**was** (indicating simply the past; pointing  
to the time during which this his commission

had been growing into its fulness and  
importance) **entrusted** (not *these people*.  
The connexion with the following appears  
to be this: his mind is full of thankfulness  
at the thought of the commission which was  
thus entrusted to him: he does not regret  
the charge, but overflows with gratitude at  
the remembrance of Christ’s grace to him,  
especially when he recollects also what he  
once was; how nearly approaching [for I  
would not exclude even that thought as  
having contributed to produce these strong  
expressions] some of those whom he has  
just mentioned. So that he now goes off  
from the immediate subject, even more completely

and suddenly than is his wont in his  
other writings, as again and again in these  
pastoral Epistles: shewing thereby, I  
believe, the tokens of advancing age, and  
of that faster hold of individual habits  
of thought and mannerisms, which characterizes

the decline of life).

**12** ff.] (See summary on ver. 3.) **I give  
thanks** (this peculiar expression is only  
used by the Apostle here and in 2 Tim.  
i. 3) **to Him that put strength in me** (viz.  
for His work: he is here treating of the  
divine enlightening and strengthening  
which he received for the ministry: compare

Acts ix. 22, where the same word  
in the Greek occurs, “*Saul increased  
in strength*”’—a coincidence not to be overlooked),

[even] **Christ Jesus our Lord, that  
He accounted me faithful** (compare the  
strikingly similar expression, 1 Cor. vii. 25,  
“*I give my opinion, as having received  
mercy from the Lord to be faithful* :”  
—He knew me to be such an one, in  
His foresight, as would prove faithful  
to the great trust), **appointing me** (compare

1 Thess. v. 9. The expression is  
there used of that appointment of God in  
His sovereignty, by which our course is

marked for a certain aim or end: and so  
it is best taken here,—not for the act of  
‘*putting me into*,’ the ministry, as A. V.)  
**to the ministry** (what sort of *ministry*, is  
declared, Acts xx. 24);

**13.** (and all  
the more is he thankful, seeing that he  
was once a direct opponent of the Gospel),  
**being before** (the participle is slightly concessive,

*though* ***I*** *was before*) **a blasphemer**  
(see Acts xxvi. 9, 11), **and persecutor, and  
insulter** (one who added insult to persecution.

The facts which justified the use of  
such a term were known to St. Paul’s conscience:

we might well infer them, from  
his own confessions in Acts xxii. 4, 19, and  
xxvi. 9—12. He describes himself as  
“*being exceedingly mad against them*”):  
**howbeit** (“ God’s mercy and St. Paul’s want  
of it are put in sharp contrast.” Ellicott)  
**I had mercy shewn me, because I did it  
ignorantly** (so Rom. x. 2, of the Jews,  
“*They have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge*.”

Compare also, as a most  
important parallel, our Lord’s prayer for His  
murderers, Luke xxiii. 34) **in unbelief** (**unbelief**

was his *state*, of which his ignorance  
of what he did was a *consequence*. The  
clause is a very weighty one, as applying to  
others under similar circumstances: and  
should lead us to form our judgments in all  
charity respecting even persecutors—and if  
of them, then surely even with a wider extension

of charity to those generally, who  
lie in the ignorance of unbelief, whatever  
be its cause, or its effects).

**14.**] **But**  
(contrast still to his former state, and explanatory

of *his having found mercy*) **the  
grace of our Lord** (His mercy shewn to me  
—but not in strengthening me for His  
work, endowing me with spiritual gifts,  
&c., as Chrysostom and others, for the  
*mercy* shewn to him is the ruling idea  
through the whole, and he recurs to it  
again ver. 16, never having risen above it  
to that of his higher gifts) **superabounded**