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THE ECCLESIOLOGICAL GROUNDING OF PAULINE  
LANGUAGE OF LEADERSHIP IN 1 AND 2 TIMOTHY

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A Dissertation  
Presented to  
the Faculty of  
The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary

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Doctor of Philosophy

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by  
Robert Lee Stanford  
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**APPROVAL SHEET**

THE ECCLESIOLOGICAL GROUNDING OF PAULINE  
LANGUAGE OF LEADERSHIP IN 1 AND 2 TIMOTHY

Robert Lee Stanford

Read and Approved by:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Hal L. Pettegrew (Chair)

\_\_\_\_\_  
William F. Cook

Date \_\_\_\_\_

To Sue,

My love, my partner.

I experience God's grace over and over again  
every time I consider you, my virtuous wife.

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## PREFACE

I started late. The journey to pursue the PhD was a long time coming. Many of the young men in my learning cohort were younger than my sons. In fact, my first grandson was born before some of their first-borns! I started late. But I began the journey with the best of support of my dear wife of forty-two years, Sue. She understands my passion of learning, and she has always encouraged me to follow that passion. I love her for that reason and many more.

Once the journey began, help came in waves. The PhD program at Southern Seminary gave me what I needed to complete the journey. So, I am indebted to any number of faithful men who taught me and challenged me. For example, sitting at lunch with Dr. Hal Pettegrew was always enjoyable and enriching. He is a teacher's teacher. He teaches his student to teach even as he is teaching. As head of my dissertation committee he continued to teach me! Dr. Timothy Jones stimulated my mind and intimidated me all at the same time. What a scholar. I suspect his seminar, Theological Anthropology, was the proving ground for whether or not one would remain in the program. I am glad I stuck it out. Dr. Michael Wilder helped me to keep my focus on the dissertation work. His seminars became the framework for which I was able to narrow my research intentions. No matter how much I tapered my thoughts, he pushed for more. Last, I am indebted to Dr. William Cook, who worked with Dr. Pettegrew as a New Testament scholar to read and guide this research. I appreciated his comments as both a scholar and pastor.

So, I continued the PhD journey and it proved to be challenging especially in the midst of situations and circumstances we could have never imagined. Yet, I rested in the fact that my heavenly Father had not been surprised or otherwise overtaken by such

distractions. In fact, He had purposed these things in my life, as well as superintended over my life so that I could complete the PhD journey with greater spiritual insight and faith than when I first began the trek.

I am grateful that Sue and I are being led on the journey by the Servant Leader, Jesus. “I will lead the blind by a way they do not know; In paths they do not know I will guide them. I will make darkness into light before them and rugged places into plains. These are the things I will do, and I will not leave them undone” (Isa 42:16).

Robert Stanford

Austin, Texas

May 2015

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

Leadership requires communication and effective leaders communicate with followers in a *language of leadership* (LL). A leader's subtle use of language may determine his or her effectiveness and believability in the process of leading. While leadership studies have become an important emerging discipline, it is significant that many academicians and practitioners have not been able to agree on a single definition of leadership.<sup>1</sup> Indeed Bass states, "Different definitions and concepts of leadership have been presented in countless essays and discussions."<sup>2</sup> Yet one common element appears to be the concept of leadership as *influence*.<sup>3</sup> Thus, the dynamic interaction of leader and follower becomes apparent in the process of leadership.

Such interaction may include elements of *persuasion*. In fact it is doubtful that much leadership is accomplished unless there is interaction and some degree of persuasion. Though the science and art of leadership is more complex than simply persuasion, certainly inducement and encouragement to follow the prompt of a leader is primary. Roger Soder maintains, "Persuasion is a critical function of leadership."<sup>4</sup> Thus one might see the LL in a most fundamental sense as the practice of persuasion: convincing followers of the

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<sup>1</sup>See Joseph C. Rost, *Leadership for the Twenty-first Century* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1993).

<sup>2</sup>Bernard M. Bass and Ruth Bass, *The Bass Handbook of Leadership: Theory, Research and Managerial Applications*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed. (New York: Free Press, 2008), 15.

<sup>3</sup>Peter G. Northouse, *Leadership: Theory and Practice*, 5<sup>th</sup> ed. (Los Angeles: Sage, 2010), 34: "Leadership is a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal."

<sup>4</sup>Roger Soder, *The Language of Leadership* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2001), 1.

validity and value of the course of action, objectives, or the philosophical perspective prescribed by the leader.

The apostle Paul's words were often expressions and application of leadership principles. For example, Paul's opening salvo to Timothy,

As I urged you upon my departure for Macedonia, remain on at Ephesus so that you may instruct certain men not to teach strange doctrines, nor to pay attention to myths and endless genealogies, which give rise to mere speculation rather than furthering the administration of God which is by faith. But the goal of our instruction is love from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith. (1 Tim 1:3-5)<sup>5</sup>

The charge "urge," "is both authoritative and personal."<sup>6</sup> The words of a leader may be spoken with authority and in many cases there may be a personal, relational element involved. Paul's charge to Timothy is specific and direct in its force: "Remain on at Ephesus." Specificity in communication may alleviate misunderstanding and save precious time in completion of a mission objective. Furthermore, Paul is careful to supply Timothy with a meaningful purpose behind his request: "So that you may instruct certain men." Subordinates need to have a reasoned understanding of the purpose for and projected outcome of the task they are expected to address. Yet there is a greater motivation ripe with the pathos of love which should motivate Timothy to obedient action. "The goal of our instruction is love." Thus Paul's LL contains a pragmatic element that addresses a greater spiritual concern. Such is the LL.

While the term language of leadership is not found in Christian Scripture, the concept is. Although there are other motifs and models by which biblical leadership may be understood, two primary models are of chief importance: biblical leadership as servant and shepherd. Often the words of Scripture spoken of and by both the servant and shepherd exude a LL as exhortation and persuasion. Paul serves his Lord as a servant-leader as well as a shepherd-leader.

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<sup>5</sup>All Scripture references are from the New American Standard Bible unless noted otherwise.

<sup>6</sup>George W. Knight III, *The Pastoral Epistles*, The New International Greek Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1992), 71-72.

## Introduction to the Research Problem

From a theological perspective, academic inquiry into LL finds itself in the infancy stage.<sup>7</sup> As the subject matter narrows in its scope, one finds little scholarly research into the specific area of Pauline LL. The paucity of scholarly attention to Pauline LL is addressed in more elaboration in this chapter but it is clear that while there are numerous works on the rhetoric of the New Testament and the oratory and literary style of Paul as well as Paul the leader, there is only nominal investigation into the apostle's LL. In some measure this research has addressed that void.

## Thesis

This research is directed at the language of verbal leadership. To be sure, non-verbal language is also a part of the process of leadership. Bass, citing Remland's studies (1981), states, "When non-verbal messages contradicted verbal ones, the listener tended to trust the nonverbal messages more."<sup>8</sup> Thus, one could surmise that leading by example is an essential nonverbal function of leadership.<sup>9</sup> Indeed Paul's LL includes bold words to the church to follow him as he follows Christ (1 Cor 11:1; Phil 3:17; 2 Thess 3:7, 9). Yet it is the verbal language of leadership this research seeks to investigate. To that end, the words of Paul are examined as he exhorts Timothy to emulate his example.

In line with the concept of the LL, Holladay and Coombs state, "Leadership is a behavior enacted through communication."<sup>10</sup> Accordingly, one may conclude that

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<sup>7</sup>Michale Ayers, "Toward a Theology of Leadership," *Journal of Biblical Perspectives in Leadership* 1 (Fall 2006): 3-27. Ayers asserts in this article that leadership studies do not generally embrace theology in the context of leadership and thus theology and leadership are often divorced in research and practice.

<sup>8</sup>Bass and Bass, *The Bass Handbook*, 128.

<sup>9</sup>Stephen Denning, *The Secret Language of Leadership: How Leaders Inspire Action through Narrative* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2007), 23. "True, the leaders' actions will eventually speak louder than words, but in the short run, it's what leaders say—or don't say—that has the impact." Ibid.

<sup>10</sup>S. J. Holladay and W. T. Coombs, "Communication Visions: An Exploration of the Role of Delivery in the Creation of Leader Charisma," *Management Communication Quarterly* 6 (1993): 405-27.

leadership is behavior and communication: the behavior of communication, as well as communication through behavior. How one communicates is as important as what one communicates, in addition to the context in which communication occurs.

Words seek to bridge a gap of understanding as people express the desires, dreams, fears, and plans for the future or concern of the moment. Every culture has developed a system of symbols, verbal or written, that members of that particular society have identified and agreed upon as possessing a common meaning. Such symbols in the form of sounds, syllables, words, phrases, and sentences threaded together allow for a free flow of ideas. Leaders lead through communication of concepts and ideas with the goal of influencing and persuading followers to receive, accept, and implement such designs.

These principles may be helpful in understanding some generic aspects of communication and yet may also serve to remind of the innate difficulty in discerning matters of language and leadership. To be sure when examining ancient documents, even the sacred text of Scripture, one is struck with the reality of the gulf that exists between understanding the *sitz in leben* of Scripture in light of present day considerations.

While Paul affirmed that “all Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness” (2 Tim 3:16). It is also true that Scripture does not allow a full-window view of Paul’s successes as a leader, his feelings or motives, nor that of his contemporaries. Additionally, Scripture does not consistently record the response of Paul’s followers to him or the more discreet interplay of real-life situations and personalities. In other words, the best scholarship in these matters must concede the possibility of a gapping chasm between the linguistic, psychological, cultural, and contextual perceptions of contemporary life and the realities embedded in Scripture. Yet the thesis of this dissertation is that there is a discernible LL utilized by the apostle that is shaped and defined by a definite ecclesiological grid in 1 and 2 Timothy.

## Key Definitions

Because most of the major terms utilized in this dissertation are common words in Christian and social science vocabularies, it will be easy to assume an incorrect definition of a term in the context of this research. Therefore, it is necessary to elaborate on a few key terms in the dissertation.

### Leadership

In the 1990s, Joseph C. Rost concluded that no precise definition of leadership has been offered by academics or practitioners.<sup>11</sup> “One of the problems stems from the fact that the term leadership, despite its popularity, is not a scientific term with a formal, standardized definition.”<sup>12</sup> Actually many definitions have been forwarded from many different perspectives and disciplines, and therein seems to be the problem in seeking a common understanding. Leadership from a political strategist may be defined differently than would a leader in the field of medicine. Likewise, ministry leadership may be delimited in a manner different than would leadership in the entertainment industry. The point is, the term and definition of leadership is a “socially constructed reality,” which may be precisely defined only in the context of the discipline in which it is practiced.<sup>13</sup> Yet the various definitions appear to support the contention that some elements are common to a general understanding of leadership.

While Rost disparages the definitions of others, he offers a single definition of leadership which surprisingly sounds like so many others: “Leadership is an influence relationship among leaders and followers who intend real changes that reflect their mutual

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<sup>11</sup>Rost, *Leadership for the Twenty-First Century*. Rost documents various definitions of leadership since 1900, and quotes other leaders in the field bemoaning the same concern; there is no central definition of leadership.

<sup>12</sup>Victor H. Vroom and Arthur G. Jago, “The Role of the Situation in Leadership,” *American Psychologist* 62, no. 1 (2007): 17-24.

<sup>13</sup>Rost, *Leadership for the Twenty-First Century*, 14.

purposes.”<sup>14</sup> In spite of its commonality, this managerial perspective and postindustrial concept of leadership may be an appropriate starting point in developing a definition of leadership. Rost documents several definitions of leadership which include elements of his and other scholars’ definitions. According to Schenk, “Leadership is the management of men by persuasion and inspiration rather than the direct or implied threat of coercion.”<sup>15</sup> Copeland states, “Leadership is the art of dealing with human nature. It is the art of influencing a body of people by persuasion or example to follow a line of action.”<sup>16</sup> Rost also documents the 1967 writing of L. J. Edinger who offers,

Leadership is a position in society which is defined by the ability of the incumbent to guide and structure the collective behavior patterns of some or all of its members. It is at all times relational, interpersonal and is based upon inequality of influence between the leader . . . and the followers.<sup>17</sup>

Similar to Rost and others, Northouse defines leadership as “a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal.”<sup>18</sup> Furthermore, Northouse defines leadership with attendant components such as the leader’s influence in the context of groups who are trying to achieve a common objective. For Hogan and Kaiser, such leader-influence is in the context of contention: “Leadership should be defined in terms of the ability to build and maintain a group that performs well relative to its competition.”<sup>19</sup> Bass adds that the leadership process “concerns the cognitions, interpersonal behaviors, and attributions of both the leader and the followers as they

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<sup>14</sup>Ibid., 102.

<sup>15</sup>B. V. Moore, “The May Conference on Leadership,” *Personnel Journal* 6 (1927): 124-28. I utilized the material from Rost, but quoted only authors that could document from primary sources.

<sup>16</sup>Norman Copeland, *Psychology and the Soldier* (Harrisburg, PA: Military Service, 1942), 77.

<sup>17</sup>L. J. Edinger, *Political Leadership in Industrialized Societies* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall), 1.

<sup>18</sup>Northouse, *Leadership*, 3.

<sup>19</sup>Robert Hogan and Robert B. Kaiser, “What We Know about Leadership,” *Review of General Psychology* 2 (2005): 169-80.

affect each other's pursuit of their mutual goals."<sup>20</sup> Bennis suggests that leadership is a process of function, as well as a process of becoming.<sup>21</sup> Likewise, Kotter agrees that leadership, in contrast to management, is "a set of processes."<sup>22</sup> Hunter defines leadership as "the skills of influencing people to enthusiastically work toward goals identified as being for the common good, with character that inspires confidence."<sup>23</sup> Kouzes and Posner state, "Leadership is a relationship between those who aspire to lead and those who choose to lead."<sup>24</sup> Coleman, Boyatzes, and McKee imply that leadership is the ability to create resonance: "A reservoir of positivity that frees the best in people . . . to prime good feelings in the ones they lead."<sup>25</sup> Such resonance would imply the reality of a relationship between leaders and followers. In working toward an integrated definition, Winton and Patterson suggest,

A leader is one or more people who selects, equips, trains, and influences one or more follower(s) who have diverse gifts, abilities, and skills and focuses the follower(s) to the organization's mission and objectives causing the follower(s) to willingly and enthusiastically expend spiritual, emotional, and physical energy in a concerted coordinated effort to achieve the organizational mission and objectives.<sup>26</sup>

Hackman and Johnson arrive at a definition of leadership from a different perspective, which adds greater clarity: "Leadership is human (symbolic) communication, which modifies the attitudes and behavior of others in order to meet shared groups goals

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<sup>20</sup>Bass and Bass, *The Bass HandBook*, 21.

<sup>21</sup>Warren Bennis, *On Becoming a Leader*, rev. and updated ed. (New York: Basic, 2009), 27.

<sup>22</sup>John P. Kotter, *Leading Change* (Boston: Harvard Business School Press, 1996), 25.

<sup>23</sup>James C. Hunter, *The World's Most Powerful Leadership Principle: How to Become a Servant Leader* (New York: Crown, 2004), 32.

<sup>24</sup>James M. Kouzes and Barry Z. Posner, *The Leadership Challenge*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2002), 20.

<sup>25</sup>Daniel Goleman, Richard Boyatzis, and Annie McKee, *Primal Leadership: Learning to Lead with Emotional Intelligence* (Boston: Harvard Business School Press, 2002), 18.

<sup>26</sup>Bruce E. Winston and Kathleen Patterson, "An Integrated Definition of Leadership," *International Journal of Leadership Studies* 1, no. 2 (2006): 6-66.

and needs.”<sup>27</sup> In support of Hackman and Johnson’s idea, Bass indicates that in twelve leadership studies speech was positively connected with leadership. Qualities of speech included tone of voice, talkativeness, and fluency of language.<sup>28</sup> To that point Dewan and Myatt state, “A clear communicator is a leader whose use of language leads to a common understanding of the message being communicated and the policy implications of that message.”<sup>29</sup>

Therefore in light of these definitions and from a social science perspective, the term leadership may be defined as the effort of an individual or group to influence others to accomplish a collective goal through the development of relationships that provide opportunity for proactive application of personal qualities, actions, and words, stimulating the thinking process and emotions, as well as the attendant actions of those being led to effect the desired response of a shared achievement.

While there is nothing innately unacceptable with framing Pauline leadership in the caste of the aforementioned social science definition, it should be acknowledged that no generic word for leadership occurs in the Pauline corpus or the New Testament in general, thus such generalization may potentially do disservice to the Scriptures. While specific words are used in various strata of ancient society the “general designation ‘leader’ is, for the most part, either not used in reference to the early Christian communities or its nature is explicitly redefined or qualified.”<sup>30</sup> To be sure, the Pauline corpus, including the Pastorals, is replete with terms that speak to matters of leadership. Some terms such as

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<sup>27</sup>Michael Z. Hackman and Craig E. Johnson, *Leadership: A Communication Perspective*, 5<sup>th</sup> ed. (Long Grove, IL: Waveland, 2009), 11.

<sup>28</sup>Bass and Bass, *The Bass Handbook*, 83.

<sup>29</sup>Torun Dewan and David P. Myatt, “The Qualities of Leadership: Direction, Communication and Obfuscation,” *American Political Science Review* (September 2007), accessed May 29, 2014, [http://eprints.lse.ac.uk/25159/1/PSPE\\_WP1\\_08\\_%28LSERO%29.pdf](http://eprints.lse.ac.uk/25159/1/PSPE_WP1_08_%28LSERO%29.pdf)

<sup>30</sup>Andrew D. Clarke, *A Pauline Theology of Church Leadership*, Library of New Testament Studies, vol. 362 (New York: T & T Clark, 2012), 1.

elder, overseer, and deacon indicate leadership offices. Although a certain amount of clarity exists as to some of the functions of such leadership, it is also true that information is limited. In other contexts “elder” may simply represent an elderly man, presumably full of wisdom and experience who may offer leadership from such a life base. Another expression of leadership in the NT is the term teacher, but it is unclear as to whether the teacher was a functional form of leadership or an official office. The writings of Paul in prescription and description offer instruction and example as to how leadership functions, but no particular word for or definition of leadership exist.

As previously stated, social science explanations and definitions of leadership are helpful, yet one must be careful in imposing such definitions on a New Testament understanding of leadership, and more specifically, Pauline leadership. In many cases social science offers an accurate description of the manner in which Paul exercised leadership, thus, it is appropriate in some instances to look to social science for a useful description of Pauline leadership. Other aspects of Pauline leadership must be derived directly from the Scriptures, which offer description as well as prescription for leadership.

Consequently, for the purposes of this dissertation Pauline leadership may be understood as the purposeful exercise of authority, love, courage, knowledge, vision, and purpose to communicate and embody Christian doctrine and practice in order to influence and equip the mind and heart of Timothy, the Ephesian elders, and consequently the Ephesian church, to live as God’s family and uphold God’s truth.

### **Language of Leadership**

In arriving at a social science understanding of the language of leadership one is nevertheless drawn to the principle that all truth is God’s truth. In that context it is needful to forward the belief that language, like every other aspect of reality, finds its origin in the creative power of God. God spoke His creation into existence (Gen 1:3, 6, 9, 11, 14, 20, 22, 24, 26, 28-29). Likewise God created humanity, His image bearers, with

the capacity to speak and create meaningful interaction with Him, as well as communication with one another.

Language is an amazing phenomenon. Contemplate the wondrous act of assembling various sounds in such an order that thoughts are audibly passed on and understood. The formation of mental pictures created by sounds formed through the coordinated mechanistic efforts of aspiration of the vocal cords, tongue, and lip formation and even the placement of the teeth, all work as a team to form intelligible sounds and symbols that create communicative mental pictures which are broadcast through words. To function as a human is to communicate. And the primary form of human communication is verbal.

Thus, it is virtually impossible to conceive of a scenario in which human leadership functions devoid of some form of communication. Leaders guide followers to accomplish a common goal which must be understood on some level by the attendants. To “understand” implies the transference of ideas, concepts, or specific information even on the most rudimentary level. Hence some measure of communication has occurred.

Given that leadership is “at the core of human experience,”<sup>31</sup> it may also be asserted communication is an essential function of leadership, in that “language has a central role in human living.”<sup>32</sup> In brief, communication is fundamental to the human experience. Indeed communication, the ability to “create and manipulate symbols,”<sup>33</sup> is a unique mark of what it means to be human, to be an image bearer.

While communication is essential to leadership, it does not guarantee that the process of effective leadership is moving forward. Certainly an authoritative speech, an

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<sup>31</sup>Hackman and Johnson, *Leadership*, 2.

<sup>32</sup>Vern Sheridan Poythress, *In the Beginning Was the Word: Language—A God-Centered Approach* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2009), 10.

<sup>33</sup>Hackman and Johnson, *Leadership*, 5.

emotional plea, or even a rational appeal to logic and common sense may or may not serve as effective leadership behavior or achieve the desired leadership result. An individual may function as a leader and yet never capture the essence of effective *leader-speak*. Equally true is that effective communication may be the determinative factor in both leader effectiveness and follower satisfaction.<sup>34</sup>

Effective leaders communicate with followers in a LL that seeks to persuade subordinates to follow the plan and directives of the leader. Thus the LL is fundamentally the language of persuasion and influence. It is notable that leadership should be understood as a proactive application of certain personal abilities, activities, and words. Proactive use of words indicates that leaders must carefully consider how they communicate with followers: “Leaders spend much of their time shaping messages that are then presented to a variety of followers.”<sup>35</sup> Conversely Fairhurst and Sarr claim, “Even though most leaders spend nearly 70 percent of their time communicating, they pay relatively little attention to how they use their language as a tool of influence.”<sup>36</sup> It is obvious that some leaders have come to an understanding of the vital role of effective leader-speak and others have not. Such consideration is not limited to the content of the information shared but also the context in which the language is framed. The LL is cognizant of and gives consideration to the importance of words and phrases. R. E. Sanders speaks of “a certain artfulness in the way speakers sequentially place and phrase what they say for the sake of being responsive to what has gone before, and as the same time anticipatory of fostering desired

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<sup>34</sup>Paul E. Madlock “The Link between Leadership Style, Communicator Competence, and Employee Satisfaction,” *Journal of Business Communication* (2008), accessed June 25, 2014, <http://job.sagepub.com/cgi/contents/abstract/45/1/61>; S. J. Berman and S. A. Hellweg, “Perceived Supervisor Communication Competence and Supervisor Satisfaction as a Function of Quality Circle Participation,” *Journal of Business Communication* 26 (1989): 103-22.

<sup>35</sup>Hackman and Johnson, *Leadership*, 21.

<sup>36</sup>Gail T. Fairhurst and Robert A. Sarr, *The Art of Framing: Managing the Language of Leadership* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1996), xi.

consequences.”<sup>37</sup>

Just as there is no single definition of leadership, there is no consensus of a proper definition of the LL should be. Yet I reviewed no small number of offerings on the LL and found common characteristics to be present. The LL may be understood as a verbal bridge constructed between leader and followers that enables the hearers to conceptualize new thoughts and challenges. Leaders always carefully consider such verbal connections so that honesty, clarity, winsomeness, passion, and reasonableness are part of the fabric of the words and conversation. Accordingly, the LL is also dialogue, not one-sided monologue. Ultimately, the LL communicates visionary purpose and pragmatic results. Ultimately, the LL seeks to persuade and influence followers to cross the verbal bridge constructed by the leader and commence as a team to accomplish that which the leader has described and prescribed. Such leader-speak is a studied and deliberate process that is both science and art.

No suggestion is made here that the apostle Paul was studied in the science and art of effective leader-speak as understood by modern scholarship. Yet one might assume that Paul weighed his words carefully as he exercised apostolic leadership. To that point, the apostle’s LL is understood as the written word which was most likely intended for a public reading.<sup>38</sup> In reference to the LL as an art and science, it may be needful to suggest that in all likelihood Paul was probably informed by the rhetorical principles of Aristotle, Socrates, Plato, Gorgias, Isocrates, and the like, and furthermore as a Spirit-led individual,<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>37</sup>R. E. Sanders, “The Effect of Interactional Competence on Group Problem-Solving,” in *Interacting and Organizing: Analyses of a Board Meeting*, ed. F. Cooren (Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum, 2007), 163-69.

<sup>38</sup>Ben Witherington III, *New Testament Rhetoric: An Introductory Guide to the Art of Persuasion in and of the New Testament* (Eugene, OR: Cascade, 2009), 97: Witherington helpfully reminds that Paul understood his words would be read aloud so that they should be, “*heard* as persuasive, not merely seen to be persuasive.”

<sup>39</sup>James A. Merrick, *The History and Theory of Rhetoric: An Introduction*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 2001), 35: “In Greece, rhetoric took hold as a major aspect of culture and education, a position it maintained for much of subsequent Western history. The ability to speak persuasively had long

he was able to effectively speak LL. Thus my contention and a working definition of Pauline LL, primarily through writing in 1 and 2 Timothy, is: words communicated in and through an awareness of and influenced by the rhetorical teaching of his day and that ultimately such knowledge and skill was utilized by the Holy Spirit to enable Paul to lead through his writing. Additionally, Paul's leader-speak was determined by the theological purpose he was addressing and the person or persons to whom he was writing, as well as the problem(s) to be attended and the context of the leadership situation. Pauline LL is characterized by authoritative truthfulness, confrontational honesty, and clarity of purpose, familial winsomeness, and reasonableness which reflects a didactic approach to leadership.

In contrast to the presumption previously stated, it is commonly asserted that Paul was probably an unskilled speaker. This is understandable given his own testimony. "And when I came to you, brethren, I did not come with superiority of speech or of wisdom, proclaiming to you the testimony of God" (1 Cor 2:1). Likewise, "But even if I am unskilled in speech, yet I am not *so* in knowledge" (2 Cor 11: 6a). Yet interestingly in Lystra the crowd called Paul, Hermes, because he was the chief speaker (Acts 14:12). Hermes was the divine messenger whose reliance on the power of speech was legendary. Certainly Luke's record of the well-crafted Pauline sermons and speeches in Acts speaks to some measure of the rhetorical ability of Paul as does his expertly crafted argument in the Roman letter, to mention only one of his epistles. Whereas the nuances of Paul's words to the Corinthians regarding his rhetorical ability may be under scrutiny, it appears that according to Acts 14 Paul was not an ineffective speaker.

While the issue of Paul's verbal acuity may never be settled, his letters speak to superior rhetorical skills. And it is primarily through his written words that he

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been valued by the Greeks, but was viewed as a natural talent, or even as a gift from the gods. Nevertheless, training in rhetoric became the very foundation of Greek education, and eventually came to be viewed as the principal sign of an educated and influential person."

exercises leadership. To that end, Clarke maintains that “rhetoric and personal example are the two principle tools of persuasion adopted and promoted by Paul.”<sup>40</sup>

## Church

The gathering, or assembly of God’s people, is defined by Paul in 1 Timothy as the “household of God,” the “ekklesia” “of the Living God.” While the concepts and practice of the LL within the context of 1 and 2 Timothy are generally applicable to the universal church, the focus of this study is on “church” as the household of God in Ephesus. Furthermore, the concept of church will be understood as multiple congregations within Ephesus that meet in individual houses but who may come together on occasion.

The texts of 1 and 2 Timothy have been unearthed in arriving at a conceptual understanding of the church as the “household of God,” the family of God. Yet brief inquiry into a broader view of the same Pauline concept is in order. Hellerman is correct in suggesting that passages such as Romans 4:1-18, 8:12-29, Galatians 3:26-4:7, and 1 Thessalonians 2:7-12, in addition to words and concepts such as God as *Father*, *adoption*, *ancestral line*, and *inheritance*, speak to the idea of church as family.<sup>41</sup> First Corinthians 4:14- 21 contains winsome familial speech and concepts such as “my beloved children” (v. 14), “I became your father through the gospel” (v. 15), and “Timothy, who is my beloved and faithful child” (v. 17). Certainly the following passage reveals a gentle, as well as a stern father: “What do you desire? Shall I come to you with a rod, or with love and a spirit of gentleness?” (v. 21).

The testimony of Scripture reflects the socio-religious practice of the day:<sup>42</sup> the Pauline mission depended on individual homes and home owners to further the Christian

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<sup>40</sup>Clarke, *A Pauline Theology of Leadership*, 147.

<sup>41</sup>Joseph H. Hellerman, *The Ancient Church as Family* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2001), 93.

<sup>42</sup>Udo Schnelle, *Apostle Paul: His and Life and Theology*, trans. M. Eugene Boring (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2005), 153-57.

movement (Acts 16:14-5, 16:29-34, 17:1-9, 18:1-4, 7-8; 1 Cor 16:19; Rom 16:3, 5, 16:14-15, 23; Phlm 1-2, 21-22; Col 4:15). While there is no mention of a home owner or house church in 1 and 2 Timothy, Acts 18 strongly suggests the existence of a church in Prisca and Aquila's house. Regardless, Paul spoke to matters concerning the church at Ephesus (1 Tim 1:3). Therefore the definition of "church" should be understood as a congregation(s) of redeemed individuals who meet in specific houses, enjoy a loving, caring familial relationship, and who maintain a unified identity in doctrine and practice with other house churches.

The church as the household of God speaks of a redeemed assembly of brothers and sisters in loving relationship with each other and the Living God. Although Paul refers to himself as father it is true nonetheless that the church of the Pastorals is ultimately under the scrutiny and care of the Living God. Robert Banks, in reference to Pauline writings other than 1 and 2 Timothy, offers insight into the situation of the household of God in Ephesus where doctrine and Christian conduct is being threatened: "The meeting of Christians with their God is more analogous to the encounter between adult children and their father where they are able to relate to him, not only in the most intimate, but increasingly in the most mature fashion."<sup>43</sup>

### **Delimitations and Methodology**

In order to safeguard the thesis and intended purpose of this dissertation, and as a means by which confusion may be avoided, this dissertation is delimited in the following fashion:

1. Except for needful forays into other Pauline literature for comparative support, this research is delimited to 1 and 2 Timothy.
2. First and 2 Timothy are delimited as authentic Pauline documents.

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<sup>43</sup>Robert J. Banks, *Paul's Idea of Community: The Early House Churches in Their Cultural Setting*, rev. ed. (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1994), 49-50.

3. First and 2 Timothy are delimited as documents that represent at least a primary level of institutionalization of the church and leadership structure.
4. This dissertation is delimited to the utilization of Pauline language of leadership in the context of the established purpose of 1 and 2 Timothy and the concept of leadership as expressed through the language of 1 and 2 Timothy.
5. The research is delimited to the study of Paul's leadership and how he communicates and conducts his particular leadership through words: primarily to Timothy, secondarily to the Ephesian elders and church, and by extension to believers today. Such delimitations should be differentiated from a primarily exegetical study, although such is obviously crucial to qualitative results; a rhetorical study, though the rhetoric of Paul will be evident; and a socio-historical perspective. Yet I considered all of those matters.
6. This research is methodologically delimited as utilizing the best research tools available, exegetical, historical, and communication studies, as I brought my own ideas, as well as that of the scholarly community to address the research.

### **Precedent Literature**

Leadership and communication are inseparable. It is difficult to imagine any scenario in which a leader may lead without utilizing some form of communicative language. Thus, it is expected that one may discover a vast library of academic and popular books and articles addressing leadership and language. A veritable library, *The Bass Handbook of Leadership: Theory, Research, & Managerial Applications*, contains over 8,500 bibliographic references of some aspect of leadership.<sup>44</sup> Clearly the task of any researcher, as pertains to leadership studies, is to narrow the list of innumerable offerings to those that may inform the subject of inquiry. Furthermore as formal leadership studies have emerged over the decades, the subject of communication as a function of leadership has engendered great interest.

This research required investigation into leadership and language—the language of leadership. Secular writers have concluded that leadership is *behavior and communication* and that there is a LL. Thus the following section offers some preliminary conclusions of social scientists in their investigation into the LL.

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<sup>44</sup>Bass and Bass, *The Bass Handbook of Leadership*.

## Social Science Research

I was introduced to the concept of the LL through the social sciences. It was the phrase *language of leadership* that arrested my attention and informed my intellectual curiosity as a pastoral leader. The scholars and publications mentioned next represent my formative research.<sup>45</sup>

**Louis Pondy.** The specific phrase *Language of Leadership* is decidedly secular in origin. In his essay “Leadership is a Language Game,” first published in 1964, Pondy introduced what appears to be the initial and purposeful mention of language and leadership as a cooperative verbal concept.<sup>46</sup> In his ground-breaking article, Pondy writes, “The dual capacity to make sense of things and to put them into language meaningful to large numbers of people gives the person who has it enormous leverage”<sup>47</sup> Some years later, Pondy wrote,

Language plays at least four important and distinct roles in social behavior, including organizational behavior: 1. It controls our perceptions: it tends to filter out of conscious experience those events for which terms do not exist in the language. 2. It helps to define the meaning of our experiences by categorizing streams of events. 3. It influences the ease of communication: one cannot exchange ideas information or meanings except as the language permits. 4. It provides a channel of social influence.<sup>48</sup>

Since Pondy’s 1964 article, an avalanche of publications have littered the landscape advancing similar ideas, developing new theses, and raising new areas of

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<sup>45</sup>Others writers not mentioned in this brief analysis, who have contributed to the conversation through other publications, include Michael Quirk and Patricia M. Fandt, *The 2<sup>nd</sup> Language of Leadership* (Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 2000); Denning, *The Secret Language of Leadership*; and Gail T. Fairhurst, *The Power of Framing* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2011).

<sup>46</sup>Harold J. Leavitt, Louis R. Pondy, and David M. Boje, “Leadership Is a Language Game,” in *Readings in Managerial Psychology*, ed. Harold J. Leavitt and David M. Boje (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1964), 224-34.

<sup>47</sup>Ibid., 95.

<sup>48</sup>Louis R. Pondy and Ian I. Mitroff, “Beyond Open System Models of Organization,” in *Researching Organizational Behavior*, ed. Louis R. Pondy and Ian I. Mitroff (1979), 1:3-39.

inquiry. One such book by Fairhurst and Sarr appears to be an answer to Pondy's ruminations on learning to utilize or wield the power of the spoken word.

**Gail T. Fairhurst and Robert A. Sarr.** In *The Art of Framing: Managing the Language of Leadership* (1996),<sup>49</sup> authors Fairhurst and Sarr use the term "framing," which suggests, among other ideas, that leaders be cognizant of and utilize opportunities in formal and informal conversation to forward leadership ideas. To "frame" one's leader-speak in the manner of Fairhurst and Sarr may require the leader to spontaneously cast a vision and empower followers "to see the world you [the leader] sees."<sup>50</sup> Yet the authors maintain that even in such informal moments of spontaneity, leaders should prepare to cast their vision. The groundwork for framing includes thought and forethought in the shaping of language. The authors write, "Our language choices are critical to the management of meaning,"<sup>51</sup> and they devote an entire chapter to the utilization of metaphor, jargon, contrast, spin, and stories.<sup>52</sup>

**Marlene Caroselli.** Caroselli's *The Language of Leadership*, published in 1990, offers a comprehensive analysis including direct examples of the speaking and writing styles of famous leaders.<sup>53</sup> Within the context of different leadership styles she offers insight into their LL. Basically Caroselli offers an analysis of the commonly mentioned personal and professional qualities attributed to effective leadership, with the important caveat that such analysis is of their verbal and, or written leader-speak. For example, it is commonly asserted that effective leaders are often inspirational figures.

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<sup>49</sup>Fairhurst and Sarr, *The Art of Framing*.

<sup>50</sup>Ibid., 50.

<sup>51</sup>Ibid., 7.

<sup>52</sup>Ibid., 100-26.

<sup>53</sup>Marlene Caroselli, *The Language of Leadership* (Amherst, MA: Human Resources Development, 1990).

While such inspiration may come from any number of sources (their devoted efforts in spite of overwhelming difficulty or their ability to be flexible in the midst of changing conditions), Caroselli cites inspirational speeches or writings—their LL.

Yet the LL is more than just a language-centered reflection of leadership qualities or actions, it is also a matter of style. According to Caroselli, the LL includes a serious consideration of the utilization of stylistic devices: “The effective leader recognizes . . . *style* is sometimes more important than *substance*.”<sup>54</sup> Additionally she states that the LL includes a purposeful consideration of the language of psychology. An effective leader will purposely utilize communicative tools such as cognitive dissonance, overwhelming supportive data, and repetition of the message, as well as other factors such as the ability to “soften a harsh reality”<sup>55</sup> and the “hope factor.”<sup>56</sup>

**Roger Soder.** Soder did not intend *The Language of Leadership* to be another treatise on the full range of the qualities or actions of the effective leader but rather to concentrate on the art of persuasion: what it is and how to utilize it. Soder’s concern is that leaders be able to effectively express their vision as well as convince others to follow. This task, beyond the grasp of even the most gifted orator, must be approached through the construction of well-informed arguments.

However, the LL requires an intermediate step before the construction of an argument: the strategic task of gathering information. Such information gathering is not just for the formation of the vision of the leader but so the leader may properly anticipate “how people are going to respond to the proposed policy.”<sup>57</sup> Soder’s point is that this step

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<sup>54</sup>Ibid., 77.

<sup>55</sup>Ibid., 152.

<sup>56</sup>Ibid., 162.

<sup>57</sup>Soder, *The Language of Leadership*, 27.

is necessary in the formulation of a LL. Soder discusses what in essence is standard rhetorical theory, basically four rudimentary kinds of argument.<sup>58</sup> At this point his work most resembles that of Caroselli. Yet the LL is also practiced in context. While Soder's contextual concern is in the political arena, the principles are transferable.

### **Biblical Investigation into the Language of Leadership**

While I was introduced to the concept of the LL through the social sciences, at this point it is necessary to bring Scripture to bear on this topic. Do the Scriptures describe or prescribe a LL? Do scholars and practitioners of the Scriptures promote the beneficial reality of a biblical LL? Can one find evidence in the Scripture of a functional Pauline LL?

As already mentioned, academic inquiry into the LL has not been widely or vigorously pursued from a Christian perspective. Certainly countless works exist on Paul's theology and ecclesiology as well as his oratory and literary style. A vast library of works serve as commentary on the Pauline corpus. Likewise, as the general subject of leadership has become a major topic of academic and pragmatic interest so has research dedicated to Paul's leadership. Yet only nominal investigation examines the apostle's LL. Accordingly, published research into Pauline LL exists only as subdivisions of major themes. Yet such subdivisions provided impetus to pursue a Pauline LL.

**P. N. Harrison.** In 1921, P. N. Harrison published *The Problem of the Pastoral Epistles*. This extensive work of exegetical analysis of the Pastoral Epistles offers great insight into the theological vocabulary of the epistles. Yet, *The Problem of the Pastoral Epistles* poses a problem. Following Schleiermacher's thesis (1807), Harrison rejects Pauline authorship. Even though Harrison claims the Pastoral Epistles to be pseudonymous, his work remains valuable as a source of scholarly understanding into

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<sup>58</sup>Ibid., 6-25.

the vocabulary of the Pastorals and thus offers insight into a latent LL.

**Wayne A. Meeks.** Speaking of the Pauline church, in *The First Urban Christians: The Social World of the Apostle Paul*, Meeks maintains that “the social structure of the organization is concerned largely with leadership, the allocation of power, the differentiation of roles, and the management of conflict”<sup>59</sup> Furthermore Meeks contends Paul utilized a body of words that identified a “unique culture”<sup>60</sup> of Pauline churches. While Meeks does not include the Pastoral Epistles in his discussion, insight into Pauline social-structure construction through the use of language suggests the utilization of an apostolic LL.

**Helen Doohan.** Doohan’s *Leadership in Paul*, published in 1984, offers understanding of “a religious leadership that explicitly results from his call to preach the gospel.”<sup>61</sup> Doohan addresses each of the uncontested Pauline letters in helpfully organized chapters that include Paul’s interaction and response to each community of faith and concludes with an assessment of leadership. The author deals with few LL issues because the focus of her results is “on the person Paul in the correspondence”<sup>62</sup> in addition to matters of theological import. Yet, Doohan’s research implies the organic expression of a LL.

**Steve Walton.** In *Leadership and Lifestyle: The Portrait of Paul in the Miletus Speech and 1 Thessalonians*,<sup>63</sup> Steve Walton examines Paul’s Acts 20 speech in order to

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<sup>59</sup>Wayne A. Meeks, *The First Urban Christians: The Social World of the Apostle Paul*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2003), 84.

<sup>60</sup>Ibid., 85.

<sup>61</sup>Helen Doohan, *Leadership in Paul* (Wilmington, DE: Michael Glazier, 1984), 23.

<sup>62</sup>Ibid., 26.

<sup>63</sup>Steve Walton, *Leadership and Lifestyle: The Portrait of Paul in the Miletus Speech and 1 Thessalonians* (London: Cambridge Press, 2000). One concern of Walton is to discern the level, if any, of

compare the content and style with 1 Thessalonians, as well as “the so-called deutero-Paulines . . . namely Ephesians and 2 Timothy (chapter 6).”<sup>64</sup> The author identifies and analyzes four major themes in the speech, including leadership, and contends, “A sharply focused portrait of Christian leadership . . . emerges . . . . Moreover the Miletus meeting presents Paul calling the Ephesian leaders to imitate this model.”<sup>65</sup> Walton’s analytical approach to Paul’s speech reveals both descriptive and prescriptive aspects of Paul’s leadership practice and ministry philosophy.

**Susan Eastman.** Eastman’s *Recovering Paul’s Mother Tongue: Language and Theology in Galatians* argues that the apostle moves his audience from the Law of captivity and indecision about the gospel, to a strong adherence to Christ alone. Eastman writes,

The message and the medium are inseparable: Paul’s discourse—packed with familial images, representative, vulnerable and yet authoritative, and above all, marked by personal suffering—demonstrates for his converts the content of the gospel.<sup>66</sup>

Eastman attributes the effectiveness of the transforming message of Paul to his use of maternal language.

The mother tongue is language not as mere communication but as relation, relationship. It connects. It goes two ways, many ways, an exchange, a network. Its power is not in dividing but in binding, not in distancing but in uniting . . . . This is the language of emotions and personal experiences . . . such language exposes rather than protects the speaker, and therefore it is a fearful enterprise.<sup>67</sup>

**Ben Witherington.** In 2009, Ben Witherington wrote in *New Testament*

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Luke’s contribution to Paul’s speech stating, “Past scholarly work suggests that within the speech there is evidence of both Lukan composition and Pauline language and concepts.” Ibid., 4.

<sup>64</sup>Ibid., 33.

<sup>65</sup>Ibid., 200.

<sup>66</sup>Susan Eastman, *Recovering Paul’s Mother Tongue: Language and Theology in Galatian Letter* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007), 6.

<sup>67</sup>Ibid., 8.

*Rhetoric*, “Unfortunately too little study has been done thus far on the rhetoric of the Pastoral Epistles.”<sup>68</sup> Likewise he maintains, “The rhetorical analysis of 2 Timothy has not been properly undertaken in full.”<sup>69</sup> In one brief chapter Witherington establishes the rhetorical character and elements of the Pastoral Epistles: “Paul has a coherent theology closely allied to an argumentative strategy.”<sup>70</sup> In reference to 1 Timothy, Witherington declares that Paul utilizes the traditions, liturgical language, and disparate material, including maxims such as “welded into a persuasive form” to lead the church into Christian truth and behavior.<sup>71</sup> Witherington demonstrates the profit of an in-depth inquiry into the Pastoral Epistles’ LL.

**Andrew D. Clarke.** Clarke’s *A Pauline Theology of Church Leadership* provides deep analysis of Paul’s perspective of leadership in addition to his understanding of how influential members of the Christian community should lead. As the focus of the work is obviously on Pauline leadership, Clarke offers helpful examination into the tools of a “Pauline leader.”<sup>72</sup> Citing the first instrument of Pauline leadership as “verbal persuasion”<sup>73</sup> Clarke maintains, “Paul used a wide range of approaches, of varying strength and forcefulness.”<sup>74</sup> Clarke’s work added to the seed material, which proved to be a fruitful investigation of Pauline LL.

**Jack Barentsen.** Pauline LL within the context of the Pastoral Epistles is

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<sup>68</sup>Witherington, *New Testament Rhetoric*, 160.

<sup>69</sup>Ibid., 173.

<sup>70</sup>Ibid., 164.

<sup>71</sup>Ibid., 173.

<sup>72</sup>Clarke, *A Pauline Theology of Leadership*, 156.

<sup>73</sup>Ibid., 157.

<sup>74</sup>Ibid., 167.

examined in Jack Barentsen's *Emerging Leadership in the Pauline Mission*. Barentsen argues, "Paul instituted uniform patterns of leadership for those levels of leadership, which sustained the consistent communication of Paul's gospel in each community in alignment with other churches in the Pauline network."<sup>75</sup> Barentsen devotes three chapters to an examination of leadership issues in Ephesus as well as specific attention to leadership structure in 1 Timothy and correction of leadership misconceptions in 2 Timothy. Each chapter contains insightful observations concerning Pauline leadership and communication strategies. While Barentsen's work is not an extended discussion of Pauline LL in the Pastoral Epistles, it contributes to the discussion and provides a strong incentive to apply intense effort into the subject.

Finally, a multitude of commentaries are devoted to an exegetical analysis of the Pastoral Epistles. Such exegesis inherently reveals elements of language in relation to leadership, yet the focus of these works is not specifically aimed at an exposition of a theology of leadership, or the communicative practices of leaders. Thus, while one may find intriguing intimations of the LL in any number of exegetical commentaries, generally speaking, the issue of the LL is not raised as a discipline or explored in any depth, yet each work contributed greatly to this research.

### **Conclusion to Precedent Literature**

To a great extent, the social sciences describe what already existed in the pages of Scripture: a LL that figures prominently in effective guidance and headship. Likewise many of the prescriptive instructions concerning the practice of effective leader-speak that have emanated from secular theory find pragmatic expression in the lives of biblical leaders.

In-depth inquiry into the LL from a biblical perspective was warranted in that

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<sup>75</sup>Jack Barentsen, *Emerging Leadership in the Pauline Mission: A Social Identity Perspective on Local Leadership Development in Corinth and Ephesus*, Princeton Theological Monograph Series 168, ed. K. C. Hanson and Charles M. Charles (Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2011), 15.

it had not been previously addressed, to any significant degree, and the fruit of such labor is further discovery of biblical principles of leadership through the lens of leader-speak. Correspondingly, as far as I was able to determine, Pauline LL within the context of the Pastoral Epistles had not been explored to any degree of depth. Because the Pastoral Epistles are recognized as documents related to church order and leadership and little investigation into the LL within the Pastoral Epistles had been realized, this examination of Pauline LL in 1 and 2 Timothy was more than merited. To that end, the following pathway served as my template for this research.

### **Focus and Direction**

The chapters subsequent to chapter 1 addressed the thesis statement of this dissertation. In his letters to Timothy, Paul speaks to his young protégé, the Ephesian leaders, and ultimately the church, in a LL based on a specific ecclesiology, the preservation and promotion of gospel truth, as well as to describe and prescribe an ethic of godliness on the part of the household of God.

Chapter 2, “Pauline Ecclesiology in 1 and 2 Timothy,” offers a biblical base for the theological context and purpose of both epistles that informs Paul’s LL. This second foundational chapter contains an abstract of Pauline theology, a theological analysis of Pauline ecclesiology in 1 and 2 Timothy, and an exegetical treatment of 1 Timothy 3:15 that champions the church as “the household of the living God, which is the pillar and support of the truth.” Chapter 2 delivers an image of the epistles that captures the ecclesiological grounding of Pauline LL.

Chapter 3, “Church as the Household of God,” is strategically significant in that it expounds an interpretation of the central metaphor of this research. The church as God’s household links saved sinners to God’s family. Thus it is a pronouncement of God’s possession of the church, as well as a description of how the family should operate, and how individuals within the family must respond to one another and to the world, and in that manner fulfill their respective duties of protecting and promoting the

gospel truth.

Chapter 4, “Church as Pillar and Support of the Truth,” ultimately proclaims the central Christian proposition: Jesus Christ is the Messiah Savior who was murdered on a cross and arose the third day. As pillar and support of such truth, the church is described in an exalted fashion. Thus chapter 4, utilizing the powerful metaphors of pillar and support, identifies the church as the steward of God’s truth and advances such stewardship as orthodoxy and orthopraxy.

“Pauline Leadership Language as Father and Teacher” is mined from 1 and 2 Timothy. Chapter 5 addresses a discernible LL utilized by Paul and shaped by the theological context and biblical exegesis of 1 and 2 Timothy discussed in previous chapters. Within the context of the church as a household, a *fatherly* perspective is apparent in the conversational framing and vocabulary Paul utilizes, as well as the tenor of his words to Timothy. Likewise, chapter 5 reveals Paul’s leader-speak from the pedagogical approach of a *teacher*, particularly in the employment of metaphorical illustrations, preformed materials, and rhetorical strategies.

Chapter 6 investigates Pauline LL as an *example*. “The Leadership Language of Example” argues that the language of example is both implicit and explicit in Paul’s exercise of leadership. Paul’s leader-speak is often the *rhetoric of example*, as in suffering and godly behavior. Such language communicates the ideas of leading by example and following the example of the leader. This implicit language is often that of influence and persuasion, as well as contrast. At other times this investigation shows that Paul is frequently direct and explicit in his LL of example.

Finally, chapter 7, “Conclusions and Implications for Pastoral Leaders,” summarizes the work and draws potential implications for leaders from the research. The research unearthed three broad principles that are more fully developed and proposed under the heading of “Practical Implications.”

CHAPTER 2  
PAULINE ECCLESIOLOGY IN 1 AND 2 TIMOTHY

Purpose often regulates choice, and the leader-speak of effective leaders is frequently determined by the totality of the mission statement. Thus meaning is contextual. Words form sentences and sentences are intended to proffer arguments and narratives that address the texts and subtexts of the operation, as well as promote appropriate responses to the mission objective. A leader utilizes controlled language to achieve mission goals. Gail T. Fairhurst brands such an approach, which controls the context and defines the situation, as “framing.”<sup>1</sup> Fairhurst and Robert Sarr state, “Effective leaders . . . use language in ways that allow us to see leadership not only as big decisions but as a series of moments in which images build upon each other to help us construct a reality to which we must then respond.”<sup>2</sup> Vern Sheridan Poythress speaks of the “wave” perspective of language in which language is not primarily stable pieces but a dynamic process of communication in which “God is in control of all these processes.”<sup>3</sup> To that point it shall be apparent in the examination of 1 Timothy 3:14-15 that the apostle Paul frames his vision of the church as well as his purpose for writing to Timothy in textured layers of meaning, clearly expressed in descriptive “sense-making” metaphors.<sup>4</sup> Furthermore, such tiers of

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<sup>1</sup>Gail T. Fairhurst, *The Power of Framing* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2011), 2-3.

<sup>2</sup>Gail T. Fairhurst and Robert Sarr, *The Art of Framing: Managing the Language of Leadership* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1996), 1.

<sup>3</sup>Vern Sheridan Poythress, *In the Beginning Was the Word: Language—A God-Centered Approach* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2009), 53.

<sup>4</sup>Ken W. Parry, “The Thing about Metaphors and Leadership,” *International Leadership Journal* 1 (November 2008), accessed January 3, 2013, <http://www.tesc.edu/ij/>: “[W]ith metaphors we have a means of improving our capacity for creative yet disciplined thought, which in turn enables us to cope with the complexity of (organizational) life. The visual and symbolic nature of metaphors helps this

expression construct a doctrine of the church; an ecclesiology that is grounded on the greater doctrine of God expressed in the theology of the Pastorals.

That Paul expresses a pragmatic theology of the church in metaphorical language is not unexpected or unusual. Pauline metaphorical rhetoric is found elsewhere. For example, “But we proved to be gentle among you, as a nursing *mother* tenderly cares for her own children” (1 Thess 2:7). Other relational metaphors include “as a father” (1 Thess 2:11), the race for the “prize” (Phil 3:12-14), and the church as the “bride” of Christ (Eph 5:22-23). Undeniably, the Pastorals are filled with metaphorical language as Pauline leader-speak.<sup>5</sup> Paul’s metaphorical language is the product of his life experiences and education as well as the culture in which he lived. While Jesus’ metaphorical language<sup>6</sup> mostly reflects his small-town and rural environment, the apostle Paul’s speech shines forth from the light of the large metropolitan areas in which he lived, particularly Ephesus, where he lived for two years according to Acts 19:10.<sup>7</sup> It is not unreasonable to suggest that Paul was schooled in rhetorical studies and that his use of persuasive leadership

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happen. The metaphor creates a visual image in the mind of the recipient. Research into clinical psychology suggests that people will remember concrete things like goose and egg much more readily than abstract concepts like confusion, debt, and wastage. Consequently, people will picture in their minds, and therefore remember, the metaphor of killing the goose that laid the golden egg much more readily than they will remember the factors that led to a loss of innovation, market-share, and profitability. Leaders are therefore able to influence followers in ways that the leaders intend and desire.”

<sup>5</sup>Warfare, 1 Tim 1:18; 2 Tim 2:3,6; architecture, 1 Tim 3:13-15; 6:19; 2 Tim 2:19; agriculture, 1 Tim 4:10; 5:17-18; 6:10; Titus 1:13; 3:14; 2 Tim 2:6, medicine, 1 Tim 4:3; 2 Tim 2:17; Titus 1:9;13; 2:1, Hunter, 1 Tim 3:7; 6:9; 2 Tim 2:26; business or trade, 1 Tim 6:5; 2 Tim 1:12-14; athletic competition, 1 Tim 4:17; 6:12; 2 Tim 2:5; 4:7.

<sup>6</sup>Kenneth E. Bailey, *Jesus through Middle Eastern Eyes: Cultural Studies in the Gospel* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2008), 279: “Jesus was a *metaphorical theologian*. That is, his primary method of creating meaning was through metaphor, simile, parable and dramatic action rather than through logic and reasoning. He created meaning like a dramatist and a poet rather than like a philosopher.”

<sup>7</sup>For example, see Helmut Koester, “Ephesus in Early Christian Literature,” in *Ephesos Metropolis of Asia: An Interdisciplinary Approach to its Archaeology, Religion, and Culture*, Harvard Theological Studies 41, ed. Helmut Koester (Valley Forge, PA: Trinity Press International, 1995). “*Ephesos* stands out as the place from which most of the Pauline correspondence originated—1 Corinthians, Philippians, Galatians, Philemon, and major parts of 2 Corinthians.” *Ibid.*, 122.

language was in part the product of the Greek system of oratory. Ben Witherington concludes that Saul was both a persecutor of Christians as well as a propagator of his own ‘true’ faith and that such status “would have provided considerable impetus for Saul to become conversant and literate in Greek, including rhetoric, and to gain some knowledge of Greek literature and philosophy.”<sup>8</sup> A contending theory that downplays the virtual certainty of Pauline oratorical studies suggests Paul’s rhetorical abilities were derived from “informal socialization,”<sup>9</sup> that is, rhetorical facility acquired in its experiential form and not from any formal instructions or knowledge of rhetorical theory. To answer the question of the origin of Paul’s rhetorical ability as an either-or scenario is futile and unnecessary. Additionally, there is another element yet to be discussed: the enabling power of the Holy Spirit to use and infuse Paul as a teacher and preacher of gospel truth. Thus, Paul’s metaphorical language finds root in his life experiences and education, the culture in which he lived, and the anointing of the Holy Spirit.

I examined Paul’s leader-speak in the context of the ecclesiological purposes the letters purport.<sup>10</sup> Paul’s metaphorical language of the church as the “household of God” (1 Tim 3:15), with requisite doctrine and conduct is the model for church order and personal conduct, as well as the self-image Paul desires the church to adopt and most significantly for this research, the ecclesiology that drives Paul’s LL. Paul’s metaphorical concepts, leadership rhetoric, and framing are captured by an overarching ecclesiological purpose that rises from a coherent and consistent Pauline theology. This language is

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<sup>8</sup>Ben Witherington III, *New Testament Rhetoric: An Introductory Guide to the Art of Persuasion in and of the New Testament* (Eugene, OR: Cascade, 2009), 102.

<sup>9</sup>Ryan S. Schellenberg, “Rhetorical Terminology in Paul: A Critical Reappraisal,” *Zeitschrift für die Neutestamentliche*, ed. Michael Wolter (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2013), 17-91, doi 10.1515/znw-2013-0010.

<sup>10</sup>Frances Young, *The Theology of the Pastoral Letters*, *New Testament Theology* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 22: “Theology is earthed in a context. The theology made explicit in the Pastorals relates to the problems the recipient communities are facing, for the purpose of the letters is to address those problems.”

clearly evident in the stated purpose in 1 Timothy 3:15, and by extension the partner document<sup>11</sup> in 2 Timothy, that is, leadership should set the church in order for her protection and promotion.

To support this claim, the way forward discerns a coherent theological context that connects 1 and 2 Timothy and discovers the purpose of the epistles through an exegetical treatment of 1 Timothy 3:14-15. Such research in consideration of the sociological setting of the epistles also yields an understanding of the ethical demands of the letters. Thus this approach produced the following roadmap to discovery: a synopsis of Pauline theology; a theological analysis of Pauline Ecclesiology in 1 and 2 Timothy; and an exegetical treatment of The Church as Household of the Living God, which is the pillar and support of the Truth. This outline may be seen as a micro image of the epistles that capture the ecclesiological grounding of Pauline leadership language.

### **A Theological Context of Pauline Ecclesiology in 1 and 2 Timothy**

Preliminary to an investigation of the church in the Pastorals is a requisite understanding of the theological core of 1 and 2 Timothy. As the theological context of 1 and 2 Timothy was unveiled, greater insight was shed on an ecclesiological understanding of the church in the Pastorals.

How does one approach an investigation into the theological center of a New Testament document? I worked from the informed assumption that just as there is

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<sup>11</sup>Some contend that the PE should *not* be read in the traditional sense as a corpus, but rather as individual letters. See Philip H. Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006), 27-31. Others promote the unity of authorship and purpose and view the PE “as a group of writings”: I. H. Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, International Critical Commentary (London: T & T Clark, 2006), 87. See also George W. Knight III, *The Pastoral Epistles*, The New International Greek Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1992); William D. Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 46 (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2000); Ben Witherington III, *Letters and Homilies for Hellenized Christians*, vol. 1 (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2006).

theological continuity within the New Testament,<sup>12</sup> there should also be a corresponding continuity within individual New Testament books,<sup>13</sup> which reflect to some degree a connection to the whole. That being the case, it appears straightforward to state that Christ is the center of the New Testament. To that point, Gerhard Hasel contends,

It seems undeniable that the NT is from beginning to end Christocentric. Jesus Christ's saving activity comes to expression in the life and activity, the suffering, death and resurrection, as well as in the exaltation and heavenly ministry of Jesus Christ.<sup>14</sup>

As one reads the New Testament, the overarching hero is Jesus Christ and it is he on whom the witness of the twenty-seven books is focused.<sup>15</sup> Accordingly, as Christ is the centerpiece of New Testament theology he is also the foundation of Pauline thought.<sup>16</sup> So it is elementary to promote Pauline theology as Christ-centered.

However, nuances to Paul's theological center complicate the simplicity of the message. One may begin with an assumption of Christ-centeredness in Pauline thought and be amply rewarded for such postulation. One quickly becomes cognizant of the observable richness of additional shades of theological texture that adorn Pauline theology. Paul did not seek to write a systematic theology but rather thirteen occasional

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<sup>12</sup>See, for example, Gerhard Hasel, *New Testament Theology: Basic Issues in the Current Debate* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993); G. E. Ladd, *A Theology of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993); Leon Morris, *New Testament Theology* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1990); Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Biblical Doctrine* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1994); David S. Dockery and David P. Nelson, "Special Revelation," in *A Theology for the Church*, ed. Daniel Akin (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2007); James M. Efird, *The New Testament Writings: History, Literature, Inspiration* (Louisville: John Knox, 1980).

<sup>13</sup>D. A. Carson, "Locating Udo Schelle's Theology of the NT in the Contemporary Debate," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 53 (2010): 133-41: "I do not know of any NTT written during the past few decades that does not respect the diversity and uniqueness of each NT document. The relationship of such diversity to the potential unity of the NT is extraordinarily diverse."

<sup>14</sup>Hasel, *New Testament Theology*, 164.

<sup>15</sup>As well as the 39 books of the Old Testament.

<sup>16</sup>David Wenham, *Paul, Follower of Jesus or Founder of Christianity* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995), 378: "Paul has a strong and distinctive Christological focus in all of his theology; not only are the death and resurrection of Jesus the vital saving events for him, but Jesus is the cosmic preexistent Lord."

letters; letters written to address certain issues in particular locations. Yet a systematic investigation of his writings yields the following as a foundation of Pauline theology: there is one Sovereign God who exercises redemptive oversight. This Savior God is revealed as the Lord Jesus Christ who appeared in the flesh and brought redemption through his blood, and will appear a second time to consummate the redemptive plan of God. N. T. Wright summarizes Pauline theology as monotheism, election, and eschatology.<sup>17</sup>

My methodology is to analyze 1 and 2 Timothy for theological content and determine the correspondence between the theological evidence unveiled in those two epistles with the overall Pauline theology to be postulated. While there is a danger of imposing the assumed Pauline theology noted previously on 1 and 2 Timothy, both letters are to a great degree in continuity with the presumed Pauline theology. The following analysis confirms such findings.

It has been advocated by any number of scholars over the years that the Pastoral Epistles are rather pedestrian and certainly beneath the considerable theological and literary standards set by the apostle. In the very least it is asserted, “The author of the Pastorals had no theology of his own. He is a purveyor of other men’s theology.”<sup>18</sup> It is obvious that the three brief documents are rich in ethical pronouncements. But such explicit ethical instruction is built upon a more implicit theology which is God-centered in every way. Commenting on the present advancement in scholarly study and reception of the Pastorals, Philip Towner states, “[The] PE are recognized as presenting a coherent

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<sup>17</sup>N. T. Wright, *Paul in Fresh Perspective* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2005), 83-107. The “summary” I allude to is in the context of a chapter devoted to Wright’s perspective of the Judaism of Paul and how it offered Wright the framework in which to promote a new Christian perspective of Paul.

<sup>18</sup>A. T. Hanson, *Studies in the Pastoral Epistles* (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1968), 110.

theological and ethical argument to a real church or churches somewhere in time.”<sup>19</sup> So what is the coherent theological theme presented in the Pastorals? This area must be carefully navigated because the “danger of imposing an alien center on Paul is a real one.”<sup>20</sup> While much of the vocabulary is admittedly dissimilar to other Pauline documents, 1 and 2 Timothy contain familiar theological themes found in other Pauline documents.

The center of theology of 1 and 2 Timothy appears to champion the concept of the one Savior God, Sovereign of the Universe, who exercises oversight of his creation and is particularly concerned about his household, the church. Furthermore, this Savior God, the Lord Jesus Christ, who previously appeared in the flesh will appear a second time as Judge.<sup>21</sup> Therefore, the life of the church, manifest in its doctrinal teaching, ethics, and organization, is paramount in the concern of God as He superintends over his household as well as His world.

### **One Savior God, Sovereign of Creation, the Lord Jesus Christ**

As one savior God, sovereign of creation, the Lord Jesus Christ is the proposed doctrinal core, how did Paul arrive at his theological construct? First, all Jewish belief, including the faith system of Paul, found its roots in the soil of monotheism. Although details are unclear, Paul was the product of his Jewish upbringing, theological training, and Pharisaic perspective. Acts, as well as Paul’s own writings, attests to his spiritual life before and after conversion. To that end it was his unique conversion that shaped and

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<sup>19</sup>Philip H. Towner, “Pauline Theology or Pauline Tradition in the Pastoral Epistles: The Question of Method,” *Tyndale Bulletin* 46 (1995): 287-313.

<sup>20</sup>Thomas Schreiner, *Paul: Apostle of God’s Glory in Christ—A Pauline Theology* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2001), 17.

<sup>21</sup>God as Savior is explicitly mentioned in 1 Tim 1:1, 2:3, 4:10 and 2 Tim 1:10, 3:15. Jesus as Lord is found in 1 Tim 1:2, 12, 6:3 and 2 Tim 1:2. God as the Only Sovereign or King may be referenced in 1 Tim 1:17, 2:5 and 6:15. The King as Overseer may be found in 1 Tim 2:4, 3:15, 4:10, 5:4, 21, 24, 6:13, 17 and 2 Tim 2:19 and 4:1. The motif of Christ appearing is located in 1 Tim 1:15 and 2 Tim 1:12, 18, and 4:1, 8, 18.

formed his theology and ministry. Certainly his theology consistently maintains the unique oneness of God expressed in three persons.<sup>22</sup>

Paul's proclamation, God is the only God (1 Tim 1:17), echoes the most fundamental of his Jewish beliefs contained in the *Shema* (Deut 6:4). Connected to God's oneness is his invisibility (1 Tim; 2 Tim; Titus 1:17), no man can see him and live (Exod 33:20). To repeat the great *Shema*, "Hear O Israel, The LORD is our God, the LORD is one" (Deut 6:4), is not only to proclaim the uniqueness of one God in a polytheistic world, but also that "Yahweh is to be the sole object of Israel's worship, allegiance, and affection."<sup>23</sup> While the English translation communicates a passive suggestion, the Hebrew lexicography should be understood in such a covenant context as an imperative, to obey.<sup>24</sup> Thus the *Shema* communicates fundamental theology as well as an attendant ethic: "You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might" (Deut 6:5). Moreover, such demands required "a regular routine of instruction"<sup>25</sup> where fathers taught sons and sons taught grandsons. God's covenant household should not forget the uniqueness of the one God and all that such grandeur demands.

One may ascertain from the full corpus of Paul's writing that his theology is grounded in an Old Testament understanding of the oneness of God. Dunn writes, "God is the fundamental presupposition of Paul's theology."<sup>26</sup> Consequently, the doctrine of

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<sup>22</sup>In relation to the Pastorals, there may be a perceived minimization of the importance of the Holy Spirit. To some extent this conclusion may be justified. Yet, it is significant that in addition to Paul's central warning in 1 Tim 4:1 that "the Spirit explicitly says . . . deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons" will arise, there are three other references to the Holy Spirit, 1 Tim 3:16, 4:14 and 2 Tim 1:14 (and possibly 2 Tim 1:7), which suggest Paul's Trinitarian doctrine.

<sup>23</sup>J. A. Thompson, *Deuteronomy*, The Tyndale Old Testament Commentary Series (Downers Grove, IL: Inter-Varsity, 1974), 121.

<sup>24</sup>Eugene H. Merrill, *Deuteronomy*, The New American Commentary, vol. 4 (Nashville: B & H, 1994), 162.

<sup>25</sup>*Ibid.*, 166.

<sup>26</sup>James D. G. Dunn, *The Theology of Paul the Apostle* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), 28.

the centrality of God common to Pauline theology<sup>27</sup> is also tacitly expressed in 1 and 2 Timothy. This doctrine of God should be primarily understood as a focus on the person and character of God and secondarily on the redemptive work of God. Such an emphasis should not be perceived as a minimization of the salvific work of God<sup>28</sup> through Jesus Christ but only that the person and character of God explains the motivation and means by which God accomplishes the reclamation of His fallen world. Schreiner maintains that the person and work of Christ does not “diminish the centrality of God but rather enhances it.”<sup>29</sup> Thus the apostle’s theological laser in 1 and 2 Timothy continues to focus on God and his work through Christ. Hence, this investigation in the context of 1 and 2 Timothy recognized the household of the one and only God as expressed in and through the Lord Jesus Christ. Both emphases yield a high level of ethical demand on the household of God: such is the outworking of orthodoxy and orthopraxy.

That Paul was immanently concerned about God and his glory may be attested to by his many references<sup>30</sup> to that reality. Yet one cannot reach such a conclusion by merely proof-texting the assertion. God’s glory must be seen with a wider lens. The glory of God is also marked as the reverent and loving obedience of his children to his Word and will. Thus the Pastorals promote godliness, which is both the spiritual identity and the ethical response of God’s people. Furthermore, for Paul the glory of God is understood as experiencing the magnificence of God in some visible manifestation, as

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<sup>27</sup>For a detailed analysis of this theological perspective, see Schreiner, *Paul*. While I have long held this view independent of any expressed salient theological formula, Schreiner provides a consistent and coherent treatment of the centrality of God. Thus, it is obvious I am indebted to Thomas Schreiner.

<sup>28</sup>Paul’s theology of God as Savior speaks to the OT background of Jehovah as Savior (2 Sam 22:3; Ps 106:21; Isa 43:3,11, 45:15, 21, 49:26, 60:16; Jer 14:8; Hos 13:4).

<sup>29</sup>Thomas R. Schreiner, *Magnifying God in Christ: A Summary of New Testament Theology* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2010), 40.

<sup>30</sup>By my count, there are at least 19 overt references to the glory of God in the Pauline corpus.

well as an expression of praise ascribing glory to God.<sup>31</sup> In response to his reflection on the gracious mercy of God in his life, Paul is moved to doxological worship: “Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God, *be* honor and glory forever and ever. Amen” (1 Tim 1:17). The eternal God is King of the ages, incorruptible and invisible. Moreover He is the only God and all honor and glory belongs to him.

The doxological hymn (1 Tim 3:16), which proclaims the mystery of godliness revealed in Jesus Christ, in addition to the faithful saying exalting Jesus Christ risen from the dead (2 Tim 2:11-13), proclaims the awe and wonder of the one God who revealed Himself in time and space as “the man Christ Jesus” (1 Tim 2:5). Christ Jesus the man<sup>32</sup> is Lord and the one to whom Paul expresses gratitude for his grace and patience. Paul declares that Jesus came into the world to save wretched sinners, and is the one “who has strengthened me, because He considered me faithful, putting me into service” (1 Tim 1:12-15). The proclamation that Christ Jesus is Lord and the revelation of godliness establishes that “the one true God, the father of Abraham, stands over against the Gentile gods as the true and Living God.”<sup>33</sup> Likewise, the redemptive act of God, while corporate in its scope, is nonetheless for Paul an individualistic and dynamic life-transforming event. David Wenham states, “The centrality of Jesus for Paul arose out of his own dramatic conversion experience.”<sup>34</sup> To that end Paul expresses gratitude to “Christ Jesus our Lord” (1 Tim 1:12), who provided him mercy (1 Tim 1:13-15).

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<sup>31</sup>Gerald F. Hawthorne and Ralph Martin, eds., *Dictionary of Paul and His Letters* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1993), 360.

<sup>32</sup>Thus, one may understand more fully the awe inspiring delight Paul took in recognizing that the one, invisible God revealed himself in human flesh (Acts 9, 22:6-11, 26; 1 Cor 9:1, 15:8) “so that at the name of Jesus every knee will bow, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father” (Phil 2:10-11).

<sup>33</sup>Udo Schnelle, *Apostle Paul: His Life and Theology*, trans. M. Eugene Boring (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2003), 70.

<sup>34</sup>Wenham, *Paul*, 50.

Even though the theological weightiness of the Pastorals may be understated, the theological import of the text suggests “the lifestyle to which the readers are called is shaped by the fact that all is from God and under God and accountable to God.”<sup>35</sup> Aageson declares, “The theology of the Pastorals is understood broadly here as the pattern of convictions and behaviors related to God and to the activity of God represented in these texts.”<sup>36</sup> The undercurrent of the texts propose that God’s household desires to know and participate in what is “good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior” (1 Tim 2:3, 5:4; 2 Tim 2:14, 4:1). Godliness is the goal, thus discipline and hard work is required “because we have fixed our hope on the living God, who is the Savior of all men, especially of believers” (1 Tim 4:10). The sense of this statement appears to speak of “the universal scope of God’s plan.”<sup>37</sup> Witherington suggests that an emphasis should be placed on the idea that God is the *only* Savior mankind has.<sup>38</sup> God has no back-up plan. Calvin contends that this is an expression of common grace:

To make this more clear, it ought to be understood that this is an argument drawn from the less to the greater; for the word σωτήρ “Le mot Grec que nous traduisons Sauveur.”—“The Greek word which we translate Savior” is here a general term, and denotes one who defends and preserves. He means that the kindness of God extends to all men.<sup>39</sup>

The salient point is that God is universally invested in his creation as overseer, especially of believers; thus piety must be practiced in regard to the conduct and care of God’s family as well as one’s own family, because this is acceptable behavior in the sight of

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<sup>35</sup>Young, *The Theology of the Pastoral Letters*, 48.

<sup>36</sup>James W. Aageson, *Paul, the Pastoral Epistles, and the Early Church*, Library of Pauline Studies (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2008). 11.

<sup>37</sup>Philip H. Towner, *1-2 Timothy & Titus*, The IVP New Testament Commentary Series (Downers Grove, IL: Eerdmans, 1994), 108.

<sup>38</sup>Witherington, *Letters and Homilies*, 256.

<sup>39</sup>John Calvin, *The Epistles of Timothy, Titus, and Philemon*, trans. William Pringle, Christian Classics Ethereal Library (2005), accessed February 22, 2014, <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/calvin/calcom43.iii.iv.ii.html>.

God (1 Tim 5:4).

Within the household of God and in regard to the difficult task of dealing with errant leaders, Timothy is to understand that he is to administer discipline fairly because he is in the “presence of God and of Christ Jesus and of *His* chosen angels” (1 Tim 5:21), knowing that their sins will follow them to judgment before the Omniscient God (1 Tim 5:24-25). Likewise, Hymenaeus and Philetus, “*men* who have gone astray from the truth” will be judged by God. Yet Timothy should be assured, “The Lord knows those who are His” (2 Tim 2:18-19).<sup>40</sup> Paul’s charge to Timothy to be faithful in the gospel ministry is issued “in the presence of God” (1 Tim 6:13). God is the unseen Sovereign who oversees his household (1 Tim 1:17).

In light of the linkage of God and Jesus Christ in New Testament theology, the singleness of God is seen in the Christology of 1 and 2 Timothy.<sup>41</sup> In essence, God and Christ are one yet are distinct from one another. The person of Christ emerges from the work of the one true God.<sup>42</sup> The redemptive plan devised by the one God is carried out by the one mediator Christ Jesus, “who gave Himself as a ransom for all” (1 Tim 2:6). Likewise, the “good confession” of Christ Jesus may refer to Jesus’ response to Pilate as he affirmed that he was King of the Jews and “in doing so willingly gave up his life to death of the cross (cf. Heb 12:2).”<sup>43</sup> Jesus’ royal claim is understood as a messianic reference.<sup>44</sup> It is the work of Jesus that identifies him in unique relationship with God.

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<sup>40</sup>Towner, *1-2 Timothy & Titus*, 185. “*The Lord knows who are his* is nearly a direct quote of Numbers 16:5 (LXX).”

<sup>41</sup>This is *not* a statement of modalism. Calvin discussed the meaning of God’s oneness in 2:5 in light of Romans 3:29-30. Calvin, *The Epistles of Paul to Timothy, Titus, and Philemon*, 56.

<sup>42</sup>John M. Frame, *The Doctrine of God* (Philipsburg, NJ: P & R, 2002), 619: “God’s triunity is related to his acts, for within the Godhead are the acts of eternal generation and procession, as well as acts of love and communication among the three persons.”

<sup>43</sup>Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 266.

<sup>44</sup>It appears that there are strong Jewish elements to the heretical teaching in the Ephesian church (1 Tim 1:3-11). Therefore, Paul is obliged to frame his theological correction in terminology they

The one God and one mediator Jesus are closely connected in 1 and 2 Timothy. Even as God is the Savior (1 Tim 1:1, 2:3, 4:10), salvation is found in Christ (2 Tim 2:10). Through his Damascus road experience, Paul can personally attest to the saving power of Christ Jesus (1 Tim 1:15). The intimate relationship of God and Jesus is stated in 2 Timothy 1:8c-10, “God, who has saved us and called us with a holy calling according to His own purpose and grace which was granted us in Christ Jesus . . . [and] . . . now has been revealed by the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus.” Wenham writes, “The distinctiveness of Jesus’ relationship to the Father is clear from the way that Paul repeatedly and strikingly brackets God and Jesus together in one phrase.”<sup>45</sup> God has saved and yet such salvation has been revealed through the Savior Christ Jesus. It is salvation which is in Christ Jesus that the chosen might attain (2 Tim 2:10). The trustworthy statement emphatically states, “Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners . . . those who would believe in Him for eternal life” (1 Tim 1:15-16). Jesus accomplished such salvation work by becoming a ransom (1 Tim 2:6), who paid the price required for freedom, as well as actually granted that freedom for those who believe. Clearly Jesus’ self-sacrifice was the redemptive work of God and this declaration is an echo of Pauline theology of self-offering found in Galatians 1:4, 2:20, Ephesians 5:2, and Titus 2:14.

### **Epiphany**

Within Pauline theology, the work of the transcendent God made manifest in the Lord Jesus Christ is a plan already set forth and in motion. However, the fullness of his design is yet to be completely consummated. Thus 1 and 2 Timothy reflect an epiphany schema that provides contour and continuity to the letters. Against charges that

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would apparently understand. The opponents desire to handle the Law, though they are far removed from a clear understanding. Paul’s renunciation of the heretics is likewise framed in a description of the heretics which reflect the opposite and dark side of the Decalogue (Exod 20:12ff; Deut 5:16ff). In this context, the understanding that Jesus is the Messiah is essential for these “want-to-be” teachers of the Law.

<sup>45</sup>Wenham, *Paul*, 117.

the church of 1 and 2 Timothy had given up hope of the return of Christ and was resigned to live in the world and must learn to get along with the world<sup>46</sup> (suggesting proactive compromise or accommodating silence), the frequency of explicit and implicit reference to Christ's return effectively argues against such a conclusion.

Indeed it should be understood that the epiphany schema is vital in the construction of the theological framework of the Pastorals. The eschatological picture Paul presents in 1 and 2 Timothy is that of salvation introduced in the past Christ event, yet that which is continuing and shall continue until the future appearing of the Lord. The household of God lives in the certain promise that Christ will return on "that day" (2 Tim 1:12, 18, 3:1, 4:8). The salvation plan of God has been introduced and continues to move toward completion. Schreiner maintains that "redemptive history is characterized by inaugurated but not consummated eschatology" and this theology "pervades the NT."<sup>47</sup> Such consummation will occur in the future appearing of Christ.<sup>48</sup> Salvation is a historical reality as well as a future fulfillment. To that point Towner argues that the Pastorals reflect the eschatological framework of already but not yet.<sup>49</sup> So salvation is a present reality lived in the continuing and transforming power of the gospel but also that which awaits its fullest manifestation.

Accordingly, Paul expresses gratitude to Christ Jesus the Lord who has appointed or put him into service. This past appointment with continuous action was borne out of the grace and mercy of the Lord. He is neither ashamed of the Lord nor reticent to suffer for the gospel because he has confident assurance (since He knows Him)

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<sup>46</sup>See Martin Dibelius, Hans Conzelmann, and Werner Georg Kummel, *Introduction to the New Testament* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1996).

<sup>47</sup>Schreiner, *Magnifying God in Christ*, 19.

<sup>48</sup>For more on "inaugurated eschatology," see G. E. Ladd, *A Theology of the New Testament*, and Anthony A. Hoekema, *The Bible and the Future* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1979).

<sup>49</sup>P. H. Towner, "The Present Age in the Eschatology of the Pastoral Epistles," *New Testament Studies* 32 (1986): 427-48.

that Christ Jesus will “guard what I have entrusted to Him until that day” (2 Tim 1:8-12). Paul recognizes that there will be “that day” in the presence of Christ in which he will give an accounting of his stewardship of the gospel. In a kind of eschatological formula Paul states that God’s salvation purpose is rooted in eternity past (2 Tim 1:9) and shall be consummated in a future event (2 Tim 1:12). Not to be lost in the formula is the fact salvation is reflected in one’s present day service.

The emphasis on present day salvation-service is inextricably tied to that day of salvation-consummation. This may also be seen in the solemn charge of Paul to Timothy to be consistent in the proclamation of the gospel since he serves not just by the gracious call of God, but also in the presence of God and Christ Jesus. Consequently, greater force is exerted on Paul’s admonition in the phrase, “[He] who is to judge the living and the dead, and by His appearing and His kingdom” (2 Tim 4:1). Timothy should pay special heed to the promised judgment of the living and the dead in that such terminology “was based on the conviction that he who appeared once to save will appear a second time to complete that salvation and for judgment.”<sup>50</sup>

Paul confidently looks forward to such a day. As he has called Timothy to share in suffering for the sake of the gospel, Paul is confident that his suffering has not been in vain and that even in the present he is progressing toward death and an eventual crown (2 Tim 4:7-8). Paul speaks in ceremonial language (2 Tim 4:6), as a present day and continual “pouring out of his blood in martyrdom”<sup>51</sup> or the “drink offering” as the “imagery of wine being poured out”<sup>52</sup> (suggesting a figurative description of death). However, his characterization is not that of a victim but as one presenting an offering. In a change of metaphors Paul has been faithful in the gospel-race and thus anticipates a

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<sup>50</sup>Gordon D. Fee, *1 and 2 Timothy, Titus*, New International Biblical Commentary (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1988), 284.

<sup>51</sup>Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 458.

<sup>52</sup>Towner, *1-2 Timothy & Titus*, 206.

gospel crown (vv. 7-8). The righteous Judge is inherently qualified to judge and provide the crown and will give it to him on that day (v. 8). The present, past, and future of Paul's life is mirrored in this paragraph and as such may be perceived as an eschatological picture within the theological framework of 1 and 2 Timothy. Timothy and the Ephesian church should heed Paul's words and example. Paul's salvation is sure but not yet fully consummated. He continues to await that futuristic fulfillment. "The Lord will rescue me from every evil deed, and will bring me safely to His heavenly kingdom;<sup>53</sup> to Him *be* the glory forever and ever. Amen" (2 Tim 4:18). This is the same promise to all, who, characterized by loving anticipation, wait attentively for his appearing (2 Tim 1:8).

The ethical principles and admonitions of 1 and 2 Timothy are prominently displayed and are appropriate for a handbook or church manual. These codes of conduct, order, and truth are also constructed on theological reality. The theological center of 1 and 2 Timothy declares that there is One Savior God who is Sovereign of the Universe. He exercises particular oversight of his household, the church. Furthermore, this Savior God is the Lord Jesus Christ. Christ appeared once in the flesh as Savior but will return as Judge. The conduct of the church is of paramount concern for God because the church represents his holy name and is charged with his holy work. The household of God, the church of the Living God which is the pillar and support of the truth, must exhibit the godliness of doctrine, conduct, and order so that the person and work of God will be upheld as the church lovingly awaits the certain return of her Lord Jesus Christ.

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<sup>53</sup>P. H. Towner, "The Portrait of Paul and the Theology of 2 Timothy: The Closing Chapter of the Pauline Story," *Horizons in Biblical Theology* 21, no. 1 (1999): 151-70: "The adjective 'heavenly' characterizes the kingdom of God/Christ as presently real but, as yet, still future in its culmination, awaiting 'that day' (4:8). This expression of salvation as present experience in anticipation of future consummation is closely parallel to Col 1:13: 'he has rescued (*erresato*) us from the authority of darkness and transferred us into the kingdom of his beloved son.' In this context of impending death, the accent is shifted to the future consummation."

## Purpose of the Epistles

The Pastoral Epistles and particularly 1 Timothy have been understood as a sort of *handbook* or *manual*<sup>54</sup> on church leadership and practice:

Paul is acting as a pastor to Timothy and Titus (and) is writing to instruct them in their own pastoral ministries . . . but they (Pastoral Epistles) might equally be called ‘the Teacher’s Manual,’ because so much of what they contain is about the kind of teaching that Christian leaders should be giving—and, just as much, the kind they shouldn’t.<sup>55</sup>

As early as ca. 170 CE, the Muratorian Canon’s special character was noted.

The Muratorian documents were singled out as having to do with ‘ecclesiastical discipline.’<sup>56</sup> Benjamin Merkle notes that although *ἐκκλησιάζω* appears only three times in 1 Timothy (3:5, 15, 5:16), “[it] is a dominant theme.” Furthermore, based in part on 1 Timothy 3:15, Merkle asserts it “could be argued that the church is at the very center of Paul’s message in 1 Timothy and perhaps also in 2 Timothy and Titus.”<sup>57</sup> Thus Mounce is correct when he states that 1 Timothy 3:14-16 appears to be “the heart of the Pastoral

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<sup>54</sup>Marshall says these letters can be “considered together as a group of writings [and it is] commonly assumed” that 2 Timothy was intended to be read after 1 Tim. Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 1. Accordingly, Long writes, “The three books were first called “pastoral epistles” by Paul Anton in 1726. The description has become so common that nearly every commentator on the books has described the letters as ‘church manuals.’” Phillip J. Long, “Reading Acts: Some Thoughts on the Book of Acts and Pauline Theology,” *Reading Acts* (blog), 2008, accessed August 24, 2015, <http://readingacts.wordpress.com/2013/12/02/pastoral-epistles-2/>. W. R. F. Browning, “Pastoral Epistles,” *A Dictionary of the Bible*, Oxford Biblical Studies Online, accessed August 21, 2014, <http://www.oxfordbiblicalstudies.com/article/opr/t94/e1424>, states, “The epistles could be fairly described as a manual for the management of the household of God.” Contra, Gordon D. Fee, *Gospel and Spirit: Issues in New Testament Hermeneutics* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1991), 54. Fee among others is not convinced the Pastorals is a “handbook.” Fee comments, “If these are ‘church manuals’ they are not, on the whole, very effective.” Ibid. Also see Fee, “Reflections on Church Order in the Pastoral Epistles, with Further Reflection on the Hermeneutics of Ad Hoc Documents,” *Journal of Evangelical Theology Society* 28 (1985): 141-51. Likewise, Schreiner, *Paul*, 388, writes, “The idea that the Pastorals are church manuals must also be resisted.”

<sup>55</sup>N. T. Wright, *Paul for Everyone: The Pastoral Letters-1 and 2 Timothy and Titus* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2004), 14.

<sup>56</sup>Luke Timothy Johnson, *Letters to Paul’s Delegates: 1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, Titus, The New Testament in Context* (Valley Forge, PA: Trinity, 1996), 3.

<sup>57</sup>Benjamin L. Merkle, *Entrusted with the Gospel: Paul’s Theology in the Pastoral Epistles*, ed. Andreas J. Kostenberger and Terry L. Wilder (Nashville: B & H, 2010), 173.

corpus . . . which puts the instruction of the corpus into proper perspective.”<sup>58</sup> Marshall contends that this is a unique section, “quite different from anything else in the letter,” and that the particular theology voiced in 3:15 is “central to the instruction of the letter.”<sup>59</sup> Kelly calls this section “the dividing point which gives it significance.”<sup>60</sup> Collins emphatically states, “[It] is one of the most important passages in the letter.”<sup>61</sup> Guthrie writes, “Spicq is probably right in considering this the culminating doctrinal point and indeed the key to the Pastorals.<sup>62</sup> Knight adds that verse 15 is a “theological description of the church”<sup>63</sup> and, in light of the *ἵνα* clause, “introduces the reason for Paul’s writing: so that Timothy and the church may *know* what is proper conduct for God’s household—with the implicit understanding that such knowledge will result in that kind of conduct.”<sup>64</sup> To be fair, there is a lack of agreement<sup>65</sup> as to whether or not this passage signals the

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<sup>58</sup>Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, 214. See also Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 178; D. Edmond Hiebert, *Second Timothy*, Everyman’s Bible Commentary (Chicago: Moody, 1958), 12; Homer Kent, *The Pastoral Epistles* (Chicago: Moody, 1982), 139; John R. W. Stott, *The Message of 1 Timothy & Titus*, *The Bible Speaks Today* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1996), 103. Contra Thomas D. Lea and Hayne P. Griffin, Jr., *1, 2 Timothy Titus*, *The New American Commentary*, vol. 34 (Nashville: Broadman, 1992), 42, and Fee, *1 and 2 Timothy, Titus*, 21.

<sup>59</sup>Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 497.

<sup>60</sup>J. N. D. Kelly, *Timothy I & II and Titus: A Commentary on the Pastoral Epistles* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1960), 86.

<sup>61</sup>Raymond Collins, *I & II Timothy and Titus*, *The New Testament Library* (Louisville: The New Testament Library, 2002), 98.

<sup>62</sup>Donald Guthrie, *Pastoral Epistles*, *Tyndale New Testament Commentaries* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1957), 87.

<sup>63</sup>Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 178.

<sup>64</sup>*Ibid.*, 178.

<sup>65</sup>“There is no unanimity among interpreters on the question of whether or not this passage should be regarded as a statement of purpose for 1 Timothy or the Pastorals as a group. Furthermore, those who take this passage as such a statement are divided as to the significance of the image of the *οἶκος θεοῦ* in it.” David Verner, *The Household of God: The Social World of the Pastoral Epistles*, *Society of Biblical Literature Dissertation Series 71* (Chico, CA: Society of Biblical Literature, 1983), 14. Scholars who understand 3:14 as centrally strategic to the entire letter recognize the very obvious *ἵνα* phrase and the condition of third class, which states the purpose after *ἵνα*.

purpose of the epistle, but there is little doubt as to its strategic importance in understanding the major themes of the epistle.

This research, then, was based on the informed conviction that 1 Timothy 3:14-16 defines the purpose of the letter (and greater Pastoral Epistles). In order to understand Paul's ecclesiological grounding in the Pastorals (and ultimately his leadership language) one may begin at 1 Timothy 3:14-16. The heart of Paul's message to Timothy (and to the Ephesian church) is an ecclesiological pragmatic concern for the doctrinal beliefs and subsequent practice of the church. Thus the practice of "being" the church, as well as "doing" church, should be addressed by understanding the nature of the church. Such understanding of the nature of the church is accomplished in the exegesis of 1 Timothy 3:15-16a.

Paul desires to travel to be with Timothy and the church, but anticipates a possible delay. So Paul writes his younger appointee. The apostle is concerned about church matters: doctrine and practice. Rightfully, Dever states, "A distorted church usually coincides with a distorted gospel."<sup>66</sup> First Timothy is a document that clearly depicts a local church in conflict. It appears that the "savage wolves" (Acts 20:29) of Paul's concern have been realized within church leadership. The "perverse things"<sup>67</sup> (Acts 20:30) of their speech have not only spoiled pure and healthy doctrine but have promoted a sinfully sick lifestyle. Accordingly, Paul writes his young protégé with a specific agenda: exercise your leadership and set God's household in order, primarily but not exclusively by dealing with the false teachers promoting a distorted gospel and a corrupted ethic. Timothy and other leaders should set the church in order for her

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<sup>66</sup>Mark E. Dever, "The Church," in *A Theology for the Church*, 766.

<sup>67</sup>διστραμμένα, perverted, depraved. In Acts 13:8, the sense is to "turnaway." In Acts 13:10 "make crooked." Phil 2:15, "mislead." BibleWorks7 Software for Biblical Exegesis and Research (Norfolk, VA: Bible Works, 2002).

protection and promotion because the church is the household of God.<sup>68</sup>

First Timothy 3:1-16 should be seen as further and fuller explanation of the concern Paul voices in the beginning of his correspondence to Timothy. The issue at hand is false teaching (1 Tim 1: 3) promoted by the self-styled “teachers of the Law” (1 Tim 1:7). Paul described these teachings as “strange doctrine” and “fruitless discussion,” which center on myths and unending genealogies. Such dialogue does not promote nor protect the furtherance of God’s plan. These teachers do not understand the very Law of God they assertively pretend to teach. In point of fact, what they promote is dangerously unhealthy and not in correspondence with the “glorious gospel of the blessed God” (1 Tim 1:11), which has been invested in the apostle. These teachers do not understand that the Law is to point the sinner to his or her need of salvation in “God our Savior” (1 Tim 1:11; 2:3) and “Jesus Christ our Lord” (1 Tim 1:12), the one mediator between God and man (1 Tim 2:5) who dispenses mercy to the sinner (1 Tim 1:16). These “certain men” (1 Tim 1:3)<sup>69</sup> do not have a clue as to the very doctrine they assert so confidently, and in the process of such willful ignorance they bring disrepute to God’s household. The purity and effectiveness of the household of God is at threat level. It is up to Timothy, presumably in concert with other leaders, to set God’s household in order.

In conclusion, the ensuing brief outline offers a panoramic view of the epistles. Following the opening greeting section, 1 Timothy 1:1-2, the center of 1 Timothy 3:14-

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<sup>68</sup>The household of God metaphor may also suggest, as in other Pauline writings, a *temple* reference (1 Cor 3:16-17; 2 Cor 6:16; Eph 2:19-21; Gal 2:2-6). Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 345-48, posits that Paul has in mind the people of God as the new Temple of God, the dwelling place of the Holy Spirit and thus a spiritual building. Certainly I see the temple concept which suggests the image of a body of people connected with God and one another. The temple as a structural reality puts forward a collective of kindred spirits who find safety, nurture and identity within the walls of the house of God.

<sup>69</sup>It is significant to note that while some of these men have been identified (1 Tim 1:20; 2 Tim 2:17 and possibly 2 Tim 4:14), the specifics of their false teaching is a matter of debate. While the opponents appear to represent some form of Judaism, their error is far less identifiable. For a representative sample of the discussion, see Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 46-51; Mounce, *The Pastoral Epistles*, lxix-lxxvi.; and Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 41-50.

16 may then be seen within the considerable expansion of the second division (1:3-6:21) of the letter devoted to organizational leadership and instruction for protection and promotion of the household of God. A third division may be seen as the simple benediction in 6:21b, “grace be with you.” As Paul has issued direct orders to Timothy concerning the false teachers in chapter 1 and more singularly defines Timothy’s leadership mission in 3:14-16, the balance of the letter will “serve this theme.”<sup>70</sup> Likewise the companion letter of 2 Timothy expands on the moral directives of the gospel for household members, including a call to suffer for the sake of the gospel. A brief outline of 2 Timothy is offered: first division (1:1-5), greeting and thanksgiving; second section (1:6–2:1-13), encouragement to Timothy in the midst of a call to suffering; third division (2:14–4:8), Timothy verses the adversaries; and fourth division (4:9-22), concluding words to Timothy.<sup>71</sup>

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<sup>70</sup>Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 32.

<sup>71</sup>Chapter 2 of this work concludes with an obviously simplified outline of the epistles. No effort has been made to ascertain a more detailed outline framework of the letters because it is not needed in this present research. Furthermore, numerous detailed outlines already exist.

## CHAPTER 3

### CHURCH AS HOUSEHOLD OF GOD

The central metaphor that explains and defines Paul's ecclesiological purpose, to protect and promote the church of God, is his image of the church as the "household of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and support of the truth." In this instance the house serves to illustrate the church. Yet the analogy is not far removed in that probably the Pauline churches met in the homes of the converts. To that point, it is virtually indisputable that Pauline churches were assemblies that met in local homes.<sup>1</sup> Wayne Meeks states, "The meeting places of the Pauline groups, and probably of most other early Christian groups, were private homes."<sup>2</sup> It is also commonly acknowledged that homeowners often led these house churches.<sup>3</sup> To be sure, the New Testament contains several references to what appears to be homes that served as meeting places for Christian assembly (Rom 16:5, 16:23; 1 Cor 16:19; Col 4:15; Phlm 1:2). Within the context of Christian assembly it seems evident that the cultural philosophy of household codes is revealed in the Pauline epistles, including Ephesians and Colossians and the Pastorals, where such influence is reflected in his concept of the "household of God."

The household of God is threatened by insider forces. At this point Paul does

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<sup>1</sup>Roger W. Gehring, *House Church and Mission: The Importance of Household Structures in Early Christianity* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2004), 1: "Most scholars are in agreement: the fact that early Christian communities met in homes is of great sociohistorical, ecclesiological, and missional significance."

<sup>2</sup>Wayne A. Meeks, *The First Urban Christian: The Social World of Paul* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2003), 75.

<sup>3</sup>Robert J. Banks, *Paul's Idea of Community: The Early House Churches in Their Cultural Setting* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2009).

not appear to directly address the evils of the pagan culture in which the Ephesian church has been planted, but rather his disapproval is aimed at the false teachers already active in the family. While the Pauline church may have been viewed as a “surrogate kinship group,”<sup>4</sup> it should not be assumed that Paul’s kinship concept was unique to the Ephesian culture or the greater world in which he lived.<sup>5</sup> Robert J. Banks asserts that Paul’s house-church ideology was part of a larger movement “towards the spontaneous association of individuals in society.”<sup>6</sup> Ferguson points out that identity groups and social networks were common and Christian conversion “often depended not on ideological appeal alone but also on social ties between individuals.”<sup>7</sup> Meeks sheds further light on the social construction of the Greco-Roman household as he contends that unlike the contemporary nuclear family,<sup>8</sup> the family of Paul’s era “is not defined wholly on kinship but by the relationship of dependence and subordination.”<sup>9</sup>

### **The House of God**

The linkage of God’s household to the family is a statement of how the family should operate as a unit and how individuals within the family must respond to one another fulfilling their respective duties. Without minimizing the divine element, this perspective lays emphasis on the human component of the church. In the world of the

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<sup>4</sup>Joseph H. Hellerman, *The Ancient Church as Family* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2001), 21.

<sup>5</sup>E. Earle Ellis, *Pauline Theology: Ministry and Society* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1989), 124: “The Pauline churches may be compared both with the various types of private associations in the Empire and with the Jewish synagogues.”

<sup>6</sup>Banks, *Paul’s Idea of Community*, 14.

<sup>7</sup>Everett Ferguson, *Backgrounds of Early Christianity*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003), 68.

<sup>8</sup>It could be justifiably argued that the definition and make-up of the twenty-first century family has been drastically redefined.

<sup>9</sup>Meeks, *The First Urban Christians*, 30.

Pauline church, the family unit could take several forms including a husband, wife, children, spouses of children, slaves, and freedmen often united by religious and economic factors and in which each member had his or her role.<sup>10</sup> There was no indecision as to who was in charge. “The householder (‘lord,’ *kyrios* or *despotes*) had full authority over the members of the household. He also had obligations and some legal responsibilities to them.”<sup>11</sup> While females had some freedoms outside the confines of the family and house, their realm of operation was definitely within the home as “workers at home” (Titus 2:4) with particular commitment to bearing children.<sup>12</sup> Their status within the family and society could be enhanced or crushed according to their capacity to bear offspring.<sup>13</sup> As to privileges inside and outside the home, and in continuity and contrast with the dominant culture of the day, Gehring proposes that New Testament research is increasingly acknowledging the “relatively heavy involvement of women” in the Pauline mission.<sup>14</sup>

In light of these conclusions, Paul’s picture of the church as the household of God stands as powerful symbolic language in that the household image serves as “a metaphor and linguistic link between the two social realities”<sup>15</sup> of the home and church. Hence as already established, Paul’s understanding of the church<sup>16</sup> and her leadership is

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<sup>10</sup>Ferguson, *Backgrounds*, 72.

<sup>11</sup>Gerald F. Hawthorne and Ralph Martin, eds., *Dictionary of Paul and His Letters* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1993), 417.

<sup>12</sup>Hellerman, *The Ancient Church as Family*, 33.

<sup>13</sup>Ferguson, *Backgrounds*, 75, states, “Augustus in 19/18 B.C., had legislation passed with special benefits . . . offered to the fathers and mothers of three or more children.”

<sup>14</sup>Gehring, *House Church and Mission*, 210.

<sup>15</sup>James W. Aageson, *Paul, the Pastoral Epistles, and the Early Church*, Library of Pauline Studies (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2008), 21.

<sup>16</sup>Paul pictures the church in any number of metaphors: “Body of Christ” (1 Cor 12), “Bride of Christ” (Eph 5), “Temple of God” (1 Cor 3), “Saints” (Rom 1), “Abrahams’s descendants” (Gal 3), “God’s field” (1 Cor 3), and “People of God” (Rom 9). Each designation reflects theology, context, and purpose. It is evident that Paul does not envision the church singularly as the “household of God.” Furthermore, to limit the modern church to any particular model is to ignore the balance of Scripture and miss the richness

constructed to some degree upon the Greco-Roman household.<sup>17</sup>

Therefore, one should expect to track Paul's leader-speak within the context of family life that reflects his ecclesiological perspective of the church and her operations. It is noted that secular household codes are not necessarily rejected but are empowered to a new and more meaningful level within homes and the church. The household belongs to the Sovereign God who, through the Lord Jesus Christ, established his redeemed family. The King oversees his household in part through the exercise of godly leaders. Thus Timothy is assigned to serve the King through setting his house in order and in certain assurance that the Lord will return to claim his household.

The household of God (οἶκω θεου) does not refer to a building or structure,<sup>18</sup> although certainly this is at least a veiled reference to house-churches and, or temple, thus suggesting the image of a structure. Yet in reality it refers to the "assembly itself, and hence to a religious community."<sup>19</sup> The importance of the phrase "household of God" identifies God's ownership and is intensified by the theological reality that Paul views God's people as the new temple, a new dwelling for the Holy Spirit (1 Cor 3:16, 6:19; 2 Cor 6:16). The phrase could suggest that the church is God's temple and it houses God's

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of the theological and practical expressions of the church. Moreover, one can comfortably assume that Paul had no vision of the modern day mega-church. Yet, there remain viable and necessary principles in the household metaphor which are applicable for the twenty-first century.

<sup>17</sup>Hawthorne and Martin, *Dictionary of Paul and His Letters*, 417, write, "The basic unit of the Greco-Roman society in which Paul lived and ministered was the household (οἶκος, οἰκία). Given the dominant place of the household concept within the culture of Paul's day, its impact upon his teaching is not surprising. Paul brings to life his descriptions of the church and various relationships within it by drawing on terms and concepts associated with the household." In reference to household codes, Everett Ferguson, *Backgrounds*, 71, contends, "popular philosophy inculcated public duties according to one's responsibilities to different groups in society" and that "quite frequent was the grouping of duties in three pairs: husband-wives, parent-children, and master-slaves (Paul delineates such pairing in Eph 5:21-6:9; Col 3:18-4:1; Titus 2:2-10, 3:1)."

<sup>18</sup>The architectural metaphors in this verse and in other Pauline writings might lead one to a different conclusion. Yet, the connection of οἶκω with 3:4-5, 12 tends to support this view.

<sup>19</sup>Martin Dibelius and Hans Conzelmann, *The Pastoral Epistles*, trans. Philip Buttolph and Adela Yarbro (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1972), 60.

family.<sup>20</sup> Consequently, “household” metaphorical language is essential in describing and defining the church of the Pastorals. Collins ascribes importance to the metaphor as he comments,

Household language is used to describe the Christian church throughout the New Testament [because] The early church existed “at home.” The house was where the church happened, where it came together as an assembly. Thus, “Household codes” summarized the way that members of the household were to relate to one another.<sup>21</sup>

Likewise, James W. Aageson assigns great importance to the household metaphor:

The household of God provides the organizing structure with which the instructions, exhortations, and theological claims of the letter are made. This image, drawn from everyday life in the Greco-Roman world . . . is critical for understanding behavior, life, and thought in the assembly of the living God.<sup>22</sup>

Yet the designation household of God is not without disagreement as to its wider importance in the Pastorals. Some scholars insist that the term itself, in the context of the greater epistle, signals a strategically direct reference to ancient household codes which, according to ancient social convention, required a legalistic, submissive attitude and obedience appropriate to the strata of the individual’s social unit.<sup>23</sup> This perspective promotes the idea that certain prescribed beliefs and behaviors within the family and extended family unit (slaves) are required of its members. The existing household codes provide for a structure of enforcement. Verner maintains, “He (author of the Pastorals) intends to bolster a hierarchical social structure in the church that is being threatened by disruptive forces. . . . In this way he hopes to suppress the forces that threaten it and the radical social values they represent.”<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>20</sup>William D. Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 46 (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2000), 220.

<sup>21</sup>Raymond Collins, *I & II Timothy and Titus*, The New Testament Library (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2002), 104.

<sup>22</sup>Aageson, *Paul, the Pastoral Epistles*, 25.

<sup>23</sup>David C. Verner, *The Household of God: The Social World of the Pastoral Epistles*, Society of Biblical Literature Dissertation Series 71 (Chico, CA: Society of Biblical Literature, 1983), 29-34.

<sup>24</sup>*Ibid.*, 186.

Others who acknowledge the social and rhetorical significance of household codes minimize such effect on the theology of the Pastorals. Consequently the household codes of the Pastorals, while accepting of the social norm, are not rules that are to be legalistically followed, but rather doctrine and behavior that flow out of the power of the gospel. In reference to the household of God and attendant household codes, Mounce takes issue with Verner, stating,

The metaphor is not used to enforce a rigid structure on the Ephesian and Cretan churches. Neither is the author's intent to give institutional authority to enforce rules. Church leadership is composed of godly people who are serious and controlled, whose behavior does not bring reproach, whose management skills and Christian maturity are already visible.<sup>25</sup>

In light of these differing perspectives, this present work proceeds along the following path relative to the influence and meaning of the household codes within the church. It is my understanding that the ecclesiology of the Pastorals is directly and profoundly affected by the household codes.<sup>26</sup> Yet this is also a new community composed of individuals who have been redeemed by Jesus and indwelt by the Holy Spirit. The secular household codes rise to a new level within the household of God. Now such social convention is motivated and empowered by the grace of God. The example and teaching of Jesus is preeminent in their hearts and obedience to a higher ethic is made possible by the power of the Spirit. Jesus has taken the Law to its fulfillment (Matt 5:17).

First Timothy, and to a lesser degree 2 Timothy, adopts the household codes found, for example, in Ephesians and Colossians in order to select “familiar ethical genres and adapt them to spelling out the household of God.”<sup>27</sup> The church of the Pastorals needs to be corrected and redirected on the path to doctrinal and ethical purity.

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<sup>25</sup>Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, 221.

<sup>26</sup>However, I do not equate the ethical requirements of the Pastorals strictly with the Roman ethic. Paul is not prescribing a status quo perspective. While there are common virtues within the Christian and Greco-Roman ethic there are also stark differences, not to mention the source and motivation for practicing such ethical behavior.

<sup>27</sup>Frances Young, *The Theology of the Pastoral Letters*, New Testament Theology (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 33.

Thus while setting the church in order, Timothy is called to lead through exhortation, instruction, and correction. Such teaching should be seen as that which prescribes and describes the family of God. Yet participation in the household of God should not be equated as the requirements of a religious or ethical legal system, but rather the outworking of the power of the gospel in each family members life. In other words, it is the power of the gospel that enables God's household to function in the prescribed manner, not legal requirements imposed by an ecclesiastical hierarchy or a religious-cultural expectation. Mounce offers a helpful discussion which may be summarized, "At the heart of the PE is the gospel of Christ: God has acted in grace and mercy through the death of Christ."<sup>28</sup> Thus it is the grace of God that saves and empowers God's household to live in obedience. Yet from the human perspective, leadership is key in assuring proper doctrine and conduct continue as the fabric of authentic life within the household of God.<sup>29</sup>

### **The Church of the Living God**

The household metaphor is enriched with the further embellishment and explanation that the household of God is the "church of the living God."<sup>30</sup> Paul uses "church" to reference a local assembly, as well as "churches" to refer to several local fellowships. While there is no specific mention of universal church in Scripture, there are instances, such as 1 Corinthians 12<sup>31</sup> and Ephesians 3-6, where Paul clearly infers that

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<sup>28</sup>Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, lxxvi.

<sup>29</sup>Ibid., lxxvi-lxxx.

<sup>30</sup>I. H. Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, ed. J. A. Emerton, C. E. B. Cranfield, and G. N. Stanton (London: T & T Clark, 1999), 509, states, "ἡτις functions as a relative to expand on or clarify the immediately preceding term οἰκὸς θεοῦ."

<sup>31</sup>Contra James D. G. Dunn, *The Theology of Paul the Apostle* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), 578-9.

there are matters applicable to all the churches of God.<sup>32</sup> Kelly states that because there is no definite article preceding “church,” Paul is thinking primarily of the local assembly<sup>33</sup> and not the church universal. Even if this is the case, Kelly is in agreement that universal principles are present. So it is my view that Paul’s letters to Timothy, while directed specifically to the church at Ephesus, may also be applied in most instances to the collective or universal church.<sup>34</sup> The household of God in Ephesus is the church of the living God.

Even though 1 Timothy 3:15 is the strategic passage in the companion volumes of 1 and 2 Timothy, it is obvious that the Pastorals do not present an in-depth Pauline theology of the church. The image of God’s people as the “household of God” (1 Tim 3:15) is rich in theological significance, yet it is incomplete. Given the fact that ἐκκλησία is the most frequent term used by Paul in reference to groups who met to worship Christ and because there is a foundational but limited theology of the church presented in 1 and 2 Timothy, it may be helpful to briefly explore the implications of ἐκκλησία from a broader framework. Three areas of brief inquiry are helpful to a fuller discovery of the meaning of “church.”

### **Called Out–Gathered In**

First, according to etymological studies, “church,” ἐκκλησία, renders the

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<sup>32</sup>Yet, it could be argued that Paul never fully develops the concept of the “universal church.” See Banks, *Paul’s Idea*, 39.

<sup>33</sup>J. N. D. Kelly, *A Commentary on the Pastoral Epistles: Timothy I & II and Titus* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1960), 87.

<sup>34</sup>See Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 509. See also Philip Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, *The New International Commentary on the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006), 274. Towner sees the reference in 1 Tim 3:15 to the universal church, yet he suggests this view is tempered by the reference to 1 Tim 3:5, which is clearly local.

conceptual idea “to call out” or that of a “gathered people.”<sup>35</sup> In reference to the first correspondence to the Thessalonians, Raymond F. Collins states that Paul wrote to a *ἐκκλησία*, “a duly summoned assembly.”<sup>36</sup> Accordingly, the church represents those who have been called out of the world, and by implication, gathered into the family of God. While the term “election” is not utilized in 1 and 2 Timothy, the concept of “called out” and “gathered in” essentially expresses the concept of Divine election (Eph 1). Paul’s testimony (1 Tim 1:12-16) expresses both his gratitude to and praise of Christ Jesus, because in the divine plan of God, Paul was put<sup>37</sup> in service and thus placed in the church. His call was according to the command of God (1 Tim 1:1) and the will of God (2 Tim 1:1). It is God “who has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace” (2 Tim 1:9). Others may be so privileged only as God grants repentance (2 Tim 2:25). Likewise Paul’s admonition to Timothy to “take hold of the eternal life to which you were called” (1 Tim 6:11) suggests that he and Timothy were called out of their former lives by God into the calling of God. To believe in and receive the gospel is to enter into the family of faith, the church. Schnell declares, “For Paul, participation in the salvation they have in common can only exist in the fellowship of believers.”<sup>38</sup>

To be called out of the world suggests that God’s household has moved into a new spiritual reality evidenced in a new moral reality. The new corporate “body,” the

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<sup>35</sup>Gordon D. Fee, *Gospel and Spirit: Issues in New Testament Hermeneutics* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1991), 125.

<sup>36</sup>Raymond F. Collins, *The Many Faces of the Church: A Study in New Testament Ecclesiology* (New York: Crossroad, 2003), 1.

<sup>37</sup>Θέμενος, verb participle aorist middle nominative masculine singular from τίθημι θέμενος is “translated variously as destine, appoint, place, put, arrange and establish.” Walter Bauer, *A Greek English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (BGAD), 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., rev. and aug. F. Wilbur and Frederick W. Danker (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1979), 815-16.

<sup>38</sup>Udo Schnelle, *Apostle Paul: His and Life and Theology*, trans. M. Eugene Boring (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2005), 559.

church, is made up of individuals who are now part of a new resurrection reality. Paul conceived of this new existence as profoundly different from the old life: each member of the church could be called a “new creation.”<sup>39</sup> The call to and fashioning of new creaturehood is purely the work of God. Christ Jesus came into the world to call sinners out of the world by his grace and mercy into the household of God (1 Tim 1:14-16; 2 Tim 1:9). Paul’s call resulted in a reorientation of his life and according to Matera, “was the moment when Christ conquered him.”<sup>40</sup> In the apostle’s mind, this is the experiential outcome of all who are “conquered” by Christ.<sup>41</sup>

Abraham J. Malherbe states that the Pastorals “reflect a pessimistic view of human beings who have not come to a knowledge of the truth and do not live according to sound teaching.”<sup>42</sup> Such pessimism, if in fact that is a fair characterization, stems from the reality of sinful humanity. Such utter ignorance is a symptom of the sickness of complete fallen depravity. The healthy teaching of the glorious gospel has no tolerance for the lawless and rebellious, the ungodly<sup>43</sup> (1 Tim 1:9-11). Those who actively oppose good and God must be called away by God from such debauchery for they cannot move toward God unless he grants repentance, which enables them to come to a knowledge of the truth. Thus the church has been called out of the immorality of the world and gathered in for the purpose of enjoying the benefits of the household of God. These spiritual

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<sup>39</sup>Ellis, *Pauline Theology*, 8.

<sup>40</sup>Frank J. Matera, *God’s Saving Grace: A Pauline Theology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2012), 27.

<sup>41</sup>The world cannot summon itself into a saving relationship with Jesus Christ in that it has not come to a knowledge of the truth (1 Tim 2:4).

<sup>42</sup>Abraham J. Malherbe, “Christ Jesus Came into the World to Save Sinners,” in *Salvation in the New Testament: Perspectives on Soteriology*, Novum Testamentum, Supplement Series 121 (Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill, 2005): 331-58.

<sup>43</sup>R. Stanton Norman, “Human Sinfulness,” in *A Theology for the Church*, ed. Daniel Akin (Nashville: B & H, 2007), 415. “[A]sebeia and its cognates can be translated as ‘impiety,’ ‘irreligion,’ or ‘godlessness.’ Godlessness is an active irreverence toward God, an impious attitude that neglects the appropriate worship of God.”

profits include the light of the gospel for spiritual and temporal living, as well as the promise of immortality forever in the presence of God. The enjoyment and exercise of these benefits should serve the redemptive mission of God in which his creation, called-out and gathered into his church, may ultimately offer him praise (1 Tim 1:12-14, 2:1-8, 3:14-16, 4:9-16, 6:1-2, 11-16; 2 Tim 1:8-11, 2:1-26, 4:1-5).

### **The Presence of God**

The called-out ones are those who most profoundly enjoy the presence of God in fellowship and within the context of family life. Accordingly, rather than “wrath and dissension” (1 Tim 2:8), the men of the household are to live in holiness with one another and implore God on behalf of all who need the truth that leads to salvation. The congregational meeting should not be characterized by faction but by brothers<sup>44</sup> in the unity of prayer.

The presence of God insures continual benefit to his family as he speaks through his Spirit (1 Tim 4:1) and his Word (1 Tim 4:13-16) and that his children have been enabled to guard the treasure of the gospel by and through the power of the Holy Spirit (2 Tim 1:14). Thus the Holy Spirit may be understood as a unique gift to the church. The presence of the Holy Spirit serves to affirm the church’s present existence as God’s household, as well as guarantees their full consummation (Eph 1:13-14). The common experience of the indwelling Spirit within each member is that “which marks off God’s people from the rest” and enables them to understand the wisdom of the cross, considered foolishness by the world.<sup>45</sup> Timothy is to continue the faithful ministry of the Word, which is able to “ensure salvation both for yourself and for those who hear you” (1 Tim

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<sup>44</sup>Ellis, *Pauline Theology*, 9, suggests that the term “brother” is utilized in Col 1:2 and 4:15 in a *technical* sense denoting “coworker” or “colleague.” In my opinion, while this does not appear to be the case in 1 Tim 2:8, the fact remains that brothers in the household of God especially in the context of prayer, should perceive each other as coworkers in the gospel.

<sup>45</sup>Fee, *Gospel and Spirit*, 136.

4:16). Timothy is aware of such truth because “from childhood you have known the sacred writings which are able to give you the wisdom that leads to salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus” (2 Tim 3:15). Timothy must publish such truth within the church. All such teaching of the “Sacred Writings”<sup>46</sup> is “profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work” (2 Tim 3:16-17). The ministry of the Word is occasioned in the presence of God and Jesus Christ (2 Tim 4:1).

Likewise, the presence of God means in times of suffering God’s family may be assured of his strengthening power and presence and that He will ultimately rescue His people from the snare of the enemy (2 Tim 4:17). As the household of God cherishes his presence, God receives the glory due only to him (2 Tim 4:18).

### **Assembly**

A second understanding of ἐκκλησία is decidedly secular, referencing an “assembly, as a regularly summoned political body,”<sup>47</sup> but also with allusion to the congregation of the Israelites, especially when gathered for religious purposes. Within the Pauline corpus, the words church and churches are mentioned sixty-six times referencing some aspect of an assembly of the redeemed. For example, 1 Thessalonians 1:1 refers to the ἐκκλησία or gathering (singular) of the Thessalonians with the identifying qualification, “in God our father and the Lord Jesus Christ,” so as to distinguish it from other political councils and synagogue meetings.<sup>48</sup> In verse 4, Paul refers to the “churches of God” (plural) in reference to many or at least several individual assemblies. The fact that these are churches in a specific geographical area removes any sense in which this may be

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<sup>46</sup>Sacred writings appears to be the favorite terminology of rabbinic Judaism which not only reflects Paul’s background but may also suggest that Timothy was familiar with the Old Testament as “God-breathed” (2 Tim 2).

<sup>47</sup>BGAD, *A Greek English Lexicon of the New Testament*, 240.

<sup>48</sup>Hawthorne and Martin, *Dictionary of Paul and His Letters*, 124.

interpreted metaphorically. This terminology describes local assemblies of gathered believers. In reference to the church in Ephesus (1 Tim 1:3), Paul mentions Onesiphorus who served the assembly in Ephesus and had shown kindness to him (2 Tim 1:18). Similarly, Paul sent Tychicus to the assembly in Ephesus (2 Tim 4:11-13).

Assembly was also popularly used to describe a group of Roman citizens entitled to vote, as well as business meetings of clubs.<sup>49</sup> While the assemblies of God are related to one another in terms of faith and practice, such is not the case as one would expect, in relation to the pagan religious assemblies, as well as secular assemblies who met for civic or social causes. Meeks states some scholars propose that Christian groups imitated the pattern of some volunteer clubs and assemblies. Yet he articulates that Christian assemblies did not consciously model themselves after such civic assemblies, and in fact while Christian assemblies were more exclusive in their membership in terms of belief and conduct, they were more inclusive in terms of accepting wide social strata of members.<sup>50</sup> The goals of civic assemblies were primarily “fellowship and conviviality.” The cultic clubs were connected to festivals and shrines to the gods, and the Christian assembly convened around matters of salvation.<sup>51</sup>

An examination of 1 and 2 Timothy reveals that the assembly of Christians in Ephesus came together for a number of salvation matters. Ministry included different activities such as encouraging, rebuking, organizing for the care of widows (1 Tim 5), public reading of the Scriptures (1 Tim 4), and prayers (1 Tim 2), as well as teaching and preaching (2 Tim 4), often in the context of public worship. It is notable that the teaching of faith matters is blended into instruction concerning how to dress and how to conduct

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<sup>49</sup>Ferguson, *Backgrounds of Early Christianity*, 42, states that in Athens, the assembly “provided a kind of direct democracy for many legislative and judicial decisions.”

<sup>50</sup>Meeks, *The First Urban Christians*, 78.

<sup>51</sup>*Ibid.*, 79.

one's life in public (1 Tim 2). Similarly, discipline has to be administered for the sake of the assembly, and this in stark contrast to the public laying on of hands as a commissioning and assignment service of blessing.<sup>52</sup>

The local assembly of those who worshiped Jesus most likely met in the homes of the wealthy members. Their financial status would allow them to provide adequate space for the small assembly to convene, discuss ministry needs, and of course worship through teaching, praying, and singing (Col 3:16). Two such homes of assembly were possibly that of Prisca and Aquila, as well as the household of Onesiphorus (2 Tim 1:16; 2 Tim 4: 19). Paul appears to be indebted to both as they proved helpful in the gospel ministry. However, wealthy homeowners were not always so useful. First and 2 Timothy strongly suggest that some wealthy members, possibly those who were leaders in their respective home assemblies, were the source of leadership problems, false teaching, and attendant ungodly behavior. Frances Young comments that the Pastorals, in addition to early Christian literature, reveal a “natural dominance of the well-to-do” because the church assembly often depended on the wealthy to subsidize the work of Christian ministry.<sup>53</sup>

Whereas there may have been many superficial similarities between the common civic and religious assemblies and clubs of the Mediterranean world, namely regular meetings, business conducted, practiced rituals, and social interactions expressed, the assemblies of God were undeniably different in origin, purpose, and function. Those in the assembly of God were summoned by God (in contrast to voluntary interest and association) and transformed into a member of the family of God. Ἐκκλησία, the assembly of God in 1 and 2 Timothy, was a household where the glorious gospel was taught (1 Tim

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<sup>52</sup>Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, 34, writes, “Timothy is 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.”

<sup>53</sup>Young, *The Theology of the Pastoral Letters*, 34.

1:11) with the goal of such instruction to encourage “love from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith” (1 Tim 1:5).

### **Temple (Assembly) of Yahweh**

To be sure, it was Jesus, not Paul, who originally spoke of “church” as the New Testament designation of God’s people (Matt 16:18). The expected activity of the Messiah was to establish such an assembly. Dunn states that *ekklesia* is how Israel described herself.<sup>54</sup> *Ekklesia* occurs at least 100 times in the Septuagint referencing Israel as the “assembly of Yahweh.” In continuity with this idea, Israel described herself as “holy” (Deut 7:6), “elect” (Ps 89:3), and “called” (Isa 41:9) of God. In establishing His covenant with Israel, God avowed, “Now then, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be My own possession among all the peoples, for all the earth is Mine” (Exod 19:5). God instructs Moses to “Gather the people to me” in order that they may hear his words. Grudem explains, “The word ‘gather’ (Heb. qahal) with the Greek term *ekklesiazō*, ‘to summon an assembly,’” is the verb cognate of the New Testament *ekklesia*, church.<sup>55</sup> These covenant verses picture Israel as God’s people in the midst of all the people of the world. Thus Israel is the assembly of Yahweh called out from the world and gathered together in the land God will supply for them. Ultimately God promised Abraham a land, a seed, and a blessing.<sup>56</sup>

Accordingly, *ekklesia* suggests an eschatological accomplishment of God through the Messiah and his people, the church. The Christ event established God’s

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<sup>54</sup>Dunn, *The Theology of Paul*, 537.

<sup>55</sup>William Grudem, *Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Biblical Doctrine* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2000), 854.

<sup>56</sup>Thomas Schreiner, *Paul: Apostle of God’s Glory in Christ—A Pauline Theology* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2001), 75.

promise to Israel for deliverance through the Messiah and the creation of the new Israel,<sup>57</sup> the church. Paul came to fully understand that the Old Testament promises were being fulfilled in the gospel of Jesus. For Paul this was not a surprising event or “unexpected turn in God’s purposes”<sup>58</sup> (Rom 1:1-3). Paul understood that the Messiah was Israel’s true king, a royal Messiah, and One who would deliver Israel as well as bring her history to climax.<sup>59</sup> This is the treasure of the gospel that Timothy and the household of God are to protect and promote.

The truth of God has captured the church. The church is to protect and promote that truth (1 Tim 3:15). Based upon the truth of the gospel, the gathered household of God is to lift up holy hands in prayer for the salvation of all people (1 Tim 2); insist on godly leadership, men above reproach (1 Tim 3; 2 Tim 2:14-26) who will not bring dishonor to the truth of the gospel; “prescribe and teach” the truth (1 Tim 4:11; 2 Tim 2:1-2, 4:1-5), knowing that the salvation of others depends on it; properly attend to the needs of household members, as well as insist on accountability from them (1 Tim 5; 2 Tim 1:13-15), so that a proper example is supplied to the household and watching world (1 Tim 2); fight the good fight of faith (2 Tim 2:3-7), which will inevitably involve suffering (2 Tim 1:8, 15), maintaining purity and godliness (2 Tim 3:1-15); and await the next epiphany of Christ (1 Tim 6:11-16; 2 Tim 1:10).

It has been demonstrated that “church” has at least three connotative meanings: the church as a called out or gathered people, the church as an assembly designed to perform public or private functions, and the church as the assembly of Yahweh. Given a full view of Pauline theology, it would not be a disservice to suggest all three perspectives

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<sup>57</sup>I am very much aware of strong disagreement as to this interpretation of Paul. One such representative source is S. Lewis Johnson, Jr., “Paul and ‘The Israel of God’ An Exegetical and Eschatological Case Study,” *The Master’s Seminary Journal* 20 (2009): 41-55.

<sup>58</sup>Dunn, *The Theology of Paul*, 169.

<sup>59</sup>N. T. Wright, *Paul in Fresh Perspective* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2005), 43.

find some measure of agreement in 1 and 2 Timothy.<sup>60</sup> The Christian community is a family of people set apart from the world, yet in the midst of the world a community of faith who reflects a divine origin, has been assembled by divine activity, and assigned to a divine purpose. This reality is seen in the central passage of 1 Timothy.

### **The Living God**

Towner asserts it unclear as to what the term “Living God” adds to Paul’s language of the church as the household of God.<sup>61</sup> Yet it is certain the appellation the “Living God” has weighty background in the Old and New Testaments.<sup>62</sup> The household of God is unique in that it has been established by and is inhabited by the living God. “This ‘assembly’ of Christian people is distinct from the other assemblies of the world in that the living God dwells within it (2 Cor. 6:16).”<sup>63</sup> Mounce contends that the term is also a statement against perceiving the church as a sort of “static institutionalism,”<sup>64</sup> but rather a household gathered, sustained, and empowered by God for his purposes.

That the household belongs to God is demonstrated in a number of instances including the language of possession.<sup>65</sup> Such possession necessarily implies his control over the church. The church is the household of God and not to be mistaken for just another religious deity in Ephesus (see Acts 19). This God does not compete with

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<sup>60</sup>1 Cor 1:2 is a demonstration of all three perspectives.

<sup>61</sup>Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 274.

<sup>62</sup>Deut 5:26; Josh 3:10; 1 Sam 17:26, 36; 2 Kgs 19:4, 16; Pss 42:2; 84:2; Isa 37:4, 17; Jer 10:10; 23:36; Dan 6:20, 26; Hos 1:10; Matt 16:16, 26:63; Acts 14:15; Rom 9:26; 2 Cor 3:3, 6:16; 1 Thess 1:9; Heb 3:12, 9:14, 10:31, 12:22; Rev 7:2.

<sup>63</sup>Philip H. Towner, *1-2 Timothy & Titus*, The IVP New Testament Commentary Series (Downers Grove, IL: 1994), 95.

<sup>64</sup>Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, 221.

<sup>65</sup>θεοῦ genitive of θεός.

Artemis.<sup>66</sup> This is not another religious group, but the house of the one and only God (1 Tim 1:17).

Given the apostle's religious background, the Old Testament concept of the "Living God" is certainly a theological concept to which Paul would have been familiar with and committed to. Moreover, there appears to be at least three conceptual ideas relative to the term, "Living God." Thus this perspective, without minimizing the human element, lays emphasis on the divine reality. This section shall address the appellation, the Living God, as reference to God as the Creator and sustaining presence of life, the only divine, and the living God as the One who establishes eschatological hope.

### **God—The Source and Sustaining Presence of Life**

First, God as the source and sustaining presence of life shall be examined. Living God obviously declares the theological truth that God is alive and because he is alive he is acutely aware of the activities of his redeemed earthly family, as well as the universal family of humanity. Not only is he aware, but he also superintends his will and purpose over his creation. For example, in reinforcing the covenantal text, Moses speaks the commandments a second time (Deut 5) and refers to the living God (v. 26) who has allowed Moses the fearfully unique privilege to hear the voice of God and remain alive. For that reason, Towner suggests that Paul may speak of the living God as "the originator and sustainer of Life" (1 Tim 4:4, 10, 6:15-17). Likewise, Paul exults in God who is eternal, immortal, and the only God (1 Tim 1:17) who has spoken his inspired Word through the apostle himself (2 Tim 3). Joshua summons the leaders of the whole nation so that he may remind them, that in contrast to the dead and useless gods of the heathen, Jehovah is a living God who has and will continue to move with power on behalf of his people (Josh 3). Psalm 18:46 declares that the LORD who lives is the blessed rock and

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<sup>66</sup>Ferguson, *Backgrounds of Early Christianity*, 199, writes, "Few if any cities in the ancient world had a closer identity with their patron deity than Ephesus did with Artemis."

exalted God of salvation. Conceivably this is an implicit statement of contrast with the pagan deities. The living God can intervene in history because of “his unchanging vitality and power.”<sup>67</sup> Equally, God is the giver of salvation through the Lord Jesus Christ. For all who will believe in him, he is the exalted God of salvation (1 Tim 1:16) “because we have fixed our hope on the living God, who is the Savior of all men, especially of believers” (1 Tim 4:10).

Psalm 84 perhaps expresses the yearning of the pilgrim who longs for the tabernacle so that he can fully commune with the living God (v. 2), who withholds no good thing from his people (v. 11). Similarly, God has created every good thing and it should not be rejected if received properly (1 Tim 4:4-5). Paul’s usage of living God may reflect such a temple or tabernacle perspective (as does possibly Ps 84), yet even if this is the not the case, the image of the household of God is not far removed from the concept of the temple of God. Hezekiah’s temple prayer (Isa 37) implores Yahweh to take vengeance on Sennacherib for his impudence against the living God, but Isaiah repudiates Hezekiah’s call for retribution because it is Yahweh, the living God, who is in charge and has planned and supervised the events of human history. Likewise, the false teachers who have strayed from the truth because they do not understand the Law (1 Tim 1:3-11) are under the attentive eyes of the living God and sure judgment. Even Paul once lived as an enemy of God (Rom 5:10) and yet the one living God saved him, the worst of sinners (1 Tim 1). Correspondingly, the Living God who has supplied a measure of blessing to all people (1 Tim 1:17, 4:10) will also universally “judge the living and the dead” (2 Tim 4:1).

In the context of 1 Timothy 3:15, the living God is present and alive and not to be dismissed. He hears the teaching and sees the behavior of his household as well as those who have invaded his family. His living vitality will be more fully experienced in the future appearing of the Lord Jesus Christ. Undeniably, since God’s purposes and

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<sup>67</sup>A. A. Anderson, *The Book of Psalms (1-72)*, The New Century Bible Commentary (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1992), 166.

grace were revealed in the appearing of the Lord Jesus Christ (2 Tim 1:10), Paul is assured that he and every member of the household of God, those who have loved his appearing, will receive a crown of righteousness (2 Tim 4:8).<sup>68</sup> Moreover, they will be fully sustained by the One who created them for his purposes.

### **God—The Only Immortal**

That God is living also appears to be a polemic statement.<sup>69</sup> The expression seems to be in opposition to the dead idols or inanimate objects of pagan worship: the living God is the only Divine. He is “incomparably alive, and his life is not contingent on anything or anyone else.”<sup>70</sup> Paul’s doxological statement (1 Tim 1:17) speaks of God’s immortality and everlasting existence. Paul insists that the God of the universe must be seen in the context of and in contrast to the worthless man-made gods of the surrounding culture. Paul’s sensitivity to the pagan culture is clearly seen in his appeal to the Athenians.<sup>71</sup> Additionally, it is clear that Ephesus, a center of pagan worship, remained a challenge to the Pauline gospel. Thus Paul appears to be compelled to insist that God is the Savior who desires all men to be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth (1 Tim 2:3-4). And what is the truth? “For there is one God, and one mediator also between God and men, the man Christ Jesus” (1 Tim 2:5a).

Paul is struck with the reality that lifeless idols offer nothing to the people. Only the living God is able to save by graciously granting repentance that leads to the

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<sup>68</sup>To some extent, Paul’s Christology is framed within the context of epiphany.

<sup>69</sup>See Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, 221; Thomas D. Lea and Hayne P. Griffin, Jr., *1, 2 Timothy, Titus*, The New American Commentary, vol. 34 (Nashville: Broadman, 1992), 123; George W. Knight III, *The Pastoral Epistles*, The New International Greek Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1992), 181. Contra, Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 509.

<sup>70</sup>Timothy George, “The Nature of God: Being, Attributes, and Acts,” in *A Theology for the Church*, 194.

<sup>71</sup>“So, Paul stood in the midst of the Areopagus and said, ‘Men of Athens, I observe that you are very religious in all respects. For while I was passing through and examining the objects of your worship, I also found an altar with this inscription, ‘TO AN UNKNOWN GOD’” (Acts 17:22-23).

truth (2 Tim 2:25). The man-made gods of Ephesus have no such power. Is it possible that Paul recalls the psalmist who depicts the idols as mere man-made objects?

Why do the nations say, “Where is their God?” Our God is in heaven; he does whatever pleases him. But their idols are silver and gold, made by human hands. They have mouths, but cannot speak, eyes, but cannot see. They have ears, but cannot hear, noses, but cannot smell. They have hands, but cannot feel, feet, but cannot walk, nor can they utter a sound with their throats. (Ps 115:2-7)

The idols of the nations are silver and gold, made by human hands. They have mouths, but cannot speak, eyes, but cannot see. They have ears, but cannot hear, nor is there breath in their mouths. Those who make them will be like them, and so will all who trust in them. (Ps 135:15-18)

Goodwin asserts that Paul proclaimed the living God in order to convince the pagans of the “superior value of worshiping the one true God” as this was an expression of the “monotheistic kerygma”<sup>72</sup> (in contrast to their dead idol-gods) he preached. Thus the pagan convert would not serve dead idols but the one living God (1 Thess 1:9). Paul is bold in his proclamation. In opposition to the dead idols he received his commission and mission from the one true God. Consequently, “the living God in I Tim. 4.10 carries missionary significance”<sup>73</sup> as God desires all men to be saved. Paul attributes his mission to the one, living God. He has been sent by the one living God who desires the salvation of humankind.

### **God of Eschatological Hope**

In the midst of the organizational motif and call to truth found in 1 and 2 Timothy, it may be easy to miss Paul’s eschatological emphasis on the unfolding hope of the household of God. Yet as has been expounded in an earlier section, the gospel truth includes the priceless promise of Christ’s return. In light of the fact that “eschatology pervades Pauline theology,” the hope of future deliverance “cannot be shunted aside to the periphery of Paul’s thought.” To that point, one must connect such theology with “all

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<sup>72</sup>Mark J. Goodwin, “The Pauline Background of the Living God as Interpretive Context for 1 Timothy 4.10,” *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 18 (1996): 61-85.

<sup>73</sup>Ibid., 60.

that has preceded it.”<sup>74</sup> Thus the salvific themes<sup>75</sup> repeatedly rehearsed in 1 and 2 Timothy remind the young leader and the Ephesian church that they “wait in hope for the final appearance of God’s saving grace because they already experience something of that grace, the fullness which is yet to be revealed.”<sup>76</sup> Salvation has come and salvation will come.<sup>77</sup> Approaching that idea, but without full development, Henry Everding comments that the epithet, “because we have fixed our hope on the Living God,” “was added by the author in 4.10 to heighten the ‘life’ theme for believers.”<sup>78</sup> So it appears that the customary approach of commentators has been to follow Dibelius and interpret the living God in connection with the life-theme of 1 Timothy 4:8: “It [godliness] holds promise for the present life and *also* for the *life* to come.”<sup>79</sup> These insights appear to be valid as they take into account the significance of 1 Timothy 4:10.

The life-themes are seen in the fact that the Living God will assure his household that they will live beyond this life. First Thessalonians 1:9-10 confirms that the living God had raised Jesus from the dead and as such will assure a future resurrection for all believers. The Thessalonian converts (v. 10) were waiting for the Son “whom he raised from the dead—Jesus, who rescues us from the coming wrath.” The Thessalonians thus await deliverance at the *parousia*, when all believers can expect a future resurrection.<sup>80</sup>

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<sup>74</sup>Schreiner, *Paul*, 453.

<sup>75</sup>1 Tim 1:12-16, 2:3-6, 3:16, 4:16, 6:12; 2 Tim 2:10-13, 2:24-26, 3:15, 4:8, 4:18.

<sup>76</sup>Matera, *God’s Saving Grace*, 187.

<sup>77</sup>The promise of hope fully realized in the return of Christ should be an encouragement to the household. Unfortunately, some believers have been taught that the resurrection has already taken place (2 Tim 2:18) and are shaken in their faith.

<sup>78</sup>Henry E. Everding, “The Living God: A Study in the Function and Meaning of Biblical Terminology” (Ph.D. diss., Harvard University, 1968): 308-9.

<sup>79</sup>Goodwin, “The Pauline Background,” 61-85.

<sup>80</sup>Ibid. See also W. Lock, *The Pastoral Epistles* (New York: Charles Scribner, 1924), 51: God is “living, and therefore able to give life now and hereafter.”

The fact that believers embrace hope speaks to the issue of waiting for that hope. While the church promotes and protects the truth of God, it continues to wait. Such waiting is not mired in stagnant existence but in the life process of “now and not yet.” “For we are a fragrance of Christ to God among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing; to the one an aroma from death to death, to the other an aroma from life to life” (2 Cor 2:15). The future hope of God’s household, although a hope that is now lived in the present, has been determined by a past event: the birth, death, and resurrection of Jesus.

### **Conclusion**

The Living God remains vigilant over his household. He is committed to keeping them but also to infusing them with godliness. This will happen as the church remains aware of the unhealthy teaching and behavior that could easily find its way into their individual homes and lives. Leaders must teach and live the truth so as to be an example to rest of the household. In that vein, and yet from an entirely negative perspective, Paul testifies to Timothy that his (Paul’s) pre-conversion life remains an example to the household (1 Tim 1:15-16).

The household of God must remember who they are, where they came from, and to whom they belong. Paul’s plea for godliness is based on the undeserving grace granted to all who find salvation in the family of God. The purpose for such rhetorical passion is to emphasize the fact that they have been included in the church of the Living God because of a merciful and patient God, Jesus Christ.

The household of God is the only divine family as there is only one God. Against the backdrop of the polytheistic culture of Ephesus and the temple of Artemis, the household of God could be threatened by any number of sick teachers, proliferating diseased doctrine. The success of Ephesus<sup>81</sup> could have contributed to the threat against

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<sup>81</sup>C. L. Brinks, “Great is Artemis of the Ephesians,” *The Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 171 (October 2009): 776-95, writes, “By the first century C.E. Ephesus was a large and prosperous city with an

the household of God. Surely the Pauline gospel was being compromised and out-right challenged by the Ephesian opponents. While it is uncertain as to the specifics of the false teaching, the damnable heresies of Artemis and the pantheon of gods could have been part of the threat. The church must know and live under the Lordship of the one God who expressed himself in and through Christ Jesus the Lord (1 Tim 1:12; 2:5). Consequently, one should listen to the Spirit who “explicitly says that in later times some will fall away from the faith, paying attention to deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons” (1 Tim 4:1).

Paul’s warns Timothy to not allow the joy and anticipation of their great eschatological hope to be stolen by opponents of the healthy teaching of the gospel. The Lord Jesus has not yet returned, but he is coming. Even now Christ has invaded their lives and begun his work in them as they labor and strive unto godliness. Timothy’s pursuit of godliness is seen at least partially in following the pattern laid down by Paul. Indeed he has observed Paul’s teaching and conduct (2 Tim 3:10). While it was commonly expected in Graeco-Roman culture that the teacher was to embody his teaching, “The content of Paul’s teaching, however, is the personal manifestation in Christ of the saving plan of God.”<sup>82</sup> God’s saving plan includes the promised day of the Lord in which the church will fully enjoy the blessings of being God’s household. Until then Timothy is to set the example. While waiting for the return of the Lord Jesus Christ, he is to lead the church in gospel ministry, protecting and promoting God’s truth while living godly lives in a corrupt world.

Timothy will lead by example and by word. He will live the truth, exemplify the truth, and speak the truth. Paul leads Timothy through words. A leader utilizes controlled language to achieve mission goals. Gail T. Fairhurst brands such an approach,

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estimated two hundred thousand inhabitants and located near the coast, across the Aegean Sea from Greece, it was an important commercial and trade center.”

<sup>82</sup>Andrew D. Clarke, “Be Imitators of Me: Paul’s Model of Leadership,” *Tyndale Bulletin* 49, no. 2 (1998): 326-66.

which controls the context and defines the situation, as “framing.”<sup>83</sup> Fairhurst and Robert Sarr state, “Effective leaders . . . use language in ways that allow us to see leadership not only as big decisions but as a series of moments in which images build upon each other to help us construct a reality to which we must then respond.”<sup>84</sup> Vern Sheridan Poythress speaks of the “wave” perspective of language in which language is not primarily stable pieces but a dynamic process of communication in which the living God guides and empowers the practice.<sup>85</sup> To that point, it shall be apparent in the examination of 1 Timothy 3:14-15 that the apostle Paul frames his vision of the church as well as his purpose for writing Timothy in textured layers of meaning clearly expressed in descriptive “sense-making” metaphors.<sup>86</sup> Furthermore, such tiers of expression construct a doctrine of the church, an ecclesiology grounded on the greater doctrine of God expressed in the theology of the Pastorals.

That Paul expresses a pragmatic theology of the church in metaphorical language is not unexpected or unusual. Pauline metaphorical rhetoric is found elsewhere. “But we proved to be gentle among you, as a nursing *mother* tenderly cares for her own children” (1 Thess 2:7). Other relational metaphors include “as a father” (1 Thess 2:11),

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<sup>83</sup>Gail T. Fairhurst, *The Power of Framing: Creating the Language of Leadership* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2011), 2-3.

<sup>84</sup>Gail T. Fairhurst, and Robert Sarr, *The Art of Framing: Managing the Language of Leadership* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1996), 1.

<sup>85</sup>Vern Sheridan Poythress, *In the Beginning Was the Word: Language—A God-Centered Approach* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2009), 53.

<sup>86</sup>Ken W. Parry, “The Thing about Metaphors and Leadership,” *International Leadership Journal* 1 (November 2008), accessed January 3, 2013, <http://www.tesc.edu/ijl>, writes, “[W]ith metaphors we have a means of improving our capacity for creative yet disciplined thought, which in turn enables us to cope with the complexity of (organizational) life. The visual and symbolic nature of metaphors helps this happen. The metaphor creates a visual image in the mind of the recipient. Research into clinical psychology suggests that people will remember concrete things like goose and egg much more readily than abstract concepts like confusion, debt, and wastage. Consequently, people will picture in their minds, and therefore remember, the metaphor of killing the goose that laid the golden egg much more readily than they will remember the factors that led to a loss of innovation, market-share, and profitability. Leaders are therefore able to influence followers in ways that the leaders intend and desire.”

the race for the “prize” (Phil 3:12-14), and the church as the “bride” of Christ (Eph 5:22-23). The Pastorals are filled with metaphorical language as Pauline leader-speak.

In summary, the central metaphor of the “household of God, the church of the living God, the pillar and support of the truth” explains and defines Paul’s ecclesiological purpose: to protect and promote the church of God. Paul’s image of the church is illustrated by reference to a house and serves as a powerful metaphor and semantic connection between two domestic realities.<sup>87</sup> Thus, the association of God’s household to the family is a declaration of how the family should function together as well as their corresponding obligations to God. Therefore Paul’s LL within the context of family life reflects his ecclesiological perspective of the church and her operations. Paul charged Timothy through a LL to serve the King by setting His house in order and in the certain assurance that the Lord will return to claim his household.

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<sup>87</sup>Aageson, *Paul, the Pastoral Epistles*, 21.

CHAPTER 4  
CHURCH AS THE PILLAR AND  
SUPPORT OF THE TRUTH

The household of God is built upon truth and may be understood as the revelation of God in and through Jesus Christ,<sup>1</sup> as well the truth of the gospel set forth in the Scriptures.<sup>2</sup> The whole of the Pastorals declare that truth is found in the person of Christ, the redemptive acts of Christ, and the teachings of Christ, as well as the teaching about Christ. Such truth “leads to salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus” (2 Tim 3:15). The proper teasing out of and defense of such truth appears to be Paul’s concern, which must be addressed by Timothy (1 Tim 1:3-11).

On the one hand Paul seems to have little patience with those who deny or seek to confuse the truth, labeling them conceited and clueless (1 Tim 6:3-4). Yet on the other hand, he urges Timothy to deal gently with those who oppose such truth with the faithful hope that “perhaps God may grant them repentance leading to the knowledge of the truth,” which will enable them to be free from the snare of the devil (2 Tim 2:25-26). It is clear that truth is understood to be centered in Jesus Christ. Yet it is also the case, according to 1 Timothy 3:15, that the household of God is the ground of the truth.

To describe the church in such fashion appears to exalt the church above any pedestrian understanding. Surely the church as “the pillar and support of the truth” supersedes any description or prescription of the church expressed in the New Testament

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<sup>1</sup>Jesus affirmed, “I am . . . the truth” (John 14:6) and “I speak the truth” (John 8:45). John says that Jesus is “full of grace and truth” (John 1:14), and that “grace and truth were realized through Jesus Christ” (John 1:17).

<sup>2</sup>As per the text of this exegesis, 1 Tim 3:14-15(16), as well as 2 Tim 3:16.

other than perhaps Matthew 16:18 and the glorious picture of the church painted in the Ephesian letter. As the concept “pillar and support of the truth” will be discussed in this chapter, it is sufficient to say at this point that the operative word is truth. The common confession of 1 Timothy 3:15-16 expresses the fundamental truth of God, the gospel of Jesus Christ. As “truth is a semantic property predicated on propositions,”<sup>3</sup> the central Christian proposition concerning ultimate Truth is that Jesus Christ is the Messiah Savior who was murdered on a cross and arose the third day.

A survey of Pauline writing affirms the fact that the truth of God was clearly on the theological radar-screen of Paul.<sup>4</sup> In that the Lord is the “God of truth” (Ps 31:5; Isa 65:16), it is certain he understood that the mystery of the Old Testament promise of Messiah had been fulfilled in the truth of Jesus Christ. Furthermore, he was convinced he was a steward of the message. So too the church is privileged to carry the same banner of truth (1 Tim 3:14-16). All Christian teaching advances on the claim that any truth cannot be known outside the gracious allowance of a wise God. Moreover, the truth of the gospel cannot be known unless God reveals it. Finally, biblical teaching insists that no one will know God unless one comes in faith to the Son of God, who is Truth,<sup>5</sup> and that privilege is ultimately the act of a gracious God. In brief, Scripture affirms that “the route and the destination are alike . . . Christ is the way and Christ is the goal.”<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>3</sup>Greg Welty, “A Theistic Theory of the Property ‘Truth,’” *Southwestern Journal of Theology* 47 (Fall 2004): 55-69.

<sup>4</sup>Rom 1:18, 25, 2:8, 20, 3:7, 15:8; 1 Cor 13:6; 2 Cor 4:2, 6:7, 11:10, 13:8; Gal 2:5, 14, 5:7; Eph 1:13, 4:15, 21, 24, 5:9, 6:14; Col 1:6; 2 Thess 2:1, 12, 13; 1 Tim 2:4, 7, 3:15, 4:3, 6:5; 2 Tim 2:18, 25, 3:7, 8, 4:4; Titus 1:1, 14.

<sup>5</sup>Yet, there are those who claim Christ, but also claim another gospel. Thomas Breidenthal Diocese of Southern Ohio, Cincinnati, writes, “I want to suggest that the unique revelation of God in Jesus in fact opens the doors of salvation wide for everybody, whether they profess Jesus as Lord or not.” “Jesus, the Way, Truth, and Life John 14:6,” *Journal for Preachers*, Pentecost 8 (2013): 28-30.

<sup>6</sup>Karl P. Donfried and I. Howard Marshall, *The Theology of the Shorter Pauline Letters* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 174.

So how do Christians arrive at such certain conclusions about truth? Certainly Christians may begin with the classic definition of faith offered for centuries by many philosophers and theologians: truth is the correspondence between an object and one's knowledge of it. However, it is also true that the church has believed and argued from an assumption of faith that God exists. Such faith is not without evidence. There is a correspondence with reality yet such belief remains the substance of faith. Thus the belief that God is, remains the baseline<sup>7</sup> of the church. That God exists presupposes that the same God would choose to communicate with his creation. Gregory Alan Thornbury writes,

Only an eternal, transcendent sovereign could create everything in such a way as to make the universe knowable, personal, and understandable. Only such a being would be in a position to be the explanatory principle itself as well as the principle *explainer* of everything that exists.<sup>8</sup>

The Scriptures say God explains himself in many and varied ways. Psalm 19 testifies that truth finds its origin in God and is revealed by God. The apostle Paul finds unity with Old Testament revelation as he champions the reality of general revelation (Rom 1:19-20). God also explains himself through special revelation<sup>9</sup> and particularly in light of the faithful saying of 1 Timothy 3, the church claims that the truth of God has been revealed in the historically objective Christ-event. Jesus Christ is the truth revealed and expressed to humankind and is to be proclaimed by the church in word and deed.

To that end Marshall proposes that this “church-truth relationship” has mainly to do with comportment: truth “demands a certain kind of behavior.”<sup>10</sup> I am in essential

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<sup>7</sup>David Wells, *The Courage to be Protestant: Truth-Lovers, Marketers, and Emergents in the Postmodern World* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008), 60.

<sup>8</sup>Gregory Alan Thornbury, “Prolegomena: Introduction to the Task of Theology,” in *A Theology of the Church*, ed. Daniel J. Akin (Nashville: B & H, 2007), 5.

<sup>9</sup>For a helpful discussion, see John M. Frame, *The Doctrine of God* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P & R, 2002), 241-73.

<sup>10</sup>I. H. Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, ed. J. A. Emerton, C. E. B. Cranfield, and G. N. Stanton (London: T & T Clark, 1999), 511.

agreement with Marshall, yet it seems altogether necessary to advance the idea that conduct finds its source, strength, and reasoning in the propositional and moral truth it expresses. To state it another way, deportment is derived from truth principles; ethics is founded and grounded on theological foundations;<sup>11</sup> and orthodoxy produces orthopraxy. While Paul's words to Timothy, the Ephesian leaders, and the church at large have much to say about the practical out-working of gospel truth, there nevertheless remains a deep well of theological truth in the same epistles that supply the ground of performance. Truth in the context of 1 and 2 Timothy should be understood as the apostolic truth of the gospel and the expressions of such truth in and through the lives of the family members of God.<sup>12</sup> Dever states, "Only with the apostle's teaching is the church, as Paul describes it to Timothy, 'the pillar and foundation of the truth' (1 Tim 3:15)."<sup>13</sup>

In light of the position advocated above, it is also needful to suggest truth and belief are bound together in exegetical coherence. For Paul to assert that God's truth is the gateway of escape from the devil (2 Tim 2:25-26) is to forward the idea that to believe the truth of God is to receive salvation. Thus believing the objective truth of the gospel concerning the redemptive person and work of Jesus Christ is inextricably connected to saving faith.<sup>14</sup> Furthermore, Paul is the foremost example of the sinner who "would believe in Him for eternal life" (1 Tim 1:16c). Regardless of how "in Him" is

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<sup>11</sup>Scott B. Rae, *Moral Choices: An Introduction to Ethics* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2009). For a helpful discussion of these ideas, see chaps. 1-4.

<sup>12</sup>This idea comports with the larger Pauline corpus.

<sup>13</sup>Mark E. Dever, "The Church," in *A Theology for the Church*, ed. Daniel L. Akin (Nashville: B & H, 2007), 778.

<sup>14</sup>John W. Robbins, "The Biblical View of Truth," *Journal of the Grace Evangelical Society* 18 (Spring 2005): 51. "The NT uses *believe* and its cognates hundreds of times, specifically with regard to *believing the Gospel, believing Scripture, believing Christ, and believing God*. (Incidentally, when Scripture uses the word *believe* followed by the name of a person or a pronoun, it always means believing the words spoken by or about that person)."

nuanced, such believing faith includes repentance (2 Tim 2:25). Such repentance produces as well as exemplifies a change of behavior unto godliness.

### **The Truth as Orthodoxy (Foundational Doctrine)**

The conduct of the church is that which has been determined by the principles of the gospel tradition forwarded by Paul (1 Tim 1:11, 15, 2:4-7, 3:9, 16-ff; 2 Tim 2:2, 2:8, 11-13, 3:10) and entrusted to Timothy (1 Tim 1:18, 4:11-16, 5:21-22, 6:20; 2 Tim 1:14, 2:15), who is in turn, to pass on the same tradition to men who can be trusted with such treasure (1 Tim 6:19; 2 Tim 1:14, 2:2). As the household of God, the church is the *pillar and support* of the gospel truth, the custodian, and correspondent of the gospel to the world. Only in promoting and protecting the truth of the living God may the church bring him the glory due his name (1 Tim 1:17; Eph 3:21). Paul's truth consists of objective propositions "intentionally polemical, inviting the reader/hearer to distinguish between his assessment of the gospel (=the truth) and fallacious competing claims (cf. 6:20)."<sup>15</sup>

The treasure-truth bestowed on the church, and that which the church exercises custodial care over, is clearly delineated as objective truth based in the historic Christ-event: "He who was revealed in the flesh, Was vindicated in the Spirit, Seen by angels, Proclaimed among the nations, Believed on in the world, Taken up in glory" (1 Tim 3:16-17). The common confession or faithful saying is a restatement of the essentials of gospel truth as it tells of the redemptive work of Christ and the resultant work of the church. *Ἀληθείας* as used in the Pastorals is a technical term for the gospel.<sup>16</sup> That the noun form *ἀλήθεια* is used instead of the adjectival forms rendered *true*, is significant. The truth of

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<sup>15</sup>Philip Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006), 179.

<sup>16</sup>William D. Mounce, *The Pastoral Epistles*, Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 46 (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2000), 86.

God the gospel, is not just true, it is truth itself.<sup>17</sup> Truth as a noun may be found at least thirteen times in the Pastorals and in every instance it is used in an objective sense as the essence of Paul's gospel, the truth of God.<sup>18</sup>

Yet such truth is not sterile. Instead it engenders and demands true life. Marshall states that conduct (v. 15) "appropriate to God's household . . . may also be called *εὐσέβεια* (2.2, 3.16), life consisting of knowledge of God/Christ and the appropriate response."<sup>19</sup> True life, namely appropriate conduct, cannot be disconnected from the objective truth of the gospel. As a polemical device, "knowledge of the truth" (1 Tim 2:4) is directed at the errant teaching. Likewise the Ephesian letter emphasizes that faithfulness to the apostolic message is necessary for salvation. In that Paul states God "desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth" (1 Tim 2:4), the theology of the Pastorals presents a structure of saving faith constructed upon objective truth received in believing faith that reveals additional truth.<sup>20</sup>

According to the Pauline gospel, to know the gospel truth is to be Christian. Consequently, it is truth that separates Paul and Timothy from the opponents (1 Tim 1:3-11, 18-20, 4:1-3, 6:3-10, 17; 2 Tim 1:15, 2:16-19, 3:1-9, 13, 4:3-4). The adversaries have

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<sup>17</sup>William Grudem, *Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Biblical Doctrine* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2000), 83.

<sup>18</sup>Mounce, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 87.

<sup>19</sup>Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 498-99.

<sup>20</sup>I interpret this verse as teaching salvation leads to the greater knowledge of God and godliness. Yet, some understand this verse as, teaching such knowledge brings one to salvation. For example, Ben Witherington, III, *Letters and Homilies for Hellenized Christians*, vol 1, *A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary on Titus, 1-2 Timothy and 1-3 John* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2006), 215, states, "It is not clear whether we should take 'and come to a knowledge of the truth' as a synonym for 'to be saved' or whether knowledge is viewed as coming before or after one's salvation experience." Edward Tingley, "True Knowledge Is Made Possible by True Religion," *International Association for the Promotion of Christian Higher Education* 16, no. 1 (2004): 3. "You could understand the conception of true-knowledge-made-possible-by-true-religion to say that, by our straightforward cognitive operations, we do indeed have knowledge, but *in a still unfinished form*. It is only when we consider that knowledge in the light of faith that the real significance of that knowledge—the *truth* of that knowledge—becomes knowable. 'True knowledge is made possible by true religion.'"

rejected, opposed, and resisted, or turned away from the truth<sup>21</sup> of God and instead have fabricated lies based on religious and irreligious sources. While continuing to amass knowledge, they never arrive at the truth (1 Tim 1:3-11, 4:1-3, 6:3-10; 2 Tim 2:14-19, 3:1-9). In so far as Pauline instruction concerning the gospel and the proper use of the Law is synonymous with the truth of God, Paul warns Timothy that the opponents do not have a grasp on the truth. Instead of “furthering the administration of God which is by faith,” they confuse the issue and impede the progress of the goal of such teaching which is “love from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith” (1 Tim 1:4-5, 7). Truth is at issue in the mission of the church.

Moreover, Truth is at issue in a theological understanding of the gracious bounty of God given freely to his creation (1 Tim 4). The false teachers who have rejected gospel truth entertain malevolent spirits and in the process of engaging in demonic activity now have “damaged moral sensibilities.”<sup>22</sup> The would-be-teachers of truth are so far from the truth they cannot engage in a conversation concerning the goodness and benefits of God’s creation and instead forbid marriage and promote abstinence of certain foods. Perhaps such teaching deprived of God’s truth was a means to or legalist claim of sanctification.<sup>23</sup> Such heresy would distort the truth of the gospel and to some degree obstruct the mission of the church. Timothy will be a morally noble and useful servant of Jesus Christ as he warns God’s household (1 Tim 4:6) of such devilish teaching. God has created both food and marital relationships and each are to be received with thanksgiving

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<sup>21</sup>Paul makes a similar argument in Rom 1-2. Men have suppressed the truth, have exchanged it for a lie, and have refused to obey it.

<sup>22</sup>Luke Timothy Johnson, *Letters to Paul’s Delegates: 1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, Titus: The New Testament in Context* (Valley Forge, PA: Trinity Press International, 1996), 162.

<sup>23</sup>Regardless, rejection of some foods was not taught as meritorious in any way by Paul. Likewise, the sanctity of marriage was mocked by their injunction to refrain from holy matrimony. It is possible that Paul had seen similar teaching in Colossae (Col 2:16-19) and was aware of its danger.

by those “who believe and know the truth” (1 Tim 4:3).<sup>24</sup>

Truth is to be handled accurately (2 Tim 2:15). In the context of the present passage, to handle truth in such a manner is to “guide it along its proper path.”<sup>25</sup> Such exacting treatment of the truth will provide evidence of diligence and attentiveness in the process of serving God as a tested and approved laborer. In essence, detailed attention to God’s truth is to stand the test and be pronounced fit for service.<sup>26</sup> In that truth by its nature is generally precise, so the workman of God must be accurate and thorough in his treatment of such truth. Truth for truth’s sake demands integrity on the part of the handler. Nevertheless, Paul reminds Timothy not to engage in bantering “filled with quibbles or contentious wranglings over words or obscure technical jargon,” or even flattering words “shamelessly pandering to their vices.”<sup>27</sup> Raymond Collins comments, “Confronted by opponents from without and eschatological apostasy from within (1 Tim 4:1-3), the church must remain the pillar and bulwark of the truth.”<sup>28</sup>

Truth is crucial because time is short (2 Tim 3:1). Timothy should not be overwhelmed or surprised by the conflicts in Ephesus for as Paul reminds him, he (Timothy) is living in the last days.<sup>29</sup> Timothy should take note that the problem is

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<sup>24</sup>Gordon D. Fee, *1 and 2 Timothy, Titus*, New International Biblical Commentary (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1988), 100: “Those who believe the gospel are freed from the food laws and ritual uncleanness.”

<sup>25</sup>Walter Bauer, *A Greek English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, rev. and aug. F. Wilbur and Frederick W. Danker from F. Walter Gingrich, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1979), 580. ὀρθοτομοῦντα, “guide the word of truth along a straight path (like a road that goes straight to its goal), without being turned aside by wordy debates or impious talk 2 Ti 2:15.”

<sup>26</sup>William Barclay, *The Letters to Timothy, Titus, and Philemon*, rev. ed., The Daily Bible Study Series (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1975), 173.

<sup>27</sup>Johnson, *Letters to Paul’s Delegates*, 74.

<sup>28</sup>Raymond Collins, *I & II Timothy and Titus*, The New Testament Library (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2002), 79.

<sup>29</sup>The English rendering “difficult times will come” (v. 1) and “men will be” (v. 2) indicates future tense. However Mounce, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 542, states, “Context requires that the vices of vv 2-

ongoing and has not been corrected since Paul's earlier correspondence (1 Tim). It should be clear to Timothy and the leadership that Ephesus for all her learning and sophistication, has never come to the truth of the gospel (v. 7). Such is obvious in the self-consumptive godlessness ("holding to a form of godliness, although they have denied its power") that characterizes the culture (2 Tim 3:2-5b).

It is the gospel truth that leads to and empowers godliness. It is false philosophies and the meaningless wrangling over words and ideas that lead to a "form of godliness" devoid of God's power. Timothy is to avoid these types of people: not sinners *per se*, but the kinds of people who proactively teach falsehoods and directly oppose the truth by turning away from the truth to myths (2 Tim 4:4).<sup>30</sup> Next Paul turns to a subgroup of the same kinds of people. These kinds of people enter into houses that do not belong to them, the homes of immature women, and trick them into bondage through their godless philosophy that will forever offer knowledge but never truth. That they are entering<sup>31</sup> seems to indicate Paul is aware of and concerned about such activity in the moment. The church faces a present threat. Perhaps such activity has confused the issue of the proper care of widows (1 Tim 5) and, or the ministry and leadership of women (1 Tim 2-3). Whether or not this is the case, it certainly appears that the truth (1 Tim 3:14-16) has been defiled and disfigured. Paul's charge to Timothy and presumably the Ephesian elders<sup>32</sup> is

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5 and hence the 'last days' of v 1 be in the present time for Timothy." So, Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 771; Fee, *1 and 2 Timothy, Titus*, 269. Also see George W. Knight III, *The Pastoral Epistles*, The New International Greek Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1992), 428-29.

<sup>30</sup>Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 554.

<sup>31</sup>Ἐνδύνοντες present tense participle of ἐνδύω.

<sup>32</sup>It is unclear whether or not Timothy is considered a temporary emissary of Paul or an elder of the church or both. Therefore, I will continue to refer to Timothy as a "leader." In respect to the office of elder, Campbell makes a compelling case that the "office" of eldership was largely honorific and was reserved for the older men as well as those who held status within the family. See Alastair Campbell, *The Elders: Seniority within Earliest Christianity* (Edinburgh: T & T Clarke, 2004).

double-sided:<sup>33</sup> he is to proclaim the truth and defend against error.<sup>34</sup>

The Pauline phrase “come to the knowledge of the truth” is unique to the Pastorals but the theme of knowledge and truth as partners in salvation is found liberally in the Pauline corpus. This should not be surprising since Paul was probably influenced by a Greek understanding of truth, as well as by his Jewish background. First and second century Greek writings reveal that truth was conceived of as “a quality of speech . . . or . . . a quality of being (truth as opposed to mere appearance).”<sup>35</sup> Through such LL the apostle could speak of Christ as the truth because he was a first-hand (Acts 9) witness to the objective truth of the resurrected Christ. His testimony and narrative accounts speak of the objective truth on which he has believed and to whom he has committed his life (1 Tim 1, 2:5-7; 2 Tim 1:8-11, 2:8-13). Likewise, other Pauline letters suggest Paul first deployed the truth concept in Christian mission, utilizing it in corresponding concepts and vocabulary.<sup>36</sup> The apostolic message would go forth from the church as the Word of God, which includes both “a divine speaker and initiator and a community of hearers or respondents.”<sup>37</sup>

In summary, “truth” in 1 and 2 Timothy refers to the full body of gospel teaching, as well as the response to such doctrine by the household of God. The church is the steward of the truth of God, the pillar and ground of the truth. In the Pastorals as well as the greater Pauline corpus, knowledge and truth are inseparably linked to salvation. Knowledge of and belief in the truth averts one from becoming entangled in specious

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<sup>33</sup>Collins, *I & II Timothy and Titus*, 79.

<sup>34</sup>“Holding fast the faithful word, which is in accordance with the teaching, so that he will be able both to exhort in sound doctrine and to refute those who contradict” (Titus 1:9).

<sup>35</sup>Leon Morris, *New Testament Theology* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1990), 282.

<sup>36</sup>Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 179.

<sup>37</sup>Michael D. Williams, “The Church, a Pillar of Truth: B. B. Warfield’s Church Doctrine of Inspiration,” *Presbyterion: Covenant Seminary Review* 37 (Fall 2011): 65-84.

teachings. Timothy and the Ephesian elders are to guard the truth which the Holy Spirit has entrusted to him (them), while the false teachers and those drawn into their teaching are continually ‘learning,’ they never arrive at the truth.

### **The Truth as Orthopraxy**

Paul’s letters were addressed to Timothy, but there was a wider audience realized.<sup>38</sup> Paul was concerned about church conduct, that is, “what constitutes fitting behavior in God’s house.”<sup>39</sup> Timothy is to exert leadership and set the church in order (1 Tim 3:1-15). However, this injunction from Paul must be understood in light of the concerns he previously addressed. Certain men and strange doctrines are not “furthering the administration of God which is by faith” (1 Tim 1:4). Such paganistic teaching may also be the source of strange conduct within the household of God. Those who teach and practice such unorthodox principles may present the perception to those within and without the household of God that family members are the proprietors of the household of God and thus are permitted to personally establish the rules of family belief and behavior, in opposition to the gospel tradition taught by Paul. Therefore, unacceptable ideas and behavior have been ratified and are being practiced. It may be that false teachers have given licenses for ungodly behavior as well as offered pronouncements of abstinence in other areas of domestic life.<sup>40</sup>

The living God is aware of such teaching,<sup>41</sup> and it cannot be permitted to

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<sup>38</sup>Witherington helpfully reminds that Paul understood his words would be read aloud so that they should be, “*heard* as persuasive, not merely seen to be persuasive.” Ben Witherington III, *New Testament Rhetoric: An Introductory Guide to the Art of Persuasion in and of the New Testament* (Eugene, OR: Cascade, 2009), 97.

<sup>39</sup>Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 506.

<sup>40</sup>1 Tim 1:1:3-11, 2:1-2, 9-15, 3:2, 4:1-5, 5:15, 23-25, 6:3-21; 2 Tim 2:14-19, 20-26, 3.

<sup>41</sup>ἑτεροδιδασκαλεῖν, present active tense meaning to *keep on teaching* a different or divergent doctrine.

continue. This is the house of the Sovereign King. Accordingly, certain “conduct”<sup>42</sup> is expected of God’s household. Verner is helpful in understanding the idea of conduct as he adds, “A check of the use of ἀναστρέφειν in Christian literature from roughly the same period indicates that this verb was consistently used to reflect the way in which individuals or groups habitually live: their habits and customs, their way of life.”<sup>43</sup>

To understand conduct as the behavior or manner of one’s walk of life seems to capture the essence of Paul’s concern. That Paul is concerned about behavior is evident from 3:14, which forwards his purpose for writing. Marshall contends that although this has a spiritual element, such conduct should include “all aspects of normal life,”<sup>44</sup> or as Verner states, “The way of life which is inculcated through Christian training.”<sup>45</sup> Yet one cannot ignore the previous admonition and concern expressed to Timothy, “that you may instruct certain men not to teach strange doctrines” (1 Tim 1:3). Strange doctrine is being promoted and the end result is abnormal behavior in the house of God.

The verb ἀναστρέφειν, “one ought to conduct himself,” may be seen as the one of plurality. Proper conduct is the responsibility of all in the house of God. Conversely, Guthrie states, “It probably refers to Timothy since he is the subject of the main verb, but it has been contended that a general reference is more in keeping with the preceding

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<sup>42</sup>Walter Bauer, *A Greek English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., rev. and aug. F. Wilbur and Frederick W. Danker (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1979), 61, ἀναστρέφειν verb infinitive present passive from ἀναστρέφω. “[O]f human conduct *act, behave, conduct oneself* or *live* in the sense of the practice of certain principles.” Ibid., 61.

<sup>43</sup>David C. Verner, *The Household of God: The Social World of the Pastoral Epistles*, SBL Dissertation Series 71, ed. William Baird (Chico, CA: Society of Biblical Literature, 1983), 109. It is necessary for me to mention that when Verner speaks of the same period he is speaking of the second century that is, well after Paul had passed from the scene. Yet his point remains valid.

<sup>44</sup>Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 507.

<sup>45</sup>Verner, *The Household of God*, 109.

injunctions.”<sup>46</sup> Mounce adds, “[It is] more likely that the subject is the indefinite ‘one’ or perhaps ‘people.’”<sup>47</sup> Collins says this word “does not so much refer to Timothy’s private behavior as it does to his activities as leader of the community.”<sup>48</sup> It seems evident given the context of 1 Timothy that “one” should be understood as the “one” of plurality.

To that point, it should be noted that conduct is elsewhere translated as “behave” (AV, RSV), and “show you what sort of character men . . . ought to have” (Phillips). Towner warns that conduct should not be understood as an injunction to “obey a handful of rules at certain times.”<sup>49</sup> Knight concurs, “The standards of conduct prescribed are no mere rule of etiquette, they are standards for the house/household that is none other than God’s.”<sup>50</sup> Karris adds, “The image of ‘the household of God’ says that you are welcome to join the group, but we do have some regulations for the members of our household.”<sup>51</sup> In light of the Pastorals, surely conduct, behavior, and character for all the household of God is in mind here.

Accordingly, conduct within the household of God should be understood as the practice of the truth of the gospel.<sup>52</sup> Paul extols the value of the church as being the “pillar and support of the truth” (1 Tim 3:15) with further explanation that the center of such truth is found in the common Christological confession (1 Tim 3:16), which exalts

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<sup>46</sup>Donald Guthrie, *Pastoral Epistles*, Tyndale New Testament Commentaries (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1957), 87.

<sup>47</sup>Mounce, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 220.

<sup>48</sup>Collins, *I & II Timothy and Titus*, 101.

<sup>49</sup>Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 273.

<sup>50</sup>Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 180.

<sup>51</sup>Robert J. Karris, *Pastoral Epistles*, NT Message 17 (New York: Michael Glazier, 1979), 79.

<sup>52</sup>The gospel in this sense is obviously more than the explicit teaching of the birth, death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus but the implicit teaching of principles as to how such spiritual reality impacts and transforms the thinking and behavior of adherents.

the glorious Savior God, the Lord Jesus Christ. Yet the magnificent hymn of confession, which is a summary of the essentials of the gospel,<sup>53</sup> demands an ethical response of particular character. It is the mystery revealed, the truth of the gospel, that “forms the basis or ground for the life described as εὐσέβει.”<sup>54</sup> and also that which empowers the children of God to live according to prescribed expectations.

The reality of the mystery of godliness compels a godly life. In other words, the fact that household members are made holy by God results in the expression of holiness in their daily lives. Family members have been gifted with righteousness, therefore their behavior must reflect righteousness. People of faith must be faithful people, just as people who have found mercy must be merciful people. These parallels reflect two dimensions, gift and task,<sup>55</sup> or what Ladd and Schreiner term “indicative and imperative.”<sup>56</sup> Those who have been gifted by God in matters of salvation will live out the task of such salvation under the watchful eyes of the Lord, anticipating his return.

Of course tension always exists between the work of God in the child of God and the child’s responsibility to act upon his or her faith. Certainly salvation does not instantaneously produce a finished product. Therein is the tension between “already” and

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<sup>53</sup>Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 276, says the confession is a “capsule summary of the gospel, it appears to expand on the notion of the ‘truth.’” Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 182, states that this is the “confessed grandeur of the gospel.” Martin Dibelius and Hans Conzelmann, *The Pastoral Epistles*, trans. Philip Buttolph and Adela Yarbro, ed. Helmut Koester (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1972), 61, state, “This is the ‘core of the message of salvation.’” Mounce, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 225, offers, “The gospel is about Christ, it is a mystery revealed.”

<sup>54</sup>Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 523.

<sup>55</sup>Thorvald B. Madsen II, “The Ethics of the Pastoral Epistles,” in *Entrusted with the Gospel: Paul’s Theology in the Pastoral Epistles*, ed. Andreas J. Kostenberger and Terry L. Wilder (Nashville: B & H, 2010), 222-23.

<sup>56</sup>George Eldon Ladd, *A Theology of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993), 568-70; Thomas Schreiner, *Paul: Apostle of God’s Glory in Christ—A Pauline Theology* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2001), 251-70.

“not yet.”<sup>57</sup> The church in Ephesus lived ‘between the times’ and the tension between doctrinal gift and resultant task was present. Furthermore, unlike the letter to the Romans where there appears to be a clear demarcation between instruction and application—orthodoxy and orthopraxy—1 and 2 Timothy appear to be less structured, sometimes speaking in more implicit ways yet in continuity with other Pauline letters. Regardless of the intensity of explicit Pauline doctrinal declaration or the “silent” implied remnants of Pauline truth, 1 and 2 Timothy make clear that “theology and ethics are inseparable.”<sup>58</sup>

The bottom line to this discussion may be stated in two principles: Task proceeds from gift, that is imperative is empowered by the indicative. Second, in the context of ethical response, gift or indicative may be understood as virtue which produces conduct or task. So the term virtue is used to describe the results of divine activity in the life of the child of God. Sanctification is the gracious work of the Spirit and also that which involves one’s responsible participation. Such divine action produces moral excellence and righteousness. George Lyons succinctly states, “Personal holiness is the achievement of the Triune God in the corporate life of the Christian community.”<sup>59</sup> The following section seeks to examine the virtue of godliness in the house of God, as well as corresponding conduct.

Attention is given to the concept of godliness as it could be rightly argued *εὐσέβεια* is emphasized in 1 and 2 Timothy as the highest expression of God’s work *in* and *for* his household. *Εὐσέβεια* is translated in various ways such as “piety, reverence, loyalty, fear of God, godliness [and] religion” in the sense it is “the duty which man owes

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<sup>57</sup>George Eldon Ladd, *The Presence of the Future* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996).

<sup>58</sup>Frances Young, *The Theology of the Pastoral Letters*, *New Testament Theology* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 28.

<sup>59</sup>George Lyons, *Holiness and Ecclesiology in the New Testament*, ed. Kent E. Brower and Andy Johnson (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007), 245.

to God.”<sup>60</sup> Godliness is a central theological theme in 1 and 2 Timothy and contributes in a major way to understanding the ecclesiological grounding of Pauline leadership language. Thus the strong employment of *εὐσέβεια* in 1 and 2 Timothy deserves attention.<sup>61</sup>

Dibelius and Conzelman state that the use of *εὐσέβεια* is very limited in Scripture, found “only in writings with a markedly Hellenistic vocabulary.”<sup>62</sup> On the other hand *εὐσέβεια* and its cognates is an important word in understanding ancient religion: pagan, Jewish, or Christian. Certainly its pagan use preceded its entry into Christian vocabulary. Yet Witherington states that Paul places “stress on the virtue of *εὐσέβεια*.”<sup>63</sup> The employment of *εὐσέβεια* in the Pastorals signals Paul’s awareness of the strong Hellenistic environment to which he communicated. It appears Paul is contextualizing his theological language in an effort to communicate more effectively with the Ephesian culture. To that point Young states the Pastorals “are pervaded by a religious culture that must stem from Hellenistic Judaism”<sup>64</sup> and when the Jews of the Diaspora met for worship in their synagogue-house, *εὐσέβεια* was the word employed to express the piety of their religion. Yet it was also a word employed by pagans to speak of their devotion to the gods and “frequently used to sum up the essence of pagan religion.”<sup>65</sup> Additionally *εὐσέβεια* was often assigned to express allegiance to the emperor. Thus it is easy to understand why Paul did not use the word in his earlier writings. Quinn writes, “It

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<sup>60</sup>BGAD, 326.

<sup>61</sup>Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 135: “The concept of *εὐσέβεια* is of major significance in the interpretation of the PE because of its importance for an understanding of the author’s view of the Christian life and ethics.”

<sup>62</sup>Dibelius and Conzelmann, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 39.

<sup>63</sup>Witherington, *Letters and Homilies*, 213.

<sup>64</sup>Young, *The Theology of the Pastoral Letters*, 21.

<sup>65</sup>Witherington, *Letters and Homilies*, 99.

might smack of honoring imperial cult or false religion.”<sup>66</sup> By late in the first century Paul set his reticence aside and employed *εὐσέβεια* to express the virtue of divine activity in the household of God, which should motivate and elevate the behavior of God’s people. The possibility also exists that he may have actually borrowed the term from the false teachers and utilized it as a polemic against them.<sup>67</sup>

I have advanced the idea that Paul is to set God’s church in order by leading and teaching Timothy and others to promote and protect the great gospel confession of 1 Timothy 3:16. Second Timothy stands in coherence and support of the central message of 1 Timothy: that the church will be set in order as leadership, in particular, lives out the mission in godliness. Accordingly, one finds eleven forms of *εὐσέβεια*<sup>68</sup> utilized in 1 and 2 Timothy. It appears that *εὐσέβεια* is both the root and fruit of one life of devotion to God. Paul’s writing to Timothy affirms that godliness is the mystery of the gospel-revealed Jesus Christ, and it is also the virtue of God’s household that will ultimately protect and promote God’s truth. Thus now an examination of *εὐσέβεια* found in 1 and 2 Timothy is appropriate.

## **Godliness**

Piety or godliness stands as a prominent virtue extolled in 1 and 2 Timothy. While such purity is expressed in different forms and situations, the idea is that the members of God’s family are to possess and exhibit the virtue of godliness. Only those connected to the Holy One are blessed with holiness. Godliness is realized as the integration of the inner spiritual life and the outward conduct of the one who is in Christ.

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<sup>66</sup>Jerome Quinn, *The Letter to Titus: A New Translation with Notes and Commentary and An Introduction to Titus I and II Timothy, The Pastoral Epistles*, The Anchor Bible, vol. 31 (New York: Double Day, 1990), 287.

<sup>67</sup>See Mounce, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 84; Fee, *1 and 2 Timothy, Titus*, 63; Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 174.

<sup>68</sup>1 Tim 2:2, 3:16, 4:7-8, 5:4, 6:3, 5, 6, 11; 2 Tim 3:5, 3:12.

A godly person is said to be one who will practice piety (1 Tim 5:4). Godliness then is a virtue that combines proper thinking and attitude toward the one true living God, as well as that which produces proper lifestyle and actions. The Pastorals emphasize that the practice of *εὐσέβεια* is always in full view of the living God.

Accordingly, godliness is, to a great extent, also in full view of the society in which the household is planted. An important theme of 1 Timothy 2 (with a related digression in vv. 9-15) is prayer: the household of God is to pray for all men. “First of all” (2:1) signals the priority of the instruction and may be viewed as an introduction to the “business section.”<sup>69</sup> Such prayer pleases God as well as expresses a compassionate solidarity with their world but without commitment to the practice of pagan religion. John J. Wainwright states, “Without compromising essential ethical standards, the Christian community must maintain respectability in the world if it is to persuade Gentiles to salvation.”<sup>70</sup> The purpose clause, “so that we may lead a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and dignity” (1 Tim 2:2), does not promote a political strategy of accommodation, but rather prayers for the salvation of kings as well as the “sanctification of the public square over which they rule.”<sup>71</sup> The ministry of the household of God is to be accompanied by good citizenship, which reflects all godliness.<sup>72</sup> It appears that Paul seeks the full manifestation of godliness through the church to influence the world.

Of course the dynamic force of godliness is Christ Jesus, the mystery of

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<sup>69</sup>Johnson, *Letters to Paul's Delegates*, 127.

<sup>70</sup>John J. Wainwright, “Eusebia: Syncretism or Conservative Contextualization?” *The Evangelical Quarterly* 65, no. 3 (1993): 211-24.

<sup>71</sup>Robert W. Wall, “Empire, Church, and *Missio Dei*: On Praying for Our Kings (1 Timothy 2:1-2),” *Wesleyan Theological Journal* 47, no. 1 (2012): 7-25.

<sup>72</sup>Dibelius and Conzelmann, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 39, support a reading of *εὐσέβεια* as “good honorable citizenship.” They believe the church has lost spiritual vitality and is awaiting the return of Christ while seeking a new strategy of social accommodation to buttress their movement. This interpretation seems hardly plausible in light of the other uses of *εὐσέβεια*, including the mystery of godliness, Christ Jesus.

godliness revealed. Perhaps Paul, in his desire for the sanctifying witness of the church, expresses the sense of Jeremiah 29:3: “Seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the LORD on its behalf; for in its welfare you will have welfare.” One sees from 1 Timothy 2:1-2 that godliness functions as the public witness of the church. Therefore such virtue must be operative in the life of God’s household so that the mission of the gospel may proceed.

First Timothy 3:16, “great is the mystery of godliness,” is understood as the central thesis of the epistle and is ultimately the force and visible expression of the conduct of godliness. In that the concept of godliness is explained, it is not be dealt with here other than to offer the following brief analysis. The household of God as the protector and promoter of the truth of God rests upon the infinite mystery of godliness and the “unmistakable implication is that the work of the living God and the mystery of godliness are to be understood in terms of Christ, and all of these are tied directly to life in the household of God.”<sup>73</sup> Furthermore, the term godliness used in this context and as reference to Christ, appears to be a kind of *word-chain* that not only emphasizes but gives color to, and a greater understanding of, the same concept utilized in other parts of the epistle.<sup>74</sup> In other words, this use of godliness appears to signal *transformational grammar* in which the church is not only steward of the mystery of godliness but is to be transformed by the treasure it protects and promotes.

First Timothy 4:6ff begins a section that might have fit more logically much earlier in the letter. Paul speaks to Timothy concerning his responsibility to God’s household. While Timothy is directly addressed, he is ultimately meant to serve as an example to God’s family. As this passage is located in its present position, it certainly

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<sup>73</sup>James W. Aageson, *Paul, the Pastoral Epistles, and the Early Church*, Library of Pauline Studies (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2008), 24-25.

<sup>74</sup>John D. Harvey, *Listening to the Text: Oral Patterning in Paul’s Letters*, Evangelical Theological Society Studies, ed. David Baker (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1998), 284.

seems to apply to what has been communicated from 2:1 to 4:5, urging Timothy to lay these matters before the family of God, even risking personal rejection.<sup>75</sup> On the other hand, such courageous leadership is the service of a morally good teacher. Interpretation of the phrase “*constantly* nourished on the words of the faith and of the sound doctrine which you have been following,” may be understood in at least two ways: The good servant of Jesus is one who is nourished on the words of faith, or Timothy will be a good servant if he gives the household of God the words of faith. Actually both senses cooperate with and fulfill one another. The “goodness” of the teacher will be determined by the goodness of what he has learned. Certainly words of faith do not include “worldly fables,” which is probably a reference to silly “superstitious nonsense based on OT material,”<sup>76</sup> fit for old women. “On the other hand, discipline yourself for the purpose of godliness” (1 Tim 4:7b).

Once again Paul reaches back to the athletic metaphor of exercise or training for a sporting event, urging Timothy that the goal of such activity is godliness. How exactly does such training achieve godliness? Several interpretive ideas are possible. Surely it addresses the concerns voiced in 1 Timothy 4:1-4 of certain ascetic constraints taught and practiced by the errant leaders. Paul appears to take issue with such extreme teaching as a means by which godliness may be realized.<sup>77</sup> Second, in accordance with 1 Corinthians 9:24-27<sup>78</sup> and certainly related to correcting the false teaching of ascetic

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<sup>75</sup>*BibleWorks 9 Software for Biblical Exegesis & Research* (Norfolk, VA: Bibleworks, 2002). First Timothy 4:6: ὑποτοθέμενις (in pointing out these things), is rendered as a verb participle present middle nominative masculine singular from ὑποτίθημι, meaning to ‘lay down or risk.’ Also see Rom 16:3-4 for a similar usage: “Greet Prisca and Aquila, my fellow workers in Christ Jesus, who for my life risked their own necks, to whom not only do I give thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles.”

<sup>76</sup>Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 550.

<sup>77</sup>See Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 306-7; Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 552; Johnson, *Letters to Paul’s Delegates*, 162-63; Contra Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 196.

<sup>78</sup>“Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but *only* one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may win. Everyone who competes in the games exercises self-control in all things. They then *do it* to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable. Therefore, I run in such a way, as

religion, it may be that Paul has in mind that such “exercise” represents a spiritual effort to restrain sinful passions and actions. In a more proactively positive regard, this proverbial saying,<sup>79</sup> “to exercise unto godliness,” may have reference to the “good” servant who continually seeks words of faith that produce holiness. Certainly Timothy is to keep on the track of spiritual discipline. Hiebert comments, “Godliness is not achieved by a rigorous mortification of the body . . . it is rather the spiritual control of the body.”<sup>80</sup> Thus in this case, to exercise unto godliness may mean that Timothy is to be cognizant of the need to restrain those sinful passions by feeding his mind with the truth of the gospel tradition delivered by Paul.

Such godliness is the practice of righteousness in this life and yet it is clear Paul understands life in God’s family has an eschatological element, in that it “is profitable for all things, since it holds promise for the present life and also for the life to come” (1 Tim 4:8). Even the process and promise of godliness parallels the “now and not yet life to come.” As a leader of, and example to, the family of God, Timothy is to exercise unto godliness. If the benefits of such holiness were limited only to this life it would be still be advantageous, but such godliness is profitable in the future eschatological life. Couser writes, “God is actively giving believers the ‘now—and—to—come’ life he promised.”<sup>81</sup> Furthermore, to practice and enjoy *εὐσέβεια* in this earthly realm is to work out one’s salvation (Phil 2:12-13) in preparation for the life to come. As one participates in holiness during this earthly stay, such godliness, in a casual sense, holds promise of fullness of life

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not without aim; I box in such a way, as not beating the air; but I discipline my body and make it my slave, so that, after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified” (1 Cor 9:24-27).

<sup>79</sup>Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 306, states that this proverbial saying “possibly found its way into Christian preaching.”

<sup>80</sup>Edmond D. Hiebert, *Second Timothy*, Everyman’s Bible Commentary (Chicago: Moody, 1958), 83.

<sup>81</sup>Greg A. Couser, “The Sovereign Savior of 1 and 2 Timothy and Titus,” in *Entrusted with the Gospel*, 116.

in the *eschaton*. This may also contain an element of motivational warning. Towner explains, “Connected with the future appearance of Christ is the thought of judgment which is thus appealed to as a motivation to 'put on' the new life already made available by the first event.”<sup>82</sup>

First Timothy 5:4 presents a more defined expectation of *εὐσέβεια* and is directed at children and grandchildren who “must first learn to practice piety in regard to their own family and to make some return to their parents.” In contrast to 1 Timothy 4:7b-8, *εὐσέβεια* in the present verse is a virtue pointedly translated into action. Practice piety<sup>83</sup> is translated elsewhere as “show piety” (ASV); “practice godliness” (Holman); “show godliness” (ESV); “learn first of all to put their religion into practice” (NIV); and, “it is primarily their duty to show the genuineness of their religion” (Phillips). If a widow has living descendants, they should learn, just as a disciple of the Lord learns, to follow his teaching and example to express their discipleship by caring for their parents and grandparents. The family within the household of God finds godliness as a domestic expression of their faith (Rom 12; Col 3-4; Eph 4-6).

Care and concern for the family of God, and in this case widows, in addition to being the expressed obligation of the household of God, also reflects the outlook of Judaism of which Paul was acutely aware. Yet Paul is also mindful that the burden of taking care of widows could be more than the church could uphold, so blood-family members (1 Tim 5:16) are first responsible to practice their religion in this fashion.<sup>84</sup> According to verse 4, this filial piety is to be expressed in financial terms. B. W. Winter comments that in a society where honor and obligations were of paramount importance,

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<sup>82</sup>Philip Towner, “The Present Age in the Eschatology of the Pastoral Epistles,” *New Testament Studies* 32 (1986): 427-48.

<sup>83</sup>*εὐσέβειν* verb infinitive present active.

<sup>84</sup>Verner, *The Household of God*, 165.

failure to care for a family member would have been a very serious breach of social expectations.<sup>85</sup> Certainly the household of God could not be guilty of such familial neglect: even pagans practice such “piety.” Furthermore, Timothy should be reminded that the domestic life of the church is under the watchful eyes of God. Such pietistic conduct is expected and acceptable in the sight of God (1 Tim 5:4).

In Paul’s preparation for closing his first letter to Timothy, he states without equivocation that those who reject his gospel message are “conceited and understand nothing” (1 Tim 6:4). The gospel is presented as sound or healthy words of the Lord Jesus Christ and combined with the doctrine conforming to or in accord with godliness (1 Tim 6:3). Whether Paul is referring to the gospel tradition he has delivered or specific words of Jesus<sup>86</sup> is unclear, nevertheless these healthy words are in accord with the teaching of godliness. The teaching which ultimately emanates from the Lord Jesus Christ is that which conforms to godliness. In full view of the ultimate authority and power of Christ, Paul’s words are those which promote godliness.<sup>87</sup> In contrast to the false teachers who reject healthy life-giving words and descend into depravity (1 Tim 6:5), Timothy is reminded that it is the gospel that produces “the life of reverence before and obedience to God.”<sup>88</sup>

The depraved mind has been deprived of the truth. This deficiency of the truth is that which is produced in part, by an outside force—presumably the god of this world (2 Cor 4:4).<sup>89</sup> Under such confusion and lies these sickly people have immorally concluded

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<sup>85</sup>B. W. Winter, “Providentia for the Widows of 1 Timothy 5:3-16,” *Tyndale Bulletin* 39 (1988): 83-100.

<sup>86</sup>On other occasions Paul has transmitted specific words of Jesus. For example, 1 Tim 5:8; Acts 20:28; 1 Cor 11: 23-ff.

<sup>87</sup>See Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 639; Knight, *Pastoral Epistles*, 250; Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 394; Mounce, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 337.

<sup>88</sup>Knight, *Pastoral Epistles*, 250.

<sup>89</sup>ἀπεστερηένων, verb participle perfect passive.

that a pretense of holiness might profit them in matters of status and, or monetary gain. Paul states that their show of godliness meant to advance their own material interest will contribute to their fall into a snare and eventual destruction (1 Tim 6:9). Judgment is surely the point here. They may be successful in amassing their fortune but run the sure risk of losing their own treasures (1 Tim 6:7) and ultimately their souls (1 Tim 6:17-19).

So Timothy is warned by his father in the faith not to fall into such a bottomless pit. Instead he is to exercise unto wisdom and keep on “flee[ing] from these things, you man of God, and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, perseverance and gentleness” (1 Tim 6:11). That Timothy is a “man of God” suggests he is already fleeing corruption and seeking godliness. Indeed Paul has set Timothy in contrast<sup>90</sup> to the corrupted individuals already mentioned. Even though Timothy is a “man of God,” he is nevertheless enjoined to pursue, even strive, toward certain things related to godliness.

Marshall terms 1 Timothy 6:11 “a combination of six basic Christian qualities.”<sup>91</sup> It could be argued that godliness is the sum of the rest of the qualities mentioned. It may well be that this brief virtue list which contains the triad of Christian virtue (with patience replacing hope), is intended to supply a more pointed understanding as to the substance of godliness because piety is expressed in spiritual as well as ethical terms.<sup>92</sup> While Pauline theology embraces the truth that “godliness” is graced as a gift from God in the context of the present passage, it is also a virtue to be pursued. Paul often utilizes a nuanced approach to some common vocabulary in his writings.<sup>93</sup> It seems then, that in contrast to those deprived of the truth, Timothy, the man of God, is to continue to

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<sup>90</sup>Εὐ δε, ὡ ἀνθρωπωπε θεοῦ (contrasting particle δε,)

<sup>91</sup>Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 657.

<sup>92</sup>Ibid., 658.

<sup>93</sup>See for example, L. T. Johnson, *The Writings of the New Testament: An Interpretation* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1999), 427-29.

search for, embrace, and live out the qualities that already define him. As a man of God, Timothy should live as a godly man.

In summary, the household of God is pictured as the place where God lives among his people as well as watches over their lives. The formation of God's household is the result of divine activity. Furthermore, the household of God is to be engaged in divine activity. The "administration of God"<sup>94</sup> (1 Tim 1:4) is the responsibility of God's household, including Paul and his circle of leaders, in that "God [is] our savior" (1 Tim 1:1). Thus the administration of God's work is a corporate obligation. Living as a member in the family of God requires responsibility and accountability, established in part through an ordered structure. Therefore "household of God" speaks to aspects of identity, purpose, organization, and authority. Society has defined roles, relationships, and responsibilities within and without the home. The same is true for God's house. In many ways the household of God mirrors the domestic home within a pagan or secular setting. Of course the difference is the presence of authentic *εὐσέβεια*.

Within the ecclesiological context of 1 and 2 Timothy, the household metaphor allows for a regulated and reasonable explanation of spiritual life in the household of God. To be sure, the household comparison is not limited to the Pastorals.<sup>95</sup> The fact that this is God's household, not a social organization, adds to the seriousness of the responsible association of family members. Influenced by false doctrine, their possible misconduct within the household of God could have deleterious results.

Therefore, matters of truth and godly conduct must be squarely considered. False teachers have introduced strange teaching with subsequent detrimental effect on the household of God. The doctrine and display of godliness has been threatened. First

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<sup>94</sup>*οἰκονομίαν* θεοῦ. According to Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 367, *οἰκονομίαν* usually indicates the task or office of the *οἰκονομῶς* but the meaning in this instance is uncertain and could be understood as training which leads to salvation or God's plan of salvation. He opts for a third consideration, the stewardship of ministry of the church.

<sup>95</sup>Paul employs household language in 1 Cor 3:9, 4:1, 9:17; Gal 6:10; and Eph 2:19.

Timothy presents *εὐσέβεια* as that which is present in and to be pursued by members of God's household. Timothy is the example in both instances. The practice of godliness will be in opposition to the ugly, immoral teaching and living of the opponents (1 Tim 1). The teaching and living of *εὐσέβεια*, which is good and acceptable in God's sight (1 Tim 2:2), will positively affect the priorities and performance of the church in regard to prayer, missions, and the function of women in the house of God (1 Tim 2:3-15, 5:1-16, 6:1ff), as well as the character requirements of leaders within the household of God (1 Tim 3, 5:17-25, 2 Tim). In fact, the mystery of godliness is the very truth upon which God's household is built and that which compels and empowers God's family to live missional lives in the fallen culture in which they have been planted (1 Tim 3:14-16, 4:1ff). *Εὐσέβεια* defines the man or woman of God who, in the midst of self-sacrifice and even suffering, lives for the sake of the gospel knowing with all assurance that God will keep such a faith commitment until the day of his return (2 Tim 1:8-12).

### **Pillar**

As the household of God, the church is the pillar (*στῦλος*) and support, (*ἐδαίωμα*)<sup>96</sup> or bulwark and foundation, of the gospel truth. Though the household of God refers to a spiritual house or family of believers, it is nonetheless a structural metaphor which, as previously mentioned, may possibly reference a temple image. Yet pillar and support expand the definition of church as the household of God which emphasizes its unique identity with the Living God, to a more functional definition of a body created for gospel ministry. The church is “more than the happy results of apostolic ministry,”<sup>97</sup> but a creation of God for the proclamation of God's truth.

“Pillar,” commonly denoted a column used as a support or bearing, is generally

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<sup>96</sup>BGAD, 217-18. “*Ἐδαίωμα* appears only in Christian writings and is understood as *foundation*. A similar word, *ἐδραῖος* is found in 1 Pet 5:9 and Eph 10:2 translated as firm or steadfast.”

<sup>97</sup>Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 510.

the accepted meaning.<sup>98</sup> The LXX (2 Kgs 25:13; 2 Chr 3:15ff; 4:12) uses the same term to describe parts of Solomon’s Temple.<sup>99</sup> Barclay states that pillar would have had distinctive significance to the Ephesians who lived in the shadow of the Temple of Artemis (Diana), the patron deity of Ephesus (Acts 19, the lover of nature and huntress, as well as the goodness of childbirth), and one of the seven wonders of the world.<sup>100</sup> It is clear from the magnificence of the Temple of Artemis that the Greeks had developed a particular fondness for iconic structures and were adapt at building columns.<sup>101</sup>

Pliny gives a glowing description of its size and appearance (425 feet by 225 feet, with 127 columns, 60 feet tall) (*Nat.* 36.95-97). The temple was burned to the ground in 356 B.C.E., and it took 120 years to rebuild it, according to Pliny (*Nat.* 16.213-14), complete with a cedar roof and a statue of the goddess made of either ebony. . . . The temple was a political, religious, and cultural symbol, the image chosen to appear on coins minted in Ephesus in the first century C.E. A wealthy goddess, Artemis possessed a large portion of land around Ephesus, including two lakes, vineyards, quarries, pastures, and salt-pans, as well as herds of animals, the income from which was used to finance the temple and the cult. In addition, the temple was an essential part of the Ephesian economy (and) functioned in the manner of a bank, where people could deposit money for safekeeping and acquire loans, the priests having charge of protecting the money deposited there.<sup>102</sup>

As a result for Timothy, the elders, and ultimately the church, “pillar and support” of God’s truth would have been particularly arresting to their moral and spiritual sensibilities. Yet there may have been an attendant suggestion in mind relative to the use of pillar. In Pauline writing, pillar is also used in a metaphorical sense to refer to people such as Cephas, James, and John. “Recognizing the grace that had been given to me, James and Cephas and John, who were reputed to be pillars, gave to me and Barnabas the

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<sup>98</sup>See Hiebert, *Second Timothy*, 13; Towner, *The Letters of Timothy and Titus*, 275; Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 510; Knight, *Pastoral Epistles*, 181; Kelly, *A Commentary on the Pastoral Epistles* 185; Mounce, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 223; Kent, *The Pastoral Epistles* 140; Witherington, *Letters and Homilies*, 245; and Dibelius and Conzelmann, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 60.

<sup>99</sup>*BibleWorks 9 Software*.

<sup>100</sup>Barclay, *The Letters to Timothy, Titus, and Philemon*, 89.

<sup>101</sup>*Ibid.*, 139.

<sup>102</sup>C. L. Brinks, “Great Is Artemis of the Ephesians,” *The Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 171 (October 2009): 776-95.

right hand of fellowship, so that we might go to the Gentiles” (Gal 2:9). James, Cephas, and John welcomed Paul as an apostle, thus recognizing that the gospel he is promoting is in fact the truth of Christ. Paul refers to these men as “reputedly”<sup>103</sup> pillars (στῦλοι), that is, “these three men were the foundation of God’s new temple, i.e., the new people of God.”<sup>104</sup> Paul may also have in mind that leaders within the family of God are pillars of truth.<sup>105</sup> In light of this proposal, a more profound significance is added to pillar. Whether or not Paul promotes such an idea in this present passage is uncertain. However, it is true that the church is the foundational support of the truth, and godly leaders are intrinsic to such foundational stability.

Thus the church and its leadership stand as pillars of support of the gospel truth. The ministry of the church is not limited to just the crucial need to defend the truth of God but also to lift up and display the truth of the gospel to the world. In this way the missional aspects of the ministry of the church move into evangelism and apologetic rhetoric in the face of the pagan world. As the church witnesses to God’s truth in his world, her conduct is all the more crucial. The message of truth is to be proclaimed by those who practice the truth and Timothy must attend to this threat to the household of God. It appears that young Timothy was faced with a monumental leadership task.

### **Support**

The second word used to describe the ministry of the church, support or foundation, does not find easy agreement as to intended meaning.<sup>106</sup> On the one hand,

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<sup>103</sup>That they were *reputedly* pillars may suggest that Paul is more interested in highlighting the message of truth, rather than the messengers of truth. God’s truth will stand the test; unfortunately leaders do not always remain firm and trustworthy.

<sup>104</sup>Thomas R. Schreiner, *Galatians*, Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2010), 130.

<sup>105</sup>This idea would certainly correspond to Eph 4:7-12.

<sup>106</sup>For example, Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, Kelly, *A Commentary*, and Witherington, *Letters and Homilies* prefer “buttress.” Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, Marshall, *The Pastoral*

Towner contends that pillar and support refer to a “supporting foundation,” and is one idea expressed as two.<sup>107</sup> On the other hand, Dibelius and Conzelmann assign importance to the two words citing their liturgical importance: “The NT parallels points to another context; namely that of fixed liturgical language, possibly of a Hellenistic-Jewish Christian type,” which echoes the idea that celebration takes place within the church, a fortress.<sup>108</sup>

That fortress is an intended meaning may speak to “support” (εδραίωμα). Εδραίωμα is related to adjectives used by Paul in 1 Corinthians 7:37 (firm) and 15:58 (immoveable); and Colossians 1:23 (firmly established). Collins asserts that the word is synonymous with θεμελιος, which Paul uses in the construction metaphor of 1 Corinthians 3:12-12 to describe his own function in the building process.<sup>109</sup> Ultimately it is Christ who is the cornerstone (Eph 2:20). “Support” is translated by Bauer as “foundation” and “mainstay,” and is “only found in Christian wr(ing).”<sup>110</sup> Mounce adds to one’s understanding of the richness (and mystery) of the word as he states that εδραίωμα may also be translated as “protector.”<sup>111</sup> Possibly, as Marshall suggests, the concept of “mainstay” carries the ideas of firmness and steadfastness and “together the two terms (perhaps as a hendiadys express the ideas of visible support (pillar) and solidity (foundation) (cf. 2 Tim 2.19).”<sup>112</sup> Given the variety of interpretations, it is probably wise

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*Epistles*, and Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles*, promote “foundation.” Mounce, *The Pastoral Epistles*, “protector,” and fortress (of truth). Dibelius and Conzelmann, *The Pastoral Epistles* and NASB use “support.” The NIV and HCSM utilize “foundation,” the NKJV, “ground,” and ESV, translate “buttress.”

<sup>107</sup>Towner, *1-2 Timothy & Titus*, 95.

<sup>108</sup>Dibelius and Conzelmann, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 60-61.

<sup>109</sup>Collins, *1 & 2 Timothy*, 102.

<sup>110</sup>BGAD, 218.

<sup>111</sup>Mounce, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 223.

<sup>112</sup>Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 510.

to resist the temptation to supply an answer as to the specific meaning of *εδραίωμα*, but rather allow the various shades of meaning to produce a rich understanding. Therefore a proper definition of *εδραίωμα* may include the idea of a steadfast fortress that protects and reinforces the truth of the gospel.

Without a doubt, “pillar and support” of the truth does not suggest that the church is the originator of the truth, but rather it speaks to the fact that the church is the treasury or depository of the truth (2 Tim 1:13-14). To that point Mounce emphatically states there is no suggestion in the Pastorals that the gospel is “subordinate to the church,” and instead “the gospel takes preeminence.”<sup>113</sup> In the present passage, truth should be understood in the objective sense. Truth refers to the apostolic faith, the whole body of apostolic teaching. The truth will be set forth in verse 17 as Paul quotes a hymn, beginning with the common formula or confession in an “almost ecstatic outburst.”<sup>114</sup> The essentials of the truth are mentioned in the chant that expounds the mystery of spiritual wholeness in the person of Jesus Christ. In summation, the church exists to protect, preserve, and promote God’s truth. This truth is not the product of human institution or invention, but rather the Divine Word for a well-ordered church and society.

The seriousness of Paul’s declaration that the church is pillar and support of the truth is more acutely understood in light of the references in 1 and 2 Timothy that allude to war against the truth and the need to stand firm in the doctrine of Jesus Christ. With apostolic authority as well as the careful concern of a father, Paul reminds Timothy to be cognizant of the fact that proper handling of the truth is essential because of the eternal implications to his (Timothy’s) salvation, as well as the redemption of others (1 Tim 4:16).

In fatherly tones, “You therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in

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<sup>113</sup>Mounce, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 223.

<sup>114</sup>Kelly, *A Commentary*, 88.

Christ Jesus” (2 Tim 2:1), Paul teaches Timothy through word pictures of a soldier, athlete, and farmer (2 Tim 2:3-6), and shares his own story of sacrifice, fidelity, and suffering (2 Tim 2:9) so that Timothy will be encouraged unto diligence to be a servant of God who labors with integrity in the word of truth (2 Tim 2:15). Timothy will set the pace for other leaders and ultimately for the church, the pillar and support of the truth.

### **Conclusion**

This research argues there is a discernible LL present in 1 and 2 Timothy, and that Paul’s leader-speak is defined and designed within the context of the ecclesiological purposes of the epistles. To that end, this chapter presented an overall Pauline theology; defined the ecclesiological purpose of 1 and 2 Timothy, which exhibits correspondence with the wider lens of Pauline theology; and exegeted the central ecclesiological statement, 1 Timothy 3:15, which leads to the greater truth of the mystery of godliness. I argued that Paul’s metaphorical language of the church as the “household of God” (1 Tim 3:15), with requisite doctrine and conduct, illustrated and advanced by Christ, is the model for church order and personal conduct, as well as the self-image Paul desires the church to adopt and the ecclesiology that drives Paul’s LL.

Paul’s ecclesiological concerns and pronouncements are addressed to Timothy. As Paul’s son in the faith and mentored by the apostle, he has been sent as an emissary to the Ephesian church with the stated assignment to set the church in order. Paul enjoins his true child in the faith to set the church in order by quelling and correcting false teachers and teaching. The truth of the church both in doctrine and practice has been compromised. The false teachers pretend to be experts in matters of the Law, when it is evident they are sinners who forward a sickly doctrine. The opponents have upset some in God’s family as to facts concerning the day of the Lord, confused others in terms of the domestic order in the home and household of God, and possibly compromised the high standard expected of spiritual leaders. Timothy is to oppose these teachers and correct their teaching with the truth of the gospel.

Moreover, this chapter asserted that the gospel truth, the mystery of godliness, that which is to be promoted and protected by the church, is *objective* truth (which must be mixed with and accommodated by faith) as well as adherence to a more *subjective* understanding of godliness expressed in spiritual and ethical terms. The gospel then consists of both the historical facts of the Christ-event and the behavior that issues forth from those who have embraced salvation offered by Jesus Christ. Pauline theology embraces the truth that “godliness” is a gift from God and yet a virtue to be pursued. Timothy, the man of God, as well as others in the household of God are to embrace and live out the qualities that already define them as God’s children. As a watch-parent, the living God sees and knows all. He not only saves his children through the mystery of godliness but teaches and empowers them unto godliness.

Finally, the church is to function in ministry as the pillar and support of the truth. The household of God cannot promote and protect the truth of God unless she is set in order herself. Thus Timothy and other leaders are to labor as elders<sup>115</sup> in oversight and teaching. The apostolic teaching, the Pauline tradition, is not the creation of Paul or the church yet the church is responsible for such truth. Furthermore, as the truth of the gospel is presented and defended, the ministry of edification, apologetics, and missional-evangelism issues forth.

In the first-century church of Ephesus, such gospel protection and promotion required the work of a godly leader who was able to properly instruct, correct, organize, orientate, and stimulate God’s household. But the young leader Timothy had to also be led by the elder apostle Paul. In the matter at hand, such leadership occurred through two letters written to Timothy from Paul. These two letters contained the LL Paul utilizes to equip Timothy to oversee the household of God in Ephesus. The subsequent chapter examines the leadership words of Paul, *what* he communicates as well *how* as he

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<sup>115</sup>Not all scholars agreed that Timothy was an official elder in the Ephesian church.

communicates. Pauline LL recognizes the unqualified value of both what and how. It is argued in this research that the content of Paul's communication to Timothy, as well as the rhetorical style and communicative elements he employs, is absolutely grounded in the ecclesiological purpose of the epistles.

CHAPTER 5  
PAULINE LEADERSHIP LANGUAGE  
AS FATHER AND TEACHER

Now that the ecclesiological grounding and framework, which sets the agenda for leadership in the Ephesian church and acts as a default-governor over the doctrines and practice of the church, has been established, I am positioned to address the thesis of the research: there is a discernible LL utilized by the apostle Paul in 1 and 2 Timothy, shaped and defined by a definite ecclesiological grid. In order to pursue the thesis, this chapter consists of two sections. The first section is devoted to an examination of Paul's LL as he writes from a familial perspective, primarily that of a father. The parental perspective is unmistakably apparent not only in the conversational framing and vocabulary Paul utilizes, but also in the tenor of his words to Timothy. Likewise, the father perspective is supported by the metaphorical image of the church as a household. The father is to protect the household from predators, whether found inside or outside the household. Such protection is two-fold: content of belief, and oversight and instruction relative to behavior. Moreover, the father is to contribute to structure and organization so that the household may function effectively and efficiently.

The second section addresses Paul's leader-speak from the viewpoint of *teacher*. This section demonstrates a kind of pedagogical approach to LL utilized by Paul, particularly in the employment of metaphorical illustrations, preformed materials, and rhetorical strategies.<sup>1</sup> In order to properly believe and behave, one must have proper life-

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<sup>1</sup>I have previously asserted that Paul was not in pure terms, a rhetorician. Yet that does not preclude the possibility that he composed his epistles with rhetorical principles in mind, or at least with a knowledge of rhetorical principles. It should also be noted that some prefer to discuss Paul in terms of a letter writer and not a speech maker. See, for example, Stanley. E. Porter, "Paul as Epistolographer and Rhetorician," *Journal for the Study of the New Testament Supplement Series* 80 (1999): 222-48. "Paul is an

changing information. Thus the teacher is indispensable in the household. Likewise, in examining such didactic methodology, the role of the father as teacher and model in the ancient home will surface.

If Timothy will become the proper leader it is because he has followed Paul and has engendered fellowship within the household of God. Thus, I now investigate Pauline LL, which finds its expansive verbal roots grounded in a God-focused ecclesiology.

### **The Language of a Father**

Paul writes as an apostle: “Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus according to the commandment of God our Savior, and of Christ Jesus” (1 Tim 1:1); “I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who has strengthened me, because He considered me faithful, putting me into service” (1 Tim 1:12) and; “Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God” (2 Tim 1:1). Paul’s leader-speak in 1 and 2 Timothy reflects the authoritative words of an apostolic leader called by God to speak the truth of the gospel. Paul’s brief testimony (1 Tim 1:12-17) detailed in full by Luke (Acts 9:1-19, 22:1-21, 26:2-23), leaves no doubt that Paul’s conversion and call impacted his theology and practice of leadership. Certainly Paul is convinced that his gospel, the full body of apostolic teaching, did not come to him from men but directly from the Lord (Gal 1:11-12).

Paul’s theology and presumably his understanding of leadership is based primarily on the “glorious gospel of the blessed God with which I have been entrusted” (1 Tim 1:11). Yet for Paul it was also “my gospel” (2 Tim 2:8). Paul clearly believes he has received a divine stewardship. His creedal formula for apostleship (1 Cor 15:5-9), which requires a personal encounter with the risen Lord, places another authoritative

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epistolographer and the structure and organization of the letter-form must take priority in discussion of his letter, not rhetorical categories.” Also E. Earle Ellis, *Pauline Theology: Ministry and Society* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1989), 151, comments, “When Paul lost his profession as a rabbi, he did not take up another as a rhetorician.”

layer on his apostolic resume. Consequently, “there should be no doubt that Paul based his claim to be an apostle on having seen the risen Lord and having been commissioned by him to go to the Gentiles (1 Cor 9:1, 15:8; Gal 1:11-17).”<sup>2</sup> Paul speaks and leads as an apostle because he has received a divine call and commission.

With this in mind, it is not unreasonable to envision that Paul’s leader-speak to Timothy would be heavy with emphasis on Divine calling and apostolic authority expressed in a language of ‘requirement’ or at least expectation of follower-compliance. Paul communicates with Timothy in the first person singular with the firmness of apostolic authority and makes it clear he is not suggesting a course of action but expecting a course of action from Timothy. Established by his apostolic call, Paul would certainly have the proper standing to address Timothy in such a way. However, having the right to lead in such a manner does not suggest that such is always the right manner in which to lead. Paul could have written in a heavy-handed fashion to Timothy, demanding that his apostolic instructions be executed. Yet Paul spoke with the loving firmness of a father.<sup>3</sup> For example, Paul addresses Timothy as “my true child” (1 Tim 1:2), “my son” (1 Tim 1:18), and “my beloved son” (2 Tim 1:2).

Authoritative words often take on various shades of expression. To that end Paul speaks to Timothy in words filled with the emotional tenderness and guiding firmness of a father to a beloved son in the household of God, the family of faith. Timothy must be reminded that he has been entrusted with leadership in God’s family. As a leader, Paul speaks in familial terms, and reminds Timothy that he is a steward of God’s family. First and 2 Timothy overflow with the pathos of a father figure who seeks to insure that

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<sup>2</sup>Gerald F. Hawthorne and Ralph Martin, eds., *Dictionary of Paul and His Letters* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1993), 50.

<sup>3</sup>“Paul’s use of patriarchal language should be understood against the framework of the family, the primary social institution in the ancient Mediterranean world.” Stephan Joubert, “Paul as Benefactor,” in *Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Newun Testament 2*, Reihe, 124 (Tubingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 2000), 172.

his teaching is passed down to his son in the faith, and by extension to the household of God and that such tradition will be upheld and perpetuated. Additionally, within the family structure there is concern on the part of the apostle for an orderly “leadership structure based on apostolic succession from Paul”<sup>4</sup> in order to ensure his gospel tradition is faithfully passed on.

### **Timothy as Child**

Although it is uncertain as to Paul’s role in the conversion of Timothy, it is clear that a strong relationship existed between the two. In a metaphorical sense Timothy is Paul’s son. The word translated “son”<sup>5</sup> (1 Tim 1:2), is reference to a child, as opposed to an adult son. At this point (and it will change), the emphasis is on the relationship between a child and parent.<sup>6</sup> This association is between two people of different generations with a close personal connection and strong common bond of faith in Christ. Furthermore, even though Timothy is clearly in a subordinate position and filial obedience is expected on his part, the strong paternal love of Paul is obvious in the words he chooses to employ.

The fact that Timothy is Paul’s “true” child in the faith is also significant.<sup>7</sup> Knight suggests that such language is probably meant to affirm Timothy’s “faithful service and proven worth.”<sup>8</sup> Timothy has demonstrated his trustworthiness as Paul’s dispatch to Corinth (1 Cor 16:5-11), as well as Macedonia (Acts 19), and perhaps to

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<sup>4</sup>Richard S. Ascough and Charles A. Cotton, *Passionate Visionary: Leadership Lessons from the Apostle Paul* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2006), 162.

<sup>5</sup>τέκνω.

<sup>6</sup>Kenneth S. Wuest, *Wuest’s Word Studies: The Pastoral Epistles in the Greek New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1952), 24.

<sup>7</sup>Τνησίω.

<sup>8</sup>George W. Knight III, *The Pastoral Epistles*, The New International Greek Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1992), 64.

Philippi (Phil 2:9). In contrast to Knight, Mounce<sup>9</sup> and Lea and Griffin<sup>10</sup> understand “true” to mean “legitimate” or “genuine” in regard to the authenticity of his faith, which issued forth as a direct disciple of the apostle. Thus Paul affirms to Timothy that he (Paul) has confidence that Timothy’s faith is genuine. Paul can trust Timothy to protect and promote the gospel tradition passed on to him. To that end, Timothy is the genuine spiritual “progeny of Paul,” with the possible inference of being his “legal representative.”<sup>11</sup> Certainly while the intended meaning of “true” may be ambiguous, it is certain that Paul utilizes a positive and encouraging LL to call Timothy to his side and affirm Timothy as a faithful and trustworthy coworker in the household of God. If “legal representative” is a reach as to Paul’s intended meaning, it is not an overemphasis to suggest that Paul believed he had no one else to properly represent him in the gospel work: “For I have no one *else* of kindred spirit” (Phil 2:20).

In light of Timothy’s previous faithful service, the term “true son” would strongly suggest a sense of approval from the apostle. The apostle’s endorsement would be a source of confidence for Timothy as he moved forward in his challenging assignment. While it is certainly the Lord’s strength and call that enables one to do the work of ministry (1 Tim 1:12), the endorsement of Paul may well have been used by the Lord to bolster the strength and possible faltering confidence of Timothy. Paul’s personal endorsement is crucial if Timothy is to set the church in order. Likewise Timothy must be strengthened and encouraged in the idea that he is capable of functioning as an effective leader within the family of God. That Timothy is a “son” of Paul further suggests the presence and significance of family. Indeed Paul and Timothy are a part of a community

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<sup>9</sup>William D. Mounce, *The Pastoral Epistles*, Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 46 (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2000), 8.

<sup>10</sup>Thomas D. Lea and Hayne P. Griffin, Jr., *1, 2 Timothy, Titus*, The New American Commentary, vol. 34 (Nashville: Broadman, 1992), 63.

<sup>11</sup>Mounce, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 8.

of faith, the household of God. This is a co-mission of co-laborers. Even though Timothy now has additional pressing responsibilities regarding his faith family<sup>12</sup> he will not be laboring alone.

With just a few words, Paul empowers his younger devotee to attend to the assigned task. Paul addresses his son in the faith with words of pathos, appealing to their close relationship. The designation of “son” solidifies in the mind of Timothy a strong emotional connection with the apostle. Paul’s call and commission as Timothy’s apostolic supervisor has originated directly from “God our Savior, and of Christ Jesus, who is our hope” (1 Tim 1:1). Now as a “genuine son” and one who is called by God in his own right (2 Tim 1:6), Timothy is endowed with authority. He is the spiritual offspring of Paul and represents Paul’s apostolic brand. Yet even this perception will find greater maturity as Timothy comes to identify himself as one stands on his own before God as an ambassador of the gospel.

Paul’s leadership rhetoric toward Timothy is uniquely personal, which is documented in the abundance of first and second person references within both epistles that form an argumentative thread established on an intimacy of relationship: “Timothy, true child” (1 Tim 1:2); “I urged you” (1 Tim 1:3); “we know” (1 Tim 1:8); “I entrust to you, son” (1 Tim 1:18); “you fight the good fight” (1 Tim 1:18); “I am writing to you, hoping to come to you” (1 Tim 3:14); “you will be a good servant” (1 Tim 4:6); and “let no one look down on your youth” (1 Tim 4:11). The balance of chapter 4 is replete with references to “you,” “your,” and “yourself.” Additional examples include 1 Timothy 6:11 where Timothy is addressed as “you, man of God,” “I charge you” (1 Tim 6:13), and “you keep the commandment” (1 Tim 6:14).

In the conclusion of the first epistle, Paul’s emotional expression “O Timothy”

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<sup>12</sup>See, for example, 1 Tim 1:18-20, 2:8, 9-15, 3, 4:16, 5, 6:17-19; 2 Tim 2:1-2, 14, 22-26, 4:1-5, 9-22.

(1 Tim 6:20) seems to capture the rhetorical mood and certainly frames the personal nature of the entire epistle, reminding Timothy of his leadership challenge first mentioned in 1 Timothy 1:2-3 with the use of the same personal name.<sup>13</sup> Likewise, 2 Timothy, which is considerably more intimate in nature, concludes with the same personal request twice issued by the apostle to his son: “make every effort to come to me” (2 Tim 4:9) and “make every effort to come before winter” (2 Tim 4:21). Clearly Timothy is more than a co-worker in a common pursuit. He is a beloved family member of the apostle and Paul’s leadership rhetoric expresses such sentiment.

### **From Child to Man**

Paul concludes his first letter to Timothy with an impassioned plea: “O Timothy, guard what has been entrusted to you” (1 Tim 6:20). Paul’s emotional words in the vocative of direct address command the younger coworker to take flight and keep on fleeing from the sins of the immoral heretics. “But flee from these things, you man of God” (6:11) marks the only place in the epistle where Paul uses the rhetorical device “but . . . you. . . .” The Greek New Testament places “you” in the emphatic position<sup>14</sup> alongside the particle of contrast with the coarse reading: “You but O man of God.”<sup>15</sup> Recognizing the leadership challenges Timothy has endured as well as his fragile health (1 Tim 1:4:2, 5:23; 2 Tim 1:7, 2:1, 4:5), Paul exercises insightful leadership as he assures Timothy he is a “man of God.” Such a leader does not descend to the level of the heretic (v. 3) or fall into the destructive lusts of those who have an unhealthy love of money (v. 9-10).

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<sup>13</sup>I. H. Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, ed. J. A. Emerton, C. E. B. Cranfield, and G. N. Stanton (London: T & T Clark, 1999), 674.

<sup>14</sup>The NASB dilutes the force of Paul’s appeal to Timothy.

<sup>15</sup>Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 260. Εὐ δὲ ὃ ἀνθρώπε θεοῦ πάντα φεθῦγε. The combination of the contrasting particle, δέ with the personal pronoun, Εὐ., “decisively contrasted Timothy with those who wander from the faith.”

The passionate interjection of (6:20) “O” (Ω) indicates a direct address to Timothy. Marshall says that “O” often expresses emotion, and in the present case, a sense of adjuration.<sup>16</sup> Paul speaks to his young mentor with passionate urging to continue to flee those things that are subversive to God-honoring leadership. Paul recognizes the weight of leadership placed on Timothy. Thus his ardent pleading to Timothy is meant to communicate the absolute necessity of the purity of leadership. Like Job,<sup>17</sup> Paul is as concerned with the purity of Timothy’s character as he is the actions of his leadership. For Paul, God-honoring leadership requires personal piety if one is to nurture and direct the household of God. Thus Paul speaks with an impassioned plea.

When Paul addresses Timothy as a “man of God” he calls on Timothy to live up to the highest ideals and examples of God’s leaders. Paul communicates to Timothy that he (Timothy) is a part of a great heritage of God-blessed leaders. “Man of God” is an Old Testament term occurring at least sixty-eight times in the LXX,<sup>18</sup> which designates “one of God’s servants or agents or one of the prophets.”<sup>19</sup> Paul places Timothy in the spiritual company of such men as Moses (Deut 33:1), David (Neh 12:24), and prophets Samuel (1 Sam 9:6), Elijah (1 Kgs 17:18), and Elisha (2 Kgs 4:7, 9). The connection with and continuity of the Old Testament is clearly seen as Paul communicates to Timothy that he represents the same family heritage of these men. Paul’s emotional language may have summoned up in Timothy images of the many heroes of the faith; men to whom Timothy can now look as examples of leaders who persevered during the most difficult of circumstances. Their stories are not just inspiring but also instructive. Timothy has entered

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<sup>16</sup>Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 656.

<sup>17</sup>“When the days of feasting had completed their cycle, Job would send and consecrate them, rising up early in the morning and offering burnt offerings *according to* the number of them all; for Job said, ‘Perhaps my sons have sinned and cursed God in their hearts.’ Thus, Job did continually” (Job 1:5).

<sup>18</sup>*BibleWorks 9 Software for Biblical Exegesis & Research* (Norfolk, VA: BibleWorks, 2002).

<sup>19</sup>Gordon D. Fee, *1 and 2 Timothy, Titus*, New International Biblical Commentary (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1988), 149.

into the realm of these special men of honor and Paul calls Timothy to follow their faithful example.

While the term “man of God” is used for all Christians<sup>20</sup> (2 Tim 3:17), in the present passage (1 Tim 6:11), it has direct reference to the function, character, and dedication of Christian leaders.<sup>21</sup> The interjection of “O” as a demonstrative expression is understandable in light of the heralded company in which Timothy is now connected. In a sense, God’s household continues to expand. While the church of 1 and 2 Timothy composes the family of God and by extension the church set forth in other Pauline writings, there is an even greater extended family composed of the saints of old. In correspondence to that, 2 Timothy highlights Paul as the primary, but not the solitary, example for Timothy, the “man of God,” to follow.

Paul’s leader-speak to Timothy is resoundingly passionate as he emphasizes to his young appointee that the calling to serve God is a “position of special honor”<sup>22</sup> and that he is “God’s agent and acts with God’s authority.”<sup>23</sup> Young Timothy must have strength of conviction in order to continue to stand before the foolish beliefs and conduct of those who advocate a different doctrine and do not agree with sound words (1 Tim 6:3). Likewise he must have confidence that he is God’s man for the occasion and that he stands in the company of God-empowered leaders. It is with this knowledge that Timothy will be able to “pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, perseverance and gentleness

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<sup>20</sup>For example, Mounce, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 570, translates the verse “in order that the person of God be proficient.” In contrast to the general understanding that 2 Tim 3:17 signifies all Christians, Martin Dibelius and Hans Conzelmann, *The Pastoral Epistles*, trans. Philip Buttolph and Adela Yarbro, ed. Helmut Koester (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1972), 120, insist that man of God “refers to Timothy in particular, not to the Christian in general.”

<sup>21</sup>Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 656-57.

<sup>22</sup>Philip H. Towner, *1-2 Timothy & Titus*, The IVP New Testament Commentary (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1994), 141.

<sup>23</sup>Frances Young, *The Theology of the Pastoral Letters*, New Testament Theology (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 112.

[and] fight the good fight of faith” (1 Tim 6:11-12a). Paul’s leader-speak appears to be well conceived and directed primarily at Timothy.

Furthermore, Paul’s LL is clearly strategic in his designation of Timothy as “man of God.” A “son” needs to know that his “father” recognizes his manhood. Thus Paul takes the familial designation of son and transforms his relationship with Timothy. Timothy is not just a son, now he is a man. Now there is a sense of a man-to-man connection. This change of relationship empowers a transformation in Timothy’s identity. Of course the context demands that Timothy understand himself as a man fundamentally different than the heretics with whom he is being contrasted. In fact his manhood is defined by such difference. Similarly, “man of God” indicates that Timothy belongs to God. Paul’s language creates in Timothy a sense of divine identity. Timothy the child (1 Tim 1:2), who has become a man, is ultimately not confined and defined by his association with Paul but is in his own right the possession of God. Therefore, the call to maintain purity in doctrine and conduct is more than just an obligation to a spiritual father or even an apostle, but serious accountability to God. Such accountability to God includes responsibility for the stewardship of God’s church. Paul’s LL offers perspective to Timothy, certainly a challenge and hopefully encouragement.

Empowered by Paul’s leader-speak, Timothy, a man who belongs to God and stands in a long line of faithful servants, will “fight the good fight” (1 Tim 6:11-12a). To that end, Timothy will remember he is a steward of God’s household and must remain faithful in the pursuit of his assignment.

### **A Father Urges His Son**

As an apostle and ostensibly leader of the family, Paul writes to son Timothy. Given the state of affairs in the church, Paul could have anticipated that Timothy might balk at his instructions. Yet Timothy is “urged to remain” in Ephesus (1 Tim 1:3). That

he is urged may indicate Timothy was planning to leave.<sup>24</sup> Paul’s LL is to urge (παρεκάλεσα) Timothy.<sup>25</sup> According to BGD, παρεκάλεσα has a wide range of meanings but the consensus is “to call to one’s side, to summon or invite, to appeal to and even urge.”<sup>26</sup> Mounce contends, “It does not mean to command.”<sup>27</sup> Towner is less adamant, stating, “The language of this past command . . . is collegial enough in tone, but in this context of conveying binding instructions, it carries the weight of apostolic authority and is intended to persuade and ensure compliance.”<sup>28</sup> Knight seems to capture the mood of Paul’s leader-speak as he declares that παρεκάλεσα carries an authoritative, yet personal, appeal of concern “which is denoted in its basic ideal of calling to one’s side.”<sup>29</sup> In this instance as well as in other situations, it appears Paul would rather exercise his leader-speak as an appeal rather than a command (Phil 8-9). Paul utilizes the LL of entreaty in communicating Timothy his “true child in the faith” (1 Tim 1:2), to remain on in Ephesus even in view of his extreme leadership difficulties.<sup>30</sup>

Though it looks as if Timothy is in retreat, there does not seem to be any conflict in the relationship between Paul and his son. Paul’s tender address to Timothy

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<sup>24</sup>Ben Witherington III, *Letters and Homilies for Hellenized Christians*, vol 1, *A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary on Titus, 1-2 Timothy and 1-3 John* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2006), 192.

<sup>25</sup>Παρεκάλεσα, verb indicative aorist active first person singular from παρεκάλειω.

<sup>26</sup>Walter Bauer, *A Greek English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., rev., and aug. F. Wilbur and Frederick W. Danker from F. Walter Gingrich (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1979), 617.

<sup>27</sup>Mounce, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 17. Contra Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistle*, 363; and Dibelius and Conzelmann, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 13.

<sup>28</sup>Philip Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, *The New International Commentary on the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006), 106.

<sup>29</sup>Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 72.

<sup>30</sup>Timothy is commanded to “fight the good fight” (1 Tim 1:18). He is apparently facing men of “wrath and dissension” (1 Tim 2:8). He has been intimidated in part because of his relative youth (1 Tim 4:12). Evidently, Timothy is facing some medical problems possibly due to the stress of the Ephesian problems.

believes any suggestion of tension between the two. Instead he speaks to him in love, about love. Paul frames his leader-speak, “The goal of our instruction is love from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith” (1 Tim 1:5), and leads his understudy with words of familial love and gentleness to do that which he did not desire to do: remain on in Ephesus. Likewise, love is the concept Paul uses to summarize the goal of healthy teaching. Furthermore, Paul may have appealed to Timothy’s moral principles (a pure heart and good conscience) in order to elicit a favorable response.<sup>31</sup> Thus Paul’s appeal to Timothy may be understood in his leader-speak as an appeal to the heart.<sup>32</sup> In this instance Paul’s LL does not fully reflect the Greco-Roman model of the father-child, superior-inferior relationship. Paul does not speak the language of an authoritarian *paterfamilias*,<sup>33</sup> but rather the familial language of love.<sup>34</sup>

### **Apostolic Resume**

Given the private correspondent nature of 1 Timothy and the intensified personal appeal of 2 Timothy, in addition to the familial relationship enjoyed by the apostle and protégé, the salutatory greeting of Paul to Timothy assumes a peculiar rhetorical stance. “Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus according to the commandment of God our Savior, and of Christ Jesus, who is our hope, To Timothy, my true child in the faith: Grace, mercy and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord” (1 Tim 1:1-2).

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<sup>31</sup>Philip H. Towner, *The Goal of Our Instruction: The Structure of Theology and Ethics in the Pastoral Epistles*, *Journal for the Study of the New Testament Supplement* 34 (Sheffield: JSNT, 1989), 157.

<sup>32</sup>“Kardia refers to the *inner person*, the seat of understanding, knowledge, and will, and takes on as well the meaning *conscience*.” Horst Balz and Gerhard Schneider, eds., *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1981), 2:250.

<sup>33</sup>Eva Maria Lassen, “The Use of the Father Image in Imperial Propaganda and 1 Corinthians 4:14-21,” *Tyndale Bulletin* 42, no. 1 (1991): 127-36.

<sup>34</sup>Raymond F. Collins, *The Power of Images in Paul* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical, 2008), 13. “Paul also used kinship language to evoke the bonds that linked him and his fellow missionaries.”

Why does Paul state his position of authority to Timothy? Why the formality of an apostolic resume? The collective answer is that this is Paul's common practice. The apostle understood his letter(s) was an official document and would be read before the church, even though both letters appear to be private correspondence to an individual.<sup>35</sup> Certainly some scholars are convinced that 1 and 2 Timothy are personal letters, or at least letters directed to Timothy<sup>36</sup> with the church as secondary recipients who "implicitly overheard"<sup>37</sup> the apostles' personal appeal. So perhaps Paul's words of affection coupled with his apostolic authority would supply Timothy with additional needed clout in the household of God to move forward in correcting false teachers as well as errant behavior in the household of God. Armed with such added power, Timothy will be better positioned to lead. No doubt given the problems to be addressed, Paul's younger follower needed the authority (in the eyes of the church) that Paul's honored position granted him. However, perhaps Timothy's greater personal need was a reminder of Paul's position and authority. As Paul's true child in the faith, Timothy may have had such a strong affinity with Paul as "father" that he was motivated more by his relationship with Paul than he was Paul's apostolic authority.<sup>38</sup> In short, Timothy may have developed such an intimacy of relationship with Paul that he lost sight of Paul's position of authority. Conceivably the follower became too relationally intimate with the leader.

Paul, the father-figure who has nurtured Timothy as a son, must also reinforce his authority as an apostolic God-ordained authority. In a LL Paul speaks in an authority-

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<sup>35</sup>The letter to Philemon in addition to the PE, are the only Pauline documents *not* addressed to a specific church.

<sup>36</sup>For example, see Mounce, *The Pastoral Epistles*; Thomas Schreiner, *Interpreting the Pauline Epistles: Guide to New Testament Exegesis* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1990); Fee, *1 and 2 Timothy, Titus*; and Witherington, *Letters and Homilies*.

<sup>37</sup>Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 12.

<sup>38</sup>It is helpful to remember that Timothy's father was not a believer (Acts 16:1) and it appears Paul had become a surrogate father in an emotional sense, as well as a spiritual father.

compliance mode, as well as with a paternalistic attitude. Patrick Gray insists 1 Timothy should be rhetorically classified as the *mandata principis*, a “commandment of the ruler.”<sup>39</sup> Perhaps this perspective might be slightly modified in light of Paul’s continual personal appeal to Timothy. The apostle employs passionate words that evoke emotions. He also utilizes familial words as well as power words in his greeting to move Timothy to responsive action.<sup>40</sup>

Paul could have addressed Timothy with words of command.<sup>41</sup> If Paul had used in the disposition<sup>42</sup> of his leader-speak an insensitive and demanding approach, he could have potentially been disqualified in reference to his own teaching. Thus loving persuasion is in order. In outlining the virtues of leaders in God’s house, Paul states that a leader must “*be* one who manages<sup>43</sup> his own household well,<sup>44</sup> keeping his children under

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<sup>39</sup>Patrick Gray, *Opening Paul’s Letters: A Reader’s Guide to Genre and Interpretation* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2012), 61.

<sup>40</sup>Evidence does not exist to suggest Timothy was non-responsive to Paul’s instructions; yet the problems evidently were not solved by Paul’s first communiqué. Paul wrote a second letter of similar concern. It is also interesting that the second letter was more personal (seemingly less authoritative) than the first. To add to the confusion, Jesus’ words (Rev 2) indicate that in many ways the Ephesian church had indeed been correctly orthodox in matters of doctrine and practice and yet other serious issues remained.

<sup>41</sup>Of course, this is not to ignore the multiple instances of imperatival command issued by Paul to Timothy.

<sup>42</sup>It is clear that Paul desired to produce an atmosphere of familial love and cooperation, especially given the difficulties Timothy was facing. Therefore, there is no heavy-handedness about the assignment ahead. While Paul does not misrepresent the difficulties of setting the church in order, he is first committed to building up his son for the task ahead.

<sup>43</sup>Ron Clark, “Family Management or Involvement? Paul’s Use of *προϊστημι* in 1 Timothy 3 as a Requirement for Church Leadership,” *Stone Campbell Journal* 9 (Fall 2006): 244. “Traditionally *προϊστημι* has been translated ‘manage’ or ‘rule,’ but the range of meanings of this word suggests involvement, protection, and engagement in the lives of others. Those who led in this way used persuasion rather than force. Persuasion was a necessary quality of leadership rather than coercion, manipulation, and control.” Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 480, concurs that *προϊστημι* could be understood as “of attention: ‘to be concerned for,’ ‘to apply oneself to’ (Titus 3:8, 14).” Fee, *1 and 2 Timothy, Titus*, 82, expands the scope of the word: “The clue to its meaning here lies with understanding the companion verb about the church in verse 5, to take care of, which carries the full force of that idiom in English. That is, to take care of implies both leadership (guidance) and caring concern. In the home and church neither has validity without the other.”

<sup>44</sup>Balz and Schneider, *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament*, 246. *Καλῶς* is used four

control with all dignity” (1 Tim 3:4-5). This requirement speaks to the consistency of a man’s domestic leadership, as well his leadership in the church of God.<sup>45</sup> Nonetheless, it must not escape observation that just as Paul has required a father or church leader to manage their homes, including their children, Paul is “managing his child” Timothy in a dignified manner through his gracious leader-speak, much of which is persuasive in attitude.

Certainly behavior is in mind here, but not exclusively. Part of the dignified administration of God’s household is the management of one’s tongue and attitude. The emphasis of these verses stands on two fronts: the responsibility of the children to be submissive to the parents, and the responsibility of the parent-leader to “maintain his personal dignity in the process” of family management.<sup>46</sup> The same concept of dignity and respect on the part of the household manager is seen in 1 Timothy 5 where there is an expected gracious and compassionate protocol for caring and relating to one’s parents, widows, and the elderly in God’s house. As has been demonstrated, Paul’s conceptual idea of appropriate leader-speak is grounded in his understanding that the church is the household of God.<sup>47</sup> This is the logical conclusion of one with vested interest in the

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times in the PE to describe excellence in service and/or accomplishing a desired task: “In 1 Tim 3:13; 5:17 *καλῶς* links appropriate and exemplary leadership with ‘caring *well* for one’s own house’ (3:4, 12).” BGD, 401, defines *καλῶς* as “1. fitly, appropriately, in the right way, splendidly 2. in a moral sense commendably, in a manner free from objection 3. beneficially, acceptably 4. rightly, correctly, do what is right, act rightly.”

<sup>45</sup>It is necessary to remember that the church met in the home and, in many if not most cases, the owner of the house would also exercise some measure of leadership responsibility in the household of God.

<sup>46</sup>Mounce, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 177.

<sup>47</sup>It is recognized that the household schema and leadership considerations are not consistent throughout the Pastorals. Paul diverges from the path. Yet, Towner, *The Goal of Our Instruction*, 170, states, “If the inclusion of bishops, deacons, widows, and presbyters among the standard social groups (husband/wife, man/woman, parent/child, master/slave) marks a divergence from the traditional form (Colossians, Ephesians, 1 Peter), it may be . . . the concept of the church as ‘the household of God’ (3.15; cf. 3.5) . . . accounts for the development. In any case, the influence of the house code within the Pastoral is evident.”

household of God. A commitment to the Lord means that one has joined the ranks of God's household and is interested in and committed to her favorable welfare. For Paul, the gospel linked believers as family members to one another,<sup>48</sup> as well as to God the Father (1 Tim 1:1-2; 2 Tim 1:1-2). Likewise, the gospel and the pursuit of godliness act as a governor on the words spoken within the family.

Furthermore, it could be effectively argued that the balance of requirements of leadership (1 Tim 3:1-13), and most obviously the injunctions "able to teach" (1:2), "not double-tongued" (1:8), and "not malicious gossips" (1:11), speak to the godly use of the tongue "faithfully exercising control of speech . . . in line with apostolic tradition."<sup>49</sup> As a leader, Paul must esteem his spiritual children with a dignified tongue and gracious attitude because ultimately he is a steward (1 Tim 1:12, 2-3, 5:9-24; 2 Tim 1:11-14, 4:7-8) of God the Father who lives and functions as Overseer of His household. Paul's LL toward Timothy flows from a gentle and loving tongue and expresses appropriate leader-speak in the household of God. Wayne McCready crystalizes the concept of the household of God as a family to be esteemed in Pauline writings when he states,

The amount of language emphasizing close personal ties, brotherly and sisterly love, greetings with a holy kiss, concern for the well-being of community members, and so on, not only reinforced a sense of community, but it underscored the internal cohesion that distinguished the assemblies of early Christians.<sup>50</sup>

To that point, Patrick Nullens states, "The Pastoral Epistles are completely immersed in the concept of caring love."<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>48</sup>This connection may be more clearly realized in the body of Christ metaphor. Thomas Schreiner, *Paul: Apostle of God's Glory in Christ—A Pauline Theology* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2001), 336, states, "The body is one and yet it has many different members, but the variety of members does not nullify the fact that there is one body."

<sup>49</sup>Jack Barentsen, *Emerging Leadership in the Pauline Mission: A Social Identity Perspective on Local Leadership Development in Corinth and Ephesus*, ed. K. C. Hanson and Charles M. Charles, Princeton Theological Monograph Series 168 (Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2011), 233.

<sup>50</sup>Wayne O. McCready, "Ekklesia and Voluntary Associations," in *Voluntary Association in the Graeco-Roman World*, ed. John Kloppenborg and Stephen G. Wilson (London: Routledge, 1996), 63.

<sup>51</sup>Patrick Nullens, "Theologia Caritatis and the Moral Authority of Scripture: Approaching 2 Timothy 3:16-17 with a Hermeneutic of Love," *European Journal of Theology* 22, no. 1 (2013): 38-49.

It is the language of a “father” that Paul invests in Timothy. Yet it is often needful for a father to speak in diverse tongues that assume an altered leadership tone. Thus Paul speaks to Timothy as his “son,” a child. However, the son is also a man, and man requires a different quality of rhetoric and tone. Likewise, the son who understands the urgency of the moment may be admonished to follow the voice of his father. Such an urgent appeal came to Timothy through the apostolic authority of his mission-leader.

### **The Language of a Teacher**

To speak of Paul as “teacher” is completely consistent with his own testimony. In 1 and 2 Timothy there are at least twenty references<sup>52</sup> to some form of “teach” notwithstanding, some used in a pejorative sense. Paul applies teacher to himself (1 Tim 2:7; 2 Tim 1:11). Likewise he maintains that leaders in the church must be able to teach (1 Tim 3:3) because such leaders are bondservants who are to teach (2 Tim 2:24). The leader must be continually nurtured in faith and sound teaching and able to prescribe and teach the same things (1 Tim 4:11). Paul assures Timothy that he is able to accomplish this requirement of leadership, in part because he has followed Paul’s teaching (2 Tim 3:10). Therefore, Paul’s aim as a leader is to set the church in order by disciplining other faithful men who will be able to teach (2 Tim 2:2). On the contrary, Paul seeks to encourage Timothy, whose ministry is to instruct certain men, not to teach strange doctrines (1 Tim 1:3). Paul’s final charge to Timothy is to “preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with great patience and teaching” (2 Tim 4:2).

The household metaphor continues to be a powerful element in understanding Paul’s leader-speak as a teacher. It was in the home where “much education and training

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<sup>52</sup>1 Tim 1:2-4, 9-11, 20, 2:6-8, 3:1-3, 4:1-13, 16, 5:17, 6:1-3; 2 Tim 1:11, 2:2, 12, 24, 3:10, 4:2-3, 15.

must have taken place”<sup>53</sup> since “education tended to be for the elite”<sup>54</sup> and “virtually all of them aristocratic young men.”<sup>55</sup> Without comment on Timothy’s social status during his formative years, it appears Timothy was familiar with home-schooling<sup>56</sup> (2 Tim 1:5), with the result that from his childhood he had “known the sacred writings”<sup>57</sup> (2 Tim 3:15).

Similarly, the household of God is a classroom for instruction of the underprivileged as well as affluent. Early Christian groups, and principally those of Pauline origin, have been likened to the school.<sup>58</sup> Such “schools” of Paul’s day mirrored the philosophical thought that championed the belief and teaching of its central figure.<sup>59</sup> To the extent that this may or may not be the case in the Ephesian church, Paul nevertheless appears to enjoy great leadership influence and exercises such leadership as the primary teacher, albeit through Timothy.

The LL is the language of the teacher. Bredfeldt rightly states, “The greatest leaders among us are the great teachers among us.”<sup>60</sup> Certainly Paul’s “greatness” was his

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<sup>53</sup>Young, *The Theology of the Pastoral Letters*, 82.

<sup>54</sup>Ibid., 80.

<sup>55</sup>Ronald F. Hock, “Paul and Greco—Roman Education,” in *Paul in the Greco-Roman World: A Handbook*, ed. J. Paul Sampley (London: Trinity Press International, 2003), 204.

<sup>56</sup>David C. Verner, *The Household of God: The Social World of the Pastoral Epistles*, Society of Biblical Literature Dissertation Series 71 (Chico, CA: SBL, 1983), 31, states, “The nurture and education of children actually fell to their mother and her servants through the sixth year of life.”

<sup>57</sup>H. Hubner, *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000), 749-61. “‘Writings’ grammata; also γραφή (2 Tim 3:16). Γραφή generally refers to ‘writing.’”

<sup>58</sup>Wayne A. Meeks, *The First Urban Christian: The Social World of Paul*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2003), 81.

<sup>59</sup>Hans Conzelmann, “Luke’s Place in the Development of Early Christianity,” in *Studies in Luke-Acts: Essays Presented in Honor of Paul Schubert*, ed. Leander E. Keck and J. Louis Martin (New York: Abingdon, 1966), 298-316. Conzelmann proposed that there was a “school of Paul,” which “methodically pursued ‘Wisdom.’” Ibid.

<sup>60</sup>Gary Bredfeldt, *Great Leader, Great Teacher: Recovering the Biblical Vision for Leadership* (Chicago: Moody, 2006), 13.

stewardship as a servant of the household of God. It was his stewardship that compelled him to proclaim Christ, “admonishing every man and teaching every man with all wisdom, so that we may present every man complete in Christ” (Col 1:28). The concept of completeness in this passage renders the sense of “maturity.” The goal of Timothy’s ministry in Ephesus, then, is in part to bring the church to some level of Christian maturity, thus “the goal of our instruction is love from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith” (1 Tim 1:5).<sup>61</sup> Nonetheless such a noble goal will not be realized as long as false doctrine is promoted and ungodly practices are pursued. Consequently Timothy is charged with confronting those who desire to be teachers of the law and to admonish them to cease the charade of pretending competence in handling the Word of God. They have promoted confusion rather than established love (1 Tim 1:5).

How does Paul utilize the LL of a teacher in leading Timothy? This division examines Paul’s leadership-speak as a teacher from three perspectives: rhetorical strategies, metaphorical illustrations, and preformed materials. The whole of 1 Timothy, and particularly chapters 2 and 3, may be seen as an instructive document organized in such a way as to promote the institutional health and mission of the family of God. While the purpose statement is found in the middle of the letter (1 Tim 3:14), the letter itself exhibits a reasoned and structured argument<sup>62</sup> that may more effectively allow Timothy to interpret Paul’s words within the mental model he has already constructed.<sup>63</sup> It is the

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<sup>61</sup>Surely agape love is the pinnacle of a mature, godly faith (1 Cor 12-13).

<sup>62</sup>In contrast, the balance of twentieth-century scholarship strongly promoted a rather disappointing evaluation of the Pastorals. Typical of such assessment are the words of David Miller, *The Pastoral Letters as Composite Documents*, SNTSM 93 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 139: “Organization and development of thought are expected from an author, but the Pastorals are characterized by a remarkable lack of both.” Yet, P. H. Towner, “Pauline Theology or Pauline Tradition in the Pastoral Epistles: The Question of Method,” *Tyndale Bulletin* 46 (1995): 288, writes, “The PE are recognized as presenting a coherent theological and ethical argument to a real church or churches somewhere in time.”

<sup>63</sup>Ken Bain, *What the Best College Teachers Do* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004), 27.

language of the teacher-leader. Likewise, according to Witherington, 2 Timothy may be understood through the instrument of a rhetorical outline, which reveals the argumentative and persuasive character of the letter.<sup>64</sup>

### **Rhetorical Strategies**

An examination of Paul's leader-speak begins appropriately in the prescripts (1 Tim 1:1-2; 2 Tim 1:2), with his family language. Timothy is "*my true child*;" "*my beloved son*." When issuing a command, the same language is employed: "This command I entrust to you, Timothy, *my son*" (1 Tim 1:18). While Paul's affection for Timothy should not be questioned, the initial family language (1 Tim 1:1-2; 2 Tim 1:2), rhetorically speaking, is intended to gain Timothy's 'listening ear' and encourage him to be "favorably disposed to what will be said"<sup>65</sup> later in the epistle. This standard type of greeting of Paul does not deviate much from his usual semantical approach. Yet Paul will require much from his younger protégé and Timothy must be emotionally conditioned for what will be required.

Certainly spiritual conditioning and strength is also in mind here. Even the reference to "Christ Jesus, *who is our hope*" (1 Tim 1:1) offers Timothy a sense of spiritual encouragement. The hope enjoyed in Christ Jesus is certainly a reference to eschatological salvation, but the concept is grounded in the past faithfulness of God.<sup>66</sup> Timothy's hope in view of the present difficulties, as well as the challenges ahead, is based on God's proven faithfulness in the past. It is significant that Paul does not employ the term "hope" in the prescript of any of his other letters. Perhaps the use of hope in his letter to Timothy is a signal as to the young leader's need of the comforting and

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<sup>64</sup>Witherington, *Letters and Homilies*, 305.

<sup>65</sup>*Ibid.*, 189.

<sup>66</sup>Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 98.

persuasive rhetoric of optimism which presents the confident reality of the gospel. In employing “hope” Paul not only voices an immovable doctrinal reality but he also employs affective language that is “both an expression of an emotion and the creator of an emotion.”<sup>67</sup> It appears that Paul writes to the head and heart with the prospect that the hands of service will follow.

Also it should be noted that Paul’s leader-speak employs familial language and optimistic words of expectation as a method of framing the argument he will present to Timothy. Paul manages the meaning and impact of the argument as he frames the ‘conversation’<sup>68</sup> by implying his relationship with Timothy, in concert with Timothy’s hope in Christ, will enable Timothy to successfully navigate the treacherous path ahead. Timothy will not be alone as he continually tackles the issues within the Ephesian church. It appears as though Paul has anticipated Timothy’s response and has pre-empted his reply by framing the argument from his (Paul’s) point of reference. In consideration of the ideas espoused by Fairhurst and Sarr, one might suggest that Paul was successful in creating and forwarding a new mental model that Timothy could fix his eyes on and draw from as he encountered the difficulties of his assignment.<sup>69</sup>

According to Christopher Forbes, Paul regularly utilized *synkrisi* or rhetorical

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<sup>67</sup>Peter Cotterell and Max Turner, *Linguistics and Biblical Interpretation* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 1989), 294.

<sup>68</sup>Gail T. Fairhurst and Robert Sarr, *The Art of Framing: Managing the Language of Leadership* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1996), 3.

<sup>69</sup>Ibid., 24: “Mental models are deeply held internal images of how the world works. In any given situation, we determine what to say by applying those models (which are general) to the context (which is specific).” Without attempting to ‘baptize’ this concept, for there does not appear to be an intended biblical meaning in this term, I think there is a sense in which a *mental model* is similar to the pragmatic functioning of a biblical understanding of faith. “Now faith is the assurance of *things* hoped for, the conviction of things not seen” (Heb 11:1). This is not a name it, claim it moment, nor is it a visualization of what one desires to ‘create.’ Perhaps the mental model of Fairhurst and Sarr might be for the Christian what is commonly called a biblical worldview.

comparisons, “though they are rarely fully developed in rhetorical terms.”<sup>70</sup> By way of example, Forbes mentions several comparisons, including the “wisdom of the world” and “God’s secret wisdom” (1 Cor 1-2), and “the works of the flesh” and “the fruit of the Spirit.”<sup>71</sup> Despite the fact that Forbes rejects the Pastorals as authentic Pauline letters, he documents the rhetorical tool of comparison or *synkrisis*, which is generously employed in 1 and 2 Timothy as a rhetorical teaching device.<sup>72</sup>

For example, Paul speaks of (1) certain men who teach strange doctrines (1 Tim 1:3), who are straying from the truth and have turned aside to fruitless discussion (1 Tim 1:6), desiring to be a teacher of the Law but not understanding “what they are saying or the matters about which they make confident assertions” (1 Tim 1:7). Yet in contrast, (2) “But we know that the Law is good” (1 Tim 1:8). Similarly, (1) these certain people are representatives of

those who are lawless and rebellious, for the ungodly and sinners, for the unholy and profane, for those who kill their fathers or mothers, for murderers and immoral men and homosexuals and kidnappers and liars and perjurers, and whatever else is contrary to sound teaching. (1 Tim 1:9-10)

Yet amazingly, (2) “I have been entrusted with the glorious gospel . . . because He considered me faithful, putting me into service, even though I was formerly a blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent aggressor” (1 Tim 1:11-15). An examination of 1 Timothy reveals additional statements of comparison and contrast:

1. (A) 4:1-3; B) 4:6-10, 4:11-16.
2. (A) 6:3-5, 9-10; (B) 6:11-14, 17-19.

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<sup>70</sup>Christopher Forbes, “Paul and Rhetorical Comparison,” in *Paul in the Greco-Roman World*, 151.

<sup>71</sup>*Ibid.*, 159-60.

<sup>72</sup>It should be noted that apparently rhetorical terms such as *synkrisis* may have had little or no significance to the “letter writer,” in Paul’s day. Thus, Stanley K. Stowers, *Letter Writing in Greco-Roman Antiquity*, LEC 5 (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1986), 34, writes, “Letter writing remained only on the fringes of formal rhetorical education throughout antiquity. It was never integrated into the rhetorical systems and thus does not appear in the standard handbooks. This means there were never any detailed systematic rules for letters.” Yet, for the sake of advancing the argument I utilize such terminology.

In 2 Timothy the following are representative of the same pattern:

1. (A) 3:1-9; (B) 3:10, 14.
2. (A) 4:1; (B) 4:2-16; (A) 4:21.

In what ways do Paul's rhetorical comparisons offer leadership to young Timothy? The creation of *synkrisis*, a comparison for the purpose of evaluation, enables Paul to continue to draw a sharp distinction between himself and the false teachers. Paul employs such comparison to advance his argument, develop his theological premise, and demonstrate and delineate the differences in himself and the gospel tradition with those of the opponents. Paul represents the gospel tradition Timothy is devoted to as well as the kind of person Timothy aspires to be. Thus the comparisons drive Timothy to mentally position himself in Paul's place where Paul is compared and contrasted with the false teachers. Paul's LL is framed in such a way that the use of *synkrisis* has placed Timothy in the position of identifying with as well as imitating the apostle.

On some occasions Timothy is directly compared with the opponents. However, whether or not Timothy is the direct object of comparison, *synkrisis* is utilized to advance the argument of persuasion. For example, after a scathing description of godless men in the last days (2 Tim 3:1-9), including the pronouncement they are "always learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth" (3:7), Paul contrasts Timothy with the godless, as he writes, "Now you<sup>73</sup> followed my teaching, conduct, purpose, faith, patience, love, perseverance" (3:10), and "You, however,<sup>74</sup> continue in the things you have learned and become convinced of, knowing from whom you have learned *them*" (3:14). Witherington comments on this series of comparisons: "Here again we see the oscillation back and forth . . . between the negative and positive

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<sup>73</sup>Εὐ δέ, "now you" may also be translated, "but you" as in the Holman Bible. The NIV translates, "You however." Mounce, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 556, comments, "Εὐ δέ . . . contrasts Timothy and the following description of Paul's life with that of the opponents."

<sup>74</sup>The same idea of contrast, as Εὐ δέ applies here.

examples, in a seemingly never-ending *synkrisis*.”<sup>75</sup> Towner comments, “Paul shifts to instruction with the contrastive combination ‘you, however.’ . . . This device creates the typical turnabout, as the contrast is drawn between the road the opponents are going down and the way of Paul that Timothy is to follow.”<sup>76</sup> Timothy does not have to follow the false teachers, yet there is always the possibility.<sup>77</sup>

Barclay remarks that Paul’s affirmative statement, “Now you followed” (2 Tim 3:10), expresses the essence of discipleship as it suggests the idea to follow alongside, physically, mentally and spiritually.<sup>78</sup> Thus Paul teaches Timothy to continue to follow the gospel tradition by commending him for doing that very thing. Finally, Paul comments that he is aware Timothy has become a kindred spirit by committing to Paul’s gospel and leadership vision and that this is attributable in the human realm, to his strength of will and resolve<sup>79</sup> (2 Tim 3:10).

Thus the use of *synkrisis* enables Paul to point out the error of the opponents as he compares himself and Timothy to the antagonists. Such comparison and contrast may facilitate an honest self-examination within Timothy to make sure he is in the process of becoming the leader he is called to be. His doctrinal and personal purity is absolutely required if he is to protect and promote God’s household. In brief, the use of comparison and contrast is utilized as an effective teaching tool of persuasion by the apostle to empower Timothy and others to remain faithful to the gospel truth through an appeal to

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<sup>75</sup>Wetherington, *Letters and Homilies*, 356.

<sup>76</sup>Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 570.

<sup>77</sup>“This command I entrust to you, Timothy, *my* son, in accordance with the prophecies previously made concerning you, that by them you fight the good fight, keeping faith and a good conscience, which some have rejected and suffered shipwreck in regard to their faith. Among these are Hymenaeus and Alexander, whom I have handed over to Satan, so that they will be taught not to blaspheme” (1 Tim 1:18-20).

<sup>78</sup>William Barclay, *The Letters to Timothy, Titus and Philemon*, rev. ed., The Daily Study Bible Series (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1975), 195.

<sup>79</sup>Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 784, Προθέσει.

self-inspection.

For Timothy, the conflict has become very personal. He is on the front line of the battle. It appears obvious that Timothy is faltering under the weight of the burden of leadership. The conflict is ongoing and all Paul can do, removed by miles from his ‘son,’ is teach and support Timothy through an effective LL. Paul calls on Timothy to respond to the demands of leadership in several different and sometimes contradictory actions or attitudes: “fight,” “flee,” “guard,” “suffer,” “be sober,” “endure,” “kindle afresh,” “be strong,” “retain,” “continue,” and “be on guard.” Each response (and most are stated as imperatives) is based on the comparative and contrastive nuances of the assignment and conflict. Paul must use appropriate direction for each and therefore appropriate language is required for each.<sup>80</sup>

Likewise, in comparing and contrasting Timothy’s various leadership concerns, it is also obvious that each challenge requires a particular response from Timothy. For example, Timothy is to continue to “stand” and fight the battle of truth that some have rejected. Yet the young leader should “run away” from the kind of ungodliness exemplified by the opponents and instead “pursue” righteousness, godliness, and the like. In contrast to pursue, Timothy is to “guard” the treasure as well as be on guard against the enemy. He is to “kindle afresh” the gift, yet “retain” healthy words of the gospel and continue in each. At times he is to “flee” and other times he is to “endure.” In contrast to

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<sup>80</sup>“Fight the good fight . . . which some have rejected” (1 Tim 1:18-19). “But flee from these things, you man of God, and pursue . . . Fight the good fight of faith” (1 Tim 6:11-12). “Guard, through the Holy Spirit who dwells in us, the treasure” (2 Tim 1:14). “Suffer hardship with *me*” (2 Tim 2:3). “But you, be sober in all things, endure hardship” (2 Tim 4:5). “Alexander the coppersmith . . . be on guard against him yourself” (2 Tim 4:14-15). “Use a little wine for the sake of your stomach” (1 Tim 5:23). “For this reason I remind you to kindle afresh the gift of God” (2 Tim 1:6). “You therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus” (2 Tim 2:1). “Retain the standard of sound words which you have heard from me” (2 Tim 2:13). “You, however, continue in the things you have learned” (2 Tim 3:13).

some of the Ephesian leaders who should not “linger” too long at the wine table,<sup>81</sup> Timothy is to “cease abstaining” and start drinking.<sup>82</sup> Paul offers Timothy a verbal strategy for leadership. However, it remains necessary to be cognizant of the idea that the strategy changes according to the situation and need.

One final example of rhetorical strategy will be examined as attention is returned to the structure of both epistles. It has already been suggested that Paul’s communication skills as a letter writer must be attributed at least in part to the influence of Greek rhetorical theory. Paul the letter writer was a product of his cultural and educational upbringing. Witherington writes, “Both Paul and at least some of his audience were educated, literate, and capable of reading and appreciating a good letter, and responding to it.”<sup>83</sup> As an able letter writer Paul utilizes a very deliberate and organized “stereotyped format,”<sup>84</sup> a rhetorical approach common in his day. The Pastorals present such an approach in a coherent and consistent argumentative strategy. Having advised Timothy that conduct in the household of God is dependent on eradication of false teaching and promotion of true doctrine (1 Tim 1:3-5), Paul advances his leadership instruction as he maps out an obvious rhetorical structure.

“First of all”<sup>85</sup> (1 Tim 2:1) initiates a new segment of thought and signals an

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<sup>81</sup>Mounce, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 175, states, “The fact that the same injunction is repeated in all three lists suggest that this was a serious problem in the Ephesian church’ evidently the opponents were well known for their drunkenness even though they were ascetics with respect to their food.”

<sup>82</sup>Ibid. “It is possible that Timothy himself was totally abstaining from alcohol because of its overuse in the Ephesian church” Ibid., 175.

<sup>83</sup>Ben Witherington III, *New Testament Rhetoric: An Introductory Guide to the Art of Persuasion in and of the New Testament* (Eugene, OR: Cascade, 2009), 99.

<sup>84</sup>Ibid., 111.

<sup>85</sup>πρῶτον πάντων. Mounce, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 78, translates “above everything else.” Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 418 states, “The superlative πρῶτον stresses either the priority (first in time or sequence) or the importance (first in degree) of instruction.” Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 114, adds, “In light of Paul’s predominant usage, we should probably understand the word in a sequential sense here,

orderly and organized didactic approach in which Paul addresses matters of household deportment. In what Yarbrough terms “A remarkable change in the literary ‘atmosphere,’”<sup>86</sup> Paul moves from personal comments to a regimented approach to household issues, guidelines, and obligations. This “remarkable change” appears to signal to Timothy the seriousness of the challenges ahead and the issues that must be squarely addressed. It appears that the false teachers have infected multiple levels of household belief and conduct. Therefore while such teaching and teachers must be directly dealt with, much of Timothy’s response will be directly to the household of God as a family.

In logical order the teacher-leader instructs his student as to guidelines for prayer and worship (1 Tim 2:1-8), church behavior and institutional requirements (1 Tim 2:8-12, 5:17-24), the roles of men and women (1 Tim 2:8-15), qualifications and appointment of church leaders (1 Tim 3), and household care of the widows (1 Tim 5:3-16). In straightforward and systematized leader-speak Paul itemizes the leadership issues to which Timothy is to attend. Bredfeldt states, “The best teachers know exactly what they want to communicate.”<sup>87</sup> Additionally, Paul writes with structure; his words and word order are deliberate and designed. Richards and Bredfeldt write,

People desire structure. Thinking demands structure. And information does not organize itself. Facts are like bricks: They do not simply assemble themselves into a building. Plans are needed. Drawings must be devised. And when the plans are implemented, the drawings become reality.<sup>88</sup>

To that point, 2 Timothy, while different in tone than 1 Timothy, nonetheless exhibits

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but with the qualification that what is placed first in sequence may be so placed because it is also that which is considered first in importance.”

<sup>86</sup>Mark M. Yarbrough, *Paul’s Utilization of Preformed Traditions in 1 Timothy: An Evaluation of the Apostle’s Literary, Rhetorical, and Theological Tactics*, Library of New Testament Studies 417 (London: T & T Clark, 2009), 76.

<sup>87</sup>Bredfeldt, *Great Leader, Great Teacher*, 117.

<sup>88</sup>Lawrence O. Richards and Gary J. Bredfeldt, *Creative Bible Teaching* (Chicago: Moody, 1998), 220.

logical structure, framing explicit instruction. Second Timothy is vastly more individualistic in character and resembles a personal paraenetic letter as “it certainly assumes that the writer and the recipient will have further contact.”<sup>89</sup> Paul requests and expects to reunite with Timothy (2 Tim 4:9-21), but there is always the possibility that such a reunion will not transpire.

Therefore, in 2 Timothy Paul as an organized leader-teacher, building and coaching through rational structure, outlines a fourfold charge to which Timothy should ascend: guard the gospel (1:14); suffer for the gospel (2:3, 8-9); continue in the gospel (3:14); and proclaim the gospel (4:1-2). Paul speaks the methodical and organized LL of the teacher in which he shares the essence of what Burke describes as instructional pedagogy. The effective teacher understands that “big ideas [are] the engines that drive real learning.”<sup>90</sup> The fourfold charge to Timothy serves as “big ideas” and as such has the ability to transform a passive people into active learners.<sup>91</sup> Paul’s LL casts a gospel vision for Timothy. Perhaps the seeming constant conflict the young leader was enduring was taking its toll on his ability to conceive of a plan or organize a strategy. Conceivably, Paul has supplied him with both and presumably Timothy will pass on the vision to the elders and eventually the household of God will adopt a big-picture mission.

### **Metaphorical Illustrations**

Metaphor may be understood as a comparison of things not apparently similar. Effective teachers employ metaphors in particularly effective ways.<sup>92</sup> In the case of this

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<sup>89</sup>Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 12.

<sup>90</sup>Jim Burke, *Effective Instruction*, The Teacher’s Essential Guide Series, ed. Lois Bridges (New York: Scholastic, 2008), 93.

<sup>91</sup>Ibid.

<sup>92</sup>Yet, use of metaphor may also hamper communication as I have found in preaching and teaching. It is needful to take stock in what Cotterell and Turner, *Linguistics & Biblical Interpretation*, 301, write, “Our understanding of metaphor depends on our knowledge of the presupposition pool of the creator

present research, metaphors as word pictures are a key in properly understanding the complex picture of leadership, and may be used by an able teacher to paint a verbal picture of the character and conduct of leaders. On the other hand, “the nuances of the leadership process cannot be captured through one theory, or one metaphor.”<sup>93</sup> Likewise, Laniak makes the astute point that metaphor may help to understand what leadership is and what leadership is not.<sup>94</sup> Even so, Paul utilizes the gift of metaphor. “Metaphorical language abounds”<sup>95</sup> in the Pastorals and enables Paul to frame the world of leadership he desires Timothy to see. This section calls attention to only a few of the metaphors that Paul employs as he teaches Timothy the substance of leadership and the commission to protect and promote the truth of God.

**The good soldier.** It appears that Paul’s pedagogy is to give his follower several mental models by which he may be tutored unto the orthodoxy and orthopraxy required of a leader. Timothy must understand that the development of godliness sometimes requires the leader to endure suffering. Likewise, Paul enjoins Timothy to share in his suffering (2 Tim 1:8, 2:3). Yet Paul frames his call to suffering in terms Timothy may more readily comprehend. Paul returns to a military metaphor and advises Timothy that being a good soldier of Christ Jesus may entail suffering (2 Tim 2:3). Paul commands Timothy to “fight the good fight” (1 Tim 1:18). Without delay he reminded Timothy that the command is from God. In this metaphor “Timothy is cast in the role of a

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of the metaphor, and is further enhanced by the availability of a cotext from which the purpose of the metaphor might be deduced.”

<sup>93</sup>J. Lee Whittington, “‘I Am among You,’ Using Biblical Metaphor as Models of Authentically Engaged Leaders” (paper presented at the South West Academy of Management Proceedings Annual Meeting, Dallas, March 11-15, 2014), 56-72.

<sup>94</sup>Timothy Laniak, *Shepherds after My Own Heart: Pastoral Traditions and Leadership in the Bible*, New Studies in Biblical Theology Series (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2006), 29.

<sup>95</sup>Benjamin Fiore, *The Function of Personal Example in the Socratic and Pastoral Epistles* (Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1986), 13.

solider . . . and ministry is viewed as warfare.”<sup>96</sup>

Elsewhere Paul spoke of spiritual warfare as that which required spiritual weapons (2 Cor 6:7, 10:4; Eph 6). Equally the “fight” referred to in 1 Timothy 1 is also spiritual warfare in which Timothy must be engaged. In fighting the fight Timothy will fulfill prophecies made about him (1:18), as well as accomplish the instructions of Paul to set the church in order (3:14-16). Paul’s leader-speak to Timothy does not misrepresent the battle. It will be a fight in which Timothy will be subjected to great distress. In fact, Paul calls on Timothy to suffer for the gospel as Paul has suffered.<sup>97</sup> “Suffer hardship with *me* as a good soldier of Christ Jesus” (2 Tim 2:3). Unlike the athlete and farmer (2 Tim 2:5-7) who generally work solo, the soldier will act in concert with other soldiers.<sup>98</sup> Therefore, Timothy is urged to join Paul’s gospel suffering (2 Tim 1:8) with the implicit suggestion that others will likely suffer with him.

Even though little is known about Timothy, it is doubtful he had direct knowledge of, or experience in, the ravages of warfare. However, one may assume he at least had a general understanding. To be sure, Roman warfare was not a neatly antiseptic endeavor but rather a gruesome blood-bath of savagery.<sup>99</sup> As an educated Roman citizen (Gal 1-2) and a keen observer of culture (Acts 17), Paul was surely aware of the cost of war. In a LL the apostle communicates to his coworker that the warfare he is engaged in could mean the difference between a household of God that brings honor to God (Eph 1)

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<sup>96</sup>Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 410.

<sup>97</sup>2 Tim 1:12; 2:9; 3:11.

<sup>98</sup>Edgar Krentz, “Paul, Games, and the Military,” in *Paul in the Greco-Roman World*, 347.

<sup>99</sup>“After the skirmishing and missile harassment by light troops had ended, the main opposing battle line approached each other. The legion either advanced deliberately or awaited the enemy until the lines were about 20 yards apart. Then the first two ranks of the Roman front-line hurled their javelins. The legion almost always charged just before the actual hand-to-hand contact of the main battle lines. The first line of 8 or 10 ranks dashed violently against the foe as the ranks behind them would then throw their javelins over the top of the melee.” Trevor Nevitt Dupuy, *The Evolution of Weapons and Warfare* (Fairfax, VA: HeroBooks: 1984), 24.

or the essential decimation of the household of God in Ephesus.<sup>100</sup> Timothy is to “fight the good fight” as the household of God has sustained loss: some have “suffered shipwreck in regard to their faith. Among these are Hymenaeus and Alexander” (1 Tim 1:18-19). Paul utilizes the same military imagery in 2 Timothy 2:1-4 to inspire Timothy to be strong in grace of Jesus Christ and to understand what is at risk.

In what ways is gospel warfare of 1 and 2 Timothy similar to literal warfare and how may such language equip and inspire Timothy to lead? The obvious connection is that this metaphor depicts a conflict between two parties. If Timothy will be bold and seek a victorious result, he will be required to perceive opponents as warring soldiers who fight with seared or cauterized consciences (1 Tim 4:2). Paul’s words to Timothy are a call to alarm and preparation! Their opponents fight without any concern for the cost of war: they are willing to choose the “nuclear option.” Mounce and Towner propose that their “cauterized consciences” may refer to moral scruples that have been branded by Satan.<sup>101</sup> This proposal is sustainable especially in light of the fact they have been “paying attention to deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons” (1 Tim 4:1). Paul is directing the war from afar and Timothy is the two-star General on the ground. If he is to be victorious he must know his demonic enemy. For Paul the teacher, this is warfare 101.

Second, the warfare metaphor speaks of preparation. Timothy’s preparation will commence as he understands the worthy nature of this warfare. Timothy must be assured that the conflict he is presently engaged is a “good” (καλὴν) fight. As Timothy leads his forces out on the battle field he must know beyond any uncertainty that the purpose behind the conflict is worthy of the pain that will be inflicted on gospel soldiers.

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<sup>100</sup>“Warfare had the potential to profoundly affect Greek societies and individuals in several ways. For example, the loss of a battle and the consequent inability to protect agricultural area could lead to starvation.” Iain Spence, *Historical Dictionary of Ancient Greek Warfare* (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow, 2002), 3.

<sup>101</sup>Mounce, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 238; Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 292.

Καλὴν from καλός appears twenty-four times in the Pastorals and may be translated in several different fashions, but it principally describes that which is ethically good, noble and worth striving for.<sup>102</sup> Paul teaches Timothy that the battle is a noble task and ethically righteous. This war is more valued than any others. Towner arrives at a different conclusion as he translates “fight the battle well”<sup>103</sup> and that “good” (καλὴν) is a description of how Timothy should go about leading the battle, that is, in a good and noble manner. Thus Timothy will be prepared to continue the fight and suffer as he understands this is a “good fight” worthy of the price paid. Furthermore he should fight in an honorable fashion.

A third meaning inherent in the warfare metaphor and one that has already been suggested, is that the battle will require suffering. Paul teaches that gospel leaders will suffer.<sup>104</sup> Second Timothy makes it clear that Paul is enduring some level of suffering. He is detained and unable to move around (2 Tim 1:16, 2:9, 4:16). If he is in Rome as some insist,<sup>105</sup> it adds clarity to the legal proceedings he is apparently traversing (2 Tim 4:16). Furthermore he is lonely and possibly dying (2 Tim 4). As he suffers, Paul teaches his student that suffering will be required as a worthy offering to the effort of a noble warfare.

Such an admission of and call for suffering is certainly counter-intuitive to human thinking. Suffering was not to be lauded or perceived as noble in Paul’s world. Yet for the sake of the gospel Paul suffers as a criminal! At times he has suffered alone (2 Tim 4:16-18) but such is required of the noble soldier. The gospel warrior fights the

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<sup>102</sup>BGD, 400.

<sup>103</sup>Towner, *The Letter to Timothy and Titus*, 156-57.

<sup>104</sup>2 Tim 1:8, 12, 2:3, 9, 3:11-12.

<sup>105</sup>Witherington, *New Testament Rhetoric*, 374.

worthy bout in a worthy manner and will often suffer<sup>106</sup> for the noble cause (2 Tim 2:3). Such suffering should be expected in that “all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will be persecuted” (2 Tim 3:12). Yet Paul does not shrink from such pain and is not humiliated because of his circumstances. Kern writes, “For Paul, ridicule, and even suffering, are not something to be ashamed of, even if they are in themselves shameful.”<sup>107</sup> Instead, he suffers with the firm confidence that he knows in whom he has placed his faith and is convinced God will guard his investment (2 Tim 1:12).

Paul employs a transparently violent image, the metaphor of a warring soldier protecting and promoting the gospel truth, to call Timothy to continue to move forward as a leader. However, this is not just a metaphorical description of leadership: it is an imperatival prescription and description for leadership. Towner suggests that this is a continuing call to, and evidence of, *ευσεβία*.<sup>108</sup> Thus Timothy is urged to press forward even as a combat veteran in the pursuit of godliness, which will surely bring about suffering.

**The athlete.** An unspoken connection exists, whether consciously or subconsciously, between war and competitive sports. Sports and particularly team games imitate war.<sup>109</sup> Accordingly, Paul introduces a second metaphor<sup>110</sup> into his teaching:

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<sup>106</sup>*BibleWorks* 7. Συγκακοπάθησον verb imperative aorist active second person singular from σθγκακοπαθέω “to suffer with someone.”

<sup>107</sup>Philip Kern, “The Cultural Context of Paul’s Gospel: The Cross and Suffering in Galatians,” *The Reformed Theological Review* 70, no. 2 (August 2011): 148.

<sup>108</sup>Towner, *The Goal of Our Instruction*, 150-51.

<sup>109</sup>T. J. Cornell, “On War and Games in the Ancient World,” *The Global Nexus Engaged, Sixth International Symposium for Olympic Research*, 29-40, accessed May 22, 2014, [www.library.la84.org/SportsLibrary/ISOR/ISOR 2002e.pdf](http://www.library.la84.org/SportsLibrary/ISOR/ISOR 2002e.pdf). Cornell states there is the suggestion that the ancients of Paul’s day may have regarded athletics as the training ground for possible warfare, though this idea has not engendered a strong following.

<sup>110</sup>Mounce, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 507, maintains that although the main point is to share in suffering, “each metaphor has its own special nuance.”

“Also if anyone competes as an athlete, he does not win the prize unless he competes according to the rules” (2 Tim 2:5). The image of the athletic contest or competitive games of entertainment pictures God’s household member in a disciplined and difficult training regimen and one that will require a measure of suffering in preparation for competition and hopeful victory. The athletic contest is a common Pauline metaphor utilized in a variety of ways.<sup>111</sup> To qualify to run in the ancient Olympiad a competitor must first complete a minimum of ten months training<sup>112</sup> and swear before the statue of Zeus that he had done so.<sup>113</sup> The training-gymnasium theme is clearly seen as Paul has already enjoined his co-worker to “discipline yourself for the purpose of godliness; for bodily discipline is only of little profit, but godliness is profitable for all things, since it holds promise for the present life and *also* for the *life* to come” (1 Tim 4:7b-8). Now Paul repeats his instruction to train unto godliness.

As one who will pass on such truth, Timothy must understand that he should continue to prepare so that he will be able to compete at the highest level. “Also if anyone competes” (2 Tim 2:5). Barclay contends that lawfully wrestles or competes,<sup>114</sup> used by later Greek writers, refers to “a *professional* as opposed to an *amateur*.”<sup>115</sup> This appears to imply some level of status and importance. It is fair to say Timothy should understand that continuous training does not negate the reality that he is also actively competing in the contest. To that point Mounce states, “Since Timothy is currently engaged in the struggle, the idea of participating is more relevant.”<sup>116</sup> It appears that while the metaphor

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<sup>111</sup>1 Cor 4:9, 9:24-27, 14:7; 2 Cor 4:8-12, 4:16; Phil 3:12-14; Gal 5:7.

<sup>112</sup>Mounce, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 510.

<sup>113</sup>Witherington, *Letters and Homilies*, 333.

<sup>114</sup>νομίμως ἀθλήση.

<sup>115</sup>Barclay, *The Letters to Timothy, Titus, and Philemon*, 161.

<sup>116</sup>Mounce, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 510.

is specifically pointed at the household leader, it is also a general statement concerning all Christians.<sup>117</sup>

What specific leader-speak principles is Paul inferring in the use of the athletic metaphor? First, Paul employs the word “competes” twice (the second time modified by “according to the rules”) in the space of eleven words and nowhere else in the New Testament.<sup>118</sup> Consequently, it could reasonably be suggested that Paul has carefully chosen a particular word for special effect. To “compete” has several connotations including the idea to “contend in a contest,” which may consist of “temptations and sufferings which, so to speak, fight against men.”<sup>119</sup> Likewise the competing athlete is said to be one “practiced in suffering.”<sup>120</sup>

“Also if anyone competes as an athlete, he does not win the prize unless he competes according to the rules” (2 Tim 2:5). Various translations maintain “also,” “furthermore,” and “similarly” (*εαν δε και*), which grammatically connects the metaphorical mention of athlete to that of the soldier and suggests there are some principles common to both, including the inference of suffering or hardship. Timothy must realize that the Christian life is governed by certain constraints as well as inevitable realities, including suffering. Not only should the household leader expect difficulty in the external administration of his duties, but even in his continual preparation to lead, hardship will persist. He will continue to encounter selfishly evil, obstinate, and otherwise demonically influenced individuals.<sup>121</sup>

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<sup>117</sup>*εαν . . . τις.*

<sup>118</sup>*Αθλητή* verb subjunctive present active 3<sup>rd</sup> person singular from *ἀθλέω*.

<sup>119</sup>Walter Bauer, *A Greek English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (BGAD), 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., rev. and aug. F. Wilbur and Frederick W. Danker (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1979), 21.

<sup>120</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>121</sup>1 Tim 1:3, 8-10, 19-20, 2:8-12, 4:1-3, 5:8, 11-15, 24-35, 6:3-5, 9-10, 17-21; 2 Tim 1:15, 2:16-18; 23-26, 4:3-4, 14-16.

Similarly, Timothy should also be aware that the struggle is *internal*. That is, sometimes the enemy is the personal bents and fragility of the leader. As such, Paul admonishes Timothy to keep the faith and a good conscience (1 Tim 1:18-19); remove yourself from the meaninglessness of discussion and wrangling over worldly fables (1 Tim 4:7); not allow others to minimize you as a leader because of the your age (1 Tim 4:12); cease abstaining and use a little wine for your frequent infirmities (1 Tim 5:23); not be spellbound by the lure of money as have others who have wandered from the faith and instead flee from such destructive bondage (1 Tim 6:10-12); and not be timid or intimidated in the pursuit of godly leadership but fan into a hot blaze the gift God endowed on you ( 2 Tim 1:6-7). In spite of Paul’s circumstances as a prisoner, he also admonished Timothy to not be embarrassed over me and especially over the witness of our Lord who was also branded a criminal and put into bondage (2 Tim 1:8). Moreover, each word of admonishment from Paul is either stated in the imperative or communicated in an imperatival sense. Thus it is clear Paul is not offering feeble advice to his younger apprentice but rather powerful descriptive actions words to which the gospel leader must respond.

Second, Paul states to Timothy that it is just as important *how* one competes as it is *that* one compete. A household leader will be a godly man who competes faithfully in the noble contest by competing “according to the rules” (2 Tim 2:5). As mentioned, a training period with accompanying oath was required. However, this was probably more of a reference to the rules of the games themselves.<sup>122</sup> So Paul reminds Timothy that under the Lord he (Paul) has imposed certain expectations of compliance in leading according to the rules. Young offers insightful commentary:

The first-century person saw the self in terms of structured relationships which both offered benefits and imposed obligations, the fulfillment of which would bring the

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<sup>122</sup>Witherington, *Letters and Homilies*, 330.

honour sought, whereas non-fulfillment would be attended by shame and disgrace.<sup>123</sup>

To that end, the rules of competition for Timothy consist of obedience: “remain on at Ephesus” (1 Tim 1:3); “fight the good fight” (1 Tim 1:18); “flee from these things (evil) you man of God . . . fight the good fight of faith; take hold of the eternal life” (1 Tim 6:11-12); “I charge you in the presence of God . . . that you keep the commandment” (1 Tim 6:13-14); “guard what has been entrusted to you” (1 Tim 6:20); “guard, through the Holy Spirit who dwells in us, the treasure which has been entrusted to *you*” (2 Tim 1:14); “refuse foolish and ignorant speculations” (2 Tim 2:23); and “preach the word . . . reprove, rebuke, exhort, with great patience and instruction” (2 Tim 4:1-3).

Moreover, the rules of competition call for personal discipline: “keeping faith and a good conscience” (1 Tim 1:19); “you will be a good servant of Christ Jesus, *constantly* nourished on the words of the faith and of the sound doctrine which you have been following” (1 Tim 4:6); “discipline yourself for the purpose of godliness” (1 Tim 4:7); “do not neglect the spiritual gift within you. Take pains with these things; be *absorbed* in them. . . . Pay close attention to yourself (1 Tim 4:14-16); “retain the standard of sound words. . . . Guard the treasure which has been entrusted to *you*” (2 Tim 1:13-14); “be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman” (2 Tim 2:15); “preach the word; be ready in season *and* out of season” (2 Tim 4:2).

Furthermore, if Timothy is to compete according to the guidelines, he will participate in and exhibit personal holiness: “an overseer, then, must be above reproach (1 Tim 3:1-2); “godliness is profitable for all things, since it holds promise for the present life and *also* for the *life* to come” (1 Tim 4:8); “show yourself an example of those who believe” (2 Tim 4:12); “but godliness *actually* is a means of great gain when accompanied by contentment” (1 Tim 6:6); and “pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, perseverance and gentleness” (1 Tim 6:11). Timothy should consider the profit of

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<sup>123</sup>Young, *The Theology of the Pastoral Letters*, 92.

godliness:

Now in a large house there are not only gold and silver vessels, but also vessels of wood and of earthenware, and some to honor and some to dishonor. Therefore, if anyone cleanses himself from these *things*, he will be a vessel for honor, sanctified, useful to the Master, prepared for every good work. Now flee from youthful lusts and pursue righteousness, faith, love *and* peace, with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart. (2 Tim 2:20-22)

**The farmer.** Next, the teaching metaphor turns to the most common in the triad of symbolic illustrations, the faithful farmer. One would suppose this simple word picture, “farmer” or “vine dresser” (Matt 21:33-40; John 15:1), spoke volumes to Timothy about leadership. “The hard-working farmer ought to be the first to receive his share of the crops” (2 Tim 2:6). Just as the soldier and athlete are involved in diligent and focused activity, so the hardworking farmer toils faithfully. As a result, he expects a return on his labor (Prov 20:4). Paul the teacher employs the common themes of persistence, faithfulness, and discipline in this metaphor and presents Timothy with reasoned motivation to forge ahead as a hardworking leader.<sup>124</sup> One element that apparently does not overtly apply to the soldier or athlete is the aspect of patience (Jas 5:7). Although the farmer must work hard, he must also wait hard. Ultimately, the farmer waits on the One who controls the rain and the sun.

The faithful farmer must wait in a state of hopefulness for the expected harvest. Thus it may be that there is an “explicit promise of reward . . . the thought of eschatological reward for faithfulness,”<sup>125</sup> even as there has been the promised certainty of suffering. Fee contends this is “not about his making a living from the gospel . . . which is totally foreign to the context, but about his final reward for being hardworking.”<sup>126</sup> Similarly, as

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<sup>124</sup>“Our brains are both storage and processing units . . . knowledge is constructed, not received. When we encounter new material, we try to comprehend it in terms of something we think we already know.” Bain, *What the Best College Teachers Do*, 26. Assuming Bain is correct, could it be reasonably proffered that Paul is unwittingly utilizing a form of advanced learning theory?

<sup>125</sup>Towner, *The Letters to Timothy & Titus*, 495.

<sup>126</sup>Fee, *1 and 2 Timothy, Titus*, 243.

one finds coherence with the second metaphorical picture, it is the hardworking farmer who works according to the rules, who indeed receives the eschatological reward.

Contrary to the idea that an eschatological prize is in view, Dibelius and Conzelmann,<sup>127</sup> as well as Hanson,<sup>128</sup> suggest there is in this verse an overture to some type of material payment for the hardworking gospel leader (1 Tim 5:17-18).

So one must ask, how eager would the farmer be to arise early every morning to labor in the field if he had absolutely no hope of enjoying the harvest in the immediacy of his labor, particularly in view of existing suffering? Besides, surely even the most dedicated farmer must eat. So perhaps the image of the hardworking farmer speaks to both aspects of present support and eschatological reward. While one may not know how Timothy fully understood this simple statement (much less how Paul intended it) one might suspect that Paul's previously uttered words, sometimes harsh and penetrating to the Thessalonians,<sup>129</sup> would ring true in Timothy's remembrance:

Make it your ambition to lead a quiet life and attend to your own business and work with your hands, just as we commanded you. (1 Thess 4:11)

Nor did we eat anyone's bread without paying for it, but with labor and hardship we *kept* working night and day so that we would not be a burden to any of you. (2 Thess 3:8)

For even when we were with you, we used to give you this order: if anyone is not willing to work, then he is not to eat, either. For we hear that some among you are leading an undisciplined life, doing no work at all, but acting like busybodies. (2 Thess 3:10)

Thus, Timothy is enjoined to work hard in the gospel ministry as would a faithful cultivator of the soil. The rules of the soil includes patient determination and hard work. Even the most devoted servant of God may be concerned about the basic necessities of life so Timothy should be assured that his needs will be met as he faithfully leads the household of God in gospel ministry.

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<sup>127</sup>Dibelius and Conzelmann, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 108.

<sup>128</sup>A. T. Hanson, *Studies in the Pastoral Epistles* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 1968), 203.

<sup>129</sup>1 Thess 1:1; 2 Thess 1:1 cosigned by Timothy and Acts 20:4.

Paul's leader-speak through the brief triadic metaphor of soldier, athlete, and farmer, reflects the design of a teacher who is intent on connecting with his younger understudy. Timothy must understand his call to, and functional responsibility for, leadership in the household of God. Timothy should not just know what Paul requires, but also understand what the apostle desires him to do.<sup>130</sup> It is not enough to state the "job description" to Timothy and expect him to function in robotic fashion. Timothy must be able to think through Paul's instructions, gaining insight into the metaphorical examples he shares. Yet the metaphorical examples offer no deep theological verbiage, nor an intense argument to trace. There is no history lesson offered for reflection. These are simply insightful observations of the world in which the household of God was planted. The teacher-leader instructs through simple observation. It may be that in these three short and unpretentious metaphors seen in the teaching ministry of Paul most reflect the teaching methodology of his Lord Jesus, who taught simple earthly stories and communicated a heavenly lesson.<sup>131</sup>

### **Preformed Materials**

The extensive employment of extant material in the Pauline corpus is well documented.<sup>132</sup> As an able teacher it appears Paul seeks out resources by which he may communicate truth to Timothy and the church. He employs common sayings or traditional

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<sup>130</sup>David Perkins, *Teaching for Understanding: Linking Research with Practice*, ed. Martha Stone Wiske (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1998), 41: "What is understanding? We know it when we see it. Teachers and indeed most of us seem to share a good intuition about how to gauge understanding. We ask learners not just to know, but to think with what they know . . . First, to gauge a person's understanding at a given time, ask the person to do something that puts the understanding to work—explaining, solving a problem, building an argument, constructing a product. Second, what learners do in response not only shows their level of current understanding but very likely advances it. By working through their understanding in response to a particular challenge, they come to understand better."

<sup>131</sup>Kenneth E. Bailey, *Jesus through Middle Eastern Eyes: Cultural Studies in the Gospel* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2008), 28.

<sup>132</sup>Yarbrough, *Paul's Utilization of Preformed Traditions*, 1.

materials that in some instances are creedal or hymnic statements as pedagogical tools.<sup>133</sup> Just as a teacher of history recounts the “historical record” in order to extract lessons from said history, so Paul uses preformed material to not only inform gospel tradition but also to underscore valuable leadership principles to Timothy.

Accordingly, Paul employs common sayings to teach profound lessons. One example of such traditional or preformed materials is the so-called trustworthy or faithful sayings. According to Towner, the trustworthy sayings are to be understood as either material that was widely known or that which would be completely understood.<sup>134</sup> Marshall suggests that the purpose of the trustworthy sayings is to confirm the truth of what is said because the church has already recognized it as part of the body of confessed truth.<sup>135</sup> The trustworthy statements,<sup>136</sup> literally translated “faithful the word,” are found in 1 Timothy 1:15 and four additional times in the Pastorals, and only in the Pastorals.

As a didactic tool, the faithful sayings offer a ground of truth from which a moral or ethical response may be generated.<sup>137</sup> So as a pedagogical instrument, such dependable reality offers a beginning point for Paul to present his teaching and Timothy to garner a response. It is commonly supposed that instruction proceeds upon the assumption that the content of teaching should be applied to the living of life. Richards

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<sup>133</sup>Ibid., 196. “The twelve PTs contribute to 1 Timothy in four ways: (1) literary cohesion (2) rhetorical leverage (3) theological directives, and (4) argument.”

<sup>134</sup>Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 143.

<sup>135</sup>Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 328-30.

<sup>136</sup>Πιστὸς ὁ λόγος.

<sup>137</sup>The starting point in understanding the significance of the faithful sayings is to appreciate the ultimate use of the word “faithful.” “God is faithful, through whom you were called into fellowship with His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord” (1 Cor 1:9). “God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able” (1 Cor 10:13). “But as God is faithful, our word to you is not yes and no” (2 Cor 1:18). That God is absolutely faithful has direct bearing on the faithful word in that it proceeds from the faithful God. The word is faithful because it is God’s word and God is faithful. Thus, the full body of gospel truth which finds its origins in the faithful God is to be trusted as faithfully true.

and Bredfedlt write, “By definition, learning requires that the student be able to meaningfully transfer a concept from one setting to another.”<sup>138</sup> If students learn best when they are able to “solve problems (intellectual, physical, artistic, practical, or abstract) that they find intriguing, beautiful, or important,”<sup>139</sup> then Timothy should be motivated to understand, apply, and move forward with actionable plans that address the commission he has been given by Paul. The directive is to remain on in Ephesus, put down the false teachers, and set the household of God in order.

In some cases it appears that the faithful sayings are directed at Paul’s young student so that the learning and eventual assimilating process of effective and planned obedience may begin. To that point Brookfield proposes a defensible proposition: “Skillful teaching is whatever helps the students learn.”<sup>140</sup> Certainly the maxims asserted as commonly accepted by the household of God could be motivating moments of clarity Timothy needs in order to fully realize his obligation of obedience. The faithful sayings offer a theologically pragmatic field of content that Timothy is able to directly apply to his personal life, as well as to his leadership in the household of God. In the faithful sayings, Paul’s leader-speak is grounded not in his opinion but in the established truth of God recognized as a faithful tradition in God’s household.

Whatever the nuances of “faithful the word” may prove to be, it certainly should be seen in correspondence with “God is faithful.”<sup>141</sup> Timothy should have confidence in the leadership implications of Paul’s instructions as well as possess an attitude of responsive obedience to such instruction in that it is the faithful sayings of a

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<sup>138</sup>Richards and Bredfedlt, *Creative Bible Teaching*, 113.

<sup>139</sup>Bain, *What the Best College Teachers Do*, 109.

<sup>140</sup>Stephen D. Brookfield, *The Skillful Teacher: On Technique, Trust, and Responsiveness in the Classroom*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2006), 17-24. Also see Bain, *What the Best College Teachers Do*, 49.

<sup>141</sup>George W. Knight, *The Faithful Sayings in the Pastoral Letters*, Baker Biblical Monograph (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1979), 8-9.

faithful God. Accordingly, the faithful sayings addressed in this section are 1 Timothy 3:1 and 2 Timothy 2:11.

**Trustworthy saying, 1 Timothy 3:1.** “It is a trustworthy statement: if any man aspires to the office of overseer, it is a fine work he desires *to do*” (1 Tim 3:1). Paul introduces the personal requirements for the office of the overseer with a foundational statement, “It is a trustworthy statement.” If Timothy will solve the problem of false teachers in the household of God it will require the trustworthy words of God spoken boldly by him (Timothy) and other leaders.

Given what has been advanced above, the use of the phrase, “a trustworthy statement” should arrest Timothy’s attention. Witherington writes,

The function of the phrase itself is to highlight and give authority and solemnity to a pronouncement of some sort. . . . It functions rhetorically very much like a brief “inartificial proof” a preexisting authoritative tradition, or a maxim cited to help persuade the audience.<sup>142</sup>

In a sense, Paul says “listen,” something profoundly important and ultimately truthful is about to be communicated.<sup>143</sup>

It is also possible that Paul employed the phrase so that Timothy would not be confused by the character list that follows. The catalogue of qualifications resembles a kind of moral list common to the secular and philosophical world of Paul.<sup>144</sup> Timothy may have been tempted to somewhat minimize Paul’s words without “it is a trustworthy statement,” assuming they composed just another list. Whereas the introductory formula, as well as the character list to follow, may be considered the entire faithful saying, inattentive reading could have prohibited Timothy from cognitively capturing the multi-truths of the faithful saying. The list may have served in any number of rhetorical

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<sup>142</sup>Witherington, *Letters and Homilies*, 202.

<sup>143</sup>Bain says to teachers, “Get their attention and keep it.” Bain, *What the Best College Teachers Do*, 109.

<sup>144</sup>Dibelius and Conzelmann, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 158-60.

functions related to leadership, which could have been understood by Timothy in a number of empowering ways. For example in direct fashion in an epideictic function, to instill praise or shame or to promote the honorable over the dishonorable. Certainly, the list would have served the functions of leadership in a pedagogical or catechetical role to organize the expectations of Godly leadership for teaching purposes. Indirectly, the list would serve in a polemical function to attack and expose the worldly false teachers and their followers.<sup>145</sup>

Knight asserts, “The fact that in the early church there has developed a saying about the *ἐπισκοπή*, indicated how very basic and important this office was considered to be for the life and well-being of the church.”<sup>146</sup> Likewise, Knight is convinced that the overseer list did not find its origins in the organization of civil leadership or religious (Jewish or otherwise) associations but “would seem to originate from a Christian community, and probably influenced by Paul.”<sup>147</sup> Surely Knight is correct in his suggestion of the importance of the office of overseer. Godly leaders and proper leadership were crucial to the Ephesian church.

Therefore, in addressing leadership issues through persuasive LL, Paul communicates as an experienced teacher-leader and attacks the issue in a tightly-packed tripartite fashion: First, he recalls for Timothy a trustworthy statement that was evidently received and believed by the confessing Pauline church. Through the words of the apostle,<sup>148</sup> Timothy is armed with the authority of God’s truth. Second, the unassailable

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<sup>145</sup>Jim Byrne, “Vice and Virtue Lists of the New Testament,” *Literary Form*, BcResources.net, October 2010, accessed June 6, 2014, [http://bcresources.net/sites/default/files/pdf/LitForm\\_ViceVirtueLists\\_NT.pdf](http://bcresources.net/sites/default/files/pdf/LitForm_ViceVirtueLists_NT.pdf).

<sup>146</sup>Knight, *The Faithful Sayings*, 60.

<sup>147</sup>Ibid.

<sup>148</sup>Bengt Holmberg, *Paul and Power: The Structure of Authority in the Primitive Church as Reflected in the Paul Epistle* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1980), 74-79: Holmberg establishes the *origins* of Paul’s authority as an apostle in the local church: (1) his personal presence, (2) his preaching as the word of

nature of the words, particularly Δεἶ οὖν, speak to the necessity of moral and spiritual obligation contained in the faithful saying. Paul’s leader-speak addresses the requirements of moral uprightness in a leader. On the basis of what Paul has said about the opposition, such leader-speak places them in harsh judgment. Third, in the overseer list, each individual item as well as the list in its entirety appears in a clear specificity of description,<sup>149</sup> which exposes adversaries who obviously miss the marks of leadership in the household of God. Mounce declares, “Almost every quality Paul specifies here has its negative counterpart in the Ephesian opponents. They are bringing the church into disrepute. So, at the head of the list Paul declares that an overseer must be above reproach.”<sup>150</sup> Without a doubt this is not a list garnered from just another civic club but the faithful saying of a faithful God. And what did the faithful saying prescribe?

It appears that the overseer (presbyter, bishop) is assumed<sup>151</sup> to be a man.<sup>152</sup> First Timothy 3:1 could be understood as, “if anyone (whoever) desires, sets his heart, stretches or reaches toward the office.” Yet, the balance of the sentence anticipates the identification of a male overseer.<sup>153</sup> Furthermore, Clarke points out, “The two passages in 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1 notably include eighteen masculine, singular adjectives that

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God, (3) the evidences of the Holy Spirit, and, (4) his relationship with the churches (and particularly the leaders), as his *children*.

<sup>149</sup>Notwithstanding the variation of interpretations that continue to be proliferated today.

<sup>150</sup>Mounce, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 153.

<sup>151</sup>This seeming assumption may well qualify as a *description* of the maleness of an overseer and not a *prescription*.

<sup>152</sup>R. A. Campbell, *The Elders: Seniority within Earliest Christianity* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1994), 246. Campbell argues that early church leadership consisted of the male householders in whose houses the congregation met. For all intent and purposes, these leaders were elders, though they were probably not given that title name. Furthermore Campbell forwards the notion that the term “elder” was “a title of honor and not of office” and originated in the ancient family or household. Ibid.

<sup>153</sup>Εἴ τις ἐπισκοπῆς ὀρέγεται. Τίς, pronoun indefinite nominative masculine which signals a connection with verse 2, “the husband of one wife: or “one woman man” (μῖας γυναικὸς ἄνδρα).

describe the overseer.”<sup>154</sup> Towner maintains that the “community structure and leadership in 1 Timothy and Titus corresponds generally to the models in both Judaism and Greco-Roman culture. And the same is true of the undisputed Paulines.”<sup>155</sup> It appears that neither Judaism nor Greco-Roman structure called for feminine leadership.

Why does Paul appear to highlight the masculine overseer? Other than the reasons just enunciated, which stand on their own, this may also be a strategic polemical statement against unnamed Ephesian opponents, that is, “certain men”<sup>156</sup> (1 Tim 1:3). The implication of Paul’s words may be as accusatory as they are instructive. The false teachers do not measure up to the character requirements of stewards in God’s household. Therefore Paul’s LL to Timothy may be seen in the official list of leadership requirements. It may also be that some of the false teaching found its origins and, or pragmatic outcome in certain women who may have been seeking leadership positions (1 Tim 2:9-15) and were being encouraged or even directly taught that such was acceptable and desirable. The “list” itself (the words!) may have been the authoritative weapon Timothy was expected to wield in weeding-out the adversaries. One may imagine that the character qualifications stated in the overseer and deacon’s list was such an obvious assault on the faux-leaders that Timothy could have been instantly armed with apostolic energy to press the issue. Furthermore, as the authorized list is read in the hearing of other leaders and, or the gathered church, the seriousness of the issue was now effectively aired: Certain men are teaching strange doctrines (1 Tim 1:3). These teachers are the correct gender but they do not have the correct teaching. Paul is priming young Timothy to confront the adversaries. The first area to be addressed for those who would be

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<sup>154</sup>Andrew D. Clarke, *A Pauline Theology of Leadership*, Library of New Testament Studies 362 (London: T & T Clark, 2012), 50.

<sup>155</sup>Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 243.

<sup>156</sup>*BibleWorks*7, Τισων, indefinite dative masculine plural from τισ.

authentic leaders is the entirety of their moral and spiritual life! “An overseer . . . must be above reproach” (1 Tim 3:2). Fee correctly comments, “That would seem to default any aspiring person!”<sup>157</sup> The term “reproach” should be understood as a kind of umbrella term, or overarching characteristic under which the remainder of the list stands.<sup>158</sup> Each trait in the list describes the qualities of being “above reproach.” In sum, to be “above reproach” speaks to “unimpeachable character . . . observable conduct that cannot be reproached.”<sup>159</sup>

“An overseer . . . must be above reproach.” The Greek construction places Δεῖ<sup>160</sup> οὕτως in the emphatic position. A rough translation could yield, (*It is necessary therefore that the overseer be above or without reproach.* “Therefore” (οὕτως), “emphasizes the connection between the list and the office. Because the office is significant a certain type of person must hold it.”<sup>161</sup> Four times in the Pastorals δεῖ refers to the obligation of a leader to be a particular kind of person. On two occasions it is related to the antagonists, stating that by necessary moral obligation they must not teach certain things. Additionally Paul states there is an expected and required behavior in the church of the Living God (1 Tim 3:15).

Paul is speaking of necessary things in the trustworthy statement of 1 Timothy 3:1—the necessity of unassailable, unimpeachable conduct. Whereas the general invitation is for any man to stretch forth to attain an office of leadership, it is absolutely

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<sup>157</sup>Fee, *1 and 2 Timothy, Titus*, 80.

<sup>158</sup>Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 156.

<sup>159</sup>Witherington, *Letters and Homilies*, 236.

<sup>160</sup>δεῖ. BGAD, 172. “[I]t is necessary, one must, has to, denoting compulsion of any kind . . . of divine destiny or unavoidable fate . . . duty . . . compulsion of duty . . . an inner necessity, growing out of a given situation or compulsion caused by the necessity of attaining a certain result . . . of what is fitting . . . [or] that something that happened should by all means have happened . . . [or] that did not take place really should have happened.”

<sup>161</sup>Knight, *Pastoral Epistles*, 169.

necessary for every man who seeks the office to be above reproach. The list serves a polemical function. The very charges levied against the false teachers bring impeachment from any leadership office they aspire to, or in which they were presently functioning. Timothy must deliver the verdict and Paul's official leader-speak list will be the first line of accusation.

In summation, the trustworthy statement of 1 Timothy 3:1 employed by the teacher is leader-speak that addresses several issues. First, it serves to capture Timothy's attention to a single-minded consideration of the issues at hand. The trustworthy words speak the language of gospel tradition and truth as opposed to some philosophical or moralistic list contained in pagan culture. Second, Paul's instructive words draw a sharp distinction between the required characteristics of gospel leaders and the opponents. Not only is a wide angle lens description "without reproach" offered, but also focused attention on details that explain the broader perspective. Timothy should not be confused as to the illegitimacy of the false leaders as he examines the standards of gospel leadership. Third, and connected to the distinction drawn between the standards of headship and the false leaders, is the "list." This official list from the pen of an apostle is Timothy's authoritative document. Although it is not asserted here that Timothy understood Paul's letters to be Scripture as he did the Old Testament (2 Tim 3:15), he nonetheless understood that Paul is God's gospel spokesman. The list could empower Timothy to courageous action. Finally, the trustworthy statement is an arresting and clarifying call to Timothy, the elders, and the church to grip the moral and spiritual necessity of proper leadership, as well as desire instruction in the same.

**Trustworthy saying, 2 Timothy 2:11-13.** "It is a trustworthy statement: For if we died with Him, we will also live with Him; If we endure, we will also reign with Him; If we deny Him, He also will deny us; If we are faithless, He remains faithful, for He cannot deny Himself" (2 Tim 2:11-13). The theme of suffering prominent in 2 Timothy is indirectly addressed in this trustworthy statement.

The metaphorical teaching that precedes this trustworthy statement speaks to the inevitability of suffering for the sake of the gospel. The soldier, athlete, and farmer will all suffer in their own ways applying their trade. Likewise, gospel leadership's similarity to those occupations includes the reality that distress will find its target in each leader. Timothy is to be strong in the grace of Christ Jesus and endure such hardship. He should remember that the ultimate reality of suffering and death has been defeated by the Messiah (2 Tim 2:8). Therefore Paul (and Timothy!) can suffer as a criminal with confidence: just as the chains of death have been broken, so the word is not imprisoned (2 Tim 2:9-10). Yet Timothy may have lost such perspective on the power and promise of the gospel. Paul is concerned that his representative in Ephesus is wilting under the pressure. Perhaps conflict with false teachers is overtaking Timothy. Witherington states, "There is all the more concern about Timothy's behavior . . . as the 'last Pauline man standing.'"<sup>162</sup> This section of 2 Timothy strongly echoes the earnest pleading of a father-teacher seeking to remind his son of the lessons of faith he has previously been taught. "You therefore, my son, be strong." (2 Tim 2:1).

Moule says 2 Timothy 2:11-13 is a "primeval Christian hymn. . . . He [Paul] evidently quotes, and does not compose."<sup>163</sup> Whether or not Paul composed the saying, he nonetheless utilizes it as a teacher-leader speaking in a language of poetry, a "quatrain of conditional sentences"<sup>164</sup> in which three of the four are in vivid contrast: "if we died . . . we live; if we endure . . . (we) reign; if we deny . . . He will deny; if we are faithless, He remains faithful" (2 Tim 2:12-13).

It is also productive to see the chronological progression of the faithful saying in that it is a partial restatement of the gospel. If we died (past), we live (present or

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<sup>162</sup>Witherington, *Letters and Homilies*, 334.

<sup>163</sup>H. C. G. Moule, *Studies in II Timothy* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1977), 84-85.

<sup>164</sup>Fee, *1 and 2 Timothy, Titus*, 249.

future); if endure (present ongoing), we will reign (future). Significantly, “deny” and “faithless” appear to refer to what could happen when suffering begins.<sup>165</sup> Mounce declares, “Context requires *εἴτω* to be translated ‘if . . . and consequently the verse is both a promise . . . and an implied warning.’”<sup>166</sup>

Paul’s methodology is straightforward. Doctrine that informs practice is unmistakably present in this faithful saying. Surely Paul is practicing some level of verbal persuasion as he reminds Timothy of the day he died—the moment of his salvation (Rom 6:2, 7-8, 7:6, 9; Gal 2:19; Col 2:20, 3:3). “If” or “since” such is the case he will also live. The call to endure suffering comes with an assurance that believers will be victorious and speaks of glorification. Timothy should envision the possibilities of that wonderful day when he will stand among the victorious in Christ. Moreover, victory is a promise of vindication. Conversely, defeat will issue forth in shame. Could Paul be approaching Timothy from a shame/reward perspective? Paul previously admonished Timothy to “not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord or of me . . . but join with *me* in suffering for the gospel” (2 Tim 2:8). If, as Philip Kern suggests, in ancient culture “shame mattered more than pain,”<sup>167</sup> perhaps Paul is reminding Timothy that as Christians endure pain and shame, the same believers will eventually reign. Gregory S. MaGee writes,

Ancient sources attest to the shame of imprisonment, illuminating Paul's remarks on shame in 2 Timothy. Paul identified the strong cultural aversion to prisoners but sought to counteract the shameful stigma and to dissuade Timothy from becoming distressed at his potentially shameful association with Paul.<sup>168</sup>

Just as there is promise of glory in faithfulness, similarly there is a dire warning: denial of the Lord and His gospel will assure that he will deny the one who has

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<sup>165</sup>Witherington, *Letters and Homilies*; Fee, *1 and 2 Timothy, Titus*; Mounce, *The Pastoral Epistles*; Knight, *The Faithful Sayings*.

<sup>166</sup>Mounce, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 516.

<sup>167</sup>Kern, “The Cultural Context of Paul’s Gospel,” 148.

<sup>168</sup>Gregory S. MaGee, “Paul’s Response to the Shame and Pain of Imprisonment in 2 Timothy,” *Bibliotheca Sacra* 165 (July-September 2008): 338-53.

denied him. For that reason Timothy must follow Paul's example of gospel faithfulness and suffering and teach others to also imitate such an example. Certainly Timothy must not tread the path laid down by others. Paul's teaching tool is a "list" of the fallen. The apostle reminds Timothy in a roll call of the infamous,<sup>169</sup> to not follow the example of others, including Hymenaeus and Alexander (1 Tim 1:20); the unnamed elders, whose "sins . . . are quite evident, going before them to judgment; for others, their *sins* follow after" (1 Tim 5:24); "Phygelus and Hermogenes" (2 Tim 1:15); "Hymenaeus and Philetus, *men* who have gone astray from the truth" (2 Tim 2:17-18); "Demas, [who] having loved this present world, has deserted me" (2 Tim 4:10); and "Alexander the coppersmith [who] did me much harm; the Lord will repay him according to his deeds. Be on guard against him yourself" (2 Tim 4:14-15).

Timothy is expected to lead by example and through his teaching. The two cannot be divorced. Timothy's words will be confirmed by his example as much as his example by his words. The emergent picture is simply that

the spiritual leader incarnates the Word of God in his relationships among the people of God and in the context of that relationship also gives verbal guidance and encouragement, focused on helping the members of the body live in harmony with divine revelation.<sup>170</sup>

This bipartite picture of leadership comports with Paul's instructive words: "Pay close attention to yourself and to your teaching; persevere in these things, for as you do this you will ensure salvation both for yourself and for those who hear you" (1 Tim 4:16).

Timothy must be faithful in his teaching and conduct. The faithful saying promises that denial of the Lord will assure that he will repudiate<sup>171</sup> the one who has

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<sup>169</sup>Similar to the 'vice lists' of Paul: Gal 5:13-26; 1 Thess 4:3-7; 1 Cor 5:9-11, 6:9-10; 2 Cor 12:20-21; Rom 1:28-32, 13:13; Eph 4:24-32, 5:3-5 and in contrast to the roll call of the faithful, Hebrews 11-12.

<sup>170</sup>Lawrence O. Richards and Clyde Holeldtke, *A Theology of Church Leadership* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1980), 132.

<sup>171</sup>BGAD, 107-8, ἀρνησόμεθα verb indicative future middle deponent 1st person plural, "to disregard oneself, be untrue to oneself, repudiate, disown."

denied him (2 Tim 2:12). Such a dire warning of the possibility of those in the future who would deny Jesus (“shall deny,” “shall disown”) by those who have claimed him as Lord is a serious matter, especially in light of the promised reciprocal action by the Lord.<sup>172</sup> Such apostasy<sup>173</sup> seems to have already been committed by those associated with the Ephesian household. Yet surprisingly<sup>174</sup> Paul adds, “If we are faithless, He remains faithful, for He cannot deny Himself” (2 Tim 2:13). In this context, “faithlessness” and “deny” should not be interpreted as synonyms.<sup>175</sup> “If we are faithless” (2 Tim 2:13) apparently refers to “periods of temporary unfaithfulness,” seemingly the same kind of behavior Paul is warning Timothy to avoid.<sup>176</sup> Undeniably, continuous and continual periods of faithlessness might in fact signal the reality of apostasy. On the other hand, transitory spiritual frailty<sup>177</sup> should not be a source of definitive discouragement or threat to Timothy. Timothy’s leadership will be hampered as long as he is trapped in the shadow of constant insecurity over times of failure.

Paul’s word concerning such faithlessness is not to give permission to fail or live in infidelity but to strengthen his understudy in the midst of possible spiritual failures in which he has been warned and indeed to which he may temporarily succumb. Has

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<sup>172</sup>“Whosoever denies me before men, I will deny before my Father who is in heaven.” Matt 10:32-33.

<sup>173</sup>Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 512.

<sup>174</sup>Fee, *1 and 2 Timothy, Titus*, 250 comments, “This line is full of surprises, and it is also the one for which sharp differences of opinion exist regarding its interpretation.”

<sup>175</sup>See Dibelius and Conzelmann, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 109; Luke Timothy Johnson, *Letters to Paul’s Delegates* (New York: Bloomsbury T & T Clark, 1996), 69; Homer Kent, *The Pastoral Epistles* (Chicago: Moody, 1982), 264-65; J. N. D. Kelly, *A Commentary on the Pastoral Epistles: Timothy I & II and Titus* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson 1960), 80-81; Knight, *The Faithful Sayings*, 112-30, Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 406-8; Lea and Griffin, *1, 2 Timothy, Titus*, 210-11; Moule, *Studies in II Timothy*, 84; Mounce, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 516-18; Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 511-514. Contra, Fee, *1 and 2 Timothy, Titus*, 250-51; John R. W. Stott, *The Message of 2 Timothy*, *The Bible Speaks Today* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1973), 64-65.

<sup>176</sup>Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 517.

<sup>177</sup>Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 513.

Timothy been tempted to depart from his post in Ephesus? “As I urged you upon my departure for Macedonia, remain on at Ephesus” (1 Tim 1:3). Is Timothy failing to lead because of a sense of intimidation that has led him to neglect his leadership gifts? “Let no one look down on your youthfulness;” “Do not neglect the spiritual gift within you” (1 Tim 4:12, 14). Has pressure become so intense and stress so debilitating, his health is failing? “Take a little wine for your frequent ailments” (1 Tim 5:23). As Paul’s appointee, Timothy is learning the extreme challenges of spiritual leadership in which threatening issues are found inside and outside the household of God. He needs to have the confidence that his own fleeting failures will not disqualify him. Perhaps Paul’s teaching, through the faithful saying, propped-up Timothy so he would gain an aggressive leadership stance.

It is outside the purview of this research to categorically state that Paul consciously and proactively pursued a didactic strategy beyond what has been proffered above in the faithful saying under consideration. However, surely repeated here is a belief-practice concept common to 1 and 2 Timothy. To the point, how does the personal sinfulness of Timothy, who is to function as a teacher-leader, impact his leadership effectiveness? With words directed specifically to the ministry of teaching, Robert W. Pazmino writes,

How does sin impact the ministries of teaching? One obvious way is that when persons are involved, sin is a given. Any perfect teaching setting changes when I am present because I am a sinner. Being a sinner and interacting with other sinners, I am aware of the potential for sinful patterns to emerge that can result in the oppression of others.<sup>178</sup>

A young and somewhat inexperienced leader, as Timothy is presumed to be, may have needed the reminder from his apostolic supervisor that whereas he (Timothy) should be “beyond reproach,” that concept does not require sinlessness. Certainly Paul’s theology (for example, Rom 7)<sup>179</sup> would not allow such a prescription for leadership. As

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<sup>178</sup>Robert W. Pazmino, *God Our Teacher: Theological Basics in Christian Education* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2001), 43.

<sup>179</sup>I am aware of various interpretive analysis of this chapter including the proposition that Rom 7 refers to Paul’s life *before* conversion to Christ.

Timothy approaches the sinners who need correction, their defense may be to point out the speck in Timothy's eye, yet remain blind to the log in theirs. Timothy must be prepared for such a defensive strategy.

The faithful saying of 2 Timothy 2:11-13 quickly turns its focus from man to Jesus. In spite of faithlessness, He remains faithful. "Human faithlessness only serves to decorate the faithfulness of God."<sup>180</sup> Timothy the leader should realize that God's purposes will not be thwarted by human sinfulness. Timothy is to be faithful, but the success of the mission does not fall to him. Paul's words may be focused first on Timothy so that he may gain courage and a proper perspective on leadership. God's work is never dependent on one man. Ministry is always accomplished in community. Second, Paul's word may be directed at the opposition "to provide encouragement to return to God."<sup>181</sup> Ultimately, the language of faithlessness and faithfulness is covenant language—He cannot deny Himself.<sup>182</sup> Such covenant faithfulness is why Paul suffers for the sake of the gospel and exhorts Timothy to do the same (2 Tim 2:1-3). The covenant has been sealed for the sake of the chosen through the resurrection of Jesus, descendant of David (2 Tim 2:8, 10). Timothy must move forward as a leader, not powered by his human giftedness or hindered by his fleshly sinfulness, but under the faithfulness of God. Certainly, even the suffering he endures will find a redemptive purpose attached.

### **Conclusion**

The significance of Pauline LL issued forth in the trustworthy statement 2 Timothy 2:11-13 is that it is written in the context of his suffering. Paul appeals to Timothy to also suffer for the sake of the gospel. The apostle frames his argument in such a manner so that such distress would not deter Timothy from his assignment. Moreover,

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<sup>180</sup>Lea and Griffin, *1, 2 Timothy, Titus*, 211.

<sup>181</sup>Ibid.

<sup>182</sup>Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 513.

there are some lessons to learn from suffering. Thus, Paul the teacher employs the gospel statements to teach his young follower lessons and principles of godly leadership. First, Paul reaffirms one of the major themes of the Pastorals, which is an important truth for leaders to receive: godly leaders must base their practice upon doctrinal truth and not the situational emotion of the moment. Timothy should remember that he serves and suffers in light of his wonderful salvation and future glorification. Such future reality will deliver a vindication of all he has endured, including the perceived shame with which he has been burdened. Therefore, he is to follow Paul's example, not that of the fully documented "fallen." Timothy, like Paul, is to be an example of godliness both in the words he speaks and the life he lives. Likewise, he is warned and he must warn others that apostasy leads to ultimate ruin. Yet as a godly leader Timothy should be assured that his intermittent forays into failure will not lead to ruination or disqualification, because ultimately the issue is God's faithfulness as the Sovereign leader and not Timothy's faithlessness and human failure as a leader.

## CHAPTER 6

### THE LEADERSHIP LANGUAGE OF EXAMPLE

Paul leads by the example he sets and the words he speaks. When those two principles converge, the LL of example is birthed. This chapter investigates the language of *example* or *model*. Barentsen suggests that 1 Timothy presents Paul’s young protégé as “a model for the local community (τύπος 4:12)” and Paul as a “model for all of his Christ-believing communities (ὑποτύπωσις, 1:16).”<sup>1</sup> Clarke reminds that a number of New Testament word-groups express the “semantic domain of imitating a personal model.”<sup>2</sup> These word-groups include the nouns “imitator” (μιμητής), “model” (τύπος),<sup>3</sup> and “example” (δείγμα).<sup>4</sup> While these words-groups are not prominently featured in 1 and 2 Timothy, the epistles are ripe with the pathos of direct and indirect references of LL, which insists on leadership by example, as well as the responsibility to follow the example of a leader. The concept of the father within the household of God as the primary leader-example is in coherence with the ancient Mediterranean home where the father as patriarch of the family was to be the primary exemplar.

As mentioned, the language of imitation<sup>5</sup> found in other Pauline epistles<sup>6</sup> does

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<sup>1</sup>Jack Barentsen, *Emerging Leadership in the Pauline Mission: A Social Identity Perspective on Local Leadership Development in Corinth and Ephesus*, ed. K. C. Hanson and Charles M. Charles, Princeton Theological Monograph Series 168 (Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2011), 222.

<sup>2</sup>Andrew D. Clarke, *A Pauline Theology of Leadership*, Library of New Testament Studies 362, ed. Mark Goodacre (London: T & T Clark, 2012), 173.

<sup>3</sup>This word-group includes the noun ‘model’ (ὑποτύπωσις) found in 1 Tim 1:16 and 2 Tim 1:13.

<sup>4</sup>Clarke, *A Pauline Theology of Church Leadership*, 173.

<sup>5</sup>μίμητης, συμμιμητηι and μιμέομαι.

<sup>6</sup>Phil 3:17; 1 Thess 1:6-7; 2 Thess 3:9.

not appear in 1 and 2 Timothy. While there are no explicit calls by Paul in the Pastorals to “imitate me,” there are implied examples found throughout 1 and 2 Timothy. Paul’s leader-speak is often the rhetoric of example, and as such there are often inferences that communicate the same basic concept; lead by example and follow the example of the leader. Certainly this speaks of leadership that effectuates through influence and persuasion. In broad terms, one finds Paul’s leader-speak as that which calls attention to himself as an example; reminds Timothy to follow his example; extols Timothy’s virtues as evidence of one who has followed Paul’s example; and contrasts the opponents, who are not following the proper pattern, with Timothy who is faithful. Thus, the motif of imitation is clearly important in Paul’s LL as a spiritual leader.

In following Paul’s example as he follows Christ, Timothy will present the proper model for others to follow: “Show yourself an example<sup>7</sup> (τυπος) of those who believe” (1 Tim 4: 12). Therefore Paul speaks the language of example to encourage Timothy’s conformity, as well as to enable Timothy to lead others in the same path of unity (2 Tim 2:2). To the extent Paul imitated the Lord Jesus, he called his followers to imitate him: “Be imitators of me, just as I also am of Christ” (1 Cor 11:1).

Frances Young stresses the significance of example and mimic.

The importance of imitation for the development of moral character in the perception of the ancient world can hardly be overestimated. Regularly the theme appears in treatment of the father-son relationship, young men being exhorted to pattern their lives after their fathers, and fathers to set a proper example.<sup>8</sup>

Elizabeth Castelli suggests that in ancient culture any expectation one may have of others to imitate him or her is to presume a position of honor over that person.

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<sup>7</sup>Walter Bauer, *A Greek English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (BGAD), 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., rev. and aug. F. Wilbur and Frederick W. Danker (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1979), 829-30: “τυπος . . . 1. visible impression of a stroke or pressure, mark, trace . . . 2. copy, image . . . 3. that which is formed, an image of statue . . . 4. form, figure, pattern . . . 5. (arche) type, pattern, model . . . 6. of the types given by God as an indication of the future, in the form of persons or things.”

<sup>8</sup>Frances Young, *The Theology of the Pastoral Letters*, New Testament Theology (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 88.

Likewise, to insist on such replication is a means by which conformity is achieved.<sup>9</sup> However, there is no evidence in the Pauline corpus that Paul ever conceived of his apostleship as a position of honor.<sup>10</sup> Notwithstanding, a “perceived honorific position,” Paul presents his life and teaching as worthy to be emulated and in this sense is “unique among the New Testament writers.”<sup>11</sup> Paul seeks a household of God in conformity with proper doctrine and godly conduct and seeks to accomplish such an objective through leader-speak that promotes a language of example and serves to influence and persuade. Furthermore, to the degree that conformity is accomplished, it ultimately reflects the radiance of the mystery of godliness: Jesus.

### **The Language of Example in Testimony**

As in Socratic method,<sup>12</sup> Paul calls overt attention to himself as an example. The main exhortation of 1 Timothy 1 is found in the stated final goal or outcome of their leadership ministry, which is “love from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith” (1 Tim 1:5). Through his testimony Paul reckons himself to be an example of such an accomplished goal. Paul’s experience with the Lord Jesus Christ was one of love and lavish faith “and the grace of our Lord was more than abundant, with the faith and love which are found in Christ Jesus” (1 Tim 1:4). The sense of “good conscience” could certainly be understood in the context of being saved from sin—Paul could stand before

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<sup>9</sup>E. A. Castelli, *Imitating Paul: A Discourse of Power*, Literary Currents in Biblical Interpretation (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1991), 22.

<sup>10</sup>Paul recognized his call to be an apostle as a commandment (1 Tim 1:1), the will of God (2 Tim 1:1), a gracious act of mercy from Christ Jesus toward the foremost of sinners (1 Tim 1:12-17), the calling of a prisoner in suffering (2 Tim 1:8), and a drink offering poured out as a sacrifice of worship (2 Tim 4:6).

<sup>11</sup>A. D. Clarke, *Serve the Community of the Church: Christians as Leaders and Ministers* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000), 222.

<sup>12</sup>Benjamin Fiore, *The Function of Personal Example in the Socratic and Pastoral Epistles*, *Analecta Biblica, Investigationes Scientifcae in Res Biblicas* 105 (Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1986), 2.

God as a forgiven sinner.

Therefore, Paul's testimony in 1 Timothy is an important starting point as it illustrates the above proposition. In this first illustration of Pauline LL of example, the apostle positively promotes himself as the proto-type of the ultimate sinner to whom God gave mercy (1 Tim 1:16). Fiore writes, "The converted Paul is the expressly designated example of the working of Christ's merciful patience. . . . [Conversely] the false teachers present a shadow image of persistent and faithless impiety."<sup>13</sup> Paul then is an illustration of the enduring grace and mercy of God. The gracious God even saved a "blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent aggressor" (1 Tim 1:13). If God would save the foremost sinner, surely he will extend the same saving grace to others.

While major theological themes are reflected in the self-pronouncement of Paul as an example to those who would believe within the context of leader-speak, what pragmatic purpose does Paul's testimony serve? To begin, the first-person grammar of his testimony should be noted: "I have been entrusted" (1 Tim 1:14); "I thank Christ Jesus our Lord" (1 Tim 1:12); "I was formerly . . . I was shown . . . I acted ignorantly in unbelief" (1 Tim 1:13); "I am foremost" (1 Tim 1:15) and; "I found mercy" (1 Tim 1:16). Moving from the lesser to the greater, Paul desires that Timothy see him as the ultimate example of the worst kind of person (the least likely to be saved), yet one who is not beyond the grace of God. As mentioned, the testimony is meant to highlight Paul's utter sinfulness and God's boundless grace. So Paul and Timothy's gospel work is ultimately a ministry of grace. However, even in the light of grace, in the background of Paul's testimony is an implied reference to the darkness of the antagonists.

The picture of the opponents painted by Paul may present a confusing perception. Paul's harsh language of description<sup>14</sup> could suggest to Timothy that as a

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<sup>13</sup>Ibid., 22.

<sup>14</sup>"[They] teach strange doctrines . . . pay attention to myths and endless genealogies, which give rise to mere speculation" (1 Tim 1:3-4), "turned aside to fruitless discussion, wanting to be teachers of

leader he should discard these heretics (or this type of person), because they are beyond redemption. Nevertheless, Paul's intention is not to brand these people as beyond the possibility of God's grace. He has already presented himself as a worst-case sinner whom God saved. Therefore, even the heretics who must be silenced may still experience the grace of the Lord Jesus. Timothy should approach these false teachers with the bold assurance that God may have arranged a redemptive appointment.<sup>15</sup> In that sense, he will "do the work of an evangelist" (2 Tim 4:5) and thus fulfill his ministry. Timothy will be a leader of evangelistic fervor by his example. Consequently, he is to engage the opponents with confidence on two levels: first, to make certain they cease their false teaching, and second, to lead them to the truth of the gospel which is able to save even the worst of sinners. Timothy must attend to proper action in the proper manner and with the proper words. Paul's leader-speak is relevant for the situation:

The Lord's bond-servant must not be quarrelsome, but be kind to all, able to teach, patient when wronged, with gentleness correcting those who are in opposition, if perhaps God may grant them repentance leading to the knowledge of the truth, and they may come to their senses *and escape* from the snare of the devil, having been held captive by him to do his will. (2 Tim 2:24-26)

Paul's brief testimony<sup>16</sup> in 1 Timothy may also be cited as his use of narrative and personal story-telling as a means of leader-speak. It is significant that Jesus taught

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the Law, even though they do not understand" (1 Tim 1:6-7), "by means of the hypocrisy of liars seared in their own conscience as with a branding iron" (1 Tim 4 :2), "their talk will spread like gangrene" (2 Tim 2:17), "lovers of self, lovers of money, boastful, arrogant, revilers, disobedient to parents, ungrateful, unholy, "unloving, irreconcilable, malicious gossips, without self-control, brutal, haters of good, treacherous, reckless, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, holding to a form of godliness, although they have denied its power" (2 Tim 3:2-5).

<sup>15</sup>Paul and Barnabas spoke out boldly and said, 'It was necessary that the word of God be spoken to you first; since you repudiate it and judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life, behold, we are turning to the Gentiles. For so the Lord has commanded us, 'I have placed you as a light for the Gentiles, that you may bring salvation to the end of the earth.' When the Gentiles heard this, they *began* rejoicing and glorifying the word of the Lord; and as many as had been appointed to eternal life believed" (Acts 13:46-48).

<sup>16</sup>See also Gal 1-2; Acts 7-9, 26.

through the narrative of story;<sup>17</sup> though not necessarily his own story, certainly the language and experiences of the common person. As for Paul, whether through Greek logic or story-narrative, his writings reflect the grand metanarrative of Scripture. Furthermore, he understands that the story he forwards is an extension and fulfillment of Old Testament Scripture.<sup>18</sup> Patrick Gray writes,

Little would remain of Paul's letters if one were to filter out the quotations and allusions to the Old Testament that they contain. Nearly every argument he makes is influenced by the Scriptures of Israel in which is he immersed. Indeed he quotes the Old Testament far more often than he quotes Jesus.<sup>19</sup>

Leaders utilize story to advance the mission. Paul was invested in the grand narrative of Scripture; it became his story and his mission. Accordingly, James W. Thompson states,

Paul's . . . pastoral and discursive preaching actually participates in a larger narrative. The epistles are, in fact, the continuation of a conversation. This larger story involves *Paul's own story, the story of his listeners, and the story that Paul has communicated to his congregations.*<sup>20</sup>

Paul tells his story (1 Tim 1:12-17). No doubt it is the same narrative (although condensed!) he shared as he spent two years in Ephesus as an apostolic leader. "I did not shrink from declaring to you anything that was profitable . . . . For I did not shrink from declaring to you the whole purpose of God" (Acts 20:20, 27). Now in his letter to Timothy the apostle again employs his story in order to lead by example. Presumably because Paul's story is similar (in some ways) to many in God's household, some will find spiritual and personal identification with Paul and be more readily induced and inspired to follow the example of the apostle. Whether or not this is the case, Paul's story has great persuasive power.

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<sup>17</sup>See Craig L. Blomberg, *Jesus and the Gospels: An Introduction and Survey*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Nashville: B & H, 2009), 299-ff.

<sup>18</sup>See B. Paul Wolfe, "The Sagacious Use of Scripture," in *Entrusted with the Gospel*, ed. Andreas Kostenberger and Terry Wilder (Nashville: B & H, 2010), 199-218.

<sup>19</sup>Patrick Gray, *Opening Paul's Letters: A Readers Guide to Genre and Interpretation* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2012), 135.

<sup>20</sup>James W. Thompson, *Preaching Like Paul: Homiletical Wisdom for Today* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2001), 40.

Paul testifies that he was formerly a “blasphemer,” “persecutor,” and “violent aggressor.” The ugliness of each word is a reminder for Timothy of the exceeding sinfulness of the former Saul and how, by the Lord’s grace, Paul was shown mercy and conscripted into leadership within the family of God. To speak of one’s self in such naked and brutally honest terms reveals the heart of a sensitive and humble leader who desires at all cost to communicate with his apprentice. Paul’s honesty displays a sense of disarming humility. In this instance he is not promoting his spiritual authority as much as confessing fleshly failures.<sup>21</sup> For Paul, such polar opposites are part and partial of authentic leadership.

As previously alluded to, one would reasonably expect that Timothy had already heard Paul’s story—foul detail after detail, one after another and maybe on multiple occasions! Yet in the language of example Timothy is again called to emulate Paul in his salvation testimony and suffering. The written testimony of Paul (1 Tim 1:12-17; 2 Tim 1:15-18, 3:10-12, 4:16-18) read by Timothy, delivered to the elders, and eventually read before the church, is leader-speak of personal sin, redemption, suffering, devotion, service, and exaltation. To some degree surely it is a description and prescription for Godly leadership. As such, it is a call to Timothy and the household of God to follow a redemptive example.

In contrast to the false teachers who offer only ruinous conjecture, Paul is an example of the gospel which redeems and transforms. His story embodies the power and trustworthiness of the faithful saying that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners. His narrative demonstrates not only the depths of human depravity but also, and just as

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<sup>21</sup>In his zeal to terminate “the Way” (Acts 9:1-2), Saul persecuted the household of God in the most violent of murderous aggression. Saul’s ‘righteous rampage’ from house to house garnering both men and women to be thrown into prison (Acts 8:3) is underscored by his advocacy of the death penalty against Believers (Acts 22:4; 26:10). At times he forces Christians to disavow their faith (Acts 26:11) and applies the whip to their back (Acts 22:19). Saul is serious about his righteous mission, having been officially authorized to persecute Christians (Acts 9:2).

important, that “God’s redemptive plan is imperturbable.”<sup>22</sup> Paul’s LL is the eloquence of testimonial story which promotes his life experience as an example for others to find Christ’s forgiveness and redemption. Even the greatest of leaders have lived with monumental failure and yet lived to lead another day.

### **The Language of Example in Godliness**

A contemporary maxim states effective leaders create leaders. On the face, this statement appears accurate. As such is presumably the case, not only does Paul’s leader-speak make use of himself as an exemplary leader, but he singles out Timothy to reflect the same. In Timothy, Paul’s “success” as a leader is highlighted. Yet Timothy must continue to develop as a godly leader. First Timothy 4:12 serves as a second illustration of leader-speak by way of a call to godliness.

Following the pronouncement of the household of God as the protectors and promoters of the great mystery of godliness Jesus Christ, Paul returns to related and pressing matters that concern God’s household—false teaching. Through an unmistakable prophetic word the Spirit says that the activity of false teachers is to be expected (1 Tim 4:1-5). Therefore Timothy is to be the “good minister of Jesus” and “point these things out”: the actions and teaching of the heretics. Whereas he is to speak the truth about these things, he is to refuse to even listen to heretical talk (1 Tim 4:6-11). Then Paul, in the context of what appears to be Timothy’s personal crisis, addresses Timothy’s projected example as a leader: “Let no one look down on your youthfulness, but rather in speech, conduct, love, faith and purity, show yourself an example of those who believe” (1 Tim 4:12).<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>22</sup>Philip H. Towner, *1-2 Timothy & Titus*, The IVP New Testament Commentary Series (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1994), 55.

<sup>23</sup>In 1 Tim 4:6-12 there is a series of words, *ἔσθή* 2<sup>nd</sup> person sing, *ἔσθιν* 3<sup>rd</sup> person singular, *σοῦ* person pronoun singular, and *γίνου*, verb imperative middle deponent, “to become,” all signaling that this instruction is pointed directly at Timothy. Timothy is to be or is to become an example so that others will have a pattern or model to imitate.

The imperatival statement of 1 Timothy 4:12 is insightful in that it offers at least three levels of communication in a kind of feminine and masculine voice. First, Paul acknowledges that Timothy is in distress; his personal pain should not be dismissed. Second, Timothy should not be minimized as a person or leader because of his age. Thus, Paul addresses Timothy's distress, which probably has seriously affected his ability to lead. Third, the mood of Paul's communication presents an image of one who is affectionately concerned as a mother and yet offers the pointed directive of a father. As a "father-mother-leader" Paul reveals awareness of his follower's concerns and offers Timothy theological and pastoral counsel as to how he should respond to this personal and leadership crisis: Show the cynics that you are a spiritual leader who conducts his life accordingly and that will be sufficient!

Thus Paul's leader-speak is that of compassion and empathy for his young disciple. He recognizes that Timothy is in pain. Even as Paul calls Timothy to suffer with him, he remains kindhearted toward Timothy's plight. The apostle expresses his awareness that Timothy is in distress and does not chastise the young leader. Here again is the cherished relationship between Paul and Timothy, which has presumably been in formation for years and is a key to leaders developing other leaders. Stacy E. Hoehl states,

Paul's loving mentor relationship with Timothy began with choosing Timothy as the right person to accompany him in serving the gospel. From that point forward Paul mentored Timothy by . . . communicating his love, respect, and appreciation for Timothy as a son, brother, and messenger of Christ.<sup>24</sup>

Paul's personal words are surely filled with the fruit of the Holy Spirit (Gal 5:22-23). However, one must not assert that this is solely the fruit of spiritual leadership as it should be reproduced in all Christians. Nevertheless, Paul exhibited such as a leader.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>24</sup>Stacy E. Hoehl, "The Mentor Relationship: An Exploration of Paul as Loving Mentor to Timothy and the Application of this Relationship to Contemporary Leadership Challenges," *Journal of Biblical Perspectives in Leadership* 3, no. 2 (Summer 2011): 38.

<sup>25</sup>Caring, compassion, and gentleness are also mentioned within secular sources as the traits of effective leaders. For example, Bill George and Peter Sims, *True North: Discover Your Authentic*

Second, the leader-speak of Paul demands that Timothy should not be minimized as a person or leader because of his age. While this fits the description of the ancient mandate letter, to demand or insist that Timothy “let no one look down” on him may at first glance seem insensitive on the part of the older apostle. Yet there is theological rationale behind such language. Paul makes it clear to Timothy that as a member of the household of God and one made in the image of God, Timothy is due respect regardless of his age. Likewise, his relative youth has nothing to do with his authority to set the household of God in order. Finally, the church who will eventually hear this word read aloud as a congregated body must not show contempt for Timothy as a leader. Therefore, Timothy should not allow himself to be thought of or treated in such a fashion. In addition to internal integrity, it appears that to some degree leadership is a matter of self-perception and self-confidence.

In light of the minimization of Timothy because of his age, how will Timothy make this leadership transaction? Again the wisdom of Paul is manifest. His words are appropriate, sensitive, and to the point: “[B]ut rather in speech, conduct, love, faith and purity, show yourself an example of those who believe” (1 Tim 1:12). As Mounce writes, “Be such a good example that accusations have no credence.”<sup>26</sup> Marshall adds, “Appointment to leadership must be accompanied by a moral life which will act as a refutation of heretical leaders.”<sup>27</sup> Through Paul’s LL, Timothy is prepared to lead. He has authority based upon God’s ordination and choice of him through the ministry of the

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*Leadership* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2007), 40, identify compassion as an important part of leadership. George and Sims write that compassion or sensitivity to the problems of others and an openness to help when possible is deemed extremely desirable in a leader. Furthermore, they contend that a leader can learn to be a compassionate person.

<sup>26</sup>William D. Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 46 (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2000), 258.

<sup>27</sup>I. H. Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, The International Critical Commentary (London: T & T Clark, 1999), 561.

apostle. His age is not part of such an equation and the announcement of Timothy's place of leadership will be read before and recognized by the church. As a result, all mouths should be shut. Yet Timothy will have to prove his trustworthiness as a leader of godly integrity. Paul's leader-speak to Timothy combines the authority of an apostle, the compassion of a father-mother, and the problem-solving instruction of a teacher.

Regardless of the insightfulness of Paul's words, the onus falls on Timothy to continually be a pattern (τύπος) or an example, to the people<sup>28</sup> of godliness in "speech, conduct, love, faith and purity." All five nouns have reference to the substance of a believer and Timothy is to be the example of each to the church. Paul has framed the concept of example within the context of a greater theme found in the Pastorals, εὐσέβεια. The operative word is godliness<sup>29</sup> in both the quality of his life and the quality of his words (1 Tim 4:8, 10).

In the first of five prepositional phrases, Paul states that Timothy's godly example must be evident in his conduct—his way of life. In his general letter to the church, Paul states that such a way of life is a radical change "in reference to your former manner of living" and that it is the response of a renewed mind, "a new self, created in the likeness of God" (Eph 4:22-24). Paul directs Timothy to live out who he is and who he continues to become. Similarly, Timothy is to exhibit love, faith, and purity—terms that Paul often uses side by side. Love is the greatest of all expressions of Christ's grace in the Christian, yet "faith" in this instance (as in the Pastorals) is more challenging to understand.

Suffice to say that the term "faith" in this present text should be understood as either the *subjective* quality of trust or exercise of belief, or in the *objective* sense, the content of the gospel. While both are obviously necessary for a leader in the household of God, it seems preferable to understand faith as the former: to trust the Lord in the exercise

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<sup>28</sup>In being an example *to* believers, he will be an example *of* a believer.

<sup>29</sup>εὐσέβειαν (v. 7), εὐσέβεια (v. 8), as opposed to βεβήλοθς (v. 7).

of such belief in the maintenance of one's life.<sup>30</sup> The last quality of living example is that of purity or chastity. Marshall says that it may refer to "propriety . . . but it is more likely to refer to purity of integrity of motive."<sup>31</sup> For Fee, purity is "the real thing, in contrast to their false asceticism."<sup>32</sup> Yet Mounce sees this as a direct reference to sexual conduct: "This word occurs again in the PE only in 1 Tim 5:2 where Paul enjoins Timothy to treat younger women like they are sisters."<sup>33</sup> Kelly opts for both: "Purity . . . which covers not only chastity in matters of sex, but also the innocence and integrity of heart."<sup>34</sup>

Undeniably leaders in the house of the Living God should be pure in motives of the heart and the conduct of life, including sexual matters. The Living God who superintends his superintendents knows the heart as well as the private sexual conduct of his people. Timothy should know that his ability to lead will be inextricably connected to the example of his life. In this sense godliness is not only the responsibility of the sanctifying God but also the moral demands placed upon those chosen for leadership. The household will follow Timothy as he is a godly example of authentic faith.

Not to be separated from the conduct of godliness, and for the purpose of this research, is the conduct of godly *speech*: "In speech . . . show yourself an example" (1 Tim 4:12b). Marshall writes that some understand "speech" to mean preaching, teaching

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<sup>30</sup>George W. Knight III, *The Pastoral Epistles*, The New International Greek Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1992), 206.

<sup>31</sup>Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 562. See also D. Edmond, Hiebert, *Second Timothy*, Everyman's Bible Commentary (Chicago: Moody, 1958), 86.

<sup>32</sup>Gordon D. Fee, *1 and 2 Timothy, Titus*, New International Biblical Commentary (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1988), 107.

<sup>33</sup>Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, 260. Also see Philip H. Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006), 316.

<sup>34</sup>J. N. D. Kelly, *The Pastoral Epistles 1 & 2 Timothy Titus* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1960), 104.

or even counseling. Yet Marshall, as well as Mounce,<sup>35</sup> contend that this is everyday speech: common conversation in the course of the day. Such routine conversation affirms the idea that the LL is not just words issued in an “official” leadership pronouncement or acts of governance, but the words of a leader in any given situation.<sup>36</sup> In essence, Paul says to Timothy: whenever a leader speaks, he always speaks as a leader whether or not he is actively engaged in formal leadership. Accordingly, one example of the improper use of the tongue is the deaconesses (or the wives of deacons) who must not be malicious gossips (1 Tim 3:11). Surely other leaders should be held to the same moral and spiritual expectations. Equally, Timothy is to be extremely wise and discerning as to the words he uses because his words may guarantee salvation for others (1 Tim 4:16).

So what characterizes godly talk as leadership example? In 1 and 2 Timothy godly speech is described as healthy words of the gospel—the full embodiment of all Jesus taught. Within the context of personal relationships, such speech issues forth in respectful conversation with older men as unto fathers, older women as unto mothers, and younger women with the purity of speech one would engage in with a sister (1 Tim 5:1). Paul appeals much more to Timothy about matters of the tongue from the negative perspective of example. Leaders will be characterized by an absence of “wrangling about words” (2 Tim 2:14) and “worldly and empty chatter” (2 Tim 2:14, 16). Leaders (who set the example for the entire household) are to avoid “foolish speculation that produce quarrels” (2 Tim 2:23). It is morally necessary for God’s leaders, servants of Christ,<sup>37</sup> to not be quarrelsome (2 Tim 2:24).

Godliness is spiritual character produced by the gospel, “the power of God unto

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<sup>35</sup>Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 298, Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, 259.

<sup>36</sup>While aimed at “outsiders” nevertheless, “Let your speech always be with grace, *as though* seasoned with salt, so that you will know how you should respond to each person” (Col 4:6).

<sup>37</sup>δοῦλον δὲ κυρίου.

salvation” (Rom 1:16; Titus 1:1),<sup>38</sup> but it is also an attribute in which God’s children are to strive. Paul’s leader-speak has been exemplary and properly directed at Timothy. As a result, Timothy should consciously pattern his leader-speak after the same model of godly speech Paul has proffered. Without a doubt Timothy must not pursue the rancorous talk of the opponents. He may be tempted to engage in meaningless, debate but he should remember that LL will produce truth and love and contribute to setting the house of God in order.

### **The Language of Example in Suffering**

From the human perspective, suffering may seem to be completely without purpose or merit. However, within the wider context of God’s activity, malevolent trials contain divine good that can be discovered.<sup>39</sup> In most other contexts suffering may indicate defeat and ignominy. Yet Paul’s second letter to Timothy advances a different argument.

The letter belongs to the paraenetic-protreptic genre.<sup>40</sup> Its personal address and numerous exhortations are often backed by references to Paul’s example. But it is the application of that example, in which Paul has followed Jesus into suffering out of faithfulness to the gospel, to Timothy who must “not be ashamed of the testimony about our Lord or of [Paul] his prisoner” (1:8), who must “join with [Paul] in suffering for the gospel” (1:9).<sup>41</sup>

This present section signals the advancement of the gospel through suffering, which is a major theme in 2 Timothy. Schreiner helpfully develops the proposition that one cannot properly deal with Pauline theology and ignore his suffering: “Paul’s suffering is vital to

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<sup>38</sup>Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, 379.

<sup>39</sup>For example, Ronald Russell, “Redemptive Suffering and Paul’s Thorn in the Flesh,” *Journal of Evangelical Theology* 39, no. 4 (1996): 559-70, states, that Paul describes the recurring calamity of the thorn in his flesh as something that “‘was given’ to him: a divine passive (ἐδόθη).” D. A. Carson, *From Triumphalism to Maturity: An Exposition of 2 Corinthians 10-13* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1984), 136, remarks that this visitation given by God was for a good purpose.

<sup>40</sup>Exhortation with instruction and, or persuasion as its goal.

<sup>41</sup>Towner, *The Letters*, 79.

his mission as the apostle to the Gentile.”<sup>42</sup> Even though this research is not aimed at Paul’s theology of suffering, his theology informs his doctrine and practice of leadership, and correspondingly his orthodoxy and orthopraxy enlighten his leader-speak.

Paul’s suffering harmonizes with, and is in sharp dissonance with, Jesus’ suffering. Paul’s suffering was not for atonement. Jesus’ was an atoning life and sacrifice. Paul’s suffering pointed to the truth of the gospel. Jesus’ suffering was the inherent truth of the gospel.<sup>43</sup> Yet misery and pain was not an accidental side effect of Paul’s ministry, it was at the heart of it.<sup>44</sup> Likewise, Jesus’ suffering was intrinsically tied to his mission, which was manifest in the strength of God. He was born to suffer and die. Paul found strength in his weakness and yet was attacked because of his suffering and weakness (2 Cor 10-13). Nevertheless, he proclaims, “[I] rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh I do my share on behalf of His body, which is the church, in filling up what is lacking in Christ’s afflictions” (Col 1:24). This difficult statement requires brief treatment since it informs the leader-speak of Paul’s suffering.

Whatever else it means, Colossians 1:24 does not suggest that Jesus’ suffering and death on the cross was insufficient or lacking in salvation efficacy. Such an interpretation would contradict all that Paul has proclaimed and in particular controvert Colossians 1:19-20. A traditional interpretation proposes the “sufferings of Paul are part of the messianic woes that must be fulfilled before the *parousia*.”<sup>45</sup> Schreiner contends

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<sup>42</sup>Thomas Schreiner, *Paul Apostle of God’s Glory—A Pauline Theology* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2001), 87.

<sup>43</sup>The Son of Man must suffer and die: Matt 26:24; Mark 8:31; Luke 9:22, 24:7.

<sup>44</sup>Schreiner, *Paul Apostle of God’s Glory*, 88.

<sup>45</sup>For example, see Jerry L. Sumney, “I Fill Up What Is Lacking in the Afflictions of Christ: Paul’s Vicarious Suffering in Colossians,” *The Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 68 (2006), 664-80; Eduard Lohse, *Colossians and Philemon*, Hermeneia, trans. William R. Poehlmann and Robert J. Karris, ed. Helmut Koester (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1971), 70-71; Peter T. O’Brien, *Colossians, Philemon*, Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 44 (Waco, TX: Word, 1982), 78-80; James D. G. Dunn, *The Epistles to the*

that while this interpretation is plausible, he offers another explanation. Schreiner states that Colossians 1:24 suggests that Paul's ministry to the gentile world and attendant suffering is the filling up of Christ's suffering as related to the filling up the Word of God "so that I might fully carry out the *preaching of the word of God*" (Col 1:25).

Paul's sufferings are a corollary to the suffering of Christ inasmuch as they are the *means* by which the message is brought to the Gentiles. It is not the case that God desired Paul to bring the message to the Gentiles and afflictions got in the way. Suffering was the intended means by which the gospel would be proclaimed by Paul to the Gentiles.<sup>46</sup>

If Schreiner is on target in his understanding of Colossians 1:24, this suggests that Paul's example in suffering becomes the *language* of gospel proclamation—Paul's leader-speak. Paul's suffering mimics (in some sense) what Christ endured. Certainly, "Christ could not have endured the full quota of suffering which must be undertaken for the sake of the body, the church,"<sup>47</sup> therefore Paul, a messenger-through-suffering, imitates the Christ of the message and the "glory does not redound to the proclaimer but to the proclaimed."<sup>48</sup>

Similarly, 2 Corinthians 4: 8-9 is a rhetorical list reminiscent of the "cross" and "resurrection" aspects of Paul's experience:<sup>49</sup> "*We are* afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not despairing; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed." The gospel narrative reflects a similar story for Jesus. Yet, it is Jesus' significant life that transforms Paul's existence into a meaningful pilgrimage, otherwise Paul would have been extraordinarily insignificant. Bauckham writes, "Paul's experience

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*Colossians and to Philemon: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, ed. Ralph P. Martin (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996), 114-17.

<sup>46</sup>Schreiner, *Paul Apostle of God's Glory*, 102.

<sup>47</sup>H. Dermont McDonald, *Commentary on Colossians & Philemon* (Waco, TX: Word, 1980), 64.

<sup>48</sup>Schreiner, *Paul Apostle of God's Glory*, 102.

<sup>49</sup>Richard Bauckham, "Weakness—Paul and Ours," accessed August 2, 2014, [http://s3.amazonaws.com/tgc-documents/journal-issues/7.3\\_Bauckham.pdf](http://s3.amazonaws.com/tgc-documents/journal-issues/7.3_Bauckham.pdf).

might often seem outwardly unremarkable. But because he sees the death and resurrection of Jesus as the key to his life, as to everything else, he can find there a pattern which makes Christian sense of his experience.”<sup>50</sup>

In specific terms, how does Paul’s testimonial language of suffering pictured in 1 and 2 Timothy enter into his leadership function and language? In contrast to his story of redemption from the treachery of his former evil life as a religionist, Paul enjoins Timothy to “join with *me* in suffering for the gospel according to the power of God” (2 Tim 1:8). “Suffer hardship with *me*, as a good soldier of Christ Jesus” (2 Tim 2:3). While there is always disagreement with particular stances assumed and controversy over positions argued for, a consensus of conservative scholars agree<sup>51</sup> that Paul wrote 2 Timothy while imprisonment in Rome (Acts 28). Thus it is a safe assumption that each time Paul employs the word “prisoner” in 2 Timothy there may be a double meaning behind each utterance. Paul often refers to himself as a prisoner of Jesus Christ or of the Lord<sup>52</sup> but in his second letter to Timothy he is a literal prisoner.<sup>53</sup>

Paul’s LL is a call to suffer for the gospel as a prisoner of Christ—the gospel leader should expect to suffer for the gospel.<sup>54</sup> Ronald Russell offers, “Pain can produce

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<sup>50</sup>Ibid.

<sup>51</sup>See F. F. Bruce, *The Book of Acts*, The New International Commentary of the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980); Fee, *1 and 2 Timothy, Titus*; Homer Kent, Jr., *The Pastoral Epistles* (Chicago: Moody, 1982); Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles*; Thomas D. Lea and Hayne P. Griffin, Jr., *1, 2 Timothy, Titus*, The New American Commentary, vol. 34 (Nashville: Broadman, 1992); Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*; Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*; H. C. G. Moule, *The Epistle to the Romans* (London: Pickering & Inglis, n.d.); John B. Polhill, *Acts*, New American Commentary, vol. 26 (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1992); and Towner, *The Letter to Timothy and Titus*.

<sup>52</sup>Eph 3:1, 4:1; 2 Tim 1:8; Phlm 1:1, 9, 23; Eph 6:20, “ambassador in chains.”

<sup>53</sup>Although this incarceration is seemingly less stringent than the imprisonment he experienced under Felix (Acts 24:23).

<sup>54</sup>It appears Paul learned well from the words of Jesus. According to Matt 10, Jesus warned that the disciples would be set out as sheep among the wolves (v. 16) and that they could be subject to a hostile government and religious establishment (vv. 17-18). Families will be embroiled in conflict because of the gospel (vv. 21, 35-37). Such conflict should not be unexpected. If they treated the Master in such as

suffering, but suffering can be present in the absence of physical pain. Suffering can arise because of the threat of future pain or the loss of purpose, creativity or meaningfulness.”<sup>55</sup> In Timothy’s case, his duties in Ephesus will have caused him to suffer on behalf of the household of God.<sup>56</sup> He will find harsh resistance in exposing the false teachers and their speculative and fruitless discussions. There are the “Hymenaeus-and-Alexander-types” with whom Timothy must deal (1 Tim 1). Timothy should expect negative repercussions. He may experience conflict (1 Tim 2) as he sets the church in order in regard to the role and place of men and women. Elders and deacons must be held to a certain standard and some may need to be confronted and others dismissed (1 Tim 3, 5:17-24). Timothy may find himself in family conflict. He may grieve in dealing with certain widows who are not on the list (1 Tim 5). A distinct possibility exists that in speaking to the powerfully wealthy inside and outside the household of God, Timothy may find himself in a serious struggle. Could his material support be at stake? Timothy should prepare to suffer as a leader.<sup>57</sup> Paul speaks to that point through his own life suffering.

### **Second Timothy 1:8**

Paul leads by example in a language of suffering, communicating, “Join with *me* in suffering for the gospel according to the power of God.” Εθγκακοπάθησον<sup>58</sup> (to suffer with someone) is found in 2 Timothy 1:8 and 2:3. Mounce suggests that Paul may

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manner, why would the student expect better treatment (vv. 25-33)? Ultimately, discipleship requires that one die to self and live for Christ (vv. 38-39).

<sup>55</sup>Russell, “Redemptive Suffering,” 559-70.

<sup>56</sup>Suffering for the household of God is in this context, equal to suffering for the sake of the gospel. But that does not mean that all suffering by church or ministry leaders within the context of serving the church or ministry should be placed in the same category.

<sup>57</sup>It appears that Timothy spent some time in prison for the sake of the gospel, “Take notice that our brother Timothy has been released, with whom, if he comes soon, I will see you” (Heb 13:23).

<sup>58</sup>Second aorist active imperative.

have personally coined the word rendered by “three morphemes [which give the meaning “suffer [πάσχειν] evil [κακός] with [σύν].”<sup>59</sup> His call to Timothy includes two negative appeals (do not be ashamed; nor of me) and one positive (but join) and is the beginning injunction that is part of a “sentence of seventy-nine words.”<sup>60</sup> This sentence is obviously important in Paul’s leader-speak to Timothy and communicates essential gospel-leadership principles.

To that end there appears to be purposeful language in Paul’s connection between shame and suffering (2 Tim 1:8). According to Towner, “Paul categorizes the behavior of disgrace and suffering very strongly in terms of the values of honor and shame that were central to that culture.”<sup>61</sup> Jewett states that a number of scholars have devoted their energies to examine the

social issues of honor and shame in Paul’s letters . . . [and therefore] a case can be made that each of the Pauline letters offers an antidote to shameful status, conveying that in Christ’s ministry of grace, those held in contempt by society were raised to a position of righteousness and honor.<sup>62</sup>

In such an honor and shame culture Paul’s imprisonment was “justification” for embarrassment and disgrace. Paul was in a position of weakness and overt defeat. His once high status as a member of an elite group as a Pharisee and Roman citizen, has now been reduced to a perceived common lawbreaker. Not only has Paul been disgraced but he is suffering as a low-class felon. For these reasons Timothy may be tempted to withdraw out of humiliation over his leader, not to mention his fear of similar treatment.

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<sup>59</sup>Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, 480.

<sup>60</sup>Ben Witherington III, *Letters and Homilies for Hellenized Christians*, vol. 1, *A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary on Titus, 1-2 Timothy and 1-3 John* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2006), 317.

<sup>61</sup>Towner, *The Letters*, 463.

<sup>62</sup>See Robert Jewett, “Paul Shame, and Honor,” in *Paul in the Greco-Roman World: A Handbook*, ed. J. Paul Sampley (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity, 2009), 551. Stephan Joubert, “Paul as Benefactor,” *Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament 2* (Tubingen: Reihe, 2000), 12, intensifies the picture as he maintains that the “poor and illiterate were involved in a never-ending struggle to maintain honour and to stay above a subsistence level.”

Yet in the midst of such possibilities, amazingly Paul orders Timothy to join him<sup>63</sup> in such “dishonor.” Paul calls on Timothy to identify with and enter into the same kind of suffering he is experiencing.<sup>64</sup>

Similar to Paul’s distress, Timothy’s suffering will be without shame as it will indicate a kind of faithful allegiance.<sup>65</sup> Mounce contends that 1:8 is the thesis statement of the larger section (2 Tim 1:3-2:13), which implores loyalty to the gospel as well as loyalty to Paul himself.<sup>66</sup> Such loyalty is the expression, as well as empowerment, of the grace of God. Fee writes that Paul was “aware of Timothy’s character and [this injunction] . . . adds the dimension of divine help.”<sup>67</sup>

Contrary to Kent’s suggestion that “the mode of expression . . . ‘be not ashamed’ . . . offers clear evidence that Timothy was not at fault,”<sup>68</sup> it is entirely plausible when scrutinized along with additional information in 1 and 2 Timothy that Timothy was in fact capable of and even close to desertion by shame.<sup>69</sup> Yet Paul assures Timothy that although he is called to suffer for the gospel he will not face such distress in his own strength but according to God’s power.<sup>70</sup> God has not abandoned Timothy in Ephesus. God

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<sup>63</sup>The sense may be rendered as “accept your share of suffering” (NET) which could extend the meaning beyond Paul: Accept or share gospel suffering with others who suffer.

<sup>64</sup>The possibilities have already become realities, “At my first defense no one supported me, but all deserted me” (2 Tim 4:16).

<sup>65</sup>“Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord” (2 Tim 1:8). The meaning is unclear: Should Timothy not be ashamed of the testimony *of* Christ or the testimony *about* Christ? Both are acceptable.

<sup>66</sup>Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, 479.

<sup>67</sup>Fee, *1 and 2 Timothy, Titus*, 229. See also, Lea and Griffin, *1 & 2 Timothy, Titus*, 188.

<sup>68</sup>Kent, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 251.

<sup>69</sup>Lea and Griffin, *1, 2 Timothy, Titus*, 190, state, “Timothy could also have been humiliated that his leader was a prisoner.”

<sup>70</sup>“For God has not given us a spirit of timidity, but of power and love and discipline” (2 Tim 1:7). Kelly, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 160, maintains that while the context insists on a ‘small s’ spirit and does not specifically denote the Holy Spirit, “it defines the specific graces He meditates.”

will be Timothy's source of strength in that Timothy is part of the household of God, a recipient of the grace of God "who has saved us and called us with a holy calling" (2 Tim 1:9). Timothy should expect the power of the Holy Spirit who dwells in him (2 Tim 1:14) to empower him in his travail in addition to the assistance rendered in the faithful support of the household of God (1 Tim 2:8; 2 Tim 4:19).

Second, Timothy should be reminded that his position in Christ, which will empower him through suffering, does not find its source in anything he has accomplished, it is "not according to our works" (2 Tim 1:9). Timothy should be comforted by the fact that such invisible power is not dependent on any visible self-accomplishment of religious good work. In the intensity of suffering and apparent defeat Timothy does not need to worry whether or not his worthiness is based on his performance.

Third, Timothy must be prompted to understand that his salvation and subsequent leadership mission is "according to His own purpose and grace which was granted us in Christ Jesus" (2 Tim 1:9) and is grounded in the historical fact of Christ's entry into the world (2 Tim 1:10). Timothy was not called to follow an absentee landlord, but a Savior (1 Tim 1:1) who has revealed himself in time and space to those whom he has called (2 Tim 1:10-11). Certainly Timothy's leadership assignment is far beyond his capacity to respond successfully. One should not be surprised at what appears to be Timothy's fainting heart and weakened body in Ephesus. Yet the impossibility of the assignment is moderated as Timothy is reminded that this is God's assigned task for him. As a leader in Ephesus charged with a difficult assignment, Timothy must not forget that the scenario of suffering is God's purposeful plan that will benefit the household of God and promote and protect the truth of God, the mystery of the gospel of godliness, Jesus Christ the Lord (2 Tim 1:2).

The language of suffering for the gospel leader is made more palatable when Timothy is reminded that his Lord appeared in the flesh and suffered great humiliation and pain. In contrast to the eternal plan (2 Tim 1:9), Paul's language breaks into current

actuality, “but now has been revealed” (2 Tim 1:10). The earlier phrase spoke of eternity past—but Timothy serves in the present. “But now” is a jolt of present leadership reality. Timothy is not solely functioning on the tradition laid down by Paul but the historic reality attested to by many of the “appearing”<sup>71</sup> of the Lord Jesus Christ. Timothy should not be dissuaded in his leadership assignment by threat of suffering or even death. No final defeat awaits those who live within the protection of the household of God because Christ has abolished death. Thus Timothy should not be held captive by the threat of death (Heb 2:14-15). Instead he should realize Christ “brought life and immortality to life.” Thus Timothy is experiencing the “kind of life Christ has secured for us.”<sup>72</sup> Hiebert states, “The thought is that this life, in its full scope, applies also to our bodies, for corruption and decay pertain to our mortal bodies, not the soul.”<sup>73</sup> Knight offers a helpful corresponding idea: “Life . . . is the supernatural and spiritual life that was promised to believers in Christ . . . Christ embodies life . . . and brings it to give it to others.”<sup>74</sup>

Towner states,

The epiphany schema gives definition and emphasis to the present age in the message of the letters, but it also implies a continuity between the past and future events. This is both verbally and conceptually apparent by the repetition of the same term for past and future events, and by the reference in each case to a historical event of “helping intervention.” If salvation is conceived of by the author as inaugurated but not finished, then the soteriological significance of the relationship between the epiphanies is not too difficult to perceive, and the conception of a present existence that is charged with an ethical tension, which would almost certainly follow in this case, could explain the author’s overt interest in the “now.”<sup>75</sup>

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<sup>71</sup>Mark M. Yarbrough, *Paul’s Utilization of Preformed Traditions in 1 Timothy: An Evaluation of the Apostle’s Literary, Rhetorical, and Theological Tactics*, Library of New Testament Studies 417 (London: T & T Clark, 2009), 140, contends that ἐπιφανείας (appearing) is exclusive to Paul.

<sup>72</sup>John R. W. Stott, *The Message of 2 Timothy*, The Bible Speaks Today (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1973), 38.

<sup>73</sup>Hiebert, *Second Timothy*, 41.

<sup>74</sup>Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 376.

<sup>75</sup>Philip Towner, “The Present Age in the Eschatology of the Pastoral Epistles,” *New Testament Studies* 32 (1986): 427-48.

Paul's theology informs his ecclesiology as well as the ethical demands of the gospel. Timothy must be strong. He must stoke the fires of spiritual giftedness and calling. He must exercise his ministry leadership. Timothy should take part in his share of suffering knowing that "we are already among those who have overcome death through Christ."<sup>76</sup>

Nonetheless, how can Timothy promote a gospel that is embroiled in shame? If he is humiliated over the implications of the gospel (suffering), how will he lead as one shrouded in "dishonor?" Marshall notes, "Shame is a feeling which leads to action which hides witness."<sup>77</sup> Timothy must forge ahead as a gospel leader in spite of culturally-perceived shame. He must not be ashamed of the name of Christ, the gospel of Christ, or the people of Christ, but rather lead out boldly as protector and promoter of all three. To that point, Paul instructs Timothy that he should anticipate God's power (2 Tim 1:14) to buttress him in his travail. Second, Timothy should be reminded that he belongs to God's household because of God's grace and not according to anything he could offer (2 Tim 1:9). He is not expected to "perform" but rather be faithful. Likewise, the church will be his ally in the battle. Third, Timothy is reminded that this is God's assigned task for him and he must exercise his special set of gifts, skills, and background to address the task at hand.

### **Second Timothy 1:12**

"For this reason I also suffer these things, but I am not ashamed; for I know whom I have believed and I am convinced that He is able to guard what I have entrusted to Him until that day" (2 Tim 1:12). Paul assures Timothy that it is the apostle's call to preach and teach (1 Tim 1:11) that has brought him suffering. As a result, the apostle does not call Timothy to suffer without assuring him that he is presently enduring the same. While Paul speaks of suffering, he likewise lives the example of a leader in the

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<sup>76</sup>Fee, *1 and 2 Timothy, Titus*, 230.

<sup>77</sup>Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 703.

midst of suffering. His life gives further testimony to his words. Timothy will understand suffering is not the path Paul has solely drawn. Towner explains, “His experience is paradigmatic . . . [with] . . . the underlying principle that the gospel ministry and suffering go hand in hand.”<sup>78</sup>

Thus Paul suffers for the sake of the gospel and recognizes his suffering is part of the calling. He is also aware that suffering will ultimately produce God’s desired result. The apostle knows the life-giving words of truth will be repulsive to some. God’s loving offer of grace will elicit a negative response by sinful humanity. The cross provokes and alienates as it produces a visceral response in the offended.<sup>79</sup> The cross will be a stumbling block and is the reason for Paul’s imprisonment and persecution.<sup>80</sup> “These things” (2 Tim 1:12) is presumably his present suffering: “the dungeon, the abandonment, the unjust doom, the awful solitude.”<sup>81</sup> Yet in the midst of affliction Paul makes a confident assertion as He suffers in the light of God’s righteous nature and promise: “I know whom I have believed.” Paul “know(s)” God. “Knows” (οἶδα) may be understood in the sense of knowing facts, that is, Paul knows truths about God and, or the character of God. Additionally, “know” may signal a deep and intimate “personal acquaintance”<sup>82</sup> with God. Because Paul “knows” God, he can trust God to keep his word.

The second part of verse 12 is more difficult to discern Paul’s intended meaning

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<sup>78</sup>Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 474.

<sup>79</sup>Philip Kern, “The Cultural Context of Paul’s Gospel: The Cross and Suffering in Galatians,” *Reformed Theological Review* 70, no. 2 (2011).

<sup>80</sup>*BibleWorks7 Software for Biblical Exegesis and Research* (Norfolk, VA: Bibleworks, 2002). Σκάνδαλον “that which gives offense or causes revulsion, that which arouses opposition, an object of anger or disapproval, a stain, fault, etc. Matt 13:41; 1 Cor 1:23; Gal 5:11; 1 John 2:10, a stone that causes people to fall Rom 9:33; 1 Pet 2:8.”

<sup>81</sup>Moule, *The Epistle to the Romans*, 54.

<sup>82</sup>Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 710.

because “considerable disagreement exist.”<sup>83</sup> Did God commit to Paul the “deposit,” that which had been “entrusted,”<sup>84</sup> the gospel truth, and, or the call and function of Paul’s personal gospel ministry? Or is the “deposit” that which Paul gave to God and “usually understood as his life or himself?”<sup>85</sup> Marshall, Towner, and Mounce contend that the best understanding of this phrase is that the “deposit” refers to the healthy teaching of gospel truth entrusted to Paul, which God will preserve for Timothy and others to continue in gospel leadership (2 Tim 2:1-2).

Accordingly Paul’s leader-speak to Timothy is to reinforce the promise that the gospel will be preserved by God, through Timothy (1 Tim 6:20; 2 Tim 1:14).<sup>86</sup> Herein is found a strange dynamic. Paul calls Timothy to suffer as a gospel representative and in the same document further calls him to suffer as the Pauline representative of Jesus’ gospel. Towner makes the point that formally passing on “some commodity . . . by entrusting it to an authorized agent”<sup>87</sup> was known in Greek, Roman, and Jewish practice and that Paul may have employed such practice in his communique with Timothy. Paul’s motivation to preserve and pass on the mystery of godliness, the gospel truth, appears to be motivated by two pressing realities: the continued threat posed by the false teachers and Paul’s impending death. While 2 Timothy may be perceived as Paul’s “last will and testament,” it is also accurate to suggest the letter may be understood as an urgent official document that transfers apostolic authority and mission to Timothy. Perry Stepp writes,

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<sup>83</sup>Fee, *1 and 2 Timothy, Titus*, 231. Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 710-12, outlines five interpretive possibilities.

<sup>84</sup>παράθηκην.

<sup>85</sup>George W. Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles*, The New International Greek Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans), 379.

<sup>86</sup>“O Timothy, guard what has been entrusted to you” (1 Tim 6:20). “Guard, through the Holy Spirit who dwells in us, the treasure which has been entrusted to *you*” (2 Tim 1:14).

<sup>87</sup>Philip H. Towner, *The Goal of Our Instruction, The Structure of Theology and Ethics in the Pastoral Epistles* (Sheffield: JSNT, 1989), 125.

The entire description of his [Paul's] vocation in 2 Timothy aims at what is being passed on to Timothy, and there is not a hint of Paul's work continuing through any means other than succession through Timothy ("All have left me"). This relationship between Paul and Timothy is the second relationship in 2 Timothy which the authorial audience would have understood in terms of succession . . . a succession of tradition. Paul, who is about to leave the scene, passes the *παραθήκη* which he received from Christ into Timothy's care so that Timothy can take his [Paul's] place.<sup>88</sup>

Barentsen proposes that Paul has utilized a "language of memory" in 2 Timothy 1 that prepares Timothy for the leadership exchange.<sup>89</sup> "Paul embeds Timothy as successor by . . . composing an identity narrative that underlines their common heritage, their common foundational beliefs and their bond of friendship."<sup>90</sup> In that Paul serves God as did his ancestors, so Timothy has such a godly heritage (2 Tim 1:3-5). As Paul recalls Timothy's tears and genuine faith, Timothy is to remember the gift of God given to him (2 Tim 1:4-7). Likewise, both Paul and Timothy have been saved and "called to a holy calling" (2 Tim 1:9), thus both should share in suffering for the gospel (2 Tim 1:8). In some ways Timothy's suffering may mirror Paul's difficulty as Paul has suffered defection by his co-workers and is burdened with a deep sense of loneliness and alienation (2 Tim 4:10-14, 16).

Paul's leader-speak is convincing. Paul and Timothy share so much in terms of the gospel ministry that Timothy should see the very natural leadership succession ordained by God:

For this reason I also suffer these things, but I am not ashamed; for I know whom I have believed and I am convinced that He is able to guard what I have entrusted to Him until that day. Retain the standard of sound words which you have heard from me, in the faith and love which are in Christ Jesus. Guard, through the Holy Spirit who dwells in us, the treasure which has been entrusted to *you*. (2 Tim 1:12-14)

Timothy should not be ashamed or retreat from gospel leadership because Paul is not ashamed. Paul's LL is pointed and direct in two areas: gospel leadership will find its

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<sup>88</sup>Perry L. Stepp, *Leadership Succession in the World of the Pauline Circle* (Sheffield, England: Sheffield, 2005), 190.

<sup>89</sup>Barentsen, *Emerging Leadership*, 259-60.

<sup>90</sup>*Ibid.*, 258.

share of suffering because of the nature of the gospel, and second, the gospel leader must face gospel headship with the knowledge that his work will not be in vain. To that end, Paul reveals to Timothy that he gratefully expects his present imprisonment to end in death (2 Tim 4:6). In essence, his ministry is complete (v. 7) and his “crown” awaits him (v. 8). However, the work in Ephesus has not progressed as he had hoped, thus, in his absence Timothy will assume the mantle of leadership. Perhaps all of Paul’s mentoring of Timothy has been about this day: the day Timothy will be forced to continue without him.

So as Paul is exiting the scene, Timothy is once again called to account for his stewardship of the gospel: “But you, be sober in all things, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry” (2 Tim 4:5). To be sure, he will face hardship. Four imperatives<sup>91</sup> speak to the urgency of the moment as the language of suffering reappears: “For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure has come” (2 Tim 4:6). Paul’s appraisal of the present circumstances speaks of his impending death. The apostle anticipates he will soon depart in death and Timothy must be ready to continue without him. In his final testimony he employs some of the same ideas he used to tutor and reassure Timothy. It appears that each time Paul uses *ἐγώ* in the Pastorals it has been used for special emphasis. Second Timothy 4:6 is no exception. In contrast to Timothy being the subject of the previous verse, Paul emphatically announces he is speaking of himself: “For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure has come” (2 Tim 4:6). Paul says to Timothy, you must be ready to continue on in the household of God because I am leaving. The process of departure has already begun.

F. F. Bruce suggests the scenario that Paul was “saved from Nero’s malice: [that is] ‘rescued from the lion’s mouth’” which is a reference to 2 Timothy 4:17, but

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<sup>91</sup>“Be sober . . . endure hardship . . . do the work . . . fulfill your ministry.”

“this time the verdict was ‘guilty,’ and the sentence, death by the sword.”<sup>92</sup> This final witness of Paul then is to bolster Timothy in his continued and intensified leadership responsibilities and “serves as one more model for Timothy to follow.”<sup>93</sup> In the present moment Paul is “being poured out as a drink offering.” The fact that he later asks Timothy to come and be with him (4:9, 21) probably indicates that Paul is speaking figuratively about his death. Nevertheless, his dramatic language indicates that in his mind his departure is a “certainty and that it is near.”<sup>94</sup> His last will and testament serves as another opportunity to speak to Timothy in the LL of example in suffering.

While the phrase “being poured out as a drink offering” is the subject of interpretive debate, it seems to communicate the sense of an offering of service to the Lord. In his life and suffering unto death, Paul’s example is that of a servant of the Lord. He has been a living sacrifice to God (Rom 12) and now his death is offered for the sake of the gospel. The concept of offering is reminiscent of Paul’s statement in Philippians 2:17 written when Timothy was with him. “But even if I am being poured out as a drink offering upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I rejoice and share my joy with you all.” Now as Timothy reads the words of his leader and possibly recalls the Philippian letter, the impact could have been particularly poignant.

Paul continues to press the point with a descriptive word picture of his parting: “The time of my departure has come.” Paul’s departure, ἀναλύσεώς is the language of “soldiers breaking camp or sailors loosing a ship from its moorings.”<sup>95</sup> Paul has already compelled Timothy to model his leadership after the good soldier (2 Tim 2:3) and now he expresses his connection to the same kind of analogy. Paul has modeled the good soldier

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<sup>92</sup>F. F. Bruce, *Paul: Apostle of the Heart Set Free* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1977), 446.

<sup>93</sup>Fee, *1 and 2 Timothy, Titus*, 288.

<sup>94</sup>Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 458-59.

<sup>95</sup>Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, 578.

and now he is breaking camp to be with the Lord. The apostle has been enabled by the Holy Spirit to be a faithful soldier of Christ. “For God has not given us a spirit of timidity, but of power and love and discipline” (2 Tim 1:7), and he is now ready to be relieved of apostolic duty which has required suffering unto death.

Just as the Spirit has empowered him, the Spirit is present in the midst of his suffering. “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, if indeed we suffer with *Him* so that we may also be glorified with *Him*” (Rom 8:16-17). The “twin themes of suffering and waiting for a yet-to-be experienced glory”<sup>96</sup> is manifest in the Roman letter just as it is in 2 Timothy 1:8-14, 2:1-13, 4:6-8. Similarly, the ministry of the Holy Spirit to a suffering saint is divine assistance in the suffering.

In the same way the Spirit also helps<sup>97</sup> our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we should, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for *us* with groanings too deep for words: and He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He intercedes for the saints according to *the will of God*. (Rom 8:26-27)

Timothy Wiarda offers an interesting idea: “When Paul speaks of the Spirit interceding, this includes the thought that the Spirit communicates believers’ feelings to God, especially their experience of weakness.”<sup>98</sup>

### Conclusion

This research argues there is a discernible LL present in 1 and 2 Timothy, and that Paul’s leader-speak is defined and designed within the context of the ecclesiological purposes of the epistles. I have argued that Paul’s metaphorical language of the church as the “household of God” (1 Tim 3:15) is a model for church order and personal conduct, as well as the self-image Paul desires the church to adopt and most significantly the

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<sup>96</sup>Timothy Wiarda, “What God Knows When the Spirit Intercedes,” *Bulletin for Biblical Research* 17, no. 2 (2007): 308.

<sup>97</sup>*BibleWorks7* συναντιλαμβάνεται “help or come to the aid of”; *BGD*, 784, “to take part with.”

<sup>98</sup>Wiarda, “What God Knows When the Spirit Intercedes,” 309.

ecclesiology that drives Paul's LL. To that end, this present chapter examined the leader-speak of Paul to Timothy from a familial perspective, primarily that of a *father*. The parental perspective which cooperates with the metaphorical image of the church as a household is unmistakably evident in the conversational framing and vocabulary, as well as the tone of the speech Paul utilizes. Second, this chapter addressed Paul's LL from the perspective of a *teacher*. Like any effective teacher, Paul employed several pedagogical approaches in his tutorship of Timothy including metaphorical illustrations, preformed materials, and rhetorical strategies. The third area of leader-speak documented in 1 and 2 Timothy is the direct and indirect employment of the language of *example*, which insists on leadership by example, as well as the obligation to follow the example of a leader. While classic Pauline vocabulary is not employed, it is clear that the concept of leadership by example is presented in Paul's communication with Timothy.

Pauline leader-speak as father, teacher, and example is featured prominently in 1 and 2 Timothy. It has been my obligation to propose and support the thesis that Pauline leader-speak is defined and calculated within the context of the ecclesiological purposes of the epistles. In humility produced in an environment of hard work, I am hopeful that I have provided support for such claims. No doubt some scoff at even the mention of the concept of "leadership" within the context of Pauline studies. For example, Mark Strom remarks, "Paul's letters provide no model or church structure or lines of authority. He has no 'doctrine' of church or leadership . . . Paul avoided the vocabulary of leadership, preferring to use metaphors of service and care from work and the household."<sup>99</sup> Yet as evidenced in my work, Strom's perspective seems implausible as the very opposite has been identified in this work.

To be fair, it is obvious that the Pauline churches did not have leaders and leadership personnel as experienced in twenty-first century church life. Yet the function

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<sup>99</sup>Mark Strom, *Reframing Paul: Conversations in Grace and Community* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2000), 180.

of leadership is unavoidable and therefore inevitable in ancient church life. That Strom maintains there is an absence of Pauline leadership vocabulary and instead utilizes metaphors, does not discount the fact, as this present research has documented, that Pauline leader-speak was practiced through any number of strategies, including metaphor and the like. In response to Strom, leader-speak and metaphor must not be mutually exclusive.

Therefore it remains that 1 and 2 Timothy contain a Pauline LL enunciated and calculated within the context of his ecclesiological perspective and purpose. Such theological perspective and leadership purpose under the guidance of the Holy Spirit and in cooperation with Paul's giftedness, education, and experiences inspired the leader-speak of Paul. Such leader-speak was first directed at his young associate Timothy and secondarily to the leadership and members of the church at Ephesus. A third audience intended as recipients of Paul's LL is the universal church of the ages, including those of the twenty-first century. Consequently, it is the task of the next chapter to briefly examine some implications of Pauline LL for the contemporary church and ministry leaders.

## CHAPTER 7

### CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS FOR PASTORAL LEADERS

Although there exists a virtual mountain of excellent scholarship related to the study of the apostle Paul, including his theology, epistles, rhetorical skills and methods, missionary endeavors, and leadership, little material addresses Pauline language of leadership in-depth (which to some degree incorporates all of the above). The dearth of such inquiry led me to investigate and demonstrate that there is a discernible language of leadership utilized by the apostle Paul that is shaped and defined by a definite ecclesiological grid in 1 and 2 Timothy. As will now be reviewed, the previous chapters discussed leadership from a social science perspective as well projected some models from the Christian Scripture. Subsequently, a definition of Pauline LL was offered and the concept researched within the context of the ecclesiology of 1 and 2 Timothy.

#### **Conclusions to Research**

As suggested in chapter 1, the general concept of leadership is not so easily defined. Social scientist cannot wholly agree as to a central definition of leadership nor can biblical theologians and practitioners. Thus, in reviewing the best of descriptions I reached the following definition: Leadership is the effort of an individual or group to influence others to accomplish a collective goal through the development of relationships that provide opportunity for proactive application of personal qualities, actions, and words, stimulating the thinking process and emotions, as well as the attendant actions of those being led to effect the desired response of a shared achievement.

The definition above appears to be congruent with the leadership efforts of Paul—although obviously much is missing. Consequently, I defined Pauline LL as

speech communicated in and through an awareness of and influenced by the rhetorical teaching of his day and that ultimately such knowledge and skill was utilized by the Holy Spirit to enable Paul to lead through his apostolic writing. Additionally, Paul's leader-speak in 1 and 2 Timothy is determined by the theological purpose he addressed and the person or persons to whom he communicated, as well as the problem(s) to be attended and the context of leadership practice. Furthermore, Pauline LL is characterized by authoritative truthfulness, confrontational honesty, clarity of purpose, and domestic winsomeness and reasonableness that often reflects a familial, didactic, and prototypical approach to leadership.

The subsequent chapters of this work then addressed the thesis statement of the dissertation. Paul's LL in 1 and 2 Timothy is based on an exacting ecclesiology that obligates the household of God to preserve and promote the gospel truth, as well as describes and prescribes an ethic of godliness necessary for leaders and followers.

Chapter 2, "Pauline Ecclesiology in 1 and 2 Timothy," offered a biblical foundation for the theological context and purpose of both epistles that informs Paul's LL. I suggested in chapter 2 that purpose and context often determine effective leader-speak. A leader utilizes controlled language to achieve mission goals. I then demonstrated that Paul frames his understanding of the church, as well as his purpose for writing, in textured layers of metaphorical meaning. Furthermore, such tiers of expression construct an ecclesiology grounded on the greater doctrine of God expressed in the theology of the Pastorals. Thus, chapter 2 offers a summary of Pauline theology. The synopsis of Paul's theology in 1 and 2 Timothy yields the following: There is One Sovereign God, who exercises redemptive oversight. This Savior God is revealed as the Lord Jesus Christ who appeared in the flesh and brought redemption through his blood, and will appear a second time to consummate the redemptive plan of God.

Chapter 3, "Church as the Household of God," is strategically significant in that it expounds an interpretation of the central metaphor of this research. The church as

God's household links saved sinners to God's family. Accordingly, the metaphor is a pronouncement of God's possession of the church, as well as a description of how God's family should operate. Furthermore the metaphor speaks to the concept of how individuals within the family must respond to one another and to the world and realize their respective duties of protecting and promoting the gospel truth. In this chapter I demonstrate that Paul's metaphorical language of the church as the "household of God" (1 Tim 3:15) is the model for church order and personal conduct and the ecclesiology that drives Paul's LL. I also confirmed that such ecclesiology cooperates with the greater Pauline theology espoused in the previous chapter.

In a somewhat detailed exegesis of the focal passage, I asserted that the term household of God is a rich metaphorical expression that helps explain Paul's LL. The household image serves as a metaphorical and linguistic link between two social realities: the home and church. The writings of Paul to Timothy reveal that the household of God is threatened by insider forces, and though many miles away, Paul must assert his God-given stewardship of leadership. Therefore he calls on Timothy (and probably other Ephesian leaders) to 'set the church in order.' The church, discussed metaphorically as the household of God, references at least three levels of meaning: the possession of God and the new temple of God; the assembly of God, His church which is authorized to conduct redemptive business; and the church as the *ekklesia* of God which suggests an eschatological accomplishment of God through the Messiah and His people. All such metaphors propose there is an expected belief system and attendant moral standard which is to be lived out under the watchful eyes of the Living God. This new reality requires that Paul, in a LL, direct and encourage Timothy to set God's household in order and secondarily to move other leaders and ultimately the entire household to heed Paul's leader-speak.

Chapter 4, "Church as Pillar and Support of the Truth," implicitly proclaims the central proposition of the Christian faith: The Lord Jesus Christ is the Messiah Savior

who was murdered on a cross and arose the third day. As pillar and support of such grand truth, the church is likewise described in an exalted fashion. Thus in chapter 4 an exegesis of the powerful metaphors of pillar and support is supplied, as well as a detailed treatment of truth. The church is identified as the steward of God's truth and advances such stewardship of truth in terms of both orthodoxy and orthopraxy.

Thus I established in chapter 4 that the "truth" the church protects and promotes should be understood in objective, as well as subjective terms—orthodoxy and orthopraxy. First, it was presented that the treasure-truth bestowed on the church and that which the church exercises custodial care over is clearly delineated as objective truth—the historic Christ-event. The common confession or *faithful sayings* are restatements of the essentials of gospel truth as it speaks of the redemptive work of Christ and the resultant work of the church. Furthermore, it was asserted that ἀληθείας as used in the Pastorals is a technical term for the gospel.

Second, it was asserted that such truth is also dynamic in that it provokes and demands true life. Chapter 4 insisted such life-giving gospel truth cannot be disconnected from the objective truth of the gospel. Accordingly, conduct within the household of God should be understood as the practice of the gospel, the practice of εὐσέβεια. Furthermore, chapter 4 expounds on the sense of protection and promotion of truth by the church as pillar and support or bulwark and foundation. "Pillar," commonly denoted a column used as a support or bearing and as a structural image (like that of household), gives support to a spiritual house or even a temple reference. Yet pillar and support expand the definition of church, which emphasizes its unique identity with the Living God, to a more functional definition of a body created for gospel ministry, proclamation of the gospel truth, and promotion of gospel ministry. For Paul the issue was to guard and promote the precious truth of God. The household of God must know the truth in order to defend it. Knowing and defending the truth is accomplished in part through consideration of proper leader-speak in equipping, instructing, and encouraging Timothy and the church to

properly know, communicate, and live the truth.

“Pauline Leadership Language as Father and Teacher” was mined from 1 and 2 Timothy in chapter 5. Within the context of the church as a household, the *father* perspective is unmistakably apparent, not only in the conversational framing and vocabulary Paul utilizes, but also in the tenor of his words to Timothy. Likewise, the father perspective is supported by the metaphorical image of the church as a household. The father is to protect the household from plunderers whether found inside or outside the household. Such protection is two-fold: content of belief, as well as oversight and instruction relative to behavior. Moreover the father is to contribute to structure and organization so that the household may function effectively and efficiently.

Established by his apostolic call, one would expect that Paul would communicate with Timothy in the commanding voice of an apostle. And while he did that, it is also significant that he wrote to Timothy as a “son.” Thus chapter 5 investigates Paul’s words to Timothy as his son or child and as a father who urges and counsels his child who has become a “man of God.” It is obvious in the discussion that Paul’s leadership rhetoric toward Timothy is uniquely personal. Though he does not shy away as an apostolic father, from commanding Timothy, Paul appears to prefer to speak in a familial language of love.

Second, chapter 5 demonstrates a kind of pedagogical approach to LL utilized by Paul, particularly in the employment of metaphorical illustrations, preformed materials, and rhetorical strategies. This chapter argues that Paul’s leadership-speak as a *teacher* was delivered through rhetorical strategies. Such systems included persuasive family language in which Paul frames his conversation with Timothy, as he manages the meaning and impact of the argument. Paul also utilized synkrisi or rhetorical comparisons, as well as leadership instruction offered through the rhetorical structure of his letters.

Last, I assert that Paul employed preformed materials in his didactic instruction to Timothy. Chapter 5 documents the fact that Paul employs common sayings and

traditional materials to not only inform gospel tradition but also to underscore valuable leadership principles to Timothy. Thus this chapter examines the trustworthy or faithful sayings found in 1 Timothy 3:1 and 2 Timothy 2:11. Paul's methodology is sound. In his treatment of the faithful sayings Paul recalls for Timothy a trustworthy statement that was evidently received and believed by the confessing Pauline church. On other occasions he appeals to the irrefutable nature of the words, particularly utilizing  $\Delta\epsilon\tilde{\iota}\ \sigma\tilde{\upsilon}\nu$ . Such is the necessity of moral and spiritual obligation contained in the faithful saying. At other times there is a specificity of description or truth that brings clarity and power to the teaching. In further instances there is an appropriate effort of persuasion based on the truth declared and, or the authority of the apostolic author.

Chapter 5 contends that Paul's LL as a father was offered through particular conversational framing and vocabulary. Paul's leader-speak as a teacher was utilized through rhetorical strategies, metaphorical illustrations, and preformed materials, and was defined and designed within the context of the ecclesiological purposes of the epistles. Thus this chapter highlighted a didactic methodology found in the functional role of the father and the methods of a teacher required in the ancient household of God.

Chapter 6 investigates Pauline LL as *example*. In "Leadership Language as Example" a case is made that the language of example is both implicit and explicit in Paul's exercise of leadership. Paul's leader-speak is often the rhetoric of example as in suffering and godly behavior. Such implicit LL is often that of influence and persuasion as well as contrast. At other times Paul is explicitly direct in his LL of example.

Chapter 6 maintains that Paul's leader-speak is that which calls attention to himself as an example; reminds Timothy to follow his example; extols Timothy's virtues as evidence of one who has followed Paul's example; and contrasts the faithless opponents with Timothy who is faithful. Thus the motif of imitation is clearly important in Paul's LL. Certainly Paul seeks a household of God in conformity with proper doctrine and godly conduct and strives to accomplish such an objective through leader-speak that

promotes a language of example and serves to influence and persuade.

Paul declares himself to be an appropriate model of leadership in 1 Timothy 1. Through his testimony he reckons himself to be an example of God's accomplished goal of salvation and leadership calling. Likewise, in 1 Timothy 4: 12 Paul calls upon Timothy to be a leader by example, which may also require suffering. When suffering for the gospel occurs, Timothy should expect the Holy Spirit to empower him in his travail (2 Tim 1:14). Likewise, Timothy should be reminded that his salvation and subsequent call to lead is "not according to our works" (2 Tim 1:9). Last, Timothy must be prompted to understand that his leadership mission is not his own but "according to His own purpose and grace, which was granted us in Christ Jesus" (2 Tim 1:9), and to the historical fact of Christ's entry into the world (2 Tim 1:10). Paul's call to Timothy to suffer with him (2 Tim 1:8) is completely consistent with His ecclesiological mission (2 Tim 1:12).

### **Implications for Pastoral Leaders**

"The words of wise men are like goads, and masters of *these* collections are like well-driven nails; they are given by one Shepherd" (Eccl 12:11). This dissertation advances the argument that in 1 and 2 Timothy the apostle Paul offers "well-driven nails, given by one Shepherd" to Timothy and the church in Ephesus. Paul communicates with his young protégé in a purposeful LL grounded in a distinct ecclesiological perspective and purpose. Within the ecclesiological framework proposed in this dissertation, the task remains to investigate possible implications of Pauline LL to contemporary pastoral leaders.

The leader-speak found in 1 and 2 Timothy offers ministry leaders needed instruction and example of effective LL. The apostle expresses a cogent understanding expressed in useful metaphor of the nature of the church, the mission of the church, and the necessity of godly headship to lead the church to express her essential character and design. Thus the contemporary pastoral leader should have an informed theological understanding of the church as it "is the most visible part of Christian theology and it is

vitality connected with every other part.”<sup>1</sup> It is surely correct to assert that every facet of ministry is inextricably tied to biblical theology and should express a theology of the “household of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and support of the truth” (1 Tim 3:15). As the LL of 1 and 2 Timothy is examined from a wide-angle view, three broad principles emerge: effective leaders seek practical holiness, which shapes the virtue of their leader-speak; compelling leaders utilize an intentional and purposeful LL; and persuasive leaders frame their leader-speak within the context of the mission vision. Now, a more sharpened focus is in order.

The following paragraph sums up this chapter. First, LL will reflect familial relationships. “Most of the words Paul employs come from the intimate side of family affairs. *Adelphoi*, ‘brethren’ is far and away Paul’s favorite way of referring to the members of the communities to whom he is writing.”<sup>2</sup> Second, as “Pauline” leaders communicate, they are cognizant of the fact that they speak in the presence of God (1 Tim 5:21, 6:13; 2 Tim 2:14, 4:1) and in the name of God. Howell rightly expresses the view that even though “succeeding generations of church leaders do not bear the stamp of apostolic authority,” as did Paul, “they do submit to the apostolic teaching and call the churches to faithful obedience to those teachings preserved in the canonical record.”<sup>3</sup> A third idea for contemporary leader-speak is that those who exercise governance must speak nurture as well as rebuke. The ability to do such often hinges on their own godly virtue, conduct, and reputation. Such LL is often through the voice of the teacher or the father of the family (1 Tim 3:1-7, 4:11). Likewise, such leader-teach may be used of God to “insure

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<sup>1</sup>Mark E. Dever, “The Church,” in *A Theology for the Church*, ed. Daniel L. Akin (Nashville: B & H, 2007), 766.

<sup>2</sup>Robert J. Banks, *Paul’s Idea of Community: The Early House Churches in Their Cultural Setting* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2009), 50-51.

<sup>3</sup>Don N. Howell, Jr., *Servants of the Servant: A Biblical Theology of Leadership* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2003), 256.

salvation” for others (1 Tim 4:16) and must be offered in gentleness and love (2 Tim 2:25; 1 Tim 1:5). Fourth, the speech of the ministry leader must address the preservation and promotion of the “mystery of godliness” (1 Tim 3:15-16) in both doctrine and conduct, within and without the gathered church. In view of this fourfold model, the task of bringing to light some implications for contemporary leader-speak may proceed.<sup>4</sup>

### **Implication 1: Familial Relationships and Language**

Leaders will learn to speak the language of family. The suggestion here is not to necessarily speak in a specific familial vocabulary, in the sense of addressing each other as brother and sister, but rather the prevalent environmental mood of family life. Paul spoke to “sons” and “brothers,” “mothers” and “sisters.”<sup>5</sup> Simply put, families speak to one another. Leaders will learn to perceive of and speak to the church in the most virtuous sense as members of his or her family. In doing so, they serve as examples to other family members. Often such communication is effectively served within familial circles of fellowship rather than in the larger population.<sup>6</sup> Yet as it is suggested next, leaders must learn to communicate with the entire family.<sup>7</sup>

**Network dialogue.** The mood or attitude of communication within the household is a matter of openness and accessibility. In a network dialogue, vital communication is not limited to a chosen circle but extended to the greater family of

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<sup>4</sup>To be sure, each principle enunciated in this fourfold model is not exclusive in itself. That is, leaders often consciously or unconsciously meld communication principles together. This is akin to the proverbial mixed metaphor.

<sup>5</sup>It appears empirically obvious that while some church traditions practice such vocabulary, the absence of authentic relational interaction seems to deny such terminology.

<sup>6</sup>One-on-one and small group ministry is in mind here.

<sup>7</sup>Obviously the size of the church will determine the ability of leadership to communicate with membership, but the point is leadership must seriously address the issue of communication with the entire church family.

faith. Network dialogue is a sociological concept that has “entered theology in connection with strategic pastoral reflections.”<sup>8</sup> Such a valued principle should compel pastoral leaders to develop an effective ministry of communications. Michael Hackman and Craig Johnson explain,

Humans have the ability to create reality through their use of symbols, and this is readily apparent in the organizational context. . . . As organizational members meet and interact, they develop a shared meaning for events. Communication is not contained within the organization. Instead, communication *is* the organization.<sup>9</sup>

Hackman and Johnson probably did not have the local church or Christian ministry in mind when they wrote “communication is the organization,” yet their concept is fascinating in that it suggests a kind of theology of gospel ministry. It could be argued that the very essence of the church is the message she communicates. Through the witness of words and lives, the redeemed are the message! Without the message, the church does not exist. Furthermore, without a winsome and persuasive countenance the church may lose her leadership influence in the culture. Thus effective leader-speak is vital in that such communication is the reason and substance for which the organizational church pursues her mission.

Likewise, the idea of openness and accessibility supports the theological concept of *imago dei* and strikes against an elitist attitude within the family (Gal 2:6; Eph 6:9; Jas 2). Furthermore, network pragmatist understand “what is at stake is precisely the process of people being informed and as a result formed.”<sup>10</sup> Open and accessible communication within the entire household concerning gospel life assists in the formation or sanctification of the family. Consequently biblical concepts concerning the household of God should be continually communicated and emphasized within the body-life of the

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<sup>8</sup>Matthias Scharer and Bernd Jochen Hilberath, *The Practice of Communicative Theology: An Introduction to a New Theological Culture* (New York: Crossroad, 2008), 85.

<sup>9</sup>Michael Z. Hackman and Craig E. Johnson, *Leadership: A Communication Perspective* (Long Grove, IL: Waveland, 2009), 238.

<sup>10</sup>Scharer and Hilberath, *The Practice of Communicative Theology*, 85.

church. To that end, events and thematic studies could be designed by leadership to address adjacent concerns of family life such as how members think about each other, relate to one another, and speak to one another. As the proper concept of family is received, the intimacy of family talk may be produced.<sup>11</sup> However, how may these levels of communication be achieved?

“Truth” and “faith” in the Pastorals are utilized in an objective and subjective sense. Since the church can experience the power of the gospel in a subjective sense, it may also be true that the church needs to more fully understand the gospel in an objective sense. The assumption here is that people can be saved without fully understanding all aspects of gospel truth. Thus pastoral leadership is charged with the shared responsibility of assisting the family in the spiritual absorption of the full counsel of God. This present research has documented numerous examples of Paul’s communication with Timothy and by extension the elders and Ephesian church. Yet 1 and 2 Timothy do not contain one particular form of strategic leader-speak, otherwise used extensively by Paul—the rhetoric of question.<sup>12</sup>

Hackman and Johnson exclaim, “Asking effective questions is a critical skill for leaders.”<sup>13</sup> Effective leaders will need to sharpen and develop this critical skill. Pastoral leaders will learn to utilize probing questions to communicate mission and methods to the church. Joseph H. Britton writes, “The effective pastor will not simply tell

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<sup>11</sup>“For the mouth speaks out of that which fills the heart” (Matt 12:34). “He who loves purity of heart *and* whose speech is gracious, the king is his friend” (Prov 22:11).

<sup>12</sup>For example, “What then shall we say to these things? If God *is* for us, who *is* against us? He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him over for us all, how will He not also with Him freely give us all things? Who will bring a charge against God’s elect? God is the one who justifies; who is the one who condemns? Christ Jesus is He who died, yes, rather who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who also intercedes for us. Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? (Rom 8:31-35). See also Rom 3:27-31; 4:1; 7, 9:22-32.

<sup>13</sup>Hackman and Johnson, *Leadership*, 250.

others what they ought to know, but encourage them to discover it for themselves by posing those difficult questions that lead them to profound answers.”<sup>14</sup> Thus the effectual leader comes to understand that “questions become bridge-builders”<sup>15</sup> to gospel knowledge, gospel relationships, and the pursuance of gospel mission.

**Circle dialogue.** In the case of Paul, Timothy was his focus<sup>16</sup> as in a circle dialogue. The older apostle developed a loving relationship with Timothy and addressed him as “my true child” (1 Tim 1:2), “my son” (1 Tim 1:18), and “my beloved son” (2 Tim 1:2). Circle dialogue is defined by a “limited number of participants”<sup>17</sup> and is often viewed as elitist.

There is no evidence that the principles espoused in 2 Timothy 2:2 are conceived of, or meant to be, elitist. Pastoral leaders must be able to practice gospel leadership formation in the manner prescribed in 2 Timothy. Like Paul, ministry leaders may identify an individual or individuals and seek out a “father-son” relationship. Of course such a mentoring or discipling relationship will be agreed upon by both persons and a contract specifying the nature of the relationship could be established. Oney suggests that Paul’s mentoring model in 2 Timothy may be utilized by contemporary ministry leaders.<sup>18</sup>

Oney proposes that first, there is an assessment of the disciple. Consequently the mentor actually voices the character qualities and giftedness of the one to be nurtured. Such is a familial recognition of the gifts and virtues of that family member. Second,

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<sup>14</sup>Joseph H. Britton, “Something to Say: Pastoral Leadership and the Word,” *Anglican Theological Review* 91, no. 1 (2009): 97.

<sup>15</sup>*Ibid.*, 98.

<sup>16</sup>There were others in the circle according 2 Tim 4:9-21.

<sup>17</sup>Scharer and Hilberath, *The Practice of Communicative Theology*, 84.

<sup>18</sup>Mike Oney, “2 Timothy: Mentoring an Experiential Learner,” *Biblical Perspectives*, School of Global Leadership & Entrepreneurship, Regent University, May (2007): 1-8.

there is verbal encouragement to invest the learner's giftedness into the gospel ministry and an explanation as to how the disciple could conduct his or her ministry. Godliness is urged! Third, awareness of the culture in which one lives and ministers is necessary if leadership is to develop a biblical worldview and speak truth to a dead world. Hence, leadership invests him or herself as "father" or "mother," in teaching such matters. Fourth, the mentoring process continues as the disciple is given specific information concerning their ministry contribution. Last, the mentor may use his or her life example as a means of motivation. Telling one's story may serve to motivate the disciple, serve as a model of grace, and forge a deep bond between leader and follower. This kind of relationship may help produce a culture in which authentically familial language is practiced.

Similarly, pastoral leaders may elect to build a circle of fellowship as a small group. In reference to ministry teams, George Gladis suggests development of a covenanting team that reflects the implicit love between members of the Trinity: "The covenant either written or verbal, describes and defines team member's relationship as a ministry team."<sup>19</sup> The verbal and, or written composition of a covenant expressed in familial language should assist members in understanding the expectations of household relationships. The covenant teams seek to "create a small community founded upon the love and grace of God in Jesus Christ."<sup>20</sup> Such a community reflects Paul's words: "The goal of our instruction is love from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith" (1 Tim 1:5). The covenant could also identify language, conduct, and even attitudes that are threats to the family and thus hold family members accountable for their words and behavior.

Perhaps a male ministry leader could build a covenant team of men. In specific reference to communication and ministry, an important and practical question may be

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<sup>19</sup>George Gladis, *Leading the Team-Based Church: How Pastors and Church Staffs Can Grow together in a Powerful Fellowships of Leaders* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1999), 10-11.

<sup>20</sup>*Ibid.*, 11.

tested. In general terms, will men commit to such a covenant team? Referring to men and the local church, David Murrow states,

Ninety-five percent of the senior pastors in America are men, but you couldn't tell it by the sermons they preach . . . [thus] men get the message that Christlikeness is synonymous with Mom-likeness. . . . It's not just pastors: feminine terminology flows freely from the lips of churchgoers. . . . Mainline churches have adopted *inclusive language*, stripping masculine pronouns from hymns, liturgy and even Scripture. . . . Conservatives use man-repellent terminology as well.<sup>21</sup>

Murrow's insights are helpful, especially as pertains to language. Although I am not in full agreement as to what constitutes "feminine terminology,"<sup>22</sup> the author makes a valid point as well as offers as a cautionary tale. The specific words and concepts of masculine leader-speak are not to be dismissed or underplayed. Effective leaders will actively seek out concepts and vocabulary, framing such words and ideas so that effective leader-speak is offered. Words are important. So as "brother" speaks to "brother," it is the language of men speaking to men. Thus those who lead in the household of God should be diligent as well as deliberate in the formation of their leader-speak. This same admonition applies to female leaders and women's ministry.

Paul's relationship with Timothy produced a uniquely personal rhetoric. His concept of family determined his vocabulary. "Do not sharply rebuke an older man, but *rather* appeal to *him* as a father, *to* the younger men as brothers" (1 Tim 5:1). Is it possible that modern leaders can develop such an intimacy with each other and with other members of the household where conduct and vocabulary grow out of this family concept? If so, why is this important? Joseph H. Hellerman adds to the discussion:

We would do well to assign to Paul's sibling terminology its full semantic weight. For more than terminology is at stake in Paul's employment of family language. Paul views the church family metaphor as an invaluable constellation of symbols for illustrating in a most practical way what it means to live in community together.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>21</sup>David Murrow, *Why Men Hate Going to Church* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2005), 135.

<sup>22</sup>Ibid. Murrow's list of feminine words include weakness, humility, communication, and nurturing.

<sup>23</sup>Joseph H. Hellerman, *The Ancient Church as Family* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2001), 78.

To call a “brother” a “Man of God” is to place him in a great heritage of men who served God faithfully and were used mightily by God. It is to place a sense of approval and assurance in him and invest in him a divine identity that may empower him to confidently live up to such a powerful title. Such an exalted mental concept and knowledge may encourage and enable him to “pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, perseverance *and* gentleness [and] fight the good fight of faith” (1 Tim 6:11-12a). As a result, leaders may “speak” a desire for godliness into a brother and call him into conformity with Old Testament saints as well as Paul’s example as a follower of Jesus.

To perceive of and address a family member as brother or Man of God<sup>24</sup> may perhaps also achieve a man-to-man connection, which could act as a transforming agent. “Iron sharpen iron” (Prov 27:17). Men sharpen men. Men need men. Yet Murrow contends, “Today’s church has developed a culture that is driving men away.”<sup>25</sup> Murrow insists that although men resist relationships, they actually desire to be connected. To that point he writes, “Men follow men. Boys follow their dads. Jesus imitated His Father. . . . Can it be any clearer? *The Christian faith is the world’s biggest game of follow the leader.* Men are perishing in our churches because they have no example to follow.”<sup>26</sup>

When brothers make a familial connection, a man-to-man connection, there is the possibility a mentoring process may begin. Ideally the mentor is able to call his brother alongside him as did Paul to Timothy. Depending on the context and individuals involved, a paternalistic attitude may be appropriately healthy and helpful and “father-language” may prove to be beneficial. Ultimately the objective is to assist men (and women) to make a spiritual and emotional connection as members of the household of God, which may afford opportunity for in-depth discipling unto godliness, producing a

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<sup>24</sup>While feminine gender is not addressed in this section, certainly the same principles apply to *sisters* and *mothers*.

<sup>25</sup>Murrow, *Why Men Hate Going to Church*, 7.

<sup>26</sup>*Ibid.*, 216.

family who is able to protect and promote the gospel.

**Ministry of communication.** It has been established that Paul’s words to Timothy would ultimately be read before the church. So while his words were focused on one *circle dialogue*, they were also meant for many, *network dialogue*. Leadership language is ultimately meant for corporate consumption whether directly from a single designated leader or apportioned through several leaders and various media transmissions.<sup>27</sup> Network dialogue and circle dialogue are absolutely essential for a healthy church. Even so, Gangel mentions two problem areas in evangelical churches as being “the strict separation of clergy and laity” (circle dialogue), which is compounded by a “failure of some ministerial staff to speak on a layman’s language-level” (network dialogue).<sup>28</sup>

To be sure, circle and network dialogue must be balanced and practiced wisely as a ministry of communication which benefits gospel ministry—the message and the messengers. As people are informed by leadership they are formed by the Spirit through teaching, examples of service, and ministry opportunities. A ministry of communication assists in the creation of community. Walter Bennis writes, “Effective leaders put words to the formless longings and deeply felt needs of others. . . . They create communities out of words.”<sup>29</sup> Godly leaders may assist in the creation of community through their words. Philosophical Linguists Lakoff and Johnson state,

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<sup>27</sup>I recognize the multitude of communication options available today and am aware that greater “communication” may be achieved through FaceBook, Twitter, text, and e-mails. But by and large these options are inferior to person-to-person speech. Most churches are not mega-churches and should be able to practice conversational human communication-verbal talk. Therefore, a conscious decision has been made to not pursue discussion of other forms of communication although there is a recognition that each may have their place.

<sup>28</sup>Kenneth O. Gangel, *Feeding and Leading: A Practical Handbook on Administration and Christian Organizations* (Wheaton, IL: Baker, 1994), 219.

<sup>29</sup>Walter Bennis, “The Leader as Storyteller,” *Harvard Business Review* 74, no. 1 (1996): 155.

New metaphors have the power to create new reality . . . this can happen when we start to comprehend our experience in terms of metaphor, and it becomes a deeper reality when we begin to act in terms of it. . . . If a new metaphor enters the conceptual system that we base our action on, it will alter that conceptual system and the perceptions and actions that the system gives rise to.<sup>30</sup>

If the power of metaphor is so commanding, it would seem as though such an instrument may be utilized by the Holy Spirit in an even more compelling manner as leaders teach and model the concept of the household of God.

Also, a ministry of communication assists in the creation of family in that it addresses the issue of hearing and listening. Network and circle dialogue offer the concept, if not the framework, for pastoral listening. Leaders are anxious for followers to hear what they have to say. But it could be argued that often leaders are not as interested in hearing what their members think, feel, or believe. McClure uses the term “attentive” in place of listening and writes, “My claim that attentiveness is a crucial element of caregiving is grounded in a theological understanding of God as One who attends to us.”<sup>31</sup>

While leaders forward their agenda through effective leader-speak, such speech requires that they also be sincere and effective listeners, modeling “God as the One who attends.” To model such will require that responsible leaders learn how to listen and proactively move to set up a variety of listening opportunities, which will allow for the needs and concerns of the family to be voiced and a proper response formulated by leadership. Consequently the mission of the church may more effectively be advanced and the family bound tighter together.

To sum up, the language of family and the environment it produces may enable “brothers” and “sisters” to respond to the reality that the household has a common goal: to protect and promote the truth of the gospel. Communication is at a premium and is a

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<sup>30</sup>George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003), 145.

<sup>31</sup>Barbara J. McClure, “Pastoral Theology as the Art of Paying Attention: Widening the Horizons,” *International Journal of Pastoral Theology* 12 (2008): 190.

part of God’s formation of the family. Like all aspects of sanctification, this is a process empowered by the Spirit.<sup>32</sup> However, the family works in concert with one another as well. Such a cooperative program offers two comforting certainties: this is a co-mission of co-laborers.

Common goals build teams. Perhaps a corrective paradigm shift to a team-based organism<sup>33</sup> is in order for the modern church. I am aware that such is reality in some groups. To that point, Cladis reports a common theme relevant to post-modernism: “People no longer respond well to orders from superiors. . . . Ministry teams that are open, available, flexible, responsive, and representative of the people they lead will do better in the postmodern world.”<sup>34</sup> Although the church does not want to shape its’ leadership philosophy or structure to cooperate with cultural practices, God’s household may need to consider the reality of post-modernism as related to familial communication.

### **Implication 2: Speech in the Presence of God and Speech for God**

Perhaps spiritual leadership, particularly within the context of vocational ministry, has become too professional. Ministry has become a job rather than a high calling. In some cases preachers have become sermon factories producing one or two “masterpieces” a week—preaching machines who grind out sermons, but the heart of ministry is missing. Furthermore because it has degenerated into a “job,” some ministry leaders effectively work for their employers and, or themselves, rather than serve the

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<sup>32</sup>“But we should always give thanks to God for you, brethren beloved by the Lord, because God has chosen you from the beginning for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and faith in the truth” (1 Thess 2:13).

<sup>33</sup>The early Pauline communities were less authoritative and hierarchal than is often the case in some “stripes” of the modern church. There are many understandable factors for such, but it appears that Paul would generally prefer to persuade than to command. Even so, I am aware of the line of authority inherent in elder leadership. Yet, the Pauline communities appear in many cases to be driven by individuals employing their spiritual giftedness in a free form fashion.

<sup>34</sup>Gladis, *Leading the Team-Based Church*, 21.

Living God who continues to superintend his church. Such a fallen attitude may also contribute to the demise of authentically spiritual servants. “The laborer [who] is worthy of his wages” (1 Tim 5:18) may lose perspective and serve a cause, rather than the Head of the household. Perhaps such leaders are being trained in ministry skill without being trained unto godliness. John Piper comments,

We pastors are being killed by the professionalizing of the pastoral ministry. The mentality of the professional is not the mentality of the prophet. It is not the mentality of the slave of Christ. Professionalism has nothing to do with the essence and heart of the Christian ministry. The more professional we long to be, the more spiritual death we will leave in our wake. For there is no professional childlikeness (Matt. 18:3); there is no professional tenderheartedness (Eph. 4:32); there is no professional panting after God (Ps. 42:1).<sup>35</sup>

The point is not to disparage professional training and education,<sup>36</sup> but rather as did Paul, appeal to a profound sense of godly thinking and ethical conduct in concert with applied knowledge. Serving the Living God is as much or more a matter of virtue ethics as it is deontological thinking. Likewise, a devout longing for God is to be desired as one discharges one’s duties before God. Perhaps teaching institutions should begin to reassess the course of studies required as well as the lives and passions of the teachers who lead and influence future leaders. Yet ultimately it must be the local church that insists on godly leaders who are able to protect and promote the truth of the gospel.

**Speech in the presence of God.** Leaders who follow Paul’s example will hold a deeply entrenched conviction that the words they speak and the message they advance is offered in the presence of God. Perhaps such a profound sense of the presence and holiness of God will prevent sinful considerations of the heart from being translated into the self-serving vanity of words and sinful conduct that follow (Jas 3-4). Words matter in

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<sup>35</sup>John Piper, *Brothers We Are Not Professionals: A Plea to Pastors for Radical Ministry* (Nashville: B & H, 2013), 1.

<sup>36</sup>“Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth” (2 Tim 2:15). The principle here speaks of one doing their best to work in such a way they will stand the scrutiny of God’s assessment. And the specific concern is Timothy’s coherence with the gospel.

the household of God and leaders in particular are to model proper speech. “Let no one look down on your youthfulness, but rather in speech conduct, love, faith and purity, show yourself an example of those who believe” (1 Tim 4:12).<sup>37</sup>

It certainly seems to stretch credibility when one considers those who claim to belong to the household of God and have been schooled in the truth of the pervading presence of God within His household (as the God of eschatological hope, the only Divine, as well as the originator and sustaining power of life), and yet treat God with such contempt so as to speak<sup>38</sup> and live in *ασεβεια* (as opposed to *εὐσέβεια*) or godliness.

Church and ministry overseers lead as stewards as the house belongs to the Living God. Therefore, contemporary leaders must not lose sight of the fact that the sovereign God continues to superintend His household. The Lord hears the manner in which his servants speak to the “older” and “younger man,” “older” and “younger women” (as well as children and employees) in the household. God has issued expectations of verbal and attitudinal decorum (1 Tim 5). Communication by those who are members of the household of God is not to reflect the kind of speech characterized by

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<sup>37</sup>Paul has much to say about words spoken. He is concerned about the moral virtue of words, the moral integrity of the speaker and the words he delivers, the clarity of speech, and motives behind one’s speech. “But as God is faithful, our word to you is not yes and no” (2 Cor 1:17). “For we are not like many, peddling the word of God, but as from sincerity, but as from God, we speak in Christ in the sight of God” (2 Cor 2:17). “[B]ut we have renounced the things hidden because of shame, not walking in craftiness or adulterating the word of God, but by the manifestation of truth commending ourselves to every man’s conscience in the sight of God” (2 Cor 4:2). “Let no unwholesome word proceed from your mouth, but only such a word as is good for edification according to the need of the moment, so that it will give grace to those who hear” (Eph 4:29). “But now you also, put them all aside: anger, wrath, malice, slander, and abusive speech from your mouth” (Col 3:8). “Let your speech always be with grace, as though seasoned with salt, so that you will know how you should respond to each person” (Col 4:6). [Young men should be] “sound in speech which is beyond reproach, so that the opponent will be put to shame, having nothing bad to say about us” (Titus 2:8).

<sup>38</sup>A case in point is the very well-publicized case of pastor Mark Driscoll. The picture becomes increasingly corrupt. Ruth Moon, “Acts 29 Removes Mars Hill, Asks Mark Driscoll to Step Down and Seek Help,” accessed September 9, 2014, [www.christianitytoday.com/gleanings/2014/august/acts-29-removes-mars-hill-asks-mark-driscoll-matt-chandler.html](http://www.christianitytoday.com/gleanings/2014/august/acts-29-removes-mars-hill-asks-mark-driscoll-matt-chandler.html). See also Yasmine Hafiz, “Protestors Call for Pastor Mark Driscoll’s Resignation after Multiple Scandals At Mars Hill,” accessed September 9, 2014, [www.huffingtonpost.com/2014/08/05/pasotr-mark-driscoll-resign\\_n\\_5651088.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2014/08/05/pasotr-mark-driscoll-resign_n_5651088.html).

the world. To that point, it is precisely this kind of worldly speech (2 Tim 2:16) that is so assessable and natural to the world<sup>39</sup> but should be foreign to the family of God.

Wise leaders will know that the ministries they lead are God's possession and that they serve as stewards in presence of God. Such knowledge should act as a governor over all forms of communication between family members, as well as those outside the family. This includes pulpit and classroom proclamation and instruction, counseling and disciplining sessions, administrative dialogue, business meetings, and friends-on-the-golf-course conversation. Godly leaders will learn to master their tongues and lead the household with speech characterized by truth, grace, and love, as well as that which ultimately promotes and protects the gospel. Such leaders will not be guilty of disparaging God and his family or polluting the purity of the gospel by using language that reflects the accessibility of commonly profane words, concepts, and attitudes.<sup>40</sup>

**Speech for God.** It is also notable that godly leaders speak, not just in the presence of God, but also for God. To assert that individuals or a household speaks for God may suggest a brazen attitude, but such is the reality. God works through the church to accomplish his divine purpose. As this is undeniably true, leaders will attend to such a joyful burden with great care and consideration in view of their responsibility to communicate for God. Pastoral leaders recognize that

the power of speech, is a performative utterance . . . [and that] the Bible regards speech as a means for creating leadership, or vice versa as the fatal cause of loosing the leadership. . . . Speech, as the Bible demonstrates, is the core of true leadership and false leadership is a victim of poor verbal performance.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>39</sup>Walter Bauer, *A Greek English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (BGAD), 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., rev. and aug. F. Wilbur and Frederick W. Danker (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1979), 138. βεβήλους, "Accessible to everyone, profane, unhallowed."

<sup>40</sup>"But now you also, put them all aside: anger, wrath, malice, slander, *and* abusive speech from your mouth" (Col 3:8). "Let your speech always be with grace, *as though* seasoned with salt, so that you will know how you should respond to each person" (Col 4:6).

<sup>41</sup>Yehoshua Gitay, "The Role of Rhetoric in the Rise of Leadership: The Case of Judah," *Journal for Semitics* 14 (2005): 112-48.

William Willimon weighs in with much the same perspective: “A good leader is a good speaker . . . leadership books . . . all stress the importance of clear, persuasive communication.”<sup>42</sup> Willimon continues as he asserts that, according to 2 Corinthians 1:9, Paul is convinced the “‘God who raises the dead’ is not only the content of Christian preaching but also its agent. Faithful proclamation is speech of ‘Spirit and of power’ that participates in, and is dependent upon, ‘the power of God.’”<sup>43</sup> Although the leader is charged with speaking for God he is not left to speak on his own. Ultimately godly leaders speak by God’s anointing.

Even so, the leader who speaks for God will seek out ways and means by which his leader-speak is sharpened in that he or she desires to communicate clearly and faithfully. Certainly communication courses and workshops may add greater insight into LL. Perhaps seminaries and Bible schools should consider offering formal studies in LL, not as an additional homiletics course but an in-depth consideration of biblical leader-speak. Possibly leaders, and particularly preachers and teachers, could form an “echo group,” an accountability group of sorts, that offers constructive comments on each leader’s communication efforts. Even in consideration of the divine element in gospel leadership, effective leaders have a profound sense of their responsibility to find ways to hone their communication skills. Even a critical listening to one’s-self in a teaching situation, business meeting, or committee meeting may reveal some area of needed improvement. And yet amazingly that same leader recognizes that unless God is the “content and agent” of his speech, all the communication skills and training he is able to accrue will be for naught. That is what it means to speak “for” and “in” the presence of God.

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<sup>42</sup>William Willimon, “Transforming Word,” *Word & World* 32, no. 4 (Fall 2012): 327-33.

<sup>43</sup>*Ibid.*

### **Implication 3: Nurture and Rebuke**

The gospel leader has a particularly challenging assignment in his governance of God's household as he speaks nurture and rebuke. Such LL is often delivered in private conversation, administrative and organizational communication, congregational proclamation, and through the voice of the teacher in formal and informal settings. In all cases such leader-speak must be voiced with wholesomeness and love and in the knowledge that one is speaking in the presence of God, for God and by God. Likewise, such speech may be used of God to "insure salvation" for others (1 Tim 4:16). Accordingly, nurture and rebuke may issue forth from the heart and voice of a father-teacher and even through the example lived before the people.

**The voice of rebuke.** The LL of a father may reflect several dispositions: "My true child" (1 Tim 1:2); "my son" (1 Tim 1:18); and "my beloved son" (2 Tim 1:2). As gentle as Paul is with Timothy, the apostle assigns Timothy a difficult task. A large part of Timothy's role in Ephesus is to rebuke (1 Tim 1:3, 18, 4:6, 5:1, 5:20, 6:17; 2 Tim 2:4, 4:2). For the contemporary leader such leader-speak will be expressed in diverse terminology and voices that assume altered leadership tones. While it is a tricky proposition, contemporary "Pauline leaders" will express the expectation of follower-compliance. There are times when their LL will not suggest a course of action but expect a particular course of action and hold followers accountable. Additionally, when justified there must be a place for direct rebuke and opportunity taken to challenge other's belief, action, and words. In the matter of willful sin, to allow evil to continue is to be negligent in the discharge of one's duties. Compelling leaders learn the fine art of when and how to offer rebuke with deliberate and studied words. In the case of verbal reprimand over inappropriate language within the household, a leader may consider such sentences and phrases as

I'm going to challenge you whenever you use the words *always, never, should, but* and *have to*. . . . Let's stop talking about what's wrong with your team and start talking about what you can do as their leader to influence the situation. . . . It

doesn't matter how good you are if you discourage others. . . . Words create reality. What kind of reality does your word choice invoke?<sup>44</sup>

Just as Paul commands Timothy to rebuke and Titus to “exhort and reprove with authority” (Titus 2:15), the contemporary pastoral leader will be faced with situations that demand a similar response. *Caring Enough to Confront* by David Augsburger is a Christian classic on pastoral caregiving and peacekeeping. The thesis of the work is that “speaking the truth in love” is a high ethical demand of the church (even though it is practiced so rarely). Whereas the context of his work is different from the framework enunciated here, some powerful principles emerge along with effective verbal approaches. Augsburger fashions it “care-fronting” and “truthing It.”<sup>45</sup> The essence of his thought is that proper rebuke does not flow out of anger, revenge, frustration, or pride, but out of love and respect. “‘I care enough to confront’ is the I-want-relationship-and-I-also-want-honest-integrity position.”<sup>46</sup>

To love people enough to confront or rebuke them is the response of a high ethic. Ministry leaders must be committed to such principled action. An even higher ethical response may be confrontation based on love of the truth.<sup>47</sup> Paul’s confrontation with Cephas (Peter) is one example of this. “But when Cephas came to Antioch, I opposed him to his face, because he stood condemned” (Gal 2:11). Whereas the issue that triggered the confrontation between Paul and Peter is not the present concern, the apparent motivation behind the conflict is. Schreiner writes,

Paul is not interested in relating the biography of his relationship with Peter, nor is he trumpeting himself as superior to Peter. . . . Paul did not reprove Peter because of

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<sup>44</sup>Meryl Runion and Wendy Mack, *Perfect Phrases for Leadership Development* (New York: McGraw Hill, 2011), 88-89.

<sup>45</sup>David Augsburger, *Caring Enough to Confront* (Ventura, CA: Regal, 1981), 8-36.

<sup>46</sup>Ibid., 15.

<sup>47</sup>“The elder to the chosen lady and her children, whom I love in truth; and not only I, but also all who know the truth, for the sake of the truth which abides in us and will be with us forever” (2 John 1:1-2). “The elder to the beloved Gaius, whom I love in truth” (3 John 1:1).

a personal pique against him or because he suddenly lost his temper. He reprimanded him because he was condemned before God for his actions.<sup>48</sup>

Even though it appears the order of importance and sequence should be reversed, corrective discipline, as exhibited, may be necessary if constructive discipline is to occur.<sup>49</sup> Certainly, the ultimate aim of all discipline is that Christ might be fully formed in the life of the one called to task. Benjamin Phillips states that words and phrases such as “rebuke (Luke 17:3; 1 Tim 5:20; 2 Tim 4:2), correct (2 Tim 2:25, 3:16), turn a sinner back (Jas 5:19), appeal (1 Tim 5:1; Jude 3), show him his fault (Matt 18:15), reprove (2 Tim 4:2), save, snatch from the fire (Jude 23)”<sup>50</sup> are utilized in the New Testament as corrective words of discipline unto Christlikeness.

It is clear that contemporary “Pauline leaders” will define the perimeters of when such reproof is necessary, as well as refine and utilize the verbal tools of rebuke as appropriate. It is also evident that such leaders examine and cultivate proper motives before speaking a word of rebuke and, or reproof. Additionally, given the emotional dynamics that may be in operation during such admonition, the wise leader will speak his words in the presence of other trusted leaders.

**The voice of nurture.** More often than not persuasion will be the method of operation issued forth in loving and guiding firmness.<sup>51</sup> This kind of leader-speak will overflow with the pathos of emotional tenderness as a leader who speaks with paternal love, affirmation, and approval. Pastoral leaders will find ways to speak validation into the lives of others, which may contribute to their continuing transformation. While there

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<sup>48</sup>Thomas R. Schreiner, *Galatians. Exegetical Commentary of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2010), 139.

<sup>49</sup>Benjamin B. Phillips, “The Attraction of Beauty in an Ugly World: On the Relationship of Discipling and Evangelism,” *Southwestern Journal of Theology* 50 (Spring 2008): 170-82.

<sup>50</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>51</sup>This is not to imply that direct rebuke is not an act of love. It is simply to signal the difference in *rebuke* and *persuasion* in order to *nurture* as a means of bringing about a proper response.

will be an appeal to the heart, the effective “Pauline leader” will also appeal to the head and hands with passionate urging so that followers will know, believe, teach, and model the gospel, and thus protect and promote the truth of God.

The “Pauline leader” will recognize the reality of an implicit suggestion developed in Philippians 2:6-7, incarnational leadership. “Instruction about sanctification, accountability to the process of sanctification, and exemplifying personal sanctification should be among the highest priorities for a pastor. Incarnational leaders are adept at spiritual nurture. Pastoral leaders are responsible for their own pursuit of godliness,”<sup>52</sup> and to a great extent the pursuit of godliness by others. To that point Richard L. Holland states, “Sanctification is the dimension of salvation that consumes the whole of a believer’s life.”<sup>53</sup>

Paul’s leader-speak is in the voice of a father, and he also speaks in the voice of example: “Follow me as I follow Christ” (1 Cor 11:1). To the extent that he lives out the life of Christ, he is worthy to be emulated. Ultimately Paul speaks as an incarnational leader and his leader-speak reflects the content, tone, and acceptable verbiage of his Leader, Christ. The same will be so for contemporary leaders. They may speak the language of a Pauline father who takes their cue from Jesus. In order to speak authentic nurture or be positioned to administer needed rebuke and, or the encouragement of Jesus, ministry leaders will be careful to not be overcome by the “spirit of this age.” Mentioning the “spirit of this age” leads to a brief discussion of rebuke and nurture.

**Debilitation of rebuke and nurture.** In many respects American culture has served to redefine appropriate formal and informal vocabulary. Biblical Christianity has suffered the same fate. Unfortunately it appears some Christian leaders are unaware of

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<sup>52</sup>I use godliness, sanctification, and Christlikeness as synonyms.

<sup>53</sup>Richard L. Holland, “The Pastor’s Sanctifying Role in the Church,” *The Master’s Seminary Journal* 21, no. 2 (Fall 2010): 219.

such inundation of cultural values or just do not see the biblical conflict it may present, and as a result may be effectively disqualified from offering either rebuke or nurture. The bottom line is that all forms of entertainment, “hard and soft news” media, and politics, as well as educational and religious philosophy, negatively impacts Christian thinking and consequently speech and vocabulary.<sup>54</sup> The church not only thinks like the world, it has also learned to talk like the world. Peter J. Flammig addresses the issue:

We live with a constant tension between being in our world and not being fashioned by it. Incarnational leadership demands that we enter and become immersed in the culture in which we serve without yielding our spirit to its limitations and authority. We must be in it, not of it. If we consider ourselves too pure to enter the murky pools of that world, we forsake the servant pattern of Jesus Christ. But if we think those murky pools can replace the kingdom, we have gone too far and have become *of the world*. Incarnational ministers sustain a tension between the two.<sup>55</sup>

Christian leaders live in such tension and lead under such pressure. Since communication is such an intricate part of leadership, contemporary leaders should be attuned to the possibility that their communication may reflect the darkness of the world rather than the light of Jesus Christ. When Christian leaders employ story lines, songs, concepts, or quotes from popular culture, what does that communicate? To be sure, it is a certain indication (so the leader hopes to imply) that the he or she is “hip,” and in tune with the culture. Indeed, all leaders should desire to be as the sons of Issachar, “men who understood the times, with knowledge of what Israel should do” (1 Chr 12:32).

Cultural awareness by leaders in any field is absolutely necessary. To that point, Karl Barth allegedly advised young ministers to “hold the Bible in one hand and newspaper in the other.” But how are leaders to understand that critical point where

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<sup>54</sup>Vern Sheridan Poythress is helpful at this point as he speaks of the stability of meaning or linguistic consistency, that is, the rules of language: “Each person who uses language relies on language rules. Rules imply a rule-giver. Now if the rules are rational, they are also personal, because rationality belongs to persons. God has plurality in himself, the plurality of three persons in one God. The plurality of laws and language rules is no more an accident than their harmony.” Vern Sheridan Poythress, *In the Beginning Was the Word: Language—A God-Centered Approach* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2009), 60, 70-71.

<sup>55</sup>Peter James Flammig, “Incarnational Leadership for Ministry,” *The Theological Educator* 52 (Fall 1995): 7-14.

social awareness and cultural baptism occurs? After Pharaoh's treasure has been plundered, how does the Man of God know when he is wearing the garments of God or the costumes of Pharaoh? In some cases it seems Christian leaders never figure it out and tragically spin out cultural concepts through improper language, and all in the name of being "contemporary." This negatively impacts all areas of their leadership, including nurture and rebuke.

This is not a call back to "King James" language, but to "King James" concepts. The values of Scripture have not changed. The Scriptures continue to speak to the moral virtue of a biblical leader with attendant vocabulary and proper framing to communicate all aspects of gospel truth. The Scriptures continue to speak prophetically to contemporary culture. Gospel leaders are to fully engage in the cultural issues in which they are planted and communicate in a biblically relevant way. Yet this matter needs to be reconsidered and thoughtful dialogue should ensue as the church seeks to speak in a proper language, with a godly attitude, and with a missional purpose.

This seemingly continues to be a challenge. Consequently, some have sought to offer a response. Scharer and Hilberath offer "Communicative Theology," which essentially calls for Christians to speak publically in terms of broader, more ecumenical, "theologies" and common social concerns.<sup>56</sup> Of course public agreement of "core" beliefs and mutual concerns generally signals that the fundamentals of the gospel are ignored. Additionally, cynics have suggested that most religious and philosophical talk, "God-talk," is useless to adequately express such existential thoughts.<sup>57</sup> Such is the massive paradigm shift of what has been termed "postmodernity."

And it gets worse. Alasdair MacIntyre speaks of disparate worldviews staring each other down without any common ground of authority or shared conceptual language

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<sup>56</sup>Scharer and Hilberath, *The Practice of Communicative Theology*, 59.

<sup>57</sup>Gordon H. Clark, *Language and Theology* (Jefferson, MD: The Trinity Foundation, 1993).

that can resolve the conflict.<sup>58</sup> Again, the Christian leader lives and serves in both worlds and must wrestle with how to communicate without taking on the spirit of the age. Curtis Chang believes that one vital response to this dilemma is to enter into the story of this age: the fallenness of humanity. Of course such fallenness is most adroitly seen as the metanarrative of one's life as reflected in the metanarrative of Scripture. Chang properly states that the gospel narrative is able to show the possibility of a meaningful resolution to the fallen metanarrative of one's life: "The concept of story is crucial to my understanding of the strategy"<sup>59</sup> to engage the postmodern world.

Pastoral leaders may use such a leader-speak strategy to intimately engage in existential conversation, yet maintain complete integrity and without resorting to the extreme concepts and corrupt language of twenty-first century culture. This same strategy of leader-speak may be used within the walls of the household under the sure assumption that fellow believers can identify with the broad story of fallenness and redemption. The metanarrative of individual fallenness offered repeatedly under the rubric of the full counsel of God will allow for nurture and rebuke, encouragement and correction.

Perhaps Galatians 6:1 speaks succinctly to the human story and the need for nurture and rebuke: "Brethren, even if anyone is caught in any trespass, you who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness; *each one* looking to yourself, so that you too will not be tempted." The text and context of the passage clearly identifies this as Christian people and redemptive activity. Paul presents the familiar story-line of a 'brother' who is tripped up by some sin. One can only image what the sin may be or the seriousness of the law broken. Yet one might find reference—a point of clarity in honest

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<sup>58</sup>Alasdair MacIntyre, *Three Rival Versions of Moral Enquiry* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1990), 4.

<sup>59</sup>Curtis Chang, *Engaging Unbelief: A Captivating Strategy from Augustine and Aquinas* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2007), 27. It is significant for a complete picture of Chang's work to understand that the author frames his concepts against the backdrop of two monumental Christian thinkers, Augustine and Aquinas, and utilizes their arguments as a rhetorical strategy for apologetics and evangelism.

reflection on one's own life. In reference to Galatians 6, perhaps even yesterday the fall occurred. How should this man in Paul's account be dealt with? Thankfully he should be gently mended or restored back to spiritual health by a spiritual brother. Although any brother is enjoined to act, this is certainly a call to leadership (not spiritually elite, but spiritually mature and responsible).

It is essential to note that such mending will occur for the most part in the context of gracious words of restoration. The one who restores should understand that the roles could be reversed. Yet it may also take some straightforward admonition and even discipline. Mark Dever remarks,

We should all admit our need for discipline, our need for shaping. None of us is perfect, finished projects. We may need to be inspired, nurtured, or healed; we may need to be corrected, challenged, even broken. Whatever the particular method of cure, let's at least admit the need for discipline.<sup>60</sup>

The same principle could also apply to the unbeliever. Their story is the same tale of fallenness and need for spiritual (if not emotional) mending. Effective leaders will continue to promote the metanarrative of fallenness and redemption through Jesus Christ in words and concepts clothed in reality and in words of nurture and rebuke. Yet such will happen within the context of wholesome God-honoring language and concepts.

#### **Implication 4: Word of Preservation and Promotion**

The LL of ministry leaders must address the preservation and promotion of the "mystery of godliness" (1 Tim 3:15-16) in both doctrine and conduct, within as well outside the church. It is clear from previous exegesis that the "mystery of godliness" is Jesus Christ and the verses that follow tease out that reality. It is also clear that this is a commonly agreed upon doctrinal proposition attested to by the first-century church. Furthermore, the church is a steward of the great mystery as the "pillar and support of the truth." Thus the mystery of godliness is the truth of God which the church supports.

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<sup>60</sup>Mark Dever, "God Himself Disciplines Us," *Southern Baptist Journal of Theology* 4, no. 4 (Winter 2000): 29.

Different terminology is used in the Synoptic Gospels as Jesus commands his church to go into the entire world and preach the gospel. The “gospel” of the Synoptics is nothing less than the mystery of Godliness in 1 Timothy 3. It is the mystery of God, the gospel which is to be protected and promoted. This is a call to missions.

**A voice of missionary action.** Whereas the balance of 1 and 2 Timothy lends itself to concern over false teaching, church organization, and ethics, Chiao Ex Ho proposes there is an implied missionary element present: “Although the challenge posed by the false teachers and church organization are *prima facie* concerns, there is an underlying missionary outlook in its theology and instruction to Timothy.”<sup>61</sup>

It is entirely plausible that Paul’s concern with false teaching is largely that such heresy could hinder mission or at least promote the wrong missionary message. Likewise, false teachers could create schisms within the family and hamper missionary activity. The opponents in 1 Timothy were not interested in promoting the Pauline message but were instead caught up in “esoteric speculations and stirring up controversies (1 Tim 1:4, 6-7).”<sup>62</sup> One cannot escape the inference of missions by the apostle. To that point, John Collins takes the position that Paul’s appointment to service (1 Tim 1:12) is “an appointment ‘to mission,’ that is, to the sacred mission of going forth with the gospel.”<sup>63</sup>

Accordingly, in the context of false teaching, organizational materials, and an appeal to a Christian ethic produced by godliness, “mission” is firmly entrenched in the apostle’s concern. The present day “Pauline leader” has the same passion for gospel mission and seeks ways and means by which he or she will promote the gospel. In short,

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<sup>61</sup>Chiao Ex Ho, “Mission in the Pastoral Epistles,” in *Entrusted with the Gospel*, ed. Andreas Kostenberger and Terry Wilder (Nashville: B & H, 2010), 248.

<sup>62</sup>*Ibid.*, 249.

<sup>63</sup>J. N. Collins, *Diakonia: Re-Interpreting the Ancient Sources* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), 215.

to promote the gospel is to witness to the Good News of Jesus Christ and then to disciple converts to some measure of maturity. It sounds simple, but every gospel leader knows it is not! In fact it is much easier to philosophically mull over the matter than to actually practice it. Consider Geisler's comments:

It is widely acknowledged that evangelicals believe that 1) truth is absolute, 2) truth is exclusivistic, and 3) that the truth of the gospel involves belief in the supernatural. Likewise, it is generally acknowledged that the postmodern world rejects absolutism, exclusivism, and supernaturalism. Given this, we are attempting to proclaim absolutistic truth in a relativistic age, an exclusivistic worldview in a pluralistic world, and a supernatural message to a naturalistic mindset.<sup>64</sup>

It is evident that the gospel leader is presented an "impossible" task. Yet that same leader understands that gospel proclamation and spiritual leader-speak are attended by a great and powerful dynamic of the Holy Spirit<sup>65</sup> (1 Tim 4:1, 14; 2 Tim 1:14) as well as co-workers in the mission.

The compelling gospel leader will find great encouragement in the reality that the Holy Spirit is the power behind gospel proclamation and leader-speak. Regardless of the seeming impossibility of the task, the gospel spokesman can move forward with confidence that the spoken word will travel with a Divine dynamic. Whether the missionary message is from the pulpit, a classroom discussion, a conversation in the hospital, or a chance meeting at the coffee shop, the gospel leader speaks good news in the power of the Spirit.

**Gospel proclamation.** Insofar as formal gospel preaching is concerned, there continues to be winds of change. It appears that some elements of the church have become

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<sup>64</sup>Norman L. Geisler, "Proclaiming the Changeless Truth in These Changing Times," *Southwestern Journal of Theology* 55, no. 1 (Fall 2012): 50.

<sup>65</sup>Because of the extraordinary principle involved here, it is necessary to include additional Pauline teaching on the work of the Holy Spirit, as well as Scripture outside the realm of Pauline thought. Rom 14:17, 15:13, 16, 19; 1 Cor 2:4, 2:13, 12; Gal 3:5, 4:6; Eph 1:13, 3:16; 1 Thess 1:5; 2 Thess 2:13; Titus 3:5. "But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you" (John 14:26). "But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth; for He will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak; and He will disclose to you what is to come" (John 16:13).

aware of the supposed lack of interest the post-Christian world has in preaching and has been forced (in their minds) to reconsider the ministry of proclamation.<sup>66</sup> Once inductive rational persuasion was the dominant model for formal preaching. Then a narrative form was proclaimed as the new way forward. But what does Paul say? What does a pre-Christian preacher have to say to post-Christian preachers? In consideration of Pauline proclamation identified in the first-century Mediterranean world, what does 1 and 2 Timothy have to teach the twenty-first century church about preservation and promotion of the gospel?

First, as Thompson suggests, Paul's letter, though considered the second option to actual speech, clearly communicates the gospel, the exact message Paul would have spoken.<sup>67</sup> Therefore his writing offers a clear picture of rhetorical argument, stylistic arrangement, and the logical sequence of his message. One can also see how the contextual situation determined his proclamation. Paul was connected to the local culture as well as the social situation of his churches.

Second, it is clear Paul delivered the *kerygma* as well as the *didache*. That is, he preached evangelistically promoting the gospel as well as taught biblical principles of Christian living in the same sermon. A generation of "Pauline preachers" can be loosed from the grip of their seminary homiletics laboratory and resist the urge to mentally label their sermon as either "evangelistic" or "nurture." First and 2 Timothy reveal that Paul addressed both in the same discourse. For example, 1 Timothy 1 warns of opponents who teach strange doctrines and a few verses later Paul is rehearsing his salvation story.

Third, even the brief witness of two diminutive pastoral letters, 1 and 2 Timothy, supports the use of narrative or 'story telling' in preaching. Why is there such an aversion to the creative use of "storytelling?" If Jesus taught primarily as a storyteller,

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<sup>66</sup>See, for example, James W. Thompson, *Preaching Like Paul: Homiletical Wisdom for Today* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2001); Chang, *Engaging Unbelief*.

<sup>67</sup>Thompson, *Preaching Like Paul*, 27-36.

why is such deemed prohibitive to modern day preachers and teachers? What is the fear of being an expository preacher who utilizes story? For example, consider the following from Christopher Wayne King:

Narrative preachers consider their sermon as a time of storytelling; expository preachers consider their sermons to be an explanation and application of God's word. Such story telling that seeks an existential experience in the listener cannot adequately fulfill Paul's mandate to confront and correct false teachers. . . . While this use of the Word of God is paramount in expository preaching, it does not exist as a primary concern for narrative preachers.<sup>68</sup>

With full deference to King it nonetheless appears that the apostle employs storytelling and a well-reasoned logical approach in his words to Timothy. The apostle employs a specific analytical attack directed against false teachers and then briefly alludes to his own story as a means to communicate that he was once as blind and misled as they (1 Tim 1). The injunctions Paul gives in his letters are often the results of reality—stories communicated to him. One can almost “hear” the stories behind the instructions in 1 Timothy 2, where it is likely some women supported by false teachers were seeking to promote themselves to leadership. Likewise is there not a story behind Paul's specific instructions in 1 Timothy 3 concerning worthy and unworthy elders? Could this passage be the red light that signals a narrative about the opponents?

In 2 Timothy 1 Paul ushers his readers into Timothy's boyhood home to meet his mother and grandmother. Is there not a storyline in this passage that could shed light on the religious upbringing of young boys like Timothy who were reared in a home of mixed parenting and faithful female figures? Also, how can one not visualize the story of Paul suffering alone? “For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure has come,” as Paul urges Timothy to “come before winter. . . . For I am already being poured out. . . . At my first defense no one supported me, but all deserted me” (2 Tim 4). Similarly, is there not a story in the simple request, “When you come

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<sup>68</sup>Christopher Wayne King, “Expository Preaching as a Means to Fulfill Paul's Mandate in the Pastoral Epistles to Confront and Correct False Teaching” (Ph.D. diss., Southern Baptist Seminary, April 2006), 174.

bring the cloak and the books . . . especially the parchments”? Paul’s epistle provides an example of range and freedom in style in teaching, preaching, and gospel apologetics.

**Gospel defense.** But how does the contemporary “Pauline leader” enable the church to defend the gospel? The working premise here is that the church cannot promote a gospel it cannot defend. Likewise, the church cannot defend a gospel it does not understand. Under the assumption that the church knows and understands the gospel, the dynamic leader is free to equip the church with defensive skills to debunk false teaching concerning the gospel.

Nonetheless, the assumption above may need to be addressed because the faithful leader cannot assume that his flock can faithfully and accurately rehearse the essentials of the gospel. The essence of the gospel is not about what God can give, such as money, happiness, health, or a new job. Yet in many quarters that is the message being sent and received. And as a result the church is littered with comparison shoppers who choose churches like they chose their appliances and cars.<sup>69</sup> The Good News is that Christ died and rose again and offers salvation to those who repent and believe. As simple as that seems to be, not unlike in Paul’s day, the message has been distorted and disfigured. The fact that a secular news organization points out such truth makes it even more disconcerting and embarrassing.

The “prosperity gospel,” an insipid heresy whose popularity among American Christians has boomed in recent years, teaches that God blesses those God favors most with material wealth.

The ministries of three televangelists commonly viewed as founders of the prosperity gospel movement—Kenneth Hagin, Kenneth Copeland and Frederick K. C. Price—took hold in the 1970s and 1980s. One of the oldest and best-known proponents of prosperity theology, Oral Roberts—the television faith-healer who in 1987 told his flock that God would call him home if he didn’t raise \$8 million in a matter of weeks—died at 91 last week.

But the past decade has seen this pernicious doctrine proliferate in more mainstream circles. Joel Osteen, the 46-year-old head of Lakewood Church in Houston, has a TV ministry that reaches more than 7 million viewers, and his 2004 book “Your

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<sup>69</sup>Thompson, *Preaching Like Paul*, 107.

Best Life Now: 7 Steps to Living at Your Full Potential,” has sold millions of copies. “God wants us to prosper financially, to have plenty of money, to fulfill the destiny He has laid out for us,” Osteen wrote in a 2005 letter to his flock.

As crass as that may sound, Osteen’s version of the prosperity gospel is more gentle (and decidedly less sweaty) than those preached by such co-religionists as Benny Hinn, T. D. Jakes and the appropriately named Creflo Dollar.

Few theological ideas ring more dissonant with the harmony of orthodox Christianity than a focus on storing up treasures on Earth as a primary goal of faithful living. The gospel of prosperity turns Christianity into a vapid bless-me club, with a doctrine that amounts to little more than spiritual magical thinking: If you pray the right way, God will make you rich.<sup>70</sup>

In order to counteract such teaching, the church will first need to understand, in some measure of detail, the gospel of the Scriptures. The effective leader proactively addresses this issue with deliberate leader-speak. Any number of settings provide opportunity for leaders to teach the essentials of the gospel. Obviously pulpit ministry is a platform for such transference, yet traditional preaching does not allow for dialogue or questions. The “Pauline leader” may find it necessary, as appropriate, to break the mold of traditional preaching and preach like Paul in dialogical fashion:

Now when they had traveled through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica, where there was a synagogue of the Jews. And according to Paul’s custom, he went to them, and for three Sabbaths *reasoned* [emphasis added] with them from the Scriptures, explaining and giving evidence that the Christ had to suffer and rise again from the dead, and *saying*, ‘This Jesus whom I am proclaiming to you is the Christ.’ And some of them were persuaded and joined Paul and Silas, along with a great multitude of the God-fearing Greeks and a number of the leading women. (Acts 17:1-4)

That Paul “reasoned” with the Jews in the synagogue on the Sabbath is excitedly relevant for a discussion on leader-speak. To reason, *διελέξατο*<sup>71</sup> (Acts 17:2) is to dialogue. To be precise, Paul talked and the Jews talked. Paul made a point and his audience made a point. Paul offered a proposition and the Jews countered with a proposition and, or a question. Within the context of this dialogue, Paul was “explaining”

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<sup>70</sup>Cathleen Falsani, “The Prosperity Gospel,” *The Washington Post*, 2014, accessed September 8, 2014, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/special/opinions/outlook/worst-ideas/prosperity-gospel.html>.

<sup>71</sup>*BibleWorks7 Software for Biblical Exegesis and Research* (Norfolk, VA: Bibleworks, 2002). *Διελέξατο*, verb indicative aorist middle deponent 3<sup>rd</sup> person singular from *διαλέγομαι* to discuss or conduct a discussion.

and “giving evidence” of the resurrected Jesus. Evidently God used this form of leader-speak because some were persuaded.

This type of dialogical communication could certainly aid the pulpit ministry in making certain that the message has been properly offered and received. And dialogical teaching in this fashion could be employed in any setting of gospel presentation. Perhaps small groups or special “required” Bible training sessions could be arranged. The possibilities are endless. Once the household of God is gathered for in-depth teaching on the nature and substance of the gospel, what should they hear? Mark Dever is helpful at this point as he not only speaks substance but also delivery of the message. He is rightfully concerned that his church be healthy and is convinced that part of a prescription for such health is a proper understanding of the gospel.

First, Dever cautions that in offering the gospel one does not “present some of the very real benefits of the gospel *as* the gospel itself.”<sup>72</sup> Beyond that, whenever Dever promotes the gospel he has in his mind a simple fixed outline so that his passion does not override his thought process and does not mistakenly offer more than he is authorized: “(1) God, (2) man, (3) Christ, and (4) response.”<sup>73</sup> Because knowing the gospel is foundational to promoting and protecting the gospel, the groundwork of certain knowledge must be constructed. In reference to laying a proper foundation (in business leadership), Runion and Mack state, “The overriding objective of the foundational stage is to provide experience and knowledge to give a basis for levels of dynamic learning and leadership.”<sup>74</sup> Providing such a foundation for greater learning is what Dever proposes in gospel instruction.

Even though he is certainly not referencing gospel proclamation, Murray offers

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<sup>72</sup>Mark Dever, *What Is a Healthy Church* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2007), 77.

<sup>73</sup>*Ibid.*, 76.

<sup>74</sup>Runion and Mack, *Perfect Phrases*, 38.

sage advice for gospel leaders involved in the task of promotion and protection of the Good News.

If you really want to communicate, and make a connection with your audience, you have to understand what it is that they need to hear, where they're coming from . . . . This connection only comes when leaders have spent time thinking hard about the audience.<sup>75</sup>

As the pastoral leader seeks to communicate the essentials of the gospel to his church family he will seek to understand who they are and the life context from which they come. Such knowledge does not change the fundamentals of the gospel but it may modify the verbal and contextual approach the leader-teacher utilizes.

To that point, Runion and Mack suggest that certain “bridge-building phrases” could be used in a manner to engage listeners’ interest. The concept of bridge-building phrases could be very helpful for the pastoral leader who sets out to “teach the gospel” to long-time members who perceive learning the basic tenants of the gospel as plowing old ground. The authors offer a bridge-building example: “If you’ve seen the TV show *Undercover Boss*, you’ll understand the value of what I’m going to ask you to do. I want you to . . .”<sup>76</sup> Accordingly, the ministry leader, having considered his audience, his objective, and his words, may say: If you’ve seen the TV show *Undercover Boss*, you’ll understand the value of what I’m going to ask you to do. I want you to work with me through the basics of the gospel because I want us to be able to clearly communicate the gospel, as well as defend the gospel.

Second, for Dever the process of communicating the essentials of the gospel continues with self-examination of words utilized. He essentially asks himself: What words or approach will best communicate? Have I communicated? Dever is not only concerned about what he says but also what his audience hears, so he asks himself questions concerning his content and delivery: “Have I explained that God is holy? Have

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<sup>75</sup>Kevin Murray, *The Language of Leaders* (London: Kogan Page, 2013), 124-25.

<sup>76</sup>Runion and Mack, *Perfect Phrases*, 38.

I made it clear that we humans are a terrible mixture? Have I clearly stated that a person must respond?”<sup>77</sup> As a part of self-inspection, Dever uses word like *explained*, *clearly stated*, and *made it clear*. Pastoral leaders do well to inspect their own leader-speak, whether it is related to teaching the gospel or casting a vision, because leaders do not always speak properly and listeners do not always hear what is said. Kevin Murray rightly comments, “It’s not what you say; it’s what they hear.”<sup>78</sup>

The mission of the household of God is to promote and protect the mystery of godliness. When family members “know and cherish the gospel above everything else they will increasingly want to share it with the world.”<sup>79</sup> However, one key is to know the gospel. Wise pastoral leaders will work hard to make certain that the church they steward truly becomes an authentic household—that they truly know, believe, and have responded to the gospel. A Christian who loves Christ and is invested in knowing and loving the truth will be equipped to defend the gospel, functioning as a “pillar and support of the truth.” When one promotes the gospel, one also defends the gospel.

### **Paul’s Preservation of the Gospel Is Realized in His Proclamation of the Gospel**

It seems evident that Paul offered any number of ‘defenses’ of the gospel.<sup>80</sup>

However, his most direct and simple defense begins with his testimonial call:

For you have heard of my former manner of life in Judaism, how I used to persecute the church of God beyond measure and tried to destroy it; and I was advancing in Judaism beyond many of my contemporaries among my countrymen, being more extremely zealous for my ancestral traditions. But when God, who had set me apart *even* from my mother’s womb and called me through His grace, was pleased to reveal His Son in me so that I might preach Him among the Gentiles. (Gal 1:13-16).

Paul says that God revealed His Son, so that he might preach His Son. Paul’s

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<sup>77</sup>Dever, *What Is a Healthy Church*, 76.

<sup>78</sup>Murray, *The Language of Leaders*, 124.

<sup>79</sup>Dever, *What Is a Healthy Church*, 77.

<sup>80</sup>Rom 1:16-20; Gal 1-3; Phil 1:17.

defense of the gospel is to declare the God of the gospel—Jesus Christ. Moreover he uses his conversion story to speak the gospel as well as allow the truth of the gospel to reveal the glory of God. Tim Kuepher explains, “He realizes that in order for us to see God’s glory, we must see Jesus, so it is Jesus that he puts front and center.”<sup>81</sup> Paul’s defense of the gospel appears to be a combination of exalting Jesus as well as offering his own story (or the story of others) in light of the cross.

The “mystery of godliness” is understood as the gospel, and the gospel is ultimately identified as the person, work, and words of Jesus. Accordingly, Paul exalts Jesus as the truth in contrast to the strange speculations promoted by the opponents (1 Tim 1:3-11). Likewise, he supports the truth of the glorious gospel by sharing his testimony (1 Tim 1:11-17). The truth is understood as promoting only one mediator—the man Jesus Christ (1 Tim 2:5) and is followed by a personal reference, “For this I was appointed a preacher and an apostle (I am telling the truth, I am not lying) as a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth” (1 Tim 2:7). Timothy is enjoined by Paul to not be ashamed of the gospel (2 Tim 1:8) and he adds personal comments: “[J]oin with me in suffering for the gospel according to the power of God” (v. 8); “I was appointed a preacher and an apostle and a teacher” (v. 11); “I am not ashamed” (v. 12); and “all who are in Asia turned away from me” (v. 15).

According to Paul, the defense of the gospel is not about “wrangling over words” (2 Tim 2:14) because such activity is to traffic with those who cling to “a form of godliness but deny its power” (2 Tim 3:5). Instead, Paul challenges Timothy to follow him and the gospel he proclaimed and defended. Finally, Paul charges Timothy to always be ready to preach the gospel (2 Tim 4:2) and states that he (Paul) is ready to depart having fulfilled his days of gospel leadership. He has been faithful to his gospel charge (2 Tim 4:6). Paul’s testimonial defense is to proclaim the truth of Jesus with the added

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<sup>81</sup>Tim Kuepher, “I Saw the Light,” *Vision* 10 (Fall 2009): 19.

caveat, a testimony of grace, that such truth has profoundly changed and redirected his life and eternity.

Does Paul's approach as enunciated above deny a valid ministry of apologetics? Of course not. "Sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts, always *being* ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence" (1 Pet 3:15). To be sure, one could argue that much of Paul's writings are apologetic in nature with Galatians standing as perhaps a primary example. The contention here is not that Paul did not possess a reasoned defense of the gospel, but rather for Paul, it appears the most effective defense of the gospel is the offensive power of the gospel. The truth of God is able to defend itself! Paul defended the gospel by preaching the gospel.

Yet it remains that the complicated world of the twenty-first century will require the finest leadership efforts of God's people. Christian leaders must afford themselves of every legitimately acceptable advantage to promote and defend the gospel. However, in the end it is the person and work of Jesus that is the issue. When Christ captures the hearts, minds, and tongues of his servant leaders, His gospel effectively marches forward.

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## ABSTRACT

### THE ECCLESIOLOGICAL GROUNDING OF PAULINE LANGUAGE OF LEADERSHIP IN 1 AND 2 TIMOTHY

Robert Lee Stanford, Ph.D.  
The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2015  
Chair: Dr. Hal K. Pettegrew

The purpose of this textually-based research was to establish the thesis that there is a discernible language of leadership utilized by the apostle Paul in 1 and 2 Timothy, born out of his ecclesiological purposes. This thesis investigated Paul's leadership from the perspective of his leader-speak.

A working premise was that leaders lead through communication of concepts and ideas, with the goal of influencing and persuading followers. To that end, leadership was defined as the effort to influence others to accomplish a collective goal through the development of relationships, actions, and words, which stimulate the attendant actions of those being led, in order to effect the desired response of a shared achievement. Similarly Paul's leader-speak was defined, in part, as that which was communicated, to some degree, through the rhetorical teaching of his day and empowered and utilized by the holy spirit.

The thesis measured against the discoveries offered a biblical base, 1 Timothy 3:15, for the theological context and purpose that informs Paul's language of leadership. Paul's ecclesiological purpose is that the church, the pillar and support of truth, must protect and promote the gospel. To that end, Paul's leader-speak is concerned about orthodoxy as well as orthopraxy.

Such leader-speak issues from Paul's mouth to Timothy in a variety of voices including that of a father, teacher, and example. A parental perspective is apparent in the

conversational framing and vocabulary Paul utilizes, as well as the tenor of his words. Paul speaks as a teacher in the employment of metaphorical illustrations, preformed materials and rhetorical strategies. Paul's leader-speak is often the rhetoric of example: godly behavior in suffering. Such implicit language of example is often that of influence and persuasion, as well as contrast. At other times, Paul is explicitly direct in his leader-speak.

The thesis of a Pauline language of leadership grounded in an ecclesiological purpose appears to be a valuable proposition. Thus, some implications and applications of these conclusions were discussed.

**KEYWORDS:** language of leadership, leader-speak, Pauline Ecclesiology, 1Timothy 3:15-16, Pastoral Epistles, goal of instruction, trustworthy sayings, faithful sayings, household of God, church conduct, church behavior, εὐσέβεια, godliness, church as family, household metaphor, Pauline leadership, Pauline language, Pauline *synkrisis*, Pauline rhetoric, Pauline rhetorical strategies, Pauline metaphors, Paul as teacher, Paul as father, Paul as example, teacher-leader, father-leader, language of family, language of teacher, language of father, language of example, language of suffering, language of memory, testimonial language, leader communication, Louis Pondy, Timothy as son, man of God,

## VITA

Robert Lee Stanford

### EDUCATIONAL

B.M., Stephen F. Austin State University, 1975  
M.M., Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1977  
M.Div., Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1985  
Th.M., Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2004  
D.Min., Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary, 1995

### MINISTERIAL

Interim Pastor, Comal Church, New Braunfels, Texas, 2012.

### ACADEMIC

Adjunct Faculty, Global University School of Theology, 2011-  
Adjunct Faculty, Golden Gate Baptist Seminary, 2012-