concerning the mystery of piety as upheld in  
the Church, cited as belonging to the *unfolding* of that mystery in Christ), **was preached among the nations** (that preaching commencing with the sending out of the Apostles, and though not then, in the  
strict technical sense, carried on *among the  
nations,* yet being the beginning of that  
which waxed onward till it embraced all  
nations. See and Compare Rom. xvi. 26  
[Eph. iii. 8]. So that we are still proceeding with our Lord’s ministry, taking *the nations* in that wider sense in which the  
Jews themselves are numbered among  
them, and the fact itself as the great commencement of the proclamation of Christ to men), **was believed on in the world**(including all that winning of faith first,  
from His disciples [John ii. 11], then from  
the Jews [ib. 28, viii. 30], and Samaritans  
[iv. 41, 42]: see also ib. x.42. Our clause  
bears with it a reminiscence of His own  
great saying, John iii. 16 ff.), **was received  
up in glory** (at His Ascension. **in  
glory:** i.e. was taken up into, and reigns  
in, glory.—It is this distinct reference to  
the fact of our Lord’s personal Ascension,  
which in my mind rules the whole sentence,  
and makes it, whatever further reference  
each clause may have, a chain of links of  
the divine manifestation of the Person of  
Christ, following in chronological order  
from His incarnation to His assumption  
into glory. The order and connexion of  
the clauses has been very variously understood, as may be seen in Wolf, and in De Wette. The triple antithesis, so characteristic of St. Paul, can hardly escape any  
reader: *“in the flesh, in the spirit,—angels, the nations,—in the world, in  
glory :”* but further it is hardly worth  
while to reproduce the distinctions which  
some have drawn, or motives for arrangement which they have supposed).

**CH. IV. 1—16.**] *Of future false teachers*(1—6)*; directions to Timothy in reference to them* (7—11)*; general exhortations to him* (12—16)*.*

**1.**] Howbeit  
(contrast to the glorious mystery of godliness which has been just dwelt on) the Spirit (viz. the Holy Spirit of prophecy,  
speaking in the Apostle himself, or in  
others,—or, which is most probable, in  
both—in the general prophetic testimony  
which He bore throughout the church:  
compare *“this know,”* spoken from the  
same point of prophetic foresight, 2 Tim.  
iii. 1. Some have supposed the Apostle to  
refer to some prophetic passage of the Old  
Test., or to the general testimony of the  
Old Test. prophecies [Dan. vii. 25; viii.  
23; xi. 30], or those of our Lord [Matt.  
xxiv. 4ff., 11], or of the Apostles [2 Thess.  
ii. 3 ff. 1 John ii. 18. 2 Pet. iii. 3. Jude  
18], or all these combined. But in the  
two former cases, we should hardly have  
had **the Spirit saith,** but the *Scripture,  
or the Lord,* or the like; the words imply  
rather the present agency of the Spirit:  
and the latter is only a less clear way of  
putting the explanation given above: for  
why should writings be referred to, when  
the living men were yet testifying in the  
power of the Spirit among them? Besides,  
see the way in which such written prophecies *are* referred to, in Jude 17) **expressly** (‘plainly,’ ‘in so many words’)  
**saith, that in after times** (not as A. V. *‘in  
the latter times,’* which though not quite  
so strong as *‘in the last times,’* yet gives  
the idea of close connexion with them:  
whereas here the Apostle speaks only of  
times subsequent to those in which he was  
writing: see the difference in 2 Tim. iii. 1:  
and compare Acts xx. 29) **some** (not the  
false teachers: rather, those who will be  
the result of their false teaching) **shall  
depart** (or decline: not by formal apostasy,  
or the danger would not be that which it  
is here represented: but subjectively, declining in their own minds and lives from  
holding Christ in simplicity) **from the  
faith** (objective—the doctrine which faith  
embraces, as so often), **giving heed to**(the participle contains the reason and  
process of their declension: *because they  
give heed to*) **seducing spirits** (**spirits** is  
in contrast with **the spirit,** ver. 1;—it is  
to be understood as in 1 John iv. 1 and 6,  
in which last verse we have the cognate