our friends. Grace be with them, for grace comprehends in it all that is good, and grace is an earnest, yea a beginning, of glory; for wherever God gives grace, he will give glory, and will not withhold any good thing from him who walketh uprightly. Grace be with you all. Amen.

**EXPOSITION, WITH PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS OF THE SECOND EPISTLE OF ST. PAUL TO TIMOTHY.**

Completed by Mr. Atkinson.

**II. TIMOTHY, I.**

CHAP. I.

After this introduction, (v. 1, 2.) we have, 1. Paul’s sincere love to Timothy, v. 3. 5. II. Divers exhortations given to him, v. 6. 14. III. He speaks of Phygellus and Hermogenes, with others, and closes with Onesiphorus, v. 13, to the end.

1. **Paul** an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, according to the promise of life which is in Christ Jesus, 2. To Timothy, my dearly beloved son: Grace, mercy, and peace, from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord. 3. I thank God, whom I serve from my forefathers with pure conscience, that without ceasing I have remembrance of thee in my prayers night and day; 4. Greatly desiring to see thee, being mindful of thy tears, that I may be filled with joy; 5. When I call to remembrance the unfeigned faith that is in thee, which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois, and thy mother Eunice; and I am persuaded that in thee also.

Here is,

1. The inscription of the epistle; Paul calls himself an apostle by the will of God, merely by the good pleasure of God, and by his grace, which he professes himself unworthy of, according to the promise of life which is in Christ Jesus, according to the gospel. The gospel is the promise of life in Christ Jesus; life the end, and Christ the Way, John 14. 6. The life is put into the promise, and both are sure in Christ Jesus the faithful Witness; for all the promises of God in Christ Jesus are yea, and all amen, 2 Cor. 1. 20. He calls Timothy his beloved son; Paul felt the warmest affection for him, both because he had been an instrument of his conversion, and because as a son with his father he had served with him in the gospel.

We here learn, (1.) St. Paul was an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God; as he did not receive the gospel of man, nor was taught it, but had it by the revelation of Jesus Christ, (Gal. 1. 12.) so his commission to be an apostle was not by the will of man, but of God; in the former epistle he says it was by the commandment of God our Saviour, and here by the will of God; God called him to be an apostle. (2.) We have the promise of life, blessed be God for it, in hope of eternal life, which God, who cannot lie, promised before the world began, Tit. 1. 2. It is a promise to discover the freeness and certainty of it. (3.) This, as well as all other promises, is in and through Jesus Christ; they all take their rise from the mercy of God in Christ,
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and they are sure, that we may safely depend on them. (4.) The grace, mercy, and peace, which even St. Paul's dearly beloved son Timothy wanted, came from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord; and therefore the one as well as the other is the Giver of these blessings, and ought to be applied to for them. Lastly, The best want these blessings, and they are the best we can ask for our dearly beloved friends, that they may have grace to help them in the time of need, and mercy to pardon what is amiss, and so may have peace with God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.

Thank his God for Timothy's faith and holiness: he thanks God that he remembered Timothy in his prayers. Observe, Whatever good we do, and whatever good office we perform for our friends, God must have the glory of it, and we must give him thanks. It is he who puts it into our hearts to remember such and such in our prayers. Paul was much in prayer, he prayed night and day; in all his prayers he was mindful of his friends, he particularly prayed for good ministers, he prayed for Timothy, and had remembrance of him in his prayers night and day; he did this without ceasing; prayer was his constant business, and he never forgot his friends in his prayers, as we often do. Paul served God from his forefathers with a pure conscience. It was a comfort to him, that he was born in God's house, and was of the seed of those that served God; as likewise the apostles did remind him afterwards of that pure conscience, according to the best of his light; he had kept a conscience void of offence, and made it his daily exercise to do so, Acts 24. 16. He greatly desired to see Timothy, out of the affection he had for him, that he might have some conversation with him, being mindful of his tears at their last parting. Timothy was sorry to part with Paul, he wept at parting, and therefore Paul desired to see him again, because he was much affected by that what a true affection he had for him. He thanks God that Timothy kept up the religion of his ancestors, v. 5. Observe, The entail of religion descended upon Timothy by the mother's side; he had a good mother, and a good grandmother: they believed, though his father did not, Acts 16. It is a comfortable thing when children imitate the faith and holiness of their godly parents, and grandparents, 3. and 4. Moreover, he was brought up in thy grandmother and thy mother, and I am persuaded that in thee also. Paul had a very charitable opinion of his friends, was very willing to hope the best concerning them; indeed he had a great deal of reason to believe well of Timothy, for he had no man like-minded, Phil. 2. 10.

Observe, (1.) We are, according to St. Paul, to serve God with a pure conscience, so did his and our parents' forefathers; this is to draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith, having our heart sprinkled from an evil conscience, Heb. 10. 22. (2.) In our prayers we are to remember without ceasing our friends, especially the faithful ministers of Christ; St. Paul had remembrance of his dearly beloved son Timothy in his prayers night and day. (3.) The faith that dwells in real believers, is unfeigned, it is without hypocrisy, it is a faith that will stand the trial, and it dwells in them as a living principle. It was the matter of St. Paul's thanksgiving, that Timothy inherited the faith of his mother Eunice and his grandmother Lois, and ought to be our's, whenever we see the like; we should rejoice wherever we see the grace of God; so did Barnabas, Acts 11. 23, 24. I rejoiced greatly that I found of thy children walking in the truth, 2 John 4.

6. Wherefore I put thee in remembrance, that thou stir up the gift of God, which is in thee by the putting on of my hands. 7. For God hath not given us the spirit of fear, but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind. 8. Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God; 9. Who hath saved us, and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began; 10. But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel: 11. Whereunto I am appointed a preacher, and an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles. 12. For the which cause I also suffer these things; nevertheless I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and I am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day. 13. Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus. 14. That good thing which was committed unto thee, keep by the Holy Ghost which dwelleth in us.

Here is an exhortation and excitation of Timothy to his duty; (v. 6.) I put thee in remembrance: the best men need remembrance; what we know we should be reminded of; (2 Pet. 3. 1.) I write unto thee, to stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance.

1. He exhorts him to stir up the gift of God that was in him. Stir it up as fire under the embers. It is meant of all the gifts and graces that God had given him, to qualify him for the work of an evangelist, the gifts of the Holy Ghost, the extraordinary gifts that were conferred by the imposition of the apostle's hands. These he must stir up; he must exercise them, and so increase them: he must use them, and have gifts; to him that hath shall be given; (Matt. 25. 29.) he must take all opportunities to use these gifts, and so stir them up, for that is the best way of increasing them.

Whether the gift of God in Timothy was ordinary or extraordinary, (though I incline to the latter,) he must stir it up, otherwise it would decay. Further, you see that this gift was in him by the putting on of the apostle's hands, which I take to be distinct from his ordination, which was performed by the hands of the presbytery, 1 Tim. 4. 14. It is probable that Timothy had the Holy Ghost, in his extraordinary gifts and graces, conferred on him by the laying on of the apostle's hands, (for I reckon none but the apostles had the power of giving the Holy Ghost,) and afterward, being thus richly furnished for the work of the ministry, was ordained by the presbytery.

The great hinderance of usefulness in the increase of our gifts, is, slavish fear; therefore he warns him against this; God hath not given us the spirit of fear; (v. 7.) it was through base fear that the evil servant buried his talent, and did not trade with it, Matt. 25. 25. Now God hath therefore armed us against the spirit of fear, by often bidding us fear not; "Fear not the face of man; fear not the dangers you may meet with in the way of your duty." God hath delivered us from the spirit of fear, and hath given
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as the spirit of power, and of love, and of a sound mind. The spirit of power, of courage and resolution, to encounter difficulties and dangers; the spirit of love to God, which will carry us through the opposition we may meet with, as Jacob made nothing of the hard service he was to endure for Rachel. The spirit of love to God, and all the hurt that man can do us. And the spirit of a sound mind, or quietness of mind, a peaceable enjoyment of ourselves, for we are often times discouraged in our way and work by the creatures of our own fancy and imagination, which a sober, solid thinking mind would obviate, and would easily answer.

The Spirit God gives to his ministers, is not a fearful, wasteful, or unwise spirit; it is a Spirit of power, for they speak in his name who has all power, both in heaven and earth; and it is a Spirit of love; for love to God and the souls of men must inflame ministers in all their service; and it is a Spirit of a sound mind, for they speak the words of truth and soberness.

II. He exhorts him to count upon afflictions, and get ready for them; "Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: for he must be ashamed of the gospel of the testimony than hath borne it." The gospel of Christ is what we have none of us reason to be ashamed of. We must not be ashamed of those who are suffering for the gospel of Christ. Timothy must not be ashamed of good old Paul, though he was now in bonds. As he must not be afraid of suffering himself, so he must not be afraid of owning those who were sufferers for the gospel of Christ.

1. The gospel is a testimony of our Lord; in and by that he bears testimony of himself to us, and by professing our adherence to it we bear testimony of him for him. 2. St. Paul was the Lord's prisoner; his prisoner; for his sake he was bound with a chain. Eph. 4. 1. 3. We have no reason to be ashamed either of the testimony of our Lord, or of his prisoners; if we are ashamed of either then Christ will be ashamed of us hereafter; "But be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God, expect afflictions for the gospel's sake, prepare for them, count upon them, be willing to take thy lot with the suffering saints in this world. Be partaker of the afflictions of the gospel;" (or, as it may be read, Do thou suffer with the gospel;) "not only sympathize with those who suffer for it, but be ready to suffer with them, and suffer with them. In all time the gospel be in distress, he who hopes for life and salvation by it will be content to suffer with it. Observe, (1.) Then we are likely to bear afflictions well, when we fetch strength and power from God to enable us to bear them; "Be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel, according to the power of God." (2.) All Christians, but especially ministers, must expect afflictions and persecution of it, and bear them to the gospel. (3.) They shall be proportioned, according to the power of God (1 Cor. 10. 13.) resting upon us.

Mentioning God and the gospel, he takes notice what great things God has done for us by the gospel, v. 9, 10. To encourage him to suffer, he urges two considerations.

[1.] He shews him the nature of that gospel which he has to preach, and the glorious and gracious designs and purposes of it. St. Paul, when he mentions Christ, and the gospel of Christ, to express from his subject, and enlarge upon them; so full was he of that which is all our salvation, and ought to be all our desire.

Observe, First, The gospel aims at our salvation; he has saved us, and we must not think much to suffer for that which we hope to be saved by. He has begun to save us, and will complete it in due time. "For God calls those things that are not, that are not yet completed, as though they were;" (Rom. 4. 17.) therefore he says, who has saved us.

Secondly, It is designed for our sanctification; and called us with a holy calling, called us to holiness. Christianity is a calling, a holy calling; it is the calling wherewith we are called, it is the calling to which we were called, says St. Paul, and therefore we must not think much to suffer for it. This grace is said to be given us before the world began, that is, in the purpose and design of God from all eternity; in Christ Jesus, for all the gifts that come from God to sinful man, come in and through Christ Jesus.

Fourthly, The gospel is the manifestation of this purpose and grace, by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who had lain in the bosom of the Father from eternity, and was perfectly apprised of all his gracious purposes; by his appearing that gracious purpose was made manifest to us. Did Jesus Christ suffer for it, and shall we think much to suffer for it?

Fifthly, By the gospel of Christ death is abolished; he has abolished death, not only weakened it, but taken it out of the way, has broken the power of death over us, taken away sin, and the sting of death, (for the sting of death is sin, 1 Cor. 15. 56.) in altering the property of it, and breaking the power of it.

Death now of an enemy is become a friend, and is the gate by which we pass out of a troublesome, vexatious, sinful world, into a world of perfect peace and purity; and the power thereof is broken, for death does not triumph over those who believe in the gospel, but they triumph over it. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? 1 Cor. 15. 55.

Lastly, He has brought life and immortality to light by the gospel; he has shewed us another world, more clearly than it was before discovered under any former dispensation, and the happiness of that world, the certain recompense of our obedience by faith; we shall with open face, in a glasse, behold the glory of God. He has shown us this thing to light, not only set it before us, but offered it to us, by the gospel.

Let us value the gospel more than ever, as it is that whereby life and immortality are brought to light, for herein it has the pre-eminence above all former discoveries; so that it is the gospel of life and immortality, as it discovers them to us, and directs us in the ready way that leads thereto, as well as the gospel of all other things, to quicken and animate our endeavours in seeking after glory, honour, and immortality.

[2.] Consider the example of blessed Paul, v. 11, 12. He was appointed to preach the gospel, and particularly appointed to teach the Gentiles. He thought it a cause worth suffering for, and why should not Timothy think so too? No man needs to be afraid or ashamed to suffer for the cause of the gospel; St. Paul says, I am not ashamed, says St. Paul, for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.

Observe, First, Good men often suffer many things for the best cause in the world; for which cause I suffer these things; that is, "for my preaching, and adhering to the gospel." Secondly, They need not be ashamed, the cause will bear them out; but those who oppose it, shall be clothed with shame.
Observe, Thirdly, Those who trust in Christ, know whom they have trusted. He speaks with a holy triumph and exultation, as much as to say, "I stand on the ground." I know we have lodged the great trust in the hands of the best Treasurers. I cannot be persuaded, &c. What must we commit to Christ? The salvation of our souls, and their preservation to the heavenly kingdom; and what we so commit to him we will keep. There is a day coming, when our souls will be inquired after; "Man! Woman! thou hadst a soul committed to thee, what hast thou done with it? To whom was it offered, to God or Satan?" He was not employed; in the service of sin, or in the service of Christ? There is a day coming, and it will be a very solemn and awful day, when we must give an account of our stewardship. (Luke 16. 2.) Give an account of our souls: now if by an active obedient faith we commit it to Jesus Christ, we may be sure he is able to keep it, and it shall be forthcoming to our comfort in that day.

III. He exhorts him to hold fast the form of sound words, v. 13.

1. "Have a form of sound words;" (so it may be read,) "a short form, a catechism, an abstract of the first principles of religion, according to the scriptures; a scheme of sound words, a brief summary of the Christian faith, in a proper method, drawn out by thyself from the holy scriptures for thy own use;" or rather, by the form of sound words, I understand the holy scriptures themselves. 2. "Holding it, let it not depart from thee;" retain it, adhere to it. Adhere to that, in opposition to all heresies and false doctrine, which corrupt the Christian faith. Hold that fast which thou hast heard of me. Paul was divinely inspired. It is good to adhere to these forms of sound words which we have in the scriptures; for those, we are sure, were divinely inspired. That is sound speech, which cannot be condemned. But how must it be held fast? In faith and love; we must assent to it as a faithful saying, and bid it welcome as worthy of all acceptance. Hold it fast in a good heart, that is the ark of the covenant, in which the tables both of law and gospel are most safely and profitably deposited, Ps. 119. 11. Faith and love must go together; it is not enough to believe the sound words, and to give an assent to them, but we must love the good words, and love the word of love, and we must propagate the form of sound words in love; speaking the truth in love, Eph. 4. 15. Faith and love which are in Christ Jesus; it must be Christian faith and love; faith and love listening upon Jesus Christ, in and by whom God speaks to us, and we to him. Timothy, as a minister, must hold fast the form of sound words, for the benefit of others. Of healing words, so it may read; there is a healing in the word of God; he sent his word, and healed them. To the same purport is that, (v. 14.) That good thing which was committed unto thee, keep by the Holy Ghost, which dwelleth in us. That good thing was the form of sound words, the Christian doctrine, which was committed to Timothy in his baptism and education as he was a Christian, and in his ordination as he was a minister.

The Christian does not commit this trust to us; it is committed to Christians in general, but to ministers in particular; it is a good thing, of unspeakable value in itself, and which will be of unspeakable advantage to us; it is a good thing indeed, for it is an inestimable jewel, for it discovers to us the unsearchable riches of Christ, Eph. 3. 8. It is committed to us, to be preserved pure and entire, and to be transmitted to those who shall come after us, and we must keep it, and not contribute any thing to the corrupting of its purity, the weakening of its power, or the diminishing of its perfection; Keep it by the Holy Ghost that dwelleth in us. Observe, Even those who are ever so well taught, cannot keep what they have learned, any more than they could at first learn it, without the assistance of the Holy Spirit. We must not think to keep it by our own strength, but keep it by the Holy Ghost.

The Holy Ghost dwells in all good ministers and Christians; they are his temples, and he enables them to keep the gospel pure and uncorrupt; and yet they must use their best endeavours to keep this good thing, for the assistance and inducement of the Holy Ghost do not exclude men's endeavours, but they very well consist together.

15. This thou knowest, that all they which are in Asia, are turned away from me; of whom are Phygelius and Hermogenes. 16. The Lord give mercy unto the house of Onesiphorus for he oft refreshed me, and was not ashamed of my chain: But when he was in Rome, he sought me out very diligently, and found me. 18. The Lord grant unto him that he may find mercy of the Lord in that day: and in how many things he ministered unto me at Ephesus, thou knowest very well.

Having exhorted Timothy to hold fast, (v. 15. 14.) the apostle mentions,

The apostasy of divers from the doctrine of Christ, v. 17. The first and purest ages of the church, there were those that had embraced the Christian faith, and yet afterward revolted from it, may there were many such. He does not say that they were turned away from the doctrine of Christ, (though it should seem they were,) but they were turned away from him, they had turned their backs upon him, and disowned him in the time of his distress. And should we wonder at it, when many turned their backs on a much better than St. Paul? I mean the Lord Jesus Christ, John 6. 66.

2. He mentions the constancy of one that adhered to him, that was Onesiphorus; for he often refreshed me, and was not ashamed of my chain, v. 16. Observe, (1.) What kindness Onesiphorus had showed to Paul: he refreshed him, he oft refreshed him with his letters, and counsels, and comforts, and he was not ashamed of my chain. He was not ashamed of his master, and for the disgrace he was now under. He was kind to him not once or twice, but often; not only when he was at Ephesus among his own friends, but when Onesiphorus was at Rome; he took care to seek Paul out very diligently, and found him, v. 17. Observe, A good man will seek opportunities of doing good, and will not shun any that offer. At Ephesus he had ministered to him, and been very kind to him; Timothy knew it. (2.) How Paul returns his kindness, v. 16. 18. He that receives a prophet, shall have a prophet's reward. He repays him with his prayers; The Lord give mercy to Onesiphorus. It is probable that Onesiphorus was now absent from home, and in company with Paul; he therefore prays that his house might be kept during his absence. Though the prophet will have it that he was now dead; and from a praying for the dead; but he might find mercy, they conclude the warrantable praying for the dead; but who told them that Onesiphorus was dead? And can it be safe to ground a doctrine and practice of such importance on a mere supposition and very great uncertainty?

He prays for Onesiphorus himself, as well as for his house, that he might find mercy in that day, in the day of death and of judgment, when Christ will account all the good offices done to his poor members as done to himself. Observe, [1.] The day of death:
and judgment is an awful day, which may be emphatically called that day. [2.] We need desire no more to make us happy, than to find mercy of the Lord in that day, when those that have shewed no mercy, will have judgment without mercy. [3.] The best Christians will want mercy in that day, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ, Jude 21. [4.] If you would have mercy then, you must seek for it now of the Lord. 

5. It is of and from the Lord that we must have mercy; for unless the Lord has mercy on us, in vain will be the pity and compassion of men or angels. [6.] We are to seek and ask for mercy of the Lord, who is the Giver and Bestower of it; for the Lord Christ is justified justice, that mercy might be displayed. We are come to a throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in the time of need. Finally, The best thing we can ask, either for ourselves or our friends, is, that the Lord will grant to them, that they may find mercy of the Lord in that day, when they must pass out of time into eternity, and exchange this world for the other, and appear before the judgment-seat of Christ: the Lord then grant unto all of us, that we may find mercy of the Lord in that day.

CHAP. II.

In this chapter, our apostle gives Timothy many exhortations and directions, which may be of great use to others, both ministers and Christians, for whom they were designed as well as for him. 1. He encourages him in his ministry, and shews him what he must do. 1. II. He must take care of a succession in the ministry, that the office might not die with him, v. 2. III. He exhorts him to constancy and perseverance in his work, as a soldier, and as a husbandman, considering what would be the end of all his sufferings, &c. v. 3-15. IV. He must shun profane and vain babblings, (v. 16. 18.) for they will be pernicious and miscellaneous. V. He speaks of the foundation v. 19. which must stand sure, v. 19. 20. VI. What he is to avoid—youthful lusts, and foolish and unlearned questions; and what to do, v. 22. to the end.

1. THOU therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.

2. And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also. 3. Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. 4. No man that warreth entangle himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier. 5. And if a man also strive for masteries, yet is he not crowned, except he strive lawfully. 6. The husbandman that laboureth, must be first partaker of the fruits. 7. Consider what I say; and the Lord give thee understanding in all things.

Here,

1. Paul encourages Timothy to constancy and perseverance in his work; (v. 1.) Be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. Those who have work to do for God, must stir up themselves to do it, and strengthen themselves for it. Being strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus, may be understood, in opposition to the weakness of grace. Where there is the truth of grace, there must be a labouring after the strength of grace. As our trials increase, we had need to grow stronger and stronger in that which is good; our faith stronger, our resolution stronger, our love to God and Christ stronger.

2. In opposition to our being strong in our own strength; "Be strong, not confiding in thy own sufficiency, but in the grace that is in Jesus Christ." Compare Eph. 6. 16. Be strong in the Lord, and in the fortress of faith, which is prepared for thee by the for Christ than to deny him, he had been strong in his own strength; had he been strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus, he had kept his standing better.

1. There is grace in Christ Jesus: for the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ, John 1. 17. There is grace enough in him for all of us. 2. We must be strong in this grace, as Christians, in our own strength, or the grace we have already received, but in the grace that is in him, and that is the way to be strong in grace. (3.) As a father exhorts his son, so does St. Paul exhort Timothy with great tenderness and affection; Thou, therefore, my son, &c. Timothy must count upon sufferings, even unto blood, and therefore,

First, He must train up others to succeed him in the ministry of the gospel, v. 2. He must instruct others, and train them up for the ministry; and so commit to them the things which he had. Secondly, He must order them to the ministry, lodge the gospel as a trust in their hands, and so commit to them the things which he had heard. Two things he must have an eye to in ordaining ministers.

1. Their fidelity and integrity; "Commit them to faithful men, who will sincerely aim at the glory of God, the honour of Christ, the welfare of souls, and the advancement of the kingdom of the Redeemer among men."

2. Their ministerial ability. They must not only be knowing themselves, but be able to teach others also, and be apt to teach.

Here we have, (1.) The things Timothy was to commit to others; what he had heard of the apostle among many witnesses, he must not deliver any thing besides, and what St. Paul delivered to him and others, he had received of the Lord Jesus Christ. (2.) He was to commit them as a trust, as a sacred deposit, which they are to keep, and to transmit pure and uncorrupt unto others. (3.) Those to whom he was to commit these things, must be faithful, trusty men, and who were skilful to teach others. (4.) Though men were both faithful and able to teach others, yet these things must be committed to them by "command of a minister, a man in office; for none must intrude themselves into the ministry, but must have these things committed to them by those already in that office.

II. He must endure hardness; (v. 3.) Thou therefore, &c. 1. All Christians, but especially ministers, are soldiers of Jesus Christ; they fight under his banner, in his cause, and against his enemies, for he is the Captain of our salvation, Heb. 2. 10. 2. The soldiers of Jesus Christ must approve themselves good soldiers; faithful to their Captain, resolve in his cause, and must not give over fighting till they are made more than conquerors, through him that loved them, Rom. 8. 37. 3. Those who would approve themselves good soldiers of Jesus Christ, must endure hardness; that is, we must expect it, and count upon it in this world; must endure and accustom ourselves to it, and be ready to labour with all our might, when the need of it comes, and not be moved by it from our integrity.

III. He must not entangle himself in the affairs of this world, v. 4. A soldier, when he is enlisted, leaves his calling, and all the business of it, that he may attend his captain's orders. If we have given ourselves to be Christ's soldiers, we must sit loose to this world; and though there is no remedy, but we must employ ourselves in the affairs of this life while we are here, (we have something to do here,) yet we must not entangle ourselves with those
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9. We see, so as by them to be diverted and drawn aside from our duty to God, and the great concerns of our Christianity. They who will war the good warfare, must sit to se to this world, that we may please him who hath chosen us to be soldiers. Observe, the great care of a soldier should be to please his general; so the great care of a Christian should be to please Christ, to approve ourselves to him.

Observe further, The way to please him who hath chosen us to be soldiers, is, not to entangle ourselves with the affairs of this life, but to be free from such entanglements as would hinder us in our holy warfare.

IV. We must see to it, that in warring our spiritual warfare we go by rule; we observe the laws of war; (v. 5.) If a man strive for mastery, yet is he not crowned, except he strive lawfully. We are striving for mastery, to get the mastery of our lusts and corruptions, to excel in that which is good, but we cannot expect the prize unless we observe the laws. In doing that which is good, we must take care that we do it in a right manner, that our good may not be evil spoken of. We observe here,

1. A Christian is to strive for mastery; he must aim at mastering his own lusts and corruptions. 2. Yet he must strive according to the laws given to him; he must strive lawfully. 3. Those who do so, shall be crowned at last, after a complete victory is obtained.

And further, we must first labour as the husbandman does, with diligence and patience, before we are partakers of the fruit; we must do the will of God, before we receive the promises, for which reason we have need of patience, Heb. 10. 36.

Consider what Isay, and the Lord give thee understanding in all things, v. 7. Here,

1. Paul commands Timothy to consider these things that he admonished him about, Timothy must be reminded to use his considering faculties about the things of God. Consideration is as necessary to a good conversation as to a sound conversion.

2. He prays for him, The Lord give thee understanding in all things. Observe, It is God who gives understanding. The most intelligent men need more and more of this gift. If he who gave the revelation in the word, does not give the understanding in the heart, we are nothing.

Together with our prayers for others, that the Lord would give them understanding in all things, we must exhort and stir them up to consider what we say, for consideration is the way to understand, remember, and practise, what we hear or read.

8. Remember that Jesus Christ, of the seed of David, was raised from the dead, according to my gospel; 9. Wherein I suffer trouble as an evil-doer, even unto bonds; but the word of God is not bound. 10. Therefore I endure all things for the elect's sake, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus, with eternal glory. 11. It is a faithful saying: For if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him: 12. If we suffer, we shall also reign with him: if we deny him, he also will deny us: 13. If we believe not, yet he abideth faithful; he cannot deny himself.

I. To encourage Timothy in suffering, the apostle puts him in mind of the resurrection of Christ; (v. 8.) Remember that Jesus Christ, of the seed of David, was raised from the dead, according to my gospel. This is the great proof of his divine mission, and therefore a great confirmation of the truth of the Christian religion; and the consideration of it should make us faithful to our Christian profession, and should particularly encourage us in suffering for it. In suffering saints remember this.

Observe, They are to look to the Author and Finisher of our faith, who, for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despised the shame, and is now set down at the right hand of the throne of God, Heb. 12. 2. The incarnation and resurrection of Jesus Christ, heartily believed and rightly considered, will support a Christian under all sufferings in the present life.

II. Another thing to encourage him in suffering, was, that he had Paul for an example; (v. 9.) Wherein I suffer trouble, as an evil-doer; and let not Timothy the son expect any better treatment than Paul the father. Paul was a man who did good, and yet suffered as an evil-doer: we must not think it strange if those who do well fare ill in this world, and if the best of men meet with the worst of treatment; but this was his comfort, that the word of God is not bound.

Paul may silence ministers and restrain them, but they cannot hinder the reception of the word of God upon men's hearts and consciences; that cannot be bound by any human force. This might encourage Timothy not to be afraid of bonds for the testimony of Jesus; for the word of Christ, which ought to dear him to liberty, or life itself, should in the issue suffer nothing by those bands.

Here we see, 1. The good apostle's treatment in the world. I suffer trouble; to this he was called and appointed. 2. The pretence and colour under which he suffered; I suffer as an evil-doer; so the Jews said to Pilate concerning Christ, If he was not a malefactor, we would not have delivered him up to thee, John 18. 30. 3. The real and true cause of his suffering trouble as an evil-doer; wherein, that is, in or for the sake of the gospel. 4. The apostle suffered trouble, not to look to a latterward he resist unto blood, striving against sin, Heb. 12. 2.

Though the preachers of the word are often bound, yet the word is never bound.

I endure all things for the elect's sake, v. 10. Observe, Good ministers may and should encourage themselves in the hardest services and the hardest sufferings, with this, that God will certainly bring them to his church, and benefit to his elect, out of them: that they may not be lost in Christ Jesus. Next to the salvation of our own souls we should be willing to do and suffer any thing, to promote the salvation of the souls of others.

Observe further, The elect are designed to obtain salvation; God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation, I Thess. 5. 9. Again, This salvation is in Christ Jesus; in him as the Fountain, the Purchase, the Way, the Truth, and the Life; and it is accompanied with eternal glory; there is no salvation in Christ Jesus without it. Lastly, The sufferings of our apostle were for the elect's sake, for their confirmation and encouragement.

III. Another thing with which he encourages Timothy, is, the prospect of a future state.

1. Those who faithfully adhere to Christ and to his truths and ways, whatever it costs them, will certainly have the advantage of it in another world.

If we be dead with him, we shall live with him, v. 11 ff. In conformity to Christ, we be dead to this world.
II. TIMOTHY, II.

and its pleasures, profits, and honours, we shall go to live with him in a better world, to be for ever with him. Nay, though we be called out to suffer for him, we shall not lose by that. They who suffer for Christ on earth, shall reign with Christ in heaven, v. 12. They who suffered with David in his humiliation, were preferred with him in his exaltation: so it will be with the Son of David.

2. To shew thyself faithful to him; If we deny him, he also will deny us. If we deny him before man, he will deny us before his Father, Matt. 10. 33. And that man must needs bear ever miserable, whom Christ disowns at last.

This will certainly be the issue, whether we believe it or not; (v. 13. If we believe not, yet he abhors faultless; he cannot deny himself; he is faithful to his threatenings, faithful to his promises, whether one nor the other shall fall to the ground, so not the least jot or tittle of them. If we be faithful to Christ, he will certainly be faithful to us. If we false to him, he will be faithful to his threatenings; he cannot deny himself, cannot rescind from any word that he hath spoken, for he is Yea, and Amen, the faithful Witness.

Observe, (1.) Our being dead with Christ, precedes our living with him, and is connected with it, the one on the other; so our suffering for him is the way to reign with him. Ye that have followed me in the regeneration, when the Son of man shall sit on the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel, Matt. 19. 28. (2.) This is a faithful saying, and may be depended on, and ought to be believed. But, (3.) If we deny him, out of fear, or shame, or for the sake of some temporal advantage, he will deny and disown us; and will not deny himself, but will continue faithful to his word when he threatens as well as when he promises.

14. Of these things put them in remembrance, charging them before the Lord, that they strive not about words to no profit, but to the subverting of the hearers. 15. Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. 16. But shun profane and vain babblings, for they will increase unto more ungodliness. 17. And their word will eat as doth a canker of whom are Hymenæus and Philetus. 18. Who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already, and overthrew the faith of some.

Having thus encouraged Timothy to suffer, he comes in the next place to direct him in his work.

1. He must make it his business to edify those who were under his charge, to put them in mind of those things which they did already know; for that is the work of ministers; not to tell people that which they never knew before, but to put them in mind of that which they do know, charging them that they strive not about words. Observe, Those that are disposed to strive, commonly strive about matters of very small moment. Strifes of words are very destructive to the things of God. That they strive not about words to no profit. If people did but consider of what little use most of the controversies in religion are, they would not be so zealous in their strifes of words, to the subverting of the hearers, to the drawing of them away from the great things of God, and occasioning unchristian heats and animosities, by which truth is often in danger of being lost.

Observe, People are very prone to strive about words, and such strife never answers any other ends than to shake some and subvert others; they are not only useless, but they are very hurting, and therefore ministers are to charge them that they do not strive about words, and then they are most likely to be regarded; when they charge them before the Lord, is, in effect, but what they do when they produce their warrant for what they say.

Study to shew thyself approved unto God, v. 15. Observe, The care of ministers must be to approve themselves unto God, to be accepted of him, and to shew that they are so approved unto God. In order thereto, there must be constant care and industry; Study to shew thyself such a one, a workman that needs not to be ashamed, v. 12. Ministers must be workmen, they must have work to do, and a great deal of work; workmen that are either unskilful, or unfaithful, or lazy, have need to be ashamed; but those who mind their business, and keep to their work, are workmen that need not be ashamed. And what is their work? It is rightly to divide the word of truth. Not to invent a new gospel, but rightly to divide the gospel that is committed to their trust. To speak terror to those whom terror belongs, comfort to whom comfort; to give every one their portion in due season, Matt. 24. 25.

Observe here, I. The word which ministers preach, is the word of truth, for the Author of it is the God of truth. 2. It requires great wisdom, study, and care, to divide this word of truth rightly; Timothy must study in order to do this well.

11. He must take heed of that which would be a hindrance to him in his work, v. 16. He must take heed of error; Shun profane and vain babblings. The heretics, who boasted of their notions and their arguments, thought their performances such as might recommend themselves; but the apostle calls them profane and vain babblings: when once men take to be fond of such, they will increase unto more ungodliness. The way of error is down-hill; one absurdity being granted or contended for, a thousand follow; their word will eat as doth a canker or gangrene; when errors or heresies come into the church, the infecting of one often proves the infecting of many, or the infecting of the same person with one error often proves the infecting of him with many errors. Upon this occasion, the apostle mentions some who had lately advanced erroneous doctrines; Hymenæus and Philetus. He names these corrupt teachers, by which he sets a brand upon them, to their perpetual infamy, and warns all people against hearkening to them; they have erred concerning the truth, concerning one of the fundamental articles of the Christian religion, which is truth. The resurrection of the dead is one of the great doctrines of Christ. Now see the subtlety of the serpent and the serpent's seed. They did not deny the resurrection, (for that had been boldly and avowedly to confront the word of Christ;) but they occupied themselves with disputing on another doctrine, saying that the resurrection is past already; that what Christ spake concerning the resurrection, is to be understood mystically and by way of allegory; that it must be meant of a spiritual resurrection only. It is true, there is a spiritual resurrection, but from thence to infer that there will not be a true and real resurrection of the body at the last day, is to dash one truth of Christ in pieces against another. Be they faithful, and they took them off from the belief of the resurrection of the dead; and if there be no resurrection of the dead, no future state, no recompense of our services and sufferings in another world, we are of all men the most miserable, 1 Cor. 15. 19. What takes away the doctrine of a future state, overthrows the faith of Christians. The apostle had largely disproved this error, (1
Cor. 15.) and therefore does not here enter into the arguments against it.

1. The babblings Timothy was to shun, were profane and vain; they were empty shadows, and led to profaneness, for they will increase unto more ungodliness. 2. Error is very fruitful and productive, and on that account the more dangerous; it will eat like a gangrene. 3. When men err concerning the truth, they always endeavour to have some plausible pretence for it. Hymeneus and Philetus did not deny a resurrection, but pretended it was already past. 4. Error, especially that affects the foundation, will overthrow the faith of some.

19. Nevertheless, the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his: And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ, depart from iniquity. 20. But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood, and of earth; and some to honour, and some to dishonour. 21. If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified and meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work.

Here we see what we may comfort ourselves with, in reference to this, and the little errors and heresies that both infect and infect the church, and do mischief.

1. It may be a great comfort to us, that the unbelief of men cannot make the promise of God of none effect. Though the faith of some particular persons be overthrown, yet the foundation of God standeth sure; (τ. 19.) it is not possible that they should deceive the elect. Or it may be meant of the truth itself, and the certainty of it. All the attacks which the powers of darkness have made upon the doctrine of Christ, cannot shake it; it stands firm, and weathereth all the storms which have been raised against it. The prophets and apostles, that is, the doctrines of the Old and New Testament, are still firm; and they have a seal with two mottos upon it, one on the one side, and the other on the other, as is usual in a broad seal. 2. Spears comforts.—that the Lord knoweth them that are his, and them that are not; knows them, that is, he owns them, so knoweth them, that he will never lose them. Though the faith of some be overthrown, yet the Lord is said to know the ways of the righteous, Ps. 1. 6. None can overthrow the faith of any whom God hath chosen.

2. Another speaks our duty—that every one who names the name of Christ, must depart from iniquity. Those who would have the comfort of the privilege, must make conscience of the duty. If the name of Christ be called upon us, we must depart from iniquity, else he will not own us; he will say in the great day, (Matt. 7. 22.) Depart from me, I never knew you, ye workers of iniquity. Observe,

[1.] Whatever errors are introduced in the church, the foundation of God standeth sure, his purpose cannot be defeated. [2.] God hath some in his church, who are his, and whom he knoweth to be his. [3.] Professing Christians name the name of Christ, are called by his name, and therefore are bound to depart from iniquity; for Christ gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, Tit. 2. 14.

2. Another thing that may comfort us, is, that though there be some in the faith is overthrown, there are others who keep their integrity, and hold it fast; (y. 20.) In a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, &c. The church of Christ is a great house, a well-furnished house: now some of the furniture of this house is of great value, as the plate in a house; some of small value, and put to mean uses, as the vessels of wood and earth; so it is in the church of God. There are some professors of religion, that are like the vessels of wood and earth, they are vessels of dishonour; but at the same time all are not vessels of dishonour; there are vessels of gold and silver, that are vessels of honour, that are sanctified and meet for the Master's use. When we are discouraged by the badness of some, we must encourage ourselves by the consideration of the goodness of others. Now we should see to it that we be vessels of honour; we must purge ourselves from these corrupt opinions, that we may be sanctified for our Master's use.

1. Observe, It, the church there are some vessels of honour, and some of dishonour; there are some vessels of mercy, and other vessels of wrath, Rom. 9. 22, 23. Some dishonour the church by their corrupt opinions and wicked lives; and others honour and credit it by their exemplary conversation. (2.) A man must purge himself from these before he can be a vessel of honour, or meet for his Master's use. (3.) Every vessel must be fit for its Master's use; every one in the church whom God approves, must be devoted to his Master's service, and meet for his use. (4.) Sanctification in the heart is our preparation for every good work. The tree must be made good, and then the fruit will be good.

22. Flee also youthful lusts: but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart. 23. But foolish and unlearned questions avoid, knowing that they gender strifes. 24. And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient. 25. In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledgment of the truth; 26. And that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will.

I. Timothy must take care of youthful lusts; (y. 22.) though he was a holy good man, very much mortified to the world, yet Paul thought it necessary to caution him against youthful lusts; "Flee them, take all possible care and pains to keep thyself pure from them." The lusts of the flesh are youthful lusts, which young people must carefully watch against, and the best must not be secure. He describes an excellent remedy against youthful lusts; Follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, &c. Observe,

1. Youthful lusts are very dangerous, for which reason even hopeful young people should be warned of them, for they war against the soul, 1 Pet. 2. 11. 2. The exciting of our graces will be the extinguishing of our lusts. Our graces are such, which is good, the faster and the farther we shall flee from that which is evil. Righteousness, and faith, and love, will be excellent antidotes against youthful lusts. Holy love will cure impure lust. "Follow peace with them that call on the Lord. The keeping up of the communion of saints, will take us off from all fellowship with unfruitful works of darkness. See, the character of Christians; they are such as call on the Lord Jesus Christ, out of a pure heart. Observe, Christ is to be praved to. It is the character of all Christians, that they call upon him; but
II. Timothy, III.

1. The apostle foretells Timothy what the last days would be, with the reasons thereof, (v. 1. 9.) He prescribes various remedies against them, (v. 10, to the end,) particularly his own example, (But thou last fully known my doctrine, &c.) and the knowledge of the holy scriptures, which are able to make wise unto salvation, and will be the best antidote against the corruptions of the times we live in. In this chapter, Paul tells Timothy how bad others would be, and therefore how good he should be; and this use we should make of the badness of others, whereby to engage us to hold our own integrity so much the faster.

2. Timothy must not think it strange if there were in the church bad men; for the net of the gospel was to enclose both good fish and bad, Matt. 13. 47, 48. Jesus Christ had foretold (Matt. 24.) that there would come seducers, and therefore we must not be offended at it, or think the worse of religion or the church for it.

Even in gold ore there will be dross, and a great deal of chaff among the wheat when it lies on the floor. Timothy must know that in the last days, (v. 1.) in gospel-times, there would come perilous times. Though gospel-times were times of reformation in many respects, let him know that even in gospel-times there would be perilous times; not so much on the account of persecution from without as on the account of corruptions within. These would be difficult times, wherein it would be difficult for a man to keep a good conscience. He does not say, "for the sinner's sakes," but, "the form of godliness;" but, "perilous times shall come, for such as have the form of godliness (v. 5.) shall be corrupt and wicked, and do a great deal of damage to the church." Two traitors within the garrison may do more harm to it than two thousand besiegers without. Perilous times shall come, for men shall be wicked. Note, Sin makes the times perilous. When there is a general corruption of manners, and of the tempers of men, that makes the times dangerous to live in; for it is hard to keep our integrity in the midst of general corruption.

The coming of perilous times is an evidence of the truth of scripture-predictions; if the event in this respect did not answer to the prophecy, we might be tempted to question the divinity of the Bible. We see all is concerned in the times, be it seen, or considered, that we may not be surprised when we see the times perilous; This know also.

Then he tells Timothy what would be the occasion of making these times perilous, or what shall be the marks and signs, whereby these times may be known; v. 2. and following verses.

1. Self-love will make the times perilous. Who is there who does not love himself? But this is meant of an irregular, sinful self-love. Men love
 THEIR CARNAL SELVES BETTER THAN THEIR SPIRITUAL SELVES.

MEN LOVE TO GRATIFY THEIR OWN LUSTS, AND MAKE PROVISION FOR THEM, MORE THAN TO PLEASE GOD AND DO THEIR DUTY. INSTEAD OF CHRISTIAN CHARITY, WHICH TAKES CARE FOR THE GOOD OF OTHERS, THEY WILL MIND THEMSELVES ONLY, AND PREFER THEIR OWN GRATIFICATION BEFORE THE CHURCH'S EDIFICATION.

2. COVETOUSNESS. OBSERVE, SELF-LOVE BRINGS IN A LONG TRAIN OF SINS AND MISCHIEFS. WHEN MEN ARE LOVERS OF THEMSELVES, NO GOOD CAN BE EXPECTED FROM THEM, AS ALL GOOD MAY BE EXPECTED FROM THOSE WHO LOVE GOD WITH ALL THEIR HEARTS. WHEN COVETOUSNESS IS GENERALLY PREVAILED ON, EVERY MAN WANTS FOR WHAT HE CAN GET, AND KEEPING WHAT HE HAS, THIS MAKES MEN DANGEROUS TO ONE ANOTHER, AND OBLIGES EVERY MAN TO STAND ON HIS GUARD AGAINST HIS NEIGHBOUR.

3. PRIDE AND VAIN-GlORY MAKE THE TIMES PERILOUS. WHEN MEN, BEING PROUD OF THEMSELVES, ARE BOASTERS AND BLASPHEMERS, BOASTERS BEFORE MEN WHO THOUGHT AND LOOK UPON WITH SCORN, AND BLASPHEMERS OF GOD AND OF HIS NAME; WHEN MEN DO NOT FEAR GOD, THEY WILL NOT REGARD MAN, AND SO VICE VERSA.

4. WHEN CHILDREN ARE DISOBEDIENT TO THEIR PARENTS, AND BREAK THROUGH THE OBLIGATIONS WHICH THEY LIE UNDER TO THEM BOTH IN DUTY AND GRATITUDE, AND FREQUENTLY IN INTEREST, HAVING THEIR DEPENDENCE UPON THEM, AND THEIR EXPECTATION FROM THEM, THAT MAKES THE TIMES PERILOUS; FOR WHAT WICKEDNESS WILL THEY STICK AT, WHO WILL BE ABUSIVE TO THEIR OWN PARENTS, AND REBEL AGAINST THEM?

5. UNTHANKFULNESS AND UNHOLINESS MAKE THE TIMES PERILOUS, AND THOSE TWO COMMONLY GO TOGETHER. WHAT IS THE REASON THAT MEN ARE UNHOLY AND WITHOUT THE FEAR OF GOD, BUT THAT THEY ARE UNTHANKFUL FOR THE MERCIES OF GOD? INGRATITUDE AND IMPITY GO TOGETHER; FOR CALL A MAN UNGRATEFUL, AND YOU CAN CALL HIM BY NO OTHER NAME. UNTHANKFUL, AND IMPURE, DEFILED WITH FLESHLY LUSTS, WHICH IS AN INSTANCE OF GREAT INGRATITUDE TO GOD, WHO HAS PROVIDED SO WELL FOR THE SUPPORT OF THE BODY; WE ABUSE HIS GIFTS, IF WE MAKE THEM THE FOOD AND FUEL OF OUR LUSTS.

6. THE TIMES ARE PERILOUS WHEN MEN WILL NOT BE HELD BY THE BONDS EITHER OF NATURAL OR COMMON HONESTY; WHEN THEY ARE WITHOUT NATURAL AFFECTION, AND TRUCE-BREAKERS. THE TIMES ARE PERILOUS WHEN CHILDREN ARE DISOBEDIENT TO THEIR PARENTS, AND WHEN PARENTS ARE WITHOUT NATURAL AFFECTION TO THEIR CHILDREN. SEE WHAT A CORRUPTION OF NATURE IS, HOW IT DEPRIVES MEN EVEN OF THAT WHICH NATURE HAS IMPLANTED IN THEM FOR THE SUPPORT OF THEIR OWN KIND; FOR THE NATURAL AFFECTION OF PARENTS TO THEIR CHILDREN, IS THAT WHICH CONTRIBUTES VERY MUCH TO THE KEEPING UP OF MANKIND UPON THE EARTH. AND THOSE WHO WILL NOT BE HELD BY NATURAL AFFECTION, NO MARVEL THAT THEY WILL NOT BE BIND BY THE MOST SOLEMN LEAGUES AND COVENANTS. THEY ARE TRUCE-BREAKERS, THAT MAKE NO CONSCIENCE OF THE ENGAGEMENTS THEY HAVE LAID THEMSELVES UNDER. AGAIN, THE TIMES ARE PERILOUS WHEN MEN ARE FALSE ACCUSER ONE OF ANOTHER; DECEIVERS ONE TO ANOTHER; HAVING NO REGARD TO THE GOOD NAME OF OTHERS, OR TO THE RELIGIOUS OBLIGATIONS OF AN OATH, BUT THINKING THEMSELVES AT LIBERTY TO SAY AND DO WHAT THEY PLEASE, PS. 12, 4.

7. WHEN MEN HAVE NO GOVERNMENT OF THEMSELVES AND THEIR OWN APPETITES, NOT OF THEIR OWN ANTECITIES, FOR THEY ARE INCONTENT; NOT OF THEIR OWN PASSIONS, FOR THEY ARE FIERCE; WHEN THEY HAVE NO RULE OVER THEIR OWN SPIRITS, AND THEREFORE ARE LIKE A CITY THAT IS BROKEN DOWN, AND HAS NO WALLS; THEY ARE SOON FIRED, UPON THE LEAST PROVOCATION.

8. WHEN THAT WHICH IS GOOD AND OUGHT TO BE HONORED, IS GENERALLY DESPISED AND LOOKED UPON WITH CONTEMPT. IT IS THE PRIDE OF PERSECUTORS THAT THEY LOOK WITH CONTEMPT UPON GOOD PEOPLE, THOUGH THEY ARE MORE EXCELLENT THAN THEIR NEIGHBOURS.


10. WHEN MEN ARE GENERALLY LOVERS OF PLEASURE, MORE THAN LOVERS OF GOD. WHEN THERE ARE MORE EPIRICHES THAN TRUE CHRISTIANS, THEN THE TIMES ARE BAD INDEED. GOD IS TO BE LOVED ABOVE ALL; THAT IS A CARNAL MIND, AND IS FULL OF ENVY AGAINST HIM, WHICH PREVARICATES ANY THING BEFORE HIM, ESPECIALLY SUCH A SORDID THING AS CARNAL PLEASURE IS.

11. ALL THIS NOTWITHSTANDING, ALL THESE HAVE THE FORM OF GODLINESS, (v. 3.) ARE CALLED BY THE CHRISTIAN NAME, BAPTIZED INTO THE CHRISTIAN FAITH, MAKE A SHOW OF RELIGION; BUT, HOW PLAINLY SOEVER THEIR FORM OF GODLINESS IS, THEY DENY THE POWER OF IT. WHEN THEY TAKE UP THE FORM, WHICH SHOULD AND WOULD BRING ALONG WITH IT THE POWER THEREOF, THEY WILL PUT ASUNDER WHAT GOD HATH JOINED TOGETHER; THEY WILL ASSUME THE FORM OF GODLINESS, TO TAKE AWAY THEIR REPROACH; BUT THEY WILL NOT SUBMIT TO THE POOR OF THIS WORLD TO TAKE AWAY THEIR SAVIOUR.

OBSERVE HERE, (1.) MEN MAY BE VERY BAD AND WICKED, UNDER A PROFESSION OF RELIGION; THEY MAY BE LOVERS OF THEMSELVES, &C. YET HAVE A FORM OF GODLINESS. (2.) A FORM OF GODLINESS IS A VERY DIFFERENT THING FROM THE POWER OF IT; MEN MAY HAVE THE ONE, AND BE WHOLLY DESTITUTE OF THE OTHER; YEA, THEY DENY IT, AT LEAST PRACTICALLY IN THEIR LIVES. (3.) FROM SUCH, GOOD CHRISTIANS MUST WITHDRAW THEMSELVES.

6. FOR OF THIS SORT ARE THEY WHO CREEP INTO HOUSES, AND LEAD CAPTIVE SILLY WOMEN LADEN WITH SINS, LED AWAY WITH DIVERS LUSTS. 7. EVER LEARNING, AND NEVER ABLE TO COME TO THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE TRUTH. 8. NOW AS JAMES AND JABRIM WITHSTOOD MOSES, SO DO THESE ALSO RESIST THE TRUTH: MEN OF CORRUPT MINDS, REPRAOBE CONCERNING THE FAITH. 9. BUT THEY SHALL PROCEED NO FURTHER; FOR THEIR FOLLY SHALL BE MANIFEST UNTO ALL MEN, AS THEIRS ALSO WAS.

HERE PAUL WARNS TIMOTHY TO TAKEheed OF CERTAIN SEDUCERS, NOT ONLY THAT HE MIGHT NOT BE DRAWN AWAY BY THEM, BUT THAT HE MIGHT ARM THOSE WHO ARE UNDER HIS RULE AGAINST THEM.

1. HE SHOWS HOW INDUSTRIOUS THEY WERE TO MAKE PROSELYTES; (v. 6.) THEY APPLIED THEMSELVES TO PARTICULAR PERSONS, VISITED THEM IN THEIR HOUSES, NOT DARING TO APPEAR OPENLY; FOR THEY THAT DO EVIL, HATE THE LIGHT, JOHN 5. 20. THEY WERE NOT FORCED INTO HOUSES; AS GOOD CHRISTIANS WERE OFTEN BY PERSECUTION; BUT THEY OF CHOICE CREEP INTO HOUSES, TO INSINIMATE THEMSELVES INTO THE DISCIPLINES AND GOOD OPINION OF PEOPLE, AND SO TO DRAW THEM OVER TO THEIR PARTY. AND SEE THAT WHAT SORT OF PEOPLE THEY WERE, THAT THEY GAINED, AND MADE PROSELYTES OF; THEY WERE SUCH AS WERE WEAK, SILLY WOMEN; AND SUCH AS WERE WICKED, LADEN WITH SINS, AND LEAD AWAY WITH DIVERS LUSTS; A FOOLISH HEAD AND A FAITHLESS HEART MAKE PERSECUTORS, ESPECIALLY WOMEN, AN EASY PREY TO SEDUCERS.

2. HE SHOWS HOW FAR THEY WERE FROM COMING TO THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE TRUTH, THOUGH THEY PRETEND TO BE EVER LEARNING, V. 7. IN ONE SENSE WE MUST ALL BE
ever learning, growing in knowledge, following on to know the Lord, pressing forward; but these were scribes, giddy and unstable, who were forward to imbibe every new notion, under pretence of advancement in knowledge, but never came to a right understanding of the truth as it is in Jesus.

3. He foretells the certain stop that should be put to their progress, (v. 8, 9.) comparing them to the Egyptian magicians who withstood Moses, they are here named James and Jambres; though the names are not to be met with in the story of the Old Testament, yet they are found in some old Jewish writers. Moses came with a divine commission to fetch Israel out of Egypt, these magicians opposed him, and thus those have never tasted the truth, and like them were men of corrupt minds; men who had their understandings perverted, biased and prejudiced against the truth, and reproachingly concern the faith, very far from being true Christians; but they shall proceed no further; or not much further, as some read it. Observe,

(1.) Seducers seek for corners, and love obscurity; for they are afraid to appear in public, and therefore creep into houses. Further, they attack those who are the least able to defend themselves; that is, silly and wicked women.

(2.) Seducers in all ages are much alike, their characters are the same, men of corrupt minds, &c. and their conduct much the same, they resist the truth, as James and Jambres withstood Moses, and they will be alike in their disapprobation.

(3.) Those who resist the truth are guilty of folly, yea of egregious folly, for magnus est veritas, et prævalebit—Great is the truth, and shall prevail.

(4.) Though the spirit of error may be let loose for a time, God has it in a chain. Satan can deceive the nations and the churches no further and no longer than God will permit him; their folly shall be manifest, it shall appear that they are impostors, and every man shall abandon them.

10. But thou hast fully known my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, long-suffering, charity, patience, 11. Persecutions, afflictions, which came unto me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra; what persecutions I endured: but out of them all the Lord delivered me. 12. Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus, shall suffer persecution. 13. But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived.

Here the apostle, to confirm Timothy in that way wherein he walked, 1. States from his own example, which Timothy had been an eye-witness of, having long attended Paul; (v. 10.) Thou hast fully known my doctrine. The more fully we know the doctrine of Christ and the apostles, the more closely we shall cleave to it; the reason why many sit loose to it, is, because they do not fully know it. Christ's apostles had no enemies but those who did not know them, or know them not. If they knew them best, loved and honoured them the more. Now what is it that Timothy had so fully known in Paul?

1. The doctrine that he preached. Paul kept back nothing from his hearers, but declared to them the whole counsel of God, (Acts 20. 27.) so that if it were not their own fault they might fully know it. Timothy had a great advantage in being trained up under such a tutor, and being apprised of the doctrine he preached.

2. He had fully known his conversation; Thou hast known my doctrine, and manner of life; his manner of life was of a-piece with his doctrine, and did not contradict it. He did not pull down by his living what he built up by his preaching. Those ministers are likely to do good, and leave lasting fruits of their labours, whose manner of life agrees with their doctrine; as on the contrary those cannot expect to profit the people at all, that preach well and live ill.

3. Timothy fully knew what was the great thing that Paul had in view, both in his preaching and in his conversation; "Thou hast known my purpose, what I drive at, how far it is from any worldly, carnal, secular design, and how sincerely I aim at the glory of God, and the good of the souls of men."

4. Timothy knew what he might gather from his doctrine, manner of life and purpose; for he gave proofs of his faith, that is, of his integrity and fidelity, or his faith in Christ, his faith concerning another world, by which Paul lived, his long-suffering toward the churches to which he preached, and over which he presided, his charity toward all men, and his patience. These were the graces that Paul was eminent for, and Timothy knew.

5. He knew that he had suffered ill for doing well; (v. 11.) "Thou hast fully known the persecutions and afflictions that came unto me;" (he mentions those only which happened to him while Timothy was with him, at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra;) "and therefore let it be no surprise to thee, if thou suffer hard things, it is no more than I have endured here."

6. He knew what care God had taken of him; notwithstanding, out of them all the Lord delivered me; as he never failed his cause, so his God never failed him. Thou hast fully known my afflictions. When we know the afflictions of good people but in part, they are a temptation to us to decline that cause which they suffer for; when we know only the hardships they undergo for Christ, we may be ready to say, "We will renounce that cause that is like to cost us so dear in the owning of it;" but when we fully know the afflictions, not only how they suffer, but how they are supported and comforted under their sufferings; then, instead of being discouraged, we shall be animated by them; especially considering that we are told before, that we must count upon such things; (v. 12.) All that will live godly in Christ Jesus, shall suffer persecution. Always at some time or other we professed the faith of Christ, and were more exposed to persecution than at other times; but at all times, more or less, they who will live godly in Christ Jesus, shall suffer persecution.

They must expect to be despised, and that their religion will stand in the way of their preferment; they who will livegodly, must expect it, especially they who will live godly in Christ Jesus, that is, according to the strict rules of the Christian religion, they who will wear the livery and bear the name of the crucified Redeemer; all who will shew their religion in their conversation, who will not only be godly, but live godly, let them expect persecution, especially when they are resolute in it.

(1.) The apostle's life was very exemplary for three things; for his doctrine, which was according to the will of God; for his example, on which Paul was able to lay his hand; for his persecutions and sufferings. (2.) Though his life was a life of great usefulness, yet it was a life of great sufferings; and none, I believe, came nearer to their great Master for eminent service and great sufferings than St. Paul; he suffered almost in every place; the Holy Ghost witnessed that bonds and afflictions did abide him, Acts 20. 23. Here he mentions his persecutions and afflictions at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra, beside what he suffered elsewhere. (3.) The apostle mentions the Lord's delivering him out of all, for Timo-
thys and our encouragement under sufferings. (4.) We have the practice and treatment of true Christians, they live godly in Jesus Christ, that is their practice; and they shall suffer persecution, that is the usage they must expect in this world.

II. He warns Timothy of the fatal end of seducers, as a reason why he should stick close to the truth as it is not now and never shall be worse and worse, &c. Observe, As good men, by the grace of God, grow better and better, so bad men, through the subtlety of Satan and the power of their own corruptions, grow worse and worse. The way of sin is down-hill; for such proceed from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived.

These who deceive others, do but deceive themselves; those who draw others into error, run themselves into more sin; and they will find it so at last, to their cost.

14. But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them; 15. And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus. 16. All scripture is given by inspiration of God; and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: 17. That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

He directs him to keep close to a good education, and particularly to what he had learned out of the holy scriptures; (v. 14, 15.) Continue thou in the things which thou hast learned. Note, It is not enough to learn that which is good, but we must continue in it, and persevere in it unto the end. Then are we Christ's disciples indeed, John 8. 31.

We should not be any more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive, Eph. 4. 14. Be not carried about with divers and strange doctrines; for it is a good thing that the heart be established with grace, Heb. 13. 9. And for this reason we should continue in the things we have learned from the holy scriptures; not that we ought to continue in any errors and mistakes which we may have been led into, but to improve the knowledge of the certainty of the things wherein we have been instructed, Luke 1. 4. Not only to know what the truths are, but to know that they are of undoubted certainty. What we have learned we must labour to be more and more assured of; that, being grounded in the truth, we may be guarded against error, for certainty in religion is of great importance and advantage; Knowing,

In that thou hast had good teachers; consider of whom thou hast learned them; not of evil men and seducers, but good men, who had themselves experienced the power of the truths they taught thee, and been ready to suffer for them, and thereby would give the fullest evidence of their belief of these truths.

II. "Knowing especially the firm foundation upon which thou hast built, namely, that of the scripture; (v. 15.) That from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures.

Observe, Those who would acquaint themselves with the things of God, and be assured of them, must know the holy scriptures, for those are the summary of divine revelation. Observe, It is a great happiness to know the holy scriptures from our childhood; the Lord should betimes get the knowledge of the scriptures. The age of childhood is the learning age; and those who would get true learning, must get it out of the scriptures.

Observe further, The scriptures we are to know, are the holy scriptures; they came from the holy God, were delivered by holy men, contain holy precepts, treat of holy things, and were designed to make us holy, and to lead us in the way of holiness. The particulars of the holy scriptures, they are by that distinguished from profane writings of all sorts, and from those that only treat of morality, and common justice and honesty, but do not meddle with holiness. If we would know the holy scriptures, we must read and search them daily, as the noble Bercans did, Acts 17. 11. They must not be by us neglected, and seldom or never looked into.

Now here observe, 1. What is the excellency of the scripture? Those are scriptures, 16.) They are given by inspiration of God, (v. 16.) and therefore is his word. It is a divine revelation, which we may depend upon as infallibly true. The same Spirit that breathed reason into us, breathes revelation among us.

2. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man, but holy men of God were moved, or carried forth by the Holy Ghost, 2 Pet. 1. 21. The prophets and apostles did not speak from themselves, but what they received of the Lord that they delivered unto us. That the scripture was given by inspiration of God, appears by the majesty of its style; from the truth, purity, and sublimity, of the doctrines contained in it; from the harmony of its several parts; from its power and efficacy on the minds of multitudes that converse with it; from the accomplishment of many prophecies relating to things beyond all human foresight; and from the uncontrollable miracles that were wrought in proof of its divine original; God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will, Heb. 2. 4.

2. What use it will be to us.

(1.) It is able to make us wise to salvation; that is, it is a sure guide in our way to eternal life. Note, These are wise guides to salvation. The scriptures are able to make us truly wise, wise for our souls and another world; to make us wise to salvation through faith. Observe, The scriptures will make us wise to salvation, if they be mixed with faith, and not otherwise, Heb. 4. 2. For if we do not believe their truth and goodness, they will do us no good.

(2.) It is profitable to us for all the purposes of the Christian life, for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness. It answers all the ends of divine revelation. It instructs us in that which is true, reproves us for that which is amiss, directs us in that which is good. It is of use to all, for we all need to be instructed, corrected, and reproved: it is of special use to ministers, who are to give instruction, correction, and reproof; and whence can they fetch it better than from the scripture?

That the word of God must not be faked, v. 17. The Christian, the minister, is the man of God. That which finishes a man of God in this world, is the scripture. By it we are thoroughly furnished for every good work. There is that in the scripture, which suits every case. Whatever duty we have to do, whatever service is required from us, we may find enough in the scriptures to furnish us for it.
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[1.] We see the scripture has various uses, and answers divers ends and purposes; it is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction of all errors in judgment and practice, and for instruction in righteousness. [2.] The scripture is a perfect rule of faith and practice, and was designed for the man of God, the minister as well as the Christian who doth vote to be a God, for it is profitable for doctrine, &c. [3.] If we consult the scripture, which was given by inspiration of God, and follow its directions, we shall be made men of God, perfect, and thoroughly furnished to every good work. [4.] We further learn, there is no occasion for the writings of the philosopher, nor for rabbinical fables, nor popish legends, nor unwritten traditions, to make us perfect men of God, since the scripture answers all these ends and purposes. O that we may have our fables more, and keep closer to them ever! and then shall we find the benefit and advantage designed thereby, and shall at last attain the happiness therein promised and assured to us.

CHAP. IV.

In this chapter, St. Paul with great solemnity and earnestness presses Timothy to the diligent and conscientious discharge of his office, as an apostolical charge given to him, all gospel ministers are to take to themselves, v. 1., 5. II. The reason of his concern in this case. Why must Timothy now be instant in season, &c. in a particular manner? Because the church is likely to be deprived of the apostle’s labours, for his departure was at hand, v. 6., 8. III. Divers particular matters, with a hint and caution, about Alexander the coppersmith, v. 9., 15. IV. He informs him of what befell him at his first appearing, though men forsook him the Lord stood by him, and that encouraged him to hope for future deliverance, v. 16., 18. And then he concludes with salutations and a benediction, v. 19, to the end.

1. I CHARGE thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom; 2. Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine. 3. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; 4. And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables. 5. But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry. 6. For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. 7. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.

1. Observe how awfully this charge is introduced; (v. 1.) I charge thee before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom. Observe, The best of men have need to be saved into the discharge of their duty. The work of a minister is not an indifferent thing, but absolutely necessary. Woe be to him if he preach not the gospel; (1 Cor. 9. 16.) I charge thee. To induce him to faithfulness, he must consider,

1. That the eye of God and Jesus Christ was upon him; I charge thee before God and the Lord Jesus Christ; that is, “As thou tendest the favour of God and Jesus Christ; as thou wilt approve thyself to God and Jesus Christ, by the obligations both of natural and revealed religion; as thou wilt make them return to the God of truth and love, and the Lord Jesus Christ who redeemed thee.”

2. He charges him as he will answer it at the great day: reminding him of the judgment to come, which is committed to the Lord Jesus. He shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom, that is, when he appears in his kingdom. It concerns all, both ministers and people, seriously to consider the account that they must shortly give to Jesus Christ of all the trusts reposed in them. Shall Christ judge the quick and the dead? That is, those that at the last day shall be found alive, and those who shall be raised to life out of the grave.

Note, (1.) The Lord Jesus Christ shall judge the quick and dead. God hath committed all judgment unto the Son, and hath appointed him the Judge of quick and dead, Acts 10. 42. (2.) He will appear; he will come the second time, and it will be an awful sight, as the word fierce-savages, &c. (3.) Then his kingdom shall appear in his glory, at his appearing and kingdom, for he will then appear in his kingdom, sitting on a throne, to judge the world.

II. What is the matter of the charge, v. 2—5. He is charged,

1. To preach the word. That is ministers’ business; a dispensation is committed to them. It is not their own notions and fancies that they are to preach, but the pure word of God; and they must not corrupt it, but as of sincerity, but as of God, in the sight of God, they speak in Christ, 2 Cor. 2. 17.

2. To urge what he preached, and to press it with all earnestness upon his hearers; “Be instant in season, out of season, rebuke, exhort; do this work with all fervency of spirit. Call upon those under thy charge to take heed of sin, to do their duty; call upon them to repent and believe, and live a holy life, and keep all ordinances, and love the world, when it is carnal; and in the morning we must sow our seed, and in the evening not withhold our hand,” Ecc. 11. 6.

We must do it in season, that is, let slip no opportunity; and do it out of season, that is, not shift off the duty, under pretence that it is out of season.

3. He must tell people of their faults; “Reprove them, rebuke them. Convince wicked people of the evil and danger of their wicked courses. Endeavour, by dealing plainly with them, to bring them to repentance. Rebuke them with gravity and authority, in Christ’s name, that they may take the displeasure against them as an indication of God’s displeasure.”

4. He must direct, encourage, and quicken those who began well. “Exhort them; persuade them to hold on, and endure to the end, and this with all long-suffering and doctrine.”

(1.) He must do it very patiently, with all long-suffering. (2.) He must do it truly, not with passion, but with doctrine, that is, “In order to the reducing
of them to good practices, instil into them good principles. Teach them the truth as it is in Jesus, reduce them to a firm belief of that, and that will be a means both to reclaim them from evil and to bring them to good work.

1. A minister's work has various parts; he is to

- preach the word, to refute, rebuke, and exhort.
- be very diligent and careful; he must be instant in season and out of season;
- spare no pains or labour, but must be urgent with them to take care of their souls and their eternal concerns.
- watch all things; "Seek an opportune time among them a kind of opposition; let no occasion slip through the negligence. Watch to thy work; watch against the temptations of Satan, by which thou mayest be diverted from it; watch over the souls of those who are committed to thy charge."
- count upon afflictions, and endure them; make the best of them. "Endure patiently; be not discouraged by the difficulties thou meetest with, but bear them with an evenness of spirit. Imure thyself to hardships."
- remember his office, and discharge that; "Do the work of an evangelist."
- expect many difficulties. "Endure patiently, be not discouraged by the difficulties thou meetest with, but bear them with an evenness of spirit. Imure thyself to hardships."
- proof of his ministry; it was a great trust that was reposed in him, and therefore he must answer it, and perform all the parts of his office with diligence and care.

Observe, (1.) A minister must expect afflictions in the faithful discharge of his duty. (2.) He must endure them patiently, like a Christian hero.

These must not discourage him in his work, for he must fulfil his ministry. (3.) The best way to make full proof of our ministry, is, to fulfil it, to fill it up in all its parts with proper work.

III. The reasons to enforce the charge.

1. Because errors and heresies were likely to creep into the church, by which the minds of many professing Christians would be corrupted; (v. 3, 4.) "For the time will come, when they will not endure sound doctrine. Therefore improve the present time, when they will endure it; be busy now, for it is seed-time; when the fields are white unto the harvest, put in the sickle, for the present gate of opportunity will be soon over. They will not endure sound doctrine. There will be those who will heap to themselves corrupt teachers, and will turn away their ears from the truth; and therefore secure as many as thou canst, that when these storms and tempests do arise, they may be well fixed, and their apostasy may be prevented by this ministry; must hear, and ministers must preach, for the time to come, and guard against the mischiefs that are likely to arise hereafter, though they do not yet arise. They will turn away their ears from the truth, they will grow weary of the old plain gospel of Christ, and then they will be greedy of fables, and take pleasure in them, and God shall give them up to those strong delusions, before they can turn away from the truth in the last times." Thess. 2. 11, 12.

Observe, (1.) These teachers were of their own heaping up, and not of God's sending; but they chose them, to gratify their lusts, and to please their itching ears. (2.) People do so when they will not endure sound doctrine, that preaching which is searching, plain, and to the purpose; then they will have teachers of their own. (3.) There is a wide difference between the word of God, and the words of such teachers; the one is sound doctrine, the word of truth, the other is only fables. (4.) They that are turned unto fables, first turn away their ears from the truth, for they cannot hear and mind both, any more than they can serve two masters. Nay further, it is said, "They shall be turned unto fables." God justly suffers those to turn to fables, who grow weary of the truth, and gives them up to be led aside from the truth by fables.

2. Because Paul for his part had almost done his work; Do thou make full proof of thy ministry, for I am now ready to be offered. And,

(1.) "Therefore there will be the more occasion for thee." When labourers are removed out of the vineyard, it is no time for them to bathe, that are left behind, but to double their diligence. The fewer hands there are to work, the more industrious those hands must be, that are at work.

(2.) "I have done the work of my day and generation; do thou in like manner do the work of thy day and generation."

(3.) The comfort and cheerfulness of Paul, in the prospect of his approaching departure, might encourage Timothy to the utmost industry and diligence and seriousness in his work. Paul was an old soldier of Jesus Christ, Timothy was but newly enlisted. "Come," says Paul, "I have found our Master kind, the cause good, and I can look back upon my warfare with a great deal of pleasure and satisfaction, and therefore be not afraid of the difficulties thou must meet with. The crown of life is as sure to thee as if it were already upon thy head, and therefore endure afflictions, and make full proof of the work of ministry unto the satisfaction of the saints and ministers, and especially dying martyrs, are a great confirmation of the truth of the Christian religion, and a great encouragement to living saints and ministers in their work. Here,

1. He looks forward, upon his death approaching; I am now ready to be offered. The Holy Ghost witnessed in every city; that bonds and afflictions did abide him, Acts 20. 23. He was not at Rome, and it is probable that he had particular intimations of God's Spirit, that there he should seal the truth with his blood; and he looks upon it now as near at hand; I am already poured out; so it is in the original, ἐκβλάβησα; that is, I am already a martyr in affection. It alludes to the pouring out of the drink-offerings; for the blood of the martyrs, though it was not a sacrifice of atonement, yet it was a sacrifice of acknowledgment to the honour and truth of God; with what pleasure he speaks of dying. He calls it his departure; though it is probable that he foresaw he must die a violent, bloody death, yet he calls it his departure or his release. Death to a good man is his release from the imprisonment of this world, and his departure to the enjoyments of another world; he does not cease to be, but is only removed from one world to another.

(2.) Observe, but to enable him to look back upon the life he had lived; (v. 7.) I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, &c. He therefore did not fear death, because he had the testimony of his conscience, that by the grace of God he had in some measure answered the ends of living. As a Christian, as a minister, he had fought a good fight. He had done the service, gone through the difficulties of his warfare, and had been instrumenal in the salvation of many. He had delivered many who were taken captive by the enemy of souls, and exalted Redeemer over the powers of darkness. His life was a course, and he had now finished it; his warfare was accomplished, so his race was run.

"I have kept the faith. I have kept the doctrine of the gospel, and never betrayed any of them." Note, First, The life of a Christian, but especially of a minister, is a warfare and a race, sometimes compared to the one in the scripture, and sometimes to the other. Secondly, It is a good fight, a good warfare; the cause is good, and the victory is sure,
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 mentions to Timothy, now at the closing of the epistle.

1. He bids him hasten to him, if possible; (v. 9.)

Do thy diligence to come shortly unto me. For Timothy was an evangelist, one who was not fixed pastor of any one place, but attended the motions of the apostles, to build upon their foundation. Paul wanted Timothy's company and help; and the reason he gives, is, because several had left him, v. 10.

One from an ill principle, Demas, who abides under an ill name for it, because he hath forsaken us, having loved this present world. He quitted Paul and his interest, either for fear of suffering, (because Paul was now a prisoner, and he was afraid of coming into trouble upon his account,) or being called off from his ministry by secular affairs, which he entangled himself in; his first love to Christ and his gospel was forsaken and forgotten, and he fell in love with the world. Note, Love to this present world is the death of our heavenly state, and the ruin of our heavenly hopes and waves of Jesus Christ. He is gone off, is departured to Thessalonica; called thither perhaps by trade, or by some other worldly business. Crescens's gone one way and Titus another way, and only Luke was with Paul, v. 11, 12. Was not that enough? Paul did not think it so; he loved the company of his friends.

He speaks respectfully concerning Mark: He is profitable to me for the ministry. It is supposed that this Mark was he about whom Paul and Barnabas contended, Acts 15. 39. Paul would not take him with him to the work, because he had once flinched and drawn back; but now, says he, "Take Mark, and bring him with thee." By this it appears that Paul was now reconciled to Mark, and had a better opinion of him than he had had formerly; do this teaches us to be of a forgiving spirit; those that are profitable and useful, though they may have done amiss, we must not therefore disclaim for ever making use of them.

3. Paul orders Timothy to come to him, bids him as he came through Troas to bring with him from thence those things which he had left behind him there, (v. 13.) the cloak he had left there, which, it may be, Paul had the more occasion for in a cold place, and if the pale face, the skin was always and usually wore, the plain dress. Some read it, the roll of parchments I left at Troas; others, the desk that I left. Paul was guided by divine inspiration, and yet he would have his books with him. Whereas he had exhorted Timothy to give attendance to reading, so he did himself, though he was now ready to be offered. As long as we live, we must he still learning; But especially the parchments, which some think were the original drafts from the others. Paul thought they were the skins of which he made his tents, whereby he got a livelihood, working with his own hands.

4. He mentions Alexander, and the mischief that he had done him, v. 14. 15. This is he who is spoken of Acts 19. 35. It should seem, he had been a professor of the Christian religion, a forward professor, for he was a particular wise officer, believed by the shipwreck of Diana, and yet he did Paul much evil. Paul was in so much danger from false brethren, (2 Cor. 11. 26.) as from open enemies. Paul foretells that God would reckon with him. It is a prophetic denunciation of the just judgment of God that would befall him; The Lord shall reward him according to his works. He cautions Timothy to take heed of him. Of whom be thou ware, for he hath greatly withstood our words.

Here are divers particular matters which Paul
with much pleasure; for one forsook him, and another did him much evil, and greatly withstood his words. Yet, (2.) At the same time he mentions some with pleasure; the badness of some did not make him forget the goodness of others; such as Timothy, Titus, Mark, and Luke. (3.) The names and memory of two persons: the one is Demas, who forsook him, having loved the present world, and the other is Alexander, who greatly withstood his words. (4.) God will reward evil-doers, particularly apostates, according to their works. Lastly, Of such as are of Alexander's spirit and temper we should beware; for they will do no good, but all the mischief that is in their power.

16. At my first answer no man stood with me, but all men forsook me: I pray God that it may not be laid to their charge.

17. Notwithstanding the Lord stood with me, and strengthened me: that by me the preaching might be fully known, and that all the Gentiles might hear; and I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion.

18. And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom: to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen. 19. Salute Prisca, and Aquila, and the household of Onesiphorus. 20. Erastus abide at Corinth: but Trophimus have I left at Miletum sick.

21. Do thy diligence to come before winter. Eubulus greeteth thee, and Pudens, and Linus, and Claudia, and all the brethren. 22. The Lord Jesus Christ be with thy spirit. Grace be with you. Amen.

Here he gives Timothy an account of his own present circumstances. He had lately been called to appear before the emperor, upon his appeal to Caesar; and then no man stood with him, (v. 16.) to plead his cause, to bear testimony for him, or so much as to keep him in countenance, but all men forsook him. This was strange, that so good a man as he shou'd have nobody to own him, even at Rome, where there were many Christians, whose faith was spoken of throughout all the world, Rom. 1. 8. But men are but men. The Christians at Rome were forward to go and meet him; (Acts 28.) but when it came to the pinch, and they would be in danger of suffering with him, then they all forsook him. He prays that God would not lay it to their charge; intimating, that it was a great fault, and God might justly be angry with them, but he prays God to forgive them. See what distinction is put between sins of presumption and sins of infirmity: Alexander the coppersmith, who maliciously withstood Paul, he prays against him; The Lord reward him according to his works; but respecting these Christians, who through weakness shrunk from Paul in time of trial, he says, The Lord lay it not to their charge.

1. St. Paul had his trials in his friends forsoaking him in a time of danger, as well as in the opposition made by enemies; all forsook him. 2. It was their sin not to appear for the good apostle, especially at his first answer; but it was a sin of weakness, and therefore the more excusable. Yet, 3. God might lay it to their charge, but St. Paul endeavours to prevent it by his earnest prayers; Let it not be laid to their charge.

Notwithstanding this, God stood by him, (v. 17.) gave him extraordinary wisdom and courage, to enable him to speak so much the better himself. When he had nobody to keep him in countenance, God made his face to shine: that by me the preaching might be fully known, that is, God brought forth from his mouth that which may prove the gospel, which is our business, he would make it seem, that he might preach the gospel at that time, for Paul knew how to preach at the bar as well as in the pulpit: and that all the Gentiles might hear; the emperor himself and the great men, who would never have heard Paul preach, if he had not been brought before them. And I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion, that is, of Nero, (as some think,) or some other judge. Some understand it as a proverbial form of speech, to signify that he was in imminent danger. And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work. See how Paul improved his experiences; He that hath delivered, doth deliver, and we trust he shall yet deliver; shall deliver me from every evil work, from doing any ill myself, and having any ill done to me by others. And shall preserve me to his heavenly kingdom. And let him give glory to God, rejoicing in hope of the glory of God.

(1.) If the Lord stands by us, he will strengthen us, in a time of difficulty and danger, and his presence will more than supply every one's absence.

(2.) When the Lord preserves his servants from great and imminent danger, it is for eminent work and service. Paul was preserved, that by him the preaching might be fully known, &c. (3.) Former deliverances should encourage future ones. There is a heavenly kingdom, to which the Lord will preserve his faithful, witnessing or suffering servants. Lastly, We ought to give God the glory of all past, present, and future deliverances; To whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

He sends salutations to Aquila, and Priscilla, and the household of Onesiphorus. v. 19. He mentions his leaving Trophimus sick at Miletum, (v. 20.) by which it appears that though the apostles healed all manner of diseases miraculously, for the confirmation of their doctrine, yet they did not exert that power upon their own friends, lest it should have looked like a collusion.

He hastens Timothy to come to him before winter, (v. 21.) because he longed to see him, and because in the winter the journey or voyage would be more dangerous.

He sends commendations to him from Eubulus, Pudens, Linus, Claudia, and all the brethren. One of the heathen writers at this time mentions one Pudens and his wife Claudia, and says, that Claudia was a Briton; whence some have gathered, that it was this Pudens, and that Claudia here was his wife, and that they were eminent Christians at Rome.

He concludes with a prayer, that the Lord Jesus would be with his spirit. We need no more to make us happy than to have the Lord Jesus with our spirits; for in him all spiritual blessings are summed up. And it is the best prayer we can put up for our friends, that the Lord Jesus may be with their spirits, to sanctify and save them, and at last to receive them to himself; as Stephen the proto-martyr prayed, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit, Acts 7. 59. And if grace be with us here to convert and change us, to make us holy, to keep us humble, and to enable us to persevere to the end, glory will crown us hereafter: for the Lord is a Sun,
TITUS, I.

and a Shield, the Lord will give grace and glory, and no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly. O Lord of Hosts, blessed is the man that trusteth in thee, Ps. 84. 11, 12.

Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God our Saviour, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen.

AN EXPOSITION,
WITH
PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS
OF THE

EPISTLE OF ST. PAUL TO TITUS.

Completed by Mr. J. Smith.

THIS Epistle of Paul to Titus is much of the same nature with those to Timothy; both were converts of Paul, and his companions in labours and sufferings; both were in the office of evangelists, whose work was to water the churches planted by the apostles, and to set in order the things that were wanting in them: they were vice-apostles, as it were, working the work of the Lord, as they did, and mostly under their direction, though not despotic and arbitrary, but with the concurring exercise of their own prudence and judgment, 1 Cor. 15. 10, 12. We read much of this Titus, his titles, character, and active usefulness, in many places: he was a Greek, Gal. 2. 3. St. Paul called him his son, (Tit. 1. 4.) his brother, (2 Cor. 2. 13.) his partner and fellow-helper, (2 Cor. 8. 23.) one that walked in the same Spirit, and in the same steps with himself. He went up with the apostles to the church at Jerusalem, (Gal. 2. 1.) was much conversant at Corinth, for which church he had an earnest care, 2 Cor. 8. 16. Paul's second epistle to them, and probably his first also, was sent by his hand, 2 Cor. 8. 16-18, 23.—9. 2-4. 12, 18. He was with the apostle at Rome, and thence went into Dalmatia, (2 Tim. 4. 10.) after which no more occurs of him in the scriptures. So that by them he appears not to have been a fixed bishop: if such he were, and in those times, the church of Corinth, where he most attended, had the best title to him. In Crete (now called Candia, formerly Hecatomphile, from the hundred cities that were in it) a large island at the mouth of the Ægean Sea, the gospel had got some footing; and here were Paul and Titus, in one of their travels, culting this plantation; but the apostle of the Gentiles, having on him the care of all the churches, could not himself tarry long at this place; he therefore left Titus some time there, to carry on the work which had been begun; whereof, probably meeting with more difficulty than ordinary, Paul wrote this epistle to him; and yet perhaps not so much for his own sake, as for the people's, that the endeavours of Titus, strengthened with apostolic advice and authority, might be more significant and effectual among them. He was to see all the cities furnished with good pastors; to reject and keep out the unmeet and unworthy; to teach sound doctrine, and instruct all sorts in their duties; to set forth the free grace of God in man's salvation by Christ; and withal to shew the necessity of maintaining good works by those who have believed in God, and hope for eternal life from him.

TITUS, I.

CHAP. I.

In this chapter, we have, 1. The preface or introduction to the epistle, shewing from and to whom it was written, with the apostle's salutation and prayer for Titus, wishing all blessings to him, v. 1-4. 2. Entrance into the matter, by signifying the end of Titus's being left at Crete, v. 3-5. 3. And how the same should be pursued in reference both to good and bad ministers, from v. 6, to the end.

1. PAUL, a servant of God, and an apostle of Jesus Christ, according to the faith of God's elect, and the acknowledging of the truth which is after godliness; 2. In hope of eternal life, which God, who cannot lie, promised before the world began; 3. But hath in due times manifested his word through preaching, which is communicated unto me according to the commandment of God our Saviour; 4. To Ti-