
a *Grace Notes* course

The Epistle of Paul to Titus

Bible Study by Correspondence

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Lesson 4 - Titus 2: 1-6

Grace Notes

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Titus

Lesson 4: Titus 2:1-6

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The Titus Curriculum

This is Lesson 4 (of 10) in the **Titus** course curriculum.

Lessons	Topics to Study
Lesson 1: Titus 1:1-7	Godliness; Hope; Preaching, Paul the Apostle
Lesson 2: Titus 1:8,9	Judgement, Justice, and Judging; Shepherds of the Flock of God
Lesson 3: Titus 1:10-16	Circumcision; Union with Christ; Mental Attitude; Sins of the Tongue
Lesson 4: Titus 2:1-6	Faith-Rest; Old Age; Authority
Lesson 5: Titus 2:7-10	Servants of God; Servants and Slaves in Palestine
Lesson 6: Titus 2:11,12	Grace; Salvation Doctrines
Lesson 7: Titus 2:13-15	Rapture; Redemption
Lesson 8: Titus 3:1-6	Anger; Forgiveness; Regeneration; Sin Nature; Essence of God
Lesson 9: Titus 3:7-11	Heresy and Apostasy; Propitiation; Imputation; Reconciliation
Lesson 10: Titus 3:12-15	Apollos; Aquila and Priscilla

Instructions for Completing Lesson 4

Begin each study session with prayer. It is the Holy Spirit who makes spiritual things discernable to Christians, so it is essential to be in fellowship with the Lord during Bible study.

Read the whole book of Titus often. It is a short book, and reading it many times will help you understand the material much better.

Instructions

1. Read the introduction to the study of Titus
 2. Study **Titus 2:1-6** by reading the verses and studying the notes. Be sure to read any other Bible passages that are called out in the notes.
 3. Study the **topics** in the same manner. Take particular care to trace all of the discussion through the Bible passages which are included. The topics are called out in the text at a certain point, but you can study the topics in any order you wish. **Review** all of the notes in the Titus study and the topics
 4. Go to the Quiz page and follow the instructions to complete all the questions on the quiz. The quiz is “open book”. You may refer to all the notes and to the Bible when you take the test. But you should not get help from another person.
 5. When you have completed the Quiz, be sure to **SAVE** your file. If the file is lost, and that can happen at Grace Notes as well, you will want to be able to reproduce your work.
 6. To send the Quiz back to Grace Notes, follow the instructions on the Quiz page.
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Titus, Chapter 2

Titus 2:1

But speak thou the things which become sound doctrine:

“But” : This word is a conjunction which introduces a sharp contrast with what was written in the previous chapter.

The conclusion of chapter 1 was a description of false teachers and heretics and the troubles they cause in a local church. By contrast, chapters 2 and 3 contain some very direct applications regarding good works. Sound teaching and a holy lifestyle are the antidotes for the problems in these local churches.

Some people claim that Paul's doctrine, which emphasizes the inner man and the work of the Holy Spirit, differs considerably from James' writing because of James' emphasis on good works. The Epistle to Titus lays these arguments to rest because it has very strong teaching regarding Christian living.

“you speak”: (lalew), “to communicate by speaking”.

[Please note again that the Greek omega is represented by the letter “w” and is pronounced “oh”. wd]

This word refers to Titus's function as a teacher of the Word. Titus is commanded to speak as becomes the true minister of God, in contrast to the false teachers described in the previous chapter.

Compare this verse with the last verse in the chapter.

“the things which become”:

The verb “become” is (prepei), meaning “it is fitting, it is proper, it is suitable”. The doctrine which Titus is to teach is to be suitable, proper for sound, uncorrupted messages.

“sound”: (hugaiaw) “uncorrupted, healthy, correct, accurate”.

[See discussion on Titus 1:9 for a discussion of the use of this word.]

“doctrine”: (didaskalia) “teaching from an authoritative source”

2 Tim. 4:2-4 “Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove (elegkw), rebuke (epitimaw), exhort (parakalew) with all longsuffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.”

Again, compare with Titus 2:15.

The content of the Word of God reveals the lies and unspiritual conduct of the false teachers. By contrast, the conduct of true believers gives evidence of the reality in the claim to be a “new creation”, to have been “born again”, and to have “Christ living in me.” And it is the Word of God, “sound doctrine”, which produces a life that is pleasing to the Lord.

A great orator can captivate people without much content; so can a consistently entertaining person or someone with great charisma.

In a Bible class, however, the only way to keep an audience of thinking people is to teach from the text of the Word of God.

One easy way out of all the work of scholarship is to play to the audience - to “tickle their ears”. To tell them what they already agree with and are enthusiastic about. That produces more pats on the back, more recognition.

The false teacher on Crete would be tempted to pander to his audience, for the sake of money. He might find out what political or religious party the congregation liked, and find he could please the people by bashing their opponents. Or he might discover what crusade the people were on, and become a “caped crusader” himself, striking out against one issue or another.

The Bible teacher must be the edified, mature, grace-oriented person the Bible demands, before any teaching is done! You teach from the text; and your life backs it up!

To apply sound doctrine, you must understand what the Bible says! You grow in grace only from

the doctrine that you understand and place your faith in!

The teaching of (didaskalia) is teaching from an authoritative source. And this command, to teach doctrine, is for the protection of both the teacher and the congregation. It has the following benefits:

- Staying with the text lifts a great burden from the teacher; God's Word is the source of all comments and applications, not the teacher's personal opinion.
- Staying with the text reduces the temptation to “play to the crowd”, to engage in personality dynamics.
- It eliminates the “Pied Piper” effect in which the teacher becomes the charismatic leader of the flock on some great quest.
- If the teacher can stay with the text, he can resist the temptation to preach, to scold, to bully, to pontificate, to sermonize.
- He is much more likely to succeed in presenting God's point of view rather than his own.
- Sound doctrinal teaching can eliminate emotional responses to the speaker or to his words. Sometimes what is called “motivating” is just such an emotional response; and as such it is not lasting.
- That which endures in any believer's life is that portion of the Word of God which actually gets applied. Edification will still be there when all emotional responses are gone.

Titus 2:2

That the aged men be sober, grave, temperate, sound in faith, in charity, in patience.

“That the aged men”: This is (presbuteis), a man mature in years, as opposed to (presbuteros), meaning mature, or senior, in rank.

Philemon v. 9 “For love's sake I rather beseech you, being such a one as Paul the aged (presbuteis), and now also a prisoner of Jesus Christ.

Paul clearly does not think of himself as decrepit or elderly. He considers himself a senior believer who can make a claim for some respect from Philemon. This word is a reference to older men -

older not only in age but also in Christian experience. These qualities of maturity are desirable in older people.

Note here the great practicality of Bible doctrine. Bible study is not some arcane practice which gives its practitioners a mystic inner quality. Rather, the Word of God transforms the inner life and outer life, for the practical benefit of the believer and of all those who know him.

The Word of God makes old age the crowning glory of a person's lifetime. Old age can have promise, productivity, vitality, confidence, and a great deal of happiness, providing that spiritual preparation has taken place during the younger years.

The older one becomes as a believer, the more his life should improve! God's Plan has answers to any problem that life can produce; but God's Plan is one of preventive maintenance. A young person must prepare now for a happy, productive old age.

Coming into old age, the mature believer has great assurance:

- He is assured of his redemption
- He understands salvation and spirituality by grace.
- He knows how to claim promises and avoid depression and anxiety.
- He understands suffering, testing, and has lived victoriously through a lot of it.
- He is ready for both suffering and happiness in his old age.
- He has applied the Word of God to his experience.

Topic: Old Age

“be sober”: from (neifalios), “temperate in all areas of life.”

This is from the verb (neifw), meaning to be well-balanced, self-controlled, restrained, alert.

It is not the same word which is translated “sober” in 1:8 or 2:12. That word is (swphrwn), meaning of sound mind, mentally stable, thoughtful, although translated sober in the KJV.

[It's hard to “pronounce” (swphrwn) in your mind. Change the “w” to long “o” and say “sophon”.]

There seems to be some confusion in the translation of the KJV (at least *I* am confused!). The English language is not so poor that a proper translation could not have been made of both words, (neifw) and (swphrwn), so as to show off the differences between them. We should not have been allowed to believe that they mean the same thing.

The verb (neifw) had an extensive connotation in the ancient world. In the listing of Greek inscriptions there is an indication that (neifalios) was used to describe the proper state of mind for temple worship.

1 Thess. 5:1-8 - for an example of the extended use of (neifw)

2 Tim. 4:1-5. - for the connotation in (neifw) of watchfulness.

1 Pet. 1:13 “Wherefore, gird up the loins of your mind, be sober (neifw), and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ;”

1 Pet. 5:8,9 “Be sober (neifw), be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: whom resist steadfast in the faith...”

“grave” : From (semnos), meaning “honorable”, “noble”, “dignified”.

Little meaning is carried into modern American English from the word “grave”, but we still speak of the “gravity” of a situation, meaning the seriousness of it.

The mature man is to be established in the Lord to the extent that the Lord has given him victory over the obvious defects in his soul. He is to have the characteristics of good character and personal integrity - in short, nobility and dignity.

In his youth, the man's vitality, good looks, his strength, and his youthful energy often covered up defects such as bitterness, envy, hatred, immorality, etc. However, if these characteristics are present in old age, they become highly visible. An elderly “babe in Christ” is a sorry sight, and is not regarded as honorable, noble, or dignified.

Old age strips the body of its glamor in order to emphasize the beauty of the soul. The greatest

beauty can be seen in old age, it is the beauty which is more than skin deep.

The mature believer can be a library of divine viewpoint, of stable thinking. And a mature man's wisdom, discernment, prudence are great assets to his community and to the local church.

“temperate”: From (swfrwn), “prudent, thoughtful, discreet.” When used of women in Tit. 2:5, “discreet, modest.”

You begin to see what I mean about the translation. Here is (swphrwn), translated “sober” elsewhere in Titus, but “temperate” here and “discrete” later on. Yet (neifalios) is translated “sober” earlier in this verse! I grant that words in translation can take on different meanings depending on context and colloquial usage, but this is confusing.

The word (swphrwn) does not mean temperate in the sense of self-restraint. That word is (egkrateis), which we saw in Tit. 1:8. To be temperate means to have mastery over the details of life and self-control in all areas of life.

To be (swphrwn) means to have a mental attitude of care for one's reputation, one's character, a consideration for appearances, along with a connotation of mental stability. To be sure, the ideas are related, but in application, “thoughtfulness” or “prudence” are the mental attitudes, therefore precede self-restraint, the practical outworking of prudence. Here again, the meaning would have been clearer in the KJV with a more consistent interpretation.

I leave it to you to examine these verses in the NASB, the NIV, and other versions, to decide whether the translations are more consistent and clear, in light of this brief explanation of the definitions.

“sound in faith”: (hugiainw), “uncorrupted” + (pistis), “faith”.

(hugiainw) is in the present participle of the Greek verb, and used as an adjective, “uncorrupted”, “healthy”, “whole”.

(pistis) is a Greek noun in the instrumental case, indicating that “faith” is the cause (instrument) of the “soundness”.

Therefore, a more accurate reading would be, “uncorrupted because of faith”. The older man has spiritual maturity and integrity because of his life of faith in God and His Word.

The mature man is to be experienced in the use of faith. He has years of experience in using faith daily, adding to his life every day layer upon layer of applied truth.

But it is not the intensity of the faith which he holds, but the *object* of his faith which is valid. Even mustard seed faith is enough when God and His Word are the objects of the belief.

The question here is, “Can I believe the Word of God?” “Can God’s promises be trusted?” “Are Christian life principles correct; do they work?” “Can I really build a marriage on the Bible?” “Can I really raise my children properly using Bible principles?” “Can I function in society, be productive, be successful, achieve great things, by placing my confidence in the Word of God?”

The answer here is, “Look at the mature Christians, men and women. They are the examples of what successful Christian living can be. They look to Jesus as the author and finisher of their faith; you can do the same!”

The mature believer’s faith is uncorrupted with worldly opinions, human viewpoint, religious semantics, or empty false doctrines. He stands like a rock by means of his faith in Christ and His Word.

“in charity”: (agapei) - impersonal love, the fruit of the Holy Spirit.

The characteristics of Christian love, which is the fruit of spiritual growth, are amply detailed in 1 Cor. 13.

“in patience”: (hupomonei), “endurance, tolerance, fortitude, patience”

Patience (fortitude) is the ability to endure toil, suffering, severe disappointment, without falling apart, without getting depressed, without striking out against enemies, real or imagined.

Patience is also the ability to delay gratification, to wait for God’s timing for everything - promotion, recognition, prosperity, rights. Children want immediate gratification of every desire, every whim. Mature people can wait as long as

necessary to receive what they need or want, knowing that the Lord will prosper in His own time.

This is Faith-Rest in action. And this is the answer to many sin problems in life, such as those brought on by self-indulgence.

Romans 5:1-5.

Testing is designed to build patience; character is built up in this manner. In these verses of Romans, a Christian is put to the test and found to be of solid character. These things are a product of patience and lead to great confidence.

Read 2 Cor. 6:4-10.

2 Cor. 12:12 “Truly the signs of an apostle were wrought among you in all patience, in signs, and wonders, and mighty deeds.”

Read Col. 1:9-11 - concerning the source of patience.

Titus 2:3

The aged women likewise, that they be in behavior as becometh holiness, not false accusers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things.

Greek students like this verse because it contains a rare triple (hapax legoumena). That means that there are three Greek words in this verse that appear nowhere else in the Greek of the New Testament. A word that appears only once is much harder to interpret than one which appears in many contexts.

“The aged women”: (presbutis). “older woman, senior woman” Again, this is not a reference to elderliness but to seniority.

“likewise”: “in the same manner”. A reference to the previous verse and qualifications of older men.

“that they be in behavior”: (katasteima) - “a state, a condition, a manner of life”.

This is the only place this word is used in the New Testament. However, we get some help from Josephus, Plutarch, and a few Greek inscriptions, and learn that in the first century, the word “behavior” referred to a person’s condition or state.

In modern American, the word “behavior” refers to conduct or manners. But in the older English of 1611, as in the Greek, “behavior” referred much

more to a life condition, to a person's inner characteristics, which would, in turn, lead to an outward behavior. Here the KJV is very close to the Greek when we use the colloquial English of the early 17th Century (see Oxford English dictionary).

“as becometh holiness”: (hieroprepeis), from (hiero), “temple” + (prepeis), “suitable”, thus, “suitable for the temple”, or “suitable to be used in worship”.

This is the second singular occurrence (hapax legoumena) in this verse. When this word was used to describe a person, it meant “worthy of reverence or respect”. It was used in literature outside the Bible to describe the conduct of a priest in the Greek temple.

While not found elsewhere in the New Testament, the word is seen in Greek literature, in Josephus; and in IV Maccabees 9:25 (Septuagint Greek translation), in the phrase, “...the revered (hieroprepeis) youth let go his life”, referring to a martyr's death.

The older woman is to have a reputation or manner of life that is worthy of respect as a mature woman of God.

“not false accusers”:

This is the plural feminine of (diabolos), “treacherous informers”.

The verb form is (diaballw), meaning “to throw through; to throw over; to defame; to inform against; to bring charges with hostile intent.” (English cognate, “diabolical”)

In the N.T., when this word appears in Greek with the definite article (and in the masculine), (ho diabolos), it refers to Satan, the Devil, “the accuser” of the brethren.

The godly woman is to have victory over sins of the tongue, particularly, in this case, the sin of bearing false witness, that is, of being a false accuser.

1 Tim. 3:11 “Even so must their wives be grave, not slanderers, sober, faithful in all things.

The deacons themselves are to be “grave, not doubletongued, not given to much wine...”

“not given to much wine”:

This reads the same in English as Tit. 1:7, but the Greek is different. In 1:7, the word is (paroinos), which means “drunk with wine”, or “quarrelsome when in his cups”. There is a discussion in the notes for 1:7 regarding the use of alcohol by Christians.

Here the phrase is (oinw pollw dedulomenas), and it's interesting to try to learn the meanings of the Greek words here. That word (dedulomenas) is form of the verb (doulow). You may remember the noun form (doulos), “servant” or “slave”. In Titus 1:1, Paul calls himself a (doulos) of God.

This phrase means “to be in bondage or slavery to wine” or “to be under the restraint of wine”.

The KJV simply does not carry this meaning well at all. The phrase “not given to much wine” is much weaker than the Greek original.

To be effective in her personal witness for the Lord, and as an adviser and teacher of younger women, the mature godly woman must not be in bondage to addictions of the flesh, in particular in this passage, to alcohol.

Drunkenness was a big problem on Crete during this period; that's why it's mentioned so prominently in this letter.

“teachers of good things”: (kalodidaskalos), “one who teaches good”.

This is the third (hapax legoumena) - [by now you know what I mean!]

The importance of the teaching ministry of the older woman is seen in the next two verses. There are many young women who need the example and godly wisdom of the senior women in the church. The older woman's advice and teaching must be backed up with a consistent, holy lifestyle, accompanied by the ability to teach doctrine that is consistent with the production of divine good.

Titus 2:4

That they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children,

This verse begins with a purpose clause (beginning with “that”) that points to the reason for the conditions set up in verse 3.

One of the purposes for having mature, knowledgeable older women is for the teaching of younger women. These types of mature women are scarce.

Someone has to teach the younger woman how to love her husband and her children. You can't get what you need from "Dear Abby". That's like leading a lamb to the slaughter!

"that they may teach the young women to be sober":

Now, the words "they may teach...to be sober" are one word in the Greek, the verb (swphrwnidzw) -- "to teach to be mentally stable; to bring someone to his senses". We have seen the adjective form (swphrwn) in previous verses, so maybe even the Greek is becoming a little more familiar to you.

Again, the translation "to teach to be sober" does not carry the weight of the much more comprehensive Greek meaning.

This verb connotes sanity of mind and stability of thinking. There are many enemies of sanity and mental stability. A young married woman has great pressures of married life and exhausting work in child rearing. There is great opportunity for depression and bitterness to creep in. The older woman's counsel enables the young woman to be occupied with Christ, to see life "with eternity's values in view", to make decisions from the wisdom of God's viewpoint.

The mature woman will have sanity, clarity of thought, wisdom, edification in the soul. She will be the picture of Grace. And she will be able to communicate these things to young women. She is a jewel among women and has an enormous task in her function as a teacher.

"to love their husbands": (philandros), --> "to be husband-loving"

This is the only use of this Greek Word in the NT, but this word was common in the epitaphs of wives written on tombs.

A tomb inscription of the time of the Emperor Hadrian (3rd Cent.) read, "Julius Bassus to Otacilia Polla, his sweetest wife. Loving her husband (philandros) and loving her children (philoteknos), she lived with him unblameably for 30 years."

"to love their children": (philoteknos) "loving one's children", having due parental concern.

You wonder why a young woman has to be taught to love her own children. But for Christians, due parental concern goes far beyond natural maternal love (which does not have to be taught). The idea in this verse takes into consideration all of the child's life and concerns itself with everything that is associated with bringing him up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

This includes child training, education, teaching manners and decorum, respect for privacy and property, respect for authority, especially the authority of God, dependence on God, love for the Lord Jesus Christ and the Word of God.

Titus 2:5

To be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed.

"to be discreet": (swphrwn) - "having a sound mind, sensible, discreet"

Here, (swphrwn) is translated "discreet", rather than "sober" or "temperate". But it carries the same idea of sensibility and stability of thinking, one results of which would be discretion.

By the way, the NIV does a good service by consistently rendering (swphrwn) as "sensible". When you read the NIV with this in mind, you become aware of the connotation of mental stability and sensibility behind the thinking and actions of the people described.

"chaste": (hagnos) - "pure, chaste, modest, innocent, blameless".

Both men and women have to be taught about sin, about true love and marriage, about proper behavior between sexes, so that they can avoid sin and experience God's blessings in life to the maximum.

READ Ruth 3:1-11

"keepers at home": (oikourgos) - "one who is occupied with domestic affairs".

Proverbs 31 is the best description of the godly wife in her daily life.

I don't even need to comment. The Scripture always provides better examples and illustrations

of doctrine, anyway, and that's always preferable to an teacher's comments.

“good”: (agathos) - “good, profitable, generous, upright”.

This young woman will be a channel of blessing, to her husband and family and to others. She will grow spiritually beyond the selfishness of childhood. She will be a conduit of the Grace of God. Out of her innermost being will flow rivers of living water.

“obedient to their own husbands”: “to be subject to their own husbands”

Notice the order in which counsel is to be given. First, LOVE. Then, MENTAL STABILITY, then PURITY, then HOMEMAKER, finally, subjection to husbands.

It takes spiritual preparation to be willingly submissive to authority, of whatever type. When a Christian has actually grown somewhat in Christ, submission is nowhere near so large an issue.

Many novice Christian young women are incensed by the idea of any type of submission. Maybe they responded poorly to their parents' authority. They certainly want their freedom now, and they don't want some man, even a husband, lording it over them.

But the “sensible” Christian woman knows there is much more at stake, that a much larger plan is involved.

Christian marriage is portrayed in Ephesians 5 as a picture of the relationship of Jesus Christ to His church. The husband is commanded to love his wife “as Christ loves the church”. The wife is commanded to submit to her husband as the church does to the Lord.

God intends for Christian marriage to be an object lesson of this spiritual relationship to an unbelieving and careless world. It is a picture that must not be marred! If either the husband or the wife fail to fulfill the commands regarding their responsibilities in marriage, they become stumbling blocks of the worst kind, because they cloud the Gospel picture.

How does Satan “blind the minds of them who believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ should shine unto them”? Well, one way is

by tempting Christians to have non-Biblical marriages. And this is strikingly brought out in the next phrase...

“that the Word of God be not blasphemed”: this is (blasphemew), “to slander; to dishonor”

This is the naked blade of the Word of God, the “two-edged sword”. The issue is very clear.

Marriage is a picture of the Gospel. Failure to obey the commands regarding marriage brings slander on the Word of God. If you bring slander on the Word of God, you are in for big trouble! Jesus said that those who hindered little children from coming to Him would have been better off if they had been drowned at birth.

“God is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.” There is every indication in the Bible that the quickest way to come under severe divine chastisement is to hinder some unbeliever from receiving Christ!

All of the commands and principles of the Bible regarding marriage, sexual promiscuity, homosexuality, divorce, are laid out by God for one main reason, to convince the world to accept Christ as Savior. All other reasons for chastity, integrity, fidelity, and love in marriage, while important, are secondary to this.

Titus 2:6

Young men likewise exhort to be sober minded.

“Young men”: from (neoteros), “the young”.

“likewise”: “in the same manner; in the same way; likewise”

“exhort”: (parakalew), “to exhort; to urge”

“to be sober-minded”: from (swphrwnew), “to be in one's right mind; to think sensibly; to be serious. Yet another use of this (now familiar) word. Briefly, then, “all of the above” can be applied to young men.

Topical Studies

Faith-Rest

Introduction

One of the consistent features of the Christian life is testing. We live in a fallen world, in an imperfect society, among people whose way of life

is directed by Satan and their own sin natures. We cannot avoid the friction, conflict, or confrontation that results from this. We face daily disasters, small and great, which are brought on us suddenly by nature, by the ignorance or deliberate actions of other people, or even by our own mistakes and sins.

Faith-Rest is God's plan for Christians who are going through testing, who are having problems. Faith-Rest is the means by which Christians can have JOY, a happiness in this life which does not depend on people, circumstances, or things. Think of it! God promises that you can have the peace and joy of God, in spite of what's happening in your life, in spite of the problems and testing that you are going through.

Your testing may be mild or severe, or anything in between. There are family troubles, money problems, social conflicts, problems on the job...the list is endless. The charge of the elephant, or the charge of the mosquito, will come at any time, and usually without warning.

But you can always depend upon God's immediate and constant provision for you in your time of testing. He knows all about our tests before they occur and has made provisions in advance to meet our needs. (Eph. 1:3,4)

1 Cor. 10:13, "These has no testing taken you but such as is common to man; but God will, with the testing, also make a way of escape, that you may be able to bear it.

Hebrews 4 tells us that the wilderness generation didn't find rest because they didn't trust God to keep His promises. There's no reason we (believers of the church age) have to make the same mistake."

Whether the test is small or great, it is allowed by God to measure our faith and our application of the things He has provided for us in this life.

1 Peter 1:7 "That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perishes, though it be tried by fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ."

1 Peter 5:6,7 "Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God,

that he may exalt you in due time, casting all your care upon him; for he cares for you."

Definition of Faith-Rest

Faith-Rest: the process of understanding, believing, and applying the doctrines and promises of God's Word in times of testing in the Christian life.

The term "faith-rest", and its definition above, is taken from the Scriptures in Hebrews 4:1,2 "Let us therefore fear lest, a promise being left us of entering into His rest, any of you should seem to come short of it. For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them, but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it."

(Read Hebrews 3 and 4 before continuing with this study.)

Faith-Rest is designed to be used by the Christian throughout his lifetime, on a daily basis, as a technique for maintaining peace and spiritual balance during difficulties, problems, or disasters in life. Faith-Rest is one of the Christian's most important resources in making rapid progress toward Christian maturity and the production of divine good in the life.

There are two reasons why Christians fail to grow and prosper in the Christian life, and fail to profit from all the blessings, promises, and logistical provisions which God has put in place.

The most common reason for failure to "enter into rest" is a lack of knowledge of God's plan and the assets He has provided for us. Christians who don't know what the Word of God says will never know the promises of God or the provisions He has made for testing.

The other reason for failure is seen in the Children of Israel of the wilderness generation. They heard the teaching but did not mix it with faith, so they did not enter into rest (the promised land).

Examples of Faith-Rest (or lack thereof)

In this section, there are several examples from the Bible in which the people of God had ample information on which to base their faith in God. Sometimes the people trusted God and prospered.

Sometimes the people showed a complete lack of trust in God and fell apart when the tests came.

You will see in these Bible passages that the extent of a believer's spiritual maturity becomes obvious in hard times. It's easy to maintain a facade when things are going well, when there's plenty of money, good health, and little to worry about. All Christians look and behave about the same in good times. But when testing comes, those who have actually failed to grow in Christ come apart at the seams, and fall back into patterns of worry, blaming other people, and trying to solve their own problems by worldly means.

The examples discussed here are:

- Abraham, who first distrusted, then believed God, Genesis 15
- The Bitter Water Test at Marah, Exodus 15
- The No-Food Test and the First No-Water Test at Meribah, Exodus 16,17
- The "Giant" Test, Numbers 13 and 14
- The Second No-Water Test, Numbers 20

The Example of Abraham - Genesis 14 and 15

Genesis 14 has the account of Abraham's great victory. After a victory there is a tendency to let down, to be vulnerable, both in the physical and spiritual realms. A football team coming off a win is harder to motivate for the next game. A victorious army tends to become complacent and underestimate the enemy. It is well to remember that Satan keeps charging; and he is especially skilled at counterpunching, at exploiting any temporary weakness. And worry is one of Satan's chief weapons.

1 Peter 5:8,9 "Be sober, be vigilant, because your adversary, the devil, like a roaring lion walks about, seeking whom he may devour; whom resist steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world."

Gen. 15:1 "After these things the word of the Lord came to Abram in a vision, saying, Fear not, Abram: I am thy shield, and thy exceedingly great reward.'

Here is God's promise of protection and an outpouring of grace blessings. The Lord has solutions for Abraham based on grace provisions which God had laid up for him from eternity past. That is, God's plan for Abraham is already set up and operational. It is merely a matter of Abraham's remembering God's previous promises and believing them.

God says "Do not worry; do not be frightened." There is only one logical thing for Abraham to do when the Lord is his shield, strength, and reward - RELAX!

Deut. 31:6-8 "Be strong and of good courage, fear not, nor be afraid of them [the giants in Canaan]; for the Lord your God, he it is who goes with you; he will not fail you, nor forsake you. And Moses called to Joshua and said to him in the sight of all Israel, 'Be strong and of good courage; for you must go with this people unto the land which the Lord has sworn unto their fathers to give them, and you shall cause them to inherit it. And the Lord, he it is who goes before you; he will be with you, he will not fail you, neither forsake you; fear not, neither be dismayed.'"

Isa. 41:10-13 "Fear not, for I am with you. Be not dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you; yea, I will help you; yea, I will uphold you with the right hand of my righteousness. Behold, all they that were angered against you shall be ashamed and confounded, they shall be as nothing, and they that strive with you shall perish. You shall seek them, and shall not find them, even them that contended with you; they that war against you shall be as nothing, and as a thing of nought.'"

Who is the one making these promises? It is the Almighty God, the Creator of the Universe! And every promise of God is backed up by His perfect character and His perfect character. Our thinking about His promises can be related to His divine attributes, for example:

Sovereignty: God in His designed Faith/Rest as part of His plan for us.

Righteousness: God is perfect goodness, so any trial will be good for us.

Justice: Guarantees that His plan for us is fair, that we will always be treated justly.

Love: we know that every situation in life is governed by God's love for us.

Eternal Life: God is eternal and we have everlasting life with Him through Christ's work on the Cross. God always plans with eternity in view.

Omniscience: God knows about my trials or sufferings even before they happen; and He has already planned what to do about them.

Omnipresence: God is always present and available to help.

Omnipotence: God is all-powerful so He always has the capability to carry out his promises and to provide help in time of need.

Immutability: God never changes in His attitude toward us, and all of His characteristics remain the same, forever.

Truth: God never lies; therefore what He has promised, He will perform (see Romans 4).

Abraham has had great victory, then he fails. He has started to worry, to cave in. He still feels he has something to complain about. He has no male heir, and if there is no male heir, the inheritance will go to Eliezer.

Gen. 15:2 "And Abram said, 'Lord God, what will you give me, seeing I go childless, and the heir of my house is this Eliezer of Damascus?'"

Worry can be a sin, Rom. 14:23, "...whatsoever is not of faith is sin." Worry is, in fact, often equivalent to blasphemy. Worry slanders God by saying that His promises are lies or that God is not able to keep His promises. In other words, the fearful person believes that God can not or will not keep His promises.

Worry is the opposite of Faith-Rest. And Faith-Rest is the answer to worry.

Abraham has two choices: (1) he can try to solve his own problems by worrying, fretting, planning, being upset and angry, trying to scrounge up answers, trying to work around things, etc., or (2) he can let God solve the problems he cannot handle.

Gen. 15:3 "And Abram said, 'Behold, you have given me no seed: and, lo, one born in my house is my heir.'"

Abraham blames God for his troubles. Blaming others, especially blaming God, is a sure sign of spiritual deterioration. A mature person takes responsibility for his own actions. It is a trend in modern psychology to find someone or something to blame for troubles, such as parents, the environment, the community, politicians, employers, etc. But this tendency ignores every divine provision, every blessing, every law, and every principle of suffering.

Gen. 15:4-6 "And, behold, the word of the Lord came unto him, saying, 'This shall not be your heir, but he that shall come forth out of your own loins shall be your heir.' And he brought him forth abroad, and said, 'Look now toward heaven, and count the stars, if you can number them.' And he said to him, 'So shall your seed be.' And he believed in the Lord; and He counted it to him for righteousness."

Here God restates His promises (of the Abrahamic Covenant) and gives Abraham a dramatic illustration of what He means, by showing him the stars. Finally, Abraham believes God. He has about 15 more years to wait before Isaac is born, but he is able to wait patiently and have inner peace because he has laid his burden on the Lord.

The Bitter Water Test - Exodus 15

Have you ever had a wonderful Sunday attending church, worshipping the Lord, enjoying the fellowship of believers, everything that make you glad to be a Christian, only to see your whole attitude change at work on Monday as your job seems to throw you into another world?

Read Exodus 14 and 15 of the account of the Israelites escaping from Egypt. They saw God 24 hours a day in the cloud and in the fire. In their terror of the Egyptians they prayed frantically to God to save them, and saw the Red Sea open up, crossed on dry land, and watched the Egyptian army being destroyed as the waters closed back over them.

And what a victory celebration they had. Read the great song of victory they sang. "The Lord is my strength and my song...The Lord is a man of war...Thy right hand, O Lord, has dashed in pieces the enemy...Who is like thee, O Lord, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders..." And on and on.

But ... just three days later, on the march, they came to the Bitter Sea, Marah, and ...

Exo. 15:24,25 "And the people murmured against Moses, saying, What shall we drink? And he cried unto the Lord; and the Lord showed him a tree, which when he had cast into the waters, the waters were made sweet: there he made for them a statute and an ordinance, and there He tested them."

As a nation, the Israelites were spiritually immature. They had no spiritual stamina and no real understanding of who the Lord is or what He could do. This is the first of many tests they would fail, tests designed to demonstrate to them how helpless they were without God. As you know, throughout their 40 years wandering in the wilderness, and in spite of daily teaching from Moses, Aaron, and Levites, in spite of witnessing miracle after spectacular miracle, only a small percentage of these people ever learned to rely completely on the Lord.

The No-Food Test and First No-Water Test - Exodus 16,17

Exodus 16 gives details of the No Food test, also failed by the Israelites, in which they murmured again against Moses, Aaron, and God. In this case God provided manna for them. This chapter is a litany of whining, complaining, and miserable behavior. And chapter 17 continues the story.

There was no water at Rephidim, and the people blamed Moses for bringing them out of Egypt so that their children and cattle could die of thirst. Their complaining was so vehement that Moses named the place Meribah ("chiding").

Of course, the Lord provided water from the rock, at the same time giving a beautiful picture of the gospel. Remember that God's grace depends on

His character, not on our character or faithfulness. The people received what they did not deserve.

The Giants Test - Numbers 13,14

Numbers 13 describes a reconnaissance patrol which was led by a high ranking officer from each of the 12 tribes. Moses would not commit a force of 2,000,000 people into a land without sending out a patrol. The patrol would spend 40 days in enemy territory before returning to Kadesh-Barnea.

Num. 13:1,2. The people received directions from the Lord. Note the promise, "...the land which I give unto the children of Israel..." The Israelites were not being asked to move into the land on "blind faith". There is no such thing as blind faith. Faith is the best eyesight in the world when it is based on the promises of God. Faith is the ability to rest on God's omniscience.

Num. 13:3-16. Caleb and Joshua are recognized as two of the great men of history, men who know the wisdom and grace of God and are willing to commit themselves to it. To them, the Word of God was more real than any situation they were to face. They were fully adjusted to their circumstances, whether good or adverse.

Num. 13:17-20. Detailed instructions for the reconnaissance. "Be ye of good courage..." One thing necessary for a successful mission, the right mental attitude. The difference between courage and fearfulness is being emphasized here. And the difference is Faith-Rest! Caleb and Joshua believed the promises of God, the other ten did not. Caleb and Joshua had courage, the other ten did not.

When the spies returned, the camp was divided into two groups, a small group of confident, courageous people who believed God, and a large group of fearful people who were shaking in their boots. There were giants in the land, and the majority were afraid of them, in spite of the promises of God.

The Lord is greater than any giant in a Christian's life. "Greater is he that is in you than he that is in the world." The Lord knew in advance that there would be giants in Canaan, and He had prepared everything ahead of time for them to occupy the

land. Yet, in spite of having met (and failed) test after test, and having seen God perform many wonderful miracles, they still lacked courage.

Num. 13:21-27. This is a complete confirmation of what the Lord said would be the case in the land. And His promises had been repeated time after time. Exo. 3:8,17; 13:5; 33:3.

"Milk and honey" is an idiom for a prosperous land. The only believers who enjoy the provision of God are those who see and appropriate God's provisions by faith. We do not live by sight. We have provisions for today, food, clothing, shelter. But what God provides for the soul cannot be seen, except by faith. But the eyes of Faith-Rest are greater than natural eyes.

Num. 13:28-33. There is no doubt that they are up against a formidable enemy. The Hittites were one of the greatest nations in the ancient world; they discovered iron and were the first to use iron weapons. The Jebusites were very powerful warriors who had not been conquered for several hundred years; their central fortification was a city called Jerusalem. The Amalekites were craft idol and demon worshippers and child sacrificers.

Caleb had seen God handle all of their problems time after time, but he was not able to persuade the rest of the people. They were afraid of the giants.

Num. 14:16. This verse explains the whole thing. The Lord could not bring them into the land because (1) their attitude toward God was bad; (2) their attitudes toward people was bad (mental attitude sins); and (3) they were negative toward God and His teaching.

Num. 14:17,18. Lack of faith in God affects succeeding generations. Where parents do not teach their children, and set the example for them, the children will follow the worldly ways of their parents. Moses prays to God that somehow He will prevent this.

Num. 14:19-23. These verses provide great insight into how God's love and grace can be shown while not compromising His justice and righteousness. He forgives the people for their lack of faith, but He still forbids the majority from entering the promised land.

Num. 14:24. Caleb was different. He listened to the Word of God every day, and He maintained an

attitude of faith that was in line with the doctrine and promises he had learned. Therefore he had a relaxed mental attitude and a good knowledge of how to function in God's plan.

Num. 14:25-30. A description of darkness in the soul. God calls this people an evil congregation and pronounces the sin unto death on the majority of the adult population.

The Second No-Water Test - Numbers 20

Historically, now, we are near the end of the 40 years wandering occasioned by the sins and unbelief of the previous generation. Most of those who were adults 39 years ago have died in the wilderness. Now their children are adults, and they have apparently learned nothing! For here is a repetition of the "no-water" test, in the same location and virtually under the same circumstances as the first one.

Num. 20:1. Miriam died at this time, and she was buried in Kadesh. Her death is representative of those who were removed under the final stage of divine discipline, the sin unto death. Now the new generation faces the issue of Faith-Rest living.

Num. 20:2. "There was no water for the congregation..." God will permit tests of all sorts, usually in the form of some disaster, heartache, frustration, or pressure situation which could be classified as a "no-water" situation.

You can handle a "no-water" situation in two ways. You can try to solve it yourself, or you can put it into the Lord's hands. The issue is what takes place in the soul. Resting in God, claiming the promises, requires categorical knowledge of the Word of God and a proper attitude of faith toward the Lord and His teaching.

No hopeless situation is really hopeless when viewed from the divine viewpoint. A believer who has Bible principle applied in his life is going to manifest many things, including a relaxed mental attitude, true happiness and joy, and a reliance on promises.

A no-water situation is never a no-water situation with God. He has provided the "water" for every situation before the world was created. But the promises of God are never superimposed on the

believer's life. They are an expression of His love, but God does not force His love upon us.

The believer who does not live in the Word has mental sins, fears, worry, anxiety, bitterness, etc. And this is expressed through murmuring. The believer with doctrine in the soul expresses his own love for God through Faith-Rest.

Num. 20:3. "The people chode (meribah) with Moses..." As soon as things go wrong, the sin nature begins to express the darkness in the soul, bitterness, implacability, fear. This causes the people to murmur against the authority which God has provided and they blame Moses and Aaron for the whole thing.

These people are actually suicidal, an evidence of great inconsistency, extreme emotional swings, and complete disorientation to life.

Num. 20:4,5. Note, this "evil place" that the congregation is complaining about is exactly the same place where God had demonstrated His love and grace before, by providing water! The believer who calls Grace "evil" has a badly scarred up soul. They have negative volition to grace and the promises of God. In their self-consciousness they have self-pity. Their mentality is dominated by mental attitude sins of worry, bitterness, vindictiveness. Their emotions are unstable. And in their conscience they have strictly human viewpoint and standards.

They are thinking of the details of life, and they expect the details of life to bring them happiness. Any believer who ignores the Word of God and looks to details of life for provision and happiness has had it! The Word of God points the believer toward God; human viewpoint points him toward Egypt.

When a believer recalls something from his past, something pleasant, instead of recalling he promises of God, he is "looking back at Egypt." A Christian who operates on Grace principles can take Egypt of leave it. He will be confident and happy in any situation, because God is greater than the most hopeless situation.

God demonstrates His love for us through adversity in a way that would be impossible in Heaven. Heaven is perfect environment, with no problems of any kind.

Hebrews 3:7-9 "Wherefore, as the Holy Spirit says, today if you will hear His voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation (meribah: from the Hebrew of Psalm 95:8-11), in the day of trial in the wilderness, when your fathers put me to the test, proved me, and say my works forty years."

To "harden one's heart" means to have a habitual and willful unbelief in God and His Word.

God was faithful to the people for the whole 40 years of wilderness wandering, yet they failed the "no water" test.

The Benefits of Faith-Rest

As a Christian grows in grace, he will use Faith-Rest with increasing skill and power, and it will support all of his divine viewpoint thinking and production. Faith-Rest relies entirely on the continuous ministry of the indwelling Holy Spirit, therefore the believer will benefit from Faith-Rest only when he is in fellowship, walking in the Spirit [Rom. 14:23].

Faith-Rest was the means of spirituality for believers in the Old Testament. [See Hab. 2:4; Heb. 11; Rom. 4:17-25] One of the principle passages relating to Faith-Rest is Hebrews 3 and 4, particularly the section from 3:6 to 4:16. Please read this passage in your Bible before proceeding.

Following are some principles of the Faith-Rest system:

- Faith-Rest is from God, Who is perfect. No human works or deeds can be added to this perfect divine provision.
- To enter into God's rest, the believer must cease from his deeds (human good) and enter into a rest in which he does no work. The Holy Spirit does the work, Heb. 3:7 to 4:16.
- Faith is required, not works. Faith implies the absence of human merit. The merit for Faith-Rest lies in the object of faith, God the Father and His Word. The doctrines and promises of the Word must be mixed with faith, Heb. 4:1,2.

- Faith-Rest produces a relaxed mental attitude and victory over mental attitude sins, Isa. 26:3,4; Rom. 5:5.
- Faith-Rest is the basis for dynamics in prayer, Mt. 21:22; Mk. 11:25.
- Faith-Rest is a principle of victory in spiritual warfare, Heb. 11:6; 1; Jn. 5:4,5.
- Faith-Rest is a part of the Christian Way of Life in the Church Age, 2 Cor. 5:7.

The extent to which Faith-Rest applies to every aspect of a believer's life can be seen in the more than 7,000 individual promises in the Bible which can be claimed by the Christian in one way or another. See, for example, 1 Pet. 5:7; Isa. 41:10; Ps. 4:8; 55:22; 56:3.

In order for Faith-Rest to function it is necessary for the Christian to take in the Word of God on a daily basis, so that he learns which promise provisions have been made available. And The Christian continually filled (controlled) by the Holy Spirit through confessing sin Biblically. Use of the Word of God in this manner provides the following benefits:

- Inner rest, the "peace of God that passes all understanding."
- A happiness (+H) that does not depend on people, circumstances, or things.
- A relaxed mental attitude arising out of victory over sins of mental attitude.
- The ability to have genuine personal love toward those close to you and genuine impersonal love toward others.
- The desire to be occupied with Christ and to study God's Word more.
- Divine provision for every need.

The key to the success of the Faith-Rest system lies in the validity of the object of our faith, the Word of God. Therefore, every aspect of the perfect character (essence) of God the Father supports Faith-Rest.

How to Apply Faith-Rest

The objective of Bible teaching is the presentation of Bible doctrine which the Christian can use in his daily life. People differ in their abilities to

retain and recall doctrines and promises when they are needed.

You never know when you will be required to use a particular doctrine, and you may be able to recall only a tiny amount of what you have heard from the Pastor-Teacher in the past. For this reason, you must take in doctrine on a daily basis so that usable doctrine accumulates gradually in small increments, line upon line and precept upon precept.

There must also be continuous repetition of important principles and reinforcement in learning how various Bible principles interrelate.

As you study the Bible you will discover that a divine frame of reference is being built in your soul by which you can receive, understand, and apply further doctrinal teaching. Truth builds upon truth. Isa. 28:10. You will see that God's viewpoint is gradually replacing your human viewpoint on many issues. You are building a set of divine standards by which you will be able to exercise wisdom and discernment and make correct decisions in life.

You will grow in spiritual maturity if you maintain continuous momentum in the Christian Way of Life for an extended period of time. Your personal intake of the Word of God constitutes its own reward as you benefits from living the truth.

In the faith application of the Word of God, you will draw on your accumulated resources of Bible teaching in order to cope with your problems and take control of your own life. The Word of God in your soul makes you self-sustaining, independent of anything in the world system, and able to face life with courage and confidence as you fulfills God's plan for your life.

Faith-Rest, then, is designed by God as a versatile technique for overcoming problems in life. By FAITH you apply doctrine logically from the resources in your soul, meanwhile you are RESTING in the promises of the Word of God.

The steps in the Faith-Rest technique are:

1. Establish fellowship with God (the filling of the Holy Spirit) through Biblical confession of sin.
2. You may then recover a relaxed mental attitude by claiming promises from the Word.

3. As a means of calling up divine viewpoint thinking, concentrate on pertinent doctrines related to the issue at hand.
4. Take control of the situation as you reach doctrinal conclusions.

An Example of Faith Rest - Victory Over Fear

Because concentration on Bible truth is so important, your mental attitude is a prime target of Satan's attacks against the power of the Word of God. Mental attitude sins and doctrinal thought cannot coexist. Everyone is susceptible to various combinations of events, circumstances, or people who cause arrogance, bitterness, depression, self-pity, worry, anger - anything to block out God's thoughts.

One of your most potent enemies, for example, is fear. Fear is a mental attitude sin which shuts down thought and closes out divine viewpoint. No matter how much doctrine is resident in your soul, none of it will help if your mind is immobilized by fear.

Note: It is not a sin to be scared, to be afraid of something that is dangerous or which threatens to harm you. Sinful fear, though, is a continuing morbid mental attitude in which you say, in effect, that God cannot or will not protect you in time of danger.

Fear opposes the believer's confidence and courage in the Christian Way of Life, 1 Jn. 4:18. It is not surprising to find that one of the strategies most often used by Satan is that of causing believers to be filled with fear.

To deal with fear, proceed as follows:

Confess sin . Fear is a sin. While confession will not conquer fear, it must be the first step. The fear has caught you off guard and you must quickly recover your mental poise and your ability to think and use doctrine. Therefore, confession and restoration to fellowship is the first requirement.

Claim promises. Following confession of sin, recover a relaxed mental attitude by claiming promises found throughout the Word of God relating to fear, such as

Isa. 41:10, "So do not fear, for I am with you, do not be dismayed, for I am your

God. I will strengthen you, surely I will uphold you with my righteous right hand."

Rom. 8:28, "For we know in fact, that to those who love God, he works all things together for good, to those who are the called ones according to a predetermined plan."

If you don't remember many good promises, look them up in a concordance, look at a list of promises, or call a friend for some help.

A promise is God's guarantee, a capsule statement of Bible doctrine on which to anchor your mental attitude. A promise expresses the character of God and provides you with an instant perspective on things and gives you the ability to reduce the most complicated situation to utmost simplicity. Where panic reigned, peace can now be restored.

Note: claiming promises is never an end in itself. It is only the beginning of the application of Faith-Rest. Promises cannot sustain a relaxed mental attitude and they cannot solve complex problems. Promises are used to make possible the most important phase of Faith-Rest, doctrinal thinking.

Apply doctrine. Your concentration on doctrine in Bible class and in your studies has brought doctrine into your soul. Now you will apply this doctrine by moving it to the front of your mind to meet the demands of the moment. You will apply a "rationale" to the situation.

A "rationale" is a "reasoned exposition of principles or statements of reasons; a set of reasoned rules or directions." By mentally tracing out the principles related to a crisis, you are re-explaining to yourself the basic concepts of doctrine that apply to the situation. This is necessary because fear and the accompanying emotions have revolted against thought, and you must take conscious and deliberate steps to reinstate the rightful authority in your soul.

You could, for example, think through some conclusions derived from Rom. 8:29,30, "For those God foreknew He also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brothers, and those He predestinated, He also called, those He called, He also justified; those He justified He also

glorified." Your thought process might go like this ...

First, "God thought about me in eternity past."

Next, "He designed a perfect plan for me in eternity past."

Then, "He chose me for a privileged part in His plan."

Therefore, "God can bless me right now because I possess His righteousness."

Finally, "God will bless me forever in Heaven."

These simple statements are really a set of five basic doctrines which help restore divine viewpoint thinking. By using this system of concentrating on doctrines which you have already learned, you can immediately recall your place in the overall picture of God's grace. By this faith application of doctrine, you can become stabilized and regain objectivity.

Take control of the situation.

Romans 8:31,32, "What conclusion are we forced to face with these things? Since God is for us, Who is against us? Who did not spare His own unique Son, but delivered Him over on our behalf, how shall He not with Him graciously give us all things."

These conclusions, stated in these verses as rhetorical questions, enable you to take control of situations which formerly caused fear and anxiety. With objectivity and confidence restored, you can evaluate your circumstances and make the decision or take the action which your own wisdom and discernment dictate as the solution to the problem.

Even if the problem is hopeless, completely beyond your control, you can still cope with it by intelligently trusting the Lord for a solution.

Any Bible doctrine you have stored in your human spirit can be developed into a rationale to meet a test or crisis in your life.

At one time or another you will need every doctrine that you have had an opportunity to learn.

If you find yourself lacking inner resources in time of crisis, it means that you have not prepared yourself in advance for the testing. Testing will come, ready or not.

Old Age

Many people have a tremendous dread of growing old. A great deal of activity during the working years is aimed at preventing as many of the problems of old age as possible: dependency on others, lack of money, boredom, ill health, and so forth. The very fear of the problems of old age often make mental and physical wrecks of people - they become old before their time.

God's Plan is that old age be the crowning glory of a person's lifetime. The Word of God shows that old age can have promise, productivity, vitality, confidence, and a great deal of happiness, providing that spiritual preparation has taken place during the younger years.

Age Divisions in the Bible

The Bible indicates that there are three broad divisions of a lifetime.

The period of **youth** lasts up to about 40 years of age. Moses began to sense his responsibility to Israel and to the Lord when he was about 40, Acts 7:23. He spent 40 more years in training, however, before he became leader of the people of Israel. It was during the years from 80 to 120 that he did his great work.

In Acts 4:22, a man is healed and the Sanhedrin wanted to ridicule his testimony. However, "the man was above forty years old on whom this miracle of healing was shown", indicating that he was mature enough to know what had happened.

In 1 Tim. 4:12, Paul writes, "Let no man despise thy youth." Timothy was in his thirties at the time.

The period of **middle age** last from about 40 to 60 years of age. In 1 Tim. 5:9, a 60-year-old widow's retirement was into a full time ministry of prayer supported by the church. Many believers hit their top pace in the middle years. The high priest's work load was heaviest between 30 and 50.

Old age is the period from 60 on. In Daniel 12, Daniel, at age 90, was told to stop acting like a dead man and to get going. In Luke 2:36-38, a woman of great age (84) was very active in serving the Lord.

Some Principles of Old Age

Old age is a mental attitude as well as a physical problem. People shudder when you discuss old age. Next to the subject of death, it is the least favorite topic. There are many ways people try to postpone old age. They try various products to keep on looking and feeling young. They try traveling to relieve boredom and to give a sense of fulfillment. They use gadgets and programs to postpone old age.

But, the older one becomes as a believer, the better life should become! God's Plan is bigger than any problem this life can produce. Of course, to take advantage of this plan, a person must understand Salvation and receive Christ as Saviour. Then, the individual must get Bible teaching every day over a period of years to make it possible to obtain the maximum out of every day of life. According to God's Plan of Grace, which includes the concept of Dying Grace, the last day of your life should be the best.

But some of the most miserable old people around are Christians. They are cantankerous and obnoxious. Their youth is no longer there to protect them. They are seen for what their souls really are, without the camouflage of youth. "As a man thinks in his heart, so is he." Youth is excused for bad behavior; but youth is no longer there to cover up. Old age exposes all the faults, habits, obnoxious characteristics, and degeneracy of soul.

When King Solomon reached old age, he wrote Ecclesiastes; and he has some advice for youth. A young person can prepare now to have a happy old age. Happiness is not in working, and it is not in retirement; it is not in this diversion or that. True happiness is in Christian growth, the production of the Fruit of the Spirit, operating on Divine Viewpoint, having a healthy edification structure in the soul -- having the inner beauty of soul.

"Rejoice, O young man!" "Find happiness when you are young." Then you can carry your happiness around with you, the inner mental happiness found in the Word of God, a happiness which does not depend on conditions, circumstances, people, or the details of life. This leads to a marvelous old age!

"And let thy heart cheer you in the days of your youth." Then you won't fight old age; old age will be the best age of all. This type of person is the salt of the earth in his old age, an aristocrat of the Christian family.

"Walk in the ways of your heart." Now the young person who is immersed in doctrine uses the Word of God in living the Christian Way of Life. "In the sight of thine eyes." The application of the Word of God to experience.

"But know that God will bring you to judgment; therefore remove sorrow from your heart, put away evil from thy flesh." This is a picture of judgment, chastisement, confession, claiming promises.

Therefore, old age is a mental attitude developed during a lifetime. The older one becomes as a believer, the better life should become. Happiness in old age is dependent on what is built up during the previous years of youth and middle age.

Problems of Old Age

As you read the following listing of the problems of old age, meditate on the Word of God and try to think of the doctrinal "antidote" for each problem. The prescription will be given in the succeeding sections of this article; but try finding answers in your own repertoire of doctrine.

- Old age may bring on a lack of mental sharpness. This can occur because of physical debility. Also, if the mind has been neglected, especially if the Word of God has been neglected, there will be a failure of the mentality.
- In old age, there can be a disorientation to life from the standpoint of success standards. A person looks back and regards life as a failure. Maybe he set goals, and now he is old and never realized the goals. There is a great danger of disillusionment.
- There is a tendency for great increase in mental attitude sins in old age, with emphasis on criticism and judgment. These things are often overlooked in youth; but they are horrible in the elderly.
- There is often a lack of security in old age, especially if the old people can't take care of

themselves financially. Their children are in the prime of their lives and often the children's plans do not include them.

- Old age may bring an inability to concentrate, forgetfulness, inability to converse, to hear, to see. So the old person gets used to sitting in a chair daydreaming, vegetating, saying nothing.
- There is sometimes a lack of motive to live, too much idle time, and too much time for complaining. There may be a desire to travel but no means to do so. So there is a lack of significant things to do.
- Old age brings future shock. Old age finds itself out of phase with the younger generations of children and grandchildren. Therefore a dangerous trend can get started toward hypercriticism.
- The older believer may have stopped growing spiritually, or worse, may never have got started. There is, therefore, no edification, no occupation with Christ, no desire for the Word. There is a tendency to stagnate, to become jaded, to rely on the study done years before.
- There can be a tendency toward the negatives of Titus 2:3, becoming false accusers, gossips, evil speakers, vicious in criticism.
- There is a tendency among older believers to drink quite a lot when they don't have anything else going for them.
- Then, there is the tendency to think that getting old means that a person has some wisdom. So there is the garrulous senior citizen who never stops talking and inflicts continuous boredom on his listeners with his platitudes and homely chatter.

A Godly and Grace-Filled Old Age

Coming into old age, the mature believer is assured of his redemption; and he comes into old age as a knowledgeable, productive Christian. He understands both salvation and spirituality. He knows how to claim promises. He understands suffering, has lived through some of it, and looks forward to greater tests. He is ready for both suffering and happiness in old age.

This person comes into old age able to apply the Word of God to experience. Even his mind is saved, according to the principles of Romans 12:2. He realizes that there are many books, but only one Book, the mind of Christ, the Word of God.

The elderly believer uses the Faith-Rest principles of life. While the body is getting weaker, there is this promise of 2 Cor. 4:15.

"For all things are for your sakes, that the abundant grace might through the thanksgiving of many redound to the glory of God. For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, works for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory."

Characteristics of a Beautiful Old Age

Review the following scripture passages to get a thorough understanding from Bible examples just what an exciting and productive old age can be like.

In 1 Tim. 5:5-10, there is the example of a widow alone who faces the occupational hazard of widowhood in loneliness. However, this woman trusts in God, uses the promises of the Bible, and keeps on praying. A widow who is "well reported for good works" is making the most out of old age.

In Acts 11:36-43 is the story of Dorcas, "full of good works", given to hospitality, who "washed the saints feet", made garments, relieved the afflicted with her nursing skills, and was a producer of divine good. She had mastered the details of life.

In Tim. 2:1,2 there is a discussion of the characteristics of godly elderly men. They are to be healthy minded, alert, sharp, with Christlike character, masters of the details of life ("temperate"), "sound in faith", having spiritual healthy because of doctrine, being free from mental attitude sins such as bitterness, envy, hostility, having mental attitude love.

In Tim. 2:3 ff are listed the characteristics of godly older women. Their shining inner beauty reflects the glory of God. They are not false accusers or guilty of maligning, evil speaking, or gossip, and they are not vindictive. They are also temperate and able to teach good things to the younger

women. They had skill and wisdom and had the willing attention of younger women. They taught the young women to be healthy minded, emotionally stable, to have sound judgment, to be poised, in control of themselves, thoughtful, to be free from carnality ("chaste"), to be morally good, and to respond to their husbands.

From these illustrations we conclude that there is plenty to do in old age, that old age can be a golden age, not necessarily in reliving the "good old days", but in actively enjoying the present and the future.

Authority

Introduction

Authority: *The power to influence or command thought, opinion, or behavior. Persons in command.*

The most important earthly influence in a person's life is that which comes from his relationship with his parents. The newborn child enters life completely dependent upon, and completely subservient to, an all-powerful authority, his mother and father. As a child grows, he adjusts continuously in his responses to that parental authority, for better or for worse depending on the training he receives. He also gradually becomes aware of other influences of authority in society; those of his schools, of the various levels of government and law enforcement, of the people for whom he works, of his church, and of the authority of God Himself.

As an adult, a person often has two roles simultaneously. He is not only subject to authority of various kinds all of his lifetime, but he may also himself be in a position of power and influence over others, perhaps as parent, military officer, executive, or judge. A person's ability to respond properly to authority, and his ability to exercise authority, depend on his orientation to divine principles of authority categorized in the Bible. As least three things are necessary to the proper response to authority. They are:

- Careful training by parents in correct standards of submission to authority
- A consistent daily walk with the Lord

- An ever-growing categorical knowledge of Biblical principles of authority accompanied by personal acceptance of the teaching leading to personal application in the life.

When any of these factors is missing, a person will accept non-Biblical, humanistic principles of leadership, or the response to leadership, with the usually bad results that derive from a poor understanding of Scriptural standards.

This paper explores the subject of authority in several ways. First we examine the source of all spiritual and temporal authority, God the Creator. The Bible is the textbook for the study. God has delegated authority to His Son, Jesus Christ, Who, in turn, has passed certain leadership responsibilities to human beings, the apostles. The apostles retained this mantle of authority as they were given the divine enabling to write the Word of God for believers to read and understand.

The next consideration in this discussion is the Biblical teaching on a variety of types of authority, including parental, governmental, and ecclesiastical authority. Finally, the paper will describe some ways in which children and young people can be trained in Biblical principles of authority and in the proper responses to and uses of leadership. There will be a few paragraphs in the final section about Chain of Command which is intended to show believers the mechanics of a proper relationship to both divine and human authority.

THE SOURCE OF AUTHORITY IN CHRISTIANITY

In all Christian activity some form of authority is exercised, either the authority of one individual over others, or the authority of an organization over individuals. The administration of leadership takes on so many varied forms that believers often become confused as to what constitutes legitimate Biblical authority. Some Christians in positions of leadership exercise Biblical principles of authority, others use human standards mixed with divine principles. Any Christian leader who is not well versed in the Biblical doctrines relating to authority is likely to use a combination of proper and improper authority.

All correct authority in Christian activity must derive from the Christian system itself: that is, a Christian leader must find his credentials of leadership in the Word of God. Authority is of two kinds, primary and delegated authority.

Primary authority grows out of the relationship of those who have the right to command and those whose duty it is to obey. The basis of all primary authority in Christianity is the Person of God. We are His; He made us. We are the creatures of His hand and the product of His intelligence. He is our Maker, Preserver, and Benefactor. He, therefore, has the absolute right to command; and it is our absolute duty to obey Him. God has seen fit only occasionally to govern man by His personal and primary authority. He usually delegates authority to others. He rules by His representatives.

Delegated authority is a right to command and enforce obedience which can be given to another by the party holding primary authority.

GOD'S PRIMARY AUTHORITY WAS DELEGATED TO THE LORD JESUS CHRIST

The first delegation of authority in Christianity was from God the Father to God the Son. Hebrews 1:1, "God, who gave to our forefathers many different glimpses of the truth in the words of the prophets, has now, at the end of the present age, given us the truth in the Son." And Jesus said, "The word which you hear is not mine, but the Father's Who sent me." "No man knows who the Father is, but the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal Him." Jesus closes His ministry on earth, and leads off His great commission to the apostles with the statement, "All power is given unto me in heaven and on earth."

The Son stands nearest the Father in delegated authority. He is the "brightness of the Father's glory and the express image of His Person." "It has pleased the Father than in Him should all fullness dwell." When the Father acknowledged Christ after His baptism, He said, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Christ was not only the delegate of God on earth, he is also the "image of the invisible God," and He said to His doubting disciples, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father."

There are several important inferences to be drawn from the concept of the authority of Jesus Christ. First, Jesus Christ is a manifestation of the power of God. Whether His power is seen in the material world or in the spiritual, our attention is arrested and our interest is challenged. God's power is part of life itself. It is the agency through which God's mind controls matter. It is the hand by which God's purpose takes form in the world.

There is a difference between power and force. Force startles and frightens us. Power, when directed by intelligent love, is always pleasing to us. There is force in a lightning bolt. It shatters the sky, can kill living beings, cleaves a tree in half, or burns a building to the ground. But there is power when an intelligent mind uses electricity to drive a train or light a city. Jesus Christ, who is God himself, is a manifestation of the power of God, not of the force of God.

AUTHORITY PASSES TO THE APOSTLES

THE TRANSFER OF AUTHORITY TO THE APOSTLES

As long as Jesus was on earth, He talked with men face to face. Men were directly under His command, and could claim His promises directly. But He has passed away from earth and does not rule anymore by His own direct authority. Just as the Father delegated His authority to the Son, so Jesus delegated His authority to the apostles.

In John 17 are the following statements:

- God gave the Son power over all flesh.
- This power was given that He might bestow eternal life on all men.
- Eternal life is bestowed through the knowledge of the only true God and Jesus Christ whom He has sent.
- God gave the Son certain men out of the world, that He might teach them all that God had given him.
- All men should believe on Christ through the word of the disciples.

In the transfer of authority from God the Father to the Son there was no danger of error or mistake. The Son, being divine, could receive without misunderstanding all that the Father communicated. But the apostles were human with all the weaknesses and imperfections of their

humanity. There was danger, therefore, that they might not correctly understand or apprehend the communication which Christ made to them.

It became necessary, therefore, for some power or influence to be exerted on their minds to preserve them from error either in taking in or in giving out the lessons which they received. Therefore, Christ promised them the Holy Spirit, who was to guide them into all truth in the conveying of the Gospel to the world.

1 Cor. 2:9-13, "Eye has not seen nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God has revealed them unto us by his Spirit; for the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God. Now, we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak not in the words which man's wisdom teaches, but in words which the Holy Spirit teaches."

THE APOSTLES' USE OF DELEGATED AUTHORITY

The Spirit-guided apostles are the representatives of God on earth for the purpose of making known His will to the sons of men. Their teaching is Christ's teaching. Their authority is the authority of the Lord. "As the Father has sent me, so send I you." So, when the apostles completed the revelation of the will of God in Jesus Christ, that revelation became the perfect law of liberty to which nothing could rightfully be added or taken away.

Anyone who teaches men to disobey the plain commandments of the apostles cannot be guided by the same Spirit that inspired them to proclaim these commandments. The same Spirit which led an apostle to proclaim truth will not lead anyone else to ignore or to disobey that truth.

Any attempt to add to, or subtract from, the words of the apostles, or to substitute other teaching in the place of their teaching, is not of God. Satan had no opportunity to corrupt the truth as it proceeded from the Father to the Son, or from the Son to the apostles. But his opportunity arrived when the apostles began proclaiming the Gospel to

mankind as they preached. "Those by the wayside are they that hear; then cometh the devil and takes away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved."

THE APOSTLES' EXERCISE OF JUDGMENT

The apostles are administering the authority of God even today, through the written Word of God which they wrote under divine inspiration. They began administering that authority on the Day of Pentecost. Their first judgment was, "These men are not drunk as you suppose, but this is that spoken of by the prophet Joel..." The world's judgment, that "these men are full of new wine", was wrong; the apostles' judgment was correct.

The apostles' second judgment was, "This same Jesus whom ye have taken with wicked hand and slain, God has raised up and made both Lord and Christ." Their third judgment was concerning convicted sinners, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto remission of sins."

Thus, in all their sermons and writings they delivered judgments for spiritual Israel which stand as authoritative today as when first delivered. There is nothing that is essential to the well-being of Christian believers that has not been a subject for the apostles' judgment. They are ambassadors of Christ. God acted through them and they represent Christ. "As though God did beseech you by us, we pray in Christ's place, be ye reconciled to God."

PRACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS RELATED TO APOSTOLIC AUTHORITY

In Dr. G. A. Jacob's book, Ecclesiastical Polity of the New Testament, there are quotations worth repeating. This book is worth thoughtful reading, and it shows the trend among some modern Christian thinkers to get back to the principles of the apostles. From the book:

"The church of the apostolic period is the only church in which there is found an authority justly claiming the acknowledgement of Christian bodies in other times. And such authority is found in this church -- not because it possessed a truer catholicity, or a purer constitution, or a more primitive antiquity than belong to succeeding ages, for neither antiquity, purity of form, or catholicity

confers any right to govern or command; but because it was under the immediate rule and guidance of the apostles. And it is their infallible judgment alone, as exhibited in this church, which has a legitimate claim to our submission. Of the church of no other period can the same be said, because the apostles had no successors to their office. They stand alone as the divinely inspired teachers, legislators, and rulers in Christ's church and kingdom. They stand alone as men appointed and commissioned by Christ Himself, and not by man.

"I appeal, therefore, from the Nicene Fathers to the apostles of Christ; from patristic literature to the New Testament; from ecclesiastical authority and practice of post-apostolic centuries to the primitive church of the apostolic age. To go back to that time, and to endeavor, as far as possible, to reproduce the church of the New Testament, is most needful for us now, if we would preserve a faithful and distinct knowledge of Christian truth among our people. By realizing, as far as we may, the ideal of that church in our own community, we shall best maintain its liberty and purity, and we shall best meet the peculiar dangers of the present time and prepare for the future."

FROM THE APOSTLES TO US - LINES OF AUTHORITY

In the previous section, the transmission of divine authority to human beings is marked out in three phases: (1) God delegated all authority on earth to the Son, Jesus Christ; (2) the Son delegated teaching authority to the apostles; and (3) the apostles wrote authoritatively concerning the uses of and submission to authority on the part of believers of the Church Age.

Thus, every standard for the administration of authority over human beings by other people is derived from the teachings of the apostles as recorded in the Bible. Because the apostles wrote with the delegated power of God and were divinely inspired and controlled by the Holy Spirit of God, we are obliged to give absolute obedience to instructions from the Bible.

Three types of delegated authority are described in this section: (1) Authority in Human Society; (2) Ecclesiastical (Local Church) Authority; and (3) Parental Authority. By careful study of the

scripture passages related to these topics, a believer should be able to gain a great deal of discernment into the problems of proper response to authority.

AUTHORITY IN HUMAN SOCIETY

The teachings of the Bible indicate that established civil authority is to be obeyed explicitly except where such obedience would cause the believer to deviate from direct Bible teaching. That is to say, God does not delegate any authority that would allow someone to overrule His expressed commands or to compromise a divine principle. The statement of Christ, "Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and unto God the things that are God's" bears out this principle.

BIBLE REFERENCES TO SPECIFIC TYPES OF AUTHORITY

- The authority of the rulers of federal, state, and local government: Rom. 12: 1 Tim. 2.
- The authority of a judge on the bench: 1 Cor. 6:1-8.
- The authority of a business owner or executive: Col. 3: Eph. 5: 1 Tim. 6.
- The authority of an athletic coach: 1 Cor. 9:24-27.
- The authority of the military chain of command: Matt. 8:8-10.

See the following passages also for references to the concept of authority in many areas of human society:

Matt. 22:19-21; 17:25-27

1 Pet. 2:18

1 Cor. 7:21-24

Eph. 6:5-9

1 Tim. 6:1,2

1 Pet. 2:13-17

Deut. 17:12,13

Rom. 13:1-7.

CHRISTIAN LIFE PRINCIPLES RELATED TO AUTHORITY

Submission to authority means doing the unpleasant thing as well as the pleasant. Therefore, there is a need for self-discipline. Gal.

5:23 and 2 Thess. 3:8-15 point out that self-control is a result of Christian growth. The entire book of Proverbs deals extensively with this issue. The believer can expect that as he grows in Christ his desire to be submissive to the Lord will grow, as will his ability to be a faithful servant.

A correct understanding of the concept of authority will cause a believer to gain respect for the privacy of others. He will learn that certain aspects of other people's lives do not fall under his "jurisdiction". So he will be much less inclined to invade privacy, judge, malign, gossip, etc .

The correct use of Biblical principles of authority also develops in the believer a respect for other people's personal property. There are many passages in the Bible about stealing, covetousness, and the protection of property. Spiritual growth involves an acceptance of these principles as the believer better understands authority.

Respect for the rights of others to function in their own place under God's plan is a basic principle of authority. Other people have the right to make decisions without interference. Mature believers do not judge others, do not bully others into conforming, do not attempt to exercise authority which has not been delegated to them. "...to his own master he stands or falls...".

Ecclesiastical Authority

Scripture references to local church authority are found in Titus 1:4-16; 2:15 – 3:2; 1 Tim. 3:1-7; Matt. 16:16-19; 18:18,19.

Spiritual leaders are not elected, hired, or appointed. They emerge. As the child of God experiences the development of his spiritual gifts, these gifts are recognized by others in the Body of Christ. He will be given a place in which to exercise his gifts.

In Acts 6:1-7, for example, it can be seen that the first deacons were recognized as spiritually-minded - filled with the Holy Spirit. These attributes of personal character, the results of years of growth as believers, were evident in these men's lives. They emerged as leaders. The vote taken was merely an agreement that the majority of the local body recognized the mature lives of these men. There may have been others who coveted places of leadership. But such others were not

recognized. The chosen deacons were selected to serve, not to be served. Nevertheless, in serving they did great works.

In becoming part of a local church, a Christian tacitly approves of the leadership structure of that church. By remaining with that congregation, he signifies that he accepts the pastoral teaching authority and the leadership of others in authority. The Bible commands submission to local church authority.

1 Peter 5:5, "Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resists the proud, and gives grace to the humble."

To submit means to recognize the chain of command and to refrain from undermining that authority. This is a command to all believers; and nearly all trouble in local churches comes from the violation of this principle. The troublemakers in a church are those who undermine authority by criticism, by conspiracies, or by other methods. It is the duty of the pastor-teacher to guard against this and to nip it in the bud. The early Christians willingly placed themselves under the leadership of the pastor and deacons because they were known to be ordained of God and that one could profit from their guidance and leadership.

PARENTAL AUTHORITY - CHAIN OF COMMAND

Case Study #1

A twenty-one year-old girl returned home with an engagement ring and her boy friend in tow. After meeting and conversing with the young man, the parents told their daughter in private that they did not approve of her marrying this person at this time and that she should wait for a year or two. They stated their belief that "the marriage will not work" and that "this fellow is not for you." The daughter argued that she felt that the Lord had brought them two of them together and that since they were both Christians it would be all right to marry right away.

What would be the correct answer in counseling with this young woman? Should she:

- (1) Go ahead with her marriage plans if she thinks it is the Lord's will for her, or
- (2) Follow her parents' wishes and wait until they give approval?

Case Study #2

An eighteen-year-old Christian young man announced to his unsaved father that the Lord had called him into the ministry and that he was thinking of going to Bible school to prepare for the pastorate. The father was strictly against such a move, and he advised his son to enter university instead, to prepare for a vocation. He told his son that he should have a profession to fall back on in case he should fail in the ministry. He wanted his son to get his college degree first; then, if he still wanted to be a pastor, he could pursue that career.

What advice should be given to the son in this case? Should he:

- (1) Follow his father's wishes and enter the university, or
- (2) Follow his own desires and go to Bible School?

Case Study #3

A teenage girl wanted to attend a certain Bible-teaching church, but her mother refused to allow this. So the girl began to attend secretly as often as she could. Her mother found out and was very angry. She told her daughter that she should be at home attending to her chores around the house instead of spending so much time with "those kids."

Should the teenage girl:

- (1) Continue to attend Bible sessions secretly in order to get good teaching, or
- (2) obey her mother's wishes?

The answer in all three cases above is: RESPECT THE PARENT'S WISHES! The following section describes the reasons for this answer.

THE BIBLICAL BASIS FOR A CHILD'S ABSOLUTE SUBMISSION

The following commands from Scripture indicate the extent to which God has committed Himself to working with children through their parents. Notice that the spiritual condition and personality

of the parent are not listed as conditions to obedience of these commands.

Eph. 6:1-3 "The right thing for you to do is to obey your parents as those whom the Lord has set over you. Honor your father and mother ... that it may be well with you, and that you may live long on the earth."

Col. 3:20, "Obey your parents in all things, for this is well pleasing unto the Lord."

Prov. 20, "My son, keep thy father's commandment, and forsake not the law of thy mother; bind them continually upon thine heart, and tie them about thy neck. When thou goest, it shall lead thee; when thou sleepest, it shall keep thee; and when thou wakest, it shall talk with thee; for the commandment is a lamp; and the law is light; the reproofs of instruction are the way of life."

THE FOCUS OF RESPONSE IS THE LORD, *NOT* THE PARENT

Part of God's purpose for placing parents in authority is to teach obedience to Himself. God is able to accomplish His purposes in our lives through those He places in authority over us, *regardless of whether they are good leaders.*

The Lord has beautiful and significant plans for those who love and respect Him (Mal. 3:16,17). We will be His jewels; we will be treated as the sons of God. When a young person reacts against the tools of authority that God has place in his life, he is reacting against God Himself. Severe warnings are given in the Bible about this.

Prov. 30:17, "The eye that mocketh at his father and despises to obey his mother, the ravens of the valley shall pick it out, and the young eagles shall eat it."

Heb. 12:5, "My son, regard not lightly the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art reprov'd of him: for whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth."

ESSENTIAL INSIGHTS IN IDENTIFYING GOD AS THE SOURCE OF AUTHORITY

In order to properly identify the hand of God in the authority which is exercised over us, several insights are necessary.

We must learn to differentiate between position and personality. One of the first objections to obeying authority is, "I can't respect the one I'm supposed to obey." But it is possible to respect a person's *position* of authority while at the same time being aware of character deficiencies which need correction.

A teenager might say, "Why should I listen to my parents? They tell me not to do certain things, but they go out and do the same things themselves!" But this young person fails to distinguish between his parents' position and their character. The young man would be quick to see the error of his line of reasoning if his friend stated, "They other day I got stopped for speeding, but the policeman has such a bad personality that I tore up the ticket."

Some say, "My parents don't even try to understand me, so why should I listen to them?" Here again, there is a failure to distinguish between position and personality. It is more important that the young person understand what God is trying to accomplish than that his parents understand him. God knows that those He places in authority will have character deficiencies? But He is able to work in spite of these deficiencies.

Psalm 76:10, "Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee."

Prov. 16:7, "When a man's ways please the Lord, He maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him."

See also 1 Peter 2:18-20.

God can develop mature attitudes through His use of authority. He can use those who are the hardest to get along with to motivate us to develop mature attitudes. In each of the three case studies which are described above, the parent in authority detected an immature attitude on the part of the young person.

In Case Study #1, the marriage was disapproved because the parents detected underlying attitudes in both their daughter and her fiancé which would have made them incompatible in marriage. Each

has a negative attitude of self-will. Each expected to be the center of the stage. Neither had learned submission to authority. They had no concept of deference to one another or regard for the wishes of the other. Proper attitudes could be learned by the young people, if they would follow the advice to wait.

In Case Study #2, the father detected in his son attitudes of ungratefulness, stubbornness, and insensitivity to the feelings of others. Even though he was not a believer, the father realized that these attitudes would cause his son to fail in the ministry. The fact that his father had some apprehension of his son's failure in the ministry should have been a significant warning to the son that he might be wrong.

In Case Study #3, the teenaged girl, by responding properly to her mother would allow her mother to see that her old attitudes had changed as a result of attending the church, and she would be advancing the most powerful argument for her mother to allow her to continue attending the church.

God's concern is that our attitudes become consistent with those of His Son, Jesus Christ. Jesus was subject to the authority of His parents as He was growing up. Because of this response, He grew in wisdom, stature, and in favor with God and man. He "humbled himself and became obedient...".

DISCERNING BASIC INTENTIONS

The basic intentions of those in authority must be discerned. Daniel "purposed that he would not defile himself with the king's meat." Yet the authorities were not trying to make him violate his convictions; they were genuinely concerned about his appearance before the king. So Daniel was in the right frame of mind to help the officer in charge work out a compromise.

In Case Study #1, the basic intentions of the parents who disapproved their daughter's marriage were not to restrict her happiness but rather to help her achieve a lasting happiness. They intended to pass on to her the insights and lessons which they had learned, sometimes the hard way. They intended for her to avoid a lot of future complications which they knew would occur if she made the wrong choice in marriage. They

intended to derive pleasure and joy from their daughter's happy marriage.

In Case Study #2, the basic intention of the father for the son was not to talk him out of the ministry but to provide him with the tools for being successful in life. He intended to use the boy's college education to build mature attitudes in his son. He wanted to be proud of his son's achievements. He intended to rest in the fact that his son was building security in his vocation. He intended that his son be grateful and appreciative for what he had done for him. And he intended to keep a channel of communication open so that his son would be responsive in the future.

In Case Study #3, the basic intentions of the teenage girl's mother were not to stop the girl from going to church, but to develop obedience toward her parents. This obedience involved assuming responsibilities around the house rather than "running off all the time." The mother observed that some of her daughter's friends were not obeying their parents and often condemned their parents for not being "spiritual". She did not want her daughter to develop these attitudes and practices.

Alternatives for the girl who wanted to get married:

- Discuss with her parents the qualities she should look for in a husband.
- Give her parents ample opportunity to become acquainted with the boyfriend before there was any discussion of marriage.
- Ask her parents to point out areas where both she and her boyfriend could improve.
- Request that her parents set up guidelines to help her discern whether she has met the right life partner.
- Be willing to show deference to her parents on the timing of the marriage.

Alternatives for the young man who wanted to go into the ministry:

- Accept the challenge of motivating new spiritual interest in his father. This is the best preparation he could have for the ministry since this is one of the most important functions of the ministry.
- Work out with his father and his minister areas of training at the university which would be useful in both the ministry and in another vocation.
- Develop a personal program of Bible study while at the university; and use the university experience as an opportunity for a ministry with students.

Alternatives for the teenage girl:

- Ask forgiveness for her past attitudes and actions which were wrong.
- Commit her mother to the Lord prior to her request to attend the youth group, understanding that the Lord would be speaking through her mother.
- Determine ahead of time that she would silently thank the Lord for whatever answer her mother gave, and continue to develop right attitudes in the home.

THE RESULTS OF OBEDIENCE TO PARENTS

It is always right to obey God, even when that obedience interrupts or disturbs our plans. Obedience to parents is one of the most essential habits for young people to learn; and parents should insist on obedience from the time their children are babies. A great deal of rebellion can be prevented by parents using Biblical principles in training their children. See Ex. 21:15-17; Lev. 20:9; Deut. 21:18-21; Matt. 15:3-6.

Divine discipline and other unpleasant results of rebellion are totally avoidable. The great inner peace, the happiness, the wonderful blessings of living the Plan of God for the life are unmistakably the greatest experiences a person can have.

Titus Lesson 4 Quiz

Instructions

The following questions relate to your study of this lesson, including the topical studies.

To answer a question, type your response in the space provided after the word "Answer:". A question may be True/False, multiple choice, fill in the blank, or short answer type.

The last question requires you to write one or two paragraphs in "essay" form. Use the space provided; it will expand to accommodate your response.

You have choices about sending the quiz back to Grace Notes.

- The easiest way is to return your answers by email:
 1. Complete the quiz by entering your answers after the questions below.
 2. Copy the completed quiz and paste it into the body of an email message.
 3. In the email's Subject field, type the name and lesson number of the course (e.g. Titus 1).
 4. Send the email message to: **wdoud@gracenotes.info**.
- You can enter your answers on these pages, then send the whole file back to Grace Notes as a file attachment. This is handy, but these lessons will average 100K to 200K in size. As an alternative,
- After you answer the questions here, copy and paste the whole list of questions into a new MS Word document; then, send the new file to Grace Notes as an attachment. The new file will, of course, be much smaller than this main file.
- Finally, you can print the Quiz pages on your printer and send your response back to Grace Notes in the regular mail. If you do this, send the mail to:

Grace Notes

% Warren Doud

1705 Aggie Lane

Austin, Texas 78757 USA

Whichever transmission method you use, when Grace Notes receives your completed Quiz, the next lesson will be sent to you, by the same means you received this one. EXCEPT: when you have sent in the FINAL QUIZ, we will send your certificate to you, by regular mail.

Questions on Titus Lesson 4

1. What will be Titus' technique to bring about spiritual maturity among the men and women of various age groups in the local churches on Crete?

Answer:

2. What are the characteristics of an older man who is "sober" or "temperate?"

Answer:

3. The testing that God puts us through is designed to punish us for sins and bad behavior. [True / False]

4. Why are older women urged to become "teachers of good things?"

Answer:

5. To make a false accusation is a sin of the tongue. [True / False]

Answer:

6. A married woman is to be "obedient to her husband," because he is the boss and deserves to be obeyed. [True / False]

Answer:

7. What is the most important issue in the wife's having a correct relationship and attitude toward the Lord, her children, and her husband?

Answer:

8. Young men have nowhere near the same amount of responsibility in their spiritual lives as do young women. { True/False }

Answer:

Faith-Rest

9. The Hebrews in the wilderness failed many of the tests, and could not enter into rest in the promised land, because _____.

Answer:

10. The objective of testing is [A. to punish us for something we did in the past; B. to bring glory to the Lord Jesus; C. to make us humble; D. to show us that we need to do more for the Lord].

Answer

11. Faith-Rest is the process of _____, _____, and _____ the doctrines and promises of God's Word.

Answer:

12. Once you have exercised Faith-Rest, you don't have to concern yourself with that part of your spiritual life any more. [False / True]

13. "Whatsoever is not of faith is _____."

Answer:

14. Number 13 and 14 describe a group of [A. 40; B. 2,000,000; C. 12; D. 144,000] people who were sent into the land to gather information.

Answer:

15. The two men who brought back a good report were _____ and _____.

Answer:

Old Age

16. Old age is inevitably going to be the worst time of your life. [True / False]

Answer:

17. To be spiritual productive in old age, it is necessary, during the younger years, to _____.

Answer:

18. The Apostle Paul told Titus that he should concentrate on teaching the young people, because it was too late to help the old folks. [True / False]

Answer:

19. Everyone is under someone's authority. [True / False]

Answer:

20. ESSAY: State briefly how God's authority is transmitted, or passed down, to us.
