

Notes on the Greek New Testament
Day 292 – October 19th – 1 Timothy 4:1-16

Works frequently referenced in these notes on 1 & 2 Timothy

Mounce, Willian D

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Chapter 4

"There is a parallel between chap. 1 and chap. 4. In 1:3-17 Paul describes the Ephesian problem and then in 1:18-20 reminds Timothy of what he already knew – and encourages him to do the task. In 4:1-5 Paul tells Timothy more about the Ephesian heresy, and then in 4:6-16 he encourages Timothy to fight the good fight. The issue of asceticism also ties 4:1-5 together with 4:6-16. The opponents taught asceticism, abstention from marriage and certain foods; by contrast, Timothy is to train himself in godliness (v.8). Vv 1-5 therefore conclude the discussion begun in chap 2 and are transitional in that they discuss the heresy and are followed by a personal encouragement for Timothy to deal with the problem." Mounce

Verse 1

Τὸ δὲ πνεῦμα ῥητῶς λέγει ὅτι ἐν ὑστέροις καιροῖς ἀποστήσονται τινες τῆς πίστεως, προσέχοντες πνεύμασι πλάνοις καὶ διδασκαλίαις δαιμονίων
 ῥητῶς expressly, specifically

Here only in the NT.

ὑστερος, α, ον last, later, future; latter
 καιρος, ου m time, age

Cf. Acts 20:29-30; 2 Tim 3:1; 4:3-4. "Paul sees Timothy and himself as being presently in the last times." Mounce.

ἀποστήσονται Verb, fut midd dep indic, 3 pl
 ἀφίσταμαι (verb dep in all forms but aorist) intrans leave, go away, desert
 πιστις, εως f faith, belief, the Christian faith

Mounce thinks της πιστεως belongs with τινες 'some of the faith will apostatise.' He continues, "The people who were falling away were a different group from the opponents, those who were hypocritical liars whose consciences were seared. The context therefore envisions three groups: the opponents, the true believers, and those who had been part of the church but had since been lured away from the faith by the opponents."

προσεχω pay close attention to, hold on to
 πλανος, ον deceitful

διδασκαλια, ας teaching, doctrine, instruction

δαμονιον, ου n demon, evil spirit

Cf. 2 Cor 4:4; Rev 13:11,14; also 2 Tim 2:26; 2 Thess 2:10-11. "Here it is revealed that at the root of the Ephesian heresy lie Satan and his demons, leading people astray and teaching his own doctrines. The role of Satan has already been hinted at in 1 Tim 3:6-7, and it will appear in 2 Tim 2:26 (cf. 1 Tim 1:20 for a discussion of Satan's role). It is also revealed that the opponents are hypocrites whose minds have been branded by Satan. Ultimately they know that what they were doing and teaching is wrong, and yet they persist. They are not honestly mistaken, but in fact carry Satan's brand of ownership on their consciences." Mounce.

Verse 2

ἐν ὑποκρίσει ψευδολόγων, κεκαυστηριασμένων τὴν ἰδίαν συνείδησιν, ὑποκρισις, εως f hypocrisy, pretence
 ψευδολογος, ου m liar
 κεκαυστηριασμένων Verb, perf pass ptc, gen pl καυστηριαζω burn with a hot iron

Mounce argues that the meaning is not that their feelings have been deadened but that Satan has marked them with his brand of ownership.

ιδιος, α, ον one's own
 συνειδησις, εως f conscience

Verse 3

κωλοντων γαμειν, ἀπέχεσθαι βρωμάτων ἃ ὁ θεὸς ἔκτισεν εἰς μετάλημψιν μετὰ εὐχαριστίας τοῖς πιστοῖς καὶ ἐπεγνωκόσι τὴν ἀλήθειαν.

κωλωω hinder, prevent, forbid
 γαμεω marry
 ἀπεχω be distant; midd. abstain from, avoid
 βρωμα, τος n food, solid food

Mounce argues that their teaching included a demand for an ascetic lifestyle that "was surely feigned." He continues, "There was an obvious contradiction in the opponents' behaviour: they eschewed marriage and childbearing, and yet Paul's statement that 'For among them are those who make their way into households and capture weak women, burdened by sins and swayed by various impulses' (2 Tim 3:6) implies that they were sexually promiscuous. Paul has rightly called them hypocritical liars (1 Tim 4:2a)."

κτιζω create, make

μεταλημψις, εως f receiving, accepting

εὐχαριστια, ας f thanksgiving

Cf. 1 Cor 10:30.

πιστος, η, ον faithful, trustworthy, reliable, believing

ἐπεγνωκόσι Verb, perf act ptc, m dat pl

ἐπιγνωσκω perceive, understand

ἀληθεια, ας f truth, reality

"In the PE. ἐπιγνωσκειν, 'to know,' can be synonymous with γνωσκειν, 'to know,' and the perfective use of the preposition ἐπι can be felt – 'know completely'... The perfective nuance would make Paul's statement stronger, and that would be appropriate for this context; the opponents claimed to know the truth, but believers fully understood the truth." Mounce.

Verse 4

ὅτι πᾶν κτίσμα θεοῦ καλόν, καὶ οὐδὲν ἀπόβλητον μετὰ εὐχαριστίας λαμβανόμενον,

κτισμα, τος n what is created, creature
καλος, η, ον good, fine, beautiful, precious

Cf. Rom 14:14.

οὐδεις, οὐδεμια, οὐδεν no one, nothing

ἀποβλητος, ον rejected

εὐχαριστια, ας f thanksgiving

"This is not to say that God's creative goodness in and of itself was ineffectual; it is to say that for believers the thankful recognition of the truth of the gospel, which renounces all stigma from foods formerly pronounced unclean, gives full assurance... Without a belief in the gospel, a person has no assurance that the dietary laws still do not apply." Mounce

Verse 5

ἀγιάζεται γὰρ διὰ λόγου θεοῦ καὶ ἐντεύξεως.

ἀγιαζω sanctify, make holy

ἐντεύξις, εως f prayer, petition

The conjunction of the Word of God and prayer is important. It is not true that everything is sanctified by prayer, for certain things are clearly wrong in themselves – adultery cannot be sanctified by prayer. But where God has commended something, it is to be received with thanksgiving.

Mounce thinks the 'word of God' may here refer to the gospel: "The gospel message reasserts what was true at the beginning: the fruit of the earth is good and available for consumption." Mounce.

Verses 6-16

"4:6-16 is a personal look at Paul's love and concern for Timothy with regard to both his ministry and his personal well-being. It is an admission that even Timothy must be careful not to fall prey to the wiles of the opponents." Mounce

Verse 6

Ταῦτα ὑποτιθέμενος τοῖς ἀδελφοῖς καλὸς ἔση διάκονος Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ, ἐντρεφόμενος τοῖς λόγοις τῆς πίστεως καὶ τῆς καλῆς διδασκαλίας ἧ παρεκλούθηκας,

ὑποτιθέμενος Verb, pres midd ptc, m nom pl
ὑποτιθημι midd point out, teach

'By continually bringing these things to the attention of ...'

καλος, η, ον good, right, proper, fine

ἔση Verb, fut indic, 2 s εἰμι

διακονος, ου m & f servant, minister

ἐντρεφομαι live on, feed on

Here alone in the NT. The present participle suggests being continually (daily) trained by the gospel.

πιστις, εως f faith, trust, the Christian faith
διδασκαλια, ας f teaching, doctrine; act of teaching, instruction

Mounce thinks that here "Paul is differentiating between the basic gospel message ('the words of the faith') and the doctrinal teaching that comes out of it ('the good teaching'). This interpretation is confirmed later in chap. 4 where Paul separates preaching, exhortation, and doctrinal instruction (1 Tim 4:13; cf. 1 Tim 1:10). A reading of the gospel should always be accompanied by the correct interpretation or doctrinal understanding of the gospel. This emphasis on doctrine is similar to Paul's teaching elsewhere that Timothy must handle the gospel correctly (2 Tim 3:14-16)."

παρηκολούθηκας Verb, perf act indic, 2 s

παρακολουθεω follow closely, give careful attention to

Verse 7

τοὺς δὲ βεβήλους καὶ γραώδεις μύθους
παραιτοῦ. γύμναζε δὲ σεαυτὸν πρὸς
εὐσέβειαν·

βεβηλος, ον vile, godless, irreligious
γραωδεις Adjective, m/f nom/acc pl
γραωδης, ες silly, foolish (lit. such as
old women tell)

here only in the NT.

μυθος, ου m myth, fanciful story

I.e. such as mark the Ephesian heresy.

παραιτομαι keep away from, refuse to
hear

γυμναζω train, exercise; discipline

For Paul's use of athletic metaphors cf. 1 Tim
6:12; 2 Tim 2:5; also 1 Cor 9:24-27.

σεαυτου, ης reflexive pronoun yourself
εὐσεβεια, ας f godliness, godly life

Godliness is the proper exercise of the
Christian. If we are to do well in the race or
fight set before us (see v.10), we need both a
healthy diet (see v.6, ἐντρεφομενος τοις
λογοις της πιστεως) and proper exercise (see
also v.8).

Pfitzner contrasts this exercise with the rigours
advocated by the opponents: "It is not the self-
centred ascetic struggle of the individual for
his own moral and religious perfection, but the
training necessary for the unhindered pursuit
of God's purposes. One can imagine that
Timothy's enemies have accused him of moral
laxity since he refuses to follow their demands
of abstention. But he too is to practice a
γυμνασια, a vigorous development and
application of all his strength and ability that
he might serve the glory of God with every
thought and action. Such exercise is not
restricted to a negative physical asceticism, nor
even to the self-disciplinary 'egkrateia' of 1
Cor 9:25ff., but rather implies a positive
developing of his strength nourished above all
'by the words of faith' (v.6)."

Verse 8

ἢ γὰρ σωματικὴ γυμνασία πρὸς ὀλίγον ἐστὶν
ὠφέλιμος, ἢ δὲ εὐσέβεια πρὸς πάντα ὠφέλιμος
ἐστὶν, ἐπαγγελίαν ἔχουσα ζωῆς τῆς νῦν καὶ τῆς
μελλούσης.

σωματικος, η, ον bodily, physical
γυμνασια, ας f training, discipline
ὀλιγος, η, ον little, small

In context, probably means 'for a little while.'
Physical exercise is profitable, but has its focus
only on the present life: even the most well-
developed and muscular body must eventually
be laid in the dust.

ὠφελιμος, ον valuable, useful, beneficial

προς ταυτα "The value of godliness extends far
beyond temporal limits, and to make that
emphasis explicit Paul says 'but godliness has
value not only for all time but also for all
things.'" Mounce

ἐπαγγελια, ας f promise, what is promised
ζωη, ης f life
μελλω coming, future

Cf. Jesus' words in Mk 10:29-30.

Verse 9

πιστὸς ὁ λόγος καὶ πάσης ἀποδοχῆς ἄξιος,

πιστος, η, ον faithful, trustworthy, reliable
ἀποδοχη, ης f acceptance
ἀξιος, α, ον worthy, deserving, fitting

Introduces the third of the five 'faithful
sayings.' Cf. 1:15.

Verse 10

εἰς τοῦτο γὰρ κοπιῶμεν καὶ ὀνειδιζόμεθα, ὅτι
ἠλπίκαμεν ἐπὶ θεῷ ζῶντι, ὃς ἐστὶν σωτὴρ
πάντων ἀνθρώπων, μάλιστα πιστῶν.

εἰς τοῦτο 'to this end.'

κοπιαω work, work hard, labour
ἀγωνιζομαι struggle, fight, compete

This first phrase acts as a second introduction
to the 'faithful saying' which follows. "Not
only is the faithful saying trustworthy and
worthy of total acceptance, but it in fact
expresses the focus of Paul's missionary
labours. What Paul had worked on and
struggled with is proclaiming the gospel of the
living God who has offered salvation to all
people." Mounce.

The verbs used underline the continual hard
work and strenuous effort that Paul and his
team put into the work of the gospel.

ἠλπίκαμεν Verb, perf act indic, 1 pl ἐλπίζω

hope, hope in

ζαω live, be alive

σωτηρ, ηρος m saviour

μαλιστα especially

πιστος, η, ον faithful, believing

The latter part of the verse is difficult, raising
questions concerning the meaning of God
being the Saviour of *all*, but *especially of
believers*. Some interpreters, e.g. Fairbairn and
Hendriksen, understand 'Saviour' to be used in
a reduced sense of God's providential mercy
and deliverance. Hendriksen quotes Calvin
saying that all of the Israelites left Egypt but
that not all arrived in Canaan.

It is probably better to understand that Paul is saying two things. Firstly he is asserting that God is the Saviour of all men in the sense that there is no other Saviour for sinners (see Acts 4:12). It is this conviction that drove on Paul and his team in the work of the Gospel – see the first half of the verse. Secondly, God is, in a particular and wonderful way, the Saviour of those who believe. It is they and they alone who have experienced the saving power and mercy of God. The saying then has a form similar to the second of the faithful sayings in 1 Tim 2:4.

Verse 11

Παράγγελλε ταῦτα καὶ δίδασκε.

παραγγελλω command, instruct

A word implying authority – the authority with which Timothy is to oppose those teaching heresy.

διδασκω teach

Verse 12

μηδεὶς σου τῆς νεότητος καταφρονεῖτω, ἀλλὰ τύπος γίνου τῶν πιστῶν ἐν λόγῳ, ἐν ἀναστροφῇ, ἐν ἀγάπῃ, ἐν πίστει, ἐν ἀγνείᾳ.

μηδεις, μηδεμια, μηδεν no one, nothing
νεοτης, ητος f youth, youthfulness

Timothy at this time must have been in his late 20s or early 30s.

καταφρονεω despise, treat with contempt

A strong word, cf. Matt 6:24; Lk 16:13.

τυπος, ου m pattern, example, type

πιστος, η, ον see v.10

ἀναστροφή, ης f manner of life, conduct

ἐν πνευματι is inserted before ἐν πιστει by TR, possibly after Col 1:8 or 2 Cor 6:2.

πίστει Noun, dat s πιστις, εως f

ἀγνεια, ας f moral purity, chastity

Every one of these qualities is lacking in the opponents at Ephesus. The hallmark of the minister of Christ is to be faithful teaching (v.11) joined with an exemplary godly life. Age is not of primary importance.

Verse 13

ἕως ἔρχομαι πρόσεχε τῇ ἀναγνώσει, τῇ παρακλήσει, τῇ διδασκαλίᾳ.

ἕως ἔρχομαι cf. 3:14.

προσεχω pay close attention to, hold on to
ἀναγνωσις, εως f reading

Reading here is the public reading of the word of God as part of Timothy's ministry.

παρακλησις, εως f encouragement, help

διδασκαλια, ας f teaching; act of teaching, instruction

"The order of the three is significant. Timothy is to immerse himself in the biblical text, to encourage people to follow the text, and to teach its doctrines." Mounce.

Verse 14

μη ἀμέλει τοῦ ἐν σοὶ χαρίσματος, ὃ ἐδόθη σοὶ διὰ προφητείας μετὰ ἐπιθέσεως τῶν χειρῶν τοῦ πρεσβυτερίου.

ἀμελεω disregard, neglect, reject

χαρισμα, τος n gift (from God)

ἐδόθη Verb, aor pass indic, 3 s διδωμι

Cf. 1 Tim 1:18.

ἐπιθεσις, εως f laying on (of hands)

χειρ, χειρος f hand, power

πρεσβυτεριον, ου n body of elders

Paul also had laid hands on Timothy (see 2 Tim 1:6). Mounce says "Paul is encouraging Timothy to make use of the gifts he possesses, gifts made evident at his commissioning into ministry, a commissioning that was accompanied by prophecy and by the ritual of laying on of hands." He thinks δια is used here of attendant circumstances rather than means or cause. The laying on of hands can signify a blessing (Matt 19:13; cf. Heb 6:2), but "Most significantly, the laying on of hands is a ritual identifying a person's call to a specific task and as such is applied to Stephen and his colleagues (Acts 6:6), Paul and Barnabas (Acts 13:3), and in the PE to Timothy (1 Tim 1:18; 4:14) and elders (1 Tim 5:22)."

Verse 15

ταῦτα μελέτα, ἐν τούτοις ἴσθι, ἵνα σου ἡ προκοπὴ φανερὰ ᾖ πᾶσιν·

μελεταω practice, cultivate, think about

Meditation that leads to practice.

ἴσθι Verb, pres imperat, 2 s εἰμι

'Continually immerse yourself in them.'

προκοπη, ης f progress, advancement

Cf. Phil 1:25. Mounce comments, "Three times Paul uses the verb to describe the opponents: they will not progress far because their folly is plain to all (2 Tim 3:9); evil men and deceivers will progress from bad to worse (2 Tim 3:13); and their heresy, which is godless chatter, will lead people into ungodliness (2 Tim 2:16). It is possible that this repetition of the verb in such a short space is an indication that the idea of progress is part of the opponents' teaching, and Paul is turning the term back upon them. In Stoicism, *προσκοπη* referred to the advance made by a person in philosophy..., and this might help explain the play on words and the nature of the heresy... If Paul is appropriating the opponents' terminology, then he is implying that true progress in religion is achieved not through adherence to myths but through following the true gospel as expounded by Timothy."

φανερὸς, α, ον known, evident, visible
ἦ Verb, pres subj, 3s εἶμι

Verse 16

ἔπεχε σεαυτῷ καὶ τῇ διδασκαλίᾳ· ἐπίμενε αὐτοῖς· τοῦτο γὰρ ποιῶν καὶ σεαυτὸν σώσεις καὶ τοὺς ἀκούοντάς σου.

ἐπεχω give close attention to, keep close watch on

σεαυτου, ης reflexive pronoun yourself

Cf. Acts 20:28. "This call to perseverance again emphasises human involvement in the salvation process. Ultimately it is the Lord who keeps and saves, but the continued perseverance of the believer is also required. The question of how these two doctrines can be balanced has bedevilled many centuries of church history. This is the same message Paul earlier sent to the Philippian church, telling them 'work out your salvation with fear and trembling; for God is at work in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure.'"

Mounce

διδασκαλία, ας f see v.13

ἐπίμενω remain, stay, persist in

σῶζω save, rescue, heal

Postscript to Ch. 4.

"This paradigm of Christian ministry, directed specifically to Timothy but applicable to ministers of all times, stands in judgment on those who neglect the teaching of Scripture, consume themselves with arguments about words devoid of godliness, bring reproach upon the church by their sinful lives, refuse to immerse themselves in the things of God, and as a result are destroying not only themselves but also those who listen and follow their example. Conversely, it is a word of encouragement and hope to those who are faithful to the apostolic example and teaching of the gospel." Mounce.