

EXEGESIS of II TIMOTHY 2

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CONTEXT

Second Timothy is Paul's last will and testament, leaving his spiritual treasures so that a true Apostolic succession of pure teaching could be preserved. Chapter 1 was an admonishment to faithfulness. The Lord is able to keep us even through persecution and desertion of the faithful.

OUTLINE

- I. Be Faithful in the Ministry, 1-13.
 - A. Pass on the grace from Paul to others, 1-2.
 - B. Fight on despite the cost, 3-7.
 - 1. Devotion
 - 2. Discipline
 - 3. Diligence.
 - C. Let nothing discourage you.
 - 1. For the elect's sake, 8-10.
 - 2. Because of God's promises, 11-13.
- II. Be Faithful in the Face of Heresy, 14-26.
 - A. How to combat heresy, 14-18.
 - B. Why to combat heresy, 19-21.
 - C. How to win heretics, 22-26.

I. BE FAITHFUL IN THE MINISTRY

A. PASS ON THE GRACE OF CHRIST FROM PAUL TO OTHERS.

1. So you, my son, be strengthened by the grace which is in Christ Jesus, 2. and entrust the things which you have heard from me (supported by many witnesses) to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.

Grammar

(Note: Transliteration alphabet used is new University of Chicago system adapted for computer indexing and now widely adopted.)

1. ENDUNAMAI. Present imperative passive, 2nd. singular.

To fill with power (DUNAMIS).

2. PARATITH8MI. Aorist imperative middle, 2nd singular.

To commend, entrust. (PARATH8KH, "deposit.")

DIDASKW. Aorist infinitive active.

Syntax

2. DIA POLLWN MARTURWN. Lenski quotes Bauer, Robertson, and Plutarch for this translation, which seems to be a legal formula.

Commentary: Timothy's assignment is to be faithful in the ministry.

But as Paul himself asked, "Who is sufficient for these things? (2nd Corinthians 2:16). Human power will not be enough; therefore he should be strengthened by the grace of Christ. Since Christianity is based on events rather than man's religious yearnings, Paul calls in the support of many witnesses. Timothy is to repeat the Gospel just as he heard it and to entrust it to men who will do the same. As vicar apostolic of the Asian synod (district president, we would call him), he is to give careful attention to worker training. His trainees must be faithful above all else--full of faith in Christ and trustworthy in doctrine.

Application: The preacher will remember that if Paul and Timothy considered themselves inadequate without God's help, he is not likely to do better. He will also realize that he won't be around forever and should be on the lookout for faithful people (ANTHRWPOIS, not

ANDRASI) to become pastors, teachers, and evangelists. Timothy is also to recognize that he can't do everything himself and is to pass on his authority--not only for the temporal details of the church, but also in spiritual work. Faithful laymen as well as pastors were to be taught to visit the sick and shut-ins, do mission work, talk to delinquents, conduct devotions, and preach (Acts 8:1, 4). God has given apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers "for the perfecting of the saints for the work of the ministry." (Eph 4: 12) Our laity is to be given a chance to share in the firstfruits of the Lord's vineyard; cf notes on v 6; but under supervision, v 15.

B. FIGHT ON DESPITE THE COST.

3. Take your share of hardship as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.

THREE ILLUSTRATIONS

4. No soldier gets entangled in the affairs of making a living, so as to please his recruiter. 5. And again, if anyone is an athlete, he is not crowned unless he competes by the rules. 6. Only the farmer who works has the right to first share of the produce.

7. Think over what I say; for the Lord will give you understanding in everything.

Grammar

3. SUGKOPATHEW. Aorist imperative active, 3rd plural.

To suffer ill-treatment along with.

4. STRATEUOMAI. To serve in the army, be a soldier.

EMPLEKW. Present indicative middle, 3rd singular.

To enfold, entangle. (Latin *implicare*.)

PRAGMATEIA. Business, business transaction.

STRATOLOGEW. Aorist participle active, masculine singular dative.

To enroll in the army, gather an army.

ARESKW. Aorist subjunctive active, 3rd singular.

5. ATHLEW. Present subjunctive active, 3rd singular.

To compete, engage in (athletic) contest.

STEPHANOW. Present indicative passive, 3rd singular.

To crown. (As victor, with a STEPHANOS.)

ATHLEW. Aorist subjunctive active, 3rd singular.

6. KOPIAW. Present participle active, masculine singular accusative.

GEWRGOS. A farmer. (Vergil's Georgics.)

DEOMAI. Present indicative active, 3rd singular impersonal.

It is necessary.

METALAMBANW. To receive one's share, take.

7. NOEW. Present imperative active, 2nd singular.

To understand, apprehend.

SUNESIS. Intelligence, understanding, discernment.

SYntax

6. TON KOPIWNTA GEWRGON DEI. An ACI, therefore the subject, DEI. "It is necessary that the farmer have first right" equals "Only the farmer who works has the first right." So construed to preserve parallelism.

DEVOTION, DISCIPLINE, AND DILIGENCE

Commentary: If a soldier leaves the field whenever pain strikes you couldn't win a football game, much less a war. No good soldier gets entangled in outside interests. You can't fight and cart along the PX both. So the pastor should devote himself single-mindedly to his work.

No athlete, however good, wins if he disqualifies himself. A speaker with the tongues of angels will not win the victor's crown unless he speaks the truth in love and shows a godly life.

The parallelism is this: No soldier who gets entangled pleases his recruiter; no athlete who breaks rules wins; no lazy farmer gets first claim on the crop. The thought here is not that those who serve the altar should live of the altar--this chapter uses several familiar illustrations in unfamiliar ways--but that those who impart spiritual blessings get the first taste of them. It is more blessed to give (a sermon) than to receive one.

Application. The pastor will have to have some connection with the workaday world. So did Paul when he made tents. The point is that Paul worked when he had to, to support himself. Getting rich was not his goal in life. Every faithful pastor should feel the same way about his hobbies. A lady milliner was asked what business she was in and said, "My business is serving the Lord. I sell hats to pay the expenses." We likewise should play golf only because it's time to play golf--because we need recreation to work at capacity.

Jim Ryun would lap most of us in a mile race, but by jumping the

gun his talent and effort would be lost. Likewise, the preacher who lets the end justify the means, e.g. raising money by legalistic preaching, may have an expensive church that is a whitewashed sepulchre. Seek results God's way or you get man's results.

Some preachers have so little diligence that they rely on old Concordia Pulpits. They rob their people; they rob themselves. Lenski: "Unless they are the first to appropriate their share of these fruits they soon cease to be the Lord's farmers who produce anything for anybody." (In loc.) Faith is necessary for the ministry, and faith comes from study of the Word.

C. LET NOTHING DISCOURAGE YOU.

1. FOR THE ELECT'S SAKE.

8. Remember that Jesus Christ, a descendant of David, is risen from the dead, according to my Gospel. 9. For it I suffer even the bonds of a criminal, but the word of God is not bound. 10. That is why I endure all this, because of the elect, that they also may obtain the salvation with eternal glory which is in Christ Jesus.

Grammar

8. EGEIRW. Perfect participle passive, masculine singular accusative. KAKOPATHEW. To be ill-treated.

DEW. Perfect indicative passive, 3rd singular. To bind.

10. HUPOMENW. To endure.

TUGCHANW. Aorist subjunctive active, 3rd plural.

To obtain; impersonal: to chance, happen.

Syntax

9. EN HW is an EN SPHAERETIKON--"in connection with which," therefore "because of which." Antecedent is EUANGELION.

10. DIA TOUTO. Antecedent: The fact that the Word is not bound.

"For this reason," "That is why."

SWT8RIAS. TUGCHANW takes genitive.

Commentary: Timothy should be encouraged by the content of his message, Jesus the Messiah, Son of David (a Messianic title), and risen from the dead (a Messianic attribute, Is 53:10). The deliverance He would bring was such great good news that nothing could stop

Paul from telling the world about it. Even punishment and ingratitude from those he was helping did not stop him. The word was not bound; in fact, Paul converted his jailers.

The amazing thing in this text is that Paul is doing all in his power to save those who are going to be saved anyway. A great mystery is here. In Romans 9 God tells us we were elected long before we could have had the slightest influence on His choice. But in 2nd Peter 1:10 we are told to "make your calling and election sure." And here it is dependent not only on the hearer of the Gospel but on the preacher.

The solution to this mystery lies in the distinction between law and Gospel, justification and sanctification. The Christian believes that God has saved him without human help, but he works as though to save himself without any divine help. The preacher prays as though everything were up to God and works as though everything were up to him.

Application: The Lutheran Confessions teach that justification is purely a matter of divine monergism. But they also teach that sanctification involves human synergism. Human synergism must not be mixed in with justification. But how often have you run into an antinomian in your congregation? He has gotten that way by mixing divine monergism in with sanctification. He thinks he can sit by the tube and suck on a beer and wait for the Spirit to move him. The attitude we should take was illustrated by a postwar Anglican priest who wanted to move his bombed-out church into the suburbs. He commanded the rubble: "In the name of Jesus Christ, be thou moved to Maryknoll Crossing." Then he picked up a shovel and got to work.

We are good at keeping synergism out of justification. Perhaps we are not as good at getting it into sanctification. But even then we give virtually all the credit to God even in our sanctification. Our share of the effort is comparable to the muscular work we contribute to the driving of a car--a little pressure on the gas pedal.

Why was Paul such a sanctified man? Why would he suffer so? For the elect's sake, and thereby hangs a tale. Why has the joy gone out of Christianity for so many. Why is sacrifice as rare as it is? Why do many consider the Gospel dull and stale? For the same reason that third grade math would be dull and stale to them. They have heard enough for their own use. A person should know the way of salvation by the time he's through with Sunday school. But if he has to teach the way of salvation--or third grade math--to someone else, he will quickly desire a college degree. If Christians lose interest in the Gospel, it is likely because they are not sharing it. And when the ministry seems stale to the preacher, perhaps it's time he went out and did some mission work.

C. LET GOD'S WORDS SPEAK FOR YOU,
2. STRUCTURE OF GOD'S PROMISES.

11. The saying is trustworthy:
If we live together, we shall also live together;
12. If we endure, we shall also rule together;
If we deny Him, He will also deny us.
13. If we are faithless, He remains faithful,
For He is not able to deny Himself.

Grammar

11. SUNAPOTHN8SKW. Aorist indicative active, 1st plural.
- SUZAW. Future indicative active, 1st plural.
12. HUPOMENW. Indicative (simple conditional).
- SUMBASILEUW. Future.
- ARNEOMAI. Deponent future. To deny.
13. ARISTEW. Indicative.

CORRECTIONS FOR PAGE 6

enough for their own use. A person should know the way of salvation by the time he's through with Sunday school. But if he has to teach the way of salvation --or third grade math--to someone else, he will quickly desire more education in the field. If Christians lose interest in the Gospel, it is likely because they are not sharing it. And when the ministry seems stale to the preacher, perhaps it's time he went out and did some mission work.

C. LET NOTHING DISCOURAGE YOU,
2. BECAUSE OF GOD'S PROMISES.

11. The saying is trustworthy:
If we die together, we shall also live together;

ARNEOMAI. Aorist infinitive.

DUNAMAI. Indicative.

Syntax

II. SUNAPETHANOMEN. Aorist of punctiliar action, therefore "die" in simple conditional. KJV "be dead" is a good try, but is stative, not punctiliar. Others, mostly "have died," is a perfect, which is not what the aorist shows. A present would make it progressive, therefore Paul uses the aorist.

Commentary: Now Paul quotes what may be an early Christian hymn.

Conybeare (The Life and Epistles of St. Paul, p 775) says it is singable to at least one ancient ecclesiastical hymn. The hymn tells us how worthwhile it is to suffer for the Lord.

The simple conditional shows correlation, not causation. We

can say, "If you'll come, I'll be at home." And here, although our dying doesn't cause our living, you can trust the saying that if we die together we shall also live together--live with Christ, which is better even than never dying at all. Death, by the way, should not be allegorized into the death for sin in this passage, which treats of suffering and martyrdom for Christ. Or, if you are called to a life of sacrifice instead of martyrdom, we have the promise that the reward of grace will be proportionate: If we HUPOMENOMEN, literally "remain under," we shall "rule over"--BASILEUOMEN. Christ is faithful. He keeps His promises.

He also keeps His threats. After mentioning hell 37 times in the Gospels He will not suddenly do away with it for the convenience of the wicked. How could He deny Himself, deny everything He stands for, call black white and evil good, falsify the fact that we do not want Him, just so the ungrateful and unbelieving won't have to take the fate they have voluntarily chosen? Those who say "I know not the man" need hear nothing on the Day of Judgement but

"Thou hast said."

II. BE FAITHFUL IN THE FACE OF HERESY

A. HOW TO COMBAT HERESY

14. Go on reminding them, and charge them before God not to fight over semantics! It helps nothing but the destruction of the hearers. Do your best to present yourself to God as worthy of approval, a workman who has nothing to be ashamed of, by correctly dividing the Word of truth. 16. Steer clear of godless and empty talk, for it will advance impiety more and more. 17. And its message will spread like gangrene. Hymenaeus and Philetus are characterized by such, 18. who have shot wide of the truth by saying that the resurrection has already happened. They are overthrowing the faith of some.

Grammar

14. HUPOMIMN8SKW. Imperative. To remind, call to mind.
DIAMARTUROMAI. Present participle active.
To give solemn evidence, testify solemnly.
LOGOMACHEW. To battle with or about words.
CHR8SIMOS. Useful.
15. SPOUDAZW. To hasten; be eager, zealous.
PARIST8MI. Aorist infinitive active. To present, offer.
ANEPAISCHUNTOS (rare): who does not need to be ashamed.
ORTHOTOMEW. Present participle active, masculine singular nominative.
To cut according to rule. "The term ORTHOTOMEIN ... is derived either from the action of priests when dividing the sacrificial offerings, or from that of the head of a family when he apportions food and drink to the members. The latter meaning seems to be the correct one; however, many of our theologians adopt the former." (Walther, Law and Gospel, pp 32-33.) No modern translation uses this picture-word. Lenski has "cutting straight." Luther and Calvin agree with the KJV "rightly dividing."
16. BEB8LOS. Profane, secular, unspiritual, godless, worldly.
PERIIST8MI. Imperative. To surround; stand clear of.
EPI PLEION. Ever more.
PROKOPTW. Future. To advance, progress.
ASEBEIA. Impiety, irreverence, irreligion.
GAGGREINA. A cancer, gangrene, spreading ulcer (equals KJV "canker").
(Hippocrates).
NOM8. Pasture.
NOM8N ECHEIN. To spread.
ECHW. Future.
18. ASTOCHEW. Aorist indicative active, 3rd plural.
To miss the mark, deviate, go astray.
GINOMAI. Perfect active infinitive.
ANATREPW. To overturn.

Syntax

14. HUPOMIMN8SKE and DIAMARTUROMENOS. Supply AUTOUS. Referent is PISTOIS ANTHRWPOIS. (Luther: die Leute.)
THEOU: Variants here are inconsequential.
15. ORTHOTOMOUNTA. Participle of means.

16. ASEBEIAS. Genitive with PROKOPTW.

17. LOGOS. Message, not word. The KENOPHWNIAS are not meaningless babblings. They have meaning, but no true content.

HWN. Cf Ga 3:9, 10. "Those who are of faith ... those who are of works. Equals 'those who are characterized by faith,' etc. Here, Hymenaeus and Philetus are characterized by words whose message is both godless and worthless. Williams: "Men like Hymenaeus." This probably does not refer to people; the only antecedent in grammatical agreement is KENOPHWNIAS. Lenski disagrees: "to whom belong Hymenaeus," construing the subject of PROKOPSOUSIN as an indefinite "they" to which HWN refers.

T8N ANASTASIN. An anarthrous variant occurs in Sinaiticus and one ninth-century uncial. Hendricksen calls it the better reading, because it is possible the article could be added for clarity. In any case it has to be translated with the article to make sense.

Commentary: With a particular controversy in mind, Paul gives

Timothy the timeless instruction that fighting over semantics was not to be tolerated in the church. Both Greeks and Talmudic scholars loved endless and hairsplitting debate. But it did no good and much harm. The hearers would have no use for an organization with such concerns. Rather, Timothy should meet the tests God had set for him--above all, teaching doctrine correctly. Walther says (see Syntax) that the verb ORTHOTOMEIN refers to distribution of food by a housefather. Just as it would be foolish to set hot chile and wine before a child and bread and milk before a day laborer, so it is foolish to preach law to the penitent and Gospel to the carnally secure. God through Ezekiel curses the false prophetesses who "slay the souls who should not die, [and] save the souls alive who should not live, by your lying to My people" (13:19). Each should hear the doctrine he needs. But even when one preaches both, as in church, law and Gospel should be correctly divided. . . Timothy was not only to teach correctly himself; he was to exercise doctrinal discipline in his district. The participle of means, ORTHOTOMOUNTA, tells how a workman can be approved and unashamed--by correctly dividing the

Word of truth. Of course, even doing this as well as possible would not make us become approved. We are commanded not to become approved but to show ourselves so.

The approved workman will want to do nothing to advance impiety, so Paul's advice is to avoid arguing with fanatics. You can't win them over; they have an answer for everything. Their talk is worldly (i.e. sinful) and empty, bearing no relation to reality. One is not and never will be saved in the method they describe. Ironically he says, "It will advance--to the rear! Like a loathsome gangrene, they who claim to be spreading life cause necrosis. They claim to feed the soul; instead they feed on it. Argument is useless, since they never stop until they win. The shepherd should not give them a forum for their heresy or a chance to sharpen debating skills, or even the common respect of a hearing. Pr 26:5 says, "Answer not a fool according to his folly, lest thou also be like unto him." Not to such fanatics is the consideration of v 25 to be given. They would refuse instruction anyhow.

Two such heretics were Hymenaeus, excommunicated in 1 Tm 1:20, and Philetus, otherwise unknown. Their error was typically Greek: "When they (the Athenians) heard about a resurrection of the dead, some started to mock." (Ac 17:32, AMT.) Understand: The Greeks believed in a resurrection, but not the kind Paul taught. Paul taught a resurrection of body ~~and soul~~. Though Plato and others clearly taught the immortality of the soul, they just as clearly denied the immortality of the body. In fact, to the Greek, the resurrection of the soul was by definition a liberation from the body. Most Greeks had Manichaeian or Flacianist tendencies. Matter was inherently evil,

spirit inherently good. The body was by definition the sinful body. Who would want to be resurrected with that? Hymenaeus apparently taught that the only resurrection there would ever be would be at conversion. This would have interesting implications. The denial of a future resurrection to judgement leads inevitably to antinomianism. Although this teaching destroyed the hope of everlasting life, it spread like gangrene, because it gave free reign to sin. Its spread should not surprise us. The prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests bear rule by their means, and My people love to have it so" (Jr. 5:31).

Application: The Presbyterian, Episcopalian, and Congregational churches began with complete doctrinal agreement except over the form of government--whether to call ruling bodies presbyteries, bishoprics, or boards of elders. Their schism comes from logomachy. A century ago a similar schism resulted from the meaningless distinction between infralapsarianism and supralapsarianism. Today's eschatological debates on premillenarian posttribulationism divide Protestantism for no reason. If a controversy is insoluble, of the debate over whether Mary is sempervirgine or not (SA, part I, article IV), it shouldn't be a controversy.

A district president must be first and foremost a theologian. Administrative ability is distinctively secondary. Paul told Timothy, who was a kind of district president, to present himself as worthy of God's approval by correctly dividing law and Gospel. An opinion that is only somewhat overstated is, "The man who hasn't read Walther's Law and Gospel doesn't belong in a Lutheran pulpit." We will not let the charge of logomachy deter us from doctrinal discipline.

The liberal redefines such words as "resurrection" so he can pass counterfeit doctrine using Bible terminology, then cries "Logomachy" when attacked. But it is the meaning of words, not words, that counts.

Dr. Becker writes,

The essence of the Word of God is not found in the words as such, but rather in the thought expressed by those words. In fact, it is possible that certain words in one context express a divine truth, while in another context exactly the same words may be a diabolic lie. When we gather as a group of Christians on the basis of the presupposition of a common faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, we may very correctly say that we are all the children of God. When those very same words, 'We are all the children of God,' are spoken in the context of a Christ-denying lodge, they are not the Word of God. They are not even true. In fact, in that context they are a diabolic false doctrine that has undoubtedly sent many a soul to hell. ("Verbal Inspiration and the Variant Readings," WLQ, Vol 71, # 3, p 172.)

At the risk of provoking a logomachy: Word Incorporated is selling the TDNT these days. Part of their sales pitch was our verse, "Study to show thyself approved unto God." They should study their own books. The word SPOUDAZW has no connotations of book learning, but equals the Latin studere. Shame on us if we misuse this verse on our Bible class! The well-schooled layman will notice such discrepancies in modern translations. It is essential that we show him the modern translation changes nothing, but merely changes back what the passage of time has changed. The word "study" meant "do your best" 400 years ago. We need to show them that language is a treadmill on which one must run to stay in the same place. We must consider the effect on our hearers.

Among those hearers may be the fanatics we are warned against. "Religious fanatic" in most instances today means Jehovah's Witness. Schnell, who was Thirty Years a Watchtower Slave, advises thus:

1. Politely refuse any literature--give a sense of failure.

2. Refuse to be drawn into argument.

3. Give a simple, joyous, and positive confession of faith in the blessings that you have and they need. Follow up if possible.

But at no time give any indication that the stinking breath of hell they belch deserves even the consideration of a hearing. You, after all, speak for God; they, for the devil.

B. WHY TO COMBAT HERESY.

19. However, there stands God's solid foundation, bearing this seal: "THE LORD KNEW THOSE WHO ARE HIS," and "Let every one who names the name of the Lord make a clean break with wickedness." 20. In a large house there are not only gold and silver vessels but also wood- and earthenware. Some are for dignified usage, others for ignoble. 21. So if anyone purifies himself from these, he will be an honored vessel, consecrated and well-pleasing to the Master, and ready for every good work.

Grammar

19. MENTOI. Indeed, really, actually. (A strengthened MEN.)

STEREOS. Solid, firm.

EGNW. Aorist of GINWSKW. Cognoscere cum affectu et effectu.

HISTAMAI. Perfect indicative active 3rd singular.

SPHRAGIS. A seal.

GINWSKW. Aorist indicative active 3rd singular.

APHISTAMAI. Aorist imperative active 3rd singular. ("Apostasize.")

To take up a position away from, leave, withdraw from.

21. EKKATHIRW. Aorist subjunctive active 3rd singular.

To clean out, cleanse thoroughly.

HAGIAZW. Perfect participle passive, masculine singular accusative.

EUCHR8STOS. Useful, serviceable, helpful.

HEHOIMAZW. Perfect participle passive, masculine singular accusative.

Commentary: What in the church causes such great offense as the

apostasy of a great leader? Paul reminds Timothy that neither heretic was ever part of the church, here pictured as a sealed foundation; no living stones fell from that foundation when they fell, but only the mud nest of a swallow or wasp. The foundation is here the church. (Do not import details of other uses of this metaphor into this chapter.) Only those within the pale of law and Gospel are part of the church. The Gospel is found in God's eternal decree of elec-

tion: The Lord knew those who were His, not "knoweth" as in KJV, as in Romans 9, this excludes all Pelagianism. But lest antinomianism, the second great perversion of the Gospel, rear its ugly head, we are told that only those who have broken with wickedness are part of the foundation. There is here a fairly clear reference to Nu 16: 5, 26, where in the rebellion of Korah Moses said, "The Lord knew (EGNW in LXX, γινωσκω) with nonconsecutive Vav in M.T.--significant for textual criticism that NT follows LXX in preference to M.T.) those who are His," and later, "Stand aloof from the tents of those wicked."

Paul then changes metaphors. We need to follow him. The foundation metaphor is dropped. The house is not built on this foundation, but equals it. The visible church is here a great house with display china as well as pig buckets. The visible church likewise held both Paul and Philetus. Become a dignified vessel, he urges, by purging yourself APO TOUTWN. Luther stands practically alone in construing the antecedent as "people" (von solchen Leuten.) Most construe it as a supplied "dishonorable practices." Luther is correct. The Interpreter's Bible notes that from a grammatical standpoint the ignoble vessels are the best antecedent, and supports this opinion with the fact that the metaphor breaks down anyhow and need not be consistent. (Pig buckets never become display china.) Luther also fits context best, making the section transitional between the thought that the church is founded on law and Gospel though wicked men outwardly adhere to it, and Paul's encouragement that Timothy not become like them by following youthful passions.

Everyone must serve the Lord; even Satan has a part in God's

plan. On the other hand, it is more pleasant to be display china than a pig bucket, especially when the pig bucket, being made of permeable wood or earthenware, must eventually go to the valley of Hinnom, Gehenna. Only those are part of the church who are both known by God and have made a clean break with wickedness. If law and Gospel are improperly divided, if a person is penitent but does not believe in forgiveness or believes in forgiveness without penitence, if he mixes monergism into sanctification or synergism into justification, he is not part of the invisible church but is destined for dishonor.

Application: Following Luther, the teaching of v 21 is to purge oneself of all heretics. This is not as impractical as it would sound in the Wisconsin Synod; many good men from our synod have gone down the road of false doctrine in past years, and who can say that he will not fall in such coming problems as the Charismatic controversy? In any trial we should look to Christ, not men, and not take offense when "pillars of the church" seem to fall.

C. HOW TO WIN HERETICS.

22. Flee youthful passions. Pursue righteousness, faith, love, and peace with those calling on the name of the Lord from a pure heart.
 23. But avoid foolish and unlearned controversies, since you know that they produce quarrels. 24. A servant of the Lord must be, not belligerent, but rather kindly toward all, able to teach, patient when wronged, 25. teaching with gentleness those who oppose him, in case God should ever grant them a change of mind to the acknowledgement of truth, 26. and they who were held captive by the devil for his will may come to their senses and escape out of his trap.

Grammar

22. EPIKALEOMAI. Present participle middle, masculine genitive pl.
 APAIDEUTOS. Unlearned, untrained, uneducated.
 PARATEOMAI. Imperative. To beg off from, seek to avoid, decline.
 OIDA. Perfect participle active, masculine singular nominative, with the force of a present.
 GENNAW. Present indicative. To beget; bring forth.

24. MACHOMAI. Present infinitive active.

8PIOS. Gentle.

•DIDAKTIKOS. Verbal adjective. Able to teach.

ANEXIKAKOS. AN, ECHW, KAKOS. Enduring or patient in the face of evil.

25. PRAUT8S. Meekness, gentleness.

ANTIDIATITHEMAI. Present participle middle, masculine singular accusative. To oppose.

DIDWMI. Aorist optative active, 3rd singular.

EPIGNWSIS. Exact knowledge; perception.

M8POTE. Lest at any time, whether perhaps.

26. ANAN8PHW. Aorist subjunctive active, 3rd plural.

To recover sound sense or sobriety.

ZWGREW. Present participle passive, masculine plural nominative.

To capture alive, hold captive.

Syntax

22. EPIKALOUMENWN. Variants are inconsequential.

24. OU DEI MACHESTHAI. Litotes. Literally, DEI OU MACHESTHAI.

MACHESTHAI. Present infinitive, continuous action. Translate either with progressive infinitive, verbal noun, or adjective. Luther: zinkisch.

26. Whole verse: RSV margin, J.B. Philips, Lenski: "they may escape from the snare of the devil, after being captured by him (the DOULON KURIOU) to do His will." Unlikely, since it skips over the logical antecedent to not one but two more distant ones.

Commentary: It is an injustice to Timothy when commentators conjecture that he may have needed this warning against the charms of the fair sex. In the first place, it breaks the Eighth Commandment. In the second, if Paul had such doubts he had no business placing him in so high a position. Thirdly, the imperative "flee" is present tense--"go on doing what you already are." Fourth, EPITHUMIAI are "passions," not "lusts." Sexual sin is not singled out here. For a young man in a position of authority the passions of an immature man, such as stubbornness, rebellion against authority, premature acceptance of novel ideas, the prideful refusal to back down from an erroneous opinion, impatience, and rechthaberei would be highly destructive. The instruction "Let no man despise thy youth" was to Timothy, not to the church. By displaying a maturity beyond his years, he was to command respect, not demand it. Sexual sin is included but

not emphasized.

Negative prohibition is not enough. Note the chiasm: Object, subject, subject, object. The pursuit of virtue is as important as flight from vice. Irenics should be practiced whenever possible, even with errorists who are willing to be instructed, provided they are within the pale of Christianity. In the case of persistent errorists we pray that God will forgive the false teachings which they spread in ignorance. They should be instructed if possible, but controversies should be declined if they are foolish--insoluble, subjective, or completely impractical--and unlearned, that is, uninstructed in the faith, with presuppositions lying outside it.

Timothy was not to return the brickbats he was stoned with. He would be attacked with earthly weapons, but the sword of the Lord is the word of God. In the hope that they will listen, he is to turn away wrath with a soft answer. Only through the word of God could there be a change of mind (repentance), so Timothy should realize his part in the economy of salvation--the repentance of a sinner was connected with Timothy's actions. Even so, his repentance was a gift of God. Timothy could consistently convert a heretic one moment and sing Ps 115 the next: "Not unto us, O Lord; not unto us, but unto Thy name give glory."

One intellectual qualification is mentioned for the servant of the Lord. He must be able to teach.

Application. Andy Kapp of cartoon fame once said, "People who say 'I'm only human' are just about to do something inhuman." The pastor is not to excuse wrong conduct by human standards. It is not for him to lose his temper in debate, or to have the disposition

to argue people down. Not every fly need be swatted. For example, during the first century of relations with Missouri, there was a difference on the doctrine of church and ministry. But since their practice conformed to our doctrine and our practice conformed to their doctrine, we are fortunate to have avoided the splintering tendencies of some.

The pastor need not defend himself when attacked, and should certainly not counterattack. If I may be forgiven for quoting Martin Luther King, "Somebody has to break the chain of hate."

Foolish controversies should be avoided. How many churches have split over the relative merits of pipe and electronic organs? Controversy might arise over just such a subjective issue as the translation of v 26. Lenski is a good example of irenic theology, hereticizing no one for disagreeing, merely saying, "If Paul had stopped before the EZWGR8MENOI, much ink would have been saved."

Surely one paragraph would not out of place on the youthful passion of lust. Augustine said, "Other vices are fought by fighting; fornication, by fleeing." In this case motive is all-important. The essayist's wife once asked, "How can a minister commit adultery when he knows it may ruin his entire career?" My reply was, "That is precisely the reason why they do it. Their motive for chastity is selfish self-interest, and when temptation comes the short-term selfish gratification seems a lot more attractive than the long-term selfish gratification of job security." No, unless the love of Christ constraineth us, we will fall.

Finally, we are required to be "apt to teach." This includes spiritual qualities. A man who disregards the instructions in this

chapter will be unable to teach those he disagrees with because they won't listen to him.

Diplomacy will also be important. I have known people as stubborn as a Wisconsin Synod layman. He will not change his mind on the pastor's say-so, but only with good reason. The pastor who feels strongly about a new translation, for instance, should phase it in gradually over several years, let the people get used to it, show them its merits without downgrading the KJV, and let even the proposal for change come from the congregation.

It is also necessary for the preacher to study. Confucius say, "Man who train horse should know more than horse." The preacher who assumes he learned enough in seminary to feed his flock for the rest of his life is deceiving himself. His ideas will be fresh for approximately one church year. Thereafter his flock will receive ever larger and more frequent portions of hash. Fine way to feed a flock! Let them eat warmed-over hash! And for Sunday dinner, yet!

Which leads to the final thought. No one wants hash every Sunday, even if the hash be made of fresh and different ingredients every week. The way you serve up your sermon is nearly as important as what you say. It doesn't help to be brilliant if no one can understand you. Let it never be forgotten that one of the most brilliant of the Scholastics, Duns Scotus, spoke so abstrusely that his name lives on in the word "Dunce." Or, as the president of the University of Chicago divinity school asked after a lecture by Paul Tillich, "Professor, could you please say at least one sentence that the rest of us can understand?"