesus the Messiah, meaning that the gospel is not only about salvation from God's wrath and condemnation through Jesus, but also about pursuing behavior according to God's (not man's) moral commandments. Yet, the Bible is about much more than proper behavior. It is also about our being sinners who cannot genuinely desire God's mercy and eternal life without also desiring to love God and then to be moral people according to God's definition of morality.

¹¹ κατὰ τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τῆς δόξης τοῦ μακαρίου θεοῦ, ὃ ἐπιστεύθη ἐγὼ – The gospel is the good news because it presents the central idea of God's mercy to sinners like those listed in the previous verses. And it is the very glory and magnificence of the blessed God, i.e., the one who deserves to be worshiped and obeyed as the highest being in all reality, because it demonstrates just how awesome God is in being willing to forgive those who do not deserve His mercy and who cannot change themselves to become qualified for His mercy.

God has decided to manifest His greatness and demonstrate how much He deserves His own adoration and that of any creatures whom He has made and are intellectually, psychologically, spiritually, and morally capable of ascribing worth and praise to Him through the story of Jesus and the sinners whom he rescues from God's condemnation and destruction.

And it is this message which God through Jesus the Messiah has entrusted to Paul as the sole apostle to the Gentiles.

¹² Χάριν ἔχω τῷ ἑνδυναμώσαντί με Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ τῷ κυρίῳ ἡμῶν, ὅτι πιστόν με ἡγήσατο θέμενος εἰς διακονίαν – Paul is using himself as the prime example of the kind of person the gospel has been revealed to save, even to the extent that God through Jesus made him one of his apostles.

Paul is grateful to Jesus for what he has done, which must have begun on the road to Damascus when Paul was on his way to arrest Jewish Christians and bring them back to Jerusalem for trial—and probably for either imprisonment or death for their blasphemy of following a crucified Messiah. And that which Jesus has done Paul describes as his "making [him] capable" (τῷ ἑνδυναμώσαντί), which is to say that Jesus and God the Father assigned Paul the unique role and responsibility to proclaim the gospel of Jesus as the Messiah to the Gentiles.

And this was in the midst of Jesus' considering Paul "a person of the faith" (πιστόν), i.e., a person to whom they were granting the message of the gospel and the role of proclaiming the gospel to the Gentiles.

And this was also at the same time that Jesus "put [him] into service" (θέμενος εἰς διακονίαν), that Jesus changed Paul's job description from acting against the gospel to acting on behalf of it and serving it—again, by proclaiming it to the Gentiles.

¹³ τὸ πρότερον ὄντα τὸν βλάσφημον καὶ διώκτην καὶ ὑβριστήν, ἀλλ' ἡλεήθη, ὅτι ἀγνοῶν ἐποίησα ἐν ἀπιστίᾳ – No matter how evil a person is and how immoral is his behavior in rebellion against God, God can still save him, if He so chooses. Accordingly, Paul freely admits that his original goal was to stamp out the Christian movement as described in Acts 8:1ff, and that his motivation was not out of a genuine desire to obey God, but out of his own pride and arrogance

in rebellion against God.

So, “even though [he] was a blasphemer and persecutor and arrogant person” (τὸ πρότερον ὄντα ἢ βλάσφημον καὶ διώκτην καὶ ὑβριστήν), Jesus put him into service as his unique apostle to the Gentiles.

A blasphemer is someone who willfully speaks lies in contradiction of the truth of God, in other words, out of a heart of rebellion against God. A persecutor is someone who willfully acts against people of authentic belief in God either to destroy their belief or to minimize their effect in their culture, even killing them if it comes to this. An arrogant person who acts out of pride against the truth of God and seeks to minimize the truth as much as possible in their lives. Paul was each of these.

Nevertheless, God showed Paul mercy (ἀλλ’ ἠλεήθην = “But I was shown mercy”) and even appointed him the sole apostle to the Gentiles. The phrase “in that I acted ignorantly in unbelief” (ὅτι ἀγνοῶν ἐποίησα ἐν ἀπιστίᾳ) is not describing the actual cause of God’s showing him mercy, but the reason why Paul can call what God did “showing mercy.” Paul’s ignorance and unbelief could never be said to be a legitimate excuse for his rebellion against God. Instead, he is simply claiming that he really did not know the truth of the Bible as he should have if he were to call himself a legitimate Bible student. He had studied the OT but was unwilling to understand it correctly. He claimed to believe the “truth” of the OT but was actually unwilling to believe it. Therefore, the only way to describe what God did to him and for him was His “showing mercy,” because Paul as a serious Bible student deserved God’s condemnation just as much as any sinner does.

Thus, it is not that Paul’s ignorance excuses him from being guilty before God for his unbelief. He would freely admit that a major reason for his ignorance was his arrogance and unwillingness to believe the truth as revealed in the Old Testament as well as the evidence demonstrated by God through Jesus by his miracles which affirmed his being sent from God and the Messiah.

1:16 Nevertheless, on account of this I was shown mercy (ἠλεήθην) so that the Messiah Jesus may demonstrate in me, the foremost, all patience as an example for those who in the future would believe in him for eternal life.

¹⁴ ὑπερεπλεόνασεν δὲ ἡ χάρις τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν μετὰ πίστεως καὶ ἀγάπης τῆς ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ – Here “Lord” is probably still Jesus the Messiah, but Paul assumes, according to his understanding of the nature of reality, that the transcendent God operated within Paul by means of his “grace” (ἡ χάρις) on account of His plan for Jesus to appear to him on the road to Damascus and to change his life from an arrogant enemy of Jesus to his committed friend.

Paul uses the verb “super-abounded” (ὑπερεπλεόνασεν) to refer to what God did with His grace within him, probably because he is still thinking of how anti-Jesus he was (eager to see all Christians put to death) and how much God changed him into an apostle of Jesus who was willing to die for his cause.

Plus, the effect of God’s super-abundant grace within him was both “the belief and love” (μετὰ πίστεως καὶ ἀγάπης) which is true of anyone who is “in the Messiah Jesus” (τῆς ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ), which is to say anyone who is genuinely a follower of Jesus by virtue of God’s having worked within him by His grace and changed his inwardness to make him attracted to and submissive to the gospel. Thus, Paul believes in Jesus and loves God and His people in complete contrast to his unbelief and hatred prior to his encounter with Jesus on the road to Damascus and prior to God’s having worked within him.

Thus, God extended towards Paul by His grace in such a bountiful way that even he, someone who was wholeheartedly committed to destroying Christianity, became converted to belief in Jesus. It therefore makes sense to see Paul as connecting both πίστεως and ἀγάπης, which can be found to be a person’s experience when he is “in the Messiah Jesus,” as the believer lives reality within the context of what God is doing to people whom He causes to become authentic believers in the Messiah, to Paul as that which accompanied God’s gracious work in Paul. What accompanied God’s grace and inner work in Paul was Paul’s belief in the gospel and his love for God and the people whom God gave him to proclaim that gospel to them.

Another possibility is that Paul is referring to God’s faithfulness and love for him that accompanied His grace. Thus, this would be God’s faithfulness to carry out His plans of converting people and God’s love for these people so that they become and remain true believers who carry out their tasks assigned to them by God, i.e., their “gift” (cf.

Ephesians 3).

But I think it is more coherent with vs. 12 & 13 for Paul to be talking about the effect of God’s grace in his life. God through His grace changed Paul’s unbelief into belief AND love, i.e., the “goal of our instruction” in v. 5. Imagine a human being who changes completely from being mean and violent towards followers of Jesus to being kind, forgiving, tender-hearted, compassionate, and patient towards them. Only God’s grace can cause this to happen to the extent that it did in Paul.

¹⁵ πιστὸς ὁ λόγος καὶ πάσης ἀποδοχῆς ἄξιος, ὅτι Χριστὸς Ἰησοῦς ἦλθεν εἰς τὸν κόσμον ἁμαρτωλοὺς σῶσαι, ὃν πρῶτός εἰμι ἐγώ – We remember that Paul just said that this is the exact message which he had rejected during Jesus’ ministry on earth and continued to reject after his death and the empty tomb to the extent that he was supporting the imprisonment and death of all followers of Jesus as the Messiah. Therefore, for him to make this statement is to demonstrate just how remarkable and powerful God’s grace is when He chooses to operate in sinners and make change them into authentic believers in the gospel of Jesus.

And this is the whole point of the creation, that God is saving undeserving people of inherent and uncontrollable evil from His condemnation and destruction through the advocacy of Jesus the Messiah. Paul thus says that the “message is faithful and worthy of all acceptance” (πιστὸς ὁ λόγος καὶ πάσης ἀποδοχῆς ἄξιος). The information about Jesus and his death, resurrection, ascension, and future return is as true as any truth can be and worthy of being embraced by all

human beings as reasonable creatures. This is the most reliable statement in all of human history and human knowledge, perhaps apart from the statement that there is a transcendent Creator of all the creation. Or it could be said that because God's plans and purposes for Jesus are His, then they are just as reliable as His existence is as the Creator of all the rest of reality. Anything which is in the mind of God and pertains to His plans and purposes is just as real and reliably true as God Himself. That which is in God is God.

And what is the message? That "the Messiah Jesus came into the world to save sinners" (ὅτι Χριστὸς Ἰησοῦς ἦλθεν εἰς τὸν κόσμον ἁμαρτωλοὺς σῶσαι). The Mosaic Covenant does not save sinners from God's eternal wrath and destruction or bring about the restored Kingdom of Israel—as Paul originally thought through his study of the OT with Gamaliel. Nor can someone simply ignore his accountability before God as the pagan idolators did of Paul's day. Nor can someone simply engage in some kind of Christian religion in the many denominations in our day. Salvation is only through belief in Jesus as the crucified Messiah and through living a life that reflects a biblical understanding of Jesus' role as the Messiah.

And Paul states categorically that he is the "foremost of all" (ὧν πρῶτός εἰμι ἐγώ), which is to say, as far as he is concerned, the greatest sinner of all time—because of his putting all the effort that he did into stamping out Christianity in his day. The implied idea is that, if God through Jesus can rescue Paul from His wrath and eternal destruction, then he can save any sinner from such. And we have seen some great sinners down through the last two thousand years, including ourselves if we are willing to look honestly into the depths of our own hearts.

¹⁶ ἀλλὰ διὰ τοῦτο ἡλεήθην. ἵνα ἐν ἐμοὶ πρῶτῳ ἐνδείξῃται 'Χριστὸς Ἰησοῦς' τὴν ἅπασαν μακροθυμίαν πρὸς ὑποτύπωσιν τῶν μελλόντων πιστεῦειν ἐπ' αὐτῷ εἰς ζωὴν αἰώνιον – And because God is all about rescuing sinners through Jesus, God has and will rescue Paul. In other words, it was "on account of this" (διὰ τοῦτο), or we could say in the light of this and in the midst of this, Paul's great sinfulness, that was "shown mercy" (ἡλεήθην).

1:13 even though I was formerly a blasphemer and persecutor and arrogant person. But I was shown mercy (ἡλεήθην) in that I acted ignorantly in unbelief.

And God's purpose for saving and forgiving Paul was so that "the Messiah Jesus may demonstrate in [him], the foremost, all patience as an example for those who in the future would believe in him for eternal life" (ἵνα ἐν ἐμοὶ πρῶτῳ ἐνδείξῃται 'Χριστὸς Ἰησοῦς' τὴν ἅπασαν μακροθυμίαν πρὸς ὑποτύπωσιν τῶν μελλόντων πιστεῦειν ἐπ' αὐτῷ εἰς ζωὴν αἰώνιον). Paul, therefore, gets to use himself as prime example of what he is teaching and urging other people to do—to believe in Jesus in order to obtain all that "eternal life" means—an existence in the Kingdom of God that never ends, moral perfection, and the abundance of a shalom-like environment that God will bring about after Jesus' return and ultimately after the restored Kingdom of Israel on this present earth. And no amount of pagan sin and immorality can keep God from extending mercy, forgiveness, and eternal life to a sinner who appeals to Him with genuine, repentance, belief, and longing for moral perfection.

And Paul says that this happens in conjunction with the "all patience" (τὴν ἅπασαν μακροθυμίαν) of God through the Messiah Jesus, that rather than destroy Paul because of his violent and destructive actions towards Christians, God waited and waited until just the right moment of His sovereign will to confront Paul with the gospel in a definite personal way and to convert him through the necessary inward change of his heart and mind. And this is what God does for all those who eventually become authentic sinful Christians and who obtain eternal salvation and life.

¹⁷ Τῷ δὲ βασιλεῖ τῶν αἰώνων, 'ἀφθάρτῳ ἀοράτῳ' μόνῳ 'θεῷ, τιμῇ καὶ δόξῃ εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας τῶν αἰώνων, ἀμήν – While Paul could call Jesus the "King of the ages" (Τῷ δὲ βασιλεῖ τῶν αἰώνων), I think that it makes more sense that he is referring to the transcendent God, who is "the immortal, invisible, and only God" ('ἀφθάρτῳ ἀοράτῳ' μόνῳ 'θεῷ), whom we will never see as such, even when we are in the eternal Kingdom of God. We will see Jesus, the "icon of the invisible God" as Paul describes him in Colossians 1:15. But we as created beings can never exist in the uncreated realm of God and see the uncreated God.

And Paul calls him the "King of the ages" who as such rules over the entire creation and is responsible for the existence of its every detail at every moment of time, regardless of the location, whether in this galaxy or in one of the other two hundred billion that exists. Paul identifies the transcendent God who rightly deserves and receives all the praise and admiration for dispensing His mercy towards undeserving sinners for all eternity, "into the ages of ages" (εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας τῶν αἰώνων), through Jesus as the Messiah, who came specifically to save sinners like Paul—and like you and me.

¹⁸ Ταύτην τὴν παραγγελίαν παρατίθεμαί σοι, τέκνον Τιμόθεε, κατὰ τὰς προαγούσας ἐπὶ σὲ προφητείας, ἵνα 'στρατεύῃ ἐν αὐταῖς τὴν καλὴν στρατείαν – Next, Paul turns his attention to Timothy specifically, because he wants to give him the charge of continuing his role as an apostolic co-worker by means of what has been said about him that resulted in his own belief and understanding of God's plans and purposes for those whom He rescues from His condemnation and destruction and of what God has specifically called him to do—to be an apostolic co-worker with Paul.

Paul begins by saying that he "exhorts" (παρατίθεμαί) Timothy "with this exhortation" (Ταύτην τὴν παραγγελίαν). And this exhortation is "in accordance with the prophecies which have led the way for" him. It could be that these "prophecies" are only the gospel in general, but they more likely have to do with the gospel and specific instructions for Timothy as an apostolic co-worker, because Paul uses the actual word "prophecies" (προφητείας) and not "the good news" or even "instructions." I think that the very word "prophecies" in this case is mostly used in the NT to refer to God's message to a specific individual or group, which is why this word probably does not refer to just the gospel. It refers to God's effects of the gospel in a person's or group's life.

For example, Acts 21:10,11, “**21:10** As we were staying there many days, a certain prophet named Agabus came down from Judea. **21:11** And coming to us, he took Paul’s belt and bound his feet and hands and said, ‘This is what the Holy Spirit says: In this way the Jews in Jerusalem will bind the man whose belt this is and deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles.’”

As a result, these “prophecies which “have led the way for” Timothy are those whereby he was assigned the responsibility to accompany Paul as an apostolic co-worker. Cf. 1 Timothy 4:14, “**4:14** Do not neglect the spiritual gift in your case, which was given to you through a prophecy along with laying on of hands of the elders.”

Thus, God has spoken, probably through Paul, to Timothy and for Timothy that he would be a strong and courageous soldier for the message of Jesus as the Messiah, in order to proclaim and it and correct others in regard to it while holding on to his own belief and understanding of God and His plans and purposes of rescuing sinners from His condemnation and destruction and with providing them with eternal life. as an apostolic co-worker (and for everyone else who is an authentic believer), and the “commandment” which Paul goes on to dissect and delineate in 2:1-15 is part of it.

Nevertheless, Paul would entrust this exhortation to any Christian, and now especially to Timothy as someone whom he trusts to understand the NT message of Jesus as the Messiah, so that an authentic believer continue his Christian role within the story of salvific history.

And Paul wants Timothy to “fight the good fight with them,” i.e., with the “prophecies” that were given specifically to him for his role as an apostolic co-worker. Timothy must battle the worldly ideas and lies which could enter into the Christian community and disrupt people’s belief in God and Jesus as the Messiah. Timothy must hold on the gospel and his responsibility to proclaim it and keep it whole and pure within the groups of Christians wherever he might be. Cf. 1 Timothy 6:12 and Paul’s use of the phrase the “good fight of belief.”

¹⁹ ἔχων πίστιν καὶ ἀγαθὴν συνείδησιν, ἣν τινες ἀποσάμενοι περὶ τὴν πίστιν ἐναυάγησαν – Paul wants Timothy to use the “prophecies” to be a responsible apostolic co-worker along with the gospel of Jesus as the Messiah itself and which authentic believers actually believe to motivate him not only to fulfill his apostolic responsibility but also to choose to hold on to his own “belief and good understanding” (πίστιν καὶ ἀγαθὴν συνείδησιν). The implied result is that Timothy will gain entrance into the eternal Kingdom of God when Jesus returns and begins it on earth with the millennial kingdom of the “great nation” of Israel.”

However, Paul indicates that some men, like Hymenaeus and Alexander, have rejected the ideas which would constitute their own “belief and good understanding,” the referent of ἣν, to the effect that they have given up their “belief” in the gospel and their role as apostolic co-workers. The implied result is that they have gone back to believing in and acting according to the lies of the world/cosmos that is opposed to and even hostile to God. And this for men who have been associated with and helping someone as committed to the gospel as the apostle Paul! What a sober warning for all Christians, that we do everything we can to hold on to our belief and understanding of God and the Bible.

²⁰ ὧν ἐστιν Ὑμέναιος καὶ Ἀλέξανδρος, οὓς παρέδωκα τῷ σατανᾷ, ἵνα παιδευθῶσιν μὴ βλασφημεῖν – All it seems that Paul means is that he now considers these two men to be unbelievers (“given over to Satan”) with the hope that God will be gracious to them and work in them so as to “teach” them not to believe ideas that are opposite to the gospel, which here is the definition of “blaspheme.” In other words, people obviously learn the truth (if God so desires) by being confronted by their error and falsehood (their blasphemy of making false statements about God and themselves) and then, if God truly changes their hearts, they become authentic believers in God and in Jesus as the Messiah. Thus, they would really grasp the truth and believe it. They stop making false statements about the nature of reality, and they learn and speak the truth about God and His creation.

Paul is describing a very loving thing which he is “doing” towards these men, which is to assess their spirituality realistically (they are following Satan and not God by having abandoned their belief in the truth of Jesus as the Messiah) and to hope that God will eventually work within them to teach them their sin and unbelief and to change their inwardness so that they genuinely believe in God and Jesus for the sake of obtaining eternal salvation and life. It is theoretically possible that Timothy (or any other sinner) might go down the same erroneous path into abject unbelief, but Paul exhorts him to do otherwise and certainly hopes that this will not be the case. And it is going to be a battle the whole way because of Satan’s aggressive tactics to destroy people’s faith and belief in God.

Paul is basically saying, “If these men choose unbelief, then let them sit in it in order to be confronted by it head on and hopefully change their minds (by the grace and inward work of God!).”

²¹ Παρακαλῶ οὖν πρῶτον πάντων ποιεῖσθαι δεήσεις προσευχὰς ἐντεύξεις εὐχαριστίας ὑπὲρ πάντων ἀνθρώπων – This is the first item that follows the exhortation which Paul mentions to Timothy in 1:18 in regard to maintaining his own “belief and good understanding.”

Just as Paul was saved while being a violent transgressor against God and a member of the Pharisees, the biblical rulers of the Jews, God can save anybody, and Paul reminds Timothy and encourages him to encourage the other Christians where Timothy is currently to pray for all those who make up their sphere of life, and probably especially for their fellow Christians—that God will grant them mercy and eternal life and to be grateful for what God has done in their lives in regard to their own salvations. The former, i.e., praying for their salvation, is comprised in the “prayers, requests, petitions” (δεήσεις προσευχὰς ἐντεύξεις), while the latter, i.e., gratitude to God for salvation, is in the word “thanksgivings” (εὐχαριστίας).

This, then, is all a part of what it means to be a loving Christian living in this world. This is in spite of Paul’s knowing

that God has predetermined who will receive His grace and salvation. It is still simply a good and right thing for Christians to pray for their own and for all others' salvation, as well as to be grateful for whatever God has done in their own lives to move them towards eternal salvation.

It is not as though the Ephesian Christians must pray for each and every person individually in their city and the rest of the world, but that their attitude of requesting from God should be that they would want God to save every human being if this were His choice, which even Paul knows that it is not. But God is Love personified and, therefore, could save every person whom He has created within the context of His love.

Since Paul lists these four kinds of prayers—prayers, entreaties, petitions, and thanksgivings—he probably is talking about not only that God's mercy for salvation be granted to people, but also that God provide whatever needs are important in their lives—physical, emotional, psychological, etc. In other words, Christians should care about the whole being of all other human beings and seek God's help with respect to whatever their needs might be. In addition, they should express their gratitude to God for all that He is doing for people according to His providential care for them and His entire creation.

²² ὑπὲρ βασιλέων καὶ πάντων τῶν ἐν ὑπεροχῇ ὄντων. ἵνα ἡρεμον καὶ ἡσύχιον βίον διάγωμεν ἐν πάσῃ εὐσεβείᾳ καὶ σεμνότητι – In the first part of this verse, Paul is not saying “exclusively (or especially) people in government positions) but “including people...” (thus the interpolation “including”). Plus, as will become clear by the rest of this list too which is Paul's commandment to Timothy and the Ephesian Christians in 2:1-15, he is calling for people to accept the lot in life which God has given them in the midst of accomplishing His purposes and desires, instead of rebelling against God and demanding that their lives be different. Along these lines, instead of raging against the government authorities and engaging in angry disputes with one another (cf. 1:4; 2:8), pray that God will save all these individuals (including their fellow Christians) from His eternal condemnation and provide for their existential needs as these Christians pursue living “a tranquil and quiet life” (ἡρεμον καὶ ἡσύχιον βίον) in preparation and while waiting for the eternal Kingdom of God. And we notice that Paul switches to the 1st person plural “we,” i.e., “so that we lead (διάγωμεν) a tranquil and quiet life,” thus including himself and by extrapolation all other Christians in this encouragement. In spite of how mistreated by certain governmental authorities Paul has been, he still prays that God will have mercy on them and rescue them from His eternal condemnation.

So this is not about praying that government leaders will lead well and produce a society of tranquility and quietness, but about Christians' submitting to God's sovereignty and pursuing a tranquil and quiet life in the midst of whatever societal, social, economic, and political circumstances they find themselves and in contrast to one of violence, anger, and disputes (like the Apostle Paul before he became a Christian – cf. 1:13) while awaiting Jesus' return and the millennial kingdom.

ἡρεμος = quiet, tranquil, calm; this is its only use in the NT

ἡσύχιος = quiet, calm, well-ordered, orderly; also in 1 Peter 3:4

εὐσέβεια = godliness, genuine regard for something or someone, i.e., here God; 15x in NT and 8x in 1 Timothy; in contrast to ἀσέβεια which in Romans 1:18 refers to human beings' ignoring God and being unwilling to take into account His presence, His plans and purposes, His moral commandments, and anything else that rightly relates to God and should serve to inform people as to who they are and how they should carry out their existences as His created beings.

σεμνότης = dignity, seriousness, decency, integrity, virtue; used also in 1 Timothy 3:4 and Titus 2:7

Therefore, this paragraph also is not about prayer *per se*, but about prayer to God in the midst of an inward contentment in the face of possible chaos, unsettledness, and even dissension and disagreement with others, whether they are Christians who are arguing with one another or they are non-Christians, e.g., government officials, who might be oppressing Christians in their lives.

Thus, the tranquil, calm, and quiet life of Christians is in the midst of their genuine devotion to God and respect for or reverence towards Him. He is everyone's ultimate authority so that all other authorities exist only because He has caused them to do so. This does not mean that Christians are forbidden to fight militarily (even rebel) against tyranny and people in government who are cruel and oppressive (in order to rescue everyone under their authority from the harm which they are bringing to them). But this becomes an important and thoughtful judgment call on the part of every Christian, which probably no one but these Christians truly have the right to evaluate because of their close proximity to the problematic people in the government. In our day and age, who really knows the truth about any situation on which the media report in this world, because who can be trusted to provide accurate and complete information?

Thus, Christians should not inwardly rebel and chafe against what God is doing in their lives and in the world. They can trust that God is telling His story exactly the way He wants to so that they can be calm and tranquil in their hearts and minds even in the midst of moral and social chaos that characterizes their culture and the world.

²³ τοῦτο τὸ καλὸν καὶ ἀπόδεκτον ἐνώπιον τοῦ σωτῆρος ἡμῶν θεοῦ – We notice here that Paul refers to God and not Jesus as the Savior, just as he did in 1:1. Certainly, Jesus rescues and saves sinners from God's wrath and condemnation, but he does so in accordance with God's plans and purposes for him as the Messiah and Son of God who entered history to live, die, rise from the dead, ascend from the earth, and return to restore the Kingdom of Israel and to bring about the Kingdom of God within the creation as God's icon and proxy. Therefore, the salvation that we enjoy is ultimately God's salvation through Jesus the Messiah. As Paul says in 1:1, God is our Savior, and Jesus is our hope, which is to say that Jesus is our hope and expectation that God will definitely save us from His condemnation and

destruction, because Jesus has qualified to intercede on our behalf and obtain eternal mercy for us who genuinely believe God for all His plans and purposes.

As a result, Paul says that “this” (τούτο), Christians’ calm and reverent lives that are accompanied by genuine prayer for all other human beings, Christians and non-Christians, is “good and acceptable before our Savior, God” (καλὸν καὶ ἀπόδεκτον ἐνώπιον τοῦ σωτῆρος ἡμῶν θεοῦ). This is to say that, in light of God’s being the “Savior” (σωτήρ), good and proper behavior for Christians is to be calm, collected, reverent towards God, and prayerful as they await God’s complete salvation and Jesus’ return.

Another way to say this is that appealing to God for mercy for all people who either do not yet appear to have His mercy or are even a part of the believing community, including people in positions of authority within the government, while remaining calm and reverent towards God is a good thing for Christians to do that is commensurate with the gospel message which comes from the Savior, God Himself, i.e., the transcendent Creator who has written Himself into the story vis-à-vis Jesus of Nazareth, the final and eternal Son of David and Son of God.

1 Timothy 4:10 Towards this we labor and strive, because we have hoped in the living God who is the Savior of all men, especially of believers (ἐπὶ θεῷ ζῶντι, ὃς ἐστὶν σωτὴρ πάντων ἀνθρώπων μάλιστα πιστῶν).

²⁴ ὃς πάντας ἀνθρώπους θέλει σωθῆναι καὶ εἰς ἐπίγνωσιν ἀληθείας ἐλθεῖν – Paul is indicating that, in spite of the theological concepts of God’s predestination and His intentionally having made two kinds of people, vessels of mercy and vessels of wrath, we can still say that at a certain level God desires that everyone be rescued from His eternal wrath. In other words, God is not some mean ogre and fiend who predestines and chooses sinners for salvation out of malice and total ill will towards the other sinners whom He chooses for eternal condemnation and destruction.

Therefore, it is entirely appropriate for Christians to pray for everyone, that they be rescued by the grace of God—exactly as the Christians are in the process of being rescued. In addition of course, we do not know who will and will not be saved of the remaining unbelievers out there. So we pray for everyone’s salvation, knowing that some of them will actually be saved and some of them will not. And we pray for the salvation of those even within the believing community, because some may actually be genuine believers who need God’s faithful love to cause them to persevere in belief and some may not be genuine believers who need God’s grace to grant them belief and then also perseverance. And God’s desire for people is of an epistemic nature, too—that they understand truth (εἰς ἐπίγνωσιν ἀληθείας ἐλθεῖν). Our minds are a key element of our being, that we not only be rightly oriented towards God in our hearts, but that we know and understand the true nature of reality, of God and His creation, and of His plans and purposes of bringing about the Kingdom of God through Jesus as His icon within the creation.

²⁵ εἷς γὰρ Θεός, εἷς καὶ μεσίτης Θεοῦ καὶ ἀνθρώπων, ἄνθρωπος Χριστὸς Ἰησοῦς – Paul is saying that the fact that there is one God means that there is one ultimate purpose for human beings’ existence, which is that they be saved from His eternal condemnation or experience this as their deserved consequence. In addition, the oneness of God reveals itself in the oneness of the mediator between God and man, the very human Jesus of Nazareth. This is properly in the light of the persistent objections of followers of erroneous Judaism to the effect that certainly the Messiah would not be rejected by the supreme Jewish leadership of the Sanhedrin and executed on a cross so that the Mosaic Covenant remains central to obtaining the promises of God. Thus, Paul states clearly and categorically the truth of God involves this one man, Jesus the Messiah, who mediates between God and sinners for the purpose of their obtaining eternal forgiveness and salvation.

God’s project is not to make people happy through earthly circumstances in the present realm, but to save them from His eternal condemnation as they live out their lives now with thanksgiving, joy, belief, and the confidence of God’s guaranteed promise to them of the eternal Kingdom of God.

²⁶ ὁ δοὺς ἑαυτὸν ἀντίλυτρον ὑπὲρ πάντων, τὸ μαρτύριον καιροῖς ἰδίους – Jesus bore witness to his role as mankind’s advocate before God by willingly dying on the cross. As a result, he can stand between God and man, appeal to God for mercy, and ensure that people are rescued from the condemnation and eternal destruction which they deserve. This was for “all men in that Jesus would be willing to intercede for every individual of the entire human race if God so commanded him, even though the Bible says that it will be only a subset of humanity for whom Jesus does this.

And Jesus’ death was “the witness for its own times” (τὸ μαρτύριον καιροῖς ἰδίους), meaning that by his life, death, and resurrection, he bore witness to his vital and important role within God’s story that he is central to any other human being’s obtaining the ultimate and final blessing of God which is comprised in salvation from His condemnation and existence in the eternal Kingdom of God.

ἀντίλυτρον = ransom. A ransom is a sum of money or other payment demanded or paid for the release of a prisoner. This the only use of this word in the NT. Based upon the explanation in Hebrews of Jesus as our High Priest who qualified to appeal to God for eternal mercy on our behalf by means of his death, Paul must be using the concept of “ransom” here metaphorically. Jesus does not literally make a payment to God the Father by his death that pays the sum of all legal debts that all (or just predestined to eternal life) sinners owe God. Instead, he dies as the prime example of what all sinners owe God for their sinfulness, which is death and destruction. And then, by virtue of his qualifying to intercede on behalf of condemned sinners, Jesus mediates for those for whom God has chosen him to do so and obtains eternal salvation and life for them when he returns.

²⁷ εἰς ὃ ἐτέθην ἐγὼ κήρυξ καὶ ἀπόστολος, ἀληθειαν λέγω ὅτι οὐ ψεύδομαι, διδάσκαλος ἐθνῶν ἐν πίστει καὶ ἀληθείᾳ – Paul reminds Timothy (as if he really needs to) that God has appointed him to take this information of God’s oneness and Jesus’ oneness to the non-Jewish world in order to encourage these people to believe in Jesus and be rescued eternally by God, indeed, even to government leaders when and if he is given the opportunity. He is a

“spokesman and an apostle” (κῆρυξ καὶ ἀπόστολος), which means that he has been assigned by God to proclaim the same message as Jesus and the other 12 apostles with the same level of authority and accuracy as they. So just as Paul would not shy away from teaching the gospel to both the powerful and the powerless in society, he wants the Ephesian Christians not to shy away from praying for any of the same for their salvation.

Paul then uses the statement of “I am not lying,” which is in Galatians 1:20 also, and here it seems superfluous in a letter to his trusted co-worker Timothy. Therefore, one option is that it is simply an idiomatic expression that everyone used with respect to ideas or information that they all would agree are true. It is just a means of emphasis when emphasis is not necessarily even needed, but the speaker/author perhaps just wants to use it anyway, maybe more for himself as an encouragement than for anyone else.

Another option is that it describes Paul’s role as an apostle, especially in the light of who he used to be as a committed Mosaic Covenant Pharisee and in the continued midst of all the objections that Jews continue to lob against him because of their commitment to erroneous Judaism. Thus, Paul is saying that he has been granted by God to speak with both authority and accuracy in regard to the biblical message of God which definitely includes Jesus of Nazareth as the Messiah and Son of God who saves sinners from God’s condemnation. The sacrifices of bulls and goats according to the Mosaic Covenant do not rescue people from God’s eternal condemnation. Only Jesus does!! This is the truth.

Paul also says that he is a “teacher of the Gentiles in belief and truth” (διδάσκαλος ἐθνῶν ἐν πίστει καὶ ἀληθείᾳ). By this I think that he is highlighting his particular role which is to bring about both belief and truth among the Gentiles, because these two elements of reality, genuine belief in the hearts of sinners and the truth in which they believe are inextricably tied together. In other words, people have “belief” in the “truth” so that both of these are what Paul’s goal is as he proclaims the gospel of Jesus as the Messiah as an apostle of Jesus the Messiah.

²⁸ Βούλομαι οὖν προσεύχεσθαι τοὺς ἄνδρας ἐν παντὶ τόπῳ ἐπαίροντας ὁσίους χεῖρας χωρὶς ὀργῆς καὶ ῥυακισμοῦ – This verse presents a prohibition against the opposite of the “tranquil and quiet” of v. 2, “anger and dispute” (ὀργῆς καὶ ῥυακισμοῦ). Paul may very well be thinking of the teachers who are focusing on the Mosaic Covenant as a list of do’s and don’ts and arguing about the exact details of how to obey each one. Thus, they are only creating an atmosphere of arguments and controversy. And this is preventing the Ephesians from combining their loving efforts in prayer for all men for their salvations through the grace of God and through Jesus’ advocacy. This is just as applicable in modern times where doctrinal and liturgical controversies and arguments have resulted in denominational splits within the Christian community, but also where an emphasis on preserving churches and church organizations through religious requirements have been promoted instead of truly seeking to understand God through the Bible with genuine humility. The obvious result has been the lack of authentic unity within the Christian community that should be a prayerful community on behalf of all men for their salvations.

We notice also that Paul uses the words τοὺς ἄνδρας so that he is most likely referring to actual men here, i.e., husbands, since probably most men and women were married in that culture and together married couples had become believers in Jesus as the Messiah so that both were participating the Christian community where Timothy had remained and received this letter.

The “lifting up holy hands” (ἐπαίροντας ὁσίους χεῖρας) by all Christian men and husbands specifically is probably metaphorical for complete submission to God under His sovereign rule and authorship of the world and human history as people await Jesus’ return. Indeed, all Christians should humbly pray to God for Him to continue His project of rescuing sinners from His condemnation while they remain inwardly calm and tranquil, regardless of how chaotic life gets around them.

²⁹ Ὡσαύτως ῥ[καὶ] γυναῖκας ἐν καταστολῇ ῥκοσμῷ μετὰ αἰδοῦς καὶ σωφροσύνης κοσμεῖν ἑαυτάς, μὴ ἐν πλέγμασιν ῥκαὶ ῥχρυσῷ ἢ μαργαρίταις ἢ ἱματισμῷ πολυτελεῖ – It seems to me that Paul is speaking not to women in general but to wives in particular, because he has just addressed the men, i.e., the husbands (τοὺς ἄνδρας), and most women in that culture were married for proper protection within society and under the law. Therefore, this has to do with the role of Christian wives within marriage just as the previous paragraph was about the role of Christian husbands in society.

Taking the prepositional phrase μετὰ αἰδοῦς καὶ σωφροσύνης as the foundational inward condition of these wives, Paul is encouraging them to have modesty and right thinking as that which is the origin of their choices and lives. The first word αἰδοῦς is used only here in the NT and probably refers to being reverent and respectful of her role within the creation as her husband’s helper in following God and pursuing His definition of righteousness and morality in their family. The second word σωφροσύνης is similar and refers to thinking correctly about one’s situation in what God has created and commanded as to how sinful human beings should live their lives—with humble submission to God and with these wives’ fulfilling their proper roles within their marriages, an institution that was created by God and not by sinful human beings.

Then, assuming this inward foundation for believing wives, Paul speaks of how these women should dress—not elaborately or with the full intention of drawing attention to their physical beauty, probably so that their inward beauty of belief, morality, and understanding of God and His plans and purposes involving their own forgiveness and eternal life are more obvious to other people. This is preferable as an implication of the gospel rather than being overly concerned about outward dress and beauty. It is not that outward dress and beauty are immoral, but a wife with authentic belief should be more concerned about her inward beauty of a changed heart and commitment to God and the things of God than to her outward appearance. And it would seem that there are some wealthy people in the Ephesian Christian community, to whom Paul’s encouragement to focus on inward truth and morality and not on external beauty

is intended.

And submitting to Paul's ideas is certainly not easy in our culture either, and it is not easy even for husbands, but Christians' concern for the condition of their heart, the truthful quality of their thoughts and ideas, and the intent of their actions towards morality and obedience to God should be ultimate in their minds because of God's work within them through His Spirit. I guess the question we should all be most concerned about is, "Are people more aware of our hearts, minds, and moral choices or of our outward appearance?"

³⁰ ἀλλ' ὁ πρέπει γυναιξὶν ἐπαγγελλομέναις θεοσέβειαν, δι' ἔργων ἀγαθῶν – Thus, outward adornment for a wife is not important, but inward adornment with outward works of morality are. By their pursuit of good choices and morality, wives proclaim their reverence and regard for God and their desire for His salvation through Jesus as their advocate.

The word θεοσέβεια is most likely a synonym for εὐσέβεια that Paul used in 1 Timothy 2:2 "including kings and all who are in a high position, so that we lead a tranquil and quiet life in all proper regard (εὐσέβεια) and serious reverence for God." Thus proper regard for God is obviously proper regard for all that is important and necessary to live life well, which would be according to God's plans, purposes, and desires for sinful human beings who would aspire to eternal salvation and life.

³¹ Γυνὴ ἐν ἡσυχίᾳ μαρτανέτω ἐν πάσῃ ὑποταγῇ – And here is how wives can think rightly about their roles within their marriages. Paul wants them to demonstrate an inward quietness and calm in the midst of learning about the gospel and eternal life, which would obviously include how two people, a husband and wife, should behave towards one another in a marital relationship and that would be according to God's design of marriage involving a man and a woman and that began in Genesis 2 when He created to first two human beings of the two sexes and genders. So the instructions with respect to the gospel and how to live out their individual designs as human beings are primarily to come from the husband, and she is to accept her place in the marriage relationship as he explains what God has called them both to do with respect to the gospel, morality, and life. Thus, the husband is responsible for learning from the Bible and the gospel what his wife and he should believe and do for the sake of their eternal salvations (cf. Genesis 2 and the commandment of God for both Adam and Eve) and to observe their individual designs by God and lead them to live them out.

Thus, the husband is primarily responsible for thinking through how his wife and he should implement the gospel in all the areas of their lives according to how he is designed and how she is designed. Thus, they together should work out exactly what their particular marriage and lives look like as based upon the gospel message and in accordance with biblical morality.

But this is certainly offensive to people in our culture. However, if the husband is committed to his wife's eternal and temporary well-being as much as he is to his own (cf. Ephesians 5), then how can a woman object to her husband's desire and instructions on how life may go well for both of them (which centers on the gospel)? In other words, Paul is assuming here that the husband is all about loving his wife in order to help her obtain eternal life, so that the wife's imposing her selfish will on him that could possibly lead to their rebelling against God simply does not make any sense. Nor of course does it make sense that the husband would selfishly dominate his wife instead of merely carrying out his responsibility as the head of his wife with humility and genuine belief in the gospel and love for God and his wife.

So there are two issues here—1) the order of creation whereby the husband is the head of the wife, so that he has the primary responsibility to ensure the well-being of the two of them, especially before God and for all eternity, and 2) the wife's not allowing her sin to lead to her dominating her husband in regard to these issues (which is the same case in the previous paragraph for all people who must be willing to submit to their governing authorities under the sovereignty of God and not lash out at them in anger, seeking to impose their selfish will on them out of rebellion against God, for God is ultimately the One who has put their government leaders in position over them). Inward quietness and humble submission to God's sovereignty and His story is so important for any Christian in whatever context he or she finds himself or herself.

Another key assumption that wives should always take into account is that they are dealing with morally depraved sinners, even if their husbands are authentic Christians and longing for eternal salvation. Therefore, they, as Eve failed to do, must always be careful not to become an agent unwittingly or unduly in their husbands' disobeying God by suggesting that they act in disobedience to God (as Eve did by suggesting that they eat of the prohibited tree). The wives must keep in mind that their husbands are just a simple choice away from rebelling against God, which will be detrimental to their relationship. Instead, as much as possible, they must encourage their husbands to keep learning the gospel and obeying the gospel for the sake of the two of them, in order that they both continue living it well and persevering in their belief until they acquire eternal life at their deaths or when Jesus returns, whichever occurs first. This would be the ultimate for her in helping her husband in his role while also helping herself because of both the short-term and long-term benefits.

³² διδάσκειν δὲ γυναῖκί οὐκ ἐπιτρέπω οὐδὲ αὐθεντεῖν ἀνδρός, ἀλλ' εἶναι ἐν ἡσυχίᾳ – Some interpret this as Paul's prohibiting women from teaching heresy on the basis of 1:18ff. Of course he prohibits her from teaching heresy, just as he would prohibit anyone from teaching heresy. So Paul cannot mean this here. And others interpret this as Paul's prohibition against women teaching men and being pastors in modern churches. But in the context of his discussion of the husband/wife relation, Paul does not mean this either.

Instead, Paul does not permit a wife to impose her own will (αὐθεντεῖν) on her husband whereby the husband would

choose to rebel against God. This means that the two words “teach” and “dominate” go together. It is certainly not the case that a wife can “instruct” her husband in something, in even the gospel, if she understands it better than he does. Paul’s concern is that she violate the design of creation as made by God whereby the husband is the “head” of the wife (cf. Ephesians 5) and demand that the husband follow her lead in everything, including in how to obey God, instead of permitting him to fulfill his responsibility and seek to lead well in this regard.

And Paul would have the wife fulfill her role with an inward calmness and tranquility (ἡσυχία)—that obviously comes from her understanding of God and His sovereign rule over her husband and over herself. This ἡσυχία was what Paul urged for all Christians including himself in 1 Timothy 2:2. It is a quiet and calm demeanor inwardly that comes from learning the gospel and the biblical message of God’s whole project. Thus, wives can live with ἡσυχία in their marriages just as all Christians should live with it and not inwardly rebel and chafe against what God is doing in their lives and in the world. They can trust that God is telling His story exactly the way He wants to so that they can be calm and tranquil in their hearts and minds even in the midst of moral and social chaos that characterizes their culture and the world.

Paul’s concern is along the lines of what happened with Adam and Eve, but there Eve was not necessarily imposing her will on Adam but simply offering him the fruit of the tree from a position of her being deceived by Satan, not complete domination. And unfortunately Adam chose to rebel willfully against God—even though his wife Eve was certainly not seeking to dominate him completely.

³³ Ἀδὰμ γὰρ πρῶτος ἐπλάσθη, εἶτα Εὕα – This is obviously a reference to Genesis 2 and the story of the creation of Adam and Eve. The implications of the order of the creation of the first two human beings is Paul’s drawing the conclusion that the husband is the primary person in the marriage relationship, while the wife is given to him as a helper (cf. Genesis 2:18, וְעֵצָה, βοηθόν). Therefore, there are two distinct roles, the head (husband) and the helper (wife), where the husband should set the tone of the marriage for living out his and his wife’s calling before God according to their design and for continuing to learn about and follow God based upon the truth available, e.g., from the Bible for those who have lived since its writing beginning about 1500 B.C. with Moses.

The fact that Adam and Eve and every man and woman after them within their marriage have different roles so that the husband is the head and the wife as his helper does not constitute a difference in status, importance, or value in God’s eyes, but simply a difference in role. Their status and importance are equal because they both are created by God to participate in His story and because they both will inherit eternal life (if they gave genuine belief). Just as a person in government may have a status higher than the regular citizens, and just as a person in a company may have a status higher than other employees, if they all are bona fide Christians, then they will all have equal status in the presence of God, and they all will acquire eternal life equally. Their roles are different in the present world, but their eternal destiny is the same because of their changed inwardness and authentic belief. And this is true for husbands and wives also. Their roles are different, but their eternal status and importance in God’s eyes are equal.

Therefore, Paul may very well be writing this paragraph because the wives had concluded that since they were of equal status before God, their role was basically the same as their husbands. And it also may have been the case that some husbands were abusing their role by being demanding of their wives instead of humbly, carefully, and gently leading their wives towards what they thought was obedience to God.

But what if the wife knows the biblical message better and is even a better teacher of it? Certainly she should share her ideas with her husband (and with any others) who is still responsible for taking the biblical message and using it in their marriage to help them both live their lives wisely and well before God in order to obtain their mutual goal of eternal life. In other words, he should take the initiative to learn from her in order that he might think through with her what the implications of the gospel are so that they both can then live it accordingly for the sake of their eternal well-beings. Thus, he is always leading in regard to the most important element of their lives—learning and living the gospel that will result in eternal salvation and life.

³⁴ καὶ Ἀδὰμ οὐκ ἠπατήθη, ἡ δὲ γυνὴ ἑξαπατηθεῖσα ἐν παραβάσει γέγονεν –

The NAS95 translates this verse, [1 Timothy 2:14](#) And it was not Adam who was deceived, but the woman being deceived, fell into transgression.

But what issue is Paul addressing here? He just said that a woman should follow her husband and that the man, Adam, was made first before his wife Eve. Probably, a Christian woman who has now come to realize that she is equally valuable before God and that the first man willfully sinned against God while his wife was only deceived into disobeying God and did not do so in a fully rebellious manner like her husband, is wondering why in the world she should follow her husband when the first one demonstrated such willful disobedience towards God. Paul’s answer is that this is simply the way God has designed reality and that His plan is to rescue Adam from eternal condemnation if he ended up becoming a genuine believer throughout the rest of his life. In other words, people’s sin does not negate or change God’s basic design of reality, which, in this case, means that husbands are still the primary leader of their wives even though the first husband was such a willful sinner while his wife was not. Wives are probably saying, “Shouldn’t women lead in marriages since Adam so egregiously failed to obey God—even though he was made first?” And Paul is saying, “No, husbands should just lead well in spite of and in the midst of their sin, and wives should follow according to God’s design of the created reality.”

Thus, a wife might want to object to Paul’s teaching that she learn from and follow her husband with submissiveness with respect to how to believe in and obey God, because it is clear in Genesis 3 that the first husband, Adam, willfully chose to rebel against God, while Eve was merely deceived. So why should any wife listen to her husband if Adam was

a good example of only what was probably going to happen in every marriage, rebellion against God by the husband? Or a believing wife might object to being her unbelieving husband's helper, because what Paul is saying here does not make sense if she is equally valuable and important before God—and she has willingly grasped the gospel and is living it. Paul's answer is that there is a possibility that Adam eventually did become a genuine believer and will be saved, and certainly there is the same possibility for the Ephesian wife's husband—if he happens to be an unbeliever and if he happens to sin dramatically against God.

The potential syntactical issue in this verse that would make my translation and interpretation incorrect is Paul's using the nominative for the woman (ἡ δὲ γυνή) and the participle (ῥέξαπατηθεῖσα) which might point more towards the subject of the singular verb γέγονεν being the woman and not the man, Adam. But it simply makes more sense that Paul is addressing the issue of a wife's submission to her husband in the light of the first husband's willful rebellion against God and in the light of the possibility that Adam still found eternal salvation from God in spite of his rebellion against God. This is to say that sin ultimately cannot stop God from rescuing people from His condemnation if this is His plan and purpose for them.

So this verse is not about Eve's falling into transgression, but about Adam's deliberate rebellion against God *through the agency of his wife, Eve*. She was genuinely deceived by Satan when she chose to think that deciding for herself what was moral was a way to grow up and mature in the eyes of God by eating from the tree which was prohibited for them to eat. In contrast, Adam was not deceived in his choice to eat the fruit of the tree, and he cannot (nor should we) blame Eve for his and their disobeying God. He knowingly and willfully rebelled against God—in line with his inherent sinfulness and hostility towards God. And he takes all the blame for the two of them violating God's commandment not to eat of the tree. Adam could have said, "No, Eve, this is not right for us to do." Instead, he deliberately chose to eat and disobey God. Thus, his "transgression" into which he came (γέγονεν) was not a change from being morally perfect or innocent to being immoral or guilty. It was a change from not deliberately disobeying God as a created sinful man by not eating of the prohibited tree to eating of it in direct violation of God's commandment.

Thus "Adam was not deceived" (Ἀδὰμ οὐκ ἠπατήθη). Instead, "he came into transgression" (ἐν παραβάσει γέγονεν) as an inherently sinful human being "while the wife was being deceived" (ἡ δὲ γυνὴ ῥέξαπατηθεῖσα).

³⁵ σωθήσεται δὲ διὰ τῆς τεκνογονίας –

The NAS95 translates the entirety of verse 15, **1 Timothy 2:15** But women will be preserved through the bearing of children if they continue in faith and love and sanctity with self-restraint.

However, the verb σωθήσεται is singular so that it makes more sense for it to refer to only one person, the one who "came into transgression" at the end of the previous verse, who, as I said in the previous endnote, is more likely to be Adam and not Eve, since he is the more problematic person as a result of his willful rebellion against God in the Garden of Eden.

Thus, Paul is saying that Adam will find salvation from God's condemnation and destruction in spite of his inward sinfulness and overt and deliberate act of rebellion against God. And this salvation will occur by means of Eve's design which, as a woman, is to bear children (διὰ τῆς τεκνογονίας), which will eventually result in salvation for people of genuine belief. We also know that Eve's and her descendants' childbearing is in line with God's desires and produces the Messiah as God's unique human instrument of salvation, i.e., *through Eve's agency as a bearer of children and eventually the Messiah*. This statement by Paul can be derived from Genesis where the ramifications of what God says in Genesis 3 is that eventually through the birth of the Messiah, Jesus brings salvation to Adam (hopefully, if became an authentic believer) and, by implication, to the husbands and wives in Ephesus (the "they") who are willing to take advantage of the childbearing of Eve through their belief in God and Jesus as the Messiah.

³⁶ ἔάν μείνωσιν ἐν πίστει καὶ ἀγάπῃ καὶ ἁγιασμῷ μετὰ σωφοσύνης ἱστώδς ὁ λόγος –

Then, in the last part of v. 15, Paul uses the plural "they." There are three options as to whom he is referring—1) Adam and Eve; 2) The husbands and wives of Ephesus with whom Timothy is in contact; 3) Adam and Eve and all husbands and wives after them to the end of this realm and the millennial kingdom.

I think that #3 makes the most sense, that Paul is concerned mostly about how husbands and wives in Ephesus are relating to one another and is using the "if" clause as an encouragement to continue in the faith as long as they are alive. Therefore, "if they remain in belief, love, and holiness with good-thinking" (ἐάν μείνωσιν ἐν πίστει καὶ ἀγάπῃ καὶ ἁγιασμῷ μετὰ σωφοσύνης), then their "belief" is authentic belief in God like that of any human being's. Their "love" is love for God and for other human beings, especially authentic believers like themselves. Their "holiness" is being different from other human beings in the world who do not demonstrate authentic belief and who do not have a changed heart. And their difference "with good-thinking" is because they have great regard for God and His statements about Himself, His plans, and the nature of reality in which sinful human beings exist and live.

Thus, this "if" clause is more likely a separate sentence, to which Paul adds the proviso at the beginning of 3:1, "this statement is reliable." In other words, if Adam and Eve (and therefore all husbands and wives in the Christian community of Ephesus) are (and were at the time) authentic, changed of heart believers, then it is true that both of them through their fulfilling their proper roles, Adams (and the husband's) teaching Eve (his wife) in regard to God and how to live the "Christian" life of authentic belief and obedience and Eve's (the wife's) following his lead and instruction, will be saved from God's eternal condemnation just as Adam will be saved through the childbearing of Eve and her descendants that results in the appearance of the Messiah, their advocate and intercessor.

Thus, Paul is saying that the possibility of salvation *through the children of Eve* mitigates the direct rebellion of

Adam's eating of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, which is an argument against any wife who would think it is permissible to dominate her husband because of Adam's rebellion, even though Adam was formed first and then Eve. In other words, the sin or sins of any husband, Adam included, does not negate God's design of husbands leading wives, especially when there will be the possibility that the husband will be rescued through his own genuine belief and through the Messiah who is a bona fide descendant of Eve. This is the say that in the midst of his wife's being deceived, Adam "came into transgression" and knowingly and willingly disobeyed God. However, as Paul says in the first part of v. 15, he will be rescued from God's wrath and condemnation by virtue of the line of descendants which we find out from Genesis 5 starts with Seth and continues through Noah, then Noah's son Shem and on to Abraham and his descendants of Jews through Isaac and Jacob to Jesus (cf. Luke 3:23-38).

Therefore, the first three words of 3:1 go better with the previous paragraph of 2: 14-15, especially v. 15, i.e., the "statement" that Adam will be saved through the childbearing of Eve and her descendants which, from a salvation standpoint, culminates in Jesus of Nazareth as the Messiah.

³⁷ Εἴ τις ἐπισκοπῆς ὀρέγεται, καλοῦ ἔργου ἐπιθυμεῖ – This second part of 3:1 is about men in Ephesus who would like to help other Christians continue to learn and grow in their understanding of the apostolic message and to care for all their existential needs, and therefore about Timothy who as Paul's apostolic co-worker should be on the lookout for such men who both have a desire to help their fellow Christians continue in their obedience to God and who are capable of doing so. Paul is saying that being an "overseer" (ἐπισκοπή) is definitely a good desire, but these men should exhibit certain characteristics in order to be carry out this task appropriately.

ὀρέγω is used in 1 Timothy 6:10 regarding the longing for money and in Hebrews 11:16 regarding the OT saints who long for the millennial kingdom. In other words, this refers to a strong desire so that there is no problem with the strength of the desire. The problem would be if selfish motivation (like that of Diotrephes in 3 John) is involved. This verb, like ἐπιθυμέω, takes the genitive case after it.

ἐπιθυμέω – I strongly desire something, and the verb typically takes the genitive case as in Acts 20:33 "I have coveted no one's silver or gold or clothes" (ἀργυρίου ἢ χρυσίου ἢ ἱματισμοῦ οὐδενὸς ἐπεθύμησα).

³⁸ δεῖ οὖν τὸν ἐπίσκοπον ἀνεπίλημπτον εἶναι, μιᾶς γυναικὸς ἄνδρα, νηφάλιον σώφρονα κόσμιον φιλόξενον διδακτικόν – An elder's life must coincide with the NT message of Jesus as the Messiah and all its implications. ἀνεπίλημπτος is used also in 1 Timothy 5:7 regarding widows and 1 Timothy 6:14 regarding Timothy. It is referring to this person's being someone whom others cannot find any obvious fault in how they are living their lives as professing believers in Jesus the Messiah. It makes sense, then, that the list of characteristics that this person should have are what Paul considers to really count for what it means for this person to be beyond criticism.

1) μιᾶς γυναικὸς ἄνδρα is used also in 1 Timothy 3:12 regarding deacons/assistants and Titus 1:6 regarding elders and refers most likely to a husband who is not committing adultery but is remaining dedicated and faithful to his wife and his responsibility to be her head that would be hard in the sexually immoral society of 1st century Ephesus where all men would have practiced sexual immorality with temple prostitutes (and probably with other women, even other men's wives) as that which was expected (or at least condoned) in their culture and religion.

2) νηφάλιον is used also in 1 Timothy 3:11 regarding wives of assistants/deacons and Titus 2:2 regarding older men and refers to being self-controlled, levelheaded, calm, and sensible in the midst of chaos.

3) σώφρονα is used also in Titus 1:8; 2:2,5 and probably refers to much the same—calm, wise, sensible, prudent and thinking well in situations that require true thoughtfulness.

4) κόσμιον is used also in 1 Timothy 2:9 regarding a wife's manner of dressing and refers to someone who acts in a way that does not make his fellow Christians cringe, i.e., his behavior truly reflects the moral calling of the gospel. Therefore, he behaves morally.

5) φιλόξενον refers to being loving and caring towards others, whether a person knows them as friends, acquaintances, etc. or not. This person treats other human beings as fellow sinners who need the grace and mercy of God as much as he does and so talks to them and acts towards them in such a way to look for an opportunity to engage with them in the truth of the gospel so that they may believe and be saved from God's eternal condemnation and destruction.

6) διδακτικόν is used also in 2 Timothy 2:24 and refers to someone who can convey the message of the gospel so that others can understand it. This requires a certain level of intellect and articulate speech such that he can be understood by others so that they can gain more knowledge and understanding of God and the biblical message.

Thus, the overseer must demonstrate a mature level of controlling his own immoral passions, have a good sense of right and wrong from the gospel, live a morally orderly life, be willing to interact lovingly with people outside the Christian community, and have the ability to articulate the apostolic message for the sake of communicating it well to others.

³⁹ μὴ πάροινον μὴ πλήκτην ἑ, ἀλλ' ἐπεικὴ ἄμαχον ἀφιλάργυρον – Paul continues his list of the characteristics of overseers of a Christian community.

7) μὴ πάροινον – Paul also uses this in the same context in Titus 1:7, that these men should not be addicted to wine and therefore to alcohol. It is not that they should never drink alcohol but that they should not become controlled by it such that their thinking and choices are impaired.

8) μὴ πλήκτην is used also in Titus 1:6 regarding elders and means that he also must not act in such a way as to bully people into belief and following their leadership within the Christian community. Instead, he should be gentle (ἐπεικὴ cf. Philippians 4:5; Titus 3:2; James 3:17 regarding the wisdom from above; 1 Peter 2:18 regarding masters of slaves where the former are not gentle) which probably implies a willingness to respect not only God's sovereign control over other people and their belief, but also people's individuality and individual responsibility to learn the gospel and belief

of their own free will, not because they feel any pressure from anyone else but God. An elder must not be pugnacious, i.e., not disposed to fight and pushed by his insecurity or arrogance into fighting with people over issues pertaining to the gospel. He also must not give in to his natural sinful passions to obtain that which he does not have simply because he has to have it for his own self-worth or need to feel good about himself.

9) ἐπιεικὴ means being gentle and therefore respectful of other people's individuality and whatever process God has them in when it comes to their being able to grasp the apostolic message, believe it, and live it.

10) ἄμαχον used also in Titus 3:2 regarding all Christians and literally means "not a fighter." Again, this would have to do with a Christian leader's and a Christian respecting the fact that people are going to disagree with the apostolic message and must be given then proper latitude to figure it out for themselves and come to authentic belief according to God's sovereign plans and purposes.

11) ἀφιλάργυρον is used also in Hebrews 13:5 and refers to someone who is not wedded to money as that which ultimately satisfies him. It means literally "not a lover of silver/that which is shiny." Certainly, some people are definitely gifted by God to make a lot of money, but the Christian leader and all Christians should not become obsessed with wealth to the extent that it dominates their mind and heart and even prevents them from being genuinely charitable with money.

⁴⁰ τοῦ ἰδίου οἴκου καλῶς προϊστάμενον, τέκνα ἔχοντα ἐν ὑποταγῇ, μετὰ πάσης σεμνότητος – The list of overseer/elder characteristics continues.

12) τοῦ ἰδίου οἴκου καλῶς προϊστάμενο refers to his understanding the gospel and its ramifications for practical everyday living, so that he is able to treat his family with love, patience, respect, and genuine care while also sharing his knowledge with his wife and children.

13) τέκνα ἔχοντα ἐν ὑποταγῇ μετὰ πάσης σεμνότητος means that the man's children find their father's love and care so attractive that they respond to him with respect and reverence, the same way that people respond to their political leaders and fellow human beings with respect (1 Timothy 2:2 and Titus 2:7). Is Paul expecting all of an elder's children to be authentic believers? Probably not completely, but as long as the children are young enough to be under their parents' roof, that they at least are willing to obey their parents who hopefully are treating them with biblical love and respect according to the gospel. Thus, this qualification is more about the father and his proper treatment of his children than it is about the children and whether or not they are genuine believers—as also demonstrated by the next verse.

⁴¹ εἰ δέ τις τοῦ ἰδίου οἴκου προστῆναι οὐκ οἶδεν, πῶς ἐκκλησίας θεοῦ ἐπιμελήσεται – Here we have a parenthetical statement to make the same point as in the previous verse.

Paul likens the guidance a man can give to his family to that which he can give to the Christian community where he interacts with others of the same belief in Jesus as the Messiah. It is a matter of continuing to be loving and caring towards his fellow Christians and to present the important ideas regarding God and His mercy of the apostolic message which should result in people pursuing a lifestyle of morality and love in a true biblical sense, whether within a family with young children or within the community of believers. Thus, the overseer's fellow Christians find it easy and right to treat him with reverence because of how loving and respectful of their individuality he is being towards them.

⁴² μὴ νεόφυτον, ἵνα μὴ τυφώθῃς εἰς κρίμα ἐμπέσῃ τοῦ διαβόλου – Paul continues the list of overseer characteristics.

14) μὴ νεόφυτον means that he is not literally a "neophyte," i.e., one who grows up or comes up new, which is to say that he is new to the faith and to the apostolic message. So he may be a good communicator and leader, but he has not gone through a period of time of experiencing what it means to be a Christian in this world that is quite humbling, or at least should be. It is good to get a little beat up by the world as a Christian in order not to become prideful with respect to one's new found faith in Jesus. Through the difficulties of life, a person learns just that much more how his belief and Christian life are the result of the work of God and His grace, not the effect of his own natural, human efforts. This produces a degree of humility within the Christian so that he can lead others in their Christianity with greater patience and compassion.

Pride goes before destruction and the fall – Proverbs 16:18. As long as someone remains prideful about his new found Christianity, he is at risk of incurring God's condemnation and not salvation, because the latter requires the necessary condition of authentic humility, that everything a person has that is truly good comes from God. We also know from the bible that Satan will incur God's condemnation and his strategy is to motivate people of pride, arrogance, and disregard for God to use their pride to gain more power and control over other human beings instead of being gracious and respectful towards them. Therefore, the word διαβόλου here may refer to a human being outside the community of Christians, but it seems to me that Paul is talking about the devil, Satan, himself. So this the "judgment of the devil," i.e., the judgment that the devil (and all his followers) will experience because of their conceit, pride, and arrogance.

⁴³ δεῖ δὲ τὸ καὶ μαρτυρίαν καλὴν ἔχειν ἀπὸ τῶν ἔξωθεν, ἵνα μὴ εἰς ὀνειδισμόν ἐμπέσῃ καὶ παγίδα τοῦ διαβόλου – 15) δεῖ δὲ τὸ καὶ μαρτυρίαν καλὴν ἔχειν ἀπὸ τῶν ἔξωθεν means that the overseer not present anything in his life that those "outside" the gathering of Christians could find as the reason why they can condemn this person as a false believer and/or Christian hypocrite. Maybe the unbelievers really do not respect the overseer, but at least they have no reason to criticize him before others because of how he conducts his life. He is honest, respectful, and acts with integrity so that no one can criticize him for unbiblical behavior, even if they do not like what he says about God and human sin, even their sin.

"Reproach" (ὀνειδισμόν) and the snare of the devil (παγίδα τοῦ διαβόλου) probably refer to the overseer's behavior and his having chosen to claim belief in Jesus the Messiah while not living in accordance with biblical, moral commandments. This is exactly what the devil (or human follower of the devil as his own slanderer of Christians who

clearly disobey God) desires so that he may criticize Christian leaders for doing what is wrong and deciding that the wrong which one is doing is right instead of agreeing with God's definition of morality—like Eve in Genesis 3. So even if outsiders prefer to act immorally, they are able to confirm that the overseer is acting in a manner different from them, i.e., morally, and is treating them with kindness and grace.

Conceit leads to deciding for oneself what is right instead of humbly submitting to God's definition of morality. If the overseer/elder falls into reproach, then he has chosen to follow the unbelievers into their immoral behavior while thinking he is permitted to do so—for whatever reason. This is the snare of the devil in which Eve got caught in Genesis 3 and which Paul wishes that the men who are overseers avoid.

⁴⁴ διακόνους ὡσαύτως ὁσεμνούς, μὴ διλόγους, μὴ οἶνω πολλῶ προσέχοντας, μὴ αἰσχροκερδεῖς – These characteristics apply to any Christian, but Paul lists them for διακόνους (=servants, assistants) within the Christian community. The question is though, who are these “assistants,” and it seems to me that there are two options—1) men who will help the overseers and elders carry out the practical means of care and concern that people will have for one another within the Christian community, whether people's needs are physical, emotional, psychological, or spiritual, or 2) the overseers and elders who carry out the practical means of care and concern for people as in #1.

There is also [Philippians 1:1](#) Paul and Timothy, bond-servants of Christ Jesus, to all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi, including the overseers and deacons (σὺν ἐπισκόποις καὶ διακόνις).

There are other uses of the word διάκονος in the NT, and Paul, for example, calls himself a servant of God with this word, and there is in this letter regarding Timothy [1 Timothy 4:6](#) “In pointing out these things to the brethren, you will be a good servant of Christ Jesus (καλὸς ἔσῃ διάκονος Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ), constantly nourished on the words of the faith and of the sound doctrine which you have been following.”

Therefore, it seems to me that Paul is switching from the singular to the plural to speak of overseers and elders, and he is calling them “servants” just as Timothy and he are good servants of God and Jesus, so that he is adding a few more important characteristics to their resumes. As a result, I have translated the word with the phrase “God's agents” to mean the overseers and elders.

ὁσεμνούς is used also in [Philippians 4:8](#) in regard to thoughts that are worthy of respect and [1 Timothy 3:11](#) and the wives of overseers and [Titus 2:2](#) and older men. It refers to that which is worthy of respect and honor, i.e., that which is true and moral.

διλόγους = double speech, i.e., speaking both truth and falsehood for one's own selfish gain.

μὴ οἶνω πολλῶ προσέχοντας = basically not someone who gets drunk with wine

αἰσχροκερδεῖς is used in [Titus 1:7](#) regarding elders and refers to greed.

Thus, the overseers' and elders' moral behavior and treatment of people should elicit respect because they are kind, gracious, and truthful in their interactions with others. If they are double-tongued, then they are willing to lie just as much as tell the truth—especially with respect to the apostolic message of the gospel. And this would obviously be wrong and immoral. In addition, as Paul has already said in [3:3](#) and now is repeating probably for emphasis sake, they should be temperate in their use of alcohol.

They should also not be aggressively pursuing money and doing so “shamelessly,” i.e., without any regard for integrity and honest behavior, at the expense of their love and genuine concern for others—as Paul has already basically said in [3:3](#), but is now repeating in a way to emphasize it. In other words, money and the acquisition of money is a big issue for any human being and especially for leaders of Christians (and therefore for all the other Christians as well).

⁴⁵ ἔχοντας τὸ μυστήριον τῆς πίστεως ἐν καθαρᾷ συνειδήσει – Obviously, as Paul is saying here, the overseers and elders as servants of God and of His people, authentic believers, should be well grounded in the apostolic message and capable of understanding it well. After all, they are helping people to live out the implications of the gospel, and the best way to help in this manner is to understand the gospel well oneself.

The “mystery of the faith” is that which was hidden prior to the actual appearance of the Messiah but now has become clear through his life (with his words and miracles and general living out his life as the very human icon of the invisible God), death, resurrection, and ascension—especially his death, which is just so unusual.

A “pure understanding” is one that is not contaminated by worldly thoughts that have their examples in documents of the NT. Thus, the overseers and elders hold on to the message of the gospel with a clear and clean understanding of God and His eternal plans and purposes to rescue sinful human beings from His condemnation through the work of Jesus of Nazareth as His proxy and the crucified and resurrected Jewish Messiah.

⁴⁶ καὶ οὗτοι δὲ δοκιμαζέσθωσαν πρῶτον, εἴτα διακονείτωσαν ἀνέγκλητοι ὄντες – It should be clear by this point in Paul's instructions regarding these leaders of the Christian community that these assistants and overseers are genuine believers in the apostolic message and serving others in a manner that is commensurate with it. This keeps them innocent in regard to all these characteristics that Paul is listing and before God as those who will obtain God's eternal mercy because they are demonstrating their belief in the gospel with the entirety of their lives, which is what will qualify them for God's forgiveness and salvation.

The genuineness of people's belief should be discovered and authenticated within the characteristics that Paul has listed as they persevere in their belief and continue to long for God's eternal salvation. Then their service of others is in the midst of the confidence by these other people that they are being served by those of genuine belief.

⁴⁷ Γυναῖκας ὡσαύτως σεμνάς, μὴ διαβόλους, νηφαλίους, πιστάς ἐν πᾶσιν – Now Paul switches back to wives and those specifically of these overseers who are assistants and servants of God. They too should demonstrate genuine belief, not pursuing evil according to God's adversary, Satan, but controlling themselves as best as possible towards

pursuing goodness and that which is moral, while also faithfully holding to all the information about Jesus and its implications.

σεμνὰς – same as above for assistants and therefore of their husbands as overseers; worthy of respect and honor for their Christianity

μὴ διαβόλους – not constantly speaking ill of others

νηφαλίους – also above for overseers and elders; self-controlled, levelheaded, calm, and sensible in the midst of chaos

πιστάς ἐν παντί = faithfully fulfilling their responsibilities or demonstrating genuine belief in everything they do.

Both end up being the same.

⁴⁸ διακονοὶ ἔστωσαν μιᾷ γυναικὶ ἄνδρες, τέκνων καλῶς προϊστάμενοι καὶ τῶν ἰδίων οἴκων – In the light of the pagan culture which encouraged temple prostitution, Paul lists again this important characteristic for leaders within their Christian community, that men should remain loyal to their wives (as Paul has also said about the overseers and elders in 3:2). In addition, their grasp of the gospel should be passed on to their families as part of their serving the whole community in living out the implications of it. In other words, the overseers should be communicating the gospel to their own families just as diligently and consistently as they are doing to the rest of the Christian community. After all, this is an ability that they obviously have that qualifies them to be teachers to all the other Christians.

⁴⁹ οἱ γὰρ καλῶς διακονήσαντες βαθμὸν ἑαυτοῖς καλὸν περιποιῶνται καὶ πολλὴν παρρησίαν ἐν πίστει τῇ ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ – By fulfilling their God-given responsibilities as overseers and servants/assistants in caring for the community of believers in regard to their spiritual, physical, emotional, and psychological well-being, these men gain a good-standing before God that will result in their being eternally saved from His condemnation, and they also gain a self-confidence in the authenticity of their own belief.

They are living out their God-given giftedness and role within human history and within the Christian community in a genuine manner, and both God knows it and they know it. The effect will be that they will acquire eternal salvation with all other authentic believers.

⁵⁰ Ταῦτά σοι γράφω ἐλπίζων ἔλθεῖν ἑπὶ πρὸς σέ· ἐν τάχει· – Paul now transitions from the importance of Christians' living out their appropriate roles within society (all Christians), within marriage (wives), and within the Christian community as overseers and their wives to how all Christians should worship together and obey God in the community of believers in God.

Perhaps thinking that Titus will bring a good report from Corinth and freeing him from having to go to Corinth himself to help with the situation of sin there (cf. 2 Corinthians), Paul expects to come to Timothy soon and continue his own shepherding of the Ephesian Christian community in which Timothy is currently participating as Paul's apostolic co-worker. However, instead Paul will meet up with Titus, who is coming from Corinth and actually does bring a good report. Then, Timothy will join Paul in Macedonia, and together they all will go to Corinth, which will bring an end to Paul's 3rd missionary journey around A.D. 58.

⁵¹ ἐὰν δὲ βραδύνω, ἵνα εἰδῇς πῶς δεῖ ἐν οἴκῳ θεοῦ ἀναστρέφεσθαι, ἥτις ἐστὶν ἐκκλησία θεοῦ ζώντος, στῦλος καὶ ἑδραίωμα τῆς ἀληθείας – If Paul is delayed in coming to Timothy, this letter is intended to serve as an adequate substitute for what he wants conveyed to the Christian community in Ephesus where Timothy is. The primary purpose of the letter is to educate the Christians in how they should treat one another within this specific group of believers in their city. Paul uses the verb ἀναστρέφεσθαι, which generally means to return, but it also can refer to how someone or a group conduct themselves. Here means the latter as it pertains to “in the household of God” (ἐν οἴκῳ θεοῦ). Thus, Paul is referring to the group dynamics of the community of believers in Ephesus in contrast to how each individual should conduct himself as a follower of Jesus, a subject he addressed in his first letter to this community, i.e., Ephesians, which was probably also a circular letter to several gatherings of Christians in the western Asia area. Therefore, group dynamics are the purpose of this entire letter and which Paul is charging Timothy to teach and instruct the Christians in Ephesus.

1 Peter 1:17 If you address as Father the One who impartially judges according to each one's work, conduct yourselves in fear during the time of your stay on earth.

In addition, Paul indicates that authentic believers are the “gathering of living” (ἐκκλησία θεοῦ ζώντος), probably saying this to contrast them with gatherings of dead gods, which would be the pagan Greek gods common in that society. For example, the temple of Aphrodite and the central worship of her was located in Ephesus. By definition, dead gods are merely the forces of the creation that are under complete control by the living God, the God of the Bible. As a result, Paul goes on to state that the community of believers in Jesus is “the pillar and foundation of truth,” meaning that it stands there in the larger society validating the stable and enduring nature of God's truth of the good news of His mercy to people who deserve only His condemnation and destruction if it were not for His sovereign grace in their lives. It is also the “foundation” and “establishment” of the truth in the sense that it demonstrates that the gospel has become an enduring fixture in the world, never to be rooted out by anyone or anything, because God will ensure that it remains even into the millennial kingdom and the eternal new creation afterwards. Everything God is doing in the world as it heads towards the 2nd coming of the Messiah is building on the foundation of authentic Christians as that group which is permanently established in the world until Jesus' return. Obviously, it is only the authentic believers in a group who call themselves Christians who are genuinely demonstrating the gospel of God and can be “the pillar and foundation of truth.” Down through the centuries, Christian gatherings that may have begun as groups of authentic believers eventually probably changed into groups that were (and still are) made up of false Christians.

⁵² καὶ ὁμολογουμένως μέγα ἐστὶν τὸ τῆς εὐσεβείας μυστήριον ὅς ἐφανερώθη ἐν σαρκί, ἐδικαιώθη ἐν πνεύματι, ὤφθη ἀγγέλοις, ἐκηρύχθη ἐν ἔθνεσιν, ἐπιστεύθη ἐν κόσμῳ, ἀνελήμφθη ἐν δόξῃ. – Because the truth which Paul mentioned in the previous verse is centered in the man Jesus of Nazareth, he is the primary example and reason for how people should treat each other as believers in God. He was predicted by the Old Testament and then appeared on earth and on the land of Israel as a real human being and a perfectly godly person. Thus, he went from being a “mystery” (an OT prediction) to a real human being and actually existing on earth in human history, who himself became the model of godliness, an instructor in godliness and the basis for salvation and godliness for all those who choose to follow him and associate with him through their belief in him. In other words, Jesus is the “mystery of godliness” who has come into existence in personal form and to imitate.

The word godliness (εὐσεβεία) is a common word in the NT (15x) to refer to literally well-reverencing or well-worshipping in relationship to God. People who exercise godliness, therefore, are inwardly willing and committed to learn from God about Him and His purposes and intentions for human beings such they then live in line with God’s intellectual, moral, and social requirements.

Paul mentions in six parts what very well could be the form of an early Christian hymn the salient points of Jesus’ existence and how the “mystery” of Jesus which had not yet been revealed was progressively made known during his first appearance. He was revealed, justified, seen, proclaimed, believed, and then taken up—

1) ὅς ἐφανερώθη ἐν σαρκί – “He was revealed in flesh,” meaning that Jesus was a man who was revealed the basis and reason for all human beings, if they are willing, to learn from and submit to God.

2) ἐδικαιώθη ἐν πνεύματι – “He was justified in spirit/Spirit,” meaning either that Jesus’ living out his role according to God’s purposes for the Messiah rendered him good and right before God, or that his living out his role according to God’s purposes was confirmed by the Spirit of God who produced the miracles which he performed and who audibly declared him the Son of God and Messiah three times during his appearance on earth. I am inclined to think that the second option is correct so that...

3) ὤφθη ἀγγέλοις – “He was seen ____ the angels/messengers,” meaning that Jesus’ inwardness was truly good and right, indeed morally perfect, and his appearing on this earth so that he was seen by other human beings in Israel during the first century was in conjunction with the transcendent God’s revealing Himself through Jesus’ miracles and at least three times by the audible voice which identified Jesus as His beloved Son (cf. Matthew 3:17; Matthew 17:5; John 12:28).

4) ἐκηρύχθη ἐν ἔθνεσιν – “He was proclaimed in/among the nations,” meaning that Jesus’ identity as the Messiah and all the important ideas which go along with his role as such were declared by the apostles, his authoritative spokesmen, to both Jews and Gentiles.

5) ἐπιστεύθη ἐν κόσμῳ – “He was believed in the world/cosmos,” meaning that both Jews and Gentiles believed and embraced the truth of Jesus’ being the long-expected Jewish Messiah, which obviously be to their benefit of eternal life and would also lead to their learning his instructions and how to conduct themselves amongst one another in the Christian community.

6) ἀνελήμφθη ἐν δόξῃ – “He was taken up in glory,” meaning that, after Jesus had completed his initial responsibilities as the Messiah during his first appearance, he was lifted off the earth as a profound indication of the awesome and wonderful nature of his fulfilling his initial responsibilities as God heads toward having Jesus return in order carry out his final responsibilities as the king of the restored Kingdom of Israel and then of the Kingdom of God on the eternal earth. Cf. Acts 1:22 “beginning with the baptism of John until the day that he was taken up from us (ἀνελήμφθη ἅπ’ ἡμῶν) — one of these must become a witness with us of his resurrection.”

Thus, Jesus is the central feature of creation history and the one to whom everyone looks for how they should treat one another within the community and believers and for their ultimate destiny in the eternal Kingdom of God.

⁵³ Τὸ δὲ πνεῦμα ῥητῶς λέγει ὅτι ἐν ὑστέροις καιροῖς ἀποστήσονται τινες τῆς πίστεως προσέχοντες πνεύμασιν ῥαλάνοις καὶ διδασκαλίαις δαιμονίων – Somehow Paul has found out from God, probably through even his study of the OT, that people will appear to embrace the message of Jesus of Nazareth as the Messiah and Savior, but they will become influenced by the world with its ideas and behavior that are influenced by Satan and his deceiving, spiritual followers (δαίμονιων), to the point that people will abandon the actual faith, probably while continuing to claim that they are authentic believers in Jesus. This is also to say that there are personal forces within the creation whose purpose and inclinations are to counter the truth of God which we find in the Bible so as to influence people, even those who appear to have become bona fide followers of Jesus as the Messiah, to live in a way that is contrary to His instruction and teaching about how to engage in human life appropriately and morally.

This same kind of claiming to worship God appropriately, after being brought up in an environment of the Abrahamic and Mosaic Covenants, but being sidetracked into worldly worship is what happened to the Israelites. A clear example is in Amos where the leaders and people of the northern Kingdom of Israel are convinced they are obeying the Mosaic Covenant when God says that they are not. So Paul could be drawing the conclusion that this same kind of self-deception is most likely going to happen within the Christian community during even his own day and later for as long as this age continues before Jesus returns. Therefore, there is all the more reason for Christians to pay very special attention to learning correctly and sticking with the biblical message. The tendency to distort the truth is so easily fulfilled that we must all be constantly vigilant to what we think we know of the Bible and how we are living it.

The adjective ὑστέροις (=later, afterwards, subsequent to another point in time) probably refers to the “times afterwards” with respect to even the people living in Paul’s day and claiming to be Christians. It will be that afterwards

they will “fall away from the faith” and pursue other ways of being religious that are different from authentic Christianity. Certainly, this has happened down through church history as even in our day where we see people distort the moral teachings of the Bible, and it will occur right up to the time of Jesus’ return.

Luke 8:13 “Those on the rocky soil are those who, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no firm root; they believe for a while, and in time of temptation fall away (ἀφίστανται).”

1 Corinthians 10:20 No, but I say that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to demons (δαίμονιους) and not to God; and I do not want you to become sharers in demons (κοινωνοὺς τῶν δαίμονιων).

⁵⁴ ἐν ὑποκρίσει ψευδολόγων, ἡ κεκαυστηριασμένων τὴν ἰδίαν συνείδησιν – It is probably best to assume that Paul is referring to these people as those whose hearts have not been changed by God and therefore are enslaved to their sinfulness and rebellion against God. Thus, their hypocrisy is a play acting at Christianity, not a genuine pursuit of it with authentic belief. They have previously seemed to embrace Christianity, but now they are incorporating worldly ideas and practices, which means that they are lying about the true nature of reality, because they are not embracing the truth of the biblical message only. In fact, they are adding to the Bible what it does not promote or include. The fact that they are stuck in being hostile towards God and friendly towards only their own sinfulness means that their minds and understanding of everything is permanently scarred and therefore wrong, the same way that a branding iron scars and permanently marks the skin of an animal (or a slave in the 1st century Roman Empire?). They can no longer make good moral judgments but are pursuing and encouraging abject sin as if it is permitted and encouraged by God.

⁵⁵ κωλύοντων γαμῖν, ἀπέχεσθαι βρωμάτων, ἃ ὁ θεὸς ἔκτισεν εἰς μετάληψιν μετὰ εὐχαριστίας τοῖς πιστοῖς καὶ ἐπεγνωκόσι τὴν ἀλήθειαν – These people who do not grasp the true nature of Christianity will do two things—

1) They will do the opposite of the Bible and discourage and hinder people from getting married, either within the practice of some kind of asceticism or perhaps within the context of different kinds of sexual immorality, pursuing sexual sin instead of encouraging men to marry women and women to marry men as God has designed for human beings from the beginning in Genesis 2.
2) They will lock into the ritual commandments regarding food and claim basically that God is more interested in what people eat than in their treating each other with genuine love, care, and kindness. And this is in the midst that God has explicitly made it clear that all foods should be universally enjoyed even though He limited the Jews to certain foods under the Mosaic Covenant for His own express purposes., i.e., to make an obvious, outward distinction between the nation of Israel and all other nations and ethnic groups. The ἃ as a neuter, plural relative pronoun refers to the foods, βρωμάτων. Those who truly know the truth of the gospel and the biblical message and who are people of genuine belief will grasp this fact of reality and will not be dissuaded by the lies of these false teachers.

Cf. Genesis 2. Adam and Eve are married, and they are encouraged by God to eat of the food that is available to them—except for the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

Mark 7:18 And he said to them, “Are you so lacking in understanding also? Do you not understand that whatever goes into the man from outside cannot defile him. **7:19** because it does not go into his heart, but into his stomach, and is eliminated?” (Thus he declared all foods clean.)

⁵⁶ ὅτι πᾶν κτίσμα θεοῦ καλὸν καὶ οὐδὲν ἀπόβλητον μετὰ εὐχαριστίας λαμβανόμενον – This world and the elements within it are not perfect by any means, but God has lovingly provided us human beings with all sorts of enjoyable things within it, including marriage and food. Paul is referring specifically to food, but certainly to make abstaining from either marriage or food a virtue is to disregard God’s loving provision for everyone.

Probably, we can infer that sinful people will think of others aspects of the created reality that they are freely to enjoy because God has made them for them and, because of their twisted and distorted minds, they will turn them into forbidden items, all the while thinking that God is pleased with their restrictions that they believe to be authentic obedience to God.

⁵⁷ ἀγιάζεται γὰρ διὰ λόγου θεοῦ καὶ ἐντενύξεως – God has stated through His “message” (λόγος), the revelation of His ideas via the Bible, that food (and other elements of the creation including marriage) are things that He has made and designed for people to enjoy, especially people who understand that God is the source and provider of the most intimate relationship possible, marriage, and physical nourishment, food, for His creatures, and especially for human beings who are the pinnacle of his earthly creation.

And it is not that prayer magically sets food or anything else apart by God in a person’s life, but Paul is assuming that Christians will pray and be grateful before they eat a meal. Thus, this person’s prayer of gratitude for what he enjoys in the creation demonstrates that he understands the loving nature of God to provide human beings, and especially people of authentic belief, with intimate relationships between a man and a woman as well as physical sustenance and nourishment. It is as though there is a symbiotic relationship between God and believing people, whereby the match in their ideas regarding the true nature of reality makes for a wonderful divine-human harmony, in spite of our continued sin at the level of their moral essence.

The only other use of ἐντενύξις (=prayer) in the NT is 1 Timothy 2:1.

⁵⁸ Ταῦτα ὑποτιθέμενος τοῖς ἀδελφοῖς καλὸς ἔση διάκονος Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ, ἐντρέφόμενος τοῖς λόγοις τῆς πίστεως καὶ τῆς καλῆς διδασκαλίας ἧς παρηκολούθηκας – In contrast to the distorted ideas that people who claim to be Christians will gravitate towards, the “these things” (Ταῦτα) of this verse, the ideas of the “liars” of the previous paragraph, Paul encourages Timothy that he will be “good servant of the Messiah Jesus” by explicitly “pointing out” the errors of this people who are misunderstanding the proper nature of how God has made the creation, taking such things as marriage and food, for example, in a direction which God did not intend.

Paul assumes that not only will Timothy point out error of these men, but also will express the truth of the gospel and biblical message so that people will use both marriage and food as they should according to God and the Bible. Thus, Timothy's continuing to teach the right perspective on marriage and food will promote the truth of the gospel. We also notice that Paul uses the word *διάκονος*, from which we get our word deacon, to refer to Timothy as a teacher of the gospel, lending evidence to his referring to overseers and elders in 3:8-13 and not to another group of "assistants" in the Christian community.

The word *ἐντρέφόμενος* (its only use in the NT) refers probably to the fact that Timothy has been well trained in the gospel message, and of course by Paul himself. Therefore, he is skillful in his teaching and presenting the ideas of the biblical message. These are "the words of the belief and the good teaching."

⁵⁹ τοὺς δὲ βεβήλους καὶ γραῶδεις μύθους παραιτοῦ. Γύμναζε δὲ σεαυτὸν πρὸς εὐσέβειαν – A possible meaning of *γραῶδεις* is "fit for elderly women," with this word coming from *γραῦς* = elderly/old woman. I have translated it "useless." Along with *βέβηλος*, which Paul uses 3x in 1 Timothy and probably means the very opposite of goodness and morality that is in line with God's instructions regarding biblical righteousness, he is speaking of "myths," i.e., topics that have no moral basis in biblical theology and are more entertaining that spiritually substantive. As a result, these mythical ideas lack appropriate connection with biblical instruction and moral behavior. They may be fun and entertaining, or they may be simply the stuff of everyday life that people find somewhat interesting, but they are not altogether moral and in the final analysis have little if nothing to do with eternal salvation and life.

In this context, Paul may also be thinking of the ideas of the hypocritical liars which are outside the boundaries of biblical truth. As a result, they too are "myths" and not truths, and Paul is encouraging Timothy to stay clear of all of them.

Rather than following ideas that are clearly unbiblical or trivial, at least when it comes to encouraging people in their belief in Jesus the Messiah, Paul wants Timothy to train himself to pursue what is good and right in God's eyes, both in mind and body, i.e., what a person believes to be true and how he acts. This is authentic "godliness" in line with the core ideas of the gospel of Jesus as the Messiah. The person who exercises *εὐσέβεια* is the one who at his core is willing and enthusiastic about finding out from God what He thinks is good and right in regard to human existence. Indeed, Paul uses this word 8x in 1 Timothy.

It is not as though people cannot talk about mundane and even trivial things, it is just that Paul is making an important distinction between them and the gospel and is saying that the latter is our focus and deserves most of our attention as sinful human beings. And certainly if we are involved in only the former, then we are completely missing the point of human existence.

⁶⁰ ἡ γὰρ σωματικὴ γυμνασία πρὸς ὀλίγον ἐστὶν ὠφέλιμος, ἡ δὲ εὐσέβεια πρὸς πάντα ὠφέλιμός ἐστιν ἐπαγγελίαν ἔχουσα ζωῆς τῆς νῦν καὶ τῆς μελλούσης – This further reveals that Paul has been saying that the mundane and trivial things of human existence are simply not substantive to God's eternal plans and purposes that have to do with His grace, mercy, forgiveness, salvation and eternal life in the Kingdom of God.

He admits that the stuff of just this world is helpful for physical sustenance, which itself is a good thing. These are the "few things" (*ὀλίγον*) for which they can be "profitable" (*ὠφέλιμος*).

On the other hand, *εὐσέβεια* and learning all that one can about God and from God through the Bible is "profitable" for "all things" (*πάντα*) and obtaining the "promise of life" both "now and the future" (*ἐπαγγελίαν ἔχουσα ζωῆς τῆς νῦν καὶ τῆς μελλούσης*).

While a kind of keeping one's body under control and even involving oneself in the mundane and trivial issues of human existence is appropriate, it is nevertheless "godliness," i.e., true physical morality which is actually in line with the message of God's mercy through Jesus the Messiah, that is the most beneficial for sinful human beings. Indeed, it is this way of acting externally which will result in a good kind of living now that is centered in authentic belief and in eternal life in the future. This indicates that God has called His people not just to a new inwardness in their very beings, but also to an external life which corresponds to authentic biblical morality. Nevertheless, it is the inwardness which is the existential foundation within His people in the present realm.

⁶¹ πιστὸς ὁ λόγος καὶ πάσης ἀποδοχῆς ἄξιος – cf. 1 Timothy 3:1. Once again, Paul states explicitly that what he has just written is not only reliable and therefore true, but also "worthy of all approval" (*πάσης ἀποδοχῆς ἄξιος*) by those who have a genuine desire for the most important truth of the gospel of salvation through Jesus the Messiah. The implication of course is that Timothy and the Christian community in Ephesus should listen to and adhere to these statements as they continue their journey towards eternal life.

⁶² εἰς τοῦτο γὰρ ἡ κοπιῶμεν καὶ ἀγωνιζόμεθα, ὅτι ἠλπίκαμεν ἐπὶ θεῷ ζῶντι, ὃς ἐστὶν σωτὴρ πάντων ἀνθρώπων μάλιστα πιστῶν – Referring to what he just mentioned as the importance of *εὐσέβεια* and learning from God what ultimately matters to Him, the gospel and His promise of life now and eternal life in the future through both genuine inwardness and the pursuit of moral behavior, both of which are part of what can be reliably spoken of because they come from a faithful God, Paul says that Timothy and he labor to present these ideas and this message so that people can enjoy both kinds of life from God.

And it makes sense to do so because God is the only living "god," because He is the only transcendent creator of all reality. The biblical God is alive and well and fulfilling His promises to those whom He has chosen. This means, too, that He is people's Savior, rescuing them from His eternal wrath, condemnation, and destruction, and Paul says explicitly to make it clear that this salvation pertains to people with authentic belief. God would gladly rescue all sinful humans if they all authentically believed in Him and Jesus as their crucified Messiah, but we find out from the Bible

that this will be for only those whom God has chosen and predestined from before He brought the creation into existence.

1 Timothy 2:3 This is good and acceptable before our Savior, God (ἐνώπιον τοῦ σωτῆρος ἡμῶν θεοῦ),
⁶³ Παράγγελλε ταῦτα καὶ διδάσκει – Next Paul commands Timothy to teach that which we sinful human beings should do above anything in this world, be people of εὐσέβεια, who are always willing to regard God as the most important reality and to learn from Him about the true nature of reality, resulting in He has taught in the Bible. Thus, Timothy will declare the good news of God's eternal mercy to Gentiles as vital and necessary.

⁶⁴ Μηδεὶς σου τῆς νεότητος καταφρονεῖτω, ἀλλὰ τύπος γίνου τῶν πιστῶν ἐν λόγῳ, ἐν ἀναστροφῇ, ἐν ἀγάπῃ. Ἦ ἐν πίστει, ἐν ἀγνείᾳ – cf. 5:2 and the only other use of ἀγνεία in the NT, which is related in the OT to the word for Nazirite (cf. Numbers 6:2,21, נָזִיר), one who willfully dedicates himself to God in order to be completely different from the world (and the rest of Israel) and its rebellion against God. For example, the Nazirite was required to abstain from drinks and food whose source was the grape, to leave his hair uncut, and to stay away from corpses. Thus, the word נָזִיר is a step above the word שָׂרֵפֶת. All the Israelites are supposed to be שָׂרֵפֶת, but some of them can choose to be נָזִיר = entirely dedicated to God inwardly and outwardly.

Thus, Paul is encouraging Timothy as a bona fide follower of Jesus the Jewish Messiah and a fellow apostolic co-worker in his disseminating the gospel to the Gentiles to raise the level of his commitment and dedication to God to the highest level possible for a human being. By doing so, he will prevent anything in his life from being something which people could legitimately criticize with respect to the truth of God, especially if they think that he is too young to speak confidently about the gospel. He is young, but he should also be loving and an example of committed belief and moral purity as he also speaks and acts in front of others.

Thus, his speech (logos), his lifestyle (ἀναστροφή), his love for God and other Christians (ἀγάπη), his belief, i.e., his belief and the gospel ideas which he is believing (πίστις), and his pure inner commitment to God and the gospel (ἀγνεία) are how Paul would have Timothy display his Christianity to those whom he is teaching in Ephesus. Of course, these are wonderful characteristics for any Christian, not just for Timothy and other teachers of the gospel.

⁶⁵ ἕως ἔρχομαι πρόσσεχε τῇ ἀναγνώσει, τῇ παρακλήσει, τῇ διδασκαλίᾳ – Until Paul has an opportunity to join Timothy in Ephesus, having gone to northern Greece, i.e., Macedonia (cf. 1:1ff.), he commands Timothy to keep reading any available OT writings to people, obviously to expose them directly to the existing biblical authors and their words as they all continue to learn as well as possible what the truth is that God has provided through these documents. Paul also commands Timothy to help (from the word παρακλήσις = literally called alongside (as a means to help others with whatever they need)) the Christian community, obviously in regard to understanding the scriptures which he is reading to them.

And, finally, he wants him to teach the people, which cannot be all that different from the παρακλήσις which he is providing them. It simply highlights the explicit communication of the truth of the scriptures for the people to embrace the biblical authors' ideas and use them for understanding the reality which God has created and for living according to His instructions.

And all this would be in connection with Jesus as the Messiah and what this means with his being the central feature and character in the story which God is telling in human history. It would be fascinating to know exactly how a community of believers in Jesus the Messiah obtained a copy of any of the OT Bible, assuming that they were not meeting in a Jewish synagogue it is most likely the these Jews were still rejecting Jesus as their Messiah and King.

⁶⁶ μὴ ἀμέλει τοῦ ἐν σοὶ χάρισματός, ὃ ἐδόθη σοὶ διὰ προφητείας μετὰ ἐπιθέσεως τῶν χειρῶν τοῦ πρεσβυτερίου – God somehow made it clear to Paul and other leaders in a particular Christian community that Timothy's grasp of the apostolic message made him particularly valuable to Paul as a co-worker in his fulfilling his responsibility to travel and proclaim the gospel to the Gentiles, even by means of reading and teaching the scriptures to Christians. Therefore, Paul encourages Timothy to remember what God, he, and other Christian leaders (perhaps in Jerusalem? It would seem best to interpret it this way) all recognized to be true about Timothy. This reminding himself would be a beneficial way to motivate himself to keep going in what he is doing, even if others try to find something about him, including his youthfulness, to criticize and discourage him from working as an apostolic co-worker.

It is always good to remind ourselves in the midst of difficult circumstances and past-acquired pain, which may be robbing us of motivation to serve God, that He is using each and every one of us as He continues to make the gospel obvious and available to the rest of the world. Every morning, we can wake up and know that we will be important to someone with respect to the message of God's eternal mercy through Jesus the Messiah—even if they are unwilling to acknowledge what we are doing and the value of what we are doing so that actually reject the gospel (this time).

⁶⁷ ταῦτα μελέτα, ἐν τούτοις ἴσθι, ἵνα σου ἡ προκοπὴ φανερὰ ᾖ τῷ πατρὶ – “These things” = the ideas from the OT writings which correspond to the apostolic message which Paul learned and has been teaching the Gentiles, which Timothy likewise has learned from Paul so that he can assist people in continuing to learn these ideas and for which Timothy was assigned by God the responsibility of teaching and helping people in regard to the growth of their own understanding.

Paul wants him to take close care in regard to all this and to immerse himself constantly (“be”) in these ideas as part of the way he fulfills his own responsibility to God and makes it clear to others that he is designed to do so and continues to grow in his own knowledge and understanding of the biblical truth. A person can never stop advancing in knowing and understanding God and the reality which He has created and is using for His own personal and eternal purposes.

⁶⁸ ἔπεχε σεαυτῷ καὶ τῇ διδασκαλίᾳ, ἐπίμενε αὐτοῖς· τοῦτο γὰρ ποιῶν καὶ σεαυτὸν σώσεις καὶ τοὺς ἀκούοντάς σου – Again, αὐτοῖς probably refers to the same biblical ideas which constitute the apostolic message. By continuing to believe and obey these ideas, Timothy himself will obtain God’s eternal mercy and salvation, and by continuing to teach these ideas, those of authentic belief and obedience who learn from his teaching and grow in their biblical understanding like him will also obtain the same.

This is Timothy’s life, his spiritual gift from God and what he is all about as a human being in this created reality. Paul wants him not to get discouraged by anything which would distract him from this “gift” from God and instead pursue doing it with every fiber of his being—just as Paul certainly must be doing.

⁶⁹ Πρεσβυτέρῳ μὴ ἐπιπλήξῃς ἀλλὰ παρακάλει ὡς πατέρα, νεωτέρους ὡς ἀδελφούς – 1 Timothy 5:1-6:2 is a section where Paul instructs Timothy in how to deal with certain people within the Christian community in Ephesus in regard to their inner commitment to the faith and their moral behavior as a result of their inner commitment and belief. This pertains to men, both older and younger than Timothy is, to women, likewise different in age, to widows, to the actual overseers and elders of the Christian community, and to slaves of both unbelieving and believing masters. It seems striking that Paul does not address the masters of slaves in this letter. But perhaps there is more of an issue in the Ephesian Christian community regarding slaves than masters—as Paul would have seen this since he just left this community recently and headed towards Macedonia and eventually Corinth.

The point is that Christians are to treat each other as family—with gentleness and patient encouragement in their common belief and destiny of eternal life in the Kingdom of God as they waited for Jesus’ return, instead of with harsh criticism of each other’s sin and moral lapses. After all, we are all sinners and will sin so that we need to repent before God and seek each other’s forgiveness where it is necessary while being patient and kind towards one another as we wait to be transformed into morally perfect and eternal beings when Jesus returns.

Here in 5:1 Paul is encouraging Timothy not to let his youthful exuberance get the best of him so that he would treat older men harshly after they have demonstrated a lack of commitment to the gospel and even misbehaved according to it. Instead, he should treat them as he would his own father whom he loves and with whom he hopefully would be willing to be kind, patient, and gentle as he encourages them to continue in the grace of God and hope of the gospel (although we all know that sometimes fathers can be more difficult to love than other men).

Likewise, Timothy should treat younger men who have misbehaved with respect to the gospel as he would his own blood brothers—again, with patience and genuine care for their eternal salvations. Implied is the importance of Timothy’s own commitment to the gospel and his assuming the leadership of these people while Paul is away and in the midst of any overseers and elders who already exist within this Christian community in Ephesus.

⁷⁰ πρεσβυτέρας ὡς μητέρας, νεωτέρας ὡς ἀδελφὰς ἐν πάσῃ ἀγνείᾳ – Similarly, Timothy should treat older women who have sinned as though each one was his dearly beloved mother, and then younger women who have sinned as though they are blood sisters—again, with patience, love, and grace.

Paul uses the word ἀγνείᾳ again as he did in 4:12, meaning that Timothy’s commitment to God and behavior humanly speaking need to be with morally and spiritual pure motives, i.e., with single-minded dedication to the gospel, and which he encourages all his fellow Christians to adopt in the same manner as he is. Thus, Timothy’s pure and unadulterated commitment to the information of Jesus as the Messiah should motivate him to urge the same on all those whom he is leading in the faith.

See note at 4:12.

⁷¹ Χήρας τίμα τὰς ὄντως χήρας – I wonder if widows were more likely than widowers because husbands tended to be much older than their wives. But, in any event, Paul does not mention widowers probably because widows as women were considered second class citizens and lack the means to care financially for themselves. Therefore, Paul is encouraging Timothy to make sure that the Christian community as a whole (in spite of the singular imperative verb τίμα) to “honor” and therefore care for women who are not only widows but also dependent on others for sheer survival.

The real phrase “the real widows,” literally “the ones who are widows” makes it sound as though there were women who claimed to be “widows” just to take advantage of others’ willingness to support them when in reality they could support themselves in another legitimate way, perhaps through an inheritance from their husbands who had died.

⁷² εἰ δέ τις χήρα τέκνα ἢ ἔκγονα ἔχει, ἱμανθανέτωσαν πρῶτον τὸν ἴδιον οἶκον εὖσεβεῖν καὶ ἀμοιβὰς ἀποδιδόναι τοῖς προγόνοις· τοῦτο γὰρ ἐστὶν ἡ ἀπόδεκτον ἐνώπιον τοῦ θεοῦ – Whereas in that culture children may have lacked genuine love for their mothers so that if their fathers died, they acted in a less than supportive manner towards their mothers, Paul is saying that it is good and right that children pay their parents back for raising and providing for them by caring for their mothers and grandmothers who all of a sudden become widows. This the children and grandchildren should learn to do “first” (πρῶτον) before the whole Christian community decides to take on this responsibility.

In other words, this is a very practical way of demonstrating the prescribed genuineness of Christian love to one’s fellow Christians. Certainly, no Christian brother or sister should go without food, clothing, and shelter who cannot take care of themselves. But, of course, it is vital to remain vigilant and aware of when people are taking advantage of other’s charity and generosity when they could take care of themselves.

⁷³ ἡ δὲ ὄντως χήρα καὶ μεμονωμένη ἤλπικεν ἐπὶ θεῷ καὶ προσμένει ταῖς δεήσεσιν καὶ ταῖς προσευχαῖς νυκτὸς καὶ ἡμέρας – Paul would hope also that women who became widows at a younger age in comparison to our culture, for example, would not allow their immoral passions to get the best of them and be led by them in opposition to the biblical message of Jesus as God’s mercy for the sake of acquiring His eternal mercy. They should not allow their

sinful passions to lead them astray into sexual immorality or any other kind of sinful trouble that women could get into in that culture. Instead, Paul would hope that these widows continue to pursue morality with the goal of eternal life in mind, continually appealing to God to help them and their fellow Christians do so. Thus, their “entreaties and prayers night and day” are their own single-minded commitment to the gospel and to the eternal destiny that God has promised through it and Jesus as the Messiah.

⁷⁴ ἡ δὲ σπαταλώσα ζῶσα τέθηκεν – But if a widow who has claimed to be a follower of Jesus chooses to pursue immorality after her husband dies, then she basically has caused herself to die to the truth and to God’s mercy. She is acting like an unbeliever even though she is still physically alive, meaning that she is probably not an authentic Christian and will suffer an eternal destiny of destruction.

Again, we see how important a life of pursuing biblical morality is not just important but also necessary for those who fully hope and expect to acquire God’s eternal salvation and life.

James 5:5 You have lived luxuriously on the earth and led a life of wanton pleasure (ἐσπαταλήσατε); you have fattened your hearts in a day of slaughter.

⁷⁵ καὶ ταῦτα παράγγελλε, ἵνα ἀνεπίλημπτοι ᾧσιν – Paul wants Timothy to state these last ideas as commands from God and from him as a genuine apostle to the Gentiles to those who have widows for whom they should care. It makes sense that they can be commands because of God’s requirement that the lives and actions of Christians coincide with the message of the gospel, that God is saving them from immorality and will transform them into morally perfect beings in the eternal Kingdom of God. Thus, loving those within one’s own family by caring for their financial and material needs is an important part of demonstrating God’s love to them. This, then is commensurate with the gospel, so that people can consider themselves “blameless” (ἀνεπίλημπτοι) before God, i.e., justified and declared forgiven for the sake of eternal life. God will not consider them condemned but saved instead. Certainly, this kind of person as “blameless” is not morally perfect, but their pursuit of doing what is good and right towards their family members indicates a heart of genuine belief in the gospel.

1 Timothy 3:2 An overseer, then, must be above reproach (ἀνεπίλημπτον), the husband of one wife, temperate, prudent, respectable, hospitable, able to teach.

1 Timothy 6:14 that you keep the commandment without stain or reproach (ἀνεπίλημπτον) until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ.

⁷⁶ εἰ δέ τις τῶν ἰδίων καὶ μάλιστα τ οἰκειῶν οὐ πρόνοει, τὴν πίστιν ἥρνηται καὶ ἔστιν ἀπίστος χειρῶν – This is very strong language from Paul and may be necessary in the light of the Ephesian culture where mutual assistance to family members was simply not that common. Indeed, it took the Christian message and gospel to transform an entire western civilization into a real civilization where people are mindful and engaged in financial, material, psychological, and spiritual care for their fellow human beings, “especially for those of their own household” (μάλιστα τ οἰκειῶν).

It also makes sense that the masculine pronouns here are generic, that if either a man or a woman refuses to act in a caring and loving way towards his or her family, then that is a direct denial of the gospel, which makes the person worse than an abject unbeliever, because they are claiming to be Christians while refusing to live in a manner which corresponds to biblical Christianity. Their Christianity is merely hypocrisy and play acting. Not so worse would be for people to deny publicly Christianity and live as though they are not Christians. In other words, play-acting at Christianity is worse than completely rejecting Christianity.

Thus, we are to help our family members spiritually, intellectually, emotionally, psychologically, financially, and any other way that is loving when they are in need.

⁷⁷ Χήρα καταλεγέσθω μὴ ἔλαττον ἐτῶν ἐξήκοντα γεγονυῖα, ἐνὸς ἀνδρὸς γυνή – see below

⁷⁸ ἐν ἔργοις καλοῖς μαρτυρουμένη, εἰ ἐτεκνοτρόφησεν, εἰ ἐξενοδόχησεν, εἰ ἀγίων πόδας ἐνίψεν, εἰ θλιβομένοις ἐπήρκεσεν, εἰ παντὶ ἔργῳ ἀγαθῷ ἐπηκολούθησεν – Because a widow has agreed to express outward and helpful actions towards other “saints” (ἀγίων from ἀγίοι, the plural of ἀγιός = set apart ones) which correspond to the good news of God’s mercy so that Timothy and others can be quite confident that she is an authentic believer, the widow who is at least sixty years old (this is surprising; people did not live very long in that culture) is permitted to “be enrolled,” which probably means that she has applied for social security within the Christian community and is eligible to be supported by her fellow Christians. She must not be promiscuous but instead helpful towards her family and other Christians. Thus, she demonstrates a life commensurate with the gospel which (hopefully) reveals the genuineness of her belief and that she is not pretending to be a Christian just to get other people’s support.

1) ἀνδρὸς γυνή – She has not been promiscuous in her life but was the wife of only one man who has now died.

2) ἐτεκνοτρόφησεν – She was diligent to raise her children well, most likely by communicating to them the good news of Jesus as the Messiah so that hopefully they became authentic believers like her.

3) ἐξενοδόχησεν – She has received and continues to receive strangers who probably had come from Paul or other apostles to continue to teach and instruct the Christians in that city in the gospel. So she received them because of their ability to teach the truth and help her family and her grow in their understanding of the gospel.

4) ἀγίων πόδας ἐνίψεν – She, in line with Jesus’ own actions and teaching his last night before the Passover meal, has sacrificially cared for and continues to care for her fellow Christians in the same city and community of believers.

5) θλιβομένοις ἐπήρκεσεν – Whether it has been physical, emotional, or spiritual affliction that her fellow Christians have experienced, she has come to their aid and continues to come to their aid as best she can.

6) παντὶ ἔργῳ ἀγαθῷ ἐπηκολούθησεν – Her overall inner condition is that she is committed to goodness and morality so as to choose to do what is good and right as much as she can as a sinful human being with genuine faith.

Thus, these are the necessary qualities that an over sixty-year old widow must have in order to be paid by the Christian community in the midst of her economic situation as a widow.

⁷⁹ νεωτέρας δὲ χήρας παραιτοῦ· ὅταν γὰρ καταστρηνιάσωσιν τοῦ Χριστοῦ, γαμεῖν θέλουσιν – It sounds as though the overall problem in vs. 11-13 is these women are unwilling to engage in good, moral actions which would be helpful to her fellow believers. In other words, instead of truly caring for people who are in need, she is more concerned about her own entertainment and being at ease as much as possible.

And this in the midst of being “drawn away from the Messiah by their impulses” (ὅταν γὰρ καταστρηνιάσωσιν τοῦ Χριστοῦ), meaning that their sinful desires are overshadowing their moral desires, which unfortunately happens to people who lack a changed heart and authentic belief. The verb στρηνιάω in Revelation 18:7,9 means to run wild or riot—obviously far away from and beyond the boundaries of moral propriety. Thus, these women’s sinful desires are not in check in any way that authentic faith provides, and they are back to their old ways of living. For some other reason than truly wanting to acquire God’s eternal mercy and forgiveness, they have come into the Christian community and are now demonstrating that they are not really interested in Christianity and its good news and promises.

Consequently, this being drawn away from the Messiah is on a and fundamental moral level, i.e., to abandon the moral implications of the gospel from a heart that is still stubbornly opposed to God and His truth. These young women desire marriage (protection within society as well as an opportunity to satisfy all their passions along with maybe having to do no work of the same kind as the other widows who are actively caring for others who are in need?) above the gospel and its hope of eternal life.

Cf. 1 Timothy 5:14 where Paul encourages marriage for young women. In other words, the desire of these young widows to marry is not wrong in and of itself. It must be their desire to use marriage to satisfy their sinful impulses along with their rejection of Jesus in the midst of it that is. They are choosing sin over love and caring for others.

⁸⁰ ἔχουσαι κρίμα ὅτι τὴν πρώτην πίστιν ἠθέτησαν – It does not make sense that Paul is opposed to younger widows getting married (cf. 5:14), but instead he is opposed to their abandoning their belief in the Messiah in the midst of allowing their sinful passions to control them away from morality. Therefore, the “marry” (γαμεῖν) of v. 11 is more a being interested in earthly things than eternal things of the Kingdom of God. It is this “tendency” that Paul suspects could come to fruition in a split second in younger women that causes him to be cautious about enrolling younger widows in the same “program” of the Christian community supporting widows who care for needy people. Perhaps he is thinking that the idle time that these younger widows on support would have would not serve them well (cf. the next verse and the word ἀργαί). They would have too much time to think and feel, making them more susceptible in the youthfulness of their faith to be controlled by their immoral passions and not by an authentic desire to do what is right. Therefore, their having “rejected the first belief” (τὴν πρώτην πίστιν ἠθέτησαν from ἀθετέω) means that they seemed to embrace belief in the gospel when they first heard it, perhaps when their husbands were still alive, but now they are rejecting it and “incurring condemnation” (ἔχουσαι κρίμα), i.e., at risk of receiving God’s eternal condemnation if they continue on this path of giving primacy to their sinful desires.

⁸¹ ἅμα δὲ καὶ ἀργαί μανθάνουσιν περιερχόμεναι τὰς οἰκίας, οὐ μόνον δὲ ἀργαί ἀλλὰ καὶ φλύαροι καὶ περιέργοι, λαλοῦσαι τὰ μὴ δέοντα – Here the issue is the women, perhaps referring mostly to the younger women, having too much time on their hands that their interactions with others is not healthy from a moral perspective. They need to busy themselves with genuinely caring for and loving their fellow Christians in need rather than busying themselves with frivolous and even immoral discussions about people and issues that are simply better left alone.

The word ἀργαί is used to refer to not only idleness, but also uselessness. In other words, Paul is concerned about the younger widows engaging in activity that is not useful to either their faith and salvation or others’ faith and salvation. The issue in these verses is to think about the gospel in such a way that a person’s behavior serves God and the ideas of the gospel in a moral fashion, clearly revealing that they are committed to God’s mercy and transformation into morally perfect people in eternity. And the immediate context points to moral activity where the young women would be involved in caring for the needs of their fellow Christians.

⁸² Βούλομαι οὖν νεωτέρας γαμεῖν, τεκνογονεῖν, οἰκοδεσποτεῖν, μηδεμίαν ἀφορμὴν διδόναι τῷ ἀντικειμένῳ λοιδορίας χάριν – This statement helps tremendously in interpreting γαμεῖν in 5:11 as something other than genuinely marrying someone for good, biblical reasons. Paul’s desire for young women (even young widows) is to be moral family members with a husband and children in order not to have too much time on their hands and give any opponent of the gospel, whether human (in this verse) or Satan, our invisible adversary (in the next verse), to criticize them for living contrary to the gospel or most especially an opportunity to lead them away from not only morality, but also the faith and genuine belief in Jesus as the Messiah for the sake of obtaining God’s eternal mercy and life through him. **Luke 13:17** As he said this, all his opponents (πάντες οἱ ἀντικείμενοι) were being humiliated; and the entire crowd was rejoicing over all the glorious things being done by him.

⁸³ ἤδη γὰρ τινες ἐξετράπησαν ὀπίσω τοῦ σατανᾶ – Paul senses that some of the younger women in Ephesus have given up their belief in the Messiah and have succumbed to a life of immorality in contrast to what the messianic message calls them. This is always the danger for any of us. The biblical authors exhort their readers to persevere in their belief and obedience to God because the forces of evil inside us and outside us are formidable, waiting for the chance to persuade all they can to abandon the gospel and its promise of eternal salvation from God’s wrath and destruction.

⁸⁴ εἰ τις τῆς πιστῆς ἔχει χήρας, ἑπαρκεῖτω αὐταῖς καὶ μὴ βαρεῖσθω ἡ ἐκκλησία, ἵνα ταῖς ὄντως χήραις ἐπαρκέσῃ – Here Paul is reiterating the concept that family support is the best support within the Christian community. If believing women have widows who are related to them, they should work at caring for them in order that the rest of the Christian community does not have to do so—as they will be doing if older widows are enrolled according to 5:9,10. This way, other people who may not have family members who can care for them can enjoy the support of the rest of the Christian community.

Of course, all this just makes good sense in the light of God’s call for Christians to love one another and care for each other’s physical, material, emotional, psychological, and spiritual needs where necessary. Thus, there is certainly something to their love being as efficient and widespread as possible.

⁸⁵ Οἱ καλῶς προεστῶτες πρεσβύτεροι διπλῆς τιμῆς ἀξιούσθωσαν, μάλιστα οἱ κοπιῶντες ἐν λόγῳ καὶ διδασκαλίᾳ – Here Paul is speaking of the “older men” (πρεσβύτεροι), whom we would call “elders,” who have the responsibility, presumably from Paul who was the first to proclaim the gospel in Ephesus, to lead (literally stand before, προεστῶτες from προϊσθῆμι) their fellow believers in their journeys as followers of Jesus the Messiah. He is saying that those who lead “well” (καλῶς) should be considered as “worthy of double honor” (διπλῆς τιμῆς ἀξιούσθωσαν), and this should be the case “especially for those who labor in the message and teaching” (μάλιστα οἱ κοπιῶντες ἐν λόγῳ καὶ διδασκαλίᾳ). Probably some of the overseers/servants/elders understood the gospel well, but they were not the best at teaching it. Then there were elders who could do both well. Paul is saying that the latter should receive “double honor,” probably both due respect for their wisdom and expressing the information of the gospel well to their fellow Christians and financial remuneration because they are taking the time to work among their fellow believers in a manner that is taking away from their normal jobs (?). Plus, as Paul goes on to say with his references to the OT, they deserve both the respect they are being given and the financial support for their “laboring” (οἱ κοπιῶντες).

The EBC interprets Paul to be talking about paying “elders” financial remuneration for their leading and double what other “elders” receive if they preach and teach. But it makes more sense in the light of 1 Corinthians 9 that the “double honor” refers to respect and financial remuneration. In other words, there were men who helped their fellow Christians to live according to the gospel because they understood the gospel well. Then there were men who not only helped guide other Christians but also stood up and taught the community in their group meetings. Because the latter men were doing more than the others, Paul is saying that they should be financially paid for their extra work of public teaching. By the way, Paul says in 1 Corinthians 9 that God has ordered that those who proclaim the gospel (the apostles and apostolic co-workers) should receive their living from their work—especially if they do this work fulltime. However, Paul would never demand this of his listeners and communities of believers who have not fully grasped the meaning of God’s grace, i.e., that salvation is a completely free gift and cannot be earned. So while an apostle “earns” his living from proclaiming the gospel (as the Levitical priests “earned” their living from performing the duties of the temple), the apostle must be careful that the people who pay him his wage are not thinking that God is paying them their wage by their faith and obedience to Him, which was something that the Corinthians were struggling to grasp.

⁸⁶ λέγει γὰρ ἡ γραφὴ ὁ βούν ἁλοῶντα οὐ φιμώσεις, καὶ ἄξιος ὁ ἐργάτης τοῦ μισθοῦ αὐτοῦ – The first quote is a verse from Deuteronomy 25:4, while the second quote is a summary of the principle from multiple verses in the OT. Together Paul is using them to present the right principle that someone who does good work, whatever it might be, deserves some kind of fair and just recompense for it. In this case, Paul is talking about both the respect which wise men who are guiding others in their faith deserve and fair financial remuneration to those elders who both guide and publicly teach the gospel to their community of believers. In these two ways, payment of respect and payment of money, people will demonstrate their appreciation for the work the elders are providing for the sake of their persevering in their faith and acquiring eternal salvation, mercy, forgiveness, and life from God.

Cf. 1 Corinthians 9 where Paul speaks of the apostles’ receiving financial support from the people to whom they proclaim the gospel, and yet it is only if the people are clearly grasping the concept of the grace of God.

The fact that modern churches do this within the context of an official and legal institution with all the systemizing of salaries and responsibilities for its employees and participants is probably not something that Paul would agree is the appropriate way to handle this issue. In other words, while Paul has just talked about putting older widows on a list so that they may be financially compensated for their service to the group, the modern method of creating formal institutions (and denominations) is too institutionalized. Certainly, it has led to people being more attracted to and promoting the religious system of their “churches” and denominations than to God and the truth. Thus, the more informal a community of believers can maintain, the more personal and individual its participants can conduct their lives in relationship to God.

⁸⁷ κατὰ πρεσβυτέρου κατηγορίαν μὴ παραδέχου, Ἐκτός ἐι μὴ ἐπὶ δύο ἢ τριῶν μαρτύρων – Timothy is in a rather unique position. He is an apostolic co-worker of Paul, and he is overseeing the overseers and elders of the Ephesian Christian community. And, because of mankind’s continued inherent sinfulness even after God changes people’s hearts and inwardness, thereby causing them to become authentic believers in Jesus who long for moral perfection, even elders will find themselves in situations where their sin has manifested itself within the Christian community.

Therefore, Paul is saying that it will not be unusual if Timothy hears from other Christians whom the elders are guiding in their life of faith in God that an elder has sinned in some way, thus requiring that the sin and the sinner need to be confronted by him.

Paul wants Timothy to be very careful that this sin really exists and so uses the OT concept of “two or three witnesses” to communicate how careful Timothy needs to be. He is implying that the problem may be with the person who brings

an accusation against an elder to him, not with the elder. This is why some verification of the person's complaint by others is important in order to assure that his sin really does exist and that it is not the accuser's issues which are motivating him to make something up or possibly to distort the situation.

Deuteronomy 17:6 "On the evidence of two witnesses or three witnesses, he who is to die shall be put to death; he shall not be put to death on the evidence of one witness."

Deuteronomy 19:15 "A single witness shall not rise up against a man on account of any iniquity or any sin which he has committed; on the evidence of two or three witnesses a matter shall be confirmed."

⁸⁸ Τοὺς ἁμαρτάνοντας ἐνώπιον πάντων ἔλεγε, ἵνα καὶ οἱ λοιποὶ φόβον ἔχωσιν – Paul's use of the plural here is interesting. It sounds as though he is assuming one of two possibilities—1) that not only will there be an elder who has sinned, but also will there be others whose sins have become obvious, or 2) that not only will there be one elder who has sinned but also there will eventually be more than one in this position.

Probably #2 is correct in the light of the context and even Matthew 18, so that Paul is implying that elders have a greater responsibility for their lives being open to the rest of the Christian community for the sake of everyone's understanding the importance of sin in the light of the gospel. Willful pursuit of sin is wrong for anybody. It is especially wrong for someone who has been encouraged by Paul and Timothy to lead people in their living out the gospel, especially by reminding them of the apostolic message for the sake of their eternal salvations and acquiring complete freedom from sin through moral perfection.

Thus, Paul wants the whole community to hear of the elder's being reproved by Timothy so that they all may "have fear" (φόβον ἔχωσιν) of both reproof and the consequences of pursuing sin, which ultimately would be God's eternal condemnation, assuming their callous attitude towards sin reveals a heart that lacks God's supernatural change.

⁸⁹ Διαμαρτύρομαι ἐνώπιον τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ Ἰησοῦ καὶ τῶν ἐκλεκτῶν ἀγγέλων, ἵνα ταῦτα φυλάξης χωρὶς προκρίματος, μηδὲν ποίων κατὰ πρόσκλησιν – With the greatest sincerity, Paul declares, urges, and warns Timothy not to allow any preference for a particular elder to cloud his judgment or inhibit his fulfilling his responsibility of addressing sin in any elder's (or fellow Christian's) life. In other words, all Christians must be treated equally in regard to their sin and exhorting them to repent and change their actions and behavior.

Our tendency as human beings is to play favorites and overlook others' moral laxities, but the gospel message is an appeal to everyone to pursue moral goodness and avoid all sin as much as possible. This applies to both overseers and those whom they are helping, who are equally charged by God to obtain His eternal mercy and forgiveness through their belief and obedience. Therefore, a person's role within the Christian community makes him neither more nor less likely to enter into salvation and eternal life, so that all should be reproofed equally for their sin.

I have translated τῶν ἐκλεκτῶν ἀγγέλων as "chosen messengers" (and not "chosen angels"), so that I think that Paul is referring to Jesus' chosen apostles, including Paul himself, as the authoritative spokesmen for God in regard to the gospel that declares that Jesus is the Messiah and that exhorts sinners to believe the gospel, repent of their sin, and seek as much as possible to live their lives with good and moral behavior.

Paul uses διαμαρτύρομαι 5 times in his letters to mean solemnly warn or charge someone in regard to their moral behavior and adherence to the gospel message.

⁹⁰ χεῖρας ταχέως μηδὲν ἐπιτίθει μηδὲ κοινώνει ἁμαρτίαις ἁλλοτρίαις· σεαυτὸν ἄγνον τήρει – Cf. 1 Timothy 4:12; 5:2. The word ἄγνον = pure, chaste, clean is the adjectival form of ἀγνεία = purity, chastity, cleanliness.

There are a couple of options for what Paul means by laying hands of someone—1) To conclude prematurely that an elder has sinned when perhaps he has not, so that Paul does not want Timothy to take part in the sins of those who are biased against the elder for inappropriate reasons; 2) To encourage too soon a man to take on the role of overseer and elder when he has not been properly vetted so that he is sinning in some way that has not become clear yet to Timothy and the rest of the people.

#2 makes more sense, particularly because of the word "quickly" (ταχέως). If Timothy too quickly thinks that someone should take on the role of leading others in the faith, he may end up participating in this man's sin (κοινώνει ἁμαρτίαις ἁλλοτρίαις) by not having done his due diligence and discovered it when he should have.

It is important to get to know people well even after having gained a favorable first impression of them. Time and experiences will reveal what kind of person they really are if the first impression is not altogether an accurate assessment of them, which perhaps is more often the case than not.

⁹¹ μηκέτι ὕδρὸ πῶτι, ἀλλ' οἶνον ὀλίγον χρῶ διὰ τὸν στόμαχον ἵνα καὶ τὰς πυκνάς σου ἀσθενείας – This encouragement by Paul seems like a *non sequitur* in between comments about other people's sins in the previous and next verses.

Therefore, it is most likely parenthetical where Paul thinks suddenly of something which could hinder Timothy from being partial and thinking clearly about and following through with his responsibilities as an apostolic co-worker—his frequent physical ailments. As a result, he encourages Timothy to apply certain physical remedies to his body in order to mitigate the effects of his conditions.

We can only imagine how difficult it was to remain physically healthy in the 1st century Roman Empire in the light of the practically unbelievable medical assistance that many of us have available in our modern world. Of course Timothy struggled with "frequent ailments" (τὰς πυκνάς σου ἀσθενείας) as did probgably Paul and many, many others in that day.

This is a great example in the Bible of how it is good and right for us to take advantage of whatever medical (physical, psychological, emotional) assistance we have available to us to fulfill our role in God's story and to help us carry out

our biblical responsibilities, while not discounting the purposes of God in “gracing” us with the medical difficulties we encounter, and in which we are encouraged by the gospel message to boast as those things which make our faith clear to us and that should move us to hope for our future salvation and entrance into the eternal Kingdom of God (cf. Romans 5:3-5; Philippians 1:29).

⁹² Τινῶν ἀνθρώπων αἱ ἁμαρτίαι πρόδηλοί εἰσιν προάγουσαι εἰς κρίσιν, τισὶν δὲ καὶ ἐπακολουθοῦσιν – Paul resumes his thread from v. 22 when he encouraged and warned Timothy not to conclude too quickly that someone is fit for leading other Christians in living the gospel. Here he states clearly that some people’s sins are very obvious—probably thinking of publicly known sexual immorality, stealing, harsh anger and criticism, lack of forgiveness, etc. But other people’s sin may not be so obvious. They appear charming and moral, but they harbor unresolved resentment and are bitter and angry, which may not actually be revealed until much later.

There are two options for what Paul means by “judgment” here—1) The final judgment when God will pronounce eternal condemnation and destruction for people who have remained unrepentant sinners all their lives; 2) Some crisis in a person’s life that reveals his sin and makes it clear that he has no business leading others in the faith. In this context, probably #2 is more correct, that Paul is encouraging Timothy to wait a while before he concludes that someone should become a moral leader and guide for his fellow Christians and not rely on strictly a first impression, so that the actual moral quality of a person’s heart, mind, and life can become clear to him and to everyone. The man’s sin will precede Timothy’s “judgment” as to whether or not he should lead others, thus allowing him to conclude that he should not. Then other men’s sin will “follow” later and allow him to draw the same conclusion that they should not become leaders in the Christian community.

⁹³ ὡσαύτως ἡ καὶ τὰ ἔργα τὰ καλὰ πρόδηλα, καὶ τὰ ἄλλως ἔχοντα κρυβῆναι οὐ δύνανται – Similar to some sins, good and moral actions that come from a heart of authentic belief are easily detected when people perform them, thus making it obvious that these men should become leaders in the Christian community if they qualify according to Paul’s previously mentioned characteristics. And similar to some sins, immoral actions that come from a heart of unbelief may be completely unknown to other people, but they cannot be hidden forever and will make it clear that these men are not appropriately capable of guiding their fellow Christians in a life of genuine faith.

All this to say in 5:19-25 that it is vital for Timothy and Christians to take moral issues seriously (especially in regard to potential overseers and elders) and deal with them appropriately in the light of the NT message of God’s mercy and eternal salvation through Jesus the Messiah.

⁹⁴ Ὅσοι εἰσιν ὑπὸ ζυγὸν δοῦλοι, τοὺς ἰδίους δεσπότας πάσης τιμῆς ἀξίους ἡγείσθωσαν, ἵνα μὴ τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ ἡ διδασκαλία βλασφημῇται – As in Ephesians and Colossians, Paul encourages slaves in the 1st century Roman Empire to obey their earthly masters in such a manner that they communicate that they honor and respect their masters as human beings who like them are created by God in His image and who also within that culture are in a social position of being their slaves. Therefore, both slaves and masters deserve honor and respect as individuals who also need God’s eternal mercy as all sinful human beings do. This prevents the “the name of God and the teaching [of the gospel] from being blasphemed (τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ ἡ διδασκαλία βλασφημῇται),” i.e., from being declared as true but lived as though it is false.

Probably slaves were drawing the same kind of conclusion that wives were, that since they are of equal status and worth in the eyes of God, that they were no longer required to act in a subservient manner to their masters. But just as God had designed marriage whereby the role of the husband is that of the leader and head of his wife in her role, so also Paul is saying that slaves must remain in their role of serving their masters, because this is good and right within the current political and societal framework. Paul is not condoning slavery as a good and proper institution—especially if it leads to mistreatment, exploiting others, and cruel suffering on the part of the slaves. He is acknowledging the reality of political and social structures and the roles which people fulfill within them. The key is not the structure. The key is the manner in which people treat each other, i.e., with biblical love, kindness, and caring, even though certain structures are more inherently conducive to allowing human beings to make their own free choices in pursuit of doing what is good and right according to biblical morality. But Paul can accept the reality of slaves in the 1st century Roman Empire because his focus is on the eternal Kingdom of God, which should be the focus for all Christians.

This use of honor is similar to that in 5:17, where that which gets paid to the masters is not financial but relational. It is the manner in which someone relates to another person so that both can detect that there is respect for the other person’s humanity and individuality before God that is part of what is transpiring between the two.

⁹⁵ οἱ δὲ πιστοὺς ἔχοντες δεσπότας μὴ καταφρονεῖτωσαν, ὅτι ἀδελφοί εἰσιν, ἀλλὰ μάλλον δουλενέτωσαν, ὅτι πιστοὶ εἰσιν καὶ ἀγαπητοὶ οἱ τῆς εὐεργεσίας ἀντιλαμβανόμενοι Ταῦτα διδάσκει καὶ παρακάλει – First, Paul exhorts the slaves not to be disrespectful or despise their believing masters. Perhaps he has to say this because the masters are not immediately freeing them as they think they should since they are all of equal spiritual status before God. But the obvious basis for why slaves should be respectful and kind towards their masters who are of the same belief as they are is that they are all believers. In other words, believers should care for their fellow believers and be kind and gracious towards them because this is simply what God requires within the Christian community.

Second, Paul exhorts the slaves to act as slaves, even though this is a bit repugnant to the slaves who will not be slaves in the eternal Kingdom of God, which the slaves probably think that the masters should acknowledge right now and grant them equal status within their households! Instead, he says that slaves should actually act as slaves because those who “those who devote themselves to acts of goodness” (οἱ τῆς εὐεργεσίας ἀντιλαμβανόμενοι) (as long as they actually have a changed heart!) are authentic “believers and beloved” (πιστοὶ εἰσιν καὶ ἀγαπητοὶ) by God. In other

words, a Christian slave who disrespects his Christian master is not a Christian. Only those who have grasped the significance of good and moral actions within whatever social context they find themselves can be said to be authentic Christians, even if their Christian brothers and sisters do not yet understand the full extent of the social ramifications of being a Christian. This would be part of what Kierkegaard calls the “essentially Christian.”

Thus, an important implication of the gospel is that people should carry out their roles in the workplace with proper respect and obedience to those who are over them as their “bosses,” even if both of them are Christians. Just because my boss is a Christian does not mean that he and I have equal status within the business. And I should especially not disrespect him for not making me a social and business equal with him, even though we will be equals in the eternal Kingdom of God.

And this was true in the 1st century Roman Empire in regard to slaves and their masters. The gospel does not allow for resentment towards those in authority if the latter are Christians, just because the gospel grants equal status to both the boss and the underling before God. In other words, the underling should not expect the boss to treat him as a working equal, so that if he does not, the underling would take offense and even get angry with the boss. Because the Christian underling is devoted to moral goodness and kindness, then he serves his boss with good actions, respect, and kindness, even though they have different levels of status in the workplace.

It is possible that the command “teach and proclaim these things” refers 1) to only what has just been mentioned with respect to slaves and their masters, or 2) to the larger section of 5:1-6:2a. In the light of the next sentence and the fact that the slaves and masters discussions seems to finish a larger section of 5:1-6:2a regarding treating different kinds of people, it makes more sense to me to interpret Paul as referring to the whole larger section.

Therefore, I see this as another encouragement to Timothy to teach the gospel and all its implications to the Ephesians. **1 Timothy 4:12** Let no one look down (*καταφρονεῖτω*) on your youthfulness, but rather in speech, conduct, love, faith and purity, show yourself an example of those who believe.

⁹⁶ εἴ τις ἐτεροδιδασκαλεῖ καὶ μὴ ᾠκιστὴς ᾖ, ἀλλὰ ὡς ἡ ἀληθεία ἐστὶν, οὕτως ἐκπαίδευε τὸν κύριον ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦν Χριστὸν καὶ τὴν ἐκκλησίαν τὴν ἑαυτοῦ σώσειν, ἵνα ἡ ἐκκλησία ἑαυτὴν ὡς ἡ ἀληθεία ἐκπαίδευῃ, ἵνα ἡ ἐκκλησία ἑαυτὴν ὡς ἡ ἀληθεία ἐκπαίδευῃ, ἵνα ἡ ἐκκλησία ἑαυτὴν ὡς ἡ ἀληθεία ἐκπαίδευῃ. Paul is starting to say that if someone really does not agree with the true gospel and its implications as he has laid them out in this larger section before, and therefore does not agree with the teaching of Jesus the Messiah himself, then he has gone the direction of acting on the basis of his pride and of his abandoning the gospel in his mind and heart. The information about Jesus and the instruction from Jesus as to how to live the Christian life fit like hand in glove. Someone cannot say that they believe in Jesus the Messiah and not behave as the Bible and he have taught.

Paul obtained Jesus’ words during the time he restudied the Old Testament after his conversion on the road to Damascus and probably during his brief but substantive discussions with the other apostles in Jerusalem.

⁹⁷ τετύφωται, μηδὲν ἐπιστάμενος, ἀλλὰ νοσῶν περὶ ζητήσεις καὶ λογομαχίας, ἐξ ὧν γίνεται ὀργισμὸς ἔρις βλασφημία, ὑπόνοιαι πονηραί – Again, the issue for Paul in this letter is loving discussion of the gospel and apostolic message as opposed to arguing and debating about the Old Testament and Mosaic Covenant from a perspective that does not see Jesus clearly as the crucified Messiah who is central to God’s plans. If a person does not like the implications as Paul has described them above, then he is not humble before God. He is proud. He may think he knows a lot about how to live life well. But he knows nothing. He loves to argue and not submit himself to God and the apostolic message. He provokes envy, conflicts, ideas in opposition to the biblical message, and opinions based in evil and not in good. Certainly, an opinion can be a good opinion, but someone operating out of his pride is going to develop evil opinions, i.e., ones that result in evil, not good opinions and their erroneous implications.

⁹⁸ διαπαραιτῶνται διὰ τὸν νόον καὶ τὴν ἀρετήν, νομιζόντων πορισμὸν εἶναι τὴν εὐσέβειαν – Anyone who rejects Paul’s listed implications of the gospel which center on remaining humble before God and others has lost sight of the biblical truth and chosen to claim that any means to obtaining “gain” and getting ahead socially in this world is the proper definition of “godliness,” i.e., right living. In other words, these are people who crave competing with all other Bible teachers and being affirmed and applauded by their fellow human beings. This sounds like the situation of academics who wrote and talk incessantly in Kierkegaard’s day but who also missed the whole point of genuine inwardness, repentance, and God’s grace that brought eternal salvation.

And Paul is saying that these people prefer worldly adulation from to others more than grasping the truth, being in the truth, living the truth, and obtaining the promised benefit of the truth—eternal life.

⁹⁹ Ὅτι ἐστιν ὁ πορισμὸς μέγας ἡ εὐσέβεια μετὰ αὐταρκείας – Paul now states that godliness, i.e., being willing to learn from God about the nature of reality and human life that leads to obedience to the biblical message of Jesus as the Messiah, does actually result in great gain. However, he means wealth of an eternal and moral nature, residency in the eternal Kingdom of God as a morally perfect person.

And this end result will occur only when a person maintains a fundamental emotional, psychological, and spiritual condition of what he calls *αὐταρκεία*, which is being content with one’s present life, regardless of its difficulties and suffering, because someone is looking forward to God’s promise of eternal life in the Kingdom of God and does not have everything he would love to have now. He has all that he needs, even if, from a practical and existential standpoint, the world would say that he must have more than he has in order to be completely content with his life.

2 Corinthians 9:8 And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that always having all sufficiency in everything (*ἐν παντὶ πάντοτε πᾶσαν αὐτάρκειαν ἔχοντες*), you may have an abundance for every good deed.

1 Timothy 6:8 If we have food and covering, with these we shall be content (*τούτοις ἀρκεσθῆσόμεθα* from *ἀρκέω*).

¹⁰⁰ οὐδὲν γὰρ εἰσινέγκαμεν εἰς τὸν κόσμον ὅτι οὐδὲ ἐξενεγκεῖν τι δυνάμεθα – Paul uses the fact that all human beings do not enter into this world accompanied by anything that they bring from some other world or place. And this is commensurate with their exit from this world. Regardless of how much they have accumulated here, whether political, social, or financial wealth and status, they leave this world and take nothing with them.

Paul is obviously using this truth to argue that whatever “stuff” someone has in this world is irrelevant in regard to acquiring life in the eternal Kingdom of God. This pertains to whatever material or other kind of stuff (social status, political status, etc.) a person obtains this side of eternity. This is also why the fundamental contentment of αὐταρκεία is so important for Christians, that even in the midst of great “need” (and the great feeling of “need”) for the things of this world, we choose to be content and tranquil with whatever we have and is the condition of our current existence. But also obviously, because of our humanity and our sinfulness, this is easier said than done. But it is what we must keep striving for as bona fide followers of Jesus who, as the icon of the invisible God, displayed this biblical contentment perfectly his entire existence during his first appearance. And fortunately, both we and he will manifest perfect αὐταρκεία in the coming Kingdom of God.

¹⁰¹ ἔχοντες δὲ ῥδιατροφὰς καὶ σκεπάσματα τούτοις ἄρκεσθῶμεθα – We would say in our day, “If we have food and clothing and a roof over our heads, then we have all that we really need.” This is Paul’s perspective in the light of the future that authentic Christians will enjoy in the eternal Kingdom of God. It will be then that Jesus returns, restores the Kingdom of Israel, and ushers in the first stage of the Kingdom of God (the millennial kingdom), that we will obtain all the “wealth” which human beings can possibly acquire from God, and we will have it in the manner of immortality and moral perfection.

ἄρκεσθῶμεθα is from ἄρκέω, the passive of which means to be content and which is the root of αὐταρκεία in v. 6, the kind of inner contentment that stays the course of biblical faith and obedience in the face of any unsettling circumstances in the world and in a person’s life.

¹⁰² οἱ δὲ βουλόμενοι πλουτεῖν ἐμπίπτουσιν εἰς πειρασμὸν καὶ παγίδα ἡ καὶ ἐπιθυμίας πολλὰς ῥανοήτους καὶ βλαβεράς. αἵτινες βυθίζουσιν τοὺς ἀνθρώπους εἰς ὄλεθρον καὶ ἀπώλειαν – In other verses above, Paul had referred to how sinful people seek to gain the approval and praise of others by the ideas which they are teaching, even within the community of believers in Jesus the Messiah. This is a kind of social currency as gained wealth. Here, he switches to the common desire that is also beyond the biblical contentment of αὐταρκεία among sinful people, if it becomes that which people desire (οἱ δὲ βουλόμενοι) more than God’s gifts of mercy and life—to obtain financial wealth so as to obtain as much as they can beyond food, clothing, and shelter. Certainly, the wealthy enjoy affirming each other for their financial wealth, so that this too can become people’s main goal—to become well-known and famous in the financial world of great wealth. But Paul also mentions that they will “fall into temptation and a trap” (ἐμπίπτουσιν εἰς πειρασμὸν καὶ παγίδα) whereby, I assume, he means that they get stuck in this condition because they have hardened their hearts and minds against the truth and are completely unwilling to change—on this existential level.

Paul also says that they fall prey to “many foolish and harmful desires” (καὶ ἐπιθυμίας πολλὰς ῥανοήτους καὶ βλαβεράς), such as other kinds of “wealth” or earthly commodities, e.g., political and social power from the impulse to control other human beings along with something like sexually immoral impulses.

Thus, Paul is indicating that it is an inner and spiritual given that people who are obsessed with financial wealth and are committed to acquiring it above and beyond anything else in life, especially instead of God’s eternal mercy and life in the Kingdom of God, are trapped in not only a foolish perspective on reality but also other strong sinful desires, so that the result will be their own eternal destruction.

¹⁰³ ῥίζα γὰρ πάντων τῶν κακῶν ἐστὶν ἡ φιλαργυρία, ἧς τινες ὀρεγόμενοι ἀπεπλανήθησαν ἀπὸ τῆς πίστεως καὶ ἑαυτοὺς περιέπειραν ὀδύναις ῥολλαῖς – Paul is saying that desiring money and wealth above God’s mercy and morality can only result in a person’s involving himself in all kinds of evil (πάντων τῶν κακῶ) in order to fulfill his goal. In addition, this obsession with wealth will only bring grief and pain into a person’s life, starting with being “led away from the faith” (ἀπεπλανήθησαν ἀπὸ τῆς πίστεως). They end up being simply abandoning authentic Christianity in their pursuit of material wealth, even while probably they continue to claim to be Christians. And this, in turn, results in their “piercing themselves through with many grievous pains” (ἑαυτοὺς περιέπειραν ὀδύναις ῥολλαῖς), which would be the mental stress and strain that comes from doing so many things wrong that the negative consequences in relationships and the ability to pursue a peaceful life pile up.

¹⁰⁴ Σὺ δὲ ὁ ἄνθρωπε τοῦ θεοῦ, ταῦτα φεῦγε· δῖωκε δὲ δικαιοσύνην, εὐσέβειαν, πίστιν, ἀγάπην, ὑπομονήν, ῥπραῦπαθίαν – In the light of how easy it seems to be that people confess Jesus as the Messiah and then down the road they become so attracted to basic human desires that overtake them and lead them not only to abandon Christianity but also engage in all sorts of sinful activities, even while continuing to claim to believe in Jesus, Paul urges Timothy to find himself obsessed with only the things of the gospel. First, he commands Timothy to “flee these things” (ταῦτα φεῦγε), i.e., ideas and desires that are different from the gospel of Jesus and activities that follow from these false ideas and basic human desires that lead a person into sin.

Second, Paul urges Timothy to “pursue” (δίωκε) six biblical characteristics—

1) δικαιοσύνην – righteousness, which is the same as moral goodness such that moral perfection will be that which a person enjoys in the Kingdom of God. [Matthew 5:6](#) “Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.

2) εὐσέβειαν – a ready willingness to seek and learn truth from God in order to align one’s mind with His in regard to the nature of reality, truth, and morality.

3) πίστιν – belief in the gospel of Jesus as the Messiah that results in remaining faithful to the truth of God and living in a manner that is commensurate with His desires and instructions.

4) ἀγάπην – love that is not a feeling but a choice to care for one's fellow believers at a physical, emotional, psychological, and spiritual level.

5) ὑπομονήν – simple but profound perseverance in believing and living the gospel that cannot be disturbed or eliminated by the stresses, strains, and even entertaining human pleasures available in this world.

6) πραῦτητα – gentle humility in the face of opposition and even hostility from unbelievers in this world who categorically reject God and the biblical message.

Another way to describe these is—They are the moral currency which would be the result of a changed heart and a fundamental desire for God's mercy. They are right living according to God's definition of morality, obedience to God morally speaking, authentic and persevering belief in the truth of the gospel, love for God and man, persevering in belief and being obsessed with these things, and finally a humble gentleness before God and towards other people whereby a person does not have to obtain wealth in order to feel good about himself; instead, he is more focused on being kind and gentle to people, even towards those who are not kind and gentle towards him.

¹⁰⁵ ἀγωνίζου τὸν καλὸν ἀγῶνα τῆς πίστεως, ἐπιλαβοῦ τῆς αἰωνίου ζωῆς, εἰς ἣν ἔκλήθης, καὶ ὁμολόγησας τὴν καλὴν ὁμολογίαν ἐνώπιον πολλῶν μαρτύρων – Paul also commands and urges Timothy to do two things—

1) To fight the good fight of the belief (ἀγωνίζου τὸν καλὸν ἀγῶνα τῆς πίστεως) – for Timothy to engage in the constant battle with the lies and deceptions that come from the world and from within himself as a sinner by reminding himself of the biblical truth and encouraging others to persevere in their belief in it too.

2) To take hold of eternal life, to which Timothy was called and to which he confessed the good confession before many witnesses (ἐπιλαβοῦ τῆς αἰωνίου ζωῆς, εἰς ἣν ἔκλήθης, καὶ ὁμολόγησας τὴν καλὴν ὁμολογίαν ἐνώπιον πολλῶν μαρτύρων) – for Timothy to grasp by faith the promise from God of eternal life in the Kingdom of God; this was that to which Paul knows that Timothy was called by God because of the evidence of authentic belief which he has seen in Timothy's own life experiences. And it is that which Timothy has confessed by expressing publicly before many witnesses that he believes that Jesus is the Messiah/Christ and Son of God who brings salvation and eternal life from Him.

Thus, Paul wants Timothy to battle whatever forces in him and in the world that would seem to want to crush his belief in God and the good news of His mercy through Jesus the Messiah. He urges him to grab on to the promise of eternal life to which God has called him and directed him through the internal work of His Spirit which has caused him to believe so that he places his future hope in God's eternal life and salvation. Paul knows that Timothy has made public his belief in this gospel, stating categorically that it makes sense to him that it is true.

¹⁰⁶ παραγγέλλω ὅσοι ἐνώπιον τοῦ θεοῦ τοῦ ῥωγονοῦντος τὰ πάντα καὶ Ἰησοῦ τοῦ μαρτυρήσαντος ἐπὶ Ποντίου Πιλάτου τὴν καλὴν ὁμολογίαν – Paul is now giving Timothy a similar commandment to obey, and he does this as though they are in the presence of God (ἐνώπιον τοῦ θεοῦ), which they are (!), and on the basis of God's being the source of life (τοῦ ῥωγονοῦντος τὰ πάντα), by which Paul must mean eternal life. He also gives this “charge” to Timothy (παραγγέλλω ὅσοι) as though they are in the presence of “the Messiah Jesus” (καὶ Ἰησοῦ τοῦ μαρτυρήσαντος), which in a sense they are since he is still alive within the creation, and on the basis of Jesus' having “born witness to the good confession before the Roman governor Pontius Pilate” (τοῦ μαρτυρήσαντος ἐπὶ Ποντίου Πιλάτου τὴν καλὴν ὁμολογίαν). This was when Jesus was on trial before Pilate after being on trial before the Jewish leaders, and he declared by his presence and his words that he is God's Messiah, the king of Israel, who will restore the Kingdom of Israel and rescue sinners from God's eternal condemnation. This is the same “good confession” (τὴν καλὴν ὁμολογίαν) in v. 12 which Timothy has publicly expressed and that is necessary for sinners to believe in order to acquire eternal salvation and life from God.

¹⁰⁷ τηρήσαι σε τὴν ἐντολὴν ἁσπίλον ἀνεπίληπτον μέχρι τῆς ἐπιφανείας τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ – On the above basis God's granting eternal life to believing sinners and Jesus' bearing witness before Pontius Pilate to his role in this process, Paul urges Timothy to “keep the instruction” (τηρήσαι σε τὴν ἐντολὴν), which would be his “good confession” of v. 12 of Jesus' being the Messiah. And he must hold on to it intellectually and willfully so that this idea is the foundation of his own life. Everything he thinks, says, and does is to occur because he fundamentally believes that Jesus is God's Messiah and all that this involves.

And Paul wants Timothy to do this “by being spotless and without reproach” (ἁσπίλον ἀνεπίληπτον), which obviously does not mean morally perfectly for a sinner, but pursuing moral goodness to the extent that he can as a changed-of-heart sinner and teacher of other followers of Jesus as the Messiah.

And Timothy should do this “until the appearance of or Lord Jesus the Messiah,” which refers to Jesus' return and second coming. Paul must know that neither Timothy nor he will live to see Jesus' return, but he simply means that he should make every effort to be a moral person of genuine faith until he dies and then sees Jesus when he returns later in history and when all believers who have died are resurrected from the dead.

¹⁰⁸ ἢν καιροῖς ἰδίους δείξει ὁ μακάριος καὶ μόνος δυνάστης, ὁ Βασιλεὺς τῶν βασιλευόντων, καὶ Κύριος τῶν κυριεύοντων – In the first part of this verse, Paul finishes his thought from the previous two verses, that Timothy should do all that he can to obey the gospel consistently and persistently *until Jesus' return*, which will be the point in history when all those who have had authentic belief, from at least Abel to the believers who are alive when he returns, will be revealed and gathered to Jesus as he descends onto the earth to restore the Kingdom of Israel.

The next part of this verse and v. 16 is what sounds like a previously composed doxology to God that Christians must

have sung together in their assemblies and which Paul is using here to remind Timothy and extol God at the same time. The song is a list of God's characteristics where the last line is to attribute all glory, honor, praise, sovereignty, and power to God for all eternity.

1) ὁ μακάριος καὶ μόνος δυνάστης – God is the only transcendent Creator of everything which He has made. Indeed, He is the all-powerful sovereign of the creation and is to be “blessed”—acknowledged in human beings' hearts and minds as the one whom everyone should thank for His provision and gracious salvation through the Messiah. Only God is worthy of the highest praise and honor, because He is the “only authority,” the One who is ruling and governing the creation at the highest level. Indeed, He is determining every element within the creation at every moment of time.

2) ὁ Βασιλεὺς τῶν βασιλευνόντων καὶ Κύριος τῶν κυριευόντων – God is the “King of those who reign as Kings and the Lord of those who rule as Lords,” meaning that no human ruler carries out his responsibility without being governed and ruled by God. God determines the desires, thoughts, and actions of all human rulers for His own eternal purposes. God reigns over all peoples of the earth and all their rulers and political leaders. No one engages in any decision of action within the political realm and within society with God's sovereignly determining what they are doing. Of course, we should understand this as theologically necessary—that no leader and nothing else within the creation exists apart from God's causing him or it to exist.

¹⁰⁹ ὁ μόνος ἔχων ἀθανασίαν, φῶς οἰκῶν ἀπρόσιτον, ὃν εἶδεν οὐδεὶς ἀνθρώπων, οὐδὲ ἰδεῖν δύναται· ᾧ τιμὴ καὶ κράτος αἰώνιον. ἀμήν –

3) ὁ μόνος ἔχων ἀθανασίαν – God is the only person who in and of Himself is immortal and eternal. He literally cannot die and cease to exist. God can create immortal beings, but their immortality is contingent on His causing them to continue to exist. His immortality simply is, because He simply is and therefore relies on or is dependent on no one else or nothing else for His existence.

4) φῶς οἰκῶν ἀπρόσιτον ὃν εἶδεν οὐδεὶς ἀνθρώπων, οὐδὲ ἰδεῖν δύναται – God dwells where no created being can exist, in a flood of the light of truth, truth which is so vast and comprehensive that it is impossible for us as created beings to know and understand. We humans can know as much as the Bible communicates about God, but we must realize that this amount of knowledge is so much less than that God Himself knows about Himself and the reality which he has brought into existence. Plus, no created being can ever see God, because, in His essence and in His essential being, He exists outside the creation. We would have to become uncreated like God, which is impossible for even God to bring about, in order to be with God directly and see God directly. We experience God indirectly, through the theophanies such as the burning bush of Exodus 3, through the person of Jesus as the “icon of the invisible God” (Colossians 1:15), and through His work within the creation which the Bible labels as the Holy Spirit. By literally being beyond the created reality, no created being can exist where He does, i.e., where He is. Therefore, no created being can be where He is in His transcendence.

5) ᾧ τιμὴ καὶ κράτος αἰώνιον. ἀμήν – It is to this God, the one and only God, to whom Paul communicates a song and doxology extolling His glory, honor, and power which are from all eternity and for all eternity.

Therefore, these last two verses are a song of praise to God the Father, not to Jesus the Messiah, as the description makes this clear with references such as “the One dwelling in unapproachable light, which no man has seen and is able to see.” People have seen and will see Jesus, because he is God within the creation and in the story which God is telling through human history. But no one can “see” the Father in His transcendence outside the creation.

¹¹⁰ Τοῖς πλουσίοις ἐν τῷ νῦν αἰῶνι παράγγελλε μὴ ὑψηλοφρονεῖν μηδὲ ἡλπιεῖν ἐπὶ πλούτῳ ἀδελότῃ ἀλλ' ἔπὶ θεῷ· τῷ παρέχοντι ἡμῖν πάντα πλουσίως εἰς ἀπόλαυσιν – Paul returns briefly to the issue of the rich and where their hearts are. Do they desire wealth in the present age more than wealth in the future age, in eternity? If the former, then they are operating out of their pride (ὕψηλοφρονεῖν), thinking that they not only are completely self-sufficient, but also are entitled to acquire as much wealth as possible so as to use it mainly for themselves. They also desire to establish themselves in the present world so that they can be affirmed by their fellow human beings. Thus, Paul urges Timothy to command these arrogant wealthy people not to be arrogant (μὴ ὑψηλοφρονεῖν), but to submit to God's truth with humility.

He also wants Timothy to encourage the wealthy not place their sense of well-being in their material wealth, “in the uncertainty of riches,” because we never know when something is going to come along, e.g., a terminal illness, and make all that wealth meaningless because we will not be able to use it anymore.

Paul knows that wealth cannot buy a person total shalom and security. Therefore, he exhorts Timothy to charge people to place their future hope in only God, who causes anything that we actually do enjoy in this realm to exist. We think that our money has bought us our enjoyment when it is God who ultimately has.

Plus, of course, only God can bring about complete enjoyment in the eternal Kingdom of God, and Paul wants the wealthy to count on Him to give them any wholeness of life and security now vis-à-vis their confident expectation in the future that God will give them complete wholeness of life and security in eternity. Meanwhile, they can view all the things of this world to which they have access either with or without financial wealth, e.g., a beautiful sunset, the oceans, etc. as God's wealth to human beings in the present realm and therefore as things to enjoy to the utmost.

¹¹¹ ἀγαθοεργεῖν, πλουτεῖν ἐν ἔργοις καλοῖς, εὐμεταδότους εἶναι, κοινωνικούς – Paul continues with his list of right living for the wealthy, that they—

Do what is good (ἀγαθοεργεῖν) – Paul would have the wealthy set their sights on doing what is good, right, and moral in their lives, regardless of the size of their bank accounts.

Be rich in good works (πλουτεῖν ἐν ἔργοις καλοῖς) – probably not all that different from the previous expression of

doing what is good

Be generous and sharing (εὐμεταδότους εἶναι, κοινωνικούς) – This means that if they do have great wealth, that they should incorporate it into their “good works” and share it (literally “well giving with”) with others who are in need.

Thus they will share with God in the provision of others in regard to their immediate needs.

¹¹² ἀποθησαυρίζοντας ἑαυτοῖς θεμέλιον καλὸν εἰς τὸ μέλλον, ἵνα ἐπιλάβωνται τῆς ῥῶνως ζωῆς – It should be only natural that people save for the future and whatever their plans would lead them to purchase or buy. Paul is saying that by the wealthy sharing their wealth as part of their good works, they are putting their morality into a savings account of sorts, a “good foundation” (θεμέλιον καλὸν) on which they are building their lives so that they will be able to withdraw their “savings” in the future in the eternal Kingdom of God. However, their withdrawal will be of actual moral perfection and immortal life, i.e., the eternal life of “life indeed” (τῆς ῥῶνως ζωῆς), as though God will transform their earthly, imperfect good works that have flowed out of their material wealth into eternal morally perfect good works.

But it is their commitment to the truth of the gospel and living in accordance with it that will be the condition on which they attain the transformed “good works” that will come out of their storage bin or savings account of the good foundation of good works that are possible because of their material wealth.

¹¹³ Ω Τιμόθεε, τὴν παραθήκην φύλαξον ἐκτρεπόμενος τὰς βεβήλους ῥενοφωνίας καὶ ἀντιθέσεις τῆς ψευδωνύμου γνώσεως – Here is the same point as throughout this letter—truth vs. error, the gospel vs. what Paul probably refers to as an erroneous understanding of the Old Testament and Mosaic Covenant. Paul’s final appeal to Timothy is to “guard” the gospel that has been “entrusted” to him (τὴν παραθήκην φύλαξον), to protect it from any false or worldly and foolish ideas (τὰς βεβήλους ῥενοφωνίας) from being incorporated into it. Instead, Timothy must keep and guard this message, which God Himself has entrusted to him through Paul’s teaching him, that which is pure and untainted by ideas or information coming from the world that are different from the biblical message of Jesus the Messiah.

This includes Timothy’s avoiding “contradicting statements of that which is falsely called knowledge” (ἀντιθέσεις τῆς ψευδωνύμου γνώσεως). An obvious example is where someone would claim that Jesus is not the Messiah and that all sinful human beings, especially Jews, must follow the Mosaic Covenant and even earn God’s blessing of life in the Kingdom of God. Such an idea clearly contradicts and is the antithesis (ἀντίθεσις) of the truth of the gospel of grace and belief in Jesus as the saving and life providing Messiah of the Jews and Gentiles apart from having anything to do with the Mosaic Covenant. Another obvious example would be the pagan idolatry in the 1st century Roman Empire and any other explanation of the nature of reality that we find in our own day.

Paul’s charge to Timothy is to keep and guard in his own heart and mind only the biblical truth of the gospel of Jesus as the Messiah. All other ideas, which are basically lies, he must dismiss from his mind as having anything to do with how to understand reality and how to live the Christian life.

¹¹⁴ ἢν τινες ἐπαγγελλόμενοι περὶ τὴν πίστιν ἡστοχῆσαν ἢ χάρις ῥεθ’ ὕμῶν [μετὰ σοῦ]. – Paul acknowledges “some” people (τινες) have come into the Christian community and initially claimed to believe in Jesus as the Messiah, but now they are “professing” (ἐπαγγελλόμενοι) “that which is falsely called knowledge” (τῆς ψευδωνύμου γνώσεως) and have thereby allowed these worldly lies to creep into the midst of their biblical worldview and steer them away from it. Thus, they “have lost their way concerning the belief” (περὶ τὴν πίστιν ἡστοχῆσαν). They have apparently abandoned Christianity and are embracing a false religion. My guess is that the latter is the common erroneous Judaism of Jesus’ and Paul’s day and that doggedly pursued Christians through the efforts of all the false teachers encountered by the NT authors. These people in the Christian community in Ephesus no longer believe what is true, and their “gospel” is now such a hodge podge of biblical ideas and worldly ideas that has probably been derived incorrectly from the Bible. This is particularly in the case of Jewish false ideas as described in this letter.

1 Timothy 1:6 “For some men, straying from (ἁστοχήσαντες) these things, have turned aside to fruitless discussion.” And finally Paul wishes God’s grace, God’s independent choice to be kind and saving towards people, to be with either the Ephesian Christians or with Timothy, depending upon which texts are correct. My guess is that Paul uses the singular in order to be that much more emphatic in his charges to Timothy, which is what this letter mainly demonstrates. Paul commands Timothy to keep, guard, and teach the gospel in its pure and uncontaminated form to the Ephesian Christians so that they together persevere in their belief. Therefore, from Paul’s perspective, the work of grace begins with Timothy and then moves on to the people, so that Paul wants God’s “grace” (ἡ χάρις) to be “with him” (μετὰ σοῦ). Ultimately, it will be God’s grace that permits him and anyone else to live out Paul’s instructions in this letter for the sake of his own acquiring eternal mercy and life in the Kingdom of God and for the sake of teaching others.