

*23 No longer drink water exclusively, but use a little wine for the sake of your stomach and your frequent ailments.*

*24 The sins of some men are quite evident, going before them to judgment; for others, their sins follow after. 25 Likewise also, deeds that are good are quite evident, and those which are otherwise cannot be concealed. 1Tim 5:23-25*

Interjected in this chapter is an instruction for Timothy to take care of his health, here we have in scripture a personal note and it emphasizes how God is personally interested in the individual, *use a little wine for the sake of your stomach and your frequent ailments.*

Then Paul returns to personal character. Remember he had instructed Timothy to, *not lay hands upon anyone too hastily and thereby share responsibility for the sins of others.*

*1Tim 5:22* So if there is a question on the spiritual behavior of a believer, Paul says don't be hasty in commissioning someone for ministry, but test the spirit of the persons, *Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world. 1 John 4:1* We all judge people we come in contact with, we choose our friends, are they good for us, do we trust them, do they build us up or tear us down? do we enjoy being around them? But as Christians we are not just fleshly men, we've been born again. So we are to test those we come in contact with, fellowship with. John writes, *test the spirits to see whether they are from God.* Are we looking at our lives as ministry, we are not in this world just to have a good time and since we are spiritual beings, we must in the affairs of our lives, pray for discernment and wisdom in our everyday relationships.

*The sins of some men are quite evident, going before them to judgment.* We are not all in the position of Timothy, pastoring a young church, but we are all, if we know Christ, in this process of working to conform our lives to God's standards.

*13Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet; but one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead, 14I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. Phil 3:13,14*

So we need to be aware of the character of those with whom we associate, *The sins of some men are quite evident.* We are not to associate with believers who have bad characters and claim to be Christians. Paul writes, *keep away from every brother who leads an unruly life and not according to the tradition which you received from us. 2 Thess 3:6* This is quite evident bad is obvious. Paul writes, *Bad company corrupts good morals. 1 Cor 15:33* This is obvious in the case of an alcoholic. If a person is going to keep from drinking they are going to have to take steps to make it possible to resist temptation. They are going to have to stop associating with anyone that is going to encourage them to drink. As Christians we need to avoid associating with so-called believers who have bad character. Not everyone that says they are a Christian strives for godly behavior.

*9I wrote you in my letter not to associate with immoral people; 10I did not at all mean with the immoral people of this world, or with the covetous and swindlers, or with idolaters, for then you would have to go out of the world. 11But actually, I wrote to you not to associate with any so-called brother if he is an immoral person, or covetous, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or a swindler—not even to eat with such a one. 1 Cor 5:9-11*

Being aware of people's character takes spiritual discernment. The negative influence of

some people is quite evident. You know that you can't trust them but there people who are crafty and sinister. Sometimes we want to be fooled. Something about them doesn't quite ring true about a person but they are so talented. They flatter us and make us feel important. Paul warns against a *so-called brother if he is an immoral person, or covetous, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or a swindler. Don't even to eat with such a one. 1 Cor 5:1* If you see this type of behavior in a believer Paul says don't even eat with them. The deeds that are good are *quite evident, and those which are otherwise cannot be concealed. 1Tim 5:25* The Spirit will reveal the sincerity of true believers, their character will show forth even though they don't make a big issue about it. The work of the Spirit in their lives will shine forth, *"Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven. Matt 5:16*

Then Paul turns to a discussion of believers who are slaves. Slavery was common in the Roman Empire and the early church had both Jewish and Gentile slaves as members. Slavery has existed throughout human history and the early church had many slaves as part of their congregations. Paul's advice to them was to *remain in the condition in which you were called*. He adds, in 1 Corinthians, given the opportunity purchase your freedom, *Are you a slave? Don't let that worry you—but if you get a chance to be free, take it. 1 Cor 7:21*

*20Each man must remain in that condition in which he was called. 21Were you called while a slave? Do not worry about it; but if you are able also to become free, rather do that. 22For he who was called in the Lord while a slave, is the Lord's freedman; likewise he who was called while free, is Christ's slave. 23You were bought with a price; do not become slaves of men. 24Brethren, each one is to remain with God in that condition in which he was called. 1 Cor 7:20-24*

Here he has positive advice for slaves. A slave was not a second class citizen in the eyes of God, they were *the Lord's freedmen*. Jesus declared, *Everyone who commits sin is the slave of sin. 35"The slave does not remain in the house forever; the son does remain forever. 36"So if the Son makes you free, you will be free indeed*. True freedom comes from knowing Christ. He who comes to Christ is free from the slavish burden of sin. This world is passing away and in God's economy anyone who is in Christ has true freedom, they are heirs of God in Christ. *The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ. Rom 8:16,17*

In our chapter Paul gives practical advice for slaves and how they relate to those who have ownership of them. But, how does this relate to us, we in this country don't relate to being slaves? (Though everyone of us, in reality in this world in slave to it. As Jesus said, *everyone who commits sin is the slave of sin. John 8:34*) Paul's instructions are equally good anyone who works for another person, is under an authority.

*1All who are under the yoke as slaves are to regard their own masters as worthy of all honor so that the name of God and our doctrine will not be spoken against. 2Those who have believers as their masters must not be disrespectful to them because they are brethren, but must serve them all the more, because those who partake of the benefit are believers and beloved. Teach and preach these principles. 1Tim 6:1,2*

Honor your masters Paul writes, *as worthy of all honor*. Some of those masters were I'm sure were cruel and not worthy of honor but Paul said honor them anyway. Even though they don't deserve it because it is God who put them in authority over you. Live

as the best slave you can be *so that the name of God and our doctrine will not be spoken against*. See there was no coveting, no jealousy, envy or discontent in this attitude. And if the masters were themselves believers work harder, *serve them all the more*. The godly behavior of Christian slaves was blessing *believers and beloved*. This is what Paul wanted Timothy to teach and preach.

So, more than just teaching about Jesus and sound biblical theology, the leaders of the church must instruct believers in godly behavior.

*16All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; 17so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work. 2 Tim 3:16,17*

Paul wants Timothy to contend for the truth, if the truth is lost, salvation is lost. Jude wrote, *contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all handed down to the saints. Jude 1:3* This gospel of Jesus and Him crucified for sin is the only way to the Father, to be made right with God. Peter declared, *there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must be saved. Acts 4:12* This Gospel, the church of the first born that offered redemption for mankind needed to endure. The teaching of the truth needed to be trusted to faithful men. In 2 Timothy 2:2 Paul wrote, *The things which you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, entrust these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also*. This gospel is the only path prepared by God for men to enter back into a right relationship with Him.

*1For this reason we must pay much closer attention to what we have heard, so that we do not drift away from it. 2For if the word spoken through angels proved unalterable, and every transgression and disobedience received a just penalty, 3how will we escape if we neglect so great a salvation? After it was at the first spoken through the Lord, it was confirmed to us by those who heard, 4God also testifying with them, both by signs and wonders and by various miracles and by gifts of the Holy Spirit according to His own will. Heb 2:1-4*

Don't tolerate other teachings that do not agree with God's *great salvation*. This was Paul's warning.

*3If anyone advocates a different doctrine and does not agree with sound words, those of our Lord Jesus Christ, and with the doctrine conforming to godliness, 4he is conceited and understands nothing; but he has a morbid interest in controversial questions and disputes about words, out of which arise envy, strife, abusive language, evil suspicions, 5and constant friction between men of depraved mind and deprived of the truth, who suppose that godliness is a means of gain. 6But godliness actually is a means of great gain when accompanied by contentment. 7For we have brought nothing into the world, so we cannot take anything out of it either. 8If we have food and covering, with these we shall be content. 9But those who want to get rich fall into temptation and a snare and many foolish and harmful desires which plunge men into ruin and destruction. 10For the love of money is a root of all sorts of evil, and some by longing for it have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs.*

*11But flee from these things, you man of God, and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, perseverance and gentleness. 1 Tim 6:3-11*

Let us contend for the faith once delivered, *we must pay much closer attention to what we have heard. Hebrews*