

- **III. 2:14–4:5 Warnings Against False Teachers**
- **2:14–26 Avoid Their Vain Ways**
- **2:14**
- **Remind them of this, and warn them before God**
 - Long’s “Come to Jesus Sermon”
 - LTJ/YAB(389) Paul moves from the rhetorical devices of memory and imitation in paraenesis to that of maxims which is a more direct form of instruction.
 - Intent is to fill out the model sketched by exemplars (living or dead)
 - **This** = the theological teaching of vv. 8-13
 - **Before God** = solemn and important; as testimony before a judge
 - **Warn them**
 - = admonish
 - They are still in the church, vulnerable, but reachable (contra those in 3:5 who are to be avoided)
 - **Avoid wrangling** (dispute, quarrel) **over words**
 - Then close the seminaries!
 - Remember: Care of words is responsible ministry.
 - GK sets the scene that Tim has been responsibly passing on Paul’s words, but those words are being challenged
 - LTJ/YAB = do not engage in polemics
 - NTW draws a distinction between “foolish words” and “words of truth”
 - JT (123-124)
 - The hymnal controversy to remove military language because we serve Prince of Peace
 - Church is on side of peace
 - However, must challenge the ideas and words of adversaries who would harm the church
 - Cf. Esolen’s strong and forceful rhetoric
 - Long reminds that good Bible study must pay attention to words, but warns that our enthusiasm can outrun reasonableness—Prayer of Jabez
 - 1 Chron 4:10: Oh, that you would bless me and that you would keep me from evil, that I may not cause pain!
 - Author built a whole theology of prayer on this one verse
 - Ignored the Lord’s Prayer, Gethsemane prayer, the Psalms
 - Without that broader perspective we end up with a health and wealth gospel
 - Words matter
 - Paul is not challenging the need to pay attention to content
 - He is challenging the attitude and **tone**
 - **Which does no good, but only ruins those who are listening**
 - **Ruins**
 - Lead to their destruction (LJT/YAB)
 - Tear down or overturn

- Can win the argument with the opponent, but lose the audience
 - Politics
 - Saw it happen with an election for state office
 - Cf. the state of political rhetoric today and how the populace is reacting
 - A great theologian, Troy Aikman, said that social media is a race to the bottom
- **2:15**
- **Do your best**
 - (*spoudoson*) see Tit 3:12 = be eager, zealous, [work hard at it]
- **To present yourself to God**
 - Term used in judicial contexts—God is the greater court of opinion (see below on “ashamed”)
 - Also used in cultic contexts = to present a sacrifice
 - The Christian life is to be an examined and disciplined life
- **As one approved by him**
 - LJT/YAB proven workman is a common image used by moral philosophers to stress the need to have a fully formed character that must be tested and proved
- **A worker who has no need to ashamed**
 - **Worker**
 - Laborer
 - The carpenter’s rule: Measure twice, cut once.
 - **Ashamed**
 - Honor and shame cultural—avoid shame at all costs
 - Cf. Muslim culture in Middle East—one girl killed by brothers for shaming the family
 - Was Tim being “shamed” by the opponents—remember that shame was a technique used by the government to attempt the shutdown of Christian preaching and teaching—extreme was crucifixion of Jesus with beatings and lashing being lesser means
 - Tim would avoid shame by passing on Paul’s gospel without distortion
 - What the false teachers are saying and doing is shameful
- **Rightly explaining the word of truth**
- **Rightly** = *orthomeo*
 - Not “rightly dividing,” but “cutting straight to the point”; i.e., don’t wrangle over words, but “cut to the chase,” or “get to the point”
 - A worker who skillfully cuts material (JRWS)
 - To cut a straight road so that a traveler can go straight to destination
- **Word of truth** = gospel
- **2:16**
- **Avoid profane chatter**
 - This is the product of a bad workmanship
 - Cf. Tit 3:9 avoid stupid controversies
 - *Bebaeblos* common place; worldly; cf. Heb 12:16—Esau was a profane man who sold his birthright by a pot of beans

- Don't wrestle with pigs...
- **For it will lead people into more and more impiety**
 - Not a good outcome
 - **Lead** = proceed, advance (cf. spread like gangrene in next verse)
 - **Impiety**
 - *Asebia* opposite of *eusebia* (godless vs. godly)
- **2:17**
- **And their talk will spread like gangrene**
 - **Talk** = *logos* (1:13; 2:9, 11, 15, 17; 4:2)
 - Only here in a negative sense; elsewhere in reference to word of God or healthy/sound teaching
 - Their **talk** is a type of anti-*logos*
 - **Spread**
 - Advance, make progress
 - Spreading ulcer, disease that consumes and destroys
 - Fee = "it will feed upon and eat away at the life of the church"
- **Among them are Hymenaeus and Philetus**
 - 1 Tim 1:20 H. and Alexander (= 2 Tim 4:14? Alexander the metalworker; doubtful) were handed over to Satan (excommunicated—cf. 1 Cor 5:5)
 - Philetus only mentioned here
 - = Christian teachers with anti-*logos*
 - Since Paul names them, are they potentially having an influence on Tim, or is Paul just identifying specific ones for Tim to avoid getting into a war of words with?
- **2:18**
- **Who have swerved from the truth**
 - Missed the mark, deviated, depart from [navigator's terminology = dead reckoning]
- **By claiming that the resurrection has already taken place**
 - For Hymenaeus and Philetus Christian existence is all about power and not about suffering (LTJ/YAB, 380; cf. theology of glory vs. theology of the cross)
 - Dualistic view at work here?—low view of material world and physical body
 - Mounce (WBC, 527f.) says this is a far cry from 2nd century Gnosticism, but it is headed in that direction.
 - Philosophical dualism would frown on the idea of resurrection of the body
 - Who in their right mind would want to get a body when the goal is to escape it?
 - JRWS(425): "...their preaching of the present resurrection threatens to diminish the significance of the cross. Paul and Timothy, in contrast, claim the gift of the power that has come from the one who has suffered and by his death has destroyed death and revealed immortality ... enables them to endure the suffering and the persecution."
- **They are upsetting the faith of some.**
 - Overturning, destroying
- LTJ/YAB(386) "...will have attitudinal and behavioral corollaries..."

- GK = this teaching strikes at the heart of Christianity
 - It affects one's future standing and hope
 - It affects how one thinks of the present relationship to Christ
 - The perspective on the body and conduct now
 - Remember NTW: "Evil is what you get when the mind is twisted out of shape and then the body goes along for the ride"
 - Also affects one's attitude toward the material world [ecological implications]
- Did it result in asceticism or promiscuity?
- **2:19**
- **But God's firm foundation stands**
 - No need to be discouraged
 - Even with overturning and efforts to destroy (v. 18),
 - The gospel is resilient and durable
 - Or, is it the church that is still standing? (see GK—cf. the house imagery of vv. 19-21 + church as house—1 Tim 3:15; 1 Cor 3:10-12; Eph 2:20-22)
 - But cf. 1 Tim 6:19 where God himself is the firm foundation
 - Finally what is assured is stability and permanence—no need to be discouraged
 - Tim probably thought he faced an overwhelming threat.
 - Could the task be done, the assignment fulfilled?
 - Paul says, "Yes, because God's solid foundation stands."
 - JT (126f.) "The fate of God's house is not in our hands! He has not called us to 'save' his house, the church, by our own powers . . . Our task is to work faithfully, recognizing that the house is God's house . . . our challenge is to see the magnitude of our calling and commit ourselves to it fully . . . we do not minister alone. He calls us to work in his house and to separate from those who would destroy it."
- **"The Lord knows those who are his" and, "Let everyone who calls on the name of the Lord turn away from wickedness."**
 - **Wickedness** *adikia* is wrongdoing in the broadest sense
 - Disregard for what is right and just, especially divine law
 - Often describes behavior that is self-centered rather than God and other centered.
 - Probably a reference to Korah's rebellion in Num 16
 - A generalized summary of v. 26 "Depart from the tents of these wicked men."
 - Dathan and Abiram would be examples of the behavior and motives of Hymenaeus and Philetus
 - GK: "Hence the inscription commands not only a departure from immorality, but also from the error that contradicts the truth and leads to such immorality."
 - The concrete application is for the Christians in Ephesus:
 - GK: to turn away from the errors of thought and practice of those who have gone astray from the truth
 - Long: Korah's rebellion did not devastate the congregation of Israel and false teachers and teaching will not devastate the church [but Tim must stand up to them and challenge it (see JT, 216f. above)]
- **2:20-21 Useful workers**

- **2:20**
- **In a large house there are many utensils not only of gold and silver but also of wood and clay, some are for special use, some for ordinary.**
 - The focus is on the workers in the house and not the house itself—notice the change in metaphor from good and bad workmen to noble and ignoble vessels/utensils
 - Esolen (*Out of the Ashes*), in his introduction, complains about the decay of civilization in general and Western civilization in particular.
 - He imagines a great manor house owned by the Westons
 - Goes from room to room describing how the current generation of the noble family has let it fall into disrepair and is allowing misuse
 - deSilva (752): "... 2:20-22 introduces the image of various kinds of utensils, some for common uses and some for noble uses. Those who cleanse themselves from 'youthful passions' and misguided teachings, and dedicate themselves to 'righteousness, faith, love and peace' will find themselves in the latter category. The author appeals to the leader's desire for honor, him or her that allowing God's call to holiness to shape his or her life will result in distinctive opportunities to serve." Cf. what Tim is charged to do in 2:2
 - JRWS suggests that the "utensils/vessels" symbolize teachers
 - Cf. 1 Cor 3:9-17—building materials
- **2:21**
- **All who cleanse themselves of the things I have mentioned will become special utensils, dedicated and useful to the owner of the house, ready for every good work.**
 - **Cleanse**
 - Contra Hymenaeus & Philetus (v. 17)
 - *Ekkathairo* cleanse thoroughly (used only here and 1 Cor 5:7—purge/clean out the old leaven)
 - GK: must depart from wickedness by departing from those who practice such (cf. 1 Cor 5:11, 13; 2 Cor 6:14-7:1)
 - **Of the things** (profane chatter, impiety, wrong interpretation and application of the doctrine of the resurrection, wickedness)
 - **Special utensils**
 - Vessel of honor
 - Temple vessels for worship
 - Not just information, but formation
 - **Dedicated**
 - *hagiasmon* = **sanctified**
 - Cf. 1 Cor 6:11: but you have been washed, sanctified, justified in the name of the Lord Jesus
 - **Useful**
 - *Euchrestos* cf. Phlm 11:
 - LTJ?YAB(388) pun on the title Chrestos
 - Onesimus was *archrestos* when not a Christian, but after conversion was useful in a new way
 - Cf. 2 Tim 4:11: Mark is useful for me in my ministry
 - **Ready for every good work**

- Mounce/WBC(531): If Tim wants to be a useful vessel for God, he must cleanse himself]by:
 - Fleeing lusts [youthful passions] (v. 22a)
 - Pursuing righteousness (v. 22b)
 - Avoiding heresy (v. 23)
 - Not be quarrelsome , but be kind and gentle
 - Service in the house of the master for the master
- **2:22**
- **Shun youthful passions**
 - LTJ/YAB (399f.) translation: “flee cravings for novelty;” Q/W (655) = “juvenile desires”
 - A second meaning is “modern style” or “novel” as attested in some variant readings
 - The verb form carries the sense of violence and revolution
 - LTJ = “I have shaded the translation away from the biographical and toward Timothy’s possible attraction to ‘novel teachings’ generated by the opposition. In an even stronger translation Timothy would once more be warned away from the violent and toward the gentle.”
- Fee (also JRWS): not limited to sexual lust, but includes headstrong passions of youth, contentiousness, arguments, debate, quick-tempered, arrogant
 - BW (339) Not necessarily lust in particular, but not ruled out in light of the earlier warning about purity in relating to younger women (1 Tim 5:2)
 - However, BW questions Fee’s proposition based on Tim appearing to be shy and timid
- **And pursue**
 - *Dioko*-hot pursuit in hunting or war; chariot racer straining forward, pressing on toward the goal
 - Cf. Phil 3:12, 14—I press on ...
 - If you are going to be headstrong, be headstrong about this
- **Righteousness, faith, love, and peace**
 - **Righteousness**
 - Don’t become self-righteousness which is unrighteousness
 - Don’t pursue wrong/unrighteous attitudes and behavior; the opponents probably are
 - **Faith and love**
 - **Peace**
 - Hellenistic world = absence of armed conflict; cf. pax Romana
 - Hellenistic Jewish writers think of *shalom*
 - Wholeness, well-being, harmony with God, others, creation
 - C. Plantinga’s definition of sin = vandalism of God’s shalom (defacing or destroying)
 - **Along with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart**
 - Cf. “clear conscience” of 1:3
 - Pure = not polluted with alien convictions (CONTENT) and commitments (CONDUCT)

- **2:23**
- **Have nothing to do with senseless controversies**
 - *Zetesis*: 1) investigation, 2) discussion or debate
 - Festus to Agrippa in Acts 25:20
 - Debate with Judaizers over circumcision of Gentile converts Acts 15:2, 7
 - Not a prohibition of all controversy—Jesus and Paul were controversialists
 - JRWS = they are senseless because they are speculative (cf. myths and genealogies) and pure subjectivism (experience and feelings over reason and logic)
- **You know that they breed quarrels.**
 - deSilva (753) this is what the “deviant innovators” were doing

- **2:24-26**
- **And the Lord’s servant must not be quarrelsome but kindly to everyone, an apt teacher, patient, correcting opponents with gentleness. God may perhaps grant that they will repent and come to know the truth, and that they may escape from the snare of the devil, having been held captive by him to do his will.**
 - Overview
 - Tim is in heated battle over ideas and words
 - His words are to be well-chosen, strong, and even tough.
 - But his tone is to show moderation, patience, kindness
 - **Patient**
 - Bearing evil without resentment—this can be difficult
 - Tolerant of people’s unkindness (turn the other cheek)
 - This is how God’s deals with us so we are to be Godlike/godly in our response
 - **Escape**
 - *Ananaephro* become sober or come to one’s senses
 - It is like the devil has inebriated or drugged them so they will do what he wants
 - **Snare**—only other use in NT = Luke 5:10 fishers of (catch) men
 - **Of the devil** = sinister element
 - **Held captive by him**
 - God or Satan? Most commentators = Satan
 - The attitudes and behavior of those so captivated is spelled out below

- **Sermon lead:** consider how social media and the political process (profane chatter) have become so hostile and polarizing. What affect does that have on the church? Whereas the social mores of American culture once reflected that of the Christian faith, that is on the wane. How is “the talk” of the media, activists with agendas counter to Christian views and behavior infiltrating the church? How do we take a strong stand, but with a tone marked by gentleness and kindness? Do we have a strong doctrine of the resurrection? In what ways do we need to be cleansed?

- **3:1–9 A Prophecy Concerning False Teachers and Its Application**
 - We move into the world of apocalyptic language (see notes above in the Introduction)
 - Long (224): the main purpose of apocalyptic speech is to set the troubles in Ephesus in context—the current distress is caused by the false teachers
 - Paul focuses not on cosmic or natural catastrophies, but on moral upheavals (does this sound familiar?)
 - Long applies it this way: it is a local outbreak of a larger cultural loss of faith and gives this section the heading of—Culture Wars, Church Wars
 - 3:1-5 is future tense while 3:6-9 is present tense (3: 6-9 is Exhibit A of what would characterize the last days. The future is now. It’s happening right under Tim’ nose.
 - 3:2-4 = list of 18 vices
 - 9 of those begin with “a” (alpha privative) = “un” as in ungrateful, unholy, etc.
 - List begins with “lovers of self” and ends with “[not] lovers of God”
 - It is an anti-God disposition. It is not self-esteem under scrutiny, but egotism.
 - **On dealing with the vice-list, before we stand and point an accusing finger toward the world where these vices are so prevalent, we should use it as mirror to see which vices tend to crop up in our own lives.** A good resource for this is Michael Mangis, *Signature Sins: Taming Our Wayward Hearts* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2008). Mangis is a Christian psychologist and professor at Wheaton College. He believes that each one of us has a signature sin that most of us will hide and ignore to the detriment of ourselves. I have a bibliography on books that deal with sin as a general theological category and on the seven deadly sins. If you are interested in that list email me and I’ll send you a copy. reid@austingrad.edu

A comment on Henry VIII by G. J. Meyer in *The Tudors* (NYC: Bantam Books, 2010): “Power corrupts, as Acton famously said, and a generation into Henry’s reign there was beginning to hang over him the stench of corruption, of something like spiritual death. He was slipping into the special realm of fantasy reserved for those deprived too long of the simple truth even—or especially—about themselves. In ancient Greece or Rome he might have declared himself a god. Living in Christian England on the threshold of the modern world, he had to settle for being treated lie a god” (32).

- Long (221): “There will always be people who sense the world as we know it passing away, and with the old verities no longer secure, they grasp desperately for the next new thing.”
 - Try to escape to a safe harbor
 - But have no charts
 - They imagine they are on a perpetual party boat and turn in on themselves
 - Become lovers of themselves.

- **3:2-4** consult the lexicons, do lemma searches, and consult the commentaries for word studies and applications. Moral philosophers commonly used **vice lists** like this...
- **Chaput** notes that Americans have a deep streak of individualism, a distrust of authority, and a big appetite for self-invention. As religion loses its hold on people's behavior all of these instincts accelerate (see pp. 87ff.)
- **3:5 holding to the outward form of godliness but denying its power.**
 - Moves from general description (3:2-4) to local setting
 - JRWS: "It is a remarkably apt portrayal of the so-called 'permissive society' which generally tolerates every conceivable deviation from Christian standards of righteousness and truth, and whose ethos has crept into the church."
 - Fee (221) "They liked the visible expressions, the ascetic practices, and the endless discussion of religious trivia, thinking themselves to be obviously righteous because they were obviously religious."
 - **Holding to**
 - Cf. 1:13—hold to the standard of sound teaching/doctrine
 - **Godliness**
 - Issue is sanctification—cf. "cleansed" in 2:21
 - Had the false teachers used *eusebia* as "their" term for superior spirituality
 - Are they claiming to be more spiritual than Paul who is, in their eyes, shamefully in prison
 - Their behavior, attitudes and motives do not correspond to their pious claims
 - **Denying its power**
 - Disregarding the transformative power; paying no attention to
 - BW (353) cites Lucian who "aptly parodies pedagogical predators and their victims. 'But although outwardly and in public they appear very reverent and stern, if they get a handsome boy or a pretty woman in their clutches or hope to, it is best to veil their conduct in silence. Some even carry off the wives of their hosts to beguile/seduce them after the pattern of that young Trojan pretending that the women are going to become philosophers.'"
 - **Avoid them!**
 - Don't waste time arguing with them
- **3:6 For among them are those who make their way into households and captivate silly women**
- **Those who make their way** *endynotes* = secret, furtive, creep into, worm their way in
- **Into households**
 - Struck at the heart of the church which met in houses
 - Probably through the back door while the men were away
 - Like house buglars
 - Abuse of hospitality
- **Captivate:** Lit = take prisoner, capture in war, [enslave], take control
- **Silly women**
 - Couldn't Paul have found another way to describe the situation?

- In defense of Paul
 - Not making a sexist statement.
 - Women rarely had access to education
 - 1 Tim 2:11-13 women could and should be taught
 - Lack of education made them very vulnerable
- However, Long (225) thinks he is, but that “is not inventing a swipe at ‘little women’ ... instead he is drawing on a cultural reservoir of prejudice about women and philosophical learning.”
 - Long (224): “There are two ways to attack false teachers, to condemn their ideas and disparage their followers and [Paul] employs both.”
 - But Paul’s frustration was occasion specific, about specific women, not speaking universally
- These teachers had “captivated” some of the women of the church
- Long imagines it this way: “Along come the false teachers, with their mumbo-jumbo exegesis of Scripture, telling these young women how extraordinary they were or could be. This was a flattering message, one these women were eager to hear, and they had the financial means to make life good for the teachers who espoused it, so it was an arrangement that worked well for both parties. The women were mobile, moving freely among the various houses of the church and whispering that they had learned some truths that were far more interesting and meaningful than the dreary old message of the cross and the resurrection being taught by the traditional elders. Before long, the whole community erupts into a dispute over the ‘old faith’ and the ‘new spirituality,’ and that is why we have the Pastoral Epistles in the first place. So from this point of view we can understand [Paul’s] exasperation over these ‘little women.’ The false teachers have preyed on their vulnerabilities and infected them with spiritual gibberish. The whole thing has blown up in the face of the responsible elders. But there was another side to this of course. The false teachers were deceptive, to be sure, but they did something the good elders neglected to do: they paid attention to the intellectual life of women in the community.” (225f.)
- Long describes the situation as a raging brush fire with Paul sounding like a fire chief barking orders more than a news reporter describing the events. One is an active role in the heat of the moment and the other is a passive, detached review (226)
- **Overwhelmed by their sins and swayed by all kinds of desire**—not specified, could include traits in the vice list of 3:2-4
- **3:7 Who are always being instructed and can never arrive at a knowledge of the truth.**
 - Cf. the **form of godliness, but denying its power**
 - Information without transformation
 - Cf 3:15—on Scripture + gospel can provide the way to where release from sin is found in salvation
 - Apparently the opponents are using something other than Scripture + gospel
- **3:8 Just like Jannes and Jambres opposed Moses, so these people, of corrupt mind and counterfeit faith, also oppose the truth**

- **Jannes and Jambres**
 - Two magicians in Pharaoh’s court from Ex 7:11-8:19.
 - Not named in the biblical text
 - Named in several sources from Jewish interpretation and tradition
 - Opposed Moses, but did not succeed
 - Remember Hymenaeus and Philetus (2:17)
- Description
 - **Corrupt mind**
 - Depraved
 - Word means a corruption that leads to collapse or rottenness
 - **Counterfeit faith**
 - *Adokimos* = failing the test or unacceptable; doesn’t measure up to standards [cf. “board certified”]; unqualified, worthless—cf. the bridge collapse in Atlanta a few weeks ago
- **3:9 But they will not make much progress, because, as in the case of those men, their folly will become plain to everyone.**
 - JRWS: ‘Yes, inside the church, within the visible society of professing believers, there are [persons] of immoral character and conduct, of purely external religiosity, of corrupt mind and counterfeit faith.’
 - Cf. Sinclair Lewis, *Elmer Gantry*
 - Lewis’s fiction has proven to be accurate—name after name
 - GK: In vv 1-9 Paul has placed the difficulties that Tim faces into the context of what characterizes
 - the last days (vv 1-7)
 - compared them with the difficulties Moses faced (vv 8-9)
 - Tim and leaders at Ephesus
 - have been forewarned of the difficulty (v1—know this)
 - warned to act decisively in response (v 5—avoid these)
 - and encouraged that the outcome will be in their favor (v9)
- **3:10–17 The Reason and Way to Counter False Teachers**
- **3:10-11**
- **Now you have observed my teaching, my conduct, my aim in life, my faith, my patience, my love, my steadfastness, my persecutions and suffering the things that happened to me in Antioch, Iconium, and Lystra.**
 - GK: the focal point of this instruction is v. 14 (*su de* again) continue/remain in what you have learned [from me] and firmly believed
 - **Now you** (*su de*) but you
 - **Have observed**
 - *Parakaloutheo*
 - To follow closely, investigate
 - LTJ/YAB (416) lit = walking behind or following as a disciple—motif of imitation lies just below the surface
 - Notice the # of 3rd person pronouns-**my**=emphasis; this is not egotism, but showing that what is required can be done in such difficult circumstances; cf. 1 Cor 15:10 But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace toward me has

not been in vain. On the contrary, I worked harder than any of them -- though it was not I, but the grace of God that is with me (NRS)

- **(1) My teaching**—in other places Paul emphasizes that he preached Christ crucified—CONTENT + CONDUCT
- **(2) My conduct** *agoge* = whole demeanor and way of life—it was authentic and open
- **(3) My aim in life** = the spiritual ambitions that motivated him and gave him direction; includes resolve
- LTJ/YAB (417) (4-7) below are in contrast with the vices of the false teachers
- **(4) My faith**= content (what he believes) + conduct (fidelity)--
- **(5) My patience** = longsuffering, especially toward difficult people
- **(6) My love** = for God and people; contra self-love
- **(7) My endurance** = in all circumstances
- **(8) My persecutions and suffering[s] [in] the things that happened to me in Antioch, Iconium, and Lysta.**
 - Long = like saying Birmingham, Selma, Memphis
 - Tim is from Lystra—knew the stories, if not eye-witness
 - Tim must be ready for the same
- **What persecutions I endured!**
 - This pause suggests that the recollection had an effect on Paul
 - Long says the effect on Tim should be: “My goodness! Didn’t Paul take a beating in his ministry.”
- **The Lord rescued me from all of them.**
 - Towner (NICNT, 575): The line corresponds closely with the LXX reading of Ps 33:18—“The righteous ones cried out, and the Lord heard them and delivered them from all their afflictions.
 - Towner (576) Paul links his sufferings with Christ
- **3:12**
- **Indeed, all who want to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted.**
 - **Want to live a godly life in Christ Jesus**
 - **Cf. Esolen’s observation** (*Out of the Ashes*, pp. 10-11): “Every single pagan philosopher of the ancient world said that if you wanted to be free, you had to learn the hard ways of virtue and that the worst form of slavery was slavery to your own appetites. That is what the founders of the United States also believed. That is what preachers used to preach. That is what we have repudiated or forgotten so that we now look to a massive central government for everything . . . It tells you what you may say and what you may not say, on pain of be prosecuted for hate—not for an act, but for an attitude.” [I would have preferred that Esolen said “for a belief” rather than “for an attitude” because attitudes can be hateful, but a belief rises above that. However, his point is well-stated and well-taken.]
 - JRWS draws three distinctions
 - Those in the world and not in Christ are not persecuted [accommodation]
 - Those in Christ and not in the world are not persecuted [withdrawal]
 - Those in Christ and in the world are persecuted [engagement; or could be because of retaliation]
 - **Persecuted**

- To run after, chase; can be friendly or hostile pursuit
 - E.g., Acts 22:4 Paul persecuted this way...
- **Taking issue with Long’s application** (230); he gives three examples of how Christian stances and churches taking them will be challenged
 - Say that the Prince of Peace said, “Put your sword away.”
 - The gun zealots go an angry offensive.
 - Some churches respond by raffling off guns in worship.
 - I wouldn’t go that far, but I doubt that Jesus had gun control in mind.
 - Let a church offer the hospitality of Christ by providing hot meals and overnight shelter for the homeless.
 - The cry of “you are destroying property values” will be heard.
 - I have no issue with Long here.
 - Let a minister try to display the wideness of God’s mercy and love by presiding at the wedding of his lesbian daughter, and someone will try to run him out of the ministry.
 - My response: Would one who reads his Bible differently and in good conscience could not bless such a ceremony receive the same “wideness of God’s mercy and love?”
 - Those on the other side of this divide can attack just as viciously.
- **3:13 But wicked people will go from bad to worse, deceiving others and being deceived.**
 - Example of intentional response
 - Cf. Dreher (*The Benedict Option*) = the barbarians are at the gate
 - Cf. <http://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2017/march/benedict-options-vision-for-christian-village.html?start=4>
 - Cf. NPR Occasional series on People of Faith in America; First installment: <http://www.npr.org/2017/04/10/522714982/catholics-build-intentional-community-of-like-minded-believers>
- **3:14-17**
Structure: G/S see a chiasm

A	Tradition, the teaching of the community (v. 14)
B	The Scriptures, knowing them (v. 3:15a)
C	Reaching wisdom that leads to salvation through faith in Christ (3:15b)
B’	The Scriptures, their nature (3:16a)
A’	Tradition, the teaching of the community (3:16b-17)
- **3:14-15 But as for you, continue in what you have learned and firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it, and how from childhood you have known the sacred writings that are able to instruct you for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.**
 - **Continue in what you have learned**
 - JRWS: “This is specially relevant whenever innovators arise in the church, ‘radicals’ who claim to be progressive and who repudiate everything which savors the traditional.”

- The tradition JRWS refers to is more than traditional practices which can change over time.
 - It is the moral and doctrinal traditions based in Scripture and has stood the test of time through the history of the church—if we deviate from the historic teachings of the church we need to double check our basis and our motives.
 - Cf. Jaroslav Pelikan: Tradition is the living faith of the dead. Traditionalism is the dead faith of the living.
 - **Childhood**
 - Cf. 1:5-6
 - *Brephos*—the earliest stage of human development, even back to embryo, here it means infancy—see LTJ/YAB
 - **The sacred writings that able to instruct you for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus**
 - LTJ/YAB(420) refers to Rom 1:16-17 and 10:1-4 and favors the reading that it is Jesus’ faith that saves. *Tes en Christo* cannot mean the Christian’s faith in Jesus because that would be *eis Christon* [faith of Christ]
 - On the otherhand, GK(444) takes Christ to be the object of faith = faith in Christ.
 - **Pastoral note:** The Bible is being read less in the home and in the church.
 - As a word of judgment, preachers to point that out. However, there must be a word of grace.
 - As a word of grace, preachers and church leaders need to find and provide resources, and start programs in the church that will equip and encourage parents to fulfill this responsibility.
- **3:16-17 All scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, so that everyone who belongs to God may be proficient, equipped for every good work.**
 - **All**
 - Are the false teachers omitting parts of Scripture or looking outside Scripture to support their position?
 - Cf. those who dismiss the Pastorals as inferior to the earlier writings “attributed” to Paul
 - **Inspired** (*theopneus*) = breathed by God
 - JRWS/Long
 - No doctrine of inspiration can be deduced here
 - Not the facts of science, but the facts of salvation
 - Doctrine of inspiration has become one of the places of “wrangling over words” (2:14)
 - G/S: Paul attempts no explanation of how this inspiration took place...enough for him to describe the purposes of Scripture:
 - It points to a saving relationship with JC, and feeds and strengthens that relationship (3:15)
 - It guides God’s people in how to be God’s people by giving them information and shaping their worldviews and actions, and by showing them where they’ve gone wrong and how to get it right (3:16b)

- It does these things so that believers will be prepared for the lives, actions, and deeds that God desires for them.
 - Long(233): “Taken as a whole, the sentence conveys the sense, ‘since we all know that the holy writings are the gifts of God’s Spirit, don’t neglect to use them to inform, shape, and correct your own faith and the faith of the church.’”
 - Long(234): “The dispute at Ephesus is never very far from the mind of [Paul]. Consequently this passage about the usefulness of Scripture probably has in mind the misuse of Scripture at the hands of the false teachers. *They* use Scripture to run right past traditional interpretations to play word games with the holy writings, finding there all kinds of strange spiritualized myths and genealogical codes with secret meanings (1 Tim. 1:4), but that’s not the real purpose of Scripture, which is to ‘instruct you for salvation through faith in Jesus Christ’ (3:15). ‘Salvation’ here refers to a whole way of life, living the life of those who are redeemed by Jesus Christ, not to a momentary decision of belief [“I got saved”]. Scripture trains the faithful, ‘everyone who belongs to God’ (3:17), in the life of salvation so that the church can body forth in the world proficient in the gospel and ‘equipped for every good work (3:17).’”
 - NTW(120): The purpose of the Bible in its rich unity and diversity is:
 - Through the work of the Spirit,
 - To transform us,
 - To make us wise,
 - To think in new patterns,
 - To see what we haven’t seen before,
 - To understand ourselves and others and God and the world,
 - And to ultimately find ourselves rescued, saved from the downward pull of sin and death,
 - Transformed by God’s forgiving grace
 - So that we become part of his new creation
- An example of how the priority of Scripture can be challenged and misplaced: The **Wesleyan Quadrilateral** developed by Albert Outler
 - I think that Outler’s motives and basic suppositions were good, but were set up for misapplication when he chose to use a quadrant.
 - For the history and description see https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wesleyan_Quadrilateral
 - The four sources of Christian teaching
 - Scripture
 - Tradition
 - Reason
 - Experience
 - As a quadrilateral, some have given all four equal standing.
 - Reference to Outler’s dismay at the misuse and outcome of the Quadrilateral: <https://www.google.com/amp/s/curtsite.wordpress.com/2015/05/12/the-myth-and-the-abuse-of-the-wesleyan-quadrilateral/amp/>
 - I agree that tradition, reason, and experience all have a place in the interpretation of Scripture, but that Scripture is not on par with, but supersedes the other three

- **4:1–8 An Exhortation to Faithful Ministry (As for you...)**
 - This is the climax of the exhortation—the climax, the crescendo
 - It's a very solemn beginning: oath language as if in a courtroom before a judge or authority
 - NTW (124) Paul lived with the clock ticking
 - Long(239) It's a look at life from the end of things.

- **4:1 In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is [coming (LTJ)] to judge the living and the dead, and in view of his appearing and his kingdom, I solemnly urge you:**
 - Long (237) asks: “Why the solemn oath language?
 - Paul is not trying to frighten [but he is trying to impress the serious of the situation and the need to respond appropriately]
 - Paul is casting the light of God's ultimate kingdom on the everyday practice of ministry.
 - What ultimately matters is seen only in light of Jesus Christ
 - We are notorious for comparing ‘success’ by the size of membership, budget, or building
 - That is not necessarily a measurement of ‘success’
 - The ultimate measurement (using Howard Hendricks categories):
 - Was the word well used?
 - Was the work well done?
 - Was the Lord well pleased?

- **1:2 proclaim the message; be persistent whether the time is favorable or unfavorable; convince, rebuke, and encourage, with the utmost patience in teaching.**An affirmation and appeal to those who preach and teach arising from 2 Tim 4:1-5
 - Vv. 1-2 is a solemn charge to Tim and preachers/teachers of all time
 - **“Preach the word”** *keruxon ton logon*
 - Word is shorthand for the Christian message
 - The charge is preceded (3:1-13) and followed (4:3-5) by references to the opponents/troublemakers (the ones with bad CONTENT and bad CONDUCT)
 - Jesus came preaching and sent the apostles to preach the good news about the kingdom of God
 - It must be done “whether the time is **favorable or unfavorable**” (in season or out of season)
 - The time was less than favorable for them
 - Cf. the contemporary situation
 - What will we do? With the momentous challenges facing us, Tom Wright says, “How easy it is for preachers then to back off, to give up trying to lead their people into further truth and insight, to trim down the ministry of the word to a few scattered reflections . . . often with the shoulder shrugging comment that nobody likes sermons these days anyways. And how easy, too, for a preacher who knows that what he or she has to say will be unpopular with some members of the church, or will get them into

trouble if the local magistrates hear about it, to trim the content of the preaching down to more general platitudes. Paul, of course, will have none of it. Keep going whether the time is right or wrong!” (125)

- **Convince**
 - Long = persuasively preach the faith so that it becomes clear
 - Lexicons = expose, set forth, bring to light
 - LTJ = “refute” = logical engagement and even a sense of correction
- **Rebuke**
 - Warn people from false paths
- **Encourage**
 - LTJ = give comfort
 - Long = standing along the pilgrim path offering cups of cold water
- **Patience**
 - Long-suffering; to become long-suffering one has to have been long-bothered
 - Had Tim reached the point of exasperation? I can see why he might have.
 - NTW = don’t just lay down the law; explain why this is important—
 - It’s from a position of authority without be authoritarian; it is not speaking down to, but reasoning with
 - Long= the teacher must be aware that disciples sometimes take a step or two back before moving forward, wander off the path in heavy fog or fall in exhaustion in the middle of the journey and need tender care
- **In teaching *Didache***
 - Rom 6:17; 1 Cor 14:6, 26; Tit 1:9
 - LTJ = here it is not content, but the act of teaching must be done in patience
- **4:3-4 For the time is coming when people will not put up with sound doctrine, but have itching ears, they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own desires, and will turn from the path and wander away to myths.**
 - This is a sketch of the “unfavorable times”
 - As in 3:1-6, the future tenses here are in reality present
 - **Sound doctrine** = healthy teaching – will face rejection
 - **Itching ears is another medical term**
 - **Accumulate teachers...**
 - LTJ = a restlessness to hear new things and not necessarily healthy ones
 - Long = they want to hear things that entertain them, make them feel good, and flatter them into thinking well of themselves.
 - Cf. the divinity school who used a student quote in an advertisement: the student was thrilled to find a school that would allow her to interpret the Bible the way she wanted to
 - NTW—“Paul himself now has a warning for Timothy, a warning which explains why he has to go with his patient teaching. Quite soon, people within the Christian community won’t want that kind of teaching which will make and keep them healthy and strong. Like people being instructed by their doctors to follow a particular diet, they will discover that half of their favorite foods aren’t on it, and so will look for different doctors who will advise them to eat and drink what they

like. In some parts of the Western world there are people who go from church to church trying to find preachers who will tell them what their ears are longing to hear—that they are all right as they are alright as they are, that they don't have to change their behavior or obey all those rules ... and, perhaps in particular, that they needn't believe that old stuff about Jesus, all the stories you find in the gospels, because there are different stories, different gospels, other ways of looking at Jesus and the world. This is what people often want to hear, and they'll go on looking till they find it. Then (they think) they can rest content. And the church drifts towards the day of Jesus' royal appearing, unaware that accounts have to be presented" (126).

- Vv. 3-4 sound contemporary: cf. Esolen, *Out of the Ashes*, chapter one, "The Restoration of Truth-Telling."
 - He points out how many lies we are being told.
 - In fact, he says, "It is almost impossible in the modern world to *not accept lies* as a matter of course" (17).
- Preachers have a responsibility to tell the truth in patience and kindness knowing that push-back is likely.
- **4:5 As for you always be sober, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist, carry out your ministry fully.**
 - The description of the apostasy in is followed by four imperatives
 - ***Su de*** again (1 Tim 6:11; 2 Tim 3:10, 14; 4:5; Tit 2:1)
 - Imperatives
 - **Sober** *nephein* BW(366)—"a technical term in the rhetorician's lexicon for the speaker who is in complete control of himself, his subject, and his vocabulary in contrast to the frenetic vaporings of the emotional opposition. Paul appears to be addressing what is going on in the church, not the world." [However, we in the church often buy the cultures Kool-Aid, bring it church, and drink it. Cf. Esolen above.]
 - **Endure suffering**—back to a constant theme in this letter; cf. Matt 5:1-12 Blessed are those persecuted on account of righteousness when they utter all kinds of evil against you on account of me
 - **Do the work of an evangelist**
 - **Carry out your ministry fully**
 - *Pleroo* to bring to completion, to finish, complete
 - Finish well
 - Baton is being passed (BW, 366); there is a lot of the race ahead of Tim, but for Paul...
 - **4:6-8 As for me, I am already being poured out as a libation, and the time of my departure has come. I have fought the good fight the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. From now on there is reserved for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will give me on that day, and not only to me but also to all who have longed for his appearing.**
 - Four different metaphors: sacrifices at temples, athletic stadium, law court

- Paul's moral effort to preserve faith—perfect tense = past effort continued in the present
 - Loyalty to the gospel and willingness to suffer for it
 - Resistance to corruptions of false teachers
 - Preserving the tradition through his delegate, Tim
- Doctrine of justification must be balanced by the doctrine of sanctification
 - Saved from
 - Saved for
 - Final judgment is not only related our faith
 - It is also related to the total substance of our lives
 - Some are ready to meet the king, some are not, and some even resent him
 - A righteous judge gives the right verdict
- BW(369) Quotes Victor Pfitzner, “This is not the certainty of the man who trusting and priding himself in the strength of his own achievement, now looks forward to the reward which he has merited. It is rather the certainty of faith and hope. He who has remained faithful to the end...has fitted himself into God's plan of salvation, has given God the honor. His being crowned on the last day is God's own crowning act on that which he has created and perfected...This amounts to the total absence of agnostic thinking usually connected with the picture of the athlete. Not the glory and honor of the ‘spiritual athlete’ but the honor of God who has set the contest, is that which is sought in the good contest of faith for faith.”
- Oden (173) “Note the irony: Paul was at this time ready to stand before a temporal judge, an unjust magistracy, for whom he continued to prey. He was confident that the Higher Judge would reverse the death sentence and give him transcendent victory.” But: “In fact, he was confident that the higher court would reverse the judgment of the lower court. Whereas the verdict of the lower court was to be death, the higher court's verdict was life, life with endless parole.”
- Bassler (173) “Throughout this letter, but especially in this passage, Paul's life is a model for Timothy's behavior and thus for the behavior of church leaders. Along with this model, however, goes a warning, for the promises of God are conditional. The sure saying makes that point very clear: ‘*IF* we endure, we shall reign.’ The author reinforces the point by placing the exhortations to Timothy directly under the shadow—or in light—of the final judgment (4:1). Paul's faithful execution of his ministry allows him to face his judge with utter confidence (4:8). Timothy's response to the exhortation should also be made ‘in view of his appearing and his kingdom,’ that is, an awareness of the eschatological consequences of faithful obedience and of faithless ministry.”
- With verse 8 we reach the end of the exhortation proper, however, there will still be moments of exhortation scattered in with the following personal notes.

• IV. 4:9–18 Paul's Situation and Prospects

- **4:9–16** His Need For Timothy to Come
- **4:9 Do your best to come to me soon,**
 - Make every effort—Paul is asking Tim to get his courage up and come even if it means suffering
 - **4:13** When you come... [sounds like Paul expects that Tim will]
 - **4:21** Do your best to come before winter
- **4:10 Demas, in love with this present world, has deserted me and gone to Thessalonica, Crescens has gone to Galatia, Titus to Dalmatia.**
 - **This present world** = apocalyptic world view—recognizes its fallenness
 - G/S draws a distinction between Demas and those like Pal who eagerly await Christ’s coming
 - We can’t eagerly await Christ’s and the transformation brought by the coming age if we remain in love with the present age
- **4:11 Only Luke is with me. Get Mark and bring him with you for he is useful in my ministry.**
 - Luke—Phlm 24; Col 4:14; “we sections” of Acts? (Acts 16:10-17; 20:5-15; 21:1-18; 27:1-28:16)
 - Mark
 - From useless to **useful**—cf. 2:21; Phlm 11 Onesimus is useful to Paul
 - Acts 15:37-40 The dispute between Paul and Barnabas
 - Broken relationships can be restored
- **4:12 I have sent Tychicus to Ephesus.**
 - Eph 6:21 & Col 4:7—a dear brother, faithful minister, fellow servant of the Lord
 - Probably delivering the letter to Tim with personal instructions
- **4:13 When you come, bring the cloak that I left with Carpus at Troas, also the books, and above all the parchments.**
 - **Cloak** = outer winter garment
 - Questions
 - Was Paul arrested here and did not have time to gather his belongings?
 - Had he stopped by on a hasty trip to Rome in order to minister to church in its distress during Nero’s pogrom?
 - The plan would have been a return trip before winter and Paul would have gathered his things.
 - In this scenario, Paul would have been arrested in Rome.
 - **Books** = *biblon* = scroll (papyrus or skin rolls) containing Scriptures or digests/catenas
 - **Parchments** = *membranus* = sheepskin, special paper; as a leatherworker Paul would have had access to and use this material. Did the parchments have Paul’s journals? Travel, church notes, memos? Copies of correspondence?
- **4:14-15 Alexander the coppersmith did me great harm; the Lord will pay him back for his deeds. You also must beware of him, for he strongly opposed our message.**
 - Brings to mind the riot in Ephesus (Acts 19:21-41 at the agitation of Demetrius, a silversmith)
 - Was Alexander associated with a similar group?

- Was he in Ephesus or another city Tim would travel through?
 - Did he bring the charges against Paul?
 - If so, did Paul again appeal to Caesar?
 - Was Alexander a Christian?
 - **Beware**
 - Alexander is a serious threat
- **4:16 At my first defense no one came to my support, but all deserted me. May it not be counted against them!**
 - But 4:21. The four mentioned there appear to be in contact with Paul.
 - The heat was intense and it would have taken great courage to testify on Paul's behalf or to be seen as an associate.
 - JRWS "Lock goes even further and, noting nine verbal similarities between Psalm 22 and verses 10 and 16–18 of this chapter, asks: 'had St. Paul, like his Master, been saying this Psalm in the hour of his desertion?' Certainly, again like his Master, he prayed that their sin might 'not be charged against them'. There is no need, incidentally, to make out that there is an irreconcilable discrepancy between this prayer and the statement about Alexander two verses previously. The cases were quite different. For Alexander had actually spoken against the gospel from deliberate malice, whereas Paul's friends in Rome had failed to speak at all, and their silence was due not to malice but to fear."
- **4:17 But the Lord stood by me and gave me strength, so that through me the message might be fully proclaimed and all the Gentiles might hear it. So I was rescued from the lion's mouth.**
 - While others departed or defected, the Lord was constant
 - **Strength** *enedynmosen* empowered, enabled. Cf. 1:7
 - The same power Tim is told to take and hold on to is what is sustaining Paul in his moment of distress. It will do the same for Tim.
 - **Gentiles might hear it**
 - Roman officials
 - Soldiers
 - Any citizens who might have attended the hearing including accuser/s
 - **Lion's mouth**
 - A popular image for being rescued or escaping from serious conflict with one's enemies. Cf. "I nearly bought the farm."
 - Who was the lion?
 - Literally tossed to the lions? Cf. 1 Cor 15:32 (fighting with wild beasts in Ephesus). Doubtful. As a Roman citizen, Paul was exempt from such punishment.
 - Nero? According to Josephus, the news of the Emperor Tiberius' death in AD 37 'reached Herod Agrippa in the cryptic form "the lion is dead"' (JRWS)
 - Satan as in 1 Pet 5:8?
 - Prosectuor?
 - G/S "To the outsiders, Paul's circumstances must have seemed bleak, perhaps even hopeless. But Paul had learned that God could use even the most negative of

circumstances for his purposes (cf. Phil 1:12-14). As far as Paul was concerned, his present circumstances were no exception.”

- **4:18 The Lord will rescue me from every evil attack and save me for his heavenly kingdom.**
 - Echoes Jewish and Christian prayer traditions that assert that God delivers his people from evil (Gen 48:16; Ps 17:12-13; Prv 2:12; cf. Mt 6:10 Let your kingdom come)
 - Everything that Paul has done and that Tim must do is in light of the reality of this kingdom and as preparation for their participation in its fulfillment.
 - This faith sustains and drives Paul even in the face of rejection and persecution
- **To him be the glory forever and ever.**
 - This is doxological language.
 - Hellenistic letters do not contain doxology.
 - 4:20; Eph 3:20-21)
 - Cf. 1:3 the letter ends as it began—in gratitude
- **Amen**
 - Paul wants and expects Tim to say “Amen” as well. The same would be anticipated when the congregation heard it.

 - 4:17–18 His Confidence in God’s Presence and Final Redemption

- **V. 4:19–22 Greetings and Benediction in Paul’s Hand**

- **4:19-22 Greet Prisca and Aquila, and the household of Onesiphorus. Erastus remained in Corinth; Trophimus I left ill in Miletus. Do your best to come before winter. Eubulus sends greetings to you, as do Pudens and Linus and Claudia and all the brothers and sisters. The Lord be with your spirit. Grace be with you.**
 - The letter begins with grace and ends with grace.
 - Grace to you (plural)
 - G/S “Paul has written to Timothy:
 - To describe his own ministry
 - To pass the care of that ministry on to Timothy making him Paul’s full successor
 - To be overheard by Timothy’s people so that they will better understand Timothy’s calling and the nature of his ministry
 - So they come to better understand their ministry
 - **THIS WILL PREACH!**