

Pastoral Epistles IV

Qualifications & Requirements of an Overseer

(1-Timothy 3-4)
Fred R. Coulter

We're going to go back and do a little bit more in-depth study in 1-Tim. 3:

1-Timothy 3:1: "Faithful *is* the saying, 'If any man aspires to *be* an overseer, he desires a good work.'" There are some of those who have striven after, as we see with Simon Magus, who lusted after and wanted to buy an apostleship. There are also those who want to be overseers, elders and so forth in the Church.

We've had an experience, which I need to relate, that is important for us to understand: A man helped us with hosting a Feast site, but after the Feast I talked to him and he was telling me how that, lo and behold, some years ago that he had a minister—while he was in Worldwide—anoint him for being sick, and then he also mentioned in his prayer for God to use him in his service, too.

Nothing was thought of that, and then 12 years later, because he wanted to be an elder so bad and wanted to have his leadership recognized so much, he decided that that was an ordination. He decided to put himself forward to anoint people, and as one being a minister. He called me and talked to me about it. I said I would listen to the whole thing he had to say and didn't make any comments, and I said, 'I'm going to think on it.'

I just happened to know personally the minister whom he said had this closet ordination for him, so I got hold of his number and called him and asked him if he'd ever do this. He said, 'Of course not! Never! No such thing!' I gave him the number of the man in question and asked him to please call him and let him know. So, he did. After he talked to him, he called me back and told me about their discussion and so forth. What happened was that I was waiting for two and half months for the man to call me back. I thought I would leave the burden upon him.

He got caught in his own imagination. What happened was that he didn't call me back, but he did withdraw all fellowship from us. That's how you can handle some of these problems.

When it says here that "...If any man aspires to *be* an overseer, he desires a good work"—we're going to see that this is all based upon the spiritual fruits and qualification. It's not based upon what we would call in the world 'leadership' necessarily. It's not based upon

'personality' necessarily. It's not necessarily based upon great speaking. Paul even said, 'You say my speech is rude'—kind of rude and bumbling. That's not the criteria.

I think that things started out with different things like Spokesman's Club and leadership classes with a good footing. But later on it became all carnal and political, all based upon carnal physical characteristics. What we're going to see when we read these, we're going to see all of these are *Scriptural spiritual qualifications of character*. Let's read them and then we'll go back over them:

Verse 2: "Now then, it is obligatory... [that's the force of the Greek] ...*that* the overseer be blameless... [not one all puffed up in pride and vanity] ...*the* husband of one wife, vigilant, serious-minded, respectable, hospitable, skillful in teaching; not given to much wine, not a bully, not greedy for selfish gain; but kind, not a quarreler, not a lover of money; one who rules his own house well, having *his* children in subjection with all respect; (For if a man does not know *how* to rule his own household, how will he take care of *the* Church of God?)" (vs 2-5).

Now let's amplify this a little bit. First of all, all if these take their root in the Old Testament.

Judgment:

Exo. 18 is a place where most of the hierarchicalists go to establish a hierarchy. Let's understand what this is really talking about. This is Moses' father-in-law talking to Moses.

Exodus 18:19: "Hearken now to my voice. I will give you counsel, and God will be with you. You be for the people toward God that you may bring the causes to God. And you shall teach them ordinances and laws, and shall make them know the way in which they must walk, and the work that they must do. And you shall choose out of all the people able men, **such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness**. And place them over the people to be leaders of thousands, and leaders of hundreds, leaders of fifties, and leaders of tens. And let them judge *for* the people at all times...." (vs 19-22).

Their rulership was *based upon judgment*. Their rulership was not command and control. If they were getting out of control in that close camping group that they had while they were on the

exodus, obviously, they would have to handle that.

Verse 21: "...such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness...." That's very similar to what we have in 1-Tim. 3 much more expanded.

Let's look at the instructions for the judges. This is also pointed on in the sermon series *Judge Righteous Judgment*, that this is something that is to be for elders, teachers and overseers.

2-Chronicles 19:5: "And he set judges in the land, in all the fortified cities of Judah, city-by-city. And he said to the judges, **Take heed what you do**, for you do not judge for man, but for the LORD who is with you when you render judgment" (vs 5-6). Why is that? *Because they judge according to the laws and commandments of God!*

Also, they have here the commandment to "...Take heed what you do..." In other words, there's a restriction on their life and behavior. They weren't to be judges just for what they thought, but they were to judge according to the laws and commandments of God.

Verse 7: "And now, therefore, let the fear of the LORD be upon you. Be careful and act wisely, for *there is* no iniquity with the LORD our God, nor respect of persons, nor taking of a bribe." We find the same thing in 'greedy of gain' and so forth.

Service:

Now then, let's understand that to be an overseer or an elder is *a work of service* for the people of God. It is not a badge of honor for carnal notoriety. Notice how many times it says to *take heed to yourself*. We just read it in 2-Chron. 19.

Paul is talking to the elders, Acts 20:28: "**Take heed**, therefore, to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers..."

As we have said, overseers are to be on the sideline overseeing the activities of the congregation. They are to make sure that everything runs smoothly, everything necessary to have the church meetings and things like that run smoothly. If there is to be teaching, then they are to teach according to the Word of God. That's another whole topic, but if they don't teach the Scriptures—basically speaking—you're going to have false doctrine enter in very easily.

Of course, one of the reasons I'm going over this in detail is because it has been the elders and ministers who caused the greatest number of problems that we're still going through in the Church today. It's still happening that there are people who are appointing themselves as teachers;

people going around who don't know what they're talking about and proclaiming themselves as teachers of the Word of God.

"...to feed the Church of God..." (v 28). That is *the work of the service* that is to be done. To feed the Church the *spiritual* food of the Word of God:

- of knowledge
- of understanding
- of wisdom
- to help them to be able to lead and guide their lives according to the Word of God
- to show them what is true and right
- to inspire them to a personal relationship with God the Father and Jesus Christ

All of that is implied there!

As we saw the last time we went through 1-Tim. 3, part 3 of this series, I showed that Jesus asked Peter three times: 'Do you love Me?' and Peter was told, 'Feed My sheep! Feed My lambs!' So, it all has to be based on the love of God, which he has purchased with His own blood.

In other words, it is the Church that belongs to Christ. Those who are baptized members belong to Christ, being the Church, and He is the Head. No minister is the head. He may lead in a visible sense that people can see, but he has to always point to Christ because Christ is the Head. **No man is the head!**

That's why the whole doctrine of the Catholic Church is totally wrong. The Catholic Church has it that you receive salvation through obedience to the church and the ministry, because the pope is the vicar of Christ, and if you don't obey them, you have no salvation. **You can't find that anywhere in the Bible! Nowhere is it there!**

"...which He purchased with His own blood.... [we all belong to Christ] ...For I know this: that after my departure grievous wolves **will come in among you**... [this also has the connotation of *overbearing* wolves] ...not sparing the flock" (vs 28-29). We've lived through that, over and over again!

Verse 30: "And **from among your own selves** men will rise up speaking perverse things to draw away disciples after themselves." And we've seen that; so right here we have a warning that there are going to be grievous wolves coming in, and as Peter said, they will come in *stealthily* (2-Pet. 2). They will infiltrate! And that's the whole plan of the ecumenical movement when you really come to understand it. That's why it's wonderful that we're meeting in small groups and homes.

As I've mentioned before, the way that we function is that we're the Church that is, is not and, yet, is. It's hard to find us. That's okay, as long as we're under the protection of Christ.

"...from among your own selves..."—so, there would be a transformation of men who are already overseers one way or the other. Why? *Because they didn't take heed unto themselves, and things and problems later developed!*

Hebrews 13:7: "Remember your leaders who have spoken the Word of God to you..." The *KJV* says, 'who have rule over you. That's not an accurate translation. They are to lead with the Word of God.

"...considering the outcome of *their* conduct; and imitate *their* faith" (v 7). We're going to see that Paul told Timothy to be an example to the flock. That's how the leadership should be:

- with the Spirit of God
- with the love of God
- with the knowledge of the Word of God
- pointing to Christ always, knowing that everyone belongs to Christ

Then you can follow their faith "...considering the outcome of *their* conduct..."

Verse 12: "For this reason, Jesus, in order that He might sanctify the people by His own blood, also suffered outside the gate." There again, we are sanctified with the blood of Christ.

- not with a hierarchy
- not with authority
- not with rule
- not with command and control

But with the blood of Christ and the Holy Spirit!

Verse 13: "So then, let us go forward to Him outside the camp, bearing His reproach." Again, constantly going to Christ.

Verse 17: "Follow your leaders..." There has to be obedience in those things' obviously, not to counter the commands of God. *No man* has the authority to change the Sabbath from Saturday to Sunday. *No man* has the authority to do away with any of the laws of God.

{note study paper: "*Binding*" and "*Loosing*" in the *New Testament* (cbcg.org); also showing Peter was not the chief apostle}.

"...and be submissive, because they are looking out for your spiritual well-being, as *those who must be* ready to give an account to God..." (v 17). In other words, all of those of you who are

elders, ministers or overseers are having to give an account, for what you do in teaching the people of God (to Christ). He's going to hold that person accountable.

"...in order that they may do this with joy, and not *with* groaning... [we've also lived through that, where there's been grievousness in the situation] ...because that *would be* unprofitable for you" (v 17).

Let's see who is the Overseer of your souls, 1-Peter 2:25: "For you were as sheep going astray, but you have now returned to the Shepherd and Guardian [Overseer] of your souls." It's interesting how that is phrased: Christ is the *true* Overseer!

- Christ is overseeing the whole Church
- Christ is the Head of the Church

He must be pointed to in everything!

Ephesians 1:19: "And what is the exceeding All of greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the inner working of His mighty power, which He wrought in Christ, when He raised Him from *the* dead..." (vs 19-20). Christ is the only One Who has been raised from the dead to immortality. No other human being!

The Pharaohs in Egypt are still dead! You look at their bones, their mummies, and they're still dead. They're just a bunch of clattering old bones wrapped up. Christ is the First and the only One raised from the dead to immortal life.

"...and set *Him* at His right hand in the heavenly *places*, far above every principality and authority and power and lordship, and **every name that is named**—not only in this age, but also in the *age to come*" (vs 20-21). This eliminates the pope—doesn't it! Jesus made it very clear: *call no man on earth your Father!* Yet, everybody calls the Catholic priest *father*, and the pope is the 'holy father,' or the 'holy see' as some people say. Of course, that's blasphemous toward Christ and God the Father, as well.

Verse 22: For He has subordinated all things under His feet, and has given Him *to be* head over all things to the *Church*, which is His body—the fullness of Him Who fills all things in all" (vs 22-23). This is the absolute primary prerequisite for anyone who is going to be an overseer, teacher and elder:

- that they understand this
- that they live by this
- that they operate their service or ministry to the people by this

If they don't, then they get all lifted up and carried away. We're going to see that there are some warnings about that a little later.

QUALIFICATIONS:

1-Timothy 3:2: "Now then, it is obligatory *that* the overseer be **blameless**..." Not someone who is out carousing about and has a bad name and so forth.

"...*the husband of one wife*..." Back then there were some who had two wives. I cannot help but think of Jacob and his two wives, two handmaids and the terrible time that he had, the fight they had over him. I imagine that he would have rather stayed out and take care of the sheep than to come home with the big argument going on between Leah, Zilpah, Bilhah and Rachel.

"**vigilant**..." Always on guard to watch how he lives; to make sure that his life is conducted properly.

"...**serious-minded**..."—not Robin Williams and Jonathan Winters. That's fine for humor, but I tell you what, we used to have a minister who would conduct almost every one of his sermons like it was the semi-risqué, half-joking all the time. Everyone was in the aisles rolling with laughter. What good did it do? Where is he today?

"...**respectable**..."—in his character and so forth.

"...**hospitable**..."—being able to help and serve people with hospitality.

"...**skillful in teaching**" (v 2). There is a skill in teaching, which is you have to be able to put the Scriptures together properly so that you bring the teaching of the Scriptures so that there is going to be edification and learning for the brethren.

- What good does it do to come to church when you are taught nothing?
- What good does it do for someone to preach and he doesn't have clue as to what he is saying?
- *No good at all!*

Verse 3: "**not given to much wine**..." You certainly don't want to have a minister to come in with a hangover on Sabbath morning and attempt to preach. That has happened, also.

"...**not a bully**..."—someone who is not going to be just pushing his way around.

"...**not greedy for selfish gain**..." that has to do with gaining power, recognition, money—any of those things.

"...but **kind, not a quarreler**..."—always given over to argumentation.

"...**not a lover of money**" (v 3). All of these thing tie in together.

Peter summarizes this in a very similar way, and again, let's see how Peter starts out: by showing the elders who were there that they also need to continuously look to Christ:

1-Peter 5:1: "*The elders who are among you I exhort, even as a fellow elder, and an eyewitness of the sufferings of Christ, and a partaker of the glory that is about to be revealed.*" He keynotes what he's saying based upon the resurrected Christ and His glory.

Verse 2: "**Feed the flock of God** *that is among you*..." That is the important thing!

- understand what you're doing
- help them to grow
- help them to understand the Word of God
- comfort them
- help them in their troubles and difficulties
- pray for them when they're sick

"...**exercising oversight not by compulsion, but willingly; not in fondness of dishonest gain, but with an eager attitude; not as exercising lordship over your possessions; but by being examples to the flock of God**" (vs 2-3). That's where the minister or teacher gets his authority:

- by his knowledge of the Word of God
- by his example
- by his love
- by what he teaches

Then if a problem comes up, he can rebuke with all authority, as Paul tells Titus 'rebuke with all authority'; which can be done. Then he has the Spirit of God, the character of God and the Word of God to back it up; not some authority that he takes to himself.

Notice that there's an accounting coming, v 4: "And when the Chief Shepherd is manifested, you shall receive an unfading, *eternal* crown of glory."

1-Timothy 3:4: "**One who rules his own house well, having his children in subjection with all respect.**" You know what happens when the minister's children do not do that; it gets around the Church. What does that do? *Undercuts and kills anything he may say concerning anything!* Unfortunately, that is true. It's also true that anyone who has children knows that they get out and make decisions and do things that you don't even know they do. So, it becomes quite a thing to try and keep

that in a proper perspective.

Verse 5: “(For if a man does not know *how* to rule his own household, how will he take care of *the Church of God?*)” What is it based upon? *Family structure!*

- that’s why we’re called brethren
- that’s why God is the Father
- that’s why Christ is our elder Brother and our High Priest

It’s all based on a family relationship!

Verse 6: “**Not a novice...**”—one who has newly come to the faith. That means that if someone is baptized, they are not immediately put into an overseer’s job.

Example: Let’s understand how it was with Paul. Paul was knocked off his donkey on the way to Damascus. He went out into the desert for three years and was taught of Christ. He came back and witnessed that Christ, indeed, was the Savior. Then he came up to Jerusalem and was there for a couple of weeks, then went down to Tarsus—his own home city—and he stayed there and did nothing. He didn’t preach, teach, or do anything.

Then after the Church grew in Antioch, they sent Barnabas down to Antioch and he went over to Tarsus and got Paul—still called Saul—and brought him over to Antioch. Then after about a year in Antioch, both Saul—who was to become Paul—and Barnabas were ordained as apostles. That’s when Paul began to be used; not until then.

So, Paul was not a novice; not someone newly come to the faith. Here’s the reason: “...lest he become conceited *and* fall into *the same* condemnation as the devil” (v 6). There are two warnings that come concerning the devil:

Verse 7: “It is mandatory that he also have a good report from those *who are* outside *the Church*, lest he ^{l#1} **fall into reproach** and *the* ^{l#2} **snare of the devil.**” So there are the two things that happen.

Why could a novice become conceited and fall into the same condemnation of the devil? *Because he would get all lifted up in his vanity!* We’ve seen that, too! We would have to say that a novice would be someone who would graduate from high school, go to college, graduate from college and be baptized somewhere in that college time, then get married, be given a car and sent off to pastor a church.

That is a novice, someone newly come into the faith. They have no experience, no age. They have no life experience in just living. Then what happens? *They get lifted up and conceited!* ‘I have

this and that and I rule over all these people,’ especially if they’re in a hierarchy.

Now let’s look at the condemnation/snare of the devil. That’s exactly what happened to the one who became the devil; he got lifted up in his own conceit. This is where the expression ‘holier than thou’ came from, because he began to think he was better than God!

Isaiah 14:12: “How you are fallen from the heavens, O shining star... [Lucifer; the name of the devil] ...son of the morning! This is the god that the Masons worship; they say that Lucifer is the true God.

“...*How* you are cut down to the ground, you who weakened the nations!” (v 12). We are going to see that ‘he who exalts himself shall be abased.’ That’s fulfilled right here in v 12; here is his condemnation:

Verse 13: “For you have said in your heart, ‘**I will** ascend *into* the heavens, **I will** exalt my throne above the stars of God; **I will** also sit upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north. **I will** ascend above the heights of the clouds; **I will** be like the Most High” (vs 13-14). That’s exactly what happens when you have someone who has newly come to the faith and given a lot of responsibility. *They get all lifted up and puffed up!*

Here is another thing that happened to the devil, as part of his condemnation, Ezekiel 28:15: “You *were* perfect in your ways from the day that you were created, until iniquity was found in you. By the multitude of your merchandise they have filled your midst *with* violence, and you have sinned. Therefore, I will cast you as profane from the mountain of God, and I will destroy you, O covering cherub, from among the stones of fire. **Your heart was lifted up because of your beauty; you have corrupted your wisdom by reason of your brightness....**” (vs 15-17). This is the condemnation of the devil. He was condemned because he exalted himself.

Now let’s look at a couple of Scriptures showing what God has promised for all of those who exalt themselves. So, we can see part of the condemnation and difficulty of the devil and exalting yourself:

Luke 14:1: “Now, it came to pass, when He went into a house of one of the rulers of the Pharisees...” Who did Jesus say was their god? *The devil (John 8)!*

“...on *the* Sabbath to eat bread, that they were watching Him. And behold, there was a certain man *who had* dropsy standing in front of Him. Then

Jesus answered *and* spoke to the doctors of the law and to *the* Pharisees, saying, ‘Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath?’ But they were silent. And after taking hold *of him*, He healed him and *then* let *him* go. And He answered *and* said to them, ‘Who among you shall have a donkey or an ox fall into a pit, and will not immediately pull it out on the Sabbath Day?’ But again, they were not able to answer Him concerning these things. Then, observing how those who were invited were choosing out the chief places, He spoke a parable to them, saying, ‘When you are invited by anyone to a wedding feast, do not sit in the chief place, lest someone more honorable than you has been invited by him. For the one who invited you and him shall come to you and say, “Give place to this one,” and then shall you begin with shame to take the last place. But when you are invited, go and sit down in the last place, so that when the one who invited you comes, he may say to you, “Friend, come up higher.” Then shall you have honor in the presence of those who are sitting *at the table* with you. **For everyone who exalts himself shall be humbled, and the one who humbles himself shall be exalted**” (vs 1-11).

That’s a snare of the devil, *exalting!* We need to realize that anyone who is going to be an elder, overseer or teacher, that is a humbling experience. It is not to be used as an office of self-exaltation.

In Luke 18 we’re dealing with the highly exalted, which we’ll say is a *low mucky-muck!* I’ve talked about mucky-mucks, high mucky-mucks and super high mucky-mucks. We’ll put this one as a medium low mucky-muck who exalted himself and thinks he’s a high mucky-muck.

Luke 18:9: “And to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others, He also spoke this parable.” Is that not the condemnation of the devil. He trusted in himself; ***I will*** exalt myself, ***I will*** set the throne, ***I will*** be like the Most High.’

Listen, you can’t trust in any of your own ability if you’re going to be an elder or overseer. You cannot, because it’s all going to fall flat on its face; it just won’t work.

“...trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others...” (v 9). That’s what the Pharisees did. They said of the people that they were to shepherd and teach. ‘These are common folk and they are ignorant.’ NO! So, Christ went on with the parable:

Verse 10: “Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one *was* a Pharisee and the other a tax collector [publican].” A publican was always

hated. Even today, no one loves the tax collector. I always pay my taxes, as much as possible, on the last day that it is due. It’s still within the law.

Verse 11: “The Pharisee stood and prayed **with himself** in this manner...” (v 11). He’s not praying to God; he’s praying with himself, though he says:

“...‘God, I thank You...’—though his mind is not on Christ or God, Who are Holy, righteous, perfect, loving, kind and their magnificent calling; none of that is there.

“...**I** thank You that **I** am not like other men—...” (v 11). Those who compare themselves among themselves are not wise, and this is what he’s doing.

“...extortioners, unrighteous, adulterers— or even as this tax collector” (v 11). True, no one is to break the commandments of God to be an extortioner or unjust or an adulterer. Those are required! You have done nothing if you fulfill that. A publican is lower than that.

Verse 12: “**I** fast twice in the week, *and I* give a tithe *of* everything that **I** gain.” Notice all the ***I*s**.

- I thank You
- I am not
- I fast
- I give a tithe
- I gain (possess)

Five ***I*s** in that short, little prayer. Does he have his mind on himself? Is he exalting himself? *Yes! We’ll see that Christ said he was!*

Verse 13: “And the tax collector, standing afar off, would not even lift up his eyes to heaven, but beat himself on *the* chest, saying, ‘God, be merciful to me, a sinner.’” That’s how we need to approach God. Why? *Because we all have ‘the law of sin and death’ in us!* We need to go to God and ***know that He alone can forgive us!***

(go to the next track)

Verse 14 is the key:

- it’s not how you stand before human beings
- it’s not how other human beings look at you
- it’s not how many compliments you get from another person
- it’s not how many accomplishment you have done

It is how your standing before God is!

Jesus said, v 14: “I tell you, this man... [the publican] ...went down to his house justified, rather than the other. For everyone who exalts himself shall be humbled; and **the one who humbles himself shall be exalted.**”

You look at the word abased—or humbled—and that means it’s going to be ignominious in its end. Did that happen to Hitler? Was his end a total abasement? *Yes!* Self-exaltation of the great fuehrer of Germany, the Third Reich, found hovering and quivering in a bunker while the bombs and artillery shells were bombing Berlin, and he finally had to take a cyanide capsule to kill himself, and Eva Braun was with him and his body was burned. ***An ignominious end!*** That’s what abasement means.

Let’s show how this humbling, even when there is great sin, is what God is interested in. *He’s not interested in how good you can make yourself, because you can’t make yourself ‘good.’* No man can make himself ‘good,’ as far as standing before God! Only Christ can make someone ‘good.’

2-Chron. 33—Here is King Manasseh was king for 55 years. He committed all of these sins, all these evils, abominable pagan worship, even causing his children to pass through the fire. He was involved in witchcraft, familiar spirits, divinations, wizards and so forth. Then God sent him off into captivity.

2-Chronicles 33:10: “And the LORD spoke to Manasseh and to His people, but they would not listen. Wherefore, the LORD brought upon them the commanders of the army of the king of Assyria, who took Manasseh with hooks and bound him with chains and carried him to Babylon. And when he was in affliction, he sought the LORD his God and humbled himself greatly before the God of his fathers” (vs 10-12).

Here he was brought to his abasement, brought down low, removed from kingship, sent off into captivity, put into prison, *so he humbled himself!*

Verse 13: “And he prayed to Him, and He was entreated of him and heard his prayer, and brought him again to Jerusalem into his kingdom. Then **Manasseh knew** that the LORD *is* God.” That’s the whole point in everything that God wants everyone to know: ***that He is God! No one else and no other thing!***

God is interested in this repentance and so forth. This has to be with everyone who an elder, overseer or teacher; you also have to have that same attitude. Always remember, as Paul said: ***we have***

nothing that we didn’t receive! Everything we have comes from God!

- every physical thing
- every spiritual thing
- the knowledge of God’s Word
- being able to serve the brethren

All of this comes from God!

Exalters and Enablers:

You also have not only exalters, but you have enablers. Always keep that in mind. Wherever there is an exalter, there is an enabler. The enablers are generally the tares among the brethren.

2-Corinthians 11:4—Paul wrote: “For indeed, if someone comes preaching another Jesus... [he’s talking to the enablers of false apostles] ...whom we did not preach, or you receive a different spirit, which you did not receive, or a different gospel, which you did not accept, you put up with it as *something good*”—something wonderful. The enablers have allowed the exalters to exalt themselves.

Verse 5: “But I consider myself in no way inferior to those highly exalted *so-called* apostles.” That’s not referring to the apostles of Christ, because there was no chief apostle. This is the ‘hot-shot self-appointed’ apostles.

Verse 6: “For although *I may be* unpolished in speech, yet, *I am* not in knowledge; for in all things I have demonstrated this to you. Now, did I commit sin by humbling myself so that you might be exalted, because I preached the Gospel of God to you freely?” (vs 6-7).

Here’s what Paul is saying about the enablers, v 18: “Since many boast according to *the flesh...*” That’s what happens, because the ones who come and exalt themselves saying how great they are.

Verse 13: “For such *are* false apostles—deceitful workers who are transforming themselves into apostles of Christ... [an exaltation] ...And *it is* no marvel, for Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light.” (vs 13-14). We’ve talked about the snare and the condemnation of the devil.

Verse 15: “Therefore, *it is* no great thing if his servants also transform themselves as ministers of righteousness—whose end shall be according to their works.”

Verse 18: “Since many boast according to *the flesh...* [that’s what he’s talking about; not only those teachers but those who are the enablers] ...I

also will boast. For since you are *so* intelligent, you gladly bear with fools” (vs 18-19). In other words, ‘you are so smart that you allow fools,’ which is an oxymoron. If are so smart, then you shouldn’t allow fools. But you allow them gladly because ‘you’re so wise.’ He’s very sarcastic here.

Verse 20: “For you bear *it* if anyone brings you into bondage... [there’s the enabler of the hierarchy] ...if anyone devours *you*, if anyone takes *from you*, if anyone exalts himself, if anyone beats you on the face.” That’s what they were doing. They were allowing it. So, in a sense, when you have the exalter and the enablers together, they deserve each other. That’s what Paul is saying here.

Verse 23: “Are they servants of Christ? (I am speaking as if I were out of my mind.)....”

Now, here’s another thing that enablers will do. The *exalters* will do it, and the *enablers* will receive it”

Galatians 1:6: “I am astonished that you are so quickly being turned away from Him Who called you into *the* grace of Christ, to a different gospel, which *in reality* is not another *Gospel*...” (vs 6-7). If there is one true Gospel, then there can’t be any other. If there is another, it’s a counterfeit; no doubt about it.

“...but there are some who are troubling you and are desiring to pervert the Gospel of Christ” (v 7)—those who would be the exalters. If you go along with it then you’re an enabler.

Verse 8: “But if we... [a direct reference to all the apostles] ...or even an angel from heaven, should preach a gospel to you *that* is contrary to what we have preached, LET HIM BE ACCURSED! As we have said before, I also now say again. If anyone is preaching a gospel contrary to what you have received, LET HIM BE ACCURSED!” (vs 8-9).

So, everyone who is going to be a teacher, pay attention! It better be right and true right down the line with the Word of God, otherwise, you’re going to find yourself in an accursed position. God will correct you and take care of you. What happens when they pervert the Gospel?

Verse 10: “Now then, am I striving to please men, or God? Or am I motivated to please men? For if I am yet pleasing men, I would not be a servant of Christ.” So, ***all the false apostles will please men!*** If you do you’re not the servant of Christ.

The exalters have the enablers, and the snare and the reproach of the devil is to go ahead and pervert the Gospel, to make it pleasing. It’s like someone said, amidst all of these polls that are

taken, one pollster said of President Clinton: ‘If they impeach him and remove him from office, his approval will go to 125%!’ Someone said, ‘Aren’t we glad that God didn’t give the Ten Commandments by poll?’ You wouldn’t have them! That’s what people-pleasers do.

If you please God and it doesn’t please some people, then that’s just too bad. You don’t have to be deliberately offensive, but sometimes it works out that there’s nothing you can do to please them. When it comes to the point that in order to please people you start compromising the Word of God, then you’re in trouble with God.

1-Timothy 3:8: “In the same way also, the **deacons** who **serve**...”—from the Greek word ‘*diakonos*’—from which we get the English word *deacon*. This is talking about deacons and deaconesses here.

“...*must* be serious-minded, not hypocritical, not given to much wine, not greedy for selfish gain... [power] ...holding the mystery of the faith with a pure conscience.... [able to understand the Word of God] ...**And let those who meet the qualifications also be proved first**...” (vs 8-10). I think that’s where we have gone wrong in the past. We have not let them be *proved first* to make sure that their fruits are the fruits that come from God.

“...then let them *be appointed to serve*, if they are *found to be* blameless. In the same way also, *their wives must* be serious-minded, not slanderers, sober *and* faithful in all things” (vs 10-11). That’s all self-evident; we don’t have to go over that in any great detail.

Verse 12: “Let the deacons be husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own households well. For those who have served well acquire for themselves a good standing and much confidence in *the* faith that *is* in Christ Jesus” (vs 12-13). Again, Paul points them right back to Christ.

Verse 14: “These things I am writing to you, hoping to come to you shortly; but if I should delay, *you have these things in writing*, so that you may know how one is obligated to conduct oneself in the house of God... [one who is an overseers, which Timothy was] ...which is *the Church of the living God, the pillar and foundation of the Truth*” (vs 14-15). That’s what clarifies what the Church of God should be.

{note the sermon series on *The Epistle to the Ephesians* that explains in detail v 16}

Verse 16: “And undeniably, great is the mystery of Godliness: God was manifested in the flesh, was justified in *the* Spirit, was seen by angels,

was proclaimed among *the* Gentiles, was believed on in *the* world, was received up in glory.”

1-Timothy 4:

1-Timothy 4 is a very interesting chapter. This is the one where most of them turn. We’ll read v 4 out of context in the *King James Version*.

1-Timothy 4:4 (*KJV*): “For every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving.”—therefore, now that we have refrigerators and freezers we can eat pork, shrimp, lobster, clams, and all of those gooey abominable things like sea-cucumbers and octopus, squid, calamari and all of that sort of stuff. That isn’t what it says or what it means.

What we’re going to learn is that those kinds of things end up being a sign of the first step into apostasy.

1-Timothy 4:1 (*FV*): “Now, the Spirit tells *us* explicitly that in *the* latter times some shall apostatize from the faith, *and* shall follow **deceiving spirits**... [notice who is doing the leading] **...and doctrines of demons.**”

When you apostatize from the Truth and the faith of God, then you give yourself over to spirits who lead you in a way to take you from God. Like anything else, *‘there is pleasure in sin for a season.’* It’s very deceptive. “...deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons.” We’ve seen that happen in the Worldwide Church of God, and other churches, to where it is almost ridiculous to even bring it up. But that’s exactly what happened to them.

Verse 2: “Speaking lies in hypocrisy, their consciences having been cauterized *with a hot iron.*” When you cauterize something, you burn it and put a scar on it. How do they do that. We covered part of that in Gal. 1.

When it comes along, at first it is subtle; a little here and a little there, and they are still using the Word of God to bring about their heresy. How can that be if the Word of God is Truth? *It’s just like taking numbers, you can take the numbers and line them up in a column*, but if you give wrong values to it, you come up with the wrong answer.

Example: 3+3=4-1/4. You’re using true numbers but you’re coming up with a false answer. That’s what these apostatizing ministers do in using the Word of God. They use the Word of God, but they wrongly divide it, or add it.

2-Corinthians 4:1: “Therefore, having this ministry, according as we have received mercy, we are not fainthearted. For we have personally renounced the hidden things of dishonest gain, not

walking in *cunning* craftiness...” (vs 1-2)—having an agenda; that’s what all those who stealthily sneak in do; they have an agenda, which they will bring out sooner or later that doctrine divides. That is an agenda to bring in false doctrine.

“...nor handling the Word of God deceitfully...” (v 2). The Word of God is Truth, but you can handle it *deceitfully*, and put it together in such a way that you come up with false doctrines. I just read how you can do that (2-Tim. 4:4). You read that one verse!

- Have you read the Scripture? *Yes!*
- Is it misapplied if you say that now you can eat all the unclean things? *Yes! It’s misapplied!*

You’re handling the Word of God deceitfully because you read the one verse and you don’t read before and after, nor do you go to the other verses in the Old Testament to show the meaning and the sense of it.

“...but by manifestation of the Truth... [truthfully presented] ...we are commending ourselves to every man’s conscience before God. But if our Gospel is hidden, it is hidden to those who are perishing; in whom the god of this age has blinded the minds of those who do not believe, lest the light of the Gospel of the glory of Christ, Who is *the* image of God, should shine unto them. For **we do not preach our own selves, but Christ Jesus the Lord**, and ourselves your servants for Jesus’ sake” (vs 2-5). Notice again how Paul always goes back to Christ!

That’s how they do it. That’s how apostasies start, and then a little more and a little more, and we know that ‘a little leaven leavens the whole lump.’ Pretty soon the whole thing is leavened.

1-Timothy 4:2: “Speaking lies in hypocrisy, their consciences having been cauterized *with a hot iron*; forbidding to marry; *and commanding* to abstain from meats...” (vs 2-3)—vegetarianism; not a clean and unclean meat question. This is to eat meat or not eat meat. If a person needs to be a vegetarian, fine.

As Paul said, ‘For those who eat meat, don’t get mad at them, and those who are meat-eaters, don’t put down vegetarians’ (Rom. 14). But **you cannot make it a doctrine from God!** Why?

Verse 3: “Forbidding to marry; *and commanding* to abstain from meats...” Of course, “...forbidding to marry...” takes care of the whole Catholic situation of celibacy and perpetual virginity. God never intended that. He didn’t make us male and female so that we should never be

married. That's ludicrous and stupid! Yet, a whole 'religion' is based on that and they think it's Holy and righteous.

Then, "...*commanding* to abstain from meats [which God] created to be received with thanksgiving..." (v 3). So, there are certain meats that God created to be received. Did He create *all* meats to be received? *No!*

"...by the faithful, even *by* those who know the Truth" (v 3). What is Truth? *Your Word is Truth (John 17:17)!* We have to look to the Word of God.

Verse 4: "For every creature of God *designated for human consumption* is good... [for human consumption] ...and nothing to be refused, *if* it is received with thanksgiving, because it is sanctified... [specifically set apart] ...by the Word of God and prayer" (vs 4-5).

Where do we find in the Word of God concerning clean and unclean meats? This is very basic, but I tell you what, some people at the very first announcement of twisting the Scripture in Acts 10 and Mark 7, gathered together out in the hall of the meeting hall and were deciding what they were going to have at the Red Lobster that night; that very night! Not even taking the time to say, 'This is the strangest thing I've heard; I'd better check it out.'

Now, I want to give you the end of the story before we go to the beginning of it, Leviticus 11:44: "For I *am* the LORD your God..." Whenever He says that, we need to pay attention. He's basing what He says on Himself.

"...and you shall sanctify yourselves, and you shall be Holy, for I *am* Holy.... [Peter repeated that in 1-Pet. 1:16] ...Neither shall you defile yourselves with any kind of creeping thing that creeps on the earth; for I *am* the LORD Who brought you up out of the land of Egypt to be your God. You shall, therefore, be Holy, for I *am* Holy. This *is* the law of the animals, and of the fowl, and of every living creature that moves in the waters, and of every creature that creeps on the earth, **to make a difference between the unclean and the clean, and between the creature that may be eaten and the creature that may not be eaten**" (vs 44-47).

There it is set aside by the Word of God!

Verse 1: "And the LORD spoke to Moses and to Aaron, saying to them, 'Speak to the children of Israel, saying...'" (vs 1-2). This is not a Law of Moses or Aaron. This is of God, but they conveyed the information to the children of Israel. This is the Law of God!

"...These *are* the animals which you shall eat among all the animals that are in the earth" (v 2).

This takes care of vegetarianism. This is a command to eat meat. Most vegetarians today have to go to the doctor to get B-12 shots because they don't have enough of the B-vitamin and they become anemic. They're anemic because they're going against the Word of God that says these are the beasts that you shall eat:

Verse 3: "Whatever divides the hoof and is cloven-footed, *chewing* the cud, among the animals, that you shall eat. Only, you shall not eat these among those that *chew* the cud, or of those that divide the hoof: the camel, for he *chews* the cud but does not divide the hoof, he is unclean to you. And the rock badger, because it *chews* the cud, but does not divide the hoof, it *is* unclean to you. And the hare [rabbit], because it *chews* the cud but does not divide *the* hoof, it *is* unclean to you. And the swine, though it divides the hoof and is cloven-footed, yet, it does not *chew* the cud; it *is* unclean to you. **You shall not eat of their flesh, and you shall not touch their dead body. They are unclean to you**" (vs 3-8).

When they were recently considering—which will bring a lot of animal viruses into the human realm—bringing in hogs to produce replacement parts, livers and things like this. One doctor said that it would cost \$18,000 just to put one pig through a virus examination to find out which viruses were in it. They not going to do that, because they're not going to pay \$18,000, they will just randomly, willy-nilly put them into people. Lo and behold, there are going to be all these *swine viruses!*

What do they call most of the flu that we get? *Swine flu!* You just notice that over a period of time those people who eat a lot of pork, when winter comes along, what do they get? *They get a lot of flu over and over again!*

Then it talks about what is in the waters that you can eat and not eat; and then the birds and the creeping things that you can eat, which are basically locust, grasshoppers and a certain kind of beetle. God has that so when famine comes—and there are lots of those around—you can crunch on those. I haven't eaten any, yet. All the rest—bats, mice and all that sort of thing—are all unclean.

Deut. 14 talks about the same thing, clean and unclean meats. If God says one thing one time, He means it, and when He says it twice He really means it.

Deuteronomy 14:1: "You *are* the children of the LORD your God..." Is that what we are called? *Yes, we're the children of God! (1-John 3:1-3).*

"...You shall not cut yourselves nor make

any baldness between your eyes for the dead, for you are a Holy people to the LORD your God, and the LORD has chosen you to be a specially treasured people to Himself, above all the nations that are on the earth. You shall not eat any abominable thing” (vs 1-3)—then it lists them all out, just not in quite the lengthy detail that is in Lev. 11.

The one that I have always wanted to eat—I don’t know if I have the heart to do it—is a giraffe. When we were in Salt Lake City we used to go to the zoo and they had a really nice zoo. It wasn’t big, but they had a giraffe house where you could walk up and you would be at the level of the giraffes’ heads. You could feed them, and they would have the softest noses and the biggest eyes. I do suppose that if the neck of a turkey is tough, I imagine that those giraffe necks are tough. They would only be good for stew. There’s not too much to them, but I’ve often thought that I would not mind eating some giraffe. That is a clean animal.

A lot of these in 1-Tim. 4 are just instructions, not a study of the Scriptures; 1-Timothy 4:4: “For every creature of God *designated for human consumption is good*, and nothing to be refused, *if it is received with thanksgiving*, because it is sanctified... [specifically set apart] ...by the Word of God and prayer. **If you are teaching these things to the brethren...**” (vs 4-6). Not only what Paul just gave here, but everything in 1st and 2nd Tim.; expand it out to that, because that’s the whole indication here.

“...you will be a good servant of Jesus Christ, being nourished by the words of the faith and of the good doctrines... [Godly teachings] ...that you have closely followed. But refuse profane and old wives’ fables; rather, exercise... [training] ...yourself unto Godliness”(vs 6-7)—constantly doing this. Training by:

- study
- teaching
- preaching

Verse 8: “For physical exercise is profitable for a short time...” If you’re training yourself physically, you can build up your muscles, it profits for a short time, but doesn’t last forever, especially for those of us who are getting older. Youth flees, and it happens to everyone. When you’re young you don’t think it will happen to you. But when you get older, you’re surprised when it does; it does happen!

“...but Godliness is profitable for everything, having *the* promise of life—of the *life* that now *is*, and of the *life* that *is* coming. This saying *is* faithful and worthy of full acceptance.

Now, it is for this *reason that* we are laboring, and we are personally suffering reproach because we have hope in *the* living God, Who is *the* Savior of all men, especially of those who are believers. **These things command and teach**. Do not allow anyone to despise your youth...” (vs 8-12). This ‘knocks in a cocked hat’ that all those who are elders have to be older in age. Timothy was young, maybe 25-30 at this point, I don’t know.

“...but be an example to the believers—in word, in conduct, in love, in Spirit, in faith *and* in purity” (v 12). Again, follow the example of those who lead you.

Verse 14: Do not neglect the *spiritual* gift *that is* in you, which was given to you by prophecy with *the* laying on of the hands of the elderhood.” Paul also was there and ordained him.

2-Timothy 1:6: “For this reason, I admonish you to stir up the gift of God that is in you by the laying on of my hands. For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power, and of love, and of sound-mindedness” (vs 6-7).

There is with the laying on of hands, to be set aside to be ordained to be a teacher or an overseer, and there is a special gift that is given. It doesn’t come before, but at the time of ordination. It can also be increased and developed as time goes by. Paul’s apostleship was also one of grace:

Ephesians 3:7: “Of which I became a servant according to the gift of the grace of God...” [that’s what happens when a man is ordained] ...*which was* given to me through the inner working of His power.”

- for the sake of teaching
- for the sake of faith
- for the sake of anointing

It’s not something that a person has before they’re ordained.

Verse 8: “To me, who am less than the least of all the saints, was this grace given, that I might preach the Gospel among the Gentiles—even the unsearchable riches of Christ.” This is what he’s talking about.

1-Timothy 4:14: “Do not neglect the *spiritual* gift *that is* in you, which was given to you by prophecy with *the* laying on of the hands of the elderhood. **Meditate on these things; give yourself wholly to them...** [to be completely dedicated to it] ...**so that your growth in the faith may be apparent to all.** Be diligent with yourself and with the doctrines; continue in them. For in doing this, you will save both yourself and those who hear you”

(vs 15-16).

When you get down to it, 1st and 2nd Tim., Titus and Philemon—but especially 1st and 2nd Tim. and Titus—are books that *show a person how to really conduct his life if he's a teacher, minister or overseer. He needs to give himself over to doing that in a way that God would want him to!*

• *Epistle; to the Ephesians*
Study paper: “Binding” and “Loosing” in the New Testament (cbc.org)

FRC:bo
Transcribed: 2-23-15

All Scriptures from *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version* by Fred R. Coulter (except where noted)

Scriptural References:

- 1) 1 Timothy 3:1-5
- 2) Exodus 18:19-22, 21
- 3) 2 Chronicles 19:5-7
- 4) Acts 20:28-30
- 5) Hebrews 13:7, 12-13, 17
- 6) 1 Peter 2:25
- 7) Ephesians 1:19-23
- 8) 1 Timothy 3:2-3
- 9) 1 Peter 5:1-4
- 10) 1 Timothy 3:4-7
- 11) Isaiah 14:12-14
- 12) Ezekiel 28:15-17
- 13) Luke 14:1-11
- 14) Luke 18:9-14
- 15) 2 Chronicles 33:10-13
- 16) 2 Corinthians 11:1-7, 18, 13-15, 18-20, 23
- 17) Galatians 1:6-10
- 18) 1 Timothy 3:8-16
- 19) 1 Timothy 4:4, 1-2
- 20) 1 Corinthians 4:1-5
- 21) 1 Timothy 4:2-5
- 22) Leviticus 11:44-47, 1-8
- 23) Deuteronomy 14:1-3
- 24) 1 Timothy 4:4-12, 14
- 25) 1 Timothy 1:6-7
- 26) Ephesians 3:7-8
- 27) 1 Timothy 4:14-16

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- 2 Peter 2
- John 8
- Galatians 1
- Romans 14
- John 17:17
- Acts 10
- Mark 7
- 1 Peter 1:16
- 1 John 3:13

Also referenced:

Sermon Series

- *Judge Righteous Judgment*