

I Tim. 6:10, 11

*For the love of money is the root of all evils; it is through this craving that some have wandered away from the faith and pierced their hearts with many pangs. But as for you, man of God, shun all this; aim at righteousness, godliness, faith, love, steadfastness, gentleness.*

II Tim. 2:21, 22

*If anyone purifies himself from what is ignoble, then he will be a vessel for noble use, consecrated and useful to the master of the house, ready for any good work. So shun youthful passions and aim at righteousness, faith, love, and peace, along with those who call upon the Lord from a pure heart.*

## Chapter 2: The Real Enemy

As we saw in Chapter 1, God looks upon the preacher of the Word as one who takes ground from the enemy and holds it. Here we need to look further into the nature of the enemy as described in our three epistles. To wage the good warfare we must know with whom and about what we are to fight.

### The Devil

“We all like to say,” the devil made me do it, as Eve said of the serpent’s beguiling. The devil does receive attention in the Pastoral Epistles, but not quite as much as we might expect.

In the Pastoral Letters the devil is one who throws accusations at people, so he is called the accuser of the brethren and slanderer. δῖαβόλος diabolos, is simply, dia, through, ballos, thrust. In 1 Timothy 3:11 women are not to be *diabalous*, slanderers. The devil is preceded by the article *tou* in I Timothy 3:6, so he is *the* slanderer.

In II Timothy 2:26, when the Lord’s servant preaches and teaches the Word patiently and gently, he frees men from the captivity of the devil. The devil lays snares, παγίς, a derivative of the word *to fasten*, pegnumi. The devil uses traps to *zogreo*, catch, men to do his will. *Zogreo* is *Zoo*, meaning *beast*, and *greo*, catch. He traps men as men trap animals, implying perhaps, that like animals, men take the bait and go into the trap freely.

One temptation is suggested in I Tim. 3:7, the elder must we well thought of by outsiders, or he will fall into *reproach* and the snare of the devil. The elder may think that it did not matter what those outside of the church think of him because the devil wants us to embrace a double life-- church and *real life* are separated. The result is the elder causes the outsiders to mock the church and its leaders.

The snare could be that he is good at doing “church” things like reading books or preparing a sermon, but not serving with his hands and life or that he is not faithful at supporting his family.

It could be even that the new responsibilities of being an elder bring up unknown weaknesses in some area that the unbelievers already knew about but the church did not know. So the devil seems to love to confuse us about our own sins and weaknesses and make us think we can do high things when we are not faithful at doing simple hard things. The devil loves to make us think we can skip steps in following Christ.

In Scripture God chooses leaders after they have been successful in another sphere. Peter and John were successful enough fishermen that they owned their own boats. David came from the fields where he tended sheep, as did Moses. Church leadership is not the first step, it is a noble task which can

The second name for the devil is one of the few that is pronounced the same in Greek, as in Hebrew, שָׂטָן, which is Satan, the adversary, the enemy. Paul says that Hymeneas and Philetas he has turned over to Satan that they may learn not to blaspheme. As bad as Satan seems to be, even he is subject to God's higher good, and instructs us not to blaspheme! God wins one way or another.

In I Tim. 5:15, some young widows had already strayed after Satan and had given themselves to idleness, gossip and being busybodies. Idleness is the devil's workshop for women as well as men.

The third name for the supernatural forces of evil is δαιμόνιον, demons, from I Tim. 4:1, which passage is an all encompassing description of what these evil forces do.

The passage reads:

<sup>1</sup> But the Spirit explicitly says that in later times some will <sup>1a</sup>fall away from the faith, paying attention to deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons, <sup>2</sup> by means of the hypocrisy of liars seared in their own conscience as with a branding iron, <sup>3</sup> men who forbid marriage and advocate abstaining from foods which God has created to be gratefully shared in by those who believe and know the truth.

Demons have doctrines and these doctrines, and it is likely that their doctrine often comes from Scriptures misused, since the law forbids unclean foods in Lev. 11. Marriage being forbidden could be either from cultic literature, or as another perverse response to the seductive women of Proverbs 6-8. Women being the root of all evil, or something.

These doctrines are πλάνος, deceitful and seducing, spirits. The demons are calculating in the pleasures they are offering, and what their teaching is, because to seduce, there has to be enticement. This is false advertising. What you get is actually a seared conscience, καυστηριάζω, a cauterized conscience.

The pastorals profile the ultimate enemy whose name is *enemy*. Paul expects Titus and Timothy to understand that the preacher of the Word is warring against principalities and powers in the demonic realm. In Eph. 6:12, we wrestle, πάλη, against principalities, and powers, and against the world rulers of this present darkness. Strong's tells us in Greek *pale*, *wrestling*, is a contest between two in which each endeavors to throw the other, and which is decided when the victor is able to hold his opponent down with his hand upon his neck.

## The World

The word *world* in I Timothy, II Tim. and Titus is a translation of three different Greek words, *kosmos*, *aion*, *krnonos*, but is never used as pejoratively as Paul uses it in Romans 12:2, do not be conformed to this world. The closest Paul gets to this is one of the more heartfelt verses found in II Timothy 4:10 *Demas, in love with this present world, has deserted me, and gone to Thessalonica*. The world, portrayed in this way, woos men to desert Paul and his cause at the hour of great need, obviously a force to be reckoned with.

In a sense, the Bible portrays worldliness is the power of the flesh in people other than ourselves and the flesh is the power of sin in us.

Worldliness in these pages of Paul is vividly portrayed within the Church through false teaching and bad behavior. Here we will look at only a two examples.

Titus 1:12 has one of the most pungent descriptions of worldly folk in it in all of Scripture.

κρητες (Cretans) αει, (always) ψευσται (liars) κακα (evil) θηρια (beasts) γαστερες (stomachs, gluttons) αργαι (lazy). Strong's concordance on line defines these words as the following:

ψευσται, psuestai, from which we get pseudo, false men.

Κακα,

- 1) of a bad nature, **a**) not such as it ought to be
- 2) of a mode of thinking, feeling, acting **a**) base, wrong, wicked
- 3) troublesome, injurious, pernicious, destructive, baneful.

Kaka is the Russian word for poopoo! Wonder where it came from?

Θηρια,

- 1) an animal
- 2) a wild animal, wild beast, beast
- 3) metaph. a brutal, bestial man, savage, ferocious

γαστήρ, gaster,

- 1) the belly
- 2) the womb
- 3) the stomach a glutton, gormandiser, a man who is as it were all stomach.

Αργαι, **the opposite of ergon, work, an a-worker, non-worker**

- 1) free from labour, at leisure
- 2) lazy, shunning the labour which one ought to perform, II Peter 1:8, things that ought to be productive, but absolutely nothing useful is produced.

In Titus the world system we must fight against is men and their cultures which are controlled by fleshly desires, the lust of the flesh.

I Timothy 6:4-9, we meet another type of worldliness.

*If any one teaches otherwise and does not agree with the sound words of our Lord Jesus Christ and the teaching which accords with godliness, he is puffed up with conceit, he knows nothing; he has a morbid craving for controversy and for disputes about words, which produce envy, dissension, slander, base suspicions,*

*and wrangling among men who are depraved in mind and bereft of the truth, imagining that godliness is a means of gain.*

*There is great gain in godliness with contentment;*

*for we brought nothing into the world, and we cannot take anything out of the world;  
but if we have food and clothing, with these we shall be content.*

*But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation, into a snare, into many senseless and hurtful desires that plunge men into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is the root of all evils; it is through this craving that some have wandered away from the faith and pierced their hearts with many pangs.*

The love of money is the root of all kinds of evil. It appears that the love of money is lust of the eyes, the inordinate desire of things that we can see and buy with money. These worldly folk were in the church.

But the worldly folk in the church also were marked by pride, in I Tim. 6:4, the refuse to be accept the sound words of the Lord Jesus Christ! That rebellion shows that they are puffed up with conceit. Unteachable folk are folk of the pride of life.

I John 2:5, 6 reveals to us that all three, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, are things the worldly system has to offer us. Most repeated command to Timothy is to φεύγω, I Tim. 6:11, flee, is a very strong word which means run away to safety. I Tim. 4:7, and II Tim. 2:23, both command Timothy to avoid godless chatter and wives tales, but the impression given in both cases is that this temptations potentially anywhere. This not only shows how dangerous the world is if it catches us, but also how aggressive it is, because it came looking for us, and we have to leave the area!

## **The Flesh**

In I Tim. 6:12, we find, *fight the good fight of the faith*, preceded by vs. 11. *But as for you shun all this; aim at righteousness, godliness, faith, love, steadfastness, gentleness.*

I Tim. 6:2-10 describes all the dangers of imagining the godliness is a means of material gain. The love of money is the root of all kinds of evil, vs. 10. The Russian version reads the love of money is the root of all evil, but this does not take into consideration *pas*, sometimes meaning *some of all kinds, and evil be kakon, evils. The end is the same. Liking material things too much is bad! Timothy was to shun all this false motivation for following Christ.*

In I Timothy Paul does not take it for granted that his most genuine disciple in the ministry will have pure motives. Of Timothy he said in Phil. 2:20, *I have no one else like him who will be genuinely anxious for your welfare*, yet Paul was urging him to be ever vigilant to watch his own heart!

Paul's concerns in I Timothy are universal, the concerns that any leader would have with a protégé, but in II Timothy they are personalized as special concerns Paul has for Timothy.

II Tim. 1:6-8 <sup>6</sup> *For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands,* <sup>7</sup> *for God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-control.* <sup>8</sup> *Therefore (do not be ashamed of the testimony about our Lord, nor of me his prisoner, but share in suffering for the gospel by the power of God,*

II Tim. 2:21-23 *In a great house there are not only vessels of gold and silver but also of wood and earthenware, and some for noble use, some for ignoble. If anyone purifies himself from what is ignoble,*

*he will be a vessel for noble use, consecrated and useful to the master of the house, ready for any good work.* <sup>22</sup> *So flee youthful passions and pursue righteousness, faith, love, and peace, along with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart.* <sup>23</sup> *Have nothing to do with foolish, ignorant controversies; you know that they breed quarrels.*

Paul uses powerful strokes not to emphasize the work of the devil, or the world, but the personal temptations, tendencies and weaknesses of his trainee, Timothy. The implications of Paul's concerns for Timothy are clear. For the minister of the Word the main enemy is not the World and Satan, but himself!

**The real enemy is not the world and Satan, but ourselves!**

I Tim. 1:5 implies the essence of our problem. *Whereas the aim of our charge is love that issues from a pure heart and a good conscience and sincere faith.* Men of God by nature have an impure heart, a bad conscience, and a false faith! If that was not the case, Paul would not have needed to mention this to Timothy.

## **The Vulnerabilities of the Minister of the Word**

Paul implies in all three Pastoral Epistles that the man of God has special vulnerabilities as a teacher of Scripture and leader of the church.

First of all, all people that read Scripture are automatically in a different category of moral existence than those that do not. For example, in I Timothy 1, and 4, folks in the church are teaching the law because they know the law. Since the scripture is always the breath of God, any use of it makes that event a divine event, a supernatural event. This is probably why the doctrines of demons are those doctrines, which use scripture, but use it wrongly. It makes for false religions, and cults. The strongest ideas on earth for good or evil are religious ideas. The most influential people are those that present themselves as being in some way from God. Rasputin in 1917 is a good example.

Therefore, those that teach the scripture, are already tempted to use powers that those without scripture simply do not have.

This religious “sexiness” is what allows men, especially in cultures where the Scriptures are respected, such as in synagogues in the first century, to creep into houses to mislead women.

*II Tim. 3:5-8* <sup>5</sup> *holding to a form of godliness, although they have denied its power; Avoid such men as these.* <sup>6</sup> *For among them are those who enter into households and captivate weak women weighed down with sins, led on by various impulses,* <sup>7</sup> *always learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.* <sup>8</sup> *Just as Jannes and Jambres opposed Moses, so these men also oppose the truth, men of depraved mind, rejected in regard to the faith.*

A counterfeit faith is much more powerful than offering people no faith. The man of God therefore is from the beginning tempted to misuse the spiritual power that he has through the Scripture. Preachers of the Word have a extra temptation to pride and vanity.

Second, I Tim. 6 adds that the imaginings of men's hearts lead them to believe that his godliness is meant by God to be a means of personal gain. Preachers of the word will be especially tempted to use their religious power to acquire wealth in inappropriate ways. It is a small step to go from teaching on tithing to teach that special blessings will be given to those that give to the pastor directly. The scripture misused can be a great tool for amassing personal fortunes.

II Tim. 3, since our identification as men of God makes women trust us, especially if we seem to be more loving than a woman's husband or father, we uniquely can "creep into houses" to deceive women and perhaps to partake in sexual favors.

## **The Implication of Paul's Emphasis**

But even with the aggressiveness of the world, and seductiveness of the demons, Paul does not say to Timothy "because the devil is constantly laying snares for preachers, rebuke the devil!" No the problem for the man of God is not primarily the devil outside of him. Paul says, "shun all this" because its attraction is inside the preacher's heart, and therefore, Paul implies that the preacher can control his own heart and lusts.

In a great house, the apostle asserts, are vessels of pleasant and unpleasant use, such as a wine bottle and a chamber pot or mop bucket. He does not say, therefore stay away from worldly people, or the devil, but "if a man will purify himself from what is ignoble, then he will be a vessel of noble use."

The real enemy in I, II Timothy is the preacher himself. Because preachers are tempted to lust for money, for sex, for power just like anyone else!

The real danger for preachers according to Paul is that because they are already ordained, layed hands upon, II Tim. 2:6, they are no longer normal folks with normal needs, and subject to normal temptations. This is why Paul wrote in Gal. 6, *Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness. Look to yourself, lest you too be tempted.*

This real enemy is poignantly portrayed in I Tim. 1:18, 19 *wage the good warfare, holding faith and a good conscience. By rejecting conscience, the certain persons have made shipwreck of the faith.* Paul portrays the most potent potential enemy of the man of God is his own violated conscience, which can destroy *his* faith, and *the* faith in him.

Martin Luther said, I more fear what is within me than what comes from without."

When you and I die, or when the Lord comes back, we are going to give an account to God of our ministry, I Tim. 2:15 tells us. If we have reason to be ashamed on that day God will not allow us to say, "Well, the devil made me do it" or "Those worldly people in the Reformed Presbyterian church were a horrible influence on me." No, if we end up being unworthy ministers of the Word, God will only allow one answer:

*I chose to be a vessel for ignoble use, and now I deserve to be treated like the garbage can that I chose to be.*

God will not bat an eye, II Tim. 2 assures us, to comply with our confession. We will find out the meaning of the word "ignoble" on a long-term basis.

The application for our training experience for pastors of Eurasia is obvious. We need to accept this about ourselves and teach it to our trainees: We have seen the enemy, and he is us!