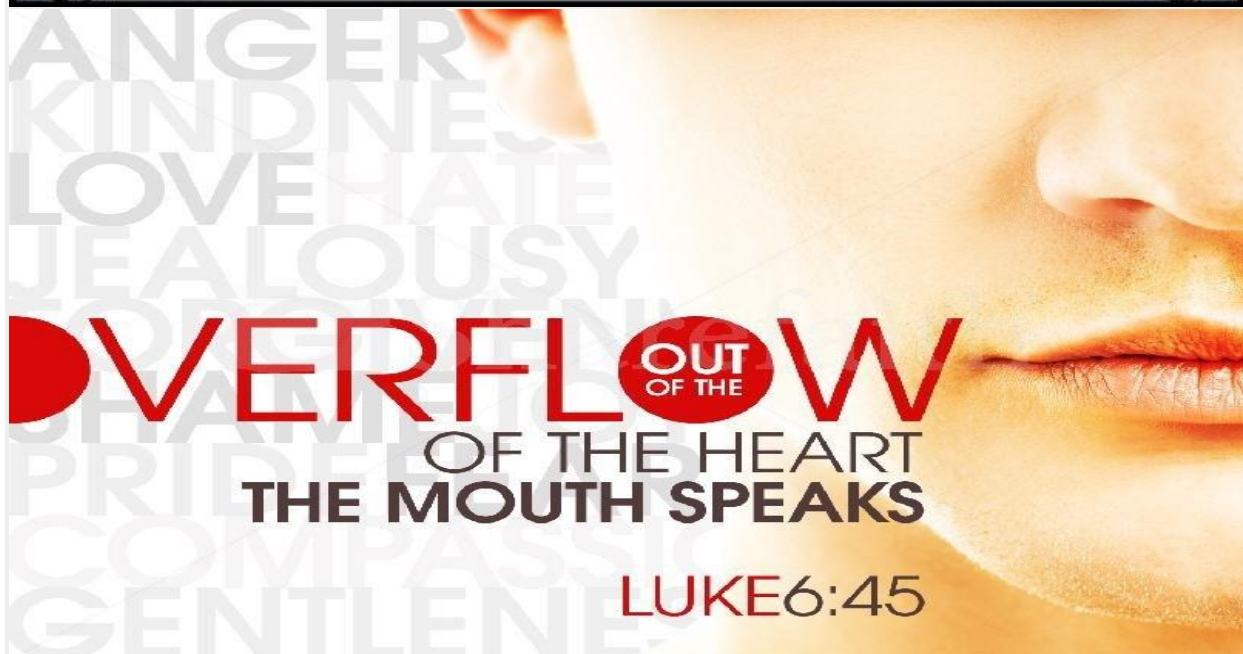


PART 1. CORRUPT COMMUNICATION SERIES

by David Lee Burris



Ellicott's Commentary for English Readers

(45) **A good man out of the good treasure.**—See Note on [Matthew 12:35](#). There the words are spoken in immediate connection with the judgment which the Pharisees had passed on our Lord as casting out devils by Beelzebub, and follow on a reproduction of the similitude of the tree and its fruit. The sequence of thought in that passage helps us to trace a like sequence here. Out of the “good treasure of his heart” the good man would bring forth, not harsh or hasty judgment, but kindness, gentleness, compassion; out of the “evil treasure” the man who was evil, the hypocrite who judged others by himself, would bring forth bitterness, and harsh surmises, and uncharitable condemnation.

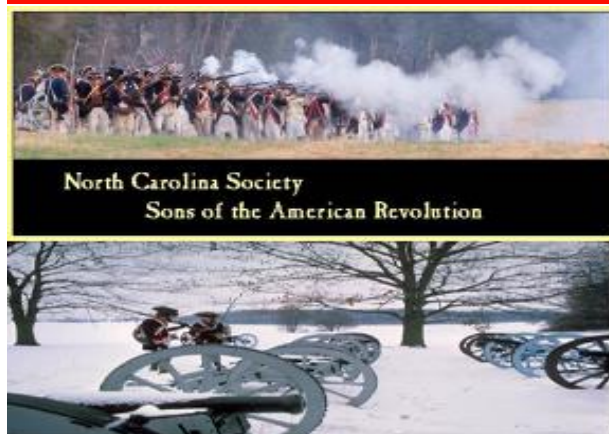
Pride of Ancestry & Family Stories





What is a "Three Percenter"?

During the American Revolution, the active forces in the field against the King's tyranny never amounted to more than 3% of the colonists. They were in turn actively supported by perhaps 10% of the population. In addition to these revolutionaries were perhaps another 20% who favored their cause but did little or nothing to support it. Another one-third of the population sided with the King (by the end of the war there were actually more Americans fighting FOR the King than there were in the field against him) and the final third took no side, blew with the wind and took what came.



North Carolina Society
Sons of the American Revolution

Private John Burris

2nd North Carolina Regiment
With Washington's Army
@ Valley Forge



Typical NC
Militiaman

Bible Genealogies

The New Testament opens in the book of Matthew by introducing, “The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ” (Matt. 1:1). Matthew’s opening statement is followed by a lengthy list of names, that establishes a direct family line from the patriarch Abraham to Jesus Christ.

Anyone who has even casually read the Bible knows that it contains numerous genealogical lists, the first of which is found as early as Genesis 4. In fact, there are so many genealogical lists in the Old Testament that we are often tempted to rush through them or even skip over them altogether, rather than take the time to patiently try to pronounce the various names included in the list. Why does the Bible include these genealogies? Since the Scriptures are a product of the mind of God (2 Tim. 3:16; 2 Pet. 1:20-21), our Creator must have had some purpose for including them in the inspired text. And, the great frequency with which they occur further points to the importance and necessity of their inclusion. But, what exactly is that purpose, and why are they necessary?

Bible Genealogies

1. Are an evidence of the historical authenticity of the Scriptures. While many may view the genealogies recorded in the Bible as boring and tedious, they actually serve to support the historical integrity of the Scriptures. For example, Genesis 5 contains the genealogy of Adam all the way down to Noah and his sons. The genealogical record of Genesis 5 contains important details, as well as the various ages of the patriarchs mentioned. We live in an age in which it is popular to dismiss the early chapters of the book of Genesis as nothing more than mythical poetry.

But, the genealogies are present as a testimony to the historical authenticity and accuracy of the Genesis record. The genealogies serve to show that the men mentioned in Genesis are real individuals who lived real lives and fathered real sons and daughters, who in turn, raised real families of their own. The history of the nation of Israel recorded in the Old Testament is replete with detailed genealogical records. One cannot simply discredit the historical accuracy of the Old Testament without having to grapple with the fact that the Israelites were able to carefully preserve these detailed genealogies.

2. Help to establish an accurate chronology of events. We know from secular history that approximately two thousand years have passed since the coming of Christ. Secular history and archaeology also affirm that roughly two thousand years elapsed from the time of Abraham to the time of Christ. In Luke 3:23-34, Luke presents a genealogy of Jesus in which he includes 55 generations within the period of time falling between Abraham and Christ. If each generation spans about 40 years, we have approximately 2000 years from Abraham to Christ. Luke continues his genealogical record from Abraham all the way back to Adam, which covers twenty generations (Luke 3:34-38). Since Genesis 5:1-32 provides the ages of those mentioned in Luke's genealogy, we can estimate the time from Adam to Abraham to have been no more than a few thousand years. It is possible to cover this span of time with only 20 generations due to the fact that the ages of the patriarchs mentioned in Genesis 5 often exceed nine hundred years. Since we know that the earth is only five days older than Adam (Gen. 1:1-31; Exod. 20:11), we can be sure the earth's age should be referenced in the context of thousands, rather than billions, or even millions, of years.

3. Were necessary in order to keep the Law of Moses. The law of the Old Covenant that God gave Israel at Mt. Sinai made it necessary for the nation of Israel to keep careful genealogical records. One of the key components of the Law of Moses was the Levitical priesthood.

God instructed Moses saying, “And thou shalt give the Levites unto Aaron and to his sons: they are wholly given unto him out of the children of Israel. And thou shalt appoint Aaron and his sons, and they shall wait on their priest’s office: and the stranger that cometh nigh shall be put to death” (Num. 3:9-10). The only way the Israelites could keep the Law of God was to make sure that the priests were descendants of Aaron, of the tribe of Levi. And, the only way to be make sure of that was to keep genealogical records. Because of this, we should not be surprised that God commanded Moses to make a careful record of the families of the Levites (Num. 3:14-39). Correct genealogical records had to be maintained in order to ensure that the priests were selected from the proper tribe and family.

4. Are not important under the New Covenant. The only genealogies recorded in the New Testament are the two genealogies of Christ found in Matthew 1 and Luke 3, respectively. These genealogies are necessary in order to show the fulfillment of prophecy concerning the family line of Christ. However, the New Testament includes no other genealogies beyond these. There is no longer a need to keep track of the families of the priests, since the priesthood and law have been changed (Heb. 7:12). Genealogical records are conspicuously absent throughout the New Testament. We do not have genealogical records of the apostles and evangelists of the New Testament, nor do we need them.

In fact, the Apostle Paul warned Titus to “avoid foolish questions, and genealogies” (Titus 3:9). He gave similar instructions to Timothy (1st Timothy 1:4). Under the gospel, genealogies are of no spiritual importance, since we are to “rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh” (Phil. 3:3).

The genealogical records presented in the Bible serve an important purpose in unfolding the story of mankind’s redemption, remember that God put them there for a reason, for “his work is perfect” (Deut. 32:4).

- *David Dann*

hope of eternal life. *This is a trustworthy saying. And I want you to stress these things, so that those who have trusted in God may be careful to devote themselves to doing what is good. These things are excellent and profitable for everyone.

⁹But avoid foolish controversies and genealogies and arguments and quarrels about the law, because these are unprofitable and useless. ¹⁰Warn a divisive person once, and then warn him a second time. After that, have nothing to do with him. ¹¹You may be sure that such a man is warped and sinful; he is self-condemned.

Final Remarks

¹²As soon as I send Artemas or Tychicus to you, do your best to come to me at Nicopolis, because I have decided to winter there. ¹³Do everything you can to help Zenas the lawyer and Apollos on their way and see

“Avoid...Genealogies”?

by [Eric Lyons, M.Min.](#)

As most Bible students know, Scripture, particularly the Old Testament, contains several genealogies. Genesis chapter five gives the genealogy of Adam to Noah. Genesis 10 lists many of the descendants of Shem, Ham, and Japheth. Genesis 11 gives the genealogy of Shem to Abraham. Genealogies make up the first nine chapters of 1 Chronicles. What's more, the New Testament opens with these words: “The book of the **genealogy** of Jesus Christ, the Son of David, the Son of Abraham” (Matthew 1:1, emp. added). In light of such extensive genealogies, some wonder why the apostle Paul instructed Timothy and Titus not to “give heed to...endless genealogies” (1 Timothy 1:4), but rather “avoid” them (Titus 3:9). One Bible critic has alleged that “if we follow this advice we would ignore most of the Bible” (Wells, 2008). Just how is it that we can trust a book that says to “avoid...genealogies,” when that same book contains several extensive genealogies? Is this a contradiction?

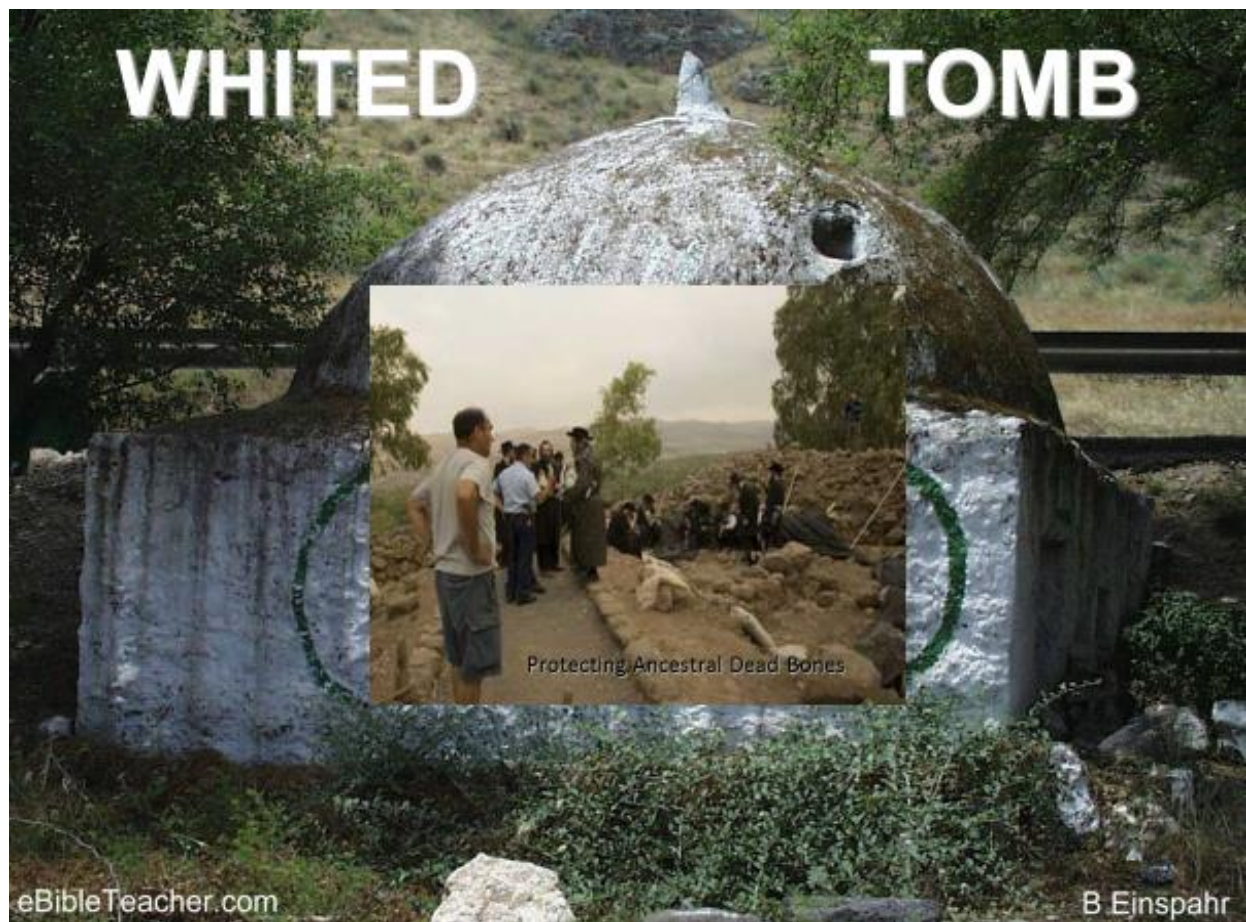
First, for one to interpret Paul's commands to mean that it is sinful simply to read or discuss the biblical genealogies is indefensible. Paul obviously believed in the inspiration of the Old Testament. In fact, to the same individual who he instructed not to “give heed to...endless genealogies,” he wrote: “**All** Scripture,” including the many Old Testament genealogies, “is given by inspiration of God” (2 Timothy 3:16, emp. added). To conclude that an apostle who claimed to be guided by the Holy Spirit (cf. 2 Peter 1:20-21) would command Christians to avoid the words of the Holy Spirit (cf. Samuel 23:2), even on the surface, is a forced interpretation.

Second, a closer look at Paul's command to “avoid...genealogies” reveals that he was not alluding merely to the reading or study of biblical genealogies. Rather, in contrast to being peaceable, gentle, and humble (Titus 3:2), while at the same time engaging in good, profitable works (3:8), Paul wrote, “But avoid **foolish** disputes, genealogies, contentions, and strivings about the law; for they are unprofitable and useless.” In Greek, as in English, “All 4 nouns” [disputes, genealogies, contentions, and strivings—EL] are without the article,” which “stresses the quality of these things” (Hiebert, 1981). Just as the Ephesians were not to “give heed to fables and endless genealogies, which cause disputes rather than godly edification” (1st Tim. Chapter 1 verses 3-4), Titus was to avoid “various ‘**foolish**’ or senseless inquiries,” including “**speculations** about the Old Testament genealogies,” that “resulted in sharp dissensions and open quarrels” (Hiebert, 2:447, emp. added). According to Paul, such foolishness is “unprofitable and useless” (Titus 3:9).

Third, genealogies were necessary under the Old Law in order to distinguish tribes, disseminate land, discern duties (the responsibilities of Levites were very different than other Israelites), and, most important, to disclose from which nation, tribe, and family the prophesied Messiah would come. Yet, same those genealogies were not “endless.”

Though several chapters of the Old Testament are comprised of genealogies, they certainly do not make up “most of the Bible,” as critic Steve Wells alleged. The genealogies that Paul likely had in mind were those the Jews kept, that through the centuries became “numerous, complicated, and extended—so that they might without much exaggeration be called ‘endless’” (Barnes, 1997). To these “[t]he Jews attached great importance...and insisted on their being carefully preserved” (Barnes).

Finally, by the time Paul wrote to Timothy and Titus, the Old Law had been replaced by a new law (Hebrews 8:7-13). There was no need for Jews to use genealogies to dispute over their identity as nation, tribe, or family. In Christ “there is no distinction between Jew and Greek, for the same Lord over all is rich to all who call upon Him. For ‘whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved’” (Romans 10:11-13; cf. Galatians 3:28; Colossians 3:11). For Christians to waste valuable time disputing over “foolish” matters, such as one’s ancestry, is “unprofitable and useless” (Titus 3:9). The only genealogy that matters to Christians is Christ’s. His genealogy serves as a proof of both the Bible’s inspiration and the deity of Christ (see Butt, 2006). The Messiah would come from the seed of Abraham (Genesis 12:1-3), the tribe of Judah (Genesis 49:10), the family of Jesse (Isaiah 11:1), and the house of David (Jeremiah 23:5). Indeed, this is precisely what happened, as the New Testament writers, including the apostle Paul, reveal (Galatians 3:16; Matthew 1:1-17; Luke 3:23-38).



FOOLISH GENEALOGIES: OFTEN WE OVERCOME OUR FAMILY HISTORIES

The Lord Jesus Condemns Pharisees, Four Woes of Matthew 23



Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!

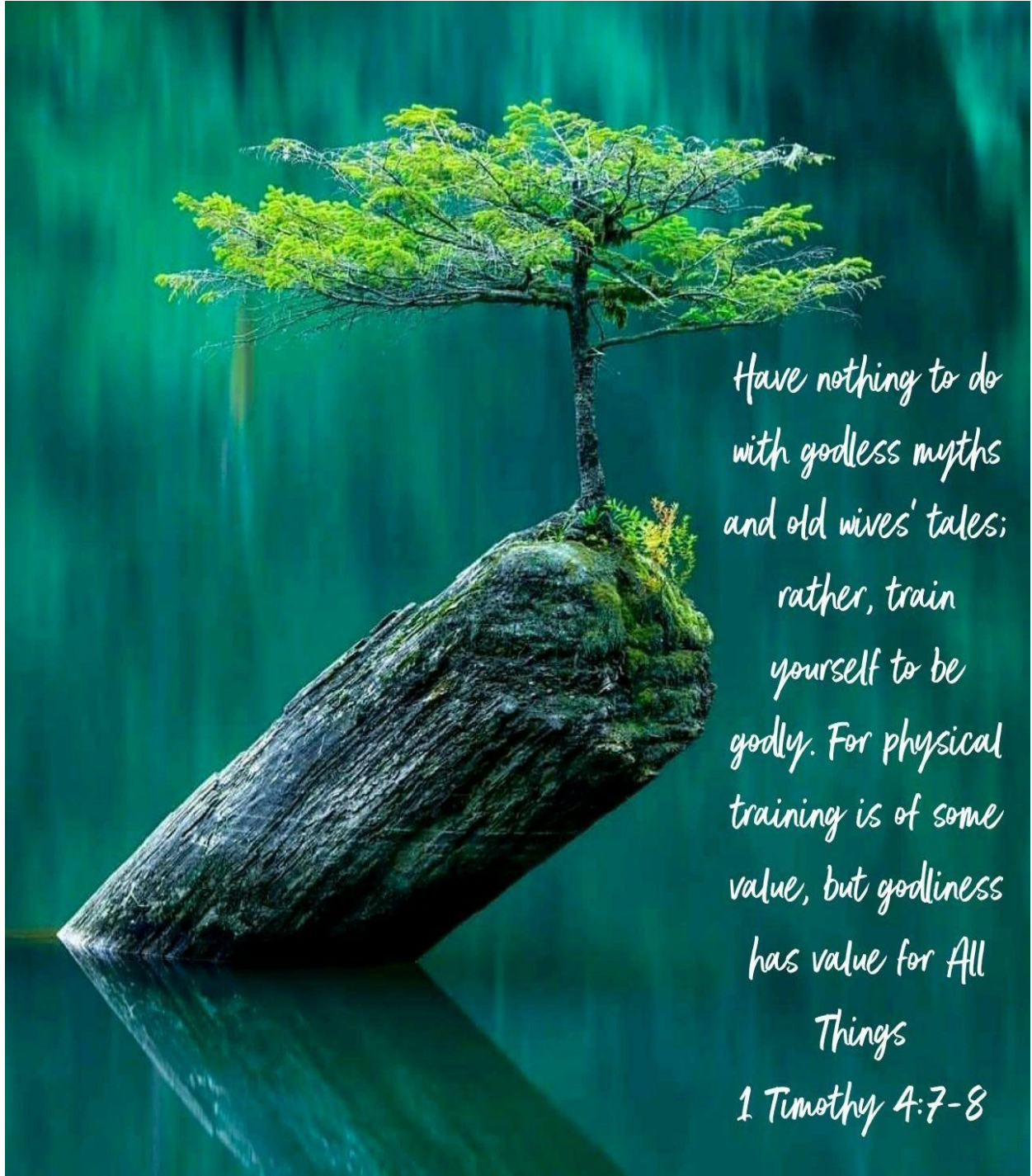
v23 for ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone.

v25 ye make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess.

v27 ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones and of all uncleanness.

v28-31 Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity. Ye garnish the graves of the righteous yet you are the children of those who killed the prophets.

GODLESS MYTHS & OLD WIFE'S TALES



Have nothing to do
with godless myths
and old wives' tales;
rather, train
yourself to be
godly. For physical
training is of some
value, but godliness
has value for All
Things

1 Timothy 4:7-8

MacLaren's Expositions

SPIRITUAL ATHLETICS

1 Timothy 4:7.

Timothy seems to have been not a very strong character: sensitive, easily discouraged, and perhaps with a constitutional tendency to indolence. At all events, it is very touching to notice how the old Apostle--a prisoner, soon to be a martyr--forgot all about his own anxieties and burdens, and, through both of his letters to his young helper, gives himself to the task of bracing him up. Thus he says to him, in my text, amongst other trumpet-tongued exhortations, 'Exercise thyself unto godliness.'

If I were preaching to ministers, I should have a good deal to say about the necessity of this precept for them, and to remind them that it was first spoken, not to a private member of the Church, as an injunction for the Christian life in general, but as having a special bearing on the temptations and necessities of those who stand in official positions in the Church. For there is nothing that is more likely to sap a man's devotion, and to eat out the earnestness and sincerity of a Christian life, than that he should be--as I, for instance, and every man in my position has to be--constantly occupied with presenting God's Word to other people. We are apt to look upon it as, in some sense, our stock-in-trade, and to forget to apply it to ourselves. So, it was with a very special bearing on the particular occupation and temptation of his correspondent that Paul said 'Exercise thyself unto godliness' before you begin to talk to other people.

But that would not be appropriate to my present audience. And I take this injunction as one of universal application.

I. Notice, then, here expressed the ever-present and universal aim of the Christian life.

Paul does not say 'be godly'; but 'exercise thyself unto'--with a view towards--'godliness.' In other words, to him godliness is the great aim which every Christian man should set before him as the one supreme purpose of his life.

Now I am not going to spend any time on mere verbal criticism, but I must point to the somewhat unusual word which the Apostle here employs for 'godliness.' It is all but exclusively confined to these last letters of the Apostle. It was evidently a word that had unfolded the depth and fulness and comprehensiveness of its meaning to him in the last stage of his religious experience. For it is only once employed in the Acts of the Apostles, and some two or three times in the doubtful second Epistle of St. Peter. And all the other instances of its use lie in these three letters--the one to Titus and two to Timothy; and eight of them are in this first one.

The old Apostle keeps perpetually recurring to this one idea of 'godliness.' What does he mean by it? The etymological meaning of the word is 'well-directed reverence,' but it is to be noticed that the context specifically points to one form of well-directed reverence, viz. as shown in conduct. 'Active godliness' is the meaning of the word; religion embodied in deeds, emotions, and sentiments, and creeds, put into fact.

This noble and pregnant word teaches us, first of all, that all true religion finds its ultimate sphere and best manifestation in the conduct of daily life. That sounds like a platitude. I wish it were. If we believed that, and worked it out, we should be very different people from what the most of us are; and our chapels would be very different places, and the professing Church would have a new breath of life over it. Religion must have its foundation laid deep in the truths revealed by God for our acceptance.

And does God tell us anything simply that we may believe it, and there an end?

What is the purpose of all the principles and facts which make up the body of the Christian revelation? To enlighten us? Yes! To enlighten us only? A hundred times no!

The destination of a principle, of a truth, is to pass out from the understanding into the whole nature of man.

And if, as I said, the foundation of religion is laid in truths, principles, facts, the second story of the building is certain emotions, sentiments, feelings, desires, and affections, and '**experiences**'--as people call them--which follow from the acceptance of these truths and principles. **And is that all? A thousand times no!** What do we get the emotions for? What does God give you a Revelation of Himself for, that kindles your love if you believe it? That you may love? Yes! Only that you may love? Certainly not.

The top story is conduct, based upon the beliefs, and inspired by the emotions.

In former centuries, the period between the Reformation and our fathers' time, the tendency of the Protestant Church was very largely to let the conception of religion as a body of truths overshadow everything else. And nowadays, amongst a great many people, the temptation is to take the second story for the main one, and to think that if a man loves, and has the glow at his heart of the conscious reception of God's love, and has longings and yearnings, Christian hopes and desires & passes into the sweetness of communion with God, in his solitary moments, and plunges deep into the truths of God's Word, that is godliness. But the true exhortation to us is--Do not stop with putting in the foundations of a correct creed, nor at the second stage of an emotional religion. Both are needful. Number one and number two are infinitely precious, but both exist for number three. True religion has its sphere in conduct. 'Exercise thyself unto godliness.' That does not mean only --for it does include that--cultivate devout emotions, or realise the facts and the principles of the Gospel, but it means, take these along with you into your daily life, and work them out there. Bring all the facts and truths of your creed, and all the sweet and select, the secret and sacred, emotions which you have felt, to bear upon your daily life. The soil in which the tree grows, and the roots of the tree, its stem and blossoms, are means to the end--fruit. What's the use of the clearest conceptions, and of the most tender, delicate, holy emotions, if they don't drive the wheels of action?

God does not give us the Gospel to make us wise, nor even to make us blessed, but He gives it to us to make us good men and women, working His work in our daily tasks. All true religion has its sphere in conduct. But then there is another side to that. All true conduct must have its root in religion, and I, for my part--though of course it is extremely 'narrow' and 'antiquated' to profess it--I, for my part, do not believe that in the long-run, and in general, you will get noble living apart from the emotions and sentiments which the truths of Christianity, accepted and fed upon, are sure to produce. And so this day, with its very general depreciation of the importance of accurate conceptions of revealed truth, and its exaltation of conduct, is on the verge of a very serious error. Godliness, well-directed reverence, is the parent of all noble living, and the one infallible way to produce a noble life is faith in Christ, and love which flows from the faith.

If all that is so, if godliness is, not singing psalms, not praying, not saying 'How sweet it is to feel the love of God,' still less saying 'I accept the principles of Christianity as they are laid down in the Bible'; but carrying out beliefs and emotions in deeds, then the true aim which we should have continually before us as Christians is plain enough. We may not reach it completely, but we can approximate indefinitely towards it. **Aim is more important than achievement. Direction is more vital in determining the character of a life than progress actually made.** Note the form of the exhortation, 'exercise thyself towards godliness,' which involves the same thought as is expressed in Paul's other utterance of irrepressible aspiration and effort, 'Not as if I had already attained, either were already perfect, but I follow after,' or as he had just said, '**press towards the mark, in continual approximation to the ideal.**' A complete penetration of all our actions by the principles and emotions of the Gospel is what is set before us here.

And that is the only aim that corresponds to what and where I am and to what I need. I fall back upon the grandly simple old words, very dear to some of us, perhaps, by boyish associations, 'Man's chief end is to glorify God, and {so} to enjoy Him forever.' 'Unto Godliness' is to be the aim of every true life, and it is the only aim which corresponds to our circumstances and our relations, our powers and possibilities.

II. Notice the discipline which such an aim demands.

'Exercise thyself.' Now, I have no doubt that the bulk of my hearers know that the word here rendered 'exercise' is drawn from the athlete's training-ground, and is, in fact, akin to the word which is transported into English under the form 'gymnasium.' The Apostle's notion is that, just as the athlete, racer, or boxer goes through a course of training, so there is a training as severe, necessary for the godliness which Paul regards as the one true aim of life. You Christian people ought to train your spirits at least as carefully as the athlete does his muscles. There are plenty of people, calling themselves Christians, who never give one-hundredth part as much systematic and diligent pains to fulfil the ideal of their Christian life as men will take to learn to ride a bicycle or to pull the stroke oar in a college boat. The self-denial and persistence and concentration which are freely spent upon excellence in athletic pursuits might well put to shame the way in which Christians go about the task of 'doing' their religion.

'Exercise thyself unto godliness.' Make a business of living your Christianity. Be in earnest about it. A tragically large number of professing Christians never were in earnest about mending themselves. And that is why they are so far, far behind. 'Exercise thyself.' You say, How?

'Well, I say, first of all, **concentration**. 'This one thing I do.' That does not mean narrowing, because this 'one thing' can be done by means of all the legitimate things that we have to do in the world. The concentration for which I plead does not shut us out from any place but the devil's wrestling-ground. All that is legitimate, all that is innocent, may be made a means for manifesting and for increasing our godliness. Only you have to take God with you into your life, and to try, more and more consciously, to make Him the motive-power of all that you do. Then the old saying which is profoundly true as it was originally meant, and has of late years been so misused as to become profoundly false, will be true again, ' Laborare est orare .' Yes! it is; if worship underlies the work, but not else.

Again I say, **exercise yourselves by abstinence**. How many things did the athlete at Corinth do without in his training? How many things do prizefighters and rowing men do without when in training to-day? How rigidly, for a while at any rate, they abstain--whether they recompense themselves afterwards or not has nothing to do with my present purpose. And is it not a shame that some sensual man shall, for the sake of winning a medal or a cup, be able gladly to abandon the delights of sense--eating, drinking, and the like--and content himself with a hermit's Spartan fare, and that Christian people so seldom, and so reluctantly, and so partially turn away from the poisoned cups and the indigestible dainties which the world provides for them? I think that any Christian man who complains of the things which he is shut out from doing if he is to cultivate the godliness which should be his life need only go to any place where horse-jockeys congregate to get a lesson that he may well lay to heart. 'Exercise thyself,' for it is unto godliness.

And then what I said in a former part of this sermon about the various stages of religion may suggest another view of the method of discipline proper to the Christian life. The strenuous exercise of all our powers is called for. But if it is true that the godliness of my text is the last outcome of the emotions which spring from the reception of certain truths, then if we work backwards, as it were, we shall get the best way of producing the godliness. That is to say, the main effort for all men who are in earnest in regard to their own growth in Christlikeness is to keep themselves in touch with the truths of the Gospel, and in the exercise of the sentiments and emotions which flow from these. Or, to put it into other words, the 'gymnastic' is to be, mainly, the man's clinging, with all his might of mind and heart, to Christ, and the truths that are wrapped up in Him; and the cultivation of the habit of continual faith and love turned to that Lord. If I see to number one--the creed, and to number two--the emotions, they will see to number three--the conduct. Keep the truths of the Gospel well in your minds, and keep yourselves well in the attitude of contact with Jesus Christ, and power for life will come into you.

FOOLISH & UNLEARNED CONVERSATION

(23) But foolish and unlearned questions avoid, knowing that they do gender strifes. (24) And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, (25) In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth; (26) And that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will.

2 Timothy 2:23-26

Don't get involved in foolish, ignorant arguments that only start fights. A servant of the Lord must not quarrel but must be kind to everyone, be able to teach, and be patient with difficult people.

2 Timothy 2:23-24

 Is A
Lifestyle



"Stay away from all the foolish *arguments* of the immature, for these disputes will only generate more conflict."

2 TIMOTHY 2:23

www.in-due-time.com

true

avoid
foolish
babbler



to teach others also. ³ Share in suffering as a good soldier of Christ Jesus. ⁴ No soldier gets entangled in civilian pursuits, since his aim is to please the one who enlisted him. ⁵ An athlete is not crowned unless he competes according to the rules. ⁶ He is the hard-working farmer who ought to have the first share of the crops. ⁷ Think over what I say, for the Lord will give you understanding in everything. ⁸ Remember Jesus Christ, risen from the dead, the offspring of David, as preached in my gospel, ⁹ for which I am suffering, bound with chains as a criminal. But the word of God is not bound! ¹⁰ Therefore I endure everything for the sake of the elect, that they also may obtain the salvation that is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory. ¹¹ The saying is trustworthy, for:

If we have died with him, we will also live with him;
¹² If we endure, we will also reign with him;
If we deny him, he also will deny us;
¹³ If we are faithless, he remains faithful—
for he cannot deny himself.

A Worker Approved by God

¹⁴ Remind them of these things, and charge them before God not to use irreverent words, which does no good, but only ruins the hearers. ¹⁵ Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth. ¹⁶ But avoid irreverent babble, for it will lead people into godlessness, and their talk will spread like gangrene. Among them are Hymenaeus and Philetus, ¹⁷ who have wandered from the truth, saying that the resurrection has already happened. They are upsetting the faith of some. ¹⁸ But God's firm foundation stands, bearing this seal: "The Lord knows those who are his," and, "Let everyone who names the name of the Lord depart from iniquity."

¹⁹ Now, in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and silver but also of wood and clay, some for honorable use, some for dishonorable. ²⁰ Therefore, if anyone cleanses himself from what is dishonorable, he will be a vessel for honorable use, set apart as holy, useful to the master of the house, ready for every good work.

²¹ So flee youthful passions and pursue righteousness, faith, love, and peace, along with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart. ²² Have nothing to do with foolish, ignorant controversies; you know that they breed quarrels. ²³ And the Lord's servant must not be quarrelsome but kind to everyone, able to teach, patiently enduring evil, ²⁴ correcting his opponents with gentleness. God may perhaps grant them repentance leading to a knowledge of the truth, ²⁵ and they may escape from the snare of the devil, after being captured by him to do his will.

Godlessness in the Last Days

³ But understand this, that in the last days there will come times of difficulty. ² For people will be lovers of self, lovers of money, proud, arrogant, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, ³ heartless, unapproachable, slanderous, without self-control,

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What God's People Are Taught to Avoid

God's book instructs us to keep away from such things as are detrimental, damaging, and destructive. Take a few moments to think about some of the things children of God are to shun.

Profane and Vain Babblings

Paul said in writing to Timothy, a young preacher, "O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust, avoiding profane and vain babblings" (1 Tim. 6:20). The New American Standard Bible translates this, "avoiding worldly and empty chatter." Weymouth renders it, "shunning irreligious and frivolous talk." The word "babblings" literally means "empty sounds." Some people get worked up over discussions pertaining to things useless and meaningless. One is exposing the emptiness of his own head when he delights in arguing pointless subjects. God's people have better things to talk about than useless, ridiculous topics. We must refrain from empty discussions. Hollow rantings amount to no more than firing blanks.

Foolish and Unlearned Questions

"But foolish and unlearned questions avoid, knowing that they do gender strifes" (2 Tim. 2:23). "But avoid foolish questions, and genealogies, and contentions, and strivings about the law; for they are unprofitable and vain" (Tit. 3:9). Some men have raised disputes and questions over trifles that can never be settled. What God has not revealed belongs to Him, not to man (Deut. 29:29). Questions that lead to endless speculation are harmful. We should not entertain questions that are asked purely for the purpose of gratifying someone's love of attention or relish for argument. Foolish questions do not edify. God wants his people to abstain from stupid and ignorant questions. That applies to preachers, too!

Agents of Divisions and Offences

“Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them” (Row. 16:17). Men who cause divisions and dissensions among brethren by refusing to uphold the truth, or by teaching false doctrines, or by promoting heresies, or by causing others to stumble, are to be noted and shunned. The expression “contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned, as R.L. Whiteside states in his commentary on Romans, “covers a wide field. One who causes dissensions by trying to introduce practices not authorized in the New Testament is to be avoided. False teachers may have personal charisma and be smooth and persuasive. By good words and fair speeches they deceive the simple, weak, and uninformed. They should be marked & avoided. Let us resolve to avoid the foregoing evils and all other things that jeopardize our eternal salvation. Many things are better shunned than shared, resisted rather than relished, escaped rather than espoused. - *Irvin Himmel*

Matter of Faith

Matter of Faith	Matter of Opinion
Baptism: Matt. 28:18-20; Mk. 16:16; Acts 2:38; 1 Pet. 3:21; et al. Immersion in water for remission of sins. Violation of the faith to promise salvation on other terms.	Use a baptistry or not; wear shower cap or not; only preacher baptize; use “baptismal formula” when baptizing.
Preaching: Matt. 28:18-20; Rom. 1:16; Gal. 1:6-9. Violation of the faith to use anything other than the gospel to bring to Christ.	Travel by boat, plane or ship; use TV, radio, or press; use gospel meetings, VBS, etc.
Lord’s Supper: Matt. 26:17-30; Acts 2:42; Acts 20:7 (Exod. 20:8); 1 st Cor. 11:23-28. On first day of week in assembly of saints with unleavened bread and fruit of vine.	Number of containers on table; time of supper in worship; time of day.
Work of the Church: Preaching (1 Tim. 3:15); Benevolence (1 st Cor. 16:1-2; 2 Cor. 8, 9; Acts 11:27-30); Edification (Eph. 4:11-16. Violations of faith include institutionalism, centralized control, and social gospelism.	Amount of aid to be given to needy; give goods, service, or money; how long to continue aid; number of classes; who teaches the class; age divisions; what kind of literature.
Singing: Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16; Heb. 2:12. Vocal music is plainly a part of the faith but instruments are another kind.	Whether to use a tuning fork or pitch pipe; kind of book; who is to lead; how many songs.

The Proper Use Of The Pulpit

The church was rent by problems, and feelings ran high. This preacher had strong convictions of his own as to the right and wrong involved, and entered the auditorium poised for the battle likely to ensue. But as he walked down the aisle he remembered advice received from an older Christian in a like situation years before. The wise brother had said, “Give ‘ern Heaven, preacher!” And that was the proper spirit, regardless of fleshly inclinations to give something else. Call it a “cute” remark; say it doesn’t remove the need for reproof or error, or of dealing specifically with the problem and needed Bible solutions; and you will be right on all counts. But the advice is scriptural. God requires an attitude and motivation on our part which must accompany the teaching of God’s plan of salvation, fighting denominational error, or correcting false doctrine among brethren. The proper use of the pulpit is to “give ‘em heaven!”

Paul’s inspired instructions to evangelists Timothy and Titus call for proper content in our teaching, to be sure; but they also tell us the purpose and deportment of the teacher which must prevail. These letters have both positive and negative precepts, often labeled as “charges.” Three times “charge” is from *diamarturomai*, meaning “solemn and emphatic utterance.” Best known of these is found in 2 Timothy 4:1-2, “Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine.” The word is again used with “study to show thyself approved unto God;” and this is surrounded by “strive not about words to no profit, but to the subverting of the hearers” and “shun profane and vain babblings: for they will increase unto more ungodliness” (2 Tim. 2:14ff).

Other “charges” (parangellos) from Paul are: “teach no other doctrine, neither give heed to fables and endless genealogies, which minister questions, rather than godly edifying which is in faith” (1 Tim. 1:3-4). Positive aspects of this charge are in 1 Timothy 2 and 3 – prayer for kings, women’s adornment, their learning in quietness, the qualifications of elders, deacons, etc. See also 1 Timothy 4:11; 5:7; 6:13; and 6:17. Paul sanctions identification of false doctrine, and false teachers – what many call “strong preaching”; but always in a sincere effort to give them heaven. The total message must be practiced if we are to claim to preach as Paul instructed.

There are repeated warnings to “refuse profane and old wives fables, and exercise thyself rather unto godliness”; or, avoid prideful “doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings, etc.” We are told, “foolish and unlearned questions avoid, knowing that they do generate strifes. And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient; in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves Titus was told to “speak the things which become sound doctrine,” yet, “to speak evil of no man, to be no brawler, but gentle, showing all meekness unto all men” (Tit. 2:3). The Timothy’s and Titus’s of today must not cast Paul’s charges aside.

We must impart information, and should know that we have not taught, until someone has learned. You may say, “I have told them, and I have told them . . .” but have they heard? True, we cannot force people to heed, but unless we have communicated God’s message to them, we have not done our job. There is a vast difference in teaching and just verbalizing information. We should reexamine our attitudes, methods, and anything else that affects the teaching process, striving always for greater effectiveness in teaching.

Imparting information is, however, but a means to an end. We reach for their hearts (2 Cor. 10: 5; Heb. 8: 10-11), and to do that we must touch emotions and will, as well as thoughts. We must cause people to believe, to desire to serve God, and be moved to obey. The question one must ask is not “what percentage negative, what percentage positive?” but rather, “does this accomplish the God-assigned purpose of teaching?” If our negativism causes hearers to renounce error, turn to Christ, and fly right, it is wisely chosen. If it makes matters worse, or is used as an ego booster for the preacher, it is not so wise, and may be sinful. If “emphasizing what we are for” causes hearers to ignore error and continue in sin, it fails the divine purpose. If it instructs in godliness and builds a proper basis for righteous judgment, it is a blessing. The obvious truth is, it takes both kinds, wisely chosen; and wise choosing can only be done on the basis of what wins hearts to Christ.

Reproving and rebuking error is not synonymous with uncouth treatment or abusive language. I am reminded of the new convert who said one preacher told him he was going to Hell, and seemed glad of it; but another told him he was going to Hell, and “it seemed to break his heart to have to say it.” Must you be told which preacher brought him to Christ? Differing personalities affect the way we say things, but preachers should learn to control their tongues and pens just as they teach others to quit “cussing.” There may be items when to “answer a fool according to his folly” calls for strong language, but this can be factual and direct without resorting to “fleshly weapons.” Being discourteous does not show strength; it is often the sign of weakness.

The general theme of this special issue is “Preaching that will save those who hear,” and that is exactly what we are striving to emphasize. We believe that was Paul’s goal when he wrote “Oh foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you?” For he also Wrote, “My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you...” (4: 16-20).

The tenderness and concern of Paul, even in upbraiding, is so apparent (cf. 2 Cor. 2:14). Note the Hebrew writer's practice of adding encouragement to his strong warnings. "Impossible . . . to renew again to repentance" followed by "but beloved, we are persuaded better things of you . . . though we thus speak" (6:4-12); and, "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God" followed by "but call to remembrance the former days . . . cast not away therefore your confidence" (10:26-39). The Lord Himself said, "Ye serpents, generation of vipers," then, seemed to weep for the people: "Oh Jerusalem, Jerusalem . . . how often would I have gathered thy children . . ." (Matt. 23:33-39). There is nothing "soft" in tender concern for sinners.

We hear a lot about "Pioneer preachers" and how many people they converted. At the risk of being deemed a "restoration heretic," I doubt this was done through their superior knowledge of the Bible. Nor do I believe their crudeness saved souls. It seems that the best explanation for their success is their dedication to the right purpose. They were soul-hungry, and stepped into the speaker's stand deeply aware that they must bring their listeners to Christ "give 'em heaven," or see them lost in hell.

- *Robert F. Turner*

The Threat of Factionalism

Titus 3:10 contains Paul's instructions to the preacher Titus about the dangers that a factious man poses to a local church. We will do well to study this passage in detail and pay careful attention to its instructions.

The factious person of whom the apostle is thinking has accepted the sinister philosophy of the Cretan errorists who specialized in foolish inquiries and law-skirmishes (see on verse 9). As has become clear, their error touched both doctrine and life, as is usually the case. It is true, of course, that the term as here used need not be restricted to a particular type of fanatic. Every factious person stands condemned here" (New Testament Commentary: I-II Timothy, Titus 395).

Having looked at these comments, let us make some observations about the text in its context.

Needless Contentions

The context of Titus 3:10 describes a group who became caught up in disagreements regarding foolish questions, genealogies, and contentions. What are these disagreements? Certainly, they are not the kinds of things under discussion by the Judaizers who were preaching that salvation was conditioned upon circumcision and observing the law of Moses, for Paul warned churches that these doctrines were destructive to the faith and worked like leaven to eat the heart out of salvation by grace through faith (see Romans and Galatians). They are not like the Gnostic controversy that denied the humanity of Christ and taught that sin did not interfere with one's relationship to God (see 1-3 John). These are questions about matters that did not attack the content of the faith.

They are described as "foolish questions." The word "foolish" is from *moras* which is used in this context to mean "imprudent, without forethought or wisdom. . . . empty, useless, 2 Tim. ii. 23; Tit. iii.9" (Thayer 420). The word "question" is from *zetesis* which means "a subject of questioning or debate, matter of controversy" (Thayer

272). The questions were "empty" and "useless" controversies, or as we might say today, "making mountains out of molehills." Sometimes churches get in the most heated kinds of controversies over matters that have no appreciable difference in application, challenge no Bible doctrine, or otherwise make a "hill of beans" worth of difference. Nevertheless, brethren can press their opinions about such matters until brotherly love is destroyed and alienation sets in.

The second word to describe what these brethren were to avoid was “genealogies.” The word *genealogia* means “a genealogy, a record of descent or lineage.” Thayer also recognizes that the word is used in the plural “of the orders of aeons, according to the doctrine of the Gnostics” (Thayer 112). The phrase calls to mind 1 Timothy 1:4 — “Neither give heed to fables and endless genealogies, which minister questions, rather than godly edifying which is in faith: so do.” The context seems to favor a syncretistic Jewish/Gnostic movement. Buchsel said, “it is probable that the expression denotes the biblical history enriched by interpretations and additions” (TDNT I:664). Such speculations were not only foolish, but also those over which brethren disagreed and divided.

The third word to describe the factional controversies of Titus 3:10 is “contentions.” The word *eris* means “contention, strife, wrangling” (Thayer 249). He adds also “strivings about the law” or “quarrels about the law” (NIV, NRSV). The word “striving” is from *mache*, “a fight, combat. . . of persons at variance, disputations, etc., strife, contention” (Thayer 394). “About the law” is from *nomikos*, “pertaining to (the) law” (Thayer 427). Arguments with reference to the law sometime drive wedges between loving brethren, rather than promoting unity, fellowship, godly living, and harmony. Such discussions are unhealthy and divisive.

From this studies, we see that Titus 3:10 is not limited in application to a person who is teaching false doctrine, but can also apply to a factious person who creates schism and division in a local church over matters of no real consequence. Any man who creates division in the local church is a threat to that church, even if he believes the truth! His schismatic and divisive conduct is as destructive to the church as any false doctrine is. Satan uses factional brethren as effectively as he uses false teachers to plague churches with friction, heartache, and upheaval. Such brethren “sanctify” their divisiveness under the banner of “standing for the truth.” They disrupt or destroy one church after another. When one group wises up to their ways and calls them to account, they pack their bags and move to another church charging that the church where they had been worshiping has gone “liberal.” The scene is repeated every two or three years. Lying in their wake is their bitter fruits — one disrupted or divided church after another! Brethren, the problem of factionalism cannot be solved by ignoring it. Just like every other area of Bible. - *Mike Willis*

Couple Boldness With Sound Judgment

Further, reject foolish and ignorant debates, knowing that they produce fights. For a slave of the Lord does not need to fight, but needs to be gentle toward all, qualified to teach, showing restraint when wronged, instructing with mildness those not favorably disposed. Perhaps God may give them repentance leading to an accurate knowledge of truth.

~ 2 Timothy 2:23-25 ~

*Beginning a fight is like opening a floodgate;
Before the quarrel breaks out, take your leave.*

~ Proverbs 17:14 ~



