

LEXICAL STUDIES  
IN THE  
PASTORAL  
EPISTLES

PREPARATION  
FOR  
EXEGESIS

R.W. BRANNAN

**\*SAMPLE DRAFT EDITION\***

Copyright 2005 R.W. Brannan  
ESV Bible text Copyright 2001 by Crossway Bibles (<http://www.esvbible.com>)  
Do not distribute without permission  
For more info, contact: [pe@pastoralepistles.com](mailto:pe@pastoralepistles.com)  
(Version 2005-02-13)

CONTENTS

CONTENTS.....2

INTRODUCTION.....6

    THE UNIQUE VOCABULARY OF THE PASTORAL EPISTLES..... 7

    THE SCOPE OF THIS WORK..... 7

    METHOD..... 8

    PRIMARY TEXTS..... 9

    SECONDARY SOURCES..... 9

WORKS CITED .....11

    OLD TESTAMENT APOCRYPHA ..... 11

    OLD TESTAMENT PSEUDEPIGRAPHA ..... 12

    APOSTOLIC FATHERS ..... 12

    OTHER LITERATURE ROUGHLY CONTEMPORARY WITH THE NEW  
    TESTAMENT ..... 14

ABBREVIATIONS .....15

    ANCIENT VERSIONS OF THE BIBLE..... 15

    MODERN LITERATURE ..... 15

*Bibles* ..... 15

*Dictionaries and Lexicons* ..... 16

*Commentary Sets*..... 16

*Individual Commentary Volumes*..... 16

<i>Other Works Cited</i> .....	16
SECONDARY LITERATURE.....	17
<i>Old Testament Apocrypha</i> .....	17
<i>Old Testament Pseudepigrapha</i> .....	18
<i>Apostolic Fathers</i> .....	19
<i>Other Works</i> .....	19
<b>FIRST TIMOTHY</b> .....	<b>21</b>
<b>1 TIMOTHY 1.1-2: PAUL'S GREETING</b> .....	<b>22</b>
<i>Verse 2</i> .....	26
PERICOPE SUMMARY.....	29
<b>1 TIMOTHY 1.3-11: PAUL'S REASON FOR WRITING</b> .....	<b>31</b>
1 TIMOTHY 1.3-4: BACKGROUND .....	31
<i>Verse 4</i> .....	33
1 TIMOTHY 1.5: THE GOAL OF TEACHING.....	38
1 TIMOTHY 1.6-7: SOME TEACH IGNORANTLY.....	41
<i>Verse 7</i> .....	44
1 TIMOTHY 1.8-11: THE PROPER USE OF THE LAW.....	47
<i>Verse 9</i> .....	48
<i>Verse 10</i> .....	50
<i>Verse 11</i> .....	54
PERICOPE SUMMARY.....	55
<b>1 TIMOTHY 1.12-17: THE EXAMPLE OF PAUL</b> .....	<b>57</b>
<i>Verse 13</i> .....	60
<i>Verse 14</i> .....	65
<i>Verse 15</i> .....	67
<i>Verse 16</i> .....	68
<i>Verse 17</i> .....	71

PERICOPE SUMMARY.....	73
<b>1 TIMOTHY 1.18-20: TIMOTHY'S CHARGE</b> .....	<b>74</b>
<i>Verse 19</i> .....	77
<i>Verse 20</i> .....	80
PERICOPE SUMMARY.....	84
<b>1 TIMOTHY 2.1-7: BUILDING FAITH AND GODLINESS</b> .....	<b>85</b>
1 TIMOTHY 2.1-2: PAUL URGES PRAYER.....	85
<i>Verse 2</i> .....	89
1 TIMOTHY 2.3-7: THE RATIONALE FOR REQUIRING PRAYER.....	93
<i>Verse 4</i> .....	94
<i>Verse 5</i> .....	96
<i>Verse 6</i> .....	99
<i>Verse 7</i> .....	102
PERICOPE SUMMARY.....	104
<b>1 TIMOTHY 2.8-15: WOMEN IN THE FELLOWSHIP</b> .....	<b>105</b>
<i>Verse 9</i> .....	109
<i>Verse 10</i> .....	115
<i>Verse 11</i> .....	118
<i>Verse 12</i> .....	120
<i>Verse 13</i> .....	124
<i>Verse 14</i> .....	125
<i>Verse 15</i> .....	129
PERICOPE SUMMARY.....	130
<b>1 TIMOTHY 3.1-7: QUALIFICATIONS OF OVERSEERS</b> .....	<b>133</b>
<i>Verse 2</i> .....	137
<i>Verse 3</i> .....	144
<i>Verse 4</i> .....	146

Verse 5.....	148
Verse 6.....	153
Verse 7.....	158
PERICOPE SUMMARY.....	162

## INTRODUCTION

The notion of “word studies” is viewed derisively in some circles. This is not without some merit, for so-called “word studies” are often built on poor foundations, drawing conclusions that are far afield of the texts upon which these word studies are based.

Yet examining the meanings of words, in context, is an important part of proper exegesis. This is acknowledged by those who write on the subject. Gordon Fee writes:

In any piece of literature, words are the basic building blocks for conveying meaning. In exegesis it is especially important to remember that words function in a context. Therefore, although any given word may have a broad or narrow range of meaning, the aim of word study in exegesis is to try to understand as precisely as possible what the author was trying to convey by his use of this word in this context. Thus, for example, you cannot legitimately do a word study of σάρξ (flesh); you can only do a word study of σάρξ in 1 Cor. 5:5 or in 2 Cor. 5:16, and so on.<sup>1</sup>

And Donald Hagner:

One of the most fruitful areas of study for exegesis is the study of the exceptionally rich vocabulary of the NT.<sup>2</sup>

Despite the necessity of word studies and the insight they provide, both Fee and Hagner are quick to caution their readers of the dangers of word studies. These warnings must be taken to heart in order to responsibly examine the words of the New Testament in the proper context. Only upon

---

<sup>1</sup> Fee, G. D. (2002). *New Testament Exegesis : A Handbook for Students and Pastors* (3rd ed.) (Page 79). Louisville, Ky.: Westminster John Knox Press.

<sup>2</sup> Hagner, Donald A., Ph.D. *New Testament Exegesis and Research: A Guide for Seminarians*. (Page 10). Pasadena, CA: Fuller Seminary Press.

so doing will the exegete arrive at conclusions to form the foundation of proper exegesis.

## THE UNIQUE VOCABULARY OF THE PASTORAL EPISTLES

Of all of the Pauline epistles, the three epistles known as the “Pastoral Epistles”—First Timothy, Second Timothy and Titus—exhibit the largest proportion of unfamiliar and infrequent words. Indeed, the Pastoral Epistles contain more *hapax legomena*<sup>3</sup> (proportionately) than the other Pauline epistles.

Thus, the unstoppable force of “word studies” meets the immovable object of the Pastoral Epistles. To responsibly exegete the text of the Pastoral Epistles, one must become familiar with the vocabulary. However, particularly with words that do not frequently occur in the New Testament, the examination of word meanings involves more than simply looking up words in a lexicon and choosing a gloss that seems appropriate.

## THE SCOPE OF THIS WORK

This work seeks to evaluate the vocabulary of the Pastoral Epistles in light of associated material. Material that uses similar language or parallel concepts is evaluated in the hopes that such material will shed light on meanings of words and phrases in the Pastoral Epistles.

This is not a work of exposition.<sup>4</sup> It seeks to be informative, not innovative; relying on testimony of similar documents from the same general time frame or similar perspective to establish meaning. This meaning, then, is used to inform exegesis.

Many commentaries and other works of exegesis frequently use material from secondary sources to provide background information or examples of

---

<sup>3</sup> A technical term meaning words that only occur once in a given corpus.

<sup>4</sup> Though doubtless some interpretation is done.

word usage, duly noting references to such works in footnotes or endnotes. This work is unique in that it seeks to provide full quotations (in translation) of these works. Instead of relegating these citations to the doom of footnotes that are seldom if ever used, the cited text itself is brought into the argument for the reader to evaluate. As such, this work also serves as a functional introduction to the use of these secondary sources and, for some, quite possibly as an introduction to the material itself.<sup>5</sup>

This work does not purport to be exhaustive in examination of such sources. However, the sources highlighted provide insight to the discussion at hand, and this provides light to the study of the text. This in turn leads to an informed understanding of the text, which should be the goal of any such study.

## METHOD

Significant phrases, words and concepts are evaluated based on various classes of material. These classes are:

- **Context.** Does the current object of study occur within the same pericope? The same book? The same author?
- **Covenant.** Does the current object of study occur within other New Testament sources?
- **Canon.** Does the current object of study occur within the Septuagint?
- **Contemporaries.** Does the current object of study occur within literature roughly contemporary to the Pastoral Epistles? This list of work includes but is not limited to:
  - *The Works of Josephus*
  - *The Works of Philo*
  - The Apostolic Fathers
  - Old Testament Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha

In most cases the areas of *Context* and *Contemporaries* are examined. Similar word usage is evaluated and compared to usage in the Pastoral

---

<sup>5</sup> For brief background on some of the secondary sources cited, please consult the *Works Cited* section below.

Epistles in an effort to determine import and meaning of the word or phrase under consideration. These smaller pieces are then tied together and evaluated from a larger perspective, to determine the meaning of the sentence, paragraph, and pericope.

In addition, aspects of *Chronology* and *Culture* may be examined, but these form a minor part of the study.

## PRIMARY TEXTS

The text of the UBS4/NA27 Greek New Testament<sup>6</sup> is used as the textual basis of the Pastoral Epistles.<sup>7</sup> The primary English edition consulted is the *English Standard Version*.<sup>8</sup> The text of the Pastoral Epistles in the ESV will be reproduced in its entirety throughout this work. The text is broken into pericopes,<sup>9</sup> which will serve as the highest-level unit of discussion.

## SECONDARY SOURCES

The class of *Contemporaries* is composed of secondary sources. Scripture<sup>10</sup> is primary and is therefore the primary resource consulted. However, the Pastoral Epistles are unique in the Pauline epistles in terms of frequency of *hapax legomenon*. Unfamiliar terminology is used that is not found elsewhere in Scripture.<sup>11</sup>

In an effort to understand these words and phrases, non-canonical text is examined and quoted from freely. The free quotation of this material should

---

<sup>6</sup> Individual words are typically quoted by BDAG lexical form. Frequencies of occurrence within the NT and Pastoral Epistles are provided as well.

<sup>7</sup> Textual variants are mentioned where deemed appropriate, typically in footnotes.

<sup>8</sup> *The Holy Bible: English Standard Version*. 2001. Wheaton, IL. Standard Bible Society. More information on the ESV is available at <http://www.esvbible.com>.

<sup>9</sup> The term “pericope” is used in the very generic sense of a selection of text; not in the technical sense that is found in works dealing with, for instance, the synoptic Gospels.

<sup>10</sup> Defined in terms of the Protestant Canon for purposes of this work.

<sup>11</sup> The words of a colleague, “Verbs are nouns—and oftenly!” seem perfect to describe some of the linguistic phenomena contained in the Pastoral Epistles.

not be misconstrued as a *carte blanche* endorsement of said material as useful for establishment of doctrine. This is not the purpose of such citations. The purpose is to examine the usage of the word or phrase in literature contemporary with the Pastoral Epistles. Using such comparison may shed light on how the word or phrase in question was understood in the first century.

## WORKS CITED

A fair portion of the cited works may be unfamiliar to the typical student or teacher. As mentioned above, these works are not to be considered on par with Scripture. They are valuable for study, however, as they provide some historical and cultural insight. Most importantly, however, they provide a witness to usage of the Greek language.<sup>12</sup>

## OLD TESTAMENT APOCRYPHA

The “Old Testament Apocrypha” is comprised of the material from the Septuagint and Vulgate that is not reflected in the Hebrew Old Testament. It is primarily of a Jewish nature, though Jews do not consider this material canonical. Many times, this material is described as “inter-testamental” and placed between the Old Testament and the New Testament. The Catholic church labels this material “Deuterocanonical”, or part of the “second canon”. The material dates from about 300 B.C. to perhaps 70 A.D.<sup>13</sup>

The material is primarily historical in nature, though there are some expansions of canonical material. For example, some expansion of Esther occurs in the “Additions to Esther” (a single narrative in the LXX, typically separated from the canonical portions of Esther in English versions).<sup>14</sup>

---

<sup>12</sup> The following descriptions are altogether too brief and wholly inadequate, yet some description must be given for those unfamiliar with these corpora. For further information on any below corpus, please consult a Bible dictionary or encyclopedia, such as ABD or ISBE.

<sup>13</sup> ABD, vol. 1 p. 292.

<sup>14</sup> There is a similar class of literature known as “New Testament Apocrypha”, however these have not been consulted with any regularity in the course of this work.

## OLD TESTAMENT PSEUDEPIGRAPHA

The term “pseudepigrapha” is a compound word comprised of the two Greek words meaning “false writings”. A pseudepigraphal book is one that is falsely attributed or anonymous. These were typically attributed to notable figures of the Old Testament (e.g. *Testament of Abraham*, *Martyrdom of Isaiah*) and in many instances provide additional testimony<sup>15</sup> concerning the lives of the person honored in the title.

Many of these documents were written in Greek, between 250 B.C. and 200 A.D.<sup>16</sup> This material is primarily Jewish in nature, though some of it is was rewritten from a Christian perspective.

There is no formal corpus for the Old Testament Pseudepigrapha, it is only a loose collection of documents. Different editions include the works the editors see fit to include.

## APOSTOLIC FATHERS

The corpus of writings known as the “Apostolic Fathers” is a collection of documents from authors who, for the most part, succeeded the Apostles chronologically. Dated ranging from 80 A.D. through 200 A.D.,<sup>17</sup> these documents were written in Greek and are explicitly Christian.<sup>18</sup>

*First Clement*: A letter written to the Roman church. It is traditionally held to be written by Clement who was the leader of the church in Rome at the end of the first century, though the document itself makes no authorship claim. It is typically dated in the 90s.

*Second Clement*: While traditionally attributed to Clement, most today do not hold to Clementine authorship of this document. Less of an epistle and

---

<sup>15</sup> Testimony that is purely speculative and most likely false.

<sup>16</sup> ABD, vol. 5 p. 537.

<sup>17</sup> These dates are by no means firm; there is much debate over the dating of many of the documents that make up the Apostolic Fathers.

<sup>18</sup> Much of the information in the document-by-document review is taken from the introductions in Bart Ehrman’s excellent edition of the Apostolic Fathers published as part of the Loeb Classical Library series. See Bibliography for citation information.

more of a homily, it is notable as an extremely early non-New-Testament example of Christian exegesis. It is typically dated in the 140s.

*The Ignatian Letters:* This collection of letters was written by Ignatius, the Bishop of Antioch, while he was being transported from Antioch to Rome to stand trial. He would become a martyr in Rome. These letters are mentioned by Polycarp (see below) and date back from the earliest of times. Eusebius places Ignatius' martyrdom in the middle to end of the reign of Trajan, between 110-117. The surviving letters of Ignatius<sup>19</sup> are:

- Ignatius to the Ephesians
- Ignatius to the Magnesians
- Ignatius to Polycarp
- Ignatius to the Philadelphians
- Ignatius to the Romans
- Ignatius to the Smyrnaeans
- Ignatius to the Trallians

*Polycarp to the Philippians:* Polycarp was the Bishop of Smyrna. Tradition holds that he was a disciple of the Apostle John. Polycarp's letter freely quotes Scripture and the teaching of the Apostles. This letter must have been written between 110 (the probable date of Ignatius' correspondence with Polycarp) and 155 (the probable year of Polycarp's martyrdom).

*Martyrdom of Polycarp:* This is the account of Polycarp's martyrdom, which most likely took place in 155 or 156.

*Didache, or the Teaching of the Twelve Apostles:* Known simply as the *Didache*, the book is a church manual from the earliest of the Christian era. It is typically around the year 100.

*Epistle of Barnabas:* This document could qualify as pseudepigraphal as its title claims Barnabas is author, but virtually no textual scholars today accept the authorship of Barnabas as possible. Date of composition is uncertain, though most scholars date the work between 118-130. Interestingly, Codex Sinaiticus (4<sup>th</sup> century) includes the *Epistle of Barnabas* in the New Testament.

---

<sup>19</sup> The "middle recension" is the one commonly held to be authentic and is the version used here.

*Epistle to Diognetus:* Unique amongst the Apostolic Fathers due to its apologetic nature, this document provides a glimpse into how Greek pagans viewed Christianity, and how Christians portrayed themselves to Greek pagans curious about the new religion of Christianity. The author is unknown. This work is commonly dated between 150-180.

*Shepherd of Hermas:* This work is a comparatively large one. There are three primary parts ("Visions", "Mandates", and "Similitudes"), each containing several chapters. Scholars offer a date range from 110-140 as a probable window of composition. Codex Sinaiticus also includes this work as part of its New Testament.

## OTHER LITERATURE ROUGHLY CONTEMPORARY WITH THE NEW TESTAMENT

Papyri, Josephus, Philo, Corpus Hermeticum, Life of Polycarp, etc.

## 1 TIMOTHY 3.1-7: QUALIFICATIONS OF OVERSEERS

*The saying is trustworthy: If anyone aspires to the office of overseer, he desires a noble task. Therefore an overseer must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, sober-minded, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, not a drunkard, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money. He must manage his own household well, with all dignity keeping his children submissive, for if someone does not know how to manage his own household, how will he care for God's church? He must not be a recent convert, or he may become puffed up with conceit and fall into the condemnation of the devil. Moreover, he must be well thought of by outsiders, so that he may not fall into disgrace, into a snare of the devil. (1 Ti 3:1-7)*

This section begins with the words “the saying is trustworthy”. This phrase is formulaic, declaring a surrounding “saying” to be worthy of the reader’s attention.<sup>1</sup> The phrasing assumes that the reader will be familiar with the saying, and will understand what Paul means.

Exactly which saying is trustworthy is at issue in this instance; it could be either the previous saying at the end of chapter 2 regarding women and childbirth; or it could be this next saying regarding the desire of one who wishes to be an overseer. The ESV interprets the following statement (the balance of v. 1) as the trustworthy saying.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See notes on 1Ti 1.15 and excursus on “Faithful Sayings”. Also, this passage has a significant variant from Codex Bezae and some Old Latin MSS of the western tradition. Instead of “The saying is trustworthy” (πιστός ὁ λόγος), the variant is “it is a human (or common, or popular) saying” (ἀνθρώπινος ὁ λόγος). Metzger (TCGNT p. 572) has a discussion on the variant; Westcott and Hort include it as a “noteworthy rejected reading”. Knight (*Faithful Sayings*, 50-52) gives full discussion and review that is well worth examining.

<sup>2</sup> Note NA27 and UBS4 both attach the chapter break and πιστός ὁ λόγος at the end of chapter 2 and insert the paragraph break *after* λόγος. From this one can only assume these editions consider the faithful saying to be 1Ti 2.15.

*if anyone aspires to the office of overseer*

Paul proceeds to the topic of leadership; specifically the leadership office of overseer. The words “aspires to” come from the Greek ὀρέγω, generally meaning ‘aspire to’, ‘strive to’, or ‘desire’.<sup>3</sup> The word is also used in the Epistle to the Hebrews:

But as it is, *they desire* a better country, that is, a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared for them a city. (Heb 11:16, italics mine)

Here the word ὀρέγω is used to indicate the desire that Christians have for the heavenly city. But this word (ὀρέγω) has similarity with a word that occurs in the next clause of 1Ti 3.1, “desires” (ἐπιθυμέω).<sup>4</sup> Both of these words are used in the pseudepigraphal *Letter of Aristeas* in a context similar to the current verse under discussion. A king is answering a question about the “essence of kingship”. The first italicized word represents ἐπιθυμέω, the second ὀρέγω:

The king signified his agreement and said to another ‘What is the essence of kingship?’ And he replied, ‘To rule oneself well and not to be led astray by wealth or fame to immoderate or unseemly *desires*, this is the true way of ruling if you reason the matter well out. For all that you really need is yours, and God is free from need and benignant withal. Let your thoughts be such as become a man, and *desire* not many things but only such as are necessary for ruling.’<sup>5</sup>

In this example there is an obvious difference between the words ἐπιθυμέω and ὀρέγω; with a negative connotation ascribed to ἐπιθυμέω based on context. Yet this is not indicative of the difference between the two words; ἐπιθυμέω need not be derogatory.<sup>6</sup>

In the *Letter of Aristeas* the advice of the king is to guard against strong desires (ἐπιθυμέω), and to “become a man” and “desire” (ὀρέγω) what is necessary to rule effectively.

<sup>3</sup> BDAG p. 721. Occurs 3x in NT, 2x in PE: 1Ti 3.1; 6.10; He 11.16.

<sup>4</sup> See comments on ἐπιθυμέω below.

<sup>5</sup> *LArist* 211. (Charles’ translation, emphasis mine). [verify Greek]

<sup>6</sup> The fact that ἐπιθυμέω may translated as “lust” in some occurrences (e.g., Mt 5.28) doesn’t help.

Both of these instances (Hebrews and *Aristeas*) indicate that the act of “desiring” (ὀρέγω) something intangible (such as an idea or state) is not to be a simple wish but is instead a serious desire focused on the state in question. At the same time, though, the use of Machiavellian techniques to achieve this goal is strictly precluded by the context. The same is true of the desire or aspirations of the office of overseer, when seriously held. The word ὀρέγω does not indicate some wistful thought of perhaps serving in such a role one day in the future. A will to accomplish a desired goal is in mind. Indeed, the use of ὀρέγω by Theocritus in the third century BC seems to be of the same nature when he uses it to describe “fish, *who rise at the bait*”.<sup>7</sup> In this instance, the fish desire the bait and pursue it in order to achieve it.

The object of this focused desire is “the office of overseer”. The Greek word is ἐπισκοπή, which has the sense of either ‘visitation’ and the derived sense of ‘position of responsibility’ or ‘supervision’.<sup>8</sup> Here the sense is that of the position of one who is in a leadership role in the community of believers. Consider *First Clement*:

So too our apostles knew through our Lord Jesus Christ that strife would arise over *the office of bishop*.<sup>9</sup>

The usage in *First Clement* simply refers to the office, not the holder of the office. And this is the sense of the word as used in v. 1. This word occurs a few other times in the New Testament, most notably Ac 1.20-22:

“For it is written in the Book of Psalms, “ ‘May his camp become desolate, and let there be no one to dwell in it’; and “ ‘Let another take his *office*.’ So one of the men who have accompanied us during all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, beginning from the baptism of John until the day when he was taken up from us—one of these men must become with us a witness to his resurrection.” (Ac 1.20-22)<sup>10</sup>

Here ἐπισκοπή is used for the office of apostle in the effort to replace the spot of the recently deceased Judas with another follower worthy of the office. It is important to note that the word here simply means ‘office’ and

<sup>7</sup> LSJ, p. 1247, citing Theoc.21.44.

<sup>8</sup> BDAG, p. 379. Occurs 4x in NT; only here in PE: Lu 19.44; Ac 1.20; 1Ti 3.1; 1Pe 2.12.

<sup>9</sup> *1Cl* 44.1 (Ehrman, emphasis mine).

<sup>10</sup> Quoting Ps 109:8 [108:8 LXX].

has no indication as to the particular office under discussion; this is deduced from context. Some interpreters see the word ἐπισκοπή used both in Ac 1.20 and in 1Ti 3.1 and create a link between the office of apostle and the office of overseer. Such a link has no place. The discussion on this point from TDNT, while lengthy, is worthy of reproduction here:

The NT uses ἐπισκοπή in the sense of “office” as well as “visitation.” According to Ac. 1:16 ff. Peter saw in the fate of Judas the fulfilment of OT prophecy. He grounded the need to choose a substitute on Ps 108:8: “His office let another take” ( 607). Here, then, the apostolic office is described as ἐπισκοπή. When we know that in 1 Tm. 3:1 the Christian office of bishop ( 617) is also called ἐπισκοπή, we are tempted to see connections and with their help to explain the development of Christian titles. It should be noted, however, that the term is used for the apostolic office in Ac. 1:16 ff. only because the selection of a replacement was seen to be a fulfilment of the prophecy in Ps 108:8. We cannot deduce from this any closer relationship between the apostolate and the episcopate. On the contrary, early Christianity had a clear sense of the distinction between the two. The term ἐπισκοπή in 1 Tm. 3:1 does not derive from Ac. 1:20 or its OT original. It is newly coined on the basis of the title ἐπίσκοπος which had meantime established itself in the early Church. This is the more easily possible, of course, because ἐπισκοπή is already used for “office” in the language of the LXX.<sup>11</sup>

### *he desires a noble task*

The one who desires to hold the office of overseer, Paul writes, “desires a noble task”. The word translated “he desires” is the Greek word ἐπιθυμέω.<sup>12</sup> The word means ‘desire’ or ‘long for’.<sup>13</sup> It may also mean ‘lust after’ in certain contexts.<sup>14</sup> While it is important to note the sense of ‘strong desire’ evident in the word, the sense of ‘lust after’ is not used here. This word also occurs in Ac 20.32-34:

And now I commend you to God and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up and to give you the inheritance among all those who

<sup>11</sup> TDNT 2.608.

<sup>12</sup> See discussion above on ὀρέγω for contrasting of ὀρέγω and ἐπιθυμέω.

<sup>13</sup> BDAG, p. 371. Occurs 16x in NT, only here in PE.

<sup>14</sup> e.g., Mt 5.28.

are sanctified. *I coveted* no one's silver or gold or apparel. You yourselves know that these hands ministered to my necessities and to those who were with me. (Ac 20:32-34, emphasis mine)

The context of the desire in Ac 20.33 is negative; this is why ἐπιθυμέω is translated as “I coveted”. But the sense of desiring something (either accepted, forbidden, or morally questionable) is the primary sense of the word. The word occurs a few times in *Second Clement*:

You should realize, brothers, that our visit in this realm is brief and short lived, but the promise of Christ is great and astounding—namely, a rest in the coming kingdom and eternal life. What then must we do to obtain these things, except conduct ourselves in a holy and upright way and consider these worldly affairs foreign to us, and not *yearn after* them? For when *we yearn* to obtain these things we fall away from the right path.<sup>15</sup>

The author of *First Clement* exhorts his readers to not yearn or long after the things of the world, and to instead focus on Christ. The word occurs with much the same meaning in the *Shepherd of Hermas*:

But participate in your own extravagance in which you can rejoice. And do not counterfeit or touch what belongs to another, or *desire* it. For it is evil *to desire* someone else's goods. But do your own work, and you will be saved.<sup>16</sup>

This same word, ἐπιθυμέω, is used to show the positive desire or longing one may have for a position of leadership in the church. This desire is “a noble task”, writes Paul. The phrase “a noble task” is formed by combining the word for ‘good’ (καλός)<sup>17</sup> and the word for ‘work’ or ‘deed’ (ἔργον).<sup>18</sup> Other English versions translate this phrase as “a good work” (NET, NKJV, WUEST) and “a fine work” (NASB95).

VERSE 2

*Therefore an overseer*

<sup>15</sup> 2Cl 5.5-7, Loeb (Ehrman, emphasis mine).

<sup>16</sup> Hermas, *Similitudes* I.11 Loeb (Ehrman, emphasis mine).

<sup>17</sup> BDAG, p. 504. Occurs 101x in NT.

<sup>18</sup> BDAG, p. 390. Occurs 169x in NT.

Paul next provides a list of qualifications for those who desire to be overseers. This list is long, running from here through the end of v. 7. It has much in common with the parallel list in Titus 1.6-9.<sup>19</sup>

*must be above reproach*

One who serves as a leader of the fellowship must not be subject to accusations of impropriety. The phrase translated “must be” is a combination of two Greek words, δεῖ (present active indicative) and εἶμι (present active infinitive). These words are not contiguous in the Greek text, they stand at the start and end of the phrase. Yet they combine together and convey the meaning of “he must be”. Paul uses similar phraseology<sup>20</sup> in other verses:

For an overseer, as God's steward, *must be* above reproach. He must not be arrogant or quick-tempered or a drunkard or violent or greedy for gain, (Tit 1:7, emphasis mine)

And the Lord's servant *must not be* quarrelsome but kind to everyone, able to teach, patiently enduring evil, (2 Ti 2:24, emphasis mine)

For, in the first place, when you come together as a church, I hear that there are divisions among you. And I believe it in part, for there *must be* factions among you in order that those who are genuine among you may be recognized. (1 Co 11:18-19, emphasis mine)

The requirement is for the overseer to be “above reproach”. The Greek word is ἀνεπίληπτος, which typically means ‘irreproachable’.<sup>21</sup> Paul uses this word in 1Ti 5.7:

Command these things as well, so that they may be *without reproach*. (1 Ti 5:7, emphasis mine)

In the context of 1Ti 5.7, “these things” are detailed in 1Ti 5.4-6; they have to do with guidelines for widows in the church. If these guidelines are

<sup>19</sup> See comments on Tt 1.6-9 for a table comparing the qualities mentioned in these two passages. Also note that similar lists of attributes occur in *Didache* 15.1-2 and Poly. *Phil* 4-5.

<sup>20</sup> That is, δεῖ as a present active indicative and εἶμι as a present active infinitive, occurring in the same verse. The structure also occurs in Lu 2.49; “Did you not know that *I must be* in my Father's house?”

<sup>21</sup> BDAG, p. 77. Occurs 3x in NT, all of these are in the PE: 1Ti 3.2; 5.7; 6.14.

followed, says Paul, then the widow will be “without reproach”. In the present context, Paul’s desire is for those who will become overseers to already be without reproach. The later work<sup>22</sup> *Life of Polycarp* provides another witness to ἀνεπίληπτος, recalling this passage from First Timothy:

... for I well know that no man could fulfil it well, except he hath first received it from the Lord in heaven, as the blessed Apostle Paul hath shown in his epistles, showing in a single word the whole life of one who is appointed to office, when he speaks of it as *blameless*. This I think cannot have escaped the ears of anyone, but must have been impressed upon his inmost soul wholly and completely.<sup>23</sup>

Paul requires those who would lead the fellowship to be above reproach and free of lingering accusations.

### *the husband of one wife*

Many debates on the role of women in the fellowship have turned on this one phrase. The phrase in the Greek is simple; it is the words for “one”, “woman” and “man” (in that order). The words for “one” (εἷς) and “woman” (γυνή) agree in case, number, and gender.<sup>24</sup> The word translated “man” is ἀνὴρ, which most generically represents an adult male. This has led many to translate this phrase in a substitutionary, isomorphic manner as “a one-woman man”.<sup>25</sup>

As is the case with many simple and seemingly literal interpretations, there is more to this situation than meets the eye. The word γυνή, in some contexts, also indicates ‘wife’.<sup>26</sup> The same is true for ἀνὴρ, which may indicate ‘husband’.<sup>27</sup>

<sup>22</sup> circa 250, reputed to be authored by Pionus. The content of this document is not reliable, but the interpretation of the use of ἀνεπίληπτος in this instance does provide some witness as to how this passage was understood at this relatively early point in the history of the Christian church.

<sup>23</sup> *Life of Polycarp*, 23 (Lightfoot).

<sup>24</sup> The case is genitive, the number is singular and the gender is feminine.

<sup>25</sup> On this phrase, the ESV places the note: “Or a man of one woman; also verse 12”

<sup>26</sup> BDAG, p. 208. Occurs 215x in NT.

<sup>27</sup> BDAG, p. 79. Occurs 216x in NT.

The words ἀνὴρ and γυνή occur frequently in the New Testament and are translated various ways, according to context. When both of these words occur together, and when both are singular nouns<sup>28</sup> the context is usually that of marriage.

Given that these words have some sort of grammatical relationship, and realizing that when they occur in close proximity elsewhere in the NT with similar form they typically occur in the context of marriage, it seems contextually appropriate to apply similar understanding here.

The phrase should most likely be rendered “husband of one wife”. This may be seen as a prohibition against polygamy. Reading any more (or less) into it is probably not wise. Using it as justification that an overseer need only be married (thus can be either male or female) or monogamous is a stretch, particularly in light of the opposite of this phrase used in 1Ti 5.9:

Let a widow be enrolled if she is not less than sixty years of age, having been the wife of one husband, (1Ti 5.9)

Here the opposite relationship, “the wife of one husband”, is stated as the discussion is concerning widows. The context is unambiguous here as it is in 1Ti 3.2.

### *sober-minded*

The Greek word is νηφάλιος, which has both literal and figurative senses. Literally, it means ‘temperate’ or ‘sober’, having to do with moderation of the consumption of alcoholic beverages. The figurative sense is to be ‘self-controlled’ or ‘level-headed’.<sup>29</sup> In this case, the sense is most likely figurative as the phrase “not a drunkard” occurs in v. 3 as part of the same list. This accounts for the ESV’s “sober-minded” instead of a more literal translation.

### *self-controlled*

<sup>28</sup> 27 verses: Mk 10.2; Lu 16.18; Jn 4.17; Ac 5.1; Ro 7.2; 1Co 7.2, 3, 4, 10, 11, 13, 14, 16, 34, 39; 11.3, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12; Eph 5.23, 33; 1Ti 2.12; 3.2; 5.9; Tt 1.6. It is questionable whether 1Ti 2.12 is in the context of marriage, though it is quite possible.

<sup>29</sup> BDAG, p. 672. Occurs 3x in NT, all are in PE: 1Ti 3.2, 11; Tt 2.2.

This comes from the Greek word σώφρων, which is translated variously as ‘prudent’, ‘thoughtful’, ‘self-controlled’.<sup>30</sup> Confusingly, this word is translated “sober” sometimes, as in the Wisdom of Solomon:

For she [wisdom] knoweth all things and hath understanding thereof,  
And in my doings she shall guide me in ways of *soberness*,  
And she shall guard me in her glory. (Wis 9.11, emphasis mine)<sup>31</sup>

This passage is not using the word “sober” to mean the opposite of “drunk”. In this sort of context there is no correlation with alcohol. A similar passage occurs in Fourth Maccabees:

Now when God fashioned human beings, he planted in them emotions and inclinations, but at the same time he enthroned the mind among the senses as a sacred governor over them all. To the mind he gave the law; and one who lives subject to this will rule a kingdom that is *temperate*, just, good, and courageous. (4Ma 2:21-23, NRSV, emphasis mine)

These two Greek words (νηφάλιος and σώφρων) are rather similar in the meaning they convey in this verse. Louw-Nida list the words in the same domain (Domain 88, “Moral and Ethical Qualities and Related Behavior”<sup>32</sup>) but in slightly different sub-domains. The word νηφάλιος is in 88.K, “Self-Control, Lack of Self-Control”<sup>33</sup> while σώφρων is in 88.L, “Sensible Behavior, Senseless Behavior”.<sup>34</sup>

### *respectable*

The Greek word is κόσμιος, which here has the sense of ‘respectable’ or ‘honorable’.<sup>35</sup> BDAG cites an inscription that uses κόσμιος, dated around 40 A.D.,<sup>36</sup> showing that the term was used in a public fashion to honor someone. Moulton & Milligan glosses as ‘orderly’ or ‘virtuous’ and further

<sup>30</sup> BDAG, p. 987. Occurs 4x in NT, all are in PE: 1Ti 3.2, Tt 1.8; 2.2, 5.

<sup>31</sup> From Charles’ OT Apocrypha.

<sup>32</sup> LN Vol. 1, p. 743.

<sup>33</sup> LN 88.87. Vol. 1, p. 751.

<sup>34</sup> LN 88.94. Vol. 1, p. 751.

<sup>35</sup> BDAG, p. 561. Occurs 2x in NT, both times in PE: 1Ti 2.9, 3.2. See note on 1Ti 2.9, where the word has a slightly different sense.

<sup>36</sup> BDAG, p. 561, citing *Inscriptiones Graecae* IV2/1, 82, 27

note κόσμιος “... is common as an epithet of honour in the inscriptions.”<sup>37</sup> As this instance occurs in a list of virtues, the sense of virtue or respect seems appropriate.

### *hospitable*

“Hospitable” is translated from the Greek word φιλόξενος,<sup>38</sup> a compound word consisting of the word for ‘love’ or ‘friendship’ and the word for ‘stranger/foreigner’ respectively. The word occurs in First Peter:

Show *hospitality* to one another without grumbling. (1Pe 4.9, emphasis mine)

Though the word does not occur in Le 19.33-34, the sentiment expressed is the same basic idea:

Now if some guest approaches you in your land, you shall not oppress him. The guest who comes over to you shall be to you as the native among you, and you shall love him as yourself, for you were guests in the land of Egypt; it is I who am the Lord your God. (Le 19.33-34, LXX)<sup>39</sup>

The word φιλόξενος also occurs in the *Works of Josephus*:

When, therefore, silence was made by the whole multitude, I spake thus to them:—“O my countrymen! I refuse not to die, if justice so require. However, I am desirous to tell you the truth of this matter before I die; for as I know that this city of yours [Taricheae] was a city of *great hospitality*, and filled with abundance of such men as have left their own countries, and are come hither to be partakers of your fortune, whatever it be, I had a mind to build walls about it, out of this money, for which you are so angry with me, while yet it was to be expended in building your own walls.”<sup>40</sup>

This excerpt<sup>41</sup> provides some context that assists in evaluating the semantic range of φιλόξενος. From Josephus’ perspective, the city in question

<sup>37</sup> M-M, p. 356.

<sup>38</sup> BDAG, p. 1058. Occurs 3x in NT: 1Ti 3.2; Tt 1.8; 1Pe 4.9. The Tt 1.8 occurrence is in a parallel list of qualities of an overseer.

<sup>39</sup> NETS translation.

<sup>40</sup> Josephus, *Life* 1.141-142 (Loeb)

<sup>41</sup> In which φιλόξεμος is the superlative φιλοξενωτάτην, thus “great hospitality” or “greatly hospitable” or even “greatest hospitality”.

(Taricheae) has some sort of population of foreigners<sup>42</sup> who are not rejected by the city. Josephus' statement contains a bit of irony in that he is praising the citizens of the city while also pleading for hospitality to be extended to him. He is hoping for the citizens of Taricheae to show him mercy.<sup>43</sup> By referencing that Taricheae "... was a city of great hospitality", Josephus intends to kindle their renowned hospitality that he may benefit from it.<sup>44</sup>

Thus φιλόξενος, in at least one sense, has to do with showing kindness of some degree to foreigners sojourning among the native population. A similar sense is found in *First Clement*:

Because of her faith and hospitality Rahab the prostitute was saved from danger. For when reconnaissance scouts had been sent into Jericho by Joshua, the son of Nun, the king of the land discovered that they had come to scout out their country and sent men to arrest them, so that once detained they could be executed. And so, the *hospitable* Rahab brought them inside and hid them in the upper room under a pile of thatching straw.<sup>45</sup>

Rahab was "hospitable" in her actions toward the spies from Joshua. She, a citizen of Jericho, showed kindness to the Israelite spies. Another instance that sheds light on the meaning of φιλόξενος is found in the *Shepherd of Hermas*:

... they are bishops and those who are *hospitable*, who always gladly welcomed the slaves of God into their homes without hypocrisy.<sup>46</sup>

In this instance, φιλόξεμος is clarified as applying to those who allowed fellow Christians to stay in their homes as need be.

However, when the word occurs in lists of virtues (as it does here), no specific context exists to inform the meaning of φιλόξεμος. In such cases, the general sense of "hospitable" is best.

<sup>42</sup> "... such men as have left their own countries, and are come hither to be partakers of your fortune."

<sup>43</sup> "I refuse not to die, if justice so require."

<sup>44</sup> The reader of Josephus' *Life* needs to remember that Josephus does tend to recall events in the light most beneficial to himself. This particular anecdote most likely reflects this tendency.

<sup>45</sup> *ICI* 12.1-3. (Ehrman Vol. 1 p. 55, emphasis mine).

<sup>46</sup> *Hermas, Similitudes* IX.xxvii.2. (Ehrman Vol. 2 p. 453, emphasis mine).

### *able to teach*

The Greek word is διδακτικός, 'skillful in teaching'.<sup>47</sup> This word also occurs in Second Timothy:

And the Lord's servant must not be quarrelsome but kind to everyone, *able to teach*, patiently enduring evil, (2Ti 2:24, emphasis mine)

In light of Paul's comments regarding false teachers who infiltrated the church and misled Christians with heresy,<sup>48</sup> the ability to teach is an important skill for leaders of the church to have. If the leaders are not able to properly instruct the church in the ways of Christ, then the church will be lost.

### VERSE 3

### *not a drunkard*

The word "drunkard" is a translation of the Greek word πάροινος. Standard glosses include 'addicted to wine' and 'drunkard'.<sup>49</sup> M-M translate instances in the Pastoral Epistles as meaning "one given to too much wine."<sup>50</sup> This quality in overseers is not equivalent with teetotalism; it instead draws attention to the ability of the overseer to act responsibly in all aspects, including his use or abstention from alcohol.

### *not violent, but gentle*

The Greek word for "violent" is πλήκτης, typically indicating 'bully' or 'pugnacious person'.<sup>51</sup> The word has to do with one who easily comes to blows, or one who tends to desire to solve problems by resorting to aggressive means earlier rather than later in a negotiation.

<sup>47</sup> BDAG, p. 240. Occurs 2x in NT, both in PE: 1Ti 3.2; 2Ti 2.24.

<sup>48</sup> e.g. 1Ti 1.3-7.

<sup>49</sup> BDAG, p. 780. Occurs 2x in NT, both in PE: 1Ti 3.3; Tt 1.7; both of these are in lists of virtues describing overseers.

<sup>50</sup> M-M, p. 496.

<sup>51</sup> BDAG, p. 826. Occurs 2x in NT, both in PE: 1Ti 3.3; Tt 1.7; both of these are in lists of virtues describing overseers.

The Greek word translated “gentle” is ἐπιεικής, glossed as ‘kind’, ‘courteous’, ‘tolerant’ or ‘yielding’.<sup>52</sup> This offers a contrast to “not violent” and sharpens the context for “gentle”. A similar contrast occurs in First Peter:

Servants, be subject to your masters with all respect, not only to the good and *gentle* but also to the unjust. (1 Pe 2:18)

Here slaves are told to obey their masters whether their masters are “good and gentle” or whether they are “unjust”. Josephus also uses this word in his treatise *Against Apion*:

However, there are other things which our legislator ordained for us beforehand, which of necessity we ought to do in common to all men; as to afford fire, and water, and food to such as want it; to show them the roads; and not to let anyone lie unburied. He also would have us treat those that are esteemed our enemies *with moderation*: for he doth not allow us to set their country on fire, nor permit us to cut down those trees that bear fruit: nay, farther, he forbids us to spoil those that have been slain in war. He hath also provided for such as are taken captive, that they may not be injured, and especially that the women may not be abused.<sup>53</sup>

Here Josephus uses the word ἐπιεικής and then provides several examples of the “moderation” that was exercised: not setting the country on fire, not cutting down fruit-bearing trees, not plundering the dead, and so on. From the perspective of a triumphal conqueror, these are not small concessions, thus it is “moderation” or some form of gentleness or yielding to do such things.

Paul requires overseers that do not exhibit violence when challenged. He instead wants them to treat situations with a serious gentleness, addressing issues properly while considering those who happen to be involved in them.

#### *not quarrelsome*

The Greek word translated “quarrelsome” is ἀμαχος. One lexicon lists ‘peaceable’ as a gloss,<sup>54</sup> another has glosses such as ‘disinclined to fight’ and

<sup>52</sup> BDAG, p. 371. Occurs 5x in NT: Php 4.5; 1Ti 3.3; Tt 3.2; Jas 3.17; 1Pe 2.18.

<sup>53</sup> Josephus, *C. Apion* 2.211-212 (Loeb, emphasis mine). The entire section (though *C. Apion* 2.114) is worth examining.

<sup>54</sup> BDAG, p. 52. Occurs 2x in NT, both in PE: 1Ti 3.3; Tt 3.2.

‘not contentious’.<sup>55</sup> This is most likely reiterating the previous entry in the list, “not violent, but gentle”.

#### *not a lover of money*

This phrase is translated from one compound Greek word,<sup>56</sup> ἀφιλάργυρος. The meaning of ‘not loving money’ or ‘not greedy’ is appropriate.<sup>57</sup> This word is the opposite of φιλάργυρος, which occurs in 1Ti 6.10. It also occurs in Hebrews:

Keep your life *free from love of money*, and be content with what you have, for he has said, “I will never leave you nor forsake you.” (Heb 13:5, emphasis mine)

Instead of seeking for more money or things that money provides, the author of Hebrews urges his readers to be content. In this letter to Timothy, Paul is requiring a similar perspective for those who would be overseers. This qualification persisted through the early church, as is evident in the *Didache*:

And so, elect for yourselves bishops and deacons who are worthy of the Lord, gentle men who *are not fond of money*, who are true and approved. For these also conduct the ministry of the prophets and teachers among you.<sup>58</sup>

#### VERSE 4

Paul has ended his list of virtues, but continues with qualifications for overseer. Some explanation is provided for each requirement; before he was simply listing criteria as they came to mind.<sup>59</sup> Paul recommends that the potential overseer’s household management be evaluated for insight as to how he might function in the role of overseer.

<sup>55</sup> LSJ, p. 78.

<sup>56</sup> Combining the alpha prefix for negation and adding φιλέω (love) and ἄργυρος (money).

<sup>57</sup> BDAG, p. 157. Occurs 2x in NT: 1Ti 3.3; Heb 13.5. Cf. also φιλάργυρος in 1Ti 6.10.

<sup>58</sup> *Didache* 15.1 (emphasis mine). Ehrman Vol. 1 p. 441. Cf. also Polycarp 4 and 5, which has parallels with 1Ti 3.8-13 and 1Ti 6.7-10.

<sup>59</sup> Hence the reason for the apparent duplication. In 1Ti 3.2, ‘sober minded’, ‘self-controlled’ and ‘respectable’ have some degree of semantic overlap between them.

*He must manage his own household well*

The Greek word translated “He must manage” is προϊστημι, which in this instance has the sense of ‘rule’ or ‘direct’<sup>60</sup> and occurs both here and in v. 5. The word literally means to ‘come forward’ or ‘stand before’. Thus it has to do with having a position of leadership (standing before something in the sense of leading or directing). Paul uses προϊστημι in Romans:

... the one who exhorts, in his exhortation; the one who contributes, in generosity; the *one who leads*, with zeal; the one who does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness. (Ro 12:8)

Here προϊστημι is a participle used substantively. The word also occurs in the Apocrypha:

And he commanded them, saying, “*Take charge* of this people, but you shall not engage and make war with the Gentiles until we return.”<sup>61</sup> (1Ma 5.19)

The word is used by Josephus as well:

However, I assured them that I would entirely forgive them for the time to come, if they would send ten of the *ringleaders* of the multitude to me; and when they complied readily with this proposal, and sent me the men forementioned, I put them on board a ship, and sent them away to Taricheae, and ordered them to be kept in prison.<sup>62</sup>

This verb is also used in the context of church leadership in the *Shepherd of Hermas*:

And so, you will write two little books, sending one to Clement and the other to Grapte. Clement will send his to the foreign cities, for that is his commission. But Grapte will admonish the widows and orphans. And you will read yours in this city, with the presbyters who *lead* the church.<sup>63</sup>

The sort of leadership represented by προϊστημι may be military (1Ma 5.19), nefarious (Jos. *Vita* 168) or well-intentioned (Hermas, *Visions* II.iv.3).

<sup>60</sup> BDAG, p. 870. Occurs 8x in NT, 6x in PE: 1Ti 3.4, 5, 12; 5.17; Tt 3.8, 14.

<sup>61</sup> Author’s own translation.

<sup>62</sup> Jos. *Vita* 168. (Loeb, emphasis mine)

<sup>63</sup> Hermas, *Visions* II.iv.3. (Ehrman vol. 2 p. 193; emphasis mine)

Here Paul applies προϊστημι to a household, noting that the state of the household must reflect proper management. One measure of how well a potential overseer runs his household is to examine how his children behave.<sup>64</sup>

*with all dignity keeping his children submissive*

The word translated “dignity” is σεμνότης,<sup>65</sup> which Paul used earlier in 1Ti 2.2, “... that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and *dignified* in every way.” The meaning of the word is much the same in this verse; that the man’s dignity is evident through the manner in which his children are submissive to him.

The word translated “submissive” is υποταγή<sup>66</sup> which has also been discussed previously, in 1Ti 2.11 where it describes the manner in which women are to learn. The same sort of relationship between father and child is being described here. The rearing of a child is a process and for the process to be effective, the parents must be in control. If a man is being evaluated as a potential overseer, yet his children are not under control, this reflects poorly on his ability to function as an effective overseer.

The potential overseer must keep his children submissive while retaining his “dignity”. That is, one’s children must not be submissive or respectful due solely to fear of punishment.<sup>67</sup> Those who would condition their children in such a way would not be able to retain dignity. Instead, the one qualified to be an overseer manages his household and his children in such a way as to retain dignity.

VERSE 5

*for if someone does not know how to manage his own household*

<sup>64</sup> [Note: Does this imply that an overseer must have children?]

<sup>65</sup> BDAG, p. 919. Occurs 3x in NT: 1Ti 2.2; 3.4; Tt 2.7. See discussion on 1Ti 2.2.

<sup>66</sup> BDAG, p. 1041. Occurs 4x in NT: 2Co 9.13; Ga 2.5; 1Ti 2.11; 3.4. See comments on 1Ti 2.11.

<sup>67</sup> I’m not advocating a home free of corporal punishment; but there is a line between corporal punishment and abuse. The qualified overseer does not cross this line.

Paul next adds a parenthetical remark to reinforce his point, clearly and explicitly linking a well-managed household with the likelihood that one will be able to serve well as an overseer. The phrase “manage his own household” in verse 5 is a mirror of the same phrase in verse 4, using a different form of the verb *προϊστημι*.<sup>68</sup> The word conveys the same meaning in both verses, that of managing or supervising, with the different inflections of the verb providing the different senses (“he must manage” vs. “how to manage”) in each verse.

The thrust of vv 4-5a is an emphasis on the ability of the overseer to manage his own household, which serves as an indicator of how he will serve in the management of the church. One’s household management skill can be evaluated by examining both how his children behave (“keeping his children submissive”) and how his treatment of his children reflects on him (“with all dignity”).

Examining the potential overseer in these areas is important because it reflects directly upon his potential ability in leadership of the church. There is not an exact correspondence; one who manages his household well will not always be a good candidate for overseer. However, one who manages his household poorly will always be a bad candidate for overseer. Paul makes this clear with v. 5b, “how will he care for God’s church?”

### *how will he care for God’s church*

The phrase “how will he care for” is a combination of the adverb *πῶς*, which typically is translated ‘how’, and the word *ἐπιμελέομαι*, which has the sense of ‘care for’ or ‘take care of’.<sup>69</sup> The word *ἐπιμελέομαι* also occurs in the gospel of Luke, in the parable of the good Samaritan:

But a Samaritan, as he journeyed, came to where he was, and when he saw him, he had compassion. He went to him and bound up his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he set him on his own animal and brought him to an inn and *took care of him*. And the next day he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper, saying, ‘*Take care of him*, and

<sup>68</sup> Verse 4 is a present middle participle masculine accusative singular. Verse 5 is an aorist active infinitive.

<sup>69</sup> BDAG, p. 375. Occurs 3x in NT: Lu 10.34, 35; 1Ti 3.5.

whatever more you spend, I will repay you when I come back.’ (Lk 10.33-35, emphasis mine)

In this passage, *ἐπιμελέομαι* occurs twice, both times having to do with the Samaritan’s attending to the needs of the wounded traveler. The same word is used in Genesis, in Judah’s account to Joseph (now a ruler in Egypt) of their earlier trip to Joseph:

Master, asked your servants, you said, “Do you have a father or brother?” And we said to you, master, “We have an elderly father who has a son (conceived in his old age) who is young, and his brother has died; so he alone remains with his mother, and his father loves him.” And you said your servants, “Bring him down to me, and *I will take care of him*.” (Ge 44.19-21 [LXX])<sup>70</sup>

The “servants” in this passage are Joseph’s brothers; they are petitioning Joseph for help during the famine. Joseph’s response, as recounted by Judah, was to ask his brothers (who were, of course, unaware of Joseph’s true identity) to bring this younger brother to him so that he could take care of the younger brother. Here again, the word has to do with the physical care of a person.

But Paul uses *ἐπιμελέομαι* to describe the care and oversight that one has for “God’s church”. Rather than physical care of a person or care for a person’s economic welfare, Paul uses the term to indicate the type of oversight the overseer must administer in order to be a faithful steward of God’s church.

The word translated “church” is *ἐκκλησία*, a much-studied word.<sup>71</sup> The most broad sense of *ἐκκλησία* is that of an assembly gathered together for some common reason; an ‘assembly duly summoned’.<sup>72</sup> In New Testament usage, *ἐκκλησία* has three primary senses: a summoned ‘assembly’, a casually gathered ‘assemblage’, and a ‘congregation’ of people with shared beliefs.<sup>73</sup> The vast majority of New Testament usage involves this third sense.

<sup>70</sup> Author’s own translation.

<sup>71</sup> For an excellent study on *ἐκκλησία*, see Hort, F.J.A., *The Christian Ecclesia*, MacMillan & Co.: London. 1898; particularly the introductory chapter and pp. 171-217 which discuss the idea of the *ἐκκλησία* in the Pastoral Epistles.

<sup>72</sup> LSJ, p. 509. Occurs 114x in NT; 3x in PE: 1Ti 3.5, 15; 5.16.

<sup>73</sup> BDAG, p. 303.

The word ἐκκλησία occurs two other times in the Pastoral Epistles, both in First Timothy:

I hope to come to you soon, but I am writing these things to you so that, if I delay, you may know how one ought to behave in the household of God, which is the *church* of the living God, a pillar and buttress of truth. (1Ti 3.14-15, emphasis mine)

If any believing woman has relatives who are widows, let her care for them. Let the *church* not be burdened, so that it may care for those who are really widows. (1Ti 5.16)

Both of these instances use the word ἐκκλησία in the sense of a congregation or body of people gathered together with shared beliefs. One passage (1Ti 3.14) defines the ἐκκλησία as the “household of God” and further describes it as “a pillar and buttress of truth.”<sup>74</sup> In the context of First Timothy, the ἐκκλησία is generally representative of a gathering of like-minded people who share belief that Jesus Christ is Savior. In 1Ti 5.16, the idea of “church” may be localized to a specific group: the one needing to care for the widow. In the current verse, however, the “church” is the church in general or the “universal” church.

The word ἐκκλησία is used to describe large groups such as this. In the LXX, the word ἐκκλησία is used of the assembly of Israelites:

And Moses spoke into the ears of all *the assembly* of Israel the words of this song until it was complete. (De 31.30 [LXX])<sup>75</sup>

The phrase “church of God” is found in the epistles of Ignatius as well:

And those who are deacons of the mysteries of Jesus Christ must also be pleasing in every way to all people. For they are not deacons dealing with food and drink; they are servants of the *church of God*. And so they must guard themselves against accusations as against fire.<sup>76</sup>

Since it has been reported to me that the *church of God* in Antioch of Syria is at peace—in accordance with your prayer and the compassion that you have in Christ Jesus—it is fitting for you as the *church of God* to elect a deacon to go as an ambassador of god there, that you may rejoice together

<sup>74</sup> See comments on 1Ti 3.14.

<sup>75</sup> Author’s own translation.

<sup>76</sup> Ign. *Trall.* 2.3 (Ehrman vol. 1 p. 259).

with those who have achieved a common purpose and so give glory to the name.<sup>77</sup>

Ignatius, who is also called God-bearer, to the *church of God* the Father and the beloved Jesus Christ which is in Smyrna of Asia, which has been shown mercy in every gracious gift, filled with faith and love, and lacking no gracious gift, a church that is most worthy of God and bears what is holy. Warmest greetings in a blameless spirit and the word of God.<sup>78</sup>

Ignatius typically uses the phrase in a local context, either speaking in the context of the actions of a particular assembly or the “church of God” in a specific locale.

The context here is similar. Paul’s comments apply to each local ἐκκλησία as it evaluates the worthiness of potential overseers. But Paul’s words do not only apply to the local ἐκκλησία, they apply to each ἐκκλησία that together makes up the universal church.

There are some instances of attempts to generally render ἐκκλησία as ‘called-out ones’,<sup>79</sup> yet this is a most unlikely translation. F.J.A. Hort discusses this (in the context of usage of ἐκκλησία in the LXX) in his book *The Christian Ecclesia*:

There is no foundation for the widely spread notion that ἐκκλησία means a people or a number of individual men *called out* of the world or mankind. In itself the idea is of course entirely Scriptural, and moreover it is associated with the word and idea ‘called’, ‘calling’, ‘call’. But the compound verb ἐκκαλέω is never so used, and ἐκκλησία never occurs in a context which suggests this supposed sense to have been present in the writer’s mind.<sup>80</sup>

Paul’s parenthetical comment “if someone does not know how to manage his own household, how will he care for God’s church?” provides one test that must be applied to prospective overseers. If one desires to be an overseer, his track record of managing his own household must be evaluated and used to help determine if he is qualified for the office of overseer.

<sup>77</sup> Ign. *Phld.* 10.1 (Ehrman vol. 1 p. 293).

<sup>78</sup> Ign. *Smyrn. inscriptio* (Ehrman vol. 1 p. 295).

<sup>79</sup> e.g. *The Companion Bible*, Appendix 186.

<sup>80</sup> Hort, *The Christian Ecclesia*, p. 5.

## VERSE 6

*He must not be a recent convert*

The word translated as “recent convert” is νεόφυτος. Its usage here is figurative as its literal meaning is ‘newly planted’.<sup>81</sup> The word occurs four times in the LXX,<sup>82</sup> one of them in Job:

For there is hope for a tree, even if it is cut down it yet will blossom, that its branch may not fail, for when its root grows old in the earth, and the stump of the root grows into a rock and dies; from the scent of water it will blossom, making the harvest just as a one *newly planted*. (Job 14.7-9 LXX).<sup>83</sup>

Outside of and previous to the use of νεόφυτος in 1 Timothy, evidence of usage is strictly literal. Moulton and Milligan note:

This word, which in its metaphorical sense of “newly-converted” is confined to Christian literature (cf. 1Ti 3.6), is of frequent occurrence in the papyri in the original meaning of “newly-planted”.<sup>84</sup>

Despite the lack of previous evidence of figurative usage, the meaning of “newly planted” is well enough established that the intended figurative meaning of “newly converted” is clear. Paul desires overseers who have had experience in their faith.

*or he may become puffed up with conceit*

The Greek word translated “puffed up with conceit” is τυφώω, which typically carries the sense of ‘be puffed up, conceited’ in the NT.<sup>85</sup> Paul uses the word in a similar list in 2Ti 3.4, describing some of the poor qualities of people in the last days, noting that some will be “swollen with conceit”. Paul uses the word to describe false teachers:

If anyone teaches a different doctrine and does not agree with the sound words of our Lord Jesus Christ and the teaching that accords with

<sup>81</sup> BDAG, p. 669. Only occurs here in NT.

<sup>82</sup> Ps 128.3 [127.3 LXX]; 144.12 [143.12 LXX]; Is 5.7; Job 14.9.

<sup>83</sup> Author’s own translation (needs a little work).

<sup>84</sup> M-M, p. 425.

<sup>85</sup> BDAG, p. 1021. Occurs 3x in NT, all three in PE: 1Ti 3.6; 6.4; 2Ti 3.4.

godliness, *he is puffed up with conceit* and understands nothing. He has an unhealthy craving for controversy and for quarrels about words, which produce envy, dissension, slander, evil suspicions, and constant friction among people who are depraved in mind and deprived of the truth, imagining that godliness is a means of gain. (1Ti 6.3-6a, emphasis mine)

This word is used similarly in the *Life of Flavius Josephus*:

Varus accused this messenger also, when he came, of telling a falsehood, and slew him; for he was puffed up by the Syrians that were at Caesarea, and had great expectations; for they said that Agrippa would be slain by the Romans for the crimes which the Jews had committed, and that he should himself take the government, as derived from their kings; for Varus was, by the confession of all, of the royal family, as being a descendant of Sohemus, who had enjoyed a tetrarchy about Libanus; for which reason it was that *he was puffed up*, and kept the letters to himself. He contrived also that the king should not meet with those writings, by guarding all the passes, lest anyone should escape, and inform the king what had been done. He moreover slew many of the Jews, in order to gratify the Syrians of Caesarea.<sup>86</sup>

Here, Josephus’ point is that Varus, due to being a part of the royal family, was “puffed up” or conceited. Varus thought more of himself than he should have.

A particularly enlightening use of τυφώω is found in Philo’s tractate *On Mating with the Preliminary Studies*:

And it often happens that he who professes some one of the indifferent branches of knowledge, when he meets with a pupil of good natural qualifications, boasts of his success in teaching, thinking that he, by himself and alone, is the cause of his pupil’s facility in learning. And then, becoming elated and puffing himself up, he holds his head high, and draws his eyebrows and becomes full of pride, and asks very high terms from those who desire to become his pupils; but those whom he perceives to be poor but still to be eager for instruction, he rejects and repels, as if he were the only person who had found a treasure of wisdom. This is the meaning of the expression, “to conceive,” namely, to be full of pride, and *to be puffed up with arrogance beyond all moderation*, on which account some persons have appeared to dishonour the queen of all the intermediate and

<sup>86</sup> Jos. Vit. 1.52-53, emphasis mine. Note the phrase “he was puffed up” occurs in 1.52, but the underlying Greek is not the word τυφώω. Instead, it is the phrase ἐπήρτο μέγα φρονεῖν.

indifferent branches of knowledge, virtue, who deserves to be honoured, even for her own sake.<sup>87</sup>

In this example, τυφώω is defined in context. The instructor is chastised for considering the innate skill of the student to be a result of his effort. This instructor has been “puffed up with arrogance beyond all moderation” in that he has taken credit for a result which he did not cause. He subsequently held students with no similar innate ability to the standard of the innately-skilled student, considering them (instead of himself) at fault when their skills did not develop in the same manner.

Paul’s fear of the overseer becoming “puffed up with conceit” is similar. If a recent convert becomes an overseer, he may consider his own skill in doctrine or practice to be superior. His lack of a solid and tested foundation in the things of doctrine may cause him to be swayed by false teaching much more easily than that of an overseer who has experience in the faith and has been tested in these things.

#### *and fall into condemnation of the devil*

The recent convert may “fall into the condemnation of the devil” as a result of being “puffed up with conceit”. The phrase “fall into” is a translation of the Greek word ἐπίπτω, which means to fall either literally or figuratively.<sup>88</sup> The word occurs again in v. 7, “fall into disgrace, into a snare of the devil”.

This figurative use of the word ἐπίπτω occurs in the book of Hebrews:

For we know him who said, “Vengeance is mine; I will repay.” And again, “The Lord will judge his people.” It is a fearful thing *to fall into* the hands of the living God. (Heb 10.30-31, emphasis mine)

Here the act of judgment is described as falling into “the hands of the living God”. The word also occurs in the LXX, this instance in Proverbs:

Through sinful lips a sinner *falls into* traps, but the righteous one escapes them. (Pr 12.13 LXX).<sup>89</sup>

<sup>87</sup> Philo, *Congr. Erud. Gr.* 127-128. [Note: I need to find a Greek edition to confirm the alignment with English, which I assume above]

<sup>88</sup> BDAG, p. 324. Occurs 7x in NT, 3x in PE: 1Ti 3.6, 7; 6.9.

<sup>89</sup> Author’s own translation.

Josephus also uses the word in his *Antiquities of the Jews*:

But as he was fallen to a fatal choice of great miseries, he was in trouble, and sorely confounded; and when the prophet had said that he must of necessity make his choice, and had ordered him to answer quickly, that he might declare what he had chosen to God, the king reasoned with himself, that in case he should ask for famine, he would appear to do it for others, and without danger to himself, since he had a great deal of corn hoarded up, but to the harm of others; that in case he should choose to be overcome [by his enemies] for three months, he would appear to have chosen war, because he had valiant men about him, and strongholds, and that therefore he feared nothing therefrom: so he chose that affliction which is common to kings and to their subjects, and in which the fear was equal on all sides; and said this beforehand, that it was much better *to fall into* the hands of God, than into those of his enemies.<sup>90</sup>

In this example, the king calculates that it is better for him to “fall into” the hands of God instead of the hands of his enemies. This occurrence is almost in the sense of ‘being delivered into’.<sup>91</sup>

Ignatius uses ἐπίπτω figuratively in his *Letter to the Magnesians*:

I am not writing these things, my beloved, because I have learned that some of you are behaving like this. But as one who is less important than you I want to protect you from *being snagged* by the fish hooks of worthless ideas. You should be fully convinced of the birth and suffering and resurrection that occurred in the time of the governor Pontius Pilate. These things were truly and certainly done by Jesus Christ, our hope. From this hope may none of you turn away.<sup>92</sup>

The picture of “being snagged by the fish hooks of worthless ideas” is particularly vivid. Ignatius urges the Magnesians to remain convinced of the essential points of faith so that worthless ideas will not entice them. If they are properly grounded, then the worthless ideas will have no ability to snag them.

Ignatius’ logic here is similar to that of Paul in 1Ti 3.6. Those without experience or grounding, no matter how impressive their other

<sup>90</sup> Jos., *Ant.* 7.322-323.

<sup>91</sup> Though it isn’t passive, it is an aorist active infinitive.

<sup>92</sup> Ign. *Magn.* 11

qualifications, are more susceptible to being enticed by false doctrine presented in an appealing and seemingly innocuous manner.

The danger is that the ungrounded will fall into “the condemnation of the devil”. The word translated “condemnation” is the Greek word κριμα and has to do with judgment, usually in a legal context.<sup>93</sup> In the NT, God is the legal authority who renders this judgment. The word is used frequently in this sort of context:

But refuse to enroll younger widows, for when their passions draw them away from Christ, they desire to marry and so incur *condemnation* for having abandoned their former faith. (1Ti 5.11-12, emphasis mine)

Let every person be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God. Therefore whoever resists the authorities resists what God has appointed, and those who resist will incur *judgment*. (Ro 13:1-2)

This word also occurs in *First Clement*:

Lot’s wife was made a sign of this: for when she left with him but then changed her mind and fell out of harmony, she was turned into a pillar of salt until this day—so that everyone may know that those who are of two minds and who doubt the power of God enter into *judgment* and become a visible sign for all generations.<sup>94</sup>

The condemnation/judgment entered into is that “of the devil”. The word translated devil is διάβολος. When διάβολος occurs with an article, as it does here, it is typically translated as ‘the slanderer’ or ‘the devil’.<sup>95</sup>

The trap the recent convert may fall into isn’t simply “condemnation”, it is the “condemnation of the devil”. The phrase “of the devil” is added to qualify the sort of condemnation that could easily befall the recent convert. Until the faith of the recent convert is tested and proven true, says Paul, he should not be put into a leadership position.

<sup>93</sup> BDAG, p. 567. Occurs 27x in NT, 2x in PE: 1Ti 3.6; 5.12.

<sup>94</sup> *ICl* 11.2, emphasis mine.

<sup>95</sup> BDAG, p. 226. Occurs 37x in NT, 6x in PE. Three of these are in chapter 3: 1Ti 3.6, 7, 11.

## VERSE 7

*Moreover, he must be well thought of by outsiders*

In addition to being experienced, the overseer “must be well thought of by outsiders”. The phrase “he must be well thought of” is an accurate translation, but the English words do not have equally corresponding Greek words. “He must be” is reflective of the Greek words δεῖ which, while having a multitude of uses, typically implies the idea of necessity. It is combined with ἔχω, a frequently-used verb which typically means ‘have’.<sup>96</sup> The English word “well” comes from the Greek adjective καλός, which typically means ‘well’, ‘good’, ‘beautiful’ or ‘useful’.<sup>97</sup> The words “thought of” actually come from the Greek word μαρτυρία. This word has to do with ‘testimony’ or statements of approval.<sup>98</sup> This usage occurs elsewhere in the NT:

Demetrius has received a good testimony from everyone, and from the truth itself. We also add our testimony, and you know that our *testimony* is true. (3Jn 12, emphasis mine)<sup>99</sup>

The first two instances of the English word “testimony” are translated from verbs (‘has received good testimony’ and ‘We also add our testimony’). The third instance of “testimony” comes from the noun under discussion. While “from everyone” may be hyperbolic it does imply that there were few who would disapprove of Demetrius’ way of life. Paul uses μαρτυρία in his epistle to Titus as well:

One of the Cretans, a prophet of their own, said, “Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, lazy gluttons.” This *testimony* is true. Therefore rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith, (Tit 1.12-13, emphasis mine)

<sup>96</sup> Regarding the combination of δεῖ and ἔχω, see comments on 1Ti 3.2 where this same sort of usage is discussed (only with δεῖ and εἰμί). Also, Byzantine manuscripts and Codex Bezae (fifth century) include an explicit αὐτον (“he”) in this location. [Note: Also of potential interest is the “fronting” of μαρτυρίαν καλήν before the verb in the clause (ἔχειν); according to discourse analysts (e.g. Levinsohn, Longacre) this must be for a reason besides simple emphasis.]

<sup>97</sup> BDAG, p. 504. Occurs 101x in NT.

<sup>98</sup> BDAG, p. 618. Occurs 37x in NT, 2x in PE: 1Ti 3.7; Tt 1.13. The word μαρτυρία occurs in a judicial or legal context in some instances, but that is not the case in the Pastoral Epistles.

<sup>99</sup> The first two instances of the English word “testimony” are translated from verbs (‘has received good testimony’ and ‘We also add our testimony’). The third instance of “testimony” comes from the noun under discussion.

In this instance, Paul is providing confirmation of the testimony of Epimenides concerning Cretans. The testimony is not in a legal context, it is a statement of disapproval regarding Cretans that Paul confirms.<sup>100</sup>

The overseer must be held in esteem “by outsiders”. The word “outsiders” is a translation of the Greek word ἔξωθεν, an adverb that functions in a number of ways but typically implies something outside of or external to something else.<sup>101</sup> A similar usage is found in Josephus’ *Wars of the Jews*:

Although I must say that submission to *foreigners* may be borne because fortune hath already doomed us to it, while submission to wicked people of our own nation is too unmanly, and brought upon us by our own consent.<sup>102</sup>

Josephus uses ἔξωθεν to mean “foreigners”, showing that submission to those outside of the nationality of the speaker is meant. The same sort of relationship is intended by Paul here; those who are outside of the fellowship must think highly of the overseer, just as those who are in the fellowship do.

*so that he may not fall into disgrace*

Paul’s reason for requiring that the overseer be well thought of by those outside the fellowship is “so that he may not fall into disgrace.” The phrase “fall into” is from the Greek word ἐπιπίπτω, which was used in similar fashion in v. 6.<sup>103</sup>

The word “disgrace” is a translation of the Greek word ὀνειδισμός, which typically carries the sense of ‘reproach’ or ‘revile’.<sup>104</sup> All of the NT instances of ὀνειδισμός, apart from this instance, have to do with reproach or disgrace

<sup>100</sup> While Cretans may have been known for deceit and laziness, Epimenides was most likely posing a paradox, and Paul was most likely playing along with it. See comments on Titus 1.12.

<sup>101</sup> BDAG, p. 354. Occurs 13x in NT, only here in PE. The sense used here is not the primary sense of the word. However, ἔξωθεν occurs in a sense similar to that used here in a variant reading of Mark 4.11 (found in codex Vaticanus, a highly regarded Greek uncial MS of the fourth century), in place of ἔξω.

<sup>102</sup> Jos. *Wars* 4.179 (emphasis mine). Josephus uses the word similarly in *Ant.* 15.316.

<sup>103</sup> See comment on 1Ti 3.6.

<sup>104</sup> BDAG, p. 710. Occurs 5x in NT: Ro 15.3; 1Ti 3.7; Heb 10.33; 11.26; 13.13.

heaped upon Christians as a result of their identification with Christ or the reproach Christ received.

By faith Moses, when he was grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh’s daughter, choosing rather to be mistreated with the people of God than to enjoy the fleeting pleasures of sin. He considered the *reproach* of Christ greater wealth than the treasures of Egypt, for he was looking to the reward. (Heb 11.24-26, emphasis mine)

The other two instances in Hebrews (10.33 and 13.13) are similar in that the reproach they describe is received on a basis of identification with Christ. Paul has similar usage in his epistle to the Romans:

Let each of us please his neighbor for his good, to build him up. For Christ did not please himself, but as it is written, “The *reproaches* of those who reproached you fell on me.” For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, that through endurance and through the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope. (Ro 15.2-4, emphasis mine)

Yet in First Timothy, Paul does not use this word in this manner; he uses it to indicate disgrace that the overseer may be susceptible to if he doesn’t have a proper foundation. If the overseer acts rashly or imprudently he may bring disgrace upon himself in the eyes of the community. The *Testament of Reuben* offers a similar example:

For until my father’s death I had not boldness to look in his face, or to speak to any of my brethren, because of the *reproach*. Even until now my conscience causeth me anguish on account of my impiety.<sup>105</sup>

In this excerpt from the *Testament of Reuben*, ὀνειδισμός seems to be a sense of shame or guilt in this case due to one’s own previous actions.<sup>106</sup> Paul’s concern is that the neophyte overseer may similarly compromise himself. While still a danger with those who have a firm foundation in the faith, in Paul’s mind the problem is much less likely.

*into a snare of the devil*

<sup>105</sup> *TReub.* 4.2-3.

<sup>106</sup> Ge 35.22: “While Israel lived in that land, Reuben went and lay with Bilhah his father’s concubine. And Israel heard of it.” The *Testament of Reuben* expands on this story in 3.9-4.4.

There are dangers in addition to disgrace, namely, falling “into the snare of the devil.” The word translated “snare” is the Greek word *παγίς*, meaning ‘trap’ either literally or figuratively.<sup>107</sup> Here the meaning is figurative, speaking of a “snare of the devil”. The same phrase occurs in Second Timothy:

And the Lord’s servant must not be quarrelsome but kind to everyone, able to teach, patiently enduring evil, correcting his opponents with gentleness. God may perhaps grant them repentance leading to a knowledge of the truth, and they may escape from the *snare of the devil*, after being captured by him to do his will. (2Ti 2.24-27, emphasis mine)

However, this phrase “into a snare of the devil” is problematic. Is it a separate thing from the disgrace, or is it exegetical, explaining the disgrace? Knight addresses this issue:

The first aspect of this concern is that he will fall into “reproach” (*ὀνειδισμός*). From whom will the reproach come? That is to say, is *ὀνειδισμός* qualified by the genitive *τοῦ διαβόλου* or is it used absolutely? For the former, it is argued that the preposition *εἰς* is not repeated before *παγίδα*. For the latter, it is argued that the reproach follows from the potential bishop not having a good testimony from those outside and so is not restricted exclusively to the *διάβολος*. That consideration is more in line with the context.<sup>108</sup>

According to Knight, then, the snare of the devil is something separate from the disgrace; one who has been disgraced may then fall into the snare of the devil. Charles Ellicott, writing in the mid-1800’s, arrived at the same basic conclusion:

... the absence of the article before *παγίδα* being perhaps due to the preposition; comp. Winer, *Gr.* 19.2, p. 114. The exact connexion is somewhat doubtful, as the genitive may depend (*a*) on both, or (*b*) only on the last of the two substantives. The omission of the prep. before *παγίδα* (De W.) is an argument in favour of (*a*); the isolated position however of *ὀνειδισμός* and the connexion of thought in ch. 5.14, 15, seem to preponderate in favour of (*b*), *ὀνειδισμός* being thus absolute, and referring to ‘the reproachful comments and judgment,’ whether of those

<sup>107</sup> BDAG, p. 747. Occurs 5x in NT: Lu 21.35; Ro 11.9; 1Ti 3.7; 6.9; 2Ti 2.26. On “of the devil” see notes on 1Ti 3.6 above which treat the same phrase.

<sup>108</sup> Knight, p. 165 (NIGTC, *The Pastoral Epistles*).

without (Chrys.) or within the Church. ... The expression *παγίδα τοῦ διαβόλου* (‘snare laid by the devil;’ apparently *gen. originis*, contrast ver. 6), occurs again in 2Ti 2.26; so similarly in 1Ti 6.9. It is here added to *ὀνειδισμός*, not exegetically ... but rather as marking the temptations that will be sure to follow the loss of character.<sup>109</sup>

One danger or “snare” is that church leaders may become targets of persecution and the objects of baseless allegation from those outside of the fellowship. Such accusations are less likely to stick if the overseer has built rapport among non-Christians in the larger community. Ignatius, in his *Letter to the Trallians*, offers a similar warning:

And those who are deacons of the mysteries of Jesus Christ must also be pleasing in every way to all people. For they are not deacons dealing with food and drink; they are servants of the church of God. *And so they must guard themselves against accusations as against fire.*<sup>110</sup>

Paul desires overseers firmly grounded and tested in the faith and thought well of by those outside of the church, that the leadership of the fellowship may be certain.

## PERICOPE SUMMARY

The position of overseer is an important position in the local fellowship and thus is important to properly fill. Paul, knowing that false teachers have been prevalent in the Ephesian church, gives Timothy guidelines to use when selecting overseers to handle the affairs of the local fellowship. Paul desires leaders with the following qualities:

- must be above reproach
- the husband of one wife
- sober-minded
- self-controlled
- respectable
- hospitable

<sup>109</sup> Ellicott, p. 45 (*The Pastoral Epistles of St. Paul: With a Critical and Grammatical Commentary, and a Revised Translation*).

<sup>110</sup> Ign. *Trall.* 2.3 (Ehrman vol. 1 p. 259).

- able to teach
- not a drunkard
- not violent
- but gentle
- not quarrelsome
- not a lover of money

In addition to this list of qualifications, Paul provides three objective tests for Timothy to apply to those who are generally qualified to be overseers:

**Test 1:** *He must manage his own household well, with all dignity keeping his children submissive, for if someone does not know how to manage his own household, how will he care for God's church?*

The manner in which the potential overseer runs his own household is indicative of the manner in which he will help administer the fellowship, both financially and spiritually. If he administers his household well, if his children are obedient and respectful, and if he treats his family members well, then he may be qualified to be an overseer.

**Test 2:** *He must not be a recent convert, or he may become puffed up with conceit and fall into the condemnation of the devil.*

If the potential overseer is a recent convert, he may not have yet developed the foundation necessary to recognize and refute false teachers. He also may not have the ability to teach properly if his grounding isn't solid. Conversely, if he is not a recent convert, he should display a solid foundation and wisdom worthy of his age and experience in the faith. The position of overseer is not one awarded based on seniority, but on ability to administer the office.

**Test 3:** *Moreover, he must be well thought of by outsiders, so that he may not fall into disgrace, into a snare of the devil.*

The character of the overseer must be above reproach. If potential overseer is not well-regarded by those outside of the fellowship, he will open the fellowship up for criticism and slander by non-believers.

Using the list of qualities as an initial filter, and applying the tests to see if the candidate is worthy of the office, Timothy will be able to narrow down the field of those who desire to be overseers. Because the criterion for

overseers has been made known and available to others,<sup>111</sup> those who aspire to the office are well aware of the requirements and understand their importance. They know what is required of an overseer and what they need to do to qualify for the office.

---

<sup>111</sup> The letter, while addressed to Timothy, was most likely intended to be read by the community at Ephesus. See comments on 1Ti 1.1.