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## Exegesis Of Paul's First Letter To Timothy\*

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(Continuation)

### Chapter 2

In the foregoing chapter Paul has set forth "the sound doctrine" in a broad sweep and the warfare which every office holder is called to wage for the preservation of God's truth. Now he proceeds to give guidelines for congregational assemblies and for those who are to hold offices in the congregations. This is the content of the second part of the letter (2:1-3:13).

**Congregational prayer (2:1-7).** This is to be offered for all, corresponding to the all-embracing grace of God in Christ which Paul is appointed to proclaim.

V. 1. The particle οὖν, "therefore," indicates the connection with the foregoing. It points back to 1:3. Among the admonitions, the admonition to prayer is placed in the number one position. πρῶτον πάντων, *non temporis sed dignitatis*<sup>1</sup> = first and foremost. Luther has joined πρῶτον πάντων to ποιεῖσθαι, but our translation joins it to παρακαλῶ, which is most natural. There must have been existing conditions in the congregations which made it necessary for the apostle to express himself as he did. The prayer that is here spoken of is not a private prayer, but a congregational prayer, the church prayer. This is shown by the context. It is the prayer offered in the public assembly. The apostle uses four terms in order to lay emphasis on prayer from its various sides. δέησις is a prayer of supplication, while προσευχή is a general, religiously oriented prayer with no restrictions as to its content. δέησις does not specify to whom the supplication is directed, for this word can be used of a petition directed to either God or man. προσευχή, on the other hand, designates to whom the prayer is

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\* translated by C. M. Gullerud.

offered; for this word is always used for prayer to God. The relation between the first two conceptions is, then, this, that δέησις is fixed with regard to content but general with regard to the addressee; προσευχή is general with regard to content but specific with regard to the addressee. ἔντευξις is derived from ἐντυγχάνω, I visit someone for the purpose of asking him for something. The noun, ἔντευξις, is therefore a visit with someone for the purpose of entreating him, and therefore it is a prayer, but with the attendant idea of an unhindered freedom of access to God, which Paul otherwise expresses with the word, προσαγωγή. εὐχαριστία is simply a prayer of thanksgiving. The first three conceptions designate the believer's relation to God through prayer. δέησις designates man's insufficiency and lack over against God, προσευχή, the fellowship of life with God, and ἔντευξις, the childlike relation with God. ὑπέρ, "for," must be connected with all the previous conceptions. The prayer is to be offered for all men, not only because all are created by God, but especially because they are all redeemed by Christ and are all objects of God's love.

V. 2. As a special part of the prayer for all men there must be a prayer for the government. Again and again the apostle in his writings turns to the Christian's relationship to the government with instructions regarding it. The reason for this must be sought in the difficulty which the Christians unquestionably experienced in observing the right attitude toward the heathen government. But how important this was! If the Christians could be accused of being unfaithful citizens, possessed of a loveless, anarchistic attitude, much would be lost for the kingdom of God. "Kings" is a pregnant expression for the sovereign regents, primarily for the Roman emperor. ὑπεροχή, derived from ὑπερέχειν, "to rule over," properly means mastership. This is the meaning of the word also in 1 Cor. 2:1. In our passage, οἱ ἐν ὑπεροχῇ refers to magistrates of whatever rank. This expression, used in connection with "kings," points to secondary ruling authorities. ἵνα, "that," does not point to the content of the prayer, but to the intention, though not the subjective intention. We are not to pray for the government with the idea that we are thereby assured of a quiet and peaceable life, for this would then, in effect, be a prayer only for ourselves. This would also conflict with the simplicity of the prayer. No, ἵνα here refers us to the objective intention,

namely, that God would provide the answer if the prayer were offered in a proper manner. The government shall maintain justice and righteousness and thereby insure peace and welfare to its citizens. This is the government's responsibility. It fulfills its responsibility as it is blessed by God. The content of prayer for the government will include petitions to God for His counsel and for His support in its official acts so that it may fulfill its salutary purposes, checking the evil and advancing the good. ἡρεμον καὶ ἡσύχιον βίον is translated "a quiet and peaceable life." ἡρεμον is, in Latin, *quietus, tranquilus*. The word does not appear in other passages of the NT, nor is it to be found in classical literature except in the comparative, ἡρεμότερος, and as a noun, ἡρεμία. It is difficult to detect any great difference in the meaning of ἡρεμος and ἡσύχιος. Repetition serves to strengthen the expression. δαΐγειν is stronger than ἄγειν, "to lead completely," with life being thought of as a race which is to be run. εὐσεβεῖα, "godliness," is a favored expression in the pastoral letters. It is the Latin *pietas*, and points to the inner piety which expresses itself in outer activity. σεμνότης is the value of life over against humanity, recognition of the right Christian life-style, especially in contrast to the restless, confusing way of the agitators. It is therefore a life in which Christian piety, namely, reverence, may receive a proper and adequate expression toward other people.

This prayer for the government, which the apostle so earnestly calls for, has its type in the ordinance of the OT. The Jews were to pray for the rulers, even for the heathen rulers (Cf. Jer. 29:7; Ezra 6:10). There it is related that the Jews faithfully observed this until the last Jewish war, when both prayer and offerings to the emperor were forbidden by the Zealots. But the ancient Christians followed the apostle's admonition. Ancient liturgies testify to this. In these we have this form: δέησις ὑπὲρ βασιλέων καὶ τῶν ἐν ὑπεροχῇ ὑπὲρ τῆς εἰρήνης τοῦ κόσμου.<sup>2</sup>

V. 3. Here, with or without the reading of γάρ, "for," the reason is given for offering prayer for all men and especially for the government. Such a prayer is well-pleasing to God and readily accepted by Him. τοῦτο, namely, ποιῆσαι. . . . This verse does not restrict itself to the immediately preceding statement of purpose. ἀπόδεκτος appears in the NT only here

and in 5:4. It is a word which belongs to later Greek citations. But the verb, ἀποδέχομαι, occurs often. An expression carrying the same thought is εὐάρεστος, which is frequently found in the epistles. ἐνώπιον, "for," [NKJV: "in the sight of"], יְהוָה in the Hebrew, literally means "in the eyes of," "in the judgment of." It refers both to καλόν and to ἀπόδεκτος. God is here called "Savior," σωτήρ, in the same sense as in 1:1 and here with special reference to the following. It is God, with His redeeming love, who wants prayer to be offered for all men, even as He loves all people (Cf. Matt. 5:45).

V. 4. "Who desires all men to be saved." This verse explains the basic thought of v. 3. God's saving love is not limited. If it would be, it would be meaningless to pray for people whom God does not wish to save; so, also, it would be unnatural to omit from our petitions those whom God has not shut out from His love and salvation in Christ. πάντας, "all," is placed at the beginning for emphasis. We have here one of the strong proof passages against the predestinarian particularism. To rescue his theory, Calvin had to resort to a very artificial interpretation of this passage. He says: *De hominum generibus non singulis personis, sermo est; nihil enim aliud intendit quam principes et extraneos populos in hoc numero includere.*<sup>3</sup> The answer to this was fittingly given: *non autem bonum erit argumentum: pro singulis orandum est quia Deus vult aliquos servari.*<sup>4</sup>

σωθῆναι καὶ εἰς . . . ἔλθεῖν, "to be saved and to come to . . ." Some have, in part, distinguished between these two terms in this way that the first gives the negative element: to be torn out of the power of sin and its damnation; the other gives the positive side: to be placed into a new state where one acknowledges the truth. But it is more exact to consider the last term as giving the way and the means whereby the individual's salvation is realized. It is alone by coming to a living knowledge both of sin and grace, that one is transferred from the damning state of sin into the blessed fellowship with Jesus. It is alone by being preserved in this new state that one can go from knowledge to knowledge, becoming more and more perfect, until we reach the point when we shall see God as He is. Gerhard says: *Salus est finis, agnitio veritatis est medium ad finem perducens, quo veritatis agnitio alibi in Scriptura vocatur fides.*<sup>5</sup> Here then there is no "hysteron proteron," as

before stated [by some]. καὶ is equal to "and, as follows." If God wants the goal to be reached, then He must also provide the way to the goal.

V. 5 makes good on the truth [that is, proves] that God desires the salvation of all. The basis for the preceding πάντας, "all," is found in εἰς. The preparation of salvation proceeds from the one God and is carried out by the one Mediator. Both the originating agent and the one carrying it out are one. Therefore the saving will must be one and the same for all. If there is one God and one Mediator, then the salvation which proceeds from the one God and is carried out by the one Mediator must embrace all. Bugge says, "If there were several gods or several mediators, then it could be presumed that this plan of salvation, brought into existence by our God and our Mediator, affected a part of humanity and that the other part has been provided for by other gods and other mediators." If God is one and therefore the God of all, then He cannot desire to provide for the one and let the other go astray, to save the one and let the other be condemned. The word, μεσίτης, "mediator," is given such a prominent position to emphasize that "all men" and the one God are placed in juxtaposition to each other, the God-hating humanity on the one hand and the holy and righteous God on the other. Regarding the meaning of the word, refer to Gal. 3:19ff. There it is used of Moses, here of Christ (Cf. also Heb. 8:6; 9:15; 12:24). The mediation, which the one Mediator would arrange, required suffering and death; for "without shedding of blood there is no remission." Therefore the apostle now continues: ἄνθρωπος Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦς, "the Man, Christ Jesus." Bauer allows himself to say that when Christ, in opposition to "one God," is called man, He cannot at the same time be called God; and that when in 3:16 a divine predicate is attributed to Him, then this betrays an unripe presentation by the author, a presentation to which he has been drawn in order, on the one hand, to oppose Docetism and, on the other hand, to retain the Gnostic phrase that "God was manifest in the flesh." But Bauer is blind to the fact that Christ is here accented as Mediator. But in order to be Mediator, He must be man and, as such, belong to humanity; for "*nur ein Mensch konnte die Menschheit mit Gott versöhnen.*"<sup>6</sup> The accenting of the human nature of Christ is not foreign to Paul, as shown in the other epistles (Cf. Rom. 8:3; 5:15; 1 Cor. 15:21; Phil. 2:7; Gal. 4:4). Some have main-

tained that the true human nature of Christ is here also accented over against the false teachers. At any rate, it was a characteristic of later Gnosticism that, in its Docetism, it disregarded the flesh of Christ.

V. 6. The mediating work of the one Mediator is now more closely described. The self-sacrifice which is here spoken of is a self-sacrifice in suffering and death. Christ Himself is the subject. In other passages it is stated that it was the Father who delivered up His Son (Cf. John 3:16, etc.). Refer to Gal. 1:14 to learn what Scripture teaches us in this matter. The compound word, ἀντίλυτρον, "ransom," is only found here. In other passages the word used is the simple λύτρον. In Matt. 20:28 we have λύτρον ἀντί. ἀντί serves to designate the vicariousness. ἀντίλυτρον is really the substitutionary ransom money. The ransom money was Jesus' active and passive obedience or Jesus' blood, a more pregnant expression (Cf. Rom. 3:25; Eph. 1:7; Rev. 5:9). This ransom was paid to the Father, for it was His law that had been broken, His majesty that had been violated (see Gal. 3:13). ὑπὲρ πάντων, "for all," is not merely, as Meyer, Huther, and others maintain, for the benefit of all, *in commodum*, but as a substitute for all. In a double sense the vicariousness is shown. That ὑπὲρ can and sometimes must include the vicariousness, as also is true of ἀντί, is shown, e.g., Mark 10:45; 2 Cor. 5:15,20,21; Gal. 3:13; Philem. 13. Irenaeus also uses the two prepositions alternately to express vicariousness (Cf. *Adv. haer.* 5,1). τὸ μαρτύριον . . . with respect to the linguistic construction, see Winer #48,1. This addition must be considered as apposition to the foregoing ὁ δούς . . . An apposition may refer not only to an individual word but to a sentence. It could here be explained with ὁ ἐστὶν τὸ μαρτύριον. That Christ gave Himself into death for all, this is the testimony or the content of the testimony which is to be proclaimed. The emphasis is on εἰς ὃ of the following verse. The article for μαρτύριον is demonstrative. τὸ μαρτύριον must not therefore be referred only to ἀντίλυτρον as if the testimony is simply to the given fact. According to the following, Paul is to proclaim this testimony; but what Paul preached was the gospel. This is here called a testimony as in 1 Cor. 1:6 and 2:1, because the gospel has a historical fact as its content, a fact realized in time. But not only that. The expression is not thus exhausted. The historical fact establishes itself also in experience in this way that

the salvation stands not only as a historical entity but also becomes a factual experience through the subjective appropriation. καιροῦς ἰδούους. The word καιρός is usually regarded as a derivative of κάρη or κάρα, *caput, summitas*. In the LXX it is found as the rendition of קָרָה or קָרָה. Among the ancient Greeks the word at times is rendered *justus modus*, an interpretation not found in the Biblical Scriptures; at other times *certum et definitum, tempus justum, tempus opportunum*. This is the meaning found in the NT: "right time," "opportune time." ἰδούος is *proprius, suus, ipsius* (Cf. Gal. 6:9; 1 Tim. 6:15; Tit. 1:3). καιροὶ ἰδούου are the points of time which are a part of the testimony, testimony's possession, so to speak. These are the times which God who rules all things has made to be special times, the NT epoch when the proclamation of Jesus' person and work should be spread over all the earth.

V. 7. The relative ὃ refers to μαρτύριον in v. 6. He was ordained to be servant of this testimony and this for the proclamation of the universality of salvation. εἰς, "for," namely, to proclaim. τίθημι τινὰ εἰς τι, "I appoint a person for something" (Cf. 1:12). The question is here forthcoming: why is Paul in this connection turning the attention to himself again? This he does for a definite reason. In the foregoing (1:12ff) Paul has presented himself, his conversion and commission, as a proof of the greatness of grace. It is so great that it covers all sins, even the sins of Paul. He presents himself, or more accurately, his office, as a proof of the universality of grace. Previously the thought was this: he, the chief of sinners received grace: now, he is the Gentiles' apostle, placed into his office by God Himself. The emphasis is placed on the expression, διδάσκαλος ἔθνῶν. κήρυξ, (related to the word γῆρυς, *vox, sonus*, and γηρύω, *sonum edo*) means "herald." This word appears three times in the NT, here and in 2 Tim. 1:11, concerning Paul, and in 2 Peter 2:5, concerning Noah. He was a δικαιοσύνης κήρυξ. The word does not give information regarding the nature or content of the message which the herald brings. This must be determined from the context. The same is true of the verb, κηρύσσειν. κήρυξ, "preacher" or "herald," is the more general term; ἀπόστολος, the more specific. The second word is therefore a closer definition of the first. He is a herald with the attribute of apostle. But now comes a formula of assurance: "I am speaking the truth in Christ, and not lying." This is an assurance expressed both negatively



and positively to give it more weight. What is it that one shall so ceremoniously be assured of? We will come to an understanding of this when we familiarize ourselves with the progress of thought. The term "apostle" is not simply defined as "preacher" or "herald," but "apostle" is again more closely defined as "teacher of the Gentiles." The latter presents the extensiveness of his apostolate by saying that it shall extend to the Gentiles. In the three expressions there is, then, a progression from the general to the specific and to the most specific, the call, the latter of which carries the most weight. We must say, therefore, that the assurance which is inserted has reference to all three expressions but has special reference to the last. He wants to nail it down that he has been called by God to be the Gentiles' apostle and this for the purpose of making it doubly sure that grace is universal. ἐν πίστει καὶ ἀληθείᾳ, "in faith and truth." Here is designated the sphere in which Paul's work as the teacher of the Gentiles is to be active (Cf. our expressions: "He is teacher in Norwegian," "in German," etc.). Paul shall teach the Gentiles faith and truth. The omission of the article in the case of πίστις and ἀλήθεια serves to emphasize the quality of the expressions: he is to teach them something so great and precious. πίστις, "faith," characterizes the apostle's teaching from the subjective side and ἀλήθεια, "truth," from the objective. Truth is the content of the message which he should teach, and by means of the truth he is to teach them to believe. Wiesinger refers πίστις, "faith," to the objective faith, *fides quae*, and sees καὶ, "and" as the explicative. This does not give the text its proper due.

V. 8. The apostle now returns to the main subject of this chapter: admonition to prayer. After he has fully established his statement that prayer should be offered for all men, he now proceeds to deal with the persons who pray, and in this connection he speaks forth on the relation of men and women to each other in the congregation. With the particle, οὖν, "therefore," the thought reverts to the material introduced in v. 1. The admonition which is there set forth is an expression of his will as an apostle which he has the right to do as the inspired apostle. Bugge, together with a few other interpreters, sees this connection: In the foregoing the apostle says **that** prayers are to be offered for all men; now he indicates **how** one should pray, namely, with uplifted hands. . . . But, according to this explanation, the apostle would be placing emphasis on an outward

ceremony, a thing not compatible with the new covenant nor with the evangelical spirit of the apostle. Besides, one could then hardly avoid numbering the women with those leading in prayer in the congregations; but this would not agree with the following, which says that women are to be silent in the assemblies. But it is not ἐπαύροντας, the "lifting up," that receives the emphasis in v. 8, but τοὺς ἄνδρας, "men," which stands in contrast to γυναῖκας, "women," in v. 9. The congregational prayer is to be led by men and not by women. ἐν παντὶ τόπῳ, "in every place" [NKJV: "everywhere"], does not mean everywhere; for here the discussion is not concerning the truth that prayer is to be offered always and everywhere, but according to the context the reference is to the congregational prayer. "Every place" then refers to every place where worship is held. There were a number of congregations in Ephesus and surrounding territory committed to the care of Timothy. ἐν παντὶ τόπῳ does not then stand in contrast either to the Jewish synagogue or to the Jewish temple. ἐπαύροντας χεῖρας, "uplifted hands" [NKJV: "lifting up hands"], describes the position during prayer. The gesture during prayer among the Jews was the lifting up of hands (Cf. Ps. 28:2; 44:20; 63:4; Exod. 17:11ff). This Jewish custom passed on as an inheritance to the Christian congregations. That this custom continued for a time among Christians—of this we have the testimony of Clemens Romanus, who is quoted by Huther: προσέλωμεν αὐτῷ ἐν ὁσιότητι ψυχῆς, ἀγνῶς καὶ ἀμυλάντους χεῖρας αἴροντες πρὸς αὐτόν.<sup>7</sup> The lifting up of hands was to be a picture of a person's exaltation. One lifted up what one could, hands and head. It was also to be a sign of one's need of God's help, which one stood there in anticipation of receiving. We fold our hands in the position of a cross to show that we come with faith in the crucified Savior and show by the folding of the hands a trusting commitment to the mercy of God with a feeling of our own weakness. But these hands must be holy, separated from the profane, not besmirched with wicked deeds performed with hands as the instruments, but dedicated to God in holy deeds. With reference to the linguistic form ὁσίους instead of ὁσίους, cf. Winer 11,1. Adjectives with three endings in -ιος, such as, -μιος, -ειος, and -αιος, are used not infrequently, especially by those of the Attic dialect, like adjectives of two endings. χωρῶς, "without," is really "separated from." διαλογισμός, "dispute," [NKJV: "doubting"], is a stronger word than ὀργή, "anger." It otherwise ap-

pears in the plural in the NT and always with a bad connotation. διαλογισμός refers to evil thoughts, ratiocinations, or, as Godet puts it, "restless working of the mind in the service of a bad heart." Thus the word gets the meaning of dispute, quarrels. The translation "doubt" is not suited to stand alongside of "wrath." The thought, therefore, is that one is to preserve the worship service from anything that separates and severs. Because this is a worship of God, the hands are to be holy. Because it is an act of fellowship, wrath and disputes are to be avoided.

V. 9. With this verse the apostle turns to the women. He has something to say to them also. One must not supply προσεύχεσθαι after ὡσαύτως, "likewise," but simply βούλομαι, which refers to κοσμεῖν. Some have wanted to supply both βούλομαι and προσεύχεσθαι, but this is not possible linguistically, for how then can one interpret κοσμεῖν? The infinitive would then be without proper connection and without direction. To be sure, some have explained it as an asyndetic infinitive (thus Wiesinger, de Wette), making reference to 5:14; 6:18; Tit. 3:14. But, as Huther calls to our attention, these passages prove nothing, since they are not adequate proof. One must consider both connection and direction. Some have sought to explain the infinitive as exegetical, but there is no proof for such a free, isolated use of the infinitive in the NT. If one is not to do violence to the text and insert something which is not there, then we must combine κοσμεῖν with an inferred βούλομαι, and γυναῖκας belongs to κοσμεῖν. To be sure, the objection has been raised that then ὡσαύτως does not come into its own right, since there would not be the similarity between the two sides which the word requires. To this the answer may be given that the similarity is not lacking. ὡσαύτως has a connection with βούλομαι and the unity consists in this, that in the assemblies of the congregation both men and women are to maintain the proper conduct. The apostle has set forth what his apostolic will is with reference to the men and women. They are to conduct themselves with propriety in the assemblies. The reason for this admonition regarding women must be sought in the existing conditions in the congregations. The Ephesian women must have desired to occupy a position which did not agree with the spirit of Christendom. They must have pushed themselves forward, not just in cosmetic matters but also in matters which involved

speaking in the congregation's assemblies, similar to the male members, and with a tendency to domineer. Here the apostle needed to step in with admonition and discipline. He was led into a general discussion of their relationship with men in this way, that he found it necessary to speak of their conduct in the gatherings of the congregation. Verses 9 and 10 are directed toward their obsession with adornments. It is as if it had been written as an admonition to many of the modern ladies who seem to come to church services to show off their finery. καταστολή is derived from καταστέλλειν, "to slip down." καταστολή is really the act of slipping down and then that which is slipped down, a dress, apparel. The word appears only here in the NT. κόσμος means "decent, modest." Paul desires, therefore, that the Christian women should dress modestly, free from fondness of finery. μετὰ αἰδοῦς, "with modesty." This is a disposition which guards against that which is indecent and obtrusive. The modest woman does not wish to have all eyes directed to her. With this word Paul proceeds from the outward, the clothing, to the inner, the attitude. The following expression points to the woman's inner *habitus*. σωφροσύνη is basically *sanitas mentis*, "self-discipline"; then also "modesty, decency." "Not with" (ἐν instrumental) "braided hair." By this is meant a kind of artistic plaiting, a kind of flashy hair dressing which show people prized most highly (Cf. 1 Pet. 3:3, where Peter does not have the divine services in mind, but everyday life). When Paul says that the women should not adorn themselves with braided hair and gold . . . , "he certainly does not mean that they should never be dressy, never wear gold or pearls, etc.; but he means that they should avoid the 'sensational'" (Daechsel). To be modest in dress is certainly good advice for both men and women.

V. 10. ἀλλ' ὃ πρέπει, "but which is proper . . . ." Luther has translated the verse thus: "*Sondern wie sich's ziemt den Weibern, die da Gottseligkeit beweisen durch gute Werke.*"<sup>8</sup> He combines δι' ἔργων ἀγαθῶν with ἐπαγγελλόμενας, while our translation has combined it with κοσμεῖν in v. 9. This combination is the natural one. These good works through which the faith-life revealed itself shall be the adornment of those who attend the worship services. In this manner there will be unity in their lives, both in and outside of the assemblies. Good works are the fruit of the life created by regeneration. The women profess their fear of God; they

profess to be children of God; and for those who do this it is proper that they should adorn themselves with good works, for otherwise their worship would not be true. *διὰ* takes the place of *ἐν* in the foregoing, because good works can be called an adornment only in a figurative sense. The good works which Paul has in mind are not only those that can be called works of charity, works of love, but every fulfillment of one's duty in and out of the home.

Vv. 11-15 show that women are to be excluded from coming forth as teachers in the public worship service. This commandment regarding women is related to the foregoing. This also concerns the women's position in the public services. The protrusion here forbidden is behavior basically of the same spirit as mentioned in verse 9. Whether it is a matter of trooping up in the assembly in luxuriously and splendidly decorated clothing, or of stepping up to teach, in either case it involves the desire to attract attention to oneself. In both instances the woman's *ἀδώς* is set aside and she loses her true adornment, her womanliness. In effect she ceases to be a woman. Emancipation is the death of womanliness. (Cf. Bugge on these verses.)

V. 11. *γυνή* lacks the article and thus the category is emphasized. It is the woman as a woman that is under consideration and not just some specific woman. In the public service she should not lose her passivity. In church she will be at ease in passivity and not in activity. The same was true also in the Jewish synagogue. A woman could only be a hearer, not a speaker. *ἡσυχία* is *tranquillitas, silentium*, "quietness." And *μανθάνειν* is "to learn, receive instruction," in contrast to *διδάσκειν*, which is "to teach others." *ἐν πάσῃ ὑποταγῇ*, "with all submission," in contrast to *αὐθεντεῖν ἀνδρός*, "to rule over man." She should be willing to acknowledge the state of submission where God has placed her and so with the receptive passivity in which she looks to the man as teacher. Huther correctly says: "*Das Christentum hebt, obwohl in Christo kein Unterschied ist, doch die von Gott geordneten natuerlichen Unterschiede nicht auf; es erkennt sie an, um sie mit seinen hoeheren Leben zu durchdringen.*"<sup>9</sup> Neander says, concerning the woman's position in the ancient church: "*Die geistige Receptivitaet und die Wirksamkeit in dem Familienleben wurde als das der weiblichen Bestimmung Entsprechende anerkannt und daher das weibliche Geschlecht von den oef-*

*fentlichen Vortraege religioeser Gegenstaende ausgeschlossen.*"<sup>10</sup> (Cited by Huther from *Gesch. der Pflanz. der Kirche*, etc., I.s.125).

V. 12. διδάσκειν, "to teach" others, is placed at the beginning of the sentence to give it emphasis. In 1 Cor. 14:34, λαλεῖν is used instead of διδάσκειν, although the subject matter is the same. ἐπιτρέπω, *concedo, permitto*, "permit." Paul speaks here with authority as God's apostle. We must remember that he is still dealing with the woman's position in the assemblies. What he forbids is to have the women step forward as teachers in the public worship. But one cannot conclude from this that a woman is forbidden to be a teacher in the children's school. Such a school belongs to the sphere of the home. Conclusions cannot here be drawn as though there could not be prophetesses with extraordinary divine gifts and special call or as though our present passage conflicts with 1 Cor. 11:5 and Acts 21:9. Starke also reminds us that "this passage cannot be cited to prove that a woman cannot write books; for though such a book may be sold to the public, the authoress does not thereby step forth in an assembly, but the book is read in the home, and it is there that one is taught from it." Gerhard says: "*Sensus est: mulieri non permitto ut in ecclesia publice doceat, privatim autem et domesticos doceat.*"<sup>11</sup> But the apostle does not only deny to the women the public teaching activity in the congregation. Paul adds: "not to have authority over a man." ἀυθεντεῖν is a word which is not found in the ancient Greek nor in any other part of the NT. The etymology of the word is not certain. Some maintain that the basic meaning of the word is "to be bigger" than another and therefore "to have authority" over him. More correctly, the word stems from ἀυθεντης, which is a contraction of ἀυτο-εντης, a combining of αυτος and εντεα, "weapon." αυθεντης is therefore one who bears a weapon in his hand to kill himself or another, and so in later Greek one who personally discharges a task, and then again one who is self-sufficient, independent, despotic, a despotic ruler. αυθεντεῖν then becomes one who is αυθεντης, "an unrestricted lord," to rule. But how has the apostle come to this? Calov answers: "*Hoc optime consequuntur ad superiora. Si loqui ac docere permetteretur mulieri in ecclesia, permetteretur ei in viros impetrandi potestas.*"<sup>12</sup> Bengel also says: "*αυθεντεῖν auctoritate uti in virum docendo, verba faciendo.*"<sup>13</sup> If the

woman can step forth as a teacher in the assemblies of the congregation, then she would be lord over the man and not he over her. It is, of course, true, as Bengel says, "The public teacher . . . is placed as lord over the one who sits at his feet." ἀλλ' εἶναι ἐν ἡσυχίᾳ, "but to be in silence." Grammatically we have here a zeugma, after ἐπιτρέπω. The word βούλομαι must be supplied, which rules the infinitive, εἶναι: "I do not permit . . . but I will." ἡσυχίᾳ, "silence," points to the quiet and meek, free of all desire to rule.

V. 13. This verse, together with verse 14, gives a double reason why the woman should submit to the man. The first reason is drawn from the record of the creation (v. 13), the second from the record of the fall into sin (v. 14). Both support the truth that the woman is to occupy a position submissive to the man and not a ruling one (Cf. 1 Cor. 11:8-13). Man was created for himself. When he was created, a human being was created. The woman was created later for man's sake. Therein, the apostle says, lies the truth of the divine ordinance that the woman is not to occupy the first, the ruling place. πλάσσειν is "to form something from a soft mass." This is the same word used in LXX's translation of Gen. 2:7.

V. 14. The difficulty which seems to be present in this verse has brought forth many explanations. A number of interpreters, in agreement with Gerhard, add πρῶτος, "first": "*Adam non fuit seductus scil. primum et immediate a diabolo.*"<sup>14</sup> Others add ὑπὸ τοῦ ὄφως, "by the serpent." But it is not permissible to add anything here, and it isn't necessary when one takes note of what the apostle is saying. ἀπατάω is the Latin *fallo, decipio, seduco*, namely, *per fraudem, per fallaciam*; that is our word "deceive." Adam certainly sinned and fell into transgression; and, since he was the head and representative of mankind, his sin was imputed to all men (Rom. 5:12). But he did not sin in the same manner as did Eve. She was led astray. The serpent held out the prospect for her that she would become wise, yes, like God Himself. Adam was not deceived. There is no place stated that the woman won him over by holding before him a prospect [of becoming like God — C.M.G.]. Therefore this word is not used concerning him. Concerning the woman it is written in Gen. 3:13, ἡ ἄνθρωπος ἠπάτησέν με, and this agrees with the Greek ἀπατᾶν, which the LXX also uses in translating the woman's reply to God: ὁ ὄφεις ἠπάτησέν με, (Cf. also 2 Cor.

11:3). Adam uses another word. He does not dare to say that the woman deceived him, but he simply says: "the woman gave me" (Gen. 3:12). Adam sinned by feebly following the woman's voice. Bengel also says: "*Serpens mulierem decepit, mulier virum non decepit, sed ei persuasit.*"<sup>15</sup> Here no addition is needed. Our Lutheran fathers have here seen a manifestation of the woman's weakness. The serpent turns to her as to the one that would be the easiest to lead astray and because she is the weaker one for whom it would not be appropriate to exercise authority. Huther claims that there is no hint here of the woman's weakness, but that the basic reason is to be found in this that the man was placed over her as a punishment for being so foolish. Certainly she has by her fall shown that she is not qualified to be ruler. She has forfeited her right to be such, and the man was placed over her as master as a punishment. Therefore, immediately after the fall it is stated that the man should rule over her (Gen. 3:16). But there seems also to be allusion to her weaker character. The fact that she permitted herself to be deceived by the stratagem of the devil seems to indicate that she was an easier target for the deception which would lead to sin and that she did not possess the critical sense of the man. She is an emotional and impulsive person. This is her strength and weakness at the same time. ἐν παραβάσει γέγονεν. This is a pregnant construction which is used frequently in later Greek literature. She fell into transgression and remained there. This is the result of the fall, and it is added to show how fatal was the deception. παράβασις is a transgression of a definite commandment.

V. 15. Schleiermacher, when he comes to this verse, breaks forth: "*Ja, was meinen sie, obwohl Paulus damals, als er I Cor. 7:25ff schrieb . . . der Meinung gewesen ist, das die Seligkeit des weiblichen Geschlechtes von Kinderzeugen abhaenge?*"<sup>16</sup> But thus a person can express himself, when he has become so eager to discredit the divine inspiration of Scripture that he cannot even take note of what it says. That is the case here. After Paul has denied the woman all activity in the public service which is not appropriate for her, he refers her to the function which God has ordained for her. This verse is connected to the foregoing in a double sense, namely, that it sets forth her salvation from her deep fall and also the life-threatening activity through which she shall attain salvation. The activity of public teaching in the church is not her life's



calling, but τεκνογονία. This word carries the emphasis. V. 15 presents a prospect of encouragement for the woman who fell so deeply in Eve and points out to her another function in life than the one which v. 12 has closed to her. That this is the meaning is shown by the very words of the text. σωθήσεται, "she shall be delivered, be saved." The subject is γυνή, "woman," not only Eve. She comes into consideration only as representative of her gender. It is the woman as a category that Paul is here talking about. She shall be saved διὰ τῆς τεκνογονίας. The word τεκνογονίας appears only here, and its meaning can only be arrived at through its derivation. It is derived from τεκνογόνος, which is a combination of τέκνον and γένω. The meaning therefore becomes childbearing. But that childbearing is not a means of salvation or a saving condition is shown by the following phrase introduced by εἰάν, "if." There the means of salvation is indicated for her as for all others. Otherwise the contrast between this verse and the foregoing section would be lost. The contrast here is not what would not and what would be the means of salvation, but the contrast is between the two spheres of life, one in which she does not have an active part, and the other where she has. And if childbearing should be the means of salvation, what would be the situation for those who do not bear children? One would have to teach as do the Mormons, that only the women who bear children can be saved. We will have the right interpretation if we will take note of the fact that the reading is here διὰ τῆς τεκνογονίας and not διὰ τῆς τεκνογονίας. διὰ with the genitive is often used to indicate the state or attitude in which we may be when we do or permit something to be done. It must then be rendered "under" or "through" (Cf. Rom. 2:27; 4:11; 2 Cor. 5:7,10; 2:4). διὰ τῆς τεκνογονίας, therefore, gives us the sphere designated for the woman, her position, her assignment; and, living her life in this situation, she shall be saved provided that . . . The new Norwegian translation has also rendered διὰ with "gjennem" (through). But "childbearing" is a term very likely chosen with special thought to the false teachers who forbade marriage. It points not only to childbearing in its regular sense but is used as an expression pointing to family life, life in the home. The call to motherhood, family life, is designated for her "*die Erfuellungen der gottgegebenen Geschlechtsbestimmung*"<sup>17</sup> (Kuebel). This is the sphere which is natural for her. She shall be the sun and comfort of the home. She is to feed and train the children in the

fear and admonition of the Lord. The public activity in state and church is for her unnatural. In the home the woman can be great; there she can perform a deed to which the man is not suited. There she can exercise an influence for church and state to which we pay too little attention. The women who are dissatisfied in the home and prefer to be found in other places degrade themselves, and the men who are active in tearing them out from the home are dethroning and degrading the finest of God's creations on earth.

Bengel writes: "*Describitur munus mulieris, in antitheto ad munus docendi et gubernandi. τεκνογονία, liberorum generatio et educatio. Non agitur hic de propria salutis causa, sed denotatur conditio sive status, in quo mulier salutem sit assecutura, quamvis non admisceat sese functioni virili.*"<sup>18</sup>

ἔάν μεύωσιν ἐν πίστει, "if they continue in faith." Faith is the necessary means for the partaking of salvation. If the woman does not have faith, it will not help her even to be in that position which is best suited for her. And she must continue in the faith, for those only are saved who remain steadfast to the end (Rev. 2:10). The apostle uses the plural μεύωσιν, "they continue," because γυνή was used as a collective term for all of womankind. The collective term is now divided into its individual parts. And that must take place; for when we speak of that which in the subjective sense mediates salvation, then it depends on how the individual stands toward God, in faith or not. The following words, "love and holiness with self-control," are not to be considered as necessary in addition to faith but as manifestations of life and marks of faith. The apostle would here show the woman that she need not seek a religious or spiritual activity outside the sphere of the home. She need not think that she must go out into the public arena to find occasion for spiritual employment. She has enough in her home circle. Faith shall be active in love toward the neighbor and in personal sanctification. When the woman bears this in mind, she will find that she has plenty of religious activity, yes, more than enough, where she is. She does not have to go over the brook for water. ἀγιασμός is sanctification (Cf. 1 John 3:3), and to this is added μετὰ σωφροσύνης, not simply "modesty" but "self-control, self-limitation, discipline," the virtue which is always afraid to exceed the designated

boundaries, free from all the elements of passion. Such virtue is the woman's pride.

(To be continued)

### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> "first of all," not in point of time but of importance.

<sup>2</sup> "Supplication for kings and those in authority for the peace of the world."

<sup>3</sup> Calvin: "The discussion here has to do, not with individual persons, but with classes of men; for he intends nothing else than to include princes and foreign peoples in this number [of those whom God desires to save]."

<sup>4</sup> "But it would not be a good argument to say: Prayer is to be made for certain individuals [Cf. v. 2], because God desires that [only] some [of them] be saved."

<sup>5</sup> Gerhard: "Salvation is the goal; knowledge of the truth is the means leading to the goal, which knowledge of the truth is elsewhere in Scripture called faith."

<sup>6</sup> "Only a man could reconcile mankind to God."

<sup>7</sup> Clemens Romanus: "Let us come before Him in holiness of soul, lifting up pure and undefiled hands unto Him."

<sup>8</sup> "But as is fitting for women who manifest godliness through good works."

<sup>9</sup> Huther: "Although in Christ there is no difference [between man and woman], yet Christianity does not abrogate the natural differences ordained by God; it recognized them, in order to permeate them with its higher life."

<sup>10</sup> Neander: "The spiritual receptivity and the activity in the life of a family were recognized as well suited to the female calling, and therefore the female sex was excluded from the public presentations of religious subjects."



# Ministering To The Emotionally Disturbed\*

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## Introduction

Depression. Guilt. Anger. Fear. Resentment. Anxiety. Worry. The dictionary calls these abstract nouns. But when they are experienced subjectively, their meaning is understood in concrete terms.

All of us know how true this is. We have all experienced these emotions. For most of us the experience comes like an occasional thunderstorm breaking up the relative calm on a lake. But for others the storm is more severe, the impact more deeply felt. The storm does greater damage, leaving the person broken, emotionally crippled, unable to function normally.

As followers of Christ our hearts go out to those of our brothers and sisters who are enduring such afflictions. The new heart which the Spirit has created within us moves us to ask, "What can I do to help? What would God have me do to serve this person?" As called shepherds of Christ's sheep our concern runs even deeper. Realizing our responsibility before God, we ask, "How should I apply God's Word to this person's heart? How can I reach this soul with the blessed gospel?"

These are questions with which every faithful shepherd ought to concern himself. In this paper we will attempt to be of some help in answering these questions and in putting this aspect of the public ministry in its proper perspective.

We will begin by considering the root of the problem—sin.

## The Problem: Sin

### Genesis 1-3

On the sixth day God created man—male and female. God created man as a being equipped with complex physical, mental, and emotional systems. Like everything God created, man was "very good." From that phrase, "very good," we infer that before the Fall our first parents possessed and enjoyed complete mental health. Their spirits were perfectly calm pools of peace and contentment. Because they feared, loved, and trusted in God in absolute holiness, no doubts or fears troubled them. They had no worries about the future, no guilt to trouble their consciences. They were secure, having all they needed in God's love for them. They trusted completely in God's ability and willingness to provide for all their needs. They had no identity crisis: they knew who they were (creatures of a loving God), what their true purpose in life was (to praise their Creator), and where their lives were heading (to a blessed eternity of fellowship with God). With such a blessed knowledge, confidence, and trust, they walked forward in life, doing the work the Lord laid before them, with no emotional baggage hindering their progress.

But then Adam and Eve disobeyed God and sin entered the world. The image of God was lost. Adam and Eve no longer feared, loved, and trusted in God above all things. As a consequence of their sin, they began to suffer emotional problems. Just as the devil had promised, they now began to know evil as well as good—from personal experience. First they hid from the Lord. Then they trembled before Him. Anxiety, worry, guilt, and fear now troubled them.

### The Temporal Consequences of Original Sin

When Adam and Eve had children, those children inherited their parents' sinful heart. And along with inherited sin came all the physical and spiritual problems we see today. The entrance of sin into the world and the loss of the image of God has left its mark on all sinners. All of us have psychological problems to a certain extent and will keep on having such problems until we die. These are the temporal consequences of original sin.

It is an observable fact that in some individuals the temporal consequences of original sin are more pronounced than in others. Even as some children are born physically weak and sickly, so some are born with an emotional make-up that is more easily disturbed than others. There are some individuals who seem to have been afflicted with emotional problems from their earliest childhood on. In them most clearly we see the dark shadow cast by Adam's sin on man's emotional make-up.

### The Temporal Consequences of Actual Sin

In addition to temporal consequences of original sin, mankind also suffers emotional problems as a consequence of actual sin; for the sinful heart which we have inherited from our first parents is by no means a quiescent thing. Unless counteracted by the work of the Spirit through the Word, it forms our entire outlook on life. And wherever a person's

attitudes and outlook on life are being determined by his natural sinful desires, there the emotional troubles caused by original sin are compounded.

For example, we are born greedy. Unless that greediness is checked through the Spirit's working of faith, it may shape an attitude which looks upon wealth as our source of security and personal significance. Such an attitude exposes one (to an even greater extent) to fears, anxieties, and insecurity.

The person who is suffering emotional difficulties is by no means to be regarded as an innocent victim. For he himself is guilty of sin before God. Unless he is led to repentance, not only will his sins lead to further emotional problems in this life, but they will also lead to his perishing eternally in those sins.

### The Solution: Christ

The solution to all of the problems brought on by sin is to be found in our Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus invites all of us who labor under sin's heavy load to come to Him and promises to give us rest. In Christ there is forgiveness for all the wrongs that weigh heavily on our consciences. In Christ we have a loving, caring Shepherd in whose arms we may rest secure, free from anxiety, worry, and fear. In Christ we have the motivation and the spiritual strength needed to set aside anger and resentment. In Christ we have joy in spite of the of ten depressing circumstances of life. Christ is the Vine; we are the branches. Whoever abides in Christ and has Christ abiding in him is a flourishing, fruit-bearing tree. Whoever has Christ's Spirit dwelling within him has righteousness, peace, and joy. Wherever Christ's Spirit works faith by the means of grace, the image of God is renewed within the sinner. Alongside the old Adam there is, then, a new man who fears, loves, and trusts in God.

Living in Christ means denying the lusts of the flesh. It means saying "no" to those sinful desires and attitudes with which we were born. Though living in Christ does not mean the end of all actual sin in our lives, it does mean growth in sanctification. Such a life brings blessings in the form of a degree of deliverance from the temporal consequences of actual sin. As we walk in the Spirit and strive against the lusts of the flesh, we enjoy the blessing of being spared those emotional complications which would arise from following the desires of the sinful flesh. This is not to say that Christians will not suffer mild and, at times, even acute emotional disturbances; for we are not yet free of our sinful flesh. But faith in Christ is a wholesome, healing force. The attitudes which are created and built up by the Spirit are ones which make for emotional stability and health. In Christ we experience a certain degree of relief from emotional disturbances already in this life and will enjoy perfect freedom from all emotional problems in the life to come.

### Our Goal: Leading The Sinner To Christ

There is a great temptation for pastors in our day to forsake Christ and the true healing He brings and to adopt instead the approach of psychology, which the world praises and admires. Practically all modern psychology attempts to heal apart from Christ. But without Christ there can be no true healing. There can be only cheap imitations that will not stand the test of time and eternity. The man leaving the psychologist's office may feel as if he has gained the whole world. But what does that feeling profit him if he loses his soul? True and eternal healing is found in Christ alone.

The goal of our ministrations to the emotionally disturbed, then, must be to place the sinner in Christ and Christ in him—to unite the sinner with the Savior in the bonds of faith and cement that bond ever more firmly. If our ministrations are such that the Holy Spirit may work through them to lead a person to Christ, we have reached our goal. In this respect there is no difference between our ministrations to the emotionally disturbed and our ministrations to others. All have sinned, and Christ died for all. Our ministering to the emotionally disturbed is nothing more than an individualized applying of God's Word of law and gospel.

The key word here is "individualized," (*Privatseelsorge*) as opposed to "general." If a person is deep in the throes of depression, it may be of some comfort and help to tell him, "Cheer up. Jesus loves you." But the comfort is surely greater when that message is applied from the perspective of the cares and concerns that lie heaviest upon his heart. The message of the gospel is the power of God unto salvation and the vehicle of the Spirit whenever it is communicated. At the same time, however, it is the responsibility of the communicator to lead the hearer to the point where, when the gospel message is spoken, the hearer may recognize that message as one that applies to him personally.

We want the message of Christ, our Savior, to reach deep into the hearts of those whom we are serving. Therefore, a great portion of our time, care, and attention in serving the emotion ally disturbed must be given to the individualization of our proclamation of God's Word.

### The Individualized Application Of God's Word To The Emotionally Disturbed

## Wisdom From On High

"Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (2 Tim. 2:15). This is what we are doing as we apply God's Word to individual souls—"dividing the word of truth." In order to do that dividing rightly, we need wisdom and understanding from on high. Therefore, as we approach each individual situation, we ought to do so with prayer. For our selves we ask that Spirit of wisdom and understanding. For the one to whom we minister we pray (as Paul prayed for the Ephesians, 3:16-17) that he might be strengthened with might through the Spirit in the inner man, that Christ may dwell in his heart by faith, that he may be rooted and grounded in love.

## "Exploratio"

Our pastoral theology books speak of an *exploratio* with a view toward determining whether one may receive the Lord's Supper with blessing. There is an *exploratio* of sorts that must take place in ministering to an emotionally disturbed person, also. The individualization of our application of God's Word calls for finding out as much as possible about the one to whom we are ministering.

There are a number of problems which may make it difficult to gain this information from an emotionally disturbed person. The emotional problem may be such that it prevents realistic and logical thinking (e.g., autism), or prevents normal speech (emotional blocking, mutism, flight of ideas), or prevents normal content of thought (fantasy, obsession, delusion), or in some other way prevents meaningful, two-way conversation. In some cases there may be no visible response at all. It is important to note, however, that lack of visible response does not necessarily mean hearing, understanding, and thinking are not taking place.

Lack of visible response should not prevent us from bringing God's Word faithfully and regularly. In such cases it may be well to remember the importance of becoming a familiar friend to the individual. It is important to try to get into his world, bringing comments and observations about the people and everyday events that are dear to him. Frequent visits are called for. Familiarity may lead to greater openness and ability to communicate. In the meantime, close friends and relatives may provide a great deal of useful information.

In cases where there is a fair degree of communication we must remember that the problems a person describes are often only symptoms of deeper problems. Our counseling is not limited to surface problems. We need to "test the waters" of a number of areas in his life, searching for indications of inner spiritual problems.

This *exploratio* is a skill that can and ought to be developed by those who are called upon to minister to the emotionally disturbed. There is no lack of good books by Christian counselors on the subject. Several are listed in the bibliography. Warning: Some "Christian" counseling books are no more than secular counseling in Christian terminology. We must keep in mind that the goal is to lead the person to Christ. Our only purpose for reading books on counseling should be to help us gain the understanding we need to apply God's Word to the individual in a way that suits his situation and need.

Although no case is exactly like another, many cases are similar. It may therefore be helpful to read the observations and comments of those who have dealt with similar cases. Since many of the books available on the subject of emotional disturbances are written by secular psychologists, their comments need to be read with great care and always weighed in the balance of God's Word.

To what extent should we try to unravel the tangled mess of emotional problems? How deep should we go in trying to trace the root problem? How far back? To childhood? Perhaps in some cases that might be helpful. But we should beware when trying to plumb a person's inner labyrinth. There is a point where we start trying to calculate the incalculable, as the secular psychologists do. We have not been called to exercise omniscience.

## Our Expectations

In ministering to emotionally disturbed souls we should beware of expecting too much in the area of visible results. Those of us who are less experienced in dealing with cases of this sort may very easily approach a situation with the expectation that, if we apply God's Word properly, we will surely be able to see that we have helped our brother or sister—in some small measure, at least. Visible results are certainly something we hope and pray for but which finally lie beyond our control. We have been charged with speaking God's Word and applying it to souls. We do so on the basis of what we know from God's Word about all men and what we know about the individual to whom we minister. The results we leave in the hands of the Lord.

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## Paul's "Tailor-Made" Witnessing at Antioch and Athens \*

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### Introduction

One of the first rules of public speaking is to know your audience and to "tailor" your message for the benefit of your listeners. The speech of a political candidate who is addressing a large labor organization will naturally be different in tone and substance from a speech he would deliver to a businessmen's association. In both cases, his effort to persuade his listeners will involve getting their attention by speaking about something with which they are familiar. Then, in a logical fashion, he presents his material point by point in a manner that his listeners can understand. Since the union member probably has a very different political viewpoint from the businessman, the skilled politician will shape his presentation in order to make it relevant to the point of view of his audience. Can we apply this method of persuasive speaking in our presentations of God's Word, whether public or private? In one sense, the answer is a definite NO. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever (Heb. 13:8). His Word is sharper than any two-edged sword (Heb. 4:12); its power is not dependent on the preacher (1 Cor. 3:7); and it will accomplish whatever God wants it to (Isa. 55:11). Furthermore, almost all present-day efforts to make the message of the Bible relevant to modern man in our "enlightened" age are based on the false assumptions that man is somehow different from what he was in past ages and that it is necessary for the individual to separate truth from myth in the Bible. But God says, "There is nothing new under the sun" (Eccles. 1:9), and "The Scripture cannot be broken" (John 10:35). What modern man needs today is the same thing that he has always needed, namely, "the whole counsel of God," the law and the gospel, sin and grace. However, in that very presentation of law and gospel we can take an example from the Apostle Paul in "tailoring." In this paper, two sermons of Paul will be contrasted: his address at the Jewish synagogue at Pisidian Antioch, recorded in Acts 13, and his address to the Athenians on Mars Hill, chapter 17. We will see how he adjusted his presentation of the gospel (not the gospel itself) to suit the background of his listeners, and we will explore some applications of this principle for modern-day evangelizing.

The first address to be considered is Paul's sermon to the Jews and proselytes at the local synagogue in Pisidian Antioch, on his first missionary journey. As was his usual practice, Paul began his missionary work in the local Jewish community. He and Barnabas sat until the regular part of the service, the reading of the law and the prophets, was concluded. They were then invited to address the congregation. Paul quickly seized the opportunity; and in Acts 13:16-41 we have his address recorded, a brief outline of which follows:

UNTO ISRAEL A SAVIOR, JESUS<sup>1</sup>

- I. Israel's history leads up to Him. (vv. 16-22)
- II. God fulfilled His promises to Israel by raising Him from the dead. (vv. 23-37)
- III. In Him alone is forgiveness. (vv. 38-41)

What sort of background did Paul's audience have in this particular case? The make-up of the Jewish synagogues in the Hellenized cities included both those who were Jews by birth and the proselytes, or gentile adherents to Judaism, who were allowed to participate in the service, although they were seated separately. So, there were both Jews and



Greeks present; but it is important to note that the audience as a whole was conversant with the Old Testament Scriptures, which were read every Sabbath. They all held the conviction that one almighty God had created them, that this one God had established a code of universal law that applied to them, and that He had promised a Savior to deliver them from their sins. Paul uses this as a basis for his address; he begins, verse 16, by addressing the crowd as "Men of Israel, and you who fear God . . .," including both the Jews and proselytes. He proceeds with a brief overview of the history of Israel. Then follows a short overview of Jesus' life and death on earth, climaxing with the resurrection. Finally comes the proclamation of the gospel and the call to faith, with the added admonition for them to avoid fulfilling the prophecy of rejection found in Hab. 1:5.

Clearly Paul was able to speak as he did at Antioch because he could presuppose two things about the viewpoint of his hearers, namely, the acceptance of the universal truths of origin and morality. Now let's consider Paul's address at Athens, noting his approach in light of the background of that audience.

Paul had not intended to be in Athens at all but fled there after an altercation at Berea during his second missionary journey. He was waiting there for Silas and Timothy to catch up with him, but he did not wait idly. He not only went to preach in the local synagogue, as was his custom, but he also engaged in discussions with the Greek philosophers in the marketplace. Acts 17:18 tells us that he caught their attention by preaching Jesus and the resurrection, so they took him to the Areopagus, that is, the place known as Mars Hill, where philosophers gathered to consider new ideas.<sup>2</sup> As in Antioch, Paul was invited to speak; these Athenian philosophers were always eager to hear something new (v. 21). Here is an outline of Paul's address:

### THE "UNKNOWN GOD" MADE KNOWN (An unfinished sermon)

- I. He is the Creator and Sustainer of all. (vv. 22-28)
- II. He is a Judge to whom we are all accountable. (vv. 29-31)

This is obviously a very different approach from the one that Paul pursued at Antioch—different, yet orthodox. "Paul did not flinch at the mention of sin, repentance, judgment, or resurrection. In the classic university atmosphere of Athens he was true to the heart of the gospel."<sup>3</sup> Paul chooses this format because his listeners had an entirely different outlook on life compared to that of the Jews and proselytes of Pisidian Antioch. What was the outlook of these Athenians? The two prevailing philosophies which are mentioned in verse 17 are the Epicurean and Stoic. A thumbnail sketch of these philosophies is revealing:

[The Epicurean philosophy] . . . derived its name and its existence from the great philosopher Epicurus . . . In physics he, like Democritus, attributes all nature to changes among atoms, in themselves eternal. He does not recognize a Creator; but, with curious inconsistency, finds a place in his system for a multitude of gods, who, however, supremely happy in themselves, take no part in human affairs . . . He desires that pleasure shall be pursued and pain avoided . . . He included under this term the pleasure derived from the exercise of the intellect and the moral faculty.

[The Stoic philosophy] . . . founded by Zeno of Citium in Cyprus . . . distinguished matter and force as the ultimate principles in the universe; and the force working everywhere they called reason, providence, God, and regarded it as conscious and thinking, yet dependent and impersonal, a breath or a fire which forms, permeates, and vivifies all things . . . at the end of a cosmical period the universe is resolved into fire in a general conflagration, and the evolution of the world begins again, and so on without end [cf. the "Big Bang" theory] . . . The human soul is a spark or emanation of this conscious but impersonal deity . . . pleasure should never be made the end of an action. The highest good is virtue, i.e., a life conformed to nature . . . especially resignation in respect to fate.<sup>4</sup>

These people didn't believe in a Creator and were totally unfamiliar with the Scriptures. If Paul had begun by appealing to the truths of Scripture, the Greek mind would rebel, asking "Whose scripture? What makes that relevant to me?" and would smugly pose Pilate's question, "What is truth?" Paul recognized that he had to establish a foothold in their minds by getting across the idea of universal Creator-God (v. 24), by Whose plan we live our lives (v. 26), and Who established a universal law by which we will all be judged (vv. 30-31). The assurance that this is so lies in the historical fact of the resurrection from the dead of the One whom He ordained (v. 31). Note that the "clincher" of both sermons is the fact of Jesus' resurrection from the dead. At this point there is no doubt that Paul would have continued his sermon with part three, "Jesus' atonement for the sins of the world," but at the mention of the resurrection he was cut off, some mocking, others giving him a polite dismissal. "All of them but the Epicureans would no doubt have agreed with him had

he spoken of the immortality of the individual soul; but as for the resurrection, most of them would endorse the sentiments of the god Apollo, expressed on the [supposed] occasion when that very court of the Areopagus was founded by the city's patron goddess Athene: "Once a man dies and the earth drinks up his blood, there is no resurrection."<sup>5</sup>

To sum up the two approaches, then, we see that Paul immediately preached Christ and the cross to the Jews and proselytes, because they believed in God as their Creator and Author of a universal moral code. But the Athenians had a mistaken outlook on life; they didn't acknowledge a Creator or universal morality, so Paul's approach to them was that of first proclaiming God as Creator and Judge of our behavior. How can we apply this type of "tailoring" to our own presentations of God's Word? Consider a quote from a book entitled *The Lie: Evolution*, by Ken Ham, from a chapter entitled "Evangelism in a Pagan World," p. 101f:

It's about time the modern church came to grips with a society that is more "Greek" than "Jewish" in outlook. In fact, the modern church itself is largely more "Greek" than "Jewish." Whereas, in the past, the creation basis was evident in society and people were less ignorant of Christian doctrine, late Twentieth Century man knows little of that. We have to come to grips with the fact that evolution has become one of the biggest barriers to today's people being receptive to the gospel of Jesus Christ. We have many letters from people indicating that they would not listen to the claims of Christianity because they thought evolution had proved it to be wrong.

Ever since the theory of evolution has been presented as scientific fact in our public schools, the product of those schools has been practically an entire population of "Greek" thinkers. The religion of humanism now holds sway: man is the ultimate end of a chance evolutionary process, and he should worship himself as the highest known being. These are people who, like the Epicureans, attribute all nature to changes among atoms and do not recognize a Creator. Or, like the Stoics, they believe that any god who exists must be merely the instigator of an evolutionary process, an impersonal force. Those who believe in this sort of divinity deny that he can act in the world to reveal himself to man or to work miracles. How will we approach such people in our calling as witnesses to Christ? According to *Walther's Law and Gospel*, we first crush a mission prospect with the law and then raise him up with the promises of the gospel. This is certainly the correct Scriptural approach, but Walther was working with an advantage that we no longer enjoy: the majority of his mission prospects had not been trained from childhood to deny that someone had made them and had established rules for them to live by. Someone who acknowledges a creator who makes the rules is ready to hear the kind of message that Paul preached at Antioch, and there are still such people today, though they are far fewer now than they were when science and the public school system were in agreement with the concept of a creator. Most of the people listening to sermons in CLC churches on a given Sunday have a background that allows the pastor to base his law and gospel message on the assumption that his listeners acknowledge God as Creator. But our mission prospects (by and large) have been taught that they have been brought into this world by blind chance, and that the only morality to which they are bound is that which they define for themselves. With this person a traditional law and gospel approach can be immediately derailed, because he has been trained, in the name of tolerance and freedom of the mind, to reject the idea that something can be absolutely and always true and right, no matter what anybody else says. Thus, witnessing to this sort of person must start with God as Creator.

. . . When it (the Bible) speaks of heavenly things it is just as true, and true in the same sense, as when it speaks about our material world, which is studied by science . . . Christianity presents its ethic as absolute and universal. On what basis? Because God created us all. We share a common human nature, and what is morally wrong for one person is wrong for us all. The individual cannot create his own ethic, for he did not create himself . . . It is no wonder that ethics based upon individual judgment end up as no ethic at all; without an objective standard, ethics deteriorate into purely subjective feelings—what I like or feel comfortable with . . . <sup>6</sup>

When a person bewitched by humanist-evolutionist philosophy is made aware of some of the natural knowledge of God and God's law that he has been trained to suppress, he can then be crushed by that law in preparation for the joyful reception of the gospel. How should we go about this process in our callings? Let's take our cue from Paul (1 Cor. 1:18-25):

For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. For it is written: "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent." Where is the wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the disputer of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? For since, in the wisdom of God, the world through wisdom did not know God, it pleased God through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe. For Jews request a sign, and Greeks seek after wisdom; but we preach Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling block and to the Greeks foolishness, but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men. (NKJV)

When Paul spoke on Mars Hill he simply confronted the Athenians with the facts of God as Creator, Sustainer, and Judge of our behavior; he declared it to be true. He did not seek to prove to them, on their terms, that there was one Creator-God. What does this tell us about the study of creation-science and its use in our mission work? Creation-science

serves many useful purposes; first of all, it is the only genuine science of origins, since it starts with a correct presupposition (there is a Creator-God) rather than a faulty one (there is no Creator-God). It aids the believer in giving glory to God by pointing out His marvelous works and sustaining hand in His creation. Hopefully, it will help reawaken the suppressed natural knowledge of God in the humanist-evolutionist, causing him to consider at least the possibility that he is responsible to his Creator.

There is a danger in getting caught up in endless arguments over creation-science data versus evolutionist-science data. That would not be preaching Christ crucified; it would only be a futile effort to make our message acceptable to the rational mind, an impossible task. However, we would do well to educate ourselves on these topics, not only for our own benefit, but for the sake of being able to refute those who scoff at the idea of responsibility to their Maker. The Holy Spirit creates and sustains faith in our hearts through the Word, not through scientific data, but **Satan is using "scientific" data to circumvent the Word**. Anything we can do to take this weapon out of his hands is worth trying.

When we present Christ as the answer for a troubled conscience to the "Jews" of our day, or as Creator, Sustainer, and Redeemer to the "Greeks" of our day, we can expect the same results that Paul got. Most of the Jews slandered Paul, persecuted him and expelled him from their region. Some of the Athenians dismissed his ideas out of hand; others openly mocked him. Jesus tells us to be glad when this happens (Matt. 5:11):

Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake. Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

However, persecution is not the only reaction that results from proclaiming the True God as Maker and Redeemer. At Antioch, the Gentiles who heard the Word ". . . were glad and glorified the word of the Lord. And as many as had been appointed to eternal life believed" (Acts 13:48). Among the Greeks in Athens ". . . some men joined him and believed, among them Dionysius the Areopagite, a woman named Damaris, and others with them" (Acts 17:34). Paul's "tailored" sermons had accomplished God's intended purpose. May God so be glorified when He works through us in our callings, and may we always be eager to put Paul's exhortation in 2 Tim. 4:2 into practice:

Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all long suffering and teaching.

### Notes

<sup>1</sup> Outline borrowed from R.H.C. Lenski's *Interpretation of the Acts of the Apostles* 516.

<sup>2</sup> *Westminster Dictionary of the Bible* 40.

<sup>3</sup> A. T. Robertson, *Paul the Interpreter of Christ* 154.

<sup>4</sup> Robertson 169 and 581.

<sup>5</sup> F. F. Bruce, *The Book of Acts* 363f.

<sup>6</sup> Nancy Pearcey, Ed., "Evangelism—Reclaiming All of Creation," *The Bible-Science Newsletter* September 1984 6.

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## P A I D E I A

### From a Pastor's and Professor's Notebook

Roland A. Gurgel

VII

Joel 2

Walt Whitman, the so-called "Good Gray Poet," was deeply concerned about the U. S. Civil War. Nowhere is that more evident than in his poem, "Beat! Beat! Drums!" There is an insistence running through that bit of verse that everyone must get involved in the conflict. No one, whether student, bridegroom, farmer, broker, lawyer, young man or old, should be allowed to rest until the issue would be settled—no, not even the dead lying on their trestles should be allowed peaceful sleep. One cannot miss the tremendous, demanding call for action in the words—(and we quote excerpts from the poem).

Beat! beat! drums!—Blow! bugles! blow!

Through the windows—through doors—burst like a ruthless force,  
Into the solemn church, and scatter the congregation;  
Into the school . . .  
Over the traffic of cities . . .  
Make no parley—stop for no expostulation; . . .  
Let not the child's voice be heard, nor the mother's entreaties; . . .  
So strong you thump, O terrible drums—so loud you bugles blow.

What Walt Whitman caught in his poem, Joel, in chapter two of his book of prophecy, had demonstrated 2800 years earlier in connection with a far more important need—a need which also demanded total involvement.

Joel writes at a time when the children of Israel had already been divided into two kingdoms. Very soon after that division the northern kingdom, the Kingdom of Israel, had turned away from serving the God of their father, Abraham. Idolatry set in at once, but it reached its height during the reign of Ahab and his queen, Jezebel. They introduced the worship of Baal. Their daughter married Jehoram, king of Judah. As a result he, Jehoram, led Judah into the same idolatrous worship. Judah, that people from whom the Messiah should come, became guilty of spiritual adultery. To make this people aware of the fact that all was not well with them, the Lord sent His army, the army of locusts, to devastate their crops—and their hearts.

In the face of this army of the Lord, the prophet cries out, "Blow ye the trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm in my holy mountain: let all the inhabitants of the land tremble . . ." (2:1). Again, in chapter 2:15, "Blow the trumpet in Zion, sanctify a fast, call a solemn assembly." These verses pick up and introduce with more detail what had been touched on already in chapter 1:14, "Sanctify ye a fast, call a solemn assembly, gather the elders, and all the inhabitants of the land into the house of the Lord your God, and cry unto the Lord."

Don't you hear that same insistence—but for another cause—that Whitman so eloquently expressed in "Beat! beat! drums!—Blow! bugles! blow!?" Listen, as Joel gives no part of the nation an escape from the sound of the trumpet and the call to an assembly—"Gather the people, sanctify the congregation, assemble the elders, gather the children, and those that suck the breasts: let the bridegroom go forth of his chamber, and the bride out of her closet. Let the priests, the ministers of the Lord, weep between the porch and the altar . . ." (2:16-17).

Certainly, there is a call here for a national day of repentance, since the nation under the leadership of its kings had turned away from the Lord God to follow after strange gods. However, a nation is made up of people—men, women, and children—of priests, farmers, rulers, housewives, etc., and as individuals who have sinned they are to gather in solemn assembly and cry unto the Lord.

#### **NOTE:**

There were undoubtedly some among these citizens of Judah who had not bowed the knee to Baal, who in humble thankfulness awaited the Messiah. Some who, like Nathanael of a later century, were Israelites indeed—without guile. (One might well remember God's words to Elijah that there were still 7,000 in Israel who had remained faithful to Him.) They, too, are to hear the cry to be gathered with fellow citizens and cry unto the Lord, for "the army of the Lord" had devastated their lands and crops also. In that devastation they were reminded of the fact that, although this destruction was not a punishment visited upon them, yet it did testify to the fact that they lived in a sinful world. They, too, were plagued by a sinful flesh, and they needed the daily reminder that in their gracious God they had the assurance of forgiveness of sins. Even in the midst of apparent desolation they could cry out with Habakkuk, "Although the fig tree shall not bloom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labor of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls: yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation. The Lord God is my strength . . ." (Hab. 3:17-19).

What was it these people were to do as a nation—as a congregation—as individuals? The answer is clear and direct: Turn to Me (the Lord), turn to Me with fasting, with weeping, with mourning—turn to Me—not just in outward formalism, with crocodile tears—but (how penetrating the words of Joel 2:12- 13) with a heart that has been rent (torn) and not just garments (the sackcloth and ashes routine was not enough).

People, see yourselves for what you have become—spiritual harlots who have gone after lovers (idols); people who have given credit to strange gods for the wonderful gifts I have given you. (We have used Hosea's picture of spiritual adultery here.) See yourselves as such, confess the sin with a grieving heart—a heart filled with true repentance—that is, in sorrow confessing one's faults but in confident trust throwing itself on the mercy and grace of God for forgiveness and restoration into God's family (v. 13 of chapter 2). Echoes of Moses' prayer, found in Exodus 22:11-12 and Numbers 14:13-20, are found in verse 17 of Joel, chapter 2. "Spare thy people, O Lord, and give not thine heritage to reproach, that the heathen should rule over them: wherefore should they say among the people, Where is their God?" Behold, the repentant sinner coming boldly before the throne of grace, building on God's promises! And, yes, seeking the glory of

God in his deliverance, for in blessing His people God's name is made great among the gentiles.

The drum beat of the law pointing an accusing finger and the sound of the trumpet calling to repentance echo through the first chapter and a half of Joel's prophecy with a demanding insistence for all to hear and act. **But!** The drum and trumpet also sound the call to lay hold on the grace and mercy and truth of God in His promise in the Messiah. "But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound" (Rom. 5:20).

We spoke of Joel being worth studying not only for content but for homiletical purposes—for developing or sharpening some preaching skills. Our sermons may well echo some of his God-given drum beats and trumpet blasts in preaching law where it needs to be preached; but no less important—perhaps more important—to fill the paragraphs of our sermons with a lively and clear-sounding gracious beat of the gospel—calling out its glorious promises and comforting sounds to troubled hearts, grieving over sin, and to thankful hearts, hungry for the heavenly sound.

What was the Lord's reaction to this rending of hearts and turning to the Lord? Already in the call to repentance there is a hint of what was to come. In verse 14 of chapter 2 there comes the question, "Who knoweth if he will return and repent and leave a blessing behind him . . . ?"

The Lord did leave a blessing. The nature and extent of that blessing will be considered in the next article on Joel's prophecy.

(To be continued)