

KINGDOM SPIRIT

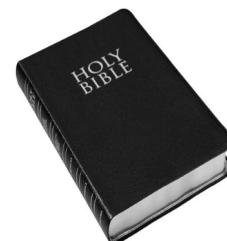
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"SEEK YE FIRST THE KINGDOM OF GOD"

Matthew 6:33



Issue 2201

IT'S THE LAW

In our last issue we were discussing how I believe the law can be categorized in four categories for better understanding. We had discussed commandments, statutes, and judgments. We are now ready for the fourth.

Our fourth category is that of "ordinances." In Gen. 26, God speaks to Isaac reiterating the promises He made to Abraham and his seed and then tells Isaac He made the promises to Abraham **"Because that Abraham obeyed my voice, and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws."** (vs. 5) By this we can assume, I believe, God's law as we find it in the commandments, statutes and judgments is not new law, at least not all the law is new. For example, we find in Gen. 9:6, **"Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed."**

However, up until God gave the stone tablets with the Ten Commandments engraved upon them, as well as all of the commandments, statutes and judgments we find in Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy, at Mt. Sinai, God's law had not been written and a nation of people held responsible to them. The various nations, or kingdoms, had sets of man authored laws, and those nations or kingdoms held their citizens responsible to those laws. But, God's law, in its entirety, had not, prior to this time, been written, or codified. This status changed dramatically at Mt. Sinai. For the first time in history, a nation made itself responsible to God to keep His laws. Paul tells us in Rom. 5:13, **"For until the law sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed when there is no law."** It was just as wrong for Cain to kill Abel as it is to murder today, Paul is saying, but because no nation or individual had been specifically given the law and had agreed to keep it, God really did not impute (or reckon) that sin against the people prior to this day. If our state did not have a speed limit law and I drove

faster than 45 mph on a road designed for a maximum speed of 45 mph, the state could not hold me responsible to that speed. But, if the legislature passed a law making it unlawful to exceed 45 mph on that particular highway, and I have basically agreed to this law through my voting (or even not voting) for that legislature and/or through my obtaining a license to drive, I am now responsible to that law and can be punished for violating it.

So when God gave Israel a written law containing commandments, statutes, and judgments, they as a corporate body agreed to keep this law as we see them do in Ex. 19:8, **"And all the people answered together, and said, all that the LORD hath spoken we will do."** They repeated this assertion several times (Ex. 24:34 and Deut. 5:27), so there can be no doubt as to the fact they took this responsibility.

But, in so doing they committed themselves perhaps more than they first realized. In the commandments, statutes and judgments, they had a system of laws that, in effect, defined sin against each other and provided remedy for this sin. Again, using our example of the commandment, **"Thou shalt not steal,"** the follow up commandments and statutes further defined stealing as theft, armed robbery, extortion, etc., to use some of our modern terminology. The judgments, based on the principle of restitution, provides that a minimum of twice what was stolen had to be restored to the damaged party with up to five times as much to be restored depending on the method and circumstance of the theft. If the thief could not make restitution, the judgments provided a means of selling the thief for his cost of restitution and also provided rules so that the thief would be treated fairly in this condition of forced servitude. So, within these laws, thorough provision is made for men to be able to live with each other peaceably and prosperously.

However, another factor entered the picture when Israel agreed to keep God's laws. Not only did men damage each other when they violated these laws, they also damaged God. If we study the complete plan and purpose of God as presented in His Word, we find it is God's intent that He and man will ultimately dwell

together. But, we also see that God, in His total righteousness and perfection, cannot tolerate anything less than total righteousness and perfection in His presence. This why we see Adam and Eve cast out of the garden (Gen. 3:24), why people died if they touched the ark of the covenant when not authorized to do so (II Sam. 6:6-7), and why no one has seen God face to face in all His glory and lived (Ex. 33:20). So, to be in the very presence of God, man must be perfect and totally righteous. If man were able to keep all of the laws of God, he could attain to that goal. But, instead of attaining to that goal, we find the law defines all of the ways we fail. Paul gives us the ultimate result of our failures in Rom. 6:23, **“For the wages of sin is death...”**

In both the Old and New Testaments, the word “sin” is translated from words whose basic meanings are “to miss” or “to miss the mark” implying failure to receive the prize as a result of missing the mark. We fail to receive the prize of living in the presence of God because we miss the mark, or target of total righteousness. When we do this we damage God, or at least our relationship to Him, in that we detract from His intent to dwell with us. Because of our sin, His intent cannot come to fruition.

As a result, God provided a new group, or classification of laws that would provide a remedy for this damage to Him. As the judgments provided remedy for man’s sin, or damage to other men, this new set of laws we will know as “ordinances,” provided for a remedy against the damage done to God by our sin. Basically these “ordinances” are based on the law of substitution, something we will discuss in more detail as we continue our study. Also, these laws dealt with the holiness, or separateness of God to which it is God’s intent that we also attain that **“God may be all in all.”** (I Cor. 15:28)

Basically, these “ordinances” are the sacrifice and worship laws and the laws of the tabernacle and rituals that Israel was to practice. However, as with the commandments and statutes often being the same law in a particular case, we sometimes find an ordinance may also be a statute and /or a commandment also. We will deal with these laws in detail in our study, but keep in mind that we must understand these laws to understand the New Covenant that we deal with in the New Testament.

We have discussed the four basic categories of God’s Law that I believe it is divided into: Commandments, Statutes, Judgments, and Ordinances. I now want to discuss these categories in some detail as I believe this will give us a good understanding of the principles involved, which is what we really need to understand to understand God’s Law. In doing this, we will be looking at many of same the laws given in the books of Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy several times, but we will be looking at them from a different perspective each time. Hopefully, this

will first familiarize us quite thoroughly with the law itself, and secondly we want to broaden our look so that not only will it be easier to make obedient application of these laws to our lives, but to our families, churches, communities, states and nation as well. Also, if we can thoroughly understand the principles involved, it will greatly enhance our ability to understand Scripture as the prophets, Jesus Christ, and the apostles all teach from the assumption that we understand God’s Law. We need to have these laws written on our heart.

I would like to start with the Commandments. We have already discussed that these are laws that the individual is primarily the one responsible to. Basically, each individual has three areas of responsibility; self, other people, and God. The commandments God gave to man deal with all three of these areas of responsibility.

I want to re-emphasize that we need to learn the principle of the law. Times and customs change so that the particular letter, or specifics of a law may not appear applicable, but the principle is still applicable. So as we begin this look at the commandments, let us do so from the standpoint that we are dealing with our individual responsibilities and that we want to understand the principle of each of the laws. Also, while we are looking at a law that deals with our responsibility to God, we are not excluding the possibility that the same principle might apply to our responsibilities to others, or even to ourselves, even though we may not list them as such. This may be left to the study and reason of each of us as students.

The most important commandment detailing our responsibility to God is Deut. 6:4-5 since Jesus called it the first and great commandment. (Read) As we look at this commandment, we need to do so in light of Deut. 11:1 (read). We are all more familiar with the parent-child relationship. The best way a child can signify his or her love for their parents is unquestioned obedience. It is the same with us toward God. As we have already said in our last lesson, the first four of the Ten Commandments would logically be an expansion of this commandment. (Read Ex. 20:2-11)

While the Law was given to Israel at a time when they were to go into a new land already inhabited by a people very deeply involved in idolatry, we can still glean much from the more specific instructions of law they were given to teach them to deal with this idolatrous people and land. For example, Ex. 23:24-25 and Deut. 7:25-26 instructed them to destroy the altars, break up their images and cut down their groves. God makes it clear, in this commandment, that they cannot co-exist with these man-made gods without being tempted to worship them themselves. This principle is still valid, thus making it necessary to

destroy the false gods around us. It is not unusual for people today to be wearing a likeness of a man-made god in their jewelry or have it in some of the decorative items in their home for example. I have talked to people who have traveled abroad and brought back replicas of the gods of other nations only to realize that putting them on display in their homes brought in a spiritual darkness to their home, that they could not explain, until they removed and disposed of these replicas. I found it necessary to dispose of a Navajo Indian blanket I had on display when I learned that some of the symbols woven into the blanket had to do with worshipping some of their gods. Ex. 20:23 and Lev. 26:1 makes it very clear Israel is not to make gods of silver, gold, or stone. Deut. 4:15-24 reminds Israel that God has not provided any likeness to them of Him to make an image of, and warns against making any likeness of anything on the earth, or worshipping any of the stars, the sun, or the moon. Ex. 23:24-25; Lev. 19:4 and Deut. 6:13-15 makes it equally clear we are not to bow down to other gods, nor serve them, nor do after their works. He promises prosperity and good health when we worship Him only.

There are a number of do's and don'ts that God commanded that we might always honor Him. Among the don'ts, Ex. 22:29-30 says not to delay the offering of the first fruits and the first born of sons and animals. We also find among the do's the command to do these things in Ex. 34:19-20; Num. 18:15; and Deut. 15:19-23. We might note that the first born of unclean animals and of man were to be redeemed. The high priest and his family received the first born and the price of redemption of that which had to be redeemed. (Num. 18:15-16)

Continuing with the don'ts, Lev. 18:21 forbids letting our seed, or children, pass through the fire to Molech, a common practice among those practicing idolatry. The same verse, along with Lev. 19:12 warns against profaning (polluting or making common) God's name. A law, in this same vein, in Deut. 23:18 says not to bring the hire of a whore or the price of a dog into the house of the LORD for a vow.

Lev. 19:26 warns against using enchantments or observing times, while Lev. 19:31 and Lev. 20:6 forbids having anything to do with wizards or those having familiar spirits, the psychics of our day. Lev. 19:27-28 and Deut. 14:1-2 forbids rounding the corners of the head (hair), marring the corner of the beard, or cutting ones flesh for the dead, or printing any marks on the body.

Deut. 16:21-22 forbids planting a grove of trees near an altar unto God, as groves played a big part in idolatrous worship. It also forbids setting up any graven image.

Sacrificing any animal that was blemished or ill favored was forbidden. (Deut. 17:1) Neither were

Israelites to eat any flesh that is torn of beast in the field. (Ex. 22:31) Israel was to set themselves apart (be holy men) from other men.

Deut. 4:2 commands that nothing was to be added to the word of His Law, nor was anything to be taken from it.

We are not to tempt God (Deut. 6:16-19). Reference is made to Israel tempting God at Massah. This was where the people murmured against Moses because they were short on water, very shortly after witnessing all the wonders of God's power in Egypt and the Red Sea and just after He had provided them manna to eat. (Ex. 17)

In Deut. 12:29-32, God forbids letting the people of Canaan snare them into serving the gods of the land and turning from the true God. Deut. 13:1-4 warns against following a prophet or a dreamer of dreams into serving other gods, even if the prophet gives a sign or a wonder that comes to pass. Even if it be a brother, son, daughter, wife, or friend that attempts to entice us to serve other gods, we are not to consent, nor are we to conceal or attempt to protect such a person from judgment. (Deut. 13:6-8)

Israelites are commanded not to abhor the Edomite or the Egyptian, but in fact were to allow them into the congregation in their third generation. (Deut. 23:7-8)

When one makes a vow unto God, he is not to be slack to pay it. It is no sin to forbear to vow, but once a vow is made, God will hold the one making the vow to it. (Deut. 23:21-23)

There were other things owed to God as well as the tithe. We have already touched on the first-fruits and the first born. (Ex. 34:19-20; Num. 18:15-16; and Deut. 15:19-23) There was also a custom of making a vow (apparently to do something for God or to sacrifice something to God) and putting one's self, or one's house, or animals up as a surety that the vow would be carried out. It was not a sin to make a vow or not make a vow, but if it was made, God took it very seriously and the one making the vow would have to forfeit what he put up as surety if he failed to carry out the vow. Lev. 27 discusses this law giving guidelines as to the value of man, presumably for the price of redemption, should that be necessary, also the valuation of one's house or field. Lev. 27:26-34 point out that nothing that is already devoted to God can be used as this surety.

A Nazarite was one who separated him or herself from the rest of the population to devote oneself to God. Apparently this could be for a given period of time or for life. Numbers 6:2-21 gives the rules that were to be observed by one taking such a vow.

We are in contact daily with each other as family, friends, in business, or in recreation. The 5th through the 9th of the Ten Commandments deal directly with this relation-

ship. (Read Ex. 20:12-16; Deut. 5:16-20) Lev. 19:18 pretty well covers all of these commandments and was noted by Jesus as the second greatest commandment of all. **“Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.”** He rightly told us that if we keep this commandment we have kept the rest already!

To help us understand the full scope of the principle of this second greatest commandment and the commandments of the Ten Commandments we mentioned, God made a number of other commandments, some dealing with family, some with business, and several in dealing with each other in general. For most of us, family carries the greatest importance in our minds, so let us look at these commandments first.

Commanding responsibility of child to parent and parent to child is probably our more important commandments. Honoring our father and mother is covered in the 5th Commandment. (Ex. 20:12; Deut. 5:16)

Probably the most important parent to child commandment we find is in Deut. 6:6-9. Here we are commanded to teach the law to our children, to talk about the law when we are sitting with them, walking with them, or even when we go to bed and when we get up. The point is forcefully made that the law is to always be in front of them.

A considerable amount of space is given in the law to forbid sexual relations with members of one's family. Lev. 18:6-17; Lev. 20:19 and Deut. 22:30 all forbid sexual relations with family members. I am using the term “sexual relations” to refer to the same act or acts that we find referred to in these passages as “uncovering another's nakedness” or “discovering one's father's skirts,” in an effort to make sure we all understand in modern-day terminology what these Old Testament terms mean. To understand that these passages are not in reference to homosexuality, we need to read Lev. 18:8, **“The nakedness of thy father's wife shalt thou not uncover: it is thy father's nakedness.”** This should help us understand better Lev. 18:7 as well as Deut. 22:30. While these could be an adulterous situation, they also may not be, but such relations with one's mother, father's wife, sister or half-sister, niece, aunt, daughter-in-law, brother's wife, or one's wife's daughter or granddaughter are all forbidden as well. Also, one is not to uncover the nakedness of one's wife's sister while the first wife is yet living. (Lev. 18:18)

Lev. 19:29 warns against prostituting one's daughter. Many of these things happen more than we realize I'm sure, but how often usually depends on the mood of society. Unfortunately, we are witnessing an all-out effort to change the mood of our society to make these types or relationships acceptable. We must remember that with God, it is still wrong.

There is considerable argument today as to whether God forbids inter-racial marriage. I would

like to insert a side note that I wrote in a book on the law several years ago:

It could be argued that the law does not specifically prohibit inter-racial marriage. This is at least partially true. However, the Bible deals almost exclusively with one race, the Caucasoid. The other two major races, the Negroid and the Mongoloid, while certainly being God's creation and part of His overall plan, are really not mentioned. It must be understood that the Bible is the outline of God's plan and purpose on the earth. Because God's servant people, Israel, come of the Caucasoid race, and it is their job to carry out God's plan and purpose, this is the race of the Bible. However, anyone harboring feelings of superiority for themselves, or hatred of the other two races, based on this fact, need to study God's Word more thoroughly.

With this fact in mind, Gen. 1:11, 12, 21, 24, and 25 all tell us it is God's plan (thus His law) that all things are to reproduce after their own kind, kind after kind.

All of the people in the Bible descended from the three sons of Noah. These families are often referred to as races, as well. For example, the Egyptians, the Canaanites and the Babylonians were all descended from Ham. The majority of people living today in Russia are descended from Japheth. But, most of the Bible people descended from the family or race of Shem.

The only specific commandment in the law (Ex. 34:11-16); Deut. 7:1-6) forbidding intermarriage, forbids Israelites from marrying Canaanites. However, Deut. 23:3-6 forbids the Moabite and the Ammonite (descendants of the daughters of Lot, nephew of Abraham) from entering the congregation of Israel for ever. If we look at Ezra 10 and Nehemiah 13, we see that Israelites returning from the Babylonian captivity did marry both descendants of Ham and of Moab and Ammon. When accused of wrong doing, they acknowledged they had sinned (transgressed the law) in doing so and put away their “strange” wives.

So while we don't find a specific law forbidding inter-racial marriage, I think we can see that there is sufficient evidence to say that God forbids such marriages. God set Israel apart (made them holy) for His purpose. This includes who we marry.

We need to remember that the primary reason for this is so that Israel would not be tempted to worship other gods. An exception to this rule (though there were several nations that there were not exceptions) is found in Deut. 21:10-14. This concerned a woman taken captive in war against Israel's enemies. This passage details the procedure an Israelite man was to follow in taking her to wife.

We will continue this study in our next issue.

A STUDY OF THE BOOK OF 2nd THESSALONIANS

We have been studying a five-part article by Dr. Stephen Jones concerning the “unveiling” of the “man of sin, the son of perdition” as recorded in II Thess. 2. Dr. Jones’ opinion was, as I take it, that the “man of sin” is represented today by the Zionists who are promoting the rebuilding of the Jewish temple in Jerusalem from which the Jews would rule the world. He likened these Zionists to Judas Iscariot who betrayed Christ for the chief priests in their desire to usurp the King, Jesus Christ, of His throne of rulership over His kingdom and the world. These Zionists are doing the same thing today, only on a world-wide scale. Let’s read II Thess. 2:1-12 and see for ourselves if this is true. Let me quote verse 2 from the NASB translation as I believe it is more accurate than the King James. **“That you may not be quickly shaken from your composure or be disturbed either by a spirit or a message or a letter as if from us, to the effect that the day of the Lord has come.”** There were people then, as there is now, that taught that Jesus had already returned and apparently were fraudulently sending letters as if they were being sent by Paul to fool people into believing that Paul had written them.

The words, “falling away” in vs. 3, as Dr. Jones pointed out, comes from the Greek word, *apostasia* which refers to divorce or a complete separation. Jesus called Judas Iscariot “the son of perdition” in John 17:12. I think we can consider the “son of perdition” that is to be unveiled to be of similar character as Judas. Paul goes on to tell us more of the man or men. He says that he opposeth God and exalts himself above all that is called God or that is worshipped and sitteth in the temple of God, trying to make it appear that he is God.

Some time ago I read an article by an author, that I felt at the time to be credible, but unfortunately can’t remember where I read it, that said that the Zionist Jews had given up on a messiah coming and decided to be their own messiah. As I was trying to remember where I read this, I received an e-mail this morning from a friend with some quotes that pretty much verify what I read. I would like to share with you some of what he sent. First he pointed out a virtually unknown fact of history that happened when General Cornwallis surrendered his army to General Washington. “Jonathan Williams recorded in his **“LEGIONS OF SATAN”**, 1781, that Cornwallis revealed to Washington that “a holy war will now begin on America, and when it is ended, America will be supposedly the citadel of freedom, but her millions will unknowingly be

loyal subjects to Jewish control.” He went on to say, “Your churches will be used to teach the Jew’s religion and in less than two hundred years the whole nation will be working for world government. That government that they believe to be divine will be the Jewish controlled empire. All religions will be permeated with Judaism without even being noticed by the masses.”

If one has any understanding at all of what is taught in most of the churches today, I don’t think there would be any argument that what General Cornwallis said has come to pass. Some churches are barely separated from Judaism such as Mormonism and the Jehovah Witnesses while others, though they believe they are pure Christian, are quite strongly influenced by the teaching of Judaism. Influences like the Scofield Bible that teaches Jewish interpretations of Bible prophecies have added greatly to the Judaism teaching in our churches.

That this has been planned and not happened by accident can be borne out by comments from Jewish writers and leaders. For example, the following is by Menachem Begin, a former Israeli Prime Minister: “Our race is the master race. We are divine gods on this planet. We are as different from the inferior races as they are from insects. In fact, compared to our race, other races are beasts and animals, cattle at best. Other races are considered as human excrement. Our destiny is to rule over the inferior races. Our earthly kingdom will be ruled by our leader with a rod of iron.” (The strange thing is that I believe that Mr. Begin was not a Judean by race. but rather a Khazar by race.)

Another comment by Karl Marx will help us understand verse 4: “The Jewish people as a whole will be its own Messiah. It will attain world domination by the dissolution of other races...and by the establishment of a world republic in which everywhere the Jews will exercise the privilege of citizenship. In this New World Order the Children of Israel...will furnish all the leaders without encountering opposition” This was from a letter he wrote to Baruch Levy and quoted in Review de Paris, June 1, 1928.

I believe that if we really look at where our world is at this time, his prophecy and verse 4 are both being fulfilled. Paul says that he told the Thessalonians this when he was with them. Then he says that they now know what restrains this “son of perdition”, thus indicating that it is Jesus Christ that is doing the restraining, until it is time for him to be revealed. However, the mystery of iniquity, or the mystery of this lawlessness was already working, but God will continue to restrain him until that time has come. When that time is come, God will cease restraining and that wicked one, or the son of perdition will be unveiled. When this unveiling takes place Paul assures us that at that time God will consume him with the spirit of his mouth, or His

Holy Word, and shall destroy him with the brightness of His coming. The unveiling of this son of perdition will be accompanied with the working of the adversary with all power, signs, and lying wonders, with all the deceit of unrighteousness among those that are perishing because they refused to accept the truth that they might be saved. Because of this, Paul says that God will send them a strong delusion that they will believe a lie so that those who refused to believe the truth, but rather took pleasure in unrighteousness, will be condemned.

(Read II Thess. 2:13-15) Paul says that he is under obligation to give thanks always to God for the Thessalonians because God from the beginning chose them to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and their belief in the truth. Since God had predestined them for this, He called them by the gospel that Paul has taught them to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore he tells them to stand fast and hold fast to what they have been taught by word when he was with them or by epistle, such as he is writing them now.

(Read II Thess. 2:16-17) Paul then closes the teaching portion of this epistle by asking God to comfort their hearts and to establish them in every good word and work.

(Read II Thess. 3:1-5) Paul asks that they pray for him that the word of the Lord will spread rapidly and be glorified as it had been with them, that he may be delivered from unreasonable and evil men, for, he says, not all men have faith. But God is faithful and will establish them and keep them from evil.

He says that he has confidence in the Lord concerning them, that they both do and will do the things that Paul commands them. He asks God to direct their hearts into the love of God and into patient waiting for the return of Christ.

(Read II Thess. 3:6-15) As Paul finishes this epistle, he commands the people to withdraw from any brother that does not follow the example Paul set before them in his own actions of working for what he eats, or is disorderly, that he might be shamed. Paul tells them not to consider such a man an enemy, but rather to admonish him.

(Read II Thess. 3:16-18) Paul closes the letter with his salutation and asks that the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with them all.

We are ready for the first epistle from Paul to Timothy. Timothy was the son of a mixed marriage, his mother a Jewess and his father a Greek. He was probably born in Lystra. Apparently his mother had taught him the scriptures and when Paul went through Lystra on his first missionary journey, Timothy, a very young man at the time, was converted. He was a timid person which required some special education

and encouragement from Paul. To not cause undue problems, Paul circumcised him before he went with Paul in his journeys. We don't know just when he began to accompany Paul, but it was not before Paul's second missionary journey.

The two epistles to Timothy and the one to Titus are usually grouped together as the Pastoral Epistles as they consist primarily of instructions that Paul gave them on the organization of the various churches. They do not contain much doctrinal information as we have seen in Paul's letters that we have been studying.

We don't know where Paul was when he wrote the first epistle, but when he wrote the second epistle and the epistle to Titus, he was probably in prison in Rome for the second time awaiting trial that probably brought about his death. So these letters were written after Paul had left Rome after his first trial, had gone to Spain, and I believe the British Isles, and had returned, probably, overland to southern Europe and Asia Minor.

Read I Timothy 1:1, 2) Paul has a different greeting here as well as II Timothy and Titus from the type of greetings that he gave to the churches that he wrote to. "**Grace, mercy, and peace**" are peculiar to these three books.

(Read I Timothy 1:3-11) The words "so do" at the end of verse 4 give verses 3 and 4 a proper sense, but they are words that were added by the translator. The NASB renders these two verses as follows: "**As I urged you upon my departure for Macedonia, remain on at Ephesus, in order that you may instruct certain men not to teach strange doctrines, nor to pay attention to myths and endless genealogies, which give rise to mere speculation rather than furthering the administration of God which is by faith.**" If this is the correct rendering of these verses, then Timothy was probably at Ephesus when Paul wrote this. Obviously, there were those that wished to teach false doctrine. The words "endless genealogies" intrigued me. The word "endless" needs no explanation. The Companion Bible says of the word "genealogies", "Referring to the list of emanations of AEONS according to the Gnostics." Paul also warns Titus of this same thing, so it must have been a serious problem at the time. My understanding of this is that, to show their supposed intelligence, these Gnostics would interject an endless stream of history of generations past with no real purpose other than to show how smart they were. I think we have all been in Bible studies where someone would get off onto an irrelative subject, and go on and on about it, after which no one could tell you what the Bible study was about nor what that person or persons talked about. I believe this is similar to what Paul was warning Timothy to not let

happen when God's Word was being taught. As he says, it just leads to speculation rather than furthering Godly edifying which is in faith.

Paul states the goal of true teaching—love from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith. Straying from this, men have turned the discussion to vain discussion. They want to be teachers of the law, but without understanding what they say or purport to be true. They cannot understand what they are saying or situations from which they make strong affirmation. I believe he is referring to those who were teaching that obedience to the law was a necessity to attaining one's salvation.

Paul says that we know that the Law is good, if it is used lawfully. To explain this he says that the Law is not made for a righteous man. A righteous man does not need the law. We might compare this to a person who looks at speed limit laws not as a barrier to hold him back, but rather laws designed to show the maximum speed that that particular highway is designed to be driven safely over. He does not break those laws, not because the penalties attached to those laws, but rather because those laws are there to help him drive safely from one place to another. He looks at them as a benefit, not a hindrance. But to the person that continually exceeds these limits, the law is a determining factor as to his or her guilt or innocence. Thus Paul says that God's Law is for those who are lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and sinners, for the unholy and profane, for murderers, the immoral men and homosexuals, kidnappers, liars, perjurers, and whatever else is contrary to sound doctrine according to the glorious gospel of our God which Paul says he has been entrusted.

(Read I Timothy 1:13-17) Paul turns to consider himself in that he thanks God who has enabled him to minister because He considered him to be faithful, putting him into the ministry. He says that God did this even though he had formerly been a blasphemer, a persecutor and a violent aggressor. Yet, he says that God showed him mercy because he had acted in ignorance of the truth in unbelief. The grace of our Lord is more than enough with the faith and love which are in Christ Jesus, he says. That **“Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners”** is a trustworthy statement that is deserving of full acceptance Paul says, and then he adds that he is the foremost sinner of all. Because of this, he found mercy, **“that in me first Jesus Christ might shew forth all long suffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting.”** He then ascribes honor and glory for the ages of the ages to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God.

(Read I Timothy 1:18-20) There had apparently been prophecies spoken concerning Timothy that

Paul refers to as he issues a charge to Timothy that he fight the good fight keeping faith and a good conscience. There apparently have been some who have rejected this kind of a charge and Paul says they have suffered shipwreck in regard to their faith. He names two individuals who have done so, Hymenaeus and Alexander whom he says that he has delivered to the adversary that they might learn to not blaspheme.

(Read I Timothy 2: 1-7) Paul begins his instructions to Timothy. First on the list is to pray for all men including kings and other men in authority in order that we all might have a peaceful life in all godliness and dignity. He says this is good and acceptable to God who desires that all men be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth. He points out that there is only one God and one mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus who gave Himself a ransom for all. Paul says that this is to be testified of at the proper time which is the reason that he was appointed a preacher and apostle, a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth.

(Read I Timothy 2:8-15) He repeats that he wishes all men to pray and to do so without wrath or dissension. Then he addresses women. Reading the King James sounds a little harsh. But examining the marginal renderings and other translations makes Paul's commandments more reasonable. He is saying that they should dress modestly with propriety and moderation and not array themselves with a lot of jewelry. Most women that I know follow these rules, but I have known some that are in direct disobedience to what Paul is saying. Doing so seems their intent to be to draw all attention to themselves, thus taking away from God. Paul seems to have a problem with women's hair, but I believe again that he is just saying to be modest. Women should be known by their good works if a woman lays claim to godliness. He believes that women should be in subjection to their husbands and learn from them. He says that he does not allow women to teach or exercise authority over men, yet we do have some examples of women of Paul's acquaintance influencing men in a Christian manner such as Lydia and Priscilla. Paul is giving Timothy advice on organizing congregations, so it is probably befitting that he give Timothy this advice as there are women, who given any authority, take more than they should. My own personal belief is that Paul is probably going a little overboard with his thoughts concerning women, but to have a good cohesive organization, I do believe it should be led by men.

I am not sure why he wrote verse 15. I assume that since he says in vs. 14 that it was Eve that was deceived by the serpent, not Adam, he is refer-

ring to Gen. 3:16 where God passes judgment on Eve for her being deceived by the serpent, **“Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee.”** Paul seems to be saying that this judgment can be lessened, **“Notwithstanding she shall be saved in childbearing, if they continue in faith and charity and holiness with sobriety.”** The word “in” probably should be translated “through” as the Greek word is *dia*. Appendix 104 in the Companion Bible says this about this word, *“With the Genitive it has the general sense of through, as though dividing a surface into two by an intersecting line. It includes the idea of proceeding from and passing out.*

(Read I Timothy 3:1-13) The word “bishop” simply means “overseer.” It does not infer a higher level of authority over a priest, for example. It simply refers to the person who is chosen to oversee a particular congregation. However, the character requirements and abilities for such an individual are rather exacting. I have seen devout men who have either divorced or been widowed and remarried, take verse 2 to mean they are eliminated from being eligible for this kind of responsibility. I don’t believe this is what this is saying. It simply means that if you have more than one wife, which was allowable at the time, there is no way one could have the time to take care of overseeing a congregation and his family at the same time. The requirement that one must rule his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity or reverence is one I believe to be very important. We often joke about kids being PK’s, i.e. preacher’s kids. Sometimes it is no joke as these kids are among the worst behaved in the community.

Because of our modern usage of certain words, if we apply our modern usage to these words in the Bible, we can often come to wrong conclusions. Deacons, as used here in I Timothy means a person who serves, cares for or aids other people. I think we all know people who do this. Paul is saying that we should hold those people to certain standards as well. He says they should be tested before they take this kind of responsibility. That serving, care, or aid can

come in many different ways including teaching either directly or indirectly. The bishop, or overseer needs to be sure that the person selected as a deacon is grounded in truth and meets the requirements Paul sets forth. The wives of deacons and bishops should likewise be reverent, not gossips, temperate and faithful in all things.

(Read I Timothy 3:14-16) As we mentioned before, Paul is writing this before his last arrest and imprisonment, so he tells Timothy that he hopes to come to Timothy soon. But in case he is delayed, he tells Timothy that he is writing so he would know how to conduct himself in the household of God. Remember that Timothy has a problem of being timid.

Vs. 16 is one that we need to repeat frequently that we may serve our God better. **“And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.”** JRL

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY.....

*As I sit in front of my computer preparing this issue of the Kingdom Spirit the calendar on the wall in front of me has a quotation from Pres. George Washington on the January page which says, **“Truth will ultimately prevail where pains is (sic) taken to bring it to light.”** In our day and time I hear it said over and over, “How can I know what is true and what is not? It is getting harder and harder to discern what is true and what is not. Obviously the main stream media can no longer be depended on for truth. So what can we depend on? Alternative media and social media is a mix of partial truth and personal opinion.*

It may come as a surprise to some that the Holy Bible is the true source of truth even in our day. God has told us the past and what will happen in the future. As Pres. Washington says it takes pains (study) to bring it to light.

**But, Seek ye first the kingdom of God,
And His Righteousness
And all these things shall be
Added unto you. Matt. 6:33**