

# 1 Timothy

**1:2.** “my true child.” Although the Greek omits the word “my,” and some commentators try to assert that Timothy is “a” child and not “my” child, it is clear the “my” is implied. As Hendrickson and Kistemaker point out so clearly, “The omission of the possessive in such as case is not at all unusual” (*New Testament Commentary: Thessalonians, the Pastorals, and Hebrews*). That Timothy was considered Paul’s spiritual child is clear (1 Cor. 4:15 and Gal. 4:19).

“in respect to *the* faith.” The Greek reads, “en pistis” (ἐν πίστις), which is a difficult phrase to translate easily into English. It means, “in” as “in the sphere of, in the realm of, in respect to, when it comes to,” (Cp. Lenski, Hendriksen-Kistemaker; Meyer’s Commentary; International Critical Commentary by Walter Lock). The phrase means more than just “in the faith,” which would have been easy for Paul to write (and easy to translate). The fact that Paul did not write that means there is more to “in faith” here than just “in the faith” which is a way of saying, “in the Christian faith,” it is Timothy’s faith in, and loyalty to, Christ and the things of God, including the entirety of the Christian faith. Also, we must keep in mind that “faith” here is a noun, not a verb. This verse is not talking about the action of faith. Some people in the faith movement have tried to make this into a verb, as if Timothy was a true child of Paul’s by virtue of his great faith. That is not the meaning here.

**1:4** “in connection with faith” (Lenski).

**1:5.** “goal” (see NASB).

**1:15.** “this statement is trustworthy.” This is the first of the five “trustworthy statements” found in the Pastoral Epistles (1 Tim. 1:15; 3:1; 4:9; 2 Tim. 2:11; Tit. 3:8). Interestingly, they only occur in the Pastoral Epistles. Here and in 4:9 Paul adds the phrase “and deserving of full acceptance.” “Statement” is translated from *logos* (#3056 λόγος), which here does not refer to the Bible as the Word, nor as Christ as the Word of God, but is used idiomatically to mean a “dictum, maxim or weighty saying” (Thayer). This statement is said to be *pistos* (#4103 πιστός), that is “worthy of belief or trust, trustworthy, faithful, dependable, inspiring” (BDAG). When the Bible says, “this statement is trustworthy,” sometimes it is referring to the statement that was made immediately before (1 Tim. 3:1; 4:9; Tit. 3:8), and sometime it refers to what is written next (1 Tim. 1:15; 2 Tim. 2:11).

**1:20.** “whom I delivered to the Adversary, that they might be taught not to blaspheme.” One of the uses of “the Adversary” in the early Christian world was the same as the Moslems today use “the Great Satan,” meaning things outside their religion that are considered evil. Thus to “deliver someone to the Adversary” was to kick that person out of the Church, to excommunicate the person (Cp. Robertson on 1 Cor. 5:5; Lenski). Then, in the “world” (the realm of the Adversary”) the person would be badly treated and not loved, and thus would “learn” not to blaspheme. When he learned his lesson, he would be allowed back in the congregation.

**2:6.** “proper time.” Technically, “its own” time, but the meaning of the phrase is the proper or right time.

**2:9.** “good judgment.” The Greek is *sophrosune* (#4997 σωφροσύνη), which generally means “soundness of mind, reasonableness, rationality,” but when this clear thinking is applied to circumstances it comes to signify the “practice of prudence, good judgment,

moderation, self-control” (BDAG). Here Paul is declaring that women must be reasonable about their dress, they must exercise good judgment when deciding what to wear. The word does not simply emphasize the action of being proper (“propriety” [NIV]); rather it points to the underlying wisdom that causes one to implement such discretion. Cp. *Holman Christian Standard Bible*, “with decency and good sense.”

**2:14.** “deceived... thoroughly deceived.” There are two different Greek words for “deceive” in this verse, and most versions translate them both as simply “deceived.” However, this covers up the interesting fact that Eve’s word has the intensifier *ex* as a prefix, indicating that she was *thoroughly* deceived. Adam is said to have not been “deceived,” *apatao* (#538 ἀπατάω), while Eve was “deceived wholly,” “thoroughly deceived,” *exapatao* (#1818 ἐξαπατάω). There is a variant reading within the Western textual tradition that has *apatao* twice, however the most favorable manuscripts include *exapatao* (Tischendorf, *Critical Apparatus*).

“fell into transgression.” The Greek literally reads, “has come to be in transgression.” This emphasizes that Eve changed states of being; it portrays her coming into a fallen state, into the *sphere* of transgression, as this is most likely a dative of sphere (cp. Wallace, *Greek Grammar*, pg. 153).

**2:15.** “good judgment.” See note on 2:9.

**3:1.** “this statement is trustworthy.” See note on 1 Timothy 1:15.

**3:2.** “It is necessary.” (For the translation, see Lenski; Wuest, *An Expanded Translation*.)

It is not optional that ministers be of good character. All the attributes in the list that follow, with the exception of being skillful in teaching, are character issues. They, more than any other sector of Christianity, represent Christ both to other Christians and to the world. It is important that a minister be able to function well in his office, but if he does so without also taking on the character of Christ, at the Judgment he will be disappointed (see note, Matt. 7:23). This list is above and beyond the character and actions of all Christians, such as the fruit of the spirit in Galatians 5, etc.

“above reproach.” The Greek word is *anepileptos* (#423 ἀνεπίληπτος) literally, “That which cannot be taken hold of.” *Anepileptos* is used of a wrestler that is so completely prepared that he cannot be grabbed and thrown by his opponent. A leader is to exhibit positive qualities that set an example, and carefully avoid behaviors that can be used against him or the ministry. As well as sinful or illegal actions, reproachful behavior includes unwise behaviors that the Adversary can use against a person. God is holy, and wants to be in relationship with people who take holiness seriously. Furthermore, through the ages unbelievers have mocked God because His people have behaved badly (cp. Rom. 2:24). God wants Himself, His leaders and His ministry to have a good reputation so they are attractive to outsiders.

“the husband of one wife.” This character issue is also spoken of in Titus 1:6 (and in 1 Tim. 3:12 is mentioned in reference to deacons). In the first century, monogamy was not always practiced, so the primary meaning of the verse is “not a polygamist.” For example, harems were common in the Eastern world, and not unknown in the Western world. However, there are other cultural overtones that must be considered. For one thing, this verse is not forbidding singles, divorcees, or widows. When women are ordained, this would be the “wife of but one husband.” Furthermore, it is clear from the context of Timothy that the traits mentioned in this list refer to present behaviors, and do not include past behavior. To understand this, let us take the example of alcohol use,

which comes up later in the list. A person is not disqualified from being a leader if he abused alcohol in his past. This is true for all the character traits. The leader must be above reproach **now**, not violent **now**, not a novice **now**, and so on. Thus, “the husband of one wife” is not forbidding a divorced person from being a minister, but rather is saying that he cannot be the husband of more than one wife now. Many commentators disagree with this conclusion, asserting that the verse is saying that the verse is stating a divorced person is not eligible for leadership and quoting church fathers. However, there are church fathers that agree with our conclusion, and later church fathers were so obsessed with sexual purity that eventually marriage was forbidden for priests. Furthermore, 1 Corinthians 7 gives examples when a divorced person can remarry, and there is no stipulation such as, “you can remarry, but you will not be able to be a leader” (1 Cor. 7:15, 27, 28).

Another overtone in the Greek text that must be considered is that the Greek word for “wife” and the Greek word for “woman” are exactly the same (*gune* #1135 γυνή). This was culturally due to the fact that women were expected to marry, and got married young. Thus although the primary meaning of the verse is that a minister cannot have more than one wife, it is also clear that a minister cannot have more than one “woman.” He cannot be an adulterer or have mental obsessions about other women. Prostitution was common in the Roman world, and a man visiting prostitutes was usually overlooked. Furthermore, it was the common custom for those who could afford the extra bedroom that a man and his wife would sleep apart.<sup>31</sup> That fact, together with the fact that any household slave was sexually available to the master made adultery quite common, and leading Carcopino to write, “...slavery degrades and besmirches marriage if it does not wholly stamp it out.”<sup>32</sup> From the scope of Scripture it is clear that the Christian leader must be a “one woman man” in his marriage contract and with his heart and eyes as well. Ogling women and making inappropriate comments about their form is not acceptable behavior for a Christian leader. Similarly, women leaders are not to be flirts, immodest dressers, teasers, or sexually immoral.

“clear-minded.” (cp. also 1 Tim. 3:11). “Clear-minded” is the Greek word *nephalios* (#3524 νηφάλιος) and the base meaning is temperate concerning wine. That developed into the further meaning of temperate, watchful, vigilant (all which apply to leaders, and all of which tipsy people are not). The temperate person has a clear perspective, is watchful, and has a proper orientation in life. Because in English the word “clear-minded” can refer to general sober behavior as well as one’s relation to alcohol, and because the fundamental meaning of the Greek refers to being temperate in relation to wine, we felt that “clear-minded” was a good translation.

“sensible.” The Greek word is *sophron* (#4998, σώφρων). It means sensible, self-controlled. “Sober-minded” is too often taken as “serious,” as if the person could not laugh. That is not the meaning here. *Sophron* is used of one who follows sound reason. Thus there is no arrogant elevation or pride about himself, and no unreasonable self-hate or self-degradation. It also involves the restraint of passions (Cp. Titus 1:8).

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<sup>31</sup> Jerome Carcopino, *Daily Life in Ancient Rome* (Yale University Press, New Haven, CT, 1968), p. 164-166.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.* p. 101.

“Respectable.” The Greek word is *kosmios* (#2887 κόσμιος), and means orderly, decent, and refers to one who is modest, well behaved, respectable, orderly in life. It refers to a person who quietly fulfils his duties and is not disorderly or on an ego trip.

“given to hospitality.” The Greek word is *philoxenos* (#5382 φιλόξενος), which literally means “love to strangers.” We felt “given to hospitality” (REV) was a better translation than “hospitable” (NIV) which seems too much like “friendly.” It is more than “friendly,” because it involves opening your home and life to others. The Roman world was vulgar and dangerous, and it was important for Christians to open their homes and lives to one another for mutual support, protection, and even outreach. Every Christian is an ambassador for the Lord (2 Cor. 5:20), and one of the ways we win people is by being “given to hospitality.” For insight into what was available as far as inns and hotels in the Roman world, see any good customs book that covers that subject. A leader is outreach oriented, not desirous of maintaining a “fellowship of old friends” that has no new growth.

“skillful in teaching.” The Greek word is *didaktikos* (#1317 διδακτικός), and means “skillful in teaching.” It is important to note that this is the only thing on the list of qualifications for an overseer that is a skill or ability. Everything else on the list involves one’s personal character. Character counts with God! However, it is important for those who are going to oversee others that they learn to teach well. This requires meekness, because teaching does not always come easy to people, and many people think they are far better at it than they are. It is very important that teachers receive feedback about their teachings to be the best teachers possible. Being skilled in teaching also requires grounding in the Word of God. The overseer must be grounded in Scripture to the end that he or she can teach the truth and refute error (Titus 1:9).

**3:3.** “Not an excessive drinker.” The Greek is *me paroinos*, (*me* is “not,” and #3943 πάροινος), which means not lingering over wine (cp. 1 Tim. 3:8; Titus 1:7). Not an excessive drinker. Since Ephesians says not to get drunk, drunkenness is wrong for any Christian. Thus this does not specifically refer to drunkenness. There are times when drinking in any amount causes behavior to become less godly, more sarcastic and quick tempered, *etc.*, or it may just be a bad example at the time. Especially among leaders, all alcoholic consumption should be watched closely. One reason for this is that Christian leaders can be called upon in a moments notice to pray, prophesy, heal, witness, etc (cp. Proverbs 31:4-7). This requirement should be taken in the “wider” sense as well as the “narrower” sense. God mentions alcohol here, but surely no one would suggest that because other “mind effecting” substances were not mentioned that they are okay with God. Since the Christian minister is to be available to serve at any time, in the larger scope of Scripture this directive applies to any “mind effecting” substance. For example, a Christian leader would not get “high” on drugs just because God did not specifically mention it in Timothy or Titus.

“Not violent.” The Greek is *me plektes* (*me* is “not” and #4131 πλήκτης), and it means “not ready with a blow,” i.e., not contentious or quarrelsome. The leader is not one who puts others down with words or fists. A leader is not a bully or “hard” leader, and does not have a belligerent attitude because of his or her position.

“reasonable.” The Greek word is *epieikes* (#1933 ἐπιεικής), which is an adjective, (occurs Phil. 4:5; 1 Tim. 3:3; Titus 3:2; James 3:17; 1 Pet. 2:18). The noun is *epieikeia* (#1932 ἐπιείκεια; occurring Acts 24:4; 2 Cor. 10:1). Lenski writes, “[I wish] that we had

a good English equivalent for this noble term!” (Cp. his note on Philippians 4:5). The concepts of “moderation, forbearance, gentleness, “sweet reasonableness” all touch a side of the full meaning of this word. The meaning is yielding, not insisting on one’s legal rights to the end that the legal rights become moral wrongs. Trench (Synonyms) writes: “*Epieikeia* refers to the sort of moderation that recognizes that it is impossible for formal laws to anticipate and provide for all possible cases and that the asserting of legal rights can be pushed into moral wrongs, so the highest right can in practice prove to be the greatest injustice.” As to the accusation that someone would be overly “reasonable” or yielding to evil, Lenski writes, “Only perverted reason would think that “yieldingness” might include a yielding of truth to error, of right to wrong, of virtue to vice and crime” (Lenski: note on Philippians 4:5). There are times when the “rules” obviously need to be bent to minister the grace of God effectively. This word covers exactly that situation—the true leader is “reasonable,” not rigid.

“Not quarrelsome” is *amachos* = not always wanting to pick a fight.

“not a lover of money.” The Greek is *aphilarguros* (#866 ἀφιλάργυρος) from “a” which is “not;” *philos*, which is “like or love,” and *arguros* “silver.” It is not loving money. The godly overseer has a good perspective on money. God is his sufficiency, not money. It can be easy for the shrewd overseer to “pump” people for money, and a godly overseer never does this.

**3:4.** The minister’s family is always to be his or her primary responsibility. Running a family is difficult, and requires a lot of time and energy. Running the church is not to be an escape from family responsibilities, or an excuse to put them on a back burner. The minister is attentive to his own family such that things are not out of control in his household. A leader will generally lead people the way he leads the people in his house. If he is a dictator in his house, he will usually eventually be one in his ministry, and if he provides no effective leadership in his house then that will probably show up in his ministry also.

“having *his* children in subjection.” Children that are disobedient, disrespectful, or generally out of control reflect on any person’s ministry. The way a person deals with his children will almost certainly be the way he deals with people in the Church. However, care must be taken not to go overboard with this with older children. In the Bible times a girl was usually married and on her own by her mid-teens and a boy by the late teens. It is common to see children who were well behaved until 14 or 15 become rebellious at 17 or 18. Just because an older teen is rebelling against parental authority does not mean the parents are disqualified for the ministry, although it might, depending on the circumstances. On the other hand, there are men and women who just cannot seem to handle their smaller children, and the chances are that if they allow themselves to be pushed around by a self-willed child, they will be pushed around by strong-willed people in the Church.

**3:5.** “Indeed” Wuest, An Expanded Translation

**3:6.** “Not a novice.” The Greek is *me neophutos* (*me* is “not,” and #3504 νεόφυτος) and it means not newly planted, not a neophyte. There are many temptations and hardships in Christianity, and even more so in Christian leadership. A leader should be one who has been tested and stayed faithful over a period of time, and in hard times. There is just no effective way to do this quickly. Many prospective leaders do well as long as they are contributing and not leading, but begin to abuse their authority or do not stand up to the

pressure when given leadership. Other people lead well for a short time, but have no longevity. There is simply no way to tell how a person is going to do over time except that he is tested over time. Thus ministers are not ordained when their ministries are first noticed in the Body, but rather after they have been functioning in their ministry for a period of time.

**3:7.** “he must have good report from those who are outside.” Sometimes a minister will treat one group of people well, but others with disdain or disrespect. Ministers need to have a way with people such that they are well thought of by people outside their immediate “group.” This discourages “cult” mentality, and encourages evangelism.

**3:8.** “not eager for dishonorable gain.” This also appears in Titus 1:7 of overseers. The Greek is *me aischrokerdes* (*me* is “not,” and #146 *αἰσχροκερδής*) and means, “not eager for dishonorable gain.” This refers to all kinds of gain, not just money. Of course it does refer to money, and historically there have been many ministers who have laid guilt trips on people, or bullied them, or threatened them, to get money. However, the phrase also refers to other dishonorable gain, such as gaining popularity by adulterating the Gospel to attract more people to the congregation (*Word Study Dictionary—Zodhiates*). Greed for money, power, recognition, etc., can cloud the mind and ruin the ministries of Christian leaders.

**3:9.** “holding the sacred secret of the faith.” The Administration of Grace (Eph. 3:2), God’s Sacred Secret (Eph. 3:9 Rotherham), is one of the greatest things God has ever done for mankind. God sent His son to die so that over and above the gift of everlasting life available to all mankind, we in the Church can be part of Christ’s very Body. We Christians have the gift of holy spirit sealed in us, permanent salvation, nine manifestations, are joint heirs with Israel, and more. What we have is so awesome and amazing that had Satan known it, he would not have crucified Jesus (1 Cor. 2:8). Yet today the Sacred Secret is practically unknown. The NIV does not even hint at the fact that ministers are to hold the Sacred Secret, translating it by the phrase “**deep truths.**”

The administration of the sacred secret is very important to the Lord, and leaders are charged to keep hold of it. To be “holding” it means more than just knowing about it. “Holding” is the common Greek word, *echo* (#2192 *ἔχω*), and it means to have or to hold. Here, as in Philippians 1:7 and John 14:21, it means “to have in one’s heart, to keep in mind” (see Thayer). Leaders are to teach about it, and should also hold the Sacred Secret by walking in the power available to them and setting an example by boldly operating the manifestations of the spirit.

**3:10.** “Blameless” is *anegkletos* (#410 *ἀνεγκλητος*) = without legal charge. It is very important that a minister live according to the laws of the land. A minister is not to risk getting caught breaking the law and thus bringing a charge against himself and also besmirching Christianity.

**3:16.** “By common confession” (NASB; Frieberg). Because the thing in question is agreed upon by all, it becomes, by extension, “unquestionable” or “undeniable,” but the root idea is that it is by agreement of all. In this case, the facts about Jesus were, in the first century Christian world, by consent of all. It is possible, and believed by many scholars, that there was a well known hymn with these lyrics.

“he was manifested in flesh.” The “he” (or “who”) was changed to “God” by scribes during the copying process, something that is recognized by scholars today. Metzger notes: “The reading which, on the basis of external evidence and transcriptional

probability, best explains the rise of the others is ὅς [who, which]. It is supported by the earliest and best uncials (N\* A\*<sup>vid</sup> C\* G<sup>gr</sup>) as well as by 33 365 442 2127 syr<sup>hmg, pal</sup> goth eth<sup>pp</sup> Origen<sup>lat</sup> Epiphanius Jerome Theodore Eutharius<sup>acc. to Theodoret</sup> Cyril Cyril<sup>acc. to Ps-Oecumenius</sup> Liberatus. Furthermore, since the neuter relative pronoun ὅ must have arisen as a scribal correction of ὅς (to bring the relative into concord with μυστήριον [mystery]), the witnesses that read ὅ (D\* it<sup>d, g, 61, 86</sup> vg Ambrosiaster Marius Victorinus Hilary Pelagius Augustine) also indirectly presuppose ὅς as the earlier reading. The Textus Receptus reads θεός, with N<sup>e</sup> (this corrector is of the twelfth century) A<sup>2</sup> C<sup>2</sup> D<sup>c</sup> K L P Ψ 81 330 614 1739 Byz Lect Gregory-Nyssa Didymus Chrysostom Theodoret Euthalius and later Fathers. Thus, no uncial (in the first hand) earlier than the eighth or ninth century (Ψ) supports θεός; all ancient versions presuppose ὅς or ὅ; and no patristic writer prior to the last third of the fourth century testifies to the reading θεός. The reading θεός arose either (a) accidentally, through the misreading of οc as ;=c=, or (b) deliberately, either to supply a substantive for the following six verbs, or, with less probability, to provide greater dogmatic precision [in other words, to more directly support the doctrine of the Trinity]. See Metzger, *Textual Commentary*.

“Declared righteous in spirit” (Young’s Literal Translation). Jesus was pronounced righteous as to his spirit, his attitude, his emotions, and the life they produced.

**4:7.** “But refuse profane and old wives’ myths.” In Christian culture, the women hold together the social fabric of the church. In the Greek culture, there were “old women” who kept many of the myths alive by passing them down (Cp. Robertson).

**4:8.** “bodily training is profitable in a few *areas*.” This verse is a great example of how most people read a modern interpretation into an ancient verse. Most people in America, being overweight and under-exercised, see this verse as saying that bodily exercise is of some good. In fact, in the biblical culture, most people got plenty of exercise, and many were actually hungry or even starving. In the Greek culture, those who exercised did so to excel in some area, such as running, wrestling, javelin throw, etc., or they exercised as a form of religious asceticism, to purify themselves in some way (Cp. Col. 2:23). In these cases, the bodily training was profitable in a few areas (literally: “for a little.” Cp. Lenski; Wuest), but it is contrasted with godliness, which profits in all things.

**4:9.** “this statement is trustworthy.” See note on 1 Timothy 1:15.

**4:13.** “To reading.” To public reading. At a time when often only a small percentage of the people could read (perhaps 10%), it was very important to read the Bible to the people in the congregation. This was why there was public reading of the Scriptures in the synagogue, as Jesus did in Nazareth (Luke 4:16ff). Several Scriptures mention public reading: Colossians 4:16; 1 Thessalonians 5:27. Revelation 1:3 says “he who reads and those who hear” are blessed. “He” would read, because one person would read, and “those” would hear because usually more than one person would be being read to.

**5:10.** “hospitality.” The Greek word here is *xenodocheo* (#3580 ξενοδοχέω). It is partially comprised of the Greek word for “stranger or guest friend,” *xenos* (#3581 ξένος). The word designates hospitality particularly to those who are not immediately within one’s private circle: “to receive and show hospitality to a stranger, that is, someone who is not regarded as a member of the extended family or a close friend” (Louw-Nida). However,

this does not necessarily refer to “total strangers,” as a *xenos* could very well be an acquaintance.

**5:18.** Quoted from. Deut. 25:4.

**5:19.** “except on *the basis of* two or three witnesses.” There are two primary ways this verse has been interpreted. The first, but least accepted, is that an accusation should not be received against an elder except “in the presence of” two or three witnesses. In other words, before Timothy (or any other leader), could hear an accusation against an elder, he would have to gather two or more witnesses to make sure the case was heard accurately. This does not seem to be what the verse is saying. The issue does not seem to be how clearly the case is heard, but rather, how decisively the case is made, which leads us to the second and far more prevalent translation of the verse, including the REV. It was standard practice in Jewish law that there had to be two witnesses to any act before it could be conclusively adjudicated on (Nu. 35:30; Deut. 17:6; 19:15; Matt. 18:16; 2 Cor. 13:1; Heb. 10:28).

This is to prevent malicious accusers from tearing the Church apart. If an elder does something offensive, the individual wronged is to go to the person and work out the problem. If there is no solution, he or she is to take others (Matthew 18:15-17). At that point there would be witnesses. This is to be a general practice. It is not to be a law that allows for unrighteousness to continue. The Bible is not against common sense, and one of the requirements of leaders is that they are to be “reasonable,” and we write in the note on 1 Timothy 3:3 above:

“The concepts of “moderation, forbearance, gentleness, “sweet reasonableness” all touch a side of the full meaning of this word. The meaning is yielding, not insisting on one’s legal rights to the end that the legal rights become moral wrongs.”

If a leader had case after case where usually credible people said that they were spoken or acted against one on one by a certain individual in leadership, but that the leader had denied what he had done when the wronged person went to him to rectify the situation, and again when the individual went back to the leader with witnesses about both the original problem and the denial, then “reason” would dictate that the accused leader must be doing something wrong, or so many people would not witness to the same fault in his life. Leaders are to have a good report among the people, and when that ceases to be the case, the leader will cease to be effective and should step out of leadership, or be removed by others.

**5:21.** “out of.” This is not the Greek word *ek* but *kata*. The Greeks way of speaking was to say, “do nothing *according to* (*kata*) partiality,” but we would not word it that way in English. Hence, we translated this phrase, “do nothing out of partiality,” which accords with modern English usage. The “partiality” spoken of in this verse refers to the honoring and rebuking of elders from the immediate context (vv. 19-20). We are not to pay double honor only to ministers we particularly like, nor are we to overlook the sins of those in leadership whom we are well disposed towards. Instead, the solemn charge of honoring and rebuking is to be kept without prejudice.

**5:22.** “and *thus* share in the sins of others.” Compare NASB and NET translations. The laying on of hands describes the implementing of a leadership position in the Church; this verse falls in the context of eldership and moral requirements for leaders (see entry on 5:24). We are instructed not to lay hands on anyone *too hastily*, lest we share in the

responsibility for their sins (cp. NASB's translation); that is, if we establish a morally corrupt leader by neglecting the requirements laid out in chapter 3 or not first testing them to be proved beyond reproach (1 Tim. 3:10), then we heap upon ourselves a portion of the responsibility for the damage they will cause the people of God and the name of Christ. This is reminiscent of the spiritual Watchman God speaks of in Ezekiel 3:17-21; 33:2-9. In order for a watchman to "keep pure" and not share in the other man's transgression, he had to speak what God had commanded him to say to the one in sin. If he did not speak against their sin, but let them go merrily on their way, then God charged the Watchmen also with the blame. So it is with elders who lay hands on those to put them into leadership positions. If they do not hold to the requirements of 1 Timothy 3 and rebuke those who sin (5:20), they share in the sins of that leader.

**5:24.** This verse teaches a great truth especially helpful for leaders in the Body of Christ to understand—for this is in the context of eldership (5:17-25). Paul is talking about the administering of leadership roles in the church. He has already laid out the moral requirements for leadership positions (3:1-14). Here in chapter five he is addressing the protocol for when a practicing elder fails to meet the mark (5:19-21) and what to look for when admitting new people into leadership by the "laying on of hands" (v. 22). All leaders are to be held accountable to the same moral standard: "observe these things without prejudice, doing nothing out of partiality" (v. 21). Thus, the word "judgment" here in verse 24 does not refer to God's Day of Judgment but rather the judgment we must make about others when considering their qualifications. R. C. H. Lenski points out that, as with any leader who picks others to serve, "Timothy is obliged to render [judgments] when he is accepting or rejecting applicants for the eldership." Only with all this context in mind can we see the application of this verse for leaders. Some people's sins go out before them, like a trumpet declaring them unfit for representing the Church in a leadership role, but with others, their sins follow after them into their office of leadership, and like good works (v. 25) they cannot remain hidden forever. In such a case we must "reprove them in the sight of all" (v. 20).

It is essential for the health and growth of the Christian Church that when leaders are chosen to lead the flock of God, these men and women are well qualified, spiritual, Christ-like people. Weak, self-willed, and sinful leaders hurt the Church both directly, by hurting God's people, and indirectly, by making Christianity a laughingstock or object of ridicule to others. Leaders have such a huge impact on the Church that it is irresponsible for one leader to bring another person into leadership in the Church too quickly, without doing due diligence about the person. Thus the Word of God exhorts leaders to not lay hands hastily on anyone, because if a leader does that he is partly responsible (he "partakes of") the sins of the other (v. 22).

**6:9.** "ruin." See commentary on "ruin" in 1 Cor. 5:5.

**6:15.** "he will bring about." God is the "he." God will bring about the return of Christ at its proper time.

**6:18.** "fellowshipping." The Greek is *koinonikos* (#2843 κοινωνικός), it is the adjective of the noun *koinonia*, and occurs only here. Lenski is right-on when he writes: "Many regard this as a synonym of the preceding [generous]. ... Others find some difference and include in the giving also friendliness, inclination, and the like. We are pleased to note that Wohlenberg has presented a more accurate meaning of the word. The word means "fellowshipping," ready to fellowship and actually doing so. The adjective, the noun, and

the verb have the same meaning. ...The Christian man is to be in fellowship with all his Christian brethren,....”