

The Book of First Timothy

“Fight the good fight.” 1Ti 1:18, 6:12

Ten Principles of Bible Study Method:

1. The objective of all Bible study is personal transformation.
2. The ideal of this transformation is the Lord Jesus Christ.
3. The written Word conforms to the likeness of the Living Word.
4. This transformation is a process of growth, not a single event.
5. We cannot be transformed by what we do not utilize in life.
6. You cannot apply what you do not remember.
7. You will not remember what you cannot comprehend, define, or explain.
8. Sooner or later, all of life is reduced down to its essence. And the essence of learning and living is summed up in the 16th Century Samurai maxim, *“Advanced techniques are the basics mastered.”*
9. The Bible is a Book of books. To understand it, we must learn it one book at a time.
10. Every book has a theme capable of being reduced to an outline. The best outline is one you can remember, define, explain, and apply.

Introduction to First Timothy

1. Timothy was one of the Apostle Paul’s most trusted and constant companions. He is mentioned over 25 times in the New Testament.
2. We first meet him in Act 16:1–3, where his training begins.
3. The first epistle to Timothy is an extended exhortation to him to *“fight the good fight of faith.”*
4. Since every believer is called to engage in spiritual warfare (Eph 6:12–18), the instruction of this epistle is vitally important.
5. Our approach will be to develop Paul’s theme, working within our chapter divisions (never perfect), around a key verse within each chapter.

Each chapter reminds us that a spiritual battle rages all around us. To be engaged as a soldier of Christ is a *“good fight,”* one we cannot lose, providing we utilize spiritual strategy and tactics. Our studies will lead us in a steady progression from salvation to spiritual victory.

About the Theme

Our theme is found both at the beginning and at the end of the book (1:18, 6:12). In each reference, different words and phrases are used. In the first, Paul speaks of the good fight of faith as an ongoing campaign, thus reminding us that we are part of a vast and great spiritual army. In the last, his words focus on our own personal struggle, a good reminder that no one can fight our battle for us. This scope and intensity will be captured as we follow Paul’s thought through the book.

Study Outline/Key Verses

1. Salvation, Chapter 1 (1:15)
2. Priesthood, Chapter 2 (2:5)
3. Leadership, Chapter 3 (3:15)
4. Conformity, Chapter 4 (4:8)
5. Teamwork, Chapter 5 (5:17)
6. Victory, Chapter 6 (6:11)

The above outline is not perfect. However, for me it has the advantage of being easily remembered. The theme stays in view with each succeeding chapter, and the flow of Paul's argument is gradually developed along a systematic and logical progression.

I encourage you to work on your own outline, using others and mine as a stimulus. Ultimately, the best outline is one you have either adopted or developed which helps to grasp the book in your mind, explain the book to others, and apply it in your own daily life. Always remember, you do not know what you cannot apply; you cannot apply what you are unable to explain; and you cannot explain what you cannot define. Thus the age-old adage, "Keep it simple, stupid," or, as Paul paraphrased it, "*unless you utter by the tongue words easy to understand, how will it be known what is spoken?*" (1Co 14:9).

Chapter One: Salvation

"This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief." 1Ti 1:15

We enter the spiritual war at the moment of our salvation. When we trust Christ as Savior, we enlist in the army of God. Each of us is given a unique part to play. In the end, our service will either receive commendation or censure from our Commander, Jesus Christ Himself. The phrase "*this is a faithful saying*" is used five times in the Pastoral Epistles (1Ti 1:15, 3:1, 4:9; 2Ti 2:11; Tit 3:8). It appears to have been used to introduce central doctrinal issues. The very cornerstone of all Bible teaching is the saving work of Jesus Christ. In referring to our Lord as "*Christ Jesus,*" Paul emphasizes His uniqueness as the God-man, the fulfillment of all Old Testament prophecy. That Jesus came to save—not to judge—is stated in Joh 3:17. That saving work reached even Paul who, writing under inspiration from the Holy Spirit, declares himself to be the "*chief*" or foremost of sinners.

I. The Battle for Truth, 1Ti 1:1–11

Paul establishes his call from God and by it his authority in God's Word. Thus, he writes as a commander on the battlefield of faith to a young captain engaged in furious conflicts in Ephesus.

A. Command and Supply, vv. 1–2

1. Chain of command: God the Father, Jesus Christ our Lord, Paul the apostle, Timothy his "*true son*" (spiritual adoption), to us today.

2. Supply line: Faith lays hold of grace, resulting in mercy, which produces hope, resulting in peace (Eph 2:4–8, 13; Rom 5:1, Rom 8:1–4).

B. Battle Lines, vv. 3–11

1. Timothy is to stand with Paul and “*teach no other doctrine*” but that which Paul was given by commandment, cf. vv. 5 and 10b–11. It is “*sound doctrine*” which is faithful to “*the glorious gospel*” producing “*a good conscience.*”
2. Opposing him are the “Gnostics” who delve into “*fables*” (v. 4) and have “*strayed*” (*astocheo*: “miss the mark”) thus “*turned aside*” (*ektrepomai*: aorist, passive, indicative—“of dislocation of a joint,” Heb 12:13). They have a great desire to be “*law-teachers,*” a term for Judaism, but they lack spiritual comprehension of the “*lawful*” use of the Law (cf. Rom 8:1–4; Gal 3:10–13, 21–25).

II. Our Victorious Commander, 1Ti 1:12–17

Paul recognizes that his faithful ministry is not due to his wisdom or strength, but to the grace given him. All glory goes to God! Here we see a catalog of five undertakings of God in Paul’s behalf.

A. His Power to Transform, vv. 12–14

Paul gives thanks and praise for what God has done for him. We will look at them in their logical sequence:

1. “*I obtained mercy*” (*eleeo*: aorist, passive, indicative). God showed compassion on the sinner (v. 13), and grace became a personal possession (Eph 2:4–8). This refers to Paul’s Damascus road experience. The word translated “*insolent*” (*hubristes*) means “*sadistic, finding joy in others’ sufferings.*”
2. God gave “*exceedingly abundant*” grace—producing in Paul “*faith and love,*” which are found “*in Christ Jesus.*” Regeneration made Paul a “*new creature in Christ*” (2Co 5:17; Gal 2:20).
3. God “*enabled*” (*endunamoo*: aorist, active, participle) Paul, giving him the “*gift and calling*” of apostle (cf. Rom 11:29; 1Co 12:4–7).
4. As a result, Paul could be “*counted faithful*” (*hegeomai*: aorist, middle voice, indicative) both to consider and to impute.
5. Finally, Paul is “*put into the ministry*” (*tithemi*: aorist, middle, participle), which coincides with “*enabled.*”

What God had done for Paul, He desires to do for each one of us, as Paul goes on to explain.

B. His Blueprint Revealed, vv. 15–17

1. “*Faithful saying*” is a term Paul uses for foundational statements of “*sound doctrine,*” of which there are five, covering:

- a. Salvation, 1Ti 1:15
 - b. Spiritual leadership, 1Ti 3:1
 - c. Spiritual sanctification, 1Ti 4:8–9
 - d. Eternal reward, 2Ti 2:11–13
 - e. How reward is won, Tit 3:4–8
2. Paul’s declaration that “*Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners*” is in keeping with Jesus’ own statement in Joh 3:16–17.
 3. Paul’s claim to be “*chief*” (*protos*—“foremost, greatest”) is his third self-evaluation found in his epistles, revealing his growth:
 - a. 1Co 15:9, “*least of the apostles*”
 - b. Eph 3:8, “*less than the least of all the saints*”
 - c. 1Ti 1:15, “*chief of sinners*”

Truly, the only way up in God’s economy is down (Mat 18:1–4).

4. God chose Paul as a “*pattern,*” a demonstration as it were, of what He can and will do for all who choose to “*pursue ... godliness*” (1Ti 6:11).
5. This thought causes Paul to break into one of his three doxologies in this epistle (1Ti 1:17, 1Ti 3:16, 1Ti 6:15–16):
 - a. In the first, God is glorified as the great King over the universe, in whom immortality, invisibility, and wisdom are revealed.
 - b. In the next, he glorifies Jesus as the revelation of God in the flesh, in His incarnation, crucifixion, and resurrection.
 - c. Finally, he praises our coming Lord as the “happy sovereign” who will reign as “*King of kings ... Lord of lords*” forever.

C. Holding the High Ground, vv. 18–20

In the chain of command, and God’s desired succession (v. 16), Paul passes on the “*commandment*” regarding the Gospel ministry (vv. 1, 5, 11), with a warning against departing from the faith.

1. The verb “*commit*” is *paratithemi*, and is a banking term for making a deposit of something valuable for safekeeping.
2. Paul’s charge is based on prophecies, apparently revealed to him regarding God’s plan for Timothy, resulting in his ordination (1Ti 4:14).
3. Based on these revelations, and given Timothy maintains faith and a “*good conscience*” (i.e., honorable synthesis of teaching and life), he is called to “*fight the good fight,*” here *strateuo*: present, active, subjunctive, speaks of an ongoing campaign, overall strategy, as opposed to 1Ti 6:12, where the more personal struggles—the tactical side—is stressed.
4. Hymenaeus and Alexander are two examples of believers who “*rejected*” the cruciality of “walking the talk” (*apothomai*: aorist, middle voice, participle) thus

leading to “*shipwreck*” (*nauageo*: aorist, active, indicative). See Acts 27 with 2Co 11:25 to see that Paul knew what shipwreck was like.

Principle:

Regeneration, combined with “*sound doctrine*,” provides the “high ground” in the spiritual battle, from which the believer fights the battles of life from a position of strength—not his own, and is able to win victory, becoming an “overcomer,” (Revelation 2–3) recognized throughout eternity (cf. Phi 3:12–14; 2Ti 4:7–8; 1Jo 2:17, 5:4–5). From this vantage point, the believer can go on to a life lived of “*love from a pure [cleansed] heart, from a good [agathos] conscience, and a sincere [anupokritou] faith*” (1Ti 1:5).

Doctrine of Conscience

1. Paul’s use of *suneidesis* surpasses any usage of the ancient world, “*a step of momentous significance for the centuries which followed*” (Kittel, Vol. VII, pg. 917).
2. By regeneration, men are enlightened to “know with” God, what is right and pure, and by His Spirit are empowered to live it. Our conscience confirms that what we know we also do.
3. A “*good [agathos] conscience*” (1Ti 1:5) therefore results from a conscience “*purified*” (washed) by faith (1Ti 3:9; 2Ti 1:3), with the potential of continual cleansing by faith and obedience 1Ti 2:20–22).
4. The “*defiled conscience*” (1Ti 4:1–2) of an apostate believer is no better practically than that of the unbeliever (Tit 1:5).
5. The six references to conscience in the Pastoral Epistles give the essence of Paul’s view of the regenerate, enlightened, and obedient believer’s ability to know and live according to “*the truth which accords with godliness*” (Tit 1:1).

Chapter Two: Priesthood

“*For there is one God and one Mediator between
God and men, the Man Christ Jesus.*” 1Ti 2:5

The call of Jesus Christ to each and every believer is “*follow Me.*” In 1Pe 2:21, we are told, “*For to this were you called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow in His steps.*”

Though Christ functions as Prophet, Priest, and King, it is His high priestly role that reconciles men to God. When Jesus offered Himself on the cross, He acted both as priest and sacrifice, the only one who could fulfill such a role. As God-man, He is equal to both estranged parties, and by His crucifixion satisfied God’s holy penalty for sin, at the same time providing for the redemption of all mankind. His mighty work began with prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane and ended with prayer on the cross.

Since every believer is a believer-priest (1Pe 2:5–9), we are called to join Him in His redemptive work, praying for his or her salvation according to the will of God. In the exercise of our

ambassadorship (2Co 5:14–21), we seek to bring the unsaved to Christ. As a minister (2Co 12:4–7), we aim at building up members of Christ’s Body.

I. The Pattern, 1Ti 2:1–7

- A. Four categories of prayer, v. 1
- B. The scope is “*all men*,” vv. 1, 2, 4, 6.
- C. The will of “*God our savior*” is for all to be saved, vv. 3–4.
- D. “*Christ*” is a unique title of the only Mediator, vv. 5–6. The ransom (*antilutron*) testified in “*due time*” (cf. Gal 4:4; Tit 1:2–3).
- E. Paul follows the pattern of Christ, exercising a three-fold ministry, equivalent to ambassador, priest, and minister, v. 7. Note the solemn oath, cf. Rom 9:1; 2Co 11:31; Gal 1:20.

II. The Practice, 1Ti 2:8–15

Prayer is effective through fellowship (“*holy hands*,” no “*doubting*,” cf. Jam 1:6–8, Jam 4:8) which implies submission, humility, and conduct. Men and women—though one in Christ—still have roles originating at creation (cf. 1Co 11:7–12; 1Co 14:34–37). The issue here is submission, not subjection (key “*have authority*”).

Chapter Three: Leadership

*“These things I write to you ... that you may know how to conduct
yourself in the house of God, which is the church of the
Living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.” 1Ti 3:14–15*

The “*commandment*” (1:1, 5, 18) is passed from Paul, to Timothy, and on to future overseers of the Church. The conduct of spiritual leaders is to reflect and witness to “*the Living God*.” It is He—not the Church—who is “*the pillar and ground [foundation] of the truth*.” It is the firm foundation (*edraïoma*), which makes it possible to “*be steadfast*” (same root, 1Co 7:37, 1Co 15:58; Col 1:23).

I. Overseers, 1Ti 3:1–7

Note again, “*this is a faithful saying*” (1:15, 4:9; 2Ti.2:11; Tit 3:8), a “*reliable statement of true doctrine*.”

- A. A man must “*desire*,” i.e., “*aspire*,” (*oregeo*: present, middle voice, indicative) to reach, stretch himself, like a runner coming to the tape.
- B. His character is judged in the context of his marriage and home life, vv. 2–5.
- C. “*Able to teach*” implies both maturity and skill (gift).
- D. Not a new believer, nor susceptible to pride (not mature), v. 6.
- E. Must have a reputation among unbelieving neighbors, v. 7.

II. Deacons, 1Ti 3:8–13

The “*likewise*” applies all the above to deacons, originally referred to as a “*table-waiter*” (cf. Act 6:1–6). These care for administration and logistics in the Church.

- A. Personal character (self-control) with a track record, vv. 8–10
- B. Wives also subject to scrutiny, v. 8
- C. Their home-life gives evidence of spiritual leadership, v. 9.
- D. A position of public respect and personal development, v. 13

III. Godliness, 1Ti 3:14–16

Paul’s letter gives instruction he hopes to reinforce when and if he comes. Timothy is in Ephesus; Paul is in prison in Rome. This letter intended to guide Timothy in conduct (*anastrephomai*: present, middle voice, infinitive), that is, how to “go about amongst the Church,” as a representative of “*the Living God*.” This “*mystery of godliness*” was revealed in Jesus Christ.

- A. “*Godliness*” is defined as “God-like,” reflecting God.
- B. God became incarnate in Jesus Christ (Joh 1:14; Phi 2:8).
- C. He was “*justified*,” or vindicated, by means of the Holy Spirit, both in His life, death, and resurrection (Rom 1:4).
- D. This entire invasion of earth observed by angels.
- E. This message is proclaimed, and believed in the world.
- F. He now resides in glory, until His soon return (note His testimony for this in Mat 26:64 in the face of death).

Chapter Four: Godliness

“For bodily exercise profits a little, but godliness is profitable for all things, having promise of the life that now is and of that which is to come.” 1Ti 4:8

Having introduced “*godliness*” in connection with the incarnation of Jesus Christ, Paul again takes up the issue of godliness as it relates to conduct. This he does by first declaring the trend of the Church Age toward deeper and darker apostasy, something we see all around us in today’s world.

I. Danger, 1Ti 4:1–5

The Holy Spirit, as author of Scripture, is very explicit (*rhetos*, “clear, unmissable”) concerning the “*latter times*” (last days). “*Some*” believers will “*depart from the faith*” (*apostesontai*: future, middle voice, indicative—“to withdraw, fall away from”). The phrase “*the faith*” speaks of the body of “*sound doctrine*” Paul values so much (1Ti 1:10; Tit 1:9, Tit 2:1). The word “*sound*” implies that which is healthy, conducive to spiritual health.

- A. They will “*give heed*” (*prosecho*: present, active, participle—“a habitual attentiveness”) to deceptive fallen spirits.
- B. They will eventually adopt “*doctrines of demons*.”
- C. By “*speaking lies*” instead of “*speaking the truth in love*” (Eph 4:15), they will be branded an agent of Satan (cf. reversionism, Eph 4:17–19; Gal 5:1–7).

- D. The general trend of these teachings is to condemn what God approves (cf. Act 10:15), and to approve what God condemns. The prohibition on marriage by “*some who will depart from the faith*” (1Ti 4:1) may be to young widows (cf. 1Ti 5:11–15) for their own designs on them (2Ti 3:6).

II. Doctrine, 1Ti 4:6–10

The biblical definition of godliness is to be the core of church worship. A “*good minister*” (*diakonos* used here) will teach “*good doctrine*” from which faith is “*nourished*” (*entrepho*: present, passive, participle—the *en* implies digestion by the inner man).

But to teach and learn, is not enough. Sound doctrine must also be “*carefully followed*” (*parakalouo*: perfect, active, indicative—“to walk beside,” cf. Ezr 7:10; Eph 5:15–17; 1Jo 1:7).

- A. Following the good implies rejecting the worthless, evil, v. 7.
B. “*Exercise*” is *gumnazo*: present, active, imperative, cf. Heb 5:14.
C. “*Godliness*” (Christ-conformity) is profitable for both present and eternal life (blessing in time, reward in eternity).
D. The suffering of Paul and Timothy (vv. 9–10) is their personal battle (*agona*: present, middle voice, indicative—note Greek of 1Ti 6:12 as contrasted to 1Ti 1:18) in the overall campaign, to bring men to trust in “*God ... the Savior of all men.*” Note the *malista*, again in 1Ti 5:17, designates a specific class or group as separate from others.
E. As in 1Ti 2:4–6 and many other passages, the unlimited, universal work of Christ for all men is in view.

III. Deliverance, 1Ti 4:11–16

Timothy is exhorted by Paul to take specific steps toward a sound, doctrinal teaching ministry, backed up by a life in conformity to the truth he teaches.

- A. He is to “*command and teach*” continually (present, active, imperative).
B. The way to avoid being despised is to be an example, v. 12, in word, deed, and motivation.
C. This ministry is to be built around reading of Scripture, exhortation to conformity, and systematic teaching, v. 13. Much would be done for our churches if God’s Word were simply read more!
D. Apparently Paul’s fear that Timothy would “*neglect*” (*ameleo*: present, active, imperative—“be unconcerned with”) proved true (cf. 2Ti 1:6). This is one means by which we “*quench the Spirit*” (1Th 5:19).
E. Timothy is to “*meditate*” (*meleta*: present, active, imperative—“cultivate, take pains over”) and “*give entirely*” (*eimi*: present, imperative—“be in it!”), v. 15.
F. Spiritual progress demands attention both to teaching and conduct. Timothy is to “*take heed*” to (*epecho*: present, active, imperative—“hold upon”). “*Continue*” is *epimeno*: present, active, imperative—the verb for “fellowship” (Joh 15:1–8).

Chapter Five: Teamwork

“Let the elders who rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in the Word and doctrine.” 1Ti 5:17

Like all divine institutions (marriage, family, nation), the Church is given a system of leadership, defined by spiritual gifts and ministries that nourish and strengthen the Body of Christ. Spiritual gifts alone do not qualify for leadership positions. Better to have men of spiritual maturity and character, apart from the gift, than vice versa. The ideal is set forth in this verse, a gifted and diligent teacher of spiritual maturity.

I. Ministry, 1Ti 5:1–16

The Church is a spiritual body wherein each member should promote the health of the others (1Co 12:12–27; Eph 4:11–16). In this section, Paul addresses proper interaction of Timothy as a leader with various members, with the emphasis being on care for the weaker members (cf. Rom 15:1; Jam 1:27).

- A. Simple guide for pastoral conduct, vv. 1–2
- B. Widows (vv. 3–16) identified and given special care
- C. The “*widow indeed*” is to be given “*honor*” (*timao*: present, active, imperative—same word in v. 17, with the same meaning as “financial support”), v. 3.
- D. The qualifying marks are:
 - 1. She is alone, with no means of support, v. 5.
 - 2. She is over sixty years old, v. 9.
 - 3. She is devoted to God’s service, vv. 5, 10.
 - 4. She has a record of faithfulness, v. 10.
 - 5. Those who have family should be supported by them, vv. 4, 8, 16.
 - 6. Younger widows, (vv. 11–14) are not to be supported, but are to marry and make a family.
 - 7. Those who give in to lust are condemned (v. 6), have dishonored their faith (v. 12), and turned after Satan (v. 15).

II. Leadership, 1Ti 5:17–25

Leadership receives both honor and censure, depending on service.

- A. “*Rule*” is *proistemi*: perfect, active, participle—“to stand before, to lead.”
- B. “*Worthy*” is *axioo*: present, passive, imperative—“to hold equal to.”
- C. “*Especially*” is again *malista*, as in 4:10, “*specifically*.”
- D. Accusations against elders to be verified (v. 19), with open, public rebuke following (v. 20, cf. Gal 2:14).
- E. Timothy’s ailments (v. 23) in this context (vv. 22–25) may have come from problems in this area. Sins of leaders will be exposed in time (vv. 24–25). God holds leaders to double-accountability (Jam 3:1).

Chapter Six: Victory

“But godliness with contentment is great gain.” 1Ti 6:6

The goal in the Christian life is Christ-conformity (Rom 8:29; 2Co 3:18; Gal 4:19). With the attainment of this “*godliness*” comes great inner peace and contentment, which is the true prize to seek in this life.

I. Contentment, 1Ti 6:1–10

The word “*content*” comes from *autos* plus *arkeo* and means “self-sufficient.” It was a technical term in Stoic philosophy for “*the wise man’s independence of circumstances*” (Linguistic Key to the Greek New Testament, pg. 633). For Paul, there was a balance between, “*Who is sufficient for these things?*” (2Co 2:16), and “*Our sufficiency is from God*” (2Co 3:4). Here he uses *hikanos*, indicating capability.

- A. Verses 1–2 actually conclude chapter 5’s discussion on various members.
- B. In vv. 3–5, Paul warns again about troublemakers (cf. 1Ti 1:3–4, 6–7; 1Ti 4:1–3). Apparently Timothy was dealing with such men in Ephesus. He is told to “*withdraw yourself*” from them (*aphistemi*).
- C. Note v. 3, as a return to the focus on “*the commandment*” (1Ti 1:1, 5, 11) and “*the doctrine which is according to godliness*” (cf. 1Ti 3:16 with Tit 1:1). “*Sound doctrine*” with faith produces Christ conformity!
- D. The picture of godly contentment (vv. 6–8) should be the prize sought by every believer (Phi 3:12–14). It is essentially defined as “*the mind of Christ*” which is “*I have come ... not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me.*” (Joh 6:38). This is true spiritual victory!
- E. The desire for riches (vv. 9–10) is a trap of Satan which “*drown[s]*” many (*buthizo*—“to drag down to the depths”), and by it many have “*strayed from the faith*” (*apoplanao apo tes pisteos*) and “*pierced*” themselves thoroughly (*peripeiro*) with many sorrows.

II. Conquest, 1Ti 6:11–21

The contrast of “*but you*” charges Timothy (and us) to a different course altogether. Spiritual victory begins with personal conquest of one’s own life and conduct. The concept of “*mastery of the details of life*” is a biblical one, and the only path into the faith-rest life.

- A. Paul calls Timothy “*O man of God,*” placing him in the great line of men like Moses (Deu 33:1), Elijah (1Ki 17:18), Elisha (2Ki 4:8–9), Samuel (1Sa 9:6) and David (Neh 12:24, 36).
- B. Five things are given as the identifying mark of the man of God:
 - 1. He is a fugitive—“*flee*” is *pheugo*: present, active, imperative.
 - 2. He is a follower—“*pursue*” is *dioko*: present, active, imperative, and followed by six objectives that help to define “*godliness*” in practical terms.

3. He is a fighter—“*fight the good fight*” is *agonizomai*: in the present, middle voice, imperative mood, with *ton kalon agona*, the fight that is noble, honorable, desirable. Thus Paul moves from the “campaign” of 1:18 to the struggle for personal transformation.
4. He is focused—“*lay hold on eternal life*” is a phrase Paul uses of the diligent pursuit of eternal reward (cf. v. 12 with v. 19).
5. He is a friend—in that he is to “*keep this commandment*” (*tereo*: aorist, active, infinitive—used as an indirect command) until the Lord’s return (cf. Joh 15:14 with Jam 2:23).

The doxology (vv. 15–16) is typical of Paul being caught up in the thrill and beauty of his own thought (cf. 1Ti 1:17 and 1Ti 3:16). “*He*” is referring to Christ (v. 14), who is “*the blessed potentate*” (*makarios plus dunastes*—the “happy sovereign” or “joyful ruler,” a beautiful concept! Of all the kings and lords of history, He alone possesses “*immortality*” (*athanasia*—“not able to die”). His spiritual “*light*” of holiness is “*unapproachable*,” and off limits to flesh and blood. One day we will see Him in all His glory. Such a sovereign is worthy of all our loyalty and service!

Paul concludes with a final exhortation that Timothy urge those seeking the riches of this life to “*hope ... in the living God*” (*elpizo*: perfect, active, infinitive, cf. 1:1). By being “*rich in good works*” they will “*lay up*” for themselves (*apothesarizo*: present, active, participle) “*treasure in heaven*” (Mat 6:20).

Note the connection, God “*gives us richly all things to enjoy*,” the purest enjoyment being to use them to bless others, by which we “*send them on ahead*” for ourselves in eternity! And, a final challenge, emphasizing the word “*guard*” (*phulasso*: aorist, active, imperative), “*Guard what [has been] committed to your trust*.”