

# KINGDOM SPIRIT

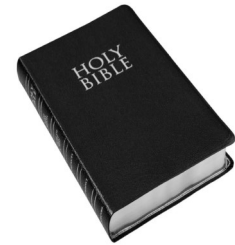
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**"SEEK YE FIRST THE KINGDOM OF GOD"**

Matthew 6:33



Issue 2203

## IT'S THE LAW

In our last issue we were looking at commandments that basically applied to business. I want to continue in this same vein in this lesson.

A form of thievery and falsehood that God condemns by commandment is to have diverse weights and measures. Just weights and measures are commanded by God. (Lev. 19:35-36; Deut. 25:13-15) The principle of course is honest in all your dealings.

Businessmen had certain responsibilities to which the law commanded them to adhere. Most of the businessmen of the time were farmers, but the principles are still the same for all business. They were to provide for the poor, the stranger, the fatherless and the widow. This provision was not issued as a welfare check, however. When the farmer harvested his crop, he was to leave the corners, the gleanings, and anything accidentally dropped was to be left. These then, the ones for whom they were to provide, went to the field, the vineyard and the olive trees and gleaned all that was left for themselves. (Lev. 19:9-10; Lev. 23:22; Deut. 24:19-22)

These farmer businessmen also had a responsibility to each other. Ex. 23:4-5 tells us that if we see our neighbor's ox or his sheep go astray, we are to bring him back to him again. Deut. 22:1-3 takes this a little further by telling us that if we don't know whose it is, we are to keep it until the owner comes looking for it and then to restore it to him. We are told that this applies to anything that is lost. Keeping it secret from the owner would be theft, would it not? Also Ex. 23:5 and Deut. 22:4 commands us to help our neighbor lift up his ox or ass which has fallen under its burden. We are not to hide ourselves from him.

One other type of theft we are prohibited from is the taking of bribes. (Ex. 23:8) I think we might all be surprised if we really thought on this one and compared our business activity to it very carefully.

We have all heard OSHA cursed and dis-

cussed, but were you aware the principle of what they are supposed to do is in the Bible. Deut. 22:8 tells us, **"When thou buildest a new house, then thou shalt make a battlement for thy roof, that thou bring not blood upon thine house, if any man fall from thence."** We are responsible to protect each other from possible hazards, whatever they might be.

We have looked at commandments dealing with family and business, let's now look at commandments dealing with our relationship with each other in general. God is concerned that we don't take advantage of or harass those in a less fortunate position than we. Ex. 22:21; Ex. 23:9; and Lev. 19:33-34 all command us to not vex or oppress the stranger in our land. Ex. 22:22-23 commands us not to afflict the widow or the fatherless child. Deut. 24:17-18 commands us not to pervert the judgment of the stranger, nor the fatherless, not take a widow's raiment to pledge.

Lev. 19:14 includes the handicapped. **"Thou shalt not curse the deaf, nor put a stumbling block before the blind, but shall fear thy God: I am the LORD."**

Ex. 22:28 says **"Thou shalt not revile the gods, nor curse the ruler of thy people."** The word "gods" here means judges or magistrates. This is a very difficult command to keep in times like these, but I believe if you will think on it, a very necessary one.

One problem we have is leadership that should not be there in the first place, according to God's law. The Bible uses the term **"congregation of the LORD"** quite often without defining it. However, since the division of power was leaders over 10, leaders over 50, leaders over 100, leaders over 1000, etc., it appears to me that each man had a voting right and through his vote, he in effect delegated his leader to vote for him at the next higher lever, etc. In this case anyone with this voting right could become a leader. I believe the **"congregation"** referred to those with this right to vote. Being cast off from the **"congregation of the LORD"** or **"of Israel"** meant

either a temporary or permanent loss of their power to vote. There were some people prohibited from being in this congregation. Deut. 23:1 includes one wounded in the stones, or who hath his privy member cut off. Deut. 23:2 includes a bastard even to his 10<sup>th</sup> generation. (A bastard in the Old Testament was a person of mixed race, one who had an Israelite father and a non-Israelite mother for example.) This appears quite harsh, but I think we can see, in the leadership we have today, God's reason for this.

Another principle most all of us have difficulty with is expressed in the 9<sup>th</sup> Commandment. (Ex. 20:6; Deut. 5:20) "**Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.**" Ex. 23:1 reiterates this. Ex. 23:2 commands us to not bow to peer pressure of any kind to cause us to do evil or to speak in a cause to wrest or twist judgment. Ex. 23:7 tells us to keep far from a false matter. Lev. 19:16 commands us not to be talebearers and not to murder.

"**Thou shalt not commit adultery**" is the 7<sup>th</sup> Commandment (Ex. 20:14; Deut. 5:18) and is reiterated in Lev. 18:20. Deut. 23:17 takes us a little farther commanding that there be no sexual perversion. "**There shall be no whore or the daughters of Israel, nor a sodomite of the sons of Israel.**" One thing that we see today that helps lead to this perversion is men wearing women's clothing and vice versa. Deut. 22:5 commands this not be done, telling us that both are an abomination to God.

One of our greater responsibilities to each other is to help protect each other from bad health or sickness. There are a number of ways we can do this. We have a couple of principles given as commandments. One of the major problems is proper disposal of human waste or sewage. Deut. 23:12-14 addresses this with a simple command, but with a very major principle. Num. 5:1-3 and Deut. 24:8-9 addresses the principle of quarantine. Both deal primarily with leprosy, but the principle of quarantining people with communicable diseases from the rest of the population is God-given.

Another responsibility we have to each other is respecting and protecting each other's property. We find this principle in the commandment in Deut. 19:14, "**Thou shalt not remove thy neighbor's landmark.**" We find the same principle in Deut. 23:24-25 in which we are told that if we are in our neighbor's vineyard or field, we can eat what we pick, but in no way are we to put it in a vessel or take a sickle to it.

What might appear to be an exception to this principle is found in Deut. 23:15-16, which tells us not to deliver unto his master an escaped servant who has come to you.

Perhaps the commandments dealing with our relationship to each other can be summed up in Lev. 19:17, "**Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thine**"

**heart: thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy neighbor, and not suffer sin upon him.**" The Ferrar Fenton translation renders this last phrase, "**You may reprove your neighbor, but not bear ill-will against him.**"

I think the goals for most of us in this life would certainly include happiness, good health, long life, and reasonable prosperity. God gave Israel a number of commandments that are designed to provide these things under most circumstances. Jesus tells us in Mark 2:27, "**The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath.**" With this in mind, it behooves us to understand that keeping the Sabbath is for our benefit, something that we as men need. Not only do we have the commandment to keep the Sabbath in the Ten Commandments in Ex. 20:8-11 and Deut. 5:12-15, but we have a host of commandments supporting and reiterating this commandment.

Ex. 31:12-17 commands the keeping of the Sabbath and tells us it is to be a perpetual covenant between Israel and God. Anyone working on the Sabbath is to be put to death. Ex. 34:21 commands us to keep it even during harvest time. Ex. 35:2-3 says, "**Ye shall keep my Sabbaths and reverence my sanctuary: I am the LORD.**"

Ex. 23:10-12 introduces us to the Sabbath year as well. It is to be very seventh year and we are to let the land rest and neither plant nor harvest. Lev. 25:2-7 repeats this law while Lev. 25:8-13 introduces us to the Jubilee, the Sabbath of Sabbath years. Every 49<sup>th</sup> year was to be declared a Jubilee, which was then to be celebrated during the 50<sup>th</sup> year, thus there would be back to back Sabbath years. However, the reckoning would be based on the 49<sup>th</sup> year. The Sabbath year was to be the release we discussed earlier and the Jubilee was to be a Sabbath year, plus all land possessions reverted back to their original owners.

The 5<sup>th</sup> commandment (Ex. 20:12; Deut. 5:16) tells us to honor our father and mother that our days may be long upon the land. Lev. 19:3 tells us, "**Ye shall fear every man his mother, and his father, and keep my Sabbaths: I am the LORD your God.**" Deut. 11:18-21 commands, as a basis for this honor and fear, that the parents make every effort to continually teach their children the law of the LORD. The penalty for being rebellious to one's parents is severe. Deut. 21:18-21 states that if a man has a stubborn and rebellious son who will not obey his father or mother, even when they chasten him, they are to take him to the elders of the city and all the men of the city are to stone him to death.

One of the best things we can do for ourselves and those around us is to stay healthy. I think most of us would agree that one of the most common causes of illness is what we eat. God has given us guidelines as to what to eat and not eat and has commanded us to adhere to them. Lev. 11 is the basic text. The funda-

mental rule, according to Lev. 11:2-8 and Deut. 14:3-8, as to what to eat among the four footed animals is to eat only those that both divide the hoof and chew the cud. Of fish, Lev. 11:9-12 and Deut. 14:9-10 tells us the clean fish are the fish that have both fins and scales. Of fowls, both Lev. 11:13-23 and Deut. 14:11-20 gives a list of clean and unclean fowls. It is a little difficult to determine the clean and unclean by the list, but basically the rule appears to be that a bird that is a scavenger (a flesh eater) is unclean and the rest are clean. All fowls that creep, going upon all four, are unclean. Creeping things that have legs above their feet to hop or leap are clean and all others are unclean. Lev. 20:25-26 commands us to put this difference between the clean and unclean animals. This was not a religious ritual, but rather commandments given for our benefit, our health.

Israelites are forbidden to eat animals that die of themselves, even if they are clean. (Deut. 14:21) However, Lev. 17:15-16 says that if a person does eat it, he shall wash both himself and his clothes and be unclean until evening. If he doesn't wash, he will have to answer for his sin.

Blood is very strictly and strongly forbidden to be eaten. We find this in Lev. 7:26-27: Lev. 17:10-14; Deut. 12:16 and Deut. 12:23-25. The reason given is that the life is in the blood. A study of the blood sacrifice for sin can be greatly enhanced with knowledge of this fact.

Lev. 7:22-25 gives us further guidelines on how to eat for good health. Fat is not to be eaten. While we will see that the removal and burning of the fat from sacrifices is part of the sacrifice rituals, doing so had a very practical purpose as well.

Lev. 11:29-45 gives us a further list of animals that are unclean. Dead carcasses of these animals and of the unclean animals we've already discussed (Lev. 11:24-28) are unclean. Anyone touching them, or any vessel, raiment, skin, sack, etc. upon which a carcass might fall would be unclean. Anyone or anything unclean as a result must be washed and cleansed.

Uncleanness was a term applied to conditions as well as actual uncleanness, but all had to be cleansed or purified. A woman bearing a child was considered unclean for 40 days after the birth of a man child, and 80 days after the birth of a maid child. Anyone unclean was prohibited from coming into the sanctuary until they were clean. The cleansing or purifying process was sometimes a combination of actual washing and a ceremonial cleansing ritual.

There are a few other commandments that are somewhat health related that we need to mention in passing. Lev. 18:19 forbids having sexual relations with a woman during her menstrual period. Lev. 19:19 and Deut. 22:9-11 tells us not to mix seed in our planting, nor to cross breed livestock with a different kind,

and not to mix fabrics in our garments. Each of these, though sometimes hard to understand, have reasons that will affect our welfare if not adhered to.

Deut. 22:10 warns not to plow with an ox and an ass together.

Deut. 22:6-7 tells us that if we happen on a bird's nest where the mother bird is setting, whether it be on eggs or with young, we are not to take the mother. If we take anything it is to be the young. The promise is that this type of attitude will prolong our days.

Lev. 19:23-25 gives a commandment that when trees are planted, the first three year's fruit is not to be eaten. The fourth year, it is to be holy to praise the LORD, and then it can be eaten in the fifth year.

One very important thing to most of us is preserving our heritage. There are a couple of commandments that need to be looked at in this light. Deut. 21:15-17 tells us that if a man has two wives, one loved and the other hated, but the hated has the firstborn son, when the man makes his will or divides his inheritance, he is not to set the firstborn of the loved wife above the firstborn of the hated which is the actual firstborn. The actual firstborn is to receive the birthright, a double portion of the inheritance, as well as double responsibility.

Deut. 25:5-10 concerns brethren (family) dwelling together and one dies not having a child. His wife is not to remarry outside the family, but her husband's brother is to take her as his wife and then their firstborn son is to take on the name of the wife's first husband and be entitled to his inheritance.

If the brother refuses to do this, they are to go before the elders and the woman is to declare his refusal and if he testifies the same before the elders, she is to loose his shoe from his foot, spit in his face and say, "**so shall it be done unto that man that will not build up his brother's house.**" This will be a shame for that man from then on. The story in the book of Ruth relies on this commandment.

Deut. 24:5 gives the commandment concerning that man who has just taken a new bride saying that he is neither to go to war nor be charged with any business, but that he is to stay home and cheer up his wife for one year.

The apostle Paul tells us in I Cor. 6:18, "**he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body.**" Lev. 18:22 forbidding homosexuality and Lev. 18:23 forbidding sodomy are thus forbidding sin against one's own body.

The 10<sup>th</sup> Commandment forbidding covetousness (Ex. 20:17 and Deut. 5:21) deals with each of us in our responsibility to ourselves. While we may steal, commit adultery, etc. as a result of uncontrolled coveting, coveting itself is a sin that hurts us when we don't control it. It may be natural to covet, but if it

couldn't be controlled, I do not believe God would have given us a commandment forbidding it.

This completes our study of the commandments. We close this portion of our study with Deut. 11:8-9, **"Therefore shall ye keep all the commandments which I command you this day, that ye may be strong, and go in and possess the land, whither ye go to possess it; and that ye may prolong your days in the land, which the LORD sware unto your fathers to give unto them and to their seed, a land that floweth with milk and honey."**

#### STATUTES

A discussion of a couple of facts might help us to better understand the purpose of the statutes before we discuss specific ones. In the 18<sup>th</sup> chapter of Exodus we have the story of Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, coming to visit Moses in the wilderness about the time that Israel reached Mt. Sinai. He observed that as Moses sat to judge the people that there was an endless line of people seeking him. So he went to Moses and basically told him he couldn't do the job of leading the people all by himself. Then he made a suggestion to Moses. In verse 19, he said to Moses, **"Be thou for the people to Godward, that thou mayest bring the causes unto God: And thou shalt teach them ordinances and laws, and shalt shew them the way wherein they must walk, and the work that they must do. Moreover, thou shalt provide out of all the people able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness; and place such over them, to be rulers of thousands, and rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens: and let them judge the people at all seasons: and it shall be that every great matter they shall bring unto thee, but every small matter they shall judge: so shall it be easier for thyself, and they shall bear the burden with thee."** In verse 24 we're told that Moses hearkened to his father-in-law and did all that he suggested. This was the way Israel was organized. Later Moses was given extra relief in the selection of 70 more elders to assist him in particular. (Num. 11:16)

Secondly, God told Moses to take Aaron and his sons from among the children of Israel that they might minister unto God in the priest's office. (Ex. 28:1) So Moses did this. God first gave Moses instruction to make special clothing for them and to consecrate and sanctify them into the priest's office. He then made it a statute that the priest wear the special clothing anytime they performed their priestly duties. (Ex. 28:40-43)

God then made another statute that the priest's office was to be Aaron's and his son's and their son's etc. for ever, or for the age.

Today we hear a great deal about separation of church and state. In the 6<sup>th</sup> century A.D., the Pope of the Roman Catholic Church successfully pressured

the Roman emperor to carry out some edicts of the church. Church and state actually became one when the church made the edicts and the state carried them out and enforced them. This went on for over 1200 years and the main reason the early Pilgrims came to America was to escape the persecution that resulted from this type of arrangement.

But, this was quite different from the combination church and state we had when God had completed the organization of Israel into a nation at Mt. Sinai. They had their representative leaders who basically judged the people; the priests who, though they did not judge, were in effect custodians of the law both to teach it and counsel it to the leaders; and the Levites were what we would call bureaucrats today, and actually did the leg work of both church and government. That this arrangement was to continue is borne out in Deut. 16:18-20 where they were instructed to select judges and officers in each city. The only time there was any sort of centralized government in Israel was in the time of Moses and Joshua, and then only in the office itself that they filled, and then later when Israel demanded and received a king in Samuel's time.

As with the statutes that required special clothing be worn in the performance of their duties and that the priesthood would always remain in the family of Aaron, laws had to be made to which the people as a whole were to be held responsible to. It was not enough to command Aaron to make special clothes and wear them or for his family to always be the high priests. For them to have done so on their own would have been of little consequence without the people as a whole or as a nation being responsible to the law. The law would have meant very little to the people if it had just been given to Aaron and his family. Unless the people recognized their (Aaron and sons) authority, it wouldn't have been worth much. So the law was not a commandment only to Aaron and his sons, but also a law to the whole house of Israel holding them, as a nation, responsible to it rather than Aaron and his sons specifically. The clothing represented the office, or the authority and responsibility of the priesthood. The principle is similar to our police officers today wearing uniforms. The policemen are the ones who have to do it, but we as a city, county, or state as a whole, are responsible to that uniform.

We will see that though the priests are very much a part of the statutes, and thus the government, they did not do the governing, at least as a function of their office. I believe we will see that is why it is necessary for Christ to be both Priest and King.

So for now, let's define a statute as a law that holds the people as a group, city, or nation responsible to it in some way. As such, a statute can also be a commandment, or an ordinance, or all three. We will

also find that a statute is very often closely related to a judgment in that it falls to the state, so to speak, to be sure a judgment is carried out. A statute can also have a similar relationship to a commandment.

The 4<sup>th</sup> Commandment, “**Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy...**” (Ex. 20:8-11; Deut. 5:23-25) is a good example of a statute being a commandment also. The individual is commanded to keep the Sabbath, but as Nehemiah showed us in Neh. 13:15-22, it is the state’s responsibility not only to be ready to enforce it, but to accommodate it.

When I use the term state, I am using it to mean whatever constitutes the government for a city or nation, or even a tribe or group as happened sometimes during the time of the Judges. Making covenants with other governments has always been a governmental or state responsibility. Ex. 23:32-33 tells us Israel was not to make covenants with the Canaanites, in fact they were not to even allow them to stay in the land.

Deut. 23:3-6 declares that an Ammonite or Moabite was to never be allowed to enter into the congregation of the LORD. I believe “**congregation of the LORD**” means, as we have already discussed, those men in good standing who were allowed to vote on policy. One could be “cut off from the people or congregation” for a number of reasons, which means, I believe, that they lost this good standing status, either temporarily or permanently. The Ammonite and the Moabite were never to attain it. Deut. 23:7-8 says the Edomite and the Egyptian could attain this status after their third generation.

Ex.34:13-14 specified that Israel was to destroy the altars, break up the images and cut down the groves of the Canaanites. Again this was a governmental leadership responsibility to see that it was done.

God gave the nation of Israel a responsibility to someday avenge Amalek. (Deut. 25:17-19) It is not specified exactly what they were to do, only that they were to not forget, but were to blot out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven. JRL

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>A STUDY OF THE PASTORAL LETTERS</b> <b>1st and 2nd Timothy and Titus</b></p>
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We are ready for Paul’s second epistle to Timothy. Unlike the first epistle in which Paul was still traveling and preaching, as he writes this second epistle he is in prison in Rome for the second time. Most believe that Timothy was at Ephesus at the time as we saw in I Timothy that Paul instructed him to stay there. If you recall, the first time Paul was imprisoned at Rome was because he had appealed to Caesar, which

was his right as a Roman citizen, to keep from being taken to be tried by the chief priests in Jerusalem. Though no one could find anything that he was guilty of, because he had appealed to Caesar, he had to be taken to Rome to appear before Caesar for his trial. He was found not guilty and released after which I believe there is evidence that he traveled to Spain, then to the British Isles, and finally overland across Europe to the area he had begun his ministry. Now, according to II Timothy 2:8-9, he says that he is in bonds again, this time for preaching that Jesus Christ was raised from the dead. Political winds in Rome have changed since he was imprisoned the first time, and he does not expect to be released this time, but rather will end up giving his life.

(Read II Timothy 1:1-2) We find the same salutation as we saw in I Timothy.

(Read II Timothy 1:3-14) Paul’s love for Timothy is quite evident. He thanks God that he has constant remembrance of Timothy in his prayers night and day. In the King James, of God, he says he serves Him from his forefathers with a clear conscience. This should read that he serves God as did his forefathers. We have to remember that Paul, as Saul, was very zealous in his serving God before he was converted. He was actually working against God out of ignorance, as obviously he had been very well educated in the law at the feet of Gamaliel, but had not accepted Christ as the Messiah until his miraculous conversion. So to say that he served God as did his ancestors is not saying that his ancestors were wrong, they were being taught the Old Covenant and worshipped the same God as did Paul, but since Christ had come and been sacrificed on the cross, he now served Him under the New Covenant.

He very much wants to see Timothy again. Keep in mind that Timothy’s mother was a Jewess and his father was a Greek. But Paul recalls the genuine faith that Timothy has, that Paul first saw in Timothy’s grandmother Lois and then in his mother Eunice. Because of this, Paul urges Timothy to kindle afresh that gift that was imparted to Timothy by the laying on his hands Paul says. He reminds Timothy that God has not given them the spirit of fear, but rather the spirit of power, love and a sound mind. Because of this, Paul tells him not to be ashamed of the testimony of Jesus or that of Paul, but urges Timothy to join with Paul in suffering for the gospel according to the power of God. He says that Jesus has saved them and called them, not based on their own works, but according to His own purpose which He had before the world began. Another reinforcement in understanding the sovereignty of God. Now this plan that God has had since the creation of the world is made manifest by the appearance of our Saviour Jesus Christ who has abolished death, and has brought life and immortality to be

seen through the gospel. It is to this gospel that Paul says he has been appointed as a preacher and a teacher among the Gentiles. It is this cause for which he suffers, including his current imprisonment, but he says he is not ashamed. Then he says, **“for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.”** Verses 13, 14 are rendered in the NASB as **“Retain the standard of sound words which you have heard from me, in the faith and love which are in Christ Jesus. Guard, through the Holy Spirit who dwells in us, the treasure which has been entrusted to you.”**

(Read II Timothy 1:15-18) Some of the people who had been disciples of Paul in Asia Minor had apparently turned away from him when he was imprisoned. Paul names two, Phygellus and Hermogenes. However, another man from Ephesus, Onesiphorus, had been a great support of Paul even when he found him imprisoned in Rome.

(Read II Timothy 2:1-13) Paul tells Timothy to be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. The word “grace” means free or undeserved favor. In this verse it comes from the Greek *charis*. Of the 156 times the word is used in the New Testament, Paul uses it 110 times in his epistles. Probably because of the way, and from what Paul was converted, he felt this undeserved favor more than the rest of the writers. He charges Timothy to teach the things that he has heard from Paul, among many witnesses, to faithful men who are able to teach others. It is not a secret doctrine that he is telling Timothy to teach, but one that Paul has taught Timothy before many witnesses. Being a secret doctrine and a mystery are two different things. Paul speaks often of the mystery of the gospel, but what he is speaking of is something that could not be known until Christ died on the cross and was resurrected. With all of the pieces of the puzzle in place, the mystery was solved. Teaching a secret doctrine, as some churches do, is not part of God’s teaching. We need to beware of those doing so.

He then tells Timothy to endure hardness, or evil, as a good soldier. A good soldier in active service is not distracted by the things happening in everyday life, that he may please he who has chosen him to be a soldier. Nor does an athlete win the crown of victory without competing within the rules. (Crowning here refers to the placement of a laurel wreath on the head of the winner instead of giving him or her an engraved cup or plaque as we do today.) He says the farmer who labors to produce his crop should be first to take of the crops he produced. He is telling Timothy to not be distracted from the job he is doing, to not go outside of the gospel into some other doctrine, and to enjoy the fruit of his labors. He tells him to consid-

er what he is saying and the Lord shall give him understanding in all things.

The primary key is that Christ was raised from the dead, the good news that Paul has been teaching and now is suffering for, being imprisoned. But though Paul is in bonds, he says the word of God is not in bonds. Because this is the case, Paul says that he endures all things for the sake of those that have been chosen that they might obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal, or age lasting, glory. Remember the three steps to complete salvation: justification, sanctification and glorification. We find these three steps exemplified in the three feasts that God required the men of Israel to keep each year: Passover, Pentecost, and Tabernacles. Understanding the reason for these three feasts will help us understand the three steps to salvation.

Paul then makes several important statements:

**“For if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him;**

**If we suffer, we shall also reign with him;**

**If we deny Him, He also will deny us;**

**If we believe not, yet He abideth faithful;**

**He cannot deny Himself.”**

(Read II Timothy 2:14-26) Paul told Timothy to put these things before the people commanding them to not argue over words, which is of no value, but leads to the ruin of the hearers. Paul then states an often repeated verse, **“Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.** I believe that a person can receive justification without being a student of God’s Word, but I believe to achieve to sanctification, one must study and seek to learn God’s Word. Sanctification requires effort on the part of the individual. Paul tells Timothy to avoid profane and vain babblings as, he says, they just lead to more ungodliness. That kind of talking will spread like gangrene and he names two men who are guilty, Hymenaeus and Philetus. He says that their error is in teaching that the resurrection had already happened, a teaching that will overthrow the faith of some.

However the foundation of God stands sure, as shown by this assurance: **“The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.**

Quoting verses 20 and 21 from the Ferrar Fenton Translation, **“But in a great house there is not only gold and silver furniture, but also wooden and earthenware; and those, indeed, for distinction, but these for ordinary use. If, however any one from among these should purify himself, he will be an article for distinction—purified, serviceable for the Master, ready for any good work.** I believe this is pretty self explanatory.

Paul tells Timothy to flee from youthful lusts.

Timothy is still a young man for the responsibility that Paul is putting on him. He tells him follow righteousness, faith, love, peace and with these to call upon God with a pure heart. He should not allow uneducated, thus often foolish questions knowing that they cause strife's. He tells him that as a servant of the Lord, he should not quarrel, rather be gentle to all men and able to teach and to be patient when he has been wronged. God's servant should correct his opponents with gentleness, for perhaps God will give them a change of mind towards knowing the truth, and upon coming to this knowledge he might disentangle himself from the snare of the devil, escaping from it into God's freedom.

(Read II Timothy 3) Though I feel reasonably sure that Paul was not thinking down the road of time two thousand years, the conditions that he says will happen in the last days would certainly define our time as the last days. Every one of the situations that Paul mentions are in evidence in quantity today. To me, this has come about due to a failure of the churches to teach the whole word of God, if they teach any of it. This has brought on what Paul says will happen in vs. 5, **“Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away.”** Jannes and Jambres, mentioned in vs. 8 are thought to be magicians, working for the Pharaoh, who withstood Moses when he brought the ten plagues on Egypt. Paul tells Timothy that he knows Paul's doctrine and the manner of life that he led along with the persecutions that he suffered in Antioch, Iconium and Lystra and how God had delivered him out of all of them. He says that all men that will live godly lives in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution. But evil men and seducers will get worse and worse deceiving and being deceived. This has been somewhat of a mystery to me when we see people, knowing what their sins are going to lead to, not only do them, but keep doing them even though their situation gets worse and worse.

He tells Timothy to continue in the things he has learned, acknowledging that Timothy had learned the Scriptures from the time he was a child. His mother and grandmother are given credit for teaching Timothy the Scriptures. Paul then finishes this chapter with,

**“All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.”**

(Read II Timothy 4:1-8) Vs. 1 in the Ferrar Fenton translation reads as follows: **“I solemnly call upon you before God and Christ Jesus, He Who will come to judge living and dead, at the manifestation of Himself and His kingdom.”** If we couple this with verse 8: **“Henceforth there is laid up**

**for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.”** These verses make it pretty clear that the determination of our rewards will not happen until the return of Christ Jesus as He establishes His kingdom here on the earth. For those who believe the heaven/hell doctrine, of going to one place or the other upon death, I would think that these verses would make such a teaching null and void. Notice that Paul is looking forward to a crown of righteousness, meaning, I believe, being presented before God as totally righteous.

Paul tells Timothy to preach the word, being ready in season or out of season, to reprove, rebuke, exhort with great patience and instruction. For the time will come, he says, when people will not be able to stand sound doctrine, but will gather to themselves teachers that will tell them fables that they want to hear, not what the Word of God says. Many preachers today will tell you that if they taught the Bible, they would lose their congregation. One of my daughters told me of a man who had been a steady attendee to the same church and the same pew for over 50 years, had never read the Old Testament and objected strenuously when the preacher preached a sermon on the law. This is just one example. Most of what is taught in most churches today is Jewish and Greek mythology and the people love to have it so.

Now we find what the situation is with Paul. He says that he is ready to be offered, that the time of his death is soon. However, he says that he had fought the good fight, he has finished his race and he has kept the faith.

(Read II Timothy 4:9-22) He desires Timothy to come see him very shortly. He is feeling quite alone having only Luke there with him. Some men have deserted him, apparently being afraid of being associated with him for fear they too might be arrested. Others like Demas was not willing to give up the worldly life. Paul has dispatched some of his disciples to different places. He asks Timothy to bring Mark with him and to pick up his cloak that he left in Troas along with some books, especially the books he says. He warns Timothy to beware of Alexander the copper-smith who he says has done him much harm and insinuates that he wants God to judge him according to his works. He says that at his first defense, no man stood with him, but God stood with him. He indicates he is talking of his first trial in Rome from which he was released so that he could continue to preach. He asks that he salute Prisca and Aquila and the household of Onesiphorus. He again asks that he hurry and come before winter and then lists some people who greet him through Paul's letter. Pudens was probably his half brother and Linus and Claudia are son and daugh-

his half brother and Linus and Claudia are son and daughter of a great general from the British Isles. We will discuss them more when we study the book of Romans. He then ends the letter with the simple **“Grace be with you. Amen.”**

As we turn to the epistle to Titus, Titus was one of Paul’s most trusted partners. Paul used him in several difficult situations, particularly in dealing with the Corinthians. If you recall, we discussed a “severe letter” that Paul apparently wrote to the Corinthians and gave it to Titus to deliver. The letter has since been lost, but there is considerable evidence of its existence at one time. Titus is not mentioned in the book of Acts causing speculation as to why not since he was quite active with Paul in his missionary journeys. One speculation is that he was a brother to Luke and possibly supplied Luke with some of the information he used in writing the book of Acts. If so, he must have been like Luke and intentionally kept his name out of Luke’s writings. He was a Greek and there is no record that he was ever circumcised. He was probably at Crete at the time Paul wrote this epistle. Paul apparently wrote this epistle between the two epistles to Timothy.

(Read Titus 1:1-9) Verse 2 is of special interest to me. Eternal, or age lasting life, was promised by God before creation. For many years I denied the sovereignty of God, why I do not know, but it is undeniable when we study verses such as this. How God controls what we do, I do not know, but to make promises like this nothing can be left to chance.

This tells us Titus was on the isle of Crete and Paul gives virtually the same advice to Titus as he gave to Timothy in choosing the men who were to be the overseers of the churches, or congregations there in Crete.

(Read Titus 1:10-16) We know today that Judaism is full of outlandish myths and lies as is witnessed by the Talmud. I was amused recently at a young lady who I had talked some to, but had never been able to really get very deep into what is really going on in the world. I had mentioned that one of our major problems today is Judaism, but had never had a chance to explain why. This was at least a couple of years ago. Recently as I was visiting with her she told

me that she and her husband had been doing some research on they own concerning Judaism and she said, “Mr. Lambert, you will not believe what is written in the Jewish Talmud.” She said that if she had not read it herself, she would have never believed the wickedness, immorality, and corruption that is endorsed and taught in this Jewish bible. Obviously, this is not something new as Paul was dealing with it in his day and advising Titus on what needed to be done to combat it. We need to keep verse 16 in mind, **“They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and to every good work reprobate.”** It really bothers me when reference is made to our Judeo-Christian moral standards, though this is probably true of our standards today, but as Christians, we need to adhere to Christian standards and not let them be diluted with Jewish fables and myths.

(Read Titus 2:1-15) Paul’s advice to Titus in dealing with all people is the same as he gave Timothy.

(Read Titus 3:1-11) Paul continues with advice on what Titus needs to be teaching including the need to be subject to rulers and authorities, to obey magistrates, to be ready to do every good work, to not speak evil of any man, to not be contentious, but to be gentle and showing meekness unto all men. Paul says we have all done one or more to these things, but after the kindness and love of God our Saviour was made known, not through our own good works, but according to His mercy through Jesus Christ He saved us. Being justified by His grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal, or age lasting, life. He tells Titus to affirm these things to the people continually that those that have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works. He says that these things are good and profitable unto men. He tells him to avoid foolish questions, or disputes, genealogies (again something promoted by the Jews) and contentions and arguments about the law, for these things are unprofitable and worthless. JRL

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