

Titus

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Titus

Many of Paul's "fellow-workers" are mentioned in the book of Acts, but Titus is not among them. All we know of him must be gleaned from Paul's letters. The most important statement regarding their relationship is found in the letter that bears his name. Paul called Titus "a true son in our common faith." (Titus 1:4). When we compare this to Paul's words to the Corinthians, that he had begotten them through the gospel, and that is why he was their father in the faith, it gives shows it is at least possible Titus was converted by Paul. When Paul added Timothy was "my beloved and faithful son in the Lord," it is fairly certain that both Timothy and Titus were men that Paul had preached to and converted.

For though you might have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet you do not have many fathers; for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel. 16 Therefore I urge you, imitate me. 17 For this reason I have sent Timothy to you, who is my beloved and faithful son in the Lord, who will remind you of my ways in Christ, as I teach everywhere in every church. 1Cor. 4:15-17

His relationship with Titus probably began before that of Timothy because Titus was brought with Paul to Jerusalem as recorded in the fifteenth chapter of Acts. It is possible but unlikely that a Gentile convert made between the time Paul returned to Antioch from his first journey and the time they went to Jerusalem a few weeks later would be taken to Jerusalem with such an uncertain outcome.

Then after fourteen years I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, and also took Titus with me.... 3 Yet not even Titus who was with me, being a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised. Gal. 2:1,3

Paul had great confidence in Titus to take him to Jerusalem as a "test case" of a Gentile convert. Paul knew the powerful emotions these people had could boil over, but clearly, Paul felt Titus was a man of great strength and character. There are not many converts who could have withstood the attitude which the Christians converted from among the Pharisees must have initially held toward him.

Paul's Third Journey

We hear nothing more of Titus until Paul's second letter to Corinth. It is clear in the account in Acts that when Paul left Troas for Macedonia and arrived at Thessalonica, only Silas, Timothy, and Luke were with him.

*Paul **chose Silas** and departed, being commended by the brethren to the grace of God. Acts 15:40*

*a certain disciple was there, named **Timothy**, the son of a certain Jewish woman who believed, but his father was Greek. 2 He was well spoken of by the brethren who were at Lystra and Iconium. 3 **Paul wanted to have him go on with him.** Acts 16:1-3*

*Now after he had seen the vision, immediately **we sought** to go to Macedonia, concluding that the Lord had called us to preach the gospel to them. Acts 16:10*

The events recorded in Philippi, Thessalonica, and Corinth all speak of Silas and Timothy, while it appears that Luke stayed at Philippi (since the "we" ceases). Yet at some point after Paul returned to Ephesus and began working there, on what we call his third journey, Titus joined him and they began to work together.

The circumstances surrounding the first letter to Corinth are not as clear as we would like, but there is enough to draw some important conclusions. Paul had already decided to leave Ephesus when he sent Timothy and Erastus to Macedonia.

When these things were accomplished, Paul purposed in the Spirit, when he had passed through Macedonia and Achaia, to go to Jerusalem, saying, "After I have been there, I

must also see Rome.” 22 So he sent into Macedonia two of those who ministered to him, Timothy and Erastus, but he himself stayed in Asia for a time. Acts 19:21-22

While the timing is right for them to have carried the first letter to Corinth, in the letter itself, Paul made it clear it was not Timothy who brought it. While the first passage states that Timothy had been sent to Corinth, the second one makes it clear that Paul did not know if Timothy would come or not.

*For this reason **I have sent Timothy to you**, who is my beloved and faithful son in the Lord, who will remind you of my ways in Christ, as I teach everywhere in every church. 1Cor. 4:14*

*But I will tarry in Ephesus until Pentecost. 9 For a great and effective door has opened to me, and there are many adversaries. 10 And **if Timothy comes**, see that he may be with you without fear; for he does the work of the Lord, as I also do. 11 Therefore let no one despise him. But send him on his journey in peace, that he may come to me; for I am waiting for him with the brethren. 1Cor. 16:8-11*

Since Timothy did not bring the letter, the probability that it was Titus is confirmed by some of the things Paul told the Corinthians. Titus was sent to Corinth with a specific purpose and a short time frame in which to accomplish it. Paul had expected his return and when he did not arrive, Paul was deeply concerned. His concern became so intense that he actually passed up an opportunity to preach the gospel in Troas to find him.

*Furthermore, when I came to Troas to preach Christ's gospel, and a door was opened to me by the Lord, 13 I had no rest in my spirit, because I did not find Titus my brother; but taking my leave of them, **I departed for Macedonia.** 2Cor. 2:12-13*

Clearly there was some connection between the Corinthians, Titus, and his late return. That this connection had something to do with the first letter is evident for the following reasons. First, after Paul left Troas and arrived in Macedonia, he was still troubled with both conflicts and fears. It was not until Titus returned that Paul was comforted.

*For indeed, **when we came to Macedonia**, our bodies had no rest, but we were **troubled on every side. Outside were conflicts, inside were fears.** 6 Nevertheless God, who comforts the downcast, **comforted us by the coming of Titus**, 7 and not only by his coming, but also by **the consolation with which he was comforted in you**, when he told us of **your earnest desire, your mourning, your zeal for me, so that I rejoiced even more.** 8 For even if I made you sorry with my letter, I do not regret it; though I did regret it. 2Cor. 7:5-7*

Yet it was not only the fact that Titus had returned that gave Paul this comfort, but also the news he had brought back from Corinth. Hence Titus was at Corinth and when he returned from Corinth he brought news that the Corinthians had accepted Paul's rebukes and were mourning over them. Thus it was not just his return but also his news about Corinth that completely relieved Paul of all his concerns.

When Paul then added that Titus' delay had led him to regret that he had written the letter. Yet at Titus return, with the great news that they had accepted the letter, repented of the things Paul had written and were showing the results of their godly sorrow (2Cor. 7:8-12), his regret had turned to joy.

Therefore we have been comforted in your comfort. And we rejoiced exceedingly more for the joy of Titus, because his spirit has been refreshed by you all. 14 For if in anything I have boasted to him about you, I am not ashamed. But as we spoke all things to you in truth, even so our boasting to Titus was found true. 15 And his affections are greater for you as he remembers the obedience of you all, how with fear and trembling you received him. 16 Therefore I rejoice that I have confidence in you in everything. 2Cor. 7:13-16

Paul had boasted to Titus about the Corinthians before he had left and Titus's affections for the Corinthians had grown as he remember their obedience, and the fear and trembling they had manifested when Titus arrived. Only Titus bringing the letter will fit all these circumstances.

Paul's final words to the Corinthians specifically state that Paul had sent Titus to them, and that while he had been with them he had not taken advantage of them.

I urged Titus, and sent our brother with him. Did Titus take advantage of you? Did we not walk in the same spirit? Did we not walk in the same steps? 2Cor. 12:18

Because of the good that had been done as a result of him being the one to bring the letter, Paul had "urged Titus" that "as he had begun" in taking the first letter to them and seeing their great zeal and devotion that "he would also complete the second part. As the first letter had commanded their giving on the first day of the week for the needy saints in Jerusalem, Titus was to return to help complete the grace started in the first letter. This may also infer he brought the second letter.

*Moreover, brethren, we make known to you the grace of God bestowed on the churches of Macedonia: 2 that in a great trial of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded in the riches of their liberality. ... **So we urged Titus, that as he had begun, so he would also complete this grace in you as well.** 7 But as you abound in everything — in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in all diligence, and in your love for us — see that you abound in this grace also. 2Cor. 8:6-7*

Paul continued to discuss Titus' heart and attitude toward the Corinthians. Titus had the same earnest care for them as Paul himself. He was not sent but volunteered to go and help the Corinthians fulfill their commitment.

But thanks be to God who puts the same earnest care for you into the heart of Titus. 17 For he not only accepted the exhortation, but being more diligent, he went to you of his own accord. 2Cor. 8:16-17

Paul concluded by telling them that if anyone in Corinthian needed a character reference about Titus before giving their contributions to him, he was Paul's partner and fellow worker concerning you.

***If anyone inquires about Titus, he is my partner and fellow worker concerning you.** Or if our brethren are inquired about, they are messengers of the churches, the glory of Christ. 24 Therefore show to them, and before the churches, the proof of your love and of our boasting on your behalf. 2Cor. 8:23-24*

Titus is mentioned in Paul's final epistle as still working for Paul and for the Lord in other parts of the world.

for Demas has forsaken me, having loved this present world, and has departed for Thessalonica-- Crescens for Galatia, Titus for Dalmatia. 2 Tim 4:10

B. Crete

How Crete received the gospel is not specifically mentioned in the Scriptures, Luke recorded that Paul went by Crete, but made it clear that Paul did preach to them on his way to Rome.

And because the harbor was not suitable to winter in, the majority advised to set sail from there also, if by any means they could reach Phoenix, a harbor of Crete opening toward the southwest and northwest, and winter there. Acts 27:12

When the south wind blew softly, supposing that they had obtained their desire, putting out to sea, they sailed close by Crete. Acts 27:13

Luke does record earlier a possible way they might have heard the gospel.

*And there were dwelling in Jerusalem Jews, devout men, from every nation under heaven. 6 And when this sound occurred, the multitude came together, and were confused, because everyone heard them speak in his own language. ... 11 **Cretans** and Arabs— we hear them speaking in our own tongues the wonderful works of God. Acts 2:5-6,11*

An Outline of the letter.

1. Reason Titus in Crete: set in order and appoint elders 1:1-10
2. Many false teachers damaging the church 1:11-16
3. Things proper for sound doctrine 2:1-10

4. What the grace of God Teaches us. 2:11-15
5. Things to remind the brethren 3:1-8
6. Things to avoid. 3:9-11
7. Final exhortations. 3:12-15

ONE

1 Paul, a bondservant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ,

Paul looked upon himself as a servant or bondservant of God. The term “bondservant” is defined:

“*doulos*... 1. a slave, bondman, man of servile condition... a. properly... b. metaph. aa. one who gives himself up wholly to another's will... gg. *doulos tinos* devoted to another to the disregard of one's own interests...” (Thayer, p. 157-158; 1401)

Although the word servant is used many times in the gospels and epistles, its primary use is that of a slave purchased with money or captured in war who is owned by another person. Only a few times is it used in the sense Paul does here. Paul used it in three three letters, and Peter (2Peter) and Jude also used this designation. John also used it to describe himself and other Christians in Revelation. To keep it from being confused with the more commonly used *deaconeo-minister/service/servant* it might be better to translate this term with the English *slave*.

As Paul prayed and fasted in darkness having been blinded after seeing the Lord on the way to Damascus, it must have been very refreshing to learn that he could still be a servant of the Messiah. He had sought to persecute and destroy the faith and the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Then he learned the truth, Jesus was Lord and King and he had sought to destroy Him. When Paul says “bondservant” it must have been with the greatest of gratitude and a humble recognition of the amazing grace and mercy that had been bestowed upon him. Paul considered his obligation to serve God very seriously.

For if I preach the gospel, I have nothing to boast of, for necessity is laid upon me; yes, woe is me if I do not preach the gospel! 17 For if I do this willingly, I have a reward; but if against my will, I have been entrusted with a stewardship. 1 Cor. 9:16-17

Paul also considered himself an apostle of Jesus Christ. This is an unusual term as it was taken from the secular world of its day and changed to fit the Scriptures. Its use in secular Greek centered on the sending of goods or people with no authority on the part of what was sent. It was something sent forth, a transport ship, or a fleet of ships on a military expedition. Jesus took this word and though not changing its essential meaning, modified it by sending them out with His own delegate authority.

a)po/stolo\$ Only occasionally in the Gk. field does a)po/stolo\$ have a meaning related or apparently related to that which it bears in the NT. For the most part the similarity is only external. The background of usage is basically different in the two cases. **In the older period a)po/stolo\$ is one of the special terms bound up with sea-faring, and more particularly with military expeditions; it is almost a technical political term in this sense.**

... It was often combined with ploi=on to mean a freighter or transport ship, though sometimes it could be used as a noun, i.e., without ploi=on, for the same purpose ... the word obviously cannot be separated from a)poste/llein. The close material connection emerges in the common expression o (a)po/stolo\$. **In the first instances this simply denotes the dispatch of a fleet (or army) on a military expedition, being simply a stronger form of the simp. sto/lo\$ It then comes to be applied to the fleet itself and it thus acquires the meaning of a naval expedition.** ... Apart from the impersonality of its fundamental meaning, **it could not become the usual term for an emissary in the Gk. world, Since the Greeks had many others words which they could use for this purpose (a&ggelo\$, kh=ruc, presbeuth/\$ etc.). Thus its later Christian usage was an innovation to Greek. ears or to those familiar with Greek** ... How far normal usage differed from that of the NT in the first Christian period and the time of the Early Church is shown by the papyri. Here we find it in the technical sense of an accompanying bill or invoice, e.g., for shipments of corn (Kittel TDWNT NT:652)

“apostolos, -ou `o 1. a delegate, messenger, one sent forth with orders... 2. Specially applied to the twelve disciples whom Christ selected, out of the multitudes of his adherents to be his constant companions and the heralds to proclaim to men the kingdom of God... 3. In a broader sense the name is transferred to other eminent Christian teachers.” (Thayer, p. 68; 652)

Paul was a special delegate and messenger of Jesus. He had been sent forth by Him with orders that had to be accomplished:

And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. 19 **"Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 "teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."** Amen. Mt. 28:18-20

But the Lord said to him, **"Go, for he is a chosen vessel of Mine to bear My name before Gentiles, kings, and the children of Israel. 16 "For I will show him how many things he must suffer for My name's sake."** Acts 9:15-16

according to the faith of God's elect

Paul was a slave of God, sent out by Jesus with authority, "according to" the faith of God's elect.

"kata,... II with the Accusative... 3. it denotes reference, relation, proportion, of various sorts; a. distributively, indicating a succession of things following one another... b... as respects; with regard to; in reference to; so far as relates to; as concerning;...c. according to, agreeably to; in reference to agreement or conformity to a standard, in various ways (aa) according to anything as a standard, agreeably to... (bb) in proportion to, according to the measure of..." (Thayer, p. 328; 2596)

Hence the work Paul was doing as slave and apostle are in reference and agreeably to the faith of God's elect. This is a difficult expression that requires careful thought. Paul is not saying that he is the one responsible for their faith. But as a slave to God and an apostle of Jesus Paul's service was to bring the faith to those who were elect. Jesus said as much when He appeared to Him and then commissioned him to be sent

But the Lord said to him, **"Go, for he is a chosen vessel of Mine to bear My name before Gentiles, kings, and the children of Israel. Acts 9:15-16**

I have appeared to you for this purpose, to make you a minister and a witness both of the things which you have seen and of the things which I will yet reveal to you. 17 I will deliver you from the Jewish people, as well as from the Gentiles, to whom I now send you, 18 to open their eyes, in order to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who are sanctified by faith in Me.' Acts 26:16-18

As Paul now looked back over his life, at the churches he had helped to bring into being and the inspired books he had written, he now understood that his work was directly tied to the faith of the elect. Since faith comes by hearing the word of God, and Paul wrote much of the word of God, his service as an apostle accomplished this. Therefore being a slave and helping God's elect with their faith are one and the same thing for him. Paul was appointed to help others gain more and more faith. This letter was also written for that purpose, adding more of the Word of God for the elect.

The term "elect" is used many times in the Scriptures. While no one can misunderstand the meaning, how it was done has become a great controversy among those who call themselves Jesus' disciples. The term "elect" is defined:

"eklektos... picked out, chosen... 1. chosen by God..." (Thayer p 197)

That God made choices back in eternity is something clearly revealed.

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ, 4 just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love, 5 having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, Eph 1:3-6

But we are bound to give thanks to God always for you, brethren beloved by the Lord, because God from the beginning chose you for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth, 14 to which He called you by our gospel, for the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. 2Th 2:13-15

He made these choices and then He created the gospel to call those He had chosen.

And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose. 29 For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. 30 Moreover whom He predestined, these He also called; whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified. Rom 8:28-30

These things are clear. The unclear portion is how God made these choices and whether we had a part in that choice.

Calvin said,

“With Augustine I say: the Lord has created those whom he unquestionably foreknew would go to destruction. This has happened because he has willed.” (John Calvin, *Institutes of Christian Religion*, Book 3, Chapter 23, Paragraph 5)

Epistle 217, 6, 19: “. . . . and so that which is said, ‘God wills all men to be saved’ although He is unwilling that so many be saved, is said for this reason: that **all who are saved, are not saved except by His will.**” (Augustine)

De correptione et gratia 14. 44: “And that which is written that which is written that ‘he wills all men to be saved and yet not all are saved, can be understood in many ways, of which we have mentioned some in other works, but I shall give one here. It is said in such a way . . . **that all the predestined are meant: for the whole human race is in them.**” (Augustine)

“...individuals are born, who are doomed from the womb to certain death, and are to glorify him by their destruction.” (John Calvin, *Institutes of Christian Religion*, Book 3, Chapter 23, Paragraph 6)

God preordained, for his own glory and the display of His attributes of mercy and justice, a **part of the human race, without any merit of their own, to eternal salvation, and another part, in just punishment of their sin, to eternal damnation.**”

“We call predestination God’s eternal decree, by which he compacted with himself what he willed to become of each man. For all are not created in equal condition; rather, eternal life is fore-ordained for some, eternal damnation for others.” (John Calvin, *Institutes of Christian Religion*, Book 3, Chapter 21, Paragraph 5)

“...we say that God once established by his eternal and unchangeable plan those whom he long before determined once for all to receive into salvation, and those whom, on the other hand, he would devote to destruction...he has barred the door of life to those whom he has given over to damnation.” (John Calvin, *Institutes of Christian Religion*, Book 3, Chapter 21, Paragraph 7)

It is clear that the two “great thinkers” of both the Catholic church and the Presbyterian church believed that this choice was made by God not by each man or woman. They believed that God chose who would be saved and who would be lost and there was nothing either class could do about it. Those destined to life would be saved whether they wanted it or not. Those who were lost would be lost no matter what their own will and desire might be and they had no say or will in the matter.

Yet the Scriptures reveal man does have a choice. First, it revealed that if were solely up to God and God’s will then all would be saved. That alone is enough to see that God did not impose His sovereign will because if He did everyone would be saved today.

For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, 4 who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth 1Tim. 2:3-4

God makes it clear above that it is no His will from eternity that some be saved and others be lost. It is His will that all men be saved and come to a knowledge of the truth. Since it is not his choice how man is elected or rejected, what is the deciding factor. All souls belong to God and only those who choose to sin will die. All wicked men who turn from their sin (repent) will live. None of his transgressions will be remembered.

Behold, all souls are Mine; The soul of the father As well as the soul of the son is Mine; The soul who sins shall die. Ezek 18:4

But if a wicked man turns from all his sins which he has committed, keeps all My statutes, and does what is lawful and right, he shall surely live; he shall not die. 22 None of the transgressions which he has committed shall be remembered against him; because of the righteousness which he has done, he shall live. Ezek 18:21-23

By the same token those who are righteous and saved can turn away from their righteousness and be lost. So nothing is fixed by God, it is selected by each man and woman.

“But when a righteous man turns away from his righteousness and commits iniquity, and does according to all the abominations that the wicked man does, shall he live? All the righteousness which he has done shall not be remembered; because of the unfaithfulness of which he is guilty and the sin which he has committed, because of them he shall die. Ezek. 18:26

When a righteous man turns away from his righteousness, commits iniquity, and dies in it, it is because of the iniquity which he has done that he dies. 27 Again, when

a wicked man turns away from the wickedness which he committed, and does what is lawful and right, he preserves himself alive. Ezek. 18:27

So election works the same way in Scripture as it does in democracy. After the vote is tallied the one with the most votes wins. In salvation God is voting for everyone, but only when we cast the deciding vote by obeying the gospel are we a part of the elect.

and the acknowledgment of the truth

The second thing that Paul's service and apostleship was to lead to was the acknowledgment of the truth. This term is defined:

"epignosis... (epiginosko q.v.) precise and correct knowledge; used in the N.T. of the knowledge of things ethical and divine... " "epiginosko...to become thoroughly acquainted with, to know thoroughly; to know accurately, know well... 2. to know... a. to recognize... to recognize a thing to be what it really is..." (Thayer, p 237; 1922-1921)

This is the term for expert knowledge of the truth. Paul's quest was to help all men understand this truth in a deep and abiding way.

For this reason I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for you Gentiles-- 2 if indeed you have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which was given to me for you, 3 how that by revelation He made known to me the mystery (as I have briefly written already, 4 by which, when you read, you may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ), 5 which in other ages was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to His holy apostles and prophets: Eph 3:1-4

He was to give them an expert knowledge of truth. The term truth is defined:

"aletheia... 1. univ. what is true in any matter under consideration (opp. to what is feigned, fictitious, false).. in truth, truly, as the case is, according to fact... a. truly, in truth, according to truth... b. of a truth, in reality, in fact, certainly... 2. in reference to religion, the word denotes what is true in things appertaining to God and the duties of man, ... c. the truth, as taught in the Christian religion, respecting God and the executing of his purposes through Christ, and respecting the duties of man, opposed alike to the superstitions of the Gentiles and the inventions of the Jews, and to the corrupt opinions and precepts of false teachers even among Christians... II. subjectively; truth as a personal excellence; that candor of mind which is free from affectation, pretense, simulation, falsehood, deceit... sincerity of mind and integrity of character, or a mode of living in harmony with divine truth..." (Thayer, p. 26; 225)

Jesus made some special promises concerning the truth.

"Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth. Jn. 17:17

"And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." Jn. 8:32

The Holy Spirit later stated that without a love for the truth, no one can be saved.

and with all unrighteous deception among those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved. 11 And for this reason God will send them strong delusion, that they should believe the lie, 12 that they all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness. 2Th. 2:10-12

Hence Paul's slavery and apostleship were directly tied to the elect in two ways. First the faith that could be gained through the words Paul wrote and spoke, and the expert knowledge of truth that could also be gleaned from them.

which accords with godliness,

Again Paul used *kata* to stress the proportion and relationship of these two things. This time it is the truth and godliness. The more truth you know the more godly you will be. The less truth you know the less "godly" you can be.

"eusebeia... from eu, well, and seboimai, to be devout, denotes the piety which, characterized by a Godward attitude, does that which is well-pleasing to Him... " (Vine, W. E. Expository Dictionary. Vol 2 p. 162)

"eusebeia... reverence, respect; in the Bible everywhere piety towards God, godliness..." (Thayer, p. 262; 2150)

The Greek term is difficult to convey with any English word. It is first "*seboima*" a reverence, awe and respect one holds toward God. Then, it is directing that awe and reverence in a good way, "eu." Paul used this term ten times in his letters to Timothy (1Tim. 2:2; 3:16; 4:7,8; 6:3,5,6,11; 2Tim. 3:5) and Titus (1:1). It is one of the things Peter said we must add to our faith in order to be busy and productive.

But also for this very reason, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge, 6 to knowledge self-control, to self-control perseverance, to perseverance godliness, 7 to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness love. 2Pet. 1:5-7

This godliness is directly tied to the truth. Since God has revealed how to show reverence and respect to Him in His word, the only way we can possess this godliness is by holding to the truth. Yet not only does the truth reveal how we are to be godly, but our love for that truth manifests it more fully than any other single thing.

2 in hope of eternal life

By using the preposition “in,” Paul emphasized that it is only upon the basis of the truths in the previous verse that this hope can rest.

“*epi... upon the surface of... 2. Metaph.; a. of that upon which any action, effect, condition, rests as a basis or support; prop. upon the ground of; and a. of that upon which anything is sustained or upheld... b. of that upon which anything rests (our upon)... d. of the reason or motive underlying words and deeds...*” (Thayer p 231-236; 1909)

This preposition is generally used to express that which can only come about when the actions or conditions are met. Hence the hope of eternal life, is based on the condition of having “*the faith of God’s elect*” and “*the expert knowledge*” which is the basis of all “*godliness.*”

Without these things there can be no hope for without these things we are still in the condition Paul described in the letter to the Ephesians.

that at that time you were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. 13 But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. Eph. 2:12-13

“Hope” in English is made up of two parts, a desire and an expectation. In the Greek language it always has the expectation, and generally it is an expectation of good.

“*elpis... expectation, hope; i.e expectation whether good or ill; 1. rarely in a bad sense, expectation of evil, fear;... 2. much more fre. in the classics, and always in the N. T. , in a good sense: expectation of good, hope; and in the Christian sense, joyful and confident expectation of eternal salvation...*” (Thayer, p. 205-206; 1680)

This hope has not yet been realized, and thus we wait patiently for it.

Not only that, but we also who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, eagerly waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body. 24 For we were saved in this hope, but hope that is seen is not hope; for why does one still hope for what he sees? 25 But if we hope for what we do not see, we eagerly wait for it with perseverance. Rom 8:23-25

The hope of eternal life is the “*redemption of our body.*” It is also all the facts in 1Cor. 15, 1Th. 4-5; along with all the descriptions of the place where we will enjoy our eternal life in a new body.

The greater the desire, and the more confident the expectation, the more powerful the hope becomes and the greater impact it will have. Since motivation plays a great role in the sacrifices God’s people are willing to make in this life, their hope is very important to God. He wants to give His people as much expectation of gaining eternal life as possible. Paul offered one great reason why we can be confident of our “eternal” life.

“*aiónios... 1. without beginning or end, that which always has been and always will be... 2. without beginning... 3. without end, never to cease, everlasting...*” (Thayer, p. 20; 166)

which God, who cannot lie,

This hope of eternal life is the antecedent to the relative pronoun “which,” and give the most tangible reason for that hope. Since God “can’t lie,” our expectation is enhanced even more.

“*apseudes...free from falsehood; incapable of falsehood...*” (Harpers Analytical Concordance p 64)

“*apseudes... (pseudos), without lie, truthful...*” (Thayer, p. 91; 893)

God is incapable of lying. That which is false and untrue is not something that God will use in any way. Another passage that states the same thing helps see this one more clearly.

Thus God, determining to show more abundantly to the heirs of promise the immutability of His counsel, confirmed it by an oath, 18 that by two immutable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we might have strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold of the hope set before us. Heb. 6:17-18

promised before time began,

While Hebrews had two immutable things (an oath and a promise), Paul is content with just a “promise” here. Both become immutable when they are joined with God’s inability to lie.

“*epaggello*... 1. to announce. 2. to promise: Mid. to announce concerning one’s self; i.e. 1. to announce that one is about to do or to furnish something, i. e. to promise (of one’s own accord) to engage (voluntarily).. 2. to profess; ... an art, to profess one’s self skilled in it...” (Thayer, p. 227; 1861)

God made a promise to man that if they would live up to the conditions He set forth in the gospel, He would restore the eternal life they had forfeited when they sinned. Since God cannot lie, He will fulfill this promise. One important point the Spirit wanted stressed here is when that promise was given.

Many times in the New Testament, God revealed to us when these promises were given. In this case it was before time began. This is a period beyond our comprehension, because we don’t have any reference but time. Something that occurred before time, predates anything we can explain or understand.

It creates some interesting considerations. First, it was given before man was created and before man sinned. The prospect of man’s sinning did not deter God from making this promise. Man’s sin was factored into the great plan God devised and would not hinder Him from saving all who did as He asked. This gives even greater hope to God’s people.

3 but has in due time manifested

“In due time” is a little more picturesque in Greek than English. The term “due” is the general term for what belongs to one’s own.

“*idios*... 1. pertaining to one’s self, one’s own; used a. univ. of what is one’s own as opposed to belonging to another... to do one’s own business (and not intermeddle with the affairs of others),... b. of what pertains to one’s property, family, dwelling, country, etc. ... c. harmonizing with, or suitable or assigned to, one’s nature, character, aims, acts; appropriate... 2. private...” (Thayer, p. 296-297; 2398)

Although it could be translated “*it’s own time*” and it might then be interpreted as simple time and chance, at a time of times own choosing, which is meaningless. A better translation would be “*In His own*” time.

<i>in his own seasons</i>	(ASV)	<i>at the proper time manifested</i>	(NASU)
<i>at his appointed season</i>	(NIV)	<i>in His own appointed time</i>	(AMP)

This would then be perfectly aligned with the term “the fulness of time.”

And He said to them, “It is not for you to know **times or seasons which the Father has put in His own authority.** Acts 1:7

“But when **the time of the promise drew near which God had sworn to Abraham, the people grew and multiplied in Egypt** Acts 7:17-18

He has made from one blood every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, and has **determined their preappointed times and the boundaries of their dwellings,** Acts 17:26-27

For while we were still helpless, **at the right time** Christ died for the ungodly. Rom. 5:6-7

For He says: “In an **acceptable time** I have heard you, And in the day of salvation I have helped you.” Behold, **now is the accepted time**; behold, now is the day of salvation. 2Cor. 6:2

But when **the fullness of the time had come**, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons. Gal. 4:4-5

that you keep this commandment without spot, blameless until our Lord Jesus Christ’s appearing, **15 which He will manifest in His own time**, He who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings and Lord of lords, 1Tim. 6:14-15

Thus God set certain time points into His eternal purpose. “Time” that it is not for us to know.

“*kairos*... a measure of time; a larger or smaller portion of time; hence a. univ. a fixed and definite time:... b. opportune or seasonable time... c. the right time... d. a (limited) period of time... e. as often in Grk. writ., ... is equiv. to what time brings, the state of the times, the things and events of time...” (Thayer, p. 318-319; 2540)

Hence by His own authority, and with His own counsel, God chose the right time. What made it right is only in His knowledge and understanding. When that time finally arrived, all that God had planned in eternity was brought into view and “*manifested*.”

“phaneroo,... to make manifest or visible or known what has been hidden or unknown, to manifest, whether by words, or deeds, or in any other way... to make known by teaching... b. with an acc of the person, to expose to view, make manifest, show one ... Pass. to become known, to be plainly recognized, thoroughly understood...” (Thayer, p. 648; 5319)

His word through preaching,

Note while Paul began this passage with only the hope of eternal life that had been kept silent, and he will now move to the entire gospel and how it was revealed to us.

Now to him that is able to establish you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery which hath been kept in silence through times eternal, 26 but now is manifested, and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the eternal God, is made known unto all the nations unto obedience of faith: Rom. 16:25-26

how that by revelation He made known to me the mystery (as I have briefly written already, 4 by which, when you read, you may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ), 5 which in other ages was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to His holy apostles and prophets: Eph. 3:1-4

God’s word was revealed to the apostles and prophets. What had not been formerly revealed was now fully manifested “through” the preaching of His word.

“en...a preposition taking the dative after it;... used of that with which a person is surrounded, equipped, furnished, assisted, or acts... c. of that which one either leads or brings with him, or with which he is furnished or equipped; esp after verbs of coming, (en of accompaniment), where we often say with ... d. of the instrument or means by or with which anything is accomplished, owing to the influence of the Hebr. prep... much more common in the sacred writ. than in the prof... where we say with, by means of, by (through)...” (Thayer, p. 209-212; 1722)

God used preaching as the instrument by which He made known the wonderful promise He had actually made before time began. God made the promise, and kept it hidden through many years then at just the right time, He made it known through the agency of preaching the gospel in all the world. The duty Paul took upon himself was to make this promise known to all men.

which was committed to me

This takes us back to the very beginning of the book. Paul was a slave and an apostle sent forth. This had been specifically committed to him, for all the purposes mentioned above. The faith of the elect, the full knowledge of truth, the godliness that comes from both, and the hope of eternal life which motivates everyone to do all these things. All this was “committed” to Paul.

“pisteuo... 2. transitively... to intrust a thing to one, i.e. to his fidelity... to be intrusted with a thing...” (Thayer, p. 511-512; 4100)

The Holy Spirit chose a word that generally means believe and trust. Whenever it deals with our relationship toward God it is faith or belief. But when it deals with what God expects from us, it is a committing, or entrusting. God entrusted with the gospel in a very special way that he never forgot.

For if I preach the gospel, I have nothing to boast of, for necessity is laid upon me; yes, woe is me if I do not preach the gospel! 17 For if I do this willingly, I have a reward; but if against my will, I have been entrusted with a stewardship. 18 What is my reward then? That when I preach the gospel, I may present the gospel of Christ without charge, that I may not abuse my authority in the gospel. 1Cor 9:16-18

For I am the least of the apostles, who am not worthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. 10 But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me was not in vain; but I labored more abundantly than they all, yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me. 1Cor 15:9-11

What God entrusted to Paul, Paul saw as a gift of grace and a stewardship that he needed to labor and sacrifice to fulfill.

according to the commandment of God our Savior;

Paul again used *kata* to stress that all the work he has done as an apostle was directly related to and in proportion with the “command” God had given to him.

“epitage ...an injunction, mandate, command ...” (Thayer, p. 244; 2003)

Although Jesus Himself appeared to Paul and gave him commands to be an apostle, Paul took it back one more step because this all initiated with God. This was something very important because the Holy Spirit had him repeat it in many different ways.

Paul, an apostle (not from men nor through man, but through Jesus Christ and God the Father who raised Him from the dead), 2 and all the brethren who are with me, To the churches of Galatia: Gal 1:1-2

But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother’s womb and called me through His grace, 16 to reveal His Son in me, that I might preach Him among the Gentiles, I did not immediately confer with flesh and blood, 17 nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me; but I went to Arabia, and returned again to Damascus. Gal 1:15-17

Paul, called to be an apostle of Jesus Christ through the will of God, and Sosthenes 1Cor. 1:1

Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, and Timothy our brother, 2Cor. 1:1

Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, Eph 1:1

Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, and Timothy our brother, Col 1:1-2

Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, 2Tim. 1:1-2

Paul’s writings form a vital part of the New Testament. There must be no doubt that it was by God’s will that Paul became an apostle and it was by God’s will and command that he be involved in revealing His word to the Gentiles.

Paul also calls God our Savior for it was by His will and His love that Jesus came. In the garden it was the Father’s will that Jesus drink the cup that brought salvation to all men. Without God’s plans and will, Jesus would not have come.

Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ, by the commandment of God our Savior and the Lord Jesus Christ, our hope, 1Tim. 1:1

For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, 4 who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. 5 For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus, 6 who gave Himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time, 1Tim. 2:3-6

4 To Titus, a true son in our common faith:

As noted in the introduction Paul had a long history with Titus. By calling him a “true son,” he may only be describing the spiritual characteristics they shared. But it is even more likely that he speaks of the role Paul played both in his conversion and in his present spiritual condition.

“*gnesios, legitimately born, not spurious; genuine, true, sincere...*” (Thayer, p. 119; 1103)

Paul considered Titus to be of the same calibre to him as if he was a legitimately born genuine son. Paul tied this to their common faith with the term *kata*. He stressed that the genuine nature of their father/son relationship is tied to their common faith. Two reasons for this could be put forth. Either Paul converted Titus and was thus his spiritual father in the faith, or their relationship was as close as that of a true father/son relationship. The term “common” refers to a mutual faith that they both shared.

“*koinos... 1. as in Greek Writings... common (i.e. belonging to several,...) 2. by a usage foreign to classical Greek, common i.e. ordinary, belonging to the generality... by the Jews opp. to hagios... Hence unhallowed... levitically unclean...*” (Thayer, p. 351; 2839)

Grace, mercy (only in KJV/NKJV – some textual issues not placed in Nestle/Aland), and peace

Paul used grace and peace in every letter he wrote in the New Testament. Only in 1&2 Timothy and Titus does he add mercy.

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Rom. 1:7

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. 1Cor. 1:3

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. 2Cor. 1:2

Grace to you and peace from God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ, Gal. 1:3

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Eph. 1:2

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Phil. 1:2

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Col. 1:2

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. 1Th. 1:1

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. 2Th. 1:2

Grace, mercy, and peace from God our Father and Jesus Christ our Lord. 1Tim. 1:2

Grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord. 2Tim. 1:2

**Grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ our Savior. Titus 1:4
Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Philem. 3**

These are the words of greeting for those living in that age. They are much like our “good morning,” “good day” etc. The Hebrew had used the term “shalom” but it was replaced by the Greek “eirene” as they began to use that language. The Greeks used the term “charis” in their greetings. Though these two terms were the casual greeting for those of that day, the writers of the NT epistles always gave it a much greater emphasis. They always added that this grace, mercy and peace were from God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ. This is especially true of “grace” which carried not just the relief of the one who received, but the “grace, graciousness, kindness, goodwill,” of the one who wished it.

“charis... grace; Latin gratia: I. outward grace or favour (as we say well or ill favoured), grace, loveliness, Hom., etc.; II. grace or favour felt, whether on the part of the Doer or the Receiver: 1. on the part of the Doer, grace, graciousness, kindness, goodwill, ... for or towards one, ... 2. on the part of the Receiver, the sense of favour received, thankfulness, thanks, gratitude, ... for a thing, ... to acknowledge a sense of favour, feel grateful, ... to feel gratitude to one for a thing, ... (Liddell and Scott Abridged Greek Lexicon. NT: 5485)

(mercy,)

Though placed in the KJV and NKJV, it is not in some of the manuscripts that other translations are based upon. In this place it matters little since the definitions of Grace and Peace fully convey all that mercy would have.

and peace

When we think of God and His attitude toward people, we should think of the peace that He seeks for us and the efforts he has already put forth to purchase that peace for us.

“eirene,... 1. a state of national tranquility; exemption from the rage and havoc of war... 2. peace between individuals, i. e. harmony, concord... 3. security, safety, prosperity, felicity, (because peace and harmony make and keep things safe and prosperous) ... 5. acc. to a conception distinctly peculiar to Christianity, the tranquil state of a soul assured of its salvation through Christ, and so fearing nothing from God and content with its earthly lot, of whatsoever sort that is...” (Thayer, p. 182; 1515)

There are many passages that speak of the peace Jesus came to purchase for us and the lack of conflict we now have with God because of that sacrifice.

Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid. Jn. 14:27

Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, 2 through whom also we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. Rom. 5:1-2

Now the God of peace be with you all. Amen. Rom. 15:32

Finally, brethren, farewell. Become complete. Be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace will be with you. 2Cor. 13:11

Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely; and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. 1Th. 5:23

Now may the Lord of peace Himself give you peace always in every way. The Lord be with you all. 2Th. 3:16

from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ our Savior.

Paul stresses that just as the letter is not just from him, so also the greeting is not. The greeting is from God and from the Lord Jesus Christ. The term “from” stresses the cause or source of something. It is defined:

“apo,...From, signifying ... Origin...II Of Origin; whether of local origin, the place whence; or of causal origin, the cause from which...of causal origin, or the Cause; and a. of the material cause, so called, or of that which supplies the material for the maintenance of the action expressed by the verb:... d. of the efficient cause, viz. of things from the force of which anything proceeds and of persons, from whose will, power, authority, command, favor, order, influence, direction, anything is to be sought...” (Thayer, p. 57-59; 575)

Paul wanted Titus and through his letter all of us to remember that God is the origin and source of all grace and all peace. In this passage Paul stresses God as a Father and Jesus as the Savior.

5 For this reason

Titus may or may not have already been aware of the reason, but this makes it public and gives him the authority to proceed with this work even if some objected to it (as those false teachers described in 10-11 would be). Paul does exactly the same thing for Timothy. Explaining exactly what he had already told him.

As I urged you when I went into Macedonia — remain in Ephesus that you may charge some that they teach no other doctrine, 1Tim. 1:3-4

Not only does this give these two younger men the authority they need to take Paul's authority in this letter and preach that those in the churches must be in compliance with them, but also to all the young men who have taken up that mantle since.

Paul uses a very unusual word to speak of his "reason" for leaving him. It is actually a derivative of "grace" (*charin* -5584 *charis* - 5585). Liddell and Scott place it in the midst of the definition of *charis* – *under special uses,*" giving us its etymology.

charis ... VI. Special usages: 1.acc. sing. as Adv., *charin tinos* ... in any one's favour, for his pleasure, for his sake, *charin ectopos glosses* for one's tongue's ... i.e. for talking's sake, ... then, much like a Prep., Lat. *gratiâ, causâ*, for the sake of, on account of, ..." (Liddell and Scott Abridged Greek Lexicon. NT 5584).

Paul left Titus in Crete for the "for the favor, pleasure, and sake of" "setting in order what is wanting." It is still saying the same thing, because it is a cause or purpose, but it is placed in the context of doing something that brings favor and concern. Perhaps he used this term to speak of the favor and concern that it should create in Titus and all preachers to do this work.

I left you in Crete,

Paul had evidently been at Crete, or passed through Crete on his journeys after getting out of prison in Rome. He had left Titus behind, but like Timothy, God wanted Titus and all future evangelists to have this letter.

that you should set in order the things that are lacking,

With the use of the adverb "*hina*," which speaks of "*purpose and end: to the intent that; to the end that, in order that;...*" There is no way to misunderstand or misinterpret this word. This is why Titus is here and it is what all evangelists / preachers are supposed to be doing. They are to take the inspired words of the apostles and prophets, like Paul here, and in "*equipping the saints*" keeping a special eye on those things that are wanting and setting them in order. Only in this way will there be the effective working of the body in which each part does its share.

And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, 12 for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, ... 16 from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love. Eph 4:11-13

The term "set in order" is defined:

"*epidiorthoo*... "to set in order" (*epi* "upon," *dia*, "through, intensive," and *orthos*, "straight"), is used in Titus 1:5, in the sense of setting right again what was defective, a commission to Titus, not to add to what the apostle himself had done, but to restore what had fallen into disorder since the apostle had labored in Crete; this is suggested by the *epi*. Vine's # 1930) "*epidiorthoo*... , from *epí* (1909), besides, above, and *diorthóœ* to correct. Only in Titus 1:5, meaning to proceed in correcting or setting in order. (Complete Word Study Dictionary: NT: 1930

Within the compound term is the emphasis, not of adding more, but of restoring and setting back into the right course. The course and direction were established in heaven by the Lord. He built His church and then revealed it perfectly to man. When we seek to make things exactly as He revealed them we too are setting in order what is lacking and putting things back into the proper condition. This is a continuous duty as people come and go in the church.

When we compare Paul's command to Timothy regarding how he handles the Word of God, we see how the two go hand in hand. The term "*rightly dividing*" comes from the same root word as the one above for setting in order.

Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. 2Tim. 2:15

orthotomeo to cut in a straight line: metaph., to teach it aright, (Liddell and Scott Abridged Greek Lexicon. NT:3718)

orthotomeo ... "to cut straight," as in road-making (orthos, "straight," temno, "to cut"), is used metaphorically in 2 Tim 2:15, of "handling aright (the word of truth)," The stress is on orthos; the Word of God is to be "handled" strictly along the lines of its teaching. (Vine's NT: 3718)

By comparing the two commands to the two evangelists, we see a harmony. The word of God gives the straight manner in which things ought to be done. The evangelist marks the places where things are not being done in that manner and then sets them in order and straightens them to the same configuration as God's word.

This is the real reason behind something being "lacking." These are the areas that are not yet up to the standards of word of God.

"leipo... 1. trans. to leave, leave behind, forsake; pass. to be left behind (prop. by one's rival in a race, hence), a. to lag, be inferior... b. to be destitute of, to lack... 2. intrans to be wanting or absent, to fail..." (Thayer, p. 375; 3007)

There are some failures, some spiritual destitution, some lack in the churches in Crete. Paul wanted these taken care of. We can see them stressed in the various verses. Doctrinal errors, moral errors, and lack of direction in the relationships of these people with other Christians and those in the world.

One of the things that were lacking were the capable men to shepherd and care for the sheep and do the same things Titus was to do by continually setting in order.

For there are many insubordinate, both idle talkers and deceivers, especially those of the circumcision, 11 whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole households, teaching things which they ought not, for the sake of dishonest gain. 12 One of them, a prophet of their own, said, "Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, lazy gluttons." 13 This testimony is true. Therefore rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith, Titus 1:10-14

and appoint elders in every city

Titus is also to appoint elders in every city. The term "appoint" is defined:

"kathistemi... (prop. to set down, put down), to set, place, put... a. to set one over a thing (in charge of it).. b. ... to appoint one to administer an office... c. to set down as, constitute... d. to constitute... i. q. to render, make, cause to be... e. to conduct or bring to a certain place... f. Mid. to show or exhibit one's self; come forward as... " (Thayer, p. 314; 2525)

It is important to consider the full meaning of this term. In Acts 6 a similar situation arose and the method of accomplishing this was brought out.

Now in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplying, there arose a murmuring against the Hebrews by the Hellenists, because their widows were neglected in the daily distribution. 2 Then the twelve summoned the multitude of the disciples and said, "It is not desirable that we should leave the word of God and serve tables. 3 "Therefore, brethren, seek out from among you seven men of good reputation, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business; 4 "but we will give ourselves continually to prayer and to the ministry of the word." 5 And the saying pleased the whole multitude. And they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and the Holy Spirit, and Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolas, a proselyte from Antioch, 6 whom they set before the apostles; and when they had prayed, they laid hands on them. Acts 6:1-6

The apostles gave the qualifications and told the disciples they would appoint them, but the disciples did the choosing on the basis of the qualifications and the knowledge they had of the men they would select. They selected them and brought them to the apostles who then appointed them by laying their hands upon them. It seems that this is the best way to understand Paul's command to Titus.

as I commanded you--

The term "command" is defined:

"diatasso... to arrange, appoint, ordain, prescribe, give order..." (Thayer, p. 142; 1299)

By using an aorist tense, Paul summed up that this was a command that had been given from the past that was to be followed always. Using the relative pronoun "hos,"

"hos... an adverbial form of the relative pronoun hos, he, ho, which is used in comparison, as, like as, even as, according as, in the same manner as, etc...." (Thayer, p. 680-682; 5613)

Paul emphasizes that this has always been the way. Setting in order and appointing elders in every church was "even as" and "like as" Paul's long standing command.

The nature of this term stresses Paul's right and duty as an inspired apostle to lay the foundation and set forth the proper order and arrangement of things. He had already spoken of things that were lacking. He now moved to discuss the manner in which it was to be fixed. Titus was to arrange things as Paul has given him the arrangement. Paul had prescribed, ordained and appointed this method as the proper thing for Titus to do, and he is now to see to it that it is done. So also would it be the responsibility of others who seek to do what Titus did to do exactly the same thing.

6 if a man is blameless,

Paul then moved directly into the qualifications. The role of elders is a great one. Nothing less than a man with highest Christian virtue and maturity could possibly do well in the role.

Qualifications

Many professions today are recognized as being far too complex for just anyone to do. Doctors who perform brain or open heart surgery, airline pilots, and multitudes of other jobs cannot be performed without appropriate training. It takes wisdom to be a doctor, and wisdom can only be gained through training, education, and experience. How much is necessary and what the minimum thresholds of competency are for each specialty must be set by those who are already proficient in that job.

Once these minimums are set, they become the standard by which everyone is judged. Tests are competency is verified, then credentials are bestowed. At that point, the person is certified to do these complex jobs. This helps ensure when we go to a doctor for treatment, we will get a doctor who knows what he is doing. Those plaques on the wall are guarantees they have the necessary education and experience to practice medicine.

No one can do any job well unless they have the necessary qualifications and skills. Most highly skilled and demanding jobs take years to perfect. We can judge the difficulty of a job by the number of years it takes to become proficient.

Using this standard, it is evident the eldership is a highly skilled job. In this case, God set the minimum standards necessary to do it. God gave these qualifications for the same reason man does. They are the bar of excellence each Christian must pass in order to be qualified to do the job well. Those without **all** the qualifications are not capable to do what God needs in this job.

Those who contemplate becoming a doctor must carefully consider the qualifications and the price they must pay to gain them. Becoming a qualified doctor does not come without dedication to hard work. It takes years of sacrifice and toil to graduate from school prepared and qualified to practice medicine.

In exactly the same way, a man aspiring to the office of an elder must look closely at the qualifications and put forth the effort and toil necessary to master them. It will require years of labor and sacrifice to gain them all. Those who desire the office of a bishop must begin when they are young. Again, the qualifications listed by the Holy Spirit are given for exactly the same reasons we give them for doctors. God wants the churches protected from unqualified men. Unqualified men should never be in the leadership role of a congregation. They would do far more damage than an unqualified doctor or airline pilot, for while these professions deal with people's lives, elders are dealing with people's souls. These qualifications are absolutely essential to do the work.

6 if a man,

*This is a faithful saying: If a **man** desires the position of a bishop, he desires a good work.*

*2 A bishop then must be blameless, the **husband of one wife**... 5 for if a **man** does not know how to rule his own house, how will he take care of the church of God?); 1Tim. 3:1-2.*

5

*if a **man** is blameless, the **husband of one wife**, Titus 1:6*

For centuries this obvious qualification of being male passed without much controversy or comment. But with the advent of the present thinking on the equal roles of men and women it must be looked at closely. Do the Scriptures allow the equality of ability of men and women to enter into the realm of leadership in the church?

This is not an ambiguous qualification at all. The Holy Spirit used a gender specific term to describe exactly who can serve as an elder. The clearest place to see exactly what God wanted is to study the qualification “*husband of one wife.*” The Holy Spirit worded it in such a way that only a man can meet it. First, the definitions of the words themselves and second the grammar (way the words are set forth) only allow a man. The Holy Spirit had two words to choose in giving this command. The general word for “*mankind*” is the Greek word “*anthropos,*” which includes both male and female. The second term was more specific. The Greek word “*aner/andros*” was used to distinguish a male from a female.

“*aner ...is never used of the female sex; it stands (a) in distinction from a woman,*” (Vine’s #435)

The second word used in this qualification is woman/wife:

gune ... In general Greek from the time of Homer, as also in the LXX (Septuagint) and the NT, *gune* denotes a. the “female” as distinct from the male: ... b. the “wife”: ...” Kittel TWDNT #1135)

By placing “*andros-man/husband*” in the same sentence with “*gune-woman/wife*” it is impossible to translate or understand it any other way. Only a “*one woman man / man with one woman,*” or a “*one wife husband / husband with one wife*” are possible translations.

Added to the words themselves, the grammar itself creates an additional barrier. While in English grammar we use word order to distinguish nouns in a sentence, the Greek language used endings on the words. In the phrase “the **husband** has a *wife*,” because **husband** is first, **husband** is the subject. In the phrase “the **wife** has a *husband*” the nouns are reversed and the subject becomes the **wife**. Greek grammar is different. Instead of word order they put different endings on the words. In this verse, “**husband**” has the nominative ending and must be the subject. The term “**wife**” is in the genitive and is used to describe the type of husband. Hence the only one qualified to be an elder would be the man/husband with a single woman/wife. Even a single man could not be an elder. It must be a husband (man) who has a wife (woman) It is impossible either grammatically or by word definitions to understand this qualification in any other way. The elder must be a man, a husband, with only one wife.

is blameless

A “*blameless*” man is someone who has lived in such a way that his reputation has nothing with which to accuse him of wrong doing. He has a good reputation.

“*an-enkletos, ...that cannot be called to account, unrepachable, unaccused, blameless...*” (Thayer, p. 44)

“*anenkletos, signifies that which cannot be called to account (from a, negative, n, euphonic, and enkaleo, to call in), i.e., with nothing laid to one’s charge (as a result of public investigation) ... It implies not merely acquittal, but the absence of even a charge or accusation against a person. This is to be the case with elders.*” (Vine, Vol 1, p 131)

He must be unaccused and blameless because there is nothing in his life that can be brought up and a valid charge set forth. The life of the man can be placed under the truth of God’s word and everyone is satisfied that he manifests all the qualifications without anything glaring and obvious to disqualify. With all the qualifications listed in Timothy and Titus, along with all the other areas of growth found in the New Testament, the members of a congregation can find nothing specific to accuse them.

anekletos which, like *anepileptos* is in the N. T. exclusively a word of St. Paul’s, occurring five times in his Epistles, and nowhere else, is rendered ‘unreprovable’ (Col 1:22), ‘blameless’ (1 Cor 1:8), 1 Tim 3:10; Titus 1:6,7). It is justly explained by Chrysostom as implying **not acquittal merely, but absence so much as of a charge or accusation brought against him of whom it is affirmed.** It moves, like *amomos* not in the subjective world of the thoughts and estimates of men, but in the objective world of facts. ... *anepileptos* of somewhat rare use in classical Greek, occurring once in Thucydides (v. 17) and once in Plato (Phileb. 43 c), never in the Septuagint or the Apocrypha, ... **affording nothing which an adversary could take hold of, on which he might ground a charge:...**” (Trench’s Synonyms of the NT)

D. THE ALL IMPORTANT SUBJECT OF MERCY!!!

(Quoted from "The Eldership by Alan Hitchen

No One is Perfect

"Blameless" and "without reproach" cannot be taken in the strictest sense of their definition. Without God's mercy and the blood of Jesus Christ no one is blameless. Even with it no one is really blameless. No one has lived a perfect life. No one is living a perfect life. Everyone has weaknesses. Without the continued grace and mercy of God no one is above reproach. Everyone does things they are ashamed of. No one can honestly say they are completely blameless. They can say that with the grace and mercy of God they are without reproach, but without that mercy and forgiveness, they are not blameless. Anyone who disagrees with this conclusion must take it up with the Holy Spirit:

As it is written: "There is none righteous, no, not one; 11 There is none who understands; There is none who seeks after God. 12 They have all turned aside; They have together become unprofitable; There is none who does good, no, not one." Rom 3:10-12

If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. 9 If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. 10 If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us. 1Jn. 1:8-10

Judging with Mercy

Since the qualification "blameless" is no longer absolute, but relative to God's grace and mercy, it is important to consider how God wants us to assess men and apply the qualifications. Since being blameless must be tempered with mercy, love, and compassion. The door is now open to a discussion of God's requirements for assessing and judging each other by His word in every realm.

"Do not judge lest you be judged. 2 "For in the way you judge, you will be judged; and by your standard of measure, it will be measured to you. Mt. 7:1-2

Therefore be merciful, just as your Father also is merciful. 37 "Judge not, and you shall not be judged. Condemn not, and you shall not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven. 38 Give, and it will be given to you: good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over will be put into your bosom. For with the same measure that you use, it will be measured back to you." Luke 6:36-38

So speak and so do as those who will be judged by the law of liberty. 13 For judgment is without mercy to the one who has shown no mercy. Mercy triumphs over judgment. Jas. 2:12-13

Christians are commanded not to pass harsh strict judgment. They are to be merciful as the Father is merciful. They are to use a standard of judgment that they themselves want when they meet the Lord in judgment. They must realize that judgment is without mercy to him who shows no mercy. All of this is simply an application of the golden rule:

Therefore, whatever you want men to do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets. Mt. 7:12

And just as you want men to do to you, you also do to them likewise. Lk. 6:31

In assessing the character of men in light of the demands of Scripture, we must do to them as we would want to be done to us. We are to show mercy, compassion, and fairness. We are to give the benefit of the doubt, put the best possible motives on people, and believe the very best about them.

Love suffers long and is kind; love does not envy; love does not parade itself, is not puffed up; 5 does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil; 6 does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth; 7 bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. 8 Love never fails. 1Cor. 13:4-7

This Wisdom from Above

But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy. 18 Now the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace. James 3:17-18

When we use the wisdom from above. We see the qualifications in their true light. First, we must thoroughly understand each condition to see what God is seeking. This is the first step in any selection process. Once we understand them, we must mercifully and

compassionately apply them. This doesn't mean overlook the command, but using mercy, compassion, and love, we seek the "*wisdom that comes from above.*" As we assess each qualification and each person, we are continually asking ourselves. Am I being "*gentle,*" and "*willing to yield,*" as I consider and reconsider any quality in which I may have doubt? Can I honestly say that my assessments are "*full of mercy,*" "*without partiality*" and "*without hypocrisy?*"

The Steps of Salvation

We have the perfect example of how we are to judge when we consider the conditions one must do to be saved. We all know that before anyone can obey the gospel, there are five things that must be done. They can be called conditions or qualifications. When the Philippian Jailer, who before the earthquake was content to leave Paul in the stocks, asked Paul "*what must I do to be saved,*" how did Paul respond? After "*they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all who were in his house. And he took them the same hour of the night and washed their stripes. And immediately he and all his family were baptized.*" (Acts 16:31-34). Did Paul wait for faith to grow, for repentance to deepen, or conviction that Jesus is Lord to broaden? No, the smallest amount of each condition was enough for him to baptize him the same hour of the night.

We all know that before anyone can obey the gospel, we must be certain they have Heard (Rom. 10:17), believed (John 8:24), repented (Lk 13:3), are willing to confess (Rom 10:9-10) and be baptized (Acts 2:38). But we are merciful, using the wisdom from above to assess each quality. If they believe, even a little, we will move to the next step. I have never met anyone who would tell them to wait a few weeks. Certainly if they don't believe, or there is still any doubt, we would tell them to wait, but if they tell us they believe, we accept it. We do the same with repentance, and confession. We aren't looking for the greatest degree, but the minimum where the qualification has been met.

How could we say assessing the qualifications for elders should be more difficult than this? Since it is evident from Scripture, the smallest amounts of these four things "qualifies" them to be a Christian, how could we say give elder's qualifications should be any different? We don't demand they hear the whole Bible, believe the truth on every doctrine in the Bible, or learn all that the Bible says about sin so they can properly repent. We don't expect them to know all about the Lordship of Jesus before they confess. We know we don't have the right to do this for salvation, yet many do it for the qualifications of elders. The truth is they only need to meet the qualification, not the highest degree we could demand. The fact that the church had elders very soon after the gospel was preached, offers us a strong case that the same application of mercy and understanding that leads to salvation should also lead to an eldership.

Wise congregations look at their men with mercy and compassion. Those who have **SOME** of **ALL** the qualifications could be considered to be qualified. It is not the degree of the qualification, but the sincere admission that they possess them **ALL** that qualifies them.

A Secular Illustration

There is one other Scriptural application we should make. Jesus was deeply concerned that men in the world would be wiser for their own generation than children of light are in the church.

And his lord commended the unrighteous steward because he had done wisely: for the sons of this world are for their own generation wiser than the sons of the light. Luke 16:8

"The sons of this world" have found a simple way to assess men and appoint them to difficult tasks based on qualifications. For a doctor, they first create the qualifications necessary to do the job and a list of minimum standards. This might include the number of years of school, their grades, time spent as an intern, and the board tests that show their knowledge and experience.

Thousands of people qualify to become doctors by this method and seldom is there a problem. They don't require 100% on all tests and assessments. Some get 90% or even less and are still allowed to practice. If men know they must show mercy and

understanding of human failings in the secular realm why can't the church do this for their elders?

A man desiring the office of a bishop will not have 100% of any qualification!. Man cannot have 100% of all the qualifications. No man ever has and no man ever will. But they did have elders. What was the acceptable level of a qualification that allowed a man to be appointed? In mercy and good judgment, the man is assessed on the basis of all the qualifications. The church will find each man to be very qualified in some areas and weaker in others. Then the difficult part comes. Why is the man weak in these areas? Has he grown and is there expectation that he will continue grow? Does he have enough of the quality that even though weak, it is admitted by all that when mercy and compassion are applied, he does have the quality, and will continue to grow and gain more.

The danger of lowering qualifications and admitting unqualified men cannot be overlooked. No one wants this to happen. But to go to the other extreme and keep qualified men out is not the answer either. The perfect solution is in the middle. The qualifications must be looked at in the context of the perfect law of liberty where mercy glories over judgment. Qualifications can be assessed by loving merciful brethren who have set a realistic standard for the qualifications when considering the individuals. The members know these men and have seen their growth. They know their character. They see weaknesses in some areas and strengths in others. But a day comes when the weaknesses reach a level where honest merciful brethren are comfortable with them. Once that day comes, there is no reason to wait any longer.

When Paul sent Titus to appoint elders in every church, he expected the qualifications to be met. It must have been an obvious inference to Titus that he was to select the men who relative to that congregation had the qualifications necessary to fulfill the office. He might find within two different congregations men with differing abilities. He might find three men in one congregation who tower above the same three men in another congregation and yet still appoint them. The qualifications require good judgment, and they also require mercy! The men being assessed must have all the qualifications to be appointed, but the degree to which they have them will be different in every man.

All men have different abilities and attributes. They differ in teaching ability, in age, wisdom, hospitality, character, temperament, etc. Just as wise and compassionate people give young qualified doctors a chance to practice medicine and grow to become aged and experienced, wise and compassionate Christians take the qualifications and with mercy and good judgment appoint men to the office of a bishop. They don't wait for men to reach perfection before appointing them. They appoint them when they feel they have reached them to the least degree. That is all God requires in any realm.

the husband of one wife,

Although these words appear to be simple and straightforward, they are among the most controversial of all the qualifications. More has been written on them than all the rest combined. The reason for this was discussed in a prophesy given in Timothy. Even before the close of the first century, Paul had revealed that marriage was going to become a very controversial subject in the church.

Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons, 2 speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their own conscience seared with a hot iron, 3 forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from foods which God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and know the truth. 1Tim. 4:1-3

The Holy Spirit stated this "expressly," so it was distinct, clear and exact. At some point in the future two things God had given to be received with thanksgiving by all who had accepted and believed the truth would be forbidden by religious leaders or teachers. While the truth in Scripture teaches that marriage is a wonderful gift from God for all, later preachers and teachers would arise who would teach the opposite.

The history of celibacy in the Roman Catholic church reveals that within four hundred years after the writing of this letter, the Catholic church was already teaching that the

“clergy” should not be married. Taking a few passages out of their context, those influenced by the pagan philosophy of Gnosticism gradually came to the conclusion that the comforts and joys of marriage were incompatible with devout service to God. According to them, since pleasure is evil, and marriage brings great pleasure, marriage should be forbidden.

They sought to make Jesus and Paul agree with them. They used Jesus’ words regarding divorce (Mt. 19:10-12) and Paul’s words regarding the present distress (1Cor. 7:32-35) to compel all who wanted to preach or serve as leaders in the church to remain unmarried. Obviously the people teaching these things must go to great lengths to obscure this qualification and nullify it with human wisdom and sophistry. These teachings have continued from the fourth century up to the present, and we still see an unmarried pope, bishops, cardinals, priests, and nuns. The scholarship of all who have been influenced by this teaching will obviously be tainted with prejudice and error.

Yet the Holy Spirit expressly revealed that this teaching is false and part of an apostasy from the true church. Any teaching that leads to the conclusion that elders and others in the church should be forbidden to marry is made by those who do not “*believe and know the truth.*”

Yet this qualification is still assailed and twisted. A large segment of commentaries and other scholarship we can consult on this verse is still influenced by this error. The comments of denominational writers shows a hopeless perversion of Scripture to justify what was inherited from Catholicism. This qualification stands in the way of this false doctrine, making it certain it would run aground against the wisdom of men. In spite of the prophecy, the clear teaching of the Bible on the honorable estate of marriage, it is still viewed by many as an inferior state.

But the Holy Spirit who gave this same qualification in 1Tim. 3:2, stated expressly that it would be nullified by those who lived in the future in the very next chapter! Since the Spirit knew this apostasy was coming, He obviously worded it so any attempt to twist or pervert it would become obvious to those who “*believe and know the truth.*”

Since we know understand that there is great error on the subject, we must keep our minds clear of the prejudice that has been created by the false scholarship and only look at the words in the qualification itself.

“*The husband of one wife*” translates the Greek phrase “*mias gunaikos andra*” in Timothy, and “*mias gunaikos aner*” in Titus.

“*mias...* a cardinal numeral, one...” (Thayer, p 186-187)

...is used to signify (l) (a) one in contrast to many... (b) metaphorically, union and concord... (2) emphatically, (a) a single (one), to the exclusion of others,... (b) one, alone... © one and the same...” (Vine, Vol. 3 p 137)

“*gunaikos...* 1. univ. a woman of any age, whether a virgin, or married, or a widow... 2. a wife...” (Thayer, p 123)

“*aner, andros...* a man,... 1. With a reference to sex, and so to distinguish a man from a woman; either a. as a male... or b. as a husband... 3. univ. any male person, a man...” (Thayer, p 45)

After carefully considering these definitions, along with the grammar in the sentence it is evident there are only two possible translations. The elder must be a “*one woman man / man of one woman*”, or a “*one wife husband / husband of one wife.*” The only ambiguity in the quality is whether to translate man and woman or husband and wife.

The fact that Paul used the term man/husband and joined it with woman/wife proves conclusively to anyone not seeking to justify a previous notion that the man was expected to be married. A careful consideration of the facts offers one clear and obvious conclusion. With the coming apostasy the Holy Spirit chose precise language that could not be twisted.

If He had only used the word “*aner,*” some would have argued that Paul did not mean husband, but man since the Greek word is somewhat ambiguous and thereby would have been much easier to set aside. But because God was already aware that this apostasy would lead in that direction, He wanted the qualification set forth so clearly that no one could misunderstand or misinterpret. (1Tim. 4:1-4).

Hence the Spirit joined the ambiguous “man/husband” to the other ambiguous “woman/wife.” By placing woman in the genitive, there is no way to separate the two. An understanding of the purpose of the genitive case proves this conclusively. Carefully consider the description of how a noun used in the genitive (*woman*) limits the other noun in the sentence (*man*).

“The genitive is the case of definition or description. It “is in function adjectival.” and usually limits a substantive... the genitive is “employed to qualify the meaning of a preceding noun and to show in what more definite sense it is to be taken.” ... Thus the basal function of the genitive is to define. In this it quite clearly carries with it an idea of limitation,...” The genitive reduces the range of reference possible to an idea, and confines its application within specific limits.” (Dana and Mantey, “A Manual Grammar of the Greek NT,” p. 72-73)

Thus the noun “*man/husband*” is “**limited**” by the noun “*woman/wife*.” The “*one wife*” “**reduces the range of reference possible to the idea**” of man and “**confines it within specific limits.**” If the “*man*” does not have “*one wife*” he does not fit the “**specific limits**” placed by the Holy Spirit by placing “*one woman/wife*” in the genitive.

There is no way to set this aside. Let those in apostasy argue that the term is “*man*” and not “*husband*.” Still that “*man*” must have a “*woman!*” There is no logical argument to remove this. The man must be joined to a woman. He must have a woman who belongs to him. Since marriage is the only honorable way for a man to have such a woman, he must be the husband of a wife. He must be a married man!

Why does Paul use the term “one?” Doesn’t everything he needed to express regarding the man being a husband find its fulfillment in the term “*husband of a wife*”? Why does he emphasize this? This is the heart and soul of the controversy. The term “*one*” is a specific term for the number one. It refers to something less than two and more than none. It makes it so specific that it is amazing that there could be any disagreement. The man must have one wife. Not two, three, four, five, six, etc. wives and not none! He must have **ONE wife!**

H. E. Phillips book on the Eldership, offers a comprehensive discussion of the various arguments put forth to remove marriage from this qualification. It is an excellent book I highly recommend. The information on the husband and wife span over forty pages(97-140).

“The statement of Paul here when translated into English means that the bishop must be: **THE** -- a definite, specific--**HUSBAND**--a married man, joined to a woman by lawful marriage--**OF**--having the relation of, forming a part of, or belonging to--**ONE**--a single in number; more than none and less than two--**WIFE**--a woman lawfully joined to a man by the bond of marriage. The bishop cannot be a husband of any kind unless he is married. If he could be a husband without marriage, he would be an unmarried husband, which is ridiculous. It would be as ridiculous as single wives or married bachelors.” (Phillips, H. E. “Scriptural Elders and Deacons,” Cogdill Foundation Publications, Marion, Indiana, 1959 p 99)

“A series of nine appeals have been made to support the position of unmarried elders: (1) Evidence of scholars, (2) A restrictive requirement and not a positive one, (3) It only means blameless in the marriage relations, (4) Paul was an elder and was unmarried, (5) Christ was the Chief Bishop and was unmarried, (6) The parallel between II Corinthians 7:2 and 1Timothy 3:2, (7) Paul said the unmarried state was preferred in service to God, (8) Bishops can get as much experience without a family, (9) To compel bishops to marry is arbitrary and absurd.” (Phillips, H. E. op. cit., p 101)

“If the numeral ONE is the important word here, there is no escaping the fact that the idea of NONE is not taught. One means more than none and less than two. A bachelor has less than one wife and a polygamist has more than one wife, consequently, if ONE is the pivot word of the passage it cannot be just restrictive and not positive. One here has the same meaning as the one in Ephesians 4:5-- “One Lord, one faith, one baptism...” That does not mean “NO Lord, NO faith, NO baptism.” Neither does “one wife” mean “no wife.” (Phillips, H. E. op. cit., p 109)

“An appropriate case is supposed where a man is qualified (?) without marriage and children and the question is then asked: “Is this qualified man to be deprived of the work of an elder just because he does not have a family?” That is to beg the question. Could we not say the same of the quality of being “apt to teach?” Suppose a case where a man is reasonably qualified in all points except that he is not “apt to teach.” Shall we deprive him

of the position of elder because of that? One argument is as scriptural as the other.” (Phillips, H. E. op. cit., p 110)

I have also included quotes from other books on the eldership that I think are helpful.

“To Timothy and Titus both, the apostle prescribes that the overseer shall be the husband of one wife. There has been a vast amount of disputation as to whether this requires him to be a married man. It is alleged, in opposition to this idea, that when churches were planted among a people practicing polygamy, men would frequently be immersed who had a plurality of wives, and that the apostle intends only to prohibit such from being made overseers. Undoubtedly the use of the numeral one in the text has this force, and it would be unlawful to place a polygamist or bigamist in the office. But while the expression has this force, we think that candor requires the admission that it also has the effect of requiring a man to be a married man. That he should be the husband of one wife, forbids having less than one as clearly as it forbids having more than one. If it be said that a man owns but one farm, it is just as clearly implied that he owns one as that he owns no more than one. Moreover, the context confirms that conclusion; for the apostle proceeds in both epistles to state how the overseer must govern his household, and especially his children; which statements imply that he is to be a man of family.

It has been urged as an objection to this conclusion, that it would disqualify Paul himself, and Barnabas and Timothy for the office of Elder although they held offices or positions of much greater responsibility. But this objection can have no force, unless it be made to appear that these brethren were qualified for the Elder’s office, or that the qualifications of an Apostle or an Evangelist include those of an Elder. Neither of the two, however, can be made to appear, and therefore the objection has no force whatever. Indeed, it seems most fitting that men whose chief work led them from city to city and nation to nation, through all kinds of danger and hardship, should be freed from the care of a family, and equally fitting that the shepherd, whose work was always at home and in the midst of the families of his flock, should be a man of family. A married man certainly possesses advantages for such work that are impossible to an unmarried man, and the experience of the world must confirm the wisdom of the requirement that the overseer shall be the husband of one wife. It may be well to add that one living wife is clearly meant, and that there is no allusion to the number of deceased wives a man may have had. If my wife is dead, I am not now her husband.” (McGarvey, J. W. op. cit., p 56-57)

“The domestic relations of the elder have given rise to more discussions and disagreements than any or perhaps all of the remaining qualifications. The meaning of the expression, “husband of one wife” has been debated since the close of the first century. Four prominent views have been set forth by expositors throughout the centuries. (1) Some contend that it prohibits a divorce and remarriage. (2) Others contend that it prohibits polygamy. (3) Still others believe the phrase prohibits remarriage after the death of one’s first spouse. (4) The vast majority of our brethren believe it is a statement which prohibits both polygamy, celibacy, and divorce and remarriage...” (Williams, op. cit., p 23-24)

These quotations sum up the controversy. Men who desire the authority and position of the office but are unqualified for one reason or another often seek to lower the qualifications to meet their circumstances. Marriage is a difficult condition to maintain if one is not the proper type of man. Many have sought the position who could not maintain this necessary prerequisite. Especially in the great apostasy is this true. Since the words are clear and he is to be married to one woman, only the prejudices of men can force it to mean anything else.

Yet there is one consideration that has also become a point of disagreement. Does one wife mean in a lifetime, or does one wife mean at that moment? If it is one woman in a lifetime, then if his wife dies, and he remarries, he is no longer the husband of one wife, but two. Those who hold this position believe that such a man is no longer qualified. Others point out that if a man is married to one woman and that woman dies he becomes married to no woman and is unmarried. If he then remarries he becomes the husband of one wife again and could again be considered qualified. The Scriptures are clear and forceful on the fact that a man is no longer bound to a wife and thus has no wife after she dies.

Or do you not know, brethren (for I speak to those who know the law), that the law has dominion over a man as long as he lives? 2 For the woman who has a husband is bound by the law to her husband as long as he lives. But if the husband dies, she is released from the law of her husband. 3 So then if, while her husband lives, she marries another man,

she will be called an adulteress; but if her husband dies, she is free from that law, so that she is no adulteress, though she has married another man. Rom 7:1-3

Since a woman/man can only be bound to their spouse as long as they live, when the spouse dies he is free from that law and has no(0) wife. If he remarries he once again becomes the husband of one wife. The first marriage has been dissolved and will never be again.

Then some Sadducees, who say there is no resurrection, came to Him; and they asked Him, saying: 19 Now there were seven brothers. The first took a wife; and dying, he left no offspring. 21 And the second took her, and he died; nor did he leave any offspring. And the third likewise. 22 So the seven had her and left no offspring. Last of all the woman died also. 23 Therefore, in the resurrection, when they rise, whose wife will she be? For all seven had her as wife.” 24 Jesus answered and said to them, “Are you not therefore mistaken, because you do not know the Scriptures nor the power of God? 25 For when they rise from the dead, they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels in heaven. Mk 12:20-25

Since marriage is forever severed at death it was foolish and unscriptural of the Sadducees to refer back to it as though it were still in affect. When a husband dies, she is free to marry so she is not married and has no husband. Since the Scriptures are this clear about what happens to marriage after a spouse dies, it is difficult to see how someone could successfully prove that a man whose wife died 20 years earlier and remarried is unqualified because he had two wives. He had one, lost her to death and now still has one. The church would certainly want to take some time to evaluate the new wife and see if she is qualified, but as far as the qualification of the man himself, if he is married after the death a former wife he is still a husband of one wife.

More complicated is the question of divorce. Not so much because of the husband of one wife, but the quality of being blameless and without reproach. A divorce is a terrible thing. Clearly if it is scriptural and he puts her away he has no wife. If a man puts away a wife for adultery, the marriage has been severed by God and he is the husband of no(0) wife. If he remarries he is once again the husband of one wife.

Yet in this case, the problem is not so simple. A divorce is a messy and terrible event and generally we have to wonder if any man is fully innocent and did all he could. Even if he did, there is still the nagging doubt that there might be some blame. But after all is said, if the divorce itself was Scriptural, he is still a husband with one wife. Yet each person and each local church will have to struggle to make the right decision on each situation.

having faithful children (KJV NKJV); children that believe (ASV NAS) are believers (ESV)

The two possible translations are clearly seen in the difference between the KJV/NKJV and the ASV/NAS/ESV. Those who follow the translation “*faithful children*” see in this qualification the need for the to be be “*faithful.*” While those who follow the second translation “*believe*” or “*are believers*” believe that all his children must be Christians who have obeyed the gospel and are still believers. The former adds another layer of questions by considering to whom do these children have to be faithful? Some say their father in the flesh while others believe it is faithful to their spiritual father (God).

Since the term “*having*” is present active participle which when joined to the verb which is in the present tense, “*be,*” we must understand this as a continuous action in the present moment. Thus as the present moment is continuously moving from year to year this qualification moves with it. Those who say this is only true while the children are in the home must answer from the context how they could conclude when it stopped. Since the Spirit gives no exceptions, it is difficult to understand why this present continuous action verb should expire. It doesn’t with the one wife, why should it be different with the children?

So the children of the elder regardless of their age must either be faithful to their father or they must be Christians. As we will see over the next few pages, it is not a simple matter to draw the proper conclusion on these two differences.

When all is studied and considered, it all rests on Greek grammar, and because it rests solely on grammar, we have to rely on two basic foundations to make the proper interpretation/translation. First and always, we rely on how this same word is used in other Scriptures and thus look over the shoulders of the scholars and translators to assess why they came to their conclusion. Second, we must rely on Greek scholars who knew the language to help us see clearly what was intended by the Holy Spirit when He gave these words. We learned from Paul that the Holy Spirit gave the words (1 Cor. 2:9-13) and from Jesus that even tenses matter (Mt. 22:29-33). So we must learn from the Greek Scholars what the grammar of these terms compel us to conclude. For these reasons, I have chosen to approach this differently than I normally would. Because of the nature of this disagreement, we must rely on Greek scholars who are fallible men. Knowing that the most sensible way to do this is to consider as many reliable scholars as possible and assess how and why they chose to interpret the grammar as they did. This is an unusual way to approach a Scripture, but the nature of the controversy leaves little else as a viable and reasonable way to proceed. We can't just form an opinion without looking at all the facts and the only way we can get these facts is to consider the conclusions others have drawn and their reasons for doing so. Therefore, we have broken this down into four sections and we will draw our final conclusion based on all the facts.

- (1) Evidence of the Translations;
- (2) Evidence of Lexicons,
- (3) Evidence of Scholars (Commentaries)
- (4) The foundation used by these scholars (All the Scriptures where the word was used).

(1) Evidence of Translations:

Of the primary translations used today, we see that the KJV and NKJV use "faithful," while all the other translations use the term "believer" or "who/that believe."

<i>having children who believe,</i>	(NASB)	<i>having faithful children</i>	(KJV)
<i>having children that believe,</i>	(ASV)	<i>having faithful children</i>	(NKJV)
<i>his children are believers</i>	(ESV)		
<i>a man whose children believe</i>	(NIV)		

But I didn't want to stop there. Since my Bible program has many other translations I considered them all to see if this trend continued. I am not endorsing or validating any of the "thought for thought," or "dynamic" translations, nor the paraphrases. I only use them for a grammatical analysis. All of these scholars were fallible men, but their assessment of the grammar of this term is still important to assess. Some are liberal some are conservative, but they overwhelmingly chose the more difficult "believe" and not the easier path of the passive "faithful."

16 used the active "believe." 5 used the passive "faithful" 1 used "faithful to God."

<i>whose children are [well trained and are] believers,</i>	(AMP)	<i>having children</i>	STEDFAST	(YLT)	<i>his children are believers</i>	(RSV)
<i>having children who are believers,</i>	(Wuest)	<i>having children who believe</i>		(WEB)	<i>man whose children believe</i>	(TNIV).
<i>his children must be faithful to God</i>	(Easy-to-Read)	<i>having</i>	FAITHFUL	(Webster)	<i>whose children are believers,</i>	(NRSV)
<i>having children who are themselves believers</i>	(Weymouth)	<i>His children must be believers.</i>		(NirV)	<i>his children must be</i>	believers
<i>having</i>	FAITHFUL	<i>children,</i>	(Douay-Rheims)	<i>must have believing children</i>	(TNCV)	<i>with believing children</i>
<i>his children believers</i>	(The Message)	<i>Their children must love the Lord</i>	(TLB)	<i>his children must be believers</i>	(NLT)	<i>whose children are of the</i>
<i>having</i>	FAITHFUL	<i>children</i>	(Holman Christian Standard)	<i>having believing children</i>	(Darby)	faith
<i>have children who are believers.</i>	(God's Word)	<i>with</i>	FAITHFUL	<i>children</i>	(NET Bible)	<i>his children must be</i>
						believers
						(TEV)

Clearly the evidence of the translations points to "believer," A total of 20 translations chose "believe" and 7 selected "faithful." Clearly these is some margin of doubt since 7 chose the passive. As we look at the Lexicons, we will learn why there is some doubt whether it is the active *believe* or the passive *faithful*.

2. The Evidence of the Lexicons and Dictionaries

A lexicon like "Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon," or dictionaries like "Vine's Expository Dictionary of the NT" or "Kittel's Theological Dictionary of NT Words" incorporate word

definitions, grammar, and word usage of both the NT and secular Greek. These are the type of scholars who translate the Bible into a language we can easily understand. Whenever there is a controversy about the meaning of a word or the grammar in a sentence we have to rely on them to try to understand the nature of the question and the proof for each side. We will begin with Vine's Expository Dictionary. (NOTE: I have highlighted the most important parts of the definition so you don't have to read the every word).

pistos **a verbal adjective**, akin to *peitho* (see FAITH), is **used in two senses, (a) passive, "faithful, to be trusted, reliable," (b) active, signifying "believing, trusting, relying," ...** **With regard to believers, they are spoken of sometimes in the active sense, sometimes in the passive, i.e., sometimes as "believers," sometimes as "faithful." ...** NT:4103), ... *pistos* **(A) in the active sense** means "believing, trusting"; **(B) in the passive sense**, "trustworthy, faithful, trustworthy." It is translated "believer" in 2Cor. 6:15; "them that believe" in 1Tim. 4:12, RV (KJV, "believers"); in 1Tim 5:16, "if any woman that believeth," lit. "if any believing woman." So in 6:2, "believing masters." In 1 Peter 1:21 the RV, following the most authentic mss., gives the noun form, "are believers in God" (KJV, "do believe in God"). In John 20:27 it is translated "believing." **It is best understood with significance (A), above, e.g., in Gal. 3:9; Acts 16:1; 2 Cor. 6:15; Titus 1:6;** it has significance (B), e. g., in 1 Thess 5:24; 2 Thess 3:3 (see Notes on Thes. p. 211, and Gal. p. 126, by Hogg and Vine). (Vine's Expository Dictionary 4103)

When W.E. Vine calls "*pistos*" a *verbal adjective* we need to take a moment to remember exactly what that means. We learned these things in Grade school but they are not always readily remembered. A *verbal adjective* is made up of two parts. An *adjective* is a word that describes or modifies a noun. The noun *man* is modified by adjectives such as *young* or *old*, *strong* or *weak*. A *verb* is a word of action such as *walk*, *run*, or *believe*. A *man walks* is a noun and a verb. An *old man walks* is an adjective, a noun and a verb. A *verbal adjective* is an *adjective* with *verbal* qualities of action. In this case, the *verbal adjective* is *faithful* or *believing*. They are *adjectives* with the action of a *verb*. But just as a *verb* can be active or passive, so can a *verbal adjective*. In the Greek language "*pistos*" is a *verbal adjective* that can be used in the active sense of "believing" or in passive since of "faithful."

When a verb is active, the individual is doing the action. When a verb is passive, someone else is doing the action to them. Hence in the verse "*he that believes and is baptized*" we see the active believe set next to the passive be baptized. So if one is actively *pistos*, they performing the action of *believing*, but if they are passively "*pistos*," then others see *faithfulness* within them. *Believe* is what we actively do and *faithful* is what others see in us.

In some cases there are two different endings on the word that will tell us whether it is active or passive. That is not true with a verbal adjective. Since the word is used in both senses with the same Greek endings, we only have the context of each verse to determine if it is active or passive. Vine stated that he believed in Titus 1:6 the children were doing the action and therefore were *believing* children.

Next we turn to Thayer to see if he concurs with Vine or if he has anything to add.

pistos, piste, piston(peitho) ... **1. trusty, faithful; of persons who show themselves faithful in the transaction of business, the execution of commands, or the discharge of official duties:**... *doulos*(a servant) Mt. 24:45; 25:21,23; *oikonomos*(steward) Luke 12:42; 1 Cor 4:2; ... *diakonos*(servant), Eph. 6:21; Col. 1:7; 4:7; *archiereus*(high priest) Heb. 2:17; 3:2 of God, abiding by his promises, 1Cor. 1:9; 10:13; 2Cor. 1:18; 1Thess. 5:24; 2Thess. 3:3; Heb. 10:23; 11:11; 2Tim. 2:13; 1John 1:9; 1 Peter 4:19; add, 1Cor. 4:17; Col. 4:9; 1Tim. 1:12; Heb. 3:5; 1Peter. 5:12;...

2. easily persuaded; believing, confiding, trusting (Theognis, Aeschylus, Sophocles, Plato, others); in the NT one who **trusts in God's promises**, Gal. 3:9; is **convinced that Jesus has been raised from the dead**, opposed to *apistos*(a-privative) John 20:27; one who has become **convinced that Jesus is the Messiah** and the author of salvation... (**a believer**): Acts 16:1; 2 Cor 6:15; 1 Tim 5:16; with the addition of to *kurio*(the Lord) dative of the person in whom faith or trust is reposed, Acts 16:15; plural in Col 1:2 (where cf. Lightfoot); 1 Tim 4:10; 6:2; **Titus 1:6**; Rev 17:14; ..." (Thayer's Greek Lexicon, p 514; 4103)

Thayer, completely agreed with Vine. If their actions lead others to see them as faithful in the execution of commands or discharge of official duty, then the word is passive since it is what others see within them. It is then translated “*trusty, faithful, reliable.*” But if the word describes the action itself (what they are actually doing), then they are “*easily persuaded; believing, confiding, trusting.*” Thayer also specifically states that in Titus 1:6 the children are actively *believing* and not passively seen as *faithful*. Other dictionaries confirm that this is a verbal adjective and that it can be translated with the active believe or the passive faithful.

Pistos, faithful, believing... **(1) *Pistis* occurs 67 times in the NT, though in only 16 of these instances with the meaning *faithful* in the sense of *believing*. The majority of occurrences thus follow the meaning predominant in non-Christian usage: *faithful* in the sense of *dependable*.** It is striking that John uses it only with the meaning *believing*. ... **(2) *Faithful, dependable, credible* (= prompting faith or trust): (3) *Faithful in the sense of believing* ...** Thus does Gal. 3:9 speak of Abraham, *who had faith* ... in John 20:27 the resurrected Jesus admonishes: “Do not be unfaithful, but *believing*”; ... **Certain persons are described as *believing* in reference to their conversion to Christianity:** Thus Acts 16:1 describes Timothy as the son of a Jewish woman who had become a believer ... Col. 1:2 speaks of *faithful* brethren, 1 Tim 6:2 of *believing* masters, and **Titus 1:6 of *believing* children.** Finally, **used absolutely *pistoi* simply means *believers*** = Christians (so 2Cor. 6:15; Eph. 1:1; 1Tim. 4:10,12; 5:16). (Exegetical Dictionary of the NT)

pisteuo pistis pistos pistoo ... I. Classical Usage. First attested of the words *pis-t-* **is the (verbal) adjective *pistos* ... It has the active and passive senses of “*trusting*” and “*worthy of trust*” (“reliable”). ... *pistis* can denote not only the confidence one has but also the confidence one enjoys ... *pistis* ... can mean both “*faithfulness*” and “*trust*,”** though it is seldom used in the former sense. As “trust” or “faith” it occurs only in religious usage. (Kittel TDWNT)

The Exegetical Dictionary, and Kittel also confirm the conclusions of Vine and Thayer. The word *pistis* is used 67 times in the NT, and 16 of those times it is used in the active sense of believing. The other 51 times it is translated in the passive “*faithful, dependable* or *credible.*” It is interesting that even with the predominant use of the passive, they still affirm it is used in the active sense of believe.

I looked at two more books, one a dictionary and the other a lexicon. But they have nothing new to add.

pistos ... **to win over, persuade. Worthy of belief, trust, or confidence. (I) Trustworthy ... True, sure, trustworthy, believable, worthy of credit** Of things, true, sure, such as *ho logos* (the word) (II) Faithful in duty to oneself and to others, of true fidelity (Col 4:9; 1 Peter 5:12, a faithful brother; Rev 2:10). Of God as faithful to His promises (1 Cor 1:9, “dependable the God” [a.t.]; 10:13; ... of Christ (2 Tim 2:13). As an attestation or oath, God is faithful (2 Cor 1:18). Especially of servants, ministers, who are faithful in the performance of duty **(III) With an active sense, firmness in faith, confiding, trusting, believing, equivalent to *ho pisteuōn* ... to believe** (John 20:27; Gal 3:9). Followed by the dat. (Acts 16:15; 1 Cor 4:17). **Used in an absolute sense** (Acts 10:45; 16:1; 2 Cor 6:15; 1 Tim 4:3,10,12; 5:16; 6:2; **Titus 1:6**; Rev 17:14). (Complete Word Study Dictionary: NT)

pistos ... **Passive., to be trusted or believed;** 1. of persons, **trusty, faithful** ... 2. Of things, **trustworthy, reliable, sure:** ... **Active., believing, trusting, relying:** Acts 16:1, 2 Cor 6:15, Gal 3:9, 1 Tim 4:10, 5:16, 6:2, **Titus 1:6**, Rev 17:14; pl., Acts 10:45, 1 Tim 4:3, 4:12; ... (On the difficulty of choosing in some cases between the active and the passive meaning, v. Lightfoot., Gal., 157.) (Abbott-Smith Manual Greek Lexicon of the NT)

Once again, both these books place *pistos* as a verbal adjective and they both choose to place Titus 1:6 in the active believing and not in the passive faithful. Thayer and Abbott-Smith encourage us to look at what Lightfoot had to say. He as a Greek Scholar who was asked to help with the translation of the original ESV from 1880 which later became the ASV when it was brought to America. He has some interesting remarks that help us understand the dilemma of the translator on this word.

The Hebrew ... the Greek *pistos*, the Latin *fides* and the English *faith* **hover between two meanings: *trustfulness*, the frame of mind which relies on another; and *trustworthiness*, the frame of mind which can be relied upon.** Not only are the two connected together grammatically as active and passive of the same word, or logically, as

subject and object of the same act; but there is a close moral affinity between them. **Fidelity, constancy, firmness, confidence, reliance, trust, belief — these are the links which connect the two extremes, the passive with the active meaning of ‘faith.’** owing to these combined causes, **the two senses will at times be so blended together that they can only be separated by some arbitrary distinction.**” (Lightfoot; The Epistle of St. Paul to the Galatians p. 154-158)

So what conclusions can we draw from the lexicons and dictionaries? They all agree that it is a verbal adjective and that it can be translated either “believe” or “faithful.” Yet five of them place the ides of “*pista*” children as believing and not faithful while the sixth simply passes over it without comment. So the scholarship of these lexicons and dictionaries fall solidly into the translation believing and not faithful. Yet Lightfoot cautions us to remember that this word will always “*hover between two meanings*” of the active “*trustfulness*” and the passive “*trustworthiness*,” and that “*the two senses will at times be so blended together that they can only be separated by some arbitrary distinction.*” Yet that being said, they all agree that it is active in Titus.

3. The Evidence of the Scholars(Commentaries).

Although the use of commentaries to prove a doctrinal point is very dangerous, in this case, we are only seeking an opinion on grammar. Since many of these men are experts in the Greek Language, have the same scholarship as those who write the Lexicons. It is only instructive to see whether these scholars understood “*pistis/pistos*” as a verbal adjective that is active “believe” or passive “faithful.” We are not seeking a doctrinal viewpoint, but only a grammatical analysis. So how did these scholarly men, many of whom knew Greek grammar, understand the term?

As in the translations, so also in these scholars *pistis/pistos* 3 understood it as the passive “*faithful*” and 12 saw it as the active “believe.”

Faithful:

- ◆ Barnes Notes
- ◆ Coffman’s
- ◆ EM Zerr

Believing

- ◆ Clarke’s Bible Commentary
- ◆ Jamieson Fausset and Brown
- ◆ NT Commentaries Lenski
- ◆ Robertson’s NT Word Pictures ◆ Calvin’s Commentaries
- ◆ Jewish NT Commentary)

Believing

- ◆ NT Handbook Series
 - ◆ Vincent’s NT Word Studies
 - ◆ Matthew Henry’s Commentary
 - ◆ Bible Knowledge Com.
 - ◆ Wiersbe’s NT Exp. Outlines
 - ◆ NT Com. William Hendriksen
- What conclusions can be drawn? The translations, dictionaries, lexicons and commentaries of those scholars who knew Greek all favored the more difficult “believing” to the easier “faithful.” In itself this proves nothing. But it helps us understand that the vast majority of scholarship points toward “believing” children and not “faithful” children. Yet the wise words of Lightfoot must never be forgotten “*Fidelity, constancy, firmness, confidence, reliance, trust belief — these are the links which connect the two extremes, the passive with the active meaning of ‘faith.’*” owing to these combined causes, *the two senses will at times be so blended together that they can only be separated by some arbitrary distinction.*

Hence, we must assess all the Scriptures on this topic and seek to understand whether this word which offers no hint in itself, fits the context better as believe or with faithful.

4. List of the Scriptures

The list of Scriptures helps clarify the active and passive use of *pistos/pistis*. As the Lexicons noted, when the verbal adjective is used of men or things, it is generally

translated with the passive “*faithful*,” and when it is used of God or His word it is translated with the active “*believe*.” Since some of the Scriptures use “*pistis*” more than once, the total number of uses is placed in front of each verse reaching to the total of 67. I have used a different font to identify those passages where the verbal adjective “*pistos*” is used in the active sense.

- 1 Who then is a **faithful** and wise servant, whom his lord hath made ruler over his household, to give them meat in due season? Mt. 24:45
- 2-5 His lord said unto him, Well done, thou good and **faithful** servant: thou hast been **faithful** over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord. 23 His lord said unto him, Well done, thou good and **faithful** servant: thou hast been **faithful** over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord. Mt. 25:21,23
- 6 And the Lord said, Who then is that **faithful** and wise steward, whom his lord shall make ruler over his household, to give them their portion of meat in due season? Lk. 12:42
- 7-10 He that is **faithful** in that which is least is **faithful** also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much. 11 If therefore ye have not been **faithful** in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches? 12 And if ye have not been **faithful** in that which is another man's, who shall give you that which is your own? Lk. 16:10-12
- 11 And he said unto him, Well, thou good servant: because thou hast been **faithful** in a very little, have thou authority over ten cities. Lk. 19:17
- 12* Then saith he to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side: and be not **faithless(unbelieving[apistis]-NKJV)**, but **believing[pistis]**. Jn. 20:27
- 13* And they of the circumcision which **believed** were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost. Acts 10:45
- 14 And as concerning that he raised him up from the dead, now no more to return to corruption, he said on this wise, I will give you the **sure mercies** of David. Acts 13:34
- 15* Then came he to Derbe and Lystra: and, behold, a certain disciple was there, named Timotheus, the son of a certain woman, which was a Jewess, and **believed**; but his father was a Greek: Acts 16:1
- 16* And when she was baptized, and her household, she besought us, saying, If ye have judged me to be **faithful** to the Lord, come into my house, and abide there. And she constrained us. Acts 16:15
- 17 God is **faithful**, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord. 1Cor. 1:9
- 19 Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found **faithful**. 1Cor. 4:2
- 20* For this cause have I sent unto you Timotheus, who is my beloved son, and **faithful** in the Lord, who shall bring you into remembrance of my ways which be in Christ, as I teach every where in every church. 2Cor. 4:17
- 21 Now concerning virgins I have no commandment of the Lord: yet I give my judgment, as one that hath obtained mercy of the Lord to be **faithful(trustworthyNKJV)**. 1Cor. 7:25
- 22 There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is **faithful**, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it. 1Cor. 10:13
- 23 But as God is **true(faithful -NKJV)**, our word toward you was not yea and nay. 2Cor. 1:18
- 24* And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that **believeth** with an infidel? 2Cor. 6:15
- 25* So then they which be of faith are blessed with **faithful)believing - NKJV)** Abraham. Gal. 3:9
- 26* Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, to the saints which are at Ephesus, and to the **faithful** in Christ Jesus: Eph. 1:1
- 27 But that ye also may know my affairs, and how I do, Tychicus, a beloved brother and **faithful** minister in the Lord, shall make known to you all things: Eph. 6:21
- 28* To the saints and **faithful** brethren in Christ which are at Colosse: Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Col. 1:2
- 29 As ye also learned of Epaphras our dear fellowservant, who is for you a **faithful** minister of Christ; Col. 1:7
- 30 All my state shall Tychicus declare unto you, who is a beloved brother, and a **faithful** minister and fellowservant in the Lord: Col. 4:7
- 31 With Onesimus, a **faithful** and beloved brother, who is one of you. They shall make known unto you all things which are done here. Col. 4:9
- 32 **faithful** is he that calleth you, who also will do it. 1Th. 5:24
- 33 But the Lord is **faithful**, who shall stablish you, and keep you from evil. 2Th. 3:3
- 34 And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he counted me **faithful**, putting me into the ministry; 1Tim. 1:12
- 35 This is a **faithful** saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief. 1Tim. 1:15

- 36 This is a **true(faithful -NKJV)** saying, If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work. 1Tim. 3:1
- 37 Even so must their wives be grave, not slanderers, sober, **faithful** in all things. 1Tim. 3:11
- 38* Forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which **believe** and know the truth. 1Tim. 4:3
- 39 This is a **faithful** saying and worthy of all acceptation. 1Tim. 4:9
- 40 For therefore we both labour and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the Saviour of all men, specially of those that **believe**. 1Tim. 4:10
- 41* Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the **believers**, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity. 1 Timothy 4:12
- 42* If any man or woman that **believeth** have widows, let them relieve them, and let not the church be charged; that it may relieve them that are widows indeed. 1 Timothy 5:16
- 43/44* And they that have **believing** masters, let them not despise them, because they are brethren; but rather do them service, because they are **faithful(believers - NKJV)** and beloved, partakers of the benefit. These things teach and exhort. 1 Timothy 6:2
- 45 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. 2 Timothy 2:2
- 46 It is a **faithful** saying: For if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him: 2 Timothy 2:11
- 47 If we believe not, yet he abideth **faithful**: he cannot deny himself. 2 Timothy 2:13
- 48 If any be blameless, the husband of one wife, having **faithful** children not accused of riot or unruly. Titus 1:6
- 49 Holding fast the **faithful** word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers. Titus 1:9
- 50 This is a **faithful** saying, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable unto men. Titus 3:8
- 51 Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and **faithful** high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. Hebrews 2:17
- 52 Who was **faithful** to him that appointed him, as also Moses was **faithful** in all his house. Hebrews 3:2
- 53 And Moses verily was **faithful** in all his house, as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after; Hebrews 3:5
- 54 Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is **faithful** that promised;) Hebrews 10:23
- 55 Through faith also Sara herself received strength to conceive seed, and was delivered of a child when she was past age, because she judged him **faithful** who had promised. Hebrews 11:11
- 56* Who by him do **believe** in God, that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God. 1 Peter 1:21
- 57 Wherefore let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls to him in well doing, as unto a **faithful** Creator. 1 Peter 4:19
- 58 By Silvanus, a **faithful** brother unto you, as I suppose, I have written briefly, exhorting, and testifying that this is the true grace of God wherein ye stand. 1 Peter 5:12
- 59 If we confess our sins, he is **faithful** and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. 1 John 1:9
- 60 Beloved, thou doest **faithfully** whatsoever thou doest to the brethren, and to strangers; 3 John 5
- 61 And from Jesus Christ, who is the **faithful** witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, Revelation 1:5
- 62 Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou **faithful** unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life. Revelation 2:10
- 63 I know thy works, and where thou dwellest, even where Satan's seat is: and thou holdest fast my name, and hast not denied my faith, even in those days wherein Antipas was my **faithful** martyr, who was slain among you, where Satan dwelleth. Revelation 2:13
- 64 And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write; These things saith the Amen, the **faithful** and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God; Revelation 3:14
- 65* These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and **faithful**. Revelation 17:14
- 66 And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called **faithful** and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. Revelation 19:11
- 67 And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and **faithful**. 6 And he said unto me, These sayings are **faithful** and true: and the Lord God of the holy prophets sent his angel to shew unto his servants the things which must shortly be done. Revelation 22:6

As we methodically consider the passages above and seek for the reasons why it is translated as the passive faithful in some contexts and the active believing in others. Some contexts will not allow the active sense of believe while others could not be the passive faithful. As noted above, sometimes it is impossible to know exactly which way to translate the word.

(6) Conclusions

While the Greek grammar would allow either translation, the evidence of translations, lexicons, dictionaries and scholars(commentaries) overwhelmingly favored the active sense of “*believing children*” over the passive “*faithful children*.”

What is gained or lost by each translation? How would each translation affect our understanding of the qualification? If we understand it in the active sense of *believing*, then the Holy Spirit demanded that elders have children who are Christians. This makes the qualification much more difficult to fulfill, but it is the translation most Greek scholars favored.

If we understand it in the passive sense of *faithful*, then the Holy Spirit is asking the congregation to assess the children’s conduct. The children are acting in a manner that leads everyone to conclude they are faithful in their actions. But the manner in which they are to be faithful is not expressed. Is this faithfulness directed toward God or toward the father. Although it could be either, most who see this as a passive believe it is directed toward the father.

When compared with the parallel qualification in I Timothy, these two complement and develop one another.

one who rules his own house well, having his children in submission with all reverence 5 (for if a man does not know how to rule his own house, how will he take care of the church of God?); 1Tim. 3:4-6

He must have his children in subjection, and they must be faithful or believing. One of the greatest goals a Christian father has for his children is to do everything he can to create a bright future for them. Training them to serve the Lord and become a Christian is one of the greatest things he can offer and a direct command from God.

And you, fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord. Eph. 6:4

“And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart. 7 You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up. Deut. 6:6-8

Those who believe and teach that “*faithful children*” only means **faithful** to the father and not to God have two obstacles to remove. The first is that it very well could be the active believe. The second, if the child must faithful, what other criteria than the passages above could be used to assess that faithfulness?

I went into this study without prejudice. I did not seek to prove one position or the other, but only to look at the evidence and draw a Scriptural and logical conclusion. It is obvious that the safer approach is to assess the prospective elder/bishop/shepherd for children who believe.

Who are Not Accused of Dissipation(Riot) or insubordination Unruly.

The Holy Spirit elaborated on the submissive reverence of the children in Timothy and the active belief in Titus with the requirement that no one within the church or those who are outside can bring an accusation against them. The Greek *kategoria* simply means an accusation or a charge. Pilate asked the Jews “*what accusation(katagoria) do you bring against this man?*” because he wanted to know what they believed he had done wrong. The elders children must have no one who can come forward and bring an accusation or wrongdoing in the realms of “*riot*” or “*unruly*.” Since we seldom use the term “*dissipation*” in every day discussions, we have to look at a definition to understand its scope.

“asotia... (the character of an asotos, i.e. of an abandoned man, one that cannot be saved... hence prop. incorrigibility), an abandoned, dissolute, life; profligacy, prodigality...” (Thayer, p 82)

“asotia... The original meaning is a. “incurable”... to be hopelessly sick... asotos then denotes b. “one who by his manner of life, esp. by dissipation, destroys himself”... a “wild and undisciplined life”... asotia occurs three times in the N.T.: at Eph 5:18: ... Tit 1:6... I Pet 4:4... In all these passages the word signifies wild and disorderly...” (Kittel, Vol I P 506-507)

Hence riot/dissipation describes the actions and attitudes of one who refuses to be disciplined or to be saved. Because they are incorrigible and will not accept correction, they give themselves over to any and everything regardless of the consequences. This dissipation leads them to destruction. They run in the wrong crowd to the wrong places and do the wrong things. The Christian who will indulge in any lust of the flesh, not simply in a moment of weakness but as a habitual practice is guilty of riot. As we consider the two other places this word is used we begin to understand its scope.

And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation(debauchery); but be filled with the Spirit Eph. 5:18

When one is drunk and under the influence of alcohol they naturally fall into dissipation. They do reckless and foolish things that can cut a life short or destroy one’s future. What they would not do sober and only would do when drunk is what these children are begin accused of doing all the time.

The second use of the term reveals the full scope of emotions that can create this dissipation.

that he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh for the lusts of men, but for the will of God. 3 For we have spent enough of our past lifetime in doing the will of the Gentiles — when we walked in lewdness, lusts, drunkenness, revelries, drinking parties, and abominable idolatries. 4 In regard to these, they think it strange that you do not run with them in the same flood of dissipation, speaking evil of you. 1Pet. 4:2-4

Lewdness and lusts, drunkenness and revelries, places to drink(bars) and idolatry all create this dissipation. People under the influence of these emotions and attitudes do the most obscene and evil things even to the point of destroying themselves. No child accused of such things has been properly trained, and a father of such children would be unable to become an elder.

It is important to see the depth of this accusation. The Holy Spirit didn’t say they must be “perfect” children, nor does He say “sinless” children. They are not required to be as mature as their father. But they must not be accused of being past hope. They must not be children who have given themselves completely over to their fleshly lusts. A child who commits a sin no matter how public can not be accused of riot if they repent. It is unfair and unscriptural to expect perfection out of an elder’s children. They are still babes and should be given the same grace and mercy as other babes in Christ. They must be in submission with all gravity, they must not be accused of riot and unruly, but they do not have to be perfect. The term “unruly” is defined:

“anupotakta... (a priv. and hupotasso) 1. [passively] not made subject, unsubjected... 2. [actively] that cannot be subjected to control, disobedient, unruly, refractory...” (Thayer, p 52)

“hupotasso... to arrange under, to subordinate; to subject, put in subjection... mid. to subject one’s self, to obey; to submit to one’s control; to yield to one’s admonition or advice...” (Thayer, p 645)

An unruly child is a child who will “*not be made subject*” to authority. He refuses to be controlled and lives in a continual disobedient state. Such a child was described under the Old Covenant.

“If a man has a stubborn and rebellious son who will not obey the voice of his father or the voice of his mother, and who, when they have chastened him, will not heed them, 19 then his father and his mother shall take hold of him and bring him out to the elders of his city, to the gate of his city. 20 And they shall say to the elders of his city, ‘This son of ours is stubborn and rebellious; he will not obey our voice; he is a glutton and a drunkard.’ 21 Then all the men of his city shall stone him to death with stones; so you shall put away the evil from among you, and all Israel shall hear and fear. Deut. 21:18-21

This child was stoned because of his violation of the fourth commandment. Because he was guilty of both dissipation and was unruly, he refused to honor his father and mother:

Honor your father and your mother, as Jehovah your God commanded you; that your days may be long, and that it may go well with you, in the land which Jehovah your God giveth you. Deut. 5:16

The children of a man who desires the office of a bishop are a reflection of his abilities to shepherd them. They reveal his ability as a spiritual leader. If they have an unfeigned faith, are submissive, grave and faithful both to God and their parents then they properly reflect on the man's character. They are a sign to the church that their father knows what he is doing in the realm of spiritual leadership.

7 For a bishop must be blameless,

Paul ties his circumstances at home with his wife and children directly to his being blameless with the conjunction "for." This conjunction is used when "*the reason and nature of something previously mentioned is set forth.*" Hence the necessity of the bishop being blameless is given as the reason and cause of the necessity of his being the husband of wife with believing children who are not accused of riot or of being unruly. If he did not have these qualities, he could not be blameless.

"gar... a conjunction which acc. to its composition *ge* and *ara*(i.q. *ar*), is properly a particle of affirmation and conclusion, denoting *truly therefore, verily as the case stands*, "the thing is first affirmed by the particle *ge*, and then is referred to what precedes by the force of the particle *ara*"... Now since by a new affirmation not infrequently the reason and nature of something previously mentioned are set forth, it comes to pass, that by the use of this particle, either the reason and cause of a foregoing statement is added, whence arises the causal or argumentative force of the particle, *for...* or some previous declaration is explained, whence *gar* takes on an explicative force *for, the fact is, namely...* Thus the force of the particle is either conclusive, or demonstrative, or explicative and declaratory;... II It adduces the Cause or gives the reason of a preceding statement or opinion... III It serves to explain, make clear, illustrate, a preceding thought or word: *for, i. q. that is, namely...*" (Thayer, p. 109-110; 1063)

Paul easily and with no explanation moves from telling Titus to appoint "*elders*" in every city to the term "*bishop*" in the same set of qualifications. Are these two different offices who share the same qualifications or are they the same office with two different names?

*For this reason I left you in Crete, that you should set in order the things that are lacking, and **appoint elders** in every city as I commanded you — 6 if a man is blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children not accused of dissipation or insubordination.*

7 For a bishop must be blameless, Titus 1:5-7

"Elder," "Bishop" and "Shepherd" used interchangeably in NT

Though there have been many efforts since early in the second century to make a distinction between these three terms and create more than one office out of them, they always fail when the Scriptures are carefully considered. In the early centuries, it was bishop and elder that was thought to be different. Because of this misapplication, a single bishop was elevated over the other elders and the Scriptures were wrested.

Even today such distinctions are rampant. All those who call themselves "*pastors*" yet do not meet the qualifications for elders in 1Tim. 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9 are misusing the term. "*Pastor*," is the Latin term for shepherd, and the only legitimate use for "*shepherd*" is for the elders of the church. An evangelist/preacher cannot be a shepherd unless he has been appointed an elder by the church. To speak of preachers and shepherds separate and apart from the elders would compel us to stop speaking as the oracles of God speak (1Pet. 4:11). But this we cannot do.

When we witness young men without the qualifications calling themselves elders, or bishops ruling over more than one local church we are witnessing error and apostasy. The child of God must become familiar with the use of the terms "elder" "bishop" and "shepherd"(pastor) as the oracles of God use them to avoid these errors.

"...that they did not differ at all from the (*episkopoi*) bishops or overseers (as is acknowledged also by Jerome on Titus 1:5 [cf. Bp. Lightfoot's commentary on Philippians p 98 sq. 229 sq.]) is evident from the fact that the two words are used indiscriminately, Acts 20:17, 28; Titus 1:5,7, and the duty of presbyters is described by the terms *episkopein*, 1Pet. 5:1 sq., and *episkope*, Clem. Rom. 1Cor. 44,1;...the Title *episkopos* denotes the

function, *presbuteros* the dignity; the former was borrowed from Greek institutions, the latter from the Jewish;" (Thayer, p 535-536)

"The terms Presbyter (or Elder) and Bishop (or Overseer, Superintendent) denote in the New Testament one and the same office, with this difference only, that the first is borrowed from the Synagogue, the second from the Greek communities; and that the one signifies the dignity, the other the duty. ...

1. The identity of these officers is very evident from the following facts:

a. They appear always as a plurality or as a college in one and the same congregation, even in smaller cities, as Philippi.

b. The same officers of the church of Ephesus are alternately called presbyters and bishops.

c. Paul sends greetings to the "bishops" and "deacons" of Philippi, but omits the presbyters because they were included in the first term; as also the plural indicates.

d. In the Pastoral Epistles, where Paul intends to give the qualifications for all church officers, he again mentions only two, bishops and deacons, but uses the term presbyter afterwards for bishop.

e. The interchange of terms continued in use to the close of the first century, as is evident from the Epistle of Clement of Rome (about 95) and the Didache, and still lingered towards the close of the second. (Schaff, Philip op. cit., Vol I p 491-493)

The reader will now readily understand why it is that so many titles are used to designate the same class of officers in the Christian church. They are called Elders on account of their superior age and implied wisdom and experience. They are called Bishops or Overseers, because it is their duty to watch over and superintend all that pertains to the edification and welfare of their respective congregations. They are call Pastors or Shepherds, because they are all required to have a shepherd's care over their several (Individual *akh*) flocks: they are to watch for souls as those who must finally give an account to God..." (Milligan, p. 323)

There can be little doubt among those who take God's word as the absolute guide (Mt. 15:8-9; 1Cor. 4:6; Gal. 1:6-9; 2Jn. 9), that the terms elder, bishop, and shepherd were used of the same office.

a bishop must be blameless

In Acts 20:28 in the midst of a sermon to the elders at Ephesus Paul revealed that it was the Holy Spirit who had made them "bishops." This is a Greek term with a Greek background. It was not a word used by Hebrew speaking people to describe their leaders.

episcopos as a Designation of Office. In ancient Greece the word *episkopos* was used in many different ways to describe those who held various official positions in respect to their office and work. In Athens in the 4th and 5th cent. *Episkopos* is a title for state officials. ... more commonly the *episkopoi* are local officials of the officers of societies ... There is no closely defined office bearing the title *episkopos* in the LXX (Septuagint). (Kittel TDWNT Vol 2 p. 608-614)

That being so, the Old Testament sheds little light on it. Even the Septuagint does not translate any office in Judaism into *episkopos*. The translators used it a few times of God as an overseer of our hearts, and of different types of offices, but not often used.

episkopos ... The LXX uses *episkopos* in the same twofold way as secular Greek. On the one hand it denotes God, and on the other it has the general sense of supervisors in different fields. ... 2. Men as *episkopoi* There is no closely defined office bearing the title *episkopos* in the LXX. But the term "overseer" is freely used in many different ways. Antiochus appoints *episkopoi* as governors over Israel..." (Kittel TDWNT NT:1985)

So Greek speaking Jews in the first century were somewhat familiar with it. The term "*bishop*" is actually a translation of three Greek terms. They are *episkopeo*, *episkope*, *episkopos*. They are defined:

"*episkopeo* - to look upon, inspect, oversee, look after, care for: spoken of the care of the church which rested upon the presbyters 1Pet. 5:2..." (Thayer, p. 242-243)

"*episkope* - oversight, i.e. overseership, office, charge...the office of a bishop..." (Thayer, p. 242-243)

"*episkopos* - an overseer, a man charged with the duty of seeing that things to be done by others are done rightly, any curator, guardian, or superintendent;...the superintendent, head or overseer of any Christian church;" (Thayer, p. 242-243)

A careful reading of these definitions shows that whoever held this office would oversee, guard, inspect, look after and care for the work and labor of others. They watch over men.

Etymology of “Bishop”

While the older translations(KJV, ASV used the English word “bishop,” only the NKJ retained it. The NASB, ESV and NIV all used the more accurate “overseer.” A study of its etymology helps us understand why it was originally used in Old English, and why it is best translated “overseer.”

“From Middle English *bishop*, *bisshop*, *bisshop*, *biscop*, from Old English *biscop*(“bishop”), from British Latin *biscopo* or Vulgar Latin (*e*)*biscop**us*, from classical Latin *episcopus*(“overseer, supervisor”), from Ancient Greek (*epískopos*, “overseer”), from (*epí*, “over”) (*skopós*, “watcher”), used in Greek and Latin both generally and as a title of civil officers.” (Wiki-based Open Content Dictionary)

The word “*bishop*” came down through history as a derivative of both the Greek and Latin. The Greek “*epískopos*,” became the Latin “*biscopo*.” Then, as the term moved into English, the Latin *biscopo* became the English *biscop*, and finally “*bishop*.” Since bishop is no longer used in secular English, and its original meaning was an overseer, the newer translations are more accurate to current usage.

The English “overseer” or “foreman” has the same basic meaning as *episkopos*.

Among the Athenians it was the title of “magistrates sent out to tributary cities to organize and govern them.” (See Robinson’s N. T. Lexicon, and references there given.) Among the Jews it had very much that variety of application which the term overseer now has in English. It is used in the Septuagint for the officers appointed by Josiah to oversee the workmen engaged in repairing the temple, 2Chr. 34:12, 17; for the overseers of workmen employed in rebuilding Jerusalem after the captivity; Neh. 11:5, 14; for the overseers of the Levites on duty in Jerusalem; Neh. 11:22; for the overseers of the singers in the temple worship; Neh. 12:42; and for subordinate civil rulers; Jos. Ant. 10. 4. 2. In all these instances it designates persons who have oversight of the persons for the purpose of directing their labor and securing a faithful performance of the tasks assigned them. (McGarvey op. cit., p 20-21)

Overseer (*episkopos*) is of Greek origin. It is used by the classical writers to denote:

1. Any guardian or superintendent whatever.
2. A municipal officer, or one who was appointed to oversee and take care of the interest of some particular town or district.
3. A viceroy, or magistrate, sent to superintend the affairs of conquered provinces.

It occurs but five times in the New Testament: viz., in Acts 20:28; Phil. 1:1; 1Tim. 3:2; Titus 1:7; and 1Peter 2:25. From all of which it is obvious that in its technical and official sense, as used in the New Testament, it denotes simply an officer who has been appointed to oversee and superintend the interest of some particular congregation. The word bishop is but a corruption of the Greek *episkopos*. It was introduced into the English language through the medium of the Anglo-Saxon, and has consequently the same meaning as the word overseer. (Milligan, R. op. cit., p 323-324)

The term *episkopos* occurs about a dozen times in the Septuagint for various Hebrew words meaning “inspector,” “taskmaster,” “captain,” “president” (see Trommius, Concord. Grk. LXX. Interpr. sub verbo, and also sub *episkope* and *episkopeo*). It was used in Egypt of the officers of a temple, in Greece of overseers or guardians in general, or of municipal and financial officers. In Athens the commissioners to regulate colonies and subject states were called *episkopoi*. The Spartans sent “*epimeletai*” in the same capacity. The term was not only applied to permanent officers, but also to the governing body. (Schaff, Philip, “History of the Christian Church” Volume I Apostolic Christianity A.D. 1-100, Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1910, (p 492 Footnote # 1)

These quotes show how extensively the terms were used in the first century both by Jews and Greeks in a secular sense. It was used in a capacity that manifested a man as a leader, guide and inspector. They would understand this the moment they heard the term.

Consider a present day application. If God were establishing the church today, and the Holy Spirit used the word “*foreman*” to describe the leaders in the church, we would know exactly what they meant to convey. If they did not want a foreman in the church, they would either select a different word, or they would qualify it to limit its meaning. If they did not limit it, then it would continue to convey its usual meaning. Therefore,

unless there is teaching in the New Testament that teaches otherwise, these men were to rule over and inspect the work of members of the church.

must be blameless

Because elders also become overseers, guardians and superintendents over the Lord's church, it is their duty to guard and care for those under their charge. It is therefore critical that they have the ability to live the gospel. They must be blameless in regard to its duties and obligations or they will be unable to help others as God intended.

Therefore he "*must*" be blameless

"dei... It is necessary, there is need of, it behooves, is right and proper, ... a. necessity lying in the nature of the case:... necessity brought on by circumstances or by the conduct of others toward us... c. necessity in reference to what is required to attain some end... d. a necessity of law and command, of duty, equity... i. e. necessity established by the counsel and decree of God..." (Thayer, p. 126: 1163)

It is just simply essential that the man be qualified. There can be no give and take here. He must fill the qualifications in a manner that leaves no doubt in the minds of the brethren there that there is any blame to be attached to him. He cannot be called to account for anything in his life that the gospel asks of him. Especially regarding the qualifications set forth. No one seeks to accuse him.

New as a steward of God,

Paul uses “as” to show the parallel between the elder’s role as bishop and steward. The terms are nearly interchangeable.

“*hos*... an adverbial form of the relative pronoun *hos*, *he*, *ho*, which is used in comparison, *as*, *like as*, *even as*, *according as*, *in the same manner as*, etc....” (Thayer, p. 680-682; 5613)

The bishop is “like as” “even as” “in the same manner” as a steward. The work a man does as a bishop should be viewed in the context of stewardship.

“*oikonomos*... (*oikos*, *nemo* [‘to dispense, manage’]...) *the manager of a household or of household affairs; esp a steward, manager, superintendent*, whether free-born, or, as was usually the case, a freed-man or slave) to whom the head of the house or proprietor has intrusted the management of his affairs, the care of receipts and expenditures, and the duty of dealing out the proper portion to every servant and even to the children not yet of age... *the manage of a farm or landed estate, an overseer, ... the superintendent of the cities’s finances, the treasurer of the city...* (see OIKONOMIA)” (Thayer, p. 441; 3624)

“*oikonomia*... *the management of a house-hold or of household affairs; specifically, the management, oversight, administration, of other’s property; the office of a manager or overseer, stewardship... the office of administrator (stewardship) intrusted by God, Col 1:25... univ. administration, dispensation...*” (Thayer p 440)

He is a man placed in charge of the possessions of another. He must faithfully take care of it. He must be certain that they are used properly and for the good of the master. In this case, the bishop (superintendent) must be blameless and fully qualified in order that he might be a good steward of those God has entrusted to him.

Let a man so consider us, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God. 2 Moreover it is required in stewards that one be found faithful. 1Cor. 4:1-2

The parable of the talents must always be remembered by those who desire the office of a bishop.

Not Self-Willed.

“*me*... a particle of negation...” (Thayer, p 408)

“*authades* ... self-pleasing, self-willed, arrogant...” (Thayer, p 83)

“*authades*, self pleasing(*autos*, self, *hedomai*, to please), denotes one who, dominated by self-interest and inconsiderate of others, arrogantly asserts his own will,...” (Vine, W. E., op. cit., Volume 3, p 342)

A self-willed man cares more for his own ideas and opinions and less for the opinions of others. He is interested in the things that are important to him and ambivalent to the things that are important to others.

This is very dangerous to the peace and stability of a local church. People have a variety of opinions. While some are doctrinal and Scriptural, others are questions of human wisdom or expediency. Although these Scriptures deal with meat, days, and idols, their principles are timeless and would apply to any subject of disagreement where there are no Scriptures. Paul spoke clearly in Romans 14 and 1 Corinthians 8-10 that it is better to defer to the opinions of others than to force one’s own. A self-willed man will have grave difficulties placing his own opinions under that of others who are weak. Yet it is essential that he be able to do so.

10 But you, why do you judge your brother? Or you again, why do you regard your brother with contempt? 19 So then let us pursue the things which make for peace and the building up of one another. ... Rom 14:10; 19:

19 For though I am free from all men, I have made myself a slave to all, that I might win the more. ... 32 Give no offense either to Jews or to Greeks or to the church of God; 33 just as I also please all men in all things, not seeking my own profit, but the profit of the many, that they may be saved. 1Cor 8:1; 11-12; 19; 32-33:

Selfishness(self-love — *philautos*) and a prideful arrogance(self-will — *authedes*) are so closely related that they are nearly identical. Carefully consider how they are seen. in . ntand some are In a comparison between self love and sell-will

“...The *authades*... is properly **one who pleases himself**, who is **so pleased with his own that nothing pleases himself, besides...** He is one so far **overvaluing any determination at which he has himself once arrived that he will not be removed from it;** for **this element of stubbornness or obstinacy which so often lies an**

authadeia...The man thus **obstinately maintaining his own opinion**, or asserting his own rights, **is reckless of the rights, feelings and interests of others**; one indeed who with no motive at all is prompt rather to run counter to these, than to fall in with them... **authadeia**, which thus **cares to please nobody**, is **by Aristotle set over against areskeia**, which is the ignoble **seeking to please everybody, the endeavoring at all costs of dignity and truth to stand well with all the world; these two being in his ethical system the opposite extremes**,... 'the pleaser of himself' and 'the lover of himself' stand in sufficient moral proximity, and are sufficiently liable to be confounded, to justify an attempt to distinguish them one from the other. ... Bengel profoundly remarks, and all experience bears out the truth of his remark, that there are **men who are ... at once soft and hard, soft to themselves, and hard to all the world besides**; these two dispositions being in fact only two aspects and outcomings of the same sin, namely the wrong love of self. But if *authades* expresses this sin on one side, *philautos* expresses it on the other. ... The *philautos* is exactly our 'selfish' " (Trench, p 349-353)

Of course Trench is speaking of the term in its worst case. But he gives us a clear picture of the scope of the prohibited characteristics of the word. Someone who doesn't know how to set aside his own views in the loving interests of others is not qualified to become a bishop made by the Holy Spirit. I like what Bengel said because it is true. "There are men who are ... at once soft and hard, soft to themselves, and hard to all the world."

God needs men who are concerned about other people and considerate of their feelings. A humble man who is ready to hear the opinions of others because they might be better than his own. A man who is willing to defer his own rights and opinions to help the lost. Jesus made it clear that those who would take any leadership role in His church must become servants and never masters.

But Jesus called them to Himself and said, "You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and those who are great exercise authority over them. 26 Yet it shall not be so among you; but whoever desires to become great among you, let him be your servant. 27 And whoever desires to be first among you, let him be your slave — 28 just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many." Matt 20:25-28

This scripture brings death to "self-will." No one can view himself as a slave to others while at the same time feeling that only his way is right and it must be done his way. Jesus and His apostles taught a spirit of tolerance and of giving up one's own rights for the good of others.

We who are strong have an obligation to bear with the failings of the weak, and not to please ourselves. 2 Let each of us please his neighbor for his good, to build him up. 3 For Christ did not please himself, but as it is written, "The reproaches of those who reproached you fell on me." Rom 15:1-3(ESV)

Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. 4 Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others. Phil 2:3-4

In order to be an elder, the feelings of others must become more important than our own. One of the indictments of the Old Testament shepherds was their selfishness.

And the word of Jehovah came unto me, saying, Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel, prophesy, and say unto them, even to the shepherds, Thus saith the Lord Jehovah: Woe unto the shepherds of Israel that do feed themselves! Should not the shepherds feed the sheep? Ye eat the fat, and ye clothe you with the wool, ye kill the fatlings; but ye feed not the sheep. The diseased have ye not strengthened, neither have ye healed that which was sick, neither have ye bound up that which was broken, neither have ye brought back that which was driven away, neither have ye sought that which was lost; but ye ruled with force and with rigor have ye ruled over them. Ezek 34:1-4

These were self-willed shepherds. God wants none of them ruling over His sheep. Let each flock beware when it is selecting its shepherds that they select men who will truly care about them and their needs.

not quick-tempered,

Because the distinctions are more difficult to grasp, I needed all these definitions to reveal the full flavor of the word. The issues are complicated because of the difference between two words translated anger and wrath. While these two Greek words are both

translated *anger* and other times *wrath*, there is a difference in them that we need to understand.

orgilos,...prone to anger, irascible, [A.V. soon angry]: Titus 1:7. (Pr. 22:24; 29:22;...)” (Thayer, p. 452)

orge ... common in poetry and prose, is related in stem to *orgao* ...and thus means the “lavish swelling of sap and vigor,” “thrusting and upsurging” in nature, (a.) the “impulsive nature” of man or beast, ... It takes on the sense (b.) of anger as the most striking manifestation of powerful inner passion, ... *orge* all the derivatives of the stem *org-* are used only of human wrath in the NT. ... Where *orge* itself is used thus, it is generally interchangeable with *thumos* But *thumos* is preferred for the passionate rage which boils up suddenly, Luke 4:28; Acts 19:28, even though *orge* seems by derivation to be particularly well adapted to express this. This term, however, contains an element of awareness and even deliberation absent from *thumos* (TDWNT NT:3711)

thumos and *orge* ...came to settle down on the passion of anger, as the strongest of all passions, impulses, and desires ...in *thumos* is more of the turbulent commotion, the boiling agitation of the feelings, ... St. Basil calls it, either presently to subside and disappear,... or else to settle down into *orge*, wherein is more of an abiding and settled habit of mind ... with the purpose of revenge; ... the more passionate ... more temporary, character of *thumos* according to Jeremy Taylor, are ‘great but transient angers;’ ... Aristotle, too, in his wonderful comparison of old age and youth, thus characterizes the angers of old men—like fire in straw, quickly blazing up, and as quickly extinguished ... (Trench’s Synonyms NT)

The anger/wrath of *thumos* is “*the passionate rage which boils up suddenly*,” the anger/wrath of “*orge*” “*contains an element of awareness and even deliberation absent from “thumos.”* “*thumos*” is “*the turbulent commotion, the boiling agitation of the feelings,*” “*presently to subside and disappear*” But if the *thumos* doesn’t disappear, it can “*settle down into orge, wherein is more of an abiding and settled habit of mind ... with the purpose of revenge.*”

Since not soon angry is a derivative of “*orge*,” and not “*thumos*” it is the anger/wrath of “*awareness and deliberation*” with “*an abiding and settled habit of mind.*” We have different passages that are helpful. Derivatives of “*orge*” are used as both anger and wrath:

Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath. Eph 4:26

But later in the same book both *orge* and *thumos* need to be put away.

Let all bitterness, **wrath, anger**, clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice. Eph. 4:31-32

When Jesus stated “*whoever is angry with his brother*,” He used *orge*. So what conclusions can we safely make with all this? The basic meaning of “*soon angry*” is to be quickly agitated in soul, and allow that anger to settle. Those who are “*soon angry*” become angry and then allow the sun to go down on that wrath.

Anger is a dangerous emotion, and to be a qualified elder, it must be carefully controlled. A man who becomes quickly angry, with little provocation and cannot control and remove it before it is seen would not be qualified. A shepherd spends time with his sheep, working with the weak and foolish, and must be gentle with them. One with a quick temper, and uncontrolled anger that becomes “*an abiding and settled habit of mind*” does not meet this qualification.

But before we leave this subject, we must also consider the other facet of this emotion found in “*be angry and sin not.*” When can a man become angry and when does it become a sin? Moses is a good example.

So it was, as soon as he came near the camp, that he saw the calf and the dancing. So Moses’ anger became hot, and he cast the tablets out of his hands and broke them at the foot of the mountain. 20 Then he took the calf which they had made, burned it in the fire, and ground it to powder; and he scattered it on the water and made the children of Israel drink it. 21 And Moses said to Aaron, “What did this people do to you that you have brought so great a sin upon them?” Ex 32:19-21

We call this “righteous indignation” because although it taps the same emotion, it is the lawful and natural use. He saw them sinning and flaunting God’s authority and became angry enough to do something about it. This is the same wrath that God feels and will be meted out on the day of judgment. It is not wrong for a man to feel this emotion as

long as it is kept within the proper limitations. Moses knew how to do this. Placed in a similar situation, but with only his own authority at stake, he had a different attitude:

Then Miriam and Aaron spoke against Moses because of the Ethiopian woman whom he had married; for he had married an Ethiopian woman. 2 So they said, "Has the Lord indeed spoken only through Moses? Has He not spoken through us also?" And the Lord heard it. 3 (Now the man Moses was very humble, more than all men who were on the face of the earth.) 4 Suddenly the Lord said to Moses, Aaron, and Miriam, "Come out, you three, to the tabernacle of meeting!" So the three came out. 5 Then the Lord came down in the pillar of cloud and stood in the door of the tabernacle, and called Aaron and Miriam. And they both went forward. 6 Then He said, "Hear now My words: If there is a prophet among you, I, the Lord, make Myself known to him in a vision; I speak to him in a dream. 7 Not so with My servant Moses; He is faithful in all My house. 8 I speak with him face to face, Even plainly, and not in dark sayings; And he sees the form of the Lord. Why then were you not afraid To speak against My servant Moses?" 9 So the anger of the Lord was aroused against them, and He departed. Num. 12:1-9

Moses was too meek and humble to become angry over those who questioned his authority, but too godly and devote to witness those who rebelled against God without becoming angry. This meets the quality of not being "soon angry." Yet there is also a time in Moses life where his anger led him to sin and cost him his own entrance into the promised land. He became so angry over their rebellion that he "spoke rashly" and "rebelled against My word." When in anger he said "shall we bring you water" he was elevating himself. When he struck the rock instead of speaking to it, he rebelled against God's word. Both of these things only occurred because at that moment he was "soon angry."

And Moses and Aaron gathered the assembly together before the rock; and he said to them, "Hear now, you rebels! Must we bring water for you out of this rock?" 11 Then Moses lifted his hand and struck the rock twice with his rod; and water came out abundantly, and the congregation and their animals drank. Num 20:10-11

They angered Him also at the waters of strife, So that it went ill with Moses on account of them; 33 Because they rebelled against His Spirit, So that he spoke rashly(unadvisedly asv) with his lips. Ps. 106:32-33

"Aaron shall be gathered to his people, for he shall not enter the land which I have given to the children of Israel, because you rebelled against My word at the water of Meribah. Num 20:24-25

For in the Wilderness of Zin, during the strife of the congregation, you rebelled against My command to hallow Me at the waters before their eyes." (These are the waters of Meribah, at Kadesh in the Wilderness of Zin.) Num 27:14

It is not always wrong to become angry, and it is not always wrong to become angry quickly if it is righteous indignation. But it is always wrong to become angry for the wrong reasons or to commit sin when one becomes angry.

Those who desire the office of a bishop must be stretching toward a controlled temper that can be held in check and not lost during provocation. Much of the training for this will be gained as he trains up his own children. They will give many reasons for anger in the course of raising them. If a man is wise he will use these opportunities to gain control and mastery of himself.

Not given to wine

Since none of our English translations have the same words to translate the two Greek words, it is important to take the time to become familiar with them. Literally, it is "not" and "beside wine." There is no verb or action.

"me... a particle of negation..." (Thayer, p 408)

"*paroinos*,... *para* and *oinos*(...one who sits long at his wine) given to wine, drunken...1 Tim 3:3; Titus 1:7 [others give it the secondary sense, 'quarrelsome over wine'; hence, brawling, abusive]." (Thayer, , p 490; NT:3943)

paroinos an adjective, lit., "tarrying at wine" (*para*, "at," *oinos*, "wine"), "given to wine," 1 Tim 3:3 and Titus 1:7, ... probably has the secondary sense, of the effects of wine-bibbing, viz., abusive brawling. (Vine's NT:3943)

The word "beside wine," was evidently an idiom in that day that had a specific meaning. Today, "beside wine" can be understood in a variety of ways, as is evident from how it is translated:

beside wine = fighting: “**no brawler.**” (KJV)
beside wine = to: “**not given to much wine.**” (ASV)
beside wine = to a bad habit: “**not given to wine.**” (NKJV)
beside wine = an addiction: “**addicted to much wine.**” (NAS)
beside wine = becoming a “**drunkard**” (ESV)
beside wine = habitual misuse: “**not given to drunkenness**” (NIV)

Clearly the problem with “*beside wine*” centers on “*for too long,*” but in what way or to what degree is open to interpretation. It was like an idiom to them so they had a better understanding than we do. We have similar idioms: “*hold your horses,*” (slow down and think) “*no spring chicken*” (not young anymore), “*tie the knot*” (get married) or “*under the weather*” (not feeling well). Without living in our culture, it would be difficult for people to really understand the meaning. Although it makes it more challenging to the reader, it is better to allow the reader/teacher to work it out.

Since the translations do not agree, they lead a reader to different conclusions. If it is a *drunkard*(ESV, NIV), what about social drinking? If it is a *brawler*(KJV), what about any use of alcohol that doesn't create brawling? If it is “*not given to much wine,*” (ASV) what about a little wine? If we leave it “*beside wine,*” then every consequence is under consideration. The Holy Spirit listed some of the things that occur if one “*linger long*” at the wine:

Who has woe? Who has sorrow? Who has contentions? Who has complaints? Who has wounds without cause? Who has redness of eyes? 30 Those who linger long at the wine, Those who go in search of mixed wine. 31 Do not look on the wine when it is red, When it sparkles in the cup, When it swirls around smoothly; 32 At the last it bites like a serpent, And stings like a viper. 33 Your eyes will see strange things, And your heart will utter perverse things. 34 Yes, you will be like one who lies down in the midst of the sea, Or like one who lies at the top of the mast, saying: 35 “They have struck me, but I was not hurt; They have beaten me, but I did not feel it. When shall I awake, that I may seek another drink?” Prov 23:29-35

Those who “*linger long at the wine,*” have “*woe,*” “*sorrow,*” “*contentions,*” “*complaints,*” “*wounds without cause,*” “*redness of eyes,*” “*eye see strange things,*” “*heart utters perverse things.*” “*linger long*” allows the affects of alcohol to impair the body.

How long then is too long? How long can a man sit before wine(alcohol) and still be acceptable? How much alcohol can a man use and not be guilty of being “*beside wine?*”

We don't yet have the answer. Here are some more thoughts:

Wine is a mocker, Strong drink is a brawler, And whoever is led astray by it is not wise. Prov 20:1

It is good neither to eat meat nor drink wine nor do anything by which your brother stumbles or is offended or is made weak. Rom. 14:21

And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; Eph. 5:18

No longer drink only water, but use a little wine for your stomach's sake and your frequent infirmities. 1Tim. 5:23

With these passages, we can gain a scriptural understanding of the broad term “*beside wine.*” When wine leads to a brother stumbling or to drunkenness, they are clearly “*beside wine*” and would be disqualified. The safest answer is that any use of wine beyond the stomach's sake and frequent infirmities(medicinal use) would violate this qualification.

Though over 100 years ago, McGarvey penned these words of wisdom:

“He must not be “given to much wine.” It is not merely drunkenness that is here prohibited; if it was, we would doubtless have the word which is appropriated to the expression of that idea. Neither is the idea of *much* in the original. The term is *paroinon*, by wine, and means simply, given to wine. It doubtless contemplates a man who is given to a freer use of wine than was customary among strictly sober people even though he might never become intoxicated.” (McGarvey, p 61)

The only safe conclusion, removing all objection, is that not “*beside wine*” is absolute. He is never “*beside wine,*” because he never uses it. Although some think this is too stringent, given our translations, it is no different than what God demanded of His ministering priests under the Old Covenant.

Then the Lord spoke to Aaron, saying: 9 "Do not drink wine or intoxicating drink, you, nor your sons with you, when you go into the tabernacle of meeting, lest you die. It shall be a statute forever throughout your generations, 10 that you may distinguish between holy and unholy, and between unclean and clean, 11 and that you may teach the children of Israel all the statutes which the Lord has spoken to them by the hand of Moses." Lev 10:8-11

The church has the right to expect their elders will always be sober and capable of distinguishing the clean from the unclean and the holy and unholy. Those who seek the office must be able to teach all the statutes at any time. For this reason, God did not want the men seeking the office to be "*beside wine*." Instead of seeking a deeper meaning, just take it at face value. They are never "*beside wine*."

"Not Beside Wine" - A Greek Idiom?

Introduction: An idiom is defined as: "*a group of words established by usage as having a meaning not deducible from those of the individual words.*" So we are not going to "*beat around the bush*" or "*cut any corners*" in today's article, because we don't want to "*bark around the wrong tree*." We seek to "*hit the nail on the head*," and might even "*kill two birds with one stone*." So, "*to make a long story short*," we want to give "*the whole nine yards*" and "*let the cat out of the bag*" about idioms. I hope you don't think "*I am off my rocker*," "*not playing with a full deck*," or "*missed the boat*." There is a "*method to my madness*," and I think at the end of this article you will agree that I am "*right on money*." The problem with idioms is that no one defines them for us. We have to deduce or infer them. If you have never heard one of these idioms you will have no idea what I am talking about. "*Pulling my leg*" could be literal, but we understand it as someone trying to "*pull the wool over our eyes*." We are always "*under the weather*," but only use that term when we feel sick. As we finish our drumstick, we know "*I have bone to pick with you*" isn't the drumstick. Even if we are chopping wood with a dull axe, we would understand "*I have an axe to grind*" isn't that axe.

There are also idioms in Scripture. "The nations are as a *drop in a bucket*" (Isa. 40:15). Job was "*nothing but skin and bones*" (Job 19:19-20). Jesus return will be "*in the twinkling of an eye*" (1Cor. 15:52). "*The wicked reel to and fro and are at their wits' end*" (Psalm 107:27). Peter wants every Christian to "*gird up the loins of your mind*" (1Pet. 1:13).

As I was working on the qualifications for elders this week, I came on the word "*beside wine*" (1Tim. 3:3; Titus 1:7). The more I thought about it the more it became clear to me that this too could be an idiom. One they easily understood, but one which we must "*gird up the loins of our mind*." I drew this conclusion after reading the diversity in the translations of two simple Greek words ("*mé pàroinos*" ("*me*" - *not*; "*para*" - *beside*; "*oinos*" - *wine*") Why did the simple "*not beside wine*" become "*no brawler*" (KJV), "*not given to much wine*" (ASV), "*not given to wine*" (NKJV), "*addicted to much wine*" (NAS), "*drunkard*" (ESV), and "*not given to drunkenness*" (NIV).

Think about it. "*Not beside wine*" moved from fighting(*brawler*), to a bad habit(*not given to wine/much wine*) to an addiction(*addicted to much wine*), to becoming a *drunkard*, or to habitual misuse(*given to drunkenness*). It is obvious none took the phrase literally. We might sympathize with the translators, since taken literally, one would be guilty if they walked down the aisle of a grocery store "*beside wine*." Even eating at a restaurant, if someone at the next table is drinking wine, we would be "*beside wine*."

Enter the idiom(a *group of words established by usage as having a meaning not deducible from those of the individual words*). "*Not beside wine*" somehow inferred "*too long at*," or "*inappropriately at*" "*wine*." they easily deduced it, while we struggle. The extent of the "*too long*" or the exact problem created by being "*beside wine*" is now unknown to us.

Yet, seeking to give us a simple meaning has only created problems. If it is a "*drunkard*"(ESV, NIV), then it could allow social drinking. If it is a *brawler*(KJV), then any use of alcohol that didn't lead to fighting might be fine. If it is "*not given to much wine*," (ASV) then some will affirm that a little wine is not a problem. Only when we

leave it “beside wine,” does anything from a single sip to drunkenness become the possible meaning.

The best solution is to “let Scripture interpret Scripture, “speak where the Bible speaks,” “be silent where the Bible is silent,” and “use Bible words to explain Bible things.” We must learn, “not to go beyond the things which are written” (1Cor. 4:6) and allow God to explain what occurs when one “linger long” at the wine.”

Who has woe? Who has sorrow? Who has contentions? Who has complaints? Who has wounds without cause? Who has redness of eyes? 30 Those who linger long at the wine, Those who go in search of mixed wine. 31 Do not look on the wine when it is red, When it sparkles in the cup, When it swirls around smoothly; 32 At the last it bites like a serpent, And stings like a viper. 33 Your eyes will see strange things, And your heart will utter perverse things. 34 Yes, you will be like one who lies down in the midst of the sea, Or like one who lies at the top of the mast, saying: 35 “They have struck me, but I was not hurt; They have beaten me, but I did not feel it. When shall I awake, I will seek it yet again” Pr. 23:29-35

The problems of those who “linger long” are the same as those who are “beside wine.” When there is “woe,” “sorrow,” “contentions,” “complaints,” “wounds without cause,” “redness of eyes,” “eyes seeing strange things,” “heart uttering perverse things” one is both “beside wine” and does “linger long at the wine.” Since “Wine is a mocker, Strong drink is a brawler, And whoever is led astray by it is not wise” (Pr. 20:1), one is “beside wine” whenever they are “led astray by it” or “show lack of wisdom” in its use. One is clearly “beside wine” when it causes “a brother to stumble or be made weak”(Rom. 14:21).

Leaders of God’s people can only be “not beside wine” when they drink no wine. “It is not for kings, O Lemuel, It is not for kings to drink wine, Nor for princes intoxicating drink; Lest they drink and forget the law, And pervert the justice of all the afflicted” (Pr. 31:4).

With these verses, the simple solution is also the best. We remove all doubt, when we understand “not beside wine” in all these contexts. One is never “beside wine,” if they do not drink or associate with those who do. Although some might think this is too stringent a view, given what our translations say, it is exactly what God demanded of His ministering priests:

Then the Lord spoke to Aaron, saying: 9 “Do not drink wine or intoxicating drink, you, nor your sons with you, when you go into the tabernacle of meeting, lest you die. It shall be a statute forever throughout your generations, 10 that you may distinguish between holy and unholy, and between unclean and clean, 11 and that you may teach the children of Israel all the statutes which the Lord has spoken to them by the hand of Moses.” (Lev. 10:8-11). No priest shall drink wine when he enters the inner court. 22 They shall not take as wife a widow or a divorced woman, but take virgins of the descendants of the house of Israel, or widows of priests. 23 “And they shall teach My people the difference between the holy and the unholy, and cause them to discern between the unclean and the clean. Ezek. 44:21-23

All Christians are priests today ministering to the Lord in His tabernacle(1Pet. 2:4-6; Eph. 2:19-22). There is never a time we don’t need to distinguish between the clean and the unclean or the holy and unholy. Never a time we don’t need to teach all the statutes. What is true of all Christians is also true of the elders. For these reasons, God did not want a man seeking the office to be “beside wine.” The idiom “not beside wine” means not beside wine either to drink it or associate with those who do. No more, no less.

Conclusion: Maybe you feel like you have “been through the mill” and I only have a “bee in my bonnet.” I don’t think we need to go “back to the drawing board,” and I hope you think I “hit the nail on the head.” Now, “the ball is in your court,” so “burn the midnight oil.” Because if you “search the scriptures daily,” “give diligence” to “rightly divide the word of truth,” and abide in My words,” “you shall know the truth and the truth will make you free.” (Acts 17:11, 2Tim. 2:15; Jn 8:31-32).

Not Violent

“plektes...bruiser, ready with a blow; a pugnacious, contentious, quarrelsome person..” (Thayer, 4131)

“plektes pugnacious and demanding- ‘bully, violent person.’” (Greek-English Lexicon NT: 4131)

“plektes ... “quick tempered carries a chip on his shoulder, is ready with his fists.” (Lenski “1Tim. 3:3”)

Anger and frustration seldom lead to violence for most people. But there are some whose anger quickly escalates to a desire for violence. That is the nature of this word. This quality describes someone who is *“ready with a blow,”* a *“bully”* or *“violent person”* one whose *“demanding”* and *“contentious”* nature coupled with a *“quarrelsome”* attitude creates an ever present possibility of violence.

A striker is a man with so little self-control and temperance that his anger can get the better of him and cause him to lash out in a moment. This leads to caustic words, a bitter quarrel, or an actual punch in the face. With the potential conflicts those leading the church will encounter, this is a very bad quality. When false teachers seek to uproot the faithful, or immoral and ungodly saints, the desire to punish exists, but it can't come out in anger and violence.

Although such anger can begin with righteous indignation, it must be kept in check. No one has the right to strike another or lash out at them no matter how evil, corrupt and wicked they are. Each man must learn to keep his temper in check.

not greedy for money,

not given to filthy lucre; KJV

not greedy of filthy lucre; ASV

not greedy for money, NKJV

not fond of sordid gain, NASB

greedy for gain, ESV

not pursuing dishonest gain. NIV

“Not greedy for money” is a compound word made up of *“aischron”* which is something that is base shameful, or dishonorable, and *“kerdes”* gain (*“to die is gain”* - *“what things were gain to me”* Phil. 1:21; 3:7)

“aischrokerdes, (aischros and kerdos) eager for base gain, [greedy of filthy lucre]: ... Titus 1:7...” (Thayer, p 17)

1. *aischros*, base, shameful...is used of base gain, filthy(lucre) ...

2. *aischrokerdes*, greedy of base gain (No 1, and *kerdos*, gain), is used in 1Tim. 3:8 and Titus 1:7, “greedy of filthy lucre;” (Vine, Volume 3, p 25)

aischrokerdes aischrokerdos pertaining to being shamefully greedy for material gain or profit - ‘shamefully greedy, greedily.’(Greek-English Lexicon)

The root idea is using dishonorable or base means to gain money. This is a stronger term than simply being a *“lover of money.”* This is a desire for money that has taken such deep root that it has gone to the next level, where his desire has become base or dishonorable. Hence he will stoop to things that are base in order to make it. The most sordid levels of this emotion would lead someone to cheat or steal, or even worse to make money while causing misery to others.

Those who make money selling drugs or alcohol, those who underpay others that they might become wealthy, those who stoop to wickedness in any realm and justify it because they are making money are unfit for the office. Regardless of whether this is still in its infancy, a mere seedling that can only be barely noticed, or full grown and having take the man captive, it is a dangerous emotion.

But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and harmful lusts which drown men in destruction and perdition. 10 For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil, for which some have strayed from the faith in their greediness, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows. 1Tim. 6:9-10

How a man makes his livelihood, and how he runs his business is of concern to God. The end never justifies the means. No one can justify working for a place whose product or way of doing business is open to question by the community or the church. Let each beware when he chooses his occupation that it not be of such nature that others would consider it an evil way of making money. A man's attitude toward money and this worlds goods is of great importance to a congregation seeking qualified men to oversee its work and membership. Such activities must be above reproach.

8 but hospitable,

The term “Hospitality” is defined:

“philoxenos, (philos and xenos), ...hospitable, generous to guests, [given to hospitality]: 1Tim. 3:2; ; Titus 1:8; I Pet. 4:9” (Thayer, , p 654)

“*xenos*,... guest-friend...[of parties bound by ties of hospitality] ... 1. a foreigner, stranger... 2. one who receives and entertains another hospitably; with whom he stays or lodges, a host...” (Thayer, , p 432)

The dual meaning of *xenos* has led to some confusion. The root meaning can be either “foreigner/ stranger” or “guest.”

xenos, xenia, xenizo, zenodocheo, philozenia, philomelos, ... 1. Words from the stem *zen-* bear on the one side the concept of “foreign,” “alien”(also “appearing strange” or “creating distaste”) and on the other side that of “guest” ...” The virtue of hospitality (*philozenia*)... in the NT, cf. Rom 12:13; Heb 13:2) makes the one who exercises it, (the host *zenos* Rom 16:23), the *philomelos* (1 Tim 3:2; Titus 1:8; 1 Peter 4:9), who practices it by *zenodocheo* (1 Tim 5:10) or “to receive as a guest”(Kittel Vol. 5, p. 1; 5381)

Hence this man must be “*given*” both to entertaining guests who are in his acquaintance and strangers who are not. He must enjoy having guests and strangers in his home.

This is mentioned elsewhere in the Scripture:

Let brotherly love continue. 2 Do not forget to entertain strangers, for by so doing some have unwittingly entertained angels. Heb. 13:1-2

The story of both Abraham(Gen. 18:1-15) and Lot(Gen. 19:1-11) come to mind. They both entertained strangers, and in both cases they were entertaining angelic beings. The term translated “*entertain strangers*” is the same term as that defined above. The only difference is it being an adjective for the elder, and a noun in the book Hebrews.

Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith. Gal 6:10

The man’s home should be open to those of the household of faith and others as there is need. Evangelism, edification and benevolence can all be enhanced in a man’s home. No one refusing to open his home to such things is qualified to be an elder.

*Above all things being fervent in your love among yourselves; for love covereth a multitude of sins: **Using hospitality** one to another without murmuring: according as each hath received a gift, ministering it among yourselves, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God; 1 Pet 4:8-10*

*Communicating to the necessities of the saints, **given to hospitality.** Rom 12:13*

From the two scriptures above it is clear that the primary idea behind this qualification is entertaining saints. Since stranger is strongly implied in the term, it should not be limited to the saints in a local church. Obviously the conditions of culture have some bearing on its fulfillment. In the first century, nice motels and RV’s did not exist. Though places could be found in which to stay while on a journey, they were not nearly as nice as someone’s home would be. The best means for traveling Christians to be cared for would be in the homes of members. This has changed considerably today. Most would rather not stay in the home of another Christian when on vacation or in travel. There are easier ways to care for such needs. But as opportunities arise, they open up the home.

a lover of what is good,

The term “*good*” is obviously a relative term. Each person has that which he considers to be good or bad. But in the context of the Scriptures, that which is good is clearly defined. First a composite of the definition as it is used in the New Testament.

“agathos... excelling in any respect, distinguished, good. It can be predicated of persons, things, conditions, qualities and affections of the soul, deeds, times and seasons.... 1. of good constitution or nature... 2. useful, salutary... 3. of the feeling awakened by what is good, pleasant, agreeable, joyful, happy... 4. excellent, distinguished... 5. upright, honorable... upright, free from guile, particularly from a desire to corrupt the people... pre-eminently of God, as consummately and essentially good... The neuter used substantively denotes 1. a good thing, convenience, advantage, ... 2. what is upright, honorable, and acceptable to God... “ (Thayer, p. 2-3; 18)

It is used to describe something that *excels* and is *useful* on the one hand and “*upright*” and “*honorable*” on the other, because it is “*acceptable to God*” A look at a concordance helps us to see the scope of the goodness that a man can love and be friendly toward.

*Abhor what is evil. Cling to what is **good.** Rom 12:9*

*Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with **good.** Rom 12:21*

*as we have opportunity let us work that which is **good** toward all men, and especially toward them that are of the household of the faith. Gal 6:10*

For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for **good** works which God before prepared that we should walk in them Eph 2:10 working with his hands the thing that is **good**, no corrupt speech ... but such as is **good** for edifying. Eph 4:28-29

knowing that whatever **good** anyone does, he will receive the same from the Lord, Eph 6:8 to walk worthily of the Lord unto all pleasing, bearing fruit in every **good** work, Col 1:10 always follow after that which is **good**, one toward another, and toward all. I Thess 5:15 comfort your hearts and establish them in ever **good** work and word. II Thess 2:17

which is proper for women professing godliness, with **good** works. 1Tim. 2:10 if anyone cleanses himself from the latter, he will be a vessel for honor, sanctified and useful for the Master, prepared for every **good** work. 2Tim. 2:21

the man of God may be complete, furnished completely unto every **good** work. II Tim 3:17 be in subjection to rulers, to authorities, to be obedient, to be ready unto every **good** work. Titus 3:1

But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, easy to be entreated, full of mercy and **good** fruits, without variance, without hypocrisy. James 3:17

And who is he that will harm you if ye be zealous of that which is **good**? I Pet 3:13

Beloved, imitate not that which is evil, but that which is **good**. He that does **good** is of God: 3Jn. 11

Summing up these passages we can assess any man to determine if he loves the things below.

*cling to what is good
overcome evil with good
abound unto every good work
bearing fruit in every good work
Prepared unto every good work
furnished unto every good work*

be ready unto every good work

*zealous of that which is good
imitate that which is good
do good*

*created in Christ Jesus for good works
work with hands the thing which is good
speak words such as are good for edifying
work that which is good toward all
the good done received again from the Lord
always follow good to one another and all
men*

*hearts established in every good work
and word*

*a good conscience
women adorned with good works
wisdom is full of mercy and good fruits*

Since congregations are to be actively involved in good works. It is clear why God wants His leaders to love good works. When they love and are friendly to all that is good they will promote it among the members and practice it themselves. God's people must be encouraged to love that which is good. God wants all leaders in the church to be wonderful examples of it themselves.

Sober minded.

"sophron ...a. of sound mind, sane, in one's senses, ...b. curbing one's desires and impulses, self-controlled, temperate, [R. V. sober minded]..." (Thayer, p.613)

"sophron ...to behave in a sensible manner," 88.93) pertaining to being sensible and moderate in one's behavior - 'sensible, sensibly, moderate, moderately.' (Greek-English Lexicon NT:4998)

sophron sophroneo sophrosune It denotes a. "the rational" in the sense of what is intellectually sound (opp. *mania*) b. "rational" without illusion", ... It can also mean c. "rational" in the sense of purposeful, ... 2. Another sense is d. "discretion" in the sense of moderation and self-control, ... e. "discretion" as prudent reserve, ... Another sense is f. "modesty" and decorum, Then there is g. "discretion" as discipline and order politically, ..." (TDWNT Kittel 4998)

While "*self-control*" describes our ability to remove and control things in our mind and "*temperance*" how to keep things from hindering our ability to see things clearly, this quality centers on the mind itself. If nothing is clouding his mind and he is completely self-controlled, can he *sensibly and, moderately*, think *rationally* and *without illusion*? When nothing clouds his mind is he a wise man or a fool? Can we trust him to make Scripturally sensible and rational assessments and decisions?

A careful review of the definitions moves one toward the above conclusion. The word deals with someone who has a "*sound mind*," and is thus "*sensible*," and "*rational*." But beneath these abilities are some important safeguards, limitations and awareness. He thinks and assesses to be certain his conclusions are "*intellectually sound*" and "*without*

illusion.” Yet in order to be certain, he needs an objective standard outside of himself, keeping himself within the limits of the modesty and decorum one finds in the Scriptures. One is “sober minded” when God is directing their paths, all their thoughts are in obedience to Christ, and they refuse to lean on their own understanding.

Trust in the Lord with all your heart, And lean not on your own understanding; 6 In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He shall direct your paths. 7 Do not be wise in your own eyes; Fear the Lord and depart from evil. Pr. 3:5-7

For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, 5 casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ, 2Cor. 10:4-6

The mind and heart must be carefully guarded (*keep your heart with all diligence, For out of it spring the issues of life. Pr. 4:23*). Even the most basic things can lead to folly. When anything coming from ignorance or a hard heart, judgment is not sound.

This I say, therefore, and testify in the Lord, that you should no longer walk as the rest of the Gentiles walk, in the futility of their mind, 18 having their understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the hardness of their heart; Eph 4:17-19

Those who can make a joke out of everything, who only see the negative, or want to be so positive that they overlook or exaggerate, are not sober-minded. Paul charged Timothy to watch out for prejudice and partiality.

I charge you in the sight of God, and Christ Jesus, and the elect angels, that you observe these things without prejudice, doing nothing by partiality. 1Tim. 5:21

A man must be able to evaluate each situation on its own merits with only what God demands in his mind. No one can allow other considerations to influence their thinking. A man seeking the law and testimony before making decisions is sober-minded. A man who listens to both sides of the argument or discussion before making a decision is sober-minded. It takes great effort to keep a mind clear of emotion. Such a man can be depended on for a fair minded sober evaluation of the facts.

Only be strong and very courageous, that you may observe to do according to all the law which Moses My servant commanded you; do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left, that you may prosper wherever you go. 8 This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. Josh. 1:7-8

Just

This word is used about 80 times in the New Testament, and about half of the time it is translated “righteous” and the other half “just.”

“dikaios ...observant of he dike, righteous, observing divine and human laws; one who is such as he ought to be;... 1. in a wide sense, upright, righteous, virtuous, keeping the commands of God ... a. universally ... b. the negative idea predominating: innocent, faultless, guiltless, ... c. preeminently, of him whose way of thinking, feeling, and acting is wholly conformed to the will of God, ... d. contextually, approved God, acceptable to God, 2. in a narrower sense, rendering to each his due; and that in a judicial sense, passing just judgment on others, whether expressed in words or shown by the manner of dealing with them:...” (Thayer, p 148-149; 1342)

The quality itself is based upon the attitude we have toward law and God’s will. One who is just/righteous “observes divine and human law,” “keeps the commands of God” and is “wholly conformed to the will of God.” It is obvious that one who is just/righteous has great respect and reverence toward God who is the lawgiver. The righteous and just standards of God become the scale upon which we weigh thoughts and actions and pronounce them just or unjust. Actually, taking this a step further, God Himself is the true standard of righteousness. His eternal attitudes and actions, which have always been, and always will be, are the basis of what is just. When we were created in His image and likeness, we too were prepared to be righteous and just, living and thinking as He does.

For Jehovah is righteous; He loves righteousness: the upright shall behold His face. Ps. 11:7

Righteous are you, O Jehovah, and upright are your judgments. . . 142 Your righteousness is an everlasting righteousness, and your law is truth. Ps. 119:137, 142

O LORD God of hosts, who is like Thee, O mighty LORD? Your faithfulness also surrounds You ... 14 Righteousness and justice are the foundation of Your throne; lovingkindness and truth go before You. 16 In your name do they rejoice all the day; and in your righteousness are they exalted. Ps. 89:8,14, 16

God possesses an 'everlasting righteousness.' He has always lived within their domain. The angelic hosts who dwell with him have also lived this life. God has given His law to man in order that man might strive to live up to that same perfect standard of life. Therefore a just man is one who observes the divine laws of God because he wants to be right with God and he recognizes that God's ways are right and just.

If you know that He is righteous, you know that everyone who practices righteousness is born of Him. 1Jn 2:29

Little children, let no one deceive you. He who practices righteousness is righteous, just as He is righteous. 1Jn. 3:7

In this the children of God and the children of the devil are manifest: Whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor is he who does not love his brother. 1Jn 3:10

By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and keep His commandments. 3 For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And His commandments are not burdensome. 1Jn. 5:2-4

Again, remember that *righteous* and *just* are translations of the same Greek word. The Holy Spirit expected us to see that they are actually one and the same. If one is *just* then they are *righteous* and if they are *righteous* then they are *just*. But all justice and righteousness are based upon the commands and ordinances of our Creator and God. Hence a man is just when he is keeping all of God's commands. This is how Job and later Zacharias and Elizabeth were commended.

There was a man in the land of Uz, whose name was Job; and that man was blameless and upright, and one who feared God and shunned evil. Job 1:1-2

And they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless. Luke 1:6

In order to be just the man must first keep God's commands blamelessly (*without reproach and blameless*). He fulfills his obligations on the job with the same concern for honesty and integrity. In summary, every area of his life is characterized by a submission to all the areas of authority that God has created.

This is so critical since as a shepherd and overseer, he will be assessing the conduct of others. An elder will be called upon to pass judgment and intervene in conflicts between brethren. He must be just, honorable, and fair in all areas of his life. He must take God's standards, and without partiality or prejudice apply them.

Holy

Unless we have studied Greek, or done some research, we may not be aware that there are two words in the Greek language that are translated *holy*. The term we are most familiar with is "*hagios*." When we read "*holy—hagios*," we understand it as someone/something that is sacred, consecrated and sanctified because of its relationship with God.

but as He who called you is holy(hagios), you also be holy(hagios) in all your conduct, 16 because it is written, "Be holy(hagios), for I am holy(hagios)." 1Pet. 1:15-16

This word is used over 200 times in the NT. But that is not the word the Holy Spirit chose here. This term is only used eight times in the NT, and five of those time are quotations from the OT.

It is surprising that *hosios* ... should occur only 8 times in the NT (5 in quotations), ... does not occur in the Gospels, the main Pauline epistles, or the Catholic epistles. ... it is common only in the Pastorals whose vocabulary is more strongly Hellenistic. (Kittel, TWDNT, NT:3741)

Since it is only used three times in the NT. It is obviously used here because there was something distinctive about it that gave a more specific description of the quality the Spirit wanted assessed.

"hosios ... expressing the everlasting ordinances of right, which no law or custom of men has constituted, for they are anterior to all law and custom; and rest on the divine constitution of the moral universe and mans relations to this... the hosios... is one who

reverences these everlasting sanctities, and owns the obligation;... (Trench, op. cit., p. 327-334)

Clearly there is a lot to consider in this Greek word. We have nothing like it in English. Its foundation is in the truth that there are some “*everlasting ordinances of right.*” The *hosios*, “*reverences these everlasting sanctities, and owns the obligation.*” When this word entered the Scriptures it became a perfect way to see the holiness in the sense of the unbreakable nature of all God’s commands. Man can break, but Scripture cannot be broken. If we have to give up our life or anything less for the ordinances, *hosios* makes it not only necessary, but logical and the only reasonable and obvious way to deal with such a situation.

Another definition broadens this out further.

“*hosios* “Of actions which by ancient sanction are regarded as “sacred,” “lawful” and “according to duty,”... It makes no odds whether the sanctioning force is divine precept, natural law or ancient custom. *hosios* thus corresponds... to what a man does by disposition in accordance with his inward attitude and inner acceptance of what is felt to be binding.... In content it is what is right and good from the standpoint of morality and religion...” (Kittel, Gerhard, op. cit., Vol 5 p 489-492)

He adds that all actions with “*ancient sanction*” are “*sacred,*” “*lawful*” and “*according to duty.*” It defines what a man will do “*by disposition in accordance with his inward attitude and inner acceptance of what is felt to be binding.*” So a man who is *hosios* fulfills all obligations from a deep sense of appreciation for where they originated.

Since truth taught by Jesus in the gospels are from heaven and are thus eternal. They are something to die for. They can only be easily set aside by someone who has no respect for these ancient principles that transcend all else. They are unbendable, and must be followed under all circumstances and at all times no matter what the cost. This deep awe and respect comes from our deep love and respect for God and for His son Jesus Christ.

15 “If you love Me, keep My commandments. ... 21 He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him.” ... 23 Jesus answered and said to him, “If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him. 24 He who does not love Me does not keep My words; ... 15:9 “As the Father loved Me, I also have loved you; abide in My love. 10 If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love, just as I have kept My Father’s commandments and abide in His love. Jn. 14:15, 21, 23-24; 15:9-10

The “*holy*” man will never, even under the most trying circumstances allow his convictions to bend or change, because he knows what it would mean if he did so. Jesus remained in God’s love because “*He kept His commandments.*” In exactly the same way, those who keep Jesus commands abide in His love. When anyone with *hosios* knows God is against something they are against it. When they know God is for something they are for it. The prospective elder with *hosios* will not change to suit anyone else. Even up to death, his allegiance to God and God’s standards take higher precedence.

It was the principle of “*hosios*” that compelled Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego to choose death.

Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego answered and said to the king, “O Nebuchadnezzar, we have no need to answer you in this matter. 17 If that is the case, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and He will deliver us from your hand, O king. 18 But if not, let it be known to you, O king, that we do not serve your gods, nor will we worship the gold image which you have set up.” Dan 3:16-18

They sealed these affirmations with their own deaths as they were cast into the fiery furnace. After God intervened, *Nebuchadnezzar* was amazed and spoke the truth.

Nebuchadnezzar spoke, saying, “Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego, who sent His Angel and delivered His servants who trusted in Him, and they have frustrated the king’s word, and yielded their bodies, that they should not serve nor worship any god except their own God! Dan. 3:16-18,28

This is *hosios* at its finest! They “*yielded their bodies, that they should not serve nor worship any god except their own God!*” Their conviction about God’s law forced them to

die before they would compromise. Peter and the apostles were ready to do the same when standing before the Jewish Sanhedrin(Supreme Court). No matter what the consequences, they would not bend.

But Peter and John answered and said unto them, Whether it is right in the sight of God to hearken unto you rather than unto God judge ye: for we cannot but speak the things which we saw and heard. Acts 4:19-20

But Peter and the apostles answered and said, We must obey God rather than men. Acts 5:29

There is nothing extraordinary about these men. No one who possesses the specific “holiness of *hosios*” could do any different. They have too much awe, reverence and respect for the everlasting nature of God’s law. This is no less than Jesus, who manifested the same respect in the garden of Gethsemane, expected of all His servants.

Be faithful unto death, and I will give you the crown of life. Rev 2:10

Such a holy man will be faithful even if it costs death. But death is the furthest extent, it also affects every other important thing one may have in their life. Jesus was firm and resolute. Without this quality of holiness we are not worthy of Him.

He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me. 38 And he who does not take his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me. 39 He who finds his life will lose it, and he who loses his life for My sake will find it. Mt. 10:37-39

Then He said to them all, “If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me. 24 For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will save it. Lk. 9:23-25

If we have “*hosios*,” if any time such a choice must be made, there is no choice to make. There is no need to even think about it. There is no such thing as circumstantial morality or situation ethics. No end justifying the means, no doing evil that good may come.

God’s laws are absolute to a “*holy/hosios*” man. They cannot be changed. Man can be broken, but the Scriptures cannot be. Heaven and earth can pass away but obedience to God’s laws cannot. God seeks such men who take a stand on the principles of right and wrong, on the principles of doctrinal purity. It all flows from the deep sense of awe and respect for the God who gave this law. God is true and every man a liar. God is righteous, holy and pure. His standards are an unbendable code of conduct which His people live by. His word is truth and his leaders must be selected on the basis of their strong feelings about this. They reverence the deep principles of right, make them his own and view them with the utmost respect.

‘Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.’” Mt 4:4

God needs such elders in his church. Men with conviction, honor, and integrity. Men after God’s own heart. Such men will do great and lasting good.

So although we might otherwise understand holy as sanctified and set apart for God, this word takes that concept a step further.

Self-Controlled

Although the obvious answer to what is “*self-control*” is the ability to restrain and control ourselves, the Greek term more than simple control. It was a word for “*power*” or “*lordship*.”

“The word group *egkrat-* takes its sense from **the stem *krat-***, which **denotes power or lordship** and which **expresses the power or lordship which one has either over oneself or over something**. The basic sense is most clearly expressed in the adjective “*egkrates*. Purely formally this may be derived from *en kratos* with its implication of **having power in oneself**, or from *en kratei* implying a status of power. *egkrates* means **one who has status of power or rule**, who has power over something, whether this power be factual or spiritual... It thus means “**to have power or dominion over all things and over oneself;**” i.e., “to be inwardly strong.” (Kittel, Vol. II p 339-342; 1468)

The stem expresses the power one possesses that gives them the right to control and force something to do our will. We have this dominion over a car while driving, since it is

completely under our control. James speaks dominion in bridling the body, as we bridle a horse or use a rudder on the ship.

If anyone does not stumble in word, he is a perfect man, able also to bridle the whole body. 3 Indeed, we put bits in horses' mouths that they may obey us, and we turn their whole body. 4 Look also at ships: although they are so large and are driven by fierce winds, they are turned by a very small rudder wherever the pilot desires. Jas. 3:2-4

Someone with self-control can do with their minds and body what the pilot can do with a ship, or a rider can do with a horse. Paul spoke of the control to bring every thought into obedience.

bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ, 2Cor. 10:5

With self-control one has the power to be “*mastering, controlling, curbing, restraining,... controlling one’s self, temperate...*” (Thayer, p 167; 1468). Thus “*every man who strives in the games exercises self-control in all things. ... But I discipline my body and bring it into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified.*” 1Cor. 9:25-27

This is a qualification that only the man under consideration would truly know the extent, since it is done within the heart. The strength to keep control and mastery, curbing and restraining evil thoughts and emotions and forcefully removing them from the mind is a personal battle.

“egkrates,... 1. prop. ...strong, robust... 2. having power over, possessed of (a thing),... 3. mastering, controlling, curbing, restraining,... controlling one’s self, temperate...” (Thayer, p 167; 1468)

“egkrates,... strong, stout; possessed of mastery; master of self;...” (The Analytical Greek Lexicon: Zondervan Publishing House 1970, p 113)

Although we all them, some weaknesses have a stronger hold than others. These “*youthful lusts,*” are doors opened into temptation and sin in our youth that have put down roots in the mind and continue to plague us. A quick temper, greed, sensual lusts, pride, impatience, greed, jealousy have become the “*sins of our youth*”(Ps. 25:7) to multitudes because they were all brought to us by evil companionship in our youth and have remained.

The key to self-control is not found in those areas where we have never been tempted. It is always found in the midst of weaknesses we remove. Thus it is not self-control if one is never tempted to lie and continues to be truthful. It is self-control when in early life one easily loses his temper at the least provocation but now controls it to a much greater degree.

Self-control is the ability to “*walk by the Spirit*” and “*not fulfill the lust of the flesh*” (Gal. 5:16-17). It gives the power to “*put to death members which are upon the earth*” (Col. 3:5) and “*deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, live soberly and righteously and godly in this present world.*” (Titus 2:11-12). Only when one has “*cleansed himself*” can he become “*a vessel unto honor, sanctified, meet for the master’s use, prepared unto every good work.*” He must know how to “*flee youthful lusts, and follow after righteousness, faith, love, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart*” (2Tim. 2:21-22). This qualification requires candor and honesty. Only the man and his wife know how far he has come and how far he has yet to go.

Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected; but I press on, ... 13 Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, 14 I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. Phil. 3:12-14

We know a man has self control within ourselves when we see growth in the following areas.

The denial of ungodliness and worldly lusts has reached a high level.

For the grace of God hath appeared, bringing salvation to all men, instructing us, to the intent that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly and righteously and godly in this present world; Titus 2:11-12

The buffeting of the body has produced fruit.

but I buffet my body, and bring it into bondage: lest by any means, after that I have preached to others, I myself should be rejected. 1 Cor 9:27

He must be a vessel unto honor.

If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honor, sanctified, meet for the master's use, prepared unto every good work. But flee youthful lusts, and follow after righteousness, faith, love, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart. II Tim 2:21-22

Self-mastery is an awesome and great task. It is a long road to walk, and the path must be begun early. To capture and bring every thought into obedience to Christ is the goal of all Christians. Those who wish to be elders must be reaching it!

casting down imaginations, and every high thing that is exalted against the knowledge of God, and

9 holding fast the faithful word as he has been taught,

holding fast the faithful word which is in accordance with the teaching, that he may be able both to **exhort in sound doctrine** and to **refute those who contradict**(**convict the gainsayer**). Titus 1:9

Since as a result of "holding to the faithful word," he will be able to "exhort in sound doctrine" and "convict the gainsayer" the foundation of all three of these commands is seen in the word "holding to," for only when they are doing that can they "exhort" and "convict."

"ant-echomai, ...in the N. T., only in Mid. to keep one's self directly opposite to any one, hold to him firmly, cleave to, paying heed to him... to hold to, hold it fast, Titus 1:9" (Thayer, p. 49)

"ant-echomai,... to hold firmly to, cleave to, of holding or cleaving to a person,... of holding to the faithful word, Titus 1:9..." (Vine, Vol. 2, p. 224)

Although in English, this is a single word it is a compound word in Greek. It is made up of the word "anti" and "echo." Looking at both of them gives a clearly picture of the term.

"echo... Transitivity. 1. to have I. q. to hold; a. to have(hold) in the hand... b. in the sense of wearing... c. trop. to have(hold) possession of the mind; ... d. to hold fast, keep... II. Intransitively... to hold one's self to a thing, to lay hold of a thing, to adhere or cling to; to be closely joined to a person or thing... near, adjoining, neighboring, bordering, next..." (Thayer, p. 265-268; 2192).

As we carefully look at this definition, we see that "echo" is a word of possession, of having and holding. As it moves through various contexts in the Scripture it can mean "to hold possession of the mind," "to hold one's self to a thing," "adhere and cling to," "be closely joined to." Hence this qualification demands that everything in his life revolves around God's word. What God told Joshua as he began his work as a leader is very helpful to fully see what God expects. He tells Joshua to be strong and courageous in order that he may observe to do according to all the Law. He told him do not turn from it to the right or to the left." He told him he should never stop talking about God's word, that every word might be sifted by and conformed to it before the words come out. He told him to meditate, ponder and consider God's word day and night. Applying it to every circumstance and event in his life. This is how one "holds fast" to the faithful word.

Only be strong and very courageous, that you may observe to do according to all the law which Moses My servant commanded you; do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left, that you may prosper wherever you go. 8 This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success. Josh. 1:7-9

But what about "anti?" Since the word "echo" conveys all that our English word "hold fast" conveys. How does "anti" strengthen and expand this meaning?

"anti 1. properly, it seems to have signified over against, opposite to, before, (Thayer's 473)

"anti" gives the additional idea of being opposite to the word of God. Whatever the Scriptures teach, he holds himself directly opposite so that they are like mirror images. This is what Jacob did with the angel(Gen. 32:24-29). In sports like wrestling and football, the opponents hold themselves opposite to one another. Jesus used this word to warn against the power of money.,

*No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will **hold to the one**, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon. Mt. 6:24*

When one holds fast to God, he must despise money, and when one holds fast to money, he must despise God. Thus the way one man holds fast to money, the other holds fast to God. Thus these three qualifications stem from *holding, cleaving, adhering* and *clinging*” “*directly opposite*” to the truth in Scripture. This is exactly what Paul told Timothy to do.

Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. 2Tim. 2:15

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 complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work. 2 Tim 3:16-17

When a man seeks and desires the office of bishop/overseer, he must be diligent to rightly divide the word of truth. Since Scripture is “*profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness,*” how can anyone exhort and refute without hold fast to it? Multitudes of passages and events reveal this. Cain and Abel, Noah, Nadab and Abihu, Saul, David and Uzzah, reveal the importance of “holding fast to the faithful word.” Many commands in Scripture also warn of necessity of holding to and handling aright the doctrine(2Jn. 9; Gal. 1:6-9; Mt. 7:21-24; Mt. 15:9; Rev. 22:18-19; 2Th. 2:9-10)

God’s shepherds must have a deep personal respect God’s Word. Without such respect terrible consequences will surely follow.

and from among your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after them. Acts 20:30

It is the obligation of a man seeking the office to be honest about this, and it is the duty of the congregation to assess his past teaching and life to determine the quality of this attitude. If he does not consistently place himself directly opposite the Word, hold it firmly, and comply with it, he is unfit for the job.

The elders are required to hold fast this “faithful word,” and, as a consequence, condemn everything unauthorized by it. A “thus saith the Lord” was to be the touchstone of every doctrine and every practice which Jew or Gentile might introduce, and thus, by “sound teaching,” the Elders were to stop the mouths of all in their respective congregations who taught things which they ought not. (McGarvey, p. 63-64)

When God rejected Saul and chose David, He was looking for a man after His own heart. A man who would go to the Word and seek to do things God’s way. At the end of David’s life, God summed up his value:

He raised up for them David as king, to whom also He gave testimony and said, ‘I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after My own heart, who will do all My will.’ ... 36 For David, after he had in his own generation served the counsel of God, fell asleep, Acts 13:22: 36

This is exactly what God seeks today in this quality. If a man aspiring to the office bishop/overseer is a “*man after God’s own heart*”, “*holding fast to the faithful word*” so he can *do all My will*,” he too “*in his own generation can serve the counsel of God.*”

that he may be able, by sound doctrine both to exhort

In the wisdom of God only those who can hold fast and remain locked into the word of God will be able to exhort in the manner necessary to be a bishop/overseer in the church. The ability to exhort is an important part of the work of the church. As shepherds watch over their sheep, the sheep can become discouraged, weak, scattered, hungry and thirsty. In such cases a word of encouragement, comfort, admonition, or consolation is the cure.

A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold In settings of silver. 12 Like an earring of gold and an ornament of fine gold Is a wise rebuker to an obedient ear. 13 Like the cold of snow in time of harvest Is a faithful messenger to those who send him, For he refreshes the soul of his masters. Pr. 25:11-13

God wants His shepherds to be able to do this with His word. This ability is the foundation of “*exhortation*”

“*parakaleo, to call to ones side, call for, summon:...* to address, speak to;... which may be done in the way of **exhortation, entreaty, comfort, instruction**, etc. hence result a variety of senses... 1. to **admonish**, exhort;... 2. to beg, **entreat**, beseech; ...3. to **console**, to

encourage and strengthen by consolation, to **comfort**;...4. to **encourage, strengthen**;... 5. it combines the ideas of exhorting and comforting and encouraging;... 6. to instruct, teach..." (Thayer, p. 482-483)

The literal meaning of this compound word is to call beside, or to one's side. Since the preposition *para-* means beside(*para-ble*), and the verb *kaleo* means to call, From this root meaning, the Greek speaking world used it for anything one can do when they have something important to say, or to be heard. Since the person wants them right beside them, it was most often used of the gentle emotions or sympathy, compassion, and love. Whatever the need is the reason for the call and when they arrive, the need is translated tenderly into words.

The word is used many times in the Scriptures most often exhort, beseech(urge), implore, and comfort. Elders need to hold fast to the word of God so they can choose the right approach to speak to those who are having difficulty. Remember God's rebuke the His shepherds in Israel :

The weak you have not strengthened, nor have you healed those who were sick, nor bound up the broken, nor brought back what was driven away, nor sought what was lost; but with force and cruelty you have ruled them. Ezek. 34:4

If they are trying and want to do better, he needs to exhort them in sound doctrine. He has to be able to make them feel good about a chance to do better and not discourage them with harsh rebuke or lack of concern.

Strengthen the weak hands, And make firm the feeble knees. 4 Say to those who are fearful-hearted, "Be strong, do not fear! Behold, your God will come with vengeance, With the recompense of God; He will come and save you." Isa. 35:3-4

Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness, considering yourself lest you also be tempted. Gal. 6:1

Although many use human philosophy and psychology, God wants the bishops/ overseer to use the "**sound doctrine**" He has provided in His word.

"hugiano,... to be sound, to be well, to be in good health... is used of one whose Christian opinions are free from any admixture of error, Titus 1:13...the sound i.e. true and incorrupt doctrine, ..." (Thayer, p. 634)

"hugiano, to be healthy, sound in health (Eng., hygiene etc.), translated "safe and sound" in Luke 15:27, is used metaphorically of doctrine,..." (Vine, Vol. 4, p. 55)

It is a sad thing when Christians use worldly thoughts to exhort God's people. Those who seek motivation from psychologists, human wisdom and reasoning are incapable of serving as elders. How can a healthy respect be instilled in others that the Scriptures are complete and can thoroughly furnish unto all good works if they are not the first and primary source used by the man seeking to help them? Only men who are accustomed to turning "*to the word and to the testimony*" (Isa. 8:20) for answers to all problems could fulfill this qualification. If a man believes that God's word "*thoroughly equips*"(2Tim 3:16-17) and has "*all things pertaining to life and godliness*"(2Pet. 1:3-4) it will be obvious in how he exhorts. All congregations need men who can take healthy and sound wisdom from the Scriptures and apply them to the sorrows and difficulties and spiritual needs of others in a loving and uplifting way.

and to convict those who contradict

He must also hold fast to the faithful word in order to "convict" the gainsayers.

"elencho,.. 1. to convict, refute, confute, generally with a suggestion of the shame of the person convicted,...by conviction to bring to light, to expose... used of the exposure and confutation of false teachers of Christianity, Titus 1:9,13..." (Thayer, p. 202-203; 1651)

elencho 1. Though the NT usage is simple and straightforward, outside the NT it is very complicated. In Homer elencho still means "to scorn," "to bring into contempt." Later it means a. "to shame" by exposure, opposition, etc.; b. "to blame"; c. "to expose," "to resist"; then d. "to interpret," "to expound"; and finally e. "to investigate." 2. The use of elencho in the NT is restricted. ... It means "to show someone his sin and to summon him to repentance." (Kittel, NT:1651)

The ability to convict and refute seeking shame(godly sorrow) and remorse is a vital need for those in sin who can still be restored. It is also needed to protect the congregation against those who would teach error and refuse to repent. This is the real

importance of church discipline. It can begin with exhortation, but if they refuse to repent, it moves to convicting, refuting and exposing.

“Moreover if your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault between you and him alone. If he hears you, you have gained your brother. 16 But if he will not hear, take with you one or two more, that ‘by the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established.’ 17 And if he refuses to hear them, tell it to the church. But if he refuses even to hear the church, let him be to you like a heathen and a tax collector. Matt 18:15-17

But this is only true for those within the congregation who are sheep. For the wolves who are seeking to destroy the sheep, the harsher side of convicting comes to the front.

Now I urge you, brethren, note those who cause divisions and offenses, contrary to the doctrine which you learned, and avoid them. 18 For those who are such do not serve our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly, and by smooth words and flattering speech deceive the hearts of the simple. Rom. 16:17-19

For there are many insubordinate, both idle talkers and deceivers, especially those of the circumcision, 11 whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole households, teaching things which they ought not, for the sake of dishonest gain. 12 One of them, a prophet of their own, said, “Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, lazy gluttons.” 13 This testimony is true. Therefore rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith, Titus 1:10-14

The type of people most in need of being convicted are those who teach error and will not submit to the authority of Christ. These are the “gainsayers.”

“antilego,... to speak against, gainsay, contradict;... to oppose one’s self to one, decline to obey him, declare one’s self against him, refuse to have anything to do with him...” (Thayer, p. 50)

Such men do not need or want to be exhorted. They need to be refuted, exposed and put to shame. Those who are too soft take a strong stance against error and publicly convict and expose a man who is a gainsayer, are not qualified to shepherd God’s people.

For I know this, that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock. 30 Also from among yourselves men will rise up, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after themselves. 31 Therefore watch, and remember that for three years I did not cease to warn everyone night and day with tears. Acts 20:29-31

“I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep. 12 But a hireling, he who is not the shepherd, one who does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and flees; and the wolf catches the sheep and scatters them. 13 The hireling flees because he is a hireling and does not care about the sheep. John 10:11-14

A shepherd needs a backbone to refute and put to shame another when they teach or practice error. Those who are so soft hearted that they cannot take such a stand or are reluctant to hurt the feelings of another would not be capable of doing this job. For the sheep would be scattered and destroyed. Note Scriptural examples of refuting a gainsayer:

Now when Simon saw that through the laying on of the apostles’ hands the Holy Spirit was given, he offered them money, saying, Give me also the power, that on whomsoever I lay my hands, he may receive the Holy Spirit. But Peter said unto him, Thy silver perish with thee, because thou hast thought to obtain the gift of God with money. Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter for thy heart is not right before God. Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray the Lord, if perhaps the thought of thy heart shall be forgiven thee. For I see that thou art in the gall of bitterness and the bond of iniquity. Acts 8:18-22

And when they were gone through the whole island unto Paphos, they found a certain sorcerer, a false prophet, a Jew, whose name was Bar-Jesus; who was with the proconsul, Sergius Paulus, a man of understanding. The same called unto him Barnabas and Saul and sought to hear the word of God. But Elymas the sorcerer (for so is his name by interpretation) withstood them, seeking to turn aside the proconsul from the faith. But Saul, who is also called Paul, filled with the Holy Spirit, fastened his eyes on him, and said, O full of all guile and all villainy, thou son of the devil, thou enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right way of the Lord? Acts 13:6-9

A man must be prepared to do this to qualify for the eldership. There is nothing mean or vindictive in either of the above. In the first case, Peter seeks to help Simon see the folly of his wicked words. He even offered him the way of escape in the form of repentance and prayer. In the second case a much more serious thing has occurred. The man was

seeking to turn another from salvation. Paul dealt with this in strong terms. This is still needed from time to time and the men selected to lead a congregation must be able to do it. This is vital if a congregation is to protect itself.

The innocent sheep must be protected from such evil gainsaying wolves. The sheep are far more important than the feelings of the gainsayer. No one can hide behind emotional excuses when such a job needs to be done. All Christians need a strong enough respect for God and His truths that they will choose fidelity to them over the favor or feelings of another.

10 For there are many insubordinate,

With the conjunction *for* (*gar*— an affirmation and conclusion that gives the reason and cause), Paul revealed why having elders in every city would help set things in order. While the gospel draws the elect from every nation, it also draws predators who wish to feed off of or destroy the sheep. Jesus warned of wolves in sheep's clothing.

Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves. Mt. 7:15-16

But there were also false prophets among the people, even as there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Lord who bought them, and bring on themselves swift destruction. 2 And many will follow their destructive ways, because of whom the way of truth will be blasphemed. 3 By covetousness they will exploit you with deceptive words; for a long time their judgment has not been idle, and their destruction does not slumber. 2Pet. 2:1-3

The true church is the most precious thing on earth, but there will always be those who seek to control and use it for their own ends. There must be mature and godly men who will oppose and expose them for what they are.

Those in the church who are “*insubordinate*” are a serious problem that must be dealt with quickly.

“anupotaktos... (A priv and hupotasso) 1. [passively] not made subject, unsubjected... 2. [actively] that cannot be subjected to control, disobedient, unruly, refractory...” (Thayer, p. 52; 506)

An insubordinate person is one who cannot be brought into submission to Christ or to the word of God. If they want to do something or teach something, there is nothing within them to hold them back. They cannot be made subject to Christ or His words. They will contradict whatever Jesus said in order to do what they want and to influence others to do what they want. They have absolutely no respect for authority. They do not care about any law and refuse to be bound by it. They cannot be subjected to the will of another either by argument of righteousness and justice, or even by threat of discipline. They care nothing for truth.

both idle talkers and deceivers,

These people use two methods of deception. First, they are “idle talkers.”

“mataiologos... (mataios and lego) an idle talker, on who utters empty, senseless things...” 392; 3151

“mataios... devoid of force, truth, success, result[A. V. uniformly vain] ... useless, to no purpose.... ta mataia vain things, vanities, of heathen deities and their worship...” (Thayer, p. 392-393; 3152)

This is the talk that leads nowhere but sounds interesting. They are the fables that those with itching ears want to hear. They are the doctrines of men that make worship vain. They are the chicken soup for the soul, steeped in human wisdom but without any scriptural authority. Unless God said it, it is idle talk, no matter how impressive.

“Well did Isaiah prophesy of you hypocrites, as it is written: ‘This people honors Me with their lips, But their heart is far from Me. 7 And in vain they worship Me, Teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.’ 8 For laying aside the commandment of God, you hold the tradition of men — the washing of pitchers and cups, and many other such things you do.” 9 He said to them, “All too well you reject the commandment of God, that you may keep your tradition. Mk. 7:6-10

For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; 4 and they will turn their ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables. 2Tim 4:3-5

Along with their vain talk comes “deception.”

“phrenapates (phren and apate) a mind-deceiver; Vulg. seductor...” (Thayer, p. 658; 5423)

They weave their tales of insubordination and vanity to lead the minds of those who listen to them into a realm of deception. We see this in the Mormon doctrine of the Bible being corrupted and needing and replacement, or of the Seventh Day Adventists that the Law of Moses continued on after the cross.

especially those of the circumcision,

The teachers who started their opposition to Paul after he and Barnabas returned to Antioch continued throughout his entire life. They would follow him, entering churches he had worked so hard to establish. The conference in Jerusalem and the letter to the Galatians dealt with the specific doctrines they sought to bind. Paul told the Galatians they were accursed by their teachings, severed from Christ and fallen from grace. He had similar problems at Corinth (2Cor. 3). Both Ephesians (Eph. 2) and Colossians (Col 2) also deal with it. They sought to convince the Gentiles that they needed to be circumcised and keep the Law of Moses. They were *“most of all”* and *“above all”* of those who were insubordinate and deceivers.

“malista (superlative of the adv. mala).. adv. especially, chiefly, most of all, above all...” (Thayer p 387)

11 whose mouths must be stopped,

Paul had seen first hand the damage these people could create within the church. They could not be refuted (they wouldn't listen) so they *“must be”* stopped.

“dei... It is necessary, there is need of, it behooves, is right and proper, ... a. necessity lying in the nature of the case:... necessity brought on by circumstances or by the conduct of others toward us... c. necessity in reference to what is required to attain some end... d. a necessity of law and command, of duty, equity... i. e. necessity established by the counsel and decree of God...” (Thayer, p. 126: 1163)

It was vital and necessary to keep the congregation from listening to them. They must be *“stopped.”*

e)pistomi/zw *epistomízæ*; fut. *epistomísæ*, from *epí* 1909), upon, and *stóma* (4750), mouth. To muzzle, stop the mouth, check, curb, put to silence, with the acc. (Titus 1:11). (Complete Word Study Dictionary: NT:1993)

Elders must do whatever is necessary to bridle, muzzle and put them to silence. Since they are insubordinate deceivers, it will be unlikely they will voluntarily stop their work. One could attempt to shame and convince them. But once it is clear they will not be bound by God's word they must be reduce to silence by removing them from the congregation and warning the church not to listen to them. Their threat to the church is lessened when they are exposed. It is a difficult but necessary step to take to protect the church. They must be marked them and turn away:

Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them that are causing the divisions and occasions of stumbling, contrary to the doctrine which ye learned: and turn away from them. 18 For they that are such serve not our Lord Christ, but their own belly; and by their smooth and fair speech they beguile the hearts of the innocent. Rom. 16:17-18

Even in this letter Paul gives the same warning.

But avoid foolish disputes, genealogies, contentions, and strivings about the law; for they are unprofitable and useless. 10 Reject a divisive man after the first and second admonition, 11 knowing that such a person is warped and sinning, being self-condemned. Titus 3:9-11

who subvert whole households,

These people can *“subvert”* a entire household.

a)natre/pw a; katastre/fw: to cause something to be completely overturned - 'to turn over, to upset, to overturn.' a)natre/pwa : 'and he overturned the tables' John 2:15. katastre/fw: 'and he overturned the tables of the moneychangers' Matt 21:12. -English Lexicon # 396)

Joined to the Greek prepositions: *“ana”* — up and *“kata”* — down. Hence to turn something upside down captures both these terms. The second *katastrepho* comes directly into our language as *“catastrophe.”* The create a catastrophe in an entire *“household,”* turning things upside down and destroying the spirituality and goodness there.

“oikos... a. strictly, an inhabited house... b. any building whatever... c. any dwelling place... univ. the place where one has fixed his residence, one’s settled abode, domicile... 2. by meton. the inmates of a house, all the persons forming one’s family, a household... 3. stock, race, descendants of one...” (Thayer, p 441)

Hence it refers to all that make up a household. Parents, children, servants, grandparents. All who make up that family unit. Just as Lydia obeyed with all her house:

Now a certain woman named Lydia heard us. She was a seller of purple from the city of Thyatira, who worshiped God. The Lord opened her heart to heed the things spoken by Paul. 15 And when she and her household were baptized, she begged us, saying, “If you have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come to my house and stay.” So she persuaded us. Acts 16:14-15

So now as a result of the type of person spoken of above, the whole house that had originally turned to the Lord has been turned upside down.

teaching things which they ought not,

The means of subverting is accomplished by teaching things that should not be taught. Untaught because they were lies, human wisdom, worthless fables. Things that destroy instead of edify. Things that are *“unnecessary.”*

“dei... It is necessary, there is need of, it behooves, is right and proper; ... a. necessity lying in the nature of the case:...” (Thayer, p. 126: 1163)

They must not teach, it is not right and proper that these things be taught. Things not found in the word of God should never be taught as though they were.

for the sake of dishonest gain.

Since these things should not be taught because they were error, why were they teaching them? What motive could one have if they were not going to get to heaven by teaching them? Their motivation is of this world. There is a reason and it is for the *“sake”* of that they do it.

“charin... used absol. prop. in favor of, for the pleasure of... it takes on completely the nature of a preposition, and is joined to the gen., for, on account of, for the sake of... toutou charin, on this account, for this cause, Eph 3:1...” (Thayer, p. 665, 5484)

Their teaching is motivated by the pleasure of and favor of *“dishonest gain.”*

1. *aischros*, base, shameful...is used of base gain, filthy (lucre) ... 2. *aischrokerdes*, greedy of base gain (No 1, and *kerdos*, gain), is used in 1Tim. 3:8 and Titus 1:7, “greedy of filthy lucre;” (Vine, Volume 3, p 25)

“kerdos... gain, advantage...” (Thayer, p. 345; 2771)

This is the same term Paul forbid in the character of elders to have any part of in the character in Titus 1:7. They are willing to use base and low means to create wealth for themselves. This would be the same motivation that leads people to profit from the misery of others. Those who create drug addicts or prostitutes to make money for themselves are the same calibre of person who would teach error in order to make money off the eternal misery of others.

12 One of them, a prophet (poet) of their own, said,

This is a different use of the term prophet than we are accustomed to. Generally, when the term is used in the Scriptures, it refers to a man inspired of God to speak God’s word through the Holy Spirit. In this case, it is the common use of the term as it was used by the Greeks speaking of uninspired men using their own wisdom and inspiration. Although it is the same word, it has been stripped of all biblical context and is only a description of how the term was used at that time in Crete.

“prophetes... in Greek writings from Aeschyl., Hdt., and Pind. down 1. an interpreter of oracles (whether uttered by the gods or the manteis), or of other hidden things. 2. a foretell, soothsayer, seer... 2. a poet (because poets were believed to sing under divine inspiration)..” (Thayer, p. 554; 4396)

Thus though used in the NT to describe the inspired man, in Greek writings it referred to a man who was a poet. We do something similar today when we use inspiration to describe how a poet or songwriter found the power within himself to devise such a thing. This was just a wise man’s interpretation of the type of people the Cretan’s were. Paul

then as an inspired apostle validated that view with the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. This is a prophet of “*their own*,” not a prophet of God.

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“Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, lazy gluttons.”

With the term “always,” each terms is multiplied to their furthest extent.

a)ei/ adv. Always, ever, continually, at all times (Acts 7:51; 2 Cor 6:10); always or ever in a restrained sense, i.e., at some stated time (Mark 15:8, “as he always did” ... meaning customarily; Sept.: Judg 16:20); very frequently, continually (2 Cor 4:11; 2 Peter 1:12, assiduously). From this is derived the Eng. “aye,” “ever.” See also Titus 1:12; Heb 3:10; 1 Peter 3:15; (Complete Word Study Dictionary: NT 104).

These four terms paint a terrible picture of this culture. They are always “liars.” They are never trustworthy. They make promises they do not intend to keep or say untrue things as though they are true. They exaggerate, pretend to be what they are not and profess feelings they do not feel. They make commitments they do not intend to keep.

“*psuestes*... *a liar*... (*pseudes*, q. v.).. one who breaks faith, *a false* or *faithless man*...” (Thayer, p. 676; 5583)

You simply cannot trust a Cretan. They will say anything to get you to believe, but they will not keep anything they say. Not only are they people you cannot trust, but they are also “evil beasts.” This term can be anything from the venomous beast that fixed itself to Paul’s hand, to the beasts that can be tamed as described by James.

therion ... to be distinguished from *zoon*, almost invariably denotes “a wild beast.” In Acts 28:4, “venomous beast” is used of the viper which fastened on Paul’s hand. *Zoon* stresses the vital element, *therion* the bestial. (Vine’s 2342)

Although the term can move from the ferocious and venomous to the tame and benign, with the adjective “evil” placed before it, the Cretan poet is not speaking of something tame.

“*kakos*... *bad* 1. *univ. of a bad nature; not such as it ought to be*. 2. [morally, i.e.] of a mode of thinking, feeling, acting; *base, wrong, wicked*:... neut. *kakon*, *to evil* i.e. what is contrary to law, either divine or human, *wrong, crime*... spec. *of wrongs inflicted*... 3. *troublesome, injurious, pernicious, destructive, baneful*... (Thayer, p. 320; 2556)

Living on level of animals regarding their lusts. “*If it feels good ... do it*” with no honor or integrity. Animals are to be feared because you don’t know what they might do. What they did yesterday is no indication of what they might do today. They are dangerous.

They were also “gluttons.” Literally they were stomachs. Likely an idiom for gluttony. They are all stomach.

“*gaster*... 1. *the belly*; by meton. of the whole for the part... 3. *the stomach*; by synecdoche *a glutton, gormandizer*, a man who is as it were all stomach, ...” (Thayer, p. 110; 1064)

These people tend to think with their stomach. They eat not just to eat to satisfaction, and not just to enjoy the food. They controlled by their stomach. They are also “lazy.”

“*argos*... fr. A priv. and *ergon* without work, without labor, doing nothing), *inactive, idle*: a. *free from labor, at leisure*... b. *lazy, shunning the labor which one ought to perform*... c. of things from which no profit is derived, although they can and ought to be productive: as of fields, trees, gold and silver... *unprofitable*... (Thayer, p. 72: 692)

They simply do not want to work hard. They do as little as they possible can.

13 This testimony is true.

While what their prophets and poets say about them is only personal opinion, Paul's is inspired. The "testimony" this poet had affirmed were his own personal observations of the character of the people.

"marturia... 2. what one testifies, testimony... in a legal sense, of testimony before a judge... in an historical sense, of the testimony of an historian... in an ethical sense, of testimony concerning one's character..." (Thayer, p. 391; 3141)

Paul had also been among them, and the Holy Spirit who knows the hearts of all men validated this as the "truth".

"alethes, ...(a priv. and letho [lanthano],... lit. not hidden, unconcealed),... 1. true... 2. loving the truth, speaking the truth, truthful,... 3. i.q. alethinous... (1) "that which has not only the name and semblance, but the real nature corresponding to the name"... in every respect corresponding to the idea signified by the name, real and true, genuine;..." (Thayer, p. 27)

In all aspects, these people corresponded to the nature of the things spoken above. They were liars, evil beasts(predators, sensual) lazy and stomachs. When this is the character of the people coming into the church, it would also be the character of those within the church until they grew out of them. These would create the problems that would exist inside the church and would also be the threats the church would face from outside. These characteristics would be in the hearts of their friends and loved ones, along with the false teachers and lost they were seeking to teach.

Therefore rebuke them sharply,

There are two words for "rebuke" in the NT. The one used here is the stronger of the two. The one not used here is a rebuke that may or may not be deserved and one that may or may not be heeded. The term used here is always a well-deserved rebuke and either leading to a confession of sin, or at least to a conviction on the part of the one rebuked, or the ones hearing the rebuke that it was needed and just.

epitimao ... means simply to rebuke, in any sense. It may be justly or unjustly, and, if justly, the rebuke may be heeded or it may not. "elencho on the other hand, means to rebuke with sufficient cause, and also effectually, so as to bring the one rebuked to a confession or at least a conviction of sin. In other words, it means to convince. (Berry's Synonyms of the NT #2008; 1651)

"elencho,.. 1. to convict, refute, confute, generally with a suggestion of the shame of the person convicted,... of crime fault or error... contextually, by conviction to bring to light, to expose ... used of the exposure and confutation of false teachers of Christianity, Titus 1:9,13...2. to find fault with, correct; a. by word; to reprehend, severely, chide, admonish, reprove... contextually, to call to account, show one his fault, demand an explanation... b. by deed; to chasten, punish..." (Thayer, p. 202-203; 1651)

This term is used three times in Titus.

*holding fast the faithful word as he has been taught, that he may be able, by sound doctrine, both to exhort and **convict** those who contradict. Titus 1:9*

*This testimony is true. Therefore **rebuke** them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith, Titus 1:13*

*Speak these things, exhort, and **rebuke** with all authority. Let no one despise you. Titus 2:15*

As Titus develops his material to teach and preach publicly and house to house, he is to use sound doctrine to convict and rebuke.

There are two ways to rebuke. The first way is to subtly and kindly do it. We want them to know they are doing something wrong, but we want to be kind and gentle about it. This is generally done when first dealing with an issue that can hopefully be dealt with by simply pointing out that something is wrong. The second way, is a pointed and sharp rebuke specific as to person and to activity. This is what we have to do when they have manifested no interest in changing after our gentle rebukes failed. This time it is sharp and even severe.

"apotomos. adv., ... a. abruptly, precipitously. B. trop. sharply, severely, [cr. our curtly] ..." (Thayer, p. 69; 664)

These aren't the type of things that can be dealt with kindly, compassionately and patiently. They need to be cut off and removed quickly for they are very dangerous. Peter's rebuke of Simon fits this latter category.

But Peter said to him, "Your money perish with you, because you thought that the gift of God could be purchased with money! 21 You have neither part nor portion in this matter, for your heart is not right in the sight of God. 22 Repent therefore of this your wickedness, and pray God if perhaps the thought of your heart may be forgiven you. 23 For I see that you are poisoned by bitterness and bound by iniquity." 24 Then Simon answered and said, "Pray to the Lord for me, that none of the things which you have spoken may come upon me." Acts 8:20-24

that they may be sound in the faith,

This is to be done "in order that" these people will be sound in the faith.

"hina... to the intent that; to the end that, in order that;... it is used 1. prop of the purpose or end;... " (Thayer, p. 302-304; 2443)

Thus the purpose of the rebuke will focus its extent and scope. The goal is to make them "sound" in their faith.

"hugiaino... to be sound, to be well, to be in good health prop ... metaph. is used of one whose Christian opinions are free from any admixture of error... the sound i. e. true and incorrupt doctrine..." (Thayer, p. 634; 5198)

It emphasizes in the spiritual realm that which all want in the physical. In our eating, exercising, and other parts of our lifestyle, we strive to be healthy. We strive to stay in good health. No one likes to be sick, and no one knowingly places themselves in a position to get sick. We wash our hands, we eat clean and good food, drink clean and good water. We take good care of our physical health. This term takes that concept and applies it to the spiritual realm. We should want the same quality of healthy spiritual food, drink, and exercise as we do in the physical realm. In order to do this we must stay close to the source. Many have drunk deeply of the perverted, tainted, and vile filth of false teachers. Vile morality, vile doctrine leads to a vile and sick spirit.

14 not giving heed to Jewish fables

The term "give heed" means much more than just an admonition to believe these fables. Even listening attentively to them is condemned.

"prosecho... to turn to... 1. to bring to, bring near... 2. to turn the mind to, attend to, be attentive... to a person or thing... in the sense of caring for, providing for... b. ... to attend to one's self, i. e. to give heed to one's self... to guard one's self i. e. to beware, 3. to apply one's self to, attach one's self to, hold or cleave to a person or a thing..." (Thayer, p. 546; 4337)

It only takes a few moments to determine whether what someone is speaking about came from Scripture or is some new or unusual idea from the minds of men. Whenever something new comes along, we are not to turn our minds to it or be attentive to it if it is determined it came from men.

There are multitudes of things that even to know about them is defiling. It is shameful to even speak about them and they are among the depths of Satan we don't need to know.

We just need to expose them to the light of the truth.

And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather expose them. 12 For it is shameful even to speak of those things which are done by them in secret. 13 But all things that are exposed are made manifest by the light, for whatever makes manifest is light. Eph. 5:11-14

Now to you I say, and to the rest in Thyatira, as many as do not have this doctrine, who have not known the depths of Satan, as they say, I will put on you no other burden. Rev. 2:24

This is the nature of the term "fable." By definition it is always something that is not true.

"muthos... 1. a speech, word, saying. 2. a narrative, story; a. a true narrative. b. a fiction, a fable; univ. an invention, falsehood... the fictions of the Jewish theosophists and Gnostics, esp. concerning the emanations and order of the eons, are called muthoi[a. V. fables]..." (Thayer, p. 419; 3554)

We don't have much information about the specific content. Evidently the Jewish false teachers were fond of making up stories about genealogies. Although we don't have an exact idea of their content, they would be similar to what false teachers always do.

Joseph Smith's story of how Israel came to North America, Jehovah witness stories of the earth being restored and 144,000 going to heaven while the rest live here and the wicked cease to exist. The Christian Science story of no pain on the earth. On and on these stories go. The New Age is full of such fables, as also are the Eastern Religions. They are foreign to the truths of the Bible and we should give no credence to them as it is an insult to our God to do so.

and commandments of men who turn from the truth.

There are two types of commands discussed in the Scriptures. The commands of God which were revealed by the Holy Spirit and the commands of men that originate in their own minds and hearts. The same noun is used for both.

"entole...an order, command, charge, precept; 1. univ. a charge, injunction... 2. a commandment, i.e. a prescribed rule in accordance with which a thing is done... a. used of the commandments of the Mosaic law:... esp of particular precepts of this law as distinguished from ho nomos(the law) their body or sum:..." (Thayer, p. 218; 1785)

There is no comparison between keeping the commands of God and serving God and keeping the commands of men instead. To elevate commands that originate in the minds of men to the same level as those given by our Creator and God is the height of folly and presumption. God has never shown any respect for the thoughts and ideas of men. When Cain changed God's instructions into his own desires God showed no respect for Cain or for the offering he made through human ingenuity. Jesus quoted Isaiah who revealed God's true attitude toward the commands of men.

"These people draw near to Me with their mouth, and honor Me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me. 9 And in vain they worship Me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men. Mt. 15:9

Worship centers on our desire to honor and glorify God. When we mix God's commands with our own, God is lowered and man is raised. How can our worship be of any value to God when our conduct contradicts our honor. The commands of men will always make worship vain. You can't honor God with your lips when your heart is influenced by human wisdom.

The only thing that commands of men can accomplish is to lead people to "turn from" the truth.

"apostrepho... 1. to turn away... to remove anything from any one... simply to turn him away from allegiance to anyone, tempt to defection... 2. to turn back, return, bring back... 3. intrans. to turn one's self away, turn back, return... 4. mid., ... to turn one's self away from... Titus 1:14; in the sense of deserting..." (Thayer, p. 68; 654)

While sound doctrine can lead us closer and closer to God, in spite of man's greatest efforts, the only thing his own ideas and commands can do is lead one away from God. Sound doctrine brings health and the teachings of men bring sickness. Once people begin to heed the teachings of men, it will lead them further and further away from the truth. This is the greatest indictment against all human wisdom. Time and again, professing themselves to be wise men have become fools, because it is not in man that walks to direct his steps. God's commands are the objective standard leading us to truth. Man's commands are subjective ideas of individual leading into error.

15 To the pure all things are pure,

The term "pure" always refers to things that have everything they should have and nothing it shouldn't. Just as there is no place in a glass of water for dirt, or chemicals, so also there is no place in the hearts and minds of men for things that are vile, corrupt, and evil.

"katharos... clean, pure, (free from the admixture or adhesion of anything that soils, adulterates corrupts); a. physically... b. in a Levitical sense; clean; i.e. the use of which is not forbidden, imparts no uncleanness... c. ethically; free from corrupt desire, from sin and guilt... free from every admixture of what is false, sincere... genuine blameless, innocent..." (Thayer, p. 312; 2513)

Corrupt desires, and false teachings, do not belong in the minds of men. The natural affections we were born to feel, and the image and likeness of God we were created to be are all pure. This is the beauty of the heart of a little child. Yet as each person moves

into the age of accountability, lusts and desires begin to stir. For each lust we fulfill, we lose purity and innocence.

Before these doors are opened everything is pure and innocent. Even after they are opened, God's word can still allow us to see them in their pure context. Everything is pure to such people because that is how they look at things and see things and when they see the other they turn from it in disgust.

but to those who are defiled and unbelieving

The term "defiled" is a graphic term, describing what occurs when a stain or dye hits a piece of cloth. If it was by design, the new colors will be pleasing as Lydia who was a seller of purple. But if the color was never meant to touch the cloth, it can be ruined.

"miaino... 1. to dye with another color, to stain: ... 2. to defile, pollute, sully, contaminate, soil... in a physical and a moral sense, sarka(of licentiousness), Jude 8; in a moral sense... absol. to defile with sin, ... in Heb. 12:15..." (Thayer, p. 414)

What happens with fabric can also happen with souls and emotions. The purity of clean emotions and hearts can be stained with the impurity of misused lusts. Such defilement forever changes the way the soul views life, as when the innocent child is defiled with wicked lusts. So Eve's heart was defiled by the stained thinking the devil introduced into her mind.

So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate. Gen 3:6

The grammar here is as important as the definition. This is a perfect participle, hence the action of defilement occurred in the past, but the effects of it continue up to the present moment. Hence just as a garment is dyed or stained with another color and its original color is forever lost, so also with the heart and soul of a man. Once it is defiled by sin and corruption, it is sullied, polluted and defiled.

Yet there are two types of defiled people. Those who are defiled and believing, are washed in the blood of Jesus and through the power of God's word, we can return to the divine nature and escape the corruption in the world through lust (2Pet 1:1-8). The other type of person is those who are defiled and unbelieving. The unbelief makes these stains permanent. They cannot be removed without Christ and the "unbelieving" will not come to Him.

"apistos... without faith or trust 1. unfaithful, faithless,(not to be trusted, perfidious).. 2. incredible, of things... 3. unbelieving, incredulous... with the added idea of impiety and wickedness... without trust(in God).." (Thayer, p. 57; 571)

They simply will not and cannot trust in Christ.

nothing is pure;

Imagine if the lense in the eyes could be stained. From that point on, everything they could see would be stained in that same hue. They could see nothing but the stain because it is the only lense they have to see life through. Yet it is not the physical eyes, but they eyes of our heart that is under consideration. With these spiritual and moral stains, "nothing" can escape.

"oudeis... and not one, no one, none, no; it differs from meideis as ou does from me... 1. with nouns... 2. absolutely, ... nothing whatever, not at all, in no wise..." (Thayer, p. 462; 3762)

Such stains sully and pervert everything they see. If it is a sexual stain, then all sexual things are stained. If it is idolatry, covetousness, malice, or envy, then everything associated with it is seen through the lense of that impurity and nothing escapes.

having eyes full of adultery and that cannot cease from sin, enticing unstable souls. They have a heart trained in covetous practices, and are accursed children. 2 Peter 2:14-15

Their perverted view removes all purity from that realm. Jesus spoke clearly about this.

The lamp of the body is the eye. If therefore your eye is good, your whole body will be full of light. 23 But if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in you is darkness, how great is that darkness! Mt. 6:22-23

And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. 20 For everyone practicing evil

hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed. 21 But he who does the truth comes to the light, that his deeds may be clearly seen, that they have been done in God.” Jn. 3:19-21

but even their mind and conscience are defiled.

When the lense by which we see the world is defiled, the mind slowly darkens. When the mind is darkened, the conscience that monitors the “mind” is also darkened.

“nous,... 1. the mind, comprising alike the faculties of perceiving and understanding and those of feeling, judging, determining; hence spec. a. the intellective faculty, the understanding...b. reason... in the narrower sense, as the capacity for spiritual truth, the higher powers of the soul, the faculty of perceiving divine things, of recognizing goodness and of hating evil... c. the power of considering and judging soberly, calmly and impartially... 2. a particular mode of thinking and judging... i.q. thoughts, feelings, purposes... desires... (Thayer, p. 429; 3563)

All ability to perceive and understand is tainted and stained. The ability to recognize, consider and judge are all compromised. This is why no command coming from such a mind can lead to glory and submission to God.

Since the “conscience” can only work off the facts and perceptions of the mind, the conscience will also become stained and no longer function.

“suneidesis... [lit. ‘joint-knowledge’]... a. the consciousness of anything... b. the soul as distinguishing between what is morally good and bad, prompting to do the former and shun the latter, commending the one, condemning the other; conscience... “ (Thayer, p. 602-603; 4893)

God created the conscience to jointly work with the mind. While the mind holds all the facts and makes all the decisions, God designed the conscience to watch over the mind and make us feel uncomfortable when we do not do what our mind believes to be right. So when the mind is defiled to think something is right(that is evil), then the conscience will also be defiled and make us feel good because we are doing what our minds think is right, but the mind is defiled.

16 They profess to know God,

This is the true evil of false religion. Without the truth that makes free to clear our minds and see ourselves clearly, we can “profess” we know God and believe with all our heart that it is so. But due to our defiled conscience, we can never see the truth.

“homologeō... 1. prop. to say the same thing as another, i. e. to agree with, assent, both absol. and with a dat. of the pers. 2. univ. to concede i.e. a. not to refuse, i. e. to promise... b. not to deny, i. e. to confess; declare... 3. to profess... i. e. to declare openly, speak out freely, [A. V. generally confess;...] ... “ (Thayer, p. 446; 3670)

With all their hearts, some believe that God never had a more knowledgeable servant than they are. They confess and profess it and their conscience bears witness with all sincerity. Yet because of their defilement, human wisdom and following human commandments it is all false.

With the strongest word in Greek for a knowledge that sees clearly and understands fully, they proclaim that which they cannot see or understand.

“eido... lat. video... The tenses coming from eido and retained by usage form two families, of which one signifies to see, the other to know... I. to see 1. to perceive(with the eyes).. 2. lat. video, to perceive by any of the senses... 3. univ. to perceive, notice, discern, discover... 4. to see, i.e. to turn the eyes, the mind, the attention to anything; a. to pay attention, observe... b. ... to see about something i.e. to ascertain what must be done about it... c. to inspect, examine... d. to look at, behold... 5. to experience, any state of condition... 6. to see i.e. have an interview with, to visit...” (Thayer, p. 172-174; 1492)

With all sincerity they proclaim and confess to a clear knowledge of God and would even pass a lie-detector test. Yet because of defilement and stains, it is not true.

but in works they deny Him,

This is very similar to what Jesus told us about such people. Don’t look only at their words and their profession. Compare what they are preaching and teaching with what the Scriptures say. Every Scripture requires fruit or works. Those who produce the fruit and do the works are the genuine article while those who profess but have no fruit or works are false.

“Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves. 16 You will know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes from thornbushes or figs from thistles? 17 Even so, every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. 18 A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a bad tree bear good fruit. 19 Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. 20 Therefore by their fruits you will know them. Mt. 7:15-20

The Greeks used “works” to describe what each one produces with their lives.

“ergon... 1. business, employment, that with which anyone is occupied... 2. any product whatever, any thing accomplished by hand, art, industry, mind... 3. an act, deed, thing done: ...” (Thayer, p. 248; 2041)

James spoke of works in the same way that Paul does here.

But someone will say, “You have faith, and I have works.” Show me your faith without your works, and I will show you my faith by my works. Jas. 2:18-19

When we trust in the Lord with all our hearts, it will be obvious by the way we live our life. If we profess to know God then all that we do will verify it. But when our mind and conscience are defiled, the deeds will always “deny” the words.

“arneomai... 1. to deny, i. e. [... to say...not, contradict]... 2. to deny, with an acc. of the pers., in various senses...a. ... of the followers of Jesus who, for fear of death or persecution, deny that Jesus is their master, and desert his cause [to disown]... b.. of those who by cherishing and disseminating pernicious opinions and immorality are adjudged to have apostatized from God and Christ... c. ...to deny himself... 3. to deny i.e. abnegate, abjure;... to renounce a thing, forsake it... 4. not to accept to reject, refuse something offered...” (Thayer, p. 74; 720)

A look at the disconnect between the words and the lives of people often reveal how stark that denial can be. There is a total contradiction between what they say and what they do.

Indeed you are called a Jew, and rest on the law, and make your boast in God, 18 and know His will, and approve the things that are excellent, being instructed out of the law, ... 23 You who make your boast in the law, do you dishonor God through breaking the law? 24 For “the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you,” as it is written. Rom 2:17-18; 23-24

being abominable, disobedient,

These are now works that are slightly off the mark. It will not be a difficult assessment. Their works will be “abominable.”

bdeluktos ... pertaining to one who or that which is or should be detested or regarded as abhorrent - ‘detested, detestable, abominable, abhorrent.’ ... ‘they are detestable and disobedient’ Titus 1:16. (Greek-English Lexicon NT:947)

Their words are disgusting, detestable and abhorrent. They create a visceral feeling of disgust. It is amazing how people who profess to know God can go so low, but it has happened multitudes of times both to Israel and to the church. It is amazing that even today exactly the same things are happening.

Professing to be wise, they became fools, 23 and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like corruptible man — and birds and four-footed animals and creeping things. 24 Therefore God also gave them up to uncleanness, in the lusts of their hearts, to dishonor their bodies among themselves, 25 who exchanged the truth of God for the lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen. 26 For this reason God gave them up to vile passions. For even their women exchanged the natural use for what is against nature. 27 Likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust for one another, men with men committing what is shameful, and receiving in themselves the penalty of their error which was due. Rom. 1:22-27

The other work that denies what they profess is “disobedience.” They speak great words of love and devotion toward God, but when you read the clear commands of God to them and listen to their answers, it is evident that there is nothing in the Scriptures that will persuade them to change or repent.

apeitheia “the condition of being unpersuadable” (a, negative, peitho, “to persuade”), denotes “obstinacy, obstinate rejection of the will of God”; hence, “disobedience”; Eph 2:2; 5:6; Col 3:6, and in the RV of Rom 11:30,32 and Heb 4:6,11 (for KJV, “unbelief”), speaking of Israel, past and present. (Vines # 544)

Regardless of the Scripture, you can’t persuade them. They remain obstinate and disobedient in the face of all scripture and all proof, yet are so convinced they cannot be moved from it.

and disqualified for every good work.

With these qualities, they are “disqualified.” Remember this is a disqualification that God has decreed. This is not something we decide.

adokimos signifying “not standing the test, rejected” (a, negative, *dokimos*, “approved”), was primarily applied to metals (cf. Isa 1:22); it is used always in the NT in a passive sense, (a) of things, Heb 6:8, “rejected,” of land that bears thorns and thistles; (b) of persons, Rom 1:28, of a “reprobate mind,” a mind of which God cannot approve, and which must be rejected by Him, the effect of refusing “to have God in their knowledge” ...” (Vines #96)

No matter what God work God has requested of His people, these people are disqualified to do them. As the Jews before them, whatever they do will lead to blaspheme.

On the next Sabbath almost the whole city came together to hear the word of God. 45 But when the Jews saw the multitudes, they were filled with envy; and contradicting and blaspheming, they opposed the things spoken by Paul. 46 Then Paul and Barnabas grew bold and said, “It was necessary that the word of God should be spoken to you first; but since you reject it, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, behold, we turn to the Gentiles. 47 For so the Lord has commanded us: Acts 13:44-47